



Inside:

- Camp Siloam welcomes five new staff
- 80 ABSC churches respond to hurricane
- OBU receives \$1 million gift
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- LMCO to reach 3,200 unreached groups

Wrong turn leads to professions of faith

John Maley, pastor of FBC, Trumann, leads two women to Christ during an unexpected conversation.

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2018 ABN Baptist Businessperson of the Year: Dr. Richard Lochala

Missionary to Mena: 'Church is something you do'

Caleb Yarbrough
Arkansas Baptist News

MENA – When you think of a missionary, the first image that pops into your mind might be of a man or woman living and serving in a faraway land, becoming immersed in foreign cultures and attempting to reach the world's most unreached peoples.

These kinds of missionaries are vitally important – but so are the missionaries who quietly labor within their local communities, knowing that their neighbors need Jesus as much as anyone.

Dr. Richard Lochala, recipient of the 2018 Arkansas Baptist Businessperson of the Year recognition, has served internationally, but today, he

is serving Christ in Mena.

"There is not a place in his (Lochala's) life that is not devoted to the Lord," said Russell Threet, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Mena.

"You can see it in the way he serves in the church, the way he operates his business and serves his patients, the way he volunteers time ... and you see it in his family life,"

said Threet, who nominated Lochala for the recognition.

"I love him dearly, and I think that he is a great example, for me and for anyone else – as a father, a businessperson and a church leader," Threet said.

Everyday missionary

Lochala has been the owner of Mountain View Clinic in

Mena for nearly 30 years. Each day he attends to it's local residents, using his decades of medical experience to heal physical ailments.

However, Lochala would be the first to tell you the spiritual health of his patients is his utmost concern.

A member and deacon of

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ABN classifieds get results!

Read them on Page 10.

The ABN classifieds are a great way to advertise for your church, ministry or business. You can now submit a classified ad via the ABN website at arkansasbaptist.org/ads

Classifieds

FOR RENT - A beautiful 3-bedroom house with a large yard, close to schools and shopping. Call 501-555-1234.

LOST & FOUND - A black and white dog, medium size, lost near the park. Reward offered. Call 501-555-5678.

CHURCH SERVICES - First Baptist Church, Mena, AR. Sunday School at 9:00 AM. Worship at 10:00 AM. Contact Pastor Russell Threet at 501-555-9010.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY - Looking for a motivated individual to join our team. Competitive salary and benefits. Call 501-555-2345.

REAL ESTATE - Beautiful 4-bedroom house with a finished basement. Call 501-555-3456.

LEGAL SERVICES - Attorney John Doe, 123 Main St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-4567.

HEALTH SERVICES - Dr. Richard Lochala, Mountain View Clinic, 1102 Crestwood Circle, Mena, AR. Call 479-394-7301.

EDUCATION - ABC Learning Center, 456 Oak St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-6789.

FOOD SERVICES - The Mena Diner, 789 Pine St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-7890.

RECREATION - Mena Golf Course, 1010 Golf Rd, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-8901.

TRANSPORTATION - Mena Taxi Service, 1111 Taxi Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-9012.

ARTS & CRAFTS - Mena Art Studio, 1212 Art St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-0123.

RELIGIOUS - Mena Bible Study, 1313 Bible Rd, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-1234.

COMMUNITY - Mena Community Center, 1414 Center St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-2345.

SPORTS - Mena Sports Complex, 1515 Sports Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-3456.

ENTERTAINMENT - Mena Entertainment Center, 1616 Entertainment Blvd, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-4567.

TRAVEL - Mena Travel Agency, 1717 Travel Trl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-5678.

FINANCIAL - Mena Financial Services, 1818 Financial Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-6789.

TECHNOLOGY - Mena Tech Solutions, 1919 Tech Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-7890.

ENVIRONMENTAL - Mena Environmental Services, 2020 Enviro Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-8901.

AGRICULTURE - Mena Agriculture Services, 2121 Agri Rd, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-9012.

INDUSTRY - Mena Industrial Services, 2222 Indus St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-0123.

CONSTRUCTION - Mena Construction Co., 2323 Const Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-1234.

MAINTENANCE - Mena Maintenance Services, 2424 Maint Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-2345.

SECURITY - Mena Security Services, 2525 Secrvy Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-3456.

WASTE MANAGEMENT - Mena Waste Management, 2626 Waste Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-4567.

WATER SUPPLY - Mena Water Supply, 2727 Water Rd, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-5678.

POWER SERVICES - Mena Power Services, 2828 Power St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-6789.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS - Mena Telecommunications, 2929 Telecom Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-7890.

TRANSPORTATION - Mena Transportation Services, 3030 Transp Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-8901.

LOGISTICS - Mena Logistics Services, 3131 Logis Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-9012.

WAREHOUSING - Mena Warehousing Services, 3232 Wareh St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-0123.

DISTRIBUTION - Mena Distribution Services, 3333 Distrib Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-1234.

SALES - Mena Sales Services, 3434 Sales Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-2345.

MARKETING - Mena Marketing Services, 3535 Market Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-3456.

RESEARCH - Mena Research Services, 3636 Resrch Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-4567.

ANALYSIS - Mena Analysis Services, 3737 Anal St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-5678.

DESIGN - Mena Design Services, 3838 Design Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-6789.

DEVELOPMENT - Mena Development Services, 3939 Develop Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-7890.

IMPLEMENTATION - Mena Implementation Services, 4040 Imple Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-8901.

OPERATIONS - Mena Operations Services, 4141 Oper St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-9012.

MAINTENANCE - Mena Maintenance Services, 4242 Maint Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-0123.

REPAIRS - Mena Repairs Services, 4343 Repar Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-1234.

REPLACEMENT - Mena Replacement Services, 4444 Replac Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-2345.

RECONSTRUCTION - Mena Reconstruction Services, 4545 Recon Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-3456.

RENOVATION - Mena Renovation Services, 4646 Renov St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-4567.

RESTORATION - Mena Restoration Services, 4747 Restor Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-5678.

REPAIRS - Mena Repairs Services, 4848 Repar Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-6789.

REPLACEMENT - Mena Replacement Services, 4949 Replac Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-7890.

RECONSTRUCTION - Mena Reconstruction Services, 5050 Recon St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-8901.

RENOVATION - Mena Renovation Services, 5151 Renov Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-9012.

RESTORATION - Mena Restoration Services, 5252 Restor Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-0123.

REPAIRS - Mena Repairs Services, 5353 Repar Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-1234.

REPLACEMENT - Mena Replacement Services, 5454 Replac Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-2345.

RECONSTRUCTION - Mena Reconstruction Services, 5555 Recon St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-3456.

RENOVATION - Mena Renovation Services, 5656 Renov Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-4567.

RESTORATION - Mena Restoration Services, 5757 Restor Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-5678.

REPAIRS - Mena Repairs Services, 5858 Repar Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-6789.

REPLACEMENT - Mena Replacement Services, 5959 Replac Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-7890.

RECONSTRUCTION - Mena Reconstruction Services, 6060 Recon St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-8901.

RENOVATION - Mena Renovation Services, 6161 Renov Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-9012.

RESTORATION - Mena Restoration Services, 6262 Restor Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-0123.

REPAIRS - Mena Repairs Services, 6363 Repar Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-1234.

REPLACEMENT - Mena Replacement Services, 6464 Replac Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-2345.

RECONSTRUCTION - Mena Reconstruction Services, 6565 Recon St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-3456.

