



THE BAPTIST MESSAGE

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Fathers & sons to highlight speakers at ECON 2019

By Brian Blackwell
Message Staff Writer

COVINGTON – Fred Luter and David Hankins will share the stage with their sons, Chip and Eric, respectively, in a rare father-son preaching engagement during the 2019 Louisiana Baptist Evangelism Conference, Jan. 28-29, at the First Baptist Church, Covington.

Fred Luter, pastor of Frank-

lin Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans, and Chip Luter, pastor of Idlewild Baptist Church's Sulphur Springs campus, Tampa, Florida, will preach during the opening session.

David Hankins, executive director for Louisiana Baptists, and his son Eric Hankins, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Fairhope, Alabama, will be on the program for the morning session of the second day of the meetings.

MAKING A CHANGE

Chip served under his dad's leadership at Franklin Avenue Baptist for five years; however, even then they rarely preached together at the same event.

"To be able to have Chip at home and be a part of our state Evangelism Conference alongside me means a lot," said Fred Luter. "The excitement of having my son preaching on the same day togeth-

er, for only the third time, is hard for me to put into words."

Throughout his ministry, Fred Luter has emphasized the importance of men taking an active role in leadership of their families—something he did not experience as a child. When he married, he promised his wife Elizabeth he would "break the cycle" and intentionally disciple their children,

See ECON, page 12

YOUTH EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

'Change' is theme & reality for YEC '18



Kirbi Cochran photo

By Brian Blackwell & Kirbi Cochran
Message Staff Writer

ALEXANDRIA – Hundreds of students embraced a call to "change the world for Christ" during the 2018 Youth Evangelism Conference, coinciding with a change in venue for the annual event as it returned to the confines of its traditional home at the Rapides Parish Coliseum in Alexandria.

Extensive renovations to the coliseum had forced a move to south Louisiana for the past four years.

"Being back at the Coliseum is like coming home; it's a good fit," said Keith Manuel, evangelism and church growth director for Louisiana Baptists. "We've been blessed to have a great response to YEC at every location, however, being in central Louisiana allows us to make the most effective use of our resources and strategically reach more students across the state for Christ.

"The coliseum staff and upgrades made this a welcome and accommodating environment to freely share the Word of God and respond to spiritual needs," he added.

See YEC, page 6

More than 6,000 students and adult chaperones packed the Rapides Parish Coliseum in Alexandria for the 2018 Youth Evangelism Celebration Nov. 18-19. Extensive renovations to the coliseum had forced a move to south Louisiana for the past four years.

Death leads to life for Gilbert woman

By Brian Blackwell
Message Staff Writer

GILBERT – Sharon Ferrington's heart went cold after her boyfriend passed away in February, but the

Christ-like legacy he left behind combined with a profound question by her sister, Susan Hill, made Ferrington consider her eternal future.

"She asked me, 'If you

died today, would you go to Heaven?' and I told her, 'I'm not sure because I'm not saved,'" Ferrington recalls of the September

See GILBERT, page 14

LBC Executive Director Search Committee meets, elects chairman



Waylon Bailey, pastor of First Baptist Church in Covington and president of the Louisiana Baptist Executive Committee, was elected chairman of the search committee seeking a new executive director for the LBC.

ALEXANDRIA (LBM) – The Louisiana Baptist Convention’s 15-member Executive Director Search Committee held its first meeting Nov. 27, focusing on prayer but also completing the first actions of official business, according to a press release from the committee.

Members elected Waylon Bailey, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Covington, as chair, and began developing a profile of the type of candidate they are seeking to lead Louisiana Baptists.

ana Baptists.

Bailey, who also is president of the LBC Executive Board, told the *Baptist Message* the committee understands the near “impossibility” of pleasing everyone.

But he said, “We want to do our very best for the future of our state. Our state needs Louisiana Baptists in order to be its very best.”

The committee will nominate a successor to LBC Executive Director David Hankins, who announced Nov. 12 his plans

to retire June 30, 2019. The LBC Executive Board will vote on the nominee, as stated in the state convention’s Articles of Incorporation.

Bailey said the process for Southern Baptists to recommend candidates, or, for interested individuals to apply, is a simple one. Names and resumes should be emailed to Bailey at lbcexedirsearch@gmail.com or sent via postal mail to “Dr. Waylon Bailey, C/O First Baptist Church, 16333 Hwy. 1085, Covington, LA 70433.”

Materials must be sent electronically or postmarked no later than January 15.

“We will pray fervently and we will seek diligently the person God would bring before us,” Bailey said in his closing comments to the *Baptist Message*. “Please pray for God’s guidance and for our discernment.”

LBC Executive Board Bylaws state the Executive Director Search Committee shall be composed of the Executive Committee and the Nominating Committee of the Board. Bailey is joined by:

Shannon Brown, member, Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans

Chris Craig, pastor, First Baptist Church, Ruston

Brad Delaughter, pastor, Satsuma Baptist Church, Livingston

David Goza, pastor, Jefferson Baptist Church, Baton Rouge

George Guillory, pastor, Glen Oaks Baptist Church, Baton Rouge

Glen Harrigill, pastor, Riverside Baptist Church, Vidalia

Michael Hawley, member and former pastor, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Ruston

Jason Hoychick, pastor, Westview Baptist Church, DeRidder

Chuck Lowman, member, Florida Boulevard Baptist Church, Baton Rouge

Carlos Meza, pastor, Iglesia Bautista del Calvario, Shreveport

Thumper Miller, pastor, First Baptist Church, Mansfield

Dwayne Monk, pastor, New Hope Baptist Church, Choudrant

Clark Stewart, pastor, New Zion Baptist Church, Covington

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Challenge given, challenge met; Pastor shaves head for food roundup



May your heart and home be filled
with the joy and peace
of Christ's love this Christmas!

Louisiana Baptist
CHILDREN'S HOME
& Family Ministries

By Brian Blackwell
Message Staff Writer

METAIRIE – Memorial Baptist Church and School recently went “all in” for the Louisiana Baptist Children’s Home Fall Food Roundup and collected more than 30,000 items that will be used to help feed and provide supplies for residents at the ministry’s campus in Monroe throughout the upcoming year.

The effort was embraced by the students, parents and church members as they worked together to surpass their all-time record.

