

LOUISIANA YEC 2017

# A LIFE CHANGING MOMENT

## 1,081 students respond to Christ

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL  
Message Staff Writer

LAFAYETTE (LBM) –The 2017 Youth Evangelism Celebration wrapped up its three-year run in Lafayette on a high note, seeing 1,081 students make decisions for Christ.

The annual event returns to its traditional home in Alexandria next year.

“YEC was truly a celebration

of the past and present,” Louisiana Baptists Youth Ministry Strategist Steve Maltempti said. “The Lord continues to bless and propel YEC forward. Students and teenagers are engaged with the Gospel message.”

During the Nov. 19-20 gathering inside Lafayette’s Cajundome, 5,929 Louisiana Baptist students were challenged by evangelist Clayton King to share what Christ

See STUDENTS on 2



Brian Blackwell photo

Two young girls worship by song led by Rush of Fools during the 2017 Youth Evangelism Celebration. The event also featured a concert by Building 429.

## ECON 2018: Pressing hard toward Harvest

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL  
Message Staff Writer

PINEVILLE (LBM) – After two years of praying and preparing for the largest joint evangelistic effort in the state among Louisiana Baptists, the time for Harvest has arrived.

This year-long statewide soul-winning effort will launch with the 2018 state Evangelism Conference, known as ECON, Jan. 22-23, at the First Baptist Church in Pineville.

“God truly has blessed us with the largest number of Louisiana Baptist churches ever to commit to work together on a specific evangelistic initiative,” Keith Manuel, evangelism associate for Louisiana Baptists, said. “Whether it is through a church participating individually or in a group through their association, we are praying for the lost to receive prayer, hear the Gospel, be saved, baptized and become a vibrant, growing disciple of Jesus in these congregations. The enlistment was great. Now the real joy comes as we meet, pray, and share the Good News with our neighbors.”

See ECON on 3

Hundreds of students came forward to the stage when Evangelist Clayton King made an altar call during the 2017 Youth Evangelism Celebration in the Lafayette Cajundome. In all, 1,081 students made decisions for Christ during the four worship sessions.



## Cajun Baptists & Haitian Creoles

By Will Hall • Message Editor

The arrival of a 44-member team of Louisiana Baptists, Oct. 14, launched a week of compassionate aid and spiritual ministry to hundreds of residents of Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas, offering hope in the form of medical and dental services, construction work, safe drinking water filter installations and upkeep, and, the sharing of the Gospel as part of these compassion efforts, Vacation Bible School, and door-to-door community evangelism.

See the complete story on page 8-10



Anna Cook, a member of Istrouma Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, snuggles with a young Haitian girl during a visit to an orphanage. The Louisiana Baptist mission team made the stop on the way to visit the future site of the LBC children's village in Haiti.



# Students from page one

has done in their lives and to lean on God's truth.

"The biggest lie is God doesn't love you," King told the students. "That's a lie. God loves you. He loved you so much that He made a path for you to be saved."

During all four sessions, King offered a chance for students to step forward and respond to the call of the Holy Spirit. He said simply knowing the truth of redemption through Christ does not set a person free but rather believing and making

a decision.

"Every one of us is more lost than we ever dreamed but we are more loved than we can ever imagine," he said. "God will never lie to you. Satan will lie to you for the rest of your life. God loves us so much He is willing to tell us when we are wrong."

"Jesus came to change the way it is, to give us all a brand new life and a brand new identity," he continued. "And you get to choose which one you believe. You've got to do what He commands."

By the end of the two-day spiritual encounter, 1,081 students had made some type of faith decision: 325 statements of belief, 212 responses to a call to ministry, 463 acts of repentance

to restore fellowship with Christ and 81 other commitments.

King also charged the local churches that brought the students to disciple, baptize and encourage them.

The theme was "Now," based on 2 Corinthians 6:2 "Now is the day of salvation."

Along with King's messages, the students were treated to music by Rush of Fools, acts of illusion by Brock Grill and testimonies from students around the state. YEC 2017 concluded with a concert led by Building 429.

The common theme throughout the sessions was a challenge to students to share their faith with classmates, family members, co-workers and others. During the Monday afternoon session, King even led participants through a training session on how to use "The Road to Life" tract to share the Gospel.

He encouraged them not to succumb to the fears Satan places in the hearts regarding evangelism but rather face it with the power of Christ.

"Every one of you has a story to tell," King told the students. "The most important thing is that you mean what you say and that you are willing to tell them your story."

This was the second of a seven-year rotation to equip students with tools to share Christ. For those who began as a seventh grader during the 2016 YEC, they will be trained with seven different evangelistic tools by the time they are seniors.

## CHANGED LIVES

Bailey Hayes, an eighth grader from Parkview Baptist Church, Monroe, was among the students who experienced salvation at YEC. He repented and plans to be baptized as soon as possible.

"The high point was committing my life to Jesus," Hayes said. "I got saved and had just an awesome and extraordinary time."

Hannah Carnes, a senior from Chesnut Drive Baptist Church, Lufkin, Texas, was inspired by King's messages.

"He has a gift of getting through to students like me," Carnes said. "I liked how he shared how the lie of believing 'it's okay to sin' was just not right."


Josh Barnett, an eighth grader from Crossgate Baptist Church, Robert, said returning to YEC was a chance to recharge his spiritual life and to witness fellow members of his church youth group accept Christ.

"YEC helps keep that fire for Christ in our hearts," Barnett said. "It makes me happy and jump for joy."

## CALLING THE CALLED

King's calls for students to step up covered a wide variety of subjects, the final one asked them to respond to the call to vocational ministry. He told students how he accepted Christ

See STUDENTS on 4



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# ECON from page one

The groundwork for the initiative to “pray for every home and share Christ with every person” began in the fall of 2015 with a small group of leading pastors. Strategy development and the enlistment of churches were undertaken in 2016. Statewide evangelism training sessions were held in 2017 and different methods were piloted.

Now, there will be a concerted push by nearly 900 Louisiana Baptist churches in concentrated prayer and soul-winning activities. The cooperative effort includes a diversity of approaches such as multi-church crusades, door-to-door outreach, one-on-one evangelism, single-church revivals and

other activities which leverage compassion ministries to share about the love of Christ.

The vision has caught on, with church participation far-exceeding the original goal of 700 partnering congregations.

## EVANGELISM FOCUS

ECON will feature inspiring messages by speakers from Louisiana and beyond. Each message will center around the theme verse, John 4:35.

The first two sessions on Jan. 22 will feature Ron Herrod, founder of RHEMA ministry; Iris Blue, co-founder of Duane and Iris Blue ministries; Sammy Tippit, founder of Sammy Tip-

pit Ministries; and Brent Crowe, vice president of Student Leadership University.

Prior to Crowe’s message, students will gather inside the church family life center for a pizza party and entertainment. Organizers are encouraging churches around the state to host simultaneous similar events – including the showing of the live Internet broadcast of Crowe’s message – to broaden the geographic reach of this Harvest event.

The remaining sessions of ECON will be broadcast over the Internet as well.

## STUDENT FOCUS

Steve Maltempi, youth strategist for Louisiana Baptists, said youth ministers and students learned more about the pizza party outreach event during the Youth Evangelism Celebration, Nov. 19-20, at the Cajundome in Lafayette.

“We are privileged and honored to have leadership that understands the importance of youth ministry enough to highlight it at the State Evangelism Conference,” Maltempi said. “As far as I know, Louisiana Baptists are the first to do this.

“This is important as we

continue to focus efforts on reaching the next generation and show churches how to ‘grow young,’” he continued. “Last year, 20 students were saved at Student Night at ECON. It was not just high energy, but it was spirit-filled and God-honoring as students considered their salvation condition. We are praying God will bless ECON again with a harvest of souls — both young and old.”

