



# THE BAPTIST MESSAGE

May 9, 2019

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## RISEN LORD, RESURRECTED LIVES

### Easter baptisms a bridge between the past, present

By Brian Blackwell  
Message Staff Writer

MADISONVILLE – “We know the early church often would baptize on Resurrection Day, so we were able to celebrate like the early church did more than 2,000 years ago,” Pastor Lane Corley told the Baptist Message, in explaining the public testimony element of five baptisms celebrated on Easter at the Bridge Church.

“A lot of families come to church anyway that day, including a good number who don’t regularly attend services, and it presented the perfect chance to share with them the theme of new life and transformation that is possible through Christ,” said Corley, who also serves as a church planting strategist for Louisiana Baptists.

Corley said his congregation has held multiple baptism services each year since the church was founded in 2009, but that this was the first time they had done so on Easter Sunday.

Dawn Black was among those who stirred the baptistry waters this Easter.

See BRIDGE, page 8



### 15 ‘resurrections’ at First Haughton sunrise service

By Brian Blackwell  
Message Staff Writer

HAUGHTON – More than 550 people turned out at 6:30 a.m. for an annual Easter sunrise service at Hillcrest Cemetery in Haughton, 8 miles from the First Baptist Church in Haughton, which provided the music and message for the special service.

Gevan Spinney, pastor of First Haughton, said the cemetery was a fitting backdrop to share the timeless story of Christ’s victory over death, and that 15 former sinners were rescued from a spiritual grave that day.

“For many of those in attendance the cemetery has been a place of heartache and defeat, this Sunday morning it was a place of victory.” Spinney said. “We use this service as an opportunity to share the Gospel with our community and it is always a special service, but this year the Holy Spirit showed up in an especially powerful way.”

Though the service was conducted by First Haughton, the event drew members from surrounding churches as well as

Top photo: Pastor Lane Corley (left) baptized his brother-in-law Will Phillips, April 21. Phillips was one of five people baptized at the Bridge Church in Madisonville. This was the first time the church has held a baptism service on Easter. Left photo: Earlier in the day, First Baptist Church in Haughton held its sunrise service at Hillcrest Cemetery and saw 15 former sinners rescued from a spiritual grave. Three more people accepted Christ in two other services during two additional services on campus, which is 8 miles from the cemetery.

Submitted photos

See SUNRISE, page 11

## Drills put participants through biblical paces

By Holly Jo Linzay  
Regional Reporter

PINEVILLE – Intense concentration furrowed the brows of the nine ninth-grade students lined up across the stage in a face-off

battle in the state Bible Drill competition.

A scripture reference was called. The drill conductor said, “Start.” The students quickly flipped through their Bibles and then stepped forward when the

verse was found. Time was called after eight seconds.

In the end, two freshmen – Milain Marce, Ascension Baptist Church in Gonzales, and Jackson Barnes, First

See DRILL, page 6



Submitted photo

Steve Horn teaches a new members class as part of a multifaceted emphasis on discipleship. He served as pastor of the First Baptist Church in Lafayette, 2005-2019.

# First Lafayette holds to Baptist traditions that 'still work' today

By Karen Willoughby  
Baptist Press

LAFAYETTE -- When F.A.I.T.H. evangelism training first rolled out nationally in 1998, the outreach leader from First Baptist Church in Lafayette took note.

Starting that year and every year since, the Louisiana church has had

50 to 60 people train twice a year in the F.A.I.T.H. initiative that combines evangelism with the caring ministry of Sunday School.

"I tell our new people every time we promote the [twice yearly] orientation, 'We do this because it works,'" pastor Steve Horn told Baptist Press. "Evangelism is something we have to be intentional about, or it doesn't happen."

First Baptist Lafayette, where about 1,100 people worship each week in the church's downtown location (1,400 on Easter), has majored on Sunday School and missional outreach throughout its 117-year history.

Since probably at least the early 1960s, the church has given at least 10 percent of undesignated offerings to missions through the Cooperative Program, the way Southern Baptist churches work together in state conventions, across North America and overseas to spread the Gospel worldwide.

Today it gives 10.5 percent, with plans to increase it incrementally to 11 percent.

"I very much like the language of identifying with all Southern Baptist churches to accomplish together what we cannot accomplish by ourselves," said Horn, pastor since 2005 who has been nominated as executive director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention. "The Cooperative Program is a wonderful model.

"My fear is that we become complacent and say, 'We're doing our part,' without entering into consideration of God's part," the pastor continued. "As pastor, it's my job to make sure we're still seeking God's will as to what our part should be."

Along with evangelism and missions, discipleship and hands-on outreach also are well-established mainstays of the church known as "First Laf" locally as well as across the

See LAFAYETTE, page 3

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**8. IT'S BIBLICAL**  
Let's not just give, give because it's a Biblical principle and promise. "Bring the full tenth into the storehouse as says the Lord of Hosts. 'So if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure.'" (Malachi 3:10)

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# Lafayette from page 2

Louisiana Baptist Convention and the internet, where its website address is [firstlaf.org](http://firstlaf.org).

