



THE BAPTIST MESSAGE

March 30, 2023

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HE HAS RISEN

EASTER'S OFFER OF HOPE
IS NOT AN EMPTY PROMISE

By Will Hall, Executive editor

ALEXANDRIA, La. (LBM) – In Jericho, during His journey to Jerusalem for that last week before His crucifixion, Jesus declared to Zacchaeus His very nature, His very character, His very purpose for becoming fully God and fully man.

Critics had questioned Jesus' going into the home of a sinner, but after Zacchaeus repented, Jesus explained that "the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Indeed, "Jesus saves" is the quintessential quality of His very being.

See PROMISE, page 17

Pence seeks 'clear sense of our calling'

By Will Hall
Executive editor

DEVILLE, La. (LBM) – Former Vice President Mike Pence did not reveal his plans regarding the 2024 presidential election: however, in an exclusive interview with the *Baptist Message*, March 19, he did ask for Louisiana Baptists and other people of faith to pray for him and his wife Karen as they seek "to discern our path forward."

NATIONWIDE REVIVAL

Pence, whose spiritual awakening took place during a Christian music festival in Wilmore, Kentucky, home of Asbury University,



Philip Timothy photo

In an exclusive interview with the *Baptist Message* at Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville, former Vice President Mike Pence shared his thoughts on nationwide revival, political discord and prayer.

site of the 1970 revival that served as one of the significant events of "the Jesus movement," said he hoped the multiple revivals reported across the country today are the "beginning of another

Great Awakening in America."

He offered that the movie "Jesus Revolution" (about the 1970s spiritual phenomenon) was making a big impact on the nation.

See PENCE, page 5

La. Baptists can experience a 'Daily Double'

By Steve Horn
Special to the Message

ALEXANDRIA, La. (LBC) – If you're a fan of Jeopardy, you're probably familiar with the Daily Double. If you're lucky enough to uncover this question, you have the opportunity to risk your entire current earnings instead of the stated amount on the puzzle board. If you're behind, the Daily Double can get you back in the game or, if you're in the lead, you can solidify your position – if you answer correctly and in the form of a question.

In June, Louisiana Baptists will have the opportunity to experience a Daily Double of sorts as New Orleans hosts the 2023

See DAILY DOUBLE, page 2

LBC offers sexual abuse prevention resources

By Brian Blackwell
Message staff writer

ALEXANDRIA, La. (LBM) – Twenty-one months after messengers to the 2021 Southern

Baptist Convention Annual Meeting called for the creation of a task force to oversee an independent review of the SBC Executive Committee about allegations of mishandling

reports of sexual abuse, the Louisiana Baptists Sexual Abuse Response Council has published a web page with prevention resources and response information.

See RESOURCES, page 6

Daily Double

from page one

meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. In addition to this annual gathering of Southern Baptists from across the nation, New Orleans will also host Crossover and the Serve Tour. Both are evangelistic

opportunities that have the potential to impact the New Orleans area in ways we've long prayed for.

Crossover is not new to SBC life. Crossover is an intentional evangelistic strategy meant to bring

Southern Baptists to the annual meeting host city, pre-Convention. Keith Manuel, director of our Evangelism and Church Growth Team, is the designated point person for Crossover from our LB staff. I want to encourage you to sign

up to volunteer for Crossover. A quick way to sign up is by texting NOLA to 888123.

The NAMB sponsored Serve Tour is also headed to New Orleans on the weekend before the SBC annual meeting. The Serve Tour seeks to involve



Steve Horn
Louisiana Baptist Executive Director

people in acts of service as the foundation to evangelism. This may appeal to your evangelistic personality more. You can sign up using the same link, texting NOLA to 888123. I'd like to challenge Louisiana Baptists to adopt a goal of one Crossover Team and one Serve Team

per association.

We do not need to miss this opportunity. 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 anything is by accident. Let's believe the

reason that the SBC annual meeting has been moved to New Orleans is to have maximum Gospel impact in New Orleans and the entire region surrounding the Crescent City.

We are mindful of Jesus' words: "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." (Matthew 9:37-38)

We know that the harvest is ripe for abundance in New Orleans. And now, we can say that the workers in that harvest are going to be more than usual, at least for this abbreviated time. Again, we cannot miss this strategic opportunity.

Would you consider altering your schedule to take advantage of these opportunities? I pray that we will see scores of people from our churches involved and as a result, hundreds of people saved. In fact, we are praying for 2,023 people to be saved as a result of Crossover and Serve.

I've been praying daily for Louisiana Baptists to be known as having a culture of evangelism. I hope that you will join me in this prayer and this "Daily Double" opportunity to impact this area of our state with the Gospel.

Steve Horn is executive director for Louisiana Baptists.

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Number 4

Louisiana women to 'Embrace' their purpose

By Brian Blackwell
Staff writer

NATCHITOCHES, La. (LBM) – Louisiana Baptist women will be challenged to embrace their God-given purpose to make disciples of all nations during the upcoming Louisiana Baptist Women's Missions and Ministry conference, April 21-22, in the facilities of the First Baptist Church, Natchitoches.

"Embrace is a time for women who are involved in missions and women's ministry to gather and encourage one another," Christine Gill told the Baptist Message. She is the Louisiana Baptist Women's Missions and Ministry strategist "They are also equipped with practical skills to support missions while discovering new opportunities for service. The ladies take the ideas they learn at Embrace back to

their churches and communities, because they want to be part of God's plan in spreading the Gospel in all places to all people."

The conference will include messages from Tara Dew (wife of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary President Jamie Dew), and worship will be led by Ann Gilbert Fenn (wife of First Baptist West Monroe Associate Pastor Mark Fenn). Attendees also will engage with an International Mission Board missionary; hear from representatives of the Southern Baptist Convention Woman's Missionary Union and Lifeway Christian Resources; attend breakout sessions; and participated in a panel discussion with licensed mental health professionals from around the state.

Breakout topics this year cover such issues as

spiritual warfare; reaching college-aged women; rediscovering children's missions; hospitality as a ministry; setting healthy boundaries; nurturing mental health in children; building a team; benefits of WMU membership; life as an IMB missionary; planning a women's ministry event; and basics about addiction recovery ministry.

Women also will have an opportunity to "Pack the Trailer" for Rolling Hills Ministries, which will open a new thrift store in Natchitoches, soon (a list of acceptable donation items can be found at rollinghillsministries.com/donate). "We wanted to provide the women who attend Embrace an opportunity to participate in a mission project this year, since they greatly desire to serve others in tangible ways," Gill said.

Embrace is sponsored

by Louisiana Baptists' Women's Missions and Ministry team and funded by the Cooperative Program and the Georgia Barnette Louisiana Missions Offering.

-- Register online at the conference website, www.louisianabaptists.org/embrace.

-- Early bird registration deadline (\$50) is

March 24. Afterwards, the cost is \$70.

-- Baptist Nursing Fellowship breakfast (for BNF members and other healthcare professionals) is scheduled for 7:15 a.m. April 22 (additional \$15).

For more information: WMM@louisianabaptists.org; 800.622.6549; or 318.448.3402.

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Dedicated FBC Longville serves in the storm

By Britney Glaser
Special to the Message

LONGVILLE, La. (LBM) - August 27, 2020, will forever be a milestone in the life of the First Baptist

Church in Longville, Louisiana. In the early morning hours, Hurricane Laura – a category 4 storm with 150 mph winds – struck, tearing off the worship center roof, and damaging sur-

rounding buildings.

