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SOAR 2017

Jason Curry

**selected as nominee for president of Texas Baptist Home,
executive committee meeting called for August 8**

By **CHARLES JOHNSON**
TBHC Trustees Chairman

WAXAHACHIE—The trustees of Texas Baptist Home are thankful to announce our selection of Bro. Jason Curry as our nominee for the next president of the Home. Jason was previously selected from a group of applicants by the Home search committee. He was unanimously approved by the trustees at their summer quarterly meeting.

Jason is a native of Jacksonville. He holds a Bachelor of Religion in New Testament Studies from BMA Theological Seminary in Jacksonville. He also has a Masters in Christian Education degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth.

Jason and his wife Tonya were married in 2004. They have three sons: Brandon, Cameron and Dexton. The Currys are no strangers at the Home as they formerly served as foster parents at TBH. Two of their sons were adopted through the Home's adoption agency.

Jason was licensed to the Gospel ministry in Jacksonville in 2003. He was ordained at Plymouth Park Baptist Church in Irving in 2014. For the past eight years, Jason has served as fulltime pastor of Children and Young Families at Plymouth Park.

A special executive meeting of the BMA of Texas churches has been called by BMAT President Wes Pratt. This meeting to consider the president nominee will be held at Farley Street Baptist Church, 1116 Brown Street, Waxahachie beginning at 2 p.m., Tuesday, August 8. All churches are urged to send a representative to this meeting.

If meeting the approval of the churches, Jason hopes to assume the reins of Home president sometime in the latter half of August. The Home trustees appreciate your prayers during this selection process.





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making progress

We need your help, \$105 for 105 years of ministry

By **JERRY FULTON**

The overall goal for our \$105 for 105 years of ministry offering is \$15,000. So far, we have only received just over \$3,600 in contributions from churches and individuals. At this time last year, over \$14,000 had already been received. If

your church has not yet given to our anniversary offering, please do so as soon as possible as we rely on this offering to help meet our budgetary needs for the year. We appreciate the following who have given:

Delores A. Adams
Jerry and Nancy Burnaman
Jerry and Cassie Fulton
Anthony Drive, Ennis
Antioch, Fairfield
Antioch, Gilmer
Beacon Hill, Waco
Buena Vista, Tenaha
Bethel, Port Arthur
Calvary, Trinidad
Camille Acres, Longview
Corinth, Jacksonville
Elwood, Wills Point

Fifth Street, Levelland
First, Blooming Grove
First of Cross Roads, Athens
First, Livingston
First, Rice
Friendship, Mesquite
Glade Creek, Gilmer
New Beginnings Bible, Ferris
New Beginnings, Venus
New Hope, Mineola
New Hope, New Waverly
Northside, Garland
Pecan, Robert Lee

Red Springs, Tyler
Rosewood, Gilmer
Round Prairie, Fairfield
Sheppard Drive, Euless
South Park, Fort Worth

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▲ Jerry Fulton

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Church health

Real relationships

By LARRY BARKER

Are we building genuine real relationships or are we settling for superficial friendships? We are comfortable talking about the weather, sports, and our family, but are we willing to go deeper? An essential part of building disciples requires nothing less than allowing other followers of Christ to become our close intimate friends. Our connection groups (small groups, Sunday School classes, etc.) need authentic relationships that will hold us accountable in our spiritual journeys.

2 Timothy 2:2 says, "And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." Yes, this verse points to the fourth generation but also notice how it speaks to a community of believers by using plural nouns. It mentions witnesses, men, and others. These words have the same thing in common in talking about a group of people. Biblical discipleship occurs through relationships.

We all seek meaningful relationships yet they seem to be painfully absent aspects of discipleship. People are not looking for a friendly church but are looking for friends. Here are some great questions to ask about the authenticity of your relationships. Are the people in your connection groups friendly? It starts there but it must go deeper. Are the people in your group open and honest with one another?

We must not settle for shallowness but strive to build a strong support team. Do the people in your group check on and care for one another beyond and outside of the group meeting? Do you notice when others are not present and check on them to see if they are struggling? Remember, your connection groups are the first responders in your church for ministry and pastoral care. Spiritual growth occurs best when other believers share the same goals.

How well do you know the people in your connection (small) group? Are they just acquaintances or do you know them well enough to know their strengths and weaknesses? What are they struggling with the most? How can you best pray for them and encourage them? We are not called to walk alone but to walk in the light together. The biblical picture of real relationships in community is described clearly in Acts 2:42-47 where they "held all things common."

In Real-Life Discipleship, Jim Putman defines a relational environment this way. "A relational environment is characterized by authenticity. A relational environment includes mutual accountability. An intentional leader creates a safe relational environment." Here are a few suggestions on how to build real relationships that help everyone grow and mature in Christ.

First, keep your eyes open for those who are hurting and struggling. If they miss does anyone contact them or reach out to them? Do not take it for granted that they are ok but instead see if there is anything you can do to help them. Whether it is a call, a text message, an email, or even a visit they need to know that someone does care when they are absent.

Second, faithfully pray for those who are experiencing illness. Prayers are appreciated but it also might require doing something to help. Maybe they need someone to drop a meal by or to clean up their yard for them. What practical service could you perform for them that would be a blessing to them and encourage them? Make sure someone is handling this and accepts the responsibility of assigning contacts.

Third, connect them with someone who knows what they need to know. Someone in your congregation can help them when they need it but you will have to be very intentional to make sure they connect with them. When they are overwhelmed with finances, health, marriage, or a multitude of other challenges the beauty is that someone else in your connection group has probably been through what they are going through. They need to know that they are not the only ones.

Fourth, listen to them to hear where they are spiritually. We show someone how much we value them when we are willing to take the time to listen to them. As you listen make sure that you are ready to give them biblical answers to their situation. The importance of authenticity and transparency cannot be overstated. What are they really saying when they express their concerns? What are they not saying about their spiritual walk?

Fifth, speak the truth in love. Real relationships do not offer up false flattery or superficial pleasantries. They seek to speak the truth in love because they



care about one another enough to even risk the relationship. This is especially true when you see that the other person is about to go against God's word. For example: we are all a product of our past but we do not have to be prisoners to our past. They can have victory over their past hurts and habits by trusting in the Lord.

We need to pray for and seek to have an energy that causes us to remain connected and help others to stay connected. When we become disconnected from other believers it is a very dangerous thing. It will not be long before we begin to drift away from our church family and the Lord. Real relationships do not walk away from our family when they are struggling or if they fall into sin. Real relationships cause us step in closer, speak up more, and seek to restore.

Get to know those in your connection (small) group more intimately. Find out what their hobbies are, what fears they have, and what temptations they struggle with the most. Then pray for them, encourage them, and hold them accountable. We cannot grow spiritually as we should without other followers of Christ who are there to challenge us and inspire us in our walk with the Lord!

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.



BMA of america



I vote 'YES' on saving Daniel Springs

By PAUL GAUNTT

Almost overnight, our culture has been blindsided by a huge paradigm shift - complements of the internet age.

And it has left in its wake, so many casualties including once thriving, world renown newspapers, encyclopedias publishers - and even textbook publishers. These are giving way to electronic gadgets. Information, which at one time, didn't travel half-way around the world and reach us until weeks later when we saw it on the newsreels at the Saturday morning matinee at the "picture show," is now reaching our hand-held devices in a split second. Incidentally, how long has it been since you have used a pay phone at a drive-in grocery or airport?

I think many of the operations of our associated work - both state and national, have been adversely affected by this electronic onslaught. We have had to shift gears and tweak methodologies a little, in order to survive this societal tsunami.

For over 50 years, Daniel Springs has weathered many storms and has served a wonderful purpose -- it has provided an outlet for church youth—provided a venue that fosters a super-rich evangelistic environment, and a place where people can sense clearly, the drawing of the Holy Spirit on their lives to repentance and salvation, and a calling to serve in the ministry, music, youth and mission work.

What has made church camping work is the removal of adult church workers, children and teens, from the deafening, shrill noise of the world, where God's voice seems to be shut out, to a rustic setting, nestled amid the Loblolly pines of East Texas. There's no TV—no disturbing news reports, no music of the world; just a place where kids can interact, study scripture, play together, swim together, worship together, make life-long friends, and most of all, experience a new sensitivity to the calling of God. Some recall meeting their life's mate there.

