

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself”

– Luke 10:27 (NIV)

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST Message

Newsjournal for Louisiana Baptists



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August 25, 2016

Historic Flooding

UNBELIEVABLE TOTALS

National Weather Service meteorologists calculated 6.9 trillion gallons of rainfall deluged Louisiana between Aug. 8-14.

NEVER BEFORE SEEN

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said 31.39 inches of rain fell on Watson and 21/2 feet on Livingston Parish.

TO THE RESCUE

The National Guard, Coast Guard, Sheriff deputies, Wildlife and Fisheries personnel, and the Cajun Navy rescued more than 30,000 people.

1,000-YEAR FLOOD

This unprecedented flooding in areas where it has never flooded has left 40,000 - 60,000 homes damaged by the floodwaters.

'THE NEED IS GREAT'



These LSU BCM students take a moment to pray in the rain as they assist people getting out of their flooded homes.



It is estimated that 40,000 to 60,000 homes across south Louisiana have been damaged or destroyed by historic and massive flooding.



Louisiana and other Southern Baptist Disaster Relief teams have already begun the cleanup process.

Unprecedented flooding leaves thousands homeless, desperately seeking help

BY WILL HALL, BRIAN BLACKWELL & PHILIP TIMOTHY

ALEXANDRIA – “The need is great,” according to John Hebert, responding to the massive flooding which struck the southern part of the state after record rainfall began Aug. 12 and continued through the weekend.

Hebert, state mission and minis-director who also oversees Louisiana Baptists’ combined disaster relief efforts, said the flooding has been historic, citing statistics from emergency

See FLOODING on 6



Pastor Brent Romero of First Baptist Boyce baptizes a boy named Sam, who became a believer while Romero and others were in Mexico on a mission trip to spread Christ’s love.

Small FBC Boyce plays big role in helping to expand the Kingdom

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

BOYCE – First Baptist Church in Boyce may be small in numbers but that did not stop nearly half of its members from participating in a recent overseas mission trip that included 20 accepting Christ.

This congregation of 35 saw 14 members travel to Mexico to spread Jesus’ love. While there, the team – which also included three members of Trinity Baptist Church in Pineville and

another from Archibald Baptist Church in Rayville – conducted sports clinics, women’s conferences, carnivals, worship rallies and the baptism of eight people.

In the end, the team saw a harvest of souls in the uttermost parts of the earth and also gained a greater motivation to share the Gospel in their own Jerusalem and Judea.

“We are a small church with a big heart,” Pastor Brent Romero said.

See BOYCE on 12

It is times like now, giving to the GBO is so important

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

“Let me proclaim your power to this new generation.”
– Psalm 71:18

For decades, Louisiana Baptists could count on its younger generation to be a stronghold in

its churches but in 2016, that is no longer the case.

Recent data shows since 1980, baptisms of children and Sunday school attendance among preschoolers, elementary-aged adolescents and teenagers are down significantly. Still, Louisiana Baptist leaders are hopeful for a turnaround

through various outreach efforts, one of those being through the Georgia Barnette State Missions Offering.

To that end, the theme for this year is “Mission: Next,” taken from Psalm 71:18.

“This year’s verse should challenge us to go to the next step, in particular in reaching every generation,” said Janie Wise, women’s missions and ministry strategist for Louisiana Baptists. “One of the greatest challenges is to bring along the next generation. Our challenge in Mission: Next is to reach out to coming generations, engaging them in missions in the state and instilling in them a passion to reach our Jerusalem and Judea.”

The Georgia Barnette State Missions offering is named after the first elected and paid WMU executive director/treasurer in the state. She would travel by train, boat, pirogue, and even horse and buggy from her home



Disaster relief efforts such as the current flooding response in the state rely heavily on funds from the Georgia Barnette State Missions Offering.

in New Orleans to other areas of Louisiana to visit state missionaries who were planting churches.

Sept. 11-18 has been set aside as Week of Prayer for state missions and ministries. Resources, including videos, demonstrating the scope and impact of the Georgia Barnette Offering have been mailed to churches across the state. Additional resources are available online at www.GeorgiaBarnette.org.

This year’s offering goal is \$1,800,000.

Because of generous giving, Louisiana Baptists have been able to continue the vision of Georgia Barnette more than 100 years after she first led women to take up an offering for state missionaries in 1907. The offering was named after her in 1937.

ANGOLA & MORE

Church planting, disaster relief operations and compassion ministries are among the most visible recipients of state mission offering funding. But the offering provides money

See GBO on 9

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'ON WINGS OF EAGLES'

Helping hands, both large & small

BY PHILIP TIMOTHY
Managing Editor

FRENCH SETTLEMENT -- The crew of the UH-60L Black Hawk helicopter was assigned search and rescue duties Aug. 15, flying along the Amite River when a small group of people flagged them down.

The chopper, part of F Co 2-135th AVN, an Army National Guard aviation support unit based in Pineville, hovered as team members tried to assess the needs of those stranded on the ground.

NOT A TYPICAL MONDAY

"We could see a walker sitting in the small boat and an elderly lady sitting in the boat," said Staff Sergeant Chad McCann, a member of Union Baptist Church, Deville. "We realized we couldn't do a hoist rescue so the pilots [Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jesse Curtis and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Walt Clement] inched the chopper down to a small sand island between two houses.

As the medic, Staff Sergeant Scott Hamilton, went over to assess the needs, McCann borrowed a small boat and followed after him.

What they found was much more than they anticipated.

"Not only was there an elderly woman, but she had just

recently had brain surgery," McCann said. "There also was a young mother (the woman's daughter) and two small children. We quickly got the grandmother secured in the helicopter and I went back to help the lady with her children."

McCann, an imposing figure at 6-foot-4, 285 pounds and the father of two, was a little surprised he got the smaller of the two children to come so easily to him.

"I did not know if she would come to me," McCann said. "But I clapped my hands and she came right to me.

"She may have been 18 months old" he said. "As I was carrying her to the helicopter she wrapped her arms around my neck and patted me on the back of my helmet. It was as if she was telling me everything is going to be all right."

It was a moment that made McCann take a moment and pause.

"My adrenalin was pumping. I was getting these jolts of adrenalin," he said, "and I had to tell myself to stay calm. She was so small and, yet, she really helped to calm me. It was as if she knew she was safe. There was water everywhere but in my arms she knew she was safe."

A LONG WEEKEND

McCann and his fellow crew

members had been going strong from morning to night through the weekend before, with Aug. 14 presenting the biggest challenges.

