



Inside:

- Ouachita receives \$800K gift of 'turf'
- Evangelist Bailey Smith dies at age 79
- Christian persecution up worldwide
- Thousands March for Life at Capitol
- Across Arkansas

Travel Arkansas

The Natural State offers great getaway destinations page 9



Williams adds vp, restructures administration

WALNUT RIDGE - Alabama native Doug Walker has been hired as vice president for university advancement and operations at Williams Baptist University (WBU), according to a Jan. 22 announcement.

Walker leads a major restructuring of the WBU administration, which includes a number of other administrators assuming new responsibilities. Walker will start his new position - which also will include serving as the university's chief operating officer - Feb. 4.

Most recently, Walker served at Trinity International University in Deerfield, Ill., where he was associate vice president for advancement and university relations.

Walker served as executive director of the Union University Foundation and director of major gifts at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., from 2009 to 2015.

From 1993 to 2009, Walker

was senior vice president for institutional advancement at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

"Dr. Walker brings significant expertise and a wealth of fundraising experience to this position, and we are delighted to have him join us at Williams Baptist University. Doug's desire to be a part of WBU is a strong affirmation of the quality of this institution and the bright future before us," said Stan Norman, Williams Baptist president.

"Soon after my arrival, I began praying that God would lead us to the person who could build upon the strong advancement foundation already here and move us forward in our fundraising efforts. We believe that God led us to Doug Walker, and our ensuing conversations and interactions confirmed that God was

advancement foundation already here and move us forward in our fundraising efforts. We believe that God led us to Doug Walker, and our ensuing conversations and interactions confirmed that God was

See **WILLIAMS** page 6



Walker



Cooper



Baine



Flippo



Andrews



Norman



Margaret Colson
Arkansas Baptist News

CABOT - "We know what it is to be attacked by someone with a machete; we know what it is to be on a public bus and have someone jump on the back of the bus with a gun and threaten all of us; we know what it is to be carried off to the local jail. It was an exciting life!"

A missionary's life is far from mundane; just ask Ray and Penny Taffner.

In 2007 the Taffners, both graduates of Williams Baptist University in Walnut Ridge, sensed God calling them to the mission field of Belize. At that time, their ministerial roots were planted deeply in Arkansas. Ray started pastoring Arkansas Baptist churches in August 1975 at Rea Valley Baptist Church, Flippin. From there, he served in a number of small rural churches in north central Arkansas and as director of missions in Big Creek Baptist Association and interim director of missions in Independence Bap-

See **BELIZE** page 3

Couple returns to Arkansas after taking gospel to Belize

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ABN Digest

Stories of interest
to Arkansas Baptists

Rapert files bill to make abortion illegal

LITTLE ROCK – State Sen. Jason Rapert, R-Conway, has filed a bill to make abortion illegal except in cases of medical emergency, such as when the mother's life is at stake.

If passed, Senate Bill (SB) 149 would not take effect immediately. It is what is commonly called a "trigger law," because it stipulates that the law will take effect if the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* abortion decision is reversed or changed by the courts. Until federal law or the courts give states more leeway, it will lie dormant.

"This bill is in preparation for the day when states can once again make their own abortion laws," said Jerry Cox, president of Family Council. "We are pleased to partner with Sen. Rapert and our friends in the legislature to work for the passage of this good law."

Rita Sklar, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Arkansas, said the bill was an attempt by politicians to "put their own careers ahead of a woman's right to choose," the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* reported.

Pro-life advocates believe the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion could be overturned following the 2018 confirmation of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh, which tilts the court in their favor.

Cox urged Arkansans to call their state senator and state representative and encourage them to vote for SB149.

"Announce this in your church, and ask your friends to call as well. We will keep you posted as other good pro-life legislation is filed," said Cox.

Ouachita receives \$800,000 gift of 'turf'

ARKADELPHIA – Tom Thrash of the Thrash Law Firm in Little Rock has provided an \$800,000 gift to fund the installation of artificial turf at Cliff Harris Stadium at Ouachita Baptist University, the university announced Jan. 22.

The turf will be ready for the kickoff of the 2019 Ouachita football season in September.

Thrash, a 1977 graduate of Ouachita, said he and his wife, Toni, made the contribution because of the university's impact on their lives.

"I owe everything I have to Ouachita," said Thrash. "The football program taught me the importance of achieving goals when faced with adversity, a lesson that has served me well over the years. I give because I want to continue the gift of Ouachita – an environment that fosters spiritual

growth, provides an extraordinary education, and receives you as part of a family."

Thrash was a four-year starter at defensive back for the Tigers and earned first-team All-Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference honors twice in his time at Ouachita. He was also inducted into the Ouachita Athletic Hall of Fame as a member of the 1975 football team.

The gift comes on the heels of a historic season for the Tigers, in which they finished 12-1 overall and were undefeated in the regular season. The Tigers won the Great American Conference Championship for the fourth time in nine years, earned the top seed in the NCAA Division II Super Region 3 and captured their first playoff victory in school history.

"Tom is a member of Ouachita's Board of Trustees

and a loyal and enthusiastic supporter of our university," said Ben Sells, president of Ouachita. "Of the 167 NCAA II football members, we're one of the smaller institutions, but we finished the season ranked sixth in the country. Ouachita is rising in many ways, including in athletics, and investments such as this extend our upward trajectory."

David Sharp, Ouachita's director of athletics, played football with Thrash at Ouachita. He said he's not surprised that his former teammate stepped in with a significant gift.

"Tom has been a leader ever since I have known him during our playing days," Sharp said. "His passion for Ouachita and Ouachita football is exemplified through this gift he and his wife, Toni, have given. Artificial turf will continue to enhance Cliff Harris Stadium, and this will directly impact the recruitment of student-athletes and the playability of

the field they will practice and compete on."

Following his graduation from Ouachita, Thrash graduated with honors in 1980 from University of Arkansas School of Law. His professional career began at Rose Law Firm in Little Rock, where he served as senior partner. In 1998, he founded Thrash Law Firm, P.A. Recently, the National Trial Lawyers Association voted Thrash one of three members of the 2018 Class Action Trial Team of the Year. In 2000, Thrash was named Trial Lawyer of the Year in Arkansas by the Arkansas Trial Lawyers Association.

Thrash is a past president of Pleasant Valley Country Club and an active member of Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock.

Construction on Cliff Harris Stadium's Benson-Williams Field will begin in the coming weeks and will be ready for the Sept. 5 home opener.



Thrash

Smith, evangelist and former SBC president, dies

DULUTH, Ga. (BP) – Evangelist Bailey Smith, former Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) president, and father of Steven Smith, senior pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, died Jan. 14 at his home in Duluth, Ga. He was 79.

Smith's election as SBC president in 1980 was the second victory for conservatives following the landmark election of the late Memphis pastor Adrian Rogers in 1979.

J. Gerald Harris, retired editor of Georgia Baptists' *Christian Index* newsjournal, described Smith as "a powerful preacher, devoted pastor and faithful friend" in an obituary posted Jan. 15 at the *Index's* online news site.

Harris wrote that Smith told him he had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in April 2017.

After receiving care from Atlanta-area cancer specialists, Smith went to the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. Smith and his wife, Sandy, remained in a Houston hotel for months for further diagnosis, chemotherapy and ob-

servations. Doctors ultimately recommended a complicated cancer surgery known as the Whipple procedure that, as Harris described it, offered "a five-year survival rate of up to 25 percent. Although the skill of the surgeon and excellent care of the hospital was (sic) commendable, the surgery was not successful."

"Most Baptists have known Bailey Smith as both a successful pastor and an effective evangelist for more than six decades," said Harris. "(H)is death has left a significant spiritual void in the 21st-century church that seems to be struggling to keep evangelism a priority."

