

Mississippi Baptist

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Midyear Meeting Held at SBC

*by the editor
with contributions from Publications
Trustee Adam Sloan*

The midyear meeting of the BMA of Mississippi was held on the campus of Southeastern Baptist College on May 23. The final enrollment report showed that there were 47 churches represented by messenger with 87 messengers present along with 14 official visitors. There were many more in attendance suggesting that not everyone who was not a messenger registered as a visitor.

The WMA met on Monday night at 7:00 pm. There was no Brotherhood meeting this year.

Tuesday morning began with Scripture and prayer. Bro. Michael Miller, pastor of Shiloh Church, Mt. Olive, Mississippi, read from Philippians 2 reminding us to have the mind of Christ and led in prayer.

The meeting was very harmonious with reports given by every department and most other ministries. Southeastern Baptist College and President Dr. Scott Carson were gracious hosts. President Ken Riley presided over the meeting and Bro. Frank Panzrino served as parliamentarian.

President Riley recognized new pastors or those serving in new positions. Pastor Lance Murray of Providence Baptist Church, Amory, thanked those who have helped them in their recovery from the recent tornado that brought destruction to many parts of Mississippi,

including much damage in Amory. The church is working hard to repair their building and return to it for services. He shared they were currently meeting in a local community center and holding together well as a church.

Southeastern College Trustee Chairman Glen Pace presented a recommendation to the body for changes in the SBC bylaws and constitution. These

consisted basically of word changes and bringing the documents up to date with current practices. Much of it was referred to as 'housecleaning'. This was passed without opposition in the afternoon session. Since the churches were not notified prior to the meeting the rules were suspended to pass this measure.

Bro. Anders Lee, pastor of Central Church, Southaven, Mississippi, and the Director of the State Youth Department brought the morning message. His subject was "'Is There Any Word From The Lord?" from Jeremiah 37:14-17.

Youth Department Presentation

One of the highlights of this meeting was a presentation by the Youth Department to the family of longtime

youth director and associational worker Bro. Latrelle Windham. New Youth Director Anders Lee and the Youth Trustees commissioned a portrait of Bro. Latrelle in honor of his service which was presented to his family, his wife Linda Windham and daughters Jennifer Robinson and Becky Wells. The painting of him is proudly displayed at the Mission's Office. All are welcome to come and visit and view the painting.



President Ken Riley

Reports

Mrs. Dawn Freeman spoke for the WMA and encouraged discipleship and connection. She expressed her desire to connect with our local church's WMA leaders to come alongside and support the discipleship of our young women. The WMA met on Monday night at 7:00 pm. Mrs. Donna DiSalvo, the second vice-president of the WMA of

Mississippi was the speaker.

Southeastern College reported on progress and changes. Campus security was added this past year to provide a safer atmosphere. Dean Jan Walker, who had a massive stroke this past year, was retired and given an appropriate retirement package. Dr. Carson asked for continued prayers for her recovery.

Plans were shared to re-pave the front parking lot and stated funds were available to complete that project. He covers all the details in the college report in this issue. Carson shared that the college had its largest graduating class in its long history in 2023. He also highlighted the progress on offering an Elementary Education degree along with degrees in various levels of the Aviation industry. The work on these and other educational levels continues.

The State Youth Department report was very encouraging. Bro. Anders Lee gave his first official report to the state and

Yager elected to position full-time

Interim Missions Director Chris Yager was elected to the fulltime position of state Missions Director at the recent meeting in Laurel. It was expected that his tenure as interim director would continue until the annual meeting in October. That seemed to be the plan when he was elected at last year's meeting. It appears that his promotion was due to his good work and leadership along with needing to putting plans in place for the future. The recommendation by the missions trustees was well received and approved by the messenger body.



Chris Yager

discussed overcoming adversity. God has blessed and there are 307 campers and chaperones registered for camp. Bro. Anders also announced that there will be a Winter Conference held December 27-29. Please make our camps an object of prayer at your local churches. Bro. Anders is also still working to raise the \$75,000 he set as a goal. God has been great and \$55,000 has been raised already. Please pray for this worthy goal.

State Missions and the Revolving Loan Fund reported after lunch. Both bodies of trustees for Missions and the Revolving Loan Fund presented Interim Missions Director Chris Yager for full-time status. The rules were suspended by the body to allow this to happen outside of the annual meeting. Bro. Yager shared his plans and goals for the work of missions and plans for various areas of church

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The State Youth Department recognized Bro. Latrelle Windham for his over 25 years of service as Youth Director. Current Director Anders Lee (r) presented a portrait to the Windham Family at the midyear meeting. Next to Lee (from left to right) are daughters Becky Wells and Jennifer Robinson and Mrs. Linda Windham. The portrait will be on display in the Missions Complex in Laurel.

Conference Director Seeks Input

The Conference Director of the BMA of America, Donny Parrish, would like to have the input and suggestions of those who attended the 2023 National Meeting held in Conway, Arkansas. Planning for the 2024 National Meeting in Branson, Missouri April 16-18, 2024 is now underway. Please direct your thoughts by email to donny@lifeword.org.

Mississippi Baptist

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi



Don Brown
Editor

Trustees

Adam Sloan - Rayburn Freeman

Danny Bartlett - Clell Allen

Corbey Jones - Joseph Bain

E-Mail - editor@msbaptist.org

Web site www.msbaptist.org

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Editor's Midyear Report

In Exodus 7:16 God told Moses to tell Pharaoh, "Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness." I take liberty with that verse when I alter it today - "Let my people KNOW that they may serve me with the knowledge they need to meet the needs and goals of our associated work!"

How many times have you used the following phrase to someone who had shared a situation with you that you did not know - "I didn't know that or I would have responded or acted differently".

Knowledge is so important, especially if we are to be involved and invested in God's work. You can get information through your state paper that you can use and act on. Pastors, make sure your church members get their state paper so they may know about the work in

which their church is involved and hopefully their church supports. This is why we are Associational Baptists. Communication with each other is important.

Finances

Income and costs determine the success and operation of any enterprise. This is especially true of the Lord's work that relies strictly on donations for their support. Publishing only one issue per month was mainly an economic move on the part of your Publication's Department. Printing and postage cost increases dictate our ability to operate and produce a product. Over the past few years - and most importantly in recent months - increased costs in both areas have been a strain on our finances.

The increase in costs along with the decrease in subscriptions has taken a financial toll. Some

churches have dropped the family plan, some churches have left the BMA, and many of our churches are smaller in membership and attendance than in previous years. As we have already stated, information is vital to the participation and support of our churches. Our departments and areas of ministry do a good job of reporting their needs and their work. This is information that our church families need in their hands every month. We urge our pastors and church leaders to encourage their churches to subscribe to the Family Plan.

We strive to publish a paper that contains information our people need and that is beneficial to them personally and collectively. We also try to present our contents in an attractive and inviting format. We print fully or partially in color as we can and it certainly enhances the look but is

costly. We will continue to use that as much as we can financially.

Due to our good Special Emphasis drive we are currently well into the black budget-wise. Your response to our 2023 Emphasis was outstanding. You gave a total of \$10,560.31. A good portion of that total came from individuals who support this ministry. Monthly donations are on track to equal that of last year. Thank you for your financial support as we move forward.

Feedback

Periodically we hear from our readers. Some say they enjoy the paper and look forward to receiving it. Others say 'keep up the good work'. We even have some who complain a little and point out their complaints and opinions. Let me say that we solicit your comments, complaints, and suggestions.

Remember, this is your paper and exists for the purpose of promoting our associated work and advancing the ministries of every area of our association.

Closing Thoughts

This is the 46th midyear report I have given to this body. This work is a valuable tool for our collective efforts of missions, education, benevolence, and ministry. I thank God and this body for a place of service and ministry. May He bless each of us we continue to serve Him.

Our BMA Associational work is worthy of our prayerful and financial support. Your paper should be in the hands of every church family. You support all of our work when your church provides the Mississippi Baptist Paper to each of your church families.

Thank You.

Midyear Report from front page

work. He discussed the Timothy program which seeks to assign a "Paul" to a "Timothy" for training. He asked for prayer as we seek to revitalize churches and plant new ones and for the Lord to send laborers. The department will sponsor the Acts 1:8 Conference this summer with a session for south Mississippi and one for north Mississippi.

Samuel Yager, the assistant missionary at Living Hope mission in Meridian was approved for full-time status

beginning June 1st. New Missions Director Chris Yager was the missionary prior to his election. Reports were heard from some of the current missionaries as they shared their progress and future goals.

The Revolving Loan Fund report reflected a change in interest rates paid on deposits. The fund is now operating a tiered system similar to CDs offered by lending institutions. The rates range from the 2.5% rate for immediate access and up to 4% for a guaranteed deposit length of 24 months.

