



The Alabama Baptist

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Informing. Inspiring. Connecting.

INSIDE



Annual church giving, baptism report — Part 4
◆ Pages 6–7



2019 National Day of Prayer focuses on loving one another
◆ Page 9



Operation Revitalization pairs pastor, church in need of healing
◆ Page 13

To watch the videos from this week's issue, visit our YouTube channel "TAB Media."



Photo courtesy of Chris Mills

Gary Brittain, Baptist campus minister at Jacksonville State University, gives the missions charge at One Mission Students' annual Student Missions Commissioning Service held April 13 at Liberty Baptist Church, Chelsea.

Summer of service

Alabama college students commissioned for summer missions

By Carrie Brown McWhorter
The Alabama Baptist

More than 100 students were commissioned for summer missions at One Mission Students' annual Student Missions Commissioning Service held April 13 at Liberty Baptist Church, Chelsea.

"This service is a highlight

for me every year and this year was no exception," said Chris Mills, student missions mobilizer for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM). "I'm expecting great things as these students serve this summer."

Hundreds of family members and friends joined Baptist Campus Ministries (BCM) directors from around the state and other SBOM personnel for the service, which included music led by the Troy University BCM worship band.

Tim Cox, pastor of Liberty Baptist, brought the missions challenge to the students.

One by one the students introduced themselves and shared their destination. Some will serve June 8 during Crossover Birmingham, an annual event held each year in the host city of the Southern Baptist Convention. One team will serve in ministries of the Shelby Baptist Association.

Everywhere in between

Other teams and individuals will serve from a week to the entire summer in the U.S. — from Georgia to Alaska, Hawaii, and everywhere in between. And still others will travel to countries across the globe, some of which

are among the most difficult places in the world to be a follower of Christ.

As part of missions prep weekend, which precedes the commissioning service, students participate in security training and learn tips for protecting themselves while they are traveling. They also learn various ways to engage others with the gospel and how to work safely with children, Mills said.

Assignments for students are based on the needs of missionaries in the field and missions organizations in various locations, as well as on
(See 'Students,' page 11)

TAB, communications ministry partners win big during national awards season

For the 23rd consecutive year *The Alabama Baptist* (TAB) has been named among the top regional Christian newspapers in the nation.

TAB also earned a variety of other awards for writing, the TAB News podcast and social media engagement, which will all be featured in the coming weeks.

Other Alabama Baptist entities and communications ministry partners also won big during this year's award season.

Staff members of the **Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions** earned five awards from Baptist Communicators Association (BCA):

- “Faryn Fryer” by **Doug Rogers** — first place, script
- “After the Storm” by **Doug Rogers** — third place, photography, news, single
- “Hope from Despair” by **Doug**

Rogers — third place, photography, news, series

Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions Identity System by **Jesse Conte** — first place, re-design



SBOM photo

Doug Rogers, director of communications and technology services for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, is the new president-elect of Baptist Communicators Association.

“Congratulations Rick Lance” by **Jesse Conte** — first place, print ad

► **Samford University** won three awards from BCA and two from Religion Communicators Council (RCC):

“Disaster simulation” by **College of Health Sciences** — second place, video, feature, 2–5 minutes (BCA)

Annual report, 2018 by **Division of Marketing and Communication** — third place, video, promotion (BCA)

“DuckTales: Devlin Hodges’ Quest to win the Walter Payton award” by **Division of Marketing and Communication** — first place, video, other (BCA)

School of the Arts event brochure by **Division of Marketing and Communication** — award of excellence, special print material (RCC)

Samford University *Beeson Magazine* by **Division of Marketing and Communication** — award of excellence and best in class, special issue publication (RCC)

► **Dogwood Media Solutions**, which manages TAB’s social media, won three awards from BCA:

“Praying Alabama” by **Brian Harris** — third place, social media campaign or event

“PursueAL.org” by **Brian Harris** — first place, event or promotion website, adapted template

“Speak.YMLink.org” by **Brian Harris** — second place, event or promotion website, adapted template

► TAB’s podcast producer and ministry partner **Square Core Media** also brought home an award of excellence for “Homebrewed CultureCast” by **Christian Piatt** from Associated Church Press. (TAB)

TAB adapts augmented reality feature

The growing popularity of video in the news industry led *The Alabama Baptist* (TAB) to introduce augmented reality (AR) to print subscribers in 2015. Now with more changes in technology TAB is shifting its video content to be focused totally online.

Like something out of a sci-fi movie AR allowed readers to view video content through an app on their smartphones or tablets. Readers could simply hold their phones over the specified printed pages of

the paper, and a video would appear on screen making the print edition “come alive.”

Full digital access

But recently the software provider TAB was using for AR ceased production about the same time a new subscription plan provides all print subscribers full access to the digital resources of TAB.

Most readers will now receive a weekly digital PDF of the paper along with the print version, “so we decided to evaluate how our video content will be shared,” said TAB editor Jennifer Davis Rash. “Our augmented reality feature was a fun resource to offer, and we are excited to see what new ways we will

find to promote and produce video content that complements and expands our news coverage.”

One place you can view original video content produced by TAB is on the Facebook page.

Theology 101 videos are posted each Friday, and other videos are posted as TAB team members travel the state.

TAB also has a YouTube channel, TAB Media, which can be easily accessed at tabonline.org/tabmedia.

Theology 101 videos are also posted on YouTube, along with missions stories, film and entertainment clips and interviews. Videos are divided by playlists or you can play through our most recent videos. (TAB)



Welcome to new TAB volunteers

The Alabama Baptist is excited to welcome a new slate of volunteers who are serving in a variety of roles at the office in Birmingham. Sarah Walters, Sue Godsey, Jessica Killgallon and Dawn York are assisting with various day-to-day office responsibilities. Don Shipp is helping with the audio digest of TAB.



“If ye continue in My word, then ... ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:31–32

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JENNIFER DAVIS RASH EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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Baptist Press (BP), Baptist News Global (BNG), Religion News Service (RNS), Forum 18 (F18), Morning Star News (MS).

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Send address changes to:
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Birmingham, AL 35209

ADDRESS CHANGE

Send old and new addresses, and name of church to:
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Allow two weeks.

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‘Nation’s Top Regional Christian Newspaper’

1999, 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018
as judged by Associated Church Press, Baptist Communicators Association, Evangelical Press Association or Religion Communicators Council

MY RASHIONALE

By **Jennifer Davis Rash**
President and Editor-in-Chief

jrash@thealabamabaptist.org
@RashionalThts



Can expectations for church members get out of hand?

Countless articles, books, TED Talks and all-day workshops offer the latest tips for reducing our daily stress — especially as the concept of achieving work-life balance has emerged among multiple generations.

With April being Stress Awareness Month it's a good time to reflect on how we are handling the pressures of life.

We all will walk through difficult seasons personally and professionally that spike our negative stress levels. And distractions are fierce these days so even during our most disciplined and balanced moments, we are likely to have days and weeks that don't go as planned.

Still we choose our reactions and how we are going to handle what comes our way.

For those of us who are believers in and followers of Christ we know our strength lies in Him. Consistent time in the Word and in prayer fortifies us for each day's demands.

We also know those daily demands and other life pressures truly can wear us down, which in turn affects our emotional, mental and physical health.

Time management and health experts share basically the same suggestions over and over, year after year — create more margin, restrict commitments, get enough sleep, exercise, eat healthy foods, spend time with positive people and participate in fun activities.

Another consistent tip coming from the experts is to delegate as much as possible to others.

I do agree with the practice of team leaders delegating responsibilities among all members of the team. After all each member should be carrying his or her fair share of the load as part of being on the team.

However, I do wonder if the art of delegation among friends, co-workers, church families, etc., has backfired a bit with most everyone attempting to delegate their personal responsibilities to others in their lives.

Could the time management tip of delegating actually be misused and therefore causing more stress in our society?

Take church life for example.

How many unnecessary responsibilities do church members expect the pastor and other staff members to carry? Are there day-to-day roles that could be managed by members of the congregation to allow the ministers more time and energy to focus on the big picture of leading the church?

And vice versa, do ministers always remember the stresses of life their congregants face?

While serving is part of a Christian's DNA, is it possible the concept of service has been

distorted by the level of expectations put on church members?

Schools, sports teams and other activities consume many students and parents alike. Work demands are ruthless, in most cases because we are all "doing more with less." And on top of the excessive outside pressures, many families are in some sort of crisis internally.

So when participating in church feels like another demand rather than an escape to reset, recenter and refill the spiritual tank, is it possible many in our congregations are only going through the motions? 🙏

RASHIONAL THOUGHTS

Processing all that life throws at us can take a toll mentally, physically and emotionally — let's choose not to pile on

We've all heard the reminders to give people who come across angry, grouchy or distant a break because we don't know what they might be going through at the moment.

And I'm guessing we've all been the person who wishes he or she could take back an overly emotional reaction to something that really wasn't a big deal.

It is true that life gets heavy sometimes. When it does we can choose to try to carry the load alone or share with others who are willing to help.

We also can truly make someone else's load lighter by simply being present, staying positive and offering a listening ear.

But our attempt to help can actually pile on our friend's load if we exhaust his or her energy

with our complaints about what all is happening in our lives.

It's a hard balance because it seems more and more people are overloaded and stressed. More and more people need rescuing, but the pool of rescuers seems limited.

Lonely journey

I wonder how many people are working through life's difficulties, pressures and to-do lists in their heads without talking it out with someone else.

It might be they don't want to burden others; it might be they have a hard time trusting. And in many cases it is because of the confidentiality of the matters at hand.

Either way carrying heavy loads and attempting to navigate difficult issues alone is more than a lonely journey. It also leads to mental,

physical and emotional fatigue.

I sometimes wonder how those called to the counseling profession handle all they have to carry.

The same is true with pastors. Think about all the families in a congregation and the burden of concern and care the pastor has for each of them and what is happening in their lives.

More people than we realize are balancing a tremendous weight mentally and emotionally as they work through each day.

Choosing to share a positive word of appreciation will go a long way in the midst of the heaviness, especially if they are receiving a large dose of complaints or negative feedback from others.

—Jennifer Davis Rash

Your Voice



Share your comments, letters to the editor, blog excerpts, social media posts

Reaching more coaches, athletes for Christ

By **Shane Williamson**

President and CEO, Fellowship of Christian Athletes

Evangelist Billy Graham once said, “A coach will impact more people in one year than the average person will in an entire lifetime.”

Because of the powerful influence of coaches, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) recognizes one of the best ways to reach more athletes for Christ is to first reach the coach.

We know the impact a Christian coach has on an athlete can be life-changing and reaches all areas of the athlete’s life — at school and home and later in the workplace and in marriages.

With that in mind, FCA has focused on the strategy of “To and Through the Coach” — pursuing the FCA vision and mission through ministries that impact coaches’ hearts, marriages and families.

We want to engage, equip and empower coaches to be disciples who make disciples and to be a godly influence on their fellow coaches, teams and athletes.

John Gibbons, our FCA state director in Alabama, says the best way to reach a campus with the gospel is to have a strong outreach to coaches.

“In discipling coaches,” Gibbons says, “you advance the gospel in

the hearts and lives of the young men and women they coach daily. We have 103 Coaches Huddles in Alabama with over 3,000 coaches in Bible study with our Alabama FCA staff. The direct impact reaches over 30,000 athletes. And we now have three coach and spouse marriage enrichment weekends to help strengthen coaches’ marriages, so they can ‘win at home.’”

Gibbons adds that a major component in discipling coaches is providing a strong ministry outreach to their athletes.

“Coming alongside coaches to reach their team involves more than having Bible studies for coaches,” he says. “Jesus walked alongside His disciples, doing ministry with them to equip and empower them to be fishers of men. Likewise, FCA provides Team Huddles, Team Camps and other special events like Fields of Faith to help coaches advance the gospel with their athletes.”

We know athletes are indeed impacted later in life by their Christian coaches. Therefore, an unwavering goal at FCA has been to fulfill Jesus’ calling to make disciples by engaging, equipping and empowering coaches and athletes to know and grow in Christ and lead others to do the same.

Making disciples is accomplished even in unconventional ways — through the avenue of sports — so coaches can have eternal impact on athletes, and in turn, help lead others to Christ as well.

Three of our smaller churches are joining together for VBS this summer in their community. They are doing this for the sake of the gospel, for the sake of the Kingdom and for their community.

Craig Carlisle
Associational Mission
Strategist, Etowah Baptist
Association

The Christian life is “a faith adventure” and we see example after example of that in the Bible and in the world in which we live.

Charlie Howell
Director of Missions
Madison Baptist
Association

Corporate worship should be a priority and not just one activity option among many for church members on the weekend.

