



THE BAPTIST MESSAGE

November 25, 2021
Volume 136 • Issue No. 13

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PRAYER CATALYST FOR REVIVAL, CHANGE

Horn pleads for personal revival through prayer

By Brian Blackwell
Message staff writer

MONROE, La. (LBM) – Louisiana Baptist Executive Director Steve Horn in his report at the 2021 Louisiana Baptist Convention Annual Meeting, Nov. 16 at North Monroe Baptist Church, issued a challenge for revival and outlined a plan to be more engaged in the prevention of sexual abuse in the church.

ADDRESSING REVIVAL

Horn encouraged messengers to participate in 'Change Me,' a 28-day personal revival guide he authored based on Psalm 139:23-24.

"I believe our churches and our nation have no problems that humility before God and His Word would not fix immediately," Horn said.

Horn said revival is needed because, like the Israelites who wandered in the wilderness, today's Christ followers are stiff-necked, impatient, tempted to follow people rather than God, filled with pride and desperately need God's blessing.

"During the COVID quarantine, the Lord put on my heart this message:



LBC Communications photo

Louisiana Baptist Executive Director Steve Horn knelt during the 2021 Louisiana Baptist Convention Annual Meeting and asked God for revival. Horn encouraged messengers to participate in 'Change Me,' a 28-day personal revival guide he authored based on Psalm 139:23-24.

'Change me,'" Horn said. "I can't change anyone else. I can't change our circumstances. I can't change much, but I can ask the

Lord to change me.

"What came from that was a 28-day resource," he continued. "I want to invite you to join me. I

want to ask you to spend 28 days as this year ends or perhaps as 2022 begins,

See HORN, page 13

Speakers press messengers to unite for Gospel

By Brian Blackwell
Message staff writer

MONROE, La. (LBM) – Prayer is a necessity to spark revival within each person, David Cranford said in his 2021 Louisiana Baptist Convention Annual Meeting presidential address, Nov. 16, in the North Monroe Baptist Church.

Drawing from Matthew 6:5-15, Cranford, pastor of First Baptist Church, Ponchatoula, said God has given His children a model to follow in their prayer lives. He said prayer is a practical privilege and refreshingly simple, adding that it involves alone time with God and demonstrates a yielding faith.

Cranford said prayer helps center one's life on God and His Kingdom. He explained that Christ followers live in a time when it is increasingly difficult to be unplugged, but he stressed the importance of intentionally seeking time alone with God.

"God wants to change us," he said. "God wants to transform us. Prayer doesn't change God. It changes you. So, it then becomes consistent for God to do what he wants

See SPEAKERS, page 10

LBC church plants celebrate first 'harvest' in 'sweetwater'

By Brian Blackwell
Message staff writer

ABITA SPRINGS, La. (LBM) – Two Louisiana Baptist church plants recently celebrated their first

baptisms, respectively, as corporate bodies.

SWEETWATER CHURCH

Natalie and Sarah Cowell shared a sweet

sister moment, Oct. 31, when they became the first members of SweetWater Church, Abita Springs, to stir the baptismal waters.

See SWEETWATER, page 2

Sweetwater from page one

As the two sisters stepped into a horse trough at the Abita Springs Recreational Center to symbolize their new life in Christ, their mother, Amiee Cowell, was moved to tears because the baptisms signified a spiritual rebirth for the entire family. "My husband had passed away from cancer in 2019 and I was so angry at God I stopped going to church," Cowell told the Baptist Message. "When Pastor

Ken (Schroeder) told me he was planting the church, I knew it was time for us to get back into church and for my daughters to finally take that next step of baptism several years after they had accepted Christ. My girls are so close and do everything together, so sharing this moment is something they will remember forever." SweetWater Church held its first worship service in September, two years after

Northshore Baptist Association Missions Strategist Don Pucik asked Schroeder if he felt led to start a church in Abita Springs.

Schroeder, who in 2019 was transitional pastor at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Hammond, remained there until they called a pastor in February.

With a core group of eight people, SweetWater Church began meeting weekly, Sunday evenings, for Bible study in Schroeder's home, and on Easter drew 46 for their first preview service at the Abita Springs Recreational Center. They continued meeting for weekly Bible studies and a monthly preview service until the church plant gathered Sept. 12 for a "grand opening" service.

"We give all the glory to God," Schroeder said. "We don't do it. He does it. We are looking forward to what the Lord has planned for us."

HARVEST CHURCH

Harvest Church, Treme, celebrated their first baptism during the initial service as a congregation, Sept. 26.

Pastor Andrew Hanna said the baptisms were a reminder of God's faithfulness to the church plant, which



Submitted photo

SweetWater Church, Abita Springs, recently celebrated the church plant's first two baptisms, Oct. 31, in the town's recreational center.

since January had met in his home for monthly community interest meetings until they moved into Phillips Wheatley Community School in June for a monthly public gathering.

"It was a special and sweet moment," Hanna said. "There were a lot of people who walked with us along this journey, and they were there the day we had our first service. That day was an answer to a lot of prayers."

Even before they met for the first service, the church was involved in community outreach: Wheatley Community School, Treme, helped identify families

who needed assistance with school supply purchases and clean up from Hurricane Ida, which made landfall in August.

Since the launch, members have continued outreach through a candy distribution at a Halloween event at Lafitte Greenway Park. The church also has mentored students at Wheatley Community School each week and hosted a basketball clinic at the school that was led by Hanna, who is a physical education teacher there.

"My heart for our church

See SWEETWATER, page 6

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Louisiana Baptists enjoy fellowship, conduct business, address issues

By **Brian Blackwell**
Message staff writer

MONROE, La. (LBM) – Louisiana Baptists enjoyed fellowship and worship during the 2021 LBC Annual Meeting Nov. 16 at North Monroe Baptist Church, but also conducted the important business of passing resolutions, addressing a motion, approving a budget and electing leaders.

RESOLUTIONS

Messengers approved five resolutions: expression of appreciation for North Monroe Baptist Church's hosting of the 2021 LBC Annual Meeting; gratitude for disaster relief partners in the Gospel; the importance of the Annual Church Profile; the sufficiency of Scripture for race and racial reconciliation; and support for the Louisiana Fairness in Women's Sport Act (preventing biological males



Brian Blackwell photo

Kevin Ulmer, a messenger from First Baptist Church, Ferriday, spoke during a time of debate about a resolution at the LBC Annual Meeting.

from participating on teams designated for women, a bill which enjoyed overwhelming support from lawmakers but was vetoed by the governor).

