

“Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ”

– Ephesians 4:7 (KJV)

M BAPTIST Message

Newsjournal for Louisiana Baptists

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August 31, 2017



Brian Blackwell photo

Pastor Norris Landry and the congregation of Point of Life Community Church in Plaquemine is building toward the future thanks to a \$35,000 gift from the Georgia Barnette Offering and the generosity of a number of partnering churches.

GBO funds help plant first evangelical congregation ever in Plaquemine

BY HOLLY JO LINZAY
Regional Reporter

PLAQUEMINE (LBM) – God’s provision through the Georgia Barnette State Mission Offering is being felt at every step of way in building Point of Life Community Church, the first evangelical church

to be established in the Plaquemine community.

“We didn’t have any money, but we had faith,” said Norris Landry, the founding pastor.

He was thankful for the many contributions from sister churches and individuals, but expressed special appreciation for the \$35,000

Point of Life received from the Georgia Barnette Offering.

Jacob Crawford, the newly commissioned director of missions for the Louisiana Baptist Association which includes Point of Life Community Church, said the Georgia Barnette Offering gift was not

See PLAQUEMINE on 5

‘Weary’ woman finds rest, then baptism at Blood River Baptist

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

ALBANY (LBM) – Liz Lowe was at a breaking point while recovering from a serious illness, but the long-time attendee at Blood River Baptist Church, finally found peace in the person of Jesus Christ after sitting for 30 years in the pews.

Lowe, who had been enduring years of health concerns, finally humbled her heart to Christ in March. But she resisted being baptized for months, until realizing her need to be obedient if she truly had surrendered her life to Him.

“After having such a difficult time in my life, the baptism was a really nice way to celebrate what God was doing for me,” Lowe said. “It was a great feeling to have my church and family members



Pastor David Collins baptizes Stormy Baham inside the Blood River Baptist Church worship center. Since a flood sent water into its facilities, the church has baptized 14 people.

See BLOOD RIVER on 8

NOBTS ‘Million Dollar Monday’ to benefit students

BY GARY D. MEYERS
NOBTS Communications

NEW ORLEANS – When New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary President Chuck Kelley began his day Aug. 7 he had little idea of the blessings to come: Two gifts totaling \$1 million dollars for student scholarships.

“This has been one of the greatest Mondays in the history of the institution and quite an exciting way to begin a new academic year,” Kelley said. “It was a ‘million-dollar

Monday.’”

NOBTS immediately will distribute more than \$200,000 of the money designated for student scholarships, and one-half will be used to endow annual scholarships for years to come.

“We rejoice at what God has done to lay the needs of seminary students on the hearts of Southern Baptists,” Kelley said. “Scholarships are becoming ever more important for those God has called

See MILLION DOLLAR MONDAY on 9



Submitted photo

The gifts to NOBTS will assist African American students studying on the main campus or at the North Georgia Hub in metro Atlanta; small church pastors in Montana; and expository preaching students from Mississippi.

Michael Evans to be nominated for LBC second vice president

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

FOREST HILL (LBM) – Michael Evans will be nominated for the office of second vice president for the Louisiana Baptist Convention during the 2017 LBC Annual Meeting.

Tim Lee, pastor of Smyrna Baptist Church in DeRidder, plans to nominate Evans for the position.

“Mike is very mission minded and sees the best in people,” said Lee, who has

been mentored by Evans for 22 years. “He loves the church and the mission of the church, and he has a heart for evangelism and for just encouraging and uplifting others. His example as second vice president would greatly benefit all Louisiana Baptists.”

Evans, who is pastor of Elwood Baptist Church in Forest Hill, is the only announced candidate for the office.

Evans said, if elected, he would be honored to repre-

sent his fellow bi-vocational and smaller church pastors with the state convention.

Elwood Baptist Church averages 75 in worship service and 50 in Sunday school attendance, according to Annual Church Profile statistics.

He said he also would like to help facilitate greater cooperation and stronger fellowship among pastors of churches of all sizes.

“I would like to see the Barnabas spirit spread throughout our Convention,” he said. “Barnabas’ passion was to help Paul and others with that gift of encouragement. I would like to see that spirit manifested in the LBC where we share each other’s burdens, resources and expertise.”

According to church

records, last year, Evans’ congregation contributed 16 percent of undesignated receipts to Cooperative Program supported ministries.



Pastor Mike Evans

The church also is committed to the Great Commission, baptizing six new believers last year, ACP records show.

Evans said 18 people accepted Christ this year during the church’s Vacation Bible School in July – including five Hispanic children whose parents work at nurseries around Forest Hill.

The congregation raised money to purchase a boat for a missionary who ministers to families in a fishing village in Greenland, and, also bought a portable baptistery for a church plant in Ireland.

The church also has signed up for the Harvest, Louisiana Baptists’ effort to “pray for every home and share Christ with every person.” Evans said he and his members will take part in a crusade in 2018 with other churches from Big Creek, Central Louisiana and North Rapides associations.

“The Harvest is important because it fulfills the Great Commission and involves so many churches both big and small working together,” Evans said. “It was Jesus’ command to go and we want to be a part of that happening in our community and parish.”

Before coming to Elwood, Evans was a consultant with the Louisiana Baptist Convention who helped raise money toward the completion of the Georgia Barnette Conference Center at Tall Timbers Baptist Conference Center in Woodworth.

He has served as pastor of Occupy Two Baptist Church in Pitkin and as assistant pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Forest Hill.

Active in Louisiana Baptist life, Evans is a trustee for Louisiana College and the Louisiana Baptist Federal Credit Union.

He also served as an executive board member for Beauregard Baptist Association in 2011-12.

