



THE BAPTIST MESSAGE

November 19, 2020
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John 3:16

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Louisiana votes 'YES on #1'

By Staff
Baptist Message

BATON ROUGE, La. (LBM) – On Nov. 3, 62 percent of Louisiana voters said “yes on #1,” the ballot measure known as the Love Life Amendment, which now adds language to the state constitution to prevent action that has taken place in 12 other states. In each of those cases, an activist state court discovered an inherent right to abortion not specifically stated

in any of the respective constitutions by using creative interpretations of a general phrase such as “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

The actual wording of the constitutional amendment reads “To protect human life, nothing in this constitution shall be construed to secure or protect a right to abortion or require the funding of abortion.”



Submitted photo

Louisiana Right to Life Executive Director Benjamin Clapper (pictured left) and members of the Right to Life staff in New Orleans Nov. 3 celebrated the passage of the Love Life Amendment.

See VOTES, page 8



Brian Blackwell photo

Scott Belmore, University of Alaska-Anchorage Mosaic campus ministry director, helps remove a tree on a property in Pineville Oct. 21.

Alaska Baptist DR offers lifelines in Louisiana

By Brian Blackwell
Message staff writer

ALEXANDRIA, La. (LBM) – University of Alaska-Anchorage Mosaic campus ministry director Scott Belmore was glued to his television screen in late August as he watched footage of the devastation caused by Hurricane Laura in his native state.

Belmore, who previously served as the director of the Baptist Collegiate Ministry at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette, wanted to do something to aid those impacted by the storm. So he contacted Louisiana Baptist Disaster Relief officials to find out how he could help.

By late October, Bel-

See ALASKA, page 11



Brian Blackwell photo

Messengers at the 2020 Louisiana Baptist Convention annual meeting adopted the ‘Gospel Resolve’ resolution and approved a new organizational structure for Louisiana College that will reduce the size of its board from 33 to 21 over the next five years. Messengers also approved amendments to the LBC’s governing documents, primarily adding provisions for operating during emergencies.

Messengers adopt ‘Gospel Resolve,’ asked to oppose SBC Resolution 9

By Brian Blackwell
Message staff writer

RESOLUTIONS

PINEVILLE, La. (LBM) – The Committee on Resolutions presented a single resolution “On Gospel Resolve” and the Committee on Moral and Social Concerns Committee addressed Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality in a separate report at the Louisiana Baptist Convention 2020 Annual Meeting, Nov. 10, at Louisiana College in Pineville.

Committee on Resolutions Chairman Steve McAlister, pastor of Westside Baptist Church in Natchitoches, said the committee considered possible resolutions, including one against Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality – which have become hot topics since messengers to the 2019 Southern Baptist Convention in Birmingham, Alabama, adopted Resolution 9 which describes these two

controversial Marxist concepts as “analytical tools subordinate to Scripture” to “aid in evaluating a variety of human experiences.”

In the end, McAlister said, the committee decided that a single resolution drafted by Steve Horn, Louisiana Baptist executive director, was preferred in the face of overcoming the obstacles of multiple hurricanes, the COVID-19 pandemic and political tensions related to hotly-

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Evangelists press on against obstacles of COVID-19

By Brian Blackwell
Message Staff Writer

HAUGHTON, La. (LBM) -- Evangelist Bill Britt, in early 2020, was looking forward to preaching at crusades and revivals over a 45-week period, but in mid-March COVID-19 brought his schedule of events, like every other evangelist's, to a near close.

Britt saw 14 events cancelled, yet he is confident about his calling no matter the crushing burden caused by the COVID-19 shutdown. "You can't stop the Gospel," Britt told the Baptist Message. "When you have the opportunities to preach to the crowd, it's exciting because you get to exercise your calling and gifts. Seeing Him move when people are full of fear and then to see some turn to the Lord is such a blessing."

In July, the evangelist from Haughton resumed his slate of crusades and revivals, though the crowds have been smaller because of COVID-19 attendance restrictions. Then Britt tested positive for the novel coronavirus. Although only a mild case, he had to cancel two more of his preaching assignments.

"The Lord provided healing for me, finances and met all of my needs," Britt said. "It has made me more sensitive to pray for those who are battling with this disease."

Despite these challenges Britt has seen multiple professions of faith at events he has been able to hold: 18 new converts at Philadelphia Baptist Church in Deville, 26 at Outreach Baptist Church in Columbia and another 20 at Cypress Baptist Church in Benton.

Additionally, the orphanage (Kenya) and Bible college

Consider using an evangelist to 'draw the net' in your church

By Clark Stewart
Special to the Message

COVINGTON, La. – I have had the privilege over the past two years to be the pastor advisor for the Louisiana Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists. It has been a real blessing for me to get to know these men and women personally. Their love for the Lord and their passion for the unsaved has touched my life. I have used many of these quality evangelists in my church and every time, God has tremendously blessed.

