

Baptist Progress

Baptist Progress, P.O. Box 2055, Waxahatchie, Texas 75168
Postmaster: send change of address to:
500125

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS | AUGUST 2020 | VOL. 107 | NO. 08

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MASTER'S BUILDERS

Thank you to the Texas WMA

By **JASON CURRY**

Texas Baptist Home for Children President

Thank you to the Women's Missionary Auxiliary (WMA) of Texas for helping us complete our swimming pool. We began the process in late 2019 and because of you and two other major gifts, we were able to complete it in mid-April. The children on the campus are loving the updated pool and splashpad during this time of quarantine.

I am always struck by the enthusiasm of a child jumping in the pool, splashing someone, then getting out and doing it all again. This simple repetitive action is fun and exciting. It's a good reminder of how important repetition is in a child's life. When children have a repetitive schedule, consistent schedule, they get into a routine and have more regulated moods and expectations of their day.

The opposite is also true. When children experience consistent fear, anxiety or trauma of any kind that leads to "unexpected" outbursts of anger, tears, uncontrolled laughter and nervous energy. Consistent abuse or neglect builds in children a consistent destructive behavior if not treated.

Children in our care are placed with families that have been therapeutically trained and go through difficult standards because of the type of experiences our children have gone through. Each child receives a Service Plan unique to who they are, what they have gone through and how they are expressing themselves in the home environment. Protecting children and helping them heal after trauma is why we are here. And I can see that we are making a difference.

A young woman came to the campus recently to visit the place she once called home. She grew up in foster care on TBHC's campus and came back to share that she was getting married. Her life is on a trajectory that may not have been possible had it not been for BMA of Texas churches. Your continued commitment to caring for children no matter the cost is what gave this young woman a hopeful future.

TBHC's staff love seeing children play because a child that can play can also heal. It is equally wonderful to see someone on the other side. Thank you for the contributions and the continued prayers for your ministry.

It will not surprise you to know TBHC is in need right now. Gifts of any amount are helping us continue to care for children from dark places. But because of you, children are experiencing hope for their futures. I'm just sayin'.





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BAPTIST PROGRESS

Jerry Fulton, Editor/Business Manager
P.O. Box 2085, Waxahachie 75168
972-923-0756 • www.baptistprogress.org

BAPTIST MISSIONARY LOAN ASSOCIATION

Jerry Burnaman, Manager
PO Box 73, Waxahachie 75168
972-923-0758

BMA OF TEXAS MISSIONS

Heith Mitchell, Director
PO Box 73, Waxahachie 75168
972-923-0757

JACKSONVILLE COLLEGE

Dr. Mike Smith, President
105 B. J. Albritton Drive
Jacksonville 75766
903-586-2518
www.jacksonville-college.edu

TEXAS BAPTIST HOME

Jason Curry, President
PO Box 309, Waxahachie 75168
972-937-1321 • www.tbhc.org



We met our goal

By **JERRY FULTON**

Thank you to every church, couple and individual who has given to the 2020 *Baptist Progress* Anniversary Offering Campaign. Throughout the month of June, churches, groups and individuals were asked to give \$108 for 108 years of service to *Baptist Progress*. Our overall goal was \$10,000. As of our July issue, we had received \$6,617. Since that time, we have received an additional \$3,415 for a total of \$10,032.

We are most grateful for all of your offerings! In addition to those we listed in our last issue, we thank the following who have given since then:



▲ Jerry Fulton

Total Received as of July Issue Publication:	\$6,617.00	First Missionary, Cleburne	108.00
		Glade Creek, Gilmer	108.00
Anonymous	650.00	House, Lola	108.00
Antioch, Gilmer	108.00	Mt. Pisgah, Mineola	216.00
Bauman Road, Houston	108.00	Old Bethel, Canton	108.00
Brazier, Robert and Carol	108.00	Ross, Bro. Leon and Johnnie	150.00
Calvary, Fairfield	1,000.00	Sheppard Drive, Euless	108.00
Emmanuel, San Antonio	108.00	Slocum First, Slocum	108.00
Enon, Gilmer	211.00	Ward Prairie, Fairfield	108.00
First, Glen Heights	108.00	TOTAL RECEIVED	\$10,140.00

Baptist Progress

USPS: 043120 • ISSN: 005-5751

Published every third week of the month by the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas

Jerry Fulton, Editor/Business Manager

editor@baptistprogress.org
P.O. Box 2085 • Waxahachie, Texas 75168
972-923-0756 (office) • 972-923-3534 (fax)

www.baptistprogress.org

Periodical postage paid at Waxahachie, Texas 75168 and at additional mailing offices

SUBSCRIPTION RATE:

Mail Church Plan: \$1.75 per month
E-Mail Church Plan: \$1.25 per month
Mail Subscription: \$24.00 per year
E-mail Subscription: \$18.00 per year
(Advertising Rates Available on Request)

Postmaster: Send address changes to Baptist Progress, P.O. Box 2085, Waxahachie, Texas 75168

Baptist Missionary Loan Association manager suffers heart attack and stroke

Bro. Jerry Burnaman, who serves as manager of the Baptist Missionary Loan Association, suffered a heart attack and a stroke on the morning of July 28, 2020. Since that time, he has been hospitalized in Methodist Dallas Medical Center in the intensive care unit. After being hospitalized, Bro. Burnaman developed pneumonia and has been on a ventilator for several days. As of the publication of this issue of *Baptist Progress*, Bro. Burnaman is responding by squeezing hands, waving and giving an occasional thumbs up.



▲ Jerry Burnaman

Baptist Progress Editor Jerry Fulton, posts a daily update on Bro. Burnaman's condition on the *Baptist Progress* Facebook page. Please be in prayer for Bro. Burnaman, his family and his medical team at this time.

Change of plans for 2020 BMA of Texas Annual Meeting, meeting to held on one day instead of two

The Administrative Committee of the BMA of Texas met August 4 in Jacksonville and decided that the 2020 BMA of Texas Annual Meeting will be held on one day instead of the usual two days. Of course, the decision was made due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

By holding the meeting on one day instead of two, no one, or at least few, will have to secure a hotel room or be concerned about eating out. A noon meal will be served at the location of this year's meeting, Farley Street Baptist Church in Waxahachie.

Plans for the meeting are in the works and a meeting schedule will be published in print and online by *Baptist Progress* when it is completed. The meeting date will be Thursday, Nov. 5, 2020.



“Martha, Martha!”

By PAUL GAUNTT

Pastor of First, Palmer

If a preacher introduces a message titled, “Martha, Martha!” a believer, who is a student of the word, and knows the account in Luke 10:39-42, can assume the message might deal with the perils of a workaholic, or misplaced values.

There are many souls today, with the Martha complex, who have found their way into the New Testament church. When anyone is plagued with the Martha complex, he or she can be described as a micro-manager, or one who distrusts any and everybody to do the job and do it well. The Martha complex causes one to believe no one else can equal their work ethic, nor can their agenda be nearly as important.

Martha considered her sister, Mary, to be lazy. There was a meal which was to be prepared for the house guests, but Mary was frittering away her time sitting at the feet of Jesus, basking upon His eternal truths, and was not being productive—like helping Martha get the meal ready. Martha was convinced the meal had far more value than the eternal truths Jesus was teaching in the parlor.

Martha was cumbered about with much serving. There was nothing that mattered but that her agenda was met. But her agenda was not fulfilling, nor was it done in joy. She was weighted down with the cumbersome duty of preparing the meal. So many people in God’s kingdom on earth are cumbered—weighted down. The deeds they suppose they are doing for the Lord are tedious, and burdensome. Oh, that God’s people, in His church, could find their niche—their place of giftedness—the place that brings them the most joy and fulfillment, and get with it. This is one of the greatest plagues in the church—people who are cumbered about with much serving but without the joy.

Martha had the spirit of control. She had an agenda, and for Mary to be in the parlor with Jesus interfered with her agenda, and her control over her sister. It is dangerous for a person with a spirit of control to try to supersede the control of the spirit of God. But that’s what Martha was really doing—she was resentful that Jesus seemed to have more control over Mary than she did. Pastors, if we resent Jesus having more control over our church members than we do, we have a very grave problem.

Martha chided the King of kings and Lord of lords because of Mary. “Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone”? That is the height of audacity. She may as well have said, “Lord, I don’t care if you are the Creator of the universe—you tell Mary I said get herself up from listening to your truths and come out here and help me!”

Jesus lovingly, gently, but firmly replied, “Martha, Martha. . . (the repetition of her name implied that it was imperative that she drop her foolish, selfish, workaholic pride and listen to Him) . . . “thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

I have known people in the church who were so cumbered about much serving, they felt that most everyone else was worthless and had agendas that were not nearly as urgent as their own.

A lady in one of my churches once chided me because



my wife, who, along with our music director’s wife, was working with a children’s choir. This lady emphatically informed me, “Your wife should be WMA president instead. After all, the former pastor’s wife was.”

