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– Proverbs 13:13 (TLB)

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January 12, 2017

‘Tis the season for soul-winning for SBC president

BY WILL HALL
Message Editor

MEMPHIS, Tenn. – While Christmas means a lot of things to a lot of people, the president of the Southern Baptist Convention sees it as an opportunity to put the exclamation point in “Jesus is the reason for the season!” by soul-winning, and this year that means 400 new believers are professing “Jesus is Lord!” because of a Christmas program.

Steve Gaines, pastor of the historic Bellevue Baptist Church in the Cordova area of Memphis, Tenn., is quick to credit others, with special praise for the tradition of soul-winning at his congregation to the leadership of former long-time pastor Adrian Rogers, as well as the vision for the presentation of the “Singing Christmas Tree” to former music minister James Whitmire.

Still, under Gaines’ leadership this flagship congregation continues to use every opportunity, especially Christmas, to reach others for Christ, and the evidence is in the results.

During 2015, the church averaged more than 7,000 in worship attendance and witnessed almost 600 baptisms – that is a per capita average of one baptism resulting for every 12 people who are active attenders (or 12:1). For the Southern Baptist Convention, the ratio is about 19:1 for established churches and even SBC church plants only achieve a

See SOUL WINNING on 6



Bellevue Baptist Church photo

Soul-winning Christmas results in New Years Day baptisms. Steve Gaines, SBC president and pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn., expresses joy following one of 50 baptisms he performed Jan. 1. Gaines hopes to re-invigorate soul winning as “the main thing” among Southern Baptists.

Thousands expected for Life marches

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

Louisianans will have the opportunity to celebrate the lives of children in the womb and their mothers during marches scheduled during three consecutive weekends in some of the state’s larger metropolitan areas.

Scheduled for Jan. 21 in Baton Rouge, Jan. 28 in Shreveport/Bossier City and Feb. 4 in Alexandria/Pineville, the Louisiana Life Marches are a chance for people of different denominations, ages, ethnicities and races to come together across lines that might normally separate them to unite in prayer and in the effort to push back on the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade* that legalized abortion in 1973.

The theme for this year’s marches is “Protect Them Both.”

According to the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, preliminary numbers for 2015 show 9,311 abortions took place, an average of 26 per day. The total represents a 10 percent decrease from the 10,211 abortions performed in 2014. That figure also is the lowest number of abortions performed in the state since 2012, when 9,225 were reported.

Louisiana Right to Life Executive Director Benjamin Clapper said he and other

See MARCH on 9

Wall Street Journal, National Public Radio expose SBC rift caused by ERLC’s Moore

BY WILL HALL
Message Editor

ALEXANDRIA – In a surprise development, two prominent national news outlets have investigated the turmoil created by a Southern Baptist leader because of his relentless attacks against fellow evangelicals who chose to support Donald Trump during the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign.

The Wall Street Journal

and National Public Radio published separate election post-mortem investigations into the 45-year-old Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, who has made himself a high-visibility figure during the presidential campaign with his inflammatory social media posts and much-publicized

See MOORE on 2



Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

Moore from page one

editorials against evangelicals printed by the liberal *New York Times* and *Washington Post*.

For his part, Moore posted an online article – the same day the *Wall Street Journal* article was released – titled “Election Year Thoughts at Christmas-time,” giving his advice about

how to “move forward” after a “divisive election.” Moreover, he appeared, at least at one point, to recast the imbroglio among Southern Baptists as a situation of others taking aim at him.

“Over the last month, there have been some pointed conversations in my denominational family about the election and the way forward, and some of them have been directed at me,” Moore wrote.

GRIEVANCES AIRED

Former SBC president, Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas, told the *Wall Street Journal* his congregation is “considering making major changes in our support of the Southern Baptist Convention,” citing Moore’s “disrespectfulness towards Southern Baptists and other evangelical leaders, past and present.”

These sentiments were echoed by William F. Harrell, former chairman of the SBC Executive Committee in Nashville, and retired pastor of Abilene Baptist Church in the

greater Augusta, Georgia, area.

Harrell lamented Moore’s condescending attacks on “the Southern Baptist people” just because many of them did not agree with Moore. He suggested the ERLC needs to change drastically or be eliminated, saying Moore should not continue to head the entity for Southern Baptists unless Moore starts to “simply represent the Southern Baptist people in Washington.”

Moreover, Harrell’s former church of 30 years is considering punitive action.

Brad Whitt, who now leads Abilene Baptist, told the *Wall Street Journal* the congregation is weighing whether to withhold its funds from supporting the ERLC.

Robert Jeffress, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, said his congregation also is considering “the wisest expenditure of its dollars,” and emphasized his deacons are “very concerned about the direction of the ERLC.”

“They do not believe it represents our church’s beliefs,” he said.

The National Public Radio report added to this chorus of concerns voiced by former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee

and Christian radio broadcaster Janet Mefferd about Moore’s bitterness toward fellow Christians.

Mefferd told NPR Moore was off base to accuse evangelical Trump supporters of “selling out their principles.”

