

“From a wise mind comes wise speech; the words of the wise are persuasive.”

– Proverbs 16:23 (NIV)

M BAPTIST Message

Newsjournal for Louisiana Baptists

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October 22, 2015

Church does lake, river baptisms HIS way



Submitted photo

Pastor Steve Speer of HIS Church in Pineville baptizes a young boy in Buhlow Lake. HIS Church held two lake and two river baptism services this year. In all, 85 people were baptized. Speer said baptizing in a lake or river brings about a sense of nostalgia.

Church's baptisms, significant growth a witness to the world

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

PINEVILLE – Cheers, high-fives and even a human wave were plentiful earlier in the month for a crowd of 100 gathered to witness the baptism of several members of HIS Church in the Red River. Some were husbands and wives; others were individuals, all wading through the water on this comfortable October evening.

Those being baptized were ecstatic to show family, friends and onlookers their declaration of a new life in Christ through baptism.

The six baptisms were the second to be performed in the river this year by the church, with two other baptisms occurring in nearby Buhlow Lake. In all, around 85 people have been baptized, with the most (43) occurring during an earlier lake baptism before a large crowd of more than 300.

HIS Church Pastor Steve Speer said baptizing in the river and lake brings about a

sense of nostalgia from when baptisms in churches and even during biblical times were held almost exclusively in that setting, instead of the more traditional baptisms inside a worship center.

“We like to baptize outdoors because it’s a retro thing, an old-fashioned way of doing things,” Speer said. “In our quest to redefine how we do church, we embrace some ways of the past.”

For Brad Hamilton, the river baptism was extra meaningful.

Not only did he witness the baptism of his son, Connor, but he was able to help baptize him.

Why? Because Speers encourages all fathers to play a part in the baptism of their children, Hamilton took part.

“It was a fantastic moment, a proud moment,” Hamilton said. “It makes you feel like you are more involved in your child’s spiritual life. Rather than being an

See WITNESS on 3

Fleming: House GOP not ‘in chaos,’ just exercising democracy to select new leader

Appearing on C-SPAN Sept. 30, 2015, Rep. John Fleming (R-La.) discussed the House Freedom Caucus’ efforts to defund Planned Parenthood and to elect a conservative as the next Speaker of the House.



BY WILL HALL
Message Editor

ALEXANDRIA – Congressman John Fleming dismisses the idea popularized in the mainstream media that the U.S. House of Representatives is in chaos because they have rejected the next-in-line candidate to succeed the retiring Speaker of the House.

“Neither Republicans nor conservatives are in chaos,” he told the Baptist Message.

Instead, he said conservatives are simply following a process to bring about change in leadership that would also bring about a change in direction.

“Conservative members and the Republican base want a ‘fresh face,’” he said. “We are all tired of big government merging with big business to carry the corporate agenda and that of the secular extreme left wing while ignoring average Americans.”

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First Coushatta's Davis to be nominated for Pastor Conference President

By BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

COUSHATTA – Nathan Davis, pastor of First Baptist Church in Coushatta, is

expected to be nominated for the office of president of the Louisiana Baptist Pastors Conference.

Brad Jurkovich, pastor of First Baptist Church

in Bossier City, told *The Baptist Message* that he plans to nominate Davis.

"I have known him to be a godly man and leader," Jurkovich said. "He and I received our Doctorates from Southwestern Seminary together. He is strong biblically, shepherds his congregation with faith and vision and is committed to seeing Southern Baptists make a difference for Christ throughout Louisiana, America and the world."

Davis said if elected he would welcome the opportunity to encourage and challenge fellow pastors in these challenging days.

"The reason that I would want to be Pastors Conference president is because I love to minister to pastors," Davis said. "Also, I love to organize services with great singing and great preaching."

"Pastors have always had a special place in my heart,"

he continued. "I want to see them encouraged and challenged to grow in their faith. I count it a privilege to even be considered."



Nathan Davis

Since 2010, Davis has served as pastor of First Baptist Coushatta, which averages around 160 people in worship.

During that time, the church has seen 45 baptisms, including 13 from Aug. 31, 2014 to Sept. 1 of this year.

Two and a half years ago, the church dedicated a family life center, which is used for evangelism and outreach. Most recently the facility hosted pro angler and television personality Jimmy Houston for a family event that saw 450 people attend and several make decisions for Christ.

Davis has served as a member of the LBC 2020 Commission, moderator of Red River Baptist Association, and is currently a member of Louisiana College's

Board of Trustees and vice president of the 2015 Louisiana Baptist Pastors Conference. He also is one of 40 captains through the initiative The Pledge, a pastor-led initiative to increase support for missions and ministries through the Cooperative Program. First Baptist Coushatta gives 13 percent of its budget to the CP.

"In this day and time, it is very important that pastors and their churches support the historical work of the Cooperative Program," Davis said. "It is instrumental in spreading the gospel around the world, alleviates a greater financial burden on seminary students, and allows us to partner together unlike any other organization."

A native of Apple Springs, Texas, Davis has served in various roles at five churches. He holds degrees from East Texas Baptist University in Marshall, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Davis and his wife, Melanie, have been married since December 2002. They have two children, Reagan and McKinley.

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Witness from page one

observer you feel like you are there.”

Gilbert Flores, along with three of his children, was baptized in the lake baptismal service in June.

“It is everlasting and priceless knowing I was able to do that with them to enjoy that moment,” he said. “Not only did our church show up at the baptism but others who were friends got to witness our baptism and the other ones baptized that day too, which was a pretty cool thing.”

Not only do they celebrate baptisms in a river or lake at HIS Church, but each person’s name is placed on a red ornament ball that is placed on the Christmas tree of life. At least 400 ornaments have been placed on the tree since HIS Church started in July of 2006.

“Because we are having so many people baptized, we are buying a 12-foot tree to hold all of the ornaments,” he said. “People get saved and have eternal life, hence the name the tree of life.”

Since Speer became a

church planter in 2002, he has held river and lake baptisms. Between his four years at Grace Baptist Church in Baton Rouge and the last nine at HIS Church in Pineville, Speer has baptized nearly 500 people. He said in 75 percent of those baptism services, at least one person will accept Christ as Savior and Lord.

Additionally, since 2014, 50 percent of the membership at HIS Church has joined through making a personal decision to follow Christ. That’s a significant increase from their previous average of 38 percent.

Membership has increased from 22 when it first started on July 2, 2006 to 750 on Sept. 14, 2014 to 1,007 in early October of this year. The recent growth surge has left the church bursting at the seams. Speer and volunteers from the church addressed it by expanding the worship center from 300 to 500 seats.