He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Northwestern State University in Natchitoches.

Evans and his wife Betty live in Forest Hill.

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Volume 132 August 31, 2017 Number 17

Religious freedom must be a foreign policy priority

BY JOHN N. KENNEDY
U.S. Senator

"I believe that the most essential element of our defense of freedom is our insistence on speaking out for the cause of religious liberty. I would like to see this country re-dedicate itself wholeheartedly to this cause. ... We are our brothers' keepers, all of us."
President Ronald Reagan

WASHINGTON (LBM) -- If you've seen the Oscar-winning movie "Slumdog Millionaire," you've had just a glimpse of the poverty that exists in India.

Mumbai, the largest city in the country, is home to one of the world's largest slums, the Dharavi district, which alone has a million residents eking out an existence in squalid overcrowded conditions.

Some reports estimate up to 60 percent of the city's 21 million citizens live in such dire circumstances.

Unfortunately, such human tragedy is not problematic just for Mumbai. Instead, roughly eight percent of India's people live in slums and about one-sixth of the 1.31 billion citizens are impoverished, earning less than \$1.90 a day.

Religious and humanitarian organizations from around the world have been responding generously over the years, contributing time and money to help. For example, in the United States large numbers of Christians take time from school or work to travel to India, not for a five-star vacation, but to be the hands and feet of Jesus. They go on missions of compassion and charity, living out the Gospel as they help minister to the

roughly 215 million people of India who live below the poverty line.

Indeed, it was the haunting images of poverty – families living on the street, children abandoned by their widowed mothers and people so starved for food that their ribs protruded - that drew Compassion International to India in the late 1960s. This organization started by helping 400 children and by 2016 was providing aid to 145,000 young ones, giving food, clean water and educational opportunities to this country's most vulnerable victims of poverty.

Unfortunately for these children, the Indian government is using a broad provision of law to disallow the transfer of funds into the country for groups it opposes, many on religious grounds, thus coercing numerous

worthwhile non-governmental organizations out of India. Compassion International is one of these ousted entities, forced to leave after nearly 50 years of serving India's poor.

News reports indicate something on the order of 11,000 nongovernmental organizations have been impacted, causing reverberations across India in areas ranging from children's vaccinations to environmental causes.

Moreover, carrying the Gospel to India has come under attack as well, resulting from that country's crack-down on citizens' freedom of religious exercise and its leaders' obvious hostility to Christianity. Indeed, the Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board recently named India among countries of concern with respect to religious liberty because

of "on-going battles" there regarding "the right to convert to Christianity."

Since 1950, when it became a republic, India has enjoyed the status of being the world's largest democracy. So its recent trend of oppressing basic rights – and freedom of religion is a fundamental human right -- is deeply troubling.

Consequently, when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the United States several weeks ago, I asked President Trump to bring up this critical issue.

Our country and India have a long-standing relationship and I, along with several of my colleagues, encouraged the president to reiterate the importance of religious liberty in India, asking him to cham-

See KENNEDY on 5

Louisiana Baptist FOUNDATION

The Louisiana Baptist Foundation is pleased to publish its Statement of Financial Position for the year 2016. The Foundation presents this statement on-line and annually in the Louisiana Baptist *Message* for public review.

The financial statement presented was prepared from the books and records of the Louisiana Baptist Foundation. A copy of the audit report for the calendar year that ended December 31, 2016, issued by independent certified public accountants can be reviewed upon request and is available at the office of the Louisiana Baptist Foundation.

Please call the Foundation if you have further questions regarding its financial position.

Louisiana Baptist Foundation
P.O. Box 311
Alexandria, LA 71309
(318) 445-4495 www.LBFinfo.org

Statement of Financial Position - December 31, 2016

ASSETS		2016
Cash and cash equivalents	\$	10,222
Accrued receivables		17,814
Prepaid expenses		14,445
Furn., equip., leasehold improvements - net of depreciation		103,532
Other assets		721
Investments in LBF managed accounts		6,607,057
Beneficial interest in trusts and endowments		14,385
Beneficial interest in split interest agreements		230,526
Assets held for agencies and trusts		<u>158,336,612</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$	<u>165,335,314</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	\$	4,021
Accrued liabilities		176,667
Liabilities for split-interest agreements		127,562
Due to agencies and trusts		
Short Term Fund managed accounts		65,382,218
Realized/Unrealized gains (losses) not allocated		369,290
Other managed accounts		<u>92,585,103</u>
Total Liabilities		158,644,861
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted		
Operating		751,115
Designated for Short Term Fund Losses		250,000
Designated for donor advised funds		5,571,989
Permanently restricted		<u>117,349</u>
Total Net Assets		<u>6,690,453</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$	<u>165,335,314</u>

"In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Louisiana Baptist Foundation as of December 31, 2016..., and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."

from the 2016 Independent Auditor's Report dated June 16, 2017, prepared by Payne, Moore and Herrington, LLP, Certified Public Accountants; presented to the Louisiana Baptist Foundation Board of Trustees, July 25, 2017.



Does God love you and want to save you?

BY MIKE HOLLOWAY

Guest Columnist

ALEXANDRIA (LBM)-Where are we going in the Southern Baptist Convention pertaining to the love of God?

I am hearing and reading about more and more Southern Baptists who say that God does not love the world, with some using theologically hair-splitting statements like “well God doesn’t love everyone the same or with the same kind of love” to argue their point.

I would like to see the Bible verse that tells us that.

More importantly, I really want to know if the Southern Baptist Convention is moving in that direction, one that discourages me from going to my neighbor and telling Him that God loves him and has a wonderful plan for his life.

