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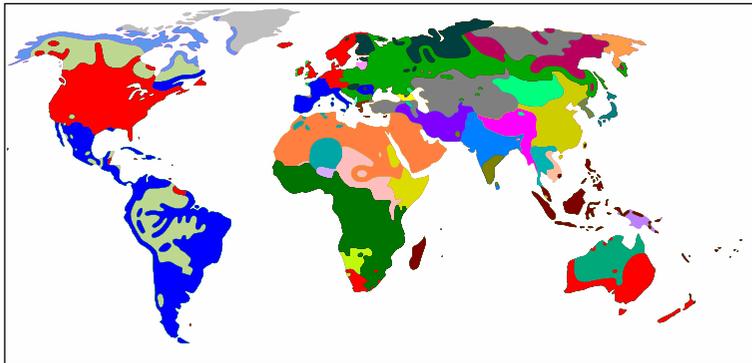
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Thirteen New Lifeworld Languages

By Holly Meriweather

“The gospel of God’s kingdom is to be proclaimed wherever there are people, to all ethnic groups wherever they are, and to the ends of the earth,” said Director of Operations Luis Ortega. As Lifeworld’s global team works to proclaim the gospel to their people groups, the most recent batch of twelve languages added to the Cloud is the largest

added to date. The list includes nine languages primarily spoken in Africa, one in North America, one in Central America and one European language.

Ortega explains, “The African continent, particularly East Africa, saw the greatest growth in language offerings where a clear gospel presentation was added in the language of the listener/viewer.” We want to thank you, our prayers partners, for that growth in language offerings.

Two-and-a-half years after Executive Director Donny Parrish challenged the Lifeworld team to offer gospel presentations in 200 languages by 2025, the current count is 107. Director of Operations Luis Ortega, who leads that effort, says Lifeworld is “sharing God’s Word and moving among the nations through the collaborative efforts of over 50 partnership agreements with churches, associations, producers, writers and contributors from around world.”

Here are the new Who Is Jesus To You? (WIJTY) languages being added to lifeworld.org. Each language listed below includes its alternate form/forms in parentheses followed by where the language is predominantly spoken:

- 96 — Bondei (Kibondei) — Tanzania
- 97 — Makonde (Konde) —

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.

Tom Lewis has felt the Lord’s leading to decline the pastorate of Bradford Baptist Church in Bradford and will remain as pastor of Mount Olive Baptist Church in Girard, Kansas.

Thomas Mobly, one of the pastors of Grace Harbor Church in Oklahoma City, Okla., was ordained to the gospel ministry on March 14 at the church.

Alvin Colston has accepted the pastorate of North Lake Church in Smithville, Mo. He will begin serving on April 11.

Everett Smith is available for preaching appointments and pastoral service as the Lord leads and can be contacted at (870) 250-0283.

Eddie Wayne Parnell, Jr., 55 of Warren, recently surrendered to ministry and is available for preaching appointments. Contact him at (501) 772-3063 or ew1parnell@gmail.com.

Maysville Missionary Baptist Church is seeking a part-time youth minister. For more information, contact Pastor Samuel Reddin at (501) 733-9650, sjreddin@gmail.com or 9 Cumbrian Dr., Bella Vista, Ark., 72714.

- Mozambique
 - 98 — Matambwe (Kimatambwe) — Tanzania
 - 99 - Maraba (Kimaraba) — Mozambique
- 100 — Yao (Kiyao) — Malawi
- 101 — German/Deutsch — Germany & Romania
- 102 — Matumbi (Kimatumbi) — Tanzania
- 103 — Mwera (Kimwera) — Tanzania
- 104 — Vai — Liberia
- 105 — Krahn (Western) — Liberia
- 106 — Mixteco (Mixtec) — Mexico
- 107 — Kaqchiquel (Cakchiquel, Kaqchikel, Kakchiquel, Maya) — Guatemala

Please join us in praying for the following:

- That people groups who speak the newly added languages will hear

See LANGUAGES, Page 2



SOAR Conference

By Nick Jacobson, SOAR Production Leader

As we plan the 2021 SOAR conference, safety and security are at the top of our priority list. Every registered attendee will be given a SOAR facemask, Hilton Anatole has hand sanitizing stations throughout their facility and social distancing will be enforced when needed/required. SOAR staff will take the temperature of every person coming into the ballroom. The safety of every student that attends is a priority for SOAR.

In addition to the safety of every student, the security of every student is also a priority. Over the last few years, the conference ministry of the BMA has hired an off-duty police officer to patrol within the facility during sessions and gatherings. Bryson Hayden from Columbia, Mississippi, has been the lead security for all BMA conferences for the past few years. He comes with years of experience as a firefighter, police officer and pastor. He enlists several SOAR staff with radio communication and trains them on what to look for during each conference. SOAR will always make the security of our students a priority, and we trust Bryson to lead this effort.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me, my email address is nick@soarconference.com, and my cell phone is (501) 269-3364.



MINISTRY CONNECTION
WORKSHOPS

Community Impact Workshop Offered

By Allan Eakin, Associate Editor

The *Baptist Progress* (official publication of the BMA of Texas) is sponsoring a Ministry Connection Workshop entitled Gospel Impact Through Community Involvement on March 23 from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. The event will be offered both in-person and online and is open to anyone.

Jason Collins, pastor at CrossRoads Church, will lead the workshop at the CrossRoads campus located at 7900 Chiesa Road, Rowlett, Texas. Pastor Jason and CrossRoads Church have enjoyed great success in the area of community involvement and will offer valuable insight to participants. During the workshop, participants will learn how to connect their church with their community in a way that expands the Kingdom of God.

Preregistration is required for the event at baptistprogress.org/ministry-connection-workshop-form or by calling (972) 923-0756 for both in-person and online participation. For in-person participants, the cost is \$10, which includes lunch. For digital (Zoom or Facebook Live) participants there is no charge.

This event is a result of the expanded role of the Baptist Progress as the informing and equipping ministry of the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas.

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CENTRAL BAPTIST COLLEGE
PROFILE

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Terry Kimbrow
President

PACE Spring 2021 Registration

Working adults looking for a convenient and flexible college option have another opportunity to enroll in the fourth five-week course of the spring semester of the PACE degree program. Classes are offered in-class, online or in a hybrid option. The deadline for new student applications for the final enrollment deadline of the Spring 2021 semester is Friday, April 9. The first deadline for Fall 2021 registration for the PACE Program is Friday, June 11.

With eight enrollment periods per year and five-week courses, busy working adults always have an opportunity to get started. Take advantage of our \$500 BMAA Grant that applies for all students who attend a BMAA church. Ministry Tuition Grants, student referral grants and a Veterans Tuition Grant are also available for qualifying students.

The enrollment process begins by applying or scheduling a virtual meeting with one of our enrollment counselors. Visit cbc.edu/online to apply or learn what PACE can do for you. If you have questions, contact the Admissions Office at pacc@cbc.edu or (501) 329-6873.

Fall 2021 Registration & Connect Days

Spring is here, and so is fall registration! Monday, April 5, our current students will be able to meet with their faculty advisors and set their fall 2021 schedule.

Incoming students that are working through the enrollment process will also be registering for classes the following week. In addition to creating their schedules, they will also register for a virtual orientation event called Connect Day. This an extremely helpful event that will prepare students and parents for success. Students can choose April 27, May 25, June 15 or July 20. To learn more about Connect Days visit cbc.edu/connect.

