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Joy in the Season

What a blessed place to be—In His Grip

by Carolyn Hagler

In the midst of this special holiday season, I find myself reflecting on the blessings that surround us. While my views on blessings have evolved over the years, my thoughts today tend toward spiritual ones.

One of the special blessings for me has been to learn to expect the unexpected and look for God in the unexpected. I'm learning to "always be on the lookout for the presence of wonder" (E. B. White). You know that we usually find what we look for. If our expectations are of gloom and doom, it usually turns out that way. It's kind of like a boomerang. Send out gloomy expectations, and here

they come back fulfilled. But maybe we can turn that around; we have a choice.

A friend named Clair provided a perfect example yesterday. Her car had a flat and had to be towed; her daughter's cat was attacked and had to have surgery. But Clair was out in the rain with a smile delivering Vardaman sweet potatoes for the 4-H Club.

With the holidays upon us, it's time to expect the unexpected. Or maybe we need to change our expectations and enjoy each moment,



Carolyn Hagler

each day as it comes. I'm afraid many of us feel God needs help in planning our life. We like to plan every detail and are disappointed when things don't work out the way we thought.

It seems so much better to me to look forward to what the Lord has in store. Maybe it will be a growing moment (might I say difficult?), or maybe it will be a "Christmas morning" kind of day. The more tightly we try to control every moment, the more we will fail. There's comfort, though, in embracing the unexpected to see what God may have for us and trusting in God's greater plan.

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Wishes For A Blessed Christmas Season

From Your Department & Commission Directors



Scott & Linda Carson



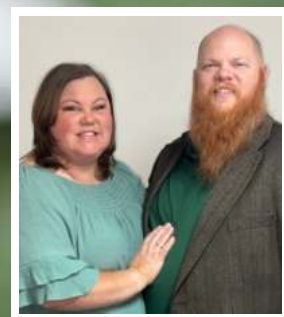
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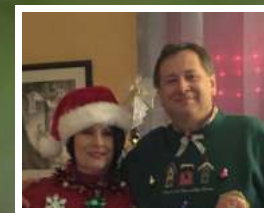
Anders & Carla Lee



Dwight & Lindsay Lindsey



John & Darla Adams



Glen & Theresa Pace

In His Grip

Continued from front page

by Carolyn Hagler

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With the holidays upon us, it's time to expect the unexpected. Or maybe we need to change our expectations and enjoy each moment, each day as it comes. I'm afraid many of us feel God needs help in planning our life. We like to plan every detail and are disappointed when things don't work out the way we thought.

It seems so much better to me to look forward to what the Lord has in store. Maybe it will be a growing moment (might I say difficult?), or maybe it will be a "Christmas morning" kind of day. The more tightly we try to control every moment, the more we will fail. There's comfort, though, in embracing the unexpected to see what God may have for us and trusting in God's greater plan.

You might consider most of my days ordinary and that it doesn't take much to

make me happy. But those ordinary days put a smile on my face.

Recently I saw something on the wall of the Wellness Center as I went to exercise. I looked and looked again and asked myself, "What is that?" I got closer and still didn't know. Then I saw the tiny bat ears; I had never seen one up close and personal; I'm happy I didn't miss the presence of wonder that day.

On a recent outing in the country, bouncing through the woods in unknown territory, I saw some wild turkeys and a deer. I also heard the laughter and felt the excitement of children riding in a wagon on Halloween to visit neighbors who treated them to candy and hot cocoa.

And then the holidays! Thanksgiving is often overlooked because of Christmas. But the joy of Thanksgiving prepares our hearts for the joy of Christmas.

It seems to me that Thanksgiving and Christmas blend together into one season of joy. The blend may be a combination of traditions from the past or maybe some new traditions in the making. Our Thanksgiving hasn't ended; it just continues to Christmas.

Are you remembering, as I do, Momma's cooking when she prepared all the family favorites?

Our family seemed to fill the house with wall-to-wall laughter, the fragrances of Thanksgiving and Christmas, the sounds of carols and hymns, and the feelings of love. Now, you know that some less-than-pleasant times were a part of those gatherings, but those memories have faded away. That's what is wonderful

about memories. We can choose to keep the ones that encourage us and remind us how blessed we are.

My thoughts seem to blend the memories of those traditional family Thanksgivings with the joy of one special Thanksgiving eating shrimp in Hawaii with JB and Sister No. 1 and another one sharing chili with them. Enjoying the moment with those you love; it's more about our loved ones than anything else.

I'm entering this holiday season with joyful anticipation with endless possibilities, making my list and checking it twice, but leaving it open to unexpected developments.

Instead of rushing through Thanksgiving to get to Christmas, wouldn't it be wonderful to let our hearts rejoice each day, to remind ourselves to be thankful for each moment? Seems to me that while we can be grateful without doing anything, we can be thankful and do something; we can praise Him, from whom every good and perfect gift comes (James 1:17).

A new song to me says it well: "You make joy out of simple and ordinary things. You fill life up with stories I'd never think



Central Baptist College in Conway, Arkansas invites applications for Vice-president for Finance

Central Baptist College in Conway, Arkansas seeks an innovative and experienced financial administrator and leader with a proven track record in the management of financial systems to serve as vice president for finance. Reporting directly to the President, the Vice President for Finance (VPF) serves as chief financial officer of the college. The VPF will provide strategic leadership and oversight of the

College's finance and accounting functions, business services and auxiliary enterprises, human resources facilities and physical plant operation and information technology.

As a member of the President's Executive Leadership Team (ELT), the VPF will support the President and will contribute to the strategic objectives and direction of the College by providing sound and ethical fiscal planning and financial management to ensure the long-term financial stability and growth of the College. The successful candidate will have an MBA or master's degree in business management, accounting or a related field and a minimum of five years accounting/finance related experience in a supervisory or managerial role.

The VPF is a 12-month full-time position with remuneration and benefits commensurate with experience. A review of applications will begin immediately. The search will continue until the position is filled.

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

Ministry Opportunities

Available for Service

Zechariah Rogers is a licensed and ordained minister and has been in the ministry for 8 years. He is married and he and his wife have two children. Bro. Rogers is available for pastoral ministry, interim pastorate, or pulpit supply as the Lord leads. He may be reached at 662-372-5730 or by email at zechrogers@att.net.

Missouri Church Seeking Pastor

Bethany Baptist Church in St. Louis, Missouri, is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. For more information contact James Hoffmann at 176 Bear Creek Drive, Wentzville, MO 63385, by text at jmhoff@charter.net or by phone at 314-277-8644.

Help Us Reach the Nations!

Summer is over and Evangelistic International Ministries is already preparing for the summer of 2024. We had a tremendous year in 2023 as we took three teams to conduct our Overseas Bible School, or VBS as we call them here in the states. EIM worked with Missionary Larry Wood and his wife, Tammy, in the Czech Republic, and the BMAA's Missions Coordinator for Africa and South America, John Michael Poulin, and his wife, Angela, in Peru. We closed our summer by working with Missionary Uziel Cerda in Mexico. God allowed us to see several come to Christ.

A total of 44 people on those three OBS teams served with us in sharing the good news of the gospel. In 2024, we are going to be much more aggressive in our trip schedule. We would like to take five teams to five different countries; which are Tanzania, Ghana, the Philippines, Honduras, and Nicaragua. To make this possible, we need 13-15 people per team which would be approximately 70-75 team members for the summer. Our team member focus is on taking adults to be a part of our evangelistic efforts. EIM has found that many adults want to go on a mission trip, but they don't know how or with whom. We invite you to join us next summer and see what God is doing globally.