One class at the 335-student school collected 5,000 items and was rewarded with a trip to a local restaurant. The congregation, which averages 125 in Sunday morning worship, also gave \$2,200 and set up a Facebook donation page that raised an additional \$1,000.

Pastor Dan Pritchett even



Submitted photo

Principal Jerry Riggs, Pastor Dan Pritchett and Children’s Home CEO and President Perry Hancock stand behind some of the 30,000 items collected for the Children’s Home Fall Food Roundup.

stepped up to provide extra motivation for the drive by offering to shave his head if more than 30,000 non-perishable groceries, paper products, and cleaning supplies were contributed to the drive.

“In previous years, the school principal and I competed with one another, with the person coming in second sleeping on our church roof,” Pritchett said. “We finally had gotten at a place where we needed something fresh and wanted the Lord to blow this up. Then I walked in one day and one of the parents asked, ‘What if Pastor Dan shaved his head?’ My wife wasn’t really crazy about me agreeing to shave my head, but she decided it was okay because of how important it is to our church and school.”

Participation has increased greatly since five years ago when 20,000 items were collected. Now, Pritchett believes his congregation and school are ready to step to the challenge he is making to any church or association in the state.

“Memorial will take on any church or association and we will compete with them for who can give the most items,” Pritchett said. “If we win, then their pastor or director of missions comes down here and we throw a big party for whoever sleeps on our roof. Then if they win, we will drive to their church or association and we will throw a party at their place and sleep on their roof.”

“We are at a place where we can go bigger with this,” he continued. “Friendly completion for the glory of God can make a big difference in the Kingdom and for the Fall Food Roundup.”

The annual Fall Food Roundup began in the early 1900s.

Children’s Home cottage dads and staff drive across the state over a four-week period in the fall to collect the items at church collection points. The cooperative effort provides non-perishable food needs for an entire year. Money received from the Fall Food Roundup is used to purchase milk, bread, eggs, meat and fresh produce needed throughout the year.

“Pastor Dan Pritchett and principal Jerry Riggs have created an incredible culture of compassion at Memorial Baptist Church and School,” said Perry Hancock, president and CEO of the Children’s Home. “I was overwhelmed when I entered the sanctuary and saw over 30,000 items that church members and students had collected for the Fall Food Roundup. I cannot thank them all enough for meeting the needs of our children at LBCH.”

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50th anniversary of Apollo 8 Christmas at the moon

By Will Hall
Message Editor

ALEXANDRIA (LBM) – Violence in the streets, racial tensions and a clash in social values mark a divide in the nation in 2018, but such turmoil also framed 1968, when the world was rocked by upheavals on a number of levels.

Like now, there was a sense of “heaviness” across the country and the globe.

But as the year drew to a close, NASA sent three men into space – the first time humans had broken free of the earth’s gravitational pull – mesmerizing the world as their space capsule circled the moon ten times as a prelude mission to a lunar landing by Apollo 9 the next year.

The crew of Air Force Colonel Frank Borman (mission commander), Navy Captain James A.

Lovell Jr. (command module pilot) and Air Force Major William A. Anders (lunar module pilot) made six live broadcasts from takeoff Dec. 21 until splashdown Dec. 27. But perhaps the most memorable of these came on Christmas Eve, during the ninth orbit of the mission.

Borman began the morning with some observations about the moon’s “vast loneliness,” calling it “awe-inspiring.”

Then toward the end of the broadcast, the three astronauts shared another lasting impression with the world -- “our feeling of closeness to the Creator of all things,” Borman would later say in his autobiography, “Countdown.”

Lovell held a piece of fireproof paper and a light, while Anders told



This NASA file photo, Earthrise, was taken by Apollo 8 Lunar Module Pilot William Anders during the first manned mission to the moon as it entered orbit on Dec. 24, 1968. Earthrise became one of the most iconic photographs from all of the Apollo missions and one of the most reproduced space photographs of all time. That evening, Houston time, the astronauts - Commander Frank Borman, Command Module Pilot Jim Lovell, and Anders - held a live broadcast from lunar orbit, in which they showed pictures of the Earth and moon as seen from their spacecraft. Said Lovell, “The vast loneliness is awe-inspiring and it makes you realize just what you have back there on Earth.” They ended the broadcast with the crew taking turns reading from the book of Genesis.

NASA file photo

Sam Moore, Evangelistic Ministries

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See APOLLO 8, page 5

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Apollo 8 from page 4

the world, "We are approaching lunar sunrise. For the people back on the earth, the crew of Apollo 8 has a message that we would like to send to you."

With the onboard television camera focused on the moon, Anders began reading:

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness." (Genesis 1:1-4)

Lovell continued sharing the passage, saying:

"And God called the

light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day." (Genesis 1:5-8)

Then Borman brought the time of reflection to a close:

"And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and

the gathering together of the waters called the Seas: and God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1:9-10)

Borman also closed the broadcast, wishing everyone "Merry Christmas" and saying, "God bless all of you, all of you on the good earth."

Neil Armstrong's statement, "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," during his historic walk on the moon the next year, might be best remembered among phrases uttered during the Apollo moon missions.

But 50 years ago, the watching world, steeped in crises and chaos, heard a profound message from the orbit of the moon, a message of everlasting hope found in "the Creator of all things."



NASA file photo

The crew of Apollo 8 -- astronauts Jim Lovell, Bill Anders, and Frank Borman -- pose in their spacesuits in front of the Kennedy Space Center simulator in this NASA file shot. Apollo 8, the first manned mission to the moon, entered lunar orbit on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, 1968. That evening, Houston time, the astronauts held a live broadcast while orbiting the moon, showed pictures of the Earth and moon as seen from their spacecraft. They ended the broadcast by reading from the book of Genesis.

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YEC from page one

FOR CHRIST'S SAKE

Evangelist Drew Worsham headlined the gathering, Nov. 18-19, challenging Louisiana Baptist teens in multiple sessions to share what Christ has done in their lives, and encouraging them to change the world for the Lord.

"He is not done with you, yet, and He has an assignment and purpose for you," Worsham said in one of his messages to more than 6,000 students and adult chaperones. "And that assignment is to make Him known."

The theme of "Change" was based on Romans 12:1-2.

The two-day event also included award-winning Christian band Rush of Fools, event master of ceremonies Joseph Sojourner, event disc jockey DJ Vow, a demonstration by the Real Encounter BMX

team, testimonies from students and concerts by former American Idol contestant Colton Dixon and the all-sibling band Bonray.

