

# Baptist Progress

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## Long-term solutions for DiscipleGuide's ministries; Holmes named interim director

By **AARON MIDDLETON**

*DiscipleGuide Trustees Chairman*

The past nine months have been an intense time of prayer, investigation, and exploration regarding the future of DiscipleGuide Church Resources. On behalf of DiscipleGuide's Board of Trustees, I want to assure you that we have made a priority of resourcing the churches of the BMA with quality curriculum, conferences, and camps. We are committed to seeing these vital ministries continue.

We understand that the BMAA departments exist only to serve the churches, so the question "What best aids the local church?" has become the filter each decision is subjected to. We have received much assistance and counsel from the leadership of the other departments, and from the Coordinating Council.

Recommendations are being made to the association that Daniel Springs Camp once again stands as a national department, and that conferences be jointly controlled by the executive directors of the BMAA departments.

We are pleased to announce that we have asked Dr. Charley Holmes to serve as our interim executive director. Under his leadership, DiscipleGuide will focus exclusively on the production of quality curriculum for BMA churches that is distinguished by its sound doctrine, which both forms and directs our vision as well as our mission. We remain committed to seeing that the churches of the BMA are well served with quality resources.

On Feb. 15, 2019, the BMA Seminary Board of Trustees met with the chairman and vice-chairman of DiscipleGuide (previously known as the Department of Church Ministries). After lengthy discussion of how the Seminary can help restore confidence in our BMAA Bible study curriculum, Dr. Holmes agreed to serve as Interim Executive Director of DiscipleGuide at a salary of \$1/annum. This decision was supported by the entire BMA Seminary Board of Trustees.

Holmes said, "My immediate goal is for DiscipleGuide to prepare a renovated adult Bible Study curriculum and have it ready for our churches to order by June 15, 2019. I pledge that this new curriculum will be true to our doctrines of the inerrancy and sufficiency of the Scriptures. It will also present associational Baptist principles as the purest form of church practice."



**Dr. Charley Holmes**

**DiscipleGuide**



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# Fellowship Problems in the First Church

By PAUL GAUNTT

From the very first day the New Testament Church was imbued with the power of the Holy Spirit, church dissension quickly experienced it's ugly start.

And that dissension grew amidst a congregation, which had: (a) personally witnessed the empowering of the Holy Spirit; (b) grew from a small band of 120 disciples to well over 10,000 voting members by the time we read in Acts 6; (c) had nearly 500 of it's members who had personally seen Christ. (1 Cor. 15:4-6) and (d) contained no members who came from a falling-out at another church.

There are some surprising factors that contribute to fellowship problems. So is it any wonder that the average attendance of an American congregation is 75? John Maxwell once stated in a conference that most churches feel comfortable with 75 in attendance and actually would rather not grow larger. It only takes 75 members to pay the bills, salaries and property upkeep. A church of 75 only needs one full-time staff member. Also, in a church of 75, everyone knows everyone, and the membership is more manageable.

Just because a church experiences phenomenal growth does not make it immune to fellowship problems. In fact, the opposite is usually true. The church in Jerusalem was just one of such churches which grew quickly into a mega-church — and so did the fellowship problems.

**1. The widows were neglected of food distribution.** This was the fellowship problem in Jerusalem. There are countless other problems that threaten the unity of the body. Acts 6:1a. What really magnified the fellowship problem was the fact the Hellenistic widows (Greek-speaking proselytes) were being neglected in favor of the widows of the native Jews. Possibly some disgruntled Hellenistic Jews approached the disciples and said, "You've got to do something! You are the leaders!"

**2. Church leaders were displaced.** The definition of the word "displaced" is "to remove from the usual or proper specified place." The apostles were expected to carry on the benevolent work at the expense of their primary calling — to pray and to prepare to preach the word to the flock. It was taking its toll on the spiritual welfare of the church.

I want to cite two incidents in churches which well illustrate the pressure that was brought on the apostles of the Jerusalem church. If these incidents had been brought to fruition, there is no question that the fellowship of the church and the ministry of the pastor would be destroyed.

In one such church two men approached the pastor with complaints about a woman in the church sending what appeared to be inappropriate letters of friendship to their wives. The pastor was summoned to go and speak to the woman's husband about the problem. After wise counsel by a more seasoned pastor, he elected not to go because he was made to realize it would have thrown him into the middle of an issue in which he would have lost his ministry, and the results would have been spiritually catastrophic for the fellowship.

In another scenario, a long-time member of the church was suspected of behaving inappropriately to a young lady in the church. The pastor, who had not been with the church but a few months, was summoned by the deacons and was told that he needed to handle the situation. The pastor firmly told them, "This situation was going on long before I arrived, and furthermore, since the man is blood kin to most of you, the responsibility is yours. If I do what you say, it will mean a U-haul bill for me, but

if you guys do the job, and it blows up, all that will be required is a first-class postage stamp to send your letter to another church."

The apostles wisely, and by the direction of the Holy Spirit, instructed the church to seek out men who could minister to the Hellenistic, as well as native widows. Simply put, they were to run interference for the Apostles, to be the remedy for fellowship problems so the Apostles could be free to pray and meditate on the word in order to feed the flock. I think it's safe to say a spiritually "fed" flock will have a minimum of spiritual problems — but a flock not properly fed from the meat of the word, is a "sitting duck" for satan.

**3. Remedy for fellowship problems.** The remedy was simple — seek out from among you seven men with impeccable character, filled with the Holy Spirit, and possessing divine wisdom, who can be "over this business." Not business administrators, not a corporate board - but the business of serving — the business of quelling fellowship problems. (diakonos - a servant; waiter - minister - or messenger) One of these men, Stephen, was described as full of grace (spiritual strength who worked great wonders), and full of faith (a strong belief that Jesus is the Messiah)

**4. Results of the remedy for fellowship problems:** Verses 5 and 7 of Acts 6 tell us that the fellowship was restored, the message was even more effectively spread, the number of disciples increased, and the people were happy with the arrangement. ("...and the saying pleased the whole multitude. . .")

What really impressed me about the Apostles was the fact they delegated the responsibility to the church to seek out the seven men. They were secure enough in the church and the Lord's direction, they did not have to pull strings to get their cronies in the office. Many times we pastors are so addicted to micromanagement, we can't relinquish control to the church. Pastor, you must relinquish control, because Christ didn't give you the Great Commission — He gave it to the Church. And as my dear friend, the late Lynn Stephens once told me, "The church is infinitely more important than (we) are."

There is not a more powerful organism on the earth than Christ's New Testament Church. She is the recipient to the blessed promises of God — She is built upon the Rock of Jesus Christ — and He promises that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. And one day He is returning to take her to His Father's house for the wedding of the ages. Part of the interlude of the Gaither song, "The Church Triumphant" gives us such encouragement;

"Listen, child of God, it's alive! Discouraged pastor, it's his church and it's still alive! Lonely missionary, sow that seed with confidence. The church is still alive. It's alive my broken-hearted friend — busy mothers, just keep trusting in Jesus, the church is alive. . . faithful fathers, there's rest in the Lord. God's church is still alive. So family of God lift your hands, lift your hands and praise the Lord. The church, God's church triumphant is alive, it's alive my friends. Alive and well!"

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.





# CHURCH HEALTH

## First impressions

By **LARRY BARKER**

Many have written on this topic before including me. However, you might be surprised by where most people get their first impression of your church. We know the impact of facilities, signage, parking lot, and how well they are welcomed by a congregation. All of these are important but in today's cyber world most people's first impression of a church is determined by the website. Several have referred to the webpage as the new front door of the church. Surveys have shown that the vast majority of guests visit a church's website before they will visit their services.

