

Baptist

Mississippi

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South Mississippi BMA Townhall Meeting Set For August 27

BMA department and agency directors will hold a South Mississippi area Townhall meeting on Thursday, August 27. Bro. James Sprayberry will host the catered luncheon and meeting at First Baptist Church in Bay Springs. Pastors, staff members and their spouses are invited to attend the event, which will begin with a noon luncheon followed by a 1:00 meeting.

Donny Parrish, Chief Creative Officer of the BMA, said, "The goals for these meetings are for your BMA national directors to listen to the concerns and suggestions of BMA Pastors and to

allow for a time of prayer and fellowship."

Pastors in area associations will be contacted by phone and/or email in the coming weeks to invite church staff members and their spouses and to get an exact head count for the catered meal.

However, accurate contact information may not be available for pastors and churches, so if you do not receive an invitation or if you need additional information, please contact Holly Meriweather at the BMA Global Ministry Center at 501-205-1127.

One Key to Helping Your Church Avoid the Disease of Institutionalization

from DiscipleGuide

When missionaries are commissioned to plant churches, they are expected to reach the communities to which they have been sent. For instance, a missionary sent to a suburb of Omaha, Nebraska, is expected to reach the people in that particular area through community engagement. Many times this takes shape as a service project such as handing out water bottles at a county fair to meet people or volunteering to feed the volunteer fire department in order to build relationships.

So when does it stop? When does a new church reach the point that it no longer needs to emphasize community involvement?

Of course, the answer is never.

Why, then, do many churches neglect community outreach? Perhaps it happens when a congregation loses focus on its mission and becomes institutionalized. Institutionalization occurs when the mission changes from an outward focus to an inward focus. Every church struggles with the temptation to institutionalize. Let's face it: reaching out

means sacrificing time and resources that would otherwise be self-serving. Every decision within the church, therefore, must be made with intentional focus on the mission. Will the

new budget reflect an emphasis on

projects that enhance the church's comfort or projects that reach the community with the gospel? Will the next VBS be focused on ministering to "church kids" or will efforts be made to invite unchurched children? Is the next sermon series going to make us comfortable with our "holy huddle" or challenge us to share the gospel with our neighbors?

As long as there are unbelievers in the vicinity, the church must make efforts to engage the community. The Great Commission demands no less.

So how will your church get involved? Let me challenge you to find at least one way to reach outside the walls of your church for the sake of making a kingdom investment. What will be your community mission?



A Note From Matt Hudson

First Vice-president BMA of Mississippi

Most of you know about the sudden death of our beloved brother and President, Gary Smith. We lost a great man, preacher, singer, pastor and friend. Bro. Gary was one of my dearest friends and traveling companion. We attended many meetings, revivals, and retreats together. He will be greatly missed. We had discussed some great plans for the meeting in October.



Matt Hudson

Please continue to pray for Mrs. Elaine, Stacy, Danny and the rest of the family, as well as East Fulton Baptist Church, as they deal with their loss. Pray as this church searches for a new pastor.

As 1st Vice-president, I am making plans to bring our Association together and encourage you to pray for the Program Committee as they meet in August to make plans. We need to have a greater sense of urgency to carry on the work of our Lord in the day in which we live. Pray for our departments, their leaders, and for God to continue blessing His work. May God bless this association, and may God bless America.

Christmas In July

by Dr. Ralph Izard

Director of Baptist Medical Missions International

The weather is hot, and we don't have to worry about ice or snow, but it is time to start putting together Christmas shoe boxes that will be sent to boys and girls in a creative access nation and either Samoa or Micronesia. If you have never been a part of "Making Everlasting Smiles," this would be a great year to start. If you want to make a child happy plus open doors to BMA missionaries to present the good news of Jesus Christ, then this is the program for you!

Your church should receive a package with a DVD, poster and instructions for preparing a Christmas present for a child on the mission field. If you did not receive this information, please call BMA Missions at 501-455-4977 and ask for Jamie or Jim and they will gladly give you the information that you need to be a missionary by preparing a Christmas present for a child. (We ask that you wrap the shoe box-sized box in Christmas paper, but please don't use Santa Clause paper, as we want to tell the children and their parents about Jesus Christ.)

Thank you for giving. You never know how many boys, girls, men and women will come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ because of your effort.





Larry Geraldson
Director



Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

Department of Missions and Revolving Loan Fund



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“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” James 1:22-25 The quickest way to forget is to stop doing. God’s Word challenges us, as individuals, to do something. James makes it clear in chapter 1:17 that God never changes, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

Mississippi Missions Matters

God is blessing the churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi. This month alone, He has allowed us to witness 74 professions of faith on mission fields, through the missions activity of the 19 men that we are supporting either directly or indirectly. But, we need to do more! There are many areas in this State where the gospel is needed. I am talking with three different men who are praying about missions. I don’t know at this point how this will develop but I ask you to make this a matter of prayer.

Special Emphasis

The following offerings were received as a part of Special Emphasis (in addition to those printed in the last issue):

- Buffalo Baptist, McClain - \$500.00
- Zion Baptist, Rolling Forks - \$500.00
- Lee’s Chapel #2, Picayune - \$77.00

Caledonia Mission

Getting Ready to Enlarge Facility

The mission, under the leadership of Missionary Pastor Bob Burch, has grown to a place where they are in need of additional classroom space, baptistry, and fellowship space. Some Sunday School classes are now meeting in the hallways of the church and baptisms must be scheduled when they can borrow a baptistry from another church. The original plans for the Caledonia Mission property included these things as a part of the second phase of construction. Thankfully, the current building was built to accommodate the addition which should make adding on less difficult. We are already working on the final plans and are talking to the contractor who helped us complete the first building. Lord willing, it won’t be long before we see construction begin. Of course, there will be additional costs.

