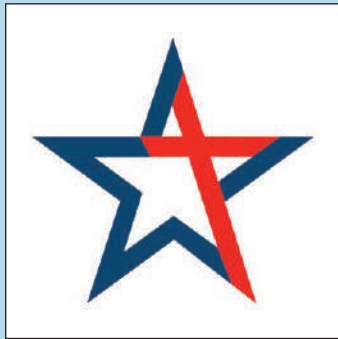


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A LIFETIME OF MINISTRY JUST
A FEW MILES FROM HOME

ROSE—preparing to reach her homeland for Christ

By **PAUL GAUNTT**

Baptist Progress Correspondent

Preparing for service to the Lord as a missionary has been a long and trying journey for Vietnam native Rose Nguyen (pronounced “Wing”).

She hails from Tay Ninh, about 130 miles south of Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) and close to the Cambodian/Vietnam border. She graduated from the public high school in Tay Ninh and afterward, attended a private college in Saigon, which specialized in language and technology.

“I stopped college for about a year and found a job, but I intended to start back,” Nguyen said.

“But afterward I applied to a government school to learn about marketing and business. I was living—100 percent, a life of an unbeliever—with no biblical values or knowledge of salvation,” she continued.

While Rose was not particularly interested in pursuing a degree, she suddenly happened into an opportunity to meet a renowned movie writer and was asked to be her assistant.

“The pay was good, and it wasn’t long until my boss introduced me to the producer and, due to her resignation and marriage, I took her place,” Nguyen said, noting that it was, at that time, she had a dream to work herself up to one of the best movie writers in the industry.

However, it wasn’t too long until she began to realize that work was filled with pressures, she was not ready to bear. To make matters worse, she received little or no support from her parents because at that time they were struggling with their marriage as Rose was struggling with the challenges of life. As everything in her life seemed to spiral out of control, she suddenly felt that life was meaningless.

“I was at my lowest point, and began to consider suicide,” she said.

She continued, “I didn’t want my parents to know, and so I chose to go to a place where no one would be able to find me.”

Nguyen hopped a bus and set out on an eight-hour trip north to Dalat. Her reason for traveling there was because of a frozen lake she had heard about which was renowned for being the quickest and most effective place for people to take their own lives. The water was frigid and virtually no one was ever reported to have survived.

“When I got to Dalat, I checked in to a hotel,” Nguyen said as she recalled that she put all luggage in the room and then headed out to the lake to do what she came to Dalat to do. But she couldn’t bring herself to do the deed that first day so she went back to her room.

“On the third day I said to myself, ‘today is the day,’ so I walked back to that lake and tried to throw myself into the lake, but the long sweater I was wearing got snagged on a tree limb and I was unable to fall into the lake.”

The incident then caused her to begin to think that surely there had to be some purpose for living. So, she went back into the road and walked back toward Dalat. She began to sense a deep need in her life that she couldn’t quite explain.

“I felt the need to search for something to worship so that maybe I could discover what my purpose was on this earth,” Nguyen said.

She said, “I was searching for something, but I did not know what.”

Nguyen tried one last time to go back to the lake and finish the job with suicide, but on her way, she saw a church.

“I was cold, and since the gate was open [to the church] I was able to get in,” she said.

Nguyen continued, “Nobody seemed to be there and so when I turned to walk out, I heard somebody say from behind me, ‘What can I help you with young lady?’”

Later Nguyen learned that the voice came from the pastor’s wife of the small Baptist Church which sat atop a mountain overlooking Dalat. When Nguyen was a small child in elementary school, she remembered seeing a cross with an image of Jesus hanging on it. She was taken with the cruelty and pain of the image with the spikes driven through his hands and feet. It had a marked impact on her.

Nguyen asked the pastor’s wife, “May I see Jesus?” to which she unlocked the sanctuary and let Rose inside.

Being alone in the sanctuary, Rose saw the cross, and she recalled the image of Jesus on the cross when she was small.

“It just seemed to be common sense that if you see the cross, you see Jesus,” Nguyen said.

“When I saw that cross, I began to cry and



▲ Rose Nguyen

asked, ‘Jesus, if you are really the Son of God—if the story about you is true, I need help—I need a reason to live,’ she said, noting that she sat there alone just crying for probably an hour.

There was a group at the church about to have Bible study and one of the people in the group asked her if she would like to join them for Bible study, to which she gladly accepted. The subject matter of the Bible discussion was new to her, but she was impressed by the friendliness of the people.

“They were so sweet—such friendly people,” Nguyen said.

She said, “I really enjoyed being there although I didn’t understand what was being said.”

The group leader gave her a Bible and afterward the group took her for ice cream and then took her back to her hotel. That night she couldn’t sleep, so she took her newly acquired Bible and began in Genesis and by the morning, she had read the first 5 books of the Bible. It was then that she felt a deep desire to know more about God and His plan for her life. Consequently, she forgot all about suicide. She felt a desire to remain in Dalat and so she

ROSE NGUYEN continued on p. 3



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MAKING PROGRESS

United Thanksgiving Offering

By **JERRY FULTON**

Thank you to every person, group and church who contributed to the United Thanksgiving Offering last year. Below is a total of funds received for the offering. Thank you for your partnership in ministry.

Antioch, Gilmer	175.00	Forest Hill, Quitman	1,500.00	Old Tyme, Longview	1,500.00
Beacon Hill, Waco	1,000.00	Freestone, Teague	75.00	Pecan, Robert Lee	2,800.00
Bethel, Port Arthur	620.00	Friendship, Jacksonville	314.00	Pilgrims Rest, Emory	500.00
Bishop Chapel, Jasper	141.00	Friendship, Mesquite	1,270.00	Red Springs, Tyler	929.00
Buena Vista, Tenaha	50.00	Glade Creek, Gilmer	1,500.00	Rose Hill, Mineola	367.00
Calvary, Centerville	300.00	Holly Grove, Livingston	500.00	Rosewood, Gilmer	3,500.00
Calvary, Ennis	250.00	Larry or Elizabeth Morgan	200.00	Round Prairie, Fairfield	1,500.00
Calvary, Fairfield	1,672.91	Leggett, Leggett	300.00	Sand Flat, Grand Saline	3,670.00
Calvary, Jacksonville	250.00	Liberty Baptist Association, Gilmer	2,000.00	Sand Prairie, North Zulch	1,500.00
Camille Acres, Longview	500.00	Liberty, Henderson	500.00	Sardis, Jewett	95.00
Central Texas Association	250.00	Macedonia, Etoile	100.00	Shady Grove, DeBerry	100.00
Central, Aspermont	1,805.00	Macune, San Augustine	2,325.00	Shady Grove, Purdon	400.00
Central, Mineola	100.00	Magnolia Springs, Magnolia Springs	500.00	Sheppard Drive, Euless	770.00
Cherokee, Gilmer	30.00	Mahl, Nacogdoches	915.00	Sheridan Terrace, Palestine	200.00
China Grove, Eustace	40.00	Maydelle, Maydelle	149.48	Sheryl Rico	3.00
Clover Hill, Quitman	100.00	Michael Phillips	620.00	South Park, Ft. Worth	446.00
Ebenezer Friendship, Pittsburg	450.00	Mt. Calvary, Carthage	290.00	Stacy, Bryan	6,000.00
Eighth Avenue, Teague	260.00	Mt. Lebanon, Grand Saline	200.00	Sunset, Lamesa	500.00
Emmanuel, San Antonio	100.00	Mt. Pisgah, Mineola	3,457.00	Temple, Mexia	175.00
Farley Street, Waxahachie	1,612.78	New Beginnings, Ferris	520.00	Walnut Street, Winnsboro	1,510.00
First Missionary, Cleburne	700.00	New Bethlehem, Conroe	220.00	Ward Prairie, Fairfield	250.00
First Missionary, Cockrell Hill	150.00	New Harmony, Tyler	2,786.18	Weeks Chapel, Jasper	2,020.00
First Missionary, Terrell	1,605.00	New Hope, Mineola	876.00	Williams, John or Mary	800.00
First, Beckville	200.00	New Hope, New Waverly	201.00	Wilson, Eric	35.00
First, Blooming Grove	500.00	New Salem, Henderson	750.00		
First, Jacksonville	100.00	Northside, Conroe	1,625.00		
First, Palmer	1,500.00	Oak Hill, Gilmer	500.00	TOTAL RECEIVED	68,225.35

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ROSE—preparing to reach her homeland for Christ cont.

continued with the people of that church on the mountain for three more years.

She took a while before submitting to being baptized.

“I wanted to know I was ready to make my profession public,” she said, noting that her experience of coming to Christ happened that night when she prayed and told Jesus that if the story about Him was true, she needed His help.

She discovered that just being part of a church fellowship didn’t guarantee a trouble-free existence. There was a lady in the church who, with almost an accusatory tone, kept pressuring her to be sure she was saved.

“I said to her, ‘Ma’am, I think you have to ask the Lord that question—not me. It is He who gives salvation and there is nothing I can do that’s good enough to deserve it.’”

The incident discouraged Nguyen from attending church for a month even though she really missed being with her friends.

“One Sunday when I was struggling, I heard a voice speaking to me— ‘Rose, if you go into the church because of the people, you will be disappointed because nobody’s perfect—but if you will go just for Me—and I knew who Me was—that was God. Why don’t you go just for Me?’”

She then realized what her purpose was for being a part of the people of God. It was for her spiritual growth.

