

Baptist Progress

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SCHEDULE—BMA OF AMERICA MEETING APRIL 25-27, 2016—GATLINBURG CONVENTION CENTER GATLINBURG, TENNESSEE WITH SPECIAL GUESTS JOHNNY HUNT AND LARNELLE HARRIS

MONDAY, APRIL 25

7:00 p.m. – Worship Service / President's Message
(Dr. Jason Aultman)

TUESDAY, APRIL 26

8:00 a.m. – WMA, Brotherhood

9:30 a.m. – Committee Meetings

11:00 a.m. – Breakout Sessions

Dr. Mark Livingston: *How to Deliver Transformational Teaching*
Dr. Mike Smith: *How to resolve conflict within the Church*
Kurt Hetherington: *How to Protect Your Church From a Lawsuit*
Paul Bearfield: *Small Churches Can Make a Big Difference*

12:00 p.m. – Lunch

12:15 p.m. – Minister's Wives & Widows Lunch (Hosted by WMA)

2:00 p.m. – General Session

3:30 p.m. – Breakout

Jerene Reddin: *The Importance of Women in Ministry*
Dr. Mike Smith: *How to resolve conflict within the Church*
Dr. Mark Livingston: *How to Deliver Transformational Teaching*
Bryan Atwood: *How to Recruit and Keep Volunteers*

4:30 p.m. – Dinner

7:00 p.m. – Worship Service / Annual Message (Jeff Swart)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27

9:00 a.m. – General Session

11:00 a.m. – Breakout Sessions

Kurt Hetherington: *How to Protect Your Church From a Lawsuit*
Paul Bearfield: *Small Churches Can Make a Big Difference*
Jerene Reddin: *The Importance of Women in Ministry*
Bryan Atwood: *How to Recruit and Keep Volunteers*

12:00 p.m. – Lunch

2:00 p.m. – General Session

3:00 p.m. – Larnelle Harris Concert

5:00 p.m. – Dinner

7:00 p.m. – General Session (Mission's Report)
Commissioning Service
Johnny Hunt, Guest Speaker



BMA
BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION AMERICA

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Next Ministry Connection Workshop, May 14

By **JERRY FULTON**

Baptist Progress has several exciting things on the horizon, the next one being our third Ministry Connection Workshop. The workshop, *Making the Most of Media, Design and Communication* will be held at Farley Street Baptist Church in Waxahachie, from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, May 14. Farley Street Baptist Church is located at 1116 Brown Street in Waxahachie. Brandon Cox, author of *Rewired*, editor of Pastors.com and pastor of Grace Hills, Bentonville, Arkansas will facilitate the meeting. To register, go to <http://www.baptistprogress.org/registration.html> or call 972-923-0756.

OTHER SCHEDULED MINISTRY CONNECTION WORKSHOPS AND MINISTRY CONNECTION CONFERENCE

Baptist Progress has other workshops scheduled as follows:

- 1. MOBILIZING PEOPLE FOR MINISTRY**
When: Thursday, July 21, 2016; 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Where: BMA of Texas Building, 632 Farley Street, Waxahachie
Who: Dr. Blanton Feaster, education pastor, Farley Street Baptist Church, Waxahachie
- 2. TRANSITIONING TO SMALL GROUPS**
When: Thursday, Sept. 22, 2016; 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Where: BMA of Texas Building, 632 Farley Street, Waxahachie
Who: Dr. Blanton Feaster, education pastor, Farley Street Baptist Church, Waxahachie
- 3. GENERATIONS (Just Added)**
When: Thursday, Oct. 20, 2016; 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Where: BMA of Texas Building, 632 Farley Street, Waxahachie
Who: Dr. Blanton Feaster, education pastor, Farley Street Baptist Church, Waxahachie
- 4. MINISTRY CONNECTION CONFERENCE**
When: Monday, Nov. 14, 2016; 2 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Where: Farley Street Baptist Church, 1116 Brown Street, Waxahachie
Who: Pastor Jonathan Falwell, Pastor Jerry Jolly, Dr. John Bisagno, Brian Free & Assurance

WEBSITE BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE

Baptist Progress can build your church's website and maintain it for a fraction of the cost you would pay anywhere else. To view samples, visit adbcennis.org and nbbcferris.com. Call 972-923-0756 for pricing.

INTERIM PASTOR TRAINING AND RESUME SERVICE, COMING SOON

Baptist Progress will soon provide training for those who wish to serve as interim pastors. If you are interested in serving as an interim pastor and would like to take part in the training, please notify me at 972-923-0756 or editor@baptistprogress.org.

If you are seeking a pastor or church staff position, please mail your resume to *Baptist Progress*, P.O. Box 2085, Waxahachie, Texas 75168 or email it to editor@baptistprogress.org.

If your church is seeking an interim pastor, pastor or church staff, contact Editor Jerry Fulton at the phone number or email the address above.



▲ Jerry Fulton

THANK YOU

Thanks to First, Palmer and Pastor Paul Gauntt for allowing me to present a concert earlier this month, and for their CD purchases with all proceeds going to *Baptist Progress*.

I also look forward to preaching during the morning service and presenting during the evening service at Mountain Home, Jacksboro, where Bro. Frank Hefner is the pastor May 1.

I am available to present concerts and/or preach with all offerings going to *Baptist Progress*. Just give me a call at 972-923-0756 or email editor@baptistprogress.org.



What Happens To Your Gift to the BMA Foundation?

All gifts to the Foundation, except those designated for operating expenses, are placed in an endowment fund and invested for one or more of the BMA departments or agencies as specified by the donor. Income from the investments provides supplemental funding for those ministries until the Lord returns. Gifts of cash should be mailed to P.O. Box 1188, Conway, Arkansas 72033. Call the Foundation office at 501-329-6891 for more information on other ways to give.