In May, we had the president of LACOSBE, Brother Gary Bowlin, preach a Harvest Day Sunday for us. With COVID-19 restrictions still being observed, we had a "drive-in" service where

people listen on their vehicle radios. Brother Gary preached with passion in an outside service and extended God's invitation to come to Christ. At 10:30 that morning, he preached inside our auditorium and had five public professions of faith.

Evangelists are a God-given gift to His churches (Ephesians 4:11). I would encourage every pastor to use these gifted evangelists in their churches. God desires and delights in the lost being saved. Using these evangelists who are gifted in "drawing the net" will help fulfill God's desire that "none perish but that all come to repentance."

Clark Stewart is pastor of New Zion Baptist Church in Covington.

(India) operated by Britt's Compel Outreach have remained operational because of the faithfulness of donors to his ministries.

"It's been a financial struggle with some guys," he said. "There is no way to explain how we kept everything functioning around the world and home except the miracle of God."

"Pray God would meet the needs of all the evangelists and churches would still invite them to preach," Britt urged. "As we look forward to next year, I would encourage pastors to call evangelists

to get ready for 2021."

Sammy Tippit, who was saved in 1965 at Istrouma Baptist Church in Baton Rouge and now calls San Antonio, Texas, home, has used the Internet as his primary evangelistic tool throughout the COVID-19 crisis. In May he reached more than 14 million people in at least 80 countries with the Gospel via 21 online events that led to "tens of thousands" of decisions for Christ. Additionally, he developed relationships online with Christians in Albania, East Africa and Nepal that he hopes will lead to

future evangelistic events in those countries.

"I believe that we're living in the greatest moment of evangelistic harvest that the world has even known," he said. "Pray that evangelists will make sure they have put on the whole armor of God, especially that our feet would be fitted with the readiness that comes from the Gospel of peace. Pray that we would be flexible and able to move quickly and willingly to adapt to our circumstances to bring the Gospel to a new generation. Pray for the financial provisions that are needed to sustain evangelistic outreach during these difficult times."

Gary Bowlin, president of the Louisiana Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, said despite having a number of events canceled, he has been blessed to preach at 20 churches and participate in a few virtual events. He is a graduate of LSU and NOBTS and has preached at more than 200 revivals in Louisiana but is now a resident of Summit, Mississippi.

Bowlin said the Lord has

See **EVANGELISTS**, page 11

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Louisiana Baptist Foundation adopts LBF Vision200

By Staff

Baptist Message

ALEXANDRIA, La. (LBM)--The Louisiana Baptist Foundation Board of Trustees adopted, Oct. 27, a strategic plan, LBF Vision200, to "Advance the Kingdom through the Foundation's ministry by \$200 million over the next twenty years or less."

LBF Executive Director Jeff Steed said the plan will set the trajectory of the Foundation for the next 20 years as it seeks to partner with churches and other ministries to advance the Kingdom "one dollar at a time, one ministry at a time, one life at a time."

He said the \$200 million goal over 20 years will be fulfilled through the Foundation's efforts to facilitate planned gifts (e.g. non-cash gifts, estate gifts, charitable gift annuities, endowments, donor-advised funds and other special gifts beyond cash), and serve churches and other ministries with funds management as well as other services to enhance their impact.

Specifically, the Foundation will emphasize activity in four areas:

PLANNED GIVING

- provide educational content to churches such as the "Louisiana Legacy" publication, sharing with members about ways they can benefit their church beyond cash
- speak in churches to inform members how to be good stewards with regard to their estates
- develop further robust planned giving website content
- send periodic communications to constituents
- offer confidential one-on-one meetings with prospective donors
- build further the internal infrastructure to facilitate the logistics of special gifts
- encourage every Louisiana Baptist to obtain a free basic "will and testament" that includes a tithe on her or his estate to a church, other ministry, or both



CHURCH/MINISTRY SERVICES

-- emphasize funds management through such vehicles as the Short Term Fund (a daily savings account for a ministry's cash reserves and/or designated accounts) and the Group Investment Fund (often used for endowments)

-- launch services in 2021 that include church loans, payroll and human resources consulting, and capital and stewardship campaigns

-- add other services over time to the newly established ChurchBiz Central (a modular platform of financial/management services)

COMPREHENSIVE MARKETING

-- use multiple communication channels to promote the Foundation's services with an emphasis on building exposure across various social media platforms

OPERATIONS

-- continue to maintain a well-skilled, well-experienced staff that seeks to provide churches and ministries with top-tier service to help these organizations further enhance their impact for the Kingdom

Steed told the Baptist Message that although the Foundation is rolling out new tools to aid churches and other ministries his team will remain focused on the core values that drive this ministry.

