

The Mississippi Baptist

JOURNAL OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

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State Association holds harmonious midyear meeting

The midyear meeting of the BMA of Mississippi was held at Parkway Baptist Church near Petal on Tuesday May 19. Pastor John Miller and the church were gracious hosts. President Leon Carmical



led is closing prayer at midyear meeting. Bankston is stationed at Camp Shelby and ministers to the troops training there.

moderated the session with BMF Director Doug Lee leading the music. The midyear message was brought by Parkway Pastor

John Miller.

A good number of messengers from across the state were present to hear reports from state departments and commissions.

Divine Grace Baptist Church, Long Beach, petitioned for official membership in the Association. This church is a former state missions project pastored by Bro. Wallace Williams.

An early item of business came from Bro. Danny Pitts, pastor of First Baptist Church of Shady Grove, Laurel. Originating within his church and discussed at the local Big Creek Association, Pitts brought a motion that the Christian Action Commission investigate the actions that we as an association can take to make a difference in the area of the abortion issue. Many options were discussed and a great desire was expressed to have more involvement within our churches concerning this issue.

Reports were heard from each of the commissions. Support was requested by each for their individual ministries. BMF Director Doug Lee expressed a desire to begin a teaching ministry for music in our churches or local associations. He plans to contact each church about the prospects of offering these services.

Brotherhood President Roger Jefcoat reported that the State Brotherhood had voted to establish a Disaster Relief Ministry. This



President Leon Carmical presiding over midyear meeting at Parkway Church, Petal would focus on 'immediate' relief in such instances until other agencies could get established at disaster sites.

Children's Home Director Sidney Davis reported that finances were stable and the children were doing well in their studies and excelling in a number of areas of their school work.

WMA President Ruby Bynum reported



Pastor John Miller brings midyear message

on their meeting on Monday night. Their project is the building fund for Bro. Estruado Maraquin and the Hispanic Mission in Laurel.

Dr. Medrick Savell reported on Southeastern College. The 2009 graduating class

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BMAA 2009 Coordinating Council holds retreat

by Philip Attebery

The BMA Coordinating Council met May 18-20, 2009 at First Baptist Church in Magnolia, Arkansas. Members present were Chairman David Watkins, Philip Attebery, Paul Bullock, Doug Brewer, Ed Stephenson, and Paul White. Directors present were John Adams, Kevin Clayton, Ron Chesser, Grady Higgs, and George Reddin. Associate directors Steve Crawley and John David Smith also attended.

The meeting was held to assist the council in addressing its constitutional purpose "to cast a unified vision and promote cooperation between the departments and/or agencies of the Baptist Missionary Association of America" (Article VIII 2).

Paul Bullock, First Vice-President of the BMA of America, began each session with a devotional thought on the subject of unity.

Steve Crawley introduced the idea of a hands-on discipleship model regarding "habits" of an effective Christian. The council and directors agreed to pursue this model and its development as part of a unified vision. It was noted that the stated purpose of the BMA, according to the Statement of Principles of Cooperation Article II, "is to provide cooperating departments an agencies that will inspire a mission vision and assist each local church in carrying out the Great Commission." The proposed model is intended to help the departments to assist local churches in carrying out the commission through effective discipleship and training methods.

Dr. Lindsey Gunn, Senior Associate for Cambridge Strategic Services, was invited to lead the group in strategic planning. The sessions focused upon planning, organization and action.

The council's next meeting is scheduled for a time in early September. The meeting will be used primarily to advise departments on their budgets and fund-raising activities.

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Southeastern College 2009 Graduating Class

See college report on page 3



What you draw them with you draw them to

Let's think about that for a moment. It is really a profound statement about the ministry in America. What we draw them with - we draw them to. Whatever you use as a means to draw crowds to church, or camp, or a conference; is in fact what you are drawing them to.

Take for example what I have seen in my own ministry. I go to a church for 9 years in a row. I do a teen conference every year as part of the week long family life revival. We average about 75 teenagers. Then, this year, they promote that there is going to be this awesome band performing some heavy and hard Christian rock music. The attendance increases tenfold. What drew the kids to church? Was it the gospel and to know more about Jesus, or was it the music? You may say, 'they were just tired of hearing you'. Thanks a lot. But I have seen this in many other churches where I have nothing to do with the program.

I know of a church that has never had good youth attendance. So they do a conference for teens, but also bill this great band coming as part of the festivities of the night. People went in droves. I asked some teens why they weren't going. They told me it was because they didn't like that band. Others who went I asked them why they went. They answered, "because I really wanted to hear this band". None of them answered it was because they wanted to grow in their walk with the Lord. The "preaching" time, if you could call it that, was really just an "addon" after the fact of the concert. So what are we drawing these teens to our churches for? The gospel or for entertainment? What we draw them with - we draw them to. I am not putting down music. I love Christian music and see it as a valuable tool of ministry and can effect change in many lives.

According to a recent poll of young American Christians, we lose 80% of all of our young people by their sophomore year in college. Most young people quit coming to

Coordinating Council

from page 1

Directors will also meet together in early July to continue work on the discipleship model to assist local churches.

Individuals with questions or concerns regarding the council should contact Chairman David Watkins or a member of the council.

church in their early 20's. I am not happy with this stat. It is grieving me. Hence this article. I am gravely concerned over where we are headed as a nation with our young people falling away from the faith. Is it time for us to reassess what we



Family Ark Ministries

Travis Plumlee

are doing in our ministries? We have two generations of Americans that have grown up with music addiction. If you even question that thought, then look around and see if the under 40 crowd has Ipods, MP3 players, CD's, car stereo systems, phones that play music etc. Many Americans have been raised with hours of watching MTV, VH1 or CMT. Music television for many is a huge part of their life.