There is Still Time to Get Started for Fall 2021!

If you or someone you know have not started the admissions and enrollment processes, now is the time to apply for admission for all programs for Fall 2021! Visit cbc.edu/apply to start the process.

We also welcome prospective students or groups of students to schedule an in person or virtual campus visit experience or a virtual meeting with an admissions counselor. Learn more and schedule your visit or meeting at www.cbc.edu/visit.

Financial Aid, including institutional scholarships, is available! Students will receive an initial financial aid award once CBC receives from the applicant an application for admission, high school and/or college transcripts, ACT test scores and a completed FAFSA Form (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Learn more at cbc.edu/scholarships.

For more information or help with any part of this process, contact the Central Baptist College Admissions Office at admissions@cbc.edu or (501) 329-6873.



Sports News
By Erik Holth

Men's Basketball

• **Wichita, Kan., March 12** — Competing in their third NAIA National Tournament, CBC took on the #22 Ravens of Benedictine College in the NAIA Men's Basketball Championship Opening Round Presented by Ballogy. CBC (19-7) led for part of the first half but couldn't stop a potent BC (21-6) offense, falling 73-61 to see their tournament end in the first round once again.

Baseball

• **North Little Rock, March 12** — Playing in their only series of the weekend, CBC hosted the Tigers of

Champion Christian College in a doubleheader at Burns Park. CBC (6-5) pounded out 25 hits and 30 runs, sweeping the doubleheader 17-2 and 13-3 from CCC (0-14).

Men's Soccer

• **Fulton, Mo., March 13** — Isaac Delafuente's goal in the 98th minute gave CBC a historic victory over William Woods University in an American Midwest Conference (AMC) contest at Westminster Field. CBC (4-6-1, 2-4 AMC) scored three times in the contest and beat WWU (3-3, 1-2 AMC) 3-2.

Women's Soccer

• **Fulton, Mo., March 13** — Returning to the pitch for the first time since October, CBC was on the road at Westminster Field for an AMC

LANGUAGES

(Continued From Page 1)

and respond to the gospel and then be disciplined through a local church.

• For Rama, our global partner in Myanmar, as a military coup has caused violence, limited to non-existent internet access and shutdowns in an already crippled economy.

• For our team members in El Salvador as they minister to people during political unrest in the country following the recent national elections.

We praise God for the expansion of the Lifeword Cloud with twelve new languages, which allows more people to find gospel presentations, teaching and help to develop their walk with God.

"For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Acts 13:47). We are excited to announce that this year's Lifeword Sunday (Oct. 24) theme is "to the ends of the earth." It is not too early to schedule Donny or another team member to come share what God is doing through your media ministry. Contact Lauren at lauren@lifeword.org.

contest against William Woods. CBC (4-7, 3-4 AMC) allowed two second half goals and lost to WWU (4-1, 4-0 AMC) 2-0.

Volleyball

• **Conway, March 9** — Opening the spring portion of their AMC schedule, CBC hosted the Owls of William Woods at Reddin Fieldhouse. CBC (10-9, 3-3 AMC) showed a lot of fight, but were swept 3-0 by WWU (1-1, 1-0 AMC) by scores of 21-25, 21-25 and 24-26.

Golf

• **Bartlesville, Okla., March 9** — Sitting in second place entering the final round, CBC was back on the course today at the Hillcrest Country Club looking for their first win of the Spring and their second win overall. CBC closed with a final round 321 to finish with a 926 and place fourth, 15 shots behind the winners, Iowa Western Community College.

• **Maumelle, March 15** — Hosting a tournament for the first time since 2019, CBC opened play in the CBC Mustang Invitational at the Country Club of Arkansas. CBC shot an opening round 305 to sit in fifth place, 16 shots behind first round leaders Kansas Wesleyan.

Athlete of the Week

• **St. Louis, Mo., March 15** — A pair of CBC student athletes were recognized by the American Midwest Conference for their performances last week. CBC golfer **Spencer LaBarbera** and pitcher **Andrew Killough** were both named Athlete of the Week by the AMC after outstanding performances.



Student Ministry Matters

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Dan Carson
Director

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Helping Students Follow Jesus

What is the most important thing that you do as a youth pastor or student ministry worker? Is it designing the best game? Is it planning a night of fun for your group? Is it making sure that your youth band knows the latest music as they lead during youth group? While those can be fun and valuable things, they pale in comparison to our big job, making disciples. As Jesus spent his time here on Earth, He made making disciples a priority. If for no other reason, that is why we should make it a priority in our lives.

The sad truth is that many of us were never personally disciplined as we grew in our faith, so we are left floundering as we try to figure out that best way to implement a strategy with our students. Here are a few things that you will want to consider as you seek to find the best approach.

• **Discipleship groups should remain small.** 2-3 students and a leader is large enough. Any bigger and participants are unlikely to share openly. You want your students to be open and honest with their lives. Your weekly student ministry meeting is not a discipleship group.

• **Males should disciple males and females should disciple females.** I know. I feel about 100 years old making this suggestion, but it provides the greatest amount of safety and real growth. A discipleship relationship is usually more connected than most others in your student ministry. It is important to protect the reputation of the student ministry worker and simply protect the student. In addition, a young man needs to see what being a godly man is all about. The same is true for young ladies. God made us different and there is nothing wrong in celebrating and embracing those differences.

• **Your discipleship group should be Bible-centric.** I understand that you will talk about many things as you apply the Bible to your life and the lives of your students, but the Word is at the heart of what we are doing. If we hope for our students to be Christ followers, then they need to be learning from His Word.

• **The bulk of discipleship, for good or bad, is going on away from church.** Look for ways to assist your students' parents. If your student is participating in 2 hours of discipleship a week, they are still only spending 3-5 hours a week focused on spiritual thing through your ministry. Their home and school get much more time than that. Look for ways to impact your students with the Word outside of the walls of the church.

This is far from an extensive list, but perhaps it will get you thinking about different approaches as you move forward. In Matthew 28, we find that we have all been called to make disciples. How are you helping your students grow to be more Christ like?



Lifeword
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Three Ways You Can Solve Family Problems

By Jesse Hales

Raise your hand if you know someone who has family problems. Is your hand raised? Ok, maybe it would be better to ask if anyone knows of a family without any problems. I sure don't. Perfect families are as real as perfect diets. Add a few kids to the equation and there's a pretty good chance you'll have some giant family problems — my sister still has lead in her back where I stabbed her with a pencil in kindergarten!



King David's family wasn't any different. Even in the brief glimpses the Bible

See **PROBLEMS**, Page 8



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LARRY BARKER, Director of Operations North America
BMA of America Missions Department

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Seven Vision Steps (Part 2)

We covered the first four steps in the last article (see March 10 issue). It must begin with an intentional initiative of prayer and fasting. Nothing clarifies vision like a season of prayer and fasting. Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness as He transitioned into the ministry He came to accomplish. He comes out of the wilderness like a man on mission, and He was. In Luke 4, Jesus goes to his hometown synagogue and reads out of Isaiah. When He finished, He rolled up the scroll and Mark Batterson says he also “rolled up His sleeves” for the work.