Thom Rainer
Founder and CEO
Church Answers

God’s Word is literature, but it also is alive and active, revealing our hearts and directing how we live.

Mary Wiley
Factsandtrends.net

My Jesus Story

In 2011 my life dramatically changed. It was a traumatic near-death experience that disfigured me and changed the way I lived, thought, acted and interacted with people.

Since then I have fought to restore and even save my life.

I began to feel what I imagine David felt when he began to get battle weary: “Lord are You ever going to stop these battles and just answer my prayers?”

I am a huge believer in prayer, especially intercessory prayer. I ask for it and I provide it.

This is where I believe a

church community — other people who will stand in the gap when you are too weary to fight anymore — is so important.

In Ephesians 6:18 we are told, “In the same way prayer is essential in this ongoing warfare. Pray hard and long. Pray for your brothers and sisters. Keep your eyes open. Keep each other’s spirits up so that no one falls behind or drops out.”

Keep praying friends.

Jenni Ingram
Gantt Baptist Church
Gantt, Ala.

Share online or email news@thealabamabaptist.org

“ Church attendance is an act of faith and in the United States of America no one should worship in fear.”

EDWARD ALEXANDER JR.

President of the Louisiana Missionary Baptist State Convention of the National Baptist Convention USA

Why Pastors and High School Head Coaches have similar jobs:

1. Both coaches and pastors are semi-public figures in the community. They occasionally appear at community events, speak publicly outside of their workplace and are covered by local press (and sometimes beyond).

2. Both coaches and pastors tend to be modestly paid, although they must interact as peers with people of all socioeconomic classes, including people who make much more and much less than they do.

3. Both coaches and pastors have to build and maintain multiple constituencies, many of whom are volunteers.

4. Both coaches and pastors

have people attending their main events (games/Sunday gatherings) who believe they are well qualified to evaluate and vocally critique the performance of the leader. Many critics have attended these events over the years and so assume that they could lead one.

5. Both coaches and pastors have gigantic impact at some of the most critical times of life for the people that they influence.

6. At their best, both coaches and pastors teach lessons that last literally for a lifetime and are often passed on to future generations.

I am so grateful for the pastors and coaches that God placed in my life and in the lives of my children. I support them, pray for

them, stay in touch with them, and thank them. These men and women are some of the greatest gifts from God to me and my family.

Pastor Jimmy Scroggins
Family Church
West Palm Beach, Fla.

Christians must not fear the future or any technological development because we know that God is, above all, sovereign over history, and that nothing will ever supplant the image of God in which human beings are created.

**“Artificial Intelligence:
An Evangelical Statement
of Principles”**
**Ethics & Religious Liberty
Commission, SBC**

From the *Twitterverse*

@DustyMcLemore

Jesus willingly died on the cross. It wasn't assassination, it was Atonement! The cross was intended to take life but Jesus died to give life! #mysavior

@Blackwell_Kevin

One of the greatest gifts that God gives to his children is an awareness of his sovereignty. The sovereignty of God is a pillow on which the soul of a believer can rest. #HeisFaithful

@fbcabbeville

“All who love Jesus Christ the Lord ought to care deeply about the church, because the church is the object of Jesus' own love. Church-centeredness is this one way in which Christ-centeredness ought to find expression. — J.I. Packer on Ephesians 5:25–27

@BeesonDivinity

“A steward is a person into whose care and responsibility something precious has been entrusted.” — Dr. Timothy George

@DL_Staples

What he said leading up to the cross. “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Matthew 22:37–39

@clbolt

This morning I am thankful for my friends. Friends I've known online (yes) for over a decade, and talk to every day. Friends from seminary who have become life-long friends with shared (often

niche) interests and mission. Thank God for friendship and friends.

@bellevuepastor

Why shouldn't the next President of @LifeWay be a competent, godly woman? I see no biblical reason @LifeWay has to be led by a man or a former pastor.

@PatrickDeneen

May this horrible day come instead to be remembered as the date we mark the renewal of Christianity in the heart of Europe.

@LGoligher

It took 135 years to build Notre Dame but the people who built it did not want their names to be remembered because they were building it to the glory of God alone — Soli Deo Gloria



Photo by Pat Musselwhite

Lonette Berg is the executive director of the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission.

Protecting our stories

Notre Dame is on fire!” As Alabama Baptists we know a little bit about church fires — some caused by electrical faults or lightning, others by accident and some by arson.

Whatever the cause we see how quickly a much-loved building can be lost.

The story of God's work in a family of faith, documented in the church's records, is often lost to fiery flames as well.

The names of past and present members, the record of missions support and service, and other church history all can disappear when the written record of the church is lost.

Unfortunately we lose more church materials to everyday risks like changing record keepers or throwing things away than we do to tragedy.

How do we protect our churches from losing the written record of God's work in and through their families of faith? By preserving church records through the Records Preservation Ministry of the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission.

Churches in our Alabama Baptist family can have their records microfilmed free of charge by calling the Historical Commission at 205-726-2363.

May God find us faithful in stewardship of His story recorded in our church records.

—Lonette Berg

CHURCH REPORT FOR 2018

Baptisms

Cooperative Program Receipts

FOR CHURCHES (PART 3)

More than 3,200 Alabama Baptist churches report CP receipts, designated offerings, baptisms

Coosa River	Baptism	CP	Designated	East Highland	0	\$2,164.00	\$1,015.00	Broadway	9	\$64,501.14	\$27,781.01	Faith	2	\$8,339.25	\$3,595.62
Alpine		\$115.04	\$4,216.28	Enon	0	\$757.00	\$2,522.00	Chavies	0	\$3,347.41	\$3,250.00	Flint Creek	2	\$6,744.00	\$3,645.00
Bemiston	0	\$340.29	\$755.29	Fairmount	2	\$11,684.79	\$8,284.66	Collinsville	3	\$2,375.01	\$3,855.00	Friendship	0	\$4,877.42	\$14,742.34
Blue Eye	4	\$3,131.26	\$4,118.69	Floralia First	3	\$26,649.65	\$1,650.89	Crossville First	12	\$31,316.06	\$12,661.84	Grace Community	0	\$2,788.36	\$2,788.36
Bon Air	0	\$8,021.31	\$7,313.74	Gantt First	1	\$13,345.31	\$8,867.90	Flat Rock	4	\$0.00	\$768.50	Hanceville First	7	\$872.72	\$492.86
Brecon First	0	\$662.10	\$1,213.10	Harmony	4	\$20,006.20	\$10,643.73	Fort Payne First	10	\$62,851.25	\$74,046.70	Holly Pond First	4	\$23,400.00	\$24,644.00
Browns Chapel	7	\$300.00	\$600.00	Hopewell	9	\$25,607.61	\$22,760.71	Freedom Baptist		\$0.00	\$0.00	Hopewell	1	\$2,884.21	\$10,515.13
Calvary	11	\$12,706.01	\$2,558.67	Judson	0	\$3,116.00	\$0.00	Friendship	0	\$0.00	\$740.00	Immanuel	0	\$463.60	\$463.62
Cartersville	1	\$2,564.50	\$3,829.00	Liberty Home	3	\$2,521.28	\$3,431.28	Fyffe First	1	\$14,016.72	\$2,933.50	Lake Catoma	0	\$7,623.29	\$12,154.55
Central	1	\$14,565.00	\$14,194.65	Lockhart Baptist	4	\$4,942.87	\$6,401.87	Gault Avenue		\$0.00	\$2,049.84	Lystra	5	\$7,040.55	\$5,034.64
Chandler Springs	0	\$4,930.91	\$1,643.66	Mill Creek	0	\$2,851.39	\$2,876.38	Geraldine First	12	\$25,223.64	\$22,907.12	Midway	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Childersburg First	0	\$22,660.88	\$12,436.70	Mobley Creek	3	\$4,029.00	\$13,286.00	Grace Chapel	2	\$557.57	\$1,108.11	Mission Grove	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
