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Mississippi

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He Is Not Here

by the editor

Many years ago I was privileged to co-host a trip to Israel with Dr. Gerald Kellar. Our group was small, but oh, what a time we had. We visited many of the expected sites and areas in Israel. Nazareth, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and a number of others. We walked where the prophets, apostles and Jesus himself walked. We visited places that we had only previously experienced through the scriptures.

The preachers decided early during the trip that each of us would get to bring a short message at the site of our choice.

Surprisingly there were no conflicts. One preached at Jacob's well, one on the plains of Megiddo, and others at their



Garden Tomb in Jerusalem

chosen place. It was a special blessing to each of us. I chose the Garden Tomb.

There are two sites in Israel that are considered possible locations of where Jesus was buried. Without going into a discus-

sion of the two, I felt the Garden Tomb was the one more appealing to my mind and to scriptural references.

My title was 'Without The Tomb'. Without the tomb, Jesus could not be buried. He could not have risen without the burial. So the tomb was necessary. Also, Jesus was found without (outside) the tomb. Wow! I still am blessed by the memory of making that point to our group. Jesus being outside (without) the tomb and having overcome death, hell, and the grave is the good news of the Gospel!

As we approach Easter let us concentrate on the words found in Matthew 28:6 "He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

ALL ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE AT NATIONAL MEETING

Join the BMAA Choir!

by Jeremy Willkerson

I have been given the honor and privilege of leading the worship this year at the BMAA meeting in Jackson, Mississippi. On Wednesday, April 18, at 3:30 p.m., we are going to be forming a BMAA choir and that is where I will need your help!

Anyone and everyone is welcome to come and sing at this time. Please spread the word to everyone you can think of who might be interested in singing with us.

I have chosen four songs — Standing On The Promises, How Great Is Our God, What A Day That Will Be and Chain Breaker. A copy of the words to all the songs will be distributed as the choir goes on stage at the meeting.

I'm sure everyone is very familiar with the first three songs. The only "new" song is Chain Breaker and it can be heard at [youtube/JGYjKR69M6U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGYjKR69M6U) (or google Chain Breaker by Zach Williams).

I chose to end with this song because that is the message and testimony we can all declare together in Christ. Once we were all bound by chains of sin, but as believers we have experienced true freedom in Christ!

Editor's Note: Being unfamiliar with the song 'Chain Breaker' I viewed it on YouTube as Jeremy suggested. It is a powerful song with a great message. I encourage those talented folks who sing to join Jeremy in the choir at the annual meeting and learn this song before you arrive. It should be a great performance.

Willkerson is Director of the BMF in Mississippi and a member of Campground Baptist Church, Gulfport.



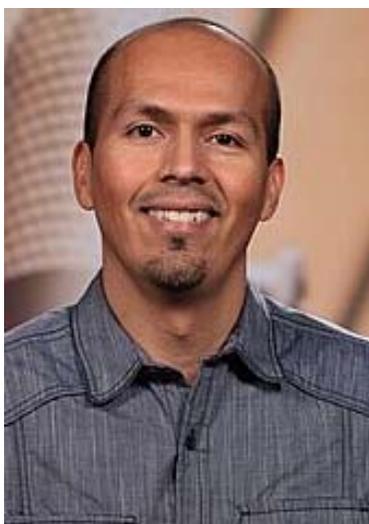
Willkerson

BORN IN 1977

Meet Luis Ortega of LifeWord Ministries

"Going north" meant success and a better life to Luis Ortega, Sr. and the other men in his village of La Estancia. So he left his wife and four young boys behind in Michoacán, Mexico, to go north to Houston, Texas, for the promise of higher wages. When they hadn't heard from him in a while, Esther Ortega decided to take her sons to Houston and find her husband. Luis Ortega, Jr. was six years old at the time.

Before they left for the States, Luis recalls that his father was no different than the others he knew who drank and were abusive and unfaithful. No matter how many candles they lit or idols they implored, nothing changed until Luis, Sr. was in-



Luis Ortega

vited to Centro de Vida/Center of Life church in Houston, jointly pastored by the late Paul Robinson, Ricky Robinson and,

later, Bob Allcorn.

Luis, Sr. had no interest in going to church, but agreed to go to a small home meeting with the intention of poking fun at the believers gathered. But God had other plans for the Ortega family, and it wasn't long before God convicted him and he was saved.

Luis's mother, however, was not as easily convinced; she was suspicious of his new-found faith, and her Catholic and animistic rituals made more sense than an intangible god. But God worked in her heart, and soon the whole family not only went to church, but committed their lives to Christ.

Centro de Vida and her leaders loved, taught and disciplined

the Ortega family. Even with his limited education, Luis's father read the Bible and taught it to his family. Later, Luis Ortega, Sr. became a church leader and now pastors Centro de Vida in Dallas.

At age twelve, Luis's mentor took him to the place he worked: a radio station in Houston, Texas. After a short studio tour, the mentor left to do a quick errand and instructed Luis to "do something if I'm not back before the song is over." The song stopped and Luis queued the next one, gave the station I.D., announced the weather, and started the song. Because the station manager heard a new voice on the air, she came

into the studio and discovered a young boy at the controls. Luis was offered a volunteer position that day, and four years later it became full-time.

