



# THE BAPTIST MESSAGE

October 13, 2022

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Submitted photo

Pastor James Pritchard baptizes a young girl at First Baptist Church, Lafayette. The church celebrated 155 baptisms during its most recent calendar year.

## FBC Lafayette: Small groups, evangelism emphasis fuel growth

By Brian Blackwell • Message staff writer

**L**AFAYETTE, La. (LBM) – An ongoing emphasis on evangelism and small groups has helped fuel steady growth at First Baptist Church, Lafayette.

“During the last 12 months, the Lord has blessed the energy and effort we have put into what God has called us to do,” Pastor James Pritchard told the *Baptist Message*. “We have tried to cast a vision and make plans to do so in a biblical way.”

See **GROWTH**, page 4

## Messengers to vote on broader definition of ‘cooperating church’

By Brian Blackwell  
Message staff writer

WOODWORTH, La. (LBM) – Executive Board members adopted a proposed amendment to the Louisiana Baptist Convention Articles of Incorporation, Sept. 27, that allows a church to contribute solely to state causes and still be defined as a church in cooperation with the LBC.

Previously a church was required to support Southern Baptist causes in order

to be in friendly cooperation with the LBC.

In his report, Louisiana Baptist Executive Director Steve Horn told the Board that 26 of about 1,600 Louisiana Baptist congregations have instructed that their cooperative missions and ministries contributions must be used only in the state with none of their gifts to be forwarded to the Southern Baptist Convention.

The moves by the 26

See **COOPERATING**, page 6



Steve Horn

## McLaurin: ‘Walk together in unity’

By Brian Blackwell  
Message staff writer

WOODWORTH, La. (LBM) – Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee Interim President and CEO Willie McLaurin urged Louisiana Baptist Convention Executive Board members to remain unified around the Great Commission.

“I’m convinced we are created in the image of God in order that we might be on mission with God,” McLaurin said

during the board meeting, Sept. 27, at Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center. “Whenever we walk together in unity we can



Willie McLaurin

accomplish so much more for the glory of God. God’s Word reminds us that we are called to walk together in unity.”

Preaching from Acts 2, McLaurin said the early church made a difference because they were unified in their mission to share the Gos-

See **UNITY**, page 2

## Koran: Missions giving increase fuels Kingdom growth

By Brian Blackwell  
Message staff writer

HAUGHTON, La. (LBM) - Koran Baptist Church, for many years, has worked to be a Gospel

lighthouse to the community, state and world, but recently decided to take their commitment to a new level.

Koran Baptist Church, which averages 150 in wor-

ship, felt led to increase their giving to state mission causes through the Georgia Barnette Louisiana Missions Offering. In 2020,

See **KORAN**, page 2



# Koran

from page one

the church gave more than \$12,000 but a year later increased that to \$65,000 (\$433 per person).

Pastor Michael Reichard said the COVID-19 pandemic and hurricanes exposed the breadth of the need for Christ in Louisiana and his congregation subsequently felt led to give more to mission causes in the state.

"The mission field is ripe,

right here, and is filled with opportunity," Reichard said. "If we don't speak to them, who will? That's why we give to missions in the state.

"Our prayer is that God would give us the wisdom to know what to say and that He would not leave us alone until we obey," he continued. "And we pray that God would continually motivate us -- not just once, but all

the time."

Reichard said he feels blessed to be a part of such a mission-minded church whose efforts have translated into 12 baptisms since January and changed lives in their community.

A van ministry that transports as many as 85 children, youth and adults on Sundays and Wednesdays has resulted in some of those accepting Christ as Lord and Savior.

Additionally, the church provides backpacks filled with food for needy children that attend Wednesday night activities; volunteers at a rescue mission in Shreveport; collects school

supplies for families in the community; and donates to families 50 pounds of grass-fed beef that a church member "tithes" off the 500 pounds he produces from his cattle.

Reichard said he is blessed to be a part of a church that embraces their community for Christ.

"We are praying that God will continue to burden us for His purposes and not

ours," he said.

**The goal for the 2022 Georgia Barnette Louisiana Missions Offering is \$1.7 million, an amount that supplements what Louisiana Baptists give through the Cooperative Program, the primary funding channel for state and national Baptist causes. For more information, visit georgiabarnette.org.**

# Unity

from page one

pel locally and beyond. Furthermore, he said, they experienced God's blessings because they ex-

alted the Savior, explained Scripture, edified the saints, embraced the Holy Spirit and saw sinners evangelized.

"All of this happened because they were unified together under the banner of the Lord Jesus Christ," he said. "They did not resist the Spirit. But they allowed the Holy Spirit to be their leader, to be their guide. And they were obedient to the purpose and the plan of the almighty God.

"I believe If we would continue to model what we see in Acts 2, we too in our churches, in our state conventions, in our Southern Baptist Convention and across the world will see a harvest of people who are on the road to Hell and will be on the road to Heaven," he continued. "And men and women, boys and girls, would be saved and baptized and set on the road to discipleship."

McLaurin said he has strived to bring about unity in his current role at the Executive Committee.

"My ministry has been to provide a ministry of unity and ministry of stability in a time when there is disunity," he said.

See UNITY, page 14

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## Growth from page one

“While the Bible did not have the same exact methodology we have today, the principles of that methodology are the same,” he continued. “That includes a big emphasis on prayer – praying for Kingdom needs and for lost people – as well as intentional evangelism and small groups.”

During the church’s most recent calendar year (Sept. 1, 2021-Aug. 31, 2022), they celebrated 155 baptisms, compared to 57 the previous year; and the most baptisms in any single year for the church, since 1998-1999, when they recorded 157.

Moreover, the church has seen growth in Sunday school and worship.

FBC Lafayette started 10 new Sunday school classes in 2021 and another 13 since January. The church also saw Sunday worship attendance increase from 870 in September 2021 to 1,078 in August 2022.

### RISING ABOVE COVID

When Pritchard started

as pastor in April 2020, the state of Louisiana had begun implementing COVID-related restrictions. After a two-week hiatus from meeting in mid-March, adult Sunday school classes began online, allowing these small groups to maintain fellowship and study until on-campus classes resumed.

Minister to Adults Scott McKenzie said church leaders understood the vital role Sunday school plays in the life of FBC Lafayette and remained committed to that aspect of ministry.

“We never lost traction even though we hadn’t met in person for several months,” McKenzie said. “What we learned from COVID is affirmation that small group ministry is important to our church. It is the glue that helped all of us stay together during a difficult time in our country.”

The church continued to grow their Sunday school program in the ensuing months and prepared for a



Submitted photo

First Baptist Church, Lafayette, held a steak night prior to February revival services, which culminated with 56 baptisms the final night.

four-day revival in February 2022. After times of prayer and fasting, the church saw the Holy Spirit move with 56 baptized on the final night of the revival.

Although the meetings ended, revival did not as 59 more new converts were baptized in the following

six months.

“We have seen people continue to come to Christ, get baptized and get plugged in, and that is what you want out of revival,” Pritchard said. “Their hearts were touched and changed, and it has resulted in raising the bar on everything we


are doing now.”

### ONWARD & UPWARD

Pritchard said he is amazed at the way his congregation has continued to embrace a lifestyle of dis-