There are several reasons why I want us to keep Daniel Springs; The first is personal. I would be remiss if I didn't say that Daniel Springs has a special meaning to me since my Mom and Dad were closely associated with it for 13 years. When I was a late teenager, home from college for the summer, living in the beautiful house the camp provided, I couldn't help but pack a bag and go stay in the cabin with some of my friends during at least one camp. I have loved the camping experience since I was a small boy. If you've attended one, you know what I mean.

Secondly, there has been no other program or department in our work, which has been a more effective tool to influence more people to come to Christ than the ministry of Daniel Springs. The last count I heard, there were over 12,000 professions of faith over 50 years—along with hundreds more who gave their lives to full time service.

Thirdly, our associated work is in dire need of venues which can draw us closer together and renew the old-time camaraderie, that

we used to enjoy as BMA people. I'm afraid the electronic age has not only produced a society of zombies who literally walk into light poles while texting or surfing the internet, but our culture is swiftly moving toward an alternate existence of only communicating through cell phones and iPads. And I am afraid this is destroying the infrastructure of our BMA fellowship, resulting in a lack of desire to fellowship with one another face to face. Daniel Springs, to me, was one of the bridges that helped bind our associated work together. Prior to Daniel Springs, we had our annual North American Baptist Assembly and Encampment at Latham Springs near Waco, Texas up until 1964. There were over 1400 at many of those camps. Everyone came -- kids, teens, middle aged, and senior citizens. We sat under a tabernacle supported by cedar posts, and sang hymns from the old "Look and Live" paperback hymnal. We had camp choirs of 70-80 people -- it was an awesome venue for young up and coming music directors to get a little experience leading singing to a massive audience, and there were usually 80 or more to accept Jesus as Lord.

Bro. Earl Moore of Carthage was part-time manager from about 1961-1966. Under his leadership, local camps began meeting there and 1965 was the first year the National encampment met there. My Dad, Eugene Gauntt, was named as the first full time director in late 1966, a position he held until 1980. James Spear had by far the longest tenure, giving 35 years of his life to the work, from 1980-2015. Under his leadership, many modernizations, expansions and conveniences were added. My dear friend Jason Prewitt, who is totally in his element, has been there almost three years. Jason is the perfect mix - he is the consummate handy man—he is a preacher, he has extensive experience in youth ministry, and he has the personality to well represent the work. I desperately want to see him excel—and I know that God the Father has more than enough resources to make that happen.

So, I want to try to convey the thoughts that I am certain Dr. Gerald Kellar, (the only man who served as president of every BMA institution of higher learning, and known for his fund-raising abilities,) would do. He would exuberantly declare, "There are at least 50 of you out there who can give \$10,000 without batting an eye: Over 1000 of you can easily give \$250 without too much trouble. And 10,000 of you can give at least \$10. That's what Dr. Kellar would say.

But during this electronic age, let me remind you how easy it is to have the camp to draft \$10, \$20 or maybe \$50 per month. It's drafted automatically from your account—and you will be surprised how little you will miss it. You will be exhilarated to know that those few dollars per month are being used to support a time-honored ministry, which will see thousands and thousands more souls come to Jesus in the next generation.

Please ask God if He might not impress you to help

GOD'S GIFT

HEAVEN IS A FREE GIFT!

It is not earned or deserved. No amount of effort or good works can earn a place for you in heaven. Why? Because . . .

MAN IS A SINNER.

"For all have sinned . . ." (Rom. 3:23)

Because of this, man cannot save himself.

GOD.

On the one hand, God is merciful and does not want to punish us. Yet God is just and must punish sin. God solved this problem for us in the Person of . . .

JESUS CHRIST.

He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins and rose from the grave to purchase a place for us in heaven—"the Lord has laid on Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6).

THE GIFT IS RECEIVED BY FAITH.

Saving faith is trusting in Jesus Christ alone for eternal life. It means resting on Christ alone and what He has done, rather than what you or I have done to get us into heaven. "Believe on (or trust in) the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

SO MAY WE ASK . . .

Have you received God's free gift of eternal life?

The Bible assures us in 1 John 5:13 that we can know we have eternal life.

Do you know for sure that you are going to heaven when you die?

The Bible says, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." If you are willing to repent (turn away from your sin and to the Lord Jesus) you can receive the free gift of eternal life by simply praying:

Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner and do not deserve eternal life. But I believe You died and rose from the grave to purchase a place in heaven for me. Jesus, come into my life, take control of my life, forgive my sins, and save me. I am now placing my trust in You alone for my salvation, and I accept your free gift of eternal life.



News of America



Lifeword Visionary Leaders around the world—Part Two

By **HOLLY MERIWEATHER**

Lifeword

As Lifeword begins year number 38 of fundraising through walks, other events or Lifeword Sunday offerings, the ministry looks forward to exciting new innovations made possible through advancements in technology. Development of the Lifeword Cloud or Lifeword Network is in the brainstorming and discussion stage and will allow listeners, affiliates and producers to access a repository of programs and multi-language discipleship materials at lifeword.org.

Even as this endeavor is in the works, low power, low wattage (Lifeword Community Radio or LCR) stations are enabling highly populated but difficult-to-access areas of the world to hear the gospel, sometimes for the first time. These local stations run by indigenous leaders, pastors and church planters are growing in number thanks to the relentless work of visionary leaders around the world.

Lifeword calls these men who are dedicated to searching (often in very rough terrain) for unreached people groups “visionary leaders,” and we would like to highlight their efforts in three areas of the world: Central/South America, Europe/Africa and the Philippines.

The following men are visionary leaders in Central and South America, and they tirelessly travel to remote places searching for unreached people groups in their respective areas. (In fact, the following LCR number counts are likely incorrect, because they are installing them so quickly!):

NAME: David Flores Perez

COUNTRY: Bolivia

BIO: David is the visionary leader who ministers along

the Mamoré River. He envisioned LCR helping BMA Bolivia reach a dozen more villages on both the Bolivian and Brazilian borders.

NAME: Denis Eduardo Lopez Aguilar

COUNTRY/REGION: Central America

BIO: Denis is BMA Missions coordinator and Lifeword’s visionary leader. He helps oversee Lifeword’s work in Central and South America and has facilitated dozens of multimedia training, and LCR training and installations.

NAME: Javier Muñoz Ruiz

COUNTRY: Nicaragua

BIO: Javier is associate pastor of a BMA church in Nicaragua and is the visionary leader for Lifeword. He has facilitated the training of a dozen young people in the use of media and led in the installation of three LCRs so far.

NAME: Paul Esteban Tinoco Lopez

COUNTRY: Perú

BIO: Paul came to the BMA and Lifeword via Lifeword’s Spanish broadcast. Paul pastors, runs a radio ministry, and has led Lifeword Peru in installing thirteen LCR stations and training the personnel to run them.

NAME: Ricardo Herrera Ramirez

COUNTRY: Honduras / Garifuna

BIO: Ricardo is of Garifuna origin and is a key leader for Lifeword in leading broadcast efforts and LCR initiatives among the Garifuna people. They run six LCR stations.

Blessings of the Song of Solomon

By **JERRY JOLLY**

I am excited about the upcoming study of Song of Solomon in the Fall edition of Compass Bible Studies.

Perhaps you are wondering why a widower would be enthusiastic about studying a book written about love and marriage. The reason is simple: All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is a blessing to prayerful readers -no matter their life situation.



▲ Jerry Jolly

It seems in the last three years, since the passing of my wife, Sweetpea, God had me in mind when He led Solomon to write these words. In reading them I have remembered:

1. The joy of my proposal of marriage being accepted.
2. The blessing of fifty-four years, nine months, and six days of loving companionship.
3. God’s presence through every trial.
4. Solomon was surely talking about Sweetpea in His loving description in 4:1-7.

Thank God for the wonderful encouraging words in the Song of Solomon!

Study them carefully, you never know when you will need them more than you ever have in your whole life -whether you are happily married, single, divorced, newlywed or widowed. Every word of the Bible is relevant and powerful for every believer.

Compass Bible Studies is produced by the DiscipleGuide, a department of the Baptist Missionary Association. You can find out more about Compass at discipleguide.org or by calling 800.333.1442.

