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Everlasting Smiles: Target Ukraine

By Angela Rice, Short Term Mission Coordinator • BMA Missions

“The devastation and destruction experienced in the lives of Ukrainians this past year have changed their lives forever. Our prayer is that, through Everlasting Smiles, not only will the

shoeboxes bring a smile to a child’s face but also bring hope to a parent’s heart. Seeing their children happy brings a smile to faces and hearts that need it. Through giving out Christmas boxes to Ukrainians this year, we have a great opportunity to share the gospel with families that are in desperate need of hope... the hope that is offered through Jesus that helps us build relationships and connect people to our churches.”

— Larry and Tammy Wood,
BMA Missionaries to Ukraine
and the Czech Republic.

This year, more than ever, we are excited to send our Christmas shoeboxes. We just finalized with Larry and Tammy Wood that shoeboxes will go to Ukraine and the surrounding countries housing Ukrainian Refugees. Can you imagine children receiving boxes full of gifts after what they have had to face? Can you imagine how much it will mean to parents who have been through so much sadness to see the excitement in their child’s eyes?

In each shoebox, there are many fun things children will enjoy. They are also packed with lots of love, and many prayers are prayed over them. But the most important thing we can give any child is the opportunity to know Jesus. Our prayer is that, through the

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MOVING with Ministers and Staff

To view previous listings
from this column, visit
our website at
www.baptisttrumpet.com.



Ethan York is the new middle school pastor at Antioch Baptist Church in Conway. He will begin serving on Aug. 8.



Reagan Lee was ordained to the gospel ministry on July 31. At the request of Valley View Baptist Church, where he has been serving as pastor since October of 2020, Central Church in Southaven, Miss. led in the ordination service.



Darius Tolbert was ordained to the gospel ministry by Jacob’s Well of Yorkville, Ill., where he has been serving since the fall of 2020. He will continue to serve as the associate pastor for worship and youth.

Ricky Williams is the new pastor at Beacon Baptist Church in Gravette and is already on the field.



Biblical Financial Principles to Live By

By Dr. Steve Crawley, Executive Director • Ministers Resource Services

Here are some helpful biblical financial principles that we all need to be reminded of from time to time:

• **Trust in God and in God alone for your future needs.** “Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God” (Psa. 20:7). “As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life” (I Tim. 6:17-19). Trust the Provider, not the provision. If our trust is in the provision, we will never have enough to feel secure. If our trust is in the Provider, we will never not have enough to feel secure.

• **Recognize that everything belongs to God, and He can do with it what He wishes.** “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it” (Psa. 24:1). Some mistakenly think that only 10% of their increase belongs to God when, in fact, the other 90% is His, too. Since God owns it all, we cannot outgive Him; His shovel is bigger than ours.

• **Diversify your investments.** “Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, or even to eight, for you know not what disaster may happen on earth” (Eccl. 11:1-2). Invest in various resources — real estate, stock market, minerals, etc.

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Signs You Are a Church Consumer Instead of a Committed Church Member

By Thom S. Rainer, Founder & CEO • Church Answers

I am a church member. I teach a small group in my church. I occasionally preach when my pastor is out. I give to the church faithfully. I have been involved in other ministries in the church over the years.

But I sometimes start acting like a church consumer instead of a committed church member. Instead of focusing on others as I Corinthians 12 and 13 clearly demonstrate, I start acting like the church is supposed to serve me. I want to get my needs met. I want things a certain way for my family and me. My unholy trinity is me, myself and I.

Tracking my own Attitude and Behavior

Recently, I’ve started tracking my own attitude by going through a series of signs that my commitment to my church is not what it should be. Here are 11 signs that I am becoming a church consumer instead of a committed church member.

You know you are becoming a church consumer when:

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CENTRAL
BAPTIST COLLEGE

PROFILE

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President



CBC Announces New Hires And Promotions

Central Baptist College is pleased to announce the addition of three new employees: Rick Brown, Sierra Carrier and Mallory Guyton. Additionally, Dr. Tim Brewer, Billie Rodriguez and Lynsey Brown have received promotions.

Rick Brown has joined CBC as the women's head volleyball coach. Brown comes to CBC from Midwestern State University (MSU), an NCAA Division II school in Texas, where he served as an assistant during the 2021 season. He was also the lead recruiter for MSU in his only season as an assistant for the Mustangs. Prior to his arrival at MSU, he had been an assistant at McCook Community College in Nebraska. He has also spent time at the high school level in Arizona and at Eastern Wyoming College as an assistant. Brown graduated from Northern Arizona University with his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with an emphasis in Computer Information Systems. He is married to Michelle and the couple has two children, Carli and Dawson.

Sierra Carrier has joined CBC Athletics and will be serving as assistant women's basketball coach. Carrier earned her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Central Baptist College. As assistant women's basketball coach, Carrier will serve as assistant to head coach Lyle Middleton and will help with player eligibility. Carrier is a member of Mt. Vernon Baptist Church in Mt. Vernon.

Mallory Guyton has joined the Public Relations office as alumni and public relations officer. Guyton is a recent graduate of CBC with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications. Guyton's main duties will be assisting the Public Relations office with writing projects, social media and events. Guyton is a member of Crosspoint Baptist Church in Greenbrier.

Dr. Tim Brewer received a promotion to full-time faculty as a Professor of Bible. Brewer has served as an adjunct instructor for the last 15 years. He earned his Bachelor of Arts from Central Baptist College, Master of Arts from BMA Theological Seminary and his Doctorate in Educational Ministry from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Brewer currently serves as lead pastor of Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Guy. He and his wife, Christie have five children — Drew, Page, Sam, John and Lydia.

Billie Rodriguez received a promotion to Director of Dining Services. Rodriguez most recently served as Assistant Director of Dining Services. Rodriguez has been employed with CBC for 13 years.

Lynsey Brown received a promotion to assistant director of Dining Services. Brown most recently served as manager of Café 52, and has been with CBC for seven years.



Sports News
By Erik Holth



Where Are You Now

• **Conway, July 26** — **Ben Madison**, who pitched two seasons at CBC (2017 & 2018) is currently pitching his third full season of professional baseball in the San Francisco Giants organization. Madison has been great this year in his 12 appearances combined between the Giants' Arizona Complex League team and the Giants' single-A affiliate, San Jose. In those appearances, Madison has a 1-1 record and an ERA of 1.53 in 17 and two-thirds innings, striking out 28 against just 6 walks and allowing only 3 runs on 7 hits so far this season. In five appearances to start the season at the Arizona Complex League, Madison threw five scoreless outings, holding opponents to three hits while walking only two and striking out seven.

He earned his only win of the season on June 13 against the Angels' affiliate, allowing just two walks while striking out one in two innings. In seven appearances at San Jose, he has 21 Ks in 10 and two-thirds innings to go with a hold. In his most recent outing on July 24 at Modesto, Madison tied his season high in strikeouts, fanning five of the six batters he faced in two perfect innings to help the Giants secure an 8-2 win. Madison and the Giants are currently in second place in the California League, three games behind division leader Fresno.

Soccer

• Conway, July 28

— CBC Director of Soccer Lance Gordon has announced a new assistant coaching hire for the 2022 season. **Dylan Perdue**, a former Mustang, will join the coaching staff this fall. "Dylan is an accomplished player and coach," said Gordon. "He is going to improve our men's and women's goalkeeper play as well as provide quality leadership for the growth of our Reserves." Perdue, a goalkeeper for CBC from 2014-17, is joining the staff as a goalkeepers coach for both teams and the head coach for the reserve men's team.




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Preparing Your Students For a New School Year

It is crazy how two words can bring such a divide, but "It's August!" can do it. You will have some students ready to tackle a new school year, while others are dreading every moment. The teachers in your congregation may be feeling some of the same things. As a student ministry worker or youth pastor, "It's August!" means there are some great ministry opportunities just around the corner.

