

“Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his[a]; we are his people ...”

– Psalm 100:3 (NIV)

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST Message

Newsjournal for Louisiana Baptists

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Volume 133 • Issue No. 10

www.baptistmessage.com

May 17, 2018



First Bossier Pastor Brad Jurkovich will nominate Ken Hemphill for SBC president

Jurkovich to nominate Hemphill for SBC president

BY WILL HALL
Message Editor

BOSSIER CITY (LBM) – Brad Jurkovich, the 44-year-old pastor of the First Baptist Church in Bossier City, Louisiana, has announced he will nominate Ken Hemphill for president of the Southern Baptist

Convention during the denomination’s 2018 Annual Meeting, June 12-13, in Dallas, Texas.

In a social media message shared with the *Baptist Message*, Jurkovich described both candidates as “godly men” but that “after much prayer” he said he was “convinced that Dr. Ken Hemphill is the man

who is capable, ready, resourced, and has the capacity and wisdom to lead us at this critical time.”

Jurkovich, who attended Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., was a classmate with

See JURKOVICH on 8

Wave of baptisms bathe new facility at FBC Covington



First Covington photos

Cayden Windom listens as Waylon Bailey, pastor of First Baptist Church in Covington, asks about his faith in Jesus. Moments later, Bailey baptizes Windom inside the church’s worship center during the first Sunday the congregation worshipped at the new \$34-million facility.

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

COVINGTON – Typically, six-year-old Cayden Windom is a shy little boy who goes out of his way to avoid drawing attention to himself. But on an early March Sunday morning the youngster came out of his shell to proclaim his faith in Jesus through baptism.

DEDICATED TO CHRIST

As Windom stood before family and friends, the youngster made history as he became one of the first people to stir the baptistery waters in the new worship center at First Baptist Church in Covington. Brimming with excitement, Windom was elated to show nearly 2,300 people

See COVINGTON on 3

‘Harvest’ spotlighted at Executive Board meeting

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

WOODWORTH (LBM) – Despite baptisms dropping below 10,000 in the state for the first time in several decades, Keith Manuel told Executive Board members he is optimistic the trend can turn around because of the cooperation by Louisiana Baptist churches through the Harvest evangelism initiative.

“There’s good news in the bad news,” said Manuel, Louisiana Baptists Evangelism and Church Growth director. “We have a great opportunity. We’ve been there before; we can do it again. We know what we need to do. We just need

to get our eyes back on the fields that are white unto harvest.

“We’ve got to make what’s important ‘important,’ and those souls are important,” he said.

In his report to the Executive Board May 1 at Tall Timbers Conference Center in Woodworth, Manuel updated board members on the Harvest, the largest joint effort for evangelism ever undertaken in the state.

The end goal of this initiative was to involve at least 700 churches to pray for every home and share Christ with every person in Louisiana. By early May, 876 churches had signed up to participate.

Manuel said his office has partnered

with 16 different Harvest events involving many associations and churches.

One way Louisiana Baptists can participate is by visiting louisianabaptists.org/harvest for updates and resources, Manuel explained. Churches also can sign up as partnering churches and encourage members to join BlessEveryhome.com.

For 20 days, Bless Every Home participants will receive a daily email containing names (heads of household) and addresses for five neighboring houses as a reminder to pray for the salvation of members of that home – for a total of

See HARVEST on 4

Plain old-fashioned door-to-door soul winning works

BY EDDIE WREN
LBC President

RAYVILLE (LBM) – I was recently in Alexandria for a meeting and began to think about evangelistic outreach. At First Baptist Rayville we use various approaches to sharing the Gospel. But I began to take a hard look at my personal evangelism strategy and what more I could do to spread the Gospel and teach others to do the same.

I felt the Lord impressing upon me a specific plan that seemed easy enough: plain old-fashioned door-to-door “soul winning.”

My plan was to enlist one of the guys at my church who was my age and younger – perhaps

who had never experienced door-to-door witnessing, or witnessing at all – to join me in this effort.

I was thinking that if I could get someone to go with me and he witnessed someone trust in the Lord that not only would the person be saved but the guy with me would get fired up about sharing the Gospel.

I prayed about the plan; the Lord confirmed it in my heart; and, I was moved to begin the next Wednesday night right after Bible study.

I figured I would call one of the regular attenders to go with me, but the first person I called said he wouldn’t be there; and, the second man said he had something going on.

In the end, I said to myself,

“No problem, I will just catch whoever is hanging around after Bible study.”

As I drove home, I prayed and asked the Lord to show me exactly the home where I should start. Then I asked the Lord to save a soul: “You know Lord, if I’m asking men to go with me door to door, it sure would be a great encouragement if you would allow us to see a soul saved.” Almost instantly, He placed in my mind and on my heart where I needed to go, so I spent the rest of the ride praying for someone to be saved.

After Bible study that Wednesday I went over to the gym to find someone to go with me, and to my surprise, no one was around. So, I sat down for a few minutes until I heard the voice of one of our men outside the gym.

“Adam! Perfect!” I thought.

When I approached and asked if he wanted to make a visit with me he said his son was with him. But I assured him we would not be gone long and that his son and mine could shoot basketball in the



Eddie Wren, LBC President & Pastor of First Rayville

gym until we got back.

As we were walking across the parking lot, Adam asked who we were going to see. After I said, “I don’t know,” he looked at me with a funny look and replied, “Ooooookay.”

I told him we were going to do door-to-door witnessing, which did not appear to comfort him.

We just kept walking, and as we approached the house I turned and looked at him and said, “This is gonna be fun, Adam.” But he didn’t look like he believed me.

I knocked on the door and a young man answered to whom I introduced Adam and myself. I explained I was the pastor of FBC Rayville and we chatted for a few moments about the church and his church background. Then I worked the conversation around to ask him if he knew the Lord and if he was confident in his salvation. He shared that he wasn’t, so I explained to him that the Bible tells us we can know we are saved and asked him if he would like to know how. He invited us in and I

asked if he had a Bible, and right there in his living room I pointed out the verses of the Romans Road, asking him to read them aloud – and I asked him if he knew what each meant.

For example, he read Romans 3:23, “For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” I asked, “What do you think that means?” and he looked at me and said, “Everybody has sinned.”

Then we talked about the reality of sin in our lives and proceeded on through Romans 6:23, 5:8, and 10:9-10.

