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(L-R) Colton Ryan, Dr. Kateryna Pitchford and Daniel Hopp

CBC Students Place in The Governor's Cup Competition

By Dr. Kateryna Pitchford, Associate Professor of Business

For the first time in Central Baptist College history, a team of students, along with a faculty advisor, competed in the Arkansas Governor's Cup Col-

legiate Business Plan Competition. The team competed in the Small Business Division and were one of six finalists in this division who participated in the 2021 Virtual Awards Presentation with a Live Elevator Pitch Competition on April 8. Students Colton Ryan and Daniel Hopp were awarded second place in their division and a cash award of \$10,000. "What a tremendous accomplishment for these two young men and for the CBC Department of Business," said CBC President Terry Kimbrow.

Ryan and Hopp, along with faculty advisor Dr. Kateryna Pitchford, represented the CBC Department of Business by submitting and pitching a business plan to be judged by business leaders from across the state in the annual competition. Ryan and Hopp formed a start-up called "Christ Light," an apparel company concept that offers a wide range of apparel products preprinted with the John 3:16 verse affixed, or they allow customers to choose their favorite verse to be added to products like hats and shirts. The goal is for the customer to use the items as an icebreaker to discuss Jesus and their Christian faith with others. While still a start-up concept, Christ Light has already sold over 300 items

MOVING with Ministers and Staff

To view previous listings from this column, visit our website at www.baptisttrumpet.com.

Derek Broyles is the new student pastor and director of Family Ministries at Park Place Baptist Church in Bryant.

across several states. Ryan and Hopp also plan to donate 10% of net sales profits to Abba Adoption, a Christian faith-based full-service domestic adoption agency located in Benton.

"The Governor's Cup competition was a very eye-opening, almost real-world experience for us," said Daniel Hopp. "It was an honor for sure, and when we heard our name called at number two, there was some relief, some excitement and some joy. I honestly felt like I could run a marathon at that moment I was so fired up."

"I am really proud of the team we put together for this competition," said Colton Ryan. "Daniel and I were able to apply the skills we learned at CBC over the past four years. Winning always feels good, so for us to get the job done and finish second in the state was a huge honor. A big thank you to the Business Department because, without them we would have never gotten to this point."

Colton and Daniel are both outstanding students with passion and business knowledge. They were able to accept feedback and incorporate it into their business plan, presentation and elevator speech to make their business idea easy to comprehend and have a strong appeal.

The CBC team was one of the six finalists in the Small Business Division, which also included teams from the University of Arkansas, Arkansas Tech University and the Arkansas School for Math, Sciences and the Arts. The Small Business Division is for business plans that are "main street." These are customer-facing operations such as retail, hospitality or services. Over \$100,000 in awards were given out across two divisions of competition, the Small Business Division and a High Growth/Technology Division. The top three finishers in each division received cash prizes, as well as the winner of the individual performance in the elevator pitch competition.

Colton Ryan is a senior accounting

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Why SOAR Conference?

By Chris Vines, SOAR Visionary Leader

Our American culture is replete with Christian conferences. In many ways, this is an encouraging reality, but also a reality worth consideration. The days of general gatherings are seemingly coming to a close and the number of micro-specific conferences is on the rise. There are Christian leader conferences as well as conferences for Christian men and women. Want to attend an apologetic, evangelism or biblical worldview conference? They are out there. Need a conference that addresses a specific sin struggle or one that focuses on helping pastors keep in step with the demands of ministry? Those are also available.

What's more is that these conferences are no longer difficult to find or attend. With the convenience of the internet, a conference can be easily promoted and distributed to any eager person with a computer or smartphone. Physical attendance is no longer a requirement, but much like the quick reading of a blog post, a conference can be easily attended in pajamas on a couch. If there's one thing that was forced to accelerate in 2020 it was online participation.

This is not written, nor is it to be read, in a cynical or unappreciative tone. The fact that many faithful conferences exist and are easily accessible for many people is a blessing from the Lord. However, since this is the reality of our current culture and since SOAR is one conference among a plethora of others, any faithful church leader or discerning parent must ask the question, "Why should my teenagers attend the SOAR conference?" Consider these four reasons:

• **Teenagers and churches can do more together than they can on their own.** SOAR is the national conference for all the teenagers in the Baptist Missionary Association of America. For more than 30 years, this has been a driving motivation

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Americans' Views of Life's Meaning And Purpose are Changing

By Aaron Earls, Lifeway Research

(via baptistpress.com) As Americans attempt to move past the life-altering effects of 2020, their perspective is shifting on some of the most significant questions facing humanity. A study from Nashville-based Lifeway Research finds, compared to a decade ago, U.S. adults today are more likely to regularly wonder about meaning and purpose in this life, but less likely to strongly believe finding a higher meaning and purpose is important. Americans are also more likely to contemplate whether they will go to Heaven when they die, but less likely to strongly believe there is more to life than this physical world.

"In the midst of such a discouraging season, fewer Americans are convinced there is something more to this life than their daily activities," said Scott McConnell, executive director of Lifeway Research. "A large majority still lean toward there being an ultimate purpose for a person's life, but instead of escaping the pandemic with thoughts of something greater, far fewer strongly hold such a view. A growing number of Americans have become open to the idea that this might be as good as it gets."

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Summer 2021 and Fall 2021 Information for New Students

Whether you or someone you know is a working adult looking to start or complete their college degree or a high school or transfer student wanting to find their college home, now is the time to make enrollment plans for Summer 2021 and Fall 2021 classes.

PACE Program

This program is for those of you with a full-time job that need a convenient and flexible college option. The next application deadline to enroll for the fall semester in the PACE Program is Friday, June 11. Classes begin July 6 and are offered in-class, online or in a hybrid option.

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, the Ministry Tuition Grant, student referral grant or the Veterans Tuition Grant. Visit cbc.edu/online to apply or learn what PACE can do for you. If you have questions, contact the Admissions Office at pace@cbc.edu or (501) 329-6873.

Fall 2021 Traditional Semester

For traditional high school students and college transfer students, now is the time to apply for Fall 2021, and scholarships are still available. To schedule an on-campus Personal Visit Experience, go to cbc.edu/visit. Students can also make a virtual campus visit or schedule a virtual meeting with a Personal Admissions Officer on that website.

Once new students complete the easy application process which includes applying for admission, submitting transcripts and test scores, and completing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), each student will receive a scholarship award package.

Begin the admissions process at cbc.edu/apply. Contact Admissions at admissions@cbc.edu or (501) 329-6873 with any questions.

Connect Day

Traditional students who have been accepted to CBC and are ready to register for classes can register to attend an upcoming Connect Day program. Connect Days are for incoming freshmen or transfer students, and all sessions this year are virtual. Connect Days prepare students and parents for success at CBC. Students can choose the date that best fits their schedule — April 27, May 25, June 15 or July 20. On Connect Day, students will receive a phone call from a member of our Student Orientation Staff (SOS). That SOS member, and current CBC student, will explain to each new student how to access the virtual Connect Day content and answer any questions prior to move-in day. To learn more about and register for Connect Day, visit cbc.edu/connect.

Summer 2021 Classes

Central Baptist College will offer online courses for two five-week sessions and one ten-week session for Summer 2021. The registration and payment deadline for the Summer 1 session is May 17, with classes beginning May 24 and ending June 24. The registration and payment deadline for the Summer 2 session is June 21, with classes beginning July 28 and ending July 29. The registration and payment deadline for the ten-week Summer 3 session is May 24, with classes beginning May 24 and ending July 29. Summer courses are available for both current and non-current CBC students. A schedule of courses, tuition and fees and payment information can be found at cbc.edu/summersessions.