If your church does not have a website, you should consider developing one. There are several benefits to having this tool available in a culture where so much of our time is spent on the Internet. Be careful though because not having a website is better than having a poorly maintained one. If someone sees an event advertised that happened two years ago then his or her impression would be that you are not relevant. Thom Rainer refers to dated information as the cardinal sin of websites that you must not commit.

**First, your site should clearly advertise the days and times of your services.** Any person visiting your page should be able to know when to attend. Do not confuse them with multiple special events that might cause them to show up at the wrong time. Strive to look at your website through the eyes of someone who has never been to church but is now feeling the need to get in church. The regular worship services and Bible studies are the most critical information. Make sure it is easily seen and understood.

**Provide links to the social media that your church uses such as Facebook, Instagram, etc.** Once again, make sure you keep your information current, relevant, and fresh. Some of you may already be scoffing at the idea of even using these tools but please consider getting the message where people are and a lot of people are on social media. A good friend, Anders Lee, recently posted this truth, "Facebook is both a tool and a tragedy." Use it wisely and prayerfully consider how your church can leverage it to let people know you have a place for them to come and be loved.

**Another great suggestion is to make sure the physical address of where you meet can be easily**

**seen on your site.** Some churches have even included a small map to help you find them. Also include the church phone number and email address, that someone checks regularly, to handle any questions they have about your church and its ministries. Our church receives questions by email on a regular basis that cover a wide variety of



topics from theology to sharing prayer requests. Can people find you and do they know how to contact you?

**Have a tab for the church staff that includes key leaders whether they are paid or unpaid.** It adds a very nice touch to provide a photo and a description of the ministry they lead. This makes it personable and shows that your church is a team ministry where they can come and be a part. This can include everyone from the pastor, associates, ministry leaders and the rule to remember here is-the more the merrier. Most people want to see evidence that your church it is not a one man show.

**Let people see who you are and what they can expect when they visit.** How should they dress? What does your worship look like? What do you believe? Pictures of the worship and different ministries can

answer a lot of these questions as people scroll through them. This does not mean that you need to have a declaration page that covers every possible concern but you should be open and transparent. Consider having a tab that covers what you believe. Share the fundamentals of the faith there. Be careful of overpromising and under delivering.

**Have archived sermons on the site because people want to hear what the preaching is like before they attend.** This is a great way to introduce who you are, what you believe, and how you worship. Our church normally records the entire service so people can get a taste of what our worship services might be like if they attended. This can be done with very little expense and is a blessing to shut-ins, folks who miss one message in a series, and anyone else who might happen to visit your site.

**Have someone younger and outside your church to take a look at your website and tell you what they see.** Is the design outdated? Is the look fresh and innovative or does it look unprofessional? Are the photos of high quality? Do the photos that are posted truly represent your church? Is the essential information easy to find? And most importantly, is your content up to date? Unfortunately, 96 percent of church websites fail the first impression test.

A well done website can give a great first impression to those who may be considering a visit to your services. I recently read that "in the last 12 months, over 17 million American adults who don't regularly attend worship services visited the website of a local church or place of worship." The majority of people will visit a church's website before they actually attend their services. The good news today is that having a website has become quite easy and very affordable. What will people's first impression of your church be?

*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](http://www.bmamissions.org).*





# INSIGHTS *for* PASTORS

## Be a lifelong learner

By **DR. ALLEN TILLEY**

Which would you rather do? Drink out of stagnating pond or a refreshing stream. The answer, of course, is fresh water. Every Sunday preachers empty themselves, preaching with passion and conviction, but they never refill themselves spiritually. Your personal time in the Word is just as important as your sermon preparation time. Never become so busy that you don't have time for spiritual growth. Here are seven tips for staying spiritually strong.

**Have a daily devotional.** Unless we become hypocritical, we preachers must practice what we tell our people to do by getting into the Word for our own spiritual development. To have an effective devotional life, we must carve out a time each day for personal study. Make this time with the Lord nonnegotiable. Get away from distractions. Turn off your phone. Close your door. Getting into your prayer closet doesn't happen by chance.

**Listen to other preachers.** Just as our people grow by listening to our sermons, we can grow by listening to other preachers. With pastors posting their sermons online, we have ample opportunities to sit at the feet of godly men. As you watch or listen, refrain from being critical or copying the sermon for future use. Use this time to learn and be refreshed. Let God speak to your heart so you can draw near to Him.

**Be intentional.** Spiritual growth doesn't happen by accident. From time to time, all of us need seasons of revival. Seek out spiritual growth seminars, webinars, books, or DVDs that address your spiritual needs. If you can't afford these resources, ask your church to help you, reminding them that you can only share what you have learned. In the end, you will be a better preacher, and your people will be better for it.

**Keep a journal.** Whenever God gives you an insight that will benefit you, write it down. If you don't keep a record of what you've learned, the devil will try to steal it from you. A journal isn't a notebook for future messages; it contains the lessons learned, truths discovered, and plans for applying these lessons. Review these notes often to see if you've put into practice what you've learned. Someone once said, "A life not reviewed isn't worth living."

**Join a prayer group.** I meet regularly with some men from my church and the men from another church in our community. We rotate bringing a devotional but spend most of our time in prayer. These prayer meetings are a blessing to me spiritually. If you don't have a group already, consider starting a group with godly men who will pray over and with you. While you can go it alone, you will discover even greater spiritual blessings if you

journey with others.

**Audit a seminary class.** Our seminary offers a variety of courses that will stretch you spiritually. With many of these classes online, you can work at our own pace. By auditing a class, you won't be stressed out by taking tests. Find a class that interests you, then pour yourself into learning and growing spiritually.

**Find an accountability partner.** Let's be honest. Sometimes it's hard to break out of old habits—like not having a time of spiritual development. Select someone who is growing spiritually. Give this person permission to ask about your spiritual health. Let him reprimand you if you slack off. Knowing someone is looking over your shoulder is often good motivation for staying on course.

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*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](mailto:allen@firstbaptistcarthage.com).*

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## Ellis-Hill Association hosts missions banquet

By **JERRY FULTON**

*Baptist Progress Editor*

The Ellis-Hill Baptist Association hosted a missions banquet during which Volunteer Student Missions (VSM) students were honored March 2, 2019. Jeremy Franklin, executive pastor of Farley Street, Waxahachie welcomed those in attendance. Grady Cashion, pastor of First, Blooming Grove and moderator of the Ellis-Hill Baptist Association introduced by video students from the association who will be going on VSM trips this year.

Those students include from First, Blooming Grove, Elizabeth Jennings who will be serving in Washington and Megan Green who will be serving in Peru. Going to Romania from Farley Street Baptist Church are Micah Fitch, Charity Fitch and Anna Ussery. David Dyke will accompany the students to Romania as an adult sponsor. From Heritage, Waxahachie, Samuel Bradley will be serving in Mexico. Students going on the VSM trips were not present at the banquet as they were attending training in Arkansas.

Following special music by Zach and Kara Hatchel, Rose

Ng, a seminary student from Vietnam, shared her testimony during the banquet. Her goal is to complete her studies at Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary and begin work toward a Doctor of Education degree. From there she plans to

open a school for the Mekong children of Cambodia in order to lead them to Christ and offer them a better way of life.

The missions banquet is an annual event hosted by the Ellis-Hill Baptist Association.