Yager also shared other areas of ministry and assistance

the department is pursuing in relation to insurance in both the medical and property sectors.

Publications was given by Editor Don Brown. He shared the needs and issues facing this work. Finances are currently good and stable, even with the increased cost of both postage and printing. The editor stressed the need for each church to be enrolled in the Family Plan and to provide the paper to each church family. His more detailed report is included in this issue. The Mississippi Baptist is selling copies of Dr. D.N. Jackson's book, "The Doctrine of Divine Election" to raise money for the D.N. Jackson scholarship at Southeastern Baptist College. Please consider buying a copy of this challenging book for yourself and your church

library to support this scholarship, our college, and future young students.

Senior Adult Commission Director Don Brown shared the blessings of the two 2023 conferences. Attendance was good at each event with Bro. Anders Lee bringing the message at both. Prizes were given, recognition of oldest senior adults at each conference, recognition of ministers who have been in the ministry for 50 years, great food, and of course good singing. Each meeting had special guest singers who presented an afternoon concert.

The director stressed that each conference costs more to hold than the fees charged to those attending. To continue to operate in a fiscally responsible manner, he stated that more churches need to support this work on a regular monthly basis.

Lifeword Announces 2023 Pastor's Giveaway!

Every year, BMA Pastors who register their church to participate in Lifeword Sunday are entered into a drawing for the Lifeword Sunday grand prize. Jennifer Harrell, Lifeword's Director of Church Connections, was pleased to announce that the 2023 prize will be an iPad Pro. "We are so excited about Lifeword Sunday, 2023," said Harrell, "and I am excited to share that we will be awarding an iPad Pro to one of our registering BMA Pastors. This is a tool that can really enhance their ministry. We love being a blessing to our BMA Pastors."

Lifeword Sunday will be on October 22, 2023, and the theme is "Share Jesus. Make Disciples. Everywhere." This reflects the digital discipleship effort Lifeword has been developing for the past two years, called Follow. As a video-based discipleship guide, "Follow" will help those who have come to Christ through Lifeword content to become disciples of Jesus. "Our ultimate goal is to make disciples and connect them with a local church," said Harrell. "Follow will be a discipleship tool that BMA church members can easily use on their hand-held device. We believe it will be a game changer for the ministry of Lifeword and for our BMA churches!" Lifeword was introduced to "Follow" at this year's BMA National Meeting.

Pastors and churches can register for the event and for the Pastor's giveaway at www.lifewordsignup.com. Lifeword will send each BMA church a Lifeword Sunday informational packet in August.

God & Country Rally
July 9, 2023
Bethel Baptist Church
Dorsey, MS
6:00 pm
Sponsored by
Tombigbee Baptist
Missionary Association

Theme: "Pray Fervently
in Righteousness
And
Avail Much"
James 5:16b

Laurel Church Revival

Sharon Missionary Baptist Church will hold revival services June 4-7, 2023. The speaker will be Bro. Steve Clark with John Musgrove leading our music. The service times are as follows: Sunday Morning, June 4: 10:30 AM (Lunch to Follow), Sunday Afternoon Service (Following Lunch), and Monday - Wednesday Night (June 5-7) at 7:00 PM. Bro. Joe Watson is the church pastor and everyone is cordially invited to attend.

He challenged each church to put the Commission in their monthly budget for at least \$25.00 per month. The income for the Commission needs to reach the \$20,000 per year level to meet its budget needs. Our senior adults have been faithful to the Lord's work and ministering to them is important. More detailed information is found in the director's annual report in this issue.

The Moral Action report was given by Bro. Sidney Davis standing in for director John

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Youth Ministers Sought

Mississippi Church Seeks full-time youth minister

Bethel Baptist Church, Fulton, Mississippi, is seeking a full-time minister of youth. Resumes may be sent to bethelbaptist445@gmail.com. Kevin Clayton, pastor

Louisiana Church Position

Calvary Baptist Church in Vidalia, Louisiana, is seeking a full-time youth minister/outreach director. We are a KJV only church. Mail resumes to Calvary Baptist Church 2001 Murray Drive, Vidalia, La. 71373 or Email resumes to calvarybaptistchurchvidalia@gmail.com.



Anders Lee

Anders Lee - Director - 901-343-3293 - anders.lee571@gmail.com

State Youth Department Midyear Report

It is a great joy to bring you this first official report as your State Youth Director. It has been such a joy to begin my work in this role and be among a lot of associations here in the BMA of Mississippi that I have not been in for a while and getting to go to churches that I have not been to in many years. I want to thank you all for the warm reception that you have given to me and the encouragement you have given me as well.

I want to thank Bro. Don Brown, Dr. Scott Carson and Bro. Chris Yager for their help and cooperation these last six months. They each in their own way have helped me get things going and off the ground. It has also been a privilege getting to know the youth committee and has been great working with them.

We have got a lot done since October. The first thing we did was secure a camp site & date for camp in 2023, and we got one by the skin of our teeth. Most campgrounds were booked and there was no availability, but Lake Tia O'Khata opened their facility up to us and we are thrilled! In fact, it was the last available week that they had so we secured it just in time. More on that in just a moment.

I have reported to 9 local associations and 7 churches since October. That has been a super blessing. We have developed a Facebook page, a new website, and a solid network of contacts from all around the State. We have a new texting system to send out messages to all in our network as well.

Our goals have all been met so far. Three major goals in fact that we have prayed over and seen

God answer. The first goal was a financial one. We began praying immediately that We could raise \$75,000 by October 1, 2023. We set three phases to achieve this. First, \$10,000 by Dec. 31, 2022. By Dec. 20th we had just a little over that goal! Second was \$40,000 by June 1, 2023. By January 20th we hit that goal! We were overwhelmed!!! Then \$75,000 by October 1, 2023. We have currently (after the Latrelle Windham Special Emphasis Offering) raised just over \$55,000. So we have around \$20,000 to raise by October. THANK YOU THANK YOU for responding to the needs of the Department, hearing our vision and getting behind us!

A second major goal was to see 200 teens & sponsors register for camp this summer. We have been praying and asking God to swing wide the doors and we have been calling, and texting and contacting people all over. As of May 15, 2023 we have... 307 registered for State Teen Camp! All I can say to that is Hallelujah! I cannot wait to get to camp and see what God is going to do! There are 22 churches participating as far north as Amory and Southaven and from as far south as Gulfport. I truly believe this proves we can and should have 500 next year! Please pray for camp, it is July 17-20 and it's coming real fast. Put this on your church prayer list and pray fervently for it! Pray for our

speaker Jacob Guenrich and the worship leader Max Sullivan and all the camp personnel.

A third goal was to get on the campus of Southeastern Baptist College and begin a ministry there. Over the Spring of 2023 we have been blessed to be there four times. I look forward to serving alongside Dr. Carson in the coming school year and doing 6 or 7 events here on campus. Pray for us as we come beside them in reaching these young people for Christ here.

We have planned a winter conference. It is called RENEW! It will be December 27-29, 2023, at Bethel Baptist Church in Fulton, MS. Tracy McMillen is our speaker and Preston Jones who leads worship at SOAR will be our worship leader for this event. The registration for this event is FREE! We are opening this event up to everyone across the BMA and working with Bro. Donny Parrish and the Youth Director in the State of Arkansas to register churches not just from Mississippi, but from all around the BMA. This has been a desire of mine to see our old Teen Conference restarted and this year we have been able to do this. I am so excited about the potential of this conference.

During camp and from the teens that come to camp we are planning two mission trips in the Spring of 2024. One to Morgan Utah and one in state to Meridian where Bro. Sam Yager is working.

Please lift this up as we plan these events!

We need monthly supporters. Currently we have a goal of having 40 churches support us each month. We have 12 to my knowledge. Let me say thank you to those churches who have been faithful to support the department. You have kept us going. I appreciate churches like Good Hope and Pastor Ricky Mitchell for jumping on board when I first mentioned the goal of 40 churches! To do all that we are doing, keeping camp at a low cost, free registration for the winter conference, and the things here at Southeastern, we have to have strong church support. Please pray about doing so.

Please follow our Facebook page, the easiest way to do that is to go to my personal Facebook page. I normally share what has been posted on the Youth Page. You can click on those posts to go to our Youth Page and like it.

If I have yet to meet you and you are not in our texting network or I do not have your information to contact you, please meet with me before you leave today so that I can add you into the system.

Come see me at our table and be sure to get a coffee mug pastors and youth guys if you have not got them. Also come by to chat and get the information you need.

Thank you so much, please pray for us and this ministry!

