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Phil Knott in Costa Rica.

Achieving the Mission In Costa Rica

By Phil Knott, Former International Missions Director • BMA of America

Believe it or not, the nations of Peru, Turkey, Panama and Mozambique all have something in common. They are all points of interest on the world map for the churches of the BMA of Costa Rica.

Missionaries and families from Costa Rica, commissioned and supported by their home churches, have gone to those far-flung places, following a calling and vision for

global missions. Pastors and leaders decided some years ago that they had been a receiving nation. Now they want to be a sending nation.

Achieving that vision required some level of organization and associational structure. One of the challenges in global missions is often the transition from American missionaries to national, homegrown leadership. Costa Rican churches certainly went through a period of change and growth in that area.

There is always the inevitable tension between the old and the new, the known and the unknown, going from the comfortable (receiving) to the uncomfortable challenge of doing it on your own (sending). Three things were necessary to push through that wall of resistance — adaptability, teamwork and unity.

• **The first step, a very important asset, is establishing a clear vision and calling.** That starts with pastoral leadership at the local church level, where people live and have a sense of calling and service that is born and nurtured. Costa Rican churches have been blessed with a high level of pastoral ministry. The founding work of BMA Missions in the country always involved training, teaching and encouraging pastors.

• **The next step would eventually come — ownership of a missionary vision.** That began, of

MOVING with Ministers and Staff

This is only a news column, and the publishing of a person's availability should not be considered a recommendation by the Trumpet. To view previous listings from this column, visit our website at www.BaptistTrumpet.com.

Murmil Heights Baptist Church in El Dorado is seeking a bivocational pastor. Contact Billy Joe Smith at (870) 310-5975 or Jonathan Burns at (870) 312-0275.



What Is Really Important

By Jeff Swart, Senior Adult Pastor Antioch Baptist Church, Conway

One of the most moving scenes from Stephen Spielberg's Academy Award-winning movie *Schindler's List* occurs at the end of the movie. During WWII, Oskar Schindler, a German businessman, made a deal with the Nazis to employ Jews to work in his enamel works factory in Poland and to pay the wages they should have earned to the Nazis. All was going well for both Schindler and the Nazis until

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course, with planting new churches in other towns and cities, but soon led to the dream of going beyond their own borders. Achieving that step required not only people willing to pick up and move but also people willing to take risks, understand complicated logistics and have a level of partnerships they had never attempted.

• **The final element is a long-term commitment.** You can't uproot families and send them around the world without some sense of purpose and persevering faith that stands the test of time. Today, Costa Rica is a sending nation with a strong network of established churches and a thriving BMA Costa Rica to help sustain the missionary vision.



Jehosua (center) with some of the pastors and tribal leaders in the Blaen Tribe

Redeeming Through the Radio

By Heather Harrison, Lifeword Writer

In a recent interview with Pastor Pete Etabag, it is obvious that Jesus Christ is the center of his life and making Him known is his life's quest.

When Pastor Pete met Lifeword missionary Travis Moore in 1975, shortly after becoming a believer himself, he never guessed serving God in the Philippines through technology would be the story of the rest of his life. However, if you talk with Pete, it won't be long before "radio transmitters" come up in the conversation.

Living in the Philippines, he travels by boat to the various islands to install and maintain radio transmitters. He is a "tech guy," but don't think for a minute that tech guys aren't missionaries.

Pete has taken his abilities, laid them before the Lord and watched God do what only God can do — bring people into His kingdom through a simple radio.

In many of the places he serves, there is little access to biblical teaching and other resources many in the US take for granted. Pastors teach on the radio, in addition to leading their own congregations, which allows those in harder-to-reach areas to hear the message. Pete not only installs radio

See **RADIO**, Page 8



Pastors' Day at the Capitol

By Jerry Cox, President • Family Council

Imagine the echo of worship, the prayers of godly men and women and the gospel openly proclaimed in Arkansas' most prominent place — the State Capitol Building!

Ministers, church leaders and their families can be salt and light by joining together from all over Arkansas in the State Capitol Rotunda from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Feb. 7, for Pastors' Day at the Capitol.

This nonpartisan event will focus on worshiping God, praying for our leaders, ministering to those in authority, fostering better relationships between ministers and legislators, practicing responsible citizenship and learning how congregations can do the same. This is an opportunity for church leaders to:

- Be encouraged, empowered, inspired and informed;
- Be a witness for Jesus Christ through prayer, praise, and worship in the Capitol Rotunda;
- Fellowship with like-minded pastors from all over Arkansas over a light breakfast and lunch;

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Terry Kimbrow
President

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Give the Gift of Education This Christmas!

Looking back on 2022, I see God's hand and provision on this campus unlike at any other time in my presidency. What man meant for evil, God has used to bring about good. The cyberattack we experienced was designed to leave us with "no hope." We, however, know the Author of all hope, and we are leaning on and trusting in Him as we move into the new year.

The theme of our weekly chapel services this year is Eph. 3:20 — "He is Able." We will not operate from a position of fear. We know God has plans "to give us a hope and a future." We believe that. Central Baptist College was founded, and continues to exist, to spread God's truth.

I can tell you, without reservation, that CBC is at a pivotal time in our history. I am finding increasing pressure to conform to issues that would potentially compromise our mission. You have my word — we will protect our mission. But we need your help! There are some things that must occur for us to not just survive, but to thrive. To continue our mission of "transforming lives by integrating Christian faith and academic excellence," we need you!

I've often said, "I think everyone who has been touched in a positive way by this place can and should be giving to CBC." I really believe that! But I don't think we have done the best job of challenging our alumni and friends to give. I'm asking you to do just that! Give a gift to CBC this holiday season and know that every single contribution helps us continue our mission of "transforming lives."

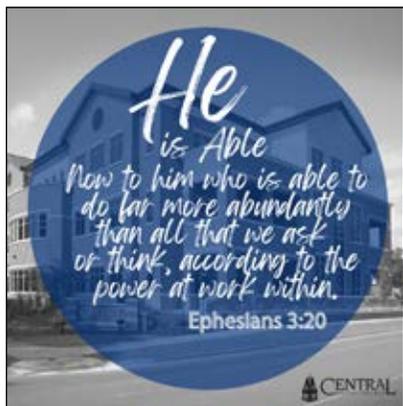
Our annual fund program is called "Gifts that Transform." With nine focus areas (listed at cbc.edu/transform), you can direct your gift to the fund where you would like to see the greatest impact. This Christmas season, as you reflect on the many gifts you have received from God, please consider a "Christmas" or "End of Year" gift to CBC. Every contribution is a "transformational gift" because it is used to further the mission and ministry of Central Baptist College.

Many people consider a memorial or honor gift at this time of year. When you give in this way, a note will be sent acknowledging that you have given a donation (without revealing the dollar amount of the gift) to the family of the person you want to remember or to the person you want to honor.

To give online, visit cbc.edu/give. If you prefer to pay by check, please make your check payable to Central Baptist College and include the name of the fund you wish to support or the person you wish to honor or memorialize on the memo line. Checks may be mailed to Central Baptist College, 1501 College Avenue, Conway, Ark. 72034. To enjoy a tax credit, checks must be postmarked, or online payments must be made by 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 31. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Director of Development Amy Reed at areed@cbc.edu or (501) 205-8934 or me at tkimbrow@cbc.edu or (501) 205-8818.

4th Annual Scholarship Gala

Save the date for our 4th Annual Scholarship Gala. The event will take place on Tuesday, March 28, at 6 p.m. at the Conway Expo Center. The black-tie optional event will be a celebration of "Fearless Faith." The proceeds from the event will benefit the Central Baptist College Scholarship Fund, which supports all institutionally funded scholarships. Stay tuned for more details on our big night!



