

# BAPTIST TRUMPET

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## ABS YOUTH GROUP DAY



By Stuart Estes, Ministry Team Leader • ABS at Univ. of Ark.

Sometimes, the hardest part of a journey is taking the first step. Even though it's been over 10 years since I began my college career at the University of Arkansas, I can still remember the anxiety of taking that first step like it was yesterday. I grew up in Harrison

and had hardly been off the farm prior to that moment. As I drove to Fayetteville, I felt like my whole world was turning upside down. In the back of my mind, I knew the Lord had made this possible, (that He had provided financially for me to go to the University of Arkansas) and He would continue to sustain me on this journey. But to be honest, at that moment my anxiety was more of a controlling factor in my life than my Lord.

Fast forward five years and I had an undergraduate and a master's degree, and had made relationships with friends that persist even to this day. I had confidence that the same Lord who walked alongside me through those years would continue to guide me in the future; and last, but certainly not least, I met and married my wife.

What joy and fulfillment God brought through a frightening first step! What a glorious journey the Lord had in store for me!

Every fall, students from all over Arkansas (and the world) head off to the University of Arkansas to start a journey of their own. Those first few



## MOVING with Ministers and Staff

To view previous listings from this column, visit our website at

www.baptisttrumpet.com.

Eric Johnson has accepted the pastorate of First Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Texas and will begin serving April 4. He will resign his role as Director of International Missions for the BMAA at the end of May 2021.

Vaun Henry has accepted the pastorate of Antioch Baptist Church in Carthage, Texas.

weeks of that first semester often set the course for the remainder of their journey. One of the factors that determines how well they do on that journey is whether or not they find a community that will accept and love them.

That is the very purpose of the Association of Baptist Students. This ministry exists so students will have a place of refuge, a group of friends and a biblical community. And this year, we are happy to announce a new way we'd like to help students with their first step.

On April 10, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the ABS at the University of Arkansas will host its first ABS Youth Group Day. High school students who are interested in or planning on coming to the U of A are invited to come visit the ministry. During the event, some of our student leaders will host campus tours for visiting students. We'll also have a special edition of our weekly gathering, The Hedge, and there will also be a free lunch.

We want to give students a chance to take that first step into college and to take it well. What better way to take that first step than to find a community of fellow students who love one another and love God's word. We hope to see you on April 10 — we'd love to take that first step along with you!

The Association of Baptist Students at the University of Arkansas is a ministry of the BMA of the Ozarks and churches like yours. If you'd like to learn more about the ministry or are interested in partnering with us through prayer or donation, check out our website at [www.thehedgeuark.com](http://www.thehedgeuark.com). Follow our social media accounts on Facebook (Association of Baptist Students) and Instagram (@thehedgeuark). You can also sign up for our email newsletter by contacting us at [thehedgeuark@gmail.com](mailto:thehedgeuark@gmail.com).



## 40 Days for Life a Success

By Jerry Cox, President • Family Council

(via [familycouncil.org](http://familycouncil.org)) Three mothers have chosen not to have abortions since 40 Days for Life began its spring prayer vigil in Little Rock on Feb. 17. Every year we hear stories from other states of abortion clinics shut down and abortion workers coming to Christ in the wake of a 40 Days for Life prayer campaign. We want Arkansas to be next. In the past, 40 Days for Life has said that the "no-show" rate for abortion appointments can go to as high as 75% when someone prays in front of an abortion facility. 40 Days for Life in Little Rock has helped save the lives of unborn children this year.

On March 22, our friends at 40 Days for Life told the story about one of the children that was saved. 40 Days for Life writes, "Two local pregnancy centers joined forces to place a mobile ultrasound in front of Little Rock's Planned Parenthood facility. That came in handy when 40 Days for Life volunteers persuaded a young, abortion-bound mom to have a free ultrasound. 'Sure,' she said. 'I'm usually running late, but today, I'm early.' When a vigil participant asked the mom whether she was excited, the frightened mother began to cry because she was terrified to break the news of her pregnancy to her mother.

"The ultrasound showed an amazing eight-week baby," said campaign co-leader Toni. "She didn't even bother keeping her appointment at Planned Parenthood." The expectant mother went home, thankful for the support and encouragement and said she felt that the presence of vigil participants was a sign to keep her baby.

40 Days for Life is one of the most powerful pro-life movements in the country. It isn't a rally or protest. It's a peaceful assembly for prayer and reflection — and it really works. Every year, we hear testimonies of lives saved in the wake of a 40 Days for Life prayer campaign. Praying outside an abortion clinic may not sound like much, but for an unborn child it can literally mean the difference between life and death.

If you would like more information, please visit [40daysforlife.com/littlerock](http://40daysforlife.com/littlerock).



This is the pro-life mobile unit that offers free services to women with unplanned pregnancies.

## Arkansas Governor Signed Bill to Ban Abortions

By Micaiah Bilger

(via [LifeNews.com](http://LifeNews.com)) Like most Americans, Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson believes that states should be allowed to protect unborn babies from abortions. But because of *Roe v. Wade*, they can't. So earlier this month, Hutchinson took action to change that when he signed the Arkansas Unborn Child Protection Act, which would ban abortions in his state.

On March 21, the Republican governor defended his action in an interview with CNN. "That was the whole design of the law. It is not constitutional under Supreme Court cases right now," Hutchinson said on CNN's State of the Union. "... And so I signed it because it is a direct challenge to *Roe vs. Wade* — that was the intent of it. I think there's a very narrow chance that the Supreme Court will accept that case but we'll see." Hutchinson said he would have preferred if

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Terry Kimbrow  
President

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## Memorial / Honor Gifts

The following are memorial and honor contributions received since the last report by Central Baptist College. Some of the contributions are recurring gifts but are only listed once. However, the family and/or honoree received an acknowledgement each time an honor/memorial gift was received.

### In Memory Of

**Kenneth R. Brown** by Mr. & Mrs. Tommy L. Wallace; **Christi Speer Bruich** by Mr. & Mrs. Hershel D. Newton; **Jean Burgess** by Mr. & Mrs. Chris Tarkington, Mr. & Mrs. Travis Faulk, Mr. & Mrs. Norman D. Crass, Mr. & Mrs. Joe Abrams, Christine Stewart, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Arnold, Springhill Baptist Church at Greenbrier, Mr. & Mrs. Frank Torian, Kathy D. Camp, Esther M. Kershner-Mitchell, Dr. & Mrs. Virgil Porter, Jr. and Linda Dickey; **Dr. Wassell L. Burgess** by Christine Stewart and Springhill Baptist Church at Greenbrier; **Maggie Chandler** by Esther M. Kershner-Mitchell and Dr. & Mrs. Gary McAllister; **J.E. Cobb** and **Dr. Harold Cooper** by Mr. & Mrs. Tommy L. Wallace;

**Jim Courtney** by Mr. & Mrs. Bruce D. Andrews, Esther M. Kershner-Mitchell, Mr. & Mrs. Hoil H. Henderson Jr., Mr. & Mrs. Mike Nix, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Reddin, Dr. & Mrs. Todd S. Swann, Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Riddle, Reba Luck, Mr. & Mrs. Afton J. Simmons, Gaye B. Twitty, Dr. & Mrs. Joel Slayton, Mr. & Mrs. Don Clark, Mr. & Mrs. Tony W. Raines, Mr. & Mrs. David A. Ross, Springhill Baptist Church at Greenbrier, Mr. & Mrs. Tommy L. Wallace, Dr. & Mrs. Virgil Porter, Jr. and Mr. & Mrs. Jim Lambright; **Ernest Evans Jr.** by Mr. & Mrs. William P. Jackson, **Jill Suzanne Farley** by Mr. & Mrs. Darrell Farley, **Brenda S. Gibson** and **Dennis W. Gibson** by Big Creek Valley Baptist Church in Jonesboro; **Henry Hall** by Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Riddle; **Opie Hefner** and **Ronald L. Hefner** by Mr. & Mrs. Jay L. Hefner; **Ruby S. Hefner** by Mr. & Mrs. Jay Hefner and Joyce Van Winkle; **Renna Hoggard** by First Baptist Church at Caldwell;