DiscipleGuide
CHURCH RESOURCES

A note to the churches from Eddie Marsh

By **EDDIE MARSH**

Former President of Texas Baptist Home for Children

The month of July represents some important times in my life. On July 1, 2004, representatives of churches of the BMA of Texas elected me as president of Texas Baptist Home for Children. I assumed my position on July 6. I counted it an honor and privilege to serve the churches of this great Association for almost 13 years. Only two men have served long in the leadership of this ministry. You were very gracious to me while I served. A special word of appreciation goes to each pastor, church, WMA or GMA group and others who visited the campus or

invited me to share the ministry with your congregation. Your love and kindness has continued since my resignation. Thank you for your words of encouragement and support.

I have been asked about my future plans. My resignation from Texas Baptist Home for Children was not intended to be a resignation from ministry. I am very interested in helping our churches through pulpit supply, interim pastor, transitional pastor, or any other way I may be of assistance. You may contact me at: 972-935-0009 or 214-903-3352 or email, cemarsh6@yahoo.com.



Familiar words. True words. But they often spring from our tongue with little passion or devotion and become commonplace, a trite slogan recited at our annual July 4th celebrations. That was not the case at the 67th Korean War Commemoration and Recognition Ceremony last month in Houston, Texas. The SaeEden Presbyterian Church from Seoul, Korea, hosted this special event where hundreds of Korean War Veterans and their families were honored. My husband, Coy, and I were blessed to be there.

The program was beautiful with patriotic tributes, musical presentations and traditional Korean Folk performances, but my favorite was the welcoming speech by two young children, ages seven and nine. For several minutes they delivered a passionate message of gratefulness from the people of their country with this impactful climax: "Because you came, we are free!" Just when I thought they were finished, the nine year old spoke again, adding her thanks for the missionaries who had come to bring good news. Raising her hand, she said "Because Jesus Christ came and died, everyone can be free forever!" Wow! These children understood true freedom and they were grateful. Their parting words were: "Thank you for giving so much. We will never forget!"

The Senior Pastor of our host church continued that theme as he remembered the devastation of that war . . . half a million widows, 100 thousand orphans and more than 135,000 American troops shed their blood fighting for a free Korea. He added, "It is because of America and your noble sacrifice and the grace of God that South Korea now enjoys peace and economic prosperity. We will never forget your kindness and love until the day we die. May God's grace be with you forever more."

The ravage of war is indisputable--devastating beyond words. But today South Korea is one of the most free, and prosperous countries in Asia. The influence of Christianity is obvious. Churches dot the landscape. Colleges begun by missionaries are prevalent. Missionaries are actively sharing the Gospel. And Korean Christians are fervent in their faith. The hope and security of Korean Christians has nothing to do with a fragile DMZ line which is being threatened every day by an evil regime. Their trust is in Jesus Christ!

I hope this reminder of one country's painful loss and ultimate victory will reignite a spirit of gratitude in our own hearts . . . to all the men and women who serve to keep us safe, and to our Savior Jesus Christ for making us free indeed! The young Korean girl spoke truth when she said, "Because Jesus Christ came and died, everyone can be free forever!" Real freedom is not free! May God bless America and may we continue to share this great message. (John 3:16)

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.



He came riding up on a stick horse, A Shepherd Bag story

By **FONDA NORRIS**

Evangelistic International Ministries Shepherd Bag Coordinator

Our van pulled into the rocky dirt drive of the small village school in Honduras as we had countless times before. It had been a long drive up the narrow mountain road to arrive here. The excited children in their blue and white school uniforms were already assembled and waiting for us under the beautiful shade trees on the school yard. As I got out of the van and began to walk through the iron gate to the entrance of the school, I noticed a small boy of about five years old come riding up to the school on his "stick horse." When he got to the school, he got off his horse and promptly leaned it against the fence and draped the string through the wire. I could not help but smile.

Hold onto this mental picture of a little boy with the big imagination while I share this thought that the Lord put into my mind later that night.

With all of the diversions of technology in our culture now, we rarely see children playing with the old-fashioned toys of yesteryear. This young Honduran boy's stick horse was a small, simple stick with a piece of string tied to it. It was not valuable to the world around him, but to him it was a horse. His horse. And he was happy.

When thinking of the Great Commission to preach the Gospel of Jesus all over the world, I thought how easy it is to get into a mindset of thinking in order to do that it must be complicated, fancy, expensive or digitally enhanced in order to be effective. In other words, with lots of bells and whistles. I think we can overcomplicate what it means to "go and preach the Gospel." Yet as Jesus went from place to place meeting people where they were, He carried nothing except a heart of love, the dust on his feet and the simplicity of the Gospel.

The Shepherd Bag Ministry is a very simple ministry. We designed it to be that way and never plan to change it. Why? Because it is so effective. Surely a small, simple unisex one gallon zip lock bag filled with the same items for all the children cannot change a child or adult's eternal future, can it? No, it can't. It was never meant to.

We decided many years ago that it is not about the bag. The bag is only a tool that God uses to open the door for us to go into schools and villages. It is about the Savior and the Gospel that is preached before the Shepherd Bags are given out that can and does change them for eternity. It costs seven dollars to put one Shepherd Bag together and ship it overseas to the waiting hands and heart of a child overseas. That's the price of a fast food meal. By keeping it simple and the costs low, it allows us to make many more bags which in turn allows us to reach more of the lost with the Gospel. And that's what it's all about. Very simple and effective.

So as the Lord continues to open the Unharvested Fields, EIM will carry Shepherd Bags and head up those narrow



dusty roads into the mountains, across the rivers and through the creeks. There's a lost world of boys and girls like the little boy on the stick horse. Lost without the One who died for him. I'm so thankful to be involved in EIM's Shepherd Bag Ministry and for God allowing me to see multitudes come to know Jesus because of a small, one gallon bag that He uses to open hearts and draw them to Himself.

At present, we are working on a Honduras shipment. We currently have 11,000 unisex Shepherd Bags almost completed and will work to get 16-18,000 total before shipping our container. When we finish the Honduras shipment, we will begin working on a shipment of 16,000 to 18,000 bags for Tanzania as well as the Philippines. We are so excited that our EIM Gospel Story Coloring book and John 3:16 Frisbee that we place into our bags have been translated into Swahili for Tanzania. This is our newest translation. To date we have had both the Gospel books and Frisbees translated into seven different languages.

If you'd like to support this ministry or have questions, please feel free to contact me at fnorris@eimworldwide.org or go to our website at www.eimworldwide.org It's a very small investment with an eternal impact.

NEED A PROJECT FOR VBS?



"REACHING THE NEXT GENERATION"

With EIM's Shepherd Bags Ministry children can reach other children around the globe with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For more information on how your children can be involved, contact Fonda Norris at 870-226-3626 or fnorris@eimworldwide.org Also visit our website at www.eimworldwide.org

Church Issues

Five reasons growth may be more difficult in your church

FIVE REASONS GROWTH MAY BE MORE DIFFICULT IN YOUR CHURCH

By DR. THOM RAINER

Every year another two million American adults become less receptive to the gospel, and less receptive to churches.

Every year.

That is one of the nuggets I took from the Pew Research work on the “Nones” when they first released the data in 2012. Pew has continued to follow the religious commitment level of Americans. From 2007 to 2014, over 12 million American adults have moved from a high level of religious commitment to a low level of commitment. They just skipped the medium level of commitment altogether.

Cultural Christianity is dying.

One no longer has to be a Christian or in a church to be accepted by society. That relatively easy pool of prospective attendees for our churches is disappearing.

But most churches keep doing what they’ve always done.

As a consequence, they are reaching fewer. They are declining.

Why?

The answer to that question is too complex for a simple blog post, but let me provide five high-level responses for now.

1. Church members are not being intentionally relational with those who are not in church. The old way

of church outreach was more transactional; today it requires the development of relationships. Most church members will not take that step. Many don’t know how to take that step.

2. Many churches are stuck in the past. While we never compromise the gospel and the Word, our methodologies must reflect an awareness of our culture, and a willingness to be missionaries to that culture. Sadly, too many church members are unwilling to make changes. Church, for them, is about their needs and their preferences.

3. Church members are not regularly inviting people to church. Yes, it can be that simple. Many of the religiously unaffiliated will come to church if we invite them. But it’s difficult for them to respond to an invitation if they never get one.