The children of Israel were in Egypt and needed deliverance. They left the bondage behind to head towards their destiny—the promised land. The time in between was their development—the wilderness—where they not only got a change of scenery but also a change in focus. Tony Evans describes it as, “deliverance, development and destiny.” Hebrews 12:2 says: *“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross.”* The vision He had for the “joy set before Him” enabled Him to persevere.

Do you have a vision statement for your ministry and your church? Vision is a battle plan for the future and does not just happen by default. It requires much prayer, fasting, collaboration and then implementing the vision you believe God has given your church. God has a specific plan, for a specific church, in a specific place, at a specific time. He has a preferred future for your church and a plan for you to follow. Begin with prayer but also do your homework by reading, listening, discussing and brainstorming.

Step number five realizes that vision does not materialize out of thin air. Once you have a rough draft of what you believe your vision statement should be you need to **SMART**en it up:

- Is it **Specific and Simple** enough to clearly paint the picture of a preferred future? Does it complicate where you are going or make it clear?
- Is it **Measurable and Memo-**

orable? Does it describe what success will look like and can it be easily stated and remembered?

• Is the vision statement **Attainable and Appealing?** Does it require faith and Holy Spirit risk? Does it inspire people to be a part of the journey?

• Is your vision statement **Relevant and Reliable?** Does it speak to your context and utilize your influence in your community? Is your vision consistent with your core values and does it represent those values well?

• Now you must make sure it is **Time-sensitive and Timely.** Does this help your congregation see the light at the end of the tunnel (“for the joy set before Him”)? Does it respond well to the times you are in? Is it built upon the timeless truths of the scripture and delivered in a timely contextualized manner?

Step number six makes sure it includes key elements. Does it have an outward focus of biblical evangelism? Does it include a discipleship pathway clearly articulating necessary steps? Does it include a leadership pipeline? In *The Multiplication Workshop* Dave DeVries states, “If you can’t reproduce disciples; you’ll never reproduce leaders. If you can’t reproduce leaders; you’ll never reproduce churches. If you can’t reproduce churches; you’ll never see multiplication!” It is a vision for healthy disciples, healthy leaders and healthy churches.

Your vision statement should reflect your current ministries and the ministries you intend to implement. John Kotter says, “Clarify how the fu-

ture will be different from the past and how you can make that future a reality through initiatives linked directly to the vision!” What passions do you as a church have? What unique gifts and abilities do your people possess? Where and how can you match those passions, gifts and abilities with the needs of your community? Ask leaders in key positions what your church can do to help them the most.

Step number 7 is determining how your people will connect to your vision statement to your entire congregation. Remove as many fears and concerns as you possibly can by reminding them that with God all things are possible. What does collaboration look like in your context? How will you get buy-in? Who will you have to move forward without? Make sure you cast your vision repeatedly because you cannot overstate it. Now is also the time to begin assessing and evaluating your progress by continually asking good questions.

Are you headed in the right direction? Are you on track and making progress? What do you need to tweak and what do you need to change? What words would touch a nerve ending and create excitement better? Realize that it begins with a first draft, develops into a rough draft but it takes a long time to become the final draft. Be prepared to rewrite the statement over and over because good writing is bad writing with good editing. Seek input from your leaders by asking them to feel free to state it, restate it and state it over again.

Do you have a clear picture and understanding of where you are going? Can you see a clear path God has set before you? Does it stir people to action and create a desire to be a part of the journey? Habakkuk 2:2: *“Write down this vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it.”*

**DO YOU OWN A BUSINESS?
ARE YOU A MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING
OF A BMA OF ARKANSAS CHURCH?**

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is a column that highlights the ministries of our BMA missionaries.

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*Help us get the word out about your ministry
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Just Thinking...

By Tom Mitchell

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The Importance of Gathering

In past articles, I have alluded to the possibility that after either limited or no in-person worship services, some may choose not to return to their churches after COVID restrictions are lifted. I was just thinking about how important it is for believers to gather to worship.

First, consider the meaning of the word church. The original Greek definition was a “gathering of those summoned.” The Greek word is “ecclesia.” As Christianity continued to impact communities, the word was simply defined as an assembly. Either way, it is evident that those who have been called out of sin to walk in the way of Christ are expected to gather—to meet together.

That brings us back to the decision facing believers as the state incrementally permits in-person worship services to resume. The question is this, “How important is worshiping with brothers and sisters in Christ to you?”

I fear that, in our modern era of Christianity, church attendance concerns do not measure up to those of the first century believers. They could hardly wait to gather. In fact, the Bible says they did so “daily.”

“Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:46-47 NIV).

This awful pandemic has had a horrible effect on the world. It has changed so much, hindered so many, taken the lives of thousands and affected the mindsets of many believers about the importance of church. Still, there are so many believers who, like the early church, can hardly wait to return to gathering in Sunday School classes, fellowship halls and especially in sanctuaries and worship centers to praise the Lord.

I pray that the churches of the BMA of Arkansas will soon be back—gathering together—with glad and sincere hearts! May the Lord then add to the churches those who are saved.



From the President...

Think Globally—Act Locally

Jeff Swart, BMAA President

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We'll Finish Together

Derek Redmond was a world-class sprinter. Derek represented America in the 1988 Games in Seoul, South Korea. However, Derek was forced to withdraw from the 400-meter sprint only 10 minutes before the race because of an Achilles tendon injury. He then underwent five surgeries over the next year. Redmond arrived at the 1992 Olympic Summer Games in Barcelona determined to win a medal in the 400-meter sprint.

As the race began, Redmond broke away from the pack and quickly took the lead. On the backstretch, 175 meters away from the finish line, Redmond heard a pop and immediately realized that he had torn his right hamstring and he pulled up lame. As the medical crew arrived with a stretcher, Redmond told them, “There’s no way I’m getting on that stretcher. I’m going to finish my race.”

Then, in a moment that will live forever in the minds of millions, Redmond lifted himself to his feet and started hobbling down the track. When the crowd saw Derek hobbling toward the finish line, they stood to their feet and began to cheer for Derek.

Derek’s dad, Jim Redmond, leapt out of the stands and ran towards his son on the track. Jim reached his son at the final curve, about 120 meters from the finish line, and wrapped his arm around his son’s waist. “I’m here, son,” Jim said softly, hugging his boy. **“We’ll finish together.”** Derek put his arms around his father’s shoulders and together, arm in arm, father and son, with 65,000 people cheering, they finished the race.

One-day, as you are running the race of your life, trouble will befall you. It is on that day that you need someone who believes in you to come running down out of the stands onto the track of life, wrap their arms around you, and whisper in your ear, “I’m here! We’ll finish together.” Solomon said: *“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up”* (Eccl. 4:9,10). Who is it in your circle of family and friends needs encouraged this week?



By Executive Editor
Jeff Herring

Remember to Trust God

Last week was a time to be reminded of trusting God with this ministry. Allan goes the post office most days to pick up the mail from our P.O. box for both the *Baptist Trumpet* and State Missions. He has learned that they don't sort the mail and place it in the boxes over the weekend so most times there is nothing in the box on Monday of each week, but when he went to the post office on Tuesday, again there was nothing in the box. Would you believe that again on Wednesday there was nothing in the box? It's true.

Now it was at this point that we began to get concerned because we had bills and obligations that must be paid each week, and as I have mentioned before, we are week-to-week at best on our obligations. Allan and I are still a week behind on our paychecks, just to make sure we can keep our bills current. That is why we really hope to find something in the mailbox each day — that is where we get the funds that have been sent for payments and donations! All of this in the midst of our Special Emphasis where we are really praying for God to provide.

