

“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”

– Galatians 2:20 (NIV)

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February 9, 2017

2017 EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

Baptismal waters help ease pain of floodwaters

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

DENHAM SPRINGS – The baptismal waters for the congregation of First Baptist Church Denham Springs were calm for several months following the historic flood of August 2016, but they have stirred once again for the congregation, just not where they would have expected.

In December, 10-year-old Elise Hebert stepped into a livestock watering trough at the Denham Springs Junior High School cafeteria and declared her faith in Christ before being plunged beneath the surface in obedience and as a public display of her faith.

Despite the dislocation from their church campus, the event was a true homecoming for Elise and her family. Elise, who along with her sister Ann Marie, had just recently returned to Denham Springs after living with their uncle in Maryland for two months immediately following the flood.

See **WATERS** on 2



Philip Timothy photo

More than 30 youth gather inside the Temple Baptist Church in Ruston worship center following a time of decision they made Jan. 23. The student night that also featured pizza and music took place during the first day of the 2017 Evangelism Conference.

RUSTON — Wayne Jenkins said in years past his team had tried other Convention-wide initiatives, but nothing with the focus of the newly launched Harvest campaign to “pray for every home and share Christ with every person” in the state.

Moreover, the Louisiana Baptist Convention evangelism and church growth director said this cooperative effort is special because he truly believes Louisiana Baptists “have the ability to achieve these goals” - and he said the harvest of salvations that resulted from Louisiana Baptists 2017 Evangelism Conference is promising.

YOUTH RESPOND

Ed Newton led a kickoff for Harvest 2017-2018, aimed at youth, during the first day’s evening session of ECON 2017.

After a pizza social at Temple Baptist Church, Ruston, Jan. 23, Ed Newton presented a message emphasizing the Gospel to hundreds of young people who were part of a packed worship center.

“Heaven is real,” said Newton, pastor of Community Bible Church in San Antonio, Texas. “Life is short. Jesus is good, and, He desires to save you right where you’re at.”

Without believing in Christ, Newton said, the future is hopeless. But he emphasized no one had to remain trapped in that spiritual condition.

See **HARVEST** on 8

Private revival stirring from public call to prayer

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

SHREVEPORT – Nearly 900 members of the Northwest Louisiana Baptist Association ended their final days of January by crying out to God to bring revival to a nation becoming increasingly filled with turmoil, according to Lane Moore, director of missions for the Northwest Louisiana Baptist Association.

Much like the association’s first Call to Prayer, which was hosted at First Baptist Church Bossier City in January 2016, Moore said this gathering brought

See **PRAYER** on 4



Douglas Collier photo

Worshippers bow their heads in prayer during the Northwest Louisiana Baptist Association’s A Call to Prayer II Sunday evening, Jan. 29, at Summer Grove Baptist Church in Shreveport.

Waters from page one

Pastor Leo Miller told members the baptism was another reminder their future was bright.

"It is one thing to have worship and the music in a service to lift you up, but when you see God do things like the ordinance of baptism, it's a really encouraging reminder to know God is moving and using difficulties to bring about his plans and purposes," he told the *Baptist Message*. During the first two months people were just overwhelmed.

"It was really encouraging to begin to get to a place where we are seeing growth once again," he continued. "When you are in the mode of survival

and get beyond that, you see God is still in charge and see blessings that come as a result of that."

Elise's father, Mark, said the leadership and compassion shown by Miller and others in the church underscores the importance of a church family, especially in the midst of disaster.

"Going through those first few weeks after the disaster, especially when my wife and I were away from our daughter for a couple of months, was a little easier with the comfort our church family showed us," he said. "They were what we needed as we all leaned on God during that time."



Submitted photo

Pastor Leo Miller baptizes 10-year-old Elise Herbert in December 2016. This was the first baptism First Baptist Church in Denham Springs has held since before a flood that devastated much of the area in August 2016.

"Getting my daughters back and seeing Elise baptized was more emotional than we expected," he said. "Since then, it seems like as every week passes we are getting back to some type of normalcy."

TOTAL DESTRUCTION

The floodwaters tossed pews around like matchsticks, made unrecognizable the toys that once filled children's Sunday school classrooms and left

a stain line around the room as a reminder of the 10 foot high waters that rose on the campus Aug. 12, 2016.

Early estimates for cleanup and repair totaled a jaw-dropping \$4.3 million – far too much than the uninsured congregation could afford to pay.

However, amid the despair, Miller discovered something much brighter – a reminder that God was with the congregation and that He was providing them an even brighter future.

"We live life knowing that we're never promised tomorrow and we realize that devastation and destruction can happen without a moment's notice," Miller said. "But once you're faced with such ad-

versity, you quickly sense the mighty hand of God is at work.

"It was truly amazing to see how God was going before us providing the right people and the right resources needed to bring about rescue and recovery," Miller said. "No one wishes for difficult times but for the child of God it's in these moments that God does His best work."

NEW HOME

First United Methodist Church in Denham Springs, which had escaped major damage from the historic flood, immediately stepped up and offered a temporary home. Ironically, the Methodist congregation worshiped on the First Baptist Denham Springs' campus in 2011 while rebuilding after a fire destroyed its facilities.

