

Baptist Progress

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Change

for children

By **EDDIE MARSH**

Texas Baptist Home for Children President

Each year at this time cans are mailed or delivered to churches for The Change for Children Campaign which runs from March through May. The next few months as you work to fill the cans our children are completing classes for the 2015-2016 school year.

As summer approaches there is anticipation of activities to occupy their time. The activities that take place during the summer as well as those throughout the year are subsidized by your generosity. The activities continue throughout the year and many of you collect throughout the year.

Participating churches should have received cans either by mail or delivery. If your church normally participates in this campaign, but did not receive cans, if you will simply contact the Home and we will make sure that a box is mailed to you. We are aware that some of our churches no longer use the cans but receive an offering for this emphasis. Any assistance is appreciated.

We know that you will be creative about how to best use the containers. For instance, we have heard of churches that put them in their classrooms. Others have talked about putting them in their place of business, which serves two purposes, not only does it provide funds for the children, it also makes those who work with understand your priorities.

Some parents make it a family affair and have the can in a prominent place in the house where it is easily accessible for parents and children to contribute.

A church in the Dallas area has a large water bottle that is placed near the altar and each week children are encouraged to put in coins. The bottle is quite full and heavy when the project is completed.

One of my favorite stories is of a small store in East Texas that places one near the coffeepot so that those who come to sit and visit on Saturday morning can contribute. There is no charge for the coffee but everyone is encouraged to "contribute to the kids."

The fact is that whatever method may have been used, for over 25 years members of churches and generous individuals from various backgrounds and denominational backgrounds have contributed to help make a difference in the lives of children.

Please mark your calendar for June 25, 2016 as we celebrate what God has provided through this campaign. That day you will hear testimonies of how God has blessed and provided through the ministry of Texas Baptist Home for Children.



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Seven things every church member should know about *Baptist Progress*

By **JERRY FULTON**

Baptist Progress is striving to be more than just a newspaper. In addition to our communications ministry, it is the desire of our staff to provide as many resources as possible to the churches of the BMA of Texas. We now provide website building and graphic design services. See below seven things every church member should know about *Baptist Progress*.

- 1. You can receive more BMA news by switching your mail subscription to *Baptist Progress* to an email subscription.** Email subscribers receive our *eNews Update*, containing news and information on most weeks the paper is not published; *Ministry Connection*, a newsletter with helpful articles for church leaders and Christ followers; news alerts; death announcements; important reminders and more are also emailed on a regular basis.
- 2. You can subscribe online to our Every Sunday Bulletin Service.** Visit our website, www.baptistprogress.org and click the "Weekly Worship Bulletins Service" banner at the top of the homepage. We have a large selection of sizes, styles and quantities.
- 3. You can order books, Bibles, gifts and supplies through our website.** Whenever you need Christian books, Bibles, gifts, music, supplies, postcards and more, be sure to visit our website, www.baptistprogress.org, click the flashing Christianbook Distributors banner at the top of the homepage to place your order. Christianbook Distributors will share a percentage of their profit with *Baptist Progress*. The only way we will be credited is if you order through our website.
- 4. You can send church news to *Baptist Progress*.** If your church has a special event, service or recognition on the calendar, be sure to send the news our way. Mail it to *Baptist Progress*, P.O. Box 2085, Waxahachie, TX 75168, or even better, email it to editor@baptistprogress.org.
- 5. You can invite Editor Jerry Fulton to speak and/or sing at your church.** Bro. Fulton has served as editor of *Baptist Progress* since November 2004. An ordained Baptist minister, he has preached in scores of conferences, revivals and Sunday worship services. Bro. Fulton also sings Southern Gospel Music in churches and family-friendly venues. A two-time graduate of Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary, Jerry is a licensed and ordained Baptist minister. In 2015, he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity from Anchor Theological Seminary. Over the past 22 years, Jerry has served four churches as pastor, and also served as director of ministry development for the Texas Baptist Home for Children.
- 6. Your church can join the Church Plan.** For only \$1.75 per month (\$21 per year) per mail subscription or \$1.25 per month (\$15 per year) per email subscription, your church can provide each of its member households with 24 issues of *Baptist Progress* for one year. The Church Plan cost is a discounted rate plan. Standard rates for mail subscriptions is \$24 per year and for email subscriptions, \$18 per year. Call 972-923-0756 to get started.
- 7. You can let *Baptist Progress* build and maintain your website, as well as provide graphic design services.** If your church needs a website, website maintenance, logos or other graphics, call 972-923-0756 for pricing.



▲ Jerry Fulton

Survey results in for Georgetown

By **JERRY FULTON**

Baptist Progress Editor

Two weeks ago, Andy Comer and a team of 30 volunteers travelled from Conway, Arkansas to Georgetown to discover what makes the town, located north of Austin, unique. While there, Comer and his team conducted a survey of several citizens.

Comer and his family moved from Sulphur Springs, where he was senior pastor of Davis Street Baptist Church, to Conway last year. Since that time, he has been serving at Antioch, Conway. He, along with a number of Antioch members, plan to move to Georgetown in the spring or summer of 2017 to plant a new church called Antioch,

Georgetown. So far, 15 people have expressed interest in moving with the Comers. In the meantime, Andy continues to put together a team.

After pouring over the survey results, Comer made the following observations:

- 1. The most common family need was more family time.** The most common way people spent their weekend time was "hanging out with family." It appears that family is a priority, and most people



SURVEY RESULTS continued on p. 12

BMA TEXAS

MISSIONS

Your Church's Mission Movement in Texas



Greetings from your BMA of Texas Missions Office

By HEITH MITCHELL

It is a value of BMA of Texas Missions that we serve the local church by assisting her in her mission. Our association exists to serve churches. As a matter of fact, we are not an association of departments, but an association of churches who seek to glorify Christ and edify one another. Those churches created our departments with the burden that we could carry out our mission more effectively by working together.

I am afraid that we can sometimes confuse this truth. We can begin to expect the church to serve the association and its projects. When things get turned around, the local associations can become an upward funnel of support and energy instead of a network for encouragement, equipping, the exchange of ideas and service to one another. There is potential for bureaucracy to grow within a department and for that department to have its own agenda. I recognize this danger and we have placed reminders all around us. The most important BMA organization is the individual churches that make it up.

I challenge each reader to examine their view of our organizational structure. BMA churches must have a real concern and love for each other. BMA churches should serve each other and spur each other on. Many of you have heard me say before that we must be an association of God honoring relationships. That begins between churches and their leaders.