Fall Sports Wrap Up

• **Conway, Dec. 6** — With the final academic awards being announced last week, the fall sports season for the CBC Mustang soccer, volleyball and cross-country teams came to an end. Every team had at least one athlete recognized on an all-academic team of some sort, and both soccer teams, plus cross-country, competed for an American Midwest Conference (AMC) championship.

Cross Country

• **Conway, Dec. 6** — Cross Country came to an end on Nov. 4 at the AMC championship, with the men's team placing sixth and the women's team placing seventh in the championship. **Jadon Price, Isaiah Stiger** and **Josh Brown** all earned All-Academic Team recognition from the AMC, with Price and Stiger additionally receiving Scholar-Athlete recognition from the NAIA.

Volleyball

• **Conway, Dec. 6** — Volleyball season ended Nov. 4 at Harris-Stowe State with CBC putting a wrap on a 4-18 season. Two Mustangs, **Mikayla Lawrence** and **Madeline Freeman** both earned honorable mention honors from the AMC, while Lawrence and **Molly Murphy** both continued to move up in the record books in digs and assists, respectively. Lawrence also earned Academic All-AMC honors, along with **Kailee Walker, Kyla Shumate** and **Sheridan Rogers**.

Women's Soccer

• **Conway, Dec. 6** — Women's soccer season also ended on Nov. 4 at Harris-Stowe State in the AMC quarterfinals. CBC finished 6-10-2 on the season and received an All-Tournament Team recognition for **Vitoria Loiola**, plus earned honorable mention selections for **Bayleigh Williams, Jayme Selph, Lexie Sengmanivong** and **Amanda Parreiras**. Additionally, Selph, **Erica Hawkins, Julissa Arevalo, Isabelle Pietrangelo** and **Marlee Lamoreaux** all earned All-Academic recognition from the NAIA and AMC, with Williams, Parreiras, **Bailey Walerczyk, Samara Hernandez** and **Josie Gelsthorpe** joining them on the AMC All-Academic Team.

Men's Soccer

• **Conway, Dec. 6** — Men's soccer season came to an end on Nov. 5 at Williams Baptist in the AMC quarterfinals, wrapping up an 8-8-3 season for the Mustangs. **Daniel Pinkney** earned All-Tournament Team honors and was also selected honorable mention for the season, along with **Callum Bisset, Daniel Mondragon** and **Manny Almaraz**. Bisset anchored the All-Academic

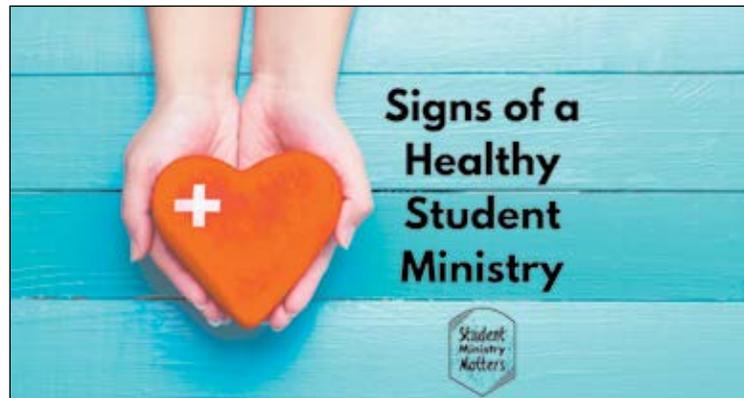


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Signs of a Healthy Student Ministry: Prayer-Infused

As we look at this week's sign of a healthy student ministry, we want to think about being prayer-focused. When we think about student ministry, we have images of pizza parties, lock-ins and mission trips. Rarely do we think about prayer. However, if we want to have a healthy, God-honoring student ministry, prayer needs to be a major priority. Prayer indicates that God is in control and shows our dependence on Him. It is a desire to see Him work in supernatural ways in the lives of our students.

There is great value in prayer. Jesus makes it clear that prayer is important. In Matt. 6:9-13, He shows His disciples the importance of prayer by giving them a model we should all follow. My pastor, Kirk Shelton, recently shared in a message that, "Being limited to prayer is not a limitation." There is great value and power in prayer. Our student ministries need the infusion of supernatural power that prayer can provide.

If that hasn't been the culture in your ministry, how do you start making a change? What can you do to help your students embrace prayer? Here are some ideas to get you started:

• **Encourage prayer in your church body as a whole.** Your church may not have a culture of prayer. Your student ministry will reflect your church. If prayer is important there, it only makes sense that your students and workers will embrace that emphasis. Talk to your lead pastor about your concern. If your church has an invitation time, pray during that time. When someone in your church asks you to pray for them, stop and pray. Our actions indicate our beliefs.

• **Make prayer a part of your weekly group meetings.** How much time do you spend praying on Wednesday night? The amount of time we spend on things in our groups shouts to our students what we think is important. TJ Lewis, of Lake Church in Arlington, Texas, starts each Wednesday night with a time of focused prayer by breaking his group into smaller groups. You can learn more about his approach in our interview with him on the Student Ministry Matters podcast.

• **Pray for your students.** It is important for us to pray for the young men and women in our groups. Whether your group is 5 or 50, you can make a plan to pray for all of them over the course of a week. Pray for their salvation. Pray for their growth. Pray for their witness. Just remember to pray for them.

• **Enlist prayer partners within your congregation.** Whether your church has a culture of prayer, or you just have one or two prayer warriors in your congregation, invite them to join you in the process.

• **Utilize technology.** Whether it is social media, email or text, there are opportunities available to us that weren't there several years back. Find the best way to connect with your students and have them praying for one another.

The simple truth is that we don't pray enough. Let's infuse our student ministries with prayer and see what God will do.

Team selections, earning NAIA and AMC recognition, along with **Andrea Migliozzi, Okikiola Ojeniyi, Ethan Urban** and **Chris Mendoza**. **Jesus Avila, Jose Simon-Nieves, Almaraz, Mario Ceballos** and **Michael Settle** joined them on the All-Academic Team.

Men's Basketball

• **Conway, Dec. 10** — Playing

the same team for the second time this week, CBC hosted Bacone College in a non-AMC contest at A.R. Reddin Fieldhouse. CBC (8-4) never trailed, leading by as many as 61 in the second half, and cruising to a 112-56 win over BC (0-13).

Women's Basketball

• **Paragould, Dec. 8** — **Caro**
See SPORTS, Page 3





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WHAT IS
THE ROLE
OF DISCIPLINE
IN DISCIPLESHIP?

Discipleship Requires Discipline

Warren Wiersbe described discipleship as “a daily discipline — we follow Jesus a step at a time, a day at a time.” Paul’s command in I Tim. 4:7 is to train ourselves as disciplined disciples who follow Christ, pursue holiness and train for godliness. In verse 10 of the same chapter, he tells us to labor and strive for these goals. The disciple must be disciplined for discipleship to occur. Disciples (followers of Jesus) are expected to train, which requires maximum effort and an all-in mentality. Discipleship without a 100% commitment will never accomplish all that God intended.

Physical training expects sweat equity proving total dedication to your task. Spiritual training has the same expectation. You must be willing to set something else down in order to pick up the spiritual disciplines needed to reach the goal of being like Christ. The word “labor” in verse 10 means to work to the point of weariness and exhaustion. He also tells us to strive, which has the idea of agonizing and to engage in a struggle. This caused Paul to state, “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Phil. 1:21). Missionary to India Henry Martin said, “Now let me burn out for God.” John Knox expressed his commitment by stating, “Give me Scotland, or I die.”

