

Dates To Remember

January 7-8, 2008
BMAA Missions Symposium
Temple Baptist Church
Little Rock, Arkansas

February 25-26, 2008
BMA of Mississippi
Pastor's Retreat
Skyway Hills Baptist Church
Pearl, Mississippi

March 13, 2008
BMA of Mississippi
Missions Conference
Skyway Hills Baptist Church
Pearl, Mississippi
8:30 am - 8:30 pm

2008 BMA of Mississippi
Senior Adult Conferences
South Conference
March 27, 2008
Big Creek Baptist Church
Soso, Mississippi

North Conference
May 13, 2008
East Amory Baptist Church
Amory, Mississippi

This Could Be You!!

By **Ralph Izard, MD**

"I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." Isaiah 6:8

Recently a BMMI team was in Rozhdestvo, Russia (this town's name is translated "Christmas" in English) and were hosted by a school which has over 350 students. Some of them live in the village and return home each night, but many live at the school because their family doesn't have sufficient food for all their children, or there is no heat in the house. The village is approximately 300 miles north of Moscow, so the temperature is very cold in the winter.

The BMMI extends a heartfelt THANK YOU to each one who made scenes like this real (pictured below). These would be impossible without those who pray daily for the BMMI, those who are faithful to contribute financially that we might be able to purchase supplies, medicine, and support for each medical team, those who work in the warehouse counting or packing medicine, and those who join a medical team to serve on a foreign mission field.

I urge you to look at the tentative schedule of the trips for the coming year and then pray about being a part of one of the teams. Medical training is not necessary to join a team, just a desire to see others accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. If the Lord leads you to participate, please call Doris at 501-455-4977. Note: In order to have the best flight schedules and better seats on the plane, the

JANUARY 1, 2008

VOL. 62 No.1

Mississippi Baptist

JOURNAL OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

A Tribute

By **Aubrey (Buddy) Johnson**
BMAA Hispanic Church Planting Coordinator

Carlos Heriberto Ramos Sanchez
(1967-2007)

We first met Carlos in the second home Bible study we conducted in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. We studied John 3 concerning the teaching of being born again. That night both Carlos and his "live in" Mari, got on their knees, repented of their sin, and asked Jesus to come into their hearts and give them the gift of eternal life. Tears streamed and the joy of our Lord filled the room that night of April 20, 2006. I well remember these words from Carlos, "Please tell me the truth and teach me all that God wants with my life. I will obey all that you teach me." I shuddered at the awesome responsibility. The very first thing I told him was, "Carlos, you need to stop living with Mari out of wedlock." The next day he rented another room for Mari and obeyed his commitment until they were married six months later. They were married in our church one Sunday evening and the next Sunday morning they were baptized. Carlos was obeying the teachings of the Bible.

One day Carlos told me that he worked with several Hispanics from his home country, El Salvador, and that he was talking with

them about Christ.

He said that one lady wanted us to come to her house and begin Bible Studies there also. That week we began in the new home and Carlos now attended both Small Groups each week plus attending Sunday School and Worship. The groups grew and soon there were

more than 25 attending our Sunday services from both groups. Many were saved and baptized into the fellowship of our church. When we left Baton Rouge, there was a vibrant group of Hispanics from ten different countries worshipping together. Here is the blessing - with the exception of one young couple, every single person who had been saved and united with our group was a direct result of Carlos' witness. What an obedient servant!

Carlos and Mari lived on the third floor of an apartment complex where they were



Carlos Ramos

alerted on November 18 at 10:15 p.m. by loud voices. Mari ran to the window and observed fire and smoke coming from the windows on both sides of their apartment. Carlos took her by the hand, ran to the door, and opened the door only to be engulfed by rushing flames. He covered his face with his hands and ran through the fire to the pavement below. Mari was pushed back through the apartment to the back wall where she opened a window, climbed through the window and hung there until the fire forced her to drop to the pavement below. They were placed in the same ambulance and rushed to the Hospital. Mari survived with a broken heel, separated shoulders, punctured lung, and burns on her hands and wrists. Carlos died on December 5, 2007. He never regained consciousness following the ride to the Hospital. He has three children in El Salvador. Mari also has three children and both she and Carlos were working to support and educate the six children. Now the burden is all on Mari's shoulders. At the time of this writing, attempts to send Carlos' body back home are underway. However, the red tape and an embargo on transported bodies during the holidays is hindering the process. I would ask you who read this "tribute" to pray for Mari and the situation she is trying to confront. Also I would ask you to consider helping her with the tremendous expenses that burden her.

The memorial service for Carlos was a real tribute to a new Christian who was in the process of becoming a true Champion for Christ. In all the years I have worked with Hispanics, and of all with whom I have worked and disciplined, Carlos became the most dedicated and widest used sooner than all the others. As difficult as it is to form great Hispanic leaders, Carlos' death is a tremendous blow to our work. However, his life and work were great encouragements to this missionary and his witness honored his Savior. Will you help us thank our Lord for what He did through Carlos Ramos? Some of the people Carlos touched with his life are now attending Bible Study Groups and attending church where Carlos had invited them. I am thankful to God for saving men and using them to help us win others to Christ. I will miss Carlos.

Your financial help may be sent to our BMA Department of Missions marked "Carlos Ramos Memorial". Thank you for your prayers and help.



BMMI Team enjoy playing table tennis and eating with the students

team needs to be complete six to eight weeks before the departure date.

Again, thank you for your support of "Children Helping Children", the Christmas Shoebox project, and the BMMI medical teams as they were deployed to five different continents this year. We are depending on your participation and support for the projects already planned for 2008!

BMMI Trips planned for 2008 include Mexico, Cambodia, El Salvador, Philippines, Armenia, Laos, Thailand, Russia, Ghana, Georgia (CIS), Peru, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, China, and Nigeria.

CHURCH NEWS

News articles should contain information that will be of interest to the general public who are not members of the church that is reporting.



Scotland, Bentonia

Scotland Baptist Church has been busy celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior during this Christmas season.

