

BAPTIST TRUMPET

www.baptisttrumpet.com

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF ARKANSAS

Volume 81

December 9, 2020 Little Rock, Arkansas

Number 13



World Missions Day 2021: Grateful for Your Giving

By John David Smith • BMAA Executive Director of Missions

I cannot recall a year like 2020. We have been thrust into uncharted waters but sustained by the simple truth that our God is in control. I have never been more thankful for your faithful

partnership with BMA Missions.

The turbulence of 2020 has been a global experience, yet what an encouragement to hear how God has blessed in the midst of global chaos. Isn't that just like God? Here is a glimpse of what we have seen around the world:

- Technology has allowed churches to share online, leading more people than ever to follow Christ.

- People have come to better understand that the church is truly a community of people, not a building or location.

- Local congregations and communities have united to support one another, share in each other's financial burdens and take on personal responsibility in discipleship and small groups.

- Though travel has been stalled, virtual meeting capabilities are enabling us to connect with each other and with missionaries, church planters, and pastors.

- I am personally excited to share that I have had more conversations with missionary candidates this year than any I can remember.

Certainly, the challenges are great. Yet we are seeing firsthand what we clearly see in Scripture — the gospel always advances in the midst of difficulty. For this reason, I am asking your church to join in celebrating World Missions Day on Feb. 28, 2021, our an-

MOVING with Ministers and Staff

This is only a news column, and the publishing of a person's availability should not be considered a recommendation by the Trumpet. To view previous listings from this column, visit our website at www.baptisttrumpet.com.

Nick Flowers has resigned as pastor of Zion Baptist Church in Fordyce to accept the pastorate at Unity Baptist Church in Hope. He will be on the field Jan. 3.

John Burleson, who recently retired from pastoral ministry and is available for preaching appointments as the Lord leads. Contact him at (501) 581-8580 or burlesonjohn@hotmail.com.

nual world missions giving campaign.

This year we are excited to announce the annual World Missions Day offering is being renamed The Jerry Kidd Offering, honoring the indelible legacy of this pioneering BMA missionary. When you give to The Jerry Kidd Offering on World Missions Day, your funds go to:

- **North America church planting** — providing stipends to multi-ethnic church planters in Canada and the U.S.

- **U.S. missionaries** — While most U.S. missionaries now raise their funds, others still receive stipends, and all U.S. missionaries benefit from support and training.

- **ChangeMakers** — Many countries have formed church associations, and we work with them as they send missionaries and plant churches. We partner with key leaders or ministries in other countries through stipends to meet specific needs and goals related to training or church planting.

In all cases, needed funds are opportunities to expand the gospel, make disciples and plant churches. We partner (do things **with** people not **for** people) to create self-sustaining church planting movements. The need for the gospel has never been greater, and that is why our goal is to double the number of missionaries in the next 10 years.

Whether on Feb. 28 or another Sunday, we ask that you lead your church to take up an offering. Last year on World Missions Day, our churches gave \$400,000. I am praying we will exceed that number this year. With your help we can do it.



— Sarah Lewis, Trumpet Photography Club

The True Meaning of Christmas

Christmas Day will be here before we know it! It doesn't seem possible does it? Each passing year seems to go by more quickly than the last. As we focus upon the Christmas season, some of us may bemoan the fact that Christmas has become so commercialized and people so materialistic that the true meaning of Christmas has been lost. I learned a long time ago that I cannot change anyone but me, so this Christmas, I have resolved to focus on what I think is important and not worry about what other people are or are not doing at this time of the year.

Spiritually speaking, to me personally, Christmas is:

- An opportunity for me personally to exalt Jesus Christ before the people who live in my world — my family, my friends, my neighbors and my co-workers. Most people have been thinking about, talking about or doing something about Christmas for a few weeks, and I have the opportunity to share the true meaning of Christmas with them.

- Christmas is a time for me to recommit myself to the cause of Christ. Charles H. Spurgeon, the English pastor of more than a century ago wrote: "As we think

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Handling the Unexpected During the Holidays

By Katy McCown

The look in her eye hinted at the fact that she was trying to help me out. With six little ones under my feet, dinner to be made and another practice to get ready for, the chip on the floor threatened to make everything fall apart. Especially when I stepped on it.

While enjoying an after-school snack, someone let a chip slip through their fingers, and it fell to the middle of the floor. The same middle of the floor that my hurried feet shuffled straight through and crushed the forgotten chip into a million tiny pieces. I was already on the edge of irritable and this chip threatened

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Semester Ending

As you are reading this article, CBC will be in the middle of finals week for our traditional students. Fall PACE classes ended Thursday, Dec. 3. The campus will begin to get quiet once again as students travel home for the Christmas holiday break. This has definitely been an interesting and challenging semester!

No one knows what will happen in the next few weeks, but the employees of CBC are already diligently preparing for the beginning of the Spring 2021 semester. PACE courses will begin on Jan. 11, and the traditional semester begins on Jan. 14.

I want to commend our faculty and staff for their tremendous work in the midst of the COVID-19 global health pandemic. They have gone above and beyond to ensure that learning continued for our students! And not just learning, but academic excellence presented in a Christ-centered environment, that our students, and you our faithful supporters, expect.

I know our faculty and staff will be ready to meet whatever challenges face us after the new year and as we begin the Spring 2021 semester. Please pray for them, the Executive Leadership Team and me, as we prepare.

Fall Priority Scholarship Deadline Reminder

Friday, Dec. 10, is the Priority Scholarship Deadline for high school seniors and transfer students who will be attending CBC for the Fall 2021 semester. Students meeting this deadline will receive the best scholarship awards of the year. To be eligible, students must apply for admission at cbc.edu/apply, submit transcript(s) and ACT/SAT/Accuplacer test scores and complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) at studentaid.gov. Students who complete these steps will automatically qualify to be the first CBC applicants of the academic year to receive a scholarship award package.

Spring Registration for Current Students

Spring and Winter term registration is now open for both our current traditional and nontraditional (PACE) students. Current students should contact their academic advisor immediately to schedule an advising appointment. More information is available at cbc.edu/registration.

Admission for Spring 2021

Applications are still being accepted for new students for the spring semester. New students should visit cbc.edu/apply to get started.

The final spring semester registration opportunity for all traditional students is Jan. 11-13. PACE students have multiple enrollment opportunities and should visit cbc.edu/pace for all spring semester enrollment dates.



Men's Soccer

• **Conway, Dec. 4**—CBC Director of Soccer Lance Gordon announced the first addition to his men's soccer class of 2021 — Central Arkansas product **Ethan Urban**.

Wrestling

• **Marshall, Mo., Dec. 5**—Hitting the mat today for the first time in 12 days, CBC was at the Burns Athletic Center for the Missouri Valley College Viking Duals. CBC competed in four matches, losing all four to William Penn, 27-0, Bethany, 36-10, Texas Wesleyan, 54-3 and Graceland 51-6.



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CHRISTMAS (Continued From Page 1)

today of the birth of the Savior, let us aspire after a fresh birth of the Savior in our hearts; that as He is already 'formed in us the Hope of Glory,' that we may be 'renewed in the spirit of our minds,' that we may go again to the Bethlehem of our special Nativity and do the first works, enjoy our first loves, and feast with Jesus as we did in the holy, happy, heavenly days of our espousal. Let us go to Jesus with something of that youthful freshness and excessive delight which was so manifest in us when we looked at Him at the first; let Him be crowned anew by us, for He is still adorned with the dew of His youth, and remains the 'same yesterday, today, and forever.'"

The true meaning of Christmas is found in the birth of the Savior of the world! Remember the simple and yet profound words of the angels: *'Bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord'* (Luke 2:10-11).

My prayer is that we who are believers will take the opportunity to exalt Jesus Christ before our world at this time of the year and meditate on the greatest gift that could have ever been given when God gave us His Son. If we do these two things, we will not miss the true meaning of Christmas!

UNEXPECTED (Continued From Page 1)

to be the push that sent me over, until my little girl said two words: "No problem."

No problem? She even said it with the tone of an angel. She learned this phrase from her first-grade teacher. They used it when a friend dropped something or spilled something or tripped over something. Instead of allowing the unexpected situation to create chaos, the eager students said, "No problem;" then they acted like it was, in fact, no problem.

So, in this moment, with a shattered chip on the floor and my emotions not far behind, I learned something from my little girl — I had made something into a problem that really was no problem at all.