"Sunday was by far the worst day," said McCann. "We -- CW2 Ricky Caldwell and CW2 Jesse Futrell, Hamilton and McCann -- rescued 42 -- 19 by hoist -- that day in some of the worst of conditions imagined. Most of our hoists were in a driving rain ... a monsoon. But this is what we have trained for as a unit."

McCann added that even being combat-trained the scenes they came upon were emotionally impacting.

"The devastation we are seeing is just unbelievable," said McCann. "There is water to the roofs of homes as far as you can see. And the Amite River is still rising and methodically washing away foundations, structures, and trees."

McCann -- who made 80 lifts after Hurricane Katrina, served a tour in Afghanistan and as recently as March, rescued six people in Winnfield -- was stunned by the amount of flooding he has seen.

"This doesn't even compare to Katrina. It is way worse ... more widespread," he said.

"Those people in New Orleans live in a bowl but these people live in areas that have never flooded ... not in a 1,000 years. They had no way of knowing



Jesse Curtis photo

SSG Chad McCann, a member of Union Baptist Church, Deville, and a crewman on a UH-60L Black Hawk, carries this 18-month-old baby girl to the safety of the helicopter on a Aug. 15 rescue mission.

this was going to happen when they went to bed Friday night.

"When they awoke at 3 a.m. Saturday morning, they had three feet of water in their homes," said McCann. "And it hasn't stopped. But these people are amazing. Everyone has a boat and they immediately put them to use. It is neighbor helping neighbor."

His unit is flying over some of the hardest hit areas -- Baker, Zachary, Denham Springs, Amite, French Settlement, and up and down the Amite River -- and he said it takes a toll on the crew spiritually, emotionally and physically from seeing so

many people enduring this kind of hardship.

He asks people to pray for him and his unit's safety, but especially for the people devastated by the flood.

"Pray for all these people down here," he said. "They have lost everything. They have lost their homes, their possessions, and their livelihood. But they haven't lost hope. We are meeting some amazing people every day. So, please pray for God to strengthen these people.

"And, if possible, please send food, water and clothes this way," McCann said. "The need is great."



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Spiritual lessons from catastrophe

EDITOR'S NOTE: Steve Horn wrote this column to his congregation the Sunday following the record flooding in south Louisiana.

Since we cannot gather today, I thought I might give us something to meditate on from God's Word. Let me encourage you to gather your family around God's Word today. Read together Genesis 32:24-32.

Jacob's struggle with the "man of God" sets the stage for some lessons we can learn. Jacob wrestled through the night with this unidentified "man of God." Jacob demanded, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." Can our wrestling with catastrophes like flooding bless us? They can if we are willing to learn some spiritual lessons through these events. These are not new lessons, but they are lessons that we seem to never learn. Ask God to help you to learn these lessons today.

Jacob's story simply tells us that we can be blessed by some of the most difficult experiences of life. I want us to turn to several passages of Scripture today as we consider 3 separate "spiritual lessons" from these catastrophic events.

**Lesson No. 1:
The Prayer Lesson**
Scripture Reference:

James 5:16
The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

The first lesson that we can learn is the prayer lesson.

May we learn over and over

again that nothing is too difficult for God. We must always live with the confidence that God can do all things. Whether it is to destroy a storm or deliver us from the destruction of a storm, God is able. I have seen God do both. Notice the three questions that are answered by this verse.

What? **Powerful**

Prayer There is a difference between praying and prayer! Many people talk about prayer, but few people really pray!

Who? **Righteous People**
Not perfect people, just people made right with God.

Does What? **Accomplishes Much**

I pray that we will never forget the continuing spiritual lesson that the powerful praying by righteous people accomplishes much.

**Lesson No. 2:
The Possession Lesson**
Scripture Reference:

Luke 12:15

And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of things he possesses."

The second lesson we can learn is a lesson concerning our possessions. Life altering events remind us that our lives do not consist of our possessions.

The Request: When Jesus was teaching on issues of life-and-death and heaven-and-hell, He was interrupted by a question concerning greed. Isn't that the way it still is? When we ought to be focused on Heavenly, Kingdom issues, we continue to dwell on earthly things.

The Story: Jesus offers a parable, a short story, to show the ridiculous nature of trusting in earthly things.

The Moral: If you are going to be rich, you better be rich toward God.

God, help us to learn that life is not about possessions.

**Lesson No. 3:
The Preparation Lesson**
Scripture Reference:

Amos 4:12

Prepare to meet your God, O Israel.

The final lesson is a lesson about preparation. We didn't get much chance to prepare for this event. It is one thing to be unprepared for an event like we have suffered, it is quite another thing to be ill-prepared for eternity.

The Lesson through the Eyes of the Unbeliever: Are you prepared to meet God? Don't delay in preparing to meet God. He has come to our rescue. He alone can save you from your sin. He has entered our world in Jesus Christ, lived a sinless life, suffered, died, was buried, and rose again. Trust Him today to save you for eternity.

The Lesson through the Eyes of the Believer: The believer must also be prepared to meet God. Are you prepared to meet God? Is everybody you know prepared to meet God?

Not again ...

I think it was New York Yankee great Yogi Berra who said, "It's like déjà vu all over again!"

This is how I felt when I saw the low pressure system basically park itself over southeastern Louisiana. As I saw the videos being posted on social media and via various news outlets, I couldn't help pray, "Lord, please, not again. Not so soon."

As you well know, we dealt with historic flooding in March across northern and western parts of our state. Volunteers from across Louisiana, as well as our Baptist brethren from a dozen or more state conventions, responded to the need. All told, volunteers spent 80 days assisting victims during the spring floods – and here we go – again.

There is no answer to the "why" question on this side of heaven, but there is a promise found in Isaiah that can encourage us as we face the aftermath of another storm. "I will be with you when you pass through the waters, and when you pass through the rivers, they will not overwhelm you." Isaiah 43:2, HCSB

God promises that He'll be with us when we pass through the waters. Even in the midst of a chaotic scene, God is there. Sometimes we sense His presence during the storm, but most often we do not. Either way, the promise is the same "I will be with you."

Twice Isaiah uses the word "when." "When you pass through the waters ..." "When you pass through the rivers." If it seems like "déjà vu all over again" it's because it is.

In westernized Christianity, we'd like to avoid this truth however, we cannot. The storms WILL come. The rivers WILL rise. The current of these storms IS swift and can carry us off physically and spiritually if we're not careful.

As is usually the case, God saves the best for last when He told Isaiah, and us, "they will not overwhelm you." This doesn't mean the storms are easy. This doesn't mean the storms are painless. It's doesn't mean there is no loss.