I had a church treasurer once, who actually made the statement to me, “These people will vote for anything, but the Lord has made me steward over the money.” He so much as said to me, “The Lord’s church has no authority—it’s only me and I’m over the church.” I can’t help but wonder how he feels about that issue today—now that he is in eternity.

In conclusion, what, according to the text to which we have referred, would Jesus consider to be the most vital, and urgent matter in the church - To see that all the menial tasks get done, or that ample time is given to the King of kings and Lord of lords? By the way, and just for the record, it is impossible to give “ample” time to the worship of our Savior.

Many people believe a preacher is lazy if he spends too much time behind his desk, buried in commentaries, lexicons, different versions of the Bible and Bible dictionaries and not enough time with the menial tasks.

Martha thought Mary was lazy because she dared to sit at the feet of Jesus and hear His word rather than to sweat and toil out in the kitchen with her frantic sister.

But what did Jesus say? “Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” Simply put, Jesus may well have said, “Martha, 1,000 years from now, no one will remember, or even care what they ate for supper tonight, but Mary is receiving things out here in the parlor which will last her throughout eternity.”



Take your victory lap The battle is the Lord's!

It was a new day for Israel! Safe on the other side of the rushing, rolling Jordan River, some of the weary travelers may have been ready for some rest and relaxation. But this was no time to stop. Throughout their difficult journey God had been with them every step of the way and crossing through the threatening waters of Jordan was no different. Now there were stones to stack and a memorial to build so all generations would hear their story and never stop talking about it. In spite of their doubts and fears God had shown up over and over again with His presence, power and provisions and now they were almost home. (My summary Joshua 4)

But wait! Massive Jericho, a most formidable foe, loomed large in front of them and it was too big to ignore. Fortified by thick, stone walls and guarded by a bigger-than-life watchtower, Jericho was a fortress no army could conquer, or at least that’s how it must have looked to the Israelites. But Joshua had met the Commander of the Lord’s army and even though his instructions were most unusual the strategy was clear and the promised victory was sure: Walk. Blow trumpets, and with one loud victory-shout the walls would tumble down. I’m guessing Joshua may have raised a questioning eyebrow at first. The truth is, He wasn’t the only one. The folks on the inside of that well-guarded fortress were terrified but probably not surprised when they heard the first trumpet blast and saw the first rock fall. They had heard about the “unconventional warfare” of Israel’s powerful God and were locked down, sheltering inside just waiting for the end to come.

Days one through six might have been called a protest as the troops followed Joshua’s command to walk around the city, but on day seven the massive walls of Jericho surrendered to God Almighty and crumbled in a heap on the ground.

We’ve all had our “Jericho moments” when bigger-than-life challenges stopped us in our tracks before we even got started. Sometimes the battle is lost in the mind as we analyze and prove to our satisfaction why God’s plan won’t work. Other times we make a brave start but allow doubt, discouragement and distractions to overtake us and the fear of failure wins out.

Next time it happens, remember Joshua’s strategy: Look UP and listen to your Commander. Look BACK and recall past victories. Look AHEAD and trust Him with your future. Look WITHIN and worship His Holy Name. As you do, go ahead and take a victory lap because the battle is the Lords and He’s already won! Once you do that get ready to be amazed because our mighty God is always faithful and He never disappoints! (Read Joshua, chapters 1-6, for the thrilling details of this exciting story.)

Pat Quesenbury has been active in ladies’ ministry for years. She is a pastor’s wife, mother and active member of the Women’s Missionary Auxiliary. Contact her at pquesenbury@gmail.com.



Everlasting Smile Shoebox Ministry 2020

By **HOLLY MERIWEATHER**

BMA of America

This year, more than ever, we are excited to send our Christmas shoeboxes. In each shoebox, there are many fun things that children will enjoy. These boxes are packed with a lot of love and many prayers are prayed over them. But the most important thing that we can give any child is the opportunity to know Jesus. Our prayer is that through the ministry of Everlasting Smiles, we will open doors for our missionaries to tell families about Jesus and that the Bible inside each box will bring them closer to him.

We are moving forward with our shoeboxes and are ready to receive them. However, this year we have a few changes we want to share with you. Because of COVID-19, we are being careful to do our part and follow guidelines that different locations have put into place. We are thankful that we now have four regional drop-off stations for your boxes.

Local drop-off stations at churches listed on our website, bmamissions.org/Christmas-shoebox, are still accepting boxes, but we have added additional regional stations as well. These stations will serve, as our Conway location does, to pack your shoeboxes and get them ready for shipping. Regional stations will deliver those ready-to-ship boxes to Conway. What a blessing!

Here is a list of the regional drop-off stations that you can utilize, as well as local ones.

ARKANSAS:

BMA America Office, 611 Locust Street, Conway, AR 72034. Contact: Angela Rice, 214-498-3041

Prospect Baptist Church, 1603 Hwy 349, Jonesboro, AR 72401. Contact: Theresa Book, 870-598-4908 or Mike Book 870-598-7232

MISSISSIPPI:

Southeastern Baptist College, 4229 Hwy 15 N. Laurel, MS 39440. Contact: Anderle Foster, 601-344-8656

TEXAS:

Fellowship Baptist Church, 992 FM 1520, Pittsburg, TX 75686. Contact David Kizer, 903-767-1151

As you prepare to deliver your shoeboxes, we would ask that you please contact your drop-off station and set a time for delivery. This will not only speed up the process but will allow all of us to follow the appropriate CDC guidelines for each location. These might include limiting the number of people delivering the shoeboxes, practicing safe distancing, and wearing a mask as required by that location.

We appreciate you so much for your involvement in this ministry. If you have questions, please reach out to Angela Rice, angela@bmamissions.com or 214-498-3041.



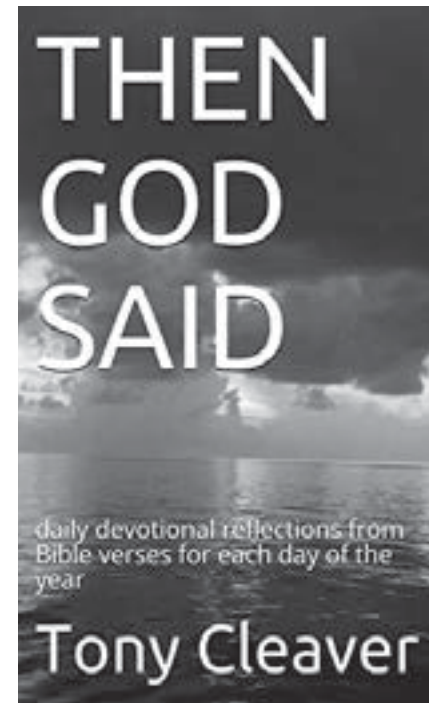
Tony Cleaver's book Then God Said available on Amazon Kindle

By **TONY CLEAVER, D.Min.**

ISAIAH 5.20

Christians believe, firmly believe, in a God who is absolute, unchangeable, and resolutely established in His control of His creation. It is He who created us. Does the determination of good or evil come from the definition of humankind? No, it comes from God. If one believes that humans are not created with divine purpose and design, and there is no absolute, then all

things are able to be inverted in terms of good/evil as the cultural and political situation dictates at any given time. If one believes that humankind is sovereign over life and that humanity is the center of the universe, and not God, then a secularist viewpoint of right/wrong/good/evil is open for any conclusion. Christians are aware the Lord God has revealed Himself to us in at least two ways: the creation of His worlds and the giving of His Word. He asks of us, His creation, to follow His principles rather than what the culture of the moment says is popular, fun, and amusing for us at this instant.



BMA of Texas Missionary has needs

BMA Texas Missions El Paso missionary, Gamalier Luna, has rented his own building for worship and is in need of a few items. If any BMA churches would like to help this new work with any of the items listed below, please contact BMA Texas Missions or Bro. Gamalier directly. His phone number is 915-274-8679 and his email address is gamaluga@hotmail.com. The following is a list of items they need:

1. Bass speaker
2. Speaker for keyboard and a keyboard
3. Projector
4. Four (4) microphones
5. Computer
6. Cables for microphone connections
7. Live Studio Audio Mixer/Mixing Console (see image for reference)
8. Microphone stands
9. Drum set

Thank you for your gracious support of BMA Texas Missions and this work in El Paso!



Jacksonville College honors retirees



By **MIKE SMITH, Ph.D.**

Two long-time employees of Jacksonville College were honored at a reception during the fall in-service activities. Linda Thomas, director of library services, and Dr. David Heflin, director of public relations and Spanish professor, retired after serving many faithful years at the College.

Marolyn Welch, academic dean and vice president of academic affairs, said, "Linda Thomas has been a faithful and enduring employee for Jacksonville College. No matter the area of assigned responsibility, she performed it with integrity and forethought. As director of library services, Mrs. Thomas worked diligently to ensure the Norman Library provided quality services to Jacksonville College students."

