

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

– Hebrews 13:8 (NIV)

M BAPTIST Message

Newsjournal for Louisiana Baptists

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March 23, 2017

First Baptist Haughton Pastor Gevan Spinney (center) baptizes four members of the Taylor family. From Dec. 4 to March 5, the church saw a baptism every Sunday.



Parents' evident faith points daughters to Christ

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

HAUGHTON – Will Taylor stepped into the baptismal waters, joining his wife, Lori, and their teenage daughters for a moment in time his family will never forget.

As Pastor Gevan Spinney baptized each member of the family, the Taylors beamed with excitement over the

journey that brought them to this point in life.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

The family had resided in Haughton for four months when the historic floodwaters in March 2016 nearly overtook their neighborhood. But tragedy became jubilation as they continued to see how the church ministered

to families in the community.

One by one, they grew closer to Christ as they became more involved in the life of First Baptist Church in Haughton.

First, Lori and Will Taylor joined a small group, leading to growth in what had been a stagnant spiritual life after both had made commitments to Christ.

See FAITH on 5



Robert Willie photo

LaSalle Director of Missions Buddy Willis (red shirt), Randy Ray, president of Kingdom Builders (second from right, kneeling) and Zenoria Pastor Joel Johnson (third from right, kneeling) spend a moment in prayer before beginning work on the new Zenoria Baptist Church.

Zenoria Baptist set for 'better than ever' return

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

TROUT – A year after floodwaters destroyed the nearly 100-year-old building which serves the congregation of Zenoria Baptist Church, members celebrated the remarkable progress that has been made on a new facility.

Friends and neighbors from around the community, including congregants of other area churches, gathered with the saints of Zenoria Baptist, March 11, 2017, to commemorate how nearly 80 Kingdom Builders literally raised a new building from the slab up over the course of a five-day period.

Located at 3133 Hwy. 500 in Trout, the new worship center will seat 138, and there will be classrooms and a fellowship hall when the structure is completed.

HOPE & THANKS

Pastor Joel Johnson is hoping his congregation of 65 will be in their new spaces by Easter Sunday.

“It’s going to be a time of jubilee,” Johnson said. “We couldn’t have pulled this off without the help of people in the community, sister churches and the Kingdom Builders. We’re not finished yet but we’re approach-

See ZENORIA on 3

Graham speaks at NOBTS chapel, students engage in cordial Q&A

BY GARY D. MEYERS
NOBTS Communications

NEW ORLEANS – Despite challenges and distractions, the church is all about Jesus and rooted firmly in His power, Jack Graham said during chapel services at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary March 7.

“This is not about us. My church. Your church. It’s all about Jesus,” he said.

Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas, preached in chapel

weeks after news broke that his church was escrowing Cooperative Program funds due to concerns over the actions by some Southern Baptist entity leaders. Even though the event was scheduled months before Prestonwood’s decision to withhold funds, some called on NOBTS to revoke Graham’s invitation. NOBTS President Chuck Kelley rejected the idea, and instead, called on Southern Baptists to be more intentional about dialogue in times of disagreement.

See GRAHAM on 2



Joe Fontenot photo

Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas, preaches during the March 7 chapel service at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary chapel.

Graham from page one

A group of NOBTS students printed and sold "I Heart CP" shirts. Though they disagreed with Graham regarding the escrowing of CP funds, they insisted that their goal was not to protest Graham or Prestonwood, but affirm their commitment to the Cooperative Program.

After the chapel service, Graham met with the students for a short question and answer time.

The students also gave Graham a letter outlining their concerns. At the request of Graham, the Q and A time was not recorded by the seminary and

the media members were asked not to report on the discussion. By all accounts, the 20-minute meeting was cordial and courteous.

Neither Graham nor Kelley addressed the controversy during the chapel service. In many ways it was a typical NOBTS chapel service with musical worship and a scripture reading, followed by a biblical, exegetical sermon. The main exception to the norm came in the form of a visiting choir, the Jubalheirs, a choir comprised of Georgia Baptist women.

Graham spoke about the

Apostle Paul's prayer Eph. 3:14-21. He noted the prayer points back to Paul's earlier teachings in the letter and concludes with a time of praise.

"The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is built on prayer and the provision of God," Graham said. "I am hugely bullish on the church and the ministry of local congregations impacting the world for Christ and fulfilling the Great Commission."

While individual believers participate with God in ministry and receive His blessings, Graham reminded the audience that the focus of the Christian life must be Jesus.

"This doxology reminds us the focus in the church is always, always, on Him," he said.



Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church, spoke about the Apostle Paul's prayer, Ephesians 3:14-21, during Chapel at NOBTS.

"Our focus is always on Jesus, but then he also says our faith is in Jesus," Graham said.

Reading Eph. 3:20, the well-known passage about Jesus' power exceed anything we can imagine, Graham noted that the believer can pray to Almighty God and expect Him to answer.

"Our faith is not in ourselves or our strategic plans ... it is believing God to do only what God can do in our lives," Graham said. "We believe in a God who is able to do exceedingly, abundantly more."

The power to live the Christian life follows through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, Graham said. It is in this Spirit-filled living that Christians experience the abundance

and provision Paul writes about in Eph. 3.

"Our focus is on Him, our faith is in Him and our fellowship is with Him," Graham said.

The strengthening of the church together is to focus of the final verse of Eph. 3. It is the binding together of the church in fellowship the keeps a diverse group of believers in community, Graham said.