"We will evaluate each program and every decision by asking ourselves,

'Does this advance the Kingdom,'" he said. "Does it add value to a church or other ministry ... help all donors regardless of wealth status ... directly/indirectly impact individuals with the Gospel ... demonstrate the highest level of trust and integrity?"

"In launching LBF Vision200, we also want to express commitment and loyalty to the Cooperative Program," Steed added. "At the end of each year, 25 percent of any net income will be given to the newly established Louisiana Baptist Convention Cooperative Program Endowment -- and we will use these funds to help further the impact of the Cooperative Program efforts in Louisiana and around the world.

"Certainly theology ties us together as Louisiana Baptists," he explained. "But the Cooperative Pro-

gram is that vehicle that binds us in missions and ministry, that allows us to do more strategically for the sake of advancing the Kingdom."

Contact the Foundation by phone, 877-523-4636, or email, contact@LBFinfo.org, to learn more about how it can serve you.

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Submitted photo

Nathan Davis baptizes his daughter, McKinley, during a worship service Oct. 25 at First Baptist Church, Coushatta. Davis had prayed throughout 2020 that his daughter would place her faith in Christ. Since he became pastor of FBCC, Davis has baptized more than 100 new converts.

‘Who’s Your One’ inspires pastor to prioritize Gospel with daughter

By **Brian Blackwell**
Message staff writer

COUSHATTA, La. (LBM) – Nathan Davis, pastor of First Baptist Church, Coushatta, accepted the “Who’s Your One” evangelistic challenge by sharing the Gospel with someone especially close to him -- his daughter, McKinley.

Throughout the year, Davis planted Gospel seeds with his daughter and prayed she would become a follower of Jesus. His evangelistic efforts and daily prayers finally were answered during a revival service, Sept. 28, when McKinley, upon the invitation of evangelist Bill Britt to the First Baptist congregation, stepped forward to declare she had repented of her sins.

A month later, on Oct. 25, McKinley proudly declared her newfound faith through baptism in front of

her FBCC family.

“It’s awesome to know that McKinley will join the rest of our family in Heaven one day,” Davis told the *Baptist Message*. “I tell our kids salvation is the starting point but not the finish line. I’m thankful we will get to spend life in Heaven together but also hopefully have a long life here to influence others for Christ.”

McKinley said she and her dad have shared many joyful times, but that her baptism is perhaps the most memorable.

“I was excited to show everyone I am a child of God,” she exclaimed.

McKinley was among two new converts who accepted Christ during the course of revival services, Sept. 27-30. Since September 2019, Davis has baptized 18 and more than 100 since he became pastor in 2010.

The baptisms are reflective of a congregation which

draws 120 for its Sunday morning worship service that is committed to reaching its community despite the challenges presented by such circumstances as COVID-19 and Hurricane Laura.

Like many Louisiana Baptist congregations, First Baptist Coushatta responded to COVID-19 attendance restrictions by using social media to stream services to hundreds of viewers since late March. They also broadcast their Easter service on a local television station that reached more than 2,000 viewers.

Additionally, the church ministered to the community by delivering flowers on Mother’s Day, distributing meals to widows and others throughout the community, providing meals to first responders and giving copies of the services on DVD and

See *INSPIRES*, page 8



CRAIG RAY HILL

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Messengers from page one

contested national elections.

McAlister said once the state began to experience disasters such as Hurricanes Laura and Delta, Louisiana Baptists Executive Director Steve Horn asked McAlister to consider the impact of passing one joint resolution on the Gospel.

"I have to tell you that took me back a little bit -- not because I had spent a bunch of time researching issues -- but the thought of there being only one resolution in the midst of all the issues that our country and Convention were facing," he said. "It took me a little while to get on board. But as I began to pray about that and began to consider the proposed resolution that you have in front of you, I began to really see that the Gospel is the answer to all of the problems."

McAlister said a resolution against Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality had been considered by his committee and he described it as an "excellent resolution." But, he said, ultimately "the committee voted to present to you one resolution, 'On Gospel Resolve,' and he urged messengers to adopt it as "a sign of our commitment to the Gospel above all."

He added that he did not think anyone on his committee supported either Critical Race Theory or SBC Resolution 9.

One messenger offered a friendly amendment -- to strike "one and only" from the ending resolve ("RESOLVED, that we display our commitment and unity by adopting this one and only resolution.") -- in order to avoid the appearance of dissuading the submission of resolutions in future years.

There was an offer on the platform to add "this year" instead of the deletion. But, in the end the original wording was adopted overwhelmingly by a show of ballots.