The fifty people who had taken refuge in the church found themselves moving from room to room as the roof began to pull free. Then, with the rising of the sun a few hours later, a new reality dawned.

"I knew we needed to get started with something," Pastor Corey Townsley told the *Baptist Message*. "We didn't sleep the night before, but it wasn't like we could get any rest that day with no power. The destruction was overwhelming. We knew we had to start working and serving. Some got to work at the church grounds, others went out to clear roads and people's homes."

Dedication and service is not new to FBC Longville, a congregation that dates to 1907. The church has a longtime

Helping Hands ministry that assists members as well as the surrounding community. Several congregants have trained and served with the Louisiana Baptist Disaster Relief.

"Immediately after the hurricane, we began using chainsaws to clear driveways and roadways. We set up a command area at the church," says James Barrow, a deacon and member of Helping Hands. "We started taking and prioritizing work orders. We cut trees off roofs and tarped the damaged areas, set up generators for seniors and disabled."

A distribution area was set up for donations of canned goods, cleaning supplies, fuels, tarps, and various needs. The church family prepared food for work crews and distributed free meals to the community.

Almost a year to the

day of Laura's landfall, Hurricane Ida – identical in strength to Laura – hit the eastern part of the state. Even though FBC Longville was still in recovery mode, their servant attitude kicked in.

"We sent a team to cook and serve hot jambalaya out of First Baptist Church, Thibodeaux," FBC Longville Associate Pastor Phillip McDuffie said. "Another time, we took a roofing team that went out and tarped another local church's facility."

It took a year to settle with insurance, and with skyrocketing building costs during the delay, FBC Longville faces a pricey rebuild.

Helping Hands saved demolition costs by tearing down the old sanctuary and classrooms. They then sorted the remnants and

See STORM, page 14

— Louisiana Baptist Children's Home & Family Ministries —

IMMEDIATE JOB OPENINGS!

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Preparing Graduates • Transforming Lives

Pence from page one

"But to see young people stepping forward today at Asbury and campuses around the country is deeply inspiring to me," he said.

In that context, Pence shared about a phone call with the AU president, who told him the chapel service that began the recent Asbury revival was "actually very ordinary." But he told Pence that at the end of it "people stayed and kept praying and people came forward," and said that "God did something here at Asbury."

"I think that God is doing something at campuses all across the country as young people today, who have literally been steeped in a culture of a postmodern America, appear to be turning back to what's timeless and what's true, and it's changing lives all over the country," Pence observed.

POLITICAL DISCORD

The former vice president also addressed the obvious political divisiveness in the country, calling it "a very challenging time in the life of this country."

He pointed out that "the policies of the Biden administration have weakened America at home and abroad," and expressed that "the American left seem every day to be assaulting the traditional values of religious liberty, the sanctity of life that really goes to the heart of what has always made this country strong and prosperous and free."

"But I do believe something very special is happening around the country," he emphasized. Foreign troubles as well as domestic challenges are pushing people to seek change, he said. But at the same time people are "longing for the kind of civility



Philip Timothy photo

Former Vice President Mike Pence signs a copy of his book "So Help Me God" at Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville. Pence shared his testimony during the two services, March 19, and signed autographs after each.

that American people show each other every day."

"I tell people, 'Once you get 15 miles out of Washington, D.C., the people in this country get along pretty well. But we just have got to have government as good as our people,'" he explained.

Pence said that means "being as principled as patriotic, as committed to life and liberty and our timeless

values." But he also said it means "doing what we can as believers to see if we can raise the debate, argue the issues firmly, but as the Bible says, always do so with gentleness and respect."

GREATEST SUCCESS

"With a son and son-in-law in the military, I think rebuilding the military after years of reckless

budget cuts always is the first priority of the national government," Pence said, when asked to name his proudest contribution as vice president. "But after that I have to believe that the enduring legacy of our administration is the appointment of three of the justices that overturned Roe v. Wade and gave the American people a new beginning at life."

"I always believed that we would see Roe v. Wade sent to the ash heap of history where it belongs, much like the Dred Scott decision of more than a century and a half ago," he revealed. "But I didn't know if I would see it in our lifetime, and to have played some small part in the president's decision to appoint those three justices whose philosophy of the Constitution set a foundation to return the question of abortion to the states and the American people is a historic achievement."

See PENCE, page 8



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Resources from page one

The page, found on LouisianaBaptists.org, offers phone numbers for reporting instances of abuse and to seek help for the

victim; a proactive checklist to avert abuse; sexual abuse definitions and state statutes; how to protect minors; how to respond to an

allegation; and resources for training and background screening.

"As I promised Louisiana Baptists during our past two annual meetings, this issue remains a priority," Louisiana Baptist Executive

Director Steve Horn told the *Baptist Message*. "The Sexual Abuse Resource Council I appointed has met diligently and has collected resources that will prayerfully assist churches and individuals in the prevention and response to sexual abuse. I ask Louisiana Baptists to join me in asking God to protect our churches from all forms of sexual abuse as we seek to maximize Gospel impact in our state."

Ray Swift, chairman of the Sexual Abuse Response Council and also director of pastoral leadership, said while they are not an investigative body, they were tasked with the responsibility to provide much needed resources.

"Our pastors and churches start have a biblical mandate to pursue righteousness and justice," Swift said. "As we have seen over the last several years, we have a sin problem within the Southern Baptist Convention. People are doing some evil things. As a Convention we certainly want to be available and be on the front line and to help in the area of sexual abuse prevention."

"We hope to provide a listening ear and a compassionate heart," he continued. "As people call us, which we do anticipate could happen, we will listen and given them good biblical advice."

For the past five months, Swift and other members of the Sexual Abuse Response Council have met to help guide work in sexual abuse awareness and reform. 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 have served as committee members.

Those meetings produced the resource page that was posted on March 13.

Additionally, Louisiana Baptist leaders took other measures including:

--LBC staff members, including personnel from Tall Timbers Baptist Conference and Baptist Collegiate Ministries, were trained by Ministry Safe, a national ministry that equips churches and ministry programs to better protect children from sexual abuse, with particular emphasis on recognizing signs that abusers are "grooming" victims. Horn noted staff will continue ongoing online training to stay current on the matter.

--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 stopping with Louisiana Baptist Executive Director Steve Horn, employees are advised that they can report to the Executive Board president.

--Language was added to the LBC Personnel Handbook as to what steps to take regarding any allegations of reports of abuse within the organization.

--Horn and LBC President Reggie Bridges attended a meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, April 4, 2022, with other state convention leaders for an update from the Southern Baptist Convention Sexual Abuse Task Force.

To access the resource page, visit <https://louisianabaptists.org/resources/sexual-abuse-response-resources/>.



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SCAN ME

Journey Church celebrates 100 baptisms in 2022

By Brian Blackwell

Message staff writer

PINEVILLE, La. (LBM) – Journey Church is in revival and all signs point to this movement of the Holy Spirit continuing for some time.

Since January, Pastor James Greer has seen lives changed as they have recorded 222 salvation decisions and 43 baptisms.

"I've never seen anything like what has happened the first four months of this year," Greer told the *Baptist Message*. "It's not what we are doing but what God is doing."

Originally Lee Heights Family Church in Pineville, the congregation moved in 2009 to the former site of Donahue Family Church and changed the name to Journey Church. Since then, the congregation (which averages 562 in Sunday worship and baptized 105 in 2022) has

celebrated the baptism of 1,072 new members into the body of Christ and witnessed hundreds of other spiritual decisions, including repentances to restore fellowship with Christ, and commitments to vocational missions and ministry.

