

# Baptist

## Mississippi

JOURNAL OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

MARCH 1, 2010

Vol. 64 No. 5

## Grady Higgs Steps Down As Executive Director of Missions

Resumes will be accepted for director  
(See end of this article)

Bro. Higgs submitted the following statement about his decision: "It has been a high honor to serve the Lord and the churches of the BMAA these past seven years. I have been deeply humbled at the trust they have placed in me by allowing me to serve in this capacity.



Bro. Grady Higgs

It has been such a privilege to serve with our missionaries throughout the nations, and to have a small part in watching BMAA missions spread to new areas of ministry. I have not taken

my responsibility lightly and pray that I have served my Lord and His churches with integrity.

I thank all of my fellow directors for their cooperation throughout my tenure in this office, and pray that God will continue to use them to His eternal glory as they seek to expand the Kingdom of our Lord in their respective fields.

I am grateful to every individual, church, auxiliary and local association that has contributed financially and prayerfully to the work of BMAA Missions during these years.

I will be available to assist and to promote BMAA Missions, and pledge to be supportive of our missionaries in their endeavor to reach the lost for

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## Interim Director selected for State Youth Department

by Phillip Burns, chairman  
Youth Department Trustees

The Trustees of the BMA of Mississippi Youth Department appreciate all your prayers during the past year as we have searched for a new director. After interviewing several candidates, we are now pleased that through much prayer we have selected an Interim Director to be presented for the association's approval.



Dwight Lindsey

Interim Director, Dwight Lindsey is a graduate of West Jones High School and Southeastern Baptist College. He was licensed to preach the Gospel on June, 6th 1999 by Hopewell Baptist Church Laurel, Mississippi, and ordained into the Gospel Ministry on November 8th 2003 by Westview Baptist

Church Oxford, Mississippi. He has served with Westview Baptist Church, Mana'o'i'o Baptist Mission, and Greenwood Baptist Church as either Associate Pastor and/or Youth Pastor in his nearly 11 years in the ministry. Bro. Dwight will shortly be celebrating 5 years of marriage with his wife Lindsay Phillips Lindsey. The

Lindsey's have 2 sons, Reid, 3, and Phillip, 1. You may contact Bro. Dwight at 662-397-6832 [dwightlindsey@live.com](mailto:dwightlindsey@live.com) or 120 Walton Road, Tupelo MS 38804.

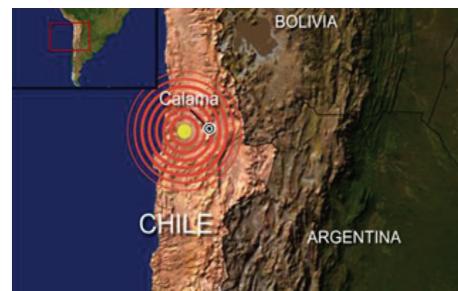
We ask for special prayer on his behalf as he leads your department in a way that would be pleasing to God.

## BMAA Missionary Bill Gibson reports on status after earthquake

by the editor

Below is a brief report from BMAA Missionaries Bill and Phyllis Gibson. The Gibsons are serving in the nation of Chile where the recent 8.8 magnitude earthquake devastated part of that South American country.

We live on the tenth floor of an apartment building. We are a little shook up but well. Our apartment building was



built about five years ago and was built for this type of earthquake activity. We were about 200 miles from the epicenter of the earthquake. Our people are well. We have accounted for all of them. Thanks for your prayers and God bless you is our prayer.

The aftershocks have been very in-



Bill & Phyllis Gibson  
Missionaries to Chile

tense but the Lord has blessed through each of them. We will not have church today (February 28) because of the damage to the place where we meet. Again, thanks for your prayers for us. Please pray for the families who have lost everything that they own. I know that this earthquake has happened to bring the people to the Lord.

Missionary Bill Gibson

## BMAA Missionary dies unexpectedly

By Phil Knott,  
Director of Operations for Latin America

Ronald Murillo, BMAA Missionary to Panama, died suddenly Thursday, February 11, from an apparent pulmonary embolism. He and his wife Damaris had moved from their home country of Costa Rica three years ago to start a new church in the greater Panama City area. The last year and a half had seen the Lord open many doors of opportunity and many had come to Christ through their



Ronald Murillo

ministry. Ronald was one of the featured national missionaries at the recent Missions Symposiums and stirred many hearts with stories of lives changed and men surrendering to ministry.

Before moving to Panama, Ronald had served many years in Costa Rica. He was Pastor of the church in Santa Ana, near the capital city, for more

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## LEAVE IT TO CLEAVER That's Not Fair

The words, "That's not fair!" echo across elementary school yards when Sally or Tommy wins the game, the contest, or the race and their playmates perceive they are not playing by the rules. Adults still spout "That's not fair!" when they come to life situations and believe others are not playing strictly by the commonly accepted rules.

I believe Daniel's tormentors (Daniel 6) used these words to the king "That's not fair!" when they spoke to the king about Daniel. "No fair. He's praying to his God. We know what happened before when he prayed to his God. Now he's praying again. That's not fair to bring his God into this situation. He needs to play by our rules. King, make him stop praying to his

God to ask for help."

What a marvelous concept! Daniel, when confronted by a situation he could not figure out, bring to resolution, or have any power whatsoever to control, did not play by the normal rules of the day. He did not play fair according to those playground people around him. He asked God for help!