Our job is to help our students prepare for the days ahead, whether they want to go back or not. Our students need to understand that school time is a great equalizer. Even for those who homeschool, "school time" provides more time to interact with others and, in turn, more opportunities to share Jesus. With just a few group times before school kicks off, now is the time to invest in your students and share encouragement with them. But how do we do that? How do we help our students as they step back into their greatest mission field?

Here are some things to keep in mind:

• **Prepare and equip them.** Your students are reentering a very secular world. They may have spent the summer with their youth group and at church camp, but that doesn't change the environment they are about to go back into. They will face adults who are secular in their thinking in addition to classmates. Your students need the firm foundation of God's Word to stand on as they face worldly concepts and ideas. If they don't have that foundation, be ready to answer their questions and provide them answers as they navigate school. We also want them to be ready to share Jesus with their friends, classmates and teachers. That means we need to equip them with the tools they need.

• **Challenge them.** There is a need for us to challenge our students to live differently than those they share a classroom and halls with, and we need to challenge them to live holy lives that will honor God. We should be encouraging them to make choices before they are faced with tempting situations. Besides living holy lives, we should encourage our students to live on mission. Are they sharing Jesus with their friends? Are they inviting people to church? There are opportunities that can be life-altering. Are we encouraging students to do the hard stuff for Christ?

• **Commission them.** As we send students back into the classrooms, we need to step beyond simple encouragement. We need to pray over them and commission them as they reenter their mission field. Every conversation and interaction is an opportunity to hold up Christ in a dark place. Let's pray for our students and send them out with purpose.

School time can be stressful. However, with God's help, our students can go forward with strength and purpose. Let's be their cheerleaders and coaches as they get back into the game.

A native of Sheridan, Perdue played 245 minutes in goal for CBC, making 13 saves in his career. He also played four seasons in net for the Little Rock Rangers and the Arkansas Wolves. He comes to CBC after serving as the volunteer assistant coach at Maumelle over the last two seasons, including

a team that went 9-3-3 in 2022 and finished as a state semifinalist. Additionally, Perdue coaches goalkeepers for the Little Rock Rangers Academy for the 2009 and 2010 kids. He also spent three years as a coach at Real Arkansas.

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Never Give Up! Never! Never! Never!

Hitler was leading the Nazis in conquering Europe and, as they advanced westward, nation after nation fell. France was defeated, and it appeared that Britain was next. During this tumultuous time, Winston Churchill became Britain's prime minister and many thought it best to attempt a peace treaty with Hitler. They saw no other way out. Churchill spent many sleepless nights and saw it as futile to try to negotiate with an evil tyrant. He decided that they would not negotiate. They would not surrender. They would fight. Against all odds, he declared to a nation "Never give up! Never! Never! Never!"

This demonstrates what the resolve of one man can accomplish when he makes up his mind to do the right thing no matter what the cost may be. If this shows us man's abilities in the flesh, think of what a leader can do who is walking in the Spirit, filled with the Holy Spirit and manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. How can that be described? Paul says it well in Phil. 4:13 (HCSB): "I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me." The Scriptures tell us that Paul fought a good fight and that he finished his course. He endured with tenacity, and he decided to never give up. Never! Never! Never!

Leadership requires developing a ministry tool belt with different skill sets. The first is the ability to hear the voice of God as He speaks to you through His Word and prayer. There are many biblical examples of hearing from God, but in the life of King David, you see this statement over and over, "So David asked the Lord about it."

Another necessary skill set is the ability to endure, which requires tenacity and determination. Your desire and passion should be as Paul said in Gal. 6:9, "So we must not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up."

Your endurance is a three-way collaboration:

• **It is providential because God is involved.** In Phil. 2:13 it says, "For it is God who is working in you, enabling

you both to desire and to work out His good purpose." Do not miss it — He is enabling you.

• **You have a personal responsibility in this process.** Philippians 2:12 states, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Are you placing yourself in the position for God to work through you?

• **There is a pastoral aspect to this development.** Galatians 4:19 says, "My children, I am again suffering labor pains for you until Christ is formed in you" — building one another up.

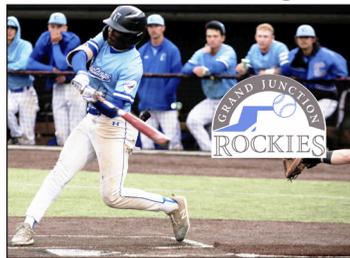
What do you do when someone stumbles or falls along the way? What happens if that someone is you? Galatians 6:1-3 speaks to this process of restoration. Growing tired and weary is normal, but it is a dangerous place to remain because it can lead to losing heart, giving up, burning out and, if not extremely careful, quitting altogether. Giving up is the opposite of I Cor. 15:58: "Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord!"

The first step to restoration is to **pick them up**. When someone stumbles, their first need is for someone who is spiritual to step in and help them back to their feet. Everyone stumbles and, when you do or when they do, we need to be ready to respond by helping, encouraging and even rebuking. Those who are spiritually strong are responsible for those who stumble; if they will let us. It is wise to remember that you are responsible to people not for people. I Thessalonians 5:14 challenges us, "warn those who are irresponsible, comfort the discouraged, help the weak, be patient with everyone."

Once you pick them up, your responsibility does not end. It is now time to **hold them up**. Galatians 6:2 tells us to, "Carry one another's burdens; in this way you fulfill the law of Christ." The idea here is to carry them with endurance. This is referring to any difficulty or problem a person has trouble coping with by themselves. Just because you have been freed from a sin does not mean you will always be free from

SPORTS

(Continued From Page 2)



Baseball

• **Conway, Aug. 1** — Following a record-setting season, CBC outfielder **Jay French** has signed a professional contract. He signed the Grand Junction Rockies of the Pioneer League over the weekend and will make his debut in the near future. French, who set nine single-season, single-game or career records this past season, becomes the second Mustang to join a Major League Baseball affiliated club, joining 2018 draftee Ben Madison, who is currently pitching for the San Jose Giants.

French led the NAIA this past season in stolen bases with 61, which also set an Arkansas state record and was named the American Midwest Conference player of the year, a first-team all-AMC selection, a first-team NAIA All-American, Natural State Baseball's player of the year and The Natural Award from NSB, which goes to the top player that is an Arkansas native.

temptation. Holding someone up requires making ourselves available for counsel and encouragement. You want to make sure they have steadied themselves enough and have their spiritual footing to move forward.

It is not spirituality but pride that makes us want to go it alone. There is no place in our spiritual journey for Lone Rangers. John MacArthur says it like this, "Conceit can coexist with outward morality, but it cannot coexist with spirituality." Allow others access to your spiritual walk and growth. In James 5:16 we are instructed, "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another." If you see someone who has stumbled, you are called to pick them up and hold them up. If you have stumbled, allow someone into your life to do the same.

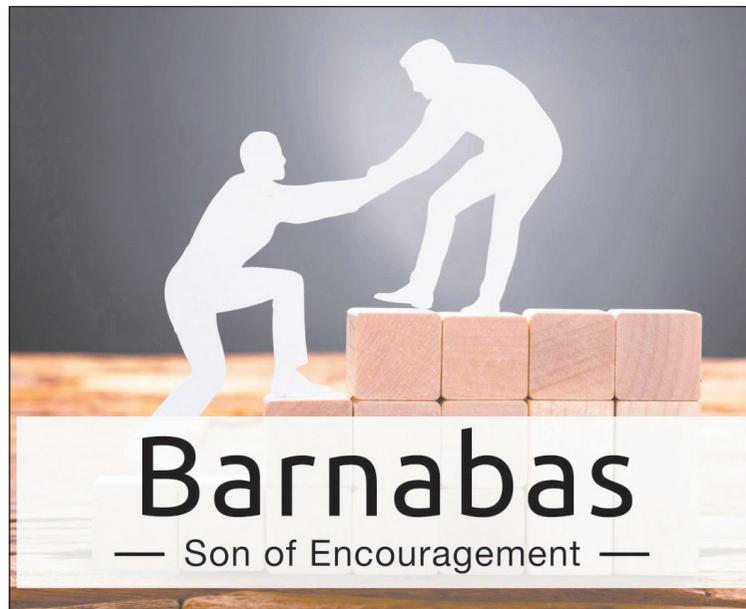
Paul then challenges us to **build them up**. How do we build them up? By walking with them and disciplining them in the Scriptures. The spiritual Christian who has picked up and held up his fallen brothers and sisters in Christ by being present and available also builds them up in the Word. You need to be fed by others, but the most important aspect of the discipleship process is being taught to feed yourself. Galatians 6:10 gives us this challenge: "Therefore, as we have opportunity, we must work for the good of all, especially for those who belong to the household of faith."