The final day of ECON will feature Ken Weathersby, vice president for convention advancement for the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention; Duane Blue, co-founder of Duane and Iris Blue ministries; Rick Gage, founder of GO TELL Ministries; Karen Abercrombie, an actress on the movie “War Room”; Greg Frizzell, founder and president of Gregory Frizzell Prayer and Renewal Ministries; and Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans and a former Southern Baptist Convention president.

Ray Jones will return to the ECON for a second consecutive year to lead music and will be joined by: the Community Bible praise team from San

Antonio, Texas; Larnelle Harris, an award-winning Gospel artist; and a combined mass choir from local churches.

The conference also will feature breakout sessions and the senior adult lunch, both on Tuesday, Jan. 23.

Topics for the sessions will be geared toward equipping leaders for the Harvest initiative. Topics include how to pray for every home, coordinating a small town crusade and holding an effective simultaneous revival.

“Harvest has the potential to be the largest evangelistic effort LBC has ever led out in,” said Wayne Jenkins, evangelism and church growth team leader for Louisiana Baptists. “It is still not too late to be involved.”

## SENIOR FOCUS

The senior adult lunch at 11:15 a.m. Jan. 23 will feature messages by Abercrombie and Frizzell and music by Harris as well as Voices of Louisiana College.

Tickets for the lunch are \$12 and should be ordered no later than Jan. 17.

**For more information about ECON, visit LouisianaBaptists.org/ECON.**



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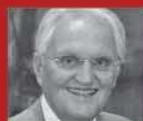
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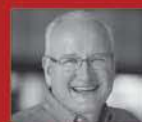
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**Greg Frizzell**  
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**Fred Luter**  
New Orleans, LA



**Ray Jones**  
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# 85-year-old lawyer a 'free will' proponent of Baptist causes

By WILL HALL

Message Editor

ALEXANDRIA (LBM)—Attorney at law Hugh B. Exnicios is pursuing God's vision for him at age 85 by announcing a call to like-minded lawyers and notary publics to join him in providing free wills to Louisiana Baptists as a means to encourage bequests to support Baptist causes "in perpetuity."

## WHAT THE NUMBERS MEAN

Exnicios said he was inspired by an April 7, 2016 article in the *Baptist Message* that shared data indicating that among tithers only 3 percent had made arrangements in a "last will and testament" to continue funding the evangelistic and compassion ministries they had supported with their tithes.

He said the research showed that as many as 37 percent of these faithful tithers would make bequests of their estates "if asked."

"I spoke to Executive Direc-

tor Wayne Taylor at the Louisiana Baptist Foundation and he told me that this would translate into about \$60 million each year in support for Louisiana Baptist missions and ministries," Exnicios said, "if just one person in each of our churches tithed on their estates."

"I didn't realize that there were more than 1,600 churches at the time," he said, "and Taylor asked me, 'How are you going to cover the whole state? How are you going to bring this vision into reality?'"

## PLANNING THE WORK

Exnicios drew on his study of the Bible for spiritual guidance, noting passages from Isaiah 6:8, 1 Thessalonians 5:27 and John 3:27, for instance, to reassure himself that God will send helpers if He has given the vision.

But he also touched base with his friend David Maxwell, minister of education and outreach with New Zion Baptist Church in Covington, who is a

partner in this ministry effort.

Maxwell said he told Exnicios "the best platform" for getting out the word to faithful Louisiana Baptists was the *Baptist Message*. "Their readers are the people who are staying informed about our cooperative missions and ministries," he said. "They are engaged and support Baptist causes."

## WORKING THE PLAN

So, he and Exnicios are calling on lawyers and notaries from around the state to contact DASH Memorial Ministries to volunteer.

Both said the volunteerism will be focused on helping individuals to craft olographic wills (in the person's own handwriting), and with adding a codicil (a handwritten amendment) to an existing will. No fees or charges are incurred in producing either of these legal instruments.

Again, they emphasized that their hope is to encourage Louisiana Baptists to include Baptist causes with bequeaths from their



File photo

Eighty-five-year-old attorney Hugh B. Exnicios is calling for lawyers and notary publics to join him in providing free wills to Louisiana Baptist seniors and encourage estate planning to support Baptist causes.

estates.

Exnicios added that an olographic will can include provisions for a special needs child or similar situation, and include a donation of real estate, automobiles or even farm equipment.

However, if someone wants to create a trust, he plans to send those persons to the Louisiana Baptist Foundation for assistance.

## A LASTING DIFFERENCE

Taylor said he welcomed Exnicios' and Maxwell's efforts through the DASH Memorial Ministry initiative for the potential aid it will offer to important Baptist causes.

He said it will help spread the message of "how to be a good steward of your estate," recalling a recent situation that illustrated how estate planning makes a difference in extending the impact of a lifetime of stewardship.

"A lady came in to see how she could leave money for the Children's Home," he said. But she did not follow up on the work on the actual estate plan. "She took notes, but did not come back.

"Now, the executor knows that the lady wanted to donate to the Children's Home, but the amount she could have given has been reduced by unnecessary legal expenses," he said. "If people will utilize the Founda-

tion, we can help them reduce costs and maximize their gifts."

"In the same spirit, DASH Memorial Ministry is offering to help Louisiana Baptists save the costs of crafting a last will and testament," Taylor said.

Will Robbins, pastor of First Baptist Church of Folsom, where Exnicios is a member, called him "a faithful Louisiana Baptist with a sense of vision."

"Hugh is a catalyst for missions and ministry and he has a passion for Baptist causes," he said.

Exnicios explained that the name for DASH Memorial Ministry came from the "dash" between the date of birth and date of death that is common on tombstones.

He said he wants Louisiana Baptists to imagine a second "dash" after the date of death to signify a "spiritual continuance" from leaving a bequest.

"It's a symbolic way to look at the difference you can continue to make with your life's work by simply making a will and including a gift from your estate to those precious ministries you supported with your tithes."

**Attorneys or notary publics who want more information about volunteering with DASH Memorial Ministry to help with free wills for Louisiana Baptists should contact Hugh Exnicios by phone, (985) 630-4549, or David Maxwell via email, David@NewZion.net.**

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## Students from page 2

at the age of 14 during a youth rally in Greer, South Carolina, and that less than a year later he was preaching his first sermon.

King encouraged the students to step out in faith and accept the Holy Spirit's calling, whatever it may be, even though He might not have revealed the specifics of His plan.

"When God calls you, you may not know the abilities He has equipped you with," King said. "My prayer is tonight some of you will begin to feel that and sense that and say Jesus I will go."

He challenged the students

not to give in to the temptation of gaining fame, and urged them, instead, to choose a path of service to Christ.

"It's not about you," he said. "It's not for you. It's not so you can make a name for yourself. When God calls you into ministry, He calls you into ministry so you can call them out of sin and call them to Jesus."

This is the final year for YEC in the Cajundome. Next year, YEC returns to the Rapides Parish Coliseum in Alexandria, where it enjoyed a 27-year run before renovations of the facilities forced a move south.



# YEC students learn, share Jesus

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

LAFAYETTE (LBM) – When Clayton King encouraged nearly 6,000 students at the 2017 Youth Evangelism Celebration to share Christ with someone while they were in Lafayette, ninth grader Kylan Davis just a few hours later accepted that challenge by leading another person to a relationship with Jesus.

As Davis was enjoying a smoothie at a restaurant with fellow members of the First Baptist Church, Houma, youth group Nov. 20, he reached in his pocket and pulled out “The Road to Life” tract King used earlier in the afternoon as a guide to demonstrate how to share the Gospel.

Moments later, the Holy Spirit moved Davis to share Christ with Todd, a manager at the restaurant.

Apprehensive at first, Davis moved forward in obedience, nonetheless, asking the man if he had a few minutes to chat.

“When I asked Todd if he wanted to receive Jesus in his life, he said, ‘Sure,’” Davis said. “I could tell the Holy Spirit was moving. I never thought I would be sharing the Gospel with someone that day, but for some reason I reached for the tract that Clayton King used to walk us through sharing Christ.”

Now that he has experienced the joy of leading someone to Christ, Davis said he no longer is afraid to share the Gospel.

