BMA of Mississippi

Celebrating 200 Years 1806 - 2006

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Mississippi Baptist

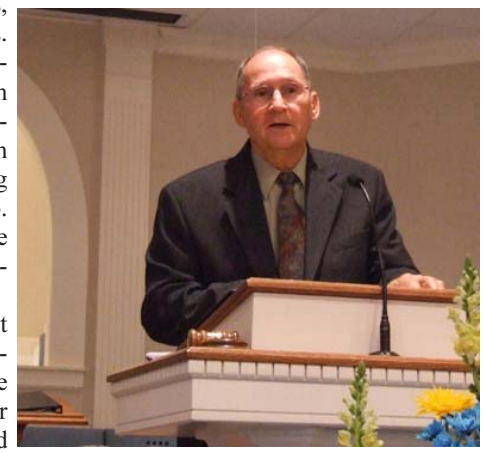
JOURNAL OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

BMA holds midyear meeting in Mantachie

The BMA of Mississippi held its 2006 midyear meeting at First Baptist Church, Mantachie, on Tuesday, May 23. A good number of messengers were present from churches from around the state to hear reports on the ministries of each of the state departments, commissions and auxiliaries. Pastor John Adams and members of First Baptist Church were good hosts and provided the messengers with the noon meal. The morning message was brought by Bro. Tom Foster, pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Saucier, Mississippi.

BMA of Mississippi President Dennis Knight moderating the 2006 midyhear meeting at First Baptist, Mantachie.

New Beginnings Baptist Church, Olive Branch, petitioned membership into the state association. This former state mission has organized into a New Testament Church and now has full member status in both the National and State BMA works.



Bro. Tom Foster brings the message at the 2006 midyear meeting.

The Program Committee presented a request to suspend the rules effecting the order of the annual meeting. The rules were suspended for the 2005 midyear meeting, but were not followed due to the shortened 2006 annual session. The October 2006 meeting was shorter than normal due to the effects of Hurricane Katrina.

The committee recommended and the messengers approved the following request:

1. That the annual President's Message be eliminated and the annual message be in its place on Tuesday morning.

2. That Tuesday night be dedicated for the Missions and Revolving Loan Fund reports.

3. That we suspend the Rules of Order to allow the Missions report to be on Tuesday night. This is only for a one year trial basis.

Missions banquet planned

Also included in this year's recommendation was that the Tuesday evening session be held at the Family Life Center of Parkview Baptist Church, Laurel. The Missions Department will sponsor a 'missions banquet' at 5:00 p.m. Tuesday afternoon for the entire messenger body. For the convenience of the messengers the Association will continue at Parkview. If a Wednesday session is needed, it will be held at Southeastern College.

President Dennis Knight noted that with the change in the schedule for the meeting and the omission of the President's Message, it is likely the business of the Association will be completed on Tuesday.

Reports

Each department and commission gave abbreviated reports on their individual ministries.

Senior Adult Commission Director Vern Holifield reported on the successful conferences held this year and noted that the National Department of Church Ministries would no longer be involved in planning and funding future conferences. The realignment of three national departments, including the Department of Church Ministries, resulted in this move.

Holifield stressed that the Senior Adult Commission would continue to have quality programs for our senior adults, but that funding would need to be increased for the commission to be able to go forward.

David Rice, interim director of the Christian Action Commission, reported that the work of the commission would continue until a new director was elected. He stressed the two main purposes of the commission - 1. Informing the Mississippi Legislature of how the BMA as a whole feels about various issues and 2. Informing our people about issues in the legislature and other areas of the world. The new mailing address of the commission should be noted - all mail for the CAC should

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Vision of new Department of Church Resources

There has been much uncertainty about how the new Department of Church Resources (DCR) will shape up. We who are on the new trustee board are grateful for the confidence the BMA has placed in us. We will do our best to continue to earn that trust. We thought it might encourage the people of the Association if we presented a statement of the direction we intend to take the new department. What follows is the trustee board's vision of what the Department of Church Resources needs to become, and a little bit of the reasoning that brought us to these conclusions over the past few months.

In its annual meeting in Joplin in 2005, the messengers of the Baptist Missionary Association of America passed the following resolution:

"That we create a new Department of Church Resources by a merger of the Publications, Church Ministries, and Camp Ministries Departments, with the merger being completed by April, 2006."

In its annual meeting last month in Mobile, the messengers of the BMA allowed the BPH, Camp and DCM trustee boards to pass out of existence, replacing them with a 15-member Department of Church Resources (DCR) trustee board comprised of five representatives from each of the original boards. The trustees unanimously agree that the following statement outlines the general direction we plan to take this new department.

Please also keep this in mind: Even though our Constitution now sees these three departments as one, it will be a long process to make that really come to pass in a practical sense. In the mean time, the BPH, Camp and DCM divisions will continue to operate just as they have in the past. Their leadership, offices, e-mail addresses, phone numbers and financial needs remain exactly the same as before.

A New Department
…and A New Vision

The word "merge," according to New Webster's Dictionary, means, "To cause to unite; to combine; blend so that individuality is obscured."

The trustees of the Department of Church Resources believe the intent of the messenger body was to blend the departments of Publications (BPH), Camp Ministries, and Church Ministries (DCM) in such a way that an entirely new department

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BMA President Dennis Knight (far right) welcomes messengers from New Beginnings Baptist Church, Olive Branch, Mississippi.

Kids Should grow over the Summer

Family Ark Ministries

Travis Plumlee

www.travisplumlee.com

Most children grow taller and bigger over the summer. Some of the teachers are always surprised in the Fall at how big some kids got over the summer. But I want to suggest growth opportunities for your children in a larger capacity than just growing taller. This summer, and every summer, your kids should still be growing in all areas of the human experience. They should grow in mental, emotional and spiritual areas as well as the inevitable physical growth.

Emotionally, your kids should mature for their age. They can grow up and mature by taking on additional responsibilities. Without the pressure of school, there is more time to do other things. Play time is important. All children should have free time just to hang out and hang loose. But a summer spent doing nothing is a wasted growth opportunity for God. Put those kids to doing chores. Chores offer security, responsibility, maturity and teaches them about work. We all have to work during our life time. It is poor parenting to expect nothing from your kids during summer. God does not like lazy people who grow up to be slothful sluggards.

Every child should be put on the chore sheet which is posted in a prominent area. You should go over what the expectations are for each job. Make sure the jobs are age and developmentally appropriate for each child. If they don't know how to do something, teach them by example. This then should be followed up with the expectation for the job to be done right. There is no need for endless nagging. Everyone knows that the chores are to be done on time. Failure to comply with this rule means there are no privileges. Stick to this rule. If you don't, everything is undone. No chores, no friends. No chores, no fun time. It is that simple. If the child is going to a camp or trip, they need to seek out someone to do their chores for them. It can be the parent or another sibling, but they need to understand that they are responsible for the job even on a vacation. Other siblings can pitch in and help for a couple of weeks. It lets the other kids know that when someone is in a bind, we step in and help each other. You reap what you sow here.

In the areas of mental growth, your kids should still read and do things to help keep their mind sharp. They can do word puzzles,(alternative to English class) figure out how much money to save, tithe and spend from their allowance money, (alternative to Math class) and play music or do some artwork (alternative to the arts area). Plan some day trips to a museum or some other learning experience that is more hands on. Don't ever let them become mindless blobs in front of the TV or video games all day. This is unhealthy. Some TV or video games are okay. But these times should be limited. These times need to be agreed upon in advance, and monitored by the parents or sitter.

In terms of spiritual growth, this should be one of the greatest times for this aspect. Children should be encouraged, and on occasion forced, to go to vacation bible school or church camp. Some kids love to go. Others fight against going. If you have a child that doesn't want to do anything spiritual, these are the kids that you may have to insist that they go somewhere that affords them spiritual growth. Maybe an older kid will want to volunteer as a sponsor for VBS. As long as they serving, or are growing, that is the mission here. Just remember, that even a good thing can be overdone. We don't want to be an exhausted, stressed and anxious Christian because our schedules are too busy doing too many summer activities. All things in moderation. Pray and let the Lord lead you.