Does it start early in our churches? I support children's min-

istry. But some churches don't really have a children's ministry. They just call it that. The kids are brought into the sanctuary for music. And as soon as the man of God stands and opens the Word of God, they are shuffled off to play, eat, drink and possibly get a small devotion. Is the person leading children's worship biblically sound, and fully equipped to teach this youngest generation the ways of the Lord? If kids are put in a children' worship time, it would be paramount for the person leading this children's worship time to be a biblically knowledgeable person who can uniquely relate the gospel to children.

I know we could never consider again going back to allowing children in church because it would mess up the beautiful adult worship experience. Then, when our little kids get older, they are shuttled off again to youth groups of whom many focus on entertainment more than equipping. Again, this is not all youth groups. Many are awesome. Yet, I have seen even some of the most biblical youth groups still waste a valuable ministry opportunity, when they take the kids

to summer conferences where the emphasis is on music, comedians, six flags and baseball games. What we draw them with - we draw them to. I have done summer camps where they set aside 45 minutes of music and save 15 minutes for preaching and altar call. You have to finish in the allotted time or you mess up lunch and the afternoon game schedule. What we draw them with - we draw them to.

Do we draw them to camp with music, fun and games and a chance to meet some hottie? Or is the absolute focus on drawing them to Christ and the Bible? I really love it when I go to camp and they get up and make a welcoming statement like this: "Brother John will lead us in worship this morning with his band, and then AFTER worship, Brother Travis will come up and preach." Was I asleep when preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ was no longer considered part of a worship service?

Please don't get offended at me. I have dedicated a great part of my life to helping minister to kids and teens. I love conferences, camps, youth ministries etc. But we need to

all pray and re-think what we are doing. We're losing 80% of them. I am again saddened that we are losing all of these kids when they become adults to stay in church. They live sinful lives with no convictions, yet call themselves Christians. I think they are cosmetic Christians of the culture.

Do I have an answer? Yes. I think the answer is at all churches, camps and conferences, the focus should be on scripture. Above the fun times, the skits, the music, the side trips to entertainment venues, we should be saturating them with scripture. Some will say that kids today won't come just for Bible preaching. You need this other to draw them in. I have seen in my ministry the hardest God-hating kids come to Jesus just by nothing more than scripture about Jesus.

Our kids don't need more entertainment. They need more Jesus. I hope you all join me in a concern for our young people's discipleship in Christ. We must do something. We are losing too many of them. Just remember. What we draw them with - we draw them to. Let's draw them to the Bible and Jesus.

LOOK UP!

THE BUZZARD: If you put a buzzard in a pen that is 6 feet by 8 feet and is entirely open at the top, the bird, in spite of its ability to fly, will be an absolute prisoner. The reason is that a buzzard always begins a flight from the ground with a run of 10 to 12 feet. Without space to run, as is its habit, it will not even attempt to fly, but will remain a prisoner for life in a small jail with no top.

THE BAT: The ordinary bat that flies around at night, a remarkable nimble creature in the air, cannot take off from a level place. If it is placed on the floor or flat ground, all it can do is shuffle about helplessly and, no doubt, painfully, until it reaches some slight elevation from which it can throw itself into the air. Then, at once, it takes off like a flash.

THE BUMBLEBEE: A bumblebee, if dropped into an open tumbler, will be there until it dies, unless it is taken out. It never sees the means of escape at the top, but persists in trying to find some way out through the sides near the bottom. It will seek a way where none exists, until it completely destroys itself.

PEOPLE: In many ways, we are like the buzzard, the bat, and the bumblebee. We struggle about with all our problems and frustrations, never realizing that all we have to do is look up! That's the answer, the escape route and the solution to any problem! Just look up.

*Sorrow looks back, Worry looks around, But faith looks up!
Live simply, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly and trust in our Creator who loves us.*

Real church: Keeping your children involved

OneNewsNow - The head of a biblical discernment ministry says a new survey illustrates that because many young people have been "brought up on entertainment" in the church of their childhood, they prefer something akin to a video game rather than digging deep into God's Word.

A new book, "Already Gone: Why Your Kids Will Quit Church and What You Can Do to Stop It", co-authored by Ken Ham of Answers in Genesis, reaffirms past surveys that have shown most children who grow up in the church will leave it as they become young adults. But it also indicates that such disenchantment with the church often begins at an early age.

Ham and researcher Britt Beemer surveyed 1,000 young adults who have left churches and found that Christian churches are "losing many more people by middle school and many more by high school than [they] will ever lose in college."

T.A. McMahon, executive director of The Berean Call, believes the failure to keep evangelical youth interested in and excited about the Bible is a consequence of abandoning teaching them in favor of trying to entertain them.

"I think it's the result for the most part of the consumer, seeker-friendly approach to church growth, which I believe has really done more to wean the church off the Bible than any trend in this century and the last one," he contends.

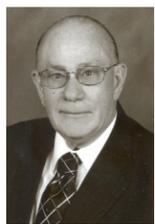
He agrees with the survey's conclusion that "on the whole, the Sunday school programs of today are statistical failures."

"There are few Sunday school classes that exist that really instruct a young person in sound doctrine, to encourage him or her to understand what the Bible teaches and the reasons why its teachings are true," McMahon adds.

McMahon says Christian youth pastors serve a vital role in teaching young people, but parents should not be neglecting their duties to demonstrate their love for God's Word and train their children in biblical truth in the home.