BMA of America News

ABS STUDENT MINISTRIES SFA

Spring Semester Activity Report—March 2016

The goals of the ABS Student Ministry at Stephen F Austin State University are the following:

- To share the gospel message with the students of SFA on a daily basis.
- To work with those who express interest in the gospel but who aren't ready to accept Jesus Christ.
- To make disciples who are committed to living for Christ, sharing their faith, and discipling other believers.
- We are also committed to being part of the Baptist Missionary Association through church membership, involvement, mission trips, and supporter encouragement visits.

Once students returned for the Fall Semester 2015 we began an aggressive strategy of (a) sharing the gospel message to a broad audience, (b) be actively involved with students who expressed interest in spiritual matters, and (c) pouring ourselves into a core group of disciples who have expressed a desire to follow Christ as disciples and to reproduce themselves spiritually by sharing their faith and discipling other believers.

- Our strategy wasn't designed by a New York Marketing firm, but it was laid out in the Scriptures. It is the strategy commanded by Jesus Christ and followed by the apostle Paul and the group of early Christians who "turned the world upside down".
 - » Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (Matt. 28:19)
 - » and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. (2 Tim 2:2).
- I share my faith on a one-on-one basis with students on a daily basis. The men in the core group that I am discipling are trained to do likewise. They actively look for opportunities to witness. Through all of this, hundreds of students will hear the gospel over the course of the current school year.
- On Mondays, we have a weekly dinner and Bible Study at the ABS house that is strategically located right across the street from the campus. Through the fall we had about 19 students involved in these Bible studies. I consider that we have a core group of 11 men in the ministry. Out of this, I have a group of five men who are particularly responsive to the call.

Going into the Spring Semester 2016 we focused on several new initiatives to further this ministry in the long-term.

- The first initiative that we have been focusing on is to renovate and transform our facility into an attractive place where we can have both large group

and small group gatherings occurring on the same night. We also want to have a place where students feel comfortable hanging out between classes. We are doing all of this to more effectively reach students with the life changing message of Jesus Christ.

» Seventy-five members of a local church (Kelty's First Baptist, Lufkin) came to ABS for a work day. Many projects were started and are still underway. Extensive renovations and improvements to our facility were started. Many of the volunteers who attended the workday have spent countless additional hours working on the facility. The renovations are still underway. Nevertheless, it is obvious that our facility has been significantly upgraded and is more suitable for having small group Bible studies, large group meetings, meals, and providing a place for students to hang out.

» I attended the Houston/Anderson county Mission Rally and they donated paper products and food items. One church from their association, Sheridan Terrace, Palestine, made a special trip to visit the ABS. Barbara Brown a member from their church is a long time ABS alumni from 1976. They were very excited about all the upgrades and progress of the facility. They brought love gifts from the church and WMA.

- Our second major initiative involves using our facility in new ways that we couldn't easily do prior to the improvements. We will be kicking off a new Monday format that involves meeting together as a large group for a time of worship through music and signing, as well as a time of general encouragement from the word of God. We will follow this with small group Bible studies where we are expecting significant spiritual growth to occur. Finally, we will all meet together for a time of fellowship over a meal. We are extremely excited about this and expect the Lord to do amazing things. We are having our initial kick off of this on Monday April 4th. However, we will be aggressively promoting it through the end of the semester.

We are also continuing our long standing commitment to general outreaches to the student body at SFA. There are two outreaches that I will mention.

- We continue to see our prayer answered that God would open doors for the gospel at SFA. Last fall, the ABS was invited to participate in the Fall SFA Wellness Fair. We were invited back to participate in the Spring SFA Wellness Fair. The ABS was specifically asked to represent the Spiritual side of wellness. Once again, this gave us the opportunity to

share the Gospel with many students and explain how the Bible had the answer to all of life's problems.

» More than 400 SFA students attended the Health Fair.

» We handed out pamphlets on how to handle problems Biblically. Pastor Jerry Browning from one of our supporting BMA churches once again assist us at the Wellness fair. As Pastor of Biblical Counseling and Outreach at Kelty's First Baptist in Lufkin Texas, and as a trainer of Nouthetic Biblical Counselors, he was especially well suited to address how the Bible and Jesus Christ truly are the answer to all of life's problems. He made a convincing case that there is no problem too big for Jesus Christ.

» Over 50 SFA students filled out spiritual surveys. Twenty-seven of these students indicated that they were interested in participating in small group Bible studies. Now that Spring Break is over, we are planning on starting these Bible studies Monday April 4th.

- We will have 50 SFA student on the ABS campus April 9th for the Big Serve Event. Each student who attends will be invited to the new Bible studies.

As exciting and rewarding it is to see God use the ABS ministry at SFA, I would be remiss not to mention that at it's very heart, it is still all about ministry. I want to close by giving a more personal example of how we were able to minister in the life of a believing student here at SFA.

As of this Spring, I have been ministering at the ABS ministry at SFA for 16 years. It has not always been easy. In fact, it has sometimes been downright tough. However, it is crystal clear to me, and overwhelmingly evident that God's hand of blessing is on this ministry in a very special manner. I have seen countless lives touched by the transforming power of the gospel. The joy that this gives me and Katie, and the joy that I expect to have on the day when I meet Jesus face to face is what keeps me going.

Once again this year, it is very exciting and rewarding to see God moving in a powerful way through the ABS ministry. We have great anticipation of what amazing things He is going to do next. I count it a tremendous privilege to be intimately involved in this ministry. This makes me all the more grateful to the Lord for all of the generous support that you – our supporting churches, supporting church members, and friends of the ministry – have provided. I am keenly aware that none of this is possible without the generous support of our partners in ministry. So I sincerely thank all of you with much gratitude.

