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National BMAA Meeting Held in Conway



A good crowd was on hand on the opening night of the 2023 BMA of America meeting at Antioch Baptist Church in Conway, Arkansas.

Preaching - Fellowship - Dinner - Worship at Annual Meeting

The 2023 annual session of the BMA of America was held April 25-27 at Antioch Baptist Church in Conway, Arkansas. The church was a gracious host with many church members serving in various areas during the meeting. The good friendly folks of Antioch went above and beyond to make the meeting a success and made it very enjoyable.

The meeting began on Tuesday evening with the President's message brought by Bro. Clif Johnson. On Tuesday morning Dr. Steve Crawley spoke

on the "Leadership Imperative" in the pastor's conference. Breakout sessions were also held covering various topics dealing with church and ministry areas. The afternoon session highlighted a message by Bro. David McMurray, pastor of First Baptist Church of Blackwood, New Jersey, and the recognition of two "legacy" missionaries.

Several family members of missionary Jack Bateman were present to represent the late missionary and his wife. Bateman was born in China to a Chinese mother and American father. His story is of great interest concerning his life's events leading him to marry and to be a legacy missionary to the island nation of Taiwan. Bro. and Mrs. Bobby Bowman were also recognized for their lengthy service in Honduras. Bowman also served as the founding leader of Baptist Medical Missions International (BMMI).

Three new missionary families were presented to the messenger body. They will be serving in Arizona, Florida, and the Bronx, New York.

The evening session assembled at the Conway Expo Center for the "Dinner on the Ground" session. Over 1,000 people gathered for a catfish din-

ner, the annual message brought by missionary Buddy Johnson, and the presentation of the annual Kellar Award given each year to a graduate of BMA Seminary for their outstanding service. This year's recipient was Dr. Ricky Williams. Williams and his late wife Pricilla served as BMA missionaries in Mexico for a number of years. Williams is currently a professor at BMA Seminary in Jacksonville, Texas. The Kellar Award was introduced by Dr. Kellar's daughter, Jeri Sue Kellar Cleaver.

The final session was held Thursday morning and consisted of reports from the various departments and ministries of the Association as well as miscellaneous business items. The messengers approved the merger of Ministers Resource Services and BMA Foundation, Inc. into one entity. The new department name is BMA Financial Services. Steve Crawley, who was the director of MRS and the Foundation was elected as the director of this new department.

Daniel Springs Camp Director Jason Pruitt shared the needs of the camp ministry and the number of events held at the camp annually. The outreach of the camp ministry is growing by being open to various ministries and groups throughout the year.

LifeWord Director Donny Parrish reported that they are now broadcasting in 150 languages around the globe. He also shared the good news of the completion of 2 projects enlarging and improv-



Bro. David McMurray



President Clif Johnson

Midyear Meeting set for May 23 at Southeastern Baptist College

The midyear meeting of the BMA of Mississippi will be held on the campus of Southeastern Baptist College in Laurel on Tuesday, May 23. The meeting will begin at 9:30 am. The complete schedule is listed on page 2 of this issue.

There will be no brotherhood meeting this year. The WMA will meet at Southeastern on Monday evening at 7:00 pm. Donna DiSalvo, second vice-president of WMA of Mississippi, will be the speaker.

The midyear message will be brought by Bro. Anders Lee, pastor of Central Church, Southaven, Mississippi, and the Youth Director for the BMA of Mississippi.

Each church is entitled to 3 messengers and urged to be represented.

Beloved pastor, educator, friend passes away

Dr. Medrick Savell, 88, of Laurel, Mississippi, passed away Thursday, April 27, 2023 at his residence in Laurel. He was born Wednesday, April 3, 1935 in Philadelphia, Mississippi.

Funeral services were held May 02, 2023 at Colonial Chapel Funeral Home with burial in Sunset Gardens Cemetery in Laurel. Bro. Shane Singleton and Dr. Joseph Harris officiated.

Dr. Savell pastored several Missionary Baptist Churches in Mississippi throughout his ministry. He loved the Baptist Missionary Association and he loved Southeastern Baptist College in Laurel. He dedicated many years of his life there as a student, professor, Dean and President. He was also a man who loved his family; however, his greatest love was the Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Savell was greatly loved and will be dearly missed by all who knew him.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 42 years, Margaret Savell; his daughter, Aletha Ann Ham; parents, Robert and Elvie Savell; brother, Edsel Savell; sisters, Mary Reagan (Cowboy) and Jeanette Irons (Billy); as well as one grandson, Blake Savell.