Matthew Mallette came on board as ministry assistant when HIS Church was starting. He loves how the church isn’t



Submitted photo

Members of HIS Church in Pineville celebrate after a baptism in Buhlow Lake. Since Steve Speer planted the church, river and lake baptisms have been an annual event. Speer credits Christ for the number of baptisms and the significant increase HIS Church has seen in its membership.

afraid to move forward but at the same time embrace some things of the past.

“God is the reason for what is happening here,” he said. “He is blessing us.”

Speer also gives all the credit to Christ for the number of baptisms and significant

increase in membership.

“What we’ve seen has been very humbling,” Speer said. “These baptisms are a witness to the world.”

“The Lord is just doing it,” he continued. “We didn’t experience growth until recently. God just showed up. It’s not

because we are special or having the right kind of programs. The Lord is here and He truly is adding to the church daily.

“How did this happen, I ask myself a lot,” he added. “Everything just came together because He brought it together in His time.”

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Why Southern Baptists are not tithing like they should

“Southern Baptists are not even approaching anything close to a tithe of their total income.” – Dr. Will Hall, *The Baptist Message*

The Baptist Message for Oct. 8, 2015 goes into detail about the financial situation facing our denomination. For the first time ever, we’re told, designated receipts are outpacing gifts to denominational causes through our Cooperative Program.

What that means is that our churches – and that means our pastors – are directing larger and larger portions of the offering plate money to the causes they wish to support. As a result, they are slowly beginning the process of defunding the causes they’re not supporting.

Underlying the various aspects of this financial crisis is one huge factor: Fewer of our people are tithing their income through their churches these days.

Will Hall writes, “Southern Baptists are robbing God.... Southern Baptists teach tithing, but whatever we are doing is not connecting with our people...”

That stopped me short.

I appreciate Will’s positive spin on things in saying we teach tithing.

But he’s wrong.

We are not teaching tithing.

We used to.

There was a time when churches would have stewardship revivals and conferences lasting for several days or even a week. They would bring in outside speakers who would teach the biblical concepts of giving. They conducted stewardship campaigns inside their churches, most of them lasting for weeks, culminating with a churchwide banquet and a pledge day on Sunday. Our people came to conferences and revivals and study courses devoted to nothing in the world other than stewardship and tithing.

Try that now and let me know how it goes.

Ask any pastor. Our people simply would not attend.

Whether churches quit holding these stewardship conferences and revivals because the people were not attending or they quit attending because the leadership no longer offered the meetings is anyone’s guess.



JOE MCKEEVER
Retired Pastor,
Author
New Orleans

The bottom line is we are not teaching tithing.

We are preaching tithing.

I don’t know of one SBC pastor who does not believe in tithing and mention it occasionally in his messages.

But it’s a rare pastor who will devote more than one or two sermons a year exclusively to tithing.

And we wonder why the younger generation is doing little more than tipping God when the offering plate goes by.

Several fallacies are current in our churches these days. Here are some of the most obvious ones....

1) The typical SBC pastor actually believes that good preaching is going to bring in bigger offerings. The only way that works is if the crowds get bigger and bigger each year. And where is that happening?

2) Our leaders believe that if people get “good and saved,” they’re going to become faithful and generous givers. We make jokes about “baptizing their wallets.”

We are expecting them to do something they are not being taught. Where is the sense in that?

3) This generation thinks that if their church is doing well financially, there is no need for sermons on tithing or an emphases on stewardship.

They have forgotten that the individual Christian needs to grow as disciples and honoring their Lord with their income is a major way of accomplishing that.

4) Many pastors are afraid to mention money.

I’ve had them admit that to me. “My people don’t like me mentioning money. It puts them in mind of the prosperity preachers on television.”

I wonder what about the biblical admonition to “Preach the Word”?

Two predictions, both of them awful...

One: At Judgement, multitudes of Christian people are going to point accusing fingers at their pastors for not teaching them to be faithful stewards of their money, for not leading them to become victorious tithers. They will arrive in Heaven and learn they have not “laid up treasure in Heaven” as our Lord commanded.

Two: At Judgement, untold millions of the unsaved will point the finger of accusation at God’s people who did not send missionaries their way. Because we chose to spend God’s money on ourselves, on expensive luxury items in our homes, and on fancy campuses and technological doodads for our churches, missionaries were called home and people died without ever hearing the gospel.

What I’m calling for...

I am not suggesting a return to 1960 with its weeklong study course meetings on stewardship, although there would be nothing wrong with it.

What I am urging is for pastors and church leaders to face one massive fact which we cannot get around: People have to be taught and motivated to tithe.

However we do it, they have to be taught, and that means using all the proven techniques of teaching concepts and changing behavior.

They have to be taught that tithing is a matter of faith.

People say, “We’re going to start tithing just as soon as we pay our debts and get a little money ahead.”

I tell them, “No, you’re not.”

There will never be such a time. Furthermore, God does not want you to tithe

that way.

When we say we’re going to start tithing as soon as the money is available, what we’re saying is I’m going to tithe just as soon as I don’t have to do it by faith.

But that’s not how it’s done. We tithe by faith, the same way we do everything else in the Christian life!

“Without faith, it is impossible to please God” (Hebrews 11:6).

“For we walk by faith and not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7).

And the big one: “The just shall live by faith” (found in Habakkuk 2:4 and 3 times in the New Testament: Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, and Hebrews 10:38).

It’s hard to start tithing. It’s uphill. It’s counter-intuitive, meaning it looks like you’re making matters worse for yourself financially instead of being really smart.

Only those who truly believe in Him will tithe.

Ask the old-timers in any church, people who were taught to tithe generations ago and have given faithfully and regularly ever since.

Tithing was hard at first. They had to make sacrifices. They had to rearrange their priorities. The second year it was still tough. But for most, tithing became easier over the years and they readjusted their spending. And now, as that generation comes toward the end of their earthly pilgrimage most give thanks that even the humblest have given a small fortune to the Lord’s work.

Only the pastors and leaders who truly want to bless their people and grow them in Christ will be willing to teach tithing.

Only courageous leaders will give more than lip service to tithing and take extraordinary steps to really help their people.

Our Lord asked, “When the Son of Man returns, will He find faith on earth?” (Luke 18:8)

Whoever teaches me to tithe has blessed my life forever.

How many missionaries really have to come home?

Like many Southern Baptists, I was distraught at the news that the International Mission Board (IMB) was forced to make a dramatic reduction in the number of full-time missionaries that we send out.

Unlike many Southern Baptists, I have had my livelihood provided for strictly through Cooperative Program giving as a former full-time employee of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

Additionally, I’ve helped secure funding for NAMB church planters and interns. I say all this to convey this money is not an Excel entry to me.