RENOVATION - Mena Renovation Services, 6666 Renov Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-4567.

RESTORATION - Mena Restoration Services, 6767 Restor Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-5678.

REPAIRS - Mena Repairs Services, 6868 Repar Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-6789.

REPLACEMENT - Mena Replacement Services, 6969 Replac Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-7890.

RECONSTRUCTION - Mena Reconstruction Services, 7070 Recon St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-8901.

RENOVATION - Mena Renovation Services, 7171 Renov Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-9012.

RESTORATION - Mena Restoration Services, 7272 Restor Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-0123.

REPAIRS - Mena Repairs Services, 7373 Repar Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-1234.

REPLACEMENT - Mena Replacement Services, 7474 Replac Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-2345.

RECONSTRUCTION - Mena Reconstruction Services, 7575 Recon St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-3456.

RENOVATION - Mena Renovation Services, 7676 Renov Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-4567.

RESTORATION - Mena Restoration Services, 7777 Restor Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-5678.

REPAIRS - Mena Repairs Services, 7878 Repar Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-6789.

REPLACEMENT - Mena Replacement Services, 7979 Replac Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-7890.

RECONSTRUCTION - Mena Reconstruction Services, 8080 Recon St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-8901.

RENOVATION - Mena Renovation Services, 8181 Renov Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-9012.

RESTORATION - Mena Restoration Services, 8282 Restor Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-0123.

REPAIRS - Mena Repairs Services, 8383 Repar Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-1234.

REPLACEMENT - Mena Replacement Services, 8484 Replac Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-2345.

RECONSTRUCTION - Mena Reconstruction Services, 8585 Recon St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-3456.

RENOVATION - Mena Renovation Services, 8686 Renov Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-4567.

RESTORATION - Mena Restoration Services, 8787 Restor Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-5678.

REPAIRS - Mena Repairs Services, 8888 Repar Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-6789.

REPLACEMENT - Mena Replacement Services, 8989 Replac Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-7890.

RECONSTRUCTION - Mena Reconstruction Services, 9090 Recon St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-8901.

RENOVATION - Mena Renovation Services, 9191 Renov Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-9012.

RESTORATION - Mena Restoration Services, 9292 Restor Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-0123.

REPAIRS - Mena Repairs Services, 9393 Repar Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-1234.

REPLACEMENT - Mena Replacement Services, 9494 Replac Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-2345.

RECONSTRUCTION - Mena Reconstruction Services, 9595 Recon St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-3456.

RENOVATION - Mena Renovation Services, 9696 Renov Ave, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-4567.

RESTORATION - Mena Restoration Services, 9797 Restor Pl, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-5678.

REPAIRS - Mena Repairs Services, 9898 Repar Way, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-6789.

REPLACEMENT - Mena Replacement Services, 9999 Replac Dr, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-7890.

RECONSTRUCTION - Mena Reconstruction Services, 10000 Recon St, Mena, AR. Call 501-555-8901.

ABN Digest

Stories of interest
to Arkansas Baptists

Ky. Baptists cut ties with dually aligned churches

PIKEVILLE, Ky. (BP) – The Kentucky Baptist Convention (KBC) will cut ties with a small group of churches that remain dually aligned with a missions network that took steps earlier this year to allow the hiring of LGBT staff members.

Messengers to the KBC Annual Meeting voted Nov. 13 to accept a recommendation from the credentials committee, administrative committee and mission board to terminate affiliation with congregations that choose to remain a part of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF).

The CBF was founded in 1991 as a fellowship of churches that objected to the ideology and methods of the Southern Baptist Convention's Conservative Resurgence.

Dually aligned churches will be given up to a year to comply before they're removed from the KBC's list of affiliated congregations.

The matter was debated for about 20 minutes before the motion passed overwhelmingly.

KBC Executive Director Paul Chitwood, who was elected to serve as president of the International Mission Board Nov. 15, said the move by messengers should be seen as "a call to those congregations to safeguard biblical teaching and maintain their historic relationships, understanding that the Bible speaks clearly on the issue of homosexuality and that they would not want to support groups that embrace unscriptural lifestyles."

Bob Fox, CBF Kentucky executive coordinator, said "The Baptist witness in our state and in the world is weaker because of this decision."

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

BUSINESSPERSON

continued from page one

First Baptist Church, Mena, Lochala and his wife, Susan, have served as both youth and young adult Sunday school teachers, Wednesday night youth volunteers and counselors to young married couples and couples looking to get married.

Ten years ago, Lochala became the sideline physician for Mena High School. And two years ago, he began serving as a lay leader for Coach's Outreach, where he leads a Bible study for Mena High School's coaches.

Through his work as a small town doctor and volunteer work with the local high school and his local church, Lochala said he recognizes daily the difference that a relationship with Christ makes in a person's life.

Lochala said the result of faith, or the lack of faith, is especially clear in marriages and families.

"I know what Christ has done in our marriage. I know what it (marriage) can be like. ... The root problems (in some marriages) are that Christ is not in their lives and that Christ is not in the middle of their marriages," said Lochala.

He said that God used Susan to show him the power of obedience to Christ in marriage, a lesson that has in many ways been the driving force of his life and ministry.

"When Susan told me that we were a team and that we were going to do whatever it took to get to where God was calling us, that's what we did," said Lochala. "Christ was in the middle, pulling us all along the way."

His wife's words were a response to Lochala's sense of being called to become a physician. However, his path to his current mission field was not traditional in the least and, he said, only came to fruition through obedience to God's plan.

Discerning God's call

Lochala grew up in Hamburg and first saw the fruits of Christian ministry through observing his parents' faithful work with their church's youth ministry.

After graduating from high school, Lochala attended the University of Arkansas–Monticello (UAM), where he earned

an associate's degree in nursing and was active in the school's Baptist Student Union.

Following graduation, Lochala began working at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences hospital in Little Rock (UAMS). There, Lochala met a couple who had been missionaries to the Philippines.

Lochala felt God calling him to the Philippines, but the only available position required him to have a bachelor's degree. He then went back to school and studied music for three years while also serving as youth and music director at Eudora Baptist Church, Eudora.

By the time Lochala completed his coursework, he had forgotten about his previous call to the Philippines. Not sensing a call to continue serving in music or youth ministry, Lochala searched for direction, and God brought back to mind his previous call.

From 1978-1980, Lochala served as a Journeyman to the Philippines with the Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board).

During his initial training for Journeyman service, Lochala met Susan.

Susan was initially going to be sent as a missionary to Rhodesia, but after a missionary was killed on the field there, the country was closed. After being commissioned without a country, she was sent to the Philippines to fill an urgent opening to teach children of missionaries. Eventually Susan was stationed in the same town as Lochala.

"God kind of pulled us together," Lochala said.

The two were married in 1980, two months after returning to the United States.

Soon, Lochala sensed God calling him to become a physician and return as a medical missionary to the Philippines.

After finding Susan fully supportive of his call and of him pursuing a medical degree, at 26 years old, Lochala spent two years taking prerequisite courses before applying to medical school. After being rejected the first time, he reapplied and was accepted.

During medical school the



Three decades ago, Dr. Richard Lochala served as a missionary to the Philippines. Today he owns Mountain View Clinic in Mena, and his primary mission field is his practice and local community.
Photo by Caleb Yarbrough

Lochala had the first two of their five children.