Survivors include his sons, Timothy Savell (Carmel) and Kenneth Savell (Laurie); daughter, Doloise Holloway (Terry); brother, Pheris Savell (Norma); grandsons, Delayne Savell (Nekesha), Joshua Guthrie, Jeremiah Guthrie (Julie), Joseph Ham (Carrie) and Blair Savell (Rachel); granddaughters, Jennifer Easterling (Ben), Stephanie Livingston (Jason), Rachel Ham, Ashley Savell and Brittani Moss (T.J.) as well as 29 great grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the family humbly requests that donations be made in Dr. Savell's memory to Southeastern Baptist College in Laurel, Mississippi.

Editor's Note: *My wife Bonnie and I worked with Dr. Savell at Southeastern College. I was there for 8 years and my wife worked with him for her entire 32 years at the college. He was a good man, loved the Lord, dedicated to the work, and his family. He certainly is remembered well.*



Dr. Medrick Savell

Continued on page 2

Mississippi Baptist

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi



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A Big Thank You

The financial and prayerful support that our people give to this ministry is so very special and greatly appreciated. Our special emphasis drive this year was a success due to your generosity. Our total received as of this writing is \$10,560.31. Yes, we not only reached our goal, but exceeded it by over \$500.00. Thanks to all who gave to this effort. This annual drive and the monthly support of our churches keeps this work going.

Memorial Gift

A big thank you to the Betty Jefcoat family for their gift of \$1,000.00 in her memory. Mrs. Jefcoat was a member of Big Creek Baptist Church, Soso. I was her pastor for 5 short years and I can attest she was a gracious and dedicated lady. What a great way to honor her memory. May God bless the Jefcoat family in kind.

Annual Meeting Report

Continued from page 1

ing the facilities at LifeWord. The total cost was \$1.5 million and completed with no debt. Many additions to the LifeWord.org website have been made as the number of contacts continues to grow. He shared that in the past year over 20 million minutes of LifeWord content has been viewed on Facebook. The gospel is being shared around the world and in the languages of those seeking information about Christ and the Gospel. LifeWord and the Missions Department continue to partner to reach individuals and plant churches.

Dr. John David Smith, president of BMA Global, shared his heart with the messenger body concerning mission outreach. Quoting others from times past he challenged the association to "Attempt Great Things and Expect Great Results". He stressed that "there is no new mission.



Buddy Johnson

It is the Great Commission - Go, Baptize, Teach! He said "Nothing substitutes for the Going". Smith advised that the BMA now has over 400 missionaries in 70 counties.

Video Reports

Each department and ministry of the BMA prepared video reports on their individual work. Those videos are more detailed than the reports presented at the annual meeting. The web address for these reports is listed here: <https://bmaamerica.org/2023-bma-department-annual-reports/>.

You are encouraged to view these videos for your own benefit. Since the national meeting has been shortened and each department is not given time to present a detailed report, the video reports are informative and appreciated.

Officers, Etc.

Officers for the 2023-24 year are as follows: President Clif Johnson, 1st Vice-president Charles Johnson, 2nd Vice-president Gary Longstaff, and Clerk Jerome Cooper (reelected) along with clerks Greg Medenwald and Randy Shepherd who continue to serve.

The 2024 annual message will be brought by Bro. James Schoenrock of Texas with Bro. Gary O'Neal serving as the alternate.

The 2024 annual session will be held in Branson, Missouri. The committee is working on a recommendation for 2025. The clerk's report shows that the Associational Fund is over \$11,000 in the red. It was noted that when the funds are insufficient to take care of all the business, our national departments are obligated to make up the difference. The clerks urged the body to increase their annual support noting that all costs have been increasing while donations have remained low. It was also noted that the past two meetings were held at churches which keeps the cost down, but that there are not many churches in our various states that have sufficient facilities to host the meeting.



Seminary President Dr. Charley Holmes presents the 2023 Kellar Award to Dr. Ricky Williams

May 2023
Missions Department
Special Emphasis Drive

Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

Midyear Meeting

Tuesday, May 16, 2023, 9:30 a.m.
Southeastern Baptist College
Laurel, Mississippi

Session One (Morning Session)

- 9:30 a.m. Worship in Music
Prayer and Scripture
Welcome by, host, and Response
 - 9:40 a.m. Call Meeting to Order
Introduce Parliamentarian
Reading of the Rules of Order
 - 9:45 a.m. Call for Constitutional Changes
 - 9:50 a.m. Enrollment Committee Initial Report, and Petitionary Letters – Nominating Committee Report:
Recognize new pastors and pastors who have new pastorates.
 - 10:00 a.m. Department, Commission, and Agency Reports Begin
Brotherhood
WMA
Southeastern Baptist College
Youth Department
Missions Department/Revolving Loan Fund
Publications Department/Mississippi Baptist
BMA of Mississippi Foundation
Commission on Senior Adults
Moral Action
Commission on History
Children's Home
 - 11:00 a.m. Worship in Music
 - 11:10 a.m. Midyear Meeting Message
 - 12:00 noon Lunch Break:
- Session Two (Afternoon Session)
- 1:00 p.m. Worship in Music
Prayer and Scripture
Vote on Constitutional Change(s) without Discussion
Departments, Commission, and Agency Reports Continue (if any) in Order Given Above
Final Enrollment Committee Report
Miscellaneous Business or Business from the Floor
Close the Midyear Meeting with the sound of the gavel

To the right

Dr. John David Smith, president of BMA Global presents a plaque to Bro. James Shoenrock for his over 20 years of service on the Missionary Advisory Committee and as president of the BMA of America. Bro. Shoenrock has had a dedicated and loyal service record to the Association.





SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST COLLEGE

Serving Christ With A Biblical World View In A Christian Atmosphere

4229 Highway 15 North, Laurel, Mississippi 39440 - 601.426.6346

President's Perspective

"Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works." Psalm 105:2

The staff and faculty of SBC have entered the busiest time of year by conducting major community activities and prepare to celebrate student accomplishments as we close out the academic year.

Last week we sponsored the second annual three-night Southern Gospel Fest at First Baptist Church of Laurel. The event was a phenomenal success with about 800 people attending each night! We came within only a few seats of being completely sold out on Friday night. The music artists were superb in their performances as each focused on praising the Name of Jesus! It was a tremendous time of worship, fun, and fellowship. Next year's Gospel Fest is scheduled for April 18, 19, and 20 of 2024, so mark your calendars and reserve your seats early as we anticipate each night be-

ing completely sold out!

On Thursday and Saturday nights, our SBC Trio, Carey Jones, Rhonda Sims and Tyrone Rogers, were the warmup act before the program started and they were fantastic! As a result of their performances, they have been asked to sing later this year at the Ark Encounter in Kentucky! I will provide more information on this as we receive more details about this exciting opportunity.

Our next big event for our community is the annual National Day of Prayer Breakfast. This will be held in our gymnasium on May 4 at 7:30 a.m. This is a free event and all we need to know is how many



Dr. Scott Carson

are attending in your party. Please refer to adjacent the information to this article.

Right after this major program, SBC will be conducting its largest commencement exercise in the college's 74-year history. On May 13 at 11 a.m. in the college gym, 47 students will be receiving their diplomas! We are so excited for them and for SBC! The Lord is doing great things on the campus of your college.

Shortly thereafter, SBC is the host location for the annual mid-year meeting of the churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi on May 23. It is always a great privilege to have the delegates of our churches on their college campus and we look forward to the fellowship each year.

Immediately thereafter, SBC is hosting a golf tournament at the Laurel Country Club to raise scholarship funds for our students. This event is scheduled for May 25. We are looking for hole sponsors as well as

teams. You can find additional information on this event in this edition of the Mississippi Baptist Paper.

Please continue to remember Provost Jan Walker and her husband Eddie in your prayers as Jan continues her recovery from the stroke she suffered in January. The good news is that Jan has experienced no setbacks in her recovery, but progress is very slow.

Again, thank you for your continued prayers, financial support, and for your kind words of edification. The work is challenging, but our God is great!

"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." Joshua 1:9

Equipping the Saints,
Dr. Scott R. Carson



CHANGE: Mark Your Calendars!

The SBC golf tournament is RESCHEDULED to May 25. The event will be at the Laurel Country Club. We are seeking hole sponsors to raise scholarship money. Sponsors and golfers can sign up here: <https://sbcchargers.com/southeastern-golf-tournament>. Please see the adjacent flyer for more information.

Need a Preacher?

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

National Day of Prayer Breakfast

Once again, SBC is the host location for the annual National Day of Prayer Breakfast for Jones County and the surrounding area. The event will be held in the college gym on May 4, 2023. This year's FREE event will begin at 7:30 a.m. Jamie Altman, Pastor of Bethlehem Community Church will be our keynote speaker. Please reference the flyer for additional information in this publication.

Graduation

Big News! We anticipate the largest graduating class in the 74-year history of Southeastern Baptist College! The 2023 Commencement Exercises are scheduled for Saturday, May 13 at 11 a.m., on the campus of SBC. Please come to this free event and bless our newest graduates in their important life accomplishment!

Half Price Summer Courses!

We are offering half priced tuition for the summer session that begins on Monday, May 22 and ends Friday, June 30. Some classes are in-classroom while others are online. To register go to: <https://southeasternbaptist.edu/future-students/admissions/> Or call us at 601-426-6346. Courses offered are:

- Bible Manners and Customs
- Worship
- New Testament Survey
- Old Testament Survey
- Personal Books (1 & 2 Timothy; Titus; Philemon)
- Principles of Managerial Accounting
- English Comp 1 & 2
- World Literature 1 & 2

- Math Literacy
- College Algebra
- Music Appreciation
- General Biology
- Oral Communication
- Introduction to Sports Management

Now Hiring

We are in search of a qualified Athletic Director. If you know of anyone who may be interested, please refer them to our website where they can upload their resume': <https://sbcchargers.com/employment-opportunities> or call 601-426-6346.

