

# M BAPTIST Message

Newsjournal for Louisiana Baptists

*Helping Louisiana Baptists impact the world for Christ*



*"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."*

LUKE 2:10-12 (KJV)

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December 15, 2016

# HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

## Return home 'a miracle' after tragic losses

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

WELSH – Judy Bertrand felt the sting of tragedy twice in August.

After 49 years of marriage, her husband Joe passed away, having lost a lengthy battle with cancer.

Next, floodwaters deluged her house near Welsh, destroying most of her possessions and forcing Bertrand out for what she thought would be a long while.

Home for Christmas seemed unlikely for 2016.

But those prospects greatly improved when an army of Louisiana Baptists and other volunteers converged in late August to rebuild what nature had destroyed.

Now, unwrapping presents under the tree is just a matter of her avoiding Santa's naughty list.

See HOME on 5



Brian Blackwell photo

Judy Bertrand and her son, Jonathan, share a laugh in front of their home near Welsh. An army of Louisiana Baptists and other volunteers helped rebuild her home, which took in several feet of water in August not long after her husband died from a battle with cancer. She moved back into her home in time for Christmas.

## The most startling news ever

BY JOE MCKEEVER

Special to the Message

We interrupt this program to bring you the following news....

*"I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people! Today in the City of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord! And this will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger."*

We return you now to your regularly scheduled program.

Wonder how Heaven decided who would deliver the news of Jesus' birth that night?

Was there a competition among the angels? Did they draw straws? Was the announcer chosen by merit?

Did anyone say, "Gabriel got to tell Mary and Joseph; it's my turn?"

What were the requirements? A good speaking voice? Fluency in Aramaic?

And was the announcing angel disappointed when

See STARTLING on 9

# Revival & awakening last long past crusade's end

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

LAKE ARTHUR – The four-day revival may have ended in late November, but for the congregation of First Baptist Church in Lake Arthur a season of spiritual awakening has only just begun.

The revival drew around 175 each service, with 23 making first-time salvation decisions in all. Four people were baptized during the revival itself, with many more expected to do so before the

end of the year.

It was the culmination of months of prayer by the congregation capped with 24 hours of continuous prayer by a sequence of members just prior to the revival.

"People let go of their pride and gave their lives to the Lord," said Jered Thomas, pastor of First Baptist Lake Arthur. "We had fire beginning to burn in the hearts of our people."

"They are pressing on," he

See REVIVAL on 12



Submitted photo

Evangelist Bill Britt preaches during a late November revival service at First Baptist Church in Lake Arthur. Twenty-three people accepted Christ by the end of the four-day revival.



## LC announces alum's \$100,000 challenge, grants, new programs

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL  
Message Staff Writer

PINEVILLE – Louisiana College President Rick Brewer announced Dec. 1 the school's plans to start three new programs, and shared details about a matching gift opportunity for alums, saying Louisiana College has much to be thankful for heading into the Christmas season.

During the press conference held in the Granberry Conference Center, Brewer told the crowd about the development of programs for students to attain a Bachelor

of Science in Computer Science, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Master of Science in Social Work. The school also hopes to offer an online RN to MSN program, which will enroll registered nurses practicing with an associate degree in nursing or hospital diploma.

These new programs could accept students as early as next fall, pending approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools-Commission on Colleges.

"Our academic leaders in this room have been working on these for several months

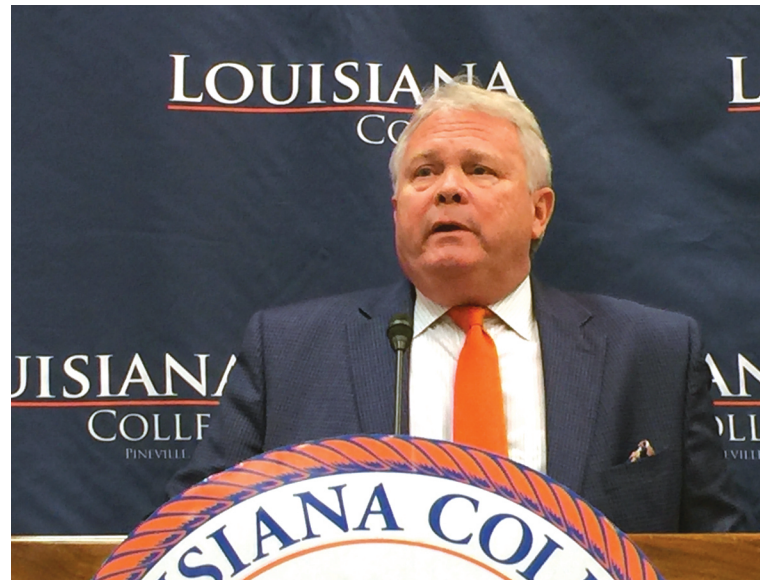
and we've identified a need in our region and are trusting that these programs will help us meet that need," Brewer said.

He also explained that two of the proposed degrees will receive funding thanks to a Healthcare Occupations Program Grant from the Rapides Foundation. The Master of Science in Social Work will get \$554,146 while the Bachelor of Science in Nursing will garner \$54,436. The degree offerings are part of the school's Vision 2020 plan, which strives to raise \$20 million and enroll 1,500 students by 2020.

Representatives from the two largest hospitals in the region said the new programs will help address a growing need in the medical field.

Nancy Hellyer, CEO of Christus St. Frances Cabrini Hospital, said many times young people leave central Louisiana to earn degrees in these areas.

"Millennials are becoming the largest workforce,"



Brian Blackwell photo

Louisiana College President Rick Brewer shares during a Dec. 1 press conference that the school received a \$100,000 challenge gift and is planning to start new academic programs.

Hellyer said, "and we know the number one thing they want is career preparation, or they'll leave."

"If we're able to offer in our community a very solid program such as this one," she said, "it really will make all the difference for Christus Cabrini."

Rapides Regional Medical Center CEO Jason Cobb thanked the school for its vision.

"It's a great day for Louisiana College, it's a great day

for your students, and it's a great day for the community, and especially in the healthcare arena," Cobb said. "So we thank you for letting us be a small part of it. We're looking forward to what it becomes for this community."

Brewer also said that the school has struck an agreement with Union University in Jackson, Tenn., that gives qualified Louisiana College graduates preferred applicant

See LC on 7

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# Louisiana's 'Big Poppa' shares Gospel to the ends of the earth

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

HAUGHTON – Bill Britt had aspirations of playing big time football as a promising high school athlete, but his life's plans and priorities changed immediately when he accepted Christ during a revival at First Baptist Church in Haughton.

Excited about his newfound faith, the next morning Britt posted a handmade sign in the locker room asking teammates to come talk to him about how to become a Christian.

That same day, he shared the plan of salvation during math class.

It would be the beginning of a lifetime spent sharing the Gospel from Louisiana to the uttermost parts of the earth.