Absolutely insist that your kids do Bible study and prayer time. Have them all sit down and have a quiet time. You can all agree upon the time. But the whole family does Bible study and prayer time, at the same time, every day. Forming a habit is a good thing. If you are not at home, insist that whomever is in charge, follows through to make sure this happens. If the kids rebel, they are reported to the parent who takes necessary disciplinary action. If this is a problem, then the summer schedule for the day can be chores, then play time, then free time, then do the devotions when the parents are home in the evening to monitor such behavior. It would be good for the parents to sit in the presence of the children and do a devotion for themselves at the same time. Regardless of what time is chosen, this is the time that the TV, music and all things are shut off. The family comes before the Lord and is quiet. There should be no noise in the house. We are quiet before the Lord. Kids today need to learn to have quiet time. Come apart before you fall apart.

Summer should be a time of great growth for your kids physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. It won't happen unless you the parent get busy and prepare. Pray through the summer and grow in the warmth of the summer SON light.

Kid's Rule, Literally

miniedition

Joseph Harris

On a regular basis, some church or pastor calls me at least once a month looking for church staff personnel. The most often requested position is youth pastor. Their appeal usually includes some of the following statements:

"We are losing our young people"

"We've got to offer something for our youth"

"We need a young person who can relate to the youth"

"Our youth are not that interested in church, we need more activities to draw them"

"We want to give the kids what they want so we need someone who will let them listen to their kind of music"

The motive of these desperate people is usually unquestionable. They are concerned about their youth and the future of the church. The problem however is this: they have fallen prey to the old liberal philosophy that kids are supposed to rule and set the standard. Years ago, the world bought into this bankrupt philosophy and the church followed suit almost immediately. I have noticed that most of the churches concerned about losing their youth and incorporate worldly programs have already lost them. Oh they may have them physically in attendance, but they have lost them morally and spiritually.

Children and youth do not need someone who can "relate" to them as much as they need authority to guide them and set and maintain standards. In the quest to make the Bible relevant, we have lowered standards and lost the respect of those we are trying to reach and teach, then we wonder what went wrong.

The tired old mantra I keep hearing is that we have to accept the dress and music of kids today (though not all new Christian music is bad, most of it is shallow and caters to the flesh). Why? Aren't we supposed to set the standard? Notice, I am not speaking of tossing out sinners who don't conform exactly to what I expect in their appearance. We should welcome and love the lost and try to earnestly win them. I am talking about the church kids who are supposed to be already following Christ and can be taught. I am glad when the lost, with or without a worldly appearance, visit our church. Christian standards for them is not a priority. Winning them to Christ is the priority. Teaching should then follow.

Why do so many have a defeatist attitude? Why do we have to accept the ungodly dress, piercings, language, attitudes and disrespect in modern MTV youth culture, as the standard for our youth? The answer is, we don't. Instead of accepting a pagan standard, we should establish a regenerated standard. But you better put on your boxing gloves and get ready for a fight. Be prepared - the biggest battle will be with the parents and church leaders. Then, having done all, stand.

Joseph Harris is the Vice-president of Southeastern Baptist College in Laurel, Mississippi.

DCR Vision

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is formed. This new department will embrace the strengths of each of the former departments, creating a climate in which those strengths can flourish and benefit all of the churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of America. We also believe that the body recognizes that each of the three former departments had weaknesses that can be corrected as the visions and operations of those departments merge into one. We believe the action of the messenger body gives the BMA a rare opportunity to fashion an entirely new resource division that is capable of providing products and services that go far beyond the present offerings of the three separate entities.

The mission of this new division is to create relevant, leading-edge educational and inspirational resources that will help BMA churches become truly effective Great Commission Churches, able to minister to and thrive in a rapidly changing American society.

Each Existing Department Has A Leadership Role

Each of the former departments brings very special talents and capabilities to this merger. This is how we see each department contributing in the most meaningful way to the BMA's new Department of Church Resources:

1. We believe the new department must have such intimate contact with our churches, pastors and staff that it will be able to clearly sense the constantly changing needs of all the BMA churches, whether large or small, rural or urban. Aware of those needs, DCR must respond quickly, creating new and innovative tools to help each church minister creatively and effectively to its community.

The organizational structure of DCM was extremely effective in developing conferences where this kind of information exchange occurs naturally. The overwhelming success of Pastor's Oasis, the National Senior Adult Conference, SOAR, the Effective Teaching Seminars and other state and national conferences puts DCM consultants into regular, close contact with our churches, making the department extremely responsive to their needs. Its culture of "part-time consultants who are engaged in full-time ministry" puts DCM in the best position to be able to provide direction for the kinds of tools that the new Department of Church Resources should develop.

2. We believe our new Department of Church Resources should capitalize more effectively on the terrific cache of experience that our National Camp Ministries Department has developed over the years. Using Daniel Springs as a base of operations, we see the creation of specialty camps to be held in different locations across the country. Sports Camps (tennis, golf, baseball, basketball, skateboard, ski camps, etc.), could capitalize on the popularity of these competitive activities and become effective venues for evangelism, discipleship training and leadership training. The spiritual curriculum of these camps would reinforce and delve more deeply into the coordinated theme that would be shared by the BMA's Sunday School, Christian Growth, Auxiliary and Youth Group studies.

Long range, we believe Camp Ministries should expand to become the Student and Children's Ministry division of DCR. As such, it will capitalize on its unique relationship with the children and students of our churches. Immersed in the youth culture while conducting its various camping ministries, the personnel of this division will be in the best position to provide direction for the kinds of tools that DCR should develop for Students and Children.

3. In order to minister effectively to today's media-savvy Americans, we believe it is imperative that the new Department of Church Resources constantly seek more relevant and effective methods for presenting the doctrinally sound Bible teachings of the BMA. The BPH division is uniquely qualified to be the production base for the educational and inspirational needs of our churches.

Taking its directional cues from those members of the DCR family

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Midyear meeting

from page 1

go to David Rice, 795 Highway 532, Mt. Olive, MS 39119.

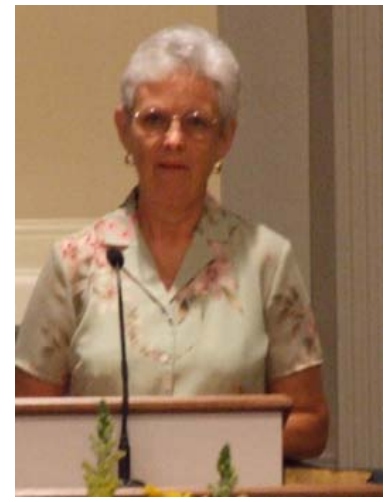
Johnny Watts reported jointly for the Commission on History and the 200th Anniversary Committee. He shared plans that will be mailed to all of our churches in the near future promoting the 200th anniversary of the BMA of Mississippi. The theme for this historic year is "His Story in Our History".

Desi Brunty presented a special in song before the Children's Home report.

Sidney Davis, director of the Mississippi Baptist Children's Home, reported on the progress of the children and their participation in school and school activities. Desi Brunty, a five year old resident of the home, was traveling with the Davis' and sang a special before Bro. Sidney's report. Davis stated that the current house parents at the home were leaving and asked for prayer for the process of filling this position. He also shared that most repairs relating to Hurricane Katrina have been made.

Bro. Lavon Haden gave the Brotherhood report in the absence of President Edgar Campbell. Campbell could not be present due to his health. Haden noted that attendance at their Monday evening meeting was good and actually exceeded that of the WMA. Tracey McMillen submitted his resignation as State Galilean Director and Pete Taggard of First Baptist Church, Henleyfield, Mississippi, was elected a interim director. The Brotherhood has no selected project since they were unable to hold their meeting in 2005. All funds will go into the general fund until a project in selected at the 2006 meeting.

State WMA President Donna Lawrence reported on their meeting. The 2006 project will be the Ed Duvall Building Fund at the mission in Cleveland, Mississippi. The WMA will change its annual meeting schedule beginning with the 2006 meeting. They will omit the afternoon session and have their entire meeting on Monday evening. This move is made to encourage more ladies to attend. Lawrence stressed the need for participation of more of the younger women in our churches. The 2006 Ladies Retreat will feature Missionaries Kim Smith of Cape Verde and Darlene Carey of the Philippines.



WMA President Donna Lawrence

Bro. Wallace Williams, BMA State Missionary introduces himself as the other state missionaries look on at the recent midyear meeting.