CBC Announces 2021 Employee Awards

Editor's Note: We do not have enough space to share the photos that correspond with this article, but you can find them on our website at baptisttrumpet.com/cbcawards.

Central Baptist College honored faculty and staff for their service to the college during the annual Employee Appreciation and Awards Luncheon on April 12. This year, employees



Golf

• **Mountain Home, April 12** — Competing for the first time since March 16, CBC was on the course for the Battle of Big Creek at the Big Creek Golf and Country Club. Men's golf is currently in seventh place after the first round and women's golf sits in eighth place.

were able to pick up a boxed meal prepared by CBC Dining Services and the awards were presented online through a Zoom session. Below is a list of employees who were honored.

Years of Service Awards

These awards are presented to employees beginning in their third year of employment at CBC. They are then recognized every five years thereafter for the duration of an employee's time at CBC.

45 years — Dr. Joel Slayton, professor of Bible and Biblical Languages;

35 years — Suzanne Banister, assistant professor of music;

30 years — Jeff Riddle, division chair of Professional Studies, department chair of Physical Education and instructor of Health and Physical Education;

15 years — Dr. Virgil Porter, chair of the Bible Department and associate professor of Bible and Gwenda Williams, institutional research coordinator;

10 years — Dr. Martin Jameson, assistant professor of Bible;

5 years — Peter Acuna, assistant wrestling coach; Lynsey Brown, Café 52 manager; Dr. Blake Duffield, assistant professor of History; Tim Gunter, chair of the Fine Arts Department, professor of Music and director of Bands; Jordan Jones, head softball coach; Dr. Joshua Kwekel, associate professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology; Frank Lee, assistant professor of Kinesiology and assistant baseball coach; Cezar Terlea, head cross country coach;

3 years — Clint Galyean, Head Men's Basketball Coach and Blake Pittman, Personal Admissions Officer.

President's Awards

Six individuals were selected for the **President's Awards**. The recipients were:

• Angela Brantley, accountant — **President's Award for Professionalism** for "representing the College, both internally and externally, with integrity and high ethical standards which characterize a true professional."

• Sancy Faulk, vice president for Advancement — **President's Award for Excellence** for "her long-standing commitment to excellence and dedication to CBC and her willingness to accept various challenges with humility and unwavering loyalty to the mission and purpose of CBC."

• Jessica Faulkner, director of Alumni Engagement — **President's**



Dan Carson
Director

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Save the Date for SMWR2021

Plans are in the works for this year's Student Ministry Workers Retreat. Last year, we went virtual to accommodate all of the limitations of COVID-19. With dropping numbers and more and more people getting vaccinated, we are headed back to a live, in-person event for 2021. This one-day event will again be held at Central Baptist College in Conway on Sept. 11. There will be food, giveaways and connections.

In a world where we were pushed apart last year, what I am looking forward to this year is just getting to hang out with others that are seeking to impact the next generation for Jesus. Many of the details are still being determined, but I would encourage you to clear your calendar and plan on joining us.

The Student Ministry Matters Podcast

Have you given us a listen? The Student Ministry Matters podcast is a weekly conversation about "all things student ministry." Recently, we have interviewed Dr. Attebery of BMA Theological Seminary, Jason Prewitt of Daniel Springs Baptist Encampment, Dr. Ben South of Central Baptist Church of Conway and Chair 2 Leaders podcast and author Jake Tyson. Even if you aren't working with students on a regular basis, you may find some helpful tips and insight as Chris Vines, Zac Lee and I talk about youth ministry. You can find it at studentministrymatters.podbean.com or through most major podcasting apps.

SOAR 2021

Have you signed your group up for this year's SOAR conference for July 6-8? Let me encourage you to take a group this year. Chris Vines, Nick Jacobsen and the entire SOAR team are working to make this year's event a great one. Student Ministry Matters will be there to meet more of our student ministry workers. You can register through their website at soarconference.com. This year's theme is PAUSE.

Editor's note: See the article on page 1 by Chris Vines for more details about the SOAR conference.

Behind the Scenes Award for "her diligent work behind the scenes to ensure CBC's success."

• Tonya Hammontree, Director of Financial Aid — **President's Award for Customer Delight** for "creating an atmosphere in which Central Baptist College students, guests, and fellow employees feel welcome, comfortable, and valued."

• Jordan Jones, head softball coach — **President's Award for Outstanding Achievement** for "her outstanding success in softball recruiting and coaching."

• Rachel Whittingham, Learning Resources Division chair and Story Library director — **President's Award for Teamwork** for "her exemplary leadership and outstanding performance and dedication to teamwork among peers and students."

Other Awards

CBC presents two awards each year that are based on guiding principles found in the book, *The Fred Factor*. All employees are given this book as part of their orientation process upon initial hire.

The C.A.R.E. (Creating a Rare Experience) Award was presented to Dr. Elizabeth Gomez, Natural and Health Sciences Division chair and professor of Chemistry, for her work in benefitting the employees, students

and visitors of CBC.

The Fred Award was presented to Byron Baker, Physical Plant director, for embodying the four principles *The Fred Factor* which are making a difference each day, having a heart for people, changing ordinary moments into memorable ones and leading by example.

The **2021 Outstanding Faculty Awards** were presented by Dr. Gary McAllister, vice president for Academic Affairs. The Outstanding Faculty Awards recognize excellence and honor faculty who have made important contributions to their disciplines, department, and institution. The **Outstanding Faculty Award** was presented to Amber Strain, assistant professor of Mathematics. The **Outstanding Faculty Leadership Award** was presented to Rachel Whittingham, Learning Resources Division chair and Story Library director.

The **2021 Employee of the Year** award was also announced. Nominated by letter or e-mail to the president, the employee was required to meet the following criteria: loyalty to the institution, demonstration of a good work ethic, positive attitude toward fellow workers and students and professionalism. The **2021 Employee of the Year** award was presented to Marieca Ashworth, Student Services coordinator.



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healthychurchpodcast.com • healthychurchsolutions.org (coming soon)



STUDENTS

(Continued From Page 1)

major at Central Baptist College and is from Bossier City, La. He is a member of the CBC Golf team and Simple Church of Shreveport, La. Daniel Hopp is also a senior accounting major at CBC and is from Conway. Hopp is currently the Operational Accountant at Tacos for Life and is a member of Antioch Baptist Church. Both Ryan and Hopp will graduate next month.

About the Arkansas Governor's Cup Competition: According to their website, "the Governor's Cup is designed to increase student appreciation for the challenges that come with developing a viable business offering. Through a real-world and rigorous competitive process, the Governor's Cup recognizes those students best able to articulate a plan that addresses these challenges. Competitors learn about the new venture creation process through their team's efforts, their work with faculty and the development of written plans and oral presentations to judges."

person the way you would want to be treated.

Dr. Henry Cloud reminds us to "Prayerfully examine your confrontation. Discern if it is a time to confront or a time to let it go. Is it an issue of preference or an issue of commandment? Choose your battles wisely (Prov. 19:11)." It is interesting that he and Maxwell both stress the importance of avoiding sarcasm and the use of absolute words like "always" and "never." Dr. Cloud states, "Confrontation can be a positive situation, a chance to help and show you care for others. If you do it with respect and with the other person's best interests at heart, it can be an opportunity for growth."