ChristPoint Community		\$1,375.00	\$6,566.80	Mt Gilead	4	\$6,181.68	\$3,709.00	Gravel Hill	1	\$4,795.17	\$2,446.92	Mt Hebron	0	\$0.00	\$300.00
Cragdale	0	\$400.00	\$1,045.00	Mt Pisgah	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Guest	3	\$2,400.00	\$3,200.00	Mt Hermon	0	\$0.00	\$179.00
CrossPointe		\$1,113.86	\$114.00	New Hope	0	\$1,784.13	\$1,170.00	Harvest Time	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mt Zion	3	\$19,058.01	\$7,404.93
Dry Valley	2	\$9,481.19	\$7,521.59	New Song Community 0		\$0.00	\$0.00	Highland	2	\$2,265.00	\$1,201.00	New Harmony	0	\$300.00	\$400.00
Eastaboga	10	\$40,454.44	\$8,785.27	Northern Heights	3	\$300.00	\$970.70	Kelly's Chapel	5	\$3,995.00	\$7,231.10	New Home	2	\$0.00	\$0.00
Eastside		\$0.00	\$0.00	Northside	1	\$1,605.44	\$2,292.36	Kilpatrick	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	New Hope #2	0	\$4,071.87	\$230.00
Eureka		\$0.00	\$0.00	Oak Grove	3	\$1,577.00	\$500.00	Kilpatrick Hispanic	0	\$822.44	\$0.00	New Hope North	0	\$0.00	\$597.57
Family Fellowship		\$0.00	\$0.00	Oakey Ridge	2	\$4,294.71	\$5,017.93	Lathamville	3	\$0.00	\$2,850.86	New Jerusalem	3	\$0.00	\$329.00
Fayetteville	0	\$3,327.70	\$5,755.73	Opp First	8	\$48,751.34	\$46,518.85	Lea's Chapel	2	\$4,246.08	\$2,924.00	Northbrook	43	\$20,416.76	\$19,710.55
Five Points	2	\$8,674.00	\$8,487.00	Philadelphia	0	\$300.00	\$0.00	Liberty	3	\$6,600.00	\$922.00	Oak Level	0	\$4,170.88	\$3,838.95
Friendship		\$0.00	\$1,656.62	Pigeon Creek	1	\$875.05	\$100.00	Liberty Hill	2	\$11,451.21	\$26,474.61	Pan Creek	2	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Hepzibah	0	\$38,926.71	\$28,073.42	Pleasant Home	12	\$9,170.00	\$6,895.00	Macedonia #1	3	\$6,690.90	\$935.00	Plainview	2	\$0.00	\$300.00
Immanuel	4	\$615.75	\$1,241.50	Rawls	0	\$1,372.92	\$13,691.68	Macedonia #2	0	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	Pleasant Grove	0	\$1,200.00	\$1,700.00
Ironaton		\$0.00	\$546.50	Red Oak	0	\$7,828.48	\$1,457.53	Maranatha	0	\$1,265.11	\$730.00	Redan	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
Jenifer		\$0.00	\$0.00	River Falls	1	\$4,501.00	\$6,898.00	Minvale	5	\$1,200.00	\$2,187.20	Riverside	1	\$288.00	\$1,400.00
Lincoln	0	\$12,217.65	\$9,239.10	Salem	0	\$671.61	\$1,147.01	Moon Lake	2	\$1,300.00	\$1,717.00	Shady Grove	2	\$0.00	\$0.00
Marble City	1	\$17,262.10	\$36,518.19	Sanford First	0	\$150.00	\$350.00	Mt Carmel	2	\$0.00	\$0.00	Simcoe	0	\$3,075.09	\$6,725.05
Mignon	1	\$11,785.06	\$7,190.82	Southside Andalusia	3	\$47,864.40	\$4,262.50	Mt Flat	0	\$4,065.00	\$1,068.00	Unity	0	\$340.20	\$1,000.30
Mountain View	3	\$0.00	\$0.00	Southside Opp	18	\$36,348.50	\$23,302.08	Mt Hermon	0	\$3,044.32	\$4,767.58	Vinemont First	0	\$7,920.59	\$6,218.58
Mt Ida		\$2,771.24	\$1,804.17	Sweet Home	1	\$1,779.72	\$644.90	Mt Olive	3	\$600.00	\$1,091.00	Walter	1	\$4,550.00	\$4,845.35
Mt Olive	8	\$0.00	\$0.00	Sweet Water	2	\$2,638.00	\$9,678.00	Mt Pleasant	0	\$0.00	\$6,013.00	Welcome	5	\$4,726.81	\$1,297.41
Mt Sharon	5	\$1,500.00	\$5,340.00	Victory	0	\$1,000.00	\$1,250.00	Mt Tabor	0	\$815.00	\$795.00	Westside Eva	5	\$8,163.69	\$6,144.00
Mt Vernon	2	\$600.00	\$1,676.00	West County Line	3	\$2,411.25	\$6,879.47	Mt View	12	\$7,420.64	\$7,247.84	White Grove	0	\$1,080.00	\$900.00
Munford	30	\$6,000.00	\$8,399.25	West Highland	0	\$2,804.00	\$5,957.00	Mt Zion		\$300.00	\$2,502.00	Zion Grove	8	\$0.00	\$0.00
New Hope	6	\$3,935.17	\$3,083.03	Westside	0	\$230.64	\$0.00	Nazareth	8	\$40,907.51	\$16,074.00	East Cullman Totals	127	\$224,594.29	\$235,649.49
Oak Grove		\$180.00	\$545.00	Westview	7	\$39,430.57	\$18,131.79	New Canaan	5	\$0.00	\$2,578.10	East Liberty	Baptism	CP	Designated
Oak Grove First	7	\$31,063.63	\$29,194.07	Zion Hill	6	\$5,911.30	\$3,131.00	New Genesis	0	\$0.00	\$1,100.00	Abanda		\$0.00	\$0.00
Odena	4	\$31,812.28	\$13,963.63	Covington Totals	186	\$582,235.01	\$490,038.61	New Harmony	18	\$5,242.00	\$5,928.67	Antioch	6	\$0.00	\$0.00
Oldfield		\$0.00	\$1,980.00	Dale	Baptism	CP	Designated	New Home		\$0.00	\$600.00	Bethel	0	\$0.00	\$250.00
Patton Chapel	6	\$2,196.86	\$1,986.85	Ariton	2	\$16,127.16	\$8,966.76	New Hope		\$0.00	\$0.00	Beulah	8	\$22,543.27	\$7,012.43
Plainview		\$0.00	\$0.00	Bethel	6	\$9,767.00	\$5,621.00	New Life	40	\$0.00	\$0.00	Blanton	3	\$2,309.80	\$850.04
Pleasant Grove	1	\$9,100.19	\$13,081.09	Camp Ground	11	\$9,993.82	\$9,294.59	Northside		\$1,000.00	\$425.00	Calvary	0	\$2,713.97	\$6,106.04
Providence	9	\$400.00	\$5,939.55	Cedar Grove	0	\$6,449.69	\$7,012.27	Oak Grove	2	\$5,146.38	\$4,610.00	Center	0	\$1,983.37	\$3,554.38
Refuge		\$5,073.55	\$850.00	Center Ridge	2	\$2,375.00	\$5,375.00	Pilgrim Rest		\$0.00	\$0.00	Cornerstone		\$900.00	\$1,602.25
Ridgeview	3	\$4,383.79	\$8,907.62	Chalkhead	5	\$6,124.56	\$2,811.92	Pine Ridge		\$0.00	\$0.00	County Line	0	\$2,006.38	\$2,735.38
Rocky Mount		\$203.00	\$61.00	Daleville	7	\$22,225.05	\$10,723.38	Pleasant Hill	0	\$3,084.47	\$5,948.35	Cusseta	0	\$4,135.12	\$3,792.33
Russell Chapel	5	\$4,685.95	\$2,855.00	Ebenezer	0	\$327.52	\$163.76	Portersville	3	\$986.00	\$200.00	Fairfax First		\$5,259.48	\$3,070.00
Salt Creek	0	\$0.00	\$400.00	Elam	0	\$2,993.99	\$2,283.13	Primera Iglesia	6	\$0.00	\$1,100.00	Fairview	2	\$22,462.07	\$13,224.23
Shelvin Rock	0	\$0.00	\$1,311.21	Haven of Grace	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Prospect		\$0.00	\$0.00	Five Points	0	\$0.00	\$445.00
Shiloh	0	\$531.30	\$235.00	Hillcrest	0	\$292.66	\$0.00	Providence	2	\$0.00	\$300.00	Grace	0	\$3,282.00	\$535.10
Southside	7	\$6,598.00	\$5,344.85	Holmes	6	\$2,600.00	\$525.00	Rainsville First	4	\$42,392.12	\$18,008.49	Happy Valley	5	\$1,300.00	\$100.00
Stemley		\$390.00	\$948.20	Level Plains First	3	\$28,829.77	\$10,777.28	Ruhama	7	\$4,200.00	\$6,602.25	Huguley		\$852.50	\$495.00
Stockdale	5	\$2,923.64	\$5,807.00	Logan Road	2	\$5,352.99	\$2,919.70	Second	2	\$6,810.29	\$2,201.33	Jackson Memorial		\$221.45	\$50.00
Sycamore		\$14,083.33	\$10,114.00	Midland City	2	\$2,621.00	\$2,055.00	Skirum	0	\$2,000.00	\$6,000.00	Johnson Chapel	0	\$2,464.62	\$1,990.00
Sylacauga First	9	\$103,533.17	\$54,247.20	Midway	0	\$600.00	\$700.00	Tenbroeck	2	\$3,409.42	\$600.00	Lafayette First	1	\$15,866.80	\$5,274.97
Sylavon	1	\$2,635.52	\$8,567.76	Morgan	1	\$2,200.00	\$4,076.50	Shepherd's House		\$0.00	\$400.00	Lafayette Heights	6	\$24,845.77	\$13,607.30
Talladega Creek	5	\$1,124.99	\$2,322.49	Mt Enon	1	\$1,541.52	\$3,131.52	Union Grove	8	\$12,431.25	\$1,109.96	Lanett First	1	\$19,977.60	\$10,916.00
Talladega First	4	\$36,974.11	\$18,699.94	Mt Pisgah	1	\$240.00	\$2,184.00	Union Hill	2	\$1,809.85	\$1,108.00	Lanier	0	\$2,345.72	\$1,759.29
Talladega Springs	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mt Zion	4	\$4,970.84	\$3,182.00	Valley Head	11	\$1,800.00	\$1,634.10	Midway	1	\$0.00	\$456.21
Tallasahatchie First	0	\$4,510.93	\$4,302.34	New Hope	0	\$7,476.00	\$7,345.00	Vernon	12	\$2,181.00	\$595.00	Milltown		\$0.00	\$0.00
Trinity	0	\$3,121.35	\$3,718.00	Newton	2	\$2,698.00	\$5,087.78	Wills Valley	8	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mt Zion	0	\$1,658.00	\$9,741.00
Union Springs	0	\$200.00	\$363.00	Ozark	11	\$50,826.81	\$23,731.65	DeKalb Totals	255	\$416,670.20	\$320,024.98	New Hope	0	\$870.84	\$880.54
Village Street	1	\$0.00	\$414.00	Peniel	0	\$4,879.00	\$12,144.00	East Cullman	Baptism	CP	Designated	Plant City		\$5,993.75	\$6,581.90
Westside	24	\$100.00	\$1,450.00	Pinckard	3	\$17,553.22	\$19,243.95	Anon	2	\$3,583.14	\$1,594.34	Pleasant Hill	1	\$1,406.00	\$3,289.00
Westview	0	\$250.00	\$250.00	Pleasant Grove	2	\$45,426.10	\$34,373.25	Antioch	1	\$1,200.00	\$10,132.60	Providence	0	\$4,372.00	\$1,592.00
Winterboro	0	\$2,173.00	\$1,409.00	Pleasant Ridge	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Berlin	2	\$3,628.30	\$6,396.00	River View	0	\$3,539.30	\$3,642.55
Coosa River Totals	189	\$498,685.76	\$395,191.57	Post Oak	0	\$2,966.25	\$1,879.37	Bethlehem East	0	\$10,798.00	\$6,841.00	Rock Springs	4	\$14,107.00	\$3,114.00
Covington	Baptism	CP	Designated	Providence	13	\$14,662.08	\$9								

