

Baptist

Mississippi

JOURNAL OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

June 1, 2019

www.msbbaptist.org

Vol. 73 No. 11

Midyear Meeting Held In Amory

by the Editor

East Amory Baptist Church hosted the 2019 Midyear meeting of the BMA of Mississippi on Tuesday May 21. The state Brotherhood and WMA met on Monday evening prior to the business session on Tuesday. President Justin Rhodes called the meeting to order after Wesley Martin led the opening of the meeting with a number of songs. East Amory Pastor Roger Akers welcomed the Association to their church. Visiting BMA Missionary to Canada Mike Poirier opened the meeting with a verse of scripture and prayer.

Only 26 churches were represented by 46 messengers present. 26 visitors were registered. The light representation could possibly be due to the location and distance many would have had to travel, although churches from all parts of the state were present. Reports were given by most departments and commissions.

The Senior Adult Commission, History Commission, State Youth Department, and Moral Action were not present. MAC Director Dr. John Adams was absent due to his recovering from recent surgery.

Bro. Dewitt Bain, pastor of Mt. Gilead Church, Columbia,



Bro. Dewitt Bain bringing midyear message

brought the midyear message from Ezekiel. He stressed the need to preach God's message

to those who need to hear the Gospel.

Children's Home Director Dwight Lindsey reported and recognized their 2019 High School Graduate Desi Brunty. He also thanked outgoing director



Dwight Lindsey

Sidney Davis and his wife Pat for their 20 years of service. The Davis' retired officially at the end of May 2019. He informed the messengers concerning ongoing efforts to reach out and help children in need. Lindsey has covered much of his report in the printed article from the Home in this issue.

Brotherhood President Mark Jones reported on their meeting and urged continued

continued on page 4

New Missionaries Approved at Meeting in Rogers, Arkansas

by Eric Johnson
International Director of Missions

Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the har-



Eric Johnson

vest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest. Luke 10:2

The need for missionaries has always been great. In his time, as Jesus looked at the

cities and towns before him, he said that the harvest was plentiful, and the laborers were few. This continues to be true as we look across the landscape of humanity today.

The Greatest Need

The vast majority of people in the world do not know Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Our missionaries around the world can attest to the truth of that statement. Whether the religious majority in a country is Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, animistic, or Christian, most people in the world do not know Christ. In the United States, most people know about Christ and may even say they are Christian, but it is evident that most of those same people do not have an abiding personal relationship with Jesus. In Latin America, most people

continued on page 6

Why Churches Are Unfriendly and Cliquish

by Joe McKeever

"When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:33-34).

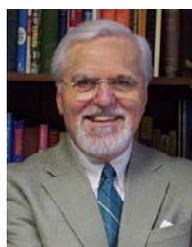
I stood before the congregation holding two letters in my hands. "Both came to my office this week. I thought you'd like to hear what they say."

"The first letter is from a member who moved several hundred miles away last year.

She is missing this church. She wrote, "The churches here are not friendly like our church back home. No one speaks to visitors. I miss our loving, friendly congregation."

I said, "Do we have a friendly church?" Heads nodded all over the building.

"Well, then, listen to this." "Dear pastor. We visited your church last Sunday and not a single person spoke to us.



Joe McKeever

You have a most unfriendly congregation. We will not be back."

The people sat there in shock. This was far from what they had believed about themselves. I said, "I give you my word that both letters came to the church office this week. One said how friendly we are and the other saying much the opposite."

"What are we to believe? I'll give you my answer to that."

"The visitors are the authority on the friendliness of this congregation. Newcomers will learn in a heartbeat whether we are loving and welcoming.

The fact seems to be that yes, we are friendly—to one another. Not to newcomers, first-timers, outsiders."

"And that is pretty devastating."

I knew whose fault it was: Mine. I was the pastor and I had dropped the ball. It all comes down to leadership.

Most longstanding church problems come down to leadership. If a problem is imbedded and out of control, almost always it's because leadership at the top has failed to deal with it properly.

When I ask people how churches received them as visitors and guests, two complaints are voiced again and again: "No one spoke to us" and "The

people seem cliquish." They seem to like one another, but do not welcome intruders into their little family.

Unfriendliness and cliquishness are two sides of the same coin. The root problem is the sinful heart of humans.

In the world of physics there are laws of deterioration. Clocks wind down. Bodies wear out. Resources get used up. The universe grows old.

And the sinful heart retracts within its shell and cuts itself off from more and more of its peers.

Put another way, left to themselves, people pull into

continued on page 5

Southeastern Baptist College

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

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

President's Perspective

"So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work." Nehemiah 4:6

Wow, how fast a year can fly by! I just read the article from exactly one year ago and the work that had to be accomplished on campus last summer was enormous. But with the help of numerous volunteers, the Lord supplied all our needs. We reopened the dorms and finished remodeling the gym just in time for the students to arrive the first week of August.

This summer is not much different from last year. We must reset and upgrade the dormitories and classrooms. There is much work to be done and we can only utilize volunteer help until July 1, because our fiscal year closes on June 30, 2019. We must finish the fiscal year in the black.

I set a goal three years ago to meet the first requirement for applying for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation. This is a

major strategic goal and absolutely critical for the future of SBC. We have finished the last two years in the black and this, being the third year, is critical because it will qualify us for application. SACS rules state that an educational institution must be in the black for three consecutive years before it can apply for accreditation. We must meet this requirement or lose the three years we have worked so hard to fiscally achieve.

Our Special Emphasis months are July and August. For those churches that are able, receiving your Special Emphasis contributions before June 30 will ensure that we once again finish another fiscal year in the black. Please remember that date, June 30. You can help us meet this important goal by sending your special emphasis contribution to us before that date.



Dr. Scott Carson
President

After July first, we will be able to hire contractors to assist us with our many projects. Time is short! We need to keep in mind that our projects will have to be completed by the first week of August before our students return for the fall semester. If you have construction skills, remodeling, painting, tiling, etc., you can donate toward our much needed improvements, contact Dr. Carson soon for coordination.

