"The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock."

- Matthew 7:25 (NIV)



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September 8, 2016

# 'IT'S TIME TO STEP UP'

# Atheist flood survivor rescued by Jesus Christ

By Brian Blackwell

Message Staff Writer

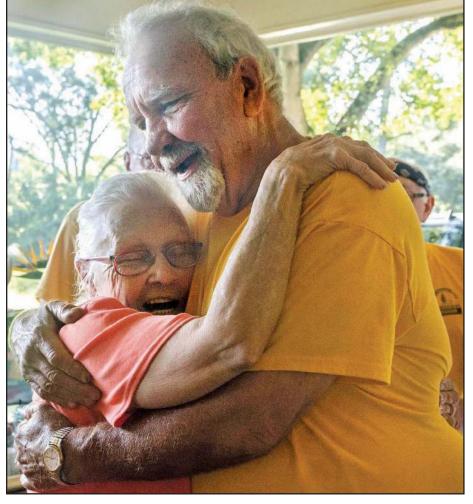
ALBANY – Jase Shawley had just wrapped up a sermon to 350 evacuees from the historic flooding in southern Louisiana when he was approached by a church member who passed along a request from Cindy, a nearly-blind woman and an avowed atheist.

"She really wants to speak with you about her salvation," the Bethlehem Baptist Church student minister was told.

Later that Aug. 14 afternoon, Shawley shared with her the basic plan of salvation and afterward Cindy had reason not only to celebrate having survived the storm, but also being rescued by Christ.

"Cindy told me she didn't know what had happened but it was something like she had never felt before," Shawley said. "She told me she had grown up

See RESCUED on 8



Baton Rouge homeowner Fay McDowell hugs Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteer Gary Tracy, a member of Northern Hill Baptist Church in Holt, Mo., Aug. 22. Skinner, along with other SBDR volunteers from Missouri, is helping tear out sheetrock and spray fungicide to prevent mold from growing in McDowell's home.

# More recovery workers needed, as damaged homes top 155,000

By Philip Timothy

Managing Editor

ALEXANDRIA - With a revised estimate of 155,000 damaged homes now being reported by the

governor's office, Louisiana Baptist leaders are asking for more volunteers to meet the overwhelming demand for assistance in mud-out and related services caused by historic floods across the southern part of the state in August.



Place Church of Baton Rouge.

vivor Pat Thomas, a member of Healing

The new Carmen K. Sisson photo number, issued

by Mike Steele, communications director for the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, more than doubles the previ-

See STEP UP on 3

# Former IMB missionaries ask for help with flood recovery

Floodwaters lifted the Lord's Supper table inside the worship center of **Don Avenue Baptist** Church in Denham Springs and moved it out a side door of the worship center, around a corner in the hallway and turned it 90 degrees against the flow to keep it in place in the back corridor – with the church Bible and offering plates intact.



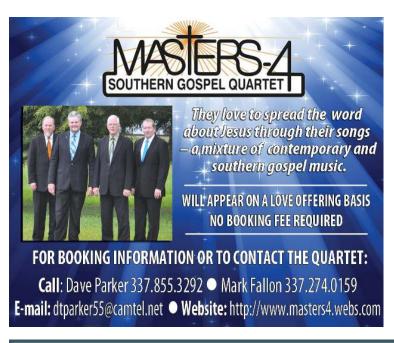
By Brian Blackwell

Message Staff Writer

DENHAM SPRINGS – Patti Higginbotham was at home when her husband Tom walked in with a special delivery from the heavily flood-damaged worship center at Don Avenue Baptist Church.

The pews had been destroyed by the current of the Amite River, which ran 6 feet high through the facility, and the pulpit was flipped on its side, she said. But the waters had lifted the Lord's Supper table and moved it out a side door of the worship center, around a corner in the hallway and turned it 90 degrees against the flow to keep it in place in the back corridor

See DON AVENUE on 9



# LBC reaching out to help pastors, congregations affected by flooding

By Philip Timothy

Managing Editor

ALEXANDRIA - The State Missions Services Staff of Louisiana Baptists, which has been quick to take care of the physical and spiritual needs of pastors affected by this recent round of historical and devastating floods in south Louisiana, is going a step further by also providing financial assistance.

Seventy pastors have received \$1,000 each to help with expenses.

"The money is being distributed through the director of missions in each of the affected areas," said Bill Robertson, Pastoral Leadership team leader. "A number have received assistance so far, and we expect to help even more."