Below are the dates and cost for each Overseas Bible School trip. The cost of the trips includes airfare, lodging, meals, and in-country transportation.

June 1 – 8 – Honduras, \$2,600.00

June 12 – 22 – Tanzania, \$3,300.00

June 28 – July 6 – Ghana, \$3,300.00

July 13 – 19 – Nicaragua, \$2,600.00

July 24 – August 3 – Philippines, \$3,300.00

We will also be conducting a baseball camp in Nicaragua on July 1-5. This is open to any baseball coach that would be interested. The cost will be \$2,300.00.

If you are interested in any of these trips, please contact Fonda Norris at 870-226-3626, or by email at fnorris@eimworldwide.org. For more information about EIM, please visit our website, www.eimworldwide.org.

Mississippi Baptist

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Finances, Giving, & Ministry

January of each year is set aside by this Association as a Special Emphasis period for your Publications Department. This ministry relies on monthly donations and the Annual January Special Emphasis Drive to meet our budget needs. Your Special Emphasis Gifts and your monthly support account for over 25% of our annual budget.

Each ministry supported by the BMA of Mississippi and America relies on love offerings and donations to continue their work. It is no secret that our economy has suffered with increased costs and the effects of inflation. This has the same effect on ministry as it does the average family.

The need for financial support of ministry is very real. Every church and every ministry depends on the generous giving of God's people. As you will note below, we have a need for our churches and members to give during January 2024.

Would you ask your church to make a generous gift to this ministry in January and will you as an individual make a personal contribution to your church's efforts? It will be greatly appreciated, used wisely, and allow us to continue to serve our churches in sharing the blessings, needs, and progress of each ministry of our great Association.

God blesses us with resources and shines His providence on the "cheerful giver".

Union Angels

by Tony Cleaver from his book: *Then God Said*

He has prepared four angels to act in concert at a certain time in human history Revelation 9.15 "...the four angels who were prepared for the hour, day, month, and year..."

Sitting at any gate of any international airport brings into view hundreds of passengers going and coming. Some are last minute trips, but most are long range planning. The Lord Most High takes great care in His planning for the ages. This verse tells us He has prepared four angels for a particular hour, day, month, and year. These angels are not "on duty" until the cosmic time determined by ultimate Providence to put into action their particular duties at that very foreordained second God has intended.

Some thinkers, philosophers, and other wizened scholars theorize in their own mind and thinking there is no God much less any plan for the ages. It is all at random; it is all coincidence; and it is all luck. Dear Reader, don't confuse the guesses and imaginations of the human mind with the reliability of the mind of God and Word of God. His plans are established by His distinctive will, not the wish of humankind.

Just as the passengers coming and going at the airport have appointed arrival and departure times, so the Lord Himself has His timetable. This timetable is so intricately planned that He has prepared four angels to act in concert at a certain time in human history. These are the only four we know about. How many more "specific action angels" are around His throne just waiting their time to do His bidding in our day, in our world, and in our time—even at the hour, day, month, and year?



Dr. Tony Cleaver

Mississippi Baptist

Special Emphasis January 2024

**Your gift to this ministry supports the outreach ministries
of the BMA of Mississippi**

Mississippi Missions Department - Southeastern Baptist College

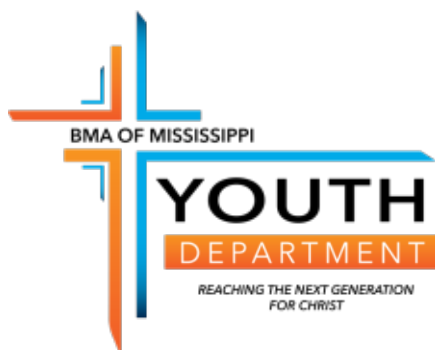
Baptist Children's Home - State Youth Department

Moral Action - History Commission - Senior Adult Commission

State WMA, GMAs & State Brotherhood

And the Worldwide Mission Efforts of the BMA of America

Our Need - \$10,000



Anders Lee

Anders Lee - Director - 901-343-3293 - anders.lee571@gmail.com

RENEW is Finally Here!

December 27-29 at Bethel Baptist Church, Fulton, Mississippi
www.bmamsyouth.org - Anders Lee - 901-343-3293

After 10 months of planning & praying for this conference, the time for it has arrived! I am so excited to see what the Lord does through this effort. Bottom line its about seeing teens come closer to the Lord and renew their walk with Him! I also pray that we will see some saved and follow Christ! **SO... PRAY!!!** Pray throughout this month that the Lord will be magnified, and the lives of teens will be justified & sanctified!!! There is power in prayer... so again I say pray for this conference!

Currently we are nearing the 300 mark for registration with 20 churches registered. Some are coming from Louisiana and Arkansas! That is great considering that this is the first time we have done this after so long and given the timing of this event. While it is not about numbers at the end of the day, it is a good benchmark to know how our people are responding to an event like this. Not long after I was elected Bro. Cliff Jenkins (one of our youth trustees)

and I started chatting about wanting to see this restart in December like in the ole days. I was glad that I wasn't the only one thinking about it! So, I am nervous but excited to see how it goes!

CAN WE STILL COME?

Absolutely! It is **NOT TOO LATE** for you and a group to register and come join in this conference! Your group will enjoy the preaching of Bro. Tracy McMillen and the worship led by Bro. Preston Jones. The teens will love Bob Smiley! He is a Christian Comedian who will perform during late night! To register visit our website and get all the details and plans for the event there also! Please, if you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me!

GIVING & DONATIONS

Memo from our Financial Secretary Brandy Riley: Please mail any & all checks to: 454 Lebanon Rd. Laurel MS 39443. Thank You!



At the close of this year the trustees and I thank you all for your financial support! We cannot do these kinds of things and the camps we have planned **WITHOUT YOU**, your church's and associations financial support! Thank you to everyone who is doing just that month after month! Some of you have joined in this year to help and it has not gone unnoticed! We appreciate you all so much!

To all of our **BMA CHRISTIAN BUSINESSMEN & WOMEN** out there. Would you consider giving through your company a year-end donation to the Youth Department? It is certainly a tax-deductible gift to aid you as well. The biggest part of it is the spiritual investment you are making in teens and kids across this state. Pray about what the Lord may have you do and give as you are led and blessed!

Many of our churches have "Gift for Christ" Offerings at Christmastime. Here at Central Church where I pastor, we have done this since we began in 2014. These offerings can be a blessing to the

kingdom's efforts in so many ways. This year our church is giving our Christmas offering to three different BMA ministries including this department. Perhaps this year your church can do something like this to help our departments in the BMA of Mississippi. It will be a blessing to all involved! My ole pastor use to say, "It's Jesus' birthday, what are you giving to Him?"

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!!!

On a personal note, I want to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a blessed and prosperous New Year! I pray for all of you as you strive to carry out the work of Christ in your local church. So, from the "Tip of the Sip" Carla and I send you season greetings! I also want to wish my fellow directors in the work here in Mississippi a blessed Christmas time!!! We love you all! Thank you for the honor of working with you all and serving together!!!