I’ve seen the lives that have been profoundly changed by the CP; both the ministers and those who’ve been ministered to. This is

why I am personally so somber about our financial distress in a major mission board.

But it’s not as a minister I write to you today. In the Lord’s providence, he led me to prepare for bi-vocational ministry and the door he opened for me was in the financial services industry. It is from that desk I seek to communicate today.



JONATHAN NIDA
Bi-Vocational Pastor
Founder of Nida
& Montgomery
Wealth Advisers

According to a Boston College Center for Wealth and Philanthropy study, between 2007 and 2061, there will be \$59 trillion transferred from estates in the US.

That’s a 59 with twelve zeros. Let’s think about that for a minute. Let’s assume only 5 percent of that is money being transferred from Southern Baptists (this as-

sumption is based on the fact Southern Baptists make up roughly 5 percent of the US.) It would leave us with \$2.95 trillion in wealth being transferred from Southern Baptists to their heirs, the government, and estate services. That is a truly staggering figure.

The question is, what does this figure have to do with the Great Commission as worked out through the IMB?

My contention is that it has everything to do with our missional work. Consider this, were you to annualize the figure stated earlier, you could assume over \$5 billion every year is being transferred from SBC estates. What if each of these SBC estate holders was committed to tithing on their estate?

Would we be scaling back our mission work with an additional \$500 million each year?

That’s more than our total CP giving for the 2013-2014 fiscal year. Obviously there are a lot of assumptions being made here, but even if the number was 10 percent of that, we wouldn’t be calling missionaries home from the field because of financial reasons. We’re eight years into the time period discussed in the Boston College study, why aren’t we flush with cash?

Many faithful givers don’t even consider planned giving on their estate despite the fact that it can reduce their taxable estate and make a lasting impact for the Kingdom of God.

It is often complicated to consider gifting illiquid assets or setting up proper estate documents, but these are fairly routine procedures that a competent financial advisor should be able

See NIDA on 8

First@First speakers share wisdom from a Christian perspective

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

PINEVILLE – Northwestern State men’s head basketball coach Mike McConathy is not just about winning games on the court but also teaching young men off the court how to be effective in life.

“What’s my job as a coach?” McConathy told those attending the recent First@First Business Leaders Lunch at First Baptist Church in Pineville. “To teach young men how to be effective in everything they do.”

Whether in coaching or business, training for life-effectiveness involves two key components, McConathy said. They are communication and paying attention to details.

“If we expect a lot of others we’ve got to give a lot,” said McConathy, who has served as coach of the Demons for 16 years. “And I think that we give and we give unconditionally because Christ gave unconditionally for us.”

McConathy said he doesn’t ask his players to do something he would not do himself.

“My philosophy is if somebody asks me to do it, I’m going to find a way to do it, because they would not ask me to do something if they really didn’t need help,” he said. “A lot of times with God, how frustrating do you think He gets with us because He asks us to study scripture, He asks us to praise Him, He asks us to do all these things. And we do them when



Brian Blackwell photo

A crowd of 50 business leaders listen to Northwestern State head men’s basketball coach Mike McConathy share advice on effective communication. Held at First Baptist Church in Pineville, the First@First Business Leaders Lunch is held the first Monday of each month and includes a speaker from a variety of professions.

it’s convenient for us rather than at times when He really needs us.”

During the first Monday of every month, speakers like McConathy share some wisdom about business from a Christian perspective. Past speakers have included Louisiana College President Rick Brewer, *Baptist Message* Editor Will Hall, Lessie Moore Elementary Principal Laurie Johnson,

author Leo Honeycutt and LSU-Alexandria Professor Sandra Gilliland.

Stewart Holloway, pastor of First Baptist Pineville, said First@First was born out of a desire men in his church had for reaching businessmen and women in the area.

“If we reach the leaders, we reach the business,” Holloway said. “We were looking around and realized this can be an ef-

fective way to minister to our community in that way.”

Holloway said First@First has provided not only advice on how to better perform in the business world but networking opportunities as well.

“Anyone wanting to live out their world as a Christian, you need support and encouragement from others,” Holloway

See **FIRST@FIRST** on 6

LBCEA
 [Louisiana Baptist Christian Education Association]



November 9, 2015
 (luncheon prior to Annual Meeting of the LBC)
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 New Orleans - NOBTS

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LouisianaBaptists.org/LBCEA

Louisiana Baptist Convention Annual Meeting

Nov. 9-10, 2015
First Baptist Church,
Bossier City, La.

Bylaw Amendment Change

That the Louisiana Baptist Convention meeting at First Baptist Church, Bossier City, November 9-10, 2015 amend the Louisiana Baptist Convention Bylaws, Article III, Section 5, as follows:

The Committee on Credentials shall be composed of seven (7) members. It shall supervise the registration and accreditation of messengers to the Convention, and shall manage the application process for congregations desiring to become a cooperating church with the Louisiana Baptist Convention and qualified to send messengers for the first time. It shall recommend to the Convention, when necessary, the disaffiliation of any Louisiana Baptist Convention church that no longer complies with the Convention's definition of a cooperating church. It shall recommend action to the Convention concerning disputes as to status of persons as messengers.

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Ways messengers can participate

BOSSIER CITY – This year's annual meeting of the Louisiana Baptist Convention will be held at First Baptist Church in Bossier City, LA on November 9-10, 2015.

In order for a church to participate in the business of the convention, they will need to elect messenger(s) to represent them.

Messengers elected by their respective church are then able to register as messengers and participate in the business of the convention.

The Credentials Committee oversees the registration process for the annual meeting. Roger Johnson, LBC Credentials Committee Chairman notes that there are five ways that messengers may be certified to participate and vote at this year's annual convention.

The first and simplest way is for messengers to pre-register using the LBC online program, print out

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL CHURCHES:

Pre-registration letters were mailed Oct. 5 for the 2015 Louisiana Baptist Convention Annual Meeting.

If you haven't already, please go on-line to www.LAone.org and use the login information provided in your letter you received to pre-register your messengers for this event.

If you have not received your letter or have questions about the process please contact Information Services office by email (Messengers@LBC.org) or phone (318-448-3402 ext. 242 or 210)

their registration card, and bring the card to the annual meeting.

Pre-registration in this

way allows messengers to be certified within a matter of minutes, Johnson said.

Second, if messengers have not pre-registered, bringing a letter from their church on church letterhead stating that they are elected messengers will allow them to register and be certified to vote.

Third, a church officer can phone in the names of elected messengers.

Fourth, verification by a fellow registered church member.

And finally, when there is no other means by which to validate a person, a meeting of the Credentials Committee may be called.

Johnson reminds pastors that they are not automatically registered as a messenger from their church and that they must follow the same procedure as other messengers in order to participate in the business and voting at the annual meeting.