Following the adoption of the resolution, LBC President David Cranford, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Ponchatoula, assured messengers of his commitment to see something done about SBC Resolution 9.

"I do sit on the Resolutions Committee, and after this meeting I will com-

municate and send a letter to our Southern Baptist Convention leaders, asking them, prayerfully, to address Resolution 9 at the Southern Baptist Convention level, asking them to help us in our cooperation and to address that resolution where it needs to be addressed -- at the Southern Baptist Convention," Cranford said. "And if that does not happen I will bring a resolution to you next year to address that issue."

MORAL AND SOCIAL CONCERNS

Just prior to the Committee on Resolutions report, Brian Gunter, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Pollock, addressed Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality during his report as chairman of the Moral and Social Concerns Committee

Gunter said passage of Resolution 9 by messengers to the 2019 SBC Annual Meeting has caused concern among many Louisiana Baptists specifically because the two philosophies that were adopted as "useful tools" by the SBC are actually an expression of Marxist doctrine and incompatible with Scripture.

He asked Louisiana Baptists to stand with the committee against the two ideologies.

"We even see these controversial theories [of Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality] creeping into churches and into denominations and into institutions of higher learning; and we as the Moral and Social Concerns Committee want to urge the Louisiana Baptist Convention and our churches to stand against these secular ideologies," he said. "The problem with Critical Race Theory is that it states that people of various skin colors are not brothers and sisters in Christ but that some people have privilege over others -- and by virtue of their skin color that they are somehow inherently racist. We do not believe this is biblical. This contradicts what Scripture states."

"The white man and the brown man and black man are brothers," he said. "We are descended from Adam and Eve. We should not be divided by the color of our skin. This culture is trying to tear our churches apart and we need to stand against it."

But Gunter also made a special emphasis about passage of the Love Life Amendment, explaining that it is now a constitutional guard that protects Louisiana's pro-life laws.

"The Love Life Amendment states that nothing in the Louisiana Constitution shall be construed to secure a right to an abortion or the taxpayer funding of abortion," he explained. "In



Brian Blackwell photo

Will Hall, director of the Office of Public Policy and executive editor of the *Baptist Message*, presents Brian Gunter, pastor of First Baptist Church in Pollock and chairman of the Committee on Moral and Social Concerns, with the Shammah Courage award.

other words, there is nothing in the state constitution that protects the abortion industry."

"We have passed very strong pro-life laws over the years in Louisiana. We are praying that one day soon -- and I believe that it will happen soon -- that Roe v. Wade will be overturned by

the United States Supreme Court.

With our state laws and the Love Life Amendment, when Roe v. Wade is overturned, Gunter said, "no child in the state can be killed by abortion from the moment of conception, the moment a woman becomes pregnant."

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Baptist Message changes print schedule for 2021 to offset costs

By Staff
Baptist Message

ALEXANDRIA, LA (LBM) -- Starting in January 2021, the Baptist Message will change its annual production run from 24 editions to 14 editions. The new printing schedule is basically a monthly plan, except two editions will be printed in October and

January to meet the needs of covering Louisiana Baptist cooperative missions and ministries as well as key organizational events, including the fall annual meeting as well as winter evangelistic meetings.

Importantly, the yearly subscription rates will remain the same: \$14 for an individual subscription and \$9.25 for a church group

discount.

Will Hall, executive editor of the *Baptist Message*, explained that the \$14 individual subscription rate went into effect January 1, 2003, and since then has lost about 31 percent of its buying power.

"We need to do something to make up the shortfall that has taken place during that long haul,"

he said. "However, the economy in the state and the financial pressure it is placing on our households and our churches, means instead of raising rates for subscribers, we will cut costs, moving from 24 to 14 printed editions each year. Taking this step will reduce our costs an estimated 35-40 percent, which essentially makes up for the loss

of buying power incurred during the 17 years the subscription rate has remained the same."

The *Baptist Message* will use its website, BaptistMessage.com, to focus on breaking news, and use the print edition to publish news and information of more enduring value as well as strong human interest stories.

Votes from page one

The amendment originated with overwhelming votes of approval in the Louisiana House and Senate in 2019. The LBC Executive Board endorsed the measure last year and month's later messengers to the Louisiana Baptist Convention adopted a resolution in support of the constitutional change.

Months of work by Louisiana Baptist leaders, state legislators, Louisiana Right to Life staff and other

pro-life supporters resulted in the strong pro-life statement represented by the final tally.

Will Hall, director of the LBC Office of Public Policy, said the strong push by Louisiana Baptists helped to influence the large margin of victory.

"Just two weeks ago, the amendment was polling at about 51 percent across the state; and, there were trouble spots where only a

third of the voters in some cities were on board," Hall said. "In the end we grabbed 11 out of every 12 undecided voters to push the victory threshold to 62 percent."

