

## NAMB church planting conf. attracts 4,200-plus

Tim Yarbrough  
*Arkansas Baptist News*

PLANO, Texas - Few could have imagined just a few years ago that a church-planting event hosted by the North America Mission Board (NAMB) would attract more than 4,200 participants, but that's exactly what happened July 29-30 at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano.

It's a good thing those planning the Send North America Conference decided to host it at the massive Prestonwood facility; otherwise, there would not have been enough room to put everyone during plenary worship and breakout sessions. Even so, many of the breakout sessions were filled to capacity. In 2012, the Send conference in Atlanta was attended by about 2,000.

To help put the attendance num-

bers in perspective, the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in Houston this year drew 5,103 messengers from the nation's 45,000 Southern Baptist churches.

A number of those attending the Send conference received full or partial scholarships to attend the conference. According to Mike Ebert, NAMB vice president of communications, the Send conference is designed to replace several meetings the entity once hosted for church planters and state leaders, including the Summer State Leadership Meeting and two annual church planting-related meetings.

The centerpiece of the conference focused around breakout and plenary sessions featuring church planting and church revitalization leaders.

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**NAMB Send conference**

Jack Graham, senior pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church, Plano, Texas, speaks to the 4,200-plus gathered there for the Send North America Conference July 29-30.

## VBS has major impact across Arkansas

Jessica Vanderpool  
*Arkansas Baptist News*

FOR MANY PEOPLE, summertime brings with it thoughts of swimming pools, baseball games, lake days - and for many churches - children's outreach events.

Arkansas Baptists did not let the summer catch them idle. Churches across the Natural State dove in and made a splash for Jesus Christ - and many of them used vacation Bible school (VBS) to do it.

And with good reason.

Allison Kizzia, Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) evangelism and church growth team member, said Arkansas Baptist churches had 90,221 participants and workers enrolled in VBS in 2012, with 2,424 professions of faith based on their annual church profiles.

Kizzia shared one way churches are using VBS these days.

"One of the current trends in VBS is the thought of returning to the model of taking VBS to the

community through backyard Bible clubs," she said, adding that LifeWay Christian Resources has produced a new resource called Backyard Kids Club (BKC) for that very purpose.

### Park Hill, North Little Rock

Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock, used BKC as they worked with two smaller-member churches to provide VBS for the churches' communities.

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**COOPERATIVE PROGRAM**  
Love In Action

**Special section**  
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### OUR PASTORS

## Pine Bluff pastor shares story of his 'special life'

Caleb Yarbrough  
*Arkansas Baptist News*

PINE BLUFF - God works in incredible ways. For many Christians, God's path for their lives is mysterious, but for Don Taylor, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Pine Bluff, his entire life can be traced back to one man and God's work in that man's life.

After growing up in Arkansas, Taylor left in 1967 to attend Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif. He originally planned to return to the Natural State upon finishing seminary, but God had a different plan, said the pastor.

To the dismay of his mother, Taylor said, he ended up staying in California after graduating. Finally, he returned to his hometown of Pine Bluff in 2005 after serving in California for nearly 40 years, about 31 of which he spent serving as pastor of Central Baptist Church, Alameda, Calif.

### Growing up in Arkansas

Taylor first arrived in Pine Bluff in 1947 when his father bought land and built his family a house there.



Don and JoAnne Taylor

As the family established themselves in their new hometown, Taylor said, the first thing his mother did was search for a church for them to attend.

"On the second Sunday of her search, we came here (Immanuel Baptist). Something resonated with my Mom, and she said, 'That's where we are going to go,'" said Taylor.

Taylor said he grew up both physically and spiritually in Immanuel and said that, though reluctantly at

first, it was the church in which he accepted God's call to surrender to the ministry.

One day after church, when Taylor was in high school, he heard some of his friends discussing their plans following graduation. Taylor, having no idea what his future held, walked away and into an unlit hallway inside the church.

"I said bye and slipped off. I came in the door and started down the hallway. I was in darkness spiritually and physically. Then all of a sudden, it was the strangest thing - in neon letters across the huge hallway were the words,

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# William D. Downs tells Ark. 'Stories of Survival'

Caleb Yarbrough  
Arkansas Baptist News

LITTLE ROCK - William D. Downs Jr. was born in 1932, into the throes of the Great Depression - the most intense and widespread economic breakdown the United States has ever seen. While many of Downs' earliest memories took place on his grandparents' rural Arkansas farm during the Depression, it took him decades to understand that their lives, like those of countless other Arkansans living at that time, were truly "stories of survival."



Downs

In 1989, Downs attended a family reunion near Bexar and returned, for the first time in nearly six decades, to his grandparents' former home - a place the family refers to as the "Blue Farm."

"Amazingly, most of the wooden frame was still standing with scraps of old newspapers dated in the 1930s still covering the cracks in the walls to protect against the winter winds. Yet not even once did I recall Pa and Ma complaining about how bad things were during the Depression," Downs writes. "'Sure,' they would say, 'Life was hard and we knew we were poor. But so was everybody else.'"

It was the courage, faith and fortitude of those, like Downs' grandparents, who not only lived through the Great Depression but did so in Arkansas, that eventually led him to write "Stories of Survival: Arkansas Farmers during the Great Depression," of which the family home at Blue Farm dawns the cover.

Downs writes in the preface to "Stories of Survival" that the book "is not intended to be a compre-

hensive history of the Great Depression," but rather a review of its key events and, more interestingly, a look into the lives of actual "survivors."

In the introduction, Downs provides a survey of the causes and effects of the Depression, which gives the reader context. However, the real treasure of the book is found in its capturing, so vividly, a picture of the everyday lives of real people in rural Arkansas during the time period - their struggles, their faith and, amazingly, their humor. All the interviews featured in the book, Downs writes, "were recorded exactly in the way they were spoken."

Downs organizes the accounts into 31 chapters. Each chapter featuring diverse firsthand accounts on topics such as "Sources of News, Listening to Radio," "Typical Chores around the Farm" and "Hog Killing: A Special Time of Year." Downs asks the right questions and, in turn, provides the reader with realistic views of the cultural, spiritual, economic, racial, ethical and technological issues that Depression era Arkansan farmers faced - all through their own voices.

One of the resounding themes throughout Downs' interviews is that of the amazing physical and emotional strength and resilience of the Arkansas farmers who lived during the Depression. There is a sense of both thankfulness and humility that pervades every survivor's story. They knew that they were poor, but they



Downs' grandparents' Depression-era home near Bexar, Ark., called "Blue Farm." Downs took the photograph in 1989 and later chose to feature it on the cover of "Stories of Survival" (below).

were also thankful for what they had and, as a result, lived peaceful lives in the midst of countless trials.

Downs' interview with Geneva King Emerson sums up the faith, perseverance and simple joy that is so definitive of the Arkansan survivors of the Depression: "I can still see the big moon rise over the hill as the family rested and visited. We sang the same old songs of faith, which seemed to be more healing than medicine, listened to the 'katydids' or crickets later in the season, the screech owls and hoot owls. A little child - a very blessed little child. I soaked it all in; dreamed on it. When I come to the final sleep, I think that will be my last memory."

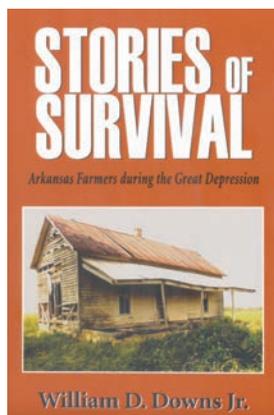
Upon reading "Stories of Survival," Downs' reason for the title becomes evident. Living through

the Great Depression, especially in a rural working class state like Arkansas, was nothing short of surviving. However, the survivors Downs interviewed were neither jaded nor cynical. Most, like Emerson, remembered the Depression as the most difficult, yet most positively memorable, time of their lives.

"Stories of Survival" is a well-written book that paints vivid pictures of men and women who could have been any of us if we were born only a few decades earlier. They are stories of regular people who had incredible faith in the face of nearly unthinkable hardship. Regardless of one's background or proclivity for history, they are stories everyone should read.

When asked by Downs what "stories of survival" today's young people need to hear, Floye Wingfield said, "I would tell them that I had more than my share of blessings, starting with the Great Depression."

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## SEND

continued from page one

Among those speaking during the conference were Dallas-area Pastor Afshin Ziafat, a former Muslim; Ed Stetzer of LifeWay Research; Johnny Hunt, senior pastor of Woodstock Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga.; Ronnie Floyd, senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas; Luis Palau, evangelist; Jack Graham, senior pastor of Prestonwood; and Jim Cymbala, a Brooklyn, N.Y., pastor, as well as many others.

Featured in a ministry wives track were Kathy Litton, NAMB ministry wives consultant, and Lorie McDaniel, women's ministry leader at Grace Point Church in Bentonville.

Worship leaders were contemporary Christian artists Brett Younker and Christy Nockels.

Floyd led a breakout session titled "A Strategic Hope for Revitalization."

He told attendees church revitalization starts with the question, "What do you see?" Floyd said God asked this question to four different prophets in the Bible.

"God was sharing a vision with the prophet of God about what He planned to do," he said.

Floyd recounted his early days as the 30-year-old pastor of First Baptist Church, Springdale (now Cross Church).

As he looked around northwest Arkansas, Floyd said he knew if the area could send chickens all over the country (through Tyson), trucks across the country (through J.B. Hunt), lead in retailing across the country (Walmart) and "send Razorbaks all over the world," certainly the church could make a major impact on its community.

"Vision is seeing it before you see it," said Floyd, quoting Billy Weber, the founding pastor of Prestonwood Baptist, adding, "You must see it with your spiritual eye before you see it with your physical eye."

The nine strategic principles for church revitalization shared by Floyd

were: 1) catch the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ; 2) clarify your vision; 3) consider carefully what your people are saying; 4) comprehend the context of your community; 5) call upon the people to go with you; 6) commit to hear God's voice and do whatever He says to do; 7) cast your vision continually and effectively; 8) create momentum with wins, and 9) challenge your church passionately and continually.

To illustrate point eight, Floyd told attendees that if the Arkansas Razorbaks can win their first four games this year against admittedly lesser opponents, when "Texas A&M and Johnny Football come to town on Sept. 28, we know we have a chance!"

He added, just like a football team, "When a church loses momentum it has had, it's bad. Create wins as fast as you can!"

Meeting with media invited to the conference, NAMB President Kevin Ezell said the Send North America Conference is designed to be a rallying point for church planters.

"We are thrilled that so many attended this year. But the point is not to host a big conference - it's to get more Southern Baptists involved in planting churches where we need more of them," said Ezell.

"Our prayer is that the pastors who attended will lead their churches to start new churches and that many of the individuals here would hear God's call to plant a church."

James Forbis, a church-planting apprentice with Cross Church, Springdale, said the conference was "geared to my ministerial calling to be a church planter."

"I was able to network and develop friendships with churches and planters in the Boston area where I feel God is leading me ever so swiftly," said Forbis, adding, "It is our goal to see successful church plants thrive in the 'Send Cities' that NAMB has designated to be of most importance."

Read more online about the conference at [www.namb.net/send2013](http://www.namb.net/send2013).

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## Ark., Ga. churches find partnership

MOUNTAIN PINE – A coincidental meeting in 2010 in Alabama of two mission-minded congregations – one from Arkansas and the other from Georgia – has had a far-reaching impact on the churches' respective mission fields and work of co-operation.

When Veal Baptist Church of Roopville, Ga., traveled to Mountain Pine July 15-19 as a part of a five-year partnership that stemmed from their Alabama meeting, it blessed the churches far more than ever imagined.

The mission week was a combined effort of both the Georgia and Arkansas churches that averaged about 50 in morning worship.

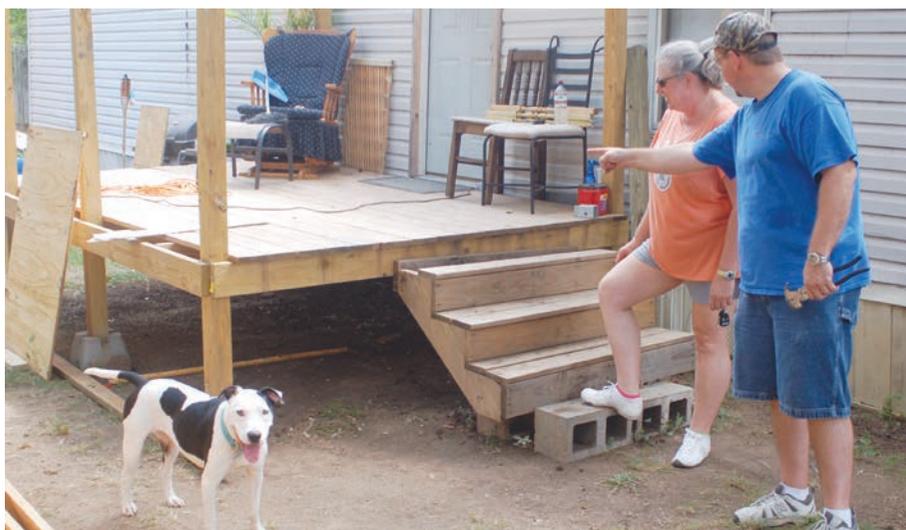
Leaders of the churches met in Bayou La Batre, Ala., while serving on the same mission project through Youth Works, according to Darren Green, pastor of First Baptist Church, Mountain Pine.

"Immediately, our two mission teams meshed together in personalities and in vision of missions," the pastor explained.

"At that time, we decided to enter into a five-year mission partnership, with Veal sending a team to work in the Mountain Pine area in 2011 and 2013 (and with) Mountain Pine sending a team to work in the Roopville area in 2012 and 2014. (We) tentatively plan for our teams to combine in 2015 to serve in the Anchorage, Alaska, area."

Before the mission week began, teams from the churches went to Hot Springs to share a meal together. As they walked into a restaurant, they were presented with an opportunity to share Jesus with a man who was apparently homeless.

"When the teams arrived at the restaurant, they encountered a homeless man sitting outside on the curb," said Green, adding, "(He) was actually a co-worker of mine that none of the team members from either church knew. He was complete with dirty, smelly clothes, unshaven for over a week, dirty knapsack with an alcohol bottle sticking out of it.



Darren Green (right), pastor of First Baptist Church, Mountain Pine, and Sabrina White of Veal Baptist Church, Roopville, Ga., inspect progress on a deck being built by volunteers. The two churches worked in the Mountain Pine community July 15-19. Photo by Tim Yarbrough

"When team members noticed him, they immediately began to discuss ways to help him, and many of them approached him to invite him in to eat with us and witnessed to him. He politely declined the offer and soon wandered off once everyone was inside."

Green added, "The teams were very surprised when he – clean shaven and well-dressed – (and) his wife and son were pointed out the next morning during the sermon, which was on the good Samaritan, and realized that he had been a part of a pre-illustration to the message and to the mission week.

"I gave the teams an A-plus on how they handled the encounter with him on the curb."