When we finished, I asked the young man if he would like to pray for salvation and assured him if he was willing to turn from his sin and turn to God through Christ, he would be saved.

There in the FIRST house we visited, the young man prayed for salvation.

The Gospel still saves!

I believe the answer to what ails the church is this simple: Christian men and women need to personally share the Gospel with others all around them.

If we will share the Gospel, God will save souls.

Eddie Wren is pastor of the First Baptist Church in Rayville, Louisiana, and president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

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(USPS 042-860) (ISSN 0740-2104)

Published biweekly Thursdays by the *Louisiana Baptist Message*, 1250 MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, Louisiana 71303.

Covington from page one

gathered March 18 the reason for his hope in Christ.

"It was exciting because of a couple of reasons," he said. "I got to do the same thing Jesus did first and I felt like the president standing in front of all those people."

Windom's baptism is only the beginning of his family's special connection with First Baptist Covington: Windom was the final person to walk down the aisle in the church's former worship center; and, his mom and dad, Julie and Jeremy, were the first couple to be married after Hurricane Katrina in the old facility, where his sister, Kensly, also was baptized.

Julie Windom said her son has illustrated a true example of Christ-like joy.

"I can learn a lot from him," she said. "The baptism part for us was super special -- he is our second child -- and there is no greater joy than knowing both are saved. We knew where his heart was all along, but he was more excited than we knew to show the world he loved Jesus. When I saw the pictures after his baptism, it showed, and, he has shared about it with people at school, church and everywhere he goes."

REACHING THE LOST

Windom is one of 46 people baptized since January, 22, when the new worship center opened.

Long before breaking ground in 2016 on its current worship center, bookstore, coffee shop and preschool space, the congregation had outgrown its worship center that seated 1,250. The church also was tight on space in its foyer and Sunday school classrooms.

The \$34 million facility

gives the congregation the breathing room needed to accommodate the growing number of members who call First Covington home: Saturday evening services have grown by 100 since mid-March; and, seven new adult classes have started (51 Connect Groups, total).

Associate Pastor Jay Johnston said the added opportunities for fellowship in the Connect Groups, as well as at the bookstore and coffee shop will give the church greater opportunities for growth.

"This has allowed us an even greater chance to reach the people in the community, bring them in, disciple them and send them back to reach others," he said. "That's the goal and the drive we are trying to work towards day in and day out."

AN ENDURING MISSION

Waylon Bailey, pastor of the church since 1989, said the April 15 dedication service was a celebration for what God has done through the congregation for its 97-year history. The special day featured remarks by Louisiana Baptist Convention Executive Director David Hankins, local officials, representatives from among the builders and members of the congregation.

Bailey recalled the excitement that overcame him and his wife, Martha, a few days before the facility opened, as they spent some moments of reflection inside the building. He also remembered that after the first worship service the couple shared with each other what others also voiced -- the building "felt like home."

But the building is much more than a new place

to worship Christ, Bailey explained. The facility has positioned the congregation to reach the next generation in an area that is constantly adding homes and businesses to its landscape.

The congregation conducts door-to-door evangelism, offers Upward sports, provides special needs classes, hosts Celebrate Recovery meetings and holds Vacation Bible School -- with each drawing a large number of first-time guests to First Covington. The congregation also has started other campuses - Hope Waldheim Church in Covington, Metairie Church and Metairie Korean Church.

Looking ahead to the future, Bailey said he is excited about meeting the challenges and taking advantage of the opportunities to reach the lost for Christ in Covington and beyond.

"We need to reach our Jerusalem obviously because of the command of Christ, but we also need to do so because our culture and our neighbors need Christ so desperately," Bailey said. "I've often thought that if people could experi-



First Covington photo

More than 2,300 people attended the dedication of First Baptist Covington's new worship center March 18. It was the culmination of a \$34 million expansion project on the campus.

ence what Christ can do in our lives, people would be knocking down the doors to become a part of God's family.

"Because they can't experience the peace, joy,

and love that we have in Christ, we have to find ways to knock on their doors," he said. "We need to go to the world for the same reasons but also of what it does for us when we go."

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Harvest from page one

of 100 of their neighboring families.

"We just need to keep our eyes lifted up," Manuel said. "The fields are still white unto the harvest. There are a lot of people who need Jesus. That's good news. There's great opportunity."

HERE FOR YOU UPDATE

John Kyle, communications director for Louisiana Baptists, shared a "Here for You" television spot that aired during the Super Bowl has reached an estimated 849,000 people across the state an average of two or more times.

A social media campaign, which ran in conjunction with the series of television commercials, engaged an additional 319,000 people via Facebook and Twitter. The outreach was made possible through the Georgia Barnette State Missions Offering.

"Here For You" is Louisiana Baptists' multi-year, multi-platform media strategy designed to give every person in Louisiana the opportunity to say yes to Jesus.

Birthered from the President's 2020 Commission in 2013, "Here for You" launched its first pilot market in mid-2014 in southwest Louisiana. Currently the campaign is in its third pilot market in the

southeast part of the state.

"We're facing an epidemic in our country," he said. "It's the epidemic of truth decay. If you believe in absolute truth today you're considered a hater, you're considered a bigot. We do not value truth in our culture today. There's only one remedy for truth decay — truth, a consistent, creative dose of God's truth delivered directly to people's hearts and homes."

BLESSINGS OF GIVING

Building on the theme of reaching the state with the Gospel, Louisiana Baptists Executive Director David Hankins said Christ followers receive a special blessing when they give to Kingdom work.

"When we get our folks to give like they ought to give, we all are blessed and we become winners, and God's work can flourish like we would like it too," Hankins said.

Hankins said giving can counter the sin of greed and free a person from what can seem like a prison of financial mismanagement. Furthermore, Hankins said giving can allow a person to experience the blessings of God's attributes.

"Because even though He was rich, He became poor for your sakes so that you through



Brian Blackwell photo

Louisiana Baptists Evangelism and Church Growth Director Keith Manuel tells Executive Board members he is optimistic the Harvest evangelism initiative can help turn around a downward trend of baptisms in the state. The Harvest is the largest joint effort for evangelism ever undertaken in the state to pray for every home and share Christ with every person in Louisiana.

His poverty might become rich," Hankins said. "You want to be like God? Give. You want to have the attributes of God? Give yourself away and be a blessing."

ENTITY REPORTS

Louisiana College President Rick Brewer said he is hopeful the school will continue a trend of enrollment growth as it moves closer to a goal of a 1,500-strong student body by 2020.