In *Spiritual Leadership*, J. Oswald Sanders states, “If he (the leader) is unwilling to pay the price of fatigue for his leadership, it will always be mediocre... True leadership always exacts a heavy toll on the whole man, and the more effective the leadership is, the higher the price to be paid.” There is a price to be paid and Jim Elliott a missionary to Ecuador said it quite well: “He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose.” He became a martyr for the gospel at the age of 28. These leaders had “fixed” their hope on the living God and were willing to make whatever sacrifice was necessary, even their own lives.

Discipleship is fueled not by curriculum or a program but rather by a person. Proverbs 9:10 (NIV) states, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” Discipleship is more about looking to Him as the answer than it is looking for the answers. It is making sure the transcendence of God is never replaced by the transcendence of self. Discipleship must be focused on who God is, and should never be focused on self-advancement or only self-improvement. Biblical discipleship is not transforming our view of God but rather a view of God that transforms us — all of us.

Disciples are called to discipline themselves in the process of discipleship by carrying the cross of self-denial, not the crown of self-improvement. Genuine followers of Christ will desire more of God and less of them. Have you elevated your purpose — what you do — over Who Jesus is? Are you celebrating your service to Him more than you are celebrating your Savior? Have you become so distracted by all the bells and whistles of programs, plans and systems that you are overlooking the person of Christ? Have you gotten so satisfied with all the activities of being involved in church that you are missing out on adoring its Founder and Head?

Colossians 2:9 tells us we are complete in Christ. He is not only Who we are following, He is our very identity. Colossians 1-2 reminds us not only of Christ’s preeminence but also of our completeness in Him. If you are not careful, you will find your identity in things ranging from your politics to your family, from sports to your hobby and even from your family to your service in your church. Being His disciple is learning that He must have supremacy and preeminence in every area of your life. That means you refuse to settle for knowing about Him and you passionately pursue knowing

SPORTS

(Continued From Page 2)

line City’s free throws, with 5.6 seconds left in CBC’s basketball game against Crowley’s Ridge College at the Carter Activities Center, provided the difference in a 56-55 victory for the Lady Mustangs (4-4) over the Pioneers (5-4). CBC led only four times in the contest and never by more than a point, as they overcame an 11-point halftime deficit to win.

• **Conway, Dec. 10**—Playing out of the AMC for the final time this season, CBC hosted the Pioneers of Baptist Bible College (BBC) at A.R.Reddin Fieldhouse. CBC (5-4) used a +21-rebounding advantage and a 16-5 edge in second-chance points to finish a season sweep of BBC (4-9) by a score of 59-52.

Wrestling

• **Kansas City, Mo., Dec. 8** — The newest NAIA wrestling poll was released, and **Christian Richer** continued to find himself ranked in the individual top 25 rankings. Richer was ranked 23rd by the NAIA, his third straight ranking this season after previously being 19th and 20th.

• **Montgomery, Ala., Dec. 10** — Competing for the final time in the 2022 calendar year, CBC was on the mat at Huntingdon University for the Huntingdon Tri-Dual against the host school and Cumberland University. CBC would drop the Huntingdon Dual 46-15 and would lose to Cumberland U 47-3.

Indoor Track

• **Maryville, Mo., Dec. 10** — Competing for the first time indoors this season, **Ally Swaim** was on the track for CBC at the MelTjeerdsma Classic. Swaim reached the final in both the 60-meter hurdles and the 200-meter dash, with all the other finalists coming from Division II schools.

Him personally and intimately.

You cannot afford to lose your awe of Who Christ is. He is the image of the invisible God and the Creator of all things. He is the Alpha and Omega and the sustainer of all things. He is over all things, and He is God almighty. A disciple disciplines themselves to remain focused and fixated on the beauty of Christ. Have you lost your awe of Who He is? Being His disciple is so much more than knowing more information about Him because He gives us so much more — He gives us Himself. Being focused and fixated on His beauty demands your total focus by becoming totally absorbed, transfixed and mesmerized with the Holy One.

Philippians 3:8 (HCSB) says, “...I also consider everything to be a loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ...” He is more beautiful than you can possibly imagine. He is more amazing, wonderful and magnificent than you could ever comprehend. Are you disciplining yourself in your

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What Makes a Wise Man?

By Kerry Stitch

“And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary his Mother, and fell down and worshiped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts unto him: gold, frankincense and myrrh” (Matt. 2:11)

Listen to almost any retelling of the Christmas story and you will no doubt be reminded of the importance of the wise men, even if some disagree as to their arrival time. If it makes you feel better, don’t place them in the manger of your nativity scene, but a ways off as en route to Bethlehem. Either way, let’s not miss their message and desirable characteristics.

• **They sought Him.** They didn’t settle for knowing about Him. They didn’t check their appointments, consider a proxy or make excuses for convenience and comfort. They went, guided by the original GPS (God’s Providential System). Yes, these highly intelligent, important Magi paused for what was (and is) the best use of their time.

• **They were led by God’s Word.** The prophet Micah had told them the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, and their most appropriate, immediate response upon arrival was worship. They didn’t post their attendance to social media, tag themselves in an exclusive photo shoot or attempt to gain access to Jesus for personal or political gain. Their overflowing hearts of gratitude simply needed His presence. Isn’t that what most of us want for Christmas or for any enjoyable moment — just to be in the presence of those we love?

• **They gave their best.** No regifting was appropriate for this setting. It wasn’t just the thought that counted... it was of supreme importance to only consider their best treasures as offerings. In a culture that breeds greed and selfishness, sacrificial giving is going to preach without needing words.

In the coming days when you pack up your nativity scenes, leave out and handy the timeless principles emulated by those early supportive characters in the Christmas story. You might just resemble a modern-day wise man or woman.

discipleship journey to learn and discover more and more about the depths of His beauty? When you see His beauty, nothing else compares to Him. Then you gladly turn loose of anything He has forbidden. You are not giving anything up, you are receiving Him and gaining so much more because of this surpassing value of knowing Him.

Discipleship is deeper than you have ever imagined because God is inexhaustible. You could never exhaust the bottomless beauty of God. Disciplined discipleship is not looking for God to be God to you but is instead understanding that God is good for you. This kind of disciple focuses on the attributes of God and does not only count his blessings. He is God and worthy of our praise, which is based more on Who we know He is than on what we see going on around us. Disciple, never forget, “knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”



Immanuel Baptist Church in Nashville is seeking a full-time pastor. Send resumes to Immanuel Baptist Church Search Committee, P. O. Box 212, Nashville, Ark. 71852.

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

Calvary Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas is seeking a full-time pastor. Resumes may be sent to resumes@calvarybaptistarlington.org or Pastor Search Committee, Calvary Baptist Church, 2021 S. Davis, Arlington, Texas 76010.

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



Trumpet Notes

By Executive Editor Jeff Herring

Authorities Seize Lethal Quantities of Fentanyl, Meth

KAIT reported last week that the 2nd Judicial District Drug Task Force seized 100 pounds of meth and 390 grams of fentanyl in Northeast Arkansas earlier this month. The drug task force reportedly is made up of law enforcement from multiple agencies.

According to the DEA, fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is 50 times more potent than heroin and 100 times more potent than morphine. Two milligrams of fentanyl is considered a potentially lethal dose. That means 390 grams of pure fentanyl would be enough to kill as many as 195,000 people — nearly every man, woman and child in Little Rock.

