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Seven New Trends in the Pastor Search Process

By Thom S. Rainer

If there is anything consistent about the current state of how churches find and call pastors, it is the inconsistencies of the process for each church. It is inconsistent by denomination and by each church individually.

I have the opportunity to interact with a number of churches looking for pastors, and with pastors who are being considered by churches. Over the past few years, I've noticed changes and trends in the process. Let me highlight the seven most frequent changes I've discovered.

Social media has become a major reference to check on potential pastors. More churches and pastor search committees are looking at blogs, Facebook,

Twitter, and other social media venues of potential candidates. One search committee member told me he read four years of blogs of a pastor their church is considering. He said that he could tell a lot about the leadership and personality of a pastor by reading his articles and how he interacts with those who comment on the blogs.

Two background checks are more common: criminal and credit. Most church search members will not disqualify a candidate who has some issues in his background legally or credit related. But they do want the candidate to be up front about any issues and they want to know

how he is dealing with those issues today.

More leadership questions are asked. In the past, Bible and theology rightly dominated the questions asked of a prospective pastor. Today those considering these pastors want to know more about his leadership qualities. "We had problems with two of our last three pastors," one church member wrote me. "But none of those problems had anything to do with their theology; they just had terrible leadership skills."

Churches scrutinize the prospective pastor's church website. I have been

surprised how much churches depend on a website to find out information about a prospective pastor. They certainly expect to hear sermon podcasts there, but they are looking for much more. Rightly or wrongly, they often evaluate the pastor by the quality and the content of the site.

Fewer search committees are going to the prospective pastor's church to hear him preach. I am hearing more often that they view such a move as disruptive to that pastor and the church. They have other options available to hear him preach. Of course, they lose the advantage of seeing and hearing that pastor in his current context.

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We Need A Pastor

by Larry Barker

Operations Director for North American Missions BMA of America

"We need a pastor!" That is something I am hearing quite a bit these days. Churches do need a pastor, but often I hear desperation and someone will say, "The sooner the better!" While, yes, a church does need a pastor, they do not need to rush into this decision too quickly. This is one of the most important, if not the most important, decision a church will ever make. This cannot be rushed, nor should a church approach it too slowly by dragging its feet. You should approach this process prayerfully and with much wisdom as you seek out the man of God to lead your congregation.

When it comes to making such a major decision there are three basic approaches that are often used. First, some congregations are time-driven. The need is now and we must get busy in making sure this happens as quickly as possible. We live in such a fast paced society which seems to be getting quicker by the minute, or maybe by the second. Slow down and find out who the candidate is, what his track record has been, and what the

references of his references have to say about him. Remember, the only way you can predict future performance is based upon past behavior. Adrian Rodgers once said, "A change of scenery never guarantees a change of character."



Larry Barker

Second, some congregations are goal-driven. They have a picture of what kind of pastor they need and quite often it is unrealistic. The "perfect" pastor does not exist and if you are not careful, the new pastor will begin his ministry with unrealistic expectations that even Superman could not fulfill. The pastor is not called to do all of the work, but to equip the members to do the work of the ministry. Make sure your "job description" fits the word of God and that the expectations will not put more pressure on the pastor than it should. The goal should be the right man, in the

place, at the right time! Some congregations are only going to use a resume to trust their family to, someone they don't really know and have never lived with!

Thirdly, congregations should be Spirit-driven. Most would say "amen" to this, but be careful to not over-spiritualize it as a "mystical" decision. It is difficult when a church member says to a preacher that "God told me you were to be our pastor!" What if God has not told him that yet? Being Spirit-driven does not cancel out being time-conscious. Doing your due diligence in the process is very important. Being Spirit-driven also does not cancel out being goal-driven. The goal should be to find God's man. The unique dynamic in looking for a pastor is that the congregation must hear from the Lord and the man God is calling to lead them must also hear His voice.

The reality is that there will always be those who want to go too fast and those who will want to go too slow. Both are dangerous and that is why we must listen closely and carefully to the Spirit's direction. Not only is this one of the biggest decisions a church will ever make, it is also one of the biggest decisions a man and his family will ever make. They may have to pick up stakes and start

from square one. All the transitions a family will have to go through when moving to a new field of service can be quite overwhelming.

There is a key question your church must consider as it prays for a pastor to be your spiritual leader. Are they willing to do the work of an evangelist? Jesus said, "I have come to seek and to save the lost!" As you consider someone to be your pastor you must examine to see what their track record has been in this area. Is there evidence of their pursuit of the lost and of sharing the gospel with others? Have they trained those around them in how to effectively evangelize? Have they intentionally built times into their schedules to be around those outside the church and not just hang out with the "in" crowd? How have they related to the unchurched where they are presently ministering? How will they lead your church to obey the Great Commission locally? What is their vision to equip your congregation to live as missionaries in your zip code? All of the other characteristics you can look for in a pastor will have limited or meaningless impact if he does not have a burden for the lost!

Healthy churches are Spirit-driven!



Larry Geraldson
Director



Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

Department of Missions and Revolving Loan Fund



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“Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.” 1 Ch 16: 8

As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday, I want to encourage you to count your blessings and take a moment to consider others, more than yourself. All of us have family and friends or know of someone who has suffered devastating loss or excruciatingly bad news this past year. Thanksgiving will not be the same for that person who sits across from an empty chair or who stands alongside a hospital bed or places flowers on a grave. For many, the tragedy experienced along this past year’s journey of faith will stir all kinds of emotions as a simple pleasant memory exasperates a hurt that cannot be quenched in this life.

I think about the pastor who lost his son to cancer; the parents whose daughter was abducted and murdered; and the pastor whose wife unexpectedly fell dead. I think about a lady who was sent home with Hospice because the cancer she just learned she had is already too far gone. I think of the young preacher whose toddler is fighting a rare form of cancer. I think about the family of 13 who lost all but 3 to a devastating tornado. I think about the mother who received that unwelcomed visit from uniformed services members informing her that her child had fallen at the hand of an enemy’s bullet. And I haven’t even begun to think about the tragedy of senseless horrors that have encroached upon people’s lives because of a society that is waxing worse and worse.

