



## Inside:

- Nativity Forever stamp issued by USPS
- 300 gather at Siloam for Replicate
- Remains of Baptist lobbyist's wife found
- 'You are!' theme of ABC Homes offering
- Lottie Moon offering goal \$155 million

## Williams turns 75

WBC celebrates 75 years of Christian higher education

Special section



November 17, 2016

## Williams celebrates homecoming

WALNUT RIDGE – Williams Baptist College (WBC) observed homecoming on Nov. 5, with alumni and friends participating in numerous activities and festivities, including the culmination of WBC's 75th anniversary celebration.

Williams honored three alumni during homecoming festivities. James Costner, a 1963 WBC graduate, of Nashville, Tenn., was presented this year's Distinguished Alumnus Award; and Bobo (WBC class of 2005) and Amber (WBC class of 2003) Newton of Tulsa, Okla., were honored as this year's Outstanding Young Alumni.

The awards presentation event also featured performances by the Williams Singers and The Cast drama team, as well as a presentation on the history of the college and recognition of the Phi Beta Lambda business society.



Alexus Clardy of Conway, and Ryan Whittle of Grinch, Conn., are the 2016 Williams Baptist College homecoming queen and king.

ness society.

Among the many other events during the day, the Lady Eagles volleyball squad faced St. Louis College of Pharmacy, and the Eagles basketball squad faced Hendrix College. During the game's halftime, the softball and wrestling teams were recognized for their accomplishments in the 2015-16 season.

Also, Alexis Clardy of Conway, and Ryan Whittle of Grinch, Conn., were crowned the WBC 2016 homecoming queen and king.

Clardy is a senior, double-

majoring in biology and psychology, and the daughter of Terry and Penny Clardy. Whittle is a senior physical education major and the son of Larry Whittle and Jasmine Bartlett.

Also representing the senior class were Brooke Howell of Bryant, and Patrick Smith of Malvern. Howell, a biology major, is the daughter of Mike and Kay Howell. Smith, also a biology major, is the son of Patrick and Leona Smith.

See **HOMEcoming** page 2

## Trump elected; Ark. voters approve 'medical marijuana'

IN WHAT IS BEING called one of the most stunning upsets in U.S. political history, celebrity businessman and political novice Donald J. Trump was elected America's 45th president Tuesday, Nov. 8.

During the election Trump courted the evangelical vote by naming Ronnie Floyd, Arkansas pastor and immediate past Southern Baptist Convention president, and Dallas pastor Robert Jeffress, to a special advisory team.

Mainstream news media had called the election for Hillary Clinton, wife of former Arkansas governor and U.S. president Bill Clinton, for months leading up to the election. In addition to Trump's presidential victory in winning the White House, Republicans maintained control of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives in the election.



Trump

For the nation's evangelicals, Trump's election has huge potential social and cultural ramifications, including decisions surrounding religious liberty cases, the election of Supreme Court justices and legislation regarding abortion, among others.

Arkansans voted overwhelming for Trump by a margin of 60 percent to 34 percent (677,904 votes for Trump to 378,729 for Clinton).

See **GROWING** page 7

### Arkansas approves marijuana

In Arkansas, voters approved the Arkansas Medical Marijuana Amendment, making the use of medical marijuana legal for some Arkansans.

Under the amendment, the Arkansas Department of Health will issue registration cards to qualifying patients while the Alcoholic Beverage Control Division will oversee the dispensaries and growing facilities.

After approval from their doctors, patients will be able to obtain up to 2.5 ounces of marijuana from a dispensary every two weeks. Glaucoma, cancer, post-traumatic stress disorder and Alzheimer's disease are some of the "qualified medical conditions" listed in the amendment. Arkansas is the 26th state to legalize medical marijuana.

Larry Page, executive director of the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council, reacted to the vote by Arkansans to approve medical marijuana.

"The passage of Issue Six was disappointing but not totally unexpected. We began our opposition to Issue Six some 20 points down in the polls, and over the course of the campaign we closed that gap," Page said in an email to the *Arkansas Baptist News*.

"However, we couldn't get it

See **ELECTION** page 2

## Ark. churches among fastest growing

CENTRAL BAPTIST Church in Jonesboro was named the second fastest growing Southern Baptist church in the U.S. in 2016. Pastored by Archie Mason, Central Baptist Church reported a 30 percent growth of 958 in its attendance of 4,203.

The list of 100 fastest growing and largest participating churches was compiled annually in collaboration between *Outreach* magazine and Life-

Way Christian Resources.

Also in the Natural State, The Summit Church of North Little Rock, the pastorate of Bill Elliff, ranks number 94 among our nation's fastest growing churches, recording a 19 percent growth of 262 in its average attendance of 1,610.

Among largest participating churches, Cross Church in Springdale, the pastorate of immediate past Southern Baptist Convention president

Ronnie Floyd, ranked number 45 with 9,033 in average attendance.

In the self-reported survey, LifeWay Research surveys 27,000 churches for information, verifies the numbers, calculates the results and compiles the lists. In turn, *Outreach* interviews many pastors and writes features profiling churches and leaders.

See **GROWING** page 7

## POSTAGE INFORMATION

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## ABN Digest

Stories of interest  
to Arkansas Baptists

### Death penalty affirmed in Calif., Neb., Okla.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) – All three states with death penalty-related measures on the ballot Nov. 8 – California, Nebraska and Oklahoma – affirmed the use of capital punishment. In California, a measure that would have repealed the death penalty failed by a margin of 46-54, according to the secretary of state. Nebraskans overwhelmingly overturned their state legislature's 2015 repeal of the death penalty, and Oklahomans approved an addition to their state constitution affirming existing death penalty statutes amid controversy surrounding the state's lethal injection methods. Capital punishment "is grounded in the understanding that God has established civil authorities to rule over us ... for our good," said Oklahoma pastor Shane Hall, referencing Romans 13. "Those civil authorities have been given authority from God to rule and provide good order to society."

### Physician-assisted suicide approved in Colo.

DENVER, Colo. (BP) – Colorado voters overwhelmingly legalized physician-assisted suicide Nov. 8, joining five other states (California, Montana, Vermont, Oregon and Washington) where similar laws already exist. The Colorado End of Life Options Act, on the ballot as Proposition 106, passed by a two-thirds margin, with 64.55 percent of voters, or 1,521,339 Coloradans approving the measure. Those who opposed it totaled 35.4 percent, or 835,355 voters, according to unofficial but complete returns reported by Colorado Secretary of State Wayne W. Williams show.

For more ABN Digest, go to  
[arkansasbaptist.org/abn-digest](http://arkansasbaptist.org/abn-digest)

# USPS issues Nativity stamp for Christmas season

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is ready for Christmas with a new Nativity Forever stamp issued Nov. 3. The stamp was dedicated at Saint John's Church in Washington, D.C., and is available nationwide immediately.

The public is asked to share the news on social media using the hashtag #NativityStamps.

"Today we honor one of the most symbolic images in the world – an image that for Christians from all walks of life celebrates the story of the Nativity – the birth of Jesus Christ. This beautiful stamp includes a brilliant star that stands out in both its illustration and in its meaning of Christmas," said Janice Walker, USPS corporate communications vice president. "There are no greater traditions than those of the holidays, and the Postal Service is happy to help you celebrate and honor your traditions."

Joining Walker in dedicating the stamps were former USPS Board of Governors member Louis Giuliano; St.

John's Church Rector Reverend Luis León; and Florida Avenue Baptist Church Pastor Adamio Charles Boddie. USPS Shipping Solutions Manager John Samuels III served as master of ceremonies.

"During my time with the Board of Governors, I witnessed the launch of a stamp series that spoke deeply to my Christian faith," said Giuliano. "The first stamp, aptly named Holy Family, was issued in 2012 and illustrated the journey of Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus into Egypt. In 2014, I was honored to stand here in Saint John's Church to help dedicate the second stamp in the series, Christmas Magi, which illustrated the story of the Three Wise Men."

"It is with great pleasure that I welcome the United States Postal Service back to St. John's Church for the unveiling of the 2016 Nativity Forever stamp," said León. "Our ceremony today celebrates the remarkable mystery of the Incarnation, the world's most widely observed holiday.

This new stamp reminds us of God's gift of His Son as our Savior, His continuing gift of grace in our lives and the possibility for us to receive the power to become His children."

Art director Greg Breeding of Charlottesville, Va., designed the stamp with original artwork by Nancy Stahl of New York City.

The stamp art features an image of Joseph and Mary silhouetted against a dawn sky. As baby Jesus lies in a straw-filled manger, Mary kneels to the right and Joseph stands to the left, holding a lantern. Over the scene, a bright star shines on the trio. The color palette features simple shades of blue and white highlighted by deep shadows.

### The Nativity scene

Artists through the centuries have celebrated the Nativity in painting and sculpture. Carvings of Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus, often accompanied by an ox and a donkey, date back at least to the fourth century. St. Francis of Assisi is



credited with creating the first crèche in the 13th century. In 1223 in a cave near a small village, he set up a manger as a visual way to deepen the message of his sermon on the birth of Jesus.

Nativity scenes remain the centerpieces of many church and family devotions during the Christmas season. Nativity Forever is being issued in booklets of 20 stamps. Forever stamps will always be equal in value to the current first-class mail 1-ounce price.

## HOMEcoming

*continued from page one*

Juniors on the court were Hannah "Mo" Whitefoot of Atoka, Tenn., and Willie Wright of Maumelle. Whitefoot, majoring in early childhood education, is the daughter of Steve and Amy White-

foot. Wright, a biology major, is the son of Ami and Sanford Frazier.

Sophomore representatives were Erika Isbill of Jonesboro, and Corbitt Cooper of Brinkley. Isbill, a history major, is the daughter of Eric and Marsha Isbill. Cooper, a physical education major, is the son of David and Melanie Cooper.

Freshmen on the court were Georgia Mara of North Little Rock, and Leandro Choi of Sao Paulo, Brazil. Mara, majoring in business administration, is the daughter of Julie Marrow Mara. Choi, majoring in computer information science, is the son of Daniel and Marilia Choi.

Also taking place during the

homecoming was the dedication of Midkiff Meadows, in memory of J.T. Midkiff. Midkiff served at WBC from 1956 to 1974 as professor of social science, dean of men and director of the Baptist Student Union. He is credited with planting many of the trees on the WBC campus and other beautification projects.

## ELECTION

*continued from page one*

much closer than two to four points in the closing days. We were out-spent by the other side by a margin of 12 to 1 or more, and that proved to be the most formidable thing we had to overcome."

Page added that he is concerned about the long-term ramifications of legalized marijuana use in the state.

"Arkansans are a compassionate people, and I think many voters did what they thought would really help patients with some very serious medical conditions. The problem lies in the fact that the proponents and supporters of Issue Six weren't really about compassionate health care;

rather, they were most interested in getting the permission to grow and market marijuana, a very lucrative business," he said.

"My fear is that we will see a whole host of unintended consequences with the legalization of medical marijuana in Arkansas. These problems will include drug abuse and addiction, increased crime, health issues, and traffic accidents and on-the-job mishaps, resulting in injury and sometimes death. I think in time we will see that Arkansans voted for one thing and unfortunately got something quite different."

### Other issues

Other measures approved by Arkansas voters Nov. 8 included:

– An amendment allowing Arkansas' governor to retain his powers while outside of the state. Before voters passed the latest measure, the Arkansas Constitution of 1874 required the governor to relinquish his power at the time he left the state. An amendment that took effect in 1926 designated the lieutenant governor as the first in line to become acting governor.

– An amendment to extend term limits for elected county officials. The measure extends the length of executive county offices from two to four years, beginning with the 2018 elections. Positions impacted include the county judge, which is essentially the chief executive officer in charge of county government, as well as other positions such as sheriff, asses-

sor, treasurer, coroner, county surveyor, tax collector, circuit clerk and county clerk.

– An amendment allowing the state to issue unlimited bonds to finance economic development projects to help incentivize companies to locate in Arkansas. The amendment removed a limit imposed in Amendment 82, which was passed in 2004, allowing the state to issue debt to firms, but limiting the total funding for those projects to the top 5 percent of the general revenue collected in the previous fiscal year. Issue 3, approved by voters Nov. 8, which also amends the Arkansas Constitution, removes the limit and also allows local governments to pay outside firms, like chambers of commerce, to spur economic development.

# 300 attend Replicate retreat at Camp Siloam

SILOAM SPRINGS – More than 300 campers from across Arkansas gathered together at Camp Siloam for Replicate, a weekend of worship and life-changing messages, learning and growing in faith in Christ, for youth in grades 6-12.