Huckabee, a Southern Baptist pastor who also served as president of the Arkansas State Baptist Convention, was more abrupt about the harshness Moore directed at others in his own denomination.

“I am utterly stunned that Russell Moore is being paid by Southern Baptists to insult them,” Huckabee told NPR.

WHAT MOORE SAYS NOW

Introducing his Christmas-time reflections, Moore asked two questions for context:

-- “What does a family Christmas look like after a divisive election?”

-- “[A]s Christians, how should we move forward in this Christmas season and beyond?”

Urging readers to “try to see where there are misunderstandings,” Moore said he had not “been clear” in what he was saying and not saying the past year.

“I remember one situation where I witnessed a handful of Christian political operatives excusing immorality and confusing the definition of the gospel. I was pointed in my criticisms, and felt like I ought to have been. But there were also pastors and friends who told me when they read my comments they thought I was criticizing anyone who voted for Donald Trump.” Moore explained. “I told them then,

and I would tell anyone now: if that’s what you heard me say, that was not at all my intention, and I apologize.”

Moore also now instructs others to “have empathy for one another” and to remember “as Christians we are called to honor everyone (1 Peter 2:17), and we ought to take the time to understand and not caricature one another.”

WHAT MOORE SAID THEN

Moore’s new kinder and gentler perspective belies the exceptionally caustic tone he took during the campaign. Moreover, public records call into question his narrow recall of just “one situation” when he criticized only “a handful of political operatives”:

-- In a September 2015 editorial, “Have evangelicals who support Trump lost their values?” printed in the *New York Times*, Moore called evangelicals’ support for Trump “illogical” and declared “these voters must repudiate everything they believe.”

-- During a January 2016 student convocation at Liberty University, while Trump spoke, Moore tweeted a stream of negative comments, concluding that “Evangelicals can love a golden calf as long as Aaron promises to make Mexico pay for it” – an apparent reference to Trump’s plan to secure the U.S. southern border. Afterward, Moore took a swipe at Trump supporters in general, tweeting, “This is unofficial, I know, but Trump is apparently winning HUGE in the demo-

See MOORE on 7



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MARSHALL: 'Greatest Commandment' revival is on the horizon

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

RUSTON – K. Marshall Williams, Sr. believes a “Greatest Commandment” revival is on the horizon and he is hoping many Christians join him in fasting and praying for it to take place.

Referring to Matthew 22:37-40, Williams, pastor of the Nazarene Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Pa., said he is praying “every blood-bought believer” would be inspired by the power of the Holy Spirit “to model unconditional love, humility, brokenness with radiant obedience to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.”

He said this “will bring inexplicable unity in the Body of Christ” which is key to “revival of evangelism and discipleship in the Church and a spiritual awakening in the land.”

Since answering the call to ministry 38 years ago, evangelism has been at the heart of his ministry, Wil-

liams said.

After graduating from Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minn., in 1978, Williams said he joined Sports Ambassadors, a basketball evangelism ministry team, and toured the Philippines, Hong Kong, Tokyo and five countries in Africa, using sports as a platform to share Christ. When he returned to the U.S., he enrolled at Palmer Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pa., where he served as an adjunct chaplain and Bible expositor for the Philadelphia Phillies, Eagles and 76ers. After earning his degree, he was called as the sixth pastor of the now 120 year old Nazarene Baptist Church.

During his tenure, Nazarene Baptist Church has completed a \$3.2 million building expansion on its campus, a Parking and Community Beautification Project and now has set out to transform a 93-acre campground near the church into a multi-service Christian

camping and conference center, he said. Moreover, the congregation has remained active in evangelism through such efforts as a community Thanksgiving service and dinner, handing out gifts to children whose parents are incarcerated, training members in sharing the Gospel and participating in the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association’s My Hope outreach in November 2013.

“We are committed to evangelism as a way of life and intentional discipleship because of the call by our Christ to the Great Commission,” he said.

Williams also is active in the community, serving as director of community outreach for Germantown Academy of Fort Washington, Pa., and as a founding trustee of the Community Partnership School in North Philadelphia, he said.

Likewise, he is active in Southern Baptist life.

He served as president

of the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania and South Jersey in 2006 and 2007, was president of the State Convention Presidents Fellowship in 2008 and was elected as president of the National African-American Fellowship of the SBC in 2014 and 2015.

Williams and his wife, the former Constance L. Jones, have three children and one grandchild.

Williams will share more about his passion for evangelism during his message at the upcoming Louisiana Baptist Convention Evangelism Conference, Jan. 23-24 at Temple Baptist Church in Ruston. For more information about attending the 2017 Louisiana Baptists ECON, visit <https://louisianabaptists.org/event/ECON2017>.

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Waldrep to 'serve up' hope at senior adult luncheon

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

DECATUR, Ala. – Phil Waldrep, a long-time evangelist who has offered the hope of the Gospel to thousands of the lost, has a message of hope for the faithful who are experiencing life crises as parents and grandparents with prodigal children or grandchildren.

“All is not lost,” Waldrep contends. He is the author

of “Reaching Your Prodigal: What Did I Do Wrong? What Do I do Now?”