When the workweek started, volunteers from the churches – numbering 26 strong – fanned out across the Mountain Pine community near Lake Ouachita, doing everything from light construction inside and outside of area residents' homes to installing carpet inside First Baptist's youth room – as well as other odd jobs.

Team members stayed at the church, sleeping on air mattresses in Sunday school rooms and in the church's fellowship hall. Church members opened their homes to team members so they could shower.

"(They) made sure that the teams had a hot meal waiting for them each evening for dinner," said Green, adding that each day started and ended with devotion time, along with team-building activities.

The theme for the week was LOVE: Sharing God's Love with the Community, said Green, and that's exactly what they did.

Projects included the following:

- A young couple with three small children, who were not members of the church, saw their bathroom floor replaced, bedroom floors repaired, ceiling and wall drywall in several rooms replaced, work done in their kitchen and a new cookstove installed.

- An elderly couple, who were not church members, saw their two porches rebuilt, a wheelchair ramp rebuilt, a kitchen floor replaced, drywall repaired and work around exterior doors to seal gaps completed.

- A single mother and adult son with Down syndrome, who were not church members, had extensive amounts of drywall work in their ceilings and walls replaced, bedroom floors repaired, as well as electrical work and painting done.

"Being able to go to each other's location helps make a difference in the community, but just as importantly, it teaches that person how to do something," said Sabrina White, Veal Baptist team leader. "(That) has been the greatest blessing for all of us."



**ABN online**

View a photo gallery of the Mountain Pine mission project at [www.arkansasbaptist.org/photo-gallery](http://www.arkansasbaptist.org/photo-gallery)

## Blackaby to speak at ABSC prayer workshop Jan. 27

SHERWOOD – Henry Blackaby has been announced as the leader of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) prayer leader's workshop set for 9:30 a.m., Monday, Jan. 27 at First Baptist Church, Sherwood. The workshop is held immediately prior to the annual State Conference on Evangelism and Church Growth Jan. 27-28.

Jimmie Sheffield, ABSC interim associate executive director, announced July 24 that Blackaby will lead the

annual workshop.

"I have known Dr. Blackaby for many years. We first met when I served with state prayer leaders. Dr. Blackaby and other national leaders led us in having a deeper prayer relationship with God. They also gave us ideas about developing church and associational prayer ministries," said Sheffield.

"Dr. Blackaby has had tremendous influence on my life. 'Experiencing God' made a lasting impression on me.



Blackaby

Blackaby will also speak Jan. 28 during the State Conference on Evangelism and Church Growth.

Blackaby is founder and president emeritus of Blackaby Ministries International, which provides consultative leadership for the Christian community. He has published a number of books on spiritual growth, two of which are "Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God" and "Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God's Agenda." He and his wife Marilynn have five children and 14 grandchildren.

# ABN Digest

Stories of interest to Arkansas Baptists

### AARP donates \$125K to help tornado victims

OKLAHOMA CITY – The Associated Press reports that AARP Oklahoma has donated \$125,000 to the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma to assist the victims of storms and tornadoes that struck the state in May. The grant to the Oklahoma convention is the first of 11 that AARP plans to make for tornado victims, the Associated Press said. Organizations receiving grants have submitted plans about how they will use funding to help storm victims. Grantees have promised that 100 percent of the money will be used for direct assistance in Oklahoma and no portion will go to administrative costs, the news service reported.

### Pope's comment on gays not a shift in teaching

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Pope Francis' comment that he will not "judge" homosexuals does not signal a change in Roman Catholic teaching about sexual morality, but reflects the pope's desire to portray the Roman Catholic Church as loving toward everyone, said Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Professor Gregg Allison. "I think some, perhaps many people, both outside and inside the Catholic Church, are hopeful that the pope's comments about homosexuality signal a change in the church's view of and policy toward homosexuality, but I have strong doubts that this is the case," said Allison, professor of Christian theology and author of the forthcoming book "Intrigue and Critique: An Evangelical Assessment of Roman Catholic Theology and Practice."

### The Word of God now popular on device apps

EDMOND, Okla. – Literally millions of Bible readers around the world now use the YouVersion app location instead of a traditional printed Bible, *The New York Times* reported. YouVersion is part of what LifeChurch.tv calls its "digital missions," *The Times* said. The app is nondenominational and available in more than 600 Bible translations and more than 400 languages. In July, the app reached 100 million downloads, placing it in same company with other large technology start-ups.

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

# Our churches are united by the Cooperative Program

The Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has never been all that glamorous – and churches that think it should be are kind of missing the point.

The Cooperative Program is the workhorse of missions in the SBC; it always has been and always will be – as long as it exists.

Today, some leaders say the Cooperative Program

has become a bloated, bureaucratic mess, but some of those voices lead large churches that share the same bureaucratic challenges.

The point is that all of our churches benefit from the Cooperative Program in one form or another, no matter what the size.

Many smaller churches give sacrificially to support Cooperative missions in Arkansas, throughout North America and the world.



## PRESSING ON

Tim Yarbrough  
Phil. 3:14

Many larger churches – while they may do many things on their own to support mission causes – benefit from the infrastructure of Southern Baptist missionaries deployed at home and abroad.

The bottom line is that the Cooperative Program is more important to Southern Baptists than ever before.

All we have to do is look around our towns and read stories about the state of our country and

the world to see the vast lostness that surrounds us.

Ministries of the state convention, our SBC entities and our seminaries would not exist – at least as they do now – if it were not for the collective giving of churches through the Cooperative Program.

It might be old-fashioned to champion the Cooperative Program, but count me as one of its biggest fans.



I've said this before and I'll say it again. It may not be until we reach heaven that we truly realize what the collective impact of the Coop-

erative Program has been on lost souls for all of eternity!

Tim Yarbrough is editor of the Arkansas Baptist News.

## Practice 'back-to-school' evangelism

As the end of summer vacation approaches and the start of school becomes a reality, the next few months become a perfect time to conduct intentionally evangelistic outreach events focusing on families with children. Following a hectic schedule of summer vacations and summer sports, going back to a typical school day routine is a major transition in the life of a family with children. At the same time, many of our churches are ramping up Wednesday night ministries for preschool, children and youth. Consider the following ideas to make this fall a season of outreach for your church.

Schools will be conducting open houses, sharing with parents all the expectations of the upcoming school year. Why not have an open house on Wednesday night and invite the community to come and see what the upcoming year will look like at your church? Print invitation/information cards to distribute to your members as a tool for ask-

ing friends and neighbors to come. Recruit greeters and set up a registration table, and consider offering a free meal as well. Create a small brochure about your church so families leave the event knowing about Sunday services, Sunday school classes and how they can contact the church if they have a need. Pay careful attention to new families who may have moved to your area and make a special visit to invite them to your open house.

Planning a tailgate party at the local high school football game is another way to help your church connect with people in the community. Pick one Friday night when a home game is being played and call the school to ask about a location where your church can set up some tables and chairs. Bring a grill, drinks and chips, and have church members bring a dessert. Consider making a sign that simply tells people what

church you represent. Ask your members to invite unchurched friends to the game and the tailgate party. Be sure to have some "especially friendly" church members paying attention so no one gets ignored when they come to the tailgate party.

Finally, fall festivals have been used successfully for years to not only attract people to your church, but to share the gospel. Many of these festivals take place at the church, but you may want to get outside your church walls and hold your festival in the community. Some guests would come to an event away from church before ever considering coming to your church. You can have invitations printed and enlist the youth group and adult Sunday school classes to blanket the community door-to-door with the invitations. Make sure you set up a registration table so you can gather

information on families to follow up with them.

Here are six ingredients that are vital to making these and other outreach events successful: praying, planning, doing promotion, being friendly to guests, gathering guest information and doing follow-up. The Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) missions ministries team has a manual for block parties that can be adapted to help you plan almost any outreach event.

Some additional ideas include: 1) giveaways as an incentive for registering; 2) evangelistic block parties and neighborhood cook-outs; 3) school supply giveaways in the community, and 4) Teacher Appreciation Sunday.

By being strategic, your church can turn this year's back-to-school activities into events that literally impact eternity!

Terry Bostick is team leader of the ABSC evangelism and church growth team. For more information or assistance with your outreach event visit [www.absc.org](http://www.absc.org).

## VIEWPOINT

Terry Bostick  
Arkansas Baptist State  
Convention



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## Family Matters

### Educational priorities

More than half (57 percent) of those age 18-28 report reading the Bible less than three times a year or never," according to The State of the Bible in 2013 survey conducted by the Barna Group. How can families adjust their priorities to change this?

As a new school year begins, parents will adjust bedtimes and alarm times to adapt to school schedules. Parents will help with homework each evening in preparation for the next day. Parents will emphasize educational priorities for their children.

As a Christian parent, I must also be concerned about the spiritual priorities of my children. I have to ask myself the question, "What am I doing at home to help my children consistently read, understand and apply the Bible in their daily lives?" Here are some suggested steps to help you develop spiritual education priorities.

1) Start by reading your Bible consistently. Children will be more likely to read the Bible if they see you reading your Bible. If you are new to reading the Bible, it will help to have a plan. Consider buying a one-year Bible or look online for a Bible reading plan to guide you. 2) Read the Bible to your children. 2 Timothy 3:14-17 provides a good model and outcome. 3) Parents and children can take turns reading an age-appropriate Bible together to help children understand and then spend a few moments discussing what was read. Gently help children develop a consistent discipline of reading the Bible each morning or evening. 4) Encourage your child to read the Bible on his or her own. It is important to ask if your children have read and what they have learned. Share insights from your own reading (see Deut. 6:6-9). Read the same passage each day and discuss what was learned.

Reading the Bible is vital to the spiritual education and growth of your children. In the process of making plans for a new school year, make Bible reading at home the priority of your child's educational foundation. It will encourage them to read and apply the Bible into their young adult years and beyond.

Ben Phillips leads the Arkansas Baptist State Convention family ministry team.



Phillips

Greatness. I've read the definitions. I know what it is. I've seen it.

Definitions for "greatness" include phrases such as "markedly superior in character or quality," "referred to individuals who possess a natural ability to be better than all others," "someone of outstanding importance or eminence." Good answers that are all close to the kind of greatness to which I refer, yet one element is missing. It is the element Christ added to these definitions when He described greatness.

"Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ... just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Matt. 20:26, 28).

According to Jesus, the qualities of true greatness involve humility, service and being servant-minded. It is the kind of heart that possesses a focus on others. It is the kind of service that acts in response to the proper motives. It is the kind of actions that do not seek glory for service rendered. It is the sort of kindness that is just as quickly shown to the "least of these" in society as to the cool, the beautiful and the powerful. It is the kind of giving that comes from hands that never expect to receive because of it. Those who achieve unbelievable, exponential greatness as defined by Christ make this a constant, consistent pattern of life.

I've seen this type of greatness. I've seen it in the family who leaves a secure position in a great church to become church planters or missionaries. I've seen it in the people who take personal vacation to go on a mission trip or accompany students to church camp. I've seen it in the busy pastor and staff who spend time after service at the back door talking much longer than necessary to those who are struggling. I've seen it in the pastor's wife of a large church who chooses to be a servant in the church working tirelessly at behind the scenes tasks. I've seen it in the women who give great amounts of valuable time to serve in WMU and missions organizations teaching this next generation about missions. I've seen it in associational missionaries who give great amounts of energy to young,

## 'Greatness'

struggling pastors because they see their, as yet unnoticed, potential. I see it in a retired associate executive director who agrees to take on the workload of assisting a freshman executive director. I've seen it in a senior partner of a large firm who gives time to work with students and who treats those who are struggling socially with the same kindness as those who are overachievers.

I've seen it in the woman, co-owner of a large and thriving business, who patiently spent much time on a youth trip with the teenage girl who was overwhelmed with problems and overindulgent with drama. I've seen it in the business men and women, and the pastors and staff, who give valuable time to serve on the boards of our agencies and institutions. I've

seen it in the men and women who ensure that every student who cannot afford to go to church camp have a sponsor. I've seen it in many of the Arkansas Baptist

State Convention staff who turn down ministry opportunities with much larger salaries to serve our state convention. I've seen it in the people who go out of their way to speak and show kindness to the mentally and physically challenged at church. I've seen it in the folks who miss valuable social and leisure time to drive church vans and buses on Sunday and Wednesday, picking up and taking home children so they can hear of the love of Christ.

I am constantly amazed, stunned and moved at the core of my being with the greatness I see in Arkansas. I get to work every day serving the great people mentioned in the examples above - plus, hundreds

more that this column does not have space to mention. Most greatness goes unrecognized in this world, but not one single act of true service goes unrecognized by our Savior. There are many in this state who have reached a level of exponential greatness because they live a continual self-sacrificing life of humble service for our Savior.

Greatness. I've read the definitions. I know what it is. I've seen it. The Arkansas Baptist State Convention is full of it.

J.D. "Sonny" Tucker is executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.



### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Sonny Tucker



## Retirement questions you should ask

As you anticipate or enjoy retirement, there are critical questions to be answered. The answers can vary drastically, and thus, the solutions are not always easy and clear.

"Retirement income planning is more than just a math problem, but you can't avoid the numbers entirely either," according to Moshe Milevsky, associate professor of finance at York University. He covers "the seven most important equations for your retirement" in his book by that title.

1) How long will your money last if you stop working today, invest your nest egg as safely as possible and try to maintain your current standard of living? 2) How many years will you live in retirement, and how random is that number? 3) What is your pension annuity worth, and how much does it cost to buy more lifetime income? 4) What is an appropriate spending rate from a nest egg, and on what economic factors does it depend? 5) What's the proper mix of stocks versus bonds in a retirement portfolio? 6) How important is leaving a financial legacy, and what is it really worth? 7) Taking everything into account, is your retirement income

plan sustainable?

The great fear that retirees face is that they will run out of money before they run out of life. An employee posits that "my month was longer than my paycheck," but he will get another paycheck next month. If the surplus runs out for retirees, then they are resigned to life on social security and any other fixed benefits or government assistance they receive.

As longevity increases, such retirement issues become increasingly important. Too many employees assume they will simply work longer without acknowledging that their health may not allow this or that their job may be passed on to a younger worker.

A wise person will plan for the future and answer critical retirement questions before the money and job run out!

Jesus said you should count the cost before you build a structure. You can ask, "Do I have enough money to build this?" Likewise, you could ask the same question about retirement planning.

David Moore is president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.



### FINANCIAL TIMES

David Moore

## PASTOR

*continued from page one*

‘Golden Gate,’” said Taylor.

Taylor said he was unsure what the phrase meant at first and continued down the hallway, looking for the church’s pastor. He found the associate pastor, and the two prayed together. During the prayer, Taylor felt God calling him to preach.

Despite his own attempts to fight his calling, being an incredibly shy young man, Taylor said he went up to the front of the church the next Sunday and accepted God’s call to preach.