But two messengers tried to amend the "Resolution: On the Sufficiency of Scrip-

ture of Scripture for Race and Racial Reconciliation."

This resolution was drafted to address the controversial concepts of Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality, both of which have become hot topics in school districts across

the country and during the 2021 election cycle. But concern about both was raised among Southern Baptists after Resolution 9 was adopted by messengers to the 2019 SBC Annual Meeting. That resolution commended both Marxist statements as "useful analytical tools" to "aid in evaluating a variety of human experiences."

Southern Baptists attempted to correct Resolution 9 during the 2021 SBC Annual Meeting by adopting Resolution 2 that condemned "any theory or worldview that ... finds the ultimate identity of human beings in ethnicity ... sees the primary problem of humanity as anything other than sin ... denies that racism, oppression, or discrimination is rooted, ultimately, in anything other than sin."

However, the SBC resolution stopped short of naming Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality as sinful.

The LBC Resolutions Committee used the same

language of the SBC resolution in the LBC resolution, but specifically named Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality as unbiblical concepts.

LBC messenger Richard Methvin, a messenger from Bistineau Baptist Church, Heflin, made a motion to strike a paragraph from the LBC resolution that documented that Southern Baptists had repented for the sin of racism in 1995. Methvin felt that the paragraph appeared to keep Southern Baptists "in a state of apology."

LBC Resolutions Committee Chair Johnny B. Hoychick, a member of the First Baptist Church, Rayville, explained that the committee was unanimous that the "language was proper and so we feel that it should be left in as is." Using raised ballots, the majority of messengers supported the committee.

Michael Linton, a messenger from First Baptist

See BUSINESS, page 6

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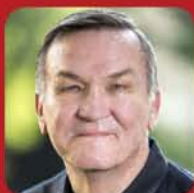
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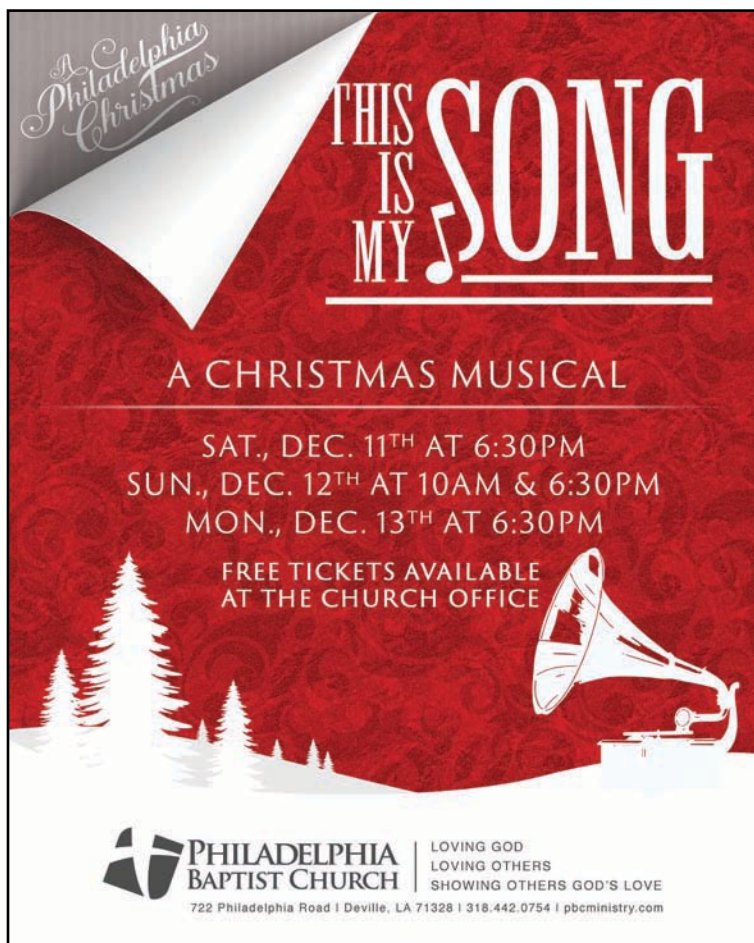
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LBC entity and special reports offer good news to messengers



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LOVING GOD
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By Brian Blackwell
Message staff writer

MONROE, La. (LBM) – Messengers to the 2021 Louisiana Baptist Convention Annual Meeting, Nov. 16, in North Monroe Baptist Church, heard encouraging updates from the state's four entities and two special reports.

LCU

In his report, President Rick Brewer celebrated the board of trustees' unanimous vote, Oct. 25, to change the school's name to Louisiana Christian University. He said it will strengthen the educational institution's reputation and further advance the Kingdom of God.

He said the university remains committed to preparing graduates and transforming lives, adding that since the start of the fall semester, 47 students have accepted Christ.

Brewer said LCU has launched the Center for



Louisiana Christian University President Rick Brewer shared that 47 students have come to faith in Christ since the start of the fall semester.

Calling and Career for students seeking internships, career advice and information about jobs available in their areas of studies. The center also helps students gain an understanding of how their values and spiritual gifts should be assessed to fully know what God is calling them to do in their lives and careers.

"We are preparing students to think Christianly and preparing them for life," Brewer said.

"Transformed people transform environments. Transformed businesses transform industries, transformed organizations transform other lives. And that's what your school is faithfully doing week in and week out." Justin Langford, dean of the College of Missions and Ministries, said

LCU's uncompromised commitment to a biblical worldview is reinforced through its Christ, Church, Culture series, Baptist Collegiate Ministry and chapel services.

"We do recognize there is a very, very difficult task that is set before us as a Christian higher education institution," Langford said. "But God has equipped us for such a time as this."