See **GROWTH**, page 5

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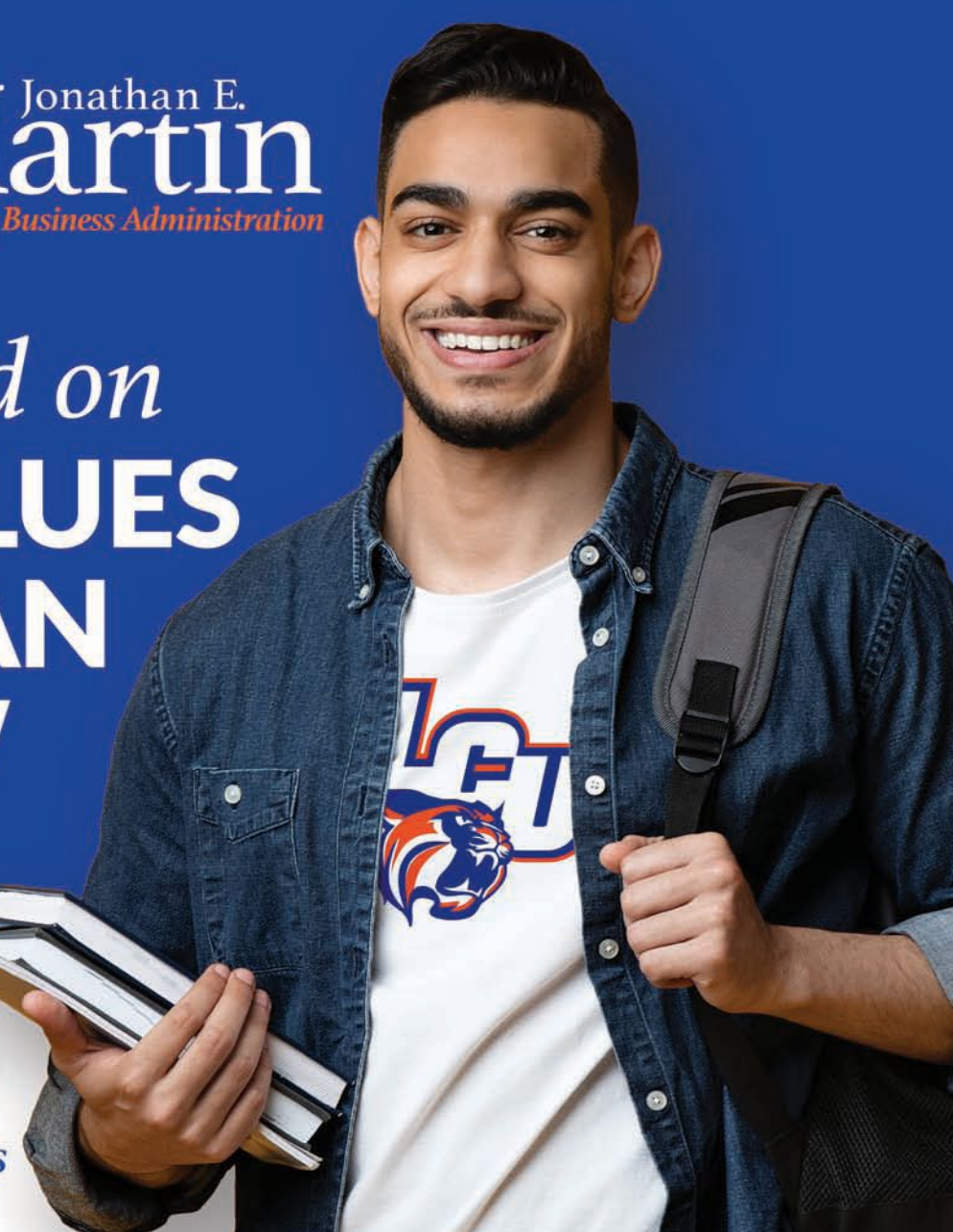
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# Students washed 'white as snow' at 'Color Clash' Growth

By Brian Blackwell  
Message staff writer

DEVILLE, La. (LBM) – Two hundred sixty students kicked off the new school year with worship and a colored powder war at Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville.

Importantly, the "Color Clash" evangelistic event was a catalyst for salvation decisions by 23 students.

Student minister Andrew Barber said the event reinforced his students' passion for reaching their classmates for Christ.

"The students were just ready to go all in on bringing their friends," Barber told the *Baptist Message*. "They were excited for the 'stuff,' but we were up front that we were going to share Jesus with everyone in that room; and they bought in."

Color Clash is Philadelphia's biggest student outreach event of the year and features a Gospel presentation, giveaways and a

chance for participants to engage in friendly battle using colored powder.

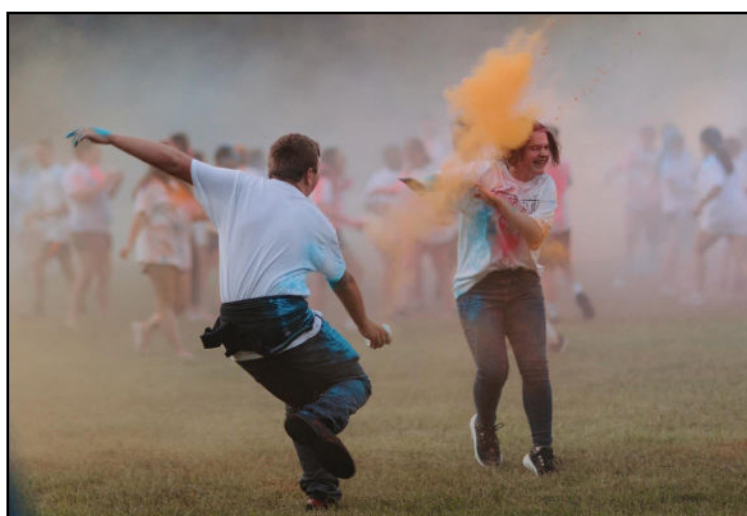
The church prepared for the event with months of prayer and a mass distribution of flyers by Philadelphia students to classmates.

The outreach effort proved successful as 125 first-time visitors attended.

"When God answered, he answered in an incredible and intentional way," Barber shared. "I had numerous students come up to me after with excitement that the friend they invited gave their life to Christ. My favorite comment was from a freshman basketball player who said, 'Two of my teammates got saved tonight.'"

Junior Gabe Lewis, the son of Louisiana Baptist Youth Strategist Brandon Lewis, said he was overcome with joy after seeing three people whom he had invited at the event.

"It was awesome to see



Submitted photo

Students enjoyed the Color Clash, Philadelphia Baptist Church's biggest student outreach event of the year that featured a Gospel presentation, giveaways and a chance for participants to engage in friendly battle using colored powder. Twenty-three students made a decision to follow Christ.

so many of the invitations end up in so many areas of our school," Lewis said. "I was jumping for joy knowing they came and then also seeing some of my classmates accept Christ. I can't wait to see what God does with our youth group the rest of the year."

PBC Pastor Philip Robertson believes the event is

only the start of a mighty movement of the Holy Spirit in the church and community.

"It was an incredible Wednesday night youth service," he said. "What a Savior. I'm grateful to Andrew Barber and all of our adult volunteers who minister and shepherd our students."

from page 4

cipleship and evangelism so they can reach Acadiana for Christ through Kingdom-minded prayer, weekly visitation, intentional invitations during worship services, an annual revival and a multiplying Sunday School. He also is proud that his members have hosted spiritual enrichment events for the state, including the Louisiana Baptist Convention's ReGroup Sunday School training event which drew 320 participants, including 110 from FBC Lafayette.

"I believe God is up to something," he said. "I have no clear picture on what that is, but I do know that in south Louisiana there is a large amount of lostness. I sense there is great opportunity because there are so many fish in this pond that have not been caught yet. Prayerfully, the Lord is positioning us where we can do it even greater."

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"I believe there is a God but I need help really feeling HE IS THERE."

"I'm afraid that God won't love me for EVERYTHING I'VE DONE in the past."

"I want to be set free ... AND I KNOW HE IS THE WAY OUT ... but how do I know if I'm forgiven?"

"I prayed that PRAYER and started crying."

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# Cooperating

from page one

Louisiana Baptist churches adds to a growing trend among state Baptist convention congregations:

-- Earlier this year, the Missouri Baptist Convention adopted a "Plan B" which allows churches to withhold funds from selected SBC entities without withdrawing from CP support altogether, according to the Missouri Baptist Convention's newspaper, *The Pathway*. About

217 congregations were choosing to withhold funds from the SBC as late as Aug. 2.

-- The Pathway also reported that the Georgia Baptist Mission Board (formerly the Georgia Baptist Convention) allows congregations to exclude up to two SBC entities and still be in friendly cooperation with the state convention. *The Christian Index*, the news

journal of Georgia Baptists, reported that at the end of July more than 180 congregations in the state were bypassing the SBC and that "others have changed their allocations."

-- Meanwhile, *Baptist Press*, a division of the communications department of the SBC Executive Committee, has noted that "North Carolina, Wyoming and Oklahoma periodically forward church gifts to the [SBC] EC with some type of designation or restriction."

The backlash against the SBC appears to be related to a number of developments at the national level, including: the SBC Executive Committee's hiring of a pro-gay law firm, Bradley of Nashville, and the SBC Sexual Abuse Task Force's hiring of the pro-gay Guidepost Solutions, both in response to SBC messengers asking for an investigation of the alleged mishandling of sexual abuse accusations; the SBC EC's waiver of attorney-client privilege and the subsequent departure of the SBC's long-standing law firm; the abrupt departure of Ronnie Floyd as SBC EC president and CEO; and the SBC Credential Committee's non-decision at the 2022 SBC Annual Meeting on an issue about ordained women pastors.

Horn said that the LBC is trying to be understanding that some Louisiana Baptist congregations have con-

cerns about the SBC.

"We are trying to strike that balance of honoring their requests while at the same time continuing to promote the ideal that we are better together with our Southern Baptist partners," Horn said during the board meeting, Sept. 27, at Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center. "By supporting this adjustment, you will be helping us to keep these churches engaged in Louisiana Baptist life while continuing to pray with them and encouraging them to reengage in Southern Baptist life. And I fear that disallowing this could cause us to permanently lose these now cooperating churches."

The proposed amendment now will be voted on by messengers to the LBC Annual Meeting, Nov. 15, in the worship center of Calvary Baptist Church, Alexandria.

See the related amendment notice in this issue.

## SEXUAL ABUSE TASK FORCE UPDATE

Horn also updated board members on response to work related to the Sexual Abuse Task Force.

He said the LBC staff members, in January, were trained by Ministry Safe, a national ministry that equips churches and ministry programs to better protect children from sexual abuse, with particular em-

phasis on recognizing signs abusers are "grooming" victims.