Moreover, Waldrep told the *Baptist Message* believers should be excited, regardless of the circumstances.

He said he will explain “why” to people at the Senior Adult Luncheon, Jan. 24, during the 2017

Louisiana Baptists Evangelism

Conference (ECON) Jan. 23-24 at Temple Baptist Church in Ruston.



Phil Waldrep

He also will speak during one of the sessions scheduled during the two-day evangelism training event.

“They will leave there with a skip in their step, knowing how vital they are and to be encouraged, not discouraged,” he said.

“I am more encouraged today than ever before,” Waldrep said. “I think we live in an unprecedented age that we can share the Gospel. More than any time in our history people are asking basic questions of ‘Why am I here?’, ‘Where do I come from?’ and ‘Where am I going?’

“As believers, we have the answers for these seekers,” he continued. “That’s the heart of evangelism.

“My goal is to assure Louisiana Baptists our best days are ahead,” he said. “We shouldn’t hang our heads but lift them – because the fields are white for the harvest.”

A native of Decatur, Ala., Waldrep began preaching at age 14. Six years later, in 1980, he and his wife, Debbie, started the Phil Waldrep Evangelistic Association.

He began preaching for revivals, many times before groups of only 10-50 people. Today, he organizes at least 20 pastor’s retreats and conferences every year, reaching nearly 100,000 people annually.

Waldrep and his wife also

are involved with church planting in New England and recently were honored for their work with the Robert H. Brindle Award for Church Planting Excellence. The award is given by the Baptist Convention of New England for a person or church that represents commitment and dedication to multiplying new churches and extending the kingdom of God.

Last year, 450 pastors and spouses attended the Waldreps’ New England Pastor’s Encouragement Retreat.

“If there is one thing I want to do, I want to use whatever the platform the Lord gives me to focus the attention of people in areas where there is a need and I feel like I can make a difference,” he said.

Tickets for the Senior Adult Luncheon may be purchased for \$12 by Jan. 16 at <https://louisianabaptists.org/ECONLuncheon>.

For more information about the 2017 Evangelism Conference, visit <https://louisianabaptists.org/event/ECON2017>.

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Sharing the Gospel made simple

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

LAFAYETTE – Sharing the Gospel with a stranger is as simple as starting a conversation about sweet tea and ending with an invitation to accept Christ.

During a session of the Youth Evangelism Celebration, Nov. 21, keynote speaker Ed Newton shared with nearly 6,000 students a “conversational” method for witnessing to their friends and others.

Newton said it is simply a matter of starting the conversation, finding something in common with that person, then looking for an opportunity to turn the discussion to Christ.

He said something as simple as a comment about sweet tea can lead to a chance to share about Him.

But, he underscored, the conversation must be authentic, and he said, you have to be intentional about asking some key questions, like: “What do you think it takes to go to Heaven?” “Do you mind if I tell you how the Bible answers this question?” and “Would you like to give your life to Jesus right now?”

“Right there at that sweet tea fountain machine, you can lead somebody to Jesus Christ, calling on the name above all names, right there in that divine appointment,” said Newton, pastor of Community Bible Church in San Antonio, Texas. “Could we live life that way? Could we live life on mission speaking of Jesus?”

Newton’s simple strategy for evangelism also included an invitation for the youth to bring a friend to an event for teens and collegians during the 2017 Louisiana Baptist Evangelism Conference at Temple Baptist Church in Ruston Jan. 23-24.

Students will gather at 5:30 p.m. inside the church family life center for a pizza party and entertainment.

Organizers are encouraging churches around the state to host simultaneous similar events and stream the live Internet broadcast of Newton’s message — to broaden the geographic reach of this initial event.

The event will kick off the Harvest initiative, a statewide campaign to engage 700 Louisiana Baptist churches to “pray for every home and share Christ with every per-

son” in Louisiana.

“We are excited about this event,” said Steve Maltempi, youth strategist for Louisiana Baptists. “We want to see a great Harvest.

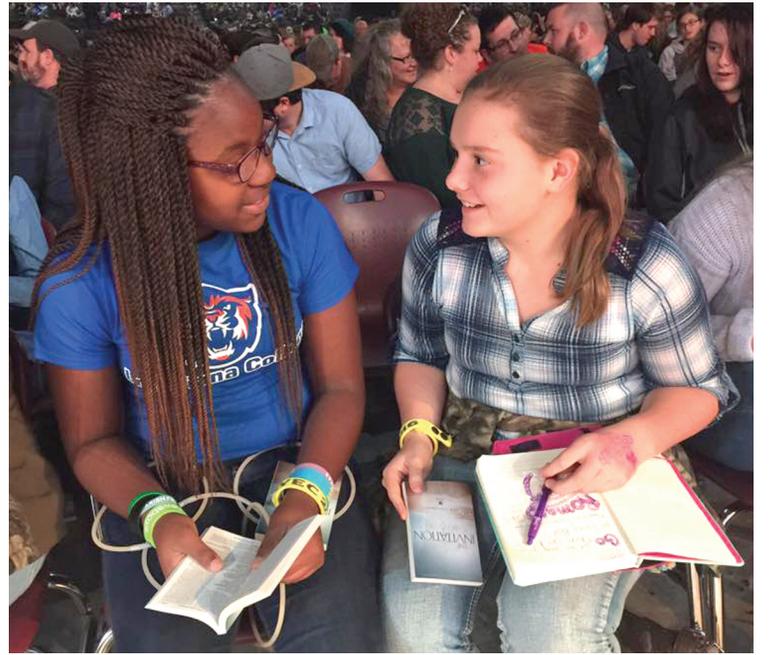
“Our goal is to reach every single person in the state with the Gospel,” he continued. “That includes every teenager and we need your help to do that.”