Southeastern Baptist College

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Dr. Medrick Savell
President

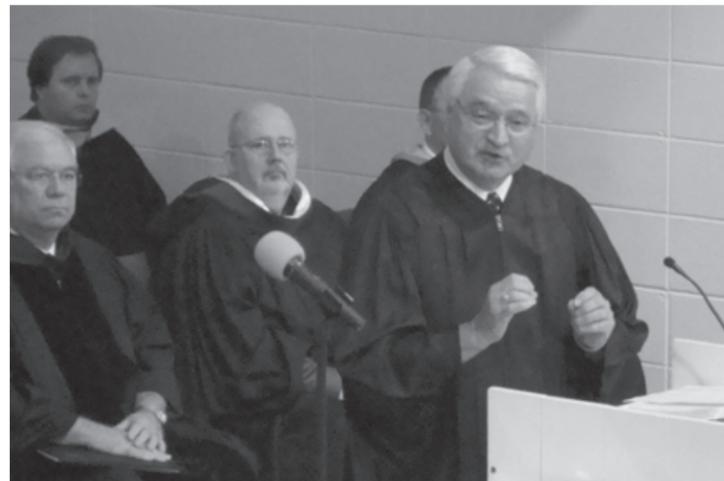
Serving Christ With a Biblical World View In A Christian Atmosphere

Churches and Individuals can Help Students Attend Southeastern Baptist College

With the current economic state in our country, it is getting harder for students to attend college. When the total cost of attending college is considered as a whole, Southeastern Baptist College is one of the most economical colleges to attend. Also, the atmosphere on campus, as well as the courses being taught

For several years the college has given a tuition grant, called HANDS (Helping Attract New Desirable Students) to students who are members of a BMA of Mississippi church, or any other church which supports the college on a regular basis.

The BMA of Mississippi Revolving Loan Fund provides a Pastoral Scholarship for Mississippi preachers who are members of BMA



Pictured above is Bro. Sidney Davis, 2009 commencement speaker for Southeastern Baptist College

from a biblical view point, is an important component for parents and others to consider. The moral condition in our country is an area that Christians need to be alarmed about and we must do more to be an influence in our society. I think sending students to a Bible college can be a great step in the right direction. Southeastern is an accredited college that God is using.

Students need financial assistance in attending college. Southeastern Baptist College is committed to the principle that no student should be denied a Christian education because of financial limitations. Therefore, the college makes every reasonable effort to assist students in obtaining any assistance for which they qualify.

I would like for our people to know that financial aid is available for students who qualify for assistance in expenses involved in attending Southeastern Baptist College. The Pell Grant and several other scholarships and grants are available to qualified students. Prospective students should contact the Financial Aid Director at the college at 601-426-6346.

churches. The purpose of this scholarship is to help BMA preachers to attend Southeastern. There is a great need in our churches for more good pastors. We appreciate the R.L.F. for providing this assistance and encourage our preachers to take advantage of it. If preachers want to attend SBC, there will be a way for them to attend.

Other Scholarships:
Anonymous Scholarships
The Bond Scholarship
The East Central Baptist Association Scholarship
The Echols Scholarship Endowment Fund
The Hall-Powell Scholarship (East Amory Baptist Church, Amory, Mississippi)
The Billy Joe Johnson Scholarship (Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Saucier, Mississippi)
The Harold Leytham Memorial Evangelistic Endowment Fund
The Pleasant Hill Baptist Church Scholarship, Tupelo, Mississippi
The Rarick Scholarship
The Rock Hill Baptist Church Scholarship, Meridian, Mississippi
The R.W. Savell Scholarship

Endowment Fund

The Tombigbee Baptist Association Scholarship

There are several ways that the churches can help students to attend our own BMA college. May I suggest a few.

If a student from your church chooses to attend Southeastern Baptist College, you could help him/her financially. Some churches are establishing a scholarship fund to help them. Some begin the scholarship by sending a certain amount to be invested and only the interest is used for scholarships. Some send a certain amount to the college each semester to be used to help students pay tuition, etc. Your church can choose who receives the aid or set up rules for how it is to be used. Your church could help the student directly by assisting them in paying for gas for travel, dorm fees, books, or part of their tuition after Pell Grant, scholarships, financial discounts, etc.

There are other ways to help the college, which also helps the stu-

dent indirectly.

Your church could put the college Foundation in your budget. This money is invested by the Foundation and the college receives the interest generated to use as needed.

Some churches send memorial gifts to the college when someone in their church family passes away. This memorial is done in three ways:

1. It may be sent to the Foundation in memory of the loved one. The college notifies the family that the gift was made.

2. It may be sent to the college library to purchase one or more books to be put in the library. The college notifies the family of the gift and the book that was purchased, and a note is put in the front of the book that it was placed in honor of the loved one. (This helps students by providing a better library for their use while students and later as they want to use the library.)

3. It may be sent as a contribution to the college in memory of a loved one. The family is notified by the college of the memorial.

SBC Honor Roll for 2009

President's List

Jacob McKenzie
Timothy Buchanan
George Grund Jr.
Charles Lee
Marvin Mathis
Farris Walker

Dean's List

Donald Miller
John Kelly
Vivian Niblett
Kimberly Glenn
Jerry Bolton
Wanda Walker
David Ruffin
Kailynn Creel
Kimberly McBryar
Genita Pugh
Whitney Hunt
David Parker
Jason Howard

Wisdom From Above

continued from page 7

Hearing God's Voice

by Maggie Chandler
from Baptist Trumpet

Oswald Chambers wrote, "The voice of the Spirit of God is as gentle as a summer breeze — so gentle that unless you are living in complete fellowship and oneness with God, you will never hear it."