"I think getting saved at a revival is one reason I am so passionate about evangelism, especially in large settings,"

said Britt, founder of Compel Outreach International. "I saw how much of an impact revival meetings can have on a local church and surrounding community."

A graduate of Louisiana College, Britt was called to evangelism in 1982 while serving as pastor of Freedom Baptist Church in Pitkin. His invitations to preach at other churches steadily increased to the point that Britt felt it was time to say yes to God's invitation to "step out in faith."

Compel Outreach International, started with his wife Wendy, has planted churches in Kenya (58), Philippines (12), Ghana (4), Mexico (3), and Zambia (1), and, built orphanages in Kenya and India, with 201 and 25 children, respectively, living on site. Additionally, nearly 500 pastors have been trained through Compel Outreach Bible University in India since 2001.

But, the heartbeat of his ministry is soul-winning, and Britt has preached to crowds ranging between 100 and 50,000 people, sharing the Gospel at more than 1,000 crusades worldwide.

Sometimes, those soul-winning campaigns run well beyond their scheduled end dates.

In April 2015, Britt led a "three-day" revival at Crockett Point Baptist Church in Crowville that actually lasted 14 days because of the expanding impact of the Holy Spirit in the community.

Britt recalls three other campaigns which experienced similar heavenly favor and were extended – one at New Pleasantdale Baptist in Philadelphia, Miss., another at First Baptist Church in Pine Prairie and yet another at Longview Baptist in Deville.

"It's exciting to see God still moving and working to



Philip Timothy photo

Evangelist Bill Britt, a Louisiana native and the founder of Compel Outreach International, has spent the last 34 years sharing the Gospel from Louisiana to the uttermost parts of the earth.

the point we have to extend the revival," Britt said. "To see that many people show up on additional nights, impromptu, lets you know God is touching the hearts of people."

"It's thrilling to see God answer your prayers and see the Holy Spirit to move in powerful way," he continued. "In fact, it's exciting to witness not only what God is doing that week I am preaching but long after

I'm gone, from hearing about a dad who has been absent in the home and gets right to a teenager who gets off drugs and returns home. To know God will use me is a very humbling experience."

**Britt will be a featured speaker for the 2017 Evangelism Conference, Jan. 23-24, at Temple Baptist Church, Ruston. Visit: <https://louisianabaptists.org/event/ECON2017>.**

## It's true... A Baby Changes Everything

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*On behalf of Dr. Hankins and the State Missions Services staff, we wish you a Merry Christmas!*

Your Cooperative Program gifts help spread the good news year-round. To ensure that your church's CP gifts are recorded for 2016, please make sure they are received by January 3, 2017.



# Malachi: The same old sins

BY RUSSELL L. MEEK

Louisiana College  
ALEXANDRIA – The Babylonian army descended upon Judah in the sixth century BC, destroying the city of Jerusalem and the temple of God in 586. The people had been consistently warned this would happen, but they were confident it would not be so, even though the Northern

Kingdom Israel had suffered a similar fate some 150 years earlier.

## FORWARDED

The prophets warned Judah repeatedly that their idolatry – looking to things other than God for their safety, satisfaction, and fulfillment – would end badly; and, because the vertical relationship between God and the people was broken by idolatry, the horizontal relationship between people also suffered greatly.

The prophets also warned the people about this: Their social injustice – exploitation of the poor, the orphan, the widow, the stranger – would also bring about God’s judgment.

But why were God’s people so confident that judgment would not befall them?

In a word (or two): religious ritualism. They were convinced that simply going through the motions of worship was sufficient to keep God happy and secure His blessing.

Biblical scholars J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays describe Jeremiah’s prophecy

about these covenant violations – idolatry, social injustice, and religious ritualism – as “three indictments” brought by a prosecuting attorney.

Guilty, Judah was sentenced to exile.

## WARNED AGAIN

Malachi, whose name means “My Messenger,” confronted God’s people about these same three sins. Even though he preached to Judah many, many years after the exile, the people of God continued to sin against Him in exactly the same way.

Then, despite having experienced the horrors of exile and subsequently God’s faithfulness in returning them to their land, some years later, the people go back to sinning in the same way as their forefathers.

In Malachi 2:11 we read, “Judah has acted treacherously, and a detestable thing has been done in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the Lord’s sanctuary, which He loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god.”

God’s people were warned against marrying those who worship foreign gods because the result would be their own idolatry. This happened to Solomon (1 Kings 11), to Israel in the wilderness (Numbers 25), and to the Hebrews, again, here. Marriage to those who worshiped other gods is particularly pernicious because it inevitably leads to the people themselves worshiping other gods.

Like the prophets of old, Malachi also had to castigate the people for social injustice.

In 2:17 we read, “You have wearied the Lord with your words. Yet you ask, ‘How have we wearied Him?’



When you say, ‘Everyone who does what is evil is good in the LORD’S sight, and He is pleased with them,’ or ‘Where is the God of justice?’”

In response to this attitude that God is unconcerned with justice, He states that He will judge their own injustice: “I will come to you in judgment, and I will be ready to witness against sorcerers and adulterers; against those who swear falsely; against those who oppress the widow and the fatherless, and cheat the wage earner; and against those who deny justice to the foreigner. They do not fear Me,” says the LORD of Hosts.”

## BROKEN BONDS

As before, the broken vertical relationship (idolatry) has led to a broken horizontal relationship (social injustice); and, God is imminently concerned – desiring that His people treat others well and serve as a light to other nations. Of course this includes proper worship (the vertical relationship), but it’s also highlighted in how His people treat the least of these around Him.

Just as before, the people believed they had nothing to fear because of their religious ritualism. They thought all that was needed to earn God’s favor and avoid His wrath was to go through the motions

of a relationship with Him.

But, the Lord says through Malachi, “When you present a blind animal for sacrifice, is it not wrong? And when you present a lame or sick animal, is it not wrong? ... You bring stolen, lame, or sick animals. You bring this as an offering! Am I to accept that from your hands?” (Malachi 1:8, 13).

## TOKEN EFFORT

The priests thought that simply going through the motions of religious sacrifice would be sufficient to please Yahweh and avert His wrath, but such was not the case. They displayed a fundamental misunderstanding of what it means to be in relationship with God and love Him fully.

God’s people have been committing this trifecta of sins for quite a long time, and the prophets of the Old Testament had preached against them before the exile and again after it.

Indeed, in the New Testament Jesus castigated the Pharisees for these same sins!

They misunderstood what it meant to have a right relationship with God. As a result, they trusted in their adherence to religious acts to secure a relationship with God, all the while despising Him by ignoring the “the more important matters of the law – justice,

See MALACHI on 8

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Churches can contact these various LACOSBE evangelists for all their church needs!





## Home from page one

Bertrand calls what transpired “a Christmas miracle.”