“A lot of the fear is in your head,” Davis said. “If you share the Gospel you might save someone ... and that’s scary to Satan. He will try to plant ideas in your head to prevent you from doing it because he knows, if you are successful, that’s one less person in Hell.”

While leading someone to Christ was joyful enough, Davis experienced another spiritual high point a few days later when he decided to follow through with a decision he

had been putting off more than a year – his own baptism.

A Christian since August 2016, Davis was waiting for “the perfect conditions” before getting baptized. But in late October, Davis accepted that would likely never happen, acknowledging that Satan was trying to prevent him from taking that step of obedience, too.

“When it happened, it was incredible,” continued Davis, who was baptized Nov. 26. “It gave me such a sense of peace afterwards. And I still feel that peace a few days later.”

Davis is one of 57 people – including 15 members of the youth group – baptized through late November at the First Baptist Church in Houma, which averages 972 in Sunday morning worship, according to Annual Church Profile statistics. Youth Minister Chet Bergeron said his students are stepping up to share their faith with friends and inviting them to church, noting that 19 members of his youth group made decisions for Christ at YEC.



Submitted photo

Ninth-grader Kylan Davis (left) and Chet Bergeron, youth minister at First Baptist Houma, had a memorable time at YEC. Davis shared Christ with someone while in Lafayette, and a few days later followed through in obedience to Christ by being baptized.

“There is no doubt God is moving through Clayton’s ministry and I’m grateful that my students responded to God’s Word and stepped out into action by following through with baptism, sharing their faith, and encouraging one another along the way,” Bergeron said. “Kylan Davis

was fired up to use the tool that Clayton King taught him during that last session we had with him and God blessed it. This not only encouraged Kylan, but the whole group as they were so excited to see what living out the Christian faith looks like on the front lines.”

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Brian Blackwell photo

Ken Freeman prays for those making a decision during a session of the Rescue Family Revival at Marksville High School. This was one of the largest evangelistic efforts for Louisiana Baptists in Avoyelles Parish.

## Four evangelistic campaigns in state 'bring in the sheaves'

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

ALEXANDRIA (LBM) – Organizers of recent evangelistic outreaches throughout the state may have used different approaches to share the Gospel but have achieved similar results – scores of the lost making decisions for Christ.

### RESCUE REVIVAL

The Rescue Family Revival took place Nov. 10-12 at Marksville High School, marking one of the largest evangelistic outreach efforts for Louisiana Baptists in Avoyelles Parish.

In the end, this harvest yielded 42 decisions for Christ.

Prior to the revival, volunteers from Life Point Community Church, Mansura, and Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville, held block parties in Bunkie, Cottonport, Mansura, Marksville and Simmesport featuring games, food, a basketball tournament and a classic car show – with invitations to attend a worship service at Marksville High School featuring drama and music by the Philadelphia Baptist youth group and a powerful Gospel message from evangelist Ken Freeman.

Freeman focused his messages on rescuing the perishing.

"We want to be a part of your rescue," Freeman said. "In life today the only thing that's going to save you is Jesus Christ."

Freeman shared about his own experience with God's saving grace that was punctuated by an absentee father, alcoholic mother and a life that was out of control.

He said his encounter with Christ only happened because he accepted a friend's invitation to church 50 years ago – as a means to meet girls. But Jesus used his selfish motive to transform his heart, and Freeman said his life has never been the same.

For more than 30 years, Freeman has shared the Gospel at more than 3,000 churches and witnessed more than 200,000 individuals make decisions for Jesus – including 134 who responded to the Holy Spirit during a revival he conducted last October at Tioga High School, and, 16 who accepted Jesus at a Wednesday night service, Jan. 18, at Philadelphia Baptist.

Leading up to the Avoyelles Parish revival, Freeman spoke in area schools to support their character development programs.

Prayer and fasting were essential elements of the harvest, Life Point Pastor Jacob Crawford told the *Baptist Message*. His congregation held multiple focused prayer gatherings and distributed 100,000 fliers advertising the event.

"Jesus rescued so many people this weekend," Crawford said. "I cannot express how appreciative we are to Philadel-

See CAMPAIGNS on 7

*The staff of the Louisiana Baptist Federal Credit Union would like to wish everyone a grace-filled and meaningful Christmas.*

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# Campaigns from page 6

phia Baptist Church and Youth Pastor Stuart Sasser. Their sacrificial love and service are an inspiration to our church and the entire state convention. It was amazing to see Philadelphia's students leading other students to Christ. They could have volunteered their time to go anywhere in the United States or world to do what they did, but they came to Avoyelles Parish. God blessed their faithfulness."

Among the Gospel conversations Crawford led, a block party encounter with a teenager named Jeremy was particularly memorable. The young man declined Crawford's invitation to attend the block party, but went to the Nov. 10 block party at Bunkie anyway – a change of mind that led to his change of heart.

"I started talking with him and simply asked him, 'If you died today, where would you go?' Without any hesitation he said, 'I would go to hell' and he began to weep," Crawford said. "I shared the Gospel with him and told him that God loves him and sent his son Jesus to die for him.

"Rather than lead him in a salvation prayer, I told him I would start praying and then I wanted him to tell Jesus what was on his heart," he continued. "He began weeping harder and cried out to Jesus to save him. He prayed and asked Jesus to keep him in His hands and don't let him go. This was a snot-slinging, tear-pouring prayer. Jeremy was born again."

## TENT REVIVAL

For the second year, organizers held a community wide tent revival in Pitkin; and, for the second year, the Holy Spirit moved miraculously.

Each night during the Oct. 29-31 revival led by Westport Friendship Baptist Church, Pitkin, crowds averaged nearly 450.

During the first night, a crowd flooded the front, including two who gave their lives to Christ and many others who came forward seeking revival in their own hearts.

"Seeing the folks come to the altar was just so special each night," said Braden Martin, who resigned as pastor of Westport Friendship Baptist Church shortly after the completion of the revival, in response to a call to lead Verda Baptist Church. "First because its worship – a moment when we can outwardly express our commitment to God, publicly

proclaim the message of Christ and reverently follow the Spirit's prompting.

"But I also loved seeing the folks come down each night to the altar because people were moved, saints and sinners alike," he said. "We desperately need our hearts to change, not more rules and regulations of religion. Only the Spirit of God, only the grace of the Gospel of Jesus can truly change a heart."

## MEGAFORCE RALLY

Philadelphia Baptist Church, Horseshoe Drive, hosted MegaForce Ministries founder Steve Carrier for its Halloween outreach, where 74 people made decisions for Christ.

Carrier gave motivational speeches during the day at area schools, and shared the Gospel at a Trunk or Treat outreach on the parking lot of church campus, and also led a worship service for the congregation the following night.

At the Horseshoe Drive events, Carrier intertwined feats of strength with invitations to the crowd to repent of their sins and come to Christ.

"There are a lot of names in these phone books, but it doesn't matter if your name is in a phone book," Carrier told the crowd of about 250 people, Oct. 31, moments before he tore apart the thick binding of

pages with relative ease. "What matters is if your name is in the Book of Life."

Leading up to the event, members blitzed neighborhoods for two weeks to get the word out. One member even visited an area shopping center, placing 500 fliers under windshields.

Clay Fuqua, campus pastor at the Horseshoe Drive location, said Carrier connected with the students and others during his time at the schools and the church.

See CAMPAIGNS on 12



Will Hall photo

Guests at the Trunk or Treat outreach at Philadelphia Baptist Church, Horseshoe Drive in Alexandria listen while Steve Carrier of MegaForce Ministries shares the Gospel. He also spoke during a worship service at the church the following night. In all, 74 people made decisions for Christ.



