

# The Mississippi Baptist

JOURNAL OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

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## What to do When Your Church Changes

By Dr. Joe McKeever

**Editor's Note:** *McKeever is a retired minister and church cartoonist. His observations are valid and may be applied in various ways. I don't think he is promoting a particular worship style or church personality, but challenging the reader to be open to change when change is needed.*

These days in my retirement ministry, most of the churches where I'm invited to preach have these things in common...

Almost no man wears a necktie or suit.

On the platform you find all kinds of musical instruments.

Huge screens are mounted on the front walls, where the words of songs and scripture are projected.

Many people in the congregation read Scripture from their phones.

Worship leaders are often wearing jeans and sneakers.

In the announcements, you hear of mission trips to foreign countries, regardless of the size of the church.

Fewer and fewer hymns are being sung, and when the old ones are brought out, they're given new treatments.

Mostly, though, what's being sung in worship was written in the past 10 or 12 years.

Churches announce on their outside signs "blended" services, "contemporary" services, and/or "traditional" services.

The times, they are a-changing, friend. (And they are not through changing either. So you youngsters should not get too attached to the present innovations.)

If you cannot adapt, you may find yourself living in the 1950s.

The other weekend I worshiped with an interesting church in Jacksonville, Florida. I have not known that church previously, but had learned a little of their story before arriving.

As the neighborhood changed around them, most of their members had moved away. Since the church failed to make the necessary adjustments to reach new residents of their community, it was slowly dying. So, not long ago, the remaining membership—mostly senior adults—asked a larger (and healthy, thriving) church in the area to take them over. They would be willing to make whatever changes were necessary to turn this around.

That takes great courage, let me say. Most "older" churches cannot do this. The members are so wed to the ways of yesterday and the methods of the past



### National Meeting Information Parking Limited - Trolley Service To Be Provided

The Committee on Arrangements would like for you to know that the parking at the Convention Center in Gatlinburg is very limited. There is pay parking close by. However the city has promised to supply trolley service from each of the hotels to be available for all of the sessions. Most of the hotels are within walking distance of the Convention Center, but we realize that there are some who may not be able to make these walks. We do encourage you to take advantage of the trolley service.

The Court Yard (Marriott) is on the hotel list, but we have been informed that the room block is small and that all of the block has already been taken. Please take advantage of the other hotels listed for the BMAA. The listed hotels will give a rebate to the association that will lower the cost for us. We need that.

If the Committee on Arrangements can be of help please let us know.  
Leon Carmical 601-466-2782  
Charles Attebery 501-472-2183  
Jackie Manasco 501-281-1310

## SOAR 2016 Is On A Mission

On July 6 more than 2,500 students will gather for three days at the Hilton Anatole in Dallas, Texas, for SOAR 2016. This year's conference theme, "Global," will focus on God's heart for the nations. "We are praying for 100 students to give their lives to missions this summer," explains DiscipleGuide Director Scott Attebery. "Whether they become overseas missionaries, North American church planters, international student hosts, faithful prayer warriors, or life-long supporters, we are praying that they embrace God's global heartbeat for the rest of their lives!"

Each session of SOAR 2016 will feature keynote speaker Clif Johnson, pastor of Garrett Memorial Baptist Church in Hope, Arkansas, while Aaron Williams and the SOAR band will return to lead students in praise and worship. This year's SOAR Village will provide an opportunity for hands-on learning and mission work. Attebery explains, "Our goal is to provide students and youth groups with opportunities to get involved in God's mission while they are at the conference and give them ideas to take home for continued mission engagement."



Registration for this year's conference is \$110 per person, and hotel rooms at the Hilton Anatole are \$129 per night (4 person occupancy). For more information, visit [gosoar.com](http://gosoar.com).

"Who knows," states Attebery, "perhaps God would be so gracious as to start a missions revival in our churches through SOAR 2016!"

Churches and individuals are invited to begin praying now for God to raise up 100 students with a heart for missions at this year's SOAR conference. Let's all pray!

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Excel In Studies  
See Page 7**



Larry Geraldson  
Director



# Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

Department of Missions and Revolving Loan Fund



State Missionaries and Wives



Bob & Edie Burch



Kenneth & Carole  
Pollock



Bobby & Lesa  
Elliott



Danny & Brenda  
Bartlett



Sidney & Becky  
Farmer



Wesley & Holley  
Martin



Anders & Carla  
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Burns



Estuardo &  
Yasmine Marroquin



Elvis & Wendy  
Garcia



Ed & Patricia  
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## Great Meeting With Missionaries

Recently, some of our church planters gathered at the Missions Office in Laurel. The meeting was opened with a wonderful devotional thought presented by Bro. Harold Floyd. Bro. Floyd also serves as one of the committeemen on the Missions Committee. His devotional was timely and encouraging to all. We enjoyed a wonderful time of sharing and fellowship, as well as prayer and Bible study. I am so grateful to have the opportunity to work with such a fine group of men. Here are a few of the highlights of our meeting:



Bro. Harold Floyd shares a devotional with some of the

Phillip Attebery, Dean of the BMA of America Theological Seminary. Missionary Sidney Farmer is coordinating this training and encourages all who might be interested to contact him for early sign up at 601-596-1004. Bro. Farmer said that they will be offering training for young people from 4th grade and up.

## Batesville

Dr. Kenneth Pollock shared about the excitement of the new mission work between Oxford and Batesville.

He said that last Sunday they had an attendance of 18 which was a record for this new mission which has only been officially holding services for a few weeks.

## Diamondhead

Bro. Wesley Martin shared about their recent outreach event in which they passed out Bibles to parade attenders in Diamondhead. Bro. Wesley and his wife Holley are expecting their third child and are also making plans to sell their home and purchase in the Diamondhead community. Please keep them in your prayers.