Linda Thomas will retire after 29 years of service at Jacksonville College. She began her service to the Lord at the College in 1990, working part-time in the library under Annabelle Anderson and part-time as secretary to Dr. Don Nelson, academic dean/registrar. Mrs. Thomas converted the library card catalog to MARC (machine-readable cataloging) records, taking the library catalog online. After several promotions, Mrs. Thomas served most of her years at the College in the Office of the Academic Dean/Registrar until 2013, when she received a promotion to director of library services, a position she held until retirement.



▲ **Linda Thomas**

During her early years at Jacksonville College, Mrs. Thomas worked for the college and attended classes, receiving her associate of science degree. She received a Bachelor of Arts and Science degree in Interdisciplinary Studies with a first concentration in Business Administration at Dallas Baptist University and a Master of Library Science degree from Texas Woman's University. Mrs. Thomas is currently a member of the Jacksonville College Alpha Beta Alpha Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa and has served as a member of the advisory team for the organization. She is a member of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest and most selective multidisciplinary collegiate honor society. In addition, Mrs. Thomas is a member of the Epsilon Omega Epsilon Honor Society, the national honor society for students in higher education pursuing a degree through online education.

Mrs. Thomas said, "It has been an honor to serve the Lord at Jacksonville College for the past 29. I pray for God's blessing on Jacksonville College as the institution continues to touch the hearts and lives of young people for the Lord." Mrs. Thomas' parting words were, "JBC will forever hold a dear place in my heart."

After 29 years with Jacksonville College, Dr. David Heflin retired from all the hats he has worn so faithfully and capably: Spanish professor, director of public relations, and chair of the proofreading team. He retired at the end of June to focus his attention on other assignments in his next phase of life, producing curricula and experiencing the joy of being more involved in the homeschooling of his 11 year old daughter.

When asked about Heflin's contribution to the College, Dean Welch explained, "Dr. Heflin has served Jacksonville College

tirelessly these many years, and he will be missed. He taught his Spanish courses with excellence and enthusiasm and was especially dedicated in representing Jacksonville College to the community through his duties as director of public relations. We pray God's richest blessings for him and his family."

Although Heflin's career began at the College in 2000, he and his family had deep ties to the College before Jacksonville College President Edwin Crank offered him a job. Heflin's grandfather, Delma Marshall, served on the Jacksonville College Board of Trustees for 18 years. Marshall's daughter, Frances, met Robert Duane (R.D.) Heflin at the College. The two married after graduating and had five children. Four of their children, including David, attended Jacksonville College. When Heflin was born in 1953, his father was serving as a pastor in Amarillo. However, it was not long before his father felt God calling him to be a foreign missionary for the BMAA, and in 1962, the Heflins moved to Costa Rica. At the age of 17, he left his home in Costa Rica to attend Jacksonville College. The JC faculty and staff took time to encourage him and help him succeed in his studies. He had a Spanish accent when he began college, but he credits his time in the Jacksonville College choir with helping him speak English without a Spanish accent. According to Heflin, he learned to "sing away" his accent.

After graduating from Jacksonville College in 1973, Heflin continued his education at Stephen F. Austin State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and History with a secondary teacher certification. Heflin was given an assistantship to teach at the university until he completed his Master of Arts in Spanish in 1976. In 1977, Heflin began working as a writer, editor, and translator for the Casa Bautista Misionera de Publicaciones, the Spanish publishing house of the BMAA in Lubbock. While working for the publishing house, Heflin took courses at Texas Tech University, where he earned his doctoral degree in Spanish with a composite minor in Portuguese and linguistics in 1991. During his time in Lubbock, Heflin translated for various national and international companies and organizations. He also hosted a weekly Spanish program on the Univisión cable television network to inform Spanish speakers about the roles of local and state elected officials.

After working for the publishing house for twenty years, Heflin was offered a teaching position at Texas Tech in 1997. He began teaching upper level Spanish courses at the university, but his desire was to teach in a Christian university where he could freely talk about his Christian faith and have a ministry to students. In 1998, he accepted a position as Spanish professor at Wayland Baptist University in Plainview. When he began teaching at Wayland, he met his future wife, Dr. Jenifer Thrall, who was also teaching Spanish at Wayland. The two became fast friends, and they married in 1999 in Jacksonville, Texas, Thrall's hometown.

In 2000, President Crank offered Heflin a job at Jacksonville College, and for the next 20 years, he enjoyed working for his alma mater. His years of experience with the Spanish publishing



▲ **Dr. David Heflin**

house prepared him for his role as director of public relations and as chair of the proofreading team for Jacksonville College, which proofreads most documents that are released from the College. In his role as director of public relations, Heflin oversaw the College's public and media relations efforts and developed press releases and created ads to promote the College and its mission. He also took thousands of pictures each year, selecting the best ones for use in printed and digital publications.

In the classroom, Heflin used an immersive approach, encouraging the use of Spanish only from the first class. By using graphics, props and digital tools like PowerPoint slides and videos, he was able to engage language learners in a way that made learning Spanish fun. His first-hand knowledge of Hispanic American cultures helped him correct misconceptions and stereotypes his students had about the cultures of the different Spanish speaking countries.

Heflin firmly believes in the integration of faith and learning, and that philosophy was evident in his classes. Dr. Heflin also stressed the importance of being biliterate in Spanish and English because many employers today look first for employees who are fluent in both languages. Because he was encouraged and mentored as a student at Jacksonville College, he enjoyed doing the same for his students.

Now that Dr. Heflin has retired, he and his wife plan to continue homeschooling. They also hope to develop more language learning materials through their own company, Heflin and Thrall Language Publications, adding to their DVD-based "Puertas Abiertas" curriculum, a graphic-intensive, immersive Spanish program curriculum for children.

Although he has retired, Heflin still sees himself as part of the Jacksonville College family. He explained, "My life verse is Psalm 37:4: 'Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart.' In God's goodness, He permitted me to serve him for 20 years at the Spanish Publishing House with managing editor Robert Isaacs, and for 20 years under the leadership of two dedicated, godly presidents—Dr. Edwin Crank, and Dr. Mike Smith—at Jacksonville College. He also gave me a beautiful family. He has given me the desires of my heart, which were His all along."

JOIN THE FAMILY AT JACKSONVILLE COLLEGE

August 12th

CLASSES BEGIN FIRST CHAPEL MEETING

Reach us by email at
admissions@jacksonville-college.edu
or phone at 903-589-7110

Dr. Mike Smith is the president of Jacksonville College. Contact him at 105 B.J. Albritton Drive, Jacksonville, Texas 75766, 903-586-2518 or msmith@jacksonville-college.edu.





CHURCH HEALTH

Should I stay or should I go?

By **LARRY BARKER**

The transition from one pastor to another is a very crucial and delicate time in the life of a church. Often, this transition time has not been handled very well. It has been said that, “there is no success without succession.” Succession requires forethought, prayerful planning and thinking through an agreed upon next steps for the church. The question is, “How long is too long?” Can a pastor overstay His welcome or even his effectiveness? Your effectiveness is more about calling, heart, vision and passion for the church and the community than it is your skill set.

Also, be careful of leaving too soon because of big dreams or discouragement. Paul David Tripp in *New Morning Mercies* shares that he was chasing his ministry dream and did not even realize it. He says this about his decision to resign one church, “I was going to exit the nightmare and go live the dream.” After resigning there was an older gentleman who said, “We know you’re discouraged and we know you’re a bit immature, but we haven’t asked you to leave. Where is the church going to get mature pastors if the immature ones leave?” He realized he was running and decided to stay instead of jumping ship.

There is a time to stay and there is also a time to go but how do you prayerfully discern between the two? You almost always believe you have one more good year in you. You can become obsessed with holding on faithfully instead of developing a plan as God gave Moses to raise up a Joshua. One, of many, important things to consider is if your spiritual fire has diminished from how it once burned. Have you accomplished what God called you there to accomplish and is it time to move on? There will be no smooth succession if a plan is never developed and agreed upon. Who are you raising up?

Hal Seed has helped us with different materials on church health and church planting. In writing on the importance of transitioning well from one pastor to the next he shares some traps you can easily fall into in the ministry.

The first is the “Maintenance-Only” trap. This is where you allow the needs of the church to keep you from continuing to expand God’s kingdom through evangelism and outreach. 2 Timothy 4:5 says, “As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.” Are you focused on the fields white unto harvest?



The next is the “Heart-Loss” trap. This is vital to your ability to stay and be who God intended you to be. One pastor said you must learn how to be thick-skinned and tender-hearted at the same time. Solomon said to guard your heart. The devil will throw everything he can at you to cause you to walk away. The heart of the leader is vital if the heart of the church is to be healthy and strong. Pastor you are not there to maintain and sustain but to thrive spiritually and for your church to be healthy, vibrant and bearing fruit. Self-leadership is the most important leadership you will exercise.