Daniel's prayers were not ostentatious public displays of religiosity. His prayers were personal; they were private; and they were with bended knee and with certainty of bowed heart. He knew his limitations with



Tony Cleaver

his situation. More importantly, he knew the power of the God Most High.

I too don't want to play fair this year. Let the imps of hell shout "That's not fair!" Like Daniel, I am going to ask the God of Heaven for His help. I'm going to bring God into the situation—probably better stated I am going to lay my situation before God. Then I am going to ask for His help.

Am I in distress? Out of a job? Sick? Getting old? Frightened? Facing loss of my home? Coming to a certain irresolute end? Failing in my marriage? In dire straits with my children? Am I in any situation where I need God's help? Then let me not play by the rules of the world. Let me not do the normal. Let me not try it on my own strength. Let me ask God for His help!

*wish him and Mrs. Higgs well and pray for God's blessings on them both.*

### Personal Information

Bro. Grady Higgs has served as Executive Director of BMAA Missions since May 2003. He and his wife, Norita, reside in Benton, Arkansas. They have three children: Amy, David and Jenny. They also have 10 grandchildren. Before coming to the Missions Office, Grady served as pastor at BMAA churches in Arkansas and Texas. He is a graduate of Southern Arkansas University and the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary. He was ordained by the First Baptist Church of Magnolia, Arkansas.

assured they will be in my prayers as they seek God's man for this office."

Bro. Higgs told the Advisory Committee that he is willing to serve until a new Executive Director is elected, and trained.

Resumes will be received by the Advisory Committee at: 1921 Cochran Drive, Mesquite, Texas 75149-5497; or by fax (817-267-7760); or by email (jrock8922@yahoo.com). The committee has set March, 26 as a deadline to submit a resume.

### Editor's Note:

*It with sadness that we make this announcement, but with great appreciation to Bro. Grady Higgs for his leadership and outstanding service to the Lord and to the BMA of America. We*

## Higgs Stepping Down

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Christ.

I thank my wife, Norita, for faithfully serving with me these past seven years. I pray that God has been glorified in all that has occurred. I look forward to what God has planned for Norita and me in our future ministry.

Please pray with me that our Advisory Committee will be led by the Holy Spirit in selecting and presenting a nominee to our association. Be

A word from Lifeword Director George Reddin

## CUT!

The acting stops, and reality sets in. All eyes turn toward the director. One word has brought everything to a sudden halt: "Cut!" It is time to reshoot the scene.

In real life the need arises sometimes for someone to shout, "Cut! Stop! Think about what you are doing." Or, in the words of God Himself, "Consider your ways" (Haggai 1:5, 7).

A new year is now well underway. New resolves are fading. Old patterns are reappearing.

Are we destined to repeat the same mistakes, to feel the same disappointments? Must we always be tormented by unfulfilled dreams?

This year could be a turning point. The year is young enough to offer a great opportunity for a fresh start. We cannot erase the past and simply reshoot the bad scenes in our lives and pretend they never occurred, but we can clean up our act from this day forward.

Who among us does not feel a need for a fresh start in particular areas of our lives? We are not interested in academy awards.



George Reddin

We seek the Master's "Well done." Some probing questions will assist us in our quest for renewal.

What are we standing on?

The right foundation makes all the difference. When life shakes us to the core, we must have some settled convictions, some core values, something solid to stand on.

The Bible calls them "the principles of the doctrine of Christ" (Hebrews 6:1). We might call them our spiritual ABCs, the basic fundamentals of our faith. Our reaction to the storms around us depends on the bedrock beliefs beneath us.

Of prime importance is a heart response to the gospel of

## Missionary Dies

from page 1

than twenty years. During that time he also led in planting new churches and for several years was the Director of Missions for the BMA of Costa Rica. Ronald was in every sense a product of BMAA mission work, having been led to Christ by Missionary Bill Gibson, and serving faithfully and effectively throughout his pastoral and missionary ministry. Ronald, 49, leaves his wife Damaris and five children. Two of them, Beverly and Debbie, lived with the family in Panama. The three older ones, Ronald, Susana, and Tamara remain in Costa Rica.

Ronald was a dear personal friend and co-worker through many years. Our experiences together on the mission field - many happy, some sad and others down-right hilarious - would

fill many pages. We have often sat for hours at a time remembering those people and situations, part of a rich legacy that he leaves behind. Someone said, "When you die, it's not what you take with you, but what you leave behind that counts." Only eternity will demonstrate the countless lives he touched. Pray for Damaris and family. Pray for the new church in Panama and those many new Christians, who just beginning their walk with Christ, have suddenly lost their pastor, mentor, counselor and friend.

To read more about the Murillos and their work in Panama, go to [www.bmaamissions.org](http://www.bmaamissions.org) Navigate to the MEET section, Central America, then click on Ronald Murillo.

## More Rooms For National Meeting

Due to the closing of the Howard Johnson hotel, there is a shortage of rooms for the BMAA national meeting in Fort Smith. However, the arrangements committee has worked with the convention center to find additional rooms. The hotels/motels listed below have agreed to offer overflow rates and rooms. Please call the business directly and identify that you are attending the BMA of America meeting. We apologize for this inconvenience and the delay in getting it resolved. Thank you for your prayers and patience.

