



## LIFEWAY CHRISTIAN RESOURCES Goals and Accomplishments in 2015

### **1. Ministry Assignment: Assist churches in the development of church ministries**

#### *Sunday School*

**Significant Accomplishments**— Although called by many names, the comprehensive ministry of Bible study/teaching, fellowship/connection, and outreach/service traditionally known as Sunday School continues to be a vital ministry in most SBC churches. While the principles and practices of the program ministry have remained consistent for decades, the location and occasion is changing in many churches. Traditionally organized into classes that meet on the church campus and scheduled adjacently to a worship service, a growing trend is a hybrid program, with churches offering weekend groups on campus and/or weekday groups on or off campus. Churches that excel at this approach employ the same principles for all occasions and locations, and limit the purposes of the group to Bible study, fellowship (ministry within the group), and outreach/missions/service (ministry beyond the group).

LifeWay has implemented an “occasion neutral” approach in the development of Bible study curriculum for ongoing groups.

In September 2015, LifeWay introduced a new 3-year study plan for The Gospel Project curriculum series. All age groups study the same Bible stories, a year-and-a-half each in the Old and New Testaments. Additionally, 99 biblical doctrines will be addressed during the cycle. The goal of a million people using The Gospel Project in the Fall 2015 quarter was reached.

LifeWay’s two other series for all age-groups also continued to be trusted by Bible study leaders. LifeWay launched a 3-year plan in 2012 under the leadership of Vice-president Dr. Eric Geiger to arrest a 3-decade decline in Bible study curriculum use. LifeWay is grateful for the churches whose trust resulted in a third consecutive year of growth in Fall curriculum orders. There is renewed hope that the 400,000 groups that used LifeWay curriculum materials may begin growing in number again as well.

In addition to the three main series, a wide-range of resources to serve a wide-range of needs and preferences were published. *MasterWork* remained a popular option for groups who prefer discussing books by noted authors, but wanted substantial Bible study as well. Adult *Explore the Bible* materials were published in Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and for the deaf (in basic English). Blind adults continued to be served through the audio versions of *Bible Studies for Life—KJV* and *Explore the Bible*. Many predominantly Black and urban churches continued to utilize *YOU!* effectively. For churches with ministries to persons and families with special needs, *Special Buddies* (kids) and *Access* (adults) continued to provide

developmentally appropriate Bible studies. Materials specifically for Kindergarten and 6<sup>th</sup> grade were used effectively by churches with groups for these important transition years. Older persons were served well through *Bible Studies for Life Senior Adults* and large-print materials. Churches preferring digital delivery of materials continued to grow, and digital editions were available for most titles in the 3 major brands. Materials utilizing additional Bible translations were available in digital form as well.

In 2015, LifeWay published *Countdown: Launching and Leading Transformational Groups*, written by David Francis, Director of Sunday School, and Rick Howerton, Small Groups and Discipleship Specialist. The book was made available as a purchasable booklet and as a free PDF download from LifeWay.com/DavidFrancis. This resource includes teaching plans, PowerPoint® presentations, and other downloads for church leaders who are training others to start new groups. Free downloads of the book were also made available for iPad users through the iTunes store and through the LifeWay Reader for other devices. It provides a brief but comprehensive reference guide about Bible study ministry through small groups, discipleship course, and/or Sunday School classes.

Ten previous books and associated training helps remained available at LifeWay.com/DavidFrancis. These training modules are used widely as a basis for church, associational, state, and regional training events.

Vacation Bible School (VBS) continued to be one of the most effective evangelistic opportunities for churches. In 2015, the numbers declined slightly from previous years: 22,922 churches and missions conducted a VBS enrolling 2,593,547 participants and leaders, recording 73,193 professions of faith, discovering over 177,772 unchurched prospects, and encouraging 1,276 who made decisions to pursue vocational ministry.

In preparation for VBS 2015, state and associational teams trained more than 60,000 individuals to work in all aspects of VBS. In comparison, the first year SBC VBS data was recorded was 1924, when an estimated 125 churches conducted Daily Vacation Bible Schools.

**Future Plans**— In 2016, a new book, *TEACHER: Creating Conversational Community* will be appropriate for training leaders of groups in a variety of environments. *Teacher* will support the annual training emphasis and include the same types of downloadable resources that have accompanied previous annual emphases. Written by director of Sunday School David Francis, director of Group Ministry Michael Kelley, and Adult ongoing curriculum publishing director Ken Braddy, the book is the second of four in the series *3 Roles: Teacher, Shepherd, Leader*. The third book in the series will be available in 2017. *Leader* will focus on the group leader's responsibility to guide the class in missions and evangelism. Allan Taylor, who joined LifeWay in 2015 to serve as Director of Church Education, will co-author with David Francis. Taylor is well-known as a champion of Sunday School through his writing and speaking ministry.

In Fall 2016, the *Bible Studies for Life* series will begin a new 3-year study plan based on research validated and developmentally appropriate indicators of spiritual growth. In Fall 2017, the *Explore the Bible* series will begin its next cycle of fulfilling its promise to cover every genre of Scripture every three years, on the

way toward studying every book of the Bible “in its context so you might obey it in your context.”

### ***Discipleship***

**Significant Accomplishments**— Each Sunday, over a million adults trust LifeWay to provide content rooted in Scripture for their Sunday school classes, small groups, and other environments. LifeWay continues to serve the church in her mission of making disciples by meeting them with this trustworthy content in the environments the church needs. Ongoing curriculum continues to be a powerful tool for discipleship in many of these churches and groups.

The three main lines of Bible study curriculum LifeWay offers for ongoing discipleship are *Explore the Bible*, *Bible Studies for Life*, and *The Gospel Project*. In particular, *The Gospel Project* has gained influence throughout this past year as this curriculum line began a three year chronological journey through Scripture. On this journey, people will see Jesus as the central character of the entire Bible and come to understand that it's not only through Jesus and His grace that we are saved, but also by that same grace we grow in Christ.

This past year also saw growth in the number of churches who are using a more tailored pathway of discipleship. In many cases, this pathway involves building their small group environment around the pastor's sermon series, endeavoring for group members to have an opportunity to personally apply their pastor's text or topic in that small group environment.

To meet the need for customized discipleship needs of many churches, LifeWay continues to utilize a specialized team of curriculum writers who will custom created Bible studies and discipleship materials around a specific church's vision, values, and discipleship track.

In addition, this year saw the broad launch of [smallgroup.com](http://smallgroup.com), an online platform where churches and groups can create their own discipleship track. This platform enables churches to customize Bible studies to align with their pastor's sermon series, empowers group leaders to choose their own studies on behalf of their group, and stream video from trusted Christian authors as a tool in their small group ministry.

**Future Plans**— 2016 will bring an opportunity to emphasize a number of key initiatives, all of which meant to help churches intentionally disciple their people. In the fall, LifeWay will emphasize *Bible Studies for Life*, the ongoing line of curriculum which most firmly connects biblical principles to real life issues. *Bible Studies for Life* connects God's Word to our lives in an intentional way, and therefore church and group leaders can know that a concentrated study in this line of curriculum will not only root their people in Scripture, but help them see clearly that discipleship is not merely a matter of education but of obedience. Because the scope and sequence of *Bible Studies for Life* is founded upon the key principles driving the research study of *Transformational Discipleship*, a leader can also know there is an intentional pattern to the studies. LifeWay's goal for the fall is to see 1.7 million people studying God's Word in an intentional way through *Bible Studies for Life*.