**Montine Johnson** and **Uriel Johnson Sr.** by Mr. & Mrs. Robert Moore; **Elmer "B" Lindsey** by Mr. & Mrs. Cliff D. Garrison, First Baptist Church at Caldwell and Kimberly Dillard; **J.C. Merritt** and **Avanelle Merritt** by Mr. & Mrs. A.K. Merritt; **Donna "Micki" M. Mitchell** and **Dr. Ron Mitchell** by Esther M. Kershner-Mitchell; **Jurl N. Mitchell** by Mr. & Mrs. Tom E. Mitchell; **Brittany Parrish** by Bobby Wilkey; **James R. Raines** by Bobby Clayborn, Mr. & Mrs. Grady Higgs, Mr. & Mrs. Roger D. Pearce, Dr. & Mrs. Virgil Porter Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Tony W. Raines, Mr. & Mrs. Steven W. Smith; **Wayne Smith** by Mr. & Mrs. Neil Corder; **Carol Mitchell Speer** by Mr. & Mrs. Hershel D. Newton; **Charles G. Taylor** by Ellon J. Taylor; **Dr. Jesse Thomas** by Mr. & Mrs. Tommy L. Wallace and First Baptist Church of Caldwell; **Dale Vincent** by Mr. & Mrs. Bob Kimbrow

### In Honor Of

**Marioca G. Ashworth** and **Shelly Clifton** by Mr. & Mrs. Jake Steele; **Winston P. Foster Jr.** by Mallory Van Dover; **Judy Gabbard** by Mr. & Mrs. Tommy L. Wallace; **Kay Ratliff Irvin** by Mr. & Mrs. Mark Davis; **Terry Kimbrow** by Mr. & Mrs. Paul L. Cherry, Mr. & Mrs. Travis Faulk, Dr. & Mrs. Gary McAllister, Mr. & Mrs. Ryan Johnson; **Crystal Long** and **Dr. Gary McAllister** by Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Whittingham; **Alyssa D. McCord** by Matthew McCord; and **Sandra L. Watson** by Mary Sue Smith.



### AMC Athlete of the Week

• **St. Louis, Mo., March 22** — For the second consecutive week, two different CBC Mustangs from two different sports took home AMC athlete of the week honors. **Ally Swaim** of the CBC Track and **Will Hodges** of CBC Baseball were selected from among

their peers as the AMC's outstanding athletes in their sports.

### Golf

• **Maumelle, March 16** — Sitting in fifth place headed into the final round of the CBC Mustang Invitational at the Country Club of Arkansas, CBC looked to make up the 16-stroke difference that separated them from the top. CBC did improve their final round scoring, finishing with a 298 for an overall score of 603

to finish exactly where they started, 19 strokes behind the winners, Kansas Wesleyan. Individually, the men's and women's teams both had medalists — **Spencer LaBarbera** (SR/Mesquite, Texas) closed with a 69 to finish with a 141 in second place, two shots behind the winner. **Keeley Bulza** (SO/Bella Vista) finished with a final round 86 to post a 174, 13 strokes behind the winner, tied for third, but was awarded third place due to a tiebreaker.

### Softball

• **Conway, March 16** — Playing on their actual home field for the first time this season, CBC hosted a doubleheader against Crowley's Ridge College at City of Colleges Park. CBC (10-3) had to come from behind three times in game one to win 7-6 in extra innings and led for most of game two, winning that game 6-4 to sweep CRC (4-8). The win in the first game was a historic victory for head coach **Jordon Jones**, who became the fastest coach to reach 100 wins in program history. She is now 101-42 in her career after the doubleheader sweep and reached 100 wins in her 142<sup>nd</sup> game, four games faster than Jason Anderson, who held the previous record.

• **Conway, March 19** — Currently in a stretch of nine straight games at City of Colleges Park, CBC took on the Warriors of Midland University. CBC (11-3) pounded out 11 hits and got solid pitching to take care of Midland (10-5) by a score of 7-3.

• **Conway, March 20** — CBC lost both games at City of Colleges Park, falling 5-3 to Midland in eight innings before being run ruled 9-1 by #2 USAO in the second game. **Katie Gordon** had a big day, driving in runs in both games for the Mustangs. The losses dropped CBC's record to 11-5 this season.

### Volleyball

• **Conway, March 18** — Returning to the court after a nine-day break, CBC hosted the Scots of Lyon in an AMC match inside Reddin Fieldhouse. CBC (10-10, 3-4 AMC) failed to take a set from the Scots (5-8, 1-2 AMC), falling 3-0 by scores of 14-25, 24-26 and 17-25.

### Outdoor Track & Field

• **Conway, March 20** — **Ally Swaim** posted a Personal Record (PR) in both the 100-meter hurdles and the 200-meter dash at the NextEra Energy Harding Invitational. Swaim posted a time of 14.64 in the 100-meter hurdles, fast enough to qualify for the "B" standard time in the NAIA this season and the fastest time in the NAIA so far. She finished fifth in the 200 meters with a time of 26.37. The win came a day after she also won the 100 meters at the William Carey College Open in Mississippi. **Dylan Burnham** also finished with a PR in the 400 meters with a time of 51.83 at the same meet.



## Student Ministry Matters

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## Being a Good Staff Member

I have been a staff guy for much of my ministry. Over the last 30 years, I worked with Henry Horton, Brad Hoshaw, David Pickard, Ronnie Chesser, Ron Fields, Wade Allen and Kirk Shelton. These men have helped shape my understanding of ministry and provided godly leadership at each of the churches where I served. In addition to the lessons they shared, my experience as a "Chair 2" leader has taught me some important things about being a good staff member:

• **Be Biblical.** Make sure your lessons and sermons are always pulled from the pages of Scripture. The last thing your pastor needs is to find out that you have been teaching some watered-down version of the gospel.

There are lots of good options for curriculum if you feel inadequate about producing your own. However, you won't go wrong by sticking to the unchanging, eternal Word of God.

• **Be Supportive.** As the staff member, you have a responsibility to support your pastor. For most of our churches, the leadership structure has the buck stopping at his desk. Back him up at every opportunity that you can. However, there will be times when you disagree. Speak to your pastor privately and never call him out at a business meeting. Even if he goes off the deep end, God has placed him in a position of authority and responsibility.

• **Be Communicative.** It is vital that you take time to inform your pastor about the good and the bad of ministry going on at your local church. One of the worst things that can happen is when your pastor receives a call about something you are responsible for and the information didn't come from you. Surprises are rarely a good thing when it comes to working with your pastor.

What advice would you give new staff members? How can they best serve alongside their lead pastors? Join the conversation and community on Facebook, Facebook.com/groups/StudentMinistryMattersCommunity.



Dan with current pastor, Kirk Shelton

### Baseball

• **Hannibal, Mo., March 19** — CBC split games with the Trojans of Hannibal-LaGrange playing at USA Stadium. They won the first game 12-7 and lost the second 5-2. **Will Hodges** hit a homerun in game one.

• **Hannibal, Mo., March 20** — CBC won both games with scores 9-5 and 11-2. **Will Hodges** hit his second home run of the series and **Andrew Killough** threw a complete game with 11 strike outs in the finale. The Mustangs are now 15-1 all-time against the Trojans.