PRACTICE ENCOURAGED

Though sharing about Jesus might seem intimidating at first, Newton said, with a little practice, anyone can become seasoned and over time lead many to a relationship with Him.

Newton encouraged the

See **SHARING** on 9



Brian Blackwell photo

Ed Newton shared with nearly 6,000 students at the 2016 Youth Evangelism Conference in Lafayette a “conversational” method for witnessing to their friends and others. Students had the opportunity to practice Newton’s ‘conversational’ technique in groups of two and were encouraged to bring a friend to an event for teens and collegians during the 2017 Louisiana Baptist Evangelism Conference at Temple Baptist Church in Ruston.

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Elaine Hodge Marze

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As a married couple, we were a team. He had my back, and I had his. Now there is a huge void, and all the uncomfortable platitudes voiced by relatives and friends can not convince me that “Everything is going to be alright.” With the peace and comfort that comes from God, I might survive, but after being married for decades, it is foolishness to expect a new widow to “Just move on.” It takes someone who has walked in these shoes to understand the dark place that is currently mine and so many other widows and widowers.



Elaine Hodge Marze, mother of two, and grandmother of five, is also the author of *Hello, Darling*, a book of humor and faith about the battle with cancer fought by her husband.

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Soul Winning from page one

14:1 relationship (The smaller the proportion, the better. It means it takes fewer members to reach more lost people).

Moreover, Gaines is adamant about engaging the new believer for discipleship.

"We really try to 'conserve the fruit,'" Gaines told the *Baptist Message*.

He used the "Singing Christmas Tree" outreach as an example.

"I share the Gospel at the end

and lead them in a time of prayer and decision making. Then I tell them we have two gifts for them, a new Bible and a booklet, 'Now That You're Saved.'"

"It tells them the main things they need to do, now that they've given their hearts to Christ," Gaines said, describing the resource as an outline of the basic spiritual disciplines of prayer, Bible study, worship and such.

The gifts are distributed at several tents where spiritual

counselors engage the new believers and begin the process of involving them in discipleship, which results in many of the converts being baptized.

Mark Blair, the minister of music who now directs the "Singing Christmas Tree" evangelism event, said the effort is very thorough.

"We have a team of people who follow up with every person who made any kind of decision," he said. "The information is shared with Life Group leaders and ministers, and every contact is followed up on in the next week."

Gaines said they now use this same system at Easter with great results, saying the unusual circumstances of these special services drives the process.

He said in both cases "most lost people come with family or with friends. So they don't really have the ability or the luxury of staying behind and talking a long time that particular time."

"We'll have 200 or 300 people get saved every Easter," he continued, "where before we were seeing three or four, maybe 10 at the most get saved."

Blair said one of the special aspects of the "Singing

Christmas Tree" effort is that it involves nearly 500 students from 4th grade through college – a signature aspect of Whitmire's former leadership.

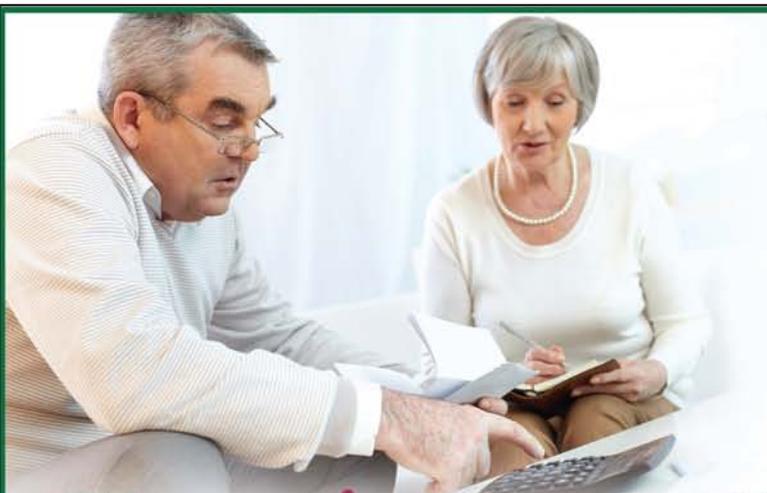
Blair said what is special about these young people is the spiritual focus they embrace, starting with rehearsals which begin as early as August.

"We talk about it every rehearsal," Blair said. "In some way, in every rehearsal from Labor Day forward, we're talking about the 'why' and not the 'what.' We talk about inviting unchurched people."