The congregation met Aug. 21 at the interim location with 250 people attending that Sunday, and the crowds held steady around that number until the group relocated Oct. 23 to the Denham Springs Junior High School cafeteria. About 275 gathered for worship the first time there. Then small groups were added along with a nursery, children's worship area and a second service to accommodate the growth – about 350 worshipers have been gathering since the start of 2017.

See WATERS on 11

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Pro-life prospects across the state and nation are looking up for 2017

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

ALEXANDRIA – U.S. Rep. Mike Johnson believes 2017 will be the most pro-life year in America in 50 years.

SHREVEPORT

“We are just getting started, so buckle up,” Johnson told a record crowd gathered for the Louisiana Life March North, whose participants walked from Bossier City to Shreveport, Jan. 28. “Thank you for standing for life. This is an important historic moment for our nation, for our state and for this community that all of us love so much.”

More than 9,000 people turned out for the fourth annual march to promote protections for the unborn.

But this year’s theme, “Protect Them Both,” added an emphasis on the value of the health and life of the mother, too.

In particular, organizers

worked to draw attention to crisis pregnancy centers across the state and the work they do to care for the mother’s health in order to make it easier for her to choose life for her unborn child.

The march, the second of three scheduled in the state, all with the same theme, included speakers and musicians from various denominations, including a number of Louisiana Baptists. Lane Moore, director of missions for the Northwest Louisiana Baptist Association, was one of them. After the march he told the *Baptist Message* he always is amazed at the diversity represented in these events.

“The young families, with strollers and small children, are encouraging,” Moore said. “The people that attended seemed to be more excited about the future of this issue. They seem to have the wind at their backs. I believe there is now an administration in Washington that is following this closely. As Vice-President Mike



Douglas Collier photo

Debbie Lindner (left) joins with other marchers as the Louisiana Life March makes its way across the Long-Allen Bridge from Bossier City into Shreveport Jan. 28. More than 9,000 participated in the march.

Pence stated at the March for Life in Washington last week, “the culture of life is winning in America.”

Louisiana Baptist Conven-

tion President Gevan Spinney, who also marched, echoed the thought.

“It is pretty awesome when evangelicals can hold hands

with Catholics and march for life,” said Spinney, pastor of First Baptist Church Haughton. “The best thing about the march

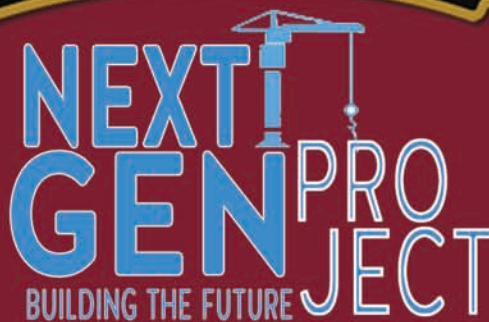
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Prayer from page one

together Christians of various ages and ethnicities to pray for law enforcement, the persecuted church, missionaries serving around the world, pastors and other church leaders.

The 2017 event at Summer Grove Baptist Church in Shreveport was marked by prayer from the worship center stage, in small groups around the room, and by individuals even in the hallways outside,

he described, adding that in the end, participants uniformly described a movement of the Holy Spirit in that place as pleas for revival were lifted up.

FRAMING THE NEED

During Moore's opening remarks, he said the culture is desperate for the love of Christ and is watching how believers live.

"My desire tonight is that we would not leave this place the same way we walked into this place," Moore said. "We are going to invite Him, and praise Him, and bless Him and worship Him and talk to Him tonight."

"When Scripture talks about crying out to God, it is indicative of desperation," he continued. "This gathering tonight is about us -- by the hundreds -- calling out to God. We are living in a country that is desperate. They may not know what they're desperate for, but they're desperate. We are watching this world come apart at the seams."

Eddie Briery then posed the question "What would happen if God turned your life around?"

Briery, who is pastor of First Baptist Church Vivian, said God did not create Christians to be just good people, but rather to proclaim the Gospel. He said for change to happen through revival, it must first take place within each person's heart.

"Revival always happens privately before it happens publicly," he said. "So when God works with us in our prayer closets, and in our hallways, and in our homes, and in our offices, and in our cars going down the interstate, we come to church as revived people because our lives have been turned completely around."

"It's not 'if' -- because he's able," he said. "It's a 'when' -- and he's ready to turn our lives around now."



Douglas Collier photo

Kenny Joiner of First Baptist Church, Greenwood offers a brief prayer with other pastors during the Northwest Louisiana Baptist Association's A Call to Prayer II Jan. 29 at Summer Grove Baptist Church.

PRAYING FOR ZEAL

Aaron Burgner, pastor of Summer Grove Baptist Church, told the crowd that for the Gospel to move in Shreveport, Christians must first have a passion for sharing Christ with a lost world.

Burgner said God has positioned all churches to make His name known, so that all would come to know His Son and not perish for eternity in Hell.

Citing Paul's zeal for sharing Christ, even in the midst of pain and persecution, Burgner said believers should have compassion for and weep over lost souls.

"That passion and zeal for the glory of God in the Gospel of Jesus Christ is what caused the Gospel to spread like wild-

fire from Jerusalem to Rome in Paul's day," Burger said. "We desperately need the Gospel to move like fire through our city. But if we will not, it will not happen. It will not happen until we begin to beg God to wake up our souls."