### Women's Soccer

• **Conway, March 20** — Women's Soccer defeated Stephens 4-3 on Senior Day at Centennial Soccer Park. **Marcela Bueno** had a pair of goals and both **Jordan Moore** and **Kelsie Moore** scored the first goals of their career in the game as well. **Erica Hawkins** had one assist and **Jayme Selph** had four saves in the win.

• **Conway, March 22** — Looking to end their home schedule on a high note, CBC hosted the Scots of Lyon College in an American Mid-

west Conference (AMC) match at Centennial Soccer Park. CBC (5-8, 4-5 AMC) tied the game early in the second half but allowed two second half goals en route to a 3-1 loss to Lyon (4-5, 4-3 AMC).

### Men's Soccer

• **Conway, March 22** — Looking for some momentum after a huge win in their last game, CBC hosted the Scots of Lyon College in an AMC contest at Centennial Soccer Park. CBC (4-7-1, 2-5 AMC) was unable to overcome an early goal, dropping a 1-0 decision to Lyon (4-4-1, 3-2 AMC).



### Free E-Trumpet

Any active BMA military personnel is eligible to receive the Trumpet free. Please send their name, address or email address to P.O. Box 192208, Little Rock, Ark. 72219; or editor@baptisttrumpet.com.



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## ABORTION

(Continued From Page 1)

the law had included exceptions for victims of rape and incest, but he signed it anyway to be a direct challenge to Supreme Court abortion rulings.

The Arkansas Unborn Child Protection Act (Senate Bill 6) passed the state legislature by a strong majority earlier this year. If enacted, the bill would ban all abortions in the state. The only exceptions would be if the mother's life or health are at risk. Abortionists who violate the ban would face up to 10 years in prison. Women would not be punished.

The legislation is supposed to go into effect this summer, but the American Civil Liberties Union already has announced plans to challenge it in court. "We're ready to take Arkansas to court — again," the American Civil Liberties Union responded when the Arkansas Unborn Child Protection Act passed.

Since 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court has forced states to legalize abortion on demand under *Roe v. Wade*. States that want to protect unborn babies may only do so once they reach the point of viability, currently about 21 weeks. *Roe* made the United States one of only seven countries in the world that allows elective abortions after 20 weeks.

Arkansas and more than a dozen other states are challenging that precedent through total abortion bans, laws that prohibit abortions after an unborn baby's heartbeat is detectable (about six weeks), laws banning discriminatory abortions on unborn babies with disabilities, and laws banning abortions after the first trimester. These laws and a growing list of other pro-life state legislation indicate that most Americans want more protections for unborn babies.

Polls do, too. Gallup has been asking about the legality of abortions by trimester for decades. Its polls have found steady, strong opposition to abortions in the second and third trimesters. Additionally, a 2019 Hill-HarrisX poll found that 55% of voters said they do not think laws banning abortions after six weeks — when an unborn baby's heartbeat is detectable — are too restrictive.

Though the high court currently has a conservative majority, Chief Justice John Roberts, who was nominated by a Republican president, has sided with the liberal justices on a number of occasions. Most of the justices have seemed reluctant to consider controversial abortion cases.

systems because of their ability to form a cooperating coalition? Now you can begin thinking through sequence. How will you accomplish the task in front of you? What are the steps that need to be taken? Three important things to ask are: What needs to be done? Who will do it? When does it need to be done by?

• **Clarity takes this process to the next level by answering the questions concerning where, when and how.** Remember, these systems need to be reproducible and interconnected

## Operating Systems

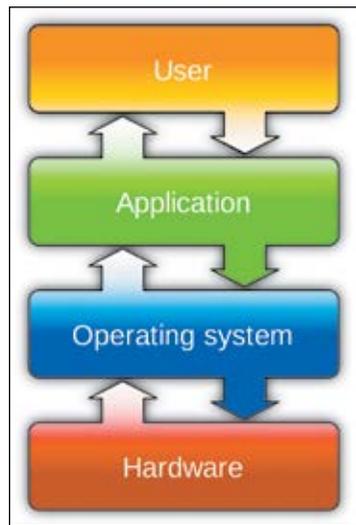
Unfortunately, my laptop is not operating right now. Even though it is turning on, the system goes so far and then freezes. The operating system has a glitch in it somewhere, and trying to figure out how to get it functioning again has been time consuming. An operating system (OS) is the system software that manages the computer's hardware, software resources and provides common services for computer programs. It is the most important software that runs on a computer because it manages all the processes of that computer.

The importance of well-functioning systems cannot be overstated. God created us with very intricate systems such as the skeletal system, which provides our body its frame and the muscular system which provides the strength needed to move that framework. We certainly are fearfully and wonderfully made in God's image. If one of your systems is misfiring and not operating as it should, it is very problematic for all of your systems and can cause them to shut down. In the Apple world, that has been referred to as the "spinning wheel of death."

Systems can be defined as a group of related parts that move and work together such as your nervous, circulatory, respiratory, immune and reproductive systems. In ministry, systems are what aid you in sustaining the relational capital you have worked so hard to build. They allow your church body to function in a way that honors and glorifies the Lord, making sure everything is done decently, in order and with excellence. Excellence is a word that scares many people, but we define it as doing the best you can with what you have.

Systems are reproducible and interconnected processes by which an organization actualizes its values and achieves its mission. They are what allow you, with excellence, to develop initiatives and strategies linked directly to your vision and implement them. How is your ministry operating? How could your ministry operate better? What operating systems should you consider implementing that describe a clear path for people to become a part of your church? Once a member, what does discipling, serving, growing and multiplying look like?

In developing strategies, structures and systems, remember how important it is to keep following a biblically healthy process that involves prayer, evaluation, collaboration and alignment with your core values. Are you



being driven by your values and making sure they are not only aspirational values (what you desire to do in the future) but actual values that are being lived out and practiced daily? Are you building systems focused and directed by God's mission for your church? Your "what" has been determined by Him and that is to "go and make disciples."

Systems need to be values-driven, mission-directed, vision-focused and then strategy accomplished. You will only expand to the capacity and effectiveness of your systems. All you have to do is study Exodus 18 to see what happens when there is not a system in place to make sure you can sustain the relational capital you have worked so hard to build. It is worth repeating what James Clear said in *Atomic Habits*: "We don't rise to the level of our goals; we fall to the level of our systems." Well thought out systems, structures and strategies in ministry are crucial.

Here are some system-building blocks to help you prayerfully work through developing their structure and strategies for implementation:

• **The first thing you must look at is attitude.** What is the overall atmosphere of the team? Is there optimism, or is there a pervading pessimism that must be confronted? What attitude or thinking needs to be fostered or corrected? Is there an immediate opposition to systems being unspiritual and not needed? What training or information would help your people see the importance of this process?

• **Then you need to look at behaviors.** What are the behaviors that reflect ownership and commitment to the system? Are your people more team oriented or do they have of a Lone Ranger mentality? Who needs to be working together on particular

# Lifeword

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## Mom Guilt and the Love Test

By Katy McCown

I once heard this idea — if you want to test your love for someone read I Corinthians 13 and replace the word "love" with your name. So here goes:

Mom is patient and kind. (We're off to a rough start.) Mom is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. (Not so sure about the rude part.) Mom does not demand her own way. (This is getting hairy.) Mom is not irritable, and Mom keeps no record of being wronged. (I need a rock to crawl under)" (I Cor. 13:4-5).

I'm not really sure where to go from here because I see these eyes — the eyes of my children, vulnerable, trusting eyes, looking at me. **Me!** What do they see?

I want them to see you, God. **You!** But it's not looking good. I failed the love test — with flying colors, I might add.