First@First from page 5

said. "You need to know you're not alone. That's what First@First helps out with."

The monthly lunch draws people not just from the Louisiana Baptist churches but those from other denominations as well.

Among those is Rich

Dupree, a member of Christian Challenge Worship Center in Pineville.

"There are several reasons why I like to attend First@First each month," said Dupree, who serves as chief of staff for the Mayor of Pineville. "First is that a majority of the attendees

are successful local business people, who I enjoy networking with and it is always a great benefit to my job with the City of Pineville. Second, I know I can always count on an inspiring message from speakers who don't have to compromise their message – unlike many business luncheons I attend. And I also enjoy supporting a local ministry that is thinking outside the box in reaching our community for Christ."

Attorney Mike Johnson, who was one of the members of First Baptist Pineville who had the interest in reaching fellow business leaders, said the meetings have been encouraging, educational and spiritually uplifting.

"Based upon the attendance, growth and feedback I believe we have stayed true to that mission and that it's working," Johnson said. "I am thankful for Dr. Holloway and First Baptist for supporting the effort and am looking forward to the continued growth of the crowd."

The next First@First is scheduled for Nov. 2. Anyone interested in attending for the cost of \$10, which includes a lunch, may do so by prepaying via credit card at fbcpineville.net or paying at the event. However, an RSVP is requested by Oct. 30 by emailing mlangford@fbcpineville.net.



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Prayer breakfast first step toward a pregnancy care center in Cenla

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

POLLOCK – For nearly two years, Brian Gunter has prayed for a way to minister to hundreds of women struggling with crisis pregnancy who are living in central Louisiana.

Now Gunter believes God has answered his prayers, with the possible establishment of a pregnancy care center in the area.

“The desire of my heart is to see our Southern Baptist churches in Cenla

engage in a cooperative missions effort to share the gospel with these women and to save the lives of their unborn children,” Gunter, pastor of First Baptist Church of Pollock, wrote in a letter mailed to churches in the central Louisiana area. “Southern Baptists are adamantly pro-life and missions-minded. It is time that we practice what

we preach because God has called us to save souls and save lives. This is our opportunity to do so.”



Brian Gunter
Pastor First Pollock

Gunter said that starting a pregnancy care center allows for Southern Baptists to do what they are known for – carrying the gospel around the world, but closer to home.

He said that the problem of the women is not

that they are unmarried or pregnant out of wedlock, but rather symptoms of a problem – their need for Christ. Gunter said this pregnancy care center will be used to introduce them to Jesus.

“Southern Baptists are known for our missions and evangelistic endeavors around the world, yet there is a tremendous need right here in our own backyard,” Gunter said. “Cenla currently has no gospel-centered, pro-life pregnancy center to minister to the hundreds of women around us who are struggling with a crisis pregnancy. Many of these women feel helpless and turn to abortion as an ‘answer’ for their problem.”

Since January 2014 – the 41st anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, which legalized abortion in the US – First Baptist Pollock has worked to start the pregnancy care center. Gunter said his church has sought advice and help of pro-life advocates in the state, as well as researched requirements to establish this ministry. His congregation also has secured donations from local businesses and a fully-functioning ultrasound machine.

“This amazing gift can be utilized to show a pregnant woman her baby so that she might see the miracle in her womb and choose life

for her child,” he said.

Even though the pregnancy care center is closer to becoming reality, needs to start the ministry still exist. These include securing a centralized location to house the ministry and getting doctors, nurses, ultrasound technicians, WMU leaders, pastors and others involved who have a passion for sharing Christ with the women.

First Baptist Pollock is hosting a prayer breakfast at 9 a.m. on Oct. 24 for anyone interested in learning more about how they can become involved in this ministry. Louisiana State Rep. Mike Johnson, who is legal counsel to Louisiana Right to Life, will be the keynote speaker. To RSVP or for more information, email secretary@fbcpollock.org or call 318.765.3525.

Louisiana ACLU accuses Airline High, principal of pushing religion

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

BOSSIER CITY – Northwest Louisiana is the sight of yet another battle for religious freedom in public schools.

The Louisiana chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union recently sent a letter to the superintendent of the Bossier Parish Schools, accusing Airline High School of “engaging in a pattern of religious proselytization.”

The letter states that prayer boxes with Christian symbols have been established throughout the school and religious messages have been included in newsletters posted on Airline High School’s website. After the letter was sent to Bossier Parish Schools, the ACLU learned information from a source was not entirely accurate.

“We had a photograph of those boxes and were told

that they were scheduled to be installed the next day, which did not happen,” said ACLU Louisiana Executive Director Marjorie Esman in an email to *The Baptist Message*. “Our goal is, as it always is, to ensure compliance with the law. I hope you will make clear that the ACLU has a long and proud history of defending the religious rights of all Americans.”

The ACLU also states in the letter they understand that Airline High School Principal Jason Rowland has encouraged students to “pray to the Almighty God.”

“This letter is to inform you these practices violate the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and comparable provisions of the Louisiana Constitution, and they must stop immediately,” the letter states.

But that is not the case, according to Mike Johnson, a Shreveport attorney and found-

er of Freedom Guard, a legal group that defends Christian individuals and businesses.

“This is typical of the ACLU,” said Johnson. “They’re on a seek-and-destroy mission for all things religious. The law is still on our side. There is no reason to give into these secularists.”

Johnson, who has offered to defend Bossier Parish Schools pro-bono, said the ACLU is ‘overstepping.’

See AIRLINE on 12

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Employing 'The Bridge,' Nicholls BCM experiencing decision after decision

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

THIBODAUX – Before the fall semester began, the Baptist Collegiate Ministry leadership at Nicholls State University was praying for at least one student to come to a saving relationship with Christ.

By the end of September, they had gotten much more – 19 to be exact.

“It’s pretty wild,” said Nicholls BCM President Zach Vorenkamp, a senior from Houston, Texas. “The Lord is really moving. If it’s anything we are doing, it’s being intentional – sharing the gospel and creating disciples.”

The catalyst for the growth began when BCM Director Conan Sherlin and his wife, Christy, and a friend of the BCM attended a national conference for BCM directors. It was there they were led to discuss with the leadership team at Nicholls a vision to share Jesus with students through the gospel appointments method.

Gospel appointments begin with someone in leadership connecting with a first-time visitor to the BCM, asking for a phone number with the intention of sending a text and

invitation to coffee within 48 hours. Then, two BCM members – one experienced and one just learning – sit down with the individual and explaining the gospel using the Bridge illustration. Through this method, the BCM members will present the gospel, using a bridge near the end to show Christ is the avenue to link God to man over the valley of sin that previously separated the two from one another.