Are you taking advantage of the opportunity to pick up, help up and build up those who stumble? Is your spiritual radar tuned in to those who are struggling? By God's grace, never give up! Never! Never! Never!

Just Thinking...

By Dr. Tom Mitchell

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Our Young Preachers Need to Preach

For the majority of my time in the ministry, I have tried to be an encourager. I do so because I was encouraged by pastors, CBC professors, departmental leaders, and members of local churches. As a young preacher at Central Baptist College in the 1960s, I was blessed to have godly men who genuinely took an interest in me. By no means do I think they thought I was a good preacher; I think their goal was to encourage me so that I could develop my preaching ability.

However, I was not the only ministry student who received their encouragement. Those professors and administrators cared about all of us — and our futures! Dr. C.O. Strong was a professor of English and also homiletics (the process of developing sermons and preaching). He was also my pastor in Conway at Central Baptist Church. It was his encouragement that helped me so much in those early days. He would call various pastors in the state, urging them to invite me to preach in their pulpits. Their responses were such blessings because a young preacher needs to preach. Many who did not get such opportunities fell away — they denounced their calls or just simply quit.

Churches, I assure you that God is still calling men into the gospel ministry. Each one will be different because his spiritual gifts are different, but the one common fact is that they have been called and as a result, they need opportunities to preach to people!

Things were quite different in the 50s, 60s and 70s of the past century. Local associations had regular Young People's Meetings, which provided young preachers opportunities. Numerous churches had one or two youth revivals each year, and those also provided opportunities. However, by far the best way for young preachers to be able to preach is for pastors to call and invite them!

There are two excellent ways to find out who some of these young preachers are:

• **The Baptist Trumpet** regularly mentions those who have surrendered to preach, as well as other young men who are available for appointments. Pastors, you can visit BaptistTrumpet.com and look for the "Moving With The Ministers" section under the "Resources" tab for all the previous run listings or contact Baptist Trumpet Executive Editor Jeff Herring (editor@baptisttrumpet.com) for the names of preachers.

• **Central Baptist College**, where many of those young men of today are receiving their educations, also recommends the young preachers to the churches. You can contact CBC Professor Dr. Martin Jameson (mjameson@cbc.edu) or CBC Director of Church Relations Duffy Guyton (dgyuyton@cbc.edu) to recommend one of those students to preach either in pulpit supply or for pastoral positions.

The impetus, as far as I am concerned, is that these young men be encouraged. I still remember the kindness of pastors who invited me as a preacher boy, but I also remember the kind responses from the church members and the encouragement I received from them. Paul's traveling companion was Barnabas, whose name means "Son of Encouragement." There are some young preachers among us who need some Barnabas-type encouragement.

Once again, our young preachers need to preach! That's what I was just thinking this week!



By Executive Editor Jeff Herring

Marijuana Cultivators in Arkansas Face Class Action RICO Lawsuit

On July 12, three Arkansas residents filed a class action complaint in federal court in Little Rock against a group of medical marijuana cultivators and a marijuana testing company. The complaint alleges that Natural State Medicinals (NSMC-OPCO LLC), Bold Team LLC and Osage Creek Cultivation falsely labeled the marijuana they cultivated by overstating the amount of THC in their marijuana products. The complaint also alleges that Steep Hill — a marijuana testing company — “routinely overstates the amount of THC in its (marijuana) flower” that it tests.

Arkansas’ medical marijuana amendment requires marijuana sold in the state to be tested. The complaint alleges that the defendants conspired to falsify the marijuana lab results. The suit was filed under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act, a federal anti-racketeering law, and it requests a trial by jury in the case.

In 2018 the state’s Medical Marijuana Commission authorized Natural State Medicinals, Bold Team LLC and Osage Creek Cultivation to grow marijuana in Arkansas. According to reports filed with the Arkansas Ethics Commission, Bold Team LLC and Osage Creek Cultivators have donated \$700,000 each toward the campaign to legalize marijuana in Arkansas. Natural State Medicinals has donated \$350,000. (familycouncil.org)

Star Trek Star Helps Share The Gospel with Co-star

Nichelle Nichols, known for her iconic role as Lt. Nyota Uhura in “Star Trek: The Original Series,” passed away over the weekend. One incredible aspect of her story most in the media will leave out is her Christian faith and the surprising way she helped share the gospel with co-star William Shatner.

To so many, Nichols was known for blazing a new trail for black women in the entertainment industry. In fact, it was Martin Luther King, Jr. who convinced Nichols — who wanted to leave screen acting for the stage — to continue starring in the TV show. He told her, “You cannot abdicate your position. You are changing the minds of people across the world, because, for the first time through you, we see ourselves and what can be.”

Nichols was also reportedly a woman of deep and abiding Christian faith. Dylan Novak, known online as “The Celebrity Evangelist,” shared on Facebook Sunday that he met Nichols in 2016 at a comic convention. It was there he learned — after sharing the gospel with her — that Nichols was already a believer. He recalled her tell-

ing him, “No fan has ever cared about my eternal life before.”

He then explained the powerful way Nichols contributed to his effort to witness to Shatner. “She went on to share her testimony of coming to know Jesus as her personal Lord and Savior,” Novak wrote. “She asked if I was going to share Jesus with William (Shatner), who was at the same comic con. I told her I was, and she handed me \$100 and said, ‘It’s on me. Go show him Jesus’ love.’”

For years, Novak, now a youth pastor in Knoxville, Tenn., has traveled around the country sharing the gospel with actors, authors and recording artists. (faithwire.com)

22 States Sue USDA For Threat of Withholding Funds

More than 20 state attorneys general have filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture for threatening to withhold funds for the National School Lunch Program from schools that do not comply with the Biden administration’s LGBT ideology.

On May 5, the USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service announced its intention to interpret “the prohibition on discrimination based on sex found in Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972” to include “discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.” In a memorandum published that same day, the agency informed state and regional directors of all Food and Nutrition Services programs of the policy change.

The department cited the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2020 decision in *Bostock v. Clayton County* finding that the provision of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting discrimination based on sex also applies to sexual orientation and gender identity as the justification for the new interpretation of Title IX. As a result of the USDA’s interpretation of Title IX, “state and local agencies, program operators and sponsors that receive funds from FNS must investigate allegations of discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation” and “update their non-discrimination policies and signage to include prohibitions against discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.”

The FNS administers the National School Lunch Program, which provides low-cost and free lunches to 29.6 million children at nearly 100,000 public and nonprofit private schools in the fiscal year 2019.

Tennessee’s Republican Attorney General Herbert Slatery joined 21 other Republican attorneys general in filing a lawsuit against the USDA and its top officials in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee Knoxville Division.

The attorneys general of Arkansas, Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Virginia and West Virginia are also plaintiffs in the lawsuit. The states contend that USDA’s interpretation of Title IX would cause the plaintiff states to lose federal funding for the National School Lunch Program and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) Program.

Describing the USDA as the latest example of the Biden administration’s “misinterpretation” of Title IX, the lawsuit states that the final rule issued by the department requires states to ensure that “no person, on the grounds of sex, including gender identity and sexual orientation, race, color, age, political belief, religious creed, disability or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be otherwise subject to discrimination under SNAP.” The final rule takes effect on Aug. 15.