## Sumrall

Bro. Phillip Burns shared a good report of progress of discipling folks. Most of the folks being disciplined are new believers. In addition to this, they continue their search for land in the Sumrall area.

## Burnsville

Bro. Elliott shared how some of his folks are stepping up to the challenge of soul winning while others are eagerly asking to be trained. They are still trying to finish some work on their parking lot.

## Missions and Evangelism Conference Just Around the Corner

The 58th Annual Missions and Evangelism Conference of the BMA of Mississippi will be hosted by South Forrest Baptist Mission on May 6th beginning at 10:00 am. South Forrest Mission is located just a few miles east of Purvis near Paul B. Johnson State Park. We will be sharing the full program soon, but here is a list of some of the featured speakers: Bro. Dennis Knight, Pastor of Paramount Baptist Church; Bro. Blake McCain, Pastor of Midway First Baptist Church; Bro. John Lewis, Pastor of East Fulton Baptist Church; Bro. Chad Cummins, Pastor of Evergreen Baptist

Church; Bro. James Sprayberry, Pastor of First Baptist Church of Bay Springs. Please plan to be there.

## El Camino

By the time you read this, we should have already, Lord willing, ordained Bro. Marciano Maldoval into the gospel ministry. Bro. Marciano will be assuming a co-pastor role alongside Bro. Marroquin at El Camino. This will free up Bro. Marroquin, Manager of BMA of Mississippi Hispanic Missions, to focus on Hispanic church planting throughout the State of Mississippi. We will most likely have some photos in the next issue of the paper.

## Revolving Loan Fund

The Revolving Loan Fund of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi makes loans to BMA Churches. Our lowest interest rate is currently 4.25%. If your church is in need of a loan to build, remodel or refinance, please call us at 601-428-8616.

## Visit Our Website and Facebook Page

Our website is [www.bmams.org](http://www.bmams.org). Like our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/bmamsmissions>.

Reports for January 2016				
	High Attendance	Membership	Total Offerings	Mother Church
<b>Church Planters</b>				
Bob Burch (Caledonia)	72	53	\$8,460.00	East Fulton
Bobby Elliott (Burnsville)	58	42	\$2,984.00	Forked Oak
Sidney Farmer (S. Forrest County)	68	44	\$7,169.00	Paramount
Danny Bartlett (Clinton)	18	12	\$3,815.00	Wilderness
Phillip Burns (Sumrall)	26	8	\$1,280.00	First Bay Springs
Wesley Martin (Diamondhead)	36	27	\$5,411.00	Campground
Anders Lee (Southaven)	141	84	\$16,515.00	Charity
Kenneth Pollock (Sardis)	11	5	\$2,922.00	First Baptist Mantachie
<b>BMA of Mississippi Hispanic Missions</b> (Estuardo Marroquin – Manager) <i>(Estuardo Marroquin is also the Sr. Pastor of El Camino, which serves as the mother church for the church plants listed below.)</i>				
El Camino (Laurel)	116	121	\$7,602.00	
<b>Church Planters</b>				
Marciano Montalvo (Hattiesburg)	38	14	\$1,026.00	El Camino
Rodolfo Galicia (Biloxi)	6	3	n/a	El Camino
<b>(Elvis Garcia – Coordinator)</b> <i>(Elvis Garcia is also the Sr. Pastor of Way, Truth &amp; Life, which serves as the mother church for the church plants listed below.)</i>				
Way, Truth & Life (Ripley)	76	86	\$4,390.00	
<b>Church Planters</b>				
Humberto Navarro (Tupelo)	24	18	\$1,561.00	Way, Truth & Life
Luis Huchin (Oxford)	90	5	\$1,684.00	Way, Truth & Life
<b>BMA of Mississippi African American Missions</b> (Ed DuVall – Coordinator) <i>(Ed DuVall is also the Sr. Pastor of Homestretch which serves as the mother church for the church plants listed below.)</i>				
Homestretch (Cleveland)	29	50	\$3,879.00	
<b>Church Planters</b>				
James Cook (Olive Branch)	11	13	\$1,625.00	Homestretch
Collectively, our missionaries reported 330 new contacts, 192 opportunities to share the gospel, and witnessed 23 professions of faiths, and 14 joined by letter in January.				

## Clinton

Bro. Danny Bartlett shared that they received approval from the Architectural Committee on their plans. Now they move to a hearing of the Zoning Committee and then to a vote by the Clinton City Council. Please pray that the city will approve their plans so that we can purchase the subject property and get started building. He also shared a story of a lady he led to the Lord recently.

## Caledonia

Bro. Bob Burch shared that Caledonia has welcomed 13 additions recently. He said that Caledonia was going to have their first Vacation Bible School this year. Mrs. Vicki Bruce will be directing it. He said they will be welcoming youth groups or churches who would like to come and participate as a mission project. This would be a wonderful opportunity for a church to invest in missions and at the same time get good training for their youth. If you are interested in helping, please contact Bro. Burch at 601-323-2795.

## South Forrest

On June 9-11 South Forrest Baptist Mission will host Evangelism Explosion Training taught by Dr.

## Disciple Guide Ministry Highlights

### Great Escape Conference

The Great Escape conference recently set sail from Galveston, Texas, on a five-day Western Caribbean cruise. The Great Escape is a time for children and youth leaders to get away and get recharged. During the conference, leaders are given the opportunity to hear valuable teaching and to connect with fellow leaders. Jeff Herring, associate pastor at Oak Park in Little Rock, Arkansas, has attended almost every Great Escape. This is how Jeff describes it.