4. Many church members fail to act like Christians on social media. Unbelievers are watching us on Facebook and Twitter. And many of us are more likely to show our rear ends than Christian love. Social media is where the unchurched reside. And they constantly see our petty quarrels, our venomous politics, and our self-serving attitudes.

5. If they come to church, they only have a mediocre experience. The religiously unaffiliated do visit our

churches from time to time. But, more often than not, they see our holy huddles and our lukewarm greetings. Most will not return.

Growth is indeed more difficult in most of our churches today. We no longer have the large pool of cultural Christians from which to draw. But we can reach them. We must reach them.

We will have to treat our membership in our churches as missionaries to the community instead of country club membership. Biblical membership is not about getting our perks, privileges, and preferences. It’s about sacrificing self for the gospel.

Then, and only then, will we see our churches start growing again.

Thom S. Rainer serves as president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources. Among his greatest joys are his family: his wife Nellie Jo; three sons, Sam, Art, and Jess; and seven grandchildren. Dr. Rainer can be found on Twitter @ThomRainer and at facebook.com/Thom.S.Rainer.





By HEITH MITCHELL

A WORD FROM YOUR MISSION OFFICE:

Through your BMA of Texas Missions movement, you are currently supplying the salaries of 21 people in 15 locations across the state. Increasingly diverse people groups are being reached. Along with Salaries, your contributions are providing Training, Coaching, Encouragement, and Accountability; all essential for a healthy church planting network. Your prayers are essential and are being answered in visible ways. Your encouragement and connectedness with each mission is spurring them on. They appreciate your service alongside them. Many of you are helping with mission projects this summer. Thank you for all you are doing. God is blessing your efforts and disciples are being made in your “Judea and Samaria.”

As always, I would love to share with your church about your Texas Mission Movement. Also feel free to contact us anytime with questions and concerns. Call me at the Missions Office or email me.

A WORD FROM YOUR MISSIONARIES:

**BRANDON DURHAM—
REDEEMER'S LOVE MISSION, HOUSTON**

She said Yes! Everything has shifted for me, dramatically! After 36 years of just being “me,” on Monday, in Brazil, I asked an amazing woman to marry me! Amanda and I are excited to begin growing together in life & ministry! Additionally, Amanda lives with chronic, debilitating pain, due to an illness (rheumatoid arthritis). We’re eager to find good medical treatment (possible surgeries)! The day after our engagement, we received unthinkable news that Brazil has suspended ALL issuance of passports to citizens (lack of funds)! We’re presently applying for emergency passport, for Amanda’s health. Please pray for God to open this door!!!! And pray for our church family as Redeemer’s



▲ Brandon Durham



Love Houston prepares to officially “launch” with a fun day in the park. On “launch” day (Sept. 10th) we’ll share with the community that we’re a new church in town, and our arms are open wide with the Redeemer’s Love.

**GARY SOUTHARD—
THE CHURCH AT VALLEY RANCH MISSION, NEW CANEY**

God has blessed us in all areas of the ministry. We performed a home wedding in our house for a young couple. This was exciting as I have never, in my 30 years of ministering, performed a wedding in my house.



▲ Gary Southard

We have been preparing and working hard to invite our community to our 3rd Annual Fireworks and Wheels show. We will share the blessings of this event next month.

We had four people desiring to be baptized in our last report. We now currently have five people now waiting to be baptized. We plan to have a Baptism Celebration on Sunday, July 16th at 7 p.m.

Rhonda and I want you to know that we are blessed to be your missionary in the Northeast Houston area. We are humbled that you would support us with your offerings and prayers. Together we can see God do great things as we serve in this mission field.

**JOHN HARRIS—
FOUNDATION COMMUNITY MISSION, BENBROOK**

We are beginning to see interest in our mission within the community, and some fruit from building relationships with the people. Pray that God will send us co-laborers to work with! There is a hunger in this area for life, but we need some helpers! If that could be you, let us know!



▲ John Harris

**WILL HUTCHINSON—
RESONATE COMMUNITY MISSION, HUTTO**

Would you commit to pray with us for the next 2 weeks about marriages in our area. We are seeing a large number of families pulled apart due to divorce and bitter marriages. God has placed a strong burden on my heart to see couples engage each other in a biblical marriage. Would you pray with us that God would open hearts and minds to seek



▲ Will Hutchinson

truth, and love unconditionally.

**CLIFF ROBERTSON—
CARPENTER'S HOUSE MISSION—LAKE JACKSON/CLUTE**

God is moving on the gulf coast. God has provided a van and now another church wants us to absorb it and with that comes a building and more. We had 55 the last Monday of the month and it was beautiful.



▲ Cliff Robertson

**ARNULFO MALDONADO—
TEXAS HISPANIC
MISSION COORDINATOR**

Would need wisdom and discernment on new opportunities arise and we do not have enough leaders to supply the demand please pray for more leaders to rise to the challenge and become church plant on this great state of Texas.



▲ Arnulfo Maldonado

**MATTHEW PRATHER—
THE BRIDGE MISSION, MIDLOTHIAN/WAXAHACHIE**

Summer is moving at a fast pace. There has been a lot of good things happening at The Bridge so far. We hosted a Kids Camp at the local park and had a good turnout each day. We met many new families and many of them are not in church. The theme was, “On The Road Again,” and we walked through the Roman Road each day. We also had a team from SOAR Serves come in and help us canvas neighborhoods and pass out door hangers. They were a tremendous blessing and helped us make about 1,000 contacts in our city. Most importantly, this past month we have seen two people come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior. That is why we do what we do. Please pray that we continue to see more come to know Christ as their Savior. We do have one need. Our computer that we use in our Kids Ministry has quit and we need a replacement. If you would like to donate money toward this it would be greatly appreciated. .



▲ Matthew Prather

PRAYER REQUESTS FROM THE FIELD

-Will Hutchinson of Resonate-Hutto Mission asks you to pray that they receive 5 new families this summer. They also ask that you pray for them as they help hurting families.

BMA TEXAS MISSIONS continued on p.12



JACKSONVILLE COLLEGE

God answers prayer

By **DR. MIKE SMITH**

Jacksonville College President

At 5:00 p.m. on March 20, Jacksonville College employees met for a time of prayer for the College. Among various needs brought before the Lord, the group prayed for the salvation of students. Jacksonville College believes that no education is complete until a student understands who God is and how to relate to Him through His Son Jesus Christ. That Monday evening administration, faculty, and staff lifted our students in prayer. We asked God to move in a mighty way among our student population and that He would change their hearts. We had no idea He would move so quickly.

Two days later, during the March 22 Chapel service, Dean of Students Donny Sadler was the speaker. Bro. Donny is also pastor of Woodland Heights Baptist Church in Jacksonville. He is a gifted communicator with a heart for evangelism and a passion for the gospel. That Wednesday morning, he preached a powerful message on James 2:14. The question he posed was, "If a person claims to have faith, but shows no evidence in his life that he has been saved, can this kind of faith save him?"

When the invitation was given for students to get out of their seats come to the front of the chapel, it was clear that a spiritual battle was taking place. At first, no one responded. As we remained in prayer, one student made her way to the front. Then another came forward, and another, until 24 students were at the altar. Staff members met with and counseled each student one on one, and every student who came forward made a profession of faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. We have started a weekly discipleship program for these students so they can continue to grow in maturity and lead others to Christ.

The greatest miracle of all is when a person passes from death to life, and I praise God for allowing me to see this miracle in 24 students. And I praise him because He answers prayer.

God is good all the time.



▲ Bro. Mike counseling some of the 24 students who were saved during the March 22 Chapel service

JACKSONVILLE COLLEGE BOOKSTORE IN TRANSITION

The Jacksonville College bookstore is in a time of transition. The ability of students to purchase textbooks at lower prices online has made it difficult for colleges to stay in the textbook business. In addition, many textbooks today are in e-book form. As a result, students attending Jacksonville College will no longer purchase their textbooks in the campus bookstore. Instead they will be able to acquire their books online and at economical prices through such distributors as Amazon, Alibris, and Chegg.

Students, alumni, and friends will still be able to purchase brand items with the Jacksonville College logo on them at the same location as the former bookstore, but the Alumni Association will operate the new store. Visitors will be able to purchase t-shirts, coffee mugs, and other items that feature the JC logo.