The congregation's core value, "Growing People Change," facilitates growth. Meanwhile, its message to the lost, "I mess up, you mess up, we all mess up," helps start conversations to convey the truth that Christ is the answer.

That mindset is what drew Arlene Clark to Journey Church. Clark was baptized Sept. 28 alongside two friends, after the Holy Spirit convicted her of the need to make her decision to accept Christ public and follow through with baptism.

"I chose to do it as an outward symbol of how Christ changed my life,"



Submitted photo

Pastor James Greer baptized Lorraine and Travis Simpson at Journey Church, Pineville. Since January, the church has recorded 222 salvation decisions and 43 baptisms.

she said. "While watching the 'Chosen' series, I saw

even Jesus was baptized and I was like 'girl you

need to get baptized.' If this Savior was baptized, I should.

"Our church has a warm, non-judgmental atmosphere," she continued. "The world beats a lot of people up. They don't have to put on anything special to come to each week. At Journey, we show a lot of love. When people walk in, that's what they feel and my life is a testimony to that."

Journey Church ministries include Fall Fest, Vacation Bible School, tailgating at all Tioga High School home football games, a "stuff the bus" with school supplies for students at Lessie Moore Elementary School, Together Tuesday (an effort where they joined community members for a time of encouragement before the school day began at area schools), Celebrate Recov-

See CELEBRATES, page 16

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Pence from page 5

Still, he said, work remains to be done, and “whatever our life leads to” he said he is determined to push to “restore the sanctity of life to the center of American law in every state in the country. “I truly do believe,” he

continued, “we save the babies, we will save America.”

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

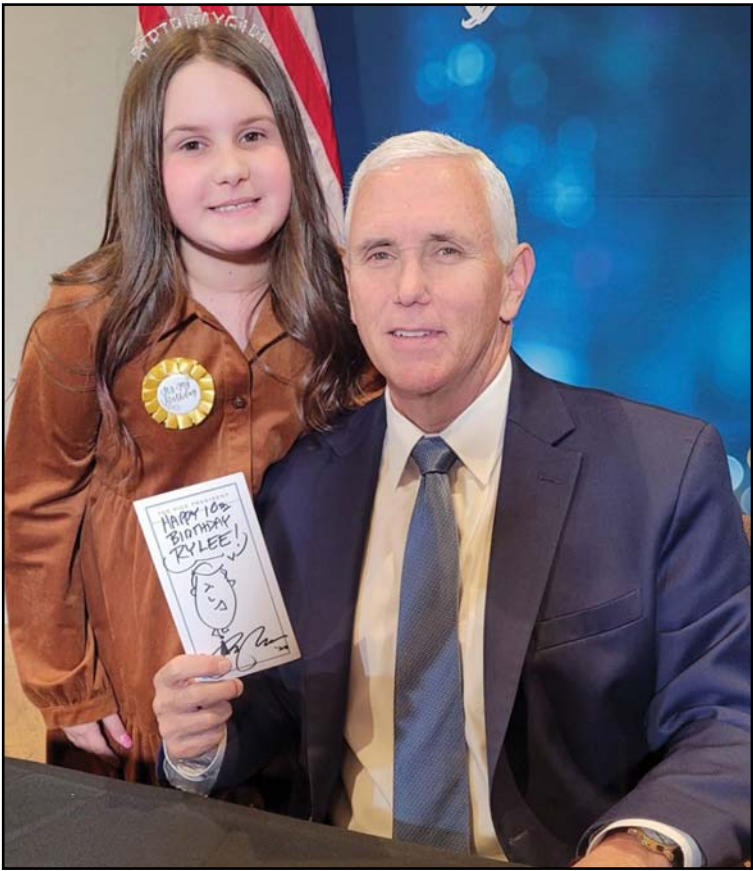
As for work that still needs to be done, Pence identified a looming

financial crisis as the “greatest challenge” the country faces – especially future generations. “We have a national debt today the size of our nation’s economy,” he noted. “That hasn’t happened since the end of World War II.”

He also proposed a national conversation about reforming these safety nets “for Americans under the age of 40,” so any changes would not impact anyone at the point of the need or who will retire in the next 25 years.

“I think we have an obligation in this generation, when we can do it without imposing hardship on people in the form of much higher taxes or actually cutting programs,” Pence said. “We can reform those systems with compassion, with common sense and we can set our nation back on a path to fiscal solvency.”

He said the next administration “has to roll our sleeves up and put



Submitted photo

Ten-year-old Rylee Miller received quite a birthday gift Sunday, March 19, when former Vice President Mike Pence gave her his autograph. Rylee is the daughter of Samantha and Jerred Miller of Kolin, La.

our nation back on the path to fiscal responsibility and reform.”

PRAYER REQUEST

Vice President Pence closed the interview by asking Louisianans to pray for him and his wife, Karen.

“We believed, at least the last 20 years, that we just wait for a clear sense of our calling; and we have

been praying about just having a sense of where we might be called -- not next serve -- but where we might step forward,” he disclosed. “John Adams said memorably, ‘Duty is ours and outcomes belong to God.’ So, I covet the prayers of any of the faithful here in Louisiana as we try to discern our path forward and see what role we might play in the days ahead.”

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'Value of a soul' ignites Gilbert revival, awakening

By Will Hall
Executive editor

GILBERT, La. (LBM)—It is not often that a revival begins with evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit already in

sight. But the annual Bill Britt four-day event with the First Baptist Church in Gilbert began with 19 baptisms, reflecting transformed hearts before the first word was preached.

Pastor Bubba Ezell told the *Baptist Message* that lives began to be changed after the congregation committed to showing greater respect for the value of one soul.

He said he returned from the 2023 Louisiana Baptist Evangelism Conference in January and told his congregation, "I would sell this building for one soul. I would give it all up for a soul."

He said it was the challenge of "How far are we willing to go?" that created a spark in the church.

Ezell emphasized this

point by sharing about a particular example within their Amazing Grace addiction recovery ministry, which has about 30 members.

"I started asking them to witness to one person a week, and to write it down," he explained. "Three of our guys led people to Christ." Other things began happening and before long, he said, "We started getting our hearts right with God about the value of a soul."

"The Holy Spirit is moving among the members of our church, and it's been that way for six weeks," Ezell added.

He offered other instances of how revival among the saved has led to an awakening among the lost.

See VALUE, page 11

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SBC EC hires Guidepost Solutions for additional role

By Will Hall
Executive editor

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Abuse Reform Implementation Task Force has recommended the Southern Baptist Convention Credentials Committee hire Guidepost Solutions to establish and maintain a “Ministry Check” website database for those credibly accused of sexual abuse, according to *Baptist Press*, the news division of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

The Pathway, the news service of the Missouri Baptist Convention, reported that the task force’s recommendation of Guidepost was made despite criticism about Guidepost’s open support of “Gay Pride” month. Last June, Guidepost Solutions, which, on behalf of the SBC, published the disputed “Report of the Independent Investigation”

about alleged mishandling of sex abuse by the SBC EC, tweeted, “Guidepost is committed to strengthening diversity, equity and inclusion and strives to be an organization where our team can bring their authentic selves to work. “We celebrate our collective progress toward equality for all and are proud to be an ally to our LGBTQ+ community,” the post added.