June Youth Department Report

CAMP UPDATE

I am THRILLED to be able to report to you that as of May 15, 2023, we have **307 registered** for State Teen Camp! All I can say to that is Hallelujah! Normally, most camps end up having about 80-85 % of the number registered. I hope we can see 275 come. Yes, it will be crowded and packed! But that will be AWESOME!

I cannot wait to get to camp and see what God is going to do! There are 22 churches participating as far north as Amory and Southaven and from as far south as Gulfport. I truly believe this proves we can and should have over 500 registered next year! Please pray for camp, it is July 17-20 and it's coming really fast. By the time you read this we will be just over a month from camp! WOW!

Please put this on your **church prayer list** and pray fervently for camp! Pray for our speaker Jacob Guenrich and the worship leader Max Sullivan and all the camp personnel. Pray for teens to be saved and yes for young men to surrender to ministry.

GREAT TIME OF FELLOWSHIP

I really enjoyed getting to catch up with and fellowship with so many at the association meeting recently. It is always great to hang out and get to know more in the association. Eventually, I will remember all your names... well... I HOPE to remember all your names. There are a lot of you - HA! It was a great time. Bro. Ken Riley did a good job, the reports were filled with good news and the meeting was harmonious. Thank you for the opportunity

to share from God's Word. It is never an easy task to preach at an association meeting, but you all were gracious even with a heavier sermon that the Lord called on me to preach.

LATRELLE WINDHAM PAINTING

Robert Shoemake, son of Glen Shoemake, a very gifted artist, hand painted the picture of Bro. Latrelle for us. It was a joy to have Mrs. Linda Windham and her two daughters, Becky and Jennifer, with us at the meeting and to see their faces as we unveiled the painting. We named the March Special Emphasis offering after him to honor him for his 25 years of service to the association. If you want to see the picture in person, it is on display in the foyer at the Missions office and will be until the State Meeting in October. In this issue of the Mississippi Baptist is a photo of the painting taken by Bro. Don Brown.

RENEW

Our winter conference, called RENEW has been booked for **December 27-29, 2023, at Bethel Baptist Church in Fulton, Mississippi**. Tracy McMillen is our speaker and Preston Jones, who leads worship at SOAR, will be our worship leader for this event. The registration for this event is FREE! We are opening this event up to everyone across the BMA and working with Bro. Donny Parrish and the Youth Director in the State of Arkansas to register churches not just from Mississippi, but from all around the BMA. This has been a desire of mine to see our old Teen

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Adams. Adams was unable to attend due to some recent physical issues and surgery. Adams has been to the state legislature and in contact with other elected officials. He urges them to vote for Christian values and for our people to go to the polls this Fall and vote. Moral issues in our land are falling further and further from the plan of God and from our founding fathers. It is our duty to stand and vote for righteousness.

History and Archives Director Jason Howard was not in attendance and had published his intention to resign several months ago in our state paper. President Ken Riley entertained a motion to accept his resignation. This was passed. Instead of electing a new director at this meeting with no prior thought, a motion was made and passed for the President to nominate a committee with an odd number of

Conference restarted and this year we have been able to do this. I am so excited about the potential of this conference. So please start planning this for your group to come too! It is time to start talking about it with your parents and teens in your church!

WEBSITE

If you need any information about camp or RENEW please visit our website at www.bmamssyouth.org and of course you can contact me at 901-343-3293.

members of the president's choosing. This committee will search for and recommend a new director for this commission at the annual meeting in October. It was noted that the History & Archives Commission does not have a trustee board. It was suggested that one could be elected to handle oversight of this work just as all other commissions and departments operate.

The Children's Home report was presented by Director Dwight Lindsey. He shared that the Home currently has seven kids in residence. He and His wife are the only staff members but would welcome others. Bro. Dwight Lindsey shared James 1:27 with the association. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

The messengers approved a motion to give Southeastern College \$500.00 to help with the expense of hosting this meeting. The 2023 annual meeting of the BMA of Mississippi will be held October 17-18, 2023 at Parkview Baptist Church in Laurel. This is the 75th anniversary of Southeastern Baptist College which was started in the facilities of Parkview Baptist Church. The founding president was Dr. D. N. Jackson, who at the time was also the pastor of Parkview.

Overall, this midyear meeting was very orderly and businesslike. The spirit and fellowship were cordial as the Lord's business was handled well. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Psalms 133:1



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 Mid-Year Report

We are halfway through the 74th year of this great institution, and I am excited to report that we have just conducted the largest commencement exercise in the history of the college! 45 students received their diplomas as approximately 350 friends and family members packed the gym to celebrate the momentous event! While most colleges lose a significant number of students between the Fall and Spring semesters, we were able to keep 100 students for both of these semesters. It is evident God is blessing Southeastern Baptist College.

In our chapel programs over this past school year, we had six students make public professions of faith, with 12 more rededicating their lives to live for the Lord. SBC is not only an educational platform, but an essential ministry of the BMA of Mississippi. A major emphasis among our faculty and staff is the evangelism and discipleship of the student body.

In my last report I stated that we had a concern regarding campus security. Recent events on school campuses have caused us to reevaluate the public's access to the school grounds and while SBC continues to have an open campus, it is no longer

conducive to the safety of our students and staff. We are continuing to explore ways to begin securing access to our campus. This is an expensive project, but it must be done to protect our people, to deter crime in general and to reassure parents and students alike, that SBC is a safe, educational environment. As part of this effort, we have contracted with SSI security for their presence on the campus during the school week and for special events like today.

We continue to work on our Elementary Education Degree requirements and are in conversation with William Carey University for a partnership in licensure for this program. In addition, an amazing opportunity was presented to SBC for the implementation of an Aviation Degree program. As of today only Delta State offers this degree in Mississippi and there is a great need to bring this program to the Southern part of our state. We cannot recruit toward this degree until it is endorsed by our accrediting agency, however, the administrative process is moving forward



Dr. Scott Carson
President

smoothly. As part of the entire package, we are already approved to implement a Bachelor of Science Degree in Airport Management for the upcoming Fall Semester.

Our sports programs fared well this past season and we have recently hired Chuck Robinson, as our new Athletic Director and Ryan Blackwell as our coach for the golf team.

Our second annual Southeastern Gospel Fest was a huge success with approximately 600-700 people in attendance each of the three nights of the event. This program has been watched in reruns by over 7,000 people across the nation on the Singing News Magazine television program. We are proud to announce that because of SBC's Cornerstone Trio being the warmup act at the Fest, they have been invited to participate later this year in a music fest at the Ark Encounter in Kentucky.

A couple of weeks ago, SBC was again the host location for the Jones County Area National Day of Prayer Breakfast with over 100 attending. We are looking forward to our scholarship golf tournament which will be held this Thursday at the Laurel Country Club. It is already a success with nearly all the available teams being filled.

It is rare that one uses the words "blessing" and "IRS" in the same sentence, however, we were blessed through the IRS with a refund of \$379,000 in payroll taxes by our participation in the Employee Retention Tax Credit program. Organizations that qualified for this program were those that continued to pay

their employees during the COVID 19 crisis. Because of this, we are now able to repair and pave our front parking lot. This project will begin within the next couple of weeks.

In addition, we were blessed with a surprise donation of \$150,000 from the Bobby and Dovey Thornton estate. This money is to be set aside for investment whereby earnings can be used in support of scholarships.

It should be evident to us all that the Lord is blessing Southeastern Baptist College. Please remember our faculty and staff in your prayers. I have learned that with greater opportunities come greater demands on time, of finances and effort. I cannot say this often enough, I continue to be amazed at our over worked staff members who continue to be devoted to the excellence of mission and ministry, for the college.

Thank you for your church financial support and individual special donations which has helped us advance and grow to become the solid institution the college is today. Your kind words of support are especially edifying. All of us here at SBC are committed to the doctrinal statement of the BMA of Mississippi. We are determined that, as our society becomes more secular and pagan, we will continue to stand as a conservative, Bible believing, Bible teaching, higher educational institution.

I now challenge you to encourage the youth of your churches to highly consider attending their very own Southeastern Baptist College! God bless you all!

Equipping the Saints,
Dr. Scott R. Carson

2023 Graduation



The largest graduating class in the 74-year history of Southeastern Baptist College Commencement Exercises were held May 13th with 45 graduating. God bless SBC's newest alumni! Please reference the adjacent pictures of this exciting event.

Below, Registrar DeAnn Rose leads graduates in prayer prior to the procession



Scholarship Golf Tournament



There was a fantastic turnout for the SBC golf tournament that was held on May 25 at the Laurel Country Club. See the adjacent pictures for more information.

