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hath loved me,
so have I loved
you: continue ye
in my love.”*

— John 15:9 (KJV)

BAPTIST Message

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January 11, 2018

Louisiana Baptist youth leader, NOBTS student, dies on mission field

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

NAKARU, Kenya – Even as family and friends mourn the loss of a loved one, they are celebrating the Christ-honoring legacy left behind by Emily Martin, an interim youth leader at Hebron Baptist Church in Bush, who died Jan. 1 while serving on her

third mission trip to Kenya.

Martin, 21, passed away following complications from a blood clot that developed inside her lungs shortly after arriving in the country.

Martin organized the trip, traveling with her brother, Joshua, cousin, Ashtin Mullett, and friend, Vally O'Connor. While in the country, she worked alongside missionaries

Len and Susan Eastwood, who represent Neighbors Outreach Worldwide ministry in Nakaru, Kenya.

Her father, Scot, told the *Baptist Message* his daughter spent her final days in a place she loved.

Even before her first visit to Kenya,



See MARTIN on 4 Emily Martin



Submitted photo

Istrouma Pastor Jeff Ginn (left) helps Dalton Mayberry to his feet during a special outdoor baptism service Oct. 22 at the church. Mayberry was one of 20 new believers baptized as part of the church's 'One Another Sunday.'

New believers brave temps to show 'hearts on fire' for Christ

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

BATON ROUGE – Despite cool fall temperatures, 20 new believers braved the brisk conditions to be part of a special outdoor baptism service Oct. 22 at Istrouma Baptist Church.

One by one, each stepped into a brimming horse trough, restated his and her individual faith in Christ, was plunged beneath the water and raised to symbolize being born again in Christ – and was greeted with hugs and cheers from friends and family among the several hundred supporters in attendance.

Scheduled as part of its “One Another Sunday,” the baptisms brought together Istrouma Baptist’s Baton Rouge, Prairieville and Hispanic campuses.

See ISTROUMA on 3

Searcy prays big, God blesses big

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

TROUT (LBM) – Searcy Baptist Church had planned in 2013 to build a new worship center on a four acre plot adjoining its campus. But God had even bigger plans for the congregation, leading a local businessman in 2016 to donate 30 acres of land less than a mile away.

Dedicated Nov. 19, 2017, the new facility (nearly 15,000 square feet under roof)

See SEARCY on 2



Brian Blackwell photo

Searcy Baptist Church Pastor Terry Reid says the church's new facility, which was dedicated Nov. 19, has 15,000 square feet under roof and includes a worship center with a seating capacity of 300, education space, an office suite and a fellowship area.

Searcy from page one

includes a worship center with a seating capacity of 299, education space, an office suite and a fellowship area. The former facility contained fewer than 5,000 square feet of floor space.

Pastor Reid Terry said God revealed Himself to the congregation in miraculous ways along the journey to the expansive campus.

Meeting in January 2016 to discuss adding onto the

old campus, church leaders prayed God would confirm their decision through a large donation to help jumpstart the building process. Within a month, a businessman (who attended a church breakfast for oil field workers in February 2014) informed the congregation that

he wanted to donate land, and lots of it.

"We just believed God would do something great and He did," Terry said. "Within the month, this 30 acre property that we're on now was given to us, donated completely to us, ready to be built upon. The land was clear and the pad was built. All we had to do was pour concrete and get to work.

"I've told our church many times, 'That breakfast cost us about \$600 in mission money,'" Terry said. "God used \$600 to buy 30 acres of real estate that was ready to be built on."

Construction on the building began in June 2016. Two months later, a historic flood hit many areas of south Louisiana, impacting some volunteers who were vital to the construction project.

But just as God did with the donation of the property,

He was faithful in providing workers who were knowledgeable to complete the task, he said.

Volunteers from the Baptist Builders along with others from the community continued to help with construction efforts. Then, after a break in the work in late 2016, professionals were hired to finish the construction and completed the building early last month.

Only recently moved into the new facility, the church already has experienced growth.

Sunday school attendance has reached 100, about a 30 percent increase; and, worship attendance also has grown, topping 160 worshippers, or about 60 more in the Sunday morning service.

"The church understands our new facility is simply a tool we can use to reach our community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ," Terry said. "We know people will come in the doors just to check out the new building, but the newness of a building will eventually wear off. We are excited about the future because we know God was building a church long before we ever broke ground on a building project, and, we believe that He will utilize these new facilities to continue building His church."

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Istrouma from page one

Indeed, a number of the baptized were among the 105 people who responded to Evangelist Jay Lowder's message during the morning worship service that day.