- Aspen Hotel & Suites — \$99.99 (50 rooms will be held until April 5, after that date the rate will be honored if rooms are available) 2900 South 68th St.; (479) 452-9000
- Candlewood Suites — \$71.99 & \$75.99 (22 rooms will be held until April 5) 7501 Madison St.; (479) 424-3800
- Comfort Inn (Fort Smith) — \$89.99 (30 rooms will be held until April 5, after that the rate will be honored if rooms are available) 2120 Burnham Rd.; (479) 484-0227
- Hampton Inn (Fort Smith) — \$109 (50 rooms will be held until April 5, after that the rate will be honored if rooms are available) 6201-C Rogers Ave.; (479) 452-2000

Jesus Christ. We must believe the truth of the scriptures, repent of sin, put our full faith and dependence in Jesus Christ as our Savior and receive His life-changing salvation that the Bible calls "new birth."

The first step to renewal is to know for sure that we belong to God and that we are going to heaven when life here is over. If we are not sure of that, we can go no further.

Why are we just standing here?

We must not waste our time trying to lay the foundation again and again. If it ever fails, it was no foundation to start with. Trust the Lord and go on from there. "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go

on unto perfection" (Hebrews 6:1). That does not mean to leave in the sense of forsaking the foundation but to leave it in the sense of building upon it. It is a call for growth in Christian maturity, to complete the building.

It is folly for us to worry about foundation failure. If it were possible for us to lose our salvation and we did, we could never be saved again. We would be eternally lost because Christ would have to go to the cross again to redeem us again, and that would put Him to an open shame (Hebrews 6:6). Let us settle once and for all whether we are saved, and then let us go

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## CHURCH NEWS



News articles should contain information that will be of interest to the general public who are not members of the church that is reporting.

### Ballardsville Baptist Church!

January 31 – February 3 Ballardsville participated in the Multi –Church Winter Revival. East Fulton, Ballardsville, Hopewell, and Greenwood churches were the hosts. Bro. John David Smith was the speaker and did an excellent job bringing God's word each evening. Special music was enjoyed each evening as well as fellowship among God's children.

February 14, Bro. Jerry Kidd from our National Association spoke during our Sunday school hour and after a short break delivered the message during the Worship Service. He was able to share much information about our mission work in our association. Much is being done but the need is still great. We thank him and his wife for being with us and our prayers go with them in their ministry.

We look forward to hosting the Annual Bible Conference on Monday, March 15 and Tuesday, March 16. We hope you will attend one or all of these services if you are able. If you are unable to attend please be in prayer for these special services.

Pastor, Bro. Thelbert Hill  
Reporter, Teresa Nichols

### Mid Central Association report

The Mid-Central Association met at Magnolia Heights Baptist Church on January 16. Magnolia Heights Baptist Church Choir delivered a wonderful special entitled "I Want To Know More About My Lord". Sherry Hollingsworth and Becky Cole brought three inspirational songs. There were twenty-four in attendance.

Bro. Grice delivered a wonderful message from Matthew 28:1-20. All in attendance enjoyed a great time of food and fellowship. The next Mid Central Association Meeting will be held at Mt. Olive Baptist Church on March 20, 2010 at 7:00 P.M.

Joyce Williamson, Reporter  
Billy Higginbotham, Moderator

### Tombigbee Baptist Association Report

Greenwood Baptist Church of Dorsey was a very gracious host on February 11 and sweet fellowship and a delicious meal was enjoyed

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# BMA of Mississippi Youth Department Special Emphasis - March 2010

# Give!

*Give, and it shall be given unto you;  
good measure, pressed down, and shaken  
together, and running over, shall men  
give into your bosom. For with the same  
measure that ye mete withal it  
shall be measured to you again.*

**Luke 6:38**

## GIVE OF YOUR

...Energy  
...Talent  
...Time  
...Funds



# Mississippi Baptist Opinion Page

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi



## Sofilthy's Attic Jumping Rope

by Barbara White

FW How long has it been since you jumped rope? Do you remember those chants that went along with the jumping? One I remember was: "Teddy bear, Teddy bear, turn around, Teddy bear, Teddy bear, touch the ground....." Another one I recall was "Cinderella dressed in yellow, went upstairs to see her fellow, how many kisses did she get?"

Still another one was "Johnny over the ocean, Johnny over the sea. Johnny broke a bottle and blamed it on me." And then, "I

told Mama, Mama told Papa. And Johnny got a beatin' with a red-hot pepper." And we all remember red hot pepper where it seemed your feet never touched the ground.

Well, those rope jumping days are over for me! But isn't it fun to remember those things we did in our childhood. We probably need to be teaching our children and grandchildren all those simple things so when the electricity goes off they will still have some fun things to do.

Anybody want to play Chinese Checkers with me?

### Editor's Note

It may be my age, although not knowing the number of years Sofilthy has been around, but this is one of the most enjoyable columns she has written. I remember some of the things I did as a young boy when there were no video games, cell phones, computers or DVD player.

I remember taking my mother's empty sewing thread spools and with a match stick, a rubberband, some soap and a knife to make ridges on the edge of the spool. With all of these sophisticated supplies I could entertain myself with my new "army tank".

We also used a rubber band, a small piece of wood and a wooden ice cream spoon to make a "power boat" for the mud puddles after a good rain.