If this is the new SBC direction, then we really don’t have much of a message

of hope to a lost and dying world. We need to throw away our Gospel tracts and stop doing outreach altogether because we’d be lying to some of our neighbors if God really doesn’t love them.



Mike Holloway

I recently read an article by Lisa Bevere titled, “God Doesn’t Love His Children Equally,” in which she contends “God loves us uniquely rather than equally.”

She wrote convincingly that “unique” is better than “equal” in that “equal” implies God’s love is “measured or measurable,” and she emphasized that “His marvelous love is not subject to portion control.”

“You can turn from Him, run away and make your bed in Hell,” she added, “but your actions will not stop His love for you.”

In view of God’s love as expressed through the death, burial and resurrection of His

Son, she is right on the mark that God’s love is “immeasurable” and “inexhaustible” for us all.

Theologian and Pastor R.C. Sproul also contends that when we read about the love of God in Scripture, distinctions have to be made. But his concept of unique means, in effect, “not all.”

Sproul said, “There are three types of divine love that we find in Scripture. First is God’s benevolent love, which speaks of God’s attitude of kindness or His benevolent will that falls on everyone. Second is God’s beneficent love, which is not just His attitude of kindness but His practical kindness to all humanity. An example of this is the act of God in providing sun and rain for the flourishing of all cultures (Matthew 5:45). Third is God’s complacent love, but do not confuse the word ‘complacency’ with being careless or flippant. Theologically, this concept means God’s special love toward His people.”

We must, according to Sproul, be careful not to speak about God’s special love in terms of all people. Instead, Sproul argues that God’s special love, the atoning sacrifice by His Son, is limited.

In fact, Pastor Sproul said “it is blasphemy to say God loves the world unconditionally” -- a statement that really troubles me.

Now God may not love

what someone becomes or chooses to do with regard to sin. But, it is a mistake to believe God does not love every person enough to forgive him or her if he or she is willing to listen to God and repent, even in the case of Esau.

For instance, consider Paul’s declarations to Timothy and Titus:

-- “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:3-4).

-- “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11).

Then of course, there are the “whosoever will” passages in the Old and New Testaments, including Joel 2:32, Acts 2:21, Romans 10:12-13 and Revelation 22:17.

In light of these and so many other verses, I am puzzled about the trend in recent years of increasing numbers of Southern Baptists who argue God does not love the lost and who oppose telling people to “ask Jesus into their hearts.”

This flies in the face of such Scriptures as John 1:12, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”

Furthermore, I am convinced we must receive Jesus somewhere and the heart is

presented as the throne of our lives (see 1 Peter 3:15, for example). Paul said Christ “dwells” in our “hearts through faith” (Ephesians 3:17) and John said we know the Spirit of truth because He “dwells” in us. If not the heart, where does He dwell?

It seems we are being encouraged to discourage overt evangelism efforts across the SBC. So, it’s no wonder baptisms are down significantly in recent years.

Moreover, if we are being pushed to believe God doesn’t love the world, then why should we spend millions to send missionaries around the globe? Isn’t this being dishonest to ourselves and the nations?

I recently read “The Gospel: A Message for Every Person,” by Dr. Adam Harwood, an associate professor of theology with the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. In the article Dr. Harwood makes three theological statements: God loves every person; Christ died for every person; and, God wants to save every person. Then he gives extensive theological support for each point.

I don’t have time or space to restate his theology but it is solid. You can read the entire article on SBCToday.com.

But I mention his work because I believe Southern Baptists need to consider his three points in the context of theological and evangelistic questions: Do we believe that God loves every person? Did Jesus die for every person?

See HOLLOWAY on 8

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Plaucheville from page one

was not just a help to a local congregation, but also a strategic investment in reaching the lost.

“Often, when you think of communities with no evangelical witness, you immediately think of other areas of our nation or world,” Crawford offered. “Few people would think of Louisiana communities in this case. Yet there are many towns in South Louisiana that have no Gospel witness.

“Plaucheville literally is an unreached people group in our backyard,” he added. “It was founded in the 1840s, and as far as are aware there has never been an evangelical Protestant church of any type in Plaucheville.

“If not for grants that Point of Life received through the Georgia Barnette Offering, it would have been almost impossible to construct the first building unit for this new church plant,” Crawford continued, “which is breaking new ground in the Gospel harvest.”

LOOKING FORWARD

Norris said the church’s new building is about 75 percent complete and that the end of construction “is in sight.”

But he said there still are several projects – sheetrock, gutters, concrete, and cover – yet to be done and he is look-

Kennedy from page 3

ing for volunteers and about another \$35,000 to finish up the last bit of work.

“God has provided so much already and He will provide the volunteers and the funds needed to complete our church,” said a confident Landry. “So many have done so much already, I believe God will answer all of our needs as we make this final push.”

LOOKING BACK

For years, it had been in Landry’s heart to plant a church, and he said it was clearly God’s will that led him to Plaucheville.

At 67 years old, Landry retired from pastoring Hesser Baptist Church, where he had served since 1996.

But his retirement from ministry was short lived.

The same day he retired, he was asked by Life Point Church Pastor Jacob Crawford to serve as his associate pastor at the Mansura church.

When Crawford told Landry of his vision to plant a church in Plaucheville, it was a confirmation to him this is where God wanted him to be.

“We started praying about starting a home Bible study and that God would send a family from Plaucheville to us,” Landry recalled.

When Crawford told Landry of his vision to plant a church in Plaucheville, it was a confirmation to him this is where God wanted him to be. “We started praying about starting a home Bible study and that God would send a family from Plaucheville to us,” Landry recalled.