The Wood County Association in East Texas has taken real steps toward encouraging and serving the churches that make it up. They have the normal meetings and rallies like most associations. They also worship together. Weekly, their pastors meet for breakfast. Monthly, pastors and their

wives meet for dinner and encouraging discussion. There is an outside guest each month to take the discussion in a new direction. Each week the association pays a retired pastor to visit a church from the association and to take the pastor and family out to lunch. The association is finding ways to help the churches that make it up. The result is encouraged pastors and connected churches. I applaud and celebrate the example they have set.

BMA of Texas Missions wants to play our assigned role in serving the local church. We want to assist you in reaching the 27 million Texans for Christ. We want to help you identify unreached people around you. We want to help equip and provide assistance to your missionaries that will help reach those people groups. We want to be open and honest with you, and we want to share every tool at our disposal with you. I encourage you to hold us accountable. Here are a couple of quick facts:

- We are currently funding 7 church plants in Texas. Three will come off state mission support this year to be self-sufficient churches and 1 is likely to make a location change soon. (We need to plant 15 churches at a time with an 80% success rate to hold our ground in the BMA of Texas)
- Bro. Arnulfo Maldonado is coming on full time in April and will be expanding our Hispanic planting efforts from Houston to the state. (We have 9 current Hispanic plants in Houston.)
- Our contributions from churches were up in January and February (thank you) but barely exceeded Missionary salaries and resource funding and continues to be short of department expenses. (We are consistently afloat thanks

to funds from churches, across our work, who previously closed their doors and left their property to the BMA of Texas.)

- We are funding our first missionary internship for a potential future planter who looks promising but needs more experience.
- We are training a potential new missionary who has a burden to plant a church in South Houston.
- We need to connect with more potential missionaries with a God given burden to make disciples and start a church. Please join us in prayer that the Lord of the Harvest will send out more laborers.
- There are 21 BMA of Texas churches currently involved in Activate, a church health program that has come from a partnership between DiscipleGuide, BMAA Missions and BMAT Missions. There will be potential for more churches to get involved next spring. Please pray for these churches.
- There are some new ways that you can connect to your Texas Mission movement.

A new website: www.bmatexasmissions.org

A new Facebook page: BMA Texas Missions

A new way to receive text updates and prayer requests from the field: Text the word "Texas" to 972-992-1358

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



ACTIVATE: Mobilizing BMA Churches Across the Nation

By TODD WEST

DiscipleGuide Director of Church Solutions

Activate is a church revitalization ministry that is mobilizing BMA churches across the nation. Approximately forty churches are now participating in this three-year experience. Here are the testimonies of two BMA leaders:

"Shady Grove Missionary Baptist Church is starting the Activate experience. We are hoping to achieve several goals. One is to get a thorough checkup on our church. We want to see the areas where we are doing good so that we can move on to great and the areas where we aren't doing so good so we can improve them as well! We want to be a healthy church! Another goal is to help us see what we need to do to grow. Like so many other BMA churches, we're showing a lot of gray! We need to focus on our community and reach the families and young people. Hopefully this ministry will show us areas that we need to

improve in order to reach out! A third goal is to be healthy enough to reproduce."

Gene Hankins, Pastor
Shady Grove Missionary Baptist Church
McAlester, Oklahoma

"Activate has brought pastors and state missionaries to the table together, and they have so much to offer each other. Every Texas Pastor's Huddle (area meeting for pastors involved in Activate) has a missionary in the mix. Our missionaries have already been exposed to all of the material in Activate. What makes Activate so attractive for the missionary is that the material is given out and worked through slowly over a three-year period. Our churches and missionaries are being given the tools to evaluate their



health and to make adjustments step by step. I couldn't be more excited about the potential of the Activate ministry".

Heith Mitchell
Director of Missions
BMA of Texas

In the fall of 2016, DiscipleGuide will sponsor an event called Activate Orientation for any pastors, staff or key leaders who would like to know more about the Activate experience. Activate Orientation will also give clear instructions for how your church could possibly begin the Activate journey starting in 2017. Registration for Activate Orientation will begin later this summer. I ask that you pray for the churches and their leaders currently in Activate.

BMA of America News

The Cynical Deception of the Muslim Religion



By DR. JOHN M. ADAMS

Moral Action Executive Director

On the bumpers of many vehicles today, we see the Co-exist sign - white letters, blue background trying to say that all these religions can get along. These signs, especially meaningful of the Islamic faith, want Americans to believe that Muslims and Christians can coexist. The coexist symbol is “c” for a crescent moon of Islam, the letter “x” for the Star of David representing Judaism, and the “t” for the Christian cross, the “o” for the pagan Wiccan, the “e” for the male/female sign, and the “s” for the Chinese ying-yang symbol. It is impossible for any two of them to agree totally because of their divergent image of God himself.

In taking a closer look at the Muslim beliefs, our desire is to expose this deceitful religion. I thank the following for their helpful writings: Dr. Adrian Rogers, Dr. David Jeremiah, Glen Beck, Karen Armstrong and Joel C. Rosenberg.

Islamic extremists have declared war on America. The sad day of 9-11 created a powerful shift in the United States. Although Muslim leaders across the globe were quick to repudiate the actions of this fringe group, Islamophobia brought the chaos of war to our American soil. We will never be the same again!

According to think-tanks in America, Americans viewed Islam as a monolithic religion that (1) preaches Holy war on non-Muslims, (2) that it shares very few of America's values, (3)

that its religion is very aggressive, and sexist, (4) that it does support terrorism, and (5) that Islam wants to destroy the American/Christian way of life.

John Quincy Adams, the sixth president of the United States (1825-1829) wrote of Islam, “In the 7th century of the Christian era, a wandering Arab of the lineage of Hagar had Mohammad the Egyptian, combining the powers of transcendent genius, with the energy of a fanatic, the spirit of an imposter and proclaimed himself as a messenger from Heaven.” The Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville said of Islam, “I studied the Quran a great deal and I came away from that study with the conviction that by and large there have been few religions in the world as deadly to men as that of Mohammed.”