As the truth of the love chapter stung my heart, I laced up my running shoes and hit the road. Maybe the pounding of my shoes on the pavement could drown out the pounding of every beat of my heart screaming, "You can't do this!" Thump. Thump. Thump. The methodical steps at least gave my heart cries a rhythm to beat with, and the fresh air filled my lungs with hope as I began to unload my deepest fears to God: "What were you thinking giving all these kids to me? Surely you knew how I'd fare on this test. If you're counting on me to show them your love, what now?"

I kept running. I figured if I ran long enough, I might stumble across the answer to my question. After an hour and still no answer, I stopped. The thought of walking back in the house and facing those eyes held me out in the cold. I stretched to stall the inevitable. Then I heard that word again. Love. "Your love will make me good enough," the song on my phone repeated it. "Your love will. Your love will."

Though this didn't carry all my burdens away or set my sorrows free, it at least gave me the courage to go inside. But still I wrestled with this standard that was so high and my effort so not-even-close. I want my kids, my husband, my friends, and all I meet to see God in me. But they watch me, and I can't, for the life of me, come up with any God-thing I pass along. There has to be a way to get from what I am to what I want to be.

All who confess that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God. We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in His love (I John 4:15-16). Finally, something to cheer about! Enough about my love — or lack thereof. Oh, how much better to talk about God's love. His love is patient and kind. His love is not self-seeking. His love is gentle and long suffering. And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect" (I John 4:17).

I know where to go from here. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful and endures through every circumstance (I Cor. 13:7). My love is not full grown, but it's growing. It's not perfect but is being perfected. And I am certain that God, who began the good work within (Mom), will continue His work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns" (Phil. 1:6).

What is your score on the love test?

processes that clearly define everyone's place on the team and how they carry out their responsibilities. You are then ready to begin executing the plan. What is working and what is not working in welcoming guests at your church? What do you need to begin doing in our assimilation process and what should you stop doing? Are you working the steps, and are the steps working?

Your systems produce the results you design them to accomplish. Do

you need to change the scorecard from how many are attending and how much is being given to how many disciples are being made? How many are actually sharing their faith and building relationships with people who are far from God? This process is what begins building the culture you desire in your church body. What impact are the attitudes, behaviors and heart of your people having on your effectiveness for Christ? What is the spiritual thermometer of your church family?





By Executive Editor  
Jeff Herring

Journey  
with  
Jeff

## Where Do You Find Your Purpose?

I was honored to have the opportunity to preach this past weekend. After almost seven months, my family (along with my mom) was able to travel to Nixa, Mo. to visit my brother (John) and his family. (We had to cancel our normal Thanksgiving and Christmas plans due to some untimely medical situations.) Since we were going to be there for the Sunday service, John asked me to preach.

My message was about “Becoming People of Action” from Phil. 3:7-14. Let me just say first that I really enjoyed being able to share from God’s Word. I pray that everyone that heard the message was as blessed as I was to preach it. In this passage, I believe we see that Paul had a **passion** to know



Jesus, which led to his **purpose** of knowing Jesus through a growing personal relationship. Once he had the correct passion and purpose, he then had the correct **practice** — sharing the gospel message with those that need to hear.

As I thought about this message again this morning, I wondered how many of us need to ask ourselves the question, “Where do I find my purpose?” Just like Paul (Saul) before he met Jesus, we can find our purpose in the wrong things. We can even be passionate (just like Saul) about something that does not matter. Paul reminds us that the greatest achievements of this world are like “*rubbish*” when compared to the “*surpassing greatness of knowing Christ.*”

I challenge you today to let your **passion** be to know Jesus, and that will lead to the **purpose** of knowing Jesus more each day through a growing personal relationship with Him. If you get those things right, then the correct **practice** will flow out of that. I pray that God will give you opportunities to share the good news with someone this week!

### Video Report Now Available

Since Allan and I are not able to be at every church, we produced a video message that can be shared to give a report about our Special Emphasis for this year. You can download the video at [baptisttrumpet.com/SE2021](http://baptisttrumpet.com/SE2021). I also shared it on our Facebook page. If you haven’t already, please listen to this five-minute video that concludes with these two challenges:

- **Will you pray for this ministry?** Pray that God will not only provide resources, but that He will give us direction about opportunities or decisions we must make for the future of the *Trumpet*.

- **Can you give to help us meet our goal of \$45,000?** This is not an arbitrary number but is based on the current needs and future plans so that we can be faithful to the mission God has given us.

### Special Emphasis Update

Please continue to join with us as we seek to “Build for the Future” by raising the support that we must have in order to continue the work of the *Baptist Trumpet*. If you have any questions about the ministry of the *Baptist Trumpet* or would like for me or Allan to come and share with your church or group meeting, please let me know.

#### 2021 Special Emphasis • Goal - \$45,000

|                                    |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Previous Balance (March 10)</b> | <b>\$2,180.00</b> |
| Mary Fleming, Little Rock          | \$500.00          |
| Temperanceville, Nashville         | \$300.00          |
| Sulpher Springs, Quitman           | \$100.00          |
| Rock Hill, Jonesboro               | \$159.04          |
| Mt. Nebo, Hope                     | \$500.00          |
| Immanuel, Greenbrier               | \$417.70          |
| Faustina, Hampton                  | \$100.00          |
| Liberty, Stamps                    | \$500.00          |
| Anonymous                          | \$500.00          |
| Anonymous                          | \$200.00          |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>\$5,556.74</b> |



By Executive Editor Jeff Herring

### US Data Shows AstraZeneca Vaccine Effective for All Adults

AstraZeneca reported March 22 that its COVID-19 vaccine provided strong protection among all adults in a long-anticipated U.S. study, raising hopes that the findings could help rebuild public confidence in the beleaguered shot in other countries and moving a step closer to clearance for American use. AstraZeneca said the vaccine was 79% effective overall at preventing symptomatic cases of COVID-19 — including in older people — and that none of the study volunteers who were vaccinated were hospitalized or developed severe disease. The company also said its experts did not identify any safety concerns related to the vaccine, including finding no increased risk of rare blood clots identified in Europe.

The findings bolster AstraZeneca’s prior research in Britain and other countries and add to real-world evidence that the shots are offering good protection as they’re used more widely. But confidence in the vaccine has been repeatedly hit because of concerns about how data was reported from some previous trials, confusion over its efficacy in older adults and a recent scare over clotting.

AstraZeneca said it will seek clearance in the United States “in the coming weeks,” putting it on track to arrive just as the country is projected to have a big boost in supplies of three other vaccines — from Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson — that already are in use.

The AstraZeneca shot is what scientists call a “viral vector” vaccine. The shots are made with a harmless virus, a cold virus that normally infects chimpanzees. It acts like a Trojan horse to carry the coronavirus’s spike protein’s genetic material into the body that, in turn, produces some harmless protein. That primes the immune system to fight if the real virus comes along. Two other companies — Johnson & Johnson and China’s CanSino Biologics — make COVID-19 vaccines using the same technology but using different cold viruses. ([baptistpress.com](http://baptistpress.com))

### House OKs Effort to Revive Abortion-related ERA

Supporters of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) are seeking to revive the controversial proposal in the face of adversarial legal opinions and criticism of its connection to the expansion of abortion rights. The U.S. House of Representatives gave the revival campaign its latest boost March 17, approving in a 222-204 vote a resolution that would retroactively eliminate the four-decade-old deadline for the amendment’s ratification. Four Republicans joined Democrats in supporting the measure. Success in the Senate will likely prove more challenging for ERA supporters, since 60 votes would be needed to overcome an expected filibuster.

The first section of the ERA says: “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” Both the House and Senate voted by two-thirds majorities in 1972 to propose the ERA to the states. In doing so, they established a seven-year deadline for its ratification. When it appeared three-fourths of the state legislatures (38 states) would not ratify the amendment by 1979, both houses of Congress acted in unprecedented fashion to extend the deadline by three years. No other states approved the ERA by 1982, however.

