

“He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” I Corinthians 1:31

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“Jesus Christ and Him Crucified”

Looking Forward To Annual State Meeting In Different Circumstances

by Greg Medenwald, President
BMA of Mississippi

We are looking forward to the 214th Session of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi that meets with Pastor Blake McCain and Midway First Baptist Church in Sumrall, Mississippi on Tuesday, October 20, 2020, at 9:30 a.m.



Midway will graciously provide a sack lunch for everyone present to enjoy in their vehicles, or in the church's fellowship center organized for social distanc-

Practicing social distancing will be wise, facial masks in times of ingress and egress will be encouraged, and the program will be streamlined in hopes that the meeting will be a one-day event for majority of the attendees.

ing, and consequently only 45 minutes has been scheduled for lunch.

The 214th Annual Session will feature reports from our eleven state departments, commissions, and auxiliaries, the annual message by Pastor Blake McCain, congregational music led by Midway Minister of Music Alan Carlson and special music by the choir of Southeastern Baptist College. The theme “Jesus Christ and Him Crucified” is taken from I Corinthians 2:2.

Elaborate displays will be difficult.

Therefore, department, commission, and agency leaders are encouraged to promote their ministries by greeting people in the foyers with printed information as opposed to large exhibits. Also, leaders from national departments and agencies, since the expedited program will disallow speaking time, are encouraged to promote their ministries through printed materials and personal contact with the messengers and visitors present.

In the event that the scheduled Tuesday morning and afternoon sessions

prove to be inadequate to properly conduct the business at hand, the messengers – 3 per church – would then vote to continue on Tuesday evening, October 20, or Wednesday morning, October 21.

God's speed in your journey, God's grace upon you and your family and church, may God's name be lifted high during the meeting, and may God's work prosper thereafter in the BMA of Mississippi – all to the proclamation and glory of “Jesus Christ and Him Crucified”! “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” (I Corinthians 1:31).

2020 Annual Meeting Program
can be seen on page 8.

Lifeword Sunday is October 18

Adjusting to God's Plan - Reaching Out in New Ways

On March 17, the BMA's Global Missions Center closed down for six weeks because of COVID-19. There were many unanswered questions for all of those who serve in the building. For Lifeword Executive Director Donny Parrish, one of those questions was, “How can we produce new programming when we have no recording studios?” Computers, cameras, lights, teleprompters, sets, everything the Lifeword and Productions teams depended on for gospel broadcasting was now off limits.

Four days before the shutdown the Lifeword Board had met and approved exciting plans for the future, and there was a lot of anticipation for implementing them. Parrish says he began to pray and ask God, “Did I make a mistake here, Lord? Are you telling me to back up or back out? What in the world are you up to?”

But just a few days later God's

...there is still uncertainty with a heavy dose of fear and anxiety, but God has shown Christians that he is still on his throne...

plans become clear: He wasn't putting Lifeword on hold. He wasn't putting the plans they prayed about on a shelf. God was using the pandemic to open doors for Lifeword in ways they could never dream.



“He was using the pandemic,” Parrish says, “to force our team to begin thinking about and doing ministry in new ways. Incredibly, God's plan was to use the pandemic to expand our borders and increase our ministry's effectiveness like never before.”

But God had been moving behind the scenes to prepare Lifeword for that day.

Almost four years ago Lifeword made the strategic move to dive headlong into internet broadcasting. It was a

seismic shift for a ministry that for 55 years had focused on radio as its primary delivery platform. God is now blessing that decision in unimaginable ways and raising up the ministry of Lifeword “for such a time as this.”

Daily Zoom meetings began immediately for the team, and discussions focused on how to best serve and equip pastors and churches at home and abroad. In addition they identified the need for timely broadcast content, and what the messaging about Christ would be during this unusual time.

Then the internet began to light up all around the world! People were stuck in their homes, frightened, and with questions about God, his plan

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Dr. Scott Carson New Command Chaplain

Change of Stole Ceremony Welcomes New MSSG Command Chaplain

CAMP SHELBY, Mississippi - After a Changing of the Stole ceremony the Mississippi State Guard has a new command chaplain.

The ceremony took place September 20, 2020 at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center (CSJFTC). The incoming command chaplain is Chaplain Col. Scott Carson.

He brings 30-years of active duty experience in the U.S. Army to the MSSG. He also serves as president of Southeastern Baptist College in Laurel, Mississippi.

“I am both humbled and excited to be part of this professional organization that supports the great people of Mississippi,” said.

Col. Carson. “I learned of the Mississippi State Guard only a few months ago and when I understood their primary mission of serving the people of Mississippi during natural disasters, I knew my spiritual calling to serve as a chaplain in uniform was



COL Chaplain Scott Carson addresses the Mississippi State Guard soldiers during the Changing of the Stole Ceremony in Dalton Hall at Camp Shelby. Photo by CPT Russ Jones



continued on page 2

Change of Stole from front page

not over.”
The Mississippi State Guard (MSSG) is the state defense force of Mississippi. It operates under the authority of the Mississippi Military Department alongside the Mississippi Army National Guard (MSARNG) and the Mississippi Air National Guard (MSANG).



Outgoing Command Chaplain COL Nathan Barber (Left) and incoming Command Chaplain COL Scott Carson (Right). Photo by 2LT Andrew Bryson.

“I thank the Lord whom I serve for bringing me to the State Guard and also Brigadier General Doug Hayhurst for entrusting me with the spiritual oversight for our dedicated chaplain team and unit members.”

Transferring the stole—a long, plain, black cloth worn around the neck—is similar to a command’s leadership passing the unit’s guidon during a change of command ceremony.

“It has been an extraordinary privilege for me to serve in the MSSG, Col. Nathan Barber, the outgoing command chaplain

said during this year’s Annual Training. “I have had the opportunity to lead a dedicated and talented group of patriots as we provided pastoral care to the Troops as they carried out their responsibilities.”

Barber served in the MSSG nearly fourteen years. Seven as those years as the command chaplain.

“And now, as I come to retirement, I am certain that the Mississippi State Guard Chaplain Corps will flourish and grow under the distinguished leadership of Chaplain Col. Carson.”

