

ABN Digest

Stories of interest
to Arkansas Baptists

Freeze resigns amid scandal at Ole Miss

OXFORD, Miss. – The forced resignation of Ole Miss football coach Hugh Freeze – an outspoken follower of Jesus – amid what the university described as “moral turpitude” has left believers disappointed and expressing hope for repentance.

Freeze, a regular speaker at churches and conferences whose Twitter account is filled with Christian references, resigned July 20 after the university discovered a “pattern of personal misconduct inconsistent with the standards we expect from the leader of our football team,” Chancellor Jeff Vitter said, according to the *Jackson Clarion-Ledger*.

Freeze was head football coach at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro during the 2011 season, leading the Red Wolves to a 10-2 overall record and a perfect 8-0 record in the Sun Belt Conference. The team played in the Go-Daddy Bowl, but Freeze accepted the Ole Miss job prior to the bowl and did not coach the game.

While in Jonesboro, Freeze, his wife, Jill, and daughters Jordan, Ragan and Madison, were members of Central Baptist Church where Archie Mason, former Arkansas Baptist State Convention president, is senior pastor.

“I truly believe that [Freeze] is a good man,” said Mississippi pastor Clarence Cooper, a friend of Freeze’s for two decades.

“And he has been overtaken with a fault. In his text to me was, ‘I love you. Please pray for me. Please stand by me and pray for my family,’” Cooper said.

Freeze was featured in the *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) in 2011 while coaching at Arkansas State.

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

5,000 campers fill Camp Siloam

SILOAM SPRINGS – “I’ve never had someone who I had never met before put their hand on my shoulder and pray for me,” said Jessie Paul, Iron-ton Baptist Church in Little Rock. “It was the best feeling in the world. Doug [Compton] had some great messages and definitely changed my outlook on life. This was one of the best weeks ever!”

At Camp Siloam, children and youth come with the expectation of God moving in big ways. From the most broken of families, to the strongest of relationships, campers come ready to worship their heavenly Father in an environment where they not only feel safe, but also feel freed from the burdens that this world is weighing them down with.

“Thank you for teaching children to worship and be in the Word,” said Cherie Estes, First Baptist Church in Morrilton. “They need this so desperately in the broken families and world we live in. It was a great week; the staffers were very helpful. Great food, great atmosphere, I was impressed from the moment we pulled in and we were prayed for in our vehicles.”

Each summer, Camp Siloam leaders write a five-part drama to convey the annual theme. The theme ties into each summer’s programming, as well. This year’s theme is “Cave Match: Time to Rock.”

In the Bible, Esther 4:14 (NIV) says, “For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?” This summer, Camp Siloam is exploring what it looks like to live a courageous life for God in the circumstances we are placed in, boldly

standing up for our faith even when times may get tough.

“I had a great week at camp. Each year, I come with a life that is horrible and full of sin, but here at Siloam, God moves and speaks,” said Josiah Faught, First Baptist Church in Jasper. He said one of the things he likes best about the camp is the worship service. “The band is awesome, but the message is great!”

The worship services at Camp Siloam are the most talked about activity at camp. In addition to the creative programming, Camp Siloam also asks the speakers to be very intentional in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ, making sure campers fully understand the complete and perfect truth of the Word of God.

“I believe that this was the best camp experience that I have ever had,” said John Repond, Pleasant Valley Baptist



Students at Camp Siloam pray during an altar call at the 2017 summer camp experience.

Church in Heber Springs. “The staff here is awesome, and the speakers were amazing. The Lord did work in my heart this week to give me a renewed commitment to serve Him.”

What makes Camp Siloam so effective in sharing the gospel are the same elements that have worked since the old-school tent revivals: a large group of people setting aside time, praying, expecting God to move, retreating to the wilderness and listening to the teaching of the Word of God multiple times. This summer, Camp Siloam has seen 340 campers give their lives



Students from New Site Baptist Church in Monett, Mo. – Amidu Pyle, Carly Jenkins, Grace Wormington, Robyn Wormington – smile for the camera during camp.

to Christ and could see more than 400 professions of faith by the end of this summer.

“I realized that I wasn’t praying about God’s plan for me, so I started. Last year I was called to missions, but I haven’t acted on that yet, so I decided to start praying that God would use me to reach others and to teach me how, not just overseas, but every day,” said Joy Calwell, First Baptist Church in Hackett.

“Every year has been amazing, helping draw me closer to Christ, along with my church group,” said Riley Keafer, First Baptist Church of Omaha. “God has worked in many of the lives around me.” She added that the Camp Siloam experience “changes so many lives every day. Camp Siloam is my home away from home.”

By the end of the summer, Camp Siloam is expecting 216 churches to bring 5,229 campers from seven states to Siloam Springs. With this being the last summer in the old Hatfield Dining Hall, a building that has stood for more than 94 years, the staff is looking forward to seeing God bring even more campers to Camp Siloam next year due to the new facility.

In January, Camp Siloam was awarded a \$250,000 challenge grant from the J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation. Camp Siloam was given one

year to finish raising the remaining balance of \$600,000 of the \$3.4 million goal for the Feed My Sheep campaign for a new dining hall. If Camp Siloam is unable to raise this remaining amount by January 1, 2018, the Mabee Foundation will retract a \$250,000 award, according to Jason Wilkie, Camp Siloam executive director.

Because of the condition of the dining hall, this is currently the greatest need to be met at Camp Siloam. Without a new dining hall, the camp ministry will not be able to continue, said Wilkie.

“I am so grateful for the generosity of people throughout the state who have made it possible for us to reach 80 percent of our goal,” said Wilkie. “So many gifts have laid the foundation for the \$1 million gift of the Bonner Family and grant from the Mabee Foundation. We are so close!”

Founded in 1923 as the Arkansas Baptist Assembly, Camp Siloam has been sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ for more than 94 years with thousands of people. Each week of summer camp consists of a live worship band, youth and children’s speakers, entertaining drama and recreation.

The camp offers a Blast Camp, for campers who have completed 3rd-6th grade; Forge Camp, for campers who have completed 6th-12th grade and Infusion, a combination of both Blast and Forge campers.

During the off-season of summer camp, Camp Siloam functions as a retreat and conference center.

Sanders 3rd woman WH press secretary

Margaret Colson
Arkansas Baptist News

WASHINGTON - While the election of former Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton as president in 1992 will go down in history as perhaps the most famous Baptist from the Natural State to occupy the White House, the naming of Sarah Huckabee Sanders as press secretary in the administration of President Donald Trump is certainly generating the most headlines today.

Sanders, a native Arkansan and graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, became only the third woman in U.S. history to serve as White House press secretary on July 21. She replaced embattled press secretary Sean Spicer in the high profile role.

As the daughter of former two-term Arkansas governor, pastor and presidential contender Mike Huckabee, Sanders grew up in the world of politics, becoming involved in her father's campaign for Arkansas governor even as a young girl knocking on doors and putting up yard signs. Through the years she refined her political savvy, serving as her father's campaign manager in his bid for U.S. president in the most recent election and then as a senior advisor to then-presidential candidate Trump after Huckabee withdrew from the race.

In a recent podcast in which 34-year-old Sanders was interviewed by Ronnie Floyd, senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, Floyd described Sanders as "one of the most powerful young women in America. She is fearless ... quick on her feet ... a rising star in the administration."

Speaking to Floyd in the podcast, Sanders said her role in the White House is an "absolute privilege; it's an honor to be here. My goal is every day to never forget that - to walk in and be reminded of how grateful I am to be here."

She credits her role in the White House "not because of anything [I] did but certainly by the grace of God and so many other people who: one, helped get the president elected and two, helped [me] be ... blessed enough to be part of his administration."

Rising to such a strategic



Sarah Huckabee Sanders, 34, White House press secretary, posts excerpts from press briefings on her Facebook page. She is a 2004 graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and daughter of former Arkansas pastor and Gov. Mike Huckabee.

national role at a relatively young age, Sanders said she is grateful for her parents, brothers and husband, who are all "incredibly supportive."

Her parents, she said, encourage her to "be myself ... be true to myself and be faithful. Everything else will fall into place if I do those things."

She also quickly acknowledges that her college years at Ouachita Baptist University (OBU) "shaped a lot of who I became as an adult and helped prepare me - in ways I didn't even know at the time - for life and what was next. I want to give credit to my alma mater for helping push me and for the friends that I made there."

Sanders earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Ouachita in 2004, with a major in political science and a minor in mass communications. While on campus, Sanders was involved in numerous extracurricular activities, including the student senate, college Republicans and a servant-leadership program. She was also named outstanding senior woman, an award voted on annually by OBU faculty.

"Sarah left Ouachita well-prepared for her career in politics and specifically political communications," said Jon Merryman, Ouachita director of alumni relations.

One of Sanders' professors, Hal Bass, Ouachita professor emeritus of political science, recalls his young student as "bright, poised, articulate, responsible, a student leader, and lots of fun. I think all of these attributes are on display in her current role."

Her liberal arts education at Ouachita "contributed to her ability to address, with confidence and competence, an extraordinarily wide variety of topics and issues. She came to campus with far more insight into the political world than most of her peers. Still, in her political science courses, she became even more knowledgeable about American govern-

ment and politics. I believe her communications courses advanced her presentation skills. She is the chief intermediary between the president and the media, and her college experience enhanced her knowledge of both," Bass said.