As you journey through the corridors of memory, the joy that is the distinguishing mark of every Christian is put to the greatest test. We all know how to be thankful for the good things, but have we learned how to be thankful for the tragic things? When we tell about God’s deeds, do we only mention the deeds that seem to be good to us? Have we learned to see value in the anxiety of suffering? We can only realize suffering’s full value if we endure the hardship. Have we learned to redeem our pain for His glory? Do we see loss in every tragedy or do we see treasure concealed in every tragedy? As the weight of difficulty bears down on you, does it release frustration, anger, and bitterness or are you like the violet which sheds its fragrance on the heel that crushes it.

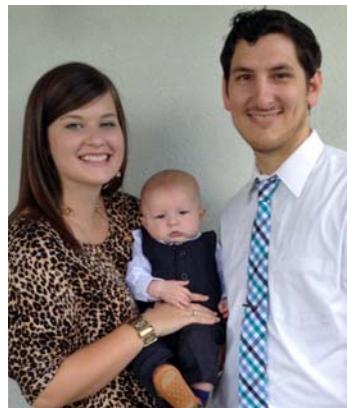
I hope that my thanksgiving prayer will not be just an eschewal of all that is wrong or a Pharisaical restatement of Luke 18:11, “God, I thank thee, that I

am not as other men are;...” Rather, I hope that my prayer will be a renunciation of self-centeredness accented with deep concern for others, and a high appreciation for a heart of love that my Lord lived to demonstrate before me, and then died to give me, and rose to teach me that difficulty and tragedy often serve as the pathway to lead me to trust Him. Therefore, my heart now beats with thanksgiving so hard and so fast that when I think about what God has done for me, it seems it will beat right out of my chest.

A little bit of thinking about others quickly brings me to my knees. If you’re like me, you are truly humbled that God has blessed you so much, even if those blessings are painful. I pray that each of you will have a wonderful Thanksgiving Day.

Newest State Missionary Available For Appointments

Our newest missionary, Bro. Wesley Martin, will begin, in earnest, his church planting efforts January 1, 2015. In the meantime, he is available to visit your church or local association to share his vision for the work in Diamondhead, Mississippi. Bro. Martin will be seeking to raise salary support and work funds during this time leading up to his start. If you would be interested in having him come to your church or local association you can call him directly at 228-380-0690 or you can call our office at 601-428-8614.



Wesley, Holley & Lawson Martin

Bro. Wesley Martin grew up on the Gulf Coast where he attended Campground Baptist Church. In 2004, he was saved and in February 2008 he surrendered to the gospel ministry and was licensed by Campground Baptist Church. He was later ordained and began to serve as Associate Pastor, under the leadership of Pastor Bryan Atwood. He has trained in leadership, outreach, youth ministry, camp ministry, music ministry and pastoral ministries, extensively. He is a good preacher of the gospel and understands the bible narrative well. He has acknowledged, in writing, his understanding and agreement with the “Articles of Faith” of the BMA of Mississippi. He is currently working toward his Bachelor’s degree at Southeastern Baptist College and this past spring was the recipient of the Arnold Knight Scholarship, given by the Missions and RLF Department. He and his wife, Holley, have one child, Lawson Reed Martin.

“I believe there is a great need for churches on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The population of this area is steadily growing, but the numbers of churches that are reaching these people are declining. I have a love for people and a great burden for lost souls. Diamondhead

is one of the cities on the coast that is on the rise. It was started as a retirement community, but now it is a newly formed city with many young families moving in. It is my desire to start a church and to build relationships, minister to people, and ultimately win souls for Christ.”

Facts About Diamondhead, Mississippi

“Over the last forty years the demographic makeup of Diamondhead has changed from that of a retirement community to that of any small suburban type area.” – Source “Diamondhead 25 years Plan”



Diamondhead, as a community, does not presently have a Baptist Church. From 2000-2010 Diamondhead grew at a rate of 42.5%. If that growth rate continues, Diamondhead could reach a population of 34,000 people by the end of 2014. Diamondhead is just 13 miles from Bay St. Louis and Waveland with an additional 20,000 people. Diamondhead, as a community, does not presently have a Baptist Church.

On August 17, 2014, Campground Baptist Church voted to recommend Wesley Martin as a missionary

continued on next page

Reports for October 2014

Church Planters	High Attend.	Members	Total Offerings
Bob Burch	72	33	\$2,796.00
Bobby Elliott	51	47	\$2,338.00
Sidney Farmer	48	33	\$4,210.00
Danny Bartlett	14	6	\$1,743.00
Phillip Burns	15	4	\$1,511.00
Wesley Martin	n/a	n/a	n/a

Hispanic Missions—South (Estuardo Marroquin – Coordinator)

Hattiesburg	21	11	\$1,105.00
Biloxi	14	3	n/a
Laurel	132	107	\$5,065.00

Hispanic Missions—North (Elvis Garcia – Coordinator)

Tupelo	31	16	\$236.00
Oxford	65	3	\$403.00
Ripley	95	76	\$4,160.00

African American Missions— (Ed DuVall – Coordinator)

Olive Branch	17	13	\$1,550.00
Cleveland	42	50	\$2,263.00

Collectively, our missionaries reported 385 new contacts, shared the gospel 300 times, and had 20 professions of faiths.

BMA of Mississippi Revolving Loan Fund Report (August 1, 2014 - Nov 13, 2014)

Gross Assets	\$19,223,731.00
Increase In Gross Assets	\$600,601.00
New Loans	3
Total of Loans Made	\$217,257.00
Loan Rate	4.25%
Shareholder Rate of Return	2.67%
Reserve	20%

COMMISSION ON Senior Adults

4226 Highway 15 North, Laurel, Mississippi 39440



Kenneth Flynt
Director

Thoughts on Aging

By Miriam Levensgood

Read Genesis 15:7-15. God promised Abraham that he would “be buried in a good old age.” Some people take long life for granted. They have a whole list of things they plan to do later—whenever it’s convenient. We don’t have Abraham’s promise. All should start on the list now!

Read Genesis 47:1-10. Jacob seems to have been almost apologetic when he told Pharaoh that he was only 130 years of age! The president of the graduate school I attended advised his students, “Always be your age.” That’s good advice. We need to accept our age at any given point in life as a part of God’s plan. Have you learned that acceptance?