It was at this time that I placed a call to Diane to see if the slow start to Special Emphasis offerings was “normal.” She assured me that it was, and that ultimately, we have to just trust God with this ministry, because it is His ministry! This was something both Allan and I already knew, but sometimes you just need someone to remind you at times where you begin to wonder.

Finally, on Thursday, Allan waited until after 10 a.m. to make sure things had been sorted and went to the post office to find a box full of payments and donations. There was definitely some rejoicing in the office as he opened the mail to find a large batch of church plan payments, and also some gifts by special friends who faithfully support this ministry.

We are still trusting God will help us meet our Special Emphasis goal for 2021 so that we can continue “Building for the Future” ministry of the *Baptist Trumpet*. I realize that many churches are not back to normal and inviting me (or Allan) to come and share about this ministry may not be possible. So we are working on a video report that you can share with your church that will let them know about this ministry and how to support us through your prayers and donations. We will post the video on our Special Emphasis page by the end of the week at baptisttrumpet.com/SE2021 and will also share it via our Facebook page. Please use this as a resource to tell others about the importance of this great ministry.

Maybe you need a reminder like we did last week — that God is still in control and you can always trust Him with the future! I challenge you to turn your situation over to God and be faithful as you serve Him as pastor, teacher, mother, father or “person in the pew.”

Thank you for all you do for this ministry.



By Executive Editor Jeff Herring

Multiple Groups Ask US Supreme Court to Support First Amendment

Multiple groups have filed friend-of-the-court briefs encouraging the U.S. Supreme Court to take an Arkansas State University student's case against university officials. Alliance Defending Freedom attorneys representing the student, Ashlyn Hoggard, are seeking reversal of a lower court ruling that allowed university officials to escape consequences for their violation of her free speech rights under the First Amendment. Although the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit ruled that ASU officials violated Hoggard's constitutionally protected freedoms, it said that the officials can't be held responsible because they are entitled to “qualified immunity” from the lawsuit.

Arkansas State's previous policies

unconstitutionally gave university officials free rein to shut down student speech even in open areas of campus, restricted most expressive activities to small zones that totaled about 1% of campus, and required advance permission for students to speak anywhere on campus. ADF attorneys argue qualified immunity should not apply because the officials violated Hoggard's clearly established First Amendment rights when they used those policies to stop her from recruiting other students to join her new student group.

Thanks to qualified immunity, “a shocking number of public colleges and universities across the country defy well-established precedent by still maintaining speech codes that prohibit student expression protected by the First Amendment,” added the Foundation

for Individual Rights in Education in its brief. (adfmmedia.org)

Arkansas Passes “No Patient Left Alone Act”

On March 9, the Arkansas Senate overwhelmingly passed HB 1061, the No Patient Left Alone Act, by Rep. Julie Mayberry (R/Hensley) and Sen. Breanne Davis (R/Russellville). This is a good piece of legislation that will help ensure people in healthcare facilities can receive visitors — even during a pandemic. The bill now goes to Gov. Hutchinson to become law. (family-council.org)

Pro-life Bills Abound; Their Fate in Court is Unknown

At an intense pace, lawmakers in Republican-governed states are considering an array of tough anti-abortion restrictions they hope might reach the Supreme Court and win approval from its conservative majority, overturning the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that established a nationwide right to abortion. A sweeping ban already has been signed into law in South Carolina, only to be swiftly blocked by a lawsuit from abortion-rights groups. Arkansas' governor signed another ban this past week. A batch of other near-total bans were also blocked in the courts after their passage in 2019. It's not clear if or when the Supreme Court might consider any of them or take some other path. The court could weaken *Roe* with approval of less drastic restrictions or even leave the core of the 1973 ruling in place.

The South Carolina law, like several passed by other states in 2019, would ban most abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detected, typically about six weeks after conception. In Arkansas, the bill Gov. Asa Hutchinson signed Tuesday goes further, banning all abortions except when performed to save the life of the mother. It has no exceptions for rape or incest. Arkansas and South Carolina are among more than 15 states where lawmakers have proposed near-total abortion bans this year, according to the Guttmacher Institute, an abortion advocacy group. (baptistpress.com)

Vatican Forbids Blessing Of Same-sex Unions

The Vatican decreed March 15 that the Catholic Church won't bless same-sex unions since God “cannot bless sin.” The Vatican's orthodoxy office, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, issued a formal response to a question about whether Catholic clergy have the authority to bless gay unions. The answer, contained in a two-page explanation published in seven languages and approved by Pope Francis, was “negative.” The note upheld the church's welcoming and blessing of gay people, but not their unions. It argued that such unions are not part of God's plan and that any such sacramental recognition could be confused with marriage.

The Vatican holds that gay people must be treated with dignity and respect, but that gay sex is “inherently disordered.” Catholic teaching holds that

marriage, a lifelong union between a man and woman, is part of God's plan and is intended for the sake of creating new life. Since gay unions aren't intended to be part of that plan, they can't be blessed by the church, the document said. And it added that blessing a same-sex union could give the impression of a sort of sacramental equivalence to marriage. “This would be erroneous and misleading,” the article said. (baptistpress.com)

Nevada Bill Would Presume Your Consent for Organ Donation

Organ donation is purely voluntary in this country; that is, the donor or family have to consent. This is known as an “opt-in” system. But with waiting lists growing, the push is on for the law to presume consent to organ harvesting; that is, unless one explicitly “opts out” of being a donor while alive, their organs are automatically available for procurement after death.

Nevada — which now permits dementia patients to order themselves starved to death when they become incapacitated — has legislation that would change the state's system from opt-in to opt-out. The bill is very awkwardly worded, deploying double negatives. From SB 134 (the bracketed words are existing law to be deleted): “A donor may make an anatomical gift: (a) By [authorizing] not refusing to authorize a statement or symbol indicating that the donor has made an anatomical gift to be imprinted on the donor's driver's license or identification card) By [authorizing] not refusing to authorize a statement or symbol indicating that the donor has made an anatomical gift to be imprinted on the donor's driver's license or identification card.”

In other words, driver's licenses or ID cards would normally come printed with consent to donation, that would only be revoked if the person refused to authorize that default message. One must object to refuse donation. Doing nothing provides automatic consent. (lifefews.com)

Federal Appeals Court Strikes Down Pro-Life Law Requiring Parental Consent for Teen Abortions

The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals panel struck down a pro-life Indiana law Friday that requires parents to be informed before their underage daughter has an abortion. Indiana Public Media reports the three-judge panel sided with Planned Parenthood about the parental consent law, declaring it unconstitutional.

Passed in 2017, the state law strengthens parental rights by requiring abortion providers to obtain proof of consent from a parent or legal guardian before a girl under 18 has an abortion. It gives parents/legal guardians a civil recourse if someone fraudulently poses as a parent in order for a minor girl to get an abortion. It also makes sure parents are notified if a minor appears before a judge to request an abortion without parental consent unless the judge determines that notifying her parents would not be in her best interest.