See ENTITIES, page 5

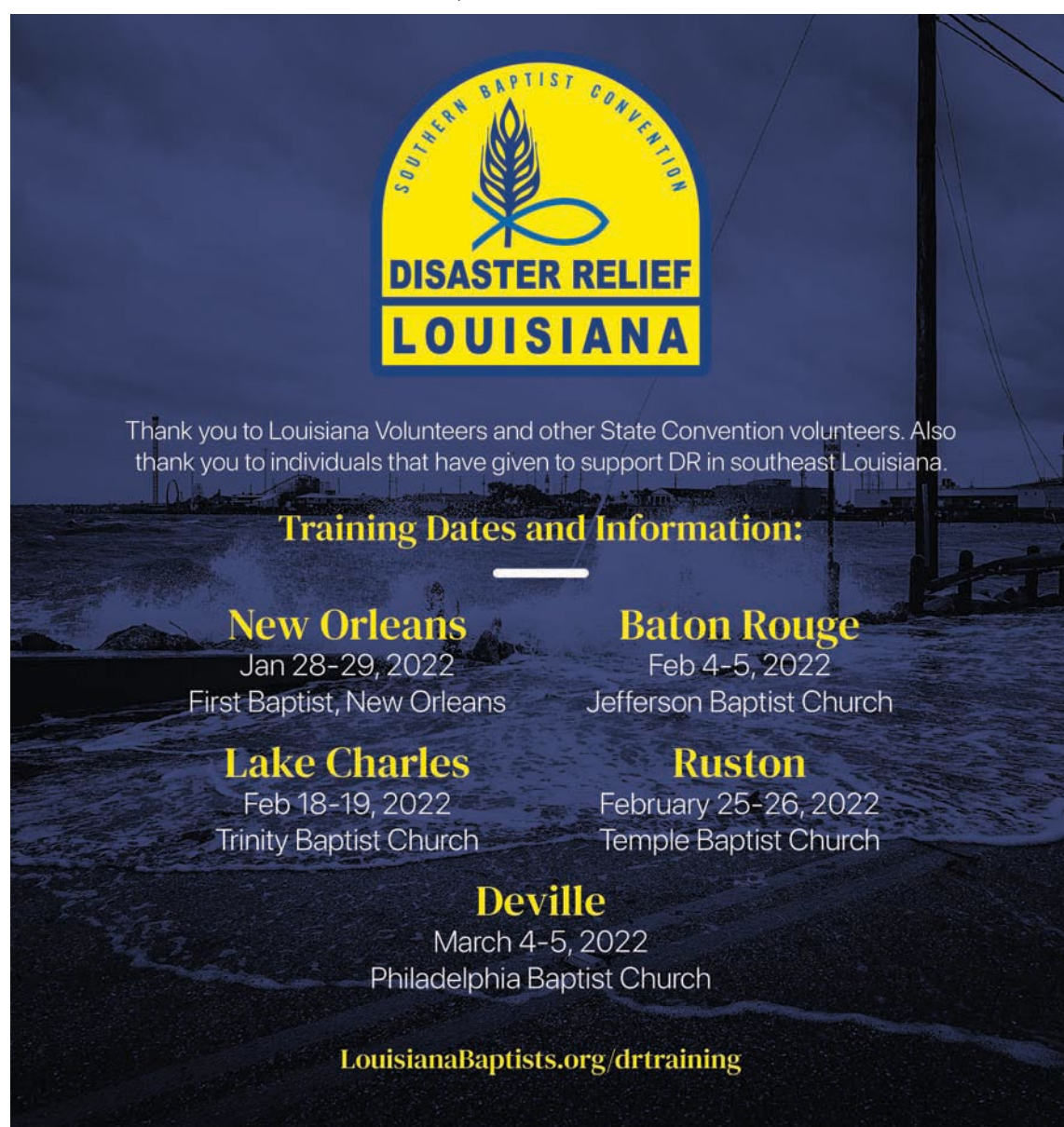


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State Sen. Beth Mizell was given the Esther Courage Award. Mizell is a member of First Baptist Church, Franklinton.



State Rep. Alan Seabaugh received the Shammah Courage Award. Seabaugh is a member of Broadmoor Baptist Church, Shreveport.



Brian Gunter, pastor of First Baptist Church, Pollock, presented state Rep. Mike Johnson with the Shammah Courage Award. Johnson is a member of First Baptist Church, Pineville.

ENTITIES from page 4

BAPTIST MESSAGE

Baptist Message Executive Editor Will Hall said the news outlet's staff and a team from the Association of State Baptists Papers had been on the ground covering Hurricane Ida through photos, videos and stories that were pushed to other state convention media outlets.

"We made a special

effort to emphasize the 31 state Baptist conventions that partnered with us," Hall said. "We felt it was important to get these reports, these photos, these videos out to them so that they could inform their churches about the importance of what they were doing here, about the difference they were making in our state by partnering with us in disaster relief."

He added that in 2022

the *Baptist Message* plans to offer a web-only subscription for those who prefer a digital format, and he announced that an RSS feed will be available in 2022 that will allow churches to add Baptist-Message.com headlines to their websites to provide dynamic content updated each time the news outlet updates its website.

PUBLIC POLICY

Hall, who also serves as director of the Office of

Public Policy, said his office testified and provided key resources to legislators and committee members on several key pro-life and pro-family bills.

He also thanked Louisiana Baptists for helping in a large way to pass the 2020 state constitutional amendment, the Love Life Amendment (which prevents a rogue actor in the judicial system from suddenly finding a right to abortion in the state constitution that is not actually written in it), not-

ing that Louisiana Baptists had inspired other state Baptists.

He said the statewide ballot initiative garnered 1,274,167 favorable votes, the most in Louisiana's history for either a candidate or ballot measure and noted that "because of your leadership other state Baptist conventions are undertaking initiatives like ours to protect common sense pro-life laws in their states with constitu-

See ENTITIES, page 7



Who. Does. What?

HereforYou.org
LOUISIANA BAPTISTS

I'VE BEEN watching a relatively new reality show called "Tough As Nails." There may be some of you who think this would be an apt title for your church business meeting! But we digress.

In the show, what some may call "blue collar" laborers are assembled from across the country to participate in a competition where they perform a variety of manual labor projects. Two things make this competition unique. First, they compete as a team, and then as individuals. Second, they compete for cash. I'm sure the IRS has agents on hand to help them complete the paperwork!

As I watched the show, I thought about the teamwork needed to attempt great things. We know God wants us to reach Louisiana, and I believe God has provided everything we need to complete the assigned task. So, let's talk logistics. If we're going to reach Louisiana, *who does what?* What is our part?

"The kingdom of God is like this ... a man scatters the seed on the ground..." Mark 4:26.

Our part begins with scattering the seed. Seems simple enough. No special training required. No advanced degree needed. All we have to do is - do it. Throw the seed. It doesn't matter where it lands, just scatter the seed. It's not that hard. It doesn't take much time. But are we doing it? Are we intentionally and consistently scattering the seed?