Since then, the effort to revive ERA has failed to gain support in federal courts from an estimated 20 judges, most recently in early March. In January 2020, the office of legal counsel of the Department of Justice issued a memorandum that said the amendment “is no longer pending” before the states because Congress “may not revive a proposed amendment after a deadline for its ratification has expired.”

Pro-life advocates, meanwhile, have long contended the ERA — in its language guaranteeing equal rights for women — would result in the establishment of abortion rights in the U.S. Constitution and the eradication of all restrictions on abortion and its funding. Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of the pro-life Susan B. Anthony List, said after the House vote, “Abortion is the greatest violation of human rights in our day — the clear antithesis of

equality. Its ratification would mean the indefinite blocking of state and federal policy to protect the rights of children in the womb.” ([baptistpress.com](http://baptistpress.com))

### Arkansas Lottery Continues Spending Most of Its Money on Prizes

The Arkansas Lottery currently budgets 69% of its revenue for prizes, according to its latest monthly financial report. The report indicates that about 16% of the Lottery’s revenue goes to college scholarships. The Arkansas Lottery spends most of the money it makes on prizes for lottery players. For perspective, the typical state lottery budgets approximately 30% of its revenue for education and about 60% for prizes. Arkansas’ state-run lottery spends a larger portion of its revenue on prizes than the vast majority of state lotteries. ([familycouncil.org](http://familycouncil.org))

### House Committee Passes Bill Protecting Fairness in Women’s Sports

On March 18, the House Education Committee passed S.B. 354. This bill by Sen. Missy Irvin (R/Mountain View) and Rep. Sonia Barker (R/Smackover) preserves fairness in girls’ athletics at school. S.B. 354 would protect girls from being forced to compete against biological males in girls’ athletics. Letting biological males who identify as female compete against girls can rob female student athletes of opportunities for scholarships. Time and again we have heard stories of biological males dominating women’s sports — especially sports like track and field. In some cases, it can even be dangerous. S.B. 354 helps protect fairness in women’s sports in Arkansas. The bill now goes to the entire Arkansas House of Representatives for consideration. ([familycouncil.org](http://familycouncil.org))

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*From the President...*  
**Think Globally—Act Locally**

Jeff Swart, BMAA President

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## Will This Easter Make A Difference in Your Life?

At the conclusion of an Easter service, a woman said to the pastor as she left, "I've never seen such a crowd in church! Do you think it will make any difference?" In telling this story, the pastor said that he held onto her hand so that she couldn't walk away and asked, "What do you mean? What will make a difference?" The woman replied, "Easter! Will Easter make any difference for all these people or will life tomorrow be the same as it was yesterday?"

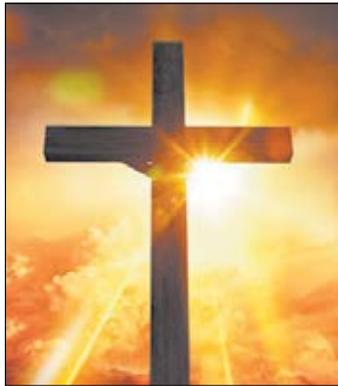
What an insightful question! Over many years of ministry, I have watched the Easter crowd come and I've watched the Easter crowd go. Sadly, Easter made no impact on the lives of so many. Why is that?

Perhaps it's because the story is so simple. The *Reader's Digest* version of the message of the Bible is this: God created a perfect world and Lucifer, and then man, messed it up. The only solution was for God to become a man and live a perfect life — something that we could not do — which then qualified Jesus to die as my substitute on the cross. When Jesus died on the cross, He took upon Himself the punishment that you and I deserved for our sins. In those last three hours on the cross, amazingly, Jesus suffered what you and I should have suffered for all eternity in Hell. After His death, Jesus was buried and, three days later, He was resurrected from the grave! Jesus' resurrection demonstrated that He really was God's Son, that everything He said was true, that God accepted His sacrifice for the sins of the world, and because He lives, He guarantees that all believer's will live eternally with Him!

We know that the Easter message is a simple message. That's what God intended it to be — a simple story so that the youngest of us could understand it. But do not take its simplicity to mean that it is not important.

We all need at least two things spiritually — hope and forgiveness. Why? Every one of us needs hope to go on and forgiveness for the removal of guilt and peace with God. What is simple — the Easter message — met the greatest spiritual needs in our lives!

I know you have heard this story a hundred times before. But this Easter, ask God to renew the message of hope and forgiveness in your heart. Ask God to use a simple message to change you. If you do, Easter will make a difference in your life this year!



## BMA Pastor Dies

John David Webb, 81 of Mountain Home, passed away March 7 after a lengthy battle with Alzheimer's disease. He surrendered to preach the gospel and was ordained 1966 by Immanuel Baptist Church in Nashville.

He received a Bachelor of Arts in Religion from BMA Theological Seminary and a Master of Theology in Religion from Dallas Theological Seminary.

He pastored several churches in Arkansas, including: County Line, Nashville; Sweet Home, Nashville; Rose Hill, DeQueen; Antioch, Nashville; Tenth Street, Paragould; and Forest Hill, Emmet. He also pastored churches in Texas.

Survivors include: his wife of 59 years, Sheila Castle Webb; daughters, Leslie McCrary of Nashville and Cynthia Montgomery of Mountain Home; three sons, Eric (April) Webb of Auburn, Ala., Dr. John (Michele) Webb of Hot Springs and Dr. Christopher (Michelle) Webb of Mountain Home; one brother, Joe Webb of Sachse, Texas; 14 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

Services were held March 12 at Latimer Funeral Home (latimerfuneralhome.com) in Nashville, and interment was in Restland Memorial Park in Nashville.

Memorials may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Fl. 17, Chicago, Ill. 60601.



**Norma Crass**, 78 of Conway, passed away Mar. 21. She was a member of Antioch Baptist Church. Survivors include her husband, Norman Crass, who served Central Baptist College for 33 years before retiring in 1996 as Vice-President for Financial Affairs.

**Clayton Austin Meharg**, 96 of Letona, passed away Mar. 16. He was a member of Letona Baptist Church.

**Bobby Presley**, 55 of Trumann, passed away Feb. 22. He was a member of Central Baptist Church.

**Emma Earlene Young**, 91 of Malvern, passed away Jan. 18. She was a member of South Main Baptist Church.



## Scammers Are Threatening Professional License Holders

Attorney General Leslie Rutledge is issuing an alert to state licensing boards and professional license holders throughout the state. Scam callers are targeting Arkansans who hold a professional license and claiming their license is under investigation and at risk of being immediately suspended if they don't make an immediate payment. The scammers have even transferred the license-holders by phone to divisions pretending to be law enforcement.

"If something doesn't seem quite right, say something," said Rutledge. "Arkansas' professional licensing boards will never call their license holders and demand immediate payment by gift cards or threaten members."

The scam callers have been posing as agents for the licensing office claiming the licensee is under an "investigation" and the license has been suspended. The license-holder's caller ID may even display the legitimate licensing office's phone number that has been spoofed by the scam callers. To further attempt to appear legitimate, the caller may pretend to be a law enforcement officer or transfer the call to another person posing as a law enforcement officer or federal agent. The scammer then offers to fix the problem or issue a temporary license by asking for personally identifiable information and payment, usually by purchasing gift cards, for a bond, such as \$5,000.

If any consumer receives any of the scam calls described above, we request that they contact the AG's office at: [imposterreports@arkansasag.gov](mailto:imposterreports@arkansasag.gov). An investigator will respond and request any additional information that is needed.

If you have any questions, contact the Attorney General's Office at [ArkansasAG.gov](http://ArkansasAG.gov) or by calling (800) 482-8982.