It is looking very promising for student enrollment for the Fall semester. The Lord is bringing many local students onto our campus who will again fill our dormitories to near capacity. Please keep our SBC staff and faculty in your prayers as we continue to press forward as the Lord leads.

The Lord is on the move here at SBC and we must keep up with Him! Thank you for your gracious support!

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." John 16:23
Equipping the Saints!
Dr. Carson

Summer Semester

We are offering a full semester of classes in a condensed format. Classes begin June 3, 2019 and finish June 27, 2019. The absolute last day to register is June 4. Don't delay, sign up today! Contact our Admissions Director at 601-426-6346. Tuition assistance may apply.

SBC Choir

Yes! Praise the Lord, we have a choir! We are blessed to have Krista McKenzie as the Director of our newly formed SBC Choir. Krista has recruited fifteen local students who will register for the Fall Semester. Does your church or ministry want to host the SBC Choir? Now is the time to reserve dates for their performance. Hurry, we anticipate their schedule to fill up quickly. Contact Krista at 601-426-6346.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Accreditation

We are about to close out this fiscal year which ends June 30. It is imperative that we remain financially in the black. We have a short term goal of applying for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation. Praise the Lord, we were in the black last year. If we finish in the black this year, then we will have completed three consecutive years in the black which that will qualify us for application. If you or your church is able to send both your June and July donations in the month of June, this would help us greatly ensuring that we complete the second year in the black. We estimate that we need \$35,000 to safely close out this fiscal year.

Graduation Exercises

Congratulations to the graduating class of 2019! Our commencement exer-



Jacobi York of Philadelphia High School has committed to playing for the Chargers this Fall

cise was held in the Southeastern Baptist College gymnasium on May 17 with our keynote speaker Dr. Terry Kimbrow, the President of our sister BMA college, Central Baptist College in Conway, Arkansas. The following students were conferred their well earned degrees:

Bachelor of Science in Church Ministries:

- James Edward McGhee, Jr.
(ABHE Honor Society Inductee)
- Zechariah P. Rogers

Associate of Arts in Bible:

- Thomas "Jess" Jackson
- Mark Ellis Lee

See the adjacent photos of this important event in the lives of these scholars.

Honor Roll

Congratulations to our SBC scholars! In order to be listed on the Honor Roll, students must take a minimum of 12 hours and finish the semester with the following grade point averages (GPA) as indicated:

- President's List (4.0 GPA):
 - Kristen Gray
 - Thomas "Jess" Jackson
- Dean's List (3.5 GPA and above)

- Mae Evans
- Nathaniel Brown
- Netanya Wilkerson

Danny Pitts Lecture Series

Southeastern Baptist College will host the Danny Pitts Lecture Series with Dr. Charley Holmes, President of the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminar, as guest speaker to be held on the campus of the college. Mark your calendars for August 19-21. More details to come.

A Golden Opportunity!

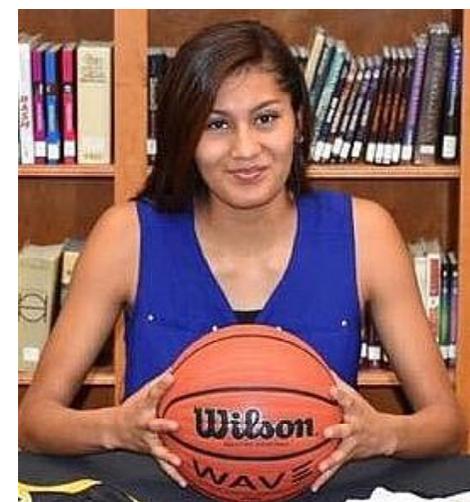
SBC possesses the 2018 Gold Award level as a military friendly college! Have you served in America's armed forces? Then you probably have Veterans Administration tuition benefits that you can use toward a free education right here at SBC. I urge you to contact your local VA representative for an evaluation of your benefits. You earned them! And remember, many benefits are now fully transferable to family members. SBC has numerous students receiving



Shedrick George of Laurel, Mississippi, auditions before Krista McKenzie, Director of the newly formed SBC Choir



Dr. Carson donned his Army uniform and delivered the keynote message at the Laurel Veterans Museum Memorial Day Ceremony in honor of our service men and women who died protecting our freedom.



Daebron Wallace of Northeast Jones High School, Laurel, Mississippi, has committed to playing for the Lady Chargers this Fall

VA assistance for both online and in-classroom tuition.

Alumni Association

Congratulations to the SBC Alumni Association Council newly elected officials!

- President: Corbey Jones
- Vice President: Sam Oglesby
- Secretary: Judy Oglesby

These three initial Alumni Council Leaders are charged with reorganizing an effective association that will help contribute to the strategic plans and future of Southeastern Baptist College. Be looking for updates from the council. We are proud of their willingness to serve to support the college future goals.



Over sixty potential students have tried out for the Chargers Basketball Team for the Fall Semester

Ministering To Young People

by Anders Lee

Make Camp Count for Eternity in 2019!!!

The summer is upon us and every summer that I remember I've been to one camp or another. In fact I started going to camp when I was 8 years old. The ole calendar is fixin' to hit the date where I turn 48, so yeah, I am a camp veteran! LOL!



Anders Lee

Back in the day when my Dad was the pastor at Lee's Chapel in Picayune, he carried us to "Perk" in Wiggins, Mississippi. Man going to camp there was special. I loved going all those years and seeing different ones year after year. My favorite place to stay was Andrews Hall. We thought we were living high on the hog in that joint! LOL Then there was the long trek from South Mis-

issippi to Gary, Texas. We didn't go there as much, but it too is a special place for me. I always appreciated going to camp. Many made investments in my life that have stayed with me till this day.

When I surrendered to ministry, one of the main things on my youth calendar became camp! I've lost track of how many kids and youth have gone to camp in vans I drove to those same BMA sites. One girl in particular was Kayla Murphree. She was 12 when she started coming to Calvary in Horn Lake, Mississippi, in 2007. Her aunt, Dana Sookraj, started bringing her and her two older brothers to church and youth meetings.

