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- Camp Joshua trains pro-life leaders
- 'New' Baptist hymnal celebrates 10 yrs.
- Page: Tort reform not 'pro-life issue'
- OBU fundraising hits record of \$17.2M
- Elrod, former OBU president, dies at 87

Block party ministry 'sparked a fire'

FBC, Hampton, uses hot dogs and fun to share Christ

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ABSC board hires Brown, changes protection plan

Tim Yarbrough
Arkansas Baptist News

LITTLE ROCK - Arkansas Baptists have a new evangelism and church health team leader after the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) Executive Board unanimously approved the hiring of Marcus Brown Aug. 14.

Brown, 41, was recommended by the ABSC Administration and Operating Committee as the new team leader of the evangelism and church health team on a day of business that included approval of a \$21 million unified Cooperative Program (CP) budget for 2019, team goals and a major change in the convention-provided church



Brown

staff protection plan. Brown replaces Terry Bostick, who resigned to become pastor of First Baptist Church in Cabot.

"Marcus is an incredible leader," said J.D. "Sonny" Tucker, ABSC executive director, in comments following Brown's recommendation, adding, "He's an avid soul winner" who is willing to take on any task put before him.

Addressing the board, Brown said, "What gets me out of bed in the morning is a love for the Church." He

added that while the ABSC has an intensive program to help revitalize churches, "God alone brings revitalization of the Church."

Brown previously served as assistant team leader for the evangelism and church health team and discipleship consultant for the ABSC.

He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Ouachita Baptist University, a Master of Divinity degree from Southwestern

Baptist Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Brown served as pastor of Jenny Lind Baptist Church in Greenwood 2001-09.

Brown and his wife, Amy, have three children, Nathan, Sarah and Peter, and are active members of New Life Baptist Church in Alexander.

2019 budget

The 2019 Cooperative Program (CP) budget recommended by the Finance Committee represents the second year of a five-year formula that will result in a 2.05 percent increase to Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) causes. A Budget

See **ABSC** page 6



Paragould church launches with 1,000+ and 22 baptisms

Page 3

Photo by Caleb Broussard

'Engage' to celebrate God's work through women

ARKANSAS BAPTIST women, do you want to celebrate God's work in the world with your sisters in Christ?

If your answer is "Yes," then consider attending the 2018 Engage / Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) Annual Meeting, set for 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 22, at First Baptist Church, Benton.

The theme for this year's event, sponsored by WMU of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC), is Unshakeable Pursuit, based on 1 Corinthians 15:58.

"We're blessed to have Linda Cooper, National WMU president, joining us at Engage. She will interpret our theme during the opening session and then lead breakout sessions related

to the theme," said Debbie Moore, ABSC missions team consultant and Arkansas WMU executive director.

The purpose of Engage / WMU Annual Meeting, said Moore, is to celebrate what God is doing in our state, nation and world. Strengthening fellowship among women throughout the state is another key element of the meeting, she said.

Along with Cooper, speakers at this year's Engage event include: Lorna Bius, a North American Mission Board missionary serving in Clarkston, Ga.; two International Mission Board missionaries; Bit Stephens, ABSC international student consultant, and Tim Yarbrough, editor/executive director, *Arkansas Baptist News*. Worship leaders are

Lee and Elizabeth Barnett, from First Baptist Church, Hot Springs.

In addition to hearing from speakers and participating in praise and worship, attendees will elect a new Arkansas WMU Executive Board and State Nominating Committee, pray for missionaries having birthdays on Sept. 22, and visit exhibits highlighting Arkansas WMU work, ABSC work and the ministries of partnering ministry groups.

This year, Engage participants are invited to support the ministry of CJCOHN, a nonprofit association of 15 Saline County churches that has been providing food, clothing and other services to

See **ENGAGE** page 8

ABN classifieds get results!

Read them on Page 10.

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

Classifieds

RENTAL
We have a large, well-lit, clean, and comfortable space available for rent. Perfect for meetings, conferences, or social events. Call us today for more information.

TECHNICAL SERVICES
Providing professional IT support and network maintenance for businesses of all sizes. We ensure your systems are secure and running smoothly.