**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 Gala**, June 5, 6 p.m., Conway Expo Center. Contact Amy Reed for more info at [areed@cbc.edu](mailto:areed@cbc.edu).

**BMA Camp**, June 21-24; Chis Vines, camp speaker, Doug Mickan, worship leader; Budd Creek Camp, Greens Ferry.

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

**SOAR 2021**, July 6-8; Hilton Anatole, Dallas, Texas; visit [soarconference.com](http://soarconference.com) for more info.

**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.



**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](mailto:brent.thompson@myimmanuel.com).

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



**Jonesboro District WMA**, April 10, 10 a.m.; Yalanda Young Merrell, guest speaker; Prospect, Jonesboro.

**Greenbrier District WMA**, April 15; 10 a.m. meeting & program; Life-Song, Greenbrier.



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

**Liberty, Stamps**, June 6-9, 7 p.m.; Donnie Edward, evangelist; Adam Rogers; pastor.



**Broadway Ave., Bay** welcomed four by letter; Rick Jensen, pastor.

**Celebration, Haskell** gained three by letter; Allan Eakin, pastor.

**Central, Trumann** reports one by letter and one by statement.

**County Line, Nashville** received one by letter; Jerry Hill, pastor.

**First, Caldwell** rejoices over six by letter and two by baptism; Michael Hight, pastor.

**Victory, Hampton** added two by letter; Robbie Duncan, pastor.

## Jacksonville College is Seeking Applicants for President

Jacksonville College is a vibrant, faith-based, liberal arts institution. Founded in 1899, the college is located in Jacksonville, Texas and is affiliated with the BMA of Texas and the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention.

The college is currently accepting applications for the office of president. Applicants must have an earned Doctorate degree, with Education or related disciplines preferred. This confident, well-spoken leader must be a conservative, growing Christian with deep experience in institutional development, fundraising and administration. Pastoral ministry-related experience is a plus.

For consideration, please send a cover letter; a personal resume which includes family information, your history of work experience, your personal testimony of faith; contact information for three references to [dpage@hillcrestbc.com](mailto:dpage@hillcrestbc.com).

**Apply by April 10, 2021 for full consideration.**





*Tales from the  
Potter's Wheel*  
By Martha Brock  
inolnewspaper@tds.net

## Responsibility

Responsibility — it's a heavy word, isn't it? It makes you feel guilty just to hear it, but if you hold up your end of a deal, you can square your shoulders and look the world in the eye. The word makes me think of three friends — Lonna, Mark and Nina.

This story is taken partly from Matthew 25 and Luke 10 and is based on the people in my mind. To one, He gave five talents; to another, two; and to another, one. Each according to his own ability.

### Lonna

Lonna was just a pretty little girl, with knobby knees, skipping rope like everyone else when one day the dance instructor came to town. It was a summertime special. The local mothers enrolled their daughters for posture lessons and a chance to get together and visit for an hour in the afternoon. It wasn't much and didn't amount to much to anyone. Not much to anyone, but Lonna. From the first point of her toe, she felt like marble in the sculptor's hand. She could feel the spirit inside of her waiting to get out, to have the unnecessary stone shaved away and the masterpiece revealed.

Lonna practiced from the end of one lesson to the next; and when the five-week session finished, it was clear to her teacher, and her parents, that this bud must be allowed to flower. This could be a long story, but actually it has only one scene — Lonna practicing and practicing, unfolding her talent until the day she stepped forth as a professional ballet dancer. She had world acclaim, fame and fortune, but to Lonna, all that mattered was the dancing.

At the end of each performance, she willed herself to practice and study, discipline her body and her movements, so she could better her next effort. Many years later a little girl looked up at her and with wondering eyes and asked her how she had accomplished so much.

"Faith" Lonna said. "Faith to bring to fruition the gift that is given you."

Her five-week dancing course had doubled, tripled and flowered. Lonna fulfilled her responsibility and lived in the "Joy of the Lord."

### Mark

Then there is my friend Mark. Like Lonna, he was just a friendly, happy little fellow. Sure, he loved to mark with Crayolas, and it seemed to his doting mother that his color choices were unusually attractive. It seemed that his little drawings had some pleasing lines, but he was just a little boy, growing up, playing baseball and learning to get along in this world.



In high school, he discovered art classes and decided to make his living at it. Mark went to college, received a degree in graphic arts and soon had a job with a top advertising agency. Mark was successful. He had money in the bank, a beautiful apartment, a fast car and fancy friends. But he wasn't happy. It seemed his effort was empty, and the work had no substance.

Finally, after a disagreement with his boss, Mark walked out. Soon his savings was gone, and he had to move. He lost his car, but Mark would laugh and say, years later, it was the best thing that ever happened to him.

He had to take the bus, and on the bus, he met a friendly looking guy who told him about his work — a graphic arts business that made religious tracts. Yes, they had an opening and needed someone to illustrate the covers and do some work inside. Sure, come along, bring your portfolio. Mark got the job. Didn't pay much, but enough. He felt like his two stabs at art training had paid off double.

Years later a little girl asked him why he gave up such a good job for one that paid so much less. "Respect," Mark said. "You have to have respect for the work you do and the One who gave you your ability. I am paid many times over when I hear of a changed life because of one our tracts. Who knows, maybe someday I'll be a ruler over many things. For right now I'm living in the Joy of the Lord."

### Nina

Then there is Nina. From the day she was born, Nina was special. When she was three, her daddy said she had one talent — just being Nina. Her smile seemed to light corners, and you couldn't help but smile back when it fell on you.

Nina wasn't much past Kindergarten when the church visiting team requested that she accompany them on nursing home visits. "Let's take her along. She makes the old folks feel young," the leader said. She wasn't in Junior High when the choir director asked to have her join them. "I know

she hasn't much volume, but even if she can't carry a tune, it won't hurt. That smile brings us together."

It was like that everywhere and all the time. When Nina was there, you could feel the light and love drawing and pulling, to each other and to the Lord. Then when Nina was 16 a terrible thing happened — she looked in the mirror and saw that she was beautiful. From that moment on, she took painstaking care of her appearance. Her makeup had to be the right shade, her hair styled, her clothes in the latest fashion.

But as Nina's appearance improved, people seemed to pay less attention. The visiting committee didn't tell her when they were scheduled at the nursing home. The choir director forgot to tell her about practice. Folks didn't notice when she joined their group. It wasn't intentional; it just seemed to happen. Nina got a little mad over it and she decided she would make them notice, so she studied her glamor magazines and paid more attention to her makeup and clothes.

Finally, she was all alone and very bitter. She said in her heart, "God is unfair, He expects me to do His work and then He turns His back on me. He expects me to do what I cannot do." Then the Lord came to her in a dream. It wasn't as my loving friend Jesus, but rather in the role of an inflexible judge. He was a hard and austere man, demanding interest on the gift that had been freely given.

"You have wasted the talent," He thundered. "You have hidden the greatest gift of all. I gave you the gift of the Holy Spirit. All you had to do was open up and allow Him to do His work. You have hidden my gift under makeup and vanity and conceit."

Friends, this story could end any number of ways — three come to mind:

- **It could be a happy ending.** The next morning Nina wakes up, sees the error of her ways and goes to her prayer closet and her Bible. She allows the Holy Spirit to again take control of her life.

- **Then there is the chance that it is too late.** While she slept, a deadly fever steals through her body and she must watch the world from an invalid's chair until an early death takes her away.

- **But there is an even sadder ending.** Nina had buried the gift of the Holy Spirit, the most important gift of all, too deeply. The Holy Spirit was quenched. He could not work. She lived her life a bitter, disillusioned woman. Unknown and unloved.