In January 2017, LifeWay will also release *Disciple's Path: The Journey*. This is a

one-year study plan that is a purposeful journey towards maturity in Christ. This unique resource was created by experienced disciple-makers in the church to take into account the process of discipleship and built it into a resource. *The Disciple's Path* is progressive, relational, disciplined, and replicable, all aimed at the goal of making disciples who make disciples.

Finally, LifeWay will continue to emphasize smallgroup.com for churches that need a custom resource that fits their own approach to discipleship. With the platform, churches and groups will find a flexible resource provider which can fit into their own discipleship model and resource them with the content they need.

### ***Lifeway Leadership***

**Significant Accomplishments**– In 2015 the Lifeway Leadership team began to develop additional products and resources to equip churches in their leadership development. The aim was to expand their ability to connect with churches whatever the context and need. In an effort to provide simpler onboarding to Ministry Grid and provide recommended, quality training the team developed training pathways. Training Pathways provide foundational, advanced, and expert-level training modules within specific ministry areas and allow churches to know where to start and what training to provide to meet each leader's needs.

Along with the ongoing development of Ministry Grid and serving several hundred churches on it, the team launched Ministry Training Essentials, packaged video courses for church leaders to stream in training events with staff or volunteers. Each course provided several videos as well downloadable guides and engagement materials to walk a group through the training process.

In July team released the first episode of the 5 Leadership Questions podcast which quickly rocketed to the top of iTunes' religion category and has drawn tens of thousands of listeners since. It has featured top leadership influencers as guests as well as several of Lifeway's own leaders. Each week they also delve into practical leadership topics. The podcast provides a timely, accessible, and free resource from which leaders in any position can benefit.

NewChurches.com launched in 2015. This site is specifically aimed at church planters and pastors starting new campuses. It provides free content (blog and podcast) as well as a paid membership with premium resources to train these pastors. In its first few months NewChurches.com has collected over 1,400 members and the response has been encouraging.

The final significant effort of Lifeway Leadership in 2015 was the management of the church leaders' site at Lifeway.com (Lifeway.com/ChurchLeaders). Early in the year the team took over managing the page and has provided daily blog posts for leaders from top practitioners, recommended resources, and it is the home of the 5 Leadership Questions podcast. This site provides daily resources for Christian leaders that can be accessed any time from any device and will encourage and help them to lead better.

**Future Plans**– Several significant efforts are in the works for 2016. First, Lifeway leadership will be launching their Leadership Pipeline resource – webinars, podcasts, blog posts, and a white paper for starters. The aim will be to provide the foundational information and teaching so that churches can see their need for a

leadership pipeline and begin taking the steps to create one. These efforts will culminate in a fall conference in Nashville for church staffs providing in-depth conceptual and practical training from top church leaders.

On the digital side, Lifeway Leadership is continuing to develop and improve Ministry Grid, and significant upgrades to the platform will roll out in 2016. They will also be redeveloping the church leaders' site to build in additional functionality and provide a broader array of resources for church leaders.

### ***Worship and Music Ministry***

**Significant Accomplishments-** In partnership with award-winning songwriters Keith and Kristyn Getty, LifeWay Worship proudly introduced the exclusive "Getty Music Series" of resources for church choirs and orchestras. The series, initiated with the release of a suite for Easter, will be arranged and orchestrated exclusively by David Hamilton.

The Let's Sing imprint of choral resources for small and medium-sized church choirs continues to gain sphere of influence. This anchor brand has been key in adding choral club memberships over the past five years.

For congregational worship resources, LifeWayWorship.com continues to experience year-over-year growth. Such inertia is primarily attributable to: 1) a continued commitment to a current and contemporary list of new releases; and 2) the Pre-Pay and Save program available to church customers.

LifeWayWorship.com also continues to support the 2008 edition of Baptist Hymnal by providing downloadable companion products, allowing churches to quickly, easily, and affordably obtain worship resources for their ministries.

An emphasis was placed on the development of vastly improved infrastructure for LifeWay Songs in 2015. A number of crucial administrative actions—most of which had been neglected for decades—were accomplished throughout the year. The pinnacle action on this front was the development of LifeWaySongs.com—a new website that features LifeWay's exclusive songs and songwriters (to roll out early 2016).

In March of 2016, the first two of many future exclusive albums for LifeWay Christian Stores will release. Greatest Worship Songs 2016 and Songs of the Cross will be available as point-of-sale CDs during the Easter 2016 season in all LifeWay Stores.

The 16 periodicals published include choral, handbell and keyboard magazines, CDs, and kits. Regrettably, *Let's Worship* ceased publication this year. Response, Opportunity, and SBC Bulletin lines continue to provide a service to churches of all sizes.

LifeWay Worship's choral club (The Red Box) released adult musicals and anthems, and SonPower student music. These included nine musicals/collections (three Christmas, four Easter, and two non-seasonal). These releases include the Let's Sing imprint, geared for the medium-size church choir.

Additionally, LifeWay Worship Events trained and ministered to over 1,000

people attending events like SonPower, Worship Week, and Music in the Mountains in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. SonPower registered 25 professions of faith, and an offering of over \$1,900 toward Compassion's "Bite Back Campaign." And 38 of the 39 groups attending served the Orlando community through 19 mission organizations. Music in the Mountains offered for sale worship resources from multi-publishers as well as Church Supplies.

In January of 2015 the fusion of B&H and the Church Resources Division brought the Broadman Church Supplies work into the LifeWay Worship department. At the same time, the LifeWay Music Service team was transferred from the LifeWay Retail Division to the LifeWay Worship department. The newly formed area has been re-named "LifeWay Worship Resources." The new department is under the direction of Mike Harland. Ricky King continues his service as Director of Broadman Church Supplies under Harland. The Music Service team is now led by Brian Brown, current manager of Sales and Business development for LifeWay Worship Resources. This new department consolidates all worship resources into one business unit, eliminating redundancies and helping ensure better service to churches in the area of worship resources.

**Future Plans**— LifeWay Worship is privileged to continue serving churches alongside key publishing partners, including Lillenas Publishing Company, PraiseGathering Music Group, Daywind Music Group, and Celebration Concert Tours. The Let's Sing series of adult choir resources continues to grow along with choral clubs from LifeWay Worship (The Red Box) and our choral club publishing partners, PraiseGathering and Lillenas.

### ***Christian Education***

**Significant Accomplishments**- 125 years ago LifeWay began helping churches in their mission of making disciples by providing biblically sound, trustworthy Bible study resources. Throughout the years churches have discovered that discipleship happens best in the context of relationships and those relationships happen best in the context of small Bible study groups. Groups matter! Groups have been the center point of the Christian Education ministry throughout these 125 years.

Groups are defined in numerous ways: open, closed, ongoing, short term, Sunday School, small groups, discipleship groups and more. Research behind the book, *Transformational Groups* by Dr. Ed Stetzer and Dr. Eric Geiger, discovered that people involved in a Bible study group read the Bible and pray more regularly, confess sins more frequently, share the gospel more freely, give more generously and serve more than those not in a group. Groups matter!

Three elements are essential to successful group ministry in a church: Launch New Groups, Develop Leaders, and Feed People. The website, [groupsmatter.com](http://groupsmatter.com) was created to help churches start, develop, and maintain strong groups. [Groupsmatter.com](http://Groupsmatter.com) offers resources to help you make your groups matter, including articles, how-tos for group meetings, training and testimonial videos, and email templates for communicating with your leaders and group members.