They agreed and the study began in January of 2015 on Tuesday nights.

“We met in their home for a year and a half. Then we felt it was time to buy land to build a church,” Landry said. So after two years as associate pastor at Life Point, it was time to plant the church.

Through a friend, Landry learned of a 5.45-acre plot of land in Plaucheville for sale at 316 Hwy 1181.

“The asking price for the property was \$26,000, but we didn’t have a penny to our name,” Landry said, “No problem, God provided.”

Several years earlier, Longview Baptist Church in Deville had sent Josh Sikes, their youth pastor, to Plaucheville in an attempt to start up a church but it never got off the ground.

COOPERATIVE MINISTRIES

“They did have a Bible study in the senior apartments. But after a year and a half of trying, they were not able to develop anything,” Landry said. “But they had raised some money, and let us know they had funds for us.”

Longview provided \$13,000, which was half the amount needed, and East Jena Baptist Church provided an additional \$12,000. They were still \$1,000 short of their goal, so Landry issued a challenged.

“I challenged our folks; and, we raised over \$1,000. God provided, and we bought the property in Plaucheville. We then were alerted about a small building for sale in Marks-ville. It was a 20 foot by 30 foot building for sale for \$6,000. First Baptist Church Blanchard agreed to buy it for us,” Landry added.

The original church building consisted of two rooms for an adult Sunday school class and a room for the children. God “provided the funding” to move the building to the Plaucheville property, and by the end of 2016, the Bible study was meeting in their own building.

The group grew to about 15 people for Bible study. Then once a month, the church group would have a dinner and an outreach at the Plaucheville Community Center, where 25 to 30 people attended.

COOPERATIVE MISSIONS

“God began to bring

everyone together,” Landry said, adding that in November 2016, the group applied for Georgia Barnette State Mission Offering funds to start construction on their property.

They received \$35,000 from the Georgia Barnette Offering and were approved for a \$50,000 bank loan to build the main facility.

Mission Builders and Kingdom Builders teams helped develop the plans, and in mid-June, volunteers showed up to help start the work.

Within a few days, the Kingdom Builders took the foundation slab to an enclosed structure, and, despite some minor delays caused by a tropical storm, put the metal roofing up in short order.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

“There is still a lot of work to be done,” Landry added.

Help is needed to hang and finish the last of the sheetrock in the worship center, and \$35,000 still is needed to fund the purchase of a steeple, and the work on the flooring, gutters, front and side porches, paint for interior, furnishings and a sound system, he said.

When completed, the 40 foot by 66 foot structure will seat about 50 for worship and include a small kitchen, two bathrooms, three classrooms and an office.

Landry hopes the entire project will be done by October.

Landry, now 70, and his wife, Donna, both agree it takes time to develop relationships and trust in the Plaucheville community, and they feel they have made good progress.

“We have a physical presence. People know we are here,” he said. For the last three years, the church

has conducted a music and arts camp for children as an outreach at the community center. More than 50 children attended this summer, and three of the children gave their hearts to Jesus.

Gloster Baptist Church paid for all of the camp’s expenses.

“There were 37 children from Plaucheville and from the families and homes we’ve been praying for. God is using this music and art camp,” said Landry.

“Everything this church does is based on faith, Landry said. “God has been faithful in taking care of us and our needs.”

Crawford was equally confident about God’s favor in this evangelistic mission and expressed gratitude for the state missions offering gift that had helped launch Point of Life Community Church.

“Thank you Louisiana Baptists for your faithfulness in giving to the Georgia Barnette Offering,” Crawford shared. “Your generosity is impacting Louisiana for the Gospel.”

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POINTS OF IMPACT:

- 600 Disaster Relief volunteers were trained in 2016.
- In south Louisiana, the Gospel was presented 1,646 times by Disaster Relief volunteers.
- 55 ministry centers supported by GBO distributed two million pounds of food.
- 200 new churches have been planted in Louisiana since 2010.
- In 2016 church plants reported 1,329 new commitments to Christ and 384 baptisms.
- Cindy Blanchard, Sanctity of Human Life/Pregnancy Resource consultant, has assisted Central Louisiana Pregnancy Center in opening this fall.
- Here for You is a multi-platform media strategy designed to give every person in Louisiana the opportunity to say “yes” to Jesus.
- Since 2014, more than 325,000 people have seen the Here for You spots. They also aired statewide during the Super Bowl and Final Four thanks to your GBO gifts!

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Blood River from page one

there to see this God-moving experience.”

Pastor David Collins celebrated Lowe’s salvation and her obedience through baptism, and he said her story is representative of how God has moved through the congregation since August 2016, when its educational building, worship center and parsonage all took in between 4 inches and 2 feet of water when the area flooded.

Since the flood, the congregation has witnessed 14 baptisms and added 32 new members.

“Through this situation, God has increased our faith and the blessings have been overwhelming,” Collins said. “All along the way through the rebuilding God has provided the money and volunteers to help us finish the work here on our facilities. It’s been humbling to see God move through the community and start a revival right here at our church that I believe will spread out into Albany and surrounding areas.”

ROAD TO RECOVERY

Without flood insurance, Blood River Baptist faced a seemingly desperate situation after the August natural disaster. The cost to rebuild was estimated at more than \$200,000.

But the congregation was able to worship in the Family Life Center that was minimally impacted, and, in the months ahead donations poured in as well as disaster relief teams and other rebuild volunteers from Louisiana, Kentucky, Michigan and Mississippi.

By mid-February, both the parsonage and worship center were move-in ready, and in July, the education building reopened.

“It felt like a fresh encounter with the Lord to move back in,” Collins. “He saw us through and provided for us.”