During my recent visit with Bro. Burch, in Caledonia, he told me that the membership of the mission has already made a commitment toward this project and they hope to do as much as they can themselves, before asking for help. But I want to go ahead and extend an invitation to you to consider

Reports for June 2015				
	High Attendance	Membership	Total Offerings	Mother Church
Church Planters				
Bob Burch (Caledonia)	69	33	\$3,962.00	East Fulton
Bobby Elliott (Burnsville)	57	43	\$2,182.00	Forked Oak
Sidney Farmer (S. Forrest County)	62	30	\$5,867.00	Paramount
Danny Bartlett (Clinton)	14	10	\$1,324.00	Wilderness
Phillip Burns (Sumrall)	20	9	\$1,762.00	First Bay Springs
Wesley Martin (Diamondhead)	33	19	\$3,588.00	Campground
Anders Lee (Southaven)	117	64	\$10,314.00	Charity
Hispanic Missions – South (Estuardo Marroquin – Coordinator) <small>(Estuardo Marroquin is also the Sr. Pastor of El Camino, which serves as the mother church for the church plants listed below.)</small>				
El Camino (Laurel)	141	117	\$5,084.00	
Church Planters				
Marciano Montalvo (Hattiesburg)	29	14	\$1,510.00	El Camino
Rodolfo Galicia (Biloxi)	11	2	n/a	El Camino
Hispanic Missions – North (Elvis Garcia – Coordinator) <small>(Elvis Garcia is also the Sr. Pastor of Way, Truth & Life, which serves as the mother church for the church plants listed below.)</small>				
Way, Truth & Life (Ripley)	105	77	\$3,801.00	
Church Planters				
Humberto Navarro (Tupelo)	20	17	\$591.00	Way, Truth & Life
Erlin Pech (Oxford)	42	5	\$1,076.00	Way, Truth & Life
African American Missions – (Ed DuVall – Coordinator) <small>(Ed DuVall is also the Sr. Pastor of Homestretch which serves as the mother church for the church plants listed below.)</small>				
Homestretch (Cleveland)	17	50	\$2,083.00	
Church Planters				
James Cook (Olive Branch)	19	13	\$1,400.00	Homestretch
Collectively, our missionaries reported 351 new contacts, shared the gospel 282 times, and witnessed 74 professions of faiths, and 2 baptisms in June.				

helping with this project. A building fund in the name of the Mission has been set up at the Missions Office and some contributions have already come in. If you would like to contribute to this project please send your offering marked Caledonia Building Fund.

Elvis Garcia, Coordinator of Hispanic Missions (North) Baptizes his Son, Josue

Many of our missionaries are raising their children on the mission field. In 2013 Bro. Marroquin baptized his daughter, Abbey, and this past year, Bro. Burns baptized his daughters, Makala and Hope. Last year, Bro. Anders Lee baptized his daughter,



Bro. Elvis baptizing his son



Campers at Way, Truth and Life Camp

Siera and this year, his son, Zac surrendered to the ministry. Now, Bro. Elvis Garcia baptized his oldest



Others baptized at The Way, Truth and Life Camp son as a part of a larger baptismal service in which others were baptized. It often goes unnoticed that our missionaries have families and their first responsibility, as missionaries is at home. Praise the Lord for what He is doing in the homes of our missionaries.

Grace Mission in Clinton

Much has transpired since our last attempt to purchase land for the mission in Clinton. The mission relocated to a new location that is much more visible and that affords them the opportunity to use the facility 24/7. Already, they have seen first time and return visitors and have conducted connection events to meet people in the community. Now, Bro. Bartlett

continued on page 3

Making Summer Count

We are in the full swing of the good ole summer time. Summers are still a great time to build family ties. It is also a time to grow spiritually. Any season of the year is a good time for that. Many families are busy, busy, and busy—but is it meaningful? Cramming one event in after another does not necessarily equate to building family unity and bonding time with loved ones. It can just mean that we are irritable, exhausted and broke. Even in leisure times, we must be good stewards of the things God has given us such as time and money.

Summer is a great time to build family memories and build on our relationships. However, as Christians, we do not make decisions apart from our covenant partner Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father. Yes, before deciding to go on vacation, you should stop and pray and ask God to lead you to a place of restoration. If you are making plans for a summer weekend, you should seek God and ask for guidance, direction, peace and protection. Matthew 6: 33 states, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Philippians 4:6 tells us to pray about everything. I wonder if this includes summer activities? I think it is wise to seek God first in every activity of daily living. Seek me first. Seek me first. Seek me first. Sometimes I think we seek Him last, or we only seek Him when things go wrong. Maybe things wouldn't be so wrong if we sought His

righteousness first!

Do family activities together. Children need to learn that very valuable lesson that life is not about them. They are in a family so sometimes they don't get to do what they want to do. They do what the family is doing. We must also ask them to join in family activities that are planned with a joyful heart and not grumbling and mumbling. When children are allowed to whine, gripe, complain, pout and make family time miserable because they don't want to be there, that is dishonoring to the par-

Family Ark Ministries

Dr. Travis Plumlee is a full-time professional speaker and leads Family Ark Ministries. For more information or to contact him, visit www.travisplumlee.com.



ents. Ephesians 6:2.