The Christmas festivities began early in the month, with the Adult Sunday School Class hosting a fish fry for the Older Adult Sunday School classes. A wonderful time was had had by all.



On December 9, the adult choir presented the Christmas musical "Gather at the Manger" under the direction of Mrs. Brenda Dearman. The musical was such a blessing to the community that two encore performances were done at Melrose Baptist Church as well as Bethlehem Baptist Church.

On Sunday, December 16, 2007, the Children's Choir presented their musical, "The Little Bell that Would Not Stop Ringing". Under the direction of Mrs. Margaret Turner and assistance by Dana Pierce, Amber Johnson, and Cara Hill, the children also played handbells to the musical selection "Silent Night". An encore performance of the program was presented on Sunday, December 23, 2007. The younger youth also prepared fruit baskets for the elderly of the community and distributed them as they caroled throughout the Scotland area.

If you ever find yourself in the Scotland community, please stop by and worship with us where everyday with Jesus is sweeter than the day before.

Melanie Hardy
Church Reporter

East Central Meeting

The East Central Association met at Dykes Chapel Church for its last quarterly meeting of 2007. It was called to order by the Moderator, Bro. T. Watts.

The message, a very moving one, was brought by Bro. H. Rogers, Pastor of Zions Rest. He based his message on Revelation 3:14-22; entitled: Danger of Forgetting.

The host church welcomed the Association. The previous minutes and treasury report was read and accepted as read.

Bro. Jeff Hines, Sr. and his son, Jr., missionaries from Michigan and Canada, respectively gave a very moving report on their work. No other State Workers were present. Bro. Randy Clark extended a hand to Bro. Rogers for such an inspiring message.

Bro. Watts said there were several very important things to be brought before the churches and reminded all that the Pastors or Moderators (if a Church was without a Pastor) were to meet one hour prior to each Association Meeting.

Our next meeting will be at 7:00 p.m., February 7, 2008, at Fairhope Church in Beaumont. We heartily welcome visitors, especially our State Workers to come and be with us. We do enjoy our State Workers attending and informing us

Space To Repent

by Grover Laird

"And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not." (Revelation 21)

Our text is taken from a letter Jesus sent to the Church at Thyatira. He is speaking of a wicked Prophetess that He calls Jezebel. She was on the edge of some frightening judgments if she did not soon repent. More than we would like to think may be there also. Consider with me some thoughts on our subject.

I. Repentance Will Not Completely Abolish Pending Judgments

Some feel that if they obtain forgiveness of their sins, this will eliminate whatever punishment that was pending. What happened to David will prove otherwise. After David's great sin with Bathsheba, David truly repented. (Psalm 51) Nathan the prophet did said unto David, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin." (II Samuel 12:13) However, the Lord did not revoke the judgment He had already pronounced against David. (II Samuel 12:15) Indeed, the sword did not depart from his house.

II. True Repentance Can Lighten God's Punishment Of Sin

Though David's repentance did not remove the judgment the Prophet warned him of, it surely made things much better. Being forgiven, David could enjoy the fellowship of his Lord. Nothing determines our peace and happiness in this world more than this. With everything clear between David and his Lord, he could also be used of God in divine service. Untold blessings have come to people from David's Psalms, many of which God directed him to write after his great sin. True repentance can do much for the sins of the past.

May I also add here that repentance and faith on the part of the unsaved will also do wonders. It will make them a new person in Christ, with their transgressions forgiven and their sins covered. (II Corinthians 5:17; Psalm 34:1) It can also open to them great opportunities of service. (Study the life and ministry of the Apostle Paul.)

III. There Is Much Involved In True Repentance

God's children do not obtain forgiveness by a short, insincere prayer. If one obtains God's mercy in forgiveness, there must be a sincere confession and a change-- "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." (Proverbs 28:13)

IV. God Does Often Give Space To Repent

For three years Rehoboam led the kingdom of Judah in the right direction. (II Chronicles 11:17) After those three years he "forsook the law of the Lord." (Ch 12:1) About two years later the Lord caused the King of Egypt to come against him, as a punishment for his sins, taking over many cities of Judah. By sincere repentance, Rehoboam saved himself much of the judgment that was on its way, but not all of it. From the time that Jeroboam turned from the Lord until judgment came, God seem to give him time to repent. Had the King turned back during those days, he would have saved himself much sorrow and lost. (II Chronicles 12:2-4) Other kings in Judah such as Asa, (II Chronicles 16:1,10,12,13) and Joash, (II Chronicles 24:22-25) were also given space to repent. They surely could have saved themselves much pain by a lesser judgment had they taken advantage of it.

V. We Can Affect God's Blessings As Well As Judgments

I am closing with four verses of Scripture for each of us to ponder. Two of them clearly teach us that God's judgments can be affected by our repentance, especially when we do so in the space God gives us to change. The other two verses tell us that by turning from the Lord we can stop wonderful blessings that the Lord was planning to send.

"At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." (Jeremiah 18:7-10)

Tennessee pastor prays 'in the name of Jesus' in D.C. ceremony

CLARKSVILLE — Early in his life, Roger Freeman made a promise that he would never deny God's name.

So, when he was first approached by the National Park Service about praying at the lighting of the national Christmas tree on Dec. 6, Freeman, pastor of First Baptist Church here and a past president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, said he would have to be able to pray in the name of Jesus.

Officials from the park service told him to write out a prayer and send it to them, Freeman recalled, noting the process began in September.

Freeman worked for about half a day on a prayer that had to be delivered in one minute.

He penned the following words and sent it in for review: "Holy Father, thank you for this season of brotherhood and hope for all humanity. We celebrate the beauty of your creation and the light you give, even in the lighting of our national Christmas tree. We rejoice in the happiness of people who care for one another and share love for every

person.

"Bless all our military who serve to protect us and to honor our country. Encourage and strengthen each military family member who bears the extra burden of sacrifice. Guide and bless our president, Mrs. Bush and their family, and all our nation's leaders. May your love be felt in all the nations of the world.