Horn noted staff will continue ongoing online training to stay current on the matter. He said dialogue has begun on how this growing understanding of this issue changes the way they conduct ministry specific to Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center, Baptist Collegiate Ministry and Disaster Relief.

Other related measures include:

-- The administrative committee adopted a change in its personnel manual prior to the Executive Board meeting regarding the chain for reporting abuse within the staff. Instead of reporting stopping with Horn, employees will be advised that they can report to the Executive Board president.

-- Language will be added to the LBC Personnel Handbook as to what steps to take regarding any allegations of reports of abuse, if any, in its organization.

-- An LBC Sexual Abuse Response Council has been formed to help guide work in sexual abuse awareness and reform. Pastoral Leadership Team Director Ray Swift, Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director Jeannie Saylor, Communications Associate (Stewardship and Cooperative Program) Stacy Morgan, Baptist Collegiate Ministry Team Director Mark Robinson, Adult Ministry Strategist Jeff Ingram, Administrative Assistant / Human Resource Specialist Jessica Fontenot and Women's Missions and Ministry Strategist Christine Gill will serve as committee members and report on their work during the upcoming LBC Annual Meeting.

-- Horn and LBC President Reggie Bridges attended a meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, April 4, with other state convention leaders for an update from the Sexual Abuse Task Force.

## ALL IN FOR SBC ANNUAL MEETING

Horn urged board members and other Louisiana Baptists to be "all in" for participation in the 2023 SBC Annual Meeting and related evangelistic events in New Orleans.

Originally scheduled to

See COOPERATING, page 10

## LOUISIANA CHURCH INSURANCE

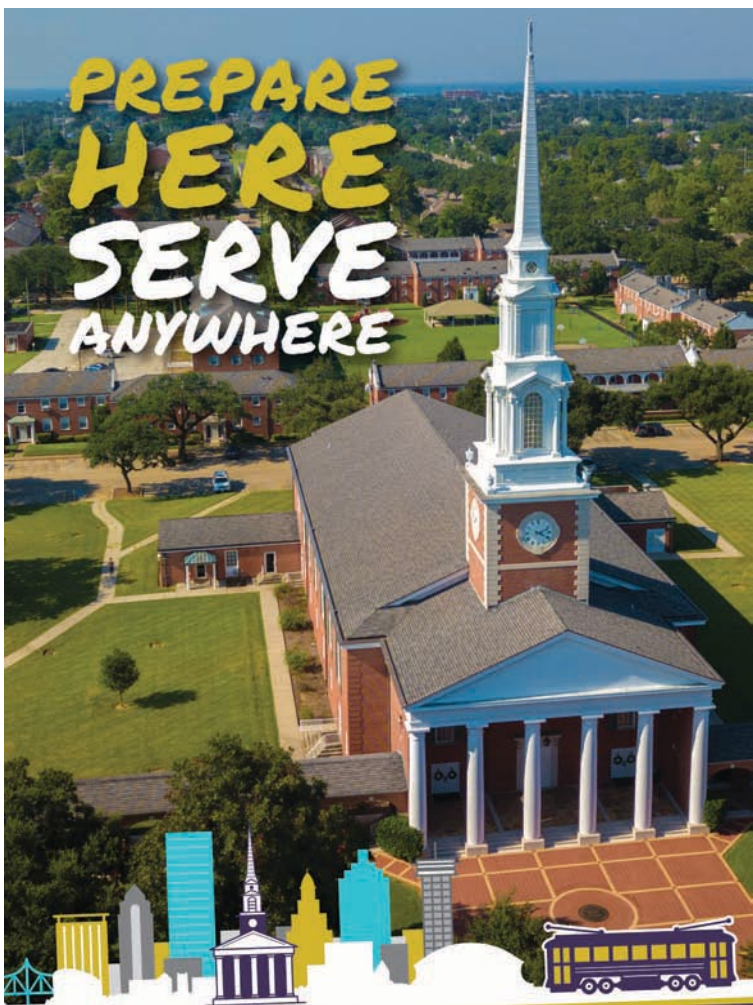
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**By Brian Blackwell**  
Message staff writer

## BUDGET APPROVAL

## ENTITY REPORTS

Louisiana Baptist Foundation President Jeff Steed said in the last 12 months more than \$2.2 million in special gifts have been established that benefit churches and other ministries, and that the Foundation's short-term fund during that same timeframe yielded more than \$1.9 million for church and other ministry accounts.

port overall has been realized since the July 2020 launch of the LBF's Vision200 (impacting the Kingdom with \$200 million through the LBF in 20 years or less).

Through LBF's ChurchBiz services, the entity recently added church loans, payroll services, a computer support help line and capital campaigns, Steed added. The foundation soon will offer accounting services and online giving.

“What drives us on a daily basis is advancing the Kingdom,” Steed said. “Thank you, Louisiana Baptists, for the opportunity to advance the Kingdom, one dollar at a time, one ministry at a time, one life at a time.”

*Baptist Message* Executive Editor Will Hall said the newspaper remains on solid ground financially, which helps the entity continue reporting good news taking place in

“We are trying to keep Louisiana Baptists informed about the good news of our cooperative missions and ministries as well as being informed so that you can fully participate as a member of the community faith that we call the Louisiana Baptist Convention and as a member of the larger community of faith that we call the Southern Baptist Convention,” he said.

Hall, who also serves as the director of the Convention's Office of Public Policy, said Louisiana Baptists enjoyed some "wins" such as passage of the Fairness in Women's Sports Act and several pro-life pieces of legislation.

"I'm very proud of your Louisiana Baptist legislators who helped support our work," Hall said. "We have 15 Louisiana Baptists who are members the House and

eight who are members of the senate in Louisiana. Most of them worked with us, diligently, to represent your voices in the public policy which is enacted in this state.”

Louisiana Baptist Children's Home and Family Ministries President and CEO Perry Hancock shared that in 2021 the entity ministered to more than 8,000 children, families and individuals in need.

He explained that the entity continues to reach others with the Gospel through its HomePlace ministry for homeless women and their children, Granberry Counseling Centers, the partnership with a Haitian children's village built by Louisiana Baptists and its campus in Monroe.

Hancock said more information about the impact LBCHFM minis-

See **GOOD NEWS**, page 10

**DWELL - 2022 LBC ANNUAL MEETING**  
**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15 • CALVARY BAPTIST, ALEXANDRIA**

**"WHATEVER IS TRUE, HONORABLE ... DWELL ON THESE THINGS" - PHIL. 4:8-9**

**LOUISIANABAPTISTS.ORG/ANNUALMEETING**





## RESOLUTION 1: ON THANKING GOD FOR THE SUPREME COURT'S PRO-LIFE RULING IN DOBBS V. JACKSON

**WHEREAS**, Scripture reveals that all human life is created in the image of God, and therefore sacred to our Creator (Genesis 1:27; 9:6); and

**WHEREAS**, The Bible affirms that the pre-born child is a person, bearing the image of God, from the moment of conception (Psalm 139:13-16; Luke 1:44); and

**WHEREAS**, Louisiana Baptists have historically recognized the sanctity of life in the womb and repeatedly reaffirmed our pro-life ethic, our opposition to the heinous act of abortion, our support for abortion-vulnerable women as well as our commitment to the sanctity of marriage and the health and growth of families; and

**WHEREAS**, Louisiana Baptists have prayerfully sought God's favor in moving the nation's highest court to affirm the truth that life begins at conception and that the preborn are worthy of dignity and protection; and

**WHEREAS**, The United States Supreme Court ruled in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* to overturn its harmful decisions in *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992); which, combined, led to more than 63,000,000 preborn lives lost during the past 49 years; and

**WHEREAS**, The Louisiana Legislature, the governors of Louisiana, and the citizens of our state had enacted laws to end abortion in our state once *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* were overturned; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the messengers to the 175th session of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, meeting in Alexandria, Louisiana, November 15, 2022, praise God and thank Him for His favor in the long-term effort to overturn the disastrous pro-abortion precedents set in *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That we applaud Associate Justices Samuel A. Alito, Jr., Amy Coney Barrett, Neil M. Gorsuch, Brett M. Kavanaugh and Clarence Thomas for their courageous unity in the face of threats of violence against them and their families to stand firm in returning "the authority to regulate abortion ... to the people and their elected representatives," allowing Louisiana and other states to ban abortion, thus protecting the lives of the preborn and upholding the sanctity of the parent-child relationship; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That we commend the churches and individuals who have worked tirelessly to cultivate a pro-life culture in our state through prayer, spiritual health and growth of our citizenry about pro-life matters, and public policy action (including the overwhelming passage of the 2020 statewide ballot measure, the Love Life Amendment); and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That we implore Louisiana Baptists to increase their efforts to serve and support local pregnancy resource centers, pro-life organizations, foster-care and adoptive families, doing invaluable and often under-recognized work in the care of mothers and children at every stage of life and the support of fathers so they may effectively bear their parental responsibilities; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That we commit to stand with and pray for abortion-vulnerable women and the fathers of preborn children, to eliminate any perceived need for the horror of abortion, and to oppose Planned Parenthood and other predatory organizations or institutions who exploit vulnerable women for profit; and be it finally

**RESOLVED**, That we urge the Louisiana Legislature to designate the month of June as "Sanctity of Preborn Life Month" in celebration of the Supreme Court's historic ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*.