Senior Adult Ministry

Commission on Senior Adults - 8 Reagan Lake Road, Laurel, MS 39443 - 601-426-3293

Another Year - More Blessings

2024 will sneak up on us in just a few more days! We are all getting older, but still working, ministering, worshiping, and enjoying the blessings of the Lord.

Plans for our 2024 Senior Adult Conferences are complete and we look forward to the following dates. Mark your calendars for **March 5, 2024 for our South Conference**. We will again meet at Big Creek Baptist Church, Soso. They continue to do a great job of hosting. We will be blessed with Bro. Brandon Wilson leading our singing, Bro. Buddy Johnson bringing our message, Macks Fish House providing our noon meal, and a great concert in our afternoon session.

The **North Conference will again be hosted by Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Fulton, Mississippi, on May 14, 2024**. We will have music, a message by LifeWord Director Donny Parrish, a great Catfish lunch, and an afternoon concert.

There will be door prizes, some surprises, special recognition, a lot of fun and just a great time in the Lord at both meetings.

There is just nothing like good Christian fellowship, singing, worshipping, and maybe even a little acting like kids As I have told you before, I am much qualified to be a 'senior citizen' but I still feel 16 years old inside.

God is good and He is good all the time. We look forward to His blessings in 2024!



Don Brown
Director

WHAT IS HAPPENING AT RENEW? RENEW SCHEDULE

December 27-29, 2023

DEC. 27th - 1st Night Session

- 5:00 PM Mealtime in Gymnasium – Bar BQ with sides, desserts & drinks
- 6:15 PM Sanctuary Events – Games & Church Feud & Prizes
- 7:00 PM Welcome, Video & Worship with Preston Jones
- 7:30 PM Tracy McMillen – Preaching
- 8:15 PM Invitation & Announcements & Video
- 8:30 PM Junk Food Buffet & Late Nite in Gymnasium
(Includes Bounce Houses, Red Neck Games, Mechanical Bull, Dunk Tank Human Foosball, Jousting, Ax Throw, 4N1 sports & Obstacle Courses.)

DEC. 28th & DEC. 29th (Morning Sessions)

- 9:45 AM Games & Church Feud & Give Aways
- 10:25 AM 5 Min Countdown
- 10:30 AM Video – Worship Begins with Preston & Band
- 11:00 AM Tracy McMillen – Preaching
- 11:45 AM Invitation & Announcements – Video - Noon Dismissed...

DEC. 28th Night Session

- 5:00 PM Mealtime in Gymnasium – The Chicken Man with sides, desserts, & drinks
- 6:15 PM Sanctuary Events – Games & Church Feud - 655 PM 5 Min Countdown
- 7:00 PM Welcome, Video & Worship with Preston Jones
- 7:30 PM Tracy McMillen – Preaching
- 8:30 PM Breakouts with YOUR GROUP –
Church Group time -Focus on what God is doing in your students!!!
- 9:30 PM Bob Smiley Christian Comedian
After Bob – announcements & dismissal...
ALL of this is at Bethel Baptist Church in Fulton, Mississippi!!!

The African Call

by Pastor Danny Bullock
Antioch West Baptist Church, Magnolia, Arkansas

By now many of you pastors and churches have read the challenge from Johnmichael Poulin to heed the call from African pastors to come help them learn and better understand the Word of God. Allow me to share with you my experience in Tanzania over the past nine years as an encouragement for you to accept this challenge and link hands with these men in Africa.

In 2014 Mike Goodwin, President of EIM (Evangelistic International Ministries), took me with him to Tanzania on an assessment trip to see if there truly was a legitimate need to begin a teaching ministry in that country like what Johnmichael is



now proposing to be done in other areas. After meeting most of the twenty-two Baptist pastors who had sent an appeal to EIM, Mike promised them that we would bring teams of three-to-four pastors three times annually for three and a half years. He tasked me with executing that plan. God brought together close to twenty

different men from four states to teach Biblical, theological, and practical courses. Leaders from BMA Seminary, Central Baptist College, BMA Global, LifeWord, and multiple churches went there to teach.

Was all the money spent and all the time invested worth it? We think so. The original twenty-two churches and pastors have now multiplied to almost fifty. The pastors took our outlines and lessons back to their churches and taught those subjects to their congregations and used them to disciple young preachers who are now going out to plant more churches.

If you are wavering about whether to have your church join this endeavor, allow me to share what a blessing this has been to me. Pastors, I believe that you will benefit from doing this more

than you realize. You will certainly benefit those that you will teach but remember that the one who studies to teach and preach always learns more than those who listen. I cannot fully explain to you how much better I understand the Bible today than I did when we began in 2014. Feeling the weight of the responsibility of teaching pastors who would then in turn teach hundreds of others led me to study harder than I probably ever had before. I did not want to teach anything incorrectly and have that error be repeated. Consequently, I grew in my own knowledge and comprehension. Because of that not only did I benefit, but those who have sat under my teaching and preaching over the past nine years have also told me that they have benefited.

One final blessing will be experienced by those who accept Johnmichael's challenge. Your time in Africa will probably result in your ministry having a far wider scope of influence than you have here in America. Few pastors influence more than ten congregations in their lifetime of ministry. Those who go to Africa and spend three years to teach 20-30 pastors who will then duplicate that many times over can eventually leave a legacy of influence over hundreds of congregations and thousands of people.

I hope you will join other pastors and churches in helping BMA Global impact the African continent. If you would wish to speak with me directly about this, feel free to contact me at danbull0550@gmail.com or 870-904-5032.

A Charlie Brown Christmas

"In 1965, Charles Schulz, a devout Christian and creator of the Peanuts comic strip, was asked to create a Christmas special for CBS featuring the Peanuts Characters.

He agreed with one requirement, that they allow him to include the story of the birth of Jesus.

Although the station's executives were hesitant and tried to convince him otherwise, Schulz was insistent. As a result, for the past 50 plus years, millions of people have



watched "A Charlie Brown Christmas" and heard the story of Jesus and "what Christmas is all about."

It wasn't until a few years back that I realized a "hidden message" in the film.

Linus, a child who seems to have some insecurities as he carries a security blanket with him at all times. In fact, Linus NEVER drops his blanket, except once...

While sharing the message of "what Christmas is all about," Linus drops his blanket at the

exact moment he says the words, "fear not!"

In this seemingly innocent moment, Linus delivers a powerful reminder of the true meaning of Christmas. We are to "fear not", for Jesus is born. We needn't rely on material things for security, we have God with us, "Immanuel", (Matthew 1:23) Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior - the true meaning of Christmas.

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Awhile back, someone informed me, indignantly so, that Linus picks up his blanket at the end of the speech so my

interpretation must be wrong. Well, he was right, Linus does pick up his blanket at the end of his speech. However, he "drops" it again later... Amid big, bright, colorful, shiny artificial trees, Charlie Brown chose the least of these, a little, wooden tree with just a few branches. Shortly thereafter, Linus uses his blanket to wrap about the base of the tree and says, "Maybe it just needs a little love". In that moment, the tree "awakens", stands tall and firm.

A reminder that no matter who we are, how many mistakes we've made, a "little love" can make all the difference.

Let's strive to "fear not" (Luke 2:10) and "love one another" (John 13:34), not just at Christmastime, but the whole year through."