The parents need to address this issue with the child and give clear expectations of the need for an attitude adjustment. Failure to honor the parents in what has been prescribed for the family can result in some form of discipline. Just use a lot of grace however. We want to teach them a better attitude, but we don't want to crush their spirit in the process.

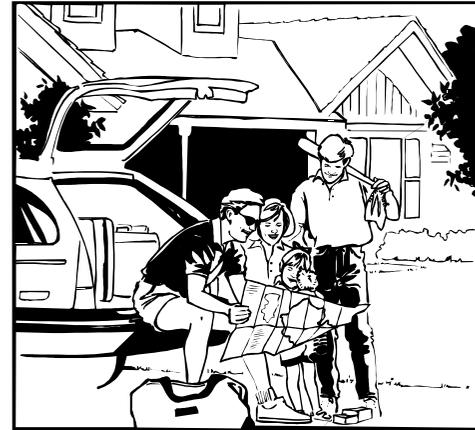
Plan some summer activities with multi-generations. Everyone is healthier when we are around people with different perspectives and different walks of

life. Involving grandparents in a few summer activities should be considered as a priority as well as a special treat. There does have to be some time given for fun times with friends. You can even plan on some family outings where your

kids get to bring some friends. As parents, always remember we have a motive for this besides fun. We want to let the light of the Lord shine through our behavior so that these friends of our children might be blessed. There are too many kids today that need to see Jesus in family fun outings. Matthew 5:16.

Make some memories. Don't just do things that require plug ins or thrill rides. If you have no ideas, ask some older person what they used to do. What special summer memories do they have? Hikes, camping, bike rides, hunting, fireflies, wading in a creek etc... Play a game of hide and seek or get a family baseball game together. So many families today chase sports. But then you are still split up as a family with some in the bleachers and one or two out of the field. Play some games together as a family. There are thousands of ideas but these are the things that last a lifetime and bring families closer together.

Finally, use summer time to grow your family spiritually. Start a bible study under the stars each night. Encourage your kids to go to camp and bible school. Please don't forsake the church attendance during your mad dash for fun. You can't have a very good summer if you leave Jesus out of it. How wonderful of a time can we have if



we don't go to church and celebrate and worship our King! And one more thing. Don't take a vacation from offerings.

The work of the Lord still has to go on. As we spend money to go to the lake or to go to the outlet mall, let us not forget to sacrificially give to the

work of the church. Summer is a great time to start a new habit if you have not done it before. Pray together as a family. Even if you would just do this for 5 minutes a night it would change your family life. Praying together as a family and having a little bible study each night not only produces memories that can never be erased, but it also produces a harvest of goodness in the hearts of all the members of the family for the glory of the Lord. So have some great fun and great memories this summer. But please remember to pack Jesus along with everything else. When you pack a swim suit also be sure and pack a Bible. God bless you. Too blessed to be stressed.

Missions Report from page 2

has discovered a 13.5 acre piece of land less than 2 miles away, that appears to be ideal for building a first unit building. Please pray for Grace as these things develop further. God is blessing and we are grateful.

Central in Southaven

Cherita and I had the opportunity to visit with Bro. Anders and Ms Carla Lee and the fine folks at Central in Southaven on the 27 and 28th of June. Bro. Anders was just returning from serving as Camp Pastor, where four of

Central's young people were saved. Central now has 14 people awaiting baptism. On Saturday evening we visited with members of the leadership team and had a wonderful time sharing. They told me of their activity, plans and vision. I was able to get a better feel for the challenges they are face planting a church in this area of Mississippi. The next day, I was invited to preach and afterwards, sit in on new member training conducted by Bro. Anders Lee. Bro. Anders and the mission were gracious hosts and we felt honored to be there. I am excited about this partnership and I am looking forward to what God is going to do through this work.

Day Star in Sumrall

Bro. Cedrick Lumpkin and the youth from Mt. Carmel in Picayune are traveling to Sumrall, Mississippi, on July 14 to conduct Vacation Bible School for the Day Star Mission. They will have VBS each night, 15-17 July, from 6-

8 pm. We are grateful to Mt Carmel for doing this and to Bro. Lumpkin for encouraging them to get involved with helping one of our mission projects. If you would like more information about this, you can contact Bro. Phillip Burns at 601-670-6191.



Sidney and Becky Farmer standing inside the new building at South Forrest - Near completion

I Lost a Friend

I had already turned in my article for the last issue when news came of Bro. Gary Smith's death. So, I want to join those who have already expressed their condolences to the family and pledge my support to Ms. Elaine. Bro. Gary was a good friend. I talked to him often and always received encouragement. In addition to his role as President of the BMA of Mississippi, Bro. Gary was serving faithfully as a member of the Missionary Committee and he will be sorely missed. He loved missions and loved hearing about new opportunities. He was candid, compassionate and caring. I never felt threatened by his questions but always distilled value from his advice. I cherish the lessons I learned as I watched him love people. His confidence in God gave him a deep abiding peace that could not go unnoticed. I will miss him.

Visit Our Website and Facebook Page

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



Brick going up at South Forrest

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Don Brown

Mississippi Baptist

Opinion Page

www.msbbaptist.org

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

Don Brown - Editor

BMA Philippine Bible College and Creative Access Nations Ministry

by Linda & Doyle Moore
Missionaries to the Philippines

Do you ever feel utterly humbled? Have you ever felt you have done nothing for the Lord? Do you feel you have sacrificed little for His work?