CHURCH REPORT FOR 2018

Church Name	Baptism	CP	Designated	Church Name	Baptism	CP	Designated	Church Name	Baptism	CP	Designated
Blue Ridge	1	\$0.00	\$110.00	Glencoe First	3	\$16,213.57	\$26,152.81	New Jerusalem	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Calvary		\$0.00	\$0.00	Goldenrod Avenue		\$0.00	\$0.00	North Russellville	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Central	1	\$8,399.16	\$5,932.00	Goodyear Heights	11	\$8,000.00	\$2,397.50	Orange	0	\$3,011.19	\$2,247.00
Coosada	27	\$145,419.84	\$30,469.11	Green Valley		\$0.00	\$0.00	Phil Campbell First	5	\$3,366.28	\$4,930.74
Deatsville	1	\$5,605.12	\$962.06	Greenwood		\$0.00	\$0.00	Pleasant Hill	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
East Tallassee	6	\$16,751.67	\$11,015.00	Harvestfield	12	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	Primera Iglesia	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Eclectic First	5	\$33,109.03	\$10,488.52	Heath		\$2,848.00	\$0.00	Red Bay First	3	\$20,072.84	\$20,000.00
Friendship		\$4,300.00	\$2,690.00	Heritage		\$0.00	\$0.00	Rockwood	0	\$879.99	\$500.00
Good Hope	4	\$30,943.71	\$18,590.50	Hokes Bluff First	12	\$40,998.02	\$23,990.59	Russellville First	2	\$18,742.34	\$16,432.60
Harvest Fields	3	\$1,100.00	\$900.00	Immanuel	0	\$11,673.45	\$3,592.97	South Side	9	\$10,283.16	\$10,160.00
Hillside	2	\$550.00	\$1,505.00	Ivatee		\$13,742.88	\$0.00	Spruce Pine		\$0.00	\$0.00
Holtville Riverside	17	\$12,848.83	\$2,257.96	James Memorial	4	\$4,751.26	\$4,961.00	Tharptown	3	\$20,697.04	\$10,328.16
Journey	31	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	Keener	1	\$7,053.00	\$605.00	Vina First	5	\$5,477.00	\$6,533.99
La Hispana de Thelma		\$0.00	\$0.00	Kyle Avenue		\$0.00	\$269.77	Waco	0	\$675.00	\$1,270.00
Lake Hill	0	\$0.00	\$320.99	Kyuka		\$3,025.99	\$8,966.50	West Highland	0	\$2,698.50	\$1,338.50
Liberty	2	\$6,701.00	\$7,246.30	Lakeview	9	\$8,317.52	\$3,783.44	Franklin Totals	90	\$229,760.95	\$149,284.25
Living Water	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Lookout Avenue	0	\$405.22	\$1,450.00	Friendship	Baptism	CP	Designated
Millbrook	4	\$37,673.60	\$6,596.00	Louis Street	0	\$1,800.00	\$1,830.00	Bethel	0	\$600.00	\$2,695.00
Mitts Chapel	5	\$12,643.00	\$14,156.00	Macedonia	0	\$24,768.56	\$12,313.00	Blount Springs	2	\$4,364.41	\$8,850.04
Mountain View		\$45,607.20	\$12,034.18	Malone	7	\$7,107.75	\$475.00	Blountsville	15	\$17,263.07	\$3,802.33
Mt Hebron East	1	\$4,578.76	\$3,804.69	Meadow Brook	16	\$175,339.03	\$29,463.00	Brooksville	4	\$0.00	\$0.00
Mt Hebron West		\$43,438.02	\$22,359.77	Midway		\$1,200.00	\$299.99	Center Springs	0	\$0.00	\$5,240.46
New Home		\$21,699.96	\$2,010.96	Mountain View		\$0.00	\$0.00	County Line	1	\$2,136.84	\$1,050.00
New Hope	8	\$5,900.00	\$4,312.00	Mt Carmel	8	\$700.00	\$1,391.50	Crossroads	9	\$70,000.08	\$69,050.46
Pleasant Hill	2	\$4,772.49	\$1,930.00	Mt Olive		\$0.00	\$0.00	Easley	0	\$1,300.00	\$1,700.00
Prospect	1	\$1,478.00	\$3,768.00	Mt Pisgah	0	\$120.00	\$0.00	Fellowship	0	\$413.02	\$900.00
Redland	6	\$3,000.00	\$2,802.00	New Harmony		\$0.00	\$0.00	Fowler Springs	6	\$0.00	\$2,902.50
Refuge	4	\$25,983.67	\$10,576.00	New Hope	0	\$300.00	\$1,545.00	Gethsemane	4	\$7,887.76	\$5,546.47
Riverside Heights		\$23,226.02	\$9,955.00	Noble Hill		\$0.00	\$0.00	Hayden First	9	\$33,030.14	\$23,437.20
Riverside Heights Hispanic		\$639.75	\$0.00	North Gadsden	2	\$12,130.38	\$4,726.02	Hopewell	5	\$15,019.85	\$6,979.00
Rock Springs	3	\$3,676.69	\$3,626.59	North Glencoe	8	\$6,458.52	\$32,663.12	Lakeview	14	\$2,498.52	\$6,019.52
Rushenville	1	\$1,669.70	\$3,279.21	North Highland	0	\$1,926.18	\$1,035.79	Locust Fork	23	\$23,924.00	\$19,280.96
Santuck	17	\$96,000.00	\$32,119.91	Northside		\$1,180.89	\$3,000.00	Mt Tabor	0	\$1,200.00	\$3,636.06
Seman	2	\$900.00	\$1,435.00	Oak Park		\$0.00	\$0.00	Mulberry	5	\$0.00	\$500.00
Shoal Creek	44	\$59,841.90	\$51,104.05	Paden	0	\$18,502.48	\$7,756.81	Oneonta First	4	\$47,511.32	\$37,041.37
Tallassee First	8	\$98,229.60	\$57,362.14	Pine Grove		\$0.00	\$0.00	Park Avenue	0	\$4,514.56	\$2,680.02
Tallaweka		\$1,745.23	\$3,776.83	Pleasant Hill		\$75.00	\$265.00	Philadelphia	12	\$841.39	\$2,305.95
Thelma	6	\$35,815.81	\$21,896.94	Rainbow City First		\$682.72	\$4,105.01	Pleasant Hill		\$2,494.60	\$150.00
Titus Baptist	0	\$6,184.00	\$2,352.00	Reed Memorial		\$0.00	\$1,700.00	Reamlap First	3	\$26,857.44	\$16,882.75
Tunnell Chapel	0	\$1,501.04	\$2,335.00	Riddles Bend	10	\$12,833.00	\$4,500.12	Snead	0	\$494.54	\$1,141.48
Wetumpka First	11	\$74,000.04	\$16,822.55	Riverbend	8	\$12,453.13	\$6,600.04	Straight Mountain	5	\$0.00	\$1,633.00
Elmore Totals	224	\$883,464.20	\$388,157.78	Rockledge		\$0.00	\$0.00	Trinity	0	\$3,022.48	\$1,566.44
Escambia	Baptism	CP	Designated	Sibertown	1	\$6,173.53	\$3,626.41	Union Hill	2	\$43,852.68	\$34,472.00
Alco		\$5,414.18	\$2,166.77	South Highland		\$250.00	\$1,113.50	Village Springs	4	\$0.00	\$0.00
Atmore First	1	\$18,424.23	\$11,984.50	Southside	19	\$71,551.52	\$39,825.69	Friendship Totals	127	\$311,020.91	\$259,463.01
Bethel		\$0.00	\$0.00	Southside First		\$0.00	\$200.00	Geneva	Baptism	CP	Designated
Booneville		\$2,123.00	\$1,500.00	Stowers Hill	4	\$7,647.44	\$3,003.00	Adoniram	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Brewton First	9	\$132,563.96	\$50,935.83	Church Wills Creek		\$0.00	\$0.00	Antioch	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
Brooks Memorial	3	\$21,053.99	\$9,608.26	Triune	132	\$0.00	\$0.00	Bellwood	0	\$2,100.00	\$3,505.00
Canoe First		\$0.00	\$945.00	Twelfth Street	14	\$0.00	\$30,270.06	Bethesda	0	\$0.00	\$126.00
Catawba Springs		\$26,449.35	\$10,903.00	Union #3	109	\$13,562.30	\$1,030.00	Christian Home	0	\$2,710.82	\$3,285.00
Cedar Hill		\$175.00	\$598.97	Walnut Grove	2	\$3,936.61	\$2,400.00	Coffee Springs First	0	\$10,024.44	\$7,766.99
Community Mission		\$390.00	\$0.00	Walnut Park		\$2,491.84	\$1,200.00	Corinth	0	\$100.00	\$50.00
Cross Point		\$0.00	\$0.00	Webster's Chapel		\$0.00	\$0.00	Devco	0	\$0.00	\$420.00
Damascus		\$7,362.00	\$11,341.00	West End	2	\$1,867.65	\$1,250.00	Eden	1	\$1,000.00	\$1,220.00
East Brewton First		\$19,389.61	\$13,605.60	White Springs	1	\$19,263.56	\$11,226.00	El Bethel		\$0.00	\$10,408.00
Elim	5	\$6,397.51	\$3,100.00	Whorton Bend	35	\$4,803.84	\$1,954.34	Fellowship	4	\$0.00	\$0.00
Flomaton First	5	\$16,402.40	\$8,565.00	Etowah Totals	502	\$831,368.18	\$437,287.43	Friendship	2	\$0.00	\$0.00
Huxford	0	\$1,929.00	\$2,519.00	Fayette	Baptism	CP	Designated	Geneva First	13	\$34,618.17	\$12,113.17
Judson		\$2,163.21	\$1,914.02	Ashcraft Corner	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Hacoda	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Liberty		\$1,800.00	\$1,800.00	Beaver Creek	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Hartford	7	\$41,217.33	\$27,279.00
Little Escambia	4	\$27,701.61	\$10,555.01	Berk	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Maple Avenue	3	\$20,173.89	\$10,553.68
Lottie	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Berry	3	\$6,015.00	\$2,889.00	Mt Calvary	2	\$5,829.06	\$4,738.12
Magnolia		\$0.00	\$4,530.00	Bethel	1	\$3,894.53	\$350.00	New Covenant	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Moyeville		\$0.00	\$0.00	Caines Ridge	0	\$0.00	\$400.00	New Hinson	1	\$15,964.27	\$16,735.00
New Beginnings		\$412.12	\$500.13	Chapel Hill	1	\$2,067.08	\$754.89	New Home	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
New Bethlehem	0	\$496.55	\$2,348.21	Concord	5	\$2,033.00	\$1,380.00	New Prospect Hartford	0	\$2,168.00	\$0.00
Nokomis		\$2,157.00	\$2,127.00	Covin	0	\$1,046.65	\$513.00	New Prospect Marl	0	\$3,472.36	\$5,160.36
North Brewton		\$12,011.88	\$4,384.28	Fayette First	7	\$57,359.96	\$44,919.92	New Teamon	11	\$10,634.92	\$14,898.00
Pleasant Grove		\$376.00	\$230.00	Grace	2	\$14,383.00	\$11,898.25	Piney Grove	0	\$245.52	\$0.00
Poarch		\$600.00	\$1,806.00	Macedonia	0	\$3,200.91	\$7,819.39	Pleasant Hill	11	\$8,897.10	\$7,042.67
Presley Street		\$1,782.20	\$4,378.20	Mountain Home	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Reese	0	\$0.00	\$548.07
Robinsonville		\$4,129.57	\$4,781.00	New River	1	\$3,788.31	\$200.00	Samsom First	1	\$2,519.00	\$31,734.00
Sardis		\$0.00	\$0.00	Oak Ridge	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Shiloh	18	\$27,771.38	\$8,494.00
True Hope Fellowship		\$1,079.72	\$0.00	Philadelphia	0	\$1,505.45	\$1,500.00	St. Elizabeth	8	\$0.00	\$0.00
Unity	6	\$4,200.00	\$4,262.00	Pilgrim Rest	0	\$1,494.38	\$449.00	Trinity	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Wallace First		\$266.50	\$557.00	Pisgah	0	\$937.86	\$0.00	Union	3	\$10,626.69	\$6,316.98
Zion Hill		\$2,773.89	\$707.91	Pleasant Grove	0	\$2,276.00	\$350.00	Geneva Totals	90	\$229,269.95	\$174,629.71
Escambia Totals	33	\$320,024.48	\$172,653.69	Pleasant Hill	0	\$3,729.64	\$1,900.00	Hale	Baptism	CP	Designated
Etowah	Baptism	CP	Designated	Rehoboth	0	\$12,081.96	\$6,666.00	Akron	0	\$1,200.00	\$300.00
Altoona First		\$2,200.00	\$960.00	Salem	0	\$400.00	\$1,139.00	Antioch	0	\$9,759.84	\$7,820.00
Attalla First	10	\$28,193.54	\$5,140.00	Sand Springs	0	\$4,239.04	\$5,000.00	Community	1	\$1,200.00	\$1,708.00
Bellevue	9	\$40,669.46	\$17,033.75	Shady Grove	27	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	Concord	0	\$1,800.00	\$1,509.83
Bethany	0	\$0.00	\$4,888.00	Shepherd	0	\$2,260.82	\$300.00	Gallion	0	\$14,000.00	\$8,211.82
Black Creek	3	\$10,975.00	\$6,314.00	Southside	7	\$67,689.45	\$33,239.09	Greensboro	3	\$39,810.10	\$38,006.60
Brierwood Hills	0	\$2,296.50	\$0.00	Spring Hill	10	\$0.00	\$331.00	Macedonia		\$802.20	\$984.21
Calvary	0	\$500.00	\$2,381.00	Unity	15	\$9,503.62	\$1,483.40	MBC	11	\$51,702.20	\$10,680.45
Carnes		\$0.00	\$0.00	Fayette Totals	79	\$200,076.66	\$124,481.94	Mt Hebron		\$3,395.00	\$950.00
Cave Springs	2	\$808.00	\$0.00	Franklin	Baptism	CP	Designated	New Haven	0	\$2,435.11	\$1,792.21
Central Avenue		\$0.00	\$200.00	Bear Creek No. One	0	\$1,964.00	\$1,010.00	New Hope	0	\$2,425.00	\$5,310.00
Central Missionary		\$0.00	\$0.00	Belgreen	1	\$1,791.21	\$1,863.72	Pleasant Hill		\$3,635.70	\$2,032.85
Cherry Street	5	\$28,601.17	\$14,434.93	Bethel	0	\$2					

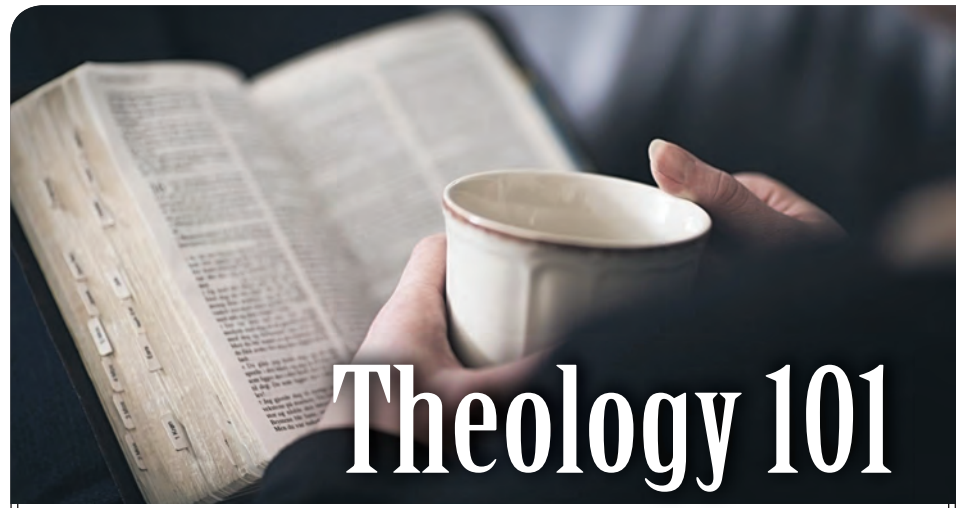
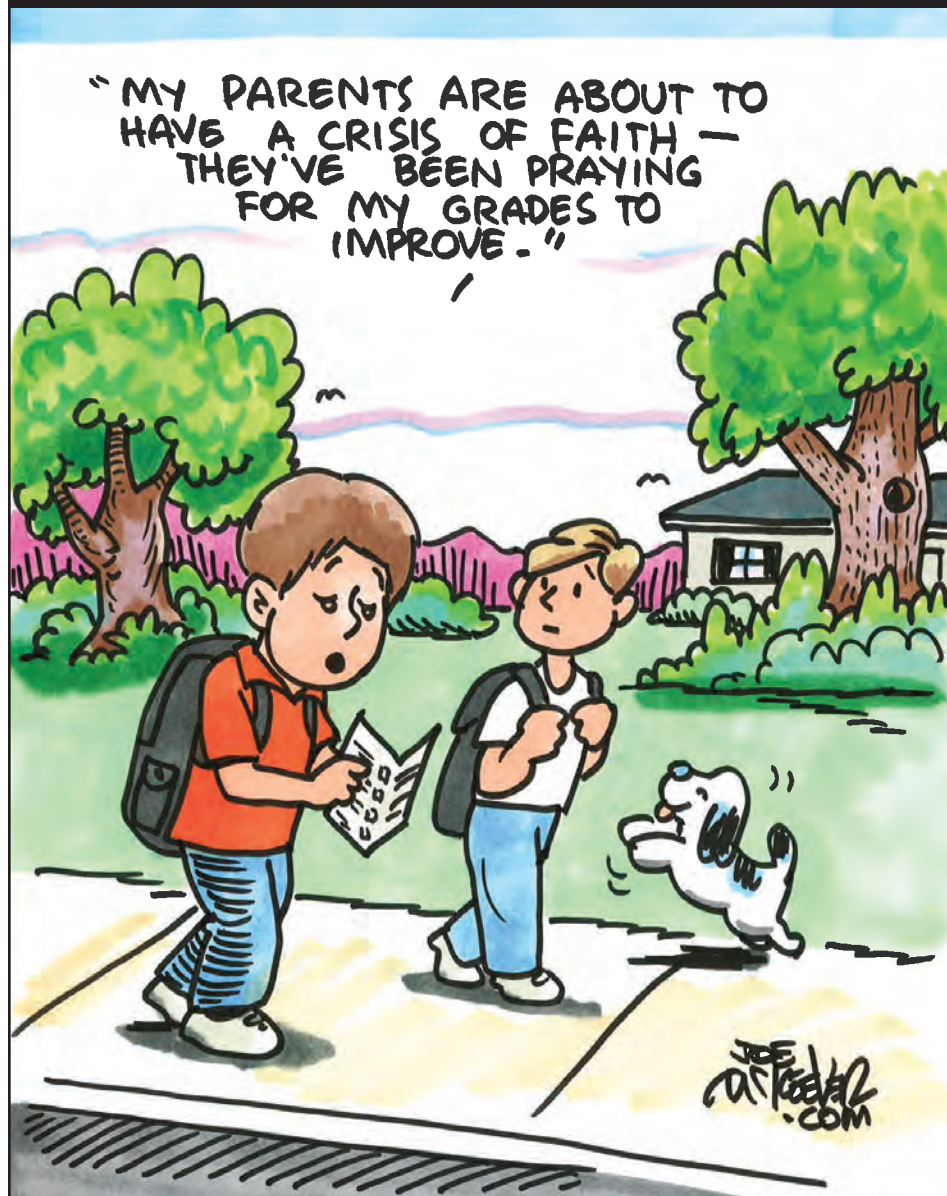
Bethel Baptist gifts pastor, wife for retirement