Smith was born in Dallas on Jan. 30, 1939, the son of the Rev. Bailey E. Smith and his wife Frances. He graduated from Ouachita Baptist University in 1961 and from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1966.

Smith led churches in Arkansas, Texas and New Mexico before being called, at age 34, as pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Del City,

Oklahoma, where he served 12 years. At the time of his election as SBC president, Smith was the youngest man ever to lead the convention, Harris wrote, noting that he earlier had served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention Pastors' Conference and the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma simultaneously.

Harris wrote that *TIME* magazine described Smith as "a formidable figure, a fiery, red-haired, old style prairie stemwinder." *Christianity Today* referred to him as "an inerrancy superstar."

"In 1980 the Del City church baptized 2,000 persons, an accomplishment unprecedented in Christian history," Harris wrote. "In the 12 years Smith was the pastor ... the membership grew from 6,600 to more than 20,000, and in a convention that was known for thriving on growth and soul-winning, Bailey Smith was known as a pacesetter."

"In 1985 the Del City church was flourishing, but Smith sensed a definite call from God to become a vocational evangelist," Harris added. "He is the only former

president of the Southern Baptist Convention to enter crusade evangelism." Bailey Smith Ministries conducted area-wide crusades, church revivals, Bible conferences, ladies' retreats and overseas ministries.

Smith's Real Evangelism Conferences "touched and changed countless lives for three decades," Harris said. First Baptist Church in Woodstock, Ga., led by Johnny Hunt hosted one of Smith's conferences.

Smith authored several books, including "Real Evangelism," "Taking Back the Gospel," "Real Christianity," "Real Christian Excellence" and "The Grace Escape." Harris wrote that Smith was working on his autobiography at the time of his death.

Smith is survived by his wife of 55 years, Sandy, and three sons, Steven, Bailey Scott and Josh, pastor of Prince Avenue Baptist Church, Bogart, Ga., as well as eight grandchildren.

A graveside service for the immediate family was held at First Baptist Church, Warren, where Smith once served as pastor, followed by a memorial service Jan. 30 at One Heart Church in Norcross, Ga.



Smith

BELIZE

continued from page one

tist Association. He also served on the Executive Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention from 1989 to 1991.

The Taffners had a good life in the Natural State. The couple had never been to the Central American country; they did not know anyone there.

Still, for them, there was no mistaking God's voice.

They packed up the three youngest, ages 7, 8 and 9, of their seven children and headed to Belize – their home and mission field for the next 11 years.

“God told us to go and, like Abraham, we went,” Penny explained. The family was not



Ray Taffner

affiliated with any particular missionary-sending organization; they raised and earned their own support.

There, they lived in the jungle, ate beans and rice and tried to immerse themselves in the culture so that the locals could be reached with the gospel.

“Belize is an extremely religious country, but that doesn't mean Christianity,” Penny explained.

Because the country, which has a population of about 350,000, is multicultural and multilingual, the Taffners spent their first two to five years simply becoming acquainted with the various culture groups. It's easy for the locals to “dismiss a normal missionary,” Ray said. A normal missionary doesn't live with the people, building a family home with only hand tools; a normal missionary doesn't work a job under a Spanish *jefe* (boss); a normal missionary doesn't send daughters out

to chop fields.

A normal missionary wouldn't have a Christmas dinner like the Taffners hosted two years ago.

“We had 34 people for dinner,” Penny said. “Do you want to know what we served? We had one boa constrictor, two four-foot iguanas and horse meat. It was a fantastic day!”

“The way most of the missionaries live in Belize is not how the local people live. The local people would say, ‘These are rich Americans who don't even know our problems.’”

“They listened to us because we understood,” she said.

Once they were immersed in the culture, the Taffners were able to share the good news of the gospel. During their 11 years in Belize, they helped start two churches that are still going today. They distributed Bibles. They taught basic hygiene. They visited in the hospitals. They ministered in the youth prison system, “teaching people they are not animals,” Penny said. They lived their faith.

“God did some amazing things,” Penny said.

The Taffners experienced many extreme occurrences in Belize, such as witches screaming and screeching in yards, police officers dropping off dead bodies at the end of their road, human skulls hanging on gateposts where they worked, a man stalking their family and trying to force them to sell their daughter. These experiences inspired the Taffners to “live by” Proverbs 3:5-6 (HCSB): “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; think about Him in all your ways, and He will guide you on the right paths.”

Many Christians have “become desensitized” to the phrase, “Trust God,” Penny believes. “They don't even know what they're saying.”

“When you know that it's God who holds you, and you absolutely know that you can't hold yourself – don't even try, you can't hold yourself,” is when trusting God becomes a reality, she believes.

“God was incredible to us; He kept all His promises,” Penny said.

Just as the couple heard God's call to go to Belize 11 years ago, the Taffners began to hear Him calling them back to Arkansas. Ray explained, “God speaks to us through the Bible, prayer, circumstances



A Belize open-air market with various food items for sale.

and the Church,” a truth taught by Henry Blackaby.

When they answered His call to return to Arkansas, they bought an old church bus and drove 2,000 miles from Belize, through Mexico and back into the United States. Like their time in Belize, the drive back home had its adventures. The trip was “not for the weak of faith or beginners,” Ray said.

They arrived in Arkansas about eight months ago, and Ray has been called to pastor Cornerstone Baptist Church, Cabot. Settling in Arkansas with very little in terms of possessions or finances, Ray said, “God has met our need.”

One daughter, Shana Pop, married a Christian man in Belize and lives there with their 2-year-old daughter, Esmi. They are continuing some of the ministry started through the years.

Their prayers for their daughter and her family are their prayers for all of the Central American country where they invested their

lives for 11 years.

“Pray for the safety of our Christian brothers, sisters and missionaries. Physical safety is a number one, 24-hour concern. We never slept a full night; you dare not sleep all



Esmi, 2, is the daughter of Shana Pop, daughter of Ray and Penny Taffner, former missionaries to Belize. Pop still resides in Belize with her Christian husband she met in the country.

night without keeping your ears open,” Ray said

“Pray for genuine salvation and discipleship.”

Contact Margaret Colson at margaret@arkansasbaptist.org.

ABN Digest

Stories of interest
to Arkansas Baptists

Persecuted Christians up 14 percent worldwide

WASHINGTON (BP) – The number of Christians suffering high to extremely high persecution is 14 percent higher in 2019, Open Doors reported, counting 245 million individuals globally.

Persecution driven by Islamic extremism and Communist authoritarianism in the world's two most populous countries, India and China, marked the increase, Open Doors said Jan. 16 in releasing its 2019 World Watch List of the 50 countries with the most extreme Christian persecution.

“Islamic radicalism continues to dominate and influence all spheres of life for Christians, and we are watching China and India very closely,” Open Doors USA President and CEO David Curry said in releasing the latest findings. “The distressing impact of billions of people living in an environment in which the government oppresses freedom of religion is unraveling day by day as millions of Christians are being attacked, imprisoned or killed.”

He added, “Religious freedom is the first freedom. If you don't have the right to make up your own mind, are you really free at all?”

China climbed to 27th on the list from 43rd in 2018. India ranked as the 10th most persecuted country this year, its first time in the top 10 in the rankings' 27-year history. North Korea, an authoritarian regime mandating worship of President Kim Jong-un, maintains its first place for the 18th consecutive year. Others in the top 10, in descending order are Afghanistan, Somalia, Libya, Pakistan, Sudan, Eritrea, Yemen and Iran.

Russia entered the 2019 list for the first time since 2011 at No. 41.

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

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)

'Yellow journalism' in social media and the mainstream press

There was a time in America that, if you took action to incite a riot, it could get you arrested.