Let's review a list of lies/falsehoods that present themselves about the Muslim faith:

Lie #1....Islam is much like Christianity and Judaism. Glen Beck wrote: “Proponents of the hand-holding, drum-circle view of world religions often point to the common origin of the three monotheistic, all-encompassing way of life, inseparable from politics and law. All authority in the Islamic faith flows from God. There is no separation of church and state in the Sunni Islamic tradition. The caliph was a religious and political leader in one.” There is a great difference.

Lie #2....Islam is a Great Religion of Peace. President Barack Obama, a pro-Arab President, stated, “Islam is a religion that preaches peace.” Numerous places in the Quran calls for violence and murder: Sura 9:29: “Fight against those who (1) believe not in Allah, (2) nor in the Last Day, (3) nor forbid that which has been forbidden by Allah And His Messenger (4) and those who acknowledge not the religion of truth, Islam, among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), until they pay the Jizyah (tax) with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.” The implications are clear. Failing to submit to Islam puts you at war with God and true believers, and those believers are instructed to fight you until you submit. In that sense, perhaps Islam could indeed be called a “religion of peace” – with peace coming only through submission.

Lie #3....Jihad is Peaceful. On September 11, 2001, Jihad had come to America. Osama bin Laden relied heavily on Quran 5:33, which reads: “The recompense of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger and do mischief in the land is only that they shall be killed or crucified or their hands and their feet be cut off on the opposite sides, or be exiled from the land. That is their disgrace in this world, and a great torment is theirs in the Hereafter.”

Lie #4....America Is Safe from Sharia Law. Abdur Rahman Doi, a Malaysian scholar of

Islamic law, explains that the Quran mandates that Sharia rule over all Muslims everywhere, for all time: “The entire Muslim Ummah [community] lives under the Shari'ah to which every member has to submit, with sovereignty belonging to Allah alone....Shari'ah was not revealed for limited application or for a specific age. It will suit every age and time.”

Imran Ahsan Khan Nyazee, a Pakistani law professor, contends that only sharia can properly govern Muslims: “Any other legal system, howsoever attractive it may appear on the surface, is alien for Muslims and is not likely to succeed in the solution of their problems....” Islam is a deceitful religion that should be exposed in these latter days. The Word of God in Amos 3:3 declares “Can two walk together, except they are agreed?” We should not and cannot accept such a wretched religion. Our Bible, which is the true Word of God, declares in Acts 4:12, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” We thank God the Father for His true Son, Jesus Christ!

Recommended reading to continue this subject is “Inside the Revolution” by Joel Rosenberg, “It Is about Islam” by Glenn Beck, and “Jihad in the Quran” by Louay Fatoohi.

May God bless the USA and His great churches of America.



CALLING ALL CHURCHES

Baptist Progress wants to hear from your church! Therefore, we request the following:

1. That each church elect a reporter whose responsibility it shall be to send Baptist Progress news about your church on a regular basis
2. That when a reporter has been elected, the name of the reporter and his/her contact information be emailed to editor@baptistprogress.org
3. That reporters upload news at the following link, <http://www.baptistprogress.org/churches-in-reviewchurch-news.html>, or simply go to www.baptistprogress.org and click Churches in Review/ Church News at the top of the home page.

We look forward to learning about what God is doing in and through your church family!

BMA America Recognized by Best Christian Workplace Institute

CONWAY, Arkansas—Best Christian Workplace Institute (BCWI) has recognized the Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) of America Global Ministry Center (GMC) as a Certified Best Christian Workplace for 2016. Four BMA departments and agencies are housed at the GMC in Conway, Arkansas: BMA Foundation, BMA Missions, DiscipleGuide and Lifeword. The Certified status reflects a “healthy-to-flourishing” culture, meeting predetermined standards of excellence through a formal employee engagement survey.

The detailed, fifty-question survey model measures eight essential factors of a thriving, healthy culture including Life-Giving Work, Outstanding Talent, Uplifting

Growth and Development, Rewarding Compensation, Inspirational Leadership, Fantastic Teams, Sustainable Strategy, and Healthy Communication. “Attaining BCWI Certification is not easy,” said BCWI President Al Lopus. “About half of the organizations we survey achieve Certification, and many organizations survey multiple years before receiving this distinction.”

The leadership team at the GMC uses the results of the annual survey to gain valuable input from employees to aid in their quest to model servant leadership and to strive for continuous improvement in the organizational culture. To see the institute's complete list, use this link: <http://www.bcwinstitute.org/bcwlits.html>.

BMA of America News

BMA of America Report and Recommendation Book mailed to churches

By **JERRY FULTON**

Baptist Progress Editor

The 2016 BMA of America Report and Recommendations Book containing reports and recommendations to be presented at the BMA of America Annual Session in Gatlinburg, Tennessee April 25-27 has been mailed to the churches. Listed below by are the proposed recommendations from each department, agency foundation and committee.



Proposed Amendments BMAA Doctrinal Statement

The following proposed amendment to the BMA of America Doctrinal Statement was discussed in the 2015 annual session and will be voted on in the 2016 annual meeting.

Article III – CREATION

C. Man — As the crowning work of His creation, God created humankind (male and female) in His own image (Psa. 8; Gen. 1:27; 2:7). Consequently, every person from conception is of inherent dignity and worth and merits the respect of all other persons (Psa. 51:5; Psa. 139:13-16; Gen. 9:6; Matt. 10:28-31; Jam. 3:9).
D. Marriage — God created marriage (Gen. 1:27-28; 2:23-24). Jesus Christ declared the Creator's intention for marriage to be the inseparable and exclusive union between a man and a woman (natural man and natural woman) (Matt. 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-9). Marriage testifies of the union between Christ and the church (Eph. 5:31-32; Rom. 1:25-27).

Committee on Arrangements

- That the 2019 meeting be held May 6-8, 2019, at the Embassy Suites Northwest Arkansas Hotel and Convention Center in Rogers, Arkansas. The Embassy Suites will be the lead hotel.

Moral Action

- That our local associations, our local, state and national WMA and Brotherhoods, and our local churches be encouraged to give a financial gift or budgeted monthly gifts to Moral Action. These funds will strengthen this ministry. We desire to do much more.
- That our churches and pastors embrace and support our nation by participating and promoting the National Day of Prayer (NDOP), Thursday, May 5, 2016. Join other Americans in prayer for our nation. Meetings can be conducted at town halls, city halls, county courthouses, flagpoles, state houses and churches.
- That all our BMA churches schedule June 26 and July 3, 2016; as the Moral Action "Freedom Offering" Sunday. This is an opportunity to honor and give memorials to our soldiers, both past and present.
- That the BMA family celebrate September 11, 2016 as Grandparents Day and honor their influence.
- That Dr. John M. Adams, Executive Director, represent the

BMA of America in Washington, DC at the Watchmen on the Wall Conference.