"Without the Gospel we're a hopeless people and I'm a hopeless pastor," he continued. "The only reason we are here is God is not dead. He is alive, and we are a people of great hope. Until God moves in our own souls and our own minds and we are constrained by the Spirit with tear-filled eyes over our people, the Gospel will not move like fire through our city."

John Lary, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Shreveport, said the path for revival is found at the feet of Jesus.

Referencing John 12, Lary said Mary humbled herself and chose to serve Christ. Lary said each Christian should exhibit that same attitude of selflessness to the world.

See PRAYER on 9

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ECON speakers preach, plead for, soul-winning!

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

RUSTON – Gevan Spinney said he believes God wants to do something in Louisiana and he urged every Louisiana Baptist church to be a part of the Harvest, which could be the largest joint evangelistic effort ever in the state.

GEVAN SPINNEY

“At least pray God would send his revival through the state of Louisiana,” urged Louisiana Baptist Convention Spinney said during the 2017 Louisiana Baptist Evangelism Conference (ECON) at Temple Baptist Church in Ruston, held Jan. 23-24. “We are praying for the next two years God will flood our state with the Holy Spirit.”

Preaching from Mark 15:21, Spinney, pastor of First Baptist Church, Haughton, encouraged everyone to be a cross bearer in the example of Simon, who carried the cross for Jesus.

“It’s impossible for you and I to take up the cross of Christ with our hands’ full,” he said. “What is it you and I need to deny ourselves? What is it we need to let go of in our schedule to pick up the cross?”

In order to reach the state for Christ for the next two years and beyond, Spinney said pastors will need to train their people to share the Gospel and

love the lost.

“We’ve got to go where the broken people are,” Spinney said. “We’ve got to see what He saw. We’ve got to feel what He felt. And church we’ve got to do what He did. The life, the hope, the peace and the power of Jesus Christ – that’s what broken people need.”

BILL BRITT

Evangelist Bill Britt believes a way to show Christ-like love today is to do as He did – show compassion for the lost.

By following Jesus’ example, believers can then win them into the kingdom.

“We’re not going to win our world for Christ and get a burden for the lost by sitting in our offices or sitting in our committee meetings and the fellowship hall,” said Britt, a native of Haughton and president of Compel Outreach International in Wylie, Texas. “But what we’re going to have to do is get off our seat, onto our feet, out in the street, to get a burden of Christ.”

Referencing Matthew 9, Britt said Jesus’ compassion in this biblical passage is shown through a vision of the shepherd, value of the sheep and the voice of the Savior. If Louisiana Baptists are to see a harvest, they must embrace the culture, love them and see them like Jesus does, he said.

“To be compassionate does

not mean just to feel sorry for or pity someone,” he said. “It means to literally get under the burden and feel what they’re feeling.”

Moreover, he said soul-winning is the fix most congregations need.

“There is nothing that will excite your church more and bring revival and bring joy to your congregation than men and women, boys and girls, walking down that aisle, professing Christ as their Lord and Savior, because somebody’s been out in the marketplace sharing the Gospel,” he said. “And to see them baptized – that’ll bring joy back to your fellowship.”

DENNIS WATSON

Dennis Watson, pastor of Celebration Church in Metairie, addressed the question, “Why am I here?”

Something pastors may ask when the mission gets difficult.

Watson used his own experience with the devastation of Katrina to make his point.

During weekend services in 2017, average worship attendance has been above 6,200 on its multiple campuses -- compared to 2,051 the Sunday before Katrina made landfall.

“Some problems may be designed by the devil to discourage you and defeat you, but they’re allowed by the Lord to develop you,” Watson said. “And when you get things right, He’ll begin to deliver you and enable you to fulfill the great purposes and plans He has for your life.

“There can be no victories in our lives and there can be no victories in our ministry if

there are no battles to be won,” he continued. “For God’s great work to be accomplished in our lives, our homes, our ministries, we’ve got to overcome great obstacles by God’s power and God’s provision.

Pointing to the text in Joshua 6, Watson said pastors may face their own Jericho today, and the key to overcoming what seem like towering obstacles is “getting alone with the Lord, getting direction from the Lord, for your life and ministry and church,” he said. “The Lord already knows how to conquer

See SOUL-WINNING on 8

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Hispanic ECON emphasizes Harvest preparation, strategies for growth

By WILL HALL
Message Editor

RUSTON - Speaking to a full crowd in the chapel of Temple Baptist Church, Ruston, Jan. 21, featured speaker Mateo Lopez encouraged the audience of pastors and laymen to be intentional in preparing to reap a harvest through evangelism, and, he emphasized going back to the growth “secrets” of the early church in order to expand the Gospel to the world.

Referencing 2 Timothy 4:5, Lopez, a pastor, church planter and teacher at the Indigenous Education Center in Veracruz, Mexico, said believers must be serious about “doing the work of the evangelist.”

He said this life emphasis starts with “a personal transformation,” and he implored the crowd to seek the Word and pursue “an attitude of obedience.”

Lopez concluded the first general session by referencing Isaiah 6:8 which asks “Who shall we send?” and elicits the response, “Here I am. Send me.”



Will Hall photo

Mateo Lopez, feature speaker for the 2017 Hispanic Evangelism Conference, presented two sessions, encouraging participants to “Get ready for the Harvest!” and sharing the “Secrets for church growth.” Lopez also led a workshop, explaining how to develop a strategy for intentional evangelism.