"As brothers and sisters in Christ we are closer to each other than we are to our own family members who may be outside of Christ," Graham said. "Our love for one another and our fellowship in Christ ... it is Jesus who brings us together. Nothing else could create this type of unique fellowship."

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<p>Volume 132 March 23, 2017 Number 6</p>			

Zenoria from page one

ing a place where we can soon meet together again.”

The former building was destroyed after 9 feet of water from the Little River – located less than a half-mile away – submerged the church, March 11, 2016. In just a 12-hour time period, floodwaters went from barely covering the floor to almost touching the roof.

When the congregation made the decision to remain together, they were offered a temporary meeting place from the Jena Band of Choctaws. Others in the community, the churches from the LaSalle Baptist Association and individuals and groups as far away as California and Michigan, pitched in – donating labor, money and supplies to contribute to the rebuilding project.

“Seeing all these people come has been a great experience and we’re looking forward to moving into our new church building that has been built a lot faster than any of us dreamed would happen last year,” said Zenoria Baptist Church member Ben Clark. “We appreciate

all the people that have given so much and we can’t imagine where we would be without their help.”

OTHER COMEBACK TALES

Zenoria Baptist’s comeback story is one of a number of good news accounts that have emerged after last year’s flood.

Record rains in March and again in August created record floods, causing a combined 19 deaths and resulting in enormous property damage, including 86 Louisiana Baptist churches among the hundreds of thousands of structures heavily damaged by the flooding.

Thankfully, all, but one, have reopened or are rebuilding.

Even the lone church that closed its doors – Hillside Baptist Church in Hammond – found a way to make the best of its situation, donating its baptistry to Stillwater Baptist Church in the city.

Another congregation chose to merge with a fellow local body of Louisiana Baptists,

Calvary Baptist Church in Denham Springs joined the Way Church of Denham Springs.

Rebuilding is still underway for five Louisiana Baptist churches.

According to John Hebert, Louisiana Baptists missions and ministry director, Amite Baptist Church in Livingston, Crossgate Baptist Church in Robert, Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Independence, Blood River Baptist Church in Albany and New Hope Baptist Church in Independence, are now meeting in their worship center but have not completed all of their facilities.

Louis Husser, pastor of Crossgate Baptist Church, echoed the sentiments of his fellow four pastors, expressing thanks – despite the extended recovery – for the aid from countless volunteers who have come to help rebuild his church.

“The Scripture comes to mind – when one member of the body suffers, all the members suffer,” Husser said. “LBC churches have been down in the trenches suffering with this church body. God has truly blessed us. Our God is a ‘come back’ God.”



Brian Blackwell photo

LaSalle Director of Missions Buddy Willis (left) visits with Zenoria Pastor Joel Johnson during a recent rebuild of the church by Kingdom Builders.

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Racial reconciliation – imagine the possibilities

BY MARVIN JONES

Louisiana College Professor

ALEXANDRIA – Imagine a world where racial tension and racial inequity does not exist.

A SKIN SIN

Imagine a world where issues of biological racism are never given credence or credibility – where prejudice towards another person because

of his family or race doesn't exist.

Biological racism can only survive when we deny the imago dei to all human beings.

Biological racism survives when one ethnic group considers another ethnic group to be sub-human because of their birth. So imagine a world where people consider their fellow human beings valuable and worthy of respect because of their status as God's creation in His image.

SOCIAL SEPARATION

Imagine a world where cultural racism is non-existent – where cultural differences no longer create barriers that divide the populace. Imagine a world that does not advance the cause of racial tension in cultural dynamics.

Imagine a world where humanity does not promote racial distinction as harmful but embraces racial differences, gender differences, social, and economic differences as God given design to promote the well-being of all humanity.

RECONCILED IN CHRIST

The problem is that any given society – all of humanity for that matter – can only imagine such a world, unless it seeks the answer to its racial problems in the ministry of reconciliation that Christ offers through his church.

The answer to biological and/or cultural racism is nothing less than the redemptive act of Jesus Christ – and the mis-

sion and ministry of the church is the redemptive work of Jesus Christ!

The church is the place where grace is given to all humanity regardless of race, class, gender, or economic barriers. Ephesians 2:14-18 demonstrates that each person in this broken humanity can be reconciled in Christ and then reconciled to one another, and verse 21 declares the Holy Spirit inhabits this reconciled community as a holy temple, "the whole building being fitted together."

Racial reconciliation is rooted in the Gospel, and the message of the church is the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

AT THE CROSS

The church is more than just a redemptive ministry, and, it is more than just an advocate for social justice – but it also is nothing less.

The redemptive act of God in Christ means that people, who are hostile to God and to one another, can be reconciled to Him and with each other, and come together as one new humanity (Eph. 2:15). The act of redemption means that redeemed humanity lives not only in equality, but also in peace, because of the cross.

Ephesians 2:14 states the position of the redeemed: "For He is our peace."

How did this happen? He removed the barrier between

us and Him represented by the veil in the temple. The death of Christ means that access to the Father is available for all people.

But God also tore down the "dividing wall" that separated Jews and Gentiles in the Jewish Temple, by the flesh of Jesus Christ.

This represents the tearing down of obstacles to experiencing the "peace of Christ" as one people of many races, ethnicities, tongues and tribes.