“My wife and I have attended The Great Escape conference for as long as I

can remember. I believe the only one we missed was when we were expecting our third child during the time of the conference. We have always enjoyed the conference, but we have especially enjoyed it since it has moved to a cruise ship-based conference.”

“When The Great Escape was previously held in a hotel/conference room setting it was beneficial to attend simply because of the content of the conference, but the awesome side benefit of having the conference on the cruise ship is the down time you get to spend with others that are in ministry like you and share concerns, struggles, victories, etc. In the previous hotel setting, you would attend the conference and usually break

## DiscipleGuide

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Attebery

to go eat with people you already knew then come back to the conference. On the cruise you are all thrown in together and you get to know others you might not have had the chance to meet otherwise.”

“We not only attend now because of the conference and whatever content will be shared, which is usually very practical to ministry, but also so we can

continue to meet others and spend time with our ministry friends that we have made throughout the years. Every year we leave refreshed and encouraged as a couple to continue in ministry. Many times The Great Escape has become a place where we have been able to give godly counsel to other ministers as they are facing difficult circumstances back home or we have been on the receiving end of that godly counsel. I believe The Great Escape conference not only provides some practical teaching on ministry, but it also provides invaluable time when ‘iron sharpens iron’ as we glean from the experiences of others.”

Mark your calendars for The Great Escape 2017, which will be January 14-19. Visit [discipleguide.org](http://discipleguide.org) for additional information on The Great Escape and other DiscipleGuide conferences.

### March Mission Trip to Daniel Springs Camp

#### Letter from Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Scurry, Texas

Following the 2015 summer camp for our youth, one of the sponsors approached our Mission Committee with an opportunity to assist Daniel Springs Camp with long-needed repairs and other modifications to the camp facilities. A delegation from our church visited the camp to determine the needs and how our church could assist in meeting them.

We met with Camp Director Jason Prewitt to ascertain what goals were envisioned for the camp and what immediate objectives could be accomplished prior to the opening of the camp for the 2016 season. We reviewed an infrastructure report that had been previously published, examined the current camp situation, and determined that we could lend assistance through our

2016 mission project, which would make the camp more enjoyable and eliminate some safety concerns that were noticed.

The immediate needs were determined to be the following: 1) replacement of three outdoor tabernacles; 2) painting of the dining hall interior and exterior; 3) removal of the grid ceiling in the indoor tabernacle; 4) repair of the rotted timbers on the retaining walls; 5) installation of handrails at the creek crossing steps and other key locations; 6) replacement of deteriorated air conditioning ducting on several buildings; 7) miscellaneous painting and sealing projects.

We at Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Scurry, Texas, are spear-heading a missions project to address those needs. We have calculated that the project will require an estimated \$42,000 in fund-

ing and approximately forty workers. Our church has pledged \$15,000 and twenty volunteers toward the project. We are seeking other churches to partner with us in this endeavor, both in monetary donations and volunteer help. Any funding received above our goal will be applied to other projects at the camp.

Since multiple congregations utilize the facility, we are requesting their assistance in this endeavor. Daniel Springs Camp is an important part of our children's futures and in their relationship with God. The camp provides a place where God can work miracles in their lives and let them come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. Letters requesting help for this project have been sent to the churches who utilize Daniel Springs.

We have scheduled this mission trip for the week of March 7, which coincides with Spring Break for most schools. However, realizing that other schools have different schedules, the core of our project team will be present at the camp during the month of March.

We envision this project to be a beginning, and with God's direction, further projects can be planned that will upgrade the camp's condition and allow the camp to continue to be a vibrant location for our children.

For further information or perhaps participation with us, you can contact Howard Mount (972-839-9617) or Rick Cheek (214-234-6947). Monies can be sent directly to: Daniel Springs Camp, P.O. Box 1749, Conway, AR 72033.

Be sure to earmark your donations as “Camp Renovation Project.”

## Church Changes from page 1

that they prefer to let the church die rather than change.

Six months after they called a young pastor from New Orleans to shepherd this transitioning congregation, I showed up for three days of ministry. As always, before and after preaching, I sat at a table drawing people. I was pleasantly surprised by the large number of children and teens and young families throughout the buildings. Already, the church is flourishing.

The longtime members of that little church are having to get used to a lot of change. The pastor does not wear a suit or tie or even a sport coat. Music is provided by a group composed of piano, several guitars, and a drum set. Four or five young adults were the praise ensemble.

It was a blessed service. The singing was great, the people were happy and friendly, and the fellowship was sweet. They're getting this right.

Being with such a happy group of God's people was such a joy.

What would happen, I wondered, if a

member who moved back to town after a year's absence walked into the service. A large screen flashes the words to hymns and choruses. The platform is covered by musical instruments, and an air of informality pervades.

Whoever heard of a church changing? (Smiley-face here)

Churches are always changing. Only the dead ones don't.

May I repeat that? Churches are always changing—if they are alive. I guarantee you that Saddleback Church (Rick Warren) in Orange County is always tweaking what they do. As does North Point (Andy Stanley) in Alpharetta, and Celebration Church (Dennis Watson) in Metairie.

But we see this same scenario playing out again and again.

You've belonged to that church for many years. You were attracted to it because of location and ministry, because you liked the pastor and the people were friendly. You have served

**continued on page 8**

## BMA of Mississippi Youth Department

Phone 662-316-6233 [www.facebook.com/bmamsyouth](http://www.facebook.com/bmamsyouth)



Kelby Johnson  
Director

### Summer Youth Camp Open To All Ages

It is time to sign up for Youth Camp! Our state camp will once again meet at Waukaway Springs Christian Retreat Center in Vossburg, Mississippi. The dates for this year's camp is June 6-8 and the cost is \$100 per person.