If we're not scattering the seed, we need to ask ourselves "why?" Why wouldn't we do the most basic of tasks that requires minimum effort and time? Do we have confidence in the seed? Do we believe the seed will make a difference in the life of that family member? Spouse? Neighbor? Co-worker? Do we believe the seed can do what God says it can do - if it's sown?

Could it be the problem is not related to the seed? Have you scattered the seed before and nothing happened, so you've lost confidence in the seed? Has the culture convinced you that no one wants to hear what you believe? *"Believe what you want, but keep it to yourself!"*

Regardless of the reason, *scattering the seed is our part.* Also, understand this, *God has chosen not to do our part.* He'll do His part, but only after we do ours.

God knows we're hesitant and inconsistent in scattering the seed, so He includes a promise. That's right, *our part comes with a promise.* If we'll scatter the seed, some will find good soil (Mt 13:8). Not *"if"* it finds good soil, but *"when"* it finds good soil.

Since 2019, Louisiana Baptists (you) have been scattering seeds of God's truth inside people's hearts and homes almost every day through *Here for You*, our multi-media outreach strategy. And it's working! Check out the progress at: LouisianaBaptists.org/hereforyou and enter **luke1423**.

As effective as this effort is, your efforts are needed to scatter more seeds and reinforce/supplement the seeds that have already been scattered.

Remember the story of Jack and the Beanstalk? Jack's mother was furious when she learned he traded their cow for handful of worthless beans. She proceeded to throw them out the window - and that's where the adventure began. Nothing happened until the seeds were scattered.

The adventure, the opportunity to reach Louisiana begins when we scatter the seed. God is ready to do His part. Will you do your part? **Start today.**

For resources and ideas on ways to do your part, visit louisianabaptists.org/here-for-you/resources



Brian Blackwell photo

Messengers elected new officers for the Louisiana Baptist Convention Annual Meeting: Price Harris, evangelist, Calvary Baptist Church, Shreveport, second vice president; Steven Kelly, pastor, Bayou Vista Baptist Church, Morgan City, and director of missions, Gulf Coast Baptist Association, vice-president; and Reggie Bridges, pastor, Temple Baptist Church, Ruston, president.



Submitted photo

The Louisiana Baptist Executive Board named new officers: Nathan Davis, pastor, First Baptist Church, Coushatta, vice president; and Dustin Stockstill, pastor, Bedico Baptist Church, Ponchatoula, president.

Business from page 3

Sulphur, asked that the resolution be amended to not completely condemn Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality, arguing that “there may be some truth in there to be found somewhere.”

Hoychick responded by pointing out “There’s only one way for reconciliation and that’s through Jesus,” adding that “There’s no man-made theory that will reconcile people.”

He concluded by noting that “from the committee’s perspective,” specifically condemning Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality addressed “those things that are out in the culture right now” and that the wording clearly stated “what we mean and what we stand on. We stand on Scripture.” Messengers overwhelmingly agreed by raised ballots.

MOTION

David Fuller, a messenger from First Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, submitted a motion to “condemn the Southern Baptist Convention President Ed Litton for plagiarizing his sermons for many years from his pulpit and call for him to resign from his position as President of the Southern Baptist Conven-



Brian Blackwell photo

Michael Linton, a messenger from First Baptist Church, Sulphur, spoke during a time of debate.

tion.” During the morning session, the motion was ruled out of order by the Committee on the Order of Business. But Fuller brought the matter up again in the afternoon during miscellaneous business, at which time messengers voted by raised ballots not to consider the motion.

BUDGET APPROVED

Messengers approved a Cooperative Program budget of \$17,626,136, a decrease of \$1,027,564, or 5.5 percent. Cooperative Program projections are based on actual receipts from August 2020 through July 2021.

The allocation formula for distributing Cooperative

Program gifts between the Southern Baptist Convention and Louisiana Baptist causes was not changed, 63.26 percent to support ministries in the state and 36.74 percent to be forwarded to fund national entities.

OFFICERS ELECTED

Reggie Bridges, pastor of Temple Baptist Church, Ruston, was elected president. Steven Kelly, pastor of Bayou Vista Baptist Church, Morgan City, and director of missions for Gulf Coast Baptist Association, was elected first vice president, and Price Harris, an evangelist from Calvary Baptist Church, Shreveport, was elected second vice president.

All three men were given individual votes of acclamation by the Convention – a single ballot cast by the LBC executive director in view of no opposition to any of the candidates.

LAGNIAPPE

The final messenger count for the 2021 Annual Meeting was 530.

Four new churches were accepted into membership of the LBC: Family Church NOLA, Kenner; Gulf Coast Baptist Church, Golden Meadow; New Friendship Baptist Church, Fishville; and Pointe of Life Community Church, Plaquemine.

The 2022 Annual Meeting is scheduled for Nov. 15 and will be held in Alexandria at Calvary Baptist Church.


Sweetwater from page 2

is we would be a faithful presence in the neighborhood to proclaim the Gospel and serve our neighbors,” he said. “That kind of witness will pay off in the long run. Ministry isn’t a sprint. It’s a marathon. We want to cultivate a place of community where people live as if the Gospel were true.

“We are seeing things already happening and how we can join in to help,” he continued. “We are limited in resources and manpower but not the heart.”

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Entities from page 5

tional amendments.”

Hall concluded his Office of Public Policy presentation by acknowledging three state legislators: Sen. Beth Mizell, a member of First Baptist Church, Franklinton; Rep. Alan Seabaugh, a member of Broadmoor Baptist Church, Shreveport; and Rep. Mike Johnson, a member of First Baptist Church, Pineville:

-- Mizell was lauded for championing the Fairness in Women's Sports Act, which would have prevented biological males from participating on teams designated for women, a bill which enjoyed overwhelming support from lawmakers but was vetoed by the governor, and subsequently missed a needed supermajority by two votes in the House during an historic override session.

-- Seabaugh was honored for taking a stand in the face of threatened gun violence and an actual physical attack to push for a simple language change (to prevent equating “dating” to “marriage”) in a bill that offered protections from violence for women and children.

-- Johnson was hon-

ored for his work behind the scenes to secure \$12 million to support foster care and adoption in the state. Hall invited Brian Gunter, pastor, First Baptist Church, Pollock, outreach director, Louisiana Right to Life, and chair, LBC Committee on Moral and Social Concerns, to make the presentation.