## RESOLUTION 2: ON PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM THE PERMANENT PHYSICAL HARM OF SEX CHANGE SURGERIES AND DRUGS

**WHEREAS**, Worldwide there has been an unexplained surge in the number of children who claim a transgender identity; and

**WHEREAS**, Research indicates that "childhood-onset gender dysphoria has been shown to have a high rate of natural resolution," with Paul R. McHugh, the renowned psychiatrist who led Johns Hopkins University Hospital to stop sex reassignment surgery in part because of a study at Vanderbilt University (Nashville, Tennessee) and the Portman Clinic (London, England) which found "70 percent to 80 percent" of children who experienced gender confusion "spontaneously lost those feelings"; and

**WHEREAS**, There is no evidence that long-term mental health outcomes are improved or that rates of suicide are reduced by hormonal or surgical intervention; and

**WHEREAS**, Instead, the preponderance of the scientific literature shows that suicide rates, psychiatric morbidities, and mortality are higher after gender reassignment or hormone therapy; and

**WHEREAS**, So-called sex change surgeries, puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones cause permanent harm in children, including cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, irreversible infertility, liver dysfunction and increased cancer risks; and

**WHEREAS**, Children lack the mental and emotional maturity to give informed consent for such drastic measures; and

**WHEREAS**, Puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones are a growing source of lucrative income for pharmaceutical companies; and

**WHEREAS**, Planned Parenthood is now the second largest provider of cross-sex hormone therapy in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, LGBT political considerations rather than medical evidence now appear to be the driving force behind sex reassignment surgeries and the prescription of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormone treatments for children; and

**WHEREAS**, At least four European countries (Finland, France, Sweden, United Kingdom) have reversed course and banned gender reassignment procedures for minors, and

**WHEREAS**, Even Sweden's Karolinska Institute, home of one of the Nobel Prize advisory panels and a pioneer in surgical and chemical sex reassignment procedures, has ended all use of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones for patients under the age of 18 years old; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the messengers to the 175th session of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, meeting in Alexandria, Louisiana, November 15, 2022, do restate our belief that "God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them," (Genesis 1:27); and be it further

**RESOLVED**, We understand that this means the sex of an individual is determined biologically at conception; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, We reject the culture's increasing objectification and sexualization of children, making them vulnerable to predatory grooming and using questionable medical pretexts to justify

drastic chemical and surgical procedures to alter physical organs in attempts to reject the child's biological sex; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, We rebuke attempts by some in the education system to undermine the rights of parents by exposing students to the ideas of gender confusion, and luring them to adopt pronouns other than those which identify the child with his or her biological sex; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, We declare our commitment to protect the "little ones" as commanded in Scripture (Matthew 18:6); and be it finally

**RESOLVED**, That we call on state and federal lawmakers and government authorities to ban the abuse of children via so-called "sex change" surgeries and drugs.

## RESOLUTION 3: ON PROTECTING LOUISIANA'S YOUTH FROM THE HARMS OF MARIJUANA

**WHEREAS**, We are commanded to protect the "little ones" (Matthew 18:6, 10, 14); and

**WHEREAS**, Louisiana rushed headlong into the legalization of so-called "medical marijuana" in 2016 without respecting the preponderance of scientific research or the opinions of known experts in the field who strongly cautioned against such public policy; and

**WHEREAS**, Louisiana has rapidly expanded from "limited" use (supposedly to alleviate "a debilitating medical condition" involving glaucoma, chemotherapy for cancer and spastic quadriplegia, while prohibiting "inhalation, and raw or crude marijuana") to now specifying 30 conditions and any "condition not otherwise specified ... that a physician ... considers debilitating" and permitting smoking pot as a treatment; and

**WHEREAS**, Use of what is accepted as "medical marijuana" in Louisiana is not controlled either by specifying which compounds found in the pot plant are contained in any pot product nor by specifying the dosage of such compounds (lacking research into the effects of such); and

**WHEREAS**, Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content (the psychoactive ingredient in the pot plant) has surged in pot products from about 2-4 percent as late as 1990 to as much as 30 percent today; and

**WHEREAS**, Even the New York Times has warned that "Medical Marijuana Is Not Regulated as Most Medicines Are"; and

**WHEREAS**, Kenneth Finn, a noted pain management specialist in Colorado who published the 544-page, "Cannabis in Medicine: An Evidence-Based Approach," has concluded that "People are using a medical excuse for their recreational marijuana habit"; and

**WHEREAS**, California, which legalized "compassionate use" of marijuana in 1996 and recreational marijuana in 2016, is now moving to place warning labels on all pot products due to increasing incidences of psychosis, paranoia and schizophrenia in their state; and

**WHEREAS**, Colorado passed H.B.21-3-17 in 2022, to regulate THC content due to surging medical emergencies (psychosis, paranoia, schizophrenia) among children and youth, with Democratic Attorney General Phil Weiser declaring, "Medical marijuana laws are enabling teens access to high potency marijuana"; and

**WHEREAS**, Already, Louisiana high school students ranked #14 in the nation in marijuana use before medicinal pot was legalized for smoking in January; and

**WHEREAS**, The CDC has stated that "Marijuana products that contain tetrahydrocannabinol"



# Credentials Committee: Messengers must register for annual meeting

## By Staff

Baptist Message

ALEXANDRIA, La. (LBM) — In order for a church to be represented during the business portions of the Louisiana Baptist Convention to be held Nov. 15 in Calvary Baptist Church, Alexandria, it will need to elect messenger(s), who then must register and be certified by the Committee on Credentials.

LBC Credentials Committee Chairman Steven Kelly noted to the *Baptist Message* that there are five ways for messengers to regis-

ter and be approved:

— The first and simplest way is for messengers to pre-register using [www.LaOne.org](http://www.LaOne.org) and print out the registration card to bring to the annual meeting. This way allows messengers to be certified within a matter of minutes, Kelly said.

— Second, a messenger may bring a note on official letterhead signed by the pastor or church clerk, stating that the individual was elected by the congregation.

— Third, a church officer can phone in the names of elected messengers.

— Fourth, a person can be vouchsafed as a duly elected messenger by a fellow registered church member.

— Finally, when there are no other means by which to validate a person, the Committee on Credentials may be called into session to rule on the registration request.

Kelly emphasized that pastors are not automatically registered as messengers, explaining that they must follow the same procedure as other messengers to participate in the business discussions and official votes of the annual meeting.

**Pre-registration letters were**

**mailed or emailed by Sept. 23. Please use the provided login information to pre-register your messengers at [www.LaOne.org](http://www.LaOne.org).**

**If you have not received your letter, or if you have questions about the process, please contact LBC Information Services by email ([Messengers@LouisianaBaptists.org](mailto:Messengers@LouisianaBaptists.org)) or phone (318.448.3402 ext. 242).**

**Registration and credentials representatives will be available on site to assist messengers on Monday, Nov. 14, 2-7 p.m. and on Tuesday, Nov. 15, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.**

## RESOLUTIONS from page 8

nol (THC) can have health risks regardless of how they are used because THC is impairing and can affect memory, attention, decisions-making, and risk-taking"; now, therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, That the messengers to the 175th session of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, meeting in Alexandria, Louisiana, November 15, 2022, call for lawmakers to enact a moratorium on THC for medical uses, as well as a prohibition on smoking any part of a marijuana plant; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That we call on the Louisiana Legislature to appoint the Louisiana Board of Medical Examiners and the Louisiana Board of Pharmacy, and other scientific and research experts as these two bodies determine, to robustly examine the scientific literature to determine what safety concerns need to be addressed in the state's medical marijuana program; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That we urge the Louisiana House and Senate to require the Louisiana Department of Health to develop and publish a database (similar to the COVID-19 dashboard it created) with cumulative data about adverse health events related to marijuana, especially involving anyone under the age of 21 years old; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That the state require approved marijuana growers to include genetic markers in their respective strains of plants to ease the tracking of pot products in the state, facilitating medical safety and legal accountability; and be it finally

**RESOLVED**, That we call on Louisiana legislators to roll back the medical marijuana program until such time as vigorous testing leads to conclusive evidence about what, if any, part of the marijuana plant or the hemp plant offers relief for a medical condition and to the development of proper dosing protocols commensurate with any other medical product.