As I reflect upon my life, I realize that I can't remember a time when I didn't hear the voice of God. Was it simply the trusting faith of a little child? Do children instinctively tune in to the divine echo without questioning its veracity? I don't know. I only know that to try to extract God's voice from my entire life experience would be like unweaving a basket or un-ringing a bell.

Spurgeon openly acknowledged hearing such a voice, even when other ears were dull of hearing. "The voice of God is that secret voice unheard by any other ear, which our own ear, opened by the Spirit of God recognizes with joy."

From the pulsating pages of the Old Testament, God's heart cry was: "O that my people would listen to me!" Yet, throughout history, we have contrived many a sorry substitute for an intimate relationship with God. Israel hadn't listened to His Voice in years, and an incredible thing happened. The glory visibly left the temple of God, and apparently no one even noticed but Ezekiel.

Ezekiel describes how the glory first moved from between the wings of the cherubim to the threshold of the temple. Then it moved above the threshold. It then departed and moved on to linger at the East Gate. God lingered... as though waiting and hoping that Israel would take note. "And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city." (Ezek. 11:23) How sad. Yet in verse 16, God says, "...Although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come." God promises to be to them "a little sanctuary" — a place apart — where they can commune with Him. Even in a strange country, they could hear God's voice and experience an Aha! moment in their lives.

Take time to seek God through prayer — letting Him know your concerns, your questions and your doubts. Tell Him you are totally dependent on Him and ask for discernment that you may hear His voice.

Spend time in the Word, for it provides balance, confirmation and direction for your life. Ask God questions. Ask Him to help you make right choices. Ask Him to reveal to you hidden things.

Be still, listen to what God has to say, then follow through on those spiritual nudges you receive.

Don't get impatient and lose heart. Prayer involves speaking, listening and waiting. When you devote adequate time to all three, you will begin to hear God's Voice — "as gentle as a summer breeze" — on a regular basis.

abundance one has when it is used for the Lord's glory-- "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." (Matthew 25:29) The Lord applied this truth to different things, and obtaining wisdom is one of them. (Mark 4:25)

If we therefore pray for wisdom with no thought of using it for God's glory, we may not obtain it. The Psalmist surely understood this when he prayed, "Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end." (Psalms 119:33)

Not all who have great stores of knowledge have the wisdom from above. It would really help

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Mississippi Baptist Opinion Page

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

Midyear Meeting of BMA of Mississippi

from page 1

was one of the largest in recent years and he reported that enrollment was up over the past 3 years. He acknowledged that problems exist, but was relying on God and His people to take care of them. Income was up, but expenses were also up in a number of areas over which the college has no control. He encouraged the churches to respond with a good 2009 Special Emphasis effort. He noted that distant education courses and online education are in the school's immediate plans.

Missionary Sam Husser reported on his work in Slidell, Louisiana. The growth was going well and a number of people have been saved. He reported an average attendance of 95 to 100 and stated that many people were being reached through weekly home Bible studies.

Bro. Larelle Windham gave his final report as State Youth Director. He shared personal thoughts from his years of service and thanked the



Youth Trustee Chairman Philip Burns (right) presents retiring Youth Director Latrelle Windham with a plaque recognizing his 26 years as Youth Director for the BMA of Mississippi.

they seek direction for the future. The Trustees presented Windham with a plaque recognizing his dedicated service over the past 26 years.

Missions Director Ray Freeman presented the work of the Missions Department. Two state missions were organized into New Testament churches this past year and he spoke of the need to go forward with new projects. Bro. Ed Duvall and the Homestretch Mission of Cleveland have begun a new outreach ministry in Indianola. This effort is being led by Bro. Donnie Logan. Bro. Logan spoke of his vision for this mission and requested prayerful support. He shared that presently he was ministering to 60 to 80 people in Indianola and was optimistic about the future.

Vern Holifield reported on the success of the two Senior Adult

Conferences held this Spring. He encouraged churches to minister to the Seniors of their churches. These individuals have been faithful through the years and the churches must remain faithful in ministering to their needs.

Christian Action Commission Director John Adams was unable to attend the meeting and his report was presented by Bro. Shane Singleton. He spoke about the petition to change the Mississippi State Constitution concerning the definition of a "person". This is a battle to help in the struggle against abortion.

There was no other general business brought before the messengers and the association adjourned until the annual meeting in October held at Southeastern College.



Bro. Donnie Logan spoke concerning his work in Indianola.

Association for their support. He encouraged support for the Youth work and the Youth Trustees as

Church of the Covered Dish BY THOMAS TAPP



"I have one correction for today's bulletin, we are having a 'deacon' election, not a 'demon' election."

Letters From Our Readers

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

Update on Bro. Harry Burge

Dear Friends,

Just wanted to give an update on Harry. We just got back from MD Anderson Hospital this past Monday and we are still trying to get over the eighty days that we were gone. The trip was very tiring, but we did receive a little good news. We met with the doctors and after they ran a lot of tests, they told us they could treat him. Two different groups of doctors got together to see what treatment would be best for him. They called Friday afternoon and said they had decided to use the Thersphere pellets for the

treatment. They also said within four to six weeks they will begin treatments. In the meantime they have him on a low dosage of chemo by mouth. They said the chemo he was taking before was extremely too high of a dosage and they could see why he was having so much trouble so soon.

So friends, please continue to remember him in your prayers. He is doing fairly well, though at times he gets pretty weak and tired. He is still able to preach and we thank God that he is holding him up and giving him the strength he needs to do that.

We also want to take this opportunity to thank each one for your support, whether it be monetary, your prayers, your visits, or your words of encouragement. They all are appreciated.