On the threshold of the cross all people are welcome. As a result, the redeemed sit together, pray together, worship together, accomplish ministry together – as a "new humanity" in the Lord's church.

ONE BODY

The idea of a new humanity is evident in the phrase "one body" (Eph. 2:16). The redeemed as "one body" implies that there were two or more bodies, but now there is a singleness of purpose and structure as Believers.

The "one body" principle is an idea, a construct not fully realized in the church nor the contemporary world. Yet, the Bible insists the church can and should strive to be a people, composed of various ethnic groups, coming together as one body.

See RECONCILIATION on 9

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FIRST BAPTIST
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Faith from page one

He at 17 and she at nine.

Then Will and Lori repented to restore their fellowship with Jesus, and their resulting zeal for the Lord manifested in big changes in how they lived.

Their teenage daughters witnessed the authenticity of the transformation, and subsequently accepted Christ at the 2017 Louisiana Baptist Convention Evangelism Conference.

They celebrated their new lives in Him by being baptized together Feb. 12 – the day of Will Taylor’s 39th birthday. The two teenage daughters were baptized Feb. 19.

“There are not enough words to describe the joy we have felt,” Lori Taylor said. “First Baptist Church Haughton may be a ‘big’ church with large buildings, but they have that small town, home church feeling. God is moving in big ways here in the small town of Haughton and we are so blessed to be part of it.”

Spinney said the seeds planted in the Taylors’ lives after the flood reminded him of how Joseph prevailed, beginning with a difficult situation

of landing in prison and ending with becoming high in command of Egypt.

“What Satan meant for evil, God turned for good,” said Spinney, who also serves as Louisiana Baptist Convention president.

WAVE OF BAPTISMS

The Taylors are part of a wave of baptisms occurring at First Baptist Haughton.

From Dec. 4 to March 5, First Baptist Haughton baptized at least one person every Sunday morning worship service, with the exception of Jan. 1, for a total of 21 baptisms.

Spinney has told his congregation they are in the midst of an unplanned revival and they hope God does not bring it to an end.

“For us, it’s really exciting,” Spinney said. “We baptize over 100 each year, so having this many baptisms this early is not really out of the ordinary for our church. But it just has been a sweet season for us, coming out of ministry we saw after last March’s floods and seeing baptisms for so many Sundays in a row. God is doing some neat stuff and is blessing our congregation in so many ways.”

DELIBERATE DISCIPLESHIP

Once baptism occurs, three confirmations are made: enlistment in a Life Group; enrollment into a four-week Connections class where they cover the topics such as knowing Christ, the Body of Christ, serving Christ and sharing Christ; and assignment to a six-week new believer class.

This ensures that each believer is exposed to the basics of Christianity, how they can best connect with our church and how they can utilize their giftedness for God’s glory, Spinney said.

The class for new Christians is one of many discipleship opportunities First Baptist Haughton offers annually.

During the fall and spring, the church offers Christian Life University (CLU), an eight-week semester-based discipleship program designed to equip believers with discipleship skills that increase their faith and Kingdom usefulness. CLU offers as many as 30 discipleship classes on Sunday evenings for children, youth, and adults.

Classes are offered according to the following grid: men, women, family, children, youth,

ministry/missions, and spiritual disciplines. A current listing of topics can be found at <http://fbchaughton.org/clu-class-listings/>. Attendance in the spring session will average 400, of which 160 who are attending a class on Apologetics.

In 2016, 125 people met in Journey Groups, which are gender-based groups of three to four people who meet in closed groups, mainly off-campus.

These smaller groups meet for the purpose of deep spiritual growth and to develop what First Baptist Haughton calls “2 a.m. friends.” Journey Groups meet for approximately 18 months then they are encouraged to multiply exponentially.

HARVEST-MINDED

The baptisms and passion for discipleship are characteristics of what First Baptist Haughton is about – evangelism.

To reach its community, state, nation and world, the congregation will use a wide variety of methods to penetrate a lost culture with the Gospel. These include a wild game supper at the church, summertime block parties in neighborhoods, Life Group ministry projects

off-campus to engage non-church members, and an Easter egg hunt attended by more than 1,500 people at a local ballpark.

“We’ve seen God move in mighty ways in the last several years,” Spinney said. “During each season of revival I remind our people of two things – let’s be careful to give God the glory for all that is taking place and let’s not do anything to quench His Holy Spirit.”

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'Thrift' stores generously minister to those in need

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

RUSTON – Business is booming for the Rolling Hills Ministries' thrift stores with no signs of slowing in sight.

Unexpected warm weather in February not only caused an early need for donations in the thrift stores, but the demand has also spilled over into Monroe – the future site of a new thrift store ministry location.

The ministry has purchased land at 5339 Desiard St. in Monroe to construct its fourth thrift store. A possible ground breaking is scheduled for April, with a projected completion date of late December.

Financial donations for making a difference in Monroe are being accepted for the \$1.8 million thrift store ministry center.

Once complete, the 14,000-sq.-ft. store will provide clothes, furniture and other items at a deeply discounted price.

The Rolling Hills Ministries' Monroe thrift store ministry center will be partnering with the Louisiana

Baptist Children's Home, and will be offering a career center where women will learn job readiness skills, life skills and receive spiritual guidance.

"Our hope is the ladies will gain spiritual and educational assistance through the career center, and develop needed skills by volunteering in the thrift store," said John Cowling, Rolling Hills director of ministries.