Luis surrendered to the ministry as a teenager, and his interest in technology continued during high school. He began attending Central Baptist College in 1996 as a Bible and ministerial student and graduated in 2000. The next year he married CBC student Lisa Sutherland, and they have four children: Elyse, Elias, Elynn and Ellisen.

After graduation, Luis began full-time at Lifeword and part-

Continued on page 2

Pastor, O Pastor!

by Dr. Tony Cleaver

Leviticus 10.10 "You must distinguish between the holy and the common, and the clean and the unclean..."

Pastor, oh pastor! Here is a job that is yours and yours alone. By the very fact of your ordination you swore before your assembly and before God that you would be the servant of God. The distinguishing work to tell the people about the holy and the common and the clean and the unclean falls to you. There is a great difference between the clean and unclean in life just as there is there a difference in left and right and up and down. There is disparity in the two: holy and common.

Pastor, O pastor! History shows us the nation of Israel fared well when the distinctions were clear and lived out in the lives of the people. History also teaches us when the line was blurred between the holy in the common the nation did not fare well at all.

Pastor, O pastor! Let's stop blaming the politicians for the state of our country. Let's stop blaming the media for the state of our country. Let's stop blaming everyone else for the state of our country.

Pastor, O pastor we must teach what is holy and what is common and what is clean and what is unclean.

Annual BMA Seminary Dinner Invitation

We want to invite you to join us for the BMA Seminary Friends Dinner to be held in conjunction with the BMAA Annual Meeting in Jackson, Mississippi.

When? Tuesday, April 17, 2018 at 5:30 p.m.

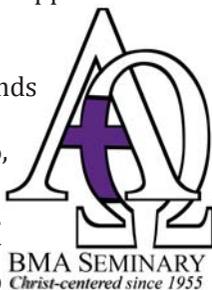
Where? The Gallery - Jackson Convention Complex

Cost? \$40/ticket (Lifetime members of the Alumni and Friends Association receive a \$5 discount)

Deadline: Tickets must be purchased no later than April 6, 2018.

Important Alumni Business will be discussed at the meeting. Dr. Tony Cleaver will receive this year's Kellar Award. Every guest will receive a gift. It will be a wonderful opportunity to rejoice in what the Lord has done for BMA Seminary and to look forward to where He is leading.

Please contact Keri Southern at the BMA Seminary for more information. She can be reached by telephone at 800-259-5673 and by email at president@bmats.edu.



New service to churches and messengers Department Video Reports Available On-Line

In the spirit of keeping Annual Reports at the national meeting between ten and fifteen minutes in length, BMA departments (DiscipleGuide, Lifeword, Missions, Ministers Resource Services and BMA Foundation) have videotaped lengthy, in-depth reports for your benefit.

Department leaders want you to have all the information you need about your ministries, so follow the link listed below for a detailed report from each director, then call 1-844-262-8637 and name the department you'd like to speak with regarding any questions you may have.

The link online for the reports is <https://bmaamerica.org/annualreports>

The Home

by David R. Piper

They had been married for some years. His business, which had started in a small way, had been growing. It had absorbed more and more of his time, thought and energy. She, feeling neglected, had kept joining more and more clubs, determined to live her own life. Still she was unhappy.

Coming home late one night, she burst into the room where he sat in an easy chair, reading.

"Why, we're strangers!" she exclaimed with sudden emotion. And so they were, although they had begun as lovers.

They both had been in the wrong. He had been working too hard to get ahead. Although he had begun by telling himself that he was doing it for her, increasing success and prosperity had become a pursuit for its own sake.

She had begun stepping up her social career as a defense against loneliness. But in the end she had gone to extremes as a vain seeker for new pleasures and thrills.

When they found each other again, it was on a higher level and with the aid of a faithful pastor who helped them to re-unite their lives by dedicating themselves and their home to the Lord. The mutual subordination of self by the enthronement of Christ brought then into intimate union with one another. Money, business, success, and social life all took their proper and distinctly secondary place. And all of them were subject to the same dedication to God.

-from Revivalist Newsletter



From The Mind of Chuck Lee

Wing-shooter

I spent my teenage years growing up in Watson, Louisiana. We had a nice little community at one time, meaning that we only had one four-way stop and no Wal-mart. Now that they straightened out and widened out the highway, added a half dozen traffic lights, replaced the barber shop with a hair salon, and added a Wal-mart. Things are strangely different. I would never care to go back except to visit a friend or two, but even then it is just too busy for me. I like having cows as my neighbors. When I pull up to the intersection at the end of the road, if I have to wait for someone to pass before I can pull out, I get a little nervous that someone is planning on developing a mall and our quiet community will be overrun with...oh, the horror...people.

When I was growing up, my next door neighbor and I could be seen most

winter evenings standing in front of his grandmother's house with 12 gauge shotguns at the ready while staring in the skies above the highway that ran in front of her house. We were looking for an erratic flying softball shaped bird that flew at Mach-1 called a Woodcock. The Woodcock would come from the

If it flew, it was fair game. That was a few years ago, but still remains as some of the best times of my life.



Bro. Chuck Lee

woods across the highway, fly over granny's house, and spend the evening pulling worms from the wet ground for their supper. Shane and I would shoot them as they flew past. Well, Shane would shoot them. I would shoot at them.