I'm more and more aware of the attitude that the holiday season can create in me. While I want to be full of joy, hope and peace, I find myself more irritable than any other time of year. I desire to be loving and patient, but I fight feelings of frustration and rush. I want to enjoy every moment, but images of perfection and added to-dos attack my joy. So, I've decided to adopt my daughter's phrase and attach it to all of the unexpected messes the holidays present.

When surprises try to detail us, let's tell them instead, "No problem." Like when my boys turn ornaments into basketballs and the tree into a basketball goal — no problem.

When I mix expired flour into the sweet potato casserole — no problem.



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Balancing Student Ministry & Home Life

As we approach the holidays during this crazy year, there are constant reminders of how things are not normal. A "normal" holiday season in student ministry means parties, ministry opportunities and concerts upon concerts.

While these things go hand in hand with student ministry, they can bring some unwanted tension into the home. There is always a bit of a push and pull between home and ministry that becomes a little bit more noticeable during the holidays. Sometimes, it can be downright exhausting, but we plug on because we love students and know that January will more than likely provide an opportunity to catch our breath.

How do we balance out the holidays, or whatever season of ministry we are in, with our families? We know God places a great deal of importance on our families and working toward a healthy balance of the two should be high on our list. Here are a few thoughts on how we can do that better:

• **Keep the lines of communication open.** It is important that you and your spouse share concerns as they are happening. Whether it is Christmas or another season all together, communication will help ease any resentment that might build between you and your spouse during especially busy times. It will also help you find solutions together so that your family knows that they are important.

• **Have a shared calendar.** Whether you use an iCalendar, Google Calendar or something on your fridge, it is important that those in your family and church understand what is coming up. I loved the big wet-erase calendar that we had at Temple Baptist Church of Rogers. I could step up to it and see what was happening in our church at a glance. In my own family and current ministry setting, we share calendars through our Apple devices. Practically speaking, this is one of the easiest and most valuable things you can do to help manage the push/pull of ministry and family.

• **Go to your kids' concerts and games.** Your child will only have one third grade Christmas concert. It is important that your church knows that these milestone events are going to take precedence. When my own kids hit high school, I wanted to be at every game they marched in as a part of the band. Did I make it to them all? No, but I did make it to most of them. They have both graduated, and I don't regret that decision at all. There will always be high school football games to attend for the students in your ministry, but after a very brief time, your children will have moved on and there is no way to get that time back. Make sure your kids know they are important to you.

• **Discuss church expectations with your pastor.** Make sure they are reasonable. The last youth pastor may have not had kids or healthy boundaries in his life. Don't be afraid to say "no" to events or activities if they are going to harm your family. Your first ministry is in the home.

• **Carve out date nights and family days.** Setting aside moments with your family shows them that they are truly a priority in your life. If you invest in those "special" days, it will help your family be more understanding when you are faced with a summer full of activity with your student ministry.

Balancing ministry and family is a challenge. There is no way around that, but with God's help, we can navigate these waters and find a sweet spot where our family is connected to our ministries in great ways.

(I didn't serve it to anyone, though!)

When half of the kids get the stomach bug and we celebrate in our pajamas — no problem.

When demands rise and time stays the same — no problem.

When reality doesn't live up to my big ideas and great expectations — no problem.

Of course, there are some problems life presents us that are, in fact, problems; and those are not as easy to navigate. But I've found that so much of the time, my problems don't have to be problems at all.

I hope these two words bless you this holiday season the same way they have me. And as we tell our surprises,

"No problem," I pray it makes room for us to remember and rejoice in the reason we celebrate this Christmas season:

"And the angel said to them, 'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord'" (Luke 2:10 ESV).

— *Used with permission. Originally published at cutt.ly/life-word-unexpected, this article may be reproduced or reprinted with permission from Life-word. Katy McCown (katymccown.com) is a former NFL wife, mother of six, writer for Proverbs 31 Ministries and president of She Laughs Ministries.*



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Lessons Learned in a Pandemic

Adaptability and flexibility are certainly necessary during these challenging times. The stress and weariness are real as we experience decision fatigue, opinion fatigue and the fatigue of uncertainty. No matter what decision you make, there will be multiple (did I mention multiple) opinions, and then your decision may

need to be changed within 48 hours or less. All you can do is seek the Lord's direction, receive wise counsel, make the best decision you can and then press forward. The burden of leadership decisions weighs heavy on your shoulders right now because you do not want to over-react or under-react.

Leading with confidence during difficult times is critical. If your people see that you are indecisive, afraid or lack faith, they will follow your lead. I Peter 4:1 tells us that as we experience trials, we should approach them as Jesus did: "Therefore, since Christ suffered in the flesh, equip yourselves also with the same resolve."

The keys to confident leadership are remaining humble — you do not have all the answers and you cannot fix everything — and having a divine resolve to obey Christ with an uncommon level of perseverance.

Lead with a focus on being a blessing by representing the love of Christ well in your community. I Peter 3:11 challenges us to turn away from evil, do good and to always pursue peace. Are you focused on how you can lead your congregation to do good? I Peter 3:10 is clear that a good day is when you and your church are doing good for the honor and glory of God. Our focus, as a body of believers, is to know and be known, love and be loved, serve and be served, forgive and be forgiven, pray and be prayed for and to encourage and be encouraged!

Did you notice the order, the focus and the priority? Your focus should always be on others first — you are to know them, love them and help them. Unfortunately, and all too often, our focus is on ourselves. God placed your church in your community strategically at this exact moment to display His Kingdom in the midst of a fallen world. Your church has been called by Christ to represent Him by doing good no matter how you are being treated. "For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil" (I Peter 3:17 HCSB).

How are you leading your church during these difficult times to be a blessing? What are your people doing

with their lives? Are they helping to create hell on earth by trading insult for insult and evil for evil, or are they helping to bring down a foretaste of Heaven? Screaming and ranting about

how mistreated you are is not a strategy for sharing the love of Christ and spreading the gospel. Are you advancing the rule of Satan through your attitudes and actions, or are you helping to establish the reign of God through your love and good deeds?

This is a wonderful opportunity for your church to become a force for good in your community. How can you bless your community and display the love of Christ in practical ways? No one should be more committed to doing good deeds than those who have tasted that the Lord is good. This is your opportunity to go the second mile and show how real God's love is. Try setting up a drive through food dropoff in your church parking lot for food distribution through a local food pantry, food bank, or delivering them to needy families yourselves.

Consider contacting your local schools to help identify their needs. Many schools are continuing to provide lunches for students. Explore ways you can help serve or deliver school lunches or send home food for the weekend in a school backpack program. You could also write thank you notes to the administrators, teachers, bus drivers and school cafeteria workers who continue to serve your children during very difficult times.

Volunteer to go food shopping, pick up prescriptions or do yard work for the elderly or disabled. Keep your eyes open for those who are the most vulnerable and compromised. How might you be able to bless those who are living in nursing homes and assisted living facilities, which are closed right now to visitors? You could write notes, cards, or have children in your church color pictures of encouragement. Then deliver them to the door of the facility for the residents.

Show your appreciation to health-care workers and first responders for their hard work and long hours. You could write notes, send thank you cards or even give them a nice gift card. Maybe you could check with them and provide snacks, treats or an entire meal to say a very special thank you for these wonderful, selfless servants. Find children through local programs who will not have a Christmas unless you and others make presents possible



Arkansas' Abortion Rate Cut in Half

(via familycouncil.org) — Last week the federal Centers for Disease Control released a report indicating Arkansas' abortion rate has been cut in half since the year 2000. The numbers were published in the CDC's Abortion Surveillance report for the year 2018 — the most recent year for which the CDC has published abortion statistics.

The report shows there were 3,069 abortions performed in Arkansas in 2018. This matches the number the Arkansas Department of Health published last year. But the report also shows that Arkansas' abortion rate was 5.3 abortions per 1,000 women ages 15–44. The abortion rate is a way to measure how prevalent abortion is in a state by comparing the total number of abortions to the state's female population. According to past CDC reports, Arkansas' abortion rate was 11 in 1990. Between 1990 and 2000, the abortion rate in Arkansas fell to 10 abortions per 1,000 women ages 15–44. By 2010, the abortion rate in Arkansas had fallen to eight, and by 2018 it had been reduced to 5.3. In other words, Arkansas' abortion rate has been cut in half since the year 2000 — and reduced by more than half in the past 30 years.

Although the CDC hasn't released abortion stats for 2019, Family Council estimates based on Department of Health data that last year Arkansas' abortion rate fell to approximately 5.1. These numbers show how Arkansas has become more and more pro-life over the years. Arkansans overwhelmingly oppose abortion on demand. Communities in Arkansas have taken steps to protect unborn children.