Marshall Blalock, ARITF chairman and pastor of the First Baptist Church in Charleston, South Carolina, conceded to SBC EC members that “some Southern Baptists will immediately have concerns about our choice.” However, he claimed Guidepost Solutions had “altered their social media engagement so this will not be an issue going forward,” *Baptist Press* reported. He also said Guidepost Solutions had

formed a new “faith-based division” whose leader has ties to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary to oversee the \$1.5 million - \$2 million project (funded by \$3 million contributed by the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board via Send Relief).

NAMB hires D.C. firm for McRaney lawsuit

AMORY, Miss. -- Court records show the North American Mission Board has added the law firm of WilmerHale of Washington, D.C., to represent it in the lawsuit, *McRaney v. NAMB*, which alleges the SBC entity illegally interfered in Will McRaney’s employment as executive director of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware as well as other potential work opportunities.

NAMB has already retained ButlerSnow, a law firm of 390 attorneys, that “emerged from being primarily a regional firm to one with national scope,” according to butlersnow.com. The company is based in Mississippi where the lawsuit was filed, and they continue to represent NAMB.

U.S. News & World Report lists WilmerHale as “a leading, full-service international law firm with 1,077 lawyers located throughout 13 offices in the United States, Europe and Asia.” Additionally, WilmerHale “clinches the title of most-liberal among the nation’s largest law firms,” according to law360.com (citing a Stanford study). Meanwhile, WilmerHale boasts on its website: “WilmerHale Again Receives 100 Percent Rating on LGBTQ Equality”; “WilmerHale Named Among the Best Places to

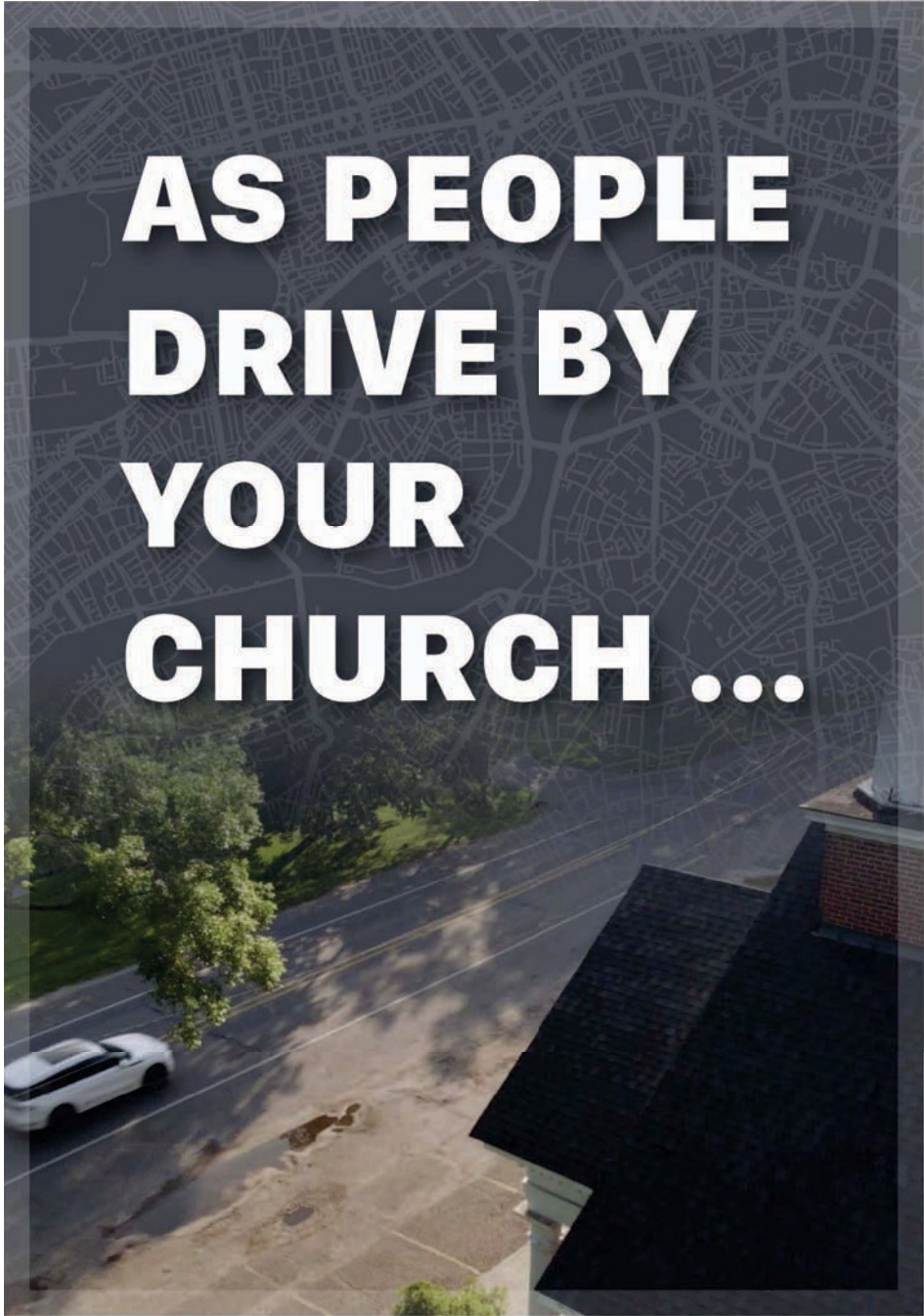
Work for LGBTQ Equality”; and “WilmerHale Becomes Visionary National Legal Partner of the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.”

McRaney is represented by W. Harvey Barton (Pascagoula, Mississippi) and Scott E. Gant (Washington, D.C.).

SBC EC releases CP trend report

NASHVILLE, Tenn. -- The financial office of the SBC Executive Committee released its monthly report for February, and the year-to-date numbers showed Cooperative Program gifts had declined year-to-year for the first five months of the 2022-2023 budget cycle (Oct. 1-Feb 28). Donations were down \$7,885,949.66, or 8.77 percent off, com-

See SBC, page 15



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Value from page 9

"People are getting their marriages back together. Then their kids get saved," he said. "Sunday, a lady got saved when one of the deacons led her to the Lord."

"I got down on my knees to speak to a little kid dressed in cowboy boots in the front row," he continued. "He acted like he was shooting at me and then hid his hand behind him. I stuck my hand out and said, 'Let me pray for you, young man.' His mother was with him, and I could hear her start to sob. I

said, 'Ma'am, are you okay?' and she said, 'I need to get saved.'"

Ezell said the result of this renewed focus by the congregation on the value of one soul is that someone has repented for salvation each week.

"We had a guy saved at 5:30 this morning," Ezell said during the phone interview, describing how the man came to grips with the fact that he was a sinner and needed a Savior. "I told Brother Bill, 'This is good.'"

Importantly, he underscored that the church

begins discipleship immediately after a person declares Christ is Lord and was especially detailed about the program of spiritual health and growth for the men enrolled in Amazing Grace: "Monday night, another local pastor works with them. Tuesday is testimony night. We have people from all walks of life. Wednesday night, I teach them discipleship. Thursday night, we do Celebrate Recovery which walks them through steps of discipleship. Friday, we send them to another church to participate in 'Parting Waters.' Saturday night, we have a lady who sits down and

teaches them in specific steps in discipleship. She is 84 years old, and she studies the Bible more than any person I know. Sunday, of course, we

have Sunday school. Also, six days each week I teach them Therapon, which is a belief therapy.

See VALUE, page 14

RA Congress to embark on 'Quest for truth'

WOODWORTH, La. (LBM) – First through sixth grade boys will embark on a "Quest for truth" (Eph. 6:11) during the 2023 Royal Ambassador Congress, March 31-April 1 on the Tall Timbers Conference Center campus.