But it seems that attempts to incite a riot and sow dissension are becoming the norm today and are increasingly driven by mainstream media.

Take for instance the incident involving a group of Catholic schoolboys gathered Jan. 18 at the March for Life event in Washington, D.C.

Initially, the media painted a very ugly picture of what was said to have taken place between the boys – particularly one boy – and a Native American man there for an Indignous Peoples March.

Social media and media reports ignited a firestorm of outrage about what appeared to happen at the event. However, a few days later – after more video of the event was made public – an entirely different version of events emerged.

It seems the Catholic boys

were the ones confronted and not the other way around.

The decline of objective journalism in the United States is a grave threat to our society and our freedom. Standards that once defined the profession are largely being ignored.

Journalists at large, well-established mainstream media outlets are making mistakes that wouldn't be tolerated when I was in journalism school.

This comes at a time when two-thirds (67 percent) of Americans say they get at least some of their news on social media – with 20 percent doing so often, according to a survey by Pew Research Center.

When I attended journalism school, students were taught the drill: The emphasis in authoring news accounts of events was simply, "Accuracy! Accuracy! Accuracy!"

Aspiring journalists were to ruthlessly pursue truth and

practice, "When in doubt, leave it out!"

That meant, of course, if you weren't certain of your facts and couldn't confirm with verifiable sources, you simply shouldn't use it.

Today, in a time when anyone can post anything to social media – coupled with an unteched mainstream media that oftentimes doesn't check its facts – it is a recipe for disaster.

Unfortunately, as we all can attest in reading our Facebook and other social media news feeds, the purpose of users at times is to provoke a response, or what some call post "click bait."

This practice is akin to "yellow journalism" practiced by newspaper barons in the late 1880s. Yellow journalism is the

use of lurid features and sensationalized news in newspaper publishing to attract readers and increase circulation.

In all fairness, an untrained journalist using a social media platform can't be held to the same standard of a trained journalist working for mainstream media.

It's a slippery slope, however, when the news that people consume lowers its standards to the level of someone who simply has a Facebook or Twitter account.

Providing context and as many facts as can be obtained is what legitimate journalists do – they don't make up a narrative that fits either what they think happened or what they wanted to have happened.

It should be no surprise that

fewer and fewer people trust mainstream media today.

Sixty-nine percent of Americans say their trust in the media has decreased in the past decade; 94 percent of Republicans, 75 percent of independents and 42 percent of Democrats agree, according to a 2018 poll by Gallup and the Knight Foundation.

The Bible teaches that we are wise to measure our words and avoid misrepresentation of others.

"Telling lies about others is as harmful as hitting them with an ax, wounding them with a sword, or shooting them with a sharp arrow" (Proverbs 25:18, NLT).

Tim Yarbrough is editor/executive director of the Arkansas Baptist News.

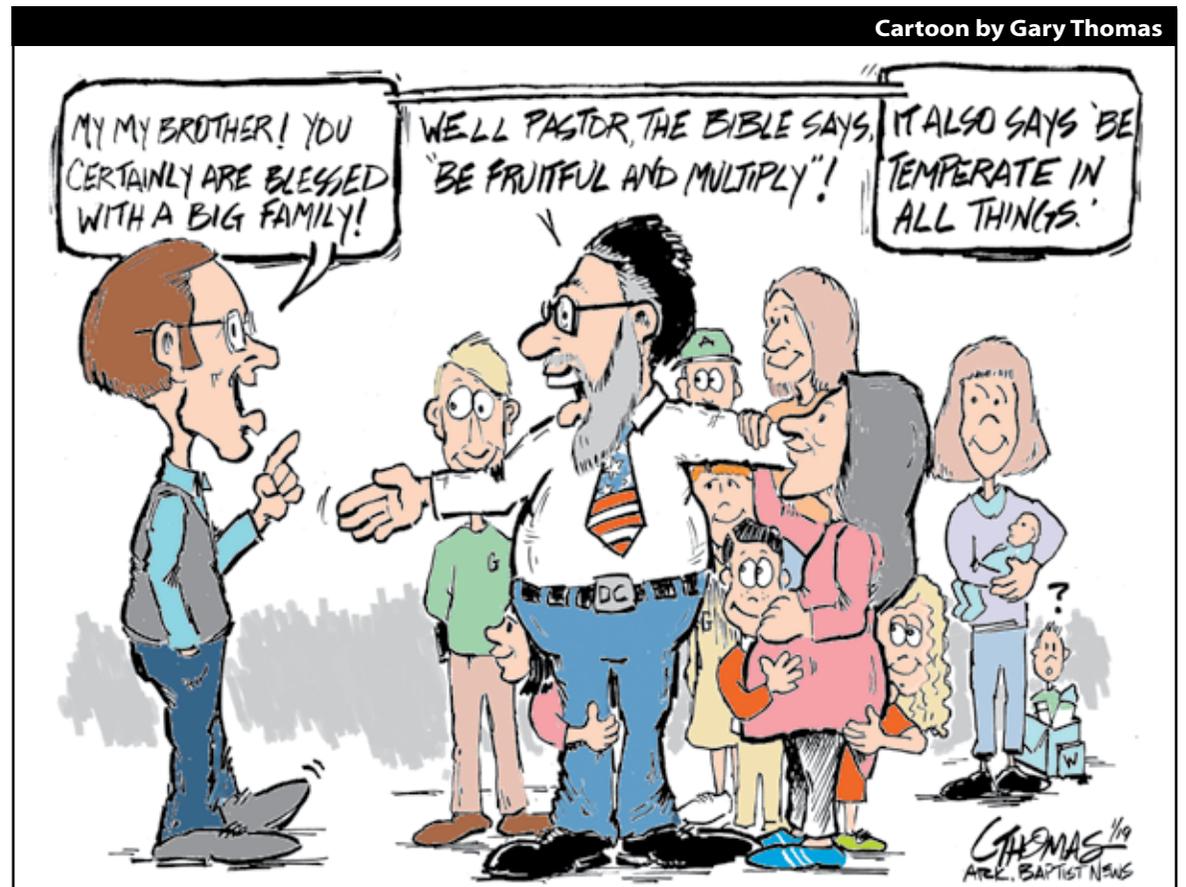
Pressing On

Tim Yarbrough

Phil. 3:14



Cartoon by Gary Thomas



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The *Arkansas Baptist News (ABN)* exists to assist Kingdom work by informing, inspiring and involving Arkansas Baptists through meeting needs of people, spreading the gospel, making disciples and growing God's work in Arkansas and beyond.

As the largest religious publication in the state, the *ABN* strives for journalistic integrity, fairness and balance in its reporting of Baptist and evangelical news.

We advocate for the cause of Jesus Christ.
We report the news based on our Christian worldview.
We uphold high standards of journalism and Christian ethics.



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Naturalistic argument against God: A response

In my last couple of articles, I detailed popular arguments against the existence of God. In this article, I want to present a third popular argument that is generally given against the existence of God. This argument can be called the Darwinian Naturalistic Argument. I think there is a good argument against naturalistic evolution without ever diving into the science of evolution.

You are probably familiar with Charles Darwin and his scientific take on the evolution of all living species. But what you may not be familiar with is the philosophical debate regarding Darwin's theory. Let me explain. Darwin



Deep Waters

Chad Meeks

claims that all of life has evolved as it is via some sort of unguided process. That means there is no God – or being – guiding the process of evolution.

All of life, according to Darwin, has come about via a random process powered by natural selection and random genetic mutation. But the assertion that the process of evolution is unguided (just granting that it is true for a moment, even though most of us probably don't think it is) is a philosophical statement or assertion, not a scientific one. How is one to measure or detect an unguided process? In other words, how is one to detect if God, a non-physical Being, is actually guiding the process of evolution? It seems to me that there is no scientific process – the process by which physical things are studied – that can determine whether a non-physical Being is guiding any process.