Your fellow servant of our Lord Jesus Christ,
John Shackelford



Ministry Tip

What a pastor can learn from a newspaper reporter

By **PAUL GAUNTT**

Baptist Progress Correspondent

From 2006-2015, I found myself in a 9-year sabbatical from full time ministry. I spent five of those years serving as a reporter/staff writer for the *Waxahachie Daily Light*. There was no doubt that it was in God's plan for me, but I had no way of knowing what the benefits would be until later.

The job was exhilarating—and there was never a need for my boss, editor Neal White to pat me on the back and give me an “atta boy”—the accolades came simply when I arrived in the mornings to help proof the copy of that day's edition, only to often find my article somewhere on the front page. Just being on the front page was good enough, but when it was above the “center line” which made it visible on the newsstand, there was no greater reward.

We would revel in our victory for about 30 seconds—then it was time to dash out the door and chase down stories for the new day.

Feature stories were my favorites—stories about motor scooter meets, antique car shows, a preacher-turned-tattoo parlor proprietor; an interview with the funeral home owner, in whose possession was the white Cadillac hearse that transported JFK's body from Parkland Hospital to Love Field on that fateful day, Nov. 22, 1963; and a feature story on Joseph, the resident church cat of Waxahachie's St. Joseph Catholic Church—and later, a tribute to Joseph in his passing—and hundreds more.

One observation about newspaper reporting: when a reporter does a feature story, the people of the story are on a pedestal—we make them the center of the universe,

if only for a few moments. Then their story is chronicled to thousands of readers. I've been reminded through this experience, that an essential key to making friends is to always make the other person feel they are the most important person on earth -- or at least in the room.

Our beloved president of Jacksonville College from 1961-1986, the late Curtis M. Carroll, in my opinion, honed that skill to near perfection. He had an uncanny way of making people feel important—and one knew that it was without pretense.

If that skill is good for a reporter or a college president, rest assured the Kingdom of Christ be enhanced when we pastors adopt the practice. I'm afraid we pastors have been guilty of repelling people because we come across like egotistical, stand-up comics, or a second-rate salesman. How many people have been turned off of becoming involved in church because they felt coerced into it by a self-absorbed preacher virtually devoid of people skills?

But when we approach people with a big smile, and an unpretentious interest in their lives, where they're from, what their interests and hobbies are, what their background is, and their thoughts on parenthood or grandparenthood, we are placing them on a pedestal for the moment—making them feel they are the most important person in the world. But we do that because we genuinely love souls—not for the motive of bolstering our membership roll, or carving another notch in our ministerial gun handle.

Here are a few suggestions for meeting and mixing with people.

1. **Omit your own life's story, rehearsed, cliched quips and stale jokes.**
2. **Be prepared with a list of simple questions to ask them—about them, signaling to them that you are genuinely interested in them.**
3. **Listen to them.** Reject the temptation to just glare at them while they talk, but all the while you are rehearsing your own retort in order to “one-up” them. Don't make the visit about you—make it about them.
4. **Make sure you are not slouchy looking, that you smell good, and don't have bad breath.**
5. **Don't be loud and boisterous.**
6. **Stay away from politics.**
7. **Find an open door to talk about Jesus.** But failure to heed No. 1-6, may cause you to blow your chance to talk about the very Person Whom you are seeking to represent.

“A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.”
Proverbs 18:24

Paul Gauntt is the pastor of First, Palmer. He served for a number of years as the BMA of Texas Department of Church Ministries director. He has served several churches as pastor, and is a correspondent and featured article writer for Baptist Progress. Contact him at pop.gauntt@gmail.com.



Filled to the brim

Rosewood, Gilmer recently completed a six week event of collecting paper goods for Texas Baptist Home for Children. The goal was set to fill the church bus with paper products. The GMA made promotional posters for the campaign and posted these around the church campus. The youth and other members loaded the supplies for delivery. The bus was filled to the brim. TBHC President Eddie Marsh related the annual event by the Rosewood congregation has saved the Home several thousand dollars over the years.



Church Health

Authentic Values

By LARRY BARKER

Much has been said and written about values. Are our values preferences or practices? In Acts 2:42-47 we are given the core values of the early church as teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. They were not just preferences but daily practices. We know this because we are told they “devoted themselves” to these values. The passage does not say they sat around discussing or debating them but, rather, they were the daily practices of their lives.

In his book *Value Driven Leadership*, Aubrey Malphurs describes values as either “actual” or “aspirational.” Is there a difference? James 2:18 makes a clear distinction between the two in stating, “But someone will say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ Show me your faith without works, and I will show you faith from my works.” James 1:22 states, “But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” Malphurs describes actual and aspirational values in the following ways:

First, Actual Values are the beliefs we own and act on daily. These values come from inside of you and are who you are. It is authentic because they exist now, in the present, and describe what is true about you right now. Actual values are not just preferences but what you practice daily. When you share your actual values people around you shake their heads in affirmation because they see it and agree with you.

Second, Aspirational Values are beliefs you do not currently own. You know you should own them but you are not quite there yet. Aspirational values deal with what should be, not necessarily what actually is. These are values we would like to adopt such as being evangelistic. We desire to reach people with the gospel, but the truth is, we are really not that evangelistic; not yet. We aspire to be!

With these two descriptions of values by Dr. Malphurs, allow me to share a couple of observations we need to be aware of about values.

Our Biblical values will be tested! For example, it is one thing to say we value loving people but we must realize that unconditional love can be put to the test daily. I John makes this very clear, “If any one says, ‘I love God,’ yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For the person who does not love his brother he has seen cannot love the God he has not seen.”

Are Biblical truths our values or our goals? We say we are burdened for the lost but what are we personally doing to reach them? It is wonderful to have the goal of reaching the world for Christ but what daily practices are we involved in that are helping us in that direction? The results will never change if we do not change our daily practices. What will we begin doing differently?

Are Biblical truths our actual practices or just aspirational preferences? Jesus said that “men ought always to pray” but how much time are we actually spending in prayer?