"Thank you for the timeless announcement of this season which is given to all peoples, 'peace on earth, good will to all.' May this promise unite all your children. In the name of Jesus, who gave us the first Christmas. Amen."

"I didn't really expect to hear from them," Freeman admitted.

But three days later he was notified that he was approved to deliver the prayer he submitted.

Freeman was nominated to deliver the prayer by Amy Spiceland Scofield, who was a teenager at FBC when Freeman went there as pastor 14 and one-half years ago.

Scofield now works with the National Park Service. Freeman said her remembrance of him is a reminder that "when you preach to teenagers you do not know what they will do with their influence in the years ahead.

"She loved her church and her pastor and she did such a good job that when she suggested a name, they listened," Freeman said

as to what is transpiring within our Missionary Works.

The ladies of the Host Church had prepared a wonderful meal for us. The Fellowship, as well as the food, was enjoyed by all.

Tommy Watts Moderator
David Daw, Reporter

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Mississippi Baptist

January 2008 Special Emphasis



Don Brown
Editor

Dear Readers

January of each year is set aside by our association as a time of special offerings for your Christian Publications Department. We have 3 main areas of operating income:

1. Monthly subscription fees
2. Regular monthly offerings from churches
3. Our *Annual Special Emphasis Drive*.

Our financial viability depends on YOUR gifts during January 2008. We encourage each of our churches to make a special effort to give to this ministry during this special drive. Would you lead your church to make a special offering in January? We really need your help!

May God bless you all,
Don Brown, Editor

Our Need \$10,000

Mississippi Baptist | Opinion Page

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

God's Blessings in 2008

May the Lord's blessings be yours in 2008. God has great things in store for His people. He does His part. It is up to us to put ourselves in the center of His will, obey His commands, and reap the benefits of obedience. God loves His people and I am convinced He wants only good for them. Let us all press forward in this new year to serve Him in a pleasing manner, working to accomplish His will in this wicked world in which we



Don Brown
Editor

live.

I am writing this on the day that a political leader in Pakistan was assassinated. The world in which we live is certainly in turmoil. Satan is indeed alive and well and working hard to combat the good will of our Father in Heaven. Wickedness is not called wickedness any longer in our society. There is no shame or embarrassment - even among those who claim to know and serve God.

That which God warned us of has come to pass - They will call

"And if you faithfully obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.

And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the LORD your God. Deut. 28:1-2

evil good and good evil.

Faithfulness to God, His Word and His work is vital in the days in which we live. May we all be found faithful in 2008 preaching His precious Gospel and reaching others for Christ's sake.

May you be blessed in 2008.

Things Have Changed But People Still Need the Lord

By Phil Knott,
Director of Operations for Latin America
BMAA Missions Department

"Typewriter?" she asked. "What's that?" This question from a new generation of kids who have not seen one of those antique machines demonstrates how things have changed in just a few decades. With the rapid advance of technology things that were new just a few years ago have become obsolete, relics of the past. Feature this: Students starting college this fall were born in 1989. They are too young to remember the first space shuttle disaster. Their lifetime has always included AIDS. The CD was introduced the year they were born. They have always had cable TV and a remote control. Popcorn has always been cooked in the microwave. They do not care

who shot J.R.

At one time in my youth I had long hair. Now, I long for hair! Yes, things change. But one thing doesn't - God and His Word. Our commitment in Missions Literature Ministry can be simply stated: God's Word to the world. Through the printed page, the Good News of Jesus Christ has brought deliverance from is and the hope of eternal life to lost souls all around the world. The answer to sin and moral chaos will forever be the same. That has not changed!

The missionary endeavors of the Baptist Missionary Association of

America have involved MLM in places all around the globe. One of the first attempts by BMAA missionaries to print systematic Sunday School literature was in Portugal and Brazil. Edited lessons were sent to Portugal. A print shop was established in Brazil to produce the literature. In recent years it became more feasible to send the work to a commercial print shop, but to this day the material is still being produced and serving the churches of Brazil.

Publishing in the Philippines has played an important role in the development of churches in this island nation. Sunday School literature, gospel tracts, and material for church planters have been key areas of work for their printing establishment located in Bicolod City, on the island of Negros. And there are some new things on the horizon. Filipino missionaries from BMA churches are spreading throughout Southeast Asia, sharing the gospel and starting new churches. Places such as Cambodia, Hong Kong, Thailand, Laos, and yes, even China are now

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Church of the Covered Dish BY THOMAS TAPP



"Some people think the pastor is a bit of a people pleaser"

2008 Pastor's Retreat

February 25-26, 2008

Skyway Hill Baptist Church
Pearl Mississippi

Theme

The Local Church in Global Missions
Matthew 28: 19-20

The four assigned parts for this study will be presented as follows:

- I. Discipleship and Leadership Development Dr. John Adams
- II. How to be a Missionary-Sending Church Dr. Medrick Savell
- III. How to Lead a Missions-Minded Church Bro. Don Brown
- IV. Local Church Cooperation in Global Missions Bro. Leon Carmical

Three speakers will be selected from the attendees.
The fee for the retreat will be \$25.00.

Registration will begin at 1:00 P.M. on Monday, February 25.

Pastors, mark your calendars now and plan to attend this retreat!



Mississippi Baptist

USPS 353-960
P.O. Box 8181
Laurel, Mississippi 39441-8000

Phone 601-426-3293
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Published on the 1st and 15th of each month by the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi. Periodical postage paid at Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39402.

Postmaster: Send address changes to the Mississippi Baptist Paper, P.O. Box 8181, Laurel, MS 39441-8000.