When the Monroe location opens, it will be the first major project for any of its thrift stores since the Bossier City thrift store opened in August 2014.

Its other thrift stores in Arcadia, Bossier City and Ruston are currently experiencing an immediate need for clothes, furniture, shoes and linens.

"Normally this time of the year, we are slow because the weather is usually cooler and people haven't cleaned out their closets yet," said David Abernathy, executive director of Rolling Hills. "But this year, business is booming. Because we really haven't had a winter, people are coming in and needing clothes, knick knacks and other items that we



Brian Blackwell photo

Rolling Hills Ministries has purchased land in Monroe to construct its fourth thrift store in North Louisiana.

are running low on."

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See **THRIFT** on 9

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NEW ORLEANS
BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Louisiana Baptist women celebrate missions at annual meeting

BY STAFF

Baptist Message

MANDEVILLE – Scheduled for March 31-April 1 at First Baptist Church in Mandeville, the Louisiana Baptist Woman's Missionary Union will hold a Mission Celebration and its 117th Annual Meeting, highlighting how the WMU is participating in what God is doing in the state, North America and around the world.

"The scriptural focus for this year's Mission Celebration is Jeremiah 17:7-8, which challenges us to be grounded, knowing our purpose; to be growing, actively involved in missions with mind, body and soul; and to be bearing fruit, to be productive kingdom women," said Janie Wise, Louisiana Baptists' women's missions and ministry strategist. "When we meet in Mandeville, we will celebrate missions and WMU organizations on mission in our churches. We also desire to be challenged to seek God's guidance in all our mission efforts."

The event kicks off Friday evening with a missions fair at

5 p.m. and a general session at 6:45 p.m.

Saturday morning, at 7:15, the Louisiana Baptist Nursing Fellowship will hold its annual breakfast, which is open to members and other interested health care professionals.

There will be a prayer experience during the morning session and new WMU officers will be elected Saturday, as well.

A mission brunch will conclude the weekend.

During the two-day meeting, there will be a missions effort to collect backpacks filled with toys, school supplies, hygiene items, Bibles and more for the Mississippi River Christmas Ministry.

Four main speakers are set to headline the weekend, including Cindy Townsend, executive-treasurer of the WMU and women's ministries at the Mississippi Baptist Convention, who will make a return to the state where she once served as LBC women's missions and ministry director. Townsend will be joined in speaking by:

-- Gibbie McMillan, men's ministry and disaster relief

director for Louisiana Baptists; -- Gina Roberts, with the International Mission Board; and,

-- Lena Plunk, mobilization consultant for WMU of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Missions Celebration and WMU Annual Meeting is sponsored by Louisiana Bap-

tists' Women's Missions and Ministry and partially funded by the Cooperative Program.

The \$25 cost to attend the celebration includes lunch. An additional \$10 fee is required for Baptist Nursing Fellowship breakfast. Registration deadline is March 22.

The registration forms for the dinner on Friday, the breakfast on Saturday and more about what items are needed for the backpacks are available at louisianabaptists.org/WMC.

For more information, e-mail wmm@louisianabaptists.org or call 318.448.3402.

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Cajuns take gumbo, Gospel to Canada during annual trip

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

NOVA SCOTIA/NEW BRUNSWICK – Louis Charrier was putting the finishing touches on his famous southern Louisiana gumbo and already a line of 15 people was forming, eager to get a taste of the Cajun dish at a Labor Day block party in Dieppe, New Brunswick, far from the Bayou state.

Moments later, some fellow Louisiana Baptists begin serving the cuisine by the bowl, along with an evangelism tract telling the purpose of their trip to the Canadian province. One of three trips Louisiana Baptists have taken to Nova Scotia and neighboring New Brunswick in 2016, the Cajun Connection is a joint effort by churches around the state.

While there, they minister with a church to conduct door-to-door surveys, Vacation Bible School and student ministry.

This outreach, which

aims to connect the culture of Louisiana with its northern roots, began in 2004 with Louisiana missionaries Winter and Betty Case from Stonewall, who spent two years in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and opened a door of opportunity to share Christ.

HISTORICAL TIES

Cajuns are descendants of the French Canadians who came to Louisiana more than 260 years ago, moving from Nova Scotia starting in 1755, when Great Britain acquired control of the area. When the Acadians did not become cooperative British subjects, the British began removing them from the Canadian province. Known as the Great Derangement, the Acadians settled in various countries, including the United States, and by the 19th century, nearly 4,000 Acadians had moved to southern Louisiana.

“For us, when we go to a Cajun area and say we are

from Louisiana, it immediately opens the door,” said Charrier, pastor of Washington Baptist Church and three other church plants in Louisiana. “Their eyes light up and it gives an open door always. They consider you a part of their past – and that common French background is the entry point for Louisiana Baptists.

“It’s more than just a Cajun Connection. We are trying to connect people to God who have been disconnected. The real connection is not horizontal but vertical. We use that name for a cultural connection. But once we arrive for that cultural connection it opens the door.”

SPIRITUAL BONDS

Steven Kelley participated in the trip for a third consecutive year. He said returning on a regular basis builds important bridges to sharing the Gospel with the people of the Canadian province.

He mentioned the exam-

ple of a young girl who has attended VBS all three years, beginning in 2014.

The first year, the team made the girl and her mother some cupcakes. By the third year, the mother, who was unchurched, attended a worship service at a local church.