-from Charlene M. Speer & 'Christian Life Ministry'

You're His Witness

by Yalanda Merrell, from Lifeword

Not long ago, I was a witness to an accident. A man came around a curve at a high speed and it seemed he just lost control and his truck cut across the highway and struck a tree head on. I saw his body thrown from the vehicle and land on the side of the road.

I called 911 and ran to help. Not knowing the extent of any internal injuries, I spoke calmly and reassuringly to him encouraging him to try to remain still. I held his hand and prayed with him until help arrived.

Once he was loaded and taken by ambulance a police officer came to take my statement. What happened? What did you see? What do you know?

I tried to calm my racing heart and recount each detail to the officer. I knew it was important to be accurate and tell exactly what I saw, nothing more, nothing less.

"And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things. And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the

deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." Luke 7:18-23

John the Baptist had been chosen by God to be the forerunner for the Messiah. He was to proclaim the coming of the Lord and the need for repentance. News had spread that Jesus of Nazareth performed miracles and healings. John sent two of his disciples to see if this was true and to inquire if He was indeed the Messiah God had promised.

Jesus responds by demonstrating His power and authority. He healed many people right there in front of them and gives them instruction to go to John and tell everything they saw.

They would be witnesses of Jesus Christ. They had a first-hand account of who He was and what He was doing. They saw His power in action, and it was time to tell their story.

Have you encountered Jesus Christ? If you have been saved, you too have a story to tell.

You have witnessed first-hand the power of God in your own life. Has He not changed you? Has He not shown you the sins in your life that must be repented of? Is He not daily correcting you when you do wrong? Have you been redeemed and made new?

It's time to tell your story. Tell of His power! Just like Jesus instructed these men, go and tell what you have seen and heard. Jesus makes the blind to see, the lame to walk, heals disease, brings hearing to the deaf and raises the dead. He offers all of this through eternal life in heaven with Him. Go and give this message to all you see. Not just the rich who can offer you something in return, but the poor who are desperate for hope!

Tell your story.

Tell the story of Jesus.

You are His witness.

DiscipleWay Is Back!

by Jordan M. Tew
BPH Executive Director

It is my pleasure to inform you that churches and individuals may now order DiscipleWay books from Baptist Publishing House. Not only is DiscipleWay one of the best tools for discipleship in print, but it is also fully produced and written by the BMA.

DiscipleWay is a trusted and tried resource with a proven track record of helping believers grow into mature disciples of Jesus. DiscipleWay is the BMA's discipleship curriculum.

To celebrate the new availability of DiscipleWay, we are offering some special prices that will help churches take full advantage of this great resource.

I hope this curriculum will help your church fulfill Christ's Great Commission.

BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION MISSIONS OF MISSISSIPPI



Chris Yager

4226 Highway 15 North, Laurel, MS 39440
Phone: 601-428-8616 Email: missions@bmams.org
Chris Yager, Director

Annual Meeting

Thank you so much for all the messengers and churches who participated in the annual meeting last month in Laurel. It was a tremendous meeting with a God-honoring spirit. It was a huge encouragement to me to see our association "striving together for the faith of the Gospel." I am excited for the work that the Lord is going to accomplish through us this year!

Missions Update

As you will read the articles of each missionary, I am so blessed to be serving alongside of a group of men like these. God is growing each mission not only with numbers, but also a focus on discipleship and training. Our missions are growing wider and deeper!

From the annual meeting, we are also partnering again with the Salt Light Mission and her Mother Church, Campground, to send Bro. Doyle Moore as a State Church Planting Missionary. Over the last year or so, Bro. Doyle has been able to step in and stabilize the mission and has been able to see growth as well. Our hope is to find an assistant missionary/Timothy to serve alongside Bro. Doyle with the ultimate goal of passing the work on to him. Please pray with us about this work and need.

Another great item from the annual meeting is the ability to bring Bro. Oscar from Guatemala to begin a Hispanic mission on the coast. We are in the process of handling his paperwork with U.S. Customs and will keep you up to date on his progress. We hope to have him here as soon as possible.

Canaan Land News By Scott Brocius

Canaan Land has some exciting news! Our sign has been delivered, installed, and is working! We have been asked, why a sign? Why do you, a mission church, need such a big sign? And the answer is, it's another form of outreach! For example, the DAY the sign was installed we received a phone call from a passerby wanting to know more about our church. The caller said, "I saw the new sign going up, and I have been looking for a good church for my family". Friends, that is the exact reason for the sign. Being along such a busy highway, it's impossible to meet everyone who passes. But the sign allows for messages to be seen that may provide a little encouragement or verses that will peak their interests and allow a door to be opened. Seeds will be planted because of words on a sign. How awesome!



Scott Brocius

Our youth are working on a live nativity, life of Christ display. We are looking forward to this and we encourage all of you to visit. We will have several scenes displayed starting with the birth through resurrection. The nativity will be December 8 starting at 6pm-until. Hot chocolate and snacks will be served. We will also have our Christmas program on December 10 at 5 pm. We encourage everyone to be in attendance. Come see what the Lord is doing at Canaan Land.

It's the holiday season! Wh at an exciting time of year for everyone. It's a busy time of year with visiting loved ones and possibly traveling. Let's not forget to slow down and be thankful for everything the Lord has blessed us with throughout the year! We all have a

testimony to share and what better time to reminisce on what the Lord has done for you and where he has brought you from than with those you love the most. We all know we are closer to the Lord coming back than we've ever been, so don't let the opportunity pass to share what the Lord has done for you. Share the gospel with someone, what better gift is there to give?

As always, please continue to keep the mission in your prayers. God is so faithful, and your prayers are being answered daily.

Jail Ministry Paul Spurlin

During the month of October, Restoration Jail Ministry visited the Jones County jail twice. We tried to go a third time during the month but were turned away due to the jail staff being shorthanded that night. It has been a while since we have mentioned it to you, but please continue to pray that the door will be continually open for our ministry in that jail.



Paul Spurlin

On October 20, I was able to preach as we met with four prisoners. During prayer time, a prisoner requested prayer, stating that he knows that he has let his children down by being in jail multiple times due to his struggles with drugs and alcohol. He desires prayer for God to cleanse him of these problems and for his children. Please pray for Joseph.

On October 27, Pastor Ken Riley preached as we met with seven to eight prisoners. During his sermon, one of the men was emotional, visibly crying. As that man left our meeting that night he told us, "Just pray for me!" Also, during the sermon, Bro. Ken polled the men as to what their response would be if God were

REVITALIZE

Our new wing of our missions department has been approved!! I am excited to offer to our churches of the BMA of Mississippi the ministry of Revitalize. Whether you find your church in the need of Restoration (assessment, development, training, and encouragement for revitalization), or full Revitalization (assessment, development, training and encouragement with financial help), or as a Replant (the most drastic form of Revitalization), we want to help you! We are praying that we will be able to begin this ministry in the new year. We are finalizing our application and the basic process that will guide the ministry. Please be in prayer for this ministry and the churches that will help us in the initial launch.

Timothy Ministry

Timothy ministry is another new adventure of our missions department. It is the expansion of our Assistant Missionary program, but now, not limited to just church planters. Our hope and desire are to see young men who God has called to preach be trained in the ministry. Those in the Timothy Ministry training will experience a 6 month to 2-year training regimen that will intensively prepare them for the gospel ministry. They will have

coaching, mentoring pastors, internships, and in the field training that will prepare them for a surrendered and successful ministry. We need God to raise up a new generation of called men to be prepared for the ministry. Will you pray with us that the Lord of the Harvest will send forth laborers and pastors for the work in the field?