Read Exodus 20:1-17. It’s interesting that only one of the Ten Commandments has a promise connected with it—the one having to do with honoring one’s parents. Paul repeated the command and promise in Ephesians 6:2, 3. There seems to be some connection between honoring one’s parents and enjoying a long life.

Read Leviticus 19:32-37. A friend from Manila once told me that all white-haired people should come to the Philippine Islands, for they would be treated with great respect. Unfortunately,

this is not always true in America. It is biblical, however, to honor elderly people. Do you follow the practice?

Read Joshua 14:6-15. Caleb was one of two spies, who had assured Moses forty-five years earlier that by God’s enabling the Israelites could take the land of Canaan. At age eighty-five, Caleb was still full of vim and vigor. He requested, “Give me this mountain.” Caleb’s “recipe” for retaining his vigor was wholly following the Lord. You can do the same.

Read I Kings 3:5-14. If God said to you, “Ask what I shall give thee,” how would you respond? God was pleased that Solomon had not asked for long life and riches, but He promised the king that if he would walk in the Lord’s way, he would also enjoy a longer life. Follow God, and let Him decide the length of your life.

Read I Chronicles 29:20-30. This depicts David as having died at “a good old age.” Looking back at the life of David, you can imag-

ine how many times he might have expected the very opposite. You may be going through hardships, but take heart: God can still bring you to ripe old age. Read Psalm 37:23-40. What a wonderful testimony David gave regarding old age: “I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” We may not have everything we’d like, but God’s promise to supply all our need (Phil. 4:19) is as true at one age as at another.

Read Psalm 71:1-24. The psalmist expressed the fear of many elderly people when he asked twice that he not be forsaken in his old age. We can count on God not to forsake the elderly, though sometimes people do. No matter what their condition, it behooves every believer to treat his elders with love and respect. Read Psalm 90:1-17. Life at its best may seem quite brief when it comes to its end. That’s why we need to number, or consider of value, each day the Lord gives us, that we may acquire discerning minds and hearts. Does this change any of your plans for today?

Read Proverbs 3:1-16. Many times when an elderly person is asked the “secret” of his longevity, he will attribute it to clean, moral living habits. Some believers die young, and some unsaved elderly people are immoral, but today’s reading indicated

that following God’s commandments will give a person a life of peace and fruitfulness. It’s worth living for Jesus!

Read Proverbs 16:22-33. The writer suggests that white hair be a crown of glory, if it is found on the head of one who is walking in the ways of righteousness. Perhaps we need to be more concerned about our way of life than about the color of our hair!

Read Ecclesiastes 12:1-14. The preacher described very vividly the physical problems that often accompany old age. But don’t forget his statement in verse 1. Be mindful of your Creator in the days of your youth, he said, before these disabilities make it difficult for you to think as clearly as you can now. Don’t put it off!

Read I Timothy 5:1-10. This is Paul’s advice to Timothy, his son in the faith, regarding proper treatment of older people. We should not rebuke them harshly but show them honor and respect, just as we would be expected to show to our own parents. What kindness could you show to an elderly person in your church?

Read Titus 2:1-5. Paul told how older people should behave. You should lead lives that are worthy of respect and honor. You should set a good example for young people.

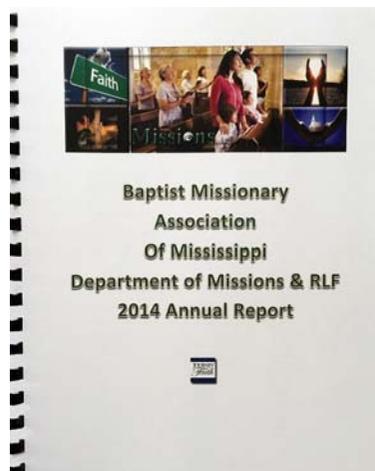
Missions

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church planter to the city of Diamondhead, Mississippi. The church voted unanimously to sponsor and support Wesley and his family as a mother church in partnership with the State Missions Department of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi. Campground is to be commended for taking this step of faith. I pray that more churches will follow her lead and begin praying about reproducing.

Annual Missions Report Booklet Mailed

A copy of our annual report booklet, which contains my report given at the Annual State Association Meeting (and reports and photos from each of our missionaries) was mailed to ev-



ery church in the BMA of Mississippi. If you would like to receive additional copies, for auxiliaries or Sunday School classes, Prayer groups, etc., we would be glad to provide you with additional copies. Just call Mrs. Kim Parker at 601-428-8616 and tell her what you need.

My Journey Away From Contemporary Worship Music

by Dan Michael Cogan

Editor’s Note: We are printing this article due to its content and the approach the writer takes. He has experienced both sides of the worship music spectrum and shares some good points concerning worship and its purpose. The style and purpose of music in the church is always a topic of much discussion and consideration.

I have been what many would call a “worship leader” for close to two decades. When I first became involved in “worship ministry” in a youth group we sang such songs as The Name of the Lord Is a Strong Tower, As the Deer, Lord I Lift Your Name on High, and others of the era of the 1980s and 90s. Ours was considered a stylistically progressive church since we used almost exclusively contemporary songs.

This meant that if I were to visit a “traditional” church, not

only would I be unfamiliar with the hymns, I would also likely cringe when they sang them and in my heart ridicule them (the people rather than the songs) as being old-fashioned.

It was during these formative years in my experience as a worship leader that I began to introduce even more contemporary songs to our youth group. It was then that I discovered artists like Delirious, Darrel Evans, Matt Redman, and Vineyard Music with their songs Did You Feel the Mountains Tremble, Trading My Sorrows, Heart of Worship, and Hungry.

As a young musician who desired to honor Christ, I found these songs to be particularly compelling. I felt different when we sang them. The way Nirvana gave voice to the angst of Generation X, bands like Delirious were giving voice to a gen-

eration of young Christians who didn’t feel they could relate to the songs of their parents and grandparents.

Over the years when I would occasionally hear a hymn, the language was always strikingly foreign, with Ebenezers and bulwarks, diadems and fetters. Which only served to confirm my bias that hymns were simply out-of-date. They had served their purpose. They had run their course.

