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How Do We Associate?

By Jeff Herring, Executive Editor

In 2023, we began making a concerted effort to encourage more conversations about why the churches of the Baptist Missionary Association chose to come together and form an association of churches. We published the “Why Do We Associate?” insert in the April 19 issue and produced the same content in booklet form available to anyone who would like to have one. We also shared a survey with pastors to understand how we can do better in encouraging involvement in our association on every level — local, state and national.

Some of the feedback from the survey said we shouldn’t assume people already know about the ministries of the association. With that idea in mind, we chose this time of year when we have traditionally al-

lowed all BMA ministries to share their goals for the new year to allow them to expand on that by sharing the story of their ministry. These ministries are only possible because churches choose to work together to do more for the glory of God and the furtherance of His mission.

As was presented in the article “Moving the Conversation Forward” by Associate Editor Allan Eakin in the Dec. 20, 2023 issue, the local church is the foundation of all that happens in our associational work. It is the foundation of every associated ministry, and every ministry has a goal to, in some way, strengthen and/or establish healthy, growing local bodies of believers. Our association of churches is stronger and more effective when every church actively

participates in the associational work on every level. Your church should join and participate in local, state, and national associations.

Local — As we begin to look at how we associate, we will look at the first level beyond the local church, which is the local association (sometimes referred to as a district association). A local association is a group of local churches in a certain geographic area that choose to associate together to do more together than the individual churches could do alone. I wish we had space to share all the great things many local associations are doing across Arkansas (and across the BMA of America), but we simply do not have the space to do so. The variety of ministries that local associations choose to cooperate together and invest in range from church camps and college ministries to sponsoring

See ASSOCIATE, Page 2



Arkansas' Annual March for Life

Pro-life Arkansans from across the state will come together to celebrate the state’s pro-life achievements and the ending of *Roe v. Wade* at the 46th Annual March for Life is set for 2 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 21, 2024, along Capital Avenue to the front of the steps of the Arkansas State Capitol. This observance is a peaceful and prayerful event that attracts thousands of Arkansans from across the state, including churches and families, to remember the estimated 60-plus million unborn

See MARCH, Page 4



CBC Announces Million Dollar Scholarship

Central Baptist College President Terry Kimbrow has announced the establishment of the “East North Street Foundation Scholarship.” The scholarship was established by David Hendrix and Douglas Hendrix. Priority in awarding of the East North Street Foundation Scholarship will be given to a male or female student that furthers the college’s mission. CBC President Terry Kimbrow said, “This is the largest scholarship donation in the history of CBC. I am humbled that the Foundation has chosen to make such a significant impact in the lives of our students.”

President of East North Street Foundation David Hendrix said, “We think CBC is a great choice for our first gifts as a Foundation. It really reflects our mission statement, which is to spread God’s Word.”

See SCHOLARSHIP, Page 2



David Dickson Retirement

By Dr. John David Smith, President • BMA Global

BMA Global honors David and Shelley Dickson for their 52 years of service to our Lord and the churches of the BMA. You are invited to a reception hosted by their children at First Baptist Church, 318 E. Main St., Magnolia, on Jan. 20, from 2–4 p.m.

David and Shelley, along with Bill and Jeanette Gibson, will be recognized as Legacy Missionaries at the BMA national meeting in April.

David Lee Dickson was born in Stockton, Calif. Shelley Nelson was born in Prescott and grew up in Gurdon. David and Shelley met at Central Baptist College and married on May 21, 1971. They have four children: Aimee (Jason) Hughes (children — Aaron, Ashton and Chandler); David “Cito” (Stacy) Dickson (children — Lane and Abby); Jamie (Loren) Miller (children — Timothy and Sarah); Joshua (Anna) Dickson (children — Luna and Griffin).

This dynamic missionary couple was first elected in 1971. In their early missionary career, they served in Nicaragua and El Salvador. Bro. David often talks about the political turmoil that was the reason they had to leave these two countries, but for those of us who know him well, we have to think he might bear some responsibility for getting kicked out of two countries!

The Dicksons then served in Honduras from 1978 until 1990. After a short term of service in Guatemala, they moved to Puerto Rico and ministered from 1994–2009.

See RETIREMENT, Page 4



In This Issue

America’s Great Need: Revival (pg. 3)
Dangerous Prayers (pg. 3)
Epic Story of Truth — Part 3 (pg. 6)
Navigating Being Fired (pg. 2)
Spotlight on Missions (pg. 5)

SCHOLARSHIP

(Continued From Page 1)

The East North Street Foundation was formed in 2023 by the Hendrix family. The Foundation is named after the street on which David and Doug Hendrix grew up in Benton and was created with the purposes of, among other things, helping those in the community who are in need and spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ to all who will listen. The Hendrix family feels strongly that Central Baptist College also seeks to fulfill those same purposes and is excited to see how it continues to work to educate its students on Christian values and principles.

The scholarship total will be fulfilled over four years, with the first \$250,000 satisfied on Dec. 23, 2023. The remaining payments will be given annually on June 1, 2024, 2025 and 2026.

According to the scholarship agreement, "The scholarship amounts shall be determined by taking into consideration both the Student Aid Index (SAI) and the student's complete aid package. The SAI is assigned to the student by the U.S. Department of Education based on the information submitted on their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and is used to determine their need and Pell Grant eligibility."

"Of the nearly 100 endowed and cash scholarships open to our students, the East North Street Foundation Scholarship is unique," commented Kimbrow. The scholarship awards are intended to close any gap between a student's financial aid package and billed tuition (plus room and board, if applicable). "This will, no doubt, be a game changer for many prospective students" said Kimbrow.

All scholarships are awarded by vote of the CBC Scholarship Committee, taking into account the qualifications and eligibility of the applicants, as detailed in each scholarship agreement. All full-time, degree-seeking students will be considered for the scholarship.