Fall Semester Registration

The Fall Semester registration is open! You may sign up for classes online at southeasternbaptist.edu/future-students/application/ or by calling Admissions at 601-426-6346, or stop by our Admissions Office 8:30-3 p.m., Monday through Friday. Classes begin August 14, 2023.

Now Hiring

We are in search of a qualified women's basketball coach. If you know of anyone who

may be interested, please refer them to our website where they can upload their resume' at <https://sbcchargers.com/employment-opportunities> or call 601-426-6346.

Online Bible Degrees

Did you know you can earn your accredited Bible college degree in the comfort of your own home? You can take one class (3 hours) or up to 18 hours completely online each semester. And you need not be living in Mississippi to take classes at

National Day of Prayer Breakfast

The annual National Day of Prayer Breakfast for the Jones County and the surrounding area was a wonderful success and well attended!



President Scott Carson welcoming attendees to annual Prayer Breakfast

Southeastern! You may want to have a discussion with your children or grandchildren today about taking classes with SBC. Qualified students can take classes while still in high school and get a head start in their college studies with our dual enrollment program. We are conservative and Bible

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Shoeboxes Provide Hope to Ukraine

by Angela Rice, Short-term Missions Coordinator

He is able.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20)

I met some people recently who so motivated my heart and inspired me to be a better person. I had a hard time figuring out how to process the thought of living and serving during a war and how to describe

these precious people. I finally came up with the word *hero*. These guys are heroes to me.

Webster defines a **hero** as “a person of distinguished courage or ability, admired for his or her brave deeds and noble qualities.”

Yes! That was good, but even greater is a **hero of the faith** . . . an everyday person who says yes to God and opens his or her heart and life to God, allowing God to do his work in and through them.

Let me introduce you to heroes of the faith that I met recently! I want you to pray for these guys. They desperately need your prayers.

We went on a mission trip in January to Poland to work with Ukrainian refugees. We asked if our Ukrainian pastors could come and spend time with our team. These pastors and their families are heroes. When the war started in Ukraine, no one really expected it. People began to panic and scatter. Many were crossing the borders. Several of our pastors started serving the long lines of hungry and cold people that were waiting to cross into other countries. For months they served in this way.

Each of these families had the option to leave Ukraine. They all are young and very smart. Most of them have young children, but they choose to stay.

I listened to a 13-year-old tell me about the bomb shelter at their school and what they do in the shelters at home, as if it were so normal . . . I have no experience with this. She was the sweetest young lady with the biggest smile. It is really cold in Ukraine during the winter. It never got above freezing when we were there. They talked about only having electricity for a few hours a day, and it is so cold!

As we returned from our trip, shoeboxes and supplies were sent into Ukraine and the pastors that we met began to spread them out. They went to four siblings that had watched as a Russian soldier killed their dad in their front yard. They were given to a group of children orphaned from the war, children at the pediatric hospital and the cancer hospital, children abandoned because parents couldn't take care of them. Shoeboxes were given in churches, schools, hospitals and

even to the soldiers at the front lines. And every time a shoebox was given, they received food and supplies, but the best part is that Jesus was shared.

Right now in Ukraine, the church is where you go to get supplies. Churches are full. Many are coming to Christ during this



tragedy. Praise God for that.

For over a year, these families have served the poor, heartbroken, cold, and hungry people of Ukraine. I asked why they stayed and the reply was this: “God’s plan for our lives has not changed just because war broke out. If anything, we are doing much more ministry than ever before. God gives us everything we need to minister. Many people are coming to Christ right now. The church is full every service.”

And it is not at all because of these guys themselves—they are everyday people, just like you and me who said yes to God, and they opened their hearts and lives to God, allowing HIM to do his work in and through them. These friends are heroes of the faith.

They know that they have what they need because of God.

He is able to give them comfort.

He is able to give them rest.

He is able to supply their needs.

And he is able to supply your needs also.

You can be a hero of the faith . . . have you ever considered that? Open your heart and your life to God and let him be in control.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20)

Master's Builders at Home Stretch Baptist Church in Cleveland, Mississippi

by Rose Bittner, Reporter

A small, but motivated, group from The Master's Builders began work at HomeStretch Missionary Baptist Church in Cleveland, Mississippi, on May 8, 2023 for a week. There were 5 men and 4 ladies who were able to come. This church building is a mission church building that The Master's Builders originally helped to construct in 2010. Brother Ed Duvall was the missionary and remains the pastor of this church family today. The builders added a classroom, built a pony wall to close in the sanctuary area, built a large storage closet with shelves in the fellowship hall, and added a porch and walkway cover over the door to the fellowship hall. They were also able to hang the sheet rock for all the new walls built. The original walkway cover and steeple blew off in a recent storm.

Remember, if you have questions about The Master's Builders ministry or if your church has building needs, contact: Mike Green at 972-935-3877, David Axe at 903-918-0720, or Eddie Sikes at 479-462-1675.

“Like” us on Facebook at **The Master's Builders** (arbor logo) to follow us and pray for us!



More SBC News

From page 4

centered, and our credits are transferable to other accredited colleges. Go to our website at <https://southeasternbaptist.edu/future-students/application> to begin your college education journey today! Or call SBC at 601-426-6346.

Available Scholarships

The Arnold Knight Memorial RLF Scholarship is available to Baptist Missionary Association ministers who take classes at Southeastern Baptist College. These funds are administered by the BMA of Mississippi Revolving Loan Fund. Contact our Financial Aid Officer for more information.

Foundations in Ministry Certificate

SBC has fielded a certificate for new ministers who are interested in gaining knowledge in the basics of theology and church ministries. This is a 23-hour program, and the student may take one class or a full load. Numerous ministers throughout Mississippi have already begun their studies and the classes can be completely online. Once the certificate is earned, all credits are transferable toward an associate or bachelor's degree should the student desire to continue in their education with SBC. Contact our Admissions Officer today! 601-426-6346, or apply online at www.southeasternbaptist.edu

Memorial Gifts

Thank you to the following donors to Southeastern Baptist College in memory of Dr. Medrick Savell:

- Larry and Ruthie Anderson
- L.G. and Debbie Miller
- Mount Olive Baptist Church of Union, Mississippi

Estate Planning

Does your personal estate planning include a donation to Southeastern Baptist College? Praise the Lord for a recent donation of \$150,000 for scholarships from the estate of Bobby and Dovey Thornton! Contact Rosemary Davis at 601-426-6346 discuss with her how you can bless SBC with your special gift.

Need a Preacher?

Dr. Carson is available to fill the pulpit and, or to make a presentation about the work and vision of Southeastern Baptist College. Chaplain (Colonel) Carson can also provide an update on the BMAA Chaplaincy and deliver a related message. Thank you to First Baptist Church of Shady Grove and Good Hope Baptist Church of Stringer for inviting Dr. Carson to preach their Sunday messages. You can reach Dr. Carson at 601-433-4736 or scarson@southeasternbaptist.edu

Available for Pulpit Supply



Bro. James Brown has resigned as pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Florence, Mississippi and is available for pulpit supply. He may be reached at 601-209-1502.

NEED A PROJECT FOR VBS



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BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION MISSIONS OF MISSISSIPPI

4226 Highway 15 North, Laurel, MS 39440
Phone: 601-428-8616 Email: missions@bmams.org
Chris Yager, Director

Midyear Missions Report by Chris Yager

It has been a joy to serve you the past seven months as the Interim Missions Director. Though it has been as interim director, we have not just maintained but advanced on the mission's side of the office. Since October, the Lord has enabled us to restart the office, get trained in the details of the office (the RLF side and the missions side), renovate the mission's side of the office and the upstairs, visit over 30 churches, be in 4 of our

Hispanic missions as well as 2 of our state missions, join a trip to Guatemala, establish our Tuesday mornings coffee/prayer/training meetings, as well as begin recruitment for more missionaries. We have a big vision for our mission office, and I would like to share that with you!

Our Vision: The vision of the mission's office is to see more churches planted while helping to strengthen our churches that are already established.

The continued vision is to multiply church plants and church

planters. We desire to establish a lead missionary program that will accompany our Timothy ministry program. The Timothy ministry program is our associate missionary program plus the next step of development within the program. Our lead missionary program will identify church planters/pastors that can be a "Paul" in training a "Timothy" for the work of the ministry.

We are also working on a church revitalization ministry that will encompass the following:

Church restoration - aiding churches in the spiritual and practical development of revitalization and renewed spiritual and numerical growth.

Church replanting - aiding applicable churches with replanting and reorganization so the church can be reestablished.

Church revitalization - aiding applicable churches in the practical, financial, and spiritual development for full revitalization in spiritual and numerical growth.

Each one of these steps will have a detailed plan that a church can go through to help them not

just keep the doors open but thrive!

