



2016 Ministry Inquiries

COOPERATIVE PROGRAM:

1. Please give a description of LifeWay Christian Resources' efforts to promote the Cooperative Program and the expected outcome of these efforts that would be suitable for use in a Baptist Press or SBC LIFE article about the value the Cooperative Program brings to our SBC entities and our entity leaders' belief in and support of the Cooperative Program.

The Southern Baptist Convention created the Baptist Sunday School Board in 1891 and authorized an annual salary of \$2,100 for J.M. Frost, its corresponding secretary and only employee. However, the SBC didn't allocate any funds for the salary which Frost was expected to generate with the new publishing entity. He did, and that's what the BSSB and LifeWay Christian Resources has done for 124 years.

LifeWay receives no funds from the denomination, including no allocation from the Cooperative Program, and never has. Instead, LifeWay provides its SBC-assigned ministries through a business model of creating trustworthy Christian resources that grow His church and Kingdom. In fact, LifeWay invests nearly \$3 million a year back into the denomination and its ministries.

LifeWay also solicits donations from 150,000 summer participants in World Changers, CentriKids and Fuge resulting in a check to the International Mission and North American Mission Board totaling nearly \$600,000.

LifeWay also supports SBC missions and the Cooperative Program in a myriad of ways including:

- Orientation of new trustees and employees covering the SBC's ownership of LifeWay, election of our board of trustees, and the importance of the Cooperative Program to sustain other SBC ministries;
- Inclusion of education and promotion material about CP and SBC's mission agencies in periodic shipments to SBC churches;
- Inclusion of missionary stories as illustrations in Bible study lessons, VBS materials and other resources as appropriate;
- Designation of a member of LifeWay's leadership team as liaison with the SBC Executive Committee on CP communication. That individual served the past two years on the Cooperative Program Advisory Council, helping develop a multi-year national strategy for the CP;
- LifeWay Stores partnered with thousands of customers and the International Mission Board to send 200,000 Bibles to China. Bibles were also distributed to thousands of women in crisis pregnancy centers across the country; and,
- LifeWay Stores aided in prayer list ministries and served as collection sites for contributions to the SBC Global Hunger Relief. These contributions were sent to the North American Mission Board and the International Mission Board for 100 percent dispersion through hunger ministry sites in the United States and overseas.



ETHNIC PARTICIPATION:

2. Please give a progress report of ethnic participation within LifeWay Christian Resources, including active involvement of ethnic churches and church leaders, across all levels and aspects of the LifeWay Christian Resources ministry—such things as board of trustees composition, senior administrative staff, other professional staff, support staff, and ethnic church and church leader composition of any external advisory groups— demonstrating progress, if any, in ethnic participation over the past two decades (1996-2015), giving special attention to progress over the past five years (2011-2015).

LifeWay Christian Resources creates products that help spiritually transform people from all cultures and backgrounds and encourages predominantly ethnic churches to utilize those products to help their members know Jesus Christ and seek His Kingdom. Following are several resources that give evidence of the ministry's commitment to that end.

LifeWay's Resources Division offers resources in 34 languages and is committed to providing two basic evangelism and discipleship resources, *Share Jesus without Fear* and *The Call to Follow Christ*, as free downloadables on www.lifeway.com in multiple languages. *Share Jesus without Fear* is currently available free of charge in Arabic, Chinese, French, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Korean, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Tagalog, Telugu, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese. *The Call to Follow Christ* is available for free in Chinese, French, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, and Vietnamese. The division continues to work with volunteers around the world to translate those resources in additional languages.

The Resources Division has employees who work specifically with predominantly Hispanic and African American churches. The division offers a series of webinars to train Hispanic leaders online at its *Español* site on www.lifeway.com along with various regional training events in the U.S. and in Latin America. The division provides age-graded Spanish curriculum along with discipleship, VBS and leadership resources. In 2014, it introduced two new lines of Bible studies for groups in Spanish called *Conetándose* and *Estudios Bíblicos para la Vida*. LifeWay sponsors events designed primarily for African-American churches including ALPHA for pastors, Transformational Church Conferences, BETA for education leaders, I'm the Man Conference for men, the new Purely Sisters Conference for women and the National Black Church Leadership and Family Conference. CRD also produces an urban Sunday School curriculum called YOU, which was chosen by the SBC's National African American Fellowship as its official adult curriculum. Additionally, African Americans serve as directors in Customer Service and Church Partnerships areas and in leadership roles as editors and managers in other areas of LifeWay.

Out of the Resources Division, LifeWay's B&H Publishing imprint publishes or licenses products in over 35 languages with nearly 1,000 resources in languages other than English. B&H is the largest commercial publisher of Spanish Bibles in the world and won 6 SEPA awards in 2015 (SEPA is the Spanish branch of ECPA), and was voted Publisher of the Year for the past two years.

The *RVR1960 Holman Study Bible* and *RVR1960 Fisher of Men Bible* continue to be received well as tools to focus the church on evangelism, discipleship, and ministry. The Portuguese version released in Brazil along with various other devotional and reference works in Spanish continue to aid the churches in



Latin America. We also published Dr. Díaz-Pabón's *Secretos de Fe* (Faith Secrets) book, B&H Global's first original book in Spanish.

LifeWay's Retail division has a mission to see lives transformed by the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Because of our mission, our goal is to provide resources and services that are accessible and relevant to the diverse communities and customers that we serve across the country.

We carry hundreds of products for churches and individuals of different ethnicities. Specifically, we carry over 4,000 Spanish language products in our store assortment. A well-identified and carefully selected section for Spanish language products is found in most stores, appropriately sized for the cultural makeup of the community they serve. Stores also carry products by and of particular interest to African-American churches and members. For example, many of our stores carry LifeWay's urban Sunday School curriculum called "YOU".