The Lochalas' third child, Whitney, was born during Lochala's family practice residency. She was born with Down syndrome and eventually had to undergo multiple surgeries to correct heart problems.

After Whitney's birth, the Lochalas recognized that their call was not to return to the Philippines but to become missionaries at home.

When an opening for a clinic became available in Mena, the Lochalas felt that was where God wanted them.

All Christians called

As a physician, Lochala encounters people with different spiritual beliefs every day. Many of the people that he treats in his clinic or serves through his church and community volunteer work might never enter the door of a local church.

Such people – young or old – might not pay attention to a pastor or other vocational minister, but they will listen to a regular guy who actively shows he cares for them with his words and actions.

"In here (the clinic) I see the results of what's going on out there – with lack of father figures and kids being raised by grandparents or great-grandparents," said Lochala.

"With a lot of these kids, whoever is raising them

doesn't care. ... They have no direction," he said. "My heart is to show them on the sidelines or to show the coaches what it is like to have Christ in your life and to be an active Christian when you are not a preacher."

"So many kids say, 'God is working on me. Maybe I should be a preacher,' and I say, 'Maybe not,'" said Lochala, "because people listen to me more than they would a preacher."

"It's a lot harder to be a missionary in the place where everybody knows you than to go to a place where nobody knows you," he said. "But, as my Dad would say, 'The proof is in the pudding.'"

"When you are here, living day in and day out, people see you deal with difficult situations and how you respond," said Lochala. "Church is something you do."

Brett Lee, pastor of Board Camp Baptist Church, Mena, and associational missionary for Ouachita Baptist Association, is a patient of Lochala's.

"I have seen firsthand Dr. Lochala's impact on our community. He is a servant willing to use his gifts and training in any capacity he can. He is a kind, patient and understanding doctor who is respected and well-loved by his patients," said Lee.

Contact Caleb Yarbrough at caleb@arkansasbaptist.org.

New employees join Camp Siloam ministry

SILOAM SPRINGS – Five new people joined the Camp Siloam staff in 2018. The new staff members are Lynn Moore, Pat Moore, Cody Stevens, Chris Wright and Summer Wright.



Lynn Moore



Pat Moore



Stevens



Chris Wright



Summer Wright

Lynn Moore, a graduate of Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, is Camp Siloam's new Hub coordinator. She previously worked as a seventh grade life science teacher at Second Baptist School in Houston and founded and directed the Second Baptist School Regal Eagle dance team. She has worked as a fitness instructor, personal trainer and Pilates trainer for more than 25 years, and she currently owns Core Pilates in Belton, Texas.

Pat Moore, new director of operations at Camp Siloam,

studied at San Jacinto College in Pasadena, Texas, and Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, La. Moore previously worked as director of recreation at Second Baptist Church in Houston, wrangler and maintenance at Camp Buckner in Burnet, Texas, and director of the Family Life Center at Champion Baptist Church in Houston. He previously owned Just Fitness 24-7 in Belton, Texas.

Stevens, from Huntsville, is Camp Siloam's new program

manager. A recent graduate of Arkansas State University (ASU) in Jonesboro, he previously worked as assistant director for the Upward Basketball program at Walnut Street Baptist Church in Jonesboro, student sports producer for ASU and a student digital media correspondent for the Sun Belt Conference. During his summer breaks, Stevens worked as a staff member at Camp Siloam with children's and youth recreation and as a spirit leader.

Chris and Summer Wright are originally from Florida. Chris Wright, new operations manager at Camp Siloam, has worked as district inventory manager for American Eagle Outfitters and an Apple specialist in Tampa, Fla., before becoming facilities manager for Camp Gilead in Lakeland, Fla.

In 2017, he was named vice president of education and training for Purpose Snackery in Milton, Ga.

Summer Wright, Camp Siloam's new guest services manager, previously owned Events by Summer Wright, where she planned weddings and events.

She worked as an independent contractor for MMD Events in Tampa, a missionary at Camp Gilead and kitchen prep at Purpose Snackery.

ABN Digest

Stories of interest
to Arkansas Baptists

Chitwood unanimously elected IMB president

ROCKVILLE, Va. (BP) – About a decade ago, Paul Chitwood became convinced God was calling him to mobilize missions and missionaries, he told International Mission Board (IMB) trustees. That call culminated Nov. 15, he said, with his election as IMB president.



Chitwood

"Being a member of this board for eight years changed my ministry and it changed my life, so much so that [my wife] Michelle and I questioned whether God had called us to overseas missions," Chitwood, who served as an IMB trustee from 2002-2010 and chaired the board from 2008-2010, said upon his election.

The IMB trustees elected Chitwood unanimously as the entity's 13th president during a 20-minute executive session at the IMB's International Learning Center near Richmond, Va. They also elected IMB interim president Clyde Meador as interim executive vice president.

Chitwood, who has been the Kentucky Baptist Convention's executive director since 2011, announced Nov. 6 that, if elected, he would recommend a permanent executive vice president with significant mission field experience. Prior to Chitwood's tenure leading Kentucky Baptists, he pastored Kentucky churches for 18 years.

Chitwood's entire vocational ministry has been in the U.S. Eight of the 13 men to serve as IMB president have not served as career missionaries.

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

80 ABSC churches serve after hurricane

ARKANSAS BAPTIST disaster relief volunteers have made quite an impact in Florida following the devastation of Category 4 Hurricane Michael in mid-October.

As of press time, 181 Arkansas Baptists – serving primarily in the area of Panama City, Fla. – have recorded 16 professions of faith, according to Keturah Quimby of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) missions team.

Additionally, 152 Bibles have been distributed; 43,755 meals, prepared; 88 chainsaw jobs, completed; five flood recovery jobs, completed; 2,552 showers, provided; and 3,128 loads of laundry, done for the victims of the disaster.

Eighty Arkansas Baptist churches have sent volunteers to serve in Florida, and 28 Arkansas Baptist associations have been involved in recovery efforts.

Arkansas Baptist volunteers suspended feeding unit operations in the areas of Bay County, Fla., and Panama City, Fla., the week of Thanksgiving, but they returned Nov. 25 and are scheduled to continue working in the area in December, said Nick Burt, ABSC assistant communications director.

"Any teams that would like to either deploy or redeploy are welcome," said Burt. "There will be opportunities through Dec. 22. We are specifically in need of chainsaw teams, flood



recovery teams, chaplains, assessors and continued shower and laundry teams. (We) will be in contact with Oklahoma to reevaluate what is needed for feeding operations going forward."

Hurricane Michael was the third most intense Atlantic hurricane to make landfall in

the United States since the 1935 Labor Day hurricane and Hurricane Camille of 1969, according to weather service officials. The storm caused catastrophic damage from wind and storm surge, particularly in Florida's Panama City Beach to Mexico Beach areas, and it resulted in 60 deaths.

ABN subscription increases effective in 2019

EFFECTIVE JAN. 1, 2019, print subscription prices to the *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) will increase \$2 per annual subscription for both church and individual plans.

"Subscription prices have not been raised in nearly 11 years. In that time, the ABN has absorbed dramatic increases in the cost of newsprint and mailing costs," said Tim Yarbrough, editor/

executive director of the newspaper.

"In 2018 alone, the cost of newsprint and mailing is up 11 percent. In 2019 I understand there is another postal increase looming," he said.