As an asset to this ministry, we are setting up technology help with a video room at the office. Our hope is to provide churches with the opportunity a place to come and put together some social media videos, promotions, and advertisements to reintroduce their churches to their communities at a reasonable cost.

Another development is the work on a more effective disaster relief plan that can be implemented quickly in the event of disaster.

Lastly, we are excited to announce the Acts 1:8 ministry development conference, "Reaching our Jerusalem" coming this August, focusing on how to reach our community and revitalize our churches.

Midyear Revolving Loan Fund Report

Investing In Eternity - this is what the RLF is all about. This fund gives believers the opportunity to steward their

finances in the most profitable way possible. The investor can yield a competitive return compared to most financial institutions while helping invest in the gospel's advancement.

Up until this past year, the RLF has been 2% above what the banks could offer their depositors. The RLF was able to keep interest rates higher while keeping loans as low as 2 to 4%. With the economic decline and the Fed's raising interest rates at a historic rate, the RLF has still been able to remain competitive with the banks. To remain competitive and keep our depositors, we have had to raise interest rates and loan rates. With that said, our loan rates are still lower than the banks at around 6% and our interest rates are just as competitive. We approved a tiered rate system within the office that we are slowly rolling out. We are offering these tiers: for immediate withdrawal 2.5%; for a 1-year lock 3.0%; for an 18-month lock 3.5%; and for a 2-year lock 4%.

As we strive to remain competitive in an ever-changing economy, we want our association and depositors to remember that their investment in the RLF is truly an investment in eternity. Over 80 million dollars have been invested in missions, churches, pastors, and missionaries, who are able to give their time to preaching and evangelism. Countless souls have been saved, disciplined, added to the local church and to the association work because of these investments. What an opportunity to yield immediate and eternal dividends. It is doing exactly what the Lord taught in Matthew 24, investing our talents to bring about an eternal return.

Thank you so much for your investments, and please continue to or begin investing in the RLF today. With your involvement, big things will happen:

The continued investment in churches, missions, missionaries, and pastors

The pursuit of self-insurance for properties. We are beginning the pursuit of learning, planning and vision casting plans of becoming less and less dependent upon insurance companies for properties.

The pursuit of medical insurance options. We are beginning to work with the Hinton Insurance group to help pastors, missionaries, and church staff members with the cost of insurance premiums.

These "big things" will go a long way to help our churches with finances and caring for their pastors. We want to be a help to our churches so that they can be more effective with the finances that the Lord has given them.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you! We are so blessed and so honored! May the Lord bless our Investments In Eternity!

Canaan Land Mission Report

by Scott Brocius,
missionary pastor

We have been extremely blessed this year at Canaan Land! It's been a busy few months. February we were able to baptize our newest member! We also had two members, who have been faithful to our church, join! We are so happy to see this growth.

In March, we were able to have a youth meeting. Bro Jared Meyers and his son led the music and Bro Wendell Helton brought

As always, we are so thankful for everyone's prayers and support. Please continue to remember us. Our mission church wouldn't be possible without all of you following the Lord in supporting us.

Hispanic Missions Update

by Estuardo Marroquin
Hispanic Missions Coordinator

We continue the work of Hispanic missions for the state of Mississippi. In recent weeks we have enjoyed the blessings God has given us in each of the Hispanic fields and continue to carry the gospel of salvation. We also continue to pray to start new fields to continue planting more Hispanic churches. We currently have three fields where Hispanic churches are being planted:

Tupelo Mission - Humberto Regalado continues to carry out activities to evangelize and disciple several people who have contacted since the beginning of this year. New families have been added to the mission and are faithfully attending worship services. We ask for your prayers for Brother Humberto and his family who are serving in this city.

Oxford Mission - Luis Huchin reports good news in this Hispanic mission. The congregation has been very lively and developing different activities to continue reaching the Hispanic community in this city. Together with their family, they are serving in this Hispanic mission where each week they gather to worship our Lord Jesus Christ with several families who have been reached with the gospel.

Canton Mission - Lucas Gomez continues to do a good job on the mission field and report good news of this Hispanic mission where they have reached several families for Christ. Every Sunday they gather in their living room to worship the Lord Jesus. Brother Luke shares that the space in his room is no longer enough for all the people who congregate in this mission. We are praying and looking for a building to move the

mission to a bigger place where they can continue to worship our God and develop more ministries in this mission. We ask for your prayers that God will guide Bro. Lucas and help them find a building for this Hispanic mission.

New Hope Hispanic Association - Earlier this month, the Hispanic Association held a retreat for women attended by about 90 women (girls,



adolescents, and adults). They had a great time of biblical teaching, and their hearts were filled with the word of God. The theme was "Fill Your Cup." Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost". (Romans 15:13). It was a blessing to see all the women from the different



Hispanic churches in our state of Mississippi united. God has been good, and we are seeing God's hand in each of these Hispanic fields. All the sisters returned to their churches in good spirits, and many gave their testimonies of how God worked in their lives.

see Missions on page 8



Wednesday night for an evening of Faith, Fellowship, and Fun. We invite anyone local to the Buckatunna area, looking for a place for their teen to growth spiritually, to join us. Services start at 7 pm and a meal is provided for the youth. They are also planning a few fundraisers this summer. If you see our tent out and about, please stop and encourage our youth and support them as the Lord leads.

We are also excited to be planning VBS! Proclamation Safari Park will start May 31- June 2. Each night will begin at 6-8:30 pm. Friday we will have a devotion and refreshments.

The plans for our new sign are coming along! This will be a wonderful addition to our church. The sign should be installed by the end of the summer.





In His Grip

By Carolyn Hagler

Carolyn Hagler is a retired educator and a member of Westover Baptist Church in Hattiesburg. You may contact her via email at cmhagler@bellsouth.net

Roll Back the Curtain

"Roll back the curtain of memory now and then.

Show me where you brought me from and where I could have been" (Remind Me, Dear Lord, by Dottie Rambo).

That old song reminds me of the importance of remembering where we came from and how the Lord guided us to where we are.

I've learned not to say how "lucky" or "unlucky" I am, nor "what a coincidence"! When God rolls back the curtain of my memories, as He often does, I am reminded of the many ways He has blessed me; but being part of the McKey Family was a special blessing.

He didn't place me in a family of wealth, but He chose a loving family of Daddy, Mother, and my sisters. It reminds me of "silver and gold have I none," but a loving family is more precious than rubies and all the "valuable" things that people often choose.

You've learned many things from these articles about my family, including the fun times and the serious times. But the heart of this family revolved around Daddy and his love that resulted in our learning many things from him, mainly by example.



His love for his family filled the empty space of his not having a mother. Though she died not many months after he was born, he never forgot her. And his grandparents stood in the gap for him.

From our earliest days, Daddy taught us respect for others by the kindness he demonstrated, even to a father who never showed him love. I don't ever remember his

raising his voice in anger (except maybe to his cattle who were prone not to listen to directions), but he dealt with us in a calm voice, even when we were stupid.

He and Mother seemed to agree on the rules of the house, except on whippings. She wanted to, and he didn't. And Daddy prevailed on that one. I don't remember, though, his undermining Mother's authority on anything else because he always told us to "Go ask your mother." He knew we were usually trying to play one against the other; he never fell for that tactic.

He taught us well by telling us stories with moral lessons, usually mixed with a nightly recitation of the multiplication tables. I think he was the one who taught us to say our prayers at night. "Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." Even though I was afraid of monsters under the chifforobe, I was never frightened by the death mentioned in our prayers. It was hard to be frightened with Daddy there.

Just like our heavenly Father, Daddy provided for us—with Daddy it was by working hard at any job he could find. He talked of leaving home young and working in a Louisiana "insane asylum" with its challenges. He hauled logs for many years until a bleeding ulcer that nearly took his life sidelined him for a while before he switched to hauling gravel.

When work was scarce during the depression, he worked with the WPA; but I don't think he ever "piddled around." Whatever his job, he always worked long hours and for many years kept a large garden along with cattle and hogs, too. He never found time to test the adage, "Idle hands are the devil's workshop."

He never complained. Cutting the grass while all of us women were in Natchez, he



Carolyn Hagler



got some of his fingers caught in his lawn mower. Taking the time to clean up, he called us and a neighbor. We managed to meet to take him to the hospital. Talking all the way, pointing out various sites, he took the cleaning, the stitching, and the skin grafting without a murmur nor a sound nor a frown. Did he stop working? No. He just wore a large oven mitten until his fingers healed. He never missed a day of work.

Daddy was also a practical man. He taught me how to shoot a rifle, change a tire, and drive a stick shift. He tried to teach me math; but when he failed at that, he taught me to manage my money. He wanted his daughters to be able to take care of themselves.