Central Baptist College is a four-year, private liberal arts college located in Conway, founded by the Baptist Missionary Association of Arkansas. Since its inception, the college has been committed to transforming lives through education that integrates Christian faith and academic excellence in a Christ-centered environment. CBC offers over 40 baccalaureate degree programs. For information about CBC, visit cbc.edu or call (501) 329-6873.

ASSOCIATE

(Continued From Page 1)

foreign missionaries. The point is each individual church realizes that when they come together, they can do more to share the gospel with a lost and dying world.

State — Beyond the local association, churches in a state can also choose to associate together. Here is a time to recognize a distinguishing factor of BMA churches — local church autonomy. This means that each church has complete authority over what the church does and how they do it. Just because a church chooses to join a local, state or national association does not mean they give up any control of their local congregation. There are requirements to agree both doctrinally (Doctrinal Statement) and how things are done (Principles of Cooperation). In light of this, it is possible for a church to choose to associate on the state level but not with a local association. Local associations do not join the state or national associations. It is up to each individual church to make that decision.

As would be expected, state associations are generally made up of more churches, so they are able, in most cases, to have a broader scope of ministry than a local association.

National — On the national level, the same principle applies regarding whether each individual church chooses to join or not. A church could choose to associate with the national association and not be a member of a local or state association. As with the state association, the number of churches is larger for the national association, so the scope of ministries is also larger.

One other note for each of these levels of association is how each ministry is supported. On each level of association — local, state and national — there is no pool of money that is used to support the ministries. On the local level, any funds collected from the churches are passed along to the ministries as the churches, through the local association, see fit to do so. For the state and national associations, each individual ministry of the association must raise their own support to keep the ministry going. No church is required to support the associational ministries, but it is important to note that the association's ministries could not continue without faithful church support.

Beginning with next week's issue, we will be giving space to allow the ministries of the BMA of Arkansas and BMA of America to share the stories of their ministries. I asked each department leader to



Men's Basketball

• **Conway, Jan. 5** — Playing for the first time in the 2024 calendar year, CBC returned to the court at A.R. Reddin Fieldhouse for their penultimate non-conference matchup with the Phoenix of Cumberland University (CU). CBC (10-4) led by two at halftime and fought off a second half CU (4-10) charge to earn their ninth non-conference win 78-73. **Tomas Mikyska** led three Mustangs in double figures scoring, which included **Devin Foster** and **Jonas Carlisle**. The Mustangs threw a block party, turning away 10 Phoenix attempts at the rim.

Women's Basketball

• **Nevada, Mo., Jan. 6** — Opening the 2024 calendar year on the road, CBC took on the Comets of Cottey College (CC) in an American Midwest Conference (AMC) contest at Hinkhouse Gymnasium. CBC (1-6, 0-2 AMC) trailed at halftime and couldn't recover in the second half, falling 52-41 to CC (8-5, 1-2 AMC). **Caroline Citty** and **Olivia Lambrightsen** were the co-leading scorers with nine points each, while those two and Tamara Christmas all led the way in rebounding with five each. The game was won at the free throw line, where the Lady Mustangs were minus eight, making six free throws in eight attempts compared to Cottey's 14 makes in 16 attempts.

share their story as if they were writing to someone who had no knowledge of their ministry and was a new believer or new member of a BMA church. Through this series of articles, I hope you will become better acquainted with how being associated together allows a greater reach for the local church and how important it is for every church to support associated ministries faithfully.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me at editor@baptisttrumpet.com.



Verdarhea Langrell, 86 of Quitman, passed away Dec. 31. She was a member of Flat Rock Baptist Church.

Carl Stimach, 85 of Jonesboro passed away Dec. 19. He was a member of Herman Baptist Church in Bono. His son, Randy, serves as pastor.

Sandra Franklin, 71 of Hope, passed away Dec. 8. He was a member at Mt. Nebo Baptist Church.



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Navigating Being Fired

Recently on the Student Ministry Matters podcast, I had the opportunity to interview the author of a new book entitled *Refined by the Fire(d)*. Kyle Isabelli was a youth pastor in the Chicagoland area who experienced an unexpected firing from one of his youth ministry postings. He moved on to serve another congregation in the area of youth and now serves that congregation as their lead pastor. As he experienced the emotions and difficulties of his journey through that season of uncertainty, he was prompted by a friend to start journaling. That journal served as the basis for his book.

Being let go by a church is one of the toughest things a minister can experience. In one swoop, a man's job, friends and support are all gone. For those not in vocational ministry, the loss of a job is hard enough. However, they have their church to lean on in those difficult times. That is not the case with the vocational minister. If they lose their job for valid or invalid reasons, they are cut off from friends and relationships that had formed. There is no easy way about it, it is difficult.

What should a youth pastor or pastor do in these difficult moments, especially when the reasons for termination don't make any sense? How should we handle being set aside for reasons other than moral failure or even in those moments? Let me share some insights I took away from my conversation with Kyle:

• **Don't react.** When someone attacks us, our reaction is to strike back. We can do that in a variety of ways. You may have a desire to punch someone, lash out through social media or simply tell everyone who will listen what horrible thing has been done to you. I'm not saying don't have emotions about it, but I am saying to be careful about your reactions. You have two reputations to protect — yours and the kingdom's. There may not have been any legitimate reason for your dismissal, but how you respond will impact what happens next as you seek to serve.

• **Investigate the "why?"** I'm not saying you need to ask around the church or community. The investigation needs to occur on a more inward journey. Prayerfully consider your ministry. Were there reasons you couldn't see? Seek out those you trust to help you see beyond your blind spots. Journal about your discoveries. This inward journey will help you as you evaluate what to do next. Do you need a season of rest from ministry? Do you need to hop right back in somewhere else?

• **Lean on your relationship with God.** I know that can be hard, especially when you feel cast aside. There is no better place for us to be than at the feet of the Father. It is also there where you can find forgiveness for the failures and mistakes that may have led to your dismissal.