Launch new groups-- In 2015, LifeWay, along with many state convention and church partners, strongly encouraged every church to intentionally launch new groups. At the end of the year churches had committed to begin over 55,000 new groups. This emphasis will continue through 2016 with a goal of 100,000 new

groups launched by the end of the year.

**Develop leaders--** LifeWay is committed to the development of group leaders. Ministry specialists trained over 32,000 church leaders in 2015, in over 500 training events. These specialists trained leaders in Sunday School, small groups, men's ministry, kids ministry, student ministry, young adult ministry, adult ministry, women's ministry and more. In addition, the launch of Ministry Grid provided training to church leaders through 5000+ videos and resources. Leaders can receive quality training at times of their choosing through Ministry Grid.

**Feed People--** While the avenue of spiritual development is through groups, a group experience alone will not transform. Transformation is a work of God that takes place as people encounter truth through the Word. Bible study is the foundation of group ministry. LifeWay continues to develop ongoing Bible study curriculum that provides a map of Bible discussion and learning for groups. A simple tool is available at [lifeway.com/GO](http://lifeway.com/GO) to help individuals and churches choose the Bible study that best fits the needs and preferences of their group.

LifeWay is not only committed to the development of group leaders, but also to the development of the leaders of the education ministry of the church. Teaching and training articles are regularly published in LifeWay resources. These resources include *Facts and Trends* magazine, ongoing curriculum leader guides, promotional mailings and more.

Bible Study Insider was developed to give Christian education leaders opportunity to examine the latest short-term and ongoing Bible study resources. Subscribers receive a box twice a year, with approximately 13-15 of the newest studies and resources enclosed. The cost of the subscription is credited back to the subscriber upon ordering LifeWay resources. In addition, [LifeWay.com/biblestudyinsider](http://LifeWay.com/biblestudyinsider) provides a hub for articles, blogs, resources and more for church and group leaders.

**Future Plans—** BETA conferences continue to be offered for those new to education ministry leadership. The conferences are held in Nashville and other locations across the country ten times each year at no registration cost to participants. Attendees learn the basic principles of group ministry, disciple making, staff relations, Sunday School principles, how to start new groups, and more. Through this interactive training experience, new educators are equipped to take the first steps toward healthy discipleship. More than 1,400 new education ministry leaders have been trained over the past nine years, with another 250 to be trained in 2016. Information concerning minister of education BETA conference can be obtained by contacting [alan.raughton@LifeWay.com](mailto:alan.raughton@LifeWay.com). BETA conferences are also available for leaders in kids ministry, student ministry, men's ministry, women's ministry, small group ministry and young adult ministry.

### ***Pastoral Ministries***

**Significant Accomplishments-** [LifewayPastors.com](http://LifewayPastors.com) was launched to serve as a landing site for events, blog, sermons, and other resources designed to equip and encourage pastors. In 2016, LifeWay Pastors is hosting over twenty Pastor Date Nights, Pastor Roundtables and ministry couple retreats around the U.S. The Associate VP for LifeWay Pastors is Mark Dance, who is a frequent speaker at conferences and retreats. Mark works alongside national, state and local SBC entities, as well as with other evangelical ministries.

Pastor's Alpha-- LifeWay Church Resources partners with state convention leaders to provide "The Pastor's Alpha: Leading the Disciple-Making Ministry in Your Church." This is a two-day training event designed for the Senior Pastor who has a heart and passion to lead the disciple-making ministry in his church. The goal is for pastors to leave with a plan to disciple their people with wisdom and intentionality. The Pastor's Alpha workshop Explores what it means to be a disciple; Equips pastors with disciple making skills and strategies in collaboration with other pastors and LifeWay leaders; and guides them to develop customized plans to more effectively Engage their church in making disciples who make disciples.

Transitional Pastor Training-- LifeWay continues to partner with state conventions to support training for Transitional Pastors, equipping them to help churches in smooth, troubled, or crisis transitions.

Church Partners-- LifeWay Church Resources has twenty-three Church Partners who annually interact with over 7000 churches conducting more than 17,000 face-to-face meetings with pastors and other ministerial staff. They discover personal, professional, and church ministry needs and provide information about biblical solutions and networking opportunities with leaders in other SBC entities, state conventions, and associations.

### ***Evangelism***

**Significant Accomplishments**—In fiscal year 2015 and continuing to the present LifeWay has partnered with the North American Mission Board to provide and distribute a new evangelism training resource to assist churches. *Life On Mission: A Simple Way to Share the Gospel*, by Dustin Willis and Aaron Coe, is a five-session Bible study that invites believers to connect with God's mission and equips them to leverage their influence to bring unbelievers to faith in Christ. The member book and Leaders Kit are targeted to reach the more than 259 million people in the U.S. and Canada who have no relationship with Jesus Christ. Find out more at [www.LifeWay.com/lifeonmission](http://www.LifeWay.com/lifeonmission).

*My 8: Embrace and Engage the Wonder of Evangelism*, is an 8-session Bible study by Ed Newton for students that deals with the heart and how-to of evangelism. Students are challenged and equipped to share their faith. The study is centered around four passages of Scripture with the number 8 in the reference: Isaiah 6:8; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8, Acts 8. These passages unfold the wonder of evangelism, moving students to share their faith not because they are obliged to, but because they are compelled to.

One of the greatest evangelism opportunities for churches continues to be Vacation Bible School. Multiplied tens of thousands of people have and will come to faith in Christ as a result of VBS. Vacation Bible School effectively opens a multitude of doors of evangelistic opportunity. Supplementing VBS, *Leading a Child to Christ Training Pack*, is a strong evangelism tool that is well designed to assist parents, teachers, pastors, and older children in sharing their faith. This training pack includes two video segments, *Leading a Child to Christ* and *Leading a Friend to Christ*, as well as conference plans for training.

*Share Jesus Without Fear, Revised Edition*, presents a simple and relational

approach to witnessing that underscores dependence on God's power for the results. Birthed out of the radical life-transformation of its author, Bill Fay, *Share Jesus Without Fear* teaches believers how to navigate a witnessing conversation in everyday situations. The addition of the *Share Jesus Without Fear* app and *Share Jesus Without Fear Scripture and Question Cards*, help the *Share Jesus* resources continue to be popular evangelism choices after nearly 20 years of strong response, keeping the revised member book within the top 15 performing products in Adult Short-Term Studies in the Church Resources division.

*More to Life*, authored by Dennis Pethers, is being utilized across the United States and the world. State conventions, associations, and churches are embracing this resource as well as the strategy behind it to strengthen evangelism training and practices. This resource and process offer evangelistic training based on a simple four-story approach that encourages and enables believers to more easily engage individuals in spiritual dialog and help them reach "people who are far from God, but close to you." *More to Life* not only trains believers, but also offers a discovery tool designed to engage nonbelievers in discovering who Jesus is, as revealed in four stories from the Gospel of John.

Many churches continue to experience great success with *FAITH Evangelism*. The resources for *FAITH Evangelism*, highlighted at [LifeWay.com/Faith](http://LifeWay.com/Faith), include:

- *FAITH Evangelism 1*, designed to equip believers to grow in their personal faith while, at the same time, taking the gospel and needed ministry into their communities.
- *FAITH Evangelism 2* continues the evangelism journey while focusing on building strong, committed leaders who will pour and multiply their lives into the lives of learners.