Additionally, Cooperative Program (CP) funds provided to the newspaper and given through the Arkansas Baptist State Convention are decreasing incrementally every year

until 2022 for a total decrease of 40 percent, necessitating the increase, said Yarbrough. He added that CP funds in the past have "effectively supplemented the cost of subscriptions to churches and individuals for years."

"The good news is that increased costs only impact the printed version of the ABN," said Yarbrough. "In many ways the reach of our newspaper

has never been greater when print subscriptions and digital distribution are taken into account. The ABN still reaches more Arkansas Baptists across the state than any other denominational news source."

Digital subscription prices will remain unchanged. The subscription increase will appear on subscribers' first 2019 billing, said Yarbrough.

Editorial & Opinion

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

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

What legacy ministry in the SBC means

Do you consider your church to be a legacy ministry?

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary (merriam-webster.com) defines legacy as "of, relating to, associated with, or carried over from an earlier time, technology, business, etc."

While there are those Baptist brethren among us that consider legacy ministry to be a dirty word, I feel nothing could be further from the truth.

Merriam-Webster goes on to say, "In its basic meaning, a legacy is a gift of money or other personal property that's granted by the terms of a will – often a substantial gift that needs to be properly managed. But the word is used much more broadly as well. So, for instance, much of Western civilization – law, philosophy, aesthetics – could be called the undying legacy of ancient Greece. And the rights and opportunities that women enjoy today are partly the legacy of the early suffragists and feminists."

When it comes to the eternal impact of the Church, we all should want to be a part of

a legacy ministry that continues to reflect the redemptive message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Where legacy gets a bad rap is when it is attached to a ministry that appears – at least on the surface – to no longer be effective in furthering the cause of Christ in today's world.

For example, I have been appalled over the years that the work of Baptist associations – which

pre-date the establishment of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) – is

often labeled as something that is no longer needed.

To be certain, as with anything, there are strong associations and weak associations. But in my experience in working with associations across the U.S. for nearly 30 years, more often than not the association is seen as a key partner of the local church – especially among smaller churches – in fulfilling the Great Commission.

It's interesting to me that the work of state Baptist newspapers often falls into the category of legacy ministry as well, when most still reach

more Southern Baptists than practically any other denominational medium of communication.

Perhaps it is by nature that Baptist newspapers are holistic in reporting and documenting the activities of Baptists that they get a bad name.

After all, their focus is broader than, say, a Baptist college or children's home. But at the same time, their work is important in providing Baptists with information about things such as the governance of their denomination, pertaining to providing information like how their missions dollars are spent.

The fact is that we are a denomination in decline.

While Southern Baptists reported an increase of more than 270 churches in 2017, membership fell for the 11th consecutive year, to 15 million. Since 2006, SBC congregations have lost about 1.3 million members, according to Annual Church Profile (ACP) reporting.

Even more disturbing is that baptisms also declined, as they have for eight of the past 10 years. Congregations reported baptizing 254,122 people – 26.5 percent fewer than in 2007. The ratio was one baptism for every 59 church members.

But ACP statistics don't tell the entire story.

Despite the best efforts of associations and state con-

ventions across the country, 26 percent of churches did not participate in the survey, according to LifeWay Research (see related story page 6). Seventy-four percent of churches participated in the 2017 ACP survey by reporting at least one item. That's down from 80 percent in 2013 and 77 percent in the past three years.

Is there apathy related to participation in the SBC, due to our denominational bureaucracy and politics?

I pray not, because even on our worst day, I count it as an honor and a privilege to be part of the Southern Baptist legacy of faith.

Tim Yarbrough is editor/executive director of the ABN.

Pressing On

Tim Yarbrough

Phil. 3:14

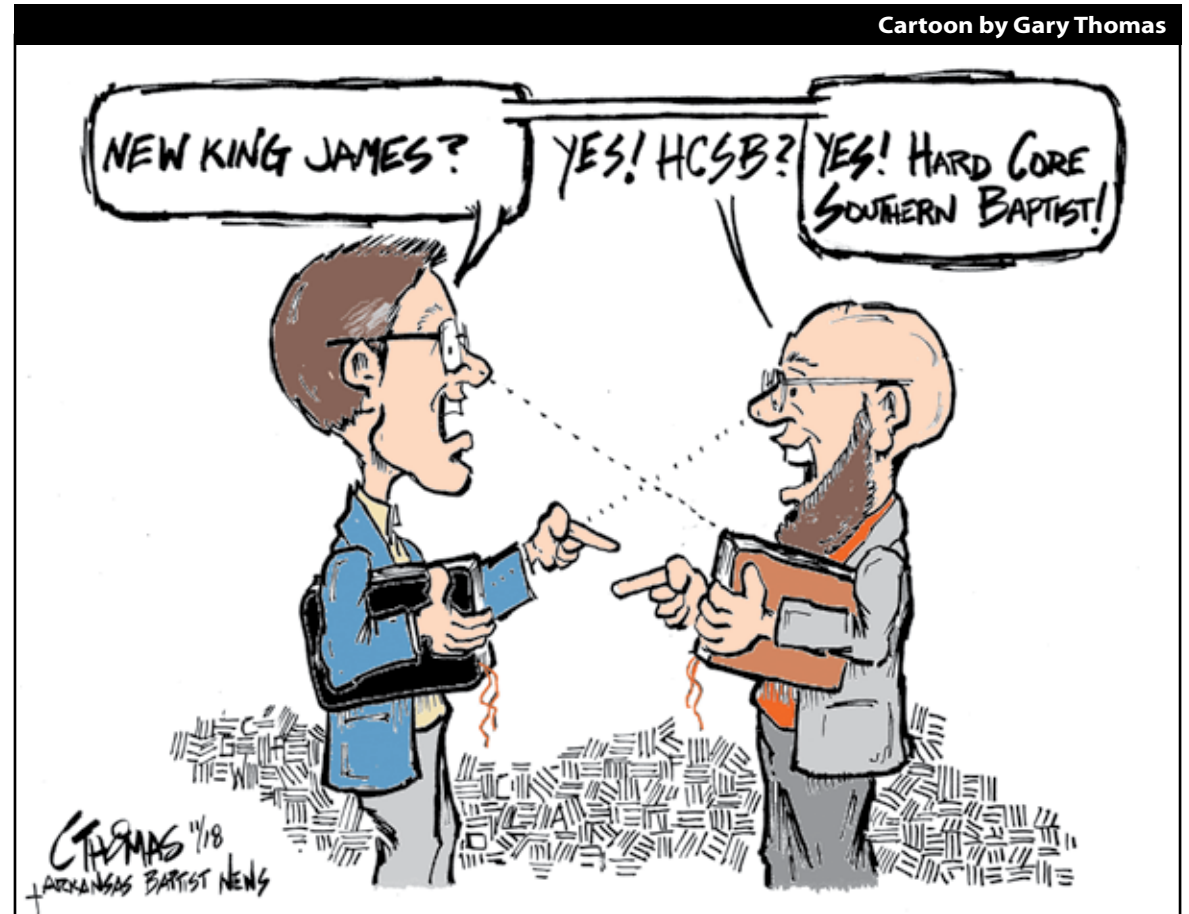


The purpose of the ABN

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.

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.

Cartoon by Gary Thomas



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What makes Isaiah 11 a messianic chapter?

At a time when Israelite kings flaunted their power and ruled unjustly, Isaiah prophesied of a hopeful future in Isaiah 11, a future that would bring great peace into the world.