Financially

Adding on these two ministries does have a cost. If you are looking for a mission project to invest in, please consider investing in REVITALIZE and/or Timothy Ministry. I am confident that the Lord is going to do great things through these new wings of our mission's department, and I would love for you to be a part of the work that He is going to accomplish!

Revolving Loan Fund

Please continue to consider investing your funds in our tiered rate system. Your investment brings a double blessing to you! You get a competitive investment rate that returns an eternal blessing as well. Through your investment in the RLF, we are able to do so much more in the realm of Missions and Church ministries. This is your fund, and we would love for you to reap the blessings both now and in eternity.

Thank you so much for the honor to serve you!

to ask them individually why He should let them into His Heaven. Three men gave answers: two focused on their good works while one was honest and said he would not know how to answer. We recognized this man who had no answer as one to whom we have preached the gospel previously. Praise God that he is not relying on his own works, but he still does not understand the gospel. Pray for the souls of these men's hearts because Satan truly does take the seed of the gospel away before some men can receive it. God have mercy upon all men!

While you are considering these men's responses to the question, upon who are you depending to reach Heaven? Our hope must rely fully upon Christ and His finished work and not at all upon ourselves.

'TIS THE SEASON Decreasing For HIS Increase, Bro. Josh Daniels

Greetings churches and associations of the BMA of MS. As we enter the holiday season, we at Refuge are enjoying this season of ministry as well. Though things have not always been easy, God has been good to us and has led us each step of the way and for that we praise Him and give Him thanks. We choose to focus on the triumphs of what God has done and how He has grown His people rather than the trials around us or ahead of us. This time of year is full of joy, fellowship, excitement, and being around those you love. We have kicked off this season with a Fall Fest which was a huge way to connect to our community. We are in the middle of a 5 day time of praise and worship with other pastors and music leaders that we have called "5 Days of



Josh Daniels

PRAISE". We have started a baptism class and will begin having a monthly baptism day starting November 19th where we will baptize close to a dozen believers. Our people plan to give out Thanksgiving baskets to some families in need that same afternoon. We will then have a Christmas celebration and fellowship on December 2nd and a New Years Eve fellowship at the end of the year. So we do have a busy few weeks around us, but it is blessing to see God's people desire to want to fellowship and spend time with one another. I have shared many times and will continue to share that one of the great things to see in a church plant is people who did not know each other begin to work together and build bonds that will last for all eternity. It is sweet to my heart.

So 'tis the season" of fellowship, joy, laughter, and drawing close to one another, but it is also the season of loving others, sharing Jesus with the lost, and serving others. God continues to draw the lost unto Himself. There have been multiple professions of faith over the last 3 months and many are part of the group to be baptized on November 19th. God has been so good to Refuge and we still have far to go. We are just getting started and look forward to seeing the impact that this body of believers makes for the years and generations to come. Thank you all for the love and support shown to us for 4 years.

Missions Reports Continued on page 7

Mission Reports From page 6

Estuardo Marroquin Hispanic Missions Coordinator

We continue to be excited about what God has been doing in Hispanic missions.

In recent weeks, many people have heard the gospel of Jesus and have come to salvation and forgiveness of their sins. People have been baptized confessing their faith publicly in Jesus Christ. Indeed, this has been a great blessing. We also rejoiced with the brethren of the Hispanic church in Hattiesburg, we had the opportunity to be with them and the privilege of preaching the Word of God. We also thank God for the Hispanic church in Ripley that has reached another year of serving God in northern Mississippi. Recently, the church celebrated its 20th anniversary.

We continue to ask for your prayers for the new Hispanic missionary, Oscar Monterroso. In the coming weeks, we will receive the date for his interview at the U.S. embassy in Guatemala City to request his permission to come to our state of Mississippi to plant churches in the south.

Thank you for your prayers and your financial support of the Hispanic Missions.



Estuardo Marroquin

Living Hope Baptist Mission Update Meridian

At the mission in Meridian, we have seen the amazing faithfulness of our God. We set out this year to lift our eyes to the harvest around us, looking for opportunities to reach people with the Gospel and praying for God to bring the increase. Our goal has always been to reach those that are without Christ and without a church family, and God has given us the blessing of being a part of His work in the lives of many this year. While we have been able to personally see some of the fruits of our labor, we may never know the extent of how God has used our labor this year. What we do know is that there are three that have professed Christ as Savior, three that have been baptized and added to the church, and over ten families that are in church today who were not before; and God allowed us to have a part in this. As God has blessed us with this ministry, we have also been given responsibility to help these people continue to grow in their relationships with God. Would you pray with us that everything we do will be fruitful in reaching the lost and building up the saved and will resound to the glory of God.



Sam Yager



Construction Update

Recently, we have put the finishing touches on two more kid's classrooms. These classrooms were left unfinished in the initial phase of construction, simply because there was not an initial need for them. However, God has blessed us with many kids in the past year. Now, these classrooms both are a necessity and are already filling up. We are so thankful for the groups from South Forrest Baptist Church and from Big Creek Baptist Church that helped with the construction of these classrooms.



Sofilthy's Attic

By Barbara White

Shoes, A Broken Leg, and Self Control

Our pastor has been teaching the return of Jesus on Wednesday nights. Last week as he was describing the City of Jerusalem to which Jesus will ultimately return, he got to describing the Dome of the Rock.

He mentioned that he had gone into it on a tour a few years ago. He did not mention that a person must remove their shoes before they are allowed to enter.

But the mention of the Dome of the Rock stirred a memory of my trip to the Dome of the Rock. I had a broken leg and only got the cast off a few days before we left on the trip. When they told us to remove our shoes, I decided I'd better not take my shoes off, fearing that my foot would swell and I wouldn't be able to get my shoe back on. So, I remained outside as everyone else went inside.



As I stood on the outside looking at the shoes that people had removed, I got a vision of the pandemonium that could be created by removing two or three shoes from one pile, taking them to another pile and picking up two or three from that pile to replace the ones taken.

I very seriously considered it but restrained myself.

As our pastor finished up his lesson, I pondered whether I should tell that. When he asked if there was any other word, I yielded to temptation and told it, even though I had doubted the wisdom of sharing it.

After the closing prayer, I went to the kitchen and gathered up my dishes, etc. and started out and immediately fell out the door. I rolled around in the alley until our pastor came along and picked me up.

I guess the moral of this story is "If you have exercised self-restraint, don't tell anybody!"



Women's Missionary Auxiliary

WMAofMS20@gmail.com

President Dawn Freeman

cdfreeman7327@gmail.com

601-325-7226

Treasurer Mrs. Theresa Reus

1264 Dean Nursery Rd.,

Lucedale, Mississippi 39452



Dawn Freeman
President

2023 Annual WMA Meeting

by Gina Harper, WMA Editor

A representative from WE ARE FREE came and spoke to us at the annual WMA meeting about their ministry to victims of human trafficking and how prevalent a problem it really is. Sister Dawn Freeman expressed a need for a similar ministry here in Mississippi.