She went to camp with us that first year. Having not been in church hardly at all in her life, hearing the Gospel at camp

deeply convicted her. She was unsure of her salvation when we talked to her at first, but through time she came to know Him for certain. Her brothers also came to faith in that time period. That all started at camp. She followed the Lord in baptism shortly thereafter. A lot was invested in those three kiddos while they were with us.

The next year she was super ready to go back to camp. That particular year we went to StudentLife at the state SBC camp grounds in Georgia. It was thrilling to see her respond to the Lord and grow in confidence at that camp. But there was a bit of sadness surrounding that camp. We knew when we went home that her mom would be moving them to Greenville, Mississippi. At the end of that camp our whole group huddled in a room and had a group testimony time. She was soft spoken and shy so it surprised us all when she thanked her youth group for

their love and the sponsors for pointing her to Jesus. She was crying and it made all of us cry as she shared.

Kayla, Dustin, and Shane moved when we got back. Facebook was just getting

Remembering Kayla

started then, but they were too young to be allowed on social media (rightly so). So we didn't have contact with them for a long while. When they later got on Facebook we were glad to see how she had grown up and got to catch up here and there.

Recently, we got the tragic news. Kayla was involved in a horrible accident that claimed her life. Bad weather... hydroplaned... She was 23. She had become a nurse, gotten married and had a little boy. Her old youth pastor at Calvary got



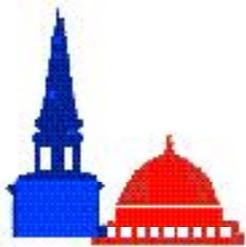
Kayla Murphree

to do her funeral. It was so comforting to know that she had given her life to Christ following camp that year!

Her brother Dustin and I talked after her accident. Through tears he said; "Brother Anders you and Nathan use to tell us the most important thing in life is knowing Christ. Today, that's all that matters." He recounted how they all had been saved and what a difference Calvary had made in their lives!

Now... I say all of this to make a simple but profound point... YOUTH PASTOR ... What you will do at camp and SOAR this summer will count for eternity! Pray for your teens! Pray for God to genuinely work in their lives!!! What you are doing matters in the lives of kids and teens soooooo much!!!

"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." I Corinthians 15:58



Dr. John M. Adams

Executive Director
www.macbma.net

P.O. Box 305
Mantachie, MS 38855

FREEDOM OFFERING

JUNE 30TH OR JULY 7TH, 2019

for

MORAL ACTION B.M.A. of America

Dr. John M. Adams, Executive Director
www.macbma.net

**Please take a special offering as we build this needed moral agency.
From small to large, every gift is needed and appreciated.**

Mail offering to: Moral Action • P.O. Box 305 • Mantachie, MS 38855

Midyear Meeting

from page 1

support for the project of Just The Crumbs and support for the state Galilean program. Missions Director Larry Geraldson spoke to the Brotherhood on Monday evening.



Mark Jones

WMA President Beth Caldwell reported that SBC President Scott Carson spoke at their meeting concerning the WMA project of helping renovate the kitchen at the college. The WMA program featured Mrs. Anita Akers entitled Lead Us, Guide Us.



Beth Caldwell

President Dr. Scott Carson shared progress at Southeastern College. He stated the college had a number of students from various states and one foreign student from the Caribbean



Dr. Scott Carson

nation of Granada. Progress is being made in a number of areas, including recognition of transfer of credits to the University of Southern Mississippi and Jones College (formerly JCJC) in Ellisville. He announced the college had been renewed for an additional 10 years with the school's accrediting agency ABHE. The school continues to pursue accreditation with SACS - Southern Association of Colleges and Schools - which is the accrediting agency for all colleges and universities for our section of the nation. This is a must accomplishment for the future of SBC.

As stated in the school's article in this issue, he announced the new officers of the Alumni Association for Southeastern. One goal of the college that is being pursued and has great promise for growth is a new degree path in Elementary Education. Carson was enthusiastic about potential Fall enrollment and the future of the college.

Missions and Revolving Loan Fund reports were given. Director Geraldson presented a number of initiatives planned for the future. Some of these are listed in his personal report in this issue. RLF Manager Vernon Newman gave a good report on the Loan Fund and urged individuals and churches to consider deposit-



President Justin Rhodes moderating midyear meeting

ing funds. He encouraged churches with Cemetery Funds to place those with the RLF. They would then be doing double duty, drawing interest to maintain their ministry and helping to finance missions and churches. Director Geraldson highlighted that 9 new churches have been organized during his tenure and currently 9 additional mission points were ongoing. He was encouraged with the interest shown by at least 3 individuals considering mission work. The Missions Department is currently developing plans to upgrade the total package for missionaries including salary increases, salary adjustments for cost of living, tuition assistance, and helping to find and finance homes for missionaries so they will be on the field and permanent fixtures.

Geraldson shared that as of this meeting there were 23 churches in Mississippi without pastors. He solicited names of churches and individuals who were available to help fill these needs. He also shared plans to change the annual Missions and Evangelism Conference to a different time of the year and change the format. More information may be gleaned from his personal report in this issue.

Editor Don Brown reported that finances were good and thanked those churches and individuals who have given to the 2019 Special Emphasis ef-

fort for the Mississippi Baptist. He solicited input and articles of interest. He stated that the churches should provide the paper to each family and emphasized that "The content of your Mississippi Baptist will inform our people, encourage our people, and help share the good news of the good work of the good people who are striving to do the work to which God has called us."

Brown encouraged churches to keep their mailing lists up to date and to make sure that new families are added.

Dr. Charley Holmes, president of BMA of America Theological Seminary reported on the school and also on the new literature direction for the BMA of America. Holmes is the interim director of DiscipleGuide relating to literature. He shared samples of the new curriculum that will be available beginning in September 2019. The literature will be published under the previous name of Baptist Publishing House. Each church is urged to use the new litera-



Dr. Charley Holmes

ture and to be aware that they will be providing a complete course for children as well. Many churches stopped using our literature when we stopped producing our own children's curriculum and these churches are encouraged to return.