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E-Mail - editor@msbaptist.org
Web site www.msbaptist.org

PRICE
\$20.00 Per Year by Mail
\$10.00 Per Year by Email
CHURCH PLAN
\$ 1.30 Per Month



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John Adams

2008 Olympics - No Bibles

The Chinese government seems to be sending mixed messages about religion and religious freedom during the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, and conflicting reports have clouded the issue of the legality of Bibles at the Olympics. The most recent information indicates that Bibles will be allowed at the Olympics, but that each visitor to China will be allowed to bring in only one Bible. On Nov 2, however, the Baptist News Agency reported that "Bibles were among the objects prohibited in the Olympic Village." The story cited the Italian newspapers La Gazzetta dello Sport report that Olympic organizers cited "security reasons" for outlawing any religious symbols at Olympic facilities.

Alcohol Billboards

www.onenewsnow.com reports that in 2007 alcohol billboards boosted kids desire to drink beer, wine, whiskey, etc. A new study adds weight to the common-sense perception that the behavior of our nation's youth is influenced by Madison Avenue. This time researchers said children are getting the message when it comes to outdoor advertising of alcohol.

A study conducted by the University of Florida (UR) and the University of Minnesota sought to find what effect alcohol advertising on billboards and window displays had on preteens and early teens.

Researchers studied students in Chicago and counted the number of ads within a two-block radius of their schools, then used that data to determine the effect of those ads on student's attitudes toward alcohol use.

Overall finding was that the more ads, the higher the intentions for the young people to drink alcohol - and this is 12 year olds in the sixth-grade that was studied.

Researchers were looking at how many ads students were exposed to at age 12, and if that had an influence on their intentions to drink and their attitudes about alcohol in the eighth grade. The study found a strong association.

Men in the Home

Pray for the men, husbands, dads, and grandfathers that are in the American homes. This past decade has seen a tremendous assault on the Biblical based homes and family

values. Today's self-centered generation heaps scorn on the traditional marriage of one man and one woman. They portray the picture as being outdated. We continue to need strong, God-fearing males in our homes.

Limited by Three Things...

It is reported that every man is limited by three things:

- 1) the knowledge in his mind
- 2) the strength of his character, and
- 3) the principles upon which he builds his life.

Challenged by Three Principles...

Every man has three primary Christian duties in the home:

- 1) live in submission to the Lord,
- 2) pray for his wife and children, and
- 3) use God's Word as his guiding source.

National Prayer Breakfast

Your director and Mrs. Adams will be representing the BMA of Mississippi Christian Action Commission and First Baptist Church, Mantachie at the 2008 National Prayer Breakfast and Leadership

Conference in Washington, D.C., Thursday, February 7. The event will start on Monday, February 4 and culminates with the breakfast on Thursday, Feb 7, 2008. President and Mrs. Bush will host approximately 3,400 attendees from all countries in the world. The event will be at the Washington Hilton and Senators, Representatives, Supreme Court Justices, cabinet members and military leaders will be present. "Prayer" is the theme of all four seminars. We count it an honor to attend and pray for our nation among our nation's leadership.

Welcome to our New Trustees

Rev. Bobby Jarrell, Friendship Baptist Church, Baldwin
 Dr. Eugene Anderson, Vardaman Street Baptist Church, Wiggins
 Rev. Edward Duvall, Homestretch Baptist Church, Cleveland

C.A.C. Supporting Churches

Temple, Biloxi
 Unity, Guntown
 Vardaman Street, Wiggins
 Washington Association, Lucedale
 Washington Baptist Church, Neely

Things Have Changed

from page 4

the focus of missionary work from our base in the Philippines. What will be the literature needs of those areas? Gospel tracts, books, Scripture portions, evangelistic and discipleship studies for small groups and home churches are some to name a few. What role does and will the printed word play in many areas not open to traditional church ministries? These are exciting days in missions as we envision a multilingual and multinational outreach in Asia through the written word.

BMAA missionaries and church planters are spread throughout an eight-nation area of West Africa. From our base of operations in Ghana, the gospel has been carried to a region filled with animistic tribal religions and folkloric superstitions. Along with Islam, Catholicism, and a myriad of other religions, they compose the spiritual and moral landscape of Africa. Many of these regions were unknown to us just a few years ago. The march of BMAA missionaries through these nations have been swift. God has blessed His Word,

and the growth has been exponential in some areas. Again, one of the common elements in all these areas is the written word. MLM in West Africa has been in the form of used literature distribution. Yes, those leftover, used Sunday School books in your church are collected, sorted, shipped, and put to good use in a land hungry for the truth. A new printing project has been also taken on - Bible studies, and gospel tracts in French for use in France, Africa, and Canada.

One of the principle areas of assistance to the Baptist Unions of Russia and the Ukraine has been in producing literature for a growing Sunday School movement. Not just printing literature, but aiding in the creation of editorial and publication staffs, training for writers, and workshops for leaders and teachers. MLM continues to be an important partner in these countries of the former Soviet Union.

Editorial Bautista (formerly Casa Bautista) has changed its location to Texarkana. But its commitment to excellence and truth remains the same. It's ministry is still to re-

COMMISSION ON HISTORY & ARCHIVES

Johnny Watts, Director
 288 Lonesome Pines Rd, Laurel, MS 39443
 601-729-8098



Johnny Watts

From your Commission on History...

We pray that all of you had a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year and may the New Year be one of continued blessings for all our churches.

AVAILABLE FOR SERVICE

Listing of names does not indicate endorsement. This column is for information purposes only.

Donald Sims

Donald Sims is available for pulpit supply and pastoral work as The Lord may lead. He and his wife are members @ Bethel Baptist church of Wiggins and can be contacted @ 601-528-3295.

Larry Pierce

Bro. Larry M. Pierce of Lucedale is available to fill in the pulpit or where ever the Lord leads. He may be reached at 601-947-3531.

Position Available

Church Seeks Youth Minister

Lebanon Baptist Church, Laurel, Mississippi, is seeking a youth minister/director. We are willing to consider someone full-time or part-time for this position. If you are interested, please forward your resume and references to Lebanon Baptist Church, 460 Lebanon Road, Laurel, MS 39440.

source both churches and missions in the United States and across Latin America in making disciples for Christ. MLM has followed right along with the missionary expansion of the BMAA in Latin America, now to seventeen countries including Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. The challenge now is to match a greatly expanded mission field with rapidly changing demographics, and support new styles of ministry and outreach.