In 2019 and 2021, the DEA and the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission reported that China and Mexico are the primary sources of illicit fentanyl in the U.S.

In November, the U.S. Treasury Department issued sanctions against the La Nueva Familia Michoacana drug cartel from Mexico for smuggling illicit drugs — including fentanyl — across the United States.

Earlier this fall, Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge warned parents about the increase in “rainbow fentanyl” pills that look like candy.

Last month, the FBI arrested 45 individuals believed to be tied to large-scale trafficking of fentanyl, marijuana and other drugs in Arkansas.

Nationwide, fentanyl, marijuana and other drugs are big business for drug cartels.

States like California, Colorado and Oregon hoped that legalizing marijuana would weaken the cartels, but instead the opposite happened. Illicit marijuana operations have skyrocketed in those states, and the opioid epidemic continues. (familycouncil.org)

Second Appeals Court Blocks “Transgender Mandate”

A second federal appeals court has blocked the Biden administration’s attempt to require doctors and hospitals to perform gender-transition procedures, as well as abortions, over their objections.

On Dec. 9, The Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a permanent injunction that barred enforcement of a Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) rule that has become known as the “transgender mandate.” A three-judge panel of the appeals court, which is based in St. Louis, unanimously affirmed a North Dakota federal judge’s

decision that the Catholic entities that challenged the regulation were entitled to protection under a federal law that guarantees free exercise of religion.

In August, a three-judge panel of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans unanimously endorsed a permanent injunction against the HHS rule issued by a federal judge in Texas. The Biden administration declined to appeal the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court by the 90-day deadline in late November.

In a similar fashion to the Fifth Circuit’s August ruling, the Eighth Circuit opinion found the Catholic entities had a valid claim under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), a 1993 federal law that prohibits the government from substantially burdening the free exercise of religion. The government may gain an exemption if it can show it has a compelling interest and is using the “least restrictive means” to further that interest.

In his opinion for the panel, Eighth Circuit Chief Judge Laven-ski Smith said federal judge Peter Welte was correct in finding the “intrusion upon the Catholic Plaintiffs’ exercise of religion is sufficient to show irreparable harm.” The panel agreed with other circuit courts that have ruled that showing “a likely RFRA violation satisfies” the conclusion there is “irreparable harm.”

During the Obama administration, HHS’ original mandate, issued in 2016, defined sex to include “gender identity” and “termination of pregnancy.” The Trump administration issued a rule in 2020 that rescinded the Obama-era policy by returning to the ordinary interpretation of the word “sex.”

Under President Biden, however, HHS announced in May 2021 a reinterpretation of sex discrimination to include discrimination on the basis of both sexual orientation and gender identity. Sexual orientation includes homosexuality, bisexuality and pansexuality, while gender identity refers to the way a person perceives himself or herself regardless of biology at birth.

HHS issued a proposed rule earlier this year that largely revives the 2016 regulation. Critics say the proposal would not only force doctors, clinics and hospitals to perform procedures to which they object but require health-insurance companies to cover ones they find objectionable.

The proposed HHS rule is another in a series of actions by the Biden administration to support abortion access and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer

rights. These include executive orders by Biden regarding both matters. (baptistpress.com)

Up to 29 States Could Ban Abortions

Following the Supreme Court decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, 14 states have banned abortions and are either protecting unborn babies from the moment of conception or have heartbeat laws protecting babies when their heartbeat can be detected at six weeks. Some states have done both.

But the battle to save babies from abortions is not over. Another eight states are currently fighting in court to get their abortion ban or heartbeat law upheld. A few more states could see abortion bans proposed in their state legislatures during the next legislative session, especially if elections in those states yield a pro-life governor or a pro-life legislature.

The state of Arizona, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, South Carolina, North Dakota, Utah and Wyoming are all fighting in court to protect their abortion bans so babies can be saved. Iowa appears likely to keep its abortion ban in place, thanks to a change in the makeup of the state Supreme Court and reversing a decision falsely claiming the state constitution allows a right to abortion. South Carolina’s heartbeat bill will likely be upheld by its conservative Supreme Court — and the same is expected in the rest of the states. Ultimately, if all of these abortion bans are upheld, 22 states will protect babies from abortions.

Other states also have the potential to pass abortion bans protecting babies, including Florida, Nebraska, North Carolina, Virginia, Alaska, Montana and Kansas. If every one of the states can ban abortions, then 29 total states — almost three-fifths of America — would protect babies from abortions. It’s virtually impossible to see any of the other 21 states banning abortions any time in the near future because they are run by pro-abortion Democrats. (lifeneews.com)

Texas Bill Could Ban Anyone Under 18 From Social Media

In Texas, using social media could soon go the way of voting — you can’t do it until you’re 18 years old.

State Rep. Jared Patterson (R) filed legislation on Dec. 7 to ban children under 18 from using social media platforms, an attempt to curb the negative side effects of internet use, like depression and anxiety.

Defending his proposal, Patterson likened social media use to smoking cigarettes, a trend Americans once believed was harmless when, in reality, it causes severe damage and increases the likelihood of contracting lung cancer. Similarly, he believes social media

is negatively impacting children.

“Once thought to be perfectly safe for users, social media access to minors has led to remarkable rises in self-harm, suicide and mental health issues,” the lawmaker said, according to KDFW-TV.

In a press release, Patterson described social media as “the pre-1964 cigarette.”

“The Texas legislature must act this session to protect children because, thus far, the social media platforms have failed to do so. HB S76 is a solution to this crisis.”

Greg Sindelar, CEO of the Texas Public Policy Foundation, lauded Patterson for the legislation. He said the problems posed by social media — particularly to minors — are “demonstrable not just in the internal research from the very social media companies that create these addictive products, but in the skyrocketing depression, anxiety and even suicide rates we are seeing afflict children.”

If approved and signed into law, social media sites would be required to verify users’ age via photo identification. Furthermore, it would give parents legal avenues to request the removal of an account illegally created by their underage children.

It does not seem out of the realm of possibility that Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) would be open to such legislation, particularly given he recently signed into law a bill banning TikTok from state-owned devices. That law comes amid a flurry of concerns over the Chinese-owned app.

Additionally, Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita (R) filed a lawsuit against TikTok on Wednesday, alleging the executives at the video-sharing platform

mislead users about the Chinese government’s ability to access their data as well as minors’ exposure to mature content.

Security concerns over TikTok have been swirling since 2020, when then-President Donald Trump unsuccessfully tried to ban the app from the U.S. market, ultimately calling on parent company ByteDance to sell the popular platform to an American company. That sale, though, never took place.

Last month, Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.), chair of the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee, admitted Trump “was right on TikTok.”

“If your country uses Huawei, if your kids are on TikTok... the ability for China to have undue influence is a much greater challenge and a much more immediate threat than any kind of actual, armed conflict,” he said. (faithwire.com)

Chinese Protestors Can Make a Difference

One Chinese American woman living in Texas described the situation of her parents in China who were suffering under the government’s continuing “zero COVID” policy. “My parents have been locked inside their home for over a month, and their door is locked from the outside. They can’t exit, even to go outside to the grocery store,” she said. It is under intense restrictions like these that 10 people died in an apartment fire in China’s Xinjiang province after COVID restrictions hampered the ability of local emergency services to respond effectively.

The horrific incident sparked a surprising wave of protests in cities across China at the end of

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Invite Your Church To Treasure the Christmas Story

By Daniel Darling

(via lifewayresearch.com)—Every church will find creative ways to tell the Christmas story. But here are some important things to keep front and center.