We say we value the word of God and should study it daily but is it our daily practice to have a quiet time in the word with our Lord? For our results to change, our daily practices must change also.

You cannot fake biblical values! What you really value always shows up! If you really believe in the importance of sharing the gospel with people far from God, then you are constantly building relationships and bridges to them. You do not just talk about what you are going to do but you actually practice what you preach. Matthew 6:21 says it well, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Make sure your values are genuine and authentic! Be honest about it! At our church I like to say, “We want to be the friendliest church in the world!” I never say, “We are the friendliest church in the world, state, or even our city!” There is nothing wrong with openly admitting what goals you would like to adopt without claiming you have arrived. You cannot intellectualize values nor can you rationalize them.

Malphurs challenges us to examine our values to determine whether they are actual or aspirational. You can determine this by whether they are verbalized preferences and goals or are actual daily practices. Here are some excellent questions to ask about ourselves and our ministries: What values or beliefs should we adopt? What values and beliefs have we adopted? What would those looking in from the outside say we value? What are our real values? What key value ingredients are missing?

This is where many churches get in trouble and struggle

because they resist what they need most; a complete or partial transition from one set of values to another. Do we value keeping members happy or do we value reaching our neighbors with the gospel? Do we value our traditions or do we value reaching our children and grandchildren with the gospel? Do we value our personal preferences or being culturally relevant while remaining biblically sound?

Realize that conflict in churches often arises from differing values. Some value safety, comfort and routine. Others value risk, sacrifice, and shaking things up. Every church must decide what they really value and if those values are not consistent with God’s mission for His church they must be willing to do whatever is necessary to be obedient to His plan for His church. Values can be measured by what our calendars contain and by our checkbooks.

Healthy churches are authentic about what they value and are willing to change to make sure God’s values are genuinely theirs!

Larry Barker is the pastor of Cornerstone, Jacksonville. He also serves as the operations director for North American Missions. For more information or to contact him, visit www.bmamissions.org.





From your state missionaries

By **HEITH MITCHELL**
BMA Texas Missions Director

THE REFUGE MISSION, TERRELL – DARREN LEMONS

We have several families visiting our church and several people in our body that need a relationship with Jesus Christ. Please pray for these families and individuals. Also, we are having a huge outreach event with the city where we will hold services at the park and will be hosting a baby changing station and a cell phone charging station. There will be around 15,000 people at this two day event. Pray that we can share God's love and his message with many people. Also, we are currently in need of a portable baptistry. Currently we have no baptistry and are in desperate needs of some support to purchase this very needed ministry item. Thank you all for your prayers and support.



▲ **Darren Lemons**

THE CHURCH AT VALLEY RANCH MISSION, PORTER - GARY SOUTHARD

We were very excited as we planned for our preview service to be held April 3. We hand delivered 250 private invitations and spent many hours praying for God to bless. Our goal was to have at least 75 people attend. Once there we would give each one a survey card asking them to give us feedback on what they liked the most and what they liked the least. Sunday April 3, we had 78 in attendance! God answered our prayers plus three! We also collected 21 survey cards full of great ideas and encouraging words. We plan to work on these over the next few



▲ **Gary Southard**



▲ **Photos of the April preview service at Valley Ranch**

months in preparing for our launch service in September. Thank you everyone who prayed for our preview



service. We could not have done it without your support and prayers!

JOURNEY COMMUNITY MISSION, ALLEN – CECIL LINKE

Journey continues to learn that reaching and discipling our community takes a great deal of intentional effort and understanding. We offer free, high quality, pictures of families and kids during the city's Easter event the week before Easter. During the event we connect



▲ **Cecil Linke**

with every family that comes through and has a picture made. We teach our people to naturally engage those families in conversation and then extend them an invite to our Easter service the following week. Along with the invite, we also mention that there will be an egg hunt for kids immediately after the morning service. Our thought was that people would come to church and then take their kids over to the egg hunt. We learned this was a huge jump for some families when 5 Asian families showed up just for the egg hunt. This was not a problem – we loved having them and engaged them briefly in conversation. Next time we want to be more prepared for any of our activities. We learned we need another piece to offer people who may want to participate in a community event you are hosting but still not ready to walk into a church gathering!



▲ **Pictures from Journey's Easter outreach Event** ▶



LIFE CHANGE MISSION, LINDALE – DEWEY DAVIDSON RICK SYDNOR TOBY GOODMAN

We are seeing people saved. Praise the Lord! We met at a restaurant, this month, with 25 people. We sang and preached.



▲ **Rick Sydnor**



▲ **Dewey Davidson**

Several guests were there. One guest in restaurant heard us and got saved. We met with Spanish men looking for work and three got saved. We are planning on doing it again this week. We went to Costa Rica with 36 people and 300 people were saved. We are planning lots of upcoming outreach. We are meeting in a Lindale park April 17 with our band, food, and preaching. We are going to Spanish hangouts in Lindale and sharing the gospel. We are taking our team to Zambia on May 30. In June, we are planning a football camp in Lindale with several NFL players. The camp will be repeated on the Jacksonville College Campus. Please pray that we can find a weekly meeting space that meets our needs. Also pray that Toby and his family can find an affordable place in Lindale.



▲ **Toby Goodman**

RESONATE MISSION, HUTTO – WILL HUTCHINSON

Easter Services with the Resonate Mission Family



▲ **Will Hutchinson**



▲ **Easter Services with the Resonate Mission Family**

Heith Mitchell is the director of BMA of Texas Missions. Contact him at hmitchell@bmatexas.org or 972-923-0757. Visit www.bmatexasmissions.org.



Second Ministry Connection Workshop conducted



By **JERRY FULTON**

Baptist Progress Editor

Pastors and church staff from Garland, Gilmer, Glenn Heights, Waxahachie, and Mineola attended the second Ministry Connection Workshop: *How to Start*



▲ Alan Rogers

Ministries to Those with Hurts, Habits and Hang-ups conducted at the BMA of Texas Building in Waxahachie March 31. Hosted by *Baptist Progress*, Alan Rogers, recovery and care pastor and former president of Texas Baptist Home for Children, was the facilitator.