In her third year with the Dalat church, she was introduced to the concept of missionaries. When a missionary family visited her church and presented their ministry, it was a new experience for her. Nguyen was curious about the life of a missionary, and how missionaries were supported. She was moved by the idea of their devotion to the gospel and to people, even though they lived on a meager salary. She was also touched when they said, “We do this because we want to serve Jesus and present Him to the people nobody else cares about.”

She said, “I just felt, ‘What a love! What a big love!’”

It was then Nguyen asked herself, “Do I love Jesus that much?”

It was not long until she was connected with a young couple who mentioned a group of Cambodian children that the visiting missionaries had been ministering to.

“In 2012, I made my first trip to Cambodia and it changed my life forever,” Nguyen exclaimed.

“These children in Cambodia who were refugees from Vietnam, could not speak the Cambodian language and could not read and write. Children had no rights—no birth certificates—no opportunity to enroll in school. The people were so poverty-stricken, and some of them chose to sell their children into sex slavery just to survive. One little girl in those families died,” she continued.

She said, “I found myself on my knees saying ‘Lord, this is not right. I want to do something about this, but I do not know what to do. If You will open a way, I will follow You.’”

Throughout 2013, Rose supported those missionaries and people from her church who volunteered to go on mission trips.

“I was satisfied to support them financially. I thought that was my gift, but it wasn’t God’s plan,” said Nguyen.

Soon afterward, she received a call from a Cambodian lady who knew Doyle Moore, of the BMA Institute in the Philippines, and he offered a four-year scholarship to study there. Nguyen asked if there was anyone in the church who

would be interested in going, but nobody else in the church wanted to go to the Philippines.

“One of my friends said, ‘He (Doyle Moore) is here now, and he needs to find somebody—can you go see him,’” Nguyen said.

She testified that the “still small voice” was speaking to her heart again and the words were, “Rose, what are you looking for? If it’s money or fame, then you aren’t worshipping Me.”

“I was just stunned! I felt a great sadness in my spirit. I thought the writing career I had was ordered of God, but now, I’m on my knees saying, ‘I worship you Lord.’”

She caught the bus from Dalat back to Ho Chi Minh City and then to Nam Pinh in Cambodia to meet Doyle Moore.

While in Ho Chi Minh City, Nguyen told her mother, who at that time was not a believer, about her opportunity to go to the Philippines to study. She even told her supervisor in her writing career that she wanted a raise in pay, saying that if the answer was “Yes,” then she would consider it a sign that she was to just remain where she was and help monetarily support the Cambodian children and missionaries. Not only did that not happen, but her mother told her, “Rose, I feel a peace about this.”

After four years study at the Institute in the Philippines, Rose had the opportunity to come back and minister to her family. She shared the gospel with her sister in Malaysia, and in subsequent visits with her mother and father, she was able to lead them to the Lord.

“It was at that moment I understood that the Lord keeps his promises—that He would care for my family,” she said.

Nguyen continued, “It is not material wealth, or acquiring more stuff, but it is the blessing of salvation—that’s the most precious gift ever.”

When she told Moore about her willingness to go back to Cambodia graduating from school in the Philippines in 2017, he strongly encouraged her to travel to Jacksonville, Texas and work toward a masters degree in church ministry in the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary.

After acquiring her master of church ministry in 2019, the dean, Dr. Phillip Attebery, told her to think about a doctorate.

“You need to earn the right to be listened to,” Attebery said.

Nguyen was able to raise enough funds for her first year’s tuition in Dallas Baptist University, to begin work on her Doctorate in Church Ministry. If everything goes smoothly, she will graduate from the university in 2023. She said that the doctoral program is helping her to seek and find solutions to issues and problems in ministering to children in Cambodia. Her aim is to bring hope and a future to the children to whom she ministers.

As she is finishing her degree, Nguyen is overseeing a few people who have agreed to help her by conducting Zoom reading classes for children in Vietnam and Malaysia, and she is working to prepare for Zoom presentations to Cambodian children. Her mother was actively teaching these children in her village before the Lord called her home.

If anyone feels led to volunteer to assist Rose Nguyen by conducting Zoom classes for these children for a couple of hours a week, or for any other questions pertaining to her journey toward mission work, contact her by emailing her at rosengii2021@gmail.com.

Liberty Association hosts Jacksonville College Rally

By **CHARLES JOHNSON**

Pastor of Rosewood, Gilmer

Liberty Baptist Association held a rally for Jacksonville College at Go Forth, Kilgore Jan. 13. Pastor John Gradberg welcomed the association. The meeting was the first Liberty Association gathering at the Kilgore church, since the congregation was formed by a merger with Stone Ridge and Victory Road Churches.

Liberty moderator Billy Byrd presided over the business meeting. The association approved hosting a “March Missions Madness” conference at Rosewood, Gilmer, March 5. This event will feature four international state missionaries from Texas. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. After the missionaries speak in the morning, a luncheon will be served in the fellowship hall with state missions director Heith Mitchell preaching before dismissal. Other associations are welcome to attend.

Several Jacksonville College staff members were present for the Jacksonville College rally. Rebecca Lightner, wife of college president Dr. Joe Lightner, brought special music before Dr. John Mann, vice president of processes and people, shared about the ministry of the college.

Dr. Lightner brought an inspiring message, “The Necessity of Biblical Friendships,” from I Samuel 18:1-4. Using an example of the friendship bond between David and Jonathan, he illustrated the importance of having accountable, trusted friends in our lives as children of God.

Following the meeting, the host church treated the messengers and guests to a delicious buffet meal. The next meeting of Liberty Association will be a rally for Texas Baptist Home for Children (TBHC) at Woodland, Glenwood, beginning at 7 p.m., March 17. Jason Curry, president of TBHC is the scheduled speaker.





A word from your Missions Office

By **HEITH MITCHELL**

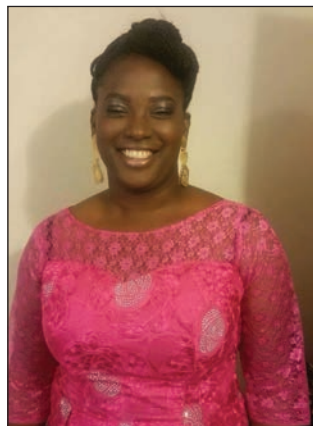
I want to share with you a very special need from one of your Texas missionaries. Kingsley Nduka found himself separated from his family when they had to flee their city in Nigeria. He is a good man, a good missionary and a good family man. As distance has kept him and his family apart, I watch him lead them, nurture and support them. Zoom and phone keeps them connected as he parents and works on school work and leads family devotions. Can you help to reunite this family? He is a letter from Kingsley:



▲ Kingsley Nduka



▲ Ebubechukwu Nduka



▲ Joy Nduka

Greetings in the Lord,

My name is Kingsley Nduka. I am one of your BMA of Texas church planters. I am currently in my second year of planting Lighthouse Baptist Church in Houston. I am reaching out to you because my family and I need your help.

My wife, Joy, and I had waited for six years for a baby having experienced six or more miscarriages. However, in 2012, the Lord blessed my family with a bouncing baby boy, Ebubechukwu. In 2013, on one of my visits to see my family in London where Ebubechukwu was born at 23 weeks, I was refused entry at the airport, because his birth left us with a debt of 32,000 pounds. So, I had to go back to Nigeria and applied for an installment payment plan, which we continue to pay to this day.

Shortly after this, the calling for full-time ministry began, but I struggled with it until 2016, when I was given the opportunity to come to the Baptist Missionary Association

Theological Seminary to study, leaving everything behind in Nigeria. As a result, the Lord made it possible for me to become a missionary with the Baptist Missionary Association in 2018 and start the process of becoming a church planter in Houston.

Even though we had to be apart, Joy and I decided that I should focus on the ministry that the Lord has called me into while she and Ebubechukwu waited for the Lord to open up a door for them to come over and join me in the ministry the Lord has given me here in Houston. During this time, Ebubechukwu gradually grew and recovered fully from his health challenges and to the glory of God, his health is now perfect.

Feb. 28, Ebubechukwu will turn 10 years old. The last time I saw him in person was when he was one year old, which means I have been away from my family for nine years. But the Lord God has used these nine years to equip me for the ministry through the BMA Theological Seminary, the BMA of Texas and the mission work here in Houston.

To the glory of the Lord, God has opened the door this year for my family to join me. As my family prepares for this reunion, we are faced with some financial obligations and we want to call upon you to be of assistance to us in any way the Lord leads you. In order to make this reunion happen, we will be needing a total of 6,500 pounds (\$8,800.00) between February and August 2022.

Below, is a timetable of events and a break down of the expenses necessary to bring my wife and son home:

By the end of February 2022, we will need the sum of 1500 pounds (about \$2,000.00) for Ebubechukwu's documentation in the United Kingdom.

By the end of May 2022, we will need the some of 3,000 pounds (about \$4,000.00) for Joy's documentation in the United Kingdom.

By August 2022, we will need the sum of 2,500 pounds (about \$3,300.00) for flight tickets and other logistics.

We will praise the Lord for any help you can give us.

This journey has been long and difficult, but God has been faithful every step of the way. And we know He will continue to be faithful until we are finally back together as a family. Thank you again for your help and thank you for your prayers.

May God bless you and keep you,
Kingsley Nduka

Note: All support should kindly be sent through the BMA of Texas Missions Department.

A word from your missionaries

**TIMOTHY ALB—
NEW MISSION IN SEAGOVILLE
TIMALBA1986@GMAIL.COM**

Please continue to build relationships with those in your surrounding community. It's a powerful tool to implement

relationships beyond the walls of your building. We have to be a go and show movement and stop being a come and see church. The connections we make outside of our four walls during the week is the foundation of building up your congregation on Sundays. Train up your leaders and hold them accountable to meet new people with you. Give them the proper path to build those relationships and execute visiting and following up with new contacts. This has been one of the most effective ways to meet new people and disciple and share the Gospel. I have a motto in our core group, "Keep it simple". When we do this, we create a culture that effectively brings new people in and opens new ministry opportunities. God bless!