I don't remember his criticizing anyone harshly. He usually made his point in

a humorous way. A neighbor, Mr. Duncan Ivey, always bought a black Dodge car, I think it was. Daddy would say, "I don't know why he bothers buying a new car; it looks just like all of his others."

Or describing in his own way the dishonesty of another person who married into the family, "He would rather climb a pole to lie than stand on the ground to tell the truth."

Though he had a minimal amount of education, he encouraged me to keep going to school. He valued education, not for learning's sake but for preparing one to earn a living. He would always ask me when I reached a certain level, "What comes next?" Quitting was not in his vocabulary.

I can be a little "teachy" at times. In fact, JB used to say, "You've got that teacher's voice again." Daddy was glad



when I started teaching because it was a safe occupation in his mind. But he often regretted it when he would wake me during the middle of the night with chest pains from a hiatal hernia. And I would say, "Daddy, you know you're not supposed to lie down right after you eat." And he would say, "Remind me not to wake you up the next time I think I'm having a heart attack." That will humble you.

But with his hats he wore every time he left the house, the khakis he wore most of the time, his white handkerchiefs and knife he carried all the time, the children's company he enjoyed, the animals he cared for with a gentle hand, and his children he loved until he died, he was Daddy. By his example, he taught me to work hard, not to let fear control me, to

love family, and to treat others with respect. Under his care and protection, I got my first glimpse of a heavenly Father, who has us under His watch care. God placed me in the McKey family to prepare me for my future with Him. Remembering Daddy today has made me reflect on what God has done in my life.



May your memories of your father be heartwarming today. If he's still with you, praise God! If he's not, praise the Father who placed you where He did.

I'm thankful God has rolled back the curtain of my memories today to remind me of the love I found in my family and in Him, too.

Happy Father's Day to those fathers who showed their children the first glimpse of God. May you fathers and grandfathers today never forget to make memories that will be revealed when God rolls back His curtain for your children one day.

In His grip, I'm thankful for the sweet memories that bring a smile.

May your memories
of your father be
heartwarming today.
If he's still with you,
praise God!
If he's not,
praise the Father
who placed you
where He did.



FW

Sofilthy's Attic

By Barbara White

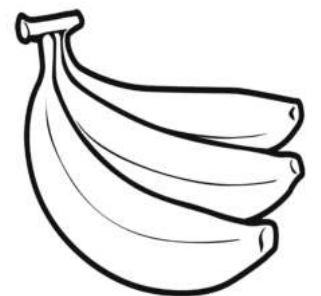
At a recent meeting I attended, a rather elderly lady was being questioned concerning her willingness to continue in a position that she had filled for several years.

She agreed to continue filling the position if she was still here when the time came, but she reminded the group that there was an element of uncertainty in the timing. She emphasized the uncertainty of our time by saying, "I don't even buy green bananas anymore!"

This same rather elderly lady was overheard responding privately to one who told her she was looking good: "Maybe so, compared to a dead dog in the rain!"

We can't number our days, but we know the One who does number them and we trust Him!

Green Bananas??



Senior Adult Ministry

Commission on Senior Adults - 8 Reagan Lake Road, Laurel, MS 39443 - 601-

PrimeTimers With A Purpose and A Passion

Commission on Senior Adults Midyear Update

What a joy old people are! Some may say, "Be careful, you may offend someone!" But as a 'super senior adult' I am not offended. Senior Adult categories are in the eye of the beholder. Senior discounts at some places begin at age 50. By that standard both of my daughters are senior adults. I don't know at what age we are called 'super seniors', but I think as a 75-year-old I fall into that category.

Speaking of Super Seniors, we had two super senior conferences this year.



Don Brown
Director

Big Creek Baptist Church and Pastor Adam Sloan hosted the South Conference in March. Attendance was up 25% over last year. Brandon Wilson led our worship time with great music. Four of our state departments gave away special door prizes, and Bro. Anders Lee brought a powerful message. Mack's Catfish provided another wonderful meal and our afternoon concert by the group 'Avenue' was a spiritual blessing and enjoyed by all there. Of course many door prizes were given out and everyone seemed to have had a great day of fellowship and worship.

Our North Conference was again hosted by Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Fulton and Pastor Tim Holsonback. Bro. Tim and

the church did a great job of hosting. The church men provided the noon meal of catfish, chicken, and all the trimmings. The ladies of the church also provided an ample selection of desserts to top off the meal. Attendance was good, the preaching was good by Bro. Anders Lee, and four of the BMA of Mississippi departments again provided door prizes for this meeting. At each meeting we recognize the oldest man and lady in attendance. The winners this year were again Earl and Sarah Brown of Unity Baptist Church, Guntown. He is 98 and she is 93. I told them I looked forward to recognizing them again in 2024 and they said they were also looking forward to next year.

Our music concert in the afternoon session was provided by Michael Booth of the Booth Brothers Trio. He was very personable and gracious to our people. He did a great job. I received a letter from him a few days after the meeting stating he was encouraged by this ministry.

He also sent a check for \$250.00 to support this work. What a gracious and special thought!

We recognized two of our ministers for their 50 years in the ministry. Bro. Eddie Boutwell and Bro. Jackie Gray have been faithfully serving the Lord for over 50 years.

Another highlight of this year's conferences is the support our people show for other ministries. This is the second year we have taken an offering to support ministries that are faithfully serving others. Our senior adults from both conferences gave a total of \$6,671.00. This was divided between our State Youth Department and Baptist Medical Missions International (BMMI). They both are doing the Lord's work in different areas.

Through April 2023 we have had 20 churches and two local associations to give \$4,696.75 to your Senior Adult Commission. This is greatly appreciated, but we need more regular support from

our churches. We need 50 more churches to put this ministry in their regular monthly budget for at least \$25.00 per month. This will give us enough funds to operate in the black and not put a strain on our budget. Each Senior Conference we hold costs the commission more than the fees that we charge. Your help in this area will take the pressure off our seniors and allow us to have quality meetings in the future. Would you ask your church to add this work to your regular support?

Don't overlook the older folks in your church. Minister to their needs. Have special days recognizing their importance. Plan special events, trips, and fellowships for your senior adults. Make sure their physical needs are also met along with their spiritual needs.

Your commission trustees work hard to make this ministry a success and we thank them for their willingness to serve. God bless you all and the work of the BMA of Mississippi.

MORAL ACTION

Baptist Missionary Association of America

Dr. John M. Adams, Director

P.O. Box 305, Mantachie, MS 38855 - 662-231-3863

www.macbma.net - Email fbcjdmaj@yahoo.com

Not Perfect

by Dr. John Adams

Executive Director, Moral Action

God desires that everyone could live in a safe, caring environment where a love for Him is nurtured. But, some experience harm and damaging situations at the hand of other's lack of wisdom or others choose what is right and do well. God wants to heal the hurting and the broken; He plans to put an end to all



Dr. John Adams

suffering and establish a new earth with no pain or sadness.

You are a child of God, His own special people created to live a pure, faithful life. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10. Don't look down on what God created and loves! If you doubt God and complain about: 1) His handiwork, 2) your being and 3) your situations, you miss out on good works and the blessing they bring over your life.

Not perfect in the sense of a high IQ, flawless skin and a great personality. But perfect for God's amazing plan for your life and those you can help along the way.

Perfect for good works throughout the day that only you can do: choosing good when faced with temptations, praying for a friend who is going through a difficult time, sending an encouraging text, blessing a coworker or family member. These are works that have eternal value. Trying to attain a perfect body, social media image, or "cushy life" is empty and useless for eternity.

Not perfect in the sense that you do everything right the first time, haven't fallen in sin or aren't tempted to sin. But perfect because God views you with eyes full of hope and love even though He sees your faults and weaknesses. He sees what you can become if you continue to choose what is right and good, how valuable you are to His work and the kingdom of heaven. You are perfect for the work of salvation that God wants to accomplish in you. Let God guide your life and form you through trials and you will become "perfect and complete, lacking nothing" in each chapter of life. (James 1:4)

Mississippi GMAs

Lakelan Jenkins, GMA Promoter

P.O. Box 1694, Collins, MS 39428

lakelanflynt@gmail.com - 601-517-1476

GMA President Encourages Others

by Emily Carroll

Hello everyone, I am Emily Carroll, the President and Song Leader for the 2023 Mississippi GMAs. I am seventeen years old and a member of Mount Carmel Baptist Church. I am beyond thankful for not only the GMA program, but also the group of GMA girls at my church. GMAs has been a very important part of my life, and it has definitely brought me closer to the Lord. It has also allowed me to meet many other young girls who love the Lord, which includes the outstanding officers that I have had the opportunity to work with this year.