Dr. Medrick Savell, president of Southeastern Baptist College, reported on the work of the college. He noted the recent loss of two individuals connected to SBC. Dr. Jentry Bond, former president and Mrs. Marie Rarick, an instructor, and stated that both would be greatly missed at SBC. Savell stated that finances were good and most repair and recovery from damage caused by Hurricane Katrina was almost complete. Strategic planning for the future of the college stressed the commitment to the concept of Bible College education and to the increase in enrollment and to upgrade the salaries for faculty and staff at the college. Savell noted that many Bible colleges seem to abandon their initial purpose of Bible College education as they grow and expand their programs. Dr. Savell stressed two areas of prayer emphasis. The college is trying to purchase 5.6 acres that join the campus on the south side of their campus and the schools effort to restart a music and choir program.

Director Latrelle Windham reported on the state youth work and stressed the 2006 theme of "How to decide to live faithfully 24/7." He noted that the goal of the Youth Department was to teach our kids how to make good decisions and to teach them the word of God.

The state missions report was presented by Missions Trustee John Adams. Director Rayburn Freeman was unable to attend the meeting due to a conflict. Each state missionary was present and spoke briefly. Revolving Loan Fund trustee Lavelle Lee gave a report on the Loan Fund and its operation.

October meeting set

The Association adjourned until the 2006 annual meeting at Southeastern Baptist College in Laurel. This meeting will mark the 200th anniversary of Missionary Baptists in Mississippi. A special celebration and recognition service is planned.

Commission on Senior Adults

Vern D.Holifield, Director
4226 Highway 15 North
Laurel, Mississippi 39440

Greetings

It is a joy to greet the readers of the Mississippi Baptist Paper. That is true because of the many friends we have out there. We pray especially for your Spiritual health. Some of you have great physical and health needs. God bless as you deal with these needs in your life.

Conferences

On May 9 we met at the Bethel Baptist Church, Fulton, for the North Senior Adult Conference. We had about 125 to register. The entire day was a grand success. We enjoyed good music, great preaching, good food and sweet fellowship. The Bethel Church and Associate Pastor Tracy McMillen did a fine job entertaining us. There was a sad note in this Conference. This was the last time Brother Donnie Parrish would be helping us. I appreciate the help of Brother Donnie and the Department of Church Ministries. We have had a good and pleasant working relationship.

The Commission on Senior Adults will move on

The Commission On Senior Adult Ministry will continue to work in the interest of our many Senior Adults in our Churches and in our Communities. We knew a change was coming in the National Work. I don't like all the parts in the change, but the change came. In the change the DCM was eliminated. We now have the DCR, the Department of Church Resources. We don't know who will finally head that Department, and we don't know how they will operate.

We in Mississippi had a Senior Adult Ministry before the BMAA had such a Ministry. We had several Conferences in South Mississippi, and they were well attended. Later we conducted a Conference in North Mississippi and now the South and North Conferences are a permanent part of this work.

The Commission will endeavor to plan good programs. To have good programs, we must have good talent for the music. We will have good preaching. We will try to have a good meal. To have the right kind of programs we must be willing and able to pay those who help us. Therefore, I am asking each church to place the Commission in their budget giving. The small fee we charge will not be sufficient to pay for these programs. Come pastor, ask your church to help us.

We already have an invitation for the 2007 South Conference. The Mill Creek Baptist Church, Picayune has invited us. A final decision on this invitation will be made soon. Thanks Mill Creek and Pastor Arthur Lee for inviting us. Mill Creek can seat around 250 in their Sanctuary. They have a beautiful new Family Life Center.

We ask our people to pray for this Commission. We ask you to lend us a hand financially too.

Thanks for your prayers, your encouragements, and your financial support.

DCR Vision

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who are constantly on the front lines of ministry to our pastors, churches, adults, teens and children, BPH will bring its considerable expertise to bear in the actual creation, production and distribution of new leading-edge training and inspirational materials. In dynamic multimedia presentations using audio, video, the internet and new technologies that will become available, BPH will create lessons, teaching aids and inspirational materials that will allow for the thoughtful and systematic coordination of the teaching ministries of our churches with camps, training and inspirational seminars and other specialty programs offered by the Department of Church Resources. Innovative distribution methods will shorten the time required to move materials through the production pipeline and will give pastors and teachers immediate access to a wide variety of educational tools so that they will be better able to tailor biblical life-lessons to the changing needs of their people.

Fulfilling this Vision Requires Unique Leadership Abilities

What we have described is a mammoth undertaking. But it is a step of great faith that we must take if this merger is to accomplish anything more than cosmetic changes. We have an opportunity to effect changes that will truly help the Baptist Missionary Association move to the next level so that the Association will be able to arm its churches with the teaching tools they need to become effective, Great Commission churches—churches truly able to reach today's American society for Jesus Christ.

It will take a very special person to direct this new department and breathe life into the vision we have outlined. We know it is God's will for the churches to prosper in winning souls and making disciples. But we also know that God works through human hearts and hands in order to accomplish His will. The selection of the right person to lead this new resource department is absolutely critical to its future success.

We believe the person who is ultimately charged with blending these three strong departments into one stronger and more effective Department of Church Resources must have the following qualifications:

1. Strong spiritual qualifications.
2. A proven track record that demonstrates an unusual ability to effectively cast vision and inspire others to follow.
3. Able to set direction for a large, diverse staff of very creative people.
4. Ability to delegate authority, set expectations and then allow the staff to operate within clearly defined parameters; and track projects through to successful completion.
5. Able to move comfortably among the various cultural settings and age groups which comprise the BMA.

A Plea from theTrustees and the Interim Director of DCR

Please pray for us. Our top priority right now is to find the man that God has prepared for this great task. And please pray for each staffer on the DCR team—those folks who used to work for BPH, Camp or DCM and are now employed by a new department which is in the midst of transition. Pray that each person will begin to understand the great things God has in store for him or her as they use their talents in a more effective way than ever before in the expanded work of the Department of Church Resources.

Guest Editorial

Your Sunday Best

by Brother Ritechus N. Dignation

I'm fired up again. I mean I'm really stirred up. I just came from church, but from the way folks were dressed, you would have thought we were at the county fair. Last week, I attended a funeral and the dearly departed was dressed better than the bereaved. I've seen folks dress better for a hog call'in.

It used to be that people took pride in themselves and dressed up for church, weddings, funerals and other special occasions. Now anything goes and nobody bats an eye at the sorry and ungodly way folks cover their hide (or don't cover, in some cases).

Now I know the old argument "What's on the inside is more important than what's on the outside", is technically true, but the label on a can also tells you what's inside. My wife used to buy those unlabeled, dented cans for a quarter at the grocery store, but I got tired of eat'in cat food casserole. What's on the outside is pretty important in my book.

My wife and daughter went to a bridal shower where the bride and other guests wore tacky jeans and shorts. They were out of place in their nice skirts and dress shoes. People tell me to loosen up cause times have changed. Dadgum right and that's the problem. A sense of propriety, pride and decency have been lost in this generation and no one seems to care or notice but old fogeys like me. We've come a long way, baby, but we're going in the wrong direction.

Nakedness in public is the norm, and not just from the younger folks. I see older people who know better, showing way too much skin, from top to bottom. Mothers and Grandmothers ought to be ashamed for leading young girls astray. The Bible says the older women are to teach the younger and brother they've done exactly that, but they have put the emphasis on modern apparel and not modest apparel.

And preacher, dress up. Comb your hair, tuck in your shirt and put on a tie. It ain't gonna kill you to look professional. After all, you can't out dress your calling

Modified Image on School Yearbook Cover Upsets Some Parents

'In God We Trust' Scrubbed from Image of Liberty Nickel

(AgapePress) - Parents in suburban Fort Worth, Texas, are expressing anger over an elementary school's decision to remove the phrase "In God We Trust" from its yearbook cover.

Officials at Liberty Elementary School in Colleyville deliberately omitted the words "In God We Trust" from a large image of the new "Liberty" nickel appearing on the cover of the school's inaugural yearbook. The coin features a portrait of Thomas Jefferson, the cursive "Liberty" inscription in Jefferson's own handwriting, and the national motto along the right edge - except, that is, along the edge of the coin's image on this elementary school's yearbook.