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- ♦ Santa Fe – Oct. 22-29
- ♦ Branson – Oct. 31-Nov. 3
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- ♦ Greenbrier Christmas – Nov. 27 – Dec. 1

- ♦ Yellowstone in Winter – Jan. 27-Feb. 1
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- ♦ China Highlights – May 18-29
- ♦ Alps of Europe – June 5-16
- ♦ Chicago by Train – July 16-20
- ♦ South Africa Safari – July 23-Aug. 6
- ♦ Alaska Land – Aug. 15-24
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- ♦ Ireland / Scotland – Aug. 27-Sept. 10
- ♦ Scotland – Sept. 4-10
- ♦ San Francisco – Sept. 6-11
- ♦ Brazil / Argentina / Chile – Oct. 22-Nov. 1



# Cajun Baptists share faith, hope & love with Haitian Creoles

BY WILL HALL

Message Editor

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (LBM) – After 14 years of peacekeeping duties in the country, the United Nations stood down its 2,300 military forces Oct. 15, giving hope of a return to political stability for the people of Haiti, a poverty-stricken nation of more than 10 million citizens.

Meanwhile, the arrival of a 44-member team of Louisiana Baptists, Oct. 14, launched a week of compassionate aid and spiritual ministry to hundreds of residents of Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas, offering hope in the form of medical and dental services, construction work, safe drinking water filter installations and upkeep, and, the sharing of the Gospel as part of these compassion efforts, Vacation Bible School, and door-to-door community evangelism.

## SHARING THE WORD

Ray Swift, administrative pastor, First Baptist Church in Lafayette, Jason Cole, pastor, First Baptist Church in Simsboro, and Wayne Sheppard, partnership missions strategist for Louisiana Baptists preached in local churches the Sunday after landing in Port-au-Prince: Swift spoke in the rudimentary structure of a rural evangelical church in Monet; Sheppard shared the Word at an established Baptist church in Croix-des-Bouquets and presided over a baby dedication there; and, Cole brought the morning message to a congregation “under construction” in Canaan.

But each joined the other 41 mission team members for the rest of the week to share the Gospel in and around the capital city – in large crowds, small groups, and one-on-one evangelistic opportunities.

## GO & TELL, COME & SEE

The events with the largest draws were the Vacation Bible Schools and medical/dental clinics. But the community evangelism team, construction team and water filter team had large impacts, too.

### VBS

The VBS and healthcare teams alternated working separately at two churches over four days, attracting large numbers of youth to the VBS sessions and pulling in crowds of adults, some with children, for free medical care.

Sheppard joined VBS team leader Shelley Hamilton, a member of Mount Vernon Baptist Church in West Monroe, to conduct VBS for two days at Croix-des-Bouquets Baptist Church and another two days at Canaan Baptist Church.

Attendance was moderate the first day at the larger facilities in Croix-des-Bouquets, but the next morning, a school holiday, there were nearly 300 children eager to attend VBS, including about 100 teens who observed from the balcony.

Hamilton told the *Baptist Message*, “28 girls and 25 boys declared Christ as



Ray Swift, administrative pastor, First Baptist Church in Lafayette, and Miguelson, a fellow Christian and an interpreter, speak with Pastor Pierre Eliacin of the Monet Baptist Church, about where they can best sow seeds of the Gospel in his community and how they can best help him grow his congregation with their efforts.

Steven Ripple, assisted by Dwayne Pitre (blue scrub shirt), both members of Istrouma Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, is shown preparing to pull a tooth from a Haiti guest of the medical and dental clinic. James, a Haitian Christian serving as an interpreter, offered verbal and physical support.



Students at the school on the Canaan Baptist Church campus responded enthusiastically when the Vacation Bible School team introduced the plan for the day.

A drilling ministry team stationed in Haiti but hailing from North Carolina tapped into a water source that provides 200 gallons of sweet water per hour for the Canaan Baptist Church campus, avoiding the fate of other drill sites in the area which produced saltwater due to contamination by the Caribbean Sea.



Lord” at the end of that two-day program.

The *Baptist Message* observed that about 60 children enrolled in the Canaan congregation’s school, plus another 30 children from the surrounding neighborhood, attended VBS the first day on that campus. On the second day, 25 young ones sought salvation, according to Hamilton, asking God to forgive their sins, surrendering their hearts to Christ and promising to live for Him.

At both locations the children were just like U.S. youngsters: enthusiastic to sing, “ye ye ye yes to va va VBS;” fully engaged when it came to crafts; and, welcoming to the Good News.

### Medical/Dental

Cole started with the construction team, but shifted to the healthcare effort the last day when several members of the medical team became ill.

Ultimately, he served with the team leader, pharmacist Steve Yellott, a member of Istrouma Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, in a makeshift dispensary which issued critical antibiotics, blood pressure drugs and other medications recommended by the general practitioner, DeSha Folgar, and the dentist, Steven Ripple, also members of Istrouma Baptist Church, who were volunteers with the team.

Yellott said the team “saw over 600 sick and injured Haitians and filled more than 2,200 medicine requests over the four days” with only one physician, four

nurses and the crews manning the dispensary and a check in/triage station.

Guests also were treated to dental care.

In the case of Croix-des-Bouquets, Ripple set up the dental “office” under a mango tree and treated about 30-50 people each day, pulling teeth, sewing up gums, and other procedures.

But the clinic also included a spiritual health check, with a group presentation of the Gospel given when the doors opened each morning; and, with a member of the evangelism team sharing one-on-one with each person as he or she or the family waited to receive medicine.

Medical/dental team members shared about a number of special ministry encounters, including: the salvation experience of an older man who earnestly asked to be set free from Voodoo; a young boy who sweetly asked Christ to forgive him and to help him share the Gospel “with all of Haiti”; and, the 34-year-old daughter of a recently deceased pastor, who realized she had been living in his faith and not hers (and made things spiritually right that day).

### Community Evangelism

Swift paired up with Reed Adams, also a member of First Lafayette, as one of two evangelism units under the leadership of Matt Saterfield, a member of Mount Vernon Baptist Church, West Monroe. Sonja Nowell, also of Mount Vernon, rounded out the four-person team that went door-to-door in multiple neighborhoods each day, enduring 97 degree heat, and at times some hostile crowds.

The two pairs had a number of unique experiences – witnessing the salvation of some and suffering the rejection by others.

Furthermore, they were able to create a prospect list in each of four villages for local ministers, including Pastor Pierre Eliacin, who is paralyzed from the waist down and limited in his ability, even by wheelchair, to navigate the narrow, winding dirt paths of the wooded rural area that is home to his small congregation at the Baptist Church of Monet.

Saterfield had one of the most unusual encounters, engaging a group of a dozen or so young men who had formed a tribe of sorts. They shared meals together, daily, out of a common bowl under a large lush tree, using the frame of wooden beams of an antique flatbed trailer as a kind of community “lounge.”

The founder of the group was a seminary dropout who twisted Scripture to argue against Saterfield and to make a case for his own religious philosophy (composed largely of the tired old ideas of universalism and “good works”). But Saterfield persisted, correcting the young man’s biblical misrepresentations.

Then, in one final effort, he used a length of cord to make a point about eternity.

Pinching about an inch of the several-feet-long strand, Saterfield said “this represents the length of our lives on earth”

See HAITI on 9



## Haiti from page 8

and pulling the remainder of the twine through his hand, then motioning on and on without any string, he told them “and this is eternity.”

Having set the context, he went on to share the Gospel, but all of the young men were keenly aware of the leader and kept looking at each other for reactions, and in the end none of them responded.

However, a young man had been listening from the periphery; and, when Saterfield ended his spiritual plea and the evangelism team was walking to their van, this outsider ran to one of the interpreters for the Louisiana group and exclaimed, “I need the Gospel, please have someone explain it to me!”

Introducing himself as Watson, he listened intently to the Gospel and then he prayed for forgiveness and salvation.

The next day the team found out how truly transformed he really was.

Watson showed up, having shorn his dreadlocks, telling the team he wanted the community “to see that I am a Christian;” and, he accompanied the team around the neighborhood, helping to identify homes where the lost lived.

The team felt so moved by his obvious transformed heart that when he expressed concern about not having proper clothes to attend church, they met his need.

