



The Alabama Baptist

Toll free 800-803-5201
www.thealabamabaptist.org

May 2, 2019

Vol. 184, No. 18
Informing. Inspiring. Connecting.

INSIDE



May 5 is special day set aside to honor churches' 'legacy' adults

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Go, Taste and See — Bay St. Louis, Mississippi

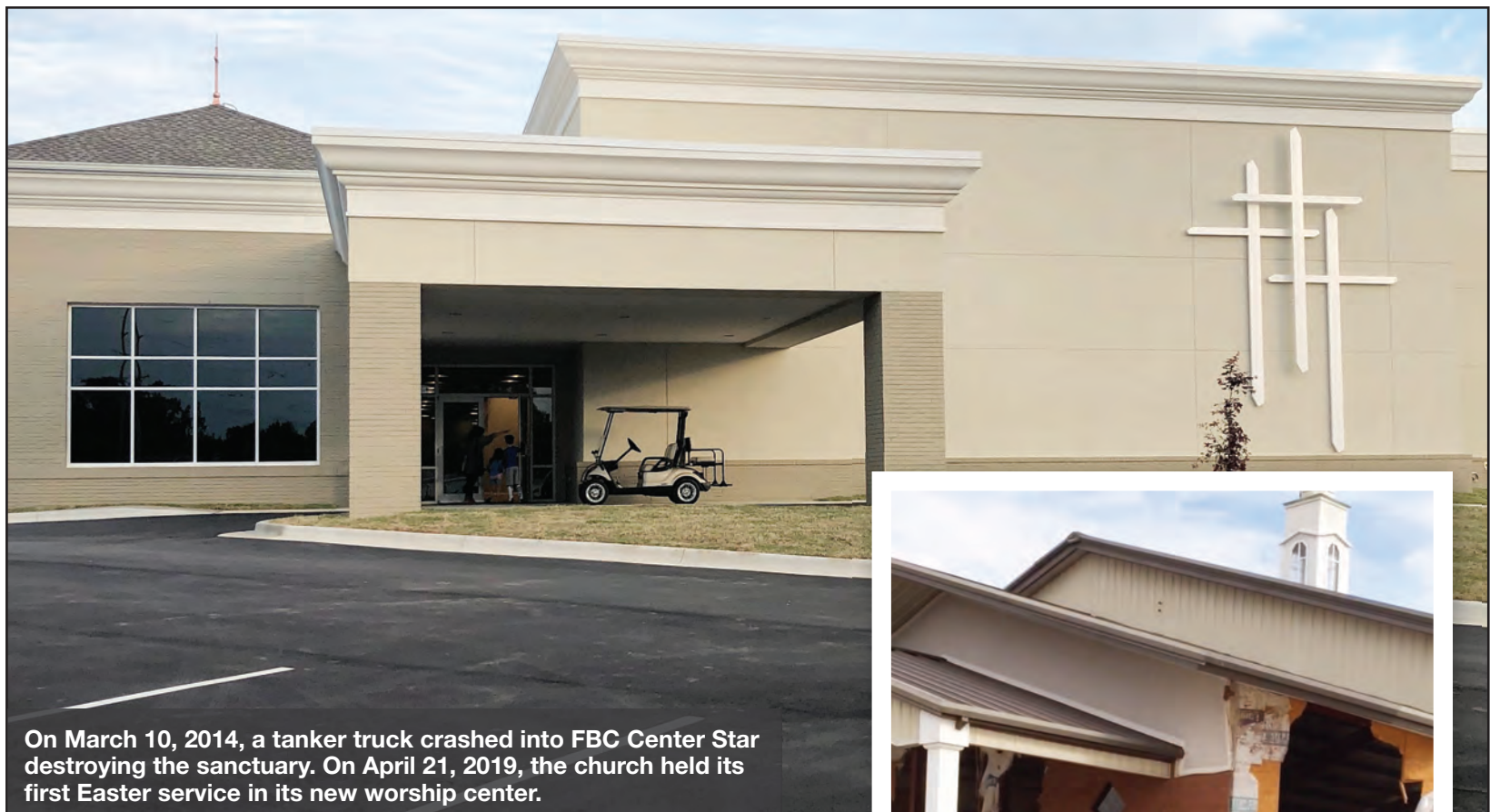
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Faith and Family — Respecting, honoring role of mother-in-law

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



On March 10, 2014, a tanker truck crashed into FBC Center Star destroying the sanctuary. On April 21, 2019, the church held its first Easter service in its new worship center.

Photos courtesy of FBC Center Star



Rebuilding the vision

FBC Center Star rebuilds after tanker truck accident destroys sanctuary

By Anna Keller
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Two dates will forever be part of the history of First Baptist Church, Center Star, in Killen: March 10, 2014, and April 21, 2019.

On March 10, 2014, the rural church's sanctuary was destroyed in a freak traffic accident.

"A flatbed trailer truck lost control on Highway 72 and crashed into the side of the building," recalled First, Center Star's longtime pastor Ronny Jones. "The truck went into the building about 50 feet, and the gas tanks on the truck burst and spilled about 100 gallons of diesel fuel onto the foundation."

The sanctuary was a total loss, but no one in the church was seriously injured and the truck driver suffered only minor injuries.

Though not what anyone had planned the accident was an opportunity to dream big and cast a forward-thinking

ministry vision as the church rebuilt, Jones said.

"God gave us a vision and a plan, and it unified our people to know we were working toward the future," Jones said.

'God provided'

The church's Family Life Center became the sanctuary following the accident, which meant some of the church's children's programs had to be relocated or postponed because of space limitations.

Staff members and ministry leaders learned to adapt, Jones said. They even put a donated hot tub in the Family Life Center to serve as a baptistery

and people continued to be saved and baptized throughout the rebuilding process, Jones said.

"We learned to be flexible and our people did very well," he said. "There were some uncomfortable times, but God provided us with a place and we kept reminding people it was temporary."

In April 2018, the church finally began work on its new facility and on Palm Sunday, April 14, 2019, they worshipped in the new building for the first time without fanfare.

"We have lots of new technology, including LED (See 'FBC Center Star,' page 12)

Every subscriber now gets complimentary weekly digital edition, website access

We know things have been a little unsettled the past month or so with *The Alabama Baptist's* (TAB) transition to Cambey & West, our new billing and circulation management partner. Thanks for hanging in there with us. We know this new partnership will be great for everyone involved — especially for you as a subscriber!

Some exciting upgrades are being made through this transition and we can't wait to share them.

One of the new perks of being a subscriber is each print subscriber now also gets a complimentary digital edition sent to his or her email each week.

Ready in your inbox

TAB Digital is released each Thursday morning and appears in your inbox via MailChimp.

The digital edition has the same content as the print edition — with an added bonus of every page showcased in full color and all website and email links accessible directly from the page.

For more information on the digi-

tal edition or to update your email address in our new system email subscribe@thealabamabaptist.org.

Another perk we offer is complimentary access to TAB's website for every subscriber. If you've forgotten what your login credentials are for the website — or if you've never set any up — you will definitely want to put this on your to-do list today.

TAB's website — www.thealabamabaptist.org — is updated daily with current news and top stories, many releasing between issues of the weekly print edition.

The website features the most up-to-date news and popular stories, but also provides access to TAB's archive of 40,000-plus articles stretching back as far as the year 2000.

The website also provides access to the weekly TAB News podcast and audio digest as well as an easy way to contact us with news items, comments or to make a donation.

Extra downloadable resources that go along with some of our top stories and article series also are available on the website.

By logging into the website you can view the full versions of the articles rather than the initial snippet.

One important note for those of you who are pros at the TAB website: We do need you to reset your password now that we have made some system upgrades.

Reset password

Go to www.thealabamabaptist.org and click on the gold "Login" button at the top of the site.

From there click on the first "Click here" option in the description. Then type in either your zip code and account number (found on the mailing label of your paper) or your email address and zip code.

Then click the red "Find Account" button near the bottom of the screen.

When prompted type your new password in the bottom two text boxes. The system has a few requirements for the passwords, but be sure to set it as something you can remember.

Feel free to contact subscribe@thealabamabaptist.org if you have any questions or problems. (TAB)

Terry honored with prestigious award by ACP

Congratulations to Bob Terry, editor-emeritus of *The Alabama Baptist*, for being awarded the **William B. Lippard Award for Distinguished Service to Religious Journalism** by Associated Church Press (ACP).

The William B. Lippard Award was established by ACP in 1966. The award is not handed out annually but rather when someone fits the criteria.



TERRY

According to the ACP website, winners of the award have made distinguished contributions in the field of religious journalism over a significant period of time; have performed with unusual distinction, courage or integrity in the religious press; have contributed influence which has markedly changed or advanced the ideals for which ACP

stands; or possess the personal qualities and talents held to be exemplary in the whole field.

The Lippard award is conferred upon the recommendation of a jury chosen by the ACP board of directors after a nomination is made.

Terry also received two awards for his personal experience article, "Don't give up on God," the third article in a six-part series written by Terry detailing the death of his first wife, Eleanor, and his faith journey during and after the tragedy.

"Don't give up on God" was given an **award of excellence** from ACP and **first place** for feature writing, first-person column by **Baptist Communicators Association**. To read the full "Learning about God: A Personal Story" series go to www.tabonline.org/learningaboutgod.

Terry also was awarded **fourth place** in editorial writing for "Saying No to Racism" by **Evangelical Press Association**. (TAB)



Graduation gift idea

Consider checking out Mike Tate's book, *The White Shirt: Find Your Peaceful and Life-giving Career at Any Stage of Life*, as a gift option for upcoming graduates. Tate partners in ministry with TAB.



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

(ISSN 0738-7741; USPS 011-080)
© The Alabama Baptist, Inc.
is published weekly except for one week in July and December by The Alabama Baptist, Inc., at 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209. Phone: 205-870-4720. Statewide phone: 800-803-5201.
Website: www.thealabamabaptist.org
Email: news@thealabamabaptist.org or subscribe@thealabamabaptist.org
Periodicals postage paid at Hattiesburg, Miss.

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Includes print, digital and full web access

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JENNIFER DAVIS RASH

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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



Epic superhero movie all the rave — how should we respond?

Ten-plus years and 22 movies later, the epic conclusion to Marvel's Infinity Saga finally hit theaters.

“Avengers: End Game” is being hailed as the greatest superhero movie of all time by numerous critics and Marvel Cinematic Universe loyalists.

If you aren't a superhero movie fan no worries — think Super Bowl, College Football Playoff National Championship or the likes of a royal wedding and you'll understand the anticipation and fanfare.

My husband, Jason, and our nephews and nieces turned me on to these rescue-the-universe adventure movies a few years ago. Sometimes Jason and I get to watch a new release with a nephew or niece; sometimes we double date with friends.

For “Avengers: Endgame” it was only the two of us amid a packed theater at a late-night showing on opening night, April 25.

And wow — the writers, editors and producers did not disappoint. The movie definitely lived up to all the hype.

The movie is rated PG-13 with the expected violence in a movie of this type and some mild language scattered throughout.

Still many of us power through the somewhat uncomfortable moments for the overall experience.

And when we are trying to determine what movies are OK for the children in our lives to see, the reviews provided by family-friendly media groups are a great resource.

The Alabama Baptist (TAB) started offering a similar resource of reviewing movies and TV shows about a year and a half ago.

Our goal is for the Media Reviews section to provide a help for Christian living.

For some this means strict entertainment limits and no TV, movies or books that aren't marketed as Christian; for others it means looking at entertainment through a Jesus lens according to the Spirit's leading.

Michael Foust serves as our movie and TV reviewer. His spe-

cialty is critiquing entertainment through a Jesus lens — trying to help all readers know what is available so they can make informed decisions. From there parents also can help their kids make better choices too.

Our challenge is to reach a broad demographic of readers with our content. Providing resources like Media Reviews is an example of how we do that.

One reader recently commented: “It's important for all Baptists to engage the world and seek to be in it but not of it. With so many engaging in TV without confronting worldliness in those

shows, equipping and encouraging believers to think through what they watch is a welcomed practice. I've found [the review section] very useful on several occasions.”

Which movies are OK for Christian families to watch? How do we guard our hearts and minds amid a media-saturated world? Are we teaching the children in our lives how to make wise choices?

TAB hopes to help you think through these and so many other real-life issues as we share resources to assist in the decision-making process. 🙏

RASHIONAL THOUGHTS

Is it basic economics — law of supply and demand? Human trafficking second only to drug trafficking

Human trafficking is the fastest growing criminal activity in the world — estimated at \$150 billion annually.

Reports indicate 27 million slaves currently exist worldwide and up to 800,000 victims are trafficked in the U.S. annually.

Alabama is not immune with Birmingham being among the six hotspots for trafficking in the Southeast. In fact I-20 is called the “super highway for human trafficking in the United States” and I-85, I-10 and I-65 are other major corridors for trafficking.

The Alabama State House observed April 24 as Human Trafficking Awareness Day following a string of arrests in multiple Morgan and Madison County massage parlors in mid-April.

During a special news confer-

ence that day Rep. Merika Coleman (D-Birmingham) and Rep. Terri Collins (R-Decatur) introduced four bills aimed at combatting human trafficking.

Three bills (HB 261, HB 262 and HB 264) passed out of committee unanimously. They all received their second readings on the House floor April 25 and are eligible for debate. HB 260 received a public hearing and was to be voted on by the committee May 1.

HB 260 and HB 261 would mandate human trafficking training on victim identification and trauma-centered care for all health care professionals and new commercial drivers respectively.

HB 262 and HB 264 clarify existing law to ensure potential victims receive the most protection possible.

Reps. Coleman and Collins were

joined at the news conference by more than 30 entities involved in combatting human trafficking.