Brent Crowe, vice president for Student Leadership University, a program that has trained more than 148,000 students, spoke at Replicate about everyday struggles Christians face.

“I think it’s safe to say at the end of the day we all struggle with being accepted,” said Crowe. “We all desire to belong and know who we are, our identity, and [to learn] how the love of Jesus defines us.”

The Museum, a Christian band from Atlanta, Ga., led campers in worship.

“Students live in an entirely different culture than any previous generation. Being

shaped by social media, which at times can be a positive tool, has also created a sense of not experiencing reality,” said Jack McCarty, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Huntsville.

“Acceptance, purpose, value in life, pressure to succeed and a lifestyle of being too busy – they are looking for something real and authentic, which can only be found in a relationship with Jesus Christ,” he said.

Students also enjoyed activities organized by Camp Siloam including ultimate Frisbee, paintball, flag football, gaga ball, volleyball and their famous giant swing, the Screaminator.

“This weekend I learned that when we tell others about God, it’s not just us talking, but it is God speaking through us, using us to share with others,” said Emma Keen from Sonora Baptist Church, Springdale.



“I really liked Brent because he wasn’t like your normal pastor who just preaches with the Bible only,” said Cade Arnold from First Baptist Church, Hindsville. “He told personal stories that were fun to listen to, but they had a lesson to teach, while using the Bible, too.”

The weekend was organized into four major sessions led by Crowe with breakout sessions in between.

Three different breakout sessions were offered to students: “College Life: What will they encounter in the classroom and on campus – The importance of being prepared,” “Missions: Short term and career – The importance of preparation” and “Worship: Leading worship with the purpose of pointing people to Jesus.”

Youth pastors attending Replicate received a copy of “Sacred Intent” by Brent

Crowe and “Rise of the Nones” by James Emery White.

Four sessions of “Generation Revitalization – Approaching and engaging the culture without compromising the Message,” was presented by Crowe and Warren Gassaway of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention for youth pastors.

Campers viewed a special screening of the movie, “I’m Not Ashamed,” based on the true story of Rachel Joy Scott, a devout Christian student who was the first of 13 deaths in the Columbine High School shooting.

“Retreats like the Replicate weekend are important because they allow students to separate themselves from a normal schedule and routine to focus or refocus their lives on the redemptive work of God in Christ Jesus,” said Crowe.

Replicate was held Sept. 23-25.



## Remains of Mo. Baptist lobbyist’s wife found

BLOOMSDALE, Mo. – Skeletal remains discovered on the family farm of a Missouri Baptist lobbyist have been confirmed to belong to his wife who had been missing for more than two years, the *Missouri Times* reported Nov. 4.

An anthropologist with the St. Louis Medical Examiner’s Office positively identified the body as Lynn Messer, 52, who disappeared mysteriously during the night of July 8, 2014, after making crafts in preparation for the second day of vacation Bible school at First Baptist Church of Festus-Crystal City, Mo.

Kerry Messer, Lynn’s husband, confirmed the finding on a Facebook page set up to

locate his missing wife. He wrote, “Lynn’s dental records are a match and the authorities have confirmed to me that the remains found Tuesday evening are absolutely those of my Bride.” He said the ordeal has been extremely stressful on his family.

Messer, who lobbies at the state capital on behalf of conservative organizations including the Missouri Baptist Convention, told local media that he doesn’t understand how

extensive searches of the area in July 2014 didn’t discover the body. Authorities have searched for clues of the miss-



Lynn and Kerry Messer

ing woman’s whereabouts since she disappeared.

“Please be in prayer for our family, which has been torn apart by all the

stress and circumstances surrounding this past 28 months ordeal. I have no idea what will transpire moving forward from today. However the critics are going wild with accusa-

tions and the media is hounding,” Messer posted on the Facebook page Nov. 2. “Please pray that somehow and in some way The Lord is glorified through all of this mess, and that I can manage to behave as an ambassador of Christ.”

Authorities reported that the remains were found by the couple’s son, Aaron Messer, and his two teenage daughters in a wooded area near the edge of the family’s property, according to the *Missouri Times*.

A cause of death has not yet been determined, and there is still no word on whether investigators suspect foul play. The investigation has been turned over to the FBI.

## ABN Digest

Stories of interest  
to Arkansas Baptists

### Mississippi messengers adopt 2000 BF&M

JACKSON, Miss. (BP) – Messengers from among the 2,200 Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) member churches unanimously approved adoption of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message as the doctrinal guidelines for the convention, during the 181st annual meeting of the convention at First Baptist Church, Jackson, Nov. 1-2. A total of 830 messengers representing 432 churches registered for the 2016 annual meeting. The messenger count reflected a decrease of six percent, or 52 messengers, when compared to the 2015 attendance figure of 882 registered messengers.

### SBC Crossover adds Greg Laurie crusade

PHOENIX (BP) – As Phoenix-area Southern Baptists prepare for their 2017 annual meeting, they are praying that a new addition to Crossover activities could lead to long-lasting spiritual fruit. At the invitation of the North American Mission Board (NAMB), Southern California evangelist and pastor Greg Laurie has scheduled his national Harvest America outreach at the University of Phoenix Stadium for June 11, 2017, which will coincide with Southern Baptists’ Crossover efforts. The Crossover crusade, which will be simulcast nationally, will include a gospel message by Laurie and music from top-name Christian artists. More than 225 local church and parachurch leaders participated in a launch meeting Oct. 6 where Laurie shared his vision for the crusade. Harvest America and NAMB will host six other preparatory meetings in November.

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# Editorial & Opinion

*"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have..."*

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

## What Trump's election means for Christians

The election of Donald J. Trump as our nation's 45th president is largely without precedent in our history.

Perhaps not since our founding fathers has a man like Trump taken hold of our highest elected office with more experience as a businessman than a politician.

Moreover, Trump's many failings – from multiple marriages to questionable treatment of women and over-the-top rhetoric – have put him before the American people as a flawed, sinful human being.

But in spite of it all, Trump touched a populist cord with his slogan, "Make America Great Again," among millions of Americans – propelling himself to become the leader

of the free world and, arguably, the most powerful person in the world.

I believe Trump's success as a political novice is more a result of the repudiation of the radical policies of our current president than it was of

Trump's opponent, Hillary Clinton.

Of course, Clinton too, was deeply flawed, as we

know all too well. Perhaps too many people today recall what a previous Clinton presidency gave the nation and decided it was time to retire the political family once and for all.

The election of Barack Obama nearly eight years ago as the nation's first African-American president touting a message of hope and change resonated with Americans –

even many conservatives willing to give him a chance.

While it should have been anticipated, the change Obama brought to the United States was not what many anticipated.

Instead of being a champion for the average citizen and the middle class, supporting policies that improved the standard of living, securing our borders and triumphing the American experience, the Obama administration was more interested in pandering to our enemies, aggressively tackling climate change issues, promoting gender-neutral bathrooms and ensuring that homosexual marriage became the law of the land. Americans have also seen historically strong defense of the principles of religious freedom begin to erode under Obama's administration.

So here we have it. We have a new day with a populist president who has made many promises that – if imple-

mented successfully – will radically alter the history of our

See **PRESSING ON** page 7

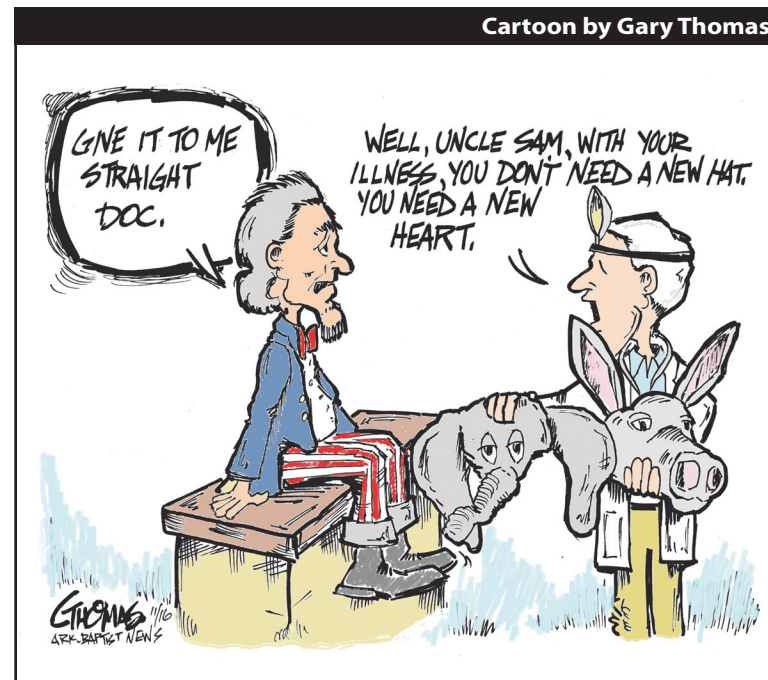


### Pressing On

Tim Yarbrough

Phil. 3:14

Cartoon by Gary Thomas



## Pro-lifers: No longer just Catholics or evangelicals

Ruth Graham, the daughter of the beloved evangelist Billy Graham, observed recently that the pro-life movement is undergoing a significant transformation. It used to be that to be pro-life meant one was probably either a Catholic or an evangelical. No longer is it restricted in that way; respect for the value of human life is found outside as well as inside religious and ideological parameters.

Recent polls illustrate the trend that secular-minded people are coming around to the principle of respect for human life. A Public Religion

Research Institute survey conducted last year found that millennials think that abortion should be restricted more than their parents' generation think. According to the results of a Marist poll, 80 percent of Americans and 60 percent of pro-choice individuals

reject the notion that abortion should be allowed up to the time of birth. A Students for Life of America survey found that only 17 percent of millennials agree that abortion should be allowed up to that point.

Destiny Herndon-De La

Rosa of Dallas founded New Wave Feminists. She believes that we must humanize the unborn child. She stated, "This is a human being with their own bodily autonomy." And, she called that view a "completely feminist message" – one that is also a foundational Christian principle.

Aimee Murphy, a resident of Pittsburgh and the head of *Life Matters Journal*, discovered how she had to view the value of human life after being pressured to obtain an abortion by a former boyfriend who raped her. She discovered that she "could not use violence to get what I wanted in life. I realized that if I wanted to get an abortion, I would just be passing oppression on to a child."

The founder of a group called Secular Pro-Life, Kelsey Hazzard, observed that the non-religious grounds for opposing abortion can bring people around who might otherwise have rejected the value of human life argument based solely on faith principles. Her position lines up with that of an ever-expanding group of young, non-religious pro-lifers; it is a belief that our culture of death has committed brutality for the sake of convenience.

While we are gratified that the message of the intrinsic value of an unborn child's human life is gaining traction among those outside the traditional pro-life camp, we are sobered by the fact that

we still have a long, long way to go. As long as our culture accepts the concept that a child's life can be arbitrarily, unjustifiably and painfully snuffed out, we cannot let up. Children, both born and unborn, are God's creation, His gifts; He has not delegated to us the right to take innocent and defenseless life.

We must never think we have traveled far enough down the pro-life road until we have returned this culture to a respect for all human life. Let's not rest until everyone embraces the high principle that unborn lives matter.

Larry Page is executive director of the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council. Contact him at [llp@arfaith.org](mailto:llp@arfaith.org).



### Faith & Ethics

Larry Page



Volume 115, Number 23  
USPS08021

Member of the Association  
of State Baptist Publications  
Arkansas Press Association  
Evangelical Press Association

Telling the story of  
Arkansas Baptists since 1901

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Toll-free 800-838-2272, ext. 5161  
Arkansas Baptist News (ISSN 1040-6056) is published bi-weekly except the last issue of the year (25 issues) by the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, Inc., 10 Remington Drive, Little Rock, AR 72204.

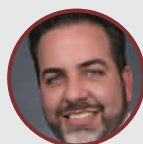
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toll-free 800-838-2272; email: [abn@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:abn@arkansasbaptist.org). Periodical Postage paid at Little Rock, AR.

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## Outdoor reflections



**Family Matters**  
Ben Phillips

Many families will spend time together in God's creation as deer season arrives in Arkansas. Solitude in the woods with a slower pace is refreshing for many of us with hectic schedules. Outdoors adventures create moments to reflect.

**Preparing** for deer season includes sighting in our rifles. Sometimes we fail to hit the center of the target. It's a reminder of our sin and how we often miss the mark (Rom. 3:23).

**Scouting** for signs of deer activity helps us determine the best places to hunt. Reading through the Bible, one discovers a variety of clues providing insight and wisdom (Ps. 119:18).

**Driving** to our hunting lease, we read a devotional from Steve Chapman's book, "A Look at Life from a Deer Stand Devotional." We discuss Scripture, reflect and pray (Ps. 78:1-8).