Revisiting this passage with the *Baptist Message*, Lopez said too often readers think “international missions” when reading this text. But he said it actually reflects the Great Commission’s charge that “as we go” we are to evangelize, baptize and disciple (Mathew 28:18-20). Furthermore, he said, “Acts 1:8 shows the correct order of priority in mis-

sions: Our home, our Jerusalem, then expanding outward as God sends us.”

During the second general session, Lopez focused on the Book of Acts to reveal the secrets for church growth.

In particular, Lopez cited Acts 2:47 and the phrase “finding favor with all the people.”

He said it is critical for the church to know the needs of the

community and to meet those needs in order to “find favor” in sharing the Gospel.

“I don’t mean ‘social work,’” Lopez explained to the *Baptist Message*, afterward. “I’m talking about a dual track – physical and spiritual ministry – where we become carriers of the Gospel in practical ways.”

Carlos Schmidt, Louisiana Baptists’ Hispanic church planting strategist and organizer of the program, told the *Baptist Message* he was pleased with the turnout and the response, and that he was particularly happy with the participation in the breakout sessions.

He described these as “four skill-building workshops” developed to impart practical knowledge and to share resources which directly apply to soul-winning:

-- Jonathan Sharp, a missionary with Southern Baptists’ International Mission Board who is assigned to Portugal, used three overlapping circles to represent evangelism, making the point that every believer should be able to tell three stories as an evangelism approach:

the story of a broken world; a personal story of salvation; and, God’s story of love for the world.

-- Guillermo Mangieri, Hispanic campus pastor for Istrouma Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, highlighted the importance of telling a story in sermons, emphasizing how Jesus used parables, or narratives, that people could remember in order to convey his teachings. He featured the use of the stories from “Creation to Christ” for effective evangelism.

-- Juan Puente, Spanish pastor with Summer Grove Baptist Church in Shreveport and dean of Hispanic Studies at Louisiana Baptist University, also in that city, led a seminar in “Can we talk?” on how to engage the lost in a conversation that leads to sharing the Gospel.

-- Lopez led a workshop on how to develop an intentional strategy for evangelism.

Schmidt said possibly the best part of the conference was the opportunity to introduce these Louisiana Baptists

See HISPANIC on 11

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Pray for prodigal children to return, and believe they will

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

RUSTON – Many God-fearing parents feel hopeless when their prodigal son or daughter strays from the faith, wondering where they went wrong in raising their child, Phil Waldrep told the crowd gathered for the annual Senior Adult Luncheon at the 2017 Evangelism Conference (ECON), Jan. 24.

But the long-time evangelist encouraged listening parents and grandparents that all is not lost.

“The very first thing we have to do is say to the Lord, until you show me what I did wrong, I will assume I did nothing wrong and I will not feel guilty anymore,” said Waldrep, who in 1980 with his wife Debbie, started the Phil Waldrep Evangelistic Association. “When you can make that decision, victory begins to come and you are in a position of strength to make other decisions.”

The author of “Reaching Your Prodigal: What Did I Do Wrong? What Do I do Now?” Waldrep said some parents may question the meaning of Proverbs 22:6 – “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

Waldrep said the verse does not teach perfect parenting will equate to perfect children.

“You can be the world’s greatest parent and still have a child who is prodigal and walks away,” he said.

“There is nothing you can do to guarantee your child serves God. But you feel guilty. You don’t want to sing in choir or serve on a committee because of the wariness of your child.

“Biblically, you probably did nothing

wrong,” he continued. “You can be the world’s greatest parent, do it by the Good Book and still have a child who walks away.”

Waldrep told the gathering that even God’s children strayed from their

father’s upbringing.

“Explain to me what God did wrong with Adam and Eve?” Waldrep said. “Perfect father, perfect environment, perfect people -- and they walked away. Your kids can have the best of parenting, be taught the truth, and still walk away.”

More than 550 registered for the luncheon at Temple Baptist Church in Ruston, which also included a concert by Squire Parsons,



Brian Blackwell photo

Squire Parsons sings during the senior adult luncheon at the Louisiana Baptist Convention 2017 Evangelism Conference Jan. 24 at Temple Baptist Church in Ruston. Parsons is famous for writing the song “Beulah Land.”



Phil Waldrep, an evangelist from Decatur, Ala., brings laughter at the senior adult luncheon during ECON.

an award-winning Southern Gospel artist who wrote the song “Sweet Beulah Land.”

Jeff Ingram, Louisiana Baptists adult ministry strategist, said the messages Waldrep and Parsons conveyed to the senior adults left them energized for dealing with important matters in responding to prodigal children or grandchildren.

“Squire Parsons reminded us of our hope of Heaven through his music, and Phil Waldrep reminded us of our hope for now through his message,” Ingram said. “I’m so thankful for all the senior adults, leaders and churches who were able to attend. Temple Baptist Church was so accommodating for those who showed up for this life-changing event.”