“It was surreal,” she said. “I felt like God was taking care of me. How else do you get that kind of help? From day one they were a blessing to me.”

After meeting Bertrand during a meeting at the First Baptist Church in Welsh, one disaster relief volunteer felt led by the Holy Spirit to spearhead the rebuild effort.

“The Lord just tells you to do things some time, so I put my arm around her at the church and told Mrs. Bertrand we would rebuild her house,” said Reggy Saxon, the project manager who is a member of Trinity Baptist Church in Lake Charles. “She asked, ‘How will you do that?’ and I said, ‘The Lord will provide.’”

And provide He did.

Lacking money, the rebuild team enjoyed great favor in God’s provision of needed supplies and volunteers.

### COMMUNITY SPIRIT

In short order, a team from the Carey Baptist Association of churches agreed to take on the project.

Then other churches of various denominations, as well as non-profit organizations and individuals from the community – even other states -- rallied around the effort.

In the end, the project was completed in fewer than six weeks -- just in time for

Thanksgiving and dedication with a prayer of thanks.

The outpouring of support for Bertrand came as no surprise to Pat Deshotel, pastor of First Baptist Church in Welsh. He said it was a manifestation of Christ-like love in a time of desperation.

“They didn’t know Judy but knew her situation,” Deshotel said. “They jumped in and helped.”

“It wasn’t about the name of your religion,” he continued. “It was about representing Christ. If Jesus had been here and seen these kinds of predicaments, what would He have done? He would have helped; He would have had compassion. And that’s what all these people did. They had compassion. They represented Christ.”

### A SPECIAL GIFT

Rob Tibbitts, pastor of Crossroads Church in Vinton, said he received a blessing knowing he helped someone in deep need.

“Scripture says we prove our Christianity when we help widows and orphans,” he said. “It started with a cup of cold water and ended with a house redone. We are hopeful the seeds we planted will come to fruition for Kingdom stuff. This is neat to be able to go in and do a rebuild and watch everything fall together and the body of Christ work together.”

“For her, it’s a double bless-



Brian Blackwell photo

Seeing God’s provision throughout the process of rebuilding the inside of her home was surreal, Judy Bertrand explains. Looking on is Pat Deshotel, pastor of First Baptist Church in Welsh. He said everyone involved represented Jesus Christ by showing love and compassion to someone in need.

ing,” he said. “She is going back into the house where she and her husband made memories, and it’s a fresh start after the flood.”

It also was a blessing for all those who were involved, he said.

“It was a great gift for us to be able to do.”

### A CHRISTMAS STORY

With Christmas just two weeks away, Deshotel said the act of kindness shown by the volunteers mirrors, somewhat, what God did for mankind by sending his Son to earth.

“There was a time when the water was in the house,” Deshotel said. “It was almost like there was ‘no room at the inn.’ Where do I go?”

“This is just the perfect example of what God expects from us because of what His Son did for you and me.”

A Christmas card with a dark blue background. At the top, a bright white star shines. Below it, the words "Peace on earth" are written in a large, white, cursive font. At the bottom, there is a silhouette of a nativity scene with Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus in a manger.

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A Christmas card with a dark blue background. At the top, the words "Merry Christmas" are written in a large, white, cursive font. Below it, there is a silhouette of a nativity scene with camels and a manger. At the bottom, there is a white silhouette of a building, likely Louisiana College, with the text "LOUISIANA COLLEGE" and "PREPARING GRADUATES • TRANSFORMING LIVES" below it.

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# Seminary students part of 'spontaneous' protest face no censure, for now

By JONI B. HANNIGAN  
*Special to the Message*

FORT WORTH, Texas — In an unusual show of defiance a few students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary stood and then walked out during the chapel service Nov. 29 in apparent disagreement with the speaker.

Seminary President Paige Patterson said later he believes the four Calvinist students who sit together most likely acted in a "spontaneous" manner and although the student code of conduct generally frowns on such behavior, this was not the norm.

"If it were to happen again, I would deal with it in no uncertain terms," Patterson said in response to questions. "They are free to think what they want, but they are not free to be rude or to disturb chapel. They know me well enough not to push this issue."

## CLEARING THE AIR

The students were reacting

to a message by Rick Patrick, pastor of First Baptist Church in Sylacauga, Alabama, and a 1993 graduate of Southwestern Seminary.

Patterson, in a separate Dec. 2 blog on the seminary website, also defended Patrick as delivering his message "as would be expected at a Southern Baptist seminary in view of the current discussions in our denomination."

Further, he clarified remarks he made after Patrick's message the students' protest.

"[L]et it be clear that I asked no one to leave the SBC!" Patterson wrote.

"What I did say was about myself," he said. "I said that if I held Presbyterian beliefs, I would be a Presbyterian. If I held charismatic beliefs, I would probably affiliate with the Assemblies of God."

"If my only difference with Presbyterians were that I favored only baptism of adult believers rather than the baptism of infants, I would probably be conflicted, but I might affiliate with Primitive Baptists," he added.

"I asked no one else to respond this way," Patterson wrote. "I expressed what I would do, just as every Baptist is free to do, and, especially, as is our custom in the academic world."

## SALVATION FOCUS

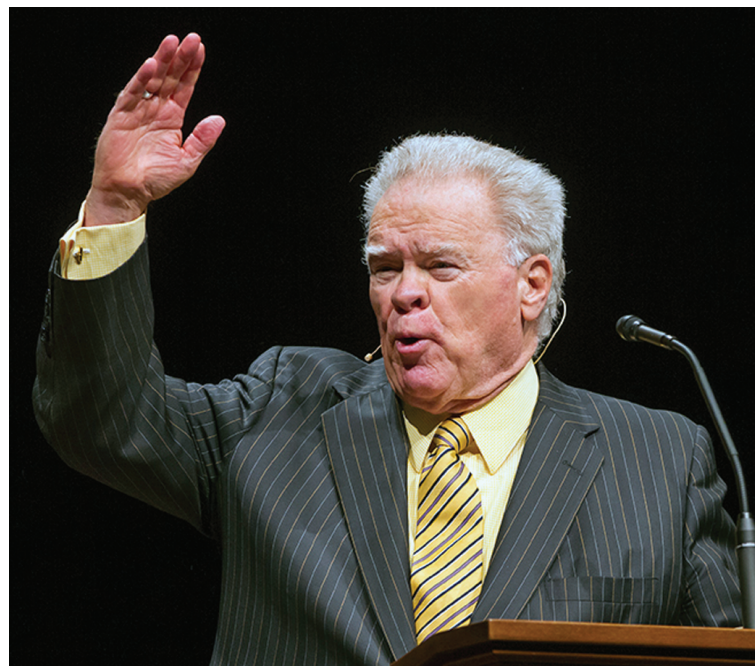
Patrick's 38-minute message focused on the primacy of salvation in Christ.