**Walking** to and from the stand is often in the dark. We use flashlights lighting our way through trees and trails. God's Word lights our way as we travel the path of life every day (Ps. 119:105).

**Sitting** on the stand is often devoid of man-made sounds. The silence in the woods is soothing compared to the sounds our culture screams. Time alone in the quiet helps me to meditate and reflect on God's Word, something I don't do often enough in a crowded life (Ps. 1).

**Experiencing** the outdoors gloriously displays the penetrating rays of the rising sun and the majestic colors of a sunset. I am reminded that my days are numbered and how fleeting my time is with my children and that I should treasure every moment and season (Ps. 104).

**Fellowshipping** at a hunting cabin with other men reminds me that we are made for community. Sharing stories illustrates how important it is to pass along the faith to the next generation (Prov. 27:17).

**Enjoying** time with family in God's creation grants secluded moments to reflect upon the goodness of God's creation, the blessings of life and a personal relationship with our Creator.

It's time to head to the woods!  
*Ben Phillips serves on the ABSC evangelism and church health team.*

# Highlights of the ABSC Annual Meeting

One of the highlights of the year for our convention of churches is the annual meeting. The meeting this year was another incredible moment for Arkansas Baptists. We worshiped, prayed, preached, celebrated, laughed, cried, fellowshipped, reported, voted and rejoiced. I have listed what I believe are some standout moments.

1) The speakers were spot on. They were anointed, prophetic, encouraging and challenging.

2) The ministry testimonies touched our hearts and made us glad to be Arkansas Baptists.

3) The agency and institution reports were a top highlight. Our agencies and institutions are high impact, an integral part of Arkansas Baptist life and a great source of pride for our state.



**Executive Directions**  
Sonny Tucker

4) The 75th anniversary celebration of Williams Baptist College was spectacular.

5) The network dinners and fellowships were great. I was privileged to attend the young ministers lunch and the church planters dinner. Both were incredible.

6) There was an increasing cultural and ethnic diversity that reflects Arkansas.

7) There was great challenge for more impact in evangelism, church planting, missions involvement and impacting lostness.

8) I saw great numbers of Arkansas Baptists encouraging and loving each other.

This was indeed another great moment for Arkansas Baptists. I walked away incredibly proud of this state convention!

*J.D. "Sonny" Tucker is executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC).*

## Annual meeting memories

Arkansas Baptists, I am humbled and deeply honored to be given the opportunity to serve a second term as president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC). Like a child staring at the gifts under the tree on Christmas Eve, my heart is full of anticipation for what God is doing and will do in our lives and through His church to engage the least, the lost and the last with the gospel.

As I said in my message to those gathered at Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, I believe now, more than I ever have, that in my lifetime, we are going to see an incredible movement of God among His people in revival and a spiritual awakening in our nation. How we need His presence; how we need His power! Spiritual awakening in our communities is dependent upon spiritual revival in our lives and our churches.

Messengers at the annual meeting also elected John McCallum, pastor of First Baptist Church, Hot Springs, as vice president and Craig Collier, pastor of Mount Pisgah Baptist Church, Jacksonville, as second vice president. Both of these men are what I call "top-shelf" leaders. I am honored to call them my friends and look forward to serving with them this year.

We are appreciative for the incredible hospitality extended to our messengers and guests by the membership of Immanuel Baptist during the annual meeting! I am extremely grateful for the service of Kasey Earle and his tech team. Although I did not have the opportunity to meet each of you personally, I want you to know how valuable your ministry was to the success of our annual meeting.

As I reflect on the annual meeting, these are a few

of the highlights I shared with my church family at First Baptist, Stuttgart:

- Emphasized our continual need for revival and spiritual awakening through focused times of prayer;
- Heard incredible stories of how the least, lost and last in Arkansas, our nation and the world are being engaged with the gospel, resulting in new believers and new churches;

- Celebrated the 75th anniversary of Williams Baptist College;

- Rejoiced with Camp Siloam in receiving a \$1 million gift to its Feed My Sheep campaign;

- Approved a five-year budget formula for 2018-2022, which will accelerate our commitment to send more Cooperative Program gifts to the nations. During this five-year period, an additional \$1.7 million will be given outside Arkansas to reach the nations for Christ!

These are not the only highlights of our time together at Immanuel Baptist. We also heard some inspiring and challenging messages from Chuck Kelley, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; Nick Floyd, teaching pastor at Cross Church in Fayetteville, and ABSC Executive Director J.D. "Sonny" Tucker. You can read more about our annual meeting

through the *Arkansas Baptist News* and the ABSC websites.

Thank you, Arkansas Baptist churches, for sending your messengers to our annual meeting. I look forward to another year filled with stories of how Arkansas Baptist churches are engaging people with the gospel for the kingdom!

*Sam Roberts is senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Stuttgart and president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.*



**President's Perspective**  
Sam Roberts



Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) Executive Director J.D. "Sonny" Tucker (left) prays for newly elected ABSC Executive Board officers (from left to right) Craig Collier, pastor of Mount Pisgah Baptist Church, Jacksonville, second vice president; Sam Roberts, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Stuttgart, president; and John McCallum, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Hot Springs, vice president.

## Letter to the Editor

### Appreciation on 75th

On behalf of Williams Baptist College, I want to offer our sincerest appreciation to Dr. Sonny Tucker and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention for all they did to provide an amazing evening of celebrating WBC's 75th anniversary during the Tuesday evening session of the annual meeting.

The informative panel, the beautiful plaque, the elegant reception and custom cake all were expressions well

beyond any expectation we imagined.

We appreciate the concern, hard work and thought invested on our behalf. We are grateful to serve with such kind and thoughtful servants in such an effective Great Commission organization!

**Tom Jones**  
*President, Williams Baptist College*

## 'Astonished by His handiwork'

On Oct. 24, Camp Siloam announced a \$1 million donation to its Feed My Sheep campaign from the Bonner family, longtime residents of Pine Bluff. The Bonner's gift was a result of their faithfulness and relationship with the Arkansas Baptist Foundation – in addition to a lot of prayer.

The summer staff and a group of prayer warriors prayed every day for 20 months. We prayed for God to touch the heart of some-

one outside of our camp network who could make a transformative gift to the Feed My Sheep campaign so that a new dining hall could be built.

Charles and Genevieve Bonner were exactly the people we had been praying for. Their

gift was just what was needed at exactly the right time. Through them, God authored a story that I had hoped would come out of the cam-



### Camp Siloam

Jason Wilkie

paigned for a new dining hall.

A friend of mine asked me if I was surprised by the gift. "It was a complete surprise," I replied. Then, he said some-

thing that I have been pondering, "Isn't it funny that we pray and hope for God to do

something, and then when He does, we are surprised?"

Why was I surprised when God amazed me by doing what seemed impossible? Was

my surprise a lack of faith? Looking back on the progression of events, I think God was creating a scenario for Him to be glorified. Our journey started with a big need. We prayed and fasted over the need. Time went on with no answer; thus our faith began to be tested. We remained faithful to pray, but honestly, seeds of doubt began to creep in. Still, we hoped and we trusted that God would touch someone's heart with our need. I believe it was in the

later moments that our amazement was cultivated.

Is that OK? Did our surprise and wonder show a lack of faith? I think God wanted us to come to the place where we would be astonished by His handiwork. The amazement we had gets us excited about telling the story again and again – a story in which the Father gets the glory.

Jason Wilkie is executive director of Camp Siloam. For more about the Feed My Sheep campaign visit [campsiloam.com](http://campsiloam.com).

## Using change as a 'weapon of redemption'

As 2016 is quickly fading into the past and the once-distant 2017 is beginning to crest on the horizon, I am reminded once again that time seemed to be in short supply this time last year, while change and trials flooded the market. It has not yet been a year since I answered the call to enter the ministry, although the tremendous change brought about by a departure from a corporate environment to a nonprofit ministry has made it difficult to remember a prior existence.

As I reflect upon the unpredictability, impermanence

and change in my life, both personally and professionally over the past year, I cannot help but think of the children and families whom we serve.

For the more than 5,000 children who are in the foster care system in the state, the single mothers and their children with no safety net, and the abused, neglected and abandoned children who have found their way to the doorsteps of our ministry, change and uncertainty are all too often their only



### ABCHomes

Josh Townsend

loyal companions.

In his book "The Knowledge of the Holy," A.W. Tozer wrote, "With God no change is possible, but with men

change is impossible to escape." At first glance this can be a distressing realization to know that change is the only predictable constant in our life. However, as Tozer later pointed out, the impermanence of our condition and nature can actually be used by God for our own good and His glory. He went on to insightfully write, "In

a fallen world such as this the very ability to change is a golden treasure. ... For human beings the whole possibility of redemption lies in their ability to change."

Reflecting upon Tozer's words and my experience over the past year, it struck me that this is precisely what we do at Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes – we use change as a weapon for redemption. Over the past year I have been privileged to witness the lives of countless children and families changed for their good and God's glory. I have seen house parents, counselors, case workers, administrators

and ministry staff introduce hope and healing into the lives of those who find themselves in the midst of incredible trials, turmoil, uncertainty and an inability to change their circumstances.

As 2016 now transitions into the rearview mirror, I feel incredibly blessed to have linked arms with this ministry and our invaluable partners to offer the message of an unchanging God who brings hope and redemption through His gospel to the children and families of Arkansas.

Joshua Townsend is director of development for ABCHomes in Little Rock.

## WBC students experience IMB missions

For 75 years, students from Williams Baptist College (WBC) have been actively involved with the International Mission Board (IMB) through the various mission programs they provide for college students.

These experiences teach them the magnitude and importance of Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) mission work while the students also learn about themselves and their personal responsibility to carry out the Great Commission.

Kendall Davenport, Jessica Stovall and Moriah Hendrix are three great examples.

Davenport, a junior at Williams, decided to take this fall

semester off and serve with the IMB Hands On project in Madagascar. This semester-long mission assignment provides an opportunity for college students and young adults to serve Christ with a missionary mentor. After spending four days in remote villages, she wrote: "My favorite part of the trip was seeing the power of God's Word ... this trip has shown me that God's Word is powerful enough and it is all we need."

Stovall graduated this past spring from WBC. Before beginning her graduate studies



### Williams Baptist

Tom Jones

this fall, she chose to serve in Thailand with IMB Nehemiah Teams. Nehemiah Teams is a program that allows college students to serve with an established missionary

team focused on reaching unreached and hard-to-reach people groups. Stovall served in a red-light district in

Bangkok helping transgender men and women leave prostitution. Through the experience she said God reminded her "to reach out in messy and dark places outside of her comfort zones because there are people in those messy and

dark places who are crying out for salvation."

Hendrix graduated from Williams in 2015 and is in her first year as an IMB Journeyman in London, England. The Journeyman program provides two years of international mission service for college graduates working alongside experienced missionaries. Hendrix's job is to reach millennials in and around London with the good news of the gospel. She feels her life has been permanently impacted by her experience, noting, "I think after I return to the states, I'll continue to be intentionally missional wherever I am. I see how sharing the gospel can and should

be a natural part of life."

These three young women have experienced firsthand how God is using the Cooperative Program through Williams and the IMB around the world to impact lost people with the gospel. As your church plans for giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, know that your gifts will help provide opportunities for college students like Davenport, Stovall and Hendrix to experience the power of the gospel in transforming lives and cultures. Those are endeavors with eternal results and well worth our support!

Tom Jones is president of Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge.

# 'You are!' 2016 ABCHomes Thanksgiving offering theme

Stella Prather  
ABCHomes

LITTLE ROCK – Tents and hotel rooms have been their home. Their parents are more interested in drugs than they are being good parents. Food has often been sparse.

This was the lifestyle of a young, sibling group prior to arriving at the Baptist Children's Home in Monticello, a ministry of Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries (ABCHomes).

Because of generous donors and churches, ABCHomes was able to place these siblings together at the Baptist Home. Now, they have their own bedroom, toys and nice clothes. They are doing well in school and love church.

These three sisters and brother are among the people of ABCHomes.

The people of ABCHomes also includes Travis.\* Travis arrived at the Boys Ranch with little self-esteem and without Christ. He now participates in our Independent Living program. He had a summer job, has a savings account and has Christ in his heart. This month Travis turned 16, and you rarely see him without a friendly smile on his face.

ABCHomes houseparents and foster parents are also the people of ABCHomes. They cared for 234 children this past year, while our residential staff ministered to 14 moms and 33 children in our family care homes. Six counselors provided almost 2,200 counseling sessions.

The people of ABCHomes includes ABCHomes' many donors and supporters.