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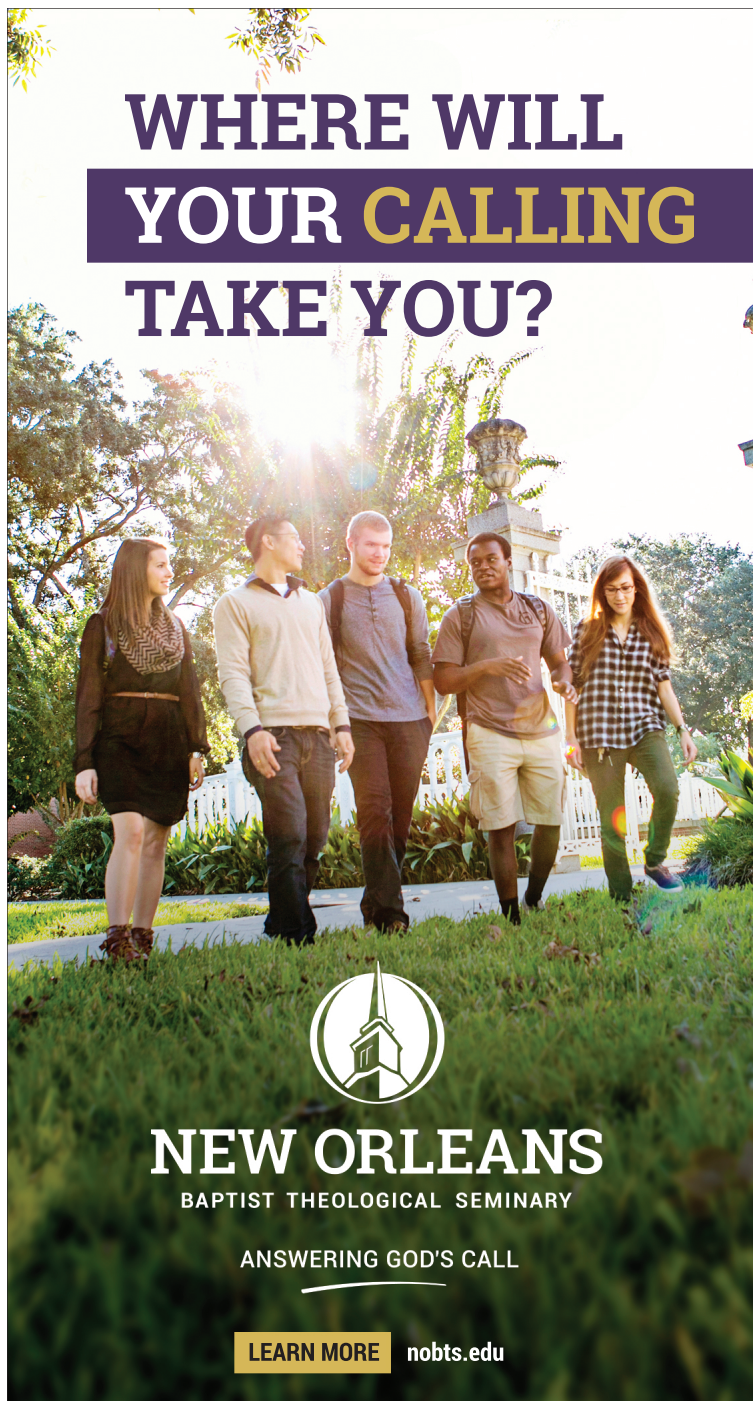


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Harvest from page one

“Right where you’re at, Jesus could step out of Heaven and step into your heart,” he said. “We’re all one step away from eternity. What will you do with Jesus?”

Dozens of individuals came forward for prayer at his invitation, and when the service had concluded 34 spiritual decisions had been made, including: 10 individuals who repented for salvation, 13 who repented to restore their fellowship with Christ, 9 others made other commitments and 2 more declared a call to vocational ministry.

SMALL CHURCH REVIVAL

Gary Maroney, president of



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the Louisiana Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, shared similar news regarding preliminary reports from the several small church revivals that were held simultaneously in the local area as part of the Harvest kickoff.

He said, overall, “this was one of the most powerful and anointed conferences,” emphasizing he has been to a lot of these meetings. When the final service ended for ECON 2017, Maroney said “God spoke to my heart.”

“Louisiana Baptists need to commit to the Harvest,” he implored. “God is giving us favor like never before.”

Although exact information had not been collected, yet, Maroney shared that evangelists like Bill Britt and Lyndon Longoria made similar observations about revival events that lasted from one to multiple days.

“All of our evangelists are reporting that people came forward during the invitations,” Maroney said, saying each man described “people pouring out

of the pews.”

“This time of Harvest was nothing less than a fresh, sweet encounter with the Lord,” he declared.

HARVEST HITS HOME

“We decided to make Monday night more of a model of an evangelistic event,” Jenkins said, elaborating about youth night at ECON 2017. “It was a Monday night, a school night, and probably not the best time to do it. But we wanted to schedule something to reach our youth, one of our weakest baptism groups.”

Jenkins shared how LBC President Gevan Spinney, pastor of First Baptist Church in Haughton, saw two of his congregation’s teens being counseled after that kickoff event.

“Here’s Gevan putting his heart into this, working hard as president of our Convention,” Jenkins offered, “and he reaped benefits.”

Jenkins also learned his personal efforts to draw in others reaped a harvest for his own family.

David, Denton, pastor of

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Brian Blackwell photo

Gary Maroney, president of the Louisiana Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, presents Price Harris with the Lifetime Achievement Award in Vocational Evangelism. Harris is an evangelist from Shreveport.