The event will feature jousting; an archery exhibition led by David Easterling, pastor of First Baptist Church, Pine; a petting zoo; and an encouraging message by Jonathan Murphy, connections pastor at Calvary Baptist Church, Alexandria.

RA Congress also will

include a Pinewood Derby; soap box races; and a Gospel presentation from Keith Manuel, Louisiana Baptist evangelism and church growth team director, and his dog, Luke. Additionally, participants will help assemble hygiene kits with Matt Tyson, pastor of 318 Church, Shreveport.

"RA Congress is a time of fellowship and celebration for RA groups across the state for their work throughout the year," Louisiana Baptist Men's Ministry and Disaster Relief Strategist Stan Statham told the *Baptist Message*.

"It's also a time to further their missions education and have a hand-on missions experience."

For more information or to download a registration form, please visit <https://louisianabaptists.org/event/ra-congress/>.

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LRTL RV Tour: Helping to keep Louisiana pro-life

By **Brian Blackwell**
Staff writer

ALEXANDRIA, La. (LBM) – Pro-life supporters must be proactive in opposing a possible bill that if passed during the upcoming legislation could legalize abortion in the case of rape or incest in the state, Louisiana Right to Life Executive Director Ben Clapper said during the “Keep Louisiana Pro-Life! RV Tour” stop at the Louisiana Baptist state mission center, March 15.

“We’re concerned about that type of legislation passing in Louisiana,” he said. “That’s why we have decided to canvass the state, cross the state, to engage with legislators, engage with pro-life citizens to make sure people are educated and talking about these critical issues in our society.”

Clapper was among those who spoke during a tour that began Feb. 27 and ends May 10 at Pro-Life Day at the Capitol in Baton Rouge. During each stop, speakers have encouraged the crowd to defend life and provide support to women in need. Participants also have been encouraged to sign a petition that asks Gov. John Bel Edwards and state legislators to oppose any legislation that would legalize abortion.

BACKGROUND

The tour comes on the heels of a June 24, 2022, ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court that overturned Roe v. Wade. Though the ruling did not itself ban abortion nationwide, the decision triggered a 2006 state law, updated during the 2022 legislative session, that

instantly outlawed abortion in Louisiana.

Edwards, who previously had voiced his opposition to all abortions, reversed course last year and publicly supported abortion in the case of rape or incest. State legislators are expected to take up the bill when the legislative session convenes April 10.

“We know there is going to be a piece of legislation that’s going to be brought forth to legalize abortion in these cases,” Clapper said. “And our hope is that we want to go forward. We don’t want to go backwards. We’re going to have a tough time to stop that effort.”

‘PLANT THE FLAG, MOVE FORWARD’

Will Hall, director of the Louisiana Baptist

Office of Public Policy, reminded the crowd they helped 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). The statewide ballot initiative garnered 1,274,167 favorable votes, the most in Louisiana’s history for either a candidate or ballot measure.

He said that while some may contend abortion should be allowed in the case of rape or incest because of “compassionate reasoning,” he does not support such action because he is opposed to killing a baby “for the sin of the father.” Additionally, Hall said, he is pragmatic, explaining that these exceptions would


allow Planned Parenthood to advise clients to claim rape or incest in order to obtain an abortion, noting that in the past, fewer than one percent of abortions were due to rape and fewer than one-half of a percent of abortions were due to incest.

He encouraged Louisiana Baptists to continue their fight for life.


“We can’t give up any ground,” Hall said. “You take the ground, you plant the flag and you move forward. You keep advancing from the ground you have taken.”

Kim Lyons, director of the CENLA Pregnancy Center in Alexandria, shared that the facility has served more than 1,500 women and provided more than 5,000 services, including most recently abortion pill re-

See PRO LIFE, page 13



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Pro-life from page 12

versal services. The center is listed on a national hotline that connects CENLA Pregnancy Center staff with women seeking to reverse the effects of the first pill taken for chemical abortion.

"We so excited to know that when these moms are facing these crisis situations, the world is telling them if you have an unplanned pregnancy, you take the chemical abortion pill," she said. "That's the mentality our society has been breeding and festering. To know the love and the non-judgmental place we are everyday to our moms in need is really a safe haven."

Dustin Bertrand, Louisiana Right to Life outreach director, shared how his mother chose to give him life even though he was conceived

through rape.

"I'm really excited and I'm passionate and I'm mission driven to partner with Louisiana Right to Life to increase our courage and our boldness, to keep on being a pro-life state from the womb to the tomb with no exceptions," he said. "I'm definitely compassionate to women that undergo physical abuse. I don't condone it. I don't believe in it. But we also must protect innocent babies' lives. Because God had a plan for this unplanned man. How much more would he have for all of us here?"

State Rep. Mike Johnson, also a member at First Baptist Church, Pineville, thanked the crowd and asked them to contact their legislators now and get a commitment they will support pro-life bills that will be

voted on this session.

Johnson said he will be pushing legislation during the upcoming session that would make adoption more affordable to families in the state.

"I hope I can count on you to be just as enthused about being pro-life beyond birth for our children and for our mothers," he said. "You can make a difference. It's this group that has made a difference thus far with your help to bring us to this point. We've considered one of the most pro-life states in the nation. We want to continue to be that way, protecting these young lives and these great gifts from God."

Abby Rose Nichols, youth director for Louisiana Right to Life and CENLA Pregnancy Center, shared about how students can become involved in pro-life efforts throughout the state. The organization offers pre-

sentations, retreats and camps that train students to be pro-life leaders in the state.

"There is a startling statistic that says 47 percent of American women enter college identifying as pro-life but only 27 percent remain pro-life after graduation," she said. "I went to a Christian university and I still knew how difficult it was to remain pro-life in the

midst of our culture," she said. "We know one of the most important things we can do is equip our youth with education and empowerment."

For more information on future tour stops, how to sign the "Keep Louisiana Pro-Life" petition or ways to become involved in pro-life efforts, visit prolifelouisiana.org.



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Value from page 11

It's some stuff I learned and took from the Bible. I teach them

every day at 4:30 a.m." As for the four-day revival, 19 new believers

walked into the baptism, March 12, with six more scheduled to be baptized. Moreover, by the end of the revival, March 15, 20 persons had

professed Christ as Savior and seven had surrendered their lives to ministry. It was an amazing outpouring of God's love

through brokenness and forgiveness, according to Evangelist Bill Britt. "It was a powerful

See VALUE, page 16

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Submitted photo

Pastor Bubba Ezell baptized Scott Ford during a worship service at First Baptist Church, Gilbert, March 12.

Storm from page 4

sold as much as possible for scrap. Despite the widespread destruction in the community, the congregation

only missed meeting one Sunday. They first met in an open field, then a tent. But sufficient repairs were made to the gym/life center, and they will hold worship services there for the foreseeable future. Additionally, they converted an old chapel on the grounds from a storage area to a functional meeting place for Bible studies and Sunday School. The church has sold plate lunches and firewood. Currently, they are selling commemorative bricks to pay for the soaring costs of the new building. Some congregations across the country have donated to the cause, too. "This building will no doubt help us continue to grow our ministry of being the hands and feet of Christ," Townsley reflected. "Our members have shown that, without a doubt, as they continue to serve in the midst of our own storm." **Donations may be made via firstlongville.org.**

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SBC from page 10

pared to 2022.