Throughout the conference, students and adult leaders were asked to intentionally reach out to classmates, family members, co-workers and others with the message of the Gospel. Moreover, during the Monday afternoon session, Worsham led a training session on how to use the EvangeCard tract to share the Gospel. Students also were reminded to share Christ on social media, and asked to post testimonies on Instagram and Facebook using #YEC18.

This is the third of a multi-year rotation to equip students with various tools to share Christ. Those who began the training as seventh graders during the 2016 YEC will



Brian Blackwell photo

A student raises her hands during a time of worship at the 2018 Youth Evangelism Celebration. The two-day event challenged students to share Christ with their classmates and change their world for the Lord.

be familiar with seven different evangelistic tools by the time they are seniors.

SHARING HIS STORY

Worsham told the students that sharing the Gospel is essentially telling a story of how their lives have been changed because of Jesus.

"God has called us to leverage the influence of relationships He has put in our lives to tell the story of Jesus," Worsham said.

"Every person that God puts in your intersection is there for a reason. God sits you next to that person in that classroom, on that bus, in that coffee shop, just so the Gospel in you would intersect with them and you might get an opportunity to love, encourage them and push them. And when you have eyes to see people as ministry, you will start to see God moving in so many different areas. All of a sudden you show up at a restaur-

rant or hang out and it's like the Holy Spirit shows up and there's a Gospel moment because you had eyes to see."

Worsham said a Gospel story has three parts – how one lived before Jesus, why a person chose to follow Jesus and what changes have taken place since accepting Christ as Lord.

"God has given us an assignment, a mission, and He sent us into the world to be agents of hope," Worsham said. "Our God's not dead, He's alive. We worship a living God."

He also warned students not to just experience God at YEC, and then neglect him when they return home. He urged them instead to focus daily on Christ and to influence others for Him.

Citing Acts 1, Worsham noted that prior to ascending into Heaven, Christ promised His followers they would receive power through the Holy Spirit.

"You and I have all this potential to change the world," he said. "But

See YEC, page 13

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- **Is a loved one already in a nursing home or receiving care? Find out why it may not be too late to save their estate!**

LBF reports 3rd quarter results, new officers, cybersecurity upgrades

By Jerry Love

Director of Planned Giving

ALEXANDRIA (LBM) – Reports of a strong third quarter, the election of new officers, the addition of a new manager for the domestic equity pool and beefed up security against potential cyberattacks highlighted the Oct. 23 agenda of the final 2018 meeting of the Louisiana Baptist Foundation Board of Trustees.

THIRD QUARTER RESULTS

Lee Morris with Graystone Consulting reviewed the Foundation's portfolio for the quarter, presenting a positive view of asset performance for the period. The increase in the portfolio was led by growth-oriented companies, primarily in the technology sector; and, fixed income investments also performed in line with expectations, he said. Alternative allocations, financial instruments other than standard stocks and bonds, also are adding value at both the performance and diversification/risk control levels.

LBF portfolio year-to-date performances as of Sept. 30:

-- Short Term Fund:

1.30% actual annualized yield;

-- Group Investment Fund, comprised of various market sectors: 2.87% total return;

-- Diversified Income Fund, conservative income-oriented fund: 0.16% total return.

All funds are generating returns that are in line with their respective benchmarks and are adhering to the investment policies established by the LBF Board, Morris said. The net assets under management stand at \$161,300,837 as of the end of September.

Although the fourth quarter has started with a correction in the markets, Morris said his firm's Global Investment Committee continues to prefer equity securities over fixed income. The GIC feels there are opportunities for growth for equities in Japan, Europe, U.S. and emerging markets, in that order. Economic news for the United States is positive and is expected to be so for the near future, he told trustees.

The forecast return for fixed income portfolios is coupon or less in returns, Morris said, noting that the GIC anticipates the Federal Reserve may raise rates 3-4 times in the

next 12 months, and projects the ten-year yield to move up to 3.25 percent by year's end.

Morris noted that the LBF's preferred portfolio is positioned to protect against the move up in rates by having a substantial percentage (60 percent, plus) invested in floating rate preferred stocks.

Trustees approved Morris' recommendation that Alkeon Capital Management be added as a new manager in the Domestic Equity pool.

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

In other business, trustees approved an operating budget for 2019 of \$887,085; and, approved

adding one million dollars in cybersecurity insurance for the LBF to help mitigate any negative impact of cyberattacks or data compromise on the LBF computer systems.

The Board also approved the hiring of U.S. Computers to update and rewrite the existing accounting system on a web based platform as a means to provide longevity to the current system and offer potential for expanded services to clients in the future.

Two Trustees, Stewart Holloway and Steve Crosby, completed 6 years of service to the Foundation and finished their terms with the Board. Executive Director Wayne

Taylor expressed his appreciation for the commitment, leadership and time they both devoted to LBF. Taylor noted two new trustees – James Hampton of Belcher Baptist Church, Belcher and Chad Hardbarger of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Shreveport – were approved at the annual meeting on Nov. 13.

Trustees elected Gray Kitchens, First Baptist Church, Bossier City, as president; John Carroll, First Baptist Church, Columbia, as vice president; and, Polly Brinker, Kingsville Baptist Church, Ball, to an additional term as secretary.

The next LBF trustee meeting is scheduled for Feb. 5, 2019.


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Submitted photo

Jacob Sooter, who grew up in Pineville, has experienced a successful career in the Christian music industry. He and his wife Meredith Andrews each have won multiple Dove Awards. They performed a special Christmas concert Dec. 8 at Sooter's home church, First Baptist Church in Pineville.

Pineville native wins Dove award at Nashville Christian music show

By John Marcase
Special to the Message

PINEVILLE (LBM) – Pineville native Jacob Sooter was doing what he does best and what he does for a living – writing Christian music – when one of his co-writers that morning in Nashville asked if he was going to the Dove Awards later that night.

Sooter knew he had been nominated for Worship Song of the Year with “Spirit of the Living God.” It is a song he co-wrote with Mia Fieldes and which his wife, Meredith Andrews, was the lead singer as part of the Vertical Worship project.

What Sooter did not know was he also received a nomination for Children’s Music Album of the Year, “Bright Ones.”

“When he asked if I was going to the Dove

Awards, that’s when I found out,” Sooter told the *Baptist Message*.