Doyle and I, along with Buddy and Taffy Johnson, were in a country recently where 50 pastors were gathered to learn more in a Leadership Workshop. I'm so glad we were not there to teach Faithfulness!

Several of these pastors are working in areas that are extremely difficult – and have even been in prison for up to 5 years at a time! Not for some grave legal offense, like murder, theft, or being a traitor, but for simply preaching the Word of God to their people. Another pastor would have been there, but he had disappeared and no one knows where he was, and still don't! Please pray for this missing pastor. He might be being "re-educated," as this time in prison is termed; he might return in a few months or years; or he might never return. The pastors that have gone through this have returned and instead of being frightened out of doing what God has called them to do,

have thrown themselves back into the thick of preaching God's word!

Would you be that brave? Would you be that faithful? We met with them, and



Michael & Zenny Estefano & family with Doyle & Linda Moore

their faithfulness and dedication touched our hearts. If there is anything we can do to teach and help them grow stronger churches, we want to do it!

We are training men and women at BMABC to be able to go out and start missions and churches, but just because we graduate a young "preacher boy" doesn't mean he knows it all or that he has all the experience he will ever need, or that he doesn't need encouragement! Taking workshops in Discipleship Training, in Church Planting, and other lessons that refresh and bless a man of God will get them back into the game ready for another inning – ready to go on and do bigger and better things for Christ and His people!

We have four young people attending the Bible College from these Creative Access Nations. Three of them came

last year, and one is new. Rose said God is opening so many doors for her that it's hard to focus on just one place. She is uniquely gifted to reach out to people on several levels, so we can't wait to see what God does in her life! She wants to finish 4 years at the Bible College. Chelly, who had initially only wanted to come for one year, determined that God has called her also to do more, and has committed to 4 years. She wants to work with children in her homeland, letting them know about God through education. Doris, too, had at first wanted to come for a year. But, when they get in the Bible College, they see all they are lacking, all that can be learned that will benefit them in mission work in the future, and they know THIS is the place God would have them be for this time.

Please pray that God will supply all needs for BMABC so that we can continue scholarships for Filipino students who truly want to train as pastors, missionaries, music ministers, and church workers, as well as any foreign students. As income has dropped off, it has become harder and harder to pinch those pennies until the squeak enough to cover all the needs of the Bible College. Qualified teachers, keeping up the school, providing for the needs of the students, feeding them and transporting them to churches on weekends where they learn by doing and putting the things they are learning in class into effect, working with faithful pastors.

Please pray that God will supply the needs for our travels to these Creative Access Nations to provide workshops for those who work in these countries. These are countries where people are not free to go to whatever church they want to. Nor to say whatever they want to in church or out of it. Doors are cracking open, and we don't want to make any waves, so pray for us that we will do nothing that will cause these pastors problems, only that we will be a great blessing to them!

Brotherhood Project Needs Help!

by Pat Spriggs, Editor/Promoter

The National Brotherhood Project is 50% Philippines Printing Ministry (Sam Freeman), 40% National Galileans and 10% General Fund. According to Brotherhood Secretary/Treasurer Robert Bynum, funds are coming in slowly. So far the following has been paid out: Philippines, \$250; Galileans, \$200; and General Fund, \$50. A total of \$2,082.33 has been collected since 2013 for the Galilean Arthur Smith Scholarship Fund.

We are in contact with Bro. Freeman and hope to have an article and photos from the Philippines in the next issue.

Offerings for the Brotherhood Project should be sent to: Robert Bynum, 43 Bear Pen Creek Rd., Laurel, MS 39440.

AVAILABLE FOR SERVICE

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

Wayne Rice

Bro. Wayne Rice has recently moved to the Laurel area and is available for fill in, interim pastor or to come in view of a call as the Lord leads. He may be reached at 601-916-9020.

Chris Freeman

Bro. Chris Freeman is available for pastoral service. He may be reached at 601-319-5199.

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Patriotic Rallies Held Across State

Big Creek Association

The churches of the Big Creek Association held a patriotic rally and service on the campus of Southeastern Baptist College on Sunday evening, June 28. An Associational choir performed patriotic music along with others who presented specials. A number of military veterans spoke of their service and their love for their God and their country. A special guest was 92 year old William "Otis" Jones, a resident of Jones County and a member of Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church. Jones was awarded the Bronze Star for rescuing a wounded fellow soldier while under heavy enemy fire. Jones' story was shared by his pastor, Bro. Brandon Wilson.

The Big Creek Baptist Association has held this patriotic rally for the past several years.



Otis Jones and Pastor Brandon Wilson



Hundreds gathered for Patriot Rally at Southeastern College



Dr. John Adams bringing message

Tombigbee Association

The Tombigbee Association met July 05, 2015 for the second annual God and Country Rally, with around 300 in attendance. The meeting was held at East Fulton Baptist Church, and included a memorial for Bro. Gary Smith. We will greatly miss Bro. Gary Smith and appreciate his service not only to our country but to the Lord and to the Tombigbee Association.

The rally started with the Pledge to the American Flag, followed by the Pledge to the Christian Flag. The congregation sang out in pride "My Country Tis of Thee", and "Onward Christian Soldiers" followed by a time in prayer. Bro. Bub Christian, a local veteran from South Green Baptist Church in Tupelo gave his testimony about war, country and following Christ.