It does mean we'll make it. As often as they come, as unexpected as they are, the storms will not "overwhelm" us.

So what can you do:

-- **Stay updated** on the needs in your area through social media, our website, (LouisianaBaptists.org/DisasterRelief) or the *Baptist Message* website, BaptistMessage.com.

-- **Pray** for the families affected, for the Disaster Relief volunteers and for God to provide comfort, wisdom and resources. Ask Him to draw people to Himself, even in the midst of this situation.

-- **Participate.** Volunteers are needed and emergency training sessions are being conducted. Check with your local association, our website, the Baptist Message website or our social media outlets for the latest information regarding training events in your area.

-- **Donate.** Many people have lost everything. Bring clothes, food, and cleaning supplies. Click on this link to give to our Disaster Relief efforts: LouisianaBaptists.org/DonateDR. Your Cooperative Program and Georgia Barnette gifts provide the equipment and infrastructure, but your cash gifts provide the specific supplies needed for each situation.

It may be "déjà vu all over again" as it relates to the storms, but it's also "déjà vu all over again" as God's people rise up and meet the needs He's put before us. Through His grace, through His presence, and through His strength we will not be "overwhelmed."

Grateful for you,

David Hankins



STEVE HORN
Pastor
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Gevan Spinney: Hold on, the cavalry is on its way

BY STAFF

Baptist Message

ALEXANDRIA – On his way to Denham Springs to minister to people devastated by the historic floods, Gevan Spinney, president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, told the *Baptist Message* he wanted folks to know help is coming.

HOPE

Spinney said he wanted “our friends” and “brothers and sisters” to rest assured Louisiana Baptists “are praying for you, and, we are coming.”

“I know from experience being where you are it seems like it takes a while. But we want you to know the cavalry is on its way,” he emphasized.

“I’ve been up here at the convention building and I’ve seen the command center,”

Spinney shared. “It’s getting organized. They are putting things in place.

“I looked on a board showing where shower trailer units and mud-out teams from all around are coming. Feeding trailers are coming from all over the states,” he continued. “Southern Baptists are on the way to get boots on the ground to help you through this.”

HELP

Spinney also made an appeal to “our churches north of Opelousas.”

“Now is the time to help,” he said. “We’ve been through this. We know what it’s like. We don’t just have sympathy for our fellow Louisiana brothers and sisters in the south who have been affected by the flood. We have empathy because we have just gone through this

ourselves in March.

“We know what it takes. We know the effort it takes. We need to go. We need to give resources. We need to give our time. We need to band together,” he continued. “It’s our turn to help now. We’ve been the recipients and now we need to go and help out. So let’s go and do this, not for our glory but for the glory of our Lord Jesus.”

Spinney also reminded Louisiana Baptists this is not a time for meeting just physical needs with resources, finances, and “boots on the ground.”

“The greatest needs in a lot of the homes are spiritual needs,” he stated. “And I want to encourage you to use this opportunity to win souls.

“God has given us the opportunity to share the love of Christ through that cold cup of water and a hot meal. But

the most important thing is to reach out to that person’s soul and give them the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

“You don’t need a passport for this mission trip,” he added.

THANKS

Spinney also offered appreciation for help coming from across the Southern Baptist Convention and praised the North American Mission Board “who does great things with disaster relief.”

“Those yellow shirts are a reminder throughout our state that we are not alone in this,” Spinney said.

“I want to encourage you, you have been faithful to give as Southern Baptists, and you have been faithful to serve,” he commended. But he also added that “Louisiana needs you more than ever before.

“Please come. Please give. Help us recover the state of Louisiana from this flood,” Spinney petitioned. “We need you.

“Thank you for what you did in March after the flood in the northern part of the state, but the southern part of our state needs you more than ever.

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Pastors adapt to heavy flooding using social media

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA – “We are in this together and we are going to come through this together.”

That is the phrase that came to mind for Jeff Ginn, pastor of Istrouma Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, following the historic flooding that has left him and many others in his church flooded out of their homes.

Citing Isaiah 43:2, Ginn said that God is with his

congregation and others who have been affected by the flooding, which dumped nearly three feet of rain in some areas Aug. 11-13.

“I know we all deeply feel a sense of loss and the challenges before us,” Ginn said during a Facebook live message Aug. 14 from Istrouma Baptist Church. “When I say we are in this together, it’s not just that you and I are in this together, but the Lord is in this with us.”

Dressed in shorts and a t-shirt, Ginn addressed the con-

gregation via his own Facebook page since the church was unable to hold services Sunday morning. He was one of many Louisiana Baptist pastors who took to social media to broadcast a message, either from the church building or a living room.

Brian Crain, pastor of Progression Church in Baton Rouge, took to Facebook to deliver his message. Broadcasting from the living room of the worship pastor, Michael

See SOCIAL MEDIA on 6

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Flooding from page one

management officials that 40,000 homes have been impacted, so far, and in some places 75 percent of them destroyed.

RAINS FELL, WATERS ROSE

"Some folks on the ground are suggesting upwards of 60,000 homes may be affected," he told the *Baptist Message*.

"Importantly, this disaster comes just a little over four months after the record spring floods which devastated the northern part of the state," Hebert said. "This is significant because about 70 percent of Louisiana Baptist volunteers are in that part of the state, and they dealt with losses while simultaneously helping others for weeks. Now, they just got their homes in order and we are asking them to step up, again, for this recovery effort."

"We need more volunteers, we need donations to purchase supplies and we need more prayers," Hebert emphasized.

As much as two feet of rain fell within 48 hours on parts of East Baton Rouge, Livingston and St. Helena parishes, a "1,000-year rain" event in these areas according to the Lower Mississippi River Forecast Center. Other parishes saw a two-day rainfall determined to be a "100-year" event -- these included Tangipahoa, East Feliciana, Washington, Ascension, Lafayette, Iberville and St. Martin.

The result of this August 12-13 inundation was historic flooding in southern Louisiana with tens of thousands of homes and hundreds of thousands of people impacted, including more than 60 Louisiana Baptist churches and the houses of at least 20 Louisiana Baptist pastors.

Lonnie Tucker, pastor of Still Water Baptist Church in Hammond, saw 10 inches of water flood his Hammond

home. But he was upbeat and grateful in the midst of the disaster.

"Thanks to our heavenly Father, my earthly father, and a neighbor with a dune buggy that rescued us from our flooded subdivision," he wrote on Facebook.

Likewise, Weldon Moak, pastor of First Baptist Church in Broussard, showed a positive spirit even though "a few inches of water" had entered the worship center. "I am hoping to save the carpet," he told the *Baptist Message*. In the meantime, the church has already met and begun "to send out teams to help clean up."