We are thankful for the many churches and individuals for supporting the Jacksonville College bookstore, and we encourage you to continue to purchase Jacksonville College logo items in the store run by the Alumni Association.

REGISTRATION

Registration is ongoing for Fall 2017. Placement testing, academic advising, and registration for new students will be available on Saturday, July 22 and Friday, August 4 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Lunch will be served at no cost to students and their parents on these days. If you plan to register on one of these dates, you must sign up in advance at www.jacksonville-college.edu (click on the Information link under "New Students Fall 2017"), or contact Admissions at (903) 589-7110 or admissions@jacksonville-college.edu.

New student registration will also be offered on July 18 and 25 for walk-ins. No sign up is required, and lunch will not be provided.

To view the full list of Fall 2017 courses, click on the Course Offerings link at www.jacksonville-college.edu.



2020

DEBT FREE IN THREE

_____ (Your name/church)
commits to pray for Jacksonville College and to give:
_____ a month for operating expenses
_____ a month for "Debt Free in Three"
_____ as a special gift for "Debt Free in Three"
_____ Amount enclosed

(Cut out and mail this form to: Jacksonville College, 105 B.J. Albritton Drive, Jacksonville, TX 75766)

ROY DARBY (1/25/1937 - 5/6/2017)

Jacksonville College employees and alumni will always be grateful for the contributions of former Dean of Students Roy Darby, who died on May 6 at the age of 80. Roy worked in the Jacksonville Independent School District for many years. He was a teacher, assistant principle, and principle in the high school. He then served as Dean of Students at Jacksonville College for 15 years. He loved young people and spent most of his professional life teaching and encouraging them. Although he was a strict disciplinarian, Roy had a soft heart for students who needed extra counseling and encouragement to succeed. He also loved sports and kept the score book during all JC basketball games.

Roy was a deacon at Tabernacle Baptist Church in Jacksonville, and he loved serving the Lord. He was well loved and highly respected, and he will be missed.



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 capital letters are those honored or remembered from Jun. 1, 2017 – Jun. 30, 2017.

ENDOWMENTS

MYRA STOKES: Mr. Bill Stokes

HONORARIUMS

ALL FOSTER PARENTS: Earlene Crenshaw

ALL LITTLE CHILDREN: Charles & Verna Baucum

HOLLIN ANDERSON: James & Susan Anderson

PALMER ANDERSON: James & Susan Anderson

BROOKE LAUDERMAN: Berenda Mewborn

CHLOE LAUDERMAN: Berenda Mewborn

HANNA LAUDERMAN: Berenda Mewborn

STAYON & LOCKIE THOMAS' WEDDING: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

JEAN WASDEN: Refuge Place

MEMORIALS

ALVIS & THEDA ADAMS: Mary Adams

CALLIE DEAN ANDERSON: Ronald & Laura Tevis

ELLA MAE BAILEY: Neta Hicks & Neta Kaye Penson

J.S. BASS: Charlotte Morgan

MYRTLE BASS: Charlotte Morgan

WALTER BECKER: Dennis & Ilona Myrice

DANIELLE BRADY: Mary Dunavant

OLEN & LULA MAE BRUTTON: Mary Adams

NANCY CARRELL: Nelson & Veda Womack

JUANITA COKER: Mary Hunt

RACHEL JO DEAN: Mary Ann Wylie

NORWOOD EATON: Jed & Glenice Whitaker

CAMILE N. EVANGELISTA: Doris Lasiter

MAXINE FINCH: Mary Dunavant

SHERRYL FORTENBURY: Mary Dunavant

LOIS & HESTER GIBSON: Janice Dore

ARTHUR JIM GREEN JR: Mary Dunavant

BILLIE GRIMES: John Grimes

ALBERT HAYES: Mary Dunavant

HALEY RENAE JOHNSON: Donna Johnson

GUSSIE KILLION: Doris Lasiter

NAN LEGGETT: Friendship Sunday School Class @ First Baptist Carthage

RHODA LOVETT: Mary Hunt

BILLIE SUE MARTIN: Terry & Sharon Martin

BURL MASSINGILL: Mr. & Mrs. Linwood Whitehead; Mr. & Mrs. Eddy Whitehead; Beth Versland; Mr. & Mrs. Beamon Calhoun; Daphna Whitehead

NEAL MCCURRY: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

DON MCGRAW: Ladies Sunday School Class @ First Baptist Blooming Grove

ELAINE MCKINLEY: Don & Susan Ross

JAMES MCLAIN: Tommy & Monna Albea

ELIZABETH MUNROE: Richard & Kim Smith

THOMAS MUNROE: Richard & Kim Smith

SARAH MORTON: David & Deana McAdams

ETHEL MULLENAX: Jeanette Haddox

WILLIAM WAYNE ROBINSON: Charles & Charlotte Johnson; Rosewood Baptist Church, Gilmer

NICK ROGERS: Tommy & Brenda Shuttlesworth

JAMES RUDD: Tommy & Monna Albea

BOBBY DON SHELTON: Brenda Ray

MITTIE JO STEWART: Robert Stewart

JESSE TALLANT: Tommy & Monna Albea

LANDAN THIELE: Eddie & Joyce Booth

JANICE SARTOR TURNER: Cedar Creek Baptist Church

DONNA VENN: Mary Ann Wylie; Jed & Glenice Whitaker

LAVERNE TURNER VOLZ: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

ROY WERNER: Jed & Glenice Whitaker

W.A. WHITE: Ronald & Laura Tevis

JERRY WHITEHEAD: Mr. & Mrs. Linwood Whitehead; Mr. & Mrs. Eddy Whitehead; Beth Versland; Mr. & Mrs. Beamon Calhoun; Daphna Whitehead



Texas Baptist Home hosts homecoming and Change for Children Celebration Day



By **JENNIFER WALKER**

Texas Baptist Home for Children

Homecoming is a time where anyone that grew up at Texas Baptist Home can come and remember their time here and fellowship with other people that grew up at the Home. It was a great homecoming celebration with a live auction to finish off the day. The auction raised over \$3,000 and will go to serve and help the kids that are currently in a Texas Baptist Home foster home or adoptive home.

Change for Children was a great success as well this

year. We had some rain showers but that did not stop these kids and families from celebrating. One of the favorite events was the Petting Zoo with a baby kangaroo. We also enjoyed barbecue and many other donors donated their time and talents to make this day special for our donors, families and churches. TBH churches are a great support and we thank you for your donations. It is not too late to send us your Change for Children cans or checks, so get those in soon!

EVERY SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE IS NOW BEING OFFERED THROUGH BAPTIST PROGRESS!

Simply set up your account with Baptist Progress for the number of bulletins you regularly need on Sunday, and they will be shipped right to your door. We have a wide selection offering six bulletin styles in various sizes to fit the worship style of nearly any church. Extra bulletins are available to add to your regular order for special days such as Easter, Christmas, Mother's Day, etc. To order or for more information, visit www.baptistprogress.org, click MORE at the top, then click Every Sunday Bulletin Service or give us a call at 972-923-0756 or send an e-mail to editor@baptistprogress.org.

If your church currently purchases bulletins directly from Warner Press, please allow us to add your church to our customer list. Baptist Progress will receive a commission if you are added to our customer list. The price for your church will be the same. Just give us a call to make the change, 972-923-0756 or email editor@baptistprogress.org.



insights for pastors

Reigniting a dying church

By **DR. ALLEN TILLEY**

The death rate of churches is at an all-time high. Across America, scores of churches are shutting their doors permanently every day. If your church is in a state of declining or plateauing, here are five keys for reigniting your church.

Recognize that your church is dying. While this may seem simplistic, many churches refuse to accept reality until it is too late. All things die, including churches. None of the churches mentioned in the New Testament exist today. Why? They died. Just as we go to the doctor only when we realize we are sick, churches don't seek help until they realize they are dying. Recognition is a painful, but necessary, part of rebuilding any dying church.

Assess the reason your church is dying. Churches die for different reasons. Changes in the community, lack of Great Commission focus, division within the church, and power struggles are just a few of the reasons churches die. Before a surgeon can operate, the doctor must make the right diagnosis. Before your church can grow, finding out the cause of its decline is just as imperative. Consider forming a task

force to discover the root cause of your church's problem.