Isaiah spoke of a peaceful king who would rule with wisdom and understanding (Isa. 11:1-5). He described this leader as a shoot coming up “from the stump of Jesse” (Isa. 11:1, NIV). God had promised David (Jesse’s son) that his heirs would always sit on Israel’s throne; however, they needed to live for the Lord (cf. 2 Sam. 7). Because Israel had a string of bad kings, it appeared that the “tree of Jesse” was dead. Isaiah prophesied, however, that there was life in the stump! This new king would rule with integrity, for justice would be his guide, and the Spirit of God would be upon him.



Baptists Ask

Ken Gore

Isaiah believed this king would introduce a time of peace (Isa. 11:6-9). Animals – both predator and prey – would lie down together. Children would have no fear of them, because there was no danger. This poetic scene depicts a paradise in the making.

This king would also create a peaceful country (Isa. 11:10-12). The “Root of Jesse” (Isa. 11:10, NIV) would have a new flag, and the nations would be drawn to it. The peoples yearned for a new country, one that would bring everlasting rest. This rest comes from the peace of God, for the heavens are God’s throne, and the earth is His footstool.

While most Christians believe the “Root of Jesse” is none other than Jesus, some wonder if this passage refers to a future yet to be. However, when Jesus came as the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6), He ushered in a peaceful time and a peaceful country. He told His disciples that “the kingdom of heaven has come near” (Matt. 4:17, NIV), and He would give them rest (Matt. 11:28). Indeed, those who trusted Him would receive the “peace of God, which transcends all understanding” (Phil. 4:7, NIV).

Does such peace really exist today? It does, though most seldom see it, because most are not looking for it. However, there are glimpses of this peace. Those who give their lives to ministry promote this peace. Those who forgive their enemies encourage this peace. Those who endorse a ministry of reconciliation are purveyors of this peace. The nations long for this peace, and people are willing to abandon their countries of origin and run to the One who will give it to them. When people receive the peace that transcends all understanding, nations fall, and peace begins.

Isaiah 11 is a messianic chapter because the kingdom of heaven is truly at hand, and today is the day of salvation. Ken Gore is professor of biblical studies at Dallas Baptist University. Send your questions to tim@arkansasbaptist.org.

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Make your voice heard!

The election is done, and those elected to be among the 135 members of the Arkansas General Assembly are gearing up for the session of the legislature that begins Jan. 14. In fact, in just a few days, the first-time elected representatives and senators and those who were reelected will be permitted to begin pre-filing bills.

We will begin reviewing those pre-filed bills and will continue to scrutinize all bills filed throughout the session. We will keep members of our grassroots network apprised of the goings-on at the legislature, so that they will be able attempt to exert influence on their elected representatives in efforts to pass good laws and to oppose bad ones.

On that note, it is crucial that state representatives and senators hear from their constituents; most of them really do want to represent those voters who sent them to the

legislature. When it is doable, given their particular set of values and their ethical considerations, they want to take positions and register votes that respect and honor their constituents’ desires.

As believers, we could do a much better job of making those constituent contacts and letting the elected officials represent

ing us know how we feel. Do we really have the right to complain about their records in

the legislature if we don’t tell them what we want them to do? The answer is “no” – we don’t have the right to criticize if we don’t give them the benefit of our positions and a rationale for them.

Now, a word about the process for making all this happen. Email is the most time- and cost-effective means of getting information to you about the matters in the legislature. Along with information about the particular issue

at hand, explaining what it is and what its implications are, the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council provides contact information for your officials so that you can send emails, make phone calls or leave messages with the Senate’s and House of Representatives’ switchboards to give your input.

If you would like be a part of the grassroots network that gives guidance to your representatives in the Arkansas Legislature, all we need is your email address. If you already receive our emails, there is nothing more you need to do. If you currently don’t receive our emails, simply email llp@arfaith.org and let us know you want to receive our email alerts and notices.

A final word. We will not share your email address with anyone or any organization. And, we will never solicit contributions with the emails. If you have questions call 501-837-1688.

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



Faith & Ethics

Larry Page

Getting beyond the numbers

For those not immersed in higher education, it can be a confusing and overwhelming world of statistics, jargon and rankings lists. How can parents, much less teenagers, navigate the cacophony of marketing messages, government data and competing opinions to make a wise choice? After all, this choice isn’t just about what sorts of classes to take or what career to pursue, but what friends and mentors to take on. These are choices that could last a lifetime.

As opaque as data can first appear, it is a great place to look. The problem is in the source and the interpretation. First, be sure the source of the data is reputable. IPEDS is the industry standard and is maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). All accredited colleges in the nation are required to report their data here. IPEDS stands for Integrated Postsecondary Educa-

tion Data System. You see why it goes by the acronym! The NCES provides a College Navigator website at nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator to help search and compare the data available in a relatively user-friendly format.

Second, think about the interpretation of the data. This is where talking to a high school guidance counselor or college admissions counselor comes in handy. And this is where we who work in higher education can really geek out.

For example, Ouachita posted an 83.4 percent freshman-to-sophomore retention rate in the latest data, our highest on record. The Arkansas Department of Education reports the average for all private colleges in Arkansas is 74.3 percent, and the average for all colleges in the state is 66.8 percent. While these numbers look good on the surface, what do they really mean? Good reten-

tion numbers mean students are staying enrolled year after year. This means that students are having a good experience, academically, socially, and even financially – and that we are fulfilling our mission as a Christ-centered learning community. This is what we truly are after as an institution and as individuals who work with students each day.

This indication of student satisfaction was underscored by data collected by collegeconsensus.com, a website that aggregates rankings data from several top ranking and review sources. By its count, Ouachita has the highest self-reported student satisfaction rankings of any college in Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas. That’s more than 200 colleges!

From an insider perspective, we love to see that. Our students leave Ouachita happy with the education and experience they had with us. They come; they stay; they are happy they did. From a

See **NUMBERS** page 6

Letters to the Editor welcomed

The Arkansas Baptist News (ABN) welcomes Letters to the Editor regarding issues of concern to Southern Baptists in Arkansas.



Send Letters to the Editor to tim@arkansasbaptist.org or to our mailing address. 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.

Seniors collect 30K in quarters for children's home

IT'S OFTEN SAID that, "Every penny counts," but a group of senior adults in southwest Arkansas believe that quarters "make more cents."

For the 14th consecutive year, senior adults in Little River Baptist Association have participated in an annual missions venture to aid Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries.

This year, the fundraiser, known as Quarters for Kids, brought in about \$30,000 in quarters, along with a few more monetary gifts.

Donated funds will be distributed to each agency resident, every house-parent and every child of a house-parent. The funds will be used to purchase Christmas gifts for loved ones and friends.

This year's donation was a

record amount collected by the senior adults. Last year, the group raised about \$22,000. Since its inception, the annual fundraiser has brought in more than \$230,000 in quarters.

Annually spearheaded by Mary Ann Jones, Little River Association's senior adult director, the project encourages association churches to collect quarters for the agency all year long. At least 24 Little River Association churches,

many of which are small, rural congregations, took part in this year's event.

True to tradition, Little River churches collected quarters in unique containers. This year's quarters were collected in household storage containers and kitchen canisters. These items will be distributed to all agency campuses for their use.