"Pray for safety in cleanup and good weather," Moak requested.

BAPTISTS RESPOND

Like Moak, many Louisiana Baptists already are responding to immediate needs, or preparing to be part of the long-term recovery effort in the state.

Resetting Perspectives

The Way Church in Denham Springs escaped the deluge which engulfed so much of the city's businesses and homes. Pastor Joshua Spinks told the *Message* this gave his congregation an opportunity to minister to so many in the community.

He said the church committed to the city Friday, Aug. 12, to take in 100 evacuees, and by Saturday morning the actual number of people in the makeshift shelter topped 250 before easing to 190 that night after other

locations opened up. Sunday brought even more change as a city well failed, leaving the church building without water and causing the evacuees to be relocated -- but not before Spinks and his congregation shared breakfast and worship with their guests.

Spinks said these events have given him and his neighbors a needed reset of perspectives.

"Last week I was worried about running out of space on my hard drive," Spinks reflected, and now "this community has become laser-focused on what really matters."

"God has a way of making us see one another the way he does," he continued. "We are all tattooed with the image of God."

War Zone

"I don't think it really sinks in how bad this is, until you get here," said Ron Thompson, a Louisiana Baptist disaster relief volunteer and director of missions for District Eight Baptist Convention, a group of five associations in the state.

"See it. Smell it. Feel it. Hear the National Guard helicopters or see the National Guard caravans. Then it sinks in," he explained.

"This is a war zone," he said, but clarified it is "not against flesh and blood, nor against rain and floods." "God has asked us to engage the hurting. Push back against the adversary. Take a dark time, and shine His light," Thompson declared.

Thompson spent the first week after the storm performing mud-out work in flood-damaged homes.

"Seeing their hurt," was impacting, he said. "I made a point to connect with each person I spoke to -- in a shelter, store, restaurant, gas station, wherever -- and call them by name if they offered it. I smiled. Told them it's going to be OK, and tried to find some

TENDING TO HIS FLOCK

One of four families from the Bridge Church in Madisonville who were trapped in their homes by rapidly rising water, Will and Charity Phillips along with their newborn baby and four-year-old twins were rescued by a National Guard team in a 5-ton truck Sunday morning, Aug. 14, and taken to a local restaurant situated on higher ground.

Pastor Lane Corley was able to reach them there and take them to his home where they will remain until the floodwaters recede.

Corley, who also serves as a church planning strategist for Louisiana Baptists, is thankful all four families were able to make it out unharmed, but knows there is a long road to recovery for everyone in the state.

"There are so many neighborhoods, homes and businesses affected by this flood, including East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana's most populated," Corley said. "We've got a lot of work and a great opportunity to let our 'light shine before men' ahead of us in south Louisiana."

encouraging word to share. "I'm humbled to be here," Thompson added, "amid the pain, just trying to help in any way I can."

Command Center

At Louisiana Baptists' state mission center in Alexandria, there is an 'all hands on deck' atmosphere in the building, in

particular in the missions and ministry team offices which host the command center for coordination of the recovery efforts.

From early in the morning until late in the evening there is a buzz of activity: fielding phone calls from individuals in need; holding conference calls to deploy teams and resources

Social Media from page 5

Young, Crain urged congregants to meet the needs of others.

"Just reach out and be the hands and feet of Jesus," Crain said. "It's going to take a lot of us to be able to work together and really see an impact made in the city. But it's a great way for the church to step up as the collective body of followers of Jesus and get involved in the city."

Further west, David Denton, pastor of Highland Baptist Church in New Iberia, used Facebook to communicate a Sunday morning message. High

water in the area forced cancellation of services on campus.

Denton rallied church members to allow God to use them to bring hope.

"Help with clean up and exercise caution in doing so," Denton said. "Feed people who are hungry. Get involved wherever you can and by all means share Christ with people."

"Be encouraged by God's promise that there is coming a day when there will be no need for rescue shelters or clean up because there will be no more floods," he continued. "Hold on to that hope."



to hard hit areas; and, serving as a crossroads of sorts for planned and informal face-to-face meetings of various sizes making sure assignments are clear across the spectrum of this large volunteer effort.

Along the walls are maps of Louisiana and dry erase boards updated in real time, and tables are lined up with banks of inboxes as well as laptops to assist in the operations.

On one whiteboard, the team lists the already 22 Louisiana Baptist churches which are serving as mobile feeding centers; hosting disaster relief volunteers; serving as shelters for evacuees; responding to mud-out requests for areas where waters have receded; distributing food, water, clothes and other essentials to sustain families displaced by the high waters; providing mobile shower units; and, performing training for 'walk-up' volunteers.

Another board shows the teams of Southern Baptists from Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, and Tennessee who have come alongside Louisiana Baptists for the immediate crisis and long-term recovery response.

There are numbers listed for the several points of contact with the North American Mission Board which is helping coordinate assistance across the Southern Baptist Convention.

There also is a list of Louisiana Baptist churches and

pastors' homes damaged in the flood and needing immediate assistance.

HOLDING HOPE, NEEDING HELP

Hebert asked churches in unaffected areas to set up prayer vigils for those impacted by the floods as well as the volunteers who are heading into difficult circumstances.

"God knows the need, but He expects us to humble ourselves and bring those concerns to Him," he said. "Pray for the people in need, but also for the volunteers who will reach out to help."

"Remember this is an opportunity to restore lives, but also to win souls," Hebert underscored. "Pray the lost will see Christ in us and allow us to share the Gospel with them."

Along that line, he urged Louisiana Baptists to volunteer for a disaster relief team.

"This is mission work you can complete without having to go out of state," he offered. "Bring a strong back and a willingness to share the Gospel."

"In situations like this, we need a lot of warm bodies and we are prepared to qualify 'walk-ups' to serve on a disaster relief team with brief standardized training on-site. Then we pair them up with a certified volunteer to ensure safety and efficiency," he said.

Hebert said some worksites will be able to outfit workers, but he urged volunteers to come prepared to be self-sufficient with work gloves and boots and such, but that meals

would be provided.

Finally, Hebert asked Louisiana Baptists to be generous in giving financially to the disaster relief fund at LouisianaBaptists.org.

"We need your help to stand in the gap for those affected by these historic storms," he said.

"The need is great."

Donations may be mailed or made electronically: visit LouisianaBaptists.org for more information. Persons wishing to volunteer may call 877.487.4658.

For continuous updates, follow BaptistMessage.com.