As the "chief intermediary," Sanders said her goal each day is "to reflect the president's message and ... agenda," describing the president as a man who is "incredibly smart," one who "has the ability to take in an enormous amount of information very quickly and make a decision."

Also, she said that the president "has a bigger heart than some people give him credit for."

In her role as White House press secretary, she said she strives to be "truthful, honest and transparent," keeping in mind that she has three young children at home and that she wants "anything that I say ... to be something that I would want them to be comfortable hearing and something that I would never have to explain or apologize to them for."

Her children, she said, also help her keep a balance in her hectic life in Washington, D.C.

"Being a mom of toddlers has helped me to master the ability to multitask," she said. She blocks off time to be with her family, setting aside her phone and engaging her children in conversation. "It makes me not just a better mom but a better person when I have those kinds of reminders of what's really important and what my priorities are," she said.

In today's world of 24-hour news cycles, little if any "accountability" for many media professionals, and assertions of fake news, Sanders counsels Americans to do their own research into what is being presented as news. "Look at the facts instead of the commentary," she said, and make decisions based upon documented facts.

Having risen through the ranks from lowly campaign positions to an influential role in the White House, Sanders wants to reflect humility and recognize her roots, noting that "to lead by example" is a key leadership lesson she has learned.

"Never ask anybody to do something that you're not willing to do yourself or that you haven't done. It helps to remember all of those things that I was doing at 16, 17, 22," said Sanders, who was named one of *Time* magazine's top 40 under 40 in politics in 2010, when she was still in her twenties.

Sanders is "not intimidated; she stands strongly; speaks clearly. She really is amazing," said Floyd.

To listen to Floyd's conversation with Sanders in its entirety, visit ronniefloyd.com.

Contact Margaret Colson at margaret@arkansasbaptist.org.

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National CP receipts 5.08% above projection

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) - Year-to-date contributions to Southern Baptist Convention national and international missions and ministries received by the SBC Executive Committee are 5.08 percent above the year-to-date SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget projection, and are 1.15 percent above contributions received during the same time frame last year, according to SBC Executive Committee President and CEO Frank S. Page.

As of July 31, gifts received by the Executive Committee for distribution through the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget through the first nine months of the convention's fiscal year (October to September) totaled \$165,503,652.87.

Ark. governor hosts Restore Hope Summit

LITTLE ROCK - Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson will host the second Restore Hope Summit Sept. 7-8, 2017, at Saint Mark Baptist Church in Little Rock.

The summit is scheduled for 1-5 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 7, and 8 a.m. - noon, Friday, Sept. 8.

According to organizers, the purpose of the summit is to motivate and facilitate business and faith leaders in caring for children in foster care and individuals re-entering society from prison. The summit's aim is to equip business leaders, clergy and lay leaders with the tools to partner with existing programs that seek to assist members of these target groups.

For more information about the summit, or to register, visit governor.arkansas.gov/RestoreHope.

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

Editorial & Opinion

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

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

Whatever happened to the Brotherhood Commission?

On July 29 at Germantown Baptist Church near Memphis, Tenn., there was a gathering of people who once led or were friends of what I believe was one of the most unique agencies ever created by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

The gathering was of former employees and colleagues of the now-defunct Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

I was privileged to join the staff of the Brotherhood Commission at age 28 as editor of Baptist Young Men's materials, and I served there for about six years.

As an agency of the SBC, the Brotherhood Commission developed programs of work involving men and boys in missions. Brotherhood work began as a national organization among Southern Baptists in 1907 in Richmond, Va., as the Layman's Missionary Movement. The name was changed in 1926 to the Baptist Brotherhood of the South. In 1938 its headquarters were moved to Memphis, and in 1950 it assumed its final name, the Brotherhood Commission.

The Brotherhood is the former home of some mission education programs many Southern Baptists will remember: Royal Ambassadors (RAs), Pioneers, Baptist Men, disaster relief (DR), and in later years, World Changers.

I was – like many young boys who grew up in the 1960s – a member of RAs at my church, but when I got a call to apply for a position as editor at the Brotherhood Commission, I did not immediately make the connection with the agency – much like

many Southern Baptists at the time.

After accepting the position and moving to Memphis, I quickly realized the jewel the Brotherhood Commission was to the convention.

As an official "laymen's" organization, the board of trustees at the Commission was made up of 75 percent laymen and 25 percent clergy – which is unique among SBC entities today.

Having worked the past seven years in secular journalism – having put in many, many long hours juggling deadline after deadline – the Brotherhood was more of the same, but with a higher purpose.

Much of the professional traveling staff of the Commission – who were in their 20s to 40s – truly believed they could change the world by motivating and activating men and boys to be proactive in Christ's mission of reconciliation in the world.

It was what drove every meeting, conference and training event.

I never worked so hard in my and I loved it so much.

The Brotherhood editors, in particular, were not only required to oversee a publication – which in my case was *Journey* magazine for Baptist Young Men – but also produce and edit training materials and do Brotherhood training across the country.

A typical work week at the Brotherhood meant meetings, writing and enlisting writers for upcoming magazine editions, editing articles for a current edition, planning and art design meetings, along with a host of other responsibilities.

Then, typically, the staff would be off for a training event in a church or association on the other side of the country, or to speak in a church service.

I became greatly acquainted with the Memphis International Airport during my time there.

Serving at the Brotherhood holds too many memories to recount in this limited space, but it was while I was there that my two children were born and where I was ordained as a deacon at Temple Baptist Church.

What's more, I got the incredible opportunity within a year of my arrival to work on a new mission project for youth called World Changers,

which at the time was the first pre-packaged mission trip experience for SBC youth.

A few years before I left, I actually worked directly inside DR, helping direct communications for that ministry.

Seeing many familiar faces at the reunion and meeting some of those who came before my time at the Brotherhood, left me with a distinct impression that I had been part of something that may never again happen in Southern Baptist life: an SBC agency exclusively for Baptist laymen.

While many of the programs of the old Brotherhood Commission were absorbed into the newly formed North American Mission Board in

1997, the fact remains the Brotherhood Commission – along with its uniqueness – will most likely never be again.

As we live our lives each day, working around people doing the things we do, we can lose sight of what's special and foolishly believe, "It will always this way."

When God puts us where He puts us, we should cherish every moment and relationship, knowing that one day it will fade away into the dust bin of history – and commit ourselves to make the most of every opportunity to serve Christ with excellence.

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

Cartoon by Gary Thomas

From the Cooperative Program Playbook...

OKAY BOYS, IT'S FOURTH AND GOAL WITH ONLY TWO SECONDS TO PLAY. IF WE PULL TOGETHER AND EVERYONE GIVES THEIR BEST, VICTORY IS OURS!



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CP influence



Family Matters

Ben Phillips

I never realized the influence of the Cooperative Program (CP) on my life and others as a child until I took some moments as an adult to reflect on my past. I grew up attending First Baptist Church, Herrin, a Southern Baptist church in Illinois, which faithfully supported CP. I was involved in Royal Ambassadors and learned about missionaries and heard missionaries tell stories of sharing the gospel with unreached people groups. Those missionaries were able to be on mission because thousands of churches big and small supported CP.

While in college at Southern Illinois University, I was actively involved in the Baptist Student Union. I participated in my first mission trip, preached my first sermon and was called into ministry while in college. My story is a familiar story to many who connect through Baptist ministries on college campuses. Baptist ministries around the U.S. are supported by CP, enabling them to reach, disciple and send the next generation to make a kingdom impact.

I was called into ministry while in college and attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1991. The six Southern Baptist seminaries are conservative and trained more than 7,000 full-time students in 2015-16. Seminary students who are members of Southern Baptist churches receive discounted tuition through CP. These students go on to graduate and make a tremendous gospel impact around the world.

After graduating from seminary, I began working with the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) in 1996 where I served as a Baptist collegiate minister and eventually began serving as a marriage and family ministry consultant. I discovered many new ways CP made a kingdom impact through the ABSC. Churches supporting CP enable us to partner together through disaster relief, church planting, state missions, collegiate ministry, church revitalization, camps, children's home, vacation Bible school, student ministry, mar-

See **INFLUENCE** page 7

Every penny counts

I vividly remember the day as a young pastor that I realized the impact of giving to missions through the Cooperative Program.

Our church was smaller in membership with substantially less missions money than many surrounding churches. It was a very exciting moment when I learned that our relatively small amount did indeed have great kingdom impact.

Our pennies were divided according to a messenger-approved budget and sent to support thousands of ministry sites, personnel, training events, etc. I learned there was literally no other way our missions money could be channeled to reach as many mission points and have as much impact.

When our missions giving was combined with thousands of other churches' offerings, it ended up creating

missions synergy and added up to a large amount of money funneled to local, state and global missions.

Every single day of my life, I hear exciting stories about the impact of our cooperative missions strategies.

These stories typically celebrate international missions, training events for pastors in the Delta, assisting churches with church plants, helping train students for ministry, disaster relief efforts, block party results, the incredible impact of our agencies and institutions in

Arkansas, and scores of other ministries.