Shane was the best wing-shooter I have ever known. As far as I know, a

wing-shooter is just someone who can shoot something that is flying. Anyway, Shane was deadly. We would get to shoot doves after the Senators and Judges and overall big-wigs had their go at it on the horse farm we worked at as teenagers. A couple of doves would fly over. Shane and I would shoot. Shane would go pick his up and I would stare at my gun in disbelief. On the occasion that we would both shoot at the same time, I would get to claim the bird, though both of us knew better. He was a good friend.

We hunted Woodcock, Wood Duck, Quail, Doves, Teal, Mallards, Grey Ducks, Chimney sweeps, Dragonflies, and even Love Bugs. If it flew, it was fair game. That was a few years ago, but still remains as some of the best times of my life. We're grown up now with children and grandchildren, but I imagine if we put our minds to it, we could recreate some of those glory days. We only have to find a place where they haven't built a Wal-mart.

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

Lifeword's Ortega

from page 1

time as youth and associate pastor at Bald Knob Baptist Church in Plumerville, Arkansas. The pastor, Bro. Rufus Crawford, became a mentor to Luis but understood when Luis shared his burden to minister to Hispanics in central Arkansas. So after leaving Bald Knob in 2009, he and Lisa began a mission under the umbrella of Antioch Baptist Church in Conway called Camino de Vida, where he still pastors.

In seventeen plus years at Lifeword, he has managed the Spanish broadcast and technology for BMA America. He is now Lifeword's Director of Operations, where his skills are critical as Lifeword implements the Cloud, which will allow anyone with internet access to hear the gospel.

Luis recently earned a masters degree with a leadership emphasis from Liberty University; however, through discipleship and his own natural bent, servant leadership is a skill he has had for a long time.

Southeastern Baptist College

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

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

Presidents Perspective

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:" John 10:27

C. Austin Miles composed a hymn in 1912 titled, "In the Garden." The song became very popular during Billy Sunday's evangelistic campaigns. Most of us may know the hymn by heart. The first stanza of the song goes like this... singing along in your head as you read the words:

I come to the garden alone while the dew is still on the roses,
and the voice I hear falling on my ear

"Er?" I'm sorry to interrupt, let's start over...

I come to the garden alone while the dew is still on the roses,
and the voice I hear falling on my ear the Son of God discloses.

And he walks with me, and he talks with me,.....

Whoa! Stop right there! That's crazy talk. You hear God speaking to you? Are you nuts?

A few years back, when I was a chap-

lain in the Army, I would write a daily devotion and send it on email to all our assigned soldiers. One day, I wrote in a devotion how God told me to do something. Immediately, I received a retort from a non-believing soldier who claimed I was insane and needed to see the psychiatrist. He insisted that if I was hearing voices in my head, then I was mentally ill and unfit for duty.

I explained in a lengthy note how Christians hear God's voice in many ways. God speaks to us through His written Word. He speaks to us in prayer. He speaks to us in the circumstances of life. He speaks to us through wise counsel of other believers. He speaks to us in sacred music. He speaks to us in sermons. And, He can audibly speak to us which may occur in important or emergency situations.

The Scripture is clear that God speaks to his children. Unbelievers do not understand this because they do not have a relationship with the Creator. They can, if they accept Jesus as their Savior. But until they do, the Holy Spirit does not dwell inside of them. They are spiritu-

ally dull of hearing.

Recently, Joy Behar of the "View" which is aired on ABC, criticized Vice President Pence for his testimony that he listens to the voice of God. She said that she loved Jesus, but accused the Vice President of mental illness for hearing the voice of God.



Dr. Scott Carson
President

Referring back to our hymn, "In the Garden", this song has been recorded by numerous famous recording artists including: Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Perry Como, Rosemary Clooney, Doris Day, Elvis Presley, Glen Campbell, and Johnny Cash. I guess Ms. Behar would call all of them crazy as well!

Listening for and responding to God's leading in a believer's life is a central theme to our dynamic relationship with our living Savior! It is biblically sound and historically proven throughout the

history of the church. There are many, many hymns that also assert and encourage us to listen for the voice of the Lord.

We are encouraged by the Apostle Paul to, "Quench not the Spirit". 1 Thessalonians 5:19. We are to be always sensitive to the Spirit's voice in our lives. And there is only one way to do this, it is by constantly being aware of God's working in our lives and to always be seeking the Lord's leading. Have you been listening for his voice lately? Perhaps it's time for a stroll through the garden!



Justin Rhodes, pastor of Big Creek Baptist Church, Soso, Mississippi, presents Dr. Carson, President of Southeastern Baptist College with checks from his church totaling \$10,300 designated toward the accreditation team visit later this month and for renovation of the school's dormitories.

Important College Facts & Reminders

Fall 2018 Basketball!

The Lord is doing great things at SBC! We intend to restart the school's basketball program this Fall Semester. We are actively seeking men and women for Southeastern Baptist College basketball! Do you know of any students wanting to join the Chargers teams? Point them our way. Sports scholarships are available. Contact Coach Brad Phillips at 601-426-6346.

Dorm Renovation

Our new recruiter intends to fill our dorms with new students! Because many of the rooms and common areas have been unoccupied for a while, there is great need to bring them back to acceptable standards. Can you help? Do you have materials, or talent, or monetary donations to designate toward this project? Give us a call at 601-426-6346 or send Chris Floyd a note at chfsoso@yahoo.com.