### Construction, Water Filters

The construction team spent a good part of the week on a number of projects at Canaan Baptist Church, wiring the church school to install lights and outlets; building multi-person wooden bench/desk combos for students; and, overseeing the drilling of a well on the campus (which produced 200 gallons of good water per hour when finished).

They were led by Darrin Badon, who serves as the director of facilities with Istrouma Baptist Church, but he and others said they were inspired by 83-year-old Billy Nutt, a member of First Baptist Church in Arcadia, whom they agreed “is still going as if he was 60.”

Meanwhile the water filter team installed a number of new purifying units (basically a gravity system of sand and gravel), and performed maintenance on others that had been installed in previous years.

They also prayed for families, engaged in evangelism, and, at one point, prayer walked around the house of a known witch doctor.

After a day of follow-up visits, Jeremy Pretto, a member of Sunrise Baptist Church in Midland, Michigan, and leader of the team, shared happily with the entire Louisiana Baptist team about the multiple reports he received from families who said that because of the water filters, “illnesses are going away,”

### IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Each night the 44-member mission team shared personal accounts with each other about the special ministry opportunities they experienced and the salvation moments that stood out most in their minds, including:

-- Nutt said he was taken aback by an incident on the way home in the team van one day. He said Badon asked the driver to make a stop at a home he had visited on a previous trip – to ask a man if he was finally ready to let Jesus live in his heart. “He did and, praise God, another soul was saved that day!” Nutt exclaimed. Badon offered that the man was so excited that he asked for prayers to be “filled with the Holy Spirit and can be an example to my family and friends.”

-- Bobby Moffett, a member of Cheniere Baptist Church in West Monroe, one of Nutt’s colleagues on the construction team, remembered his nervousness in witnessing to a Haitian volunteer (because Moffett was without his Bible which was marked to easily share key Scriptures). “I’m not a preacher,” he offered, adding that he had “not done anything like this through an interpreter.” Still, Moffett pushed through his hesitance and realized, “wow, this suddenly got easy.” The man received Moffett’s “relayed” presentation of the Gospel and prayed to ask God’s forgiveness and to surrender his heart to Christ.

-- Sheppard, also the executive assistant to the executive director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, shared about a special encounter at Canaan Baptist Church. As he entered the door to set up for VBS, a young boy looked at him with a huge smile. “While I was still going through the door, he ran and leapt into my arms, giving me a strong hug, making my day and a great start for VBS.”

-- Hamilton recalled a reunion with a young girl she met in Canaan the previous year. “Esta had a mean spirit then, and I wrote her name in my Bible and prayed over her every day. This year when I walked in, she ran up and hugged me beaming!” Moreover, when the invitation was given, Esta was the first one to come forward. “We



Will Hall photo

A Haitian local who is a seminary dropout (white tank t-shirt, right) tried to dissuade young men in his “posse” from believing the Good News Matt Saterfield (left) shared with them. Afterward, a young man, Watson, out of the picture to the left, chased down one of the interpreters for the evangelism team and declared, “I need the Gospel, please have someone explain it to me!”

made immediate eye contact and began to cry,” Hamilton continued. “God won the war in this beautiful child’s life!”

-- Christiann Bayne shared about a four-day VBS miracle that she related to Jesus multiplying the five small barley loaves and two small fish. Each day, about mid-afternoon, the team served a hot meal of rice and beans to the children:

**Day 1**, they had prepared for an initial low turnout the first day at Croix-des Bouquets Baptist Church, but had to respond

to a near-doubling of the crowd by the end of the day, which they did, making “Day 1 a success,” she declared.

**Day 2**, the number of children nearly tripled from the day before, catching them unprepared in supplies. But, with the refrain of “You’re a good, good Father” playing, God made the food sufficient to serve everyone there, Bayne said.

By **Day 3**, at Canaan Baptist Church, she shared, the Christian contemporary tune “had become our anthem” and we began to

sing it “louder and louder” while plating meals.

Despite the challenges of the previous days, they had not imagined the challenge they would face on **Day 4**. “I looked at my team members and we all had similar thoughts... ‘We are feeding the 5,000.’ Even our Haitian friend, helping to serve the food, looked up at the crowd and shook her head in disbelief as if to say, ‘We’re not going to make it.’ But we continued to sing and pray,” Bayne recalled. “‘Thirty more plates!’ we heard. Then, ‘four more plates.’ By the end, to our complete surprise, everyone was fed, including the Haitian workers who helped us. And there was one plate left over,” she said. “God reminded us He is a good Father, making sure that His children had all they needed, and more!”

### FAMILY REUNIONS

Two families represented on the mission trip also updated the Baptist Message about “adopted” family members still in Haiti.

*Terry & Shelly Hamilton*  
Hamilton and her husband Terry have been engaged in a

See HAITI on 10



## ACCOUNTING NOTIFICATION FOR CHURCHES

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## Haiti from page 9

two-year process to bring home a young girl they first met during her visit to a Louisiana Baptist medical clinic in 2015. Selena came seeking help for a badly burned leg, and had to return a second day because she was in an even worse condition. Ultimately the team rushed her to a local hospital, and eventually she recovered.

The Hamiltons discovered they could not get over the love they had developed for her and, after talks with Selena, they began to pursue adoption of her.

They told the *Baptist Message*, they are “waiting for her immigration to be finalized” so they can “begin a two-week socialization period” for bonding. Even then, it still will take three to six months to complete the administrative process of obtaining a passport, visa and exit letter for Selena, Shelly explained, and a previous Christmas 2017 timeline for bringing her home has been lost because of a strike by Haiti’s judges this summer.

“It’s been tough,” she said of the two-year effort, “but we have stayed the course. We’ve been able to be faithful knowing that

without a doubt this is a calling on our lives.”

A miracle confirmed their calling, Terry shared: In a three-day period about a year and a half ago, they were able to track down the mother in the Dominican Republic and the father in Haiti and obtained their permission to adopt Selena; and, they found Selena’s birth certificate and an orphanage that would take her (a government condition for starting the adoption process).

Now they are hoping the entire process will be completed by April 2018. So are their 13-year-old son Ryder, and 10-year-old daughter Hattie.

The Hamiltons said that when they first started thinking about being part of an overseas mission trip, they asked God to make it “life-changing,” adding that in meeting Selena, “He has changed us forever.”

*Darrin Badon*

Badon shared how he and his wife Julie came to unofficially adopt a young man, Beoda -- and with their other children becoming a long distance family of five for the Haitian orphan.

Badon said he first came to Haiti for a five-day mission trip in 2010 after a 7.3 magni-

tude earthquake – that killed more than 220,000 people and injured another 300,000, according to Haitian government records. The five-man team was part of Global Orphan Project, and came “just to love on the children” living in a dozen or so orphanages, Badon said, offering the insight that it was common at each of the visits for the children to “choose” an adult to spend time with during that day.

A 10-year-old boy chose Badon during one of the visits, and having no common language they simply spent time playing soccer or drawing tic-tac-toe in the dirt, he said. “This started a long, deep relationship [with Beoda] that changed me.”

Badon continued to visit Haiti on mission trips, always seeking out Beoda. Then in 2014, he was surprised to learn the youngster had been moved to another orphanage -- where widespread negligence was evident. He managed to have Beoda transferred to a Global Orphan Project facility, where he quickly recovered from the mistreatment inflicted at his former residence.

“When I went to see him (in his new residence), he had made a cardboard sign that read, ‘I love you Daddy!’”

Darrin said he and Julie

have made a commitment to contribute to Beoda’s transportation and education, hoping he soon will graduate from high school, and then “continue his studies, making a difference in Haiti for the Lord.”

#### COMPLETING THE VISION

Sheppard said the most impacting event for him was the team’s visit to the recently enclosed portion of the future compound Louisiana Baptists are constructing to establish a permanent foothold in Haiti.