I still remain as enthusiastic and excited for the ministry and impact of Cooperative Program missions as when I first learned of this incredible missions plan. And today, just like then, every penny still counts.

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



Executive Directions

Sonny Tucker

The countdown begins!

The countdown has officially begun! We are all familiar with that phrase. An important event is approaching in the near future, and as that event grows closer, the anticipation builds. Accompanying the anticipation could be any number of emotions: joy, sadness, hope, despair, peace, worry, excitement or fear. Depending on the event, you might be experiencing a roller coaster of emotions. Ask any church planter what he's experiencing during the weeks leading up to the launch of a new church.

I've got the date circled on my calendar in red permanent marker. The date is Wednesday, Nov. 8. As a matter of fact, I even have a specific time written on my calendar. There, in red permanent marker is 10 a.m. What's so special about that date and time? Well, at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 8, Arkansas Baptists, while gathered at First Baptist Church, Russellville for the 2017 Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) Annual Meeting, will nominate and elect our next ABSC president! Now, please don't misunderstand. I have thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity of serving Arkansas Baptists as president for these two terms. It is truly a joy to work alongside our ABSC staff and the leadership of our institutions, agencies and committees. Together, we have assembled an incredible team of "top shelf" leaders. Arkansas Baptists, our present is solid, and our future is bright. But, on Nov. 8, I will gladly pass the gavel to the next person elected to serve as our president. I'm sure I will breathe a deep sigh of relief, which may or may not be accompanied by a shout of joy. I might even break out a duck call!

During the 2016 annual meeting, we started the clock ticking on another countdown. By an overwhelming majority, messengers gathered at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, approved the 2018-22 Cooperative Program Unified Budget Formula. To refresh your memory, this decision provides for a 2.05 percent increase for Southern Baptist Convention causes during this five-year budget period. That means more Arkansas Baptist Cooperative

Program (CP) dollars will be leaving our state and be used for taking the gospel to the nations. Yes, that also means a reduction in the budgeted CP dollars for our ABSC agencies, institutions and executive board programs.

Although ABSC agencies, institutions and executive board programs will receive less budgeted CP dollars beginning in 2018 – depending on the generosity of Arkansas Baptists and ABSC churches – the possibility exists that they will receive a greater amount of CP dollars than budgeted. How's that possible? Two factors. First, the 2018-22 Unified Budget Formula includes a statement that if CP funds received exceed the annual budget, 50 percent of the excess would be given to the International Mission Board and 50 percent would be given to the ABSC and allocated to ABSC agencies, institutions and executive board programs at the same percentage as their budget allocation. Second, the 2017 budget was greatly reduced, making it a more realistic budget that can be met through the generous CP giving of ABSC churches.

The countdown has begun. The clock is ticking. Now, perhaps more than ever before, is the time for Arkansas Baptist churches to become champions of the CP. Arkansas Baptists, the effectiveness of the CP begins as each of us decides in our hearts what to give through our local church. ABSC churches, the CP is also dependent on us. The more CP dollars forwarded to the ABSC means more monies will be available for CP ministry both in Arkansas and among the nations. An incredible resource available to you for promoting the CP in your church is CP Share, which can be accessed through the ABSC website (absc.org).

I am eagerly anticipating how Arkansas Baptists and Arkansas Baptist churches will respond to the challenge before us. Let's finish the year strong in our giving and continue that trend throughout 2018!

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



President's Perspective

Sam Roberts



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The road to normalizing same-sex marriage

Two years have passed since the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its Obergefell v. Hodges decision. With the wave of their pens, the majority of justices held invalid all state laws which restricted marriage to one man and one woman. The proponents of same-sex marriage were euphoric over the victory for “equality” as they

defined it.

What was expected was a tsunami of homosexual nuptials being celebrated.

However, that has not happened. “Why?” one asks. Isn’t that what they asked for? Wasn’t that why they asked for it? As it turns out, it was not.

According to a recent Gallup poll, a mere 10.2 percent

of homosexuals are in marriages. That is only a little over a 2 percent increase in same-sex marriages (or the equivalent of marriage) since the Obergefell v. Hodges decision. And that is in spite of the fact that the court’s decision added 14 additional states where same-sex marriage was green-lighted.

Prior to the decision, there were 154,000 married homosexual couples nationwide. Two years after the decision, that number has grown to

only 198,000. It does not appear that those attracted to the same sex are rushing down the aisle or to the courthouse or to wherever. Surprising perhaps is the fact that more homosexual men are married to women than to other men.

Ninety percent of homosexuals remain unmarried. This seems to fit nicely with all the anecdotal and empirical evidence that homosexuals – particularly male homosexuals – are notoriously sexually promiscuous. Given that, why would they want to “settle down” with just one partner?

Marrying was not uppermost in the minds of most homosexuals and their apologists. Now, the right to marry was another matter. While marrying was not the objective, the legal right to marry was. Why? Because if homosexuals won the right to marry, then their lifestyle would be legitimized. No longer could their aberrant, depraved behavior be deemed outside the norm. They would have arrived.

Austin Ruse, the author of “Fake Science: Exposing the Left’s Skewed Statistics, Fuzzy Facts, and Dodgy Data,” asked, “Were gay Americans really ever interested in being married? . . . No, they weren’t. As their choices the past two years [since the Obergefell decision], amply demonstrate, it was a ruse.”

Ruse added, “Gay marriage was about imposing an ideology on the rest of the country. It was about changing the institution of marriage for everyone else. And it was also about getting even with a larger society gays felt had treated them badly.”

Homosexuals and their cheerleading cultural warriors and change agents got what they wanted. And here is what there is to show for it: the institution of marriage irreparably damaged if not virtually destroyed, God’s Word handled shabbily, and our culture gravely wounded.

Larry Page is executive director of the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council. For more information visit arfaith.org.



Faith & Ethics

Larry Page

From our Churches

God is doing a mighty work!

By Paul Easter Jr.

God is doing a mighty work at Elliott Baptist Church, Camden!

Our prayer is and has been, “Oh that You would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at your presence...” (Isaiah 64:1, ESV). On July 30, in answer to our plea, 10 of our young people surrendered to the Lord and followed up with baptism.

Many of these young people had been talking seriously and asking questions about salvation

for months. Devoted leaders have invested and continue to invest quality time teaching and praying for this younger generation. The consistent efforts of these dedicated leaders have produced much fruit. The fruit was not only in salvations, but in growing mature disciples. The Apostle Paul writes to the church at Corinth, “For in fact the body is not one member but many” (1 Cor. 12:14, NKJV).

God certainly gets the glory as He and He alone opens hearts to the gospel message. Luke gives us much clarity when he writes; “The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul” (Acts 16:14, ESV). It is indeed God that opens the heart, but He chooses men and women

to be the instruments in the hands of the Redeemer.

As the pastor of Elliott Baptist, I am so proud to be a part of a body that is willing to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. We often visualize a gospel presentation as a one-on-one encounter and it often is, but God chose to use a group of caring and concerned leaders to reach these young men and women for

Christ. What a beautiful picture of church unity!

A church goes through many changes over the course of time. At one time, Elliott Baptist was

on the main highway and had a thriving congregation, but we are now a little off the beaten path and some wonder if God has forgotten us. Sometimes it seems as if we do more funerals than baptisms, but God reminded us this past Sunday that He is still in the business of saving souls!

No matter the size of your church, there is still a great need in our rural communities for the gospel message.

Our ministry philosophy at Elliott is a simple one: “Loving God, Loving People and Reaching the World!” How do we do that? We simply keep preaching, teaching, praying and loving people.

The Apostle Paul sums up our ministry philosophy

succinctly, “For the love of Christ compels us...” (2 Cor. 5:14, NKJV). God truly came down and made His presence known at Elliott Baptist and we pray that He continues to use us to reach people for Christ.

Paul Easter Jr. is senior pastor of Elliott Baptist Church in Camden.



Ten young people recently made professions of faith at Elliott Baptist, Camden.

ABSC Agencies

Ouachita Online degree options

Everyone loves a good story, and it’s always a delight to get to tell one.

Ouachita Baptist University has a great story to tell about a recent milestone for our distance-learning program, Ouachita Online.

On Saturday, May 12, we graduated our first online student with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Christian studies. Ryan Alexander, pastor of a congregation in North Platte, Neb., finished what he started at Ouachita 20 years ago. Alexander’s wife, Sarah, and their five children were present to see him walk across the stage in front of Cone-Bottoms Hall during our annual spring commencement ceremony.

After beginning online course development in 2014, Ouachita offered our first online courses beginning

in January 2015. Since then we have developed all of the courses necessary for a student to complete the requirements for a Bachelor of Arts in Christian studies or business administration or for an Associate of Arts in Christian studies entirely online. Additional courses in a variety



Ouachita Baptist

Rob Hewell

of other disciplines already have proven helpful for other Ouachita students needing a way to complete their studies and finish their degree.

With a commitment to offering online degree options, Ouachita Online makes a Ouachita education available for more students from anywhere and from a variety of walks and stages of life.

In just over three years, Ouachita Online has demonstrated the ability to design, develop and deliver quality online courses. As of May of

this year, we have closed the loop by demonstrating we can graduate online students with a major of their choice.