One just cannot show scientifically that the process is unguided.

Granted, according to scientific standards of measurement and detection, it may appear unguided, but, as I have written previously, one need not think that scientific knowledge is the best or ultimate form of knowledge. As the philosopher, Alvin Plantinga, notes, the idea of an unguided process "isn't part of evolutionary theory as such; it's a metaphysical or theological addition." And if an unguided process is a "theological addition," one cannot claim it is a scientific idea. Thus, to claim that all living creatures evolved via some unguided process, one must give a good philosophical or theological reason why this is the case. To date, I know of none that has been given.

But suppose someone might say: "Fine! One cannot prove that evolution came about from some sort of unguided process; however, science can prove that evolution did take place (I'm going to avoid the tedious task of distinguishing between macro- and micro- evolution here), and such proof undermines the belief in the existence of God." But how does evolution disprove the existence of a Creator?

Granted, most conservative evangelical Christians do not hold to evolution – for good reason. But just granting the assertion, for argument's sake, I don't see any reason why someone holding to evolution would think that this disproves the existence of God. How would the evolutionary process get going in the first place? Who created all of the matter and material to have an evolutionary process? Who created the laws and systems used in the evolutionary system?

Evolution is a theory that uses extant material; it isn't a theory on how the material came to be. Evolution, granted in its simplest form, doesn't undermine the belief in God or the existence of God.

Chad Meeks is associate pastor of youth and discipleship at Cedar Heights Baptist Church in North Little Rock.



Growing boundaries

A few months ago, we welcomed a new kitten into our home. This adorable little orange and white ball of fluff was only four weeks old at the time, having been abandoned by his mother and rescued by mine a couple of weeks before. He was tiny, and we made sure to set boundaries that would keep him from hurting himself. But, in truth, the boundaries we had to set were few simply because he was so small. We needed only to protect him from getting lost or hurt.

Fast forward a few months, and we now have a still-adorable but much larger 5-month-old kitten. He has fully embraced the abilities of a mostly grown cat, including jumping onto places he shouldn't be jumping onto. For the longest time, that was only a low dresser or coffee table. But the more he has grown, the more inclined he has been to see just how high he can jump or how many things he can get into. One day recently, we walked

into the kitchen to find him nestled comfortably behind the lunch dishes that had been left to dry on a towel on the kitchen counter! We were less than pleased with him at that moment, to put it mildly, although I must confess to all of us getting a good laugh out of the situation!

While cats aren't as easily trained as dogs, it is possible to set boundaries that they learn to obey. And, slowly

but surely, our precious orange kitten will grow into a more mature adult cat who

knows his boundaries and respects them; at least, we hope he does! But the reality is that the more he grows and matures, the more he will encounter freedoms he has never known before. And as he does, he will have to learn new boundaries.

I think there just might be a parallel in our own growing. We know that growth is a positive thing, even when the growing process is painful. It presents new freedoms, new avenues for exploration,

new opportunities. But there is another side to the growth coin. Growing also presents a need for new boundaries. And we, like that precocious orange kitten, find ourselves testing the limits and getting ourselves in a bit of trouble when we stretch too far.

The problem comes when we don't recognize that we've pushed too far, when we don't acknowledge our new boundaries. We find ourselves constantly bucking against the Savior. And, frankly, we might find the benefits of our growth sorely limited because we're so focused on insisting that we be allowed to enjoy our new freedoms.

No growth outpaces the need for boundaries. No maturity is too great for a growth in discipline. Will we fight those boundaries and refuse the discipline to ensure our imagined right to new freedoms? Or, will we joyfully submit to the wisdom of our Master as He shows us where the new boundaries lie?

Ann Hibbard is a member of East End Baptist Church in East End. Read her blog at annhibbard.com.



Uncovered Dish

Ann Hibbard

5 questions for purposeful Easter planning

Right now, in preparation for Easter, many church leaders are thinking through what they did last year, making some minor changes motivated primarily by complaints, and then hoping for the best. There is a better way.

Prayerfully consider five questions as you plan for Easter:

What is your primary purpose? Now, we would all agree that our primary

purpose is to honor the Lord and make much of Him. But, try to be more specific. This year, should the emphasis be evangelistic or maybe spiritual renewal? Perhaps it should be a close, intimate time of worship and introspection. If you are thinking, "Yes, we should do all of the above," the answer is, "No, it won't work well." There needs to be a singular primary purpose. If you try to aim at everything, you will hit nothing well.



Answering the Call

Eric Ramsey

What is your primary goal? Based on your purpose, what do you need to accomplish? For instance, if your primary purpose is evangelism, your goal might be to effectively communicate the gospel to 50 unchurched adults. Remember, actual goals are in some way measurable – whether quantitatively or qualitatively,

objectively or subjectively. You need to determine how you know if you reach the goal.

How will you accomplish the goal? Too often, church leaders jump to this step without carefully praying through and considering the previous two questions. If your goal is to communicate the gospel clearly to 50 unchurched adults, an Easter egg hunt might or might not be a great method. If you have 500 children at the Easter egg hunt, it made the news; photos were all over social media, and families loved it, but was it a

success? It was only a success if 50 unchurched adults heard the gospel. If they didn't, then the event was a failure because it did not accomplish the goal. Be sure your activity is aimed at the goal.

How will you organize and execute the plan? Think through your expenses. Is there budget for what you want to do? Break large tasks down into multiple smaller tasks. Assign leaders to each of the smaller tasks and encourage them to recruit their own teams to help them. Remember, the broader the leadership involvement, the larger the event participation.

How will you communicate? Budget and plan for communication just as you budget and plan for the event(s). Who is your audience? What do you want them to do? What will you say to them to move them toward the desired action? Always keep communication simple, uniform, concise, targeted

See **RAMSEY** page 6

WILLIAMS

continued from page one

calling him to Williams. Both Doug and Virginia are faithful followers of the Lord and will be welcomed members of the Williams family.”

Walker said he is excited to join the WBU administrative team.

“Virginia and I are excited about the opportunity of serving the Lord through Williams Baptist University and grateful for the Lord’s call through Dr. Norman. President Norman’s vision for Williams and Christian higher education is exciting, and we are thrilled to join his team,” he said.

Walker has a bachelor’s de-

gree in business from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Ala., a Master of Divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree from Southern Seminary.

Other Williams cabinet members are assuming new roles at Williams as well. Brett Cooper has been appointed vice president for creative services and technology, and special assistant to the president. Cooper will be responsible for WBU communications and marketing, as well as information technology.

“These enhanced responsibilities will allow WBU to more fully utilize Dr. Cooper’s expertise in communications and marketing, intensifying

our focus on strategic branding and messaging,” Norman said. “Additionally, he will work closely with me, providing counsel and taking the lead on special projects and initiatives.”

Brad Baine’s administrative role has expanded, as he assumes the new title of vice president for academic affairs and campus life. In addition to academics, Baine will oversee areas and departments directly involving students, including athletics, student development and campus ministry.

“This structure facilitates an integration and synergy for the collaboration and planning of all matters pertaining to students. Dr. Baine’s expertise in academic affairs and his passion for Williams students will

suit him very well in this role,” Norman said.

Angela Flippo is another recent addition to the Williams cabinet, joining the university in September as vice president for enrollment management.

“WBU continues to benefit from the outstanding leadership of Ms. Flippo,” Norman said. “Her efforts are already making a difference, generating encouraging results in our recruiting efforts for next fall and beyond. Her singular focus will remain on this absolutely crucial area.”