Just for the enjoyment of it, I would like to hear from our readers about some of the "old timey" things that you use to do to entertain yourself as a child. Those things that the current generation will not know about if we do not tell them.

Send your notes to us at editor@msbaptist.org or P.O. Box 8181, Laurel, MS 39441.



Don Brown  
Editor

## Letters From Our Readers

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

### Is BMAA Non-Profit Organization?

Dear Editor:

I sincerely seek information from those more knowledgeable than I about the Baptist Missionary Association of America. If a person were to die and leave an estate of one million dollars to the BMA of America, where should the money be mailed? The BMA of America does not have a headquarters or physical address. It does not have a banking account. It does not have a treasurer. It does have four departments: Department of Christian Education (Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary) located in Jacksonville, Texas; Department of Radio/Television (Lifeword Media Ministries) located in Conway, Arkansas; Department of Missions located in Little Rock, Arkansas and a Department of Church Resources (Discipleguide Church Resources) located in Texarkana, Texas. While each of these "Departments" has a physical address, none is the headquarters of the BMA of America.

Is the BMA of America a non-profit organization? If so, who filed for this tax-exempt status and who holds the papers? If a person made a check payable to the BMA of America, would it be a tax-deductible contribution? (Even if, as mentioned above, there is no address to mail the contribution.)

If a person engaged an attorney for the purpose of suing at law the BMA of America, who/what would he sue?

Is it possible that the BMA of America only exists when the messengers of the cooperating churches meet for official business? Is it possible that the BMA of America is not a non-

## Church of the Covered Dish BY THOMAS TAPP



profit organization; but rather an association of like-minded Baptist Churches with no official headquarters, banking account or treasurer?

Perhaps some of the Mississippi Baptist readers can help me find the correct answers I am sincerely seeking.

Respectfully,  
Dr. Mike Harmon  
Sulphur Springs, Texas  
mharmon@lakehighlandsbaptistchurch.org

### Texas Church Fires: Safeguarding Our Churches

Dear Editor:

"...Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18)

Recently a lot of concern was shown regarding the burning of church buildings in our area. We did what we could to protect our church building - an alarm system and made sure the door locks were secure. Local, state and federal law enforcement agencies provided additional security by frequently checking on our premises. Many of our members and others in the community were on alert for anything that seemed suspicious.

Thankfully, the arsonists have been arrested, but is our church safe from destruction? The church building is just that

— a building. The church is made up of members who have professed their faith in Christ and were baptized. There is someone whose aim is to destroy the church of our Lord. That is Satan, and his greatest tools are discouragement, discontent and nonchalance.

When pastors stop pastoring, deacons stop "deaconing," teachers stop teaching and church members stop being active church members, Satan has achieved his goal. The greatest danger to a church comes from within, and we need to join together to protect it. I am concerned about the condition of our churches.

Pastors, join me in a pledge to take care of our responsibilities as overseers of the church body and preaching the gospel — let us be true to our calling. Deacons, join with us in this pledge — promise the Lord and your church that you will actively perform your responsibilities by being faithful to your calling. Teachers — be faithful to your calling, pray for your class members, keep in touch with them and teach them using only gold, silver and precious stones to build on their foundations.

All church members — be faithful to use your time, talents and treasure for the furtherance of the Gospel in your community and around the world.

Young people — establish your faith so you can face the future without fear.

Parents — teach your children. Children — please obey God by obeying your parents.

Above all, love one another.

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# How To Be A Better Friend

Have you ever wondered if other people thought you were a good friend? Would you like to be a better friend to those around you? I'm sure we all would. But is there anything that we do that tends to dampen people's enthusiasm regarding our relationship? I will examine some things for you to consider in this area.

## Do not dominate the conversation.

For you quiet people, this probably is not an issue. For some of you, it may very well be the reason you don't have many friends. In a healthy friendship, each friend needs to be a good listener. Each person also gets to share and talk about what is on their mind. That is the joy of friendships. However, when one person in the relationship dominates the talking; it will erode the closeness of the relationship.

People still may want to go hang out with you, but not as frequently, because some days they just can't stand the non-stop verbosity that you provide. Slow down. Be comfortable with silence. Let others talk. Friends let friends talk. Yield. It not only works well in driving, but in friendship communication.

## Be others centered, rather than self centered.

Friendships are dysfunctional when both people are only concerned with themselves. If the friendship is all one-sided, it is not a healthy relationship. We have all been in relationships where the other person is needy. You are only friends for what you provide to this person. They may need a listener, a counselor, a comedian to make them laugh. Whatever it is that you bring to the relationship, is the reason it exist. The friendship is there for what you can give to

the other person. This is not healthy.

Healthy relationships are based upon mutual equality. You both bring things into the relationship and meet each other's needs and desires. We are friends because we enjoy each other. I don't have to "do something" to keep the friendship going. If you only like me when I am making you laugh or we are having a good time, then that is a self-centered relationship. If you are there for me through thick and thin, then we have a true friendship.

Learn to always ask how your friend is doing. What is going on with you? How can I pray for you? And by all means, actually stop and pray for them sometimes. Prayer brings two people closer together every time. Show up in your friends life when they need you.

## Counsel wisely.

Proverbs 27:6 "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." A true friend may tell you



## Family Ark Ministries

Travis Plumlee

some things that are painful to hear, but helpful in the long run. A person who doesn't really care about you will tell you what you want to hear. They are just interested in people pleasing and not helping you. But be very slow to offer advice. A good rule of thumb is: preach less, listen more.