The mission of the Mississippi State Guard (MSSG) is to provide mission-ready military forces to assist state and local authorities in times of state emergencies; to conduct homeland security and community service activities under the umbrella of Defense Support to Civil Authorities; and to augment the Mississippi Army National

Guard and Mississippi Air National Guard as required. About

The Mississippi Military Department is composed of the three branches of the military in the state of Mississippi. These branches are the Mississippi Army National Guard, the Mississippi Air National Guard, and the Mississippi State Guard. All three branches are administered by the state Adjutant General, an appointee of the Governor of Mississippi, and fall under the governor’s command.

Headquartered at the Raymond Road Armory Camp in Jackson, Mississippi, the

MSSG functions as an organized state militia under the authority of Title 32 of the U.S. Code



Col. Carson, left, during Change of Stole ceremony and U.S. Code, and the Mississippi Code of 1972, Chapter 5.

For information contact, please email Capt. Russ Jones, MSSG Public Affairs Officer at rjones60@gmail.com or 662-801.2150.

It’s a Mess

by Dr. Tony Cleaver

Let’s just go on and say it out loud: “It’s a mess!” Our United States of America is in a mess. One coast is on fire. Another coast is whipped by storms. Another coast is deluged with floods. The center of the country is lashed by winds. Not to be ignored is the virus that has us all in its grip. Our country’s

social, school, business, even our religious process is being shut down, changed, and irrevocably altered by this bug.

We as citizens scan the news daily hoping for a cure from the disease. We try to turn our calendars quickly to attempt to get past the storm season and fires. We hope for governmental rescue from our economic plight. We even put our masks on in

our public outings to surely and certainly protect us from the scourge. Many are out of work scrounging for ways to provide for their families. We scream, “Somebody’s got to do something! We’re in panic, pain, and pandemonium.” Familiar words, aren’t they? Recognizable feelings, right? Fits most of our situations, doesn’t it? In the midst of this mess, science, and government have no solution for us.



Tony Cleaver

Let me remind us all of some other words of consequence for this time in which we are living: “The rest of the people, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands to stop worshiping demons and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood, which cannot see, hear, or walk. And they did not repent of their murders, their sorceries, their sexual immorality, or their thefts.” (Revelation 9) The Bible goes on to say in Chapter 16 “(their) kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues because of their

pain and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they did not repent of their works.”

Christians understand science and its claims on our environment. Christians understand global health problems and public health strategies. Christians understand economic principles. However, beyond all this, Christians know with absolute certainty the God of Heaven, the Lord of the Armies, is in unconditional control of His creation.

Calamitous events have to do with us. Let’s just go on and say it out loud: “It’s a mess!” Now the next words to say out loud are (I have not heard or read anyone saying these words.): “It’s a mess and the cause of the mess is us. We are the messers.” It is all of us, not simply “them”, who are in great need of repentance. The wise teacher once observed: “...if I send pestilence on my people, and my people, who bear my name, humble

themselves, pray and seek my face, and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7)

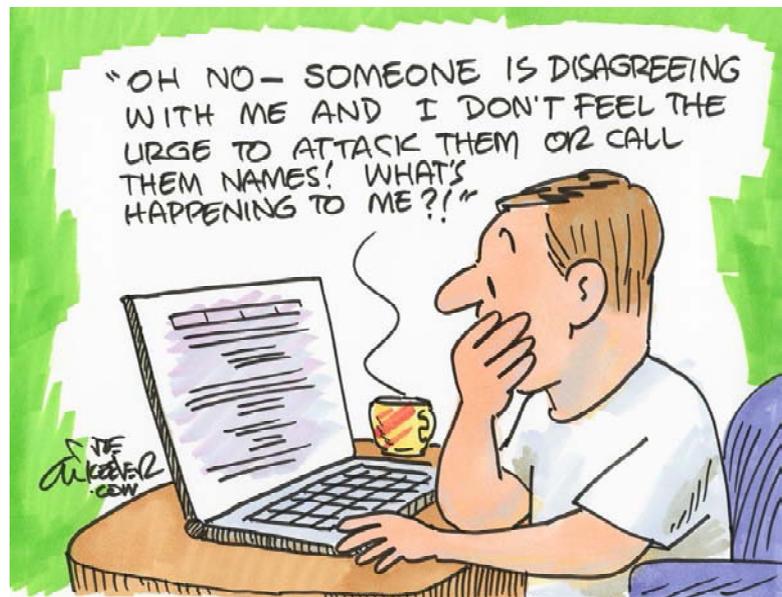
Dr. Tony Cleaver is a retired U.S. Army Chaplain and Director of Distance Learning for BMA Seminary.

You may contact him at jstmcleaver@embarqmail.com

East Central Holds Annual Meeting 2020

Our 2020 annual meeting was held September 12, 2020, at Canaan Missionary Baptist Church. Bro. Aubrey Cook preached an amazing message from Luke 17:32 - Remember Lot’s Wife. Business was done in an orderly fashion with 4 of our missionaries presenting their reports. Thanks go to Canaan Baptist Church for hosting the meeting. Our next meeting will be held at Tiger Creek Missionary Baptist Church on November 5, 2020.

Moderator: Bro Jason Howard
Reporter: Bro. Jerry Overstreet



Submission Policies

Your Mississippi Baptist is the voice of the BMA of Mississippi, her churches, and her ministries. We are pleased to publish reports from all related entities, including the world-wide ministries of the BMA of America. We do not publish news or notices of secular or outside groups.

Article submissions should be sent by email to editor@msbaptist.org or in typed format by mail to P.O. Box 8181, Laurel, MS 39441.

Photos should be emailed in jpg format. Photos lose resolution when printed on newsprint, therefore the original quality is vital. Photos should be well lighted, in focus, clear and sharp. Photos should contain people if at all possible. There is no guarantee that all articles and/or photos will be published. Unsolicited items will be given consideration, but publication is not guaranteed. Date sensitive articles will take priority.

We publish on the 1st and 15th of each month with the exception of December. Articles announcing events should be in the issue that is published at least 2 weeks prior.

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Thousands fill National Mall on day of prayer and repentance

WASHINGTON (BP) – Tens of thousands packed the National Mall in Washington Saturday September 26 to cry out to God and repent.

The gathering stretched from the Lincoln Memorial to the U.S. Capitol.

Christians from all over the country participated in the prayer march, which was organized by evangelist Franklin Graham.

Vice President Mike Pence and his wife Karen also participated.