As part of the restructuring, the position of bursar has been created to provide supervision for business affairs and human resources. Aaron Andrews has been appointed interim bursar. Andrews has served 15 years at Williams as director of alumni relations and annual giving.

“This new administrative structure and talented team of leaders will help us fulfill the strategic vision laid out in our plan, ‘Renewing Minds, Transforming Lives,’” said Norman. “Tremendous days lie ahead for Williams Baptist University, and I believe that these cabinet and administrative transitions better enable us to advance our mission as we move boldly toward the future God has in store for us.”

RAMSEY

continued from page 5

and consistent.

Get busy! This year, Easter is April 21.

Eric W. Ramsey is an evangelism and mission strategist and serves as associate pastor of First Baptist Church, Fort Smith.

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Thousands rally for life at Arkansas Capitol

LITTLE ROCK - A brisk, cold day didn't deter a crowd of more than 1,000 that converged on the Arkansas State Capitol grounds Jan. 20 for a pro-life rally protesting the U.S. Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision 46 years ago.

Sponsored by Arkansas Right to Life, the March for Life, in its 41st year, is designed to be a peaceful and prayerful event remembering the estimated 60 million unborn children who have been killed by legal abortion, according to organizers.

The Arkansas rally was one of hundreds held across the U.S. in the years following the Jan. 22, 1973, Supreme Court

decision affirming the constitutional right to abortion.

Hundreds of marchers began the march between Battery and Wolfe Streets on West Capitol Avenue behind the Capitol, ending at the steps of the Capitol where a number of elected officials, dignitaries and other special guests spoke during a brief program.

Andy Mayberry, president of Arkansas Right to Life, encouraged the crowd gathered for the march to continue the fight for pro-life causes.

"The abortion rate is declining in our state and across America, but we can't stop our work," Mayberry said.

Other speakers included Ar-

kansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, Lt. Gov. Tim Griffin, U.S. Sen. Tom Cotton, U.S. Rep. French Hill and Attorney General Leslie Rutledge.

Hutchinson shared remarks made during an appearance by Vice President Mike Pence Jan. 19 at the national March for Life in Washington, D.C., where Pence said, "We are the Pences, and we are pro-life." Mirroring Pence's comment, Hutchinson said to the cheering crowd, "Well, I am here to say: We are the Hutchinsons, and we are pro-life."

Courtney Beck, who at age 16 obtained an abortion by judicial bypass of the Arkansas parental notification law, shared the regret she felt for her decision.

"The baby wasn't the mistake," she said. "The mistake was being a sexually active child who had a secret abortion. I thought I was fixing things, but I found myself being undone."

Other participants in the program were Dave Hughey, pastor of Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock, and Iverson Jackson, pastor of Zoe Bible Church, Little Rock.

Hughey delivered the opening prayer for the event:

"Our Father, we come first this afternoon acknowledging our dependence on You. You are the Creator and Sustainer of life; You're the Author of life. God, we thank You for the life that You have given us. We stand this morning for those who do not have the opportunity for life. Father, as we gather here, we want to be people who stand with You in defense of life. Father, we thank You that we live in a state where our governor and our legislature are pro-life and have done much to preserve the sanctity of life in this state. Father, we ask that You would help us individually to do all that You would call us to do, to speak,

to give, to defend the unborn any way that we can. Father, we thank You for the privilege of life; we thank You that we are able to stand with You in life, and we ask that You would help us to be faithful, that You would help us to persevere and do all that we can to stand with You to defend life. For we ask these things in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen."

Prior to the rally, Rose Mimms, executive director of Arkansas Right to Life, said, "As we work to change hearts and minds, we are committed to an educational campaign on the Abortion Pill Rescue program that offers abortion pill reversal treatment for those women who choose medication abortion and then change their mind before completing the abortion. This campaign, along with legislation, will ensure women who obtain medication abortion and change their mind have a chance to rescue their child."

Three reasons students need another Lead/Defend event

LITTLE ROCK - While college and high school students are always busy, they should plan to attend the annual Lead/Defend apologetics and leadership event sponsored by the college and young leaders team of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC). Here's why:

First, to help evangelize a secular culture. Times have changed, said Bill Newton, youth pastor at First Baptist Church, Hot Springs.

"The culture is a lot more secular than it has ever been in my lifetime," said Newton. That's the negative aspect of this generation, he said, adding there's a positive side too: "People are more open to have spiritual conversations than ever before. Since the culture is not afraid to question, it's a tremendous opportunity to lead people to the truth. Lead/Defend provides opportunity to give answers."

Last year, an atheist came to a Lead/Defend breakout session Newton presented challenging the atheistic worldview. Coupled with that

session and ongoing encouragement from some Christian friends, this student accepted Christ.

"Six months later, this guy is a believer because of what went on at Lead/Defend," Newton said.

Second, to address topics students talk about and relate them to the Bible. Not only does the conference answer questions about different worldviews like atheism, but also it "targets the broad-range topics Christian students are grappling with on campus: the trustworthiness of Scripture and the relevancy of the gospel to everyday life," said Cole Penick, campus minister at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

Penick said students are talking about politics and faith. They're also having LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, gay) conversations and conversations addressing sexual ethics in general. Political hot buttons include immigration and issues regarding race such as police brutality and policing procedures.

Penick said each year students hear about these issues at Lead/Defend.

Third, to keep students engaged in their faith while attending college. Jonathan Freeman, college minister at Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro, gives his incoming college freshmen a personal speech: "It's not like it was in high school." Freeman adds, "You need to be biblically relevant on hard topics you'll be exposed to. You can't be ready for college and all it's going to bring you because it's something you have no experience in."

Seth Tucker, ABSC youth ministry consultant, said statistics show that youth abandon the church once they get to college, but that trend can be reversed.

"It gives them the opportunity to talk to people who've been down that road, who offer advice and wisdom from their own lives," said Freeman.

This year's Lead/Defend Conference will be held March 2, at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock.

Leadership & Apologetics Conference

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MARCH 2, 2019

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LeadDefend.org info and registration

OBU burglarized of electronics, sporting equipment

ARKADELPHIA - Two people broke into five different athletic buildings on the campus of Ouachita Baptist University (OBU) facilities Jan. 12, stealing articles such as electronic devices, memorabilia and sports equipment, campus police reported.

"The safety of Ouachita's campus and community is always our top priority," said Jeff Crow, director of OBU's

department of safety and emergency management. "Since transitioning to a campus police force over the last two years, Ouachita is better prepared than ever to deal with this kind of situation."

The Ouachita police are working closely with the Arkadelphia Police Department, Clark County sheriff's office and other local agencies to investigate several leads.

"We are confident that we

will successfully identify and arrest the responsible parties," said Crow.

If you have any informa-

tion that will lead to the identification and arrest of the two perpetrators, please contact the Ouachita Police at

870-245-4000. A \$1,000 reward is being offered to anyone providing information leading to an arrest.



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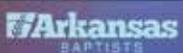


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- March 16th - North Pulaski Baptist Association office
- April 6th - F&C Marion
- April 13th - North Arkansas Baptist Association
- April 27th - F&C Rogers, Olive St.

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For more information, visit absc.org/blockparty



For all the Arkansas Baptist news fit to print visit arkansasbaptist.org!

Take time to travel The Natural State in 2019

IT'S ALMOST TIME to start planning your summer vacation. Before you choose between another crowded beach trip or the financial strain of Disneyland, you might want to consider another option closer to home: Arkansas.

The Natural State is full of beauty and history. Whether you have just moved to the state or lived here your entire life, there are always new things to discover.

Arkansas is called The Natural State for good reason. With 52 state parks and three national forests that cover 29 million acres, Arkansas is full of rivers, caverns and hiking trails that are ready to be explored.