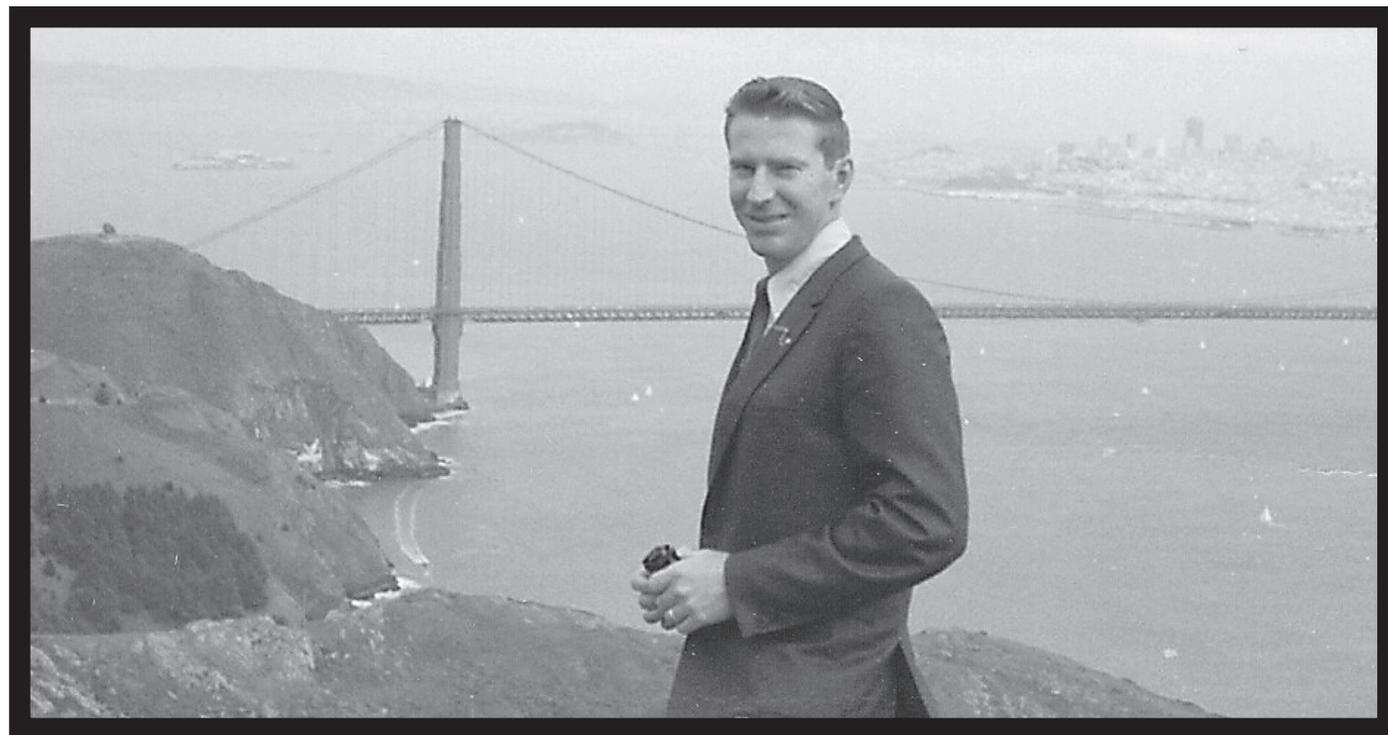
### College to California

Taylor never enjoyed school growing up, and his dream had always been to be a pilot. However, his mother urged him to visit Ouachita Baptist University (then Ouachita Baptist College) following his graduation from high school. Taylor said upon visiting, he knew Ouachita was where God wanted him to be.

Taylor enrolled at the school and loved his time there. After spending two years working at a mission church in Chicago, an experience he credits with helping him learn to preach, Taylor graduated from Ouachita in 1967, at which point he enrolled at Golden Gate Theological Seminary, bringing to fruition the vision he had had in the hallway of Immanuel when he was still in high school.

“When I was 21, my Mother sat me down one day and said, ‘I want to tell you a story. I wouldn’t tell you before, but I want to tell you now. When you were 2 years old, I was praying that God would use your dad in a special way. God told me that He wasn’t going to do that, but He was going to use Don,’” said Taylor.

During his time in seminary, Taylor became involved in various ministries, including ministry at San Quentin State Prison and pulpits throughout California. Taylor went on to graduate from Golden Gate with a Master of Divinity degree in 1970 and a Doctor of Ministry degree in 1980, and he also taught at the seminary for a time. Upon finishing his Master of Divinity degree, Taylor and his wife JoAnne, who is also from Arkansas, wanted to return to the Natural State to begin their ministry at home. However, God once again had other plans. Upon graduating in 1970, Taylor became pastor of West Avenue Baptist Church in Turlock, Calif.



Taylor stands before the Golden Gate Bridge in 1968 (above). Taylor at Barry Chapel at Ouachita Baptist University in 1962 (below left). Taylor is featured on a revival flier during the time he spent in Chicago in 1962 (below center). Taylor stands with Harlan, son of Isam B. Hodges, and Mancheta Hodges (below right) at Central Baptist Church, Alameda, Calif., in 2004 during the church’s 60th anniversary and Taylor’s 30th as pastor.

“God broke my heart and said, ‘Who is in charge of your life? You or Me?’ ... God opened the door. From the day we got there, the church started growing and we started baptizing people. We settled in, and we thought we were going to be there for the rest of our lives,” said Taylor.

After three years, the Taylors felt completely at home at West Avenue, but God called

minister for nearly 40 years in California and eventually return him back to pastor his childhood home church, but every single aspect of Taylor’s journey was precipitated by the faithfulness of another servant of Christ who paved the way for him.

“The first 12 pastors of Immanuel Baptist Church each stayed one year. And then a pastor came, and he stayed almost 10 years. He was a great evangelist and a great preacher. He had a burden for souls,” said Taylor.

Upon hearing the gospel for the first time in 1934 during a revival at her schoolhouse, Taylor’s mother was saved. The man who led the revival and baptized Taylor’s mother was the pastor who spent almost 10 years at Immanuel Baptist Church in Pine Bluff.

“In 1936, he (the pastor) felt that God was calling him out to California. So he went out to California and settled in Oakland at Calvary Baptist Church. And he started a school for young preachers. That school eventually became Golden Gate Seminary. It started there at Calvary Baptist Church in Oakland. ... He was the first president of Golden Gate Seminary,” said Taylor.

“Then on July 12, 1944, there was a group of people that wanted to start a church on the island of Alameda, (Calif.), and they needed somebody to moderate that meeting. So they went to this man who was once the pastor of this church (Immanuel Baptist). ... He moderated the meeting that started Central Baptist Church, where I pastored for



31-and-a-half years,” said Taylor.

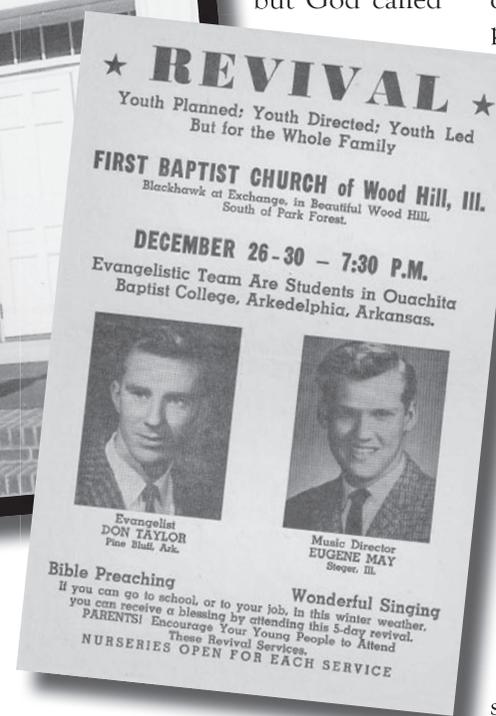
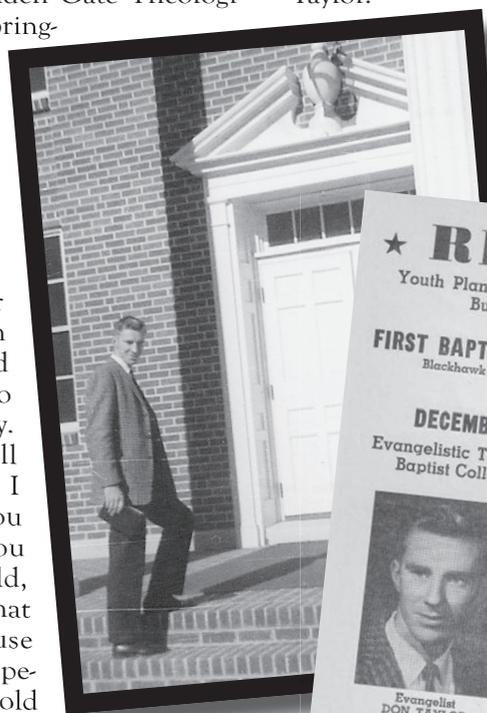
“His name was Isam B. Hodges. ... Here is this man who pastored this church (Immanuel Baptist), who baptized my mother, who started the school that God called me to, who moderated the incorporation of the church to which God called me and blessed me for 31-and-a-half years,” said Taylor.

“When I was celebrating my 30 years at the church and the church’s 60th anniversary, I got in touch with Isam’s son and invited him to come. When he showed up with his wife, I could hardly speak,” said Taylor, “I told him and the church, ‘All my life I have lived and ministered in the shadow of this giant.’”

“I feel like I have had a special life – not that I deserve it, but God has been so good,” said Taylor.

“Bro. Don is a great man of God,” said Dwayne Tanton, associational missionary for Harmony Baptist Association in Pine Bluff. “He is now serving as our associational moderator and treasurer. The church he leads as pastor, Immanuel Baptist, is always hosting events for us. Bro. Don’s story about growing up in Immanuel and then returning to pastor the congregation after 40 years is an amazing one. You can truly tell in his voice when he talks about his home church that the feelings run very deep. It was truly a God thing.”

Contact Caleb Yarbrough at [caleb@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:caleb@arkansasbaptist.org).



them to leave the church and move back to the bay area to the community of Alameda. Taylor became pastor of Central Baptist Church, Alameda, Calif., and he and JoAnne served there for more than 31 years.

### Following in the footsteps

It was not until years after he began his ministry that Taylor completely understood the intensity of God’s providence in his life. Not only was it amazing that God led Taylor to attend seminary 2,000 miles from his home in Arkansas,



## VBS

*continued from page one*

“God had placed this on my heart back in January that VBS needed to get back to going into the community to reach those who may not come to a ‘big’ church VBS,” said Susan Bumpas, preschool/children’s minister at Park Hill. “We were not reaching all the kids that I felt God needed us to reach.”

She and fellow Park Hill member April Walker discovered they both had the same burden.

“With both churches, Park Hill was a support team,” explained Bumpas. “Our goal was to support both of these churches so that, in the future, they have experience and leadership built to do their own backyard Bible club.”

Bumpas said Park Hill will also be available to support and mentor the churches throughout the year.

“We went in hoping to help support them for BKC but learned we could also help support them in getting a children’s ministry rolling in their church on a regular basis,” said Walker.

Bumpas said Park Hill also held their own VBS and collected nonperishable food items to help the two churches minister in their communities.

“Park Hill was able to reach out to three different neighborhoods this summer,” said Bumpas. “That would not have happened if we would have only offered VBS at Park Hill. It doesn’t matter where a person attends church, but what matters is that they are being reached. These partnerships helped to build that potential for each of the three churches to reach more people in their own community.”

### Crossgate Church, Hot Springs

Crossgate Church, Hot Springs, took their VBS, Parkapalooza – Carnival Craze, into the community and held it at three local inner city parks. About 175 individuals – guests and volunteers of all ages – took part at each park each evening. Activities, games, gospel object lessons, free food and more were available.

“Many children made personal faith decisions,” a statement released by the church said.

### Fellowship Baptist, Witcherville

Another church that is reaching out to share the VBS love in a unique way is Fellowship Baptist Church, Witcherville. They kicked the summer into gear – literally – through VBS sports camps.

Gary Martin, the church’s pastor, said church members have traveled across the nation – and even into Canada – for the past 15 years to help train churches in this type of VBS. He said their Sunday morning worship attendance is about 220, and it’s not unusual for 90 people to participate in these mission trips

those they have helped other churches hold, they have seen about 100 salvations, as well as other decisions,

VBS commencement service. And several young people were saved during the Bible school.

“Children will come because of the activities that are going on,” Wheeler said about using VBS as an outreach event. “You get to share the gospel with them, and parents are going to come and see their kids perform in a service of some type. They’re going to come and see them do an activity.”

His message during the commencement service was on faith evangelism strategy.

### Harvest Baptist, Wilson

His son, Bobby Wheeler Jr., pastors Harvest Baptist Church, Wilson, a church plant of First Baptist Church, Marion, also saw both children and adults saved.

Bobby Wheeler Jr. said a church from Alabama came to work with them for Harvest Baptist’s VBS event. They kicked it off with a citywide block party, and several adults and children gave their lives to Christ.

“I think VBS is a great way to share the gospel with the kids and to eventually from there be able to reach the parents, as well,” he said. “If you pour your heart into sharing the gospel with these kids every day for a week, you know that they’re going to go home and talk to their parents about it, and eventually that can get their parents asking questions as well.”

He said he believes “vacation Bible school allows an opportunity for children who might not come to church regularly to be able to interact with godly people and have their lives be impacted by godly people.” He shared the tremendous response his own church has seen as children experienced the church’s love.

“And the great thing about it is once the kids realize that they’re being poured into and these people are caring about them, then they are more receptive to retain the information that is being shared,” he said.

There were about 30 salvations – including those at the block party – during Harvest Baptist’s VBS, about 15-20 of which were adults.

Contact Jessica Vanderpool at [jessica@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:jessica@arkansasbaptist.org).



so far this year.

He said while any church can benefit from VBS sports camps, small-membership churches, in particular, find them beneficial because they draw in a lot of children but are fairly inexpensive and do not require a lot of space or a large number of staff.

In addition to going to individual churches to train them in this technique, Martin said the church has also partnered with Buckner and Concord Baptist associations to hold VBS sports camp training during each association’s VBS training days.



each year. In addition, they hold VBS sports camps in their own town.

“One of the things that we had noted was that in order to get the gospel to people, we have to somehow get into their circle of influence,” Martin said. He added there are a number of ways to do that, such as by making friends or going door to door, but sports draws people to their turf – kind of like a revival meeting would.

“Not everybody’s interested in revival meetings, but all people seem to be interested in sports,” he said. “And so when we created a place for sports to take place and we make it diverse enough where just nearly every kid in the community can get involved in it, they tend to come, and when they do, then we have the opportunity to present the gospel.”

Between their own camps and



Martin emphasized they also value traditional VBS and often encourage churches to use it.

### Joiner Baptist, Joiner

But regardless of the type of VBS employed, the results are changed lives – of both children and adults.

Bobby Wheeler, interim pastor at Joiner Baptist Church, Joiner, has seen this firsthand.