In the first part of his sermon, Patrick noted he came to Christ after hearing the plan of salvation and praying "The Sinner's Prayer."

Patrick said it was disconcerting when 30 years later that prayer was being blamed for sending people to Hell.

"The blame lies not with the form of expression, but rather with the lack of sincerity in the heart of the false professor," Patrick said.

He also urged the chapel crowd not to neglect the study of salvation, offering his view that traditionalists (non-Calvinists) and Calvinists see things differently when it comes to "matters of ministry



Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Paige Patterson

and theology."

## DIVERGING PATHS

Declaring Baptists share a basic sense of orthodoxy concerning the Virgin Birth, the Trinity and the Scriptures, Patrick said the road diverges after that and Calvinists and traditionalists split ways.

Patrick said he and some other like-minded pastors had taken notice of the growth of Calvinism in the Southern Baptist Convention, including ministry organizations, sponsored conferences, and even book giveaways promoting Calvinistic views on church history, church governance,

church planting and cultural engagement.

In all, they identified six different Calvinist organizations that had emerged in Southern Baptist life.

With that discovery, Patrick said he and these other pastors decided there should be at least one that represents the (Herschel)Hobbs/(Adrian) Rogers non-Calvinistic doctrinal position, "a basic view of salvation" embraced by the early writers of the Baptist Faith & Message.

Hence the group formed Connect 316, an organization he said is not part of the new

See PROTEST on 7

*For unto you is born  
this day in the city  
of David,*

*a SAVIOR,  
which is  
CHRIST,  
the LORD!*



Merry Christmas  
From the Staff of the  
Louisiana Baptist Foundation

Louisiana  
Baptist  
FOUNDATION



*May blessings great and small  
be yours this Christmas!*

"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift." 2 Corinthians 9:15

Louisiana Baptist  
**CHILDREN'S HOME**  
& Family Ministries



# Protest from page 6

Calvinistic movement, but, “rather, we are an organized, respectful response to that movement.”

Patrick said the difference on the issue of salvation is no small matter, insisting the doctrine of salvation is a key distinctive of Southern Baptist thought and life.

How one views salvation also influences what a person thinks about other spiritual issues, he said.

Patrick said a believer’s soteriological view shapes his or her view on the “Sinner’s Prayer,” “evangelists,” “altar calls,” and “mode of baptism.”

He said it even influences

what one believes about “God and country” and the use of “alcohol and tobacco.”

Patrick shared how a growing number of Southern Baptists are expressing concerns about individuals and groups in the SBC who “increasingly embrace the Presbyterian view of salvation doctrine, church government, the mode of baptism, avoidance of the altar call, the use of beverage alcohol, the approval of societal missions funding and so on.”

These practices are broader than the issue of salvation, Patrick conceded, but he insisted each is driven by a person’s basic belief about what salvation

means.

“If we are not careful a myriad of related beliefs and practices will enter our camp, hidden within the Trojan Horse of Calvinism,” Patrick asserted.

## PLAIN SPOKEN

Barry McCarty, a professor of preaching and rhetoric at Southwestern Seminary said he did not view the student protest as a “huge incident” in chapel that day, nor did he find Patrick’s message polarizing.

In fact, McCarty defended Patrick for presenting a viewpoint he said he also holds and he believes is one held by a majority of Southern Baptists.

“I can say that Rick was plain spoken and I didn’t think he was at all ugly toward anyone who is a Calvinist. I think he was just trying to find a parity,” McCarty said.

McCarty, chief parliamentarian at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting for 31 years, said there are two things that hold Southern Baptists together – the Cooperative Program and The Baptist Faith and Message.

“I don’t want to see people lining up in partisan camps,” he said of Calvinism and more

traditional views.

However, McCarty said he heartily rejects infant baptism, adding that it is the one Presbyterian practice that would not fit under the Southern Baptist tent, no matter the desire to be inclusive toward Calvinists.

“I have got to question if a Southern Baptist church is embracing paedobaptism,” McCarty said. If they do, “I think they have given away a fundamental important Baptist distinctive.”

## THE ONE THING

Patterson ended his statement with a focus on baptism as well, in context of salvation, and in a larger sense, evangelism.

He said the whole Conservative Resurgence, which was a fight about Southern Baptists’ beliefs, “was really always about one thing—reaching men and women for Christ.”

Patterson wrote. “My unalterable fear for our denomination today is that baptisms will continue to plummet, giving a certain indication of loss of evangelistic concern and fervency.

“Southern Baptists prospered by being the most effectively evangelistic among all denominations, and we will only pros-

per again if we honor God in that way,” Patterson continued.

*Joni B. Hannigan is a news-writer living in Jacksonville, Fla.*

**Link to statement:**  
<http://theologicalmatters.com/2016/12/02/concerning-remarks-on-calvinism-in-chapel-at-southwestern/>

**Link to video:** <http://media.swbts.edu/item/2259/sogreat-a-salvation>

# LC from page 2

applicant status – any chemistry graduate with a GPA of at least 3.0 will be given preferred status for admission into the sister school’s program.

“We are pleased and thrilled in that and honored to be associated with Union, a benchmark institution.

We are grateful they would partner with us,” Brewer said.

Brewer closed the press conference with an announcement that an anonymous donor has given \$100,000 to challenge other alums and friends of the school to match the gift.

The intent is to advance

the ongoing efforts for campus beautification and facility enhancements.

Since late May, 17 of 18 school buildings have received new roofs, and some facilities have received interior upgrades.

Brewer said they are receiving checks daily, ranging from \$10 to \$5,000.

“It’s not equal gifts,”

Brewer said. “But it’s equal sacrifice, equal participation.

“We can all give something, whether it’s 10 bucks or 20,” he said. “I don’t mind asking, because we’re asking for something fantastic.”

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**St. James Baptist Church in Bunkie was selected by Mrs. Alisha Arvie from November’s Give A Gift entries to assist with expenses associated with this new church start. Pray for St. James and their impact in the Bunkie area.**

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# CELEBRATING THE BIRTH OF OUR SAVIOR



## NEW ORLEANS

BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

ANSWERING GOD’S CALL



# Closed by flood, church still a part of the Kingdom to come

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL  
Message Staff Writer

HAMMOND — Since it was constituted 30 years ago, Hillside Baptist Church has been known as a loving congregation which survived its share of trials.

Despite an optimistic attitude, the congregation of 20

could not overcome several feet of water that filled the worship center — after the Natchitoches River overflowed its banks in August — wiping out pews, hymnals and three decades of memories.

Among the few items not destroyed was the baptistery.

Lacking flood insurance, the congregation decided to

close permanently, but they were looking for a way to continue contributing to Kingdom work, even in the face of shutting down and turning over the keys Sept. 8 to the family who originally donated the property.