### RESOLUTION 4: ON A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO THOSE EXPERIENCING MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, RELATIONAL AND ADDICTION ISSUES

**WHEREAS**, God made all things perfectly good for His glory and the good of humanity (Genesis 1-2); and

**WHEREAS**, Adam and Eve rebelled against Him, choosing their own way and the way of

the evil one, and consequently ushered sin and disorder into our world, negatively impacting the whole human race (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12-21; 8:22); and

**WHEREAS**, As a consequence of this fall, humanity is subjected to many kinds of mental, emotional, relational and addiction issues, spanning a broad spectrum, including autism disorders; intellectual disabilities; conditions like schizophrenia, clinical depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorders, and eating disorders; diseases of the aged such as dementia and Alzheimer's disease; as well as a host of addictions that take captive so many; and

**WHEREAS**, God did not abandon fallen humanity but loved the world (John 3:16-17) and launched a plan of redemption—a restoration that is incomplete in this age but will be perfected in Heaven (1 Peter 1:3-9); and

**WHEREAS**, Those experiencing mental, emotional, relational and addiction issues, like all people, are crowned with honor and dignity, being made in the image and likeness of God (Psalm 8:4-6; James 3:9); and

**WHEREAS**, Those experiencing mental, emotional, relational and addiction issues often feel isolated, stigmatized, and rejected, sometimes resorting to self-destructive behaviors, including suicide; and

**WHEREAS**, Suicide is a tragedy, leaving heartache, pain, and unanswered questions in its wake; and

**WHEREAS**, God has called us to share the Gospel of Christ with all people, including those experiencing mental, emotional, relational and addiction issues; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the messengers to the 175th session of the Louisiana Baptist Convention meeting in Alexandria, Louisiana, November 15, 2022, affirm that those experiencing mental, emotional, relational and addiction issues are of immeasurable value to God, and we commit to proclaim liberty to them by supporting biblically sound counseling ministries; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That we oppose all stigmatization and prejudice against those experiencing mental, emotional, relational and addiction issues (as well as their loved ones) and declare, instead, that we must offer care, concern, and compassion, including the assurance that those in Christ cannot be separated from the eternal love of God that is in Jesus; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, That we urge Louisiana Baptists to support the Granberry Counseling Centers provided through the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home and Family Ministries, and other ministries such as Celebrate Recovery, and

encourage those experiencing mental, emotional, relational and addiction issues to engage with these biblical counseling opportunities; and be it finally

**RESOLVED**, That we call on Louisiana lawmakers to establish a task force on mental, emotional, relational and addiction issues to investigate the safety nets available through governments, businesses, churches and other non-profits to ensure that the totality of the care and compassion system for these citizens is sound and that the process is secure such that no person is ever without the help they need.

### RESOLUTION 5: ON EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION

**WHEREAS**, Many individuals and groups have had a part in planning, preparing and conducting the 175th annual meeting of our Louisiana Baptist Convention; and

**WHEREAS**, The messengers of this Convention desire to warmly recognize and express appreciation to the following:

**Dr. David Brooks and Rev. Todd Strain**, pastors of Calvary Baptist Church, Alexandria, Louisiana, their staff and the congregation for their assistance with details and for providing the use of their facilities for this annual meeting; and

**Dr. Reggie Bridges**, Convention president, and pastor of Temple Baptist Church, Ruston, for his warm, gracious spirit in leading, speaking and listening to Louisiana Baptists this year, and his gentle firmness in moderating this annual meeting; and

**Temple Baptist Church, Ruston**, for their commitment to sharing the Gospel in our state by graciously supporting Dr. Bridges's leadership of all the churches of the Louisiana Baptist Convention this past year; and

**Jeremy Christ**, music director for this annual meeting, and worship pastor with Calvary Baptist Church, Alexandria, for planning and coordinating the music, and the musicians and singers for their contribution of instrumental and vocal talents; and

**Scotty Blackwell**, chairman of the Committee on Order of Business, and minister of music with First Baptist Church, Minden, and the members of the Committee on Order of Business for planning this informative and inspirational annual meeting; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the messengers to the 175th Session of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, meeting in Alexandria, Louisiana, November 15, 2022, express to each of the above, and to all who contributed, our deepest heartfelt gratitude.



## Good News from page 10

tries' impact is detailed in its 2022 annual report, which can be found at [lbch.org](http://lbch.org).

"Louisiana Baptists care," he said. "Thank you so much for caring."

Louisiana Christian University President Rick Brewer encouraged Board

members to bring prospective students to the school's upcoming Preview Day.

Scheduled Oct. 8, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., "Preview Day" will allow guests to tour the campus, gain details about classes and degree majors from pro-

## Cooperating from page 6

take place in Greensboro, North Carolina, the SBC Executive Committee, in April, voted to change the location to New Orleans, which has the meeting space to accommodate a larger crowd.

He said LBC staff will help coordinate sign-up efforts for Crossover, a large-scale evangelistic effort held before the SBC Annual Meeting, and the North American Mission Board SERVE Tour, an effort that seeks to involve participants in service projects as the foundation for evangelism the weekend before the SBC Annual Meeting.

"We cannot miss this

opportunity," Horn said.

"By the providential hand of God, the annual meeting of Southern Baptists has been adjusted to come to our state in 2023. I don't believe that anything happens by accident. Let's believe that the reason that the annual meeting is coming to Louisiana is not because it was determined that the venue in North Carolina was too small. But let's believe together that the reason that it is coming to New Orleans is God wants to do something powerful in New Orleans and the surrounding region to impact lostness in that area."

fessors, interact with students who will share why they chose LCU for their undergraduate degrees and learn about student clubs and organizations, athletics and residential life.

He shared that LCU is a Christ-centered university that is intentional about teaching students to make a difference for Christ in the culture through coursework, seminars and professors who are passionate about Jesus.

"Your college is being intentional about integrating faith in learning," he said. "We are a Great Commandment school. We teach them to love God, love others with your heart, soul, mind and strength. And we're a Great Commission school, challenging students to be on mission."

### EXECUTIVE BOARD PRESIDENT MESSAGE

Executive Board President Dustin Stockstill, (pastor, Bedico Baptist Church, Ponchatoula),

encouraged board members to be unified around the Gospel.

Preaching from Acts 4:32, he underscored how the early church was concerned about sharing the love of Christ.

"Their unity was wrapped up in Jesus," he said. "Unity is built on the Gospel, not common affinities. If we're trying to build our churches on common affinities, our churches already are well behind what we are supposed to be doing, and disunity already has wedged its way in there."

### LBC PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Louisiana Baptist Convention President Reggie Bridges (pastor, Temple Baptist Church, Ruston) encouraged board members to meditate on the things of God.

Drawing from Philipians 4:8-9, Bridges encouraged Board members to have their minds dwell in the praise of God, feet dwell in the path of God and hearts dwell in the peace of God.

He offered this encouragement to frame mindsets for the upcoming LBC Annual Meeting.

"When we come together, Nov. 15, there are going to be some things, some challenges that we are going to work through and we need to do that," Bridges said. "But I hope when we come away from that day, we will have allowed our minds to dwell also on the praise that we have in God for what we are doing through our entities, through what we are doing through our Convention, through the good things of God."

## Proposed change to LBC Articles of Incorporation

By Staff

Baptist Message

ALEXANDRIA, La. (LBM) – The Louisiana Baptist Convention Executive Board adopted a recommendation, Sept. 27, to amend the LBC Articles of Incorporation, regarding what constitutes a "cooperating church."