"Everything with us sort of starts with Sunday School," Horn said. "And we have a strong discipleship ministry. On average, if we have 1,000 in Sunday School, we'll have 400 in discipleship Sunday evening or Thursday morning and evening."

Teams trained in F.A.I.T.H visit contacts Tuesday evenings relayed through Sunday School class members who know to be alert to the possibility that friends, family members, coworkers and others with whom they come in contact might be needful of a visit by the church.

"We live in a changing culture but we find it tremendously easy to get into people's homes," Horn said, "and very common to share the Gospel when we get there."

F.A.I.T.H. visits, along

with First Lafayette's other outreach efforts and an oft-repeated awareness from the pulpit of the need to share Christ, has resulted in more than 500 baptisms over the last 10 years.

"I've always thought in terms of the fact that we cannot do better than the vision of the Great Commission," Horn said. "Jesus already gave it to us: 'Therefore go and make disciples of all nations....'" (Matthew 28:19).

A full complement of children's missions education programs -- Mission Friends, GAs, RAs and Acteens -- supports First Lafayette's ministries to "all nations," which starts with its Cooperative Program and other missions giving.

This includes a Chinese ministry for the last 30 years led by Queenie Lau; a deaf ministry about that same length of time; a ministry to Gypsy children and the Roma people in Romania for the last 12 years; the

relaunch within the last 10 years of a Hispanic church; and within the last year, a ministry to 200 children through a partnership with a church in El Salvador identified by Compassion International.

First Lafayette for the last 30 years has provided a Christian day school for area residents, which has grown over the last four years to include high school. This year will mark its first graduating class of seniors.

"It's a great way to be evangelistic in our setting, our culture," Horn said. "Our strength has been that we are a traditional Southern Baptist church that is not stuck in tradition for tradition's sake, but using traditional programming to reach forward."

"We sound the bell that a lot of things a lot of people have discarded still work," he said. "The reason things don't work is people don't work at them."

Lafayette is in the south-central part of Louisiana, a 13-parish area known as "Acadiana." The

city was established in 1821 with land donated for a Catholic church, and that religious influence continues to permeate the culture.

"We continue to be in a very lost culture -- no lack for evangelistic opportunities in Lafayette," Horn said. "At the same time, we have a very good reputation, a very good name in Lafayette, and we want to use that to our advantage."

The church ministers locally through music and the arts. One example:

multiple performances of its "Living Christmas Tree" draw thousands of people from across Acadiana each year. Last Christmas the theme centered around a children's storybook Bible, and 900 people signed up to receive a free gift of that Bible.

"We physically brought [the Bible] to their home, which gave us direct engagement with them in their home," Horn said. "An adult couple on Easter

See LAFAYETTE, page 11

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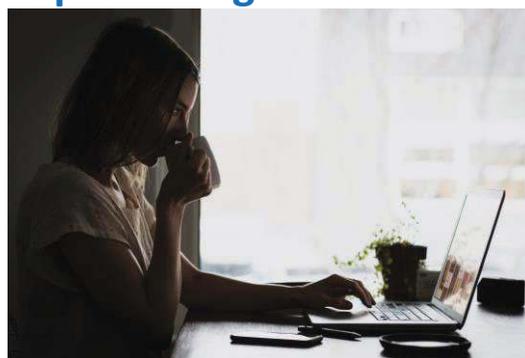
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# LBC ministry to be featured at SBC

By Brian Blackwell  
Message Staff Writer

MONROE – Christian Women’s Job Corps participants from the Louisiana Baptist Children’s Home and Family Ministries will have their handmade products on display during the upcoming national Woman’s Missionary Union meeting and also offered for purchase inside the exhibit hall at the 2019 Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in Birmingham, Alabama.

Since December, the

women artisans have created the products that will be sold at the WMU’s WorldCrafts store. CWJC Director Tonya Hancock said the Children’s Home is honored they have been given the opportunity to share how Christ is changing the lives of many women facing high unemployment and widespread poverty in Monroe.

The state program for the Christian Women’s Job Corps ministry was started in 2010 by the Louisiana Baptist Children’s Home and Family

Ministries to provide encouragement, love, spiritual training, life skills, high school equivalency test training and other tools to have a better life, Hancock said.

Recently, WorldCrafts, the fair trade division of WMU, invited the Louisiana Baptist women’s ministry to be a partner, leading to the opportunity in Birmingham this summer.

“As a WorldCrafts artisan group, the women are learning to create beautiful crafts along with the promise of providing economically for their families in a safe and loving environment,” Hancock said. “Through its partnership with WorldCrafts, the women see the promises of their Father come to life – they now have a future and a hope as they are able to provide for the basic needs of their families. One artisan says that



LBCH photo

Members of the Woman’s Missionary Union from the First Baptist Church in Minden and ladies from others states looked at a mug made by Christian Women’s Job Corps artisans from the Children’s Home.

this work has given her a sense of self-worth and the knowledge that ‘with God’s help I can do things I never dreamed I could do.’”

Hancock said the women also are making items that will also be available in the World-

Crafts catalog which will be released soon.