During this time of seeking God's guidance, Hillside members were inspired to

donate the baptistery to a congregation that was busy soul-winning and in need of one — and found out Still Water Baptist Church in Hammond was waiting to baptize 13 new believers.

Pastor Gerald Burton was excited his Hillside congregation was able to give away something that can bless oth-

ers for generations to come. "The devastating fact that all was lost was a very hard blow to the few remaining members we had," Burton said. "This is one good thing that came out of a very terrible situation that left many of our own members with

See FLOOD on 9

## Malachi

from page 4

mercy, and faith" (Matthew 23:23).

### SIN AGAIN

Here's the thing: We continue to commit these same sins today.

The thinking so often goes that we can place our hope in our job, bank account, or any number of other things, just as long as we go to church on Sunday, give our tithe, and maybe read the Bible here and there if we need an emotional boost.

Too many of us don't worry about the poor, the orphan, the widow, the stranger among us because, after all, we went to church this Sunday, and we even gave a tithe.

Yet this type of thinking is startlingly dangerous—it led to exile in the Old Testament and the rejection of Christ in the New Testament.

### TIME FOR CHANGE

Let us learn from God's words through Malachi and seek out a true relationship with God characterized by Jesus's words in Matthew 22:37-38: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important command. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands."

Russell L. Meek is assistant professor of Old Testament and Hebrew with Louisiana College, and serves as associate editor of the Journal for the Evangelical Study of the Old Testament. His article is a leader resource for the SBC January Bible Study on Malachi, which warns believers today against apathy and complacency in their walk with God.



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*For more than 20 years Steve and Blake Rainey have been showing people that they do not have to lose their life's savings in the event that they or a spouse goes into a long-term care facility. The testimonial below is from someone with experience in the nursing home industry.*



Lani Arnold

Lani Arnold retired as Admissions Director for a long term care facility after 20 plus years in the business where she witnessed first-hand the financial and emotional devastation when a loved one is admitted to a nursing home.

"I listened to spouse's fears of not having enough money to live on while paying for a nursing home and how these couples had saved all their lives for retirement with hopes of leaving their children an inheritance," Lani says. These situations led Lani to investigate how she could help people protect their assets when a loved one went into a nursing home.

"I attended a S.A.F.E. Planning seminar and I talked with families who had used S.A.F.E. Planning's services to see if they were happy with the outcome," Lani explains. "I also visited with both Steve and Blake Rainey on numerous occasions to make sure they too had a passion for the elderly. I needed to be sure their concern was more about people than profit. I called the Medicaid office and spoke to my case manager and made sure everything that the Rainey's had told me was legal and above board. I had to feel comfortable referring S.A.F.E. Planning to my client-families because my reputation was on the line too."

"I don't recommend a service that I have not investigated and know it is a safe and secure company. Senior adults need protection. They deserve protection. They have earned that right. I can honestly say Steve and Blake Rainey, along with Ric Cochran, have their clients' best interests at heart. I've witnessed these guys go above and beyond for families, and I highly recommend their services. They will walk the family through the Medicaid process and fill out all the lengthy forms. They will fight for your rights and protect as much of your assets as legally possible."

Lani and her husband, Larry, attend Calvary Baptist Church in Shreveport, LA.



## Startling from page one

Heaven's light was switched on and the audience for this event-for-the-ages was revealed to be a few rag-tag shepherds?

Edward R. Murrow and Walter Cronkite eat your hearts out! This was the best announcing job of all time.

Let's break this wonderful announcement down into its ten components...

### DO NOT BE AFRAID.

Angels always prefaced their announcements with these words. We smile at that because it makes complete sense. We get invaded by the supernatural so seldom that when it does happen, our hearts stop, our mouths drop, and our knees knock.

I imagine the angels paused for a full minute before continuing, until the pulse rates returned to normal. No more fear.

### GOOD NEWS.

It's the best news imaginable. Now, keep in mind that

for news to be good, it has to address a bad situation. A cure for cancer is discovered, that's good news.

The war ends, good news. Dad gets a job, good news. But to find a cure for some disease no one has ever had or heard of?

Not good news.

Throughout the New Testament, the message of Jesus Christ is called good news.

Paul was not ashamed of it (Romans 1:16) and said it was the message of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (I Corinthians 15:1ff.)

No more darkness.

### GREAT JOY.

It results in pure unadulterated ecstasy. The shepherds "went back, glorifying and praising God for all they had seen and heard, just as had been told them" (Luke 2:20).

"In Thy presence there is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand, there are pleasures forevermore" (Psalm 16:11).

No more sadness.

### FOR ALL THE PEOPLE.

It's for everyone, crossing every border and drawing in every race. "God so loved the world."

In most cases with which we are familiar, good news for one group becomes bad news for another. Your country wins a war; another loses. Your team wins a game; someone else loses. But in Christ, we are all winners. "More than conquerors" (Romans 8:37).

No more exclusion.

### UNTO YOU.

It's for you. It's personal, as though this message came special delivery to your home with your name on it.

By saying this to the lowliest strata of humanity – shepherds are said to have ranked on the social scale just above lepers – the Lord is making an eloquent statement of inclusion for all humanity. If these guys were included, no one is left out!

No more being left out.

### THIS DAY.

It's for now. They've waited for hundreds of years. Anna, the elderly lady of Luke 2, spoke to "all those waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem."

When Jesus began His preaching/teaching ministry, He said, "Today, this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). And He said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and

believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15).

No more waiting.

### IN THE CITY OF DAVID.

It's here. In the very city where David lived and grew up, where he kept his sheep and played his lyre and composed hymns. Perhaps these shepherds are keeping sheep in the very same pastures where David once worked.

No more looking here and there, wondering, questioning.

### A SAVIOR.

"He shall save His people from their sins," said the angel to Joseph (Matthew 1:21). The best news of the ages is there is a Savior, His name is Jesus, and Jesus saves!

Jesus alone is the Savior. "Neither is there salvation in any other..." (Acts 4:12).

No more trying to save ourselves.

### CHRIST THE LORD.

This Savior is the Messiah of whom the prophets spoke and wrote, of whom God's faithful people read and for whom they longed. To be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14), called "wonderful counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father" (Isaiah 9:6), and to bear the sins of us all (Isaiah 53:6).

No more searching.

### THIS SHALL BE A SIGN.

"Here is how you will find the One born to be your Savior." I love the simple

directions given by the angel to the shepherds. "Wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." There couldn't be two of those in Bethlehem.

It is our privilege to tell people today how they may find Jesus the Savior. As Paul said, "The word is nigh thee...that if you will confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9).

### A FINAL WORD: THIS OLD NEWS IS EVER NEW.

Any news is new if the recipient has never heard it.

And for those who know the Lord Jesus as Savior and Lord, the news seems fresh every morning.

Let us tell the good news.

## Flood from page 8

water inside their homes and no flood insurance.

"We got a lot of use from the baptistery," he added, "and our church is so pleased that we could help another church in need."