No, our world is not the same as it was ten or twenty years ago. But one thing is constant: people do need the Lord. He is ours to share. With every piece of paper, thousands upon thousands, on which is written the name of Christ, God is glorified and His name lifted up.

Mailing Addresses for Departments & Commissions of BMA of Mississippi

Mississippi Baptist Paper

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Mississippi Baptist Children's Home

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State Missions & RLF

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 Laurel, MS 39440

Commission on Senior Adults

Vern D. Holifield
 658 Joe Perrett Rd.
 Laurel, MS 39443

History & Archives Commission

4229 Highway 15 North
 Laurel, MS 39440

Christian Action Commission

P.O. Box 88
 Mantachie, MS 38855

What Should I Do ?

We all have to make decision in our life. We make hundreds of decisions every day. Most of these require little thought. From time to time, though, we have to make some major decisions that will effect our life greatly. These are the ones I wish to address in this article. We need to make sure that all of us make decisions that will bring honor to God, and that is the best decision for the path He has set before us. It would be good for us to remember what the Lord has told us

in His Word regarding decision making. Proverbs :5,6 “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

Here are some helpful tips on making important decisions in your life.

1) Take Your Time - Proverbs 4:26 “Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.” Ponder. Think about it. Pray about it. We are to pray about everything in Philippians 4:6. It is reckless to your life as a Christian to make a decision without consulting your Father. We live in a world where we are used to everything being fast and quick. We want fast answers. No one wants to wait on God anymore.

We make so many wrong decisions because we think time is running out. We run ahead of God and get into trouble by making the wrong decision in the flesh. Sarah couldn't wait on God either, and look at the trouble received by an ill-conceived child. Don't let other people pressure you into making a snap decision. If they say, ‘ But I have to know NOW!?’ then tell them, ‘If you have to know now, then the answer is no. But if you can wait until I have had time to pray and think about it; then we will see.’ Major decisions should never be made quickly on the spur of the moment. You don't have to drag it out forever, but don't be hasty with major decisions.

2) Never make a decision in the middle of a crisis. When emotions are raw, it is the wrong time to make sound decisions. You tend to make decisions with your heart alone, and fail to also use the sound mind that God gave us. I think it is important to use both the heart and mind in decision making. I used to work in hospitals. Part of my job as a counselor, was simply helping families and patients make sound decisions about after-hospital care. In the emergency room, people thought they had to make life-changing deci-

sions instantly. That is not always the case. The doctor may need to. But the family needs to go home and rest and pray through some things in some instances. When the family is all upset, it is the worst time to make a permanent decision. Wait until things calm down a bit, even if it is just waiting until morning. A new morning puts a new perspective on many issues.

3) Involve others. If it is important, it is a wise thing to seek advice.

Proverbs 1:5 ‘A wise man will hear, and will increase learning, and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsel.’ Don't let other people make your decision. All people, even loving ones, may have a clouded heart because of their affection for you. So, we have to take counsel with a grain of salt. However, it is good to seek Godly advice. Don't seek advice from TV therapist or people that do not spend time with God. For your sake, if it is important for your future, I would seek out advice from someone I know who is mature in their faith and spends time with God. It is usually pretty clear who these people are in your life. Ask for objective help and then take this advice and incorporate it into your prayer and decision processes.

4) Don't make selfish decisions. God wants us to be Christ-like. This means that we always think and consider others. Who else should I include in this decision process because the outcome will also effect their life? Who else will I need help from to accomplish this goal? You don't live in a world by yourself, and you should never make decisions that are only benefitting you. A wise head of the house will gather input from his whole family to make sure he is making the best decision for the family. A wise husband wouldn't want to make a decision without seeking advice from his equal life partner.

Life is not just about you. It is about God. Make decisions that will give God the most glory. Make decisions that will not promote you the most, but promote the cause of Christ the most. Above all, be sure that your decisions are Godly for the plan that He has for your life. Otherwise, you will wind up in a fish's belly like Jonah. And that is a miserable place to be.

Proverbs 4:23,25 ‘Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.’ Scripture calls wisdom a ‘she’ in Proverbs 4:9 and says ‘She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.’ Wisdom in decision making is an ornament and a crown.

Tennessee pastor prays

from page 3

To Freeman's knowledge he is the first Baptist pastor to deliver the invocation at the ceremony in recent years.

Freeman admitted to being nervous about praying at the national ceremony. “It was the first time I ever practiced a prayer. I said it over and over,” he laughed.

He recalled that he was nervous as he advanced toward the platform, “but once I went out there the Lord took over and the fear went away.”

A highlight of the occasion was the opportunity to stand with President Bush on the platform as the band played “Hail to the Chief.”

“At that moment I realized I was representing the Lord who was over all authority, all kings, all nations,” Freeman said. “I shed a tear after I realized God allowed me to have a part in that.”

Freeman also was impressed that President Bush began his remarks, “Tonight we celebrate the good news that in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago a Savior was born.”

“That was commendable,” Freeman said.

Freeman still is not quite sure why he was selected. He thinks part of the reason is that he hails from a military town (Fort Campbell), and he was honored to have represented Fort Campbell, the city of Clarksville, and his church

“It wasn't about me. It was about the city and First Baptist Church,” he stressed.

Freeman also believes very strongly that he was chosen because God wanted His name honored at the Capitol.

“God gave me favor for some reason. I'm thankful to God for the privilege. It was an incredible blessing,” Freeman said.

While he considers the experience to be a blessing and honor, he is adamant that the greatest honor he has is to be the pastor of a Baptist church. “When all is said and done, strong churches and strong families make a strong nation.

“My only ambition is to please the Lord Jesus and to be the pastor of a Baptist church.”

Freeman was accompanied on the trip by his wife Priscilla and daughter Sarah.

President Calvin Coolidge started the national Christmas tree tradition in 1923 with the lighting of a 60-foot-tall “Community Christmas Tree.”

