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Missouri's only abortion clinic could soon lose its license and close

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Members of Baptist Prep's football team load sand bags that were provided to the Maumelle community to protect homes and property from flooding. Baptist Prep is a school associated with First Baptist Church, Little Rock. Photo by Rachel Kowalchuk

Arkansas sees record rainfall

Baptists respond to heartland floods

Caleb Yarbrough
Arkansas Baptist News

ARKANSAS BAPTISTS are responding following historic rainfall across America's heartland that shattered records in May - resulting in widespread flooding along the Arkansas River.

Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, a member of Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, formally requested federal emergency assistance for "debris removal and emergency protective measures" for 15 counties on May 29.

Emergency assistance was requested for the following counties: Arkansas, Chicot, Conway, Crawford, Desha, Faulkner, Franklin, Jefferson, Johnson, Lincoln, Logan, Perry, Pope, Sebastian and Yell.

Hutchinson surveyed dam-

age in affected counties May 30.

The current role of Arkansas and federal emergency personnel is that of "mitigation," according to Hutchinson's comments during a May 29 press conference.

"We have advanced warning that we have a devastating flood that's here, but the river is going to increase in its crest level in the next few days.

We are in the business of mitigating the damage and loss and saving lives," said Hutchinson.

The governor praised the spirit of The Natural State's people and their response to recent storms and flooding.

"I just want to praise Arkansas for the way that everyone has come together to help evacuate homes, to help neighbors move furniture; but also the key thing has been simply

putting sand in bags," said Hutchinson.

The same day Hutchinson commented on the importance of sand bags, the football team for Baptist Prep, a private school and ministry of First Baptist Church, Little Rock, volunteered their morning practice time to fill bags of sand in Maumelle, helping the community prepare for flooding.

Arkansas Baptist disaster relief (DR) teams began staging supplies at strategic points along the Arkansas River during the Memorial Day holiday weekend. The first location with a supplies station was activated at Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Smith.

Grand Avenue Baptist also opened its feeding center to serve locals affected by flooding, as well as relief volunteers. East Side Baptist Church, Fort

See **FLOODING** page 2



Hutchinson

SBC baptism levels lowest since 1945

NASHVILLE, Tenn. - Southern Baptists recorded the lowest number of baptisms in 74 years in 2018, according to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Annual Church Profile (ACP) statistical summary.

Conversely, Southern Baptist congregations saw an increase of more than \$82 million in overall giving in 2018, according to the ACP report. However, in addition to baptisms, other key metrics declined, including membership, average worship attendance and total number of churches.

The number of churches cooperating with the SBC declined by 88, or .19 percent, to 47,456. Southern Baptists also reported 4,085 church-type missions last year, a decline of 291 or 6.65 percent. The number of churches and missions combined is 51,541 congregations. The ACP is compiled by LifeWay Christian Resources in cooperation with Baptist state conventions.

According to the 1945 SBC Annual, there were 24,165 Southern Baptist churches in 1944, which is less than half of the 51,541 churches and church-type missions recorded by ACP in 2018.

The Arkansas Baptist State Convention reported 1,533 churches and missions in 2018, compared to 1,546 in 2017, or a .84 percent decrease. Baptisms reported by the state convention in 2018 numbered 8,962 compared to 10,255 in 2017 or a 12.6 percent decrease.

"Part of the Annual Church Profile process is for associations and state conventions to connect with each congregation and to confirm they still exist and are cooperating together in ministry," said Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research. "This year several states put extra effort into identifying

See **BAPTISMS** page 2



Blake Ligon, teaching pastor of Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro's Paragould campus, baptizes Reed Yarbrough during the launch of the campus Aug. 12, 2018.

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Read them on Page 10.

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ABN Digest

Stories of interest
to Arkansas Baptists

Mission Possible takes 'Jesus to the communities'

NORTH LITTLE ROCK – North Pulaski Baptist Association (NPBA) held its fourth annual Mission Possible event May 4 in the North Little Rock (NLR) community.

"Mission Possible is one of the action plans of our association," said Dennis Wilkins, associational missionary for NPBA. "It's where we designate a location – usually a city in our association – and we have our churches join together to focus on that city. We're just taking Jesus to the communities."

More than 250 people from NPBA churches and 40 people outside of the association came together for the effort. Volunteers helped with six block parties, visited two nursing homes, did prayer walking and evangelism, painted Caring Hearts Pregnancy Center, provided food and cake to NLR first responders, gave free haircuts, fed and played games with tenants at Willow House and prepped 10,320 meals for care centers. Twenty-two people made professions of faith during the event.

"This event gives the local churches a stronger recognition in their community other than being a building that is open once or twice a week," said Wilkins. "It puts them in a social position with their community. It gives the people an opportunity to meet church members and church members an opportunity to meet community members on a different platform than just a worship service on Sunday."

Wilkins stated that more than 75 people accepted Jesus as their Lord from Mission Possible in the past four years and many people have joined churches as a result of the community outreach day.

For more ABN Digest, go to
arkansasbaptist.org/abn-digest

FLOODING

continued from page one

Smith, posted on social media May 28 that it had free sand and empty bags available.

East Side Baptist hosted a special event to encourage the people of Fort Smith and surrounding communities who were affected by flooding on May 31.

"We feel strongly that this community needs a time of encouragement," said Rick Gering, East Side Baptist's lead pastor.

Quoting Song of Solomon 8:7 in a video promoting East Side Baptist's Hope and Encouragement event, Gering said that no amount of flooding can "quench" or "drown ... the love, and the spirit, in this community."

Like many in the Fort Smith area, Gering's home experienced extensive damage as a result of recent flooding.

Two Arkansas DR feeding units were up and running as of May 27. The Washington-Madison Baptist Association feeding unit is located in Sebastian County and is feeding volunteers and emergency workers. The Arkansas Baptist State Convention's (ABSC) feeding unit, known as "Unit

1," is located in Faulkner County where volunteers are currently feeding prison inmates who were brought in to aid the efforts.

"These individuals (inmates) are filling sandbags to be used to protect people's homes from the flooding, and we are available to both feed them and minister to them," said Randy Garrett, ABSC DR director.

In addition to deployments within the state, Arkansas DR teams have also deployed to Oklahoma and Missouri.

"We are also assisting with the flood recovery process in Oklahoma as they experience the same degree of flooding and significant storm damage. Two of our chainsaw teams – Balboa Baptist Church and Northwest Association – have deployed to Claremore, Okla., to help restore the damaged area," said Garrett. "Additionally, the Ozark Baptist Church Shower and Laundry unit is working with first responders in the Cherokee Nation outside of Muskogee, Okla."

"We also have a chainsaw team deploying to Buckhorn, Mo., where storm damage has left trees uprooted and homes damaged," he said.

Garrett requested that Arkansas Baptists pray for Southern Baptist Convention DR



A portion of Burns Park in North Little Rock is closed off with barriers due to flooding. Photo by Tim Yarbrough

volunteers, for necessary resources, for the survivors of recent disasters, for the current and ongoing recovery process and for God to use recent disasters as a vehicle for ministry.

"We are deeply saddened by these events and are grateful that God uses these things for good," said Garrett.

"This opportunity to minister to those impacted and first responders gives us the chance to share the hope of the kingdom with everyone around us. We are grateful to be able to serve in this capacity," he said.

Two emergency DR training events were held June 1. One-hundred and fifty people attended a training at Central

Baptist Church, Conway, and more than 500 people attended a training at Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Smith.

The ABSC encourages Arkansas Baptists, both trained and untrained, to volunteer at five established relief sites located in Fort Smith, Russellville, Conway, North Little Rock and Pine Bluff.

For more information on Arkansas DR and volunteer training events, visit absdisasterrelief.org.

For the latest on Arkansas flooding and DR efforts, visit arkansasbaptist.org or follow the *Arkansas Baptist News* Facebook page at facebook.com/ArkBaptNews.

Contact Caleb Yarbrough at caleb@arkansasbaptist.org.

BAPTISMS

continued from page one

and confirming cooperating churches, revealing the decrease in the number of congregations."