▲ **Rose Ng**





# Auxiliaries

## “Our Legacy, God’s Grace, Fresh Starts” Retreat in Conroe

By **GLENDAM CHAMBERLAIN**

### LADIES MINI-RETREAT APRIL 6

It is in the air, can you feel it? It is excitement over the Conroe Ladies Mini-Retreat, a time of small talk for women to discuss the Big God we serve. I hope you have marked your calendar for Saturday, April 6, 2019 to join us.

This mini-retreat is open to all ladies, whether you are currently in WMA or not. You’ll find worship, music, break-out sessions, lunch and a time to fellowship with Christian Ladies.

Retreat will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Northside Baptist Church, 701 FM 3083 W. Conroe, Texas 77303.

There is no charge but you will need to register. Daycare for children under the age of four will be available. Please email Jeannie Walker at [leonawalker@consolidated.net](mailto:leonawalker@consolidated.net) if you plan to attend and if you need daycare.

The theme is “Our Legacy, God’s Grace, and Fresh Starts” based on the genealogies in Genesis. Main speaker for the event is Johnnie Ross, Texas WMA 1st Vice President.

### SCHEDULE

9:00-9:30	Praise and Worship
9:30-10:00	Adam to the Flood
10:15-11:00	Break-Out Sessions
11:00-11:30	The Flood to Joseph
11:30-12:15	Lunch
12:15-1:00	Break-Out Sessions
1:15-1:45	Joshua to the Promised Land
2:00-2:45	Break-Out Sessions
2:45-3:00	It Only Takes One

If you would you like to stay overnight for the retreat here are a few hotels that are available: Homewood Suites by Hilton 3000 IH 45 N., 936-703-6000; Holiday Inn Express and Suites 2240 Stoneside Road, 936-788-5200; Fairfield Inn and Suites 3010 IH 45N., 936-756-3040; Hampton Inn and Suites 2242 Stoneside Rd., 936-537-1888.

Make plans to attend and if you are not able to come please add this date to your prayer list.

### SWIMMING POOL REPAIRS

Texas WMA has joined hands with Texas Baptist Home for Children to raise funds to help repair the campus community swimming pool. The pool currently needs repairs costing approximately \$30,000. We need your help to reach our goal of \$12,500 to assist in these much-needed repairs.

Send offerings to: Jo Strong, 149 NW Suzanne Terrace, Burleson, TX 76028. For more information please contact Diana Morris, Texas Project Promoter at 903-288-7575 or at [grammydi1013@msn.com](mailto:grammydi1013@msn.com).

### NATIONAL WMA

It’s time to start gearing up for the National WMA meeting on May 6-7, 2019 in Rogers, Arkansas. Theme is “Catch the Vision, Reaching Out in Service” based on Acts 11:5.

The business meeting will be held May 6 from 3 to 5 pm at the John Q. Hammons Convention Center. A retreat is scheduled for May 7 from 9 to 3 pm at the Temple Baptist Church, located just 5 minutes from the convention center. The retreat features keynote speaker Judy Wallace, with special music by Sabrina Clayton. Great break-out sessions will be held after lunch.

Lunch will be a catered event. A taco bar buffet with something for everyone to enjoy. You can pay \$15 at the door, but you must pre-register for the luncheon. Contact Jodi Rhea with your name, phone number, church and state. Please email this information by April 27 to [jodigrhea@live.com](mailto:jodigrhea@live.com) or send a text to 501-472-9490.

Check out the promotional video by Judy Wallace, keynote speaker, on the website at [www.nationalwma.org](http://www.nationalwma.org) or on Facebook at National WMA of BMAA.

### TEXAS WMA FALL RETREAT

Save the date for the Texas WMA Ladies Retreat slated for Sept. 20-21, 2019 in Gilmer. Christi McDermott, Texas 2nd Vice President, selected the theme “More of Jesus, Less of Me” referring to John 3:30. Antioch Baptist Church will host the retreat, 7391 Giraffe Road, Gilmer 75644.

This retreat promises to be a weekend focusing on Jesus and off of ourselves. The cost is \$25. You can register by contacting Ava Pool through Antioch Church, by email at [avanpool1956@gmail.com](mailto:avanpool1956@gmail.com) or by phone at 903-790-5598.

Overnight accommodations can be made at Executive Inn and Suites, 920 US 271, Gilmer, 903-843-6099.

### HEARTWARMING CHRISTIAN FICTION

Many of our Texas ladies are familiar with Jackie Ricks through WMA. Jackie is also a Christian fiction novelist.

Jackie was born on Valentine’s Day, the youngest of five children. Her father was a Baptist Minister, they lived mostly in Texas, although she started school in Oklahoma and went to school briefly in Florida. She attended a total of twelve different schools.

Jackie graduated from Hemphill High School in Texas and then went on to the University of Texas at Austin. She has a BA and an MA degree. She taught school for 31 years, from sixth grade to junior college.

Although Jackie always wanted to be a teacher, she also wrote from the time she began school. Mrs. Ricks put writing aside for a while to have a career and family, but returned and succeeded in being published. She also wrote Sunday school literature for 14 years and has been published in various Christian magazines. Her

books are available at Amazon.com, email [jdbricks@att.net](mailto:jdbricks@att.net) for more information.

### CHANCE ON LOVE Series by Jackie Ricks

This six-book series begins in West Texas in 1931. Chancy Thompson was a good Baptist deacon’s daughter, raised to obey her parents and the Bible. This six-book series covers her adventures as a new bride all the way through to her enjoyment of grandchildren during the 1960s. During that time, the family goes through various struggles and hardships as God takes them to East Texas and back and forth with His leadership. She takes a chance on love and trusts God to work it all out. The books are available on Amazon.com, email Jackie Ricks for more information

- Book 1: Love Rejoices in the Truth
- Book 2: Love Is Patient
- Book 3: Love Endures All Things
- Book 4: Love Never Fails
- Book 5: Love Hopes All Things
- Book 6: Love Believes All Things

Glenda Chamberlain is the Texas Women’s Missionary Auxiliary (WMA) editor. Contact her at [gcham33@yahoo.com](mailto:gcham33@yahoo.com). For more information about the Texas WMA, visit [www.texaswma.com](http://www.texaswma.com).





Contact BMA Foundation Executive Director Charles Attebery for more information.  
[charles@bmaamerica.org](mailto:charles@bmaamerica.org) or call 501-472-2183

*A Gift That Keeps Giving*

Gifts to the BMA Foundation are never spent. They are invested and the earnings benefit BMA departments annually until the Lord returns.

Some Ways to Give

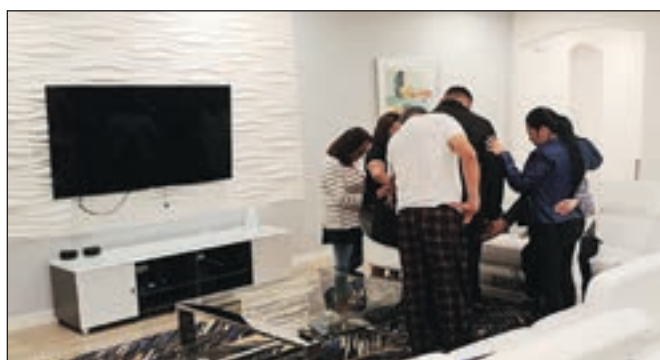
- Cash
- Stocks and bonds
- Life insurance policies
- IRA Rollovers
- Bequests



## A word from your mission office

By HEITH MITCHELL

This month, your faithful giving resulted in 28 of your missionaries and spouses traveling to Florida for equipping and refreshing at the Exponential Church Planting Conference. We joined 6,000 people from 50 states and 25 countries. We stayed in a house together cooking, eating and enjoying fellowship with each other. We spent all of each day being poured into about evangelism, discipleship and missions. Thank you for your faithfulness to take care of your Texas Missionaries. Here are some pictures.