Wheeler saw 10 adults saved during his church’s Wednesday night

## 400-plus women celebrate WMU's 125th at Wellspring

LITTLE ROCK – Wanda Lee, Julia Ketner and other Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) leaders spoke during Wellspring – the Arkansas WMU annual meeting and an inspirational missions event for women – in celebration of Arkansas WMU's 125th anniversary.

More than 400 women attended the Wellspring event, which was held July 26-27 at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock. The event included worship, fellowship, hands-on ministry opportunities, breakout conferences and a 125th birthday party for WMU.

Program guests included Wanda Lee, executive director of national WMU and former national president of WMU; Ericka (last name withheld for security purposes), a native Arkansan who served overseas through the International Mission Board (IMB); Lorna Bius, first LoveLoud catalyst appointed by the North American Mission Board (NAMB), and Gayla Parker, former Arkansas and Maryland WMU staff and wife of Freddy Parker, pastor of Lifeway Baptist Church, Little Rock.

In honor of Arkansas WMU's 125th anniversary, this year's Wellspring theme was *The Story Lives On*.

Many aspects of the main sessions centered around WMU's anniver-

sary. A drama in the first session shared the history of WMU. Videos shared thanks and birthday greetings from many who have benefited from WMU in recent years. Music was led by Parker and Becky Moore, pianist at Immanuel Baptist. Music began with more traditional songs in the first session and transitioned to more contemporary songs by Saturday afternoon.



Wellspring attendees examine historical WMU documents.

During the program, David George, president of the national WMU Foundation, presented Krissy Thompson of Fort Smith with this year's Sybil Bentley Dove Award (see related story below), which is given annually to an outstanding Christian Women's Job Corps participant. The award is accompanied by a \$2,200 grant.

The conference attendees were given the opportunity to take part in hands-on ministry opportunities as

part of the event. These opportunities included creating fleece blankets for children and teenagers at Arkansas Children's Hospital and bringing items to fill buckets for the Baptist Global Response Bucket Project, which will be used in hospice care in developing countries.

Attendees also raised money through donations and a silent auction for WMU's Arkansas Touch Tomorrow Today Endowment Fund. They raised more than \$15,000, bringing the endowment total to \$108,000.

Arkansas WMU officers were also elected at the meeting. These were Diane Blackwood of Family Fellowship Baptist Church, Jonesboro, president; Carol Foster of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Paragould, vice president; Cindy Barker of Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock, secretary, and Mary Katherine Webster of Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock, treasurer.

Attendees celebrated the anniversary of Arkansas WMU with a birthday party Friday night, as well as with a 125th anniversary photo booth and a room lined with historical WMU documents and photos.

WMU published a prayer guide that led participants through 125 days of prayer leading up to the Wellspring event.

"Wellspring was a great time to celebrate the 125-year legacy of Arkansas WMU and to be inspired by those who have led us through these years," said Diane Parker, ABSC missions support team leader and Arkansas WMU executive director.

"As we were reminded of those who have mentored, participated, given and prayed for missions in the past, we have been challenged to step into the coming years with the renewed vision of assisting Arkansas churches in understanding and being radically involved in the mission of God."

Other program personnel included Parker; Diane Blackwood, Arkansas WMU president; Melinda Bunyard of First Baptist Church, Fayetteville; Clemmie Edwards, former Arkansas WMU president; Rachel Wait Ekensear of Immanuel Baptist; Gary Hollingsworth, pastor of Immanuel Baptist; Julia Ketner, chair of the Arkansas WMU 125th celebration committee; Vickey Lloyd of University Baptist Church, Fayetteville; Jana McKnight of Immanuel Baptist; Kaye Miller, former state and national WMU president; Carolyn Porterfield, former Arkansas WMU staff; Judy Shaddox, former Arkansas WMU president, and Sandy Wisdom-Martin, former Arkansas WMU staff and current WMU of Texas executive director.

## Arkansas woman finds hope through CWJC, wins award

Laura Wilson  
WMU

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – Imagine feeling helpless in changing your future, not having anyone to turn to for help and not having a place to call home. This is how Krissy Thompson described her life before coming to Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) in Fort Smith.

"I was a night club entertainer and living in my car," Thompson said. "My father committed suicide when I was 25, and I was all alone, drinking to cover up the pain. I didn't have anywhere to go."

Thompson went to Grand Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Smith looking for counsel, and it was there that they told her about Fort Smith CWJC.

Founded by national Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) in 1997, CWJC provides a Christian environment in which women in need are equipped for life and employment through biblical nourishment. Each participant is paired with a mentor to guide, encourage and keep them accountable. Women receive training in life skills to help them attain education, job-readiness and self-sufficiency.

"I came to CWJC in deep spiritual darkness, alone and confused with no one to guide me," said Thompson. "CWJC took me in and

met me where I was with loving arms I had never experienced before. I received teaching and care that I so desperately needed at that time."

Miranda Curbow, Thompson's mentor in CWJC, described Thompson as a single mom determined to make a life change and rebuild her life.

"Krissy is a believer, was baptized, is a member of a local church and is attending a community Bible study currently," said Curbow. "She has completed an inpatient alcohol abuse recovery program and attends AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) meetings regularly."

Curbow said she has been sober for more than a year and has "completed a 10-week course on parenting skills."

Thompson supports herself with a part-time job in child care and is attending the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith, working toward her bachelor's degree in psychology.

"My plan is to finish school quickly and seek a career in social services," said Thompson. "That way I can provide for my children and give them what they need."

Thompson is this year's recipient of the Sybil Bentley Dove Award, which is given annually to an outstanding CWJC participant.

"This endowment will pay for a portion of her college tuition," said Curbow. "It will allow her to contin-



Krissy Thompson (holding award) was this year's winner of the Sybil Bentley Dove Award which is given annually to an outstanding CWJC participant and accompanied by a \$2,200 grant. Also pictured from left: Diane Blackwood, Arkansas WMU president; Diane Parker, Arkansas WMU executive director; Wanda Lee, national WMU executive director; Valerie Fitch, site coordinator of Fort Smith CWJC, and David George, national WMU Foundation president.

ue in school toward her bachelor's degree. With a bachelor's degree, she will seek a career in social services, which will enable her to be financially stable. Mostly, she can give back to the community with a solid, godly reputation."

When asked what she would say to other women who have experienced similar situations, Thompson responded, "I would mention God's Scripture about Jesus saying that He will never leave you or forsake you when you belong to Him. God has given me strength and courage to have faith in Him and lean on Him through the tough times instead of taking the easy way out ... sin."

Now Thompson no longer feels

helpless in changing her future. She said she now has a godly mentor, as well as her Savior to turn to, and a place she and her daughter, Tommie, can call home. Thompson's life has changed from being alone to a life filled with hope, friends and the love of Christ.

"Currently, my future is looking brighter," said Thompson.

"I have become a more stable mother able to provide care and love for my child, attending church and becoming more involved in the community. Most importantly, my relationship with my Savior is growing every day."

Laura Wilson is a senior at University of Alabama at Birmingham.

# Muleriders spread gospel by Acts 1:8 example

MAGNOLIA – What does a “Mulerider” have to do with Acts 1:8?

More than one might think.

The battle cry, “Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and ends of the earth,” rings loud and clear in the minds of Arkansas Baptists. They love it, quote it, believe it and act on it.

David James, Arkansas Baptist State Convention collegiate ministry team leader, explained that Acts 1:8, or the Acts 1:8 mission, is not only located in the Book of Acts, it is seen by some as the outline of the Book. He said it is the “leaven of the acts of the Church as the gospel spread from a local movement to the ends of the world.”

And Muleriders – the term used for students and personnel at Southern Arkansas University (SAU) in Magnolia which stems from the school’s Mulerider mascot – are hard at work carrying out the Acts 1:8 mission.

James said Robert Pinkston, Robert Turner, Ben Phillips and Mike Sandusky, are examples of Muleriders who served as Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM) campus ministers at SAU.

And he pointed to Mali, Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey and

Arkansas as locations where SAU campus ministers have moved after leaving SAU.

“In other words, Arkansas Baptists are moving from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth, not just mobilizing collegians, as marvelous as that is. We are mobilizing campus ministers to the ends of the earth,” said James. “Lynn Loyd, also once a Mulerider, moved from SAU to the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, BCM and is now the collegiate ministry team mission consultant for the

Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Mulerider Ben Maddox works at Mississippi College as collegiate minister. Mulerider James Smalley retired in Arkansas after 30 years with Arkansas collegiate ministry.

“Muleriders are clearly Acts 1:8 missionaries from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.”

“But the Mulerider story is not just a geography lesson,” said James. He shared what Adam Tanner, a contributor to Forbes.com, posted July 22: “Just knowing a birth date, gender

and ZIP code is enough information to identify as many as 87 percent of people in the United States ... that means that knowing three



Mike Sandusky (green shirt), campus minister at Southern Arkansas University (SAU) in Magnolia, prays with students during an SAU Baptist Collegiate Ministry mission trip in Mena.



## Sheffield named interim ABSC assoc. exec director

LITTLE ROCK – Jimmie Sheffield has been named interim associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC).

Sheffield, 75, previously served in the position of associate executive director from 1986 to 2003. Don Pucik, who succeeded Sheffield in 2003, resigned from the position in June after being named pastor of Wynne Baptist Church, Wynne.

J.D. “Sonny” Tucker, ABSC executive director, said in a statement about Sheffield’s hiring, “It is a tremendous honor for me to serve alongside Jimmie Sheffield.”

“There are several things about him that really stand out. Jimmie has

a deep love for God and the work of Arkansas Baptists. You do not have to be around him long before you realize the spiritual depth he possesses. Depth like this is only achieved by years of walking with God and years of being a man of prayer,” said Tucker.

“Jimmie is a man of integrity. You never have to question his motives, respect for people, commitment to playing by the rules, handling of money or being at the top of his game day in and day out. He has an unrelenting work ethic. Jimmie also possesses an un-

canny spiritual wisdom and discernment,” he said.

Tucker added, “For most of my 16 years as pastor, whenever I encountered difficult decisions or circumstances, Jimmie was one of the first from whom I sought counsel. He did not always tell me what I wanted to hear, but he was always right.”

Sheffield has served in a number of church and denominational capacities over the years, including administrator of Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock, and as associate pastor,

minister of education, minister of music and minister of youth in various Texas, Tennessee and Louisiana churches.

Additionally, he has served as interim or intentional interim pastor of First Baptist Church, Camden; First Baptist Church and Temple Baptist Church, both in Searcy; First Baptist Church, Cabot; Second Baptist Church, Jacksonville; South Side Baptist Church, Pine Bluff; First Baptist Church, Mayflower, and Lonoke Baptist Church, Lonoke.

Sheffield and his wife Annette reside in North Little Rock. They have two daughters and five grandchildren.



Sheffield

## Master’Singers scholarships awarded

THE ARKANSAS Master’Singers recently awarded the Master’Singers Memorial Scholarship to Wade Stotts and Alexandra Whitlow.

Stotts, from Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro, attends Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia. Whitlow, from Concord Baptist Church, Van Buren, attends Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Scholarship recipients are chosen

based on a number of criteria. The person must be pursuing a full-time call to vocational music/worship ministry, maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA and be involved in local church ministry.

“The number of applicants grows each year,” said Larry Grayson, Arkansas Baptist State Convention leadership and worship team member. “The selection committee studies their applications, written testi-

mony and recommendations to determine which applicant(s) to award the scholarship.”

Funds from the scholarship are provided by “love offerings” from Master’Singers Festival of Song concerts, said Grayson.

The Arkansas Master’Singers are ministers of music/worship leaders, directors, accompanists, choir leaders, pastors and staff members from Arkansas Baptist churches.

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## Cooperative Program touches Arkansas, world

LITTLE ROCK - "I am convinced there are several things Arkansas Baptists have running through their veins. One of those is an intense commitment to the Great Commission," writes new Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) Executive Director J.D. "Sonny" Tucker.

"I am asked regularly, 'Are we called to give to missions or to go on missions?' The answer is, 'Yes.' We are to both give and go. One of the greatest avenues of missions giving that makes incredible impact is giving through Cooperative Program (CP) missions."

Serving as a pastor in local churches for many years before being chosen to lead Baptists in Arkansas in 2012, Tucker can attest to the impact of the Cooperative Program in the Natural State and throughout the world.

Today, perhaps more than ever, a church's commitment to supporting the Cooperative Program is key to Southern Baptists reaching the world for Jesus Christ, Tucker believes. Ministries of the ABSC would not be possible without that support.

"Thank you, Arkansas Baptists, for your love and passion for missions and for your commitment to work cooperatively to fulfill the Great Commission. When you put together the spiri-

tual synergy of approximately 1,525 congregations in Arkansas, the effect on Arkansas is incredible," said Tucker.

"When you pool the Arkansas synergy with the 45,000 Southern Baptist congregations in the U.S. and Canada, the impact is, again, incredible. Nationally and globally, the SBC baptizes around 500,000 people annually and plants approximately 30,000 new churches!"

Tucker added that because of Arkansas Baptists' commitment to Cooperative Program, missions, "We impact international students, children, women considering abortion, unreached and underserved communities and people groups, churches wanting to be revitalized, missionaries, church planters, the hurting, the hungry, churches desiring to get to the next level, higher Christian education, churches without pastors, small group teachers and people desiring to more effectively share their faith."

"(And) that is just the tip of the iceberg!" he added. "Thank you, Arkansas Baptists, for making last year a great year of Cooperative Program impact. Let's ask our great God to do even greater things in the future!"

Rusty Hart, Cooperative Program specialist at the ABSC, said it is important to promote CP giv-

ing regular in the church, but not everyone knows exactly how to do it effectively.

While some members have served in their churches for many years, they may not have a good understanding of where the money goes, Hart said.

"Unfortunately, our churches are filled with members who don't understand the Cooperative Program but don't want to appear stupid by asking about it," he said.

Hart offered some key ways to promote the CP in any church to raise awareness without being boring.

**1) Take advantage of free promotional materials.** Free resources are available to all churches. "We gladly provide brochures explaining the distribution of CP funds, posters that highlight CP giving or general pamphlets that help people understand the needs in our world," said Hart. "You can use them as bulletin inserts or make them available during Sunday school or other church meetings. We highly recommend that you have them available throughout the year somewhere in the church building so that interested people can pick them up at any time."

## Where does my gift go?



**1. Your gift**, which is comprised of your tithe (10% of what God provides) and offerings above your tithe, is given to the Lord through your local church. This puts love in action ...



**2. ... in your church and community.** The numerous programs, ministries and missions of your **local church** utilize the greatest portion of your gift.



**3. Your church** commits part of your gift to reaching people through the Cooperative Program (CP). The first stop for your gift is the **Arkansas Baptist State Convention**. There a portion of your gift is used to put love in action through a wide assortment of ministries and missions.



**4. The state convention** forwards part of your gift to the **Southern Baptist Convention** to help missions and ministries in North America and around the world.