The complaint urged a federal judge to issue “a declaratory judgment holding unlawful the Department’s Memoranda and Final Rule” and a “declaratory judgment holding that Plaintiffs are not bound by the Department’s Memoranda and Final Rule.”

The complaint also sought a declaration that the department did not have the authority to penalize and withhold federal funds from Title IX and Food and Nutrition Act recipients that “continue to separate students by biological sex in appropriate circumstances.”

The plaintiff states requested similar declarations preventing retaliation against Title IX and Food and Nutrition Act recipients that “maintain showers, locker rooms, bathrooms, residential facilities and other living facilities separated by biological sex or regulate each individual’s access to those facilities based on the individual’s biological sex.”

The states also want the court to prohibit retaliation against schools that “do not require employees or students to use a transgender individual’s preferred pronouns,” maintain athletic teams separated by biological sex” or assign individuals to teams based on biological sex.

The lawsuit comes a month after 26 state attorneys general wrote a letter to President Joe Biden outlining their concerns with the USDA’s administrative action and asking the administration to rescind the guidance. (christianpost.com)

Abortion Centers Closed, Some States Are Abortion-Free

Already, 43 abortion facilities have closed across the United States since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* on June 24. And more are expected to close in the coming months because they no longer are allowed to make money killing unborn babies in abortions.

According to a new report at *The 19th*, seven states are completely abortion-

free, and four more saw abortion facilities close as a result of their newly-enforced pro-life laws. The report highlighted new data from the Guttmacher Institute, a pro-abortion research group, that examined the impact of state pro-life laws on abortion facilities since the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health* ruling.

The Guttmacher researchers found that all of the abortion facilities in Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Texas have closed or stopped doing abortions as a result of their laws banning abortions. According to Axios, 23 closed in Texas alone, along with five each in Alabama and Oklahoma, two in Arkansas and one each in Mississippi, Missouri and South Dakota.

States that are enforcing heartbeat laws, which ban abortions once an unborn baby’s heartbeat is detectable (about six weeks of pregnancy) have also seen abortion facilities close. In Tennessee, four have closed so far, and one shut down in Georgia. Ohio and South Carolina also have heartbeat laws that ban abortions once an unborn baby’s heartbeat is detectable but none of the abortion facilities there have closed yet, according to the report.

The closures are forcing abortion providers to admit that killing unborn babies in abortions is big business. As Axios noted, “While clinics that offer abortion offer other reproductive health services, many of them depend financially on abortion” to stay open.

Some of the abortion facilities that closed plan to re-open in states like New Mexico and Virginia where abortions are still legal, but others have stopped doing abortions for good. As a result, babies are being saved from



- CBC Day 2022**, Sept. 11.
- Student Ministry Workers Retreat**, Sept. 17; Central Baptist College, Conway.
- Gospel Singing**, Sept. 17, 6 p.m.; featuring The Kinsmen Quartet; Cross Roads Baptist Church, Warren.
- re:Charge Leader’s Oasis**, Sept. 27-29; Hot Springs Hotel, Hot Springs.
- Lifeword Sunday**, Oct. 23.
- BMA of Arkansas**, Nov. 3-4; Central Baptist College, Conway.
- National Senior Adult Conference**, Nov. 15-17; Chateau on the Lake, Branson.

abortions. In the seven states with full abortion bans, about 80,500 unborn babies used to be aborted annually, according to *The 19th*. While some pregnant mothers will travel to other states for abortions, many others will have their babies instead. Pro-life laws do save lives, and even abortion activists admit it. The Charlotte Lozier Institute estimates more than 110,000 unborn babies are being saved from abortion as a result of the pro-life laws currently in place.

More states are trying to protect unborn babies from abortion. Indiana lawmakers met for a special session this week to pass pro-life legislation, and legal battles are being fought in Kentucky, Utah, Louisiana, Michigan and Wyoming to enforce their pro-life laws. (lifeneews.com)

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Take a 360 View of Your Security

You walk up to your church on a Monday morning and the first thing you notice is broken glass everywhere. As you enter, the devastation slowly reveals itself with every step — graffiti spray-painted on the walls, computers and audio equipment stolen, smashed bathroom fixtures flooding nearby classrooms. The destruction affects nearly every room in your building. The physical damage can be repaired, but the resulting emotional trauma can affect your people for months or even years.

Mike McCarty, founder and CEO of SafeMinistry Solutions, a security consulting company specializing in safety and security for ministries, saw first-hand how theft affects ministry. His church experienced two separate break-ins within weeks of one another. “The theft really created unease among our congregation that lasted for quite a while. Losing the equipment also affected our ability to hold virtual services. The incident heightened the awareness of the need for a focus on security with our leadership team,” said McCarty.

Every year, thousands of ministries are affected by burglary, vandalism, arson and other property crimes, according to FBI crimes against property by location statistics. The physical and emotional damage can devastate a congregation, leading to disruption of services and reduced attendance. As a result, many ministries have started security teams and implemented Sunday and mid-week plans to protect their people and property. But security teams can't monitor property all the time. By incorporating technology with a 360 view of security, you can create a full circle of safety for your ministry's people and property.

Screening Volunteers

Protecting your people begins with a comprehensive screening process for any volunteer who will work with children, youth or vulnerable adults. Since these volunteers are trusted with

an increased level of access, it's important for ministries to carefully select and screen each person. Part of the process involves a background check. It's common practice for ministries to run a background check at least every three to five years for volunteers, with an annual renewal application that asks volunteers whether they have been arrested, charged or convicted of any offenses in the past year.

ArrestAlert, from SafeMinistry Solutions, is a new service that immediately alerts a ministry in the event a volunteer is arrested and can be used as an added layer of protection. “The foundation of ministry security is managing who has access and to which specific areas,” said McCarty. For more information about ArrestAlert, visit safehiringsolutions.com/arrestalert.

Layers of Security

McCarty recommends a layered approach to securing your property. This method helps you focus on critical areas to address first, such as having policies and procedures, a safety team and a robust volunteer screening plan. Once you have the basics in place, take your security to the next level by incorporating technology to protect your property. There are several key technologies that can help, including access control, security systems and security cameras.

Access Control

Churches are uniquely open and welcoming, particularly when there are worship services, so they have different access control needs than a regular business. This means that ministries need to think about which doors need to be locked or left open as it relates to events. “Many churches have open doors on Wednesday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning, but they need to look at keeping doors locked on weekdays during regular hours,” said McCarty.

When considering ways to secure your property yet still maintain an

open and inviting space, McCarty recommends looking at who has access to specific areas of your ministry's property. The layer that is the most open includes the parking lot and sanctuary. Ministries want people to feel welcome as they come and go from a worship service. But as those layers get closer to critical areas, such as the children's ministry or office area, the access becomes limited. Don't be tempted to relax your access control measures when there aren't any children or youth activities on campus. Keeping your people safe is important, regardless of who is on campus.

Controlling access to specific areas of a ministry building can be as simple as locking doors, but this isn't always safe or practical. An alternative is to install access controls — such as a digital keypad or key card reader — to doors leading to the critical areas of your ministry. Whether your ministry uses electronic access control or simply chooses to keep doors locked or monitored, providing safety while maintaining an open and friendly atmosphere is the goal.

Full Circle Safety

Security cameras are another great tool to layer into your safety and security plan. Criminals often look for less secure facilities, or facilities that offer the least chance of being caught. They'll typically avoid buildings with alarm systems or surveillance cameras. In one study, security cameras were found to be an effective deterrent to burglary. Security cameras may also deter other criminal acts. Learn more by reading the article “Security Cameras at Church” in the Brotherhood Mutual Online Safety Library (<https://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/resources/safety-library/risk-management-articles/buildings-and-property/building-security/surveillance-cameras-at-church/>).