• **God isn't done with you.** You may feel rejected. You may feel like a failure. Understand that if God has called you to a life of ministry, He is not done with you yet. Don't give up. Don't quit.

Now, for those who are in leadership roles reading this article, let me encourage you to not fire someone too early. In the end, they may need to be let go. However, there are other steps before that. Are they coachable and teachable? If they are, invest in that person before parting ways. Be clear in your expectations. Give them a chance to learn and grow. Send them to conferences. Share good books with them. Give them a probation period. There are many options. Just don't give up too early.

Join us in our Facebook group (facebook.com/groups/StudentMinistryMattersCommunity) to share other ways you handled being let go.



HEALTHY CHURCH SOLUTIONS

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LARRY BARKER, By Larry Barker, Regional Coordinator
For Europe and North America • BMA Global

healthychurchpodcast.com • healthychurchsolutions.org



Opportunities For Service

County Line Baptist Church in Marvell is seeking a full-time pastor. Inquiries may be made to Tommie Shackelford at (870) 338-2873.

Franklin Street Baptist Church in Farmerville, La. is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Resumes may be sent to Danny Eddy, 2511 Cedar Creek Drive, Ruston, La. 71270.

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

require seeking His face far more than merely seeking His hand.

• Dangerous prayers are also Missional — “Lord, Send Me!”

When the prophet Isaiah saw the throne room of God, after confession and transformation, he said, “Here am I, Lord, send me” (Isaiah 6:8). Prayer is not getting God to help you but getting in line with what He is about to do and how He desires you to participate in His mission. Jesus’ heart was to learn His assignment from the Father, then surrender to it reverently. Henry and Norman Blackaby stated, “Am I resolved that no matter what God reveals to me and requests of me through prayer, my answer is an unqualified yes?” Your “yes” is to be on the table even before you pray.

Even at 12 years old, Jesus was already committed to be about His Father’s business. He told us to pray, “Our Father in heaven, holy is your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven!” (Matt. 6:9-10). Saying “yes” to His will, regardless of how difficult it is, is the only response worthy of who He is. Knowing the biblical command to pray without ceasing and the urgent need for intercessors should make us willing to pay the price required (time and energy) to be a people of prayer. It begins with being willing to pray dangerous prayers, then it can continue as you develop and recruit prayer partners.

In the coming weeks, we will cover how to develop a prayer culture in our lives, homes and churches. Please let us know if you would like some resources on how to be a “Revival Ready Church” or other prayer resources. It can all begin with this “dangerous” prayer: “Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?” (Psalm 85:6). I can hear some of you crying out, “That’s not dangerous, that is obedience!” I hear you, but revival will require giving up some things you have been holding on to through self-denial, sacrifice and surrender. That can only happen through confession, transformation and living missionally.

Just Thinking...

By Dr. Tom Mitchell

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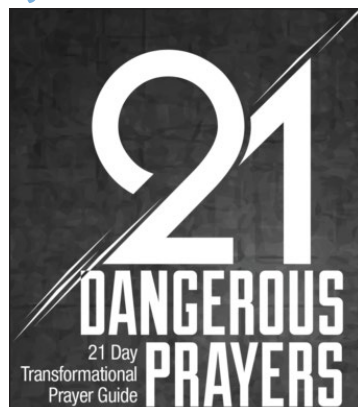
Dangerous Prayers

Looking at our world, its sinful condition, and the critical plea for revival, the need for prayer is apparent. Are we willing to pray desperate prayers, even dangerous prayers? In *21 Dangerous Prayers*, Gary Rohrmayer wrote, “Can prayers be dangerous? Is prayer supposed to be dangerous? Any encounter with a Holy God can be dangerous — not in a life-threatening way, but in a way that can be life-altering and soul-shaping. All too often, we pray safe prayers — God bless me, God help me, God protect me, God heal me, God provide for me.”

Dangerous prayers are throughout the Scriptures. In Psalm 139:24, King David prayed, “*And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*” That can be quite challenging and overwhelming. The heart of dangerous prayers is expressed by John the Baptist, “*He (Jesus) must increase and I must decrease.*” We see dangerous prayers echoed by the Apostle Paul, who prayed from prison in Phil. 1:12, “*But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel.*”

Jesus is our ultimate example in everything, especially in praying dangerous prayers. In Luke 22:42, He pleads, “*If thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.*” Jesus’ prayer life was His life and ministry. As a matter of fact, it was His lifeline. On the show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, the contestant was given three lifelines to help them when they were unable or unsure of the answer to the question. They could do 50/50, where half of the four possible answers were eliminated, poll the audience or phone a friend. Prayer is our lifeline.

Jesus maintained uninterrupted time communicating with His Father. That is the key to our lives and our ministries as God intended. Jesus allowed nothing to interfere or distract Him from prayer. In *Experiencing Prayer with Jesus*, Henry and Norman Blackaby challenge us with the reality of dangerous prayers and commitment. “There is a cost to denying self, taking up a cross, and following after our Lord (Luke 9:23). If God did not spare His Son from agony of soul, then we shouldn’t expect Him to spare us



from the cost of being His disciple.”

In *God, Do You Hear Me?*, Dr. Derwin Gray reminded us, “Prayer is the secret place where we find God waiting for us. Prayer is the door we enter to discover God’s heart of unending grace. Prayer is the home we have always wanted, where we can crawl into our Father’s lap. Prayer is a precious gift.” In Luke 6:12, Jesus leads by example, “*And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.*”

Gary Rohrmayer divides dangerous prayers into three categories:

• Dangerous Prayers are Confessional — “Lord, Search Me!”

Psalm 139:23 asks God to shine His light of holiness and righteousness on our hearts. He reveals any iniquity or transgressions hindering our relationship with Him and keeping us from being useful in His mission. In *Handle With Prayer*, Dr. Charles Stanley stated, “When God points something out in my life, it is with a finger of love attached to the hand that bears the mark of that love, a nail print.” As you enter your prayer closet, you need to ask, “What sin do I need to confess?” Live dangerously and ask him to expose your sin so you can seek His forgiveness.