**Future Plans**—In February, 2016, LifeWay Resources releases the *Tell Someone - Bible Study Kit*, by Greg Laurie. This new collection of evangelism tools equips believers in small groups to be able to identify people and places already in their daily routines, encouraging and empowering group members to share the good news of Jesus Christ. The *Tell Someone* resources show believers how to build bridges with their own gospel stories to connect people to the heart of the Savior.

### ***Marriage and Family Ministry***

**Significant Accomplishments**— LifeWay has resourced churches in family ministry for many years through the publication of quality family and devotional magazines. Included are:

- *HomeLife*—A monthly family magazine with articles and fresh ideas for families, marriages, and personal development.
- *Mature Living*—A monthly magazine focusing on the spiritual and personal needs of adults, from boomers to seniors.
- *ParentLife*—Offers practical ideas, devotionals for families, and Christian living insights written especially for parents (monthly).
- *Parenting Teens*--Encouragement, information, and insights address the unique challenges of guiding a teen through adolescence into adulthood (monthly).
- *Journey*--Monthly devotional magazine for women with content that is substantive but not overwhelming for busy schedules.
- *Stand Firm*—A monthly devotional guide for men with role-model interviews and articles that fit into a man's busy schedule.

- *Open Windows*—A quarterly devotional guide featuring individual daily readings and selected Scripture passages (also available in large print).

Churches use these resources to help families realize and prepare for the fact that life happens between Sundays. While these magazines provide wonderful leisure reading, they also hit hard topics of life from a strong biblical perspective.

Through the years, LifeWay has provided Marriage Getaways for couples. These retreats provide the opportunity to worship together, attend workshops, and renew commitments. In 2015, Marriage Getaways were held in Destin, FL; Branson, MO; and Ridgecrest (NC) Conference Center (2). Some 2,000 people attended these events. God moved through these events to save and strengthen marriages and lead many to Christ. God uses these events to transform and strengthen marriages and center couples on their relationship with each other and with Christ. Anything is possible with God!

**Future Plans**— LifeWay will continue to host Marriage Getaways in Branson and at the Ridgecrest Conference Center in 2016. These events will feature top marriage speakers like Steve & Debbie Wilson from Texas who are the founders of *MarriageMattersNow.com*, Barrett & Jenifer Johnson out of Georgia and founders of *infoforfamilies.com*, Jackie & Stephana Bledsoe from Indiana and authors of *7 Rings of Marriage* newly released by LifeWay this February 2016, among others. Dale & Jena Forehand from Alabama and founders of *daleandjena.com* will be featured as marriage speakers at the 2016 dotMOM event in Brentwood, TN.

LifeWay will continue to offer quality group ministry resources to engage participants to grow in their marriage and as parents and grandparents. Some recent group resources produced include *Ready to Launch* by J. D. and Veronica Greear and a collection of Bible studies by Dr. James Dobson- *The Strong-Willed Child, Dare to Discipline, Bringing Up Boys, Bringing Up Girls, Love for a Lifetime, Straight Talk to Men, and Your Legacy*.

In 2016 LifeWay is excited to produce a new marriage study with Jackie Bledsoe entitled *The 7 Rings of Marriage*. Also in 2016 LifeWay is partnering with Matt Chandler to release a study on Biblical manhood and womanhood called *A Beautiful Design*.

### ***LifeWay Global***

**Significant Accomplishments**— LifeWay Global exists to “serve the Church in her mission of making disciples”—worldwide. We provide a broad mix of Bibles, reference works, books, kids resources, on-going curriculum and short-term studies in multiple languages to more actively serve the global Church.

In 2015 Lifeway Global’s impact on international churches was anchored by *The Gospel Project, Explore the Bible*, and *Bible Studies for Life* (in English and in a revamped Spanish edition). LifeWay expanded its small group resources in Spanish with the successful release of the *War Room Bible Study*. LifeWay’s Chinese enterprise—Life Connection LLC—provided marriage training to more than 20,000 participants in live and on-line events. Seminars and conferences are being led across China by indigenous staff.

**Future Plans**— In Summer 2016 LifeWay Global plans to launch basic

discipleship training in China based on *Experiencing God*. In Brazil, LifeWay's on-going curriculum was launched in Portuguese to local churches through a partnership with CLC in São Paulo. In the Fall of 2016, *Disciples Path* will be introduced in Spanish with a long-term vision to publish in several majority languages.

## **2. Ministry Assignment: Assist churches in ministries to college and university students**

**Significant Accomplishments-** LifeWay continues to recognize and emphasize the crucial importance of reaching and equipping college students with the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the work of the local church and state-convention-supported ministries. There are approximately 22 million college students in North America and churches are continuing to seek ways to reach and equip this important segment of our population. LifeWay provides churches and collegiate ministries resources and events that will assist in making disciples of Jesus among college and university students.

Ongoing curriculum provides churches with trustworthy resources that give college students the opportunity to study the Scriptures in small groups, Sunday School, or on their own. *Bible Studies for Life – Young Adult*, *Explore the Bible – Young Adult*, *The Gospel Project* and *YOU!* all address relevant and crucial issues of how the Scriptures intersect with the lives of college students. Whether the starting point in these groups is life, the text, or theology, the various lines of curriculum that LifeWay offers for college ministry will help students grow in their walk with Christ.

Short-term studies continue to be produced by LifeWay with the tag-line “LifeWay Young Adults Recommends.” These short-term studies are ideal for semester small groups and retreat settings. A variety of authors and subjects are given the tag-line of “LifeWay Young Adult Recommends” because of relevance to the life of college students and young adults. These titles can be found on the LifeWay Young Adults landing page on [lifeway.com](http://lifeway.com).

LifeWay also continues to offer meaningful and relevant events that promote spiritual growth and missions to churches and collegiate ministries including:

**Beach Reach–** For two weeks in March 2015, over 750 college students and leaders gathered in Panama City Beach, FL for one of the most intense and challenging experiences provided by LifeWay. Through daily pancake breakfasts (in partnership with the Georgia Baptist Disaster Relief Team), free van rides, and street/beach ministry, college students reached out to fellow college students on Spring Break in PCB. Over 70 decisions of salvation were made among college Spring Breakers during the two weeks among hundreds of Gospel Conversations. Early registration each year ends in mid December, but groups can register up to the time of the event.

**Collegiate Week–** Over 1800 college students and leaders gathered at Glorieta Conference Center in New Mexico during the first week of August 2015 for a week of worship, Bible Study, and recreation. Collegiate Week continues to be a strong connection between churches and state conventions as college students prepare to return to their campuses for the Fall semester. Included in Collegiate

Week is an intentional emphasis upon training of leaders through the leaders track.

Collegiate Summit- Over 600 Collegiate Leaders gathered in Nashville, TN in April 2015 for the National Collegiate Ministry Summit. The Collegiate Summit is an every-three-year training event that will have it's next gathering in April/May of 2018 – Location to be determined. The 2015 had plenary sessions led by Kyle Idleman, John Dickerson, Ricky Chelette, Michael Kelley, and Jeff Iorg. Worship was led by Dave Hunt. Along with the plenary sessions, there were break-out sessions based upon ministry settings, ministry topics and resources.