Finally, consider installing a security system. A system with an audible alarm can potentially reduce the amount of time a burglar or vandal remains inside your building. “Criminals panic once they hear the alarm because they know the police will arrive soon,” offered McCarty. You don't need an expensive system, either. The idea is to force the person to move quickly, minimizing the amount of damage.

As your ministry implements robust layers of protection, you'll strengthen your people and property against disruptive events, and ensure the continuity of essential ministry services.

SafeMinistry Solutions

SafeMinistry Solutions provides safety and security services, education, trainings and customer care. The result is a 360-degree solution for the safety and security of your congregation and your called ministry. They specialize in background checks, volunteer management, digital security, and physical security. To learn more, visit the SafeMinistry Solutions website.

Spotlight On Missions

Send offerings to BMA Missions
P.O. Box 878 • Conway, AR 72033-0878
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Most of these 15 students just completed 6 master level classes, working toward their Master's Degrees from the BMA Theological Seminary in Jacksonville, Texas. Three of them have completed all requirements with one who will finish in October.

Stan & Donna Scroggins • The Philippines

From Stan — This is supposed to be summer break, but nooooo... after two weeks of teaching with Dr. South, I headed to an ordination on the island of Palawan, then back to Manila and then Donna got back. Now we will focus on getting ready for school to start back on Aug. 17. Be praying for the Lees. Both Doug and Diane are delayed for some medical procedures and are set to return around the first of September. Also, thanks for inquiring about the recent earthquake. All our churches and personnel are good. We have earthquakes here almost hourly. Some we feel, most we do not.

In June, I began teaching 15 pastors and missionaries our BMA Disciple-Way disciple-making course for the master's program. Dr. Philip Attebery was our guest finishing up this teaching. As a result, many of the pastors that were trained are now training their individual congregations about the importance of disciple-making. I am so pleased to be helping with additional training of pastors coming up in August.

I remember when I was trained by DiscipleWay leadership just a few years ago. Dr. Philip Attebery, Dr. Steve Crawley and Dr. Ronnie Johnson, who prayed, researched and wrote what many across Christian America reviewed as “one of the best discipleship training programs to date.”

I encourage pastors, missionaries and church members to consider using this exceptional discipleship training. Contact Dr. Philip Attebery for more information at philip.attebery@bmat.edu.

God's Providential Hand — Almost three years ago, Donna and I met a precious baby girl with a cleft palate and her parents at our BMA mission on the Island of Guimaras. We knew we had to do something to help. A couple from First Baptist Church in Potosi, Mo. provided the funds, so we began the search for surgery options. Wall after wall and closed door after closed door, then a God thing. I was having a procedure at the hospital in Manila. While being prepped, the anesthesiologist told me she often traveled to Iloilo, next door to Guimaras. I asked if she had family there. “No,” she said, “I go there to provide my services for cleft palate repair.”

The doctor gave me all the information I needed, and we informed the parents. After several complications and then a two-year COVID interruption, baby Ezra had the first of three surgeries this month. After her lip repair, she will have palate repair and then cosmetic surgery for a deviated septum. Doctors say that by age 13, there will be little sign of her surgeries. Donna and I are two very happy missionaries. Thank you, Nathan and Jaclyn Rowe, who made

See SPOTLIGHT, Page 8



After the total destruction and loss of their building from a typhoon in December 2021, this is the newly rebuilt Honda Bay Baptist Church.



STAND FIRM & LIVE EPIC
 HELPING YOU NAVIGATE SUCH A TIME AS THIS
 By Jake McCandless
 jake@standfirmministries.com www.standfirmministries.com



Future Headlines: Many Will Turn Away

I've mentioned Matt. 24:10 a few times — it's the heartbeat of Stand Firm because it holds a prophecy that many will turn away from the faith. That haunts me. Professed Christians, church members, friends, family, people who are dear to us and once proclaimed to be a believer will turn away.

Unfortunately, this future reality doesn't seem too futuristic. There's likely an empty chair or pew spot in front of us. If not there, then certainly behind us. There are even once occupied pulpits that are empty. This was the case before COVID-19, and it's far more the case now.

Though our attendance appears to reveal this having been fulfilled before our eyes, it hasn't exactly occurred. In context, this turning away is at a particular time. So, even with the "great no return" following COVID, we "ain't seen nothing yet."

In Matthew 24, Jesus includes the great apostasy (turning away) during the beginning of birth pains. The birth pain term wasn't novel to Jesus' Olivet Discourse. It comes from an Old Testament precedent. Prophets referred to the birth pains as the final 3.5 years of this age. This is the time of unequalled great distress — the time of Jacob's trouble. Following that trying time for the Jewish people, Jesus will return and establish His kingdom. The "baby" from the birth pains is Jesus' Kingdom.

Since we can align the birth pains and birth, the beginning of birth pains leads to this unspecified amount of time. We can't exactly pinpoint how soon before the birth pains the pre-labor tremors will begin. According to Daniel 9, the Antichrist is in power at least 3.5 years before the start of the birth pains. It seems the events of Matt. 24:4-12 correlate to the rise of the antichrist. The language in Matthew 24 also seems to show that the events are given in chronological order. The order of these first events also matches those in Revelation 6.

I point out the timing in which this turn-away event occurs, but what I re-

ally want to point out in the context is that Jesus told the reason for the apostasy. *"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people"* (Matt. 24:9-11).

Did you catch it? Yes, persecution and even martyrdom. The full prophecy here is that there will be great persecution leading professed believers to hate one another, betray one another and even turn away. This intense time of persecution isn't vague either, we see it mentioned in the book of Revelation: *"... I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years"* (Rev. 20:4).

"When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed" (Rev. 6:9-11).

In comparing these two passages, it appears that this great turning away happens due to intense persecution and beheading in the last days. We're not told where this persecution will happen. It appears to be universal. I think we should highly consider the persecution occurring where it hasn't already. I think this because those facing persecution are now standing strong. They are teaching that persecution is possible, therefore those who come to faith in those nations know what they're getting into. That's not the case for the West, especially in America.

CONSUMER

(Continued From Page 1)

- Your worship attendance becomes optional.
- You replace in-person attendance with digital attendance (though I fully understand that some people are unable to attend in-person).
- Your attendance to a small group is declining, or you stop attending completely.
- Your attitude toward your church is more critical.
- Your giving declines or stops.
- You critique sermons instead of listening prayerfully.
- You see church as a place to meet your needs instead of your meeting the needs of others.
- You move readily to another church when your needs are not met.
- You get frustrated at what other church members aren't doing.
- You don't pray for your church regularly.
- You don't share the gospel.

Church Consumers Are Not Biblical

The local church is the dominant topic in the Bible after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. Indeed, the entirety of the New Testament, from Acts 2 to Revelation 3, is either about the local church or written in the context of the local church.

The local church is God's plan A, and He didn't leave us a plan B.

I am a church member. Sometimes I need to be reminded to act and think like one.

Editor's Note: This article is shared with permission and was originally published at churchanswers.com/blog/eleven-signs-you-are-becoming-a-church-consumer-instead-of-a-committed-church-member.

— Thom S. Rainer is the founder and CEO of Church Answers and Executive Director of Revitalize Network. He received both the master of divinity and the Ph.D. degrees from Southern Seminary. Dr. Rainer has served as pastor of four churches. He served for 12 years as dean at Southern Seminary and for 13 years as the president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources. Dr. Rainer has authored or co-authored 33 books and is an active writer and podcaster at ChurchAnswers.com.

Regardless of the location, both the persecution and resulting turning away will be future headlines. In those newspapers or social media newsfeeds, it would be best to have our obituary and closed casket funeral announcement rather than being listed as one of the great number of people that turns away.

That sounds tough, like something we don't need to be talking about, but I beg to differ. We need to think through it beforehand. Though we might not likely be the generation that experiences it, one generation will. We need to be prepared. They need to be prepared. We need to stand firm. They need to stand firm.

Jake is available for revivals and preaching learn more at standfirmministries.com.