Four state conventions saw double-digit growth in the number of Southern Baptist congregations. The Baptist General Convention of Texas added 44 congregations; the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention grew by 31; the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention added 22 congregations, and SBC of Virginia grew by 20. Those figures include churches along with church-type missions – congregations that are not fully independent or self-sustaining.

Although Southern Baptist congregations reported increased giving, membership of those congregations declined by 192,404, down 1.28 percent to 14.8 million members. Average weekly worship attendance declined by 0.43 percent to 5.3 million worshippers.

McConnell noted that while the ACP offers a snapshot of the Southern Baptist Convention, it does not tell the whole story. Seventy-six percent of Southern Baptist churches participated in the 2018 ACP by reporting at least one item on the profile. Almost a quarter of churches did not report any information.

"The percent of churches reporting in 2018 is up two percentage points from 2017 but lower than the three previous years (2014-2016) when we had 77 percent participation," he said.

As in previous years, reported totals do not include all of the activity of Southern Baptist congregations, though the summary does include adjustments in some categories for non-reporting congregations.

Baptism decline slows

Southern Baptist congregations baptized 246,442 people in 2018, a 3.02 percent decline from the 254,122 reported in 2017. Southern Baptists saw a 9.49 percent decline in baptisms from 2016-2017. In

2016, Southern Baptists reported a 4.89 percent decline in baptisms from the previous year.

Ronnie Floyd, president and CEO of the SBC Executive Committee, said, "While this report contains news that concerns us greatly, we need to celebrate every life who was positively impacted by the gospel."

Several state conventions experienced growth in baptism numbers this past year. State conventions with the largest increases in baptisms in 2018 were the California Southern Baptist Convention, which grew by 2,653 to 12,212; the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, which grew by 2,092 to 21,563; the Florida Baptist Convention, which grew by 1,245 to 26,162; the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, which grew by 469 to 17,511; and the Colorado Baptist General Convention, which grew by 353 to 1,834.

Giving & mission expenditures

Total church receipts and

undesignated receipts were both up for the second year in a row. Total church receipts reported through the ACP increased 0.7 percent to \$11.8 billion. Undesignated church receipts increased 0.87 percent to \$9.6 billion.

Congregations reported total mission expenditures of \$1.17 billion and Great Commission Giving of \$572 million.

Giving through the SBC's Cooperative Program is not included in the ACP statistical summary. Those totals are available through Baptist state conventions and the SBC Executive Committee, which processes the mission gifts.

Individual congregations voluntarily report their ACP data to their local Baptist associations and/or their state conventions. National statistics are compiled and released when all cooperating state conventions have reported.

This article was compiled from reporting by Baptist Press and Baptist News Global.

Missouri could be first state without an abortion clinic

Caleb Yarbrough
Arkansas Baptist News

ST. LOUIS – As a result of the Missouri Health Department and the state legislature not renewing Planned Parenthood's license to perform abortions, Missouri could become the first state in the U.S. without a legal abortion provider since the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the case of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973.

As of press time, a Missouri judge had granted a temporary restraining order, allowing Planned Parenthood's St. Louis Region clinic to continue performing abortions.

The clinic is the only abortion provider in Missouri. St. Louis Circuit Judge Michael

Stelzer granted the temporary restraining order prior to midnight May 31, the time at which the clinic's state abortion license was set to expire, according to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

The temporary order is applicable for less than one week. Stelzer scheduled a hearing to allow further debate regarding the clinic's license status for Tuesday, June 4. The result of that hearing was not known at press time.

While the St. Louis-area Planned Parenthood location would still be able to provide non-abortion health services if its license is not renewed, the organization said, in that event, it plans to sue the state, "in order to try to keep serving

Missouri women," according to a CBS News report.

"This is not a drill. This is not a warning. This is a real public health crisis," said Leana Wen, president and CEO of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

Wen did not comment on the tremendous public health victory that the clinic's closing would represent for the unborn children of Missouri.

Stelzer's order came only days following Missouri Gov. Mike Parson's signing of some of the nation's strictest abortion legislation into law. Missouri's new abortion law bans abortions on or beyond the eighth week of pregnancy and does not provide exceptions

for women who were raped or were victims of incest, according to CBS News reports.

Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards signed a similar abortion bill into law May 30. Louisiana's legislation bans abortion as early as six weeks of pregnancy. However, Louisiana's new law will only take effect if Mississippi's new abortion law, which was recently blocked by a federal judge, is upheld in federal appeals court, according to CBS News reports.

Arkansas has two active abortion clinics located at 5921 W. 12th St., Suite C in Little Rock and 3729 North Cross-over St. in Fayetteville.

Contact Caleb Yarbrough at caleb@arkansasbaptist.org.

ABN Digest

Stories of interest
to Arkansas Baptists

Former Arkansas pastors to be nominated at SBC

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – David Uth and Noe Garcia are expected to be nominees for Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) leadership positions in Birmingham, Ala., at the annual meeting June 10-11.



Uth, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla., will be nominated as president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference. Uth is a former president of the Florida Baptist Convention and International Mission Board trustee chairman. He has served as pastor of churches in Louisiana, Arkansas and Texas.



Garcia, senior pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church, Phoenix, will be nominated as second vice president of the SBC. He previously served on staff at Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, as well as churches in Tennessee and Texas.

Illinois bill would 'strip all protections' from unborn

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (BP) – The Illinois House of Representatives and its Democratic majority passed a bill on May 28 that would reportedly strip all protections from unborn children, allowing for abortions up to the moment of birth. The so-called "Reproductive Health Act" also allows partial-birth abortions and removes protection for pro-life doctors and insurers who object to the practice.

For more ABN Digest, go to
arkansasbaptist.org/abn-digest

LifeWay to lean on states for annual meeting bookstores

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – LifeWay Christian Resources is requesting state conventions to provide on-site staffing and handling of its bookstore presence at 2019 annual meetings.

The effort by the publishing arm of the Southern Baptist Convention is being called the "LifeWay Showcase," with the purpose to "fulfill the requests by State Convention leaders to have a LifeWay presence at their annual meetings."

LifeWay announced in March that it would close all of its 170 brick-and-mortar stores in 2019. Five Arkansas stores are operated in Little Rock, Fort Smith, Hot Springs, Jonesboro and Rogers. In the past, the closest bookstore to where the annual meeting was being held in Arkansas would handle set up and staffing of the LifeWay bookstore.

Dan Garland, LifeWay's director of church partnerships, explained the LifeWay Showcase would continue a long-held partnership between publisher and state conventions.

"LifeWay and state conventions have long been partners in the work of distributing books, Bibles and discipleship resources. Our strong partnership continues as LifeWay offers showcases at annual meetings of state conventions. The showcase will display key titles from LifeWay and B&H Publishing for church leaders

to browse and evaluate. Plus, showcases will also include special sale pricing on select titles and free shipping on all orders placed during the convention."

A flyer distributed about the LifeWay Showcase states LifeWay will provide at no cost to state conventions a display of selected published books, Bibles and short-term new releases three weeks prior to their annual meeting. The resources, which are to be displayed for sale during the annual meeting, are not to be returned, with state convention offices being asked to keep the resources for use following the annual meeting.

Additionally, the flyer states that a promotion code for a 30 percent discount on B&H Books and CSB Bibles will be provided to annual meeting attendees.

LifeWay will provide "printed order forms for those who do not have access to online shopping including only the titles displayed for the showcase," states the flyer, adding, "Where possible Church Partners will help man the showcase and assist customers to know how to place orders on lifeway.com or by using the printed order forms."

The flyer also states that LifeWay will pay a 15 percent commission to the state conventions on the net sales generated by the assigned source code.

In return, state conventions are to provide two, 8-foot skirted tables to display products, a contact point person 60 days prior to the meeting, someone to set up and staff the tables during the meeting; send a photo of the table set up to LifeWay; print order forms for attendees without Internet access; assist attendees in placing orders on lifeway.com or with printed forms; show a "pre-roll slide as applicable in main ses-

sion" to promote the LifeWay Showcase to attendees; make a "main stage announcement" about the LifeWay Showcase, and explain how it works, and provide feedback.