My GMA group and I have also been blessed with a group of ladies from our church who support us and remind us to stay strong in our faith. Not only that, but we can go to them with anything that we could ever need. My favorite memory from GMAs was when I was in the maiden step and our class was learning about a missionary from Hawaii. To help us remember about this missionary, our teacher brought in a pineapple, and we cut it and ate it.

I want to encourage all the churches to start a GMA group because you get to have these amazing memories with other girls but also grow in your relationship with the Lord. If any churches need any more information, or any assistance in creating a GMA group, feel free to contact Mrs. Lakelan Jenkins at lakelanflynt@gmail.com. In addition to that, our officers this year are going to be reading a book called The Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan. Our plan is to read a chapter each month starting this June up until our state camp in March and encourage everyone to join us in our study. We are so excited for our state camp!

National Brotherhood Report

by President Mark Jones

The BMA of America National Brotherhood met April 25th 2023, at Antioch Baptist Church in Conway, Arkansas. Officers this year are President Mark Jones, 1st VP Bryan Buckley, 2nd VP Van Widger, 3rd VP Dennis Baker, Secretary/Treasurer Scott Kirkland, Galilean Promoter Dan Williams, and Assistant Galilean Promoter Maverick Hendricks. The project this year will be Stoneridge Baptist Camp in Smithville, Arkansas.

Bro. Scott Small gave testimony on the work at Stoneridge and then preached a message from John 3:16 and Romans 5:8. He talked about falling in love with Christ and making Christ personal. Thanks to Brother Scott for the message and the work he does at Stoneridge

As you have seen, Bro. Dan Williams is our new Galilean Promoter replacing Bro. Kenneth

Colvert. If you have been involved with Galileans over the years you know we owe a great deal to Bro. Kenneth for all he has done for the Galilean ministry. Thanks to Bro. Kenneth and we will be praying for you.

National Galilean Camp will be held June 23 – 26, 2023, at Stoneridge camp. Any church with young men are invited. Even if you do not have a Galilean program, you can come and see what Galileans is all about. If you are planning on coming, please contact Bro. Dan Williams.

First Vice-president Bryan has proposed the National Brotherhood having a Brotherhood Retreat soon. The retreat will be in Missouri. There will be a time of fellowship, prayer, hearing the word preached, games, and food. Dates will be announced. Anytime we can do things to make the men of the church stronger we need to do it.

A SONG OF DEGREES.

- 1 Behold, bless ye the LORD,
all ye servants of the LORD,
which by night stand in the
house of the LORD.
- 2 Lift up your hands in the
sanctuary,
and bless the LORD.
- 3 The LORD that made
heaven and earth
bless thee out of Zion.

Psalms 134

Missions

Continued from page 6

I thank God for the blessing of seeing the fruits of every Hispanic pastor and missionary in our state of Mississippi and ask for your prayers that we may continue to fulfill the command of our Lord Jesus to "Go, and make disciples.. ." I ask for your prayers for my life and my family that we may continue to coordinate the Hispanic work and glorify the name of our God in Christ.

mission:world

NEWS

GOSPEL MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

By Tommy Rose
BMA Missionary to Mexico
bmamissions.org

We came to Queretaro, Mexico, five years ago to plant a church. We decided to move to the growing metropolis because BMA Mexico does not have a gospel presence in the state of Queretaro. Upon arriving, our family focused on meeting and sharing the gospel with the unchurched. Our first outreach event was planned with a church group visiting us from the United States. We spent the week passing out water bottles and tracts at one of the many parks downtown. We handed out hundreds of water bottles with our church logo and contact information.

These events are admittedly stressful because we weren't able to strike up a conversation with every person who received a water bottle. We began to ask ourselves a series of questions: Will anyone even read or look up the information? Will anyone contact the church? Will anyone visit the church? Is what we're doing making any difference at all?

It was five years after passing out those water bottles that God reminded us he has it all in control.

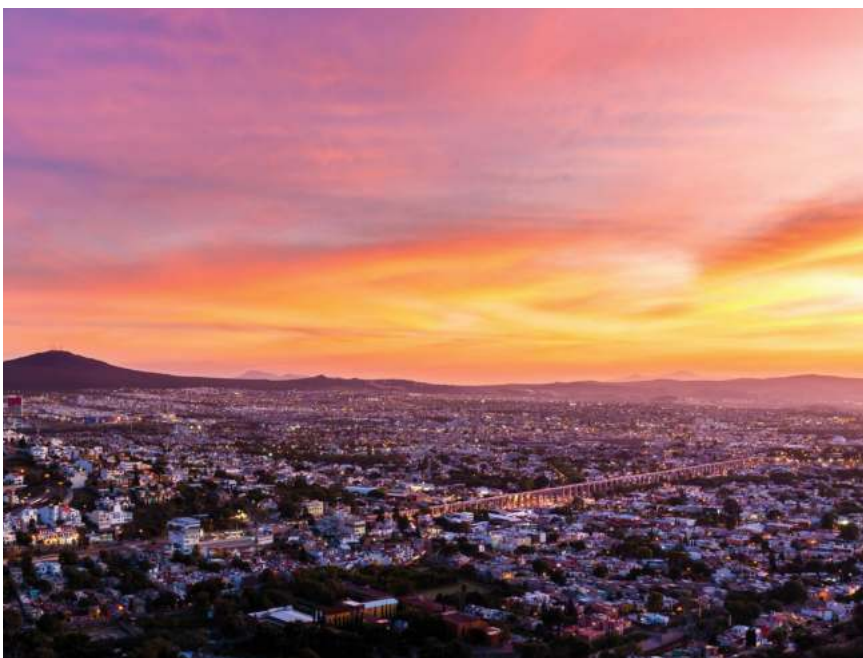
Isaac had received a water bottle that day in the park, and he took it home and placed it in his apartment. That water bottle became buried among the clutter of life and practically lost all visual contact with the known world. However, in God's perfect timing the information on the bottle resurfaced, and Isaac sent us a message through Facebook. He explained he had been facing some difficult situations when the water bottle appeared again after five years. It is difficult to put into words and to wrap our heads around the events that lead us to God's perfect plan. Recognizing the hand of God in our lives and his guidance is a blessing of immense proportions. The circumstances that Isaac was experiencing had led him to us and opened his eyes to a need only God could meet. Our church, El Arco, had the privilege of directing him to God's Word and the good news of the gospel.



We met downtown at a coffee shop where he explained the despair he was feeling and the need for hope and a new purpose. I pray that more people would come to this realization. I know it may hurt to go through difficult situations, but when they take us to a point of crisis it can be a beautiful revelation. Sadly, the opposite is more likely true. People are more likely to find solutions waiting for them in empty words of comfort. The majority of people really do find bliss in their ignorance. That is why it is so beautiful to experience the moment someone realizes they can do nothing without Jesus.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Isaac came to our new believers Bible study and placed his trust in Christ as his Lord and Savior. He commented that he had sought the counsel of many professionals and pastors of churches, but he had never had the gospel explained as he had heard in our Bible study. I honestly don't know how the gospel may have been presented to him before we met, but we pray that God continues to use us to proclaim a clear and powerful gospel. We pray that the people God has placed in our lives would yearn for purpose and truth and find Jesus. Maybe it will be today or tomorrow or five years from now, but as we faithfully serve, we will undoubtedly experience marvelous testimonies like Isaac's. We can't wait to hear your stories of God's providence. God bless you all and thank you for your prayers and support.



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NEWS



DELIVERING CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES, RECEIVING A LASTING BLESSING

By Lydia Dunlap
Freshman at
Central Baptist College

Ever since I was five years old I've been called to be a foreign missionary. In fact, before I was even saved, I was telling people that's what I wanted to be when I grew up. This past December, I went to El Salvador to pass out Everlasting Smiles shoeboxes. We left about two weeks before Christmas, and I left America thinking of all the things still left to be done: presents to buy, the family Christmas calendar, and all the other things for the busiest time of year. When I stepped off the plane in El Salvador, I had no idea how different I would be when I boarded the plane back to America.

I had often heard the stories that began with, "This mission trip changed my life..." or "I'll never view America the same way again..." but that wasn't my experience. Our group of twelve consisted of six ladies, a young married couple, a security consultant, and three teenagers. It was the most unlikely bunch you've ever seen. You see, before this trip I had only done VSM trips, so I had only been on trips with kids my age.



It's an understatement to say I was worried about the dynamics of this team when we were first introduced. Along with that, I had never been out of the country. I was used to having Oreos right down the road at Walmart when I needed them, and for a picky eater like me, that was essential. This trip was looking like something I had never known before, and I'm the kind of person who loves to take adventures... once I've carefully scheduled them.