Dr. Cloud continues, "Be patient and stay in control of your emotions (Prov. 15:1). Give the person a clear game plan to fix the problem. Do what you can to help them. If necessary, be willing to seek input and assistance from others as appropriate. Finally, above all, seek to confront as Jesus would. Pray and ask the Lord to accompany you and give you the words to speak." Romans 13:8 says, "Do not owe anyone anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law."

Make sure you follow the Biblical example of Matt. 18:15-16, then check out a few resources on thinking through how you will lovingly confront. The two quoted in this article are Dr. Henry Cloud's *Care Enough to Confront: Step by Step Guide to Positive Confrontation* and John Maxwell's blog, *The Ten Commandments of Confrontation*.



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Ministry Misconceptions

I was just thinking — there are many misconceptions about ministry in the local church. The foremost of those is that ministry is performed by pastors and staff — whether associate pastors, worship leaders, youth pastors or missions pastors.

The truth is that every member of the local church is a minister for the cause of Christ. Each believer in Christ is, at the moment of salvation, not only indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but gifted by that same Spirit. All believers have spiritual gifts, and some have more than others.

A misconception of many is that the church hires people to do the work of ministry, but those ministers are actually to be encouragers and equippers of the church members to utilize the gifts which the Holy Spirit has given them. "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-13).

I have often written in this column that I have a two-word definition for ministry — **meeting needs**. As one who has been gifted by the Holy Spirit with certain spiritual gifts, you are to utilize those gifts to meet the needs of both believers and unbelievers. If one has the gift of evangelism, he is to meet the need of the unbeliever by introducing him to the gospel and how to be saved. If another has the gift of mercy, he or she is to meet the needs of those who are dealing the heartaches, difficulties and other aspects of life that encumber their spiritual lives. If one has the gift of encouragement, he should use that as a ministry to meet the needs of those who are downtrodden, disheartened and discouraged and to build them up through love.

There are multiple lists of spiritual gifts in the New Testament (Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4 and other miscellaneous passages). Each gift has its particular purpose in the work of building up the local church to minister in the community. Utilizing our spiritual gifts is an evidence of maturing as believers and as ministers in the body of Christ. No gift is non-essential, and the Holy Spirit never makes mistakes. When He gifted us, He knew where we would be in our daily lives and exactly what we would need to do our part in the ministry of the church.

Another misconception is that the only spiritual gifts existing now are faith, hope and love, but those are the means by which a believer ministers. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Without hope, there is no impetus to meet needs. Without love, the believer is only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal — a lot of noise but no ministry. Paul said it this way, "Love never fails" (I Cor. 13:8).

Be certain that you are important to the ministry of your church. The apostle Paul wrote, "But in fact God has arranged the parts of the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be" (I Cor. 12:18). Note that it is God who has done this — not the pastor, not a teacher — but God Himself via the Holy Spirit who indwells you.

Paul further wrote, "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!' On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor" (I Cor. 12:23).

So you see, you are important to the work of ministry in your church. That person who is hurting may need you to show mercy, if one of your gifts is mercy. If you have the gift of teaching, use that gift to impart the Word of God to those who need to learn, to grow spiritually and to be able to use their gifts as they mature in Christ.

Paul emphasized that not all are apostles, prophets or teachers. Just think, if everyone were a teacher, who would be the learners? The Holy Spirit has gifted you, a believer in Jesus Christ, to do the work of meeting needs through your church. Give of your best to the Master.

Spotlight on Missions

is a column that highlights the ministries of our BMA missionaries. Send 300-400 words as a Word document to editor@baptisttrumpet.com. If you include a photo, please make sure it is full size & in jpeg format.

Help us get the word out about your ministry to our over 8000 subscribers!

Lovingly Confront

In an interview with the senior leader of a mega-church, who planted the congregation and then pastored it, he was asked what was different about today and when the church began 30 years ago. He stated that when they started, if someone had an issue with you, they would come into your office, sit down, look you in the eye and discuss the disagreement with you face-to-face. Today you find out about it through social media. The times certainly have changed, and in this particular area, not for the better. Technology has given the opportunity for someone to hide behind a screen and attack anyone and anything they choose.

Some have taken the statement "touch not God's anointed" out of context to mean that you should never confront God's leaders, confront error or even question less than Scriptural practices. Others have forgotten that there is a biblical way to approach elders and I Timothy 5 clearly states how to do that.

Everyone needs accountability — let me say that again, everyone! Accountability does not guarantee there will never be challenges or problems, but no accountability pretty much guarantees there will be. So biblical confrontation is important and necessary but, most importantly, it must be motivated by love.

Jesus was asked, "What is the greatest commandment?" His response was basically, "Well, actually there are two!" He tells us to love God and to love others. He does not divide the two, nor does He make provision for a dichotomy between them. Jesus makes it clear that if you truly love God, you will love others also. Yet, we no longer measure our love for God by how well we love others. There is no wiggle room in this because, scripturally, the core metric of true spiritual maturity is how well you love. How well do you love God and how well do you love others? Why is such a shallow love allowed to go unchallenged?

No matter how many Bible verses you have memorized or how well you

can teach the Scriptures, if you do not demonstrate love, it is all "a tinkling cymbal" and is nothing. In *Until Unity*, Francis Chan says, "We need to stop thinking that our primary duty toward our fellow believers is to critique them. It's not! Our primary duty is to love them." This is not a call to sweep error under the rug or to look the other way when it comes to truth, but it is a plea for us to practice the same grace we desire for others to show us. If you don't really love people deeply, it could be that you have never experienced the love of Christ deeply.

Hold on though, because Jesus goes totally radical in Matt. 5:43-45 by taking love to another level. He stated that what really sets a believer apart as spiritually mature is not only loving God and loving others but also your ability to love your enemies.

It has been well said that outrage is not a strategy. Are you willing to hold to the biblical expectation of not only loving one another but also loving those you think are your enemies? Are you willing to show them respect and have enough integrity to confront them face-to-face if at all possible? The biblical example is that you are to speak the truth in love.

Do not be quick to criticize, but rather be quick to encourage those with whom you may disagree. Always confront in private when possible and handle the conflict at the lowest level possible. Do not stir things up just to stir them up. Remember how patient others were with you and be willing to give the benefit of the doubt.

John Maxwell has developed the *Ten Commandments of Confrontation* where number six says, "Thou shalt avoid sarcasm (especially in an email or text)." This is good advice, and he states the importance of treating the



Arkansas Bans Gender Transition Procedures for Minors

On April 6, Arkansas became the first U.S. state to prohibit doctors from providing gender transition procedures for children. The legislation, known as the Arkansas Save Adolescents from Experimentation (SAFE) Act, prohibits any physician or other healthcare professional from providing gender transition procedures to any person under the age of 18. Additionally, it prohibits any public funds from being given directly or indirectly to any doctor, hospital, or other entity that provides gender transition services for minors.

In March, the bill passed the state House by a vote of 70-22 and was approved in the state Senate by a vote of 28-7. Republican Gov. Asa Hutchinson vetoed the legislation, saying, "This was one step way too far, and I couldn't abide by it." On April 6, the state's Republican-controlled legislature voted to override the veto.

The primary effect of the law is that it prevents healthcare providers from giving puberty-blocking drugs and cross-sex hormones to minors. Puberty-blocking drugs are used to delay the onset or progression of puberty in children who experience distress at identifying with their biological sex. Cross-sex hormones refer to testosterone or other androgens given to biological females in amounts that are larger or more potent than would normally occur naturally in healthy biological females or to estrogen given to biological males in amounts that are larger or more potent than would normally occur naturally in healthy biological sex males.