Dig for diamonds at Crater of Diamonds State Park in Murfreesboro; canoe down the Buffalo National River in Ponca and hike up to Magnolia Falls in Deer. Tour the multiple caverns in Arkansas, including Blanchard Springs Cavern in Stone County, Mys-

tic Cavern in Harrison and War Eagle Cavern in Rogers.

DeGray Lake Resort State Park in Bismarck hosts a range of activities for families, including boat rentals, hiking trails, golf courses, horseback riding, disc golf and swimming. Visitors can choose to stay in the DeGray Lake Lodge, camp in a tent, hook up their RV or sleep in a rented Year-round Universal Recreational Tent (YURT).

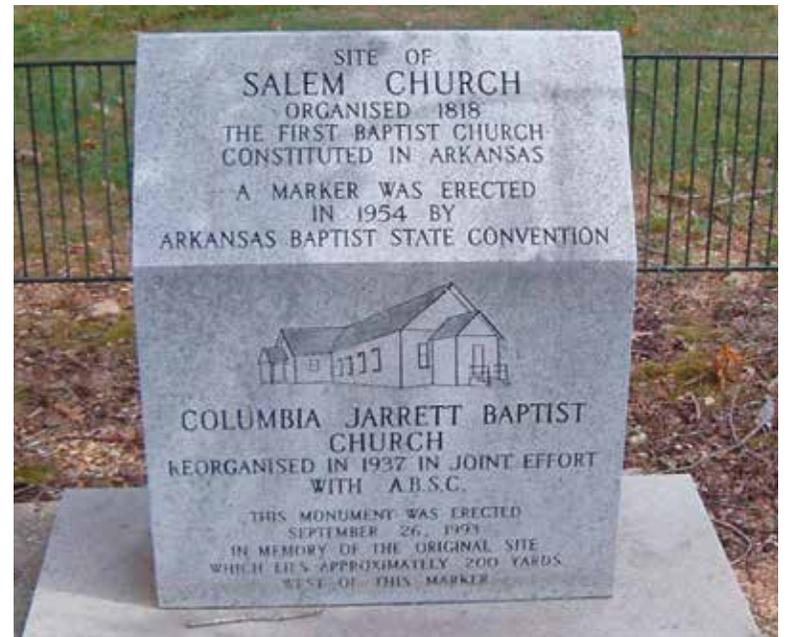
Just up the road from Bismarck is the Hot Springs National Park in Hot Springs. While it is known for natural beauty, the city has a deep history with gangsters in the early 1900s and bathhouses. You can stroll through downtown Hot Springs to see Bathhouse Row and visit the historic Arlington Hotel. Hot Springs is also the home to Magic Springs amusement park and the popular Garvan Woodland Gardens.

Also famous for bath-

houses, Eureka Springs is another historic site to visit. Eureka Springs offers a wide variety of activities, including zip-lining over the Ozark Mountains, touring the Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge and walking the historic downtown area. Two major attractions in Eureka Springs are The Great Passion Play and the Holy Land Tour that attract thousands of people annually.

Randolph County is the location of five springs with medicinal qualities famous in the late 1800s. The county is also the location of two historic sites: the documented site of Arkansas' first school located in a cave in Hall's Creek Canyon and Columbia Jarrett Baptist Church, the first Baptist church in Arkansas.

A little-known historic landmark in Arkansas is the Rohwer Heritage Site, formerly known as the Rohwer Japanese American Relocation Center. With only a monument and cemetery remaining to honor



Marker for the first Baptist church established in Arkansas, organized in 1818. Photo by the Randolph County Heritage Museum

those who were imprisoned, visitors can learn more about the history of Rohwer at the World War II Japanese American Internment Museum in McGehee.

There are plenty of activities

and places to visit in Arkansas to keep your summer busy. Whether a family vacation or church outing, let Arkansas be your summer location.

For more information visit arkansas.com.

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Obituaries

Mary Beard Daniel, 88, of Hot Springs, died Dec. 19.

Daniel was a founding member of Hot Springs Baptist Church and a founding board member of Garland County Community College. Daniel also owned two businesses: Sewing with Love and Fabulous Finds.

She was preceded in death by her husband, three brothers and a son.

She is survived by her three children, 13 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Services were held Dec. 22 at Hot Springs Baptist Church.

Marilee Cupp Franks, 65, of Conway, died Dec. 28.

Franks was a special education teacher in Little Rock, Monticello, Benton and Conway school systems.

She was a charter member of Woodland Heights Baptist Church in Conway.

She is survived by her husband, daughter, son and three grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

Funeral services were held at Roller-McNutt Funeral Home in Conway Dec. 31.



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR – Jody Tillery (left), associate pastor of First Baptist Church Eagle Mills in Camden, was recognized as volunteer of the year for Global Maritime Ministry by Philip Vandercook (right), executive director of Global Maritime Ministry, and Stan Statham, president of Global Maritime Ministry's board of directors. Global Maritime Ministries exists to meet the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of thousands of seafarers and maritime workers who enter the Port of Louisiana. Tillery has led mission trips to Reserve, La., for the past five years to help the ministry.

SPEAKER: Haley Downey
WORSHIP LEADER: Caity Peters

ALL GIRLS RETREAT

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On the move

Don Pucik is now serving as associational mission strategist for Northshore Baptist Association in Louisiana. Pucik is a former associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Milestones

Dusten Melear of El Dorado received the Master of Arts in Worship Leadership degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Dec. 15. Originally from Houston, Texas, Melear serves as the associate pastor of worship at First Baptist Church, El Dorado.

Church life

A conference for those who have experienced divorce will be offered at 4 p.m. on Feb. 16 at Trinity Baptist Church, Searcy.

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Contact: Charles Flynn at (501) 376-4791, ext. 5167 or cflynn@abchomes.org.

Baptist Home for Children, Monticello.

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Contact: Kelly Jones at (870) 367-5358 or kjones@abchomes.org.

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FBC Kennett, Missouri, is prayerfully seeking **full-time senior pastor**. The church located in southeast Missouri has the following mission statement: "Loving God. Sharing Jesus. Serving People." If God is leading you to a new ministry, send resume to fbckpastorseek@gmail.com or mail to: FBC-Kennett, 300 St. Francis Street, Kennett, MO 63857. Resumes due by 03/01/19.

FBC in Senath, MO (www.senathfirstbaptist.org) is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please send resumes to Box 177, Senath, MO, 63876 or by email to fbcsenath@gmail.com.

Faith Southern Baptist Church is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Submit applications to P.O. Box 273, Huntsville, AR 72740. Applications will be accepted through March 1, 2019. For more information, contact 479-738-2487.

Witt's Chapel Baptist Church in Maynard, AR, is seeking a **pastor**. Send resumes and references to: David Byers, 1340 Legate Road, Maynard, AR 72444.

Elmwood Baptist Church is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee, Elmwood Baptist Church, 6591 Prairie View Road, Harrison, AR 72601.

Clear Lake Baptist Church in Blytheville, Arkansas is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please prayerfully consider this before you apply: our

church earnestly desires a man who is called to the ministry of church growth. Candidates should email complete resumes to: office@clearlakechurch.org.

Bigelow Baptist Church, Bigelow, AR, is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Please send resumes to brandonrakridge@gmail.com.

Fair Park Baptist Church is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Please send resumes by January 31st to FPBC Pastor Search, 801 East 16th St., Russellville, AR 72801.

Hamburg First Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please send resume to First Baptist Church Pastor Search Committee, 203 E. Parker St., Hamburg, AR 71646 or email to fbchbg.office@gmail.com. For more information, you may call the church office at 870-853-5520.