"It's like Jay drew the net but the seed had been sown in people's hearts by the love our people show the community throughout the year," Pastor Jeff Ginn told the *Baptist Message*. "When push comes to shove, we are called to lead people to Christ, baptize them and make disciples. All of those who are new to Christ tend to bring their friends and that's what happened here. They came to the baptism service and brought others with them, planting even more seeds."

"One Another Sunday" activities also featured a picnic.

REACHING OTHERS

"One Another Sunday" is only one of several large-scale evangelistic outreaches the congregation makes each year to engage the local community.

Recently, Istrouma Baptist's members adopted Cedarcrest Elementary School, located adjacent to the church parking lot. Small groups adopt each teacher, supplying them with treats throughout the school year. Members also hold Christmas parties, grill out for the teachers and staff, assist in afterschool tutoring and watch the children of parents attending Parent Teacher Organization meetings.

Ginn said the effort has helped foster an even greater personal connection with the school staff.

"Our discipleship team has led the way in encouraging our small groups to engage missionally. Our small groups not only study the Scripture, and fellowship and care for one another, they are reaching outward to share life."

Another local outreach is Istrouma Baptist's annual "Go Day."

In its eighth year, the effort involves hundreds of members who participate in more than 40 different projects around Baton Rouge. In 2017,

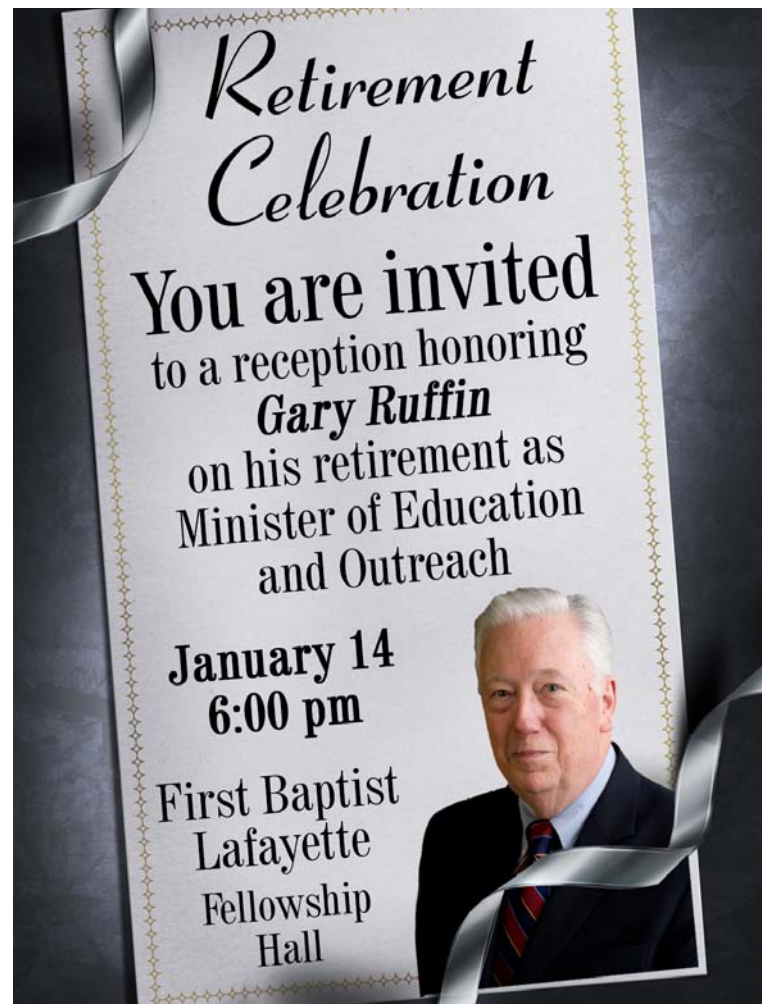
these included neighborhood block parties, a picnic for special needs families, gift baskets to firemen and policemen, sports clinics for youth, landscaping a Christian school and volunteering at a nursing home.

But its evangelistic efforts are not limited to just Baton Rouge.

Church members have taken mission trips to places like New Orleans, Alaska, Haiti, Guatemala and Mexico; and, recently, the congregation commissioned disaster response teams to serve in areas of Texas hit hard by Hurricane Harvey. Both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking volunteers conducted relief operations in Conroe, Port Arthur and Sagemont.

For Ginn, Istrouma Baptist has been given so much and believes they should bless others freely.

"Istrouma does serve widely but that is partly because we have been so blessed," he said. "To whom much is given, of them much is required."