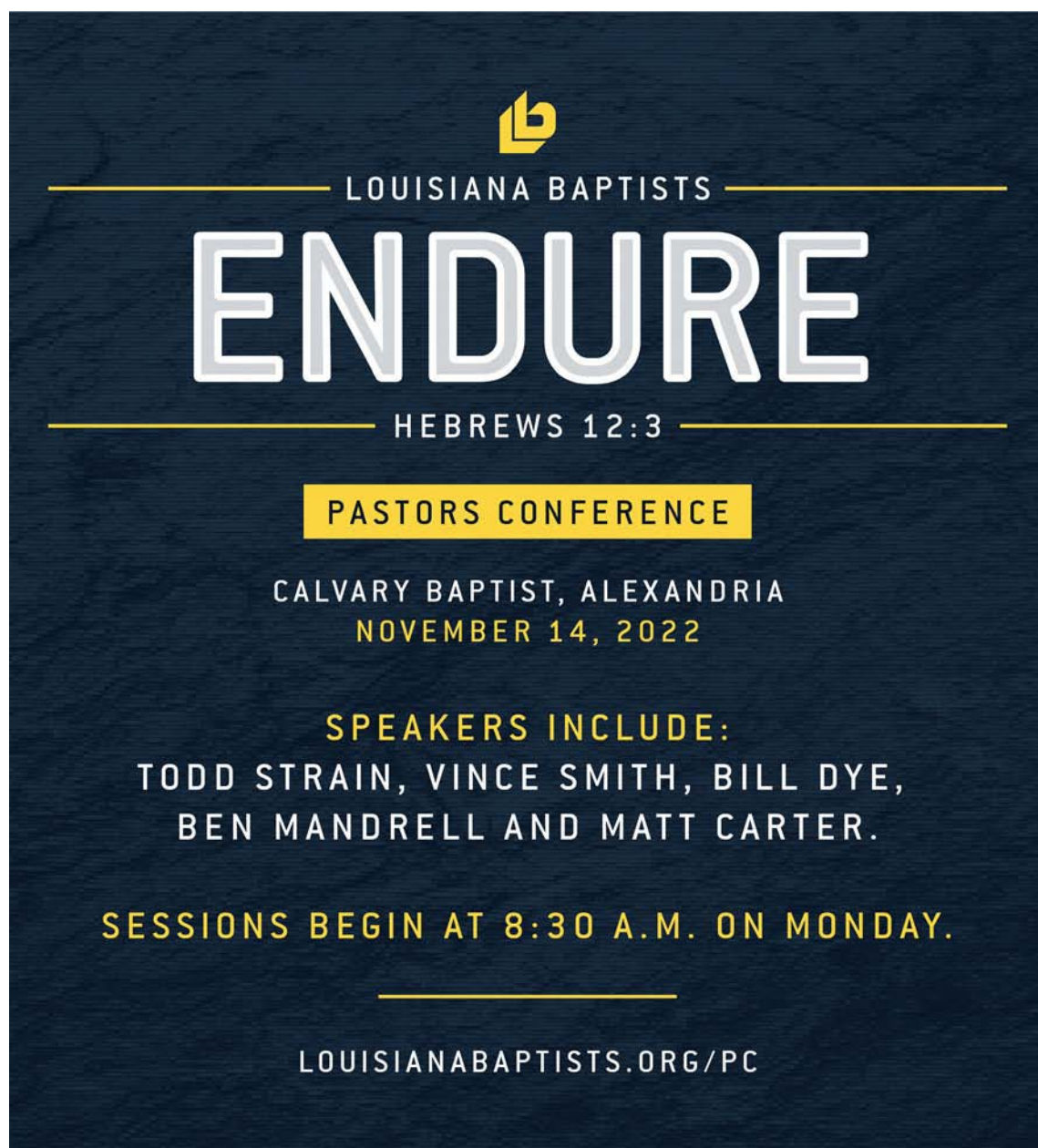
The change would allow congregations to give solely to the cooperative missions and ministries of Louisiana Baptists, when previously membership required giving "to the work of Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program."

According to Article XVIII. Amendments of the LBC Articles of Incorporation, any proposed amendment "originating in the Executive Board of the Convention" must be "posted to the LBC website and published in one (1) issue of the *Baptist Message* (print edition or digital edition) no later than fifteen (15) days before the meeting of the Convention."

The complete motion adopted by the Executive Board is presented in italics immediately below with the proposed change underlined:

*That the Louisiana Baptist Convention meeting in Alexandria, Louisiana, November 15, 2022, amend Article VI, Section 5 (Membership), of the Louisiana Baptist Convention Articles of Incorporation as follows:*

*"Section 5. A cooperating church with the Louisiana Baptist Convention 1) is of like faith and order with Southern Baptists as expressed in the Baptist Faith and Message of the Southern Baptist Convention, 2) is sympathetic to the purposes and work of the Convention, 3) contributes to the work of Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program or the work of Louisiana Baptists through contributions to the Louisiana Baptist Convention for its use in state programs and agencies and 4) has applied for membership in the local association and, upon recommendation by the LBC Committee on Credentials, has been approved to send messengers to the Convention."*



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**NOVEMBER 14, 2022**

**SPEAKERS INCLUDE:**  
**TODD STRAIN, VINCE SMITH, BILL DYE,**  
**BEN MANDRELL AND MATT CARTER.**

**SESSIONS BEGIN AT 8:30 A.M. ON MONDAY.**

**LOUISIANABAPTISTS.ORG/PC**



# McLaurin responds to questions about pro-gay controversies

By Will Hall

Message executive editor

ALEXANDRIA, La. (LBM) – Willie McLaurin, interim president and CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, spoke to the Louisiana Baptist Convention staff, Sept. 28, in the state missions building, Alexandria, the day after presenting a message to the LBC Executive Board during its fall meeting at Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center, Forest Hill.

During a break, McLaurin agreed to speak to the *Baptist Message*, responding to questions about two issues that have generated extended discussion among Louisiana Baptists.

The Baptist Message asked for clarification about why the SBC EC

extended the contract of the pro-gay law firm to handle the Department of Justice investigation about the SBC EC's handling of sexual abuse accusations, and what remedies the SBC EC would seek for the pro-gay Guidepost Solutions report which has been shown to have high-profile errors despite costing at least \$2.1 million.

**About extending the Bradley law firm contract:** Was there any consideration to asking long-time SBC lawyer Jim Guenther for a recommendation; or to reaching out to Southern Baptist lawyers ... rather than continuing with the Bradley law firm, which holds positions that are antithetical to what Southern Baptists believe?

**McLaurin:** Our board decided to stick with Bradley to specifically do

the Department of Justice investigation stuff -- that's what they are doing for us because that's their specialty. They've been with us on this journey, and we just felt like they were already down the road with us on this. So, we just made the decision to keep them to help with the DOJ.

I did bring in another group, called the Fidelis Group. The Fidelis Group is our interim counsel, so they are handling all the day-to-day non-profit stuff that happens with governance. They're all Southern Baptists.

We decided to keep Bradley. When those things are happening, and they are coming -- and again, they come fast -- you have to respond to the DOJ when they call. So that's where we're at. Our board officers ... our trust-

See QUESTIONS, page 12



Submitted photo

Willie McLaurin, interim president and CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, responded to questions about pro-gay controversies posed by Message Executive Editor Will Hall, Sept. 28.

## Ephesians

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OCT. 27

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# Key documents filed in *McRaney v. NAMB*

By Will Hall

Message executive editor

ARMORY, Miss. (LBM) – A trio of experts have provided written testimony in the lawsuit, *McRaney v. NAMB*, which claims the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention wrongfully influenced the termination of Will McRaney as executive director of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware.

The three documents were filed in response to NAMB's request that the federal court hearing the case "enter partial summary judgement in its favor" -- in part because NAMB claims to be a "supporting organization" of the BCMD, a specific IRS designation, and in part because NAMB

asserts First Amendment rights in the matter, based on a claimed hierarchical relationship between NAMB and the BCMD.

-- Charles R. Lindsay, a Mississippi CPA with 39 years of experience, including leadership with state and national CPA professional organizations, rejected NAMB's claim to be a "supporting organization" for the

state convention, citing, in part, NAMB's failure to meet IRS requirements for such status, although he conceded that "minimum, relevant information" from NAMB was needed "to make a definite determination."

-- D.C. Sharp, Ph.D., managing director of Econ One Research, an economic consulting firm with offices in California, Colorado, New York,

Tennessee, Texas and Washington, D.C., as well as in two cities in India, who has provided expert consultation in 300 legal cases and has an extensive academic leadership record, said McRaney's damages, so far, "ranges from approximately \$1.4M to \$1.8M." He said that NAMB's claim to be a "supporting organization ... makes no sense to me as an economist given

that, throughout the relevant period, BCMD provided more financial support to NAMB than NAMB provided to BCMD."

-- Barry Hankins, professor of history and immediate past chair of Baylor University's Department of History, as well as editor of the

See DOCUMENTS, page 14

## Questions from page 11

*ees ... know that Bradley was specifically handling the Department of Justice -- that's their specialty, that's what they do.*

*In terms of the other -- giving other folks consideration -- I haven't had any conversations with anybody about*

*some of the names that you mentioned ... [Harvard-trained Jonathan Whitehead (Missouri Baptist and former at-large trustee over the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission); Mike Whitehead (Missouri Baptist Convention*

*attorney who won back five breakaway entities; and a former ERLC general counsel); and Congressman Mike Johnson (Louisiana Baptist, who is affiliated with Alliance Defending Freedom, and a former ERLC trustee)] ...*

*I did, earlier in the year, connect with the ADF. I did connect with them because I was trying to find some new interim legal counsel. So, we did that, and we found Fidelis.*

**About errors in the Guidepost Solutions report** (GS secretly edited its online report to remove a false accusation against former

Texas Baptist leader Jim Richards; and the report errantly named the SBC EC outside counsel, Jim Guenther, as an SBC EC vice president -- among other flaws that have been alleged). *Is there any attempt to go back to Guidepost and say you gave us a faulty product?*

**McLaurin:** *From the Executive Committee's perspective, there is no effort or no attempt on our behalf.*

*The Convention asked the past president to appoint the Sexual Abuse Task Force. The Sexual Abuse Task Force was the one who engaged Guidepost on behalf of the Convention.*

*So, you can imagine -- the Executive Committee is the one that's under investigation, and the one that is under investigation, you don't even have the right, really, to go back and challenge anything.*

*If I was an outsider, it might be a different story. But the EC as a corporation, the investigation was on us. All you can really do is to receive the report.*

*There have been different pockets across the country that have raised some of the validity -- some of those pieces that you've mentioned. Those were pieces, evidently, that were caught after the report was there.*

*But in terms of just trying to go back and overhaul the report, that is not on my radar. I don't think the Executive Committee is in a position to be able to do that.*

### Sam Moore, Evangelistic Ministries

479-381-1170 evangelistsammoore@gmail.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 2022-2023 events.