In January the Arkansas Legislature will consider a proposal to make abortion illegal except to save the life of the mother. This could give the U.S. Supreme Court an opportunity to overturn Roe v. Wade and other pro-abortion rulings.

Slowly but surely Arkansans are winning the fight against abortion.

through your generosity.

The lessons learned during this time are many, but it especially reminds us that a fallen world that is spiraling out of control needs the church to be the church more than ever. "He gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for Himself a people for His own possession, eager to do good works" (Titus 2:14 HCSB).

Just Thinking...
By Tom Mitchell
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Don't Let COVID-19 Be The Grinch

I was just thinking — many people are familiar with the movie, "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas." Of course, it doesn't focus merely on the gifts, tinsel, lights, etc.; it focuses on the stealing of the spirit of Christmas.

As Karen and I watch various news reports and read of incidents across our nation where Christianity has come under attack, like most of you, we know that if Christ is in the heart, nothing or no one can take that away.

Christ spoke to a storm-tossed sea and the troubled waters became calm. During this stormy year of 2020, may each of us remember that the Prince of Peace can calm our troubled hearts.

Since March of this year, the residents of the state, the nation and the entire world have faced the monumental task of adjusting to lives of turmoil. We have become accustomed to wearing masks, reading or watching COVID-19 reports, and seeing the number of hospitalizations and deaths climb each day worldwide.

COVID-19 is not a person, but it is definitely a menace. It has affected us in such a way that we are separated instead of connected. I don't refer to politics. I am talking about social distancing (6-12 feet). Loved ones cannot be with family members in hospitals or nursing homes. Pastors cannot visit the shut-ins of their congregations. Family and friends cannot be with their loved ones as they pass from this life. Businesses of every sort and size have closed, many in bankruptcy. Millions of workers have lost their jobs and have no income for their families.

Church life is different in 2020. At this time of the year, congregations would normally be planning ministries to those in need. Worship leaders would be working with choirs and praise teams for Christmas musicals. Fellowship meals by classes and congregations would be on the planning calendars. In worship services, the members and guests would normally greet one another with hugs, handshakes and glowing smiles. (We can't see those behind masks.) Because it's Christmastime, attendance would increase and sanctuaries would fill. But this year, normal is extremely abnormal.

All this is due to a pandemic — a worldwide virus that is wreaking havoc around the globe. People are worried, fearful, reluctant, frustrated and perplexed at every turn. Sounds as if COVID-19, like the Grinch, is stealing Christmas doesn't it?

Ah, but while this is by no means "normal," neither is it something new! Believers before us faced, endured and overcame the terrible turmoils in life — and we can too!

The Apostle Paul wrote, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution, or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Rom. 8:35-37).

My friends, don't let COVID-19 be the Grinch! Don't let what's going on outside of you quench the working of Him who dwells inside of you! This is not a time to throw up our hands and give up. Now is the time to submit to Him who is the true Spirit of Christmas.

"May our Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word" (II Thess. 2:16-17).





By Executive Editor
Jeff Herring

Journey
with
Jeff

Progress is Being Made

Our mission is to keep the news coming to you in the best, most efficient way possible. One way that we have been working to do this is an upgrade to our circulation management system. This has been in the works for over a year, and we have been in the process of actually transitioning to the new system for the past four months.

If all goes well, you won't notice any changes, and you will continue receiving your *Trumpet* each week. Keep watching for some new options to manage your account via our website (baptisttrumpet.com). We appreciate your patience as we move to this new system that will help us be more efficient and also prepare us for future ministry possibilities as the Lord leads.

One thing the new system allows is to sign-in to your customer service portal via your email. If you would like have access to this when we go live, please email your name, email and contact information to billing@baptisttrumpet.com so we can get it added to your subscription.

Thank you for your faithful support of this ministry and we look forward to seeing how God will bless us as we continue to seek His will.



Trumpet Notes

By Jeff Herring, Executive Editor

Safe Haven Billboard Campaign Comes to Cabot

Arkansas Right to Life (ARTL) is continuing a campaign to promote the Safe Haven Law and Safe Haven Baby Boxes across Arkansas with a new billboard in Cabot. The goal of the campaign is to place a billboard in each of Arkansas' 75 counties.

The Cabot billboard is currently running for four weeks from Dec. 7-Jan. 3. The billboard is located at the intersection of Highway 5 North, south of Highway 89 and has average weekly impressions of more than 82,000.

ARTL Executive Director Rose Mimms said the Arkansas Right to Life Safe Haven billboard campaign is funded through donations, adding that the Knights of Columbus organization has been instrumental in providing sponsorship and funding for several billboard locations. (artl.org)

Second Hate Crimes Bill Filed at Arkansas Legislature

Rep. Fred Love (D/Little Rock) pre-filed a second hate crimes bill at the Arkansas Legislature (H.B. 1020) on Dec. 2. The bill is virtually identical to S.B. 3 by Sen. Jim Hendren (R/Gravette) and Rep. Fred Love (D/Little Rock) enacting hate crimes legislation in Arkansas.

Family Council has opposed hate crimes legislation for more than 25 years. These bills write special protections into state law for groups of people based on sexual-orientation, gender-identity, and other characteristics. These laws simply do not work.

Data from the FBI indicates that they don't protect people and violent hate crimes have continued to occur in states with laws like these on the books. (familycouncil.org)

U.S. House Votes To Decriminalize Marijuana

The House passed in a nearly party-line vote, 228-164, the Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement (MORE) Act. The bill would end criminal penalties at the federal level for the possession, distribution and manufacture of marijuana.

The proposal is unlikely to go any further when it moves from the Democratic-controlled House to the Senate, where Republicans hold the majority. In the House, only five Republicans voted for the measure.

Smart Approaches to Marijuana, a collection of experts who oppose marijuana legalization, has cited an increased use of the drug, harm to children and adolescents and a greater increase in costs to the public among concerns regarding legalization. (baptistpress.com)

Harvard Says Men Can Have Babies

Harvard Medical School recently hosted a panel discussion on Maternal Health. The topic was why women of color are statistically three times more likely to die during pregnancy or childbirth than white moms.

Throughout this event, talking about pregnancy and childbirth, every one of the panelists refused to use the word "woman." On Twitter, the event was described as confronting problems faced by "pregnant and birthing people." After wide backlash, they tweeted again: "Our panelists used this language because not all who give birth identify as women."

The real tragedy here is that health-care disparity for moms of color is a real problem. But if medical health experts refuse to acknowledge that the term woman refers to something that exists in reality, and that medical science itself depends on these biological realities, how can we expect them to solve an issue as complicated as ethnic health disparities? (familycouncil.org)

Pfizer Warns Pregnant Women Not to Use Vaccine

A new document published on a British government website warns against giving the new Pfizer coronavirus vaccine to pregnant and breastfeeding women because of potential risks. The document, "Reg 174 Information for UK Healthcare Professionals," pro-

vides details about the new two-dose vaccine, which could soon be available in the US. The company said it is waiting for final approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, but the vaccine already is in production.

According to the document, there is little data about the risks of the vaccine thus far, and animal reproductive toxicity studies are not finished. Therefore, the Pfizer vaccine, BNT162b2, "is not recommended during pregnancy," the document for medical professionals states.

Women who are breastfeeding or trying to become pregnant are also advised against receiving the vaccine because of unknown possible risks. The vaccine "should not be used during breast-feeding" because "a risk to the newborns/infants cannot be excluded," the document states. It also urges medical professionals to advise women of childbearing age to "avoid pregnancy for at least two months after their second dose."

Meanwhile, four pro-life medical groups said the Pfizer vaccine and another from Moderna did not use cells from aborted babies in the production phase, the Catholic News Agency reports. Though "it is true that the animal-phase testing for these vaccines used abortion-derived fetal cells, commendably, it does not appear that production methods utilized such cells," the pro-life groups said. (lifeneews.com)

Abortion Providers Buckling Under COVID-19 Economic Strains

Independent abortion clinics that

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(501) 565-4601 • www.baptisttrumpet.com

Baptist Trumpet

(USPS 043-720)

(ISSN 0888-9074)

Published by the Baptist Missionary Association of Arkansas; sponsoring Missions, Benevolence and Christian Education.

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(mailing list changes & billing inquiries)

Price: \$23.50 per year; Church Plan: \$20.25 per year

Published weekly except for the week of New Year's and one week in April, May, July, September, November and December. Periodical postage paid at Little Rock, Arkansas. Editorial offices at 10712 Interstate 30, Little Rock, Arkansas 72209. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the *Baptist Trumpet*, P.O. Box 192208, Little Rock, Arkansas 72219-2208.

Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or the churches of the BMA.



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Vintage Maggie

By the late Maggie Chandler



I Wish I'd Said That

(Her first article for this column — reprinted from the Sept. 10, 1975 Baptist Trumpet) Over the past 10 years, I couldn't count the number of times I have borrowed some magnificent thought, phrase, proverb, or outline from a writer or preacher. After using it to full advantage and the idea creating the desired effect, I have had to hang my head meekly and say, "I wish I'd said that, but I didn't." How I wish I'd had the forethought to have jotted down all these relics of divine wisdom.

Solomon didn't have a monopoly on wise sayings, but his collection is a true masterpiece. Believing as I do that the entire Bible is God breathed, I therefore believe that each proverb is an axiom, or an absolute truth. If I were to choose a phrase that made a tremendous impression on me as a young Christian and has lost nothing with the passage of time, it would be Prov. 4:7: "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."

How we take pride over an increase in wisdom in the things of God. We study to show ourselves approved and yet with all our getting, we so often neglect to get understanding. There is a difference, you know. It is very possible to obtain wisdom without knowing how to share it with others. This sharing is what I consider to be understanding.

I once read an article in a magazine which told a story something like this:

A young, liberated woman on an assignment for a prominent newspaper arrived on the coast of Ireland late one night. She was met by an older, heavy-set woman who was to accompany her to an out-of-the-way fisherman's cottage. The walk was less than pleasant along the cold, blustery shore in total darkness.

As they arrived at the cheerful, well lighted house, the big wooden door was opened by a smiling crippled boy supporting himself on two crutches. After the introductions were made, he said, "Weren't you two terribly afraid in this stormy weather?"

The young reporter opened her mouth to reply, "Oh, not at all. I've done much more dangerous things in this line of business, and besides, I can take care of myself." But before she had the chance to get these words out, the old Irish lady threw her arms around the boy's shoulders as she said, "You know, Jimmy, it really was bad out there tonight, but the thing that helped to keep me from being afraid was knowing that back home there was a big, strong man like you waiting just for me."

Just think of the things we have said which we would love to take back, and, oh yes, think of all the lovely things that should have been said and were not.

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." I wish I'd said that!

NOTES

(Continued From Page 4)

combine to provide nearly 60% of abortions in the U.S. are struggling to remain open during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new report from an abortion advocacy group.

Elizabeth Graham, vice president of operations and life initiatives for the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, encouraged Christians to continue to advocate for life even if abortion clinics close. "Every time a life is rescued from abortion is cause for celebration by Christians. But that shouldn't be limited to those of us who are pro-life, instead it should be for everyone," Graham said. "To do that, though, we must continue to foster a

culture of life that protects the preborn and cares for the vulnerable in every situation. "If we accomplish that, there won't be a need for a single abortion facility because each of us will finally see the inherent value and dignity of every individual human life made in the image of God."

Without the financial support of the Planned Parenthood network, which qualifies for various grants, at least 14 independent clinics closed just this year during the added financial constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the report, nearly 340 independent clinics remained in the U.S. as of November, compared to 510 in 2015 when the group began tracking the data. More than 40 independent clinics have closed in the past two years. (baptistpress.com)



Free E-Trumpet

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Maggie Chandler Called Home

Margaret Ann (Maggie) Kinley Chandler, 71 of Conway, passed away Dec. 1, after a valiant battle with COVID-19. She was the wife of Don Chandler, pastor of Central Baptist in Conway, where she served as a Life Group teacher for 40 years and worked with women's ministries.

Maggie was a woman of many talents, including being a gifted speaker and writer. For almost 30 years, she wrote a weekly column in the *Baptist Trumpet* entitled, "I Wish I'd Said That." The column was a favorite among our readers and was also picked up by other BMA newspapers. Even after she retired from writing her weekly column, some of her past articles appeared in the *Trumpet* from time to time under the "Vintage Maggie" header. (See her first article from the Sept. 10, 1975 issue on this page. Subsequent articles can be found in the *Baptist Trumpet* Archives at www.baptisttrumpet.com.)

As her obituary on the Roller-McNutt Funeral Home website said, "Maggie's life was anything but routine or normal. Early in life, she trusted Jesus Christ as her personal savior and that dictated everything else she pursued or was involved in."

She graduated from Central Baptist College with an Associate degree and had a varied career in work and ministry. She was Governor Mike Huckabee's administrative assistant, worked for several years in state government and wrote and took part in television shows for Lifeword Broadcast Ministries, interviewing many well-known Christians.

Maggie also wrote several books, including *A Heart Toward Home*, which traced the life of her grandmother, who once served as a cook in the Biltmore Mansion in North Carolina and lived to be well past 100 years.

"Maggie's impact on everyone she met is her legacy — she loved, gave, encouraged, taught and helped! She was a godly woman who made a remarkable impact on her husband's pastoral ministry."

"Summing up Maggie's life in just a few words is practically impossible," said *Trumpet* Editor Emeritus Diane Spriggs. "I have known her since we were children, well over 60 years, and she never ceased to amaze me — always in a good way. Anyone who knew Maggie was blessed by doing so, and she will always be remembered as a wonderful example of what a Christian woman should be."

In addition to many friends and extended family, her other survivors include: three children — Lori (Donnie) Kulbeth, Michael (Shelly) Chandler and Marlo (Cory) Atwell; two brothers, Carroll (Elaine) Kinley and David (Sandra) Kinley; six grandsons and one granddaughter. Maggie's "Jonathan" was her lifelong friend, Debbie Allred, who spent a great deal of time with Maggie in her beloved New England and Rocky Shores.

A memorial service will be announced at a later date and in lieu of flowers, gifts may be made to Central Baptist Church, 3333 Dave Ward Drive, Conway, Ark. 72034.



Tressie Spears Passes Away

Tressie Loy Reynolds Spears, 98 of Greenbrier, passed away Dec. 3. She was the widow of W.S. Spears, who passed away in 2009 after 41 years in the ministry, pastoring several BMA of Arkansas churches and serving as a missionary for the Mount Vernon Association at Greers Ferry for four years.

Mrs. Spears was a homemaker, seamstress, gardener and baker who worked tirelessly to care for her family and loved to share the Word of God with those around her.

Survivors include: three children, Eldon (Barbara) Spears, Randy (Judy) Spears and Rita (Chuck) Birchfield; a sister, Milgean Barton; a brother, Harrell Dean Reynolds; 8 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great grandchildren.

A graveside service was held Dec. 6 at Republican Cemetery in Greenbrier under the direction of Roller-McNutt Funeral Home of Greenbrier.



Leta Fulcher, 92 of Nashville, passed away December 6. She was a member of Center Point Baptist Church.

Reba May Ussery, 74 of Trumann, passed away Dec. 1. She was a member of Central Baptist Church.

Michael Wayne Cavin, 59 of Greenbrier passed away Nov. 29. He was a member of Bethlehem Baptist Church.

Ormond Edward "Junior" Gentry, Jr., 67 of Searcy, passed away November 19. He was a member of West Race Baptist Church.

DISTRICT CALENDAR

Jonesboro District WMA, Jan. 9, 10 a.m., Prospect, Jonesboro.

Central Ark. District Brotherhood, Jan. 11, 6:30 p.m., Pleasant Grove, Carlisle.

Southwest District GMA, Jan. 23, First, Taylor.

Mt. Vernon District Brotherhood, Mar. 8, 6:30 p.m., Central, Hughes.

Widow of Wassell Burgess Dies

Elsie Imogene (Jean) Sewell Burgess, 93 of Greenbrier, passed away Dec. 1. She was the widow of Wassell L. Burgess, who pastored many churches in central Arkansas and also served 27 years as an instructor, academic dean and president at Central Baptist College.