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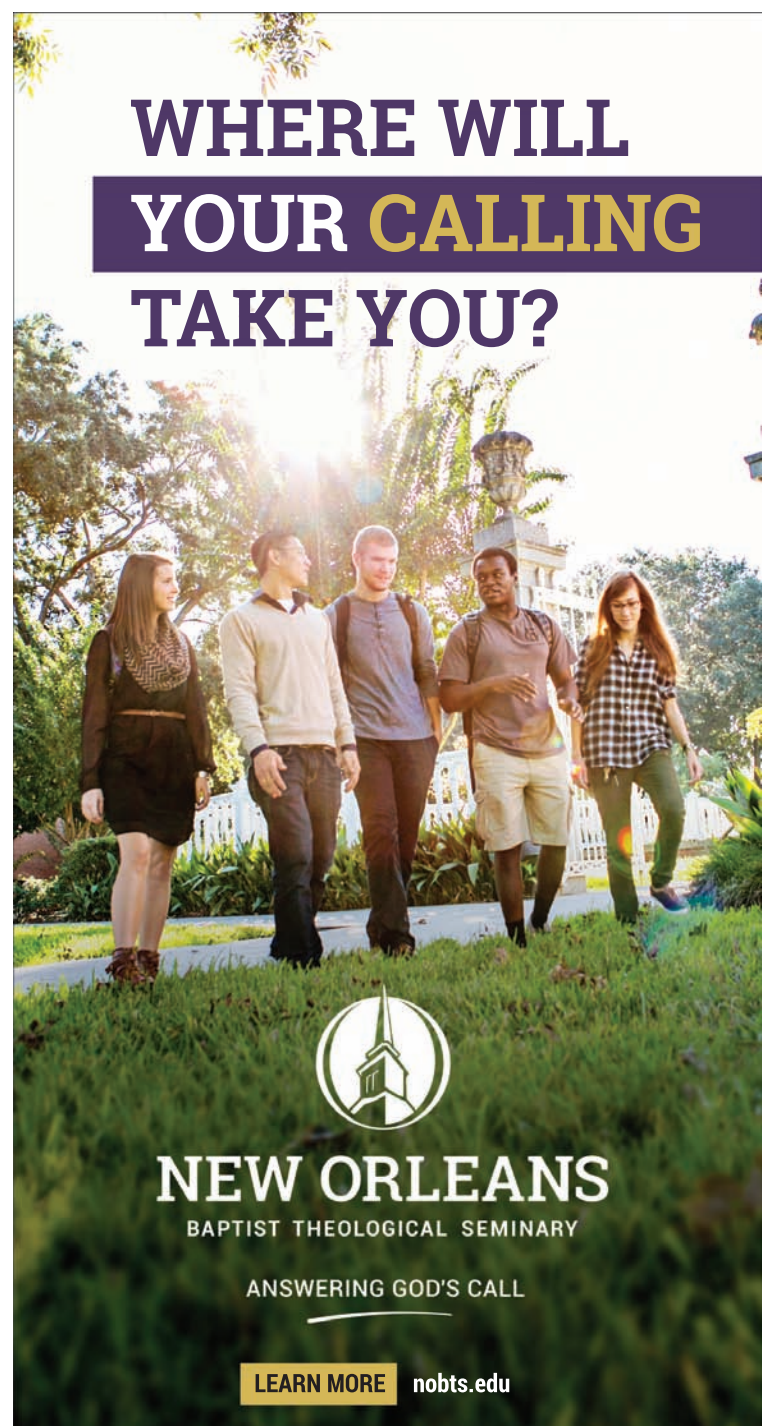
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Martin from page one

Martin had a strong love for missions that began as a teenager with a church evangelistic trip to Oklahoma where she took part in conducting Vacation Bible School. She also took mission trips to Belize and Guatemala in recent years.

A student with the Leavell College of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Martin likely would have moved to Kenya to continue mission work after graduation, her father said.

“Emily had this infectious laugh and smile that drew people to her,” he said. “She had a compassion for people and had a way of making people feel loved just like Jesus would. From the comments we have gotten in the past few days, we really have seen just how much of an impact she had on so many people.”

Rickie Wilson, pastor of Hebron Baptist Church, said Martin’s death weighs

heavily on her family and the congregation, but that her legacy of serving Christ is a comfort to all who knew her.

“Her passing doesn’t seem real,” Wilson said.

“She was one of the most joyful people I have met.

“When I first started, I asked her various questions such as, ‘If you could walk through a door and be anywhere in the world where would you want to exit to?’” he continued. “She answered, ‘Kenya.’

“Pray for the family’s healing and peace,” he said. “Her parents have a strong faith. Pray for people to see in her life the love she had for reaching Kenya.

“Pray for the youth she worked with – to see and understand that she was willing to be used by God and even in this unexpected loss her life was a witness for Him,” he said. “Pray for their healing.”