When Rogers joined the staff at The Avenue Church in Waxahachie—a church that averages 3,400—four years ago, the church had exploded with growth, but had also encountered a problem along the way. Scores of people were joining the church's life groups who had hurts, habits and hang-ups, and the church was uncertain as to how to minister to those individuals.

Rogers was assigned the task of starting ministries to those experiencing problems with co-dependency, anger, guilt, gambling, alcohol, drugs, pornography, divorce, grief and other hurts, habits and hang-ups. After investigating several ministries, Rogers and The Avenue Church finally decided on *Celebrate Recovery*. The choice of *Celebrate Recovery* was made because of the ministry's name recognition,

available support, already prepared curriculum as well as other resources.

Celebrate Recovery was started by John Baker in California. Using the same 12 steps as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Baker made the program Christ-centered and incorporated the Beatitudes. Other than Christ-centeredness, *Celebrate Recovery* distinguishes itself from AA in two steps that specifically point to not just a higher power, but the God of the Bible as being the source to Whom one must turn for solutions.

Each week at The Avenue, *Celebrate Recovery* begins with a large group meeting. Led by an eight or nine peace band, attendees worship. One of 25 lessons is taught one week, with testimonies shared the next on an alternating schedule. Following worship, men and women separate into gender specific groups for share time and 12 step classes. Participants also are assigned accountability partners.

Celebration Station, for those first grade to fifth grade with hurts, habits and hang-ups; *Embrace Grace*, a ministry to those with unexpected pregnancies; *DivorceCare*, for those who have experienced divorce; and *GriefShare*, for those who have lost a loved one, are other ministries made available by The Avenue.

The next Ministry Connection Workshop: *Making the Most of Media, Design and Communication*, will be conducted at Farley Street Baptist Church in Waxahachie, from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. May 14. Register at <http://www.baptistprogress.org/registration.html> or call 972-923-0756.

Enjoy the highlights of the 2016 BMA National Meeting!

BMA Productions will broadcast portions of the 2016 Baptist Missionary Association of America National Meeting from Gatlinburg, Tennessee, live via online video April 25-27. Viewers may access content by navigating to bmalife.com/tv during the following times:

Monday, April 25, 7 p.m. - First General Session (President's Message)

Tuesday, April 26, 7 p.m. - Third General Session (Annual Message)

Wednesday, April 27, 7 p.m. - Sixth General Session (Missions Commissioning & Johnny Hunt)

Come see and experience Daniel Springs

By **JOHNATHAN WILSON**

DiscipleGuide Director of Marketing

Thanks to the dedication of churches, youth groups and college ministries, the following improvements and enhancements to Daniel Springs have been made over the past few months. Several open-air tabernacles have been remodeled. The main tabernacle interior drop ceiling was raised, painted and insulated and new lighting was installed, all of which will keep everyone cooler and reduce energy costs. The dining area received new paint on the inside and outside, and the popular canteen area was painted as well. All work was done to make sure every camp attendee has the best experience possible.

In 2015, Daniel Springs was blessed to have a summer work staff of twenty students. The 2016 goal of thirty students is almost complete. All female staff positions have been filled; however, male staff positions are still available. If you are interested or know someone who is, applications can be found at danielspringscamp.com. You can also contact Jason Prewitt at 903-685-2433.

Registration for camp is open with many options to choose from. Listed below are the 2016 Summer Camp experience options:

June 7-10 - Galilean

June 14-17- GMA

June 21-24 -Student Camp I (7th grade-College)

June 28-July 1 -PreTeen I (4th-6th grades)

July 12-15 -PreTeen II (4th-6th grades)

July 19-22 -Ark-La-Tex Family Camp

July 26-29- Student Camp II (7th grade-College)

Schedule your camp experience today. For more information and to register your church, visit danielspringscamp.com or call 903-685-2433.



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Date: Friday, April 29th

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Location:

Texas Baptist Home

629 Farley Street

Waxahachie, TX 75165

RSVP to Kristen Lindsey at klindsey@tbhc.org



MONEY WISE

BAPTIST MISSIONARY
BMLA
LOAN ASSOCIATION

Changing society

By JERRY BURNAMAN

We live in a rapidly changing society. There are three observations about change: (1) Change occurs whether we like it or not, (2) It comes much faster than we anticipate, and (3) It usually comes in a way that we least expect it.

I read recently about one change that is very difficult for me accept. In the next decade we will have Personal Robot Assistants to help us in the daily routine of living. These “bots” will converse with you and guide you in making wise decisions.

An example would be about purchasing a new home. You have a family of four: wife, husband and two children. You ask yourself some questions: Where is a good location for my dream home? Next to a reputable elementary school? Perhaps a few miles away would be cheaper.

You decide to confide with your Robotic Assistant and it asks you a series of questions.

“Do you desire your home to be near a school? Parks? What’s the price range? Do you want a home for two, four, or seven?”

After a back-and-forth conversation it tells you your dream home is two miles away from a reputable public school. A park and shopping center are also nearby for your convenience.

Andrew Moore, dean of the Carnegie Mellon School of Computer Science says “bots” in your phone and

computer are very possible within the next decade. “Bots won’t answer in a single sentence,” he tells tech insider. “We’ll have a dialogue with them and we’ll solve problems together.”

These “bots” won’t merely crawl the internet and give factual information about the news or weather, like Siri and Google—they will likely help us make meaningful life decisions and perform daily physical tasks for us.

Moore says we will have meaningful conversations with “bots” and they will be able to answer complicated questions using algorithms. On a day-to-day level he imagines “bots” will integrate with other automated systems so they can carry out errands.