Remember to Pray for  
**PROJECT 2029**

**100 New Churches/10 years**

I would love to come and share Texas Missions with your church or association. I have open dates and look forward to hearing from you.

### A WORD FROM YOUR MISSIONARIES

**WESLEY BURKE—INTERN PREPARING FOR NACOGDOCHES**  
**WESLEYDAVIDBURKE@GMAIL.COM**

Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, DC has welcomed me for five months as a personal intern to Pastor Mark Dever. Six other men and I are reading and writing daily papers on biblical ecclesiology and the importance of building healthy churches. This has been and continues to be a wonderful preparation for the future church planting opportunity awaiting us in Texas.



▲ Wesley Burke

Prayer Needs:

My family has been physically sick and we await test results for my son Asher that could prove he possibly has a serious illness.

**NEPTALY MOLINA—IGLESIA BAUTISTA MISSION, NACOGDOCHES**

**NRMOLINA23@GMAIL.COM**

In the month of February, we carried out several activities:

- Feb. 25, we had a meeting of cohabitation in the office of Sister Govana and her family, where she gathered a group of five couples, 10 adults, three young people and two children with a total of 15 people in the City of Lufkin. We are planning meet once a month, to pray and study in the Bible and we can initiate discipleship.

- Feb. 16, we carried out an activity of couples for the day of love and friendship, with a good attendance of 40 people.

Prayer Needs:

- 1) Pray for the pastoral family, spiritual life, health and spiritual strength, to remain involved in the work of the Lord in Nacogdoches.
- 2) Pray for legal documentation in this country.
- 3) Pray for the growth of the church in quality and quantity.
- 4) Pray for the cell group in Lufkin in the home of Sister Goevana Rodrigo Lopez.
- 5) Pray as we explore two new places to plant two new works, one in Marshall and the other in Cushing.



▲ Neptaly Molina

**JAIME GARCIA—**

**IGLESIA BAUTISTA NUEVA VIDA MISSION, GILMER/MESQUITE**  
**JAIME.GARCIA2911@GMAIL.COM**

Acts 6:4 teaches us that there is always a great need in the work of the Lord and it is necessary to be in prayer so that we have God's answer to our needs. We continue to preach to the church with examples in the scriptures to motivate them that they become more involved in the work of the Lord.



▲ Jaime Garcia

Prayer Needs:

Once again I thank you very much for your commitment and help. I ask you for your prayers so that my time in the ministry will be efficient and that I will not neglect the most important thing for me, my family and my communion with God and the ministry.

**LEE (NICKNAME)—**

**BMA TEXAS MISSIONARY AMONG ARABIC REFUGEES, RICHARDSON**

“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” Philippians 3:20-21.

During this month, my wife and I are serving and praying with some of the ones that we talked with before. At the same time, we met new friends and we have had time to pray with them. One of the people we met has a great testimony.

She got a New Testament from her daughter's Christmas shoebox in Iraq about 15 years ago, and a letter from the sender who wrote on it that there is someone who loves you. She gave her address in USA in case she needed any help.

She saved it and read it secretly without letting anybody know about it, even here husband or daughter. After that, during the war, she and family escaped to the United States. After a few days, she found, in her things the Bible with the address. She tried make contact but received no answer until now.

I met this lady in the mall while she was talking in Arabic. She had some things with her and was telling her daughter, “It's too much, we can't pay it all.” She started to take some things and put them on the shelf close to the cashier. Without letting her know, I took them to another cashier and paid for them. I let my wife keep her eyes on her after she paid. She stopped her and told her these things that you put away, we heard you saying you couldn't pay, but God sent us to you to pay for the things you need. From there we made a relationship with her and she told us her story.

God is great! He has his own way to lead those who are

**BMA TEXAS MISSIONS** continued on p.10

# TEXAS BAPTIST HOME FOR CHILDREN

## Take responsibility for your actions

By **JASON CURRY**

My son and I went on our first camping trip together. On this trip, some great things happened and God really blessed our weekend as father and son. We were riding our bikes on the trails and on the way back to our camp site, my son was in front of me and I saw him lose control and run into a big black truck parked at another site. I immediately checked on him and found nothing more than a bruise on his arm.

After that, I reviewed the truck he had run into and found a new big scratch from the bike handlebar. I looked at the truck and saw a few other scratches here and there. And all of a sudden, I thought, "The owner of this truck would never notice the new scratch." I instantly received a rebuke from the Spirit. This moment lasted maybe a second or two. I then said to my son "Ok, son, let's see who this truck belongs to." With that, we found the owners in their trailer and had a fun conversation with them about accidents. There were jokes and my son and I went on with our ride and headed back to camp.

We had gone on this trip to talk about character, purity, and being a man of God. He probably does not remember one word I said or read to him that trip but he does remember that funny accident he had running his bike into a big black truck. I imparted to him something that day, "Take responsibility for your actions."

Proverbs 28:13 says "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy" (NKJV). My sons and daughter will know this truth, if for no other reason than I hope I always am an example to them. Making the words "Do as I say" really mean "do as I do." I will never be perfect like Christ but perhaps I can be an example of

pursuing Christ's perfection.

As you may imagine some of TBHC kids are hearing and seeing this truth for the first time ever in our foster homes. Accountability? More than likely this is not something they have learned or seen. Parents walking away from doing the right thing is all that is needed to start the road of indifference in one's life.

Pray for our kids. The hard places are not just because of trauma that has happened to them. It is also a lack of learning.

Have you taken it upon yourself to be an example by not covering your sin, or hiding from consequences? There are people in your life that need you to show them how to live. Do you hold yourself accountable for your actions? Let us all never forget that God will. True religion is not associated with church attendance or tithe. It is connected to relationships with God and people.

Join us in our purpose to glorify God by caring for children. You can do that today by committing to pray for TBHC every day. Giving of your treasure is also an amazing way to put your spoken word into action. This is your ministry and with your help we are bringing kids home.

*Jason Curry is the president of the Texas Baptist Home for Children. Contact him 629 Farley St, Waxahachie, TX 75165, 972-937-1321 or jcurry@tbhc.org. For more information, visit [www.tbhc.org](http://www.tbhc.org).*



## Texas Baptist Home for Children "Go Blue for Kids" Charity Luncheon—April 23, 2019

The Texas Baptist Home for Children (TBHC) "Go Blue for Kids" Charity Luncheon is April 23. Blue is a significant color for April because it is meant to bring awareness to Child Abuse Prevention. TBHC participates every year in Go Blue events and National Child Abuse Prevention month.

On April 23, TBHC would like to invite you to a special charity luncheon at the Waxahachie Civic Center to hear about the wonderful TBHC children and families that thrive in foster care and adoption because of community members like you.

Eric Porter is the speaker for this event. Eric is the president of Backyard Orphans. Their mission is to bring attention to the foster care and adoption needs right in your town. Backyard Orphans partners with TBHC to bring awareness to the community about foster care and adoption.

Join TBHC April 23 at 11:45 a.m. at the Waxahachie Civic

Center for this special luncheon. Your business can also sponsor this event.