In the near future, we plan to add new majors, providing individuals seeking an online degree program more reasons to choose Ouachita.

Alexander is just the first of many who will graduate from Ouachita with their degrees by completing their educational journeys via Ouachita Online. We currently anticipate several more online students to graduate in May 2018.

You can explore the possibilities of online study at Ouachita by reading about the program at obu.edu/online. On that Web page, you also can watch a video with more of Alexander’s story and learn more about the values of a Ouachita education via Ouachita Online.

Rob Hewell is director of online learning initiatives at Ouachita Baptist University.

Send Orlando: 4,000 exhorted to 'redefine life'

Tim Yarbrough
Arkansas Baptist News

ORLANDO, Fla. – Ray Peoples came to Orlando seeking excitement, but not the excitement of Disney World or the city's many other theme parks.

You see, Peoples is moving his family from Fort Smith to the Kansas City, Mo., area to undertake a year-long church planting internship through the North American Mission Board (NAMB) at New City Church.

Peoples joined about 4,000 other Southern Baptists at Send Orlando, July 25-26, held at First Baptist Orlando. It was the last of three 2017 Send Conferences focused on the theme Redefine sponsored by NAMB and the International Mission Board (IMB).

Two other Send events were held in San Diego and Dallas, each drawing about 4,000 registrants. The conference – which according to NAMB was for church members, students, lay leaders, pastors, group leaders, church planters, Sunday school teachers, student pastors, missionaries and anybody else who makes up the local church – included main sessions, breakouts and

INFLUENCE

continued from page 5

riage ministry and many other ways that enable people's lives to be changed with the gospel.

Over time I've learned about the many different ways partnering together through giving to CP enables us to do more than we could alone. Invest just a little time learning about CP and you'll discover the various avenues that CP influences people with the gospel in Arkansas and around the world.

Ben Phillips is a member of the ABSC evangelism and church health team.

networking opportunities.

Peoples, who most recently served as student and missions pastor at East Side Baptist Church, Fort Smith, in addition to leading his church to be on mission the past eight years, has now answered the call to become a church planter.

He said he is amazed at the resources available today for church planters.

"I encourage pastors and leadership to engage with the (Send City) efforts in some capacity," said Peoples.

"I can say as a planter about to go out on the field, the biggest help has come from local and in-state churches – though NAMB provides support, the churches and their teams will fully make this endeavor possible. So I would greatly encourage them to check into how they can help support the mission that is bigger than just one church, or multiple churches, but is ultimately the establishment of God's kingdom."

NAMB's Send City emphasis prioritizes its work in 32 cities, which the agency believes have "the greatest spiritual need and potential influence throughout North America."

Lori McDaniel, wife of Mike McDaniel, pastor of Grace Point Church in Bentonville, and a global mission catalyst at IMB, led two women's sessions at Send Orlando: Leveraging Power of the Ordinary and Leading Women to Advance the Gospel.

During the Leveraging Power of the Ordinary session – designed to provide practical and everyday ways to equip women in sharing the gospel – McDaniel was joined on stage with panelists Kathy Litton, national consultant with NAMB; Renie Willis, an Atlanta pastor's wife, and Cyndi Caruthers, former IMB missionary who now leads the Movement Church in Rich-



Lori McDaniel (left), a pastor's wife from Bentonville and global mission catalyst at the International Mission Board, leads a panel discussion in the breakout session, Leveraging Power of the Ordinary, at the Send Orlando Conference July 25. Panelists are (from right): Kathy Litton, Renie Willis and Cyndi Caruthers. The conference provided practical and everyday ways to equip women in sharing the gospel. McDaniel is married to Mike McDaniel, pastor of Grace Point Church in Bentonville. *Photo by Tim Yarbrough*

mond, Va.

Women can share the gospel with others by "leveraging the power of the ordinary" by "making hospitality a rhythm, leaving everything as is" and "inserting Scripture by speaking truth," McDaniel told those present.

"We're talking about sustained intentionality with non-believers so we can build trust to share the gospel with them," McDaniel said.

Send Orlando featured 43 speakers including Trip Lee, hip-hop artist and pastor; J.D. Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, N.C.; David Platt, IMB president and Kevin Ezell, NAMB

president, in 36 breakout sessions with topics that included Effective Preaching in the 21st Century; Critical Issues in Global Missions; College, Compassion and Community; and Women, Missions and the Holy Spirit.



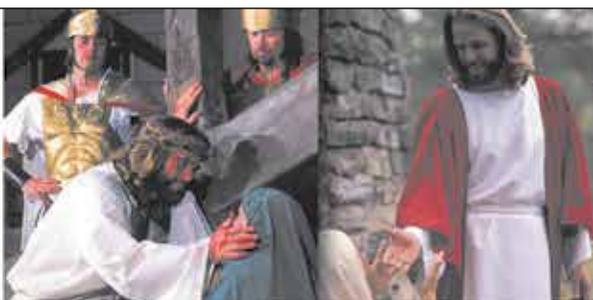
Kevin Ezell (left), of the North American Mission Board, and David Platt, of the International Mission Board, share the stage at Send Orlando.

Rachelle Starr, founder of Scarlet Hope, an organization that rescues women in the sex industry in Kentucky, led a breakout session on Big Issues Made Small ... Change Your Community, Change the World. Starr shared stories from the front lines of her everyday ministry and encouraged attendees to look around and "find people who need to hear about Jesus."

Peoples encouraged Arkansas Baptists interested in becoming a part of Southern Baptist church planting efforts to visit the NAMB/IMB websites or to go on a Catch the Vision tour.

"Find a planter or overseas missionary that your church can support whether it be provision (financially), people or prayer, because help in prayer can help provide the other two needs. If the church isn't greatly interested in going far, then contact some of our in-state church plant leads like Dave (McClung) and Chad (Grigsby) of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention – we have some awesome church plants right here in our own state that would love partnerships I am sure."

Contact Tim Yarbrough at tim@arkansasbaptist.org. Josie Bingham of NAMB contributed to this article.



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Gallup: Non-denominational Protestants on rise

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) – Data pointing to a dwindling percentage of Americans who identify with a specific Protestant denomination has spurred calls for churches marked by God’s “presence and power” and for reemphasis of biblical doctrine.

Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President Steve Gaines said a strong denominational identity doesn’t seem to hinder the church he pastors or the SBC. Still, the manifest work of God in a church is far more important than its denominational identity, he said.

“We are ‘Bellevue Baptist Church,’” Gaines said of the Memphis-area congregation he leads. “I don’t believe the word ‘Baptist’ hinders our ministry. I don’t believe being part of

the SBC hurts us. I believe if what is happening in and through a specific local church is Christ-honoring and Spirit-anointed, people will come and get involved regardless of what the name of the church is or what denomination it is part of.”

According to the Gallup polling organization, just 30 percent of American adults identified with a specific Protestant denomination in 2016, down from 50 percent in 2000. Over the same timeframe, the percentage of Americans who regard themselves as Christians without claiming a specific denomination rose from 9 percent to 17 percent, a July 18 news release stated.

“I’m convinced that we should seek to have churches that are marked by the super-

natural presence and power of God,” Gaines said. “If people sense the presence of Jesus at a church, they will come and be part of what God is doing. And they won’t care whether that church is part of a denomination or not.”

Gallup claimed the shrinking percentage of Americans who identify with a specific Protestant denomination stems from two realities:

– “There are fewer Protestants of any kind in the American population today.” Thus, “the pool of those who identify with a specific Protestant denomination is smaller.”

Protestants shrank from 57 percent of the population in 2000 to 47 percent in 2016, Gallup stated. At the same time, the percentage of Americans who do not claim a religious identity of any kind rose from 10 percent to 20 percent.

– Those who self-identify as Christians increasingly put themselves in the “non-denominational category.”

Of Americans who do claim a specific Protestant denominational identity, Baptists are the largest group with 10 percent of the population. Some 3 percent identified specifically as Southern Baptists in

2016, down from 8 percent in 2000.

Gaines said the lack of denominational loyalty seems to parallel a lack of loyalty to corporations and brands among Americans, with workers frequently transferring “from company to company” unlike they did in previous generations.

“Whether [the lack of organizational loyalty] is good or bad, I don’t know,” Gaines said. “But it is reality. That’s why many churches have chosen to remove the name of their denomination from the name of their church. Many churches in the SBC have removed the word ‘Baptist’ from their identity. Again, I can’t say whether that is right or wrong. That is between them and the Lord.”

Kevin Smith, executive director of the Baptist Convention of Maryland-Delaware, said he is not surprised by Gallup’s findings.

“As we have [a] greater [number of] therapeutic pulpits and fewer pulpits preaching clear biblical doctrine, theological (thus denominational) identity gets muddy, cloudy and irrelevant,” Smith said. “I’ve always felt a responsibility to make

sure ... members [of churches I pastored] have understood why we are Baptist.”

Smith added, “Sadly, for many ‘Baptist’ is a sociological indicator, rather than an exegetical/ecclesiological one.... Historic Protestant identity and confessions will be more important heading forward because ‘evangelical’ is becoming more and more useless” as a theological descriptor amid a vast number of people who claim that identity without holding key theological beliefs traditionally associated with evangelicalism.”