After experiencing a five-

year downward spiral in enrollment by an average of 100 students per year that began in 2010 with 1,870 students and ended in 2015 with 1,109, the school reported a gain of 17 students in 2016. The school reported another increase in the fall 2017 semester, with 1,210 enrolled.

Brewer attributed continued the growth to increased academic offerings for undergraduate and graduate students, and a growing online studies presence. Several new scholarship opportunities have

enhanced enrollment as well.

He voiced optimism the school will once again enroll at least 300 new freshmen for the 2018-2019 academic year. If so, it would be the first time Louisiana College has enrolled 300 or more new freshmen for two consecutive years.

"What we do in Christian higher education is countercultural because the Gospel is countercultural," Brewer said. "What we do is important I believe because the world needs more of this counterculture."

"Education that instructs the mind without deepening the soul is not genuine learning," he said. "Our goal is to graduate students who make a difference for the common good with redemptive voices in the world."

For his part, Louisiana Baptist Foundation Executive Director Wayne Taylor said the entity helps others understand that everything they own belongs to God.

He encouraged board members to help their respective congregations to learn benefits of giving to a Louisiana Baptist church or ministry.

"We just need to preach the truth, the message, to help people get the concept of what we are to really be as stewards and release a lot of resources so we can actually reach the people around the state," Taylor said, "and at the foundation, we're excited to be a part of that and help you in support the Children's Home, the College and your church."

During his report, Louisiana Baptist Children's Home President and CEO Perry Hancock thanked individuals and churches for making a difference in the lives of children.

Through its foster care and adoption ministry, Hancock said 100 children have been placed in the homes of Louisiana Baptists. But with 4,400 children in need of foster care homes in the state, Hancock said many more Louisiana Baptists have the opportunity to become involved in this particular ministry.

Hancock said the Children's Home has additional ministry opportunities, including an opening for cottage parents to serve at its campus in Monroe. He encouraged interested couples to contact his office at 318.343.8200 for more information.

He also reminded Executive Board members that the Annual Children's Home Sunday Offering is June 17 and asked for their support in promoting it, which falls on Father's Day.

See HARVEST on 5



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Harvest from page 4

"The Children's Home is father to the fatherless," he said. "Pray for us that day. Let your church know about their Children's Home and if God leads you to be a part of the offering we would appreciate that."

"We are so very grateful," he said. "There would be no Louisiana Baptist Children's Home without Louisiana Baptists. Thank you for being the heroes for our kids."

For his part, *Baptist Message* Editor Will Hall provided updates on the paper's operations and production, and, also covered key issues and developments in his work as director of the Office of Public Policy.

Regarding Louisiana Baptists' newspaper, he made particular mention of the special tribute to Billy Graham in the March 8 edition, following Graham's death Feb. 21.

"Many people across the country learned of Billy Graham's special connection to Louisiana through stories about the coffin crafted for him at Angola," Hall said. "But his connections to Louisianians were greater than that, including a 22-day Shreveport crusade in 1951, a 29-day New Orleans campaign in 1954, a five-day event in LSU stadium in 1970 and a one-day service in the Superdome in connection with the 1982 Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention; and, our archives show he conducted two more events in Louisiana than what are listed in the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association records."

"In 1954, he took one day away from his New Orleans campaign to preach in Baton Rouge before a crowd of 25,000, and 500 crowded to aisles during his invitation," Hall said. "Importantly, in 1954 during the midst of the Shreveport outreach effort, he took a day to preach in front

of an estimated 10,000 people at Louisiana College, and 300 people responded to the call of the Holy Spirit."

Hall also gave a quick summary of key bills reflecting Louisiana Baptists' values that have passed critical votes, and others opposing Christian values and beliefs that have been defeated.

In particular, Hall noted the success, so far, in keeping a slew of gambling bills from passing; and, he credited David Cranford, pastor of First Baptist Church, Ponchatoula, Louis Husser, pastor, Crossgate Church, Folsom, and Sherman Mack, member, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Albany, who is chairman of the Louisiana House Administration of Criminal Justice Committee, for one such successful effort.

"These three men stood like Shammah in the pea patch and took a stand to stop the placement of a riverboat casino in Tangipahoa Parish," Hall said, referencing H.B. 438, which was aimed at relocating a gambling facility from Shreveport.

PRESIDENTS' REMARKS

Executive Board President

Waylon Bailey reminded board members they have a responsibility to become involved in God's work despite the challenges faced.

Citing Acts 13, Bailey said churches must overcome the roadblocks to maintaining unity, and persevere against the challenges of how to reach cities and suburbs where an increasing number of the population is moving.

"We know that one of the reasons why we are struggling to revitalize churches is that some of those churches are in the open country where people simply don't live in numbers as they did before," said Bailey,

pastor of First Baptist Church in Covington. "The other challenge is to revitalize churches in urban areas that need to be renewed. We need to view all people, rural and urban, as creatures of the Gospel, and focus on what we can do instead of what we can't do."

"Before we can take any of those challenges, we have to make the choice," he said. "As strong lay leaders in the church as well as pastors and staff members, we have to take the challenge of 'Am I going to let Jesus truly be the Lord and the Master? Is it going to be His day?'"

LBC President

President Eddie Wren closed the meeting by challenging pastors and their congregations to reach their communities and beyond with the Gospel. Before setting out on the Great Commission, believers should devote ample time in prayer for those they plan reach with the Good News.

"Jesus instructed his followers to pray to the Lord of the harvest," said Wren, pastor of First Baptist Church in Ray-

ville. "Two thousand years ago Jesus said the greatest need, and it's still the greatest need today, is for workers in the harvest."

"The vast majority of Southern Baptists will never tell anyone about Jesus with their mouths," he continued. "If we don't tell them the Gospel, it doesn't matter how nice they think we are, it doesn't matter how nice they think we behave, they will never get the message of the Gospel and they will never trust Christ as their Savior."

PRAY After a time of prayer, Wren said God will then lead believers to develop a plan for evangelism.

PLAN "I think maybe one of the greatest problems that you and I have in sharing the Gospel is that sometimes we just don't have a plan," he said. "We just figure it's going to happen. We go about our business and we get to the end of the week and we realize we have not shared the Gospel with anybody."

PLOW Once that plan is developed, Wren said action must be taken by going into the harvest field and executing the

plan. "We need to plow," Wren said.