“When you pray, pray with confidence,” Pence said. “As we stand today on an ancient promise that Americans have claimed throughout our history, that if His people, who are called by His name, will humble themselves and pray, and turn, He’ll do like He’s always done, through much more challenging times in the life of this nation. He’ll hear from heaven. And He’ll heal this land.”

“I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I have nowhere else to go.” - Abraham Lincoln



Pence said Americans have always turned to prayer in times of turmoil.

“Since the founding of our nation, our leaders and our people have gone to prayer in

challenging times,” he said. “Abraham Lincoln, before whose monument we stand today, said during his time in the White House: ‘I have been driven many times to my knees by the over-

whelming conviction that I have nowhere else to go.’”

Pence brought greetings from President Trump and said the President told him to thank the people for their prayers.

Also at the Lincoln Memorial, Graham prayed, “Our Father and our God, we come to say thank you. But Father, our country is in trouble. We need your help.”

Organizers said many more around the country prayed together from homes and churches. And around the world, believers in different time zones set alarms to wake up in the middle of the night to pray, according to a report from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

Will Graham, Franklin’s son and grandson of the late Billy Graham, prayed at the World War II Memorial and asked for God’s protection of military members around the world.

“My grandfather understood that the battle ... is done on our knees,” he said. “That’s where the real fight is. Make sure you pray, pray and pray.”

Attorneys for MacArthur say judge has agreed to trial

OneNewsNow.com - Attorneys for California pastor John MacArthur announced late Thursday their client and his church have won the right to a court trial in the ongoing legal fight with local and state public officials.

The announcement by Thomas More Society means a trial judge will hear Los Angeles County defend its contempt citation against Grace Community Church and also hear attorneys for the church fight the

constitutionality of such orders.

MacArthur is fighting local officials in a county where numerous businesses are allowed to operate, but Grace Community and all other churches are ordered to remain closed unless they conduct outdoor services.

According to L.A. County’s “Roadmap to Recovery” website:

Gyms and fitness centers, offices of non-critical sectors, places of worship, personal care services, and indoor malls must continue to cease all indoor op-



Pastor John MacArthur

erations as ordered by the State of California. Additionally, indoor operations at restaurants, wineries, movie theaters, family entertainment, zoos, muse-

ums, and cardrooms remain closed.

L.A. County has a population of 10 million, where fewer than 6,500 have died from COVID-19 to date.

The county’s shut-down orders, ironically, could delay a contempt trial until 2021, but a hearing is set for November 13 to allow attorneys on both sides to argue over the preliminary injunction before Judge Mitchell Beckloff, Thomas More said.

“This ruling,” Thomas More special counsel Charles LiMandri said, “prevents Los Angeles County’s attempted rush to judgment in its continued prosecution of Pastor John

MacArthur and Grace Community Church for courageously exercising their First Amendment rights.”

MacArthur, who has led the church since the 1960s, has said he and church elders willingly closed their doors when medical experts predicted a terrible pandemic that never materialized despite the warnings.

“I’m very grateful to Judge Beckloff for providing full due process and recognizing the importance of these constitutional protections,” MacArthur said in a statement. “The reality is that the county cannot show that their order is even rational, much less necessary.”

Lifeword Sunday is October 18 from front page

for the world and for their lives. Investment in the Lifeword Cloud and its social media platforms began to have huge pay-offs. Traffic to Lifeword.org doubled overnight, and thousands of people began to tune in to programming.

The ministry of Lifeword was speaking to more people about Jesus than at any time in her history.

Churches from across the BMA began calling to ask about live streaming their Sunday services. Lifeword and BMA Productions teams consulted with multiple pastors and church staffs, helping them use technology to continue ministry each week.

Suddenly God’s church was forced out of buildings and into the streets. The technology many churches had avoided was now a lifeline for ministry. Lifeword and BMA Productions teams were there to help BMA churches fulfill their mission.

Six months later, there is still uncertainty with a heavy dose of fear and anxiety, but God has shown Christians that he is still on his throne. Lifeword never shut down broadcasts that point people to the cross. Lifeword never called a halt to exalting God’s name. And it never canceled Lifeword Sunday celebrations. Oh, how God has blessed the BMA’s media ministry!

Lifeword’s 55th birthday was

September 4th of 2020. She’s in her “mature” years, but she can still get around pretty well, around the whole world, actually! With more global partners, more broadcast languages, and more countries than ever before, she is reaching the lost with the powerful message of salvation through Jesus.

Join us as we celebrate God’s goodness, even through the chaos of a pandemic. Lifeword Sunday is October 18. Contact Lauren Crawley at lauren@lifeword.org or 501-205-1127 for more information. Text lifeword20 to make a \$20 investment or donate at lifeword.org/donate.

Sofilthy's From the Archives

by Barbara White



Sleeping On A Waterbed

Not long ago I had my first-time experience of sleeping on a waterbed. The first challenge is getting in AND out of the bed, but with practice, I mastered that.

I won’t say that it was a spiritual experience, but I was reminded of how the disciples must have felt when they were in a storm on the sea of Galilee. Many years later someone wrote a song about it: “Master, the tempest is raging. The billows are tossing high.....” And if you have a problem with motion sickness, I certainly don’t recommend it.

Just as Jesus calmed the sea, he calmed that sloshing waterbed and I slept good! I don’t do many things well, but I sleep good!

Sleeping good is a special blessing from God! “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matt. 11:28

Southeastern Baptist College

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Serving Christ With A Biblical World View In A Christian Atmosphere

President's Perspective

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Corinthians 15:58

I never wanted to pastor a church. I knew I was called to the military chaplaincy as a young man of 17 years old and after college, the Lord compelled me to follow His will for my life. However, one of the requirements for qualifying for the Army Chaplaincy was to pastor a church for a minimum of two years. I just couldn't see the logic in it and even though I did not want to



Dr. Scott Carson
President

pastor, it was necessary. Otherwise I could never become a chaplain. Later on, I was to learn just how valuable that experience had been. I didn't want to, but it was necessary, otherwise I could not serve as a chaplain.

"We are nearly already overwhelmed with daily challenges, but if God truly wants us to do this, then He will enable us to accomplish His will..."

While I was still in seminary Community Baptist Church called me to be their pastor, and even though I was reluctantly following the Lord's will, I knew this was God's choice. The people were friendly and eager to receive the Word of God and to continue growing spiritually. They also knew I planned to be there only two years until I qualified for the chaplaincy and were willing to give me the opportunity.