Go to <https://www.tbhc.org/go-blue/> to register or sponsor.



## An expression of everlasting love

Many of our friends choose to honor or remember a family member, a friend or an associate with a gift for the children of the Baptist Home. Texas Baptist Home for Children, in turn, notifies the appropriate person. Listed in capital letters are those honored or remembered from February 1-28, 2019.

### ENDOWMENTS

**MYRA STOKES:** Bill Stokes

### HONORARIUMS

**DAVID BAILEY:** Leon & Johnnie Ross

**NADINE CARROLL:** Leon & Johnnie Ross

**MISS ADELINE GRACE DYSART:** Tim & Katy Jennings

**PAT DAVIS-SHEW:** Jack Coles

**KEITH FAULKNER:** Leon & Johnnie Ross

**LARRY HENSON:** Leon & Johnnie Ross

**JANE JONES:** Leon & Johnnie Ross

**MR. & MRS. DAVID LOFTIS:** Leon & Johnnie Ross

**AMBER THOMPSON:** Leon & Johnnie Ross

**ZACK WILKERSON:** Leon & Johnnie Ross

### MEMORIALS

**JS & MYRTLE BASS:** Charlotte Morgan

**WALTER BECKER:** Dennis & Ilona Myrice

**AVA BRUMMELL:** Patsy Bishop

**SANDRA CROSS:** Charles & Charlotte Johnson

**JOHN BRENT DAVIDSON:** Galveston Baptist Association; Rose Hill Missionary Baptist Church, Mineola

**MARIA DELANGEL:** Senior Adult SS Class @ FBC, Red Oak

**CECIL DOWNEY:** Carlie Downey

**MARTHA GIBSON:** Charles & Charlotte Johnson

**JIMMY HOWELL:** Johnny & Phyllis Howell

**JANICE JACKSON:** Willing Workers Class @ Fifth Street Baptist Church; Mrs. Bob Thomman

**WILMA JENNINGS:** Karl & Judy Millican

**HALEY RENAE JOHNSON:** Leora Johnson

**JAE MAX JOHNSON:** Leora Johnson

**ROLAND JONES:** Linda Lewis

**VAUDE LANGSTON:** Johnny & Phyllis Howell

**E.M. LAWSON:** Dene Gilbert

**BOBBY MARTIN:** Earlene Crenshaw

**MARTY JO NICHOLS:** Eugenia Boley

**EARL PAYNE:** Rosewood Baptist Church; Charles & Charlotte Johnson

**WANDA PILLOWS:** Mary Hunt

**MARTY SCHELSTEDER:** Charles & Charlotte Johnson

**RAYMOND SCOTT:** Mrs. Bob Thomman

**ROMELLA STEPP:** Red Springs Missionary Baptist Church

**JIMMY TANKERSLEY:** Margaret Tankersley

**ANN TREADWAY:** Karl & Judy Millican

**WILMA UNDERWOOD:** Randy & Vikki Odom

memorials-honorariums

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

## The good life

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: March 31, 2019

TEXT: Proverbs 10:22, 24-25

### THE HOOK

John W. Peterson wrote about the good life many years ago in a title song to the musical bearing the same name: “Give me the good life, the life more abundant, the life Jesus promised to those who receive Him as Savior and Lord; Give me the good life.”

Which life do you suppose Peterson was writing about? A world-renowned movie and rock star from Memphis, died in August, 1977. His name made headlines in virtually every newspaper on the globe. While I personally believe Elvis Presley knew the Lord, his glamorous, wealthy, world famous career, in many ways, took him captive and he was a prisoner to his own success. And the trappings of that “success” literally ended his life early.

But another Memphis citizen, Dr. R.G. Lee, passed away almost exactly 11 months later. News of Dr. Lee’s death made the back pages in a small, obscure article. Yet, he preached the gospel of Christ to literally hundreds of thousands of people—pastored one of the flagship Southern Baptist Churches in Memphis, for 33 years, and preached his signature sermon, “Payday Someday” thousands of times.

Which of these lives do you think illustrates the lyrics in the John W. Peterson song?

### THE BOOK

**1. The Christian life is characterized by God’s riches (10:22).** The great Apostle Paul opened his letter to the Ephesians by affirming that Christ has “blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (literally, “in the heavenlies) Ephesians 1:3. These riches were listed in that chapter as our having been “predestinated unto the adoption of children: “made us accepted in the beloved,” made us abound in all wisdom and prudence; revealed the mystery of His will (namely, that because of the death and resurrection of Christ, the middle wall of partition has been torn down, making the Jew and the Gentile one new man in Christ. As his children, we have received an inheritance - we’ve been made joint heirs with Jesus Christ—and He is right now, preparing our heavenly mansion. The riches of the believer in Christ cannot be measured by the world’s economic system.

**2. The Christian life is a life graced by God’s favor.** Proverbs 10:24b tells us that “*the desire of the righteous shall be granted.*” Why? The answer lies in Psalm 37:4, “Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.” God grants the desires of the righteous, because their desires are in alignment with God’s desires.

**3. The Christian life is a life blessed by God’s watch care.** Proverbs 10:25 tells us who is under God’s unseen, watchful hand; The wicked will not withstand the whirlwind, but the life of the righteous is earmarked by a firm foundation.

### THE LOOK

The Christian life is the good life, because the economy of it is dependent on, and provided by God’s grace, and its scope reaches into the heavenlies. Some lives on this earth may be earmarked by wealth, but it is temporary, and, in the final outset, it fails to bring fulfillment. (Read about the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31.)

## The tongue of the wise

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: April 7, 2019

TEXT: Proverbs 15:1-2, 4, 7, 23, 26, 28

### THE HOOK

The book of Proverbs draws very clear distinctions between foolish talk and words of wisdom. One way for the class to be drawn into a lesson on “The Tongue of the Wise” is to cautiously share experiences as a child when you spoke out of turn. (Don’t share something inappropriate.) As a child, I recall being chided severely after we returned home, from something I ignorantly said which was offensive or could be taken in the wrong way. We all have experiences when our mouths got us into trouble. That’s why it is imperative that we learn to speak discreetly, and with much forethought. God’s Word, and the presence of the Holy Spirit can guide our thoughts and our tongues in ways that our conversation will minister grace to the hearer (Ephesians 4:29).

### THE BOOK

**1. A tongue out of control creates havoc (verses 1-2).** Most fights are a result of words mis-spoken.

**2. A tongue controlled by the Spirit brings life (verse 4).** Words can either bring and enhance life, or they can bring grief and a wounding of the spirit. It is tragic when all a small child hears are words like, “Why can’t you be like your sister?” “You’ll never amount to anything.” Perverse, cruel, biting words can change the course of a person’s destiny.

**3. A tongue controlled by the Spirit disperses knowledge (verse 7).** Knowledge is the facts, information and skills acquired through experience or education. Wisdom is the quality of insightfulness, perceptiveness and the ability to make wise choices based upon knowledge. Many people possess a head full of knowledge, but without the ability to utilize it. My Grandfather Bloxom used to make references to “educated fools.”

**4. A tongue controlled by the Spirit speaks wisdom at the right time (verse 23).** A truly wise individual understands that even though the information is right and appropriate, the timing may not be good. It’s good when a person speaks insightful words “in due season.”

**5. A tongue controlled by the Spirit, speaks from a pure heart (verse 26).** A pure heart is a holy heart. And we are commanded by God in 1 Peter 1 to “Be ye holy for I am holy.” A wicked man can only speak perverse things, but not so with one with a pure, godly heart.