Because of donors, ABCHomes provides hope to

hurting children and families. This is the goal of ABCHomes, which raises essential support through an annual ABCHomes Thanksgiving Offering. The theme of the 2016 offering is "You are!"

In 2016 an anonymous donor has agreed to match individual gifts (up to \$100,000) to the ABCHomes Thanksgiving Offering. A gift of \$10 becomes \$20 to children. A gift of \$1,000 is worth \$2,000. Even small gifts are multiplied.

Many children we serve often are the weakest in our society," said David Perry, ABCHomes executive director. "Their hearts and lives are not full of courage but of fear.

**YOU are!**  
2016 Thanksgiving Offering

Thanks to the many churches and individual donors that generously give to the Thanksgiving Offering, we can reach out to these hurting children and families and offer them Christ-like hope and seek to direct them to that wonderful hope in the Lord."

The 2016 ABCHomes Thanksgiving Offering promotional items were recently mailed to pastors. These

resources include posters, bookmarks, a promotional video, offering envelopes and speaker request forms. The offering video can be found at <https://youtu.be/V5AWWsKcm2M>. Online donations may be made at [abchomes.org/donate](http://abchomes.org/donate).

Stella Prather is director of communication at ABCHomes. For more information visit [abchomes.org](http://abchomes.org). \*Names changed.

## GROWING

*continued from page one*

Southern Baptist churches achieved higher rankings in the category of participation than in the area of growth, *Outreach* and LifeWay found. Each list includes 20 Southern Baptist congregations. All numbers are based on attendance, not official membership, according to the report,

which captures numbers from February and March of 2015, excluding Easter Sunday.

"Although we go to great lengths to confirm data, the information is reported by pastors, staff or church officers, and as such, reflects their perception – their churches as they see them," *Outreach* said in its October issue. "The 2015 fastest-growing list includes surveyed churches with

attendance greater than 1,000, a numerical gain of 150 or more and a percentage gain of at least 4 percent. The 2015 largest list includes all churches participating in the survey with attendance of 5,269 or more."

Complete lists and accompanying features are online at [outreachmagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/2016\\_Outreach100-Summary.pdf](http://outreachmagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/2016_Outreach100-Summary.pdf).



## PRESSING ON

*continued from page 4*

great nation.

Americans are a generous and forgiving sort and are ready to give their new champion a chance. Already, President Obama has extended an olive branch to the president-elect and, at this writing, seems to be doing everything possible to support a peaceful transfer of power.

The challenges of our

country are many, and Trump made fixing them a cornerstone of his campaign.

– We have runaway debt that will eventually cripple our economy if not put into check.

– Our porous border is allowing undocumented immigrants to enter our country illegally, not only overburdening local and state governments, but also allowing the potential for terrorists to enter as well.

– The Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare,

while providing healthcare to many low-income Americans, is socking it to many other Americans with high premiums seen as unsustainable in the long term.

– America's trade agreements and the policies of several past administrations are closing plants and sending American jobs overseas.

While some Americans are placing their hope and future on a Trump presidency and his promise to "fix America," Christians know that our future is found only in the

person of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, it is time for us to double down and pray for our new president daily and also to pray for those with whom he will work to restore our country to a place of prominence in the world.

I pray this is so because I believe a strong America helps provide stability in the world. But more importantly, I believe a strong America is good for the furtherance of the gospel across the globe.

Praying for our government

is a biblical command.

"First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" 1 Timothy 2:1-4 (ESV).

Tim Yarbrough is editor/executive director of the ABN.



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# Lottie Moon Christmas Offering sets \$155 million goal

RICHMOND, Va. – Dec. 4-11 is this year's Week of Prayer for International Missions in the Southern Baptist Convention. The Week of Prayer, with the theme "The gospel resounds" from Colossians 1:5-6 (HCSB), undergirds the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions.

The offering, in tandem with Cooperative Program gifts from Southern Baptist churches, supports international workers in seeking to fulfill the Great Commission.

Gifts to the Lottie Moon offering are received through local Southern Baptist churches or online at [imb.org](http://imb.org), where there are resources to promote the offering. One hundred percent of the money collected goes to sending and sustaining missionaries.

This year's goal is \$155 million, which is a decrease of \$20 million from the 2015 goal of \$175 million.

"Right now, because of your giving, there are missionaries going up and down the Amazon and proclaiming the gospel to remote tribes. Right now, people in European cities who are being attacked continually by terror are also hearing the hope of the gospel because of your giving. Right now, as a result of your giving, there are brothers and sisters spreading the gospel across West African villages, sub-Saharan countries, Middle Eastern cities, South Asian fields, Central Asian mountains, and Southeast Asian islands. Your faith is literally resounding around the world for the glory of God," said David Platt, president of the International Mission Board (IMB).

Here is a glimpse at a few of the missionary

families featured in this year's emphasis.

## Copland family

Verona, Italy

Nick and Shannan Copland use modern tools to meet people and forge relationships in the ancient Italian city of Verona.

## the gospel resounds

Through websites they've established, Nick and Shannan, IMB workers, find common ground on social media to meet people who share interests, such as outdoor life and Italian cuisine. Relationships are natural keys in sharing spiritual truth, especially in a postmodern city like Verona – beautiful and wealthy but spiritually impoverished. Friendships formed during mountain hikes or evening meals often lead to sharing about Christ.

The Coplands are being tagged locally as the couple who bring people together.

Speaking English has also opened doors and led the Coplands to organize English camps for local students, using volunteers from the United States. The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering allows them to bring the gospel of Christ to northeast Italy, where Southern Baptists have never worked before this couple planted their lives in Verona.

## Dove family

Sandefjord, Norway

Sharing the gospel is an everyday part of the lives of IMB church planters Zack and Jennifer Dove as they deepen relationships and bridge conversa-

tions toward gospel truths in Sandefjord, Norway.

"Zack will say often . . . We don't need to let cultural norms be the filter," Jennifer explained.

"We need to let the gospel be the filter and so just share a little bit and see where it lands and plant that seed."

## Cregg\* family

South Asia

The Indian bride wore blue silk, trimmed with gold. Rich fabrics in brilliant hues are traditional for wedding saris in this South Asian megacity.

But the guest list was anything but typical. Among those celebrating this day were

was before the ministry of a Christian activity center rescued Shanti from her former life. She is now a believer and has a good job to support herself. And on this day, she even married a Christian man.

IMB missionaries Rodney and Helen Cregg\* have partnered in establishing the activity center in the middle of a notorious red-light district that offers prostitutes a place to learn basic skills.

"This is why we do what we do, to see these ladies – and other people in [this city] – realize the hope in the gospel and then find victory in free-

20 prostitutes – women who were like family to Shanti.\* She knew them from the years she shared their heartbreaking lifestyle as a prostitute. That

See **LMCO** page 9

## Reach Your Community

- Scott Nute: International Evangelist from Houston, TX
- Former Pro Baseball Player
- Local Church & Areawide Events

### Contact

713-277-8638

[scott@scottnute.org](mailto:scott@scottnute.org)

[www.scottnute.org](http://www.scottnute.org)

Scott is a member of Houston's First Baptist Church in Houston, Texas



## STEWARDSHIP TIP

### GIVING WITH FAITH AS SMALL AS A MUSTARD SEED

The Foundation is always looking for ways to partner and allow Arkansas Baptists to participate in funding the Kingdom through the ministries they love. The Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma has created an app called MustardSeed that allows your "spare change" to be donated to your church or favorite ministry. Simply link your credit or debit card to your MustardSeed account and each time you make a purchase, the purchase amount is rounded up to the nearest dollar. Once a month, the "change" will be automatically sent to the ministry you've designated. Scripture commands us to serve God with our time, talents, and material possessions. MustardSeed is another avenue, in addition to our tithe, to be obedient stewards who regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally use God's provision to spread the Gospel and change the world. Reaching the world with the good news of Jesus Christ may seem like a job reserved for professional missionaries but the biggest change happens when regular people take action in obedience to scripture. As Jesus told his disciples, with faith the size of a mustard seed, nothing is impossible.

If you have questions about MustardSeed, contact us or visit <https://www.mustardseedapp.org/>

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Who are the people of Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries?

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2016 Thanksgiving Offering

# Delta Network continues church planting, education efforts

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) leaders shared about the work being done to reach and teach those living in the state's Delta region during the recent ABSC Annual Meeting.

Tim Wicker, ABSC church planting team leader, was joined on stage Tuesday afternoon, Oct. 25, at the convention's annual meeting by Ray Dean Davis, associational missionary for Tri-County Baptist Association; Willie Jacobs, ABSC church planting team member; Chris Roller, pastor of students at First Baptist Church, Rogers, and Anthony Banks, pastor of Second Baptist Church, Turrell, to discuss

the impact of the Delta Network on church planting and theological education in the region.

Banks described his experience being called to vocational ministry and eventually becoming pastor of Second Baptist. Davis shared how the Tri-County Baptist Association provided an unused church building for Second Baptist to meet in, and Roller described a mission trip that he and students from First Baptist did this summer in which they helped with a block party being hosted by Second Baptist.

"Brother Jacobs took me down to Turrell, Arkansas ...

and when I looked at Turrell, I saw where I had come from – a small town full of violence, trouble, poverty, and I saw what the Lord wanted me to do – to bring restoration to a town," said Banks. "He had a good man to do it because He restored me. He brought a wretch, a nobody, and put him up to tell everybody about Somebody that can save anybody."

"It takes all of us working together. It takes all of us partnering together," said Jacobs.

"One of the things we had really been looking for in a mission trip wasn't just to go build buildings or repaint stuff; it was the fact that we wanted our students to be reaching out with the gospel and seeing people respond," said Roller. "And it didn't



Willie Jacobs, Arkansas Baptist State Convention church planting team member, speaks during the Delta Network report at the ABSC Annual Meeting held Oct. 25-26 at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock. Photo by Caleb Yarbrough

take long to realize that Anthony (Banks) was already seeing this in his church, and we wanted to be part of that."

"By the grace of God we

are at 47 and have baptized 15," said Banks. "Look at what God did here. ... When I taught the little bitty crowd that we had, God started sending the increase."

## LMCO

*continued from page 8*

dom," Rodney said.

Another woman at the center agreed: "Being involved at the center, I am finding the love I didn't get from my family from people who know the Lord. Through Jesus I am ex-

periencing love. I am blessed."

### Bethany Amber

*Johannesburg, South Africa*

When Bethany Amber, 18, shares the gospel, she leaves a mark. On this day in a Pretoria township in South Africa, children crowd around her, clamoring for her to paint henna designs on their small hands.

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The fish, moons and suns she paints illustrate Bible stories she shares. "We were learning about creation, and I wanted to do designs that [reflected] creation," she explained.

Through the medium of henna the IMB "missionary kid," whose parents serve in South Africa, has a ministry of her own. Plant-based henna ink is usually used to create nonpermanent patterns for special occasions such as weddings. She and a friend have created a visual library of designs that, when strung together, represent Bible stories. As she holds the hands of children and women, painting on these designs, she's sharing more than just beautiful designs and the human touch: She's sharing gospel truth.

*\*Names changed*

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## Obituaries

Dean Everett Newberry, Jr. died October 11.

He was a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia and Southwest-  

 ern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Newberry pastored churches for more than 60 years, including 12 years at First Baptist Church, Rogers, and 10 years at Whitney Mountain Chapel.

He served 17 years as chaplain at Hudson Foods and 10 years at Mercy Hospital Northwest Arkansas in Rogers.

Newberry served in the United States Air Force during WWII.

He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Jeanne Hampton Newberry, three sons, seven grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

Funeral services were held Oct. 14 at First Baptist Church, Rogers, Pleasant Grove Campus.

A private burial took place in Rogers City Cemetery in Rogers.

## On the move

H. L. Robins is pastor of Centerpoint Baptist Church in Colcord, Okla.

Larry Murphy is serving as pastor of Osage Mills Baptist Church in Bentonville. He previously served 29 years with the International Mission Board (IMB) in Togo, West Africa, Brazil and Portugal.

Ricky Williams is serving as pastor of 26th Street Baptist Church in Rogers.

Rodney Fry is serving as pastor of Sunny Side Baptist Church in Rogers.

Carl Mason is serving as pastor of Second Baptist Church in Siloam Springs.

Rick Miller, music minister and associate pastor at First Baptist Church, McGehee, is also serving as pastor of Delta Outdoor Church in McGehee.

Ken Worthington is serving as pastor of Eastside in Trumann.

Stan Parris retired Nov. 13 as pastor of Second Baptist Church in Arkadelphia.