Mississippi Department of Education Honors

On February 20th, the Mississippi Department of Education honored one of our students and professors for their achievements in higher education. Pastor James McGhee, Jr. (student) and Dr. Bob Burch (professor) were recognized at this year's Higher Education Appreciation Day Working for Academic Excellence (HEADWAE) in Jackson, Missis-

sippi. The day began with a tour of the Mississippi Capital Building and concluded with a banquet at the downtown Marriott with Governor Phil Bryant as host and keynote speaker.

Free Tuition?

Yes! And if I were you, I would not hesitate to take advantage of God's gracious gift of a college education at one of the finest Christian institutions in the United States! Thinking about taking courses in the Summer or Fall? There are several scholarship opportunities available for our student body that supporters of the school have graciously provided. In addition, if you are a BMA minister, there are scholarships specially set aside available for you! Our recruiter, Brad Phillips, has all the information you need to sign up for classes or contact Ginny Singleton regarding financial aid. Both can be reached at 601-426-6346.

Carson's Army

Brother Chris Floyd introduced a special individual donor concept named Carson's Army at the SBC Donor and Volunteer Dinner. Each person has the opportunity to "enlist" with their pledge at various levels of rank representing their ability to give toward Southeastern Baptist College. If you feel led of the Lord to enlist, call 601-426-6346 today! Please refer to the "Carson's Army" giving chart

in this publication. Praise the Lord! We already have our first Major and our first General enlisted into Carson's Army!

#6 in the Entire Nation!

SBC is rated the 6th most affordable Online Christian College in the nation for 2018! Why spend big bucks at other colleges when you can earn your amazingly affordable accredited degree here at Southeastern Baptist College? Contact us today!

Go for the Gold

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 VA assistance for both online and in-classroom tuition.

Alumni Association

We are beginning a major effort to reorganize and re-energize our Alumni Association. We will attempt to identify and contact every alumnus who has ever taken courses at our great school and will meet briefly at the BMAA annual meeting in Jackson. We will share our newest strategic initiatives which include asking our Alumni to consider giving \$56 per month in an effort to raise \$58,000 over the next 12 months. We have many infrastructure issues that must be addressed. Will you allow God to use you? Alumni Sam and Judy Oglesby have graciously accepted to lead this effort. Please contact them at 601-550-8513 or pastor_1@comcast.net to verify that your current contact information is correct.

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Don Brown
Editor

Mississippi Baptist

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

Observations From the Gospel of Mark

Random Thoughts & Information

Your Mississippi Baptist has a website. The internet address is www.msbbaptist.org. As of March 14, 2018 the site has had a total of 132,394 'visits'. That's right, 132 Thousand Plus.

The site contains information that is of interest to our readers and information that at times cannot wait for the next issue to be published and mailed.

We also have a Mobile app for your IOS and Android devices. Just go to your store site for your phone or tablet and search "MSBaptist App". Of course the app is free and gives you the ability to check our site regularly for important information.

National Meeting

It's CLOSE this year. Many churches do not attend our national meeting each year due to expense, distance, or for some bi-vocational pastors, the inability to get time off to attend.

2018 is a great time for our churches in Mississippi to make sure you are represented. If you have never been to an annual national meeting we encourage you to take advantage of it being hosted in Jackson at the Jackson convention center.

Even if you cannot attend the entire meeting, we encourage you to make the Missions Commissioning service on Wednesday evening. This is always an inspirational time and worthy of our attention.

Each department director has recorded a video report for our churches. I have begun viewing them and they have done a great job of reporting their area of ministry. You can view these on your computer, tablet, and even your phone by going to the web at <https://bmaamerica.org/annualreports>.

It is worth your time to hear each report. We appreciate the efforts of these men to keep us informed.

Easter Sunday, 1978

In 1978 I was invited by Bro. G.H. Gordon to preach at Creston Hills Baptist Church in the evening service on Easter Sunday. Bro. Gordon was the chairman of the Publication Trustees at that time. A special called session of the BMA of Mississippi had been called to meet at Creston Hills for the purpose of considering the committee's nominee to become the first full-time editor of the Mississippi Baptist Paper. I was that nominee.

I honestly did not know much about the work, the job, or what the future would hold. I resigned a corporate job to follow what I knew was the Lord's will. It has been 40 years. It has been a blessed 40 years. As I write these words it is hard to believe that it has been that long. I surrendered to the ministry in 1977 and admittedly was quite "wet behind the ears" in the ministry.

God has been good and the people of the BMA of Mississippi have been gracious. I have enjoyed these years and the ministry of which God has allowed me to be a part. What a good thing He has given me and my family.

Mark 1. 4 "John came baptizing..."

Dear reader, have you been baptized? Many were baptized by John in the Jordan River. They complied to a baptism of repentance. They confessed their sins. Have you confessed your sins to God? Have you been baptized? Possibly you have waited for a very special time in your life to be baptized. Well, today is that day! This is the week! Now is that time! As you confess your sins and as you repent, you can be baptized- just like in the days of John! Go to your church-hurry to your church-to be baptized.

Mark 1. 15 "Repent and believe the good news."