CELEBRATING THROUGH SERVICE

Steve Masters celebrated a milestone Aug. 15 as director of the LSU Baptist Collegiate Ministry.

"Having my 25th anniversary during a major disaster reminds me the most important things in life are God, family, church, friends and serving others," Masters said. "Material goods that get flooded can be replaced. You cannot replace God!"

He was joined by 20 LSU BCM students, who later helped clean out six homes in the area.

Associate Director Sarah Farley challenged believers to react positively to "one of the worst disasters to hit our state. This is a great time to be the Global Church," she proclaimed. "To be the tangible hands and feet of Jesus! Join us!"

The BCM is hosting volunteer groups Aug. 26-28, Sept. 2-5 and Sept. 9-11, with housing provided at Istrouma Baptist Church in Baton Rouge. For information about partnering with them, contact sfarley@bcmsu.net or lsubcm@eatel.net.

SAFE & SOUND

Satsuma Baptist Church became a place of jubilation after near tragedy Aug. 11-14.

Families separated after flash flooding in Livingston were reunited at the church Sunday morning.

The Cajun Navy, an informal name for the many Louisianians who used personal boats to rescue others, transported people throughout the day, dropping them off at the church into the arms of anxious but grateful members of displaced families.

Pastor Brad Delaughter said he was blessed to witness the church's response as "the hands and feet of Jesus" and the tangible effects of coming together "as an Acts 2 church."



Pritchard Baptist Church in Jena, LA

invites everyone to make plans now to join them for



September 15-18, 2016

Judgement House is an evangelistic walk through drama that presents the gospel by telling a timely and relevant story called 'Collision.' You will be led through a series of rooms that tell the story of 3 teens whose lives are cut short through tragedy. You will see how their deaths dramatically impact their families and what they experience beyond the grave. Most importantly you will see how JESUS CHANGES LIVES!

For more information/reservations call or text Allyson at 318.992.3351

Protection for Your Church



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Louisiana Baptist churches damaged by floodwaters

Amite Baptist Church, Central
 Bethel Baptist Church, Franklinton
 Blood River Baptist Church, Albany
 Carroll Baptist Church, Walker
 Church of Life, Baton Rouge
 Comite Baptist Church, Baton Rouge
 Community Church, Springfield
 Cross Creek Cowboy Church, Zachary
 Don Avenue Baptist Church,
 Denham Springs
 Eastside Baptist Church, Zachary
 Ebenezer Baptist Church, Hammond
 Faith Baptist Church, Baker
 Fellowship Baptist Church, Central
 First Baptist Church, Baker
 First Baptist Church, Broussard
 First Baptist Church, Crossgate
 First Baptist Church, Denham Springs
 First Baptist Church, Kaplan/parsonage
 First Baptist Church, Lydia
 First Baptist Church, Springfield
 French Corner Baptist Church,
 Ponchatoula
 Friendship Baptist Church, Central
 Gracepoint Church, Simmesport
 Grays Creek Baptist Church,

Denham Springs
 Greenwell Springs Baptist Church,
 Central
 Hebron Baptist Church, Denham Springs
 Highland Baptist Church, New Iberia
 Hillside Baptist Church, Albany
 Hillsdale Baptist Church, Amite
 Hope Center, Roseland
 Immanuel Baptist Church,
 Baton Rouge
 Korean Church, Lafayette
 Lake Martin Baptist Church, Ascension
 Lanier Baptist Church, Baton Rouge
 LifePoint Church, Simmesport
 Milldale Baptist Church, Zachary
 Montpelier Baptist Church, Amite
 Mt. Calvary Baptist Church,
 Independence
 Mt. Nebo Baptist Church, Roseland
 New Bethlehem Baptist Church,
 Denham Springs
 New Hope Baptist Church,
 Independence
 North Highland Community Church,
 Baton Rouge
 Northside Baptist Church,



Submitted photo

French Corner Baptist Church, Ponchatoula was one of 60 Louisiana Baptist churches whose buildings were damaged in the recent flooding. The church suffered 13 inches of water in its worship center and 4 inches in its education building. Like other damaged churches, they will rely on help from disaster relief teams and other groups to rebuild.

Denham Springs
 Old Zion Hill Baptist Church, Tickfaw
 One Life Church, Prairieville
 Redeemer Baptist Church, Baton Rouge
 Riverbend Baptist Church, Baton Rouge
 River Road Baptist Church, Hammond
 Sherwood Baptist Church, Baton Rouge
 Stevendale Baptist Church, Baton Rouge
 The Way Church, Denham Springs

Trinity Baptist Church, Eunice
 Trinity Baptist Church Pumpkin Center,
 Hammond
 Vietnamese Hope, Baton Rouge
 Walker community ministries, Walker
 Woodland Baptist Church, Springfield
 Woodland Park River Road Campus,
 Hammond
 Zoar Baptist Church, Baton Rouge

Flood-damaged Pastors' homes

Please pray for these pastors, whose homes were damaged by recent flooding.

Jay Avance,
 First Baptist Church, Baker
David Collins,
 Blood River Baptist Church, Albany
Carolyn Conerly, widow of Roderick Conerly
 former LBC employee and Pastor
Pat Deshotel,
 First Baptist Church, Welsh
Chris Fuselier,
 First Baptist Church, Youngsville
Jeff Ginn,
 Istrouma Baptist Church, Baton Rouge
Tommy Hicks,
 Antioch Baptist Church, Tickfaw
Larry and Elizabeth Langley,
 The Garden Baptist Church, Lafayette
Deleece Nichols,
 First Baptist Church, Lafayette
Josh Powell,
 Woodland Baptist, Springfield
Lee Rogers,
 First Baptist Church, Kaplan
Kyle Sullivan,
 Woodlawn Baptist Church, Baton Rouge
Jered Thomas,
 First Baptist Church, Lake Arthur
Lonnie Tucker,
 Still Water Baptist Church, Hammond
Darryl Woolery,
 Tammany Hills Baptist Church, Covington



MISSION: NEXT

2016 GEORGIA BARNETTE STATE
 MISSIONS OFFERING

▶ **WEEK OF PRAYER: September 11 - 18**
 ▶ **STATE GOAL: \$1.8 million**

WWW.GEORGIABARNETTE.ORG



"Let me proclaim your power to this new generation ..." Psalm 71:18

GBO from page two

for many other ministries in Louisiana, including Here for You, Louisiana Baptists' new multi-platform evangelistic media strategy, scholarships through the WMU for students to attend Louisiana College and Southern Baptist seminaries, missions camps for young men and women, the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary extension inside the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola, port ministries in Baton Rouge, Gonzales and New Orleans, and pregnancy resource ministries.