## Church life

First Baptist Church, El Dorado, Celebration Choir, will present a Christmas concert at 6 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 4, in the sanctuary.

"Give thanks with a grateful heart" was the theme of the Ladies' Night Out Monday, Oct. 24, at First Baptist Church in Nashville.

More than 400 women attended the event, which featured 50 tables decorated by the ladies of the church in a



**GROUNDBREAKING** — Rye Hill Baptist Church in Fort Smith celebrated a groundbreaking of a new 775-seat worship center on Sunday, Oct. 30. Construction was scheduled to begin the following week. Shown in photo are (from left): Tony McCutcheon; Travis Beshears; Ronnie Keener; Clay McGill; Mike Franklin, senior pastor; Steve Stewart, associate pastor/music minister; Warren Stewart; Juanita Culverson; Cynthia McCutcheon, and Paul Walker.

Thanksgiving theme. The men and teenage girls of the church served the meal.

April Sartin, wife of Kevin Sartin, pastor, gave the welcome and the opening prayer.

In honor of Pastor Appreciation Month, a gift was presented to the Sartins from the church's Women's Drama Group.

Door prizes donated by local businesses were given to those present.

Following the meal, the group sang musical selections about giving thanks. Leading the music were Jenny Westbrook, Jenny Hainen, Lisa Hagler and Monica Wallace, accompanied by Jaree Hall.

Anna Blase, wife of former pastor David Blase, introduced

"Hearts Touched by Jesus." The group presented a drama, "Women of the Bible."

Afterward, each lady present was given a small crystal heart with a pink ribbon on it. The pink ribbon was to remind women present about breast cancer awareness.

The evening concluded with the group singing, "We Shall Behold Him." Deb Tackett led the final prayer.

The event marked the 100th performance of the drama, which was first presented at First Baptist Church in Nashville in 2001 and has been shared with over 20,000 women in Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas.

To host the drama in your church call 870-845-1404.



## ■ Houseparents needed:

**Baptist Home for Children, Monticello.**

Contact: Randy Luper at (870) 367-5358 or rluper@abchomes.org. These full-time positions include salary, housing, medical and life insurance and paid leave.

**Emergency Receiving Home, Judsonia.**

Contact: Derek Brown at (501) 455-8554 or dbrown@abchomes.org. This relief houseparent position includes salary, medical and life insurance and paid leave.



Read more news and features on our new website at [arkansasbaptist.org](http://arkansasbaptist.org)

# Classifieds

## PASTOR

Plaza Heights Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking a **senior pastor**; a visionary leader, called by God to minister to all ages. Submit resumes to Pastor Search Committee, c/o Plaza Heights Baptist Church, 1500 SW Clark Rd., Blue Springs, MO 64015, or email [pastorsearch@plazaheights.org](mailto:pastorsearch@plazaheights.org).

Beech Street Baptist Church is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please send resume to Beech Street Baptist Church, P.O. Box 408, Gurdon, AR 71743.

FBC Clarendon, AR, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send resumes to FBC Search Committee, PO Box 324, Clarendon, AR 72029.

FBC, Sheridan, is seeking a **full-time senior pastor**. Send resumes to FBC Pastor Search, 1201 S. Rock, Sheridan, AR 72150 or [fbcsheridanpastorsearch@gmail.com](mailto:fbcsheridanpastorsearch@gmail.com)

by 12-31-16.

Small church needs **full-time pastor** who uses KJV. Has parsonage. Send resume to: Rickey Wilkes, Friendship Baptist Church, 3712 Hwy. 1 S., Marianna, AR 72360.

Smithville Baptist Church seeking either **bi-vocational or full-time pastor**. Please send resume to P.O. Box 37, Smithville, AR 72466.

FBC Vandervoort, AR, in Ouachita Baptist Assoc. is accepting resumes for **full-time pastor**. Email resume to [beckie.apple@tyson.com](mailto:beckie.apple@tyson.com).

FBC Bellefonte is searching for a **bi-vocational pastor**. We are a fundamental, conservative, traditional worship rural church in the Ozarks. Send resume to [jpeslinger@icloud.com](mailto:jpeslinger@icloud.com).

First Baptist Church, Gillham, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please send resumes to Pastor Search Committee, c/o Vona McKinley, 332 Pendergrass Road, Horatio, AR 71842.

## OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

Small church in southeast Arkansas is seeking a **music leader** for Sunday morning worship. Contact Larry Toller, pastor, at 870-413-1938.

Full-time positions available, Louisiana Baptist Children's Home, Monroe, LA. Salary, housing, life/medical insurance, annuity, paid vacation, and training. • Husband/wife teams needed as **campus foster parents**. Contact Susan Nolan at 318.343.2244 or [snolan@lbch.org](mailto:snolan@lbch.org). • Ladies needed as **cottage managers** serving homeless children and mothers. Contact Susan Clark at 318.343.2244 or [sclark@lbch.org](mailto:sclark@lbch.org).

First Baptist Church in Nevada, MO is in search of a **full-time worship pastor**. We are seeking a great worshiper of our Lord Jesus Christ who has the skill set to invite others into that journey. Please send resume to [worship@fbcnevada.org](mailto:worship@fbcnevada.org).

[pastor@fbcnevada.org](mailto:pastor@fbcnevada.org).

Sheridan First Baptist Church is seeking a **part-time interim worship/choir leader** (Sunday morning service & Wednesday pm practice). Please send resume: 1201 South Rock Street, Sheridan, AR 72150 email [fbcsheridan@windstream.net](mailto:fbcsheridan@windstream.net).

Church Position: Hillcrest Baptist Church, Jasper, TX, is seeking a **full-time associate pastor/youth minister/missions minister**. Send resumes to: Bro. David Nugent, Hillcrest Baptist Church, 3196 U.S. Hwy. 190W, Jasper, TX 75951, or email [rhondaism02@yahoo.com](mailto:rhondaism02@yahoo.com). For questions or information, call Bro. David Nugent at 409-384-3371.

Union Baptist Church, El Dorado, is prayerfully seeking a **bi-vocational music minister**. Please send resume and DVD/link to Jonathan Morris, 144 Crain City Rd, El Dorado, AR 71730, or email [jmorris.ubc@gmail.com](mailto:jmorris.ubc@gmail.com).

Beebe First Baptist Church is accepting resumes for a **full-time minister of music and education**. Please send resume to PO Box 67, Beebe, AR 72012 or email [bhall@fbcbeebe.com](mailto:bhall@fbcbeebe.com).

Small church needs **music director**. Sundays only. Contact [sulliglenda@yahoo.com](mailto:sulliglenda@yahoo.com) if interested.

Bear Creek Springs Baptist Church is seeking a **full-time student pastor**. Those interested should send a resume to Bear Creek Springs Baptist Church, Attn: Senior Pastor, 179 Devito Loop, Harrison, AR 72601.

## MISCELLANEOUS

WANTED: **Bibles and hymnals** Prussian Blue 1991. Emmanuel Baptist, 870-838-5085.

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NOVEMBER 27, 2016

I recently registered my oldest child for her first ACT attempt. It seems like just yesterday she was starting junior high; suddenly she is almost halfway through high school. Yes, I know the old advice to not blink, but there is more to it than that. It is less that my baby girl is growing up and more that I feel like life is just flying by. There are so many things I hunger to do; yet, days skip into weeks and turn into months or years, and it's easy to believe the lie that I am running out of time, that I must live under the weight of urgency and stress.

But when I think of Jesus' return, that urgency tends to disappear. The apostles understood themselves to be in the last days, and they lived with an urgency to support that understanding. Yet, here we are nearly two millennia later, and Jesus still has not returned. Suddenly, I have plenty of time!

2 Peter 3 brings two truths into focus.

First, I have time. My life is not flying by any faster than it should. God gave me plenty of time each day, week, month and year to "be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless" (2 Pet. 3:14, NASB).

Secondly, though, I must retain an appropriately-directed sense of urgency. If I truly anticipate the return of Christ – if I truly agree with the early Christians that these are the last days – then I should live like it. As I walk with Jesus, my life must reflect an urgency that points as many people as possible to His path before we all face the judgment.

Every time we feel like life is flying by and the stress and false urgency mount, may we be reminded of the truth that our only urgency must be to behave as those living in the last days. May our anticipation lead to action until the very day we see our anticipation fulfilled.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## With anticipation

2 PETER 3:3-13, 17-18 (NASB)

Ann Hibbard  
East End

"Rest on every side" (2 Chron. 20:30). That sounds good, does it not – especially this time of year, with Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's? How did Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah get to that moment? How did they find "quiet" for the kingdom?

It started with desperation. Take a look back at the beginning of this chapter. The Ammonites, the Moabites and even some Edomites had come to attack Jerusalem. By this time in the history of Judah, the kingdom was not strong enough to fight off this coalition. Further, Jehoshaphat had previously allied with Ahab in battle, a questionable decision at best (see 1 Kings 22). Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah faced an overwhelming challenge with this wave of invaders.

Jehoshaphat wisely "resolved to seek the Lord" (2 Chron. 20:3), and then he gathered all of Judah to stand before God and cry out for that answer. Notice that, according to 2 Chronicles 20:13, everybody was there. Infants, wives, children – everyone – came together to seek God's deliverance.

And God delivered. He provided the comfort of His Word, the promise of tomorrow and the salvation that was needed.

First, consider the comfort of God's Word. The people did not know if God would hear, but God heard and answered. We know that God hears, and we already have His Word.

Second, ponder the promise of tomorrow. How many times are we reminded that tomorrow may never come for us? Yet the people of Judah were told that, tomorrow, God would deliver them. While we have no guarantee of tomorrow without standing before God, we can be certain to face tomorrow with the enemy van-

quished. The cross of Jesus secures a tomorrow that is vastly superior!

Third, celebrate the salvation that is needed. We need to be delivered, not from earthly enemies, but from our own sin and death. Jesus provides salvation. If we start with these things, we will be able to give thanks in every situation and find rest on every side.

## BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

## Give thanks – anyway!

2 CHRONICLES 20:10-12, 14-17, 20-22, 29-30

Doug Hibbard  
East End

DECEMBER 4, 2016

One of my favorite fantasy novelists writes a story in which a special gifting impacted the lives of two men. One of the men had worked for 20 years to prepare for the gift he knew would come to him. The second man, however, came upon the gift unexpectedly, and the shock of it nearly drove him mad before he was able to learn how to use it. But one point was made clear – the Giver of the gift does not make mistakes. He, in His own way, did prepare the second man for the gift, even if the preparation was not clear.

I chuckle sometimes because I see a somewhat similar scenario played out in the stories of my fellow ministry wives. Some of us knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that we would serve alongside our husbands in ministry. Others from our ranks, however, were surprised when they fell in love with a pastor-in-training, and still others were shocked when their husbands of many years surrendered to the ministry. Despite the differences, one thing is consis-

tent in every story. God prepared all of us for the ministry, whether we realized it or not.

That is what makes me love these first verses of the book of Joshua. Here was a man who had been serving Moses for 40-plus years, and suddenly he became the one in charge. I cannot imagine how overwhelming that transition must have been, even with decades of preparation and training. Yet, the God who commissioned Joshua also was the One who prepared him. And in these beautiful verses, God reminded him of that preparation.

"Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you" (Josh. 1:5, NASB). Everything Joshua had seen and experienced from the first moment until the last was ordained by God to pave the way for this very commission.

When He instructs, He equips. And when He equips, we cannot help but respond as Joshua did – in full obedience.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## Commissioned

JOSHUA 1:1-9 (NASB)

Ann Hibbard  
East End

It is worth noting, before we even get to Psalm 119, that this is an acrostic poem in Hebrew. Each section of eight verses begins with the Hebrew letter that is the section title in your Bible. Most likely, that has no effect on the meaning of the Psalm, but it is worth noting because of how much effort that must have taken. Scripture is inspired by God, but there are still human hands at work. As you work for the Lord God, do it well, remembering who your audience is. He is worthy of your best effort.

Now, on to the Psalm. The psalmist, who remains anonymous, started off by celebrating the happiness of the godly. As New Testament believers, we should immediately see the echoes of the Beatitudes, where Jesus proclaimed the "blessedness" of certain members of the kingdom of God (Matt. 5).

In this passage the psalmist used multiple words for the Word of God. The HCSB uses instruction, decrees, ways, precepts, statutes, commands

and judgments to speak of the differing components of the Word of God. A good commentary of the Psalms will help you break out the meanings if you'd like to study that further.

These opening verses celebrate all of these aspects of God's Word. Note, though, that the psalmist did not celebrate them for their own sake.

He recognized that the only way to truly know God is through His Word. The celebration is of the God who has revealed Himself through His Word.