By the time the calendar flips to its final month, people are either filled with excitement or dread about Christmas. They're either singing Andy Williams' "It's the Most Wonderful Time of Year" in their heads or are quietly muttering Merle Haggard's "If We Make It Through December."

But this season affords churches a wonderful opportunity to rekindle joy and wonder over the birth of Christ. Like the shepherds on that Bethlehem hillside, like the wise men on a pilgrimage from the East, like Simeon and Anna who eagerly waited for the Messiah, we can approach the manger this year and worship the Christ child.

How can churches help God's people treasure Christmas this year? Every church will find creative ways to tell the story. But here are some important things to keep front and center:

• **Give them Jesus.** It's amazing that even in 2022, in a world skeptical of Christianity, we still pause and celebrate this season. Even the most hardened hearts will get swept up in the season — the festive decorations, the shopping and the food. But where will people go to discover the real story at the heart of this season? The church should be the place where weary souls can come and hear of the mystery and miracle of the incarnation of the Son of God, the Almighty's stooping to take on humanity and live among the brokenness of the world.

Listen to the longing in the classic hymn, "O Holy Night" — "Long lay the world in sin and error pining, 'til He appears and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices, for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn"

If what the Bible tells us about Christmas is true — and we believe it is — it changes everything. That baby, born of a peasant couple on the backside of the Roman empire, came to heal a world broken by sin,

sadness and despair. That child in the manger came to, as the hymn-writer Charles Wesley wrote, make sure "God and sinners reconciled."

For those, like me, who have known the story their whole lives, and for those who have yet to hear the real story of Christmas, this gospel word is the best news, the only news, a weary world needs to hear.

• **Leave space for sadness.** The myth of Christmas is that it requires you to come with manufactured happiness. But this time of year, so many are lonely, hurting and in pain. Some families are displaced by war or unrest, spending this holiday in a place far from home. Others look around and see an empty place at the table where a loved one once sat. There are also many who face uncertain economic futures, fractured relationships or depression. The holidays can stir up emotions and sadness, a sad nostalgia over what has been lost.

We are also living in a broken world, riven by war, famine and disease. Every week, we hear of another mass shooting in yet another previously-thought safe place. Or we hear of another politician caught in a scandal or another hypocritical church leader.

Sometimes, the festivities of Christmas seem a mockery to our present distress. Yet, the real story of Christmas encompasses the evil and messiness of the world. Jesus was born, not into an idyllic setting, but into the squalor of a dysfunctional ruler. The people of God were jaded, and a bit cynical about the prophetic promises that seemed distant and impossible. The original Christmas story is a harrowing tale of the murder of innocents, indifference by religious leaders and a people who had lost their home and their national identity. God with us — Immanuel — means He has visited us in our distress. So, you can bring your heartache, your rejection and your fears to Christmas because the one who dwelled among us can bear your deepest pain.

• **Sing the carols.** The hymnody of Christmas is some of the richest and most creative art the church

has produced. There are wonderful new songs being written by artists today that your church should introduce to God's people for worship, but don't hesitate to regularly and repeatedly sing the beautiful, timeless carols this season.

Singing these lyrics, some of which express profound and beautiful theology, helps form and shape the hearts and minds of Christians over a lifetime. They draw us back — away from the noise of the world, the business of our personal lives, the chaos of the moment — toward true worship. Christmas carols are a common language, connecting us across time and denominational and tribal divisions, uniting in worship to the bride of Christ.

• **Put yourself in the sandals of the characters.** The people who make up the nativity sets that sit atop our mantles are not merely wooden characters but were real, live flesh and blood humans who were chosen by God to make up the cast of that first Christmas. Joseph was an ordinary man who was thrust into leadership and who exhibited obedience and faithfulness. Mary was a young girl who said "yes" to bearing and caring for the Son of God. The shepherds responded to the angels with immediate worship and evangelism. The wise men took great expense and trouble to seek out Jesus. Anna and Simeon believed, against all hope, that the prophecies in Scripture would come to pass in their day. Retell their stories. Help your people imagine themselves in the sandals of these ordinary people.

• **Send people out with joy.** There is a temptation to rail every year about the "commercialization of Christmas." And there is something to be said about the way the story of the incarnation can get buried under the pomp and circumstance of the season. But rather than using your influence to go off about a beleaguered retail employee who says "happy holidays" or an obscure town somewhere that didn't allow a Christmas tree at city hall, perhaps use this moment to invite the watching world into the real story of the first advent.

Tell the story that makes "a weary world rejoice," a story that is more than just a sentimental time of good feelings. Just listen to Mary's words: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, because he has looked with favor on the humble condition of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed, because the Mighty One has done great things for me, and his name is holy. His mercy is from generation to generation on those who fear him. He has done a mighty deed with his arm; he has scattered the proud because of the thoughts of their hearts; he has toppled the mighty from their thrones and exalted the lowly. He has satisfied

the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering his mercy to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he spoke to our ancestors" (Luke 1:46-55 CSB).

That is why we can say Christmas is joy to the world, why we should listen to or "hark" what the angels are singing and why that silent night in Bethlehem was a holy night.

— This article is shared with permission and was first published at research.lifeway.com/2022/12/07/invite-your-church-to-treasure-the-christmas-story. Dan is the director of the Land Center for Cultural Engagement at Southwestern Seminary. He is the bestselling author of several books, including *The Characters of Christmas*.

PASTOR (Continued From Page 1)

- See lawmakers debate bills and pass laws, and learn how the legislative process really works;
 - Tour the State Capitol Building;
 - Learn how churches can fulfill the biblical mandate to pray for those in authority;
 - Get to know some of Arkansas' leading policymakers; and
 - Meet state legislators and other high-ranking state officials.
- To register, go to tiny.cc/pastorsday. If you have any questions, please contact Charisse Dean at charisse@familycouncil.org or call (501) 375-7000.

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CENTRAL
BAPTIST COLLEGE

Job Announcement: Vice President for Advancement

Reports to: The President

Mission Statement: Central Baptist College is committed to transforming lives through education that integrates Christian faith and academic excellence in a Christ-centered environment.

Responsibilities: The Vice President for Advancement is charged with supporting the mission of CBC and elevating the institution's profile through:

- Serving as the institution's chief fundraising officer;
- Developing effective donor, community, and alumni relations;
- Championing CBC through ongoing engagement with alumni, donors and community leaders to continuously maximize the potential for revenue;
- Provide leadership to the Offices of Development, Public Relations, Church Relations, and Alumni Services, working with them to design, implement and direct an integrated and comprehensive development program, with special emphasis on identifying, cultivating, soliciting, engaging and stewarding support to provide long-term financial sustainability for the college;
- A voting member of the President's Executive Leadership Team.

Qualifications: Minimum bachelor's degree; master's degree preferred

- Minimum of seven years of supervision/team leadership
- Demonstrated leadership abilities and strategic thinking
- Ability to manage donor relations with a high degree of professionalism, integrity and confidentiality
- Exceptional oral and written communication skills
- Ability to manage multiple projects/deadlines and possess a service-oriented, team-player attitude
- Fundraising experience preferred
- Travel required, including weekends and evenings.

Candidate must support the Christian identity of the College and demonstrate mature faith, a Christian lifestyle and a strong belief in Baptist Doctrine.

Salary: Competitive and commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Application review will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

To be considered for the position of Vice President for Advancement, interested candidates must complete an Application for Employment at cbc.edu/jobs and send a cover letter, resume (including references) and statement of faith as PDF attachments addressed to Terry Kimbrow, President, at tkimbrow@cbc.edu. Electronic submissions only. Background check required.