Online Bible Degrees

Did you know you can earn your accredited Bible college degree in the comfort of your own home? You can take one class (3 hours) or up to 18 hours completely online each semester. And you need not be living in Mississippi to take classes at Southeastern! You may want to have a discussion with your children or grandchildren today about taking classes with SBC. Qualified students can take classes while still in high school and get a head start in their college studies with our dual enrollment program. We are conservative and Bible centered, and our credits are transferable to other accredited colleges. Go to our website at <https://southeasternbaptist.edu/future-students/application> to begin your college education journey today! Or call SBC at 601-426-6346.

Available Scholarships

The Arnold Knight Memorial RLF Scholarship is available to Baptist Missionary Association ministers who take classes

at Southeastern Baptist College. These funds are administered by the BMA of Mississippi Revolving Loan Fund. Contact our Financial Aid Officer for more information.

Foundations in Ministry Certificate

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

Memorial Gifts

- Thank you to the following donors to Southeastern Baptist College:
- Stuart and Deloris Compston in memory of Mrs. Odell Lott Stephens.
 - The Jefcoat family in memory of Mrs. Bettye Jefcoat.
 - Chris Holder in memory of John Wilson.
 - Ed Welborn in memory of Linda Welborn
 - Jane Brockway in memory of Molly Blackledge
 - Sonny Jones in memory of Mrs. Odell Lott Stephens

More Southeastern News on Page 5

All Across The Campus



The student crawfish fellowship was a big hit



The SBC Trio performs at the Southeastern Gospel Fest



New Roof on Murphy Hall



Bestcolleges.com has ranked SBC #5 out of 17 colleges as the best business degree program in Mississippi!

Estate Planning

Does your personal estate planning include a donation to Southeastern Baptist College? Contact Rosemary Davis at 601-426-6346 discuss with her how you can bless SBC with your special gift.

Registration is open!
Half Price!

SUMMER

CLASSES

BEGIN MAY 22



Mississippi Baptist Children's Home



Dwight Lindsey

118 Lowe Road, Laurel, Mississippi 39443 - (601) 426-3928
Dwight Lindsey - Director

This Spring has already been a difficult season for many. The devastation of loss has spread over the state of Mississippi and many others. Loss is to be accompanied by mourning, but we can learn so much from the goodness of God in these difficult times. We grow in our faith and are comforted by the words given by the Spirit and penned by Paul in 1 Timothy 4:4-5, "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." While I know this is not the exact context of Paul's writing, I believe the principle still applies. Good or bad, if received with thanksgiving, all things can be good for our sanctification.

While some are going through a difficult time that can grow their faith, we have been blessed in many ways by the giving of our churches and others. It is easy to grow accustomed to the support that comes regularly, but recently we received a small gift from a local high school that blessed our hearts, and we wanted to share that blessing with you. Lindsay received a call and an opportunity to pick up a donation that also allowed her to talk to some students about our ministry. The following lines are her story of that day.

It's always fun going into high school and telling people about what you do. I had

the opportunity today to go to Laurel high school and talk to the business class in the Vo-Tech building as a group of about 15 kids that had gathered paper products for the Children's Home. I was able to speak to them about what Dwight and I do here at the Home. After I gave them the basic idea of what we do with the Home and how things run at the Home I opened it up for questions.

The group had some really good questions about everyday life here at the Home. It started off with the usual. How many kids do you have, what ages are they, how many boys, and how many girls? I answered, "There are five boys and one girl, ages 10 to 16. They asked about discipline on how we handle that, and I was able to give examples of things that have happened in the Home, explaining that we have the right to discipline the children like we would in our own home, but that we try not to immediately jump into punishment. We try to take each issue case by case based on how a child handles discipline and what works best for them. The students asked if we've ever kicked anybody out, to which we have not kicked anyone out, but I did explain that there are things that the kids can choose to do at certain ages that can cause them to not be able to return to the Home. One young lady asked about stress in the Home and if we had stress doing this kind of work, to which my answer was, "Oh honey, yes!" Then I went into explaining that going back to the discipline. We have to weigh the safety of all kids against what one child is doing, there is the stress in that, and the stress of them making their own decisions and having to live with the consequences of those decisions, and just being parents is stressful. The teacher asked if we ever got attached to the kids, and of course, I answered we do. I gave an example of the three-month-old we had for several months and getting attached to her,



Eddie Walker anchors the new security building

see Home on page 8

BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION MISSIONS OF MISSISSIPPI

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

“You Are More Important than You Know!”