- That our Baptist Missionary Association of America reaffirm and approve the five (5) Moral Action resolutions and that we sincerely pray for our nation and homes.
- That we humbly request that these resolutions be printed in our BMA State Papers.
- That Dr. John M. Adams stand as a nominee for Executive Director of Moral Action.

Lifeword Media Ministries

- That Sunday, October 23, 2016 be set aside as Lifeword Sunday.
- That the housing allowance be set at \$2,500 per month for the chief broadcast officer, production team leader, program director, and executive director.
- That the executive director be paid a base salary of \$45,846, a housing allowance of \$30,000, one-half of Social Security/Medicare, health & dental insurance, retirement at 6 percent of salary and an auto provided. Note: The recommended compensation is based on an independent evaluation of the executive director position by Phillip Blount & Associates, an independent compensation consulting firm used by a number of Baptist groups. Compensation levels are determined through a three-step process—job analysis, job evaluation, and extensive market research. The recommended amount is at the 25th percentile level.
- That Steve Crawley stand as a nominee for Executive Director.

Ministers Resource Services

- That Ron Chesser stand as nominee for Executive Director of Ministers Resource Services.
- That \$18,000.00 of the Executive Director's salary be designated as housing allowance.
- We urge each church to enroll her pastor and church staff in the BMA Retirement Plan at Ministers Resource Services.
- We urge our pastors and their wives to enroll in the Ministers Benevolent Society and Auxiliary.
- We urge each church to include Ministers Resource Services in her monthly budgeted offerings to the various departments and agencies of the BMA.

BMA Theological Seminary

- Re-affirm the appointment of Dr. Charley Holmes as president
- Each church observe Sunday, May 15, 2016, As Scholarship Sunday with: a. special prayer for our graduates b. receive a special scholarship offering to support the training of future BMA pastors and missionaries on that Sunday

DiscipleGuide Church Resource

- We recommend that Scott Attebery stand as a nominee for the position of Executive Director of DiscipleGuide.
- We recommend that the executive director be paid a base salary of \$49,646, a housing allowance of \$32,000, one-half of Social Security/Medicare, health & dental insurance,

retirement at 6% of salary and an auto allowance. Note: The recommended compensation is based on an independent evaluation of the executive director position by Phillip Blount & Associates, an independent compensation consulting firm used by a number of Baptist groups. Compensation levels are determined through a three-step process—job analysis, job evaluation, and extensive market research. The recommended amount is at the 25th percentile level.

- We recommend that churches participate in DiscipleGuide's Kingdom Investment special emphasis on December 18, 2016.

BMA Foundation

- That the Executive Director's compensation be set at \$9,600.
- That \$7,200 of the Executive Director's compensation be designated as housing allowance for income tax purposes.
- That Charles Attebery stand as a nominee as Executive Director.
- That members of BMAA churches prayerfully consider tithing their estates with a bequest directed to the BMA Foundation.

BMAA Missions

- We recommend Ashraf Sara for a three-year term as a church planting catalyst among Arabic speaking peoples in the U.S.
- We recommend Jesse Garrido for a three-year term as a church planting catalyst among Spanish speaking peoples in California.
- We recommend the approval of the proposed BMAA Missions Employee Compensation Policy.
- We recommend Joe Costa as missionary to the Middle East to be elected in April 2016.
- We recommend the approval of the "Policy and Procedures for Partnering/Endorsed Ministries."
- We recommend that we endorse the ministry "We Are Free" and that it becomes a partner ministry.
- We recommend Angel Colon as a North American Church planter to Vidalia, Louisiana.
- We recommend monthly support for the Hispanic church planting effort in Louisiana with up to \$2,000.00, as per budget availability. (Angel Colon).
- We recommend Carl and Dana Sookraj as self-supporting missionaries to Peru.
- We recommend the election of Tatiana Tinoco and Susy Galvez from Peru as missionaries to India in partnership with the Peruvian association.
- We recommend the proposal made by the missions office leadership concerning Larry Barker and North American church planting. We recommend that Larry Barker serve as the leader of North American Church Planting with a monthly part-time stipend from the missions office.
- We recommend the re-election of Dr. John David Smith as Executive Director of Missions.
- We recommend that the Executive Director's salary be set at \$44,000. Along with all director's housing allowances set at \$24,000.



Blessed Assurance

By DR. MIKE SMITH

Fanny Crosby (1820-1915) was America's most prolific hymn writer. She wrote more than 6,000 hymns. Because of a doctor's mistake, she became blind at an early age. In her physical darkness, God gave her light to write these hymns. She wrote in her autobiography, "I do believe that the Lord permitted me to be blind when that affliction had been put upon me by a doctor's blundering, and I believe that the way has been shown to make my blindness a blessing." At the age of eighty, she moved to Bridgeport, Connecticut, where she is buried. My wife, Susan, and I had a special moment with God after we found her tombstone when walking in that Connecticut cemetery. We have been back other times and always take a few moments to go and stand at her grave. On her headstone is a verse from one of the hymns she wrote:

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Jacksonville College stops all activities every Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. for Chapel. Our desire is that our staff and students will have a special moment with God. Visitors are always welcome to attend Chapel. Every Wednesday at 11:00 a.m., pray for Jacksonville College and that Chapel will be a special worship moment with God. Pray that no student or staff will leave Jacksonville College without the blessed assurance of being "born of His Spirit, washed in His blood."

Dr. Mike Smith is the president of Jacksonville College. Contact him at msmith@jacksonville-college.edu or 903-589-7106. You may also visit the Jacksonville College website, www.jacksonville-college.edu



REGISTRATION

Registration is ongoing for Maymester, Summer I and II, and Fall 2016. New course offerings for Fall 2016 will include courses in agriculture, teacher education, and criminal justice.

2016 Class Sessions:

Maymester: May 17 – June 2

Summer I: June 6 - July 7

Summer II: July 11 - August 10

Fall: August 17 – December 6

Full course schedules are available at www.jacksonville-college.edu.
Online registration is available.



▲ On March 16, Aaron Smith, JC men's basketball coach, preached in Chapel about "A Hope that Endures," based on Hebrews 10.