To learn more, visit [www.worldcrafts.org/artisans/cwjc-of-monroe-la](http://www.worldcrafts.org/artisans/cwjc-of-monroe-la), or [worldcrafts.org/cwjcmonroecustomorders](http://worldcrafts.org/cwjcmonroecustomorders); or, email [cwjcmonroe@gmail.com](mailto:cwjcmonroe@gmail.com).

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Tonya Hancock encouraged Christian Women’s Job Corps participants and guests at the Louisiana Baptist Children’s Home. Hancock is the executive director of the program at the Children’s Home.

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# A spiritual 'Enterprise' happens in Lake Charles

By Brian Blackwell  
Message Staff Writer

LAKE CHARLES – The sale of facilities that formerly belonged to a struggling Anglo church in Lake Charles has breathed new life into an African-American congregation in the city.

The property, located at 3007 Enterprise Boulevard and which used to house the once-thriving Boulevard Baptist Church, was sold Feb. 22 to Mount Olive Baptist Church.

At one time Boulevard Baptist Church had as many as 1,320 members, according to Annual Church Profile statistics. But as the demographics of the neighborhood changed, attendance steadily declined, with fewer than 15 members attending in late

2017.

Rather than close the doors, Boulevard Baptist chose to sell the property to Carey Baptist Association the following year. The association continued to allow the congregation to worship in the facilities while a new buyer was found.

Meanwhile, Mt. Olive Baptist was praying about its vision for the future when the Holy Spirit orchestrated a conversation in October 2017 between Carey Association Director of Missions Bruce Baker and Pastor Braylon Harris about a possible relocation to Boulevard Baptist's property.

Instead of focusing on adding onto its existing facilities at its 37-acre property, Mt. Olive Baptist turned its eyes two miles



Submitted photo

Mount Olive Baptist Church, an African American congregation, purchased the property, Feb. 22, that used to house the once-thriving primarily Anglo Boulevard Baptist Church in Lake Charles. Among those on hand for the property transaction were leaders from Mount Olive Baptist Church, Carey Baptist Association and New Shiloh Baptist Church. Mount Olive Baptist Church sold its former property to New Shiloh Baptist Church.

westward to the Boulevard Baptist location.

"We struggled to get real great traction on mov-

ing forward even though we purchased the land," Harris said. "Bruce and I were at Boulevard Baptist

one day and as I told him what all we wanted in our church expansion, Bruce

See ENTERPRISE, page 6

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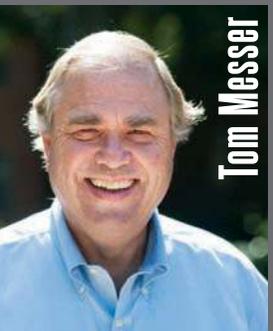
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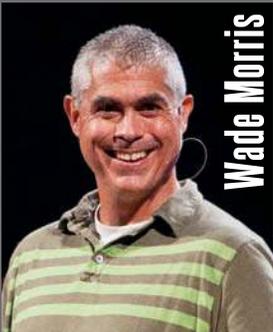
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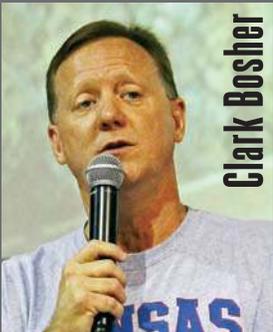
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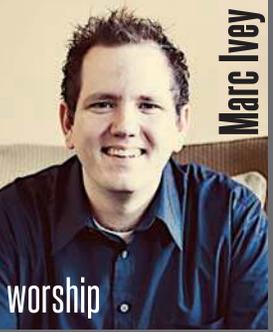
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## Drill from page one

Baptist Church in Covington – were named winners and this summer will represent Louisiana Baptists in the Youth Division of the Bible Drill national competition in Concord, North Carolina.

That match is representative of a day of fierce compe-

tion at the 2019 Louisiana Baptist State Youth and High School Bible Drill and Speakers Tournament held April 27 at the First Baptist Church in Pineville.

Brandon Lewis, LBC youth ministry strategist, said Bible Drill is part of a discipleship program designed to assist youth in developing useful skills and

knowledge of the Bible. The program teaches and tests students' knowledge of the books of the Bible, basic beliefs and doctrinal convictions, and, different approaches to the plan of salvation.

Students competed by grade level in three divisions: Children's (4th-6th), Youth (7th-9th) and High School (10th-12th).

All 146 participants had completed two other stages of competition – church and district -- before reaching the state events.

"There's been such an

excitement here today," said Mitch Peltonen, a Bible Drill coach and minister from Grace Memorial Baptist Church in Slidell.

"Through the years, there is such an apparent difference in the lives of the youth who have been involved in these competitions. There is more of a dependence on the Lord when faced with things that come into this dark world. They are overcomers because they are relying on the Word that they have hidden in their hearts," Peltonen said.

Kristy Alfollette, a Bible

Drill coach from FBC Slidell, agreed, and said she has witnessed how involvement in the competition has shaped the lives of many of the youth in their church.

"Learning the Scripture draws them closer to God and helps lay a foundation for their lives," Alfollette said, adding that for 10 years her church has tracked the lives of their Bible Drill participants through college, work and marriage.