It is easy for one to overlook the vital impact that you, the local church, and local association play in the daily operations of our Missions Office. All that is accomplished (whether it is the financial or spiritual help to a missionary, the recruitment of missionaries, or the encouragement and help to our pastors, churches, and association, our disaster relief aid, or even the Revolving Loan Fund) is supported by your relentless prayers and financial giving. Without you, our Missions office would be weaker, less effective and missing a key part in the work of the gospel. You are more important than you know to the work of missions! So let me say thank you for allowing me to represent you as we desire to accomplish the great work that our Savior has commissioned us to do!

It is true, this work could not be done without your prayers. Please pray with us as we are seeking God’s face to answer these specific requests. First, we need Laborers! Please pray with us as we are asking God to give us 30 men to answer the call to preach, missions, and pastoring. We are in desperate need for men to answer God’s call. We have mission fields in need of church planters, churches in need of pastors, and pastors in need of staff members. We need to beseech the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into the field that is already white unto harvest.

It is also true that this work cannot be done without your continued financial support. Please pray about giving to our special emphasis for this month. We are striving to reach the goal of \$30,000.00. This emphasis will allow your missions department to continue to expand the vision of church planting and church revitalization. I am excited to share with you this vision at our mid-year meeting. Please don’t miss out on this meeting and this vision.

Living Hope Mission Update *Our Faithful God* by Samuel Yager

Watching God prove Himself and His Word is an incredible faith-building experience. As you may know, our main focus this year at Living Hope has been outreach. While it has been amazing to watch our people become invested into reaching people with the Gospel of Jesus, watching God show Himself strong and faithful has been so much more powerful.

Since the beginning days of Living Hope, we have kept a regular door-to-door outreach schedule on Saturday mornings. This year, we committed to make outreach the focus of our schedule rather than a piece of our schedule. This has looked like monthly activities for our different age groups, specific witnessing training, services at a local behavioral health hospital, a coffee stand, involvement in city festivals, and other opportunities to connect with people in our community. In this, the people of Living Hope have truly made themselves laborers together for the Gospel, and this alone has encouraged my heart. Even greater than this encouragement has been the faith-building experience of

watching God be faithful to His Word.

We know the Scriptures gives us the principle of sowing and reaping, and we know that God is the One Who gives the increase (1 Cor. 3:7). We know God hears and answers prayer, and we know that He can do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. But knowing these truths and experiencing them are two different things. Over the past month, we have been blessed to watch God bring in visitor after visitor and give connection after connection. Just one example is that we were able to see our largest numerical day yet on Easter with 67 people. We have done our best to be faithful in going, but He is the One Who is bringing the increase. We have watched God answer specific prayer and show Himself faithful and true. We are praising God for how He is working among us and building our faith.

Thank you to all who continually uphold us in prayer. I ask that you continue to pray for us as we now have more people to disciple and serve; for we know we must be faithful with what God has given us if we wish to be entrusted with more. I am so thankful for



CURRENT MISSIONARIES MISSISSIPPI

- SCOTT BROCIOSUS:
◦ CANAAN LAND BAPTIST CHURCH
- JOSH DANIELS:
◦ REFUGE BAPTIST CHURCH
- SAMUEL YAGER:
◦ LIVING HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH
- ESTUARDO MARROQUIN:
◦ EL CAMINO/ HISPANIC MISSIONS
- PAUL SPURLIN:
◦ JAIL MINISTRY

INTERNATIONAL (BMAA)

- MICHAEL POIRIER: CANADA/ HAITI/ AFRICA
- SEAN PASLEY: FRANCE
- SAM FREEMAN: PHILIPPINES
- JOHN MICHAEL POULIN: LATIN AMERICA

GOAL FOR APRIL AND MAY 2023

\$30,000

Matthew 6:21 “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

What does it mean to be Mission Minded?

- It means **Praying** for laborers and **Giving** so that the laborers can go!

Missions Mindedness realizes that it takes money to send laborers into the Harvest Fields (Philippians 4:15-19), it emphasizes reaching our Jerusalem (hometown) and Judea (state) as well as our Samaria (country) and the uttermost parts of the world (foreign countries), and it sees a personal responsibility for being involved in the going and sending parts of missions.

Would you **PRAY** for laborers, **GIVE** so that laborers are able to go, and **RESPOND** personally to the call of missions to your Jerusalem?



your support of us; we wouldn’t be where we are today without you.