The Arkansas Baptist State Convention has yet to make a decision on if it will have a LifeWay bookstore at its 2019 annual meeting, which will be held Oct. 22-23 at Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock.



CAR SHOW – Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries' (ABCHomes) Ride and Shine Car Show was held May 18 at the Baptist Home for Children in Monticello. The event raised funds for ABCHomes and featured 34 vehicles, including everything from sports cars to off-road vehicles. *ABCHomes photo*

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)

How the past helps us better understand the present

Sometimes a trip into the past helps us to better understand the present.

My mother lost her mother around the age of 11, and along with her two younger sisters, was sent to a Catholic boarding school for the better portion of 1947.

Mom has always told me that it was a dark and difficult time in her life. Not only was she dealing with the death of her mother, but the reality of living away from her father and other family members in an unfamiliar place was tough.

It's not that Ursuline Academy School in Arcadia, Mo., wasn't a nice place. In fact, the buildings and grounds were ornate and kept immaculate. There was lots of room on the grounds for the three sisters and other young girls to romp around and play. "You think that wasn't a change for us," my mother, who is from Steele, Mo., told me recently. "The nuns wore robes and walked the halls. They had those rosaries on their belts, which would jingle as they walked (as they came around to check on us)."

"That was a pretty bad time for us. We had a stepmother.

My mother had died, and my daddy married pretty quick after mother died," said mom. "He had been overseas (in the war) and had just got back when she died."

My grandfather, indeed, was in the middle of World War II and fought in some of the war's most vicious battles. Coming home after experiencing the horrors of intense combat

still did not prepare him for the sudden and unexpected death of his wife.

I've often speculated that my grandfather perhaps remarried so quickly in an attempt to recapture a sense of normalcy in his life. Family members never heard him speak much of the war. It wasn't a subject to be discussed.

Mom has always been quiet and self-reliant. She never complained much and always accepted where the consequences of life took her.

Over the recent Memorial Day holiday, a trip to a relative's wedding in Fredricktown, Mo., took us within about 25 miles of Arcadia. My wife, Pamm, and I used the opportunity to drive over to check out what was left of

Ursuline Academy.

The property is no longer a boarding school, but a bed and breakfast with a restaurant and ice cream shop.

While the grounds of the school aren't kept to previous standards today, there is no mistaking what a beautiful place it once was.

As I walked the grounds, taking photos of buildings, statues, stained glass and other artifacts, I couldn't help but think about what my mother told me about how difficult of a time it was for her and her sisters.

For example, because of the age of her youngest sister, Barbara, it was up to mom and middle sister, Shirl, to see after her by giving her baths and seeing after her other

needs while at the school.

Most people learn self-reliance at some point of their lives, but not many of us are thrust into it at such an early age. What I realize is that God uses the situations and circumstances of our lives to build our character – that is if we allow Him and accept His guidance.

My mother learned well. Now, as she struggles each day following a stroke she suffered nearly three years ago, I see her determination and resiliency in a whole new light.

God used mom's experiences as the eldest sibling 72 years ago to shape who she became later in life and who she is today (James 1:2).

Tim Yarbrough is the editor of the *Arkansas Baptist News*.



Pressing On

Tim Yarbrough

Phil. 3:14



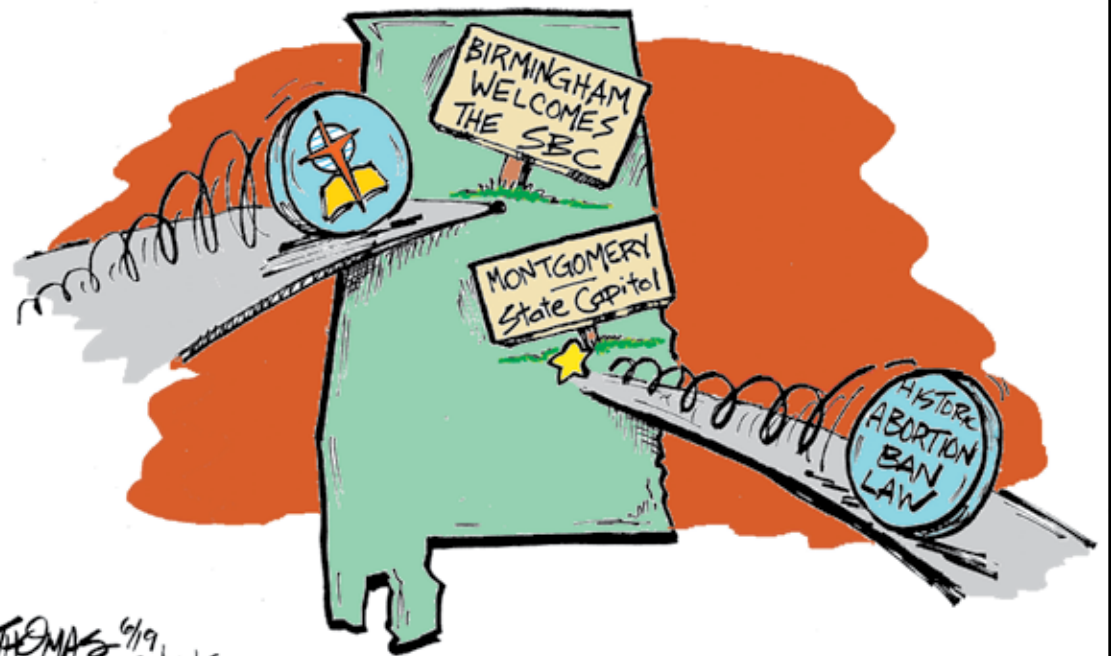
My mother, June, (right) along with sisters, Shirl, (left) and Barbara, (top) around the time they were residents of the Ursuline Academy Catholic boarding school in Arcadia, Mo., in 1947.



The gymnasium on the grounds of the former Ursuline Academy in Arcadia, Mo.

Cartoon by Gary Thomas

The Crimson Tide is not all that rolls in and out of Alabama.



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Why did Jesus overturn the tables in the Temple?

The “cleansing of the Temple” is one of the most well-known events in Jesus’ ministry. Although it is shared in all four gospels, the most elaborate place is found in Mark 11:15-19 (HCSB):

“They came to Jerusalem, and He went into the temple complex and began to throw out those buying and selling in the temple. He overturned the money changers’ tables and the chairs of those selling doves, and would not permit anyone to carry goods through the temple complex.”



Baptists Ask

Ken Gore

At first, it appears that Jesus was upset at their activity of buying and selling, as if such a practice were sinful. However, when individuals worshipped at the Temple, they needed to exchange money for the Temple tax. Since some could not bring a sacrifice from a long journey, many would buy their animals on the premises.

Read carefully; the passage reveals that Jesus wanted to share something greater with the crowd. Quoting Isaiah, He declared that the Temple should be a “house of prayer for all nations” (Isa. 56:7). Rather than a place for all to worship the Lord, the Temple had become a place for religious and political exclusivism.

Jesus then declared that the Temple had become a “den of thieves.” This was a clever allusion to Jeremiah 7. In this chapter, the prophet pronounced that the people behaved one way inside the Temple, but lived another way outside its walls. By calling the Temple a “den of thieves,” neither Jeremiah nor Jesus referred to any thievery that occurred inside the Temple. Instead, a den is a place where the robbers hide out to be safe. Jesus declared to the Temple officials that their time for hiding was over.

By turning over the tables, stopping the Temple tax, and preventing the sacrifices, Jesus declared that worship in the Temple was over. The reason for the end of Temple worship was clear: It was futile. To prove this point, Mark noted that Jesus cursed a fig tree before he entered the Temple (Mark 11:12-14). Upon leaving, the disciples remarked that the fig tree had died (Mark 11:20-21). The fig tree, therefore, was a symbol of the Temple. Like the fig tree, the Temple should have been fruitful; instead, it was fruitless. As the fig tree was destroyed because of its fruitlessness, the Temple would also be destroyed.