Photo courtesy of Bethel Baptist Church

Bethel Baptist Church, Pleasant Grove, in Bessemer Baptist Association, honored Pastor Rick Cato (far left) for his ministry at the church. Cato announced his plans to retire in October 2019 after 16 years at Bethel Baptist. Cato and his wife, Essie (second from left), were gifted a 10-day trip to Ireland and England from the church. It was presented to them by the chairman of the deacons Jay Johnson (center) and deacon Philip Houston.

REFLECTIONS



Theology 101

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR PEOPLE IN THE PEW

Eternal security

Once Saved, Always Saved

By Jerry Batson, Th.D.
Special to The Alabama Baptist

A common expression about Baptists from both inside and outside the Baptist family is that Baptists are people who hold to a doctrine of once saved, always saved. Unfortunately and also inaccurately, the phrase is often used with stress on the second part, “always saved.”

This yields the unbiblical and distorted idea that regardless of what unfolds in a person’s life in the aftermath of a public confession and water baptism, that person is forever heaven-bound. The crucial ingredient, however, lies not in the last part but with the first part, “once saved.”

Eternal security in salvation is irrevocably connected with a genuine conversion experience of personal trust in Christ and the resultant spiritual union with Christ. It is only in light of biblical saving faith that we assert the eternal security of the believer.

‘Through faith’

Hence when we read 1 Peter 1:5 that believers are those “who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time,” we must give equal stress both to the “through faith” part as we do to the “kept by the power of God” part.

The significant confession contained in the Baptist Faith & Message statement captures the matter of eternal security in these words: “All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has

accepted in Christ and sanctified by His Spirit will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end” (Article V).

The Bible garners several common human experiences or ordinary analogies by which to undergird a more formal or theological understanding of eternal security.

For several weeks Theology 101 will draw upon some of these analogies that serve to express the idea of “once saved, always saved” in less formal expressions.

‘Must be born again’

One such analogy from human experience is that of birth. In the physical realm birth is neither an irreversible nor a repeatable event for what is born. Babies are not returnable commodities.

Eternal security rests on the fact that salvation is a matter of a divine birth. Jesus’ well-known declaration to Nicodemus is a solid focal point: “You must be born again” (John 3:7).

Final salvation with its entrance into heaven is not dependent on multiple divine births but on a singular, unrepeatable spiritual event in which the Holy Spirit brings into being new life that flows and grows from that singular, supernatural spiritual birth.✠

Jerry Batson is a retired Alabama Baptist pastor who also has served as associate dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University and professor of several schools of religion during his career.



Praying for 7 centers of influence in America

GOVERNMENT

Pray for civil servants and leaders in all branches of government at the federal, state and local level to value and respect one another and to work together for the greater good of our nation.

MILITARY

Pray for God's protection on military leaders and personnel, and pray they will be courageous and wise in their decisions.

MEDIA ARTS

Pray for those who are working in media and arts to be communicators of truth who share inspirational stories that illustrate the power of love.

BUSINESS

Pray for business leaders to be people of honesty and integrity who comprehend their great opportunity to create economic blessings in their communities.

EDUCATION

Pray for administrators, teachers and faculty teams to create a culture of love and respect for every student. Pray for students to rise up together, loving one another and making a difference in the future of America.

CHURCH

Pray for pastors and churches to model and exemplify the love of Jesus to a world that desperately needs His love.

FAMILY

Pray for families to commit to following the Bible and practicing love and forgiveness.

(Source: Adapted from the prayer guide for the 2019 National Day of Prayer)

'A day like no other'

2019 National Day of Prayer focuses on loving one another

By Carrie Brown McWhorter
The Alabama Baptist

Just as they have since 1952, Americans will take time May 2 to observe the National Day of Prayer, a day set aside to mobilize unified public prayer for America.

"There's no other observance in the American calendar like the National Day of Prayer," said Ronnie Floyd, who has served as president of the National Day of Prayer since August 2017. "On this one day we have the opportunity to come together as one nation in prayer."

The theme for this year's event is "Love One Another." It's a theme that is biblical, relevant, clear, simple and understandable, Floyd said. Most of all it is a theme that will engage all Americans, he said.

"The vast majority of America understands America is broken. And they understand that God is the only one who can fix it," Floyd said in comments at the National Day of Prayer Leadership Summit in October 2018.

Since 1952

The National Day of Prayer was created in 1952 by a joint resolution of Congress and signed into law by President Harry S. Truman.

In 1988 the law was unanimously amended by both the House and Senate to designate the first Thursday of May as a day of national prayer. President Ronald Reagan signed it into law on May 5, 1988, and every president since 1952 has signed a National Day of Prayer proclamation.

In 2018 the National Day of Prayer prompted more than 100,000 social media posts on Twitter and Instagram combined.



May 2 is the
2019 National Day
of Prayer

The national observance

has been viewed more than 1 million times on Facebook, according to LifeWay's Facts & Trends website.

Several Alabama cities, including Birmingham, Montgomery, Heflin, Oneonta, Troy and Ozark, are hosting Bible reading marathons in conjunction with the National Day of Prayer. Volunteers will read the Bible around-the-clock leading up to or to kick off the city's National Day of Prayer observance.

In dozens of other towns and cities throughout the state prayer gatherings will be held at city halls and county courthouses, which is fitting since government is the first of seven spheres of influence in American life highlighted in this year's prayer guide. The other six spheres of influence are military, media arts, business, education, church and family.

*"Love one another.
Just as I have
loved you."*

John 13:34
2019 National Day of Prayer
theme verse

The prayer guide and other resources for participants are available at the event website. Also available is a searchable event page to help you find a National Day of Prayer event near you. Event organizers can register their event at the same site to be included in search results.

Those who cannot attend a live event can join in the online National Day of Prayer, scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m. EST time and conclude at 9:30 p.m. EST on May 2. Details and a link to the livestream will be available at the event website.

Churches and other organizations interested in promoting the National Day of Prayer also will find promotional tools at the event website, including videos, presentation slides and shareable graphics.

For more information and to get your church involved in the 2019 National Day of Prayer, visit NationalDayOfPrayer.org.

Staying in the Magic City



Photo courtesy of the Greater Birmingham Convention and Visitors Bureau

Variety of lodging options for SBC annual meeting

Want to attend the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting in Birmingham this year, but you live just far enough away you need a place to stay?

Here are a few of your options for how to stay in the Magic City if you don't already have something lined up.

► **Book a convention hotel.**

The SBC annual meeting website (sbcannualmeeting.net) lists 36 hotels offering convention rates for the meeting. While the convention rate on rooms is available through May 14, some hotels are already full.

The hotels range distance wise from adjacent to the convention center to 14 miles away.

The convention management team is working to implement a plan for hotel shuttles and park-and-ride lots from local churches. They'll release more specific information closer to the SBC annual meeting.

Parking and transportation became a challenge with the closure and rebuilding of I-20/59 over downtown Birmingham this year, but SBC leaders say the shuttle system should help.

To check out the list of convention hotels, distances and prices or to make

an online reservation visit sbcannualmeeting.net/sbc19/hotels.

► **Check out other options.**

If for some reason you can't find a convention hotel that works you might try going a little farther

up the road to Trussville or Leeds and exploring hotels in that area. Hotels.com pulls up several options for under \$100, and you could still take advantage of one of the park-and-ride lots at a church so you wouldn't have to deal with parking downtown.

► **Try an AirBNB.**

If you aren't already familiar with AirBNB it's an online site where people post photos of their home and allow you to request to stay there for a standard rate like a hotel.

Just like every person's house is different every

arrangement is different — you can rent a bedroom in someone's house, a detached mother-in-law suite or a whole house or apartment.

This option may seem out of your comfort zone, but it's not as unusual these days as it sounds — 6 million people a year travel this way.

In fact so many AirBNB hosts have gone out of the way to make their home a great place to stay many

people now prefer this to a hotel stay.

Interested in giving it a try? Each homeowner is heavily peer-reviewed, sometimes by hundreds of guests, and you can read what people say before you book your stay.

Who knows? You might end up getting an opportunity to share Jesus with your host while you're here too. To check it out visit airbnb.com. (Grace Thornton)



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WEEKDAYS 3-5P

THE MARK WHITE SHOW
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Students reminded of their ‘one mission’

(continued from page 1) student availability and preference.

Giving through the Cooperative Program helps subsidize the cost for students, noted Cox, who serves as president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention.

Kingdom work

“Know that we are able to commission you today to this exciting endeavor and to send you out this summer because of faithful Alabama Baptists who have given through the lo-

cal church and through the Cooperative Program,” Cox said.

He also emphasized the importance of the work students will be doing for the Kingdom.

“Remember as you live life on mission this summer you have one mission and that is the Great Commission — to make disciples who make disciples who make disciples,” he said. “That one mission doesn’t change in Chelsea or in Prattville or whatever part

of the state you represent. It stays the same.”

Cox encouraged the students to be flexible, throughout their summer missions experience and in life. The call to missions is one of sacrifice, he said.

“I can promise you when you are on mission this summer, no matter where you are from Shelby County to across the ocean, you’re going to be called to sacrifice,” Cox said. “May your life be spent in self-sacrifice for the glory of God.”

Lindsey Ward, a student at the University of Montevallo who will be serving in Birmingham and San Francisco this summer, said after the service she is looking forward to a great summer.

“I’m overwhelmed with excitement and joy,” she said. “I’m so thankful for the opportunities I’ve had through college to grow in my faith, and I’m so excited to have one more summer

as a One Mission student.”

Ward, who one day hopes to serve in college min-

istry, is an example of the impact summer missions and opportunities through campus ministries can have on students, Mills said.

‘Step of obedience’

“A summer missions experience opens a student’s eyes to the possibilities that exist beyond that week, month, summer and even college,” he said. “Over and over again we are seeing students seek to take that

step of obedience to go beyond a short-term missions experience and truly live life on mission. Sometimes it is back to the location they served one summer, but in other cases it’s taking that experience and applying it here in Alabama or somewhere else in the world.”

Prayer reminders

Mills said Alabama Baptists can help by praying for student missionaries. Now is a good time to start praying for the students as they prepare physically, mentally and spiritually to go and for the senders who are supporting them, he said.

One Mission Students also will post weekly prayer reminders on social media, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. For more information about summer missions go to onemissionstudents.org.

For more information about summer missions go to onemissionstudents.org.

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WMU Foundation photo

Pat Bohannon (far right) and the Women on Mission group at Five Points Baptist Church, Northport, assemble flower arrangements for homebound church members.

Modern-day Lottie Moon honored by Five Points Baptist

Billie Wallace says she'll never forget the day Pat Fleming Bohannon was supposed to rush into Five Points Baptist Church, Northport, dressed as missions hero Lottie Moon.

The skit was to help the church celebrate the 125th anniversary of Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) six years ago and Wallace says Bohannon always committed fully.