Chuck Kelley, president of NOBTS, cited Martin’s

love for the people of Kenya during an e-mailed statement to the *Baptist Message*.

“The New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary family is shocked and deeply saddened with the news of the homegoing of our Leavell College student Emily Martin while on a mission trip to Kenya,” Kelley said. “Emily was deeply passionate about the Lord and her calling. She loved the people of Kenya and had made several mission trips there. We pray for God’s grace and comfort for her parents and other family members as they deal with unimaginable grief from this sudden and unexpected loss. In addition we pray also for our faculty and students as well as they return from the holidays to find her chair empty. Her life mattered to all who knew her here and all who experienced her love and witness in Kenya. May we all live and serve as she did.”

A funeral service will be held once Martin’s body is transported back to the U.S. Arrangements are pending at this time.



Submitted photo

Emily Martin, who died Jan. 1 while in Kenya, shares love with a young Kenyan girl receiving care under the umbrella of the Neighbors Outreach Worldwide ministry in the city of Nakuru. Her most recent visit to Kenya was her third mission trip to the country.

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ECON 2018: Pray for the souls of Louisiana youth

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

PINEVILLE – Churches throughout the state are encouraged to pray for a great harvest of souls of youth expected to attend the upcoming Student Night Jan. 22 at the Louisiana Baptist Convention Evangelism Conference.

One of the first events for 2018 associated with the statewide Harvest initiative to “pray for every home and share with every person” in Louisiana, Student Night will feature a pre-session pizza party, a demonstration by the Real Encounter stunt team and music by Elevate, a travel band from Louisiana College.

The main session, which will be live streamed, will feature Ray Jones and the Community Bible Church Praise Team of San Antonio, and, a message by Brent Crowe of Orlando, Fla.

Jones is the brother-in-law of Wayne Jenkins, who is retiring as Louisiana Baptists’ director of evangelism and church growth, and Crowe is a vice president with Student Leadership University, which was founded by Southern Baptist evangelist Jack Strack.

The pre-session will begin

at 5 p.m. inside the Family Life Center of First Baptist Church, Pineville.

Steve Maltempi, youth strategist for Louisiana Baptists, said Student Night is a continuation of a challenge to share Christ that youth were presented with during the 2017 Youth Evangelism Celebration in Lafayette.

“Student Night is the perfect follow-up to YEC,” Maltempi said. “Students were motivated to be evangelistic at YEC and Student Night at ECON is their chance to bring lost friends to a free event their friends will love. Students are encouraged to pray specifically for their lost friends and invite them to Student Night.”

For those unable to attend Student Night, the event will be livestreamed beginning at 6:30 p.m. Churches can log onto louisiananbaptists.org/livestream and follow instructions from there for access. Last year, numerous churches hosted rallies via livestream.

“I can’t wait to see what God does at Student Night and at locations live streaming across Louisiana,” Maltempi said. “Last year folks took advantage of the live streaming by doing it for their entire

youth group or small group and Sunday School leaders hosted parties for their class, or individual youth hosted their own party. It was amazing to see the many ways folks used the live streaming.”

Maltempi calls Crowe one of the best youth communicators in the nation and is confident he will “connect with church and unchurched students alike.”

While serving with Student Leadership University, Crowe has trained more than 148,000 students to commit themselves to excellence and living out their faith.

Crowe said he is excited to be a part of what he anticipates will be a movement of God during Student Night; and, he urged Louisiana Baptists to pray for that favor from Him.


“I would simply say to youth pastors and workers that this is going to be a night that the Gospel will be clearly presented,” Crowe said. “Therefore, please pray for students by name that on that night that they would hear the words from the Savior that so many have heard

before...’come and follow me.’ “Dr. Billy Graham once said that if you want to see

God move greatly, pray, pray

See YOUTH on 9

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Experiences lead Tippit on powerful evangelistic journey

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

PINEVILLE – In 1970 much of the country was being torn apart by violent protests against the divisive Vietnam War, but in Monroe, Louisiana, revival was unifying the area with faith, hope and love.

Only 25 people attended the first night of that February revival which was being led by Baton Rouge native Sammy Tippit at Calvary Baptist Church, Monroe. But an area-wide movement quickly broke out. The scheduled five-day campaign had to be expanded into a three-week crusade, and, attendance exploded, necessitating a move to the Monroe Civic Center to accommodate the crowds.

Importantly, thousands of lost souls were subsequently saved.

“Pastor L.L. Morris was the only one praying at first and believed God was going to move mightily,” Tippit told the *Baptist Message*. “More of us joined him and a great prayer

movement emerged, followed by many decisions by young people.”