Gaines said that is the DNA of Bellevue Baptist.

"I don't care what it is – funeral or wedding – we are reaching out to the lost," he said.

See SOUL WINNING on 8



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Lani Arnold

Lani Arnold retired as Admissions Director for a long term care facility after 20 plus years in the business where she witnessed first-hand the financial and emotional devastation when a loved one is admitted to a nursing home.

"I listened to spouse's fears of not having enough money to live on while paying for a nursing home and how these couples had saved all their lives for retirement with hopes of leaving their children an inheritance," Lani says. These situations led Lani to investigate how she could help people protect their assets when a loved one went into a nursing home.

"I attended a S.A.F.E. Planning seminar and I talked with families who had used S.A.F.E. Planning's services to see if they were happy with the outcome," Lani explains. "I also visited with both Steve and Blake Rainey on numerous occasions to make sure they too had a passion for the elderly. I needed to be sure their concern was more about people than profit. I called the Medicaid office and spoke to my case manager and made sure everything that the Rainey's had told me was legal and above board. I had to feel comfortable referring S.A.F.E. Planning to my client-families because my reputation was on the line too."

"I don't recommend a service that I have not investigated and know it is a safe and secure company. Senior adults need protection. They deserve protection. They have earned that right. I can honestly say Steve and Blake Rainey, along with Ric Cochran, have their clients' best interests at heart. I've witnessed these guys go above and beyond for families, and I highly recommend their services. They will walk the family through the Medicaid process and fill out all the lengthy forms. They will fight for your rights and protect as much of your assets as legally possible."

Lani and her husband, Larry, attend Calvary Baptist Church in Shreveport, LA.



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Moore from page 2

graphic of folks with eggs or cats as their Twitter avatars.”

-- In a January 2016 article in *Roll Call*, a Washington, D.C., newspaper that covers politics in the nation’s capital, Moore declared his disdain for Trump’s (and ostensibly Cruz’s) evangelical supporters, saying, “Ted Cruz is leading in the ‘Jerry Falwell’ wing, Marco Rubio is leading the ‘Billy Graham’ wing and Trump is leading the ‘Jimmy Swaggart’ wing.”

-- In a February 2016 opinion piece published in the *Washington Post*, Moore said “this election makes me hate the word ‘evangelical,’” asserting that self-identified evangelicals (by implication Trump supporters) “may well be drunk right now, and haven’t been into a church since someone invited them to Vacation Bible School sometime back when Seinfeld was in first-run episodes.”

-- Moore also publicly criticized about 1,000 evangelical leaders who met with Trump in New York City for what organizers called “a dialog” to address concerns about his

candidacy. Attendees included such prominent Southern Baptists as newly-elected SBC President Steve Gaines, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., and Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council and interim pastor of Greenwell Springs Baptist Church, Greenwell Springs, La. Moore’s assault against participants prompted an open letter from Jerry Vines and Jimmy Draper, two of four former SBC presidents who also were present at the June 2016 event. They made it clear they did not endorse Trump, and without mentioning Moore by name, cautioned individuals against engaging in “a carnage of intemperate words” about participants at the gathering and they urged Christians to be careful to speak truth to one another “in love.”

-- His vitriol hit a crescendo in an October 10 article he penned in the *Washington Post*, condemning those who disagreed with him as “the old-school political Religious Right establishment.” Saying there is good news “regard-

less of how this election turns out,” Moore wrote “the next evangelical generation” (Moore is on the board of The Gospel Coalition, which appeals to millennial neo-Calvinists) “rejects their way.” Painting the latter group as “younger, multiethnic, gospel-centered Christians,” he caricatured the former group as “doctrinally vacuous,” implying they longed for “a lost regime of nominal, cultural ‘Christian America.’”

WHAT SUPPORTERS SAY

But, Moore has his defenders – a mixed group of Democrats, neo-Calvinists (sometimes referred to as the “Young, Restless and Reformed”), Christian liberals, supporters of the “new establishment” in the SBC, and, still others who agree with Moore on his positions about social issues.

-- Rachel Held Evans, a liberal Christian blogger who “left” evangelicalism for the Episcopal Church, in part to celebrate “the inclusion of LGBT people,” defended Moore as “no liberal,” adding “He just doesn’t think racism, sexual assault & lying is ok as long as a Republican does it.”

-- Dwight McKissic, pastor

of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, and an African American leader who condemned President Obama in 2012 for his endorsement of same-sex marriage, told NPR he supported Moore for his stance on police brutality. “If they succeed in ousting Russell Moore, effectively we have become the Trump Baptist Convention,” he said.

-- Baptist Press, the news service of the Southern Baptist Convention, posted an open letter Dec. 21 by three Reformed theology personas: Jonathan Akin, pastor, Fairview Church, Lebanon, Tenn.; Nathan Finn, dean, School of Theology and Missions, Union University, Jackson, Tenn.; and Micah Fries, pastor, Brainerd Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tenn. According to BP, the three men, who described themselves as “younger Southern Baptist ministers who haven’t reached the age of forty,” called for “the [conservative] resurgence generation and their protégés” to “be the statesmen we need them to be in this season of denominational tension.” Indicating the “backlash against Moore”

(representative of other fissures in cooperation) was a concern “shared by many of our generational peers,” they lamented “that these tensions could lead to division.”