"Our churches worked hard to get out the word and it made a difference!" he said.

Brian Gunter, pastor of First Baptist Church in Pollock and board president of the CENLA Pregnancy Center in Alexandria, said Tuesday's vote was a culmination of many years of hard work and prayer on the part of pro-life advocates in the state.

"It was an incredible victory," Gunter told the *Baptist Message*. "We outperformed our expectations. With 62 percent of the state voting pro-life it proves Louisiana is the most pro-life state in America. When Roe v. Wade is overturned by the US Supreme

Court it ensures our pro-life laws will remain in place in Louisiana and that abortion will finally stop in this state. And I believe it will happen. We've never been this close to overturning Roe and ending abortion."

Louisiana Right to Life Executive Director Ben Clapper thanked all those who voted "YES on #1" and worked to get others to do so, too.

"We always thought and believed Louisiana was a pro-life state but this was the first time our citizens put it on paper," he said. "This set in stone that the state overwhelmingly showed their love for life.

"It's a testament to our people and to our churches who worked so hard," he continued. "We knew that if there wasn't a strong campaign on the pro-life side to pass this amendment there was a good chance we could

lose on this amendment. If it wasn't for all of those who worked tirelessly on this issue, we would be looking at very different results now. To all the churches who took this upon themselves to promote this amendment we are so grateful for their courage and stepping out to promote the Love Life Amendment and get it passed."

Clapper said even though he and others have celebrated this victory, much work remains to be done in the fight for life. He encouraged others to support pregnancy care centers and consider participating in one of the five Louisiana Life Marches that are scheduled throughout January 2021.

"We look forward to the day when Roe v. Wade is overturned," he said. "The pro-life movement succeeds when we all work together with passing policy like the Love Life Amendment and supporting mothers and babies in this battle against a very real darkness that we can win."

Inspires from page 4

CD to those who could not attend or listen online.

But Davis said he is intent on keeping his flock forward focused.

"I tell our congregation the best is yet to come -- when we keep our eyes on Jesus."

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2020 LBC: Resolve in the face of adversity

By Brian Blackwell
Message staff writer

STEVE HORN

PINEVILLE, La. (LBM) – Amid a year of COVID-19, multiple hurricanes and political turmoil, hope and resolve were consistent themes shared at the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

Louisiana Baptist Executive Director Steve Horn praised messengers to the 2020 LBC Annual meeting of churches for their resiliency amid a difficult year.

“COVID, political division exacerbated by racial division, devastating hurricanes and the accompanying economic

disruptions have tested us,” Horn said during his executive director’s report, Nov. 10. “As one social media meme put it, ‘In Louisiana, we are tough, but we are tired.’

“But, if 2020 has proven anything, this year has proven that we, in Louisiana, are a resilient bunch,” he continued. “And, I am thankful.”

Horn said Louisiana Baptists were faithful in giving, gathering and sharing the Gospel despite COVID-19 and multiple hurricanes.

Though most events sponsored by the state missions services team were canceled during the summer, Horn said efforts to share the Gospel did not wane.

The communication team used the “Here for You” multimedia campaign to reach 95 percent of television viewer homes in the state -- who were spending additional time at home due to COVID-19. Around 250,000 Louisianans have been reached through the campaign’s social media and streaming platform.

But more importantly, through a partnership with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, the campaign has registered more than 5,000 views of the Gospel presentation and more than 500 decisions for Christ.

“As one of our staff members likes to say ‘we may have been confined, but we were not contained,’” Horn said. “You cannot quarantine Good News.”

Other evangelistic efforts have continued as well, including the annual Youth Evangelism Celebration, originally scheduled at the Rapides Parish Coliseum in Alexandria, that was revised to three one-night events called “YEC: Limited Edition.” The Baptist Message will have a full report in the December edition.

Horn also noted that each Baptist Collegiate Ministry continues to see students on their respective campuses come to Christ through new ways of evangelism, discipleship and acts of service.

He added that the state

evangelism conference will convene at Summer Grove Baptist Church in Shreveport Jan. 25-26.

Horn said Louisiana Baptists continue to amaze him with their commitment to share Christ no matter what obstacles they face.

Moving forward, Horn said he is more convinced than ever that Louisiana Baptists need one another, God’s grace is sufficient and they will need to continue exercising incredible resiliency.

“As odd as this might sound, let us be glad that we haven’t missed 2020,” he said. “Because of what we have faced, we witnessed the incredible work of Southern Baptists coming together for the sake of the Gospel. I’m glad I did not miss that.”

“Because of what we have faced, we got to see God at work. The one who promised to never leave us or forsake us did not leave or forsake us. I’m glad I did not miss that.”