MORAL, SOCIAL CONCERNS

Afterward, Gunter used Johnson's efforts on behalf of foster children to launch his CMSC report, offering that nearly 4,000 children are in Louisiana's foster care system. He said that the committee had set up an ad hoc panel to work with the state legislature in 2022 to form a foster care and adoption legislative task force to identify ways to improve the system.

“We want those children to be cared for with Christ's love by Christ's people,” Gunter said.

He also explained that while multiple pro-life laws have been passed in the state recently, the fight for life is not over, reporting that every day an average of 22 babies lose their lives at abortion clinics in the state.

“We have abortion clinics in Shreveport, New Orleans and Baton Rouge and it is our mission to shut those abortion clinics down once and for all and protect every child in Louisiana by law,” he said. “Thank you so much Louisiana Baptists for your support and let's fight to take care of our state's children and to save the lives of the unborn in the days to come.”

LOUISIANA BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME

Perry Hancock, president and CEO of the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home and Family Ministries, said more than 3,000 children and others have heard about hope found in Jesus Christ this year through the entity's various ministries.

“Every day, day in and day out, when you wake up in the morning as a Louisiana Baptist you know that God is working, meeting needs,

changing lives through your Louisiana Baptist Children's Home,” he said.

Dennis Phelps, director of church and alumni relations, shared in the report that the entity recently restarted the Ministerial Care Residential Program. Louisiana Baptist terminated ministers and International Mission Board missionaries (on stateside assignment, transitioning to a new ministry or recently retired) are eligible to apply for a free apartment on the LBCHFM's campus in Monroe for up to one year.

“We want to say ‘thank you’ to you for supporting our Louisiana Baptist Convention and your strong support of the Cooperative Program, which allows us to reach out to help encourage and support the children and the families of our pastors and our missionaries in the Southern Baptist Convention,” said Phelps, who also is director of the Ministerial Care Residential Program.

LOUISIANA BAPTIST FOUNDATION

Louisiana Baptist Foundation Executive Director Jeff Steed said the entity is available to visit churches and educate Louisiana Baptists about such new services as church loans, payroll services, capital campaigns, in addition to money management for churches and it conducts seminars to aid Louisiana Baptists and churches on how to structure an estate or make a will.

Steed said that in the last year, the foundation helped Louisiana Baptists establish more than \$1.6 million in special gifts for churches and other ministries; earn \$1.4 million in income through a short-term fund; and receive returns of \$25.1 million in long-term accounts.

“The Louisiana Baptist Foundation is advancing the Kingdom one dollar at a time, one ministry at a time, one life at a time,” Steed said.

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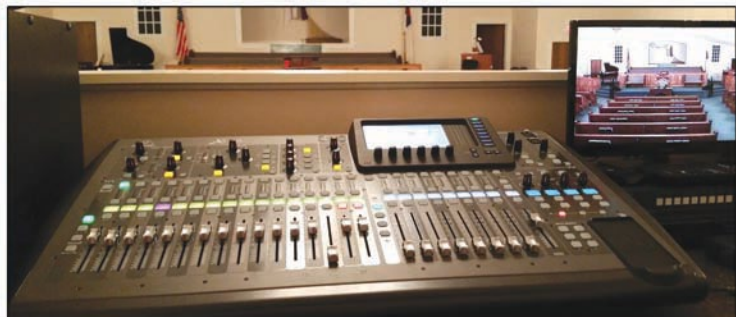
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Speakers from page one

to do anyway and that is to change the human heart.”

Prayer is not complicated and does not require a secret formula, Cranford said. He encouraged messengers to have a more focused prayer life.

“What’s the best way to pray?” he said. “The best way to pray the prayer you will use?”

“Talk to God as you would talk to your best friend,” he said.

“The secret to praying is to pray,” Cranford pointed out. “The vast majority of us in this room don’t need to learn how to pray. We need to learn to pray more.”

BIBLE STUDY

Steve Echols, president of Brewton-Parker College, Mount Vernon, Georgia, said for revival to come, Christ followers must exhibit the fruit of



Steve Echols led a Bible study on the fruits of the spirit.

the spirit.

“God is ready to empower us with the Holy Spirit,” Echols said, basing his Bible study on Galatians 5:22-23. “We can’t do it humanly. We don’t have to invent something. We don’t have to dream up something. We just need to allow the Holy Spirit to have His way in us.”

Echols said revival in America will come when the church shows up faithfully, overcoming obstacles they may encounter.

“It’s time for the church to show up, stand up and speak up,” he said. “Faithful – that’s the outcome of revival. Lord, change me.”

“But it’s not anything I can do,” Echols continued. “It is what the Holy Spirit does in me. It’s not something we can achieve, but it is something that He will surely do in us.”

OREN CONNER

Oren Conner, pastor of First Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, in his convention message challenged messengers to rely on and call upon the mercy of God.

Drawing from Luke 18, Conner said Christ followers must be more like the sinner who asked for God’s mercy and less like the Pharisee who believed he did not need it.

“Whoever tries to exalt himself God will humble, and whoever humbles himself God will exalt,” Conner said. “The days



Brian Blackwell photo

Retired and bivocational ministers were recognized during a special awards lunch for their service: R.V. Couch, Lake Lilly Baptist, Jonesville; Jerry Penfield, retired, and Marc Daniels, First Baptist Avondale, Avondale. Wallace Primeaux, retired, who was unable to attend, also was recognized.

of us exalting ourselves, lauding our accomplishments, claiming our moral high ground are gone. It’s time for God’s people to humble ourselves and confess we are sinners in need of God’s mercy. The plea for God’s mercy is a plea for change to take place in our lives which we want.”

Conner added that mercy leads to humility.

“God’s mercy is the

heartbeat of humility,” Conner said. “If you want, if you desire, to be humble before God, think on His mercy – the fact that he has not given to you what you deserve. He’s given you the abundance of grace from the riches of His wealth and glory. He, in this moment, is molding you and shaping you to be in the image of His Son Jesus because He loves you.”