In 1941 President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill lit the tree together, but the next three years the ceremony took a hiatus due to a war-imposed blackout. In 1963 the assassination of President John F. Kennedy launched a 30-day period of national mourning, delaying the lighting of the tree until Dec. 22.

The current tree is a 40-foot-tall Colorado blue spruce that was planted in 1978. It was brought to Washington from York, Pa. The ceremony takes place in an area known as the Ellipse, south of the White House.

“I just always thought it was a terrific ceremony that recognized Christmas as a national holiday as well as a Christian holiday and felt like it was the beginning of the Christmas season in America,” Freeman said before actually participating in the event.

Performing at this year's ceremony were country music artist Sara Evans, classical artist Holly Stell, singer/actor Julian Ivey, the St. Albans and National Cathedral Schools Choir, and the United States Air Force Band



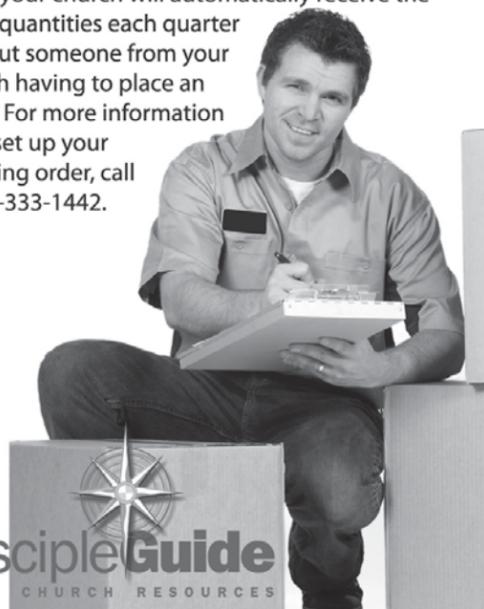
Family Ark Ministries

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BMA of Mississippi Missions Conference

March 13, 2008

Skyway Hills Baptist Church
Pearl, Mississippi

8:30 am - 7:45 pm

Make Plans To Attend

'In God' returning to \$1 coin prominence

WASHINGTON (BP)--Presidential one dollar coins are the only U.S. coins currently being issued by the United States Mint that have the inscription "In God We Trust" along the edge, but public pressure soon may send the motto back to the front or back of the coins.

Legislation introduced by Sens. Sam Brownback, R.-Kan., and Robert Byrd, D.-W. Va., that would return "In God We Trust" to a more visible location is awaiting President Bush's signature.

The Presidential \$1 Coin Act of 2005 was meant to honor the nation's presidents by issuing \$1 circulating coins featuring their images in the order that they served. The first four honoring Presidents Washington, Adams, Jefferson and Madison were issued this year.

The coins feature what the mint calls edge-incused inscriptions -- used in other countries -- of the year of minting or issuance, "E Pluribus Unum," "In God We Trust" and the mint mark. The size, weight and metal composition of the presidential coins is identical to that of the Sacagawea Golden Dollar. The 2005 congressional bill mandated the inscriptions be placed along the edge to allow "larger and more dramatic artwork" on the front and back. It was not a decision made by the mint.

But some coins made it through production without having the inscriptions stamped on the edge, and some experts say the wording on the coin's edge could rub off over time. Others expressed concern that moving the "In God We Trust" motto to the side of the coins was the first step in removing it altogether.

"Since the colonial beginnings of the United States, citizens of this nation have officially acknowledged their dependence on God," Brownback said in a news release December 6. "It is important that our national motto, 'In God We Trust,' is prominently displayed on all of our currency. We should not relegate our heritage to the side."

Brownback's legislation is included in The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008, which is several hundred pages long. Section 623 specifies that the motto be moved from the edges of the presidential coins to the obverse (front) or reverse (back) of the coins. The move "shall be put into effect by the Secretary of the Treasury as soon as is practicable after the date of enactment of this Act."

According to the Treasury Department, the motto was first placed on United States coins largely because of increased religious sentiment during the Civil War.

"Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase received many appeals from devout persons throughout the country, urging that the United States recognize the Deity on United States coins," the department says on its website.

The first recorded appeal came in a letter to Secretary Chase dated November 13, 1861 from M.R. Watkinson, a minister from Ridleyville, Pennsylvania, noting that recognition of "the Almighty God" had been "seriously overlooked" on the nation's coins.

"You are probably a Christian," Watkinson wrote. "What if our Republic were not shattered beyond reconstruction? Would not the antiquaries of succeeding centuries rightly reason from our past that we were a heathen nation?"

Watkinson suggested the words "God," "liberty" and "law" be inscribed on the coins.

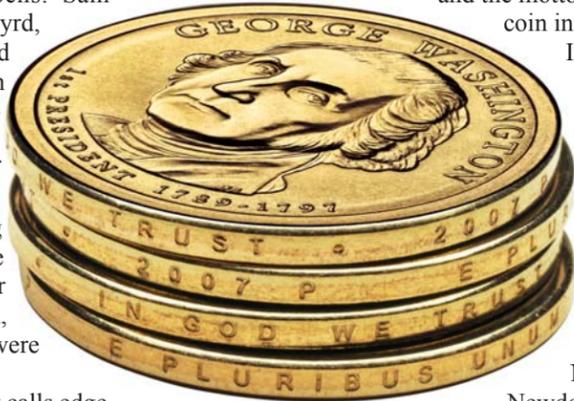
"This would relieve us from the ignominy of heathenism," he wrote. "This would place us openly under the Divine protection we have personally claimed. From my hearth I have felt our national shame in disowning God as not the least of our present national disasters."

Chase then instructed the director of the Philadelphia mint to prepare a motto. In a letter dated November 20, 1861, Chase wrote, "No nation can be strong except in the strength of God, or safe except in His defense. The trust of our people

in God should be declared on our national coins.

"You will cause a device to be prepared without unnecessary delay with a motto expressing in the fewest and tersest words possible this national recognition."

In 1863, Chase approved the motto "In God We Trust," and the motto first appeared on the two-cent coin in 1864.