Janet Travis, principal of Liberty Elementary School, explains that in making the determination, she wanted to avoid offending students of different religions. But for those who preferred, the yearbook came with a sticker that allowed students to put the phrase "In God We Trust" back on the Liberty nickel.

An attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union told the Ft. Worth Star-Telegram that the move by the school and the district was appropriate, sensitive, and constitutional. "Sometimes administrators and schools are really caught trying to make appropriate decisions with respect to people's views. Someone is always going to complain," said Dallas attorney Michael Linz. "I think that the school administrators were drawing the appropriate line by trying not to offend others."

But Debi Ackerman, whose ten-year-old daughter attends Liberty Elementary, says despite the school's intentions, it succeeded in offending "people who believe in our country and what it stands for."

Ackerman says she had a "huge problem" with the way it was handled. "Instead of printing 'In God We Trust' on the coin image, they didn't print it, and instead sent it home in sticker form in a concealed envelope," she says. The mom says it was explained to the young students that "there are some people who don't believe in God and that this might not be appropriate for some beliefs -- and when you get home, go ahead if you wish to and affix [the sticker] to the yearbook."

The decision to remove the motto from the coin's image, says Ackerman, is another example of political correctness run amok.

"For me it kind of stemmed from like, Christmas trees aren't being referred to as Christmas trees; they're being referred to as holiday trees," she says. "And instead of Christmas decorations, it's holiday decorations - and Easter break isn't Easter break anymore, it's Spring break. Then this happened, and for me it was just like they seem to be worried about stepping on the wrong people's toes."

Interestingly, one of the parent leaders in the school turned the same phrase in an interview with Star-Telegram. "We are a public school," said Tom Gardner, Liberty PTA president. "We sure do not want to step on anybody's toes. I don't think any harm was intended."

In an effort to address and perhaps defuse the situation, the school district has issued what it calls an "apology letter" to parents. But Ackerman says it reads more like a "regret letter" than an apology.

Letters From Our Readers

Bond family issues thanks

Dear Christians Friends,

My family and I want to thank you for all the ways you have ministered to us during Jentry's two-year battle with cancer. We truly appreciate your prayers, love, and concern for us during this time. Thank you to the churches and individuals who have blessed us with your cards, calls, visits, and monetary gifts. Those in attendance at Jentry's visitation and funeral services were truly a blessing of comfort to our family.

A special thank you to the Southeastern Baptist College administration, faculty, staff, and Board of Trustees who have made special efforts to see to our needs so that we could care for Jentry as we needed and wanted to do. Please continue to pray for our family as we accept God's will for our lives. Jentry loved the work God called him to do at Southeastern Baptist College, with God's people and the churches of the BMA. Thank you for your support of and confidence in him to do that work to the best of his ability through God's direction.

Love in Christ,
Emma and Aaron Bond
Mike, Amy, Jonah,
and Isaac Hinton

Church covenant available

Dear Editor,

My name is Alma Herrington from Silver Run Baptist Church out about 16 miles from Poplarville, Mississippi. Our church, formerly known as Oak Grove Baptist Church, has a church covenant that needs to be put to use. When we were tearing down the old church building the guys that did the job for us told me they did not feel comfortable throwing away such a good covenant when it could be put to use somewhere. We purchased a new covenant for the new building. This covenant is a large one that you hang on the wall. It is about 4 1/2 to 5feet tall.

Since we were not going to use the old one Bro. Arthur told me it would be OK to bring it to my home instead of destroying it. I have not been able to find anyone that can use it and thought maybe you would know a missions church or church damaged by Hurricane Katrina that could use it. It is already framed and just needs to be hung in someone's church. If you know of a church in need of one they may contact me at my email address listed below.

Your help would be greatly appreciated.

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Mississippi Baptist

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

Marriage Amendment Important

A supporter of the Federal Marriage Amendment feels the GOP's main contender for the White House is way out of step with the feelings of most Americans when it comes to defining marriage. The Republican Party's frontrunner for the presidential nomination in 2008, Senator John McCain, has once again stated his opposition to a federal marriage amendment. McCain says the issue of how marriage should be defined is one best left to the individual states. However, Gary Bauer of the Campaign for Working Families says McCain's idea makes no sense and is simply not going to work "because no country could allow a couple to be married in one state, and then if they move to a different state have that marriage not exist." There must be one national standard for marriage, Bauer insists, not five or six. "And I think the question that Senator McCain has got to answer is, does he want that one standard to be one man-one woman, or is he prepared to accept the standard being same-sex marriage, polygamous marriage, and all sorts of other alternatives," the conservative activist says.

15 individuals received degrees from BMA Seminary during commencement exercises

The Associate of Divinity degree was awarded to Bernice Heath of Linden, Texas. The Bachelor of Arts in Religion degree was awarded to Philip S. Blamo of Monrovia, Liberia; Richard Jason Trotter Curry of Jacksonville, Texas; David D. Darst of Alto, Texas; Barbara S. Gust of Jacksonville, Texas; and Christopher D. Price of Crockett, Texas.

The Master of Arts in Religion degree was awarded to Jason M. Aultman of Conway, Arkansas; Dennis E. Baker of Imperial, Missouri; Curtis H. Collins, II of Longview, Texas; Douglas L. Jackson of Tyler, Texas; William Issac Plotts of Normangee, Texas; and Terrance R. Wright of Yantis, Texas.

The Master of Arts (Theological Studies) degree was awarded to Malcolm Bernstine of Shreveport, Louisiana. The Master of Divinity degree was awarded to Dr. Daniel Baber of Tyler, Texas. The Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree was awarded to James D. Shine of Jacksonville, Texas.

Dr. John Adams, Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church, Mantachie, Mississippi, delivered the commencement address.

Sofilthy's Attic

by Barbara White

Things Don't Last

Do you ever think about the way things don't last? Take a good haircut and give it a few weeks - it's over. How long does a good mowing job last for your yard? And what about a good batch of cookies, they're gone in no time flat. Then there's tires, shoes, clothes, styles of clothes, vehicles, etc. I read the other day that face lifts don't last over 5 years.

So we have to come to the conclusion that nothing is permanent EXCEPT our God. Let's take a minute to praise Him for being constant in times of turmoil and change! **Malachi 3:6 "I the LORD do not change.."**

"Earnestly contending for the faith"

Dr. Charley Holmes
President BMA Seminary

Dear Fellow Servants of the Lord,

As we approach our 50th anniversary celebration (Golden Jubilee), we are reminded of those who laid the foundation of BMA Theological Seminary. Their courage, vision and faithful service fill our hallowed halls and encourage our faith daily. By God's grace, their mission and passion remain at the forefront of our efforts and is evidenced by record attendance, prestigious accreditation (SACS and ATS) and an esteemed faculty.

We believe, with God's constant blessings, that we will continue to welcome new faces to BMA Seminary—young men and women called to ministry and eager to impact our world for Him. We will not fail to provide God's best to those who wish to pursue God's wisdom, knowledge and direction. Our charge is to provide BMA churches and mission fields around the world with "faithful individuals who shall be able to teach others also."

To help us accomplish all that God has placed before us, we ask for your help and for your partnership in this eternal endeavor.

The growth that God has blessed us with has also resulted in **wear to our facilities**. We have not had any major renovations in more than 25 years (library annex), and the daily impact of this growth on our physical plant is becoming more evident (specifically, two major roof leaks and 25 year old carpet that is torn throughout our facility).

June 11 is Seminary Sunday. In the past, we have requested your prayers on this special occasion and have not asked for a financial commitment. Your prayers are still vital because, "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous person availeth much."

Additionally, we ask for your financial support. We strongly believe that we must ensure God's willing servants a safe, properly equipped and comfortable environment that will allow for their continued spiritual growth.

God's Word encourages us to *ask*…and then prepare to *receive* (Matthew 7:7-8). As I make this request, I am humbled and thankful for what God has done—and will do in the future! I'm humbled because those we teach will touch countless lives for Christ. And I'm thankful because I know this letter is now in the hands and hearts of God's faithful servants who will not be idle but will "hear and not harden their hearts"to this need.

Please, begin praying today as a church and individually. On Seminary Sunday, trust God with your giving, knowing that when you give, you are helping *your* Seminary do the work of the Lord, by preparing individuals for HIS ministry… Thank you for your faithfulness!