Louisiana Baptists Executive Director David Hankins, who has been touring the incident command centers, said he wants pastors to know they are not alone.

'Many of the area pastors are working in their communities in addition to tending to their own needs. We want them to know we stand with them during this difficult and demanding time and will do ev-

erything we can to assist them in every way possible," said Hankins.

"Louisiana Baptists are again showing their commitment to the Lord and their communities by their quick and sacrificial response to this historical event," he said. "Our State Missions staff is working with area DOMs in an attempt to account for every pastor and every church in the affected areas.'

According to information from the incident command centers, 75 churches have been damaged by the flooding, too. The LBC is coordinating church partners in the state and from around the country to help impacted congregations recover

See HELP on 4

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Brian Blackwell photo

Mountains of debris from cleaned out houses extend for as far as the eye can see in subdivisions throughout the Baton Rouge areas. Hundreds of volunteers are working to remove wet sheetrock, carpet and insulations from flooded houses.

# Step Up from page one

ously reported figure of about 61,000 flooded houses.

But, Steele stressed the numbers may continue to fluctuate because calculations include direct reports from parishes combined with information gleaned from imaging technology.

Meanwhile, Louisiana Baptist leaders are calling for an even greater mobilization of volunteers.

Gevan Spinney, pastor of First Baptist Church, Haughton, and president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, thanked Southern Baptists for their response so far and lauded the North American Mission Board for the great work it does with disaster relief.

"Those yellow shirts are a reminder throughout our state that we are not alone in this," he said.

But he also urged more Southern Baptists from around the country to "Please, please come

"Louisiana needs you more than ever before," he said.
"Please come and give to help us help the state recover from this flood. We need you. Thank you for what you've done in March in response to the floods in the northern part of our state. But the southern part of our state needs you now more than ever.

The urgency of the situation was echoed by Louisiana Baptists' supervisor of state disaster relief efforts.

"Our disaster relief people began working as soon as the floodwaters began to go down," said John Hebert, LBC state director of missions. He added that on any given day Louisiana has 300

certified disaster relief "yellow shirts" deployed around the state "working eight to 10 hours."

"Their numbers have been bolstered by Southern Baptist disaster relief teams from 22 states," adding about another 700 volunteers on the field daily, Hebert said.

But even with help from other faith-based organizations, kids helping from schools and churches organizing their members locally, the 155,000 flooded homes needing restoration far exceed the manpower available now to respond.

"We got a big shot in the

arm over Labor Day weekend," Hebert said, with a boost in volunteers that included about 400 Baptist Collegiate Ministry students.

But he emphasized even more help is needed quickly to help homeowners eliminate the possibility of "black mold" before the growth of these biological toxins worsen the situation.

Reports from the field indicate the problem already is developing rapidly.

"We went yesterday (Aug. 25) and the mold had already gotten into the ceiling," said Robby Poole, pastor of Longview Baptist Church in Deville. "In this heat and humidity it is literally spreading like wildfire."

"Mold is nothing to be taken lightly," said Alan Knuckles, Director of Missions for Acadia, Louisiana and Mt. Olive Baptist Associations. "I have trained

See STEP UP on 8

## Pritchard Baptist Church in Jena, LA

to make plans from them for



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A mountain of debris lays outside Amite Baptist Church, Denham Springs following mud-out services. The church sustained \$1.3 million dollars in damage resulting from four feet of flood water Aug. 13.

# Connect with flooded churches

Louisiana Baptists have announced an initiative to partner healthy churches with churches impacted by the mid-August flooding in southern Louisiana.

In some cases, multiple congregations will be connected with the same church due to the size of the recovery and rebuilding projects, said Wayne Jenkins, director of evangelism for Louisiana Baptists.

Already, 34 churches have stepped up, he said. But 50-60

more partners are needed to care for up to another 40 or so churches still seeking financial and manpower assistance.

Jenkins used as an example Amite Baptist Church in Denham Springs – home to 625 worshipers on a typical Sunday – which was flooded with up to 4 feet of water Aug. 13 and experienced about \$1.3 million in damages.

Unfortunately, the con-

gregation did not have flood insurance to deal with the devastation caused by the 1000year rainfall, he explained.

"I just believe there are plenty of churches that are willing and are able to do something to assist flood-impacted churches like Amite," Jenkins said.

For information on how to partner with a flood-impacted church, call 318.446.3242.