She knew Bohannon meant to rush in, but in the moment she thought, "Wow, she's really playing this up."

Turns out Bohannon had tripped and fallen unintentionally on the way in, but had worked it into her monologue somehow and kept right on going.

'A missions woman'

"She went right on with it," Wallace said. "She's 87 now so she would've been 81 then."

She would do anything like that — she loved promoting missions. And she always committed all the way."

That's why Bohannon has gotten the reputation as the church's very own Lottie Moon — because of her

commitment, Wallace said. "She came to Five Points in 2001 and we knew right away she was a missions woman."

Bohannon grew up in Girls Auxiliary and she's felt like God was calling her to missions ever since.

But then her course looked like it might be different than what she planned — she married a preacher.

"We got married right out of seminary in 1956, and when I married him he was thinking he was called to be a pastor," Bohannon said of her first husband, Binion Fleming. "But then one Sunday God spoke to him and he said to me, 'How do you feel about being a missionary?'"

She told him she was ready to go. The couple applied to the Foreign Mission Board (now the International Mission Board) and a few months later they were leading a church in Guam.

But the Flemings' missions work didn't end in Guam.

Over the course of their life together they racked up years serving as missionaries with the Home Mission Board (now the North American Mission Board) in

Montana and Washington.

After her husband died Bohannon moved to Northport to be closer to family. She joined Five Points Baptist and continued her missions work there.

She married Ken Bohannon and the two carried on ministry in both of their churches — Five Points Baptist and St. Mark United Methodist Church, where he taught Sunday School.

After he died she kept the same schedule and taught the class at St. Mark in his place.

It's been a joy

Now in her late 80s, Pat says she's slowing down a bit, but everything she's been involved in has "been a joy."

"All my life it's been a privilege to be able to share what God means to me and to reach into the lives of other people," she said.

Five Points Baptist recently honored Bohannon's legacy by purchasing a brick in her name on WMU's new Walk of Faith brick garden.

For more information on how to honor a missions hero visit wmufoundation.com/walkoffaith. (WMU Foundation)

TAB CLASSIFIEDS

For information on placing a classified ad call 205-870-4720, ext. 102 or email ads@thealabamabaptist.org.

CHURCH POSITIONS

PASTOR

Wayside Baptist Church is looking for a pastor. Send resumé to: Chris Baker, 2935 Campground Road, Alexander City, AL 35010 or email resumé to: search4pastor@gmail.com.

MINISTER OF MUSIC

Westview Baptist Church, 809 Damascus Hwy, Enterprise, AL 36330 is prayerfully seeking resúmes for a part-time minister of music. Please send resumé to church address, marked ATTN: Personnel Committee. For additional inquiries call 334-494-2336.

MINISTER OF WORSHIP

Sisters is searching for a minister of worship. Sisters is a conservative Southern Baptist church in central Georgia. The position involves planning and leading worship services, as well as the other music ministries of the church. He will work closely with the pastor and other staff members. Resúmes, along with a cover letter, may be sent to: SBC Search Committee, 1807 E. McCarty Street, Sandersville, GA 31082 or office@sistersbaptist.org.

WORSHIP LEADER/ YOUTH MINISTER

Center Hill Baptist Church in Hamilton, MS, is seeking a full-time worship leader and youth minister. Please contact Roland Whigham at roland@mspeanut.com for additional information.

STUDENT MINISTER

FBC McCalla is seeking a part-time student minister. The church is located in the western part of Jefferson County, close to McAdory High School. Send resumé to: P.O. Box 268, McCalla, AL 35111 or email it to: tdjproductions1@gmail.com.

YOUTH MINISTER

Farley Community Church in Huntsville, Alabama, is seeking a dynamic, spirit-filled person to serve as our full-time youth minister. Christ-focused discipleship is at the heart of all of our ministries. A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution or seminary and previous youth ministry experience are required. Please submit resúmes to: personnel@farleycc.org.

BIVOCATIONAL YOUTH MINISTER

First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Alabama, is seeking candidates to lead our youth ministry. Please submit resúmes to: office@fbcwoodstock.org.

PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER

Concord Highland Baptist Church (Bessemer Assn.) is looking for candidates to re-start the youth ministry. Please mail resúmes to: Youth Search Committee, Concord Highland Baptist Church, 105 Concord Highland Drive, Bessemer, AL 35023.

MINISTER OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES

FBC Dadeville is looking for a full-time minister of children and families. Only candidates called to long-term ministry to children should send a cover letter and resume to Dr. Ben Hayes at bhayes@fbcdadeville.com or P.O. Box 308, Dadeville, AL 36853.

PIANIST

Belgreen Baptist Church is seeking pianist for Sunday morning worship. Paid position. Contact matthew_payne@bellsouth.net.

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'Restoration'

Montgomery's Operation Revitalization pairs pastor, church in need of healing

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

David Fleming says that Frank Pruden and his family came to Montgomery with nothing but a U-Haul truck and a hope that God could use them again.

"When we receive people at the City of Refuge the person is usually coming to us following a termination and is very broken," said Fleming, leadership director for Montgomery Baptist Association.

City of Refuge, a Montgomery Association ministry, is modeled after the ministry by the same name at First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Georgia — a sanctuary that gives hurting pastors a place to go.

'Put them together'

Pruden, a student pastor from Mississippi with Alabama ties, was one of those. In the months after he and his family arrived he received a new place to live, some counseling and leadership coaching and a new career in insurance. But over time he desired another type of boost too — a new opportunity at ministry.

And as Neal Hughes, associational mission strategist for Montgomery Association, lay in bed a few months ago, he thought of someone else who needed a boost too —



Photo by Neal Hughes

Frank Pruden is ordained as pastor of Cloverdale Baptist Church, Montgomery, as part of Montgomery Baptist Association's Operation Revitalization — a ministry pairing pastors in need of experience with churches in need of healing.

Cloverdale Baptist Church, a congregation in a changing community with mostly elderly members.

"Around 12:30, God just woke me up and said, 'Put them together,'" Hughes said.

The next day he shared the idea with the Prudens and discovered something amazing — Pruden and his wife, Paula, had been up until 1 a.m. pleading with God for direction.

"God was putting together a man in need of restoration and a church

in need of restoration," Hughes said.

And in that moment all knew God was calling them to start something new — Operation Revitalization, a way for Montgomery Association to pair pastors with churches in need of healing.

"It was just one of those moments from heaven," Hughes said.

Over at Cloverdale Baptist they received a sense of divine appointment too.

Deena Weston had felt God's

hand on the situation ever since she and her husband had searched for a church four years ago.

As the couple began to look for next steps for their family she called Ken May, then director of missions, and asked if he knew of a congregation who could use a hand.

'Lighthouse on a hill'

He pointed her to Cloverdale.

The big brick church sat on a hill surrounded by two colleges, a neighborhood growing in trendiness and a section of town with deep poverty. Weston was impressed by the opportunity — and the faithfulness of the Cloverdale Baptist members.

"There was just a scattering of a few members, and they were mostly over the age of 80," said Weston, in her late 40s. "It was really just inspiring to me that over the years they had been faithful to keep the doors open, to keep that lighthouse on a hill."

One way they'd been shining the light was through a weekday preschool with more than 100 children and 30 employees.

"That's a missions field right there in our building — souls that can be loved," Weston said. "And these

(See 'Cloverdale,' page 17)

Local churches come together to help Cloverdale run college ministry

Several years ago Deena Weston was working at a local Montgomery high school and met an international exchange student from Germany who really needed a different home.

She came to live with the Westons — members of Cloverdale Baptist Church (see story this page) — but had already started going to Eastmont Baptist Church.

"I didn't see any rea-



Photo courtesy of Gene Kim

son she should change that up, and in helping her be involved there I got to know Gene Kim," Weston said.

Kim, Eastmont Baptist's college and missions pastor, was working hard to get ministry efforts going in area neighborhoods and local college campuses, and Weston suddenly had an idea.

"Cloverdale is so close to Huntingdon College and Alabama State University, and I asked him what he had going on on those campuses," Weston said. "He said really nothing and God started connecting the strings."

Now Kim — with the

support of other local churches and the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions — leads a group similar to Baptist Campus Ministries at Cloverdale Baptist called Mosaic.

Opened doors

"It was a way for Cloverdale to have a college ministry without having the people we needed to execute that ministry," said Weston, noting that most of their congregation is made up of senior adults.

"It's another beautiful partnership that I hope will continue and grow."

Kim said it met a ministry need for them too.

"I had been thinking, 'How can we reach those campuses?' and Cloverdale kept popping into my mind," he said. "It's amazing how God opened all of those doors. They have been so welcoming to us. It's not an Eastmont thing or a Cloverdale thing, it's a Kingdom thing." (Grace Thornton)

3 stories you should know



RNS photo

A massive fire engulfed the 850-year-old Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris on April 15, destroying the entire wooden frame of one of Christianity's most beloved monuments. Parisians stood in the street and watched as smoke and flames billowed from the top of the cathedral, behind its iconic entryway with the famous rose window. After sunset they gathered to sing the Ave Maria in French. The cause was not known, but it was thought to be linked to a \$6.8 million renovation project. The construction on the cathedral began in 1163 and was completed by 1260. (RNS)

Hate crime charges added in Louisiana arsons

Hate crime charges have been filed against Holden Matthews, 21, a white man accused of arson that destroyed three Louisiana black Baptist churches.

Matthews pleaded not guilty April 15 to the charges in St. Landry Parish Criminal Court. He is charged with three counts of hate crimes, two counts of simple arson of a religious building and one count of aggravated arson of a religious building, and was denied bond.

The three churches, all more than a century old, are affiliated with the National Baptist Convention USA (NBC USA). Mount Pleasant and Greater Union Baptist churches in Opelousas and St. Mary Baptist Church in Port Barre lost their buildings in the fires. No deaths were reported. (BP)

Greear to be nominated for second term

North Carolina pastor J.D. Greear will be nominated for a second term as president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) at the June 11–12 SBC annual meeting in Birmingham. Pennsylvania pastor K. Marshall Williams will nominate him.

Greear, pastor of The Summit Church, Raleigh-Durham, has focused his first year as SBC president on the "Who's Your One?" evangelism initiative, ethnic and gender diversity in his presidential appointments and a Sexual Abuse Advisory Study, which is advising him on a range of issues related to sexual abuse in the Church. (BP)



GREEAR

— NEWSBRIEFS —

Judson's Scott Bullard named 11th president of Pfeiffer University

Scott W. Bullard, Judson College's senior vice president and dean of the college, has been named the 11th president of Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer, North Carolina. He will assume his new responsibilities June 1.

Bullard joined Judson's faculty as assistant professor of religious studies and director of campus ministries in 2008. He has served in numerous academic and administrative roles on campus, including most recently as interim president.

Bullard has worked to enhance the academic offerings of Judson, supervising the addition of the bachelor of science in equine science, the bachelor of social work and the associate degree in nursing and overseeing the growth of the college's distance learning program.

He also supervised several capital improvements and successfully concluded the \$20.4



BULLARD

million "Blessed Light" capital campaign.

"Judson College — her mission, the beauty of her campus and most of all her people — has shaped my mind and will forever have part of my heart," Bullard said. "I believe that God has somehow used this season of my life and service at Judson to impact students' lives here but also to prepare me for service at Pfeiffer. I could not be more pleased that I have been called to work alongside the faculty and staff of Pfeiffer University to impact students."

A North Carolina native, Bullard holds a doctor of philosophy degree in theology from Baylor University, a master of divinity degree from Duke University and a bachelor of arts in religion and philosophy from Campbell University. (Judson)

Teresa Crawford, wife of Lake Catoma Baptist pastor, dies at 70

Teresa Bishop Crawford — wife of Bobby Crawford, who serves as pastor of Lake Catoma Baptist Church, Cullman — died April 8. She was 70.

A native of Albertville and graduate of Albert-

ville High School, Crawford went on to study religion and sociology at Samford University in Birmingham. She ministered faithfully in her church, playing the piano and serving in other roles.

She is survived by her husband; son, Brian; and two grandchildren. (Grace Thornton)



CRAWFORD

SBC Credentials Committee for 2019 announced by J.D. Greear

Southern Baptist Convention President J.D. Greear has announced appointees to the 2019 Credentials Committee.

Appointed as chairperson is Betsy Gomez, a layperson at First Baptist Church, Irving, Texas. Muche Ukegbu, lead pastor of The Brook Church, Miami, will serve as vice chair.