A few companies have already previewed prototypes of automated personal assistants. Last year, New York City based Robot base unveiled a “bot” prototype that can turn out lights, manage social calendars and even read bedtime stories to kids.

Well, that’s going too far. Kids need a warm human body, a mother or dad, to read them bed time stories, and my perspective is it should be a bible based story, or at least one with good moral teachings. I don’t think a “bot” can hug a kid and say “I love you,” with the same influence a parent can.

The personal assistant service GoButler just announced

it replaced human employees with algorithm-driven “bots.” Amazon, Google, Microsoft and Apple will likely be the major players designing these advanced robotic assistants, Moore says. All four are already developing their own variations.

Yes, I understand technological advancement is necessary in areas of business and the economic world. However, I’m very concerned when it depersonalizes human relationships because having family relations and expressing love for one another is the basic fabric of godly living. Furthermore, our first priority is to have a personal relationship with our Lord and walk in love every day.

Do you want a robot to make your financial decisions? In my opinion if you need wisdom instead of asking a “bot,” ask Him who has all the wisdom. “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5).

James gives further instructions about work and finances. “Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit’; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. You ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.’” (James 4:13, 15).

The Baptist Missionary Loan Association of Texas came into existence because some godly people discerned the leadership of the Lord to help missions and churches with financial assistance to enhance their ministries.

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Just give us a call at (972) 923-0758. Or contact me at jerryburnaman@yahoo.com. It would also be a joy for me to come to your church or organization and preach and share the ministry of the BMLA of Texas.

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Jerry Burnaman is the business manager of the Baptist Missionary Loan Association. Contact him at jerryburnaman@yahoo.com or 972-923-0758.



Auxiliaries

National WMA

By SHARON COLE

The National WMA meeting is just a few days away at the Convention Center of Gatlinburg, Tennessee, April 26. President Janet Widger and the other officers have worked diligently planning the program and other necessary details to make it informative and inspirational. The meeting will be held in the Tennessee Ballroom of the Convention Center with registration at 8 a.m., and the meeting beginning at 8:30 a.m. The theme this year has been, "Going the Extra Mile."

Second Vice President Jodi Rhea, has planned an excellent program with the special speaker, Fran Hoover. If you have never been to a National WMA meeting, then make very quick plans to go and receive a great blessing. Especially if you are a pastor's wife or widow, a luncheon is being prepared to honor you for your service of standing by the man God has chosen for you. This luncheon will begin at 12:15 p.m. in the Gatlinburg Room. If you plan to attend and have not let them know, please do so today at jawidger@sbcglobal.net.

At the close of the books for auditing, Feb. 29, the corresponding secretary had received for the project, \$33,844.56. The goal is \$40,000. The project has been 80 percent for the Bible College in The Philippines, 15 percent for the Youth Fund and 5 percent for the General Fund. Money will still be received and counted at the meeting so bring your offerings and be a cheerful giver to help reach the goal.

Also at the meeting will be Jackie Ricks with her new study book: "Add To Your Faith." It is a new Bible study based on the WMA motto, 2 Peter 1:5-7. You may buy the book from her at the meeting and have her sign it, or you

can order it from her by regular mail, phone, text, or e-mail: Jackie Ricks, 612 FM 49, Mineola, TX 75773; 903-245-5715; jdricks@att.net. The price is \$10 with tax included. The price from Amazon.com or createspace.com is \$9.99 plus tax, shipping and handling. Of course, the digital version is only \$2.99 plus tax.

In "Add to Your Faith," Mrs. Ricks examines each characteristic mentioned in the passage similar to the way she treated the qualities in the virtuous woman passage in her Bible study, "Profiles of Virtue." In this book she looks at a Bible woman's life, discussing that particular virtue. Some of the women are Rahab, Anna, Deborah and Mary of Bethany.

Finally, Mrs. Ricks discusses a modern woman she has known who exemplifies the same characteristic. There will also be a worksheet packet for those who prefer not to write in their books or for those without their own book when studying in a group. Another good book Jackie has written is "People Are People," a biography of the personal life of missionaries, John and Shirley Ladd, formerly of Mexico. It tells of their journey through struggles of learning a new language, reaching unchurched people in a foreign country and reaping many blessings from serving the Lord. The price of this book is \$5.00. Please take advantage of these study books that will inspire and help you grow spiritually.

TEXAS WMA PROJECT

Total offerings to date for the Texas WMA project as of the end of March are \$3,212.48. Jacksonville College is in need of a front-end loader tractor to help in landscaping and moving heavy objects around campus. The tractor also needs

to have a mower deck to take care of the big areas on campus. You do not have to be a member of the WMA to contribute to this project. All funds are welcome and you will be blessed beyond measure. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7.

MEET OUR STATE MISSIONARIES

The Church at Valley Ranch is being led by missionary, Gary and Rhonda Southard in Porter. In a message from him he writes: "I have been a missionary for 8 years with the BMA of Texas. This is our second mission project. I was a pastor for 23 years at 4 different churches from western Oklahoma to Houston, Texas. Rhonda, my wife, is a Master Teacher for a middle school. She has been in the teaching profession for 16 years mostly teaching English. We have two grown sons, Jeremy and Matthew, and both are married. Rhonda and I have been working on this mission project since January, 2013. We are located just 30 minutes from downtown Houston in a new planned community called Valley Ranch. That is why we named this mission, The Church at Valley Ranch. The vision for our project is "Where Everything is Made Better"- Better Faith, Better Families, Better Future. Our vision verse is Hebrews 11:40, "God having provided some *better* thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Last June we started meeting in a local Elementary school the first Sunday of each month for a worship service. The other Sundays we have a group meeting for discipling and training our new leaders. We have eight families and we baptized four people so far. We plan to have our Preview Service on Sunday, April 3rd as we work toward our launch Service on September 4th. You can find us at our website: churchvalleyranch.com. You can like us on Facebook-The Church at Valley Ranch and you can watch us on youtube - The Church at Valley Ranch. Please encourage prayer for us and the new people we are reaching through The Church at Valley Ranch." (Bro. Southard can be reached by mail at 18366 Hollow Oaks Circle, Porter, TX 77365, 832-231-6506, gary@churchvalleyranch.com. If you have more questions about our state missionaries contact Missions Director: Heith Mitchell, BMAT office, 972-923-0757. If you wish to give to a Texas Missionary resource fund please send your offerings to Baptist Missionary Association of Texas, P.O. Box 73, Waxahachie, TX 75168.)