# Help from page 4.

from the damage and rebuild facilities.

"If you know of a pastor/ staff member whose house flooded, please contact Bill Robertson," said Hankins. "If you know of a church that flooded, please email Wayne Shepherd, our executive assistant.

"While overwhelmed by the need, I am encouraged by the Lord's provision and the spirit of His people," Hankins continued. "Please continue to pray and participate in any way you can – either through making a financial contribution, providing needed supplies or by volunteer-

ing your time.

"May God continue to bless and direct our efforts in the days ahead." Hankins said.

Contact Robertson at Bill. Robertson@LouisianaBaptists.org with the name and church of the pastor in need. Email Shepherd at Wayne. Shepherd@LouisianaBaptists.org about a church that has had flood damage. If there is not internet access, call 877.487.4658 and share the information.

Additional information can be found at LouisianaBaptists. org/DR.





# Cowboy church pastor: In times of crisis, world turns to the church

By Brian Blackwell Message Staff Writer

ZACHARY - Since the launching of Cross Creek Cowboy Church in 2013, Pastor Josh Morris has talked to his congregation about being Jesus' hands and feet.

In mid-August, they got that chance when many in the congregation stepped up and helped serve 600 hot meals, rescued horses and cleaned out the inside of homes heavily damaged from what has been called the 1,000-year flood.

All this happened despite the church getting 2 1/2 feet of water in its own building.

Fortunately, the water quickly receded and repairs already have been completed, Morris said, and he offered that many churches in the southern part of the state were not in as favorable a position.

But he said regardless of the situation facing a congregation, God can use the devastation caused by the flood for good.

"A lot of people have questions," Morris said. Where do they turn first? Church. This is where they come for encouragement when bad things happen. It gives us an opportunity to reach those who normally don't go to church."

"The love of Christ is what we are showing," he continued. "What they need right now is for us to minister to them and get their needs met first. Then we can start sharing the Gospel."

Morris said this kind of



**Pastor Josh Morris** 

loving spirit in his congregation is a reason why they have grown from a group of 10 when he helped to start the church in March 2013, to averaging 80 in attendance just prior to the flood.

A native of St. Francisville, Morris and his wife Tara moved back to Louisiana after three years of Christian camp ministry in Texas,

where they also helped to start trying to teach us." two cowboy churches. They came home to Louisiana with the sole purpose of starting a cowboy church here.

The church offers several targeted outreach events, such as conducting worship services at secular rodeos, hosting their own rodeo events at local arenas and holding on-foot dummy roping 'get together' events once a month in its facilities – a former feed

During the week members and guests have the opportunity to attend men's and women's small group Bible studies – in homes and other community venues – called Round Pens, a take on the name for the area where a horse is trained.

"In a round pen, the horse learns respect and what the trainer is trying to get him to do," Morris said. "It's like that in our Bible studies, where we run in deep and learn more about what God is

While Cross Creek Cowboy Church relies on the traditional tithes, it also relies on funding from the Georgia Barnette Offering for State Missions. The offering helps supplement some of Morris' salary and provides funds used toward its outreach to the community.

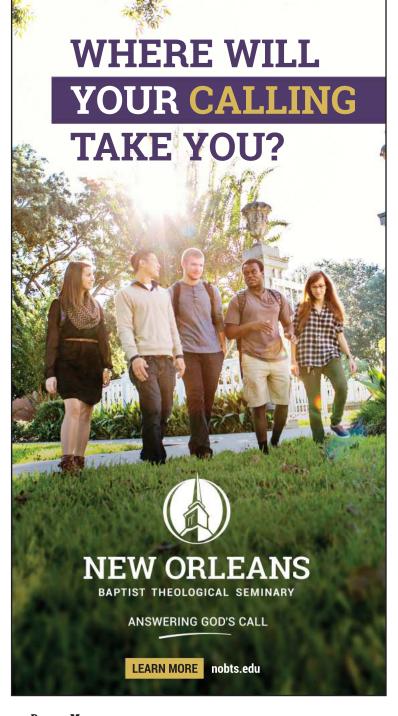
"The offering frees me up to be out in the community and do what we need to do to reach our neighbors in need," Morris said. "It's been a blessing and there is no way we

could have done the ministry outreaches we have done if it hadn't been for the Georgia Barnette Offering.

"God loves cowboys too," Morris concluded. "We just need to show them that love."