Smith urged Southern Baptists to emphasize Baptist distinctives, like believer’s baptism and regenerate church membership, in their discipleship processes.

“We have the Baptist Faith and Message,” Smith said. “The question is, ‘Do we care?’ Discipleship includes learning biblical truth. We need to do better in many cases.”

Gallup’s 2016 data was drawn from telephone interviews of 2,053 adults May 4-8 and Dec. 7-11. The margin of error in the survey was plus or minus 3 percent at the 95 percent confidence rate, according to the release.

Baptist youth engage God and community

Sarah Davis
Arkansas Baptist News

PARON – Camp Paron hosted its second annual youth camp July 17-21. The Engage theme challenged the 56 students and adults to deepen their relationships with Christ while teaching them the different ways they can serve their communities.

“The camp impacted students through encouraging them to be in the Word, but then also to engage the community through afternoon mission projects,” said Charity Taylor, former member of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions team who recently became children and families minister at First Southern Baptist Church in Bryant. “I think it’s encouraging them not to just know God’s Word but to see God’s Word working and how they can make an impact.”

The camp was full of engaging experiences for the students. The camp partnered with First Baptist Church and Second Baptist Church, both in Perryville, to throw a block party at the city park. On Thursday, church planters gave their testimonies. Students packed school supplies into

backpacks for church planters to hand out later. Campers also heard how the Southern Baptist disaster relief ministry helps people around the state and nation.

“This camp has made my students more aware of what is really important in their lives – putting God number one,” said Jeff Harris, member of First Baptist Church, Norman. “They need to understand that if you don’t have God first, you aren’t going to have the life you want in the first place.”

The youth camp also included large worship times, breakout sessions and team-building exercises. Students were able to grow closer to their church families and also build relationships with campers from other churches.

“A camp is one of the best places to share Christ with students, and we know it gets harder to reach the lost the older they get,” said Samantha Tischer, assistant manager at Camp Paron. “Our hope is to provide an environment where students can feel safe, build relationships with believers and learn about the one true God.”

Sarah Davis is a summer intern with the Arkansas Baptist News.

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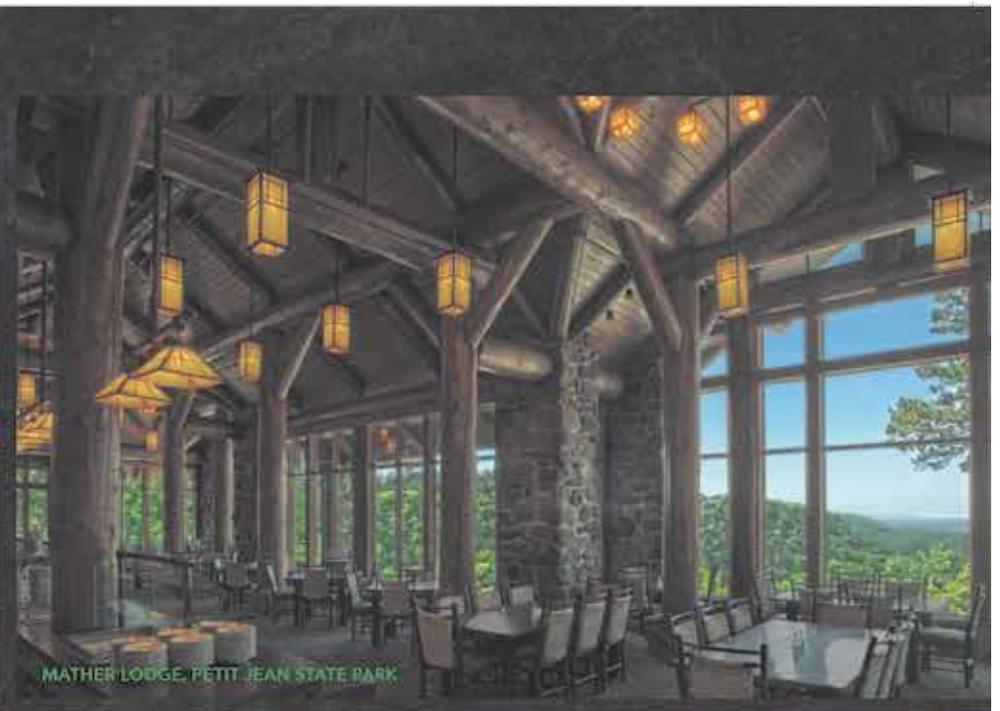
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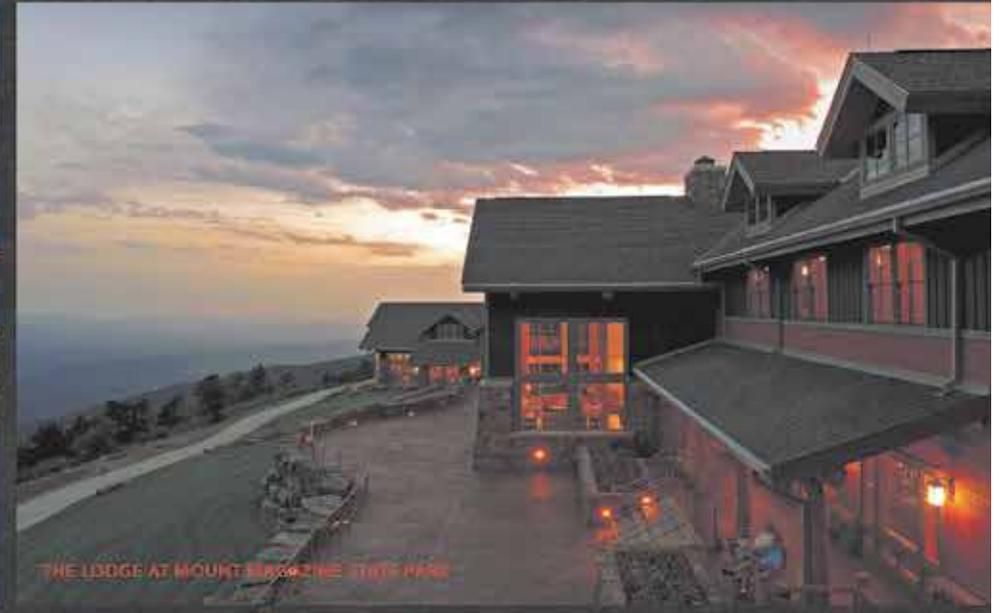
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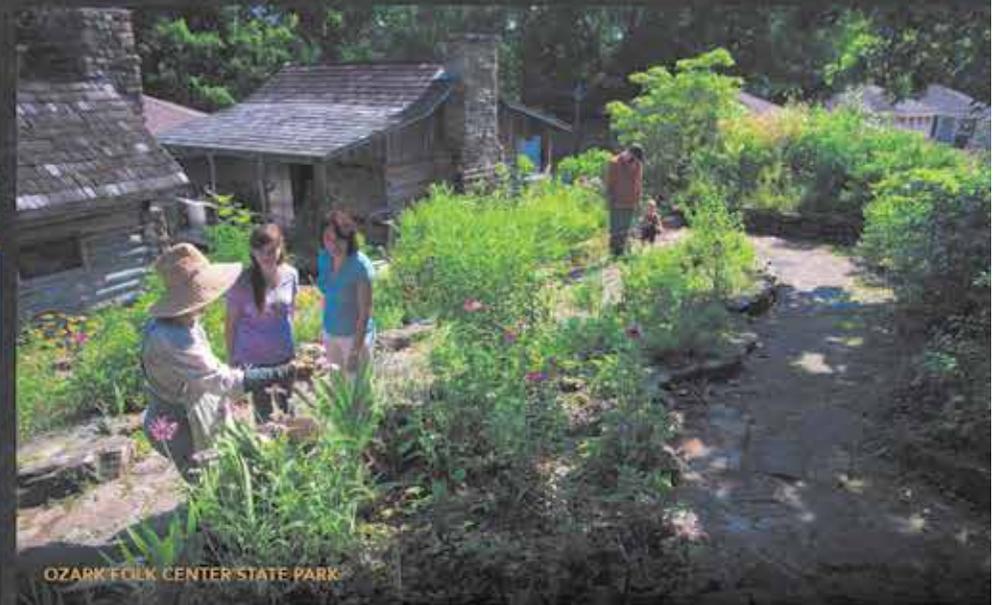
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Summer camp creates 'worshipful' church leaders

Sarah Davis
Arkansas Baptist News

ARKADELPHIA - There was a different energy coming from the Ouachita Baptist University campus as 798 students participated in JoyWorks and PraiseWorks. Their passion for God fueled them to learn how to use their gifts and interests for ministry.

"This is a highly focused camp where they take individuals who have specific interests, and they try to nurture and channel them toward the gospel ministry," said Chad Meeks, member of Cedar Heights Baptist Church in North Little Rock. "The camp encourages students to take their interests, whether it be drama or music, and use it to the glory of God, not merely



taught how to channel their interests or talents in a way that is beneficial to the church.

"Students are

for their own personal entertainment."

A worship arts camp, JoyWorks and PraiseWorks offer training in different areas of church ministry. A total of 34 different tracks are offered, including guitar, singing, drama, drums, piano, videography, graphic design, lighting and photography. Students are

getting the opportunity to be exposed to training in a range of areas. They learn new things that can be used back at their church," said Larry Grayson, executive director of PraiseWorks and JoyWorks.