Jones

Ouachita receives unrestricted gift of \$1 million for 2nd year

ARKADELPHIA – For the second consecutive year, Ouachita Baptist University (OBU) in Arkadelphia has received an unrestricted \$1 million gift from an anonymous donor.

"The gift is significant for its size and nature as well as its impact," said Ben Sells, Ouachita president. "The contribution supports the President's Innovation Fund that

is focused on advancing the university's new strategic plan, which includes new academic programs."

An unrestricted gift means that Ouachita can freely decide where to use the money – no strings attached. According to "The Chronicle of Philanthropy," colleges and universities in the United States received only 15 unrestricted gifts of \$1 million or more in 2017.

"Ouachita is becoming more innovative, which is crucial to meeting the needs of students and responding to challenges in society," Sells said.

The President's Innovation Fund also supports enrollment and fundraising efforts. The university also reported receiving a record \$17.2 million in private support in academic year 2017-2018.

NUMBERS

continued from page 5

parent or prospective student perspective, that's the kind of data I could get my head around – the kind that is tied to real, meaningful experience.

Brooke Zimny is director of communications and marketing at Ouachita Baptist University.



VBS PREVIEW – A preview of LifeWay's 2019 vacation Bible school (VBS) theme, In the Wild!, was presented Nov. 15 at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention building in Little Rock. The event featured Melita Thomas (left), VBS ministry specialist at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. Shirley Forrest (right), of First Baptist Church, Marion, demonstrates to the audience how to decorate for the In the Wild! VBS theme. Photos by Sarah Davis

Study estimates contributions of non-reporting SBC churches

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Long-standing patterns continued to dominate the 2017 Annual Church Profile (ACP) report released in June. The number of congregations affiliating with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) increased over 2016 totals, while reported membership and baptisms continued their year-over-year decline.

But that's not the whole story, said Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research, which compiles the ACP data in cooperation with Baptist state conventions.

The 2017 ACP totals released in June counted all 51,920 congregations affiliated with the SBC – an increase of more than 150 over 2016. However, the ACP totals did not include statistics for every SBC congregation.

Despite the best efforts of associations and state conventions across the country to gather data, 29 percent of congregations (churches and missions) did not participate, according to McConnell. Seven in 10 SBC congregations (71 percent) participated in the ACP survey by reporting at least one item on the profile. That's down from 74 percent the previous three years.

For that reason, reported totals do not include all of the activity of the SBC, though the summary does include some adjustments for non-reporting congregations.

LifeWay Research conducted additional analysis this fall on reporting patterns and created estimates for non-reporting congregations.

Based on this analysis, the estimated total membership of all SBC congregations is 15.7 million, compared to 15 million reported membership. LifeWay Research's analysis also estimated 363,069 baptisms likely occurred, compared to 254,122 reported baptisms.

McConnell said the gap between reported totals and estimated statistics for all SBC congregations is almost 109,000 baptisms, 1.2 million attendees, more than 741,000 members, and nearly \$2.7 billion in total receipts.

"The additional analysis this year is not an attempt to create bigger numbers," McConnell said. "Analysis of this type cannot replace actual information reported from congregations. Rather, it's an acknowledgement that the traditional reporting is not telling the whole story of the changes taking place in the SBC, even though the traditional reporting at the national level already pulls forward attendance and receipt statistics for a few years."

Pulled forward statistics are specific responses congregations provided in prior years that are included in a current year's data when a statistic is missing for that congregation.

According to McConnell, even the estimated statistics show a clear decline in membership levels. "Is the SBC still in decline? In short, yes," McConnell said. "The SBC experienced growth in membership until a peak in 2006 followed by decline. Even prior to 2006, researchers noted the rate of membership growth was declining at a steady pace."

McConnell said the recent decline in baptisms across the SBC is in part due to lack of reporting. He confirmed that the ACP report does not pull data forward for baptisms.

"With some trepidation we have used statistics to estimate that there were likely about 363,069 baptisms in 2017," McConnell said. This estimate is 43 percent higher than the 2017 reported total.

However, McConnell said, the higher baptism estimate still indicates a form of decline in baptisms. "In 1950, SBC congregations baptized more than the 2017 estimate with only 7 million members. The ratio of members to baptisms continues to increase, which means it takes more members per baptism."

The information collected on the ACP tells several important ministry stories. "This history is helpful when churches look at their own trendlines, introduce a prospective new pastor to their church, and when they seek outside financing," McConnell said.

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering to reach 'every nation'

EVERY CHURCH. Every nation.

To the International Mission Board (IMB), it is more than a catch phrase. It's the core of what the IMB does, and it's the theme for the 2018 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (LMCO) for International Missions.

Lottie Moon, a Southern Baptist missionary in China during the 1800s, wrote letters urging American churches to send and support more international

imb

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missionaries. In 1918, after Moon died on her way home from the mission field, the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) named the annual Christmas offering for international missions after the woman who had challenged the WMU to start it.

Through LMCO, individuals and churches support more than 3,600 missionaries, enable disciples to be made and churches to be multiplied around the world, and help

reach the 3,200 unreached people groups.

In 2016, the IMB reported more than 45,000 people were baptized and 4,550 new churches were started overseas.

"Because Southern Baptists give to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, IMB missionaries can take the gospel to unreached peoples around the world," said Debbie Moore,

Arkansas Baptists' WMU executive director. "More than 2.8 billion people have little to

no access to the gospel. Every church and every church member have a critical role to play in taking the gospel to the world."

Southern Baptists have two opportunities to support international missions. The first is to give financially to LMCO. The national goal for LMCO is \$160 million, and Arkansas Baptists' goal is \$6 million.

"Every dollar we give makes a difference because 100 percent of the money collected goes to the work of reaching



Every penny given to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering supports IMB missionaries like Larry Pepper (center). Pepper was a NASA flight surgeon before answering God's call. For more than two decades, he has worked with the IMB at hospitals in Africa.

every nation and every people group," Moore said.

The second opportunity is to pray during the Week of Prayer for International Missions Dec. 2-9.

"The Week of Prayer is a week set aside to pray for our

missionaries and their work around the world," Moore said. "The focus is to encourage church members to reach every nation by praying and giving."

Churches should have already received a packet of in-

formation and DVD from the IMB. If your church has not received the LMCO resources, call the IMB at 800-999-3113. For additional resources, contact the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions team at 800-838-2272 or visit imb.org.

Wrong turn in Trumann leads to professions of faith

TRUMANN — Sometimes even when faithful Christians make a wrong turn on the road, God can lead them to just the people who need to hear the gospel message.

On Oct. 21, John Maley, pastor of First Baptist Church,



Maley

Trumann — along with his wife, Jennifer Maley, and the church's Sunday school director, Terrie Thompson — set out to follow up with individuals who had made professions of faith during the recent Acts 1:8 One Day Mission Trip in the community.

When they looked at the first address they were heading to, they knew right away that something wasn't right. "We were given an address that

doesn't exist in Trumann ... but we all agreed it was probably just a typo," explained the pastor. Knowing they were supposed to be going to a trailer park, the trio agreed to go to Willow Road, rather than Wilson Street, the address they were given. There, they spotted a trailer park on yet another road and made another turn. "Instead of admitting defeat, I turned into the trailer park (on a totally different road)

and found lot 3," Maley said.