You Will Fall Asleep, So Charge Your Phone Now

I don't know if I will ever learn my lesson. There have been so many times when I have gone to bed, knew I was tired and would fall asleep any minute, told myself I better plug my phone in to charge right away in case I fell asleep and then woke up to an uncharged and dead phone. Am I alone? I know I'm not completely alone — my wife does this way more than me!

This too often reality in our house is the modern twist to an ancient parable told by Jesus — the Parable of the 10 Virgins.

You're likely familiar with the Parable of the 10 Virgins or 10 Bridesmaids found in Matt. 25:1-13. This parable is part of the application portion of Jesus' Olivet Discourse which is recorded in Matthew 24-25, begins with the disciples asking Jesus what the signs of the end of the age would be. Jesus then embarked on the greatest prophecy conference in history. He walked through the signs and then pivoted to application. He gave a "now this is how you should live." It seems He was far more concerned with His followers living in light of His return versus them knowing all the details. The end of Matthew 24 contains a few short parables, then there are seemingly three parables in Matthew 25. (I say seemingly because I think there's a possibility the third isn't a parable, but rather a return to the events of the end of the age. I'm still wrestling with that one.)

The first of the possible three parables is the one of the 10 bridesmaids. Jesus' parable follows the Jewish wedding custom of that day where a groom-to-be would come pay a dowry for his bride-to-be, then return to his family's home to add a room. When the groom-to-be's father said the room was done and it was time (for only the father knows) the groom-to-be would grab his wedding party and

go get his bride and her wedding party. Therefore, the bride and her party needed to be ready.

In the parable, Jesus said, all 10 fell asleep, but 5 had extra oil for their lamps and the other 5 did not (Or as in our modern twist, 5 had plugged their phones in to charge before they went to sleep and 5 didn't.)

The five who had oil in their lamps were able to go to the wedding banquet. The five who were without oil had to go searching for oil and missed the wedding banquet.

Five were ready. Five weren't.

Five rose to the occasion. Five wilted.

All 10 were asleep.

I've always thought of this parable and preached it as if it talked about generally being ready for Jesus, and that this boiled down to being saved or not. It is a Biblical reality that is true, but may not be the fullest interpretation of this parable.

We are only saved by faith in Christ. That's it. I'm not arguing anything different, but I believe the parables need to be interpreted in context. I think it's more accurate to understand that this parable relates to how to live in the last days. Ultimately, being ready for Jesus is to be saved, but I'm not sure if that is all that is meant by being ready here. I don't know exactly what is meant by oil either. There is a biblical precedent for the oil being the Holy Spirit, which again we receive in full at our salvation. Though again that's true, I feel as though, in the context of this parable, the oil might be "what is needed to faithfully persevere in this time."

As you can tell I'm wrestling through some of those details, but one detail I'm not struggling with is that they **all** fell asleep. I hadn't caught this until a couple of years ago when a friend came to me with this detail. **All** the bridesmaids fell asleep awaiting the groom. I believe it's highly

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November. The main target of the protests was the government's lockdown measures, but the pent-up frustrations of Chinese citizens went much further. Some student protestors shouted, "Xi Jinping! Step down! CCP! Step down!" It is not an exaggeration to say that these protestors are risking their lives to make these statements.

Protests rarely happen under the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) tight-fisted authoritarian regime. It is even more rare that they prove to be effective. Yet, a new 10-point order issued by the Chinese National Health Commission on Dec. 7 indicates that the CCP is rolling back some of its most extreme COVID restrictions. The new rules state that citizens who contract the virus and exhibit mild or no symptoms are no longer required to be admitted into a state-run facility and can now quarantine at home.

Demonstrations on the scale of

likely Jesus is indicating most **all** of His followers will be asleep and not watching for Him. They don't have to be because Jesus said just a few verses before that His followers needed to respond to the signs of the last days by staying awake — by being alert and watchful. Yet, the default for the follower of Christ is to have grown weary in the wait and be asleep. Is this why we don't focus on the end of the age much?

Though most all will be asleep a percentage will have "charged" their phone before they fell asleep. They had stocked up on oil. They had put wood on the fire. They had saved. So, though they missed the signs they were still ready to be faithful in the challenges.

Though I have lots of questions about this parable — we must see that we can and likely will be (maybe are) asleep. But let's make sure we've got what we need in case we do. Let's plug in our phones for we will likely fall asleep.

I don't think we have to wonder much about what this might look like — we've seen a microcosm of it with COVID. We mostly **all** were asleep that something like COVID could come and impact our churches. Therefore, like the parable, we **all** had fallen asleep. The storm of COVID brought challenges that woke us up. Nearly half proved to have had oil and half didn't.

Today, nearly three years down the road from that first Sunday of not gathering, only 40%-60% have returned to our churches. Is it possible that the ones who fell asleep with the oil returned? COVID was a bad time, but we ain't seen nothing yet.

Jake is the newest state missionary and would love to share about the work in Northwest Arkansas and encourage your church to stand firm. (standfirmministries.com)



Mount Vernon Brotherhood Meets

By Lance Madden, Reporter

The Mount Vernon BMA Brotherhood met Monday, Dec. 5 at Bethel Baptist Church in Forrest City for our quarterly meeting, with 29 in attendance and 9 churches represented. We collected an offering of \$362, which went to Farrell Eoff, pastor of Rondo Baptist Church, for medical expenses.

The host church fed the men a delicious meal of hamburger steaks. After congregational singing led by Bernard Evans and Rose Kemmer, Dexter Thorn sang "How Beautiful Heaven Must Be," J.E. Hughes sang "For What Earthly Reason," Joe and Rose Kemmer played a medley of "Rock of Ages," "The Old Rugged Cross" and "America the Beautiful" on the accordion and piano, and Vickie Lewis sang "Thank You, Lord, for Your Blessings on Me." Don Lewis, pastor of Haynes Baptist Church, then preached an encouraging and challenging message from Luke 1:26-37 titled, "For with God Nothing Shall Be Impossible."

The next meeting of the Mt. Vernon BMA Brotherhood will be Monday, March 6, at Rondo Baptist Church at 6:30 p.m. Our offering goal will be Central Baptist College.

the anti-lockdown protests perhaps have not been seen since the Tiananmen Square Massacre, when Chinese citizens learned just how far the communist government would go to secure its own power and crush peaceful protests. Chinese authorities were quick to insist that the anti-lockdown protests last month were instigated by "foreign forces." Student protestors in Beijing asked at a rally, "Was it foreign forces that started the fire in Xinjiang?" and "We can't even access foreign internet, how are foreign forces meant to be communicating to us?"

China's internet is restricted and widely censored. However, resourceful protestors have, at times, found ways around it. One method in the past utilized Apple's AirDrop feature to share information and images among fellow protestors. AirDrop uses wireless Bluetooth connections between phones, making it difficult for Chinese censors to monitor and interrupt discussions. This was used as recently as October, when an anonymous protestor hung a sign over a highway bridge. However, on Nov. 9, a new Apple update limited the use of the AirDrop feature, specifically in China.

Protestors started to simply hold up blank sheets of white paper at rallies, symbolizing the internet censorship that swiftly erases the voices of dissenters. A4 size white paper was promptly banned from being sold online or in stores. China's communist leaders have long been fearful of protests. Now, they even fear blank sheets of paper.