• Dangerous prayers are Transformational — “Lord Break Me!”

In King David’s confessional prayer (Psalm 51:17), he speaks about what God desires of us: “*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*” Derwin Gray asks a very convicting question, “If Jesus answered every prayer you are praying right now, would you be more like Jesus?” Dr. Charles Stanley said, “God is more interested in our character, our future and our sanctification than He is in our momentary satisfaction.” Transformational prayers



America’s Great Need: Revival

I was just thinking about various comments I heard over the past few weeks of the holiday season. One subject was what was needed in America in 2024. The thoughts ranged from relief from high inflation, to lowering the national crime rate, to improving race relations and to giving aid to the worn torn countries with which we are allies.

However, it is my personal opinion — as well of that of many others — that America’s great need is a true, return-to-Christ revival across the country.

A Little Bit of History

In the very early days of our country, believers carried the gospel from colony to colony with unbridled enthusiasm for seeking the salvation of the lost and for the spiritual growth of the new converts. In the two decades of the 1730s and 1740s, the country was filled with bold and powerful preaching and the repentance of the hearers. That bold preaching also led those who had become lax in their spiritual walks to confess their shortcomings and find renewal in their spirits as they sought to put Christ first in their families, businesses and communities.

Later, from 1850 to 1900, preachers like D.L. Moody, Ira Sankey, Charles Spurgeon and Hudson Taylor each led churches, schools and evangelical efforts in large cities and small towns to turn their hearts to God through Jesus Christ.

Revival Fires on College Campuses

How important is it that we continue to minister to children, youth and young men and women in our cities and churches? The answer is **extremely!** Some of the largest evidences of true spiritual revival have begun with young men and women on college campuses. They were not on mission to rebel against the administrations — they were on mission to share the gospel with classmates and instructors.

In 1802, on the campus of Yale University, the student body numbered 230. As revival broke out, one third of those came to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Two other campuses that have had a history of spiritual revival were Wheaton and Asbury. What began on those campuses from 1905 through 1992 spread across the nation — invigorating believers to share the Word of God with friends, families, coworkers and, certainly, classmates.

Why Does America Need Revival?

I believe our nation has made a tremendous, grievous error with regard to our relationship with God. We have become so caught up with prosperity and seeking lives of ease that we have become a nation that tends to think we no longer need Him.

Here are some Scriptures that I believe, when we compare America to them, we must admit show our nation needs revival: “*Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people he chose for his inheritance... But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine*” (Psalm 33:12; 18-19 NIV). When we look at the big picture of our nation, we see that atheism, agnosticism, apathy and the spirit of anti-Christ are so very prevalent. What is not prevalent is the concern for lost souls, the passion for serving the Lord and the great expectancy of our Lord’s return.

A Familiar, But Fervent Truth

Revival and the need for revival are not new. As long as mankind has
See REVIVAL, Page 4

MARCH (Continued From Page 1)

children killed by legal abortion.

The event, sponsored by Arkansas Right to Life (ARTL), will remember the 51st anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion in the United States on Jan. 22, 1973.

"We will never forget the thousands of unborn babies in Arkansas and the millions nationwide who were killed by abortion as a result of *Roe v. Wade*," said Rose Mimms, executive director of Arkansas Right to Life. "Even with the overturning of that tragic court decision, our work to defend and protect pregnant mothers and their unborn children is as fierce as ever."

Staging for the march begins at 1:30 p.m. at State Street. At 2 p.m., ARTL President Wayne Mays will lead the marchers along with elected officials, invited dignitaries and other special guests to the steps of the State Capitol for a brief program. For more information on the 2024 March for Life event visit artl.org/march-for-life.

Arkansas Named No. 1 Pro-Life State for Fourth Consecutive Year

Arkansas is ranked first on Americans United for Life's Annual "Life List" for the fourth year in a row, the Washington D.C.-based organization announced.

"Each year, Americans United for Life takes a look back on the progress made for life in the state legislative sessions and ranks the states based on their laws designed to promote life, including protections for the unborn, the elderly, and the terminally ill. This year, we are proud to announce that Arkansas is once again the most Pro-Life state in America," said Natalie M. Hejran of Americans United for Life.

Arkansas is followed by Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Indiana, as the top five states on the list.

Rose Mimms said the fourth consecutive year of the designation demonstrates the hard work Arkansans are doing to protect the most vulnerable in society.

"Arkansas has earned the ranking as the most pro-life state in the nation for the fourth year in a row. We love life and work hard to respect and protect the unborn, newborn and those who are weakest in our society threatened by legal abortion, infanticide, assisted suicide and euthanasia and remain committed to the protection of all life," said Mimms.

In 2022, Americans United for Life said, "Arkansas has a pro-life constitutional amendment as well

RETIREMENT (Continued From Page 1)

Here are some interesting facts about David and Shelley Dickson as they pertain to their missionary service:

- It would be challenging to find another missionary couple that has enjoyed the fruitfulness in ministry the Dicksons have experienced. They had a unique ministry among the Garifuna people, specifically in Honduras, as well as in other places. They were the first missionaries to reach the Garifuna people.

- Their missionary service has been marked in multiple places by the planting of thriving, multiplying churches that continue in that work today.

- Their ministry of over 50 years as BMA missionaries is remarkable.

- They served in five different countries—four in Central America and then Puerto Rico.

- They worked in countries torn by civil war, and they would describe times of their missionary service as difficult and draining. However, that speaks to their great faithfulness and resilience in ministry.

- Bro. David, who is a cancer survivor multiple times, has served as the senior field coordinator for Latin American missions.

- He has accepted a role as missions pastor at First Baptist Church in Magnolia.