The problem with my youthful logic only began to dawn on me about seven years ago. I had come to recognize that these ancient hymns accomplished something that the new songs weren’t. While contemporary worship seemed to take the listener on an exciting and emotional rollercoaster, the old hymns engaged the mind with deep and glorious truths that when sincerely pondered

caused a regenerated heart to humbly bow before its King.

When I accepted my first post as a paid member of a church staff in 2007, I began the practice of singing one hymn each week. There were times where my peers would teasingly ask what an “Ebenezer” was. What I found was that when I gave them a basic definition of these seemingly obsolete words we were singing, their response was usually something akin to, “Oh? Cool. I never knew that!” I think when they asked, they half expected me to say, “I don’t know! Weird word, huh?” Instead they were being challenged to learn, not merely a new word, but how to ponder the things of God deeply when we sing His praises.

Nowadays, I still choose songs for our congregation to sing that were written recently, but they are becoming increasingly the

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DEPARTMENTS & COMMISSIONS

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

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

State Youth Department
4226 Highway 15 North
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Don Brown

Mississippi Baptist

Opinion Page

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Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

Don Brown - Editor

A Thanksgiving Message From God's Word

Psalm 100 - A Psalm of praise.

Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the LORD is good: his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body: and be ye thankful.

Col. 3:15

Fishing For Men (or Little Boys)

You may have noticed a small mark near my left eye. It's not that big, which is kind of a shame because when I point it out to people they generally have to get a magnifying glass to find it. Being so small, you might find it hard to believe that it is actually a scar left behind from an encounter I had with a black bear in the hills of Tennessee. You would be right, but that would have made a much more interest-

ing story. In fact, I almost let my imagination go wild and run with the story of our tooth and fang battle, but I didn't want to lose my credibility as a serious writer.

The scar used to be further down my cheek, but I guess time has stretched my skin; either that, or my head has grown since being six or seven years old. The year was 1970 something and our family and a couple of other families had ventured into the great outdoors for a little camping excursion when the incident happened. Several of us were fishing along the bank when my brother caught a whopper four ounce bream a little upstream from where I was fishing. Naturally, I went to go and see the trophy and congratulate Darrell on a fine catch (not to ease into his honey hole while he was extracting the hook as some have suggested). As I passed behind one of the grown people (a teenager), I suddenly thought my face was trying to leave the rest of my body. It was an eerie sensation to say the least.

The teenager in question simply thought he had snagged a bush behind

From The Mind of



Chuck Lee

him, and proceeded to yank with increasingly excessive force. The bush (my cheek), refused to give up the treble-hooked lure and upon the fourth or fifth yank, I calmly asked the young man if he would perhaps be kind enough to dislodge said hook from my face. "What is all that yelling out here"? Mom had rushed from the confines of the pop up camper to find her youngest being proudly displayed as if posing

for a photograph as the trophy catch of the day. Later, she commented that she thought a bear had come down from the hills and had carried away one of her babies. That too, would have made a more interesting story.

After several unsuccessful attempts from every fisherman within a thirty mile radius to use their special method of hook extraction from the cheek of a child, common sense finally grabbed my father and made him see that carrying me to the doctor was a more logical solution. By the way, that is what has kept my parents together for fifty plus years; Dad listening to common sense. Mom doesn't like us calling her that, but sometimes you are just stuck with a nickname that follows you all your life.

Forty years later, I still carry the reminder that we are to be fishers of men. I guess as far as personal biblical reminders that a person could carry around on their person, this one isn't so bad. A she bear coming out of the hills...well that would be a story someone else would have to tell.

National Missions Welcomes New Staff Member

The BMAA Department of Missions is happy to welcome Paige West to our Global Missions Team as the administrative assistant to the directors of missions. Paige is the wife of Pastor Todd West of Oasis Church in Little Rock, Arkansas. Todd and Paige have two daughters: Addison and Riley, age 12. Paige comes to the Department of Missions after serving for a number of



Paige West

years on staff at Oasis Church. She will assist the Executive Director, The Director of North American Church Planting, and the Director of International Missions. She will also serve as the office manager for the Missions Department staff at the Global Ministry Center in Conway, Arkansas. Paige has great people skills in addition to her organizational abilities. If Paige can assist you in any way, please contact her via email at paige@bmaam.com or by phone at 501-455-4977 ext. 3848.

Sofilthy's Attic

by Barbara White



Gumption

The other day, I attended a meeting where there were some good thoughts spread around and there was one preacher in particular who got and held my attention for a long period of time. He did this by using the word gumption. Well, I hadn't even heard that word in a long time. I got to wondering if it was in the dictionary so I went to look it up and it wasn't in the first one, but I have two dictionaries and I looked it up in the other one and sure 'nuff it was in there.

The definition given was: courage or boldness. Then in italics it said: "used only in everyday talk."

Well, I for one am glad that preacher had the gumption to use that word to cause me to realize that I don't use gumption near often enough in the Lord's work. What about you?

The scripture in Proverbs came to my mind. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion."

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Southeastern Baptist College

Danny Pitts - Interim President
4229 Highway 15 North, Laurel, Mississippi 39440, (601) 426-6346



Danny Pitts

Serving Christ With a Biblical World View In A Christian Atmosphere

Giving A Blessing

As we approach the holidays and the end of the year, many are looking for ways to give thanks to the Lord for His goodness. Although other opportunities are available for you to contribute to the future at Southeastern, you will find a couple of special ones below.

First, an anonymous contributor has committed \$10,000 to our school. He has challenged for nine other individuals to give the same amount. He stated that he is not wealthy. This person hopes his sacrificial efforts may motivate others to make similar donations to our college. We thank him for his generosity and wait for others to join him.

Library Available

Below is a letter written by Librarian Amy Hinton. This presents a way for you to provide books which will continue giving knowledge to student and to recognize some special people.