Prayer Needs:

Pray that our core team seeks God's will during our challenges and victories.

**ISAIAS MARTINEZ—
NEW SPANISH MISSION
AT NORTHSIDE, CONROE
ISAIASMJ1966@GMAIL.COM**

We start a new year with great challenges. Multiplication through making disciples who make disciples will be our priority.

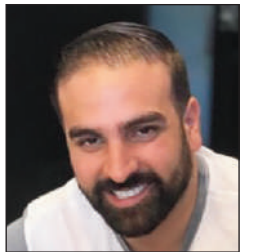
Prayer Needs:

Pray for the spiritual and numerical growth of our church.



**JAIME HENRIQUEZ—
FUENTE DE VIDA ETERNA
MISSION, HOUSTON
DAIRYJENY@YAHOO.COM**

First we thank you for all the support of the churches and prayers of the BMA family. Our mission has been blessed, souls have been saved



▲ Timothy Alba



▲ Isaias Martinez



▲ Jaime Henriquez

BMA TEXAS MISSIONS continued on p. 13

CHURCH HEALTH

Making Godly Decisions

By **LARRY BARKER**

Leaders and lay people are required to make decisions that could potentially cause them or their churches to get off the course that God intended. Every decision must be saturated in prayer and stand firmly on the truth of God's Word.

In John 16:13 Jesus tells His disciples, "When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth."

Your faith will be challenged as you choose to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord. You must consent not only to His presence but also to the actions He desires you to take. You are thankful He is there and you want Him in the driver's seat.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to guide us into truth, but don't be upset when you're not sure what He's doing in your life. God has a plan and you will not always know what He's up to, but you can trust Him. Don't become unsettled when your questions go unanswered.

Read Hebrews 11 and know that without faith it is impossible to please Him. Resist the urge to ask Him to give you more than you need if that will cause you to trust Him less. The Lord desires us to trust Him daily, to cry out to Him for direction daily, and to take up our crosses—denying self—daily.

How then do you make good and godly decisions knowing that one wrong decision has the potential for critical impact on your life, family, and church? Sinful decisions can even visit and impact generations after you. The world says you should consult counselors such as financial advisors, career guidance counselors, and business coaching, all of which can be tremendously beneficial, but there is more to good decision-making than weighing all the evidence, comparing the pros and cons, and taking the logical course of action. If all else fails you could flip a coin and accept the fifty-fifty chance of being wrong.

Henry Blackaby says it well: "God doesn't want us to do what we think is best: He wants us to do what He knows is best!"

Remember that the Holy Spirit guides into "all the truth." The primary reference here is to New Testament writers. Jesus tells the disciples in John 14:26, "The Holy Spirit . . . will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you." Jesus is referring to the four gospels, telling them they will be reminded of everything He had spent more than three years teaching them. In John 15:26-27 Jesus says, "He will testify about me and you also will testify." The fulfillment of this truth is found in the book of Acts.

John 16:12 continues, "I still have many things to tell

you, but you can't bear them now." Jesus says more truth is coming and this New Testament truth can be trusted. The Holy Spirit would also continue to guide into all the truth they were not quite ready for yet: the epistles. Then He tells them the Holy Spirit would guide them in how everything would come to a conclusion. John 16:13 says, "He will also declare to you what is to come," which is speaking of the Revelation. Jesus says the Holy Spirit that inspired the Old Testament would also inspire the New Testament.

What a comforting declaration Jesus is giving the disciples. They would soon have the complete canon of Scripture and Jesus was confirming its reliability. Only the Holy Spirit, since He is God, knows all that God knows, and thus is equally qualified to reveal divine truth to man.

Because He is the Spirit of Truth, the Bible is inerrant, God breathed. Second Timothy 3:16 says, "All scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness." Yes, the Holy Spirit was coming to comfort, guide, and be our constant helper, but He was coming primarily so Scripture, all truth, could guide us. This demands a complete admittance of total dependance upon God by immersing yourself in His Word.

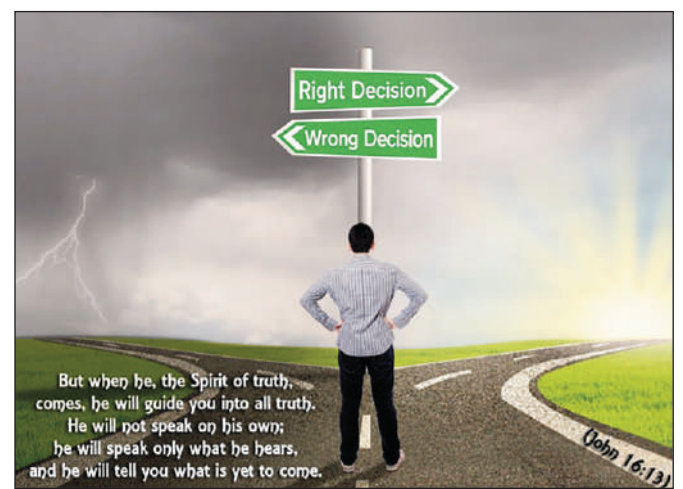
When you fill your mind with Scripture, before long you will find yourself thinking, acting and being directed by biblical principles.

Out of your commitment to God's Word you are able to make good, godly decisions. You are also committed to prayer. Often called "God's phone number," Jeremiah 33:3 says, "Call to Me and I will answer you and tell you great and incomprehensible things you do not know." Ask Him to guide you daily in every decision and not only when you are facing problems.

This prayer principle is not only for church leaders. There is no dividing line between sacred and secular, because God is not restrained by manmade artificial boundaries. Prayer will keep you focused on the one absolutely consistent factor in life: God. He is immutable and therefore unchanging over time and unable to be changed. God's Word is settled in heaven forever.

The Holy Spirit enables us to not be upset when we're unsure what He is doing. The Holy Spirit empowers us to not be unsettled when our questions go unanswered. The Holy Spirit will aid us in trusting Him completely.

How tragic it is to face a major decision that



desperately calls for God's wisdom, but you have grown unfamiliar with His voice. You have become disoriented to what is right and wrong because you have not been communicating with Him daily and consistently. Maybe you just wish you had more time to pray. Daniel had enormous government responsibilities, yet his habit was to have three dedicated times of prayer every day. Daniel's political enemies desired to remove him from his position and executed. How did Daniel face these attacks and this danger? He prayed, as was His custom.

God faithfully guided and protected him. Daniel had complete confidence in his rich relationship with God. You say you have complete faith in God, but you don't have a rich, deep daily walk with Him? Daniel's confidence came from not only who God is but also from Daniel's daily experience with Him. Daniel talked to God regularly and knew that whatever happened, God was with him. He came out of a seemingly hopeless situation victorious . . .

I'm not sure this is what happened but I can just see Daniel being lowered into the lion's den and saying, "Leo, go over there and sit down and shut up!"

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.



LEAVE IT TO CLEAVER



Traditions that trap

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

As good as our traditions might be, sometimes they become a trap. I need to examine some of my own traditions that might trap me. I have traditions because of family, past experiences or denominational attachment. Some of these place God in a box of being a God of “then but not now.” Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:5) showed great courage to put away a tradition that had been imbedded in the soul of the nation for decades (Numbers 21:4-9). I hope I have the courage to be like him in my walk with God.

There is great surprise and amazement in examining traditions. Some need to be kept. Some need to be abandoned. Let me share some traditions that I am wrestling with right now:

Time of worship service. At one point in my life I assumed God had commanded we worship at 11 o’clock on Sunday morning. What a surprise when I went to a service at 8:15 a.m., then to Sunday School after that! Wow, I was awake.

Preacher attire. As a young Christian, I assumed preachers were born in a black suit. They came straight from the factory dressed that way. I saw a preacher the other day without a tie. Probably he did not get the memo. However, he preached a great sermon in the worship time. I also heard a superb sermon from a pastor in a pulpit robe. I saw a cowboy church preacher in boots, blue jeans, with a really big belt

buckle. Mercy me-what a wide choice of preacher apparel!

Pews in the church house. The first time I worshipped without pews was an uncomfortable experience for me. However, there is no requirement to sit in rows facing forward. Some congregations choose chairs for worship. They place them in a semi-circle. Making eye contact with other congregants is a good experience for me. This encourages me on to do the work of worship. I like both. I don’t have to have it one way or the other as my tradition.

Other music instruments. This is a fact of my life: The piano and the organ have always been on certain sides of the auditorium. What challenged me last month was the orchestra in the service. It not only had drums, it also had strings, brass, reeds and cymbals. I tapped my foot—only one foot—during worship! Worship music is at times A Capella. The point here is the worship of God, not the instrument.

Liturgy. Our kind of Christianity prides itself that we are not liturgical. What happened to me in a recent service was this: They received the offering just before the benediction! What were they thinking? I heard responsive readings and prayers. It touched my heart as we said aloud together the Model Prayer. Don’t tell anyone, but in my private devotions I have begun to read aloud some of those readings in the back of the hymnbook.

Hymnbooks/screen hymns. This is a tough call. I don’t

read music to know what those little markings on the pages indicate. I know what I like to sing. I know my comfort zone in worship. There are others who are in worship with me who might enjoy some other music process. I think I might be open to some movement in this area. I know when I get to His presence I will sing, and sing with great gusto. Why shouldn’t I practice that now?