The third trap we can all fall into is “Vision-Hijack.” Members have their own agendas and from day one you must make sure that everyone is on the same page. People need to know who your church is, how you will operate and how you will carry out God’s vision for your context and community. One pastor has said that you have to be mean about your vision. You will certainly have to protect it many, many times. Do not allow a Diotrephes to hijack your vision. 3 John 9 says, “I wrote a short letter to the church; but Diotrephes, who likes to be their leader, will not pay attention to what I say.”

The next trap can be a very difficult time in your ministry and it is the “Discouragement Pit.” This will come at some point or time and at one level or the other. It can sneak up on you because of the challenges you face, conflicts you observe and disappointments you experience.

Hal seed says, “Therefore, refueling faith, hearing from God, receiving mentoring and outside encouragement, as well as old-fashioned perseverance will help you cope.” There is a weight and burden that comes with correctly shepherding the Lord’s church.

If you are discouraged and not sure of what to do next get away for a prayer retreat and seek God’s face and presence. Reach out to some godly advisors who can help guide you through this season. Take a vacation or a sabbatical if possible. Hal adds, “Your desire to move on might be driven by fatigue and exhaustion. The best course may be to take a break. Get away and rest. The situation may look different after an extended break.” We will cover four more ministry traps in the next article.

Paul said this to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:15-16, “Practice these things; be committed to them, so that your progress may be evident to all. Pay close attention to your life and your teaching; persevere in these things, for by doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers.”

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.





INSIGHTS *for* PASTORS

Casting Vision

By ALLEN TILLEY, D.Min

Speaker and writer John Maxwell said, “If you’re two steps in front of your people, you’re a leader. If you’re ten steps in front of your people, you’re a martyr.” Finding and maintaining the right balance is crucial for pastors. An effective tool in maintaining that balance is creating and casting the vision that God has for your church. Proverbs 29:18 teaches, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

Without a vision, churches flounder, wandering endlessly from one program to another. Once certain of God’s plan, people rally together, creating a spirit of unity and cooperation. A lesson I’ve learned in ministry is that if I, as the leader, do not provide the vision for my church, someone else will. People join churches with preconceived ideas as to what the church should look like, and those ideas aren’t always biblical.

Missionary J. Hudson Taylor said, “God’s work, done God’s way, will never lack God’s supply.” Here are seven simple steps in creating a vision that will ignite a sense of purpose for every church.

Ask the Father. Always remember, it is His church. Therefore, we must take the time to find His will. Jesus told the disciples that He would build the church (Matthew 16:18). Based on that verse, I believe that the Lord wants every one of His churches to flourish. Go into your prayer closet and don’t

leave until you have His answer.

Study your community. While praying for God’s vision, take an assessment of the people around your church by asking two questions. What needs do they have? What can your church do to create a spiritual thirst in the unchurched? Remember, people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care. Be like Paul in Acts 17:23; look for something that will engage the lost.

Survey the talent in your church. First Corinthians 12 teaches the church is one body, made up of different body parts. God places those “parts” in your church to make a fully functioning church. What are the spiritual gifts, talents, and skills of your church members? In what ways can you best utilize their strengths for the glory of God?

Seek wise counsel. Once you begin to formulate a plan, share it privately with those you trust. Be sure your counselors are spiritually guided and in touch with the Master. Proverbs 11:14 reminds us there is wisdom in a multitude of counselors. Only the foolish would design something that will affect the entire church without getting feedback first. Give your counselors the freedom to give suggestions for changes.

Launch with enthusiasm. Once you find God’s vision, be excited as you share it with the church. Let them know the

journey you’ve been on and how God has led you to this point. Enthusiasm is contagious. If you’re not sold on the vision first, your people will never buy into it. Go back to your prayer closet and start over. However, if you genuinely believe it’s God’s will, then let the church see and hear your excitement. Carefully explain God’s plan so everyone will understand it.

Promote, promote, promote. People are forgetful creatures. If you mention something once, they quickly forget. Keep your vision alive by reminding your people often, and through as many media as possible, such as preaching on it, putting it in the Sunday handout, listing it in your monthly calendar, and creating space for it on your website. When new members join inform them of your vision. Be sure to plan avenues for fulfilling the vision and then celebrate the victories.

Dr. Allen Tilley is pastor of First Baptist Church of Carthage, Texas. He has over 30 years of pastoral experience, and God has continually blessed his ministry with dynamic spiritual and numerical growth. Contact him at allen@firstbaptistcarthage.com.



Moral Action

By JOHN ADAMS, D.Min

Never before have we encountered such anti-God, anti-church and destructive behavior as we are dealing with today. We all must agree that change is in the air for America and for our world. Even so, it’s not likely that you and I will ever have to face consuming torture as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had in the furnace of Daniel’s book.

Many writers and speakers tell us that God knows completely what we are going through. So, the very strength and joy is that Jesus is walking through it with us. We do love Him!

Psalm 91:15-16: “He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.”

I have resigned as senior pastor of First, Mantachie, Mississippi after 20 years of service. These years have been wonderful and God anointed.

First, Mantachie has agreed to let Moral Action ministries continue to use the large office that we have used since 2005. I plan to work three-fourths time in Moral Action efforts. Mrs. Adams and I will do our very best to honor our Lord in this valuable and needed ministry.

Of course, travel is limited and we will not be going to Jackson or Washington, D.C. until the COVID subsides. By email, snail mail, telephone, text and social media, we will continue.

The 2020 Moral Action Freedom offering has been

exceptional. We are approaching \$21,000.00, which dealing with our climate of social unrest has been encouraging. Thank you to church members, teachers, WMA groups, Brotherhood groups, pastors and deacons for your support and prayers.

Please continue to help us by giving monthly. Set us in your budget this fall or this New Year. There is joy in my heart!

Dr. John M. Adams is the executive director of BMAA Moral Action. Contact him at Moral Action - BMA of America . P.O. Box 305 . Mantachie, Mississippi 38855 or visit www.macbma.net for more information.





A word from your Missions Office

By HEITH MITCHELL

In the current climate of Cancel Culture and in the face of a real illness, I am overjoyed to report to you that your missionaries reported 21 souls saved this month. This is less than half the reports before COVID-19, but this number is amazing during shut down. They are laboring hard for the Kingdom. All 30 of your supported missions are meeting live for worship. Discipleship is taking place. House groups are active. Like all churches they are seeing the loss of some who have not returned from the initial shutdown.

We all join you in praying for the end of this virus and shutdown. We pray that God will get glory in this season.

Join us in laboring and praying for:



- That we see an aggressive multiplication movement of churches who make disciples, equip and release leaders and start churches for the glory of God and the advancement of his Kingdom mission
- That each new mission begins with a plan to begin three new churches in their first 10 years
- That pastors and churches of the association be encouraged and equipped to start new churches
- That we connect, evaluate, identify and train new prospective church planters

We would love to share with your church about what God is up to and show you how you can be involved. I am personally available to come and share. We also have tools we can provide you with to help you become a partner in church planting. Reach out to us.

Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

A word from your missionaries

MATTHEW PRATHER—
THE BRIDGE MISSION, MIDLOTHIAN/WAXAHACHIE
MATTHEW@DISCOVERTHEBRIDGE.COM
DUAL SUPPORT BMAA/BMAT

Summer is quickly coming to a close and school will be starting soon. There are many questions as to what that will look like in our area. I am sure that is the same in your area as well. There seems to be so much uncertainty in our world today. We are continuing to navigate how COVID-19 is affecting our



▲ Matthew Prather

community and our church. We continue to reach out to our community in new ways. We are seeing people saved through our online content and ministering to a lot of new people online and have good conversations with them. People are hurting, their marriages are struggling, they are fearful, etc. All these things are leading to conversations with people in our area. I ask that you would continue to pray for us as we minister during this different time. We thank you for your continued support and prayers.

PRAYER NEEDS:

Pray for us as we lead our church through COVID-19.

KINGSLEY NDUKA—
LIGHT HOUSE MISSION
IN HOUSTON
KINGEDU700@GMAIL.COM

May the Lord continue to uphold and keep you for all good works.

PRAYER NEEDS:

I need God's wisdom in taking steps as He leads me.



▲ Kingsley Nduka

JESSE HALES—
ANCHOR AUSTIN MISSION IN LEANDER
HALESJESSE@GMAIL.COM
DUAL SUPPORT BMAA/BMAT

COVID-19 is forcing all of us to think outside the box when it comes to outreach and connecting with people. As we prayed for new ideas this month, pressure washing popped into our minds. We rented some equipment, and with the help of a few friends, we made a meaningful, lasting connection with about 20 families in our neighborhood pressure washing driveways and other things completely for free. It's surprising how fast doors open up and conversation starts to happen when you find a meaningful way to love on people like that. The most common question we got was "is this for real" followed up by my favorite "why". What a great platform for explaining the love of God.