The project is a collective effort among Louisiana Baptist churches, Louisiana Baptists’ Children’s Home and Family Ministries and the Haiti Baptist Convention – a ministry focus that first developed as a vision after the devastating 2010 earthquake left 4,000 more children as orphans. A non-profit foundation, Louisiana Reach Haiti, subsequently was formed to promote Louisiana Baptists’ evangelization and church planting work in Haiti, and to raise funds for specific projects there, like the children’s village and mission center.

Now with a wall, gate and tower built, and a well drilled, construction will begin on a children’s village and a pastor training center, Sheppard said.

“Working with Pastor Jean Louis Odvald and the New Evangelical Baptist Church of Haiti, Louisiana Baptists will establish an orphanage that raises up Daniels and Esthers,” he told the *Baptist Message*. “We will plant multiplying churches that share the Gospel and make disciples across Haiti.”

He also shared about the work Louisiana Baptists completed in Canaan to establish another foothold in Haiti.

“We have helped build a worship center, school and medical clinic, and put in a pure water well, strengthening the Canaan Baptist Church to change the spiritual lives of the 1.5 million people living there.”

Sheppard said his heart

“was greatly moved” when the team began to prayer walk the enclosed grounds of the future children’s village and mission center.

“I thought about the hundreds of boys and girls who will one day be living, learning, running, playing, loving and being loved, and, importantly, coming to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ,” he said. “I thought about the many pastors and church leaders who will be trained there and sent out to spiritually impact Haiti.”

“I thanked God for what He is doing, and, for the opportunity to be part of His work in that land!”

**Email Wayne.Sheppard@LouisianaBaptists.org, or, RonGreenwich@gmail.com to be part of a future Louisiana Baptist mission trip to Haiti (June 2-8, Oct. 13-19 in 2018). Financial gifts to help complete the children’s village and training center can be made by check to the Louisiana Baptist Foundation, P.O. Box 311, Alexandria, La., 71309 (write “LA Reach Haiti” in the memo line). Visit lbchophansembrace.org for additional information.**

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** *Special thanks to Peggy Moffett, a member of Cheniere Baptist Church in West Monroe who serves with the Children’s Home, and to Ron Greenwich, a member of First Baptist Church in Minden and a retired missionary providing leadership to the ongoing work of Louisiana Baptists in Haiti. Peggy coordinated months of planning stateside, including flight arrangements and budget management. Ron oversaw all in-country details – everything from scheduling events and activities to setting up lodging, transportation, interpreters and security. Their tireless efforts for months made a difference in the lives of many in Haiti, and in the coverage of this mission endeavor by the Baptist Message.*

## MERRY CHRISTMAS

*‘For unto you is born this day  
in the city of David a Saviour,  
which is Christ the Lord.’*

*Luke 2:11*

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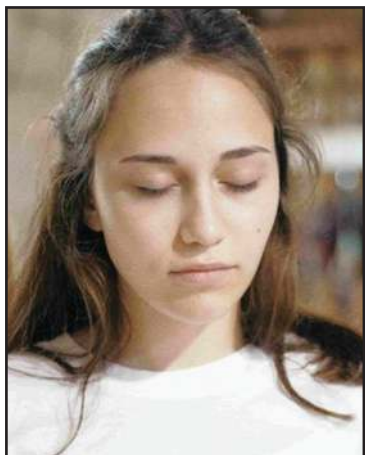
# Picture Bible transforms lives in Belarus!

By WILL HALL  
Message Editor

MINSK, Belarus (LBM)—The Good and Evil Illustrated Bible is changing Belarus, according to Andrew Ryzhkov, founder of the Byelorussian Mission in-country ministry.

After the most recent mission trip by Louisiana Baptists to this former republic of the Soviet Union, Ryzhkov shared that this picture Bible continues to have exceptional influence on his countrymen.

“Four out of every 10 people who receive one of these Bibles end up repenting and turning their lives over to Christ!” he told the *Baptist Message*. Moreover, such



Young people in Belarus are seeking salvation and committing their lives to the ministry.

evangelistic success comes at a price of only \$10 per copy of this Bible version.

The news of the impact of

this illustrated Bible comes amid the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Bible being translated into the Belarusian vernacular. Yet, despite this historical milestone, demographic information shows that more than 41 percent of Belarusians identify as agnostics or atheists, and even more are nominal in their religious affiliations.

Louisiana Baptists have been actively engaged in evangelizing Belarus since 2014, helping to establish local churches, complete construction projects and conduct training of pastors and lay people.

Wayne Sheppard, partnership missions director for Louisiana Baptists, said an International Mission Board representative had described “an openness” in Belarus that he witnessed first-hand when he visited the country in 2016.

“There is a great receptivity and a great openness; and we Louisiana Baptists have the special privilege of part-



Submitted photo

There is an openness and a receptiveness in Belarus among the people to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior and to follow Him in baptism. Louisiana Baptists have been actively engaged in evangelizing Belarus since 2014.

nering with Belarus’ pastors to start churches and reach people for the Lord.”

Moreover, he touted the distribution of the Good and Evil Illustrated Bible as one of the most successful evangelism approaches for reaching the Byelorussian people.

Ryzhkov agreed, calling these special copies of God’s Word “an important tool in evangelizing Belarus.”

“You can see how important it is to give them a free copy of their own. They are eager to reach out their arms to get a Bible!”

**Donate copies of the Good and Evil Illustrated Bible via ByelorussianMission.org. Learn how to participate in a Belarus mission trip by email to Tommy-Middleton@BAGBR.org.**



Submitted photo

Orphans from Belarus, the former republic of the Soviet Union, receive a copy of the Good and Evil Illustrated Bible by Andrew Ryzhkov, founder of the Byelorussian Mission in-country ministry.



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*For unto you is born  
this day in the city  
of David,*

**a SAVIOR,**


*which is*

**CHRIST,**

*the LORD!*

Merry Christmas  
From the Staff of the  
**Louisiana Baptist Foundation**

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## Campaign from page 7

"The people that moved towards the stage during our Trunk or Treat event had many needs such as salvation, commitments and prayer," Fuqua said. "We are still connecting with those decisions. Several schools didn't have the money for the assemblies and our people stepped up and funded the event. One principal was so blessed by the gesture and broke down in tears and shared that the school could never offer something like this for their students. Many times, it's us

that get the blessing when we are trying to bless others. It is a memory I will cherish for years in my ministry."

### CORNERSTONE CONGREGATION REVIVED

When Cornerstone Baptist Church, Oakdale, set a date for a tent revival, the members hoped for a vast harvest of souls in the community, but experienced a mighty movement of God within the congregation, instead.

During the month prior to

the revival, the congregation blitzed Oakdale, handing out fliers advertising the revival – causing six members to realize their lost conditions and to pray for forgiveness and salvation, vowing to live for Christ and declaring Him Lord and Savior.

During the revival, which was extended one day beyond its original timeframe of Nov. 5-10, no salvation decisions were recorded. However, a missions offering was doubled on the final night, from \$3,600 to more than \$7,200, thanks to an anonymous donor's match. Three of its members also surrendered to calls to career missions.

"Before the revival, we wanted to see a lot of people get saved and revived," Pastor Tony Robinson said. "God taught me that what we meant for Oakdale, He meant for us."

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Brian Blackwell photo

Dignitaries, supporters and friends gathered December 4 to mark the official opening of the Cenla Prenancy Center, located on the campus of the Louisiana Baptist Building in Alexandria. The facility will be open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and will offer: pregnancy decision coaching by trained advocates; free pregnancy tests; free ultrasounds; information about pregnancy options; maternity and physical resources; parenting education; and, abortion recovery support groups.



Philip Timothy photo

Benjamin Clapper, executive director of Louisiana Right to Life, presents Louisiana Baptist Convention Executive Director David Hankins (left) the 'In Service to Life' award honoring him and Louisiana Baptists for their generous support of pro-life causes. The presentation was made Nov. 17 during the 3rd Annual Cenla Prayer Breakfast at Granberry Hall on the Louisiana College campus -- in recognition of leasing space to the Cenla Pregnancy Center at \$1 monthly, an \$84,000 a year value.