We are confident that God will continue to use David and Shelley in His global mission. On behalf of our BMA Global team and our churches, we say thank you for all they have done.

as a conditional law in place that prevents virtually all abortions now that *Roe* is overturned. The state regularly leads the nation in creative solutions to support flourishing families and to help women choose Life. Arkansas has around 40 pregnancy centers serving women all across the state, compared to just 2 abortion centers which are both located in Little Rock."

— *Arkansas Right to Life is the state affiliate of the National Right to Life Committee the oldest and largest pro-life organization. For more information visit artl.org.*

DISTRICT CALENDAR

Greenbrier Dist. Men's Fellowship, Jan. 20, 8 a.m.; Immanuel, Greenbrier.

Greenbrier Dist. WMA, Jan. 20, 10 a.m.; Bethlehem, Greenbrier.

Jonesboro Dist. Brotherhood, Feb. 13; Nueva Esperanza Mission, Jonesboro.

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.

Ronnie Johnson is available for pulpit supply as the Lord leads within a driving range of Stuttgart, preferably on Sunday mornings. He has been pastoring churches for 21 years. Contact him at (870) 659-7774 or his wife, Barbara at (870) 659-7274.

East Amory, Amory, Miss. is seeking a youth pastor. Send resumes to East Amory Baptist Church, 905 Hatley Road, Amory, Miss. 38821. For more information, contact Brandon Johnson at (662) 640-2348 or Pastor Roger Akers at (662) 231-4025.

REVIVAL (Continued From Page 3)

a hot and cold relationship with the Almighty and a so-so commitment to Christ, the need for revival will always exist. May we be reminded of this great truth: *"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land"* (II Chron. 7:14).

Baptist Churches Need Revival!

Revival is not about **they and them** — it's about **we and us; you and me!** May our churches seek true revival. May our pastors, evangelists and missionaries preach the Word boldly, and may each of us pray fervently!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Gospel Concert featuring Destined to Glory; Feb. 11, 5 p.m.; New Liberty, Emmett.

World Missions Sunday, Feb. 25.

CBC Gala, March 1; featuring Dr. Jack Graham; Antioch, Conway.

BMA of America Annual Mtg., April 16-18, 2024; Chateau on the Lake, Branson.

SOAR 2024, July 3-5; Live! By Loews Convention Center; Arlington, Texas.

Student Ministry Workers Retreat; Sept. 14; Central Baptist College; Conway.

BMA of Arkansas Mtg., Nov. 7-8; Central Baptist College, Conway.

JOIN US FOR YOUTH GROUP DAY

January 27, 2024
10:00 AM

WOMEN'S GAME: 1:00 PM

MEN'S GAME: 3:00 PM

cbc.edu/youthgroupday



GAMES TOUR FREE LUNCH GIVEAWAYS MUSTANG BASKETBALL

BMAA Meeting • April 16-18

Chateau on the Lake Resort • Branson, Mo.

For more information visit

BaptistTrumpet.com/BMAA2024

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Spinning My Gears
a young pastor's perspective
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A Biblical Perspective On The Sanctity of Life

After the Dobbs decision came down from the Supreme Court, many pro-life advocates celebrated the victory. Indeed, giving states the ability to handle the abortion issue is a victory of sorts. Unfortunately, the work needed to promote a biblical view of the sanctity of life is far from finished. The risk of momentary accomplishments may result in a loss of motivation. A list of words come to mind describing this dwindling momentum — lethargy, complacency, apathy, indifference. Those who desire to advocate a biblical view of life in our society cannot allow these words to describe their approach.

I am remorseful over the time I wasted remaining silent on this touchy subject. Recently, I recorded an episode of *The Lonely Pastor's Podcast* with my friend, Michael Battenfield, to discuss some evangelicals' shortcomings in approaching the subject. As an association of churches, we must consider how we may keep the gears spinning to advance a biblical worldview. Our conversation revealed a more significant concern about how Christians think about controversial issues. Our primary purpose must be to see God call our neighbors to a relationship with Him rather than conscripting our beliefs upon them. Nevertheless, we know God intends to use Christians in this pursuit. As such, the greater concern is that more and more Christians are using lines of reasoning that come from the world instead of their Bible.

When topics become front and center in our culture, we allow the most prominent views to become our talking points. For most Ameri-

cans, discussions about abortion divide themselves across political party lines. Dividing a major issue into a two-party system is not the answer. Many of our church members may be surprised to learn that most "pro-life" organizations fail to align themselves with a truly biblical worldview. While these groups are doing good work, their goal is to implement "incremental management." Their middle-of-the-road approach to introducing laws that "regulate" and "restrict" abortion seems, on the surface, to be a good thing. Still, they are ultimately compromised positions that fail to apply the Bible wholly. Perhaps my failure to recognize progressive work is why I'm not a politician. Frankly, though, on an issue that is abundantly supported by a biblical understanding of life and its preciousness, I cannot bring myself to align with a compromised position that reflects the same error that resulted in our cultural shift toward accepting murder in some cases.

So, churchmen, let's do our best to correct the error. We do not need to tell each other **what** to think. Instead, we need to challenge each other on **how** to think. Our thoughts should be guided and supported by statements that begin with the phrase "the Bible teaches." For example, the Bible teaches that life begins at the moment of fertilization (Psalm 139:13-16). Therefore, life does not start at birth or when viability is achieved. Life begins when fertilization occurs. When we disciple others or participate in Bible studies with our brothers and sisters, we tend to apply less scrutiny to points we agree with. I do not believe anyone wants

Spotlight On Missions
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Doug & Diane Lee • Philippines

We were honored to have a visit from BMAA Missions Executive Director Dr. John David Smith for the BMA of the Philippines (BMAP) Missions Conference in Mindanao. While visiting the Philippines, the BMA of the Philippines Bible College (BMABC), hosted a

lunch for all the pastors on Negros Occidental, who would not be going to Mindanao for the national conference and association meeting. There were over 100 pastors and visitors that enjoyed the fellowship with our American counterparts.