Kelley also shared about two young boys, who attended the VBS this year.

By the end of the week, he said, their mother was communicating with the team through Facebook, sharing the impact they had on her sons.

While neither mothers have accepted Christ, yet, Kelley said the effort planted seeds that he hopes one day will lead to their having a relationship with Jesus.

“For me, it’s all about relationship building,” said Kelley, pastor of Bayou Vista Baptist Church in Morgan City and director of missions for Gulf Coast Association. “The first year you go, everything is new. But now we have a personal and relational investment that makes it all different.

“I have gotten to know the community and built those connections,” he said. “You only get that by going to the same place over time.”

Kelley said the comradery among the Christians in the area is something he hopes to model more in south Louisiana.

“The churches up there because there are so few of them have a tremendous fellowship,” Kelley said. “While we were there, we had more than one occasion where the local congregation drove many miles to get there for fellowship and worship. They were willing to drive a little bit to be with us.”

LBC PARTNERSHIPS

The Cajun Connection is one of the partnerships that span at least 50 countries which Louisiana Baptists are a part. Wayne Sheppard, executive assistant to the executive director for Louisiana Baptists, said like the other partnerships, this one is a perfect opportunity to share Christ’s love in another country, particularly for those living in southern Louisiana.

“The main reason is the affinity of French Acadians – natural connectivity culturally and historically,” he said. “Additionally, the people group network has an excellent strategy and leadership team. Finally, it is very good entry level mission experience for people who have never done missions.”

For more information on how to partner with other churches for the Cajun Connection, contact Charrier at 337.308.0336.

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General Admission: \$15

To purchase tickets: FbcCov.org, click on Events, then on "A Southern Gospel Concert".

Thrift from page 6

COUNTING GOD'S BLESSINGS

Cowling views the progress as God's blessing on the work they do, which encompasses more than just selling low priced household items, but building relationships with those who are assisted, donate, volunteer and shop.

"It is the relationships that create an environment of love and hope as a Rolling Hills family," he said.

Much of their work is planting seeds for sharing the Gospel.

This can come in the form of placing tracts by a cash register in the store, building

relationships with community leaders through its monthly luncheons, sharing Christ through a worship service at a state park, praying for and visiting customers in the hospital, hosting a Children's Home mobile pregnancy care center or providing free health screenings through Louisiana Tech University.

"When people walk into our store or come in contact with volunteers at other locations of ministry, they know we care, serve and love them" Cowling said. "Whatever a person's purpose in visiting us, we love them."

"We are generous with our

conversations with customers and we want to hear their stories," he continued. "We want to know where they are coming from and how to serve them. At the end of the day, every one of us at Rolling Hills is a minister in some way as we make contact with others."

DISASTER RELIEF

In addition to its ministry in the thrift stores, Rolling Hills is also gearing up for disaster relief training.

Every third weekend in March Rolling Hills Ministries provides Louisiana Baptist Disaster Relief Training.

Louisiana Baptist Disaster Relief volunteer leaders from around the state come to Temple Baptist Church in Ruston to train volunteers in the areas of assessment, basic orientation chaplaincy, chainsaw/recovery, feeding/shower/laundry and mud-out/ash-out/recovery and feeding/shower/laundry.

Though Rolling Hills disaster teams have not responded to any major disasters in several years, 2016 was a different story.

In the weeks following historic floods in March, the ministry served as the incident

command center for Southern Baptist disaster relief efforts.

They activated chaplains, assessors, feeding, mud-out, shower and laundry units.

The ministry sent more than \$45,000 in gift cards which were distributed directly to flood victims, sent \$2,800 to the Louisiana Baptist Convention to assist in rebuilding a home in southwestern Louisiana, and spent an additional \$20,000+ in budgeted funds helping with the recovery operation.

In 2016, Rolling Hills volunteers provided more than

14,000 volunteer hours, which included their work following major flooding in the state.

And when southern Louisiana was devastated with historic flooding, the ministry stepped up again. They activated chaplains, assessors, feeding, mud-out, shower, laundry and generator units. The ministry also received, stored and transported donations from churches, schools and individuals, in addition to delivering supplies and loaning Rolling Hills' employees to a rebuild location in that area.

Reconciliation from page 4

IN HIS IMAGE

Therefore, imagine a church where the ministry of Christ becomes the mission of the redeemed.

Imagine a church that contends for racial equality not only for members but for all humanity.

Imagine a congregation that finds itself as the example of Christ's new, living, redeemed humanity demonstrating God's love for all people.

Imagine a church where social justice is evidenced in social ministry (Acts 6).

Imagine a church, in Louisiana, that dares to implement the mission of Christ in its ministry.

Imagine a church demonstrating racial harmony, racial unity, and radical transformation to a world that needs to see the victory of Christ over racial sin.

Imagine a world that can be impacted by such a church that can exist in Louisiana.

Imagine your church becoming that church!

Marvin Jones, Ph.D., is professor of Theology and Church History with Louisiana College. His column is part of a series of commentaries provided by Louisiana College relating to the Southern Baptist Convention's calendar of Special Emphasis Sundays.

New Chapel Hill, West Monroe presents



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C3 Christ Church Culture

April 8 8:30 to Noon




Dr. Chuck Pourciau
Senior Pastor
Broadmoor Baptist Church, Shreveport
"Contending for the Faith, Jude 3"



Dr. Rhyné Putman
Assistant Professor of
Theology & Culture
New Orleans Baptist
Theological Seminary
"Identity & Faithfulness in a
Gender-Confused Culture."