▲ Jesse Hales

PRAYER NEEDS:

We are getting ready to start our small groups back up and ask that you pray for that to go well.

ISAIAS ROJAS OSECHAS—
CHURCH PLANT IN SPRING
ISAIAS.ROJA5299@GMAIL.COM

Continue to pray for us, for the establishment of new

small groups and development of the Baptist mission, Victory in Christ. Pray for its forthcoming constitution into Pioneer Church. Infinite thanks for your moral, economic and great encouragement in planting new churches. Pray that we achieve our goal of three new groups so they can join with the church.



▲ Isaias Rojas Osechas

NEPTALY MOLINA—
IGLESIA BAUTISTA MISSION, NACOGDOCHES
NRMOLINA23@GMAIL.COM

We spent a good time in the Beaumont camp July 22-25. Everything planned by the Baptist Missionary Association of America was a great blessing. The lectures, the adoration, the food, the fun and the impressive testimonies of the speakers was great. God spoke to me and I renewed my commitment to continue letting God work in my mission areas.



▲ Neptaly Molina

PRAYER NEEDS:

For our spiritual lives. Prayer that we win new families in Cushing. Pray also Our Vacation Bible School this month. We will do it in the outdoor park in Nacogdoches. Finally, pray for my graduation in 2021.

WESLEY BURKE—
REDEMPTION BAPTIST MISSION, NACOGDOCHES
WESLEYDAVIDBURKE@GMAIL.COM

Romans 14:23b says, "For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin." There are many options to appease others in these uncertain days, but the Christian must remember to act in regards to their conscience as it is informed by the Word of God. This has encouraged me specifically through quarantine and the COVID-19 pandemic we all face.



▲ Wesley Burke

PRAYER NEEDS:

Pray that God would grow our church through genuine conversion and that COVID-19 would end.

Gamalier Luna – New Mission in El Paso
 gamaluga@hotmail.com

We have moved into a new building and have these needs:

1. Bass speaker

BMA TEXAS MISSIONS continued on p. 14

Master's Builders come to Texas



By **NELDA MALONE**
Master's Builders Reporter

The Master's Builders began work at New Beginnings, Venus July 6, 2020. The church needed help on their 30 X 60 feet fellowship hall. Seven Master's Builders helped in building walls and putting up sheetrock and completed the work in two days. Thank you to Pastor Brian Merchant and the church for the great food and fellowship.

One of our Master's Builders, John Mangum of Ruston, Louisiana, has been called home. He was one of four men who had a vision for a group of people who would help a church build a place of worship that they otherwise could not

have afforded. This was in 1991, and The Master's Builders were formed. Bro. Mangum was our office coordinator until January 2019. Pray for his wife, Linda, and the family. He was a dear friend who will be sadly missed.

If your church has building needs or if you have any questions about The Master's Builders ministry, you can contact Eddie Sikes at 479-462-1675, Mike Green at 972-935-3877 or David Axe at 903-918-0720.

Remember to "Like Us" on Facebook at "The Master's Builders" and keep up with our ministry.

Can COVID-19 stop us?



By **JORDAN M. TEW**
Assistant to the Director of Baptist Publishing House

Dear friends, I am concerned about the current state of our churches. Consider what has become "normal" for us: we are barely meeting for weekly worship, some congregations have eliminated singing praises to our Lord, most churches are not actively going out into their communities to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus, and Sunday school classes are off the table in a growing number of churches. What in the world is going on?

Now before anyone takes offense at these words, let me assure you I understand there are churches and individuals who have decided to cancel various meetings and have made changes to better protect their health and safety. I applaud that, and I understand those decisions are difficult for churches and individuals to make. I also understand there is a need to abide by the law of the land, if possible and if it does not go against the commands of the Bible.

However, an ongoing lack of corporate worship, evangelism, and Bible teaching can never become "the new normal." God's Word and His mandate to His churches have not changed. Are we being faithful during these days? Are we preaching the Gospel as we ought? Are we worshipping as the Bible instructs us? Are we baptizing and taking the Lord's Supper? Are we neglecting anything God has commanded us?

I wonder if COVID-19 is the biggest obstacle we will face in our lifetime? I would assume it is not. If this virus proves to be an ongoing setback for our churches, then how will we respond to the other trials Christ has promised we will face? How will we handle famine, nakedness, and sword or persecution, hatred, and false prophets (Romans 8, Matthew 24)? Will we stand on the promise that Hell itself will not prevail against us or will we merely limp along until Jesus returns?

The truth is, God's people have always assembled and ministered despite trials. In the roughly 2,000-year span since Jesus walked on this earth, His churches have faced persecution, plague, war, starvation, terrorism, economic instability and governmental opposition. How we handle our current situation will impact our children and our grandchildren directly.

God's people are well-acquainted with suffering and difficult times. In fact, we have often thrived under harsh conditions and God has used times like our own to usher in great outpourings of salvation and revival. We have not been called to comfort or safety. We have been called to faithfulness. Will COVID-19 stop us? Perhaps a better question is "Can COVID-19 stop us?"

Consider the words of your Savior and the Cornerstone of your church: "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

2020 National Senior Adult Conference canceled

After much thought and prayer, the difficult decision has been made to cancel the 2020 National Senior Adult Conference due to safety concerns with COVID-19. The safety of friends and family is very important. Though the meeting will not

take place this year, plans are already in the works for the 2021 National Senior Adult Conference. Mark your calendars for the 2021 National Senior Adult Conference that will be held Nov. 15-17 2021 at the Chateau on the Lake in Branson, Missouri.





Sweet Hour of Prayer Ladies Conference

By **GLENDA CHAMBERLAIN**

Come experience a wonderful day of encouragement and renewal as Texas WMA sponsors *Sweet Hour of Prayer Ladies Conference*. This one-day, spirit-filled event, open to all ladies and teen girls, is scheduled for Sept. 12, 2020 at Northside, Conroe.

The date is drawing near. You must register by Aug. 22 with Jeannie Walker by calling or texting 936-756-6324, or emailing leonawalker@consolidated.net. A fee of \$15 is due at the door on the day of event.

Kristi Key, Texas WMA second vice president, has planned a full day of worship, music and breakout sessions from 9 a.m. through 3 p.m. Lunch will be provided. For anyone arriving on Friday evening, she will hold a special prayer journaling class at 7 p.m. If you are interested in attending the prayer journaling class, be sure to mention this when registering for the conference.

The guest speaker for the conference will be Stacie Bostic. Stacie is committed to bringing teaching and testimonies that demonstrate the power of God to her community and encouraging others to surrender to God's purpose and experience the joy of allowing Him to manifest in their lives. The Lord has paved an exciting path for Stacie to touch hearts and minds with her testimony that focuses on the art of surrender, walking by faith and rising above your circumstances. Stacie's message is firmly grounded in the Word of God.



▲ Stacie Bostic

She loves to connect with women of all ages by sharing her story and her passion for Jesus. Gathering with women in diverse settings is one of her greatest joys. Because she feels so strongly about praise, worship and the power of God's Word, she founded Girl Power in 2009 in Gun Barrel City in order to connect "girls of all ages" to God's Word and fellowship.

Stacie's desire, ultimate and consuming, is to remain Kingdom-focused and to live a transformed life, that she might "prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2). Stacie loves Jesus.

- Breakout sessions include: Sweet Hour of prayer....
- During Grief by Cheryl Hughes
- During Divorce by Laura Hazzard

- With Aging Parents by Cindy Allen
- Raising Littles by Christie Burton
- Raising Teens by Kim Cade
- Newly Married by Chelsea Mendez
- For Teens and Young Women by Makaye Key
- Intercessory Prayer by Johnnie Ross
- Mentoring by Charlotte Johnson
- Bible Study by Marsha Cyzmer
- Sharing the Gospel by Tonya Smith

Worship in music will be led by John Mendez and Makaye Key. John is the worship pastor at Liberty, Gun Barrel City. John has been blessed with a talent for music and a heart to bring others to the throne of God. The Lord has blessed Makaye with a servant's heart and beautiful voice. She will bless you with her heart for the Lord.

Childcare will be available. Please note number of children needing the nursery and child(s) age when registering.

Nearby hotels include Holiday Inn Express, Hampton Inn & Suites, Homewood Suites and Fairfield Inn and Suites.

Northside, Conroe is located at 701 North FM 3083 West in Conroe.

You can find more information about the speaker and breakout sessions on Facebook by searching for *Sweet Hour of Prayer*, also on the WMA website at www.texaswma.com.

For more information, please feel free to contact Kristi Key at 903-340-0845 or Outnumberdad@aol.com.

Be sure to register today with Jeannie Walker. You will not want to miss this wonderful ladies conference as we dig deeper into prayer while renewing and strengthening our relationship with our Lord and Savior.

Glenda Chamberlain is the Texas Women's Missionary Auxiliary (WMA) editor. Contact her at gcham33@yahoo.com. For more information about the Texas WMA, visit www.texaswma.com.