See RESOLVE, page 12

FEMA, SBA extend deadlines to Nov. 27

ALEXANDRIA, LA (LBM) -- U.S. Sen. John Kennedy has announced important information for Louisianans seeking help in the wake of Hurricane Laura.

The Small Business Administration has extended its deadline to Nov. 27 for physical loan applications (property damage to home or business).

Submit completed loan applications to: U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

For additional information, contact the SBA by phone, (202) 205-6734.

Meanwhile, the Federal Emergency Management Agency also has extended its

deadline to Nov. 27.

Homeowners and renters can apply for federal assistance, which includes help for temporary housing, rental assistance and repair or replacement of damaged property.

Grants may be available as well to help with other expenses such as medical and dental care, childcare, funeral and burial costs, replacing essential household items, moving and storage, vehicle repairs and cleanup.

Louisianans can determine whether they live in a designated parish and obtain other information through the FEMA helpline, 800.621.3362 (TTY 800.462.7585), and at disasterassistance.gov.

Immediate Job Openings

Louisiana Baptist Children’s Home & Family Ministries
Full-Time Cottage Parents
 on Monroe Campus!

Husband and wife teams are needed. Full-time positions include salary, benefits, paid vacation, and training. Basic job description is to provide love, care, and hope in Christ for children in need. Applicants should not have children living at home under the age of 18. Must have a sense of call and commitment to a ministry of service to children and be active members of a local Southern Baptist church. Part-time positions are also available.



Send resume to:
 Susan Nolan at
snolan@lbch.org
 or LBCH,
 PO Box 4196,
 Monroe, LA 71211.



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EDITOR'S NOTE: Do you have a Revival, Homecoming, a new pastor, a community outreach or a concert? The Baptist Message would love to share your church news with the rest of the state. It is very easy to do, just send in your information (who, what, where and when) to philip@baptistmessage.com or call 318.449.4345. To get your event in the paper, please submit your information three weeks prior to the event.

ON THE MOVE

■ **Eric Zimmer** is the interim pastor at Ida Baptist Church, Ida.
 ■ **Lance Rolland** resigns as pastor of Westwood Baptist Church, Keithville and **David Venable** is the interim pastor.

REVIVAL

■ Serenity Baptist Church, Tickfaw: **Revival**, November 18-20, 6:30 p.m. each night. Evangelist: **Gary Bowlin**. Pastor: Keith Wagner.
 ■ Social Springs Baptist Church, Ringgold: **Harvest Sunday**, November 22, Evangelist: **Bill Britt**. Pastor: James Hester.
 ■ Faith Baptist Church, Baker: **Revival**, December 6-9. Evangelist: **Bill Britt**. Pastor: Arnold Austin.

LAGNIAPPE

■ Rocky Springs Baptist Church, Lisbon: **Seeking a bivocational music leader**. If interested in this position, please call 318.680.7419 for further details.
 ■ Brushy Creek Baptist Church, Bancroft: **The Erwins in concert**, November 20, 7 p.m. at the Hyatt High School Community Center, 6249, Hwy 109, Fields, LA. Pastor: Mike Streams.
 ■ Ouachita Baptist Church, West Monroe: **Holiday Bazaar**, November 21, 9 a.m.- 3p.m. There will be many vendors, food to eat in or carry out. Everyone is invited. Call Roxanne McCormick at 318.547.4738 for more details. Pastor: Mike Holloway.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Zwolle: **Church Wide Thanksgiving Meal**, November 22, 5 p.m. The meal will be held in the Activity Building. Pastor: Marty Williams.
 ■ Longview Baptist Church, Deville: **Annual Thanksgiving Pig Roast**, November 22, 6 p.m. Pastor: Robby Poole.
 ■ Mangham Baptist Church, Mangham: **Community-wide Thanksgiving service**, November 22, 6 p.m. at First Assembly of God in Mangham. Speaker: **Jimmy Wilkins**. A time of refreshment and fellowship will follow. Pastor: Rick Aultman.