While human trafficking is not a new issue awareness has developed slowly, according to David Pinkleton of End It Alabama.

“Unless you are the trafficker you are against human trafficking but there is still a lot of work to do to combat it,” he said.

The faith community has been a great help in the fight against trafficking, Pinkleton told *The Alabama Baptist (TAB)*.

To learn more about the issue and the new legislation listen to this week's *TAB News* on iTunes or anywhere you get your podcasts. The podcast also is archived at www.thealabamabaptist.org/explore/podcasts.

— Jennifer Davis Rash

Your Voice



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

Hurricane Michael recovery 6 months later

By Clay Owens
www.clayowens.me

How do you tell the story of those who have endured the last six months in the area devastated by Hurricane Michael?

Everyone is waiting on something. And we're waiting longer than we ever anticipated. Six months ago, I naively thought we would have at least the inside of our house almost back together by now. But our house

is still completely gutted. Insurance has yet to give us anything close to the amount required to restore the house. We're camping out in an RV in our front yard.

I'm still confident that our personal situation will, in time, be sorted out. Even so, it looks like we're still at least six months out. Or will it be longer? Who can tell anymore?

In the days after the storm, hope burned brightly as strangers from

all over poured in to restore power, serve food, deliver supplies and help clear roads and yards of debris.

As our plight faded from the news cycle, so did the help. When I travel out of town now and mention how things are here, I always get the same answer: "I didn't know it was still that bad." It's not that people don't care; they just don't know.

My hope is that now, at the six-month mark, people will again become aware that the needs here in the Florida Panhandle are great. I believe the people who cared six months ago still care today. I believe if they know there is a need, they will still do what they can to help — I saw it firsthand in October, as I received call after call, message after message from people who wanted to do what they could. They came willingly and we were able to connect them with countless needs.

I assure you there is still a need. If you want to help, I encourage you to reach out to churches and agencies here in Panama City and surrounding communities. They can point you to where the needs are.

I believe people still care; they just need the opportunity to show it.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Clay Owens directs the worship ministry at Emerald Coast Fellowship, Lynn Haven, Florida. For more information about how your church or missions team can help in Hurricane Michael recovery and rebuilding efforts go to www.tabonline.org/resources.

The task of making disciples of all nations has not been fully embraced in the American church ... in spite of the convenience of having other ethnicities and immigrants from other countries often living in the same neighborhood.

Scott McConnell
Executive director
LifeWay Research

In America, it seems that fewer people are living with faith. And yet, both in America and internationally, more people are dying for their faiths. It pains me to write this: Martyrdom is alive and well in this world.

Jeffrey Salkin
Rabbi and author

In every situation, there are always two stories: the story you see and the story God sees.

Pastor Dewayne Rembert
Flatline Church
at Chisholm
Montgomery, Ala.

Music is something that allowed me to become comfortable with myself.

Walker Burroughs
American Idol finalist
and future choir director
Vestavia Hills, Ala.

Letters to the Editor

The stained-glass windows in the hallways of MacGorman Chapel at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) were conceived as a permanent recognition of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) conservative resurgence and those who participated in it, including many small church pastors.

Without those represented in the windows, instead of standing for the inerrancy of the Bible I believe Southern Baptists would now be debating same-sex "marriage," abortion for any reason and whether Jesus is the only way of salvation.

Now the SWBTS trustees and the new administration have reversed the previous commitment and removed all these windows.

Numerous Baptists have won-

dered if it is a disregard of the conservative resurgence and an attempt to erase all traces of — in my opinion — the falsely accused and much maligned Pattersons.

Many are disappointed the new administration and trustees have made no attempts at reconciliation. Pray for SWBTS and the SBC. Time will tell.

David R. Brumbelow
Highlands, Texas

EDITOR'S NOTE — David Brumbelow is a graduate of SWBTS, small church pastor and author. He, along with his father, Joe E. Brumbelow, and brothers, are represented in one of the windows that were removed.

To read the news story on the stained-glass windows visit www.thealabamabaptist.org.

Share online or email news@thealabamabaptist.org

“We look at everything in life through the lens of our belief in a God who is holy-love.”

A J I T H F E R N A N D O

Teaching director of Youth for Christ in Sri Lanka

If you want a more effective life or organization, change the habit loop. Most every action we do daily is based on habit. You do not think of your morning routine; you just do it. You do not look at a map to go to the grocery store, you get in your car and drive. Your day follows a regimen of habits. ... Understanding how habits work helps you control certain areas of your life and can assist leaders in affecting the habit loops of their organization.

George Yates
Church health strategist
Alabama Baptist State Board
of Missions

First impressions of your church will flow from how a visitor feels

the first few seconds they land on your website.

Dated information, drab graphics and dead links tell visitors the church is apathetic in going about its ministry to the glory of God — in the same way an overgrown lawn and decrepitated facility would say the same to a person who pulls up to your church in person.

On the other hand, a well maintained website tells guests the church wants to model excellence in all they do.

In today's digital age, the care that goes into a church website is indicative of how guests expect to be treated when they actually visit your church.

Aaron Wilson
FactsandTrends.net

According to [a new Gallup] report, since the last years of the 20th century, “church membership” has shrunk 25 percent, from 69 percent of the population to 52 percent. That compares with a 14 percent decline in religious identification, from 90 percent to 77 percent. ...

The traditional pattern of young adults joining churches after they get married and have children has not been holding true. ...

The evidence is dramatic. That it portends a severe crisis in institutional religion in America should be obvious to anyone with eyes to see and ears to hear.

Mark Silk
Professor of religion
in public life
Trinity College (Conn.)

From the *Twitterverse*

@matalexander

Sanctimony is not a fruit of the Spirit.

@DrMattQueen

If you are confident in the gospel for your salvation, then be confident in that same gospel to share it. The same gospel you heard and by which you were saved is the same gospel someone needs to hear in order that they may be saved. #evangelism

@davidjeremiah

Do you ever feel overwhelmed by the presence of God? By His Spirit He is with you constantly, and the Holy Spirit even dwells within you. Try to develop the habit of practicing His presence. Learn to frequently whisper to yourself, “Christ is with me, around me, inside me.”

@andrewtwalk

‘Easter worshippers.’ My ‘identity’ has been ‘erased.’ See how we can use that language, too? But let’s not because ‘identity’ is a term progressives use to justify whatever inclination they want celebrated.

@kjant91

Don’t miss the opportunities that God has opened for you by staying stuck and stagnant where you are.

@kk4me2

Let us sing praises to our Lord throughout the day. Amen.

@Jacob_LMay

Father thank you for the late nights and early mornings of studying to get to know you more. This incredible journey is provoking a more profound longing to love you more.

@timkellernyc

To stay away from Christianity because part of the Bible is offensive assumes if there is a God he wouldn’t have any views that upset you.

@jasonkeithallen

“The gospel is only good news if it gets there in time.” Carl Henry

@1ofHisSheep

It’s a strange and peculiar thing... LOVE...that compels us to do that thing the world says just doesn’t make sense. Do it anyway. It’s the Gospel.

@macbrunson

“David was prospering in all his ways for the LORD was with him” (1 Sam. 18:14). Your help is in the name of the Lord, not the name of your favorite Christian hero.



SBOM photo

Rick Lance is executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions.

Welcome to Birmingham

For the first time since 1941 our state will soon welcome messengers to Birmingham for the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

The meeting will be conducted at the Birmingham-Jefferson Civic Center (BJCC) June 11–12.

I especially commend to you the SBC Pastors Conference led by Danny Wood, pastor of Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Birmingham. The conference, free and open to the public, will take place at the BJCC on June 9–10.

Alabama Baptists also would be blessed to attend the SBC meeting as elected messengers from your local church or as a guest.

Southern Baptists from numerous states will participate June 8 in Crossover Birmingham, an evangelistic outreach initiative that will see the gospel shared across the Birmingham-metro area. The North American Mission Board has set a goal of reaching 20,000 homes with the gospel. Training and a rally featuring Johnny Hunt will be held June 5.

Find out more at CrossoverBHM.org. Pray for those who hear the gospel, that they will receive it and experience the new life that only Christ can offer.

—Rick Lance

CHURCH REPORT FOR 2018

Baptisms

Cooperative Program Receipts

FOR CHURCHES (PART 5)