All veterans, active military, police, first responders, and firefighters were recognized and given round of support for their service. Dr. John Adams brought an inspiring message and encouraged all Pastors, youth and other attendees to come forward to pray for our country.



Part of crowd at Tombigbee Association Rally

Sofilthy's Attic

by Barbara White



"AIN'T IT A SHAME?"

You can hear a lot of opinions concerning church music floating around these days. It seems each generation thinks something new is better and sometimes it is.

I don't think any new song will ever top "Amazing Grace" or any of Fanny J. Crosby's heart-thrilling songs and I can think of many others that bless my heart and bring joyful praise.

But I can think of some "goldie oldies" that I wonder how they ever got into a song book. For instance: "The Church in the Wildwood" makes no allusion to God, Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit. And another one that someone brought

to my attention recently is in the "Heavenly Highways" song book. The title is: "Ain't It a Shame?" and each verse names something that is a shame to do on Sunday when you have Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday in which to do them. Among those things listed were gossip and lying. So I'm wondering if the song writer thought it was OK to gossip and lie during the week as long as you didn't do it on Sunday.

While I'm on this song rant - I've noticed some folks my age or older who have been singing songs found in the hymn book all their life. But when a hymn number is called out, they can't sing a lick until they've found the number. Do they really not know the words to those songs they've been singing for 60 or 70 years?

I can sing the words to songs, but I have more trouble quoting scripture. Ain't it a shame?

Fall 2015 SOAR:lit - Growth in Worship

As much teaching that has been done concerning worship over the last several years, who would think that we need another study on the topic? However, we still struggle with integrating worship into the fabric of our lives. The spiritual discipline of worship is one that we will never fully master for two simple reasons. First, we are sinful creatures battling the pull to worship lesser things than God. Second, all of God is completely infinite, which means that for all of eternity we will be discovering fuller aspects of his person and plan. The continual growth in our knowledge of who God is and what he has done on our behalf will intensify our worship.

But we don't have to wait until we enter the gates of heaven to gain fuller aspects of his person and plan. We can get started with that right now! This quarter of SOAR:lit continues the focus on worship and will encourage us to respond in worship to some of God's attributes such as his unfailing love, his ability to deliver, his immutability, his sovereignty, and his presence in the midst of tragedy. These are just a few areas of study in the Fall 2015 edition of SOAR:lit.

Remember, SOAR:lit is designed around the SOAP method of Bible study. Your students should SOAP the prescribed scripture for that week before coming to the Bible study. This will allow them to have more interaction during the study time and will also allow the teacher a greater opportunity in the discipling of students on how to study the Bible.

For more information on SOAR:lit and other DiscipleGuide products, visit discipleguide.org today.

SUMMARY OF THE SUPREME COURT'S DECISION IN OBERGEFELL V. HODGES

Information Concerning Church Actions After Same Sex Marriage Ruling

Editor's Note: This article is taken from *Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company's* website. It ran in the *Arkansas Baptist Trumpet* and contains information important to churches and religious organizations in light of the recent Supreme Court ruling concerning marriage in America. It would be wise for any church or organization to seek legal advice as they move forward.

On June 26, 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a 5-4 ruling holding that the Fourteenth Amendment

From The Mind of Chuck Lee

Out of Style

I must admit, I haven't always been this non concerned about my hair style. There was a time, in my teenage years, that I would stare in horror at the handiwork of some grizzled, cigar-chewing barber who had gotten his license from shaving new recruits who had just entered the armed services. The reason I would be devastated was because my head had been reduced to a social experiment. The society doing the examination were usually my peers in school, who I must conclude, always looked forward to my regular haircuts and had spent countless hours thinking of ways to ridicule me for the weeks that it would take for my hair to grow back out. I wore a hat a lot back in those days. That is probably the reason I am going bald today; that or being a minister with four children.



Chuck Lee

As I grew older, and had to start paying for my own haircuts, I realized how silly it was to pay somebody the equivalent of the price of a nice fishing rod just to cut my hair...AND THEN HAVE IT TO JUST GROW OUT AGAIN! I'm not a conspiracy theorist, but it makes you wonder, just what are they putting in those shampoos? The relationship between me having to pay for something, as opposed to someone else having to pay, has changed my thinking on many purchases I have made through the years.

The era that I grew up in, only had a few styles to choose from. The preppies wore their hair whatever the going style was of the day. The hippies wore theirs long to defy the preppies. The poor folks just shaved theirs to the scalp. Today, there really is no style. We have opened up the Pandora box of hair and it is no big thing to see hair of varying colors, shapes, and sizes. I left the house one day with bed head hair and nobody even threw me a second glance. I fit right in.

In all reality, I don't really worry too much about my hair. It can turn gray or turn loose, for all I care. My wife and children have their opinions, though, so I now have to at least brush what little of it is left before I leave the house. They really worry more about my style of clothing more than my hair. But I say, hey, polyester bell bottoms never go out of style.

Most of what has brought us down is trying to conform to the styles of the time and fit in with everybody. I think the church has gone that route. I think I may just start my own style, the out of style look. But then again, who would notice?

Chuck Lee is pastor of Pine Grove Baptist Church, Purvis. He may be reached by email at leecharles47@yahoo.com

requires a state to license a marriage between two people of the same sex and to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and performed in another state.