He went and “Bright Ones” won.

“It was a real treat and honor. The best thing is I tied Meredith now that I have two Doves,” he joked.

PINEVILLE ROOTS

A dry and sharp sense of humor has been part of Sooter’s life since birth.

He grew up in Pineville, the oldest of two children to Alexandria attorney Vic Sooter and his wife, Molly, who teaches piano in Central Louisiana and who has performed with the Rapides Symphony Orchestra.

So, music has been part of Sooter’s life from the beginning, too.

Moreover, he and his sister, Katelyn Parks, had no choice but to learn piano at an early age.

After graduating from Pineville High School, Jacob Sooter attended Millsaps College in Jackson, Miss.

While in college, he also led contemporary worship services at the First Baptist Church in Jackson.

He received his break

when he toured with Jeremy Camp in 2007-08, playing keyboards for the Contemporary Christian Artist who has earned 32 number one hits.

“I met Meredith at a Jeremy show,” said Sooter. “She was on staff at Harvest Bible Chapel in Chicago. By the end of 2008, I was married and on staff at Harvest Bible Chapel.”

Sooter quickly discovered he did not want to grow and raise a family as a touring artist.

“There are guys that are great at living on a tour bus and being a dad and managing it,” he said. “I’m not one of those guys. When I was single and with 11 other guys on the tour bus, it was an incredible, once-in-a-lifetime experience.

“When you are married and have kids, it’s totally different. I had fun, but then I got married, and next I had kids, and I didn’t like it” [my former bus-tour life].

NASHVILLE TRANSPLANT

In 2011, Sooter won his first Dove Award, along

See AWARDS, page 10

*For unto us
a Child is born,
unto us a Son
is given...*
Isaiah 9:6

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Mike Johnson to lead congressional conservatives

BOSSIER CITY (LBM) — U.S. Rep. Mike Johnson, R-La., has been elected chairman of the influential Republican Study Committee.

Johnson, a member of the First Baptist Church in Bossier City, will assume his post while beginning only his second term as a congressman.

With 150 members, the RSC is largest caucus of conservatives in the Congress, constituting more than a third of the 435 U.S. representatives.

Former RSC chairmen include Vice President Mike Pence, who served in the position when he was a congressman from Indiana, and U.S. Rep. Steve Scalise, of Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, who has since been elected Republican whip, the number two GOP leadership spot in the House.

After his election, Johnson released a statement, vowing to “continue to fight” for core values while helping to shape “the future of the conservative movement.”

“As we become the minority party in the next term, we have a vital responsibility to present practical ideas and effective policy initiatives,” Johnson said, “and to unify as a conference to vigorously defend and advance our core conservative principles.”

SODOM AND GOMORRAH?

Archaeologists excavating the Bronze Age city of Tall el-Hammam reported in November at the annual meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Re-

search, their discovery of evidence of a “cosmic airburst event that obliterated civilization,” wiping out Middle Bronze Age cities and towns of the plains in Middle Ghor, north of the Dead Sea, about 3,700 years ago.

Some researchers identify Tall el-Hammam as the former Sodom.

Genesis 19 describes how God “rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah” destroying “all the plain ... and what grew on

the ground.”

Meanwhile, the scientific team, which includes experts from the Comet Research Group, an international society of comet impact scientists, and the Los Alamos National Laboratory, one of the largest science and technology institutions in the world, said evidence points to an instantaneous devastation of an area “approximately 500km²” that left only the “stone foundations” of mud-brick walls, and destroyed the soil with “a super-heated brine of Dead Sea” salts.

The researchers estimated 40,000 to 65,000 people were killed instantly by the catastrophe.

ADAM AND EVE OR DNA ‘BOTTLENECK’

Some media outlets announced evidence of the creation account, or at least the great flood, after a study published in Human Evolution found that mitochondrial diversity in almost all species points to a common starting point about as early as 100,000 years ago.

CULTURAL NEWS

In an effort to prove that mitochondrial DNA, found in organelles in each cell and which is distinct from the DNA in the nucleus of cells, is a reliable tool for identifying distinct lines within species or organisms, researchers Mark Stoeckle and David Thaler discovered that the 7.6 billion humans living on earth likely emerged from “a small population in which a sequence from one mother became the ancestor for all modern human mitochondrial sequences.”

Based on similar low genetic variation that they found among five million specimens of 100,000 animal species, they deduced that more than 90 percent of animal genetic lines emerged at the same time; and, they related the genetic bottlenecks in both humans and animals to “near-extinction events.”

Although they used specific language to suggest that a worldwide catastrophe caused a reboot of sorts for all humans from a single ancestor, in response to the firestorm about their findings, Stoeckle and Thaler have since told at least one media outlet, “Our study follows mainstream views of human evolution. We do not propose there was a single ‘Adam’ or ‘Eve.’ We do not propose any catastrophic events.”

Others have interpreted their research to claim that

the human species has to “revamp” itself in the evolutionary process, and that through some unknown mechanism, it occurs “in unison” with all animals.

Although the scientists reject the notion of an Adam and Eve creation, and presumably a Noah and Naamah reboot of creation, their work does provide some support for a number of points about creation that are made in Scripture.

For instance, their conclusions point to a sudden appearance of modern man and animals, which is consistent with both the

creation and flood accounts.

Likewise, they did not find any “in-between” species.

This would appear to frustrate Darwin’s theory of evolution which is founded in part on the premise of “intermediate gradations, whereas species were formerly connected.” On the other hand, this finding is entirely consistent with the language of the Genesis account of creation which uses language such as “after its kind” to describe the process for populating the earth.



Mike Johnson

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Awards from page 8

with Andrews, for collaborating with Paul Baloché on "How Great is the Love." The song tied with Chris Tomlin's "Our God" for Worship Song of the Year.

Three years later, Sooter and Andrews moved their family to Nashville.

Now he is a staff writer at Essential Music, which is a division of Provident Label Group. The label is home to artists such as Stephen Curtis Chapman, Third Day, Casting Crowns, Matt Maher, Tauren Wells and Vertical Worship.

Andrews continues to tour and is scheduled to release her first live solo worship album on Dec. 7. The next night, she will be in concert at the church in which Sooter grew up, First Baptist Pineville.

"It will be me and Mere and maybe one other instrumentalist," Sooter said. "It's really cool. It's always more nerve-wracking performing in front of family and friends than when it is before strangers."