May the Lord bless each of you,
Bro. Harry & Sis. Eleanor Burge

Pictured on the right are Galilean Director Mark Jones, Assistant Director Larry Tramel and Mr. Galilean Sernior Alex Davis (center). All of these individuals are from Bethel Baptist Church near Fulton.



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Commission on Senior Adults

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Greetings

Today is a beautiful day in South Mississippi. The Lord has given us much needed rain for our area. The gardens are growing now and soon we will enjoy the fruit of our labor. The Lord is good to His children.

North Senior Adult Day

The Hopewell Baptist Church, Fulton and pastor Matt Hudson were at their best. They extended us a warm welcome as Hopewell always does. The ladies had the buildings beautifully decorated.

Dr. Sims, the Hudson's, and the Shiloh Trio provided the beautiful music for the day. Dr. Rayburn Freeman preached a great message. The fellowship was noticeably good. The food was simply great. We had around 125 in attendance. I want to thank Brother Eddie Boutwell for the pictures taken at the conference.

All in all, I believe the 2009 conferences were the best or among the best we have had. Thanks to all on the programs and all who at-

tended. Without the people we couldn't have these good meetings.

Associations Attended

We enjoyed meeting with the Oak Grove Association which met with East Main Baptist Church,

Lumberton.

The Midyear meeting of the BMA of Mississippi was a good meeting. The harmony and fellowship were great. All the reports were encouraging. The reports from the missionaries were good. They re-

ported that souls were being saved. All the reports show that our BMA work is alive and well. No, not perfect, but we are enjoying God's power at work in many ways. Brother John Miller brought a powerful message.

Our Seniors

During the summer months the seniors just do their thing. They have their regular meetings, go places, attend and support their pastor and church. I encourage every senior adult to remain active and as busy as possible.

Pray for one another in your church. Hold your pastor up in your prayers. Pray for our great country.

There is quite a number of churches that do not have a ministry to their seniors. Pastor, you should do your best to lead your church to get involved with such a ministry. Many seniors refuse to participate in the senior adult ministry in their church. Senior adults should be active in guiding young people in their spiritual development. God knows our youth need the counsel and wisdom of mature Christian adults.

Scenes From North Mississippi Senior Adult Conference



AVAILABLE FOR SERVICE

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

Johnny Watts

Bro. Johnny Watts of Laurel, is available for pulpit supply and service as the Lord leads. Bro. Watts has been a faithful servant and may be contacted at 601-729-8098.

Terry G. Johnson

Bro. Terry G. Johnson is available for pastoral work. Have been a pastor since 2005. For resume contact him at 13 Aldon Road, Purvis, MS 39475 or call at 601-436-0115.

Ricky Chambliss

Ricky Chambliss surrendered to preach in April 2008 and is licensed by Magnolia Baptist Church in Hattiesburg. He is a senior at Purvis High School and is available for ministry as the Lord may lead. For references please call 601-264-8087. He may be reached at 601-467-9986.

Larry Pierce

Bro. Larry Pierce of Lucedale is available for pulpit supply, view of call, and for revivals. He may be contacted at 601-947-3531.

Ohio students get arrested for evangelism

OneNewsNow - A group of young Christian evangelists ran into trouble with the law while trying to evangelize on an Ohio campus.

Five of seven members were arrested on the campus of Sinclair Community College in Dayton after being told to leave. All of it took place on public property. The group of Christians was approached by

police who allegedly denied their constitutional right to freedom of speech.

Officer: "You're all going to jail. Come on, it's private property. You want to go to jail, too? This is not First Amendment; you're on private property and you need to go."

Student: "We have a right to be here."

Officer: "You want to go to jail, too?"

Student: "We have a right to be here."

One member of the group, Dan Poillon, remains jailed pending arraignment. Much of the action was caught on video by another member, but police seized the camera and still have it. Student Jason

Storms describes the scene.

"When they tackled Dan and threw him to the ground, she got her camera out and began to film, so we have film of Dan on the ground getting roughed up by the cops," he notes. "And then an officer came over to her and asked for the camera and she said 'No, I'm not going to give you the camera.' And so she was placed in handcuffs, and her camera was confiscated."

Storms adds they were handing out Christian literature and witnessing peacefully and says there was no justification for violating their constitutional rights. The Alliance Defense Fund is representing the students.

Christian student group fights for equal rights

OneNewsNow - A group of Christian attorneys and law students lost the first round in federal court over a Christian Legal Society chapter at the University of Montana Law School.

The Christian Legal Society had an operating chapter on campus, but litigation counsel Casey Mattox says the student body voted to de-recognize them. "They did not like the fact that they had a statement of faith requirement for voting positions and officer positions within the group," he explains.

Mattox points out the Legal Society welcomes all members, but those who vote or seek elected position must endorse and adhere to a Christian worldview. Ignored that issue."

Midyear Brotherhood Meeting brings new ministry

by Roger Jefcoat, President
BMA of Mississippi Brotherhood

The Brotherhood of the Mississippi BMA met Monday, May 18, 2009 at Parkway Baptist Church, Petal.

The annual project is the Southeastern Baptist College Land Fund and the State Galileans. The interest in these projects have helped bring in offerings by the midyear that surpassed the total offerings for the past two years.

For the program Bro. Chuck and Belinda Lee brought the special music, then Bro. Lee brought the evening message using Matthew chapter 11 as his text.

Brother Josh Spears, State Galilean Director, reported that the state Galileans had a great Retreat in March. Attendance was slightly down, but the services were great. Bro. Spears gave his resignation as State Galilean Director and thanked the Brotherhood for allowing him to serve in this ministry for two years. State Assistant Galilean Director, Bro. Mark Jones, offered to help begin or assist with any churches Galilean Program. He is also developing a quarterly newsletter for the State Galileans.