Lonnie Wascom, director of missions for Northshore Baptist Association of which Hillside is a member, said the gesture should serve as an example to others throughout Louisiana.

"What a blessing to know the legacy established by Hillside's faithfulness is continuing in the baptism of believers reached by Still Water Baptist Church," he said.

Hillside Baptist is the only Louisiana Baptist Convention congregation to close because of the August floods, although more than 70 were

flood damaged.

The congregation's decision to disband was made despite a Louisiana Baptist initiative to partner healthy congregations with those impacted by the flooding in southern Louisiana.

Most of the other congregations already have been paired with sister churches, but there are still some in need of companions to come alongside and help them rebuild, according to Wayne Jenkins, director of evangelism for Louisiana Baptists. Jenkins said the biggest needs now are skilled tape setters and floaters to install drywall.

**For information on how to partner with a flood-impacted church, call 318.446.3242.**

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For information, contact Susan Nolan at: 318.343.2244 or snolan@lbch.org

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Ladies are needed for the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home, Monroe, LA, to serve in HomePlace, a transitional living ministry for homeless children and their mothers. The full-time position includes salary, housing, life and medical insurance, annuity, paid vacation, and training. Provide love, care, and hope in Christ to children and families in need. Both full-time and part-time positions require 24-hour work schedules.

For information, contact Susan Clark at 318.343.2244 or sclark@lbch.org



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## Old Bethel Baptist Church in Natchitoches is seeking a Bi-Vocational Pastor

Please send résumés to:  
**Old Bethel Baptist Church,**  
Attn: Pastor Search Committee,  
504 Old Bethel Church Rd  
Natchitoches, LA 71457  
or email to jan57p@yahoo.com



## First Baptist Church in Zachary, LA is seeking a MEDIA/COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Please submit resumes and cover letter to mediaSearch@fbcz.org  
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Find a job description at fbcz.org/jobs. (No calls, please.)



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## ON THE MOVE

■ **Bill Holifield** has resigned as pastor of Colyell Baptist Church, Livingston.

■ **Kyle Norred** ordained to the Gospel ministry at Social Springs Baptist Church, Ringgold. He is now serving as pastor at Fryeburg Baptist Church, Dubberly.

■ **Kendrick Banks** was ordained to the Gospel ministry Nov. 27 at The Crossing, Monroe.

■ **Michael Oates** is the minister of music at Jerusalem, Pumpkin Center, Hammond.

■ **Ronnie Chiasson** is now full time pastor at Highland Baptist Church, Bogalusa.

■ **E. J. Kemper, III** is the new pastor at Mount Pilgrim, Lake Charles.

■ **Les Fogleman** retired from Wadesboro Baptist Church, Ponchatoula Aug. 30, 2016. He is available for pulpit supply and interim pastor. Contact him at 985-974-3960 or by email [lesriefogleman@bellsouth.net](mailto:lesriefogleman@bellsouth.net)

## IN REMEMBRANCE

■ **Joseph Willis Strother**, 82, of Clayton, Georgia, died Nov. 25. The son of Southern Baptist Missionaries Greene W. and Martha Krause Strother, he was born Dec. 14, 1933 in New Orleans. From 1934-1940 and 1947-1949, he lived with his family in Anhui, Henan and Jiangsu provinces of China. He received a B. A. degree from Louisiana College in 1955. On June 1, 1955, he was married to Earlene Richards in St. Landry. After having served four years in the Louisiana National Guard while in college, he then served as a Staff Sergeant in the U. S. Army from 1955-1957. Upon completion of his military service, Strother was employed as an art educator from 1958-1966 in Marietta, Georgia, Montgomery County, Maryland and University of North Carolina-Greensboro. In 1966, Strother entered the University of Georgia as a doctoral student and as a Carnegie Grant recipient. He received his E.D.D. in 1969 and remained on the faculty of the University of Georgia Art Department until 1976. During his years at UGA, he also served as the Co-Director of the UGA-Studies Abroad Program in Cortona, Italy. In 1976, he was named director of Louisiana Tech University's School of Art and Architecture, retiring in 1996 as Professor Emeritus. While at La. Tech, he was the director of school's first exchange program with Xian Jiaotong University in Xian, China living and teaching there in 1986-1987. He and his wife, Earlene, subsequently returned to China in 1998-1999 and 2001-2002 to teach English at Xian Jiaotong University in Xian and Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing. A committed Christian, Strother was a deacon and adult Sunday School teacher at Clayton Baptist Church. He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Earlene and was predeceased by their son, Joseph Willis Strother, Jr. He is also survived by his brother, G. W. Strother of Brazoria, Texas and two sisters, Joyce Carpenter of Jacksonville, Florida and Miriam Gordon of Colorado Springs, Colorado.

■ **Z. T. "Zack" Winningham**, 84, of Mendenhall, passed away Nov. 8 at University of Mississippi Medical Center. Funeral services were held Nov. 12 at Poplar Springs Baptist Church in Mendenhall, Miss. Burial was in Poplar Springs Baptist Church Cemetery. Born and raised in Simpson County, Miss., he surrendered to the ministry as a Southern Baptist preacher and served over 65 years in Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. He pastored First Baptist Church Westwego (1958-59) while attending New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in New Orleans. He pastored Eden Baptist Church in Denham Springs in 1969-1975 and again in 1983-1989. In between those two stints at Eden he pastored at Kingsville Baptist Church, Ball (1975-1977). Surviving family members are his wife of 17 years, Patti Pearson Winningham, son Greg Winningham (Marsha), daughters Dianne Cardon (Mark), and LaDonna Braswell, grandchildren Gregory Winningham II, Jonathan Winningham, Trent Cardon, Thomas Braswell II, Guy Ray Braswell II, and Zachary Braswell. He was preceded in death by his wife of 39 years, Donzie Winningham, his parents, William H "Crowder" and Ada Lea Winningham, his siblings, Cleveland Winningham, James Winningham, Thomas Winningham, Johnnie B. Winningham, L.A. Winningham, Myrtis Wallace and Maggie Mae Thames.

## LAGNIAPPE

■ Summer Grove Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Southern Lights -- Ice Skating and Christmas Village**, Dec. 2-23, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m. Pastor: Aaron Burgner.

■ First Baptist Church, Bossier City: **Natalie Grant & Danny Gokey Concert**, Dec. 15, 7-9 p.m. For ticket information, go to [CelebrateChristmasTour.com](http://CelebrateChristmasTour.com) or call the church at 318.746.7940. **Christmas Eve Service**, Dec. 24, 4 p.m. **Christmas Day Service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Brad Jurkovich.

■ First Baptist Church, Jena: **Christmas Cantata presented by FBC's adult choir**, Dec. 15 & 18, 6 p.m.; Christmas Eve Lord's Supper Service, Dec. 24, 5 p.m.; Christmas morning service, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Dominick C. DiCarlo, Jr.