When Jesus overturned the tables, He did not cleanse the Temple. Instead, He declared to the crowd that the days of the Temple were fast approaching an end. As it turned out, the One Who condemned the Temple would be greater than the Temple itself. Although the Temple would be destroyed, God’s followers – found in all nations and peoples – would continue to worship Him beyond its borders.

Ken Gore is professor of biblical studies at Dallas Baptist University. Send your questions to tim@arkansasbaptist.org.

Letters to the Editor

Mission trips

Eric Ramsey’s recent article about mission trips had some different concepts. I sincerely agree biblical mission trips bring glory to God. It is possible for some “mission trips” to become a field trip to see the sights. These trips are hollow due to a lack of spiritual prepara-

tion by leaders and mission team participants.

Rev. Ramsey’s idea of mission trips being valid – only if the focus is on church planting – is disturbing. His comment of an influx of new believers having no impact on strengthening a local church body is

See **LETTERS** page 6

The Equality Act is troublesome

When groups as disparate as radical feminist organizations, such as the Women’s Liberation Front, and conservative, Christian groups, such as the Alliance Defending Freedom, Concerned Women for America and the Family Research Council, find themselves on the same side of a policy debate, it raises a number of questions. These groups are opposing the so-called Equality Act being considered by the U.S. House of Representatives. So, what is wrong with it?



Faith & Ethics

Larry Page

If it becomes law, the Equality Act would add sexual orientation and gender identity to the classes or groups that are protected under the federal civil rights law. Currently, groups that enjoy that level of civil rights protection are those whose members share characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, gender (not gender identity) and religion. The Equality Act would elevate homosexuals and transgendered persons to that special grouping not based on characteristics as

with the others, but determined essentially on behavior and feelings.

Feminists are lined up against the Equality Act on the basis that it is not really a civil rights bill. Rather, they point out that the passage of the law would require that biological men could identify

as female and use restrooms and other facilities reserved for women.

Also, they say, it would mandate that males self-identifying as females be allowed to participate in women’s sports and, perhaps worst of all, it would simply nullify all sex-specific rights that women have fought so hard to achieve.

Recently, a group of conservative religious leaders, among them James Dobson, Franklin Graham, Robert Jeffress, Tim Wildmon and others, sent a letter to leaders in Congress expressing their strenuous opposition to the Equality Act. The letter pointed out that the bill “would gut religious protections – even the freedom currently enjoyed by houses of

worship.”

The letter went on to warn the congressional leaders that not only is the Equality Act “incompatible with God’s Word (the Bible) and the historic teaching of the church, but the Equality Act is also riddled with threats to religious liberty and the sanctity of human life.” They also made the case that members of the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) groups did not share “immutable characteristics like skin color and ethnicity.”

The Heritage Foundation has identified some groups that would be significantly harmed if the Equality Act becomes law. Employers and employees would be forced to conform to the new standards or face punitive consequences. We have already seen this with enforcement of state laws that extend “protections” similar to what the Equality Act would do at the national level. Florists, bakers, photographers and others have been sanctioned for not servicing same-sex weddings and other celebrations.

See **EQUALITY** page 6

Preparing for lives of meaningful work

Throughout the 2018-2019 academic year, we at Ouachita have focused on the theme, Lives of Meaningful Work. It’s a phrase from our mission statement that speaks to one of Ouachita’s desired outcomes for graduates: that Ouachita graduates will be prepared for such lives and work.



Ouachita Baptist University

Ben Sells

It’s also a topic of national attention. For example, Gallup recently released a report titled “The Future of Work.” It highlighted a decade-long study surveying two million employees. Their research focused on how engaged employees were in their work and how meaningful their work feels.

Gallup’s president said the study was “the single most profound, distinct and clarifying finding in its 80-year history.” What did they

learn that was so astonishing? Gallup found that only one-third of Americans feel they are doing meaningful work. They also discovered that employees who feel their work is meaningful were those who

reported two particular experiences in college.

First, “They had at least one professor who made them excited about learning and cared about them as a person.” The second was the opportunity to engage in experiential learning where they were “able to apply what they were learning in the classroom.”

These are two experiences at which we excel in Christian higher education – especially at Ouachita. A Ouachita education provides a foundation to find meaning in all the God-honoring roles and careers that await our graduates.

But this is a foundation to

build upon, not rest upon.

In my own journey this year, I read again the Book of Psalms. Three insights stood out to me as I considered our meaningful work theme: know God, be humble and do good.

While the recommendation to “know God” seems obvious, powerful forces can compete for our attention, and the loyalty is due to God. Even better, declare the Psalms, this God Who made you (Psa. 139:13) wants to be known by you (Psa. 111), loves you (Psa. 136), watches over you (Psa. 121:3), is for you (Psa. 124:8) and so much more.

In the midst of successes, we also must be humbly aware that we didn’t do it alone. Because the Lord has been at work, the Psalms tell us our labor has not been in vain (Psa. 127:1). The human tendency is toward the self. But

See **WORK** page 6

Camp Siloam staff prepares for summer physically and spiritually

Sarah Davis
Arkansas Baptist News

SILOAM SPRINGS – Flashlight? Check. Sunscreen? Check. Bible? Check.

Camp season is upon us, and students are packing their bags in anticipation. But how does the camp staff get ready for summer?

“Camp readiness is both physical and spiritual,” said Jason Wilkie, executive director of Camp Siloam.

Camp Siloam’s home team (year-round staff) meets together once a month to accomplish big projects as soon as summer ends. Many men and women volunteer during the off-season to help the camp with many tasks.

“Our summer staff comes two weeks before camp and starts to train and get camp ready,” said Pat Moore, associate director of operations at Camp Siloam. “Generally, they are helping get bunkhouses ready, grounds looking great and activities prepared – such as the water slide, giant swing and volleyball court.”

Staffers must also personally prepare for the busy season.

“Physically, it is important to get plenty of exercise, stay hydrated and eat well,” said Moore. “Spiritually, I begin each day in His Word, reading over a solid devotional and

praying. As fully devoted followers of Christ, we must stay connected to the Vine to see the Lord working in us and through us.”

The home team meets between four and five hours each week to pray for the camp and to study Scripture from September to March.

“I have to spend time with the Father in the days outside of summer camp. Each of our home team staff is poured out all summer, so we must be filled up by the time the summer staff arrives for orientation,” said Wilkie. “We prepare camp by getting our college staff’s hearts in the right place through worship, teaching and fellowship.”

Wilkie’s favorite tradition is the candlelight prayer walk on Saturday night before campers arrive. The summer staff gathers in the small worship center, and Wilkie reads John 1 with the lights out and one candle lit. The staff then comes up one by one and lights a candle. They leave the building and walk to the west end of the camp. As they walk in a way their light does not go out, they pray for the campers who are coming.

“When we get to the far ballfield, I ask them what lessons the light taught them,” said Wilkie. “Their responses are treasures to me, and



Camp Siloam staff prepares beach volleyball courts to be used by campers this summer. *Camp Siloam photo*

their prayers lay a spiritual foundation for the summer.”

Last year, Camp Siloam hosted 5,800 campers. More than 450 campers made professions of faith, and 260 expressed interest in missions or full-time ministry.

“We are expecting around the same number of campers this summer, but we would not be surprised if we surpass 6,000,” said Moore.

This summer, Camp Siloam has acquired a yurt from a nearby camp. They have turned the yurt into a retail store and made the old store an additional bunkhouse for male campers. A traditional yurt is a portable, round tent covered with skins or felt and used as a dwelling by nomads in Central Asia.

Camp Siloam has also partnered with a new outfitter on the Illinois River and will offer kayaking to campers in the afternoon.

The biggest upgrade is the new cafeteria, Cedar Hall. The \$3 million project opened in June 2018. Cedar Hall seats 900 and feeds 1,100. The cafeteria offers five serving lines, four drink stations, a salad bar and air conditioning.

“It’s just so nice to not have to sweat onto your chicken tenders during dinner,” said Wilkie.

The camp has made itself available to individuals this summer. One bunkhouse each for girls and boys has been set aside for children, June 17-21, and students, June 24-28, for campers to come without a church. These campers will be led by college students hired specifically for these weeks.