Jesus' first message was focused on his contemporaries repenting and believing the good news.. That message is timeless for us in our day. To repent is like the order in the military drill: "About face!" That is the order to turn in the opposite direction. We turn away from our own selfish and sinful direction to the guidance of the good news. That turn to the power of the good news has to do with our belief in it.

The good news is there is a Savior who died for our sins. He was buried. He rose from the dead. He is coming back to earth to gather his people. The belief in the good news makes it possible for us to repent. If there is no turning there is no belief, and the other goes hand-in-hand - the good news enables us by divine power to move toward repentance. Lord Jesus, may I repent and believe the good news!

Mark 1. .22 "They were astonished at his teaching..."

Jesus' teachings still astonish a modern crowd.. To the religious He still says: "You must be born from above to enter of the Kingdom of Heaven" To the rich He still says: "give it all away to

have treasure in heaven." To the business person He says " Follow me and I will give you a new occupation. "The young people He says:" Allow the young to come to me." To the hopeless He says: " Today you will be with me in Paradise." To the political cynic He says: "Certainly you see the Son of God before you."

Yes, Jesus' words are most commanding even in our modern world. Good reader, open your heart to allow His words in your life. You too will be astonished!

Mark 1.35 "Very early in the morning, he... made his way to a deserted place... he was praying."

Let's get to the point: If the Son of God felt such need to be alone with His Father, how much more must I emulate Him in my prayers. Jesus made it a normal and natural event be alone with God. He took time - definite time - to do this without fail. Jesus was ever mindful of His needs.

Oh how the Son of God felt it to be an absolute imperative to be in the perfect center of doing what His Father sent him to do! Let me leave the noise of social media, the chatter of television, the banter of radio, the disturbances of cell phones, and all other distractions simply be quiet in order to first listen to the One who lives forever.

Mark 1.41 "I am willing... be clean."

Many think we have to cajole Jesus to get him to do anything for us. Many believe we must bargain with Him to get what

we want. It is an attitude of quid pro quo. It is not like that at all.

First of all, we have nothing to bargain with - we have no positive balance sheet of resources. Second, He does not ask of us anything other than

Leave It To 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

our listening to and responding to the Holy Spirit convincing us we need to trust Him enough to allow Him to become our Savior.

The leper in this Scripture did not bargain because he could not. He had nothing with which to bargain. The only thing he possessed was leprosy. That's not a bargaining chip! My condition is like the leper of this passage - "Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to the cross I cling."

It is straightforward with Jesus: I am willing... be clean.

East Central Association

by Bro. Jerry Overstreet
At our recent meeting the message was brought by Bro. Greg Hillman. Attendance was good with only two churches not present. After normal business it was noted that Bro. Phillip Reynolds resigned Murberry Church. Due to his resignation Bro. Duston Helton of Zion Rest church was elected as our new moderator.

Church of the Covered Dish BY THOMAS TAPP



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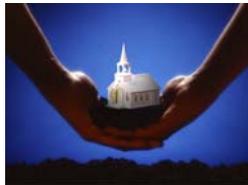
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"So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God." 1 Thess 2:8-9.

I love the transparency by which Paul communicated with the churches. It's as if he is saying, "I love you, and desire to be with you, to share with you, to encourage you, to preach the gospel unto you." What a heart! God grant me this heart!

It Has Been Another Good Month For State Missions

Construction at Day Star in Sumrall has begun. Last Saturday, March 10th, twenty or more people showed up to help construct the pavilion that will be located in the rear of the main building. Bro. John Prickett has scheduled May 19th as the day we plan to raise the

Work Day At Sumrall



The Pavillion going up

main building. We are recruiting volunteers to serve on teams to help with specific tasks on that day.

If your church has a group of men who would like to serve, please call Bro. Phillip Burns at 601-670-6191. Each team will need a Team Leader and Bro. Burns will need the Team Leaders' contact information and the names of each person on the team and any special skills they may have. Also, we are in need of a "Boom Truck" to help set the trusses. If you know of someone who has a boom truck and would volunteer its use, please contact Bro. Burns at the number above.

Diamondhead

We are scheduled to appear before the Planning Committee at the City of Diamondhead on March 27th. We are seeking their approval for a variance that would allow Redemption Baptist Mission to use the property for a church. Please pray that all will go well and that they will approve our request.

D'Iberville

Awaken at D'Iberville, held their first leadership meeting in preparation for upcoming Bible studies. I am excited to see this newest mission project moving forward.

Midyear Meeting

The BMA of Mississippi Mid-Year meeting will be hosted by Central at Southaven. They have also scheduled their organization service for September, 2018.

Special Emphasis Material in the Mail

April and May are the months the churches of our association have set aside to emphasize State Missions. I would like to challenge our churches to make preparation to participate in this emphasis. I am available to come to your church and give a report and preach. If you would be interested in me coming to your church, please give me a call at 601-428-8616.

Also, a number of our missionaries are available on Sunday evenings as they may not yet have Sunday evening services started. I encourage you to invite one of our missionaries to attend your Sunday evening services.

In addition, we will be mailing some promotional material soon. We hope this will aid you in informing your church about the missionary activity that is going on across the State of Mississippi.