Every day our team hopped in a van and drove to our destination. We visited churches

and villages across El Salvador, ranging from a thirty-minute drive to almost three hours. The first place we went was my favorite. I still close my eyes and dream of being there. We parked the van and walked up a little dirt road filled with large black rocks that I later found out were from the volcanoes that had erupted. As we walked along the road, we eventually came to a clearing, and all of the sudden there were hundreds of children. How unexpected! Just a moment before, I only saw the beautiful scenery of El Salvador, but suddenly my sight was flooded with children with large eyes, holding on to our every move.

As we moved closer into the clearing, our team gathered together, but I felt like I was on a stage. When I turned my head, people were taking pictures of us and little kids were inching closer. They came in their nicest clothes—dresses and fancy shirts—yet I could see how little they had. It didn't take long before I had moms asking me for a "pho-to" (the only English they knew) then passing their babies into my hands. How humbling to be trusted so blindly.

The gospel message was given, and we began passing out shoeboxes. These kids had come from everywhere by car and on foot. They had waited for us to arrive, all for shoeboxes that many American kids wouldn't even like as a gift. We stayed there long after most kids had left, and I couldn't help but be in awe of what I had just witnessed. God has never been louder in my calling to missions. I tear up just writing this and feeling the certainty of my future as a missionary.

The next village was where we passed out shoeboxes, and some people from our group came across a little girl with a jump rope. They told her to play with it, but it was evident she didn't know how. They called me over to show her, and she watched with amazement as we all took turns showing her how to jump rope. I remember her laugh as she first started jump roping then saw her mom walk up behind her. Her mom couldn't have been much older than me, but she didn't know how to jump rope either. So we taught her, too. Eventually Pastor Rigoberto got a long rope from his truck, and we started inviting everyone to join in.

I was on the end swinging one side of the jump rope, and the mother of the girl was on the other side. I looked over and it was like seeing myself in a mirror. But how different were we? Two young women, so different but so equally loved by Christ. Our arms eventually grew tired, but the joy of everyone jump roping was greater. This was the unity that I longed for in America.

These experiences changed me. Not in the way I had always heard it described but in the way that the Lord changes you through something you've prayed over. Something you've longed for. If the Lord has ever given you the desires of your heart, you know what I'm talking about. The peace of resting in God's plan for my life was peace like I've never felt. Joy that I've never known.

When I came back to America, it was just as busy as I had left it. People were rushing to do last minute Christmas shopping, and my family was wondering about my trip. But I sat there just thinking of the week, knowing I could never fully express what I experienced. Longing to be back with my new friends and dreaming only of when I could return. God had put in my heart from the beginning that this was his purpose for me, but getting to live it is a blessing I can never comprehend.

mission:world

NEWS

THE LABORERS ARE FEW IN SOUTH AMERICA

By Holly Meriweather

bmamissions.org

In Matthew 9:35, the Lord is talking to his disciples and saying basically, “Look at the harvest. The laborers are few.” Although most of us would not believe it, South America has few laborers and few healthy churches.

Here are the statistics for this region, country by country:

In Argentina, the only BMA presence is one church that was planted by BMA Bolivia; however, it is not a healthy one. According to ministry workers, with the exception of the one BMA Bolivia church plant, Argentinian churches are not true Baptists; they are charismatic.

In Chile there is a church planting movement taking place, but only in Santiago, the capital, and there is no presence outside the capital. Pastors involved with the good work going on there have a vision to plant a church in each of the municipalities of Santiago before they concentrate on another area. So, BMA presence is centered on one city of over five million people.

In Uruguay, there is one BMA church in the entire country with no leaders planting more churches.

In Peru, three states out of 24 have a BMA presence. But in the south part of the country, there is no evangelical presence, and when you travel from village to village in the area, there’s not even a Catholic chapel. In the 1980s a terrorist group had control of the southern region, likely causing the complete lack of evangelical, biblical presence, including Catholicism.

In Colombia, BMA presence is in its infancy. A ChangeMaker from Mexico has just started his ministry in the jungle between Venezuela and Colombia. With 40 recent professions of faith, leaders have started a Bible institute there, but they have only begun to scratch the surface in Colombia.

In Ecuador there is a brand new church plant, and forward movement is happening.

Again there is a mindset that South America is reached with the gospel, but that’s not true. If you look at pure demographics of the entire region, it is more likely that only two percent of the population has heard the truth, but those are in pockets. Entire sections of the country are unreached.

Our leaders in South America are working tirelessly to reach people and plant churches, but these few leaders can only do so much. They need help.

So what do we do?

Become involved in mobilization.

First, plead with the Lord of the Harvest that he will send leaders. Pray that he will send people and raise up workers from among those countries. Americans need to understand that their role is not just funding missionaries but also sending missionaries.

Next, give financially to help our ChangeMakers who work within their own people groups to build relationships, share the gospel, make disciples, and plant churches. In fact, a leader in Venezuela is asking for help with Bibles and other materials.

Finally, one very important way to be involved in mobilization is to take a short term trip through VSM or BMMI. Johnmichael Poulin, regional coordinator for South America and Africa, has funds set aside for any pastor to go on a trip with him, but only two pastors have taken him up on that offer so far.

Many career missionaries have been called to full-time ministry because of short term trips. Just one of many examples is Gavin and Chase Roberts, who

went on trips to Peru growing up. Their experience led them to plant a church in Utah. God used their short-term trips to draw them into full-time church planting ministry.

Johnmichael himself became involved in long-term missions because of short-term missions experience: “In 1994 I took my first trip to Bolivia when I was a senior in high school then returned in 1995. Missionary to Bolivia Jimmy Swindoll was sent out of Calvary Baptist Church at Horn Lake and invited me to come spend a year with him, so I left on Christmas Day of 1996.

“God began working on my heart during those twelve months about full-time ministry, and my pastor, Dr. Kevin Clayton said, ‘If God’s calling you into ministry, nothing else will make you happy.’ I ended up coming home after that year and worked a non-ministry job and had a successful career making good money, but I was unhappy. So I went to seminary, and a month into it, I was called to pastor a church for five years in Munford, Tennessee. But finally, my family and I became missionaries to Peru and spent ten years serving the people there.”

South America is ripe for harvest, but the laborers there are few. Who will go? Who will help?





GROWING THE GARIFUNA CHURCH

By Heather Harrison

Lifeworld

lifeworld.org

When God prepares a man for mission work and then reroutes that mission work, it might look like his plans have been compromised, but because we trust a sovereign God, we know his plans cannot be thwarted. David Dickson knows this well. As a missionary living in Honduras in 1980, after being forced out of Nicaragua, David and his family were spending a day on the beach when he heard two young boys playing and speaking a language he didn't recognize. After discovering what their language was and who this people group was, he began the journey of learning their language and sharing Jesus with them. And thus, the providential hand of God began the ministry to the Garifuna people, who descended from the Afro-indigenous people from the Caribbean and were exiled to Honduras in the 18th century. Because of God's superintending of the lives and details of Dickson and others, Lifeworld was privileged to be the first to produce gospel content in their language. Currently, Lifeworld and our partners are producing multiple types of programs and planting churches around the world.

Ricardo Herrera Ramirez produces several video programs for the Garifunas in Honduras and other areas. Among the programs are *Grandfather's Advice*, *Fisherman*, *Garifuna to Garifuna*, and *Round Table*. He and his team also manage several community radios and translate multiple videos and blog articles from the Spanish and English sites into Garifuna to post on the Garifuna website. The Garifuna women also lead programs for the community radios.

As several of the Garifuna people have migrated to the United States and other countries, they are now reaching their people in areas like New York, Houston, and Wilmington, NC. In April of this year, the Garifuna church in the Bronx is celebrating its second anniversary. Cherry Gamboa, who was a pastor in Honduras and Lifeworld speaker, immigrated with his family to the US and started this church in New York. Seeing several come to know Jesus Christ, God has grown their congregation. They have had struggles as well: between rising rental costs, the growing congregation, and simply being asked to leave, finding a place to gather with their growing congregation has not been easy. They are currently seeking their fourth building. Another challenge has been the unique struggle of serving a trilingual congregation as they seek to conduct the service in the three languages spoken by the members, English, Spanish, and Garifuna. In Wilmington, there are already several Garifuna people willing and ready to help with a church plant. Marvin Miguel, a Honduran pastor, is moving to North Carolina soon. In Houston, Henry Norales, who was trained in media by a Lifeworld team, is working on the preliminary work necessary in planting the Garifuna church there.

God's providential hand has been clearly seen throughout the years of the gospel work among the Garifuna people. As he has positioned Lifeworld to equip these believers to use media, they have shared Christ with their people around the world. Join us in praising God for his work!