As I consider my walk with God, I’m simply “thinking out loud here” regarding a few of traditions that might trap me. We all have them. I am looking at mine. If I need to abandon some of my traditions, let me be like Hezekiah!

Lord Jesus, call to my mind those traditions that trap. If I need to, may I smash that tradition! Set me free! May I find fresh worship with You and You alone. May I find that bonded link with You while it is today!

Tony Cleaver is the director of distance learning and a professor of Biblical studies at Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary in Jacksonville, Texas. He is an author and writer of the popular newspaper column, Leave It to Cleaver. He may be contacted at tony.cleaver@bmats.edu.



BMA of America Meeting, April 18-20--Preach the Word!

By **CLIF JOHNSON**

BMA of America President

It is with great honor and joy that I invite you to the 73rd Annual Meeting of the Baptist Missionary Association on April 18-20, in Springfield, Missouri, as we gather together to celebrate what God has done in the last eight months through our association of churches and to look forward to what lies ahead.

Friends, the only time during the year that the entire BMA seeks to gather in a representative format is during this meeting, so make plans to be with us to worship together, to learn together, to be refreshed, and to conduct our business together.

Preach the Word! is this year’s theme for the association, so the entire time we are together, this theme will center our thoughts.

We live in a day where many talking heads compete to rent space in our minds and hearts and in the hearts and minds of our people. But one voice must silence all the others, and that is the voice of God. How does God make His voice known today?

The proclamation of His Word must stand in a primary position in answer to the question.

At our upcoming meeting, you will be able to attend breakout sessions that build on this theme:

Preaching the Word and the Mission of God (presented by BMAA Missions)

We Tell the Creation Story (presented by Lifeword)

Cut it Straight by Justin Peters (sponsored by BMA Seminary)

Pastor Your Family Well by Tim Brewer (sponsored by Ministers Resource Services)

Study the Word (presented by Baptist Publishing House)

Pray the Word (presented by ACTIVATE)

Keeping the Word Central in Student Ministry (presented by Daniel Springs Camp)

What I am most looking forward to are the four worship times we will share together. Are we there to conduct our

business? Absolutely, and we must do this. But as you read earlier, this is the only time in the year that we, as like-minded brothers, gather together. Why wouldn’t we worship together every chance we get? Included in those worship services will be sermons on the necessity of the Word, the power of the Word, the sufficiency of the Word, and the mission of all the Word to all the world.

Our joining together is a major highlight of my year, and I pray it will be yours as well. See you in Springfield!

See hotel information for the meeting on p. 13 of this issue.



▲ **Clif Johnson**

Zarqa Baptist Church Building Dedication-November 2021

A CALL TO SERVE

And do not forget to do good for others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased (Hebrews 13:16).

Inspired by this verse, the ministry team at Zarqa Baptist Church in Jordan responded to God's call to serve their community. Two years later in March of 2007, they began doing just that through a free medical clinic. Since that time four additional areas of service have been established to provide physical and spiritual healing in their community and beyond.

The original medical providers were a dentist, a nurse and a clinic manager, but in 2013 circumstances changed dramatically as their work expanded to include thousands of refugees crossing into Jordan from Syria.

With an increasing number of patients, an average of 2,500 people per month, the working team added two physicians, a general practitioner, a family doctor, and nine nurses. A pharmacy was eventually added, and they began doing minor surgeries and emergency operations followed by hospital referrals.

Because Pastor Samer is humbled and grateful to God for blessing their efforts, providing supporters, and raising up prayer partners, the church began planning a building dedication and invited BMA Missions personnel, including Executive Director John David Smith, to attend.

He says, "What a joy it was to be present for the dedication of the beautiful ministry building in Zarqa. This great tool is being used for medical care for an average of 2,000 people each month, daily discipleship, and pastor training. It will be a vital piece of ongoing ministry and kingdom expansion in that region of the world."

AN URGENT NEED

As they began medical services to Syrian refugees, it was increasingly obvious that the mostly women and children who fled their war-torn country needed help beyond the physical. Pastor Samer says, "We treat them through a post-trauma recovery program as many of them have lost their husbands, children, and all their property in the war. We support them psychologically and financially, and we help with training."

Another goal of the recovery ministry is to teach life skills so they can eventually sustain themselves. They are taught sewing, embroidery, culinary arts, soap making, computer/administrative skills and learn how to market and sell their products.

AN EDUCATIONAL NEED

Many refugee children have lost both parents and either have a lapse in their schooling or have never attended, so there is a critical need to educate children in two refugee camps near the Syrian border. Through the ministry of Zarqa church, they now have that opportunity.

Two schools have been established for refugee children - ages six to fourteen - and each one offers Arabic, English and math instruction. Their teachers say the education gap is closing gradually, and they can now read and write, which creates an obvious growth in their confidence, self-esteem and attitudes.

In addition to the two refugee schools, there is another one at Zarqa church that serves the community's children, bringing the total number of schoolchildren to 200. There

are also free monthly medical services and distribution of other daily needs to people living in refugee camps near the Jordan/Syria border.

A MARGINALIZED GROUP

Although Jordan is taking many steps forward with better workplace and inheritance laws, some women find themselves in dire circumstances financially. Bro. Samer says, "We support several services that help people be financially self-sufficient. One of those groups began when our ladies started visiting and caring for widows and divorced and single women with medical and spiritual help. By God's grace we have dedicated one floor as a women's center to provide medical, spiritual, and psychological help in a safe, comfortable environment."

Bro. Samer's wife Suzan manages the group and helps provide training for these women who want to be self-supporting despite their brokenness. Along with training women in sewing, making crafts, and cooking to pay their living expenses, the women of Zarqa Baptist Church make regular home visits to those who can't get out.

A BIBLE TRAINING INITIATIVE

In addition to these services, ministry leaders at Zarqa church have responded to a spiritual call to teach and train those they serve who want to understand Christianity and the Bible. According to their stated goals, the Theological Training Center was established "to prepare and develop new leaders for the progression and prosperity of the gospel message."

Through small group Bible studies, individual discipleship, and specialized programs conducted by certified trainers, they have established the Theological Training Center. And for those who desire deeper theological teaching, local

seminary professors volunteer their time to do so, and some theological subjects are taught by professors.

A BLESSING OF PROVISION

The Lord blessed the church with a five-floor building for all five services: medical, refugee, children's education, women, and Bible training.

On November 4, 2021, a BMA Missions team attended the inauguration and dedication of the five-story ministry center to be used, as Pastor Samer says, "for God's glory alone." It was a time to praise God for those who were involved in this kingdom work and thank him for providing supporters for their vision. For Zarqa Baptist Church, the ministry center's goal is always to be salt and light for the lost and broken.

On World Missions Day 2022, join BMA Missions and churches all over the world in celebrating the mission of God.



▲ Ministry Center Building at Zarqa Church



▲ Middle East Coordinator Charlie Costa and Missionary Sam Jordan at the building dedication.

Grady Cashion—A lifetime of ministry just a few

By PAUL GAUNTT

Baptist Progress Correspondent

God doesn't have the same calling on every servant—some serve in multiple states, or on the other side of the globe, but others, like Grady Cashion, spend a lifetime ministering just up the road from home.

In fact, the only two churches where Cashion has served during his 33 years in the ministry, are First, Avalon, as youth director, just seven miles from where he was raised, and the other just 15 miles from his childhood home, First, Blooming Grove, where he has begun serving his 29th year as pastor.

Born in 1953, Cashion was raised in Bardwell, Texas, seven miles west of Ennis on U.S. Highway 34, along with his two brothers, Lloyd, who is 16 years his senior and Kenny, who was six years his senior. Their parents, Rhoton and Helen Cashion, farmed near Bardwell. The Bardwell Church of Christ was the family's home church during the boys growing up days.

"I was saved in that church when I was 12 years old," said Cashion.

He continued, "Those were some fine people in that church—people who made such a difference in my life."

Cashion attended the church until he was 16, and according to his testimony, he drifted out of God's will, and chose to chase the world instead of following the Lord.

He graduated from Avalon High School in 1971.

"Kathy graduated from grade school on that Thursday night, and I graduated from high school the very next night," Cashion said.

After high school, Cashion attended Navarro College for a year and a half, and began selling Kirby Vacuum Cleaners. He and Kathy married in December 1974 and moved to Fairfield, which was in the center of his sales area. He worked for Kirby for several years as an area distributor.

Later his father gave up farming and Cashion returned home to run the farm.

"It took me two years to go broke farming," he said, noting that after a few years, to support his farming habit, he purchased a service station and tire store in Waxahachie.

Frank Escamilla, now Cashion's associate pastor, began helping Cashion on the farm when he was 13-years-old, and later went to work for him at the tire store where he worked for 12 years. When Cashion surrendered to the ministry, Escamilla bought the business.

Cashion said he and Kathy were not attending church although she had been saved and baptized at First, Avalon when she was a young girl under Michael Gott's pastorate.

It was in 1986 when Kathy became ill and was admitted to the hospital in Waxahachie. At that time, things began to change.

"After a few days in the hospital, they didn't think she'd live through the night," Cashion said.

He continued, "Her blood pressure was very high and her kidney function began to fail. Lloyd drove down to be with us, and he said 'Grady, it looks like she isn't going to make it.'"

It was out on the courtyard of the old hospital that night that Cashion got on his knees and prayed, "God, please, if you'll just give me my wife back, I promise you I'll serve you."

"I'll never forget when I walked into her ICU room the next morning, she was sitting on the side of the bed and said, 'Good morning sweetheart,'" Cashion said, welling up with tears.