A National Collegiate Ministry network continues partner with LifeWay to give direction and leadership on a number of topics of importance in reaching and equipping college students. BCNet (Baptist Collegiate Network) consists of six committees staffed by church and campus-based college ministers in coordination with SSDA (State Student Directors Association). LifeWay's partnership with BCNet and SSDA is an essential component in continuing to emphasize collegiate ministry in the SBC.

LifeWay also partners with the North American Mission Board and the International Mission Board along with other networks such as College Metro, and BSU Advancement Committee to provide resourcing, training and connections with the opportunity to reach and equip college students as disciples of Jesus Christ.

**Future Plans**– LifeWay and National Collegiate Ministry will continue to seek opportunities to partner with churches and collegiate ministries in reaching and equipping college students and young adults.

Short-term studies will be offered under the “LifeWay Young Adults Recommends” tagline. These studies will be relevant to issues that young adults and college students are facing within their culture.

Ongoing curriculum will continue to have a young adult emphasis. *BSFL Young Adult*, *ETB Young Adult*, *TGP* and *YOU!* will all be lines of curriculum that will help young adults understand what it means to be a disciple of Jesus within their context.

Beach Reach and Collegiate Week will be offered for college students and collegiate groups during 2016.

Opportunities for LifeWay trainers to interact with leaders of collegiate ministry is available for churches, associations, and state conventions by contacting LifeWay Collegiate/Young Adult ministry staff.

### **3. Ministry Assignment: Assist churches with Christian schools and homeschool ministries**

**Significant Accomplishments**- The Christian Schools ministry assignment is housed in the student ministry component of LifeWay Church Resources. The purpose for this work is to provide consultation, products, and services needed by churches operating Christian schools, independent Christian schools, churches desiring to start Christian schools, and homeschool families. This work involves

consultation with many churches that already have Christian schools, churches that are interested in starting schools, and existing Christian schools.

The biblical philosophy of education to guide the training of children and youth is presented in *Kingdom Education: God's Plan for Educating Future Generations, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. This resource provides the driving principles behind the services and resources to Christian schools, churches, and families concerning biblical education. The Student Ministry Publishing component continues the revision process of its middle- and high-school *Quest* Bible curriculum.

#### **4. Ministry Assignment: Assist churches in ministries to men and women**

##### ***Women's Ministry***

**Significant Accomplishments**— The LifeWay's Women's Events team was once again privileged to minister to women across the United States and around the world through Bible teaching events and women's ministry leadership events. In 2015, the team managed 28 events, including 15 enrichment events, two live simulcasts and 11 leadership training events. The team hosted 11 "Living Proof Live" events with Beth Moore in cities large and small across the United States, including Atlantic City, New Jersey, Greenville, SC, Boise, Idaho and Seattle, Washington. "Living Proof Live" events ministered to more than 72,000 women in 2015 and reached another 150,000 women through the annual simulcast with Beth Moore.

LifeWay Women continued the popular "dotMOM" event in the Nashville area and hosted a "Priscilla Shirer Live," simulcast and live event in Huntsville, Alabama. LifeWay Women launched a brand new women's multi-platform event centering on the sufficiency of Christ titled "Abundance." The first event launched in early December in Daytona Beach, Florida.

The 2015 Priscilla Shirer Live simulcast event was delivered successfully via online delivery to 1753 individuals and small groups and 154 churches representing 49 states & 7 countries.

The 2015 Living Proof Live simulcast event broadcast live from Wichita, KS. The Living Proof Live simulcast event was delivered successfully via online delivery to 9,871 individuals and small groups and 700 churches representing all 50 states, 19 countries, 2 military bases and one county jail. The theme of the simulcast was Beth's "Audacious" book and for the first time, she wrote a book about her powerful simulcast message.

Almost 7000 women's leaders representing over 2700 churches were trained during 2015 through 45 live training events and various consultations. A variety of women's ministry leadership training opportunities were offered, including "YOU Lead," which is a training pre-conference before "Living Proof Live" to make the best use of leaders' time as they come to bring women from their church for the enrichment event.

Other leadership events included the Women's Leadership Forum and partnerships with state conventions, universities, and seminaries to provide the most effective tools for women's leaders. Women's Ministry also hosted 2 events for women's ministry directors with 3 years or under experience called Women's Ministry

BETA.

A highlight was the celebration of our 20th annual Women's Leadership Forum with the theme "One" based on Ephesians 4:1-6. The forum featured LifeWay authors Karen Kingsbury, Lisa Harper, Jen Wilkin, Pete Wilson, She Reads Truth leaders and Rebekah Lyons. We expanded our training beyond women's ministry leaders to all women in leadership. LifeWay Women also enjoyed a partnership with the SBC Ministers' Wives by providing registration and event planning assistance for their annual luncheon in 2015.

LifeWay Women continued production of "The Chat, with Priscilla," a talk-show format, web-delivered show, featuring Priscilla Shirer as host. The show began in late 2012. Priscilla approaches topics ranging from dealing with modern-day culture as a Christian to fashion, health and more. LifeWay Women produces the new show monthly and it airs on [www.theChatwithPriscilla.com](http://www.theChatwithPriscilla.com) and launches new shows monthly.

In 2015, the women's short-term Bible study area released many wonderful studies from both new and well-known authors. *Armor of God* by Priscilla Shirer is a study that helps women develop an action plan and personalized strategy for prayer and victory over the enemy. Angie Smith produced her first Bible study called *Seamless* and is a study that helps women understand the Bible as one complete story. The founders of She Reads Truth, Raechel Myers & Amanda Bible Williams also developed a LifeWay Women Bible Study called *Open Your Bible: God's Word is for You and for Now* that helps women learn to study the Bible for themselves. Other 2015 women's short-term studies include *Fight Back with Joy* by Margaret Feinberg; *Hosea: Unfailing Love Changes Everything* by Jennifer Rothschild; *The Friends of Jesus* by Karen Kingsbury; *Living in Truth* by Mary Jo Sharp; as well as updated editions of older studies - *Living Free* by Beth Moore and *Life Lessons from Women in the Bible* by Rhonda Kelley.

LifeWay Women's social media footprint continued to expand its reach in 2015. The Women's All-Access blog had 1,306,228 total page views and more than 756,562 visits. The LifeWay Women Facebook page has 112,442 likes, @LifeWayWomen has 40,947 followers on Twitter, 24,000 followers on Instagram, 4,165 followers on Periscope, and 4,423 followers on Pinterest. LifeWay Women also launched online bible studies with over 24,000 women participating.

**Future Plans**— In 2016 the women's events area will host 12 events across the country with Beth Moore in cities such as Reno, Nevada, Springfield, Missouri, Miami, Florida and Chicago, Illinois. This year Beth and LifeWay Women will provide an event to Native American women on a reservation in Chinle, Arizona in the four corners region. LifeWay is partnering with the Arizona SBC state office for this event.

Three "Priscilla Shirer Live" events including a global simulcast are planned for Seattle, Washington, Reading, Pennsylvania and even in Hyderabad India. Priscilla's global popularity is growing after the War Room movie. LifeWay Women will also host one "dotMOM" event again in 2016, at Brentwood Baptist Church in Brentwood, TN, in late September. LifeWay Women's events will also host three more of the new Abundance multi-platform women's events in

Asheville, NC, Fort Wayne, Indiana and Dallas, Texas in 2016.