▲ Former JC tennis player Joey Quandt shared his testimony in Chapel and described his preparation and plans to do mission work in the Orient.



◀ Recently retired BMA pastor Roy Stephens preached in Chapel on March 23. In Fall 2016, Stephens will serve as counselor, psychology instructor, and golf coach at Jacksonville College. He will also teach the College's three new courses in agriculture.



▲ Until He Comes, the Jacksonville College praise and worship team.

Daniel Springs gets a face-lift

By **JASON PREWITT**

Daniel Springs Camp Director

Daniel Springs has been in need of a face-lift for several years. Thankfully during the month of March, many churches supported financially and volunteered their time to give Daniel Springs a new and improved look.

The week of March 6 brought members from Mount Olive Baptist Church, Scurry; Union Hill Baptist Church, Brownsboro; and Springhill Baptist Church, Springhill, Louisiana to camp. They constructed new open-air tabernacles, sealed cabin windows, painted the inside and outside of the cafeteria and helped with the main tabernacle remodel. Everyone had fun while working even though it rained over 8 inches.

The week of March 14 brought the student ministries from Davis Street Baptist Church, Sulphur Springs and Farley Street Baptist Church, Waxahachie to camp. They finished the open-air tabernacles and the sealing of windows and doors on cabins. They also painted and cleaned up work areas. All of this was accomplished in two and one-half days.

During these two weeks, an enormous amount of improvements were made to camp facilities. Everyone worked with great mindsets, willing hands, and servant hearts. The work done by these churches has made a lasting impact on Daniel Springs. There are projects still needing to be completed before camp season starts. If you or your church would like to be a part of helping with the lasting legacy and ministry of Daniel Springs, please call 903-685-2433 or email Jason@danielspringscamp.com.

Come see the new and improved Daniel Springs. Register by visiting danielspringscamp.com/register. It is going to be a great year at Daniel Springs. Come be a part of it!



Dallas County churches join for *One Prayer*

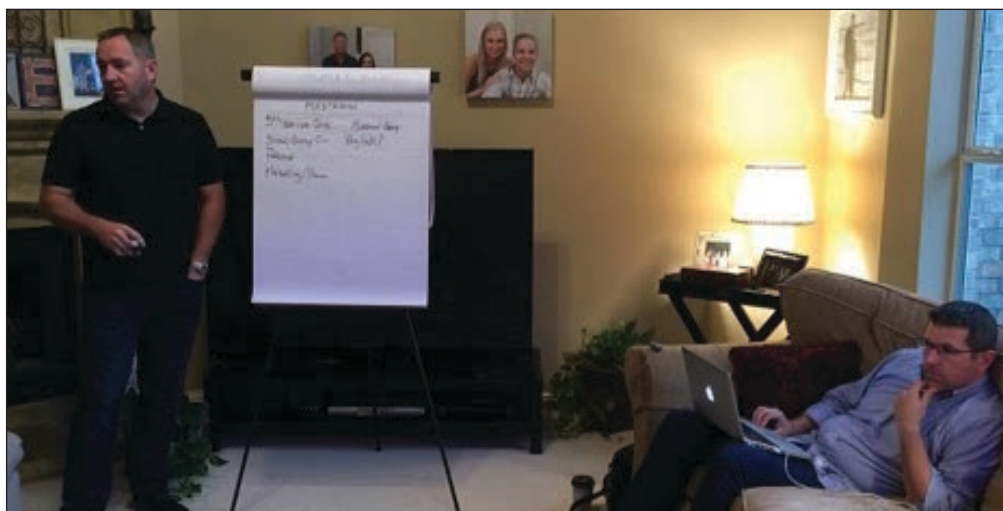
By **CECIL LINKE**

Lead Pastor of Journey, Allen

Five Dallas County churches including Refuge, Terrell; Calvary First, Mesquite; Crossroads, Rowlett; Journey, Allen and The Bridge, Celina are conducting a series called "One Prayer." The lead pastors of each church will rotate around for a five week series discussing what some of our prayers are for the Kingdom of God. The hope is to create a genuine sense of local cooperation and solidarity in each church, while emphasizing the importance of why those churches form an association.



▲ **Pastor Darren Lemons and others participate in planning meeting for series**



▲ **Pastor Jason Collins (standing) and Pastor Tim Brown (seated)**

Mountain of Hope extending hope to the people of Creve, Haiti

By **BILLIE MCINTYRE**

Liberty, Gun Barrel City

Mountain of Hope (MoH) is a faith-based 501(c) 3 non-profit organization working in the community of Creve, Haiti and Reverend Francois Norcilus since 2003. The mission of the organization is to 'extend hope to the people of Creve, Haiti through sustainable change.' The ministry's goal is to help improve and maintain the health of this community as well as maximize their quality of life by providing clean, accessible water through deep bore water wells.

A new campaign is being 'kicked-off' called The 10-4 Water Project. The ministry asks that each church, class or family make a one-time donation of \$10 for water wells in Creve.

MoH has previously shared that Creve has no public water services available. The main water source, referred to by the villagers as 'Kris', is a concrete, walled area with a large cistern, which is connected via PVC and iron pipes to two underground captages where water is collected from two different springs. The basic foundations of this cistern were developed by CARE in 1985. Presently only two out of the six taps are functioning.

'Kris' is busy all day and night with people from the communities of Creve, Rochefort, and Jacobaille. Kris is also a popular spot for bathing, washing clothes and hair. Concerns are the quantity of animal feces around the site and the number of children walking barefoot



in the area. Diarrhea is the third leading cause of child death, a majority of which are water-related.

During the rainy season the disease rates in the community increase and water from Kris is dirty. The deep bore wells in the actual village will eliminate the need to walk to Kris thus giving the people back precious time and energy spent on the daily task of getting water. Estimates to drill these deep bore water wells, based on depth, range from \$20,000 to \$75,000 per well. The 10-4 Water Project funds that are raised will be used 100 percent for the wells.

Donations can be mailed to Mountain of Hope, P.O. Box 236, Eustace, TX, 75124. Please visit our website at www.mountainofhope.net or on Facebook at Mountain of Hope. Mountain of Hope is supported by Liberty, Gun Barrel City.

Church Health

Are you the older brother?

By LARRY BARKER

The reports of great Easter services yesterday are already coming in! One church plant, not even two years old, had 212 in attendance and ten joined. Another report of a church plant not yet five years old had a record attendance of 539 with six baptisms. Our church exceeded our average attendance by 150 and had 495 present on Easter. How did these reports cause you to feel or react? Were you able to rejoice or did it make you skeptical or envious?