“The Bridge is fantastic because it allows for the individual listening to respond and even to visually comprehend where they line up in life,” Sherlin said. “Whatever response these folks give us we have something for them. This is an advantageous method as it catches people who are spiritually seeking or even folks who are not where they know they should be, because in truth they are usually in one of those categories when they decide to walk into the BCM.”

DECISIONS AFTER DECISIONS

The end result is for the Nicholls State BCM is the most decisions in five weeks than they average for an entire semester, which is normally two to three decisions. Voren-

kamp said this new method is much more effective than presenting the gospel in a large setting, such as their Thursday evening Merge Bible study, which averages 85 each week.

“The decisions we have seen almost are exclusively on a one-on-one basis,” Vorenkamp said. “If I had to guess, it’s about that relationship. In as much a group setting of 90 people you can try to make it warm and a feeling of community, it’s all about people being people and connecting with one another. You can earn someone’s trust one-on-one much easier and that leads to a way to share the gospel that you just can’t do in a large group of people.”

Harley Grandstaff is one of the 19 students who accepted Christ through the gospel appointments method. Through a late August meeting at an on-campus coffee shop with Vorenkamp and Sherlin, he learned of his need for Christ.

“The two drew a diagram of where one needs to be spiritually in order to be accepted into heaven,” he said. “And when they asked me where I thought I was if I had to draw myself on the diagram I realized that I’m not on the right track, and I knew I had to change that. I then prayed with them and accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior.”

Ever since he decided to accept Christ, Grandstaff said he has felt as if the weight of any worries, doubt, or troubles has been lifted off him.

“The peace and unconditional love that God has shown me made me realize that I should have been seeking a better relationship with him all my life,” said Grandstaff, a freshman from New Orleans. “And over at the BCM, God gives us the peace and joy to help us produce a fun, friendly, and family like



Submitted photo

A Nicholls State Baptist Collegiate Ministry student disciples a new Christian. One-on-one gospel meetings are an important part of the BCM reaching 19 for Christ in the first five weeks of the semester.

environment to allow all of us to aid one another in our walk with Jesus.”

Once the students accept Christ, the BCM leaders then immediately match them with a spiritually mature believer there. Vorenkamp said seeing them mature and grow in their faith is a key so they will continue their journey as a Christ-follower.

“Paul talks a lot in his letters about people needing spiritual milk,” he said. “You’re not doing someone justice where they see God for who he is and then leave them on their own.”

HOPEFUL FUTURE

As for the remainder of the school year, Sherlin hopes that growth can continue. The goal for the remainder of the year is to complete 100 Gospel appointments.

He said that the plan is three-fold. Sherlin wants his students to continue engaging every visitor with Gospel appointments, present the

gospel spontaneously with others around campus and using group outreaches such as a meal or Pinterest Party for the Kingdom.

“I am confident through God’s grace that we will hit our projected target,” Sherlin said. “The difficult part will be to ensure all those who have made a response are being matched with solid teaching and discipleship.”

“Evangelism without discipleship has been in my opinion a waste of time as new believers are rarely equipped to withstand the difficulties that quickly arise with their decisions,” he continued. “We need prayers and support from our church bodies as the task ahead continues to grow as every year more and more students arrive on campus with little or no church background. We are so thankful for the love and support we already get and look forward to partnering with our denominational body for a long time to see lives transformed and disciples made.”

NIDA from page 4

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DON JOHNSON

Fleming from page one

average Americans.”
The Louisiana Republican who represents the 4th U.S. Congressional District said that when John Boehner “was pressured to retire” from his position of leadership, “there was a reluctance by many conservatives to simply promote the next guy, Kevin McCarthy.”

He said such feelings resulted from Boehner’s leadership team’s begrudging conservatives “very little voice” in the legislative agenda, thus hampering conservatives’ efforts to oppose the “liberal/progressive agenda of President Obama.”

Moreover, he said many conservatives “have been dealt punishments, individually, for not voting as we are told,” adding that “the culture of singling out conservatives for punishment existed within the entire leadership team, not just John Boehner.”

CONSERVATIVE CHAMPION

Fleming describes himself as a conservative on social issues, fiscal policies and defense matters, having won his first term to Congress campaigning to change Washington.

He has especially distinguished himself in his support of military members, rising to defend and expand religious liberties for active duty personnel, enabling them to exercise the beliefs of their faith and not just passively “hold” them.

He also co-chairs the Values Action Team, a congressional group that liaisons with social conservative organizations in order to advance legislative goals that support traditional values and vision on life issues as well as marriage, business and education matters.

Fleming said he is looking for someone to serve as Speaker who is fair-minded and “believes in empowering the American people as the Constitution intended.” Specifically, he hopes the new House leader and his team will work to improve jobs and the economy “by reducing taxes and regulation.”

The next Speaker needs to support the repeal of Obamacare and Dodd-Frank (criticized by some as overreaching with burdensome regulation), he said, as well as reforms that would lead to balancing the budget. He also is looking for a candidate who is “truly concerned about the nation and our founding principles.”

Fleming was emphatic he has no plans to run for Speaker.

Instead, he is considering “a probable U.S. Senate opportunity, assuming Sen. Vitter, R-La., is elected governor.”

However, he said he would work to help the new Speaker “be successful.”

A lifelong Southern Baptist who is a member of First Baptist Church in Minden, Louisiana, Fleming shared that he would personally prefer a strong Chris-

tian as Speaker. But he also said it was important to be considerate of First Amendment religious liberty principles.

“Fortunately, the laws and our very democracy derive from our Christian principles,” he added.

Fleming called Rep. Daniel Webster, endorsed by the House Freedom Caucus as its candidate for Speaker, “a strong Christian man with impeccable integrity.”

“He served as Speaker of the House for the Florida House of Representatives and reformed it from a ‘power’ based system to a ‘principle’ based system, exactly what we need in the U.S. House,” he said.

Saying congressional members from the Sunshine State praised Webster’s leadership and character, Fleming described the Florida congressman as the “fresh face” that is needed as Speaker.

Moreover, he said Webster has the spiritual dimension that is needed in the next leader of the House.

Although not a close friend of Webster’s, Fleming said he has watched him closely and in whatever situation he was in “observed him to be a strong, powerful, principled follower of Christ.”

Still, as more members announce themselves as candidates, Fleming conceded “we may have to take a second look.”

FAITH & POLICY

The fourth-term congressman from Louisiana emphasized the government is not well-suited for solving spiritual problems even though these are the root of many of the nation’s ills, and even said in some cases government intervention has only worsened the situation.

Brewer announces creation of a Board of Visitors for the school

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

PINEVILLE – Louisiana College has launched a program that not only provides financial aid to students but gives them possible real-world business experience in a variety of fields.