Call a town hall meeting. Invite all the membership, including those who haven't been to church in a while. With a caring and loving attitude, have the task force present their findings, trying not to personally blame any specific person. If needed, encourage reconciliation and forgiveness among your membership. Allow people the opportunity to express themselves as long as they do so in a cooperative spirit. At this point, explain the following next step below.

Bring in an outsider. Ask someone unaffiliated with your church to make an assessment of your church. Either someone from the Missions Office or a pastor of a growing church can spot things that you and your church no longer see. Present this individual with your findings, ask them to examine your ministries and facilities, sit in on a worship service, and allow them to review your history. Open your doors and hearts by being completely honest. Have your outside source to write up their report and suggested changes, so you can present them to the church. Be sure to provide this person with a monetary gift for his services.

Implement change. Call another town hall meeting, present the outsider's report, trying to gain everyone's support. Because what you are doing now isn't working, don't be afraid to implement the suggested changes. During the meeting, paint a picture of what God can do through a church surrendered to His purpose.

Throughout the entire process, saturate everything with prayer, asking God to guide you and your congregation. While reigniting a dying church can be a long and difficult process, God delights in seeing His churches grow.

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.



BMA Texas Missions cont.

-Matthew Prather of the Bridge, Midlothian asks you to pray for his wife Amy for her job search.

-Pray for Joshua Pickard, Intern as he visits missions looking for his place of service.

-Pray for John Harris as he continues to meet people, share Christ, and Make Disciples in Benbrook. Pray specifically for open doors of opportunity.

-Intern Christian Martinez asks prayer for his expecting wife and baby. The baby should be here this month.

-Pray for new families reached at The Church at Valley Ranch Mission. They are specifically praying for 8 new families and increased offerings.

-Pray for the launch date of September 10th at Redeemer's Love Mission in Houston. Pray for Bro. Brandon and Amanda's upcoming wedding.

-Intern - Toby Goodman is preparing for a move to Hutto. Pray for a house for them there.

-Arnulfo Maldonado asks you to pray that God will continue to provide more Hispanic Missionaries.

-Intern - Christian Martinez is seeking God's direction

about where God would have them to serve.

-Please pray for God to provide an Associate missionary at Resonate-Hutto, Carpenter's House-Lake Jackson, and Foundations-Benbrook.

-Neptaly Molina from the Nacogdoches Mission is waiting on his Religious Work Visa approval. He also has a big outreach event coming.

PRAISE REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

-Bro Brandon Durham is engaged! We celebrate with him and his fiancée, Amanda.

-4 salvations were reported this month!

-Valley Ranch Mission held a Fourth of July event with over 300 present. They are seeing many Sunday visitors!

-The Bridge Mission had a local summer camp outreach with kids saved!

-Fifth Street Baptist Church in Levelland has a vision and burden to start West Texas Churches. Two are underway!

-Antioch Georgetown, the new Mission from Antioch Baptist Church in Conway, AR is underway. We are so excited to see them here!

-God continues to answer your prayers on behalf of your mission effort!



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





auxiliaries

Grace Wins with National WMA

By SHARON COLE

The National WMA meeting held May 2, 2017 at the Convention Center in Arlington was refreshing and inspiring. The theme this year was “Grace Wins.” We heard from Shirley Hoffpauir how Grace Wins when we are broken. Enduring pain that brokenness brings can be used by God to accomplish His plan for our lives.

Shirley then created a chalk drawing of a woman holding a cracked jar with light rays showing through, illustrating how God’s light shines through our brokenness to reveal His love. During this demonstration, Jerene Reddin sang “Nothing Greater Than Grace.”

In our “breakout sessions,” Jennifer Barton spoke on how Grace Wins through Illness. Kelly Johnson spoke on how Grace Wins in missions and her journey through the joys and trials of being in a foreign land spreading the gospel of Christ. Golda Prakash also spoke on missions in the country of India serving with her husband, Prashant Prakash. Jayna Williams spoke on how Grace Wins in Working with Youth. Joan Decker spoke on how Grace Wins in Your Golden Years.

National Miss GMA, Patricia Hernandez, sang “How Great Is Our God” acapella in Spanish. The National Jr. Miss GMA, Emily Gentry, read Philippians 4:4-7 and led in prayer.

A total of \$35,146.89 was raised for the project, computers for the Christian school in India. First Baptist, Springhill, Louisiana received recognition for giving the most to the project. The new project for 2017-2018 is BMAA Bible College in the Philippines.

Charlotte Johnson installed the following officers emphasizing that “God is Enough-God’s Grace is Enough.” President-Ruby Poteet; First Vice President-Jodi Rhea; Second Vice President-Charlotte Johnson; Third Vice President-Brenda Hornaday; Recording Secretary-Ann Pugh; Assistant Recording Secretary-Linda Dertinger; Treasurer-Pat Duncan; Assistant Treasurer-Janet Widger; Media Director-Alicia Johnson; Editor-Lane Flynt; Historian-Sandy Kennedy; Director of Youth Auxiliaries-Mandi Townsend; Assistant Director of Youth Auxiliaries-Laurie Hicks; GMA/YLA Promoter-Lisa Christian; Assistant GMA/YLA Promoter-Sandra Kizer; Sunbeam Promoter-Sherry Laminack; Assistant Sunbeam Promoter-Shirley Hoffpauir; Song Leader-Judy Wallace; Pianist-Jerene Reddin; Project Promotion Committee-Debbie Clark, Diana Morris, Kelly Williams; Salary & Expense Committee-Ann Raines, Beth Caldwell, Victoria White; Study Book Committee-Jackie Ricks, Narita Roady, Carolyn Colvert. Advisory Council-

Bro. Claude Evans, Bro. David Kizer, Bro. Randy Rhea. A total of 156 registered for this meeting. Next year’s theme is “Fear Not-Finding Courage to be Who God Wants You to be.” The theme verse is Joshua 1:9. The National WMA will meet in Jackson, Mississippi, April 17, 2018.

DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

The Polk County District WMA met on Saturday, April 22, 2017 with Soda Baptist Church. Carol Griffin called the meeting to order and Betty Blakley led in singing Count Your Blessings and Take the Name of Jesus With You. Special music was presented by Ruth Malone who sang, Calvary’s the Reason Why. Sandra Lilley introduced the special speaker, Vickie Burns, a retired educator who has dedicated her life to the ministry of speaking at retreats and seminars. She spoke from Ephesians 3:14-21 reminding us that we have access to the riches of God’s glory and His storehouse is never empty. She stated that we are to be filled with all the fullness of God and watch that we are not too busy to be filled with Christ. The project for next year will be: The Center of Hope and The Master’s Builders. The following officers were elected for 2017-2018: President-Carol Griffin; First Vice President-Barbara Benton; Second Vice President-N/A-(each host church is responsible for the program) Third Vice President-Regina Maze; Secretary/Treasurer/Reporter-Delores Adams; Historian-Sharon Smith; Assistant Historian-

Doris Hambrick; Nominating Committee-Carol Griffin & Barbara Benton; Sunshine Committee-Barbara Benton & Ruth Malone; Pianist-Gracie Hood; Assistant Pianist-Delores Adams; Song Leader-Betty Blakley; Advisory Council-Bro. Brett Lester, Bro. Denton Maze, Bro. Wayne Bickley.

SHINE FOR JESUS-REACHING OTHERS THROUGH DANIEL SPRINGS BAPTIST ENCAMPMENT

The Daniel Springs Baptist Encampment is our Texas WMA project for 2017. The camp facility belongs to the BMAA. That includes every BMA church in the nation. It is the perfect place for students and adults to get away to focus on Christ without the interruptions of everyday life. Located in Gary, our camp can house 1,000 students each week of the summer. That translates to 1000 souls being reached

GRACE WINS continued on p. 15

SPONSORED BY TEXAS WMA

You Were Saved to Shine
Ladies' Retreat
October 6-7, 2017
Rosewood Baptist Church
8260 Arrowwood Rd., Gilmer, Texas 75644

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:16.

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For
Jesus

This dynamic 2-day retreat is designed to equip, encourage and challenge you to SHINE FOR JESUS. You'll experience inspiring worship, fun & creative workshops, a box dinner on Friday, a delicious lunch on Saturday plus yummy treats and a chance to connect with others.