All reports and business was cared for during the morning session. The Association dismissed after the midyear message and was provided the noon meal by the good folks of East Amory Church. The church was a gracious host and is appreciated for their hosting this meeting.

Positions Available

Mill Creek, Picayune

Mill Creek Baptist Church of Picayune, Mississippi, is seeking a full-time Lead Pastor. We are pursuing a man who will be a wise shepherd for the members of Mill Creek Baptist Church, an active participant in Pearl River County Mississippi, and is committed to building a long-term ministry. He must faithfully communicate the timeless truth of God's Word with the aim of leading his listeners to the redeeming quality of Jesus Christ.

The Lead Pastor is responsible for the spiritual oversight, leadership, and care of the church body. This includes training and equipping the saints at Mill Creek Baptist Church for the work of ministry, visitation and counseling of church members, participation in church activities, and provides oversight of the day-to-day operations of the church office. Consequently, he must meet the Biblical standards of

eldership as laid out in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

If you feel led to pursue this position, please mail your resume to the following: Ronnie Spiers, 23399 Mitchell Rd., Picayune, MS 39466 or email ronnie.v.spiers.mil@mail.mil.

Greenwood, Fulton

Greenwood Missionary Baptist Church located in Itawamba County, Mississippi, is seeking a full-time pastor. E-mail resumes to kelbycomer18@hotmail.com or mail to 1400 Greenwood Church Rd., Fulton, MS 38843.

Campground, Gulfport

Campground Missionary Baptist Church located in Harrison County, Mississippi, is seeking a full time pastor. If you feel led to pursue this opportunity please Email resumes to southernirrigation@att.net or contact Alan Sullivan at 228-860-8740.



Contact BMA Foundation Executive Director
Charles Attebery
for more information.
charles@bmaamerica.org or cell 501-472-2183

A Gift That Keeps Giving

Gifts to the BMA Foundation are never spent. They are invested and the earnings benefit BMA departments annually until the Lord returns.

Some Ways to Give

- Cash - Stocks and bonds
- Life insurance policies - IRA Rollovers
- Bequests



Don J. Brown, Editor

E-Mail - editor@msbaptist.org

Web site www.msbaptist.org

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

Phone 601-426-3293

PRICE
\$20.00 Per Year by Mail
\$15.00 Per Year by Email
CHURCH PLAN
\$ 1.30 Per Month per Family

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

Postmaster:

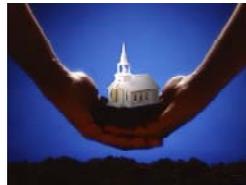
Send address changes to
Mississippi Baptist Paper
P.O. Box 8181, Laurel, MS
39441

BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

Missions Department & Revolving Loan Fund



Larry Geraldson
Director



www.bmams.org - 601.428.8616



State Missionaries, Coaches & Coordinators and Wives



Phillip & Dawn
Burns



Kenneth & Carole
Pollock



Sidney & Becky
Farmer



Johnny & Neta
Williams



Wesley & Holley
Martin



Jason and Kylie
Howard



Estuardo &
Yasmine Marroquin



Ed & Patricia
DuVall

In Psalm 118 verses 28 and 29 the scriptures say, “Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever.” I want to begin my report by giving praise to our God. He is a good God and He has been merciful and kind to us and has blessed us beyond our imagination.

I want to remind you of the “Purpose” assigned to this department by the churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi, of whom we serve: “Article II – Purpose, Section 1: The purpose of this department shall be to preach the Gospel of Christ and establish Churches.”

I also want to remind you of the non-negotiable “Principles” that I presented to you, when I assumed the role of your Director of State Missions: 1) Mandate – The Word of God; 2) Message – The Gospel; 3) The Method – Preaching; 4) Means – The Churches.

Now, let me share with you some of the “Progress” we have made in the pursuit of fulfilling our purpose. To

date (since Oct 2011), we have organized nine new churches. Two more are nearing that point.

We currently have nine other church plants ongoing.

We are supporting 12 men (directly or indirectly) who are involved in missionary activity across the State. We have witnessed the organization of two new associations.

We have provided Professional Development training for our missionaries in Evangelism, Discipleship, Sermon Preparation, etc. We have established a coaching ministry and have tapped into some of our veteran Missionaries to help pour into our current Missionaries. I want to recognize the fine job that Bro. Sidney Farmer has done as



Director Larry Geraldson
Reporting at midyear
meeting in Amory

our Missionary Coach.

We have worked hard to provide our Missionaries with all that they need to conduct daily missionary activity and succeed in planting a Bible believing, Bible preaching church.

We have worked hard to ensure our Missionaries have the property and facilities necessary to move from a temporary presence to a permanent presence in their community. We recognize the struggle that Missions face when saddled with huge debt. Therefore, we have gone above and beyond to reduce and, in many cases, eliminate debt and help these new missions/churches have a better chance of survival. With the support of our Churches, and the Revolving Loan Fund we have purchased or made loans for property and buildings totaling \$2,819,937.00. To date, we have been able to reduce that over all number, which represents all the debt for our missions, by two thirds or \$1,778,065.00. That is tremendous!

All but one of our missions, which organized, have survived and all but one still has their founding pastor lead-

ing and ministering to them.

We have improved our processes to help us be more efficient and we are continually operating at or above 90/10. This means that at or above 90% of all the money we receive for State Missions goes directly to our Missionaries.

We had several Missionaries go off support the past associational year. We have added two new Missionaries in this current associational year, and I am presently talking to three other men about the possibility of church planting. We hope to add at least one more new missionary this year, and, Lord willing, two more in 2020.

Now, let me take a moment to speak about our “Plans”. At the past annual



RLF Manager
Vernon Newman

see State Missions on page 6

Why Churches Are Unfriendly

from page 1

themselves and become private. And, unless provisions are made to counter this downward trend, people tend to pull into their cliques, small groups composed of people like themselves.