-- Ten Louisiana Baptists

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Moore from page 7

signed a letter of support for Moore: Fred Luter, Jr., pastor, Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans; David Crosby, pastor, First Baptist Church, New Orleans; Mike Miller, former pastor, First Baptist Church, Kenner; Geovanny Gomez, pastor, La Viña Spanish Baptist Church; Larry Johnson, Crossroads Community Church, Kenner; Chad Gilbert, pastor, Edgewater Baptist Church; Page Brooks, pastor, Canal Street Church; Anna Palmer, Crossroads NOLA; Jay Adkins, pastor, First Baptist Church, Westwego; and Jack Hunter, executive director, New Orleans Baptist Association. Calling Moore “a prophetic voice” and comparing him to Martin Luther King, Jr., the group lauded Moore as “a zealous advocate on behalf of the unborn, the family, the

vulnerable, the weak, and the strangers among us, and vigorous in his defense of religious liberty and against racism.” Conceding that “Moore’s tone ... hasn’t always been as statesmanlike as perhaps it could have been,” they expressed satisfaction with Moore’s “apology” contained “in his Christmas letter.”

A QUESTION REMAINS

Despite Moore’s castigation of Southern Baptists and other evangelicals, Albert Mohler, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., vouchsafed for Moore’s “love for the Southern Baptist Convention.”

Telling the Wall Street Journal he knows Moore’s heart and character, Mohler expressed confidence in Moore’s “ability to serve all Southern Baptists as president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty

Commission.”

But others say – attacks on them aside – that the ERLC president was so severe toward Trump since September 2015 as to make himself ineffective as an advocate for Southern Baptists with the incoming White House administration. After eight months of constant public character assaults against Trump, Moore finally caught the candidate’s attention in May 2016, eliciting a tweet from Trump who called Moore “a truly terrible representative of Evangelicals and all of the good they stand for. A nasty guy with no heart!”

“He’s going to have no access, basically, to President Trump,” Graham told the *Wall Street Journal*, with Whitt offering a similar belief.

Regardless, the controversy has grown beyond expressions of concern about Moore’s aggressive behavior toward fellow Southern Baptists – whether in exposés by secular news outlets or on SBC web forums populated with competing views on the matter.

While ERLC trustees and the SBC Executive Committee have yet to address the maelstrom that has developed, one state convention has been asked to look into the matter.

During the Louisiana Baptist Convention annual meeting in November, church messengers referred a motion to the

state executive board to study the recent actions of the ERLC.

David Hankins, executive director of this fellowship of about 1,650 churches, explained the matter to the *Wall Street Journal* in terms of Louisiana Baptist pastors’ “frustration” with Moore – growing concerns about policy positions Moore has stated and not just his lack of civility during the presidential election.

Hankins elaborated to the *Baptist Message*, saying, “Our people have raised issues about Dr. Moore’s support for building a mosque in New Jersey and his suggestion that judges like Roy Moore in

Alabama should resign and protest as citizens rather than oppose gay marriage from the bench after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down voter-approved protections for traditional marriage in 26 states.”

Hankins told the *Wall Street Journal* these kinds of positions put Moore in “disagreement with a large majority of his constituents.” The executive board still is considering its next steps, he added, and churches are, too.

“I’m not aware of any churches that have pulled funding yet, but I’m aware some have said they’re going to,” Hankins said. “People are mulling their options.”

Soul Winning from page 6

“We don’t do anything without sharing the Gospel. It is just part of who we are.

He wants the same thing for the Southern Baptist Convention.

“I can’t make anybody do anything,” he said. “But, I can lead by example and inspire people.

“People are going to Hell and we don’t have time not to make sharing the Gospel the main thing.”

Gaines closed his conversation with the *Baptist Message* by giving an example of the results of Bellevue’s emphasis

on soul-winning at Christmas.

“A family came up to me this year and shared they were from somewhere in New Jersey,” he recalled.

“The wife told me, ‘We came down here two years ago and my husband prayed and asked Christ to come into his life, and I want you to know he’s a brand new man.’”

The best part, Gaines said is that now the wife is saved, too.

“‘We both were baptized,’ she told me, ‘and now we are in church.’”

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Brian Blackwell photo

New Testament Bibles were distributed to students Nov. 21, 2016, as they entered the Cajundome in Lafayette for the Youth Evangelism Celebration. They were encouraged to give one to a friend and share Jesus.

Sharing from page 5

students to see every conversation they have with someone as a divine appointment to share the Good News.

“You’ll never know the impact and the effect of you being a witness for the person of Jesus Christ,” Newton said. “God has called you, ordained you, and divinely destined you to open your mouth and to share the message of Jesus.”