■ Calvary Baptist Church, Alexandria: **A Calvary Christmas** - A two-act visually stunning multimedia event featuring a cast and choir of over 400 people, a full orchestra, live animals, flying angels and much more culminating in the beautiful story of Jesus' birth in The Living Nativity, 7 p.m. on Dec. 16 and Dec. 17, 2 p.m. on Dec. 18; **The Foto Sisters at Christmas Eve worship** at Calvary, Dec. 24, 6 & 8 p.m.; **Christmas Day Service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: David Brooks.

■ Eastside Baptist Church, Zachary: **Discipleship Conference**, Dec. 16-18; 6 p.m. Dec. 16-17 and 10:30 a.m., Dec. 18. Speakers: **Herb Hodges and Soup Campbell**. For more information, call the church office at 225.938.6914. Pastor: Keith Cox.

■ Bayou Vista Baptist Church, Morgan City: **"This Hope" in concert**, Dec. 16, 6:30 p.m.; **Christmas Eve Candlelight service**, Dec. 24, 6 p.m.; **Christmas Morning service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Steven Kelly.

■ Florida Boulevard Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Celebrate Christmas with Gordon Mote and The Foto Sisters in concert**, Dec. 16, 7 p.m. A love offering will be taken. Pastor: Jason Bland.

■ First Baptist Church, DeRidder: **A Christmas concert with Gordon Mote and The Foto Sisters**, Dec. 17, 6 p.m. **Christmas Eve candlelight service**, Dec. 24, 6 p.m. Pastor: Josh Eubanks.

■ First Baptist Church, Jonesboro: **"Jesus" - A Christmas Cantata**, Dec. 18, 10:30 a.m. The Adult Choir will present this cantata to the church. Pastor: Stuart Toms.

■ Bethel Baptist Church, Colfax: **Children's Christmas Program**, Dec. 18, 6 p.m.; **Christmas Day Service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. The Candlelight service will be celebrated with the Lord's Supper. Pastor: Carl Gulde.

■ Calvary Baptist Church, Slidell: **Price Harris in concert**, Dec. 18, 11 a.m.; **Christmas Fellowship**, Dec. 18, 5 p.m.; **Christmas Eve Services**, Dec. 24, 6 p.m. Pastor: Aaron McGuffee.

■ Brookwood Baptist Church, Shreveport: **"Sing a Song of Christmas" performed by the kids at Brookwood** (ages 4 years to fifth grade) Dec. 18, 4 p.m. in the Worship Center; **Christmas Day Services**, Dec. 25, 9 & 10:15 a.m. Pastor: Michael Smith.

■ First Baptist Church, DeQuincy: **Christmas Handbell concert**, Dec. 18, 6 p.m.; **Christmas Eve Service and Lord's Supper**, Dec. 24, 5 p.m.; **Christmas morning service**, Dec. 25, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Gil Arthur.

■ Jerusalem Baptist Church, The Pumpkin Center, Hammond: **Christmas Cantata**, Dec. 18, 10:30 a.m.; **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service and "Polar Express" train rides for children**, Dec. 24, 6 p.m.; **Christmas Day Worship Service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Phil Weaver.

■ Cedar Crest Baptist Church, West Monroe: **Dave Moreland** will retire at the end of the year after serving 14 years as associate pastor/minister of missions. A reception will be held in his honor Dec. 18 beginning at 3 p.m. in the fellowship hall. There will be a program at 3:30 p.m. Pastor: Greg Clark.

■ First Baptist Church, Lafayette: **Celebrate Christmas with Gordon Mote and The Foto Sisters in concert**, Dec. 18, 6 p.m.; Christmas morning service, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Steve Horn.

■ First Baptist Church, Jonesboro: **JESUS - Christmas Cantata presented by the adult choir**, Dec. 18; **annual Christmas Eve Candlelight service**, Dec. 24, 6



Submitted photo

**New Zion Baptist Church of Covington licensed Blake Macloud and Corey Jenkins to the Gospel Ministry.** Pictured (from left) are Macloud, senior Pastor Clark Stewart and Jenkins.

p.m.; **Christmas morning service - celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ**, Dec. 25, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Stuart Toms.

■ Cook Baptist Church, Ruston: **Children & Youth Christmas musical**, Dec. 18, 6 p.m.; **Candlelight Lord's Supper service**, Dec. 24, 5 p.m.; **Christmas morning worship service** only, Dec. 25, 10:15 a.m. Pastor: Wayne DuBose.

■ First Baptist Church, Vidalia: **'A Small Town Christmas'** presented by the FBCV Choir and directed by Junior Williams, Dec. 18, 6 p.m.; **Candlelight Service**, Dec. 25, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Wes Faulk.

■ Fair Park Baptist Church, West Monroe: **Celebrate Christmas with the combined choirs, praise team and worship team**, Dec. 18, 6 p.m. The program will be followed by church-wide reception. Pastor: Waymond Warren.

■ Foster Road Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Jesus Means Christmas to Me**, Dec. 18, 5 p.m. followed by Christmas Fellowship Dinner. Pastor: Mike Morris.

■ First Baptist Church, Bogalusa: **SNOW night**, Dec. 18, 5:30 p.m. **Lottie Moon Christmas Dinner and Auction**, Dec. 21, 5:15 p.m. **Christmas Eve Vespers**, Dec. 24, 6 p.m. Pastor: Greg Whaley.

■ First Baptist Church, Tioga: **Breath of Heaven - Christmas Cantata**, Dec. 18, 6 p.m.; **Special Delivery: Wrapped in the Father's Love children's musical**, Dec. 21, 6 p.m.; **Christmas morning service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Tim Hisaw.

■ Grace Memorial Baptist Church, Slidell: **Christmas**

**cantata, "Joy" presented by the Adult Choir and Orchestra**, Dec. 18, 10 a.m.; **Christmas Eve Candlelight service**, Dec. 24, 6 p.m.; **Christmas Day Worship**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m.; **A Concert by the Dove Brothers (from North Carolina)**, Jan. 1, 10 a.m. Pastor: Bob Heustess.

■ Simpson Baptist Church, Simpson: **Candlelight Service**, Dec. 21, 7 p.m. Pastor: Silas Cross.

■ Metairie Baptist Church, Metairie: **"Carols, Keyboards, and Candles" service**, Dec. 21, 6:10 p.m. Multiple pianos will play our favorite carols/hymns reminding all the meaning of Christmas. In addition, there will be challenging Scriptural meaning of Christmas as special passages are explored. The service will end with a challenge to "carry the light" of Christmas with us. Family and friends are invited. Metairie Baptist is located at 401 Codifer Blvd. in Old Metairie. Pastor: Thomas Strong.

■ First Baptist Church, Minden: **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**, Dec. 24, 5 p.m.; **Christmas morning service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Leland Crawford.