Highland Baptist Church in New Iberia, and Jenkins’ son-in-law, shared the details with the *Baptist Message*.

Denton said he and his wife brought their two sons to ECON 2017 just so they could see what their grandfather did, and underscored he was not expecting either to respond.

But he also said 10-year-old Nate had been asking questions for some time and that they had been “talking a bit, and had gone through a couple of books that talk about salvation and what it means to have a relationship with the Lord.”

Denton said he was delighted when Nate responded and that he was blessed to counsel him about his decision.

“As a dad, I’m thrilled,” he exclaimed.

Jenkins was delighted as well, saying Nate’s decision was “icing on the cake” for his work on ECON 2017.

He also used this example to emphasize the need for evangelists in Louisiana Baptist churches.

“David’s church is a good church, and his congregation hears the Gospel all the time,” Jenkins said. “But in many cases it’s a special evangelism event that draws the net.”

“Evangelists are gifted in drawing the net,” he said, making the point that it takes a cooperative effort among pastors, evangelists and members. “It takes, prayer, hard work, working the plan, and trusting God to bring the increase, and He will.”

The Harvest has begun!

Soul-Winning from page 5

GARY FROST

those great problems that you’re facing.”

“If we can get our focus off of our problems, look at the Lord and see what He is doing and join Him in what He is doing, I’m telling you those walls and those problems and those problem people will come falling down,” he said. “And the Lord will enable us to accomplish the great mission and vision He has entrusted to us.”

In today’s culture, immorality is rampant, with disregard to traditional values and principles. Yet, despite how dark things might seem, Christians should take heart for the opportunities ahead.

“This is an opportunity for the light to shine even brighter than it has shown before in America,” said Frost, national

See SOUL-WINNING on 9

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Prayer from page 4

"As we humble ourselves with an attitude of surrender, an attitude of worship, we soak up his word and his truth, allowing His word, allowing his truth to transform us," he said. "When is the last time that you have found yourself at the feet of Jesus laying everything out? True revival will come when we humble ourselves, when we submit everything about us at the feet of Jesus. As leadership in the church, revival will take place when we would humble ourselves and kneel at the feet of Jesus and say Lord it is all about you. When we do that the path of revival will become very clear to us."

REVERSE COURSE

U.S. Rep. Mike Johnson, a member of First Baptist Church in Bossier City, said with darkness encroaching upon the nation, many Christians wonder what part they can play to reverse course and revival to come.

The answer, Johnson said, is found in Jesus' command to engage the culture.

"He said you are called to be the salt and light," Johnson said. "He said the only thing that can dispel the darkness is the light of Truth, and you don't take your light and put it under a bushel basket. You take it out in every single arena of the culture in which



Director of Missions
Lane Moore

you are planted. You take it into every aspect of society because 'you are My disciples, you are My followers.'"

Citing 2 Chronicles 7:14, Johnson said the nation must become humble, pray, seek God's face and turn from their wicked ways. Then, God will bring revival.

"Let's pray so this land can be the shining city on the hill, so we truly can remain one nation under God," he said.

PRAYERS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

Randy Harper, pastor of Bellaire Baptist Church in Bossier City, reminded the crowd of the difficulty members of law enforcement have.

With several pastors who are members of law enforcement in the area standing behind him, Harper prayed for their safety and that others would encourage them.

"It is very difficult to wear a badge today and we owe them a great gratitude and a lot of prayer," he said. "It's not the highest paid position in our society but it ought to be one of the most respected positions in our society."

Former Northwest Louisiana Baptist Association Director of Mission Wayne Dubose closed the prayer gathering by reminding the crowd that more than 90,000 believers were martyred in 2016 and that many more are being tortured, living in fear, daily, for their lives.

"Heavenly Father, we pray that persecuted believers would be infused with hope for a better day," said Dubose, interim pastor of Trinity Heights Baptist Church, Shreveport.

"We ask that the Holy Spirit would comfort and strengthen them. Please give them an understanding of how much you love them. Bring them wisdom to know how to share the Gospel in their circumstances. We pray that a strong remnant of the persecuted church would be able to safely stay in their homeland and function as light and salt for you."

Soul-winning from page 8

facilitator of prayer and compassion initiatives for Mission America Coalition in Palm Desert, Calif.

Basing his message on Jeremiah 29:11-14, Frost said the passage offers seven principles to be hopeful: God never forsakes his people; God controls our captivities; God's setbacks are God's set ups; God's people reveal God's presence; God despises false hope; God keeps his promises; and, God answers the prayers of the faithful.

He said that God is calling His children to search for Him with all their hearts and pray on a regular basis for their nation.

"God answers those who are living holy lives," he said. "Holiness is not a denomination. Holiness is a way of living."

PHIL WALDREP

At first glance, readers might view Romans 16 as more salutation than substance, Phil Waldrep said. But the evangelist said those many names of women and slaves — people who could do little for Paul — still were important to the apostle.

"People loved Paul," Wal-

drepp said during his message, "because Paul loved people."

"People love people who love people," he said. "Or put another way, people love churches who love people."

Waldrep, founder and president of Phil Waldrep Ministries in Decatur, Ala. said love has three characteristics: It appreciates people for who they are and not what they can do for them; acknowledges people; and, affirms people. The real test of an evangelistic church is whether they love people who cannot do anything for them, he said.

"If you will love the people nobody wants, God will give you the people everybody wants," he said.