The newly-formed Board of Visitors is comprised of alumni, business owners and other professionals and friends of LC who are giving between \$1,000 and \$10,000 annually for four years. During their four-year commitment, the members will help the students find internships, network for the college, help develop additional financial resources and help refer prospective students to LC.

LC President Rick Brewer, who said the initial goal was to sign up 25 members by Sept. 1, who would contribute at one of four levels: Board of Visitor,

\$1,000; Leadership Council, \$2,500; Executive Council, \$5,000; and the President’s Council, \$10,000. But they surpassed that goal when the formation of the Board of Visitors was announced on Oct. 6. Forty-four have signed up. The initial success prompted Brewer to set a goal of 50 members before the end of the fall semester.

“It has the ability to transform a student’s life,” said

See VISITORS on 11

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But he said this is why “a belief in a true moral compass is an essential characteristic of our next speaker.”

“There is no question that the decline of the American family and culture is directly related to a more permissive society enabled by a very large government safety net,” he explained. “In my opinion, the main reason God gave us the family unit was to be able to better survive famine, wars, disease, and other economic disasters, as well as keeping our culture intact and to pass on the Gospel.”

He described declining societal morals combined with big government as leading to a culture spiraling out of control.

“Society becomes more accepting of morally unjust behavior, and government stands ready to prop up people who have so damaged their lives they no longer can support themselves. They have no family to assist them, which in turn leads to enabling self-destructive behavior.”

In the end, such a cultural model leads to national indebtedness that is unsustainable, he said, and it leads to borrowing from future generations. In the United States the national debt exceeds \$19 trillion, with most of growth taking place in the last 15 years. Without “stark, fundamental reforms,” Fleming said our country faces the same fate as the Roman Empire—“national and cultural destruction.”

“My prayer is that God will give members of the House of Representatives the wisdom and insight to elect the right person

for the right reasons to lead us,” he said.

“That this person be a Christ-follower and that he or she leads us by example and by Christian principles every day.

“That he or she is efficacious and efficient in turning Congress from a rubber stamp for ill-advised and often un-Christian policies to one that begins to take leadership in bringing this nation back to God and on its knees in prayer to him.

“Finally, that this nation responds to that leadership and takes its rightful place once again as leader of the world in generosity, morality and standing up against evil rulers in the protection of innocents who suffer under them.”

Congressman Fleming serves on two House committees: Armed Services, and, Natural Resources (for which he serves as chairman of the Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans).

Next year he will celebrate 40 years as a practicing MD.

He and his wife Cindy have been married for 37 years and have four children and three grandchildren.

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TO PLACE INFORMATION IN NOTABLES: Please call (318.449.4345), fax (318.445.8328 or email (philip@baptistmessage.com) your church's event three weeks before the event takes place. Include church's name, date, time, cost, and pastor's name.

ON THE MOVE

- **Jonathan (wife Amy) LeFleur** is the new associate pastor of youth and administration at Mulberry Baptist Church in Houma.
- **Jason (wife Becky) Shawley** is the new associate pastor of students at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Albany.

HOMECOMING

- Colyell Baptist Church, Livingston: **164th Homecoming and Fall Revival**, Oct. 25-28, homecoming, Oct. 25, 10:30 a.m. A covered dish lunch and fellowship will follow the service. Revival, Oct. 25, 6 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, 7 p.m. Speaker: **Lynn Rodrigue**. Music: **Jim Richardson**. Pastor: Bill Holifield.
- Parhams Baptist Church, Jonesville: **Homecoming**, Oct. 25, 11 a.m. Dinner on the grounds will follow the service. Speaker: **Tony Ganey**.
- New Elizabeth Missionary Baptist Church, Shreveport: **40th anniversary celebration**, Oct. 25, 10:30 a.m. The theme for the occasion is, "God's People Laboring in the Building of His Kingdom," Psalm 127:1. Speaker: **Gilbert Ross**. Pastor: Danny R. Mitchell, Jr.
- Eastside Baptist Church, Rayville: **Homecoming**, Nov. 1, 10:30 a.m. Lunch will be served after service. Revival: Nov. 2-4, 6 p.m. **The Crusaders** will be in concert and worship. Pastor: Chris Crawford.
- Woodlawn Baptist Church, Woodlawn: **66th Homecoming Celebration**, Nov. 1, 10 a.m. Speaker: **Ray Shawa**. Music: **Billy Wilson and Margie Nell Walker**. A covered dish lunch will follow the service. A special invitation is extended to all former members, families and friends. Pastor: Richard Louviere.

REVIVAL

- Heflin Baptist Church, Heflin: **Fall Revival**, Oct. 25-28, Sunday 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Monday through Wednesday 6:30 nightly. Evangelist: **David Hanna**. There will be a pizza party for the children on Wednesday evening. Pastor: Ronnie Osborne.
- Calvary Baptist Church, Springhill: **Revival**, Oct. 25-28, Sunday, 6 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, 7 p.m. Evangelist: **Johnny Tucker**. Music: **David Daniels**. Pastor: John David Franklin.
- First Baptist Church, Jonesboro: **Revival**, Nov. 1-4, Sunday morning, 10:30 a.m., 6:30 p.m. nightly. Evangelist: **Alan Miller**. Music: **Russ Givens**. Pastor: Charles Wesley.

LAGNIAPPE

- Acadian Baptist Center, Eunice: **Louisiana Campers on Mission work week**, Nov. 1-6. This is the annual work week at ABC. There will be a variety of projects including painting, sewing, landscaping, construction and remodeling. All skill levels are welcomed. Having an RV is not necessary, ABC has motel-like accommodations. For reservations contact ABC at 337.457.9047 or email at abccamp@abccamp.com or for more information call COM President Keith Brown at 225.926.9410.
- Calvary Baptist Church, Slidell: **Fall Festival**, Oct. 23, 6-8 p.m. Pastor: Aaron

McGuffee.