We are very excited to have Bro. Blake McCain as our speaker this year. Bro. Blake is the pastor of Midway First Baptist in Sumrall and will do a great job of challenging our students with the Word of God.

One new change for this year is that we are opening up camp for all ages. Many of the children who have attended our junior camps over the years are now reaching their teen years and we want to continue providing the camp experience that they have come to know and love.

We would love for you to experience camp with us this Summer. For more information and to preregister, contact Bro. Kelby Johnson at 662-316-6233 or [kelbyjohnson@yahoo.com](mailto:kelbyjohnson@yahoo.com).

**State Youth Camp**  
June 6-8, 2016  
Waukaway Springs  
Vossburg, Mississippi  
Speaker: Blake McCain, pastor  
Midway First Baptist, Sumrall



Don Brown

# Mississippi Baptist

# Opinion Page

www.msbbaptist.org

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

Don Brown - Editor

## An Essential Element To Success

Our Association understands that the “gift from the heart” is essential to the success and viability of each of the ministries that are supported by our churches. Regular monthly support given cheerfully to each department and ministry is the lifeblood of success. The Association has set aside months of “special emphasis” to highlight the needs of each ministry and to raise supplemental funds.

January of each year is the time set aside for your Mississippi Baptist.

The financial viability of this work is tied directly to regular monthly support AND a good special emphasis offering. We thank each church and individual for the offerings sent in this year. God bless you for your heartfelt support for the publication ministry.

Listed to the right are the gifts received as of this publication date. If your church has not given to our Special Emphasis this year, please consider sending in a gift. It is needed.

## A Good Friend Goes Home

Longtime Mississippi Baptist columnist Travis Plumlee passed away recently. Bro. Plumlee's ministry was multifaceted. He conducted retreats, youth conferences and camps, revivals and much more. He was a trusted counselor and writer.

He offered advice on various subjects through his column in this publication as well as others throughout our Association. His contribution and ministry proved fruitful and will be missed.

We have a number of articles he has written that we have not published.

From time to time we may run some. The advice in them is timeless. This ministry of his will continue to impact individual lives.

The Plumlee's medical expense, and no doubt other associated expenses, were not covered by insurance. Many have already given love offerings to help. A number of churches and individuals have called for the Plumlee's address.

All offerings and correspondence may be sent to Sharon Plumlee, P.O. Box 163, Mountain View, AR 72560.

I am sure they will be appreciated.

## Travis Plumlee

William Travis Plumlee, 60, of Mountain View, Arkansas, died January 28. He was born in Fort Worth, Texas, and was saved when he was eight years old.



Travis Plumlee

He surrendered to the ministry in 1993, and was ordained February 7, 1993 at Antioch Baptist Church in Conway, Arkansas.

Dr. Plumlee attended Slidell Seminary, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and University of Texas at Arlington and received a doctorate in theology.

He received many awards over the years for his service, including: Dr. Frist Humanitarian Award; World Center for Health Studies Quality of Life Award; American Cancer Society Counselor of the Year; American Hospital

Association Benson Award for Outstanding Advancement in Health Care Education; Agape Award, Houston AIDS Foundation; Ambassador's Award, Governor of Texas; Travis Plumlee Center for Women & Children, named for him; Tralee Crisis Center located in Pampa, Texas; and president of UCA Faculty Senate.

In December 1991, he began working with the BMA through Lifeword as a consultant provided by Rapha Hospital Treatment Centers in Houston, Texas. He came to help start a program that centered on starting small group ministries in local BMA churches to which Lifeword telephone volunteers could refer callers for continuing ministry.

Bro. Plumlee went on to establish Family Ark Ministries, which he said was “designed to meet the needs of the local church” through several venues, including teen conferences and Biblical Manhood and Biblical Femininity Conferences. Bro. Plumlee also produced numerous videos, audio tapes and CDs

## 2016 Special Emphasis Gifts Received

Antioch Baptist Church, Taylorsville .....	\$150.00
Bethel Baptist Church, Louise .....	\$200.00
Buffalo Baptist Church, Mclain .....	\$100.00
Canaan Baptist Church, Richton .....	\$300.00
Cypress Creek Baptist Church, Brookland .....	\$100.00
Ed Crockett .....	\$300.00
First Baptist Church, Bay Springs .....	\$327.00
First Baptist Church of Calhoun, Laurel .....	\$500.00
First Baptist Church of Shady Grove, Laurel .....	\$500.00
Hopewell Baptist Church, Fulton .....	\$53.00
Leakesville Baptist Church, Leakesville .....	\$250.00
Linda Collins .....	\$50.00
Little Creek Baptist Church, Perkinston .....	\$177.50
Magnolia Baptist Church, Hattiesburg .....	\$300.00
Mantachie First Baptist Church, Mantachie .....	\$200.00
Mary Rhoden, Carriere .....	\$25.00
Parkview Baptist Church, Laurel .....	\$100.00
Red Creek Baptist Church, Lucedale .....	\$100.00
Riverside Baptist Church, Ellisville .....	\$95.00
Spring Hill Baptist Church, Ocean Springs .....	\$62.58
Stephen Howell .....	\$50.00
Steve & Daura Crawley .....	\$100.00
Washington Baptist Church, Neely .....	\$209.75
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$4249.83</b>

on family issues. He also authored two books — Family Foundations and Practical Tips on Raising the King's Kids.

Survivors include his wife of 39 years, Sharon White Plumlee; a son, Austin (Amelia) Plumlee; a daughter Alison (Josh) Stearns; a brother, Ronnie (Sherry) Plumlee; a sister, Sandra (Butch) Cersonsky; and two grandchildren.