I would like to take this oppor-

tunity to tell you about a wonderful program our library has that could be a blessing to you and could be an opportunity for you to bless others. At our library we accept donations to purchase books and to place them in our collection "in honor of" a person being honored by friends/family or "in memory of" a person who has deceased. This is a very tasteful way of remembering a loved one. Books are gifts that keep on giving, as they can be used and enjoyed by students immediately and for many years to come. Each book donated is labeled inside the front cover with the person's name being honored along with the donor's (or church's) name.

I ask you to consider making an "in memory of" donation to the library when a friend or family member has died or an "in honor of" donation when you would like to give special recognition to someone. It is a way for you to not only commemorate them, but it is an excellent way for you to support the college library; its

students rely on the best quality books to conduct their studies. Because we need to provide so many books and materials for our students - and the cost of books as you know can be quite expensive (especially for college-level research materials) - our library relies heavily on the generous donations from churches and individuals.

If you would like to make a donation to the college library, simply mail your request and donation (any amount is greatly appreciated) to:

Southeastern Baptist College
A.R. Reddin Memorial Library
4229 Highway 15 North
Laurel, MS 39440

Also, if you have any questions concerning the college's library, I will be happy to speak with you. Please feel free to give me a call (601-426-6346) or to come by and see me at the library. Our library doors are always open to you; many non-students do use our library for research. You are so welcome to come and use the books/materials we offer to aid

Work Continues At Southeastern College

Below are some photos of ongoing work at our college. Roofs are being replaced, trim is being repaired and new fire escapes erected on two of our buildings.



you in preparation for sermons, for Sunday school lessons, and/or for your own personal research interests!

Thank You!
Amy Hinton, Librarian

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME

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Corresponding Secretary

Mrs. Shirlene Smith
730 Hwy 533, Laurel, MS 39443
601-729-5638

Missionary's Door Is Always Open

by Jackie Ricks

Oscar and Tamy Gaitan's door is always open to anyone who desires to support the mission work in Nicaragua in any way. The same held true years ago when Tamy's mother, Karen Smith, went to Nicaragua to teach. She found Paul and Mickey Robinson and John and Shirley Ladd very welcoming to her. In fact, she lived with John and Shirley for a while. At that point, Nicaragua was a growing mission work within the BMAA. Then, due to the political situation, we had to withdraw the American families from there. Now it seems to be open and thriving again.

Oscar and Tamy married in 1998 and have lived in Nicaragua the whole time, Oscar, having grown up there. They have two children: Lidia Sarai, who is 10, and Ostali Natanael, who is 1. The children go with their parents and help in the mission work as well.

In 2004, Oscar was asked to be the coordinator of missions for the country of Nicaragua. At that time, they began with Action centers (or what we might call cell groups) in different parts of the country. They have opened at least one church plant each year, and sometimes two. This year, however, God has blessed them with four new church plants. They currently have 26 churches in Nicaragua - 7 churches and 9 new church plants that are less than 5 years old. They begin a church plant with an action center or cell group and grow and multiply from there.

Nicaragua also has a Bible Institute with two extensions to train their leaders. One is in the area of San Francisco Libre; the other is at La Esperanza, on the east coast. This is a much needed asset anywhere.



Gaitan Family

Without proper training, it is difficult for those who have never known anything about true Christianity to understand what they need themselves, much less to provide it for others. The classes are taught by men from Nicaragua.

Years ago, the Robinsons and Ladds began a clinic ministry in Nicaragua. There is also a clinic ministry operating in a remote area of Nicaragua today. That allows the people to get general medicines much closer to home. This is in San Jorge, San Francisco Libre. BMMI teams also come on a regular basis to perform needed medical and dental work in these areas.

Different churches from Arkansas, Mississippi and Texas have greatly supported the ministry in Nicaragua. These people have sent groups to work on construction of church buildings and other ministry needs such as conferences. These groups help not only with the work, but also in establishing contact for them and spreading the gospel to different areas of Nicaragua.

Oscar and Tamy say, "We are always glad to have visitors and if you ever need a place to serve in missions, we would love for you to consider Nicaragua. Our home is always open to those who desire to support mission work in any way."

Oak Grove WMA Report

Bethel Baptist Church hosted our quarterly meeting on October 10, 2014. Bethel Baptist Church served us a delicious meal.

The devotional was given by Tina Ross from Bethel Church. Gloria Thurman, a retired missionary from Bangladesh since 1998, was the guest speaker. She and her husband now reside in Columbia. After working in a country of 87% Muslim and 13% Hindu, she reported that there are approximately 300,000 Christians in the last twenty years. She stated even though there are 12,000 miles from Bangladesh we can witness here in Mississippi. There are seventeen different nationalities in Columbia alone.



She prepared three native dishes for us to enjoy in addition to our meal. They were a rice dish, chicken curry that is eaten weekly, and rice pudding.

Bro. Denny Patterson dismissed our meeting with prayer. Our January meeting will be at Good Hope Baptist Church.

Betty Kendrick, Reporter

Mississippi State WMA Corresponding Secretary's Report September 30, 2014

Balance September 30, 2013	\$ 14,638.12
Total Received	
Oct. 1, 2013-Sept. 30, 2014	22,352.14
Total to Account for	36,990.26
Expenditures	15,291.09
Balance on Hand	21,699.17
General Fund Balance	\$ 9,470.04
Project (75%)	5,227.36
Ladies' Retreat Fund	7,001.77
Balance on Hand	21,699.17
PROJECT TOTALS	
25% plus designated offerings	\$ 2,292.40
75% Women's Ministry in Ghana, Africa	
(Dale & Celia Broom)	6,429.61
Total Received	8,722.01

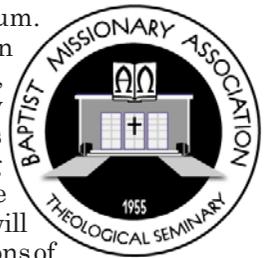
Churches Receiving Certificates for Contributing \$100.00 or More to the WMA Project

1. Berean Baptist Church, Soso
2. Bethel Baptist Church, Bassfield
3. Big Creek Baptist Church, Soso
4. East Amory Baptist Church, Amory
5. First Baptist Church, Bay Springs
6. First Baptist Church, Calhoun
7. First Baptist Church, Mantachie
8. First Baptist Church, Shady Grove, Laurel
9. Hopewell Baptist Church, Laurel (Given in memory of Rosie Welborn)
10. Lebanon Baptist Church, Laurel
11. Lone Oak Baptist Church, West Point

DiscipleGuide Partners With BMA Seminary

DiscipleGuide is pleased to announce a new partnership with the BMA Theological Seminary for the purpose of ensuring theological accuracy in Bible Study curriculum.