According to Grayson, students return home with a "passion to live for Christ."



Members of the orchestra at PraiseWorks (above) practice their pieces for the end-of-the-week concert. Students worship in song (below) during the morning service at PraiseWorks. The JV choir for JoyWorks (left) rehearses for its end-of-the-week concert. In all, 798 students participated in the 2017 PraiseWorks and JoyWorks camp events on the campus of Ouachita Baptist University. The worship arts camp, sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, is designed to encourage students to use their interests in drama and music for the glory of God. *Photos by Sarah Davis*

They are able to lead worship in their student ministries, and they become more excited about worship in their

own church.

"The camp made me realize how important God is in my life," said Carly Hall, a student at First Baptist Church in Sherwood who has been to the camp the past six years. "I've realized how important worshipping God is and how we are each individually made

and handcrafted by Him."

Along with tracks, students were able to choose between orchestra and choir. After rehearsing all week, they presented a concert on Friday as their WorshipWorks Finale Worship Celebration.

Sarah Davis is an intern at the Arkansas Baptist News.



Sam Moore Evangelistic Ministries

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E4Call internship helps students discern calling

PARON - More than 50 student interns, mentors, leaders and guests gathered at Camp Paron May 18-19 for E4Call orientation, a time to network and to learn what being called to ministry is all about.

Based on Ephesians 4, E4Call is an Arkansas Baptist State Convention ministry aimed at high school and college students sensing a call to ministry. Participants are given opportunities to explore God's

call through mentorships, exposure to various resources, and networking with like-minded individuals.

Activities included a session on diversity in the calling, breakouts for newbies and alumni, one-on-one mentor/student time, evangelism training, and personality and spiritual gifts assessments.

Additionally, participants enjoyed food and fun, culminating with a worship service

with J.D. "Sonny" Tucker, executive director, Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC). Music was led by Kasey Earl and his band.

Participants were told that Jesus gave us an example of mentorship by the way He trained His disciples: 1) I do; you watch, 2) I do; you help, 3) You do; I help, 4) You do; I watch and 5) You do; someone else watches.

Paul urged believers in

Ephesians 4:1 (NIV) to "live a life worthy of the calling you have received."

The E4Call orientation is designed to provide a launchpad for student interns and their mentors to begin their summers together with others along the same journey.

For the summer of 2017, 27 students are exploring their calls to ministry in 17 church or associational positions under the discipleship of 20 mentors.

Following is a list of E4Call participants in 2017: Rachel Lovell, served at Barcelona Road Baptist Church, Hot Springs Village; Zachary Goins and Abby Smith, served at Caldron Ridge Baptist Church, Conway; Sam Beavers, served at East Side Baptist Church, Pine Bluff; Nick Canale, Maddie Dunn, Emily Stewart and Jack Buck served at First Southern Baptist Church, Bryant; Emily Enis, served at Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Smith; Ben Keisling, Jacob McOlvin

and Winston Turner, served at Greenwood First Baptist Church, Greenwood; Joshua Griffin and Shaleena White, served at Hot Springs Baptist Church, Hot Springs; Hayden Roberts, served at Huntsville First Baptist Church, Huntsville; Jeremiah Abell, served at Newport First Baptist Church, Newport; Elizabeth Fish and James Moelter, served at North Pulaski Baptist Association, North Little Rock; Bailey Jones, served at Otter Creek Community Church, Little Rock; Taylor Bascue, served at Palestine Baptist Church, Greenwood; Brandon Brigrance, and Makayla Marshall, served at Pocahontas First Baptist Church, Pocahontas; Lizzy Stoddard, served at Southside Community Church, Paragould; Bethany Dorton, served at Trinity Baptist Church, Searcy; Jesse Walker, served at Village Baptist Church, Magnolia; Shirley Chidester and Joel Falknor, served at Washington Madison Baptist Association, Fayetteville.

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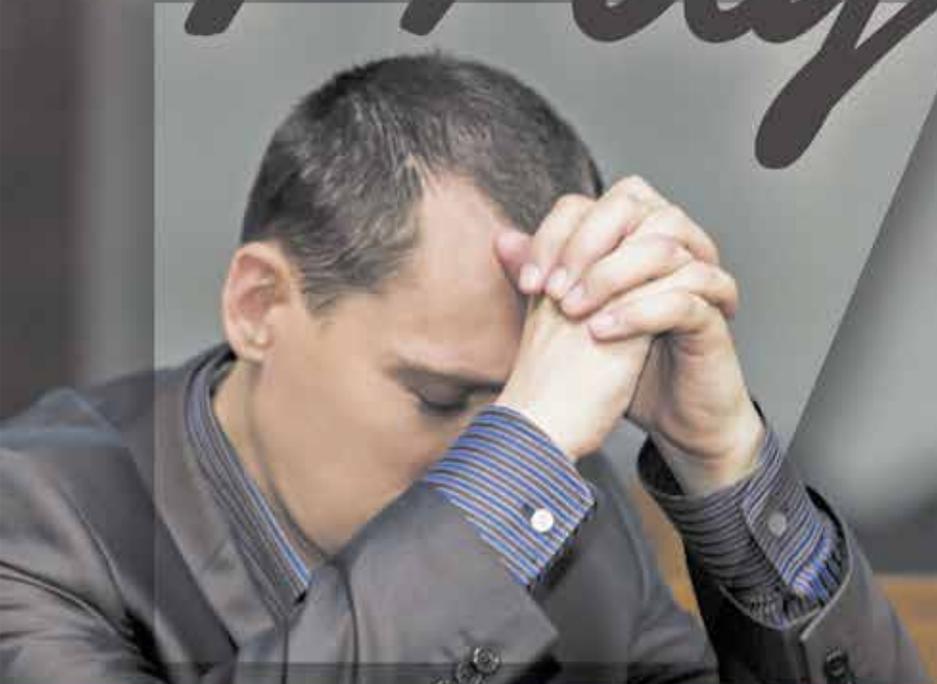
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STATEWIDE PRAYER GATHERING FOR PASTORS AND ALL MINISTERS



TAYLOR LEAVES ABSC — Charity Taylor (right) visits with her Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) co-workers during her recent going away party. Taylor left the ABSC to serve as children and families minister at First Southern Baptist Church in Bryant. Photo by Caleb Yarbrough

Obituaries

Wallace D. Ballentine, 86, died July 23.



He and his wife, Darlene, were also founding members of Hot Springs Baptist Church in Hot Springs.

Ballentine and his family moved to Hot Springs in 1939 when he began his newspaper career, selling the *Hot Springs New Era* on the streets of the resort city. Later, during a brief

time in Mineral Wells, Texas, Ballentine delivered newspapers on horseback. After returning to Hot Springs, where he became a route carrier at the age of 15, he continued to develop a love for the newspaper business.

Ballentine eventually worked his way up to route supervisor, account executive, retail advertising manager and advertising director with *The Sentinel-Record* in Hot Springs.

He became the newspaper's general manager in 1970, a position he held until his re-

tirement in 2001, culminating in 55 years of service with his hometown newspaper.

The Arkansas Press Association honored Ballentine in 1999 with the Golden 50 Service Award for his contributions to "the newspaper industry, the people, and the State of Arkansas."

Former Garland County Judge Larry Williams proclaimed Jan. 23, 2001, as Wallace D. Ballentine Day.

A longtime community leader, Ballentine joined the Hot Springs National Park Rotary Club in 1966. He became a 75th anniversary Paul Harris Fellow in 1991 and was given Honorary Rotarian status when he retired from the newspaper.

Ballentine also served on the Greater Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, the National Park Community College Board of Trustees and as 2004 chairman of the Garland County United Way campaign.

He was preceded in death by a son. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Darlene Bearden Ballentine, two daughters, a half-brother, eight grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

Funeral services were held

July 26 at Caruth-Hale Funeral Home chapel in Hot Springs.

Baptist life

Black River Baptist Association (BRBA) will host Bucks, Ducks & Faith at 6 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 30 at Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Blackrock.

Evangelist Sam Moore will speak on the great outdoors and After Grace will lead the worship. Everyone is invited to attend.

Mount Vernon Baptist is located at 730 Elm Street in Black Rock.

Tickets are available at the BRBA office. For more information call the association office at 870-886-2788.

Greg Addison, associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will be the guest speaker at the Aug. 21 meeting of the **North Pulaski Baptist Association (NPBA)** pastors' conference.

Addison, a former attorney, will speak on "Legal Issues Facing the Church Today."

"It is important that your church's bylaws and insurance be updated to accommodate our changing culture," said Dennis Wilkins, associational missionary with the NPBA.

On the move

Michael Hayslip is serving as pastor of Oak Grove Baptist Church in Pine Bluff.

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Classifieds

PASTOR

Cedar Grove Baptist Church of Arkadelphia is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Send resumes and references to Cedar Grove Baptist Church, 825 Cedar Grove Road, Arkadelphia, AR 71923.

Chicot Road Baptist Church is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Send resume to 13301 Chicot Rd, Mabelvale AR 72103 or email chicotroadbaptist@att.net.