Joining Dr. Smith for this conference were Asian Pacific Coordinator Dr. Stan Scroggins, former Missionary to the Philippines Jimmy Walker and Grant Garlington. We did a "thing" we would not have done when we were teenagers. When Pastor Albert Ramos, one of our BMABC Alumni, invited us to come to their church anniversary in Lublub, we were told the only way to get there was on motorbikes. Yes! Doug and I rode motorcycles through the mountains to be there. It was a wild, scary, fun 45-minute

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ride, but worth it. When we arrived, there was an overflow crowd and sweet hospitality from God's wonderful people in this secluded area. Just call us "recycled teenagers" in our golden years. Many came forward making decisions for Christ! What a beautiful place to have a ministry. God is so good! We are anxiously waiting for our next trip and already have an invitation for next year.

There were 1,130 registered guests for BMAP Grand Thanksgiving Day on the college campus. It was a great spirit-filled day! The BMABC Choir, under the direction of BMABC President Dr. Doug Lee performed for those in attendance.

Updating the library at BMABC has finally become a reality. Thanks to the anonymous donor, the project has begun with the installation of the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) in our library and student orientation for Koha Library Software. We also replaced the old jalousie (louvered glass) windows with solid tinted windows. The old ones were broken and couldn't be repaired, and moisture and humidity were beginning to ruin the books. The last thing we will do is paint and hope enough funds left for aircon (air conditioning). (Our librarian, Ivy Carpiano, received her BA Degree in Library Science. We are proud of her.)

Money for work funds, personal support, BMABC, Scholarship funds, DCCA and special projects can be sent to Mill Creek Baptist Church, 11 Old Kiln Road, Picayune, Miss. 39466 or BMAA Global Missions, P.O. Box 878, Conway, Ark. 72033. Please note on your check which project it is to be used for. Donations are tax deductible.



New windows in the library at BMABC.



The Epic Story of Truth: Part 3 Continued Sin, Judgment and Creation

In Acts 20, Paul tells the gathered believers that in his teachings he had not shrunk back from the whole counsel of God. We should have that same goal. The whole counsel of God is the whole Bible, but there are parts of the Bible narrative we tend to push off as fringe subjects, such as prophecy, the unseen world, God's continued plan for Israel and other culprits. If you've followed my articles, you may think the opposite of me — I seem to only focus on the overlooked and left-out parts of Scripture. That might be a fair assessment, but we must see how these often forsaken aspects of the Bible fit into the whole narrative. In this series, I'm telling that complete narrative.

We started at creation and saw how, even as the earth is cursed and man is cast out of the Garden of God, there's a promise made. That promise, found in Genesis 3:15, is that a promised one will come and defeat the serpent — Satan. Then the curse will be lifted. That's found in the first of the Bible. In part 2, we flipped to the back of the Bible to the Book of Revelation, where we're told of the Promised One coming and defeating Satan. Then the earth is made new, and we're restored to that walking-with-God-in-the-cool-of-the-day relationship with the Father.

Flipping back to Genesis the narrative continues from Adam and Eve's sin in the garden and their consequences, and there the same theme (sin) continues. For 1,600 years, sin continues to permeate the world until God says enough and sends the judgment of the flood. Though mankind continued to sin and rebel against God, some godly people remained. In extra-biblical

sources, they talk about men such as Adam, who lived 930 years, and over half of that period warned against turning from God. Seth, Enoch, Methuselah and Noah all preached against wickedness, but mankind still failed to repent. In Peter's second epistle, he calls Noah a preacher of righteousness. Methuselah's very life was a prophecy, as his name meant, "When he dies, judgment will come." Interestingly, he was the longest-living man in history which, even in warning of judgment, points to God's grace.

Along with the sin of mankind, there's also the strange account of a possible angel rebellion in Gen. 6:1-4 that led to the ones referred to as the Nephilim: "When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the Lord said, 'My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.' The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown" (Genesis 6:1-4 ESV).

Of course, that's a loaded subject (speaking of avoided topics) with different views that I'll tackle at a later point.

In Genesis 6, God refers to the world as corrupt and sends the judgment of the flood: "Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways" (Gen. 6:11-12 NIV). Through it, He saves Noah and his family in the ark. Following the flood, when the ark comes



FAMILY COUNCIL

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Family Council News

• **Arkansas to Begin Funding Pro-Life Alternatives to Abortion This Month** — The State of Arkansas is expected to begin funding pro-life alternatives to abortion in January. Act 622 of 2023 by Sen.

to rest on dry land, Noah and his family, with the preserved animals, deboard and restart creation again. Of course, this is a story we're all very familiar with, but in the closing of the flood account in Genesis 9, God drops a hint to more of the story. It's there where we see again how the return of Jesus and prophecy fits in the epic story of truth.

Since we're familiar with the New Testament prophecies, it's easy to gloss over the "easter egg" tucked away in the flood account. Following the flood and in the giving of the rainbow, God promised Noah: "Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: 'I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you — the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you — every living creature on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth'" (Gen. 9:8-11 NIV).

Did you see the "easter egg"? God promised Noah that He would not destroy the world again with water. Wouldn't it had been more comforting if God said He wasn't going to destroy the world again period? He couldn't because that's not what lies ahead. Here 1,600 years into human history and nearly 4,400 years ago, God hinted that there would be another judgment on the world that would lead to destruction. He doesn't tell what that will look like, but just that it won't be by flood. That means a destruction lies ahead, and it's the prophecies of that destruction to which we'll turn in the next article.

Dive into the Epic Story yourself by reading Genesis 6-9.

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

Scott Flippo (R/Bull Shoals) and Rep. Lane Jean (R/Magnolia) authorizes \$1 million in state-funded grants for crisis pregnancy centers, maternity homes, adoption agencies and social services agencies that provide material support to women with unplanned pregnancies. The measure also contains language clarifying that grant funding cannot go to abortion providers or their affiliates.

On Dec. 14, lawmakers on the Administrative Rules subcommittee approved rules from the state Department of Finance and Administration paving the way for Arkansas to begin distributing the \$1 million to pregnancy centers this month.