LEGAL SERVICES
Offering expert legal advice and representation in various areas of law, including contract law, estate planning, and business law.

ACCOUNTING SERVICES
Providing comprehensive accounting and tax services to help you manage your finances effectively and stay compliant with regulations.

MARKETING SERVICES
Developing creative marketing strategies and campaigns to increase your brand visibility and attract new customers.

CONSTRUCTION SERVICES
Providing high-quality construction services for residential and commercial projects. We are committed to safety and customer satisfaction.

TRAVEL SERVICES
Offering personalized travel arrangements and vacation packages to make your next trip a memorable experience.

REAL ESTATE SERVICES
Providing expert real estate advice and assistance in buying or selling your home. We are dedicated to finding the best solution for our clients.

FINANCIAL SERVICES
Providing professional financial planning and investment management services to help you achieve your long-term goals.

HEALTH SERVICES
Offering a wide range of health and wellness services, including physical therapy, massage, and nutritional counseling.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
Providing quality educational programs and tutoring services to help students succeed in their studies.

ARTS AND CRAFTS SERVICES
Offering unique and custom-made arts and crafts services, including pottery, jewelry, and home decor.

EVENT SERVICES
Providing professional event planning and execution services for weddings, corporate events, and social gatherings.

LANDSCAPE SERVICES
Offering professional landscaping and maintenance services to enhance the beauty of your outdoor spaces.

HAIR AND BEAUTY SERVICES
Providing a variety of hair and beauty services, including haircuts, styling, coloring, and skincare treatments.

MOVING SERVICES
Providing reliable and efficient moving services for local and long-distance relocations. We handle everything from packing to unpacking.

WATER DAMAGE SERVICES
Offering fast and effective water damage restoration services to minimize damage and return your property to normal.

PLUMBING SERVICES
Providing expert plumbing services for residential and commercial properties. We handle all types of plumbing issues.

ELECTRICAL SERVICES
Offering professional electrical services, including wiring, repairs, and installations. We ensure all work is done safely and to code.

PAINTING SERVICES
Providing high-quality painting services for interior and exterior surfaces. We use premium materials and techniques.

ROOFING SERVICES
Offering professional roofing services, including inspections, repairs, and full roof replacements. We are committed to durability and safety.

CONCRETE SERVICES
Providing expert concrete services, including foundation work, driveways, and patios. We ensure a long-lasting and level finish.

LANDSCAPE LIGHTING
Offering professional landscape lighting services to enhance the beauty and safety of your outdoor areas.

POOL SERVICES
Providing comprehensive pool maintenance and repair services to keep your pool clean, safe, and enjoyable.

WINE TASTING SERVICES
Offering unique wine tasting experiences and classes to help you discover new flavors and varieties.

YOGA AND FITNESS SERVICES
Providing a variety of yoga and fitness classes to help you improve your health and well-being.

COOKING CLASSES
Offering fun and informative cooking classes for all skill levels. We teach a variety of cuisines and techniques.

WEDDING SERVICES
Providing professional wedding planning and coordination services to make your special day stress-free and memorable.

PHOTOGRAPHY SERVICES
Offering professional photography services for weddings, portraits, and events. We capture every precious moment.

VIDEO PRODUCTION SERVICES
Providing high-quality video production services for businesses and organizations. We create engaging and professional content.

WEB DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
Offering professional web development services to create beautiful and functional websites for your business.

SEO SERVICES
Providing expert search engine optimization (SEO) services to increase your website's visibility and attract more traffic.

CONTENT WRITING SERVICES
Offering professional content writing services for blogs, websites, and marketing materials. We create compelling and engaging content.

GRAPHIC DESIGN SERVICES
Providing creative graphic design services for logos, business cards, and marketing materials. We ensure a consistent and professional look.

TRANSLATION SERVICES
Offering professional translation services for documents, websites, and audio files. We ensure accurate and culturally sensitive translations.

INTERPRETING SERVICES
Providing professional interpreting services for meetings, conferences, and legal proceedings. We ensure clear and effective communication.

TELEMARKETING SERVICES
Offering professional telemarketing services for lead generation, sales, and customer support. We ensure high-quality and ethical practices.