PERSEVERE Wren added that even in the difficult times, the Holy Spirit will help a Christian persevere and not give up in fulfilling the Great Commission.

"You're not going to lead someone to Christ every time you share the Gospel," he said. "But here's a fact. If you don't share the Gospel, you'll never lead anyone to Christ."

"If you and I will take the initiative, and we will pray and we will seek God's face for a plan and we will get that plan and we will start working that plan and we will start plowing and we persevere in it, somebody is going to get saved," he said.

"The answer to our churches' decline is not in programs, it's not in a different style of music, it's not in the way we dress," Wren observed. "The answer is in sharing the Gospel. If we would become a people who believe the book, and believe that the Gospel saves, and take that Gospel out personally, we will see a great abundance of souls saved by the power of the Holy Spirit

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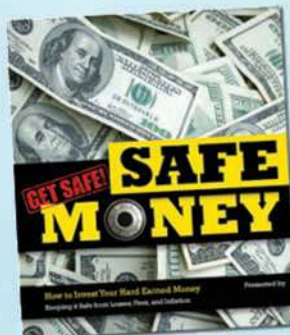
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NEW ORLEANS – Pastors of smaller membership churches are eligible for help with expenses for attending the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting by applying through the Caskey Center for Church Excellence at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Surplus funds from last year's Pastors' Conference costs were placed in reserve by the conference's officers and designated for convention travel scholarships for

smaller membership pastors, with NOBTS' Caskey Center designated to distribute the funds.

Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each will be awarded to qualified applicants on a first-come, first-served basis. Funds must be used for flight, hotel, mileage, rental car, meals, books and resources or other convention-related expenses. If awarded, the \$1,000 check will be mailed directly to the church with a letter designat-

ing the funds for the pastor's convention expenses.

Pastors of congregations with less than 150 in average attendance and whose churches are unable or unwilling to fund convention expenses may apply.

Applicants will be asked a series of questions to determine eligibility. Personal contact information as well as church contact information will be required. By applying, applicants agree to use the funds to attend all four SBC

Pastors' Conference sessions June 10-11 as well as all of the SBC annual meeting sessions June 12-13.

Last year, 61 scholarships of \$1,000 were provided from funding generated by the Pastors' Conference, with \$24,000 from its budget overage set aside for scholarships this year.

"The Southern Baptist Convention has always been comprised primarily of smaller membership churches," said Jeffrey C.

Farmer, associate director of the Caskey Center. "These faithful Christ-followers serve at the crossroads of America, proclaiming the Gospel and loving their neighbors. We are honored to be able to provide this resource so that many who have never attended the Pastors' Conference and convention can participate in our denomination's annual meeting."

To apply or for information, go to www.nobts.news/ConferenceScholarship.

How churches can register messengers for the SBC

You can pre-register your church messengers online for the 2018 SBC Annual Meeting in Dallas.

Simply click on www.SBC.net/AnnualMeeting and enter your SBCID, which you can obtain from your local association, www.louisianabaptists.org/directory-of-doms, or the state convention offices, 318.448.3402.

1. When you pre-register a church messenger online, each messenger gets a unique 8 digit

"Registration Code" printed on their Messenger Card.

2. Print out the Messenger Card, and give it to your church messenger. A copy of the Messenger Card also will be emailed directly to the messenger's personal email address.

3. The church messenger presents their Messenger Card at the Registration Desk for the 2018 SBC Annual Meeting in Dallas, TX.

Messengers elected by your congregation may also register

on site by presenting a letter on church letterhead signed by the pastor, clerk or moderator of the church certifying the individual has been duly elected as a messenger.

Under certain circumstances, the Credentials Committee may accept other documents (which may include a fax, email or other physical or electronically transmitted document) from the messenger's church which certifies the person as a church messenger.



Messengers raise their ballots to cast their vote at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

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M-JAM prepares youth to live 'Life on the Edge'



Brad Bennett, founder of Real Encounter Outreach, shares the Gospel during M-JAM while a Real Encounter Outreach team member showcases his skills. As seen on America's Got Talent, Real Encounter Outreach partners with local churches and various organizations to connect with those who do not yet know Christ and share the life-changing message of Jesus.

Special needs camp seeks volunteers to be a buddy

BY STAFF

Baptist Message

WOODWORTH – The first-ever Louisiana Baptist summer camp for individuals with special needs is seeking volunteers to serve as a buddy to each participant.

The event June 25-27 at Tall Timbers Conference Center in Woodworth will feature games, activities, worship and Bible study designed for children and adults from ages 8 and up who have intellectual or development disabilities.

Each camper will have a buddy, who is at least 16 years old, and volunteers are needed, said camp director David Anderson, and previous experience with special needs is not required.

"Champions Camp will be a week to remember," said Anderson, children's ministry strategist for Louisiana Baptists. "Anyone that commits to attend as a buddy will be assigned a special needs camper to shadow and assist throughout camp."

"This is a great opportunity for anyone with a heart for service and an interest in serving the amazing people in our midst who have special needs," he said. "Anyone who would like to join us and experience the best week of their summer should contact us quickly to get more information or just go to the camp website and download the form to register. We are very

excited about the possibilities of this new opportunity and ministry."

The cost for Champions Camp is \$118.

For more information about how to serve as a buddy or to register for the camp, visit <https://louisianabaptists.org/event/champions-camp/>, or call 318.449.4226, or e-mail david.anderson@louisianabaptists.org.

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

LAFAYETTE/WOODWORTH (LBM) – More than 700 children and adult leaders met separately at two locations for the recently completed M-JAM conference, but both groups experienced a transforming day of learning how to live "Life On The Edge" for Christ.

The day-long event featured the Real Encounter Outreach team from Branson, Missouri, and Louisiana and international missionaries, with all the speakers centering their messages around the conference theme, based on Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Participants also enjoyed music by worship leaders from central Louisiana and break-out sessions about the plan of salvation, compassion ministry, BMX stunt tricks, church planting, and IMB missions.

Attendance was 178 at First Baptist Church in Lafayette March 10 and 519 at Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center May 5, with the dual locales allowing participating first-through-sixth graders and their leaders to attend M-JAM closest to where they live.

"M-JAM at Tall Timbers went wonderfully well," said Jess Archer, children/youth mission strategist for Louisiana Baptists. "We had an exciting



More than 700 children and adult leaders participated in M-JAM, held jointly at First Lafayette and Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center in Woodworth.

day of meeting missionaries, hearing the Gospel message, learning about Rolling Hills Ministry right here in our state and meeting two BMX professionals who use their platform to share Christ with others. This is one event that we look forward to each year."