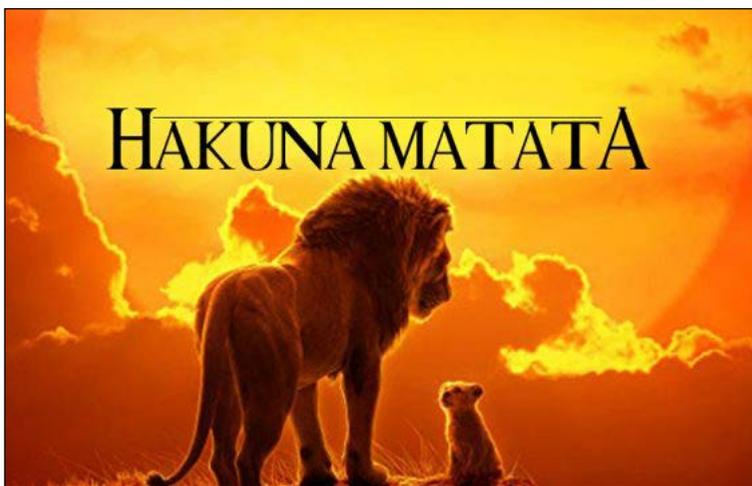
Mrs. Burgess graduated as a registered nurse from Little Rock Baptist School of Nursing in 1948. She was a compassionate and selfless caregiver to many. She worked in hospitals and clinics, ending her nursing career as school nurse for Greenbrier schools, where perhaps she had her biggest impact on the lives of hundreds of families.

Survivors include: a daughter, Sue (Ron) Tilley; and a son, Ross (Sharon) Burgess; one grandson and two great-grandchildren, all of Greenbrier.

Funeral services were held Dec. 4 at Springhill Baptist Church in Greenbrier with burial in Springhill Cemetery under the direction of Roller McNutt Funeral Home of Conway.

Memorials may be given to the Wassell and Jean Burgess Scholarship Endowment fund at Central Baptist College (1501 College Ave, Conway, Ark. 72034) or to Springhill Baptist Church (25 State Hwy 287, Greenbrier, Ark. 72058).





Exposing the Lie Of Hakuna Matata

By Melody Turner

Whether you have or have not watched *The Lion King*, you probably have heard the phrase “*hakuna matata*,” which means “*no worries*.” The movie begins with Simba being presented to the animal kingdom as the future king. For the first half hour or so, Simba is growing up, while Scar, the king’s brother, schemes to rip the kingdom away from both his brother, Mufasa and his nephew.

Scar is successful in his schemes and takes control of the Pride Lands by murdering his brother, along with attempting to do the same to Simba. The young prince survives the wildebeests and the hyenas and runs far away. Timon and Pumba find and save him from dehydration in the dessert and teach him their way of life. (If you watch *Lion King 1½*, you will know their backstory.)

Simba finds paradise away from all of his problems and his past, along with learning how to eat bugs, while he grows into a young lion. For the rest of his youth, he lives by the phrase “*hakuna matata*” to keep his haunted memories at bay.

Life is easy until his childhood friend, Nala, shows up and tells him he must return and accept his responsibility as rightful king. Simba isn’t immediately convinced. He would rather keep living his life, worry free, and leaving his past in the past.

Do you ever feel like Simba? Do you try to push everything away — your fears, your insecurities, the skeletons in your closet — in order to live a “worry-free” life?

That would be nice...in the short run, but at the end of the day, Simba would not be satisfied until he accomplished what he was born to do and who he was born to become — king.

We were all born to become someone — a child of the true King of kings. The Apostle Paul writes this to the church of Ephesus, a church that faced persecution:

“Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son” (Eph. 1:4-6 NLT).

We have a destiny and a purpose, like the sun rises and sets each morning, to be holy and to be adopted into God’s family. With this great purpose, we cannot simply *hakuna matata* through life. We must face the facts — like Simba did through the help of his friend, Rafiki — that God not only lives within us through the indwelling of his Holy Spirit, but He also has a great purpose for us.

What does the application of that look like? It is to bring light into the world through love and the gospel of Jesus Christ. John writes, “*God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love — not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us”* (1 John 4:9-12 NLT).

The salvation God freely gives is an assurance of His love for us, and it causes us to love fully and completely. We can be free from sin’s bondage.

Because of that amazing promise, we can face our fears or whatever we have hiding in our closets that we are ashamed of, like Simba was ashamed of and felt responsible for the death of his father. Because only then can we move forward from our fears, our shame and our past and embrace the purpose God has for us.

— *Used with permission. Originally published at cutt.ly/lifeword-hakuna-matata, this article may be reproduced or reprinted with permission from Lifeword. Melody Turner is a Dallas native married to Tyler Turner, an active-duty airman and a graduate from Central Baptist College with degrees in Bible, Multimedia Communications and Business.*



Bethlehem, Greenbrier welcomed one by letter and one by baptism; Dr. Martin Jameson, pastor; Laura McGee, reporter.

Charity, Ward rejoices over one by baptism; Keith Lewis, pastor.

Cathedral, Jonesboro added one by letter; Rhonda Pruitt, reporter.

Center Point, Nashville gained one by statement; Jaron Tipton, pastor.

First, Damascus received two by letter; Daniel Williams, pastor.

Hermon, Bono rejoices over 1 by baptism and five by letter; Randy Stimmach, pastor; Janet Watkins, reporter.

Unity, Hope welcomed one by baptism; Penny Ehrhardt, reporter.

First, Mantachie, Miss. received two by letter.



CBC Homecoming, Jan. 29-30; Central Baptist College.

CBC Scholarship Gala, Feb. 20, 6:00 p.m.; Conway Expo Center. Contact Amy Reed for more info at areed@cbc.edu.

World Missions Day, Feb. 28; Jerry Kidd Offering for BMA World Missions.

Fresh Grounded Faith Women’s Event, Aug. 6-7, 7 p.m. Fri., 12:30 p.m. Sat.; Antioch, Conway.

Ark. Ladies Retreat, Sept. 25, 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.



Bradford Baptist Church in Bradford is seeking a full-time pastor. Resumes may be sent to the Pulpit Committee at P.O. Box 16, Bradford, Ark. 72020 or bbcbroadford@gmail.com. For more information, call (501) 344-2414.

First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Tex. is seeking a pastor. Please send resumes to: Search Committee, 210 Philips St, Jacksonville, Texas 75766 or reception@firstjax.org.

Keltys First Baptist Church in Lufkin, Texas is seeking a full-time lead teaching pastor. Resumes, ministry philosophy and sermon links can be emailed to jobs@keltys.org or mailed to Attn: Pastor Search, P.O. Box 3043, Lufkin, Tex., 75903. Visit keltys.org/pastorsearch for more information and a job description.

Meadowside Baptist Church in Pittsburg, Kan. is seeking a full-time pastor. Contact Greg Hardister at (620) 704-6860.



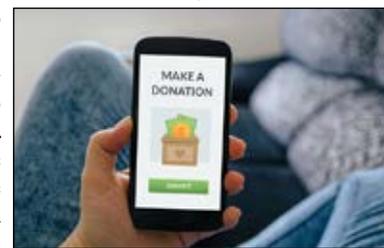
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Charitable Solicitation: Register Before Asking For Money

Your church, school, college or camp outreach may span several states, resulting in out-of-state charitable donations. Most states require nonprofits to register before receiving contributions. For organizations big or small, or those which span multiple states, compliance for online contributions and professional fundraising events can be complicated.



Look Before Crossing State Lines

With the ease of online banking and the growth of multi-state ministries, camps and educational institutions, more organizations are receiving donations from across state lines. Professional fundraisers are assisting nonprofits in larger building and renovation projects to help generate funds.

While both of these situations provide benefits to religious organizations, often leaders are not aware that receiving solicited/unsolicited funds and using a professional fundraiser may require the organization (or fundraiser) to register in different states. The stakes are high if the church, school or camp fails to comply with charitable solicitation laws. Noncompliance can result in fines or the ability to solicit. In some states, an organization can even lose recognition of its tax-exempt status.

Approximately 40 states have enacted some form of charitable solicitation statutes. According to the IRS, state solicitation statutes generally serve two important purposes:

- They allow the public to get basic information about organizations asking for contributions so donors can make better, more informed charitable giving decisions.
- They help protect state residents from charitable solicitation fraud and misrepresentations.

State statutes usually require organizations to register with the state before soliciting its residents for contributions. In most states, certain nonprofits are specifically excluded or exempt from the registration requirements. Exemptions vary from state to state. An organization can learn about its state’s registration requirements for charities, taxation, information for employers and more from the IRS.

Is Your Fundraiser Registered?

Some churches, colleges and schools hire outside consultants, while others hire staff members to administer fundraising activities. Your organization may use a combination of the two. How a nonprofit chooses to handle staffing for its fundraising activities can have important ramifications.

Professional fundraisers — organization employees and independent contractors hired by the organization — are regulated and required to register in all applicable states. The National Council of Nonprofits offers guidance on how to properly classify workers and other registration requirements in its Professional Fundraising Consultants and Grantwriters guide.