Those are our choices, friends. We, born again people, have a gift, it's the Holy Spirit, the most important one of all. As His children, we have the gift of the Holy Spirit living in our lives. We can allow Him to live and accomplish His work through us and we will hear Him say, in the fullness of time, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things I will make you ruler over many things." Jesus said that twice in Matthew 25. He promised that we can enter into the "Joy of the Lord."

**Spotlight On  
Missions**  
Send offerings to BMA Missions  
P.O. Box 878 • Conway, AR 72033-0878  
501.455.4977 • www.bmamissions.org

### Michael & Laura Beth Strong • Minneapolis, Minn.

*"The LORD Himself goes before you; He will be with you. He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid or discouraged"* (Deut. 31:8).

What a month it has been since our last update! God is definitely opening some new doors for us in the work here. This week we had 30 people in the five different Bible Study and Discipleship groups I lead throughout the week — including nine people in our newest Bible Study that just launched three weeks ago with four people in attendance! Excitement has been building, and we hear about new people who are interested in coming every week. I've been trying to stay grounded in God and not numbers, since those can ebb and flow, because God's love and grace is unchanging. The fact that this group is made up of people hungry to learn about who Jesus is and how to follow Him excites me.

While Seth was in the hospital, Laura was able to build relationships with staff all around the hospital — she has a knack for that. She had lunch or a snack with several people and even taught a 54-year-old Somalian woman how to tie her shoes! There are so many people going through so many horrible and hard things that it's hard to process it all. Seth was on a floor with other babies in severe condition, and she got to bond with the nurses who serve them and some of the mothers. Not only do these babies have severe conditions, but many of the parents are facing all of it without knowing God loves them and wants to have a personal relationship with them — I don't know how they make it through the day. I didn't like that Seth was struggling, but I was glad Laura was there to share the hope of the gospel with those parents. If Seth had not been having the issues he had, then no one would be there to share the hope we have in Christ with the people Laura was able to share it with. For this I am thankful. Each day I heard reports of how God opened doors to share the good news with someone or how she got to pray with Christian nurses and minister to them.

While I have struggled to stay as connected to God as I would like, I have had times where God has broken into my days and reminded me He is no less connected to me in these moments than He is on my best days. I may not "feel" connected, but Christ's blood has purchased a secure connection with God. In the rushed moments of prayer and study where my brain is fried from lack of sleep or hard-pressed from the stress and worry, God still shows me truths about Himself in the texts I didn't see. He still gives me "aha" moments and lets me know He is right there with me, guiding and leading me. He has ministered to me through the people around me at the Bible studies, especially the guys at FreedomWorks. I may be there to lead studies, but the Holy Spirit is ministering to me through them, and I am grateful.

I am also praying for mature co-laborers to join me and carry the load. If this work keeps growing, as it seems it will, then I am going to need some help soon. I currently have no one able to play an instrument or lead worship, but I really need help with discipling people in a weekly meeting and smaller micro-groups (3-4 people). Any help is welcomed, and I trust God will provide it when the time is right. For now, we wait, work and continue to invest in men so they may be equipped to fill these roles in the event that no one answers the call.

We are now in a place, I believe, could be a catalyst for mission work. We are ready to start outreach activities, including an evangelistic Easter Service, in the Harbor House where we meet. For Easter, the message will be on how Christ's finished work is God's plan to secure "A Place Where We Belong." The goal is to connect with anyone who realizes they just don't fit anywhere. God is giving us great ideas to serve the college population and reach out to share the gospel. I have more ideas than time, budget and ability.

Thanks for your prayers and support. May God bless you for your investments in the kingdom just as He has promised. I am thankful for you all.



Seth Ryder hooked up to EEG while in Children's Hospital. Laura, Seth and Samuel stayed in the hospital for about two weeks this most recent trip.



Some of the guys from the Bible Study groups who came to help clear out the food from the Harbor House that we are using to minister.



## Missionaries

**Michael Hight, Hispanic Coordinator; (501) 326-0198**  
**Ruben Isturiz, Misión Ebenezer, West Little Rock; (501) 707-5388**  
**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**  
**Johnny Shew, Faith Chapel, Flippin; (870) 421-1984**  
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**PAUL WHITE**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

## “We’ll Work Till Jesus Comes” (Or Will We?)

There is an old saying that “when the going gets tough, the tough get going.” For most, this past year has been one that involved a lot of work, but not much fruit to show for it. Winning the lost is somewhat like fishing — some days are great, others are good and then there are the frustrating days when it seems the fish just will not bite no matter how many different baits you use. Still, I believe a bad day of fishing is better than a good day at work. Meaning, our service to God — our fishing for men — even when it seems no one cares, is still better than just sitting on the dock. One of my life lessons was, “To catch fish, one must keep his hook in the water, for you never know when a fish will bite.” Unless you are fishing, you will not be catching.

Much has changed in ministry over the past decade, and it appears that it will continue to change into the future. Jesus, when asked, said that He came “to seek and to save those which were lost” (Luke 19:10). This is our marching order, church. In the midst of the storm, I hear our captain (Jesus) saying “Every man on deck!”

Currently, a pastor or missionary’s plight is daunting. I am thankful that we have a group of men who have fished hard and are continuing to fish hard, knowing that it is God that will give the increase. Please be slow to judge a ministry more by results than effort. A good example for us to remember is found in John 6:66 — that one day while Jesus was teaching, many walked away.

Lord, help us to be found faithful to your command. Jesus said, “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men” (Matt. 4:19). Please pray for your pastor and your missionaries as they share the wonderful news of Christ with a lost and dying world. And may each child of God also be found fishing!

### From Our Missionaries

**Connection Point, Brookland:** Chad White writes, “It was a good week here at Connection Point. Severe thunderstorms and the threat of tornadoes forced us to cancel our Wednesday night groups. Most people in our area are still a little nervous after the tornado last year about this same time.

“Over the weekend, we had our floors refinished and they look amazing. Thanks to all who helped get things set back up for Sunday, and a special thanks to our member who refinished the floors.

“Sunday was a good day as we had a good attendance and enjoyed a wonderful day of worship. We were pleasantly surprised as Spring Break week is not typically a well-attended service.

“At the conclusion of the service, I was privileged to announce that my son was officially engaged to a wonderful young lady. After service, we all enjoyed some refreshments and celebrated with Alex and Hope.”

**The Mustard Seed, Cain:** Jim Tollison writes, “Things are continuing to look up at the mission. A real positive attitude is in the air, and we are planning a lot of special things soon. We have several young men here at the mission, so our volunteer youth leader, Kenny is planning some outings in the near future and will be

teaching hunting and fishing skills, etc. Kenny spent several years in the Army, including serving several tours in Iraq. He has extensive experience in survival training and was a drill instructor between deployments. He will instill the importance of leadership and being good examples.

“We had one young man who came forward Sunday upon profession of faith and wants to be baptized. As we plan this baptism, we hope others will follow.

“Easter Sunday, we will have a special singing with Ron and Marylou Warren, followed by an Easter egg hunt and a cookout. We are praying for a lot of visitors that day!

“We are expecting a great spring for the mission. Thanks for your prayers and support. God bless your work for Him!”

**Misión Creciendo en Cristo (Growing in Christ), North Little Rock:** Juan Carlos Posadas writes, “World Central Kitchen will be providing us dinners for 4 weeks — 100 on Tuesday and 100 on Thursday — to share with the community. Last week was the first one, and we thank God for His provision.

“On Friday, another unexpected blessing came from Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance who provided us with 44 \$25 gift cards to buy food in a supermarket to share with the community.

“The mixer board stopped working

on Saturday, and we will have to buy a new one. This is the second one that was donated to us and it is ruined. The good thing is that we have a small six-channel mixer which is in good condition and helped us out of the problem, having rehearsal and worship with enough sound.