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

Lookout Mountain	Baptism	CP	Designated	Northside	0	\$374.39	\$666.80	Faith Rock	6	\$0.00	\$0.00	Berean		\$50.00	\$65.00
Demaris	3	\$540.62	\$774.97	Oak Park	17	\$17,120.00	\$7,916.42	Free Home	0	\$0.00	\$50.00	Bethel	38	\$19,123.89	\$10,544.17
Friendship	0	\$0.00	\$200.00	Oakley	1	\$1,969.00	\$8,637.00	Gethsemane	0	\$0.00	\$500.00	Big Creek		\$0.00	\$0.00
Little River	0	\$404.60	\$2,638.03	Owens Cross Roads	2	\$400.00	\$6,251.00	Gilliam Springs	42	\$103,404.19	\$80,474.67	*Boe Road		\$0.00	\$200.00
Mill Creek	2	\$0.00	\$870.00	Pineview	6	\$0.00	\$0.00	Grace		\$250.00	\$3,580.11	Calvert	52	\$9,206.00	\$6,464.00
Mt Bethel	0	\$1,500.00	\$900.00	Pleasant Springs	1	\$14,160.00	\$17,494.50	Grace Fellowship	0	\$2,073.98	\$1,650.00	Cambodian Mission		\$0.00	\$0.00
Mt Calvary	2	\$445.25	\$1,444.00	Rivertree	22	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	Grant First	2	\$6,000.00	\$3,125.17	Cedar Creek		\$0.00	\$0.00
Mt Vernon	0	\$3,820.00	\$2,997.00	Sherwood	10	\$33,536.00	\$10,503.00	Guntersville First	12	\$40,191.32	\$13,865.96	Celebration	15	\$50.00	\$640.00
Mt Zion	0	\$1,094.00	\$300.00	Shippis	15	\$0.00	\$0.00	Haney's Chapel		\$3,436.86	\$2,771.00	Celeste Road		\$1,352.00	\$4,519.60
New Bethel	0	\$2,835.87	\$9,133.76	Simple	9	\$5,816.41	\$0.00	Happy Hill	0	\$919.18	\$1,444.46	Chickasaw First	0	\$500.00	\$2,950.05
Pleasant Valley #1	0	\$3,202.00	\$1,388.00	Southside	3	\$71,466.01	\$53,119.20	Happy Home	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Churchula	9	\$3,900.00	\$3,600.00
Pleasant Valley #2		\$1,431.28	\$200.00	Sweetwater Fellowship	11	\$0.00	\$0.00	Hebron		\$0.00	\$0.00	Citronelle Memorial	7	\$9,710.12	\$11,942.10
Shady Grove	0	\$520.00	\$4,930.00	The Brook	5	\$0.00	\$0.00	High Point		\$1,500.00	\$0.00	Cloverdale	11	\$4,719.74	\$3,050.86
Southeast	1	\$0.00	\$50.00	Fellowship of Faith	36	\$0.00	\$0.00	Hilcrest	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	College Park		\$16,155.15	\$14,305.35
Unity	0	\$0.00	\$500.00	Trinity	7	\$6,689.13	\$2,943.00	Honeycomb	2	\$2,747.14	\$5,780.06	Cottage Hill	95	\$39,432.00	\$51,784.25
*Victory		\$0.00	\$0.00	Union Grove	4	\$12,470.73	\$1,292.00	Hustleville	0	\$2,497.70	\$1,102.00	Crawford	9	\$44,760.10	\$51,087.61
Welcome Hill	6	\$1,874.00	\$0.00	University	0	\$55,299.84	\$48,313.73	Kingdom	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Creola First	2	\$6,782.85	\$6,962.87
Yellow Creek	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Victory Fellowship	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Liberty Hill		\$1,099.92	\$1,375.00	Cross Point		\$2,140.71	\$2,801.14
Lookout Mountain Totals 14		\$17,667.62	\$26,325.76	Wall Highway	8	\$36,000.00	\$20,631.83	LifePoint Brindlee Mt.		\$0.00	\$0.00	Crosspoint of Mobile	5	\$0.00	\$0.00
				Wears Chapel	0	\$0.00	\$470.00	Lifepoint	83	\$500.00	\$0.00	Cypress Shores	6	\$1,999.92	\$8,546.92
Madison	Baptism	CP	Designated	West Mastin Lake	5	\$1,100.00	\$0.00	Maranatha Haitian	0	\$600.00	\$0.00	Dauphin Island	5	\$11,971.56	\$12,394.98
All Nations	0	\$11,676.62	\$3,025.56	Westlawn	0	\$3,075.00	\$4,108.00	Mountain View	1	\$5,112.00	\$500.00	Dauphin Way	33	\$57,100.04	\$82,861.00
Antioch	2	\$0.00	\$0.00	Whitesburg	52	\$348,219.27	\$382,609.77	Mt Calvary	14	\$956.12	\$5,528.39	Dawes First	6	\$19,144.11	\$18,304.44
Bethany	0	\$253.49	\$1,375.20	Willowbrook	191	\$60,000.00	\$319,575.31	Mt Carmel	2	\$7,288.78	\$8,306.00	Dayspring	31	\$15,000.00	\$26,900.00
Bethlehem HG	26	\$6,833.30	\$0.00	Winchester Road	14	\$35,924.00	\$2,899.50	Mt Hebron	1	\$1,416.61	\$400.00	Ebenezer	10	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bethlehem LS	1	\$5,146.04	\$9,618.52	Woodland Hill	1	\$3,768.91	\$4,078.00	Mt Olive #1	0	\$354.43	\$1,898.64	Emmanuel	1	\$11,816.86	\$8,820.41
Bevill's Chapel	2	\$0.00	\$11,251.71	Madison Totals	823	\$1,734,185.39	\$1,606,812.77	Mt Olive #2	3	\$1,200.00	\$2,149.00	Faith Baptist Wilmer		\$39.00	\$0.00
Brownsboro	2	\$10,389.63	\$9,074.47					Mt Sinai		\$0.00	\$0.00	*Faith of Grand Bay		\$0.00	\$0.00
Carter's Grove	0	\$500.00	\$397.00	Marion	Baptism	CP	Designated	Mt Tabor	1	\$650.00	\$650.00	Faith of Mobile	3	\$0.00	\$0.00
Cave Spring	0	\$1,000.00	\$2,643.65	Antioch	0	\$3,760.50	\$4,894.50	Mt Vernon	15	\$62,104.12	\$11,259.00	Fellowship	1	\$2,725.00	\$3,360.00
Central	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Barnesville	1	\$258.00	\$774.00	New Canaan	1	\$0.00	\$0.00	Forest Hill	7	\$34.00	\$466.00
Charity	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	*Brilliant		\$142.10	\$105.26	New Covenant	0	\$4,925.02	\$3,283.32	Friendship	11	\$60,975.00	\$27,256.70
Christ Community	7	\$0.00	\$0.00	Cornerstone	1	\$7,724.00	\$5,919.47	New Friendship	0	\$2,233.43	\$440.00	Fulton Road	2	\$2,230.35	\$8,236.27
Clements Huntsville	1	\$0.00	\$0.00	Eastside	0	\$0.00	\$7,423.13	New Heights	0	\$5,137.00	\$4,754.76	Georgetown	3	\$300.00	\$1,260.00
Community Life	2	\$775.00	\$0.00	Emmanuel	0	\$300.00	\$0.00	New Macedonia	0	\$1,050.81	\$0.00	Government Street	4	\$33,902.00	\$15,761.23
Cornerstone	3	\$0.00	\$0.00	Fulton Bridge	5	\$18,305.00	\$6,076.00	Northside	0	\$877.00	\$649.00	Grand Bay First	23	\$32,732.68	\$19,480.95
Cove Baptist	48	\$18,295.56	\$8,168.60	Gu Win First	0	\$413.64	\$0.00	Northwest		\$0.00	\$0.00	Gulfcreek		\$0.00	\$200.00
CrossPointe	0	\$2,400.00	\$0.00	Guin First	14	\$28,795.63	\$25,588.32	Oak Grove		\$0.00	\$0.00	Haven Woods	4	\$500.00	\$2,883.00
East Huntsville	0	\$1,540.64	\$1,860.00	Hackleburg First	5	\$10,356.75	\$5,126.24	Oak Hill	4	\$300.00	\$100.00	Heron Bay		\$0.00	\$1,200.00
Essential	12	\$8,680.00	\$0.00	Hamilton First	14	\$59,175.00	\$18,116.50	Pine Grove #1		\$0.00	\$0.00	Higher Ground		\$3,449.20	\$1,478.23
Farley Community	9	\$22,483.56	\$22,779.39	Harmony Grove	10	\$9,678.29	\$948.26	Pine Grove #2		\$0.00	\$0.00	Highpoint	36	\$9,950.00	\$1,300.00
Fellowship	2	\$0.00	\$0.00	Hines Memorial	15	\$3,901.00	\$0.00	Pleasant Grove	0	\$3,997.00	\$2,827.00	Hill Spring	2	\$2,463.92	\$4,347.93
First Flint River	12	\$600.00	\$0.00	Kemp Chapel		\$3,031.00	\$2,040.00	Pleasant Hill #2		\$0.00	\$250.00	Hollinger's Island	6	\$21,373.26	\$18,481.29
Five Points	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mt Olive	5	\$500.00	\$2,300.00	Pleasant Valley	2	\$0.00	\$0.00	Hope of the Nations		\$0.00	\$0.00
Flint River	27	\$44,850.00	\$17,453.72	Mt Zion	4	\$3,734.64	\$3,748.00	Primera Hispana	7	\$2,352.00	\$200.00	Indian Springs	1	\$0.00	\$579.25
Galilee	1	\$900.00	\$838.00	*New Hope		\$0.00	\$0.00	Red Apple	0	\$3,813.18	\$2,262.82	International		\$0.00	\$0.00
GracePointe	22	\$7,000.96	\$2,900.22	Old Trinity	2	\$605.00	\$224.00	Red Hill	1	\$0.00	\$0.00	Irvington First	3	\$3,000.00	\$10,673.45
Gurley First	1	\$1,958.33	\$175.00	Pleasant Grove	2	\$5,138.48	\$7,709.43	Rehobeth		\$0.00	\$0.00	Kushla - Bethany		\$0.00	\$830.00
Harmony	0	\$1,114.38	\$1,088.00	Primera Iglesia	0	\$770.00	\$2,837.25	Rock Springs	0	\$2,900.00	\$4,540.00	Lafitte	3	\$563.31	\$7,023.23
Harvest	5	\$28,332.28	\$19,347.80	Shiloh	2	\$1,730.08	\$4,207.55	Ruth	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Lambert Grove	8	\$1,100.00	\$0.00
Haven	2	\$21,789.79	\$9,121.10	South Hamilton	0	\$730.85	\$0.00	Sardis	7	\$75,336.87	\$30,985.99	Laos		\$975.00	\$900.00
Hayes Chapel	2	\$0.00	\$0.00	Winfield First	9	\$88,090.71	\$43,279.18	Second Boaz	0	\$2,592.23	\$5,120.64	Lockler Memorial	1	\$6,481.06	\$6,078.75
Hazel Green First	18	\$24,921.82	\$26,898.00	Marion Totals	89	\$247,140.67	\$141,317.09	Shoal Creek	0	\$2,503.99	\$2,854.00	Luke 418 Fellowship	17	\$6,000.00	\$41,251.84
Highlands	0	\$2,150.00	\$4,235.61					Snead Chapel		\$0.00	\$0.00	Manor	9	\$3,015.53	\$8,644.17
Hillwood	0	\$60,855.70	\$884.00	Marshall	Baptism	CP	Designated	Solid Rock	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Moffett Road	7	\$23,461.40	\$21,716.40
Hobbs Island	5	\$3,753.66	\$0.00	Albertville First	11	\$68,589.18	\$67,646.85	Solitude	12	\$41,798.80	\$7,530.00	Myers Memorial	0	\$687.10	\$641.95
House Hope/Restoration	15	\$2,440.00	\$950.00	Alder Springs	0	\$3,134.59	\$2,579.84	South Sauty	1	\$8,130.79	\$6,992.29	Navco		\$0.00	\$0.00
Huntsville First	25	\$125,721.12	\$198,851.59	Antioch	1	\$0.00	\$4,278.00	Southside	6	\$12,895.55	\$4,003.84	New Home		\$0.00	\$0.00
Huntsville Korean	5	\$0.00	\$0.00	Antioch at Martling	1	\$0.00	\$0.00	Springdale		\$0.00	\$0.00	New Home Citronelle		\$1,623.19	\$1,485.24
Huntsville Park	10	\$23,860.59	\$6,789.00	Arab First	5	\$80,659.97	\$44,743.53	Sweet Home	4	\$3,344.00	\$1,886.80	New Hope		\$0.00	\$0.00
Hurricane Grove	7	\$0.00	\$0.00	Bakers Chapel	1	\$5,595.67	\$1,747.00	The Fellowship	4	\$11,004.00	\$3,533.10	New Jerusalem		\$0.00	\$0.00
Jackson Way	3	\$32,703.04	\$23,349.00	*Beech Spring		\$0.00	\$0.00	Trading Post	6	\$3,771.75	\$0.00	New Liberty Park		\$0.00	\$0.00
Korean First	1	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	Bel Air	0	\$1,200.00	\$1,360.00	Union Grove #1	12	\$1,800.00	\$2,938.04	New Pilgrim	1	\$0.00	\$200.00
Korean Grace	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Bethany	10	\$15,133.32	\$34,600.30	Union Grove #2		\$0.00	\$0.00	New Vision		\$0.00	\$0.00
Lakewood	8	\$4,742.00	\$6,508.07	Bethlehem	9	\$31,507.85	\$2,500.00	Union Grove First	3	\$15,787.72	\$12,473.94	Orchard	0	\$9,137.49	\$8,475.49
Liberty	1	\$1,200.00	\$1,660.00	Bethsaida	4	\$8,358.13	\$6,875.52	Valley View		\$0.00	\$0.00	Parkway	4	\$2,356.00	\$2,368.43
Life's Journey	0	\$3,172.40	\$0.00	Beulah	7	\$7,344.18	\$14,711.25	Victory Cornerstone		\$0.00	\$0.00	Pine Springs		\$0.00	\$0.00
Lighthouse	1	\$8,550.00	\$1,675.00	Boaz First	7	\$55,775.48	\$147,314.94	Victory Hill	2	\$0.00	\$0.00	Providence		\$0.00	\$0.00
Locust Grove	4	\$664.92	\$35.08	Brindlee Mountain	6	\$9,514.15	\$3,972.15	Victory Missionary	5	\$0.00	\$1,440.00	Redemption	133	\$128,205.03	\$87,115.45
Mable Hill	1	\$600.00	\$0.00	Butler	1	\$0.00	\$0.00	Warrenton	0	\$2,055.18	\$1,228.77	Relevant		\$0.00	\$0.00
Madison First	9	\$18,443.22	\$19,843.98	Carlisle	3	\$5,500.00	\$6,271.00	Westside Arab		\$0.00	\$500.00	Renascent		\$1,200.00	\$900.00
Madison Korean	0	\$1,000.00	\$350.00</												