Sadly, China is becoming an increasingly closed society. In February 2022, China's National Immigration Administration announced that it would no longer renew passports for non-essential travel due to "great security risks" posed by the waning COVID-19 pandemic. Massive COVID quarantine camps have sprouted up

across the country, capable of holding tens of thousands of people.

The extreme and oppressive nature of China's COVID lockdowns is just the symptom. The real problem is the longstanding systematic oppression of the CCP, and Chinese people are clearly getting fed up with it. American leaders should not let the courageous protests of young Chinese citizens be snuffed out and forgotten. We must amplify their message and remind them they are not alone in their desire to see China become a more free and just society. (washingtonstand.com)



Mt. Vernon Youth in Harvest, Dec. 19, 6:30 p.m.; County Line, Marvell.

Central Ark. District Brotherhood, Jan. 9, 6:30 p.m.; Pleasant Grove, Carlisle.

Jonesboro District Brotherhood, Jan. 10; Bethany, Jonesboro.

Southwest District WMA, Jan 10, 10 a.m.; First, Bodcaw.

Central Ark. WMA, Jan. 14; 10 a.m.; North View, NLR.

Jonesboro District Brotherhood, Feb. 14; Nueva Esperanza, Jonesboro.

Mt. Vernon District Brotherhood, Mar. 6, 6:30 p.m.; Rondo, Lexa.



Master's Voice Christmas Concert, Dec. 16; 7 p.m.; Landmark, England; David Inzer, pastor.

Homecoming, February 17-18, 2023; Central Baptist College, Conway.

BMA of America, April 25-27, 2023; Antioch Baptist Church, Conway.

National Galilean Camp, June 23-26, 2023; Stoneridge Baptist Camp, Smithville.

SOAR Student Conference, July 3-5, 2023; Gaylord Texan Hotel, Grapevine, Texas.

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(L/R) Michael Jannise, pastor of Old Time Baptist Church in DeQueen and Executive Director of Missions Paul White.

Another First-time Visit

Sunday, I was privileged to be with Michael Jannise, pastor at Old Time Baptist Church in De Queen. I had a great time speaking on State Missions and preaching God's Word. I love being able to meet my brothers and sisters who, like me, love our Lord and share a precious kindred spirit. Their building was beautifully decorated for the Christmas season. Thanks again, Bro. Michael and church, for this opportunity. It may have been my first, but hopefully not my last. Merry Christmas!

Be It Known

As I stated above, I would love to come to your church and share the work of your state missionaries. I can share Missions and preach or just share the work of Missions. Of course, that's your call. I'm anticipating another first-time visit soon.

He Will Do in a Pinch

A friend and pastor, Gary Henderson had to have a knee replaced and asked me if I could fill in for him until he is able to return to the pulpit. It was a no-brainer seeing that Fairview in Jonesboro was the first church I pastored and many of her members that I pastored are still actively involved. Please keep him in your prayers as he should be up and running in a week or so. As you can see, I had to pass this Sunday as I had scheduled to go to De Queen a couple of months ago. So remember, should you need a person to fill in who will cause your people to appreciate you more, give me a call.

From Our Missionaries

Misión Creciendo en Cristo (Growing in Christ), North Little Rock: Juan Carlos Posadas writes, "Thank God, Sayra and I are in better health — not fully recovered, but serving the Lord. I was able to attend the prayer meeting last Friday since the class I was teaching at the Bible Institute ended the previous week. It was very pleasant for me to pray again with the brothers of the church."

"Sunday, we studied II Peter 1:12-21. It is interesting how the apostle teaches the value of the Word of God and intends to fulfill the purpose of transmitting it to future generations, fulfilling the Great Commission."

"We received 1,200 gifts, which we have begun to wrap, to deliver to the children of our church and

our community. It is the third consecutive year we can do this activity, and we thank God for provision for His work."

"We are very grateful to God for having allowed our son, Jose Carlos to turn 19 — time goes by fast and sometimes we don't realize it. He is now a Senior, and next year he is going to university. Please help us pray that God will provide everything he needs for his university studies."

Ebenezer, West Little Rock: Ruben Isturiz writes, "Last Thursday was my last Old Testament class for the semester at the Theological Institute. It was a blessing to be able to teach an overview from Genesis to Malachi. This Thursday we will have a meeting where I'll hand in their grades and have time for fellowship."

"Last Sunday, we had a visit from German Galindo, who pre-

sented to our congregation the missionary project to Mexico. We also continued in our series of sermons that have to do with the birth of Jesus Christ.

"We will have our Christmas dinner on Saturday, Dec. 17. Pray that new people will come to hear the gospel message. I thank God for you. Without your prayers and support, we cannot do the missionary work that God has placed in our hands. To God be the glory!"

Faith Chapel, Flippin: Johnny Shew writes, "We had a wonderful service Sunday morning! We had a good number and, once again, several that had been out sick or traveling were back, but several more were out for the same reasons. Between the flu, RSV, COVID and all of the other colds, viruses, infections and bugs going around, it is difficult to get everyone together at the same time; but we still had a wonderful service."

"The granddaughter of the couple that joined us last week, a wonderful teenage girl, came and said, 'Bro. Johnny, I think it's about time I joined this church.' So, I asked her if she knew she was saved, and she said emphatically, 'Yes!' I asked her if she had been baptized and she had, so she is joining us as well, and I can't wait to see what the Lord will do through her. Praise God!"

"Then, a younger girl whose parents are members came up to me and said, 'Bro. Johnny, I want to be baptized.' She had told me that two weeks ago after our last baptism, and I told her then that we needed to have a talk about that, to make sure she understands what it is all about, and she said, 'Okay.' Her parents said that is all she has been talking about since then, so we had that talk. I told her she needed to be saved first and asked her if she knew what that meant. She told me she did, and we had a long conversation about Jesus dying on the cross, what it means to be saved and what baptism means. I believe she understands salvation better than a lot of adults. She made her profession of faith, and I agreed to baptize her. Praise God! I have never seen anyone so excited to be baptized."

"Then her little sister said she wanted to be baptized too, so I started having that same talk with her, and we decided that she isn't ready for that yet. She needs to keep studying her Bible and learning more about Jesus, and she said,

'Okay. We baptized their parents last year and now the kids are coming to Jesus — I love to watch Him work.'

"We thank you for your prayers for us, Faith Chapel and the people in our community we are trying to reach. Please continue, God is answering them!"

The Table, Springdale: Clinton Morris writes, "We hit the ground running this last week. I am still battling some lingering illness, but I'm much better than I have been in weeks."

"I had several great meetings with locals. We are going to partner with a local church to do a Christmas potluck for the homeless. We are looking for partners for some of our other localized ministry outreaches. Two new ministries are blossoming, and we are working hard to figure out how to implement and nurture them."

"Our online services are live. We are working through some of the rougher features of this ministry, but along with the live service, we also have an online small group. We have a recorded service for those who are unable to attend either our in-person or live service options. These added features have helped us continue to reach some of our people who have been sick or are just unable to make it out. Join us in praying for unity."

Faith Journey, Benton: Bryan Clay writes "This week at Faith Journey, we worked on being an encouragement to others. I had the opportunity to bring the morning message at our sending church, Celebration Baptist Church in Haskell. My message talked about how Barnabas was an encouragement to the new believers at Antioch, and he shows us how we should always seek out ways to show Christ's love to others by lifting them up."

"With that in mind, we were able to get out in the community and encourage others. We went and spoke to a local adult day center in our area. I thought I would go and share my testimony and it would be a blessing to them but, as it usually happens, they sure were a huge blessing to me."