CALL CENTER SERVICES
Providing professional call center services for customer support, sales, and training. We ensure a positive and helpful customer experience.

CRM SERVICES
Offering professional CRM (Customer Relationship Management) services to help you manage your customer data and improve your marketing efforts.

EMAIL MARKETING SERVICES
Providing professional email marketing services to create targeted and effective email campaigns. We ensure high deliverability and engagement.

SOCIAL MEDIA SERVICES
Offering professional social media management services to help you grow your online presence and engage with your audience.

INFLUENCER MARKETING SERVICES
Providing professional influencer marketing services to reach new audiences and promote your brand through social media.

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES
Offering professional reputation management services to monitor and improve your online reputation. We ensure a positive and trustworthy image.

ANALYTICS SERVICES
Providing professional analytics services to help you understand your website and marketing performance. We provide clear and actionable insights.

CONSULTING SERVICES
Offering professional consulting services in various areas of business, including strategy, operations, and financial management. We provide expert advice and solutions.

COACHING SERVICES
Providing professional coaching services to help you achieve your personal and professional goals. We offer personalized and supportive guidance.

MENTORING SERVICES
Offering professional mentoring services to help you gain valuable insights and experience from industry experts. We provide ongoing and flexible support.

TRAINER SERVICES
Providing professional training services for businesses and organizations. We offer a variety of training programs and courses.

WORKSHOP SERVICES
Offering professional workshop services for team building, skill development, and professional growth. We create interactive and engaging experiences.

CONFERENCE SERVICES
Providing professional conference and event services, including venue selection, logistics, and registration. We ensure a smooth and successful event.

EXHIBITION SERVICES
Offering professional exhibition and trade show services to help you showcase your products and services. We provide creative and effective booth designs.

RESEARCH SERVICES
Providing professional market research and data analysis services to help you make informed business decisions. We provide accurate and reliable information.

ADVERTISING SERVICES
Offering professional advertising services, including print, digital, and outdoor advertising. We create targeted and effective campaigns.

PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES
Providing professional public relations services to help you manage your brand's image and communicate with the media. We ensure a positive and consistent message.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT SERVICES
Offering professional crisis management services to help you prepare for and respond to unexpected events. We provide a clear and effective plan of action.

RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES
Providing professional risk management services to help you identify and mitigate potential risks to your business. We ensure a proactive and comprehensive approach.

INSURANCE SERVICES
Offering professional insurance services to help you protect your business and assets. We provide a variety of insurance policies and options.

TAX SERVICES
Providing professional tax services, including tax preparation, planning, and auditing. We ensure compliance and maximize your tax savings.

ACCOUNTING SERVICES
Offering professional accounting services, including bookkeeping, payroll, and financial reporting. We ensure accurate and timely information.

LEGAL SERVICES
Providing professional legal services, including contract review, dispute resolution, and estate planning. We ensure your legal needs are met.

FINANCIAL SERVICES
Offering professional financial services, including investment management, retirement planning, and estate planning. We help you achieve your financial goals.

REAL ESTATE SERVICES
Providing professional real estate services, including buying and selling homes, property management, and commercial real estate. We ensure a smooth and successful transaction.

CONSTRUCTION SERVICES
Offering professional construction services, including general contracting, subcontracting, and construction management. We ensure high-quality and timely completion.

LANDSCAPE SERVICES
Providing professional landscape services, including design, installation, and maintenance. We create beautiful and functional outdoor spaces.

HAIR AND BEAUTY SERVICES
Offering professional hair and beauty services, including haircuts, styling, coloring, and skincare treatments. We ensure a relaxing and enjoyable experience.

MOVING SERVICES
Providing professional moving services, including packing, loading, and unloading. We ensure a safe and efficient move.

WATER DAMAGE SERVICES
Offering professional water damage restoration services, including water extraction, drying, and mold remediation. We ensure a thorough and effective restoration.

PLUMBING SERVICES
Providing professional plumbing services, including repairs, installations, and maintenance. We ensure a quick and reliable response.

ELECTRICAL SERVICES
Offering professional electrical services, including wiring, repairs, and installations. We ensure safety and compliance with all codes.