**6. A tongue controlled by the Spirit measures every word (verse 28).** The righteous thinks before they speak. Not so with the wicked—they lash out with uncontrolled words, and the content is evil.

### THE LOOK

May our desires be to speak at the right time, with forethought, and with a pure heart. May we be on guard to insure that every word which proceeds from our mouths, ministers grace and builds others up in the faith.

## True friendship

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: April 14, 2019

TEXT: Proverbs 16:7, 28; 17:9; 18:4; 27:10

### THE HOOK

To get into the lesson of friendship, examine one of the more notable friendships in the scripture—that of David and Jonathan (1 Samuel 18). What are some of the key expressions of their friendship? At least a couple; first of all, scripture says their souls were knit together. Each one cared for the other as he would care for himself. True friends have each other’s best interests at heart. Secondly, Jonathan, who was rightful heir to the throne, was more than glad to relinquish his robe to David, and obviously rejoiced when David was victorious in conquests and leadership. Such are earmarks of true friendship. Jonathan’s friendship with David far superseded any desire he might have had for power.

### THE BOOK

Solomon, being a son of David, was likely aware of the special friendship David had with Jonathan. And being filled with divine wisdom, Solomon had keen insight on friendship. What are some of the qualities of a true friend?

**1. A true friend pleases the Lord (16:7).** Even though devout believers in God are met with aversion by the world’s crowd, there is a sense where even the enemies of one whose lifestyle reflects godliness, and one who pleases God, have to acknowledge. It’s true ungodly people can collect so-called friends, but little good comes from such a friendship.

**2. An evil man destroys friendship (16:28).** Froward means perverse, useless, a troublemaker. His words and deeds cause trouble, digs up evil and his or her gossiping tongue alienates anyone who might otherwise be a friend.

**3. A true friend has a forgiving spirit (17:9).** That friend will not broadcast an offense committed against him. He is more interested in seeking love and reconciliation.

**4. A true friend speaks wisdom (18:4).** His words are likened to a deep fountain or flowing stream. Consequently, when he speaks, he speaks words of wisdom, encouragement and grace (Ephesians 4:29).

**5. True friendship is sometimes found in friends rather than family (28:10).** You have heard the term, “closer than brothers.” Solomon knew that sometimes kinship was not necessarily friendship. A friend will help you out of the goodness of their heart, but sometimes sibling rivalry or an impatient parent is not so willing to help.

### THE LOOK

There are reasons why some people are lonely and friendless. Many of them are wrapped up in themselves. They have a constant pity party. The whole universe revolves around them and their troubles. Others, who are not lonely, are that way because they dare to be involved in other people’s lives. They reach out—they show genuine interest in others. What person would not be drawn to such kindness?



# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

## Lending to the Lord

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: April 21, 2019

TEXT: Proverbs 14:21; 19:17; 21:6; 22:16

### THE HOOK

(Briefly share testimonies of how God paid you back when you helped someone in need.) Years ago, a man and woman with three small children, stopped in front of our church in Nacogdoches, driving an old station wagon. They were journeying from Houston to Detroit, and were in dire need of fuel and provisions, especially for the children. I decided to put Bro. Don Collins' principles of stewardship into action—namely the verse that says, “He that gives to the poor, lends to the Lord.” I sent the family to Bill Ross's Phillips 66 station down the street, and I went to buy some food for the family and diapers for the little ones. My total investment was approximately \$37.00. Bill Ross got in on the blessing by paying for half of the gasoline.

The very next day, my friend Lynn Laird called me from his funeral home and said a family wanted a Baptist preacher to come say a few words over the remains of their father. I spoke to a family of about 15 people for no longer than 10 minutes. As I left the funeral chapel, two young men followed me out, each handing me a sealed envelope. When I arrived home, I opened them, only to find a total of \$50.00 in cash. Hence the promise of Proverbs 19:17 was confirmed in a tangible way. *“He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.”* God says in Malachi 3 to try Him.

### THE BOOK

**1. Giving to the poor brings joy and happiness to the giver (14:21; Acts 20:35).**

**2. Giving to the poor brings God's yield on the investment (19:17).** It may not always be in monetary reimbursement, but other blessings which may far outweigh money. And it may not always be returned the very next day.

**3. Ill-gotten gain brings sorrow and defeat (21:6).** Swindling people out of their hard-earned money, according to this verse, is vanity—or emptiness. There are no heavenly rewards for ill-gotten gain. It usually ends in death and sorrow.

**4. Oppressing the poor or patronizing the rich for self-gain will end in poverty (22:16).** I am reminded of a man (a loan shark) who was charging a band of needy people in the community, an exorbitant amount of interest on cash loans. *The Message* paraphrase says it well, “Exploit the poor or glad-hand the rich—whichever, you'll end up the poorer for it.”

### THE LOOK

Scripture promises rewards to those who help those in need, and has a stern warning for one who takes advantage of the poor or tries to buy the acceptance of the rich.

## Self-control fosters sound wisdom

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: April 28, 2019

TEXT: Proverbs 23:19-21, 29-35

### THE HOOK

Late one night, when I was in submarine school in Groton, Connecticut, a young, slight-built sailor came into the barracks drunk. It must have been his first time. The effects of the strong drink caused him to grab a very large sailor who was already asleep in his bunk, and he caused him to fall on the floor with a loud thud. The big guy got up—picked up the drunk and slammed him against the wall like he was a rag doll. The next morning, as we were standing in line to eat breakfast, the small guy was in front of me. I laughed loudly and said, “Boy, you were surely feeling your oats last night, weren't you?” in answer, he whispered, “Quiet! that guy is right in front of us.” He had come to his senses by morning, but the strong drink, as it does with anyone who imbibes, causes one to lose perspective—often to his peril.

### THE BOOK

**1. The drunkard lacks the wisdom to travel the straight path (23:19).** The alcohol causes him to lose control of his senses and perception.

**2. The drunkard and the glutton are reduced to poverty (23:20-21).** Drowsiness and reduced to rags is indicative of how a life of slothfulness. No energy—no incentive to be productive—just lying in the bed all day.

**3. The drunkard and the glutton are reduced to a life of conflict.** Sorrow and violence are common. The wounds without cause are probably inflicted upon him because the alcohol caused him to start the fight - a fight he doesn't remember.

**4. The drunkard becomes more addicted (23:30-31).** They experiment with different variations of alcohol. It is an obsession. It looks harmless—even inviting, with its' rich “bouquet,” but eventually it stings like an adder.

**5. The drink leads to other sins (23:33).** The heart becomes more and more perverse, and immorality sets in.

### THE LOOK

Turn from temptation. 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape that ye may be able to bear it.”*

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](mailto:pop.gauntt@gmail.com).



## 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.*





## Get Ready! Get Prepared! Get Moving!

How did it happen? My house is bursting at the seams—walls covered, drawers full, and closets jam packed. Even though it's 39 degrees as I write, unless God interrupts the schedule, it will be spring when you read this and I'm feeling the pressure. It's time to swing into action and clear out the clutter.

What about the extra junk stored away in our hearts and minds? Like bitterness, anger, unforgiveness, selfishness, and just plain old tacky thoughts that sneak in undetected? Though uninvited, they hang around and end up staying. That never works out well because these unwanted "guests" come at a high price and they're taking up valuable space! Go ahead and take care of that now. Hit the DELETE button and replace them with the Truth!