In HIS Grace,
Dr. Charley Holmes

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." (Luke 6:38 KJV)

Military Service Prayer List - Please remember the following as they are serving in our military. You may add names to the list by mailing them to: Mississippi Baptist, P.O. Box 8181, Laurel, MS 39441 or by email at editor@msbaptist.org.

CPT Lawson "Sonny" Brannan, *Stringer, MS*
George Rogers, *Wiggins, MS*
Scott Clanton, *Pineview, Lucedale*
Miles Farragut, *FBC of Shady Grove, Laurel*
Kenneth Smith, *Hattiesburg, MS*
Wayne Mack, *Seminary, MS*
Anthony Hodge, *Purvis, MS*
Thomas Temple, *Laurel, MS*
David Cunningham, *Forked Oak, Booneville*
Jacob Blakeney, *Mineral Springs, Taylorsville*
Lance Holifield, *Mineral Springs, Taylorsville*
Phillilp Holifield, *Mineral Springs, Taylorsville*
Robert Shavers, *Pleasant Hill Baptist Church*
Jeff Necaise, *Pleasant Hill Baptist Church*
Michael Wright, *Pleasant Hill Baptist Church*
Harold (Scooter) Bond, Jr., *Laurel*
Harold (Tink) Compton, *Faithview Church*
Jeff Schonewitz, *Saucier*
Michael Casey, *Gulfport*
Larry "Dean" Welborn Jr., *Carnes, MS*
James Reeves, *Westlawn, Picayune*
Ronnie Spiers, *Westlawn, Picayune*
Patrick Garrett, *Poplarville, MS*
Darryl Gipson, *Poplarville, MS*
Ken Bullock, *Skyway Hills, Pearl, MS*
Lemuel Kendrick, *Lee's Chapel #2, Picayune*
Albert C. White, *Mclaurin, MS*
Craig Landry, *Benville Church, Picayune.*
Janet Hilbun, *Sand Hill, Lucedale, MS*
Barron Horn, *First Baptist, Bay Springs, MS*
Jessie David Loague, *Bethel, Fulton, MS*
Dustin Wills, *First Windsor Park, Ocean Springs,*
CPT. William "Lee" Henry, *Richton, MS*
Justin Johnston, *Summerland Baptist*
Dusty Gray
James Riley
Randol Harlow, *Nettleton, MS*
Joshua S. Pierce, *Corinth Church, Lucedale*
Alan Fiscarckly, *South Green Church, Tupelo*
Russell S. Taylor, *Paramount Church, Perkinston*
Craig Fillingane, *Cypress Creek Baptist Church*
Michael Patrick Boyd, *First Baptist, Bay Springs*
Johnny R. Hunt
Jason Rivers, *Ellisville*
Tommy Mitchell, *Purvis*
Jake Driskell, *Lebanon, Laurel*
Will Norris, *First, Henleyfield*
Trevor Saltsman, *Westview, Oxford*
Russell Robertson, *Temple, Lucedale*
Tim Cooper, Ozark, *Mantachie*
Wesley Grissom, *Hopewell, Fulton*
Derick Mallette, *Ramsey Creek, Saucier*
Mary Muffler, *Ramsey Creek, Saucier*
Jonathan Morgan, *Ramsey Creek, Saucier*
Neal Garrett , *First Baptist, Tremont, MS*
David Palmer, *First Baptist, Tremont, MS*
Bradly Sharp, *Bethel, Lucedale's 150th*
Johnny Ray Hunt, *Unity, Unity, MS*
Chuck Williams, *Sharon Baptist, Laurel*
Cory Williams, *Sharon Baptist, Laurel*
Jason Cotton Hillman, *Washington, Neely*
Richard Rylee, *Richton, MS*
Jennifer Norris, *Pleasant Hill Church, Mooreville*
Thomas James Reich, *Bethel, Fulton, MS*

Mississippi State W.M.A.

Donna Lawrence, President
1621 Hildreth Road
Columbus, MS 39702

Lawrence

Corresponding Secretary
Mrs. Shirlene Smith, 730 Hwy 533
Laurel, MS 39443

National WMA Going Strong

While God has ordained that men be in leadership in His churches, most every church will admit that the backbone of the congregation can be found in its women's ministries.

The Women's Missionary Auxiliary of the BMA of America is not just another women's ministry. At last count the national association of the WMA has raised and distributed over $974,000 to missions causes both at home and abroad since 1954. At the heart of this organization is a desire to support the outreach programs of local churches and to teach as well as encourage personal growth for each one of her members.

Outgoing WMA President Shirlene Smith (left) presents the gavel to newly elected President Janet Widger.

Janet Widger was elected to serve as president of the national auxiliary at the most recent meeting in Mobile, Alabama. Janet is a native of St. Louis, Missouri, and a member of Zion Baptist Church where she was saved and baptized when she was ten. The 4th of six children born to Virgel and the late Lucy Widger, Janet has an Associates Degree from St. Louis Community College and has worked as a Police/ Fire Dispatcher since 1979. Besides being elected national president, Janet has been president of the Missouri WMA, the Washington County District WMA and Zion Baptist Church local WMA. She has also served as 1st Vice-president at the National, State and District levels, 2nd Vice-president at the State and District levels and on several committees at all levels. She is a charter member of the Lifeword Foundation Board and Regional director for the Lifeword Walk of Faith.

"I consider it an honor to serve in this new capacity." Widger says when asked to comment on her most recent position of service. "I am thankful for having pastors, past and present, which are supportive of the Auxiliary work. I am very thankful for parents who felt it important to take us to a Missionary Baptist Church, but not just take us but were examples of service and commitment to the church and her ministry."

Assisting Janet as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Vice-presidents respectively are Mrs. Renna Hight of Bryant, Arkansas, Mrs. Anita Akers of Amory, Mississippi, and Mrs. Lisa Gothard of Splendora, Texas.

Outreach Committee information

Greetings from your
National First Vice-president

I pray you are busy and enjoying your service to the Lord through our National Women's Missionary Auxiliary. At our National meeting in April, we voted for the National 1st Vice-president and all of the State Presidents to be the new 'outreach committee'. We changed the name to avoid confusion with the National Promotion Committee. I have already sent letters and some promotional material to our State Presidents.

I would like for our focus this year to be on 'reaching out instead of in', remembering the scripture "Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in..." (Luke 14:23)

We are asking for your help in several ways to accomplish this goal.

1. 'Reach out' to ladies in your individual sphere of service. Especially those not involved in WMA. Some brochures are being printed at this time to help us with this endeavor. We will try to get them to your area as soon as possible. We are hoping to get some to your State representative at GMA Camp.

2. We are also asking for volunteers to lead out in organizing prayer circles for WMA all year, not just at special meeting times. Our next meeting is GMA Camp, June 13-16. Please pray for the camp, that souls will be saved and all drawn closer to the Lord. Also pray for the Nat. WMA officers as they meet.

3. Since it is a new year in WMA, we are asking all of you to reconsider our 'Standard of Excellence'. We only had one church to reach the Standard of Excellence last year and we would love to have much more participation this year. I will be running off copies to pass out. If you would like more information, just contact me at: Renna Hight, (501) 847-1397 or ivhight@aristotle.net.

Have a wonderful, enjoyable year in WMA.

Renna Hight
National 1st Vice-president

Ten Mile WMA holds meeting

The Ten Mile WMA held its April 9th meeting at Grace Church. Mrs Jean Knight called the meeting to order. Mrs. Evelyn Foster led us in 'At The Cross' with Mrs Sue Duncan at the piano. Geraldine Necaise from Grace gave the welcome and Mrs. Eula Mae Dedeaux from Pleasant Hill gave the response. Some of the ladies gave a report on how their church was making progress from the storm. Mrs. Pat Johnson led us in prayer. Mrs Evelyn Foster from Grace gave the devotion from 2 Chronicles 12:9 on how God will give us peace in our life when we are in need of it, Grace is what he gives us when we allow him to. God is sufficient for all our needs when we allow him to control it. Paul didn't let his thorn in his side stop him and we should ask for his grace to bear them.

We sang Praise Him for our offertory song .Mrs Pat Johnson gave us a little background on Miss Cherie Breland and her work in the WMA. She has been the treasurer of our WMA for many years. She received numerous letters telling how Miss Cherie has been a blessing to different ones in our BMA work. She has had some couples name their children after her. This reporter would like to add that she has been a blessing to me since I met her many years ago. We all enjoy her smiling face.