Over the course of the first year in the pastorate, the Lord

blessed the church with souls saved, new believers baptized and members added to the church roles. All I needed was another year of smooth pastoring before resigning and entering the Army. It was personally very rewarding. Then it happened. Our Sunday school building was woefully inadequate for the growing congregation. Someone made a motion during a business meeting that we should build a new multipurpose Sunday school building. I knew what this meant. I had been told that one of most contentious things a pastor can experience in leading a church is for it to build. Before I knew what was happening, it was seconded. The deacons and leaders of the church were all for it. In

fact, when put to a vote the church voted unanimously... well, except for one abstention, me! I don't think anyone even noticed that I had not raised my hand.

Yes, there were contentious moments. There were stressors.

There were words exchanged between tremendous church members and myself! But, in the end we had a beautiful new Sunday school addition complete with a multipurpose kitchen and fellowship hall, and it was paid in full when the last item was put in place without losing a single church member. Praise the Lord!

Well, here I am again challenged to be stepping out in faith and doing God's will in this extremely important endeavor for the future of SBC: a building program. Arg! The time has come that we seriously move forward with planning and building a new dormitory that will house somewhere between 50 to 100 students. Even though we are now at maximum hous-

ing capacity and are blessed with the largest number of students in many decades, it is clear that the Lord wants us to grow even more. I believe we can add another 100 students quickly if we had the living space to do it. Along with this growth also comes other stressors if we proceed with building. We will need parking spaces and a new student center. I also envision our campus someday having a beautiful chapel facility.

It will be amazing to see the Lord lead us through this building program, but at the same time I know there will be significant challenges in this initiative. We are nearly already overwhelmed with daily challenges, but if God truly wants us to do this, then He will enable us to accomplish His will. I am asking the churches of the BMA of Mississippi to pray earnestly about this opportunity the Lord has given to us to establish the future of SBC. He is leading us forward and we must keep up with Him!

"In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion." Psalm 71:1

Equipping the Saints!
Dr. Carson



President Carson is appointed as Command Chaplain of the Mississippi State Guard

Special Emphasis

Praise the Lord for your generosity! Southeastern Baptist College's Special Emphasis Months recently concluded and listed below are the churches that specifically provided donations toward this effort.

Many sent their contributions early and while other churches participated throughout the year giving eagerly toward special needs, as they were moved

by the Holy Spirit. Donations are down from previous years which I am confident this is due to COVID 19.

You may still participate, simply mark your check in the memo line as Special Emphasis. I express a huge "thank you" to all the churches and individuals who support God's work here at SBC.

- Bethel, Seminary
- Big Creek, Soso
- Cypress Creek, Brooklyn
- Day Star, Sumrall
- East Amory, Amory
- First, Bay Springs
- First, Shady Grove
- Forked Oak, Booneville
- Hopewell, Laurel
- Magnolia, Hattiesburg
- Mineral Springs, Taylorsville
- New Bethany, Seminary
- Paramount, Wiggins
- Parkview, Laurel
- South Green, Tupelo
- Spring Hill, Ocean Springs
- Temple, Biloxi
- Washington, Neely

Final Notice: Hilbun Dorm Renovation Not Fully Funded

Renovation is complete on the upstairs of Hilbun Hall dormitory and students have already fully occupied them! We still need donors to help pay for the rooms. This is a tremendous opportunity for your church, yourself, or an organization to adopt as their contribution to the growth of SBC. Four of the rooms are financed by generous donors. There is still an opportunity for you to donate toward one or more of the remaining four



Gym floor renovation continues to move forward

rooms. For each full sponsor, the sponsor's name will be placed on a plaque on the door of the suite. Each suite will cost \$7,200 to renovate. Please refer to the adjacent flyer for more details.

TNT

Due to COVID 19, the Tuesday Night Talks (TNT) are cancelled through the end of the Fall Semester. We will endeavor to restart this important spiritual growth program in the Spring Semester.

Lighthouse Café is OPEN!

There are COVID 19 protocols in place, however, the café is open Tuesday



Professor Reed delivers the chapel message through Friday, 11-2. Closed Saturday, Sunday, and Monday.

Amazon Smile

Anyone shopping on Amazon can select Southeastern Baptist College as your charity. When you do this, a portion of your purchase price will go directly to SBC as a donation from Amazon! Thank you for those who are already using this unique method to benefit SBC.



SBC staff utilizes new tech to discuss finances



SBC choir "Cornerstone" practices for upcoming association meetings

Singleness – Biblical Instruction

Dr. John M. Adams
Executive Director, Moral Action

“Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.” I Cor. 7:25

There is Biblical advice on staying single and living the life without a marriage partner. Sometimes our cruel society makes the widowed person, the divorced person, or the individual who has never married, feel like an “odddity”. It may surprise some of the marrieds to know that it is God’s will for some not to be married. It is time for all to realize there is nothing wrong with singleness.

There are some benefits of remaining single. I have in mind those who have never married or those who have been married, but are no longer.

1. Less of Present-Day Distress - I Cor. 7:27: “Art thou bound unto a wife? Seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife”

In remaining single, you are certain to

have less stress and distress. In our day there are certain hostilities and distresses that you simply encounter because you are a Christian and married. Children and marriage add a beautiful, but great responsibility. When Paul said, “Are you released from a wife?” he is saying, don’t seek to get married to solve your problems. A single person does not have to live a lifestyle of seeking a mate. They should seek the Lord and if they desire to marry, let the Lord seek their mate. So many go to parties, bars, college, single clubs, etc. under the presumption, “we are suppose to pursue a marriage partner.” Vs. 27, simply says, “Put the Lord Jesus Christ



Dr. Adams

RESULTS OF OUR QUIZ OVER THE BMA DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

by Jordan Tew, Assistant to the Director

Let me begin by saying this quiz is not perfect. There are certain challenges in taking a doctrinal statement and turning it into a quiz. Also, since this quiz was available online, not every person who took the quiz is part of a BMA church.

Now that I've said those things, I can say that the results were mostly good. Our people seem to have a good grip on the basics of the Christian faith.

However, there are also several troubling trends to note.

(709 people took this quiz)

1. There is uncertainty about the nature of Jesus' resurrection. (24% believe he rose spiritually from the dead. However, His resurrection was bodily and literal. This is important because to deny the bodily resurrection is actually heresy and is the position of unchristian groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses.)

