

# BAPTIST TRUMPET

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## CBC Seeks Accreditation For a MBA Degree

By Jessica Faulkner, Director of Alumni and Public Relations

Central Baptist College recently announced that it will begin seeking accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs

(ACBSP) and the addition of a master's degree in business (MBA). CBC President Terry Kimbrow said, "The success and high academic quality of our undergraduate business degrees have made the Business Department among the fastest-growing departments at CBC. We are now well-positioned to add an MBA program that will allow students to stay here and develop advanced business skills and a graduate degree valued by many employers."

This five-year process includes four stages. The first phase is to seek business-related program accreditation at the baccalaureate and graduate levels from the ACBSP. The second phase would be to change our state charter to include graduate programs. The third phase would be to hire faculty for MBA program development. The fourth and final phase is to seek approval from the Higher Learning Commission to offer graduate degrees. Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Gray McAllister said, "We are excited about the future of our Business Department and are eagerly look-

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### "Take Control Of Your Budget" Webinar

You are invited to attend the first Ministers Resource Services (MRS) Financial Education webinar of 2023. We will be discussing how to "Take Control of Your Budget." Join the webinar on Wednesday, March 15 at 3 p.m. Central Time (US and Canada). You must register in advance for this webinar by visiting [tiny.cc/MRSbudget](http://tiny.cc/MRSbudget). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. Everyone who registers for the webinar will receive a recording link after the webinar to watch it on demand, whether you were able to attend live or not. However, all attendees will have the ability to interact with the presenters by submitting questions in the chat during the webinar.

If you have any questions, please contact MRS at (844) 262-8637 or [cherie@bmaamerica.org](mailto:cherie@bmaamerica.org).

ing forward to taking the first step in the process."

CBC currently offers a BBA degree with emphases in Accounting, Business Administration, Business Analytics, Business Information Systems, International Business, Management, Management Information Systems and Marketing. For more information visit our website at [cbc.edu](http://cbc.edu).

If you have any questions, contact me at [jfaulkner@cbc.edu](mailto:jfaulkner@cbc.edu) or (501) 205-8800.

— CBC is committed to transforming lives through education that integrates Christian faith and academic excellence in a Christ-centered environment, and is a four-year, private, liberal arts college owned and operated by the Baptist Missionary Association of Arkansas. CBC offers approximately 40 baccalaureate degree programs, 16 athletic teams that compete in the AMC conference of the NALA, and 6 fine arts performance groups. For more information about CBC visit [cbc.edu](http://cbc.edu).



## BMA Seminary Accreditation Reaffirmed

In December 2022, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) reaffirmed its accreditation of the BMA Seminary's associate, bachelor and master levels of study. The commission reaffirmed the seminary's accreditation for the maximum 10 years. Although SACSCOC requires a customary fifth-year interim report, which will be completed in 2028, the seminary is accredited until 2032.

This follows several years of institutional self-reflection and reporting. It also follows a similar process through which the seminary sought reaffirmation of its accreditation with the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools (COAATS). In 2021, that commission reaffirmed its accreditation of the seminary's master's degree programs until 2031.

Both of the seminary's accrediting entities are peer organizations that seek to help member institutions maintain quality and integrity regarding agreed-upon standards of higher education. Standards pertain to areas such as institutional mission, planning and evaluation, faculty credentials, governance and administration, student achievement, learning resources and physical and financial resources.

In its final action letter to the BMA Seminary, the Commission on Accrediting recognized certain distinctive strengths of the institution.

See BMATS, Page 2



## "Let Love Overflow"

By Charlotte Johnson, President • National WMA

The National Women's Missionary Auxiliary (WMA) will meet on Wednesday, April 26, beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the Burgess Auditorium at Central Baptist College in the Cooper Complex. This conference is for **all** women of BMA churches.

Diane Spriggs will be the guest speaker and she will speak on "Loving the Unlovable." Diane is a writer for Lifeword and editor emeritus for the *Baptist Trumpet*, a ministry where she faithfully served for over 40 years, the last 15 as editor. She speaks at various women's meetings regularly.

Lunch will be across the street in Mabee Student Service Building. If you would like to eat, please send \$15 to Janet Widger, P.O. Box 23, Salem, Mo. 65560. You must register by April 1. Minister's wives and widows will be our guests but you do not need to register with Janet if you plan to eat.

There are breakout sessions after lunch you may also attend:

- "Loving Young Mamas" with Lauren Crawley,
- "Splish Splash" with Jessica Willems,
- "Loving Missionaries Well" with Sidney Wines,
- "Prayer" with Cindy Allen, and
- Breakout session for Hispanic Women with Belinda Caudle.



# CENTRAL BAPTIST COLLEGE

## PROFILE

### Central Baptist College

1501 College Ave. • Conway, Arkansas 72034  
(501) 329-6872 • (800) 205-6872 • www.cbc.edu  
Twitter: @CentBaptCollege and @tkimbrow

Terry Kimbrow  
President



## Board of Trustee Meeting Highlights

The CBC Board of Trustees met Friday and Saturday, March 3-4, on the Central Baptist College campus. The standing committees of the Board met on Friday evening to conduct business and hear recommendations from the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). The full board convened on Saturday morning at 8:30 a.m.

During the committee meetings on Friday and/or the full board meeting on Saturday, vice presidents and the faculty council moderator gave reports and updates relative to their areas of responsibility including: Enrollment and Housing, Public Relations, Property Acquisition, Annual Giving, Scholarship Gala Fundraising, Ransomware Giving, Baseball Field, and Academic Goals for 2023.

The following recommendations were approved by the full board:

- Actions taken by the property acquisition committee since the October 2022 board meeting;
- New courses — Biology of Cancer, Study Abroad Prep Course
- New courses with the time of implementation to be determined by the ELT — Modern Terrorism, Modern Insurgency, U.S. Military History, History of Human Rights, History of International Relations, U.S. Constitutional History, American Legal History, History of International Law, Modern China, History of Modern Latin America and the Caribbean;
- Revised degree programs with the time of implementation to be determined by the ELT — A.S. in Military Studies, B.S. in History;
- New minors with the time of implementation to be determined by the ELT — Military Studies, International Studies, Legal Studies;
- Letter of commendation to Dr. Kateryna Pitchford for her promotion to Professor of Business;
- January 2023 Year to Date Revenues and Expenditures; and
- 2021/2022 Audit Report.



## Sports News

By Erik Holth

### Basketball

- **Columbia, Mo., Feb. 28 —** Playing in their fourth American Midwest Conference (AMC) tournament final, CBC, the #3 seed, took on the #1 seeded Cougars of Columbia College (CC) at the Arena at Southwell Complex. CBC (21-10) started slow, fought back in the second half but came up just short, losing to CC (23-8) 62-53. **Jalen Adams** led the Mustangs in scoring with 12 points,

while **Brevin Brimble** and **Tajuan Johnson** both added 10.

### Softball

#### • GulfShores, Ala., March 3 —

Returning to the field for the first time in eight days, CBC was at the Gulf Shores Sportsplex for the first three games of the Gulf Coast Invitational. CBC (7-11) won two out of their three games, beating Texas A&M-San Antonio and Faulkner in the bookend games, sandwiched between a close loss to Baker.

#### • Gulf Shores, Ala., March

**4 —** After going 2-1 on day one of the Gulf Coast Invitational, CBC was back at the Gulf Shores

## Reports from the Churches

**Brister, Emerson** added three by letter and one by baptism; Dr. Eric Goble, pastor.

**Church at Willow Beach, NLR** rejoices over two by baptism; Roy Tilley, pastor.

**Letona, Letona** welcomed two by letter; Jackie Manasco, pastor.

**Zion, Fordyce** received one by baptism; Scott Smith, pastor.

## Deaths

**Claude Douglas "Buddy" Baker**, 79 of Magnolia, passed away March 5. He was a member of First Baptist Church.

**Freddie Glenn Evans**, 90 of Lonoke, passed away Feb. 16. He was a member of Eastside Baptist Church.

## BMATS

### (Continued From Page 1)

First, “Consistent with its mission statement, the school embodies the confessional stance of the Baptist Missionary Association, guided by a high view of the inspiration and authority of Scripture.” Second, “The school embodies a relational community of faith and learning.” Third, “The faculty and staff are deeply committed to the mission of the institution, manifested by their personal and vocational engagement in the student’s intellectual, human, spiritual and ministerial formation.”

According to BMA Seminary President Charley Holmes, “Accreditation is a challenging process that requires the attention of administrators, faculty, staff and trustees. It is a blessing to see their efforts recognized and rewarded by our peers. It is also a blessing to know that our students will continue to earn accredited degrees as they prepare to serve in various ministries of Christ’s kingdom.”