“That was definitely a big milestone for Blood River,” he continued. “To see everyone get back together was big time for me as their pastor because I know how it feels to be displaced in their own homes because I was one of them, living in a camper outside my parsonage for seven months until the parsonage was renovated.”

PATH TO REVIVAL

In the midst of the renovation, Collins received a divine revelation that would set the path for the revival the congregation is experiencing now.

One May morning, Collins was in the worship center when he said he felt a nudging of the Holy Spirit.

“The Lord spoke to me while I was on my knees, praying,” Collins recalled. “He said ‘you are on the altar of God and get ready for the harvest.’”

Soon after, Collins took a trip to the LifeWay Christian Resources on the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary campus and spent six hours in the store praying for God to reveal to Him what steps he should take next.

He said in the end he felt God’s leading to take his congregation through “The Fresh Encounter: Experiencing God’s Power for Spiritual Awakening.”

Developed by Blackaby Ministries, the Bible study guides believers through the biblical pattern of experiencing God’s presence which leads to revival in the church a spiritual awakening in the world.

The church has been going through the study since June, with Collins preaching a Sunday message related to the material and members participating in Wednesday night small groups to discuss the lessons.

Wednesday night attendance has grown from five at the first meeting in early June to 22 in late July. Meanwhile, Sunday morning attendance reached 151, the highest since Collins became pastor to the congregation.

The study led to one of the most powerful weeks in the life of the church, Collins said, explaining that during the July 30-Aug. 2 revival, three people came forward and were baptized.

“The Lord impressed upon me the need to start living out the theme verse of the study, 2 Chronicles 7:14,” Collins said. “People need to humble themselves to God. Revival begins with changed hearts.”

Moreover, he said, revival is needed now especially because

of the breakdown of the family.

“Satan is trying to destroy homes,” Collins said. “We are trying to do our part to reverse that here.”

Church member Russell Osborne said God has restored his joy since the August 2016 flood. A facilitator of the “Fresh Encounter” study on Wednesdays, he has seen first-hand a restoration of families.

“The revival merely helped to stir up God’s people and get them excited about reaching the world with the Gospel,” Osborne said. “The greatest blessing during the revival was seeing two precious souls get born again. That’s worth more than all the money in the world.”

“I’ve had my joy restored after going through a period of discouragement before I started attending at Blood River,” he continued. “It felt as though no doors would ever open but now God has put me in a place where there are more doors open than what I can go through.”

“What’s more exciting than anything is that God isn’t finished and is still moving,” Osborne continued. “My wife and I are more excited than ever and we look forward to what God is doing at Blood River and are eternally grateful that God is

allowing us to be a small part.”

Since revival services have concluded and the “Fresh Encounter” study is nearing its end, the church soon will turn its attention to discipleship and new outreach efforts, Collins said.

He said the congregation already offers ministry through a food and clothes pantry, and that they host a monthly community family fellowship offers people in the area an afternoon of games and food. All of which helps to draw people to worship services or Bible study.

Now they plan to do even more planned ministry.

“Instead of having a Sunday night service, we want to be of service to the community on Sundays,” Collins said, adding that they will go into the community to perform compassion ministries and share the Gospel in place of corporate worship on Sunday evenings.

“We will continue to listen to the voice of God,” Collins explained. “He’s already shown us that if He calls us to do something, He will see it through. We’ve been a very blessed congregation in which many have shown Christ’s love to us and we want to show it to them, like He’s done for us since the storm.”

Holloway from page 4

Does God want to save every person?

If we can agree the answer to all three is “yes,” there’s still hope for the SBC.

If on the other hand, there are widespread differences of opinion, or an overwhelming chorus of “no” – indicating uncertainty about whom God loves, or even if God wants to save the lost – then we might be better served to spend our ministry dollars on a social

gospel just like the lodge groups down the road.

Mike Holloway is pastor of Ouachita Baptist Church in West Monroe. He serves on the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee and as chair of Louisiana Baptists’ Moral and Social Concerns Committee, and, is a past president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention (2007-2009).

LIVING PROOF

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September 16, 2017

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Million Dollar Monday from page one

to the church and the mission field.”
The gifts will assist African American students studying on the main campus or at the North Georgia Hub in metro Atlanta; small church pastors in Montana; and expository preaching students from Mississippi.

One anonymous donor sent a check for \$200,000 to be used immediately as a part of the Fred Luter Jr. African American scholarship program – a scholarship the donor established in 2011. One hundred and fifty thousand dollars will provide scholarships in New Orleans; \$50,000 will fund scholarships at the North Georgia Hub.

“Southern Baptists need to become more and more racially and ethnically diverse if we are to reach our nation and our world,” Kelley said. “An anonymous donor has been greatly blessed and inspired by the ministry of pastor Fred Luter and wants more God-called African Americans like Dr. Luter to be able to receive quality theological education.”

To date the seminary has awarded \$878,616 through the Fred Luter Jr. Scholarship Fund – \$800,641 in New Or-



Submitted photo

NOBTS President Chuck Kelley said initiatives like the Caskey scholarship, the Montana and Wyoming scholarships and the million dollars just received now provides full-tuition scholarships to pastors in five states.

leans and \$77,975 through the North Georgia Hub. During the past 12 semesters, an average of 102 scholarships per semester have been awarded on the main campus. The scholarship program launched at the North Georgia Hub during the 2015 fall semester and provides nearly 20 scholarships per semester.

“We have watched these scholarships literally change the composition of our student body,” Kelley said. “Our goal is to continue to enhance the diversity in our seminary family and to encourage a

growing diversity within the Southern Baptist Convention.”