**Cross Creek Cowboy** Church is one of approximately 150 new churches that have been planted since 2010 with the help of Georgia Barnette gifts. Visit GeorgiaBarnette.org to learn more about the Georgia Barnette State Missions Offering and how it helps churches grow.









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# Rescued from page one \_\_\_\_\_

being taught God didn't exist. But now her heart was telling her He was real.

"Watching somebody who literally had nothing to do with any form of church or praying until that morning and then watching her say 'Lord I need you' just hours later was beautiful."

But Cindy's salvation is not the only miracle God has performed at Bethlehem Baptist Church as a result of the storm.

Floodwaters rapidly rose

in the church parking Aug. 12, until Shawley asked God to intervene. Afterward, the waterline crept within 2 feet of the back door of the building where evacuees were being housed, but no further.

For the next several days, the church was immersed in the ministry of feeding evacuees and sharing with them the love of Christ. It also influenced the community as a hub of service for volunteers such as the local high school football team.

Moreover, its impact continued to be felt even after the shelter closed Aug. 19, particularly when a number of the evacuees returned for Sunday morning worship services Aug. 21, including some who came forward during the altar call.

"It was beautiful to see 11 people come down and say they are giving their lives to Christ," Shawley said. "As much as it was a blessing for them, it was a blessing for us. This was something our church needed to see, that He can move mountains.

"God has a plan and purpose for this church," he continued. "For seven days straight, this church was on mission and still are. But for that week, these tireless church members were helping keep this running. He stopped the water so 350 people could find hope here and some even found Jesus. We were truly the body of Christ to multitudes who needed a touch of His hand."



Jase Shawley preaches to flooding evacuees attending worship services Aug. 14 in the gymnasium at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Albany.

# Step Up from page 3

more than 200 in the one-hour mud out course and I caution them all to be very careful to wear their masks and gloves when doing a house.

"Of course, I went in to assess a home the other day," said Knuckles, "And I forgot to put

on my mask. I wasn't in there very long and I began to cough."

Knuckles also issued a plea for experienced disaster relief workers to step up.

"We need our trained DR guys to respond," he said. "If they are waiting for a phone call, don't. We need help and we need it now."

Hebert said the response by Louisiana Baptists joined by Southern Baptists across the nation in gearing up to meet the challenge has been a blessing, and, he hopes the latest update about the substantially larger extent of the damage will rally an even greater outpouring of assistance.

"Look, I thank God for the help and support we have been getting from all over the United States," he said. "So far, we have received \$260,000 in donations, countless truckloads of much-needed supplies and food, and lots of prayers.

"But now we are praying God will stir a great army of volunteers to come and help us try to get ahead of this thing," he said. "Now is the time we need everyone to step up."









# **Don Avenue** from page one

- with the church Bible and offering plates intact.

Some might dismiss such a blessing as a coincidence, Higginbotham offered. But she believes it was a symbolic gesture from God.

"I just thought of Jesus' declaration in Matthew, that 'Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away," she said. "I immediately sent a text to everyone in the church to encourage them with the news.

"I believe it was a way God was telling us He sees us and knows about our situation in this disaster.

"He preserves His Word in our hearts," she said, "but He also saw fit to preserve the tangible Word, the church Bible."

When the congregation met in a sister church for worship Aug. 21, they took up tithes in the preserved offering plates, and the protected Bible was on display for all to see, she said.

"That's just about all He spared, but we feel that His hand was on that," Higginbotham said. "And we claim it as just something special from Him, a special word from Him that He has not forgotten Don Avenue Baptist Church."

Now the congregation is asking Southern Baptists not to forget them, either.

They have relied on Southern Baptists to hold the rope before, having served on the Caribbean island of St. Maarten from 1991 to 2003 as missionaries with the denomination's International Mission Board.

Pastor Tom Higginbotham, has been serving in an interim basis for two-and-a-half years, told the *Baptist Message* the church did not have flood insurance and contractors gave an estimate of \$254,000 just to clean out and sanitize the facilities.

"It's just cost prohibitive for us to spend that kind of money," Higginbotham said. "We are asking for churches to come and volunteer to gut these buildings."

"I believe with 20 or so helpers, we can haul out the pews, strip out the flooring and take out the drywall in about two weeks," he said. "If we can get it down to where we can sanitize everything to protect against mold, we will be able to start putting together the resources to rebuild, ourselves."

He also hopes to get some volunteer skilled labor to supervise several specific electrical, plumbing and flooring tasks.