K. MARSHALL WILLIAMS

Every soul in every home needs a Savior, K. Marshall Williams declared, in his first of two messages; and, it is every Christian's duty to show compassion and let others that Jesus cares for them.

To read the rest of this story and others on Econ 2017 go to www.baptistmessage.com.



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Waters from page 2

MOVING FORWARD

Although the congregation has enjoyed fond times in their new location, they are planning to build new facilities.

Fifteen years earlier, members had voted to purchase a property 2 miles from their original church building.

At the time, they had no plans to move but felt one day God might lead them to relocate – and that time is now, Miller said.

The land at 27735 Highway 16 in Denham Springs is not far from Interstate 12 and a bustling shopping center that features the Bass Pro Shop.

Once construction is complete in the fall, the worship center will seat 753, with room to expand to 1,100 in the future, Miller said.

The complex also will feature adult education classrooms, children's and

preschool spaces, a large commons and a multi-purpose gymnasium.

"We just pray that God is glorified and that he continues to work through body of Christ, and that the area sees and experiences the love of Christ through his people," Miller said.

"Our vision is to become a regional life transformation center," he said. "We realize this is part of the prayer we have been asking God to work in and through us to unify us. We are 'one' now in that we are all unanimous about moving to a new building.

"People are more receptive now to the things of God than they have been in quite some time. The people of our area are very much aware our homes and houses and relationships are all temporal," Miller offered. "But they are learning that those things which we have with God are forever."

Hispanic from page 6

pastors to the Harvest initiative – a two-year effort to "pray for every home and share the Gospel with every person in Louisiana."

By the end of the conference, 10 pastors had committed to participate with their congregations in the Harvest initiative,

he said.

"We passed along important strategies and practical skills for evangelism," Schmidt said, "and we made the case they should use these soul-winning tools as part of our joint effort as Louisiana Baptists to win the state for Christ!"

LOUISIANA NOTABLES

ON THE MOVE

■ **Jeff (wife Andrea) Tinsley** is the new pastor at First Baptist Church, Haynesville.

■ **Marty (wife Joy) Williams** is the new associate pastor at First Baptist Church, Zwolle.

■ **Marvin (wife Dianne) Cooper** is the new pastor at Bethany Baptist Church, Bethany.

■ **Billy Flowers** is the new pastor at Emmanuel Baptist Church, Vivian.

■ **Kevin Kellow** is the new youth minister at Ferry Lake Baptist Church, Oil City.

■ **Blade Foster** is the new youth minister at First Baptist Church, Oil City.

■ **Jason Harp** is interim pastor at Brookwood Baptist Church, Shreveport.

■ **Bill Stroud** resigned as pastor at Caddo Prairie Baptist Church, Hosston.

■ **Wayne Dubose** is the interim pastor at Trinity Heights Baptist Church, Shreveport.

■ **Bob Heustess** retired January 31 after serving 46 years as pastor at Grace Memorial Baptist Church, Slidell.

■ **Dennis Hackler** is the new pastor at Cherry Ridge Baptist Church, Bastrop.

HOMECOMING

■ Trinity Baptist Church, Natchitoches: **65th Anniversary**, Feb. 19th, 10:30 a.m. Lunch and concert will follow the service. Friends and families are invited to attend. Speaker: **Wayne Bridges**. Music: Bob Adams. Pastor: Josh Currie.

REVIVAL

■ Wilda Baptist Church, Gardener: **Revival**, Feb. 8-12. Evangelist: **Lyndon Longoria**. Special Music: **Kelly Longoria**. Pastor: Joey Rudisill.

■ Bethel Baptist Church, Livingston: **Comu-**

nitywide Revival, Feb. 12-15, 6:30 p.m. nightly. Speaker: **Herb Reavis**. Special Music: **Mackey Willis Family**. Pastor: Charles Ellzey.

■ First Baptist Church, Waterproof: **Revival**, Feb. 19-22 Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell, chalk artist**. Pastor: Larry Walters.

■ Martin Baptist Church, Coushatta: **Harvest Sunday**, February 19, 11 a.m. Evangelist: **Joe Aulds**. Pastor: Richard Kaufman.

■ Cecilia Baptist Church, Cecilia: **Revival**, Feb. 19-22, Evangelist: **Lyndon Longoria**. Special Music: **Kelly Longoria**. Pastor: Peter Vidrine.

■ North Central Baptist Church, Delhi: **Family Crusade with 2Talk42 Ministries**, Feb. 19-22. The Sunday service will begin at 5 p.m. with the Monday through Wednesday services at 6:30 p.m. The group shares the Gospel thru ventriloquism and puppetry. Puppeteers: **Brian & Vicki Cockerham**. Pastor:

LAGNIAPPE

■ First Baptist Church, Tioga: **Men's Beast-feast**, Feb. 10, 6 p.m. Bring your favorite wild game, a side dish, or a dessert. Pastor: Tim Hisaw.

■ The Lord's Church, Kentwood: **University of Equipping presents a Biblical view of Human Identity**: Who has the authority to choose gender? Feb. 11, 9 a.m.-noon, Speaker: Hal Stewart. Cost: Free with donations being accepted at the door. Pastor: Don Meadows.