DISASTER RELIEF

Louisiana Baptists state disaster relief director Gibbie McMillan said the offering was vital to helping fund the recent disaster relief response to record flooding that left more than 18,000 homes flooded throughout many areas of the state in March and the historic flooding taking place now.

"The Georgia Barnette State

Missions Offering is the most important mission offering given for the ongoing work of missions in Louisiana," McMillan said. "We are all about missions but missions begin at home and the needs we see are great. So when people give to the GBO they are supporting missions in Louisiana."

"As the state director of Disaster Relief in Louisiana I am totally dependent on this offering for my entire budget," he continued. "When the storms come there is a real cost connected and only through this offering will the basic needs be met. I hope the good people of Louisiana will support the GBO."

CHURCH PLANTING

Louisiana Baptists' church planting director James Jenkins echoed the thought, calling the offering the lifeblood of missions and ministry for Louisiana Baptists, especially in helping meet the goal of planting 300 new

churches by the year 2020.

"When a church gives to the GBO, it is partnering with other churches, associations and other Southern Baptist entities to plant healthy, culturally relevant, biblically sound, multiplying churches that seek to fulfill the Great Commission," he said. "With the GBO, we can aid sponsoring churches to recruit and deploy church planters into every community in our state. In addition, we use the GBO to help our new church plants gain a physical footprint in the community, where people can gather for worship and discipleship."

Even though the week of prayer for the Georgia Barnette State Missions Offering is still a few weeks away, churches are encouraged to begin promoting it now. "Reaching the next generation is one of the key audiences identified by the President's 2020 Commission," added David Hankins, executive Director for Louisiana Baptists. "I want to encourage every church, regardless of size or location, to pray for and participate in the Georgia

Barnette State Missions Offering.

"Our window to positively affect the lives of the next generation is closing," Hankins continued. "We must act now and we must give now to influence this important generation with the Gospel."

Churches that have not yet received promotional materials should call the LBC Women's Missions and Ministry office at 318.448.3402.

Printed materials and on-line promotional pieces can be accessed at www.GeorgiaBarnette.org. Users can download feature videos for each day of the week of prayer.

Other resources include drama and sketch ideas, sermon outlines, teaching guides, promotional tools, clip art, a list of speakers and worship ideas.

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Louisiana Baptist FOUNDATION

The Louisiana Baptist Foundation is pleased to publish its Statement of Financial Position for the year 2015. The Foundation presents this statement on-line and annually in the Louisiana Baptist *Message* for public review.

The financial statement presented was prepared from the books and records of the Louisiana Baptist Foundation. A copy of the audit report for the calendar year that ended December 31, 2015, issued by independent certified public accountants can be reviewed upon request and is available at the office of the Louisiana Baptist Foundation.

Please call the Foundation if you have further questions regarding its financial position.

Louisiana Baptist Foundation
 P.O. Box 311
 Alexandria, LA 71309
 (318) 445-4495 1-877-523-4636
www.LBFinfo.org

Statement of Financial Position - December 31, 2015

ASSETS	2015
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 7,890
Accrued receivables	12,177
Prepaid expenses	11,128
Furn., equip., leasehold improvements - net of depreciation	82,333
Other assets	721
Investments in LBF managed accounts	6,599,631
Beneficial interest in trusts and endowments	14,104
Beneficial interest in split interest agreements	239,410
Assets held for agencies and trusts	<u>157,344,319</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ <u>164,311,713</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
LIABILITIES	
Accounts payable	\$ 4,103
Accrued liabilities	159,647
Liabilities for split-interest agreements	131,441
Due to agencies and trusts	
Short Term Fund managed accounts	67,047,355
Realized/Unrealized losses not allocated	(169,262)
Other managed accounts	<u>90,466,225</u>
Total Liabilities	157,639,509
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	
Operating	\$ 692,989
Designated for Short Term Fund Losses	250,000
Designated for donor advised funds	5,607,141
Permanently restricted	<u>122,074</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>6,672,204</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ <u>164,311,713</u>

"In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Louisiana Baptist Foundation as of December 31, 2015..., and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."

from the 2015 Independent Auditor's Report dated July 1, 2016, prepared by Payne, Moore and Herrington, LLP, Certified Public Accountant; presented to the Louisiana Baptist Foundation Board of Trustees, July 26, 2016.



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LARRY BALDRIDGE, Christian Cajun humorist, available for church events. For more information, call 337.250.3954.

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For information, contact Susan Nolan at: 318.343.2244 or snolan@lbch.org

SEEKING FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME COTTAGE MANAGERS

Ladies are needed for the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home, Monroe, LA, to serve in HomePlace, a transitional living ministry for homeless children and their mothers. The full-time position includes salary, housing, life and medical insurance, annuity, paid vacation, and training. Provide love, care, and hope in Christ to children and families in need. Both full-time and part-time positions require 24-hour work schedules.

For information, contact Susan Clark at 318.343.2244 or sclark@lbch.org

SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR

First Baptist Church of Delcambre, LA is seeking a bi-vocational pastor.

Please send résumés to:

First Baptist Church
P.O. Box 295 • Delcambre, LA 70528 or
email to firstbaptistdelcambre@gmail.com

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CHILDREN'S MINISTER

New Zion Baptist Church in Covington, LA is seeking a part time or full time Children's Minister

Please send résumés to: New Zion Baptist Church
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If interested, contact Robert Daniel at the Baptist Mission Center at 318. 445.5772.

New Zion Baptist Church in Covington, LA is seeking a

FULL TIME YOUTH MINISTER

Please send résumés to: New Zion Baptist Church
17387 New Zion Church Rd
Covington LA 70435
or by email: newzion@newzion.net
For more information,
call 985.892.4711

Seeking a bi-vocational PASTOR

Verda Baptist Church located in Verda, La. is a loving family-oriented church with an average attendance of 60. Our mission is to glorify God, strengthen families and serve others as we walk through this life together. Parsonage is available.