DISTRICT CALENDAR

Greenbrier Men's Fellowship, Aug. 20, 8 a.m.; Bethlehem, Greenbrier. Contact Reed Rust @ (501) 730-2524.

Mt. Vernon Youth in the Harvest, Aug. 22, 6:30 p.m.; Fourth St., West Helena.

Mount Calvary — Sept. 8, 7 p.m.; Letona, Letona; Bill Goodwin.

BMA of the Ozarks — Sept. 9, 2 p.m., meeting; 5 p.m., dinner; worship following dinner; Springdale, Springdale; Wes Hulvey.

Mt. Vernon — Sept. 10, 10 a.m.; Rondo, Lexa; Marty Cantwell.

United — Sept. 10, 10 a.m.; Denver Street, Greenwood; Derrick Bremer.

Mt. Vernon Dist. Brotherhood, Sept. 12, 6:30 p.m.; Central, Hughes.

Central Arkansas — Sept. 22, 10 a.m.; El Faro, Little Rock; Gary Lambright.

South Arkansas — Sept. 23, 7 p.m.; Blanchard Springs, Junction City; Mike Senn.

Columbia — Sept. 25, 5 p.m.; Macedonia, Magnolia; Paul Bullock.

Clark — Sept. 27, 7 p.m.; New Caney, Gurdon; Kenneth Anderson.

Union — Oct. 2, 3:30 p.m., meeting; 6 p.m., worship service; Riverside, Fulton; Larry Byers.

Judson — Oct. 8, 9 a.m.; Bethel #1, Rison; Rick Bolin.

Central Ark. WMA, Oct. 8, 10 a.m.; South City, Little Rock.

Greenbrier — Oct. 9, 3:30 p.m., Missionary Committee; 4 p.m., general session; 6 p.m., message; First, Damascus; Danny Paul.

Harmony — Oct. 9, 6 p.m.; Spring Lake, Texarkana; Don Embry.

Central Ark. Dist. Brotherhood, Oct. 10, 6:30 p.m.; Village Creek, Mabelvale.

Jonesboro — Oct. 15, 10 a.m.; Prospect, Jonesboro; Ken Beaver.

Arkansas Prairie — Oct. 21-22; 7 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m. Saturday; Forks of Lague, Dewitt; Robert Wade.

Howard — Oct. 22, 10 a.m.; Centerpoint, Nashville; Chuck Reel.

HOMECOMINGS

Sand Springs, Damascus, Aug. 7; 9:30 a.m. singing; 10:30 a.m. worship; Gaylon King, pastor.

Barney, Enola, Aug. 14; 10:30 a.m. worship; Bill Goodwin, message; lunch and singing in the afternoon; Reagan Shearer, pastor.

Beacon, Taylor, Aug. 14; 9 a.m. Sunday School; 10 a.m. worship; 11 a.m. fellowship; Noon, singing and church history; Kerry Easley, pastor.

Bethany, Jonesboro, Aug. 14; 10 a.m. worship; 11:30 a.m. lunch and singing to follow; Mitch Doss, pastor.

181st Homecoming, Macedonia, Jonesboro, Aug. 21; 11 a.m. worship; Noon, lunch; message, Don

Revivals

Pleasant Springs, McCaskill, Aug. 7-9; 5 p.m. Sunday, 7 p.m. Mon.-Tue.; Bobby Fisher, evangelist; Jarod Hendry, pastor.

Banks, Banks, Aug. 7-10; 5 p.m. Sunday, 7 p.m. Mon.-Wed.; David Inzer, evangelist; Jerry Burress, pastor.

County Line, Marvell, Aug. 7-10; 9:45 a.m. & 5:30 p.m. Sunday; 7 p.m. Mon.-Wed.; Chris Vines, evangelist.

Landmark, England, Aug. 14-17; 6 p.m. Sunday, 7 p.m. Mon.-Wed.; Master's Voice (in concert); Ricky Capps, evangelist; David Inzer, pastor.

Beacon, Taylor, Aug. 15-19; 7 p.m.; Daniel Williams, evangelist; Kerry Easley, pastor.

New Liberty, Emmet, Aug. 22-26; 7:30 pm; Dr. Neal Clark evangelist; Billy Compton, pastor.

Faustina, Harrell, Aug. 29-31; 7 p.m.; Jim Moss, evangelist; Gene Boyette, pastor.

Macedonia, Jonesboro, Aug. 29-31; 7:30 p.m.; Mon., Larry Merrill; Tues., Gary Gibson; Wed., Don Howard; Don Seat, pastor.

Antioch, Hampton, Oct. 16-19, 7 p.m.; Jim Moss, evangelist.

Cross Roads, Warren, Oct. 17-19, 7 p.m.; Richard Gambill, evangelist; Sidney McGraw, pastor.



Fairview Baptist Church in Blytheville is seeking a full-time pastor. For more information call or text Rodney Cooper at 870-278-1797 or email at cooperr@manilaschools.org.

Fellowship Baptist Church in Marion is seeking a full-time pastor. Resumes may be sent to Fellowship Baptist Church, P.O. Box 66, Marion, Ark. 72364 or fellowship.marion@gmail.com.

Hillcrest Baptist Church in Texarkana is seeking a bi-vocational music director. For more information, contact Pastor Kelly Owens at hbctexarkana@gmail.com.

Meadowside Baptist Church in Pittsburg, Kan. is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Contact Greg Hardister at (620) 704-6860.

Victory Baptist Church in Gentry is seeking a pastor. Call or text Mark Betts at (479) 752-7140 for more information.

Weddington Baptist Church in Fayetteville is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. For more information, visit weddingtonbaptistchurch.com.

Seat, pastor.

Faustina, Harrell, Aug. 28; 10 a.m. Sunday School; 11 a.m. worship (Russ Hopper); potluck lunch to follow. Gene Boyette, pastor.



Missionaries

Michael Hight, Hispanic Coordinator; (501) 326-0198
 Ruben Isturiz, Misión Ebenezer, West Little Rock; (501) 707-5388
 Juan Carlos Posadas, Misión Creciendo en Cristo, NLR; (501) 712-8752
 Johnny Shew, Faith Chapel, Flippin; (870) 421-1984
 Clinton Morris, The Table, Springdale; (870) 316-1519
 Bryan Clay, Faith Journey, Benton; (501) 522-0079
 Roberto Marcelletti, Misión Gracia Soberana, NW Ark.; (936) 202-7988
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"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men."

~Matthew 5:13



Has Our Salt Lost Its Saltiness?

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13).

Real blood-bought Christianity rubs the world the wrong way. This has caused our country to be flooded with a cold steam religion that neither irritates nor saves. Our gospel is one of absolutes, and if the preacher's message rubs the congregation the wrong way, they need to turn around and then it will rub them the right way. Paul stated, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1:16).

There is nothing wrong with the pure plain gospel. It's the watered-down, sugar-coated religions that cause most church members to become irritated with the kind of preaching those men in the Bible were guilty of. We are instructed to take His yoke upon us and teach and preach the truth, and the truth, in short, is repent or perish. Is it even possible to follow and serve Jesus and not teach the whole council of God? Even if it means touching on subjects like hellfire, calling sin sin and living a separated life different than those of the world.

The cry today is fellowship, bring in all kinds and let us fellowship. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing;" (II Cor. 6:17). The call to fellowship, with every ism and schism, originated in Hell and not in Heaven. The very action of "living godly" is a rebuke against this world. When you believe in a church separated from worldliness, modernism and compromise, you are looked upon as being narrow-minded, uncooperative and as a holier-than-thou individual.