Now that abortion is prohibited in Arkansas except to save the life of the mother, we need to support women and families and eliminate the demand for abortion. This grant funding does that. It provides women in Arkansas with actual pro-life options — meaning they are less likely to travel out of state for abortion.

Family Council was pleased to support passage of Act 622 last year, and we plan to work for passage of a similar appropriation measure at the Arkansas Legislature this April.

• **Attorney General Rejects Ballot Proposal Writing Abortion into State Constitution** — On Jan. 4, Arkansas Attorney General Tim Griffin's office rejected a proposed amendment writing abortion into the state constitution. This is the second time the A.G.'s team has rejected this abortion amendment, citing ambiguities in the measure's wording.

Arkansans for Limited Government has been working for the certification of the popular name and ballot title of an amendment permanently enshrining abortion in the Arkansas Constitution. In December, the group filed reports with the state Ethics Commission showing it has received \$2,341 in donations supporting the amendment effort.

If approved, this amendment would write abortion into the Arkansas Constitution and erase decades of good, pro-life laws.

Family Council has worked for

nearly 35 years to promote and protect the sanctity and dignity of innocent human life in Arkansas. This amendment would place women and unborn children at risk. We are firmly committed to stopping abortion in our state.

• **Minnesota Department of Health Issues Warning About High-Dose THC Products** — In December, the Minnesota Department of Health issued a warning about illegal marijuana products containing high doses of THC. In a statement, public health officials wrote: "Illegal, high-dose hemp-derived products may contain hundreds of milligrams of THC per serving, and with multiple servings in a package, this can add up to thousands of milligrams of THC — far above the legal limit... These products are produced by a variety of manufacturers and, if consumed, may lead to adverse health effects, such as becoming unresponsive, seizures or psychotic episodes."

Edibles and other substances containing high doses of THC are sometimes manufactured from industrial hemp — or cannabis. The health department's statement noted that illegal, high-THC products were found in 39% of hemp retailers inspected in the state. Marijuana edibles containing high levels of THC pose a serious risk. According to the Minnesota Health Department, they can cause: unresponsiveness; extreme anxiety or panic attacks; psychotic episodes (hallucinations, delusions or a loss of personal identity); an increase in heart rate, chest pain or heart attack; sudden high blood pressure with headache; uncontrollable shaking or seizures; and decreased judgment, perception and coordination that can lead to injuries.

Consumers are advised to contact their health care provider if they become ill or begin suffering symptoms of THC overdose after consuming a high-dose cannabinoid product. Nationwide, marijuana products like these — including gummies, candies and other edibles containing THC — are sending kids to the emergency room.

In 2022 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration released a strong warning highlighting five serious health risks associated with Delta-8 THC manufactured from industrial hemp products. Likewise, researchers at the Oregon Health and Sciences University found poison center calls due to children exposed to marijuana rose 245% from 2000-2020.

Last summer the Centers for Disease Control released a report
See FAMILY, Page 7



State Missions

Missionaries

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 Johnny Shew, Faith Chapel, Flippin; (870) 421-1984
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What Does Purpose Mean?

Webster defines purpose as “something set up as an object or end to be attained; resolution, determination.”

To purpose requires us to make up our mind as to how one will be perceived. To purpose couples our physical response to our inward desire. Even to the point as to be thought of as a vow like those repeated during a wedding ceremony. If that should be the case, how important is it to keep our vows? Often, it seems our resolve to live a separated life for Christ is pushed aside for us to fit in with the world around us.

While reading the Bible, I came across individuals who are good examples of being sold out to Jesus and one’s Christian walk. While there are multitudes of such examples in the Bible, a couple stand out to me:

• **Daniel** — He was taken captive and was living in a foreign land, in a godless society and, most likely, thankful to be alive. When his walk with God was threatened, he responded in a God-honoring fashion. We are told in Dan. 1:8 that Daniel **purposed** in his heart that he would not defile himself. He would not partake of the king’s meat and alcohol. Neither would he have killed him physically, but it would have destroyed his witness and testimony, which is really all we have to give to God. Like the spouse who is found unfaithful one time may find forgiveness for their sin, yet such an event leaves lasting scars, tremendous pain and reminders of one’s lack of godly purpose.

• **Job** — While struggling to understand the why of things, he had **purposed** to remain loyal to his God. While his wife encouraged him to curse God and die, he rather praised God and lived, and still today stands as a mighty witness of our promise-keeping God.

How about you? Are there places you won’t go or activities you will not participate in? Can a person discern that you are a child of God just by witnessing your actions and by knowing you for a short time? We are told to let our yes be yes and our no be no. Why do so many people feel having a **purpose** and being **purposed** is not important? As we start off on another new year, may we **purpose** to not only honor God with our mouths but also with our actions.

From Our Missionaries

Misión Creciendo en Cristo (Growing in Christ), North Little Rock: Juan Carlos Posadas writes, “We began the year with prayer meetings and fasting. From Jan. 3-5, a group of brothers and sisters met to pray in the temple from 7:30-9 p.m. We prayed for personal requests, for the health of people we know, the plans God has for each member of the church, the church corporately, Hispanic congregations at the national level, our association and for missionary work in Romania with Cristian Martinez and his family and the missionary work in Mexico City with our German Galindo.

“We began the series of studies on the book of Revelation on Sunday. We consider it very timely considering the world crisis we are experiencing. Furthermore, with this book we will finish studying chronologically the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles.

“On Dec. 30, we celebrated

Sayra’s birthday. The church met and ate pupusas, had fun and thanked God for the life and ministry God has allowed her to develop with women, children and the Assistance Program community.

“We are very grateful to God for allowing us to conclude another year of service to Him in this work. We are ready, with enthusiasm, to carry out what God has prepared for us in the year 2024. To Him be the glory and honor!”