Today I'm reminded of a lady who had her house and her heart in order and was ready to respond when the need arose. You know the story. Ruth, Orpah and Naomi had no warning their life was about to change dramatically. Sudden death struck with a vengeance, leaving behind three widows to grieve and survive. Devastated over the loss of her husband and two sons, Naomi decided to return home to Bethlehem. While Orpah offered to go with her, she turned back at Naomi's insistence. Not Ruth. In spite of her own personal loss, she persevered. Surely she had doubts about her own inadequacies and fear of an unknown, uncertain future must have rushed in to threaten her resolve. Naomi mattered more, and Ruth's commitment to care for her was steadfast.

Life is something like that for us. Full of surprises—some happy; others hurtful—but if we look close enough, we can find opportunities tucked in all of them. Ruth walked away from everything she had—family, friends and country—into a life filled with strangers, long hours of hard work and poverty. In the process, she gained love, prosperity, and the honor of being in the lineage of Jesus Christ. Wow! What an exchange! Ruth chose Naomi's God, and received far more than she left behind.

We may not be called to leave home and country, but we need to be ready. Someone said: "The more stuff we have, the more we have to manage." Getting rid of that extra "stuff" makes it possible to live life on mission unhindered by a cluttered heart or home. It's spring! The perfect time to refocus on important matters. After all, Jesus may have an important assignment for me today—OR—He could call my name to make the journey of a lifetime tomorrow. Either way, I'm responsible to get ready, get prepared, and get moving—wherever He wants me to go! (Read the entire story in Ruth 1-4 for the thrilling details).

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](mailto:pquesenbury@gmail.com).



## BMA Texas Missions cont.

lost to the right way.

Prayer Needs:

Pray for Bro. Lee's health. He is facing cancer and possible surgery.

**SPENCER SIMPSON—  
REDEEMER'S LOVE MISSION, HOUSTON  
SPNCRSMPSN@GMAIL.COM**

We have seen exciting things here at Redeemer's Love as the new year kicks off with over 20 of our people being committed to discipleship groups designed to equip them to make more disciples. The development and growth of our core team has been a joy to watch as well. Thank you for your continued love, support and most of all prayers.

Prayer Needs:

Pray for a new location for the church to meet and grow.



▲ Spencer Simpson

**MATTHEW PRATHER—  
THE BRIDGE MISSION, MIDLOTHIAN/WAXAHACHIE  
MATTHEW@DISCOVERTHEBRIDGE.COM**

As I am writing this, we are supposed to get the key to our new building today. We are so excited to have a building that we are leasing. This building will allow us to meet at the same location each week. We have not been able to do that while we have been at the Waxahachie Civic Center. This will be a tremendous blessing to us.

There is a lot of work to do to get it ready over the next several weeks. We have a goal of having all the work done in time for Easter. If you would like to help keep our expenses down you can donate to The Bridge through the missions office. Thank you for your continued support and prayers. We are excited about what God has in store in the coming months for The Bridge.

We could use your help with these needs. You can give through the missions office to help us get the things that we need for the building. Thank you so much for your prayers and support! It is great to see God answer one of the prayers that I shared with you last month!!

Prayer Needs:

Pray for us that we find an associate. Pray for us as we go through the process of getting our new building ready and move in. That we use it as a tool to reach more people.

**CLIFF ROBERTSON—  
CARPENTER'S HOUSE MISSION—LAKE JACKSON/CLUTE  
DRCLIFFROBERTSONJR@GMAIL.COM**

God is moving and stirring the hearts of the people we have come to serve. Pray that their hearts and doors would be open as we renew our outreach efforts in this new year!

Prayer Needs:

Pray that, as we begin our third year, we would focus on the outreach that began this church and reaching the lost and hurting people of our area with renewed strength and passion!



▲ Cliff Robertson

**CRISTIAN MARTINEZ—  
GRACE HARVEST BAPTIST MISSION, LUBBOCK  
CRISTIAN.LMBC@GMAIL.COM**

Last month, I shared the need we have in Lubbock. Now I'm sharing the great opportunity we have. We need to prepare for the years to come. National research shows that a majority of the Gen Z (born after 1995) who were raised in the church are leaving any affiliation with a church. We have an opportunity to reach and retain them.



▲ Cristian Martinez

Around 50 percent of that generation represent minority ethnicities in the city of Lubbock.

This goes back to the need of providing minorities the opportunity to hear the gospel clearly proclaimed and lived in the context of a healthy church. We need to equip families to live out the gospel and to pass it on to the next generation. We also need to think beyond our church by building relationships with other churches that are reaching minorities and strengthen them.

Another unique opportunity in Lubbock is connecting with more than 3,000 internationals that come to Texas Tech University. The nations are coming to us. Many of them will go back to their countries of origin. We must give them the treasure of the gospel to take with them and equip them to bear much fruit wherever they go in whatever they do.

Prayer Needs:

Pray for unity in my family and among the disciples. Pray for fruit as we proclaim the gospel and make disciples. Pray that Satan will not take the seed of the Word from their hearts but they will obey it, grow and produce fruit.

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

Hey BMA family! We moved into our new space this past Sunday, and we're so excited about it. We just want to ask that you keep on praying for us, and again, if you would like to reach out and know how you personally or as a church can help us advance the Kingdom of God contact me here at [ronnie@kchapel.org](mailto:ronnie@kchapel.org)



▲ Ronnie Mills

Prayer Needs:

Please pray that we would continue to remain focused and keep things relative to us. Pray that as we have moved into a new space that we would remain faithful to our vision, mission and values as a church and that we don't get ahead of ourselves.

**MIKE WATT—CROSSWORK MISSION, TAHOKA  
MIKE.WATT@CROSSWORKCHURCH.ORG**

Cross-Work church in Tahoka is moving forward. We are trusting Jesus to bless our efforts in small towns in west Texas.

Prayer Needs:

Pray that I can lead my people to be disciple-makers. Pray that I will lead by example and be empowered by God.

Heith Mitchell is the director of BMA of Texas Missions. Contact him at P.O. Box 73, Waxahachie, TX 75168, 972-923-0757 or [hmittell@bmatexas.org](mailto:hmittell@bmatexas.org). For more information, visit [www.bmatexasmissions.org](http://www.bmatexasmissions.org).



# EVENTS

## BMA OF AMERICA ANNUAL MEETING

**DATE:** May 6-8, 2019

**PLACE:** Northwest Arkansas Convention Center, Rogers, Arkansas

## SOAR STUDENT CONFERENCE

**DATE:** July 3-5, 2019

**PLACE:** Gaylord Texan, Grapevine, Texas

## BMA OF TEXAS ANNUAL MEETING

**DATE:** November 4-5, 2019

**PLACE:** Keltys First Baptist Church, Lufkin, Texas



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# PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

## AVAILABLE POSITIONS

**YOUTH PASTOR**—Afton Grove, Jacksonville, is seeking a bi-vocational youth pastor to lead our vibrant, middle and high school students. Duties will include coordinating worship and activities for the youth group including: outings, assist with Vacation Bible School, outreach ministries, Sunday school and Wednesday evening service. Qualifications: Have a strong personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, have passion and a heart for the youth, pass drug test/background check. A formal job description is available upon request. Send resume to Eddie Richardson, [fasteddie999elr@gmail.com](mailto:fasteddie999elr@gmail.com). 5/19

**PASTOR**—Oak Hill, Gilmer is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Send resume to Tommy Stracener, 1461 Barber Road, Gilmer, Texas 75644 or to [jim.barton62@gmail.com](mailto:jim.barton62@gmail.com) or call 903-762-2817. 5/19