In 2005, Michael Newdow, an atheist and lawyer from Sacramento, California, sued Congress and several federal officials because he said the motto's presence on U.S. coins and currency violated his First Amendment rights. A federal judge in Sacramento ruled against him in 2006, the Associated Press reported, and Newdow appealed.

Newdow argued his case against the motto along with his case for removing the words "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance before a three-judge panel of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals December 4, saying both references disrespect his religious beliefs.

CWA says domestic partners bill a precursor to same-sex 'marriage'

OneNewsNow.com - A spokesman for Concerned Women for America warns that yet another piece of legislation being promoted in the Democrat-led Congress would force taxpayers to subsidize immoral and dangerous behavior.

Senators Gordon Smith (R-Oregon) and Joe Lieberman (I-Connecticut) have introduced a bill that will extend domestic partner benefits to homosexual federal employees. The measure would allow an employee and his or her same-sex partner to be eligible for federal health benefits, the Family and Medical Leave program, long-term care, insurance, and retirement benefits. Representatives Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin), who is an open homosexual, and Tom Lantos (D-California) have introduced the bill in the House and included foreign service workers for the first time.

Matt Barber is policy director for cultural issues at Concerned Women for America in Washington, DC. He says the bill is the camel's nose in the tent for a litany of pro-homosexuality legislation, along the lines of the Employment Nondiscrimination Act.

"For the government to take a moral stance here [regarding] people who engage in homosexual conduct is essentially equating that conduct to natural sexual relations between married, heterosexual couples," states Barber. "This really introduces us to the whole idea of gay 'marriage' at the national level to federal ENDA."

Barber believes most people do not realize that all of the major benefits being sought by homosexual "couples" are already available through relatively simple means, such as power of attorney and rights of inheritance.

"It's just a matter of filling out the paperwork," he explains. "But I think the big issue here again, the big problem, is that this lends official government recognition to unhealthy and immoral behavior."

Michael Guest, an openly homosexual former U.S. ambassador to Romania under President Bush, recently resigned from the State Department following his criticism of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice for failing to "redress policies that discriminate against gay and lesbian employees."

BAPTIST MUSIC FELLOWSHIP

Dr. J. E. Sims, Director
P.O. Box 24, Mantachie, MS 38855
662-282-7425
Email fbcjes@nexband.com

"Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them." (Psalm 126:2)

This wonderful verse, reminding us of one of the ways we can witness to a lost world, is followed by these words of testimony: "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." (psalm 126:3)



J.E. Sims

Having served as a pastor, teacher, associate pastor, music, youth, senior adult, etc., I have personally been involved in all of these ongoing ministries. We should certainly uphold our brothers and sisters in Christ who are laboring for Christ in each of these areas.

All of our Mississippi churches will soon receive a letter concerning the reorganization of our Baptist Music Fellowship. I ask that the pastor or music director from each church fill out the accompanying information sheet and return it to me at the address indicated.

We plan to expand our musical outreach, starting at our state meetings. I hope to involve many more of our talented musicians as the occasions arise.

Thank you, in advance, for returning the information sheets, and for your continued prayers.

Pro-family activist says euthanasia becoming more common

OneNewsNow.com - Pro-family activist Janet Fogler says a case in Australia, in which a young man was taken off life support against his family's wishes, is becoming more commonplace.

Paulo Melo, 29, was placed on life support after suffering brain and spinal injuries from a December 5 car accident. Melo's family insisted he was making progress, moving his head and eyes in response to family visits. But despite their pleas, the Royal Darwin Hospital switched off the life support -- claiming his case was futile. The family was denied a court injunction during the ordeal.

Janet Folger of Faith 2 Action says the Australian case is reminiscent of the Terry Schiavo case. She says it is becoming more common for doctors and hospitals to determine the value of someone's life, while ignoring family wishes.

"We're talking about a 29-year-old man, who is trying to verbalize, whose family says 'he is trying to speak,'" says Folger. "He's moving his eyes and head in response to his family's visits. But doctors say 'hey, his life is futile, so we're going to remove the care he needs'. In this case, everybody wanted this young man to live except the doctors."

Folger points out that Texas has a Futile Care Law that not only jeopardizes patients on life support, but even endangers patients who receive food-and-water life support. With those types of laws, she says, the doctor's decisions are usually favored over family members. Patients cannot be allowed to die for convenience, and because insurance companies are pressuring hospitals to discontinue expensive care, she argues.

BMA of Mississippi
MISSIONS DEPARTMENT

4226 HIGHWAY 15 NORTH, LAUREL, MISSISSIPPI 39440 - (601) 428-8616
 Rayburn Freeman, Director



News of Interest

The Revolving Loan Fund Trustees has authorized a new system which will allow our investors and loan holders to make deposits and loan payments by automatic bank draft. Also, any church that wishes to make automatic monthly contributions to the Revolving Loan Fund may enroll in this program. If you are interested in enrolling in this system, please call us at 601-428-8616 or send us an email at moffice@bmaofmsmissions.org and let us know. We will then send you all the required information and forms needed to enroll.

Also, if any church is interested in participating in a system like this for having their missions contributions automatically sent each month, please let us know that you are interested, and we will forward that information to the Missionary Committee for their consideration.

Missions Conference

Please be much in prayer for Shady Grove in Tishomingo as they hold their church Mission's conference on February 3rd.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the 2008 Mississippi Missions and Evangelistic Conference on March 13th held at Skyway Hills Baptist Church in Pearl, Mississippi. The meeting will start at 8:30 a.m. and end at 7:45 p.m.

Ed Duvall, Homestretch, Cleveland

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I'm writing to share with you what God is doing here at Homestretch Baptist Church. This past month has been one of much inspiration. We recently had an elderly lady join our church. She is a tremendous encouragement



Ed Duvall Family

to mef and our ministry as a whole.