Patti Higginbotham said despite the enormity of the situation she and her husband are not discouraged.

"When this happened, I told Tom I don't know of a people anywhere who would be more primed for God to show up and do something immeasurably more than we could ever ask and imagine," she said. "And we are waiting for Him to do that here. And we believe He will."

Tom Higginbotham asks any church with available workers to mud-out the Don Avenue Baptist Church facilities to contact him by phone, 225.360.5145.





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# **LOUISIANA NOTABLES**

#### ON THE MOVE

- Larry Evans is the new interim pastor following the resignation of **Chris Campo** as pastor at Parkerson Avenue Baptist Church, Crowley.
- Chad (wife Dawn) Boudreaux is new worship leader at First Baptist Church, Crowley.
- Kaylie Glovier is new children minister at Red River Baptist Church, Benton.
- **Jerry Elkins** retires as music minister from Cross Point Baptist Church, Bossier City.
- **Bruce Edwards** retires as education minister from Airline Baptist Church, Bossier City.
- Mike Landry retires as pastor at Bethany Baptist Church, Bethany.
- **Derek Cox** resigned as pastor at Springs of Grace Baptist Church, Shreveport.
- **Rex Blankenship** named as interim pastor at Springs of Grace Baptist Church, Shreveport.

#### IN REMEMBERANCE

■ C. Bullard Jones, 85, passed away July 26, 2016 after a brief illness. Raised in Winnfield, he graduated from Louisiana College in Pineville, where he met his wife Sunnye Dykes. He went on to obtain his Master of Divinity from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. During his long service in ministry, he served churches in Louisiana and Texas. He retired from the ministry in Baton Rouge. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Barbara (Sunnye) Dykes Jones. He leaves behind four sons and their families: Ricky and wife Freda; Dennis and wife Kim, grandchildren Haley, Kasey, and Jeremiah; Terry and wife Patti, grandchildren Stephen, Erin, and Mark; Jerry and wife Laura, grandchildren Christopher and Jarred. He is also survived by his sisters: Jenira Murrell and her husband Ralph; and Mary Thigpen and her husband Drew. He has numerous great grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

#### HOMECOMING

- 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.
- Sandy Bayou Baptist Church, Columbia: **99th Homecoming**, Sept. 18, 10 a.m. Lunch will follow

the services. Speaker: **Carlin Sanders**. All former members and families are invited to attend. Pastor: Larry Russell.

- Conway Baptist Church, Farmerville: Homecoming, Sept. 25. Brothers In Christ in concert, 10 a.m. and memorial and worship service, 11 a.m. Speaker: Tony Campanale. Lunch will follow services in the Family Life Center. Friends and families of present and former members are invited to attend. Pastor: Paul Carter.
- Alto Baptist Church, Alto: **Homecoming**, Sept. 25, 10:30 pm. Speaker: **James H. Miller.** Worship: **The Sanctuary Quartet**. Lunch will follow the service. Pastor: Alan Miller.

#### REVIVAL

- Parkview Baptist Church, Alexandria: **Revival**, Sept. 16-18. Evangelist/Worship: **Price Harris**. Pastor: David Shaw.
- Rock Corner Baptist Church, Dubach: **Revival**, Sept. 18-21. Evangelist: **Joe Aulds.** Pastor: Gary Massev.

#### LAGNIAPPE

- Cooper Baptist Church, Leesville: Ordained Jay Donaldson as a deacon, Aug. 21. Pastor: Edgar Evans
- Philadelphia Baptist Church Horseshoe Drive, Alexandria: **Block Party**, Sept. 10, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. There will be door prizes, church rummage sale, music, games, inflatables, hot dogs, and hamburgers. Grand Opening of Philadelphia Baptist Church Horseshoe Drive, Sept. 18, 9 a.m. breakfast, 9:30 a.m. Sunday school and worship, 10:45 a.m.
- First Baptist Church, Jonesboro: **The Crafty Café 2016** presented by the Jackson Woman's Missionary Union, Sept. 10, 8 a.m. 4 p.m. Come sip and shop to benefit local missions. Pastor: Stuart Toms.
- Live Oak Baptist Church, Denham Springs: Ladies Prayer Gathering, Sept. 12, 7 p.m. Come as we pray together. For more information contact, call Patti Higginbotham 225.939.8185 or sxmimb@cox.net. Pastor: Howard Turner.
- Trinity Baptist Church, Natchitoches: 2016 Ladies Conference, Sept. 13, 5:30 p.m. Speaker: Cyndi Grace. Cost: \$10 which includes a catered meal. Pas-

tor: Josh Currie.