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Titus White



Eddie Wren



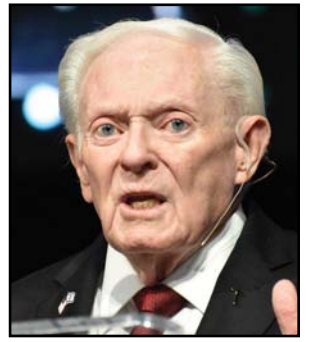
Steve Horn



Waylon Bailey



Jamie Dew



Tommy French

Pastors Conference speakers: Stand firm for Christ

By Brian Blackwell
Message staff writer

MONROE, La. (LBM) – During the 2021 Louisiana Baptist Pastor's Conference, Nov. 15, in the North Monroe Baptist Church, Monroe, speakers offered words of encouragement and conviction to pastors.

TITUS WHITE

Titus White, pastor of Grace Community Church, Baton Rouge, spoke during the opening session from Daniel 3:13-14, 25 to urge the crowd to stand firm on the Word of God.

He pointed to the faithfulness of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, who refused to bow to the image of gold made by King Nebuchadnezzar. He said they were brave in the midst of captivity, united in the midst of conformity and safe in the midst of captivity – and their obedience was rewarded.

"God has given them a platform of persecution to stand before men so God could get the glory," White said. "We've got to understand God sometimes puts us in a platform of persecution that God can get the glory out of our lives. They did not bend or bow. They

stood firm on the Word of God."

EDDIE WREN

Eddie Wren, pastor of First Baptist Church, Rayville, reminded pastors they can find peace and joy in Jesus. Preaching from Philippians 4, Wren said if pastors are going to stand firm they must worship, pray and act like Jesus.

"If we are going to stand firm, we have to find our joy in the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords," Wren said. "We have to find joy in the one who holds us in His hand and is so strong that no one can snatch us from Him."

Wren said Christians should practice prayer, supplication and thanksgiving when worry begins to set in.

"If we don't go before God with a grateful heart then we need to do a check because something's wrong," he said. "We've forgotten who He is and who we are. Instead of worrying, we should go to the Lord. When we take our worries to Christ, we are trusting Him; and the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension will guard our hearts and

minds in Christ Jesus."

JAMIE DEW

Jamie Dew, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, used 1 Peter 3:13 to challenge pastors to remain anchored in their calling to share the Gospel in a world hostile to the message of Christ.

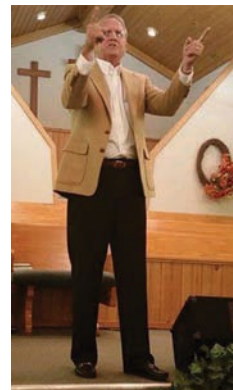
He said it is an honor to suffer for righteousness' sake and that Christ followers should love Jesus supremely, share Christ at all times, speak respectfully and keep a clear conscience.

Dew added that while he is saddened by the lack of respect for one another on social media by some who profess to be Christ followers, he is encouraged by the spirit of those he

visits each week at churches in Louisiana and across the United States.

"At the end of the day Southern Baptists are

See CONFERENCE, page 12



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Conference from page 11

kind, they're faithful, they love Jesus and they love people," Dew said. "And it gives me hope. The Gospel that we preach is offensive in its own right. The Gospel confronts people where they are and it says, 'You are a wretch, you are a scoundrel.' That's why God says, 'Don't add our offensiveness on top of that.' Always be ready to give a defense of the hope that is within you. Share Christ with people but do it with gentleness and respect."

STEVE HORN

Louisiana Baptist Executive Director Steve Horn cited 1 Peter 5:5-11 to exhort pastors to be hopeful and stand firm when facing spiritual battles.

Horn said pastors who are in spiritual battles must stand firm against pride and Satan – that they must stand firm in the faith. He

also reminded pastors to be humble toward others and God as they fight this spiritual battle against evil forces.

"The ultimate evidence of our trust in Jesus to be our living hope is to act in humility," Horn said. "As we humble ourselves, we cast our cares upon Him."

Horn closed his message with a challenge to remain strong in the faith.

"In face of everything culture throws at us, let us be reminded here today this is no time to go wobbly," he said. "Stand firm."

WAYLON BAILEY

Waylon Bailey, pastor of First Baptist Church, Covington, cited Jeremiah 1:4-19 to remind pastors they are formed to do God's work, for the Master and His plan, to proclaim God's Word and to be faithful and true.

Bailey said Christ followers will be tempted to draw back from the fight, but that they must resist and remember that now is the time not to retreat.

"It's not time for us to keep our heads down," Bailey said. "It's time for us to get our heads up."

Bailey cautioned pastors not to succumb to Satan's temptations of discouragement, fear and timidity. Instead, he told them, be bold and courageous.

"Somebody will fight against you," he said. "There's an enemy who fights against us and certainly he is not harmless. But the enemy will not overcome you because 'I am with you,' says the Lord. God's way is not to take us out of the fight. It is God's way to lock arms with us in the middle of the fight. Because He does that, we can be faithful and true



Family Research Council President Tony Perkins encouraged pastors to spend time in prayer and the Word.

"Your faithfulness to preach that message is the only thing that stands between sinful men and the eternal lake of fire."

TONY PERKINS

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, an evangelical public policy ministry, based in Washington, D.C., with offices in Baton Rouge, said if Christ followers want to see His Kingdom advanced in today's culture, they must be strong in the Lord, be prepared for the conflict, be bold to speak and not remain silent.

Perkins, a former interim pastor of Greenwell Springs Baptist Church near Baton Rouge, Louisiana representative and member of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, encouraged pastors to spend time in prayer and Scripture reading, and not to try to fit in with the culture.

"Are you spending time on a daily basis in your prayer closet crying out to God for your community, for this state and for this nation," Perkins said. "Are you spending time in his Word other than just sermon preparation? Are you challenging your people to be in the Word of God? We are powerless without the Word of God."

Despite the challenges the United States is facing, Perkins said he remains encouraged by the men and women of God who feel called to serve in politics.

"One reason I'm encouraged that God is not finished with America is He is continuously calling more and men and women of deep faith to our nation's capital to serve," Perkins said. "Men and women who love the Lord Jesus and they are there at great sacrifice to serve because they believe the Lord has called them there. Last time I checked God doesn't call people to go in when He's ready to destroy; when He's finished, He calls them out."

and obedient unto Him."

TOMMY FRENCH

Tommy French, pastor emeritus of Jefferson Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, reminded pastors to stand firm in a wicked culture that embraces sin.

He said multiple prophecies are being fulfilled and that great tribulations are on the horizon. Therefore, the Church must stand strong and be a bold witness to a world that needs Christ.