The State WMA voted to support 'Just The Crumbs' as our 2023-2024 Mission Project. "Just The Crumbs" responds to areas of natural disaster and provides meals for as many as 700 people a day following the catastrophe. Our goal is to raise \$40,000.

The State WMA voted to have a midyear Retreat in the North Region of the state to promote participation from that area in our state work again. The retreat is to be held before March 2024. Ladies from our BMA churches in the North Region are encouraged to come together as we make plans for this retreat. Please contact Mississippi WMA President Dawn Freeman of Campground Baptist Church, Gulfport, or Gina Harper of Skyway Hills Baptist Church, Pearl.

The State WMA voted to create a scrapbook for Shirlene Smith for her 30-plus years of service to our State WMA. The completed book is to be presented at the midyear meeting in May to Shirlene Smith. We would love to include your stories and photos with her. Please send photo and tribute submissions to Gina Harper at Skywayhills2@gmail.com by April 1, 2024.

Contact information ...

Gina Harper, WMA Editor, 936-668-6133, skywayhills2@gmail.com

Dawn Freeman, WMA President, 601-325-7226, cdfreeman7327@gmail.com

Ten Mile District WMA Report

by Maria Ochoa, Reporter

Our recent meeting was held at Campground Baptist Church, Gulfport. Our Project Fundraiser for our District Project is "Dollars for Daughters". Jars were passed out to each church for collection for a Girls School in India, in need of renovation.

We approved a motion to change our name to South Mississippi District WMA. This is to include other WMA members from other churches to become a part of our group. A Skit was presented by Campground WMA. We work for Jesus daily; we are his Disciples. Jesus loves us, plug in the word of God in your daily conversations.

We have invited the State WMA meeting in 2024 to be hosted by our group. Our next local meeting is January 8, 2024 at 7:00 pm with Paramount Baptist Church, Perkinston.

Mississippi GMAS

Lakelan Jenkins, GMA Promoter

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601-517-1476

GMA Service Project Information

By Amberlee Shaw

Campground Baptist Church

Hey everyone! I have been a GMA girl for a little over a year. One thing that GMA's is about is reaching people through the Gospel, and an effective way to do that is through service projects.

Today I'm going to be talking about some of the service projects you and your group can do. One thing that usually is a big hit is hosting a bake sale. Another is you can host a family movie night at your church. Not only is this an opportunity to possibly share with others the news of Jesus, but it's also a good way to have fellowship with new people. Also, your group can do a book drive to help classrooms that might not be able to afford them. Something that the girls at my church did during one of the camps we have here is make self-care bags for the homeless. The bag included things like a toothbrush and toothpaste, deodorant, floss, a comb, etc. Some other things there are to do are to visit nursing homes, pick up trash at the beach or park, and even help work concessions at your schools. All these service projects are a great opportunity to bring others to Christ and to have fun while doing it.

Don't forget to check out our state GMA website and social

January 2024

Publications Department

Special Emphasis

HISTORY & ARCHIVES

Glen Pace, Director

601-520-5376

www.bmahistory.org - email mrpmg@yahoo.com



Glen Pace

History is Boring?

by Glen Pace

I would like to begin this article by thanking the messenger body of the BMA of Mississippi for the opportunity to serve as director of the Commission on History and Archives. It is my goal to honor our Lord and build on the legacy of previous directors to establish a commission that can be beneficial to the churches of our great association.

Many years ago when I started school the students all felt history was boring. I was no exception to the rule and wondered why we needed to learn what happened in the past. After all, that was behind us and we were living in the present. In eighth grade I had a history teacher named Mrs. Norsworthy. She had a unique way of making history come alive. It was during those years that I started enjoying studying history. I realized that if we as a nation were going to succeed, it was important to know about our past triumphs and failures. Those lessons would guide us in the present and lead us into the future. We would learn from past failures by not making the same mistakes.

The Bible is filled with history! God wrote in His inspired word, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:" Isaiah 46: 9-10. God instructs us many times in his word to remember our past. It could be said that God wants us to know our history. He often refers us to an event in our lives individually, or collectively as a nation, to teach us a lesson about the present and give us guidance into the future. The prophet Jeremiah records in chapter 6 verse 16, "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." How can we seek and walk in the old paths if we do not know anything about them? I understand that some parts of the Bible are more interesting than others. For instance, many chapters are filled with genealogy. This one begat this one, this one begat this one, and so on. One preacher said, "They were so much begotten going on that you might forget what you are reading." Although this is a sacred part of God's word, it can be difficult to comprehend.

An old song that states, "The toe bone's connected to the foot bone, The foot bone's connected to the ankle bone, The ankle bone's connected to the leg bone, The leg bone's connected to the knee bone, The knee bone's connected to the thigh bone, The thigh bone's connected to the hip bone, The hip bone's connected to the back bone, The back bone's connected to the neck bone, The neck bone's connected to the head bone, The finger bone's connected to the hand bone, The hand bone's connected to the arm bone, The arm bone's connected to the shoulder bone, Now shake dem skeleton bones."

This song teaches children how to start learning their bones. The exciting parts of God's word and the begotten parts all tie his word together to bring us his complete divinely inspired word. Just as our skeleton would be incomplete without every bone, God's word in its entirety is needed in our lives to support our Christian walk. Join us as we learn more about our history.

We hope to build on the foundation others have laid for this commission and archive material that will benefit our pastors, teachers, staff, and members in their studies and presentation of God's word. We want to be a resource to research books, minutes, sermons, papers, yearbooks, and church history. We would like to have some classes online, discussion boards or forums. We hope to have a wealth of information that everyone of all ages can use.

We need 4 more trustees to serve on the board. We have two that have committed at this point. If you could serve, please contact me at 601-520-5376. It would be great to have young and old alike.

If you record your sermons, please send each week. Any old books, papers, minutes, photos, or such would be great to copy and archive for the future. Stay tuned for future information. You can visit us at <https://www.bmahistory.org/> and we can be reach via email at mrpmg@yahoo.com.

Finally, we will have to pay for the help to bring this material to our churches. Please consider a small amount in your budget to help with this ministry. If we can speak to your church, please call and we would love the opportunity. Most of all, we seek your prayers that God will be glorified through the efforts of this ministry.

A Message From The Middle East

Charlie Costa, Middle East Regional Coordinator and BMA Missionary to Lebanon

What are BMA missionaries doing in the midst of a war in the Middle East? Well, good question. The simple answer is this: Doing what the Lord has commissioned them to do. We do not see political, religious, ethnic, or any other lines. We see lost people in need of Jesus.

In these circumstances, we learn what it means to pray in anguish: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." When you see the depravity of man at its worst and feel like you are in a runaway train that you cannot stop, you lift your hands imploring the mighty Savior to come back and save—one way or the other.

No one constrains us to be here but the love of God shed in our hearts by His Holy Spirit. No one constrains us to be here but the calling of God on our lives to the point where we are willing to lay down our lives for him as he did for us—we are going to die some day, we might as well make it count. No one constrains us to be here but our commitment to the churches that have entrusted us to take the Gospel to these people.

Would you consider prayerfully and financially supporting our Baptist leaders and churches in the Middle East as they continue pressing on even in the midst of war and uncertainty?

BMA Global is happy to receive any funds to distribute. Checks can be mailed to BMA Global, PO Box 878, Conway, AR 72033. Just write "Relief Middle East" in the memo line, or you can give online at <https://app.securegive.com/BMAMissions/main/donate/category>. Just scroll down and designate your gift to Charlie Costa's fund.