Seminary faculty have begun reviewing lessons for Compass, DiscipleGuide's adult Sunday school material, and Compass Teacher, the corresponding leader's guide. The first of the Seminary-reviewed materials will be released in the Winter editions of the literature.



"When it comes to teaching God's Word, accuracy is vital," explains DiscipleGuide Executive Director Scott Attebery. "That's why we are so thankful for the Seminary's willingness to review our lessons. Scripture is the greatest treasure we have been given on earth, and we want to provide literature that is true to God's Word."

Seminary President, Dr. Charley Holmes comments, "Even before I was a part of the Seminary, it had an active role with DiscipleGuide Sunday school material. Seminary professors and graduates have written or edited numerous quarterlies and other helps. I am delighted to have one of our grads, Dr. Scott Attebery, as the editor of educational materials. We are blessed by having the privilege of assisting Dr. Attebery with reviewing the theological and biblical content of our BMA educational materials."

To learn more about, or to order Compass curriculum, go to discipleguide.org or call 800-333-1442.

New State WMA Project

The ladies of Mississippi voted on a new project. 75% will go to Moral Action and 25% to the General Fund. I realize that many of you are already praying, but I hope we will continue to pray and support this ministry.

Bro. Adams enlightened us on a lot of things going on and according to the news these are perilous times. Not only are babies being murdered, our young people are being drawn into things that we as ladies have never dreamed of.

As I was thinking of this I realized that one link of a chain can not pull much, but many links can pull a large amount. Will you consider being a link in our chain? Ladies helping ladies can make a difference. May our Lord bless each of you.

Bea Hudson & Chris Smith
Project Promoters

12. Movella Baptist Church, Lucedale
13. Parkview Baptist Church, Laurel
14. Pine Grove Baptist Church, Purvis
15. Sharon Baptist Church, Laurel
16. Shiloh Baptist Church, Mt. Olive
17. Skyway Hills Baptist Church, Pearl
18. Temple Baptist Church, Lucedale
19. Ten Mile Baptist Church, Wiggins
20. Vardaman Street Baptist Church, Wiggins
21. Washington Association District WMA

Top Five Churches in Giving to the Project

1. Vardaman Street, Wiggins \$ 1,346.37
2. Parkview Baptist Church, Laurel 1,000.00
3. First Baptist Church, Calhoun 740.00
4. Temple Baptist Church, Lucedale 720.00
5. Skyway Hills Baptist Church, Pearl 625.00

The project selected for 2014-2015 is 25% General Fund; 75% Moral Action. Send all offerings for this project to: Shirlene Smith; 730 Hwy 533; Laurel, MS 39443. May God bless each one as we serve and honor Him in our local churches through WMA.

Shirlene Smith

Self Control

by Paul Gauntt

(from Baptist Progress)

People have often misunderstood the word “meek.” To many, the word connotes “weakness”—lack of boldness or courage. But meekness is anything but weakness. But it is “power under control.”

Jesus epitomized meekness, yet He didn't violate that trait when he entered the temple, overturned the money changers' tables, and drove them out, saying, “My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.”

This came from the Savior, the one “meek and lowly in heart”—but the action portrayed anything but weakness. Jesus was meek—yet He was a man's man.

A meek person can exercise power and courage, yet it's always for a right and godly motive. It's never for his own defense—never to gain attention for oneself—but always for the glory of God.

My good friend, Rick Robinson, pastor of Center of Life, Houston, was keynote speaker in one of our Breakthrough youth conferences a few years ago. During one message, he shared his experience of being a constant victim of bullying in school. He was a little smaller than most of the rest of his peers, making him a natural target. He decided to enroll in martial arts training, and learn not only the art of self-defense, but the important life lesson of self control. After an extended period of training in karate, he earned his black belt. Now, the bullies would be faced with something which they didn't bargain for.

But Rick noticed another dynamic in his life—he was suddenly keenly aware of the devastating effects the full force of the martial arts could have on his foes. Prior to his karate training, he was faced with the possibility of being beaten up by bullies—now, he had another concern. So with a chuckle, he said, “I just decided it was best to let them beat me up.”

That is a great illustration of power under control. When a boy is young and immature, he loves to burn the tires his father bought—drag racing and showing off his powerful muscle car. Older, more mature men may

drive high-performance cars, but it's enough for them to just to know it's there—and there is little or no need to impress anyone with its power. They can look over at the teenager next to them at the traffic light, smile at them, and let them win.

That's self control.

Jesus said that He was “meek, and lowly in heart”—quite an incredible statement coming

from the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. This is the

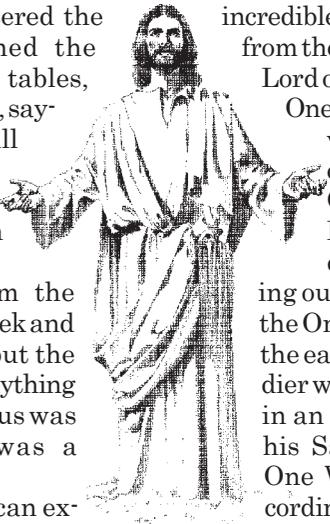
One Who spoke the universe into existence—This is the One Who raised Lazarus from the dead simply by calling

out his name. This is the One who re-attached the ear of the Roman soldier which Peter severed in an attempt to defend his Savior. This is the One Who, one day, according to Revelation 16,

will make His descent upon the earth, smiting the nations with the sharp sword out of His mouth, and then ruling the earth “with a rod of iron” during His Millennial reign. Now that's power! But Christ was no less powerful during His first advent on earth—but during that time, He came to be the Sacrificial Lamb on the cross of Calvary, for the remission of our sin.