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MINISTERS RESOURCE SERVICES

My pastor's three greatest prayer needs

By **STEVE CRAWLEY, Ph.D.**

In July of 2018, my pastor at Antioch, Conway, Arkansas, Dr. Jason Aultman, asked each of the national and state department directors who were church members to preach one Sunday of the month. I felt led to share a message titled, "How to Be Your Pastor's MVP (most valuable player)," which was my version of an effort John Maxwell spearheaded in the early 2000s.

The thesis of the message was to convey that the single most important thing we can do for our pastor is pray for him daily. Not making supplication on his behalf through vague prayers, mind you, but interceding with specificity.

Charles Spurgeon stated that our prayer life can often be likened to us browsing through a department store: We go here and there meandering around but really don't put much thought into what we are doing.

To aid our church in implementing the challenge of the message, I asked our pastor beforehand for his three greatest prayer needs. I assert that the three requests he made known then are applicable to all pastors, missionaries, and ministers at large today. Please consider the following when praying for your leader.

HIS FAMILY

Unless you have experienced living in a pastor's family, you have no idea of the inherent burden that some church members place on his wife and children. According to Brian Croft in a May 2020 article in *Tabletalk* magazine, "Eighty percent of pastors surveyed said the ministry has had a negative effect on their families."

He further states that research shows a majority of church members expect their pastor and his family to live at a higher moral standard than they live themselves, leading to the proverbial 'glass bubble.'"

A church leader needs enough margin to pastor his family before he pastors the church. Members should be mindful of boundaries that allow him to prioritize his investment in his wife and children. Years ago, Bro. Arnold Knight shared, "After looking back over my ministry, I wish I had spent more time with my kids and less time worried about disgruntled church members."

SPIRITUAL VITALITY

Sundays come awfully fast. Because of many peripheral responsibilities, a pastor's time in the Word may often be confined to sermon preparation. Such action does not necessarily build his spiritual vitality.

In his book *Leading on Empty*, Wayne Cordeiro claims

that 85 percent of what we do we could delegate, 10 percent of what we do we could train someone to do, but 5 percent of what we have to do only we can do. This top 5 percent relates to his wife and children (as mentioned earlier), his health, and his time with the Lord. Our pastor must have the marginal latitude to focus on his top 5 percent, and at the top of that list is his personal walk with God. He cannot lead us where he has not been, and he cannot give us what he does not have.

A CLEAR VISION

In Proverbs 29:18(a), Solomon writes, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." This verse does not refer to the importance of vision in leadership but to the importance of a clear understanding of God's Word and directives.

The pastor has a heavy responsibility to seek divine revelation then lead his people accordingly. His challenge is to discern the difference in the latest leadership fads and the timeless truths of God's Word.

Next, as Henry Blackaby states, he must not "sell the vision" but communicate what God has revealed, trusting the Holy Spirit to prepare hearts. This is no small task, and divine intervention on behalf of his flock is paramount.

In conclusion, to the pastors of our churches, you have what I consider to be the highest calling in the world. This calling is the passion of your life. Consequently, though you and your family may not be tired of ministry, you may be tired in ministry. So, don't try to be a lone ranger. Share your burdens with your church and give them an opportunity to intercede on your behalf.

To the members of our churches, let's be faithful to pray specifically for the following:

- That God will bless your pastor's family so that they may thrive in their calling
- That God will sustain your pastor's spiritual vitality so that he may thrive in his preaching
- That God will make his vision crystal clear to your pastor that he may thrive in his leading—all for the glory of God!

Dr. Steve Crawley is the executive director of Ministers Resource Services. Contact him at P.O. Box 995, Conway, Arkansas 72033, 844-262-8637 or MRS@bmaamerica.org.



An expression of everlasting love

Many of our friends choose to honor or remember a family member, a friend or an associate with a gift for the children of the Baptist Home. Texas Baptist Home for Children, in turn, notifies the appropriate person. Listed in capital letters are those honored or remembered from Jul. 1-Jul. 31, 2020.

ENDOWMENTS

MYRA STOKES: Bill Stokes

HONORARIUMS

MR. & MRS. KEITH FAULKNER: Leon & Johnnie Ross

BRO. CHARLES & CHARLOTTE JOHNSON: Stanley & Doris Allen

LEORA JOHNSON'S 80TH BIRTHDAY: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

MR. & MRS. ALAN LENNOX: Leon & Johnnie Ross

MR. & MRS. ROY MERRILL: Leon & Johnnie Ross

KARL PACE: Kelly Penick

BABY G PARAMORE: Cheri Matthews

MR. & MRS. KEVIN PHILLEY: Leon & Johnnie Ross

MR. & MRS. JOSH ROSS: Leon & Johnnie Ross

MR. & MRS. LEON ROSS: Leon & Johnnie Ross

AUDREY POOL SMITH'S 100TH BIRTHDAY: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

MR. & MRS. ALFRED E SPRINGER: Leon & Johnnie Ross

MR. & MRS. COLTON STEGALL: Leon & Johnnie Ross

CLINT WILSON: Charles & Iris Wilson

NICKIE WILSON: Charles & Iris Wilson

MEMORIALS

HELEN ANDERSON: Steven Anderson

WALTER BECKER: Dennis & Ilona Myrice

GEORGE BISHOP: Stanley & Doris Allen

TOMMY BLAKLEY: Betty Blakley

LARRY & ROSELEN BOBO: James Bobo

SABRINA BRADSHAW: James & Linda Sockwell

ARGE JAMES BROCKLES: James & Linda Sockwell

LLOYD CASHION: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

EVELYN CHERRY: David & Lexa Adams

VICKI JOYCE JAMAR CHRISTIAN: Charles & Charlotte Johnson; Dale & Trena Tillery; Donna Dugger; Henry & Renesia Wilburn

JOE CLARK: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

KENNETH WAYNE CLINE: James Perryman; Dorothy Wright; Eileen Cmerak & Family; Cindy Ulen; Jimmy & Syble Glasscock

JAY DAVIS: Linda Lewis

MISS EMILY DAY: Mildred Burkhardt

PEGGY DENMAN: Brian Mauk

KENNETH DICKEY: James & Debbie Murphy

SONNY DUNAVANT: Margaret Wolf

DAVID ELLIOTT: Ray & Claynell Dennis

GEORGIA GIBBS: Latch Baptist Church, Gilmer

BILLY EDWARD GLENN: Henry & Renesia Wilburn; Brent & Tammy Swanner; Jed & Glenice Whitaker; Brian Mauk; Caleb & Jami Davidson; Jon & Lena Williamson; Jimmy & Carla Shipp;

MATASHA GOEBEL: Mrs. J.T. Goebel

TILMON GOEBEL: Mrs. J.T. Goebel

MARLENE GORE: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

MACK HICKS: Neta Hicks

DORIS JOHNSON: Andy & Nell McCuiston

JOYCE 'MIM' JOHNSON: Brenda Caldwell; Kim Robertson

ROLAND JONES: Linda Lewis

DORIS LASITER: Antioch Baptist Church, Palestine

LEON LESTER: Allen & Holly Cousins

MARY CATHERINE LEVERETT: Allen & Holly Cousins

KEVIN LEWIS: Linda Lewis

BENNIE LYBRAND: Duane & Charlotte Turner

JOHN ROY MCWHORTER: Jimmy & Carla Shipp

JOYCE MILES: Kenneth & Tina McKnight

H.V. MINTER: Bethel Methodist Church, Colleyville; Jerry & Delores Duncan; Jennifer McIntosh; Johnna Hill, James & Diana Battersby; Zelma Prince; Stacie Chapmond; Woody Jarmon; Dale & Jane Davis

CHARLES MITCHELL: Gay Mitchell

GREG MOODY: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

DON O'PRY: Temple Baptist Church

PEGGY REEVES: L.C. & Jennetta Whitehead; Eddy & Dora Whitehead; Beth Versland

BYRON SPENCER: Charles & Charlotte Johnson; James & Debbie Murphy

MR. & MRS. EDWARD TALBOT: Roy & Elizabeth Talbot

LOIS TUCKER: Dan & Lamarsha Wimberly

E.T. WILLIAMS: Minnie Williams

JOHN WOLCOTT: Gay Mitchell

MARY WOLFINGTON: John Wolfington

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

A life transformed

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: September 6, 2020

TEXT: Acts 9:1-31

THE HOOK

Imagine with me for a moment—Adolph Hitler, the ruthless dictator of Germany, who rose to power in the mid to late 30's and reigned until 1945, orchestrated the slaughter of 6 million Jews and millions of other people. Suddenly, the news breaks that Hitler had been gloriously saved—and God had told him to come to your house, (you being a Jew) where you would minister to him and care for him as he is set on course to be a great force for Christ. Put yourself in Ananias's shoes. What would you think? What would you do? Perhaps you could relate better with Osama bin Laden—the butcher of Bagdad, Saddam Hussein, or Charles Manson. You say they were much worse than Saul—Paul said he was “chiefest of sinners.”