Charlie Costa

mission:world

NEWS

A JOURNEY OF FAITH, SERVICE, AND IMPACT

By Jamshad Hadyat
Urdu Church Planter in Georgia
bmaglobal.org

Born and raised in Pakistan into a devout Christian family, Jamshad Hadyat's life journey has been a remarkable testament to his unwavering faith, commitment to service, and a profound call from God. In 1988, a pivotal year, he accepted Jesus as his personal savior in a youth camp meeting, an event that would shape the trajectory of his life in profound ways.

Feeling the undeniable call of God to serve, Jamshad embarked on a path that defied convention and societal expectations. In 1993, he stepped into the role of a church planter, responding with a resounding "yes" to the divine mandate on his life. Balancing his ministry responsibilities with the pursuit of secular education, he pursued his studies with diligence and dedication.

Despite familial pressures to pursue a career in medicine, Jamshad's conviction in his divine calling prevailed. He chose to follow the path laid out before him by God, declining admission to medical college and continuing to minister and study concurrently. His passion for education extended to teaching at a school for 12 years, impacting the lives of countless young students, many of whom are on the mission field.

His ministry took him to the farthest corners of Pakistan, where he preached the Gospel and shared the message of Jesus with fervor. In 2008, he embarked on a new chapter of his life by getting married, embracing partnership in his mission to spread love and faith.

However, the challenges in Pakistan compelled Jamshad to make a difficult decision. He left his homeland and journeyed to the United States, driven by a divine purpose to awaken a nation to spiritual revival. His itinerant journey saw him moving from city to city, town to town, church to church, delivering a message that resonated deeply with his listeners.

With a heart burdened for the issues facing the world, he spoke boldly on subjects ranging from the Islamic population's influence to the sanctity of life amidst abortion debates. Guided by the spirit of God, his journey led him to a place uniquely suited for his mission: Clarkston, Georgia.

Nestled within the mosaic of cultures that is Clarkston, Jamshad's impact took on a new dimension. Alongside his beloved wife Anila and their two children, they embarked on a mission to plant a church that would cater to the Urdu-speaking population. With time, dedication, and divine favor, the Bible study sessions they initiated evolved into the flourishing congregation of Vertical Life Church Urdu, which officially launched on February 20, 2016.

Jamshad Hadyat's life echoes a narrative of faith, service, and transformation. From his roots in Pakistan to his mission in Clarkston, his journey inspires others to embrace the call of God, persist through obstacles, and create meaningful change in the lives of those they touch.

Anila Hadyat : A Pillar of Faith and Mission Partner

Behind every extraordinary journey of faith, there often stands a dedicated and supportive partner. In the case of Jamshad Hadyat, that partner is none other than his beloved wife, Anila. Her role in his journey of faith and ministry has been instrumental, as she

embraced her calling as a life partner and a mission partner, walking hand in hand with Jamshad through every step of their remarkable journey.

Anila's involvement in the ministry began as a natural extension of her deep-rooted faith and her commitment to supporting her husband's calling. With a heart full of compassion and a spirit of service, she became an active participant in the church activities and the establishment of Vertical Life Church Urdu (VLCU).

Her contributions were multifaceted and deeply impactful. As they embarked on the journey of church planting, Anila opened their home to families, creating a warm and welcoming space for fellowship and spiritual growth. Her culinary skills were put to use as she lovingly prepared meals, not just nourishing bodies but also fostering a sense of community and belonging.

In a new land with diverse needs, Anila's heart shone brightly as she offered rides to those in need, ensuring that transportation was never a barrier to participation in church activities. Her nurturing spirit extended to caring for families, tending to both their material and spiritual needs with unwavering dedication.

Their journey was not without challenges, as establishing VLCU and navigating cultural differences presented both uphill battles and moments of doubt. Yet, Anila's steadfast faith and unwavering support provided a foundation upon which their shared mission could flourish.

Through ups and downs, Anila remained an unshakable anchor, steadfastly committed to their calling and their shared vision. Her partnership with Jamshad demonstrated the power of unity in the face of adversity and the strength that comes from being bound by a common purpose.

The love of God, a love they both held dear, illuminated their path through every challenge. It was this divine love that fueled their persistence, their resilience, and their ability to overcome obstacles that came their way.

Their answered "yes" to God's calling, uttered in times of triumph and tribulation, became a testament to the transformative power of faith in action.

Anila's journey alongside Jamshad exemplifies the role of a true partner in faith, serving as a beacon of strength, love, and unwavering commitment. Her selfless contributions, both seen and unseen, have played an integral part in the success of their shared mission.

As the chapters of their lives continue to unfold, Anila's presence remains a constant reminder that true partnership in faith involves not only embracing the journey but also embracing the people who walk it beside us. Through her support and sacrifice, she embodies the essence of a mission partner, amplifying the impact of their collective efforts and spreading the message of God's love and grace.



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NEWS



CHANGING THE LIVES OF CALIFORNIANS

By Mkram Shahatit

Arabic Church Planter in California
bmaglobal.org

Editor's Note: Ashraf Sara, Arabic Church Planting Coordinator, serves Arabic-speaking people by helping pastors plant churches in America. He says this of the ministry in California: "In California, which contains the highest Arab population in America, Mkram and Claude Shahatit are planting a church in the Arab-concentrated city of El Cajon where the Arabic population represents the majority of the city's total. The Shahatits are following Jesus' example by going out to the community and meeting Arabic people. The community center they started is for teaching ESL and computer skills to improve the livelihood of the people there. Their efforts to live out the Great Commission by making disciples have resulted in planting Jesus Light of the World Arabic Church."

The following is Brother Mkram Shahatit's story and ministry update:

I was born in Jordan in 1964 and raised in a Catholic family. I had heard the gospel at a church in Amman, Jordan, but didn't know Christ until I came to the States in 1987. I was living and working at a supermarket in an African-American area of Chicago when a kind Christian lady who shopped there every two weeks began telling me that Jesus loved me and had a plan for my life. For months, I listened to her and didn't believe I could be saved, but finally I accepted the Lord as Savior then baptized.

Call to Ministry

After three years of discipleship classes and Bible training, the Lord touched my heart and called me to serve, so I volunteered at an Arabic church in Chicago. In 1994, I met and married a Christian lady in Beirut, Lebanon, and we have three children.

In 1995, we moved to San Diego and lived in El Cajon, California, where I served as assistant pastor for three churches in 17 years. Then God called us

to plant a church in El Cajon: Meridian Arabic Church, and five years later our congregation was relocated and renamed Jesus Light of the World Church in El Cajon.

Reaching Refugees

One of the ways we serve the Arabic community is through the Family Welcome Center, which reaches out to refugees and shares the gospel. A team of volunteers from various churches connects with refugees to serve them. Since 2016, this ministry has offered free classes on ESL (English as a Second Language), computer and life skills, document translation, filling out paperwork, and other practical services. Volunteers conduct follow-up visits and remain in touch with those they have served.

We have outreach events every year at Christmas and Thanksgiving, plus a fall festival in October. There are also back-to-school, VBS, and Kids' Club ministries for children, but God recently called me to start a new ministry for refugees, especially Muslims, in El Cajon and the surrounding areas. God is shaking the nations, and people are leaving their homelands, causing an influx of thousands of refugee families from Iraq, Syria, Kurdistan, and Afghanistan.