Leadership training continues in 2016 across the country with 40 training live events scheduled including “Women’s BETA,” “YOU Lead,” “Women’s Leadership Forum” (Theme: Replicate based on 1 Corinthians 11:1, including speakers Trudy Cathy White, Nicki Koziarz, Annie Downs, Jennie Allen and others) and partnerships with other organizations. LifeWay will continue annually to assist with and register attendees for the annual SBC ministers’ wives luncheon. Beginning with our 2015 Because we want to provide the best leadership training for every woman, Women’s Forum as well as our YOU Lead events will seek to equip women to serve and lead biblically wherever that might be.

LifeWay continues to discover ways to meet the needs of leaders through various social media strategies with on-demand video webcasts and by providing continual leadership help on our leader blog., [LifeWay.com/WomenReachingWomen](http://LifeWay.com/WomenReachingWomen).

The year 2016 brings with it plans to publish more women's Bible studies including: *1 Peter* by Jen Wilkin and *Missional Motherhood* by Gloria Furman, both are part of a partnership with The Gospel Coalition and will be featured at their women's conference this summer. Also *The Gospel of Mark* by Lisa Harper; *A Woman Who Doesn't Quit: 5 Habits from the Book of Ruth* by Nicki Koziarz, *Looking for Lovely* by Annie F. Downs; *Redeemed* by Angela Thomas are releasing this year. Plus, we are expecting a new study from Beth Moore in the fall called *Entrusted: A Study of 2 Timothy* as well as a new study from Kelly Minter on 2 Corinthians late in the year.

### ***Men’s Ministry***

**Significant Accomplishments**— In 2015 LifeWay Men continued to build on a strong 2014. The Main Event—LifeWay’s Conference for Men— expanded from one to three cities – Vancouver, Washington, Kansas City, Missouri, and Nashville. We saw nearly 5000 men (4790) from several hundred churches across the country come together for two-day transformational events.

LifeWay partnered with Dr, Johnny Hunt and FBC Woodstock, Georgia to simulcast the Johnny Hunt Men’s Conference. The response was greater than expected- reaching 135 churches and 149 individuals from 27 states (Total Estimated Audience: 25,000).

LifeWay Men presented two Men’s Ministry BETA Conferences. These new three-day conferences, hosted at LifeWay in Nashville, were provided for church leaders interested in starting and implementing a ministry to men in their church.

Along with the Beta conferences, we had partnerships with national organizations such as Iron Sharpens Iron and the National Coalition of Ministries to Men to train hundreds of leaders on strategies, resources, and events for men’s ministry.

In April, 2015, we released Volume 2 of our Men’s Audio Devotional CD. Selling more than 20,000 copies, it has helped us get trustworthy biblical content into the hands of an increasing number of men. Though there was no Bible Study released specifically for men in 2015, LifeWay Men continued to see strong sales numbers with studies such as 33 The Series and Kingdom Man.

*Stand Firm*, LifeWay’s devotion for men became available digitally in 2015

through DevoHub.com allowing churches with access to trustworthy daily devotional content straight to their phone or tablet.

**Future Plans--** In 2016, we will bring our conference to men, The Main Event back to Nashville, Tennessee on July 22-23 and Kansas City, Missouri August 26-27. The focus of these transformational events will come from 2 Corinthians 16-20, challenging men to give themselves to the mission of the gospel and Kingdom expansion in their spheres of influence. Platform guests (appearing live at select locations) include: Dr. Johnny Hunt, Tim Tebow, Dr. Darrin Patrick, TC Stallings, Jonathan Evans, Dr. Jimmy Sites, and others.

We will continue our partnership with Dr. Johnny Hunt and FBC Woodstock to simulcast the Johnny Hunt Men's Conference worldwide on February 5-6, 2016.

LifeWay Men continues to provide biblically trusted resources most notably – *Kingdom Man* with Tony Evans, *Game Plan for Life* with Joe Gibbs, and 33 The Series from the Creators of *Men's Fraternity*. *Volume 6* in *33 The Series* releases January 1, 2016. We are in the beginning stages of planning for a new LifeWay Men Bible study resource with Dr. Eric Geiger that will follow the grand narrative of scripture from Genesis to Revelation. Anticipated release date for this resource will be January 2017.

To provide opportunities for small churches or men who, for various reasons, are unable to attend a men's Bible study in their local church, LifeWay Men will offer the *Kingdom Man Bible Study* (with Dr. Tony Evans) online. The study will be housed on the growing LeadingMen blog ([lifeway.com/leadingmen](http://lifeway.com/leadingmen)) in March 2016.

LifeWay Men will present 2 major training events in 2016. First, our three-day BETA Conference will be April 11-13. It will provide training for church leaders relatively new to men's ministry. And next, we will offer a 1-day training conference for ministry leaders prior to the Main Event in Nashville July 22-23. We will work to strengthen partnerships within the convention with state and association leaders and seminaries along with local churches. We will seek to discover and build new partnerships outside the convention to broaden our influence and champion men's discipleship.

## **5. Ministry Assignment: Assist churches through operation of Conference Centers and Camps**

**Significant Accomplishments--** Ridgecrest Conference Center hosted approximately 64,500 guests in 2015, resulting in many spiritual decisions. The summer of 2015 also saw almost 2,500 campers attend Camp Ridgecrest for Boys and Camp Crestridge for Girls, with many of these boys and girls making spiritual decisions while at camp. In addition, 480 lives were impacted by attending Family Camp, Father & Son Weekend, and Mother & Daughter Weekend.

**Conference Center Events** – Special conferences and events being planned and sponsored at Ridgecrest in 2016 include: Senior Adult Southern Gospel Springfest, Blue Ridge Mountain Christian Writers' Conference, Downhill @ Dawn (half marathon), and Valentine's Weekend.

## **6. Ministry Assignment: Assist churches through the publication of books and**

## Bibles

**Significant Accomplishments**— B&H Books -- B&H publishes books that impact individual lives, families, churches, and God's work around the world. The fruit of this was seen in key accomplishments for 2015. We celebrated more than thirty of our titles being recognized with awards in the Christian Retailer's Best Awards including: *Autopsy of a Deceased Church*, *Truth Matters*, *Recovering Redemption*, *The Love Dare*, *Portraits of Devotion*, and *The Insanity of Obedience*. 2015 was also marked by partnership with the film release of *War Room*, with which we released multiple products, including the New York Times' Bestsellers *The Battle Plan for Prayer* and *Audacious*. Of greatest significance, however, is the testimonies we receive from readers whose lives are impacted and whose relationships with the Lord are deepened from using our resources. We are honored to partner with others throughout LifeWay and across the denomination to produce resources that lift up the Kingdom work of the SBC.

B&H Kids— 2015 was another solid revenue growth year for B&H Kids. Our *Big Picture Interactive* brand (connected with Lifeway's The Gospel Project for Kid's curriculum) continued to be our top-selling line. Key releases included titles for kids and teens connected to the movie *War Room*, and the release of the *Essential Teen Study Bible*, a fully designed full-color Bible for students that debuted in September. Major signings during the year included Priscilla Shirer, Sheila Walsh, and Vicki Courtney. We also launched a new brand for toddlers, *Little Words Matter*, which includes board books, sound books, and a Bible storybook, all targeted to help our youngest readers begin a lifelong relationship with Jesus.