Sportsplex for two more games. CBC (8-12) split on the final day, beating LSU-Alexandria in game one before falling to Saint Xavier in game two.

### Wrestling

#### • Wichita, Kan., March 3 —

Following his victory in the AMC/Sooner Athletic Conference Championship two weeks ago, **Darron Harvey** wrestled in the NAIA National Championship in the heavyweight class. Harvey, who gave CBC a wrestler at nationals for the third straight year, lost two tough matches to eliminate him on the first day of competition.

### Baseball

#### • Ozark, Mo., March 4 —

With weather playing a factor in scheduling again, CBC traveled to take on the Patriots of Baptist Bible College (BBC) in a doubleheader. CBC (5-10) dropped both ends of the doubleheader to BBC (9-7).

## Student Ministry Matters

Phone: (479) 790-7808  
bmayouthdepartment@gmail.com  
www.StudentMinistryMatters.com



**BMA of Arkansas Youth Department**  
1410 North Porter Rd. • Fayetteville, AR 72703



## Summer Camps & Conferences

What does the summer look like for your student ministry? Is it full of activity or low-key? I encourage you to find opportunities to make it a time of relationship building. While that can take the shape of many different things, there is something special about camps and conferences.

• **Camps and conferences allow students to get away from tough situations at home.** Not everyone's home life is idyllic. In fact, many of our students are struggling at home. Depression, divorce and unbelieving parents can be just a few of the things that get in the way of the spiritual growth of your students. Getting away can give them an opportunity to focus on the pressing spiritual needs of their lives.

• **Camps and conferences allow students to grow closer together.** Relationship building is a vital part of student ministry. If your students are going to grow closer, they have to spend time together. Trips to and from camps and conferences are always filled with memorable situations. Flat tires, weird bathrooms and crazy van games are all just a part of that shared memory. The event itself is also a time when your students will be able to spend time with one another and meet some other believers. That is encouraging to students who may feel all alone in their schools.

• **Camps and conferences allow students to get to know their adult leaders.** Much like time spent with one another, students need to spend some time with their leaders if there is a relationship to be built. For many of your volunteers, the only place they connect with students is at the church house. They need those relationships there, but event trips provide moments of sharing and talking outside of the church walls.

• **Camps and conferences allow students to focus on their spiritual lives.** Like number one, students have an opportunity to grow when they leave part of their life behind. Camps can especially give students a chance to sit and think about the message God is trying to convey to them. The normal distractions can easily pull our attention from what God wants to communicate.

There is still great value in going to church camp and summer conferences. They may be expensive and inconvenient, but they have the ability to help your students grow closer to God and one another. As you think about your summer, consider taking your students to church camp and SOAR (the BMAA National Youth Conference). There is still time to put your trip together.

Visit Facebook.com/groups/StudentMinistryMattersCommunity to join the conversation and let us know why you like or dislike conferences and camps as a part of your normal student ministry rhythm.

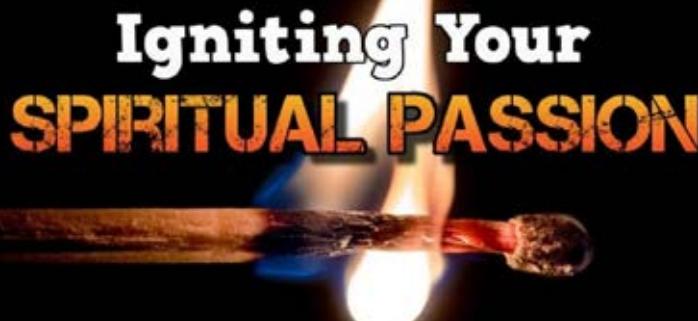


## HEALTHY CHURCH SOLUTIONS

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LARRY BARKER, North America Regional Coordinator And  
Vice President of Strategy and Training • BMAA Missions

[healthychurchpodcast.com](http://healthychurchpodcast.com) • [healthychuchsolutions.org](http://healthychuchsolutions.org)



## Spiritual Passion

What are you passionate about? What causes your heart to beat harder? You can tell what a person is passionate about in several ways — maybe their voice gets louder, they begin to pound their fist on the table or their eyes well up with tears. Passion is defined as a “strong and barely controllable emotion.” It also refers to the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, focusing on His final hours. It is seen in Christ’s agony in the garden, where His sweat “fell as great drops of blood.” His passion nailed Him to the cross, where He suffered and died for our transgressions. Jesus endured the cross “for the joy that was set before Him.”

Passion has been defined as “a conviction that becomes contagious because it withstands the test of pain.” The passion of Christ was His willingness to suffer for us in order that we might have a relationship with Him. Romans 5:8 says, “But God commendeth (demonstrated) his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Passion is the thing you are willing to suffer for; it is being able to endure anything because of the “joy set before you.” Paul told the Corinthians to not fix their gaze on their suffering and troubles they could see right then, but instead to set their focus on the eternal things they could not presently see.

What are you passionate about? What gets you out of bed in the morning with great anticipation for your day? Are you passionate about spending quality time in your secret place with Jesus? Are you passionate about being in His Word and allowing the Word of God to cause you to focus on sin to confess, commands to obey and/or promises to claim? Are you passionate about prayer and hearing what He has to say to you? Are you passionate for the privilege to worship God in spirit and in truth every chance you get? Are you passionate to share the love of Christ with others and introduce them to your Lord and Savior?

If you are not passionate about the things of God, why not? Passion is what fuels you and keeps you

going. When your passion wanes, your spiritual energy and vitality will diminish. Your context is important (where God has placed you to have the greatest impact) and your ability is important (how God has uniquely equipped you to accomplish His purpose for your life), but opportunity and skill sets are useless if your passion for Christ is lost. God is the one who hard-wired you with certain inclinations. He teaches and shapes you through the sum total of all your life experiences, but your intimacy with Him is what enables you to last.

Here are some great questions for self-evaluation given to me in a training a couple of years ago:

- **What are you called to do?** Determine your life call and personal mission.
- **Why do you do what you do?** Is your life core based on your personal values? Then you can determine your life steps by developing a personal strategy.
- **How will you do what you do?** Now it is time to measure your life score with your own personal metrics.
- **Are you accomplishing God's purposes?**

• **Where is God taking you?** You live by your life map which is your personal vision of God's preferred future for your life.

Passion increases when you understand and pursue your special assignment from and for God. The main point in this process is not your fulfillment but rather God's glory. Remember, passion is the thing you are willing to suffer for. Your church is worth that sacrifice. If God has called you there, then you must do whatever is necessary to increase your passion for your church and to remain passionate for her. One pastor said, “I strictly discipline all of my best thoughts and energy to help the church accomplish its mission.” Ephesians 5:25 tells us, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.”

Here is another process that might help you in developing your passion for your church:

## Revivals

**Fellowship, Walnut Ridge,** April 16-18; Danny Bradley, evangelist; John Durham, pastor.

**Charity, Ward,** April 16-19; Sun. 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m.; Martin Jameson, evangelist; Keith Lewis, pastor.

**Milligan Ridge, Manila,** April 17-21; 7 p.m. nightly; Mike Colvin, pastor.

**Union, Rosston,** May 29-31; 7 p.m. nightly; Jim Moss, evangelist; Joe Brown, pastor.

**Fourth St., West Helena,** Oct. 1-4; Sun. 5 p.m., Mon.-Wed. 6:30 p.m.; Michael Hight, evangelist; Lance Madden, pastor.

## HOMECOMINGS

**Union, Rosston;** May 28, 10:30 a.m.; Jim Moss, message; lunch to follow; Joe Brown, pastor.

• **Write down five things you are interested in** — you can list hobbies, food, etc.

• **Then list four things you are excited about** — things like a vacation or a conference you plan to attend.

• **List three things you are driven by** — this could be a new book you are reading, different learning opportunities and family time.

• **Write down at least one or two things for which you are greatly burdened** — This is where it is very crucial. You are consumed with them, and you have a passion and willingness to suffer for them to change. Are you burdened for your church? Are you burdened for your family? Are you burdened for revival and the reality of not experiencing redemptive movement? Are you burdened that your church is not producing disciples? Are you burdened that maybe your church has lost her first love? Are you burdened for those who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? The only thing worse than being lost is being lost and having no one who cares enough about you to be looking for you. Jesus said He had come to seek and save the lost, and you should be passionately looking for them as well.

Are you satisfied with your passion for God or would you like to see your passion increase and your relationship with Him improve? Are you willing to do whatever is necessary to see your passion for Christ increase? Are you going to spend whatever energy and time is necessary to get alone with Him in your secret place and to truly abide in Him? Would you be willing to pray this to God: “Showers of blessing showers of blessing we need; mercy drops ‘round us are falling but for the showers we plead”?