"And 48 of the 50 young people we have tracked are

See DRILL, page 7

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## Enterprise from page 5

told me I was basically standing at a property that met all we wanted. That day was like one of those 'aha moments' and jumpstarted the process that got to be where we are today."

Meanwhile, a buyer, New Shiloh Baptist Church in Lake Charles, was found in early February to purchase Mt. Olive Baptist's facilities, and, New Shiloh has since joined the association.

"We have tried to be good stewards and do the work that Boulevard Baptist did effectively for so many years," Harris said. "It's been what I call a 're-vision.' The original vision was to build a building, but what we now have would probably have taken us three to four pastors and two to three generations to get done."

### BRIGHT FUTURE

Baker is excited about God's plan for the church to reach the community with the Gospel.

"All pastors involved have been very supportive of moving this forward," he said. "We view this as an investment in the Kingdom to build strong relationships and tear down barriers."

Since relocating, Mt. Olive Baptist has renovated the facilities and cultivated relationships with residents of the neighborhood.

Members have started a daycare, after-school tutoring services and basketball training sessions, shared the Gospel through door-to-door visitation, hosted a Vacation

Bible School and distributed evangelism tracts at local parades. They also have continued operation of a supply closet for area homeless and the less fortunate.

Harris knows his church cannot change the entire city of Lake Charles, but they can do their part to be a catalyst for transformation through Christ.

"I don't believe we can do it all, but it is our job to inspire others," Harris said. "We do what we can the best we can with the hope and desire we can inspire others to do what we don't do well."

"Our mission since I have been pastor eight years ago is 'go, teach, love,'" he continued. "We are big on outgoing, and being innovative and creative in the way we go and being inclusive in the way we teach and being real in the way we love people. Together we, by all means, go, teach and love. The transition to this facility magnified our means to do more ministry -- and to reach more means to do more ministry to reach more men."



2019

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# Drill from page 6

still following the Lord today," she noted.

Saturday's event at First Pineville was one of three at different sites. Temple Baptist Church in Ruston and First Covington also hosted state competitions.

Bobbi Liner, an eighth grader from the First Baptist Church in Slaughter, said, "I've grown spiritually. At first, I didn't know where to start studying the Bible, but Bible Drill has helped me learn the Word. It's given me a foundation and has helped shape my life.

"I can be in a situation at school, not knowing what to do, and then the Word pops up in my head. I've grown closer to God because of it," he said. "Bible Drill is a choice. We choose to study the Word of God. It's up to us to study.

"The whole Bible Drill experience has helped me find a reason to get into God's Word. It's been life-changing in a very personal way. Bible Drill has increased my faith and I've recalled Scripture that has helped lead others to Christ," said Tristen Bueche, a junior from the Fellowship Baptist Church in Greenwell Springs. He added that he has been able to let his "light shine for Jesus," and that he is excited about the opportunity to use his training during a mission trip to Honduras this summer.

Another junior from Fellowship Baptist, Luke Norton, agreed.

"Really knowing the steps for salvation and key Bible verses has helped me be a witness many times, especially on mission trips," he said.

"Bible Drill has certainly expanded my knowledge of God's will. I know where certain verses are, and I know how to share the Gospel. Because of Bible Drill, I have moved out of my comfort zone with confidence, and I'm learning more and more about God," said senior Eric

Whitten from the Lakeshore Baptist Church in Monroe.

"I'm finding I still know the Bible verses we had to learn years ago from Bible Drill," said Cate Stennett, a senior from First Covington. "These verses stick with you for life."

Lewis said the Speakers Tournament is designed to stimulate growth toward Christian maturity by asking 10th-12th graders to think seriously about their spiritual commitment. This year participants addressed such topics as "The Résumé of a Disciple" and "Words: Tools for Destruction or Construction." The students had 4-6 minutes each to present their speeches. A senior from First Covington, Kathryn Broussard, won the 12th Grade competition.

Chris Pugh, a senior with Ascension Baptist, was the overall winner of the High School Division in Bible Drill.

He and Broussard will represent Louisiana Baptists in their respective competitions in the High School Division at nationals.

Other state winners include:

### SPEAKERS TOURNAMENT

11th Grade -- Laura Aime, a junior from the Woodlawn Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, earned first place and Desiré Crow, a junior from Ascension Baptist, finished second. Philip Caples, vice president for the integration of faith and learning with Louisiana College, presented each with four-year scholarships (Aime: \$4,500/year; Crow: \$3,500/year).

10th Grade -- Halle Boren, a sophomore from First Covington, won first place.

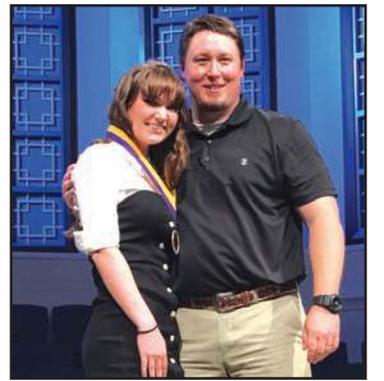
### BIBLE DRILL

12th Grade -- Ashlyn James, First Baptist Church, Montgomery, and Erin Whitten, Lakeshore, tied for first-place.