Tippit, who founded Sammy Tippitt Ministries based in San Antonio, Texas, will share more about how God has moved through mass evangelism events as part of his message at the 2018 Louisiana Baptist Evangelism Conference, Jan. 22-23, at First Baptist Church, Pineville.

He will be joined in the program by Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans, and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention; Brent Crowe, vice president of Student Leadership University, Orlando, Fla.; Rick Gage, founder of GO TELL Ministries, Atlanta, Ga.; Gregory Frizzell, founder of Gregory Frizzell Ministries, Oklahoma City, Okla.; Ron Herrod, founder of Ron Herrod Evangelism Ministries Association, Knoxville, Tenn.; and Karen Abercrombie, an award winning actress who played the spicy, 80-year-old prayer

warrior, Miss Clara, in the film “War Room.”

BEYOND LOUISIANA

“God was on the move, not just in Monroe but simultaneously in other parts of the country,” Tippit said in describing that time in our country’s history.

As the revival in Monroe came to a close, Tippit felt led to join his wife, Tex, and five others to take part in “A walk across America” to Washington, D.C., pushing a wheelbarrow full of Bibles as a symbolic means of calling our nation back to God’s Word. Along the way, Tippit and the team stopped at college campuses and other venues to hold rallies -- and revivals similar to the one in Monroe erupted in multiple places.

At the same time, the Jesus Movement was spreading across the United States with thousands of young people each week turning their lives around to follow Christ, he said.

A few weeks after the rally in D.C., Tippit said, he and his wife traveled to Chicago, Ill., to open a street ministry working with young people.

Each night they hosted young people in their home-based Bible studies, and they saw a remarkable change in the local community -- as people came to Christ, the nightclubs were forced to close early because of a lack of business.

This turn of events actually led to his arrest, prompted by angry nightclub owners.

“Early in my ministry, God allowed me to see that He has the power to transform our culture,” said Tippit, who added that the charges against him eventually were dropped.

ENDS OF THE EARTH

Tippit has preached the Gospel in more than 80 countries.

While serving as pastor of a church in Hahn, Germany, he witnessed the congregation grow from 50 to 70 people

attending Sunday morning services to more than 500 worshipers on Sunday mornings and 700 in attendance on Sunday evenings. Moreover, Tippit said 70 percent of the growth resulted from salvations and aggressive discipleship.

“I started discipling the men and my wife disciplined the women,” he said. “They then shared their faith and our membership exploded because people were getting excited about applying what we taught them.”

After Germany, Tippit was asked to minister in Romania.

Traveling church to church, Tippit said the buildings were filled to capacity one to two hours before the start of a revival meeting -- with people arriving continuously to pray.

“I had never seen anything like it,” he said. “I felt like I was walking into a situation that reflected the stories of some of the great historic revival.”

See TIPPIT on 9

“
OPEN YOUR EYES AND LOOK AT THE FIELDS, FOR THEY ARE READY FOR HARVEST.

”

JOHN 4:35

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Frizzell's passion for revival rooted in prayer, evangelism

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

PINEVILLE – Gregory Frizzell believes the need for prayer and evangelism has never been more urgent than today.

Moreover, he contends the time is now for Christ's followers to rise up and ask God for a great revival and awakening to sweep across the United States – beginning in the hearts of each believer.

"If programs, education, strategies and promotions could by themselves bring revival, we would have long since had the biggest in history," Frizzell said. "The fact that true New Testament power must also be tied to fervent prayer and deep repentance is now abundantly clear. We are past being helped by quick general prayers and surface confession. The good news is that more and more are awakening to this reality."

Frizzell, whose ministry is based in Oklahoma City, Okla., will share more about his passion for revival during the final session of the 2018 Louisiana

Baptist Convention Evangelism Conference, Jan. 22-23, at First Baptist Church, Pineville. He also will touch on the elements of an effective prayer life during the Senior Adult Luncheon at ECON 2018.

Frizzell will be joined in the program by Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans, and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention; Brent Crowe, vice president of the Student Leadership University, Orlando, Fla.; Rick Gage, founder of GO TELL Ministries, Atlanta, Ga.; Sammy Tippit, founder of Sammy Tippit Ministries, San Antonio, Texas; Ron Herrod, founder of Ron Herrod Evangelism Ministries Association, Knoxville, Tenn.; and, Karen Abercrombie, an award winning actress who played the spicy, 80-year-old prayer warrior, Miss Clara, in the film "War Room."

"In our evangelism conference, we will rediscover a couple of elements that can make all the difference in taking our prayers and empowerment

to another level," Frizzell said. "The hopeful news is that greater power and closeness with Jesus are not out of reach. We really can learn to pray in ways that transforms ourselves, our families, churches and reaches our lost communities."