Sometimes friends are just suppose to serve as sounding boards. I don't want advice, I just want you to listen to me. Other times, your friend may ask for advice and then you should feel close enough to the person to share freely. However, remember Ephesians 4:15. Always speak the truth in love. Even if it is something for the person's own good, saturate it with a loving tone rather than a

judgmental tone. We can all take a big dose of humility and learn and grow because of the wise counsel of a friend. So, don't get all hurt so easily. Proverbs 1:5 "A wise man will hear and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels." This advice giving is only welcome when you two have a close relationship. It is hurtful if you have just a casual relationship.

Be sure your advice is biblical. So many marriages get into trouble when a well-meaning Christian friend gives ungodly advice. If you don't know if you have a biblical answer, don't give a worldly one. Seek a pastor or someone who can help you give sound biblical advice and then get back to your friend. Many lives have been wrecked because of worldly advice given by a Christian friend. It never hurts to say, "I don't really know what you should do, but I will pray with you and be here for you."

## Friends encourage one another.

other.

You can tease each other, but if you always feel like your friend is critical of you, making fun of you, judging you, etc., that is not a healthy friendship. That is sick. The last thing we need in our lives are more poisonous people. Find someone new to hang out with. If you don't have anyone, pray for God to send you Christian friends that will encourage your walk with Him. You should feel supported, encouraged, and appreciated for who you are with a true friend. You don't have to put on a mask. Your friend accepts you like the song says about Jesus: Just As I Am.

We all have friends. We all need friends. Friends enrich our lives, help us over the humps, and believe in us when we don't believe in ourselves. If you have no friends, then implement Proverbs 18:24. And to be the ultimate good friend, follow the Godly wisdom found in Proverbs 17:17, "A friend loveth at all times."

## Filmmaker: Anti-Semitic attitude plagues colleges

**OneNewsNow** - A new documentary is exposing an effort to flood college campuses with anti-Semitic propaganda towards Israel.

In the last few years, film director Wayne Kopping says he has noticed a rise in anti-Israel sentiment on college campuses, North America in particular. With the start of Israel Apartheid Week at the beginning of March, Kopping is calling attention to his new documentary, *Crossing the Line: The Intifada Comes to Campus*.

We say 'crossing the line' from legitimate criticism of Israel and Israeli foreign policy to something a lot more sinister, almost demented," he notes. "And the question that we ask in the film is, 'What is this line that they've crossed? Is it anti-Semitism? What is the threat not only to the Jews but also to Americans and the world in general?'"

Kopping describes that what he has witnessed in the anti-Israel movement is not a solution. "We see students sing songs like, 'Hey, hey! Ho, ho! The state of Israel's got to go.' They're not speaking about a two-state solution; they're speaking about the elimination of the Jewish state," he comments.

A condensed version of the film is being made available for a limited time on the web at [CampusIntifada.com](http://CampusIntifada.com).

## Senator draws attention to violation of rights

**OneNewsNow** - A U.S. senator says religious intolerance appears to be on the rise in some countries.

During a hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last week, Senator Jim DeMint (R-South Carolina) voiced his concerns to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and claimed religious rights are being violated in many countries.

"It seems increasingly over the last year or two that human rights, religious freedom in China, Egypt, India, Vietnam [and] other countries, [there are] more and more reports that there's less religious tolerance," he stated.

Clinton's response was that the United States takes human rights violations seriously, even though she came under fire last year for saying that the U.S. government was not going to let human-rights abuses interfere with trade between China and the United States.

The secretary of state said the U.S. also is working with Muslim nations to find an alternative to banning what they call defamation of religion. She said

that while some people feel threatened when their religion is criticized, freedom of speech must also be protected.

## Ruling against prayer appealed

**OneNewsNow** - Forsyth County in North Carolina will appeal a federal court's decision against prayer.

The county Board of Commissioners has conducted prayer before its meetings for years, and many of them were in the name of Jesus, but Mike Johnson of the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) tells OneNewsNow that atheist groups filed suit against that practice and won a federal court decision.

"The federal district court here got it wrong and declared that you can never have a sectarian reference effectively in a public prayer or a prayer before a legislative session, and that's just clearly wrong," he contends. "It's in defiance of Supreme Court precedent and some other case law."

One primary concern for commissioners was liability for the American Civil Liberties Union's attorney fees, should that group prevail on appeal, and Johnson believes what happened in

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## Letters

from page 4

My prayer for all of us is that, though the earth shall crumble, we will all be able to stand before our Creator and be welcomed into His kingdom as "good and faithful" servants.

— Dr. Jack McNeeley, pastor  
Red Springs Baptist Church,  
131 FM 16 West  
Tyler, TX 75706  
(903)858-2365  
[drmcn@juno.com](mailto:drmcn@juno.com)

## Youth Revival

Lebanon Baptist Church  
March 7-10

Lunch will be served after morning service  
with afternoon service to follow.

No evening service.

Monday - Friday 7:00 P.M.  
Speaker: Brandon Wilson,

Magnolia Baptist Church, Hattiesburg.

Music: Joseph Walter

Lebanon Baptist Church

## Ruling

from page 5

Forsyth County could be a model for others.