Misión Gracia Soberana (Sovereign Grace), NWA: Roberto Marcelletti writes, "We were able to meet on Sunday and, even though it is our fourth service and we are a young church, had an excellent time united in worship and devotion to the Lord singing the gospel and teaching the gospel through one of the most Christological passages in all Scripture — Phil. 2:1-11, where Paul calls us to imitate Christ. His attitude of service on the cross gave us freedom and we should serve one another with the same humility Christ did. In a church where its members have that attitude, it is impossible for there to be divisions and problems."

"After the sermon, we went to the sermon application, where we went to the fellowship room and talked as the family of the faith that we are.



Broadway Ave., Bay added one by statement; Rick Jensen, pastor.

Calvary, Heber Springs welcomed one by letter and one by statement; Josh Murphree, pastor.

Old Hickory, Hattiesville rejoices over one by baptism; Blake Martin, pastor.

Shiloh, McRae gained two by baptism; Rodger Cole, pastor.

First, Springhill, La. reports one by baptism; Chris Lucy, pastor.

In the middle of the conversation, we learned about a situation a family that had visited us was in, and those of us who were there helped them get work. We looked for clothes and other things they needed. We stayed until 4 p.m. We always stay after the service to strengthen our fraternal relationships. Then we went to a sister's house and continued the fellowship until 7 p.m., satisfied that we were able not only to serve our beloved brothers but also help them in their needs."

Epic Life, Pea Ridge: Jake McCandless writes, "How can one of our most 'successful' weeks also be the week of the worst Bible study? Probably because it's not about us. I shared in my report last week that someone I have been covering in prayer for a year showed interest in our Bible study. That was Monday. On Wednesday afternoon, just an hour before our Connection Group, my wife and I ended up at the store at the same time. As I was checking out my items, the girl behind the counter said I looked familiar. I read her name tag and realized she was my wife's cousin whom we hadn't seen in six years. She was on my mind because my father-in-law had invited her to a Connection Group the week before. We visited and shared that we were headed to our Connection Group. She then said she got off at 5:30 and would like to come. She did! This was awesome."

"The bad part was that my wife and I ended up spending most of the Bible study looking for our dog, Charlie, who we thought was missing but wasn't. Long story, but it wasn't terrible because, not only did our guest come to Bible Study, but she also came back Sunday to our monthly worship gathering and brought a friend! So that was more good news."

"This morning we got more bad news — as we lost the use of the library community room. I will share about that next week!"

IMPORTANT (Continued From Page 1)

word came down from the Nazi High Command that these Jews were to be transported by rail to a concentration camp at Auschwitz to be exterminated.

By this time, Oskar Schindler had learned to love his Jewish workers, so he made a deal with the local Nazi officials to purchase their continued services and then transport them to Czechoslovakia to work in an ammunition plant he was starting. Schindler began to make a list of the names of the Jews he wanted to take with him and ended up with more than 1,100 names on the list — hence the name of the movie, *Schindler's List*. Schindler spent almost his entire fortune literally purchasing the lives of those Jews.

Upon hearing the announcement that the war had ended and that a cease-fire would begin at midnight, Schindler realized he had to flee for his life because he would be considered a Nazi war criminal by the Allies. As he was preparing to leave, he looked into the faces of the Jews who had come to say "Goodbye," and realized their number was so very small when compared to those who had died in the extermination camps. At that moment, he began to weep

uncontrollably and said: "I could have got more out. I could have got more... If I just... I could have got more... I didn't do enough." Schindler then looked at the car that he was about to drive away in and said, "Why did I keep the car? Ten people right there. Ten people. Ten more people." He took a gold pin off his jacket and said, "This pin — two people... two more people... at least one... at least one more... one more person... I could have a person... gotten one more person and I didn't. And I didn't!"

At that moment, Schindler realized that possessions are unimportant when compared to the lives of people.

There is a great lesson here for Christians. One day, we will stand before the Lord and weep over the possessions we bought because we thought we couldn't live without them. On that day, we will realize that some of the things we spent our money on could have been used to send another missionary overseas, build a church building in a foreign land or have printed more Bibles, tracts and literature.

Most of us get so consumed with material things that we forget there are souls hanging in the balance. This Christmas season, please remember what is really important!

RADIO (Continued From Page 1)

transmitters, he also trains and mentors local technicians to service them. This technology has resulted in countless Filipinos hearing the message of a God who loves them and a Savior who died for them.

South Catabato, a province on the island of Mindanao, is one of the areas in the Philippines where Pete has been working. He, along with missionary Jehosua de los Santos, first installed a transmitter for the Blaen Tribe. Jehosua is the son of Genaro de los Santos, who first started the Tribal Mission work there. Pastor Pete had promised Genaro before his death that he would install a radio transmitter there. Now his son, Jehosua is not only seeing that promise realized, he is also taking part in the ongoing work to reach more tribes. Pete has helped train and equip Jehosua, who now acts as the tribal coordinator for the Tribal ministry of South Cotabato in place of his father, to operate and maintain the technology of the existing transmitters. Jehosua travels to many of these areas, often walking many miles, planting missions and churches. The local FM radio will benefit his work there to reach those in neglected and remote villages. Lifeword assists him in the

evangelization and discipleship of the Tribal Ministry through Media Technology. Pete also meets with Jehosua and his team once a month to further encourage and train them in ministry.

Pete is currently preparing a 150-watts transmitter for the next tribe in South Catabato — the T'boli Tribe. Please continue to pray for Pastor Pete, Jehosua and his team as they have been working to add to the 10 languages already being produced there and are working to add radio transmitters and stations to the current 45 operating radio stations.

Pastor Pete and his faithfulness to what God is doing in the Philippines is a vivid picture that when we lay our abilities, gifts and resources before the Lord, He will accomplish His purposes in and through us. What a gift to be involved in God's work and watch Him do what only He can do — draw others into His kingdom through unexpected means, including the radio.

Team Lifeword Info

We want to send a **big** thank you to all who participated in Lifeword Sunday 2022! It was an amazing time of prayer and celebration among our churches about all God is doing through Lifeword to share gospel around the world!



Robert "Bob" Powell, 89 of Rye, passed away Dec. 8. He was a deacon at Calvary Baptist Church in Warren.

J.B. Mills, 96 of Greenbrier, passed away Dec. 7. He was a deacon at Springhill Baptist Church in Springhill.

Garry Wayne Coffman, 68 of Morrilton, passed away Dec. 5. He was a member of Calvary Baptist Church.

Lois Jean Carter, 88 of Brookland, passed away Dec. 3. She was a member of Prospect Baptist Church in Jonesboro.

Please pray for the potential of new programming in the Bengali language of India and the Miskito language of Central America and for our team in Lebanon as they are creating and sharing content on multiple social and media platforms to reach and engage young people and build personal relationships with them that are ultimately bringing them into the local church.

Praise God that full licensing has been granted for a radio station in the capital of Peru. Also for the new Lifeword show, "Storybook Homes," which launched in the US earlier this month. This show relates home improvement to the restoration offered in Jesus Christ.



ATTENTION CENTRAL ARKANSAS!

Don't miss this opportunity to attend a class with Arkansas pastor, Dr. Gary O'Neal. He will be teaching a class for the Spring 2023 semester focused on supporting pastoral ministry.



Classes will be held virtually, but if you are in the area you are welcome to come to Oak Park Baptist Church in Little Rock from 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. on Monday afternoons beginning January 23, 2023.

Topics include: Advantages of a Plurality of Church Leadership - Church Growth Leadership Models vs. Biblical Models - Am I Called to Ministry? and others.

Contact Dr. O'Neal for additional information at 662-322-5846.