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**FULLTIME SENIOR PASTOR**  
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**FULLTIME WORSHIP PASTOR**  
Bonita Road Baptist Church is currently seeking a fulltime Worship Pastor Please email all inquiries to [simple7ministries@yahoo.com](mailto:simple7ministries@yahoo.com)

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**SEEKING BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR**  
Community Baptist Church in Lafayette is seeking a Bi-Vocational Pastor. Please send résumé to Community Baptist Church, P.O. Box 60265, Lafayette, LA 70596-0265.

**SEEKING A FULL TIME PASTOR**  
Jerusalem Baptist Church Please send résumé to: 11109 Jerusalem Church Road Hammond, LA 70403 or email résumé to: [jbc@jbcpc.org](mailto:jbc@jbcpc.org)

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Emmanuel Baptist Church, Arcadia, LA is seeking a bi-vocational or a full-time pastor. Send résumé to Bill Bolton 486 Hwy 519, Arcadia, LA 71001 or call 318.243.5741

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**SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR**  
Rocky Branch Baptist Church, located at 109 Roan Rd, Farmerville LA 71241 is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Résumés can be mailed to the church address or emailed to [kris\\_finkbeiner@yahoo.com](mailto:kris_finkbeiner@yahoo.com).

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New Hope Baptist Church of Elmer, LA is prayerfully seeking a dedicated full-time or bi-vocational pastor. Please send résumés to: Search Committee 9308 HWY 112 Glenmora, LA 71433 or email your résumés to: [newhopebc90@gmail.com](mailto:newhopebc90@gmail.com)

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## SEEKING PASTOR

New Ouachita Baptist Church in Enterprise, LA is searching for a pastor. Please send résumés to New Ouachita Baptist Church Attn: Pastor Search Committee 226 Ouachita Church Rd Enterprise, LA 71425 or email your résumés to [diana\\_roark@hotmail.com](mailto:diana_roark@hotmail.com)



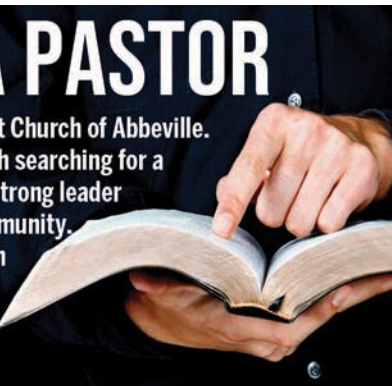
## ASSOCIATIONAL MISSION STRATEGIST

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## SEEKING A PASTOR

Seeking a Pastor for First Baptist Church of Abbeville. We are a Southern Baptist church searching for a Pastor who is loving, humble, a strong leader and able to reach out to the community. If you think you are the right man of God to help lead and help us grow, please send your résumés to us at [pgayneaux@aol.com](mailto:pgayneaux@aol.com)



## SEEKING YOUTH MINISTER

First Baptist Church, Dry Prong, which is located in Dry Prong, LA is seeking a part-time, God-filled person to serve as our youth minister. If you feel called by God for this position, please send your résumé to [FBCDP@bellsouth.net](mailto:FBCDP@bellsouth.net).



## SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR & YOUTH MINISTER

Grand Lake Community Church, located in Cameron Parish, is looking for someone with youth and/or pastor experience, with a burden and passion to reach the youth and young families in our rural area. Please send résumé and/or contact [visionteacher56@yahoo.com](mailto:visionteacher56@yahoo.com) for more information



## IMMEDIATE JOB OPENINGS On Monroe Campus

### COTTAGE PARENTS:


Husband and wife teams are needed. Full-time positions include salary, benefits, paid vacation, and training. Basic job description is to provide love, care, and hope in Christ for children in need. Applicants should not have children living at home under the age of 18. Applicants must have a sense of call and commitment to a ministry of service to children and be active members of a local Southern Baptist church. Part-time positions are also available.

Please send resume to: Susan Nolan at [snolan@lbch.org](mailto:snolan@lbch.org) or LBCH, PO Box 4196, Monroe, LA 71211.

### COTTAGE MANAGERS:

Full-Time and Part-Time Positions Available: Christian women needed to serve in HomePlace, a transitional living ministry for homeless children and their mothers. Must have a sense of call and commitment to a ministry of service to children and families.

Please send resume to: Jonann Byargeon at [jonann@lbch.org](mailto:jonann@lbch.org) or LBCH, PO Box 4196, Monroe, LA 71211.



— Louisiana Baptist Children's Home & Family Ministries —

## IMMEDIATE JOB OPENINGS!

### FOSTER & ADOPTION SPECIALISTS NEEDED:

Two full-time social workers needed, one for Baton Rouge and one for Shreveport. Positions include salary, benefits, and paid vacation. LMSW licensure required. A minimum of two years' experience in child welfare or related field preferred. Must demonstrate proficient speaking and writing skills. Must be able to work independently. Some travel required. Must have a sense of call and commitment to a ministry of service to children and families and be an active member of a local Southern Baptist church.

Send resume to: Susan Nolan at [snolan@lbch.org](mailto:snolan@lbch.org) or LBCH, PO Box 4196, Monroe, LA 71211.




## Document from page 12

*Journal of Church and State* published today by Oxford University Press, said "NAMB's First Amendment defense in this case, if accepted by courts, would actually undermine religious liberty rather than safeguard it." He argued that NAMB's claim would only make sense "if Dr. McRaney worked for NAMB, but he never did." Hankins also disputed any suggestion that the SBC is "over other Baptist entities," saying, "one of the principal reasons Baptists came into existence was because of the theological belief that religious authority resides only in local congregations." Treating Baptists in any other context by the court "would be an affront to religious liberty," he concluded.

So far, NAMB has lost two rulings by the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals (a three-judge panel, and the whole court) and in its appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, which declined to hear the case. *McRaney v. NAMB* is now in the discovery phase (obtaining information from the opposing party, including depositions) before the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi.

## Unity from page 4

"I believe God in different places and times raises up called men of God to lead us to bring back unity. And when there is instability the Lord calls men to help bring back stability."

He thanked Louisiana Baptists for their steadfast commitment of giving to the Cooperative Program and proclaiming His Word.

McLaurin also praised Louisiana Baptists for their evangelism and baptism efforts.

"In the most recent reporting year, churches that are part of the Louisiana Baptist Convention baptized almost 6,000, which represents people who are saved, baptized and set on the road to discipleship," he said. "And If the Lord Jesus were to come back today, every one of those individuals would have eternity in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ."



## Book

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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@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

- **Trey Robertson** will be ordained to the ministry on October 16 at 6 p.m. at Downs ville First Baptist Church.
- **Craig, wife Ovina, Forque** is the new pastor of New River Baptist Church, St. Amant.
- **Morgan McCallister** resigned as pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, West Monroe.
- **Duane Moreno** resigned from Magnolia Baptist Church, Saline due to health reasons.
- **Lacie Strange** is the new children's ministry assistant at First Baptist Church, Haughton.
- **Taryn Kocurek** is the new weekday preschool director at First Baptist Church, Haughton.

HOMECOMING

- Goodwill Baptist Church, Oak Grove: **Homecoming celebration**, October 16, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Lucas House.
- New Ebenezer Baptist Church, Castor: **Homecoming**, October 23. 10 a.m. Speaker: **Luke Hockenjos, evangelist**. Special Music: **Stephen Dickerson**. Pastor: Austin Hand.

REVIVAL

- Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Ridgecrest: **Fall Tent Meeting**, October 13-14, Thursday, 5 p.m. Youth only, 7-12th grades; Thursday, 5 p.m., Tent Meeting in the park, Friday, 6 p.m., Tent Meeting in the park. Evangelist: **Heath Williams, heathwilliamsministry.com**. For further information call 318.955.9057 or 318.613.1312. Pastor: Brenton Smith.
- First Baptist Church Starks: **Revival**, October 16-19. Evangelist: **Mackey Willis**. Worship: **The Mackey Willis Family**. Pastor: Ron Butler.
- Sweetwater Baptist Church, Quitman: **Harvest Day**, October 23, 10:30 a.m. Evangelist: **Bill Britt**. Pastor: Wilton Wall.
- Heflin Baptist Church, Heflin: **Revival**, October 23-26, Evangelist: **Luke Hockenjos**. Pastor: Ronnie Osborne.