At the beginning of November, I was

asked to visit a young 13 year-old girl who was in the hospital. This child had been diagnosed with a rare form of Leukemia and is in desperate need of a bone marrow transplant. I went to visit and shared the Gospel with Myesha and her mother. She accepted Christ as her Lord and Savior. Not only did she pray and ask Christ into her heart, but her mom prayed the sinners prayer as well. Several ministers from the community had been visiting her. I asked her if anyone had told her about Jesus or how she could be saved. Sadly, she said no one had talked to her about Christ. Remember this young lady in your prayers as her condition has worsened since my last visit with her.

Please pray for the harvest here as there are many others that are hungry for someone to share with them the message of hope. Pray that God will make a divine appointment with me and those who are desperately seeking Him. On another note, we are less than a month from closing on ten acres of land. The Mission will buy the property and we will purchase it from the Missions Department. The total cost of the land will be approximately \$100,000.00. We already have \$36,000.00.

Thank you for all that you all have done and are continuing to do. I pray that you won't grow weary of well doing. Thank you so much for your prayers and support.



50 Days of Prayer and Giving
Pray & Give To Reach The World For Christ

FIFTY DAYS OF PRAYER

Plans are underway to make this an even more meaningful time of prayer to our BMAA churches. In a few weeks our churches will receive an information packet and an order form for FIFTY DAYS PRAYER CALENDAR. Pray that God will use this time to move us to prayer and intercession.

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY - FEBRUARY 24th

Mark this date and start making plans to make it the most exciting Sunday in your church year. It is not too early to invite your Missions Directors, or BMAA Missionaries to be with you on this special day.

MISSIONS PROJECTS WHICH MIGHT INTEREST YOU

From time to time individuals, churches or groups within churches make inquiry about projects for our missionaries. Here are a few you might consider:

\$300 per month to help pay the salaries of our missionary pastors who are planting new churches in Yerevan, Armenia. There are ten of these, and they are all deserving of our support.

\$50,000 for each of these ten new churches to purchase land in Yerevan, Armenia.

\$40,000 to help pay for the ambulance BMMI recently donated to a province in China. This is one of the projects of our national WMA. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

\$8,000 to help pay for a much needed truck for Bro. Edmond Mamom in Cambodia and Thailand.

\$10,000 for Dorcas House and other ministries of Bro. and Mrs. Don Newsom in the Philippines.

Iraqi Army Soldiers Deliver Season's Tidings to Assyrian Christians in Kirkuk

KIRKUK, IRAQ - Coalition Forces enjoyed a Christmas party in Iraq recently.

The holiday cheer was courtesy of the 2nd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, and was held at an Assyrian Christian School in Kirkuk on Dec. 15.

According to military officials, the theme of this year's celebration was ethnic and religious diversity.

"Kirkuk is a good place to be for Christians ... a place where all ethnic groups, Arab, Kurd, Turkman and Christian, are living in peace," the Christian school priest told the Assyrian International News Agency (AINA). He also ministers to 2-4 IA Soldiers who operate from Iraqi Army Base K-1 in Kirkuk.

Both IA and CF Soldiers, with the 2414 Logistics Transition Team at K-1, came armed with presents, which they passed out to the children who were clothed in various ethnic dress to represent the cultures that are trying to bring back some semblance of normality to this ethnic diverse area of northeastern Iraq.

"We want to live and work with our neighbors in harmony ... as Iraqis," Maj. Zyad Junaid Omar, 2-4 IA Civil Affairs officer, told AINA. Zyad, whose father is an Arab and mother a Turkman, said that he invites CF Soldiers along to show Iraqis that, "Americans are good people that want to help." He also wanted the Iraqi public to see how well the IA and CF work together.

"Maj. Zyad is a patriot in the true sense," Lt. Col. Greg Markert, 2414 LTT, told AINA. "He wants to make a difference. He is not concerned about the ethnic background of these children. He's concerned about Iraq's

future ... which they represent."

AINA reported that gifts the soldiers handed out were contributed by employers, friends and family of Pennsylvania Guardsmen Sgt. 1st Class Ken "Gunny" Ganszewski, 2414 LTT, and Markert, both of Philadelphia. "What started out as a suggestion snowballed into 200 packages full of toys, candy, blankets ... the response has been tremendous," said the former Marine.

AINA reported that this was just one of the several ongoing civil affairs programs run by the 2-4 IA's CA team.

"We're honored to be a part of their program," Markert told AINA. "These children are the future of Iraq; they are the most important equation in our mission here."

"I fought as a Marine in the Gulf War against some of these Soldiers who I am now mentoring," AINA reported Ganszewski said. "This brotherhood we've formed is making a positive impact on the children of Iraq ... its future."

He said that both groups of soldiers agree that what they are doing has a larger impact than "kicking doors down and brandishing weapons." He underlined the importance of getting involved by saying, "That child who is given a pair of shoes may return home and convince a relative not to place an IED out on the road. Or, if he sees someone trying to hurt an IA or CF Soldier, he'll report it."

AINA reported that the LTT team has 10 members. They hail from the 240th Quartermaster's Company, 16th Sustainment Brigade from Bamberg, Germany; 13th Combat Service Support Battalion, 3rd Infantry



Sofilthy's Attic

by Barbara White

THE "GALE"

A lot of folks in Mississippi were affected by the recent "gale" that blew through the lovely state. Many homes were destroyed, some damaged and many others had trees down all over their yard but the home was unharmed.

In times such as this, it is easy to feel "singled out". At such times we can get things back in perspective by reading God's Word. II Corinthians II:23-33 tells of the adversities that Paul encountered in his life but he didn't seem to feel "singled out". We can praise our Father that He is still in control!

Division, Ft. Benning, Ga.; the National Guard Bureau and its 28th Infantry Division's staff. All of the U.S. Soldiers are attached to the National Guard's 213th Area Support Group, Allentown, Pa., currently headquartered at Forward Operating Base Anaconda.

"We've come from all over the U.S. and Germany to form this team. We've since become a cohesive family, together with our adoptive family, meaning our fellow Soldiers with the Iraqi Army's 2nd Brigade, 4th Division," AINA reported Markert said.

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