11th Grade -- Anna Stames, First Baptist Church, Gonzales, and Jinny Schober, Heritage Baptist Church, Shreveport, tied for first and Hayden Alsept of Fellowship finished third. All three



Milain Marcel and Jackson Barnes were awarded first-place medals by Brandon Lewis, LBC youth ministries strategist, for winning the 9th Grade competition in the Bible Drill. They will represent Louisiana in the Bible Drill at nationals. Photos by Holly Jo Linzay



Kathryn Broussard, a senior from FBC Covington, received the first-place medal in the 12th-Grade Speakers' Tournament from Brandon Lewis, LBC youth ministries strategist.



Chris Pugh, the first-place winner in the 12th Grade High School Bible Drill, was awarded his medal by Brandon Lewis, LBC youth ministry strategist.

received four-year scholarships from Louisiana College (Stames, Schober: \$4,500/year; Alsept: \$2,500/year).

10th Grade -- Logan Womack, East Winfield Baptist, was named overall winner.

9th Grade -- Winners were declared in three groups: Jack Stogner, First Covington, Milain Marcel, Ascension, Cameron Lindsay, Woodlawn, Jackson Barnes, First Covington, Kaleb Atkinson, First Baptist Church, Kilbourne, and Thomas Garbarino, First Baptist Church, Lafayette.

8th Grade -- Winners were declared in two groups: Leah Amie, Woodlawn, Laynie Atwood, Kingsville Baptist Church, Ball, Katie Peltonen, Grace Memorial, Chase Haag, Kingsville Baptist Church, Ball.

7th Grade -- First place: Brodie King, New Chapel Hill Baptist Church, West Monroe, and Timothy Singletary, First Covington. Second place: Peyton Moschell, Grace Memorial, and Madison Bueche, Amite Baptist Church, Denham Springs.

No winners in the fourth, fifth or sixth grade competition were announced.

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# Bridge from page one

She had professed her faith in Christ as a youngster, but did not understand the importance of obedience represented by baptism.

As she grew older, her desire to attend worship services at a local church waned. However, her sister, Kallie, invited her to attend Bridge Church in late 2018, and within months Black became passionate about her faith and wanted to be baptized.

“Since coming here, I have seen a different side of people,” she said. “When you walk into Bridge Church there is no judgment, only care and love. I can’t wait to get up on Sundays and come

to a place where Christ is real.”

The catalyst for the Easter baptisms came from a focus on prayer and multiple evangelistic outreaches in the weeks leading up to the holiday.

Members were encouraged to pray for one person, and invite him or her to the service.

Some members also participated in the challenge issued by Lee Strobel, a speaker at the 2019 Louisiana Baptist Evangelism Conference, to pray for one person for one minute at 1 p.m. every day leading up to Easter, and were reminded about their commitment by



Submitted photo

A large crowd celebrated Christ’s resurrection and the baptisms of five people during an Easter Sunday worship service April 21 at the Bridge Church in Madisonville.

a daily text.

Members also hosted 12 block parties and Easter egg hunts to reach out and encourage their neighbors to join them for this special worship service.

“When you start praying for your neighbors, it opens your eyes to the opportunities to share the Gospel,” Corley said. “We are looking to see others come to Christ through those relation-

ships between neighbors and friends. Hopefully more people will get on board praying for their neighbors and family members because we all want to get more involved in God’s mission when we see new life and transformation.”

Since January, nine new believers have been baptized at the Bridge Church, which meets at a movie theater in Madisonville. Corley said they hope to baptize 25 people by the end of the year, which would be a record for the nine-year-old congregation that averages 130 worshipers on Sunday, according to church records.

Throughout the week, members grow their relationships with Christ and each

other through one of eight small discipleship groups that meet in homes, coffee shops and other locations.

“Small groups are really important for portable churches like ours,” Corley said. “When you are portable, the focus is relationships and not the building. Buildings are great and provide that sense of place that can keep people returning to, but when you are portable, the relationships become even more important. We have many people that will tell us I may miss church every now and then, but I will never miss my small group. The relationships become the focus and that makes me, as a pastor, very happy.”

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# New Orleans flood insurance coverage at risk

By Will Hall  
Message Editor

## CULTURAL NEWS

NEW ORLEANS (LBM) – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has declared that the \$14 billion spent to fortify the Greater New Orleans area against flooding in the wake of devastation by Hurricane Katrina is at risk of failure, putting the region at risk of being disqualified from participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

In a “Notice of Intent” to prepare an environmental impact statement as part of a re-evaluation report, USACE stated the previous work it had completed to upgrade the levees, floodwalls, gates and pumps to reduce hurricane and storm damage risk at the “100-year level” was in peril in part due to weak soils and subsidence (sinking).

The statement said an “engineering analysis” indicated the measures previously taken could be for naught “as early as 2023 ... absent future levee lifts.” At that point, USACE will notify FEMA of the loss of risk reduction, “which may result in the loss of accreditation required for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.”

### Florida set to ban sanctuary cities

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (LBM) – The chambers of Florida’s legislature have passed competing bills banning sanctuary cities in the state, with the House version imposing a \$5,000-per-day fine for each day that a sanctuary-city policy is in place and including a rule to suspend or remove government employees or elected officials who defy the ban.