The Word of God is not something we were given for its own sake. We, like the psalmist, should celebrate the Word as our way to a relationship with God. It is through this relationship that we find joy in Christ. After all, who is righteous enough? None but Jesus!

Our joy in following the Word of God is complete when we know the Word who put on flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). Let us remember Him as we approach Christmas.

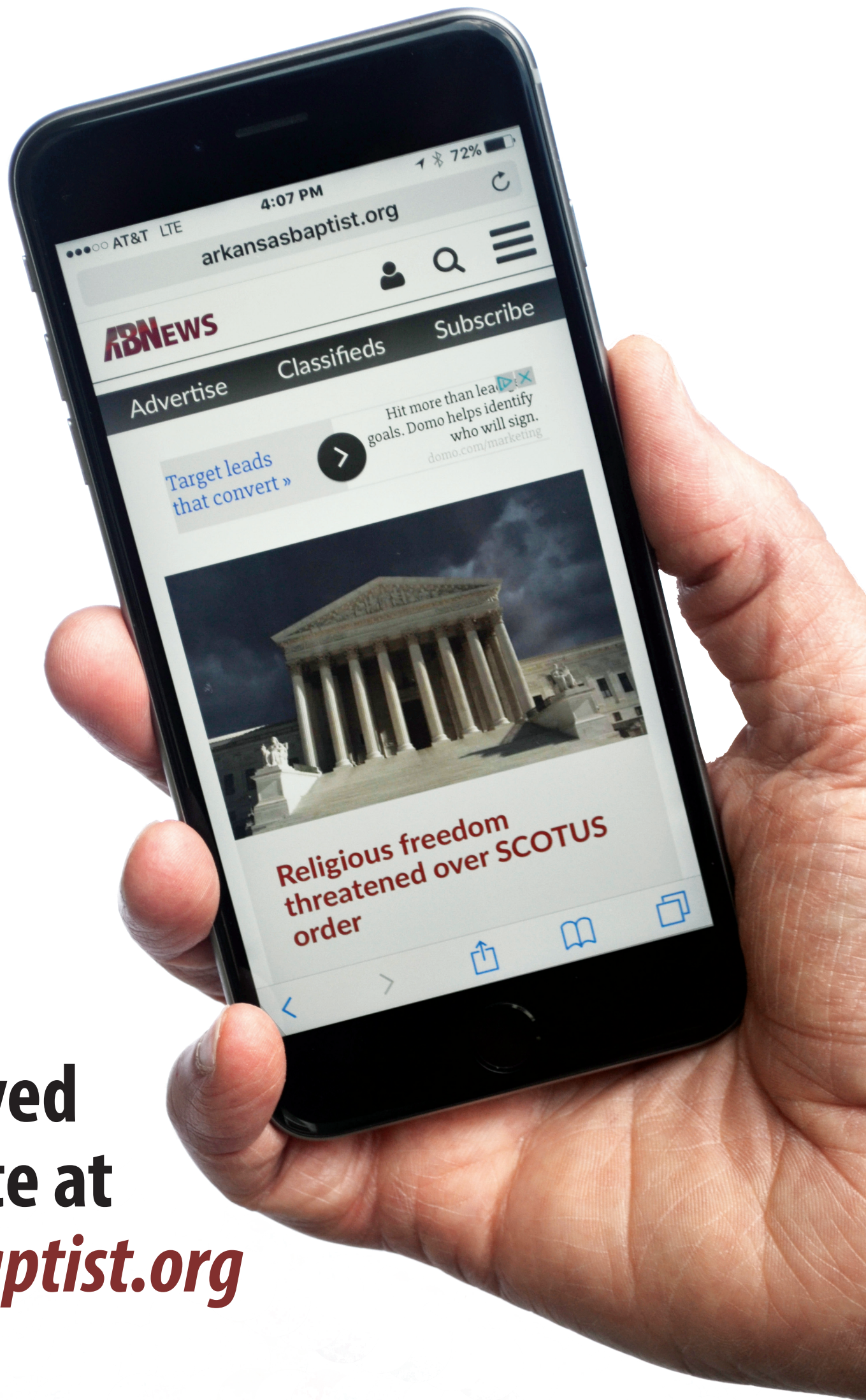
## BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

## God's Word delights

PSALM 119:1-8

Doug Hibbard  
East End

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# IMB taps 5 megacities for global initiative pilot

LONDON (BP) – “There’s no lack of church buildings in London, but the average congregation is fewer than 20 people,” missionary James Roberts noted.

Roberts is part of an International Mission Board (IMB) team in London strategizing a comprehensive missions approach to reach this city of 8.6 million. More than 50 non-indigenous communities, each with 10,000 people or more, have been identified in London, making it truly a global city.

London is one of five cities in the Global Cities Initiative (GCI) being piloted by the IMB.

More than 300 languages are spoken in London, and 37 percent of the city’s population was born outside the United Kingdom, one-fourth of whom have moved to London in the last five years.

A city that once served as fertile ground for great Christian preaching and churches, London has grown fallow over the last 50 years.

In 1963, 3.2 percent of London’s population claimed to have no affiliation with religion. In 2015, that number had soared to 44.7 percent. The Anglican Church alone saw a 33 percent drop during this span.

Recognizing global migration patterns from rural to urban settings, IMB has

named London – along with Dubai, Shanghai, Kuala Lumpur and a major city in South Asia (unnamed for security purposes) – as focal points in piloting a Global Cities Initiative.

The five GCI cities were selected based on their potential for global influence as well as their vast numbers of unengaged, unreached people groups. The goal is that as members of the people groups are transformed by the gospel while living in the cities, they will return to their homelands as indigenous missionaries.

In London, the GCI initiative involves using the city’s 280-plus underground tube stops as key points for missional communities. The team’s “God-sized vision” includes having a missional community near every stop. The plan is in the initial stages of mapping the areas and conducting demographic research to aid in future evangelism and discipleship.

“We want to engage people groups; we want to see London reached,” said Roberts, the IMB’s senior city manager, adding that their strategy includes the “goal of starting new groups, doing evangelism and training leaders, with the hope of starting new churches.”

IMB President David Platt’s vision of “limitless missionar-



London is one of five cities in the Global Cities Initiative being piloted by the International Mission Board.

ies” requires “multiple pathways” for engaging lostness all over the world. In addition to career missionaries, IMB is looking for Christian students, business professionals and retirees willing to move overseas to aid mission teams in one of the five GCI cities. These life stages, combined with numerous opportunities for education and employment, serve as platforms for either short-term or long-term missions engagement.

“Our hope for [students

and business professionals] who come with GCI is not only will they help engage with us in what we’re doing in the city, but they will start ministry in their areas of influence,” Roberts said.

Retirees, for example, can be “incredible because they have resources, time and a ton of wisdom. They’ve been walking with God longer than most of us, and they have a different perspective. We can release them into the city and engage them in all different

kinds of ways.”

IMB also wants partner churches in the United States that will select a city and mobilize its members who might be interested in connecting with a CGI team. The mission board has access consultants in each city to help business professionals discover potential job openings and an abundance of opportunities for gospel engagement.

For more information on the Global Cities Initiative, visit [imb.org/gci](http://imb.org/gci).

## Homosexual-affirming churches trigger BGCT response

DALLAS (BP) – In response to messenger actions at the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) annual meeting Nov. 15, convention leaders will ask the BGCT Executive Board to consider withdrawing fellowship from two churches that permit practicing homosexuals to be members.

The congregations at issue are First Baptist Church in Austin, Texas, and Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas. Neither church cooperates with the Southern Baptist Convention or the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention.

“The BGCT believes First Baptist Church, Austin and Wilshire Baptist Church are outside of harmonious cooperation as defined by the conven-

tion’s historical position and past actions, and reaffirmed by a motion passed by messengers to this year’s annual meeting,” the BGCT said in written comments.

“Since messengers also passed a motion to formalize the process for addressing churches who place themselves in this position, the BGCT will refer to its Executive Board for consideration any churches who place themselves outside of harmonious cooperation,” the BGCT stated.

Earlier this month, BGCT leaders sent letters to First Baptist and Wilshire informing them that to affirm any form of sexual expression outside marriage between one man and one woman was

tantamount to “choos[ing] to withdraw ... from harmonious cooperation with the churches of the convention,” the BGCT said.

First Baptist responded with an open letter on the church’s website to BGCT leaders stating, “We are proudly and openly welcoming and affirming of all God’s beloved children.”

The letter accused the BGCT of “complete disregard for the fragile freedom of the local church as outlined in our historic Baptist tradition” and pledged to withhold funds from the convention starting immediately.

Wilshire leaders announced to the congregation Nov. 14 via email that the church body

had voted 577-367 over the previous two Sundays to approve a recommendation permitting “all members to participate in congregational life on the same basis as any other church member regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.” The vote followed a study process that yielded a 35-page report from a deacon-appointed “Inclusion and Diversity Study Group.”

During the BGCT annual meeting this week in Waco, Texas, messengers approved two motions related to withdrawal of fellowship from individual congregations, though neither named a specific church.

One motion stated “that the convention reserves to

itself exclusively, through a two-thirds vote of its Executive Board, the authority to remove a congregation from harmonious cooperation.”

The other motion stipulated “that any church which affirms any sexual relationship outside the bonds of a marriage between one man and one woman be considered out of harmonious cooperation with the Baptist General Convention of Texas.”

Representatives of both churches told BP they interpret the BGCT’s actions to mean the convention will no longer receive their financial contributions, seat their messengers at annual meetings or permit them other privileges of cooperating churches.



# Williams Baptist College: The dream at 75

**Brett Cooper**  
Williams Baptist College

WALNUT RIDGE – Logically, it never should have worked.

The country was still clawing its way back from the Great Depression. The region had seen one Baptist school after another close its doors. Yet, a young pastor, all of 28 years old, had a dream.

“It is nothing less than miraculous that WBC will soon have existed for 75 years. A lot of people didn’t think it would last a year,” reflected Steve Williams, whose father, H.E. Williams, was that young pastor.

Indeed, the thriving college that now bears the

Williams name celebrates its diamond anniversary in 2016. Its 75-year history is marked by remarkable progress, rooted in divine guidance and providence.

It was 1941 when Williams, pastor of First Baptist Church of Pocahontas, rallied supporters to begin a new work called Southern Baptist College (SBC). It started in September of that year with 42 students enrolled.

“When the Lord spoke to him, he was faithful to let the Holy Spirit guide him. When the Lord placed on his heart there was a need for a Christian college in northeast Arkansas and southeast Missouri, he did not let opposition stop him,” said Jim Williams, also a son of the founder.

Looming large over Williams’ efforts were the failures of other Baptist schools in the region, including Maynard Academy, Woodland College, Mountain Home Baptist College and Jonesboro Baptist College.

“He felt led, despite the history of failure of such efforts, to try, yet again, and provide a distinctly Christian higher education opportunity in the region. He was fortunate to have the assistance and encouragement of alumni and supporters of the previous Baptist schools,” said Kenneth Startup, academic dean and historian of record at the college.

See **DREAM** page 2

# DREAM

*continued from page one*

It was anything but easy. World War II would erupt by year's end, draining both resources and prospective students. Donors had to give sacrificially just to keep the budding college afloat.

"Moreover, the early faculty worked for only the barest wages," Startup noted. "And Dr. Williams and Mrs. Williams went so far as to turn their own home into a kind of dormitory. It was very hard in the early years. I think the key to the college's survival is really summed-up in two words: faith and sacrifice."

In spite of those challenges, Williams managed to recruit an impressive faculty from the start, launching a tradition of exceptionally qualified professors that continues to the present.

"Dr. and Mrs. Ben Lincoln, Charles Gwinup, Dr. J. I. Cossey, Dr. H.L. Waters, Dr. W.K. Wharton, Dr. S. W. Eubanks and J.T. Midkiff all taught in the early years. I'm sure they all could have made much more teaching elsewhere, but they had a desire to see WBC grow and prosper," said Steve Williams.

The list of faculty luminaries at the college has continued to grow throughout its 75 years.

The first campus was the Pocahontas Community Center, which is now the site of Pocahontas High School. It remained SBC's home until the night of Dec. 26, 1946, when an arson fire gutted the college's main building.

Williams was already seeking to acquire part of the recently decommissioned Walnut Ridge Army Flying School, a few miles south of Pocahontas, and he had been granted use of a number of the former military structures.

Now, that old air base at Walnut Ridge would have to become home to a college, and quickly. Southern opened on its new campus less than two weeks later in January 1947.

The college would eventually gain ownership of the property from the War Assets Administration, thanks in large part of support from U.S. Senators William Fulbright and John McClellan, as well as Congressman Wilbur Mills. To this day, streets bearing the

names Fulbright, McClellan and Mills are principle routes through campus.