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Sharon Cole is the editor for the Texas WMA. Contact her at S9Co@aol.com. For more information on the Texas WMA, visit www.texaswma.com.



EVENTS

APRIL 25-27, 2016

67th Annual Session
of the BMA of America
Gatlinburg Convention Center
Headquarters (Hotel: Glenstone Hotel),
Gatlinburg, Tennessee

MAY 1, 2016

Jaguar Day Across Texas Annual Offering for
Jacksonville College

MAY 7, 2016

Commencement Ceremonies
105 B.J. Albritton Dr., Jacksonville College
1:30 p.m.

MAY 14, 2016

Baptist Progress
Ministry Connection Workshop,
How to Make the Most of Media,
Design & Communication
with facilitator Brandon Cox,
pastor of Grace Hills Church,
Bentonville Arkansas
& editor of Pastors.com
BMA of Texas Building,
632 Farley St., Waxahachie, Texas
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
No cost—RSVP editor@baptistprogress.org
or 972-923-0756.

MAY 17-JUNE 2, 2016

Maymester at Jacksonville College

JUNE 6-JULY 7, 2016

Summer Term I at Jacksonville College

JULY 11-AUGUST 10, 2016

Summer Term II at Jacksonville College

JULY 21, 2016

Baptist Progress
Ministry Connection Workshop,
How to Revitalize Your Church
BMA of Texas Building,
632 Farley St., Waxahachie, Texas
Time TBD
No cost—RSVP editor@baptistprogress.org
or 972-923-0756.

SEPTEMBER 22, 2016

Baptist Progress
Ministry Connection Workshop
TBD

NOVEMBER 14, 2016

Baptist Progress & Ellis County Baptist
Association Host Ministry
Connection Conference
Farley Street Baptist Church,
Waxahachie, Texas
Details TBD

NOVEMBER 15-16, 2016

BMA of Texas 116th Annual Session
Farley Street Baptist Church,
Waxahachie, Texas

PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

AVAILABLE POSITIONS

PASTOR—Sand Flat, Grand Saline is seeking a full-time or bivocational pastor. Send resume to Loyd Nations, 1950 FM 1519, Grand Saline, Texas 75140, loydeenations@gmail.com or call 903-312-8001.

YOUTH—Park Avenue, Searcy, Arkansas is seeking a youth director. Send resume to ATTN: Keith Lunceford, c/o Park Avenue Baptist Church, 211 E. Park Avenue in Searcy, Arkansas 72143 or email to keith@vuwireless.com. All resumes will be handled privately and discreetly. Please include a photograph.

NURSERY WORKER—Afton Grove, Jacksonville is seeking nursery workers. Send resume to ATTN: Nursery Committee, 360 CR 4208, Jacksonville, Texas 75766, aftongrovebaptistchurch@gmail.com.

PASTOR—Ashmore, Loop is seeking a pastor (full-time or bivocational). Send resume to Ashmore Baptist Church c/o Tom Ingle, PO Box 346, Loop, Texas 79342, ashmore4u@outlook.com or call Tom Ingle 806-928-8843/ Loyd Halbrooks @ 806-759-2095.

PASTOR—Blackjack, Troup is seeking a bivocational pastor. Send resume to the church at blackjackbaptistchurch@gmail.com or P.O. Box 605, Troup, Texas 75789.

PASTOR—Fifth Street, Levelland is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee—Larry Beadles, 1009 5th Street, Levelland, Texas 79336 or Lbeadles@msn.com.

MUSIC/YOUTH—Lake Highlands, Sulphur Springs is seeking a fulltime youth/music minister. Send resume to Lake Highlands Baptist Church, P.O. Box 441, Sulphur Springs, Texas 75483-0441. 1/20/16

PASTOR—Myrtle Springs, Quitman is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Myrtle Springs Baptist Church, 2185 FM 2225, Quitman, Texas 75783. TFN

PASTOR—First Missionary, Morton is seeking a fulltime pastor. Send resume to the church at P.O. Box 981, Morton, Texas 79346 or to jimmysealy@aol.com. TFN

SPECIAL REQUEST TO CHURCHES WHO SEND CHURCHES IN REVIEW STATISTICS EACH WEEK

As editor, I want all of our churches to be involved in the ministry of *Baptist Progress*. It is also my goal to include news from your church whenever possible. With these things in mind, allow me to share my heart. As long as churches continue to send us statistics for our Churches in Review column, I will continue to include them. However, our readers would much rather read news of what the Lord is doing in and through your church. So, on the same page of our website where you enter your Churches in Review statistics, there is also a place to include news from your church. If you wish to continue sending statistics for your church that is fine, although I do not believe that our focus should be on numbers. Whether or not you send us your weekly statistics, please also include news from your church. I look forward to including your church news in our next issue.