A primary goal of the law is to protect young girls from abuse. Sexual abusers have been known to take their young victims to abortion clinics to cover up rape and pregnancy. The law, if upheld, would help ensure abusers are not posing as their young victim's parent or guardian. Indiana is expected to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. (lifefews.com)

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American Red Cross
Missouri and Arkansas

American Red Cross Seeks Volunteers

As we head into spring severe weather, the American Red Cross of Missouri and Arkansas has an urgent need for additional volunteers who can assist **virtually and in person for disaster response**. Volunteers are also needed to **support blood drives and transport blood** to hospitals.

"We are gearing up for spring disaster response needs such as flooding and tornadoes, and we need additional volunteers who can help virtually or in person," said Chris Harmon, Regional Disaster Officer. "Throughout the pandemic, our volunteers have continued supporting disasters locally and nationally. Some traveled to serve states hit with hurricanes, wildfires or tornadoes, while many helped with the response from their home."

Volunteers are also needed to help support blood drives by being a greeter and helping blood donors check in at local blood drives or to drive Red Cross vans to transport life-saving blood to local hospitals.

Blood drive greeter needs are greatest in the following areas:

- **Missouri** — St. Charles, Greater St. Louis, Washington, Columbia/Jefferson City and Cape Girardeau
- **Arkansas** — Boone and Baxter Counties

Drivers to transport blood in Red Cross vans are needed the most in the following areas (no special license required):

- **Missouri** — St. Charles, Greater St. Louis, Columbia/Jefferson City and Cape Girardeau

"Interested volunteers may join a virtual informational session to learn more before signing up," said Kobi Gillespie, Regional Volunteer Services Officer. "These are held several times a month to help individuals learn about opportunities and how the Red Cross operates."

Volunteers make up at least 90% of the Red Cross workforce and hold positions at all levels throughout the organization including leadership roles. To sign up for an upcoming virtual informational session, go to redcross.org/ARCVolunteerFair.

Upcoming virtual sessions:

- Thursday, March 18, noon
- Tuesday, March 23, 4 p.m.
- Thursday, April 1, noon
- Tuesday, April 6, 4 p.m.
- Thursday, April 15, noon
- Tuesday, April 20, 4 p.m.
- Thursday, April 29, noon

Additional dates are available online.

The Missouri and Arkansas Red Cross Region **deployed 32 people to help Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas and Kentucky** with recent winter storms and flooding, including both in-person and virtual support — 10 of the 32 individuals traveled to help with the responses. The remaining volunteers assisted virtually from their home.

Red Cross teams have impacted thousands of lives in the hours after disasters struck, providing essential support to helping families through some of their most difficult days and ensuring donated blood is processed and on hospital shelves when patients need it.

How to Help

You can help ensure that families don't face emergencies alone — especially during a pandemic:

- **Donate** — Support our Disaster Relief efforts at redcross.org/GivingDay. A gift of any size makes a difference to provide shelter, food, relief items, emotional support and other assistance. Your donation will be part of our annual Giving Day on **March 24** to aid families in need across the country.

- **Volunteer** — Visit redcross.org/VolunteerToday for most-needed positions and local opportunities.

- **Give blood** — If you're healthy and feeling well, make an appointment at RedCrossBlood.org. Your donation can make a lifesaving difference for a patient in need. As a thank you, those who come to give blood, platelets or plasma on **March 15-26** will receive a Red Cross T-shirt, while supplies last.

- **Learn Lifesaving Skills** — Take a class in skills like CPR and first aid to help in an emergency at redcross.org/TakeAClass. Online options include our Psychological First Aid for COVID-19 course, which covers how to manage stress and support yourself and others.



International Evangelist, Luis Palau, Dies

(via baptistpress.com) Luis Palau, a Christian evangelist known for his smile and hearty laugh and described by some as "the Latino Billy Graham," died Thursday (March 11) at his Portland, Ore., home. He was 86. Over the past half century, the Luis Palau Association, based in Beaverton, Ore., estimates that it has reached 30 million people in 75 countries. Under its Argentinian-born founder's leadership, the association "has coordinated hundreds of citywide campaigns in dozens of nations, including major evangelistic festivals on five continents." In the process, Palau worked with thousands of churches in hundreds of cities around the world, with gatherings in London, Hong Kong, Singapore, Chicago, Moscow, Madrid, Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Washington and elsewhere.

In a January 2018 video, Palau disclosed to ministry supporters and friends that he had been diagnosed with late-stage lung cancer and that his illness was terminal. The diagnosis, which he had learned several months earlier, came as a surprise, he wrote in a statement posted on the Luis Palau Association website. "As you can imagine, this isn't news we were expecting or hoping for. Yet our trust in the Lord remains rock solid." For several more years, Palau did well, appearing at an outdoor crusade in Madrid in the summer of 2019.

Palau wrote dozens of books and has been featured in radio broadcasts in English and Spanish on 3,500 radio outlets in 48 countries. In April of 2019, the ministry released a feature-length film about the evangelist's life and legacy in North and South American theaters, as well as in Spain.



Immanuel Baptist Church in Nashville is seeking a full-time worship pastor/media director. Resumes may be sent to: Search Committee, P.O. Box 212, Nashville, Ark. 71852 or brent.thompson@myimmanuel.com.

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



ATTORNEY GENERAL
LESLIE RUTLEDGE

ARKANSASAG.GOV

Beware of COVID Scammers

The Arkansas Attorney General's Office has received recent reports of vaccine misinformation, fake COVID-19 testing and treatment targeting Arkansas's Hispanic population. Scam artists will always take advantage of a tough situation and attempt to steal from hard-working Arkansans. The Arkansas Department of Health has provided a list of trusted vaccine clinics in each region of the state where Arkansans can receive their vaccine on a first-come, first-served basis if they qualify.

"I urge Arkansans to never give any personal information over the phone," said Attorney General Rutledge. "If you believe a con artist is attempting to spread fake COVID-19 information, don't hesitate to contact my office and let us do the fighting for you."

AG Rutledge has offered the following tips for consumers about fraudulent COVID-19 vaccines and treatments:

- **Do not pay exorbitant fees for COVID-19 vaccinations.** Instead, visit the Arkansas Department of Health's website to find locations of regional testing and clinics offering COVID-19 tests at no cost to consumers.

- **Be cautious of health providers who claim they can cure, prevent, or lessen the effects of COVID-19** while charging high fees for their false claims.

For questions about COVID-19, including where to find testing locations, call the Arkansas Department of Health at (800) 803-7847.

Find accurate information about COVID-19, including information about how it spreads, symptoms, prevention and treatment, what to do if you are sick and frequently asked questions, on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's website.

For more information and tips to avoid scams and other consumer-related issues, contact the Arkansas Attorney General's office at consumer@arkansasag.gov or visit ArkansasAG.gov.



Celebration, Haskell gained two by letter, Allan Eakin, pastor.

Herman, Bono welcomed one by baptism and two by letter since last report, Randy Stimach, pastor; Janet Watkins, reporter.

Milligan Ridge, Manilla rejoices over one by baptism, Mike Colvin, pastor, Donna Jackson, reporter.

Spring Lake, Texarkana welcomes two by baptism, Randy Shepherd, pastor.



Victory, Hampton, April 19-21, 7 p.m., Ruben Weaver, evangelist; Robbie Duncan, pastor.



Greenbrier District WMA, Apr. 15; 10am meeting & program; Life-Song, Greenbrier.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Ministry Connections Workshops, Mar. 23, 10 a.m.; Sponsored by Baptist Progress; CrossRoads, Rowlett, Tex.

