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By Philip Timothy
Managing Editor

See DON AVENUE on 9

‘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.

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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 everything 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.
Flooding 2016

Step Up from page one

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.

ouisely 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," 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
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 congregation did not have flood insurance to deal with the devastation caused by the 1000-year 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 volunteering 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.
Georgia Barnette State Offering

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 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 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 mill.

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 trying to teach us.”

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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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.”

Rescued from page one

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.

“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.”

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Mission Board.

denomination’s International island of St. Maarten from 1991 having served on the Caribbean Baptists to hold the rope before, asking Southern Baptists not to Church.”

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Aug. 21, they took up tithes in in a sister church for worship gible Word, the church Bible.”

also saw fit to preserve the tan

our hearts,” she said, “but He
disaster.

was telling us He sees us and she said. “I immediately sent a

My words will not pass away,”

en and earth will pass away, but

from God.

believes it was a symbolic gesture Higginbotham offered. But she be-

– with the church Bible and of-

ferring plates intact.

Some might dismiss such a blessing as a coincidence, Higginbotham offered. But she be-

lieves it was a symbolic gesture from God.

“I just thought of Jesus’ decla-

From page one

As Southern Baptists arrive in Louisiana to work on the recovery of 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.

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 es-

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9
**LOUISIANA NOTABLES**

**ON THE MOVE**

- Larry Evans is the new interim pastor following the resignation of Chris Campo as pastor at Parkers Avenue Baptist Church, Crowley.

- Chad (wife Dawn) Boudreaux is new worship leader at First Baptist Church, Crowley.

- Kaylie Glover is new children's 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 is resigned as pastor at Springs of Grace Baptist Church, Shreveport.

- Rex Blankenship named as interim pastor at Springs of Grace Baptist Church, Shreveport.

**IN REMEMBRANCE**

- C. Bullard Jones, 85, passed away July 26, 2016 after a brief illness. Raised in Winfield, 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 Fenda; Dennis and wife Kim; grandchildren Haley, Kasey, and Jeremiah; Terri and wife Patti; grandchildren Stephen; Erin, and Mark; Jerry and wife Laura, grandchildren Christopher and Jared. He also is survived by his sisters: Janera Murrell and her husband Ralph; and Mary Thigpen and her husband Drew. He has numerous great grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

**HOMECOMING**

- Glover Baptist Church, Glover: 100th Anniversary, Sept. 10-11, Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided. Register at cayugahomecoming.com or by calling 318.687.1683. Pastor: Ron McLellan.

**REVIEW**


**Lagniappe**


- Philadelphia Baptist Church Highway Drive, Alexandria: Block Party, Sept. 10, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Lunch will be provided. There will be door prizes, church nursery take, music, games, inflatables, hot dogs, and hamburgers, Grand Opening of Philadelphia Baptist Church Highway Drive, Sept. 10, 9 a.m. Breakfast: 9:30 a.m. Sunday school and worship: 10:45 a.m.

- First Baptist Church, Jennings: Mother’s Day Luncheon, Sept. 11, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Register by Sept. 4. Pastor: Kelton Hayter.

**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 bfkg yfizz qg vzazzg pauf bfg

edazmgpog mv bfg ozmlr mv bfg zmip, iy bfg

arably hmkgl bfg ygi.

**Answer to August 25 Scripture Crypto:** Ephesians five: thirteen

Fiquexxbu: vmlxgbdg

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

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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 scClark@lbch.org

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

With support from the church, the Pastoral Support Team, and the Pastor’s family, the pastor will work to fulfill the vision. This position requires: Flexible schedule and a light to medium duty truck. The Tent Consultant will receive a set fee depending on the size of the set up. Mileage is reimbursed to help cover the cost of vehicle usage. Tent requests are received at the Baptist Mission Center. The TC then makes contact with the key person from the requesting church or organization to discuss specifics. On the set up day, the TC arranges with the tent and its trailer. The TC will guide the volunteers to erect the tent in proper sequence and with all due safety.

If interested, contact Robert Daniel at the Baptist Mission Center at 318.445.5772.

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LOUISIANA BAPTIST CHILDREN’S HOME
SEEKING 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

September 8, 2016 • www.baptistmessage.com • LOUISIANA BAPTIST MESSAGE
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