**5. A waiting world** hears and responds to the gospel, thanks to your gift.

## What is the Cooperative Program?

THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM is the plan Southern Baptists use to fund missions causes. The Cooperative Program helps support international and North American missionaries, state convention mission work, Baptist organizations and more! Because of the gifts of Arkansas Baptists, numerous decisions have been made for Christ, women have chosen life over abortion and collegians have served on mission around the world. And that is just the beginning of how Arkansas Baptists have made an impact on the kingdom of God through the Cooperative Program.



## How are CP funds distributed?

### National/International Missions

International Missions	21.44%
N. American Missions	9.74%
Theological Education	9.47%
Ethics & Religious Liberty	0.70%
Facilitation Ministries	1.36%
<b>Total National/International</b>	<b>42.71%</b>

### Shared Ministries

**Total Shared Ministries: 0.61%**

### Arkansas Missions

Arkansas Baptist Assembly	1.15%
Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes	2.64%
Arkansas Baptist Foundation	1.55%
Arkansas Baptist Newspaper	1.32%
Christian Education	19.47%
Ouachita Baptist University	
Williams Baptist College	
Pastoral Scholarship Fund	
State Missions/Ministry Efforts	24.08%
General Ministries (Church Annuity Plan, etc.)	6.47%
<b>Total Arkansas:</b>	<b>56.68%</b>

*Note: Percentages were calculated based on 2013 fund distributions.*

BECAUSE  
you  
gave  
last  
YEAR

to the COOPERATIVE PROGRAM



1617 FAMILIES ENGAGED TO BUILD FAITH AT HOME THROUGH THIRTY-NINE FAMILY MINISTRY EVENTS

3,664 CAMPERS AT SILOAM SPRINGS

299 DECISIONS MADE

319 BABIES SAVED FROM ABORTION



MINISTRY ON 36 ARKANSAS CAMPUSES

Through ABSC Baptist Collegiate Ministries BCM BAPTIST COLLEGIATE MINISTRY

662

COLLEGIANS MOBILIZED TO SERVE ON MISSIONS AROUND THE WORLD



260,877 INDIVIDUALS WERE FED THROUGH HUNGER MINISTRIES



27 NEW CHURCHES WERE PLANTED 280 PLANTERS AND LEADERS WERE TRAINED IN NEW CHURCH PLANTING

OVER 1300 PROFESSIONS OF FAITH Through Arkansas CP Missionaries



2,754 PERSONS REACHED FOR CHRIST THROUGH ARKANSAS BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION MISSIONS



ARKANSAS BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION

## CP

continued from page 10

2) **Make the most of all promotional opportunities.** “We often think that CP promotion is dependent upon printed media, but that may not be the most effective tool,” said Hart. “A 2-minute testimony preceding the offering that shares a salvation experience made possible by our CP giving may be just the spark people need to place a little more in the plate. A sermon illustration that includes a one-line statement such as, ‘This woman came to Christ as a result of your giving through the Cooperative Program,’ might be just the reminder people need to know that their giving is having an impact on the world. While occasional videos in services work great, it is the small reminders that we hear repeatedly that drive home the fact that CP really is making a difference in the world on a continual basis.”

3) **Focus on impact.** “Most churches think that Cooperative

Program promotion is synonymous with the latest pie chart of the percentage breakdown of fund distribution. While this is important, it really does little to motivate Southern Baptists to give,” said Hart. “Instead of relying on graphics, why not focus on impact? When people see that their giving is having an eternal impact here in Arkansas, across America and around the world, they



**COOPERATIVE PROGRAM**  
**Love In Action**

know that CP is relevant. Nothing motivates Southern Baptists to support the Cooperative Program like hearing about changed lives!”

4) **Have a yearly celebration emphasis.**

Hart added that even if a church takes the previously mentioned promotional steps, it is still a good idea to dedicate a service or “season of emphasis” each year to highlight the Cooperative Program. “To avoid repetitiveness, focus on new victories for that year, sharing stories of conversions, the latest statistics from all of our CP-funded endeavors and celebrating all that God has used us to accomplish around the world,” said Hart. “A yearly emphasis reminds people of all the varied ministries that their money is supporting while

also helping them see the eternal impact they are having. Using the CP Promotion Month Packets makes it easy to have all the information you need. Whether you choose a Lest We Forget monthly theme or a Celebrate the Victory service, Southern Baptists need to be challenged anew to be Great Commission people.”

Hart said it is important to not assume all church members already understand the Cooperative Program.

“With an influx of new members from non-SBC backgrounds or

transfer growth from churches that may not have promoted CP, you may have many in your congregation who don’t have a clue,” he said.

“Could it be that by promoting the Cooperative Program and celebrating the victories of all that it does in our world, your church giving would increase and passion for missions would sweep through the church? May it be so!”

For information or to request promotional materials, contact Hart at rhart@absc.org or 501-376-4791, ext. 5158.

**Missions Getaway for Girls**      **CAMP-O-RAMA For Boys**

**Girl's Cost: \$50 each**  
Cost covers lodging in cabins, meals, and activities

**Boy's Cost: \$15 each**  
Cost covers activities, boys bring tents and meals

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SPRINGLAKE BAPTIST ASSEMBLY  
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- \* CALL 501-376-4791 EXT. 5137

VISIT THE ARKANSAS CHILDREN'S MISSIONS FACEBOOK PAGE:  
[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/ARKANSASCHILDRENSMISSIONS](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/ARKANSASCHILDRENSMISSIONS)

MISSIONS GETAWAY/CAMP-O-RAMA IS A COOPERATIVE PROGRAM EVENT OF THE MISSIONS SUPPORT TEAM AND ARKANSAS WMU



## Acts 1:8 One Day Mission Trip

For information, go to [www.absc.org](http://www.absc.org), or call Breck or Oleta, toll-free in state, 800-838-2272, or in Little Rock, 501-376-4791, ext. 5150. A ministry of the Cooperative Program and Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions offering.

**Saturday, Oct. 5**  
**Harrison Area**  
**A Mississippi River Ministry Project**  
**8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**  
**Cost: \$10 (includes lunch, special dietary needs not provided)**  
**Deadline to register: Sept. 18**  
*(Team assignments for registrations received after Sept. 18 will be made by coordinator and informed by email only)*

Mail to: Acts 1:8 Trip, Missions Ministries Team, ABSC, 10 Remington Dr., Little Rock, AR 72204 by Sept. 18. (Copy & complete this form for each person attending.) Make check payable to ABSC or call 800-838-2272, ext. 5150, with credit card information. Please PRINT legibly.

Your name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Cell # \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_ Age if under 18 \_\_\_\_\_  
Team choices (must list 3 by name in case first choices are full):  
1st choice \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd choice \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd choice \_\_\_\_\_  
Special skills: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Questions? \_\_\_\_\_

## Ministry Opportunities

- Prayer walking
- Children's activities
- Senior adult ministry
- Home repairs/painting
- Health/dental clinics
- Youth sports camps
- Evangelistic teams
- Yard work teams
- Block parties
- Children's Fishing Derby
- Cowboy Ministries



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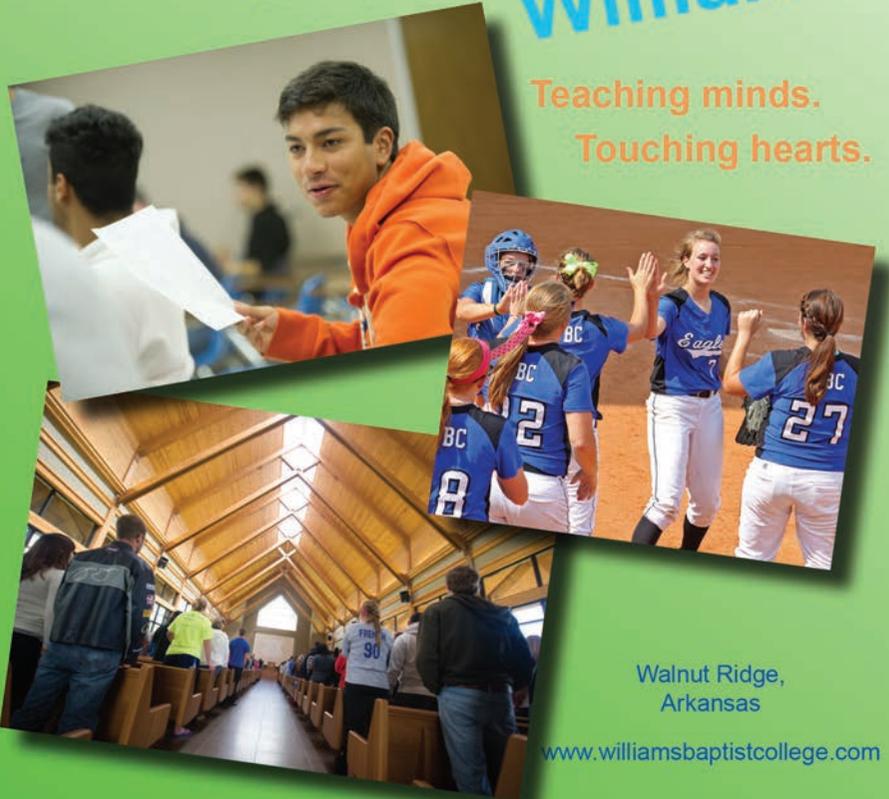


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## 6 ways the Cooperative Program impacts your church

WHEN WE THINK of the Cooperative Program (CP), our focus is usually on the impact we can have upon the world. While we rightfully place the vision on the lost, the reality is the CP can have a lasting impact upon each individual and each local church that participates. Following are six ways the CP makes an "impact" on your church. The Cooperative Program:

**Increases** awareness of what God

is doing in our world. Through the Cooperative Program, we are seeing hundreds of thousands come to Christ each year, and it reminds us God is still moving among us.

**Motivates** personal commitment to evangelism. When we make missions a priority and begin to catch a vision for what God can do, we become more and more motivated to share the gospel.

**Prepares** churches to reach the

lost around them. The CP is continually strengthening churches to be better prepared to reach the lost around them.

**Allows** for practical involvement in missions. With more than 12,000 missionaries in North America and around the world, we have the unique chance to get personally involved through prayer, by sending resources and materials or by going to lend a helping hand.

**Connects** churches together for maximum potential. Regardless of size, the CP takes churches to places they might never go and helps them share with people they might never meet face to face.

**Ties** each individual and every church to fulfilling the Great Commission. When a church is committed to the CP, they are a part of a comprehensive strategy to fulfill the Great Commission.



*A big thank you to Arkansas Baptists for their hard work and support this year in Disaster Relief!*

In 2013 Arkansas Baptists have heard and answered the call locally; in Shawnee and Moore, OK; in Hannibal, MO; Waldron, AR; and Eagle Pass, TX. Over 4700 Buckets of LOVE were collected by 85 churches, associations, and individuals and delivered to the hurting people of Oklahoma - and it's only July!

**Thank you Arkansas Baptists for your incredible service!!!!**

*Thank You, Arkansas Baptists, for providing Cooperative Program support to allow us to help ministers, missionaries, widows & widowers, the elderly, and so many others!*



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### MULTI-HOUSING MISSIONS CONFERENCE

Focus on multi-housing missions/church planting

**Saturday, August 24**

10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Arkansas Baptist State Convention building,  
10 Remington Dr., Little Rock

**No cost!**

**Speaker topics:** Multi-housing missions development, church planting in multi-housing settings and prayer walking.

**Breakout sessions (pick one):** strategy for multi-housing missions (SSM), the basics of simple church in multi-housing settings (BSC) and children's ministry (CM).

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Address: \_\_\_\_\_

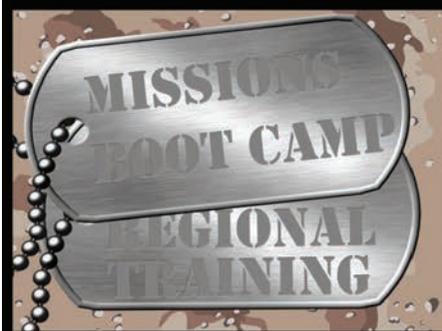
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Check only ONE area: SMM  BSC  CM

**DEADLINE: August 16, 2013**

Please mail form to: Multi-Housing Conference, Attn: Oleta Raines, Arkansas Baptist State Convention, 10 Remington Dr., Little Rock AR 72204. Or email information to oraines@absc.org.

Contact Oleta Raines at 501-376-4791, ext. 5150



### 2013 REGIONAL MISSIONS TRAINING

For all church & associational missions leaders

Be all you can be for missions discipleship.

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**MEN'S MISSIONS/MINISTRY**

- \* EMPOWERING & EQUIPPING MEN TO MAKE DISCIPLES
- \* HOW TO USE RAs TO MAKE DISCIPLE-MAKERS



**WOMEN ON MISSION/ ADULTS ON MISSION**



**HOW TO TEACH STUDENT MISSIONS**



**HOW TO TEACH CHILDREN'S MISSIONS**



**HOW TO TEACH PRESCHOOL MISSIONS**

\*\*\*\*\*

ALL SESSIONS ARE OPEN TO MISSIONS LEADERS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN MISSIONS DISCIPLESHIP, INCLUDING THOSE WHO TEACH MISSION FRIENDS, GIRLS IN ACTION, ROYAL AMBASSADORS, CHILDREN IN ACTION, AND ADULT GROUPS.