Ebenezer, West Little Rock: Ruben Isturiz writes, “Thank God, we started the New Year 2024 well. Our attendance returned to normal after two Sundays with low attendance. During the holiday season many people went out — for the Hispanic community, days like Dec. 24 and 31 are days of many preparations in the kitchen and with family.

“It has been a blessing to start the year as is our custom in Ebenezer. We paused all activities during the week and, as pastor, I went

from home to home to pray, bless and dedicate each man, who is the family leader. The commitment is that the man (the leader) will pray and bless the rest of his family. Last week, we prayed for three families.

“At the end of December, a young man from Ecuador started to attend and I gave him his first Bible lesson. We agreed that, every Monday afternoon, we will have our meeting to study the Bible together. Be praying for Henry Muñoz, that God will touch his heart and he will surrender his life to Christ. The enemy has hindered his attendance at church because he has been working on Sundays.

“Thank you, brothers, for your support. Happy New Year, and may God be glorified in 2024.”

Faith Chapel, Flippin: Johnny Shew writes, “Happy New Year from Faith Chapel! It has been such a busy time for us, as I know it has been for everyone. We had a wonderful Christmas, both at home and at the mission. We had a lot of visitors over the past few weeks, met a lot of new people and it has been a joyous time for us.

“Last week, we had a great number at worship, but this week the number was down with several families out sick. There is another bug making its way around the community. But what we lacked in number, we made up for in zeal and it was a wonderful time of worship together!

“I have been telling you for a few weeks that we are waiting on the drywall contractors to come and do their part. They are extremely busy, as we all are. Well, praise God, they came last week and measured and ordered all the sheetrock. It will be stocked soon, and they will work us in as soon as possible! This is a major milestone for us, as we once again can see some progress! Thank You, Lord, for your provision for us!

“We also thank you for your prayers and support, and for allowing the Lord to work through you in helping us so we all may further His kingdom and glorify Him.”

Faith Journey, Benton: Bryan Clay writes, “The new year has come in with blessings already! We were able to celebrate our daughter’s

engagement this week with family and friends. We are so grateful and excited to join our two families and watch as the Lord’s hand is upon this beautiful couple as they begin their journey toward a happy marriage.

“We are starting this year with a study on the book of Acts. We look forward to what the Scripture teaches from this new verse by verse study.

“Please be in prayer for a few of the families at Faith Journey. We have several who are having health related challenges and family related issues. We believe in the power of prayer and hold on to the promises that God is sovereign over all.”

Misión Gracia Soberana (Sovereign Grace), NWA: Roberto Marcelletti writes, “Happy New Year 2024 to all. We are very excited about the challenges that are presented to us in this new year. The goal was to consolidate our mission in the last service of the 2023. We were meditating on Hag. 1:5, ‘Consider His Ways.’ The Lord reminded us what our priority should be for this new year as believers and as a church — He should be our priority, and we should continue in prayer, evangelism and discipleship.

“Yesterday we had our first service of 2024. We had a beautiful time of corporate worship. We started Sunday School with 11 children. Patty, my wife is training two volunteers to help her.

“This week we start again our Grace Groups in the cities of Pea Ridge, Springdale and Rogers. Please continue to pray our mission.”

Epic Life, Pea Ridge: Jake McCandless writes, “You might have caught that I was a little down with how November and the first of December went for us in Pea Ridge, but I’m excited about the coming new year. How 2023 ended and 2024 has started has been a big part of that. Our last two Connection Groups to end 2023 both had first-time guests. We did a combined Connection Group at our house to end the year, and we had four new visitors representing three households. They were back for the first Garfield Connection Group this year. That meeting was the largest for Garfield, which quadrupled their average over November and December. Our last Preview Connection Group also produced a first-time visitor. This week, all our Connection Groups will be back in action, and Sunday will be our monthly Collective Gathering.

“I’m also excited about partnering with a new sending church. South City in Little Rock has extended a hand to serve in that role. Though I hate we’ve had to make a change, as you know my heart is definitely in Epic Church in Springdale, but

FAMILY (Continued From Page 6)

showing the number of children, teens and young adults sent to the emergency room due to marijuana exposure increased from 2019 to 2022. The report revealed that marijuana-related ER visits surged more than 200% among children under age 11 during that time.

These drugs are dangerous — especially for children. That’s part of the reason Arkansas has taken steps to prohibit THC products made from hemp.

Last year, the Arkansas Legislature passed Act 629 by Sen. Tyler Dees (R/Siloam Springs) and Rep. Jimmy Gazaway (R/Paragould). This good law prevents Delta-8 THC and other THC varieties from being manufactured and sold via industrial hemp (or cannabis) in Arkansas. However, a group of companies that profit from Delta-8 THC are suing to block Act 629 in federal court.

Without laws prohibiting gummies, candies and other edibles made from industrial hemp and marijuana, these drugs could send more children to the ER in Arkansas.



Bridge, Mountain Home rejoices over three salvations and one addition by letter; Hershel Conley, pastor.

Brister, Emerson welcome one by baptism; Dr. Eric Goble, pastor.

Immanuel, Greenbrier added four by letter; Dr. Billy Crow, pastor.

Letona, Letona received two by baptism; Jackie Manasco, pastor.

Old Hickory, Hattiesville gained two by baptism and one by letter; Blake Martin, pastor.

Union, Bodcaw reports one by baptism; Joe Brown, pastor.

this partnership with South City is going to be incredible. They are trying some of the same methodology we’re using in Pea Ridge, so we will have the chance to learn from each other. This weekend, Amanda and I are joining the city group leaders of South City for training. We’re excited to learn and fellowship with them. Pray for us as we have something working behind the scenes I’m excited about!”

El Faro #2 Hispanic Mission, Cabot/Jacksonville: Michael Hight writes, “This weekend was a good one. We confirmed with the people a time for our first home Bible study. This is fruit from our outreach we did on Dec. 17.

“Please pray for our temporary meeting place and that more people would open their hearts and doors.”

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