## Just Thinking...

By Dr. Tom Mitchell

(501) 804-6647 • [temitchell1946@gmail.com](mailto:temitchell1946@gmail.com)



## The Church's Relevance

I was just thinking about a comment I heard recently. Some men were in a discussion and one of them said, “Church is no longer relevant in the world.” That is quite a statement. But is it true?

### Christ's Church Has Always Had a Purpose

I will be first to admit that churches are not like they were even 50 years ago. Many preachers are not like they used to be, either. Why? Because they have lost sight of the church's purpose. It is not to make people comfortable, entertained or rich.

The gospel of Jesus is effective. It makes sinners uncomfortable with their sins. Also, when people worship in spirit and truth the focus is on the Lord, not themselves. The messages from God's Word should certainly be energizing, but not entertaining. The gospel is a blessing from God to cause people to have peace, not to make them prosperous. Yes, I know some believers are wealthy, but not the majority. And so many of those who are wealthy use their money to promote the gospel locally and worldwide, not to hoard it for themselves.

The purpose of Christ's church is to be light in a dark world. It is to be witnesses to those who are unsaved. It is to give its members contentment, knowing that this world is not perfect, yet knowing that perfection will come when we see Jesus.

The purpose of the church is to reach the world by being witnesses of Christ to those who are lost and facing everlasting condemnation because of sin. “...And you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8 NIV). Jesus gave that commission to His church because that is the church's purpose.

### Christ's Church is to Impact

Several years ago, I was speaking to a man who had dropped out of church. He said the reason was due to the “holier-than-thou” attitudes of church members. I agree that such an attitude is definitely the wrong way to impact our communities.

Jesus certainly doesn't want believers to condone the sin of others, but neither does He want the church to condemn them. The theme of my ministry since 1970 has been “Looking past faults and meeting needs.” Church members are supposed to impact their communities by loving God and loving sinners. When Christ looked out on the Calvary crowd, He looked at people who hated Him. But despite His humiliation, pain and suffering, Jesus did not hate them. Instead, He looked past their faults (their sins) and met their need — and ours. That single act made the greatest impact ever, and it continues to do so 2,000 years later. *Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing...*” (Luke 23:34). Mankind's greatest need is forgiveness from sin and salvation of our souls.

### Christ's Church is to Remain Relevant

I truly believe we are living in the Last Days. Things are not getting better — they are getting worse day by day. Christ's church is as needed as ever. Members must take on the attitudes of servants of the Lord in ministry. I am not referring to the pastor preaching, but to believers doing their utmost to meet the needs of others as the Holy Spirit leads.

We need to minister to those in our communities (our world) as if we were ministering to Jesus. The Lord's church is the only entity on earth given that responsibility; and when that is done, we glorify the Lord. Sadly, many have been deceived and distracted from being obedient to Christ's commission. To truly be relevant, churches must return to the basic principles of the Great Commission — making disciples, baptizing converts and teaching believers to do the Lord's work until He comes again.

### The Church's Relevance is Needed Today

Jesus said that His blessing will be on those who minister to Him. See CHURCH, Page 4

## Arkansas Faith And Ethics Council



Larry Page, Director

P.O. Box 25112

Little Rock, AR 72221

(501) 228-0432 • (877) 665-6883

llp@arfaith.org • www.arfaith.org

## DISTRICT CALENDAR

**Jonesboro District Brotherhood**, March 14; Stoneridge Camp, Smithville.

**Mt. Vernon Youth in Harvest**, March 20, 6:30 p.m.; Fourth St., West Helena.

**Mt. Vernon WMA**, April 1, 10 a.m.; Harmony, West Helena.

**United District WMA**, April 1; Hattieville, Hattieville.

**Jonesboro District WMA**, April 4; 5:30 p.m., meal; 6:30 p.m., meeting; Prospect, Jonesboro.

**Central Ark. Brotherhood**, April 10; 6:30 p.m.; Landmark, England.

**Southwest District Brotherhood**, April 11; meal – 6 p.m., program-7 p.m.; Ed Phillips, pastor.

**Greenbrier District WMA**, April 13; 10 a.m.; lunch to follow; Immanuel, Greenbrier.

**Central Ark. WMA**, April 15; Landmark, England.

**Mt. Vernon Youth in Harvest**, April 17, 6:30 p.m.; Bethel, Forrest City.

## CHURCH

(Continued From Page 3)

in this world. The righteous (not holier-than-thou) people asked, “Lord, when did we do these things for you?” (Matt.25:39). He replied, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” (Matt. 25:40).

May God grant His churches the grace, the burden and the determination to be relevant in a world that desperately needs to know Jesus Christ as Savior.

• **Senate Bill 43 (SB43)**—

This bill will further define what constitutes “adult-oriented performances” and will prohibit such performances from being conducted on public property or in the presence of children and further forbids public funding of those events. This bill has been approved by both chambers of the legislature and signed into law by the governor. It is now Act 131.

This victory represents a concrete move to protect our state’s children from being exposed to indecent and sexually provocative displays.

• **Senate Bill 81 (SB81)**—

This bill will amend the laws regarding the criminal offenses of sexual indecency with children. Essentially, the bill will make it a crime for an adult to knowingly enter and remain in a public changing facility (bathroom, locker room or shower room) assigned to persons of the opposite sex while knowing a minor of the opposite sex is present in that facility. After being amended for the third time, the bill was approved by the Senate’s Judiciary Committee. Now it will go before the full Senate and, if approved there, will go over to the House for consideration.

• **House Bill 1156 (HB1156)**—

If approved, HB1156 will protect students at public schools and public charter schools from having to share sex-specific spaces such as locker rooms, shower rooms, restrooms and changing areas where stages of undress are common with a member of the opposite biological sex. Accommodations, such as single-use facilities may be provided for those declaring a different gender identity than the sexual identity given at birth. The House and the Senate’s Education Committee have approved the bill. If approved by the full Senate, it will go to the governor and, upon her signature, this will be a good law that will be essential if we are to protect female students from having to undress and shower with biological males.

• **House Bill 1502 (HB1502)**—

This bill was recently filed. If it becomes law, HB1502 will create the criminal offense of sexual solicitation of a minor. The bill was filed in the House Judiciary Committee, where it awaits a hearing. After an initial review, it appears this bill could be very helpful in protecting children.

Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns about any of these issues. We will be glad to explain these matters further. Thanks for your participation in good government. It works best when we get involved, have our voices heard and our preferences are known.

## Garrett Memorial Christian School Announces Gala

By Christi Zumwalt, GMCS Administrator

Garrett Memorial Christian School (GMCS), a ministry of Garrett Memorial Baptist Church in Hope, is excited to announce the GMCS Gala on Saturday, April 15. The formal, black-tie optional event will be held at 6 p.m. at Hempstead Hall, 2500 South Main, Hope, Ark. All proceeds from the Gala will benefit the GMCS Saints Gymnasium.

The keynote speaker for the event will be Governor Mike Huckabee, 44<sup>th</sup> Governor of Arkansas, host of the weekend TV show “Huckabee,” a Fox News contributor, NY Times best-selling author of 14 books and a frequent speaker for groups all over the world. He also hosts the podcast “Huckabee” on Quake Media. While Governor of Arkansas from 1996 until 2007, he became one of the longest-serving governors in the state’s history. He left a legacy of tax cuts, job creation, the reconstruction of our state’s road system, K-16 education reform and a nationally heralded and duplicated health initiative that focused on prevention. He ran in 2008 and 2016 for president, finishing second in the Republican primary in 2008. He is a frequent visitor to Israel since 1973 and, since 1981, has been taking groups to the Bible Lands. An avid musician since age 11, Huckabee is a bass player and often joins guest artists on his weekly television show. He owns radio stations in Arkansas and Missouri. The former governor and his wife, Janet spend time in Arkansas and have three grown children — John Mark Huckabee, David Huckabee and his wife, Lauren and Governor of Arkansas Sarah Sanders and her husband, Bryan — and seven grandchildren.

I am excited to have Governor Huckabee, an advocate for Christian Education, as our speaker for the event. Our school exists to provide quality education from a Christian worldview, as well as foster and develop each student’s full mental, physical, spiritual and social abilities, and athletics is an integral part of seeing that accomplished. The construction of a gymnasium has been a part of the long-range plans for GMCS, and the need has increased as our enrollment and athletic opportunities have grown. We are grateful that God has opened the doors for us to see the dream of a new gymnasium realized. It is our hope that, through the generosity of those who attend this year’s gala, we will see this goal accomplished, as well as strengthen the continuation of Christian Education in Southwest Arkansas.