"The local concerned citizens there -- pastors and other folks -- took a stand, and they raised private funding to offset the risk of the county to any eventual attorney fee award that might be given to the ACLU," he explains.

The group raised almost a half-million dollars for that purpose, so the case is now going to the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The ADF attorney is confident the county will prevail in the appeal.

## NCAA nixes family ad, Focus 'befuddled'

**OneNewsNow** - The NCAA has withdrawn Focus on

the Family's banner ad on its website, apparently because of the organization's stance on homosexual relationships.

Associated Press reports the National Collegiate Athletic Association heard from some of its members that the banner conflicted with the organization's policy of inclusion, regardless of sexual orientation. The ad - part of the pro-family group's "Celebrate Family - Celebrate Life" campaign - was pulled without any notice, according to Focus on the Family's Gary Schneeburger.

"We're a little befuddled, I guess is the best way to say it, that an ad that clearly that was not controversial," he responds. "It was not even political - it was simply about a father wanting the best for his son...."

The ministry spokesman suggests the banner ad was taken down "not...because the ad itself was offensive, but because the very existence of Focus on the Family apparently to some people is offensive."

The major governing body of college sports says ads must be in agreement with NCAA principles, and its own standards allow it to exclude advertising and advertisers that it deems "do not appear to be in the best interests of higher education and student athletes."

"What that tells us," says Schneeburger, "is that we're not allowed to advertise our family help services because we have biblical values on issues like marriage." And if such material were "all of a sudden labeled hate speech," he says "we have deeper problems in our country than we even know."

Schneeburger points out that Focus spends 90 percent of its budget on parenting and marriage resources, and only 10 percent advocating on behalf of the unborn and for traditional marriage. The supposedly controversial Super Bowl ad featuring Tim Tebow and his mother, Pam, was part of Focus's "Celebrate Family - Celebrate Life" campaign.

## Don't Eat Too Much

by Douglas Laird

*Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it. It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory (Prov: 16:27)*

The biblical writer speaks of honey as being the choicest of delicacies and a taste that all people desire, and he uses it to illustrate some important truths.

One comparison and three applications are obvious. The comparative truth: honey is like praise. The three applications are: (1) the taste is sweet; (2) a bit of it is not harmful, indeed may be healthy; and (3) one can consume too much. The warning is in number 3...over-indulgence.

One who has counseled with people has no doubt observed again and again the barrenness of simple praise extended to the needy. The lives of many children would have been radically changed if someone could have given some praise instead of open condemnation. Some have run away from home because they felt that there was no love there. Some have dropped out of school because they felt the no one cared. On the other hand, children have succeeded because they could not fail parents who believed in them. Noble men and women testify that the spark which fire them to success was the teacher who commended instead of condemned.

And I suggest that the number of people needing marriage counseling would be drastically reduced if marriage companions would have given attention and praise for the many little distinctions peculiar to the other. The same is true of the plant manager and any others who have people working for them. And another important truth is, it not only gives confidence and loyalty on the part of the one who receives the praise, but words of praise excite devotion and more personal concern on the part of him who gives it.

Having observed the truth that a bit of honey or praise is not harmful, and indeed may be healthy, let us now observe that the taste is sweet. Only honey seems to be capable of illustrating how sweet praise really is. Praise is delicately sweet and exciting to the taste. The biggest factor in any life is one's ego, and any potion which excites this is difficult to receive without addiction. One thrills to hear of his excellence. It is as sweet as honey. But as indicated earlier, one can consume too much. Vain egotism can cause one to taste of it again and again and again. He likes to hear of his excellence in the area of his profession or trade, but as a child allowed to eat too much rich candy, it can make him sick.

One should strive diligently to avoid addiction to praise. First, because its grip is subtle, and two,

continued on page 7

## MINISTERS RESOURCE SERVICES

RETIREMENT AGENCY OF THE BMA OF AMERICA  
RON CHESSER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### BMA RETIREMENT RETURNS

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
<b>LT GROWTH</b>	20.48%	12.03%	5.55%	15.74%	5.23%	(29.03%)	25.39%
<b>FIXED INCOME</b>	2.89%	2.18%	2.75%	2.34%	2.54%	2.64%	2.78%

**The Long Term Growth accounts have averaged a growth of 7.91% each year for the past seven years. In the past seven years we have posted a total of 55.39% to each LT Growth account.**

**The Fixed Income accounts have averaged a growth of 2.59% each year for the past seven years.**

**The BMA Retirement portfolio assets totaled \$9,109,032.11 on December 31, 2009. In 2009 the BMA Retirement portfolio grew by 1.8 million with 1.1 million of the growth being new retirement money deposited by participants. The BMA Retirement portfolio over the past seven years has had a growth in assets of \$5,226,965.24.**

### MARKET PERFORMANCE

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
<b>DOW</b>	21.1%	3.15%	(0.6%)	16.29%	6.4%	(34.9%)	18.8%
<b>NASDAQ</b>	42.1%	8.58%	1.4%	9.52%	9.8%	(40.5%)	43.9%
<b>S &amp; P 500</b>	0.2%	9.0%	3.0%	13.62%	3.5%	(38.8%)	23.5%

**The Dow has averaged 4.32% each year for the past seven years.**

**The Nasdaq has averaged 10.69% each year for the past seven years.**

**The S & P 500 has averaged 2.00% each year for the past seven years.**

**You may contact Ministers Resource Services, the retirement agency of the BMA of America, at P. O. Box 2866, Texarkana, AR 75504, by phone at 870-774-2654 or email Executive Director, Ron Chesser, at RChesser6365@aol.com to request a retirement packet or to open an account.**

# CHILDREN'S HOME

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

## Recent Church Visit

We were with the Ten Mile Baptist Church near Wiggins and Pastor Stan Bennett on January 31 for their Youth Sunday and fifth Sunday afternoon service. Their youth treated our young people to an outing to see the Mississippi Surge in a hockey game on Saturday evening. It was an event that was enjoyed by all.