(Copy and post this friendly reminder)

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# Journey Church treks to Alexandria to launch second site

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

ALEXANDRIA – Facing space concerns, Journey Church in Pineville has announced plans to establish a second campus.

Located in the space formerly occupied by Economy Boots at 1898 MacArthur Drive in Alexandria, the new facility will allow the church to seat up to 300 people, with a targeted launch date of April 1, 2018. The congregation averages 988 in combined attendance for three weekly services at its Pineville worship center and is on pace to outgrow its current capacity of 1,300 in a year, Executive Pastor Joshua Poe said.

“This is the biggest step of faith physically and financially we have taken,” Poe said. “We are called Journey Church for a reason: We are on a journey. “People generally don’t

like change, but Pastor James Greer and our people don’t mind changing,” he continued. “We do some things outside the box. Our people are willing to do whatever it takes to reach someone for Christ.”

The 14,000-sq.-ft. facility will have worship space, coffee area, classrooms and an office. Darrell Ingram, associate pastor at Journey Church’s Pineville campus, will serve as the pastor of the Alexandria location. Greer will remain at the Pineville campus but will have his messages livestreamed to those meeting in Alexandria.

Members celebrated the decision Oct. 22.

Originally Lee Heights Family Church in Pineville, the congregation moved in 2009 to the former site of Donahue Family Church and changed the name to Journey Church.

At the time of the move, the church averaged 236 in

attendance, but by 2012 had grown to 377.

Since its inception, Journey Church has celebrated the baptism of 509 new converts and witnessed hundreds of other spiritual decisions, including repentances to restore fellowship with Christ, and commitments to missions and ministry.

The congregation’s core value, “Growing People Change,” facilitates growth, and, its message to the lost, “I mess up, you mess up, we all

mess up,” helps start conversations to convey the truth that Christ is the answer.

Journey Church ministries include Celebrate Recovery, professional counseling, hospital visitation and feeding the needy. Greer said its expanded presence is needed in an area where thousands still need the love of Christ.

“I’ve never been so excited about how God is going to use the new modern campus to reach so many for Christ,” Greer said. “Our vision is to

bring those far from God close to God and there’s so many that don’t go to church at all or quit because they view church as boring, not relevant and always condemning.

“The truth is, Jesus would draw crowds where ever He went and condemned mainly the religious and self-righteous, not the sinners,” he continued. “Journey Church wants to be relevant, not boring, and let everybody feel welcome no matter where they have come from or what they have done.”

**Sam Moore, Evangelistic Ministries**

479-381-1170, [sam@evangelistsammoore.com](mailto:sam@evangelistsammoore.com)

Sam Moore is a vocational evangelist. He has the gift of an evangelist and the heart of a pastor. He is available for revivals, crusades, Harvest Days and witness training. Call or email to schedule your 2018-2019 events.

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### MILESTONE

■ Calcasieu Baptist Church, Glenmora: **Bert and Rubye Riddle, Jr., will be honored with a 60th wedding anniversary reception and party** on the afternoon of December 16 at the church. Bert Riddle was ordained a Baptist minister in Louisiana in 1950 at the age of 18. He continuously pastored for more than 67 years, 25 years as pastor of Calcasieu Baptist Church, along with pastoring seven others churches (both full and part-time). He retired from the ministry 2 years ago at the age of 83 after being diagnosed with Myasthenia Gravis. The couple was married on December 24, 1957. Friends and acquaintances of the couple are invited to attend. For more information, call Keith Riddle, 318.447.7297. Pastor: Joe Keith Cruse.

### ON THE MOVE

■ **Coty Hardy** is the new pastor at Country-side Baptist Church, Hammond. ■ **Jonathan Watts** is the new pastor at Victory Baptist Church, Hammond. ■ **Alan Moak** has resigned as pastor of Red Oak Baptist Church, Livingston. ■ **James “Bubba” Courtney** is retiring as pastor of New Bethlehem Baptist Church, Denham Springs. ■ **Jerry Elgin** is the new pastor at West Lake Baptist Church, Doyline. ■ **Virgil Ragland** is interim pastor at Belcher Baptist Church, Belcher. ■ **Scott Shirley** is the interim pastor at Belle Park Baptist Church, Haughton. ■ **Adam (wife Ashley) Napper** is the new youth minister at Calvary Baptist Church, Slidell. ■ **David Logan** is the new minster of music at First Baptist Church, Covington. ■ **Misti Coleman** is the new children’s minister at First Baptist Church, Slidell. ■ **Craig West** is the new music Minister at Bethel Baptist Church, Bastrop. ■ **Kinsley Armstrong** is the new children’s director at Cheniere Baptist Church, West Monroe. ■ **Kaitlyn Jenkins** is the new youth leader at Loranger Baptist Church, Loranger. ■ **Robert (wife Elizabeth) Fontenot** is part-time student minister at First Baptist Church, Bogalusa.

### REVIVAL

■ First Baptist Church, Robeline: **Revival**, January 7-14, 6 p.m. nightly. Evangelist: **Sam Moore**. Worship: **We R Called**. Pastor: Brian Ray. ■ First Baptist Church, Haynesville: **Revival – A Renewed Church**, January 7-10, 6 p.m., Sunday and 7 p.m. Monday-through – Wednesday. Sunday evening will be family night, Monday night invite an unchurched friend and Tuesday, Sunday School fellowship night. Evangelist: **John Cowling**. Worship: **Daryl Durnigan**. Pastor: Jeff Tinsley.

### LAGNIAPPE

■ New Hope Baptist Church, Choudrant: **“The Greatest Story Ever Told”** performed by the choirs of Cook Baptist and New Hope and co-conducted by the father-son-in-law duo of Frank Nihart and Jason Ambrose, December 10 at Cook Baptist, December 16 at the Lincoln Parish Library in Ruston with free fingers foods

for those who attend and December 17 at New Hope in Choudrant. All presentations begin at 6:00 p.m. Admission is free. Pastors: Jeff Smart, Cook Baptist, and Dwayne Monk, New Hope. ■ Tom Hebert Road Baptist Church, Lake Charles: **Walk Through Nativity**, December 15-16, p.m. Go through the journey with Mary and Joseph to see what it was like that night Jesus was born in a stable. Pastor: Carl Whitley ■ Blood River Baptist Church, Albany: **Mama Nem’s Kitchen and Blood River are teaming up for the inaugural Toy Drive/Car Show**, December 16, 12-4 p.m. Bring an unwrapped, new toy or small donation to enter. Cars that raise the most donations can win first, second or third place. The event will take place at 29629 South Montpelier Road, Albany. Pastor: David Collins. ■ First Baptist Church, Slidell: The Orchestra, Adult and Children’s Choirs will present **“Carols by Candlelight”** on December 16, 7 p.m., and December 17, 10 a.m. Christmas Eve Service will be December 24, 6 p.m. Pastor: Casey Stark. ■ East Ridge Baptist Church, Lake Charles: **A Christmas Love Story**, December 16-17, 6:30 p.m., December 16; 5:30 p.m., December 17. The choir and drama team at East Ridge present an original drama written by one of their own. Pastor: Alan Weishampel ■ Victory Baptist Church, Walker: **Living Nativity**, December 16, 6 p.m. Pastor: Tim Robinson. ■ First Baptist Church, Dry Prong: **Live Nativity**, Dec. 16, 6-8 p.m. Bring your family and friends to travel through Bethlehem with us as we experience the night Jesus was born. Our guests will begin in the sanctuary, where they will enjoy live music, until time for their group to travel to Bethlehem. Then groups will be led out to the park and begin their travel through the night Jesus was born. After their tour, our travelers will enjoy some homemade gumbo and hot cocoa. Kids can roast a marshmallow and make a craft. Everyone is invited. Pastor: Drew Gardner. ■ First Baptist Church, Monroe: **Christmas in the Park**, December 16 in Anna Gray Noe Park in downtown Monroe. It will be an extraordinary holiday event for the entire family and will consist of a live Nativity from 4:30-6:30 p.m. as well as family activities such as cookie decorating, s’mores making and a train ride from 4-7:00p.m. We will have food trucks on site and hot chocolate. Pastor: James Doughty. ■ First Baptist Church, Starks: **Light of the World Christmas Cantata**, December 17, 10:45 a.m. ■ Parkview Baptist Church, Baton Rouge: **“All Is Well” Christmas musical**, Dec. 17, 8:30 and 11 a.m. Pastor: Michael Hardaway. ■ Calvary Baptist Church, Alexandria: **Orchestra Christmas Concert presented by The Conservatory**, Dec. 17, 3 p.m. Enjoy music from the Christmas season performed by the students of the Music Conservatory. Free admission and open to the public. Pastor: David Brooks. ■ Bayou Vista Baptist Church, Morgan City: Christmas Cantata - **“The Greatest Story Ever Told”**, December 17, 11 a.m.; Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, December 24, 6 p.m. Pastor: Steven Kelly. ■ Trinity Baptist Church, Natchitoches: **“This is Christmas”** presented by the sanctuary choir, children’s choir and “Parable” youth performing arts team, December 17, 6 p.m. The performance will be followed by a tasting tea in the fellowship hall. Pastor: Josh Currie.