In the story of the prodigal son there are actually two prodigals. One took his inheritance, squandered it, and finally came to his senses and returned home. When his father saw him he rejoiced and the celebration began but the older brother was not a happy camper. The older brother was angry and said, “Look, I have been slaving many years for you, and I have never disobeyed your orders, yet you never gave me a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends!” (Luke 15:29)

The real story in the parable of the prodigal son is actually the older brother.

In context, these were the kind of people to whom Jesus was telling this story. The older brother was actually more lost than the younger because he could not see his lostness. His goodness and respectability had blinded him. Sadly, he was living with the father but was far from him. He was more concerned about keeping score of how others were serving more than taking care of his own relationship with the father.

The older brother serves as a warning to us that it is possible to obey God’s commands and be lost. It is possible to faithfully attend church, read your Bible, pray—and be lost! As you work for God you can appear to be very close to Him and yet actually be very far from Him. If you still need a little convincing then you should take a look at Matthew 7:21-23 and Luke 18:9-14. The older brother did not have the same heart his father had!

How do you know if you are the older brother? Are there signs to look for that should cause us to repent and ask for the Father’s forgiveness? Maybe we are not the older brother but are acting like him at times. What should we look for? Here are things to watch out for to make sure our hearts are like the heart of our Father:

First, when you cannot rejoice when prodigals return home you are acting like the older brother. The father was dancing and celebrating but the older brother could not. There was no rejoicing in his heart because he was angry and believed he was justified in being mad. The issue was not that it made him mad but what he did with that anger. The older brother was seething because he had saved up this anger for years and now it was boiling over.

When you harbor and hold onto offenses over a long period of time they can lead to depression, ulcers, insomnia, and outbursts of anger. They give you a negative attitude and rob



you of the joy of the Lord. The key is always to get before the Lord, admit our anger, and then ask Him to help us to rejoice the way He rejoices. If you are always skeptical when a prodigal son returns home you are acting far more like the older brother than you are the father!

Second, when you are constantly griping and complaining you are acting like the older brother. He says, “This son of yours!” He does not even want to admit that he is his brother. It appears that he does not want him back in the family and would just as soon go on without him. The older brother is condescending, proud, and faultfinding. He hears the music and wonders why he was not invited? He sees the celebration and is jealous that they were throwing a party for his brother and not for him.

How do you know if you have become like the older brother? When you are always negative. Especially about the things that makes our heavenly Father rejoice! Philippians 2:3-4 says this about jealousy, “Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” You can tell a lot about a person’s heart if they cannot rejoice when others are blessed and they are not!

Third, when you have a hard time forgiving you are acting like the older brother. Are you prone to holding

grudges? Do you often think, “I may forgive but I will never forget?” Do you struggle with harboring bad feelings when someone has chosen the wrong path and then returns home? Are you actually sympathizing with the older brother and feeling like he is really getting a raw deal here?

Where do you start in this process of forgiveness? You need to grasp the enormity of your debt and realize it is much greater than you can even imagine. John Newton said this, “I remember two things: That I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great savior.” Ephesians 4:32 states it clearly, “And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ. “The heart of the father is to forgive while the heart of the older brother is to hold a grudge ‘til Jesus comes!

Healthy churches and healthy Christians rejoice when God does great things!

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.



Auxiliaries

King of my heart

By SHARON COLE

Daniel Springs Encampment in Gary has been host to the Texas GMA Houseparty for many years. Camp Director Jason Prewitt welcomed everyone and was encouraged to sing along the GMA Song. He was also given a crown and a scepter. Hayley Maynard, Natalie Oates and Katie Allen were recognized for decorating the tabernacle so beautifully. The stage area displayed a cross draped in purple signifying that Jesus is the King of our Hearts.

March 18-19 92 girls and counselors met for their annual houseparty. This meeting consists of general sessions of fun time, getting acquainted, singing, recognitions of special groups and individuals and time of worship. This year's special speaker was Stacie Bostic. Friday night she spoke on "Understanding Just 'Who' the King of our Heart Is." He is Jesus, our Redeemer. He is our Mediator. We are daughters of the King of Kings so we should live like a princess and love ourselves for who we are because God does!

Mary Key presented a special song: "He Loves." Each year, a VIP group is recognized for giving the most money to the current project. This year it was Oak Grove, Canton. The project was missionaries to Ecuador, Chris and Holly Huson. A video of them was shown explaining what they are doing in Ecuador and how God has opened doors for them to begin small group Bible studies for them to share the love of God with the people of Ecuador.

The Saturday worship session with Stacie Bostic was again inspiring as she encouraged the girls to "Lead By Example." She stated that we should stand firm on our convictions and not be swayed by others' ideas when they clearly go against God's Word. We must keep our heart, mind and body pure and pleasing to God to be an example for others to follow.

Patricia Hernandez presented a beautiful song, "Holy Spirit."

In the business session the following officers were elected: President-Patricia Hernandez; 1st Vice President-Cheyenne Collard; 2nd Vice President-Abigail Verhelle; 3rd Vice President-Chloe Key; Secretary-Elizabeth Ricks; Adult Secretary-Jackie Ricks; Song Leader-Tatum Wisdom; Adult Song Leader-McKenna Wilson; Historian-Megan Gebauer; Project Promoter-Sarah Kizer; Adult Project Promoter-Frances Cravey; Treasurer-Jeannie Walker; Asst. Treasurer-Nancy Cranney; Advisory Council: Caroline Ayers, Lisa Maynard, Katie Allen, Jayna Williams, and Teel Witt. The new project for 2016-2017 is 90 percent-Will and Kelly Hutchinson, church planters in Hutto. and 10 percent General Fund.

In the afternoon session, Cheryl Hughes, Asst. GMA/YLA Promoter directed the program beginning with officer installation presented by Texas WMA President, Sherry Decker. District promoters recognized girls in each respective district who had been saved or passed a Forward Step this past year. Each queen participating was recognized followed by Megan Gebauer from Van Zandt District singing: "He Knows My Name."