Funeral services were held February 1 at Flatwoods Baptist Church in Mountain View, Arkansas.

-from Baptist Trumpet reports

**Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi**  
www.bmaofmississippi.com

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# Keep It Simple

As a child, I never understood the idea of simplicity. A simple task, such as taking the trash to the curb, at once became a complex, multifaceted adventure that involved evading foreign spies, booby traps, and wild dogs. A five minute job could easily be transformed into a good two hours that would rival any Rambo movie.

"Down, Sassy, down"! Sassy was my mixed breed sidekick who I convinced was a world class squirrel dog. She believed this until the day she passed on, some ten years later. But in these early years, she was a method actor that nearly always involved her working for the Russians as an undercover agent.

My brothers and I would often sit for hours pouring over detailed plans under a dim light in our secret hide-

out. "You boys better come out of that bedroom and get your chores done" Dad would scream lovingly! "Be right there! We're almost done planning how we are going to mow the yard". For some reason, Dad never felt a simple task such as mowing required a lot of thought or planning. But then again, he was a grown up.

Now that I am a... (don't laugh, Mom)... "grown-up", I don't have time to plan intricately detailed, and well thought out modes of com-

pleting a task. A committee doesn't have to be formed, and delegates from neighboring countries don't have to be present. I just do it. As quickly as I can. So I can once again retreat to the safety of my recliner. Although, I do feel that washing the dishes bears a bit of contemplation, no matter what my wife says.

## From The Mind of Chuck Lee

Lee pastor's Pine Grove Baptist Church, Purvis. He may be reached by email at [leecharles47@yahoo.com](mailto:leecharles47@yahoo.com)



## Letters From Our Readers

Letters reflect the opinion of the writer and not necessarily this publication or the BMA of Mississippi

### Pastor Writes Concerning Outside Group's Action *The Ten Commandments in Itawamba County, Mississippi*

The Freedom From Religion Foundation, based in Madison, Wisconsin, has come to Itawamba County to tell us that we cannot display the Ten Commandments in our courthouse. We live in the Bible belt buckle of America with churches on nearly every corner. This non-profit organization sights, "separation of church and state" in the constitution as the foundation of their alleged lawsuit on behalf of their client. I ask anyone to show "we the people" where in the constitution does it state the separation of church and state. Our government tells us that we don't need God in our lives and that we have the right to govern ourselves by our own moral law. The Ten Commandments are the moral foundation on which our laws are based. If they are no good to us, then let's turn out every person in prison that has killed someone, stolen from their neighbor, or falsely accused someone.

Many of our great Presidents from the past such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Abraham Lincoln, believed in God and based our government on the belief in God. Many of our great documents such

as the Constitution, the Gettysburg address, the Declaration of Independence, contain statements of the belief in God. The Declaration states, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." We are one nation under God.

It is past time that "we the people" begin to stand up and stand firm on the rights to express our beliefs. What amazes me is that there have been no phone calls or letters from our county government to the churches of Itawamba County letting us know of the intent of this organization. Whether you believe in God or not, let's put it to the vote from the people. One person or a small group of people shouldn't tell us what we can or cannot do or keep in our courthouse. After all, it is the people's house and not the government's.

It is my intention to make my position known that we need to keep the Ten Commandments in our courthouse. Won't you stand with me as a God fearing believer on this important principle? I ask the pastors in our county to inform your people what is happening in our county. Let's take a stand for truth and the right as citizens of Itawamba County to display the Ten Commandments in our courthouse. I encourage our county government to stand and fight for "we the people." We will stand with you.

Matt Hudson, pastor  
Hopewell Baptist Church  
Fulton, Mississippi

# Southeastern Baptist College

Danny Pitts - President

4229 Highway 15 North, Laurel, Mississippi 39440, (601) 426-6346



Danny Pitts

*Serving Christ With a Biblical World View In A Christian Atmosphere*

## Students and Faculty Recognition

Southeastern Baptist College participated in the Headwae Banquet on February 2, 2016. Headwae is a day in which an outstanding student and an outstanding faculty member from each of the 34 institutions of higher learning in our state are honored. Those chosen from our school were Justin Rhodes and Dr. Shirley Hendricks. In addition to the honorees and their spouses, my wife and I attended.



Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant

The day began with everyone meeting at the Capitol. Governor Phil Bryan, spoke to the group, sharing that he was the first person from his family to pursue a college degree and recognized the difference

it had made. The representatives and their guests were given a tour of the state capitol. The Banquet was held at the Marriott. During the meal each college and honoree were identified.

Justin Rhodes is the pastor of Big Creek Baptist Church. He is an excellent student and has greatly supported the school in many ways. He and his wife Christie have three children.

Dr. Shirley Hendricks is Adjunct Professor in the Psychology Department. She and her husband Phillip have a son. They love the Lord and desire to be used of Him. Dr. Hendricks works with Crossroads Counseling Center which has offices in Laurel and Pearl, plus several other locations. Although Crossroads ministers to people with a variety of issues, they emphasize Christian Marriage and Family Counseling. Many pastors have been frustrated over the anti-religious perspective of some secular counselors. Crossroads may be the answer for you. The number is 601-939-6634.



President Pitts & Justin Rhodes



President Pitts & Dr. Shirley Hendricks

## Effective Praying Appreciated

Regularly people from our association come up to me and say that they are praying for me and the ministry of Southeastern. I truly appreciate your prayers. Dr. Jack Taylor said that God does not do anything without getting his people to pray first. There may be some exceptions to this with the Sovereign God, but this seems to be the normal method of operation by the Lord. Before sending judgment upon Sodom, he had Abraham to pray. Before sending Jesus to the cross, Jesus had Gethsemane. Before Pentecost, the 120 were praying. Do you know of anyone who was saved without anyone praying? Surely more will be done for the Lord at Southeastern when we are praying. Thanks again for your intercession for us.