But both bills require local and state law enforcement to honor any federal agency’s request for detention of any person believed to be a “removable alien” under federal immigration law.

If the differences can be worked out, observers expect Gov. DeSantis to sign the reconciled bill into law, with Florida joining nine other states (Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, Iowa, Mississippi,

Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee and Texas) to enact such a mandate.

A 2017 bill that would have prohibited sanctuary cities in Louisiana was left to die in committee, but the impact of that legislative failure is uncertain.

The Center of Immigration Studies lists New Orleans as a “sanctuary city,” however the city signed a 2012 federal consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice Louisiana which governs its conduct with regard to reporting the immigration status of “victims or witnesses to crime” and the sheriff’s department is restricted from releasing release dates or addresses of inmates due to a class action lawsuit regarding detention of illegal immigrants.

The CIS also previously named Lafayette as a sanctuary city because of policies put into place by former Sheriff Mike Neustrom, according to a report in TheAdvertiser.com. But his replacement Mark Garber reversed these administrative rules and then demanded CIS remove Lafayette from the list.

The PEW Research Center reported that the majority of illegal immigrants live in California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York and Texas.

### IRS gives Satanic Temple ‘church’ tax exempt status

WASHINGTON, D.C. (LBM) – Not even two weeks after tax day, the Satanic Temple, a self-described atheist group, celebrated that “for the very [first] time in history a satanic organization has been recognized by the United States federal government as being a church.”

The categorization allows the Satanic Temple to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions.

According to LifeSiteNews.com, the Satanic Temple website clearly acknowledges it is not a religion per se and does not believe in Satan, but simply uses the name as a “symbol of the Eternal Rebel in opposition to arbitrary authority.” But the group argued to the IRS that the “narrative structure by which we contextualize our lives” and which gives members a “sense of identity, culture, community, and shared values” qualifies it as a religion.

The surprise IRS announcement followed by a month or so the ruling by the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that denied the minister’s housing allowance benefit to another atheistic group, the Freedom From Religion Foundation based in Wisconsin.



Message file photo

This photo shows flooding at the I-10/I-610 interchange and surrounding area of northwest New Orleans after the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. Despite spending \$14 billion against flooding, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said the work is at risk of failure, which puts the region at risk of being disqualified from participating in the National Flood Insurance Program.



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Email résumés to: [office@ebchurch.com](mailto:office@ebchurch.com)  
Mail-in résumés to: Ebenezer Baptist Church  
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Fellowship Baptist Church in Trout, LA is seeking a bi-vocational (part time) minister of music/worship. We are seeking someone who is committed to using their gifts and talents to lead our congregation (choir) in worship through music. For full job description email request to [fellowshipbctrout@yahoo.com](mailto:fellowshipbctrout@yahoo.com). Résumés should be mailed to Fellowship Baptist Church, 487 Fellowship Rd., Trout, LA 71371, C/O Mrs. Joy Bond.

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West Lake Baptist Church in Doyline, LA., is accepting résumés for either bi-vocational or full time pastor.  
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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Do you have a Revival, Homecoming, a new pastor, a community outreach or a concert? The Baptist Message would love to share your church news with the rest of the state. It is very easy to do, just send in your information (who, what, where and when) to philip@baptistmessage.com or call 318.449.4345. To get your event in the paper, please submit your information three weeks prior to the event.

**ON THE MOVE**

- **James H. Miller** retired April 14 as pastor of the First Baptist Church, Spearsville.
- **John Elliott** retired April 28 from Emmanuel Baptist Church, Natchitoches.
- **David Correia** has resigned as pastor of Eastside Baptist Church, Ponchatoula.
- **Stan Wyant** is the new pastor at Faith Baptist Church, Bastrop.
- **John-Robert Phillips** is the new associate pastor to students at First Baptist Church, Hammond.
- **Haven Kinchen** is the new director of children's ministries at First Baptist Church, Hammond.
- **Robert Robinson** is the new pastor at Covenant Baptist Church, Slidell.
- **Joseph (wife Megan) Cumberland** is the new youth pastor at Rose Park Baptist Church from First Baptist Church, Tallulah.

**REVIVAL**

- Social Springs Baptist Church, Ringgold:

## Lafayette from page 3

both made a profession of faith as a direct result of receiving that Bible." For the last 10 years the church has engaged in "FBC Loves Lafayette Day," a day of service in the community that has drawn as many as 600 to work on up to 40 beautification, cleanup and feeding projects. One year it focused on the campus of the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. Other projects might include providing a meal for first-responders or for the homeless, tackling the needs at impoverished schools, and writing cards to thank

- Harvest Sunday**, May 12, 11 a.m. Evangelist: **Sam Moore**. Pastor: James Hester.
- Anacoco Baptist Church, Anacoco: **Revival**, May 12-15. Evangelist: Scotty McDowell, chalk artist.
- Fellowship Baptist Church, Mansfield: **Revival**, May 17-19. Evangelist: **Lyndon Longoria**. Pastor: Weyland Jack Gauntt.
- Southside Baptist Church, Jonesboro: **Revival**, May 19-21. Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell**, chalk artist. Pastor: Wesley Venable.
- Pine Grove Baptist Church, Castor: **Spring Revival**, May 19-22, Sunday 6 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, 7 p.m. Evangelist: **Kyle Williams**. Music: **Sherri Lloyd**. Pastor: James Lovell.
- Oak Hill Baptist Church, Bastrop: **Revival**, May 19-22, 6 p.m. Sunday; 7 p.m. Monday-Wednesday. Speakers: **Bodie Spicer and Steve Pace**. Pastor: Andy Myrick.
- Lake St. John Community Baptist Church, Ferriday: **Revival**, May 22-25. Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell, chalk artist**. Pastor: Mark Richardson.