The Case

This case began when a same-sex couple from Cincinnati, Ohio, filed a lawsuit alleging state discrimination against same-sex couples who have been lawfully married in another state. John Arthur was terminally ill and sought to name his partner, James Obergefell, as his surviving spouse, but was unable to do so under Ohio's same-sex marriage ban. The Director of the Ohio Department of Health, Richard Hodges, was named as the defendant in the case. As the case made its way through the appellate courts, other same-sex couples joined in the complaint. And as the case continued to progress, the question before the courts became whether Ohio's refusal to recognize marriages legally performed in other states violated the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantees of equal protection and due process.

A Landmark Decision

In its decision, the Court began by recognizing the history of the subject of marriage, noting it is one of

both "continuity and change." The Court then applied the following reasoning in making its determination that the Fourteenth Amendment requires a state to license a marriage between two people of the same sex:

1) The fundamental liberties protected under the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment extend to certain personal choices, and among those is the right to marry.

2) Because marriage is inherent in the concept of individual autonomy, supports a two-person union unlike any other in its importance to the individuals

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CHURCH NEWS IN BRIEF

Church seeks pastor

Midway Missionary Baptist Church Leakesville, Mississippi, is seeking resumes for pastor. Please send resumes to Quint Green 139 Shorty O'Neal Drive Leakesville, MS 39451. Quint may be contacted at 601-394-9474.

Mount Gilead Church Sets Revival

Revival services will be held at Mount Gilead Baptist Church, near Columbia, on July 26-31. Dr. Wade Lott will be serving as Evangelist. Bro. Wade grew up in Mount Gilead and is currently serving as the Associational Director of Missions for the Tugalo Baptist Association in Georgia. His dad, Bro. Larry Lott, is the Music Director at Mount Gilead and his Mother, Carolyn, is the Organist. Bro. Wade is a great preacher of the Gospel and we are excited to have him coming home to share this great week of Revival services with us.

The Sunday morning service will begin at 10:30 and will be followed by lunch at the church and an afternoon service. The week night services will be at 7:00. Please pray with us for a week of Spirit filled services and visit with us if you can.

Rocky Branch Sets Revival Services

Rocky Branch Baptist Church in Sumrall will hold revival services starting July 19-24th. We will have a different evangelist each night. The schedule is as follows: Sunday, July 19th, 1:00 PM, Bro. Greg Medenwald; July 20, Bro. Greg Bennett; July 21, Bro. Denny Patterson; July 22, Bro. Mickey Steele; July 23, Bro. Chuck Lee; and July 24, Bro. Nick Freeman. Night services start at 7:00PM. Everyone is welcome.

Temple, Lucedale Sets Revival Services

Temple Baptist Church will have revival services beginning Sunday, August 2 at 11:00 AM, followed by lunch and an afternoon service. Monday through Thursday services will begin at 7:00 PM. Bro. Justin Cameron will be preaching Sunday through Wednesday and Chance Cameron will be preaching Thursday evening for the youth. All youth in the Association and county are encouraged to attend. Pastor B.J. Hudson and the Temple family extend this invitation to all.



Justin Cameron

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



Big Creek District WMA and Brotherhood Meeting

The Big Creek District Brotherhood and WMA will meet with Salem Baptist Church, Stringer, Mississippi, August 3, 2015, at 7:00 pm. Please make plans to attend this important meeting. The WMA will elect officers for the new year.

The Nominating Committee will be meeting in July to elect new officers for the 2015 year. If a lady is led by the Lord to accept a position in our WMA, please let President Bonnie Brown know. Please be in prayer for the Nominating Committee as we meet to nominate ladies the Lord will use in each position.

Hobolochitto District WMA

by Jean Overton, Reporter

The Hobolochitto District WMA met at Lee's Chapel #2 on April 25, 2015.

Mrs. Jared Lee gave a wonderful devotion entitled "What's Your Destination?" Our Project for next six months is the college in the Phillippines to help with repairs.

Our next meeting is July 25 at Mt. Calvary, Pica-yune. Their new pastor Bro. Comeaux will be our speaker. Bro. Jared Lee brought a message from I Samuel.

We enjoyed a delicious meal after the meeting.

Southeastern Baptist College

Danny Pitts - Interim President

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



Danny Pitts

Serving Christ With a Biblical World View In A Christian Atmosphere

Our financial year ended on June 30th. The initial reports are obviously not from the audit, but they look very encouraging. The total income shows \$700,000 with the ending balance being over \$60,000 in the black. We have been sacrificially frugal in all spending. Our caution in finances probably caused us to be surprised by the degree of the good news for the year. We ask for prayers of thanks by everyone who has prayed for God to bless.

Recognition of everyone who contributed to the good report is not possible. We did sell the mobile home. Robert (Larry) Welborn continues to manage the foundation well with interest income to meet our needs. An additional \$25,000 was made available to help replace new roofs on the two dorms. In this economy his supervision of the foundation has been remarkable. My goal is to reach the place where we do not depend on the interest and allow it to accumulate for capital expenditures. Several people including the Dennis Rankins and the Charles Bobos have

done much work on the school buildings. Not only did their efforts free other funds for operations, they helped us meet the substantial requirements of the insurance company. The faculty and staff have served faithfully during the past year.

Over 103 churches connected to the BMA of Mississippi gave offerings during the year. The total was \$138,135.38. This does not include Special Emphasis funds. Below are listed the 12 which gave over \$3,000.