BMA National Meeting

We are planning to set up our display at the Annual Meeting of the Baptist Missionary Association of America which will meet in Jackson, Mississippi, April 16-18, 2018. Our hope is to encourage folks to prayerfully look at the opportunities to pastor and plant churches in Mississippi. Please keep us in your prayers.

Reports for Feb 2018				
	High Attendance	Membership	Total Offerings	Mother Church
BMA of Mississippi (Church Planting Coach)				
Dr. Robert Burch (Caledonia)	98	117	\$5,510.00	Missionary Coach
Sidney Farmer (S. Forrest)	55	53	\$6,359.00	Missionary Coach
BMA of Mississippi (Church Planters)				
Bobby Elliott (Burnsville)	35	65	\$2,205.00	Forked Oak
Danny Bartlett (Clinton)	19	11	\$4,335.00	Wilderness
Phillip Burns (Sumrall)	31	18	\$3,778.00	First Bay Springs
Wesley Martin (Diamondhead)	56	27	\$3,656.00	Campground
Anders Lee (Southaven)	175	156	\$14,130.00	Charity
Dr. Kenneth Pollock (Batesville)	28	9	\$1,748.00	First Baptist Mantachie
Dale Broom (S. Hattiesburg)	8	2	\$425.00	Evergreen Seminary
Will Hutchinson (D'Iberville)	3	3	\$250.00	Campground
BMA of Mississippi Hispanic Missions (Estuardo Marroquin - Manager) <small>(Estuardo Marroquin is also the Co-Pastor of El Camino, which serves as the mother church for the church plants listed below.)</small>				
El Camino Marciano Montalvo (Laurel)	136	131	\$6,013.00	Mother Church
Church Planters				
Leo Adan (Hattiesburg)	35	18	\$1,024.00	El Camino
Jorge Galicia (Biloxi)	29	2	\$106.00	El Camino
Lucas Gomez (Canton)	6	2		El Camino
Way, Truth & Life Byron Morales (Ripley)				
		96		Mother Church
Church Planters				
Humberto Regalado (Tupelo)		14		Way, Truth & Life
Luis Huchin (Oxford)	41	7	\$1,309.00	Way, Truth & Life
Daniel Polanco (Horn Lake)	9	2	\$145.00	Way, Truth & Life
BMA of Mississippi African American Missions (Ed DuVall - Coordinator) <small>(Ed DuVall is also the Sr. Pastor of Homestretch which serves as the mother church for the church plants listed below.)</small>				
Homestretch (Cleveland)	27	57	\$3,288.00	
Church Planters				
James Cook (Olive Branch)		22		Homestretch

Revolving Loan Fund

We recently met with the Trustees of the Revolving Loan Fund to report on the growth of the fund and to consider new loans requested. The approved loan requests will serve to grow the fund even more, and other pending loan inquiries suggest that the near-term future of the fund is good. We continue to encourage people, churches, cemetery funds etc. to open an account in the Revolving Loan Fund. At the present time we are paying 2.17% to our shareholders. During the meeting we discussed the possibility of increasing the rate paid to our shareholders and agreed that a decision on the matter could come in the very near future.

Over 100 VSM Students Head To The Mission Field!

by Angela Rice

March 2-4 over 100 students and leaders packed out the Lutheran Worship Center on Pettit Jean Mountain to prepare to take the love of Jesus to the nations! VSM World Missions Weekend



is a mandatory training event held annually for students going on a summer mission trip. BMA Missions is committed to training everyone going to visit our BMA Missionaries. These students and their leaders have been taught by experienced, faithful men who have dedicated their lives to making God's name famous around the world. Who

better to train our students than Dr. John David Smith, Bro. Eric Johnson and Bro Phil Knott? We are so appreciative to them for giving up their weekend to invest in our kids.

Why invest so much time and treasure in training young people to go the mission field? The answer is simple. The goal is for teams to be an effective tool for the missionary to further his mission on the field! Would we want a teacher to teach our students that has never been educated? Would you want a surgeon to operate on you that has never been trained? Understanding the wonder of God's great mission and how they fit into His great plan an imperative. Knowing how to navigate a different culture and how to respond to people immersed in a false religion is indispensable. There is so much more to going on a mission trip than just showing up! It's important for students to understand what missionaries are looking for in a student mission team. Mistakes are made by short term mission teams that lack training that hurt the ministry of the missionary on the field. VSM is committed to providing training to students so that they will be more effective in their witness for Christ.

It's exciting to be able to report to our BMA churches that that these young men and women that will head to the mission field this summer are equipped

to go. I am so proud of them for doing the hard work of raising funds and for being committed enough to make their missions a priority and diligent to turn in the necessary paperwork in preparation for their trip. I can't wait to see how God uses these students for His glory. In

the next few weeks they will take the love of Jesus to the nations of Peru, China, the Philippines, Panama, Canada, Mexico, Tanzania, and Atlanta, GA.

BMA churches, meet your Volunteer Student Missionaries for 2018! Will you pray for them?