The legislation does not prohibit medical procedures to persons born with a medically verifiable disorder of sex development, including a person with external biological sex characteristics that are ambiguous. (baptistpress.com)

House Public Health Committee Advances End-of-Life Legislation

On April 8, the House Public Health Committee passed two bills weakening the state's end-of-life laws. Among other things, H.B. 1685 makes it easier to deny nutrition and hydration to a dying person, and H.B. 1686 weakens Arkansas law about advance directives and Physician Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment forms. Both bills were amended in committee. However, the changes to the bills still fail to address all of the problems with H.B. 1685 and H.B. 1686. The bills now go to the entire Arkansas House of Representatives for consideration. (familycouncil.org)

House Public Health Committee Passes Two Pro-Life Bills

On April 8, the House Public Health Committee passed two pro-life

bills. The first was S.B. 463. This bill by Sen. Blake Johnson (R/Corning) and Rep. Tony Furman (R/Benton) requires the State of Arkansas to report abortion data to the federal Centers for Disease Control. It also tightens Arkansas law concerning abortion facility inspections, and it requires abortionists to file certain documentation when the woman is a victim of rape or incest.

The second was S.B. 527. This bill by Sen. Ben Gilmore (R/Crossett) and Rep. Mary Bentley (R/Perryville) requires abortion facilities to have transfer agreements with hospitals, and it fixes a flawed definition in a pro-life law passed in 2019.

Both bills passed with solid support from pro-life legislators. Planned Parenthood has issued statements opposing each of these measures. S.B. 527 and S.B. 463 now go to the entire Arkansas House of Representatives for consideration. (familycouncil.org)

Christian Colleges Fight Lawsuit

Alliance Defending Freedom attorneys representing three Christian post-secondary schools asked a federal district court on April 9 to allow them to intervene against a lawsuit that seeks to strip all students at private religious colleges of federal financial aid unless their schools renounce core religious beliefs. The suit, filed by a recently formed LGBT activist group on behalf of some current and former students, intends to prevent any students from using tuition grants, student loans and any other federal financial assistance at schools that operate according to Christian beliefs on sexuality.

The three schools — Corban University, William Jessup University and Phoenix Seminary — are asking the court to allow them to defend the relevant provisions of Title IX, the federal law that is under attack. Among other things, Title IX allows students to use federal financial aid at private religious schools that operate according to their beliefs. (adfmedia.org)

Campus Groups Win in Court

Federal courts have recently delivered victories to student faith groups that were kicked off state university campuses for requiring their leaders to be Christians. Wayne State University in Detroit violated the First Amendment rights of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship by revoking its status as a religious student organization, a federal judge in Michigan said in an April 5 opinion.

On March 22, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Louis ruled administrators at the University of Iowa were personally liable for violating the free speech and expressive-association rights of Business Leaders in Christ (BLinC).

The court opinions are the latest

regarding the clash between the rights of campus religious groups to limit leadership to those students who affirm their beliefs and the anti-discrimination policies of universities. In recent years, schools such as Vanderbilt University and California State University have removed religious groups from official recognition because of their faith-based requirements for leaders.

In his opinion, federal judge Robert Cleland said Wayne State's Board of Governors and two of its administrators violated InterVarsity's "rights to internal management, free speech, freedom of association, freedom of assembly," as well as the free exercise of religion and establishment of religion clauses of the First Amendment. "The ability of religious groups to select leaders who in fact agree with the religion is exactly what the First Amendment protects," Cleland wrote in his 83-page opinion. "No religious group can constitutionally be made an outsider, excluded from equal access to public or university life, simply because it insists on religious leaders who believe in its cause." Cleland ruled the two Wayne State administrators who are defendants were liable for all of InterVarsity's claims except the one regarding freedom of assembly.

InterVarsity, which has been at Wayne State for 75 years, welcomes all students as members but limits its leaders to those who affirm its statement of faith. When InterVarsity sued Wayne State in 2018, the school restored it as an official student organization but did not revise its non-discrimination policy and continued to say the group is in violation.

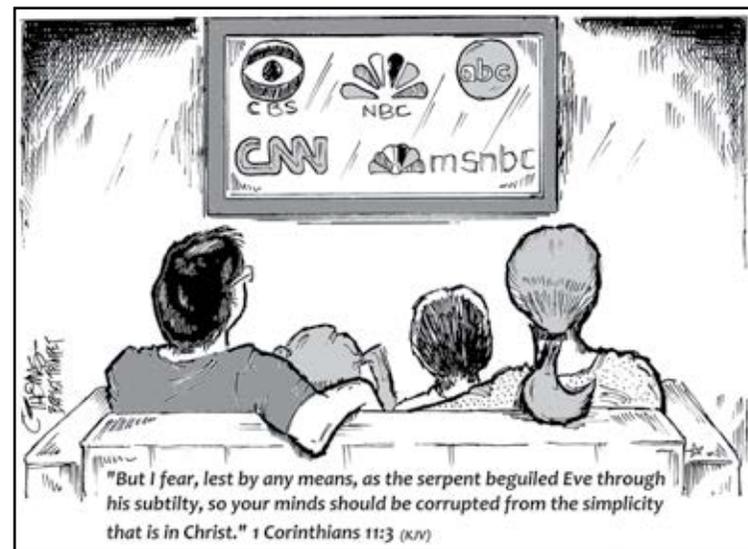
In the Eighth Circuit case, the University of Iowa had not challenged a federal judge's ruling that the school violated BLinC's rights under the First Amendment to free exercise of religion, free speech and expressive association. Instead, BLinC appealed the lower court's finding that the university's administrators qualified for immunity from those violations.

In its ruling, a three-judge panel of the Eighth Circuit held the administrators were personally responsible regarding the free exercise and expressive association violations but not the free-exercise claim. Federal judge Stephanie Rose had ruled in separate cases that the university violated the First Amendment rights of BLinC and InterVarsity. (baptistpress.com)

Supreme Court Sides with Center For American Liberty

The Supreme Court of the United States ruled 5-to-4 with the Center for American Liberty in the case Ritesh Tandon, Et Al v. Governor Gavin Newsom on April 9, lifting restrictions on in-home religious gatherings, marking the third Supreme Court victory for the Center for American Liberty against Gov. Newsom's unconstitutional COVID-19 pandemic shelter-in-place orders.

On Oct. 13, 2020, the Center for American Liberty, on behalf of plain-



tiffs Ritesh Tandon, Pastor Jeremy Wong, Karen Busch, Terry and Carolyn Gannon, Connie Richards, Julie Evarkiou, Dhruv Khanna, Frances Beaudet, and Maya Mansour, in coordination with Eimer Stahl, LLP, sued California Governor Gavin Newsom and Santa Clara County Executive Jeffrey Smith, challenging unconstitutional restrictions on religious and political gatherings.

On April 12, California Governor Gavin Newsom lifted location and capacity limits on places of worship as a result of the Supreme Court of the United States, ruling five times that his orders were unconstitutional. (libertycenter.org)

Kentucky Abortion Amendment To Be on November 2022 Ballot

Kentucky Secretary of State Michael Adams signed House Bill 91, a proposed constitutional amendment

on abortion, during a ceremony attended by pro-life advocates at the Kentucky State Capitol on Wednesday (April 7). The language of the legislation is simple: "To protect human life, nothing in this Constitution shall be construed to secure or protect a right to abortion or require the funding of abortion." Rep. Joseph Fischer, the Republican sponsor of HB 91, called it a historic occasion. Prior to signing the bill, Adams said, "One of the perks of my jobs as secretary of state under the constitution, is I get the constitutional amendments. They don't go to the governor, they come to me. I get to sign them. I've already signed a couple, but I take no more pleasure than signing this one, especially."