THE BOOK

God sovereignly selects the most unlikely man in the world (verses 15-16) to be His servant. Why would He do this? So we might be assured that there was no other personality or force that could have possibly taken the glory.

- 1. God knows how to get His man (verses 3-6).**
- 2. God does the impossible to demonstrate His power (verse 20).** Paul immediately began preaching Jesus—the One Whose church he persecuted just a few days earlier.
- 3. Men were astonished (verse 21).** The same man who caused such havoc toward the church, was now on fire for God. The miraculous transformation of Saul of Tarsus served to create such a stir in the church—the kind of stir that broke out in an exciting movement that glorified Christ.
- 4. The tables were turned for Paul (verse 22).** Like the preaching of Jesus, the Jews could not refute Paul's message

of Jesus as the Messiah. But now, Paul was in the crosshairs of the legalistic Jews. His own people hated him, and true believers were still afraid of him.

THE LOOK

One great lesson we take away is this—the calling of God upon Saul was personal. Verse 7 says that the men in Saul's company on that Damascus Road were speechless. They could hear the sound of a voice, but saw no one. God targeted one person—Saul. When God calls one to repentance—or to preach the gospel, it is personal. When He called the Ethiopian eunuch, it was personal, and it was plotted and planned (God sent Phillip). God's call is always personal—powerful, and purposeful. That was certainly the case with Saul. It is so, with anyone who has been called of God.

God grants repentance—even to Gentiles

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: September 13, 2020

TEXT: Acts 11:1-18

THE HOOK

My Dad loved to tell the story about the farmer selling his mule to another man. He assured the man that the mule was a worker and would always obey. So, after the man got the mule home, he realized the mule was in fact very stubborn. So, he sent for the farmer to come help him with the mule. After the farmer arrived, he took a two-by-four and knocked the mule in the head. After that, the mule had no trouble following commands. The farmer turned to the man and said, “I forgot to tell you—you have to get his attention first.”

Although God was more gentle than the farmer, He had a special way to break through Peter's bias against Gentiles.

THE BOOK

1. Breaking through prejudice (verses 1-3). It enraged the believing Jews that Peter, who spread the gospel in Joppa, dared to enter the homes of the “uncircumcised” gentiles (heathen) and eat with them. The Pharisees were wroth with Jesus for doing the same, but these with whom Peter ate, were converted Jews who should have had the love of Jesus in their hearts.

2. Peter's vision (verses 5-9). In Peter's vision, God gave him an object lesson of God's attitude toward the Gentiles. A large sheet, bearing all manner of animals which were considered unclean under the law, but now God was saying, “Get up, Peter; kill and eat.”

How audacious that Peter would “notify” God that the food was unclean. But he was about to understand that God had brought him into the age of grace.

It was God's reminder to Peter of what Paul told the church in Ephesians 2:14; “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.” God giving Peter the “go ahead” to partake of gentile food illustrates that blessed truth—that the mystery of the ages, which was not revealed to the Old Testament patriarchs, was now revealed to the church—that the Jew and gentile have become “one new man in Christ.”

3. The Holy Spirit's help (verses 12-17). The precious Holy Spirit encouraged Peter to go to the Gentiles without doubting (John 16:13). When he entered into the man's house, he discovered that the Spirit was working in both places—both in Peter and the man who was told by an angel to send to Joppa for Peter. When the Spirit moves upon a heart to go visit a person, He is known to also be preparing the one being visited. The Spirit came upon all in the house.

4. The results were that they glorified God, and new life had come to that house (verse 18).

THE LOOK

May our prayer be, “Lord Jesus, take away our bias toward those whom we may deem unclean, so that we may take the gospel to them in a spirit of love. For you died for them, just as you died for us.” Amen.



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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

The growth of gospel ministry

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: September 20, 2020

TEXT: Acts 11:19-26

THE HOOK

What leaps from verses 19-26, are the glorious ingredients which are contained in a flourishing work of the gospel. Let us point out some of those wonderful evidences of a genuine work of God. And as we read them, may we ask God to give us a glimpse of that supernatural power to spread that same gospel today.

1. One ingredient of a flourishing church is persecution (verse 19). Since the stoning of the first New Testament martyr, Stephen the spread of the gospel escalated. But they were only preaching the gospel to Jews. Persecution has been one of God's most effective tools to spread the gospel.

2. Another ingredient is the hand of the Lord (verse 21). The gospel will be to no avail without the touch of the Master's hand on that preaching.

3. The word of this great moving of the Spirit had reached back to the church in Jerusalem. When God's mighty power is manifest, the news will spread like wildfire (verse 22).

4. The Jerusalem church took proactive measures to continue to ensure the effective spread of the gospel, by sending Barnabas, a good man, filled with the Holy Spirit and faith (verse 24).

5. People came to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and were added to the church (verse 24)

6. There was effective teamwork. Paul and Barnabas ministered together in Antioch. The church was faithful to

assemble (forsake not the assembling—Hebrews 10:25). God the Father knows well how to assemble a team of men to minister. Modern-day examples of this are Grady Cashion and Frank Escamilla, who have been such a team for First, Blooming Grove for a quarter of a century.

THE LOOK

Let's review the ingredients of the effective spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ: persecution, verse 19; preaching, verse 19; the presence of the hand of God, verse 20; a supporting mother church, (Jerusalem) verse 22; the grace of God, verse 23; exhortation, verse 23; cleaving to the Lord, verse 23; a great ministry team, 24-26; the assembled church taught the Word, verse 26—and this led to their being called "Christians" (followers of Christ).

Who is the authority?

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: September 27, 2020

TEXT: Acts 12:1-25

THE HOOK

Who is the authority of the New Testament church? Herod and his administration learned the hard way that it was not the government. A modern-day version of this event was when the iron fist of the California government decided to close down churches. But a voice in the wilderness, John MacArthur and his church, issued a lengthy statement declaring that the government of California was not his church's authority. As it is stated in my favorite hymn, "The church's one Foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord. . ."

THE BOOK:

Herod had already executed James, the half-brother of Jesus, and a leader in the Jerusalem Church. Herod's next victim after Passover, was to be Peter, who was bound in jail, between two soldiers. Being a man of faith, Peter had no trouble sleeping that night.

But an angel lighted up the jail cell, tapped Peter on the shoulder, his shackles fell off, he got dressed. In fact, the escape was so easy, Peter thought he was dreaming it.

Meanwhile, the church was gathered at Mary's and John Mark's house (cousin to Barnabas) where they were in deep intercessory prayer on Peter's behalf. Ironically, Peter had a more difficult time getting into Mary's house than when he walked out of Herod's jail. In fact, when a girl named Rhoda came in to announce that Peter was there, they accused her of being crazy.

Sometimes, we are in such earnest prayer to the Father, we fail to look up and see that He has already answered that prayer.

The freeing of Peter was not only an embarrassment to the king, but it meant death to guards.

THE LOOK

The take-away to this text is—the government may think they have the power over the church—but God in Heaven will always dispel that myth.

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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2020 Local Association Annual Meetings

ASSOCIATION	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
East Fork		--	--
Ellis-Hill	Sept. 17	11:30 a.m.	Farley Street, Waxahachie
Tarrant County	Sept. 19	9:30 a.m.	Kingdom Chapel, Saginaw
Dallas County	Sept. 21	6:30 p.m.	Crossroads, Rowlett
Tryon	Sept. 27	5 p.m.	Southline, Cleveland
Mount Olive	Oct. 3	9:30 a.m.	Mt. Calvary, Carthage
Gulf Coast	Oct. 4	5 p.m.	Bethel, Port Arthur
Trinity River			
Original Bethlehem	Oct. 3	9 a.m.	Fellowship, Magnolia Springs
Central West Texas	Oct. 10	9:30 a.m.	Grace Temple, San Angelo
Harmony	Oct. 10	12 p.m.	First Missionary, Cleburne
Landmark Montague	Oct. 11	12:30 p.m.	Saint Jo, Saint Jo
Liberty	Oct. 11	3 p.m.	Oak Hill, Gilmer
Van Zandt	Oct. 11	5 p.m.	First, Grand Saline
Cherokee	Oct. 12	6 p.m.	Enterprise, Jacksonville
Harris County	Oct. 12	7 p.m.	Suburban Wood, Humble
Wood County	Oct. 13	7 p.m.	Cross Roads, Winnsboro
Angelina	Oct. 15	7 p.m.	O'Quinn, Pollok
Plains	Oct. 10	9:30 a.m.	LakeRidge, Lubbock
Central Texas	Oct. 17	9 a.m.	Ward Prairie, Fairfield
Houston-Anderson	Oct. 18	5 p.m.	Antioch, Palestine
Navasota River	Oct. 18	4 p.m.	Beacon, Bryan
Landmark Nacogdoches	Oct. 22	7 p.m.	Landmark, Cushing
Polk County	Oct. 25	3 p.m.	Centro de Vida, Livingston
Smith County	Oct. 27	6 p.m.	Not available

2. Speaker for keyboard and a keyboard
3. Projector
4. 4 microphones
5. Computer
6. Cables for microphone connections
7. Live Studio Audio Mixer/Mixing Console
8. Microphone stands
9. Drum Set

We would be blessed to receive items or the money to purchase them. Thank you for everything.