CHURCH REPORT FOR 2018

South City		\$751.63	\$751.62	Hartselle First	9	\$47,407.99	\$25,187.00	Muscle Shoals Totals 97	\$319,329.50	\$185,770.60	Poplar Springs	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	
South Mobile		\$9,472.00	\$7,868.00	Highland	2	\$3,931.90	\$610.00				Prudes Creek	0	\$613.93	\$909.00	
*Spice Pond		\$249.00	\$80.00	Hopewell		\$412.50	\$1,100.00	North Jefferson	Baptism	CP	Designated	Reno	10	\$6,766.88	\$728.44
Spring Hill	24	\$338,049.91	\$129,430.13	La Casa		\$0.00	\$0.00	Antioch	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Pleasant Grove Totals 126	\$89,290.73	\$41,587.76	
St. Elmo First	2	\$8,392.54	\$4,362.63	Lebanon		\$22,479.00	\$18,905.21	Beechwood	5	\$29,316.19	\$6,740.10				
St. Joseph		\$0.00	\$0.00	Liberty	1	\$944.56	\$951.22	Black Creek	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	Randolph	Baptism	CP	Designated
Theodore First	1	\$10,833.29	\$5,456.46	Lifepoint	0	\$61,350.76	\$11,162.50	Brookside First	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Antioch		\$0.00	\$0.00
Tillman's Corner First	35	\$162,469.51	\$40,448.81	Light of Life		\$0.00	\$0.00	Calcedonia	0	\$864.36	\$50.00	Bethel East		\$300.00	\$1,968.98
Travis Road	0	\$1,106.47	\$3,752.22	Mt Carmel	0	\$2,030.97	\$1,625.40	*Cardiff		\$0.00	\$0.00	Big Springs	0	\$2,751.89	\$461.00
Trinity	7	\$4,100.00	\$5,135.00	Mt Nebo	1	\$1,220.00	\$4,445.00	Castle Heights	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Calvary		\$0.00	\$1,525.00
Turnerville	0	\$9,939.34	\$15,052.60	Mt View		\$0.00	\$1,200.00	Cedar Mount	0	\$0.00	\$1,078.04	Community Life		\$0.00	\$0.00
Union	0	\$18,199.92	\$17,613.01	Mt Zion	3	\$11,471.00	\$7,185.50	Central Gardendale	7	\$3,000.00	\$1,871.00	Corinth		\$0.00	\$0.00
Vietnamese Obedience		\$600.00	\$600.00	New Beginnings	1	\$1,100.00	\$2,455.02	Clay		\$1,457.95	\$1,800.00	Fellowship	0	\$600.00	\$900.00
West Chickasaw		\$0.00	\$0.00	New Canaan	3	\$32,177.99	\$15,478.55	Enon	25	\$80,625.00	\$7,660.00	Gold Ridge	0	\$900.00	\$3,695.00
West Jordan	0	\$421.00	\$200.00	New Center	3	\$42,040.74	\$17,791.36	*Fulton Springs		\$0.00	\$1,265.97	Herren's Grove		\$0.00	\$0.00
West Mobile	68	\$32,945.13	\$25,575.34	New Friendship	2	\$4,971.26	\$10,621.13	Gardendale First	119	\$120,000.00	\$51,876.00	High Pine	0	\$4,999.56	\$1,983.00
Wilmer First	41	\$55,145.68	\$19,150.31	New Salem		\$923.43	\$0.00	Glenn's Chapel	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Levens	0	\$500.00	\$1,000.00
Woodridge	22	\$84,333.37	\$52,599.38	Oak Forest		\$0.00	\$528.00	Glennwood	0	\$1,200.00	\$12,799.05	Liberty East		\$0.00	\$135.00
Zion	0	\$677.00	\$1,903.00	Oak Park		\$0.00	\$270.00	Haig Missionary	3	\$600.00	\$0.00	Macedonia		\$0.00	\$0.00
Zoe		\$0.00	\$0.00	Oak Ridge	1	\$2,758.47	\$1,457.00	HighPoint Community	30	\$2,958.30	\$507.00	Malone		\$0.00	\$0.00
Mobile Totals	1001	\$1,550,494.19	\$1,116,001.06	Parkview	5	\$83,401.75	\$17,758.65	Kimberly First	9	\$0.00	\$0.00	Mt Prospect		\$0.00	\$200.00
				Pine Ridge	2	\$7,400.00	\$2,600.00	Liberty	0	\$11,741.81	\$8,804.87	Paran		\$720.00	\$1,000.00
Montgomery	Baptism	CP	Designated	Pines		\$0.00	\$0.00	Mineral Springs	0	\$1,142.10	\$1,300.00	Pleasant Grove	0	\$600.00	\$2,487.68
All Nations		\$100.00	\$0.00	Pleasant Hill	4	\$7,914.67	\$12,596.16	Mt Olive First	10	\$86,489.86	\$22,877.05	Providence		\$871.57	\$1,368.00
Bethel	0	\$12,008.34	\$5,913.62	Pleasant Valley		\$0.00	\$0.00	Mt Pisgah	0	\$0.00	\$555.00	Roanoke First		\$1,545.82	\$8,336.00
Bible Missionary		\$450.00	\$300.00	Point Mallard Pkwy.	13	\$2,400.00	\$1,350.00	Mt Zion	7	\$57,873.91	\$15,095.00	Rock Mills First	2	\$1,813.22	\$1,911.00
Brewer Memorial	0	\$0.00	\$2,325.18	River City		\$0.00	\$200.00	New Beginnings	12	\$0.00	\$4,173.00	Rocky Branch	0	\$5,772.96	\$7,802.90
Bridgeview	3	\$1,726.07	\$580.00	Rock Creek		\$2,000.00	\$10,500.00	North Gardendale	2	\$4,599.96	\$2,852.99	Shiloh	0	\$4,296.00	\$4,040.00
Brookwood	2	\$2,139.00	\$1,030.00	Rock Springs	3	\$0.00	\$0.00	North Highland	9	\$7,613.28	\$4,433.92	Smyrna		\$900.00	\$900.00
Capitol Heights	1	\$25,845.31	\$12,276.19	Ryan	0	\$7,360.00	\$8,120.00	Oak Grove	0	\$7,780.23	\$7,188.39	Springfield	0	\$0.00	\$1,300.00
Catoma	2	\$3,295.45	\$6,190.72	Serenity		\$1,228.00	\$3,557.00	Pawnee	1	\$666.50	\$1,506.50	Trinity	3	\$11,336.81	\$5,175.77
Central Community		\$0.00	\$0.00	Shady Grove	2	\$15,126.00	\$11,068.00	Pineywood	0	\$650.00	\$1,831.85	Union		\$1,200.00	\$850.00
Chisholm	0	\$5,306.25	\$1,422.00	Shiloh	18	\$677.00	\$1,775.00	Republic	0	\$18,893.18	\$8,870.00	Union Hill		\$0.00	\$0.00
Cloverdale	0	\$1,925.00	\$2,120.00	Shoal Creek	17	\$49,839.44	\$17,488.25	Sardis	0	\$778.62	\$2,498.43	Wadley		\$0.00	\$0.00
Dalraida	10	\$50,446.78	\$27,016.49	Sixteenth Avenue	0	\$3,021.00	\$2,930.00	Sharon	0	\$50.00	\$0.00	Wedowee First		\$70,748.22	\$27,191.65
Eastdale		\$6,000.00	\$1,010.00	*Soul Harbor		\$0.00	\$0.00	Sharon Heights	1	\$31,493.12	\$33,166.01	Zion	0	\$3,000.00	\$1,020.00
Eastern Hills	9	\$168,407.91	\$66,169.21	South Chapel Hill		\$5,577.81	\$4,383.49	Smoke Rise	15	\$0.00	\$4,738.00	Randolph Totals	5	\$112,856.05	\$75,250.98
Eastmont	32	\$118,506.61	\$88,695.91	Southside	2	\$38,702.00	\$24,732.97	Trafford FBC	0	\$1,200.00	\$2,096.00				
Engaged Christian		\$750.00	\$750.00	Southwest	2	\$6,865.33	\$4,957.95	Union Chapel	1	\$4,641.52	\$6,658.67	Russell	Baptism	CP	Designated
Faith and Grace		\$0.00	\$0.00	Stoney Acres		\$437.12	\$0.00	Water Stone	2	\$18,637.47	\$9,688.14	Auburn Heights	9	\$5,833.31	\$0.00
First Southern	1	\$100.00	\$485.00	*The Ark		\$0.00	\$0.00	North Jefferson Totals 258	\$494,273.36	\$223,980.98	Avalon Woods		\$0.00	\$0.00	
Friendship	3	\$9,650.66	\$3,962.25	*Upper Room		\$0.00	\$0.00	Aliceville First	4	\$40,004.00	\$19,437.00	Beaver Creek	10	\$11,796.51	\$12,810.00
Friendship Missionary		\$0.00	\$0.00	Trinity		\$22,843.00	\$8,000.00	Arbor Springs	2	\$6,815.69	\$2,955.00	Bethany	5	\$2,979.16	\$10,889.16
Gateway	1	\$6,400.08	\$0.00	Tunsel Road	17	\$2,925.00	\$5,979.00	Bethlehem	0	\$1,072.00	\$1,517.00	Cedar Hill	1	\$720.00	\$500.00
Greater New Faith		\$0.00	\$0.00	Unity		\$519.00	\$625.00	Calvary	4	\$16,802.40	\$23,646.59	Central	6	\$7,930.63	\$16,709.50
Hayneville	2	\$30,902.63	\$13,626.00	Valhermoso		\$1,200.00	\$5,804.96	Carrollton	0	\$47,758.58	\$20,674.08	Concord	4	\$35,043.48	\$12,559.84
Heritage	10	\$89,586.21	\$28,418.10	Vestavia Hills		\$3,000.00	\$3,400.00	Coalfire	0	\$1,117.93	\$0.00	Cottonton	3	\$2,715.18	\$971.02
Highland Avenue	0	\$0.00	\$5,101.00	Walden Chapel	3	\$2,016.12	\$3,371.29	Cross Roads	5	\$1,889.00	\$3,354.50	Crawford	5	\$34,007.24	\$7,927.18
Highland Gardens		\$3,647.00	\$4,620.00	Walnut Grove		\$600.00	\$0.00	Double Branches	1	\$678.16	\$1,735.40	Crawford Road	4	\$11,392.13	\$10,212.31
Hunter Station	1	\$4,813.19	\$2,572.00	West Hartselle	4	\$47,324.42	\$57,326.52	Ebenezer	1	\$200.00	\$400.00	Emmanuel	2	\$8,719.11	\$3,707.92
Jonathans House	0	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	West Point		\$540.00	\$0.00	Emmanuel	2	\$30,821.78	\$13,895.99	Fellowship	0	\$7,409.48	\$3,922.75
Lakeview	0	\$9,896.00	\$6,164.00	Westmeade	16	\$158,017.91	\$38,622.77	Ethelsville	4	\$27,649.82	\$2,686.44	Golden Acres	42	\$12,996.00	\$0.00
Lapine	0	\$3,584.80	\$1,165.89	Morgan Totals	260	\$1,283,406.84	\$803,687.88	Fellowship	2	\$0.00	\$0.00	Hatchechubbee	10	\$3,600.00	\$3,059.30
Letohatchee	1	\$6,210.00	\$7,185.00					Flatwoods	2	\$20,179.86	\$11,475.00	Hurtsboro First	0	\$2,135.29	\$4,140.65
Lowndesboro	0	\$4,445.00	\$3,454.00	Mud Creek	Baptism	CP	Designated	Forest	0	\$1,000.00	\$500.00	Ladonia	6	\$17,500.00	\$8,038.83
*McGehee Road		\$0.00	\$0.00	Bayview		\$0.00	\$4,028.32	Friendship	6	\$3,000.00	\$8,793.48	Lakewood	3	\$22,300.09	\$12,958.82
Mixtec	3	\$0.00	\$0.00	Big Creek		\$500.00	\$5,255.00	Galilee	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Midway	3	\$1,200.00	\$1,215.00
Montgomery First	119	\$742,925.00	\$617,604.11	Crossroad		\$5,551.22	\$5,255.00	Garden	0	\$270.00	\$4,103.00	Mt Lebanon	2	\$3,415.00	\$2,995.00
Montgomery Korean	3	\$1,100.00	\$1,130.00	Dogwood Grove	0	\$4,605.25	\$6,930.97	Gordo First	10	\$24,532.83	\$4,990.00	North Phenix	3	\$900.00	\$1,581.94
Morningview	13	\$10,656.00	\$12,868.18	Johns		\$1,200.00	\$1,284.00	Hebron	1	\$1,750.00	\$4,080.00	Oswichee	12	\$5,523.62	\$10,117.12
Mount Zion	3	\$6,211.02	\$17,182.53	Liberty		\$0.00	\$0.00	Hickory Grove	1	\$1,638.32	\$0.00	Phenix City First	6	\$400.00	\$2,126.00
Mountain Hill	1	\$10,556.75	\$18,818.32	McNeil	0	\$0.00	\$215.00	Highland	12	\$2,000.00	\$3,749.25	Philadelphia	16	\$36,000.00	\$13,213.64
Nueva Vida		\$20.00	\$80.00	Mud Creek	1	\$180.00	\$3,920.00	Liberty	0	\$1,541.03	\$3,392.06	Pine Grove	0	\$3,729.50	\$2,105.00
Open Acres	9	\$720.00	\$1,915.00	New Providence		\$2,810.62	\$5,387.30	Mineral Springs	2	\$5,347.00	\$512.00	Pittsview	0	\$0.00	\$8,379.00
Pike Road	1	\$600.00	\$116.76	Oak Grove First	6	\$8,432.76	\$9,640.78	Mt Pleasant	18	\$4,200.00	\$11,452.00	Pleasant Hill	8	\$0.00	\$0.00
Pine Level	0	\$1,046.64	\$2,506.61	Oak Grove Miss.		\$520.00	\$0.00	Mt Tabor	0	\$1,857.82	\$4,000.00	Seale	21	\$1,500.00	\$1,212.00
Pinedale	0	\$11,608.60	\$8,094.75	Pine Ridge	0	\$2,879.63	\$1,035.00	New Salem	4	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	Seale Road	0	\$4,884.82	\$0.00
Pintlala	2	\$0.00	\$23,291.23	Pleasant Hill	0	\$1,686.00	\$566.81	Pickensville	5	\$32,490.00	\$14,375.25	Shiloh	0	\$4,966.46	\$5,843.47
Ridgecrest	1	\$52,457.92	\$22,576.17	Quinton		\$0.00	\$0.00	Pine Grove	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	Silver Run	14	\$10,570.80	\$19,799.13
River Bend	1	\$126.69	\$482.00	Rock Creek		\$0.00	\$0.00	Reform First	0	\$14,126.20	\$7,218.40	Smiths Station	13	\$17,429.41	\$14,913.75
Sampye Memorial	6	\$3,000.00	\$15,625.00	Smithville		\$0.00	\$0.00	Spring Hill	0	\$1,761.76	\$6,277.04	Summerville	10	\$6,000.00	\$9,037.71
Snowdown															

Persecuted church

Coordinated suicide bombings shock Christians in Sri Lanka on Easter

A large-scale attack on Christians in Sri Lanka on April 21, Easter Sunday, killed at least 321 people and wounded at least 500 more. Three churches and three hotels were bombed in the coordinated attacks.

The Islamic State claimed responsibility for the bombings on April 23 and said they were in retaliation for the March 15 attacks on mosques in New Zealand.

Shyami Sirivardene, a resident of Negombo, said Negombo and parts of Colombo where the blasts took place are predominantly Christian areas.

“Negombo is fondly called the ‘little Rome,’ with shrines and ancient churches,” Sirivardene said. “The attacks have been planned to affect the Christian community ... people flock in huge numbers to attend the Mass on Easter and Christmas.”

More than 100 worshippers died in a suicide bomb blast at St. Sebastian’s Church. St. Anthony’s Shrine, a large Catholic church in the Kochchikade area of Colombo, and Zion Church in Batticaloa, in the eastern part of the country, were also bombed.

Suicide bombers also detonated explosives in Colombo at the Shangri-La Hotel, the ground-floor Taprobane restaurant at the Cinnamon Grand Hotel and at the Kingsbury Hotel.

Sri Lanka, a predominantly Buddhist country, ranked 46th on Christian support organization Open Doors’ 2019 World Watch List of the 50 countries where it is most difficult to be a Christian.

In related news

► Muslim Fulani herdsmen attacked two predominantly Christian villages in north central Nigeria after beating, raping and killing a 19-year-old Christian woman in the pre-dawn hours of March 23.

Danlami Mante said armed Muslim Fulani herdsmen ambushed Joy Danlami and her two younger siblings as they were returning home from a community feast in a nearby village.

After the ambush the herdsmen proceeded to the family’s village, where they burned down 17 houses. They then rampaged through another village, burning 11 homes and four churches.

Nigeria ranked 12th on Open Doors’ 2019 World Watch List of countries where Christians suffer the most persecution.

► A Malaysian pastor was abducted by police for allegedly proselytizing Muslims, Malaysia’s human rights com-

mission has concluded following a two-year investigation.