The measure will not appear on the ballot until the general election in November 2022, because there are no elections this year in Kentucky. (baptistpress.com)

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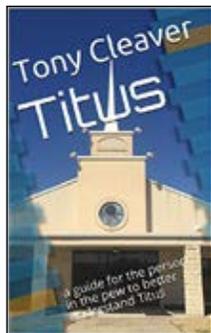


Book Review

A Great Study for the “Good Reader”

By Jeff Herring, Executive Editor

I was pleased to receive a copy of this study on the book of Titus by Dr. Tony Cleaver. He states in the dedication of the book that the purpose of writing the book is “so that every man, woman, boy and girl who engages in the worship services at their respective church can better understand Paul’s letter to Titus.” He goes on to explain that he wanted to make it understandable for the “person in the pew” in every church — or as he addresses them in the study, “Good Reader.”



Dr. Cleaver provides a great introduction to the book and also the basis for how the study of this book will be approached — that the letter is “both descriptive for its day” and also “prescriptive for our day.” After the introduction, there are a couple of chapters dealing with Titus as found in Paul’s writings and of how this book may fit into the timeline of Paul’s life. He then begins a verse-by-verse study of Titus, including commentary and suggested application for your life.

I believe this book is successful in its stated purpose of being understandable for every “person in the pew.” It would also be a great resource for a small group study, leadership development or even a Sunday School class teacher. While the book is geared to the everyday reader, Dr. Cleaver also includes some specific notes and applications to pastors. I would recommend this study for every student of God’s Word who desires to have a better understanding of the book of Titus.

The study is currently available at cutt.ly/titus. You may also be interested in some of Dr. Cleaver’s other books available there as well.



Arkansas GMA Annual Meeting

By Tori Sinsley

Corresponding Secretary

The Arkansas GMA is having a virtual meeting on Saturday, April 24. Join us on Facebook Live at 10 a.m. that morning. In the afternoon, we will have videos and fun activities for the girls to do with their GMA groups at their churches.

Our theme for this meeting is “Go,” and the theme verses are Matt. 28:19-20. The project for this meeting is “Piece of Hope” in Nicaragua with Missionary Paige Ferrel Sanchez.

Our Facebook page is Arkansas State GMA. We would love for you to join us. If you cannot join the meeting, please contact State Promoter Lisa Rust at lisarrust@gmail.com to receive a DVD with our meeting on it. We hope to see you there on Saturday, April 24 at 10 a.m.!



VBS Column to Begin

We will begin running the Vacation Bible School listings in the April 28 issue of the *Baptist Trumpet*, and will continue until the last VBS takes place. To include your church’s VBS (as soon as your dates are set), just send the following information to editor@baptisttrumpet.com or P.O. Box 192208, Little Rock, Ark. 72219.

The information should include the name and location of your church, VBS beginning and ending dates, starting and ending times and the VBS program theme.

The listing will appear each week on our website (baptisttrumpet.com) and will appear in the printed *Trumpet* as space is available. Due to limited space, we will not be able to include kick-off and closing information, but will be glad to list a telephone number for readers to call for more information.

VBS results (limited to average attendance, number of professions of faith and offerings collected — amount and for what ministry) will be gladly listed in the “Reports from the Churches” column.

If you’d like to send a photo to be included in a VBS collage that will appear in the Sept. 15 issue, send it no later than Sept. 6 to editor@baptisttrumpet.com. All photos must be sent full size, in color and in a jpeg format. We will not be able to include out-of-focus snapshots since they would be even fuzzier when printed on newspaper.

Using the right tools to interpret the Bible

“Preaching through our doctrinal statement... Got my Greek New Testament out and read (the supporting passage) with ease. It was very edifying listening to the Lord speak through the original text. It’s more emphatic... I am thankful God gave me the opportunity to attend seminary and be taught by our professors. The tools I learned there are still a blessing and useful now... Keep at it.”

– Bro. Jake Vandenberg (MDiv 2007)



It was a blessing to receive Bro. Jake’s message recently. A young pastor is using serious tools to help our people understand the beliefs and practices upon which our association was founded. Bro. Jake is not alone in his appreciation of how your seminary has helped him to pastor his church. Just yesterday, I received a call from one of our former students to say that he was leading his church in Mississippi to begin supporting the Seminary monthly. We have even had a Southern Baptist church in Texas begin regular support of \$100 monthly. This church was unhappy with the liberal trajectory of some of the SBC seminaries. (Another SBC church began monthly support a few years ago.)

Anyone in the United States can easily observe that the trend toward liberalism in the country has accelerated and deepened lately. Many denominations have begun to follow suit. Rest assured the BMA Theological Seminary will hold to the inerrancy and sufficiency of the Scriptures. These principles lead us to teach that individual, autonomous churches are God’s means of advancing His Kingdom. Also, the biblical pattern is for these Baptist churches to work together in an associational manner. To my knowledge, no other accredited seminary in the United States teaches this except your BMA Seminary.

Please remember to have special prayer at your church on Seminary Sunday, May 16, 2021. Also, please plan to receive a special offering that Sunday for scholarships. These scholarships are used to help equip qualified men and missionaries with the same tools and beliefs that Bro. Jake received at BMA Seminary.

In His Service,



Dr. Charley Holmes
President



Dr. Philip Attebery
Dean



P.S. Remember that in these days of very low CD rates, BMA Seminary annuity rates are very attractive. As an example, a 36 month certificate of deposit with a balance of \$10,000 is currently earning .50% APY. Compare this with the current Charitable Gift Annuity rate for a 75-year old (single-life) at 5.4%.

Arkansas Faith And Ethics Council



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Questions Regarding Hate Crimes?

There has been no shortage of discussion and controversy surrounding the fact that Arkansas has yet to enact a hate crimes law. Supporters of a hate crimes law are quick to point out that ours is only one of three states without some version of this law. Opponents point to data to try to prove that hate crime laws aren't effective in reducing violent crimes and only serve as a means of virtue-signaling.

The constant polemics has created mostly confusion and a murky mess. A recent development in the form of a newly filed bill has shaken things up a bit. The charges and counter charges are flying again. What is one to believe about the relative merits of the arguments for and against hate crimes?

In this article, it is my intention to clear the air as much as possible. In doing so, I am not advocating for or against hate crimes in general or on any bill specifically. My purpose is to try and explain at least the fundamentals of the issue without getting too far in the weeds. I believe that with a basic understanding of the issues at hand, folks can make up their own minds about the wisdom of rejecting or enacting a hate crimes law. And if one is to be enacted, what should that law look like?

Even before the current legislative session began in January, there were two so-called "hate crimes" bills filed—Senate Bill 3 (SB3) and House Bill 1020 (HB1020). These were your standard, run-of-the-mill hate crimes measures.

Not unlike the various hate crimes bills proposed in previous sessions of the state's general assembly, these two bills reeled off a list of groups to receive preferential treatment by allowing an enhanced or longer prison sentence for a perpetrator who chose a member of one of those groups as a victim based on apparent animosity for that group.

Among those favored classes listed you would find groups based on characteristics such as race, color, religion, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin and sex. In later iterations, hate crimes bills would add groups characterized by gender identity, sexual orientation, disability and service in the armed forces.

In some three months since this legislative session began, there has been a lot of talk, but no action taken on SB3 and HB1020. The opposition to those bills within and without the general assembly was perceived to be so insurmountable that any efforts to push the bills forward would have been futile.