"I urge every Louisiana Baptist to pray fervently for God's power and presence to be mighty in our January meeting. Without His grace and power, we can do nothing. But with His grace and power, nothing is impossible."

Frizzell has traveled throughout the United States and world sharing his message, and recently launched an initiative that targets 250,000 pastors for spiritual awakening and sweeping evangelism in strategic nations, according to a biographical page on Frizzell.

He has served as pastor of several congregations and also was a prayer and spiritual awakening specialist for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma as well as the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Additionally, he has written more than 40 books and published hundreds of articles on prayer, church renewal, evangelism, leadership and spiritual awakening. His book, "Returning to Holiness," has been translated into 40 languages and is approaching 2 million copies.

A graduate of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Frizzell said he is excited about engaging with Louisiana Bap-

tists during ECON 2018.

"I am especially excited because of my experiences with many Louisiana Baptist churches, pastors, missions directors and state staff over many years," he said. "In Louisiana, there has been a unique sense of connecting evangelism and missions with prayer and revival. Not only is that connection totally biblical, it is the pattern

See FRIZZELL on 9



MASTERS-4
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First Pineville updates facilities in time to host ECON 2018

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

PINEVILLE – Just in time to host the 2018 Louisiana Baptist Convention Evangelism Conference, Jan. 22-23, First Baptist Church, Pineville, has completed Phase One of its largest building renovation effort since 1997.

After two years of planning, the \$5 million project started in 2015 has given a major facelift to every building on its cam-

pus during the first of several planned stages of construction and updates.

Among the most notable improvements, so far, are the new carpet, lighting, pews and sound equipment in the worship center, which are complimented by renovated bathrooms and a bride's room in the lobby area.

New landscaping has been completed as well.

But, other areas of the campus have seen improvements, too: The activities building

received a new elevator and expanded restrooms; the fellowship hall was updated with a new stage, sound system, and lighting; the adult education building now has expanded restrooms; the children and preschool areas have new paint and flooring; there is a new playground; and, the church offices are renovated.

Pastor Stewart Holloway said the congregation's growth from their faithfulness to the vision humbles him.

"From the moment we started developing our master plan to when we developed our first phase, people have been enthusiastic, they've been completely supportive," he said. "They have been generous in their giving and they have been generous in helping if there is a project that needed to be done. All of that has been really amazing. The unity that our congregation has experienced through this building project has been something that I think would make the Lord really proud."

Originally, the project was to cost about \$1.9 million.

But when Holloway came



Pastor Stewart Holloway sits in the newly renovated sanctuary of First Baptist Church, Pineville. The \$5 million project gave a facelift to every building on its campus.

before the church to present the plans that consisted mostly of updates and repairs the congregation voted to expand the renovations to include more extensive renovations and additions to the sanctuary and an elevator modernization – at a price tag of \$5 million.

Since Holloway became pastor of the church in 2008, the congregation has paid in full \$1.1 million in old debt while resident membership has increased from 1,061 to 1,520, according to church records.

"All of that is a God thing," Holloway said. "The project has been God-sized in terms of money and God-sized in terms of the amount of things we've been able to accomplish. Every building on our campus has had something done to it. Most of them have had some major

work completed.

"The sanctuary is the largest of the projects and is the culmination of it all," he continued. "And it really captures everything we wanted to see done in this first phase, which is to make way for future generations, to bring up the building to modern standards and set us for some future growth."

Phase Two will include additional parking to accommodate Sunday morning worshippers and attendees of special events such as the ECON 2018. Until then, FBC will use nearby parking lots and a shuttle to transport participants who park even further away.

"We look forward to using our facilities as an effective tool for ministry to the people of Central Louisiana and beyond," Holloway said.

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Tippit from page 6

Tippit continued to take mission trips to the country until he was arrested there in 1988 and told never to return.

But the pause in his visits was short-lived.

Revolution came a year later, and with the permission of the new government, Tippit

resumed his evangelistic work there.

"Just as I was about to preach at a stadium following my return to the country, my translator turned to me and asked if I knew the significance of that day," he recalled about the May 1990 crusade. "He

said today is the day we had an answer to prayer that the Gospel would be preached in stadiums."

His experiences in Monroe, Germany and Romania were extremely different in terms of his ministerial roles, but Tippit said they shared a common characteristic – God's people

cried out to Him and He moved in a mighty way.

Importantly, He believes Louisiana is ripe for harvest, too.

"I think Louisiana has incredible potential," he said. "This culture prepares people for missions and the people of Louisiana have great potential to reach the world for Christ.

"I love Louisiana," said Tippit, who co-authored "Twice A Slave", which was about Joseph Willis, considered the father of Baptists in Louisiana. "That's where God saved me. That's where God sent me. That's where God brought me my wife. To be able and come back to share and encourage pastors and friends and leaders of Louisiana, I am just thrilled."