"I haven't lost the wonder I had when I was 16 years old and used to sneak into the church sanctuary to play the grand piano. It'll be nice to be home."

It will also be a rare

chance to see Sooter perform. He rarely travels anymore, except when Andrews asks, or one-off appearances, such as a recent show with Jesus Culture and the K-Love Awards.

"I would rather stay at home, write and produce and stay with the kids," he said.

He and Andrews have three children, sons Maverick (8), Remy (5) and daughter Frankie (4). Needless to say, music is a major part of the children's lives.

"All the kids will do piano," said Sooter. "I didn't have a choice, and I'm thankful for that."

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Leesville First Baptist, Leesville, LA is seeking a full-time pastor. Please send résumés to: Roger Rolon, 399 Liberty Creek Road, Leesville, LA 71446 or First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1568, Leesville, LA 71496.

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First Baptist Church Pastor Search Committee,
203 E. Parker St.
Hamburg, AR 71646
or email to fbchbg.office@gmail.com.

For more information, you may call the church office at 870.853.5520.



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@baptistmessage.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

- **Louis Charrier** is the new pastor at New Life Church, Arnaudville.
- **Heath (wife Jennifer) Peloquin** is the new pastor at Summer Grove Baptist Church, Shreveport.
- **Jeremy (wife Vicki) Spurling** is the new pastor at Kingston Road Baptist Church, Shreveport.
- **Ryan (wife Lauren) McCoy** is the new youth pastor at First Baptist Church, Shreveport.
- **Micah Murrell** is the new pastor at Pleasant Hill Baptist, Pollock.
- **Paul Raiford** has resigned as the minister of music at Amite Baptist Church.
- **Michael Lachney** is the new media director at North Monroe Baptist Church, Monroe.
- **Kinsley Armstrong** resigned as children's director at Cheniere, West Monroe.
- **H.B. Fuller** is retiring after serving the bi-vocational and pastors in the Northwest Louisiana Baptist Association for the last 20 years.
- **Dana Howard** is retiring after 47 years of service as a ministry assistant at First Baptist Church Bossier.

LAGNIAPPE

- The Open Door Baptist Church in Lafayette, LA is seeking a **Wednesday night sitter for the infants Children's Ministry**. This is a paid position. For more information contact Holly Ward at 337.400.2508 or 337.422.4965.

- Iglesia Bautista Emmanuel, the Northeast Louisiana Baptist Association Hispanic Mission in Monroe **honored Pastor and Mrs. Elias Salas** with a dinner on November 20 for the couple's 50th wedding anniversary.
- Memorial Baptist Church, Metairie: **Live nativity**, December 13-16, 6-9 p.m. Pastor: Dan Pritchett.
- First Baptist Church, Lafayette: **Receive Our King featuring the singing Christmas Tree**, December 14, 7 p.m.; December 15, 3 p.m.; December 16, 3 p.m. and December 17, 7 p.m. Free tickets are available at www.FBCLAF.org/Christmas. Pastor: Steve Horn.
- First Baptist Church, Zachary: **Christmas concert featuring Selah and Geoffrey Andrews**, December 14, 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for general admission and may be purchased at www.fbcz.org/selah-ticket. Pastor: Paul Ballard.
- First Baptist Church, West Monroe: **A "Northeast Louisiana Christmas Celebration,"** December 15 and 16, 6 p.m. This free event will have 200 singers, musicians, and dancers celebrate all things Christmas. You'll experience the sights and sounds of all the holiday season. Pastor: Michael Wood.
- East Ridge Baptist Church, Lake Charles: **A Christmas Love Story**, December 15, 6:30 p.m. and December 16, 5:30 p.m. A choir and drama presentation will feature Zita, a homeless woman, who desires to come out on the right side of life but thinks it's too late. She discovers the true love behind the Christmas season. Pastor: Alan Weishampel.
- Tom Hebert Road Baptist Church, Lake Charles: **The Living Christmas Story**, December 14-15, 6 p.m. the outside of Tom Hebert Road Baptist Church becomes the city of Bethlehem. It is transformed into the Living Christmas Story, a walk-thru reenactment of the way life was 2,000 years ago on the night Jesus Christ was born. Not an ordinary Christmas play, the Living Christmas Story uses real people from the community who become the people of Bethlehem. Scenes come alive as

- you walk through and experience the wonder of Christmas with drama, live animals, and music. Pastor: Carl Whitley.
- Florida Boulevard Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Breakfast with Santa**, Dec. 15, 9-11 a.m. Pastor: Charles Lowman.
- Sardis Baptist Church: **Come Let Us Adore Cantata** presented by the joint choirs of First Baptist Church Winnsboro and Crowville, December 15, 6 p.m. Pastor: Jim Savage.
- First Baptist Church, Crowville: **Come Let Us Adore Cantata** presented by the joint choirs of First Baptist Church Winnsboro and Crowville, December 16, 11 a.m. Pastor: Wade Coker.
- Rocky Springs Baptist Church, Lisbon: **Christmas Choir Special**, December 16, 11 a.m. Dinner on the grounds will follow the choir special; **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**, December 24, 6 p.m. Pastor: Larry Sellers.
- First Baptist Church, Jonesboro: **"Peace Has Come", a musical presentation** of God's love by the First Baptist Church Choir under the direction of Trey Etheridge, December 16, 5:30 p.m. in the sanctuary located at 500 South Cooper Avenue, Jonesboro. A Church-wide fellowship will follow the musical in the Family Life Center. Pastor: Brian McAllister.
- Temple Baptist Church, Ruston: **"Prince of Heaven" Christmas Music Program**, December 16, 11 a.m. Pastor: Reggie Bridges.
- First Baptist Church, Zwolle: **Christmas Cantata**, December 16, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. The choir, led by Joe Jones, will present the Cantata. A Christmas Fellowship will follow the evening presentation in the Fellowship Hall. **Candlelight service and Lord's Supper**, December 23, 6 p.m. Pastor: Marty Williams.
- First Baptist Church, Pineville: **Jesus, Advent of the Messiah Christmas Musical**, December 16, 6 p.m. Pastor: Stewart Holloway.
- His Church, Pineville: **Christmas Concert with James and Kristen Opdenhoff**, De-