B&H Bibles & Reference— In 2015 Holman Bibles continued to release line extension of our popular study Bibles, including The Apologetics Study Bible, The Apologetics Study Bible for Students, the HCSB Study Bible, the Study Bible for Women in both HCSB and NKJV, and the KJV and NKJV Study Bibles. We also introduced large print edition of the KJV and NKJV Study Bibles as well as the Study Bible for Women so we can serve customers who prefer something larger than our regular edition. Our new releases included a line of Journaling Bibles in HCSB, KJV, and NKJV. We also launched a new Rainbow Study Bible, NIV edition.

For reference books, we launched the new commentary series, Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation, with a volume on Hebrews by Dr. Tom Schreiner of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. This series takes a unique approach by providing a section of exegesis and a section of biblical theology for each passage of Scripture. We also released the new Holman Illustrated Bible Commentary, which takes as its starting point the study notes from the HCSB Study Bible and expands them to create a 1-volume commentary that covers every passage of Scripture. We also released numerous new titles in our Christ-Centered Exposition series, which is catching some real momentum among those looking for accessible exposition that is Christ-focused.

B&H Academic— In 2015 we published 15 titles designed to serve our academic and pastoral audiences. For our Baptist audience in particular, we produced two major volumes—*Baptist Foundations* and *The Baptist Story*. *Baptist Foundations* is an up-to-date presentation of the theological foundations of Baptist church polity written by leading Southern Baptist scholars. *The Baptist Story* is a comprehensive history of the Baptist movement that will likely become the standard textbook on

this subject, also written by three prominent Baptist historians. Both will serve scholars, seminary students, pastors, church leaders, and interested laypeople. Other significant releases include two additional volumes in our Perspectives Series, a new undergraduate textbook in church history, a book of essays honoring Dr. David Dockery, two more volumes in our Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament collection, a second edition of our popular *Missiology* text, a new volume on preaching, and two volumes defending congregationalism and the importance of baptism, respectively. We also exhibited at a number of conferences, such as Shepherds', The Gospel Coalition, and ETS, and donated books for special events at SBC seminaries. In addition, we launched a redesigned blog and grew our social media following significantly. Taken together, these assets reached several hundred thousand current and potential customers with information on, and material from, our resources. Promoted content from our books grows our audience and ministers to them on a weekly basis as we share insights from leading evangelical scholars and pastors.

**B&H Spanish--** In 2015 we expanded the *RVR1960 Holman Study Bible*, a full-color Bible that has been enthusiastically received by customers throughout the U.S and Latin America. We continued to extend the *Fisher of Men* Bible line with an NTV edition (the Spanish New Living Translation) to complement the popular RVR60 edition. The Portuguese *Fisher of Men* successfully launched in the Summer of 2015. B&H re-launched its best-selling RVR1960 *Rainbow Study Bible* in 2015 with a refreshed layout, and we expanded our most popular RVR60 text Bibles in 2015—including *Hand Size Giant Print*, *Super Giant Print*, *Large Print Compact*, and *Gift and Award* editions. B&H also staged an ambitious expansion of its Spanish book program, anchored by *Fervent* (Priscilla Shirer), *Battle Plan* (Stephen Kendrick), *Audacious* and *Whispers of Hope* (Beth Moore), and *Doctrines That Changed the World* (Dr. Miguel Nunez). B&H Spanish rolled out a major publishing line for kids in the Fall 2015, anchored by the best-selling *Big Picture* line—including resources for toddlers and pre-schoolers.

WORDsearch Bible Software released a new version of their desktop application, WS 11. Over 7,700 upgrades were sold in the first month, which was a record number in the history of the company. B&H Academic acquired five graduate institutions that are switching all textbooks from print to digital using our proprietary platform, [www.mywsb.com](http://www.mywsb.com).

**Future Plans--** In 2016 B&H Publishing Group will continue to develop and produce products that are biblically based and have the highest spiritual quality and integrity.

**B&H Books--** Upcoming releases include *Who Moved My Pulpit?* by Dr. Thom Rainer; *She Reads Truth* by Raechel Myers & Amanda Williams; *Tell Someone* by Greg Laurie; *Gospel in Life Series* in partnership with the ERLC, among many others.

**B&H Kids--** In 2016, we will continue expanding *The Big Picture Interactive* brand with a 52-week devotional and new Bible Storybook connected to the second cycle of *The Gospel Project for Kids* curriculum. Our release of Bible titles will slow in anticipation of the 2017 launch of titles in the new CSB translation. Top titles for the year will include five books for tweens and teens from author Vicki Courtney, including a mother/daughter devotional, and the launch of Priscilla Shirer's middle-reader series, *The Prince Warriors*, which publishes in April.

In the fall of 2016, we will relaunch the *Bibleman* brand, which has been in the market for more than twenty years. The brand was purchased from Thomas Nelson in 2013, and we have been working up a new strategy that includes animated videos, books, and toys.

**B&H Bibles--** We continue to develop new study Bible projects to support HCSB and for application in other translations as well. In coming years we will announce study Bible partnerships with several prominent pastors/authors.

**B&H Academic—** As we begin 2016, we look forward to several notable titles scheduled for this year. Among these are *Unchanging Witness*, which defends the historical position of the church on homosexuality, a volume on the doctrine of the Trinity, a revised edition of *Planting Missional Churches*, *Ephesians* in our Exegetical Guide series, a highly anticipated intermediate Greek grammar, and *The SBC and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, containing reflections by major leaders in the SBC on its current state and future direction. We will attend more events where we can reach Bible college and seminary faculty, and continue to grow a readership that resonates with our core commitments. We look forward to serving the church and the academy even more in 2016.

**B&H Spanish--** As we look to the future, the NTV edition of the *Fisher of Men Bible* is expected to release in March. We also look forward to a large print edition of the popular *RVR1960/KJV Bilingual Bible*, and 4 mini books (on divorce, abandonment, divorce, and fear). Beth Moore's *Whispers of Hope* in Spanish will come out in May 2016. B&H will re-launch the best-selling *RVR1960 Rainbow Study Bible*, which has received numerous awards throughout the last several years. This Bible will have a refreshed look, as well as several modern and unique covers according to demographics. A book for kids written in Spanish will come out; the authors are from Ecuador. We look forward to an evangelistic pamphlet for children, too. We will also start the Style-Out Bible Program featuring our top three Spanish Bibles lines; the goal is to showcase the different options customers have in terms of trim size, point size, and covers.

## **7. Ministry Assignment: Assist churches through the operation of LifeWay Christian Stores**

**Significant Accomplishments—** LifeWay's Retail division seeks to transform lives by the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. During fiscal year 2015, LifeWay's Retail division serviced millions of customers and tens of thousands of churches domestically and internationally through over 170 stores in 29 states and online.

The Retail division also continued its emphasis on serving church leaders through the minister's discount program. At the close of fiscal year 2015, more than 200,000 ministers were represented in the minister discount program. Ministers, church staff, and furloughing missionaries use this discount for solutions vital to their ministry efforts. Additionally, the LifeWay Rewards customer loyalty program continues to grow. An emphasis this year on our *Price Match Promise* has helped our customers know that we will match the price in our store of any store or online retailer for an new item that we carry.

The division focused intently on serving church customers with a renewed commitment this year. An initiative to hire a Church Connection Specialist for each store was launched. These employees specifically focus on reaching and

servicing the needs of our church customers with greater expertise.