I am among those who in past sessions have opposed hate crimes measures. However, my opposition was

not based primarily on my standing as a leader of a faith-based group. It had much more to do with my grounding as an attorney and my experiences prosecuting criminal cases. There are others who voiced the same concerns.

Within the context of American law and criminal jurisprudence there are near-sacrosanct principles. Among those principles are "equal protection of the law" and "due process of law." Legal scholars and traditionalists have admonished us to hold onto those venerable constitutional tenets and not let them become weakened.

For those reasons, many took exception to the way previous hate crimes proposals listed specific groups for which the laws would bestow deferential treatment. Invariably, when you enumerate a list of favored groups, you omit all others. When you do so, you create two classes of people with differentiated treatment — one favored and one not — and that is decidedly un-American.

A new bill, Senate Bill 622 (SB622), was filed a few days ago. It has some ear markings of hate crimes legislation; however, there are those who reject calling it a hate crimes bill due to the distinctions between it and typical hate crimes laws.

The major distinction between the latest proposal and SB3 and HB1020 (and all the other hate crime bills that have come before them) is that there is no listing of specific groups in SB622. Everyone across the board can be treated equally.

SB622 works essentially as follows. If I am a victim of a violent crime and the evidence at trial proves the perpetrator targeted me due to my membership in a "recognizable and identifiable group or class who share mental, physical, biological, cultural, political or religious beliefs or characteristics," then he must serve at least 80% of the prison sentence imposed on him before he becomes eligible for parole.

SB622 has no listing of specific classes of people; therefore, no first-class citizens and no second-class citizens recognized in the law. Everyone treated the same — no more and no less equal protection — and no more and no less due process. That is a much more equal approach.

A common apprehension of hate crime laws or laws similar to hate crimes such as SB622 involves the potential that the law or its enforcement could revert to the point where speech and thought could be crimi-

nized. The drafters of SB622 were sensitive to this fear and attempted to allay such concerns by including the following language in the bill. "This section does not interfere with the exercise of rights protected by the United States Constitution or the Arkansas Constitution, including without limitation the right of clergy to express religious beliefs during a religious service or ceremony..."

Under a literal interpretation of SB622 and obvious inferences that can reasonably be drawn from it, the same rights would be enjoyed by anyone expressing beliefs or views that grow out of their experiences and shared characteristics with others in their respective group. An example could be a labor union organizer encouraging the employees of a particular business entity to form a union or join an existing union as a local.

While there are many who are wary of a hate crimes law or a proposal such as SB622, there is also an increasing willingness to give the matter serious consideration. The conventional wisdom has been and continues to be that Arkansas will have a hate crimes bill or a version of one before this session ends, and that SB622 may be as good a compromise as can be had.

You can choose for yourself. And if you would like to try and influence your state senator and representative regarding your position on this issue, there are a number of ways you can do that. You can send a text or email to them. Also, you can call the senate's and house of representatives' switchboards and leave a message for your representatives. They should hear from you about this. You are one of their constituents and they are public servants.

If you have questions or need more information about any of this, you may contact us at (501) 837-1688 or llp@ArFaith.org.

Editor's Note: As of April 12, the House and Senate have approved SB622 and it is awaiting the signature of Governor Asa Hutchinson to become law.



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

New Hope Missionary Baptist Church in Wynne is seeking a full-time pastor. For more information, call Britt Johnson at (870) 588-1667 or Scott McClintock at (870) 208-3243.



Arkansas Extends State Income Tax Filing Deadline

Attorney General Leslie Rutledge is issuing a notification to Arkansans that the deadline for filing state individual income tax has been extended until May 17 to coincide with the extended federal deadline.

"This year, the date might have changed, but the responsibility remains — tax time has arrived," said AG Leslie Rutledge. "We have dealt with tough situations, heartache, and a difficult year, but I want Arkansans to know their options when safely filing their taxes."

AG Rutledge has provided these tips for Arkansans still working on filing their federal and state taxes this year:

- **Compare the prices and fees of multiple preparers.** Prices can vary significantly. Check the qualifications and reputation of the person handling your personal information. You are responsible for the information submitted to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
- **Make sure the preparer has a Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN) from the IRS.**
- **Make sure that your tax return shows your address and that your refund is direct deposited into your bank account.** Be wary of a tax return preparer who insists that you use his or her address and bank account. You may not get all that you are entitled to receive.

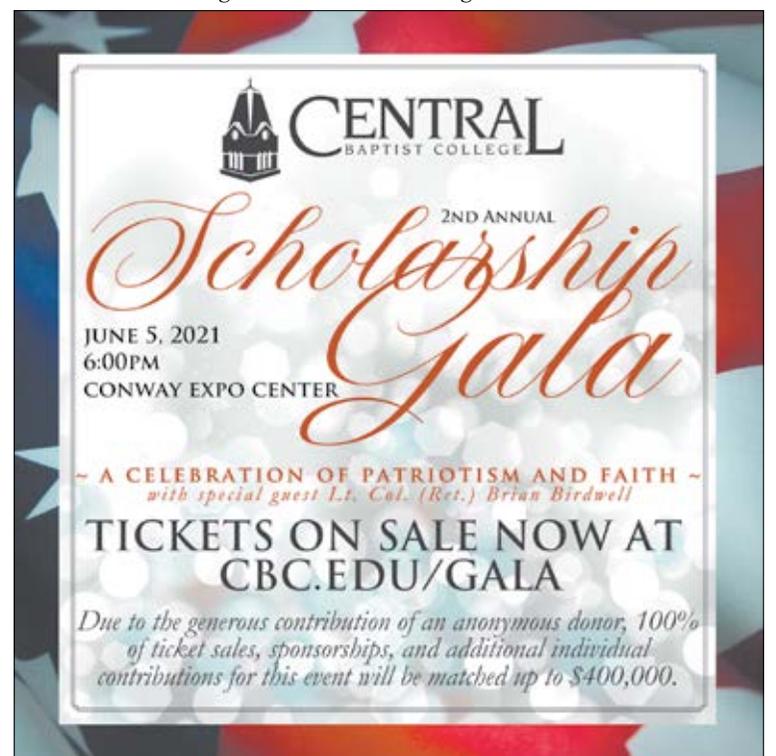
AARP Foundation Tax Aide program offers free assistance to Arkansas seniors filing their taxes online or by calling 888-OUR-AARP (888-687-2277).

Tax help is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week on IRS.gov.

Visit the IRS website to see if you qualify for free federal tax filing preparation. Information for filing state taxes can be found online on dfa.arkansas.gov/income-tax or by calling (501) 682-1100.

Governor Hutchinson issued a proclamation to announce that he had signed Executive Order 21-06, which grants the extension for filing an Arkansas tax return or payment until May 17.

For more information and tips to avoid scams and other consumer-related issues, contact the Arkansas Attorney General's Office at (800) 482-8982 or OAG@ArkansasAG.gov or visit ArkansasAG.gov.



Missionaries



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 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

Carrying the Load

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9).

I want to encourage every pastor, ministry worker, department leader and staff, church planter and future church planter that make up this association to stand strong under what I call the Load of **Purpose**. Anyone who is trying to follow the Lord's direction knows that you cannot encounter God and leave unchanged.

Even in, what seems in my lifetime, the worst of times, God continues to bless our association's efforts to win the lost and to lift up His name. He has given us pastors, teachers and missionaries that, against all odds, continue to make headway in areas of evangelism and discipleship.