- cember 16, 6 p.m. There will be a fellowship following the concert. Pastor: Steve Speer.
- Alto Baptist Church, Alto: **Peace Has Come Christmas musical**, December 16, 10:30 a.m. Live Nativity presentation, 5 p.m. Worship leader, Jay Ellerman. The church is located at 2296 Highway 15, Alto. Pastor: Alan Miller.
- Waller Baptist Church, Bossier City: **South-ern Plainsmen Quartet in concert**, December 16, 6 p.m. Everyone is invited. Pastor: Gary Johnson.
- Calvary Baptist Church, Slidell: **Christmas Cantata**, December 16, 11 a.m. Pastor: Aaron McGuffee.
- First Baptist Church, Mandeville: **The Arrival as performed by the MFBC Adult Choir**, December 16, 6 p.m. Come celebrate the joy of His birth. Pastor: Jake Roudkovski.
- Bethel Baptist Church, Colfax: **'It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year' Christmas Musical**, December 16. Bring your friends and family for this special Christmas musical and your favorite dishes to share afterwards. **Children and Youth Program**, December 23, 6 p.m. **New Year's Eve Bash and Fireworks**, December 31, 6 p.m. in the gym. Bring goodies and finger foods to eat and games to play. Come enjoy this special fellowship time together. Pastor: Carl Gulde.
- Emmanuel Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Family Night at Christmas**, December 16, 6:30 p.m. Bring your family and friends, a song to sing and a snack to share. **The Lord's Supper**, December 24, 6 p.m. Pastor: Chad Hardbarger.
- Bayou Vista Baptist Church, Morgan City: **"All Year Long" Christmas musical presentation performed by the youth choir**, December 16, 11 a.m. Pastor: Steven Kelly.
- Family of Grace, Alexandria: **Christmas at Coughlin Saunders in Alexandria**, December 16, 10 a.m. Pastor: Brad Webb.
- Fair Park Baptist Church, West Monroe: **It's Christmas performed by the worship choir**, December 16, 6 p.m. The performance

- will be followed by FPBC church-wide reception. Pastor: Waymond Warren.
- Calvary Baptist Church, Many: **Just A Little Christmas children's musical**, December 16, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Cyle Clayton.
- First Baptist Church, Keithville: **Good News From Home Christmas musical**, December 16, 10:15 a.m. Pastor: Michael Stowell.
- First Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Peace On Earth: A Christmas Concert**, December 16, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Jeffrey Raines.
- Bethany Baptist Church: **Sleepless in Bethlehem**, December 15, 7 p.m. and December 16, 6 p.m. Pastor: Marvin Cooper.
- Calvary Baptist Church, Alexandria: **Christmas concert presented by Calvary Conservatory of Music Orchestra**, December 16, 3 p.m. Pastor: David Brooks.
- First Baptist Church, Starks: **Shepherds and Kings, a choir presentation and drama**, December 18, 7 p.m. and December 23, 10:45 a.m.
- First Baptist Church, Haynesville: **Community-wide Christmas musical program**, December 16, 6 p.m. **Christmas Eve Candlelight service and Lord's supper**, December 24, 6 p.m. Pastor: Jeff Tinsley.
- Longview Baptist Church, Deville: **Christmas Cantata - Come and See, Go and Tell**, December 16, 10:30 a.m.; **Christmas Candlelight Service**, December 23, 6 p.m. Pastor: Robby Poole.
- Pine Grove Baptist Church, Ruby: **Behold, A Savior!** Christmas Cantata, December 23, 11 a.m. Pastor: Herb Dickerson.
- Natalbany Baptist Church, Natalbany: **Jesus Means Christmas to Me - Children's Cantata**, December 23, 10:15 a.m.
- Cross Point Baptist Church, Bossier City: **Candlelight service**, December 23, 6 p.m. Pastor: Shane Nugent.
- First Baptist Church, Winnsboro: **Come Let Us Adore Cantata presented by the joint choirs of First Baptist Church Winnsboro**

See NOTABLES, page 14

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.

owm twszqf hphmkzah jmwozehb qzeeqh: tye

xwsqzghaa za jmwozedtqh ygew dqq ebzgx, bdizgx

jmwbzah wo ebh qzoh ebde gwl za, dgs wo ebde lbzkb

za ew kwvh.

ozmae ezvwebf owym:hzxbe

Clues:
L = W; W = O

Answer to November 22 Scripture Crypto:
Galatian four: eleven

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ECON from page one

he told the *Baptist Message*.

When Elizabeth gave birth to a son, the couple chose the name Chip in reference to the phrase “chip off the old block.”

Fred Luter explained the name reflects his desire that children’s lives be shaped by the leadership of their fathers.

“I grew up in a home without my dad active in my life,” he said. “When I got married and had a son, I said God let me be the dad to my son I didn’t have. He not only answered my prayer but gave me lagniappe.

“Not only did Chip become a believer but he was called to the ministry,” he continued. “It’s something I never thought would happen. I wanted him to be a godly man, but to see him not only become a believer but be called into pastoring is more than I ever

thought would happen.”

Chip Luter first served on staff as a youth ministry intern in June 2005 and later as pastor of senior high youth at Concord Church in Dallas, Texas, before becoming pastor of youth and young adults at Franklin Avenue Baptist in January 2010.

Five years later, in March 2015, Chip Luter answered the call to become pastor of Idlewild Baptist Church’s Sulphur Springs campus.

“I’m excited I am preaching right before my dad because no preacher should ever have to follow Fred Luter, even his son,” quipped Chip Luter. “I miss those days I was serving on staff with my dad because we had a great dynamic.

“It’s always fun to come and preach at home, but even more



Baptist Press photo

Chip Luter (left) once served on his dad Fred’s staff at Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans. They will share the stage for a joint preaching engagement at the 2019 Louisiana Baptist Evangelism Conference.

so to preach alongside my dad,” he continued. “The thing I am really grateful for is even as his church grew and God gave him greater opportunities like becoming president of the Southern Baptist Convention, he was always the same dad at home where he was a faithful husband and father.”

LEGACY OF MINISTRY

David Hankins, who is retiring June 30 from a post he has held since 2005, previously served a pair of Texas Baptist churches from 1971-85 before becoming pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Lake Charles.

He is one of several generations in his family

to pursue a call to ministry. His grandfather was a preacher, his father was a Baptist deacon, his son, Eric, is a pastor, and his grandchildren are on staff of churches in South Carolina and Mississippi.