The largest of the “million-dollar Monday” gifts – a check for \$550,000 – provides full-tuition awards to small church pastors in Montana and establishes an endowment to perpetuate the initiative.

Fifty thousand dollars will be used to fund the initiative for the first two years while the endowment corpus builds. After the first two years, interest drawn from the \$500,000 endowment will be used to fund the scholarships. The scholarship is available to

Montana pastors studying at the undergraduate or graduate level.

Already, two students from Montana have been identified and will receive the scholarship for 2017-2018.

Kelley said the anonymous donor who established the Montana initiative was inspired by the Caskey Center scholarship program which offers full-tuition gifts for smaller church pastors and bi-vocational ministers in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. The same donor previously funded full-tuition scholarships for small church pastors in Wyoming.

Kelley hopes that initiatives like the Caskey scholarships and the Montana and Wyoming scholarships will inspire additional gifts to aid students.

“This gives us five states with full-tuition scholarships for pastors serving small churches,” Kelley said. “Five states down; 45 to go.”

One of the “million-dollar Monday” donors also provided \$250,000 in grants for Mississippi students to study expository preaching through the Adrian Rogers Center for Expository Preaching at NOBTS. The new preaching scholarships will launch during the 2018 fall semester.

“Dr. Adrian Rogers is

one of the most significant graduates in the history of NOBTS,” Kelley said. “He was quite well-known as a Southern Baptist leader, but the hallmark of his ministry was always outstanding biblical exposition. We want to raise up a whole generation of preachers in the tradition of Dr. Adrian Rogers.”

The newly-established Adrian Rogers Center will be formally dedicated during chapel services Sept. 12. The center exists to train the next generation of biblical expositors and to provide resources and continuing education opportunities to enhance the pulpit ministry to local church pastors. For more on the Adrian Rogers Center, visit www.nobts.edu/rogerscenter.

“We at NOBTS love the Word of God. We love having the privilege of equipping and resourcing those who have been called to teach the Word of God to our churches and consider this an investment of the highest order,” said Adam Hughes, director of the Adrian Rogers Center and dean of the chapel. “This scholarship fund, and future ones we are trusting God to provide, will help students prepare to preach the Bible with accuracy, conviction, and excellence for a lifetime of ministry in the local church.”

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8 REASONS YOU'LL LOVE TITHING
"TEST ME NOW IN THIS" MAL 2:10

- 1. IT'S WORSHIP**
Whether you're in a church with electric guitars or pipe organs, everybody should have an opportunity to give because from Genesis to Revelation giving is true worship. You are saying, "Lord, above everything, I believe in You. It all belongs to You! This is a symbol of my complete belief, trust, and dependence on You to be my everything."
- 2. IT'S A PROMISE**
Here's the deal, the Lord says, "If you'll be faithful in this area of obedience, I promise you that I'll take care of everything you're going to need. Trust me in this. You cannot out-give me."
- 3. IT'S A TEACHER**
If you want to teach your kids the best way to handle money and to be financially responsible, teach them about the tithe. Tithing teaches us how to avoid the virus of materialism and learn the bliss of generosity.
- 4. IT'S A BLESSING**
Once you begin the journey of tithing and generosity, it will enrich your life far beyond any money you hold on to.
- 5. IT'S A PROVISION**
When you tithe, you're taking care of the facilities of your church, the minister(s) and their families. If your church gives through the Cooperative Program you are a blessing to ministries and missions all over the world.
- 6. IT'S A TEST**
Throughout scripture, God is continually testing those who follow him. From Genesis to Revelation we see men and women struggling with a God who dares them to trust Him a little more every day. But there is one area of our lives where God invites us to test Him. It is in this thing called the tithe. He says, "Test me! I dare you! I will come through."
- 7. IT'S AN INVESTMENT**
So much of the resources we spend are slippery. They're spent on things that will be broken, consumed, experienced, expired, and cast aside. The investment of the tithe is sure.
- 8. IT'S ETERNAL**
We are investing in a kingdom that is built to last. And last FOREVER!

8 MORE REASONS TO GIVE
"TEST ME NOW IN THIS" MAL 2:10

- 1. IT'S A MIRACLE**
When you open yourself up to giving through the tithe you get a glimpse into the supernatural. Ask a tither if supernatural provision has ever happened in their years of giving and inevitable the answer is, "Yes."
- 2. IT'S A FAITH BUILDER**
Tithing strengthens your faith muscles. Once you begin to trust your money to God, you'll find that it's easier to trust Him with everything else in your life.
- 3. IT'S A JOY**
There's a deep feeling of bliss that comes from giving with no regard for receiving. Givers are the happiest people on the face of the earth.
- 4. IT'S UNIFYING**
Tithing believers are believers that say to God and their church family, "I'm all in." Tithing husbands and wives are saying to each other, "There's something a whole lot bigger going on in our marriage than just us."
- 5. IT'S CONTAGIOUS**
Once tithers experience God in giving, they want to share with others about the grace and provision God has provided. As we share the joy of giving, others are inspired to give.
- 6. IT'S TAX-DEDUCTIBLE**
Yup, it's the most minor benefit. But it's a benefit!
- 7. IT'S A GREED SLAYER**
One of the most debilitating characteristics of unhappy people is greed and it spills over into every area of our generosity.
- 8. IT'S BIBLICAL**
Last, but not least, give because it's a Biblical principle and promise. "Bring the full tenth into the storehouse so that there may be food in My house. Test Me in this way," says the Lord of Hosts. "See if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure." Malachi 3:10

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Renewal weekend set for African American pastors

BY STAFF
Baptist Message

WOODWORTH – Southern Baptists of Texas Convention African American Fellowship President Tony Mathews will headline a Louisiana Baptist conference next month for African American pastors and their wives wanting to be intentional in Acts 1:8 missions.