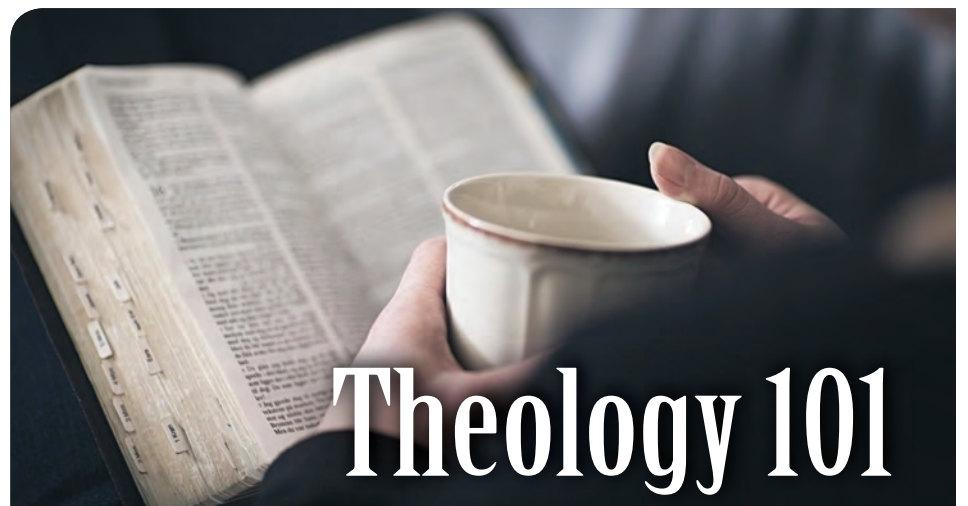
The family of 63-year-old Raymond Koh — who was abducted in February 2017 in Kuala Lumpur — hopes he is still alive and wants the government to investigate further.

Koh served as pastor of an Evangelical Free Church of Malaysia for 20 years before founding Harapan Komuniti — an outreach to single mothers, drug addicts and HIV/AIDS victims — in Malaysia in 2004. Days before Koh’s disappearance the family received death threats for allegedly spreading the gospel.

Sunni Islam is the government-authorized faith in Malaysia. Malaysia ranked 42nd on Open Doors’ 2019 World Watch List. (MS, BP)



Screen capture from CBS News
Suicide bombings across Sri Lanka on April 21 target Christians celebrating Easter, leaving more than 300 dead.



Theology 101

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR PEOPLE IN THE PEW

Eternal security

Divine Gift, Divine Grip

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

Last week Theology 101 introduced the analogy of divine birth as one way of thinking about and undergirding the formal understanding of belief about the eternal security of believers in Christ. The point was just as physical birth is an irreversible reality so is the spiritual birth of each Christian. Hence, one who has been born again spiritually cannot become unborn but is eternally a child of God.

In addition physical birth is not a repeatable event. As a person is born once so a believer is born again only once. Jesus’ words to Nicodemus about the necessity of a spiritual birth were not, “You must be born again ... and again ... and again.” Once saved, always saved could be expressed as once spiritually reborn, always spiritually reborn.

Trustworthy and lasting gift

This week attention is drawn to the dual analogies suggested by Christ’s declaration in John 10:27–28: “My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”

The first of these analogies is that of the divine gift. God’s Son made it clear His followers have been given eternal life that has the security of never perishing. What Christ gives is a trustworthy and lasting gift.

God who through Christ be-

stows eternal life is the joint trustworthy Giver. What God gives He does not retract. This divine gift has behind it the integrity and authority of its divine source. That divine integrity is expressed in the truth of Romans 11:29, “For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.”

One of those irrevocable gifts is that of the believer’s eternal salvation.

Promising grip

The second analogy in John 10:28 is that of the divine grip. Once a repentant believer has believed in Christ, that believer is securely in the hands of the Savior from whose hands no one is able to snatch that person away.

On the occasion Jesus gave this promise He also went a step further to promise the double security of believers being not only in His hands, but also in the hands of His Father, promising, “My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand. I and My Father are one” (John 10:29–30).

Eternal security is to be experienced and appreciated in terms of a divine birth, divine gift and divine grip.✠

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.



Day of **gratitude**

May 5 is special day set aside to recognize churches' 'legacy' adults

By **Grace Thornton**
The Alabama Baptist

Eileen Mitchell can think of one after the other in rapid fire. The church member who has brought flowers from her garden to place in the church each Sunday for the past 17 years. The person who has been tutoring for more than 20 years in the church's after-school program. The man who's been a greeter for more than four decades.

The legacy of the church goes on because of their service and that's why a special day is on the calendar May 5 to honor the church's older adults, said Mitchell, who leads senior adult ministry for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions.

"People forget the behind-the-scenes service that older adults provide," she said. "In addition those long-term members help us remember our past."

And remembering the past can propel churches forward to continue

to serve their communities, Mitchell said.

Churches have so many ways they can honor these "legacy" members, she said, and it doesn't have to be celebrated on May 5. A breakfast or luncheon, gift cards to lunch at a local restaurant or a fellowship time with the church staff could be ways to show them appreciation.

The children of the church could also prepare cards to give to each older adult, or church staff could recognize them during the service based on their age, their length of membership or their length of service.

Kenny Hoomes, associate pastor for spiritual maturity/senior

adults at First Baptist Church, Montgomery, says that's what he does on Senior Adult Day, but he lets people in the congregation choose if they're going to self-identify.

"Since many people will not admit to being a senior I simply ask, 'If

"We all stand on tall shoulders when we think of where we are in life. And when we think of leaders we have known, some senior adult comes to mind."

Kenny Hoomes
associate pastor
FBC Montgomery



Photo by Doug Rogers

Senior adults gather at the annual Senior Adult Evangelism Conference to learn more about serving the community and spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.

you consider yourself a senior adult, please stand," he said. "This places the burden on the individual rather than asking for people of a certain age to stand."

Commitment to the church

Mitchell suggested churches consider changing the name of the day too, if they would prefer. Members of the Baby Boomer generation, of which Mitchell says she's a part, aren't always a fan of being called "senior adults," she explained.

Some churches might call it something else, like Legacy Sunday or Day of Gratitude.

"The significance is that older adults are appreciated for their service and commitment to the church body," Mitchell said.

Hoomes agreed.

"We all stand on tall shoulders when we think of where we are in life," he said. "And when we think of leaders we have known some senior adult comes to mind. Maybe that person was a parent, a grandparent or a Sunday School teacher."

The day is a way of thanking them for leading their church to Jesus, Hoomes said. First, Montgomery, holds its special service every year on the third Sunday in May, and in addition to having a recognition time they involve the church's senior

adult choir and ask older members to be the soloist and deacon of the day.

Eloise Crossley, senior adult director for First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, says they do something similar — they have a senior adult choir lead worship and they put flowers in the sanctuary to honor legacy adults who have passed away.

They also host a banquet and entertainment to honor their church's senior adults.

"Senior adults have worked in God's kingdom work for a long time," Crossley said. "Some senior adults are deacons, teachers and ushers, and some serve on many committees of the church or work with Gideons, Sav-A-Life or Meals on Wheels. They are still our strong workers for Kingdom work." ✝

"Senior adults have worked in God's kingdom work for a long time. ... They are still our strong workers for Kingdom work."

Eloise Crossley
senior adult director
FBC Jacksonville



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May 5 is Senior Adult Sunday, a day churches have the opportunity to honor their 'legacy' adults and the Kingdom work they've done in the community.

Bay St. Louis back in business



Infinity Science Center

Photo by Connie Pearson

Here are 4 great reasons to visit Bay St. Louis on Mississippi's Gulf Coast

By **Connie Pearson**
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

In the fall of 2005 volunteer relief teams headed to the Gulf Coast of Mississippi to provide food, water and cleanup help in the horrific aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Bay St. Louis and Waveland, where Hurricane Katrina made landfall, were leveled and the entire infrastructure for utilities, water and communication was wiped out.

Baptists were there for weeks with cooking crews, chainsaws and dumpsters assisting the survivors who were attempting to pick up the pieces of their demolished homes and businesses.

The following spring high schoolers and chaperones from Falkville thoughtfully gathered formal dresses and decorations allowing Bay High School students to experience the prom they thought would be impossible.

Five years later, as rebuilding efforts provided hope for recovery, the 2010 BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico caused another knockout punch to the area economy, which was barely clinging to life.

Fast forward nine years to the present, however, and what visitors will find in Bay St. Louis and Waveland today is new and thriving thanks to incredible dedication, hard

work and millions of federal dollars.

The natural beauty of the coast as a backdrop is an added bonus.

Variety of attractions

Infinity Science Center, associated with Stennis Space Center, is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday. It is smaller than the Alabama Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, but admission is also cheaper, and the exhibits and tours are outstanding.

The Ground Zero Museum in Waveland chronicles the days immediately preceding Katrina's landfall and devastating aftermath.

The museum is housed in the former Waveland Elementary School, the only building left standing on Coleman Avenue after the storm. Among the poignant displays are the Katrina Recovery Quilt Collection and numerous

photographs. The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Studio Waveland's Gallery features the works of an impressive group of local artists, and Old Town Bay St. Louis is filled with dozens of fascinating antique stores and boutiques.

While strolling along the harbor-side in Bay St. Louis, be sure to notice the angel trees carved by Dayle Lewis. Some are dedicated to the

memory of locals who died, while others are symbolic of the protection given to brave survivors who clung to the trees in desperation as the rising water surged through the town.

The historic train depot at 1928 Depot Way houses the Welcome Center, a colorful display of Mardi Gras costumes, artifacts from famous citizens and the Alice Moseley Museum. Alice Moseley was actually born in Birmingham but is claimed by Mississippians as a prolific folk artist and painter. Forty-five of her original paintings are displayed on the second floor.

Fresh seafood

The Gulf of Mexico has been cleaned up too and the fish are loving it. Oysters, shrimp and grouper appear on every menu. The proximity to New Orleans means diners will taste gumbo, etouffee, crab cakes, po'boys and bread pudding prepared by cooks and chefs who understand the fine art of seasonings and preparation synonymous with the area. For non-seafood lovers chicken, burgers and steaks appear frequently as well.

Two popular restaurants in Bay St. Louis are Cuz's Old Town Oyster Bar and Grill and 200 North Beach. Cuz's is casual, while 200 North Beach is pricier and more upscale. A few blocks away you'll find Mockingbird Cafe, which became known as the "living room of Bay St. Louis" after the storm. It was the gathering place for locals in search of a meal and an opportunity to connect. It offers great coffee and fresh, homemade breakfast and lunch entrees.

A few miles outside of Bay St.

Louis in Kiln, Mississippi, Bret Favre's hometown, look for Jourdan River Steamer. That kitchen doesn't even own a fryer. Specialties include Royal Red shrimp, Dungeness crab, live Maine lobsters and certified Angus steaks.

Lodging options

Although several chain motels and hotels such as Super 8, Motel 6 and Econo Lodge are available, I would encourage you to check out Bay Town Inn Bed and Breakfast, Carroll House Bed and Breakfast and The Trust Bed and Breakfast for a chance to interact with the locals, or Buccaneer State Park for a place to park your RV.

If you don't have an RV don't fret. Contact Gulf Coast Campers, let them know when you're coming and they'll have an RV set up and ready for you to rent and enjoy temporarily when you arrive.

Buccaneer State Park features a large waterpark called Buccaneer Bay that is open to the public and includes a wave pool, water slides and a toddler pool sure to provide summer fun for the whole family.

Tight-knit community

It takes only a few minutes of chatting with local business owners in Hancock County to sense the passion and resolve they have to make their part of the Gulf Coast even better than it was before the storm.

Against all odds Bay St. Louis is back in business. And these overcomers deserve our admiration and respect, but they also need our dollars in their restaurants, inns, campsgrounds and attractions. 🇺🇸



Angel tree

Photo by Connie Pearson

Connected by Love

Mother-in-law role often subject of jokes but deserves respect, honor, acceptance

By Leah Owens

Ed.S., M.A., LPC, NCC

Registered play therapist

Let's be truthful. When someone says "mother-in-law" it is often followed by an eye-roll or groan. I think of the controlling, meddling character Marie on the sitcom "Everybody Loves Raymond." She justifies her behavior with one of her favorite lines: "What I do comes from love."

My boys have jokingly said, "Mom, I hope you never act like Marie." I do keep that in mind. I

have been a daughter-in-law for more than 30 years and a mother-in-law for almost three, recently adding our second daughter-in-law, as I affectionately refer to them.

I have made mistakes in both roles, but hopefully I have learned some things along the way.

The book of Ruth tells us the true story of a mother/daughter-in-law relationship. Ruth raised the bar high in regard to the way we should treat a mother-in-law. Naomi wasn't a great mother-in-law by any means. She seemed to be a bitter, selfish and seemingly miserable woman.

But even after Ruth's husband, Naomi's son, died, Ruth cared for and honored Naomi. Naomi's behavior was no secret to people around her and they noticed

Ruth's kindness toward her.

Ruth left no room for excuses concerning the way we are to treat mothers-in-law, even the difficult ones. Why did Ruth do it?

She chose to honor and be kind to Naomi not of her own will but out of reverence and honor to God. As a result God blessed Ruth. She did it not through strength of her own but through God's strength in her.

Your effort in building a relationship with your mother-in-law is an expression of love toward your husband. It will bless your marriage.

In her shoes


It may help to try to understand a mother-in-law's perspective when another person enters the scene and her position changes. She was in the picture long before you were. Women are nurturers and we want to protect our territory. "Mama Bear" can appear quickly and without warning if she believes her territory is being threatened even if it isn't.



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Let her see you loving and caring for your husband. Pray for her and the relationship. Show interest in her. Compliment her on something. Look hard — you can find something even if it's just the fact that without her you wouldn't have your husband. Honor her. Communicate with kind words and grace. That's a hard one sometimes, but Ephesians 4:29 says we are to let no corrupt talk come out of our mouths, "but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear."

EDITOR'S NOTE — *Faith & Family* is a monthly look at important spiritual, cultural and relational issues facing today's families. For more articles on contemporary topics like these go to PathwaysProfessional.org/blog.