The group prayed in the car and approached the trailer where a 19-year-old girl was standing on the porch. They introduced themselves and "asked if the person whose name was on the decision card lived in the trailer," Maley said. Not surprisingly, she answered that the person did not live there, but she unexpectedly invited the group into the trailer on the chilly evening.

Inside, the group from church met the girl's twin sister and disabled 69-year-old grandmother.

First Baptist recently completed evangelism training, Maley explained, "so I asked them the two diagnostic questions, which are 'Do you know for certain that you would spend eternity in heaven, or is that something you would say you are still working on?' They all indicated they were still working on it. I then asked the follow-up question, 'If you found yourself standing before God and He asked,

"Why should I let you into My heaven?" what would your response be?' None of them could answer."

Maley shared the gospel, and the grandmother and one of the twins prayed to receive Christ.

The following Sunday, a shuttle from church picked them up, and the two new believers made their decisions public during the worship service.

Those two decisions, along with at least seven other recent additions to the church, have energized church members.

In another home visit on Nov. 11, the pastor and two church members led a husband and wife to Christ.

"It was like those two families (the teen girl and grandmother and the husband and wife) were waiting for someone to tell them about Jesus. I believe those experiences show us that if we are faithful to share the gospel, we will be blessed to see people make decisions for Jesus," Maley said.





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OBU to present A Festival of Christmas Nov. 30 & Dec. 1

ARKADELPHIA – Ouachita Baptist University's School of Fine Arts will present its annual

A Festival of Christmas performances on Friday, Nov. 30, and Saturday, Dec. 1, both

at 7:30 p.m. in Jones Performing Arts Center. The theme for this year's production is Let Us Adore Him.

"There is a song that begins the second half of the program titled 'Let Us Adore Him.' That is the central theme of our show and the theme of A Festival of Christmas,"



Ouachita Baptist University will present A Festival of Christmas Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 in the Jones Performing Arts Center on campus.

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Located just 10 minutes from Hot Springs Village, Arkansas, SOZO Recovery Center is achieving amazing results in curing drug and alcohol addiction in men by having their residential clients study the Bible and attend a local church. "By practicing this God-centered, Bible-based curriculum, over 35 men have gotten sober and become baptized in the last four years," said SOZO Director, Bob O'Dowd.



For information, call Bob O'Dowd at 501-226-9575 or email him at bonhsv@suddenlink.net.

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said Gary Gerber, dean of Ouachita's School of Fine Arts. "It is a celebration of the Christmas season, but, more importantly, it is an expression of praise and adoration for God sending His Son to the earth."

Ouachita's choral ensembles, including Concert Choir, Ouachita Singers, Women's Chorus and Ouachita Sounds, will perform throughout A Festival of Christmas. Additionally, children from the local community will also perform with the Honor Choir.

A few songs in this year's performance are: "O Holy Night," "Mary, Did You Know?" "Grown Up Christmas List," "The Christmas Waltz" and "Holly Jolly Christmas."

"A Festival of Christmas has some songs that have become traditions and are requested each year," Gerber said. "Many of the songs that we will perform are new songs and songs that haven't been done for several years but are still favorites of many patrons."

Students and faculty work hard to produce A Festival of Christmas each year, preparing nearly six months in advance.

"We begin the planning of Festival of Christmas in the summer. The students begin working on the music in August; the dancers start preparing in September, and then we put it all together on Monday evening, the week of the show," Gerber said. "It is amazing how it comes together in one week."

For more information call 870-245-5555 or visit obu.edu.

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Obituaries



Erich Brian Albat III, 54, of Conway, died Nov. 6.

Albat served as a pastor and youth minister in Arkansas. For the past 10 years, he pastored Point of Grace Baptist Church in Vilonia.

He was preceded in death by his father, Erich Albat Jr., and grandfather, Archie Wheeler.

He is survived by his wife, Melanie Albat; daughter, Rachel Acklin; son, Joshua Albat; mother, Velma Albat, and sister, Vicki Gibson.

Services were held Nov. 11 at Friendship Baptist Church in Conway.

Milestones

Don Jones retired after 27 years as associational missionary for Little River Baptist Association.

S. D. Hacker retired after 27 years as director of missions for Rocky Bayou Baptist Association. Hacker also recently served on the Arkansas Baptist News Board of Directors.

WBU's Massey publishes 'In a Better Place'

WALNUT RIDGE – Brady Massey, director of bands at Williams Baptist University (WBU), recently had a piece of band music published, titled "In a Better Place."

This piece was commissioned by the Marion High School band in Arkansas, under the direction of Brandon Robinson. It was written as a memorial to Thad Williams, the late husband of Cathy Williams, director of bands at West Memphis High School and the cross-town rival of Marion High School.

Thad Williams was an advocate and mentor for thousands during his tenure as a

coach at West Memphis High School. He also served as the longtime recreation director for the Dixie Band Camp, one of the largest and longest running summer music camps in the country.

The music composed by Massey, while reverent, is not intended to be somber. Rather, it represents the hope and optimism that were a huge part of

Williams' personality.

Massey said the music is written specifically for Williams, but it is meant to be shared with everyone who has a loved one who has gone to be "In a Better Place."

Church life

Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock, will have Breathe: A service of Consolation and Reflection at 4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 2, for anyone who has experienced loss.

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Cornerstone Baptist Church, Cherokee City, is seeking **bi-vocational pastor**. Please submit resume to cornerstonebaptistcc@gmail.com or P.O. Box 1366, Gentry, AR 72734.

Philadelphia Baptist Church is seeking a **pastor**. Please send resumes to scott@arcotower.com.

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

Windover Baptist Church is seeking a pastor and is open to **bi-vocational and full-time candidates**. Please send resumes to Search Committee Chairperson, 311 Windover, Jonesboro, AR 72401 by Jan. 31st.

Sulphur Rock Baptist Church is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Please send resume to PO Box 67, Sulphur Rock, AR 72579, or email pweaver98@yahoo.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.

Calvary Baptist Church in NLR is prayerfully seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Send resume to 5025 Lynch Drive, NLR AR 72117, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

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.

Emmanuel Baptist Church, Weatherford, is prayerfully seeking an experienced **F/T senior pastor**. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee, Emmanuel Baptist Church, 719 North Kansas, Weatherford, OK 73096 or email to ebcfwford@gmail.com.

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

North Main Baptist Church (SBC) seeking **bi-vocational pastor**. Send resumes to jvance1@windstream.net or 707 North Main, Sheridan, AR 72150.

OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

Seeking **associational missionary** for Little River Baptist Association due to retirement of our AM of 27 years, Don Jones. Submit resume to Search Committee, P.O. Box 965, Nashville, AR 71852.

FBC, Port Arthur, TX, is prayerfully seeking a **full-time worship/outreach pastor**. We are a multi-generational church that currently has a traditional worship style but is moving to a more contemporary worship. This individual must not only be musically gifted but also have a heart for outreach as we try to reach our community for Christ. For a full job descrip-

tion and information concerning FBCPA please visit www.fbcportarthur.org. Send resumes to dhintonfbc@gmail.com.

P/T praise team director needed at FBC West Fork. Must lead weekly Sunday morning service and bi-weekly Sunday evening. Applicant should know musical parts and have experience with team/band. Send resumes to westforkfbc@yahoo.com or drop off at 246 Centennial Ave, West Fork, AR.