He said, "God had just done a miracle and I knew it."

Kathy was transferred to Dallas where the doctors diagnosed

her with scleroderma a severe autoimmune disease that affects the skin, blood vessels, muscles and internal organs. The Cashions were later told by the doctors that life expectancy was probably no more than a few years, with a diagnosis of scleroderma.

Again, choking with tears, Cashion smiled and said, "But God gave us 35 more good years."

Another bit of grim news they received was that with scleroderma, she would be on dialysis for the rest of her life if she didn't receive a kidney transplant. But another miracle happened when, after four months of dialysis, her kidneys began functioning again and they functioned for another 33 years.

"The doctor (in Dallas) referred to her as his 'miracle girl,'" Cashion said.

Cashion said that while Kathy was hospitalized, he had lost the lease on his building, but as he moved just around the corner in downtown Waxahachie, his business almost doubled overnight.

"Although I hadn't been in God's will, God still knew where I was going," he said.

The couple began attending Kathy's childhood church—First, Avalon. It was during a message in a revival that his brother Lloyd preached in Avalon that shook him to the core. The message was "Somebody Cares for Your Soul." The outline was—1. I care for your soul; 2. The church cares for your soul; and 3. Jesus cares for your soul.

"I knew Kathy was saved, and I knew I was saved, but then I looked at my little 9-year-old girl Kristy, and realized that she had never been taught the things of God.

After the Cashions began attending church regularly, Jack McDaniel of Waxahachie, came to serve as interim pastor at Avalon.

"Bro. Jack thought I was already a member of the church and called on me regularly to pray," Cashion said.

He continued, "But one Sunday morning I walked down the aisle and told him, 'Bro. Jack, I know I'm saved, but I've been so far out of God's will that sometimes I don't even feel saved.'"

McDaniel was surprised when Cashion told him that he wanted to join the church by baptism.

"In the dressing room after the baptism, I told Bro. Jack that I knew God wanted me to do something for Him—I don't know for sure what, but I know He wants me to work with kids," Cashion said.

"Bro. Jack asked me if I felt led to do that, and I told him 'Yes,' so when we walked out into the church right after the baptism, he told the church 'We don't have a youth director so I (recommend) that we make Grady our youth director.'"

Cashion said even though there were only about two or three children in the church, he and Kathy planned a hot dog supper and game night for them, and six attended. Many people were afraid the Cashions were discouraged, but his retort was, "Hey, we had six—that's twice as many as we usually have."

It wasn't long until the church was regularly having 40-50 young people in attendance and one Wednesday night, they saw 12 youth make professions of faith.

After about four years of very productive ministry at Avalon, Grady began to feel the Lord calling him to preach.

Cashion said, "I prayed, 'God don't you see what's going on here?'"

He said that he really thought God had made a mistake in calling him to preach. But Cashion could not get the thought

out of his heart, and finally he threw out the fleece. One Sunday morning at his church, he prayed, "Jesus if you want me to preach, show me Jesus on the cross in red in the baptistry."

Weeks later, he took a van load of youth to Webb Chapel Baptist Church in north Dallas. The church was performing an Easter pageant. During the play, Jesus was featured on the cross, but he wasn't in red until they flooded the baptistry with bright red lights.

"It was as though God said, 'There you go,'" Cashion said with a laugh.

But Cashion, still a little unsettled, talked to several preacher friends, including Bro. McDaniel, who gave him the same advice many older preachers have given to young preachers—"If you cannot preach, then don't preach."

But one Sunday, when Grady preached in the pulpit at First, Italy during a youth Sunday, he threw out one more fleece and asked God to let people move during the invitation. God answered that prayer with eight people moving, further confirming God's call on his life.

"A few days later, I told Kathy, 'Baby, it's looking like I'm going to have to surrender to preach,'" he said, breaking out in laughter at her reply.

Cashion said, "She told me, 'Well, if you weren't going to surrender to preach, I was going to surrender for you!'"

He surrendered to the ministry in October, 1992, and came to First, Blooming Grove in August, 1993, after serving the Avalon church as youth director for almost four years.

Frank Escamilla became under conviction while working at the tire station and one afternoon Frank called Lloyd. He said, "Lloyd, I don't know what Grady's got, but I want it."

Immediately, Lloyd drove from Mount Pleasant to Waxahachie and led Frank to the Lord.

Cashion was certain that First, Blooming Grove was in God's plan for him. In their home in Avalon, Cashion was on his knees in the one place where he did the most praying—the bathroom. He prayed, "Lord, if you want me to go to Blooming Grove, have them call me." The phone started ringing before Cashion could finish the prayer, and it was Ronald Lynch from First, Blooming Grove calling him.

"I told them I needed a couple of weeks to sell my station, my house and my pickup," Cashion said.

He continued, "But within a week, all was sold, I preached my first message on August 8, and on August 10, they sent the moving van."

On the very first day they lived in the parsonage, Cashion was summoned by a member of the church to come to the nursing home in Corsicana and witness to his 92-year-old father who was not a Christian. The man accepted the Lord, and 17 days later he went home to be with the Lord.

Cashion has baptized literally hundreds of people in the 29 years he has been in Blooming Grove. The church has grown from 62 in worship on that first Sunday in 1993, to almost 300 prior to the COVID shut down.

"We haven't got them all back yet, but last Sunday we had 223," he said.

The church enlarged the old sanctuary, but soon outgrew it. They consulted with an architect wanting to plan for a big fellowship hall, but they were told they needed a sanctuary instead. They set up a 30 year note on the new 560 seat worship

miles from home

center but the building was paid in full in 30 months. They converted the old sanctuary into a large fellowship hall. They also added a \$570,000 ministry building designed for youth, and it was paid in full upon completion.

The church staff includes, Escamilla; Joann Pommerening, who works with the youth ministry Lisa Harris is children's church director and Blake and Crickett Nichols, serving as interim youth directors, working under Pommerening.

Cashion is grateful for the praise team, the greeting ministry, the safety team, the Sunday school teachers and everyone who works in the church various ministries.

He said, "I am blessed to pastor a wonderful congregation of loving and giving people, but I'm forever grateful to God for the helpmeet He provided me when He gave me Kathy."

"Kathy was never an 'out front' person, she loved to work behind the scenes," he said.

"Instead," Cashion said, "She loved to plan all the food for fellowships and funerals, and stay afterward cleaning up the kitchen. She was a great support to me. She gave of herself so I could be free to do the work of ministry."

Cashion expressed how difficult it is right now to do ministry without her. He said that there is nothing like having the support of a wife.

"The last two years of her life, nobody really knew just how sick she was," Cashion said.

"She'd come to church when she could, and would come in and smile — people would ask her how she was doing, and she would always say, 'fine,'" he continued.

Cashion jokingly told her that he was going to have to preach on lying the following week.

During a period of a little over a year, Grady preached Lloyd's and Kenny's funerals, and just prior to Thanksgiving of 2021, he preached Kathy's service at Blooming Grove to a large crowd.

Over 25 years ago, Kathy started the Angel Tree Ministry at First Baptist of Blooming Grove, which enabled hundreds of children in the area to have a Merry Christmas.

"This year, in her honor, they have changed the name to 'Ms. Kathy's Angel Tree,'" Cashion said.

Cashion has served faithfully in many positions in the Baptist Missionary Association, including the board of trustees for BMA Texas Missions and the Baptist Book Center. He has served for several terms and continues to serve as moderator of the BMA of North Central Texas (formerly Ellis-Hill Association) and has preached the annual sermon at the annual BMA of Texas Meeting a couple of times and has been used widely in revivals.

Although he has been invited to preach in view-of-a-call by numerous churches through the years, some which were large churches, Cashion never accepted any of the invitations.

Cashion said, "I know I'm right where God wants me to be. Lloyd once told me, 'Grady, don't go to Blooming Grove with the idea you're going to bounce around from here to there. If you want to pastor a big church, you go somewhere and grow one. Go with the mindset of staying. Don't use churches as stepping stones to bigger places.'"

Cashion said, "I thank God for how He has blessed me and I pray that He will allow me to continue serving Him until He calls me home."



▲ Bro. Grady Cashion



▲ First, Blooming Grove Worship Center



▲ First, Blooming Grove Fellowship Hall (former sanctuary)

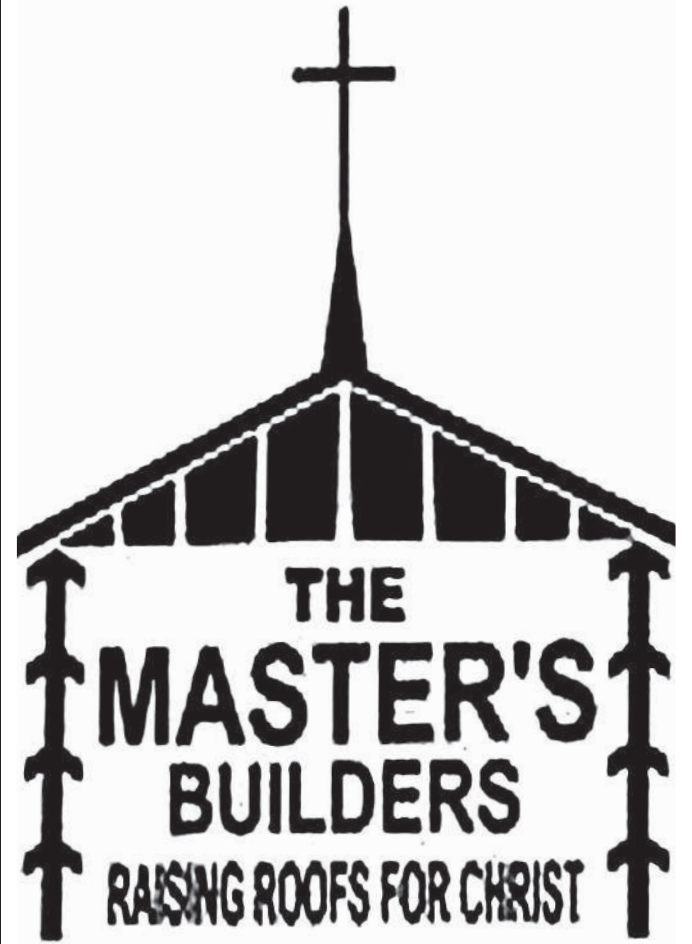


▲ First, Blooming Grove Youth Building



▲ Grady and Kathy Cashion

The Master's Builders enjoy annual retreat at Daniel Springs



By NELDA MALONE

The Master's Builders Reporter

The Master's Builders annual retreat was at Daniel Springs Camp in Gary January 11-14. There were 22 of the group who attended. Our retreat gave time to reconnect and enjoy time together. A few days of food, fun and fellowship were enjoyed. The group stayed in the Daniel Dorm, a wonderful facility.