The Miss/Jr. Miss GMA candidates were introduced. Each one shared her favorite memory verse, telling why it was special to her. As the program continued, Cheryl Hughes spoke on the importance of studying God's Word if He is going to be King of our hearts. During the presentation Cheryl explained the meaning of Psalm 119:11, Psalm 119:15-16 and 2 Timothy 3:16. Reigning Miss GMA, Alaina Verhelle revealed that Carrie Buck of Old Bethel, Canton, representing Van Zandt District was named Jr. Miss GMA and Patricia Hernandez of Oak Grove, Canton, also representing Van Zandt District was named Miss GMA.

Gifts were given to

all the girls by Texas WMA President Sherry Decker. A Bible was presented to Carrie by *Baptist Progress*, and Patricia was presented a scholarship to Jacksonville College by President Mike Smith. Officers presented outgoing president McKenna Wilson with a gift and she passed the gavel to the new president, Patricia Hernandez. McKenna was also presented with her own keepsake gavel.

TO BE CONTENT

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Philippians 4:11.

Fanny Crosby, the great blind poetess was taught early in life that God always did everything right. Because of this, she never became angry about her blindness. It was Fanny's grandmother who helped her to know about the beautiful, fluffy clouds in the sky, even though she could never see them. She learned about the colorful rainbow that God had given and talked about it as though she could really see it.

By listening carefully, she could tell the difference between all the birds and bird calls. Fanny Crosby went to the woods to learn and listen to them almost every day. She learned about all the different flowers just by touching or smelling them.

Fanny Crosby learned something else, too. She learned to love the stories from the Bible. In just a little while, she learned the whole book of Ruth, most of the Psalms, and the book of Proverbs. Because of her love for the Lord Jesus, He gave her a special talent in writing. She became the author of hundreds of poems and songs. Many of them are in the hymnal we use in the church. Some of them are: *Rescue the Perishing, Near the Cross, Blessed Assurance, I Am Thine, O Lord, Jesus is Calling*, and many, many more. She wrote over 8,000 songs and poems, religious and secular. She applied Phil.4:11 to her life and used her handicap to honor God. God doesn't allow adversity to harm us but to make us stronger as we depend on Him.

Fanny Crosby thanked God for what she had instead of grumbling about what she didn't have. Our reactions to problems are being watched by others. Everything that happens is God's plan conditioning us for greater things. Christ wants us to be content knowing that He will work it all out to our good.



▲ Carrie Buck, Junior Miss GMA



▲ Patricia Hernandez, Miss GMA



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.

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 10, 2016

Annual Polk County BMA
Worship Service
(Jacksonville College Rally)
First Baptist Church
of Providence
898 Providence Road
Livingston, Texas
Donny Sadler, guest speaker
Jacksonville College Ensemble, music
4 p.m.

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.

PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

AVAILABLE MINISTERS

TOBY GOODMAN is available for pulpit supply. He is currently planting a church in Lindale. Contact him at 903-353-6719 or T_Goodman@sbcglobal.net.

TOMMY HALL is available for pulpit supply or to serve as interim pastor. He is a member of Davis Street, Sulphur Springs. Contact him at 903-335-0518 or oldbishop53@yahoo.com

JOHN HENDERSON is available for pulpit supply. He is a member of First Providence, Livingston. Contact him at 936-327-9228 or Henderson2@livingston.net.

AVAILABLE POSITIONS

YOUTH—Park Avenue, Searcy, Arkansas is seeking a youth director. Send resume to ATTN: Keith Luceford, c/o Park Avenue Baptist Church, 211 E. Park Avenue in Searcy, Arkansas 72143 or email to keith@vuewireless.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, AshmoreBaptistChurch@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

PASTOR & STAFF CHANGES

AXSEL ZAVALA is the new pastor of Glenfawn, Cushing.

DOCK LAZARINE has resigned Bethel, Clayton, effective April 17.

OBITUARY

JAMES L. WEBBER, 87, went to be with the Lord March 14, 2016. He was born July 29, 1928 in Little Rock, Arkansas. He was ordained as a Baptist minister in 1954 and pastored churches in east Texas and Oklahoma for 62 years. He was the founding pastor of Faith, Longview, and continued to serve as associate pastor until his death. He is survived by his wife of over 60 years, Sylvia; two sons, David and Tim; a daughter, Tina Perkins; several grandchildren and great grandchildren.



CHURCHES IN REVIEW

MARCH 13, 2016

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
Anthony Drive, Ennis		95	
Cedar Creek, Teague	15	18	
First, Blooming Grove	184		1 By Baptism
First, Palmer	46	76	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	18	50	
Harvest, Lufkin	55	80	
Jackson, Joaquin	68	129	
Little Flock, Lufkin	10	10	
New Harmony, Tyler	291	336	
New Hope, Mineola	64	126	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	42	53	
Pine Brook, Tyler	34	60	
Rosewood, Gilmer	116	201	
Security Calvary, Cleveland	20	35	

MARCH 20, 2016

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
Anthony Drive, Ennis		85	1 By Statement
Cedar Creek, Teague	15	18	
First, Blooming Grove	204		
First, Crandall	75	105	2 By Baptism, 1 By Letter
First, Omen	39	80	
First, Palmer	62	92	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	13	43	
Harvest, Lufkin	26	27	
Jackson, Joaquin	68	114	
Little Flock, Lufkin	12	12	
Merriman Hills, Sherman	16	18	
New Harmony, Tyler	297	388	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	47	55	
Piney Creek, Kennard	13	29	
Rosewood, Gilmer	136	225	1 By Profession

MARCH 27, 2016

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
Anthony Drive, Ennis		152	
Antioch, Gilmer	55	148	
Bethel, Groesbeck	39	46	
Cedar Creek, Teague	14	33	
First, Blooming Grove	224		1 By Baptism
First, Crandall	89	137	
First, Palmer	53	139	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	23	86	
Harvest, Lufkin	41	69	1 By Baptism
Jackson, Joaquin	89	198	
New Harmony, Tyler	10	12	
New Hope, Mineola	60	164	2 By Baptism
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	51	68	
Piney Creek, Kennard	16	33	
Rosewood, Gilmer	136	377	
Round Prairie, Fairfield	98	229	1 By Letter
Security Calvary, Cleveland	24	53	

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

Jonah—Mercy

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: April 10, 2016

TEXT: Jonah 1:1-3, 17; 2:1, 2, 10; 3:3, 5; 4:1, 4, 11

It is said the book of Jonah is divided into four parts; Chapter one records Jonah fleeing God; Chapter two records God bringing Jonah back to Him; Chapter three deals with Jonah preaching to Nineveh, and in chapter four, we see Jonah's anger at God calling off the judgement of Nineveh.