“The movement that occurs when we help the community not only attracts people who are interested in the products we donate, it also attracts some petty thieves. They have opened the cars of the sisters who come to serve, taking cash; they have taken our outdoor fire pit set, which we use in our meetings with bonfires, etc. This is the reason why we are resuming the video camera installation project.

“Thank God, the discipleship meetings continue, and we have some very interested families which fills us with joy. We are encouraging a group of young people to participate in the SOAR 2021 student conference ‘Pause.’ It will be our first time, and we are excited!

“On Sunday, we talked about the topic ‘Women of the Church’ based on Titus 2:3-5. It was a good time for reflection and the church was blessed with the Word.

“Thank you for continuing to pray for this ministry, and I ask you to pray for Sayra’s health and mine. God bless you.”

**Life Journey, Fort Smith: Darrin Smith writes,** “There are several who are stepping up in different spots in our mission. It is exciting to see our members taking more and more responsibility.

“We had two first-time visitors in worship this past Sunday who said they were glad they came. It was great to see a few more in our service. The spring weather is bringing people out.

“Thank you for your continued prayer and support. It is very encouraging.”

**Grace, Green Forest:** Carter Pearce writes, “Wednesday night, we completed our study through the book of Romans. We used Warren Wiersbe’s book, *Be Right*, as our study guide and had great discussion throughout the study as we focused on salvation and how Christians should understand and share their salvation. Romans 16 is Paul’s account of people in his life. He addressed three types of people in that chapter.

“Paul first spoke about individuals who had impacted his ministry. He then warned the church at Rome about false teachers who would try to

infiltrate their church. Finally, Paul mentioned people who were currently ministering alongside him. I encouraged our group to find ourselves in the same place as the Romans. We need to have an impact on other people’s ministry, be on guard against false teachers and false leaders and we must be active in ministry ourselves.

“I have been asking for three years now that God will show us what to do to reach the people in Carroll County. This week, during prayer and reflection, I decided that I need to change that request. Rather than asking God ‘What should we do?’ we will be asking God, ‘What should we be?’ to reach our community.

“We are struggling in Green Forest, and maybe this change of mind and change of focus will help us reach those around us. Just like Paul taught us in Romans 12, we need to be transformed by renewing our minds. Please join us in praying that we will be who God wants us to be in order to reach our neighbors with the message of Christ.”

**Ebenezer, West Little Rock:** Ruben Isturiz writes, “I thank God that, despite the pandemic, all Ebenezer members are still active. Not all of them attend in person, but they do connect online. One case is that of José Rodríguez. He works for FedEx and many times connects from different states of the country. Previously, his route was more stable, and he attended the service every Sunday. I ask for your prayers for God to free his Sundays so he can attend in person.

“God continues to make changes in the lives of the brothers through the Berean Groups (cells). We thank God that next Thursday the group in Baseline will be activated. The leader did not communicate with them last Sunday. I asked you to pray for the Vidal Family that after having started very well, it is no longer possible to continue studying the Bible with them. Pray that the door will be opened again with this family.

“On Resurrection Sunday we will have our ‘Sunrise Worship’ — many churches in Latin America have it. At 6 a.m., we will begin our service, remembering the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We will participate in the Lord’s Supper and then a breakfast. Pray the truth of God’s Word will be sown and we will have a good time of fellowship. Thank you for your prayers. To God be the glory!”

**Faith Chapel, Flippin:** Johnny Shew writes, “We had a great week at Faith Chapel. We went to our mother church Sunday evening and baptized our newest member — we now have 19 members. We love going back and seeing our brothers and sisters. We miss them so much, but we love seeing our new members meet them and grow to love them as well.

“We also spent some time this week at Highland Hills — our grandmother church — trying to get some ideas as we begin to plan our own building. We will need a bigger one very soon,

praise God! It is amazing how God will work through us and bless our work if we are simply faithful to Him. He is more than faithful to us.

“I have said this more than once, I knew God was calling us to BMA Missions and he was telling us to plant a church, but I did not know how much I would love it! We are so very blessed to be a part of this mission, and what God is doing in Flippin. Thank you so much for your prayers, please continue!”

**Not Alone, Springdale:** Clinton Morris writes, “This week, the Holy Spirit has been creating amazing opportunities to communicate His truth to people. We had an amazing moment with a waitress at a local pizza hangout. DeAnna felt strongly led to pray for Megan, and she opened up about some grief she is currently going through. We are planning on going back soon to further our relationship.

“I had an amazing opportunity to discuss the direction of my church plant with a few local Christians who are interested in supporting our cause. We are still in conversation of what that may look like, but we are excited to see that God is creating some opportunities.

“Thursday morning, I had a cool opportunity to chat with a prodigal son of God. He walked away from his faith five years ago and has been in a limbo land of uncertainty. We chatted for an hour about what Christ has done for him, and some practical thoughts on how to come back to the faith. Pray that I will get the opportunity to talk with Danny again in the near future. That conversation was one of those crazy interruptions to my normal routine — I love it when God steps in and directs me to people in need of His truth.

“Thursday night, we had a community meeting in our house and made some new friends. It was so amazing to see our small group practicing what we have been discussing on Friday nights. We are still evaluating what God plans on doing with these new contacts.

“Friday night, as usual, we had our church’s Bible Study. We are going through the book, *Is Genesis History*, and setting some solid biblical foundations for our group.

“Saturday morning, I spent three hours chatting with my neighbor. He and his wife are saved, which is awesome. We are planning on doing some outdoor projects together. I am prayerful that we can create a neighborhood prayer group that is dedicated to praying over the life situations of our neighbors.

“Please continue praying for a second vehicle and a centralized meeting place for this church.”

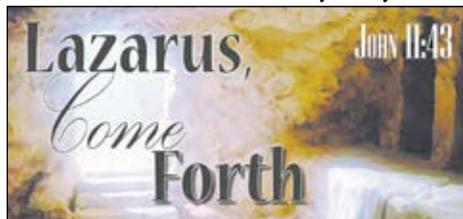


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# Lazarus...The Greatest Comeback Story

By Kerry Stitch



*"When he had said this, He shouted with a loud voice, Lazarus, come out" (John 11:43).*

March Madness is here... no, I'm not talking about standing in line for a COVID vaccine or getting your paperwork organized to finish your

taxes. It's that time of year when fans gather — small numbers, thank you, Rona — to don the jersey and cheer for the team that matters, theirs.

This madness can often take the form of a "comeback" on the court. Let's face it, we are drawn to them. Maybe it's because we can identify with being an underdog or having a past experience we would like to grow from. Even the GOAT, Michael Jordan, (Sorry, LeBron, not even close!) kept the mindset of the comeback. Take a listen. "Twenty-six times I have been trusted to take the game winning shot, and I missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life, and that is why I succeed."

Comebacks matter to God as well! Take a look at Joseph in Genesis, Job's restoration or Moses' crime as examples of God in the renovation business. Let's be clear, God's comebacks are always an opportunity to pull the curtain back on God and expose His glory, never ours!

God's compassion in our setbacks, disappointments and less than stellar decisions are evident in His persistence to draw us back to confession, repentance and right-standing. The beauty in the Lazarus story is captivating. I'm guessing that's why so many "comebacks" are the core of best-selling novels, thrilling movies and inspiring music.

God's sovereignty explodes on the pages of Scripture through setbacks and returning to Him. Our "stench" may not be Lazarus' stench of death in a tomb, but all sin reeks to the Father. Hand Him the pieces, the missteps and the blunders and watch what God can do with your brokenness. The "I Am" who parted seas, conquered death and executes comebacks is waiting for you. Be a Lazarus... come forth to your Father!

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