As a result of the sinful, selfish heart, people drift away from loving other people and retreat into solitude. Then, even though man is naturally gregarious and craves fellowship, left to himself he will gravitate to a small band of buddies and then freeze out all outsiders who wish to break into the cluster.

These are the result of sin.

I see it all the time. A church sits there, on that road a few miles out of town, populated primarily by three or four interrelated families. The thought never occurs to them that someone might find them unfriendly. Why, don't they have great suppers and fellowships? Don't they mill around for a full five-minutes during the worship time greeting each other? But then it hap-

pens...

The new school year starts and several new families move to the area. The youth group finds itself with a half

I see it all the time. A church sits there, on that road a few miles out of town, populated primarily by three or four interrelated families. The thought never occurs to them that someone might find them unfriendly. Why, don't they have great suppers and fellowships? Don't they mill around for a full five-minutes during the worship time greeting each other?

dozen new kids. New families enter the worship center and end up sitting where Aunt Polly and Uncle Thomas have hibernated for years. The men wear-gasp!-neckties! And-this is important-the new people are friendly enough. They really seem to want to break into the inner life of this church. But the members erect barriers.

The members-all of whom have

known one another for ages-are suspicious and superficial. They say the right words, but when church is over, no one hangs around to get to know the newcomers. They are gone. Over Sunday lunch, they discuss the new families and reinforce one another's hesita-

tions about welcoming them.

Eventually, most of the new people move on to the larger church in town where they are given a better welcome.

You can't blame them. No one wants to go where they are not welcome.

The members of that church would be shocked if they knew they had sinned against the Lord by not welcoming those families.

Sin means a lot of things: rebellion

against God, neglect of the things of God, disobedience to the will of God, and installing oneself as his/her own deity. “My will be done” says the sinful heart.

When our Lord said, “By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, that you love one another as I have loved you” (John 13:34-35), He was establishing that the law of the sinful heart would no longer be calling the shots around here. The redeemed of the Lord will come out of their shells and love one another.

They will belong to each other.

Coming out of a shell is work. Ask any butterfly.

Let the pastors show themselves as friendly. Let them leave their inner sanctum (aka, “pastor's study”) a good quarter-hour before every worship service and mill around inside the building greeting people, welcoming newcomers, and introducing them to others.

In time, the people will do what their leaders do.

That is a law never proven wrong.

New Missionaries Approved

from front page

would say they are Christian. Yet when asked what they are trusting in for salvation, a great majority will answer that it is their own works that save them. This is in the so-called “Christian world.” In Asia and the Middle East, millions have not yet heard that there is a Savior who can give them eternal life.

Jesus said we need more workers!

The Lord’s Solution

God has blessed the work of Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) Missions. Today the gospel is being preached in almost 80 countries through BMA Missions efforts. By the grace of God, we have more American BMA missionaries than ever before in BMA of America history. Our churches are supporting close to 600 national church planters across the globe. Thousands of lives are being changed. Church multiplication is taking place. The name of Christ is being proclaimed to the nations; and yet with God, we can do more! We are doing more than we ever have and yet we must continue to send missionaries. Some of you reading this article may be used to plant churches in the future. Some of you may go. Laborers are surely needed.

As international director, I travel to many of the fields where we have missionaries. One of the common themes that I hear from people in other countries is one of thanksgiving. They ask

us to thank our churches for sending missionaries to their people. One national pastor in Latin America expressed it this way: “BMA people are a sending people.” What an honor to be known as a people who send missionaries with the gospel to people who have not heard.

This year we are blessed to be sending missionaries to the Philippines, Romania, and Latin America. As you read about them, I ask if you would please do three things: 1) commit to pray for these missionaries and the people with whom they will share Jesus; 2) pray that the Lord would send more like them; 3) and pray about how you can be involved in supporting these individuals and BMA of America missions.

Candra of Hopewell Baptist Church in El Dorado, Arkansas.

She will be going to Romania to serve alongside BMA missionaries Bryan and Pam Risner in the fall of 2019. The Risners have a vision for church planting among the Romanian and gypsy people of Romania. Candra has



Candra

been to Romania and has been coordinating with BMA Missions and the Risners as she prepares for missionary service. Pray for Candra as she arrives in Romania. She will need to dedicate a substantial amount of time during her first year to learning the language and people of her new home. As a part of the BMA team in Romania, Candra is planning to assist the Risners by helping assimilate different people groups into the church, as well as helping develop discipleship strategies for children, teens, and women. Please keep Candra in your prayers as she embarks on the mission where God has led her. Pray for Romania. Pray that God would send more laborers for the harvest there.

Cris and Alicia of Good Hope Baptist Church in Columbia, Mississippi.

Alicia Ramshur was sent to the Philippines in 2010. During her time there, she married Cris Samson, and they now have a baby boy (Benjamin). Cris is a church planter, and they have begun serving the Lord together in the Philippines. Last year, they returned to the United States



so Alicia could finish her medical degree and take tests finalizing her medical licensing requirements. Cris and Alicia will be returning to the Philippines as a missionary couple. They intend to help struggling mission points

that Cris is familiar with in evangelism and discipleship, as well as provide medical assistance to the people in isolated areas where there is a need for health care workers. After their arrival in the Philippines, they will be seeking the Lord’s will for a new area where they will plant a church. From the beginning of the church plant, Cris intends to pour into young men who will be able to continue the work of the ministry. Pray for them. Pray for the Philippines. Pray that God would send more laborers for the harvest there.

Hannah of Central Baptist Church in Prescott, Arkansas.

Over the next year, Hannah will be studying Spanish in Costa Rica. In 2015, Hannah went on a short-term mission trip to Honduras. It was after this trip that Hannah believes the Lord opened her eyes to the needs of people and called her to get involved in missions. Hannah is a dental hygienist and is seeking the Lord’s guidance as to a specific location where her gifts, talents, and education can be used to advance the cause of Christ. Pray for Hannah as she learns Spanish and the Lord continues to guide her in missions.