Please send résumé to: Kristal Thomisee, PSC
Secretary at mrsthomisee@gmail.com.
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LOUISIANA NOTABLES

ON THE MOVE

- **Tim Post** is the new pastor at Bethel Baptist Church, Bastrop. Post, who served as minister of music at Bethel for the last 24 years, will continue his ministry in music evangelism as he directs the music in revival services all over North Louisiana and South Arkansas.
- **Michael (wife Etta) Linton** is the new pastor at First Baptist Church, Sulphur.
- **Kevin (wife Caitlin) Willsie** is the discipline/operations minister for Norris Ferry Community Church, Shreveport.
- **Draper (wife Kimberly) Wright** is the new pastor at New Zion Baptist Church, Bossier City.
- **Weston Brown** is new as worship minister at The Covenant Church and Hub Ministries, Shreveport.
- **Frances Stinson** retires as music minister at Pinecroft Baptist Church, Shreveport.
- **Hardy Yeats** is interim music minister at Waller Baptist Church, Bossier City.
- **James M. Riley** is the new pastor at Grace Family Fellowship, Covington.
- **Nicholas Varnado** is the new music minister at Trinity Baptist Church, Hammond
- **Gregory Allen (wife Jennifer) Neal Jr.** is the new pastor of student ministries at Immanuel Baptist Church in Hammond.
- **Ruth Bell** is the new worship leader at Celebration Church, Slidell.
- **Ernest Graham** has resigned as minister of education at Amite Baptist Church.
- **Caleb Moss** has resigned as worship leader at Genesis Church; is the new worship leader at First Baptist Church, Westlake.
- **Matthew Smith** is the new pastor at Connect Church (sponsored by New Zion Baptist Church, Covington)
- **Sam Cirrincione and Chad Wiles** are new pastors at The Field NOLA (sponsored by Crossroads Baptist Church, Hammond).
- **Jeremy Antley** is the worship leader at Ouachita Baptist Church, West Monroe.
- **DeWayne Kelly** is the new youth minister at Oak

Grove Baptist Church, Eros.

- **Amanda Wilson** is the new children's minister at First Baptist Church, Calhoun.
- **Kayne Jeselink** is the new youth/children's director at Cherry Ridge Baptist Church, Bastrop.
- **Eddie Davis** is the new pastor at Oak Ridge Baptist Church, Oak Ridge.
- **Larry Anderson** is the new music minister at First Baptist Church, Bastrop.

HOMECOMING

- Bethel Baptist Church, Colfax: **Homecoming Sunday**, Aug. 28, 9:45 a.m. Sunday school, 10:45 a.m. worship. Speaker: **Lloyd Whitman**. There will be a covered dish meal following the service. The church will provide the meat. Pastor: Carl Gulde.
- Zion Hill Baptist Church, Farmerville: **175th Homecoming**, Sept. 4, 10 a.m. – noon. Dinner on the grounds will follow the morning service. Speaker: **Connie Smith**. Pastor: Connie Ward.
- Gloster Baptist Church, Gloster: **100th Anniversary**, Sept. 10-11, Saturday, 3-7 p.m. and Sunday, 9 a.m. – 1 pm. For more information, call 318.933.55484. Pastor: Ron McLellan.

REVIVAL

- Little Pass Baptist Church, Charenton: **7th Annual Unity Revival Meeting**, Aug. 28, 6 p.m. Pastor: Chris Holloway.
- Morehouse Baptist Association: **Four Church Progressive Revival**, Aug. 28-31, 7 p.m. nightly. New Friendship Baptist Church, Bastrop, Aug. 28. Speaker: **Andy Myrick**; Twin Oaks Baptist Church, Bastrop, Aug. 29. Speaker: **Todd Wooden**; Oak Hill Baptist Church, Bastrop, Aug. 30. Speaker: **Judd Roark**; South Side Baptist Church, Bastrop, Aug. 31. Speaker: **Luther Sanson**.
- First Baptist Church, Sunset: **Harvest Days**, Sept. 11. Evangelist: **Joe Audls**. Pastor: Don Whatley.
- Pisgah Baptist Church, Bernice: **Revival**, Sept. 4-7, Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell**, chalk artist. Pastor: Jeff Hurst.


LAGNIAPPE

- **BAGBR Total Church Life Leadership Conference** has been cancelled. Please note that if you have already paid to attend the conference your check will be returned to you via snail mail. Director of Missions: Tommy Middleton.
- North Shreve Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Clothes Closet on the first and third Saturday of each month**, 8 a.m.- 2 p.m. **Arts & Crafts Fair, second Saturday of every month** beginning Sept. 10, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Booth rental: \$25. Call the church office for an application form. Pastor: Roy Davis.
- Bob Tolquette is available for supply, interim or pastorate. Call 337.401.6551 or 337.401.6553.
- New Zion Baptist Church, Covington: The Perry's in concert, Aug. 26, 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15 at the church office, \$16.82 on-line at newzion.net or \$20 at the door. This a first come/first serve seating. Proceeds go to offset the cost of the Blessing of the Hunt. Pastor: Clark Stewart.
- First Baptist Church, Tallahassee, Florida: **Seeking full-time Senior Pastor**. Located in downtown Tallahassee, First Baptist is a Bible focused congregation that desires a dynamic preacher/teacher who can preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, possesses a deep and personal prayer life, has a strong focus on evangelism and can pastor a diverse congregation. Candidates should have a minimum of a Masters of Divinity and a Doctorate is preferred. For more information on our church, please refer to www.fbctlh.org/pastorsearch. Interested candidates or referrals should submit a cover letter and resume to pastorsearch@fbctlh.org or to the Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 710, Tallahassee, FL 32302. Review of resumes and cover letters will begin September 2, 2016.
- **NLBA Small Church Marriage Retreat & Connecting in Healthy Relationships for Singles**, Aug. 27, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Camp Bethany. Cost: \$10 per person. Deadline to register Aug. 25. Speakers: **John Lary**, Calvary Baptist Church (Married Couple Track) and **Lynn Loyd**, Arkansas Baptist Convention, (Single Adult Track). Music: **Richard &**

Sheri Bright. To register, contact the NLBA office at 318.686.5736.