#### 2013 SCHEDULE

- 6:00-6:15 OPENING
- 6:15-7:00 SESSION 1
- 7:00-7:15 BREAK
- 7:15-8:00 SESSION 2

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**SEPTEMBER 17**  
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FORREST CITY, AR

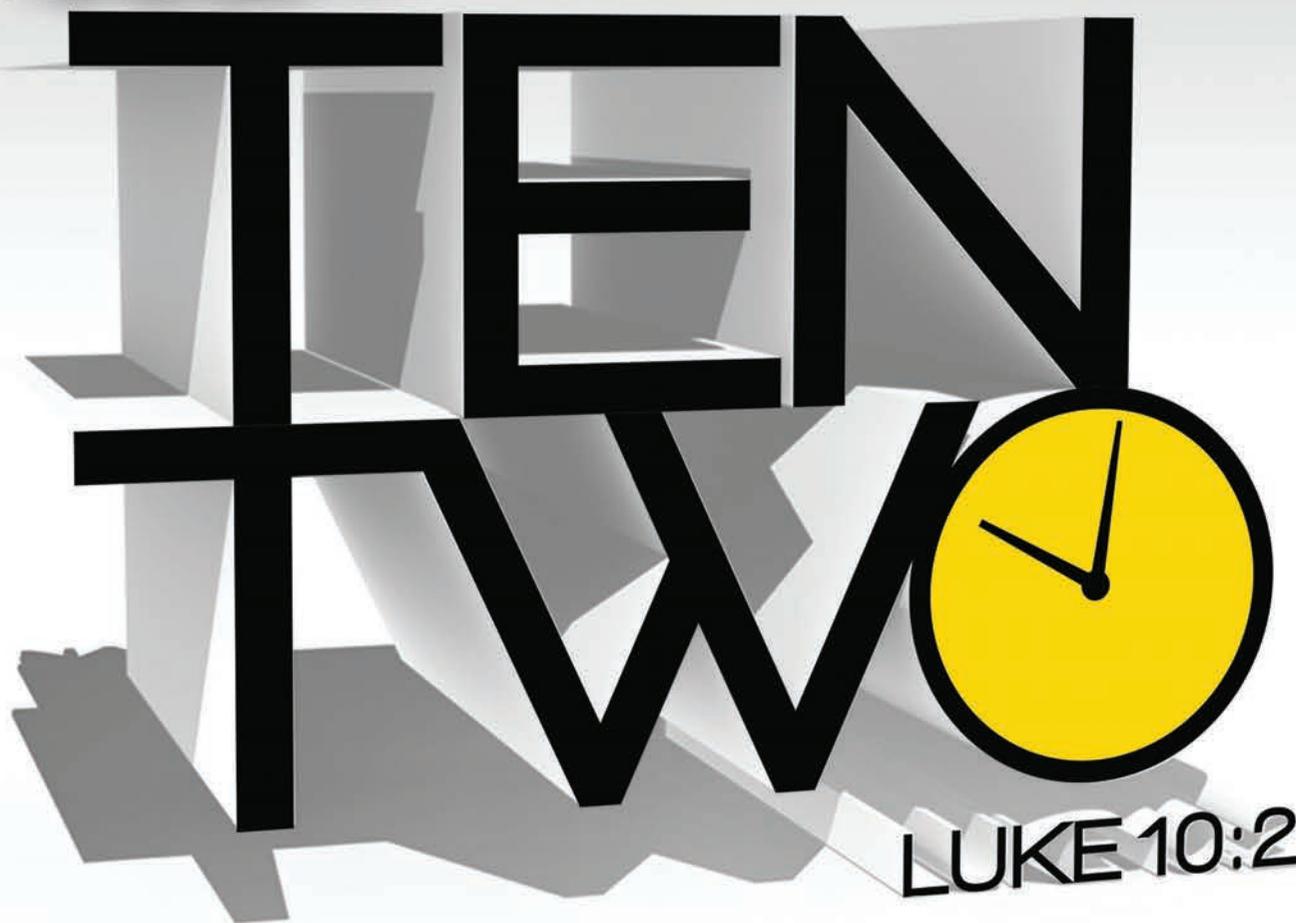
**SEPTEMBER 23**  
BEAR CREEK SPRINGS BAPTIST  
179 DEVITOS LOOP  
HARRISON, AR

**SEPTEMBER 24**  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
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OZARK, AR

**A ministry of the Cooperative Program and the Missions Support Team, Arkansas Baptist State Convention and Arkansas WMU.**

# IT'S TIME TO PRAY

NAMB



"He told them: 'The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.'"

**October 2, 2013**

Lead your church to join churches across North America on  
Wednesday, October 2, in praying Luke 10:2 for workers in God's harvest.

**Learn more at [namb.net/TenTwo](http://namb.net/TenTwo)**

## Hundreds of students worship at PraiseWorks

ARKADELPHIA – More than 370 campers attended this year's PraiseWorks, a worship arts camp for students who have completed grades seven through 12. The event took place July 15-19 on the campus of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia.

PraiseWorks "has proven to be one of the most innovative youth worship events, equipping future worship leaders with hands-on knowledge and giving them a place to discover and develop their God-given abilities," said Larry Grayson, Arkansas Baptist State Convention leadership and worship team member.

But students did more than learn about worship during the event. Many of them also made key life decisions.

Not only did 20 students accept Christ and more than 70 students rededicate their lives, but also 20-plus students were called to ministry, 171 committed to spend time alone with God daily, 175 dedicated themselves to being a student of worship and numerous students made other significant decisions.

Grayson said to his knowledge, this year's PraiseWorks attendance was the largest in the camp's 61-year history.

"The spirit of the camp was just incredible," he said. "I truly believe it was one of – if not the – best camp experiences I have ever had! It is important to enthuse and train up young worshippers and worship leaders, and that is just what happened."

During the camp, students chose from tracks focused on a variety of media, including drama, art, graphic design, stomp, video production, guitar and drums. In addition, they participated in either choir or praise orchestra.

Gary Gerber, associate professor of music at Ouachita Baptist University, served as camp choir director. Carter Threlkeld, minister of instrumental music at Bellvue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., served as camp praise orchestra director. Marty Collier, co-pastor of The Church on Rush Creek in Arlington, Texas, and campus pastor for the Mira Lagos campus, served as camp pastor. Grayson said Collier is a "PraiseWorks alumni" who previously lived in Ashdown.

"I could not have asked for better faculty or sponsors, and the students were equally amazing, cooperative and passionate," Grayson said.

"The worship times were overwhelming and powerful."

imagine  
PraiseWorks 2013



### Celebrating WMU's 125th at Wellspring

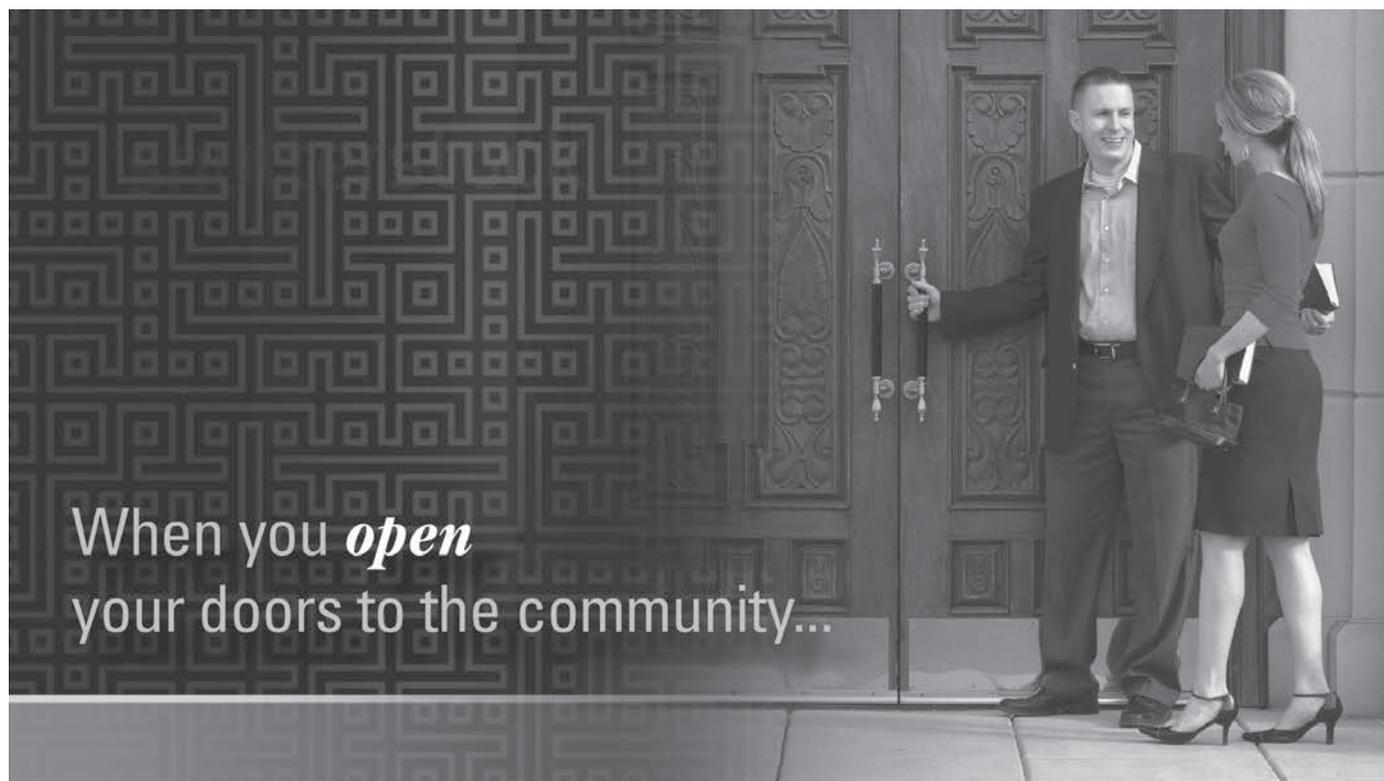
Mary Katherine Webster of Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock, newly elected Arkansas WMU treasurer, celebrates WMU's 125th birthday with a piece of birthday cake during Wellspring. The annual event drew women from across Arkansas July 26-27.

## Associational annual meetings schedule\*

Association	Date	Place/Time	Association	Date	Place/Time
Arkansas River Valley	Oct. 15	First Baptist, Delaware, 4:30 p.m.	Independence	Oct. 14	Pilgrims Rest Baptist, Batesville
Arkansas Valley	Oct. 21	First Baptist, Clarendon	Liberty	Oct. 21	TBA
Ashley County	Oct. 15	First Baptist, Crossett	Little Red River	Oct. 21	First Baptist, Heber Springs
Bartholomew	Oct. 21	Westside Baptist, Warren, 5:30 p.m.	Little River	Oct. 14	Kern Heights Baptist, DeQueen
Big Creek	Oct. 25	First Baptist, Viola	Mississippi County	Oct. 21	Gosnell Baptist, Gosnell
Black River	Oct. 15	First Baptist, Swifton	Mt. Zion	Oct. 14	Family Fellowship, Jonesboro
Buckner	TBA	TBA	North Arkansas	Oct. 15	First Baptist, Harrison
Buckville	Oct. 13	Mt. Tabor Baptist, Jessieville	North Central	Oct. 14	First Baptist, Shirley
Caddo River	Oct. 13	First Baptist, Mount Ida	North Pulaski	Sept. 23	Central Baptist, North Little Rock
Calvary	Oct. 15	Trinity Baptist, Searcy	Northwest Arkansas	Oct. 21	Charity Baptist, Rogers, 6:30 p.m.
Carey	Oct. 21	First Baptist, Bearden	Ouachita	Oct. 14	First Baptist, Hatfield
Caroline	Oct. 8	First Baptist, Biscoe	Pulaski	Oct. 22	Geyer Springs First Baptist, Little Rock, 11:45 a.m.
Centennial	Oct. 14	First Baptist, Almyra	Red River	Oct. 20	Beech Street Baptist, Gurdon, 3:30 p.m.
Central	Oct. 24	Hot Springs Baptist, Hot Springs, 1:30 p.m.	Rocky Bayou	Oct. 17	First Baptist, Evening Shade, 6:30 p.m.
Clear Creek	Oct. 8	Second Baptist, Clarksville	Southwest Arkansas	Oct. 15	First Baptist, Fouke
Concord	Aug. 25	First Baptist, Greenwood	Tri-County	Oct. 21	Angels Way Baptist, Marion
Conway-Perry	Oct. 19	First Baptist, Morrilton, 3 p.m.	Trinity	Oct. 14	Corners Chapel Baptist, Trumann
Current-Gaines	Oct. 15	First Baptist, Piggott	Wash. Madison	Oct. 21	New Hope, Springdale, 4:30 p.m.
Delta	Oct. 13	Bayou Mason Baptist, Lake Village, 6 p.m.	White River	Oct. 21	East Side Baptist, Mountain Home, 4 p.m.
Faulkner	Oct. 17	Friendship Baptist, Conway			
Garland County	Oct. 8	Antioch Baptist, Royal			
Greene County	Oct. 15	Calvary Baptist, Paragould			
Harmony	Oct. 21	Matthew's Memorial Baptist, Pine Bluff			

\*Information provided by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention

The staff of the Arkansas Baptist News is available to attend your association's annual meeting. Contact us at [jessica@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:jessica@arkansasbaptist.org).



When you *open* your doors to the community...

...trouble sometimes walks in.



**Jeff Laster**  
Church Administrator  
Wedgwood Baptist Church

Jeff Laster was shot *in his church*. Now he encourages ministries like yours to be better prepared.

September 15, 1999 was like many ordinary Wednesday evenings at Wedgwood Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas. There was a youth rally and concert. But there was also an intruder with two guns and a homemade pipe bomb.

Seven were killed — four of them teenagers. Seven more were wounded. Jeff was one of them.

"What is the value of safety? From Wedgwood's perspective, you can't put a price on that," he says.

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## Siloam shares Father's love

SILOAM SPRINGS – A few months ago, Danny Alford of First Baptist Church, Center Ridge, was reunited with his son, DeeJay Alford, after 15 years. This summer he brought his son to Camp Siloam, formerly Arkansas Baptist Assembly, for the first time, and his lost son was united with his heavenly Father.

Jason Wilkie, executive director of the camp, quoted Galatians 4:7, which says, "Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

"No story better illustrated the concept of a loving father taking back his son than the story of Danny and DeeJay," he said.

Camp Siloam offers thousands of students the opportunity to learn of Christ's love each year, said Wilkie, adding Camp Siloam hosts seven weeks of camp in the summer and youth retreats in the off-season.

Wilkie said summer camp attendance was up in 2013. So far, about 600 students have made life-changing commitments during summer camps. Almost 300 campers have been saved, about 200 have re-committed their lives and more than 50 have made commitments to missions.

"Each summer at Camp Siloam, we teach a scriptural theme with creativity," Wilkie explained. "We custom-write a five-part drama to illustrate the theme."

He said this year's drama is set in the 1950s and focuses on "Papa," who has a chain of diners but no heir to inherit them – until he meets Marie. Marie learns to serve people by working in The Gracie Spoon Diner, but she is conned into stealing Papa's recipe. However, she is forgiven and receives her inheritance and even more than she imagined could be possible.

"Today's youth are a fatherless generation," said Wilkie. "An infor-

See **SILoAM** page 18



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## Birthday benefits church ministry

Morgan Ison, member of Central Baptist Church, North Little Rock, recently celebrated a birthday by giving back. Friends were asked to bring canned goods and items for the Central Baptist Food Pantry in lieu of presents. A group of Morgan's friends went to the food pantry and worked with director Dale Prater to get sacks of groceries ready to give out to families for that week. From left: Airianna Johnson, Megan Williams, Laine Rainbolt and Morgan.



## VBS offering

Children from First Baptist Church, Sheridan, visited the Baptist Home for Children in Monticello June 26 to present a \$660 vacation Bible school (VBS) offering. Children collected change for the offering the week of VBS.

## CHURCH SERVICES DIRECTORY

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5153, or nelle@arkansasbaptist.org.



Students enjoy spending time at Camp Siloam, formerly Arkansas Baptist Assembly.

## SILOAM

continued from page 17

mal survey of campers conducted at camp told us approximately 75 percent of our campers come from fatherless homes. This summer, ... we wanted our campers to understand their identity as children of the King. We wanted campers to know God the Father and His incredible grace that is available for them."

He pointed to one speaker, in particular, who connected with campers on this level. Evangelist Ken Freeman spoke of struggles with his own father and his ability to forgive him.

"Campers and adults were touched by the need to forgive their dads," Wilkie explained. "Sixty-five campers came forward the first night of camp when Ken shared his testimony."

Camp staff members have also made an impact on campers' lives.

