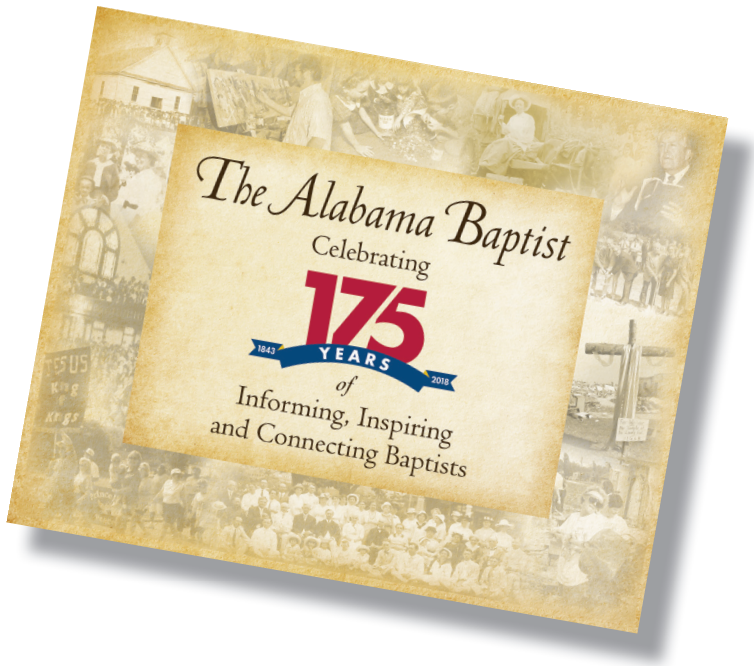
Storied history of 'unbroken ministry'



First-ever history book of *The Alabama Baptist* now available for pre-order

After 175 years of continuous ministry, the first book devoted to the history of *The Alabama Baptist* newspaper will be published in a four-color fully illustrated book to be released September 2017.

"It is unusual for a weekly publication to have an unbroken ministry for 175 years," observed Bob Terry, editor of *The Alabama Baptist*. "Only the blessings of God, the hard work of those associated with the paper and the graciousness of Alabama Baptists made this possible."

'Instrument of great power'

In 1843 when the paper was first published in Marion, Alabama Baptists described the new publication through a resolution as "an instrument of great power in promotion of the best interests of the denomination and in advancing the cause of Christ at large."

At the same meeting messengers voted that "*The Alabama Baptist* be employed by the officer of this convention as the organ through which they shall confer with the churches connected with this body."

From that time to this, *The Alabama Baptist* and the Alabama Baptist State Convention have worked together for the benefit of cooperating churches and the convention itself.

While covering wars, political upheaval, depression, cultural changes, civil rights, technology shifts and more, *The Alabama Baptist* has served its readers with the three-fold mission of informing for perspective and understanding, inspiring for growth as Christian disciples and connecting Baptists for missions and ministry.

Focus on stories

Each week the paper reports events from the world of religion, provides practical helps for everyday problems, examines moral and ethical issues from a biblical perspective, shares resources for Christian living, undergirds what Baptists do together and imparts information of God's work through Baptists at home and around the world.

Now that storied history of this valuable ministry will be told in a 208-page coffee table style book. Its design is to focus on the stories of Alabama Baptists with the history of the publication itself weaved into the stories.

Elizabeth Wells, retired archivist for Samford University and librarian for its Special Collection and Archives department in Birmingham, is currently writing this intriguing history. Wells has written two institutional history books and authored numerous historical articles. Interestingly, her master's thesis at Auburn University was about the founding of *The Alabama Baptist*.

"I love the stories of *The Alabama Baptist*," Wells said. "I have read them for years and now I get to share them with everyone through this first book devoted to the paper's history."

The working title of the new book is "The Alabama Baptist: Celebrating 175 Years of Informing, Inspiring and Connecting Baptists." It will be released in hardback and paperback versions.

Pre-orders are already being received.

Terry said, "Pre-orders guide us in knowing how many books to publish. We don't want to end up with extra copies in a warehouse or overprint hardback versions when Baptists want the paperback edition."

Free shipping

Cost of the book is $34.95 in hardback and $24.95 in paperback.

To encourage pre-orders, free shipping and handling (a $7 value) is being offered until Dec. 24.

"I have read the drafts of the early chapters," Terry said. "Anyone interested in what God has done through Baptists in Alabama and around the world will find this an exciting read." (*TAB*)

Wells to author *TAB* history

WELLS

A veteran historian, Elizabeth Wells is a retired archivist for Samford University and librarian for its Special Collection and Archives department in Birmingham.

Wells served as chair of the department for 38 years. In 2013 she received the Marvin Yeomans Whiting Award from the Society of Alabama Archivists for significant contributions to the preservation and dissemination of local history in Alabama.

She also received the Virginia Hamilton Award by the Alabama Historical Association in 2015 for her contributions in promoting Alabama history.

Wells holds a bachelor's degree from Judson College, a master's degree in history from Auburn University and a master's degree in library science from the University of Alabama. (*TAB*)

Order Form: *The Alabama Baptist:* 175 Years

To order your book simply *fill out the form below and mail to: The Alabama Baptist 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209. You also may call* ***1-800-803-5201*** *or order online at* ***www.thealabamabaptist.org****.*

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