Facilities were secured, but the battle to keep the college going financially seemed always to be uphill in the early years.

"It seemed like when I was young the college was always about a month from going out of business," said Steve Williams. "Dad was stubborn and single-minded when it came to the college. At times it was like he just willed the college to keep going."

SBC supporters provided vital funding through gifts large and small. J.K. Southerland and Edward Maddox emerged as pivotal donors in the early years, and countless others also stepped up to fill financial needs along the way.

It all required huge amounts



of time on the part of Williams, a price paid not only by him, but also by his family.

"He spent most of his time working in behalf of the college. Southern Baptist College was his life. He was president, teacher, architect, construction superintendent, fundraiser, preacher, and he did most of the college printing," recalled Jim Williams.

Beatrice Williams, wife of the president, played a huge role in the college's history, filling teaching and administrative duties, as well as tending to matters at home while her husband was away.

"She stayed in the background and did things to enhance his work," Jim Williams said. "Mother never wanted the spotlight on herself. She was very humble."

The college met its early challenges and enjoyed spurts of growth. The Korean War resulted in veterans seeking a college education through the GI Bill, and the Vietnam War



Above is an aerial shot of the old air base at Walnut Ridge, which became the home of Southern Baptist College in January 1947. At left is the sign that originally greeted students to the college's campus. Below is a photo of the "old chapel" on the campus of Southern Baptist College. The building was relocated, bricked, and currently sits across the street from the college's administration building.

viewed by the board as a natural successor to Williams. A Southern graduate, he returned in the

lege, earned the distinction of being the daughter of Southern's first president and wife of the second.

"Dr. Nicholas never applied for the job of president of SBC," she recalled. "The challenges were so great at that time Jack only agreed to take the job after much prayer and deliberation, which resulted in being absolutely sure that this was what God wanted him to do."

One of Nicholas' first moves was to name Jerol Swaim as academic dean. Together, the two set their sights on arguably the biggest transition in the college's history: four-year status.

"A key part of the leadership of Nicholas and Swaim was the recognition that the college needed to obtain full baccalaureate status," said Startup. "This transition to full baccalaureate status transformed the college and really provided the foundation for the stability and strength of the college during recent decades. It was a vital transition."



1960s as a psychology professor and had served as director of student affairs. Articulate, energetic and a devout Christian, he was ideally suited for the role.

He would inherit a mountain of challenges. Enrollment had dropped in half at the conclusion of the Vietnam War. The faculty would have to be downsized, painfully, to match the student numbers. And new, public community colleges presented a grave threat of competition.

Martha Nicholas, herself a longtime librarian at the col-

also produced a boon in enrollment, largely due to draft deferments. Others came simply because of what the college had to offer.

"The college was small, the faculty was accessible, and I was challenged to think broader and deeper. The faculty cared about me as a student, but they also cared about me as an individual," reflected Jerry Gibbens, who returned to the college as a professor of English, a role he has filled now for 49 years.

In the early 1970s, the college faced critical transitions, most notably a change in leadership. Williams stepped aside as president in 1973, and the SBC Board of Trustees named his son-in-law, Jack Nicholas, as the new president of college.

Nicholas had long been



Above, Southern Baptist College students gather inside the school's former A-frame student center. Below right, students hoist H.E. Williams, president of Southern Baptist College, on their shoulders when the college received accreditation in 1963. Below left and center are photos of the college baseball team and cheerleading squad.

It would take years to prepare SBC to transition from junior to senior college status. By the 1980s, though, leadership and faculty were ready to make the move.

"It was a very difficult challenge to get four-year status," Martha Nicholas said. "Dr. Nicholas was thorough in his preparation and diligent in presenting the need to become a four-year college. He also had some very good help from board members and others who supported the change."

The Arkansas Baptist State Convention, which owns and operates the college, rejected Southern's proposal for four-year status the first time it was presented. But, by the following year, the college rallied its supporters and won the crucial vote. In 1984, SBC became a four-year institution.

Along the way, Nicholas also led Southern to modernize its campus. New and attractive buildings began to replace the older structures, and the college began to look the part of an outstanding liberal arts institution.

In 1991, the college celebrated its 50th anniversary with another big transition: its first and only name change. The generic "Southern" was replaced with the name of the founder, and Williams Baptist College (WBC) was christened.

Nicholas retired in 1991 after 18 years as president, to be succeeded by the tenures of

challenges facing the college when I became president: fi-



Jimmy Millikin and Gary Huckabay.

But WBC would truly come of age as a four-year, liberal arts college under the leadership of Jerol Swaim. Serving at the college since 1964, Swaim had been history professor, academic dean and executive vice president until 1995, when he would add president to that list, a role he filled for 17 years.

"There were three major



nances, enrollment and facilities," Swaim recalled. "A few months before I became president, the college had

financial stability and numerous upgrades to its facilities. Iconic campus structures such as Manley Chapel and Swaim Administration Building (the name of the latter a surprise tribute by the Board of Trustees), as well as other notable projects, were completed during his tenure.

Swaim also conveyed a sort of institutional self-confidence to WBC. His love of Williams proved to be contagious, helping all associated with the college to appreciate it at a whole new level.

"I think that it stemmed from the fact that the college had always had a very strong faculty and an outstanding student body," he said. "I simply could not imagine why anyone would not want to either work at or attend Williams."

When Swaim retired in 2012, an old friend of WBC was named his successor. Tom Jones had served as vice president for institutional advancement at Williams for six years in the 1990s, before leaving to fill the same role at Golden

provided at Williams."

Jones has implemented vision strategies to help Williams set its sites on the next 75 years. He led a 15-member committee of faculty, staff and students in forming the Diamond Destiny Plan, outlining a number of goals that have since been met. A new committee is at work presently formulating the next phases of the vision strategy.

"Williams is positioned to aggressively tackle the challenges and opportunities of the future in several areas," Jones said. "The support received from the Baptist churches of Arkansas through the Cooperative Program continues to strengthen our purpose as a Christ-centered institution."

"The increasing number of individual and corporate donors providing significant funds for scholarships, facilities and programs will provide an even higher standard of service to our students. And the exceptional level of Christian professionals who seek to join our stellar faculty and staff ensures a leadership quality equipped to handle the demands of a biblically based organization in an ever-changing industry."

Of course, for all the changes that have blessed WBC over the past 75 years, the fact that much has remained the same is also worth celebrating.

"A Williams education continues to emphasize a Christian worldview. WBC still stresses that our graduates should be lifelong learners. Education at Williams takes place in the classroom, the dormitory, the gymnasium and the cafeteria," said Jerry Gibbens.

Martha Nicholas noted, "It would be wonderful if my parents could see WBC today. I think they would be pleased to see that the college continues to advance in accomplishing its mission to provide a quality education in a Christian environment."

A sense of excitement permeates the Williams campus as it celebrates its 75th anniversary, indicative of a college that is mature ... but not old. It is established ... and yet agile. It is a college with a very proud heritage and an even brighter future.

Brett Cooper is vice president for institutional advancement at Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge.



borrowed a half million dollars for operations. Also, the enrollment had dropped 25 percent, from 612 to 462."

Swaim saw the college through to unprecedented

Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in California.

Jones became the sixth president of WBC, returning to find that some notable changes had taken place while he was away.

"Without a doubt, the most striking change was the transformation of the campus," Jones said. "First-rate residence halls, a spacious and beautiful administration building,

and an iconic chapel structure were surrounded by immaculate grounds and landscaping. The campus appearance really communicated the quality of the educational environment

# The next 75: a conversation with WBC President Tom Jones

WALNUT RIDGE – Following is a conversation on the future of Christian higher education with Williams Baptist College President Tom Jones.

**Q:** Why is it important for a college to plot its future course?

**A:** Williams Baptist College's strong position would be the envy of most institutions in the country. We are financially sound with a nominal debt, a nationally recognized excellence in our academic programs, and a price that is affordable for most hard-working families. Those standards are possible because of a focused, well-stated plan. The college community has always made the most of the resources provided through a prudent and intentional commitment to stewardship of the Lord's resources. Careful planning keeps us faithful to a long-standing commitment to responsible, fiscal management that has long been a part of the college's core value.

**Q:** How has Williams gone about establishing its vision for the future?

**A:** In 2012, and again in 2015, a Strategic Planning Committee developed and

revised a clear statement that articulates our vision for Williams Baptist College: To produce exceptional graduates prepared to competently engage local and global cultures through a Christ-centered worldview. As we develop programs and policies, that statement helps guide us in establishing priorities, goals and objectives that focus our efforts on our vision.

**Q:** With all the possibilities for the future, how does a college narrow down the choices and choose a direction?

**A:** The Strategic Planning Committee, comprised of members from the various groups of our college community, has identified and recommended areas of improvement and growth for the institution. Over a six-month period, the committee performed institutional analysis, prioritized strategic initiatives and created core objectives. Their recommendations formed the basis for the Diamond Destiny Plan, which will guide our priorities through the next four years. Continuing the momentum and direction of earlier plans, the Diamond Destiny Plan provides steps for capitalizing on institutional strengths,

addressing areas for improvement, tackling imposing challenges and embracing strategic opportunities.

**Q:** These are changing times in higher education, aren't they?

**A:** As a key contributor to the social fabric of our nation, the college experience will always reflect the various changes that inevitably shape the future of our world. Many of these changes are good and help us accomplish our goals in a more effective way. Other changes directly oppose our scriptural position as a Christian liberal arts college. Either way, the culture will continue to offer invasive change that will relentlessly challenge our methodologies, educational philosophies and delivery systems.

**Q:** How do you determine where higher education is headed, and how do you steer an institution toward that?

**A:** While we certainly want to be sensitive to the needs of our market and remain current on technology and approaches that improve our delivery, our future direction is not determined by the latest fad or social philosophy. When we face new challenges in higher



Tom Jones, president of Williams Baptist College, speaks at the college's convocation.

education, we will readjust the way we operate when appropriate, defend our position when needed, and remain committed to excel in our mission of strategically providing a curriculum and environment that are decidedly Christian and uncompromising in our faith and purpose.

**Q:** What do you see as the future of online learning?

**A:** Online education is allowing greater access to a Christian liberal arts education than ever before. The

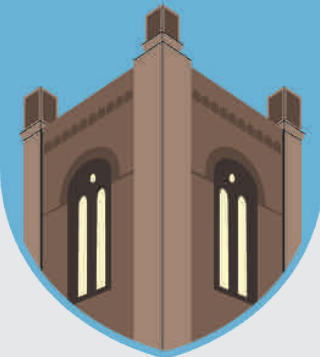
technology has improved our ability to provide a quality program through a variety of degree options while maintaining the integrity of student interaction and success. We are currently developing a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and our first graduate degree, a Master of Arts in Teaching, that will serve markets that were previously unreachable, furthering our impact in professions that directly influence the communities in our region.



**FBC**  
Walnut Ridge  
Arkansas

Thank you to the men and women  
of **Williams Baptist College** who  
have provided 75 years of  
faithful Christian ministry through  
excellence in higher education

**FIRST BAPTIST**  
POCAHONTAS



**Happy 75th  
Anniversary to**



**WILLIAMS**  
BAPTIST COLLEGE



**Q:** Whether it's online or a traditional, classroom setting, how does a Christian college like Williams maintain its spiritual commitment?

**A:** A Christian college doesn't become a Christian college by accident. It is intentional. And it doesn't remain a truly Christian college by accident, either. Maintaining our Christian identity is intentional, and it is ongoing. There are always worldly forces at work that would push us away from our Christian moorings. Williams Baptist College holds steadfastly to the biblical principles and the Christian commitment upon which it was founded.

We all see and experience the rapid changes in our society that are confusing and often frightening. In the

face of these challenges, Williams will continue to stand strong on the solid scriptural standards that always have and always will define who we are.

It is our repeated intention that our worldview will be marked by a pronounced leading of the Holy Spirit, an unwavering commitment to God's Word and rigorous scholarship, and a vigilant witness that boldly and consistently proclaims Jesus as the author of all truth. As we grow, as we improve, as we plan our future, it will be with an eye toward establishing and implementing goals that will provide a course that, upon completion, will enable Williams to make an even greater impact on our region, nation and world for the Father's glory.

## Williams Baptist College Timeline

**Sept. 10, 1941** — First students enroll at Southern Baptist College in Pocahontas. H.E. Williams named first president of the college. There are 42 students that first fall semester.

**Dec. 26, 1946** — Main building on Pocahontas campus destroyed by fire.

**Spring 1947** — Less than two weeks after Pocahontas fire, spring semester classes begin at the former Walnut Ridge Army Flying School about 10 miles south of Pocahontas. The site has been home to the college ever since.