## Former Pastor Dies

Malcolm LaTroy Clark, 58 of Lucedale, Mississippi passed away on February 8 after a lengthy illness. He pastored several churches in Alabama and Mississippi, including Temple at Lucedale, Rigby Street in Montgomery, Alabama, and Helton Road in Theodore. Bro. Clark was also a retired auto mechanic.

Survivors include his wife, Cynthia

"Cindy" Darlene (Cain) Clark; a daughter, Kristina (David) Pritchett; a son, Clifton (Kasey) Clark; his mother, Dorothy Jean (Wiggins) Clark; three brothers: John (Kristie) Clark, Dennis Clark and Kenny (Nicki) Clark; and 10 grandchildren.

Funeral services were held February 10 at Rocky Creek Baptist Church in Lucedale



**MISSIONS**  
baptist missionary association of america

# LIGHT INTO DARK

**WORLD MISSIONS DAY**  
**FEBRUARY 28, 2016**  
**BMAMISSIONS.ORG/WORLDMISSIONS**

## Women's Missionary Auxiliary

**President**  
Linda Smith  
2816 Old Bay Springs Rd.  
Laurel, MS 39440  
601-470-1398



**Corresponding Secretary**  
Mrs. Shirlene Smith  
730 Hwy 533  
Laurel, MS 39443  
601-729-5638

## National WMA Project Information

by Janet Widger  
National WMA President

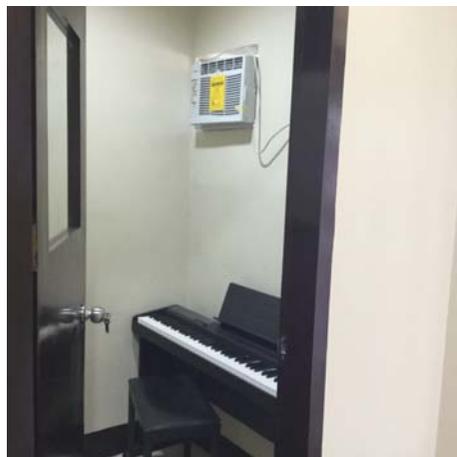
I would like to take a few minutes to answer some inquiries that I have received and to clarify information about the 2015-2016 National WMA project.

Last April when the Project Promotion Committee met with Bro. Doug and Sis. Diane Lee, it was decided to call this

project "Making a Joyful Noise in the Philippines". The funds received are to make needed repairs and renovations at the Bible College of the BMA of The Philippines.

A brochure was designed by Carolyn Colvert. The envelopes needed were donated by a generous lady from New Mexico and Committee Chairperson Alice Smith, and helpers addressed and mailed out this brochure last summer. I understand that several of these brochures were not delivered for various reasons such as bad mailing addresses, no mail box at address location, etc.

Further, to be good stewards of funds received, the Promotion Committee used FREE social media outlets. A short video was created by Carolyn Colvert and you can view this video by going to the National WMA web page [nationalwmaofbmaa.net](http://nationalwmaofbmaa.net) (I understand that the website has the wording "Asia Pacific" - this is the same project.) This video can also be accessed via YouTube and you can find information on our Facebook page National WMA



New piano and practice room at Philippine Bible College

Another means of finding out information about the project and to get exciting updates by sending your email address to Bro. Doug and Sis. Diane at [doug@musicservicesinc.com](mailto:doug@musicservicesinc.com) They will send you a monthly newsletter. To me,



New tile and bathroom work at Philippine Bible College

this has been exciting because as funds were received they have been forwarded and the work has begun and the Lees are posting pictures of the progress.

Last, but certainly not least, you still have time to contribute to this project if the Lord directs you to. For auditing purposes, the books will close on February 28, 2016. However, we will still collect for the project up until the 2016 meeting on April 26th.

Make you your check payable to the National WMA and mail to National WMA c/o Pat Duncan, P.O. Box 30, Hardy, AR 72542. I know the Lord will bless you for contribution.

Thank you and I hope to see many of you pril 26, 2016 in Gatlinburg.

## Hobolochitto WMA Meets

by Debbie Lott, Reporter

The Hobolochitto District WMA ladies met January 30, 2016, at Westlawn Baptist Church. A devotion was given by Jean Dunn about praising and trusting the Lord with scripture taken from Psalm 100 and Jeremiah 17:7-8. Bro. James Reeves brought the message with scripture taken from Proverbs 31:10 on Godly women.

Our next meeting will be at Wolf Creek Baptist Church on April 30. The attendance banner was awarded to Mt. Calvary Baptist Church. The closing prayer was given by Michelle Tebo.

## Mississippi State WMA Corresponding Secretary's Report

February 1, 2016

Total to account for .....	\$17,498.76
General Fund .....	\$10,263.21
Water for Christ (75%) .....	363.16
Ladies' Retreat Fund .....	6,852.39
Printing Fund .....	20.00
Total received .....	\$17,498.76
Project to date:	
75% Water for Christ .....	\$ 363.16
25% General Fund +	
Special offerings .....	112.19
Total received .....	\$ 475.35

Send offerings to:

Shirlene Smith  
730 Hwy 533  
Laurel, MS 39443

# MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME

18 LOWE ROAD, LAUREL, MISSISSIPPI 39443 - (601) 426-3928  
SIDNEY DAVIS - DIRECTOR



SIDNEY DAVIS

## Another Year to Serve the Lord

One month has already gone in the year 2016. The year 2015 quickly passed by in a hurry. To many it brought moments of heartaches and sorrows, births and deaths, ups and downs, sunshine days and stormy days, but that is all in the past. For God's many wonderful and glorious blessings we give Him our heartfelt thanks, praise, and adoration. Psalm 103:1-5.