"God has called us, the pastors, to teach message of eternal life," French said.



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See CONFERENCE, page 13

Horn from page one

asking, 'Lord, change me.'"

Horn asked messengers to come forward and pick up a 'Change Me' booklet, adding that state missions services personnel and some Executive Board members completed the challenge earlier this year.

"Would you be willing to pray, 'Lord, change me. Search me. Know my heart. Test me and know my concerns. See if there is any offensive way in me; lead me in the everlasting way.'?"

ADDRESSING PERSONNEL POLICIES

Horn said the state missions and ministry staff will meet in January to address existing personnel policies, best practices and to develop helpful resources for how to handle matters related to sexual abuse. He pledged that the LBC Executive Board staff will continue to work throughout the year on this issue, offering other action steps for 2022:

- review and make necessary changes to Executive Board personnel policies;
- conduct a review of procedures and staff training for Louisiana Baptist-sponsored camps and events;
- explore how to help churches implement best practices to avoid sexual



A messenger picks up a devotional - Change Me - written by Louisiana Baptist Executive Director Steve Horn.

abuse;

-- train staff as resource providers to aid churches in sexual abuse response;

-- review best practices for equipping churches to honor, care for and minister to those harmed by sexual abuse; and

-- work with Louisiana Baptist entities to review their policies and training on sexual abuse prevention and reporting.

"Whereas churches only choose to cooperate with us, we do exist in part to serve the local church," he said. "We also have cooperative ministries in disaster relief, BCMs and camps. In light of this I want to offer my personal commitment before we meet in an annual meeting this time next year."



Brian Blackwell photo

New Pastors Conference officers are: James Doughty, First Baptist Church, Monroe, president; Ben Hackler, First Baptist Church, Sterlington, vice president; and Wes Pierce, Cook Baptist Church, Ruston, secretary-treasurer.

Conference from page 12

LANGIAPPE

Elected to lead the 2022 Pastors Conference are: James Doughty, pastor, First Baptist Church, Monroe, president; Ben

Hackler, pastor, First Baptist Church, Sterlington, vice-president; and Wes Pierce, student pastor, Cook Baptist Church, Ruston, secretary-treasurer.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Do you have a Revival, Homecoming, a new pastor, a community outreach or a concert? The Baptist Message would love to share your church news with the rest of the state. It is very easy to do, just send in your information (who, what, where and when) to philip@baptist-message.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

- **Justin, wife Alisha, Clark** is the new campus pastor at First West Fairbanks.
- **Andrew Orr** is the new education minister and wife **Tracy Orr** is the new children's minister at Blanchard First Baptist Church from Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville.
- **Jerod, wife Jessica, Gann** is the new student pastor at Summer Grove Baptist Church, Shreveport.
- **Stuart Graves** has resigned as pastor at Red River Baptist Church, Benton.
- **Micah Murrell** is new pastor at NOW church, a church plant in Grant Parish.

- **Jonathan Murrell** is new worship leader at NOW church, a church plant in Grant Parish from HIS Church, Pineville.
- **Matt Johns** is interim music director at HIS Church, Pineville.
- **Roger Dunlap** is the new pastor at Macedonia Baptist Church, Holden.
- **Marty Eaves** was ordained into the Gospel ministry on November 7 at First Baptist Church, Zwolle.
- **Chase, wife Rachel, Sanders** has been called as the new college pastor at First Baptist Church, Ruston.

REVIVAL

- Antioch Baptist Church, Farmerville: Harvest Sunday, December 5, 10:30 a.m. Speaker: **Bill Britt**. Pastor: Rubin Weaver.
- New Hope Baptist Church, Calcasieu: **Revival**, December 12-15, December 12, 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m. December 13-15, 6 p.m. nightly. Evangelist: **Mackey Willis**. Worship: **The Mackey Willis Family**. Pastor: Rob McLane.

LAGNIAPPE

- Bayou Rouge Baptist Church, Evergreen: **Furniture for sale**. 22 1-foot long pews (light maple in color) padded back and seat; matching Lord's Supper table; matching pulpit; two matching flower stands and two matching pulpit pews. If interested, please contact David Townsend at 337.945.3866, if no answer leave your number and he will call you back or Sam Pearce at 318.346.2166. To see the pews or to come pick them up call for an appointment. The

- church is located 100 Church St., Evergreen, LA 71333.
- First Baptist Church, Blanchard: **Southern Plainsmen in concert**, November 28, 6 p.m. Pastor: Clay Fuqua.
- Shreve City Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Southern Plainsmen in concert**, December 5, 10:45 a.m. Pastor: Gene Nix.
- Ashland Baptist Church, Ashland: **Southern Plainsmen in concert**, December 5, 6 p.m.
- Center Point Baptist Church, West Monroe: **Southern Plainsmen in concert**, December 11, 6 p.m. Pastor: Ricky Boone.
- Hickory Grove Baptist Church, Coushatta: **Southern Plainsmen in concert**, December 12, 10 a.m. Pastor: Mike Fort.
- **Branson at Bethany: Christmas Show**, November 30, 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Speaker: **Seva May**, singer, theater actress and former Miss Georgia, Music: **The Foto Sisters**. Comedy: **Ryan and Friends**. Cost: \$17 (no credit cards). A meal will follow each show. Checks must accompany ticket sales. Makes checks payable to: NLBA/B@B, 5875 W. 70th St. Shreveport, La. 71129. Tickets will be mailed upon receipt of checks. Mark which show you are attending. Tickets went on sale September 20 and there will be no refunds after November 15. Bethany Camp & Conference Center is located at 9766 Hwy 79, Bethany, La. 71007.
- First Mount Nebo Baptist Church, Jena: **From the Manger to the Cross – A walk-through of the life of Jesus Christ**, November 28, 6-8 p.m. at Nebo ballpark. Pastor: Mark Breland.
- First Baptist Church, Denham Springs: **The Lighting of Christmasville Spectacular!** November 28, 6 p.m. The FirstKids Quest Choir will