First of Midway, Sumrall	\$9,261.93
Paramount, Perkinston	\$6,600.00
Big Creek, Soso	\$6,073.81
Canaan, Richton	\$5,400.00
Springhill, Laurel	\$4,800.00
Cypress Creek, Brooklyn	\$4,296.75
Magnolia, Hattiesburg	\$4,230.00
First of Shady Grove, Laurel	\$4,132.50
Skyway Hills, Pearl	\$3,600.00
Good Hope, Columbia	\$3,526.48
Lebanon, Laurel	\$3,500.04
Campground, Gulfport	\$3,400.00

Actions After Same Sex Marriage Ruling

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involved, safeguards children and families, and is the "keystone" of the Nation's social order, marriage is a constitutional right.

3) The right of same-sex couples to marry also is derived from the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of equal protection.

4) Because the right to marry is a fundamental right "inherent in the liberty of the person, and under the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment," couples of the same sex may not be deprived of that right and that liberty.

The Religious Organization "Carve Out"

The Court then added a "carve out" for "religions and those who adhere to religious doctrines":

Finally, it must be emphasized that religions, and those who adhere to religious doctrines, may continue to advocate with utmost, sincere conviction that, by divine precepts, same-sex marriage should not be condoned. The First Amendment ensures that religious organizations and persons are given proper protection as they seek to teach the principles that are so fulfilling and so central to their lives and faiths, and to their own deep aspirations to continue

the family structure they have long revered. The same is true of those who oppose same-sex marriage for other reasons. In turn, those who believe allowing same-sex marriage is proper or indeed essential, whether as a matter of religious conviction or secular belief, may engage those who disagree with their view in an open and searching debate. The Constitution, however, does not permit the State to bar same-sex couples from marriage on the same terms as accorded to couples of the opposite sex.

Chief Justice Roberts and Justice Thomas noted in their dissents that the First Amendment guarantees the right to "exercise" religion. Chief Justice Roberts further noted that "exercise" is a word that the majority omitted from their opinion. So while this provision acknowledges the First Amendment rights of religious organizations to teach principles that are central to their lives and faiths, the dissenting justices expressed concern that it may not be broad enough to encompass the full exercise of those rights.

Chief Justice Roberts also noted that, "Hard questions arise when people of faith exercise religion in ways that may be seen to conflict with the new right to

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME

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



SIDNEY DAVIS

Students Recognized on Awards Day Continued

In my past two articles I have reported on several students at the Home and their progress over the course of this past school year. In this article I



Our 4th grade girl with her awards

would like to congratulate our fourth grade girl who will be going into the fifth grade next year. She achieved a number of awards at the end of school. Those awards consist of Principal's Award in recognition of yearly Principal's List (all A's), the Mathematics Achievement Certificate, the Social Studies Achievement Certificate, the Science Achievement Certificate, the Language Arts Achievement Certificate, the Reading

Achievement Certificate, the Citizenship Certificate, Certificate for Reaching Yearly Accelerated Reader Goal, Achievement Certificate for Top Accelerated Reader Award, the Super Reader Award, Member of Student Council Certificate, and Perfect Attendance Award. As you can tell, she excels in her studies at school and we commend her for being a good student.

Expression of Sympathy

We would like to express our sympathy to the family of Bro. Gary Smith. His love, concern, support, and faithfulness to the ministry God called him to do was evident to all who knew him.

Our prayers and thoughts are with Elaine and the Smith family during their time of loss.

Remember In Prayer and Focus Verse

Continue to remember the Home in your prayers and its ministry. We are thankful for your prayers and support. May there be a turning back to the Lord and may we as His people look to Him and the truths of His Word. His Word will not fail us. "There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass." Joshua 21:45.

same-sex marriage." He then offered the following examples:

- 1) A religious college that provides married student housing only to opposite-sex couples.
- 2) A religious adoption agency that declines to place children with same-sex married couples.
- 3) The tax-exempt status of some religious institutions that oppose same-sex marriage.

Chief Justice Roberts went on to state that there is "little doubt that these and similar questions will soon be before this Court." It seems likely that future cases will ultimately determine the full scope and effect of this decision for churches and other religious organizations.

So What Does This Mean for Churches?

This ruling does not appear to take away any of the rights that religious organizations currently have under the law. Still, the ruling leaves unanswered questions that may lead to confusion and concern for ministries. Common concerns include whether a pastor must perform a same-sex wedding ceremony, whether a church must make its facili-

ties available for same-sex wedding events, and if a church must provide same-sex spousal benefits to employees.

Communicate Expectations to Limit Lawsuits

All ministries should have biblically based beliefs and policies documented in the bylaws, articles, and other foundational documents of the organization. Stating the ministry's beliefs, along with applicable reference to scripture in governing documents, can help avoid claims of improper discrimination. Churches and ministries will do well to clearly communicate that the ministry's positions and policies are based on sincerely held religious beliefs.

Statement of belief: Include a statement of the ministry's spiritual beliefs within the organization's governing documents or bylaws. This lays the foundation for the ministry to operate in accordance with its stated beliefs.

Consistent response: If the church or ministry treats an individual or a group

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Same Sex Marriage Ruling

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of people differently than it does another person or group, the odds of the ministry losing a lawsuit increase significantly. For example, if the organization offers its sanctuary or event center for rent to the general public, yet declines to allow a same sex couple to rent the facility, the individual whom the church declined may have a valid claim of discrimination. Churches and ministries should consider limiting the use of their facilities to individuals who are members in good standing. For churches or ministries that do not have formal membership procedures, limiting the use of facilities to regular or active attenders may help to reduce the risk of an improper discrimination claim.