Part of our **Great Commission Seminar**, LC's C3 Apologetics Conference is for Christians serious about engaging the culture by fulfilling the Great Commission and Great Commandments. Open to the public, the half-day conference will be held in the Martin Performing Arts Center. Admission is free.



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First Baptist Church Boyce seeks a
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First Baptist Boyce
Pastor Search Committee
P.O. Box 278
Boyce, LA 71409



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New River Baptist Church in St. Amant, LA
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IN REMEMBRANCE

■ **Gene Williams**, 89, went to be with his Lord and Savior Dec. 18. He was born in Corsicana, Texas in 1927 to Henry and Lola Williams. He received a Bachelor of Arts from Baylor, a Master of Divinity degree and the Doctor of Philosophy degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. After listening to the radio broadcast of old-time evangelist Mordecai Ham, nine-year-old little Gene accepted Christ as his Savior. Later at the age of 15, he started preaching in 1942 when the pulpit supply minister did not show up for a service. By 1944 he had started working at his first church, a Baptist church that met half-time, sharing a building with the Methodists. In 1945 he was ordained into the Gospel ministry and in 1948 was pastoring his first church full-time when he married the former Dorothy Fiew. After serving as pastor of churches in Texas, Louisiana and Alabama, he entered vocational evangelism in 1957. Williams conducted his first missions focused overseas crusade in 1960 in Jamaica. He has led over 2,000 revival meetings in America and over 135 overseas crusades in foreign countries. He founded Williams Ministries in 1959 and in addition to leading revival meetings, Williams served as chairman of the board of the missions ministry now named Concern for the World and produced a gospel television show called World Concern. He taught evangelism and missions at Liberty Baptist Theological seminary with Jerry Falwell in the early 1970's and became president of Luther Rice Seminary in 1982, serving in that capacity until 1992. He was a member of the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and was elected to the "Hall of Faith" of Southern Baptist Evangelists in 2008. He was preceded in death by his wife Dorothy. He is survived by his three children, Sandra, Randall (Christa), and Tim (Joy), four grandchildren Reagan (Mandy), Judson (Petra), Brittany, and Ashlyn (Gabriel), and 4 great-grandchildren Ryleigh, Tucker, Ivalee and Michayah.

HOME COMING

■ Old Union Baptist Church, Converse: **Homecoming**, April 2, 11 a.m. Dinner on the grounds will follow the worship service. Speaker: **Murray Hodge**, associate pastor at Summer Grove Baptist Church, Shreveport. Special Music: **Southern Plainsmen Quartet** at 1:15 p.m. Pastor: Alton Middleton.

REVIVAL

■ Emmanuel Baptist Church, Natchitoches: **Revival**, March 26-29, Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, 7 p.m. nightly. Evangelist: **Joe Aulds**. Pastor: John Elliott.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Larose: **Revival**, March 26-29. Sunday, 10:45 a.m. & 6 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. Evangelist: **Bill Britt**. Music: **Mackey Willis Family**. Pastor: Gary Handberry.
 ■ Clarks Baptist Church, Clarks: **Revival**, March 26-29. Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell**. Pastor: Jack McKeithen
 ■ Meridian Baptist Church, Beekman: **Revival**, March 26-29. Evangelist: **Casey Johnson**. Pastor: Philip Boatright.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Olla: **Revival**, April 2-5. Evangelist: **Bill Britt**. Worship: **Mackey Willis Family**. Pastor: Greg Dunn.
 ■ Longview Baptist Church, Deville: **Revival**, April 2-5. Speaker: **Kerry Skinner**. Worship: **Kellie and Kristen**. Pastor: Robby Poole.
 ■ Emmanuel Baptist Church, Natchitoches: **Revival**, April 2-5, Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, 7 p.m. Evangelist: **Joe Aulds**. Pastor: John Elliott.
 ■ Midway Baptist Church, Jena: **Revival**, April 2-5, Sunday, 6 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. Speaker: **Rubin Weaver**. Pastor: Daniel Breithaupt.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Logansport: Area-wide Crusade at the Logansport Riverfront Stage, April 2-5. Speaker: Gevan Spinney, Louisiana Baptist Convention President. Pastor: Timothy Roberson.
 ■ Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond: Fields of Faith Revival, April 3-5 at SLU's University Center. Speaker: Walt Barnes, associate pastor of student and discipleship ministries at New Palestine Baptist Church in Picayune, Miss.
 ■ Magnolia Baptist Church, Crowville: Revival, April 13-15. Evangelist: Casey Johnson. Music: Brad Mount. Pastor: Ron

Ferrington.

■ Social Springs Baptist Church, Ringgold: Revival, April 14-21, Evangelist: Sam Moore. Pastor: James Hester.
 ■ Southside Baptist Church, Jonesboro: Revival, April 16-19. Evangelist: Scotty McDowell, chalk artist. Pastor: Wesley Venable.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Jonesville: Spring Revival, April 17-20, 6 nightly. Speaker: Rubin Weaver. Music: Ben Waites. Pastor: Todd Whittington.