- Baptist Association of Greater Baton Rouge Senior Adult Revival, Sept. 16-18. Speaker: Joe McKeever, author, cartoonist, retired DOM & pastor. Director of Missions: Tommy Middleton.
- First Baptist Church, Blanchard: Gospel Music concert, Sept. 16, 6 p.m. Special performances by Rocky Maddox, pianist, songs comedy and Grounded Quartet 'Gaither style.' Cost: Free. Pastor: Doug Allen.
- Calvary Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Beth Moore Living Proof Simulcast 2016**, Sept. 17, 9 a.m. 4:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided. Register at calvaryshreveport.org or by calling 318.6874920, ext.247. Pastor: John Lary.
- Kingston Road Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Beth Moore Living Proof Simulcast 2016,** Sept. 17, 9 a.m. 4:30 p.m. Cost: \$20. Lunch is included. To register, go online to www.kingstonroadbaptist-church.org or call 318.687.9885. Pastor: Wayne DesLattes.
- Northeast Louisiana Baptist Association Senior Adult Fall Progressive Revival, Sept. 19-21, 10 a.m.- noon. Monday Highland Baptist Church, West Monroe; Tuesday Victory Baptist Church, Monroe; Wednesday First Baptist Church, Calhoun. Speaker: LC President Rick Brewer. Cost: \$5 per person to help defray the cost of lunch, which will be served each day. Director of Missions: Jerry Price.
- Family of Grace Church, Alexandria: **Marriage 24 Love One Another**, Sept. 23-24, 6:30 p.m., Friday, and 9 a.m. 3 p.m., Saturday. Speaker: **Dudley Bienv enu**, Christian counselor and author. Cost: Free and open to the public. Seating is limited. To reserve space call Family of Grace at 318.443.1400 or 318.769.1992. Pastor: Brad Webb.
- First Baptist Church, Lafayette: **Refresh 2016**, Sept. 24, 9 a.m. 2:30 p.m. at the FBC Fellowship Hall. Speaker: **Tracie Miles, Proverbs 31 Ministries.** Pastor: Steve Horn.
- Judson Baptist Retreat Center, St. Francisville:

  'Angles on Angels' Ladies' Retreat, Sept. 30Oct. 1, Friday 6 p.m. Saturday 2:30 p.m. Speaker:
  Becky Brown. Worship Leaders: Paula Payne. To register, go online to www.judsonretreat.org. For questions or more information, call 225.634.7225.

# **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.

vml bfg kilbf yfizz qg vuzzgp aubf bfg

edmazgpog mv bfg ozmlr mv bfg zmlp, iy bfg

aibgly hmkgl bfg ygi.

Figieexe bam:vmxlbggd

Clues:

E = K; M = O

Answer to August 25 Scripture Crypto: Ephesians five: thirteen









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

**SEEKING FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME** 

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.

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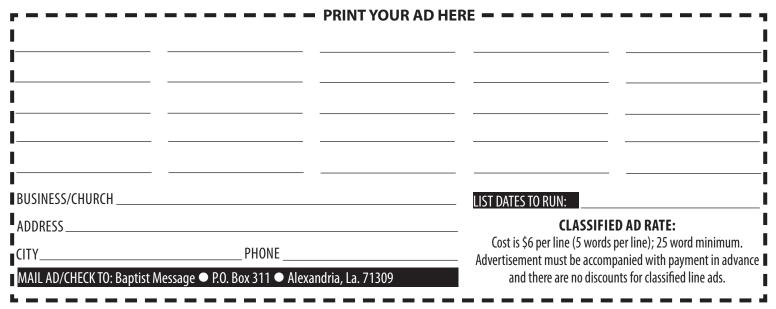
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# 

Thank you Louisiana Baptists for helping your Children's Home "make groceries" each year for the children God has placed in our care. Please know that our staff is praying for the many ministers and congregations that have been impacted by the flooding and are serving those in need in a variety of ways. If your church is a designated pickup location for our Fall Food Roundup and will be unable to participate this year because of the flooding, we understand. Please contact us at 318.343.2244 or marc@lbch.org.

# Thank You!

A complete Fall Food Roundup Needs List and Pickup Schedule may be found at www.lbch.org