Our men voted to establish a Disaster Relief Ministry. We will collect items to be used immediately after a disaster. This ministry is not an attempt to compete with other relief

organizations, but to assist our people while setting up for long term relief. Supplies will be stored at the Mississippi Missions Complex and may include canned foods, dry foods, paper products, plastic ware, and bottled water. We pray that our men will support this Ministry.

We plan to have a meal prior to the 2009 annual meeting and the requested donation will be \$6.00 per person at the door.

We elected the following officers to fill unexpired terms

Second Vice-president – Adam Sloan

Secretary-Treasurer – Roger Akers

Galilean Director – Mark Jones

Assistant Galilean Director –Larry Tramel

Please keep the Brotherhood in your prayers this year as we serve Our Lord.

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.



Mississippi W.M.A.

Mrs. Ruby Bynum, President

43 Bear Pen Creek Rd., Laurel, MS 39440
601-428-1901

Corresponding Secretary

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

Big Creek District WMA

The Big Creek District WMA and Brotherhood met on April 6th at Parkview in Laurel. The WMA meeting was called to order by president Ruby Bynum. Judy Blackwell led in opening song "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" accompanied by Mary Wardell on the piano. June Holifield led in prayer and everyone was welcomed to Parkview by Virginia Poore. Sherry Shows of Mt. Moriah gave the response. Devotion was brought by Kristy Matthews of Mt. Moriah entitled "Are You Ready for the Wedding?"

Corresponding secretary Kay Chisholm reported that there were 8 churches represented with 33 present. A nominating committee was elected consisting of Virginia Poore of Parkview, Bonnie Brown of Big Creek, Sherry Shows of Mt. Moriah, Shirlene Smith of Hopewell, Janice Bryant of Lebanon, and Ruby Bynum of Calhoun. These ladies will be working to get officers for next year so everybody stay by your phone and say "yes" when asked to fill an office!

Shirlene Smith gave the state WMA report. Historian Judy Eavanson asked each church to send her pictures and/or items to place in the WMA scrapbook. Mrs. Bonnie Brown wants each church to let her know when their WMA was organized along with their first officers. You can e-mail it to her at bbrown@southeasternbaptist.edu. Or mail to her at 8 Reagan Lake Road, Laurel, MS 39443.

Bro. Estuardo Marroquin of the Hispanic Mission gave a report on the Hispanic ministry and brought our evening message.

The resolution was given by Mrs. Lillian Bynum of Lebanon and was Psalms 46: 10 "Be still and know that I am God." This will help each of us in our daily walk with the Lord. The next Big Creek District WMA and Brotherhood will meet on July 6th at Berean in Soso. Make plans now to attend. This meeting will be the installation of new officers. Sherry Shows, reporter

Oxford Church plans Homecoming & Revival

Westview Baptist Church, at 435 Hwy 6 West in Oxford, will be having Homecoming June 7, 2009. Sunday School begins at 10:00 am with worship at 11:00 am. Lunch will follow and an afternoon service will begin at 1:30. We will also be having Revival starting Monday, June 8 through Wednesday June 10, with services at 7:00 pm each night. Brother Aaron Parker, dean at Southeastern Baptist College, will be the guest speaker. We would like to invite everyone to come out to hear God's Word preached, some good music, singing and good fellowship.

For more information call Pastor Dale Wirick at 662-236-1971.

Shiloh Church to hold 'open house' for new building

Shiloh Baptist Church of Mt. Olive will hold an Open House in recognition of our "Foundation for Christ" with the completion of our new sanctuary. The Open House with a reception in the fellowship hall will be held on Saturday, June 27, 2009 from 2:00-3:30 p. m.

A dedication service will be held on Sunday the 28th beginning at 10:30 a.m. Lunch will be served in the fellowship hall following the ceremony. We invite our friends and sister churches to join us in these special services.

Sharon to hold Revival

Sharon Baptist Church near Laurel will hold revival services beginning July 14 and continuing through Wednesday July 17. The speakers will be Joe Watson, Tray Lampkin, Dale Broom and Vern Holifield. Everyone is invited to come and enjoy this time of worship.

Tiger Creek events

Tiger Creek Baptist Church will be celebrating it's 106th Homecoming Celebration on Sunday, June 7th. We will be having regular morning services and lunch with special Southern Gospel music in the afternoon by The Gann Family from Panama City, Florida. Please come and join us during this special celebration.

Tiger Creek Baptist Church in Overt is planning a one day Vacation Bible School on Saturday, June 20th. The time is from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The theme this year is Passport to the Promised Land. We have classes for ages 3 to 12 and well as an adult class taught by Pastor Williams.

Pastor Dana Williams
Reporter, Betty Holifield

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Sofilthy's Attic

by Barbara White

Most of you remember memorizing poems and then having to recite them before the whole class. The following would have caused the class to wake up if it had been allowed.

JUST FOR FUN

"It was midnight on the ocean,
Not a street car was in sight;
The sun was shining brightly,
And it rained all day that night.

"'Twas a summer day in winter,
And the snowflakes fell like glass,
A barefoot boy with shoes on
Stood sitting in the grass.

"'Twas evening and the rising sun
Was setting in the west,
And the little fishes in the trees
Were huddled in their nests.

"The rain was pouring down
And the moon was shining bright,
And everything that you could see
Was hidden out of sight.

"While the organ peeled potatoes,
Lard was rendered by the choir,
As the sexton rung the dishrag,
Someone set the church on fire.

"Holy Smoke", the preacher cried;
In the rain he lost his hair;
Now his head resembles heaven,
For there is no parting there."