Mrs. Louise Crawley, our State project promoter, gave us a report on our State Missionaries. She asked each church to take a missionary and the mission office to pray for every day.

Mrs. Paula Prickett gave us a report on the GMAs. Several girls from our district were elected to positions in the State GMAs. They were Jerrica Kirkland, 1st Vice-president, from Paramount Church, and Megan Brewer, 2nd Vice President, from Grace. She announced that the next meeting would be held June 27th at 7p.m. since the next meeting would be on the 4th of July.

Ten Mile District WMA is very proud of our Sunbeams. The following children from Ten Mile District won the following positions: Miss Mississippi State Sunbeam, Crystal Brewer from Grace Church; Little Miss Mississippi Sunbeam, Barbara Jean Williams; 1st Alternate Mr. Sunbeam, Aaron Cochran; 1st alternate Little Mr. Sunbeam, Payton McLure from Paramount Church.

Grace gave the program, with Megan Brewer singing The Old Ship Of Zion. The name of the program was Mrs. Trudy Hospitality. It was about being A TRULY HOSPITALITY PERSON.

Prayer request were taken and we met at the altar, had our dismissal prayer and the blessing on the food. The next meeting will be July 10th at O'Neal Road.

Geraldine Necaise, reporter

Big Creek WMA

The Big Creek District WMA met on April 3, 2006, at Parkview Baptist Church in Laurel. President Shirlene Smith presided. Kay Chisholm of Louin led in the WMA motto. The welcome was given by Judy Evans of Parkview and Nita Jefcoat gave the response. Ruby Bynum of First Baptist of Calhoun gave a devotional entitled "Three Houses" taken from John 19:20-27 concerning the domestic home; Matthew 16:18 concerning the church home; and John 14:1-6 concerning the heavenly home. Jeanelle Burks gave the business and treasurers report. Shirlene Smith gave a report on the State Project fund. Ruby Whitaker, corresponding secretary, stated there were 9 churches represented with a total of 36 present. The program was presented by Parkview's Stacy Bartran about a mission trip she participated in to Costa Rica. She showed a video of her group helping to build a training facility for missionaries to come to train. Stacy shared how the mission trip had touched her life, stating people who have nothing are happy and it makes one appreciate all the blessings God gives us. She said that visiting a mission field will change your life forever. Let us all continue to pray for our missionaries as they do God!s work and also pray for those who give their time to help prepare for the missionaries to train

Wilma Byrd of Calhoun gave the resolution: "Be it resolved that we strive to be more mindful of our auxiliaries work and encourage more ladies to take part. April being "missions month," may we pray daily for our missionaries and families and support them in their work. Let us be encouraged to pray for our national officers during the National meeting this month in Mobile, Alabama. Ephesians 6:18, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Be it resolved that we give a rising vote of thanks to Parkview Church in hosting this meeting."

Mrs. Byrd presented each lady with a hand crocheted bunny rabbit and encouraged the WMA to "multiply like rabbits." The next meeting of the Big Creek District WMA will be held on Monday, July 10, 2006, at Lebanon Baptist Church and we hope to see everyone there. Attendance has been down so let's all make an effort to bring more ladies with us to the July meeting.

Sherry Shows, reporter
Big Creek WMA

Attention GMA Counselors

Counselors attending National GMA Retreat must have a Background Check through James Speer at Daniel Springs. This is a new Texas state law. Send full name, date of Birth and social security number. Bro. Speer will send a password for you to go to the Internet site and take a test and then be cleared. His e-mail is: jspeer9064@aol.com. Mailing address is: P. O. Box 310, Gary, TX 75643-0310. Phone for questions at 800-332-2309.

GMA Girls

GMA Promoter Beth Caldwell
166 Twin Creek Rd,
Lucedale, MS 39452
601-947-6011

Sunbeam Prom. Linda Dertinger
132 HowardHill Road
Soso, MS 39480
601-729-2908

Mississippi State Sunbeam Treasurer's Report

May 15, 2006
Mrs. Shirlene Smith

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE STATE PROJECT:

Big Creek Baptist Church, Soso	$100.00
First Baptist Church, Louin	200.00
Grace Baptist Church, Saucier	100.00
Hopewell Baptist Church, Laurel	105.00
Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, Carriere	150.00
Skyway Hills Baptist Church, Pearl	30.00
Temple Baptist Church, Lucedale	80.00
Snack Shop at SB Retreat	183.53
Craft Sales at SB Retreat	79.45
Total received for project	1,027.98

Churches contributing $100.00 or more to the project were presented a Certificate of Recognition in appreciation for their contributions to the Sunbeam Project for 2005-2006.

PROJECT TOTALS:

25% General Fund	$ 257.00
15% MS State Media Ministry	154.20
60% John David Smith's Work Fund for Cape Verde	616.78
Total received for project	1,027.98

The project selected for 2006-2007 is 25% General Fund and 75% Philippine Publications - work fund for David Freeman. Please send your offerings for this project to: Shirlene Smith, 730 Hwy 533, Laurel, MS 39443. May God bless each church to have a great year in Sunbeams!

Vintage

"Of Old, Recognized, Enduring Interest, Importance or Quality"

Sold Out And Radical

SOAR is for all youth groups in the Baptist Missionary Association of America. It is a time of worship, Bible study and fellowship with other youth groups across the United States. The theme for SOAR is "Vintage". The Gospel is "Vintage"! It is an old message that has enduring interest and importance from generation to generation. It has never been out-of-date and has always been relevant and true. It is a "Vintage" Message that has just as much importance today as it did the day it began. Make SOAR a priority this year and invite others to join us.

DCM

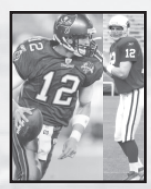
Adam's Mark Hotel
400 North Olive Street, Dallas, TX 75201
Hotel ph: (214) 922-8000 / fax: (214) 922-0308
Individual Reservations: (800) 444-2326 • www.adamsmark.com/dallas

Group rate for SOAR is $79 with up to four to a room. Group rates will be honored three days before and after event based on availability. Make your reservation by the June 9 cut off date to secure your rooms. Check-in is by 3:00 and checkout is 12:00 noon. Half price parking for SOAR is $6 per day. You can visit the Adam's Mark web site for more hotel details.

Session Speakers

David Dickson

Donny Parrish


Josh and Luke McCown

Steven Carroll

Scott Attebery

Worship

Shane and Shane

David Attebery

David Dickson - Passion and Power of the Gospel • **Donny Parrish -** Purpose of the Gospel
Josh and Luke McCown - Plan for the Gospel • **Steven Carroll & Scott Attebery -** Purity of the Gospel
Shane and Shane • David Attebery and Aaron Williams - Worship

Registration

Your $50 paid registration will cover all Conferences Sessions, Concert, Villages, Late Nights and SOAR t-shirts. All in attendance are expected to pay registration. Fill out a registration form and mail to DCM along with your payment by the June 9 deadline. After the deadline registration will be $60 and for groups who choose to stay at an off site hotel the fee is $70. You may also register on line at our new student web site at www.dcmstudents.org or print a registration form. Paid registration is non-refundable after the deadline and you are not considered registered until payment has been received. If you have any questions call the DCM office at 501-513-3726.

SOAR

July 4 - 6, 2006

Schedule

Tuesday, July 4

11:00 am - 2:00 pm	Registration
2:00 - 4:00	Session #1 - Purpose of the Gospel SOAR Band and Donny Parrish
7:00 - 9:00	Session #2 - Power of the Gospel SOAR Band and David Dickson
9:00 - 12:00	SOAR Villages Open
10:00 - 11:00	The Livin It Skate Demo
12:00 Midnight	In Rooms

Wednesday, July 5

9:30 am - 11:30	Session #3 - Plan for the Gospel SOAR Band and Josh & Luke McCown
2:00 pm - 4:00	Session #4 - Passion for the Gospel SOAR Band and David Dickson
7:00 - 9:00	Session #5 - Shane and Shane
9:00 - 12:00	SOAR Villages Open
10:00 - 11:00	Concert by Alisa Turner
12:00 Midnight	In Rooms

Thursday, July 6

9:30 am - 11:30	Session #6 - Purity of the Gospel SOAR Band and Steven Carroll, Scott Attebery

SOAR Villages
- **Worship**
- **Discipleship**
- **Fellowship**
- **Missions**

Late Nights
- **The Livin It Skate Demo**
- **Alisa Turner**

Prisoners Bible Crusade Report

Dear Editor,

On May 4,1973 we were 33 years old. In that time we gave 454,606 pieces of Christian materials, of which 163,343 were whole bibles. I became full time Director in Jan. 2000. In 5 1/2 years I have personally witnessed 275 people get saved and traveled 130,677 miles. Chaplains report 12,785 peoples saved.