As believers in Christ, we already have His power working in us (Ephesians 3:20) We are filled with all the fullness of God (verse 19). Yet, we are commanded of Him to walk in meekness and lowliness upon this earth. When you are genuinely meek and lowly in heart, you are able to curb harsh words to debaters, regardless of how “right” you may be. When you're meek, you do not feel the need to defend or usurp yourself. In fact, God says that vengeance is His, and he would defend us. Long-time pastor, revivalist and writer Lynn Stephens once noted, “A man who must defend himself has no defense.”

Paul exercised this control in his life in 1 Corinthians 8, when he declared that partaking of meat once offered to idols did not violate his own conscience, but he willingly refrained from eating it in order to not be a stumbling block to those young in the faith—those who were converted from paganism, and who still had a problem with consuming meat which had been offered to pagan gods.



MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME

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SIDNEY DAVIS - DIRECTOR



SIDNEY DAVIS

In Every Thing Give Thanks

Often times we may be prone to say, “in spite of everything give thanks.” But that is not what Paul wrote. He said, “In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:18.

Give thanks in everything? Yes in every situation and circumstance. We give thanks because God has promised that, “all things work together for good to them that love God.” Romans 8:28. We can thank God today because He has promised, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Hebrews 13:5.

Special Emphasis

There's just a few more weeks remaining in this year's Special Emphasis for the Children's Home. We have designated November 16 as “Children's Home Emphasis Sunday.” We would like for you to have special prayer for the outreach and ministry of the Home. Also, we would like for you to consider receiving an Emphasis offering for this ministry. We have already received emphasis offerings and are grateful for the individuals and churches for their support.

First Nine Weeks Report Card

Well, report cards for the first nine weeks of school reveal that the girls and boys at the Home have started the new school year doing well. The

kindergarten boy student is learning his numbers and abc's and is starting to improve in his reading. His teacher notes, “He is working hard!” The first grade boy has all A's. He was also selected to be an escort for his class at the Homecoming activities for North Jones Elementary. The second grade girl just liked one point in receiving all A's. She is working hard to achieve that goal. The fourth grade girl received the Principal's List Award (all A's) and was also chosen for Student of the Month. Our middle school girl and high school boy are doing well in their studies also. We are thankful for their progress thus far in this school year.



Homecoming Escort

Remember in Prayer and Focus Verse

Thank you for remembering this ministry in your prayers. Continue to remember the girls, boys, and staff of the Home as you pray. “Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” Psalm 107:8, 15, 21, 31.

Hobolochitto District WMA Report

President Mrs. Lumpkin welcomed everyone to the meeting. “Victory in Jesus” was led by Nicole with Claudette at the piano. We had 5 churches represented. Michell Tebo gave the devotional. All reports were given.

Mt. Carmel took home the banner. Our project is the Children's Home in Laurel. Fellowship will be at Mt. Calvary on January 8, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

Bro. Tebo brought the message from I John 5:12-14. Also gave an appreciation to WMA

ladies for their service and work. A memorial donation was given to St. Judes Children's Hospital in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Prayer requests were given with prayer given by Nicole Mitchell. Everyone enjoyed a delicious meal of soup and sandwiches and dessert by ladies at Benville Baptist Church.

Jean Overton, Reporter

It's Time to Order Winter Literature!

DiscipleGuide began taking Winter Literature orders on November 3. Ordering early ensures your literature will arrive in plenty of time for the upcoming quarter.

DiscipleGuide offers a full line of literature including Compass for adults, SOAR:lit for youth, and DiscipleKids for children. Other books, studies, and auxiliary materials are available as well. To order, or to learn more about DiscipleGuide products, go to discipleguide.org or call 1-800-333-1442.

Check Your Memory from Bro. Grover Laird

1. But his _____ is in the law of the Lord and in his law doth he meditate day and night. (Psa. 1:___)
2. for thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the _____. (Psa. 61:___)
3. Wilt thou not revive us again that thy people may _____ in thee. (Psa. 85:___)
4. A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband but she that maketh ashamed is as _____ in his bones. (Prov. 12:___)
5. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send _____. (Isa. 6:___)
6. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the _____ at his mouth for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. (Mal. 2:___)
7. Then opened he their understanding, that they might _____ the scriptures. (Luke 21:___)
8. And were _____ in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen. (Luke 24:___)

Contemporary Music

from page 3

minority. And the criteria for selecting them is becoming more and more thorough. Hymns have begun to take precedent in my song selection for two reasons.

First, hymns have been sung by the giants of the faith who have gone on before us over the last two millennia. When we sing 'A Mighty Fortress Is Our God', we join with Martin Luther who wrote it, and with Calvin and Spurgeon and Edwards who invariably sang and cherished it. When we sing 'It Is Well With My Soul' we are encouraged by the faith of Horatio Spafford who wrote the hymn in the wake of the tragic death of his four daughters. And while many contemporary songs have certainly

been written by wonderful brothers and sisters in Christ who have surely endured trials, the fact that we can join with generations past and be reminded that the Church is vastly larger than our local congregation, farther reaching than our town or state or country, and much, much older than the oldest saint living today is something we should not take lightly. Indeed, this should birth in us a desire to sing the songs that our Family has sung together for two thousand years (and beyond when we discuss singing the Psalms).

Second, the content of hymns is almost always vastly more theologically rich. When I say rich, I don't necessarily mean

every hymn recounts the Gospel in its entirety or that all hymns clearly teach the Five Points of Calvinism. Rather, the theology in the hymns is typically more sound or healthy than much of contemporary worship music. As I said earlier, contemporary songs engage our emotions more often, where the hymns engage our hearts by way of the mind.

By way of example, one of the top ten contemporary songs being sung in American evangelical churches right now is called 'One Thing Remains'. While there is nothing in the song particularly bad (in fact, much of it is pretty good), it seems to me that the purpose of the song is to work the listeners into an emotional state. The chorus is:

"Your love never fails/It never gives up/ Never runs out on me / Your love never fails / It never gives up / Never runs out on me / Your love never fails / It never gives up / Never runs out on me / Your love / Your love / Your love."

With the repetition of a simple lyric like that, it isn't a stretch to say that the composers' goal was not to engage the listeners mind.