CHURCHES IN REVIEW

APRIL 3, 2016

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
Anthony Drive, Ennis	54	85	
Antioch, Gilmer	69	138	4 By Baptism
Bethel, Groesbeck	65	76	
Cedar Creek, Teague	10	20	
First, Omen	48	96	
First, Palmer	52	63	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	18	44	
Harvest, Lufkin	55	75	
Jackson, Joaquin	77	128	1 By Baptism, 1 By Letter
Little Flock, Lufkin	10	10	
Merriman Hills, Sherman	15	15	
New Hope, Mineola	53	105	1 By Baptism
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	44	54	
Pine Brook, Tyler	26	51	
Piney Creek, Kennard	17	30	
Security Calvary, Cleveland	19	49	

APRIL 10, 2016

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
First, Blooming Grove	196		1 By Baptism
First, Crandall	65	101	
First, Palmer	54	93	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	26	60	
Harvest, Lufkin	50	70	
Merriman Hills, Sherman	17	17	
New Harmony, Tyler	315	352	
New Hope, Mineola	53	123	1 By Baptism
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	41	51	
Piney Creek, Kennard	16	28	
Rosewood, Gilmer	126	184	
Security Calvary, Cleveland	14	41	

For publication, statistics for Churches in Review must be received by Monday at 5 p.m. on Monday.

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Sunday School Lessons

Habakkuk—Faith

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: May 1, 2016

TEXT: Habakkuk 1:1, 2; 2:1-4, 14, 10-; 3:1, 2, 19

Habakkuk, a prophet, in whom little is known about his background or his calling. In chapter 1 of his great treatise, we find this:]

HABAKKUK'S LAMENT OF A CORRUPT WORLD:

The prophet, Habakkuk, who seemed to be well versed in the Law of Moses, obviously feels that the Great God of Heaven has turned a deaf ear to his outcries and is slow to act, in regard to impending attack of the Babylonian army. As for the world in which he was living, it was crumbling — replete with misery, destruction, a fallen society, an unenforced law, lack of justice — wickedness run rampant.

THE LORD'S SEEMINGLY DISMAL REPLY:

He summoned Habakkuk to watch and be amazed at the onslaught of the cruel, violent Babylonians. It seems they are an army out of control, with a bent on marching across the earth conquering empires.

Apparently, they have weapons of war are unmatched by anyone — with the swiftest horses, the fierceness of “evening wolves” and their horsemen are able to cover a phenomenal amount of territory very swiftly.

In the midst of his lament, Habakkuk acknowledges God's eternal purpose and the

fact the Chaldeans are His instruments. “Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgement; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction.”

A true, spiritual prophet recognizes, and takes refuge in the fact that God is in sovereign control of an army that is determined to destroy nations.

GOD COMFORTS HABAKKUK:

Like society of Habakkuk's day, our 21st Century culture has been wracked by troubles, sorrows and evil. Often, people are trapped in a dark oppression if their own making. But the book of Habakkuk gives us reassurance that, no matter how dismal, God's grace is able to intervene. Habakkuk closes his prophecy with these reassuring words. “Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.”

APPLICATION:

God sometimes uses our enemies to correct us; but always, the Lord “is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.” Habakkuk 2:20.

Zephaniah—Punishment

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: May 8, 2016

TEXT: Zephaniah 1:14, 15; 2:1-3; 3:1-5, 9, 15, 18

THE PROPHET

The prophet Zephaniah can be traced back to King Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.) Zephaniah's prophecy was given during King Josiah's reign (650-609 B.C.) It was in 628 B.C. that Josiah destroyed all the altars to Baal, burned the bones of false prophets, and broke the carved idols (1 Chronicles 34:3-7) Zephaniah was a contemporary of Jeremiah.

THE MESSAGE

Zephaniah's message was a warning to Judah that her days were numbered. (chapter 1) His frequent reference to the “Day of the Lord” were more than any other Old Testament book. His prophecy refers to the fall of Judah to Babylon. He predicted the fall of Nineveh, which occurred in 612 B.C. But his prophecy gives us a glimpse into the future to the time God's wrath would be poured out as a judgement of sin, (tribulation) and would ultimately result in a time of blessing (3:17).

(Christ's Millennial Reign)

THE APPLICATION:

Those living in Judah were guilty of turning from the worship of God to building their own places of worship and bowing to false gods. They had begun to desecrate the temple, which was the dwelling place of God — a foreshadowing of the abomination of desolation spoken of by Jesus (Matthew 24:15) and by Paul. (2 Thessalonians 2:4)

THE CHALLENGE

We too, can be guilty of taking worship of the true and living God lightly — when we live in open sin, become lethargic toward the command to “not forsake the assembly,” and just simply forget God, such as was the case with Ephesus who left her first love (Revelation 2:4). Zephaniah reminds us how seriously God takes your relationship with Him. But remember Zephaniah's message in chapter 3 — God is a merciful, forgiving God, and His desire is to restore hope to His children who will bow to Him and honor Him. (1 John 1:9)

Paul Gauntt is the pastor of First, Palmer. He served for a number of years as the BMA of Texas Department of Church Ministries director. He has served several churches as pastor, and is a correspondent and featured article writer for Baptist Progress. Contact him at pop.gauntt@gmail.com.



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**SUNDAY
MAY 1, 2016**



JAGUAR DAY ACROSS TEXAS

ANNUAL OFFERING FOR JACKSONVILLE COLLEGE

Dear Jacksonville College Supporters,

Thank you for your prayers and financial support. God blessed in the Fall Semester 2015 with over a hundred salvation decisions. In the Spring Semester 2016, we had a record enrollment. Also, we had eight students who participated in a mission trip to Costa Rica where over two hundred salvation decisions were made. We ask you to pray and give a special offering for Jaguar Day Across Texas. This offering helps us with the lean financial months of summer and to complete projects to prepare for the fall. This offering may be taken any Sunday in May or June. We designate May 1, 2016, as Jaguar Day Across Texas.

This offering will help Jacksonville College

- 1. Pay expenses during summer months**
- 2. Paint Memorial Hall**
- 3. Paint and remodel the SUB**

We ask that

- 100 Churches / Individuals give \$200**
- 200 Churches / Individuals give \$100**
- 200 Churches / Individuals give \$50**

**JACKSONVILLE COLLEGE
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