“We are humbled He uses us and this place to do His ministry,” said Moore. “We are privileged to see the gospel preached and God use it to redeem young people each week.

The legacy of Camp Siloam to impact the lives of people each week, each summer and over many decades has been amazing to me.”

For 96 years, Camp Siloam has been a place to share the gospel with campers and where thousands of students have accepted Christ, but Wilkie finds the immeasurable things the most valuable.

“How do you measure the friendships that deepen here? The camper who all of a sudden feels like his pastor is a friend because he spent a week with him at camp?” said Wilkie. “How valuable are the memories or the inspiration of a college student speaking into a young person’s life? What kind of impact does our college staff make when they come back to the BCM excited about ministry and confident in sharing the gospel?”

Contact Sarah Davis at sarah@arkansasbaptist.org.

LETTERS

continued from page 5

alarming. What church would not be overjoyed with a group of new believers? Should a mission team focus on being sure the membership of a local body increases or a person’s name is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life? People desperately need the Lord. Churches grow from personal professions of faith. Many churches in America are struggling with apathy and lack of resources. Construction teams, mercy ministries, and community outreach by mission teams, may provide vital life support for dying churches. Because of those mission teams, the community could become more open to hearing the presentation of the gospel. Genuine mission trips result in kingdom growth in and through

those on mission teams; as well as those exposed to Jesus through their work. Many mission teams have demonstrated the love of God in creative ways, to earn the right to share Jesus.

There isn’t a specific formula for the perfect mission trip, or perfect mission team. But 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV) provides excellent guidelines: “But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”

Kay Hicks
Little Rock

Lottery rip-off

The *Arkansas Baptist News* has spoken against the lottery. Maybe they ought to speak against the rip-off it is.

First, if you win the Powerball, you only get one-third if you get it all at once, or, you can take the whole thing over 30 years and with inflation probably get less, since half the money taken is given to the winners, one-sixth is given to the winner and two-thirds of that goes back to Uncle Sam in taxes. Then comes regular Arkansas taxes plus special 10 percent gambling tax, leaving the return to the winner maybe between 4 to 5 percent.

It’s maybe not the wisest of investments.

Nick Nixon
Charleston

Letters to the Editor: Send Letters to the Editor to tim@arkansasbaptist.org or to our mailing address (10 Remington Dr. Little Rock, AR 72204). Letters must be typed, double-spaced and 300 words or less (fewer words, the better). Letters must be signed and marked “for publication” and may be edited to fit space requirements.

EQUALITY

continued from page 5

Medical professionals and health facilities would have to provide certain medical services, even if doing so would violate their consciences. Parents might be prevented from

having their children who suffer with gender dysphoria from being subjected to hormonal and surgical interventions. Women would be deprived of the rights afforded them by gender-specific standards, norms and laws.

Larry Page is executive director of the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council.

WORK

continued from page 5

Scripture shows us that it’s in becoming self-forgetful that we truly experience life. Indeed, the Psalms tell us God saves and sustains the humble (Psa. 18:27, 147:6).

As I read the Psalms, I was stirred again of God’s heart for the “least of these.” Psalm 37:27 captures it by declaring “do good.” Over and over, we are admonished to

help people who have been marginalized – spiritually, physically, socially and in many more ways. The Psalms declare blessed are those who act justly and always do what is right (Psa. 106:3).

To have a life of meaningful work, indeed a meaningful life, know God, be humble and do good, building on the strong foundation provided by the education, family and experiences granted to you by the grace of God.

Ben R. Sells is president of Ouachita Baptist University.

Small churches invest in future with improvements

SMALLER CHURCHES in Arkansas have been busy this year making big improvements and renovations. From remodeling to bringing buildings up to code, these improvements will allow churches to continue to serve surrounding communities.

Pee Dee Baptist Church, Clinton, has completed a remodel to its fellowship hall. The room that once served as the church's worship center was outdated with paneled walls and carpet. The church put in new dimmable LED lights, replaced the carpet with laminate flooring and covered panels with drywall.

"The fellowship hall now

provides a better lit, welcoming and newer look," said Kyle Blanton, pastor of Pee Dee Baptist Church. "The area has high traffic as it connects the education building and new worship facility. So, right in the middle of two new and updated buildings was a time warp of about 40 years. It was time for an update."

Several groups in Clinton use Pee Dee's fellowship hall throughout the year, including Life Line Screening, a wellness company with board-certified physicians that tests for early risk of heart disease, stroke and other serious illnesses like cancer; The C.A.L.L., an organization that educates, equips

and encourages the Christian community to provide a future and a hope for children in foster care; and the local high school football team.

Sunnyside Baptist Church, Rogers, has updated its sound system, renovated its worship area and replaced all the flooring on the main level of the church.

"We pray that, when someone walks into our little church, it looks and feels welcoming," said Rodney Fry, pastor of Sunnyside Baptist Church. "Our members have gotten energized during the process, and they talk about how much the improvements have even helped them."

Sunnyside has future plans of renovating its fellowship hall and gym area. In 2020, a major roundabout and road will be going through the church's property, and entryways will have to be changed as well.

"We look forward to seeing what God is going to do next on His land and property," said Fry.

First Baptist Church, Cotton Plant, has updated its gas lines both inside and outside the church facility to bring the building up to code and improve safety.

"For a church where 25 in worship is a big Sunday, God has provided funds for us to continue to meet and wor-

ship," said Mack Davis, pastor of First Baptist Church, Cotton Plant. "We are able to continue to reach out to the community and witness, and the community is seeing that we are not giving up and closing down."

The *Arkansas Baptist News* will publish its third of four planned Church Building and Facilities editions Oct. 24 and needs submissions from you about building updates and improvements that your church may have undergone recently or are planning in the near future.

Not all churches can announce construction of a new

See **INVEST** page 8

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Cedar Glade begins fundraising to replace 42-year-old pool

IMBODEN – Cedar Glade Baptist Encampment (CGBE), outside of Imboden, has started fundraising for a new swimming pool. The camp's board of directors voted to replace the current 42-year-old pool during its March meeting.

"The estimated cost of replacing the pool will be \$550,000," said Charles Lewis, director of communication for CGBE. "The goal is to have the money raised to begin destruction of the current pool and begin building the new one by the second week of August 2020."

"We are asking for individu-

al givers from each of our associations and larger donations from individuals interested in the camp," said Lewis.

The camp is owned by six associations: Greene County Baptist, Trinity Baptist, Black River Baptist, Current-Gaines Baptist, Big Creek Baptist and Rocky Bayou Baptist.

Currently, the camp has raised \$61,150 for the new pool.

"This project is the first of several renovations to the camp," said Lewis. "We look forward to the next few years to remodel cabins. Several cabins need to be

totally replaced."

The new swimming pool will be larger to ensure future growth of the camp will be

accommodated.

"All future renovations will give the opportunity for greater use by all the associa-

tions, and hopefully other associations and churches across Arkansas will find use of the camp," said Lewis.

Ark. pregnancy centers trained to reach younger generation

LITTLE ROCK – The Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) hosted the Arkansas Pregnancy Care Center (PCC) Association for a training event May 17. Bri Laycock, senior director of ministry solutions for Heartbeat International, trained more than 70 directors and leaders on how to talk about abortion to Millennials and Generation Z.

"The training is important due to the numbers of Millennials and Gen Z that visit the centers," said Sam Roberts, assistant team leader of the ABSC missions team. "Directors and volunteers need to better understand the thought processes of those generations."

"Through the ministry of the 22 pregnancy care centers partially funded by the Cooperative Program and Dixie Jackson (Missions Offering) gifts, 514 babies were saved from abortion in 2018, and 148 individuals

discovered new life in Jesus Christ," said Roberts.

According to Roberts, the 22 PCCs recorded 3,000 volunteers from ABSC churches.

"Our centers are pro-life and gospel-focused," said Roberts.

"They do not offer, recommend or refer for abortions or abortifacients. They provide accurate information about pregnancy, life and abortion procedures and risks."

INVEST

continued from page 7

building or major renovations, but many churches are doing little things that enhance the appeal of their facilities, whether it be landscaping, the addition of new playground equipment or other items.

