



CONNECTIONS

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Phone: 919.231.3995

Fax: 919.231.4819

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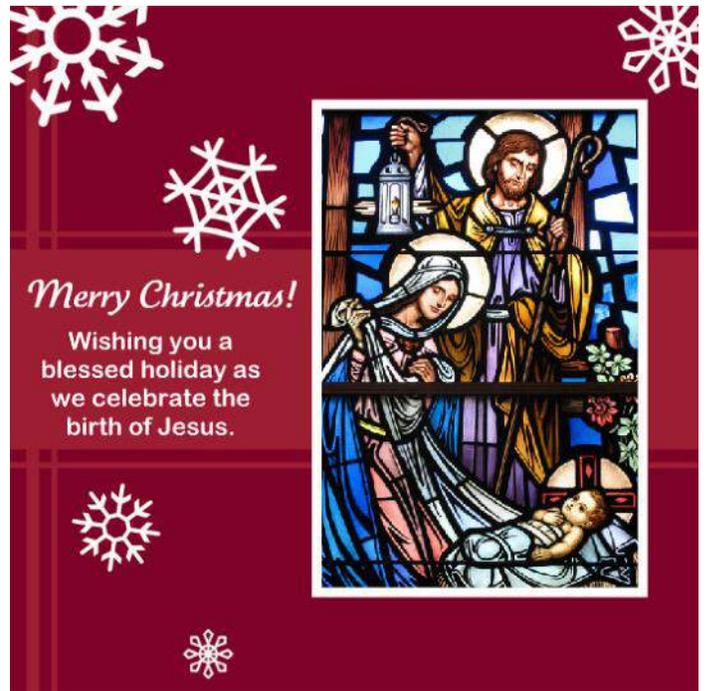
December 2020

Issue 12

*Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year*

the Raleigh Baptist Association Staff

*Roger Nix
Iris Woodard,
Cynthia Thelen
Andrea Raynor*



Our vision is
more attainable than ever.

2020 GOAL

\$175
million

imb

LOTTIE MOON
CHRISTMAS
OFFERING®

imb.org/lmco

The **Lottie Moon Christmas Offering®** is an annual offering collected by believers around the world to support international missions. The offering was officially named in 1918 by Woman's Missionary Union in honor of the missionary to China who urged churches to start it and give sacrificially.

This offering is unique from other mission offerings in that 100% of gifts provide for missionaries all over the world. It is a valuable part of Southern Baptists' 175-year history of reaching the nations with the gospel and vital to reaching the vision of a multitude from every language, people, tribe and nation knowing and worshipping our Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 7:9).

**For more information and resources
go to:**

imb.org/lmco
or call 1.800.999.3113

3 SHOCKING STATISTICS THAT SHOW HOW QUICKLY, RADICALLY

(AND PERMANENTLY?) CHURCH IS CHANGING IN 2020



When you're in the middle of a disruption, it's hard to know exactly what's changing, let alone how deeply or permanently things are changing. As 2020 soon draws to a close, there are three numbers that, at least for me, show how quickly, radically and perhaps permanently the church is changing.

As you look through these numbers, you may feel the temptation to explain them, dismiss them or even come up with reasons why the trends don't apply to you. I've heard so many leaders spend 2020 saying things like:

- *People have always gathered in person, and they'll gather again as soon as possible.*
- *I'm the exception to the rule. I can get people to come back.*
- *This is the CHURCH...in-person gatherings are here forever.*

These numbers paint a different story. One that wise church leaders may want to act on now while there's still time to pivot. Even when the truth isn't what you want to see, the truth is still your friend.

There are so many numbers floating around right now, but these three in many ways clarify the trends we're seeing right now. And, as shocking as they are, they can help you prepare for a very different, but also very promising, future. At least that's my hope.

1. 36%----The Average In-Person Attendance for Reopened Churches

In Tony Morgan's **Q3 UnStuck Church Report**, he shares that among churches his team surveyed, in-person attendance is 36% of what it was pre-COVID. No leader entered 2020 saying "I hope we're at 36% of where we are right now by the end of the year." But that's exactly what's happening.

What makes this more interesting is who was in the survey. Of the 261 churches Morgan's team surveyed, 34 churches were under 100 in attendance and 34 were megachurches. The average pre-COVID attendance of the surveyed churches was 961. This means that the report skews to much *larger* churches than average (961 is more than four times the size of most churches in America), and perhaps churches that were experiencing more momentum than average (being previously at almost 1000 in attendance).

The *Q3 Unstuck Church Report* also revealed that only 21% church leaders agreed that they have a "well-defined digital ministry strategy to engage with people who are outside the church and outside the faith." In other words, almost 80% don't. There's a lot of work to do here. There is evidence a lot of church leaders are stuck right now in the emerging trap of doing nothing well as they straddle both in-person and online ministry.

2. 41%----The Percentage of Gen Z Who Primarily Prefer Physical Gatherings Post-COVID

So how many people are coming back to in-person gatherings when COVID is over? Apparently fewer than you think. And fewer than you'd hope. According to a Barna/Stadia survey, only 41% of Gen Z say that when COVID is over, they want to return to primarily in-person worship. 42% of Millennials say they prefer primarily in-person worship. Which means, of course, the majority don't.

It's easy to think "Well, this is just an unprecedented year. Things will get back to normal soon." Maybe, except it's hard to go back to normal when normal is disappearing.