Churches and ministries should also include a statement in their facilities use agreement that requires any user—member or nonmember—to agree to use

the facilities only for purposes that are consistent with the ministry's faith and beliefs.

Take Steps to Avoid a Lawsuit

To reduce the likelihood of an individual bringing a successful same-sex-related lawsuit against your church or ministry, consider the following steps:

1) Include a spiritual purpose provision in your governing documents/bylaws. Be sure your organizational governing documents clearly state your ministry's spiritual purpose, your reliance on scripture, and the intent to advance the ministry in accordance with scripture. Where appropriate, quote scripture within the purpose statement.

2) Include a morals clause in your employee handbook. Be sure your employee handbook includes a policy telling your organization's employees that

the church expects them to support its spiritual purpose and behave in accordance with it. Including such a clause in your handbook, when applied consistently, can go a long way toward protecting the church from employment-related lawsuits.

3) Respond with sensitivity. Train your clergy, staff, and volunteers to approach individual needs and requests with empathy. Although you cannot meet every request or demand, the manner in which you convey your response is sometimes as important as what you have decided.

4) Consult with local counsel. When revising organizational documents and ministry policies and procedures, involve a local attorney. A wide variety of federal, state, and local laws apply to employment and facilities use, and consulting with a local attorney can pro-

vide guidance on any state-specific and local legal issues that you may encounter. You also should contact your attorney and your insurance agent any time you anticipate a claim against the church.

All ministries, whether supportive of same-sex unions or not, should have biblically based beliefs and policies documented in the bylaws, articles, and other foundational documents of the organization. Stating the ministry's beliefs, along with applicable references to scripture in governing documents, can help ministries avoid claims of improper discrimination. Also, ministries will do well to clearly state that their positions and policies are based on sincerely held religious beliefs. Contact a local attorney for assistance with creating your policies and procedures and for help in understanding how the law applies to your ministry.

Trusting The Wrong Thing

by Grover Laird

"My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." (Psalms 62:5)

Life is filled with needs that we cannot supply, problems that we cannot solve, burdens that are too heavy for us to carry and opportunities that are too big for us to take advantage of. The only way we can make it down here is to obtain some help that is beyond us. And the help we must have is the help of the

Lord - the grace of God. We must trust the Lord.

But what do people do who do not trust the Lord? The answer is, God in mercy watches over them, taking care of the things they must have to make it down here. When Jesus was speaking of treating people better than they were due to be treated He said, *"That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise*

on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matthew 5:45) The Psalmist also said, *"The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works."* (Psalms 145:9) The Lord brought people into this world, and He will be good to them as long as they are here. He has also made



Bro. Grover Laird

accessible to them a way of salvation that will insure eternal happiness.

If they will not accept God's plan of salvation, after the Lord has been patient and merciful, they will have to assume the full responsibility for their sins. They will therefore spend eternity paying for their sins, existing without God's mercy and grace they once had. Speaking of this the Bible says, *"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;"* (2 Thessalonians 1:9)

But what about God's children? Some seem to depend more on this world and what it can do for them, than they depend upon the Lord and what He can do for them. Well, Israel did this and it greatly displeased the Lord - *"Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!"* (Isaiah 31:1) More than displease the Lord, it turned out to work against them rather than help them - *"Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion."* (Isaiah 30:3)

While the Lord will take care of His children now and later, we will have a far better life here if we will live it leaning on Jesus - *"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit."* (Jeremiah 17:7,8)

When we have taken everything under consideration, it seems we would all say to ourselves, *"My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." (Psalms 62:5)*

The Master's Builders work in Arkansas and Texas

On April 27th, The Master's Builders arrived to help at Connection Point Mission in Brookland, Arkansas. They framed the foyer, worship area, storage rooms and bathrooms. This job needed extra sheets of sheet rock and bigger framing boards to meet code and the men worked extremely hard to meet these code guidelines. When you stand and watch the men work, as I often do, you will be amazed at how God strengthens them to be able to do the work that they need and want to do.

God sent a new friend and fellow worker on this job at Connection Point. Virgil Curry of Waxahachie, Texas, fit right in with our family and we praise God for sending him to us.

In June, Eddie Sikes received a call from Dr. Mike Smith of Jacksonville College, Jacksonville, Texas, requesting help from The Master's Builders to help in repairing Ragsdale House, which was damaged during a recent storm. A huge tree was blown onto the roof and carport of the dorm/house and help was needed to repair the roof of the house and tear down the damaged carport. Eddie called on several of the Builders who live fairly close to Jacksonville and work began on June 18th. There were 9



Builders who worked on the job during the next week. Because of the heat and humidity, the men started their work at 6 and ended at noon. They repaired the corner part of the roof over the kitchen, put new sheet rock up on the ceiling, and tore down the adjoining carport.

The Master's Builders always enjoy going to Jacksonville College and catching up with the staff and our friends

that we have made down there. They take such good care of us. Thank you for the meals and the fellowship we enjoyed.

If your church has building needs or if you have questions about The Master's Builders Ministry, contact Office Coordinator, John Mangum at 318-205-5155 or cell 318-607-4100 or Field Coordinator, Eddie Sikes, at 903-725-6549 or cell 479-462-1675.