**CHRIS DRIVER—
WEST TEXAS MULTIPLICATION NETWORK/
TEXAS MISSIONARY CARE
CJDRIVER316@GMAIL.COM**

West Texas probably seems like another world to most people, but sadly we are experiencing the same chaos as everyone else. But praise God, like everyone else, we also continue to see God moving and working and the gospel advancing in ways we didn't expect! Our efforts to reach new small communities here in west Texas is slowly moving on. I am now personally teaching people from five towns, which means we are reaching people in 10 towns here in west Texas! We are still a long way from reaching every town in west Texas, but every person and every town draws us closer. Please continue to pray for a second generation of groups to start from the ones we have already reached.

PRAYER NEEDS:

- Second generation groups
- The Brockway Family
- School starting back

**RONNIE MILLS—
KINGDOM CHAPEL MISSION,
SAGINAW/NORTH FORT WORTH
RONNIE@KCHAPEL.ORG**

It's been a blessing this past month. We dialed back and began to focus on being the church, making disciples and living out the mission Jesus has given us. We are currently moving through the Sermon on the Mount all the way to November 8. Jesus has been wrecking our hearts, and we're learning more than ever as His disciples. We stopped our online streaming to focus solely on the physical gathering, and have challenged our people to live out who we really are as sacred and set apart. Overall, this has been a very healthy shift for us to remove the production feel, consumerism and wasted energy.

PRAYER NEEDS:

Please pray that Jesus would continue blessing Kingdom Chapel and the investment He is making in our lives. We know we're tasked, as churches all over the world are, with a great mission, and we just want to be faithful. Please continue to pray and support us. Contact ronnie@kchapel.org for any information or ways to support.

Heith Mitchell is the director of BMA of Texas Missions. Contact him at P.O. Box 73, Waxahachie, Texas 75168, 972-923-0757 or hmitchell@bmatexas.org. For more information, visit www.bmatexasmissions.org.



EVENTS

BMA OF TEXAS ANNUAL MEETING

DATE: November 5, 2020

(Date changed to one day only meeting)

PLACE: Farley Street Baptist Church,
Waxahachie, Texas

pastor & staff changes

DAVID DOWNEY is the new youth pastor of South Park, Fort Worth.

JOHN HENDERSON is the new interim pastor of Damascus, Corrigan.

** If you are aware of pastor and staff changes, please let us know at Baptist Progress by emailing us at editor@baptistprogress.org.*

personnel & positions

AVAILABLE POSITIONS

PASTOR—Center Hill, Oakhurst, located off of Highway 190 in Oakhurst, is prayerfully seeking a experienced bi-vocational pastor. Send resume to chdcpastorsearch@gmail.com or call 936-662-7831. 11/20

PASTOR—Elwood, Wills Point is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Send resume to P.O. Box 536, Wills Point, Texas 75169, to billypolege@yahoo.com or call 214-536-5795. TFN

STUDENT MINISTER—First, Palmer is seeking a part-time director of student ministry. Send resume to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 70, Palmer, Texas 75154, or e-mail resume to FBCpalmer.org, or pastorpaul@fbcpalmer.org. 8/20

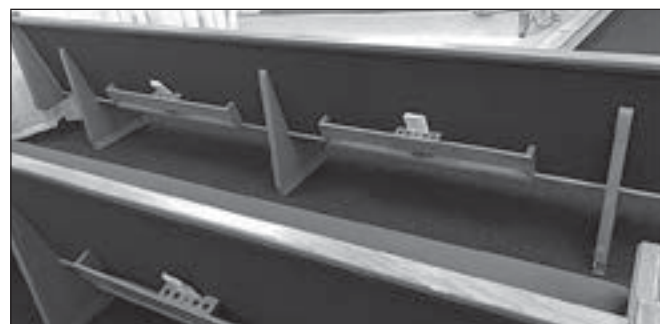
PASTOR—First Missionary, Morton is seeking a pastor. Send resume to jimmysealy@aol.com or to FMBC Box 981, Morton, Texas 79346. TFN

PASTOR—Mount Olive, Scurry is seeking a full-time pastor. Send resume to the church at P.O. Box 99, Scurry, Texas 75158. TFN

PASTOR—First, Jacksonville is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee, 210 Philip Street, Jacksonville, Texas 75766 or email to reception@firstjax.org. TFN

ITEMS AVAILABLE:

Living Waters, Fort Worth has for sale 48 blue chairs for \$5 each and a portable baptistry for \$1,000. Also available for free to any church in need, are 20 pews (18 @ 12 ft. and 2 @ 4 ft.), 69 navy and 17 red Heavenly Highway Hymnals and 143 New National Baptist Hymnals 21st Century Edition. If interested, please contact Pastor Jack Cook at 817-564-6209.



OBITUARIES

MARYJANE ARRINGTON MATHIS

Maryjane Arrington Mathis, 65, of Jacksonville, passed away July 13, 2020 at Tyler Continue Care Hospital in Tyler, following an extended illness. A memorial service will be held at a later date.



Maryjane was born May 6, 1955 in Jackson, Mississippi to Melvin Slay (Deek) and Annie Katherine Byrd Arrington. Her early childhood was spent in Jackson, Mississippi and Jacksonville.

She moved to Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia at the age of 12 when her parents entered the mission field of the Amazon jungle basin in Bolivia. She returned to the states to complete high school in Mize, Mississippi and then attended Jacksonville College where she met the love of her life, Alton Gene Mathis. They married at Royalwood Baptist Church in Houston Dec. 17, 1976. Maryjane served along side her husband who was a longtime BMA pastor.

Maryjane was a dedicated and caring nurse for over 40 years as an LVN and later a registered nurse, following in the footsteps of her mother. Maryjane enjoyed using her abilities as a Spanish speaker through teaching, serving in churches and caring for Spanish-speaking patients as a nurse.

Maryjane was a talented artist and with Gene, owned and operated a craft business, Homemade Happies, for many years. They sold their creations at numerous craft shows and in their own store.

Maryjane and Gene became foster parents and established the Mathis Rainbow Home for Children, caring primarily for children with special needs. Over the years, their family grew to include six adopted and three biological children, aside from the numerous foster children they cared for.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to Jacksonville College, 105 B.J. Albritton Dr. Jacksonville, TX 75766 and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

SOAR 2020

By **NICK JACOBSEN**

It is very easy to say that COVID-19 has changed everything, including SOAR 2020. However, one thing that didn't change is the impact SOAR 2020 had.

Since SOAR 2020 was online, there was no way of knowing exactly how many individuals watched, but what we do know is how many times the sessions were played, how many times the sessions were downloaded and something called "impressions." There were over 230 downloads of the sessions and over 140 downloads of the breakout sessions. There were over 640 plays of the sessions.

Those numbers are great, but since we posted the session videos on Facebook and people shared the post, there were almost 9,000 impressions, meaning nearly 9,000 people saw the SOAR sessions on their Facebook feeds. This year, Lifeword partnered with SOAR and gave away AirPod Pros to a student pastors who signed up on the SOAR website. The winner of the AirPod Pros was Glen Taylor from First Baptist Church in McNeil.

We saw churches from other denominations sign up, like Church of Christ, Pentecostal and Assembly of God. Now, we don't know if they watched the sessions with their group, but we do know that they know about the SOAR Conference and could have watched the sessions.

Some of the feedback we've received is that some churches were able to gather over the June 26-27 weekend and engage in the sessions, and they posted several pictures on the SOAR Facebook page. We even had a way for students to respond to the message by letting SOAR know digitally online.




There was one profession of faith, and several committed to being discipled. SOAR leadership reached out to local BMA churches to follow up with those students that made a commitment.

Volunteer Student Missions gave away a \$500 scholarship for a 2021 trip, and the winner of that was Grace McLelland from First Baptist Church in Magnolia.

Southeastern Baptist College and Jacksonville College have not yet announced their SOAR Scholarship recipients. However, Central Baptist College has awarded two half

tuition scholarships (valued at about \$8,000 each) to Karli Rabb, from Brister Baptist Church at Emerson; and Dixie Johnson, from Bethel Baptist Church in Fulton, Miss. Both young ladies will graduate in 2021.



We were thrilled to still offer SOAR, albeit a little different, none the less the Lord used SOAR. We also announced SOAR 2021 will be at the Hilton Anatole in Dallas, Texas on July 6-8, 2021, and the theme is Pause. We will focus on worship and that being our response to who God is.




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