Hannah

May BMA churches continue to be a sending people for the glory of God. Thank you for your efforts and support of BMA Missions.

State Missions Report

from page 5

meeting, I introduced you to several ideas which for me, have become initiatives. All of them are designed to help us provide better support to our Missionaries and their families.

Working together with the Missionary Committee and the Revolving Loan Fund Trustees, over the course of this summer, I hope to provide you with some recommendations at the next annual meeting which could possibly include: Base salary and benefits increases, salary adjustments for high cost of living areas, guidelines for providing our missionaries with loans to purchase a home in the area where they are church planting. Tuition assistance (from current scholarship funds) to attend an approved college or university or seminary for undergraduate and/or post graduate work.

In addition to our work in the area of Missions, few know the amount of time we spend helping our established churches. Currently, we have 23 churches without pastors. When our churches get without a pastor, they often call us for help. We welcome the

call and consider it an honor to serve. We try to provide counseling and constructive and practical help as they begin their search for a pastor. We are required to maintain a list of available preachers. This list is on our website at www.bmams.org. We try to keep it updated but it is a challenge, to say the least.

In Article VIII – of the Missions Department By-Laws, you can read about our responsibilities in the area of “Church Ministry.” The purpose statement, in this article, says that we are, “...to be a resource in strengthening and stabilizing our churches.”

From 2011 until now, we have spent most of our allotment of time for this area working to help stabilize a number of churches which were already at or near closing down, when I arrived. While we have been able to help several churches, we were not able to turn things around for 7 of our established churches. Shiloh in Steens (disbanded); Harmony in Hurley (merged with Inspire and later became a Life Church of Mobile satellite campus), Creston Hills

in Jackson (disbanded), Westview in Oxford (disbanded and remaining members began Mid-Way at Batesville), Fifth Avenue in Laurel (left our work and became Church of God in Christ), Bethel on Barkley Rd in Hattiesburg (disbanded), and New Heart at South Hattiesburg (disbanded).

During this same time, we have succeeded in slowing down the bleeding and while we still have some churches that are struggling, we are adding more than we are losing. In addition to the new church plants, I have reached out to former BMA of MS churches with the hope of re-establishing relationships and re-establishing trust and I am excited to report that we are seeing some results. The Hobolochitto Association, for example, has seen renewed interest by churches previously inactive, the return of one church which previously departed and the petition of a new church just this past few weeks. We are hopeful that all of these churches will become active in the State Association, as well. I have visited with other churches and have confidence that we will see others join or re-join us soon.

By God’s grace I am hopeful that we can begin to move some attention from stabilizing to strengthening our

churches. To that end, I have asked Bro. Sidney Farmer to become our Discipleship Coordinator and help us provide the same resource (discipleship training) which we provide to our missionaries, to our churches.

I have also asked Bro. Justin Rhodes to serve as our Church Ministries Coordinator with the specific role of helping us with Church Care and Conferences. By “Church Care” I mean, to help us develop and maintain a “Missionary at Large” program that will recruit some of our retired, seasoned pastors, to serve, as needed, to supply our churches when their pulpits are vacant. This program will provide these men with a coordinated approach to helping our existing churches, while providing them a small stipend to help cover their expenses (when they go), in addition to whatever the church may give them in a love offering.

These men will be vetted and approved by our Missionary Committee and will become representatives of our Missions Department. We have a list of men we are planning to approach about this idea.

continued on next page

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME

118 LOWE ROAD, LAUREL, MISSISSIPPI 39443 - (601) 426-3928
DWIGHT LINDSEY - DIRECTOR



DWIGHT LINDSEY

Fostering Faith...in thankfulness:

Thank you. That phrase can seem commonplace at times, especially in the south where we are known for our hospitality. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 says, "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

I hope that I can echo the Christian sentiment of all the fellow supporters of the Children's Home when I rejoice with Sidney & Pat Davis and Mrs. Betty Turnbow for coming to the end such a long commitment to serving

children with the love of Christ. I hope I can join fellow supporters in praying for them as they continue to serve Christ where ever He may lead. Also, I hope I will not be the first or the last to say thank you for such longevity that is becoming more and more rare. June 1st will not be the same without these people and it will most certainly be a new and different day here at the Children's Home.

I was glad to see many of you at the midyear meeting in Amory just a couple of weeks ago. I will sum up my report for those of you who were unable to

attend. Since January we have dealt with 8 potential cases while traveling 6,314 miles to keep 36 appointments. We have NOT said no to any of those 8 cases. Varying circumstances have led to children not coming to us or remaining in the pending status. Our most common hurdle at the moment is the people requesting information are not the people who have custody of the children. Our other hurdle is rebuilding relationships within the Child Protective Services caseworkers.

Our current plan of action to move past these hurdles is twofold. We will be launching a website in the coming months that will allow a younger generation of parents information about our services and an anonymous way to contact us with questions. While this will not guarantee referrals we believe it can only help. In the realm of CPS, our board approved the information on a new brochure in April and since then we have hand delivered brochures and child placement applications to 5 county

offices (Jones, George, Greene, Forrest, & Lamar). Like with referrals, this does not guarantee children but it is moving us patiently that direction.

We still need your help with room renovations. Please contact us if you would like to help. Be ready with dates you can come and work, that would be a big step in the right direction. Please pray for our potential cases. Pray for our resolve. It has been quite trying to know there are multitudes of kids who need our help, to know it is our job to help, and yet to know that it is out of our hands to help. We pray for the Lord's timing of His redemptive work in the Home and we pray for your patience with us and circumstances beyond our control. Let us trust Him as we serve Him and His people. Please contact us if you would like for us to come to your church in July, August, or beyond. Contact the office (601-426-3928), our Facebook page, or my cell phone (662-605-0996).