Frizzell from page 7

of great awakenings throughout history.

"My special word to Louisiana Baptists is God's power and grace are as great as in the days of early believers," he said. "The Lord has definitely not lost His power. My current ministry often places me in many countries such as Africa, China, India and South America. In several places I minister, there is great risk and persecution of believers. Yet What I have discovered is the levels of prayer and surrender are somewhat higher than those most common in some other nations. Rather than just saying some general prayers, they have moved into the effective, fervent prayer of fully yielded hearts."

Youth from page 5

and then pray some more," he continued. "There has never been a great movement of God divorced from people who faithfully prayed and petitioned the Lord to do what only He could do. I believe that we need a revival of prayer in our local church. And I'm hoping that the Lord will once again move and bring awakening to our land."

HARVEST KICKOFF FOR '18

Thirty youth received salvation during Student Night at the 2017 ECON, which kicked off the Harvest campaign after a year of Louisiana Baptists' evangelism strategists sharing about the vision and helping churches develop plans to participate in it.

In 2017, more than 850 churches signed up to be part of the statewide evangelistic initiative; evangelism training was conducted in churches and local associations and different evangelism methods were piloted.

In 2018, Louisiana Baptists will be working together in concentrated prayer and soul-winning activities such as multi-church crusades, door-to-door outreach, one-on-one evangelism, single-church revivals and other activities which leverage compassion ministries to share about the love of Christ.

"It is our desire for Student Night to be a portion of the Harvest events for churches in the local area of the conference and across the state," said Keith Manuel, evangelism associate for Louisiana Baptists. "Thanks to the Cooperative Program, this can be an extra event for our churches with national speakers/musicians that is provided at no cost or in the case of a church using the live stream, just the cost of some snacks to reach students in their community for Christ."

"The reports of salvations and life-change from last year's event were amazing," he continued. "We are asking church-

es all over the state to pray for this event. Pray for students and adults to be open to the gospel and for a willingness to become growing disciples who boldly communicate the gospel of Jesus with their friends and families."

Sam Moore, Evangelistic Ministries

479-381-1170, sam@evangelistsammoore.com

Sam Moore is a vocational evangelist. He has the gift of an evangelist and the heart of a pastor. He is available for revivals, crusades, Harvest Days and witness training. Call or email to schedule your 2018-2019 events.

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Balboa Baptist Church in Hot Springs Village, AR is receiving résumés for Associate Pastor Administrator. Please email résumés to debbiebalboabaptist@gmail.com. For a job description log onto the website balboabaptist.church, click on 'Who We Are' and then click 'employment'.

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ON THE MOVE

■ **Craig James** is the new director of Missions for North Central Baptist Association.

■ **Lloyd "Doc" Stephens** is the new music director at Mt. Hope Baptist Church, Oakdale, Louisiana. He was called to the position in March of 2017.

■ **Ray Raney** is the new operations pastor at First Baptist Church, Bossier.

■ **Mike Schultz** is the new pastor at Pisgah Baptist Church, Forest Hill.

■ **Dan Causey** has been named interim pastor at Kingston Road Baptist Church, Shreveport.

■ **Brett Puckitt** is the new pastor at First Baptist Church, Vivian.

■ **Bill Stewart** is the pastor at Caddo Prairie Baptist Church, Ida.

■ **Roy Davis** is the interim pastor at Gray Baptist Church, Jefferson, Texas.

■ **Gary Ruffin** retires as minister of education and outreach at First Baptist Church, Lafayette.

■ **Brad Gill** is the new minister of outreach at First Baptist Church, Lafayette.

■ **Scott McKenzie** is the new minister of education at First Baptist Church, Lafayette.

■ **Howard Turner** is retiring from Live Oak Baptist Church, Watson on March 31, 2018 after 24 years of dedicated service. The divine leadership that he and Mrs. Dolly has provided is greatly appreciated and revered

■ **Johnny Morgan** is the new pastor of Live Oak Baptist Church, Watson.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Rachel Gayle Mercer Wiggins, member of Trinity Baptist Church in Natchitoches, passed away Nov. 24, 2017 in Natchitoches. Born on December 29, 1956 at Sellars Baptist Baby Home in New Orleans, she was adopted a few months later by Rev. Earl and Betty Mercer. She would attend Louisiana College and graduated from Louisiana Tech with a nursing degree. After a distinguished career at Glenwood Regional Hospital in West Monroe, she left in 2000 to become the full-time nurse at the Louisiana Baptist Children's home. She retired in 2010 after complications from brain cancer that she had battled many years earlier. Rachel is survived by her children, Jeremy Wiggins of Grover Beach, California and wife Kim; Amanda Wiggins Impson of Monroe, and husband Johnny, two grandchildren, Abigail Kathryn Brown and Anderson Gene Waalk, both of Monroe, and one brother, David Keith Mercer of Natchitoches. She was preceded in death by her parents Rev. Earl D. and Betty Rockett Mercer; her paternal grandparents, Fred and Lottie Johnson Mercer and her maternal grandparents Rev. Dewey H. and Aetna Elkins Rockett.