First Baptist Church, Hector, is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Send resume to 801 East 16th Street, Russellville, AR 72801, or email: arvba@suddenlink.net.

East Side Baptist Church, Paragould, AR, is seeking a **full-time senior pastor**. Please mail resumes to: Pastor Search Committee, East Side Baptist Church, 529 E. Court Street, Paragould, AR 72450, or mail resumes to: brichey@connect2eastside.com. You may also include a sermon DVD or a link to a sermon video/audio.

Victory Baptist Church, Back Gate, AR, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please send re-

sumes to: pastorsearch@vbcbackgate.com.

Mountain Top Cowboy Church, Heber Springs, is searching for a **full-time senior pastor**. Mail resume to the Pastor Search Committee, 45 Heber Springs Rd., Heber Springs, AR 72543, or go online to www.mountaintopcowboychurch.com and click on "Pastor Search" for more information.

OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

We are in the process of accepting resumes for a new **associational missionary** for Calvary Baptist Association. You may mail a resume to P.O. Box 1030, Judsonia, AR 72081 or email it to calvarybaptistassociation@gmail.com.

Glendale Baptist Church, Booneville, is seeking a **full-time minister to students**. To inquire further or submit a resume, email stu.min@glendalebc.org.

Judsonia FBC is in search of a **full-time pastor of youth/education director**; salary set at \$50,000. Please send resumes to fbcjcd@gmail.com or call (501) 729-3336.

Viola First Baptist Church is searching for a **full-time student pastor**. For more information, please contact "Youth Pastor Search Committee" either by text [870-321-1892], by email [wlring70@yahoo.com], or by mail PO Box 295, Viola, AR 72583.

South Side Baptist Church, Damascus, AR,

is seeking a **part-time youth leader**. Send resume to ssbc0809@gmail.com or 153 Sulphur Rd, Damascus, AR 72039.

Cedar Heights Baptist Church in North Little Rock, AR, is seeking a **part-time associate youth minister**. Please send resumes to jobs@chbcnrl.com or visit chbcnrl.com.

Worship leader for Immanuel Baptist Church, Pine Bluff. Position is Sunday only to lead worship and work with choir/play instrument would be a preference. Music is traditional hymns/blended chorus. Honorarium each week plus mileage at .54 cents a mile. Email DonTaylor@TwinOaksHome.org or call 972-400-0996.

Maple Avenue Baptist Church of Smackover, AR, is seeking a **P/T student minister**. If interested, please call 870-310-5508 or email benmc@mapleavenuebc.com.

Woodland Heights, Conway is seeking a **full-time student pastor for 7th-12th grades**. Looking for a strong leader to reach students and equip them for ministry. Experience and a theology degree preferred. Send resume to resumes@whbcconway.org.

South Main Baptist Church, Crossett, is seeking a **bi-vocational youth pastor**. Send resume to: smbcsecretary@windstream.net or PO Box 430, Crossett, AR 71635.

Farmington First is seeking a **full-time student minister** for established youth ministry. Looking for someone to take students

deeper in the faith and equip them to reach others. Experience and a theology degree preferred but not required. Send resume to personnel@farmingtonfirst.com.

First Baptist Church, Henderson, Texas, **full-time position for children's minister**, to minister to children and young families. Send resumes to David Higgs, 207 W. Main St., Henderson, Texas, 75652, or email dhiggs@thefbc.org.

Bi-vocational worship pastor for blended service. FBC, Pea Ridge. 479-451-8192. To submit resume or request more info - al@prfbc.org.

Perryville FBC is seeking a **bi-vocational music director**. Send resumes to pvfb.church@gmail.com.

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FEBRUARY 3, 2019

In my healthcare and research work, I often set goals and then design processes to reach those goals. It is beginning with the end in mind. This worked so well I implemented the same process for my evangelistic and missional goals. But that didn't work so well.

John Stott said, "We should not confuse the objective, what we think will happen, with the consequence, what really happens." I learned God is in charge of both means and end results. I need to concentrate on obedience and accepting the plan God uses to accomplish His purposes.

Joseph most definitely began with the end in mind. God gave Joseph two dreams. In the first dream, he and his brothers were binding sheaves. Suddenly Joseph's sheaf rose and stood upright, while his brothers' sheaves gathered around and bowed to Joseph's sheaf. When he told his brothers, "They hated him even more" (Gen. 37:5). They already hated Joseph because he was Jacob's favorite.

God gave Joseph another dream. He

saw the sun, moon and 11 stars bowing before him. He shared the dream with his father and brothers. Jacob responded with a rebuke, "Are your mother and brothers and I going to come and bow down to the ground before you?" (Gen. 37:10). His brothers were jealous and plotted to kill him. Reuben had second thoughts and suggested they throw him into a cistern. When the brothers saw a caravan of Ishmaelites, they sold him into slavery.

Some scholars believe that the brothers assumed their actions would prevent the fulfillment of the

dreams. If this is correct, the brothers were acting in conscious rebellion against what they might have understood as prophetic knowledge. Their jealousy clouded their judgment.

We need to accept God's plan to accomplish His purpose. We should also use wisdom in communicating God's truth with others. We can, as in the case of Joseph, be thankful that God's purpose ultimately will be accomplished despite the efforts of some.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Accept it

GENESIS 37:5-11, 19-27 (HCSB)

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

When substances take over

EPHESIANS 5:15-21 (HCSB)

Ephesus was a center of pagan worship. Many Ephesians worshipped Bacchus, the god of wine and drunkenness. Worshipers approached Bacchus in a drunken state, using every sensual practice possible.

In contrast, Paul talked about how to commune with the God of heaven. Paul exhorted, "Don't get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless actions, but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). The King James Version reads, "which leads to excess." The Greek word used here is *astia*, and it was used to describe excess and riotous living. It is the negative of *sozo* which means "to save." *Astia* literally describes the type of living that comes with substance abuse. Paul expected the Ephesian Christians to live differently than the pagan worshippers. They were to be "filled with the Spirit."

Spirit-filled Christians need to pay careful attention to their walk with Christ (Eph. 5:15). To be Spirit-filled is to be Spirit-led. When we abuse substances and become impaired, we are

more likely to be led by sensuality and waste valuable time. Paul said to make the most of our time (Eph. 5:16). We should use our time wisely to seek opportunities to win persons to Christ, teach others the Word of God, be involved in the discipleship of immature Christians, encourage others in their walk with God and do the work of the church.

Since time is valuable, Paul also exhorted the church to be wise and seek God's will (Eph. 5:17). We need to seek God's will and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. We can avoid misery, wasted time and resources if we seek God's will on what He wants for our lives.

The byproduct of a Spirit-filled and Spirit-led life is worship (Eph. 5:19-21). The four Greek participles in this text, to "speak," "make," "give" and "submit," are in the imperative tense, which means they are things we must do.

We should allow only the Holy Spirit, not any substance, to fill us and lead us to do the things of God.

FEBRUARY 10, 2019

Even the most faithful and God-honoring believer will experience temptation. Many believers fall into sin because they thought they were strong enough to stand against temptation and not flee from it. An example could be if you stop drinking alcohol, then the last place you want to be is in a bar. There will be times when temptation presents itself; you must turn and flee (1 Thess. 5:22). A great example of this is Joseph and his encounter with Potiphar's wife.

After arriving in Egypt, Joseph was sold to a man named Potiphar who worked for the Pharaoh of Egypt. Joseph rose to the status of chief steward in Potiphar's household. The Lord was with Joseph and gave him success. The Scriptures go into detail about Joseph's physical characteristics. This is by design. Joseph not only had to deal with the normal temptations that came with his age, but also had to deal with a woman who needed attention because her husband was preoccupied with protecting Pharaoh's court. Potiphar's wife was attracted to

Joseph, and she tried to force herself on him. In the process of fleeing from her, Joseph left his cloak behind.