Ebenezer Baptist Church, El Dorado, AR, is seeking a **full-time minister of students** with some associate pastor responsibilities. Please send resumes to: Search Committee, Ebenezer Baptist Church, 1942 N. Wyatt Drive, El Dorado, AR 71730.

Graves Memorial Baptist Church, North Little Rock, is seeking a **full-time or part-time youth pastor**. Please send resumes to nick@gmbclife.com.

First Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, Arkansas, is seeking a **full-time student pastor**. Send resume to 500 S. Washington, Murfreesboro, AR 71958 or firstbaptistmurfreesboro@gmail.com.

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.

MISCELLANEOUS

Holy Land trip with Denny Wright. Last call! \$5,547 April 28-May 9, 2019. \$750 deposit by Nov. 30. Email Denny now dwrightbalboa@gmail.com.

Ministerial discount: **4 burial plots** at Forrest Hills Memorial Park, Little Rock. Located in Garden 4, lot 618, sites 3,4,5,6. Regular cost \$1800 each but will discount each plot to \$800 each with ministerial discount. Mike Russell 479-841-2601.

DECEMBER 9, 2018

Jacob was on the run for his life. Esau's threats to kill him were not idle words (Gen. 27:41). He was exhausted and stopped for the night. He used a stone for a pillow and lay down to sleep (Gen. 28:11). Jacob probably gave no thought to the fact that he was in the very area where his grandfather, Abraham, had pitched his tent, built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord (Gen. 12:8). As Jacob gazed into the night sky and saw the countless shining stars, he probably didn't think about God's promise to Abraham that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky (Gen. 26:4).

Jacob had a dream, which was a direct revelation from God. Jacob saw a ladder resting on the earth with its top reaching heaven (Gen. 28:12). This represented the place where heaven and earth touch, access to God. He saw angels ascending and descending the ladder. God wanted Jacob to know that

He was accessible and wanted to make direct contact with him. Above the ladder stood the Lord (Gen. 28:13).

God wanted Jacob to know Who He was and what He would do. He repeated the Abrahamic covenant and gave a promise of His presence. Jacob awakened and realized he had been in the presence of God (Gen. 28:16-19). As an act of worship, he set a marker,

consecrated it with oil and named the place Bethel, which means "house of God" (Gen. 28:19).

In this dark and lonely time in Jacob's life, God chose to

reveal Himself. God chooses unique times in our lives because that is when we are more teachable and ready to listen to His message. Although we often feel like we are alone and have been abandoned, we are never alone; God is always with us. God reveals His presence and His purpose to those He chooses, giving them purpose in the process.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Not alone

GENESIS 28:10-22 (HCSB)

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Joseph's obedience

MATTHEW 1:18-25 (HCSB)

peared to him in a dream and delivered some shocking news, "What has been conceived in her is by the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 1:20). He was not to be afraid to take her as his wife, and he was to name the child "Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). It would be nice to know what Joseph was thinking, but we don't. We do know, from Scripture, that Joseph got up from his sleeping and did as the angel commanded (Matt. 1:24).

Joseph had a simple plan for his life with Mary, but God stepped in and changed that plan. He didn't resist; he didn't question, and he didn't run. Joseph responded with simple obedience. Often we resist things that attempt to alter or interfere with our plans. This change can be welcomed, especially if it comes from God. Following God's plan will require change in our lives. The first and primary step is simple obedience.

DECEMBER 16, 2018

There are many examples in the Bible of imperfect individuals whom God used in extraordinary ways. Scripture does not attempt to hide these individuals' imperfections and failures. God often uses imperfect people with imperfect lives to advance His plans. One of these individuals was Jacob. He had an awesome experience at Bethel. Yet, we see in this lesson Jacob would reap what he had sown.

Jacob arrived just outside of Haran in a field where there was a well. Shepherds were watering their sheep. The

shepherds knew Jacob's uncle Laban. Laban's daughter Rachel brought the flock to the water, and Jacob helped her get them to water. Keep in mind that Jacob was supposed to be looking for a wife from within his own family.

After Jacob had worked for Laban for a month, Laban wanted to pay him. Since Jacob was in love with Rachel, Jacob agreed to work seven years for Rachel (Gen. 29:18). Jacob worked hard for seven years. When it came time for Jacob and his bride to be alone, Laban

had substituted Leah for Rachel. Imagine Jacob's surprise when he looked upon Leah the next morning. Jacob's question to Laban must have pricked him with conviction, "Why have you deceived me" (Gen. 29:25)? Maybe at that moment Jacob could understand emotionally how Esau must have felt when Jacob deceived his father and stole Esau's birthright.

Jacob agreed to work another seven years for Rachel. It came to be, but it was a terrible marital beginning for both Leah and Rachel. Jacob "loved Rachel more than Leah" (Gen. 29:30). The tragic event would set the stage for problems that would fester and continue for years.

As believers, we can be thankful for God's faithfulness to His promises even when we do the opposite of what He has called us to do. When we violate the will of God in our lives, we always experience the natural consequences of our sins. We need to remember that God's grace overcomes the greatest of sins.

The situation was rather dire from Mary's perspective. She was betrothed to Joseph; the dowry had been paid to her family; they had not consummated their marriage, and she was pregnant. The strangest part of all was that she had not been intimate with a man. Perhaps she kept saying over and over in her head, "How can this be?"

The angel Gabriel visited Mary and said to her, "Rejoice, favored woman! The Lord is with you" (Luke 1:28). If she wasn't troubled enough, this troubled her even more. An

angel with a strange greeting "deeply troubled" her. "Deeply troubled" is the Greek phrase *siata-paxthe*, which only appears here. This phrase describes being "confused and perplexed." She didn't quite know what to make of it.

Gabriel understood Mary's confusion. He told her not to be afraid and then explained what was happening to her (Luke 1:30-33). It did not relieve her confusion immediately. She asked,

"How can this be, since I have not been intimate with a man?" (Luke 1:34). Gabriel had the answer, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (Luke 1:35). He explained that this child would be called the "Son of God" (Luke 1:35). In verses 36-37, Gabriel explained the miracle she was experiencing. He explained that Elizabeth was also having a baby in her old age.

Mary said two important things. First, she said, "I am the Lord's slave" (Luke 1:38).

This reveals that she totally trusted the Lord. Second, she said, "May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). Because she believed the Word of the Lord, she could be used by the Spirit to accomplish the will of God. Mary's believing response was to surrender herself to God as a willing servant.

Mary is a great example for us to follow. She exemplified the courage we can have as we trust God's plan for our lives.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Family

GENESIS 29:16-30 (HCSB)

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Mary's trust

LUKE 1:26-38 (HCSB)

Featured commentary writer



Gerald Nash

Gerald Nash is a registered respiratory therapist at Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center in Russellville. He is a member of Second Baptist Church, Conway, where he serves as a Bible teacher, small group leader and member of the men's ministry. He also serves as a clergy-chaplain at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Conway. He has attended several universities and seminaries, including Williams Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has earned a bachelor's degree in Christian ministries, master's degrees in pastoral studies and theological studies and a doctorate in pastoral studies. He volunteers on the Cairo Geniza Princeton project analyzing and sorting undeciphered Hebrew, Greek and Arabic manuscript fragments (10th-13th centuries) of the Jewish diaspora in Egypt. His goal is to be an adjunct professor and return to the university to work on a master's degree in archaeology with an emphasis in paleography.

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