- North Acres Baptist Church, Minden: **Golf Tournament**, Aug. 27. For more information, call 318.453.4285.
- Fair Park Baptist Church, West Monroe: **Unspoken Concert**, Aug. 27, 6 p.m. Doors will open at 5 p.m. Cost: \$10. Call the church office for more information at 318.396.6306. Pastor: Waymond Warren.
- First Baptist Church, West Monroe: **Impact**, Aug. 28-31. All youth grades sixth through 12th and youth leaders are invited to attend. Cost: \$1 per person at the door. Pastor: Michael Wood.
- University Baptist Church, Thibodaux: **Bayou Baptist Association Evangelism Rally**, Aug. 28, 5 p.m. Speaker: **Chuck Kelly**, president of NOBTS. Music: **University Praise Team**. Children's Rally: **Catch the Fire & P.R.E.A.C.H. (puppets)**. Director of Missions: Joe Arnold.
- Trinity Baptist Church, Lake Charles: **Steven Masood**, raised in Pakistan as a Muslim, will be giving his testimony of his journey to discover truth and finding Jesus Christ, Aug. 28 at both the 9:15 and 10:45 a.m. services in the central venue. He will speak again from 5-7 p.m. in the North Venue. He will be leading in two conferences: The two faces of Islam, and The Spiritual Questions Muslims Ask. Pastor: Steve James
- First Baptist Church, Bogalusa: **Homecoming Concert**, Aug. 28, 6 p.m. Pastor: Greg Whaley.
- Trinity Baptist Church, Hammond: **4th Sunday Family Fellowship**, Aug. 28, 5 p.m. There will be plenty of food for everyone and loads of water game fun, including a water slide and a dunking booth. For more information, call the church office at 225.294.5536. Pastor: Bob Adams.
- First Baptist Church, Pineville: **First@First Business Leader Luncheon**, August 29, Noon. Speaker: **Pastor Stewart Holloway** will speak on the topic "Rest in the Life of a Leader." He will share some of the insights learned over his recent sabbatical. Cost: \$10 and you may pay at the door. Please RSVP to Melinda Langford (mlangford@fbcpineville.net by 8 a.m. Aug. 29. Pastor: Stewart Holloway.

Louisiana Baptist FOUNDATION



Each month in 2016 the Louisiana Baptist Foundation will award a gift to a Louisiana Baptist Church or Ministry.

Help choose the recipient by completing the form below and returning to the address listed. If your submission is selected (at random), \$1000.00 will be sent to the ministry you have chosen.

The person selected for July, who wishes to remain anonymous, chose Woodridge Baptist in Shreveport to be the recipient of \$1000 because they reach the community with the love of Christ, meeting needs that often go unnoticed.

Mail completed form to: GIVE A GIFT
c/o Louisiana Baptist Foundation
P.O. Box 311
Alexandria, LA 71309

Name _____

Phone _____

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Church or Ministry Selected: _____

For information, rules and a link to on-line submission, go to: www.baptistmessage.com/give-a-gift/

Scripture Crypto

The Scripture Crypto is a Bible verse in which one letter has been substituted for another, thus encoding the verse. To find out what the verse is, you must determine what each letter is a substitute for. An "a," for example, may stand for a "t" in this week's issue of the ScriptureCrypto. Next week, "a" could stand for a "d." Each week, each letter is different. Solve by trial and error. The answer will be given next week. Note: All numerals, such as those in the scripture reference after the verse, are spelled out.

tmz eaa zryvbc zrez eus usfuhpsi eus qeis

qevyoscz tk zrs aybrz: ohu jrezchpsu ihzr qens

qevyoscz yc aybrz.

Sfrsctyevc oyps:zryuzssv

Clues:
Q = M; Y = I

Answer to August 11 Scripture Crypto:
Hosea eleven:six

Boyce from page one

“When we go there, I feel they want us there so badly.

“At the end of the week, I took away we can do more here to reach people in our community,” he continued. “We need to be in that same mindset of doing all we can because that’s what God has called us to do. We are so fast-paced here and we don’t take the time to step back and ask God what He wants us to do here in our community.”

After a vision trip to Kini, Mexico, in 2014, Romero returned with a team of five from First Baptist Boyce the following year. In 2015, they worked with Central Motul Baptist Church, located just outside Merida in the Yucatan Peninsula.

In 2016, the team worked with members of this same church in various venues throughout the week, and activities included a showing of God’s Not Dead attended by 75 people.

The highlight for Romero was baptizing the first eight converts of the church. The new believers range in age from 11 to the mid-30s.

He said the poolside bap-

tism, which resembled a party-like celebration, was different from any he has experienced in the United States.

“The baptisms were an overwhelming experience for me and my team members,” Romero said.

He said they waited five months “until their American church friends came.”

“Just knowing they waited because we are a part of their ministry is hard to put into words,” said Romero.

HUMBLE OFFER

Prior to the service, the pastor shared with the team a story of how Christ-like love softened the hearts of the family of one of the teenagers baptized.

The teen had told his parents about being saved during a showing of God’s Not Dead two days earlier. But instead of celebrating, his parents threatened to kick him out of their home.

During a visit to his home, the parents accused the pastor of stealing the teen’s cell phone. The pastor, who is on a limited income himself, offered a sacrificial gift – his own cell phone.

“He told them that if a

cell phone was keeping them from talking about their son’s decision, they could have it,” Hannah Romero recalled. “The pastor doesn’t have much but yet he was willing to give away something costly.

“To the family, it was an even bigger deal,” she said. “The mom started crying and said they had gone to the Catholic church all their life and if the same thing had happened to them, their church would have said it’s not their problem. They allowed their son to get baptized and it brought down a lot of walls.”

NEW PERSPECTIVE

She said that story was another example of how God’s supernatural power was at work throughout the trip. She said she was reminded how she should display that same boldness back home.

“The trip was so different and energizing for us,” she said. “They are so anxious to go out and share the gospel, that we see it’s worth it and does make a difference. We came home energized and ready to share Christ with our neighbors.”

Despite temperatures reaching triple digits, team member Trisha Austin said the heat did



Submitted photo

Children and others from the community attend a carnival where a mission team from Louisiana that includes face painting, balloon animals and sharing the gospel with all who attended.

not deter her from enjoying her first international mission trip. She was reminded to be content with all God has given and that family is more important than a material object.

“I really felt God’s presence when we sang the same songs in Spanish that we also sing in English and know God hears them just the same,” Austin said. “We feel a kinship even though we don’t understand each other verbally. Smiles and hugs do not need an interpreter.”

The team returned home with lessons learned that con-

tributed to planning a community carnival. It also is shaping their participation in a joint Christmas project with another church.

“When we go over there to work with the team, they are excited and stress that we are serving them,” Brent Romero said. “But in fact, they serve us and it motivates us that if they can reach their community regardless of how little funds they have, we can do the same here in Boyce. They have such a passion to serve God and we want to do that where we live.”

MISSION: NEXT

2016 GEORGIA BARNETTE STATE MISSIONS OFFERING

“Let me proclaim your power to this new generation ...” Psalm 71:18

STATE GOAL:
\$1.8 million

“... STARTING WITH 12 PEOPLE TO 28 PEOPLE TO RIGHT AT 300 PEOPLE IN LESS THAN 3 YEARS. NOBODY CAN DO THAT BUT GOD.”

GREG SHYNE, UNITED OUTREACH CHURCH, SHREVEPORT

GOD IS USING THE GEORGIA BARNETTE STATE MISSIONS OFFERING TO HELP GROW HIS CHURCH.

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