LAGNIAPPE

- **Alton Achorn** is available for supply. Call 318.715.8874.
- Bethany Camp and Conference Center, Bethany: **Branson at Bethany**, November 29, Showtimes 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Cost: \$17 and **TICKETS ARE ON SALE NOW** (No credit cards). A meal will follow each show. Checks must accompany ticket sales. Make checks payable to NLBA/B@B, 5875 W. 70th St., Shreveport, La. 71129S or call 318.686.5736. Featuring **Williamson Branch from Nashville, Matt Adams, Master illusionist, Harold Ashcraft, Shreveport's own Southern Gospel Tenor**.
- Association Kingston Road Property, Shreveport: **First Responder Chaplain/**

- Ministry Training Level 2**, October 19, 9 a.m.-3 p.. Cost: \$99 per person plus Eventbrite service and processing fee. This class is open to everyone who has a heart to serve and minister to First responders. Register online at Eventbrite or [www.servingheroes.net](http://www.servingheroes.net). For more information contact, Chaplain Barry Young, [barrymichaelyoung@yahoo.com](mailto:barrymichaelyoung@yahoo.com) or call 816.808.0789.
- First Baptist Church, Lafayette: **I Still Believe Tour with Jeremy Camp and special guest Katy Nichole**, October 21 at 7 p.m. Tickets are on sale at [FBCLAF.org/tickets](http://FBCLAF.org/tickets). Pastor: James Pritchard.
- First Baptist Church, Covington: **CeCe Winans – Believe For It Tour**, October 13, 7 p.m. Tickets: <https://www.ticketmaster.com/event/1B005CBB0C18ACAF>. Pastor: Waylon Bailey.
- Stevendale Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Greg Sullivan Ministries Presents Southern Gospel at Stevendale with special guest 4Calvary Quartet**, October 14, 7 p.m. Pastor: Stephen Young.
- Trinity Baptist Church, Pineville: **Fall Festival**, October 15, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., **Craft show**, 4 p.m. The festival will feature a car show, carnival games, craft show and a concert. Pastor: Kevin Roberts.
- **Night of Hope, gospel praise benefit for St. Jude Children's Hospital**, October 15, 2 p.m. at the Rayville Performing Arts Center. Talent includes **Old Paths, Lauren Talley, 3 Heath Brothers, Josh and Ashley Franks, The Allen Family, and Comedian Tim Lovelace**. Tickets are available by calling 318.417.3929 or email [SJNightofHope@gmail.com](mailto:SJNightofHope@gmail.com).
- Refuge Baptist Church, Echo: **Harvest Festival**, October 15, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. There will be vendors, testimonies, food games, a pumpkin patch, hayride and live music.
- Milldale Baptist Church, Zachary: **Greg Sullivan Ministries in concert with special guest 4Calvary Quartet**, October 16, 10:15 a.m. Pastor: Dennis Terry, Sr.
- Cotile Baptist Church, Boyce: **The Southern Plainsmen Quartet in concert**, October 22, 6 p.m. A love offering will be taken and there will be refreshments following the service.
- Esler Baptist Church, Pineville: **Harvest Festival/LSU Tailgate Party**, October 22, 5-8 p.m. There will be lots of food, fellowship, games, and fun. The LSU-Ole Miss football game will be played on the big blowup screen outside. Pastor: Joshua Timothy.
- Pine Grove Baptist Church, Ruby: **Mark Lanier in concert**, October 23, 11 a.m. Pastor: Dwayne Irwin.
- First Baptist Church, Tullos: **The Southern Plainsmen Quartet in concert**, October 23, 10:30 a.m. A love offering will be taken. Pastor: Scott Smith.
- Humble Baptist Church, Glenmora: **Fall Festival**, October 23, 5 p.m. Pastor: None
- First Baptist Church, Ruston: **Fall Fest at the Lambright Center**, October 23, 4:30-6:30 p.m. There will be jambalaya/hot dogs, games and plenty of candy. Wear your favorite costume. Pastor: Chris Craig.
- First Baptist Church, Marion: **The Allens in concert**, October 23, 11 a.m. Pastor: Bubba Hoggatt.
- Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville: **Family Fall Fest - Hallow Him**, October 26, 6-8 p.m. Extreme inflatables, door prizes and lots of candy. Pastor: Philip Robertson.

IN MEMORIAM

Dr. William Durwood "Step" Martin

SHREVEPORT, LA. -- William Durwood Martin—known simply as Bro. "Step" to the members of Calvary Baptist Church in Shreveport and the thousands whose lives he touched—passed away on Sept. 23, 2022.

Martin, noted throughout the state for his 33-years as pastor Calvary Baptist Church, Shreveport, his evangelistic and mission work, his involvement in the Louisiana Baptist Convention, and his ability to reach the lost, was 89.

Born November 18, 1933, in Pelahatchie, Mississippi, the son of Robert and Maylene (Edwards) Martin, he attended Hinds Junior College in Jackson, Mississippi, where he quarterbacked the championship football team.

After graduation, he transferred to William Carey College in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. At William Carey, he continued to play football. Early in his years at Carey, something happened to "Step" that would alter the course of his life. He began to understand that the life he was living and the future that he had planned were meaningless and empty.

One night in late October, 1954—well after midnight—Step found himself, desperate for answers, at the door of Andy Tate, Dean of Men. When he knocked on that door, Tate, welcomed him saying, "Come on in, "Step," I've been waiting for you." "Step" poured out his heart to Dr. Tate who opened his Bible and read to him.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

Tate explained that God loved "Step" deeply and that the promise of eternal life is for everyone—it doesn't matter who you are or how bad your life has been. Jesus paid the price for every bad thing we have ever done or ever will do. All Jesus wants is for us to turn

away from our selfish lives, turn to Him, and believe that He will receive us, forgive us, and give us a new life with purpose.

Step had seen this message change the lives of some of his closest teammates and other students at William Carey. He was ready to unreservedly follow Jesus. That choice almost 68 years ago changed the rest of "Step's" life. He began to tell this simple message to anyone who would listen—Jesus will save whoever believes.

In 1955, he married Patricia Pinson, a fellow student at William Carey, and they began to serve the Lord together. While in college, "Step" pastored Sanford Baptist Church near Hattiesburg.

Upon graduation, he entered New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. During that time, he was called to pastor Navco Baptist Church in Mobile, Alabama. He served there for four years. Then he spent two years in full-time evangelism. He was then called to pastor First Baptist Church, Satsuma, Alabama in 1963.

Responding to God's leadership, in March of 1969, Bro. "Step," his wife, Pat, and their six children moved from Alabama to Shreveport, to pastor Calvary Baptist Church. There they joined a group of believing families committed to sharing the gospel from their location in Cedar Grove.

Within his first year as pastor, Bro. "Step" founded Calvary Baptist Academy while expanding the Day Care and Preschool. People responded to the gospel message, and—by 1975—the church had outgrown its location on St. Vincent Avenue. God led Bro. "Step" and the church to build a new facility at a site in south Shreveport.

Under his leadership, Calvary supported and partnered with a growing number of local and international missionaries—beginning a robust Faith Missions Offering and increasing support of Southern Baptist mission efforts.

In addition, he set up the "Step" Martin

Evangelistic Association (originally known as Glimpses of Glory) which still provides financial support to seminary students, young pastors, and missionaries. Over the next 27 years, Bro. "Step" and the believers gathering as Calvary Baptist Church faithfully continued to impact Shreveport and the world with the simple message that ignited their faith—Jesus will save whoever believes.

In 2002, Bro. "Step" retired as Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church and was named Pastor Emeritus. For the next 12 years he preached revivals across the South while he and Pat focused on encouraging pastors and their wives in those churches.

During his ministry as pastor and evangelist he held hundreds of revivals, preached in more than fifteen states and six foreign countries. For 60 years, Bro. "Step" faithfully preached the truth that changed his life—Jesus will save whoever believes.

Bro. "Step" is survived by his wife, Patricia Pinson Martin; six children, Marty Martin and wife, Carla, Tammy Lundquist and her husband, Robert, William D. "Bill" Martin, Jr. and wife, Dedee, Dr. Robert Tate "Bob" Martin and his wife, Pam, Teena Ward and her husband, Bryan, and Teri Logan and her husband, Darren; sixteen grandchildren, Serena Martin, Brittany Lennard and her husband, Cameron, William D. "Drew" Martin, III and his wife, Amanda, Robert Tate Martin II, Rhonda Martin, Jessica Ward and her husband, Judd Smith, Jordan Carver and her husband, Bradley, Jamie Ward, Garrett Logan and wife, Sydney, Geoff Logan and his wife, Lindsey, Grayson Logan, Esther Logan, Gideon Logan, Elizabeth Logan, Emma Logan and Erin Logan, and twelve great-grandchildren, Lawson Lennard, Ledger Lennard, Laikyn Lennard, Emersyn Martin, Ellyot Martin, William D. "W.D" Martin IV, Ward Smith, Remy Smith, Maverick Carver, Clara Logan, Hadley Logan and Fitzgerald Logan. He also leaves a sister, Delores Burkett and her husband, Billy Ray and four nieces.

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.

VXN VJPSBJ PGENW FGOJ, CJ CBJJ TJIN XQRJB NWJ

AGC, UWXN XI XQNS NWJ PGENW CWEFW UWSXAR

GPNJBCGBRU VJ BJKJGAJR.

LGAGNEGQU NWBJJ: NCJQNH-NWBJJ

Clues:  
R = D; J = E

Answer to September 29 Scripture Crypto:  
Jude eighteen



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