**1963** — Accreditation granted by the North Central Association.

**1968** — College adopted into the Arkansas Baptist State Convention family of institutions.

**1973** — D. Jack Nicholas named second president of the college.

**1984** — Southern Baptist College becomes a four-year institution.

**1991** — Southern Baptist College renamed Williams Baptist College in honor of college founder H.E. Williams. Jimmy Millikin named third president.

**1993** — Gary Huckabay named fourth president.

**1995** — Jerol Swaim named fifth president.

**2012** — Tom Jones named sixth president of Williams Baptist College.

**Congratulations to  
President Tom Jones  
and the faculty & staff  
of Williams Baptist College  
as you celebrate  
**75 YEARS**  
of shaping students' lives**



*Your colleagues at  
Ouachita Baptist University  
pray for God's blessings  
on your ministry & service  
in the decades ahead*



# The crusade: H. E. Williams and the race for gov. of Arkansas

Colton Babbitt  
Williams Baptist College

WALNUT RIDGE – As the U.S. entered the 1960s, the political climate of Arkansas was in a state of tumult. The issue of integration had stirred the populace and made the problems of an already poor state seem desperate. Gov. Orval Faubus seemed poised to capitalize on the chaos and easily take a fourth term. In the midst of the turbulence, a political unknown, Hubert Ethridge Williams, would appear and unleash, with missionary zeal, an onslaught of criticism of Faubus' leadership.

Williams represented a minority sector of the population that disliked Faubus' tight control of the Democratic Party, his mismanagement of integration and his shortcomings on education. In an election with no shortage of Cold War drama, Williams would challenge what he perceived to be the menace of "Faubusism."

Williams was in many ways the opposite of Faubus. While many men (including Faubus) had been fighting World War II, Williams had been fighting to establish an institution of Christian higher education in northeast Arkansas. He was a well-respected and experienced Southern Baptist minister and an educator, and he had utilized both aptitudes serving as president of Southern Baptist College since its inception in 1941. He believed firmly in the principles of education, free enterprise and, above all else, the Christian faith.

Although Williams was trained in the arts of education and Christian ministry, he felt compelled to enter the 1960 gubernatorial race after receiving ample encouragement from admirers of his leadership and oratory skills.

Williams vocally declared that he was going after the governor, not Faubus the man. Faubus frequently referred to Williams as the "preacher," with heavy implications that he ought to go back to the pulpit where he belonged and let the professionals handle the politics. Though Williams had previously served in the office of the circuit clerk of his native Perry County, he was still considered an outsider candidate.

One of Williams' criticisms

of Faubus was his political "dictatorship" of Arkansas politics and, more specifically, the Arkansas Democratic Party. Since Reconstruction's end, every governor-elect had been a Democrat; therefore, the Democratic primary was where the next governor would be predetermined. Williams felt that Faubus had a tight hold on the Arkansas Democratic Party, making it difficult for reform to take place.

The accusation that Faubus had a strong upper-hand in the Arkansas Democratic Party was not totally unfounded. His sway among Arkansas Democrats was visible as a stay-the-course attitude circulated praising Arkansas' "progress" under Faubus. Shortly before the primary election, welfare payments were increased, and Williams cried foul. He charged Faubus and his supporters with abusing the welfare system to gain votes from those dependent on government support. When talking about this group, Williams referred to the elderly being "used by politicians."

The most pressing issue of the 1960 gubernatorial race was arguably integration. In 1957 the eyes of the world were upon Little Rock as Faubus ordered the Arkansas National Guard to prevent nine black students from attending Central High School. Southerners roared in applause at Faubus' act of insubordination, while the federal government found itself embarrassed, and the rest of the world watched on the edge of its seat.

Williams felt integration of the educational system was being mishandled, and Faubus had used the integration issue for political gain. He scathingly rebuked Faubus' statement that race relations had "never ... been so good," calling it a "preposterous statement." Faubus responded by asserting that Williams was receiving support from pro-integration supporters. This reflected Faubus' larger tactic of depicting the opposing Democratic candidates as integrationists.

Although publicly Faubus had fiercely attacked integration, Williams accused him of duplicitously encouraging integration privately. To Williams, this was an irresponsible political move that contributed

to instability in race relations; Faubus was encouraging both sides to garner their support without solving the issue.

Inwardly, Williams was motivated by "his strong beliefs in civil rights and racial integration." The harrowing reality of the time was that no openly pro-integration candidate was going to be elected in Arkansas or any other Southern state. If Williams was going to have a chance at the gubernatorial nomination and to make a difference, he had to keep those opinions to himself – for the time being.

Southern Baptist College under Williams' administration would be integrated by 1963 and would have an African-American student body president by 1967. However, as much as he may have wanted conditions to improve, Williams publicly advocated "cessation" during the 1960 campaign, with the stated aim to take a break from the uproar that accompanied the Civil Rights movement and let tempers cool.

Williams could not shake the fear that the social unrest caused by the clashing of segregationists and groups such as the NAACP would open the way for socialist revolution in the U.S. From Williams' perspective the embarrassing debacle of Faubus' stand against President Eisenhower and integration at Central High School was fuel for Soviet propaganda, and the desire for social change could easily lead to a communist movement among African Americans, as well as other minority groups.

Williams' political ideology was significantly marked by his fierce anti-communist stance. He had visited the

**I CHALLENGE YOU, ORVAL FAUBUS —**

In view of your false and misleading attack upon me in your misuse of my speech "America's Point Of No Return" in which I fight the terrible menace of Communism, I challenge you to produce one public statement where I have ever CONDEMNED REA, the Veterans Medical Benefits and the Welfare Program. I will give you \$1,000.00 for such documented evidence.

In view of your shattering damage to Arkansas and the cause of freedom in America and the world, **I CHALLENGE YOU TO MEET ME IN PUBLIC DEBATE ON OR BEFORE JULY 21 ON THE FOLLOWING PROPOSITION:**

"Resolved that the Faubus Administration has aided the Communist cause substantially and if your policies and practices are carried to their logical conclusion such would destroy the United States Government and the American way of life."

It being understood that such acceptance must be made at least 3 days before time for the debate to be held in Little Rock with adequate notice given to the event.

**YOUR FAILURE TO ACCEPT THE ABOVE CHALLENGE WILL BE CONSIDERED BY THE PUBLIC AS AN ADMISSION OF INEXCUSABLE GUILT AND AN EVIDENCE OF UNMITIGATED COWARDICE.**

*H. E. Williams*  
Candidate for Governor

P.S. Haven't you had enough of Faubusism? Won't you join with me morally, spiritually and financially to rid Arkansas of the Faubus dictatorship?

**Vote For**  
**H. E. WILLIAMS**  
**for GOVERNOR**

Pol. Adv. Paid By H. E. Williams

Soviet Union twice in the previous decade, once on an educational tour and then as the leader of an American entourage from Southern Baptist College to attend the American National Exhibition held

in Moscow. He had seen the Soviets' best, although less than successful, attempts to compete with America, and he had seen people living in abso-

See **GOVERNOR** page 7

## CAMP PARON



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# H.L. Waters: A crucial teacher in the early days of Williams

WALNUT RIDGE – Beside our office hallway is a portrait of Williams' first Bible teacher, H.L. Waters. Waters was a crucial teacher during the

first years of Southern Baptist College (now Williams Baptist College).

Waters was born in 1882 in Fishhook, Ill., and he began

his life in a log cabin. In his early adulthood, he wandered west into Indian Territory, where he became a Christian. In 1906, he preached his first

sermon, and he served rural areas as a home missionary. He received his education from both LaGrange College (now Hannibal-LaGrange University) and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. In the 1920s he pastored in Ewing, Ill., where he also taught at Ewing College.

When H.E. Williams met Waters in 1941, Waters, who was nearly 60 years old, was pastoring the Philadelphia Baptist Church north of Jonesboro. Williams expressed his vision to Waters for the new school, as both of them understood the value of a solid ministerial education. Waters was so interested in teaching Bible, that when the school could not pay him the first year, Waters waived his salary and taught anyway. To compensate, Waters pastored two "half-time" churches, drove about 500 miles a month and received \$85 in monthly salary.

As part of his "pay package," his daughter Ruth received a tuition waiver during that first year. Not only did Ruth serve as the first Baptist Student Union (BSU) president of the fledgling school, she also was a member of the first graduating class.

Throughout Waters' tenure at Southern Baptist College, he ministered to many of the area's rural churches. Rural life

served him, for he understood the people's needs and knew how his ministerial students could meet those needs. His experience and expertise were exactly what the new school needed. Students were enthralled with his pastoral acumen and his mission work. He was, indeed, a Christian gentleman.

Not wanting his mental powers to slip in the classroom, Waters retired from Southern in 1953 at age 71. The school had become a great part of his life, and he had served well. Soon after retirement he moved to Harrisburg, Ill., serving there until his death in 1964.

Waters' legacy continued. His grandson, David Johnson (Ruth's son) went to Southern Baptist College in the mid 1970s, and he was also BSU president while here. He has served as an Arkansas pastor for many years.

The Williams Baptist Department of Christian Ministries' highest award is named in honor of H.L. Waters. It is given to the graduate who exemplifies the balance of academic excellence and commitment to ministry. To date, 11 students have received this award, most of whom currently serve as pastors. These students carry on the legacy that Waters began. They are a fine tribute to a wonderful, godly teacher.



Waters



**Thank you, Williams Baptist College,  
for pointing higher education students  
even higher.**



**Congratulations to Williams Baptist College  
on 75 years of impacting the world through  
Christian higher education.  
1941-2016**



## GOVERNOR

*continued from page 6*

lute squalor. These conditions firmly convinced Williams that transitioning to communism was the worst possible ailment any nation could endure.

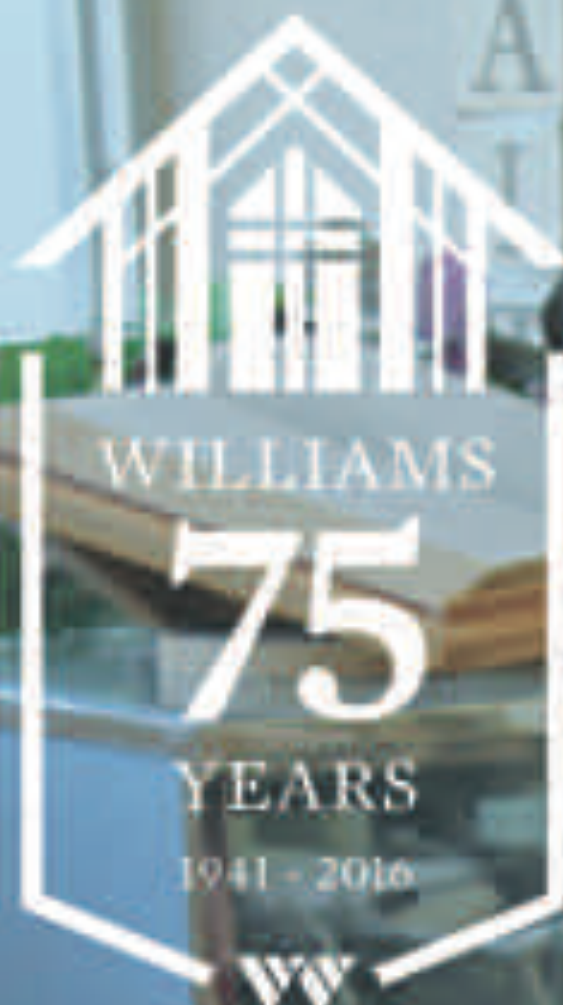
Williams connected his ideological enemy of communism and his political target, Faubus, by declaring the instability caused by Faubus' policies was prime fuel for Soviet propaganda. The implication was clear: Faubus was aiding the communists. In response, Faubus disavowed any ties or sympathies toward communism and criticized Williams for questioning social programs Arkansans depended on.

As his background would

suggest, Williams also was concerned with improving education in Arkansas. In the end, however, Faubus would narrowly avoid a runoff in the 1960 Democratic primary, and he won his fourth term. Williams later wrote, "I tried to help bring Arkansas to the middle of the road on some issues we had been led astray regarding. I feel I made a positive contribution which still lives on in our state."

Although Williams would not wrest the nomination away, his campaign serves as a reminder that not all Arkansans complacently supported Faubus. Many clearly had tired of Faubus and did not think the affairs of the state belonged in his hands.

Colton Babbitt is a history major at WBC from Benton.



Shaping Lives.  
Training Leaders.  
Making Disciples.  
For the Next 75 Years.



WILLIAMS

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