Volunteer Student Missionaries Preparing for Service



BMA Missions Director John David Smith preparing students for summer mission trips

Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi
www.bmaofmississippi.com

DEPARTMENTS & COMMISSIONS

Mississippi Baptist Paper
P.O. Box 8181, Laurel, MS 39441
601-426-3293

Southeastern Baptist College
4229 Highway 15 North
Laurel, MS 39440
601-426-6346

State Youth Department
4226 Highway 15 North
Laurel, MS 39440
662-397-6832

Baptist Children's Home
118 Lowe Rd., Laurel, MS 39443
601-426-3928

Missions & Revolving Loan Fund
4226 Highway 15 North
Laurel, MS 39440
601-428-8616

Commission on Senior Adults
4226 Highway 15 North
Laurel, MS 39440
601-729-2613

History & Archives Commission
4229 Highway 15 North
Laurel, MS 39440
601-729-8098

Moral Action
P.O. Box 88, Mantachie, MS 38855
662-282-7425

The Resurrection Mat 28:1-6

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

Church to license new minister

Springhill Baptist Church in Laurel will license Bro. John M. Musgrove to the Gospel Ministry on the 25th of March, 2018. Bro. John will preach the morning message and then be presented his license by the church. The service will be followed by dinner on the grounds and an afternoon service. Bro. John is 20 years old and has served Springhill church as song director, assistant Sunday school teacher, assistant audio/video technician, usher, and on various committees. Please pray for Bro. John as he follows the Lord's will for his life.

Ten Mile Church Hosts Ladies Meeting



Ten Mile Baptist Church near Wiggins, recently held their first annual Ladies Meeting! Ninety ladies attended the meeting. Debbie Ragland was the main speaker and Mia Emory gave her testimony. The men of the church cooked and served lunch. Thank you to all the churches who came with us and to Sandra Parker for her leadership.

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY AUXILIARY

President Beth Caldwell

166 Twin Creek Rd, Lucedale, MS 39452 - 601-947-60118

Corresponding Secretary Mrs. Shirlene Smith

730 Hwy 533, Laurel, MS 39443 - 601-729-5638

Mississippi WMA Project Information

Our state WMA theme for this year is "Children Are God's Heritage" Psalm 127:3. Our project is Bro. Carl Sookraj and the orphanage in Peru. What a worthy project we have chosen! The following is an email from the Sookraj family. Notice especially the last prayer request. It is for prayer and financial support. Please remember them in your prayers, and let's get motivated to provide the financial support needed. Our state WMA can be a big part in this work. Let's make it a record-breaking year!

State Project Promoters - Linda Smith, Marilyn Welborn

National WMA Meeting & Ladies Retreat

Jackson, Mississippi

Monday afternoon—April 16 & Tuesday April 17

Officer's meeting at 1:30 p.m.—2:30 on Monday afternoon at the convention center in Room 209-210.

WMA Business meeting: Monday 3:00p.m.—5:00p.m.

Opening—Ruby Poteet, President

Welcome—Beth Caldwell, Mississippi President

Song—Judy Wallace (offering for general fund)

Song & Project Offering—Judy Wallace

Business Meeting—Ruby Poteet

Reports

- Petitionary Letters
- Treasurer's Report
- Officer's Recommendations
- Project Nominations & Selections
- Election of officers
- Officer's Reports—GMA & Sunbeam
- Committee Reports—
 - Registration, Finance, Resolutions
- Installation of officers
- Theme for 2018-2019—Brenda Hornaday
- Promotion of Project
- Closing Remarks

Outrageously Courageous

Dare to Live Beyond Your Fears Ladies' Retreat

Rooms 216-218

Tuesday morning

8:45—Registration

9:00—Welcome—Ruby

Devotional—Miss GMA—

Prayer—Junior Miss GMA—

Door Prizes

Praise & Worship—Judy Wallace

Special Music—Sabrina Clayton

Introduction of Program

Charlotte Johnson - Kim Crabill

Meal—(at Convention Center) 12:00-1:00

You must register and send \$17.50 for meal to Jodi Rhea by February 28, 2018. Jodi Rhea, 40156 E. CR. 1631; Wynnewood, OK, 73098

1:15—Breakout Sessions—

45 minutes each /rotate to another session

1. Shirley Hoffpauir—Teaching in Sunbeams

2. Judy Wallace—"From Final to First"

3. Kim Crabill—Roundtable discussion

4. Diana Morris—Missions

Dismiss at 3:00 p.m.

Nursery Room 211

National WMA Project

Here is a short report from the Sookraj Family

Praises:

We finished our first trimester of language school.

We enjoyed our first Christmas as missionaries away from family.

We were able to safely travel to Peru for Christmas for a visa renewal.

Our financial and prayers partners!

Life has been a little crazy

Ha! Imagine that missionary life being crazy! We survived our first trimester in language school with minimum tears, and the kids finished their first semester of school in Costa Rica. We learned a good bit of Spanish, but we still have a lot more to learn. We visited Peru during our break from school. We loved being with the Poulins for Christmas.

We have to leave Costa Rica every 90 days to renew our visas, so we went to Peru.



Carl Sookraj Family in Costa Rica, preparing for ministry in Peru

We enjoyed being in Peru for two weeks. We explored more of Peru, practiced some Spanish, and visited with friends.

While in Peru, Carl and JohnMichael explored other possible areas in the Ica region for the orphanage. We have known that land is very expensive in Ocucaje, and have been told recently that land is less expensive in other areas in the Ica region. We are praying for God's clear direction in this.