Wilkie explained how summer

staff member Tavarus McIntosh grew up without a father. Wilkie related that McIntosh's father came to town when he was young, and yet he didn't visit him. McIntosh got to pray with another camper whose father did the same thing to him.

In addition, Robert Coppedge, Camp Siloam program director, met five "lost children," and he was able to pray for them all week. By the end of the week, all five accepted Christ as Savior.

One camper in the student leadership program was challenged by his leaders to share the gospel with other campers one day. He acted out "the Bridge" gospel presentation using an actual bridge.

Sixty-five campers gathered to see his demonstration, and 10 were saved.

"Through these stories, one sees God continue to use Siloam in amazing ways," Wilkie said. "God is blessing this place where His name has been honored and remembered for 90 years."

## Church life

First Baptist Church, Clarendon, will feature evangelist David Ring as guest speaker Aug. 12. The service will focus on how to emerge victorious rather than victimized in

the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. Ring has cerebral palsy.

Ironton Baptist Church, Little Rock, will celebrate its 120th anniversary Sunday, August 25, during the 11 a.m. worship service. The service will be followed by a catered lunch. All former members and friends are invited. For more information, call 501-888-2693.

The Women on Mission group of Central Baptist Church, Hot Springs, will host Brinda Hall as guest speaker for their Aug. 13 meeting in continued observance of the 125th anniversary of Woman's Missionary Union. Hall will share about her recent mission trip to villages near Quito, Ecuador.

## On the move

Horace Gray retired July 14 from Temple Baptist Church, Benton.

Donnie Deaton has been called by First Baptist Church, Prescott, to serve as minister of youth.

## POSITIONS

## AVAILABLE



## Houseparent couples

■ Arkansas Baptist Home for Children, Monticello

## ■ Boys Ranch, Harrison

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ABCHomes is an agency of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and is compliant with Section 504 of the Rehab Act of 1973.

Submit your church news to  
jessica@arkansasbaptist.org or  
call 501-376-4791, ext. 5153.

# Lennon reaches out to 21st century women

CONWAY – From being a wife and mother to being a community leader and church member, women lead busy lives.

It's a fact that is not lost on Andrea Lennon, women's ministry leader, founder of True Vine Ministry and member of Second Baptist Church, Conway.

Lennon explained that in her travels around Arkansas, she has noticed women want a "meaningful relationship with God," but they "struggle with cultivating" that relationship.

She said women are overwhelmed by what they need to accomplish, and they feel they need to achieve excellence in their roles as wives, mothers, friends, co-workers, church members, etc.

"As I see women trying to navigate through life and all the different roles they fulfill, I notice that often women put their own needs, including spiritual growth, on the back burner," Lennon said.

She called this trend "alarming." "God allows women to invest in so many people. ... If we try to meet the needs of others when our spiritual tanks are running on empty, we forfeit the God-given opportunity to demonstrate that Jesus makes a real difference in our lives," she said. "We also stay frustrated as we draw on our own strength to tackle life's challenges."

In lieu of "this trend in women's lives," she has "simplified" her min-

istry approach.

"In both my speaking engagements, as well as my written resources, I do my best to focus on clear biblical teaching and practical application of God's Word to our daily lives," she said, adding she challenges "women to do three things: know the Truth, live the Truth and share the Truth."

One of the tangible manifestations of Lennon's simplified ministry approach is her recent devotional – "Free to Thrive."

The study differs from Lennon's previous Bible study, "Reflecting His Glory: From Conformity to Transformation," which is more of

a "traditional Bible study" and takes 30-35 minutes per lesson to complete.

Several churches both in and out of the state have offered the "Reflecting His Glory" Bible study, and many women have loved it and benefited from it. And Lennon said she is pleased with the response to it. But at the same time, she said some women have found the book's size and time-commitment daunting. So she wrote "Free to Thrive."

Lennon said she didn't feel like she had to sacrifice spiritual depth to create a helpful resource for busy women.

"In fact, spiritual depth is exactly what a busy woman needs," she explained. "They need their Bible study tool to cut to the chase. They need bottom-line truths, and they

need them as soon as possible. As a result, 'Free To Thrive' does not waste a single word. Each devotion can be completed in 10 minutes or less."

She described it as "a devotional book with thought-provoking questions" and added that it "presents a clear, biblical picture of freedom and invites the reader to know and experience freedom in every area of life."

"In each devotional, the reader is asked to read one verse, think about the meaning of that verse and then respond to that verse by setting a goal for their day," she said, adding that the study's key verse is Galatians 5:1.

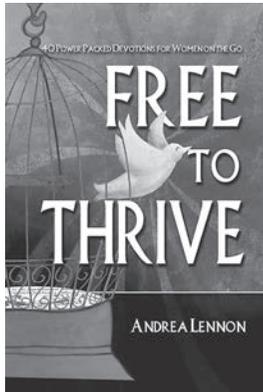
She said busy lives do not grant a "free pass" when it comes to Scripture memory and reading and study-

ing the Bible.

"In fact, when we use our busy-ness as an excuse, we allow our schedules to control our lives," Lennon said.

"I chose to look at my time in God's Word as a refuge/refuel time, rather than a task that must be completed," she explained. "This approach to valuing God's Word reminds me that the Bible was written thousands of years ago in order to capture and chronicle God's epic story. ... God, in His infinite wisdom, knew that we would need clear instruction as we walked on this Earth. As a result, God preserved His Word for you and me! My question is this: Why would we not spend time in His Word each day?"

For more information, visit [www.andrealennon.net](http://www.andrealennon.net).



*True Vine Ministry*

**Andrea Lennon**  
Women's Ministry Speaker  
and Author

Encouraging women to  
know the Truth, live the  
Truth, and share the  
Truth!

[www.andrealennon.net](http://www.andrealennon.net)  
[andrea@andrealennon.net](mailto:andrea@andrealennon.net)  
501-514-2581

## Classifieds

### PASTOR

Tuckerman FBC is in search of a **part-time/bi-vocational pastor**. Send resumes by email to [ddixonasp165@live.com](mailto:ddixonasp165@live.com) or Pastor Search Committee, C/O D. Dixon, 140 Greenhaw, Tuckerman, AR 72473.

Small northeast Arkansas church is in search of a **pastor**. Send all resumes to Manila BC, C/O Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 748, Manila, AR 72442.

New Hope Baptist Church, Omaha, is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Email resume to [nehope@omahaweb.net](mailto:nehope@omahaweb.net) or contact Bonnie at 870-426-3984.

Forty-Seventh Street Baptist Church is in search of a **pastor**, will consider bi-vocational. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee, 4700 Pike Ave., North Little Rock, AR 72118 or email [47thstbaptist@yahoo.com](mailto:47thstbaptist@yahoo.com). Accepting resumes through Aug. 31, 2013.

### OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

**Youth pastor** needed at Crystal Hill Baptist Church in Little Rock. Call 501-455-0669 or email [crystalhillbaptist@sbcglobal.net](mailto:crystalhillbaptist@sbcglobal.net).

**Someone to lead blended music for worship service and to direct a youth program.** This can be a full-time position or willing to divide into two bi-vocational positions. Send

resumes to Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church, 433 N. Mississippi, Nowata, OK 74048.

Glenwood First Baptist Church is looking for an energetic, outgoing, godly **student minister**, full-time position. Please contact 870-356-3133 or send resume to email [pastorphilipfbc@windstream.net](mailto:pastorphilipfbc@windstream.net).

Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Benton, seeking **bi-vocational youth minister**. Send resumes to Youth Minister Search Team, Ridgecrest Baptist Church, 900 Ridge Road, Benton, AR 72015.

Seeking **student pastor** for growing youth/college-age program. Energetic person or couple with an excitement to follow God and lead others to Christ. Send resume: [jayreb@windstream.net](mailto:jayreb@windstream.net) or 6817 Shannon Road, Pine Bluff, AR 71603, Pastor Bobby Hartsfield – 870-692-0558.

First Baptist Church, Atkins, is currently seeking a **full-time student pastor**. Please send all correspondence to [duffelbag55@gmail.com](mailto:duffelbag55@gmail.com). For additional information, please contact Ferrel Duffel at 870-838-3277.

First Baptist Church, Judsonia, is seeking a **part-time minister of music**. Email resumes to [fbcjud@gmail.com](mailto:fbcjud@gmail.com) or call 501-279-6748.

West Fork FBC is seeking a **full-time minister to students** who is excited and experienced in developing and reaching our young generation and their parents. Send all resumes and correspondence to [hclowerhunt@yahoo.com](mailto:hclowerhunt@yahoo.com).

Formosa Baptist Church, Clinton, is prayerfully searching for a **part-time worship leader** who can lead a blended service. Please send resumes or questions to [billytreece@hotmail.com](mailto:billytreece@hotmail.com) or Formosa Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1530, Clinton, AR 72031.

Walnut Valley Baptist Church is currently seeking **part-time worship pastor**. Contact Tim Forrest, [tforrest@cablelynx.com](mailto:tforrest@cablelynx.com) or send to 1698 N. Hwy. 7, Hot Springs, AR 71909.

New Mexico Baptist Children's Home is seeking a Christian couple to work as **houseparents** for a great group of kids. We offer a competitive salary with benefits, plus room and board. If this is your calling, please contact Bill Marker at 575-359-1254 or email [bill.marker@nmbch.com](mailto:bill.marker@nmbch.com).

Camp Paron is seeking a **married couple** willing to work flexible hours and varied tasks. Housing may be included as part of the pay package. Call 501-837-7362 for more information.

Holly Springs Baptist Church, Holly Springs, has two bi-vocational positions open – **youth pastor** and **worship leader**. Call David Dillard at 870-687-1590 for information.

### MISCELLANEOUS

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**Handbells:** White Chapel Bell Foundry of England, 3.5 octaves. \$20,000 OBO. 409-659-3641.

Williams Baptist College, Walnut Ridge, seeks a qualified individual with law enforcement experience to serve as **director of campus safety**. Applicant must be a commissioned security officer through the Arkansas Board of Private Investigators and Private Security Agencies and have an associate's degree (bachelor's degree preferred), as well as commitment to the college's values and mission. For a complete job description: [williamsbaptistcollege.com/employment](http://williamsbaptistcollege.com/employment). Submit application materials, including a letter of interest, resume and contact information via email to [hr@wbcoll.edu](mailto:hr@wbcoll.edu). Applications accepted until position is filled.

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## Red River DR team responds to Texas flooding

ARKADELPHIA – A six-person team of Red River Baptist Association disaster relief (DR) personnel recently returned from a weeklong assignment in Eagle Pass, Texas.

The Red River disaster relief team was selected to help provide meals for disaster relief teams doing “mud out” and cleanup jobs after the Rio Grande River flooded many homes along the river about six weeks ago.

Red River team members arrived July 14. They slept at and fed the work teams at First Baptist Church, Quenado, Texas, which is a short distance from Eagle Pass.

Harold Johnson, unit director and lead blue cap for the Red River disaster relief team, said the team prepared an average of about 80 meals each day. They returned to Arkadelphia July 20. Jane Strickland of Camden served as the team leader, and Ed Whitson of Curtis was the transportation coordinator.

The disaster relief team is sponsored by Red River Baptist Association, which is located in Arkadel-

phia. The team operates under direction of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC).

“The team’s mission is to prepare wholesome and nutritious meals for consumption by the victims of disasters and by emergency responders who are assisting them,” said Johnson.

“We are excited about how God has used the Red River Baptist Association DR team in the last year, with people going out on over five different responses,” said Joe Burt, associational missionary for Red River Baptist Association and active member of the association’s DR team.

Johnson said the team has responded to 13 disasters within Arkansas and 22 outside Arkansas since its inception in 1997.

Some recent disaster responses were in response to Hurricane Isaac in New Orleans and Superstorm Sandy in New York. They also supported Mission of Mercy, the Arkansas Dental Association’s free den-



Red River Baptist Association disaster relief personnel recently returned from serving in Texas. From left: Wayne Morrison of Magnolia; Charles Bell of Hot Springs; Jane Strickland of Camden, team leader; Sharon McClelland of Hot Springs; Jerry Poole of Greenwood, and Ed Whitson of Curtis, transportation coordinator.

tal clinic at Arkadelphia held May 31 and June 1. The team prepared breakfast and lunch – for a total of 2,250 meals – for patients waiting in line.

“The Red River Baptist Association feeding unit is a valuable asset of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention disaster relief ministry,” said Bill Cantrell, ABSC missions ministries

team member and missions mobilization strategist and ABSC disaster relief director. “Their commitment to serve those affected by a disaster is seen in the number of times they have been deployed, including their recent deployment to Eagle Pass, Texas, along with their openness to provide ministry through community outreach since 1997.”

## Master’ Singers overseas ministry trip planned for 2014

TEN DAYS. Ten thousand listeners. Four thousand decisions made. That’s what a musical group from Texas experienced while on a mission trip to Ukraine – and Arkansas Baptist musicians will have a similar opportunity for ministry next year.

The Arkansas Master’ Singers – a musical group for ministers of music and other staff members and their spouses, as well as choir members with a recommendation from their minister of music – will travel to Ukraine April 21-May 2 to minister through concerts.

“I prayed for an evangelical opportunity for Master’ Singers,” said Larry Grayson, Arkansas Baptist State Convention leadership and worship

team member. “I yearned for something where life-change will be the evident result. The Ukraine opportunity is by far the greatest opportunity of all my years of ministry.”

The Arkansas Master’ Singers will team with evangelist Michael Gott and will sing nine times in concert halls that seat 700-1,500 people. A ground crew is already at work in Ukraine, planning the events.

Grayson said it has been requested that one venue move from a location with the capacity for 1,000 seats to a location with the capacity for 5,000-plus seats.

And there will be no shortage of lost people among audience members.

“The Christians are told to bring

a nonbeliever as their ticket to get in, and they do just that,” Grayson explained. “They are given tickets, and they bring their guest with their name written on the ticket. Forty percent of the audience will be people who need Jesus.”

He continued, saying those names are prayed over by a prayer team during the event.

In addition, “Every word we sing will be translated into their language, so it will not be a ‘musical’ experience, but a God-speaking experience,” Grayson said.

At the end of each concert, the gospel will be presented. Audience members will be asked to write their decisions on their programs and take them to a certain location after the concert. Local pastors will follow up with them within a few days.

A similar format was used when the group from Texas traveled to

Ukraine for their mission trip.

“I still can’t believe I get to be a part of such an event,” said Grayson. “I am praying that as many of our Arkansas musicians can participate as possible. I think our lives will never be the same. I think worship ministry in Arkansas will be incredibly impacted.”

More than 100 Arkansas Master’ Singers have made commitments to participate in the trip. As long as flights are available, others are welcome to join the mission. To sign up now, participants must plan to be in Master’ Singers this fall since much of the preparation will be done as the group meets. Some nonmusical slots are available.

To watch a promotional video, visit <http://vimeo.com/63004987>.

For more information about the trip or about joining Master’ Singers, call 501-376-4791, ext. 5121.