Joseph's cloak provided evidence for false charges, which resulted in Joseph's imprisonment. Joseph did the right thing, but it didn't turn out well. Joseph's integrity led him from a cistern to a dungeon. Joseph did not sulk or make demands; he remained faithful to God in his present circumstance.

God was with him and granted him favor with the prison warden. Joseph maintained an optimistic and

faithful outlook on life despite his circumstances.

Joseph was extremely loyal, strong against temptation and faithful to God even in the midst of unfair circumstances. This is the kind of character we need to emulate and/or develop in our lives. We may not have control over our circumstances, but we do have control over our response. Our ability to overcome temptation depends more on our Christ-like character than on our circumstances.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Tempted

GENESIS 39:3-12, 19-21 (HCSB)

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

When marriage is questioned

GENESIS 2:18-25 (HCSB)

Our pastor's wife leads and hosts a multi-generational brunch for all the women in our church. She assembled a team of men to volunteer in the set-up and the tear-down for the event. She described this men's group as the "He Team." I was proud to serve and honored that there was no hesitation in the use of a masculine personal pronoun.

There is much confusion about gender in the popular culture. Many persons feel there is a conflict between their physical gender and the gender they feel they identify with. Often it is a case that they are not comfortable with their bodies or the expected roles associated with their genders. The American Psychiatric Association calls this gender conflict "gender dysphoria." This is not to be confused with being gay or lesbian, which is more about being attracted to the same sex. Those who don't want to identify with male or female are called non-binary. Gender confusion leads to confusion

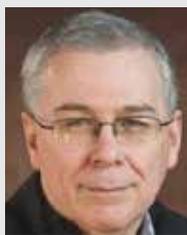
about marriage.

The distinctions in masculine and feminine were created by God. God also instituted marriage between one man and one woman. In Genesis 2:18, God said something rather interesting, "It is not good for the man to be alone." God called everything good up to this point. The creation of the female was for the welfare of the male. She was to be his "helper." The Hebrew word is *ezer*, and it is used to describe the function of the female to the male. It is in

no way a demeaning word. It is used in the Old Testament to describe one who can provide what is lacking in the other.

Man and woman were created with unique genders. The institution of marriage was created to see a man and woman leave their families and cleave together as one. Marriage between one man and one woman includes the fundamentals for God's plan for the family unit.

Featured commentary writer



Gerald Nash

Gerald Nash is a registered respiratory therapist and EEG technician at St. Mary's Regional Health System in Russellville. He is involved in medical research, determining antibiotic resistance in tuberculosis. Nash leads a small group and is involved in many ministries at Second Baptist Church, Conway. He has attended several universities and seminaries, including Williams Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His degrees include a bachelor of arts in Christian ministries, master of arts and doctor of ministry in pastoral studies, and master of arts in theological studies. He is currently studying archaeology and paleography and volunteers on the Cairo Geniza Project, deciphering and analyzing ancient Greek and Arabic documents. Nash enjoys reading, bass fishing and spending time with his family. He and his wife, Mary Ann, love to travel, explore ancient ruins and go on wild animal safaris.

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Inside:
- 41st annual March for Life Jan. 20
- Students serve with ABSC DR in Fla.
- Ark. ranked second most pro-life state
- Allen, former SBC pres., dreamer dies
- Blood, Moore discuss evangelism

ECON Directory
Arkansas evangelists and ministers available for service
page 9

Modern-day David and Goliath story
Pope County residents fight casino they voted down
Caleb Yarbrough
Arkansas Baptist News
voters approved a local ordinance that requires either the county judge or Quorum Court to receive permission from the county's voters, in the form of a local election, before allowing a casino to be built in the county, according to the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*.
Issue 4 also includes language requiring a letter of recommendation from either the county judge or Quorum Court of Pope and Jefferson counties before a casino can be built. If the proposed casinos were to be built in Pope and Jefferson Counties, Hot Springs and West Memphis – but Pope County voters soundly rejected the measure.
The question is: Shouldn't Pope County residents have a say in whether or not a casino is brought to their county?
In November, Pope County

At 99, former Arkansas pastor awarded Green Beret status
PEARLAND, Texas (BP) – After World War II, decorated Army veteran Jesse Whitley returned home and became a soldier for the Lord, serving as a Baptist pastor and preacher for more than 45 years.
“Sgt.” Whitley, who celebrated his 99th birthday Dec. 14, received renewed recognition on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, with Green Beret status for his service in a special forces unit nicknamed “The Devil’s Brigade.”
It came as a surprise to Whitley, who faced combat action with the First Special Service Force (FSSF) against the Japanese in Alaska’s Aleutian Islands and against the Germans in Europe.
Whitley joined the U.S. Army on April 25, 1939, at age 19 in Texarkana, Ark., where he grew up. He was honorably discharged on Oct. 31, 1945.
The Veterans Day ceremony was held at First Baptist Church in Pearland, Texas. Whitley lives in the Houston suburb with his daughter, Vicki Cumbie, having moved from Arkansas about a year and a half ago.
Whitley served as pastor of six Arkansas churches: Ebenezer Baptist Church in Warren; Graves Memorial Baptist Church in North Little Rock; Hebron Baptist Church in Little Rock; Centennial Baptist Church in Pine Bluff; Lakeside Baptist Church in Hot Springs; and Green Meadows Baptist Church in Pine Bluff, where he retired.
First Baptist Pearland member John Triplett spearheaded the effort to obtain Green Beret status for Whitley, who served in the FSSF, forerunner of the current U.S. Army Special Forces, whose elite troops wear the iconic Green Beret.
The FSSF garnered WWII fame for a 99-day period in 1943 when it operated behind enemy lines primarily at night, inspiring a 1966 book and a 1968 film based on the book, both titled “The Devil’s Brigade.”
In researching Whitley’s military record, Triplett discovered that the pastor had been “eligible for Green Beret status for approximately 10 years,” but no one had been able to complete the process to formally recognize him. “So I made it a personal thing.”
With Whitley in his late 90s, “If we don’t get this done, it may never happen,” Triplett said. “It’s just time to make it happen.”
In his opening remarks

NEWS ANALYSIS
WHO SHOULD DECIDE whether or not a casino is built in Pope County?
Arkansas voters approved Issue 4 (Amendment 100) in November laying a path for casinos to be built in Pope and Jefferson Counties, Hot Springs and West Memphis – but Pope County voters soundly rejected the measure.
The question is: Shouldn't Pope County residents have a say in whether or not a casino is brought to their county?
In November, Pope County

ECON 2019 set for Jan. 28-29 at Geyer Springs First Baptist
LITTLE ROCK—The Arkansas Baptist State Convention’s (ABSC) Conference on Evangelism and Church Health (ECON) 2019 will be held Jan. 28-29 at Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock.
This year’s guest speakers include Stephen Kendrick, writer and producer, Kendrick Brothers; Junior Hill, vocational evangelist; Charlie Dates, senior pastor, Progressive Baptist Church, Chicago; Robert Smith, Charles T. Carter chair of divinity, Beeson Divinity School, Birmingham, Ala.; David Allen, dean of the School of Preaching and George W. Truett chair of ministry, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, and Paul Chitwood, president, International Mission Board.
David McKinney, worship pastor at Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, will lead worship during the conference.
“I am excited about the speakers who will be sharing with us this year. We will hear messages from some familiar faces including Robert Smith and David Allen. Our dear friend, Junior Hill, will be back with us. We are also excited to have joining us for the first time Charlie Dates, Stephen Kendrick (producer of movies such

See **CASINO** page 6
See **ECON** page 8

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