The Multistate Registration and Filing Portal (MRFP) is a nonprofit corporation working with the states to develop a single platform that charitable organizations and professional fundraisers can use to register. A few states have signed up to pilot the program. While not yet operable, religious organizations can request automatic updates from the MRFP about the program’s status.

Additional help

An organization is encouraged to register with all states it solicits or receives donations from, as necessary. If a church, school or camp receives donations from a significant number of states, organization leaders may be able to use a third-party vendor to help with registrations.

While Brotherhood Mutual does not endorse any particular vendor, Harbor Compliance registers religious organizations in applicable states and will maintain the registration. Check with other religious organizations and nonprofits in your area to see if they could recommend a third-party vendor, too.

Brotherhood Mutual’s legal team specializes in helping ministries answer questions from an insurance and risk management perspective. See if the Legal Assist team’s guidance can help you. You can review FAQs, ask a legal question, or obtain an attorney referral for your area—it’s a free service we offer to the religious organization community.



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 Carter Pearce, Grace, Green Forest; (870) 688-7412
 Juan Carlos Posadas, Misión Creciendo en Cristo, NLR; (501) 712-8752
 Jim Tollison, Mustard Seed, Cain; (870) 370-3938
 Chad White, Connection Point, Brookland; (870) 243-4683
 Darrin Smith, Life Journey, Fort Smith; (479)-763-8909
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PAUL WHITE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Forgiveness in Real Time

This is the season to remember God's love for us, He demonstrated His love by sending His Son to pay our sin debt. Often, we have heard the line "I owed a debt I could not pay, and He (Jesus) paid a debt He did not owe." Have you given much thought to that aspect of God's love and concern for us?

In my lifetime I have experienced it in a very real sense. We were poor, like most everyone in those days. It was normal to have an account at the local mercantile store (early day Walmart plus some) where you could charge items like food, pick sacks, plow points, a new pair of pants or shoes and feed until crop time or payday, and then you would come in and settle your debt.

There was a house full of us, and if a man ever needed an account it was my dad. While we never had what people call the better things in life, we had each other and love. I seriously do not believe I ever went to bed hungry. Our father cared enough for us that, while we had no idea how he did it, we were partakers of his care. Much the same way we, as His children, are beneficiaries of God's care and provision.

I was privileged to experience a father's love and care in a very special way. As a young boy, my friend and I decided we were going camping and that we needed some supplies. No problem, I said to my friend I know what I will do, so we marched into the old store in Brookland and begin to gather what we wanted — bread, bologna, chips, drinks, candy. Once it was all gathered on the counter, the clerk asked us, "How do you want to pay for this?" I remember I said, "Just put it on my father's account."

Life was good and all went great until the weekend came and it was time for dad to go pay last week's bill and charge yet another. While doing so, dad found out that I had charged some things on his account. He not only paid what he owed, but he paid the debt I had made. Why? Because he was a loving father, and he actually paid a debt I made but could not pay. He did for me what I could not do for myself. Does that sound like anyone you know?

May we be conscious that God did not come to make us rich or famous, but to save us by paying that sin debt we could not pay. Like the song that says, "I was guilty with nothing to say, and they were coming to take me away, when a voice from Heaven was heard that said let him go take me instead." May His love for us motivate us to live for Him.

From Our Missionaries

Connection Point, Brookland: Chad White writes, "It was a good week at Connection Point. We finished collecting gifts for our Angel Trees and delivered eight huge bags full of clothes and gifts for children to the school. We also collected food for a family in our area who has taken in some boys that needed a home. We also collected Christmas gifts for a family in our community who is struggling this season. On top of that, we began collecting filled stockings for a classroom of students from one of the poorer school systems near us. God has richly blessed us, and we are humbled to be able to bless others in His name."

"Sunday, our numbers were a little lower than normal, but we enjoyed a great service. Please continue to pray for the work here in Brookland as we continue to share the gospel of Jesus with our community."

The Mustard Seed, Cain: Jim Tollison writes, "We had a great day at the mission Sunday and had a pretty

good crowd, including some visitors. We enjoyed our annual holiday meal, combining Christmas and Thanksgiving celebrations.

"Our walkway project is now complete. It has already been a special blessing to us with the recent rains."

"Becky is working hard to put together our youth Christmas program. A couple of our mothers are also helping. "We have about 20 young folks who are participating in this special program and practices are being held at every opportunity."

"I want to thank all who are continuing to support this work in so many ways. We would not be this far along without your support. Please remember to pray for those we are sharing the gospel with."

"Our thoughts and prayers go out to those who have suffered the loss of loved ones from this horrific pandemic."

Misión Creciendo en Cristo (Growing in Christ), North Little Rock: Juan Carlos Posadas writes, "Two weeks ago, I had a virtual meeting with Gregory Pilewski, the new

superintendent of the North Little Rock School District. We discussed the challenges that Hispanic students face in schools. Mr. Pilewski showed a lot of interest, to the extent that he decided to visit us on Sunday.

He had the opportunity to meet our congregation and to hear the gospel. After the meeting, when he said goodbye, he told me that when his wife moves to North Little Rock, he would return to visit us with her. It will be another good opportunity to share the gospel. Mr. Pilewski authorized the donation of 30 worktables for students who have contact with our church through the food distribution program and who are receiving virtual classes. His team is looking for donors of beds for eight students who sleep on the floor.

He has asked me to be part of his advisory group. It seems this will be a long-term relationship for the benefit of the North Little Rock community, especially the Hispanic one. I thank God for the opportunity of service that He provides to His church.

"During the past week, we donated Christmas decorations to the North Little Rock School District and North Heights Recreation Center. Both institutions were very grateful. We thank God for their provision through City Serve, allowing us to create good relationships with institutions serving the community. Thanks for your prayers."

Grace, Green Forest: Carter Pearce writes, "This weekend has been wonderful in Green Forest. We had a kids' reading Friday night for which we had 16 in person and another 9 join by Zoom. Saturday morning was the Green Forest Christmas parade where we were able to serve hot beverages and open our building to the community. We had several come in to view our Christmas decorations and hear about our mission in Carroll County."

"On Saturday, our men and older boys went to the firing range and enjoyed some male bonding."

"After services on Sunday, we celebrated a birthday with a party for our new three-year-old. Everything we do is focused on showing the love of Christ to our community. Whether joining together to read stories about Christmas, serving hot beverages, spending time together as brothers in Christ, worshipping in traditional fashion or celebrating birthdays together, we are truly focused on growing together."

Ebenezer, West Little Rock: Ruben Isturiz writes, "Last Sunday, we

Spotlight On Missions

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Michel & Ruth Poirier • Quebec/Haiti/Africa

The situation in Africa is not getting much better. Our church in Cameroon has been taking in refugee families who fled from the north in order to save what's left of their families. When they arrived, they had nothing except what they had on their backs. We were able, through love gifts that came in, to send \$450 to help carry the burden of the church's needs.

Even during this time of struggle, the church is flourishing in fellowship and spiritual growth. The Bible lesson through Facebook is the only source of spiritual education the leaders are getting. I praise the Lord for Pastor Serge Leclerc, who took over our work in Ste. Marie and, with my assistance, directs the spiritual development of these Christians.

The country is in great need of clean water. It is something we take for granted, but it is a luxury for those who have no resources. For some, it is a daily struggle to get the clean drinking water they need to survive. Those who live in the small villages have to walk miles to get water that is of poor quality. The condition is bad, and prayer and action are needed. Six months ago, Water for Christ sent a dozen water filters for some families and for the church. It was a great blessing, and the people are praising God for it.



We are very busy with the care of our churches in Haiti, Africa and Canada. The Lord is good, even during this pandemic. Lack of fellowship has brought down the spiritual morale in our churches, especially in Quebec, Canada where government regulations keep us from getting together in groups larger than 25 and limits fellowship after church services. In other words, when the last "amen" is given at the close of the service, everybody must go home.

The restriction is a heavy weight on our people but, praise the Lord, two Sundays ago a lady gave her life to the Lord and started Bible lessons with Ruth. Another man started Bible study with one of our men in the church. Even in these difficult times, we are being blessed by the Lord!

Two people were saved in Onaville, Haiti last week, and we were able to help with food distribution there. Medical attention was also given to one of our young teens who has been hospitalized for 26 days, waiting for an operation. We also sent \$3,400 to help with needs in two of our churches there.