On Sunday morning the youth of the church taught Sunday School classes. We were special guests for the day. The children of the Home rendered special music during the morning and afternoon services and I had the privilege of bringing mes-

sages from God's Word. The host church provided a delicious meal which was to the delight of everyone. We enjoyed this time of fellowship with this good church.



SIDNEY DAVIS  
DIRECTOR

## Annual Rally

On February 8 the Ten Mile Association had their annual rally for the Home. This meeting was held with the Unity Baptist Church in McHenry and Pastor Carlos Smith

It was good to have the opportunity to report on the ministry of the Home and also share a message from God's Word to those in attendance. Our appreciation is extended to each church and individual who gave toward this rally.

## Spiritual Blessing

It is a joy to be able to report that a boy at the Home has recently made his public profession of faith in Jesus Christ and has followed the Lord in believer's baptism. We rejoice over his salvation and ask that you remember him in your prayers as you pray.

## Four Plus Inches of Snow

It is highly unlikely to see snow in south Mississippi but on Friday, February 12, over four inches of the white stuff had accumulated in the Laurel

area.

School had already been cancelled for Friday the day before due to the very much anticipated snow day. Sure enough the snow began to fall on Thursday night and did not subside until Friday afternoon.

Well, the snow day is now history, but this Friday in south Mississippi is one to be remembered in years to come. Talk about erecting a huge snow man. Talk about throwing large wet snow balls. Talk about sliding down a hill on a snow board. Talk about eating snow cream that melts in your mouth. Talk about the beautiful scenery as it snowed huge large flakes that found its way on trees, limbs, buildings, and etc. These are what memories are made for. Oh, by the way, we enjoyed the snow day!!!

## AVAILABLE FOR SERVICE

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

### Donald Sims

Bro. Donald Sims is available for pastoral service, revivals and pulpit supply. He may be reached at 601-528-3295.

### John Grimes

Bro. John Grimes is available for preaching appointments or pulpit supply as the Lord leads. Bro. John is



John Grimes

41 years old and has been married for 18 years. He and his wife have four children, ages 16, 13, 9 and 4. Bro. John and his family are members at Trinity Baptist Church in Florence, Mississippi. He may be contacted at 601-717-3743 or 601-936-6937. His pastor, Bro. James Brown, may also be contacted at 601-209-1502.

### Ryan Ricks

Ryan Ricks is available for preaching appointments, youth work, etc. Contact him at 313 Dummy Line Rd. Wiggins, MS 39577 or by phone at 225-329-7082. Ryan is the grandson of BMA pastors H. Eddie Ricks (retired) of Ennis, Texas. and Walter Hickman of Wiggins. He is a member of Pleasant Hill Baptist of Saucier.

### Kevin Sanford

Bro. Kevin Sanford is available for pulpit supply or however God may use him. Bro. Kevin is 30 years old. He previously pastored Temple Baptist Church in Columbia. Bro. Kevin and his wife Allison have two children, Brandon 7 and Emma 4. He may be reached at 601-408-1519

## "Snow Day" At The Home



## Don't Eat

from page 6

because one is often the last to know it. Friends frequently see it first, and one's egotism sorely taxes the affinity that friends formerly enjoyed for each other.

A little praise gives essential confidence and loyalty. Excessive indulgence moves one across a fine line to vain glory and becomes an idolatry that erodes one's devotion to God who created him.

Taken From "Why Worry"

A note from Lifeward Director George Reddin

## Cut

From page 3

on with Christ, confident that our Foundation will never fail.

How did we get where we are?

We didn't get here all at once, but we know we are a long way from where God wants us. How did this slippage occur?

Hebrews, chapter 6, offers some insight.

The Hebrews were Jewish

believers whose lofty expectations in the Christian life had never materialized, and they were losing heart and beginning to wonder if they had believed in vain. The writer expresses his faith in the genuineness of their salvation (verse 9) and his admiration of their purity of motive and fervency in service in days past (verse 10). His call for diligence (verse 11) and warning against slothfulness (verse 12) identify the problem. It was not a matter of overt sin in their

lives but a waning of spiritual zeal. They needed revival. Does that ring a bell in our lives?

What do we want to be?

God offers us more than mediocrity in our ministry. He has promised us His presence, His power, His protection, His provision, His productivity. Can we trust those promises?

The closing verses of Hebrews 6 assure us that God's promises are dependable. That passage illustrates that God will not go back on His promises, and He

confirmed that truth by an oath. The appearance of the Messiah on the stage of history at the exact time predetermined by God proves that God's promises are reliable.

So, we can set our sights high. We can be all that God has called us to be. Let's perform this year in such a way that we hear the director shout, "It's a wrap!"