- Live Oak Baptist Church, Montegut: **Mission Family Night**, Oct. 23, 6 p.m. meal and worship 7 p.m. Pastor: Matthew Chouet.
- New Hope Baptist Church, Independence: **2nd annual Gumbo cook-off and craft fair**, Oct. 24. Pastor: Steven Campbell.
- Cotile Baptist Church, Boyce: **Southern Plainsmen in concert**, Oct. 24, 6 p.m. A love offering will be taken. For more information contact the church at 318.793.8847 or Rhonda at 318.729.0317.
- Watson Baptist Church, Watson: **Fall Festival**, Oct. 25, 5-7 p.m. There will be Trunk or Treat. Kids can wear their family friendly costume (nothing scary please). There will also be a chili cook off, plenty of candy, hot dogs, fun and fellowship. Pastor: John Pemberton.
- Woodland Park Baptist Church, Hammond: **Family Fall Festival**, Oct. 25, 4:30 - 7:30 p.m. Pastor: Scott Thompson.
- Longview Baptist Church, Deville: **Fall Festival**, Oct. 25, 4-7 p.m. There will be a cake walk, games, candy, food, music, a hay ride, and a cook-off. Pastor: Robby Poole.
- First Baptist Church, Jena: **Coats for Kids Gumbo Fundraiser**, Oct. 25, 11 a.m. Pastor: Dominick DiCarlo, Jr.
- Red Bluff Baptist Church, Folsom: **Inaugural Chili and Pie Cook-Off**, Oct. 25, 4-7 p.m. The event will be in conjunction with a family field day and offers plenty to eat and lots of outside activities. Pastor: David Maxwell.
- ABC Pregnancy Center Annual Banquet - **Life Matters**, Oct. 26, 7 p.m. at Treasures of Marilyn's. Tickets: \$65 if purchased before Sept. 30. Speaker: **Voddie Baucham**, one of today's foremost spokesmen for the sanctity of life.
- First Baptist Church, Eunice: First Eunice's Women's Ministry presents Christian recording artist **J.J. Heller in a Plates of Grace event**, Oct. 28, 7 p.m. Finger foods will be served in the Fellowship Hall beginning at 6 p.m. Cost: Free. Pastor: Tim Moffett.
- Trinity Baptist Church, Natchitoches: **Harvest Fest 'Harvesting for Him'**, Oct. 28, 5:30 - 7 p.m. Admission is free. Pastor: Joshua Currie
- Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville: **Hallow Him Family Fall Festival**, Oct. 28, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Plenty of fun, fellowship and candy. Pastor: Philip Robertson.
- First Baptist Church, Lafayette: **Fall Festival**, Oct. 28, 5-7 p.m. This event is for children through the sixth grade. Friends and family are welcomed. In the FBC Lafayette gym and parking lot there will be Trunk-R-Treat, a Bluegrass band, a petting zoo, a photo booth, lots of games, fun jumps, and tons of candy. Food and drink will be available for purchase. For more information, call 337.233.1412 or go online to www.fbclaf.org. Pastor: Steve Horn.
- First Baptist Church, Minden: **Fall Festival**, Oct. 28, 5:30-7:30 p.m. The festival will be held in the Family Life Center gymnasium and parking lot. Free admission, carnival games, inflatables, door prizes (must be present to win), dessert walk, and costume contest. Pastor: Leland Crawford.
- First Baptist Church, Slidell: **Community Fall Festival**, Oct. 28, 5-7 p.m. on the front lawn of the church with food, a cake walk, inflatables, and games

for the whole family. Friendly costumes are welcome. Pastor: Ricky Cummings.

- First Baptist Church, Haynesville: **Trunk or Treat**, Oct. 28. There will be loads of candy, fellowship and fun. Pastor: Shelby Cowling.
- First Baptist Church, Jonesville: **Fall Festival**, Oct. 28, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Pastor: Gary Norris.
- Acadian Baptist Center, Eunice: **ABC Golf Tournament (3-man scramble)**, Oct. 30, 8 a.m. shotgun start. Cost: \$50 per person which includes green fee, golf cart and lunch). For more information call 337.457.9047 or go to www.abccamp.com.
- Pine Grove Baptist Church, Ruby: **Fall Festival**, 6:30-8 p.m. There will be food and fun for the entire family. Please no scary costumes. There will be 10 new games. Win tickets and redeem those tickets for candy and prizes. Pastor: Ken Gilmore.
- Fair Park Baptist Church, West Monroe: **Fall Fun Fest**, Oct. 31, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. in the family ministry building gym. There will be tons of fun for all ages. Big Al concert, Oct. 31, 6 p.m. Doors open at 5 p.m. Cost: Free. Pastor: Waymond Warren.
- First Baptist Church, Sulphur: **Trunk or Treat**, Oct. 31, 5:30 p.m. The event will be held in the FBCC parking lot and is for children from birth to the fifth grade. Come enjoy candy, games and more. For more information, contact Amy Bruce at 337.802.0894. Pastor: Andy Buckley.
- Bethlehem Baptist Church, Albany: **Annual Trunk and Treat**, Oct. 31, 5:30 p.m. Pastor: Joe Dunn.
- Sandy Creek Baptist Church, Pride: **Fall Festival**, Oct. 31, 6-8 p.m. Come join us for fun, games, candy, prizes, food and drinks. Pastor: Jerry Potts.
- First Baptist Church, Vidalia: **Trunk-R-Treat**, Oct. 31, 6-8 p.m. There will be plenty of candy, fun and fellowship. The event will take place in the church's parking lot. Pastor: Bill McCullin.
- First Baptist Church, Pineville: **Halloween Neighborhood Outreach**, Oct. 31, 5:30 p.m. Pastor: Stewart Holloway.
- Bayou Vista Baptist Church, Morgan City: **Fall Festival**, Oct. 31, 5:30-7:30 p.m. There will be lots of candy and small toys for the kids. Pastor: Steven Kelly.
- Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, Independence: **Fall Fest**, Oct. 31, 11 a.m. There will be a country store, lunch and fun for the entire family. An auction begins at 1 p.m. Pastor: Don Bassett.
- Iglesia Cristo Para Todos, Natalbany: **Latino Harvest Festival**, Oct. 31, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the church facility, 15054 Hwy 1064, Natalbany. There will be free food, games, health examinations, dental information, and activities for the children and much more. There will also be information on health plans and Medicaid. Pastor: Ramon Rodriguez.
- First Baptist Church, Covington: **Trunk or Treat**, Oct. 31, 2-5 p.m. with an afternoon of family fun of games, inflatables and treats. For more information, contact Josh Jordan at jjordan@fbccov.org. Pastor: Waylon Bailey.
- Mulberry Baptist Church, Houma: **Community-wide Hallelujah Fest**, Oct. 31, 3-5 p.m. There will be plenty of games, fun popcorn, and candy. Friendly costumes are welcomed and encouraged. Pastor: Jim Meeks.