- sing, the sponsor trees will be judges, and we will light up Christmasville together. The Christmasville Village will be in this new area but have all of the old favorites ... story cabins, Santa, the petting zoo, the train, and the exciting new theme for **Winter Wonderland: A Candy Land Christmas**. The church's ticketed public events will be Dec. 3-5 and December 10-12. Tickets are available now at christmasville2021.eventbrite.com. Members night on December 2 will not require a ticket. Pastor: Leo Miller.
- First Baptist Church, Pineville: **First@First Business Leader Luncheon**, December 2, noon. Speaker: **Octavia Williams**, worship leader at River Outreach Church, Pineville. Cost: \$10 (lunch catered by Southern Creations) and open to the business community. Please RSVP to <https://fbcpineville.secure2.agroup.com/events/firstatfirst/2021-11-04+11%3A50%3A00>. Pastor: Stewart Holway.
- Istrouma Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **A taste of Christmas**, December 2, 7 p.m. at the worship center on the Baton Rouge campus. Cost: \$10 per/person. Kickoff the holiday season with our annual women's even, featuring the best holiday foods and music around. Pastor: Tim Keith
- Zoar Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Senior Adult Ministry Christmas Luncheon**, December 2, 11 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Music: **The Foto Sisters**. This is a ticketed event so contact the church for more information. Pastor: Clint Newsom.
- Broadmoor Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Falala Fest**, December 3, 4-9 p.m. This will be a fun-filled event for the entire family. It will take place in the north parking lot of Broadmoor Baptist Church (weather permitting). There will be vendors, train rides, choirs, Christmas trees, and fireworks, and more. Pastor: Chuck Pourciau.
- First Baptist Church, Lafayette: **The Singing Christmas Tree – Born is the King**, December 3-6, Friday, 7 p.m. Saturday, 3 p.m., Sunday, 3 p.m., Monday, 7 p.m. Under the direction of John Frank Reeve, minister of music, First Baptist Lafayette plans to celebrate Christ's birth this December with a Christmas program, "Born is the King," featuring The Singing Christmas Tree. The Singing Christmas Tree has been a part of this special season for over three decades. The presentation will tell the story of the birth of Christ and will serve as an inspiration of hope and love in these often-challenging times facing us across our nation and world. Pastor: James Pritchard.
- Parkview Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Mark Lanier Ministries in concert**, December 4, 11:30 a.m. Pastor: Chris DeGeorge.
- Trinity Baptist Church, Oak Grove: **Bethlehem Boulevard**, December 4-5, 6-8 p.m. Bethlehem Boulevard is a walk through nativity where you will travel back to Bethlehem the night that Jesus was born. You will be guided through the busy streets Bethlehem where you will encounter merchants, shepherds, livestock, and people from all places that have traveled to Bethlehem. There is no cost, but donations will be accepted. Pastor: Courtney Rainey.
- Columbia Heights Baptist Church, Columbia: **Mark Lanier Ministries in concert**, December 5, 6 p.m. Pastor: Warren Maxwell.
- First Baptist Church, Bossier City: **The Foto**

- Sisters in Concert**, December 5, 10:45 a.m. – noon. Pastor: Brad Jurkovich.
- Trinity Baptist Church, Lake Charles: **Grand Reopening Celebration**, December 5, 9 and 10:45 a.m. Trinity Baptist will be celebrating the grand reopening of its remodeled central venue. Speaker: **Steve Horn**. Pastor: Steve James.
- First Baptist Church, Ponchatoula: **Thrive 55 Christmas**, December 7, 10 a.m. Music/Worship: Fellowship: The Todd Allen Family. Pastor: David Cranford.
- First Baptist Church, Haughton: **Tinsel in the Trunk**, December 8, 6 p.m. Life Group classes can be a part of holiday night for the church and community by registering their trunk. Classes are asked to decorate cars and give out candy or prizes. Be creative and present your favorite Christmas theme. If interested in participating, call Teresa at 318.949.2441. Food trucks will be on-site for food purchases. If you plan to bring your children and your friends, be sure to register before you come. Pastor: Gevan Spinney.
- First Baptist Church, Moss Bluff: **Christmas at First**, December 8, 6-8 p.m. There will be a Christmas experience for the whole family. The event will feature funnel cakes, hot chocolate, Jingle Jam, fire pits, snow, live music and so much more. Pastor: Steve Bennett.
- First Baptist Church, Zachary: **Mark Lanier in concert**, December 9, 10 a.m. Pastor: Paul Ballard.
- First Baptist Church, Ponchatoula: **Christmas Spectacular 2021—The Glory of Christmas**, December 10 & 12, 7-9 p.m. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Childcare will be available for children ages 5 and under. Pastor: David Cranford.
- First Baptist Church, Bossier City: **Women's Annual Christmas Gathering – Home for Christmas**, December 9, 6 p.m. For more information, visit www.firstbossier.com/gathering. Pastor: Brad Jurkovic.
- Calvary Baptist Church, Merryville: **Live Walk Through Nativity**, December 10, 6 p.m. and December 11, 8 p.m. Come walk through and visit with the town of Bethlehem. Live animals and something for all ages. Pastor: Jim Miers.
- Houston River Baptist Church, Lake Charles: **Journey to Bethlehem**, December 10-12, 6-8:00 p.m. Come take a step back in time to experience the night of Jesus' birth. Pastor: Lonnie Gothrup.
- Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville: **A Christmas Musical – This is My Song**, December 11-13, December 11, 6:30 p.m., December 12, 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., December 13, 6:30 p.m. Free tickets are available at the office, located at 722 Philadelphia Road, Deville, LA 71328. While tickets are free, they are necessary to ensure adequate seating. Pastor: Philip Robertson.
- First Baptist Church, Jonesville: **Mark Lanier with Sherry and Randy Miller in concert**, December 11, 6 p.m. Pastor: Todd Whittington.
- Bethel Baptist Church, Colfax: **Mark Lanier in concert**, December 12, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Carl Gulde.
- Trinity Baptist Church, Sulphur: **Mark Lanier in concert**, December 12, 6 p.m. Pastor: Lamar Huffman.
- Hickory Grove Baptist Church, Coushatta: **The Southern Plainsmen in concert**, December 12, 10 a.m. Pastor: Mike Fort.



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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.

OBI PXBI WTRP QXOPJ, OBI BTJ WTRP COPKXBJD, OBI JRPB

RBJT JQX ATPJ WTRP CTI; STP QX MD CPOUMTRD OBI

KXPUMSRA, DATF JT OBCXP, OBI TS CPXOJ GMBIBXDD, OBI

PXYXBJXJQ QMK TS JQX XNMA

ZTXA JFT:JQMPJXXB

Clues:
P = R; O = A

Answer to October 28 Scripture Crypto:
Joel two:thirteen



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