Update from Restoration Jail Ministry by Paul Spurlin

Thank you for continuing to pray for Restoration Jail Ministry. Since I last updated you through the *Mississippi Baptist*, we have visited the Jones County jail four times. Before, I mention some highlights from our recent jail visits, I want to share with you about a ride I gave to a man walking to Laurel on Highway 15. As I was going to Laurel, I saw the man walking and felt impressed by God to offer him a ride. When he got into my vehicle, I told him that he looked familiar to me. He gave me his name, but I did not recognize it. Then he said that I may have seen him in the jail docket, so I reached to get a gospel tract that I use in the jail and asked him if I had ever given him one of them. He replied that I had. Thanks be to God for allowing me an opportu-

nity to talk to this man again, outside of the jail.

During our jail service on February 24, several prisoners thanked our ministry for coming because it means a lot to them that people are willing to give up their time so that the prisoners are “not forgotten.” On April 7, we had positive results from five different prisoners. One asked for prayer that he might be able to overcome anger and drinking alcohol, which he said he did primarily to deal with his anger. Another asked for prayer that he could stop using illicit drugs. A different one asked for prayer that he might be able to appropriately show thanksgiving to people who had helped his mother post bail for him in the past. The fourth asked for prayer to be able to handle the great difficulty he is currently facing. Among other things, his daughter had been killed, and his wife had been threatened with death. Lastly, a prisoner asked for our ministry to provide him with a

prayer journal so that he might record his prayers. Thanks be to God for these men desiring prayer in their lives to overcome their difficulties and for their willingness to humble themselves to ask others to pray for them in some trying circumstances.

Refuge Baptist Mission

Kiln, Mississippi
by Bro. Josh Daniels
Greetings to the churches and associations of the BMA of Mississippi,

It seems that often through church planting and trying to move things forward, we find that our plans and desires may not always line up with what God has in store. In last month’s update we included our plans to have our first service in the new building. We were not able to make that date happen. The final details of finishing up a building have proven to

Missions
Continued on page 8



In His Grip

By Carolyn Hagler

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

May Flowers

During the rainy, stormy days of April, how many of you quoted, "April showers bring May flowers"? Those May flowers seem to be a unifying theme for the entire month, a time of remembering, honoring, and celebrating mothers and the men and women who died while serving in the military.

Flowers, especially carnations, remind me of Mother's Day, a special time in May to remember our mothers who are no longer with us or to honor those still living. But the message is much deeper than a holiday; the Old Testament and the New Testament emphasize honoring our mothers as well as our fathers.



The Proverbs 31 woman is described as a virtuous woman who is more precious than rubies; who takes care of her husband, children, and household; who willingly works; and who is strong, wise, kind, and busy. That woman is a hard act to follow.

Mothers are special, even though some mothers don't have a mother's heart and some women who aren't mothers do. If you were blessed with a loving mother (or a mother figure), you know what love is. Regardless how loving a mother may be, though, God's love is even greater. In fact, He reminds us that a mother may forget her child, "yet will I not forget thee" (Isaiah 49:15). He hasn't forgotten Israel, and He will never forget us. So, God uses mothers so that we can understand a little more how much He loves us.

Just like you, I'll be thinking about my mother on Mother's Day; but I think of her a lot more often than that. Sister No. 1 made the sisters and the grandchildren a heart-shaped pillow to remind us of her. Made from her chenille robe, my pillow is decorated with a real aspen leaf pin that I got her in Colorado, a crochet hook that she used after she learned the skill in her 70s, and her mother's ring, representing her love for her daughters.



I'd still like to call her one more time on Wednesday and Sunday as I did every week and ask, "What are you doing?" She would say as she did often, "I'm reading the best book." I got my love of reading from her.



Carolyn Hagler

She loved watermelon, pistachio ice cream, mysteries that didn't have a blue cover, red Daniel Green house shoes, chicken salad, my Gabi 1, and her grandchildren. When I came home to visit (and that was often), she always had M&M's waiting for me. She kept tuna salad in the fridge for this picky eater so that I always had something I would eat (I did out-grow that).

She bought the first watermelon of the season and always found the best cookies to try. Going through the depression and being raised in a large country family gave her the grit to do without when she had to but also made her enjoy splurging for her children and grandchildren.

Her fried chicken was unparalleled, and she always had room for one more at the table. Sunday dinners when the preacher often visited are remembered for the table groaning with the weight of wonderful country cooking. Never lunch. Dinner. She would always spread the tablecloth over the leftovers after dinner and uncover them for supper. No one ever had food poisoning!

I don't remember Daddy ever telling Mother that he loved her. Instead, his actions revealed his love. He didn't appreciate plants and flowers that weren't edible, but he planted beautiful Tropicana roses and tended them carefully for her. Even though he fussed, he planted gladiolas and staked them for her. He taught her to drive and always kept her car full of gas and ready for the road. And she was always ready for the road. Actions mean more than words.