**LAGNIAPPE**

- **John Elliott** is available for supply, interim or bi-vocational pastorate. He can be reached at 318.332.5483.
- Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, West Monroe: **Randy Burdeaux**, pastor of Mt. Vernon, is now a captain in the 20th Engineer Battalion of the Louisiana Army National Guard and is serving as the unit's Chaplain.

## Sunrise from page one

people who rarely attend any worship service. Spinney said the service has become a tradition for those not connected to a church, which he sees as the perfect opportunity to share the hope of Christ. "Hillcrest sends out invitations to all the people who have loved ones buried there, and those people end up coming back year after year," Spinney said. "That gives me an open door to share the Gospel."

people for their service in government and the military. Two years ago at least a dozen other churches in the Evangeline Baptist Association got involved "and now we are calling it 'Here For You Acadiana,'" tied to the Louisiana Baptist Convention's ongoing "Here for You" campaign," Horn said. First Baptist has "always had an outward focus" in Lafayette and beyond, the pastor said. "We have tried to be a true partner to all our associational endeavors. I feel that's a part of who we are." The service was one of three for First Baptist Haughton on Easter Sunday. Three people came forward to accept Christ in the two services on campus. "Easter is an easy time to share the Gospel," Spinney said. "Most people in Haughton acknowledge and celebrate Easter in some form or fashion and we have noticed the more we share the Gospel the more people respond to Jesus."

- **Sam Wheat, Minister of Education & Outreach at Emmanuel Baptist Church** is retiring in May. A reception will be held for him May 19 from 2-4 p.m. in the Family Life Center of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Ruston.
- First Baptist Church, Zwolle: **29th annual Adult Day at Clara Springs Baptist Camp, Pelican**, May 9, 10 a.m.-1 pm. Special Guest: **Brent Lamb**, former lead-singer for Shenandoah, a Christian recording group. Lunch will be complementary. Please RSVP to the church office 318.645.4492 by May 1 if you plan on attending. Pastor: Marty Williams.
- First Baptist Church, Rayville: **Ben Waites in concert**, May 11, 6 p.m. Pastor: Eddie Wren.
- Stevendale Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Day Three with Greg Sullivan in concert**, May 17, 7 p.m. Pastor: Stephen Young.
- First Baptist Church, Pineville: **Marriage Night Simulcast**, May 17, in the fellowship hall on the lower level of the activities building. Cost: \$40 a couple. A catered meal will be included with this event as well as childcare. Marriage Night livestream event is in partnership with RightNow Media. Marriage Night will bring together thousands of husbands, wives, and engaged couples to hear from **Francis and Lisa Chan (You and Me Forever)**, **Les and Leslie Parrott (The Good Fight)**, and comedian **Michael Jr.** Please register at [www.fbcpineville.net](http://www.fbcpineville.net) or by calling the church office at 448-8221. Pastor: Stewart Holloway.
- Center Point Baptist Church, West Monroe: **Wild Game Supper**, May 18, 4-7 p.m. Free catfish, chicken, sausage, and wild game. Bounce house and door prizes. Speaker: **Robert Dukes**. Music: **Brent Avara**. For more details, call Ricky at 337.224.8008 or Rochelle at 318.307.9455. The church is located at 608 Winnfield Rd., West Monroe 71292.

- Victory Baptist Church, Hammond: **Day Three with Greg Sullivan in concert**, May 19, 10:30 p.m. Pastor: Jimmy Hill.
- Beulah Baptist Church, Winnfield: **Ben Waites in concert**, May 19, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Lamar Carpenter.
- First Baptist Church, Bossier City: **Family and Fireworks**, May 19, 7-9 p.m. at FBC Bossier's Freedom Fields. Bring your friends and your family and enjoy a laid-back atmosphere where you can relax in your lawn chair, blanket, enjoy some food and fun. Our concession stand will be open and there will

be additional food options. There will be field games kids and adults can play (soccer, football, Frisbee), inflatables, music and the evening will close out with one of the largest Fireworks shows in Louisiana! Pastor: Brad Jurkovich.

- Bonita Road Baptist Church, Bastrop: Man Church, May 23, 6:30 p.m. Speaker: **Russell Caldwell**. Worship: **'Therefore Worship'**. Pastor: Casey Johnson.
- North Monroe Baptist Church, Monroe: **Zion's Way**, May 24-25, 7 p.m. Pastor: Bill Dye.