■ Riverview Baptist Church, Alexandria: **And on Earth ... Peace – a Christmas musical**, December 17, 10:15 a.m. Pastor: David Newton. ■ Jerusalem Baptist Church, Hammond: **Christmas Musical**, December 17, 10:30 a.m. **A Christmas Eve service** will be December 24, at 6 p.m. Pastor: Phil Weaver. ■ Grace Memorial Baptist Church, Slidell: Christmas Cantata, **“What Kind of Throne,”** December 17, 10:15 a.m. presented by the adult choir and orchestra. **Christmas Eve morning worship** will be 10:15 a.m. **Christmas Eve service** at 6 p.m. will have carols, candles, special music, scripture, and the Lord’s Supper. Pastor: Dennis Phelps. ■ First Baptist Church, Mandeville: **Merry Christmas Mandeville**, December 17, 6 p.m. presented by the adult choir. ■ First Baptist Church, Delhi: **Christmas Cantata**, December 17, 6 p.m. in the sanctuary; Christmas Eve services, December 24, 11 a.m. Pastor: Stacy Morgan. ■ The Bayou Church, Lafayette: **Annual Christmas concert provides the sounds of the season**, December, 22-23, 6:30 p.m.; December 24, 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. We will transport you to a Christmas wonderland as we set the tone for this joyful season through music, community and fun surprises for all ages. Our pastor will share a brief message about the hope that was born on Christmas for all to receive. Pastor: Mike Walker. ■ First Baptist Church, Pineville: **Christmas special**, December 17; December 24, 6 p.m. **Carol and Candlelight Service**. Pastor: Stewart Holloway. ■ Bethel Baptist Church, Colfax: **Christmas Musical – Forever God is with Us**, December 17, 10:45 a.m. Performed by the Bethel Choir; **Candlelight and communion Christmas Eve Service**, Dec. 24, 10 a.m.; **New Year’s Eve fellowship and fireworks**, December 31, 5 p.m. Come enjoy the fireworks and fellowship.

Pastor: Carl Gulde. ■ Calvary Baptist Church, Slidell: **Christmas musical/play**, December 17, 1 a.m. **A Christmas fellowship** will be held that evening at 6 p.m. **A Christmas Eve service** will be held December 24, at 11 a.m. Pastor: Jeff Mitchell, serving while Arron McGuffee is deployed. ■ Macedonia Baptist Church, Effie: **Christmas and fireworks show**, December 17, 6 p.m. Pastor: Mike Wilkinson. ■ First Baptist Church, Zwolle: **Christmas Cantata**, December 17, 10:30 a.m. In the evening there will be **singing of carols and Christmas party** with light refreshments. Pastor: Jerry Penfield. ■ First Baptist Church, Haynesville: **Christmas Cantata**, December 17, 6 p.m.; **Christmas Eve service**, December 24, 6 p.m.; **Wild Game Supper**, January 6, 6 p.m. Speaker: **John Cowling**. Pastor: Jeff Tinsley. ■ Trinity Baptist Church, Hammond: **Trinity Choir Christmas Musical**, December 17, 10:45 a.m.; **Christmas Singing**, December 17, 5:30 p.m.; **Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols**, December 24, 10:45 a.m.; **Candlelight Service and Observance of the Lord’s Supper**, December 24, 5:30 p.m. Pastor: Avery Dixon. ■ His Church, Pineville: **Christmas concert with James and Kristen Opdenhoff**, December 17, 6 p.m. and there will be a fellowship following the concert. Pastor: Steve Speer. ■ First Baptist Church, Tioga: **Christmas cantata** presented by the adult choir, December 17, 11 a.m.; Alexandria Korean Baptist is joining Tioga FBC, December 24, 5 p.m. for **carols, candles & communion**. Pastor: Tim Hisaw. ■ Family of Grace, Alexandria: **Christmas Eve Service**, December 23, 5:30 p.m. at the South Campus; December 24, 9 & 10:30 a.m. at the North Campus. Pastor: Brad Webb. ■ First Baptist Church, Sulphur: **Christmas Eve morning service**, December 24, 10:30

a.m.; **Christmas Eve evening service**, 4 p.m. Pastor: Michael Linton. ■ First Baptist Church, Winnfield: **Christmas Eve Service**, December 24, 11 a.m. Pastor: Steven Smithson. ■ First Baptist Church, Minden: **Christmas Eve candlelight service**, December 24, 5 p.m. Pastor: Leland Crawford. ■ Hebron Baptist Church, Denham Springs: **Christmas Eve morning worship**, December 24, 10 a.m.; Christmas Eve Communion, December 24, 6 p.m. ■ First Baptist Church, DeQuincy: **Christmas Eve Service**, December 24, 10:30 a.m. Pastor: Gil Arthur. ■ Rocky Springs Baptist Church, Lisbon: **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**, December 24, 6 p.m. Pastor: Larry Sellers. ■ First Baptist Church, Zwolle: **Christmas Cantata and drama – ‘Road to Bethlehem,’** December 17, 10:30 a.m.; Christmas church-wide fellowship, December 17, 6 p.m. There will carol singing and a social. Pastor: Jerry Penfield. ■ First Baptist Church, Hammond: **International Mission Study on Russia**, January 1, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Children’s study will also be provided. RSVP for lunch and nursery by January 3 at 225.567.5086 or office@north-shorebaptists.net. ■ First Baptist Church, Pineville: **First@First Business Leader Luncheon**, January 8, noon. Speaker: **Claire Lemoine, director of the Cenla Pregnancy Center**. Cost: \$10 and you may pay at the door. Please RSVP to Stewart Holloway (sholloway@fbcpineville.net.) Pastor: Stewart Holloway. ■ Calvary Baptist Church, Shreveport: **2018 Night of Praise**, January 12, 6:30 p.m. Featuring Steel Magnolias, Ammer Gayle Whatley, Jake Cowley, Calep Lewis, Allen Family and the Voices of Louisiana College. Pastor: John Lary.

## 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.

bsi gwx zgnq ga fgw py ymqiabym, hsgrrpsv,

mzbm by fgw bxq nbxmbhqxy ga mzq

ywaaqxpsvy, yg yzboo fq jq boyg ga mzq

ugsygobmpgs.

yqugsi ugxpmsmzpbsy gsq:yqeqs

Clues:  
G = O; X = R

Answer to November 23 Scripture Crypto:  
Deuteronomy seven: twenty



## 'The Greatest Story'

as told in Luke 2 King James Version

- 1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.
- 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)
- 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.
- 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)
- 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.
- 6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.
- 7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.
- 8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.
- 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.
- 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
- 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.
- 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.
- 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
- 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.
- 15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.
- 16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.
- 17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.
- 18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.
- 19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.
- 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.