The Retail division has buyers dedicated to selecting ethnic merchandise and intentionally integrates products for all audiences into promotional catalogs, including Spanish language product, to introduce a broad selection of resources and services that meet the needs of our ethnic customers.

We are proud to passionately equip diverse communities across the country, meeting unique needs for one singular mission.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCE:

3. What has LifeWay Christian Resources implemented to assist SBC churches with training and equipping people with mental health challenges and how will LifeWay Christian Resources continue to seek ways to work in cooperation with SBC entities and others to address the severe challenges imposed by mental illness?

LifeWay takes seriously the opportunity to provide a variety of resources to assist individuals and churches in ministering to persons in our churches and communities who suffer with mental health challenges. The following is a sample list of those materials available from LifeWay.

LifeWay Mental Health Resources

(not an exhaustive list)

- "Ministry in the Face of Mental Illness"
 - Special focus lesson in *Bible Studies for Life*: September, 2015
 - Released online at LifeWay.com: January 2015
 - <http://blog.lifeway.com/biblestudiesforlife/free-bonus-session-ministry-in-the-face-of-mental-illness/>
- *Beyond the Shadows: Discover Hope for Overcoming Depression*
 - An eight-session Bible study that walks participants through the experiences, feelings, and struggles common to depression. Participants in the study are encouraged to find healing in the context of a caring, biblical community.
- *Recovering from the Losses of Life*

- A Bible study that offers insightful principles from God's Word to help persons through the grieving process.
- *The Search for Significance: Build Your Self-Worth on God's Truth*
 - An eight-session, small group Bible study that delivers practical learning activities to help believers in Jesus Christ apply God's truth and gain a real sense of self-worth.
- *Making Peace with Your Past*
 - A support group study that offers practical, biblically-based guidance to lead adults to identify, understand, and come to terms with the feelings and problems of growing up in a dysfunctional family.
- *A Trusted Friend*
 - A resource that helps participants develop lay counseling skills such as having a heart of compassion, learning to listen more than talk, and to identify the root of the problem. Participants will learn to use the Bible and prayer appropriately in counseling sessions.
- *What You Need to Know About Healing*
 - Careful research, biblical narratives, and personal stories of physical and spiritual healing bring to light the wisdom in trusting God to bring hope and purpose into whatever situation a person may face.
- *Verbal and Emotional Abuse*
 - Learn biblical truths and practical how to's for stopping the pain of abuse and restoring peace in all your relationships.
- *Melissa: A Father's Lessons from a Daughter's Suicide*
 - Frank Page, President and CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, learned this firsthand when he and his wife Dayle lost their daughter, Melissa, to suicide in 2009. Writing from personal experience, he examines the biblical truths that carried him through such a painful time and that minister to him on dark days still known to come around.
- *Anxiety Cure*
 - Panic anxiety is the number one mental health problem for women and second only to drug abuse among men. *The Anxiety Cure* provides proven, natural strategies for overcoming panic disorder and finding an emotional balance in today's fast-paced world.
- *Experiencing Grief*
 - A brief but powerful book that will help lead readers out of their grief experience through five stages of grief. At the end of the journey is peace and a seasoned, more mature faith.
- *Counseling the Hard Cases*
 - Editors Stuart Scott and Heath Lambert use the true stories of real patients to show how the truths of God's Word can be released to bring help, hope, and healing into the lives of those who struggle with some of the most difficult psychiatric diagnoses.
- *The Minirth Guide for Christian Counselors*
 - A comprehensive resource for those who counsel from the Scriptures from a leading Christian counselor.
- *Steps: Gospel-Centered Recovery*



- This study from The Village Church offers a twelve-session discipleship process that will take people to the root of sin and suffering in order to embrace the freedom found only in Christ's redemption.
- LifeWay Christian Stores stock multiple mental health related products including books, pamphlets, and three resources in Spanish. An additional forty-five products are available for special order.

QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO LIFEWAY CHRISTIAN RESOURCES

4. What has proven to be LifeWay Christian Resources' most reliable metric indicating future accomplishments of, or challenges to LifeWay, and why is that metric the one LifeWay Christian Resources believes is most important to watch?

There is an almost endless array of critical metrics necessary for an international ministry like LifeWay to constantly gather, analyze and respond to. However, one of the most meaningful for LifeWay is the number of churches we are reaching and how deeply we are reaching into each church.

5. Please give a progress report on the sale of LifeWay Christian Resources' properties located in downtown Nashville, Tennessee. Please include next steps and long term plans for office space and distribution.

LifeWay completed the sale of its 14.5-acre campus in downtown Nashville in November, 2015 to Southwest Value Partners, a private real estate investment firm based in San Diego. LifeWay continues to occupy a portion of the campus over the near term until it determines the permanent location of its corporate headquarters.

In January, 2016, LifeWay announced signing a purchase agreement for 2.7 acres in downtown Nashville for the new 250,000 square foot corporate headquarters. The location is part of Capitol View, a new mixed-use, urban development five blocks north of LifeWay's present campus.

LifeWay will conduct appropriate due diligence, and, if all goes well, is hopeful of moving into the new facility late in 2017 or early 2018.

6. Please give a status report for LifeWay Christian Resources' stores. Please include near and long term projections for LifeWay stores.

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 a new item that we carry.

Ministry remains the Retail division's primary purpose. We remain highly sensitive to ongoing in-store ministry opportunities.

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.

7. What impact does online publishing and online commerce have upon near and long term feasibility of LifeWay stores?

Online commerce is having a major influence on all brick-and-mortar retail businesses, including LifeWay Christian Stores. However, our leadership and staff are continuously and aggressively addressing those challenges by better understanding our customer base, offering Christian products tailored to our customers, and providing unparalleled customer service and ministry.