Jonah's experience influenced godless mariners to turn their hearts to the true and living God. Jonah 1:16 "The the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord and made vows." Only a sovereign God can receive glory even in our rebellion.

Jonah's experience reveals that God is still in sovereign control: Jonah 1:17 "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah, And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." The fish didn't just come by happen chance — it had been especially prepared by God to transport Jonah to the place to which God had instructed him to go.

Jonah's experience became an occasion for fervent, desperate, prayer. Jonah 2: 2 "And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the

belly of hell cried I, and thou headrest my voice." Is your prayer life a little lax? Time in the belly of the fish — or in the hospital — or in desperation over a loved one who is sick unto death, or the loneliness of an empty house because your spouse has departed, will certainly "fix" one's prayer life.

Jonah's experience resulted in an effective, successful evangelistic movement. Jonah 3:5 "So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them." When God leads an evangelist to preach to a city, He blesses the efforts and brings about desired results.

Even in God's victory, His man sometimes has issues to overcome: Jonah despised Nineveh. He wanted the great city destroyed. Assyria was an idolatrous, proud and ruthless nation, bent on world conquest. But our gracious God gave Jonah an object lesson of His matchless mercy and grace through the gourd. Jonah 4:8-10, and revealing His kindness and mercy toward Nineveh — Jonah 4:11.

APPLICATION:

When God speaks, even if His plan seems unreasonable, it is best to follow Him the first time.

Micah—Grace

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: April 17, 2016

TEXT: Micah 1:2-5; 3:9-12; 6:8; 7:18, 19

The Prophet: — Micah (meaning "who is like Yahweh") one of the 12 minor prophets, from Moresheth-Gath, prophesied during the reigns of kings Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. Micah prophesied future destruction of Jerusalem and Samaria, and its future restoration. He was a contemporary of Isaiah and Hosea. He prophesied during the fall of Israel to the Assyrian Empire in 722 BC.

Micah expressed his grief over the sinful conditions of Samaria and Jerusalem. In Judah, people were victimized by wealthy oppressors and false prophets (chapter 2) It was a government that lived in luxury off the hard work of its nation's people. Yet, he expressed hope for Israel in the future. (2:12-13) How history repeats itself!

In chapter 3, Micah warned against the leadership of Israel, saying they loved evil, and wreaked havoc upon the people.

In chapter 4 and 5, Micah gives the people a glimpse of Jesus's future millennial reign upon the earth and promises Israel's return from exile and the remnant purified. Also in chapter 5, we find a most vivid prophecy of the birth of Jesus Christ. (Micah 5:2)

Israel's guilt and punishment is established in chapter 6, but the Lord's compassion is manifest in chapter 7. Micah calls for God's chosen people to repent; 6:8 "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Nahum—Vindication

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: April 24, 2016

TEXT: Nahum 1: 1-12

Nahum, (which means "comforter") one of the minor prophets, was a contemporary of Micah and Habakkuk, with his single focus being on the plight of Ninevah. Some scholars believe Nahum wrote the book in Jerusalem in around the seventh century B.C.

Hailing from the town of Alqosh, (1:1) an Assyrian city in modern Northern Iraq, he was a very nationalistic Hebrew, and his writings were written before the downfall of Assyria, of which Ninevah was the capitol, and was located in what today is northern Iraq on the eastern bank of the Tigris River.

Nahum delivered a blistering message to the population of Ninevah, a city that, about 100 years earlier, had heeded the message of warning delivered by Jonah and they repented. But time passed, and the Assyrians had returned to their wretched ways, conquering the northern kingdom of Israel and wielding power over Judah to the south. (2 Kings 17) and deliberately

rebelling against the Lord God.

The Lord is a jealous God (verse 2) Although God is slow to anger (verse 3) He, and only He has the privilege and right to be jealous. Jealousy is an evil force in humanity, but a Holy, sovereign God has a perfect right.

The Lord is all powerful: He has the ability to control every force of nature (verse 4-5)

The Lord is good, and understands those who take refuge in Him, and place their trust in Him. (verse 7)

An important lesson to be learned from the plight of Ninevah is the fact people can experience revival and a renewed spirit in the Lord, but sometimes it doesn't last. People slip back into their old practices, drift away from the good graces of God, and sudden destruction will surely happen.

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.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Spring Show:

D. K. Molar, the Devious Dentist or...There's Gold in Them Thar Teeth!

April 7 (Student Night), April 8-9 (General Admission)

at 7:30 p.m. in the Mary S. Lewis Theater

Spring Choir Concert

April 12 at 7:00 p.m. in Buckner Chapel

Program Featuring Senator Robert Nichols:

"History of the Boundaries of Texas"

(Part of the Cherokee County 180th Celebration of the Independence of Texas)

April 19 at 7:30 p.m. in the Mary S. Lewis Theater

Jaguar Day Across Texas

(annual day of giving for Jacksonville College) Sunday, May 1

Commencement

May 7 at 1:30 p.m. in the Curtis Carroll Field House/Gymnasium



The survey results are in cont.

didn't feel like enough time was spent with family, even though weekends were spent with family.

2. People are searching for truth, even non-believers. When asked about what they would look for in a church, "Bible-based" was commonly given as an answer. People said that they wanted things like a church "not afraid to speak truth," and that "teaches the truth." Even for non-believers, it appears most people still connect truth with God's Word.

3. Perception is reality. When asked about their city, some said it was too small while others said it was too big. One person even said, "Georgetown is not too big and not too small." It sounds like the story of the Three Bears. Those who live in the same town have different perceptions about their town.

4. Nearly 40 percent of those we surveyed have lived in Georgetown less than 5 years. This isn't too surprising due to the rapid growth of the area. There does appear to be a rift between the long-time Georgetown residents and all the younger, new residents. One Georgetown resident of 43 years said, "Georgetown has changed for the worst. It's now weird, like Austin."



▲ The Andy Comer Family

5. About half of the people we surveyed have some sort of Christian background/influence. They mentioned the Bible as their favorite book, or they talked about how they listened to Christian radio.

Comer said, "Many told us they currently attend a church. But the reason we are planting a church is for the other half. It was evident that many had zero Christian background/influence. As one man shared, 'I don't go to church, and I'm not looking.'"

The future church planter requests continued prayers for the church plant in Georgetown.