An annual business meeting was conducted and The Master's Builders were informed of upcoming projects for 2022. It will be a busy year if all goes as planned. Projects are scheduled for the following churches and ministries: Celebration, Haskell, Arkansas (Feb 28-March 18); Faith, Flippin, Arkansas (April 4-14); Oasis, Levelland (May 2-13); Jacksonville College, Jacksonville (June); Park Avenue, Searcy, Arkansas (September); Daniel Springs Camp (October).

The Master's Builders thank Jason Prewitt for all he does at Daniel Springs and Morgan Sandifer for being available to help with everything needed. The group also thanks Randy Decker, who came to fellowship and bring a devotion.

There were so many of the group who were unable to make the retreat this year. They were missed greatly.

For more information about The Master's Builders ministry or to inquire about church building needs, please contact Eddie Sikes at 407-462-1675, Mike Green at 972-935-3877 or David Axe at 903-918-0720.

Also, like The Master's Builders Facebook page.

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, in turn, notifies the appropriate person. Listed in bold letters are those honored or remembered from Jan. 1-31, 2022.

ENDOWMENT:

MYRA STOKES: Bill Stokes

HONORARIUMS:

AIDEN FARMER'S 7TH BIRTHDAY: Tony & Lisa Sinclair

MIKE STEPHENSON: Robert & Jean Jacks

MEMORIALS:

ALICE HILTON: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

ALVIN TAYLOR: Ann Pugh

ANN KEEL: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

BETTY ANN KIRBY: Temple Baptist Church

BILL THOMPSON: Temple Baptist Church

DOROTHY WRIGHT: Thomas Jeter

EDDIE BYRD: Darinda Medcalf

EMMA ALLRED: Charles & Charlotte Johnson, Jed & Glenice Whitaker

FRANK & DORIS DILL: Andy & Sylvia Dill

HENRY LOUIS HOMAN: Oma Conn

HOYT HOPKINS: Virginia Hopkins

JENNIFER LAPORTE: Charles and Charlotte Johnson

JERRY KEY: Brian & Mary Mauk

JOE MORGAN: Temple Baptist Church

JOHN MY GRANDSON: Eva Evans

LARRY & ROSELEN BOBO: James Bobo

LARRY JOHNSON: Jed & Glenice Whitaker

LEON LEE: Calvary Baptist Church

LINDA NELSON: Randy & Vicki Odom, Joanna Noggle, Friendship Class

LOUIS CAIN: Cecil & Jackie Blair

LOVITA LOU OUIMET: James Ouimet

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

PEANUT & ELISIE LOVE: Alice Freeze, Buford Love, Calvin Love, Clifford Love, Tami Elliott

TONY SMITH: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

WALTER BECKER: Dennis & Ilona Myrice

ELIZABETH PETERS: Penny Gibbs



I'm just sayin'

By **JASON CURRY**

The year was 1922. The Texas Baptist Orphanage was 12 years old, and the previous leadership had not ended on a good note. The BMA of Texas had a choice to make: Who should they elect to lead the work of their churches in caring for children. It was decided that TBHC needed someone different, someone that would address needs from a perspective that could improve the lives of the boys and girls for whom they cared. They needed Mrs. D.C. Dove. She was elected as the first woman director and walked into the job with eyes ready to see what needed to be done.

She saw that with almost half of the children in care being boys, they did not have living quarters suitable for their needs. Every child was cared for, surviving, not necessarily thriving. She began work on ensuring that the boys had proper sleeping quarters, a place to store schoolbooks and much more was placed on her agenda walking into her new role.

This was a time that needed not just her touch but her perspective. A balance in the care of children is always needed. And we all have choices to make. Needing something different is scary at times and change is always hard.

TBHC has stood steadfast in what our identity is—we glorify God by caring for children. Yet, we have changed over time in the way we care for children. People constantly ask if we are an orphanage. TBHC has not been an orphanage in over 60 years.

Dove paved the way towards better care of our children. She saw what was needed to nurture our kids and took action. As we will explore, Dove had many setbacks and disadvantages as the director. Yet she strove to establish quality care for children in difficult conditions.

Romans 12:2 says, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Let us all get some perspective. This world is trying to distract us, renewing our mind is what Christians are to do. God’s will is perfect. It is on you and me to discern it. Dove approached her work at TBHC that way, and it is up to us to do the same. Being the first can be scary, change can be scary, but may I always be found in God’s acceptable and perfect will.

I'm just sayin'.

Jason Curry is the president of the Texas Baptist Home for Children. Contact him 629 Farley St, Waxahachie, Texas 75165, 972-937-1321 or jcurry@tbhc.org. For more information, visit www.tbhc.org.

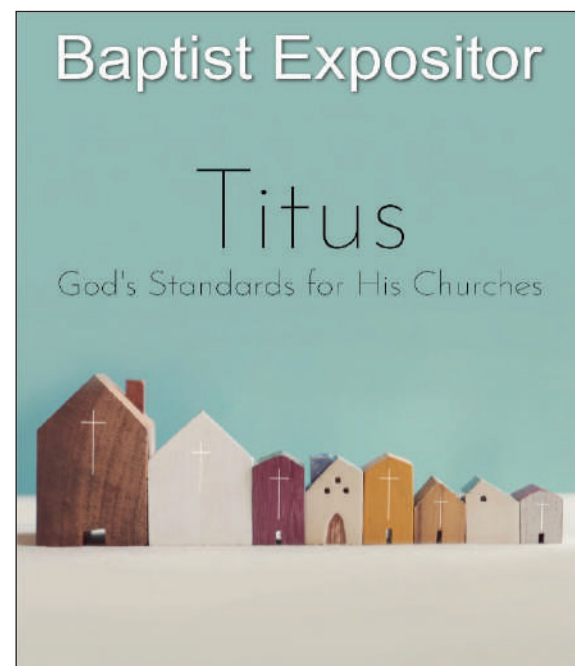


Spring 2022 Baptist Expositor, a verse-by-verse study over the book of Titus

This quarter, learners will come to know God’s standards for His churches. As learners progress through this study, they will be able to identify the qualifications for elders/pastors, the proper behavior of believers, the doctrine of the gospel, and gain a proper understanding of church discipline.

This is a 13-week study and is perfect for Sunday school, small groups or any other Bible Study class.

Visit baptistpublishinghouse.com or call 800-333-1442 to order.



BMA Texas Missions cont.

and lives have been transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer Needs:

Pray for us as we make a decision concerning a church building we are trying to buy.



**KINGSLEY NDUKA/
ADEREMI BADRU—
LIGHT HOUSE
MISSION IN HOUSTON
KINGEDU700@GMAIL.COM/
REMIBADRU44HOPE@
YAHOO.COM**

In all that we do, let us always remember that it is all about God



▲ Kingsley Nduka

Prayer Needs:

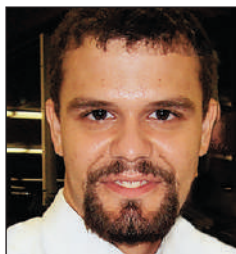
Pray for my family and I as we prepare for their coming to the United States. - Kingsley



▲ Aderemi Badru

**ROBERT LEE—
HARMONY BAPTIST CHURCH IN
NORMANGEE REPLANT
BRO.ROBERT.F.LEE@GMAIL.COM**

January is a time of new beginnings, and I certainly look forward to what lies ahead. Although there were difficult times in the past couple of years, and certainly will be in the days ahead, I still look forward to what God has in store for us in 2022 and pray that we will see great things happen here at Harmony.



▲ Robert Lee

Prayer Needs:

Pray that we would see even more results in the months ahead from the relationships we have built in the community.

**CESAR LEAL—
NEW MISSION IN SAN ANTONIO
CESARLEAL2002@YAHOO.COM**

With much encouragement and joy, we begin the month of January by carrying the Word of God to three different places. The church must continue to move forward despite



▲ Cesar Leal

difficulties, God always blesses faithfulness and our desire to serve in His work. Despite the virus, the cold and the economic inflation, new people continue to come to the church because they have spiritual needs and it is our task to help them and bring them into a relationship with God.



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

In each of us, there is a purpose of God in being here on this earth, and you may wonder: Who am I and why am I here? If you want to know, then draw near to God, because the more you seek God, the more information from God you will receive, and you will be able to discover who you really are and you will know because he is here on earth.