2. We seem to have much confusion about the origins of the church. (30% believe it began at Pentecost, but we believe it began during Jesus' earthly ministry.)

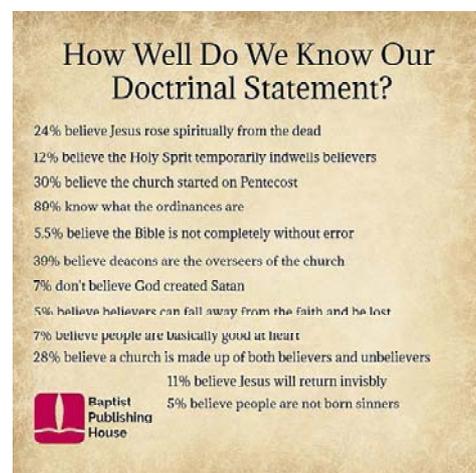
3. 89% know what the ordinances are. That's a low number. (The ordinances are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. 8% of quiz takers thought it was prayer and worship.)

4. There is a general lack of biblical knowledge when it comes to the role of deacon. (39% believe deacons are the overseers of the church. Scripture only gives the title of overseer to the pastors/elders. This has often led to unbiblical leadership structures and controversy within the local church.)

5. There is confusion as to the definition of a church. This was, perhaps, the most confusing part of the quiz. Participants were asked: A church is made up of believers and unbelievers: True or False? (28% answered "true." While both believers and unbelievers, wheat and tare, attend church week in and week out, the biblical definition of a church is a group of baptized believers.)

6. People are not sure about the nature of Christ's return. Many people hold different views of the endtimes (tribulation, rapture, millennium, etc.), but what we have here is a pretty serious case of non-clarity. (11% believe Jesus will return invisibly. The Scriptures make it very clear that "every eye shall see Him," Revelation 1:7.)

We will be posting some links to helpful resources addressing these issues soon. We hope to provide our churches with what they need to learn and grow in these important areas of doctrine. If anyone would like a copy of the BMA Doctrinal Statement, please contact us at baptistpublishing@gmail.com.



in control of your singleness. Seek Him – not some available mate.”

II. Less Difficulty – I Cor. 7:28: “But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh, but I spare you.”

This verse adds a dimension single persons readily ignore in being alone. It is saying that people who remain single may have fewer difficulties in their personal lives. Success in life consist not so much in marrying the person who will make you happy, as escaping the person who will make you miserable. Don’t marry just for companionship, sexual relations, or financial security.

III. More Time For Spiritual Matters - I Cor. 7:29-31: “But this I say, brethren, the time is short, it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it for the fashion of this world passeth away.”

Marriage is not sinful, but Paul is simply teaching that there is an alternate lifestyle - different from marriage. In the single stage of life there are no reservations or resistance and the person is completely available to Christ’s call. If you are living alone, ask yourself, “Is God allowing me to be single so that He can greater use me?” He may wish to use you in some area of His work that you could not take on if you were married.

We are often short-sighted in that we think only of what we are not enjoying, rather, than what God may have for His glory, and for our spiritual enrichment. The ultimate in God’s plan is that you, who are unmarried, seek the Lord and

listen to what He is saying to you. Verse 32 says, “But I want you to be free from concern.”

IV. More Time For a Vertical Relationship – I Cor. 7:32-35: “But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord. But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit, but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.”

Those of us who are married, cannot apply verse 35, as those who are single. It is good to be married, if God is in the marriage. But the single person, undoubtedly, has more time.

Three Admonitions:

(1) Be Happy

Since God has allowed you to be single, you are to capitalize on the scriptural benefits that are yours to enjoy. Whether single, divorced, or widowed, God is sovereignly in control.

(2) Look Up

Turn all of your energies to the vertical, instead of the horizontal panic and worry. God is good at finding you a mate or giving you great satisfaction being single.

(3) Calm Down

Relax and give all the control of your life over to the Saviour. Watch Him direct your life toward others who could really use some things you have to offer.

Volunteer Student Ministry Training Set

from National Missions Department

If you plan on leading a VSM team, going on a BMMI trip, or visiting a mission field in the near future, we encourage you to attend this upcoming security training. BMA Missions is the sponsor, and you will be equipped in ways you didn’t even know were necessary for travel abroad. (The security company conducting the training is used by Missions for its required training of missionaries and Missions team members.)

Here are the details:

What

Advanced Travel Security and Survival Training

The course will cover travel security basics, advanced techniques for surviving hostage and government detention, information protection, and other travel security-related modules.

Who

Anyone who travels often (including VSM, BMMI, overseas mission field, etc.)

or works in sensitive areas. This course will help improve your ability to avoid conflict and survive if/when necessary.

When

Monday November 9 and Tuesday November 10

Where

Global Missions Center at 611 Locust Avenue, Conway, Arkansas (This in-person training is in compliance with CDC regulations.)

To sign up, contact Eli Semedo on or before October 26 by calling 501.455.4977 or emailing eli@bmaam.com.



Daniel Springs Baptist Camp Planning for Future

by Jason Prewitt, Camp Director

As you know Daniel Springs Camp was unable to host our normal summer camp season due to the Corona Virus. We were so disappointed not having our summer staff family of young adults that invest their summer into camp and missing church groups being on camps each week of the summer. We so missed seeing the longtime friends and the new relation-



Jason Prewitt

ships with church leaders that come as sponsors and the students that come with their church groups. Needless to say, it was too quiet at Daniel Springs during the months of May, June, July and August.

On an exciting and upbeat note, we were able to host a few small groups this summer thanks to the Daniel Retreat Center that was remodeled with your help. That remodeled building has turned into a huge blessing. It was great seeing groups together, being in God's Word, worshiping, involved in recreation games and building lasting friendships with fellow students and adults.



What does no summer mean for Daniel Springs Camp? We started out the summer very concerned as to what would happen to the camps financial stability, we have worked so hard to build over the last few years. As many of us have done, we cut back on non-essential expenses. Through all of this God has been

amazing. Contributions have dipped down, but nothing like we expected – Praise the Lord. We are still watching all the expenses closely because we know this is not over yet, but the monthly contributions through associations, churches, individuals and special offerings from different groups have been a huge blessing. A few years ago, our goal was to be strong. Daniel Springs Camp is holding its healthy status, which would not happen without the monthly supports and special offering, as of now but please join us in prayer as we strive to be financially stronger and stronger each day.