■ First Baptist Church, Haynesville: **Christmas Eve service**, Dec. 24; **Christmas Morning service featuring Christmas Music from the FBC Choir**, Dec. 25. Pastor: Ronnie Burns.

■ Hebron Baptist Church, Denham Springs: **Communion and Carols**, Dec. 24, 6 p.m.; **Christmas morning services**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m.

■ First Baptist Church, Mandeville: **Christmas Eve service**, Dec. 24, 4:30 p.m.; **Christmas Day Service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Ken Schroeder.

■ Woodland Park Baptist Church, Hammond: **Christmas Eve Service**, Dec. 24, 5 p.m.; **Christmas Morning Worship services**, Dec. 25, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Scott Thompson.

■ First Baptist Church, Slidell: **Christmas Eve Service**, Dec. 24, 6 p.m.; **A Family Christmas Day Service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Terrell Suggs.

■ First Baptist Church, Haughton: **Christmas Eve service**, Dec. 24, 5 p.m.; **Christmas Day Worship service**, Dec. 25, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Gevan Spinney.

■ Sale Street Baptist Church, Lake Charles: **Christmas Eve Service**, Dec. 24, 6 p.m.; **Christmas morning service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Randy Edwards.

■ First Baptist Church, New Orleans: **Christmas Eve service**, Dec. 24, 5 p.m.; **Christmas Day service**, Dec. 25, 9:30 a.m. Pastor: David Crosby.

■ First Baptist Church, Ruston: **Christmas Eve Candlelight service**, Dec. 24, 5:30 p.m.; **Christmas Day service**, Dec. 25, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Chris Craig.

■ First Baptist Church, Winnsboro: **Christmas Eve Vespers**, Dec. 24, 6:00 p.m.; **Christmas Day service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Craig Beeman.

■ Taylor Baptist Church, Taylor: **Christmas Day services**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Jimmy Eppinette.

■ First Baptist Church, Many: **Christmas morning service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Jonathan Bost.

■ First Baptist Church, Hornbeck: **Christmas morning service**, Dec. 25, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Jack Bell.

■ Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville: **Christmas morning service**, Dec. 25, 10:45 a.m. Pastor: Philip Robertson.

■ Family of Grace, Alexandria: **Christmas service**, Dec. 25, 10 a.m. Pastor: Brad Webb.

■ Connect Church Northshore, Covington: **Grand Opening/ Block Party of the Connection Center Thrift Store**, Jan. 7, 11 a.m. There will be free food, children's games, and much more. The Connection Center is located at 1133 N. Lee Road, Covington. The store is currently taking clothing and furniture donations. To donate items, please call 985.778.8568. Connect Church is sponsored by New Zion Baptist Church, and is supported by the Northshore Baptist Association and Louisiana Baptist Convention church multiplication. Pastor: Matthew Smith.

■ First Baptist Church, Pineville: **First@First Business Leader Luncheon**, Jan. 9, noon. Speaker: **John Marcuse, Public Relations Specialist at Rapides Regional Medical Center**. Cost: \$10 and you may pay at the door. Please RSVP to Melinda Langford ([mlangford@fbcpineville.net](mailto:mlangford@fbcpineville.net)). Pastor: Stewart Holloway.

## Scripture Crypto

The Scripture Crypto is a Bible verse in which one letter has been substituted for another, thus encoding the verse. To find out what the verse is, you must determine what each letter is a substitute for. An "a," for example, may stand for a "t" in this week's issue of the ScriptureCrypto. Next week, "a" could stand for a "d." Each week, each letter is different. Solve by trial and error. The answer will be given next week. Note: All numerals, such as those in the scripture reference after the verse, are spelled out.

trzfr zd pri ijxcidp uw uax zcrixzpjcfi, acpzz pri

xinilhpzuc uw pri haxfrjdn huddiddzuc, acpu pri

hxjzdi uw rzd mquxo.

ihridzjed uci:wuaxpiic

**Clues:**  
A = U; H = P

**Answer to Dec. 1 Scripture Crypto:**  
The Song of Solomon two:twelve



## Revival from page one

continued. “Revival has just begun. It starts now, today, with each person. They are ready to continue on. We will continue to grow, invite and get those to come.”

Bill Britt, an evangelist and native of Haughton, preached each night and Broken Vessels of Deridder performed music.

“The biggest thing Bill Britt got across to those coming to the revival was gaining a relationship with the Lord,” he said. “From the beginning to the end, he pointed to salvation.”

Thomas has been at the church for just two years, but he said he learned this is the first revival the church has experienced in 10 years.

He believes this could be the catalyst to spiritually reenergize a congregation that has experienced its own recent setbacks: The pastor who preceded Thomas died in the parsonage; and, members’ homes were flooded in August.

Fortunately, the worship center and education space escaped the same high waters of the nearby Mermentau

River.

“This church has been through a lot,” Thomas said. “The Lord gave me a vision when I got here and a hunger for that church and the people, their lives and their souls. The church wasn’t dead but they were in a dormant stage. It took some time to build some trust with them.

“They began to search and pray,” he said. “We began to pray.

“I began to share my heart with the church and what God could do,” he continued. “The church began to pray and hearts changed – desire grew for revival in each individual and for the community.”

There had been some signs of revival before the November crusade, seen in an increased emphasis on missions – from its Woman’s Missionary Union sewing dresses for overseas missionaries to delivering Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets to needy families in the community.

Also, every Wednesday a bus picks up children from the area. They get to enjoy a meal and then participate in a time of discipleship that includes lessons about character development and memorization of Scripture. Two-thirds of the 95 who come do not have a church home.

Already, Thomas has seen fruit from the ministry effort.

During the recent revival, a woman accepted Christ after first attending a Wednesday evening service to hear her child sing a solo hymn.

“You could tell the Holy Spirit was moving in her life and stirring,” Thomas said. “She ran to the altar and gave her life to the Lord. And it may never have happened if we hadn’t reached her child first.

“That’s our prayer,” he continued. “Through our Wednesday night kids, if we can reach that kid, I promise down the road we will reach that family.”

# MERRY CHRISTMAS (WITH CP GUY) IT'S A COOPERATIVE LIFE

One cold and quiet night, Pastor George Bailey was celebrating Christmas, and the end of another budget year, when his wife noticed a melancholy cloud come over him.



The mysterious CP man led him to his church.



In the blink of an eye they found themselves in a far-away land.



Suddenly a strangely magical man appeared in the middle of the parsonage.



Suddenly they found themselves looking over a large metropolis.



After the mysterious little man in the Christmas cap suddenly disappeared, Pastor Bailey found himself in Minnesota, because it's snowy there and it makes this story look more like Christmas.



**PASTOR BAILEY** suddenly found himself back in his easy chair at the parsonage with a greater appreciation for CP supported missions and ministries in Louisiana and around the world.