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\$89,879,186.88 (YTD, FY 2022)

Gifts through the Cooperative Program were 2.35 percent above what was budgeted for 2022-2023, according to Baptist Press. However, there is a two-year lag in the SBC budgeting process, meaning the 2022-2023 budget was based on 2020-2021 Cooperative Program receipts, which were negatively impacted by the global pandemic and substantially less than donations in 2021-2022. So, 2022-2023 gifts are above what was planned based on 2020-2021 numbers, but down from the amount received during 2021-2022.

Designated giving for the first five months of the fiscal year also experienced a year-to-year decrease, falling 3.61 percent, or \$3,410,637.33 from the

2021-2022 budget cycle, with both the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering being negatively impacted.

DESIGNATED

\$91,180,839.32 (YTD, FY 2023)
\$94,180,839.33 (YTD, FY 2022)

IMB: 1,200 missionary candidates in pipeline

RICHMOND, Va. -- The SBC International Mission Board reported that its pipeline for missionary candidates has 1,200 trainees. This is a significant milestone for Southern Baptists, as the number of missionary candidates in 2019 was 300, according to the IMB press release.

The goal is to always have more than 1,500 applicants in the pipeline. [This is the number of candidates in line prior to the 2016 drawdown (focused on 50-year-old missionaries with five years of field experience) under former IMB President David

Platt.]

The announcement comes as IMB has suffered an ongoing decline in overseas missionaries for more than two decades but sliding significantly since 2010. IMB reported having 3,527 deployed missionaries on February 28, the lowest number of missionaries on the field since 1983 (3,386), counting only paid personnel (3,401), or 1984 (3,432) if 126 "team associates" are included. In 1985, there were 3,597 missionaries on the field.

Southern Baptists have given generously to abate the shrinking missionary force, donating record amounts to the last three completed Lottie Moon Christmas Offerings: \$203.7 million (2021-2022), \$177.6 million (2020-21) and \$159.5 million (2019-20).

James to nominate Barber for second term as SBC president

LAKE CHARLES, La. --

Steve James, pastor of the Trinity Baptist Church in Lake Charles, Louisiana, announced Feb. 13 his intention to nominate Bart Barber, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Farmersville, Texas, for a second term as president of the Southern Baptist Convention during the 2023 SBC Annual Meeting in New Orleans this June.

James and Barber served together on the board of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

According to information supplied to the Annual Church Profile, FBC Farmersville reported 14 baptisms in 2022 and averaged 320 in weekly worship. The church collected \$1,014,990 total undesignated receipts, with \$108,276 given through the Cooperative Program. The church also gave \$64,713 to the 2022 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering as well as \$630 to the 2022 Annie Armstrong Easter

Offering.

Barber is a graduate of Baylor University and has both an M.Div. and Ph.D. from Southwestern. He and his wife, Tracy, have two teenage children.

Based on reporting by Baptist Press.


Luter to nominate Adkins for SBC first vice president

NEW ORLEANS -- Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist in New Orleans East, Louisiana, and a former Southern Baptist Convention president, announced Feb. 14 that he intends to nominate fellow Louisiana pastor Jay Adkins for the office of first vice president during the 2023 SBC Annual Meeting this June.

Adkins is pastor with the First Baptist Church, Westwego, which he has led since 2002. He and


See SBC, page 16


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Value from page 14

week,” Britt told the

Baptist Message. “People

were saved each service, and several were called to preach! Even after the services were seemingly over, people were still

worshipping and going to the altar.

“I never get tired of seeing people getting saved, week after week,” he exclaimed. “In the last two weeks I have seen 84 people come to Jesus! There is a fresh wind from Heaven blowing across His Church.”

As for FBC Gilbert, it

all began with recognizing that each soul matters to God.

EPILOG: Revival and awakening continue to manifest in FBC Gilbert. On March 19, the congregation witnessed seven baptisms, two additional professions of faith and one more commitment to ministry.

SBC from page 15

Luter serve together in the New Orleans Baptist Association.

According to information supplied to the Annual Church Profile, FBC Westwego reported seven baptisms in 2022 and averaged 85 in weekly worship. The church collected \$125,970 in total undesignated receipts, with \$250 given through the Cooperative Program. However, the SBC Executive Committee Finance Office reported FBCW sent \$10,572.59 directly to the SBC EC toward the Cooperative Program Allocation Budget during

fiscal year 2021-2022.

The church did not report contributions to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering or the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering in the ACP report. However, the congregation listed \$7,382 contributed to NOBA and total missions expenditures of \$11,813.

Adkins is a graduate of Leavell College and has both an M.Div. and Th.M. from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Michelle, have two sons.

Based on reporting by Baptist Press.

Celebrates from page 7

ery and a Christmas lights display.

Greer said its pres-

ence is needed in an area where thousands still need the love of Christ.

“Our staff, leaders and church are truly excited about evangelism,” he continued. “Our main focus in everything we do is to help bring people far from God, close to God. Our people step up for events and other outreaches that we do both in serving and giving.”

“It’s our church culture to intentionally invite new people to a weekly worship service and we seek to make our guest experience something special,” he said. “Our church truly welcomes everyone. No matter what people have done, their race or their socio-economic status, we invite anyone in. You will see smiling friendly faces greeting you anytime you walk through our doors. We hope that people will come with their mess ups, experience a miracle and leave with a life changing message of hope.”

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Promise from page one

Importantly, the promise of salvation is to both the lost sheep of Israel as well as other sheep "not of this fold," meaning Gentiles like you and me (John 10:11-16). This is to fulfill the promise of Isaiah 49:6 that Jesus will "raise up the tribes of Jacob" and "restore the preserved ones of Israel" as well as be "a light to the Gentiles," extending salvation "to the ends of the earth."

Moreover, it is no small matter that the promise of salvation was fulfilled on the cross and the fullness of salvation was completed in the tomb.

Instead, the empty cross is a reminder that you and I don't have to be crucified to pay for our sins. The Bible tells us that "God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). And when Jesus

cried out "It is finished" (John 19:30) while dying on the cross, He was using an accounting phrase. He was saying, "The books are closed, and the cost has been 'paid in full!'" He paid the price so that you and I don't have to bear that cost.

Likewise, the empty tomb offers assurance that one day we will be raised from the grave. Paul made this point by mocking

death and the grave in his letter to the church at Corinth, telling believers that death has no sting for them, and the grave has no victory over them (1 Cor. 15:55).

Fortunately, the promise of salvation is still open to anyone who would humble himself or herself to Jesus, ask Him for forgiveness and mean it. The Bible says, "Though your sins be as scarlet, He will wash them white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18). In other words, He will give

you a clean slate.

In the end, this empty slate is the promise of Christ's empty cross and

empty tomb. And above all else, both signify that the hope of Easter is not an empty promise.