State Missions Report

from page 6

In addition to this, we will be maintaining a list of men who have surrendered to preach and are waiting for the opportunity to go. We will be encouraging our churches to use these men and give them a chance to learn and prove themselves. If you would like to be on this list, please contact myself or Bro. Justin Rhodes.

We have no funds for the Church Ministries responsibilities assigned to us. Therefore, we will be challenging our churches to include a regular offering for "Church Ministries", in addition to their normal mission offering.

When I speak about "Conferences," I am specifically speaking about the Missions and Evangelism Conference which we are mandated to hold each

year.

My goal is to have a Missions Symposium, possibly in the first part of December, that invites everyone. It will include the traditional exposition of the work through preaching, but it will also include a banquet with both our State Missionaries and our Mississippi based Foreign Missionaries (which we hope to emphasize more).

I have asked Bro. Justin Cameron to serve as a Foreign Missions Ambassador to help keep us informed about the work of our Mississippi based Foreign Missionaries and help coordinate their participation in this Symposium.

Lord willing, the first Missions Symposium, under this new format, will be held on December 7th and 8th of 2020.

We hope to provide program detail in January of 2020 (almost a year in advance) so people can plan their calendar and promote the event in their normal church year.

As you can see, we have some bold initiatives in front of us and a lot of work to be done. We need your support and prayers to make it happen.

Finally, let me share some thoughts regarding the Revolving Loan Fund and the relationship of these two operations together. I would be negligent if I did not speak praise to the Lord for the growth He has allowed us to experience in the Revolving Loan Fund. Bro. Newman is doing a wonderful job as the Manager of this fund. The support to our people and to churches and to our missionaries is tremendous. The technological advancements, we have made, have improved our support and allowed us to grow the overall fund

and at the same time reduce the overall workload. Process improvements have made us more efficient but have allowed us to continue to maintain our offices with just myself, Bro. Newman and Ms. Kim Parker. Ms Kim is doing a great job and recently, at our Missions and Evangelism Conference, we acknowledged our appreciation for her 10 years of dedicated service. We have an outstanding staff, we have outstanding missionaries, we have wonderful churches and we have an amazing God.

Thank you for the opportunity to continue to serve as your Director.

*God bless,
Larry Geraldson
Director of Missions
and Revolving Loan Fund
Baptist Missionary Association
of Mississippi*

News Items

Missionaries on Leave

Danny and Rita Ballard, missionaries to the Philippines, will be home on furlough from August through mid



Danny and Rita Ballard

October. Churches wishing them to come by and share their ministry while home may schedule a visit may contact them by email me at ballardsphilippines@gmail.com.

Lucedale Church Honors Officers

Temple Baptist Church, Lucedale, hosted a lunch on Friday, May 17, in the Fellowship Hall, for law enforcement personnel of the Lucedale and George County area. Those in attendance included representatives of the Lucedale Police Department, George County Sheriff Department, Fire Marshall, local District Attorney, the Lucedale mayor, Darwin Nelson, and wife, and other administrative personnel. There was a good turn out and we enjoyed hosting the event. We appreciate and thank our law enforcement for their service to our community.

GMA Total Correction

The totals in the recent treasurer's report for the Mississippi State GMA were incorrect. The correct totals are as follows:

Total received	\$2,141.57
Missionary Carl Sookraj	\$1,673.95
We are sorry for the error.	

BMA Seminary's Sixty-Second Commencement

The Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary of Jacksonville, Texas, held its 2019 commencement exercises on Saturday, May 18.

The 2019 graduating class was the seminary's sixty-second. Graduates received Associate, Bachelor and Master's degrees during the ceremony.

Dr. Charley Holmes presented the commencement address. Holmes is completing his twentieth year as President of the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary. Holmes earned the Bachelor of Arts in Religion and Master of Divinity degrees from the BMA Seminary. He also earned the Doctor of Ministry degree from Reformed Theological Seminary. Under his leadership, BMA Seminary has tripled its enrollment, gained accreditation with the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, added distance education and degree programs, and enhanced its Christ-centered curriculum.

Holmes, a native of Limestone County, is married to Diane Holmes. They have two children and five grandchildren. He is also a member of the First Baptist Church in Jacksonville. In addition to his duties as seminary president, Holmes currently serves as Interim Director for the Baptist Publishing House, and has traveled globally and nationally to speak at ministry conferences associated with the Baptist Missionary Association and other biblically and theologically-conservative entities.

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 commitment to the authority of Scripture.

God Will Lend You the Tow Sacks

As featured in mission:world Magazine

by **Mati Spencer**

These stories are taken from Buddy Johnson's book, *Tow Sacks*, which will soon be available for purchase. In this book, he talks about his family's call to the mission field in Mexico, their time serving in that country, and their eventual transition back to the United States. He details many stories about their international ministry, which stretched nearly thirty years, explaining throughout the book how "When God starts giving, he will even lend you the Tow Sacks."

Boys Selling Rats:

I had no idea that there would be a problem with our moving trailer as we traveled into another country. There was no problem with the contents, just the importation of the little trailer. We spent an entire day dealing with the border officials, and were finally permitted to continue our trip toward San Luis Potosí.

We spent our very first night in Mexico in a little hotel in the town of San Fernando. We never forgot the emotions of that day and night. The remainder of the trip was rather uneventful until we stopped beside the isolated roadside for the boys to use the bathroom. There were no houses for miles, so I assumed this was a safe place to stop, and surely there would be no onlookers.

Much to our surprise, two small boys about nine or ten years of age appeared by us holding a couple of rats in their hands. These rats live in the roots of the "maguey" cactus plants, and they are edible by the local folks. Naturally, we did not buy the rats, but



Buddy Johnson baptizing in river

as we drove away, Martha asked:

"Did you see that?"

"Yeah," I said. "They were almost as big as squirrels."

"No," she exclaimed, "their eyes!"

"Naw, I didn't notice their eyes, just their tails and teeth."

"No, the boys' eyes!" she explained.

"They were so empty, without sparkle, no joy. Their eyes were expressionless! Poor children," she moaned.