Email Sarah Davis at sarah@arkansasbaptist.org or call 800-838-2272 to share your church's improvements with the ABN.

Sam Moore Evangelistic Ministries



479-381-1170,
samm@fcbentonville.org

Sam Moore is a vocational evangelist and a native of Arkansas. He has the gift of an evangelist and the heart of a pastor. He is available for Revivals, Crusades, Harvest Days and Witness Training. Now scheduling for 2020-21.

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Gospel Games

"An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules."

2 Timothy 2:5 (CSB)

DAVID'S SHEPHERD'S BAG

This Biblical quotation is taken from Psalm 23:1,2. Words in the diagram are grouped together as in the list.

THE LORD
IS MY
SHEPHERD
I SHALL
NOT WANT
HE MAKES ME
TO LIE DOWN
IN GREEN
PASTURES
HE LEADS ME
BESIDE

THE STILL
WATERS



CHRISTIAN
ARK. BAPTIST NEWS

Across

1. Chicago time, perhaps (abbr.)
4. Jeanne et al.
8. Chinese seal
12. "Eat not of it ____, nor sodden" (Exodus 12:9)
13. Kilmer subject
14. ____ worship
15. Daughter of Cadmus (myth.)
16. Mrs. Chaplin
17. Encourage
18. "grown fat as the heifer at grass, and ____ as bulls" (Jeremiah 50:11)
20. "We do not ____ after the flesh" (2 Corinthians 10:3)
22. Slippery one
23. "the calf, the young lion, and the ____ together." (Isaiah 11:6)
27. City in Judah (Joshua 15:2)
29. Job education act (abbr.)
30. New (prefix)
31. Cleveland player (abbr.)
32. Sounded like a cow
33. "an hollow place...in the ____,

and there came water" (Judges 15:19)

34. Knot
35. Preposition
36. "all ____ to dust again" (Ecclesiastes 3:20)
37. "The Lord shall reign for ever ____" (Exodus 15:18)
39. "cast off their clothes and threw dust into the ____" (Acts 22:23)
40. Son of (Heb.)
41. "under his tongue is mischief and ____" (Psalm 10:7)
44. "Moab shall howl over ____" (Isaiah 15:2)
47. Winglike
49. Surprise!
50. Of the family of the Eranites (Numbers 26:36)
51. Infamous emperor
52. Grecian ____
53. "But whoever shall ____ me before men" (Matthew 10:33)

54. Between 12 and 20
55. Turf

Down

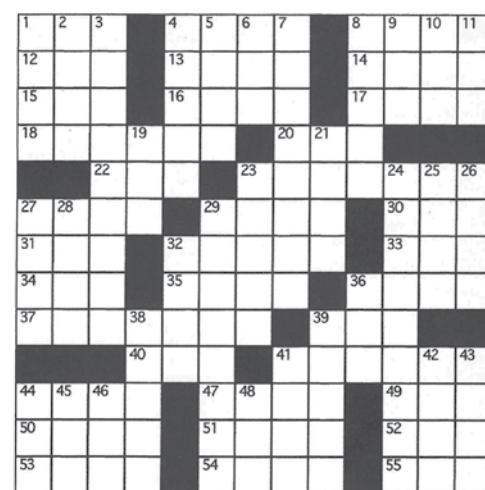
1. "Where no oxen are, the ____ is clean" (Proverbs 14:4)
2. Hamlet was one
3. "to open before him the ____ gates" (Isaiah 45:1)
4. "let us set for him there a bed, a table and a ____" (2 Kings 4:10)
5. Believe (arch.)
6. Evening (poet.)
7. Found in Caspian (2 words)
8. Peasant
9. Pronoun
10. Assn.
11. "The Raven" writer
19. Mideast country (abbr.)
21. "And they came to the threshing-floor of ____, which is beyond Jordan" (Genesis 50:10)
23. Less than
24. "Who was before a blasphemer

and a persecutor, and ____" (1 Timothy 1:13)

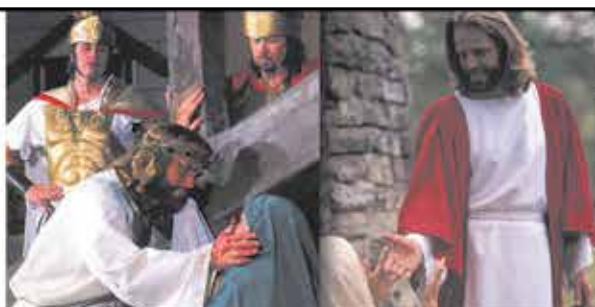
25. "for my salvation is ____ to come" (Isaiah 56:1)
26. Ball ____
27. Collection of writings (scient.)
28. Pour
29. "he is mediator of a better ____" (Hebrews 8:6)
32. "____ worketh no ill to his neighbor" (Romans 13:10)
36. ____ ear
38. they brought thee for a present horns of ivory and ____" (Ezekiel 27:15)
39. Brother of Moses
41. Weasel
42. Straight ahead (var., poet.)
43. Farther (arch.)
44. Masculine name
45. Sooner than (poet.)
46. Outlaw
48. Light-horse Harry

Crossword by Barbour Publishing, Inc.

ABN Crossword puzzle



Crossword answer, page 10



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Editor's Note: The Arkansas Baptist News would love to share your church news with the state. Send your information to sarah@arkansasbaptist.org or call 1-800-838-2272, ext. 5153. Please submit information three weeks prior to the event.

Obituaries

Mary Lucile Foster Holley, 88, of Arkadelphia, died May 14.

Holley served with Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and wrote children's literature for the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (now LifeWay Christian Resources). She also served on the discipleship training team for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention with her husband, Robert Holley, and led children's Bible drill for Pulaski Baptist Association.

She was preceded in death by her parents and husband.

Holley is survived by two brothers, two daughters and three grandchildren.

A memorial service was held May 18 at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock.

Michael Leon Wilson, 55, of Blytheville, died May 19.

Wilson was the music director at Clear Lake Baptist Church, Blytheville.

He is survived by his parents, a sister, a niece and a

nephew.

A funeral service was held May 24 at Clear Lake Baptist Church.

Milestones

Jeremy Prine celebrated his 10th anniversary as youth minister and music minister at Southside Baptist Church, Stuttgart, on Sunday, May 19.

Maple Grove Baptist Church, Trumann, dedicated its Main Street Campus on Sunday, June 2.

Ordinations

Turner Roberts was ordained Sunday, May 19, at First Baptist Church, Hamburg. Roberts serves as the student pastor at First Baptist Church, Hamburg.

William Vodrazka was ordained Sunday, May 19. Vodrazka is the pastor of Fair Park Baptist Church, Russellville.

On the move

Tory Dardar is serving as worship pastor at Valley Baptist Church, Searcy.

Don Moore is serving as minister of music at Oak Grove Baptist Church, Van Buren.

Church life

Cross Point Cowboy Church, Nashville, will host Play Day series starting at 7 p.m., Friday, June 7, for ages 1-18. Events will include a flag race, poles, barrels, goat ribbon pull, goat tying and speed. Other Play Day series will be at 7 p.m., Friday, July 19; 7 p.m., Friday, August 9; and 2 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 8.

First Baptist Church, Floyd, will host a community block party from 4-6 p.m. Saturday, June 8. There will be food, music, games, face painting, a bounce house and door prizes.

Conway First Baptist Church women's ministry will host An Evening with Amy Hannon at 6:30 p.m., Monday, June 10. Hannon is an author and

speaker, and she owns Euna Mae's in northwest Arkansas. She is also the host TV program, "Cooking Today."

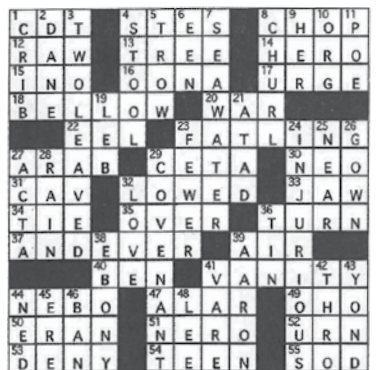
Calvary Baptist Church, Little Rock, will host the Compassion Experience, an exhibit that replicates the homes and environments of real children who grow up in extreme poverty in developing countries. The exhibit will be open 11 a.m.-7 p.m., Friday, June 14, and 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturday-Monday, June 15-17.