Dakota Martinez, a first grader from Bethany Baptist Church, raved about the BMX demonstration by the Real Encounter team, and the opportunity to play games with his friends.

"Seeing the BMX guys do all kinds of stunts was very cool, but I also enjoyed the way they used it to tell us how Jesus died on the cross for us," Martinez said. "M-JAM was fun with the games like Gaga Ball that we played outside, but this day was about praising God."

Julie Broome, a second grader from First Baptist

Church in Lecompte, also took away life lessons she looks forward to applying throughout the year.

"I basically learned that I don't need to do bad things, but really try my best to do my best for Jesus," Broome said.

Next year's M-JAM is scheduled for March 30 at Connect Church in Algiers and May 4 at Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center.

M-JAM is a Cooperative Program-funded event sponsored by the Louisiana Baptist Convention Women's Missions and Ministry.

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Sixty Louisiana lawyers organize as Christian group

BY HOLLY JO LINZAY
Regional Reporter

LAFAYETTE (LBM) – A group of Louisiana attorneys believe the time has come to band together in order to actively preserve, protect and promote Christian values as the fundamental basis for the laws in the country.

“It is time to take a stand and be a voice,” said Kent Aguillard, a lawyer from Eunice.

Aguillard, along with 60 other lawyers, have formed the Louisiana Association of Christian Lawyers, Inc., the first of its kind in the

state, according to a statement provided to the *Baptist Message*.

These lawyers are organizing to answer to a higher power and a greater authority than the political whims of a society brimming with moral decay, he said. The Louisiana Association of Christian Lawyers, Inc. was created, according to Aguillard, for the purpose of providing a forum and opportunity for group participation by individual attorneys who are dedicated and biblically inspired to uphold and promote those laws which are based on Christian values

and principals, and which confirm the country’s “trust in God.”

“There’s an erosion of the strong, moral code we had in this country. There used to be standards that just weren’t crossed. Now the lines are getting blurred,” Aguillard observed.

“For more than 200 years, certain moral values were the norm in the country,” he added. “Historically, the Bible was very important in government in the United States,” noting that John Jay, the first chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court who also was president of the American

Bible Society, advocated reading and studying the Bible.

According to Aguillard, the lawyers in the LACL believe the Bible is the inherent, infallible Word of God and they want to be able to inform the public about laws which might affect their personal liberty.

It is mandatory all Louisiana lawyers belong to the Louisiana State Bar Association to be able to practice law in the state, and the group tried to get the LSBA to establish a section for the preservation of Christian values. But multiple attempts failed, Aguillard said, due to

liberal influences.

“It was very evident Christian lawyers in this state needed an organization, not controlled by the Louisiana State Bar Association, that existed to preserve Christian liberties,” said Aguillard. “Therefore, the Louisiana Association of Christian Lawyers Inc. will establish a forum of its own and will be independent of the LSBA this June.”

A kickoff meeting of the Louisiana Association of Christian Lawyers, Inc. is slated for June 3-8 in Destin, Florida during the annual meeting of the LSBA.



Jurkovich from page one

J.D. Greear and calls him a longtime friend. He told the Baptist Message he had known Hemphill only by reputation until he personally interviewed him in March, but he said he had known of him since the 1990s, especially for his work in “growing churches.”

He hosted livestreamed interviews of both candidates: J.D. Greear, Feb. 27, and Hemphill, March 28.

Jurkovich closed his endorsement of Hemphill by mentioning his wife Paula and their three children, one of whom is an IMB missionary, describing them as “a powerhouse family for the Gospel.”

Saying he was “excited to be nominating” Hemphill as SBC president, he urged “every pastor to pray and attend.”

FBC Bossier averages about 2,000 in weekly worship attendance.

The vote for SBC president will be held June 12 in the Kay Bailey Hutchinson Convention

Center during the 1:15 p.m. business session.

GROWING LIST OF ENDORSERS

A growing list of individuals have contacted the *Baptist Message* either directly or through shared communications to publicly declare their support of Hemphill, including two prominent African American pastors as well as other leaders from across the nation.

Ralph Douglas West, pastor of The Church Without Walls in Houston, a Southern Baptist congregation with 9,000 worshippers on three campuses, said he “whole heartedly” endorsed Hemphill for SBC president.

Referencing the “factionalism” in the church at Corinth, he expressed concern about “the turbulence of the Convention,” saying Hemphill has a “proven track record of being a voice of unification and reconciliation ... [and] has not done so in a cheap, superficial sense.”

West closed by lauding Hemphill as a champion for “the cause of Christ as first and foremost, not another agenda,” and declared, “This is what we need right now and, why we need him as the representative voice of the Convention.”

Meanwhile, Walter Malone,

Jr., pastor of Canaan Christian Church, a Southern Baptist congregation in Louisville that attracts 1,400 worshippers for Sunday services, endorsed Hemphill, referring to his “wealth of experience and education that will be needed for this level of leadership.”

Saying Hemphill was a “man of vision” with “a heart for God and a heart for the people of God” Malone declared Hemphill “the man for this hour.”

Others declaring their support for Hemphill, include: Michael A. Cox, pastor, First Baptist Church, Pryor, Oklahoma; Ernest L. Easley, director, R.G. Lee Center of Christian Ministry, Union University, Jackson, Tennessee; Mayson Easterling, executive director for church relations, North Greenville University, Tigerville, South Carolina; Ray Gentry, executive director, Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders, McDonough, Georgia; John H. Killian, director of Missions, Fayette County Baptist Association, Fayette, Alabama, past president, Alabama Baptist State Convention, past President, SBC Committee on Committees; and, Daniel Wilson, pastor, First Baptist Church, Pleasant Grove, Alabama.

Learning Scripture is not a 'drill' but a key life skill for youth

By HOLLY JO LINZAY
Regional Reporter

PINEVILLE (LBM) -- It is all about the Word for the youth who took part in the State Bible Drill competition, April 28, at the First Baptist Church in Pineville.

"I didn't take reading the Bible very seriously until I started competing in Bible Drill. But being in the Bible Drill has helped me to hide the Word of God in my heart," Hannah James said. She is a ninth-grade homeschool student from Fellowship Baptist Church who attended the State Tournament for Youth and High School Bible Drill & Speakers' Tournament for the sixth time.