God is always good to us. During this Christmas season, let's keep in mind those who are less fortunate. May God bless you and yours during this special time of year. (ostervald@axion.ca)

restarted our worship services in the temple after two weeks of streaming online. Half were present and the other half were online since we still have people in quarantine. We participated in the Lord's Supper. We were grateful that we still have a faithful group that, despite the pandemic, we have the desire to congregate. Only God can, in the middle of COVID-19, establish us as a church. I am grateful for Geronimo, who visited us this Sunday in search of a place to worship.

"Keep praying for the Berean Groups (cells) because we had to close them again because of the positive cases of COVID-19. Only online groups are meeting. We had to put two groups online — those that live in Chile and those that live in Colombia. I led the group from Chile last Friday. There were eight of us and it was a great blessing. The question that I left them to analyze until the next meeting is, 'Are you a sheep of Jesus?' Everyone in that group is a non-believer. Pray that they

will make their decision for Christ. It is wonderful that Ebenezer, being a mission, is doing missionary work in Chile, Colombia and Venezuela. To God be the glory!"

Faith Chapel, Flippin: Johnny Shew writes, "It was a very sad week here. We lost two longtime friends/acquaintances — one, age 60, a man of God, to COVID-19; and one, age 59, to a pulmonary embolism. I'm sure one is with Jesus now, but I'm not sure about the other. It reinforces to me why we do what we do. We never know when it will be our time, so we must be ready."

"To show the love of Jesus means to tell others about Him so they can be ready too. In my message this week, I talked about missing opportunities to share Jesus; I have missed too many. We all are busy, we are all dealing with COVID-19 and we all have so many legitimate excuses. I'm just so tired of making excuses. Pray for us please as we try to reach the lost for Jesus and pray for them."



Christmas From the States



Grateful Hearts

By Editor Don Brown

(via *The Mississippi Baptist*) — The last two months of each year present us with opportunities to reflect on our lives, our blessings and our relationship with our God. The two holidays we celebrate, Thanksgiving and Christmas, should give us pause and cause us to reflect on the One who really is the center of each.

In spite of all the turmoil that 2020 has brought to our world, nation, churches and many families, we must continue to realize that our Lord has blessed us beyond measure. The Christmas season each year is a vivid reminder of His abundant mercy on mankind.

God has richly blessed us as a nation, as individuals and as His children. Regardless of our health, wealth or circumstances, we can all agree that He has blessed us beyond our expectations, our needs and beyond that which we deserve. A popular radio host's response when asked how he is doing is "Better than I deserve." That certainly also applies to the rest of us. As we stop and reflect on His blessings, may we tell Him that we are deeply "thankful" for His care.

Christmas gives us opportunity to reflect on the greatest gift ever bestowed upon humanity — He gave His Only Son. He has showered His love upon all mankind by providing a Savior, a Deliverer, an Advocate for the lost souls of mankind. What a love God has for us!

We are truly thankful for all the blessings of life that God gives. Let us be mindful of the greatest gift as stated by the physician Luke as he wrote the following words: *"And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end"* (Luke 1:30-33).

Bonnie and I wish you all a very blessed Christmas and a prosperous 2021. May the God of all mercy bless our nation and deliver us from our neglect, sinfulness and this devastating pandemic.



The Shepherds' Message

By Editor Mike Mobly

(via *Oklahoma Baptist*) — I sat in amazement as I watched a television show recently as they were trying to rationalize the miracles of the birth of Jesus. They unsuccessfully tried to reason away the virgin birth, blaming it on poor interpretation of ancient manuscripts; and they attempted to explain the star of the wise men and the prophecies of the Old Testament. For some reason, we just cannot accept what we cannot explain.

I suppose one of the most fascinating aspects of the Christmas story is not so much miraculous as it is mysterious — why the shepherds? Why would God choose to reveal the most magnificent moment in history to the most menial men of their day?

Could it be that He knew they would be the most appreciative of the gift? That they would recognize that they deserved this honor the least, so they would treasure it the most? Maybe He knew they would be the least heeded when it came to spreading the good news. How many times in His adult ministry did Jesus warn His followers not to reveal all they knew about Him to the world yet? It was not yet time to disclose everything to the world, and yet it was a time when someone had to know, someone had to talk, someone had to proclaim the coming of God to the world.

And don't miss what they did when they discovered Jesus: *"They made widely known the saying which had been revealed to them"* (Luke 2:17). That's also our role today, isn't it? We are to share the news of the One who has saved us, to sing the notes of the song He has placed in our heart and to split the night with the light that has been revealed to us and proclaim that the world needs a Savior.

When I think about all of this, I feel like the shepherds most days — why should I be entrusted with this awesome opportunity to share the gospel? I'm not worthy, under-equipped and the last person in the world who is fit to represent God in the world. Yet, He chose me anyway. He allows me to be a part of His incredible plan because there is meaning to the message found in the messenger who was chosen. The grace of God is discovered even in the selection of the herald who lauds the news of His coming.

My prayer is that we will all discover a deeper urgency to tell people about Jesus before time comes to a close, that our eyes will be opened to the opportunities God presents us with daily to talk about Him with anyone and everyone in our world and that, despite the inadequacies we feel about ourselves, we will recognize the magnitude of the message itself. It is there that we place our faith.



Those Christmas Hallmark Movies

By the Late Jesse Spurlock

(via *Oklahoma Baptist*) — If you've loved those classic Christmas movies that are presented each year as we come into the Christmas season, I know you've probably stumbled across the ones broadcast on the Hallmark Channel. They will frequently be broadcast on major stations, but will show up the following years on the Hallmark Channel.

In 2017, as we were coming into the Christmas season, Hallmark began broadcasting a series of Christmas movies, and there was an article in the *Daily Oklahoman* titled, "Hallmark Channel is Now an Escape." As I read the article, I found that I was in agreement with the slant of the writer. She quoted Mac Cohn, proprietor of a sports website in Ohio: "Usually, to unwind, I would watch football, but even watching football has become a political thing. The Hallmark Channel has none of that."

The article's author, Monica Heese, stated "Hallmark, which often seemed to exist just so you had something to fold laundry to, is now deep into its biggest annual event 'Countdown to Christmas,' a series of several dozen fresh-from-the-oven seasonal made-for-TV movies. And it is an event."

The modern news stinks, current events stink, turning on the television, in general, stinks. Here it is:

Another beloved icon revealed to be a sexual predator? Nope, let's watch Hallmark.

Another North Korean missile, now deemed capable of hitting the United States? Nope, let me watch Hallmark

Well, the writer "had me" from the first and I was soon lulled into the ever-so-subtle message of those movies.

As I continued reading, she quoted Michelle Vicary, Hallmark's Executive Vice President of Programming. I shouldn't have been surprised as I was suddenly confronted with the bottom line of those lovable Hallmark movies when Ms. Vicary stated that the Hallmark movies are "always Christmas-focused, but tend to celebrate the season, rather than Jesus Christ."

It surprised me that she blatantly made it very clear that the focus and point of their movies was to direct attention to the season and away from Jesus Christ. Why does she think there is a Christmas season in the first place?

Regardless of the moral codes behind the Hallmark movies, no one viewing one of those movies has ever been told to confess and repent of their sins and ask to be forgiven — especially in view of the fact that Jesus Christ is not even mentioned in any of them.

Eliminating Jesus from the Christmas season may leave a "warm, fuzzy feeling," but doesn't satisfy the deepest need mankind has — forgiveness of sins and a new life in Christ.

God very clearly told us in John 3:16: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

In John 14:6, Jesus clearly stated, *"...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*

He also said, in Luke 16:2: *"Except ye repent, ye shall also perish."*

No, God didn't send Jesus into the world so Hallmark could produce movies to make us feel better about ourselves. He was sent so that, through Him, mankind can have eternal life.

I appreciate those Hallmark movies that permit me to watch them, regardless of who is present (especially my daughters, other females or children), but we need to realize that Jesus — not "Hallmark Movies" — is the reason for the season.

Assured by God's Blessing

By Dwight Lindsey, Director • Miss. Baptist Children's Home

(via *The Mississippi Baptist*) — God is good, all the time — and the popular saying echoes, "All the time, God is good!" We recently hit the time of year that is especially set aside for giving thanks.

I am thankful for so many things. I am thankful for the wife the Lord gave me. She is always with me and is always trying to encourage me, even when I need correcting. I could not ask for a better blessing, but there's more.

I have extended family and my family in faith that support me physically and biblically. That's not all.

God has given me the blessing of being a part of the lives of some awesome kids. They make me laugh, they make me cry and they give me a small glimpse of the Heavenly Father. It hurts sometimes, but it's worth it. At times, it's hilarious, heartwarming and beyond anything I deserve.