Rural church in Sidney seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Send resume to Sidney Baptist Church, PO Box 54, Sidney, AR 72577 or email ljitate4500@gmail.com.

Woodland Baptist Church, a small rural Southern Baptist church, in Clarksville, Arkansas, seeks a **full-time pastor**. Accepting resumes through August 31, 2017. Send resume and references to Pastor Search Committee, Woodland Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1009, Clarksville, AR 72830.

Effective Aug. 1, 2017, the pastor search committee of Faith Southern Baptist Church in Huntsville will begin accepting resumes for a **bi-vocational pastor**. Mail resumes to: Faith Southern Baptist Church, PO Box 273, Huntsville, AR, 72740. 479-738-2487. Resumes accepted until Oct. 1, 2017.

Kern Heights Baptist Church in DeQueen, Arkansas, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send

resumes to KHBC Search Committee, 822 N 9th St., DeQueen, AR 71832 by 8/31/17.

FBC Gould, AR seeking **full-time pastor**. Send resumes to Gould First Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 375, Gould, AR 71643.

2nd Baptist Church, Siloam Springs, is looking for **bi-vocational pastor**. Please send resume to PO Box 1289, Siloam Springs, AR 72761.

Lambrook FBC seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Send resumes to: Johnny Williamson, PO Box 544, Elaine, AR 72333.

OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

SBC church in Shreveport, LA, is seeking a **worship pastor** who will oversee all aspects of the worship ministry and will work with the senior pastor in worship planning. He will be a member of the Executive Team. He will lead and oversee both the blended service and the modern service. Our church averages 1400 in worship and has a large choir of 100 people that are involved in the blended service every Sunday. He will be a man of integrity who is seeking to walk in an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ both in private and in public. The worship pastor will be a competent leader who has demonstrated growth in his worship ministry both in his current and past ministry context. Send resume and media clips to pastor@sum-

mergrove.org. Requirements: • Southern Baptist Theological education preferred. • College degree in music. • Minimum of five years' experience leading congregation worship including choir and orchestra. • Ministry experience in a church of 500 or larger is preferred. Compensation package includes salary and benefits.

Seeking **full-time pastor to children and families**: East Side of Paragould is seeking God's man to lead a thriving children's ministry and to assist our families in parenting and disciple making. We are a loving and serving church in a growing community with quality schools. Send resume to Phillip Miller: pmiller@connect2eastside.com.

First Baptist Church of Paragould is seeking a **bi-vocational worship leader** for a blended worship style. Submit resume to P.O. Box 816 Paragould, AR 72451 or email fbc@paragould.net.

Trinity Baptist Church, Benton, AR is seeking a **full-time student minister**. Mail resumes to 702 Church Street, Benton, AR 72015 or email resumes to: trinitybenton@gmail.com.

Rye Hill Baptist Church in Fort Smith is accepting resumes for a **part-time youth minister**. Please send resumes by email to carla@ryehill.org.

Central Baptist White Hall, AR, is accepting resumes for a **full-time youth and education pastor**. To be considered, please contact CBC Youth Pastor Search Committee,

PO Box 20336, White Hall, AR 71612-0336 or cbcsecretary@cablelynx.com.

Levy Church, NLR is seeking a **worship pianist** with choir accompaniment skills. Apply to: steventiner@levybaptist.com.

Westside Baptist Church of Waynesville, MO is seeking a **full-time preschool ministry leader** for Birth - 5yrs old. Interested applicants can email a resume NLT August 4th to: pastor_john@westsidewaynesville.com or fax 573-774-6432.

Spring River Baptist Association, Joplin, MO, is seeking a **director of missions/associational missionary**. Submit resume before Aug. 30, 2017, to: SRBASearchTeam@gmail.com.

Union Avenue Baptist Church in Wynne, AR, is seeking a **bi-vocational youth minister**. Call 870-238-2230 or 870-208-5990.

Seeking a **full-time children's minister** with multiple years of experience. Degree preferred. Must be capable of planning and executing a weekly children's ministry. Will coordinate with day-school director and preschool minister. Need to be a team player and must be capable of working with volunteers. Send resumes to: resumes@firstmarion.org or FBC Marion, PO Box 6, Marion, AR 72364.

First Baptist Church of Bay, AR, (located just outside of Jonesboro) is seeking a **part-time minister of music** who is committed to leading a blended worship service. Resumes may be

mailed to First Baptist Church, PO Box 190, Bay, AR 72411 or submitted to www.bayfbc.org.

Levy Church, NLR, seeks **full-time worship/executive pastor**. Send resumes to: steventiner@levybaptist.com.

Full-time minister to youth and families, Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Hot Springs, AR. Will work closely with senior pastor to meet the needs of a growing church. Email resume to mwiles@cablelynx.com.

Small church needs **music director**. Sundays only. Contact sulliglenda@yahoo.com if interested.

MISCELLANEOUS

Rock Hill Baptist Church, Lockesburg, AR, is looking for a **15-passenger van** with low mileage. Contact: Roger Tollett: 870-582-2180.

I'm **in search of stories of children adopted from foster care** by a Christian family and now grown adults working a full-time job, have a stable family of their own, have a good relationship with their adopted family, active in a local church, and have a growing relationship with Christ. E-mail stories to shaneandplanes@yahoo.com.

Place your classified ad at
arkansasbaptist.org/ads

Foster, Perkins named Williams Baptist College dept. chairs

WALNUT RIDGE – Williams Baptist College has named Robert Foster chair of the department of Christian ministries and Blake Perkins chair of

the department of history and government.

Foster has been a member of the Williams Christian ministries faculty since 1999.

Originally from Oklahoma, he earned his bachelor's degree from Oklahoma Baptist University and his M.Div. and Ph.D. from The Southern Bap-

tist Theological Seminary.

“Dr. Foster has been an extraordinary faculty member for 18 years at Williams,” said Brad Baine, vice president for academic affairs at Williams. “He teaches with genuine passion and presents the content of his courses in a dynamic fashion. During his tenure at Williams, Dr. Foster has exhibited quality leadership, as he has served in a variety of capacities for the benefit of the college. I am confident that Dr. Foster will continue to provide superior leadership as the chair of the department of Christian ministries.”

Perkins has been an assistant professor of history at Williams since 2014, after serving Williams as an adjunct in-

structor. The Lawrence County native earned his bachelor's degree in history from Lyon College, his master's degree in history from Missouri State University and his Ph.D. from West Virginia University.

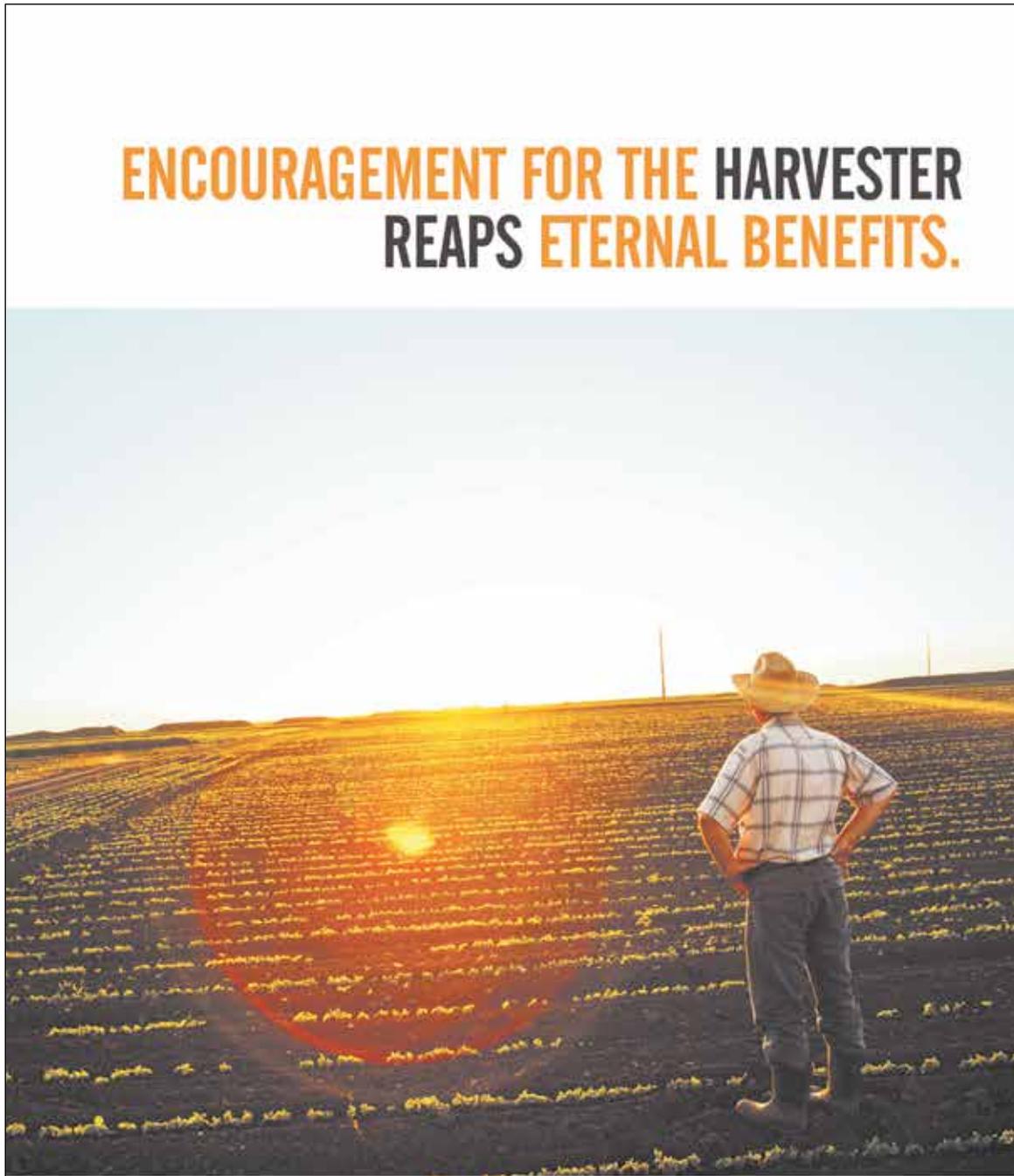
“Dr. Perkins is a highly effective instructor with a passion for history and meeting the needs of his students. In addition to his skills in the classroom and leadership for the institution, he is a published author and has presented his research at national, state and local events. Williams is fortunate to have Dr. Perkins as a faculty member and chair for the department of history and government,” added Baine.