All these people are doing is trying to be salty. Those who live lives other than as described in the Bible are hypocrites, blinded guides and whited sepulchers that are full of dead men's bones. We are to love the lost, but we are to come out from them pulling them out of the fire to speak. After all, the life we have to share is much better than the one they now have, or is it? Because, while we are in this world we are not of this world — "know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

From Our Missionaries

Misión Creciendo en Cristo (Growing in Christ), North Little Rock: Juan Carlos Posadas writes, "Thank God for our Vacation Bible School. We had 70 kids, and the Word of God was clearly exposed to the children and parents who visited us. Four children and four adults were evangelized. We had four professions — Maylee (11), Cristofer (12), Beverly (13) and Lisenia (13). We invited the parents to the closing ceremony at our Sunday meeting, and we were visited for the first time by 3 mothers and 18 children.

"We had 24 VBS volunteers — four from other churches and the rest from

home. They all had an excellent attitude, serving God with all their hearts. Let us pray for a good follow-up with the new families we have contacted, especially let us pray for the families of the children who received Christ."

Ebenezer, West Little Rock: Ruben Isturiz writes, "Last week, we addressed in the workshop 'Principles of Evangelism, Discipleship and Gospel Movements' third theme of 10 sessions. They are still identifying, through 'The Oikos Map,' people in their social context. We continue praying for God to make us see people around us, in this session we are doing the '5-5-5 Experiment,' which consists of focus-

ing on 5 people from our Oikos Map, praying 5 minutes a day for 5 weeks, that God would touch their hearts.

"We will not have the workshop this week as some of us will be accompanying our mother church in their Vacation Bible School program. It will be beautiful to see both congregations working together. After our VBS, we will continue with the training on Monday in a face-to-face way and on Wednesdays online. On Sunday some already started to give thanks for what God is showing people in their social context.

"Once again, thank you for your support — both in prayer and in your offerings. Thank you for being partners in ministry. To God be the glory!"

Faith Chapel, Flippin: Johnny Shew writes, "For the second week in a row, we had a new record attendance. Praise God! I know it is not all about numbers and we are not just trying to fill seats, but thank You, Lord, for sending us a houseful again. Even with several of our members out, we had our most ever. And even with three of our own kids out, we had more teens than ever, and the usual number of under seven-year-olds. Praise God again!"

"I am especially encouraged because we have also had record attendance on Sunday nights for the last two weeks! People are engaged and participating in our Bible studies. They are inviting people, and we are seeing them worshipping in spirit and in truth. It is amazing to watch and be a part of.

"The Lord is blessing this work, and we firmly believe it is because of your prayers and support for us, Faith Chapel, Flippin and the whole community. Please continue. The Lord is hearing your prayers and answering them!"

The Table, Springdale: Clinton Morris writes, "This week, we held several meetings, enjoyed the opportunities to visit with others and had training sessions with Drew, where we are setting goals for the next few months and are working toward prepping the Church Constitution and the Articles of Faith.

"We met with our own folks on Monday, following up with anything from the week before and making sure that we are keeping on track. In the evening we had 27 people at the house. The numbers are steady. We have had an average of 28 people at our house every Monday since January, and this has led to 10 people attending our mission.

"Tuesday was a concert with one of the couples we have been visiting with in our Monday gatherings. I also

have gotten to know the wife's mom and stepdad. We are setting up some things to do with this couple on a regular basis. It is so amazing to see how God brings people together.

"Our Men's Bible Study on Wednesday is progressing. We are going through the *Presence Centered Church* by Bill Elliff. This book is so powerful, and the conversations we have been having are amazing. To have a group of men discuss precepts of God for over 90 minutes is encouraging.

"Thursday evening, I met with the BMA of the Ozarks Mission Committee. It was encouraging to hear from the other missionaries and to have the opportunity to present the ministry of The Table.

"Friday was partially off, and we had a relaxing evening with Drew and Kaley. Part of the evening was spent Vision Casting for the future of the church. We began talking about some of the plans and hopes for next year.

"Saturday morning, we had a soggy experience at the local farmers market and enjoyed a fun time as a family. The evening was spent with one of our new couples that we have been encouraging. They have been coming since May, and they are growing in their understanding of Christianity. I am hopeful that they will accept Christ soon.

"I spent Sunday morning with one of our men who has been out of town for a few months. We had a great time of encouragement and fellowship. In our Sunday evening service, we had 32 people and 4 guests. Many of our folks who have been out for vacations and sickness have made it back. We were so thrilled to be able to fellowship and worship God together.

"The second Sunday of August, we are going to celebrate our one-year anniversary of meeting at Old Pine Coffee Roasters. I truly cannot believe it has only been a year. So many things have happened and so many people have been affected by The Table and the message of the gospel. Thank you so much for your continued support and prayer."

Faith Journey, Benton: Bryan Clay writes, "This week at Faith Journey, we've been trying to get the word out about our mission by going out and just inviting people in the community. This is sometimes the easiest way to let them know who you are and where you are! We love letting people know what God is doing in the area and that we want to have them be a part of it.

"Our lesson at the meeting this week was on John 15:1-2. Jesus tells us that He will remove non-fruit-bearing branches and prune us so that we may produce more good fruit. God will use this type of shaping to mold us into His image so we may bear good fruit in our lives to show others His love through us.

"This week, we are looking forward to the visit from the Advisory Committee and being able to show them where we are currently meeting and sharing with them the area that God has led me to. It should be a great time!"

Misión Gracia Soberana (Sover-



Bodcaw, Bodcaw reports two by statement; Lane Garner, pastor.

Bridge Church, Mt. Home, rejoices over one by baptism and one profession of faith: Hershel Conley, pastor.

Calvary, Warren gained two by letter; Rocky Goodwin, pastor.

Celebration, Haskell gained two by statement; Allan Eakin, pastor.

Charity Heights, Hot Springs added one by letter and one by statement; Jim Oliver, pastor.

First, Damascus received one by letter; Daniel Williams, pastor.

Immanuel, Nashville reports on by baptism; Glen Green, interim pastor.

eign Grace), NWA: Roberto Marcelletti writes, "This week, I have been reviewing and praying for the plans that the Lord has given us for the Northwest area of Arkansas. He used a meeting with the Ozarks Missions Committee where I met a group of pastors and leaders and presented my planting project for the Hispanic church. It was good to go back to the book of facts and review the details of the chapter that I consider to be a summary of the mission of the church. I also told them about our philosophy of ministry, with an acrostic that in Spanish means 'Networks.' **Relate** (connection or entrance to the place and people); **Evangelism** (sharing the gospel); **Discipleship** (this phase includes teaching for baptism, membership, leadership); **Establish new churches** (send); and **continue the process again in another area.**

"I explained to them that we were relating to some people, we are evangelizing others and we are in discipleship with others. Every month we have a massive event where we recommend the entire group of people that we have on our prayer list.

"We had a visit this week from a family that came because Patty has a problem with her back, and we took the opportunity to share with them about the plan. On Wednesday, a couple of women also came and we shared coffee and what God is doing in our lives. We continue our discipleship with the three groups. Some come on Thursday at 5 p.m., others on Friday at 7 p.m. and others on Saturday at 7 p.m.

"I ask for your prayers because it was not easy this week to keep weekly appointments due to the rains and work. One woman who was to come on Saturday morning canceled at the last minute because it was raining that day. The good thing is she is very interested and plans to come to visit us next Saturday, so we continue with the plan."

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BMA Pastor Dies

David G. Johnson, 70 of Greenbrier, passed away July 29, 11 days after Sue, his wife of 50 years, passed away. David loved the Lord, his family, his church, the St. Louis Cardinals and New York Yankees. He enjoyed riding his motorcycle, playing softball and cheering on the Arkansas Razorbacks. He retired from Arkansas Farm Bureau and was serving as pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Bee Branch.

Survivors include: his sons, David Mark Johnson and Brent Lee (Anna) Johnson; a sister, Virginia (Bob) Moore; a brother, Uriel (Judy) Johnson; and two granddaughters, Adelynn LeeAnn Johnson and Brynlee Elizabeth Johnson.

A funeral service was held at South City Church in Little Rock on Aug. 3. Interment was at Forest Hills Cemetery in Alexander, under the direction of Roller-McNutt Funeral Home of Conway (rollerfuneralhomes.com/conway).