■ Blanchard Baptist Church, Blanchard: **Does Evil Disprove God? A discussion on the problem of evil**, Feb. 11, 7 p.m. Speaker: Mikel Del Rosario. There will be a Q&A afterwards. Cost: Free. Pastor: Doug Allen

■ Louisiana Church, Abita Springs: **Gumbo Cookoff**, Feb. 11, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. **This is a fundraiser for the upcoming Issacs'**

Concert. For information on entering your gumbo call Amy Keene at 985.373.7387. It is free to the public. Desserts, drinks, and horse rides will be provided. Pastor: Jerel Keene

■ First Baptist Church, Pontchatoula: **Evening concert with The Foto Sisters**, Feb. 12, 7 p.m. Pastor: David Cranford.

■ First Baptist Church, Ruston: **Ted DiBiase, WWE Hall Of Fame professional wrestler, will give his testimony**, Feb. 12, 8:45 & 11 a.m. Pastor: Chris Craig.

■ Longview Baptist Church, Deville: **2Talk42 Ministries presents sharing the Gospel thru ventriloquism and puppetry**, Feb. 15, 6:30 p.m. Puppeteers: Brian & Vicki Cockerham. Pastor: Robby Poole.

■ First Baptist Church, Jonesville: **Associational Men's Conference Fish Fry**, Feb. 16, 6 p.m. Speaker: **Paul Carter**. Special Music: **Harrigall Family**. Pastor: Todd Whittington.

■ First Baptist Church, Hornbeck: **28th Annual Wild Game Feast**, Feb. 17, 6 p.m. Speaker: **Chuck McAlister**. Pastor: Jack Bell.

■ Hebron Baptist Church, Denham Springs: **The Art of Marriage**, Feb. 17-18, Friday, 6-9:00 p.m. Saturday, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. There are six sessions in total. Cost: \$50 (Includes Study Materials and Refreshment both days).

■ First Baptist Church, Slaughter: **WeRcalled in concert**, Feb. 19, Pastor: Basil Wicker.

■ Bayou Vista Baptist church, Morgan City: **Chili Cook-Off**, Feb. 19, 7 p.m. Pastor: Steven Kelly.

■ First Baptist Church, Evangeline: **WeR-Called in concert**, Feb. 22, 6 p.m. **Associational Women's Conference**, Feb. 23, 6 p.m. Speaker: **Julie Beckley**. Pastor: Rod Lejeune.

■ Riverview Baptist Church, Alexandria: **The Jim Brady Trio in concert**, Feb. 23, 7 p.m. For more information, call 318.613.6505 or 318.443.5555. A love offering will be taken. Pastor: David Newton.

Louisiana Baptist

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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.

umd jgqhubnr gkn osmr: qunt gkn gss

mzrlkgrq, qunt gkn gss vwbo vlzd, qunt hgrrlq

ogky; dsnnemrz, stmrz vljr, slemrz ql dswbonk.

mdgmgu imiqt-dmp:qnr

Clues:
M = I; Q = T

Answer to January 26 Scripture Crypto:
Mark twelve: thirty-four

March from page 3

is that it doesn't matter where you worship on Sunday morning, we can stand together on behalf of the unborn."

BATON ROUGE

Supporters of life took to the streets in downtown Baton Rouge Jan. 21 to proclaim that every person matters in God's eyes. The Louisiana Life March South drew more than 1,500 people despite the forecast for rainfall.

"Even though storms threatened the Louisiana Life March South, pro-lifers stood strong to protect both mom and baby," said Louisiana Right to Life Executive Director Benjamin Clapper.

Jeff Ginn marched with other members of Istrouma Baptist Church in Baton Rouge where he serves as pastor. Ginn said he was encouraged to see people from so different ages, races and denominations come together to stand for life.

"There is a rising generation that's pro-life, which is very encouraging," Ginn said. "It's a good picture of the kingdom of God."

Katrina Jackson, a state representative who authored legislation that requires admitting privileges for doctors who perform abortions and one of the keynote speakers, encouraged the marchers to be an advocate for life, showing women facing a difficult decision that they have another option other than abortion.

"I know we can legislate within the realms of an unjust decision until God reverses it," Jackson said. "So we're not standing still on what the Supreme Court says."

"We can never stand still because while we stand still, there is someone, somewhere, that doesn't think they have a choice," she continued. "And our voices tell them that there is a choice."

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Six days after the Baton Rouge march and three days before the event in Shreveport, Louisianans were a part of 500,000 marchers who traveled from across the nation and around the world to stand up for the unborn in the 44th Annual March for Life



Douglas Collier photo

Right to Life participants stand in prayer Jan. 21, during the Louisiana Life March South at the State Capitol in Baton Rouge. More than 1,500 people attended the first of three marches.

in the nation's capital.

Clapper said he was encouraged to see so many people brave the cold weather to make a unified statement.

"These brave warriors, most of them young people, send a strong message to our nation that life must be protected from beginning to end," Clapper said. "Over

2,000 Louisianans joined the crowd and brought the "Preaux-life" message to Washington DC."

During the pre-march rally, Vice President Mike Pence told the crowd he was humbled to become the highest ranking U.S. official to speak at the event. He said ending tax-payer funded

abortions and appointing a pro-life Supreme Court judge are among the priorities of the administration of President Donald Trump.

"Because of all of you and the many thousands who stand with us in marches like this all across the nation, life is winning again in America," Pence said.

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