God was beginning to put in her heart something that He wanted her to try to change in the lives of little children. Before we even arrived to San Luis, God was preparing us for many years of service and work.

Robbed:

Upon arriving to our house [after going on a trip to visit several villages and share Christ] my full heart was immediately emptied! I opened the gate to our patio, which was padlocked, when my heart sank.

The door was open!

The glass had been broken and the door was standing wide open. As I entered, I thought, "Thank you, Lord, that Martha and the kids weren't here," as they were on a furlough in the United States. Every drawer in the kitchen

was open and empty. I hurried to the bedroom and found a window broken there also. Our shoes, combs, brushes, jewelry, almost all my pants (yes, my pants) were gone!

I hurried outside to observe a make

shift ladder leaning against the wall which enclosed our back yard. There I found a pair of my pants with the legs tied making a bag. The thieves had used my pants to make bags to carry the smaller things they had taken. Apparently, as they were passing pants loaded with goodies over the wall, they became frightened and dropped a pant full.

I was learning that "stuff" is not all that important. However, I filed a report with the police, who came, collected fingerprints, and promised to call me when they found our things. Great! That never happened! Stuff can be replaced and only memories of that which had found new owners remained.

The Boys' Blonde Hair:

In Mexico, every Monday is a time for a brief flag ceremony and a short



The Johnson boys

program. This ceremony is known as the "honors" program. This happens at 8:00 o'clock every Monday morning in every school in Mexico, all doing the same thing at the same time.

The principal of the school at Benito Juarez Elementary School welcomed all the students on our first morning at this school during the honors program and then he introduced our sons, Grady and Scott. Most of the children had never seen a person with blonde hair

and white skin.

At recess that day some of the little boys in the school decided that they wanted some of that blonde hair from our two boys! After school that day, Leonor, our neighbor, related to us how the Johnson boys had stood back-to-back and fought to keep their hair. Through the years all five of our boys lost hair to some of their classmates.

Scott came home from school angry. He said, "I'm not going to salute that ole flag. It's the wrong color." He told Leonor that if she would bring it home, "My mama will put blue on it, and it will be red, white, and blue instead of red, white, and green."

The First Baptist Church:

While I was trying to evangelize in the villages, I was also trying to be daddy to my boys and husband to my wife. My time with the boys was spent playing in the orange grove and singing with them. I was learning to play the guitar, and we had learned songs from church in San Luis. I would sit on the front porch in the afternoons and sing with the kids, and I must say that they could really sing well.

It happened that during the first evening or two, only the four of us would sing and our neighbors' kids would come and listen. I began to teach the songs to them and they would invite other friends to come the next day. Before long I had a pretty good group of kids singing on the front porch.

One Saturday evening I told them to come back to our house at 10:00 o'clock Sunday morning. I told them that we would sing some more and I would give them a booklet. The next day fourteen of them came to our very first Sunday school. I had built some benches so we moved the furniture and held our first service. This was the meager beginning of the "First Baptist Church." We continued to meet on Sunday mornings and I continued to work in the villages.

Brotherhood Projects

The BMAA Brotherhood (national brotherhood) Project for 2019-2020 is "Moral Action" (65%), National Galileans (25%), and General Fund (10%). Designations may also be sent for the Bro. Arthur Smith Memorial Scholarship Fund - for the National Mr. Galilean to attend a BMA sponsored school. Send project money to the Secretary/Treasurer: Roy Caldwell, 166 Twin Creek Rd., Lucedale, MS 39452

The Brotherhood of the Mississippi BMA Project for 2018-2019 is "Just The Crumbs" (60%) and Mississippi Galileans (40%). Designations may also be sent for the Disaster Relief Fund. Send project money to the Secretary/Treasurer: Roy Caldwell, 166 Twin Creek Rd., Lucedale, MS 39452

These projects, including sponsorship of Galilean ministries by the Brotherhoods, are very worthy. Your Project contributions help us support Galilean ministries. Why not give to both today?!

Master's Builders Report

by Nelda Malone, reporter

The Master's Builders traveled to Summers Baptist, Summers, Arkansas, in April. This was our fourth time to have the privilege of working with this church.

One of the rooms completed in the older Fellowship Hall will be used as a food pantry and will also have supplies to help with foster care children that are brought to a family with little or no time to prepare. Summers Baptist will be a designated shelter for the area!

We are scheduled to be at We Are Free on May 20th and at Stoneridge Camp in Smithville, Arkansas, on September 20th.

If you have questions about The Master's Builders or if your church has building needs, contact: Office Coordinator John Mangum at 318-202-5155 or 318-607-4100 (cell); or Field Coordinator Eddie Sikes at 903-725-6549 or 479-462-1675 (cell). Keep up with us on Facebook at "The Master's Builders".

Leave It To Cleaver

John 4.4 "He had to travel through Samaria..."

Life takes us through many places we don't want to go. Jesus did not necessarily want to travel through Samaria, but He had to. We prefer to go through the scenic places, the happy places, and the places we like to choose with our own volition. However, sometimes the sick bed calls us, and it calls with unrelenting pain with suffering over a long period of time. Sometimes the boss calls us to tell us of a layoff with little notice and no promise of termination compensation. Sometimes the legal system calls with crushing charges that we could in no way imagine coming into our life. Jesus had to travel through Samaria. It was a terrible place inhabited by terrible people according to the Jewish thought. The Samaritans were "not nice people, and they lived in a horrible land." Nevertheless, He knew Jacob's well was there, and there was a divine appointment made by Provident Wisdom He had to keep. Dear Reader, those awful trips through Samaria have an opportunity for you to observe from heavenly perspective--Jacob's well is there in Samaria! This might be in your travel today. Who knows what the surprise from the very hand of God awaits you at the wellsite—even though the well is in Samaria!



Tony Cleaver

Dr. Tony Cleaver is a retired U.S. Army Chaplain and Director of Distance Learning for BMA Seminary. You may contact him at jstmcleaver@embarqmail.com