Event sponsorships begin at \$250. For more information, to purchase tickets or to make a donation to the GMCS Gymnasium Project, contact Carolyn Lauterbach, Office Manager, at gmcsala@gmcsaints.org or (870) 777-3256.

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JEFF HERRING, Executive Editor  
editor@baptisttrumpet.com

P.O. Box 192208 • Little Rock, Arkansas 72219-2208  
Telephone (501) 565-4601 • Fax Line (501) 565-NEWS  
(Note: An answering machine on the 565-4601 line will take messages after regular working hours — Monday-Thursday)  
[www.baptisttrumpet.com](http://www.baptisttrumpet.com)

ALLAN EAKIN, Associate Editor  
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## Legislative Update

The second month of this legislative session is about to go into the books. The following is a compilation of some of the key bills and proposals with which we are concerned, working on at some level or tracking. There are other measures, but the ones we list in these updates are the major ones.

Some bills covered in previous updates are not included in this one. Those are bills that were either passed and signed into law, defeated, withdrawn by the sponsor(s) or still in the hopper but dormant and may or may not become active again. If any of these dormant bills become active, we will add them back into these legislative alerts. We omit the bills in those four categories to prevent the updates from being too long.

We begin this update by acknowledging a significant achievement and the part many of you played in that success. If it becomes law, **Senate Bill 66 (SB66)** will require that internet distributors of obscenity utilize reasonable age-verification methods to prevent minors from acquiring the obscenity. SB66 was approved recently in the Senate, but on Wednesday, Feb. 22, in the House Rules Committee, no member made a motion to approve the bill. That development effectively prevented the full House from hearing the bill.

SB66 got another hearing in the House Rules Committee on Wednesday, March 1. We thought that with help from our grassroots network, the outcome might be different. Early Tuesday, we sent emails to our entire grassroots email list, asking that emails be sent to the members of the House Rules Committee, encouraging them to grant their approval to SB66. Many of you took that step, and on Wednesday, March 1, that committee gave a unanimous vote of approval to the bill. Due to the efforts of many of you, this really good bill will be heard in the full House, where it should get



## LEAVING RAKE MARKS

BY: Stan Scroggins, Asia-Pacific

Regional Coordinator

bmamissions.org

Missionaries are an independent breed. It just goes with the territory. However, living in cross-cultural settings, often with no familiar personalities to interact with and having to make all decisions on your own, can lead to the mistake of becoming detached and sequestered.

Of course there are biblical teachings that show us how to avoid these missteps.

A recent article entitled "Why Did Jesus Send Out His Disciples Two by Two" by Mark Roberts gives a wonderful example of why Christ employed the strategy of shared ministry. "Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits" (Mark 6:7). Shared ministry can be identified in many ways. Married couples, missionary collaborators, team sending, accountability partners, and mentorships are practices by modern missionaries to prevent seclusion and isolation that often leads to missionary burnout.

When Donna and I arrived in the Philippines almost seven years ago, we benefited from the work of many missionaries who had gone before us. Each left his or her own individual legacies and we quickly picked up on those we would benefit from most. Things like an established local, regional, and national association structure and mission planting embedded into the DNA of every local church. Donna and I have certainly had a "shared" missionary strategy. We've worked side by side, complementing each other in our particular areas of God-led ministries. Serving with BMAA missionaries Doug and Diane Lee also inoculated us against the infectious "rogue missionary" virus, which plagues many missionaries. We've discovered that partnering with Filipinos, helping them with tools and not getting in their way, has been the most fulfilling of our Lord's shared ministry formula.

Establishing an exit strategy is important for shared ministry to be successful. Without one, missionaries invariably assure ultimate mission failure. Having an exit strategy was certainly one of the foremost topics in our early pre-field preparations. I remember then International Missions Director Phil Knott saying, "The most beneficial thing you can do is to know your exit strategy now, before you arrive on the field."

We knew our term on the mission field would be short compared to those "lifers" like Doyle and Linda Moore, Ray and Faye Freeman, and Don and Linda Newsom. So maybe for us it was easy to go in already thinking of our exit strategy, knowing we had a short seven-year window. But modern missiologists now coach missionaries to plan everything they do with an exit strategy in mind, even twenty,

thirty or forty years down the line.

In Christian mission if you don't have a plan you can be sure the devil does. No missionary would ever desire that their life's work for Christ would end with their departure. Here is a story I once heard about a park ranger whose job it was to clean up camp sites after the campers left:

*Bill, why don't you follow me around today and let me show you the ropes? "Sure thing," he answered. Bill observed the seasoned ranger's attention to cleaning the grills, removing charred wood from campfires and raking leaves and trash from every used site. Coming up on one site, obviously not used, Bill expected to keep walking on to the next location. With no trash to pick up and no ashes to clean out, the older ranger proceeded to take out his rake and scrape across the dirt of the camp site. "What's all the fuss?" Bill asked as he continued, "This place wasn't even used." "Well Bill, people just like to know someone's been here by seeing the rake marks in the dirt."*

That is what our exit strategy has been about, preparing our field, or camp site, so that those who follow can pick up where we left off and advance the cause of Christ for the next generation. How did we do it?

Church planting is the best exit strategy. While we've been here we've partnered with many of our local churches, helping with their local church planting. We are so glad to have partnered with the following churches:

- Karis Baptist Church in E.B. Magalona and their missionary in Mandala
- Dos Hermanas Baptist Church, Missionary Kevin Berayo, and his three missions in the mountains of Ahgu
- New Testament Baptist Church in Sullivan, Missouri, along with New Testament Baptist Mission and Missionary J.R. Suico in Tigbawan, Leyte
- Ati Baptist Tribal Church and Pastor Roter Sinceda
- First Missionary Baptist Church in Talisay and now daughter church in Badiang with Pastor Ezra Leyson
- Miranda Grace Baptist Church and its new mission in Mandalagan with Missionary Pastor David Perez
- Kusol Mission in Hinigaran and Pastor Loreto Lopez

We didn't have to come and reinvent the wheel. We found some "rake marks," recognized someone had plowed before us, and picked up the rake to scrape out some new streaks.

Being part of the teaching ministry of the Baptist Missionary Association Bible College is an example of using our exit strategy to prepare this invaluable institution to continue to train future missionaries, pastors, and teachers of the Philippines and even the entire Asia Pacific region. Achieving accreditation for the college, refurbishing and even rebuilding well-used facilities, and partnering with the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary in America to upgrade our teachers' credentials with masters degrees has all been part of securing the legacy this institution has meant to the Lord's work here for many years to come. An exit strategy we developed, even before leaving for the field, was a plan to secure the Bible College's financial future. The Darlene Carey Christian Academy is part of that plan. The academy, in just a few years, will be in a position to provide at least a third of the Bible College's budget and will certainly be a huge part in the Christian education of thousands of Filipino children.

Finally, our shared ministry will be part of our exit strategy too. Even though we no longer will be living in the Philippines, for the rest of our lives Donna and I will be working to promote missions and always with a focus on the work God called us to and the people God gave us a love for. Third John 1:4 will be our clarion call: "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." And maybe, prayerfully, someone will come after us and find our "rake marks" left behind.



## MISSIONS WORK IN MINNESOTA ENTERS NEW PHASE

BY: Michael Strong, Church Planter

Minneapolis, MN

[bmamissions.org](http://bmamissions.org)

**G**reetings, brothers and sisters in Christ! I am excited to report back to you about the work God is doing in Minnesota. We are seeing people come to Christ, others commit (and some re-commit) themselves to Christ, and a growing group of people from diverse backgrounds take new steps of faith as they prepare to meet King Jesus face to face one day. It has been an honor and a pleasure serving as your partner to these beloved Minnesotans.

We are currently working in Minneapolis, and God is helping us begin to reach the 31,397 people that live in our ZIP code. Our primary means of reaching people is through relational evangelism that results in Bible studies. We consistently kept roughly 20 different Bible study and discipleship groups active over the last year. The number continues to grow as more of our people step out in faith and start new groups. We expect that number will continue to increase exponentially. Some of the more exciting results in the last year include eight new salvations accompanied by baptism. Almost 100% of those baptized have followed through on their commitment to Jesus by joining intentional personal discipleship groups led by our church leaders.

We are also broadening our missional scope by reaching out to the community through various service projects. We take being the hands and feet of King Jesus seriously and look for ways to love our neighbors and equip and mobilize our people to do the same. We have been teaching the church how to serve the people closest to them and how to share the hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ with them. This has broadened our impact and is leading to growth in missional interactions. We live as a family and do a lot of life-on-life together. This allows us to serve each member's family and friends together. The uniqueness of our blood-bought community showcases how different the church is from the world. We are seeing a growing number of people who are beginning to associate with our group and attend functions we host.