▲ Neptaly Molina

In another order, it is important to keep in mind that we should not confuse something that we do very often in the work of God and that is activity with productivity. You can be busy for no purpose. We have to do what Paul did, forget what is left behind and extend forward (Philippians 3:13-14).

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

Hello from the south plains of west Texas! It has been another crazy month of hit and miss with sicknesses of all sorts for our group. I know we aren't the only ones, but it



▲ Chris Driver

sure has been frustrating and exhausting. We are finishing up with acquiring the building and trying to gather the necessary funds for the remodel project. And God has shown up and shown off! He has proven faithful at every turn. I know it won't be long before we have everything we need to get started.

Prayer Needs:

Pray that the Lord will provide funds for the remodel project. At least \$5,000 more is needed to complete the project. Pray for our Sunday morning group to start soon. Pray for new relationships and gospel opportunities. Pray for the towns of Levelland, Sundown, Whitharral, Whiteface, Morton and Smyer.

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

As we begin our study of the Gospel of John, we're praying that Jesus becomes bigger and bigger and bigger to us. We don't pray that He changes, but as we grow, we see Him more of who He is, and that we know Him more and more. That's our prayer for you as well.



▲ Ronnie Mills

"He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high"- Hebrews 1:3

Prayer Needs:

Please pray for us as a church. We're asking that you pray for God's provision for us, as we have been given property of our own, and also we are helping another church in our area to have a place of their own financially.

If you would like to support us financially, and be a part of the work the Lord is doing here in Saginaw, we are grateful. Please continue to pray for our growth, and the Lord's mission here to advance.



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.



BMA Of america



World Missions Day is February 27.

Over 450 ChangeMaker missionaries need your support!

We are incredibly thankful for the tremendous support that we receive throughout the year from our faithful churches. However, World Missions Day is the one day for every church to join in emphasizing our global missions imperative and our global missions partnership.

World Missions Day is also an opportunity to give to the Jerry Kidd Missions Offering. This offering is above and beyond regular giving and accounts for 20% of our total annual budget. Your support of the Jerry Kidd Missions Offering is critical in our ability to support our rapidly growing network of ChangeMaker missionaries around the world.

Did you know?

- BMA Missions has 65 US missionaries in 18 countries.
- BMA Missions has over 450 ChangeMaker missionaries in 65 countries!

ChangeMakers are the product of 70+ years of sending US missionaries that disciple and train up local leaders to plant local churches in their own countries. Our number of churches, church plants, and ChangeMaker missionaries continue to grow. Your support on World Missions Day and to the Jerry Kidd Missions Offering is critical in our ability to sustain this growth.

Please join us this year in supporting World Missions Day and giving to the Jerry Kidd Missions Offering—We need your support!



My Call to Ministry

By **CHRIS VINES**

SOAR Host

SOAR Student Conference: June 29–July 1, 2022, Hilton Anatole, Dallas, Texas; lowest price since 2015: \$100 per person; www.soarconference.com

There are two distinct times in my life that I knew without a doubt God was calling me. The first was during an intentional conversation with my grandmother about Christ’s sacrifice for me, a sinner. It was then that God called me to Himself, and the Holy Spirit opened the eyes of my heart to believe the gospel and simply trust Christ’s atoning work on the cross for my salvation.

The second call to ministry was seven years later. I remember sitting in a service and being under strong conviction to give up my life’s pursuits and dedicate my life to His ministry. I will admit that at that moment, my role in ministry was unknown. But I did know the Lord was calling me to say “Yes” to serving His church in whatever role He would show me.

By that time in my life, I had heard many people give their testimonies of running from the Lord and experiencing intense, difficult years before they finally surrendered to God’s call. Part of my conversation with the Lord was, “Why in the world would I ever run from you when I know you will

just bring me right back to this moment?” So, I said yes right then.

Since then, I have discovered a reality that has become more clear the longer I live: God truly does have a hold on me. I have not attempted to kick loose from this call, and I have never regretted saying “yes”. The reality is that God has a firm grip on me, and I am compelled to serve Him and make Him known. There is a burning desire within me to preach the gospel and to make King Jesus known to all people. Overwhelming thankfulness floods my heart for this grace.

Sixteen years later, the reality is that God keeps calling. He continually calls me to surrender my pride, personal desires, and earthly pursuits to Him. Truthfully, God’s call has always been to put my “Yes” on His table.

Have you put your “Yes” on God’s table?

There are many reasons a person hesitates to say “Yes” to God’s call. Some think He owes them a detailed plan of what they are saying yes to. Others simply don’t want to say “no” to their own plans or the plans other people have for them.

SOAR 2022 will be all about God’s call on our lives. God is calling, but are we saying yes?



BMA of America



Time to make reservations for Annual BMA of America Meeting



By **JEROME COOPER**

BMAA Arrangements Committee Chairman

The 2022 session of the Baptist Missionary Association of America will meet at the University Plaza Hotel and Convention Center in Springfield, Missouri April 18-20. Please make your reservations early. Call the local hotel directly to make your reservations. The local telephone number is included below.

You must identify that you are with the Baptist Missionary Association of America and that you are booking your reservations within the block of rooms for the BMA of America Meeting that begins on April 18, 2022.

The University Plaza Hotel will serve as our headquarters hotel for the annual meeting in Springfield University Plaza Hotel, located at 333 John Q. Hammons Parkway in

Springfield, Missouri. Single/double rooms are \$124 per night. King suites are \$159.00.

Make telephone reservations by calling 417-864-7333. The reservation cutoff date is March 19, 2022. The rates shown above will be available for three nights before and after the meeting if you would like to extend your stay in Springfield. All room rates quoted above are subject to all local taxes. This information and additional news about the national association meeting can be found on the BMA website at www.bmaamerica.org.

Check that website for news and updates about the meeting and reports from the national departments. They will be posted as they become available.

New Enrollment method for BMA of America Annual Meeting

By **GRANT BARNETT**

Enrollment and Finance Committee Chairman

In an effort to streamline the enrollment process, our committee recently met with the Coordinating Council and began asking hard questions. After much discussion, it was determined that certain changes could save us both time and money as well as speed up registration lines at the meeting. This year, for the first time, there will be no pre-registration, no letter to fill out and send in, and no online registration. You will simply elect messengers within your church and come to the meeting.

When you come to the registration table, tell us the name of your church and the number of messengers and visitors. If you have any minute funds we can collect them at the registration table or you can send it by mail to BMA America LLC, P.O. Box 1188, Conway, Arkansas, 72033. If you are a church or know of a church petitioning to join BMA America, please fill out the online form found at bmaamerica.org/nationalmeeting.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you in Springfield!





Lubbock to host March Spring Retreat

By **GLENDA CHAMBERLAIN**

LakeRidge, Lubbock, will be the site for Texas WMA Spring Retreat. This one-day event will be held March 12, 2022. Johnnie Ross, retreat organizer, is planning an in-depth study of Christ's commandments.

There will be no cost for attending the retreat in the hope that many of our west Texas ladies will seize this opportunity to unite with ladies from across our great state. Registration will open at 8:30 a.m. A light breakfast will be available.

Morning and afternoon activities include general sessions with dynamic speakers, plus, a series of breakout sessions ladies will have the opportunity to attend. A delicious lunch will be provided by LakeRidge. After enjoying a wonderful time of fellowship together, the day should conclude around 2:30 p.m.

We look forward to the opportunity to build closer relationships with our west Texas ladies. For more information about the spring retreat please go to texaswma.com.

NATIONAL WMA THEME *INTENTIONAL*

The theme for the National WMA year has been *Intentional*. God calls us to live an intentional life, to seek out opportunities to share His love, His word, and His salvation. The theme verse is Ephesians 5:15-16, "Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil."

Cindy Allen, National WMA 2nd vice president comments, "Many of us are saddened, and sometimes even shocked, at things that are happening in our world, our country, even our hometowns. However, we are warned in the Bible that there will be times such as these and that we are to seize opportunities to share God in these times. God put you exactly where he wanted you to be 'for such a time as this', just like he did Queen Esther so many centuries ago. The world needs Christians to be intentional, our families and friends need us, because they need God."

The national WMA meeting will take place in Springfield, Missouri April 19, 2022. Cindy has a great meeting planned for the National WMA. The keynote speaker will be Mrs. Judy Biggers from Arkansas. Breakout speakers will challenge ladies to be intentional with our hospitality, sharing our faith, with discipleship, and to be intentionally transformed. Cindy said, "As a popular song from my youth stated, 'People need the Lord' and they need us to share him, **INTENTIONALLY!**"

GROW YOUR LADIES GROUP

February is slated as enlistment month for WMA. Debbie Edmondson, Texas WMA 1st vice president, shares a few ideas to help your ladies group grow, "As we look forward to 2022 I would like to encourage you to have regular fellowship together. This can be in many different ways, Bible studies are always uplifting, but don't stop there, Bunco nights are fun, having lunch together at a home or restaurant is also a great time to share, laugh and food seems to unite us all! Prayer circles can bring us closer to God and each other. Col. 2:2 'that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love.'"

Encourage your ladies to fellowship together, strengthen those bonds so they will be able to lean on one-another for support in difficult situations and rejoice with them during joyous moments. Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

WE ARE THE "KEY" TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL

GO—Jesus has given us clear instruction and authority to reach out to a lost and dying world.

TELL—Good news that Jesus came to die on a cruel cross to prove His love for us, and to give us new life if we accept Him.

TEACH—New disciples how to live in obedience to His Commands.

Our obedience to the Great Commission is why "We (you and me) Are The Key" to spreading the gospel to the world. The door in South Asia is currently open but could change at any time. Help the Women's Ministry to meet their goal of \$15,000 for this ministry.