ONESource Direct extends the distribution channel and helps churches maximize stewardship of their resources by continuing to connect them to savings opportunities on a broad range of quality products and services, such as background checks and church buses through LifeWay's ONESource program. The Digital Church component of ONESource Direct offers LifeWay eGiving which allows churches to receive funds digitally.

Ministry remains the Retail division's primary purpose. We remain highly sensitive to ongoing in-store ministry opportunities. Furthermore, we partnered with thousands of customers to send over 200,000 Bibles to China for distribution through churches. Additional Bibles were distributed to thousands of women in crisis pregnancy centers across our country. Stores served as collection sites for contributions to the SBC Global Hunger Relief, with special emphasis on the Syrian Refugee Crises.

**Future Plans**— LifeWay's Retail division anticipates being well positioned to assist millions of customers every step of their way by providing trustworthy answers for life issues. Caring team members will be ready to prayerfully equip and guide customers. We plan to carry a vast selection of Bibles, Bible Studies and other products for transformational impact as we emphasize ministry concerns of the Southern Baptist Convention. Plans are to attract families with more in-store events and activities as we grow our ministry.

#### **8. Ministry Assignment: Assist churches through church architecture consultation and services**

**Significant Accomplishments**— LifeWay Christian Resources provides church architecture consultation and services through a strategic relationship with Visioneering Studios. Visioneering Studios has won numerous national awards such as Best Church Architect, Best Church Design, and Best Building Contractor. Through this dynamic ministry resource, LifeWay offers churches, associations, state conventions, and denominational entities with an expanded array of services including full architecture expertise, master planning, real estate services, development services, interior design, environmental graphics, and design-build services. Visioneering Studios' intent is to develop destinations that lift the spirit now and forever.

The strength of the Visioneering team is to apply each individual church's story to the design of their facilities – something Visioneering calls “Architectural Evangelism”. By teaming with Visioneering Studios, with offices in Charlotte, Nashville, Denver, and Irvine, we are able to provide full “Dream to Dedication Day” services coast to coast.

During the past year, Visioneering Studios served churches with architectural and/or building assistance as follows:

- Serving church architecture and construction projects in California, Colorado, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, Mississippi North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Washington.
- Giving churches consultation and advice through Studio Tours, telephone conversations, and at the Visioneering Studios booth at the Southern Baptist Convention and other events such as Catalyst, Exponential, and ARC

Exchanges.

- Providing training for church leaders by conducting a Church Building Conference in Atlanta, GA.
- In addition to Visioneering's Blue Sky Workshop Master Planning process, Visioneering launched a new offering called Development Advisory Services aimed at walking the church through all of the "Pre-project" steps necessary to a successful building project. These things include: Strategic Feasibility Analysis (Financial Capability), in depth understanding of the local church DNA, Vision and Goals, Next Steps Facility Programming, Proforma budgeting, preliminary scheduling, permitting process review, and cash flow forecasting.
- The Visioneering Studios at LifeWay location saw Trinity Presbyterian Church in Boerne, TX, Life Christian Church in West Orange, NJ, First Baptist Church in Clinton, MO, and Gateway Fellowship in San Antonio, TX complete construction and open the doors on their new facilities in the past year!
- The Visioneering Studios at LifeWay location also embarked on Design-Build services for Vibrant Church in Columbus, MS, and Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, KY in the past year!

**Future Plans**— We will continue to attend regional and national events to inform and assist church leaders in the planning and building process in 2016 and beyond. In addition, we will continue to design and construct new and exciting facilities for churches and other non-profit entities such as the Boys and Girls Club through the expanded scope of services available through Visioneering Studios. Call Visioneering Studios at LifeWay at (877)899-1872 for more information and to discuss how Visioneering can serve.

## **9. Ministry Assignment: Assist churches in capital fund raising**

**Significant Accomplishments**— The most significant accomplishment this year was the launching of a comprehensive discipleship strategy resulting in a trained team and organized plan to develop the spiritual habit of generosity. This successful initiative saw a 700% increase in terms of service growth from the previous year.

In 2015 we:

- Served 34 congregations;
- Served in 21 states coast to coast;
- Served 5 denominations;
- Served 1 nonprofit;
- Served church plants, small churches averaging less than 200 in worship, mega-churches averaging over 3,000 in worship, and multi-campus churches;
- Spoke at numerous events across the country to church planters, senior pastors, and discipleship pastors;
- *Leading a Generous Church* staff tool was launched and has sold approximately 500 copies to date;
- Launched SBC500 research project with the 500 largest SBC churches to learn strategic practices;
- Expanded our team.

**Future Plans**— In 2016, we will continue developing and launching additional tools to provide optimal coaching to churches of all sizes in the areas of capital campaigns, generosity culture, and one day readiness.

We will continue to develop campaign support materials for churches in partnership with LifeWay Research, LifeWay Discipleship in Context, IDdigital, and 5 Degrees Branding. These materials include both custom and templated small group curricula for all ages, and print and video design materials for stewardship initiatives.

**10. Ministry Assignment: Assist churches by conducting research and compiling statistics**

**Significant Accomplishments--** LifeWay Research released a variety of significant research studies in 2015. These included data and articles about the views of pastors, Americans and/or churchgoers on prayer, racial diversity at church, influence of Christian media, immigration reform, gay marriage, rise of the Nones, views of Islam, stand on Israel, religious liberty/freedom, divorce, suicide, pastors who leave the pastorate, influence of Pope Francis, animal welfare, abortion and appeal of new churches.

LifeWay Research partnered with significant partners including CareNet, Focus on the Family, Moody Radio, the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board, Outreach magazine, the National Association of Religious Broadcasters, and the National Association of Evangelicals.

The NAE partnership produced a new research-based definition of evangelical beliefs based on four questions that can be used in research projects.

A partnership with The Billy Graham Center for Evangelism at Wheaton College will result in a national survey about the state of evangelism in America as well as a multid denominational conference on evangelism.

A LifeWay Research analysis of 843 new churches from 17 denominations and church planting networks indicated newly planted churches are more effective than existing ones at drawing people who aren't connected with a church, in addition to other conclusions.

The SBC Annual Church Profile (ACP) showed Southern Baptists were adding more churches but serving fewer members who are giving fewer dollars.

The number of cooperating churches within the SBC rose for the 15th consecutive year, but the churches lost more than 200,000 members, the biggest one-year decline since 1881. Average attendance, baptisms and giving also declined. The number of churches in the convention grew by 374 to 46,499, up 0.81 percent from the previous year.

One of the biggest declines was Southern Baptist church membership, which fell 1.5 percent to 15.5 million—still the largest Protestant denomination by far, but at the lowest level since 1993. Weekly worship attendance declined 2.75 percent to 5.67 million Sunday worshippers.

Baptisms declined for the third year in a row, although the rate held steady with

one baptism for every 51 members. Churches recorded 5,067 fewer baptisms, a decrease of 1.63 percent to 305,301.

Total and undesignated church receipts according to the ACP data also declined, 0.49 percent and 0.24 percent respectively. And, total missions expenditures decreased 4.98 percent to \$1.2 billion.

**Future Plans**– LifeWay Research will release significant studies in 2016 on presidential preferences, the affect of the economy on churches, immigration, evangelism, church planting, the state of theology, marriage and the clergy, and religious liberty.

LifeWay will also continue work with state Baptist conventions to update software used for the Southern Baptist Directory Service and Annual Church Profile.