Moving forward we are still, like many of you, taking this day by day. We are working on a

calendar of events but until the states lift some of the requirements, we are struggling with hosting big events. That does not stop us from hosting church retreats, men's or women's groups, family reunions, pool parties or small groups activities. We have options of day events or overnight stays. There are plenty of activities such as Archery Tag, gaga pit, volleyball, basketball, human foosball, swimming in the pool, fishing or just the peace and quiet of east Texas. Let us know how we be of service to you, your church or your family.

An excitement is already building about the 2021 summer camp season. We are already working on recruiting our summer staff so if you are or know of a high school junior or senior, a college student or a young adult that would like to invest their summer investing in students and adults send them our way. Dates for summer camps will be coming out soon so keep watching for more details.

If we can be of help or you would like me to come share about Daniel Springs Camp, your camp ministry please let me know. I would love to come and share about the exciting things going on with your camp ministry. My contact information is Jason@DanielSpringsCamp.com or (903) 685-2433.

5 Myths About Why You Go to Church

by Larry Barker, Director
North American Church
Planting

Core values are principles and convictions that you have for both your life and your ministry. They are values focusing on the action that will occur and the behavior that will dominate and direct your journey.

Quite simply: "Values Require Action!"

The same thing should applied to churches, and whether they are written down or not, churches have core values. It is your church's DNA that defines who your church is. Two thousand years ago, the first church in Acts 2:42-47 knew what their core values were and articulated them well: They "devoted themselves" to their values, and their actions reflected and defined them.

Luke McCown says, "Behavior always follows authentic belief." In Acts 2, because they valued people and their needs, they were willing to sell their possessions to make sure that everyone's needs were met. Their behavior followed what they said they believed.

In Acts 6 church leaders met to discuss how they valued elderly widows being ministered to but also valued the importance of prayer and the ministry of God's word. So they developed a process where neither value was neglected. Once again their behavior followed what they said they believed!

Fast forward 2,000 years and let's say a church believes strongly that every member should serve in a ministry." Here's how that belief should best be articulated: "We value

aggressively seeking opportunities to use our God-given abilities to glorify God and serving with the church to carry out her mission.

"As members, we continually serve in our sponsored ministries for our growth and the growth of others. We value Ephesians 2:10: For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."

My church's three-pronged core values are "Worship, Grow, Serve." Under each of these three verbs is a well-articulated explanation as to how each church member can accomplish each one. I am not just a pew-sitter. I am a minister.

Francis Chan puts it this way: "The pastor is not the minister. The pastor is the equipper; every member of the church is a minister." If you struggle with that concept please check out Ephesians 4:11-12. Today's churches have been described as looking more like a spectator sport where 95% of the people who desperately need exercise are watching the 5% who desperately need a rest.

There are many possible reasons more people are not accepting their responsibilities of serving in a ministry. Pastor Todd West lists these five ministry myths that help us understand and expose the truth.

Myth #1

Only certain people are gifted to serve. (See 1 Corinthians 12:6-7.) The truth is that God has a place, a plan, and a purpose for every one of us. God is watching and he notices your worship.

You have a voice he wants to hear, a heart he wants to know, and a life he wants to use.

Myth #2

I just don't have time. (See 1 Corinthians 10:13) The truth is that we make time for those things we really value. None of us has any more time than anybody else, but we will have more time if every member is doing their part and fulfilling God's plan for them. Someone has said, "A year from now you will wish you had started today."

Myth #3

It is the pastor and staff's job to minister to people. (See Ephesians 4:11-12 and 1 Peter 2:9) Spiritually mature Christians are not those who have all the answers but rather they are involved in the process of making disciples and developing leaders. The Great Commission involves us reproducing ourselves!

Myth #4

It is better to not get too involved. (See Ephesians 3:21 and Ephesians 1:23.) If everyone pitches in it is doable. It is overwhelming when everyone is not pulling their own weight but expecting everyone else to do their work for them. We overestimate what we can accomplish in one year, but we underestimate what can be accomplished in five years.

Myth #5

What I do is not important. (See Ephesians 4:16.) If you think that you're too small or unimportant to have an impact,

try going to bed with a mosquito in the room. You can make a difference, and Christ is working in you to equip you to accomplish his good work. Hebrews 13:21 says, "(May God) make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

Healthy churches realize that they are not just a gathering place but an equipping center to train every member to be a minister and to accomplish God's mission!

Lifeword Sunday is October 18th

Has your church registered for Lifeword Sunday? Have you purchased LWS T-shirts? Ordered bulletin inserts and/or posters? Have you planned a fund-raising event? Do you have a team Lifeword leader in your church to do those things?

If you haven't it's not too late, and each one of them can be accomplished according to social distancing guidelines, even the fund-raising part!

According to Director of Church Connections Lauren Crawley, many churches are still having the traditional "Walk" to raise money for Lifeword. Also, she says, "Because more people outside our churches are finding out about Lifeword with the 'boosting' Jon Dodson (Director of Internet Broadcasting and Digital Strategy) does, we're expanding our reach to anyone on line who sees our videos. For the first time in our history, people are becoming aware of the ministry behind the broadcasts."

Cloud technology has enabled more people to understand what Lifeword is and does, and even more exciting is that people are sharing the gospel content they see. With more sharing comes more people who can hear the gospel, often for the very first time!

You can be a part of spreading the good news to desperate and hurting people all over the world by going to Lifeword's Facebook page then liking, following and sharing its content.

You can also partner with Lifeword by texting "lifeword20" to make a one-time \$20 investment or donate at lifeword.org/donate. (A one-time donation of \$20 will be added to your mobile phone bill. All donations must be authorized by you the account holder. Message & Data Rates May Apply.)

Scripture Thoughts by Cleaver

Galatians 1.7 "...Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ."

The genuine Gospel has many imitations, fakes, knock offs, and counterfeits.

Those phonies are not a real Gospel at all. The good news of the Gospel is that Christ has died for our sins, was buried, and He rose again the third day. Some try to disturb or trouble Christians with falseness regarding the Gospel. Jesus tells us (Matthew 24.24) that false prophets will come to show great signs, even wonders, to try to fool people.