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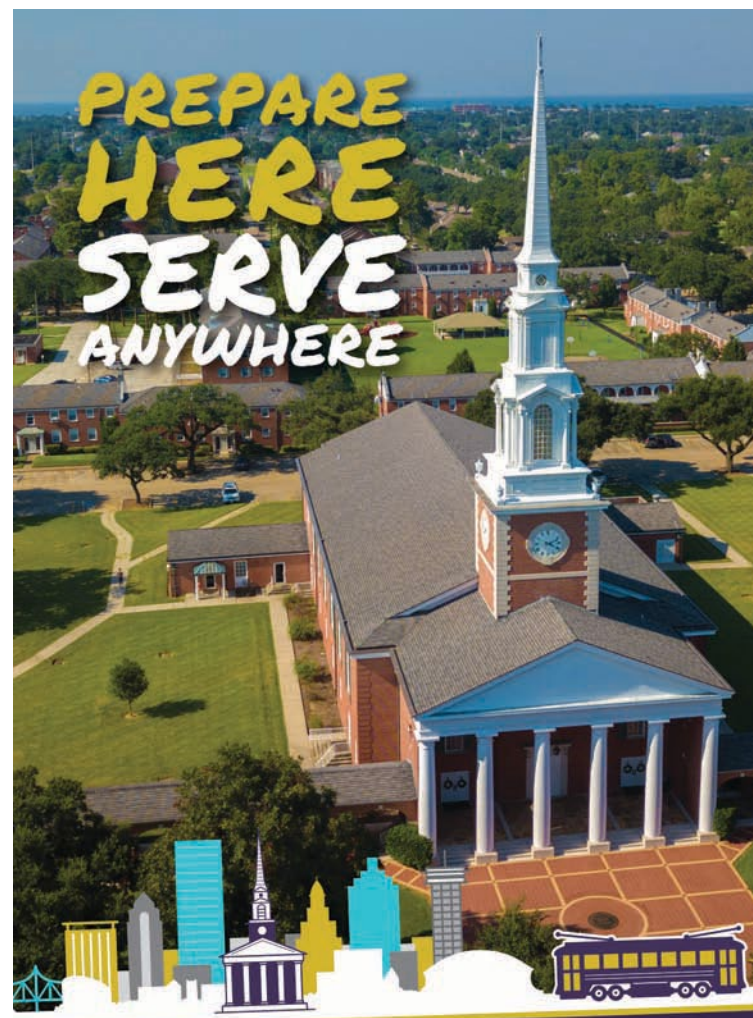


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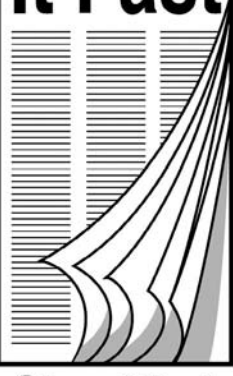
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First Baptist Church Leesville is seeking a part-time minister of music. Send résumés: Attn: Robbie Endris, FBC Leesville, P O Box 1568, Leesville, LA 71496 or email to robendris@gmail.com

Are you looking for a small group Bible study for your church or ministry?

Haylee Collins, a Louisiana Baptist pastor's wife and NOBTS MDiv graduate, might have a solution for you!

Check out www.hayleecollins.com to find affordable, comprehensive, and text-focused Bible studies.

FULL TIME PASTOR
Cooper Baptist Church, Leesville is seeking a full time pastor. Please send résumés to 853 Cooper Church Rd. Leesville LA 71446. Call 337.537.3735 with any questions.



Seeking a Bi-Vocational **PASTOR**
Beulah Baptist Church in Mansfield, LA is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Please mail résumés to Beulah Baptist Church, 3417 Hwy 481, Mansfield, LA 71052 or email to rosemarym621@gmail.com



SEEKING A PART-TIME YOUTH OR FULLTIME YOUTH/CHILDREN MINISTER
Cherry Ridge Baptist Church is accepting résumés for a P/T Youth Minister or a F/T Youth/Children Minister. Résumés may be e-mailed to crbapt@gmail.com or mailed to **Cherry Ridge Baptist Church, 1005 Cherry Ridge Rd, Bastrop LA 71200.**



MINISTER OF MUSIC
First Baptist Church Pineville is now accepting applications and recommendations for Minister of Music. Résumés with cover letters may be mailed to First Baptist Church Pineville, attn: Stewart Holloway, 901 Main Street, Pineville, LA 71360 or emailed to sholloway@fbcpineville.net



Seeking a full-time or part-time **STUDENT MINISTER**
Plain Dealing Baptist Church, Plain Dealing, LA is seeking a full-time or part-time student minister. Please send résumés to: Search Committee Plain Dealing Baptist Church, PO Box 543, Plain Dealing, LA 71064 or email to pdcbcla@gmail.com




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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

- **Les Colvin** has retired as pastor at First Baptist Church, Zachary.
- **Coy (wife LeAnne) Fuqua** is the new pastor at North Keithville, Keithville.
- **John Oswalt** retiring as music director at Belle Park Baptist Church, Haughton.
- **Mickey Alexander** is the new pastor at Enterprise Baptist Church in Farmerville.
- **Eric Green** is the new pastor at Bayou Vista Baptist Church, Morgan City.
- **Luke (wife Jenn) Lusted** is the new music minister at First Baptist Church, Shreveport. He comes from Camelback Bible Church, Paradise Valley.
- **Aaron (wife Seana) Greenwood** is the new music minister at Woodridge Baptist Church from Farley Street Baptist Church, Waxahachie, Texas.
- **J.D. Jones** has resigned as Children's minister from Calvary Baptist Church, Shreveport to become associate pastor at Fellowship Community Church, Stonewall.
- **Kurt Zortman** is the new pastor at Elm Grove Baptist Church, Bossier City from interim.
- **Charles Blanchard** is ordained a pastor at Beulah Baptist Church, Cheneyville.
- **Gary Richerson** is the new interim pastor at Poland Baptist Church, Alexandria.
- **Michael Didon** is the new pastor at Carroll Baptist Church,
- **David Brown** has retired as pastor from Gray's Creek Baptist Church, Denham Springs.
- **Carl Sullivan** is the interim pastor at Hold Baptist Church, Holden.

REVIVAL

- Siloam Springs Community Church, Jonesboro: **Spring Revival**, March 26-29. Guest speaker: **Craig James**. Pastor: Wayne Morrow.
- Northside Baptist Church, Montgomery: **Spring Conference**, April 1, 9 a.m.- noon. Speakers: **Lee Brand, pastor of Faith Baptist Church, Bartlett, Tennessee; Kenneth Bass, professor of religion and philosophy at Central Texas College in Killeen, Texas.** Testimony: **Chris Bradford**. Worship: **Graceway Quartet**. Cost: free. Lunch will be served. Please RSVP by March 22. Any questions contact pastor@timtilton318@gmail.com or call 318.628.0597 (call or text). Pastor: Timothy Tilton.
- Fellowship Baptist Church, Greenwell Springs: **Revival**, April 2-5, Sunday 10:15 a.m. & 6 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday 6:30 p.m. nightly. Evangelist: **Marvin Cooper**. Worship: **Broken Vessels**. Pastor: Mardy Guidry.
- Gray Baptist Church, Jefferson, Texas: **Spring Revival**, April 2-5, Sunday 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. nightly. Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell**. The church is located 10 minutes southwest of Vivian (Hwy 2 to Texas) at 150 FM 727, Jefferson, Texas, 75657. Pastor: Roy Davis.