She got her first job when Middle Sister and I were in high school and loved it. She worked in Hirsch's Department Store and then worked for the county's food commodity program. She hated to be called elderly (I'm starting to understand that) even though she worked with the senior citizens of the county many years after she became a senior citizen.

I never doubted that she loved me, though her last few years were difficult ones for her. But she was the champion of her grandchildren; she would fight any battle for them and win. She had a mother's heart.

A mother's heart led to flowers used to decorate the graves of our Civil War dead. During the Civil War, many soldiers fought and died at Shiloh. Columbus, Mississippi, became a hospital town for those wounded soldiers. Approximately 2,500 Confederate soldiers and 32 Union soldiers were buried in Friendship Cemetery.

After the war, four women decided to decorate the Confeder-

ate graves with flowers. One of the women asked, "How can we expect the Northern states to honor Confederate graves if we don't honor the Union graves here?" So, they covered the graves of both the Gray and the Blue with flowers.

That gesture of humanity and reconciliation was the beginning of what became Memorial Day. "The Blue and the Gray" (Francis Miles Finch, September 1867), immortalizes their generosity.

*"From the silence of sorrowful hours
The desolate mourners go.
Lovingly laden with flowers
Alike for the friend and the foe."*

I think it took a mother's heart to honor the fallen who fought against the South and the grief of their families. I also think a mother's heart is revealed in one special grave in Friendship Cemetery which pays homage to a woman who died in the Civil War. Her simple marble military tombstone reads:

Mrs. Canant



**Vol. Nurse
CSA**

It's a mystery, and we only know she gave her life as a volunteer serving as a nurse. She may have been a wife or a widow. She may have been a mother, maybe not. But she had the heart of a mother.

Many of us believe that Decoration Day, as it was called originally, started in Friendship Cemetery and became known as Memorial Day, which honors our dead from all the wars.

Just as carnations symbolize Mother's Day, red poppies symbolize Memorial Day. Flowers have a way of stirring our hearts to remember.



May, when many of our flowers are resurrected from the dead of winter, seems fitting as a time to honor and remember our mothers and those men and women who died while serving in the military.

Let's celebrate this May and remember how blessed we are; in His grip we are "the flower of God's love" (K. J. Ramsey, "Your Goodness and Love," Devotions Daily).

Available for Service

Bro. James Brown has resigned as pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Florencia, Mississippi, and is available for pulpit supply. He may be reached at 601-209-1502 or by Email at Jameswbrown50@gmail.com.



James Brown

Glen Pace promoted

Glen Pace, Pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, is a chaplain in the Mississippi State Guard (MSSG) and was recently promoted to Captain by Chaplain (Colonel) Scott Carson, President of Southeastern Baptist College and the Senior Command Chaplain for the MSSG.



Col. Carson (right) presents promotion to Captain Glen Pace

Louisiana Church seeking full-time youth minister

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

Who Can Find A Virtuous Woman?

Well, God can and His Word tells us about such a person in the 31st chapter of Proverbs. Here are a few verses to ponder...

28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed;

her husband also, and he praiseth her.

29 Many daughters have done virtuously,

but thou excellest them all.

30 Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain:

but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates. Proverbs 31:28-31

Missions

Continued from page 6

be tedious and time consuming. I am being reminded more and more of the verses found in Proverbs 16 especially verse 9. Man may plan his way, but God directs his steps. If we are all honest as followers of Jesus, we are ok with that. Wouldn't we want our Lord to have the final say so? Wouldn't we want Him to be completely in control? Wouldn't we want the Father to move us and change our steps since He knows better than we do? We would all say, ABSOLUTELY!



As many of you, we too had a great Resurrection Sunday service. We were able to host a 9 am worship service that morning at McLeod Park in Kiln, Mississippi. We were so concerned about the rain that we really didn't think much of the cold & windy weather that came in. It was tough, but we had many people show up and gather for a great time of worship. One young man wanted to talk about salvation and surrender to Jesus! AMEN! We were able to meet new guests, share the gospel with them, tell them about the new building coming up and invite them to be a part of the ministry.

Refuge Mission



We continue to grow in spirit and unity as a new body of believers. God is forming great bonds among the church family and drawing us closer together as we draw closer to Him. It is encouraging to see men and women step up and rise up to the forefront as leaders and great servants of Christ's church. People who were brand new in the ministry 2-3 years ago are now leading in the building of the church both physically and spiritually. It is an amazing thing to witness as some were shy and quiet begin to lead a Bible study or pray over others. Some who were hesitant are now leading the way each afternoon working on the building. God is truly building His church.

As I close this report, I ask that you continue to pray for us and to support this mission effort if you have not already done so. As we get closer to organization, our needs continue to be there, and some needs have increased. Please



consider a monthly offering or maybe even a one-time offering to be sent to our BMA of Mississippi Missions Office marked for Refuge Building Fund or General Offering. We have only gotten this far because of God using churches and associations to meet the many needs of a new church.