Today these false teachers have a "doctorate in deception" and an immense social media presence. These kinds of people want to pervert the Gospel. This word "pervert" or distort means to turn away. Shall we in our church have a lot of politics and a little of Jesus? Should our church have a large portion of contemporary social agenda and just a hint of Jesus? No and an absolute no! To some people adding to the Church mission with political or social agendas

is improving it. No, you have forsaken the Gospel!

Paul adds (verse 9) "If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse!"

Galatians 2.16 "...for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

When I first learned to type on an old manual typewriter, the instructor told us about right side justified margins. Those margins are even on the right side. That was almost impossible to do on a typewriter. Not so with a word processor. You can justify any margin, left or right or both, with the click of a keystroke. Justified can be applied with a Christian meaning to be "even" in God's sight. Acceptable, even correct, in God's estimate is what justified means in this passage.

Good Reader, most of us think we have created some wonderful machinations to be justified in His sight. We have developed many ways to "show God how good we are" in order to be justified in His presence. Hold on! Let's stop our processes of labored efforts to justify ourselves. It is Christ who justifies us with God. That's the Gospel truth!

Paul concludes this thought of self-justification with this audacious statement: (verse 21): "...for if righteousness comes through the law (that is keeping or doing a set of rules or a concoction of procedures), then Christ died for nothing."

Galatians 6.1 "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted"

The first thing I do when I slip or fall is to look around to see if anyone saw me. I am so embarrassed! Slapstick humor on stage and film and TV has everyone laughing when someone slips and falls on a banana peel. It is not so humorous when someone slips and falls into scandal, bad behavior, wrongdoing, or plain old downright sin. When this happens, gossip mongers go to work with new and damning ammunition for their tongues to spew out about the "sinner" who got caught.

Certainly the one caught in the fall, overtaken in wrongdoing is typically embarrassed and mostly shamed. Many who are caught want someone to help them. In the Christian Church that person must be the brother or sister in Christ. The Golden Rule of "do unto others as you

COMMISSION ON Senior Adults

4226 Highway 15 North
Laurel, Mississippi 39440



Kenneth Flynt
Director

Commission on Senior Adults Annual Report

by Kenneth Flynt, Director

2020 has been a difficult period of time for all of us. A strange time for all of us. In spite of changing times, the Senior Commission has fared well. Support has continued and we do appreciate your faithfulness in giving to this ministry.

The South Mississippi Senior Conference at Big Creek Baptist Church didn't miss a beat. Almost 400 gathered for a great day and it will be well remembered. Thanks to those who attended. The North Mississippi Senior Conference scheduled for May at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church had to be canceled due to COVID-19.

Both conferences are once again scheduled to meet in March and May, watch for dates.

A joyful time is always in store at these meetings. Door prizes brings thrilling moments and the recognition of the oldest people present is always a fun time. Looking forward to these again when it is safe to do so.

Stay safe and let's look forward to new conferences when it is safe to meet.

would have them do unto you" is a positive and proactive directive from Jesus. We must do to the other who has been overtaken in wrongdoing as we would want them to do for us. We need to do it first. Restoration is what the Apostle tells us to do. It's what Jesus tells us to do.

Brothers and sisters, let's get

busy restoring our fellow congregants. Remember we too might be there on their banana peel someday.

Dr. Tony Cleaver is a retired U.S. Army Chaplain and Director of Distance Learning for BMA Seminary.

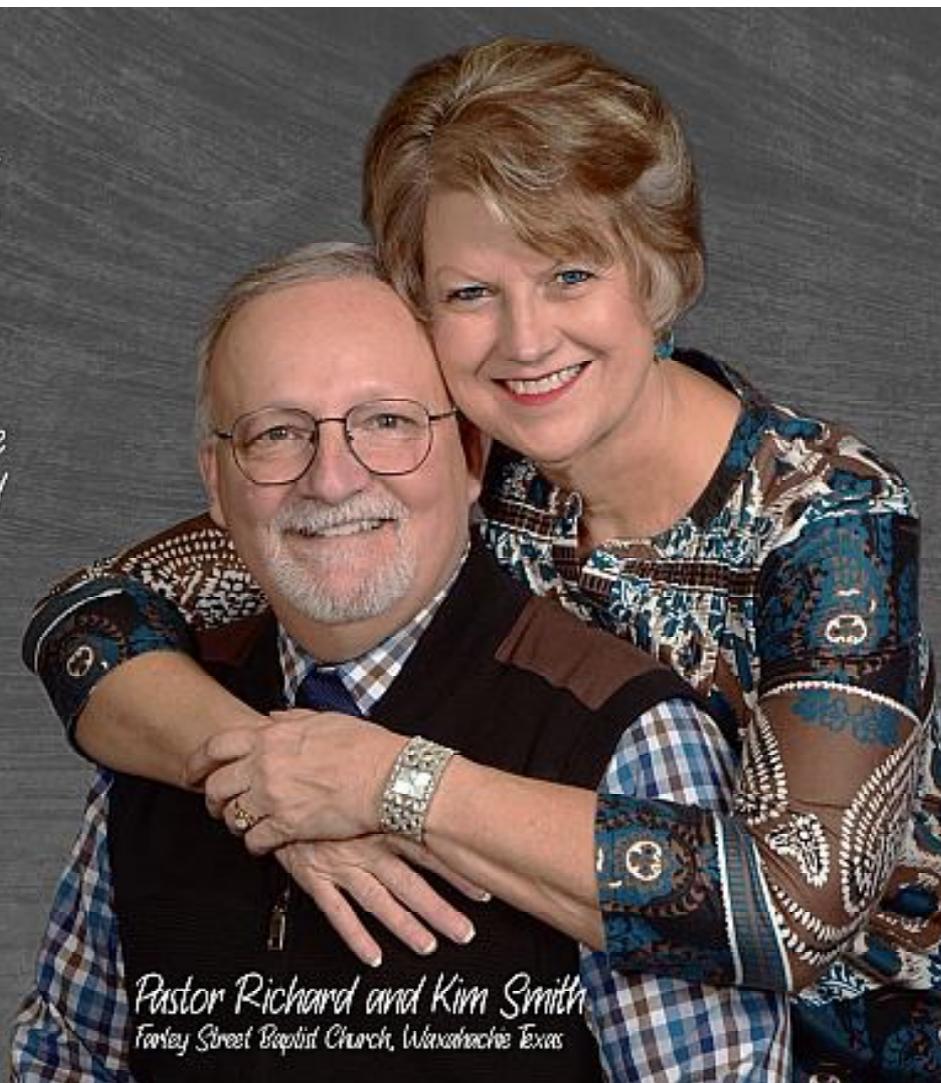
You may contact him at jstmcleaver@embarqmail.com

Lifeword was the very first mission offering Kim and I gave as a new married couple. The year was 1980, I was finishing up my college degree at East Texas Baptist University, and we were serving on staff at Calvary Baptist Church, in Gilmer, Texas. Paul Bearfield asked me to serve as area coordinator for the Walk-a-thon. We certainly did not have much money, but we believed then, as we still do 40 years later, giving to Lifeword is helping share the most important message in all the world, to all the world. We hope you will join us in giving to Lifeword, so the world can hear the good news of Jesus Christ.