Leah Owens is a nationally certified licensed professional counselor and a registered play therapist serving in north central Alabama for Pathways Professional Counseling, a sister ministry of Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries. 

Suggestions for connection

▶ If you have kids text or email pictures of the grandchildren. FaceTime is even better.

▶ Send random texts of funny things throughout the week.

▶ Share your hurts and concerns with her.

▶ Make her feel welcomed in your home.

▶ Ask her opinion about something (make it a safe topic).

▶ Invite her to do something with you. It doesn't have to be something that takes all day, maybe just a quick trip to the store. (Leah Owens)

Pitfalls to avoid

1. Don't put your husband in the middle of any conflict between you and your mother-in-law. There may be times when appropriate boundaries need to be set, especially in the early years of marriage. Discuss this with your spouse and have him firmly put those in place and follow through.

2. Don't have unrealistic expectations of your mother-in-law. Respect her differences without being offended.

3. Don't become discouraged. A good relationship may take time. It may never happen. We can't change other people. Meet her where she is. (Leah Owens)



FBC Center Star literally 'standing on the promises' in new sanctuary

(continued from page 1) screens, and we needed time to work out the bugs," Jones said. "We didn't want to start on Easter."

But on Easter Sunday, April 21, the Colbert-Lauderdale Baptist Association church opened the doors of its new sanctuary wide. Members welcomed a crowd of around 540 — about twice the church's regular attendance — to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and it was exciting, Jones said.

God's miracle

"We love the new worship center," he said. "It's contemporary and modern, which takes a little getting used to, but we love it."

One of the new features is a café in an area known as the Commons Intersection. The space physically connects the sanctuary and multipurpose classrooms, but it also offers a connecting point for church members of all generations, Jones said.

"The senior adult classrooms are located right next to the space and everyone mixes there right in the

heart of the building," he said.

And there's another bonus for the church: "We are getting our Family Life Center back," Jones said.

The church's reconstruction was made possible by a combination of insurance money and gifts by church members, said Deena White, the church's administrative assistant and financial secretary.

"We didn't really do any fundraising, but we encouraged people to pray about giving above their tithes," White said. "The motto became, 'Don't do the math — ask God to do the miracle.' Our church family has been so faithful to give."

During construction of the new sanctuary church members added special touches, such as writing Bible verses on the floor prior to carpet being laid.

"We will forever be 'standing on the promises,'" said Jackie Beavers, the church's ministry assistant.

And through it all church members learned what Christian unity is all about, Jones said.

"Our people sacrificed their own traditional expectations and began looking toward the future," he said. "This process really stretched

us hard, but we are learning to be who we need to be to minister in our culture." (Carrie Brown McWhorter contributed) ✠



Photo courtesy of FBC Center Star

During construction of FBC Center Star's new sanctuary, church members added special touches, such as writing Bible verses on the floor prior to the carpet being laid.

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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.

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 resumé 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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'Welcome wagon'

Alabama Baptists prepare to welcome messengers to SBC meetings

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

Got your best smile ready? In just a few weeks Baptists from all over the country will be pouring into the Magic City for the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting, and Rick Lance says it's a prime opportunity to say hello and introduce ourselves.

"I appeal to Alabama Baptists to think of yourselves as an important part of a convention welcome wagon," said Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM). "We want to make sure all of our SBC family feels welcome as they come to Birmingham."

To that end the SBOM has been working for months planning and preparing to host the meeting in the best way possible.

They've been preparing billboards to welcome messengers to Alabama.

Sharing the gospel

And as the meeting gets closer leaders from the SBOM will be involved on a variety of fronts, starting with Crossover.

Before messengers and guests gather for the SBC annual meeting volunteers will go out June 8 to knock on 20,000 doors in the Birmingham area and share the gospel with the people they meet. It's an SBC tradition to take all that manpower converging on the city and harness it for the sake of missions.

Sammy Gilbreath, SBOM evangelism director, is leading those efforts and recruiting volunteers.

He's been working hard alongside Birmingham-area associations to get ready, and they would love your help too (see story, this



Photo courtesy of Greater Birmingham Convention and Visitors Bureau

On June 8 groups will go out all over the Birmingham area to share the gospel during the Crossover Birmingham event held in conjunction with the June 11-12 SBC annual meeting.

page, on how to volunteer).

In past years Crossover has resulted in hundreds of people professing newfound faith in Christ, providing local churches contacts to follow up with and disciple.

Michael Ethridge, director of operations for Birmingham Metro Baptist Association, has been the point person for recruiting greeters and ushers (see story, this page) for the SBC annual meeting June 11-12.

"He has been assisted by area pastors from a variety of churches," Lance said. "They are being trained and oriented to do this ministry with excellence. We are grateful for their participation."

Sponsorship

In the days between Crossover and the annual meeting SBOM is helping to sponsor one night of the SBC Pastors Conference,

led this year by Danny Wood, pastor of Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Birmingham.

The SBOM staff is also hosting an exhibit booth at the SBC annual meeting for the first time ever.

"Do plan to come by the exhibit area and say hello," Lance said. "We would welcome the time of fellowship."

He and other Alabama Baptist leaders hope everything will come together in a great meeting where God is glorified.

"These are but a few tangible ways we are seeking to assist our SBC family as they gather in Birmingham for the first time since 1941," Lance said. "We hope and we pray that the SBC family will make Kingdom impact while in Birmingham. We further desire to see Christ honored in all that we do."

For more information about SBOM leaders and the ministries of SBOM visit alsbom.org.

Getting involved: Volunteer opportunities during SBC

If you're a hands-on kind of person then you will like the assortment of ways to get involved in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting this June. One of them is to volunteer to share the gospel in Birmingham. You also can volunteer to help serve messengers as they attend the meeting.

What's needed

Explore the information below to discover more about what's needed and how you can be involved.

► Participate in Crossover Birmingham

If you've got a heart for sharing Jesus with people who don't know

Him yet Crossover Birmingham could use your help.

On June 8, the Saturday before the SBC annual meeting, groups will meet at 9:30 a.m. at nine hub churches to head out into neighborhoods with the gospel.

The churches represent Bessemer, Birmingham Metro, Mud Creek, North Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair and Sulphur Springs Baptist associations. Volunteers will divide into teams and visit 30-50 homes each.

You don't have to be local to be a part. To go out you need to do two things — register for the event and attend one training session.

The first option for training is a kickoff rally at 6:30 p.m. the Wednesday before (June 5) led by

Johnny Hunt, senior vice president of evangelism and leadership at the North American Mission Board and co-pastor of First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Georgia.

Simulcasts available

That event will be held at The Church at Brook Hills, Birmingham, with simulcasts at The Baptist Church at McAdory, McCalla; First Baptist Church, Mount Olive; and First Baptist Church, Trussville.

A second option is to arrive an hour early on Saturday for 8:30 a.m. training at the hub church where you're planning to serve.

For more information, to view a list of hub churches or to register visit crossoverbhm.org.

► Serve as an usher or greeter

There's also a need for ushers and greeters at the annual meeting June 11-12 at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Center (BJCC). You could serve in the morning or afternoon session on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Michael Ethridge, director of operations for Birmingham Metro Baptist Association (BMBA), is coordinating volunteer efforts. Online registration ahead of time is required and BMBA will email you a short training video.

To register visit www.tabonline.org/volunteer. For more information contact Ethridge at 205-599-3245 or michaele@BMBAOnline.org. (TAB)

3 stories you should know



BP submitted photo

Religious liberty advocates held 'Save Chick-fil-A Day' at the Texas Capitol on April 17 after the restaurant was banned from the San Antonio airport for donating to religious nonprofits. 'It had nothing to do with how they treated anybody in their store, or how they treated someone in their restaurant,' Texas Values President Jonathan Saenz said. 'It's about their personal beliefs and a donation that was made to the Salvation Army.' (BP)

'50 Reasons' campaign urges SBC attendance

A "50 Reasons" social media campaign launching April 22 will unveil daily encouragements to attend the 2019 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Birmingham.

SBC Executive Committee President-elect Ronnie Floyd is spearheading "50 Reasons to Come to #SBC19" 50 days in advance of the event June 11–12 at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Center (BJCC).

"The most important meeting each year in our Southern Baptist family is our annual convention," Floyd said. "I hope at least one of these reasons will encourage you to join us."

The 2019 annual meeting theme "Gospel Above All" will be highlighted in the daily posts. The annual meeting program is available on SBCLIFE.net. (BP)

University of Mobile announces interim plan

The University of Mobile (UM) board of trustees has announced plans to select an interim president to provide leadership during the presidential search process, which is expected to take a minimum of nine to 12 months.

Board of trustees chairman David Conner said in an email the board believes "it is in the best interest of [UM] to have an interim president in place as quickly as possible, ideally before the start of the 2019–2020 academic year."

Conner said Fred Wilson, who was appointed UM's temporary interim president following Tim Smith's resignation in February, will serve until the official interim president is selected. Conner noted the board is "thankful that he was willing to serve in this capacity." (UM)

— NEWSBRIEFS —

Founder of the Alabama Baptist Conference of the Deaf dies at 90



David Bruce Richardson, founder of the Alabama Baptist Conference of the Deaf, died April 15. He was 90.

A native of Gadsden, Richardson studied at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, where he met his wife, Patsy. In 1956 they were appointed as Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board) missionaries to work with the deaf in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. The following year the couple decided to call Montgomery home and begin a more targeted deaf ministry throughout the state of Alabama. After seeing other states' annual conferences for the deaf Richardson started one in Alabama in 1959 to give the deaf opportunities to train as leaders.

He also headed up deaf ministry for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions from 1961 until he retired in 1990, and he served in



RICHARDSON

deaf ministry at First Baptist Church, Montgomery, where he was a member for 61 years.

At the time of his death he and Patsy had recently moved to Decatur and joined Somerville Baptist Church.

Richardson is preceded in death by his wife of 62 years, who died March 27. He is survived by his son, Ronald; daughter, Nancy; and one grandson. (TAB)

NAMB announces Send Conference changes designed to expand reach



The North American Mission Board (NAMB) announced April 17 its next Send Conference — Send 2020 — will happen through a series of local and regional conferences. They will take place in more than 70 locations throughout North America beginning in fall 2019 and continuing through 2020.

"It's about maximizing momentum," NAMB president Kevin Ezell said. "What began as a plan to hopefully reach 18,000 people with a national event in Atlanta is now a plan to reach in excess of 200,000 by taking the events on the road."

The local and regional approach will also al-

low different events to take on different formats.

The focus of the conference series is to call every believer to actively share the gospel wherever God has placed them and to openly consider where God might be calling them to serve.

"In addition to allowing us to bring this important message to every corner of North America this approach also gives us maximum flexibility to shape the event for specific audiences," Ezell said. "The more we discussed this way of doing it, the more excited we became about the possibilities."

Many of the events will be hosted by local churches. Plans also include events on or in close proximity to several university campuses.

Part one of the tour will commence this fall with Johnny Hunt featured as the main speaker. Those events will kick off with a Sunday evening program focused on evangelism for every member of the church. The next morning, pas-



North American
Mission Board

News near you

BESSEMER ASSOCIATION

▶ **Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church, Hueytown**, will host a senior adult day May 7 at 11 a.m. John Ed Mathison will be the guest speaker. Reservations are required for lunch. For more information or to place a reservation call 205-491-3771. Josh Cook is pastor.

BIRMINGHAM METRO ASSOCIATION

▶ **Vestavia Hills Baptist Church** will host the 12th annual Shepherd Memorial Concert on May 5 at 6 p.m. The concert will feature the Vestavia Hills Baptist Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra along with classical guitarist Rodrigo Rodriguez. A love offering will be taken to benefit the Shepherd Scholarship Fund. Gary Furr is pastor.

COFFEE ASSOCIATION

▶ **Bethany Baptist Church, New Brockton**, will host GriefShare starting May 5 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. It will continue for 13 weeks. At GriefShare group members will understand the pain of grief and will learn how to apply biblical principles to the healing process after the death of a loved one. For more information call 334-488-0904. Greg Cotter is pastor.

CALHOUN ASSOCIATION

▶ Joining a worldwide audience 250 women attended the **Going Beyond Live with Priscilla Shirer** simulcast April 6 at **Greenbrier Road Baptist Church, Anniston**. The event included Bible study led by Shirer and worship led by Anthony Evans.



Photo by Susan Harvey

MORGAN ASSOCIATION

▶ **Liberty Baptist Church, Hartselle**, will celebrate its 40th anniversary May 5 at 10:50 a.m. Ken Blackwood will be the special guest speaker. Lunch will follow the service. Lynn Harvel is pastor. ▶ **Michael Morgan** is the new pastor of **Parkview Baptist Church, Decatur**. He previously served as pastor of Goss Baptist Church, Columbia, Mississippi. He and his wife, Jamie, have two children.



MORGAN

SALEM-TROY ASSOCIATION

▶ **Salem Baptist Church, Brundidge**, will celebrate its 195th anniversary with an old-fashioned tent revival May 15–19. Wednesday through Saturday services will begin at 7 p.m., and the Sunday service will begin at 11 a.m. Matt Queen, professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, will be the guest speaker. Chad Manion is

pastor. ▶ **Dwayne Norman's** last Sunday as pastor of **Bush Memorial Baptist Church, Troy**, was April 28. He served at Bush Memorial Baptist for almost eight years and will begin as pastor of Campbellsville Baptist Church, Kentucky, on May 12. He and his wife, Mandy, have four children.