Committee members from Alabama are:

▶ Ann Stafford, layperson, Southside Baptist Church, Dothan

▶ Stacy Stafford, pastor, Southside Baptist Church, Dothan

News near you

ALABAMA-CRENSHAW ASSOCIATION

▶ **Union Baptist Church, Honoraville**, will host the Alabama-Crenshaw Baptist Association Senior Adult Rally on May 9 at 6:30 p.m. Brother Billy Bob Bohannon will provide the entertainment. Mason Halacker is pastor of Union Baptist, and Jack Anderson is associational mission strategist.

BETHLEHEM ASSOCIATION

▶ **Eastwood Baptist Church, Monroeville**, will host a Founder's Day celebration May 5 at 10:30 a.m. Gary Miller will be the guest speaker. Worship will be led by Tim Lawrence, former youth and music director at Eastwood Baptist. A covered-dish lunch will follow the service. Steve Dunn is pastor.

CLEBURNE ASSOCIATION

▶ **East Heflin Baptist Church** will host the My Secure Family workshop April 28 from 3 to 7 p.m. It will focus on internet security and keeping children safe, and will be hosted by Tray and Melody Lovvorn of Undone Redone. A meal and child care will be provided. For more information call 256-463-5650 or visit www.eastheflinbaptistchurch.org. Jason Reaves is pastor.

COFFEE ASSOCIATION

▶ **Bethany Baptist Church, New Brockton**, will hold a homecoming service April 28 at 9 a.m. Former pastor Lane Harris will be the guest preacher. A fellowship lunch will begin at 11 a.m. For more information call 334-894-2344. Greg Cotter is pastor.

COVINGTON ASSOCIATION



LANCE

▶ **Bethany Baptist Church, Andalusia**, will host a senior adult revival May 7 at 10 a.m. Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, will be the guest speaker. A meal will follow. For more information or to RSVP call 334-222-3009. Nathan Daniels is pastor.

EAST CULLMAN ASSOCIATION

▶ The Strengthening Your Ministry in Evangelism Conference will be held May 4 at **Northbrook Baptist Church, Cullman**. Chuck Kelley and Sammy Gilbreath will be the guest speakers. The second session, "Challenges of Evangelism in the 21st Century," begins at 5:55 p.m. and does not require registration. For more information call 256-737-9918. Keith Warden is pastor of Northbrook, and Randy Makemson is director of missions.

EAST LIBERTY ASSOCIATION

▶ **County Line Baptist Church, Dudleyville**, will celebrate its 184th anniversary May 5 at 10:45 a.m. Wade Fuller will be the guest speaker. For more information call 334-864-7773. Mike Beck is pastor.

ESCAMBIA ASSOCIATION

▶ **First Baptist Church, Atmore**, will hold a one-night revival May 5 at 5:30 p.m. Kevin Blackwell, director of the Ministry Training Institute at Samford, will be the guest speaker. Josh Nichols will lead worship. For more information visit www.fbcatmore.org or search First Baptist Church of Atmore on Facebook. Kevin Garrett is pastor.

MORGAN ASSOCIATION

▶ **Walnut Grove Baptist Church, Decatur**, will host Jason Runnels in concert May 5 at 11 a.m. A love offering will be taken. For more information call 256-654-1160, email WGBC622Bethel@gmail.com or visit walnutgrovebaptistchurch.net. John Bain is pastor.



RUNNELS

MUD CREEK ASSOCIATION

▶ **Smithville Baptist Church, Bessemer**, will host a car show May 5 from 2 to 5 p.m. Mike Simpson is pastor.

SULPHUR SPRINGS ASSOCIATION

▶ **Bethel Baptist Church, Dora**, will host a spring revival April 28–May 1. Sunday services will be held at 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Wednesday services will begin at 7 p.m. Jeremy Powell, pastor of Crosswind Church, Union City, Tennessee, will be the guest preacher. Child care will be provided for the revival. Powell will also lead a Bible study Monday through Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. John Foles is pastor. ✝

— NEWSBRIEFS —

▶ Kevin Ward, director of missions, Limestone Baptist Association, Athens

▶ Kristi Warden, layperson, Northbrook Baptist Church, Cullman.

A full list of committee members is available at tabonline.org/committee. (BP)

Southwell retires after 15 years as music minister at Beulah Baptist



Beulah Baptist Church, Valley, in East Liberty Baptist Association, recently held a churchwide service in celebration of the retirement of music director Jerry Southwell. He served alongside his wife, Lillian, at Beulah Baptist for 15 years. (TAB)

Prayer and miracles center of newly released 'Breakthrough'



Everybody knows what it's like to suffer alongside a loved one in crisis. That includes Chrissy Metz. The "This Is Us" star said that's what drew her to the role of Joyce Smith in the new movie "Breakthrough," released April 17 in time for Easter weekend. "Breakthrough" dramatizes the true story of

Smith, whose 14-year-old son, John, fell through the ice on a frozen Missouri lake in 2015. John spent more than 15 minutes underwater and another 43 minutes with no signs of life — until his mother began to pray over him.

Three weeks later, John walked out of the hospital on his own and without brain damage — something his doctor described to NBC News at the time as a "bonafide miracle."

The movie depicts how the Smiths' church and their community joined in an outpouring of support and prayer for John and how his recovery prompted questions about why some people recover from crises and others do not. (RNS)

FBC Hackleburg, celebrates note-burning for new sanctuary



Jubilee Sunday was held March 31 at First Baptist Church, Hackleburg, in Marion Baptist Association, in celebration of the church's note burning.

First, Hackleburg, paid off its loan for the new sanctuary completed in March 2009. Pastor Sam Morgan spoke and gave thanks to God. Former interim pastor Larry Hill also spoke to the con-

gregation and reminded them of the three components of instruction for success: God is in charge, leaders must lead, people must follow.

"Together with much prayer and united effort the goal was reached. God truly works in miraculous ways," said church member Angie Anglin. "We give Him all the praise and glory." (TAB)

Nancy Tindle, wife of Mount Olive Baptist pastor, dies at 57



Nancy Denise Gray Tindle, whose husband, Tim, serves as pastor of Mount Olive Baptist Church, Coker, died April 7.

She was 57.

For decades Tindle was involved in missions work in Central America partnering with ministries like SHYNE Honduras and Good Samaritan Baptist Mission in Nicaragua.

Tindle touched many lives through her faith in Christ.

She is survived by her husband of 37 years and her daughter, Lindsey. (Grace Thornton)



TINDLE



ONE MISSION: The Great Commission ONE PROGRAM: The Cooperative Program MANY MINISTRIES: Great Commission Ministries

Senior Adult Evangelism Conference

FREE ADMISSION

NO REGISTRATION

Monday, May 6, 2019

Lakeside Baptist Church,
2865 Old Rocky Ridge Road, Birmingham

9:30-3, Lunch on your own

FEATURING:



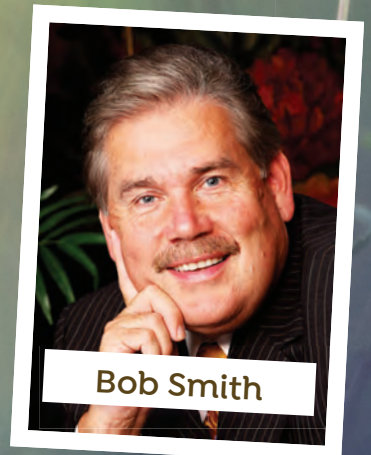
Daven Watkins



Roy Hill



Tom Richter



Bob Smith

For further information, please contact
Ministry Assistant Lori McGough at
1-800-264-1225, ext. 245



Alabama Baptist
STATE BOARD OF MISSIONS

This event is made possible by gifts of Alabama Baptists through the Cooperative Program.

Cloverdale Baptist 'revitalizing its mission,' becoming active part of community through MBA partnership

(continued from page 13)

precious church members served faithfully by opening their doors to these children."

On Sundays you can find church members washing their hands in the bathroom while stepping around toddlers' step stools, and they never complain about it or any other inconvenience, she said.

"And every Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday night they pray faithfully over a whole list of people," Weston said. "They're diligent about it. It would be easy to think this is a dying congregation, but it's full of worker bees who all have a heart to serve."

'Burning desire'

One of them is Buster Rambo, a church member who is 90 and has "prayed so long for Cloverdale to be revived," Weston said. "I think God's going to let him see it."

Pruden hopes he'll see it too.

Long before he knew he'd be paired with Cloverdale Baptist for Operation Revitalization he'd driven by the church and thought it would be the perfect place for God to start something new.

"I don't think we would've been



Photo courtesy of Deena Weston

Ninety-year-old Buster Rambo (second from right), a member of Cloverdale Baptist Church, Montgomery, 'prayed so long for Cloverdale to be revived' and through Operation Revitalization believes 'God's going to let him see it.'

ready to take on this project before coming to the City of Refuge, but God has used different things to prepare us for it, and it's been a burning desire and passion in my heart now for a while," Pruden said.

And Weston says the church is excited to partner with Pruden for Operation Revitalization — basically a one-year lab where Pruden can get

some experience as a senior pastor and be coached by Montgomery Association leadership. As part of the lab Pruden will help the church organize one major outreach per quarter. At the end of the year the church and Pruden can decide together if they would like to move forward.

Weston said she thought the idea was a perfect fit from the moment

Hughes first mentioned it to her.

"He needed a place where he could work and learn and try things, and we had a place where he could serve," she said. "Together we're hoping we can all heal and grow to be more like Jesus."

Their most recent outreach was April 20 — an event called Here's Cloverdale: An Afternoon on the Green.

"We're sowing the fields and doing outreach right now," Pruden said.

Fleming said it's a good thing for both Cloverdale Baptist and the surrounding neighborhoods.

"The church is learning again what it's like to be a part of the community," he said. "We're seeing them become more and more ingrained. It's revitalizing their mission."

And Pruden and his family have bought into the vision 100 percent — he and his family have moved to a house about 100 yards from the church so they can be an active part of the community.

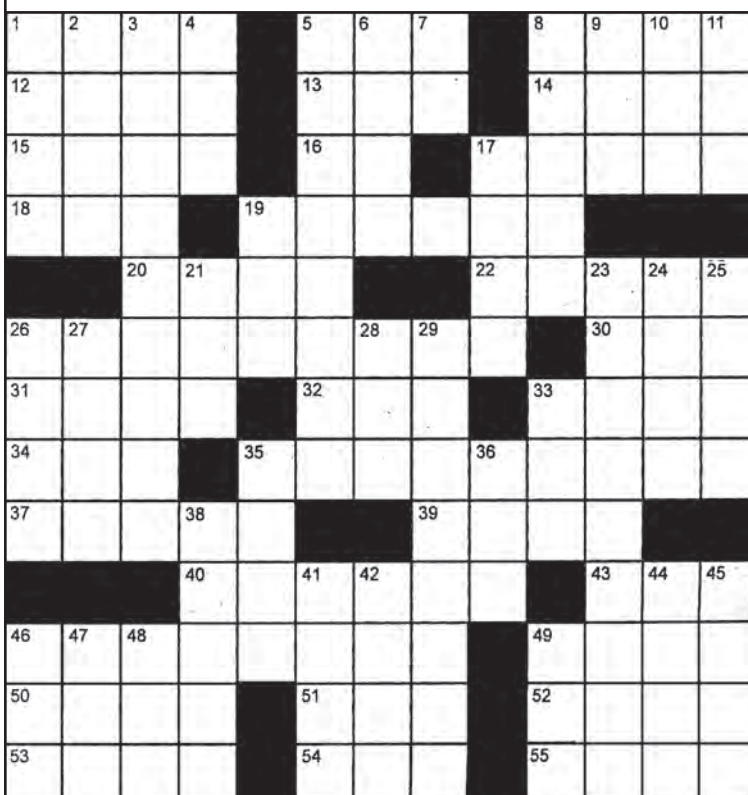
Weston said the church's new vision is still in the infant stages, but she believes soon they will be taking a few steps.

"I know God has a dream for us," she said. 🌱

Looking for the answers to this week's crossword? Those are now on page 2 so we can make the puzzle clues larger and easier to read. Happy puzzling!

Christian Crossword

By Lee Esch Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.



Across

1. Silas' cellmate. (Acts 16:25)
5. ___ aloud, spare not. (Isa. 58:1)
8. From whence come ___ and fightings among you? (James 4:1)
12. Straight mark.
13. Grassy meadow.
14. Against. (prefix)
15. Mine entrance.
16. Each. (abbr.)
17. Fork prongs.
18. Longing.
19. Documents.
20. There is a ___ for the silver. (Job 28:1)
22. Musical exercise.
26. All ___ of God. (2 Cor. 5:18)
30. Nothing.
31. Ritual.
32. Environmental watch-dog. (abbr.)
33. Buddies.
34. Before. (poetic)
35. Acceptable. (as a proposed law)
37. Grassy plant.
39. Carbonated beverage.