- Bethlehem Baptist Church, Winnfield: **Spring Revival**, April 2-5, Sunday, 5 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, 6 p.m. Speaker: Gevan Spinney. Pastor: Charles Malone.
- First Baptist Church, Robeline: **Revival**, April 9-16, meals, 5:30 p.m.; service, 6:30 p.m. Evangelist: **Sam Moore**. Worship: **Praise teams from Robeline First and Natchitoches**. Pastor: Brian Ray.
- First Baptist Church, Tallulah: **Revival**, April 16-19, Evangelist: **Bill Britt**. Pastor: Jay Parker.
- Wild Horse Ministries Multipurpose Building, Trout: **Community Spring Revival**, April 16-21, Sunday, 7 p.m., Solemn Assembly of Prayer, Speaker: **Dick DeBusk**. Monday, 7 p.m., Speaker: **Ruben Weaver**; Tuesday, Speaker: **Casey Johnson**; Wednesday, 7 p.m., Speaker: **Casey Johnson**; Thursday, 7 p.m., Speaker: **Jeff Moreau**, and Friday, 7 p.m. Speaker: **Tomell Hamms**. For more information call Paul Daly, 318.312.0388.
- Heflin Baptist Church, Heflin: **Revival**, April 23-26, Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday-Wednesday 6:30 p.m. Evangelist: **David Hanna**. Worship: **The Lisemlys**. Pastor: Ronnie Osborne.
- Welcome Home Baptist Church, Columbia: **Revival**, April 23-26, Sunday 6 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. nightly. Evangelist: **Lyndon Longoria**, Music: **Rick and Jennifer Duckett**. Pastor: Jim McKeithen.
- Southside Baptist Church Jonesboro: Revival, April 30-May 3. Sunday, 10:30 p.m. Speaker: **Steve Horn. Executive Director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention**. Sunday, 6 p.m., Speaker: **Lee Brand, former VP of the SBC**; Monday-Wednesday, 6 p.m. Worship: **Graceway Quartet and soloist Kathy Venable** and other singers. Pastor: Wesley Venable.

LAGNIAPPE

- First Baptist Church, Ferriday: **Surplus chairs** to be given away at (no cost), 100 for children (wooden) and 35 theater chairs for adults. Call Bill Beasley. First Baptist Church, Ferriday, 601.807.5237.
- Sale Street Baptist Church, Lake Charles: **Matt Papa Live**, March 30, 7 p.m. Cost: free event. Pastor: Drew Mills.
- Bethlehem Baptist Church, Winnfield: **Hunting for Christ Banquet**, April 1, 5 p.m. There will be some tremendous door prizes to be given away. Pastor: Charles Malone.
- Inaugural Camp Harris 4-Person Golf Scramble Fundraiser, April 1 at Trails End Golf Course, Arcadia. Cost: \$500 for four-man team. Remit to Harris Baptist Assembly Camp 2800 Harris Rd, Minden, La.71055. For more information call Harry O'Brown, camp manager, at 318.455.5012 or Michael Sanders, tournament director at 318.458.6100.
- First Baptist Church, Covington: **Fishers of Men**, April 1, 10 a.m.- 1 p.m. This free event is for Special Needs Families in the Greater St. Tammany Area. The theme this year is "Fishers of Men". The mission is to provide a free fun-filled day for families with special needs individuals where every member of the family can participate and experience joy of doing things together. The second goal is to provide resource information about products/services in this greater area which may be available to our families. For additional information, call the church office at 985-892-2149. Pastor: Waylon

- Bailey.
- Riverview Baptist Church, Alexandria: **Jesus from Messiah**, April 2, Dinner on the grounds after worship service followed by an Easter egg hunt for the children. Pastor: David Newton.
- ASCENSION**
- Oak Grove Baptist Church, Prairieville: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 3, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- Dutchtown Baptist Church, Prairieville: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 4, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- Graceworks Church, Prairieville: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 5, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- Fellowship Church, Prairieville: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 6, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- Ascension Baptist Church, Gonzales: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 7, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- CENTRAL**
- First Baptist Church, Central: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 3, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- Greenwell Springs Baptist, Baton: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 4, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- Zoar Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 5, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- Fellowship Church, Greenwell Springs: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 6, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- Comite Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 7, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- BATON ROUGE**
- Stevendale Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Pas-**

- sion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 3, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- First Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 4, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- Jefferson Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 5, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- Family of Faith, Baton Rouge: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 6, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- CrossPoint Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Passion Week: An Easter Journey**, April 7, 11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Lunch and Bible study.
- **65th Annual Bienville Men's & Boys Rally**, April 6 at Bienville High School. Guest speaker: Kyle Williams. Supper will be a BBQ plate with ice cream for \$9. RSVP to Philip Towns 318.548.8504 by March 27th.
- Temple Baptist Church, Winnsboro: **The Living Last Supper**, April 6, 6 p.m. Come and prepare your heart for Easter as the choirs of Temple Baptist Church, First United Methodist Church and First Baptist Church Winnsboro reenact the last supper with song and music.
- Lanier Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **His Amazing Love – An Easter Musical Production**, April 6-8, 6:30 p.m. nightly. The story of the Life of Christ. This is a free event. For more information call, 225.355.5605 or go to www.LanierBC.com. Pastor: Mike Ferguson.
- Siloam Baptist Church, Many: **Legacy night featuring nine BASS professional anglers**, April 8, 6-8 p.m. Come meet some of the best fishermen in the world and listen to their testimony. A meal will be provided. For more information, call 318.452.9731. Pastor: Wayne Morrow.
- Martin Baptist Church, Coushatta: **Night of**

- Joy Comedy Tour**, April 13, 6 p.m. Comedian: Bob Smiley. This event is sponsored by Men of Courage Red River. Music: WeRCalled. There will be free fish plates and live performances by WeRCalled. Pastor: Richard Kaufman
- First Baptist Church, Haughton: **Ben Waites in concert**, April 19, 6 p.m. Pastor: Gevan Spinney.
- Louisiana Christian University, Pineville: **Hymn Fest**, April 20, 11 a.m. **Ben Waites, Scotty Blackwell and Rick Brewer** in concert.
- Arkadelphia Baptist Church, Pitkin: **The Dixie Echoes in concert**, April 21, 6:30 p.m. Pastor: Andrew Johnson.
- Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Columbia: **Steve Black and the Master's Trio in concert**, April 22, 5 p.m. Pastor: Robert Cooke.
- Mt Patrick Baptist Church, Bernice: **The Louisiana Melody Boys in concert**, April 22, 6 p.m. Pastor: n/a
- Grace Baptist Church, Monroe: **Steve Black and the Master's Trio in concert**, April 23, 9 a.m. Pastor: Ricky Baker.
- Louisiana Christian University: **Matthew West – My story your glory Tour**, April 27, 7 p.m. Cost: For a limited time select seats only \$22 +venue and ticketing fees.
- Calvary Baptist Church, Tullos: **Ben Waites in concert**, April 30, 10 a.m. Pastor: Norris Curry.
- Eastside Baptist Church, Rayville: **The Louisiana Melody Boys in concert**, April 29, 5 p.m. Pastor: Chris Crawford.
- Calvary Baptist Church, Tullos: **Ben Waites in concert**, April 30, 10 a.m. Pastor: Norris Curry.
- Dayspring Church, Ruston: **The Louisiana Melody Boys in concert**, April 30, 6 p.m. Pastor: J.E. Brown.

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.

IZW PFGZ MGBXB BIP QFIQ FG IZBPGYGW

WVBHYGGQSU, FG BIVW XZQR FVD, QFRX IQQ ZRQ NIY

NYRD QFG EVZTWRD RN TRW. IZW ZR DIZ INQGY QFIQ

WXYBQ IBE FVD IZU LXGBQVRZ.

DIYE QPGSKG:QFVYQU-NRXY

Clues:
G = E; Y = R

Answer to February 23 Scripture Crypto:
Matthew twenty-six:sixty-nine

APRIL 24 - ALEXANDRIA
APRIL 25 - SHREVEPORT
9AM-3PM

\$15

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Mt. Carmel Baptist Church
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Register at LouisianaBaptists.org/LABMA • For questions, contact Jeff Ingram at 318.448.3402.