- Bethel Baptist Church, Colfax: **Camo-themed Harvest Fest**, Oct. 31, 6-8 p.m. Come dressed in your best camo. Special guest: **Mitchell Miles**. There will be gumbo, popcorn, cotton candy, face painting, slides, jumpers, games and prizes. Pastor: Carl Gulde.
- Mandeville Baptist Church, Mandeville: **Trunk or Treat**, Oct. 31, 3-4:30 p.m. Pastor: Ken Schroeder.
- First Baptist Church, DeQuincy: **Light the Night for Jesus**, Oct. 31, 6-9 p.m. Please join us for a lot of fun, food and games. Costumes are welcomed but optional. Pastor: Rob T. Walls.
- Grace Memorial Baptist Church, Slidell: **Trunk or Treat Family Festival**, Oct. 31, 4-6 p.m. in the church parking lot. Pastor: Bob Heustess.
- Thompson Road Baptist Church, Slidell: **Trunk or Treat**, Oct. 31, 5:30-8 p.m. There will be games, a hayride, hot dogs. The theme of this year's event is 'Be a Spark in the Dark!' More information can be obtained by calling the church office at 985.690.6077. Pastor: Randy Boyett.
- Trinity Heights Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Family Fall Festival**, Oct. 31, 5:30-8 p.m. Come join us for our annual family fall festival at the ROC and outside areas. There will be plenty of food, door prizes, and games. We will have a dunking booth, super slide, train rides, fun house maze and tons of candy. Children are encouraged to wear happy costumes. Pastor: Kris Chenier.
- New Beulah Baptist Church, Hammond: **Trunk or Treat**, Oct. 31. Pastor: L.C. Lord.
- First Baptist Church, Many: **Fall Festival**, Oct. 31, 6-8 p.m. Food, fun, fellowship and lots of candy. Pastor: Calvin Phelps.
- First Baptist Church, Tioga: **Trunk or Treat**, Oct. 31, 5 p.m. Fun for the entire family. Pastor: Tim Hisaw.
- First Baptist Church, Jonesboro: **Family Fall Fest**, Oct. 31. Games will begin at 2 p.m. and run until 8 p.m. There will be food and music from 4-8 p.m. The music will be provided by Ode. There will be a concert from 8-10 p.m. in the Family Life Center featuring New Class. Pastor: Charles Wesley.
- Hebron Baptist Church, Denham Springs: **Hebron 2015 Fall Festival**, Nov. 1, 5-7 p.m. There will be plenty of food, fun, games, prizes, age graded costume contests, and more candy hat your kids will know what to do with. Pastor: Danny Mann.
- Mandeville Baptist Church, Mandeville: **Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer**, Nov. 2, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. This special day will feature a guest speaker, special music, special prayer groups, offering with lunch by Mandeville FBC. Please RSVP by Oct. 28 to office@northshortbaptists.net or call 225.567.5086 to make sure to have lunch for everyone. Pastor: Ken Schroeder.
- Don Avenue Baptist Church, Denham Springs: **Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer**, Nov. 2, 7 p.m. All are invited to come to this special event. Pastor: Tom Higginbotham.
- First Baptist Church, Hornbeck: **Fall Festival**, Nov. 4, 6-8 p.m. There will be a chili cookoff, games and much more. Come out and join us for the fun and the fellowship. Pastor: Jack Bell.

Visitors from page 9

Brewer, who saw success with the same model when he was on staff at Charleston Southern University before coming to LC. "Closing the affordability gap - that's the biggest thing this can do for us."

Byron McGee, LC's vice president for institutional advancement, said during his 30 years of experience in the enrollment area of the school, some prospective students were unable to attend because their parents did not have the money needed. With the formation of the Board of Visitors, McGee believes those situations could be less common.

"This is going make a huge difference in our ability to close the deal for students who want to be here, to get that Christian education, to be here for all the right reasons and not have to settle for somewhere else just because of a few hundred dollars," McGee

said. "So again you might not think that extra thousand a year will make a difference. I'm telling you, it's going to make a huge difference in the lives of the students."

Board members will have the opportunity to meet the students who benefit from the scholarships during a luncheon. These donors will "enjoy a meal and fellowship with some of the finest college students on the planet," Brewer said.

Besides donating money for scholarships, Brewer said board members will also provide internship opportunities. Members are involved in such industries as agriculture, banking, education, health care, law agriculture, local government and ministry.

For more information on joining the Board of Visitors, call 318.487.7118.

For rest of the story go to www.baptistmessage.com.

Scripture Crypto

By CHERYL VAUGHN
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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.

y hjvos nvz gyor ecmhoypk mpx gyor jycxsg mpx

gyor rmyc yp mcc ors cmevzuh vd nvzu rmpxh; nso

ns ozupsx pvo ov js, hmyor ors cvux.

rmkkmy ogv:hsaspossp

Clues:
G = W; M = A

Answer to October 10, Scripture Crypto:
Leviticus nine:three

Airline from page 7

“What they hope is when local bodies receive a letter, they bow to the pressure,” said Johnson, a member of First Baptist Church in Bossier City. “But what they’ve done is awakened a sleeping giant. This is not what the ACLU had in mind.”

Bossier Parish Schools released a statement on Sept. 25, acknowledging Superintendent D.C. Machen had received letters from the ACLU and Johnson. He then forwarded them to the school board’s legal counsel for review.

The school board met on Oct. 1 and voted to reject the demands of the ACLU, determining nothing improper happened at Airline High School.

“The Board’s counsel has investigated the allegations raised by the ACLU and found them to be without a factual or legal basis,” according to the school board statement read at the meeting. “At the same time, the Board wishes to publicly reaffirm its intent to operate a successful school district in which equal access is recognized and the legal rights of all students are respected, including those of its students who wish to engage in student-lead, student-initiated religious expression.

“... The Board and its administra-

tion welcome meaningful discussion of this and any issue but will base their decisions on the law and facts as they know them to exist. Decisions in the best interest of our students can never result from threats and intimidation.”

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Soon after news broke about the ACLU sending a letter to Bossier Parish Schools, those in support of Rowland and religious liberty took to social media to voice their opinion.

The Facebook page, *Praying for Airline High School*, announced a prayer rally and organizers estimated that a few thousand students and community members attended the event on Oct. 3.

John Fream, pastor of Cypress Baptist Church in Benton where Rowland is a member, is among those voicing his support for the principal.

“Jason Rowland is a great man of God, who serves our community and our church,” he said in an e-mail to *the Baptist Message*. “He is one of our best Sunday School teachers and is consistently a man of God. The prayer rally came about from God stirring in the hearts of three ladies



Pam Gras photo

Airline High School principal Jason Rowland (center) and state representative Mike Johnson pray with others from the community at a prayer rally at the school earlier in the month. Louisiana’s chapter of the ACLU has accused Rowland and the school of pushing religion.

from our church. It started with about 10 people gathering to pray and through social media has grown to hundreds, probably thousands to come together on Saturday at Airline High School to pray. Mostly, Christians are just tired of having our rights

stomped on and we want to stand in the gap as we seek God and support Jason Rowland.”

The incident is the second this year regarding religious freedom in a Shreveport-Bossier City public school.

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