Whereas Augustus Toplady's hymn 'Rock of Ages' is doctrinally sound, it also is a very moving song of our dependence upon Christ our Rock:

Seven New Trends

From page 1

Churches are depending less on traditional resources to seek prospective pastors. More are depending on informal networks to seek these pastors, rather than denominational or similar sources.

More churches are asking questions about the emotional intelligence of a candidate. Is he self-aware? Is he moody or temperamental? How motivated is he? Is he empathetic? Does he have good social and interpersonal skills?

There are several other trends I am watching closely. But these seven are the dominant trends in the pastor search process. Though they are ranked in order of frequency of comment, they are really all very close in their overall importance in the ways churches seek to find and call a pastor. So the number one issue, social media and the pastor, is not that much more dominant than the number seven issue, the emotional intelligence of the prospective pastor.

"Rock of Ages cleft for me / Let me hide myself in Thee / Let the water and the blood / From Thy wounded side which flowed / Be of sin the double cure / Save from wrath and make me pure."

So I make this plea to my fellow ministers, do not neglect these milestones from ages past. In fact, I would make the case for the abandonment of most contemporary songs. If you choose a song for congregational worship based on its content

(say you have chosen a contemporary song because of its focus on the Cross), do the hard work of finding a hymn that more than likely addresses the same topic or doctrine in a much deeper way. If on the other hand you have chosen a song because of the way it feels or the emotion it evokes, ask yourself whether you are depending upon the Holy Spirit or your own skills to engage our brothers and sisters in singing to our King.

National Campground Set for 50th Year of Camping

by Jason Prewitt, director

Have you ever been so excited about something and you just could not put it into words or you could not explain it to someone else? That's how I feel when I think of what is going on at Daniel Springs.

This summer is the 50th anniversary of the camp opening. I don't know about you, but it excites me to think about the thousands of people who have come through the gates of Daniel Springs Camp and been transformed by God during their camp experience. Testimonies are heard all over the world of how God has moved in lives because of the ministry and leadership of Daniel Springs.

We have been so blessed to have had Bro. James Speer lead in amazing ways over the last 35 years. I count it a huge blessing to have been a student and then a Student Pastor under his leadership. His servant heart and willingness to take the camp in new directions to reach countless lives for Christ have made an impact on the Kingdom.

God is already opening many new doors for this coming camp season. Please begin praying for the impact 2015 will have on young lives visiting Daniel Springs. We want all that is done to be God honoring and the best we have to offer.

Planning is already underway for the 2015 camp season. This planning includes some new retreats along with the summer schedule. Keep checking on the website, www.danielspringscamp.com for details of upcoming events and updates. If you have any questions feel free to contact the camp at (903) 685-2433 or email me at jason@danielspringscamp.com. We are so excited about the future and all that it has to offer.

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.

Church seeking pastor

Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, Picayune, Mississippi, is searching for a pastor. For those interested or for those requesting more information please contact Bro. Richard Cudd at 601-798-5039.

East Central Association Report

The East Central Association held its quarterly meeting on November 6, at Dykes Chapel Baptist Church in Richton. There were seven of the ten churches represented at the meeting.

Bro. Jerry Overstreet brought a message from the book of Malachi titled "The Altar of the Lord being defiled." He stressed the need to worship in the right way. Following the message, the minutes were read from the previous meeting and treasurer report given. Other reports were then given by: a letter being read by the moderator from Bro. Bartlett, missionary in Clinton; Bro. Paul Lee from the Prisoners Bible Crusade; Bro. Larry Geraldson from the missions department; and Bro. Phillip Burns, missionary at Day Star mission in Sumrall.

Shane White, asst. reporter

Harmony Report

The November meeting of the Harmony Association was held November 11th at Big Oak Baptist Church in Fulton. The meeting was treated by special music by The Harpers, introduced by Bro. Eddie Boutwell. There were 7 churches represented with 40 present and 8 visitors. The next

Gospel Music

Gospel Sing Set

The Florida Boys will be at Pine Ridge Baptist Church in Laurel on November 30. The program will begin at 5:00 p.m. For more information call 601-319-8466.

New Years Sing Planned

Pine Ridge Church in Laurel is planning a New Years Eve Quartet gospel sing. Spoken 4 Quartet from Branson, Missouri and Bro's 4 Quartet will be with us on December 31. The program will begin at 6:00 pm at Pine Ridge Baptist Church 220 Service Road Laurel, Ms 39443. For more information you may call 601-319-8466.

meeting will be at Forked Oak, swapping out with Central Baptist, the speaker will be Bro. Eddie Boutwell. Minutes of October meeting was not read, as it was entered in the new Harmony booklet. A request of New Hope Baptist to withdraw from the Harmony Association, was read and approved. It was announced that Bro. Doug Bridges accepted the position of interim pastor at Big Oak. Also announced that Bro. Don Thornburg had resigned as pastor at Westview in Oxford. We voted to pay The Harpers \$300.00 plus room and board for their expenses. The evening message was brought by Bro. Bobby Elliott.

Bro. Bobby Elliott, Moderator
Tony Marolt, Clerk

Prisoners Bible Crusade report

Free Bibles to Chaplains for Inmates in the USA

Report YTD 10/31/2014: 4,668 KJV English Bibles; 908 Spanish Bibles; Bibles totals 5,576; 2,540 New Testaments; 230 John/Romans; All Study Books 8,152; 1,797 Study helps; totals for all Bibles and materials to date in 2014 is 18,295. These were sent into 55 prisons. Chaplains report 461 people saved (24,113 since 1/1/2000). 19 new Chaplains requesting Bibles for the 1st time in 2014. (Since 1973, 227,919 Bibles; 62,885 New Testaments; Total all bibles & materials: 677,783. All bibles, books and materials given free of charges.

Personal

I have traveled 7,354 miles, I have personally seen 1 confession of Faith in Jesus Christ in 2014 (353 since 1/1/2000), visited 9 churches, 16 associations meeting & 38 prisons visits, taught 38 bible study classes in prisons. 1,025 CD/DVD sermons given to prisons (4,597 since 1/1/2000). Isaiah 55:11 inside prisons! Serving His Servants
Paul E. Lee, Director PBC
601.798.1341
pbc8paul@datasync.com