Teen Challenge, Mar. 28, 11 a.m.; Lemonwood, White Hall.

Hot Dogs and Hot Rods, May 22, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; proceeds benefit Water for Christ; LifeSong, Greenbrier.

CBC Scholarship GWala, June 5, 6 p.m., Conway Expo Center. Contact Amy Reed for more info at areed@cbc.edu.

National Galilean Camp, June 25-28; Stoneridge Baptist Camp, Smithville, Arkansas.

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 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

• **Decline in Academics** — When discipline deteriorates, learning also deteriorates. Teachers are not able to teach if they do not have the attention of the children.

• **Self-centeredness** — The basis of humanism is the idea of man being supreme over God. Children are taught to put themselves first which is indirect opposition to Phil. 2:4.

• **Total Academic Freedom** — Humanists believe that children have the right to read anything they want except the Bible. They believe it is immoral to indoctrinate children with the beliefs of the Bible.

• **Total Sexual Freedom** — Humanists want to “liberate” our children from sexual inhibitions. Their sex education programs are nothing more than academic pornography.

To combat this humanistic philosophy, children and teens need to be trained from the Bible in church, in school and in the home.

How do Christians and Secular Humanist Differ?

• On God, humanists usually do not believe that God even exists. Humanists believe mankind is the highest entity.

• On God, Christians believe that God is the highest Entity. He is perfect in wisdom, power, might and love. He created us. He is to be worshipped.

• On Jesus Christ, humanists believe that if Jesus existed at all, He was a mere man. He may have been an interesting teacher, but when He died, He stayed dead like any other man.

• On Jesus Christ, Christians believe that Jesus Christ is God, come in the flesh. He was born of the Virgin Mary. He lived a perfect, sinless life. He died on the cross to pay for our sins. He rose from the dead to prove He had conquered sin, death, and Hell. He lives forevermore.

On and on the comparison goes. So Paul, the apostle, stated that “as we have received Christ, beware of vain deceit...” (Col. 2:6-8).

Jesus' Way Becomes Our Way

By Gavin Roberts, BMAA Church Planter

Jesus cares for the one who no one else cares about. I love the account of Jesus healing blind Bartimaeus in Mark 10:46-52. As Jesus was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a passel of other folks, they happened to walk by a blind beggar named Bartimaeus. Bartimaeus was doing the best thing a blind beggar could do in Jesus' day — sitting beside the road hoping for someone to take pity on him. He was told that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. However, Bartimaeus, unlike many others who came in contact with Jesus in Mark, knew immediately that Jesus was no ordinary man. He knew that he was the Messiah. So, he began to cry out for the “Son of David” to have mercy on him.

Many thought that the condition of Bartimaeus was a result of his sin or the sin of his parents before him (John 9:2). They didn't think Jesus had any time to deal with the likes of this man, so everyone around started telling Bartimaeus to hush. No one helped him. No one tried to take him to Jesus. The more the crowd tried to quiet Bartimaeus, the louder he cried out.

When Jesus heard Bartimaeus calling out to him He didn't turn and walk the other way. He didn't join in with the crowd telling him to hush. Jesus stopped dead in His tracks to care for the one who no one else cared about. Jesus called Bartimaeus to Himself. When asked what He wanted Jesus to do for him, Bartimaeus asked for his sight.

This is a considerably different answer than Jesus' disciples gave him in Mark 10:37 when asked the same question. Jesus was living out the lesson He taught His disciples in verses 35-45. Jesus went on to serve and save Bartimaeus by healing him. *“And Jesus said to him, ‘Go your way; your faith has made you well.’ And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way”* (Mark 10:52 ESV).

Bartimaeus knew Jesus was the Messiah. He knew Jesus was his only hope. When Jesus called him, he left behind everything and ran to Him, and Jesus saved him. Jesus ultimately serves and saves later in the book of Mark by dying on the cross in the place of sinners like Bartimaeus. Sinners like me. Jesus died, but He was also resurrected.

After Bartimaeus was healed, Jesus told him to go on his way. However, the end of the verse says that after Bartimaeus recovered his sight, he followed Jesus on the way.

When Jesus saves us, his way becomes our way. We are no longer our own. We are Christ's. When Jesus saved Bartimaeus, He became his Lord. When Jesus saves us, He becomes our Lord. He is the boss of our lives. His way becomes our way. Jesus cares for sinners like us enough to save us. When Jesus saves us, we follow Him on the way!

New National WMA Project

By Jackie Ricks, Editor • National WMA

As most of you know, the 2021 national meeting has been postponed from April to August in Waxahachie, Texas. Because of this, the WMA felt that we needed to go ahead and take care of some of the business. Many of you saw the notices and voted about officers and the project. The new national WMA project is now the Darlene Carey Christian Academy in the Philippines.



Darlene Carey had a heart for ministry and especially for children. Those who knew her all have a story to tell of some way she touched their lives. This school will enable young people to grow and learn not only academically, but also spiritually. The hope is that it will also touch the families of the children.

The academy opened in the fall of 2019 with only first grade. Second grade was added in the fall of 2020, with the goal of adding one grade every year until the school is open for all 12 grades. It costs approximately \$20 per month for each student to attend. They do have some scholarships available for students in need.

Missionary Jimmy Walker says that the first building of six classrooms is paid for and should be completed in May of 2021. They have also raised a small portion of the money, but still need almost \$95,000 for the second building of six classrooms.

The Darlene Carey Christian Academy will serve as a ministry to families in the Philippines as well as underwrite a third of the BMA College of the Philippines operating budget. That will help bring the college closer to being self-supporting.

For more information on the academy, contact missionary Jimmy Walker, who is currently on furlough in Magnolia with his family. He will be glad to come speak to any group about the work in the Philippines. He may be reached by calling (870) 299-9167.

Project offerings sent after April 1 to the national WMA will go to this project. The new treasurer and address for offerings is: WMA of BMAA, % Janet Widger, PO Box 23, Salem Mo. 65560.

The Secular War

By Dr. John Adams, Executive Director

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, So walk ye in him, Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ” (Col. 2:6-8).

Wikipedia describes secular humanism as a philosophy or life stance that embraces human reason, secular ethics and philosophical naturalism while specifically rejecting religious dogma, supernaturalism and superstition as the basis of morality and decision making.

Secular humanism states that human beings are capable of being ethical and moral without religion or belief in a deity. It does not, however, assume that humans are either inherently good or evil, nor does it present humans as being superior to nature. Humanists International is the world union of more than 100 humanists, irreligious and atheist organizations in more than 40 countries. The “Happy Human” is recognized as the official symbol of humanism internationally, which number between four and five million people worldwide, according to Wikipedia.

Ethical Movement

Another important precursor was the ethical movement of the 19th century. The South Place Ethical Society was founded in 1793 as the South Place Chapel on Finsbury Square, on the edge of the City of London, and in the early nineteenth century was known as “a radical gathering place.” At that point it was a Unitarian chapel, and that movement, like Quakers, supported female equality. Under the leadership of Reverend William Johnson Fox, it lent its pulpit to activists such as Anna Wheeler — one of the first women to campaign for feminism at public meetings in England — who spoke in 1829 on “rights of women.” In later decades, the chapel changed its name to the South Place Ethical Society, now the Conway Hall Ethical Society. Today, Conway Hall explicitly identifies itself as a humanist organization, albeit one primarily focused on concerts, events and the maintenance of its humanist library and archives. It bills itself as “The landmark of London's independent intellectual, political and cultural life.”