ST. CLAIR ASSOCIATION

▶ **Eden Westside Baptist Church, Pell City**, will host the St. Clair Baptist Association Painkillers Conference on May 3–5 from 6:45 to 8:30 p.m. Ted Traylor and Pastor Jacky Connell will be the conference speakers. The Student Painkillers Conference will be held May 3 in the Student Worship Center, and the three-day Shine Kids Conference also will be held that weekend with the same schedule as the main conference. For more information or to register visit www.painkillersconference.com.

TUSCALOOSA ASSOCIATION

▶ **Cornelius Chapel Baptist Church, Buhl**, will host a homecoming service May 5 at 10:30 a.m. Dax Lancaster will bring the message. An old-fashioned dinner will follow the service with a singing following the dinner. Geoff Elrod is pastor.

WALKER ASSOCIATION

▶ **First Baptist Church, Carbon Hill**, will host Marvelous Mondays in May. On May 6, Mac Brunson, pastor of Valleydale Baptist Church, Birmingham, will be the guest speaker. For more information call 205-924-4145 or visit www.fbccarbonhill.com. Scott McCullar is pastor. 🇺🇸

— NEWSBRIEFS —

tors and church leaders will return to attend an equipping session geared toward helping them train and mobilize their congregations for evangelism. NAMB has already secured 18 locations for these events.

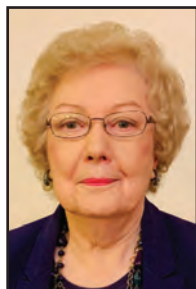
A schedule and registration information will be available soon at send2020.com. (BP)

Alabama-Crenshaw Association food pantry founder Jewel Killough retires



Jewel Killough, Alabama-Crenshaw Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) missions consultant and founder of the Alabama-Crenshaw Baptist Association food pantry, has retired after more than 30 years of service in the association.

Killough began serving the Alabama-Crenshaw Baptist Association through WMU by teaching "missions books" throughout the association. Through the years Killough coordinated and managed association-



KILLOUGH

al WMU ministries including the food pantry, the Luverne Health and Rehab Christmas store and the annual prayer walk. While serving on the WMU leadership team Killough served the members of First Baptist Church, Luverne, as WMU director and Sunday School teacher.

The food pantry began as an outreach ministry of First, Luverne. Moved by Bible teachings to "help the poor," Killough collected food supplies to be given whenever the need arose.

"It was difficult to get the word out to those in need," Killough said, and the ministry was moved to the association office where food could be distributed to those who contacted the ministry. The food distribution effort soon became a monthly event.

As the years passed the need grew as did awareness, and the food pantry gained volunteers and the support of the WMU leadership team. Today the food pantry distributes non-perishable food items to 35–50 families each month.

"We've had lean times but good support." Killough said. "I just love the people." (Lanell Smith)

NOBTS presidential search committee narrows its list to top 4 candidates



Frank Cox, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary trustee board chairman, updated the trustee board on the status of the seminary's presidential search April 22, saying the search committee has narrowed its focus to four candidates.

The search committee, led by Cox, was formed last fall after Chuck Kelley announced his intention to retire on July 31, 2019. The committee encompasses 11 voting members — nine trustees, a faculty member and a student.

Cox cautioned the board not to believe everything published regarding the presidential search.

Cox also addressed rumors that Kelley has sought to influence the presidential search committee.

"I want you to know Dr. Kelley is not involved in the process," Cox said. "He met with us for 30 minutes in our first meeting where he talked about his experience of being a candidate for president of New Orleans Seminary [during the last search]. He has not told us how to conduct our process and he has not met with us again." (BP)



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

"WILD" FOR Vacation Bible School

Can you imagine an event at your church:

- ★ where seven months of ministry growth is gained in one week?
- ★ where the Gospel is shared daily?
- ★ where more than half of attendees have never been to your church before, and more than 20 percent do not attend any church?

Vacation Bible School is this kind of event!

Churches across Alabama have VBS annually, and every year lives are changed during a week's time.

"VBS is the number one evangelistic tool for reaching people," said Jamie Baldwin, with the Office of Sunday School & Discipleship at the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions.

The office works to train associational leaders throughout Alabama with the skills needed to lead a successful VBS. Those trained then teach VBS volunteer workers in local churches.

Associations often act as "connectors" to help churches share resources with each other, Baldwin observed. He said the association can also serve as a catalyst to get the community excited about Vacation Bible School.

Baldwin said he has seen a church with fewer than 30 members have a VBS for two children, and churches with more than 1,000 members have hundreds of children. He said the size of the VBS is not as important as using the opportunity to share the Gospel with the youngest generation.

"More people will be saved through Vacation Bible School than through any other ministry or event a church has to offer," Baldwin said. "Even unchurched parents will send their children to VBS because it had such a positive impact on their childhood."

The Office of Sunday School & Discipleship suggests that churches use LifeWay's VBS material because of its missional focus with resource kits for churches of every size.

The LifeWay material aims to be age-appropriate and evangelical. This year's VBS theme is "In the Wild: Amazing Encounters with Jesus."

Whether a church uses LifeWay resources or not, Baldwin said he is sure lives will be changed through VBS at Alabama Baptist churches this year. Between crafts, music and games, he said children are sure to have fun and hear the Gospel.

Seven months of ministry in one week alone: Is your church ready for Vacation Bible School?

For more information, please contact State Missionary Daniel Edmonds, director of Sunday School & Discipleship Ministries, at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 285, or (334) 613-2285, dedmonds@alsbom.org.



By Sydney Basden
SBOM Intern



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Event and location is followed by SBOM contact person and extension. For more information on these events, call 1-800-264-1225 or (334) 613-2 + the extension, or visit alsbom.org.

MAY

- 2-4 **Alabama Church Planting Basics**, Birmingham Metro Baptist Association, Lamar Duke, ext. 332
- 3-4 **Church Weekday Education (CWE) Leadership Training**, Shocco Springs, Talladega, Linda Hicks, ext. 263, or Lee Wright, ext. 241
- 4 **State Pinewood Derby Race**, Disaster Relief Center, Prattville, Monica Thompson, ext. 227
- 4 **North Alabama Spring Library Workshop**, Shoal Creek, Deatsville, Marty Woodall, 334-569-3854
- 5 **Senior Adult Sunday**, Eileen Mitchell, ext. 221
- 6 **Senior Adult Evangelism Conference**, Lakeside, Birmingham, Amy Nelson, ext. 258
- 7 **Church Insurance: Protecting People and Property**, Dale Baptist Association Office, Ozark, Linda Hicks, ext. 263
- 12 **Mother's Day**
- 12 **Children's Homes & Family Ministries Sunday**
- 12-18 **Christian Home Week**, Eileen Mitchell, ext. 221
- 14 **Church Insurance: Protecting People and Property**, Northbrook, Cullman, Linda Hicks, ext. 263

JUNE

- 5 **Crossover Birmingham Training**, various locations, Amy Nelson, ext. 258
- 6 **Small Church Tax Conference**, CrossPoint, Trussville, Linda Hicks, ext. 263
- 6-7 **Missions Adventure Camp for Mom & Me (One Night)**, WorldSong, Cook Springs, Amanda Armstrong, ext. 223
- 6-8 **Missions Adventure Camp for Mom & Me (Two Nights)**, WorldSong, Cook Springs, Amanda Armstrong, ext. 223
- 8 **Crossover Birmingham**, various locations, Amy Nelson, ext. 258
- 9 **WMU, SBC Celebration/Annual Meeting**, Birmingham, Candace McIntosh, ext. 222
- 10-14 **Missions Adventure Camps for Girls & Teen Girls**, WorldSong, Cook Springs, Amanda Armstrong, ext. 223
- 11-12 **Southern Baptist Convention**, Birmingham, Debbie Oliver, ext. 242
- 16 **Father's Day**
- 17-21 **Missions Adventure Camps for Girls & Teen Girls**, WorldSong, Cook Springs, Amanda Armstrong, ext. 223
- 20 **Small Church Tax Conference**, SBOM Office Facility, Prattville, Linda Hicks, ext. 263
- 24-28 **Missions Adventure Camps for Girls & CITs**, WorldSong, Cook Springs, Amanda Armstrong, ext. 223
- 25 **Church Administrative Guidelines**, SBOM Office Facility, Prattville, Lee Wright, ext. 241, or Linda Hicks, ext. 263
- 30 **Citizenship & Religious Liberty Sunday**, Keith Hinson, ext. 289

JULY

- 1-3 **Mini Missions Adventure Camp for Girls, Boys & Leaders**, WorldSong, Cook Springs, Amanda Armstrong, ext. 223
- 1-3 **Mini Missions Adventure Camp for Teen Girls**, WorldSong, Cook Springs, Amanda Armstrong, ext. 223
- 4 **Independence Day**
- 4-6 **Family Missions Adventure Camp (Two Nights)**, WorldSong, Cook Springs, Amanda Armstrong, ext. 223
- 5-6 **Family Missions Adventure Camp (One Night)**, WorldSong, Cook Springs, Amanda Armstrong, ext. 223

‘Vigilant and proactive’

Most pastors satisfied with discipleship efforts but see room for growth

Most Protestant pastors feel confident about the discipleship taking place in their churches. However, there’s still plenty of room for growth, according to a new study from LifeWay Research.

Nearly two-thirds (65%) say they are satisfied with the state of discipleship and spiritual formation in their local church, while 78% indicate there’s room for improvement.

‘Movement’

While two-thirds agree they are satisfied with discipleship, 44% are not regularly evaluating discipleship progress to inform that opinion. About 8 out of 10 (83%) have an intentional plan for discipleship.

“Following Christ involves movement,” said Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research. “And that movement can either be

walking with Christ or straying from that path. Churches must be vigilant and proactive in encouraging the progress of believers.”

Churches use many approaches to disciple and encourage spiritual development in adults, the study found. On average churches chose more than six of the nine approaches listed in the survey. Sunday School and ongoing small group Bible studies are the most common discipleship approaches followed by sermons, women’s groups and short-term Bible studies.

“In a broad sense discipleship is really an intentional and consistent effort driven by faith to follow Jesus,” said Michael Kelley, director of discipleship and groups ministry at LifeWay Chris-

tian Resources. “But the specific dynamics of how discipleship happens in an individual church vary based on the context of that local church.”

When it comes to the question of on-campus or off-campus small group Bible studies, almost all Protestant pastors (96%) say they have ongoing adult Sunday School or small group Bible studies at the church building. Slightly

more than half (53%) say they have small group Bible studies that meet in homes or outside the church building.

The pastor survey also reveals demographic differences by age, region and ethnicity, as well as church size and denomination:

Pastors of churches with

attendance of 100–249 (70%) are more likely to say they are satisfied with the state of discipleship in their church than those with attendance of 50–99 (61%).

Pentecostals (75%) are more likely to agree than Baptists (63%) and Methodists (54%)

Pastors ages 45–54 (88%) are more likely to say their church has an intentional plan for discipleship of individuals and encouraging their spiritual growth when compared to those 55–64 (80%). Non-white pastors (91%) are more likely to say they have an intentional plan than white pastors (82%).

Pastors in the South (59%) are more likely to say they evaluate discipleship progress in their church than those in the Midwest (51%). Pastors age 18–44 (60%) are more likely to evaluate their church’s progress than those 65 and older (49%).

“The majority of older pastors grew up in churches

where discipleship was assumed to be taking place,” McConnell said. “More younger pastors realize it’s something that must be tracked.”

‘Christlikeness’

McConnell and Kelley noted that years of research have generated the Discipleship Pathway Assessment, a comprehensive tool to help churches gain a better understanding of the spiritual health of their congregation and the effectiveness of their methods of discipleship.

“Every Christ-follower is on a pathway,” said Kelley. “Time and again Scripture uses the word walk to describe how we interact with Jesus Christ. Our job as pastors and disciple-making church leaders is to help people take step after step on the pathway of discipleship toward the goal of Christlikeness.” (LifeWay)

Church leaders interested in evaluating their church’s discipleship process can learn more at DiscipleshipPathway-Assessment.com.

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.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13			14			
15				16			17			
18			19							
	20	21				22		23	24	25
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31				32			33			
34			35				36			
37			38			39				
	40			41	42			43	44	45
46	47	48					49			
50				51			52			
53				54			55			

Across

1. Arrived.
5. Bean counter. (abbr.)
8. The trees of the field shall ____ their hands. (Isa. 55:12)
12. Will ____ rob God? (Mal. 3:8)
13. Hurl.
14. Assistant.
15. The ____ is clothed with strength. (Ps. 93:1)
16. Citizen of Tirane.
18. Food additive. (abbr.)
19. Every ____ fled away. (Rev. 16:20)
20. Pointed tools.
22. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and ____ and forever. (Heb. 13:8)
26. Ones who offer their services.
30. Compass direction.
31. Dry.
32. Farm organization for youth. (abbr.)
33. Information.
34. 2,000 pounds.
35. I lay down ____ the sheep. (John 10:15)
37. If thine ____ hunger, feed him. (Rom. 12:20)

39. ____ is good, save one. (Luke 18:19)

40. Prisoner.
43. Capture.
46. A Japanese island.
49. A city in Hawaii.
50. Hosea. (Rom. 9:25)
51. Abraham’s burnt offering. (Gen. 22:13)
52. Aware of.
53. Purchases.
54. Before. (poetic)
55. Selves.