Evangelists from page 2

been faithful and strengthened his faith throughout the pandemic.
 "People can pray by asking God to move on the hearts of pastors to use the full time evangelist in a greater way than ever," he said. "Baptisms are down and will be more so this year than ever; and evangelism, soul winning, crusades and revivals need to be put back as a priority by pastors and churches. People should pray specifically for evangelists to have open doors of ministry and to be sensitive to their financial needs. Presently, we are entering the winter months when not a lot of events are normally scheduled."
 David Hanna, the past president of LACOSBE and

■ Bayou Vista Baptist Church, Morgan City: **Annual church-wide Thanksgiving meal** November 24, 6 p.m. A brief service will be held in the sanctuary at 6 p.m. and the meal will be served in the Family Life Center. Pastor: Steven Kelly.
 ■ Mission Point Baptist Church, Stonewall: **Friends Forever hymn sing**, November 29, 5 p.m. All are invited to come sing along with **Price Harris & special guests**. The church is located at 740 Linwood Ave., Stonewall, La. Pastor: Ron Johnson.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Mandeville: **Voices of Mobile -- An Evening of Musical Worship**, November 29, 5 p.m. in the Worship Center. A love offering will be taken. Pastor: Corey Fontan.
 ■ Trinity Heights Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Laughing All the Way to Christmas Celebration**, November 29, 6:00 p.m. Speaker: Dennis Swanberg, America's Minister of Encouragement. The celebration is free to the public. A loving offering will be collected. Minister of Music: Darrell Robertson.
 ■ First Baptist Church, Tallulah: **Madison Baptist Association M-Night**, November 30, 6:30 p.m. Speaker: **Craig West**. There will be a meal served after the service. Pastor: Craig West.
 ■ Calvary Baptist Church, Shreveport: **Price Harris Calvary teen choir reunion "Friends Forever,"** January 8-9. For more information, contact Price Harris at ph2@aol.com or Van Lewis at vanalewis1@gmail.com. Pastor: John Lary.
 ■ Branson at Bethany: **Christmas Show**, December 1, 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. The show features **the Littles from North Carolina, Ryan & Friends (comedian and ventriloquist) and Shreveport's own Seva May, singer, theater actress and former Miss Georgia**. Meal follows each show. Checks must accompany ticket sale (no credit cards). Make your checks payable to NLBAB@B and mail to the Northwest Louisiana Baptist Association, 5675 W. 70th Street, Shreveport, LA 71129. No refunds after November 23. For more information or tickets, call 318.686.5736.
 ■ Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville: **Family Merry Marketplace**, December 2, 5:45 & 7 p.m. There is limited registration for each time. Register by November 29. Doors open 15 minutes prior to each event. Cost: Free. Crafts: 4 Craft Gifts per child (angel, donkey ornament, nativity painting, shepherd stenciled plate). As a family, journey back in time and experience the miracle of Christmas while your kids make special crafts to give others. Wrap it all up with Christmas music, festive decorations and gift bags included. Pastor: Philip Robertson.

Alaska from page one

more and seven students from Mosaic (an Alaska Baptist Resource Network ministry that is similar to a BCM) packed their bags and traveled to Louisiana to serve as an Alaska Baptist Disaster Relief team. Throughout Oct. 19-24 they removed trees that had fallen on homes and cleared debris that was scattered across properties throughout Rapides Parish. But more importantly, they shared the hope found in Jesus with the 17 homeowners they encountered.
 Among those blessed by the Mosaic team were Rebekah and Jeremy Buckels, members of Calvary Baptist Church, Alexandria, who lost 30 trees to Hurricane Laura and then had two inches of water flood their home during Hurricane Delta. Rebekah has known Belmore since they were teenagers residing in Lafayette, and she and Jeremy were thrilled that Belmore and the students were able to come to their assistance.
 "Scott and his team were able to, in one day, cut up several large trees and remove dangling branches, freeing us up to work on our flooded house," she said. "We are extremely grateful to the team for blessing our family with their service. They truly exemplified serving

as the hands and feet of Jesus."
 Belmore was overjoyed to see his students enthusiastically serve those in his home state.
 "I wanted to introduce them to missions, and disaster relief plays a role in that," Belmore told the *Baptist Message*. "They needed to come down to serve people in the community that are hurting and broken right now because of the devastation that is taking place to their homes and families. I knew that we needed to do something to put these students out in a place that is going to stretch them and grow them in their faith."
 The students not only worked long hours during the day at job sites, but in the evening they completed classwork at their host church, Philadelphia Baptist Church Horseshoe Drive in Alexandria. Due to COVID-19, UA-A has moved to a virtual classroom model and this allowed Mosaic members to work in Louisiana and participate in classes, too.
 Kaysie Rich said despite the challenges presented with schoolwork and a three-hour difference in time zones, the blessings she received outweighed any inconveniences.
 "It's been very humbling," Rich said. "We have

natural disasters in Alaska but we don't have hurricanes, and we typically don't have trees falling on our homes. The relief that we are bringing these people, the love of Jesus Christ that we bring to these people -- they are so grateful. I don't think anybody really realizes how much people appreciate this kind of ministry until your feet are on the ground and doing it. There are no words to describe it, just an overwhelming feeling."
 Clinton Boyer said he was reminded of how blessed he is to have housing and food.
 "I never thought about the aspect that you can't sleep peacefully at night with four trees on the house -- afraid it would cave in," he said. "It's a different kind of experience to give somebody peace of mind to sleep through the night."
 Caleb Copp was impressed with the teams who cooked, did laundry and helped with other tasks so their team could minister.
 "It's also awesome to see homeowners really excited about trees taken off their houses or a giant limb that was this time bomb waiting to go through someone's roof. It's a cool way to bless people."