Download registration form and retreat schedule at TexasWMA.com click on the events tab

To have a registration form mailed to you contact Glenda Chamberlain, Texas WMA 2nd Vice President • gcham33@yahoo.com • 903-725-6570 • 903-806-3484

Seats are filling fast, get your registration in today!

CHRISTY BEAM
Author of *Miracles from Heaven*, a remarkable true story of faith and blessings. Christy shares the story of her daughter Annabel, who was plagued by a chronic illness. How she fell 30 feet headfirst through a hollow tree. Of Annabel's visit to Heaven followed by the miraculous disappearance of the symptoms of Annabel's chronic disease.

EVENTS

SENIOR ADULT CONFERENCE

DATE: November 13-15, 2017

PLACE: Branson Hilton Convention Center, Branson, Missouri

BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION 117TH ANNUAL SESSION

DATE: November 6-7, 2017

PLACE: New Harmony Baptist Church, Tyler, Texas

pastor & staff changes

RYAN BURCHETT is the new pastor of Northside, Garland.



Later this year, Baptist Progress, will celebrate 105 years of ministry. During the month of June, we are asking each church to send

**\$105 for 105
years of ministry**

to Baptist Progress. The goal of our anniversary offering is to raise \$15,000 to meet our budget for the year.

WILL YOUR CHURCH HELP US?

If so, please send your offering of \$105 for 105 years of ministry to:
Baptist Progress
P.O. Box 2085
Waxahachie, Texas 75168

We appreciate your contribution to our ministry needs.

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PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

AVAILABLE MINISTER

MIKE CROSS is available for pulpit supply or to serve as pastor. Contact him at 979-402-5491 or mikecross413@gmail.com. 10/17

JAMES SHINE is available for pulpit supply or to serve as interim pastor. He is a member of Cornerstone, Jacksonville. Contact him at 2302 Briarwood Drive, Jacksonville, Texas 75766, jim.shine@bmats.edu or 903-721-0199/903-586-1066. 7/17

SCOTT SCHULLE is available to serve as a bivocational pastor. He is a member of First, Maydelle. Contact him at 903-948-0058 or 903-795-3886.

AVAILABLE POSITIONS

PASTOR—Emmanuel, Garland is seeking a bivocational senior pastor. Send resume to Rodney Blount, 721 Wallace Drive, Garland, Texas 75041 or rodney.blount@aggregate-us.com. For more information, call 214-384-8557. 8/17

PASTOR—Lawrence Springs, Fruitvale is seeking a bivocational pastor. Send resume to lindakayek@yahoo.com or call Buddy Kindle at 903-896-2069 or Roy Lee LaPrade at 903-896-1867. 7/17

STUDENT PASTOR—Soda, Livingston is seeking a fulltime pastor of students. Send resume to youthguywayne@yahoo.com.

EXECUTIVE PASTOR—Farley Street, Waxahachie is seeking an ordained minister to serve as executive pastor. Send resume to resume@farleystreet.com.

OUTREACH DIRECTOR—Farley Street, Waxahachie is seeking a bivocational outreach director. Send resume to resume@farleystreet.com.

PASTOR—Mt. Pisgah, Mineola is seeking a pastor. Send resume to the church at 4995 FM 49, Mineola, Texas 75773, or dmvaughn@peoplescom.net or call 903-967-3767 for more information.

MUSIC—First, DeSoto is seeking a bivocational music minister. Send resume to Dr. Kerry Moore at 221 West Beltline, DeSoto, Texas, fbcdesototxgmail.com or call 972-223-7441 for more information.

WORSHIP PASTOR—Farley Street, Waxahachie is seeking a Worship Pastor to lead an established choir, praise team including musicians for blended worship and oversee adult education programs. Must have major or minor degree in Music. Preferred 3-5 years of experience supervising choral/musical ministries. Salary TBD. Send resumes to resume@farleystreet.com.

PASTOR—Ashmore, Loop is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Tom Ingle, HCR 1, Box 23, Loop, Texas 79342, ingle@scoggindickey.com or call 806-928-8843. 7/17

PASTOR—Hill Creek, Whitehouse is seeking a pastor. Send resume and recorded sermon to Hill Creek Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 1287, Whitehouse, Texas 75791.

church news

Galileans from Little Mound, Big Sandy attended the National Galilean camp in Smithville, Arkansas June 29- July 1. It was a great time of fellowship and fun with the national group that consisted this year of churches for Arkansas, Mississippi and Texas. The Galileans held their annual meeting to elect the upcoming year's officers which included Neil Aga as the national secretary from Little Mound, Big Sandy. He will be attending the Galileans national officer meeting later in July to plan next year's camp

churches in review

JUNE 18, 2017

CHURCH	SS	WORSHIP	ADDITIONS
First, Crandall	74	101	1 by baptism
First, Palmer	46	64	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	16	30	
Jackson, Joaquin	54	96	
Merriman Hills, Sherman	13	26	
New Harmony, Tyler	270	370	
Olde Tyme, White Oak		55	1 by baptism
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	33	60	
Rosewood, Gilmer	122	245	1 by baptism
Security Calvary, Cleveland	20	48	
Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill	16	24	

JUNE 25, 2017

CHURCH	SS	WORSHIP	ADDITIONS
First, Blooming Grove	209		4 by baptism
First, Crandall	71	147	
First, Palmer	36	64	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	16	42	
Jackson, Joaquin	69	119	
Little Mound, Big Sandy	52	70	
New Harmony, Tyler	287	375	1 by baptism
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	38	44	
Pine Brook, Tyler	27	51	1 by baptism
Rosewood, Gilmer	134	225	2 by baptism
Security Calvary, Cleveland	16	33	1 by baptism
Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill	15	20	

JULY 2, 2017

CHURCH	SS	WORSHIP	ADDITIONS
Anthony Drive, Ennis	48	103	
First, Crandall	70	138	
First, Palmer	44	75	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	15	31	
Jackson, Joaquin	64	126	
New Harmony, Tyler	249	320	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	38	44	
Pine Brook, Tyler	31	56	
Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill	16	16	

JULY 9, 2017

CHURCH	SS	WORSHIP	ADDITIONS
First, Blooming Grove	200		
First, Omen	33	65	
First, Palmer	52	86	1 by baptism
Glade Creek, Gilmer	18	36	
Jackson, Joaquin	69	124	
Little Flock, Lufkin	50	70	
Little Mound, Big Sandy	35	40	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	40	44	
Rosewood, Gilmer	151	241	2 by letter
Security Calvary, Cleveland	22	48	
Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill	16	24	

Sunday School Lessons

One of God's greatest hits

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: September 3, 2017

TEXT: Song of Solomon 1:1

The Song of Solomon gives us God's perspective into the institution of marriage, which He has designed and has sanctioned. Possibly the most neglected book in pulpits across America is the Song of Solomon. May we take these next few months to look at this most sacred institution.

The Song of Songs: This song, which is "the best song," was likely written during the early part of his reign over Israel. He wrote 3000 proverbs and wrote 1005 songs. Most of his songs were lost, but God, in His infinite wisdom, decided this song on love, courtship and marriage found its

place in the scripture.

Satan has always sought to undermine God's plan for the ages, on many different fronts. But probably one of his most effective campaigns has been his assault on the institution of marriage. Movies, sitcoms and other works of literary "art" have taken the husband/wife relationship and have hijacked it, commercialized it, perverted it and has turned it into anything but what God's plan has been for this most blessed union.

The Song of Solomon, as inspired by the Holy Spirit, puts into perspective, the emergence of feelings of love between a man and a woman. Many interpret this book as being a

symbol of God's love for His bride Israel.

The purpose of this poem is to showcase the feelings of love between a husband and a wife. The poem clearly presents marriage as being designed and ordained of God and it is for the man's and woman's pleasure, within the confines of marriage.

Marriage is good. Proverbs 18:22 states, "He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord."

The writer of Hebrews says, "let the marriage bed be undefiled." Hebrews 13:4

Marriage is an earthly symbol of a higher marriage, between Christ and His church. Ephesians 5:25-33.

What a woman wants

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: September 10, 2017

TEXT: Song of Solomon, 2:4

The problem with most marriages is, men have little clue as to what brings joy to their wives, when it comes to the marriage relationship.