40. Renew ___ spirit within me. (Ps. 51:10)
43. Depot. (abbr.)
46. The Spirit of the Lord God _____. (Isa. 61:1)
49. A Great Lakes state.
50. Thy ___ is like a tower of Lebanon. (Song of Sol. 7:4)
51. Golfer's requirement.
52. Display model. (abbr.)
53. Raced.
54. A Great Lakes province. (abbr.)
55. Biblical garden. (Gen. 2:8)

Down

1. Can ___ well on an instrument. (Ezek. 33:32)
2. Assistant.
3. Not welcomed.
4. ___ down your nets for a draught. (Luke 5:4)
5. Immediately his leprosy was _____. (Matt. 8:3)
6. Thou knewest that I ___ where I sowed not. (Matt. 25:26)
7. Young adult. (abbr.)
8. Beltline.
9. Feminine name.
10. A set path. (abbr.)
11. Female sibling. (abbr.)
17. Every good ___ bringeth forth good fruit. (Matt. 7:17)
19. Swine.
21. Compass direction.
23. Not embarrassed.
24. A seasoning herb.
25. Otherwise.
26. Three. (Spanish)
27. The laborer is worthy of his _____. (Luke 10:7)
28. Military address. (abbr.)
29. A police arrest record.
33. Cushion.
35. Air. (prefix)
36. Child.
38. They ___ upon me with their mouths. (Ps. 22:13)
41. Reach hither thy hand, and thrust it ___ my side. (John 20:27)
42. Federal agents. (for short)
44. Brethren, the ___ is short. (1 Cor. 7:29)
45. Twelve o'clock.
46. ___ and outs.
47. He it is to whom I shall give a _____. (John 13:26)
48. ___ hospitality one to another. (1 Pet. 4:9)
49. Poem.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For April 28

Explore the Bible

By Robert E. Jackson, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Christian Studies, University of Mobile



SERVES
Mark 10:35–45

The Request (35–39a)

On the road to Jerusalem, Jesus talks to His disciples about His soon coming suffering and death. His words seemingly go in one ear and out the other.

James and John approach Jesus with a question. No, they are not asking for the honor to be crucified to the right and left of Jesus.

The disciples are desiring to replace the self-serving Roman government with a new government where they would rule.

While Christ is talking about dying as a suffering servant James and John are asking to be elevated to the most influential people on earth. Jesus tells them they don't understand their request.

The road for all Christ-followers is the same road Jesus traveled; a path of suffering and death.

The cup is a metaphor for suffering (Isa. 51:17, 22), and baptism refers to being submerged into calamity (Pss. 42:7; 69:1).

In other words Jesus wants the disciples to know following Him is filled with trials, difficulties and even death.

Jesus challenges the two men to consider the cost of their request.

Today we must make certain we proclaim the true gospel. No gospel exists without a cross.

A message of "Come to Jesus and you will become healthy, wealthy and free of suffering" is unbiblical and must be rejected.

It is imperative we teach others to consider carefully the cost of following Jesus.

The Reaction (39b–41)

Jesus assures James and John they will follow Him and will suffer greatly because of this decision.

However, He informs them the Father has already chosen the two people who will sit on His right and left in the new Kingdom.

The other disciples hear this conversation and are furious.

Their anger is not because James and John were insensitive to ask for power when Jesus was talking about His suffering and death.

No, they were angry because they wanted to sit at the right and left of Jesus. They were jockeying for position, fame and power.

Far too often in our churches we have people who are hungry for honor and position. They get mad when someone gets more recognition than they do.

Nor do we have to look very far to find a pastor who uses churches like a stepladder to get to a more prestigious place of "service."

As we study this passage we must ask ourselves, "Do I strive for recognition or honor? Am I jealous or envious of others when they are acknowledged and I am not?"

The Ransom (42–45)

The very heart of this section is summarized in Jesus' challenge to serve.

True honor comes from serving others instead of lording over them. After all Jesus came to serve and give His life as a ransom for many.

By using the word ransom Jesus is implying that humans are enslaved making it impossible for us to ever pay for our own freedom.

Jesus' death is a supreme act of sacrifice that anyone who believes in Him will be set free.

What must be done? Repent and believe today!

After believing, Christians must follow Jesus in a life of serving others.

Martin Luther King Jr. once said that anyone can be great because anyone can serve: "You don't have to have a college degree to serve.

You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You don't have to know Plato and Aristotle. ... You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love." 🙏

Bible Studies for Life

By James Riley Strange, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of New Testament, Samford University



SELL EVERYTHING YOU OWN
Matthew 19:16–26

Today we read a famous encounter (see also Mark 10:17–30 and Luke 18:18–30). Jesus' words have challenged believers ever since Jesus said them (see v. 25).

Before we examine the passage two schools of thought on the meaning of the aphorism in verse 24 deserve our attention.

First some scholars have suggested that the word translated "camel" was supposed to be "cable," the result of a scribe's misspelling. But it is not likely that Jesus originally talked about a "cable" passing through a needle's eye. Other early Jewish writings use similar sayings about large animals passing through needles' eyes.

Second we know of no gate of Jerusalem called the "Eye of the Needle." One may have existed at Damascus centuries after Jesus. Thus the reading that the "eye of the needle" is a narrow stone opening difficult to pass through is also unlikely.

It is therefore probable that Jesus used hyperbole as He often did (see examples in Matt. 5:29 and 7:3–5 and another camel example in Matt. 23:24).

Outward obedience is not enough. (16–20)

Jewish teachers would have agreed it is not enough simply to obey God's commands as Jesus established in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:21–48). Jesus' contemporaries would have recognized Jesus was "building a fence around the Torah." The idea is that a good teacher says, "God said, 'Don't do X,' but I say, 'Don't come close to doing X, and besides, God cares about your intention.'"

We should also note that Jesus' contemporaries would have found the man's question illegitimate in the first place for in Jewish teachings eternal life could not be earned. Rather God granted it as part of the covenant with Israel, and Israel kept the law as a response to the grace it

received at Sinai.

Furthermore many would have been scandalized by the question, "Which ones?" A person did not pick which commandments to obey. Therefore Jesus apparently is playing the man's game to his own ends. Notice how He quotes the commandments that deal with human relations (see Ex. 20:1–17) and then brings in one not on the list, but many would agree expressed the heart of the Torah: "Love your neighbor as yourself" from Leviticus 19:18. A lack of such love is the man's problem. Jesus is already aiming at verse 21.

External obedience grows out of our internal obedience to Christ. (21–22)

In verse 21 most translations have Jesus saying, "If you wish to be perfect ..." The word is better translated "complete." The man did not state he wished either perfection or completion, but Jesus is using subtle admonition: "Your understanding of the commandments is only partial because of your moral immaturity. What you lack is a love of your (deserted) neighbor that makes a real difference."

Jesus knows the law is full of commandments about care of the poor.

A relationship with God matters, not possessions. (23–26)

Possessions, of course, need not be material. I once heard a lecturer at Samford say, "Why did you become a Christian? Was it to gain inner peace? Well then it is inner peace you want and not God." Jesus said something similar in Matthew 6:21–24.

We may fall into the same trap this man did. We may seek the deed that will guarantee eternal life (or contentment or intellectual certainty) and so discover what we want is not God or Jesus or to live rightly, but this other thing. May we instead, as this man failed to do, learn to love God and love our neighbors as ourselves for no other reason than because God created us to do so. 🙏



Media reviews

Riley Clemmons

Riley Clemmons
Capitol, 2018

In this 12-song self-titled debut album for 19-year-old Riley Clemmons truth and hope take center stage. Clemmons is



a talented Christian pop singer/songwriter whose lyrics go much deeper

than what passes for mainstream pop. In the popular song “Broken Prayer” she acknowledges her need for God. In the catchy “Running After You” she admits she was chasing the temporal, but all along needed Him. In “Saving Me” and “Honest” she discusses the insecurities of a young woman and her vocals shine in “I’ll Stay.”

Mack Brock

Greater Things
Sparrow, 2018

“Greater Things” is the first solo studio project from Mack Brock, the former member and producer of Elevation Worship at Elevation Church, Charlotte, North Carolina. The 14-track album includes collaborations with Bethel Music’s Amanda Cook and London Gatch.

“Greater Things” is for those who want their worship songs at a slower

pace — with a gifted voice like Brock’s leading it. The album includes well-known songs like “Do It Again” and new ones like the title song “Greater Things.” (Michael Foust)



Singing Contractors

Photo courtesy of Gaither Music Group

‘Why us?’

Singing Contractors amazed by God’s blessings

By Michael Foust

Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Not long ago Aaron Gray and Josh Arnett could walk in and out of a Cracker Barrel without anyone noticing them.

But that was before their videos went viral. Before they were known as the Singing Contractors. Before the Gaither Music Group released their nationwide debut album. And before Cracker Barrel started selling that very album.

“People notice you when you go out and eat,” Gray said. “It’s just been a crazy, crazy thing.”

Their nationwide debut album “Working on a Building: Hymns & Gospel Classics” released earlier this year. It’s a compilation of well-known tunes (“How Great Thou Art” and “Because He Lives”) and original songs like the title track “Working on a Building.”

Their story is the stuff of a Hollywood film — with a country

gospel twist. Gray and Arnett were (and still are) general contractors.

“We can do windows, doors, cabinets, drywall, paint,” Arnett said. “We pretty much do it all.”

Rising stars

Of course they can sing too. Their rise to musical acclaim started when Gray posted one of their singing videos on Facebook. Friends named them the “Singing Contractors.”

A few years later, in 2015, their video rendition of “How Great Thou Art” went viral garnering 1 million views in 32 hours. It’s now been viewed more than 15 million times.

They appeared on Fox News’ “Fox and Friends” wearing “Singing Contractors” T-shirts. They sold enough T-shirts to pay for their first and second albums. Then Bill Gaither called wanting to put them on his label.

Their debut nationwide album released Feb. 1 and they’re still amazed by God’s blessings.

“We ask ourselves a lot: ‘Lord, why did you choose us?’ And we honestly cannot tell you why God chose to allow this to happen — only that God has used it to work in our lives,” Arnett said. “We always want to make sure that we give Him the praise and Him the glory for it. We’re honored to sing about Him. We’re nothing special and we want to be faithful to Him.”

Meet the reviewer

Michael Foust covers the intersection of faith and entertainment as a media reviewer for The Alabama Baptist. He also is the husband of an amazing wife and the father of four young children.

'The call of God'

Sharing a 'Jesus dream' to the Hispanic population in, around Salt Lake City

Luis Soto traveled across South America teaching and mobilizing in eight nations during a seven-year span. His missionary journey eventually led him and his family to Salt Lake City where he launched a new church.

"We arrived here to preach at a

How to pray:

▶ Pray for more Christians to be discipled and work alongside Soto spreading the gospel.

▶ Pray for the Soto family to experience God's presence when they feel discouraged. (TAB)

conference for a week," Soto said. While there he observed the need for Bible-believing and teaching churches in Utah, a state with a majority population of Latter-Day Saints or Mormons (2 percent are evangelical Christian). Soto and his family were overwhelmed.

"When you come here to become a church planter," Soto explained, "you need the call of God because it's not easy. It's a hard place."

Soto arrived in Salt Lake City in 2013 with his wife, Beatriz. He became the pastor of an established church and launched a new church a few years later.

Rather than seeking to grow a large church Soto aspires to be part of a church planting movement spanning across the metro area to reach the lost.

As a Puerto Rican whose native tongue is Spanish, Soto focuses pri-



NAMB photos by Daley Hake

Luis Soto and his wife, Beatriz, have one daughter, Eliana. Soto and his family serve in Salt Lake City where he planted Iglesia Bautista Gracia Eterna.

marily on the Hispanic population in and around Salt Lake City.

"Hispanic people come from California and Mexico for the American dream," said Soto. One of his goals is to show them their need for "the Jesus dream" and salvation.

Power of the gospel

The difficulties facing the Hispanic community can make evangelism and discipleship difficult. Many must work two or three jobs to make ends meet. Time is scarce so Soto invests in their lives through one-on-one discipleship by meeting at the park and in homes.

Soto has witnessed several families being changed by the power of the gospel. A passion for disciple-making is developing. Discipleship leads to starting new churches in a city devoid of gospel-proclaiming, gospel-teaching congregations.

Now men like Jose Castillo are prepared to be sent out as missionaries themselves. While it can be difficult to send out his co-laborers in the gospel, Soto knows it is necessary.

"The sensation is joy and you cry," he said. "But you have a joy because this is the purpose for a church. This is the Great Commission, 'Go and make disciples.'" (NAMB)



Luis Soto (center) preaches to his church, Iglesia Bautista Gracia Eterna—Eternal Grace Baptist Church, which he planted in Salt Lake City. Soto has a vision to see several churches launch out of his congregation.