"But learning the Scripture has made a huge impact in my life. Bible Drill is not just about memorizing Scripture or the competition. It's about life. Learning Scripture has helped me to witness and to live for God," James, the first-place winner in the 9th grade Drill-off, added.

Participants in the Bible Drills and Speakers' Tournaments have gone through two other levels of competition, church and district, before reaching the state events.

Bible Drill is part of a discipleship program designed to assist youth in developing useful skills and knowledge of the Bible. They must know the books of the Bible; find common Scripture references; know different approaches to the plan of salvation; and, be



Brian Blackwell photo

Students look up a Scripture passage during the 2018 Louisiana Baptist State Bible Drill competition April 28 at First Baptist Church in Pineville. The participants in the Bible Drills and Speakers' Tournaments go through a three-step process which begins in the church before moving on to the district level and then finally advancing to the state level.

able to recall the scriptural foundations about key beliefs and doctrinal convictions.

Through the years, Steve Maltempi, youth ministry strategist for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, said he has seen tremendous spiritual growth in the lives of the youth who have participated in the State Bible Drill and Speakers' Tournament.

"God's Word will not return void," Maltempi said, referring to Isaiah 55:11. "I urge parents to get this started early. The Bible drill can help build a foundation that they will live by from this point forward."

Maltempi recalled a

conversation with a former participant who told him how he was sitting in a college class and recalled a Scripture that allowed him to recognize some false statements his instructor was making.

"The student recognized very quickly the instructor was not speaking the truth. He jotted down on one side of his notebook what the professor was saying, and then on the other side of his notebook, he wrote what the Scripture says," Maltempi said.

During the assembly, a group of students were awarded gold medals for competing in the State Bible Drill for nine years, from the fourth

grade through the 12th grade. It is a total commitment for most students who get involved, Maltempi added, a commitment "that builds their faith."

Emma Groom, a senior student from First Baptist, Slidell, was one of the recipients of the Nine Year Gold Medals.

"It's been an amazing experience to participate in the Bible Drills. It's one of the best things you can do for yourself. This experience has helped me grow in my relationship with God, and has helped me make friends everywhere," Groom said, adding, "I get asked about things all the time at school, and Scripture just pops into my head that apply to my friends' situations. I don't have to say I need to look it up. I know where it is."

Sam Stogner, a ninth grader from the First Baptist Church in Covington, said this year was his fifth time to compete in the Bible Drill, and he plans to be committed all the way through his senior year.

"Because of the Bible Drill, I am stronger in the Word, and if I ever must defend my faith, I'll have the tools to do it," Stogner said.

Noah Lyle, who is in the 10th grade and a homeschooled student from Woodlawn Baptist Church, Baton Rouge echoed these sentiments.

"It's been challenging to learn the Scripture. It's never

been about the competition or medals. I'll use these Bible verses for the rest of my life," Lyle said.

Ben LaRavia, a 10-year-old fourth grader from the First Baptist Church in Kilbourne, participated in the children's Bible Drill and bubbled with enthusiasm when asked to share his thoughts.

"I'm excited to be learning God's Word. I'm inspired by it. My family always worships God, and I always want to follow the Word of Jesus," LaRavia said.

His mother, Amy LaRavia, said she is thrilled her son will be getting a firm foundation in the Word of God. "Ben is my little preacher," she said with a big grin on her face.

About 180 students competed in the State Tournament for Youth and High School Bible Drill & Speakers' Tournament. Daniel Cooper, from FBC Covington, won first place in the 10th grade Speakers' Tournament. Cooper, who chose as his topic, "Too Busy to Serve the Lord," will represent Louisiana Baptists at the National Youth Speakers' Tournament.

Bible Drill coach Jane Copp, from FBC Covington, believes the tournament prepares the students for life.

"Preparing for the speakers' tournament is a tough process from beginning to the end, but so worthwhile. At the end, they have grown so much spiritually," Copp, with tears glistening in her eyes, said.

BIBLE DRILL & SPEAKER TOURNAMENT WINNERS

Winners for the Youth Bible Drill include (participants competed in groups of 12 or fewer):

7th Grade (2 groups)

1st Place: Leah Amie, Woodlawn, Baton Rouge; 2nd Place: Abigail Manning, FBC, Lafayette;
1st Place: Laynie Atwood, Kingsville, Pineville; 2nd Place: Chase Haag, Kingsville, Pineville.

8th Grade (3 groups)

1st Place: Mary Copeland, FBC, Gonzales; 2nd Place: Caitlyn Beebe, Woodlawn, Baton Rouge; 1st Place: Thomas Garbarino, FBC, Lafayette; 2nd Place: Carter Manning, Church Acadiana, Youngsville;
1st Place: Emily Nevels, FBC, Oak Grove; 2nd Place: Haven Norman, FBC, Kilbourne.

9th Grade (2 groups)

1st Place: Ellis Hathaway, FBC, Covington; 2nd Place (tie): Emeline Soileau, FBC, Covington; 2nd Place (tie): Rebecca Stennett, FBC, Covington
1st Place: Hannah James, Fellowship, Greenwell Springs; 2nd Place: Josh Pugh, Ascension, Gonzales.



Hannah James and Youth Ministry Strategist Steve Maltempi

A "Drill-Off" was held, composed of the top 9 participants to determine the overall winner -- which added Logan Womack, East Winnfield, Winnfield; Carter Byrd, FBC, Amite; Lydia Bearry, Woodlawn, Baton Rouge; and Sam Stogner, FBC, Covington to the five 1st and 2nd Place winners in the two groups. The champion was Hannah James, Fellowship, Greenwell Springs, and she will represent



Joshua Singletary and Youth Ministry Strategist Steve Maltempi

Louisiana Baptists at the National Youth Bible Drill Tournament.

10th Grade

Overall Champion: Jinny Schober, Heritage, Shreveport.

11th Grade

The three winners with the highest overall scores earned scholarships to Louisiana College:



Louisiana College Professor Philip Caples with a scholarship winner.

1st Place: Dylan Hill, Kilbourne (\$4,500 annual LC scholarship); 2nd Place: Hannah Copeland, FBC, Gonzales (\$3,500 annual scholarship); 3rd Place: Hannah Philips, Fellowship, Greenwell Springs (\$2,500 annual LC scholarship).

12th Grade

Overall Champion (state division): Hunter Thomas, Dunn, Dunn;
Overall Champion (national division): Joshua



Daniel Cooper

Wilhelm, FBC, Gonzales.