To parent your children is a gift from God, and parenting children in need is a reminder of the love of God. I had to pause while writing this article to work out the details of receiving another child this week. I am thankful that we continue to be a blessing to kids in need.

I am blessed by the churches, individuals and businesses that act as the hands of God in our lives daily. We have had churches give toward Christmas and individuals shipped some gifts directly from Amazon. A business also blessed us with some food this Thanksgiving. Thank you all for acting as the Spirit of God guides your heart.

As we prepare for the most wonderful time of the year, we are reminded of God's greatest blessing given to His creation: *"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, good will toward men"* (Luke 2:11-14).

I am not assured in the goodness of God only when these daily blessings come my way. I am assured every day by the blessing of God through His son, Jesus Christ. God is not good just because He gives good gifts, but because He provided us with the one eternal need we could not get anywhere else. Thank you, God for Jesus, grace and redemption.



Wee Gather
Worship resources for children and families.

Legacy Builders
Christmas Advent
The following is a chronological order of scriptures that tell the Christmas story. Discover with your family what is hidden and what is to be revealed in the Christmas story. For resources, how many days are available, please go to www.baptisttrumpet.com.
What do the words mean? (Answers)
Have a blessed time together celebrating our Lord's advent (answers)
Answers:
1. How many days? 25 days (including Christmas Day)
2. Before you begin, remind your family that the world was not created on the 1st of January. From the first of January, the world was created. During that time, the world was in a dark time for the rest of the world. The world was created on the 1st of January, but the world was not created until the 25th of December.
Scriptures:
• **Matthew 1:1-23** - The birth of Jesus Christ
• **Matthew 2:1-12** - The wise men
• **Matthew 2:13-18** - The flight to Egypt
• **Matthew 2:19-23** - The return to Nazareth
• **Matthew 3:1-17** - The baptism of Jesus
• **Matthew 4:1-11** - The temptation of Jesus
• **Matthew 5:1-48** - The Sermon on the Mount
• **Matthew 6:1-18** - The Lord's Prayer
• **Matthew 7:1-12** - The Golden Rule
• **Matthew 8:1-13** - The healing of the leper
• **Matthew 9:1-13** - The healing of the paralytic
• **Matthew 9:14-17** - The wedding at Cana
• **Matthew 10:1-42** - The sending of the twelve apostles
• **Matthew 11:1-19** - The baptism of John the Baptist
• **Matthew 12:1-21** - The healing of the blind man
• **Matthew 12:22-30** - The healing of the deaf and dumb man
• **Matthew 12:31-32** - The sin against the Holy Spirit
• **Matthew 12:33-37** - The fig tree and the vine
• **Matthew 12:38-45** - The sign of the prophet Jonah
• **Matthew 13:1-52** - The parables of Jesus
• **Matthew 14:1-12** - The feeding of the five thousand
• **Matthew 14:13-21** - The feeding of the four thousand
• **Matthew 15:1-20** - The healing of the deaf and dumb man
• **Matthew 15:21-28** - The healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter
• **Matthew 16:1-12** - The bread of life
• **Matthew 16:13-28** - Peter's confession
• **Matthew 17:1-9** - The transfiguration
• **Matthew 17:21-27** - The payment of the temple tax
• **Matthew 18:1-35** - The kingdom of heaven is like...
• **Matthew 19:1-12** - The Pharisees and the divorce
• **Matthew 19:13-15** - The blessing of the children
• **Matthew 19:16-22** - The rich young ruler
• **Matthew 19:23-30** - The camel and the eye of a needle
• **Matthew 20:1-16** - The parable of the workers in the vineyard
• **Matthew 20:17-19** - The journey to Jerusalem
• **Matthew 20:20-28** - The request of James and John
• **Matthew 20:29-34** - The healing of the blind men
• **Matthew 21:1-11** - The triumphal entry
• **Matthew 21:12-17** - The cleansing of the temple
• **Matthew 21:18-22** - The fig tree withered
• **Matthew 21:23-27** - The parable of the tenants
• **Matthew 21:28-32** - The parable of the two sons
• **Matthew 21:33-46** - The parable of the vineyard
• **Matthew 22:1-14** - The parable of the wedding feast
• **Matthew 22:15-22** - The question of the tribute money
• **Matthew 22:23-33** - The question of the resurrection
• **Matthew 22:34-46** - The question of the Messiah
• **Matthew 23:1-39** - The woes against the Pharisees and Sadducees
• **Matthew 24:1-14** - The signs of the times
• **Matthew 24:15-28** - The sign of the sun and moon
• **Matthew 24:29-31** - The sign of the Son of Man
• **Matthew 24:32-35** - The fig tree
• **Matthew 24:36-44** - The day and hour
• **Matthew 25:1-13** - The parable of the ten virgins
• **Matthew 25:14-30** - The parable of the talents
• **Matthew 25:31-46** - The judgment of the nations
• **Matthew 26:1-75** - The Last Supper
• **Matthew 27:1-54** - The trial and crucifixion of Jesus
• **Matthew 27:55-66** - The burial of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:1-10** - The resurrection of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:11-20** - The great commission
• **Matthew 28:21** - The promise of the Holy Spirit
• **Matthew 28:29-32** - The final judgment
• **Matthew 28:33-35** - The end of the world
• **Matthew 28:36-38** - The new heaven and earth
• **Matthew 28:39-40** - The new Jerusalem
• **Matthew 28:41-45** - The new covenant
• **Matthew 28:46** - The final words of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:47-50** - The ascension of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:51-52** - The descent of the Holy Spirit
• **Matthew 28:53-54** - The coming of the Son of Man
• **Matthew 28:55-56** - The final judgment
• **Matthew 28:57-58** - The end of the world
• **Matthew 28:59-60** - The new heaven and earth
• **Matthew 28:61-62** - The new Jerusalem
• **Matthew 28:63-64** - The new covenant
• **Matthew 28:65-66** - The final words of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:67-68** - The ascension of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:69-70** - The descent of the Holy Spirit
• **Matthew 28:71-72** - The coming of the Son of Man
• **Matthew 28:73-74** - The final judgment
• **Matthew 28:75-76** - The end of the world
• **Matthew 28:77-78** - The new heaven and earth
• **Matthew 28:79-80** - The new Jerusalem
• **Matthew 28:81-82** - The new covenant
• **Matthew 28:83-84** - The final words of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:85-86** - The ascension of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:87-88** - The descent of the Holy Spirit
• **Matthew 28:89-90** - The coming of the Son of Man
• **Matthew 28:91-92** - The final judgment
• **Matthew 28:93-94** - The end of the world
• **Matthew 28:95-96** - The new heaven and earth
• **Matthew 28:97-98** - The new Jerusalem
• **Matthew 28:99-100** - The new covenant
• **Matthew 28:101-102** - The final words of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:103-104** - The ascension of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:105-106** - The descent of the Holy Spirit
• **Matthew 28:107-108** - The coming of the Son of Man
• **Matthew 28:109-110** - The final judgment
• **Matthew 28:111-112** - The end of the world
• **Matthew 28:113-114** - The new heaven and earth
• **Matthew 28:115-116** - The new Jerusalem
• **Matthew 28:117-118** - The new covenant
• **Matthew 28:119-120** - The final words of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:121-122** - The ascension of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:123-124** - The descent of the Holy Spirit
• **Matthew 28:125-126** - The coming of the Son of Man
• **Matthew 28:127-128** - The final judgment
• **Matthew 28:129-130** - The end of the world
• **Matthew 28:131-132** - The new heaven and earth
• **Matthew 28:133-134** - The new Jerusalem
• **Matthew 28:135-136** - The new covenant
• **Matthew 28:137-138** - The final words of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:139-140** - The ascension of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:141-142** - The descent of the Holy Spirit
• **Matthew 28:143-144** - The coming of the Son of Man
• **Matthew 28:145-146** - The final judgment
• **Matthew 28:147-148** - The end of the world
• **Matthew 28:149-150** - The new heaven and earth
• **Matthew 28:151-152** - The new Jerusalem
• **Matthew 28:153-154** - The new covenant
• **Matthew 28:155-156** - The final words of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:157-158** - The ascension of Jesus
• **Matthew 28:159-160** - The descent of the Holy Spirit
• **Matthew 28:161-162** - The coming of the Son of Man
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• **Matthew 28:165-166** - The end of the world
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• **Matthew 28:169-170** - The new Jerusalem
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• **Matthew 28:179-180** - The coming of the Son of Man
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• **Matthew 28:201-202** - The end of the world
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• **Matthew 28:299-300** - The final words of Jesus

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