Levy Baptist Church, North Little Rock, will have a fish fry at 5 p.m., Friday, June 14.

Mount Vernon Baptist Church, Black Rock, will show "Kingdom Men Rising" at 6:30 p.m., Saturday, June 15.

Grace Chapel Baptist Church, Lonoke, will host The Sons Family in concert at 5 p.m., Sunday, June 30.

See crossword, page 9



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The Baptist Home, Monticello, is seeking a houseparent couple.

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CAMP SILOAM

Classifieds

PASTOR

Faith Baptist Church, Quitman, is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Send resumes to Michael Rickel, PO Box 163, Quitman, AR 72131.

FBC, Stuttgart, is seeking candidates for a **full-time senior pastor**. Interested parties should send a resume to resumes@fbcstuttgart.com.

Friendship Baptist Church is accepting resumes until June 19th, 2019, for a **full-time senior pastor**. Applicants must have substantial experience as senior pastor of a mid-size Southern Baptist church and have a college degree in ministerial related studies. Submit resume by mail to FBC, 767 Rocky Point Rd. Conway, AR 72032, Attn: Search Committee or email to: fbcsearchcommittee2019@gmail.com.

FBC, Ash Flat, seeking **bi-vocational pastor** for a small congregation. Contact Carl Fuller, 870-994-2139 or mail resume to FBC, PO Box 335, Ash Flat, AR 72513.

Witt's Chapel Baptist Church, Maynard, AR, is seeking a **bi-vocational or full-time pastor**. Send resumes and references to: David Byers, 1340 Legate Road, Maynard, AR 72444.

OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

Covenant Baptist Church, Collierville, TN, a conservative Southern Baptist Church with a traditional worship style, seeks a **full-time minister of students, singles, and their families**. Applicants must send a cover letter and resume to youthsearch@mycbbc.org or to Covenant Baptist Church, ATTN: Personnel Committee, PO Box 1165,

Collierville, TN 38027-1165.

Trinity Baptist Church, Benton, AR, is seeking a **bi-vocational worship leader**. Send resume to trinitybenton@gmail.com or mail to 702 Church St., Benton, AR 72015.

FBC, Horatio, is seeking a **part-time youth and children's minister**. Send resumes to FBC, PO Box 296, Horatio, AR 71842.

Mineral Area Baptist Association is searching for a **bi-vocational director of missions**. Send resumes by 6/26/19, to MABA Attn: Search Committee, 5169 Flat River Rd., Farmington, MO 63640 or email: mabasearchcommittee@gmail.com.

First Baptist Church, Crossett, is actively seeking a **full-time youth minister**. Send resumes to resumes@fbcrosssett.com or mail to 701 Main St, Crossett, AR 71635.

First Baptist Church, Hardy, seeking **part-**

time worship leader for congregational singing and adult choir. Send resume, inquiry to PO Box 27, Hardy, AR 72542, 870-856-3767.

FBC, McAlester, OK, is seeking a **FT worship/media pastor**. Please see our website for more information and to submit resume.

First Baptist Church, Lepanto, Arkansas, is seeking a **F/T youth pastor**. Parsonage provided. You may email resume to kyle@fbclepanto.com or mail to First Baptist Church, PO Box 400, Lepanto AR 72354.

Cocklebur Baptist, Ward, AR, is prayerfully seeking **part-time worship leader**. Accepting resumes until June 1. Email resumes to cbc4138@gmail.com or mail to Attn: Worship Leader Search Comm., 4138 Cocklebur Rd, Ward, AR 72176.

First Baptist Church, Perryville, is seeking a **bi-vocational music director**. Send resumes

to pvfb.church@gmail.com.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Arkansas Baptist News is seeking applications for an **experienced advertising representative** to call on existing clients, as well as pursue new clients. A candidate for this position must have a proven track record in advertising sales. To apply, please email a detailed resume summarizing experience and qualifications no later than June 24 to tim@arkansasbaptist.org. No phone calls please.

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JUNE 9, 2019

The relativistic culture in which we live rejects absolutes and exclusiveness. It is in this context and to this culture that God has called believers to be on mission to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. The very nature of the gospel is both absolute and exclusive. This makes it rather uncomfortable for many Christians to witness and share their faith. Fearing criticism, rejection and hostility, many have privatized their faith.

God desires for “everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4). This won’t happen if the church isolates itself from the world. We must move beyond the privatization of our faith, engage the culture with the gospel, and openly apply biblical truth to every area of our lives. Francis Schaeffer said, “Christianity is not merely religious truth; it is total truth – truth about the whole of reality.”

The mission of saving souls must be accompanied by evangelistic praying (1 Tim. 2:1-2). Paul urged prayers for everyone, particularly those in authority.

Those in authority have a direct bearing on our being able to have a “tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity” (1 Tim. 2:2). Paul knew that praying for them could create favorable conditions for the church’s evangelistic efforts.

Paul expounded on the truth that people must acknowledge if they are to be saved (1 Tim. 2:5-6). There is only one God. There is only one mediator between God and man. This is the person of Jesus Christ, who gave Himself a ransom for all. Although our gospel is absolute and exclusive, our witness is universal.

All people must receive the message and must come to Christ the same way.

Ronnie Floyd, president and CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, said, “I believe the time is now to prioritize, elevate, and accelerate our pace to present the gospel to every person in the world and to make disciples of all the nations.” Floyd wants us to prioritize what the Lord has already commanded us to do in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20).

EXPLORE THE BIBLE**On mission**

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-15 (HCSB)

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE**Deborah: encouraging faith**

JUDGES 4:1-9; 5:1-5 (HCSB)

Deborah was a prophetess, a judge, and an example of encouraging faith. She described herself as “a mother in Israel” (Judges 5:7). She had the gifts of wisdom, judgment and pastoral direction. She was serving as mother to the entire nation at a time when male leadership was absent.

Because Israel did evil in the sight of God, the Lord placed them under the oppression of Jabin, king of Canaan, for 20 years. Israel cried out to the Lord. Deborah summoned Barak, the leader of Israel’s army, and basically asked him why he hadn’t done what the Lord had commanded him (Judg. 4:6-7). The Lord’s commands were very specific: Deploy the troops on Mount Tabor; take 10,000 men, and I will give you victory. Barak was paralyzed with fear.

There is a saying that behind every good man is a great woman. I know this is true because I am married to one. She often has to encourage me to do what I know I should do without anyone telling

me. This was the situation with Barak. He said to Deborah, “If you will go with me, I will go. But if you will not go with me, I will not go” (Judg. 4:8).

Deborah said, “I will go with you” (Judg. 4:9). She placed a condition on it, “You will receive no honor on the road you are about to take” (Judg. 4:9). This was true, she said, because Sisera and his army would be delivered “into a woman’s hand” (Judg. 4:9). She was not talking about herself; she was speaking of Jael (Judg. 4:17-22). Long story short, Jael, while Sisera was sleeping, drove a tent peg through his temple and nailed him to the ground.

When godly leaders lead and are willing to be used of God, the Lord will receive praise (Judg. 5:2). Barak was hesitant to follow God’s plan for him, but Deborah reminded him of God’s commands and encouraged him to follow through. We should do the same for each other, knowing our victory will be for God’s glory.

JUNE 16, 2019

I have extensive training and experience in leadership and leadership development in both my secular work and my ministry. In one of my positions, staff members were doing a terrible job. Leadership was reduced to a daily series of commands, which ended with, “Do them, or else.” With my training and experience in mind, I proceeded to tell the leader that the staff would do a better job if there was less dictating and more leading by example. The response was, “I am the leader; they just need to follow.” I was swiftly shown the door. Everything rises and falls with leadership.