**PASTOR**—Mt. Pisgah, Mineola is seeking a full-time pastor. Bi-vocational is an option. Send resume to the church at 4995 FM 49, Mineola, Texas 75773 or email to [mpmbc.mineola@gmail.com](mailto:mpmbc.mineola@gmail.com). Audio or video sermon if available would be appreciated. TFN

**YOUTH MINISTER**—Mt. Olive, Scurry is seeking a full-time (30-40 hours per week) youth minister. Must be called by the Lord to minister to youth. Prior experience a plus. Please email resume to [landa@h1pm.com](mailto:landa@h1pm.com) or mail to Search Committee, PO BOX 99, Scurry, TX 75158, or call Landa Taylor at 214 649-5625 to drop off resume at the church. TFN

**PASTOR**—New Salem, Centerville is seeking a pastor. Contact Barbara Brook at 903-388-0752. 3/19

# CHURCHES in REVIEW

## February 17, 2018

CHURCH	SS	WORSHIP	ADDITIONS
First, Omen	34	76	
First, Palmer	44	68	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	19	42	
Merriman Hills, Sherman	16	20	
New Harmony, Tyler	278	337	2 by letter
New Hope, Mineola	85	141	1 by letter
Olde Tyme, White Oak		44	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	49	70	
Rosewood, Gilmer	130	255	1 profession of faith
Sand Flat, Grand Saline	35	60	1 by statement
Sand Prairie, Normangee		60	
Security Calvary, Cleveland	23	42	
Simmons Hill, Diana	10	16	
Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill	13	18	

## February 24, 2018

CHURCH	SS	WORSHIP	ADDITIONS
First, Omen	39	81	
First, Palmer	51	82	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	12	30	
Jackson, Joaquin	85	125	
New Harmony, Tyler	299	358	
New Hope, Mineola	76	147	2 by letter
Olde Tyme, White Oak		45	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	44	55	
Rosewood, Gilmer	144	255	1 by baptism, 3 by letter
Sand Flat, Grand Saline	45	63	
Sand Prairie, Normangee		62	
Security Calvary, Cleveland	25	42	
Simmons Hill, Diana	19	23	
Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill	18	23	

## March 4, 2018

CHURCH	SS	WORSHIP	ADDITIONS
First, Omen	39	70	
First, Palmer	44	65	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	12	26	
Jackson, Joaquin	78	113	
New Harmony, Tyler	296	339	
Olde Tyme, White Oak		47	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	42	51	
Rosewood, Gilmer	108	226	
Sand Prairie, Normangee		34	
Security Calvary, Cleveland	22	41	

## March 10, 2019

CHURCH	SS	WORSHIP	ADDITIONS
Glade Creek, Gilmer	16	32	
Jackson, Joaquin	53	103	
New Harmony, Tyler	253	271	2 by letter
Olde Tyme, White Oak		71	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	45	58	
Rosewood, Gilmer	115	200	
Sand Flat, Grand Saline	47	63	
Security Calvary, Cleveland	16	40	
Simmons Hill, Diana	14	19	



## Bibles, Books, Music & Gifts

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# JACKSONVILLE COLLEGE

## Director of Abortion Recovery Ministry Speaks at Jacksonville College

By **DR. DAVID HEFLIN**

*Jacksonville College Director of Public Relations*

On January 23, the day after New York passed the Reproductive Health Act, BJ Garrett, Executive Director of Christ-centered Abortion Recovery & Education (CARE), spoke in Chapel at Jacksonville College. As she addressed students, faculty, and staff, BJ began to recount the tragic story of her childhood: “When I was twelve years old, my mother sold me for a bag of groceries. I was being sex trafficked by my own mother before sex trafficking was a thing. When I was twelve years old, there had been so many men that had been given access to my body that I was basically a shell of a little girl. There was no real ‘me’ left at twelve years old.”

BJ felt like her life was out of control, and she made one terrible choice after another. Those choices led to four pregnancies, the first when she was only fourteen years old. She kept two of the babies, Ashlei and Austin, but she had two abortions. She still struggles with the memories of her first abortion. She explained, “I can still feel today the pressure in my gut from me lying on that table and them ripping my child from my body . . . Every time I hear the sound of a vacuum cleaner or an air conditioner turn on, I can hear the sound of them literally taking the life of my child from my body. It was horrendous.”

BJ then married a man who was an alcoholic. The marriage seemed unlikely to last, until BJ and her husband became Christians. “I cannot tell you what it was like for me to go from such ugliness and such brokenness to meeting Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior,” she said. “He is the Healer of all things.”

BJ and her husband, Jay, have now been married for 21 years. The two have a daughter, Alex, who is attending Jacksonville College. Ashlei, BJ’s first child, is a Jacksonville College graduate. She is now 28 years old and is a beautiful reminder of how precious life is. Ashlei attended the January 23 Chapel service to support her mother.

When BJ became involved with CARE, she was able to talk about things from her past that she had kept hidden from even those closest to her, including her abortions. God used CARE to help her heal, and she is now able to offer support to other women who are struggling with the same decisions she had to face. BJ explains, “CARE’s mission is to restore lives wounded by abortion and to educate the community of its consequences. In short, we minister to both men and women who are hurting from a past abortion experience. We help them understand the truth of abortion, and we offer real help and resources for those facing an unplanned or crisis pregnancy.”

In 2016, BJ accepted the position of Executive Director of CARE. She is also a graduate of the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary in Jacksonville, and she welcomes opportunities to share her testimony of restoration and abortion recovery.

When asked for her response to New York’s Reproductive Health Act, BJ answered,

“First, and most importantly, taking your child’s life at ANY stage of development comes with life-altering, heartbreaking

physical, mental, and spiritual consequences. I know this because I’ve made that choice not once, but twice. We have to educate our nation about the truth of abortion.

Second, full-term abortions are already legal in several states, and there are even nonprofits that raise money just to help women pay for and end their children’s lives. This is not new. New York just joined the list of these states. Heartbreaking? Yes, but I feel that educating our communities and our nation is key to stopping the heartache caused by abortion.”

Jacksonville College stands with the BMA of Texas and the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention in recognizing that life begins at conception, and we agree with Focus on the Family’s value statement regarding the sanctity of life: “We believe that human beings are created by God in His image. Therefore, every person, from conception to natural death, possesses inherent dignity and immeasurable worth – including preborn children, elderly individuals, those with special needs, and others marginalized by society. Christians, then, are called to defend, protect, and value all human life.”

New York’s Reproductive Health Act that legalizes even full-term abortions was signed into law on the 46th anniversary of Roe v. Wade. JC President Mike Smith lamented, “Christians were asleep in 1973 when abortions became legal.” It is the prayer of Jacksonville College that Christians will wake up and support ministries like CARE that work with women who find themselves in “crisis pregnancies” and that help men and

women who have suffered from the spiritual and emotional complications of abortion.

For more information about CARE, visit [careabortionrecovery.com](http://careabortionrecovery.com).



▲ On January 23, BJ Garrett, Executive Director of CARE, spoke in Chapel about the tragedy of abortion.

## Upcoming Events

### EARLY REGISTRATION FOR SUMMER TERMS BEGINS

Wednesday, March 20

### EASTER BREAK

April 19-21 (Offices closed)

### JAGUAR DAY ACROSS TEXAS

Annual Offering for Jacksonville College

Sunday, May 5

### COMMENCEMENT 2019

Saturday, May 11 at 10:00 a.m. at Central Baptist Church in Jacksonville