In America, the ethical movement was led by Felix Adler, who established the New York Society for Ethical Culture in 1877. By 1886,

similar societies had sprouted up in Philadelphia, Chicago and St. Louis. These societies all adopted the same statement of principles:

• The belief that morality is independent of theology.

• The affirmation that new moral problems have arisen in modern industrial society which have not been adequately dealt with by the world's religions.

• The agreement that educating the young is the most important aim.

The first ethical society along these lines in Britain was founded in 1886. By 1896, the four London societies formed the Union of Ethical Societies, and between 1905 and 1910 there were over 50 societies in Great Britain, 17 of which were affiliated with the Union. The Union of Ethical Societies would later incorporate as the Ethical Union, a registered charity, in 1928. Under the leadership of Harold Blackham, it renamed itself the British Humanist Association in 1967. It became Humanist UK in 2017.

Secular Humanism

Author Steve Hall states: “We live in a day when there is a great war going on in the society in which we live. There are many battlefronts and aspects to the war, but the primary war in our day is between Christianity and secular humanism.” Secular humanism is a religion and a philosophy of life which views man as the supreme being of the universe. It rejects the existence of God and the supernatural. It sees moral values as relative and changing and varying from person to person.

Humanism has drastically affected the basic morality of the United States. It is a subtle philosophy and is often undetected by those not aware of it. Humanism is not new. It is that old struggle of man's will against God's will. A humanist believes in himself rather than God, and is more concerned about self-preservation than about the needs of others.

Humanism affects children and teens in many ways, and we need to be aware of these dangers:

• **Disrespect for Authority** — Children and teens are taught that whatever you choose will be right for you because you choose it. This, of course, leads to situational ethics, which is contrary to God's Word.

• **Decline in Discipline** — Since children and teens are taught that they are their own authority, they want to do their own thing. They ignore the leadership of police, parents, teachers and others in authority over them.



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STATE MISSIONS

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PAUL WHITE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy Birthday

This past Sunday, Faith Chapel in Flippin, (Johnny and Karen Shew), celebrated their first anniversary as a mission. They were victims of COVID-19, having to shut down after their first public meeting, yet they did not let that deter them as they continued doing everything they could. It is obvious God is blessing their efforts as they presently have 18 members and have been able to purchase and pay for a beautiful piece of ground they hope to begin building on soon. Vicki and I were privileged to be with them for their anniversary service and was honored to share the morning message.

After the service, we enjoyed a time of fellowship. During the fellowship, a young man saw us and came over, and after visiting for a while, he publicly accepted Christ as his savior. Please continue to pray for Johnny, Karen and the work in Flippin, especially Karen, having lost both her father and mother within the past month.

Update on meeting

Last Tuesday, the Advisory Committee, the missionaries and I met for our annual spring meeting. We welcomed Keith Lewis, our newest member, to the committee and look forward to working with him. We were blessed with everyone being able to make it, which is unusual for that many pastors to all be available at the same time.

With nine missionaries it was an all-day event with us starting at 8 a.m. and finishing at 5 p.m. We heard reports from our missionaries and prayed for each one. It goes without saying this has been a most difficult year for church planters. It is almost like having the clock turned back a year for some. Yet, as things begin to loosen up, the future is looking much better. I want to thank Immanuel Baptist Church in Greenbrier and their pastor, Tony Crocker, for hosting this year's meeting. It was much easier to social distance in a larger venue.

Your Advisory Committee and missionaries and our churches are to be commended for their faithfulness to this work and the generosity of their giving.

From Our Missionaries

Arkansas Hispanic Missions: Michael Hight writes, "It was a pleasure to meet with the Advisory Committee this past week. They are always an encouraging group of men.

"Most of last year was hampered due to the COVID-19 restrictions, but activities are beginning to pick up again. We are looking forward to a ladies meeting on March 20 in Central Arkansas. It is my prayer that we will be able to have a Pastor's and Laymen's Conference this year as well.

"Please keep us in your prayers as we seek to encourage our Hispanic Mission's work. Pray for God to raise up church planters that want to start new works. Our current mission projects are moving forward, and God is using our missionaries. Thank you for your support and prayers!"

Connection Point, Brookland: Chad White writes, "God's work continues here at Connection Point. This past week, I had the opportunity to meet with the men of the State Missions Advisory Committee and share what God has been doing over the past six months. I always appreciate the encouragement and insight I receive from this group.

"Sunday was a pretty good day. Our in-person attendance was down a bit, and we had some technical issues with

our streaming, however, we still had a good day. Almost everyone stayed to help stack chairs and clear the floor so we could have them rewaxed this coming week. God has blessed us with some great people who never shy away from work.

"We had our Men's Breakfast on Saturday, and had a great turn-out and an awesome devotional. God has really blessed our Men's Ministry over the past few months. It is very exciting to see these guys grow in the word and in their faith."

The Mustard Seed, Cain: Jim Tollison writes, "We had another good day at the mission Sunday. We had a few of our folks out. I am sure they were bitten by the time-change bug.

"I enjoyed meeting with the BMA of Ark Advisory Committee in Greenbrier last Tuesday. They are always an encouragement to me and the folks at the mission. These guys do a good job.

"We are planning a special day at the mission on Easter Sunday. Ronnie and MaryLou Warren will present a special music program. We are fortunate that they could come again this year as they have always blessed our hearts in the past.

"Pray for all the contacts we have been making. God has some great things in store for this mission. May God Bless

the BMA work around the world."

Misión Creciendo en Cristo (Growing in Christ), North Little Rock: Juan Carlos Posadas writes, "Thank God the Little Rock Food Bank provided food for the community last week. We also had the opportunity to bless 144 families with Farmers to Families' Boxes full of food products. The community of Alexander was blessed through the Great Commission mission, with whom we were able to share part of the donations received.

"Monday was a very sad day for us. A good friend of the family, whom my children call Aunt Lupe, went to the presence of the Lord. Earlier in the morning her younger brother also died. Please join us in praying for this family as they had to bury two members of the family on the same day. That same Monday afternoon our beloved pet, Chispita, also died, after being with us for 14 years. Fernanda had come on Sunday, because she knew about Chispita's delicate condition, we believed that she would die on Sunday, but she managed to survive until Monday. What a difficult Monday for us!

"Tuesday, we had the opportunity to meet with the Advisory Committee and enjoyed sharing with this beautiful group of men of God what God is doing in North Little Rock and in the lives of my family and in my own.

Friday, we had a prayer chain starting at midnight on Thursday and ending at midnight on Friday, members of the congregation had at least one hour during the day to talk with God, at the end of their hour each participant called those who they continued in the next hour, so that the chain did not break during the 24 hours.

"On Saturday morning I shared the theme 'The Fast' with the brothers of the El Faro church, who invited me to teach them on their day of fasting and prayer. In the afternoon we had discipleship meetings while the children received music classes. Later the worship group would rehearse the songs for the Sunday meeting.

"Sunday we shared about the contrast between men who follow the truth and those who stray from the truth based on Titus 1:10-2:2. Yesenia, who has been visiting us for a month, decided to receive Christ as her Lord and Savior and Jonathan, who was visiting us for the first time, did so also. We thank God for the lives of these two young people. I encourage you to pray that they confirm their faith and join a discipleship group.