Retired Pastor Dies

Billy Mack Russell, 78 of Bodcaw passed away May 11. Known by many people as "Bro. Billy" or "Bro. Billy Mack," he was a faithful member of Corinth Baptist Church, where he pastored for 37 years. Prior to that, he pastored at Laneburg Baptist Church for two years. He retired from Firestone after 37 years of service, and was an avid outdoorsman who enjoyed hunting, fishing, gardening and woodworking.

Survivors include: two sons, Jeff (Sandy) Russell of Bodcaw and Jonathan (Mandy) Russell of Milton, Fla.; a daughter, Carol (Kenny) Camp of Stamps; a brother, Jackie (Sally) Russell of Searcy; a sister, Becky Dianis of Magnolia; 6 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

A graveside service to celebrate Billy's life was held on May 28 at Falcon Cemetery, with his son, Jonathan officiating. Cremation services were provided by A.O. Smith Funeral Home (aosmithfuneralhome.com).



Former BMA Videographer Dies

Redmond Keisler, 68 of Sheridan, passed away July 28. His career in television and sound engineering led him to start his own video production company and aided in the spread of the gospel as he traveled to several foreign countries as the videographer for the Baptist Missionary Association.

He also spent more than 40 years playing and singing bluegrass music with his brothers, Randy and Rick as The Keisler Brothers, and in recent years as The Redmond Keisler Band.

He was passionate about raising funds and donating his time, talent and energy to the church and for the Kids in Bluegrass program to which he provided instruments for kids eager to learn and to help promote bluegrass to a younger generation.

He was a member of Immanuel Baptist Church in Sheridan.

Survivors include: his partner, Kelly Rogers of Pochontas; two sons, Daniel (Jessica) Keisler of Ozark and David (Brittany) Keisler of Sheridan; two brothers, Randy Keisler of Sheridan and Rick Keisler of Nashville, Tenn.; and five grandchildren.

An informal visitation/memorial service in honor of Redmond will be held on Aug. 13 at 1 p.m. at Immanuel Baptist Church in Sheridan (206 E Holly St.).



Gaylord Gunnels, 85 of Magnolia, passed away July 30. He was a member of First Baptist Church.

Pamela Gail Sisson, 57 of Sheridan, passed away July 9. She was a member of Immanuel Baptist Church.

FINANCE (Continued From Page 1)

• **Be disciplined to save little by little over a period of time.** "Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it" (Prov. 13:11). Discipline plus diversity plus time equals a good return.

• **Avoid or minimize the use of debt.** "Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law" (Rom. 13:8). While this verse is not exclusive to debt or finances, it is not a bad rule of thumb. "The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender" (Prov. 22:7).

• **Learn to save a portion of your income.** A fool spends everything he makes, but a wise man puts money

SHOEBOXES

(Continued From Page 1)

ministry of Everlasting Smiles, we will open doors for our missionaries to tell families about Jesus and that the Bible inside each box will bring them closer to Him. For more information, including packing instructions, visit bmamissions.org/christmas-shoebboxes.

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Would you like to make a donation so we can pack boxes for you? We can do that! The cost of each box is \$25. This includes the box, wrapping, gifts, Bible and shipping costs. Please send your donation to Everlasting Smiles, P.O. Box 878 Conway, Ark. 72033.

Drop-off Information

We are thankful that we now have four regional drop-off stations for your boxes. The local drop-off stations at churches listed on our website are still accepting boxes, but we have added additional ones. These stations will serve the same purpose as our Conway location — to pack your shoeboxes and get them ready for shipping. Regional stations will deliver your boxes to the Conway office ready for shipping. What a blessing!

Here is a list of the regional and local drop-off stations and contact information:

• **Arkansas — BMA America Office** (611 Locust Street, Conway, Ark. 72034); Angela Rice at (214) 498-3041; **Prospect Baptist Church** (1603 Hwy. 349, Jonesboro, 72401); Theresa Book at (870) 598-4908 or Mike Book at (870) 598-7232.

• **Mississippi — Southeastern Baptist College** (4229 Hwy. 15 N. Laurel, Miss. 39440); Anderle Foster at (601) 344-8656.

• **Texas — Fellowship Baptist Church** (992 FM 1520, Pittsburg, Texas 75686); David Kizer at (903) 767-1151.

Please contact your drop-off station and set a drop-off time. This will speed up the drop-off process. We appreciate you so much for your involvement in this ministry. If you have questions, please reach out to me at angela@bmamissions.com or (214) 498-3041.

back for future needs. "Precious treasure and oil are in a wise man's dwelling, but a foolish man devours it" (Prov. 21:20). "Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Without having any chief, officer, or ruler, she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest. How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man" (Prov. 6:6-11).

• **Manage resources to pass along as an inheritance.** "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, but the sinner's wealth is laid up for the righteous" (Prov. 13:22). Consider setting up a savings account for your grandchildren to help them get started. (steve@bmaamerica.org)

SPOTLIGHT

(Continued From Page 5)

all this possible.

Ordination Trip to Puerto Princessa — I arrived at the newly rebuilt Honda Bay Baptist Church on Saturday at 1 p.m. and immediately went to work leading an introduction to their choir of the Christmas musical, "Cool Yule." On Sunday, after the morning worship and lunch, the ordination of 2019 BMA Bible College Graduate Patrick Maban began. I was honored to preach the ordination message.

Manila Mission Church Survey Trip — The Baptist Missionary Church outside of Manila is the mother church of six missions. Only two of these churches have pastors. "The fields are white, but the laborers few." This church really has a heart for missions and a desire to reach the 22 million people of urban Manila.

The church has a mission to the poorest of the poor — known as the "Land Fill Church" — this is the location where all the refuse of Manila is brought. The people here make a living by recycling refuse. The church is the only concrete building here and serves as an emergency shelter location.

Another BMA Baptist Church is located in a higher economic village but still considered very poor. They are glad to have Bro. Rico as their pastor.

After visiting several of the church's mission sites, we inspected possible locations for a decidedly middle-class location. A storefront is one of many available for rent near the largest university in the Philippines, with several other colleges and high schools located nearby. Logically, church planting in poor areas makes for a low cost but reaching people in a middle-class location will be quite expensive.

The last two months have been the longest Donna and I have been separated in our married life. While we went to the same high school, we

did not meet until we arrived at Jacksonville State University in Alabama, and married five years later. After 43 years of marriage, we continue ministry together here in the Philippines. After a trip to Palawan and Manila, I met her at the airport in Manila to travel the rest of the way back to Bacolod together.

Finally, Donna is Home — After some final family fun at the Escape Room; goodbyes to our daughters (Kelsey and Leslie), granddaughters (Ava Grace, Edy Rose, Joy Tatum) and sons-in-law (Graham and Josh), the long trek to the Philippines began — Tyler to Dallas, Dallas to Los Angeles, Los Angeles to Manila and Manila to Bacolod. I finally made it and met up with Stan at his hotel before we headed out for Bacolod.

From Donna — There is never enough time. I wish I had more time with our family here in the United States. Now that my main mission for coming home is accomplished, it is time for me to head back to the Philippines. It will be such a joy to be back and get down to work with school starting up in August. It looks like we will have a big enrollment this term with over 90 students already making applications and there is still a month to go before school starts. Thank you for praying for my safe travel. The recent earthquake didn't affect us in Negros. Usually, the big ones happen in the northern Luzon area. Stan was there just a few days ago.

Stay up to date with the Scroggins and their work in the Philippines by visiting their website and checking out their blog — thescroggins.com. You can also partner with Stan and Donna by giving through your local church or the BMA Missions website.

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Stan: +63 908-894-6723. You can also contact us through email and Facebook Messenger: Donna, gojvcrusaders@msn.com/Stan, stanmusical@icloud.com. Visit thescroggins.com to subscribe to their ministry updates.

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