Several times during his

message, Newton allowed the students to practice this “conversational” technique in groups of two. He also taught them essential Scriptures in Romans to help them understand the doctrine of salvation they would be sharing.

For more information about the Harvest student outreach event, visit <http://labaptistyouth.com/harvest-students/>.

March from page one

march organizers wanted to remind those in the state that the pro-life movement is not just about protecting the unborn but also offering mothers considering an abortion an alternative, such as crisis pregnancy centers.

“As a pro-life movement we not only need to do what we can to protect the unborn but we have to offer the support to the mothers who may be facing a very difficult decision,” Clapper said. “In a society such as ours where abortion is legal, it’s the mother making the choices that will impact lives.”

“We want to let them know that we are here for them and let them know there are alternatives to abortion,” he said. “We need to educate people that our pregnancy care centers and adoption resources are available.”

All three events, which include opening and closing activities, are scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. and last until noon.

The march in Shreveport/Bossier City will start at the Boardwalk area in Bossier City, crossing over a bridge before ending in Shreveport’s Festival Plaza.

In Baton Rouge, the march will begin at the Old State

Capitol building and end at the current State Capitol building.

In Central Louisiana, the march will begin at Louisiana College in Pineville and end at the amphitheater in downtown Alexandria.

Speakers named, so far, include newly-elected U.S. Rep. Mike Johnson, a member of First Baptist Church in Bossier City, and Katrina Jackson, a state representative who authored legislation that requires admitting privileges for doctors who perform abortions. Johnson and Jackson will speak at the Shreveport/Bossier event, and Jackson will speak at Baton

Rouge as well.

Sponsors include Louisiana Right to Life, Louisiana Baptist Convention, Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops, United Pentecostal Church of Louisiana, Louisiana Family Forum, the Knights of Columbus, Baton Rouge Right to Life, Caring to Love Ministries, Ark-La-Tex Crisis Pregnancy Center, Northwest Louisiana Baptist Association, Louisiana College and Louisiana’s Concerned Women for America.

For more information on the Louisiana Life March, visit LALifeMarch.com or call 866-463-5433.

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For Give A Gift information, rules and a link to on-line submission, go to: www.baptistmessage.com/give-a-gift/

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For information, contact Susan Clark at 318.343.2244 or sclark@lbch.org

ON THE MOVE

■ **Kyle, wife Rachel, Pieri** is the new pastor at White Castle Baptist Church, White Castle.

■ **Mickey Alexander** is the new pastor of Cedar Baptist Church, Archibald.

■ **Andrew Voss** has resigned as pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church, Franklinton.

■ **David Barnard** is the new worship leader at Philadelphia Baptist Church Horseshoe Drive, Alexandria.

■ **David Montgomery** has resigned as music minister at First Baptist Church, Livingston.

■ **Gary Johnson** is the new pastor at Waller Baptist Church, Bossier City.

■ **Roy Davis** has resigned as pastor of North Shreve Baptist Church, Shreveport.

■ **Jason Frazier** has resigned as pastor of Woodland Hills Baptist Church, Shreveport.

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

■ **Howard Cole** is the interim pastor at Kingston Road Baptist Church, Shreveport.

■ **Rick Carter** was licensed to the ministry in November by his father Pastor Paul Carter at Conway Baptist Church, Farmerville.

REVIVAL

■ Washington Baptist Church, Washington: **Revival**, Jan. 13-15, 6:30 p.m. nightly. Evangelist: **Lyndon Longoria**. Music: **Brad Mount**. Pastor: Louis Charrier.

LAGNIAPPE

■ Calvary Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Price Harris' 25th annual Night of Praise**, Jan. 13, 6 p.m. Worship: Harris, the Allen Family, Branded, Aaron Wilburn and Johnny Parrack. Cost: Free. A love offering will be taken to help fund mission projects. Pastor: John Lary.

■ Oak Ridge Baptist Church, Oak Ridge: **The Sanctuary Quartet**, Jan. 15, 10:45 a.m.

Pastor: Eddie Davis

■ Camp Living Waters, Loranger: **BRAVE – Preteen Retreat**, Jan. 15-16. Cost: \$50 per person. Camp Pastor: Corey Olivier. Fifth and sixth graders are invited to attend a weekend of Bible study, games, s'mores and fun. For more information, email clw@camplivingwaters.net or call 985.345.1831.

■ Unity Baptist Church, Oak Grove: **The Sanctuary Quartet**, Jan. 15, 6 p.m. Pastor: J. Kelly Coleman

■ First Baptist Church, Covington: **Adults 55+ Winter Celebration**, Jan. 17, 9 a.m. – noon. Cost: \$10 (payable at the door/lunch included). Seating is limited and reservations are required. Join the Young at Heart group for their 31st anniversary celebration featuring gospel singer Ben Waites and comedian Lee Bayless with lots of door prizes, refreshments, music, laughter and wonderful fellowship. To register go online at fbccov.org/ministries/adults-55 or by calling the church office at 985.892-2149. The deadline to register or cancel is Jan. 11, 4 p.m. Pastor: Waylon Bailey.