God is giving our people compassionate hearts. They have been speaking up in recent months and we have heard them loud and clear: They want to use their gifts to serve their neighbors. Some desire to cook. Others desire to help with house repairs. Some desire to share their testimony at schools. Some desire to help with the children in the church. One member has increasingly embraced the role of greeter! They clean up, share, and volunteer in the community in many ways. As you may imagine, their hearts are bigger than their pocketbooks. We have been relying on partners to provide the necessary supplies to reach out to the community. The need and desire is growing in our church. We are praying for new partners and increased commitments from existing partners in the coming months as we deploy our people in groups to reach the city and call lost sheep into the fold.

We have been intentionally small to this point because we wanted to invest significantly in the core group of the church. We believe in regenerative church membership. Our worship services are focused on helping believers see and worship God in the Scriptures. We also use those times to equip these saints to experience spiritual maturity and to form Christlikeness in them. After our services we send them out full of the gospel and encouraged to share the hope they have with others. We believe this will result in a disciple-making movement that will lead to a church planting movement as we raise and train up leaders. We are now at a point where growth could happen a bit more quickly, and this will bring new challenges. We are excited about the opportunity to seek God and rely on him in the coming months as he helps us navigate the changes he will bring into our church and our lives.

I am so thankful to share what God has done in 2022 with you and I look forward to updating you in the near future on what God continues to do. If you are interested in partnering with us or receiving our newsletter, please reach out to me via email: [mike@nnccmpls.com](mailto:mike@nnccmpls.com). Thank you for partnering with us to take the gospel to Minnesota!





## Ordinary Faithfulness in Church Planting

BY: Thomas Mobly, Church Planter

Oklahoma City, OK

bmamissions.org

**H**ave you ever been waiting for God to do the “next big thing” in your life, in your church, in whatever context you’re in? When my wife and I moved to Oklahoma City in 2017 (where I am originally from) with our friends Nathan and Lynzie Brewer, there was so much excitement in the anticipation of what God was going to do in this new chapter of our lives. We had never helped plant a church before. We weren’t even the ones who came up with the idea to plant Grace Harbor Church in OKC. We were the ones invited in. Nevertheless, we were willing and eager to go and be a part of something new and exciting!

Over the past five years of planting a church we’ve been blown away many times by how God moves in big ways. There are so many stories I could tell you that would probably leave you speechless and in awe (seriously, ask me sometime). These big displays of God’s greatness fill us with excitement and wonder, and they humble us, as they should! But over the past five years not every single day has been filled with the big displays. There has, by no means, been a lack of God’s greatness, but the truth is that much of church planting work requires faithfulness from us even in the days that are seemingly ordinary.

There’s something about the ordinary that may cause ministry to seem disenchanting at times. Things can become routine and stale when the big displays aren’t always right in front of us. But I believe God has not called us to become complacent in the ordinary. The work of church planting is sometimes a long season of digging up dirt, putting down seed, and watering.

It’s the kind of work that allows us to walk alongside a mother and wife who is suffering from an illness that never seems to go away despite how many doctors she sees. It’s the kind of work that lets us witness this family grow in their faith through suffering as they and their small group continue to pray for healing.

It’s long term relational investment in meeting with our Afghan refugee neighbors right here in OKC. It’s working with an Afghan Christian man God brought to our church with the vision of planting Afghan churches here in town. There are about 1,000 Afghan refugees in OKC. About a quarter of those are within five miles of us.

It’s ministering to a brother in Christ who is struggling to find purpose in his life right now because his work is just not providing it, and everything in his world is changing around him. But it’s also seeing him faithfully serve his family and church family, using his gifts to minister to others behind the scenes.

Ordinary ministry work is walking with God-fearing parents who have a child that is dismissing faith in Christ completely. It’s prayerfully and consistently building relationships with neighbors in our city and right

next door, living out and speaking the truth of the gospel. It’s making sure we don’t forsake the discipleship happening right at home with our own families.

There is an older brother at our church named John who has spent most of his life in the work of ministry and pastoring. He’s now retired and ministering in a different way here at Grace Harbor. John grew up in Illinois on a farm. He often tells us that the work of ministry (and in my opinion, church planting specifically) is similar to farming. He says sometimes the work we’ve been called to do is to plow and pursue. We plow in the fields God has given us, planting and watering, all the while eagerly pursuing the will of God and waiting to see him give the growth.

Church planting, I am finding, requires faithfulness in the little things—in the ordinary. But I am also finding faithfulness in the ordinary brings joy and fulfillment in our work. Because while we have been called to be faithful in the ordinary, God’s faithfulness to build his church is anything but ordinary. In addition to the big displays of God’s greatness, it’s within the small, sometimes unattractive and difficult, uneventful times that God is working in extraordinary ways as well.

When we started planting we did have a somewhat big vision for Grace Harbor Church. But thankfully God has graciously course-corrected us in that vision while sustaining us in our slow growth over the past five years. For some the sixth year of a church plant is when the vision you began with is coming into full bloom, but in some ways for us we believe God is giving us a new and fresh vision for Grace Harbor Church—one that he has cultivated and faithfully grown within us and the people here at Grace Harbor.

It’s because of God’s grace, faithfulness and never-ceasing love for us that I am so very thankful to be doing the work of church planting, pastoring, and ministering here in Oklahoma City . . . even in the ordinary.





## Overcoming Opposition in Myanmar

BY: Heather Harrison

Lifeword

lifeword.org

**D**espite extreme hardships and uncertainty in Myanmar, God has been faithful to Lifeword's global partner, Rama, in his efforts to share Jesus Christ. The military in Myanmar, since staging a coup in 2021, has carried out a brutal nationwide crackdown. This has made sharing the gospel message difficult, and many believers have been killed. Most forms of communication are tapped and commandeered by the military, but Rama and his team are able to send and receive Lifeword programming to a playout center in Singapore to beam the programming back into Myanmar. Even though they are not free to gather and worship, they are still meeting in small numbers, leading Bible studies in nearby villages, sharing gospel tracts, and visiting people house-to-house. In the midst of such opposition, there are still many who are being baptized and discipled.

Rama continues to share the message of Christ through YouTube, Facebook, and the radio. He has heard from several who, after listening to his messages, have repented of sin, idolatry, and false beliefs. As Rama has been faithful to the call to minister to these people in spite of such opposition, God has also been faithful to his work and to show Rama some of the impact his efforts are having on the people.

Allow us to share some of that fruit with you:

One man from the Yangon Division called Rama and said he's been caught in a cycle of drinking and disconnection from believers. He listened to their radio program, felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and asked for prayers that he could change, telling Rama, "Your radio program is a blessing." Another man from the North, who had been listening to the radio program for several years, came to the mission church for worship for months, declaring his faith in Jesus Christ and rejecting all other gods. He passed away shortly after his conversion. Rama praises God that this man's eternity is forever changed.

One man, clearly caught in sin, reached out to Rama after hearing his message on Facebook about the thief on the cross. "If I repent before I die like the man on the cross, will God forgive me?" he asked. They continued discussing forgiveness and how life is unexpected. Another man who was also listening to Rama's messages on Facebook came to faith in Christ and contacted Rama to say thank you. They were even able to talk over the telephone. Two other men contacted Rama through Facebook asking how to be saved and came to know Christ as their Savior. One woman messaged Rama through Facebook saying that she had been doubting her salvation, but after hearing his message she gained assurance of her salvation and felt such peace.

As you can see, Rama and his team are living through unimaginable difficulty, but the message of Christ is still growing and changing lives. This is just some of the fruit of Rama's partnership with the faithful God who called him. We are grateful for your partnership with Lifeword which enables missionaries like Rama to proclaim Jesus Christ to a broken world.



# Spotlight On Missions

## Send offerings to BMA Missions

P.O. Box 878 • Conway, AR 72033-0878  
501.455.4977 • [www.bmamissions.org](http://www.bmamissions.org)



Parents gather under the new nipa hut

### Stan & Donna Scroggins • Philippines

It has been especially wet during the rainy season this year, but it looks like things are beginning to dry out a bit. Filipinos hate to get rained on, and since the rain has been especially bad this year, many have lost homes and lives due to flooding.