Youth Speakers' Tournament

The winners of the Youth Speakers' Tournament include:
10th Grade: Daniel Cooper, FBC, Covington;
11th Grade: Cathryn Stennett, FBC, Covington (awarded \$4,500 annual LC scholarship);
12th Grade: Joshua Singletary, FBC, Covington.



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WANTED

The Louisiana Baptist Historical Association is seeking former members and anyone else, who has an interest in the history of their church or Louisiana Baptist institutions, about restarting the organization. Those interested should send their contact information to Perry Lassiter at perrylassiter@yahoo.com, plassiter@suddenlink.net or by calling/texting 318.243.4772 to set up a meeting.

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Emmanuel Baptist Church in Ruston, LA is seeking a Senior Pastor. Please send résumés to Pastor Search Committee, c/o Emmanuel Baptist Church, 1200 Farmerville Hwy, Ruston LA 71270 or pastorsearch@ebcruston.org.

FBC PINEVILLE SEEKING A MINISTER OF MUSIC

First Baptist Church Pineville, LA, seeks a Minister of Music with a passion for leading congregational worship, overseeing an age-graded choir ministry, and growing a comprehensive music ministry.

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Interested candidates can email résumés to justinc@fbclakeprovidence.com

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FBC, Henderson, Texas is seeking to fill the position of Minister to Children and Young Families. This is a fulltime staff position with full benefits. FBC is located in the heart of East Texas and the average morning worship attendance is 600 plus.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Do you have a Revival, Homecoming, a new pastor, a community outreach or a concert? The Baptist Message would love to share your church news with the rest of the state. It is very easy to do, just send in your information (who, what, where and when) to philip@baptistsmessage.com or call 318.449.4345. To get your event in the paper, please submit your information three weeks prior to the event.

ON THE MOVE

■ **Jonathan Weldon** is the new student/education minister at Ellerbe Baptist Church, Shreveport.

■ **Austin Bedwell** is the new youth pastor at Emmanuel Baptist Church, Shreveport.

■ **Doug Graham** is the interim pastor at New Bethel Baptist Church, Bossier City.

■ **Terry Mims** has resigned as pastor at Emmanuel Baptist Church, Monroe.

■ **Ellis Auttonberry, Velton Frost, and Dave Rodgers** were given the title of Deacon Emeritus on April 29 at Ridge Avenue Baptist Church in West Monroe. The three were honored with a fellowship after the evening service.

■ **Lauren Brown** is the new Children's Minister at Brookwood Baptist Church, Shreveport. She was previously at Woodridge Baptist Church, Shreveport.

■ **Alex Davis** resigned as youth pastor at Summer Grove Baptist Church, Shreveport.

■ **Dwayne McDow** resigned as executive Pastor/Business Administrator at Summer Grove Baptist Church, Shreveport.

■ **Bryan Ulmer** is the new youth minister at Cheniere Baptist Church, West Monroe.

■ **Bill Ashburn** has resigned as discipleship pastor at North Monroe Baptist Church, Monroe.

HOMECOMING

■ Longview Baptist Church, Deville: **95th annual Homecoming**, May 27, 10:30 p.m. Speaker: Tommy Free. Pastor: Robby Poole.

REVIVAL

■ Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville: **Campmeeting**, May 20, 6 p.m. Speaker: **Ricky Belgard**. Music: **Jamey Alwell and Catahoula Drive**. Pastor: Philip Robertson.

■ Day Spring Ministry, Ruston: **Revival**, May 20-23, Sunday 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday thru Wednesday, 7 p.m. Evangelist: **Joe Aulds**. Music: **Danny Smith**. Pastor: J.E. Brown.

■ Alpine Baptist Church, Pineville: **Revival**, May 20-23, Sunday 10:30 a.m. & 5:30 p.m. Monday- Wednesday, 6 p.m. Speaker: **Preston Nix**, Professor of Evangelism & Evangelistic Preaching at NOBTS. Alpine FBC is located at 7215 Shreveport Hwy., Pineville, LA. Pastor: Lucas LaCour.

■ Patton Baptist Church, Jonesville: **Revival**, May 20-23, Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell, chalk artist**. Pastor: Juan McLure.

■ Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, Columbia: **Revival**, May 20-25, Evangelist **Lyndon Longoria**. Special Music: **Kerry Longoria**. Pastor: Robert Cook.

■ Bellwood Baptist Church, Provencal: **Revival**, May 24-27. Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell, chalk artist**. Pastor: Roger Matkin.

■ Bayou Macon Baptist Church, Gilbert: **Revival**, May 27-30. Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell, chalk artist**. Pastor: Jerry Goodman.

■ Trinity Baptist Church, Franklinton: **Family Crusade**, May 27-30. Evangelist: **2TALK42 Ministries**. Pastor: Joe Baugh.

■ Grand Ecore Baptist Church, Natchitoches: **Revival**, May 27 - June 1. Evangelist: **Sam Moore**. Pastor: Wayne Hicks.



LAGNIAPPE

■ **Terry Mims** is now available for pulpit supply and interim. To contact him, call 318.801.9140.

■ First Baptist Church, Lafayette: **Jubilate Deo Unity Concert**, May 18, 7:30 p.m. in the worship center. Chorale Acadienne, The Acadiana Symphony Orchestra, and area church choirs combine to present Dan Forrest's Jubilate Deo. This is a ticketed event. Tickets are available through the Chorale Acadienne website at <https://choraleacadienne.com/tickets>. Pastor: Steve Horn.

■ First Baptist Church, New Orleans:

Matthew Beisel was commissioned at Sharon Baptist Church on Sunday, May 6. Glen Waggon, acting interim, and Randy Osborn of the Greater Baton Rouge Baptist Association, conducted the Commissioning Service which was well-attended, including Chaplains of the United States Army Reserve. Beisel is also a Chaplain in the Reserve. He comes to Sharon from Florida and is a graduate of the New Orleans Baptist Seminary. Matthew and his wife Haleigh have two children, Edith and Elliot.

Men's Golf Tournament, May 19, 1-5:30 p.m. at the Joe Bartholomew Golf Course. Lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. Cost: \$45. For more information or to sign up, contact Taylor.Rutland@fbno.org.