■ Taylor Baptist Church, Taylor: **Annual Wild Game Supper**, Jan. 20, 7 p.m. Bring you favorite wild game dish. Pastor: Jimmy Eppinette.

■ Bayou Vista Baptist Church, Morgan City: **Gulf Coast Association annual Wild Game dinner**, Jan. 21, 6 p.m. Cost: \$10. Pastor: Steven Kelley.

■ First Baptist Church, Minden: **Wild Game dinner**, Jan. 24, 6:30 p.m. in The Family Life Center. Everyone is invited to bring their favorite game dish and enjoy an evening of fellowship and fun. Pastor: Leland Crawford.

■ First Baptist Church, Haughton: **Shine 2017 Kickoff event for Women's Ministry**, Jan. 27, 6:30 p.m. Speaker: Jinny Henson. She and her husband John co-authored the book "Maggie Lee for Good" following Maggie Lee's tragic death in a church bus accident in 2009. Cost: Free. For more information, email women@fbchaughton.org or call

757.788.9537. Pastor: Gevan Spinney.

■ First Baptist Church, Bossier City: **PLACE Conference**, Jan. 27-28, Friday, 6-9:30 p.m.; Saturday, 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Speaker: Jay McSwain. This conference will equip church leaders in volunteer ministry placement, personal discovery, coaching and connecting. For more information, call First Bossier at 318.746.7940. Pastor: Brad Jurkovich.

■ Summer Grove Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Northwest Louisiana Baptist Association Call to Prayer II**, Jan. 29, 6 p.m. Praying for the lost, missionaries, families, our community, state, and country, repentance, revival, and much more. DOM: Lane Moore.

IN REMEMBRANCE

■ **Dwayne Smith**, 57, passed away Dec. 20. Pastor of First Baptist Church, Basile for the past nine years, he loved the people of Basile and especially if he could lead someone to the Lord. He loved camping but most of all

he loved his family. He is survived by his wife of 35 years, Patricia B. Smith of Basile; two sons, Billy Smith of Basile and Michael Smith and wife, Sara of Pineville; sisters, Faye Fontenot and husband, Lester of Basile, Shirleen Francois and husband, Craig of Evangeline, Elisa LaFleur and husband, Donald of Elton and Ruth Horn and husband, Doug of Moss Bluff; granddaughter, Gracie Ann; brother-in-law to Myrtle Meaux of Texas, Ralland Boone of Butte La Rose, Diana Belfour and husband, Lee of Eunice and Charles Boone of Prairieville. He is preceded in death by his son, Owen Smith; and his parents, William and Willa Mae Bellon Smith; and a sister, Billie Pennington.

■ **Guy Gerald "Jerry" Waldron Sr.**, 79, passed away December 3, 2016. Born Dec. 30, 1936 to Guy and Reeda Waldron, he graduated from Haynesville High School and Louisiana Tech University, where he earned degrees in chemical engineering and business. He worked for 40 years as a chemical engineer until his retirement. During that

time, he also served his community and his beloved First Baptist Church, Haynesville through various ministries. He served 22 years as a member of the Claiborne Parish School Board. For the last 12 years up to the time of his death, he served as the minister of music at FBC Haynesville. He had such a passion for church and his choir. From coaching sports, to teaching Sunday School, to leading youth groups, to leading worship, Jerry had a burden for souls and wanted everyone he met to be with him in Heaven one day. Jerry is survived by his wife of 57 years, Betty Dubberly Waldron; three children, Guy Waldron, Jr., Greg Waldron and his wife April, and Susan Woods and her husband David; 11 grandchildren, Cody, Madison, Mason, Hayden, Brady, Brandon, Leyton, Lincoln, Emma, Sophia, and Casey; his sister's daughter, Jennifer Garner Fowler, her husband Jay, and daughter Reeda Kate; and numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and his sister, Linda Waldron Garner.

LACOSBE wishes everyone

a blessed New Year

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you, and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.
Jeremiah 29:11

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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.

kl cbg adq gzjsw sizjwsgdipj, dq gzj cbwv

pbrrdivjv kl gzj zdiv bu rbjq, ubw gzj isij gwskjq,

div ubw gzj zdcu gwskj.

obqzxd ubxwgjji:gab

Clues:
D = A; Z = H

Answer to December 15 Scripture Crypto:
Ephesians one:fourteen

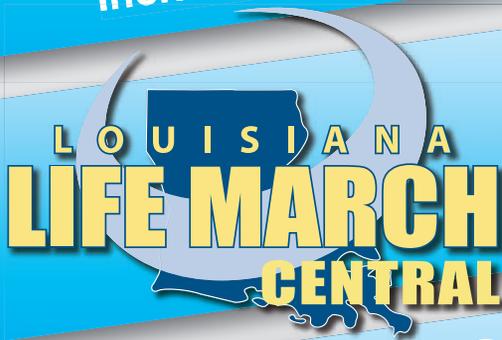
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Saturday, January 21, 2017 | 10 am - Noon
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LIFE MARCH CENTRAL | ALEXANDRIA
Saturday, February 4, 2017 | 10 am - Noon
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