If you are a worker in your church or in one of our departments, then you know what I mean when I talk about the weight that comes with purpose and, brothers and sisters, this purpose can be daunting at times. However, we have hope in knowing that God tells us He knows the plans that He thinks toward us. *"He has plans to prosper us and to see us to an expected end"* (Jer. 29:11).

I want to encourage you to bear up under this weight of ministry. Why? Because it is God's way of reminding us of the weight (importance) of our responsibility. You may feel like God has made a mistake in challenging you with so much responsibility, but He does so to get the most out of us. Just keep repeating this verse: *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ"* (Phil. 1:6). It is God's way of getting much out of us. Bearing up under the load of ministry can make a man entertain the idea of quitting and giving up on himself, his assignments, family, loved ones and friends, but may we claim the promise afforded us in Isaiah: *"Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fail; But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint"* (Isa. 30:40).

From Our Missionaries

Connection Point, Brookland: Chad White writes, "We had a good week here at Connection Point. Our Wednesday night groups were back on track, and we had a pretty good attendance despite the stormy weather."

"Saturday, our men held our Men's Breakfast. We enjoyed delicious food and great fellowship. We also heard a powerful devotional about unity, brotherhood and love. It was a great morning."

"Sunday, we enjoyed a good day. We had some folks out, but still enjoyed a good attendance and a great time of worship. We even had a new family visiting with us!"

"We have several exciting things coming up in the weeks ahead. We can hardly wait to see what God will do in and through these. Pray that we will be sensitive to His leadership and be able to clearly hear His voice."

The Mustard Seed, Cain: Jim Tollison writes, "We enjoyed another good week at the mission."

"Special guests are coming to the mission next Sunday. Eddie Jones' sister will be here to present special music. She is a very talented musician and singer. We are hoping to have several visitors from the community."

"Our concrete will be delivered this week for our walkway. It is going to

be a great addition to our facilities.

"Please continue to pray for the new folks we have been encouraging to make the mission home."

"Thanks so much for your prayers and support."

Misión Creciendo en Cristo (Growing in Christ), North Little Rock: Juan Carlos Posadas writes, "The hot food distribution program ended last Thursday, but we were informed of an extension for four more weeks, so we will continue to visit homes on Tuesdays and Thursdays, delivering 100 dinners every day."

"We thank God for continuing to open doors for this mission. Our congregation is going through a difficult time. In the health area, we have some members who are sick and several family members as well. We are believing that God will use these circumstances to strengthen our faith and teach us to depend more on Him. Help us to pray for the health of the brothers and their families, especially so that those who do not know Christ as their Lord and Savior may have the opportunity to know Him."

"This weekend, we spoke to young men about prudence, integrity, seriousness and wholesome words based on Titus 2:6-8, so that our adversary has no valid argument against God's church. I ask God to grant you a blessed week."

Grace, Green Forest: Carter Pearce writes, "Spring has arrived in the Ozarks! With spring comes vacations, canoeing/kayaking, motorcycle rides and traveling to our area to enjoy God's beauty. The downside to that is that the young Christians who worship with us also use Sundays to enjoy outdoor hobbies. One challenge all ministries face is helping people understand the need to worship together."

"While it is certainly true that we can, and should, worship God at all times and wherever we are, many in our society believe that thinking about God and even thanking Him for natural beauty are equivalent to corporate worship. Even people who enjoy attending services and being part of a church often fail to place the proper importance on putting God first in their lives."

"When I reported at the state association meeting last November that 2020 wasn't a bad year, many people thought I was joking. As it turns out, 2021 is proving to be a much bigger challenge to our ministry. Please pray with us that God will lead us in the right direction as we strive to be what God wants us to be in Carroll County."

Ebenezer, West Little Rock: Ruben Isturiz writes, "It was a hectic week. One of our sisters, who is a nurse had an accident on the highway. Four cars were involved, but the sister saw the hand of God in how He protected her from a major tragedy. When I heard her testimony, I was amazed at how great our God is."

"Last Sunday, a young man from Guatemala attended. Those of the Berean Group (cell) of Baseline have been praying for him, and it was a blessing to see him worship in the temple in Chenal for the first time. Those of the Berean Group in Chenal continue to advance in the study of the Word of God. In this new stage, there is a new member of the group — Victor Martinez."

"Some of you are involved in the ministry of Baseball Chapel. Last year, we had no ministry due to the pandemic. This year our season will be shorter. We will start in May. We do not know all the measures that will be taken this year. Pray that God will guide us in how to develop the ministry this season. Thank God, Kory and I have already gotten the first dose of vaccine. Thanks for your prayers. To God be the glory!"

Faith Chapel, Flippin: Johnny Shew writes, "We had a great day yesterday at Highland Hills! Yes, you read that right. Paul Vincent invited Karen and

UPCOMING EVENTS

Music On The Lawn, April 25, 6 p.m.; presented by the Fine Arts Department; Central Baptist College, Conway.

Gospel Singing, May 1, 5:00 p.m. meal; 6:00 p.m. singing; Dwayne Williams, singer; Faustina, Hampton.

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.

BMACamp, June 21-24; Chis Vines, camp speaker, Doug Mican, worship leader; Budd Creek Camp, Greers Ferry.

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

SOAR 2021, July 6-8; Hilton Anatole, Dallas, Texas; visit 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.

HOMEcomings

Union, Rosston, May 23, 10:30 a.m., lunch 12:00 p.m.; Joe Brown, pastor.

Bodcaw #1, Bodcaw, July 25, 10:30 a.m., John Ed Dorman (devotional); Taylor Bruce (message); potluck lunch and singing; Lane Garner, pastor.

Revivals

Landmark, England, April 18-21, 10:45 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. Sunday; 7:00 p.m. Mon.-Wed.; Jim Moss, evangelist; David Inzer, pastor.

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

Faustina, Hampton, May 2-5; 11:00

me to come share about Faith Chapel Mission with our grandmother church.

"In case you didn't know, Temple in Jonesboro sent Paul White (our State Missions director) to Highland to plant Highland Hills Baptist Church, then Highland Hills sent Hershel Conley to Mountain Home to plant The Bridge Baptist Church, and The Bridge sent Karen and me to Flippin to plant Faith Chapel Baptist Church, and we are doing so with the intention of sending our own missionary to wherever God calls him to plant another church. This is the biblical model for how our Lord builds His church, and we are simply trying to stay faithful to that."

"While we were gone, Scott Small, Stone Ridge Baptist Camp Director, came and filled in for me and shared this year's camp opportunities and a great message with our folks."

"What a wonderful association we belong to — working together to share the gospel. Praise God, we are so happy to be a part of it! Thank You all for your prayers! Please continue."

Not Alone, Springdale: Clinton Morris writes, "My wife and all our kids have had the stomach bug and

Deaths

Morgan Gill, 27 of Sheridan, passed away April 9. He was a member of Immanuel Baptist Church.

Frances L. "Fran" Howard, 75 of White Hall, passed away April 7. She was a member of Calvary Baptist Church.

Dawn Ann Threewit, 79 of Mountain Home, passed away April 3. She was a member of The Bridge Baptist Church.

James "Jim" L. Henderson, 78 of Mabelvale, passed away March 31. He was a member of Park Place Baptist Church in Bryant.



Bodcaw #1, Bodcaw added one by statement; Lane Garner, pastor.

Chapel Hill, New Edinburg gained two new members; Dwayne Ashcraft, pastor.

Immanuel, Greenbrier received two by letter; Tony Crocker, pastor.

Grace, Russellville rejoices over one by baptism; Roger Pearce, pastor.

Oak Grove, Jonesboro welcomed two by letter; Wynndel King, pastor.