■ Calvary Baptist Church, Merryville: **Buddy Liles in concert**, May 19, 6:30 p.m. Liles sang with Florida Boys Quartet from 1972 till the late 90's. He has been active in southern gospel music for 52 years. Pastor: Jim Miers.

■ First Baptist Church, Jonesboro: **Miles Pike in concert**, May 20, 5:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Miles shares the Gospel through song and word with gripping vocals, candid testimonies, comical anecdotes, and a worshipful approach. Admission is free, but a love offering will be taken. First Baptist located at 500 S. Cooper Avenue in Jonesboro. Pastor: Brian McAllister.

■ First Baptist Church, Haughton: **Chil-**

dren's Night of Celebration, May 20, 6 p.m. We are having a night of celebration as children showcase Bible skills learned and choirs present, "All Creation Sings!" end of year program in the sanctuary. Pastor: Gevan Spinney.

■ Cross Branded Cowboy Church, Pineville: **Southern Revelation Gospel group in concert**, May 21, 6 p.m. For more information or to book Southern Revelation, call Mark Goodman at 318.450.0768. Pastor: Herb Dickerson.

■ Bayou Vista Baptist Church, Morgan City: **Children's choir musical -- Nailed It**, May 27, 6 p.m. Pastor: Steven Kelly.

■ First Baptist Church, Bogalusa: **Christian Fine Arts Academy**, weekly in June, 1-4 p.m. Registration is open for the summer. Music lessons for piano, voice and flute begin June 4. To register or to get more information, call the church office at 985.732.3756. Pastor: Greg Whaley.

Wascom announces he is retiring as Northshore DOM

COVINGTON – Lonnie Wascom, director of missions for Northshore Baptist Association since its formation in 2011, has announced his resignation from the position Oct. 1.

In a letter sent through his e-mail blast Thursday, May 10, Wascom said he has served in vocational ministry for 55 years, beginning with the role of "assistant music director" at Judson Baptist Church in Walker as a 15-year-old boy. Therefore, Wascom said the decision was one he did not take lightly.

"But as each of you know, God is faithful," Wascom wrote in the letter. "He demonstrated that faithfulness by giving Linda and me the clarity we needed to reach this decision. His peace accompanied that decision. His

word is true: 'You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.' Isaiah 26:3"

Associational Moderator Jay Johnston said in a statement attached to the letter that a search committee has been named to begin the search for a new director of missions.

"We will share more information with the churches and the process in the days ahead," wrote Johnston, associate pastor at First Baptist, Covington. "Please join me in celebrating this decision of Bro. Lonnie's pending retirement. I would also ask that you pray for Bro. Lonnie and (his wife) Linda as they begin this season of transition. We will be honoring Bro. Lonnie during the annual meeting in October."

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.

oyfz, wldj gjfkm yu gm nyu: qyf wj pn oxulcpkh, luz




nyfj djajz: qyf yqccpgjn wj qloojcw pucy cwj qpfj, luz

yqc pucy cwj slcjf.

glccwjs njdjucjju:qpqcjju

Clues:
F = R; Y = O

Answer to May 3 Scripture Crypto:
the song of solomon seven:thirteen

 <p>J.D. GREEAR The Summit Church Raleigh, North Carolina</p>		 <p>KEN HEMPHILL Second Baptist Church Springfield, Missouri</p>
<p>“The problem is that so much of what is given to the CP stays in the states. I don’t think there’s any question that some of the institutions must cease to function, at least at their current levels.”</p>	<p>View of State Conventions and Local Associations</p>	<p>“We must restore trust and vitality in all our partnerships. Southern Baptists have worked effectively and efficiently through all of our churches, associations, state conventions and the national convention.”</p>
<p>“Over time it appears some parts of the SBC shifted into ‘bad parachurch’ mode. We, the Summit Church, don’t just recruit people to work for the IMB. These church plants around the world are ours.”</p>	<p>Cooperative Versus Societal Missions</p>	<p>“We must renew our commitment to a cooperative mission strategy. We are in danger of slipping toward a neo-societal method in which individual churches establish their own missional strategies.”</p>
<p>“Since when did we become Southern Baptists? I get that. It’s not something we wear on our sleeve. There are obviously parts of the SBC we’re not excited about and don’t really represent who we are.”</p>	<p>Southern Baptist Identity Approval</p>	<p>“I am a Southern Baptist by birth and by conviction. Dad was a Southern Baptist Pastor. I have been engaged in SBC life for my entire ministry. I agree with our theology, ecclesiology and missiology.”</p>
<p>“Calvinism is not an issue to me until it becomes one to you. When it becomes one to you, it becomes one to me. I’ll probably take whatever side you are not.” (TGC’s Jared Wilson calls JD a Calvinist.)</p>	<p>Transparent Salvation Doctrine Position</p>	<p>“Did God create some persons to spend eternity in heaven and others in hell with no choice?” Ken Hemphill says no. As a signer of the Traditional Statement, Ken clearly believes anyone can be saved.</p>
<p>“Denominations, which are really just glorified networks, are tools for the Kingdom. And so, a tool, if it’s dull, you sharpen it. If it no longer helps you to sharpen it, you throw it away.”</p>	<p>Cooperative Kingdom Participation Convictions</p>	<p>“Kingdom thinking requires shared vision and convictions. I am committed to our congregational polity because it defines how we cooperate and ensures that we have accountability at every level.”</p>
<p>“I am grateful for both the Acts 29 Network and the SBC, both tools with their own set of problems.” “Many Pastors question whether giving money to the Convention is the best use of their resources.”</p>	<p>Internal Versus External Cooperation</p>	<p>“My denominational service through NAMB, LifeWay, Southwestern Seminary, and the Executive Committee, has given me an appreciation for the total work of the SBC and a great hope for our future.”</p>
<p>In 2016 and 2017, the most recent two years for which records are available, J.D. Greear’s church donated 2.4% of their undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program of the SBC.</p>	<p>Record of Cooperative Program Support</p>	<p>In 2016 and 2017, the most recent two years for which records are available, Ken Hemphill’s church donated 12.2% of their undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program of the SBC.</p>
<p>“I still choose not to drink, to be on the safe side.” “I feel free in Christ to drink alcohol. Being free to do something and being wise to do it are not the same.” “Godly people can choose either side.”</p>	<p>Convictions Regarding Beverage Alcohol</p>	<p>“My wife and I practice total abstinence. My issue has always been my personal testimony and possible impact on a weaker brother. I agree with the many resolutions the SBC has passed concerning alcohol.”</p>