REVIVAL

■ Washington Baptist Church, Washington: **Revival**, January 12-14, 10:30 Sunday, 6:30 p.m. nightly, Evangelist: **Lyndon Longoria**. Music: **Brad Mount**. Pastor: Louis Charrier.

■ First Baptist Church, Hornbeck: **Winter Revival**, January 14-17, Sunday, 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. Pastor: Jack Bell.

■ First Baptist Church, Greensburg: **Two Riv-**

ers Harvest Revival, January 20, 6:30 p.m. Pastor: Tommy Smith.

■ Calvary Baptist Church, Monroe: **Revival**, January 21-24, Sunday 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday 7 p.m. Evangelist: **Don Crosswhite**. Special Music: **Price Harris**. Pastor: David Willoughby.

LAGNIAPPE

■ Calvary Baptist Church, Shreveport: 2018 Night of Praise, January 12, 6:30 p.m. Featuring **Steel Magnolias, Ammer Gayle Whatley, Jake Cowley, Calep Lewis, Allen Family and the Voices of Louisiana College**. Pastor: John Lary.

■ First Baptist Church, Vinton: **Gold City Quartet in Concert**, January 12, 7 p.m. Pastor: Bobby Daniel.

■ First Baptist Church, Vidalia: **Camo Sunday/Chili Cook Off**, January 14, Pastor: Wes Faulk.

■ First Baptist Church, Covington: **Adults 55+ Winter Celebration -- 32nd Anniversary of the "Young at Heart" group**, January 16, 9 a.m.-Noon. Cost: \$10 (payable at the door/lunch included). Deadline to register is 4 p.m. January 10 (limited seating/reservations necessary). Comedians/Musicians: Larry Delawder from Branson and Tim Lovelace from Nashville. The program concludes with lunch. Please register online at www.FbcCov.org or by calling the church office at 985.892.2149. Register by individual names unless you are registering and paying with one check for your group. Note: seating is limited and the caterer must be paid for all who are registered by the deadline so please contact the church before the deadline if you must cancel. All adults 55+ are invited to this fun celebration. Pastor: Waylon Bailey.

■ Trinity Heights Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Jay & Laura Laffoon**, January 19, 7 p.m.

Join us for the Ultimate Date Night featuring non-stop comedy and laughter that is filled with nuggets of marriage wisdom and Biblical principles. Pastor: Colin Wimberly.

■ Bayou Vista Baptist Church, Morgan City: **Gulf Coast Wild Game Supper**, January 20, 6 p.m. Cost: \$10 in the Family Life Center. Pastor: Steven Kelly.

■ Fellowship Baptist Church, Greenwell Springs: **The Erwin Family in concert**, January 21, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Pastor: Jeremy Pruitt.

■ First Baptist Church, Blanchard: **Allegiance Music Ministries in concert**, January 21, 6 p.m. Pastor: Doug Allen.

■ Cypress Baptist Church, Benton: **A Call to Prayer**, January 28, 6 p.m. Everyone is encouraged to join Southern Baptist churches in Northwest Louisiana for a powerful time of prayer. We will be praying for the lost, missionaries, families, our community, state, and country, repentance, revival, and harvest. Pastor: John Fream.

■ New Life Baptist Church, DeRidder: **"Soup**

for the Soul - Sowing Seeds of Hope", January 26, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Entertainment: **Peanut Butter & Jelly, comedians**. There will be a gumbo luncheon, silent auction and door prizes. Cost: \$10 and tickets can be purchased at the door. Proceeds will assist Beauregard Christian Women's Job Corps in providing women in need with life and job skills. Pastor: Jerry Key.

■ Georgetown Baptist Church, Georgetown: **Josh Blakesley in concert**, January 26, 7 p.m. Pastor: Carl Griffith.

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.

rei gp jxspi gyumpvh, rei mryi, sgrz ym zgk

mpwlrez, zgrz zgxc mgxcvipmz vxxf ctxe mcqg r

ipri ixo rm y ru?

mpqxei mrucpv eyep:pyogz

Clues:
C = U; I = D

Answer to December 14 Scripture Crypto:
Second Corinthians one:seven

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