Shady Grove, Prescott reports one by baptism; Mike Puckett, pastor.

a.m. & 5:00 p.m. Sun.; 7:00 p.m. Mon. - Wed.; Dwayne Williams, evangelist.

Temple, Fordyce, May 9-12, 7 p.m.; Jim Moss, evangelist; Lance Hollis, pastor.

Union, Rosston, May 24-26, 7 p.m.; David Dillard, evangelist; Joe Brown, pastor.

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

Bodcaw #1, Bodcaw, Sept. 12-17, 7 p.m.; Jimmy Walker, evangelist; Lane Garner, pastor.

suffered miserably most of the week!

"I am working hard on the church's strategy and am looking forward to the three events we are planning through November. Pray that God will provide a place for us to do these events and that they will be well attended."

"I have been so encouraged the last few days by just how good God is. It never ceases to amaze me how He already has the answers in place to questions that I am just discovering. We have another member in our Core group, and we are looking to add a few more over the coming weeks — all things in God's timing and in God's leading."

"Pray for Cody, Manny and Brian. I have been meeting with them on Monday nights, and I am praying that they will understand the gospel, and that they will want to come to one of our Bible studies."

"I will be working on a website in the upcoming weeks, and we will be able to minister further to our community. We are also going to provide a list to churches and individuals looking to get involved in this church plant."

"If you would like information about getting involved, please reach out to me at notalonechurch@gmail.com."

PURPOSE (Continued From Page 1)

Finding Purpose

Most Americans (57%) say they wonder, “How can I find more meaning and purpose in my life?” at least monthly, with more than 1 in 5 saying they consider the question daily (21%) or weekly (21%). Few (6%) say they think about it yearly. Close to 1 in 4 (23%) say they never wonder about finding more meaning and purpose. Another 15% aren’t sure.

Compared to a 2011 Lifeway Research study, Americans today are more likely to regularly think about how they can find more meaning and purpose. A decade ago, 51% said they wonder about finding meaning and purpose at least monthly, with 18% saying they think about it daily and 19% saying weekly, 13% said they thought about that question yearly, and 28% said they never considered it.

“During COVID-19, many experiences, pleasures and metrics of success became irrelevant overnight,” said McConnell. “It is not surprising that more people thought about their purpose and what matters in life.” Most Americans say everyone’s life has a purpose and it’s important to them that they pursue their deeper purpose, but U.S. adults aren’t as sure about that as they were a decade ago.

Four in 5 Americans (81%) believe there is an ultimate purpose and plan for every person’s life. More than 2 in 3 Americans (68%) say a major priority in their life is finding their deeper

purpose. Almost 3 in 4 (73%) say it’s important that they pursue a higher purpose and meaning for their life.

Each of those percentages are similar to 2011. There has been a significant shift, however, from strong agreement to more hesitant agreement. Those who strongly agree with each statement dropped, while those who somewhat agree rose.

“Few Americans are ready to deny there is an ultimate purpose and plan for every person’s life,” said McConnell. “But more are stepping back from this driving their own pursuits. Life has become a more pessimistic pursuit, with fewer going all out for something better.”

As Americans consider higher meanings, most believe they have found it. Close to 3 in 5 (59%) say they have found a higher purpose and meaning for their life, with 28% disagreeing. Religiously unaffiliated Americans are the most likely to disagree (37%). Americans who belong to a religion other than Christianity are the most likely to agree (80%). Among Christians, the more often they attend church, the more likely they are to say they have found a higher purpose and meaning for their life. Half of those who attend less than once a month (51%) say they’ve found such meaning for their life, compared to 69% of those who attend one to three times a month and 76% of those who attend four times a month or more.

More Than This?

Close to half of Americans (45%) say they wonder, “If I were to die today, do I know for sure that I would go to Heaven?” More than a third (37%) say

they never think about that question, and 18% aren’t sure.

Compared to 2011, more Americans today say they wonder if they’ll go to Heaven daily (15% to 8%), and fewer say they never think about it (37% to 46%). More now also say they aren’t sure how often they consider the question than a decade ago (18% to 12%). Christians who attend worship services four times a month or more (46%) are as likely to say they never wonder about their eternal destination as the religiously unaffiliated (47%), but perhaps for different reasons. Those religiously nones, however, are more likely to say they never ponder if they will go to Heaven when they die than Protestants (37%) and Catholics (26%).

“The question of going to Heaven doesn’t cross the minds of people who don’t believe in Heaven and those who are completely certain they will go to Heaven,” said McConnell. “While the Bible teaches one can be certain a place is prepared for you in Heaven, nearly half of Americans pause each year, wondering if Heaven is waiting for them.”

Even if most Americans aren’t regularly contemplating their admittance to Heaven, the vast majority believe there is more to life than just what they can see. More than 4 in 5 U.S. adults (85%) believe there is more to life than the physical world and society. Few disagree (9%) or are not sure (6%). The total agreement percentages are similar to 2011, but there is significant movement away from certainty. In 2011, 67% strongly agreed, and 21% somewhat agreed. Today, 43% strongly agree, and 42% somewhat agree. In

SOAR

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for continuing SOAR and for striving to make it excel. This means that SOAR is not a “pop-up” conference that will only remain through a particular cultural issue. SOAR gathers annually because of the strong belief that teenagers need to see and know that they are part of something bigger. They need to know that God’s kingdom is expanding and that they are part of an amazing group of churches working together to spread the fame of Jesus Christ.

• **SOAR will always teach and preach God’s Word.** There will always be a temptation to shift commitments with what the current culture deems important. Falling into this temptation usually means abandoning what is most important for a lesser—but often more popular—issue or interest. God made it clear through the pen of Paul that “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17). SOAR is committed to faithfully proclaiming and teaching God’s Word.

• **SOAR believes in the local church.** God has lavished His grace upon the church. Christ died for His church. Christ commissioned the church to make disciples. The Holy Spirit empowers the church for His mission, and Christ promises to always be with His church. SOAR will always lead teenagers to love their church and never seek to replace it.

the latest study, Americans ages 18 to 34 and those 35 to 49 (87%) are more likely to say there is more to life than

• **SOAR challenges teenagers to live sold out, radical lives for King Jesus.** Don’t take this statement lightly. It is both serious and dangerous. SOAR does not intend to lead teenagers to drink lattes while reading inspirational, Christian quotes. That’s not radical, that’s easy. The intention of SOAR is to challenge teenagers to live counter-cultural lives by continually bowing down to the one true King. A radical life is one that consistently denies self and is available to follow Jesus wherever He leads. The disciples of Jesus had moments of leisure, but as they followed Him, they also came near to lepers and lashings. As Paul was instructing Timothy, he made it very clear that “all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (1 Tim. 3:12). SOAR wants the best for teenagers, but SOAR also believes that God’s best is not synonymous with America’s best. Christlike, radical living rarely coincides with relevant culture. Sold out lives for Christ and maxed out credit cards for stuff will never go together. SOAR will consistently challenge teenagers to live their lives for more.

SOAR exists to lead teenagers to learn God’s Word, love their church and live sold out, radical lives for Jesus. This year, we are very excited to gather with these intentions on July 6–8 in Dallas, Texas at the Hilton Anatole Hotel. We would love for you and your teenagers to join us!

For more information, visit soar-conference.com.

the physical world than those 65 and older (79%). The religiously unaffiliated are the most likely to disagree (20%).

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The banner features a photograph of a band performing on stage with a blue and purple lighting scheme. The text is overlaid on the image in white and teal colors.