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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.

jt vchv vcl ahil ta h phg fhj vtfhun vcl whep vull tg

vcl tgl jqnl, hgn vcl ahil ta h otzgr eqtg vtfhun vcl

whep vull tg vcl tvclu jqnl: qv fhj phnl vcutzrc hee vcl

ctzjl utzgn hstzv.

ldlyqle atuvo-tgl:gqglvllg

**Clues:**  
G = N; H = A

**April 25 Scripture Crypto:**  
First Timothy four: eight

# Big numbers jumpstart ABC construction project

By Brian Blackwell  
Message Staff Writer

EUNICE – A million dollar gift to the Acadian Baptist Center has helped jumpstart construction on a much-needed new worship center, with camp leaders, board members and supporters breaking ground April 11 in a ceremony to launch construction and to celebrate how God has provided financially to build the facility.

“A man and his wife came to summer camp worship and saw the gym full to the brim, and couldn’t stop thinking about our need for a new worship center,” camp director James Newsom told the Baptist Message. “He said I don’t know how God speaks to you but I couldn’t quit thinking about your need for the worship center

so my wife and I decided to help you get started.”

When completed in April 2020, the \$3 million, 18,000-sq.-ft. facility will accommodate up to 1,000 people. More than \$2.3 million has been raised in gifts and pledges. Additionally, the camp is signing up volunteers to augment the work performed by professional crews, he said.

“It’s really exciting to finally get this project started because it’s such a God thing,” Newsom said. “Attendance has increased to 3,000 for camp, and we are thrilled the kids will have a nice worship center to enjoy. So many people have given and participated just to be a small part of what God is doing at Acadian Baptist Center. It will make for a better camp experience and provide room for growth.”



Submitted photo

Acadian Baptist Center staff, board members and other supporters celebrated breaking ground for a new worship center during a special ceremony April 11. The 18,000-sq.-ft. facility will accommodate up to 1,000 people. More than \$2.3 million has been raised to fund the building.

Campers currently worship in the gymnasium, which Newsom said is not ideal.

“When we have bad weather, the kids aren’t able to play inside the gymnasium because of all the worship equipment set up,” Newsom said. “We have just one more summer and then we will finally have dedicated space for each of

these purposes.”

Many of the 110 people who have donated to the new facility are former camp staff, board members and parents whose children were impacted by the ministry. Newsome said that nearly 8,000 people have repented and placed their trust in God at Acadian Baptist Camp since it opened in 1975.

“The support has been phenomenal,” Newsom said. “People see how camp changes lives and they want to invest in the next generation. They realize the youth who attend our camps will be the adults of tomorrow.”

**Donations to the new worship center can be made at the camp website, [abccamp.com](http://abccamp.com).**

## Whatever Happened to Hope?

How do you explain an extraordinarily gifted and successful person who seemingly has it all and ends it all? Suicide confounds us, especially high-profile suicides.

When we hear that a famous chef, a popular designer or entertainer decides life is not worth living, it often leaves us feeling bewildered. By the world’s standards, they were successful. They had notoriety, money and all of the trappings of the “good life,” but if you dig a little deeper, you’ll find these high profile suicides are symptomatic of a larger problem.

According to an article in USA Today, suicides are up 30% since 1999 – totaling nearly 45,000 people per year. In fact, suicides claim more lives than car accidents. First responders seem particularly vulnerable. A recent study indicated more

firefighters and police officers die by suicide than all line-of-duty deaths combined. And we’ve all read too many posts relating to suicides attributed to cyber bullying.

Writing from a Roman prison, Paul identified the underlying issue when he reminded the believers in Ephesus of their former condition, “*You lived in this world without God and without hope.*” (Eph. 2:12, NLT).

In order to see examples of this lifestyle, spend a few minutes on social media or watch any number of popular programs, especially reality TV. You’ll see plenty of examples of what it means to be hollow and hopeless.

*People give up when there is no hope.*

*People die when there is no hope.*

*Those who are left grieve*

*when there is no hope.* Headlines today often describe and define a society living without God and without hope.

Solomon said it best, “*Hope deferred makes the heart sick.*” (Pr. 13:12, ESV). And today this sickness has gone viral.

What do you do? What can you do?

The good news is that God has given us an antidote for the virus. But will we share it?

We don’t need to be reactive people. Instead we need to be proactive people. Be ready to respond. Be ready to give hope.

*Here for You*, Louisiana Baptists multi-media evangelism strategy, is a response. A response by you, Louisiana Baptists, to those living without God and without hope.

Instead of sitting around and complaining about the condition of the



culture, we are going inside the devices people are using and the programs they are watching with the only thing that provides hope – truth, God’s truth.

As we leverage current communications platforms to seed the truth of God’s word inside every heart and every home, we’re seeding the path to freedom. We’re pointing those without hope to the only God who provides hope.

When is the last time you took a proactive approach? Start now. Take a moment, go to [www.HereForYou.org](http://www.HereForYou.org) and share truth, share hope with your friends and family via social media.

Whatever happened to hope? It’s where it’s always been – with the God who created us and loved us enough to send His Son to restore the hope Satan and sin stole in the garden. Share hope today.