Our grateful thanks to our Lord and each of you for your prayers and support. For the year 2006 we have given free to prisoners 2,608 Bibles; 200 New Testaments; 2,430 John/Romans; 5,065 Study Books, 1,110 Study helps, all totals 11,413. Sent into 19 prisons. Chaplains report 598 people saved (12,785 since 1/1/2000). 3 new Chaplains requesting Bibles for 1st time. I have traveled 22,405 miles, visited 15 churches, 7 associations meeting & 11 prisons, one foreign county, taught 30 Bible study classes. I have preached 12 sermons in churches, 6 in prisons with 13 people getting saved. PBC's Evangelistic Team has conducted three two-night revivals in prisons in 2006.

It is a joy to report that one chaplain in Florida working with Juveniles reports that in 2005, 117 teens were saved. In the Harrison County Jail at Gulfport, Mississippi, Chaplain Joe Collins reports 245 Inmates made decisions for Christ in 2005. All total Chaplains report 934 Inmates saved during 2005. What a great blessing to hear of Prisoners turning to Jesus!

February 21 to March 3, 2006 I traveled to Ghana, West Africa (16,548 round trip miles) with Missionary Buddy Beahr. I taught in the Bible Institute there that is sponsored by Trinity Gospel Ministries of Covington, Louisiana. I taught the "Bible Study Helps Seminar" in two districts to 20 Pastors, 12 Church Planters and 8 Deacons. This is the same 12 hour seminar that I am teaching in the jail and work center in Gulfport, Mississippi, through out the year.

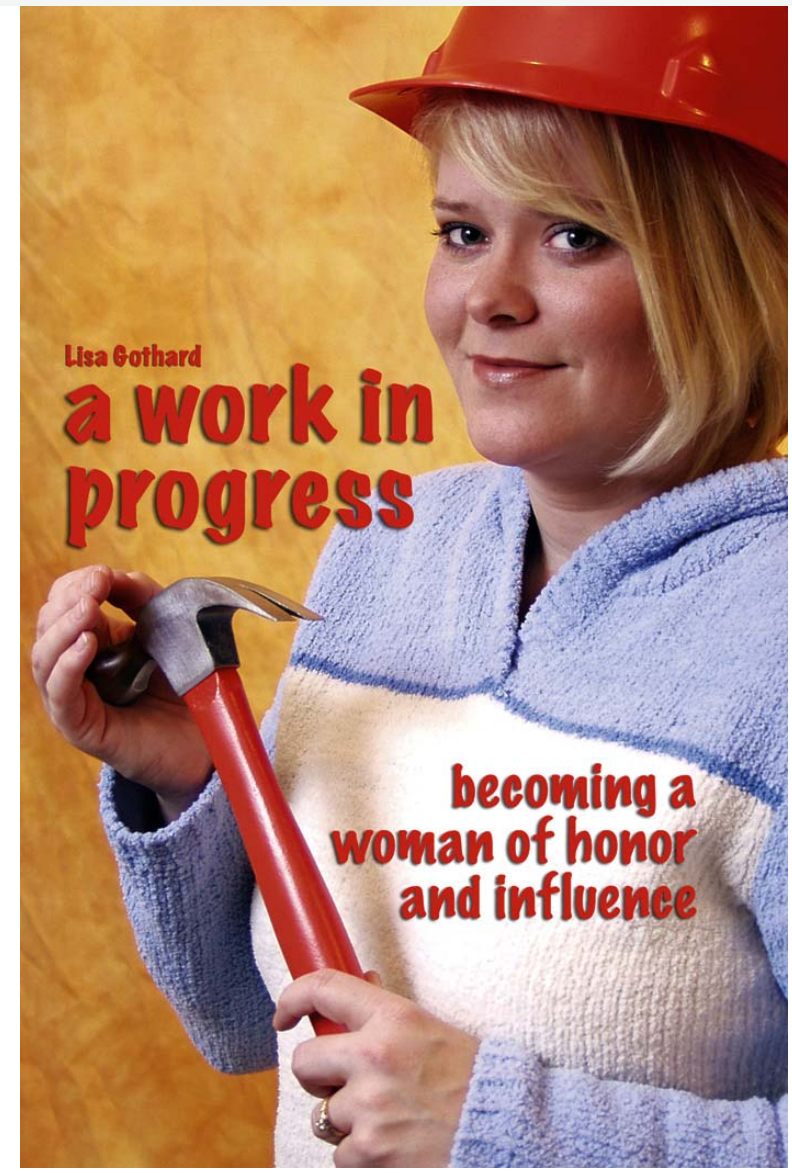
Again, my thanks to each one for your prayers and support of this Bible Ministry! For the churches and individuals who give so I can travel and teach God's Holy Word to Prisoners and to preachers on the other side of the world, for each one who gave for Pastor Bashiru, Thank you!!

Prison Information? State DOC's web sites are linked at: www.prisonersbiblecrusade.org. June 30, 2005, People in Jails & Prisons is 2,186,230 and just over 7 million under some type of correctional supervision in the USA. In the 12 months before June 30, 2005, the number of inmates in prison and jails rose an estimated 56,428 inmates, or 1,085 per week. The number of women under the jurisdiction of State and Federal prisons is 106,174. Since 1995 the annual rate of growth in the number of female inmates has averaged 4.7%, higher than the 3.0% average increase of male inmates. At midyear the nation's jails supervised 819,434 persons. (Bureau of Justice Statistics)

Prisoners Bible Crusade
Box 696, Picayune, MS 39466

Mississippi Christian Ladies Retreat

September 22 & 23, 2006
Jackson Hilton
Registration Fee $60.00
Speakers...Kim Smith & Darlene Carey
Kim & John David Smith are missionaries to Cape Verde
Darlene is missionary to Philippines.
Please send pre-registration to:
Peggy Thomaston
20600 Busby Rd
Vancleave, MS 39566



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.

Lebanon, Laurel has new pastor

Bro. Aaron Maxwell, former BMA of America North American Missionary to Middle Cross Baptist Church in Casper, Wyoming, is the new pastor of Lebanon Baptist Church near Laurel. The Maxwells will be on the field the first of July.

Tiger Creek, Ovett

It's hard to believe five months of this year has past. We have been busy with church and family. Our annual Homecoming will be June 7. Brother Aubrey Cook will be preaching the message. Weare looking forward to this event. The Anchorman Quartet will sing for us in the afternoon service. We would be happy to have you with us that day.

Our Vacation Bible School will be held June 4-9. The closing program will be the next Sunday afternoon. You are cordially invited to attend. The summer revival will be July 23 - July 26 with Brother Garry Smith preaching these services. Pray for us that we will have souls saved and people revived. In the last month, we have lost two of our members in death. The first, Ms. Janette Stroud, she suffered with emphysema for several years. The most recent death was Brother Billy Ray Crosby. He died from a long bout with cancer. Both of these people were active members of our church when able. They are precious people and will be truly missed. Please pray for these families.

Several of our people have been sick this year. Pray that God will heal us and keep us strong about the Master's business until He comes.

Yours in Christ,
Charlotte Mills, reporter
Bro. Randy Clark, pastor

Revival At Sharon
Missionary Baptist Church

You are invited to Revival Services at Sharon Missionary Baptist Church June 4-9. Sunday services will be at 10:30 A.M., with lunch at the Church, and afternoon services after lunch. Monday through Friday services will begin at 7:00 P.M.

Our visiting speaker will be Brother Justin Cameron, Sunday through Tuesday night, and Brother Aaron Parker Wednesday through Friday Night. Brother Eddie Lambert is Pastor.