Jeanne Walker, Texas WMA project promoter, suggests a few fundraising ideas: "Find someone that does woodwork to make large key holders and sell them; have your church members donate \$5 for each key on their key ring; use a calendar with a 31 day month and have people choose a date and donate that amount to the project."

Please send your donations to support the South Asia ministry to: Jo Strong, 149 NW Suzanne Terrace, Burleson, TX 76028.

DISTRICT NEWS

The Cherokee District met at Cornerstone, Jacksonville, Jan. 11. A light supper of soups was provided by Cornerstone WMA, and the Fresh Start WMA of First, Maydelle, made a variety of desserts available to choose

from. Twenty-three ladies representing four different churches in the Cherokee District were in attendance. The business meeting and program were opened by President Cindy Allen who led the group in reciting the WMA motto 2 Peter 1:5-7. Nancy Washburn, First Vice President, read the theme verse which is Psalms 130:5. Alicia Johnson led the group in an opening prayer, the offering was taken up, and Secretary Lugene Sims called the roll of officers.

Jo Ann Bass introduced Karen Harrellson who sang "It Is Well With My Soul." Mrs. Shelby Barker brought the program, and Mrs. Barker used a slide show to present the countries she and her husband, Bro. Larry Barker had traveled to last year. They had visited BMA affiliated churches in Portugal, Czech Republic, and Puerto Rico.

Feb. 8 is scheduled as the day for the Cherokee District WMA to serve soup to the BMA Theological Seminary, and volunteers signed up to either make soup, dessert or help in the kitchen that day. Also, the district Girls Missionary Auxiliary invited all girls to attend the GMA house party on Feb. 19 at First, Jacksonville. The district WMA approved we would provide pizza & dessert for the girls' lunch.

Afton Grove, Jacksonville, won the attendance banner. Nancy Washburn explained the next meeting's outreach, which is bringing in supplies for the Child Welfare Board here in Jacksonville who provide needed items to children who are victims of abuse or neglect. A list is to be submitted to all WMA before the next meeting.

Connie Sherman, of First, Maydelle, thanked Cornerstone for their hospitality and the delicious supper. Prayer Chairman Alicia Johnson read the submitted prayer requests, and prayed for these as well as dismissed the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for April 12, 2022 at Sardis, Henderson.

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.



EVENTS

PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

2022 BMA OF AMERICA MEETING

DATE: April 18-20, 2022

PLACE: University Plaza Hotel & Convention Center, Springfield, Missouri

2022 SOAR STUDENT CONFERENCE

DATE: June 29-July 1, 2022

PLACE: Hilton Anatole Hotel, Dallas

2022 RE:CHARGE LEADERS OASIS

To be decided

2022 BMA OF TEXAS MEETING

DATE: Nov. 7-8, 2022

PLACE: First Baptist Church, Livingston

2022 NATIONAL SENIOR ADULT CONFERENCE

DATE: Nov. 15-17, 2022

PLACE: Chateau on the Lake, Branson, Missouri

AVAILABLE POSITIONS

YOUTH PASTOR—First, Carthage is seeking a full-time youth pastor who will provide leadership and oversight for all aspects of the student ministry so that students can know and follow Jesus Christ. Send resume to James McRight at james@firstbaptistcarthage.com. 3/22

PASTOR—First Missionary, Morton is seeking a pastor. Send resume to 148jimmysealy@gmail.com or to FMBC, Box 981, Morton, Texas 79346. TFN

AVAILABLE MINISTERS

EDDIE BALLARD is available to serve for pulpit supply. Contact him at 936-635-4195.

In Loving Memory



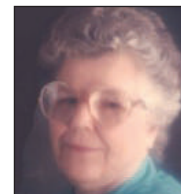
MARVIN E. HUDLERH

Marvin E. Hudler, 96, went to his Heavenly home Jan. 29, 2022. He served in the U.S. Army. Hudler pastored BMA churches and preached revivals in several states as well as two foreign countries. He was in full time ministry until his failing eyesight caused him to retire. Hudler is survived by his wife of 69 years, Dwight Marie, their children and several other family members.



C. NADINE MITCHELL CARROLL

Nadine Carroll, 93, passed away Jan. 24, 2022. She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, longtime BMA pastor, James Glen Carroll. Funeral services were held at Croley Funeral Home in Gilmer Jan. 28, 2022.



GRACE WILLIAMSON BRANHAM

Grace Williamson Branham, 92, passed away on Feb. 4. She was the widow of former BMA of America Missions Director Craig Branham. Bro. Branham pastored churches in Arkansas, Missouri and Texas. He also served as BMA of America assistant missions director and as director of the BMA Pastor's Retirement Fund. Mrs. Branham attended Jacksonville Baptist College, Central Baptist College in Conway, Arkansas and graduated from Arkansas State Teachers College (UCA) in Conway, Arkansas with a degree in education. During her career, she taught in public schools. Funeral services were held at Bethlehem, Greenbrier, Arkansas, Feb. 9.



February—Enlistment month for Women's Missionary Auxiliary

By **BRENDA HORNADAY**

National WMA First Vice President

February is the month that has been set aside by the National WMA to encourage women to become active in their local church's women's ministry. Due to COVID, many of our churches and their ministries have experienced a decline in attendance during the past two years. Hope-fully we will soon see an end to this pandemic.

The National WMA theme for 2021-2022 is "INTENTIONAL". Ephesians 5:15-16 says "Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil." As we try to build our attendance back up, I challenge each lady of your women's ministry to be "intentional" in encouraging new ladies to attend your meetings by making the most of every opportunity.

Ways to be Intentional:

Individually invite each lady in your church to come to your meetings or Bible Study (in person, by telephone, text, or email)

Have the meetings or Bible Study times printed in your church's bulletin, Facebook Page, and website

Promote the topic of your meeting or study with colorful posters placed in strategic places in the church

Be excited about your ministry and share the things you are learning in conversations with those ladies not attending

Look for ways your group can meet the needs of all the ladies in your church

Poll the ladies of the church to see what they would like to get from your ministry

Have an informal get-together with finger foods to let the ladies of the church become more personally acquainted

Have special events such as Mother/Daughter teas, Valentine's Banquets, painting parties, etc. to get the ladies interested in meeting together

Make sure your meetings and Bible Studies are bathed in prayer and are structured to provide spiritual growth for each lady in attendance

Let's strive to enlist new ladies in our women's ministries during this new year.

pastor & staff changes

TERRY SKINNER has retired as pastor of Calvary, Fairfield, but not from preaching, after 29 years with the church.

CHRIS WINKLER is the new pastor of Northside, Garland.

GARY SOUTHARD has resigned as pastor of The Church at Valley Ranch, Porter to become the new pastor of First, Palmer.

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

Keep your ministry's money safe with Organizational Optional Theft Coverage

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Proudly serving the BMA of Texas



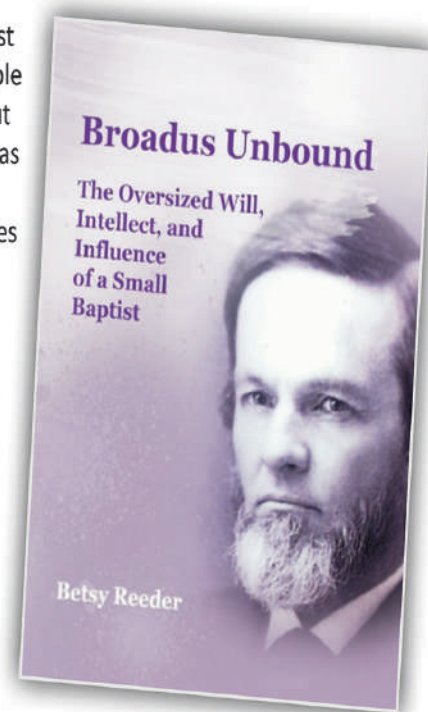
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Broadus Unbound

Called by the famed Charles Spurgeon "the greatest of living preachers," John A. Broadus left an indelible signature not only on the Baptist denomination but on a generation. Emerging from the U.S. Civil War as a voice of reason and reconciliation, he traveled, wrote, and tirelessly trained clergy for the urgencies of his time.

Compiled by direct descendant Betsy Reeder and based on the words of Broadus and his intimates, ***Broadus Unbound, The Oversized Will, Intellect, and Influence of a Small Baptist***, reveals a complex and unforgettable personality, ablaze with unshakable faith and indomitable willpower. The biography includes never-before-published letters preserved for five generations by the family. Combined with other nineteenth-century writings, the result is an unveiling of the man and his world unlike any previously offered.

Available on [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com).



MARCH MISSIONS MADNESS

Sponsored by Liberty Baptist Association

Where: **Rosewood Baptist Church**

8260 Arrowwood Rd., Gilmer, 75644

When: **Saturday, March 5, 2022**

Time: **9:00a.m. to lunch (Free lunch provided)**

For more info: **903-790-1385 or 903-790-1691**

State Missionary Speakers:

Haitao. He. from Corpus Christi;

Bichitrananda Sapathy from Fort Worth;

Kingsley Nduka from Houston;

Chris Mindi from Austin; and

Heith Mitchell, Texas State Missions Director

Love Offering will be taken



60th Anniversary Celebration

Camille Acres Baptist Church

(formerly Ware Acres Baptist Church)
Longview, TX

Saturday, March 26, 2022

1:30 P.M.

Guest Speaker: Bro. Ronny Moore, charter member of the church

Some, who grew up in the church, will participate with music, testimonies and the history of the church.

The church will honor Pastor Thomas Ayres for his 30 plus years as pastor.