I just realized that reading this gives me the same feeling that I have after watching a newscast. What about you?

The Wisdom From Above

by Rev. Grover Laird

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." (James 3:17)

For one to "be without knowledge, it is not good," (Proverbs 19:2) and to be without wisdom to use it is not good either—"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." (Proverbs 4:7)

There are many references to wisdom in the Bible, and some of them are somewhat different. Yet these differences should create no problem for the person who studies under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

I. There Is A Wisdom That Is Not Of A Spiritual Nature

The Bible refers to some that God gave wisdom, or skill, to prosper materially. (Ezekiel 28:4; Deuteronomy 8:18) To others God gave wisdom to "devise cunning works," some of which was involved in building the Tabernacle. (Exodus 31:3) Still others He gives wisdom that will make the normal work load easier. (Ecclesiastes 10:10) Also, the unsaved can be trained in a wisdom that is

profitable for one's day by day life in this world. (Acts 7:22)

Sometimes, however, the wisdom of this world is not spoken of too favorably. The Bible speaks of the wisdom of Babylon perverting them, (Isaiah 47:10) of God destroying the "wisdom of the wise," (1 Corinthians 1:19) and the "wisdom of this world" being foolishness with God. (1 Corinthians 3:19) The Bible also mentions a wisdom of this world we are to "cease from." (Proverbs 23:4)

II. Distinguishing Traits Of Wisdom That Honor The Lord

The wisdom that the Bible is most concerned about, and we should be most concerned about, can be easily identified. In Proverbs chapter eight, there is a wisdom that could be referring to Christ. Yet it is also talking about the wisdom we are considering here. Notice what this wisdom says about itself.

This wisdom that is from above is always right on any subject—"Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things." (Proverbs 8:6)

Wickedness has no part in this wisdom—"For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my

lips." (Proverbs 8:7)

Every part of this wisdom deals with righteousness—"All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them." (Proverbs 8:8)

Then in Proverbs 21:30, we find that there is no part of this wisdom that is against the Lord or His Word—"There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD." (Proverbs 21:30)

In the Book of Psalms we find that this wisdom begins with a reverential fear of the Lord—"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever." (Psalm 111:10) Actually, one cannot separate the fear of the Lord from wisdom—"And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." (Job 28:28)

By looking back at our text, we will see several other ways to identify this wisdom that God honors and we desperately need.

III. How This Wisdom Can Be Obtained

Looking back to Proverbs eight again, we find that the wisdom that honors the Lord is

readily available for all who are interested, even the simple minded. We hear wisdom crying out everywhere for people to take advantage of this blessing—"Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man. O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart." (Proverbs 8:1-5) It will not all be easy, but it is surely available for all, and the Lord wants us to have it.

We must understand from the beginning that the wisdom from above involves the Bible. After Moses gave some of the commands of the Bible to Israel he said, "Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." (Deuteronomy 4:6) Therefore the wisdom of Israel that impressed the nations around them was what they learned from the Bible. The same will be true of us.

The Psalmist said that God's Word made him wiser than his enemies, gave him more understanding than his teachers, and more understanding than older people—"Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts." (Psalms 119:98-100)

Some who take the role of wise men have rejected the Bible, but the Lord says that these are not really wise—"The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?" (Jeremiah 8:9) The shortest route to the wisdom of greatest value is Bible study.

But there are something that will help God's children in understanding the Bible and obtaining this wisdom. I feel that it starts with a desire to have it. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst af-

ter righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6) While we may hunger and thirst after wealth and honor and never get it, if we hunger and thirst after something that is righteous we can have it.

The Psalmist said, "My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times." (Psalms 119:20) Again, speaking of God's Word the Psalmist said, "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." (Psalms 19:10) A strong hunger for the Word will surely be honored.

When we feel that strong hunger for the Word, we are then in a condition to pray for it. The Bible says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5) This, of course, will have to be done in faith. (James 1:6,7)

As we begin asking for wisdom, we must start searching the Scriptures—"Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God." (Proverbs 2:3-5) Surely a man is blessed when it can be said of him, "...his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." (Psalms 1:2)

Living an holy life will also help in our quest for wisdom. Proverbs 2:7 says, "He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly." Again we read, "...a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever." (Psalms 111:10) Still another passage says, "I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts." (Psalms 119:100) Those who live by the Bible will find it easier to understand it.

Using what we learn can also help us to understand the Bible and obtain wisdom. In Matthew 25, we find that the Lord may take away the little one has when it is not used for the Lord's glory, but add to an

continued on page 3

BMA Seminary's Fifty-second Graduation

Thirty-five individuals received certificates and degrees from the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary during its 2009 commencement exercises on Saturday, May 16. The event was held at First Baptist Church, Jacksonville.

Certificates of Christian Leadership were given to Latonia Dykes Bernstine of Shreveport, Louisiana; Quincy R. Holland of Shreveport, Louisiana; Levi Jones, III of Oil City, Louisiana; Anderson H. Ruffin of Shreveport, Louisiana; Jeff H. Ruffin, Sr. of Shreveport, Louisiana; Darren L. Stanley of Monroe, Louisiana; JoAnn W. Stanley of Shreveport, Louisiana; Walter Lee Williams of Shreveport, Louisiana.

The Associate of Divinity degree was awarded to Milan Bulak of Decin, Czech Republic; LaJoyce Deckard of Jacksonville, Texas; Marcus Foster of Lampasas, Texas; and Betty O'Neal of Henderson, Texas.