With the Apostle Paul we should say, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13,14. As with Paul may we strive to be of greater service to our Savior in 2016. No doubt the year that is ours to serve the Lord in there will be sadness and joy, reunion and separation, but during the journey of this year there will be direction for every day, comfort for every sorrow, and a solution for every problem. Proverbs 3:5, 6.

## Food and Miscellaneous Rallies

Recent food and miscellaneous rallies were held at the Movella Baptist Church near Lucedale and Pastor Donald Brown, (Washington Baptist Association), the Rocky Branch Baptist Church near

Sumrall and pastor Robert Arinder, (Oak Grove Baptist Association), and the First Baptist Church of Orange Grove near Gulfport and Pastor Christopher Flynn, (Ten Mile Baptist Association). Our thanks and appreciation goes out to each church and individual who gave food and miscellaneous items as well as monetary gifts to the Home at these rallies.

## Students Recognized on Awards Day

In January our boys and girls received awards and certificates on their school work for the first semester of this school year. We are very pleased on the progress they are making in their studies. Our second grade boy made the Honor Roll. Our third grade girl received the Principal's Award (all A's) this semester. She is an Honor Roll (B average) student, but has taken that next step for which we are thankful. Our fifth grade girl also received the Principal's Award.

## Remember in Prayer and Focus Verse

Continue to remember the ministry of the Home in your daily prayer. "And let us not be weary in well doing: so in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Galatians 6:9.

## Kids Recognized For Academic Work



## 2016 Ladies Retreat Set

by Beth Caldwell, Retreat Chairman - 601-947-6011

The WMA officers have been busy planning this year's Ladies Retreat. The Retreat will be on August 26 and 27, 2016 at Camp Garaywa in Clinton. Sabrina Clayton will be the speaker for our retreat. The theme is "One Day at a Time."

I would like for you to mark your calendar now so you will not forget these dates. You may send your registration in beginning June 1, 2016. When you mark your choice of bed remember that it is on a first come basis. Registration will begin at 2:00 o'clock. Remember to bring items for the silent auction. This is always so much fun to see if you can get that item you really want.

Ladies, we all need this special time together so it is my prayer that you will begin planning today to be at Camp Garaywa on August 26, 2016. If you have any questions do not hesitate to call me and I will be glad to try to answer your question.

I am looking forward to receiving your registration on June 1, 2016.

2016 Ladies Retreat Registration Form on Page 8

## More Youth Auxiliary Notes . . .

### Mississippi Galilean President

My name is Braeden Martin, your Galilean state president. We had our state meeting Saturday to plan out this year's camp and next year's. We started out with prayer. Then we went over the schedule and decided our devotions we will do as officers. As we went along you could just see God begin to work. I have participated in several planning sessions and it is great to see God work. We went over what next year's theme should be and the roll of officers.

As an officer I must be a servant to Galileans and must be an example. We also went over how to make camp better. Our goals as an officer are to make camp fun, but also be focused on Jesus Christ. Then we prayed and that ended the meeting.

I am privileged to serve as the president and be a Galilean. Galileans has helped me though some tough times and has helped me keep my eyes on God. I thank the BMA for all of their support. Our camp is March 18-19 at Camp Garaywa in Clinton, Mississippi.

### VP Promotes GMA Camp

by Lakelan Flynt

Hey girls! My name is Lakelan Flynt and I'm the GMA 1st Vice President. I want to encourage all of you to come to GMA Camp this year! This year the House Party we plan will have a little talent show. If you would like to be a part of this write me at 1059 HWY 532 Mt. Olive, MS 39119 or text me at lakelanflynt@yahoo.com.

We would also like to invite your group to bring blankets to sit on during the House Party. We also encourage you to dress as a group in a costume that you feel relates to the theme. This theme this year is Anchored in Hope.

We look forward to seeing you at camp.

# Why are so many Christians biblically illiterate?

by **Jeremiah J. Johnston**

**From Foxnews.com** - Emblematic of the Bible's declining influence is what Harper Lee penned in her 1960 novel "To Kill a Mockingbird," in which the character Miss Maudie says, "Sometimes the Bible in the hand of one man is worse than a whiskey bottle in the hand of [another]."

Most Christians know enough about the Bible to be dangerous.

The Bible in America is a massive industry (\$2.5 billion) yet it is the best seller few read and fewer understand.

The Bible has become a moving target. One can strip it down, twist it, misread it, add to it, supplement it, and even overrule it, and, unfortunately, 95 percent of the congregation will not realize it.

Why? Because Americans no longer know the Bible. The evidence is overpowering that contemporary Christianity is Bible-ish, at best, and at worst, in some cases, Bible-less.

The American Bible Society releases an annual State of the Bible report and their research is persuasive in understanding the declining influence of the Bible in America.

Everyone has an opinion about the

Bible. Politicians attempt to use the Bible, Grammy-award winners quote it and Hollywood has portrayed it on the big screen.

Yet one problem remains: most are oblivious to the Bible's basic content, meaning, and message.

Across the pond, the results are even more dramatic: one-third of British parents thought Harry Potter was a thematic plot-line derived from the Bible.

The Bible is not held in the esteem it once was. Over the last 150 years, America has drifted from its Biblical focus. In an election season, it is remarkable to recall that, though he was not a member of any church, the Bible was valued as an authority in America so much so that Abraham Lincoln quoted from it four strategic times in his second inaugural address on March 4, 1865. President Lincoln used words ascribed to Jesus in Matthew 18:7 and — using the Bible — pronounced God's judgment on our nation for her moral bankruptcy of slavery.