The evangelism conference will mark just the second time he and Eric have had a joint preaching engagement.

“To no one’s surprise, Eric Hankins is one of my favorite preachers,” David Hankins said. “The opportunity to share the platform with him is an exciting honor and I’m praying God will use our messages to stir our hearts on the urgency of engaging the next generation.”

A native of Lake Charles, Eric Hankins has served as pastor of the First Baptist Church, Fairhope, since Dec. 1, 2016. Before that, he was pastor of the First Baptist Church, Oxford, Mississippi, Galloway Avenue

See ECON, page 16

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LBC staff assignments revamped for 2019

By Staff
Baptist Message

ALEXANDRIA – Some members of the Louisiana Baptist Convention state mission services staff will be taking on new roles early next year.

Stacy Morgan, church administration strategist for Louisiana Baptists, will transition to the role of Cooperative Program and stewardship strategist and

Jeff Ingram, adult ministry strategist for Louisiana Baptists, will remain in his current role while absorbing Morgan's church administration strategist duties in early January.

The changes were approved by the LBC Executive Board.

Both men told the *Baptist Message* they eagerly anticipate their respective new responsibilities.

"I'm looking forward

to responding to pastors, staff and the church's needs in this critical area of church administration," Ingram said. "I'll be providing resources for churches regarding church administration. Specifically, this may include the church ministry assistants' conference, church tax seminar, staff compensation research, as well as resources to help churches develop safety policies and marriage policies. I also will be responsible for the annual luncheon for

retirees and bi-vocational pastors."

Morgan said he is excited about promoting the Cooperative Program to the more than 1,650 churches of the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

"The thing that distinguishes Southern Baptists from other Baptists is we cooperate together in fulfilling the Great Commission," Morgan said.

"Considering we are a Convention where the overwhelming majority of congregations are under

125 in worship attendance, the Cooperative Program allows those churches to have a significant impact on the world through giving to this endeavor. Even a very large church would find it difficult to fund more than one missionary overseas or one church planter or have a camp or college or seminary. But when we put all of our resources together we can fund those things and they are tools that help us accomplish the Great Commission."

YEC from page 6

without the Holy Spirit we don't have power. Jesus said I am sending you into the world to change it, but you don't need to do it on your own."

SHARING EXPERIENCES

Angel Edmisson, a member of Christway Baptist Church in Pineville, was moved to accept Christ as her Savior after one of Worsham's messages.

"The Scripture and the sermons were very moving. I knew about Christ and I have been very much aware of Him, but I didn't fully accept Him into my heart until yesterday," she said. "He really did move me in ways I couldn't imagine."

Elizabeth Norred, a member of First Baptist Church in Zachary, was reminded about the importance of being an authentic Christ follower.

"One thing, especially,

that I got out of these two days was Drew's point about how there is a difference between knowing about Jesus and truly knowing Him," Norred said. "That really hit me because we can know a lot about Him, and we can quote verses, and we can pray when we actually don't know Him, personally. And to have a relationship with Jesus is an amazing thing to have and it can really change your life."

David Myers, a member of South Park Baptist Church in Leesville, was moved by the sense of community inside the coliseum.

"YEC brings us together as one," Myers said. "You could feel Jesus in there. YEC is all about bringing people to Jesus."



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Gilbert from page one

conversation. "That's when I knew I needed to follow Christ."

She repented for salvation and that same month was baptized.

Speaking to the *Baptist Message* Ferrington recalled her emotions afterward.

"My baptism left me with this overcoming peace," she said. "I wanted to throw my hands up and say, 'Praise the Lord.' God took a black

hard heart, wiped it with red blood and it came out white."

IN GOOD COMPANY

Ferrington is among 25 new believers who have been baptized at First Baptist Church in Gilbert since January. The baptisms give a glimpse of the revival First Baptist has experienced since Pastor Bubba Ezell arrived in

October 2016.

Before then the congregation averaged about 25 worshipers in Sunday morning services, and baptisms were a rarity. Two years later, attendance has more than quadrupled and 55 converts have been baptized.

"Ministry can be tiring for any pastor, but this is what inspires me to get up and share God's love," Ezell said. "God can use anything in the world and He chose us to be that city on the hill. When people come to our church they feel the presence of God. Our church, with the help of youth pastor Dustin Carroll, has totally flipped from a church that was down to just a couple of dozen and has grown to where we have to find chairs many Sundays to accommodate all the people wanting to get a seat. There's no question that what's happened here is a mighty move of God."

Ezell attributes the numerical increase to his congregation's growing spiritual presence in the community, touching lives through an addiction ministry and a

sprawling youth ministry.

Ministering to addicts is highly personal for Ezell, who found Christ while as a patient at a treatment facility in Logansport in 2013. Just as he saw his need for Jesus when he hit rock bottom, Ezell said many in his community are struggling with addictions and Christ is their only hope.

Since he became involved in ministering to addicts at treatment centers and jails across north Louisiana in 2015, Ezell has seen 815 people come to a relationship with Christ. Some of them have gone on to help other addicts through the church's Amazing Grace Ministries.

Through this ministry, men receive encouragement and tools to overcome their addictions. During the first two months the men are under constant supervision

by the staff at the transition house. They must attend Bible studies, Celebrate Recovery meetings, worship services, substance abuse classes and discipleship training. After that the men move on to the job phase, where they are helped in finding work so they can save money to better position themselves to succeed after they leave the six-month program.

Ezell dreams of expanding from the 14-person capacity of their current group home to facilities that have room for up to 50 men.

"Our vision is to take these guys in and sow what we have into their lives," Ezell said. "Our church loves on them and tries to teach them what they need to have victory in Christ. We're a small country church with a big heart for God."



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Baton Rouge Press

Notables from page 11

and Crowville, December 23, 10:55 a.m. Pastor: Craig Beeman.

■ Kingsville Baptist Church, Ball: **Acoustic Christmas**, December 23, 10:30 a.m. Pastor:

Bart Walker.

■ The Bayou Church, Lafayette: Christmas Concert, December 23, 3 & 5 p.m. December 24, 1, 3 & 5 p.m., in the auditorium. This festive event has something for the whole family to enjoy. We will transport you to a Christmas wonderland as we set the tone for this joyful season through music, community and fun surprises for all ages. Our pastor will share a brief message about the hope that was born on Christmas for all to receive. Pastor: Mike Walker.

■ Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, West Monroe: **Candlelight service**, December 23, 6 p.m. Pastor: Randy Burdeaux.

■ Trinity Baptist Church, Lake Charles: **PJ's with the Pastor in the worship center**, December 24, 6:00 p.m. **Acoustic Carols By Candlelight in the Cavern**, December 24, 7 p.m. Pastor: Steve James.

■ First Baptist Church, Vidalia: **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**, December 24, 6 p.m. Pastor: Wes Faulk.

■ Cypress Baptist Church, Benton: **Christmas Eve service**, December 24, 6 p.m. Pastor: John Fream.

■ Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville: **Ben Waites in Concert**, December 30, 9 & 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Philip Robertson.

■ First Baptist Church, Hornbeck: **Candlelight Service and Communion**, December 30, 6 p.m. Pastor: Jack Bell.

■ Taylor Baptist Church, Taylor: **Observance of The Lord's Supper**, December 30. Pastor: Jimmy Eppinette.

■ First Baptist Church, Pineville: **First@First Business Leader Luncheon**, January 7, 2019, noon. Speaker: Curt Iles. Cost: \$10 and you may pay at the door. Please RSVP to Stewart Holloway (sholloway@fbcpineville.net.) Pastor: Stewart Holloway.

■ Calvary Baptist Church, Shreveport: 2019 **Night of Praise**, January 11, 2019, 6 p.m. Featuring **Price Harris Ministries with Caleb Lewis, Summer Grove Baptist Choir, The Needhams, The Allen Family, Bo Shed, Monk Trio, Larry Alton Trio**. Pastor: John Lary.

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Lousiana Baptist Ralph Abraham announces run for governor in '19

By Staff

Baptist Message

ALTO (LBM) – Ralph Abraham, M.D., a Republican who represents the 5th Congressional District, announced Thursday, Dec. 6, he has entered the 2019 gubernatorial race.

"I'm running for governor, and I intend to win," Abraham said in a brief statement released on his personal Facebook page.

Abraham, a member of Alto Baptist Church, was first elected to Congress in 2014. His district encompasses 24 parishes in the northeastern, central and southeastern areas of the state.

He serves as a member of the House Armed Services Committee, the Agriculture Committee

and the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology.

The three-term congressman joins Baton Rouge businessman Eddie Rispone, also a Republican, in challenging the incumbent John Bel Edwards, a Democrat.

Abraham is a physician, veterinarian, business owner, farmer, pilot and veteran. He was a first lieutenant with the 20th Special Forces Group Airborne Division of the Army National Guard from 1986-1989, according to his website.

He is a native of rural Richland Parish where he and his wife, Dianne, live. He holds degrees from Mangham High School and Louisiana State University.

During his time in

Congress, Abraham has been a consistent pro-life advocate, voting against funding for abortion providers like Planned Parenthood. A member of the pro-life caucus, Abraham has spoken at various events around the state, such as the 2016 CENLA Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast at Louisiana College in Pineville and the 2018 Louisiana Life March CENLA in Alexandria-Pineville.

If elected, Abraham would join five other Baptist men who have served as governor of Louisiana: William Wright Heard, 1900-1904; Huey Pierce Long, 1928-1932; Oscar Kelly Allen, 1932-1936; Earl Kemp Long, 1939-1940, 1948-1952, 1956-1960; and, James Houston Davis, 1944-1948, 1960-1964.



Ralph Abraham photo

U.S. Rep. Ralph Abraham, who represents the 5th Congressional District, announced on Thursday, Dec. 6 that he had entered Louisiana's gubernatorial race. A member of Alto Baptist Church, if elected he would become the sixth Baptist to have served as governor in Louisiana.

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LOUISIANA BAPTISTS

ECON from page one

Baptist Church, Mesquite, Texas, and Gillsburg Baptist Church, Gillsburg, Mississippi.

Holding true to a vision to reach the next generation, Eric Hankins is passionate about making disciples of his church members and their children.

"If we obey the teaching of Christ, we are to have a heart and passion for the next generation," he said. "From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible has many examples and lessons about it. We should be handing down our faith to the next generation through discipleship. Jesus picked 12 guys he would equip to do ministry after he was gone."

Eric Hankins said even though his father was a committed pastor, he made time with his family a priority.

"Dad was a careful protector of his family and of his time with us," he said. "Dad taught us to be men of character. We knew we had a duty to be men who spoke truth. He was a truth teller and that was a priority in our home."

ALL IN THE FAMILY

The Luters and Hankins will be joined on the program by Argile Smith, senior pastor of Parkway Baptist Church, Biloxi, Mississippi; and Lee Strobel, an atheist-turned-Christ follower who authored the best-selling book "The Case for Christ."

The praise and worship lineup includes David Phelps, an award-winning Gospel artist from Nashville, Tennessee, and, combined choirs.

Other events include:



Submitted photo

Eric (left) and David Hankins (third from left) stand with family members after the ordination of Eric's son, JD, (fourth from left), into the Gospel ministry. The father-son duo will preach together during the second day of the 2019 Louisiana Baptist Evangelism Conference at the First Baptist Church in Covington, with a focus on reaching the next generation.

Student Night featuring Ed Newton, lead pastor of Community Bible Church, San Antonio, Texas; the state Senior Adult Luncheon featuring

Phelps in concert; breakout sessions; and, various fellowships.

The Luters and Hankins applauded the evangelism conference's focus

on reaching the next generation.

"The timing is right in this convention for the next generation to step up in leadership as we have seen with our SBC president," Fred Luter said. "This is encouraging other younger pastors to get involved. My generation is stepping up to the plate and passing the baton to the younger ones."

David Hankins echoed the thought.

"The stats are clear and they are alarming – we are losing those we say we love the most – our kids and our grandkids," he noted. "The headlines on the news and in our newsfeeds show the reality of a culture trying to distance itself from the truth that can set it free. Join me in praying God will light a fire in our souls to do everything we can, wherever we can and whenever we can to reverse these trends."

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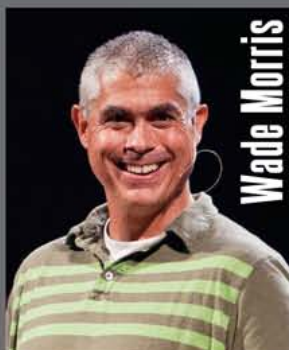
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