I have to laugh as I say that we are anticipating having the first service in the new building on May 7th. We are shooting for that date, but as earlier mentioned, that will be completely up to God.

May God continue to bless the churches and associations of the BMA of Mississippi!

Mississippi GMAs

Lakelan Jenkins, GMA Promoter
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2023 State GMA Camp

by Ruby Hickman 2nd Vice-president & Pianist

Hello everyone! My name is Ruby Hickman, I am the 2nd Vice-president and the pianist for the 2024 State GMA's. We recently held our 2023 girls retreat at the beautiful Camp-ground Baptist Church in Gulfport. This year's camp was AMAZING! Our GMA officers worked really hard to make the 2023 camp rock. Our theme was "Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever". We fellowshiped together, played games, held Bible study groups, made crafts, and had a lot of fun talking about Jesus.

Our speakers, Bro. Buddy and Mrs. Taffy, who are missionaries, came all the way from Texas. They told us how they travel the world spreading God's Word. They talked and explained the difficulties and struggles they have been faced with and are still facing today. Some of those difficulties included weather, the coronavirus, and other people, all of which hinder their efforts. They also had so many praises of the positive things the Lord is doing in their ministry. Many people are getting saved and doors are opening through friendships they have established while spreading God's word. Their presentation included lots of pictures that gave us a close-up look at the day-to-day ministry that the Lord has allowed them to have.

The camp, the fellowship, and the speakers reminded us that God is good all the time all the time God is good. Jesus NEVER changes He is the same from years ago until today and His word NEVER changes. The world around us might change but one thing is for certain Jesus doesn't change.

Going forward, our theme for the 2024 State GMA camp is "Highway to Heaven." I am excited to see what the Lord has in store for the 2024 State GMA camp. We also have National GMA camp coming up! Make sure you have signed up for National Camp if you haven't already. The theme is "Clueless without Christ" from Colossians 2:10 with Bro. Todd West as the camp pastor. The dates for National Camp are June 14-17 and registration ends on May 27th. Please keep all the officers and volunteers in your prayers as we work to the best of our ability to do the Lord's will.

tine's Day, because some hadn't had birthday celebrations before they came to us. That led to questions about Christmas, and I was like well, they have lots of people that donate Christmas gifts to them, so we are thankful they have a good Christmas. One young man asked if we spoiled them. I answered, "I'm sure the older ones would say we spoil the younger ones, and the younger ones would say no, I'm not spoiled." We try to be fair and give things and opportunities to all the kids, and when you have a lot of kids, then that adds up to a lot of things and opportunities. I used Christmas as an example. You know they all get spoiled at Christmas, but tons of people love on them and want to give them a good Christmas, so they know, and the kids will be able to open gifts and that family experience. We provide them with that experience to tie a physical memory to the gift of Jesus coming to love and give himself for us.

We ended our time together with a picture documenting what the kids had done and the donations they took up for us and the ones that were there to help. I had one young lady come to me after class was over and asked how did you get into this line of work? I told her that I have a social work degree, so child welfare has always been my thing, but I also gave a little background on how Dwight and I took over for the retiring director before us. It was a good morning getting to meet the students and sharing with them about our ministry here at the Children's Home.

I hope this encounter was as much a blessing to you as it was to us. If you would like us to visit your church and share more about the Children's Home, please reach out. The quickest way to reach me is by cell phone at 662-605-0996. Also, if any pastors or churches need me to fill the pulpit for you, don't hesitate to reach out. May we all continue preaching the Gospel and making disciples.

Sofilthy's Attic

By Barbara White

Multiplication



In doing my laundry, I have discovered something that will rival the widow's oil and the five loaves and two fishes in the ability to multiply! That is a tissue that is left in the pocket of a garment that is being washed in the washing machine! When the door of the machine is opened, it looks like a blizzard has passed through the machine. White stuff is everywhere!! After picking off all the white stuff you can see and clothes are placed in the dryer, when the cycle is over and the door of the dryer is opened, there is more of that white stuff! O, that we as Christians would spread the gospel and the good deeds of our Savior as readily as that tissue was multiplied and spread!!

Home Report

Continued from page 5

but being able to see her go back home and her mom had done what she was supposed to do also feels like a success story in the midst of the hurt. Another young lady asked about it if the kids had cell phones, and I explained how our system works. They have to show responsibility and that they are able to handle things appropriately and according to their age; then they can have certain electronics, but most of the kids do not have cell phones because they are still learning to be responsible for using them appropriately. The same young lady then asked if we celebrate birthdays. I told them that we do, and we try to make a bigger deal out of birthdays than we do other holidays, for example, Valen-