The unwillingness of many Americans to dig deeper into the Scriptures is not related to a lack of options. The Gideons give away a Bible every second. One publisher sells more than sixty

different editions of the Bible.

Clearly, the challenge of biblical illiteracy in America is not because of a shortage of Bibles, but rather knowledge and appreciation of the Bible's message.

The Bible is a diverse love story. Actually, it is the greatest break-up-and-get-back-together story the world has ever known.

The message of the Bible is that even though we are not what we should be, God loves us, redeems us, and has a purpose for our lives.

A tremendously exciting new initiative is underway to re-introduce the world to the Bible.

In 2017 the six-floor 430,000-square-foot Museum of the Bible will open only two blocks from the National Mall in Washington D.C. The Museum of the Bible invites all people — those with faith and those without — to engage with the Bible

in an immersive experience with its unique history, narrative and influence.

Once one encounters the story of the Bible's history and preservation, the cost that was involved — and it was a

terrible cost — one can never again open the Scriptures with the same detached, careless attitude.

The story of how the Bible has come to us is a tale of heroism, courage, persecution, betrayal and towering faith in a God who raises the dead, mixed through the centuries with the blood of martyrs. If 80 percent of Americans believe the Bible is "God's word," shouldn't we show the Bible some respect by knowing more about it?

Jeremiah J. Johnston, Ph.D., is president of Christian Thinkers Society, a Resident Institute at Houston Baptist University where he also serves as Associate Professor of Early Christianity.

The evidence is overpowering that contemporary Christianity is Bible-ish, at best, and at worst, in some cases, Bible-less.

## 2016 Christian Women's Retreat

Sponsored by BMA of Mississippi WMA  
Camp Garaywa Conference Center — Clinton, MS  
August 26 & 27, 2016

### "One Day at a Time"

We are excited about this upcoming retreat. It will be one you will not want to miss.  
(Retreat: a perfect time to get away for spiritual renewal and relaxation.)

Program: Registration is from 2:30 – 5:00 PM Friday, August 26, 2016.

- o Dinner at 6:00 PM
- o General session begins at 7:00 PM
- o The retreat will continue through lunch Saturday, August 27, 2016.

The conference fee is \$45.00 per person and includes three (3) meals. Room accommodations vary on type room desired. Rooms at Patterson Place have two queen beds and are \$120.00 per night up to four (4) people per room. Accommodations in other parts of conference center are single beds with shared bathrooms at \$25.00 per night. For the adventurous, there are cabins with bunk beds at \$15.00 per person (*must furnish own linens*). These cabins have outside bath houses. All sleeping areas are air-conditioned.

Rooms are assigned on 'first come first served' basis. Registration form, conference fee, and room charge must be received together to get room of choice. Do Not delay, send registration in beginning JUNE 1!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_

#### ROOMS (Please check)

(1) Patterson Place: 1 per rm \$120 \_\_\_\_ 2 per rm \$60 ea \_\_\_\_ 3 per rm \$40 ea \_\_\_\_ 4 per rm \$30 ea \_\_\_\_  
(2) Single beds (\$25 ea) \_\_\_\_ (3) Outside cabins (\$15 ea) \_\_\_\_

List roommates \_\_\_\_\_

REGISTRATION FEE (\$45) \_\_\_\_\_

ROOM COST \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Camp Garaway is a  
SMOKE FREE campus

Please fill out (completely) registration form below, clip and mail with registration fee and room rent to: Beth Caldwell, 166 Twin Creek Rd, Lucedale, MS 39452. (Feel free to make copies of this form. One person registered per form.) **Cut off date for registration is Friday, August 19, 2016.**

(For more information or questions, contact Beth Caldwell, Ph. 601-947-6011 or 601-766-5702, Email: roybethc4@att.net)

## Church Changes from page 3

the Lord there in numerous capacities and your children grew up there. You have a history with that church. And now....

Now, it's not the same church.

There's a new pastor and new leadership. They are attracting a different group of people from the lovely group that drew you in. You feel less and less a part of things. You're not at home with many of the innovations they're doing now.

What should you do?

Recognize that churches are always in a state of change if they are alive.

Every time someone joins your church or leaves it, the church changes. Every time a member begins to get serious about reading the Word or witnessing or tithing or ministering, or when they backslide, the church changes. It is never static, never a frozen entity.

You yourself are growing and changing if you are alive and obedient. I grew up on a certain kind of church music, then grew past that. Later, my tastes changed and to no one's surprise, have changed again.

Your needs and requirements change.

My tastes change. It's called "life." After radiation treatment of the head and neck a full decade ago, many things no longer have a taste at all, while others are as wonderful as ever. I can handle spicy food better than before

since I have fewer functioning taste buds. Life is like that.

Perhaps you are dragging your feet and resisting something new the Holy Spirit is trying to do in your life.

You are if you insist that the Lord do something again in the same way He did it before. You are dragging your feet and resisting Him if you reject the new things He sends because they are outside your comfort zone. Do you suppose Jonah felt comfortable going to Nineveh? Don't you know it was way, way outside his comfort zone?

Perhaps the Lord has something new for you in the community and you should be in another church. This may be His way of cutting you loose from those ties that have bound you so you can move forward.

Are you open to new things? New ways?

If you are not, you're going to have trouble with the Lord Jesus.

"Behold," the Lord said, "I make all things new" (Revelation 21:5). He wasn't just talking about Heaven, friend.

He's making me ever-new right now. Yep, I said that. Psalm 92:12-15 promises that. "The righteous will flourish... They will still bear fruit in old age... They will be full of sap and very green..."

So, what do you do when your church changes? Grow with it.