## BMA Seminary Brand Lectures

The 2010 Brand Lectures will be Tuesday, March 2 and Thursday, March 4, 2010 in Dorman Memorial Chapel at the Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) Theological Seminary in Jacksonville, Texas. The theme of the Lectures will be Family Worship. Lecture times will be at 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. each day.

The speaker for the Brand Lectures will be Brother Mark Livingston who has been senior pastor of Keltys First Baptist Church in Lufkin, Texas since 2006. He and his wife, Amanda have two children, Lacy Jayne, age three and Micah Haddon, age one.

Brother Livingston has served in various church positions since 1994. In addition to ministry roles, he has served as Spiritual Life Director of the Southern Baptist Educational Center Christian School in Memphis, Tennessee, and as an adjunct professor in theology at both Crichton College, Memphis, Tennessee, and Central Baptist College, Conway, Arkansas.

He has earned degrees from Central Baptist College, Conway, Arkansas, The University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi (Ole Miss) and Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis, Tennessee. He hopes to have a Doctor of Ministry degree completed in May 2010 from Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri.

Brother Livingston's dissertation is research on the subject How to preach Christ-centered sermons from Old Testament narrative texts.

The "Brand Lectures" are named in honor of the late Dr. and Mrs. Ralph A. Brand of Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Ralph and Rosalie Brand served the Lord together for over fifty years.

The Brands had three children. Rosalie retired as head of the cataloging department of the library at the University of Southern Mississippi. Dr. Brand worked in prison ministries for over 30 years. Prior to his death he resigned as Director of New Directions



Mark Livingston

Prison Ministries, but continued to be active in that work until his death.

Dr. Brand traveled extensively and authored several articles and books. Some of his best known works include: Simplified Techniques of Counseling, Analysis of Revelation and Techniques of Counseling-An Aid to Pastoral Efficiency.

In over 50 years of ministry, he served as local and state missionary; dean of Southeastern Baptist College, Laurel, Mississippi; Missions Director of University Extension Courses at Mississippi State University; and Director of Student Counseling, Jones County Junior College, Ellisville, Mississippi. Dr. Brand pastored churches in Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma and Mississippi. He also served as trustee for the Mississippi Baptist Children's Home, vice president of the BMA of Mississippi Missions Department, and development officer and trustee for BMA Theological Seminary.

For further information, contact Carol Shine at BMA Seminary, 903-586-2501, ext. 218 or cshine@bmats.edu.

## BMA Seminary Trustees Hold Meeting



BMAA Theological Seminary Trustees met in February for their midyear session.

## BMA OF MISSISSIPPI MISSIONS DEPARTMENT

4226 HIGHWAY 15 NORTH, LAUREL, MISSISSIPPI 39440 - (601) 428-8616  
Rayburn Freeman, Director



### Work underway in Ripley

As this is being written the Masters Builders and the Classic Builders of Mississippi are in Ripley, Mississippi raising the walls of the First Hispanic Baptist Mission. Bro. Elvis Garcia is the missionary pastor to the hispanic speaking people of Ripley and the surrounding area.

We are thankful for these good men and women giving their time and their

labor to help with the building. What a blessing they are to God's work and to the ministry of First Hispanic Mission. May God bless them in kind for their care and dedication.



Bro. & Mrs. Elvis Garcia

## 2010 Missions and Evangelistic Conference Schedule

### North Conference

March 15-16, 2010  
Ballardville Church  
Tupelo, Mississippi

### South Conference

March 25-26, 2010  
El Camino Baptist Mission  
Laurel, Mississippi  
*Thursday Afternoon & Evening*

New Heart Baptist Mission  
Hattiesburg, Mississippi  
*Friday Morning & Afternoon*

## Church News

from page 3

by all.

Bro. Bryan Wilson called on Pastor Gary O'Neal for scripture and prayer for the welcome. There were 74 present with two visitors.

Reports were given by Bro. Fulton Lindsey on his prison ministry. There were over 1,406 souls saved in 2009 and in January 116 were saved. Bro. Bryan Wilson reported on several of our missions work. Also, the Revolving Loan Fund doing well. Bro. Dwight Lindsey gave a youth report on the winter camp and requested to pray for the man to lead this department. Bro. Matt Hudson challenged each church to support the National Brotherhood project. It was approved to bring an offering to the March 11 meeting and the offering would be divided between the National Brotherhood project and the WMA project.

Sister Kathy from Greenwood church sang a beautiful song that inspired all before Bro. Jackie Gray preached. His

text was Ezra 3:1, "We need God to stir us with the gospel in our worship - our work and our witness.

Wanda Parmer, Reporter

### Harmony meeting

The Harmony Association met on February 12, at Unity Baptist Church in Baldwyn. Following special music the evening message was given by Bro Tim Nall.

The business meeting was called to order with a roll call with 8 churches represented and a total of 43 present with 2 visitors. Encampment and Missionary committee reports were given. Bro. Freeman gave a report on state missions and Bro. Ray Boone gave a report on his work in the Hattiesburg area. Our next meeting will be at Westview in Oxford with Bro. Doug Wilson as our speaker and Bro. Dale Wyrick as the alternate.

A time of food and refreshments provided by the host church followed the meeting.

Tony Marolt - Promotional Secretary  
Tim Nall - Moderator

A simple man believes anything,  
but a prudent man gives thought to his steps.

Proverbs 14:15