1 A woman wants to know her husband places her above

any other. Verse 2: "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters."

2. A woman wants her husband to be strong and protective. He is as the apple tree (rare) among the trees of the forest. He shines brighter than any other in the crowd. She mentions being "in his shade." which indicates strength,

protection. What woman would not respond excitedly to a husband whose strength protects

3. A woman wants her husband's comfort. verse 4: His banner over me is love."

4. A woman wants her husband to sustain and refresh her. "Sustain me with raisin cakes, refresh me with apples. . ."

Isn't She Lovely

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: September 17

TEXT: Song of Solomon 1:5-8

Being deeply tan is a plus in today's culture. Women (and men) spend enormous amounts of time in tanning booths, or lying in the backyard or on the beach, because being extremely tan is socially (and romantically) accepted. But this woman in Song of Solomon 1:5 was tan for a different reason — she was dark from working in the sun, and being such, she did not feel lovely. Perhaps her thoughts about herself were a result of remarks from acquaintances, including her step-brothers. Her tan reflected her lowly background.

But a well adjusted woman, one who places her faith in the Lord, will not consider herself to be worthy of a man's love because of her physical appearance, but rather because of what God has made her. It is most gratifying to know that a man married a woman, not because of looks, but because of inner beauty. Physical looks have a way of changing with age, but inner beauty continues to flourish. 2 Corinthians 4:16



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Sunday School Lessons

Bring out the best

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: September 24, 2017

TEXT: Song of Solomon 1:9-2:7

Why do some men feel they have to bolster their male ego by putting their wives down among other acquaintances? Many women are downtrodden when all it would take from their husband is a few kind, complimentary words.

The reference in 1:9 was not to call her a horse, to liken her to the well-groomed, satiny sheen of Pharaoh's horses. He says the strands of jewels highlight the curvature of her neck and accents her beauty.

She referred to the head of her lover as being like a sachet of sweet myrrh, an ointment used for healing, as spices and

as a sweet fragrance. Engedi is, today, an oasis and nature reserve in Israel located west of the Dead Sea. His fragrance reminded her of the wildflowers of Engedi.

He likens her to a lotus blossom blooming in a swamp of weeds. He carries her on a pedestal, and is always attentive to her self worth. His unfailing expressions of love and adoration for her (including his warm embrace - verse 6) causes her to swoon and cry out for something to eat to sustain her.

Men, you will do no greater service to your wife, and delight her children more than to deeply revere her as God's person for your life. When you bolster her self-worth,

you are bolstering your marriage and glorifying God, who designed that marriage.

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.



Grace Wins with National WMA cont.

and taught God's Word for four days each week. Many souls are saved, lives are rededicated, hearts are surrendered to missions and lives are forever changed. Our goal is to provide funds for updates to our camp. Can you help us reach our goal? Plan several fundraising events during the year to raise the money. Challenge the men of your church! Decorate bottles and see who can fill their bottle first: women or men! Another option is to give your ladies each a water bottle to fill with dimes. A 20 ounce bottle will hold \$70. Another idea similar to a carnival, is to set up a "Minute To Win" party for your church family to come and enjoy while participating. Sell tickets and an opportunity to participate in various games. Use your imagination! Do you believe that one person's junk is another person's treasure? You can organize a church-wide yard sale with everyone donating items to sell. Host a HOMEMADE Ice Cream Freeze Off in August. People will vote by paying or making a donation for their favorite homemade ice cream.

KEEP OCTOBER 6-7, 2017 ON YOUR CALENDAR: ANNUAL LADIES' RETREAT-ROSEWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH, GILMER, TEXAS.

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



Obituaries

HENRY LEE HORTON

Bro. Henry Lee Horton, 73, of Fairfield, passed away on Saturday, June 17, 2017 in Waco. Funeral services were June 20, 2017 at Calvary, Fairfield. Horton was born January 22, 1944 in Kirvin to parents W. C. (Dub) and Lula Shanks Horton. On June 7, 1963 he married his high school sweetheart, Vannette Shields, and they celebrated 54 years of marriage together. Horton graduated in May 1964 from Jacksonville Baptist College in Jacksonville and Baylor University in August 1965. He also attended Southwestern Theological Seminary in Ft. Worth. Horton pastored Lost Prairie Baptist Church in Groesbeck then served as a missionary to France from 1966 to 1970. He pastored Calvary Baptist Church in Mesquite for 10 years and Round Prairie Baptist Church in Fairfield for 7 ½ years. He pastored Antioch Baptist Church of Conway, Arkansas for 20 years retiring in 2008 for health reasons and returned home to Fairfield. In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by a son, Bryan Lee Horton in September 1993. Left to cherish his memory is his wife Vannette Horton of Fairfield; a daughter, ReNae Eyre and husband Shawn of Jacksonville; a grandson Bradley Eyre and wife Alayna of Keller; a granddaughter, Lauren Crawley and husband Caleb of Conway, Arkansas; a sister, Charlene Allbright of Cypress; a sister, Allene and C.W. "Carol" Stubbs of Houston, and numerous nieces and nephews.



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Nearly 2,000 gather for SOAR 2017

GRAPEVINE—Church vans piled in to the Gaylord Texan Resort the afternoon of July 5 for three days that would change lives forever. Nearly 2,000 students came together for the first session that evening, where Ryan Storey, Jordan Bowen, and McKenna Marlow hyped up the youth and kicked off the conference. Afterward, the keynote speaker, Dustin Wisely, entered the stage to give the students a foreshadowing of the sessions to come: that all followers of Christ are called to ministry, no matter what. The evening was concluded with a worshipful set from We the Union, then students emptied out of the Texas Ballroom and filled the SOAR Village.

Thousands of students roamed the different stations in the Village, which included a bookstore, a café, a “Built to Build” station which helped students discover their natural ministry gifting, a VSM Experience and Prayer Walk, a blogging center where students shared their hearts, and many other stations from impactful ministries. The Village Stage featured music from Raquel, smooth acoustic tunes Tyler Sellers, and even Youth Pastor Karaoke, through which Dave Vandergriff emerged as victor.

The following sessions walked through Philippians 1 and 2, and Dustin Wisely explained how even though Paul was in prison when he wrote these letters, he was ecstatically joyful in Christ. Why is this? Because God was his true treasure, and his only desire was to make Christ known. Paul had full confidence that God was in complete control, and in life or death his circumstances would work out for his good and Christ’s glory.



Session three brought a panel of people who grew up going to SOAR, and who are now living a life that serves the Lord outside of vocational ministry. The panel included foster parents, an NFL football player, a businessman involved in training up godly men, and a short-term missionary. All of these people built upon and solidified the calling that all Christians must live a life of ministry, even if they don’t enter vocational ministry.

The final session drove home an essential point for students: faithful Christians should not be the exception. Followers of Christ should live a life of sacrificial, joyful ministry because they live for something greater than this world. They have the BEST news: the gospel. Wisely closed out with a challenge for SOAR students: how are you going

to live a life of ministry when you leave SOAR? Because, as a follower of Christ, it’s what you’re called to do.

SOAR 2017 had several other opportunities to learn and grow, including five different SOAR Workshops, which were a smaller, more focused time of discipleship. SOAR Serves included three different mini mission trips, which served communities and BMA church plants in the area, reinforcing the concept of living a selfless lifestyle.

The results left in the wake of SOAR 2017 are salvations, commitments to ministry, and many lives impacted for Christ. DiscipleGuide is excited about the impact from this year, and is looking forward to SOAR 2018, when the theme will be “Local,” challenging students to get involved in their local church.

Most Needed Items

Plastic Folders (All Colors with Brads and Pockets)

Paper Goods: Kleenex, Paper Towels, Paper Plates, Ziploc Bags (all sizes)

Ring Binders: All Sizes and Colors. Zip binders are needed as well. For boys and girls

Pens and Pencils: Pen colors Black, Blue and Red. Pencils need to be American made #2 pencils and mechanical pencils

Markers: Crayola, Expo (Thick and Thin), Highlighters,

Scissors, Glue, and Playdoh- Scissors need to be pointed 5". Glue needs to be Elmer glue sticks

Paper: Graph, Manila, and Construction (9x12 and 12x18)

Composition Notebooks and Multi Subject Spirals only

TBH
Back to
School

DROP OFF AT TBH BY AUGUST 4TH

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