"On Sunday afternoon, my wife and I went to visit the Great Commission Mission since they invited me to preach. We had an excellent time with the Lord, and four people decided to consecrate their lives to the Lord, renewing their vows of commitment to God.

"It has been a very active week with many nuances, and we are grateful to God for allowing us to serve Him. Blessings to all, and please continue to pray for us and the work that God has entrusted to us."

Grace, Green Forest: Carter Pearce writes, "With the COVID-19 restrictions easing locally and across Arkansas, we are looking at ways to be more publicly involved. Green Forest is scheduling events on the square, in the park and even on the soccer fields. We look forward to ministering publicly again after about a year of focusing primarily on growing within our congregation. "Outreach is vital to any ministry, but especially for a mission congregation. We have dwindled a bit in attendance and are praying for opportunities to meet new people and share the love of Christ with them. We believe the best way to share God's love is through service — we serve others because Jesus served.

"Pray for us and other missionaries and pastors as we strive to adjust to cultural changes all around us. The message of Christ will never change, but methods for reaching our communities change constantly. As we pray for opportunities, we must be ready and willing to serve when those opportunities present themselves."

Ebenezer, West Little Rock: Ruben Isturiz writes, "Life in Ebenezer on weekdays in the Berean Groups (cells) and on Sunday in our Celebration Service is the result of what happens in the homes.

"I thank God for each group in the home that allows us to carry out His Word. Last Monday in Chenal, we finished with the first book of the series, 'New Life in Christ.' For the next month we will be using the 'Biblical Discovery Study' method and then continue with the second book in the series.

"Conversing with other pastors, I see that at Ebenezer we are privileged. Other congregations have not been in the church building for a year, and they have only had online services or services from their cars in the parking lot. There are few times in Ebenezer we have stopped meeting, the month of lockdown due to the pandemic.

"Every week in Ebenezer we have met inside with the use of the masks, and social distancing. It is a blessing to have been able to do it. Keep praying with us that we can reactivate ministries like the one-on-one discipleship, youth ministry and children's ministry. We are praying for God's wisdom. To God be the glory!"

Faith Chapel, Flippin: Johnny Shew writes, "Praise God! What a wonderful week we had at Faith Chapel! On Tuesday, I gave my annual report to the State Missions Advisory Committee and was pleased to report that

after our first year in Flippin, we have 18 members and have had 4 baptisms!

"We had our first anniversary service Sunday, and Brother Paul came and preached a very encouraging message. Three of our members who were already very engaged in telling our community



Johnny & Karen Shew with Faith Chapel's first anniversary cake.

about Jesus, publicly renewed their commitments to being a better witness for Jesus! Again, Praise God!

"Then, while I was cooking hamburgers and hot dogs for our anniversary celebration, a young man came up to us and asked us to pray for someone in the neighborhood that had a death in the family last night. After we prayed, we talked and I asked if he was saved, he said, 'No.' I asked if he knew how to be saved, he said, 'No.' I asked if he wanted me to tell him how to be saved, and he said, 'Yes!' He got saved right there on our porch! Again, Praise God! He came back for the evening service, and said he wants to join us. We plan to baptize him next Sunday night! We are already starting next year's report! Praise God!

Please continue to pray for us and our work in Flippin. God is answering your prayers in mighty ways!"

Not Alone, Springdale: Clinton Morris writes, "It was great seeing Bro. Paul and the State Missions Advisory Committee on Tuesday, where I gave our annual report.

"I am bouncing back from the allergies and a weak voice. Our kids are now dealing with a mixed case of allergies as well. I am praying we can get through some of the sleepless, cough-filled nights soon.

"We are working hard through this early planting stage. Many relationships are being forged, but now the effort will be to bring some of these people into conversations about either the gospel or coming to our fledgling church. The start of this church will be centralized within our Bible Studies as opposed to having a centralized preaching service.

"I talked with Stuart Estes about some ministry opportunities at the U of A, and these may work well into what I already have visioned.

"I met my neighbor across the street. He is a great guy in his 70s who is planning on retiring. He and his wife watch their great grandchild during the week. We are planning on hanging out with them soon. He loves to fish so it looks like I will need to learn a new hobby! We are looking for ways to bring our neighbors together, and it is hard during this time of COVID, but God is creating opportunities.

"Would you all please pray over two different things? A second vehicle and a centralized meeting place for this church. (We may need to rent a current business or coffee shop space, but our tithing footprint is currently small.)

"May God bless you all."

PROBLEMS

(Continued From Page 2)

gives us of David's interactions with his siblings, we see trouble brewing. David was the youngest of eight brothers with at least two sisters somewhere in the mix. In that time and culture, the focus was generally on the oldest brother and in David's family that was Eliab. We get a really good idea of what Eliab thought of his little brother David in 1 Samuel 17:28 when he blasts him for having what he was sure were evil intentions. David's dad had sent him to the battlefield with supplies for his oldest brothers, and when he got there he started asking around about the battle.

If you would allow me to paraphrase a little bit, Eliab basically blamed David for being a little punk who just came to stir up trouble for his own pleasure. Eliab quickly tries to put that punk in his place and remind him that he is just a little insignificant shepherd boy who takes care of an insignificant amount of sheep in the middle of an insignificant place.

I sense a growing attitude of resentment and bitterness in Eliab's words. Right before this we see where Samuel, the famous prophet, had recently skipped right over Eliab and anointed that insignificant little shepherd boy to be the next great king of Israel. Yeah, I'm pretty sure Eliab wasn't too pleased with that.

Apparently, it wasn't just his

siblings that David had issues with. Some translations leave it more hypothetical than others, but in Psalm 27:10 David said, "my father and my mother have forsaken me." Think about this, if David is the most written about person in the Bible other than Jesus, why do we not hear a lot more about his family? I think the answer is at least in part that there wasn't much of a relationship to talk about.

If you find yourself identifying with David, you might be wondering how a man after God's heart handled such deep and personal conflict and betrayal. Let me just point out three quick things that stand out to me when I look at this:

• **David forgave.** Hey, I didn't say these were 3 easy things. If you're going to be pursuing after God's heart, though, you have to pursue peace and forgiveness, even in the hardest of relationships. I Chronicles 27 is not one of the most thrilling chapters in the Bible (don't read in right before bed), but we can find a real gem in verse 18. Buried away in a list of people that David had set up in power in his kingdom, we find out that he made his brother, Eliab (otherwise called Elihu) the tribal leader or chief over the tribe of Judah. David chose forgiveness.

• **David humbled himself.** It's not easy to keep from lashing back at someone or defending yourself when you're being slandered or wrongfully accused. It actually can seem quite easy to justify in your own head let-

ting someone have it in the name of "justice." David doesn't do that to Eliab. In fact, nowhere in the biblical account do we see David promoting himself at all.

• **David relied on God.** Right after David wrote about his parents' betrayal in Psalm 27, he said that God would lift

him up. Just like David the shepherd boy had lifted up, carried and cared for many hurt lambs, he was confident that God would lift him up when he needed it.

Too often, the relationships that mean the most hurt the most. Thankfully, we can learn from Eliab's little punk

brother that we can pursue after God's heart and heal the hurts among family members. We can choose forgiveness even when it's the hardest thing we've ever done. We can humble ourselves and not have to correct others' views of us. We can certainly rely on God to lift us up in the middle of the worst hurts.

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