The Apostle Paul said, “If anyone aspires to be an overseer, he desires a notable work” (1 Tim 3:1). The English reformer John Wycliffe wrote, “The highest service that men may attain to on earth is to preach the Word of God.” Because this is a high and noble work, Paul described the biblical qualifications for pastors and deacons. Paul gave this list of qualifications to provide churches guidelines for the selection of leaders and to provide church leaders an assessment

tool for their own spiritual lives. Desire is not enough; it must be accompanied by discipline.

Different churches will approach leadership differently and may emphasize one or more qualifications over others. Warren Wiersbe said, “Even though the church is an organism, it must organize or it will die. Leadership is a part of spiritual organization.” Church leadership was designed by God, and we should not attempt to impose secular structures on a spiritual design. Churches are not corporations; pastors are not CEOs,

and deacons are not the board of directors. These 13 verses make it clear this is spiritual. Henry Blackaby said, “Spiritual leadership is moving people on to God’s agenda.”

Church leadership is responsible for the life-transforming discipleship that will lead the congregation to be more like Christ. They must be models of Christ-likeness in character, in morality, in family relationships, and in public life. They have a greater weight of responsibility because of their great influence on others.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE**Setting the example**

1 TIMOTHY 3:1-13 (HCSB)

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE**Hannah: faith that prays**

1 SAMUEL 1:1-28; 2:1-3 (HCSB)

A couple prayed constantly for a baby, but the woman never became pregnant. Fertility doctors told her that, outside of a miracle, she would never have children. She wanted a baby girl so much. A newborn baby boy was available and, after praying, the couple adopted him. Family and friends reminded her the baby was not a little girl. Her response was always the same, “This is the baby the Lord has provided.” A year after the adoption, she found out she was pregnant with a baby girl. She would name the baby Hannah because the Lord was gracious.

Hannah was one of Elkanah’s two wives. Hannah was barren, which in that day was one of the worst things that could happen to a woman. Elkanah’s other wife, Peninnah, had children. Elkanah tried to console Hannah by giving her a double portion of food. This only made matters worse with the other wife who taunted Hannah. Hannah was so sad and depressed she couldn’t even eat.

While Hannah and her family were at Shiloh worshipping the Lord, she wept and prayed. She made a vow to God: If He would give her a son, she would give him back to the Lord. Eli, who at first thought she was drunk, assured Hannah that God heard her prayers. She had renewed hope. “Hannah went on her way; she ate and no longer appeared downcast” (1 Sam. 1:18).

The Lord remembered Hannah, and she became pregnant and bore a son whom she named Samuel. After the child was weaned, she took him to the temple to Eli. She made yearly visits to see Samuel and give him a new robe. The Lord later blessed Hannah with three sons and two daughters.

We learn from Hannah’s prayer of faith that God is the Savior. He is holy, almighty and all-knowing (1 Sam. 2:1-3). Hannah’s prayer also teaches us that God is powerful, caring and the ultimate judge (1 Sam. 2:8-10). May we have a faith that leads us to pray and trust God.

Featured commentary writer

**Gerald Nash**

Gerald Nash is a registered respiratory therapist and EEG technician at Saint Mary’s Regional Medical Center in Russellville. Nash is involved in medical research and is a preaching pastor at Soul Food Cafe Mission. He is involved in missions and also leads a small group and the decision room ministry at Second Baptist Church, Conway. Nash has attended several universities and seminaries, including Williams Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He holds multiple educational degrees, including a bachelor of arts in Christian ministries, a master of arts and doctor of ministry in pastoral studies and a master of arts in theological studies. Nash volunteers on the Cairo Geniza Project deciphering and transcribing ancient Greek and Arabic documents. He loves to read, bass fish, and spend time with his family. He and his wife, Mary Ann, love to travel, explore ancient ruins and go on wild animal safaris.



Inside:

- IMB VP of communications resigns
- Clergy applaud LR congregations study
- Child abuse awareness and prevention
- The gospel versus cultural Christianity
- Ballard celebrated for 60 years of ministry

SWBTS removes stained glass

Southwestern removes and relocates windows honoring CR leaders

page 2



Cabot runner reaches goal:

'Made perfect in weakness'

Sarah Davis
Arkansas Baptist News

CABOT – "Anyone who knows me knows I love to run," said Laranda Burrow. "It's just something in my blood."

For the next two years, Laranda Burrow sought help and advice from other professionals. Her new goal was to get her body back to where she could safely run.

She tried Rolf therapy, a mix between physical therapy and a massage that releases



Nick Floyd nominated to lead Cross Church

SPRINGDALE – Nick Floyd has been nominated as senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, the largest of directors and congregation of 14. The church is held in each church's four April 20

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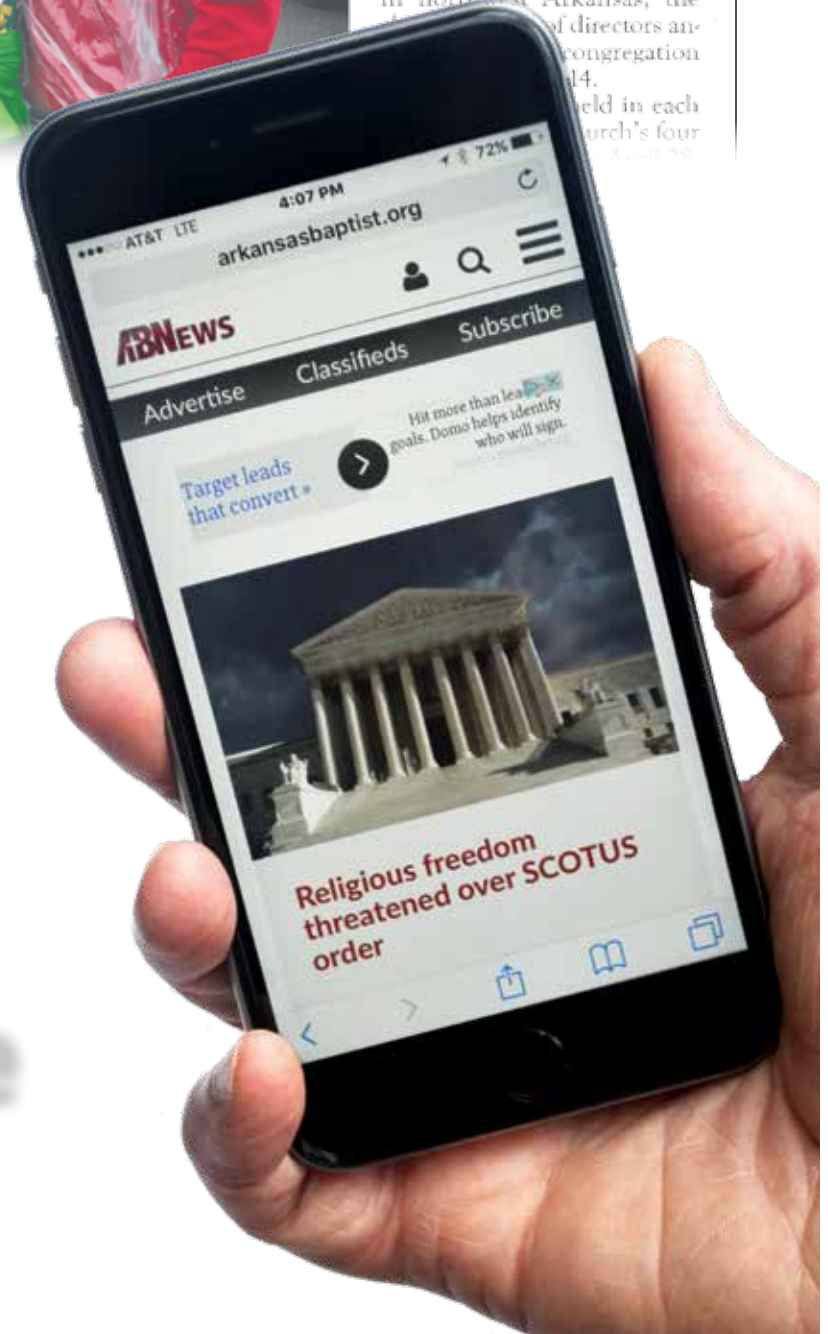
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