Down

1. He maketh the storm a _____. (Ps. 107:29)
2. Old Testament prophet.
3. Imitation butter.
4. Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the _____. (Rev. 22:13)
5. Organize.
6. Survey.
7. Father God. (Mark 14:36)
8. I ____ all things through Christ. (Phil. 4:13)
9. 52. (Roman numeral)
10. A city in Oklahoma.
11. My tongue is the ____ of a ready writer. (Ps. 45:1)

17. Insects.
19. Love worketh no _____. (Rom. 13:10)
21. Marry.
23. Extremely loud.
24. Regarding. (2 words)
25. Twelve months.
26. Do good to them that ____ you. (Matt. 5:44)
27. Press.
28. Major football organization. (abbr.)
29. What things were ____ , ____ those I counted loss. (Phil. 3:7)
33. Ye have made it a ____ of thieves. (Matt. 21:13)
35. Exotic pet bird.
36. Enemy.
38. Voice transmitters. (informal)
41. He hath cast me into the _____. (Job 30:19)
42. Jewish month.
44. Singing part.
45. Sounds of disapproval.
46. Elf.
47. Oklahoma State University. (abbr.)
48. Ye have taken away the ____ of knowledge. (Luke 11:52)
49. A garden tool.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For May 5

Explore the Bible

By Robert E. Jackson, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Christian Studies, University of Mobile



PURIFIES

Mark 11:15–19; 12:41–44

Cleansed (11:15–17)

The last week of Jesus' life He enters the temple courts and begins cleansing it. Merchants, selling goods with the approval of the religious leaders, treat God's holiness with contempt. Naturally the vendors and the religious establishment profited from these enterprises. Although we don't know for sure some theologians suggest goods were sold in the court of the Gentiles thus disrupting their prayer.

Regardless of the context the temple was misused in order to elevate the power of the nobility while exploiting the poor and outcasts. Therefore we observe the righteous indignation of Jesus as He overturns the tables of these merchants.

His house will be a house of prayer for all people. Corrupt practices intent on furthering reputation, careers and wealth cannot and will not be tolerated so Christ points to the source of injustice in His day — the priestly hierarchy operating in the temple.

Feared (11:18–19)

Ultimately the religious leaders knew Jesus was correct. And yet confronted with truth they became fearful. They feared because Jesus was holy and they were unholy. They feared because Jesus taught truth while they propagated man-made rules. They feared because the multitudes were listening to Christ's teachings instead of their teachings. Ungodly fear always seeks to remove the source of the fright.

Thus the religious leaders sought a way to destroy the source — Jesus Christ. Even today people fear when they hear truth. Often this fear manifests itself in anger. Therefore they seek to silence Christians who proclaim the gospel. What must we do? Pray God will open their hearts and replace their hatred for Christ with love.

Observed (12:41–42)

This passage is one of the most intriguing passages in the Bible. Jesus' crucifixion was at hand. Each moment Jesus had left on this earth was precious and God-ordained. Time was short. Much remained to be taught and done. In the business of the hour Jesus takes time to sit and watch people give. His observation of this act of worship should not be a surprise; God says more about giving in the New Testament than heaven or hell combined.

Perhaps Jesus' action should be a wake-up call for us in rich America. God watches what you give. Why? Does He need your money? No. He observes your giving because He loves you. He knows where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Put simply our heart follows our treasure. A stingy Christian is an oxymoron. True worshippers are generous because God lives within them.

Commended (12:43–44)

As Jesus watches a poor woman gives all she has. Notice this fact; Jesus allowed her to give it all. I would want to rush in and tell her, "That is okay. God understands your heart. Keep it so you will have something." Not Jesus. He allows her to give Him everything she has.

One lesson is God commends our faithfulness in giving, not the amount we give. A sacrificial "small gift" is more valuable to God than a large gift given out of abundance. Moreover Jesus commends this lady because she places her trust in God. Jesus allows her to give all she has to live on because He knows the Father will take care of her.

In our worship through giving today are we giving out of this same spirit of trust this poor widow exhibited? Pray Jesus will observe our hearts and worship. Ask Him to purify any area that is not bringing honor to Him. 🙏

Bible Studies for Life

By James Riley Strange, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of New Testament, Samford University



LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

Luke 6:27–36

Read Luke 6:17–38 for context. Last week we read a passage in which Jesus emphasized loving our neighbors as ourselves. There He spoke of the destitute among us.

Jesus' most famous lesson on this topic comes in the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37). Because of the bad blood between many Samaritans and Palestinian Jews of Jesus' day that parable, spoken to an expert in the Torah, sharpens what Jesus says to His disciples.

This passage falls in what some call the "Sermon on the Plain" in Luke (see 6:17). Many teachings also appear in the "Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew 5–7.

Many teachings have to do with how life will be lived in the Kingdom. Even if not fully realized the Kingdom is here (see Luke 11:20). Therefore Jesus' followers strive to live now as we will then.

Loving those who hate us should be seen in our attitude and actions. (27–28)

Jesus' audience had many instructions about right treatment of enemies in their Scripture (Ex. 23:5, Job 31:29–30, Prov. 16:7, 20:22, 24:17, 25:21–22), but it's another thing to hear a respected teacher bring teachings to life.

Jesus began by addressing His disciples, but verse 27 and 7:1 show that the audience has grown.

Jesus will follow up with some concrete examples, but these general statements are striking on their own because our instinct is to return hate for hate, curse for curse, abuse for abuse. Even we who have both the Old and New Testaments (see also Rom. 12:14–21) in our Bibles are no better at loving our enemies.

Loving others may require action on our part. (29–31)

"Coat" or "cloak" refers to the outer garment; "tunic" or "shirt" to the inner one. Jesus says, more

than not repaying hate for hate, extend grace to your enemy. The examples show how serious Jesus is.

The word "love" is the same word used for loving God in Luke 10:27, and the word "bless" is the same for blessing God in Luke 1:68 and 24:53. How is that possible?

Jesus knew some would be able to feel love toward their enemies. For the rest of us He provided examples so that we could start by doing rather than by feeling. We may feel no affection for our enemies. We may in fact hate them in return. Even so we can perform these acts and we can do more.

This is because Jesus did not provide an exclusive list as if we are obligated only to offer the other cheek, but are free to punch back if struck elsewhere.

Like other teachers of His day Jesus meant for His followers to extrapolate from these examples to their own situations. A "blow" may be an insult, a slight, a betrayal, a look of disgust or a no-confidence vote. Jesus' instructions still pertain and He gives the interpretive key at verse 31.

Our love flows out of the love Christ has shown us. (32–36)

We are good at loving our own. We may say, "My sister wronged me, but I will forgive her because she is family." According to Jesus, even those who do not anticipate the full realization of God's kingdom — even those whose lives have not been transformed by our merciful God — do this.

We are to be as merciful as God — who is "kind to the ungrateful and the wicked" — is to us. Paul said it this way in Romans 5:6–10: "Christ died for the ungodly." Why? Because God loved us "while we were His enemies."

With God's help we will become more like Him — loving all people. Thanks be to God. 🙏

TOP 9

best-selling Christian books

NONFICTION

- 1. Girl, Wash Your Face**
By Rachel Hollis (Thomas Nelson)
- 2. Grateful American**
By Gary Sinise (Thomas Nelson)
- 3. The 5 Love Languages**
By Gary Chapman (Moody)
- 4. It's Not Supposed to Be This Way**
By Lysa Terkeurst (Thomas Nelson)
- 5. Jesus Calling**
By Sarah Young (Thomas Nelson)
- 6. The Persian Gamble**
By Joel C. Rosenberg (Tyndale)
- 7. Total Money Makeover**
By Dave Ramsey (Thomas Nelson)
- 8. Everybody, Always**
By Bob Goff (Thomas Nelson)
- 9. The Theft of America's Soul**
By Phil Robertson (Thomas Nelson)

Source: Christian Book Expo at press time

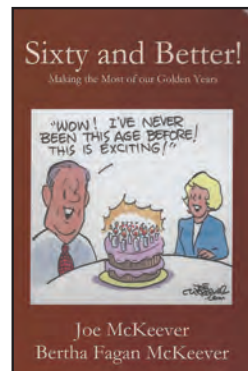


Media reviews

Sixty and Better! Making the Most of Our Golden Years

Joe McKeever and Bertha Fagan McKeever.
Cleveland, TN: Parson's Porch Books, 2018. 150 pp. (Paperback).

Readers of *The Alabama Baptist* will recognize one of the authors of this book; in fact, my guess is he has sketched most of you! The co-author is Joe McKeever's lovely wife, Bertha. Knowing what I do of this couple (Joe personally, and Bertha through Joe's glowing descriptions), I'd say the word "better" in the title of this book is an apt description of this dynamic duo.



This upbeat, busy-with-life couple offers advice for those who want to age with zest and joy. The introduction says it nicely: "If it's this much fun being 78,

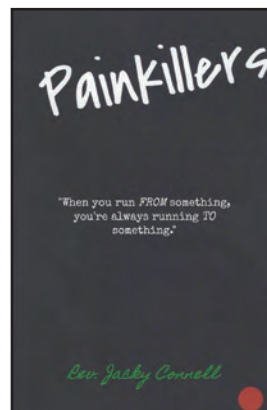
imagine what the 80s are going to be like!" The book is peppered with this kind of encouragement as the authors deal with topics like what they do to stay young (none of that stuff about eating broccoli), the opportunities that present themselves in later life and whether a widowed senior should remarry or not.

"Sixty and Better" is a great, quick read that leaves the reader smiling and ready to take on the rest of life. Now if you will excuse me I have a lot to do. Joe and Bertha are right — it just keeps getting better!

Painkillers: Book and Study Guide

Jacky Connell. CreateSpace, 2018. 135 pp. (Paperback).

Show of hands: How many (besides me) thought this was a book about drug addiction? I thought so! Even though the book really isn't about drugs, there is a clear parallel. The author points out that when we run from something (pain) in our lives, we always run to something else. That is often drugs, but drugs are not the only painkillers people turn to in an attempt to escape emotional pain. The book deals with seven of those painkillers, from isolation to inappropriate relationships to an independent spirit.



The bulk of the book consists of descriptions of these unhealthy painkillers, along with examples of people in the Bible who used them to escape their pain, and sound counsel for the one who has become entrapped. Connell is careful not to provide simplistic, pat solutions — he recognizes that "healing deep emotional pain just isn't that simple or easy."

Connell is pastor at Eden Westside Baptist Church, Pell City, in St. Clair Baptist Association.

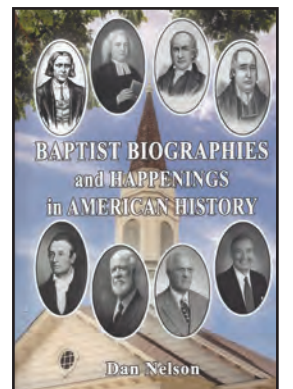
Baptist Biographies and Happenings in American History

Dan Nelson. North Fort Myers, FL: Faithful Life Publishers, 2018. 268 pp. (Hardback).

Did you know that Roger Williams, considered the father of Baptist thought in America, did not remain a Baptist throughout his life? Are you familiar with the contributions of John Clarke to the establishment of the Baptist church in America? Did you know that Billy Graham, revered Baptist evangelist, never pastored a Baptist church?

Are you aware of how much persecution the early church leaders, who came to this country to escape persecution in Europe, endured once they arrived in America?

I'm not going to tell you which of those I did and didn't know, but I will tell you where you can learn these things and more. In "Baptist Biographies," Dan Nelson has done us all a great service, presenting a chronological arrangement of biographies and "happenings" in Baptist history. You probably will have heard of most of the subjects and events, but to be able to read through them in the order in which they appeared in history is fascinating and instructive and weaves the story of what made us who we are as a denomination. 🇺🇸

**Meet the reviewer**

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Eye of the storms

Former Cubs pitcher finds peace in Christ during life's storms

By **Bill Sorrell**
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

In 2018, Jaye Chapman went through two storms. One ended his baseball career, the other devastated his hometown.

A former pitcher for the Chicago Cubs in the 2012 season, Chapman was playing with the Houston As-

tros' Triple-A affiliate Round Rock in 2017 when he experienced a devastating arm injury. During surgery a 7-inch titanium screw was inserted into his forearm, but Chapman's baseball career ended in January 2018.

"I was at a crossroads," Chapman said. "I had been in constant prayer about whether it was time to move on, time to for me to get home to my roots. Baseball is a very transient life. You are on the road away from home. I wanted to get back closer and start a family of my own. Then my arm snapped. That is about as clear as it gets to not play anymore. I felt like it was an answered prayer in a way."

Then in October, the Panama City, Florida, native saw his hometown devastated by Hurricane Michael, a Category 5 storm which reached peak winds of 160 mph.



Photo courtesy of Chicago Cubs

Jaye Chapman, former pitcher for the Chicago Cubs, went through two storms in 2018. One ended his baseball career and one devastated his hometown.

How to pray:

▶ Pray those still recovering from Hurricane Michael's devastation will experience the peace and grace of God.

▶ Pray for those still waiting to finalize insurance settlements, who need housing and who don't have jobs because of Hurricane Michael (TAB)

The powerful storm tore the roof off the home of Chapman's parents, Joel and Jan, damaged his brother's home and left only the foundation of the home Chapman himself was building.

Hope after destruction

"This storm ruined people's lives. They had to move, get new jobs. Trees were in the highway. You couldn't drive anywhere. It was stunning, the amount of destruction," Chapman said.

But in the midst of destruction, people helped each other too.

"It was nice to see some good per-

spective out of the storm," Chapman said. "That's an indication of faith, people helping do anything they could."

Faith has been part of Chapman's life since he was baptized at the age of 14. Now at 31 he says the times he has felt closest to Christ have been when he has been able to glorify God even in difficult times. One of his favorite verses is John 16:33.

"That verse puts life in perspective," Chapman said. "My main goals in life are to be truly at peace with who I am, always be true to who I am and be at peace with the Lord and myself." ✝



Wikimedia Commons

In October 2018, Hurricane Michael devastated the Gulf Coast, including Jaye Chapman's hometown of Panama City, Florida. The storm tore the roof off the home of Chapman's parents, damaged his brother's home and left only the foundation of the home Chapman was building.