LAGNIAPPE

■ The Mount Olive Baptist Association is taking resumes for a **part-time Director of Missions** of their 39 churches. Resumes will be taken until May 31, 2017. Applicants should have a Master's Degree from an accredited seminary by regional accrediting agencies, or experience deemed sufficient to function in the position. (Ten years of ministry experience). Please mail resumes to Attn: Neil Treme, Glenmora Baptist Church, P.O. Box 237, Glenmora, LA. 71433.
 ■ Temple Baptist Church, Jena: **The Kingsmen Quartet in concert**, March 23, 7 p.m. For more information, call 318.641.067. Pastor: Jimmy Keene.
 ■ Hebron Baptist Church, Denham Springs: **Reach 2017 Community Cook Outs**, March 25. Members will host cookouts to reach members in the community. For more information, contact associate pastor Danny Mann at brodannym@hebronbc.com.
 ■ Temple Baptist Church, Winnsboro: **Deer Creek Baptist Association spring sing**, March 26, 5 p.m.
 ■ Maple Springs Baptist Church, Logansport: **Women's Retreat**, March 31-April 1, Friday, 6:30-9 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon. Join them for fun, food, and fellowship and a Bible Study based on 2 Cor. 5:17. Pastor: Lee McClintock.
 ■ First Baptist Church, DeRidder: **4th Annual Spring Jubilee**, April 1, 5 p.m. Featuring **11th Hour the Collingsworth Family, Mark Lanier**. Cost: \$20. Pastor: Josh Eubanks.
 ■ Cedarcrest Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **Pete Shirokov, Professor of Jewish Studies at Beulah Heights University in Atlanta**, will give his testimony, April 2, 5 p.m. Pastor: Neil Caver.
 ■ Lifechurch Louisiana, Ruston: **Community Service**, April 2, 6 p.m. This event is being sponsored by pastors of the following churches -- First Ruston, Cook Baptist, Temple, St. David's Missionary Baptist, The Bridge Community Church, Calvary Baptist Church, Emmanuel Baptist Church.
 ■ Cooper Baptist Church, Leesville: **Wild Beast Feast**, April 2, 5 p.m. Speaker: **Johnny Morgan, Obedience 2 Death**. Event is free and open to all men and boys. Bring your favorite wild game dish and fellowship. Where: Cooper Baptist Church 853 Cooper Church Rd Leesville LA 71446. Pastor: Edgar Evans.
 ■ Lincecum Baptist Church, Georgetown: **Mackey Willis Family in Concert**, April 2, 6 p.m. Pastor: Jim Winegeart.

■ Siloam Baptist Church, Many: **"Meet the Elite"**, April 2, 2 p.m. Everyone is invited to come hear some of the country's top bass anglers as they share fishing stories and their testimony. For more information, contact Mary Gore at 318.645.6601 or tbbaptist@gmail.com. Pastor: Tony Anthony.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Pineville: **First@First Business Leader Luncheon**, April 3, noon. Speaker: **Randy Ponthie, Southern Heritage Bank**. Cost: \$10 and you may pay at the door. Please RSVP to Melinda Langford (mlangford@fbcpineville.net. Pastor: Stewart Holloway.
 ■ Calvary Baptist Church, Alexandria: **Jack Zimmerman of Jewish Voice Ministries International, Phoenix will speak on the Passover Seder**, April 5, 6 p.m. Pastor: David Brooks.
 ■ Toledo Bend Resort Ministries, Zwolle: **Bassmaster Elite Tournament**, April 6-9 at Cypress Bend State Park, Many. Join us as we welcome Elite bass fishermen and fans to Toledo Bend by volunteering to Prayer Walk the grounds, walk the crowd for potential gospel conversations, volunteer to help with children's activities and more. For more information, contact Mary Gore at 318.645.6601 or tbbaptist@gmail.com.
 ■ First West Baptist Church, West Monroe: **First West NELA Egg Fest**, April 8, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Join us at West Monroe High School, Sterlington High School, and West Ouachita High School at 11a.m. Some 100,000 eggs will be scattered across these three fields. Kids up to 5th grade will be able to pick up eggs in this family-friendly event.
 ■ First Baptist Church, New Orleans: **Easter Egg Hunt**, April 9, 4-5:30 p.m. This FREE event is for children birth through 6th grade & their parents and includes arts & crafts, the telling of the Easter story, snacks, and our annual Easter Egg Hunt. For more information or to register, contact faye.scott@fbno.org. Pastor: David Crosby.
 ■ The Bayou Church, Lafayette: **Annual Spring picnic and Easter Egg Hunt**, April 9, 4:15 p.m. All children (birth-5th grade) are invited to search for 7,000 eggs packed with candy and prizes in one of four designated fields. Then, we'll continue the festivities with family fun games such as sack races, three-legged races, and more. Pack a picnic for your family or enjoy a hot dog meal (includes chips, drink, dessert) for \$3. There will be live music and a good time. Pastor: Mike Walker.
 ■ Hebron Baptist Church, Denham Springs: **Palm Sunday**, April 9, 10 a.m. Easter egg hunt will follow the worship service. Lunch will be provided; **Maunder Thursday**, April 13. This is a service of remembrance and communion will be observed; Good Friday, April 14, **Movie night** featuring the movie -- "Risen"; **Resurrection Sunday - He Is Risen**, April 16, 10 a.m.
 ■ Brookwood Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Annual preschool & kids Easter Egg Hunt**, April 9, 12-2 p.m. Lunch will be provided under the covered area at the north end of the building and there will be inflatables, crafts and egg