## Ark. Baptist State Convention launches ministry job website

LITTLE ROCK – The Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) recently launched a new website – <http://serve.absc.org> – designed to help more churches fill needed ministry roles.

William Jaques Jr., ABSC leadership and worship team member, explained the website is designed as an online bulletin board where churches, associations and ABSC agencies and institutions will have the ability to post both paid and volunteer ministry positions.

Additionally, people who are seeking paid or volunteer ministry positions will be able to search for potential positions.

“The need for the bulletin board became apparent during evaluation of the efficacy of the ABSC’s online résumé system,” Jaques said. “Many churches request and receive résumés for ministry positions that need to be filled in their church on an annual basis. However, if a church

wanted simply to post an opening for a position, there was no place on the convention website for them to do so. Additionally, if the church needed to fill a position other than a ministerial position, such as custodial or secretarial, they were forced to advertise in other places.”

He said with the release of the new website, ABSC churches and associations may now post openings for multiple types of employment opportunities. However, the site also allows them to post opportunities for volunteer services.

“Let’s say, for example, that a church in the Delta would like to host a sports camp for the students in their town, but they don’t have the manpower to accomplish this task without help. They could post the need on this new website, and a church from across the state whose youth group is looking for a good missions opportunity could meet this need,” Jaques explained.

The site is laid out along two distinct paths, he said. The first path is for those who would like to post a paid or volunteer position. Every Arkansas church, association and ABSC employee – anyone with access to ACTS – can post an available position by logging onto the system using their ACTS user name and password.

The second path is for those who are looking for a ministry opportunity. The site allows seekers to search for positions in their areas.

Additionally, a person may sign up to receive an email notification when a new position is posted.

“We hope that this site will be useful for connecting churches, associations and state convention employees, agencies and institutions with willing individuals to fill needed ministry roles,” said Jaques.

For more information, email Jaques at [wjaques@absc.org](mailto:wjaques@absc.org).

AUGUST 18, 2013

EXPLORE THE BIBLE:

**Is there any hope?**

ECCLESIASTES 9:3-12, 15-18; COLOSSIANS 3:17, 23

Whatever state of mind Solomon was in when he wrote this week's text, we can know for certain he placed no hope in the ways of this world. He had seen more than the most experienced senior citizen. He had experienced more than the greatest adventurer.

Our human nature appreciates certainty. We want to look at the odds and "know for sure" what will happen. Life doesn't always work that way.

Ecclesiastes 9:10-12 teaches us to keep going even when what our eyes see may tell us that our circumstances are hopeless. No matter how unlikely victory may seem, we should complete our life tasks with all our strength. We should never forget that the strength of a follower of Christ is actually God's very own strength and that apart from this strength we can do nothing and with His strength we can do all things.

Not the fastest? The swiftest does not always cross the finish line first (a ray of hope for someone as slow

as I). Not the strongest in your particular field? Don't quit! I can assure you that you would not be the first person to win the day even though he seemed outmatched. So often, we fail to account for the great strength of our great God that can enable us to do immeasurably more than we can think or imagine.



Chris Sims  
pastor  
Pilgrims Rest Baptist  
Batesville

Solomon's words may seem pretty cynical to you. How can you avoid cynicism in a world that is unfair? How can you avoid disappointment when things happen outside of your control? If you are a fully

devoted follower of Jesus Christ, then you have a hope that does not disappoint. The situation may seem bleak, but the Savior is more than able to deliver you through it with victory. Press on!

As the Apostle Paul would tell you, "Whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus" and "do it enthusiastically, as something done for the Lord and not for men" (Col. 3:17, 23).

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE:

**Jesus commissions His Church**

LUKE 24:44-49; ACTS 1:6-8; 2:41-47

Between His resurrection and ascension, Jesus spent time on earth. In Luke 24:44-49, Jesus shared references to Scripture. Jesus told the crowd that the "Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms" (Luke 24:44, NASB) predicted events that would take place. All these events prophesied of Jesus' message to the people, His death, resurrection and ascension into heaven. In verses 46-47, Jesus explained what was written in Scripture. Jesus then tells the people, they are the witnesses of these events. Jesus would fulfill the promise of God by sending a "power from on high" to them and they were to stay in the city until they received it (Luke 24:49). Jesus was preparing His witnesses to go out and tell the world about God's love.

Acts 1:6-8 depicts another conversation between Jesus and the disciples. The disciples wanted to know the physical time and date God would restore the kingdom (Acts 1:6). They thought it would

be a physical battle and Jesus would take the place of the government, similar to a physical king. In verses 7-8, Jesus directed the disciples in how to think about God's kingdom.

They did not need to know when the kingdom of God would be coming, but they would receive the Holy Spirit and would be Jesus' witnesses near and far (Acts 1:8).

In Luke 24:48 and Acts 1:8 Jesus gives clear instructions for the disciples and other followers to carry out with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:41-47 shares how believers were coming to know the truth and being baptized. The apostles were teaching, and the new believers practiced living as the Church. They fellowshiped and broke bread together and lived in unity with other believers.

Jesus gave specific instructions to the disciples and other believers about being witnesses of His ministry. Acts 2 shows the believers living out Jesus' command. How are you living out the command Jesus gave to the disciples and other followers?



Charity Gardner  
member  
Compass Church  
Little Rock

AUGUST 25, 2013

EXPLORE THE BIBLE:

**What's the answer?**

ECCLESIASTES 11:1-5, 9-10; 12:13-14

A person can spend so much time trying to find the meaning of life that they live a life of no meaning. Ecclesiastes 11:4 can teach us that no interest ever comes when an investment wasn't made. A once-famous quote from a Latin poem says, "Carpe diem," or, "Seize the day." Indeed, Scripture is full of that very directive. The Apostle Paul tells us more than once to redeem the time. Literally, that means to cash in on the precious resource of every moment we are given and to do so for the glory of God!

How will you answer the question, "What is the meaning of life?" First, make that question more personal with this subtle change, "What is the meaning of my life?"

Solomon lived a life of splendor and luxury. He was the wisest human in the land and had many years of devotion to God. He also spent years of strife and stress with his heart being pulled away by the foreign gods of his many wives. In

the end, he answered the question simply: "Fear God and keep His commands" (Ecc. 12:13). God's commands are covered in total in His holy Word.



Chris Sims  
pastor  
Pilgrims Rest Baptist  
Batesville

I pray that your life is marked by devotion to the one true God through a personal relationship with His Son Jesus. If it is, you will find meaning in life by fearing God and keeping His Word.

Possibly, your life has been a series of hard knocks and near misses. You may not yet know the perfect peace that comes from knowing God and being known by Him. If this is you,

and you want to start over, then Solomon's counsel is also your starting place - fear God and keep His Word.

Seize the day and make an investment that will bear the fruit of a life of meaning now and a life of eternal peace later.

When all is heard about your life, how will your family respond to the question, "What did he/she feel was the meaning of life?"

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE:

**God completes the story**

JOHN 14:1-3; REVELATION 21:1-4; 22:1-5, 12-14

As followers of Christ, we are longing for the end of the story. John shares a glimpse of the completion to the story. John 14:1-3 is Jesus' words to the disciples. They believed in God, and Jesus commanded they believe in Him as well. John 14:1 (NASB) says, "Believe in God, believe also in Me." Jesus is commanding a belief in His words and actions. In the next couple of verses, Jesus offered hope through a view of heaven. He was not talking about the physical looks of heaven, but a place for those who believe. As humans, we are always

looking for ways to belong. Jesus wanted to promise that He would return for all people who believe.

John's revelation of the end times and heaven is recorded in Revelation. Revelation 21:1-4 shows a glimpse of John's vision of heaven. Similar to John 14:1-3, John does not talk about the physical look of heaven, but focuses on the fact that heaven will be a dwelling place where God is among His people and

they are with God. How comforting is it to know the ending of a story?

In Revelation 22:1-5, John wrote a descriptive view of heaven. He described the crystal-clear river, the tree of life and the lack of need for light from a lamp or the sun (Rev. 22:1-5). In verses 3-4 (NIV), John mentions, "His servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads." The servants will serve God and worship Him. Because of the closeness in relationships, man will be able to see God's face. Finally, man will see the true image of God and the

relationship for which humans long (Rev. 22:4). What a great way to close out the greatest love story of all time.

We have hope based on the words of Jesus throughout His ministry. And we also have a glimpse into heaven through John's eyes. That glimpse gives believers hope that Jesus is coming again and a vision of a close relationship with God in eternity. What more can someone hope for after death?



Charity Gardner  
member  
Compass Church  
Little Rock

## PB man lived to help those in need

Michael S. Lee  
The Commercial

PINE BLUFF - Clarence Ross "Sonny" Spharler Jr. loved two things: doing what he could to help others and fixing watches.

Spharler, of Pine Bluff, died June 27 at the age of 82 in the town where he was born on Nov. 15, 1930.

Known as "The Watchmaker," Spharler spent 67 years performing minor miracles with timepieces, first as an assistant and later as the proprietor of Spharler's Jewelry, which was first opened by his father next to the downtown train station in 1936.

Spharler's sister JoAnn Bussey remembers her brother as a man always on the go in service to others.

"While fixing watches was his job, what he did for everybody during his free time was out of the goodness of his heart," Bussey said. "What my brother did for others wasn't his job; he just made it his job. He went to Jenkins and gave them fruit and played his harmonica for them. He went to nursing homes to visit with people."

It is obvious that Bussey loved her brother immensely.

"No one was ever luckier than I was to have a brother and a family

like I had," Bussey said. "When I was 14 years old, Sonny would take me with him to Little Rock to Robinson Music Hall to hear gospel and country-western music. He bought me my first malt."

Bussey said all of the time she spent with her brother in his later years after his health turned was anything but a burden.

"I took Sonny out to eat dinner and lunch at Snow-White's and Rooster's at least three or four times a week," Bussey said. "People would say thank you for taking care of Sonny. I know they were trying to pay me a compliment, but I almost took it as an insult. Sonny was my brother, and I loved being with him."

"Sonny loved his church (First Baptist)," Bussey said. "The Sunday before he passed away, I drove him to church because he wanted to be there. It was sheer effort for him because he was so weak, but he wanted to go and so I took him."

Spharler is survived by his sisters and brother, as well as many nieces and nephews.

*This article first appeared in The Pine Bluff Commercial and is used with permission.*

*Michael S. Lee is on staff at The Commercial.*



Spharler



### Razorback's Bielema visits ABCHomes event

Bret Bielema, Arkansas Razorbacks head football coach, stopped by the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries (ABCHomes) golf tournament Monday, July 22 at Lost Springs Golf Club in Rogers. During lunch, Bielema briefly spoke to the golfers about the upcoming Razorback football season and fielded questions. Bielema said he was honored to attend the ABCHomes event, noting, "It's not what you have, but what you give." Golfers and Boys Ranch residents Cody, Will and Cade (pictured) - along with ABCHomes staffer John Ross (second from left) - enjoyed meeting Bielema. *Photo by Stella Prather*

### Support the ABN Endowment Fund



An endowment fund for the *Arkansas Baptist News (ABN)* has been established at the Arkansas Baptist Foundation. Consider helping secure the future of the official news journal of the state convention by including the *ABN* in your will or by making a contribution to the *ABN* Endowment Fund. Contact David Moore at the Foundation at 501-376-0732.



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Robert Pinkston, Ben Phillips and Ben Maddox will be present



For more information, contact Mike Sandusky at 501-339-6974

## Back to School

When Caleb came into the care of the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes last Fall, he had never attended school. He was 7 years old.

After his housemother enrolled him in kindergarten, the youngster could hardly wait for his first day of school. As the school bus arrived early that first morning, he excitedly jumped on board. Since that time, Caleb has enjoyed and excelled in school. He loves to share all that he has learned.

That is why your support is so vital! In the upcoming school year, \$425 will help outfit a growing child with clothes, shoes and school supplies. Others need special equipment in order to participate in sports, band and other extracurricular activities.

Can our children count on your support this year? Any gift received will help our kids start the school year off right and help meet other ministry needs.

Your gift can help a kid like Caleb start the school year off right.



Donate TODAY at  
[www.abchomes.org](http://www.abchomes.org)



# Arkansas Baptist State Convention Leadership and Worship Team



"Deacons are doing things with a different mindset! The training, **Be It, See It, Risk It, Do It**, produced a sincere concern for meeting the needs of our members. The Deacons established a system to contact members during inclement weather and formed a new men's ministry to assist after a disaster. They are becoming more involved!"

Sam Higgs  
Pastor, First Baptist Church, Hazen



"Our church is moving forward for two important reasons. First, we seek the will of God in our worship and ministry. Second, we adhered to a process of healing, the **Intentional Interim Ministry**. It was the right thing for our church to do and exactly what it was presented to be."

Don Sharp  
Superintendent, Cotter Public Schools  
Chairman of Deacons, First Baptist Church, Mountain Home



"Members now understand more about biblical giving and sacrifice! Offerings increased 29%. **How to Take the STEW Out of Stewardship** laid the groundwork for seven weeks of prayer and testimonies. The people then gave \$180,000 toward a goal of \$150,000 on one Sunday to pay-off all debt. The extra money is dedicated to do more ministries!"

Jack McCarty  
Pastor, First Baptist Church, Huntsville



**PraiseWorks** has been one of the most ministry-impacting events in my ministry! Student involvement quintupled from 7 to 40 as we expanded their options to skit-writing, drama, singing, praise band, sign-language, human video, art, and tech production. I thank God **PraiseWorks** opened our creative eyes to new ideas, methods and possibilities.

Michael Treat  
Student Minister, Central Baptist Church, Conway



ABSC Leadership and Worship Team members clockwise from top right: Denny Wright, Jimmie Sheffield, Larry Grayson and William Jaques

*Thank you for giving to the Cooperative Program*

Arkansas Baptist News  
P.O. Box 552  
Little Rock, AR 72203

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST NEWS

"Telling the story of Arkansas Baptists since 1901"

Dear Arkansas Baptist,

The *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) is delighted to offer this special Cooperative Program issue (see pages 10-14) **free to all Arkansas Baptist churches** – in special cooperation with the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

To our faithful subscribers, we want to say, "Thank you!" To our nonsubscribing churches, we prayerfully ask you to consider signing up for a Group Plan or Every Resident Family Plan.

The ABN is grateful for your church's gifts given through the Cooperative Program, which provides 45 percent of our budget for operation. (The other portion of our budget comes from the support of subscribers and advertisers.) To ensure the continuance of a unique voice for Arkansas Baptists for generations to come, we need your support!

The ABN is changing with changing times – in addition to our improved print edition, the ABN offers a digital edition and extensive website at [www.arkansasbaptist.org](http://www.arkansasbaptist.org) featuring additional Arkansas Baptist-centric news, information and bonus features. Find us on Facebook and Twitter as ArkBaptNews.

These are exciting days as we work together to fulfill Christ's charge to take the gospel across Arkansas and to all the earth!

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Serving Together,

Tim Yarbrough  
Editor

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