Lifeword Sunday

10-18-20

*Pastor Richard and Kim Smith
Farley Street Baptist Church, Waxahachie Texas*



Durable Riches

"Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness" (Proverbs 8:18).

by Bro. Grover Laird

The Wisdom from above is speaking in our text. It is the Lord Who gives us the help we need in obtaining durable riches: the kind that blesses and lasts.

To say the least, most people seem rather mixed up concerning the subject of riches. When riches are mentioned, most people immediately think of a kind that the Bible calls deceitful riches, not thinking of the kind that the Bible calls durable riches. Strange isn't it?

While all of us need a certain amount of money to meet our material needs in this world, getting too concerned about it has been the downfall of many. Because of this danger the Bible normally doesn't speak too well of money. It often referred to money as "filthy lucre." (I Timothy 3:3) Jesus spoke of people letting it be their god. (Matthew 6:24) The Bible tells us that a love for this kind of riches is "the root of all

evil," and that an over concern for it would bring much sorrow and pain in the end. (I Timothy 6:9,10) When our text therefore spoke of durable riches, it was not speaking of money. It was rather speaking of Spiritual wealth. Salvation, and all that goes with it, is spoken of as riches. (II Corinthians 8:9) Things like faith, (James 2:5) and "full assurance of understanding" are also called riches. (Colossians 3:2)

Unlike material wealth, there are no bad side affects to durable riches. Spiritual riches are all good. Also, it is difficult to describe all the benefits of these riches because they are "unsearchable riches." (Ephesians 3:8) Consider with me now some comparisons between money and Spiritual, or durable riches.

Money is temporal - "For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?" (Proverbs 27:24).

Spiritual wealth lasts - "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Matthew 6:20). Money is deceitful - "And the cares of this

world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mark 4:19).

Spiritual wealth is never misleading. It is always better than described. It can be "joy unspeakable and full of glory." (I Peter 1:8)

Material wealth is uncertain - "Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" (Proverbs 23:4,5. Also I Timothy 6:17)

Spiritual wealth is sure - "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (I Peter 1:4,5)

Oh how our generation needs to take a closer look at riches. Then after seeing them as they are, seek to obtain the riches that provide peace, that make us useful, that honors the Lord, and that last.



Grover Laird

Big Creek Association Auxiliary Meetings

The Big Creek District Brotherhood and WMA will meet on November 2, 2020, at Big Creek Baptist Church. The ladies will meet in the Church Sanctuary and the men will meet in the Family Life Center beginning at 7:00 p.m.

The Master's Builders work in Arkansas



On September 14, the Master's Builders began work at New Liberty Baptist in Emmet, Arkansas. This job was originally scheduled for May, but because of Covid 19, it was postponed. New Liberty had torn down their old building, which housed their sanctuary, and had poured their slab for the new 86 x 44 - 3,800 square foot building. They were really needing our help. There were 12 Master's Builders from 5 states ready to start the build. Each morning with start the day with a devotional and prayer.

The build went well and progress was made until there was a long delay in getting the decking put on the building and tropical storm "Beta" arrived. The Master's Builders plan to return on October 19 to try to finish the rest of their part of the sanctuary.

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

Annual Meeting Schedule

BMA of Mississippi

October 20-21, 2020

Midway First Baptist Church

Sumrall, Mississippi

Theme

"Jesus Christ and Him Crucified"
I Corinthians 2:2

Tuesday, October 20

9:00 a.m. WMA Business Meeting
Brotherhood Business Meeting

Session One

9:30 a.m. Worship in Music – Alan Carlson
9:40 a.m. Meeting Called to Order – Welcome and Response, Scripture and Prayer, Reading of the Rules of Order
Call for Constitutional Changes
9:45 a.m. Enrollment Committee Initial Report
9:50 a.m. Election of Officers
10:00 a.m. Midyear Meeting Location and Speaker (5/18/21)
10:10 a.m. Annual Meeting Location and Speaker (10/19-20/21)
10:15 a.m. Nominating Committee Report
10:20 a.m. Reports Begin
Commission on History – Jason Howard
Children's Home – Dwight Lindsey
Brotherhood – Mark Jones
WMA – Teresa Reus
11:10 a.m. Worship in Music
11:15 a.m. President's Message – Greg Medenwald
11:45 a.m. Scripture, Prayer, and Dismissal for Lunch

Session Two

12:30 p.m. Worship in Music – Alan Carlson
12:35 p.m. Scripture and Prayer
12:40 p.m. Vote on Constitutional Changes if Necessary
12:45 p.m. Reports Continue
Southeastern Baptist College
Dr. Scott Carson
Youth Department
Kelby Johnson
Missions Department/Revolving Loan Fund
Larry Geraldson
Publications Department/Mississippi Baptist
Don Brown
BMA of Mississippi Foundation
Dwight Lindsey
Commission on Senior Adults
Kenneth Flynt
Moral Action
Dr. John Adams
3:00 p.m. Salary Committee Report
Clerk's Report
Final Enrollment Committee Report
Appointment of Enrollment Committee
Miscellaneous and Additional Business
4:00 p.m. Worship in Music – SBC Choir
4:10 p.m. Annual Message
Midway Pastor Blake McClain
5:00 p.m. Prayer and Adjournment

Wednesday, October 21

Session Three at 9:30 a.m. if Necessary

Registration Table

Tuesday Morning – 8:00
Tuesday Afternoon – 12:15

(Each church must register messengers and receive ballots.)

Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

www.bmaofmississippi.com

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