Newcomers to our church are invited to all events, which recently included summer outreach activities. We sponsored two Bible teaching events, including a four-day junior high event for ages 13 to 17 that included lunch, sharing the gospel, Bible teaching, games, and sports. There were 34 youth in attendance, and some decided to follow Christ. Also a VBS for ages five to twelve was attended by 50 children. We are excited for the open door we have in El Cajon to reach out to refugees and newcomers.

In addition, Jesus Light of the World Arabic Church has seen growth in its discipleship classes, kids and youth ministry, and ladies' Bible study classes. Church members are involved in community outreach to newcomers and

Muslims, but we just want to be used for God's glory. We feel blessed to join and work with BMA Global and our BMA family.

Please join us in prayer for our ministries to honor and glorify God and change the lives of Californians. Also, pray for the protection of children and youth and the word of God to be effective in children's hearts. California public schools are fighting same sex marriage, and teaching children to change their gender. Please pray for our state and the future of our children.



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NEWS

FAITHFULNESS IN A GODLESS CULTURE

By Milan Bulak

ChangeMaker in Czech Republic
bmaglobal.org

Our ministry is about faithfulness. People in our region reject religion and when you say “Christ” it is even worse. Simply said, this is a Godless culture. They do not care about God and reject his existence and their need for him. But we know that it is not about us. We are those who plant and water, but God is the one who gives growth. That is a source of encouragement for us. To know that God is sovereign and that the gospel is the power unto salvation.

We have had some new people coming in the past year to our worship service. I will mention some names and ask for prayers: David, Nickolas, Alex, Mrs. Linhart, Lukas, Ema, and Adela. It is always a miracle when people listen to the Word of God and come to him in faith.

David comes from a charismatic background and realized that he was not getting the truth in that movement. He is very thankful to be in a Bible-believing church. We teach from the Word, and he sees that there is much more in it and he sees the beauty of the gospel.

Alex is from a non-believing family and is 14. He comes every Sunday and every Bible study. He also went to a youth church camp.

Mrs. Linhart is 79. We witnessed to her and prayed for her for 10 years. Probably a year ago she came and started to listen to the gospel. A few months ago you could see the change in her life and attitude. She repented of her sins with tears and called to Christ to save her soul. We can see the fruit in her life, and last Monday we baptized her.

I have to mention also **Ema**, my niece who started coming to our church. She was with us at the church camp and I can see some change in her life. In the past she came a couple times in a year to worship, but she is more serious about God.

Adela is the daughter of one of our dear church members. Her mother is a believer, but her father is a nonbeliever. She was a rebellious child with opposition towards God and her mom. She was with us at the church camp. She changed a lot, and her relationship with her mother is much better. Praise God. She also comes to our worship service.

Please pray for all of these. Some do not know God but listen and think. Some are born again and are in the beginning of their walk with the Lord and need discipleship and prayers.

Church Camp

Every year we have a church camp for church members and friends. Five like-minded Baptist churches (our church is one of them) here in Czech for the past eight years have come every summer for a week-long church fellowship which consists of morning and evening preaching, singing, praying, and a lot of discussions and fellowship during the day.

We started the camp with 80 people, and this year we had 200+ people. There were people from all over the Czech Republic, and we had some people from Slovakia, Ukraine, and one sister from Germany. Her name is Petra, and

she got saved under our ministry. Last year we baptized her. Please pray for her also.

Conferences and Preaching Opportunities

This past year I had a chance to preach and teach in other regions. I taught apologetics at the Bible Institute, and preached in churches in Bohemia and Moravia. I was invited to preach at the Bible conference in Prague where I preached on justification by faith. What a grace to see Czech Christians eager to learn this great doctrine and then go back into this dark world with the bright light of the gospel. This coming October, by the grace of God, I will preach two messages at the conference close to the city of Trinec, which is close to the Polish and Slovakian borders. I will preach on the authority and inerrancy of Scripture.

Other Ministry

I help with a Christian magazine every three months. It is a great opportunity to teach people in Czechia and Slovakia about important topics such as discipleship, gender, attributes of God, etc. By the grace of God, I also edit books for Christian publishers and teach English in one company as a tool for evangelism. My student is a young manager and his name is Radim. Please, pray for him. He is one of the top leaders in their company and has a bright future. But without God, it is a loss. I share the gospel with him and have very good discussions.

Our Needs

Please, pray for our people and for us that we stay faithful in this godless and God-rejecting place. Pray for effective discipleship and growth.

Pray for us as we do not have a permanent building.

Pray for our finances.

Pray for our children.



Lifeworld[®]

NEWS



A HOME CHURCH IN A DIFFERENT LAND

By Heather Harrison
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“A home church in a different land is difficult but we believe that it is the Lord who builds his church.” Remi Badru
Sometimes our efforts within the Kingdom of God look more like building a business than building a family. Building a business can be quick work, and there is no short supply of strategies to try. Building a family is different. It requires things like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness...It requires sacrificing time, money, and comfort, and it is something that becomes a part of our everyday lives.

Nduka Kingsley and Remi Badru know this well. Both are originally from Nigeria, and were attending seminary, when they sensed the call of God to give their lives to build his church. This calling took them to Houston, where for the past four years, they've been planting and growing a church there among the large population of Nigerians.

When Nduka and Remi moved to Houston, they began asking God for direction regarding the details of their new church. As they started meeting and engaging with other Nigerians there, they began meeting on Sundays. Since Covid-19 caused their numeric growth to halt, they are currently rebuilding. They have several families committed to the church. Two of them were baptized just last week! Finding a location to meet has been a struggle; they currently meet in a local hotel. Because the schedule, transportation, and a regular location is difficult, their mid-week service is online. They also regularly invite church members into their home. “We want to not only build relationships, but we want our home to feel like their home...like a family,” Nduka shares.

Creating a strong presence online is another focus for them right now, sharing that they've “noticed most people don't want to open their homes, but they open their phones on social media.” Both pastors use their social media accounts to share about Christ and about their church through writing and sharing portions of their sermons. Several readers and viewers have interacted with them through social media, and some have eventually come to a Sunday service. Lifeworld is discussing various ways to use media to partner in helping in their church planting efforts.

“There is a huge Nigerian population here, seeking hope in America, but we want them to know Christ is their hope,” Remi explains. Many come to the US with hope of a better life. Because of this, many of them work three jobs and no longer have time for church or Christian community. “The gospel they have heard so far has been that God meets your needs, so when they come here and find success and are not as needy, it is easy to not make time for church.” Many of them are sending money

back to their families who are still in poverty in Nigeria. This adds difficulty to church planting and church building efforts.

The BMA of Texas has been a great support, and they are thankful. However, they share that “there is a lot that goes into an African church. To an African person, church is more than a regular meeting, it must be celebratory. There must be a place, accustomed to rejoicing, because that is the outlet for many to come to God. So, to get good music, a consistent location, and other resources has been difficult.”

Organizing various community outreach efforts and spending time with church members regularly has allowed them to engage, care for, and invite people into their close Christ-centered community. Remi shares that since Africans are typically family focused, their goal is not only to build their church, but to further the family of God.

Please pray for this church and that God would grow them. Pray for wisdom as Lifeworld seeks to support and help their efforts in exploring even more online opportunities for growth.