• **Sunday, Feb. 26** — The BMA Bible College and the Darlene Carey Christian Academy celebrated World Mission Day on Tuesday, Feb. 21 with a joint mission rally under the basketball pavilion on our campus. The BMABC Choir sang and we welcomed Mike Goodwin who spoke on the Samaritan woman. We received a great offering for World Mission Day, and while the offering was being counted, we had an old-fashioned testimony service. We exceeded our goal of 25,000 pesos, with 26,717 pesos. This year the offering has been given to our BMAP president and pastor of Refuge Baptist Church in Hong Kong for his upcoming trip to encourage the mission there.

• **Darlene Carey Christian Academy** — The academy is working on adding two more grades in the fall. This means hiring more teachers and staff. The school is totally tuition based, which means all teacher's salaries and expenses are paid through the tuition paid by the students. We also try to help with projects needed for the school to be able to run more smoothly and joyfully and are excited to have a new nipa hut (a traditional Filipino-style house/structure) where parents can wait and staff members can rest.

• **From Stan** — We will welcome a team from Missouri to participate in a church organization and ordination on the Island of Leyte. Pastor Josh Wright and Mae Laymann, both from New Testament in Sullivan, Mo.; Melvin Meade, former Philippines missionary and pastor of Lower Doe Run in Centerville, Mo.; and Tony Kingston from Bethel in Lonedell, Mo. will travel with me, Donna and BMAP President JoJo Vallejera to the mountains of

Leyte for the church organization and ordination of Missionary Alfred J.R. Suico as the new church's pastor on March 19. This is a hard place to travel to, and we ask for your prayers for our safety. We are also expecting guests from all over the Philippines to attend.

• **From Donna** — We start mid-terms this week and then student week during the month of March. Back during our first months as missionaries, we traveled to northern Luzon (that is the island Manila is on) to work with BMMI and Missionary Fil Kakilala. While on that trip, we met Mae Lahmann from Missouri, a Filipino from the mountains of Leyte. She told us her story of helping the village she grew up in and the small mission church there that has been without a pastor for the five years we have been serving here in the Philippines. She asked if we would travel there and help the ministry. This makes the church organization and pastor ordination so much more special as we travel to Leyte in March to finish our work there. Thanks for all your prayers!

• **Ordination at Mandalagan Baptist Church** — Two young men who were in the first class of freshmen we taught when we arrived in the Philippines in January 2017 were recently ordained. Joshua is the student who would

purchase a ticket on the bus and then, while traveling north for two hours, stand and preach to the travelers. Aljun spoke no English when he first arrived, but persevered until graduation and even started working on a master's degree through the BMA Theological Seminary. Both of these men are from the island of Mindanao. They are both missionaries now. I was honored to take part in their ordination.

• **Visit to Japan** — Donna and I were so excited and thankful to visit Japan and our missionary there this month. We fell in love with Daisuke (Dice-kay) Okada. We regret not being with his wife, Marcia who was in the United States caring for her mom. Daisuke was a great host. We also recorded several informational videos you can see soon from our Global Missions Office. The building they meet in for church services is a leased Chinese restaurant they remodeled. We attended their English-speaking worship — the Japanese worship was later that day. Missionary Okada also teaches a new generation of believers who are also headed into ministry. Daisuke and Marcia Okada will be at the upcoming national meeting in Conway. Please make a point to introduce yourself to them.

• **Congratulations** — After years of work and study (beginning in 2010) and intensive classes from May to October 2022, four of our teaching staff at the Bible College finished taking their exit exams for their master's degrees. They had 12 hours of comprehensive exams in Church History, Disciple Making, Systematic Theology and Old and New Testament. I received word from BMATS Academic Dean Dr. Philip Attebery in Jacksonville, Texas that all four students passed their exams and have been officially recommended by the seminary's faculty and board for graduation. When I informed the students, Pastor Joemel Samson said, "I wanted to jump up and down for joy, but had injured my foot." These men will receive their diplomas and be hooded at the upcoming graduation of the BMA Bible College on April 17.



(L/R) Stan & Donna Scroggins with Daisuke Okada, missionary in Japan.



## Leave it to Cleaver

By Dr. Tony Cleaver

726 Walnut Dr. • Killeen, Tex. 76549  
[jstmcleaver@gmail.com](mailto:jstmcleaver@gmail.com)



## Are You Ready to Worship In God's House?

"I long and yearn for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh cry out for the living God" (Psa. 84:2 CSB). I do not sense a lot of yearning for God's house among my fellow church attenders. It is a sound of whooshing as the congregation arrives with a second to spare or perhaps a second or two late. Fast food and COVID have made us ready to be quickly served. If the church service is too long (getting to be over 30 to 45 minutes), we lose attention and are ready to move out the door. Then as the service ends, there is a whoosh of flowing air leaving the room as all dash out the door.

There is no arriving early to pray. There is no silence of reverence within the hallowed walls of the church house. It sounds like the parking lot at a big box store where everyone is yelling to recount the gossip of the week. As the prelude sounds, our voices rise not in anthems but in decibels to be heard speaking to our neighbors. Even at communion or the Lord's Supper, there is the thought of "Let's get this over with so we can get out of here to go or do whatever." It seems no one contemplates the body and the blood of Christ.

Our behavior is the opposite of what this Psalm is trying to tell us — "How happy are those who reside in your house, who praise you continually." Being present in His house is an ultimate ambition for His people. The "Selah" in verse two is there for a reason. It is there to emphasize the importance of the thought — "Think about this! Turn this over in your mind!" The sons of Korah gave more emphasis to being in God's house as a choice of lifestyle in v. 10: "Better a day in your courts than a thousand anywhere else. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than live in the tents of wicked people."

When you go to church next Sunday, think about what you are doing. This is the most important event you will attend all week! This is the most critical thing you can do for yourself and for your family. You are going to be in God's house! Some Christians say, as they begin their services: "Let us worship God!" It is the prelude to all that follows in the next moments in His house. The Lord of Armies stands ready to provide blessings upon blessings as we worship Him. Let us do our part to receive them.

Let the hymn verses below reverberate in our hearts as we come to His house this Sunday. The words of this hymn certainly capture some of the important thoughts regarding the words of this Psalm: "I long and yearn for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh cry out for the living God" (Psa. 84:2).

"Come, Thou Almighty King, Help us Thy Name to sing, Help us to praise! Father all glorious, o'er all victorious, Come and reign over us, Ancient of Days!..."

"To Thee, great One in Three, Eternal praises be, hence, evermore. Thy sovereign majesty may we in glory see, and to eternity love and adore!" (This hymn, at times, is attributed to Charles Wesley.)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Bluegrass Gospel Singing** featuring Lindley Creek (Greer Family), March 19; 5 p.m.; Union, Rosston.

**CBC Scholarship Gala**, March 28; Conway Expo Center, Conway.

**Pastor's R & R**, March 28-30; Stoneridge Camp, Smithville.

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

**Hot Dogs and Hot Rods Car Show**, June 3; benefits Water for Christ; Lifesong, Greenbrier.

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

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

**Student Ministry Matters Retreat**, Sept. 16; Central Baptist College, Conway.

**BMA of Arkansas Meeting**, Nov. 2-3; Central Baptist College, Conway.

**Celebration 2023** (formerly the National Senior Adult Conference), Nov. 28-30; Chateau Resort; Branson.



## End Time Views: Rapture (Part 3) Contextual Ruling on the Field

The image above is the timeline I use when speaking in churches. Notice the timing of the rapture—"sometime in the final seven years." I really don't like dealing with the rapture because it is such a divisive subject. It also is only one aspect of the many details in the Bible about the end times, but I've spent the past couple of articles on it. We began by introducing the different views of the rapture timing — pretribulation, mid-tribulation, pre-wrath and post-tribulation. The names give away the timing of each of these views.

In the last article, we continued the format of this series, which presents the different views, then looks at the historical and contextual rulings on the field. By "ruling on the field," I mean we need to address interpreting the Bible and selecting our biblical positions like NFL replay officials. With replay reviews, the rule is that the ruling made by the official on the field stands unless the replay footage shows clear and obvious evidence the call was incorrect. I believe we should apply the same rule to our interpretation of the Bible. The ruling on the field historically is what the original audience understood, and the textual ruling is the plain reading of the Bible in context.

In the last article, we looked at the historical context of the rapture timing and found that the predominant view of today is at odds with the ruling on the field. The predominant view of today is the pre-tribulation rapture view, while the view of the first followers of Christ and of first-century Jews was something akin to a late pre-wrath view or post-tribulation view. Undoubtedly, the realization that our current leading view isn't the historical ruling on the field is challenging, but the historical ruling isn't the only factor in our selecting of biblical positions. The most important ruling is the plain reading of Scripture in context.