The Bachelor of Arts in Religion

degree was awarded to James M. Cross of Ferris, Texas; Marcus L. Ellison of Shreveport, Louisiana; James A. Johnson, Jr. of Tyler, Texas; Lawrence A. Okeyo of Migori, Kenya; Kyle J. Roadcap of Longview, Texas; Edgar E. Roberson of Fort Worth, Texas; William Thomas Rose of Bridge City, Texas; and Jacob Shulenberger of Jacksonville, Texas.

Master of Arts degrees were awarded to Dr. Shun Au-Young of Longview, Texas; Steven L. Crawley of Conway, Arkansas; Charles W. Hawkins of Dermott, Arkansas; Eric Johnson of San Luis Potosi, Mexico; Patrick Maae of Schuyler, Nebraska; Jacqueline Tolbert of Kilgore, Texas; Douglas R. Cummings of Jacksonville, Texas; Patrice L. Anaab of Accra, Ghana; Michel L. Loua of Guinea, West Africa; and Philip C. Parks of Flint, Texas.

The Master of Divinity degree was awarded to Jimmie Decker of

Poplar Bluff, Missouri; Lowell H. Hamill of Edinburg, Texas; Nicholas W. Parish of Conway, Arkansas; Edgar E. Roberson of Fort Worth, Texas; Colin Semwayo of Gweru, Zimbabwe; and Tyron D. Tatum of Maumelle, Arkansas.

Dr. Philip R. Bryan, President Emeritus and Professor of Biblical and Theological-Historical Studies, delivered the commencement address. He is set to retire following more than 40 years of service to the seminary. He holds academic degrees from Jacksonville College, the University of Oklahoma, BMA Seminary and Baylor University.

BMA Seminary provides accredited theological education to qualified individuals by seeking to equip them for Christian service and leadership roles. The seminary supports the educational needs of the Baptist Missionary Association of America and other groups who share a like commitment to the authority of Scripture.

MORAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Baptist Missionary Association of America

Dr. John M. Adams, Director
 P.O. Box 305, Mantachie, MS 38855 - 662-231-3863
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John Adams

(This is the fifth continued series of "Our Judeo-Christian Heritage.")

Religious Freedom

II Corinthians 3:17 states "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

The Word of God abounds with words promoting freedom. We should feel comfortable talking about religion in our nation. Our Founding Fathers prohibited a Federal establishment of religion, but there is not a single thread of evidence that they intended to set up a wall of separation between the state and religious belief. The first amendment of the U.S. Constitution was not written to protect the citizens from religion, but was penned to protect religion from government tyranny.

A woe is given to liberal-minded lawyers and judges in Luke 11:52, when they try to take away the key of divine knowledge from our lands.

I. History Records the Loss of Religious Freedom.

Anti-God forces have steadily assaulted religious liberty and wicked landmark court decisions have curtailed the spread of the Good News. Many have remained silent in the halls of history as the liberals raged.

II. Present Day Issues Confront Religious Freedom.

If we do not begin reaffirming our Judeo-Christian values at all levels of government, we will soon be a large country without freedom. There are many who oppose and strive to remove religious freedoms. Russia and China are prime examples of nations that have removed religious freedom due to alien-anti Christian forces. We cite past attacks and changes:

A. A Lower Lake, California teacher forbids her students to repeat the words "under God" during class recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. (AP)

B. A woman in Collinsville, Oklahoma was awarded \$390,000 by a jury because her church excluded her from the membership. (60 Minutes)

C. The ACLU, through the courts, has forced Kentucky schools to remove the Ten Commandments from school classroom walls. (NBC)

D. The courts have forced Gideons in Illinois and other states to end its practice of giving Bibles to public school children. (BNS)

E. The ACLU sought to establish the unconstitutionality of the Presidential proclamation declaring "The Year of the Bible."

The most aggressive organizations in America against religious freedom are the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union), the AHA (American Humanist Association), NEA (National Education Association), NOW (National Organization of Women), and PAW (Norman Lear's People for the American Way). These groups and many others pose a serious threat to America's religious freedoms. The ACLU alone has over 6,000 active court cases pending, with a budget of \$1.7 million, and over 4000 liberal lawyers.

III. God's Word Advocates Religious Freedom.

The Bible declares in Psalms 2:1-2 that the heathen will rage and people will imagine vain things, as they set themselves against the Lord and His ways. We believe that freedoms for all people flourishes when religion is vibrant and the rule of the law of God is acknowledged.

As King David of Israel was dying, his lastingly message was "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." II Samuel 23:3. Even King Nebuchadnezzar of the renowned Babylonian Empire recognized the need of serving God... Daniel 3:28-29. Paul told the Roman Empire that "the creature (human beings) shall be delivered from bondage into the glorious liberty of God"... Romans 8:21.

Religious freedom is being assaulted time and time again. We need to raise the "Banner of the Lord" higher. Contact your Senators, Congressmen and Congresswomen and the President of the United

States with your Biblical convictions. These addresses are available to you at our website: www.macbma.net.

Freedom Offering for
 Moral Action Committee
 July 5, 2009
*God bless you as you give
 to this worthy ministry.*

DiscipleGuide Supporting Churches in Making Disciples Annual Special Emphasis is September 27, 2009

Our goal at DiscipleGuide is the same as yours. Discipleship. Guiding people to a closer relationship with Christ one step at a time. We offer tools that help believers grow in their walk with God – tools you can trust.

As part of the Baptist Missionary Association of America family you can rest assured that our resources – from Bible-study curriculum to conferences to camps – are solid biblically and tailored to meet the unique needs of your church.

The annual special emphasis of DiscipleGuide is September 27, 2009. You can further the work of publishing, conferences, camps, Missions Literature Ministry, information services, and Web services with your generous gifts.



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