Rocky Branch

Rocky Branch Baptist Church, Sumrall, will hold revival services June 4-9. Our Guest speaker will be Bro. Warren Theriot, pastor of First Baptist Church of Orange Grove, near Gulfport. Services will be held nightly beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Bethel, Fulton

Greetings from all of us at Bethel! On the 6th of May a group of ladies attended the district WMA meeting at East Amory.

The Northeast Mississippi Senior Adult Day met at Bethel on the 9th. A good crowd was in attendance. On the 12th Bethel hosted the Harmony Association meeting.

On Sunday, May 14, all of the mother's present were recognized with a gift and also the graduating seniors and college graduates were recognized.

On the 17th the WMA met and the speaker was Brooke Smithey. Everyone enjoyed her testimony of how she has coped with blindness since the age of sixteen.

Several attended the midyear meeting at First Baptist in Mantachie on the 22-23.

There have been 4 additions since our last report.

Tracy McMillen, Asst. Pastor
Joyce Cooley, Reporter

Harmony Meeting

The Harmony Association held its May 12 meeting will Bethel Baptist Church at Dorsey. Moderator John Adams presided over the meeting. Bro. Tracy McMillen welcomed the messengers to Bethel. There were 13 church represented with 57 individuals present. Missionaries Joseph Oyeleye and Elvis Garcia gave reports from their fields of service.

Special music was presented by Tracy McMillen and the evening message was brought by Bro. J.L. Sims. Our next meeting will be at Central Church at Corinth.

Tombigbee Meeting

A wonderful spiritual service was enjoyed at Greenwood Baptist Church on May 11 as the Tombigbee Association held its monthly meeting. There were 93 present as we heard good reports from Bro. Elvis Garcia and Bro. Joseph Oyeleye. Bro. Wexford Parmer reported on state missions for Bro. Rayburn Freeman. Mrs. Gary Bell sang "How Long Has It Been" and Bro. Neil Murphy brought the message from II Timothy 4:16.

Our next meeting will be with Hopewell Baptist Church, Fulton.

Lavon Hayden, president
Wanda Parmer, reporter

Scotland Baptist Church,
Bentonia, Mississippi

Many exciting things have happened during these past few months at Scotland Baptist Church. From eight-year-old Kendall Prescott asking Jesus into his heart to Senior Day with hundreds in attendance, Scotland Baptist Church continues to grow in God's wonderful blessings.

We are happy to announce that Abbye Allen, Amber Arender, Robert Franklin, and Rachel Smith are all graduating from high school this month while Kalyn Carter and Sarah Elizabeth Hardy will graduate from five-year-old kindergarten. Steven Carter, Alisha Arender, and Lauren Sligh will also receive college degrees from local community colleges or universities. We are proud of each of these students and we ask that you join us in praying for their futures.

Scotland Baptist was blessed this past month to have the Christian musical group New Genesis in concert during the evening services. A large crowd of members and guests were blessed as the group sang hymns worshiping the Lord and a great time of food and fellowship followed.

Another faithful member of Scotland Baptist Church has gone on to be with the Lord. Brother Paul Goolsby, age 50, died of respiratory failure last week and will be greatly missed by the Scotland community.

If you ever find yourself in the Bentonia community, please stop by and worship our Heavenly Father with us. Join us at Scotland Baptist Church where every day with Jesus is sweeter than the day before.

Melanie Hardy
Scotland Baptist Church
Church Reporter

Expert Thinks Evangelical Christianity Could End Chinese Communists' Rule

By Chad Groening

(AgapePress) - An American anti-Communist activist says he is encouraged by a recent report that after years of atheism, the Chinese people are returning to religion. He believes that is going to be an increasing problem for the Chinese Communist Party.

D.J. McGuire is president of the China Support Network and the China E-Lobby. He says a recent article in the Chinese newspaper, the Epoch Times, points out that years of Communist rule has not brought the Chinese people satisfaction or spiritual transcendence, with the result that many are turning elsewhere to fill the void.

"The Chinese people are suffering a crisis of faith," McGuire contends. "As one would expect, Maoism has not brought them fulfillment of any kind. They're now relying on radical nationalism, the CCP is, in order to survive, and that's exactly the sort of thing that only works temporarily."

But while the Communist regime looks to nationalistic fervor for salvation, the activist says the Chinese people are returning to the very thing the government fears -- religion. "What we now see is a people, the Chinese people, crying out for faith, crying out for fulfillment," he explains. "And they're finding it, increasingly, in Christianity."

The more Christianity spreads, McGuire asserts, "and the farther and deeper that spreads, the more treacherous it is for the Chinese Communist Party." He says this is because there is something fundamentally different about the Christian church.

"What makes Christianity different," the head of the China Support Network notes, "in particular evangelical Christianity - and I say this as someone who was born and raised Catholic - [is that] evangelical Christianity is connected but it's decentralized, which makes it much harder for the communists to stamp out and remove."

Other religious communities, such as Falun Gong and Roman Catholicism, are more centralized, McGuire points out. "And that is why I think the rise of evangelical Christianity is one of the things that will lead to the end of the Chinese Communist regime."

Because of the structure of China's underground Christian church in cells or house church communities rather than a centralized "head" that can be easily cut off, McGuire says he believes evangelical Christianity will eventually lead to the end of Communist Party rule in China. He believes this is one reason why the Communist Chinese regime is so afraid of the church.

Vacation Bible School
Red Creek
Baptist Church
630 Smithtown Road
Wiggins, MS 39577
Monday through Friday,
June 5-9 at 6:30 p.m. nightly
and ending at 9 p.m.
Closing Ceremony - Sunday,
June 11 at 6 p.m.
Refreshments afterwards -
Parents are encouraged
to attend.
9th grade and older will meet each night at the church at 6:30 p.m. then travel by bus to a special retreat for a night of worship and teaching.
Call 601-928-5260
or 601-928-8211
for more information or if you need a ride.

AVAILABLE FOR SERVICE

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

George Rogers

Bro. George W. Rogers is available as the Lord may lead. He may be reached at 19 Scooter Warden Road, Wiggins, MS 39577 or by calling 601-928-7759.

Chris Myers

Bro. Chris Myers a member of First Baptist Church, Bay Springs, would like to be used for pulpit supply. Bro. Chris is an ordained minister that has served in churches around the area as youth minister. He has been a blessing to us, helping with the teaching of our adult Sunday School Class, other classes and filling the pulpit in my absence. I have watched Bro. Chris mature and be a blessing to our church. He is a Godly husband of Suzy and father of Anna. Our church recommends him to you. You may contact him at 601-764-9693 or through the church at 601-764-2492.

James Sprayberry, pastor
First Baptist Church
Bay Springs, Mississippi

Jarrod Stockman

First Baptist Church Bay Springs is please to announce that Jarrod Stockman has accepted the call to the ministry and was licensed by the church. Jarrod was a student at University West Alabama and he will be a sophomore at Southeastern Baptist College this fall. He is willing to be of service to our churches as needed. He can be contacted at 601-764-9490 or through the church at 601-764-2492.

James Sprayberry, pastor
First Baptist Church
Bay Springs, Mississippi

Neal Helton

Bro. Neal Helton is available for pastoral service were ever the Lord may lead. He 25 years of age and has been marred to his wife Aliesha for 5 years. He and his wife love to work with the youth. And he is a member of Midway Baptist Church, Leakesville, Mississippi. He may be reached at 601-508-4319. For information about Bro. Neal you may contact Leo Sketo at 601-947-7751.

Larry Pierce

Bro. Larry Pierce is available for pulpit supply as the Lord leads. He has been in the ministry since 1996 and is a 1997 graduate of Southeastern Bible College, Birmingham, Alabama. He may be reached by calling 601-947-3531.

Dale Wirick

Bro. Dale Wirick is available for pulpit service as the Lord leads. He is a member of Faith Baptist Church, Escatawpa, Mississippi and may be reached by calling 228-369-1419.

Carl Seal

Bro. Carl Seal is available for pastoral or pulpit service. He may be reached at 601-722-4695 in Seminary, Mississippi.

David Clark

Bro. David Clark is available for pastoral work or pulpit supply. He has pastored churches in Collins, Picayune, Lumberton, Ovett and Laurel, Mississippi. He and his wife are currently members of Parkview Baptist Church, Laurel. He may be reached at 601-426-6896.