For the most part, we should

run from new views. Think of the new biblical views that are being introduced. New is nearly always dangerous, but I do believe if there is an area in biblical studies where new might be okay, it is in prophecy. The Book of Daniel alludes to this in that it says the scrolls would remain sealed until the last days. With that said, the rapture is not something covered in the Book of Daniel.

So, what is the textual ruling on the field for the rapture?

For a long time, I was under the impression that it couldn't be known, but I no longer believe that. Over the next couple of articles, I want to challenge you to be a Berean. The Apostle Paul commended the Bereans because they searched the Scriptures, they didn't just take his word. I want you to do that. My own journey in studying the rapture timing has been interesting. I had a stranger reach out over social media and challenge me to read four passages. I did, and I walked away from that reading feeling like those passages were clear on the timing of the rapture. That clarity matched that of the original audience's beliefs.

I then immersed myself in the passages used to defend the pre-tribulation rapture. What I found shocking was that nearly none of those passages actually gave a timing. They defended a rapture but weren't specific about the timing. I want to start with those verses. For the rest of this article, I'm going to lay the groundwork for you to be that Berean. Here are the main defenses of the pre-tribulation rapture, followed by a question:

**Romans 8:1** — This is one of the leading defenses of the pre-tribulation rapture. Dr. David Jeremiah recently had a large social media campaign where he cited this verse as proof of a pre-tribulation rapture: "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1 NIV).

**Question:** Do this passage and its context identify the condemna-

tion here as the tribulation on earth in the final years of this age? Does it give a timing of the rapture?

**• Revelation 3:10** — Another leading defense is this verse in Revelation. This is part of the seven letters to the seven churches of Asia. On the surface, those letters seem to be seven real letters to seven real churches. Though some interpret them as prophetic, they never claim to be. So that is one problem with this passage, I encourage you to judge the rest: "Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth" (Rev. 3:10).

**Question** — Does this passage give a timing of the rapture? Is it even referring to the end of the age or just the church in Philadelphia?

**• Revelation 4:1** — This is one of the main verses used to defend the pre-tribulation view. The argument is that the first part of the Book of Revelation shows the church on earth, then it pivots to show the church in Heaven. The verse never identifies the rapture or timing. Leading pretribulation proponent Paige Patterson wrote in his commentary on Revelation that defending the pretribulation rapture with Rev. 4:1 should be done "on the basis of passages other than Rev. 4:1." He went on to write that the passage should be seen as "John's personal visionary experience." After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this' (Rev. 4:1).

**• I Thessalonians 4:16-17** — This is the defining passage on the rapture and it only provides the timing of the rapture by placing it at the same time as the resurrection. "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever" (I Thess. 5:16-17).

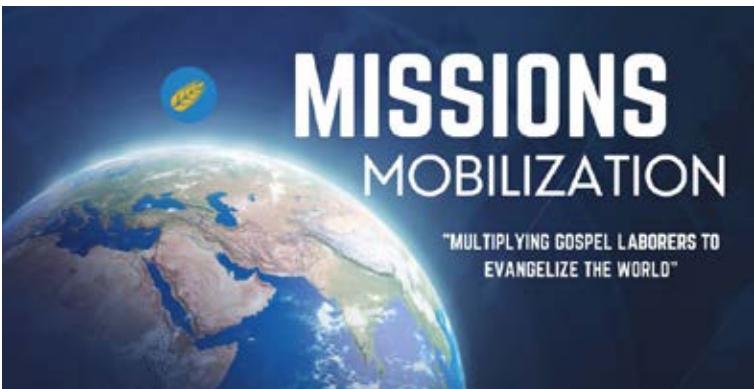
**Question** — Does this passage give a timing of the rapture?

**• I Thessalonians 5:1-3** — This would seem to be the most helpful, but if we read it objectively it may not even be talking about the rapture.

*"Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, 'Peace and safety,' destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape"* (I Thess. 5:1-3).

**Question:** Does this passage mention the rapture or give a timing of it?

These are the leading passages



## Mobilizing the Church

By Larry Barker, North America Regional Coordinator and Vice President of Strategy and Training • BMAA Missions

Mobilization is defined as "the action of a country or its government preparing and organizing troops for active service" or "the action of making something movable or capable of movement." The goal of mobilization is activating God's church God's way! Gary Rohrmayer declared it as a "commitment to strengthening existing churches while simultaneously starting new churches." It is the people of God saved by the power of God for the purposes of God. Mobilization is moving from only pursuing information to realizing that being who Christ has called us to be is more about imitating him (II Cor. 11:1).

How do we mobilize our churches to actively be His army accomplishing His mission? Are we on the move and are we headed in the right direction? A definition of a comprehensive perspective on church mission mobilization could be this: "the strategic process through which every local church is empowered by the Spirit of God to emphasize the message, vision and strategies of the Great Commission, within the context of every nation and every community activating every disciple in their assigned roles toward the fulfillment of the Great Commission in this generation."

In *Made for More*, Todd Wilson and Rob Wegner stated the challenge well: "The role of the local church is to be the mobilizing home base. This empowers all disciples to discover their personal calling, then deploy them to express the fullness of Jesus into every corner of culture and into every sphere of society." Church mobilization is an intentional process intended to increase the health and mission of congregations with

of defense of the pre-tribulation view. In the next article, we will look at some others that seem to actually present a timing. Again, the goal is to identify the plain reading of the text in context.

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

the desire that they will participate in multiplication. Notice that there are three distinct phases to church mobilization: **health, mission and multiplication**.

It is God's desire for your congregation to reach its greatest potential by increasing your spiritual health, your mission to reach people far away and the multiplication of disciples, leaders and churches. Mobilization requires systems for discovery, development and deployment through a discipleship pathway and a leadership pipeline. The question is, how far will you go in the process? Will you settle for anything less than God's clear mobilization battle plan stated in His Word? Are you willing to spend time working "on" the ministry, not just "in" the ministry?

The **health phase** should mobilize your church to diagnose its current condition through evaluation to determine where to improve the health of your church and its members. It calls for, if needed, rediscovering your calling to fulfill the Great Commission and a willingness to realign core ministries to the litmus test of orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Orthodoxy in isolation has been referred to as a "lifeless debate among sterilized and unproductive leaders that dominate the catechistic territory of the Brand-Expander." Orthodoxy is having the right opinion while orthopraxy is the addition of the right activities.

Truth is not a lifeless concept that is somehow contained in the pages of a systematic textbook of generally accepted orthodox opinion but is in fact a person — Jesus (John 14: 6). This Truth is the King of the kingdom, the head of the church, and is marshaling faith-followers to accomplish His eternal redemptive purpose on earth. Implicit in orthopraxy is an obedient faith to the King of the kingdom. There is no "right activity" excused away from our obedience of faith. Genuine orthopraxy is living out our orthodoxy by faith. This principle is made clear in James where we are called to also be doers of the Word.

The former (orthodoxy) without See MOBILIZE, Page 11



## 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  
 Jake McCandless, Epic Life, Pea Ridge; (501) 472-9079  
 Donna Webb, Administrative Asst.; (501) 565-4601  
 E-Mail: bmaofarkfrontdesk@gmail.com  
 Office Location: 10712 Interstate 30 • Little Rock, AR 72209  
 Mailing Address: PO Box 195514, Little Rock, AR 72219  
[www.bmaARmissions.com](http://www.bmaARmissions.com)  
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PAUL WHITE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
arstamis@comcast.net

## What Must One do to be Saved?

It is impossible to believe on the Lord without first hearing the Word of the Lord. Some say, "Just call on the name of the Lord, and you will be saved." Surely it is sinful to teach that the lost man can be saved without hearing the Word of God, the gospel, the power of God unto salvation (John 3:16).

To say that man can be saved without repentance and faith is to contradict God's plan of redemption laid down throughout God's Word. To complete God's plan of salvation as recorded in Romans 10:13, "*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" Note the questions in verses 14 and 15: "*How shall they call on him whom they have not heard? How shall they hear without a preacher?*" The answer is in verse 17: "*So faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.*"

If the unbeliever could be saved from judgment by calling upon the name of the Lord only, how then shall we deal correctly with John 3:18? "*He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already. Because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God.*" Please consider the "*How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?*" Too often, men cut away at the Word to make it conform to their own conceptions and personal feelings.

Keep in mind that for a person to be saved, they must first realize they are lost, doomed and in need of a Savior, a Redeemer to forgive their sins and become Lord of their lives. I have heard a person say to someone, "Hey, wouldn't you like to go to Heaven when you die?" (and who wouldn't) and they answer "yes." Then they are told to bow their head and "repeat these words." I was witnessing to a lady one day when I asked her if she knew the Lord and Savior and if had she been saved. She looked at me and said, "saved from what?" "*This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me*" (Matt 15:8).