Scheduled Sept. 8-9 at the Tall Timbers Conference Center in Woodworth, the conference also will feature worship by Thomas Eugene Keys III, worship minister at Calvary Baptist Church in Shreveport. The conference will include a wives event on Saturday morning led by Carolyn Fountain, spouse of Leroy Fountain, church health strategist for the New Orleans Baptist Association.

During the 25 years he has served as pastor of North Garland Baptist Fellowship, Mathews has led the congregation to help plant eight churches and sponsor church mission trips to Brazil, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Paso, Guatemala, India, Japan, Kenya, Laredo, Madagascar,

Mexico, Montreal, Panama, Peru, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Tanzania and Venezuela. He is a published author of several books, and he has preached, lectured and conducted seminars in a number of cities across the United States.

The idea for the conference and retreat was birthed in a conversation between Wayne Sheppard, coordinator of Partnership Missions, for Louisiana Baptists, and Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church and a former president of the SBC.

“We are excited to provide this weekend of encouragement, training, and inspiration for all Louisiana Baptist African American pastors and wives,” Sheppard offered, “and to give them a brief retreat.”

Registration is free before Sept. 1, as a joint gift of the Louisiana Baptist Partnership Missions and the Louisiana Baptist Missions and Ministry team. The conference will begin at 5 p.m. Sept. 8, and conclude at noon the following day.

To register, visit louisianabaptists.org/castthenet.

LOUISIANA NOTABLES

ON THE MOVE

- **Steven (wife Pammie) McAbee** is the new pastor of Open Door Fellowship in Coushatta.
- **Avery Dixon** is the new pastor at Trinity Baptist Church, Hammond.
- **Bobby LeCompte** is the new discipleship minister at Bedico Baptist Church, Ponchatoula.
- **Casey Stark** is the new pastor at First Baptist Church, Slidell.
- **Zach Husser** is the new minister of music/discipleship at Westside Baptist Church, Ponchatoula.
- **Blake Becnel** is the new minister to young adults at Westside Baptist Church, Ponchatoula.
- **Ray Werline** is the new pastor at Woodhaven Baptist Church, Tickfaw.

HOMECOMING

- First Baptist Church, Doyline: **93rd Homecoming**, September 10, 10 a.m., special music; 11 a.m., Worship service; dinner on the grounds will be held following the service. Guest Speaker: **Ray Hearron**. Special Music: **Bruce Lee**. Pastor: Paul Pierson.
- Welcome Home Baptist Church, Hebert: **Homecoming**, September 10, 10:30 a.m. Speaker: **Tony Robinson**. Special Music: **Kinetek**. Pastor: Jim McKeithen.

REVIVAL

- Calvary Baptist Church, Forest Hill: **Revival**, September 3-6, Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. Evangelist: **Wayne Jones from Freedom Mission, Logansport LA**. Special Music: **Josh & Vallery Dixon**. Pastor: Wayne Dunn.
- Carolina Baptist Church, Saline: **Revival**, September 3-6, Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell, chalk artist**. Pastor: Ken Roberts.
- Social Springs Baptist Church, Ringgold: **Fall Revival**, September 3-10, 6 p.m. nightly. Evan-

gelist: **Richard Kaufman**. Special Music: **Donna Weaver**. Pastor: James Hester.

- Summerville Baptist Church, Summerville: **Revival**, September 7-9, Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell, chalk artist**.
- Temple Baptist Church, Jena: **LaSalle Baptist Association Evangelistic Event**, September 9, 6:30-8 p.m. Evangelist: **Casey Johnson**. Worship: **Broken Vessels (Tory Dardar)**. This event is designed to reach all ages and is in conjunction with the Louisiana Baptist Convention's Harvest initiative, which is designed to reach every household by 2018. The theme is John 4:35. Pastor: Johnnie Phillips, Evangelistic Coordinator.
- First Baptist Church, Ferriday: **Delta Baptist Associational Evangelism Rally**, September 10, 6 p.m. Guest Speaker: **Wayne Jenkins**. Special Music: Glen Roberts. Pastor: William Joshua Morea.
- Philadelphia Baptist Church at Horseshoe Drive, Alexandria: **Celebration of Hope Revival**, September 10-13, Sunday, 10:45 a.m. & 6 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. Evangelist: **David Hankins**. Pastor: Clay Fuqua.
- Richey Baptist Church, Deville: **Revival**, September 10-13, Sunday 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday 7 p.m. Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell, chalk artist**. Pastor: Grady Dodge.
- Emmanuel Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Fall Revival**, September 10-13, 10:45 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, 6 p.m. Evangelist: **Steve Hale**. Pastor: Chad Hardbarger.
- Welcome Home Baptist Church, Hebert: **Revival**, September 11-13, 6:30 p.m. nightly. Guest Speaker: **Tony Robinson**. Special Music: **Rick and Jenny Duckett**. Pastor: Jim McKeithen.
- Tillou Baptist Church, Bastrop: **Revival**, September 13-16. Evangelist: **Rubin Weaver**, Friday and Saturday. Pastor: Taylor Freeland.
- Coteau Baptist Church, Houma: **Renew & Refresh Revival**, September 14-17, Thursday-Saturday, 7 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m. Speakers: **Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church**, (Thursday) and **Bill Robertson, LBC Pastoral**

Leadership Director (Friday – Sunday). Special Music: **LeFevre Quartet**. Pastor: Wayne Hunt.