Foster



Perkins



**ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE HARVESTER
REAPS ETERNAL BENEFITS.**

Businessperson of Year contest underway

LITTLE ROCK – The *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) is planning to hold its annual Arkansas Baptist Businessperson of the Year recognition, and ABN readers are invited to nominate a businessman or businesswoman from their church for consideration.

Candidates should be a resident of Arkansas and a member of an Arkansas Baptist church. They should be actively involved in ministry in their church and in other areas.

To nominate someone, please include the following: (1) name, phone number, email and church member-

ship of the submitter; (2) name, phone number, email and church membership of the candidate, and (3) a 200-300 word essay explaining why the candidate should be considered for Arkansas Baptist Businessperson of the Year, including the impact he or she makes in the business world, as well as his or her involvement in church/ministries/missions.

Submissions for the contest must be received on or before Nov. 1.

Email nominations to tim@arkansasbaptist.org or mail to Baptist Businessperson of the Year, 10 Remington Dr., Little Rock, AR 72204.

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AUGUST 20, 2017

Recently I had a wonderful conversation with a dear lady born in Hamburg, Germany. Olga grew up in Nazi Germany. Her father was a fisherman and out to sea for long periods of time. When he was home, Olga and her mother lived in constant fear. Her father was an outspoken critic of Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich. His open criticism alone could have led to their arrest and execution. The situation was complicated by foreign workers who would turn in dissidents to gain favor with the authorities.

Olga's father refused to allow anything religious into the home. While her father was out at sea, her mother taught her different prayers.

Olga became very emotional during this part of our conversation. She raised both hands up and said, "What else could we do? All we had were those prayers my mother taught me." Prayer was their only protection. As I listened to Olga's story, it reminded me of David's situation in Psalm 141.

David was being pursued and persecuted by King Saul. On the run and in

hiding, David was facing a seemingly hopeless situation. He pictured his bones being scattered at the mouth of the grave like upturned rocks in a plowed field (Psa. 141:7). He cried out, "But my eyes look to You, Lord God" (Psa. 141:8, HCSB). When our situations and circumstances look hopeless, we must turn to God Who is our Refuge.

David prayed with a sense of urgency (Psa. 141:1). He offered his prayer as incense while raising his hands in an act of worship (Psa. 141:2). David also prayed that the Lord would guard his words, desires and actions during difficult times (Psa. 141:3-5). It is always a great temptation to treat the enemy in an ungodly manner. David sought refuge in the Lord, asking for protection from the traps and snares of the enemy (Psa. 141:8-9). He asked the Lord to let his enemies fall into their own traps and allow him to pass safely by (Psa. 141:10).

God is our Refuge. In Him we can find hope, strength and help in our times of need.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

The protector

PSALM 141:1-10

Gerald Nash
Conway

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

A passion to share the gospel

2 CORINTHIANS 5:11, 14-21

Gayla Parker
Little Rock

Christ with the lost is important to us, then we will overcome all obstacles and find a way to do it.

It is this kind of passion that Paul was speaking of in 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. We are compelled by the love of Christ, pleading on behalf of God to the lost to be reconciled to Him. The Greek word for "compel" is *synechein*. It is only used one

other time in the Bible, in Philippians 1:23. It can be translated to "hold together," to "hold fast" or "to leave no choice."

The love of Christ - His love that took Him to the cross to die on our behalf - leaves us no choice but to share that love with the lost. Either it will be important enough for us

to find a way, or we will find an excuse.

What are you passionate about? Are you passionate about sharing the gospel and winning the lost? Is it manifested in the way you live life? I pray the love of Christ will give us no choice but to share the gospel for the sake of the lost.

AUGUST 27, 2017

In my ministry and my work in healthcare, I continually engage people who are discouraged, depressed and disconnected. This past year I participated in a fundraiser for the annual walk event for suicide prevention. The event raised funds for education, awareness and support for victims and their families. The theme was "Out of the Darkness."

The individuals I work with and minister to often describe where they are in life as "a dark place." This is exactly where we find David in Psalm 42. As David lamented, you get the sense that his depression had taken him to a very dark place. David said he was depressed and in turmoil (Psa. 42:5). He was not just depressed; he was "deeply depressed" (Psa. 42:6, HCSB).

David gave the reasons for his depression. Just as a deer thirsts for water during a drought, David's soul thirsted, or longed, for God. So often depression has an underlying disconnect. David felt disconnected from the Lord. David knew that God was omnipresent, but he wanted a deeper and personal awareness of God in his life as he was going through

these difficulties. This longing for God was intensified when the enemies asked him all day long, "Where is your God?" (Psa. 42:3, HCSB). This taunting caused him not to be able to eat. His tears were his only nourishment (Psa. 42:3). David painfully reflected on his separation from Jerusalem, public worship and his home (Psa. 42:6-8). He felt overwhelmed (Psa. 42:7).

David knew what caused his depression, and he also knew the cure. He asked himself why he was depressed (Psa. 42:5). He told himself, "Put your hope in God, for I will still praise Him, my Savior and my God" (Psa. 42:5, HCSB). The cure is praising God and placing trust in Him. He repeated the cure in verse 11.

This is a teaching psalm. David wanted to teach us a lesson. When we find ourselves in a dark place, depressed and disconnected, we often turn to secular solutions. We need to place our hope in God. This may sound too simple in human thinking, but it is God's solution. There really is no one else who can pull us out of that dark place.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

The longing

PSALM 42:1-11

Gerald Nash
Conway

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Right here, right now

MARK 5:1-2, 8-15, 18-20

Gayla Parker
Little Rock

Driving rules around the world are different than in America. In Europe drivers drive on the left side of the road; in Asia drivers learn to deal with major traffic.

More than one million people lived in our city when my husband and I were missionaries in the Philippines. Every day at every hour, there was traffic! The first order of business

was to learn how to drive in that kind of traffic with the new set of rules. We learned if there is room for your bumper, there is room for your car; you just keep squeezing it in. Four marked lanes really mean eight lanes. The right of way is based on the size of the vehicle, and a red light is only a suggestion.

Not knowing the red-light rule can cause problems. Most would assume a red light means cars will stop and those with a green light can continue through the intersection. That would be a false assumption.

In America it would be a false assumption to assume that because America is considered a Christian nation, all

Americans are Christians. Sadly, many see living a Christian life and being involved in church as mere suggestions, like the red light. There is one huge difference. Ignoring the red light may cause a little car damage, but ignoring the need for a Savior will cause huge eternal damage.

According to LifeWay Research, only 4 percent of Americans born after 1982 will be

reached by the church. For today's believer, there is no need to go far to share your salvation story.

In Mark 5 the demon-possessed man went home to tell his family and friends how Christ changed his life. The Samaritan woman in John 4 went to her village to tell of the Man who knew everything about her.

The blind man in John 9 went home to tell his family how Christ healed his eyes. Telling our salvation story begins right here at home. The distance we travel is not nearly as important as being intentional about telling our salvation story right here, right now.

DON'T GO ON SAFARI WITHOUT 4-WHEEL DRIVE.

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Life on mission is an adventure, and we want to equip you for every hill and valley you will face. So before you set out on the journey, come to Southwestern Seminary to fuel your heart and strengthen your mind for a ministry that is sure to include some bumps and peaks along the way. Let us fill your pack with the gear you need for the long haul. ***BE READY.***



SOUTHWESTERN
BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



"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 (which includes a special 12-page section) free to all Arkansas Baptist churches – in cooperation with the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

To our faithful subscribers, we want to say, "Thank you!" To our non-subscribing 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 about 42 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 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!

Become a subscriber today so you don't miss another issue of the *ABN*. For more information about how your church can read about how God is using Arkansas Baptists to expand His kingdom, call 501-376-4791, ext. 5153, or 800-838-2272, ext. 5153, or visit arkansasbaptist.org/subscribe.

Serving Together,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Yarbrough". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Tim Yarbrough
Editor/Executive Director

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