Scripture Crypto

The Scripture Crypto is a Bible verse in which one letter has been substituted for another, thus encoding the verse. To find out what the verse is, you must determine what each letter is a substitute for. An "a," for example, may stand for a "t" in this week's issue of the Scripture Crypto. Next week, "a" could stand for a "d." Each week, each letter is different. Solve by trial and error. The answer will be given next week. Note: All numerals, such as those in the scripture reference after the verse, are spelled out.

UDG CRY YNALCFUDK YBFE YDCVYUCYG PK, UDG

USSEFTCYG PK, UDG EUFG PLWD PK RUVG HWDGUNY.

GYPCYVWDWQA CJYDCA-KFO:KFO

Clues:
C = T; F = I

Answer to October 22 Scripture Crypto:
Ezekiel forty-one: nineteen

Resolve from page 9

DAVID CRANFORD

David Cranford reminded messengers not to give up as the emphasis in his president's address.

Referencing 2 Corinthians 4, Cranford, pastor of First Baptist Church in Ponchatoula, exhorted Louisiana Baptists to "glorify Him in the midst of it all so that His grace may extend through more and more of His people."

Cranford said Louisiana Baptists should press forward and remember "the beginning," "the now" and "the later part" of their respective testimonies with Jesus.

"It is possible even in the midst of these days to experience renewal and revival and restoration, if we don't neglect our spirits and our spiritual health," he said. "Don't become spiritually near-sighted in times of trouble and distress. Spiritual nearsightedness brings discouragement and depression. God does

not cease supporting and strengthening and loving His people just because times are difficult."

STEVE MCALISTER

During the Convention sermon, Steve McAlister, pastor of Westside Baptist Church in Natchitoches, said America needs hope amid the difficult circumstances faced in 2020.

McAlister, referencing Genesis 1:26, 27, 2:15-17 and 3:22-24, said the church must treat people according to His image, should engage in the democratic process and are obliged to share the Gospel.

He said God has given believers the task of being Christ's ambassadors and to share Him with others.

"That's the hope of America," he said. "That's the hope of the world. That's the hope of Louisiana. It's not a country. It's not a government. It's not being on the right side of an issue. The hope of our country is the Gospel of Jesus Christ."



Brian Blackwell photo

David Cranford (center), pastor of the First Baptist Church in Ponchatoula, was re-elected president, David Jeffreys (left), associate pastor of Highland Baptist Church in New Iberia, was elected first vice president, and William Smith (right), pastor of Lakeshore Baptist Church in Monroe, was elected second vice president.

BUDGET APPROVED

Messengers approved the Cooperative Program allocation budget and amendments to the LBC Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

The 2021 financial plan is identical to the one approved for 2020 by messengers in 2019 and is based on expected contributions of \$18,653,700, following eight previous consecutive years of annual decreases. The allocation formula for distributing Cooperative Program gifts also remains unchanged with 63.26 percent dedicated to support ministries in the state

and 36.74 percent forwarded to fund national entities.

Cooperative Program projections typically are based on actual receipts from August of the previous year through July of the current one. This year the Business and Finance Committee of the Executive Board chose to recommend suspending the usual conservative budget process due to receipt anomalies resulting from COVID-19 restrictions and interruptions to church operations caused by hurricanes, storms and tornadoes.

The amendments to the Convention's governing documents essentially added

provisions for operating the Convention during emergencies.

OFFICERS ELECTED

David Cranford, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Ponchatoula, was re-elected president. David Jeffreys, associate pastor of Highland Baptist Church in New Iberia, was elected first vice president, and William Smith, pastor of Lakeshore Baptist Church in Monroe, was elected second vice president.

All three men were given individual votes of acclamation by the Convention – a single ballot cast by the LBC executive director in view of no opposition to any of the candidates.

LAGNIAPPE

The final messenger count for the 2019 Annual Meeting was 386 in attendance out of 440 pre-registered for the abbreviated meeting - shortened because of COVID-19.

The 2021 Annual Meeting is scheduled for Nov. 16 at North Monroe Baptist Church in Monroe.



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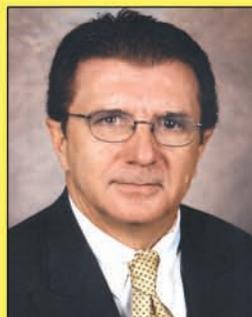
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