LAGNIAPPE

- Milldale Baptist Church, Zachary: **Labor Day Bible Conference**, September 1-4, Begins 6:30 Fridays and ends noon Monday. Evangelist: **Bob Pitman, Malcolm Ellis, Jimmy Robertson, Paul Tsika, Roc Collins**. Music: **Fred Guilbert**. Pastor: Jason Robertson.
- Social Springs Baptist Church, Ringgold: **“Whoever Will” Men’s Conference**, September 2, 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Cost: No charge -- open to all adult men. Pastor: James Hester.
- Trinity Baptist Church, Pineville: **The Southern Plainsmen in concert**, September 3, 6 p.m. We will have a love offering for the Plainsmen. Pastor: Darryl Hoychick.
- First Baptist Church, DeRidder: **An Evening with Phillips, Craig & Dean**, September 7, 6:30 p.m. Cost: \$20 general admission. For more information, call 337.463.9047 or go online www.fbcderridder.org. Pastor: Josh Eubanks.
- Ebenezer Baptist Church, Jonesboro: **North Central Baptist Association presents its annual Men and Boys Rally 2017**, September 7, 6:30 p.m. Speaker: **Wilton Wall**. Special Music: **Donald Rudd**. A full meal will be provided free of charge. For more information and/or to sign up, please call Wayne Morrow at 318.259.2162 or 318.628.0505. Pastor: Wayne Morrow.
- Washington Baptist Church, Washington: **Joe Aulds guest speaker**, September 10, 11 a.m. Pastor: Louis Charrier.
- First Baptist Church, Pineville: **First@First Business Leader Luncheon**, September 11, noon. Speaker: **Jessica Thacker, communication professor at Louisiana State University at Alexandria**. Cost: \$10 and you may pay at the door. Please RSVP to Melinda Langford (mlangford@fbcpineville.net). Pastor: Stewart Holloway.



Rose Mary Martin was selected to direct the \$1500 gift for the 2nd quarter of 2017. She chose her church, **Beulah Baptist in Mansfield**, to be the recipient and they intend to use it for benevolence in their community.

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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.

rddm yd odfeunrpnu, ysxy gn rdun qdy ysdun

ysbqwu gsbts gn sxpn gedfwsy, ify ysxy gn

entnbpn x afrr engxej.

untdqj zdsq nbwsy

Clues:
D = O; R = L

Answer to August 17 Scripture Crypto:
Jonah four: seven

Children in Louisiana Need Your Help!

There is a tremendous shortage of foster and adoptive families across Louisiana.

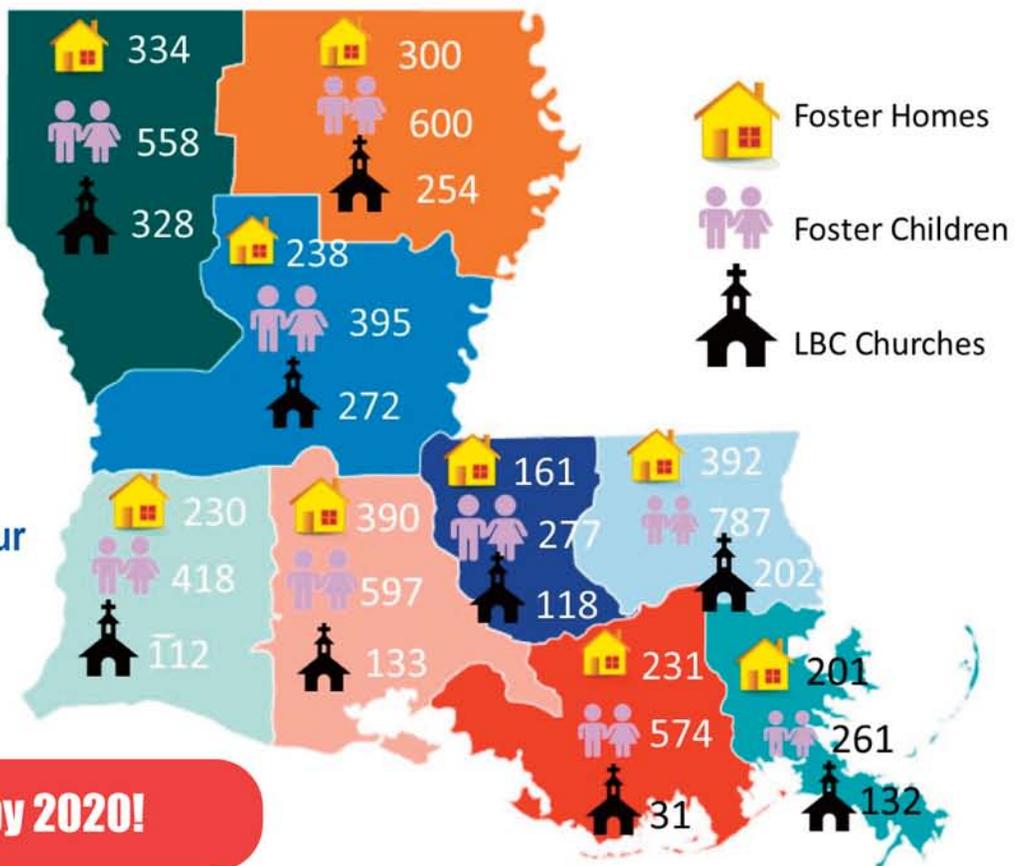


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Margie Nielsen
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Key Areas In Reaching Our State (KAIROS) #10 in the LBC 2020 Commission strategy includes Louisiana Baptist Children's Home & Family Ministries pursuing initiatives that reach children in distress (such as foster care & adoption strategies).

Louisiana Baptist Children's Home & Family Ministries