Carl and Jeremiah had the chance to go fishing in Costa Rica with other students from the language school we attend. The kids are making friends and adjusting to life outside of the United States. They miss "home" often as we all do. It is difficult to be away from everything familiar you have ever know, but they are doing a great job handling the changes.

Classes have started and we are happy to have a routine again. We go to class weekdays from 7:30 A.M. to 12:05 P.M. The kids don't finish classes until 2:30 P.M. so the time between is spent running errands (paying bills, grocery shopping, etc). We are lucky; we only have a 7 minute walk to the school from our apartment.

We attend a local Spanish Baptist Church on Sunday morning and attend an English Bible Study on Sunday evenings. We are excited to learn even more Spanish this trimester.

Carl will be at the National Meeting this year, God willing. Please pray for him as he travels and also pray for the kids and me in Costa Rica. We depend on Carl for most things here in Costa Rica, so that week will be very different.

Prayer Requests

That we will stay healthy. (Dana and all 3 kids have asthma and the volcanoes have been blowing ash.)

Safety

The ability to learn a new language. Learning a new language is difficult. (especially for old people like Carl)

Our house is Mississippi to sell.

Carl as he travels to Mississippi for the National Meeting.

That our churches and supporters will continue to support us both financially and in pray.

A Report from the Ballards in the Philippines

We are currently conducting a Bible Study on the book of James. One of the main themes in the book of James is the aspect of showing your faith and your belief in Christ by the works you do. I like the way Francis Chan said it in reference to James 1:23-24, "What was the point of looking in the mirror? The whole point of looking in the mirror is because you want to see your reflection, and you know whatever you need to do, maybe I missed a spot shaving, or whatever it is. But if I'm not going to remember what I look like, there was no point whatsoever. In the same way, if you're going to a Bible study and you're not actually going to do something about it, if you're going to sit in a church service and there's no action, or doing, or deeds afterwards, James says, Why do you even do

that? It's worthless."

Children's Outreach in Sto. Tomas

Jesus said, "Do not forbid the little children to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 19:14 Chil-



Danny & Rita Ballard

dren are our next generation of Godly leaders. Therefore, we must take every necessary

means to educate them in the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Our goal as missionaries is to lead the children to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and disciple them to go into their own towns, villages and barangay's to do the same.

This past February 14th was our kick-off of our children's ministry in an area called Santiago. Many of the children there cannot attend school because of the lack of finances. Uniforms and school supplies are way too expensive for them to purchase, therefore, they are forced to grow up without any type of formal education.

However, we are there now to teach them about Jesus Christ and God's Word. We are so excited as we have already had four Children's Bible story times. The children are very

attentive. Many are still very shy and prefer to listen from a

there in this ministry, "When are they(us) coming back?" Each



Kids flock to our children's ministry

distance in the tops of trees. We have been averaging 35-50 children each meeting.

We meet in an open field behind the children's houses where there are huge shade trees that the children love to climb and a variety of animals that graze there. It's truly a beautiful area God has blessed us with.

The children are excited about Bible story time and often ask the adults who assist us

week as we leave, the children run behind the tricycle and wave goodbye over and over. It is truly a beautiful site to behold.

Contact Information for the Ballards:

Danny & Rita Ballard
106 Villadolid Street, San Antonio Heights Phase 1, Sto. Tomas Batangas 4234, Republic of the Philippines.
Magic Jack Phone Number: 228-206-9511

Chipping In...
For Scholarships

Cherokee Ranch Golf Club

14089 US-79 Jacksonville, TX

Saturday, May 5

Contact Director Tom Mitchell
501.804.6647
tom.mitchell@bmats.edu

4-Person Scramble
\$400 Per Team
Hole Sponsor \$150

Benefiting the
BMA Theological Seminary

BMA Seminary Golf Tournament REGISTRATION FORM

Team Captain: _____ Email _____

Golfer #2: _____ Email _____

Golfer #3: _____ Email _____

Golfer #4 _____ Email _____

(Please Make Checks Payable to: "BMATS Golf" – Mail to: P.O. Box 670, Jacksonville, TX 75766)
SHOTGUN START AT 8:30 A.M. LUNCH FOLLOWS THE ROUND

Sponsorships (Call Keri Southern at BMATS to be a sponsor (800)259-5673)

Presidential Level -- \$5,000 (2 Teams, Banner Signage, and Hole Signage)

Dean Level -- \$2,500 (1 Team, Banner Signage, and Hole Signage)

Faculty Level -- \$1,000 (1 Team and Hole Signage)

(A Faculty or Staff Member's Name Can be added to your signage)

Pre-Tournament Fellowship -Friday, May 4, 6:30 P.M.

Gregson Center, BMAT Seminary, 1530 E Pine St, Jacksonville, Texas

Holiday Inn Express – Rooms Blocked for BMATS Golfers

1923 S Jackson St, Jacksonville – 1-4 in Room -- Call (855) 479-0732 [Mention the Tournament]

Join BMA Seminary for Justin Peters' presentation:

Clouds Without Water

A Biblical Critique
of the
Word of Faith Movement

Exposing the False Prosperity Gospel

April 3 & 5, 2018
April 3rd at 10: AM &
3:00 PM
April 5th at 10:AM

BMA Seminary
1530 E. Pine St.,
Jacksonville, Texas
903-586-2501