## From Our Missionaries

**Misión Creciendo en Cristo (Growing in Christ), North Little Rock:** Juan Carlos Posadas writes, "On Saturday, we had a movie afternoon. The children watched cartoons with biblical messages and the youth watched the movie 'God is Not Dead 3.' They ate pizza and popcorn and drank sodas. There were 18 young people, 16 children and 16 adults that attended."

"On Sunday, Oscar Lopez preached. He is one of the students at the Bible institute. He did very well, and at the end of the service, he received recognition from several brothers, who encouraged him to continue in service to the Lord. Talking with him, he told me that two weeks ago he had the opportunity to evangelize two nephews who received Christ as their Lord and Savior. I thank God for Bro. Oscar's spiritual growth and ability to lead others to Christ."

**Ebenezer, West Little Rock:** Ruben Isturiz writes, "The following phrase is a truth that you and I know: 'God answers prayers.' This week, I am witnessing once again what God does when His people pray. For weeks, I have asked you to pray for Eduar and his family to make their decision for Christ.

Yesterday, Eduar confirmed to me that he had made his decision to follow Christ. Glory to God! Now his wife and children are pending.

"I tell you the following so that you will continue to pray for this family. Eduar and Yoly are not married yet. They have already told me they want to get married because they want to live a life that honors God. Pray that they will be able to get their marriage license and we will be able to perform the wedding. Remember that they are newcomers and are arranging their documents. Pray that God will open the doors for them.

"My desire and prayer is that on the Fourth of July we can go to the lake and be able to marry them and baptize their entire family. It would be a wonderful celebration to have both happen on the same day! On the day that we remember the value of freedom, may they also remember that true freedom is in Christ.

"Continue to pray for new people in Ebenezer. We are praying for families with children and new families to come into the presence of God. Pray for the workshop we will begin this month on 'Gospel Movements.' May God be glorified."

**Faith Chapel, Flippin:** Johnny Shew writes, "We had a wonderful

time of worship on Sunday. Our numbers were up a little more this week, and we had three first-time and several return visitors. We also had a mother and daughter who have been coming for quite a while officially join us Sunday morning. Some thought they were already members, but now they are for sure. They are a very sweet family, and her other daughter and her parents are already members. I love the way families come together to make up a church family. I believe that is God's will in building His church.

"Work on the new building is progressing as well as we can expect. It seems like we get a good storm every three or four days, but the weather is warming, the days are lengthening and God's timing is perfect. So we will just keep trusting Him to meet our every need. We will keep you posted on the progress.

"We thank you all for your prayers and support. We could not do this without you—the mission or the building. Please continue praying for us, Flippin, those we are trying to reach here and for our building. God is answering them!"

**The Table, Springdale:** Clinton Morris writes, "We had a beautiful Sunday evening service. The children's ministry joined us in worship and the engagement was amazing. We spoke on Mark 4—'Jesus Calming the Storm and our Fear.' If you would like to hear that message too, please go out to our podcast on Spotify — 'After the Table.'

"We had an amazing leadership meeting on Tuesday between our Children's Ministry directors and the future pastor. I am so grateful to see the great strides of growth, both spiritually and physically. This meeting set the tone for the future. It solidified many of the things I have been praying for the last four months. God is so gracious to show me that the roots of this church go deep, and the future growth will be exciting to observe.

"On Thursday night, we did our cross-cultural interchurch ministry called 'Around the Table.' We showed up at a laundromat called Quick and Clean, partnering with several local churches. Several were aiding the local community of Springdale by paying for every load of laundry within that three-hour period of time. Other churches served food, and The Table brought

## MOBILIZE (Continued From Page 10)

the latter (orthopraxy) is lifeless legalism and the latter (orthopraxy) without the former (orthodoxy) is presumptuous pursuits. The **mission phase** focuses on mobilizing your church to reach people who are far from God right where they live. You are unwilling to settle for them having to find you but are dedicated to figuring out where they live and how you can build gospel relationships. True health requires reprioritizing disciple-making. Do you have a discipleship pathway your people understand and can clearly articulate? Are you making disciples who make disciples?

The mission phase demands a farm system of homegrown, discovered, developed and deployed disciple-makers. You must have a mechanism to raise up leaders out of the harvest.

Finally, there is the **multiplication phase**. Everything that is healthy normally multiplies. This will mobilize your church to catch and cast a vision for not only the multiplication of disciples and leaders but also for multiplying churches. You are focused on recognizing and equipping leaders from within your fellowship. This requires a commitment to sacrificing your resources for

board games to teach. We had six tables with four chairs each and were nonstop busy teaching and interacting with these people. We taught these Marshallese children how to play games and interacted with their parents. Several of us had opportunities to share Jesus. Overall, this was such an amazing experience. I am so thankful for the 'Around the Table' leadership who were able to pull this ministry off. After Thursday, we received several calls to bring this ministry to other churches.

"Keep us in prayer as God continues to show us direction as well as firming the foundation."

**Faith Journey, Benton:** Bryan Clay writes "This week at Faith Journey, we have enjoyed seeing the beginnings of spring peeking through the cold weather. Spring always helps remind us of new life and rebirth. Through the gospel, God gave us the promise of new life when we trust in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

"We had an opportunity to help get a men's Bible study started over the last couple of weeks. We are meeting on Tuesday evenings at The Cabin 3H in Benton. We are studying *The Resolution for Men* by Stephen and Alex Kendrick with Randy Alcorn. We are really looking forward to seeing how God moves in the lives of the men that are coming every week. Please pray for everyone involved. Have a blessed week!"

**Misión Gracia Soberana (Sovereign Grace), NWA:** Roberto Marcelletti writes, "We

others to hear the gospel.

Begin with strong discipling relationships because they are God's primary vehicles for building and supporting a pathway for health, mission and multiplication. It requires taking ownership of God's vision in all three areas by holding yourself and your church accountable to God's direction for your congregation. It means you contextualize health, mission and mobilization to your people and your pathway. Then you look for collaboration with others in developing the best way to train and mobilize disciples, leaders and church planters.

Here are some important questions for determining your church's current commitment and concentration:

- Is your church future-oriented, present-oriented or past-oriented?
- Is your church more focused on the community, the congregation or the core of your church?
- Are you motivated and driven more by vision, programs or the present structure?
- What best describes the attitude of your church — innovative, stuck in a routine or complacent?
- What level of faith describes where you are right now — high-risk faith, low-risk faith or no-risk faith?

continue to advance in disciplines with 10 who continue the process. This week, we continued the visitation and went to pray for a young couple who are joining the church and want to be discipled and baptized. Our goal now is to be able to disciple the greatest number of people so that the Lord, through His Word, will continue to transform them and help them commit to Sovereign Grace.

"On Sunday, a sister joined the praise group and is the first to assume the challenge of serving in our church and also on Sunday. Patty, who is our Sunday School teacher, began with the little ones. The challenge is for them to start reading their Bibles and applying what the Lord reveals to them, so we are developing a series on the importance of the Bible in our lives.

**Epic Life, Pea Ridge:** Jake McCandless writes, "Last week, I was excited as our new group launched. This week, the group met and everyone was back. It is incredible to see God working through the multiplication of our Connection Groups.

"I'm thankful that softball season has started. Both my daughters play, and I help coach one of the teams. This gives us tons of opportunities to build relationships. We have many families on the edge of coming. Please pray with us that they will."

"Continue to pray as we now have to wait until April 4 for the Planning Commission to meet over rezoning the house we're looking to purchase."

*Opportunities  
For  
Service*

Beacon Baptist Church in Taylor is seeking a bi-vocational youth minister. Interested applicants need to mail a resume to Attn: Youth Search Committee, P.O. Box 94, Taylor, Ark. 71861. Call Pastor Karry Easley for more information at (870) 299-2751. Please leave a message if there is no answer.

Calvary Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Resumes may be sent to resumes@calvarybaptistarlington.org or Pastor Search Committee, Calvary Baptist Church, 2021 S. Davis, Arlington, Texas 76010 or Jay Juarez at (214) 762-9807.

East Foothills Baptist Church in Lindale, Texas is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Resumes, including references, may be e-mailed to eastfoothillscb@gmail.com or mailed to Marilynn May, 13107 CR 431, Tyler, Texas 75706. For more information, contact Josh Richardson at (903) 316-3047.

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

The Association of Baptist Students (ABS) at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, La. is seeking an ABS Director. Send resumes and inquiries to Deryl Jones, 24205 Hwy. 371, Sarepta, La. 71071 or deryl54@yahoo.com. He can also be reached at (318) 423-8540.

**all in.**  
*Matt. 22:37*

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