hunts for preschool age kids as well as school age kids. Bring your Easter baskets and an appetite.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Lafayette: **Saviour, A Modern Oratorio**, April 13-14, 7-8:30 p.m. Ballet Magnificat! joins the First Baptist Choir and Orchestra to present this Easter musical. The presentations are free and tickets are not needed. Pastor: Steve Horn.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Winnsboro: **Good Friday Egg Hunt**, April 14, 10 a.m. this for children ages 3 to 10 years of age. Pastor: Craig Beeman.
 ■ University Baptist Church, Thibodaux: **Easter Egg Hunt**, April 15, 1-3 p.m. at Eagle Park. This is for babies thru 10 years old only. Bring your own basket or bag. For more information, call 985.446.5818.
 ■ Trinity Heights Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Community Easter Egg Hunt**, April 15, 10 a.m. - noon. There will be 15,000 eggs, a petting zoo, face-painting and great door prizes. Pastor: Collin Wimberly.
 ■ Elm Grove Baptist Church, Bossier City: **Easter Egg Hunt**, April 15, 11 a.m. There will be more than 3,000 eggs and this is for children from birth thru 5th grade. **Easter Sunrise Service**, April 16, 7 a.m. at the Red River Marina Pavilion Pastor: Brian Prucey.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Scramble Up South Highlands 2017 (Egg Hunt)**, April 15, 9 a.m. Pastor: Jeff Raines.
 ■ Airline Baptist Church, Bossier City: **Easter Egg Drop**, April 15, 10-11:30 a.m. Pastor: Terry Young.
 ■ Barksdale Baptist Church, Bossier City: **Community Easter Egg Hunt** April 15, 2-4 p.m. There will be food, games, crafts, bouncy houses and egg hunts for toddlers-5th grade. Pastor: Calvin Hubbard.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Haughton: **Community Easter Egg Hunt**, April 15 at the Lawson Bo Brandon Sports Complex, 10 a.m.-noon. Pastor: Gevan Spinney.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Ruston: **Easter Egg Hunt**, April 16, 10:15-10:45 a.m. located inside FBC. **Easter Service**, April 16, 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Pastor: Chris Craig.
 ■ North Monroe Baptist Church, Monroe: **Easter at the Coliseum**, April 16, 10 a.m. Pastor: Bill Dye.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Many: **Easter Musical "Because He Lives - Amen!"** on Easter Sunday, April 16, 11 a.m. Pastor: Jonathan Bosst.
 ■ North Monroe Baptist Church, Bastrop Campus: **Easter services**, April 16, 10:30 a.m. The Bastrop campus is moving services to the M.A.C. Morehouse Activity Center on Easter Sunday.
 ■ Northeast Baptist School, Monroe: **9th Annual Golf Tournament**, April 21, Chennault Park. Noon, registration/lunch at noon, 1 p.m., shotgun start. This is a 4-Man scramble. Cost: \$100 per person. Registration forms available at the Associations Center, the School, or online at www.nelba.net. For more information call the school at 318.325.2077 or log onto www.mynbs.org.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Bossier: **Jeremy Camp in concert**, April 21, 7 p.m. The concert will also feature Citizen Way. For more information, call 318.746.7940. Pastor: Brad Jurkovich.

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 Scripture Crypto. 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.

wkcky cfkykoeyk riu nkwc zs wyzues: qpc
 wylky riu bitk rzcfepc gkiuzsa eo cfk gpygf psce
 aet oey fzb.
 igcu crkvjk:ozjk

Clues: K = E; W = P
Answer to March 9 Scripture Crypto: Numbers twenty-two:twenty-eight



HONOR THE PROTECTORS RA Congress 2017

Boys, 1st - 6th grade, and their leaders

Activities include: Cot race, Fireman's seat hoist, Nail Driving, Log Sawing, BB Guns, Sling Shots, Archery and much more!

For more information, visit LouisianaBaptists.org/RACongress. You can also call the Men's Ministry office at 318.448.3402 or 800.622.6549.

April 7-8, 2017
Tall Timbers, Woodworth
 Registration starts at 3:00 pm

Royal Ambassadors slated to 'Honor the Protectors'

BY STAFF

Baptist Message

WOODWORTH – The upcoming Royal Ambassador Congress will honor those who serve and protect the United States at home and abroad.

Scheduled for April 7-8 at the Tall Timbers Conference Center, the RA Congress for first through sixth grade

boys will feature testimonies from law enforcement and armed forces officers as an emphasis of this year's theme, Honor the Protectors.

"Many of the boys may never have had much interaction with a law enforcement officer or someone else who protects them," said Mike Collie, RA consultant for Louisiana Baptists. "This year's RA Congress will allow them some time with those

on the front lines while exposing them to the Gospel."

RA Congress also will include its annual Pinewood Derby, where participants display their cars before the race, and soap box races, camp craft skills competitions and presentations from David Cheatwood, a Louisiana Baptist Disaster Relief volunteer, and Bill Robertson, pastoral leadership director for Louisiana Baptists.

The cost for RA Congress is \$63 per person, based on multiple-occupancy of rooms, and includes lodging, three meals, a shirt and registration.

March 31 is the deadline to register.

For more information or to download a registration form, please visit louisianabaptists.org/racongress or call 318.449.4280.

LouisianaBaptists.org/2017CampOverview



THIS IS WHY SUMMER IS IMPORTANT