The very low attendance numbers that many church leaders often dismiss as medical (i.e. caused by COVID) may actually be a much deeper cultural and generational shift than we realize. **Crisis is an accelerator**, and so many of the trends we've been seeing over the last few decades are now happening faster than ever, in real time. The digital genie is out of the bottle.

3. 30%----The Percentage Point Gap Between Boomers and Gen Z

You know who really desires physical gatherings? Boomers--71% of Boomers say they want primarily in-person church attendance after COVID is over. For Gen Z, only 41% prefer primarily physical gatherings in the future. That's a 30 point gap.

A 30 point gap is a large gap...and here's how it might be impacting your leadership. First, the average senior pastor is a Boomer. According to a Barna survey, the average age of the senior pastors in America in 2020 is 57. Only a minority of Millennial, Gen Z and even Gen X want to *primarily* gather in person in the future. Changes happening now in church attendance preferences are cultural and generational.

In many ways, this confirms what you already know. Regular church attendance has been dropping for decades. The crisis appears to have accelerated that. In person isn't going away. But it likely won't play the role it used to even as recently as a year ago.

If your mission is to fill buildings, then keep going with your current strategy. But if your mission is to reach people, it might be time to rethink things.

Training and Mission Opportunities

Training Opportunities through the Baptist State Convention of NC

<https://ncbaptist.org/events-all/>



January 1-30, 2021 Pray Together...Go Together

Join us in praying for an unreached people group and a pocket of lostness each day with our 30-day prayer guide. As we pray together, we must also go together and take the gospel to the unreached and least reached among us.

<https://ncbaptist.org/prayandgo/>

Saturday, January 30, 2021
10:00 am - 1:45 pm
Virtual Conference

90 Day All-Access Pass Available

Go to the following link to register:
<https://www.accelevents.com/e/CWU>



**RESOURCING
WORSHIP**
CHILDREN'S WORSHIP
UNIVERSITY

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

Saturday, January 30, 2021



Tuesday, February 23, 2021

Friendly Ave Baptist Church
4800 W. Friendly Ave
Greensboro, NC 27410

In Person & Virtual Options

For more information contact
Austin Pulliam at
apulliam@ncbaptist.org or call
800.395.5102, ext. 5651

Wheels4Hope is a non-profit, faith-based car donation program that has served the greater Raleigh community since 2000. We turn donated cars into local blessings!

Our mission is to provide affordable, reliable transportation to low-wage families and individuals who are referred to us by one of our partner agencies. Wheels4Hope strives to provide families with the vital link (transportation) that is necessary for them to be self-sufficient.

Over the years, Wheels4Hope has been able to change thousands of lives. Help us keep that number growing by making a vehicle donation today!

Call **919.832.1941** or go to www.wheels4hope.org to learn how you can donate a vehicle or make a financial donate to help a family in need.



RBA Calendar and Bulletin Board

NOTE: Committee Members will be contacted regarding meeting times and format via email.

December 2020

24 Christmas Eve - RBA Closed
25 Christmas - RBA Closed
28-31 RBA Closed

January 2020

1 New Year's Day—RBA Closed
18 Martin Luther King Day

Job Openings:

First Baptist Church, Garner, NC is seeking candidates for the position of Ministry Assistant to NextGen Ministries. It is 16-hour per week part time employment responsible for administering those day-to-day tasks and functions relevant to the ministry areas of the NextGen. These areas of ministry are: fbcPRESCHOOL, fbcKIDS, Middle School Ministry, High School Ministry, College Ministry, and NextGen Life Groups. The Ministry Assistant to NextGen Ministries will also assist with day-to-day office needs, including assisting the receptionist with answering phones and doors, and relieving receptionist and staff

during appointments throughout the day. The ideal candidate is someone who professes Christ as their Savior and Lord with a combination of applicable education and experience in a church or office setting equivalent to 4 years. If you or someone you know is seeking a vocation in an atmosphere of ministry and meets these requirements, please have them contact Sara Littlejohn at sara@fbcgarner.org. Website: www.fbcgarner.org

First Baptist Cary, Cary, NC, is seeking a Ministry Assistant. This candidate is responsible for providing administrative and ministry-related support to one or more members of the ministerial team. The candidate will interact with church staff, church members and the community while furthering the purpose, mission and vision of Cary First.

The candidate for this position must have a growing personal relationship with Jesus Christ, with a hunger to know God and make Him known. We are looking for

someone that will embrace the purpose and mission of Cary First. The ideal candidate adapts well in a changing work environment, has a willingness to be a team player, creates consistency in their area of work and strives for excellence in everything they do by valuing people first. To apply send cover letter and resume to myron@caryfbc.org.

Openings: Church Staff Job Descriptions and Other Ministry Openings are available on our website under "Ministry Placement"

Go To: www.raleighbaptists.org

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Linking
The Great Commission
To Church Mission
For Kingdom Growth
Matthew 28:19-20

Roger L. Mrs. Executive Director, roger@raleighbaptists.org
Cindy Boffler, Consultant for Church Start Strategies, Demographics & Multi-Housing, cindy@raleighbaptists.org
Jrs Woodard, Administration & Communication Assistant, jrs@raleighbaptists.org
Cynthia Thelen, Caring Connections Ministry Director, cmthia@carlingconnectionsministries.com