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WINE TASTING SERVICES
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YOGA AND FITNESS SERVICES
Providing professional yoga and fitness services, including classes, personal training, and group fitness. We ensure a challenging and supportive environment.

COOKING CLASSES
Offering professional cooking classes, including basic cooking, advanced techniques, and specialty cuisines. We provide a hands-on and enjoyable learning experience.

WEDDING SERVICES
Providing professional wedding services, including planning, coordination, and day-of services. We ensure a stress-free and memorable wedding.

PHOTOGRAPHY SERVICES
Offering professional photography services, including weddings, portraits, and events. We capture every precious moment in high quality.

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James retires, leaves legacy in Arkansas, beyond

Caleb Yarbrough
Arkansas Baptist News

LITTLE ROCK – In more than 40 years of ministry, David James, Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) college and young leaders team leader, has invested in the lives of countless young adults across Arkansas and beyond.

James is set to retire at the end of August. During a going away party held for him Aug. 14 at the ABSC building in Little Rock, various Arkansas Baptist leaders shared stories of James' impact on them and others over the years.

Bit Stephens, international student consultant for the ABSC, said James "always used the Word of God to encourage us."

"When students would spend time with David, they would feel like the most important person in the world."

Sharing James' passion for reaching international students, Stephens said, "He taught us that if God saves them, He can change a life. He can change a family. He can change a nation."

Tavoris "T" Uzoigwe, ABSC campus minister at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB), shared about James' work among ethnic college students in Arkansas.

Uzoigwe said that James is one of five men who have significantly impacted his spiritual life.

"He (James) could see something in me that I couldn't see in myself. Great leaders do that; they can see other people for what they are in Christ, even if they can't see that in themselves," Uzoigwe said.

Uzoigwe said that James taught him that actions speak louder than words. In the context of his work with UAPB students, who often come from broken families, Uzoigwe said James told him that one of the biggest threats to society are fathers not being in homes.

Ryan Scantling, ABSC Conway campus minister, said that James' passion is for college students, regardless of the size or location of the school.

"I was driving back home in Dardanelle about a year and a

half ago, and David called and said, 'Did you know there is a small horseshoe school there that we need to start a campus ministry for somehow?'" Scantling recalled.

"David's heart is really one of Paul in Romans 10:1, that his heart's desire and prayer concerning them, college students, wherever they may be, is for their salvation," Scantling said.

Bill Noe, collegiate events coordinator for LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, Tenn., shared about the impact James has had on college ministry and collegiate ministers nationwide.

"As I continued over the last six years traveling the country and being involved in collegiate ministry on a national scale, I can't think of anybody that has the kind of legacy and influence that this man (James) has," Noe said.

"I know that you have experienced it on the campuses in Arkansas, but it is not just in this state," Noe said. "We were, just last week, at Collegiate Week (a national gathering of collegiate ministers). ... We sat in a room of about 350 leaders, and the question was



David James (right) speaks during his retirement celebration Aug. 14 at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention building in Little Rock. Below, a map of the world serves as the guest book for the event. A cartoon depiction of James by *Arkansas Baptist News* cartoonist Gary Thomas reads, "Thank you David for your faithful service!" Photos by Caleb Yarbrough

plaque on behalf of LifeWay, commemorating 43 years of ministry to college students.

Greg Sykes, ABSC president and senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Russellville, talked about his friendship with James, highlighting James' way of showing his legitimate interest and care for all people he meets.

Sykes said that he began his ministry serving in college

philosophy of ministry and who's going to do what, but the reality is that there were a lot of kids not being reached for the gospel and campus ministry fills a hole that, unfortunately, the local church doesn't always fill."

Sykes commented on James' unique ability to build leaders, saying, "This guy (James) has recruited some of the best and the brightest and has had this special way of saying, 'What you do well, turn it loose.'"

Following these personal reflections on James and his legacy, J.D. "Sonny" Tucker, ABSC executive director, presented James with a gift, thanking him for his service.

"I know very few people in Arkansas, or anywhere, that has had impact like David James. His investment in students over these years has produced spiritual fruit that has multiplied hundreds of times and will only be fully realized in heaven," Tucker said in comments provided earlier to the *Arkansas Baptist News*.

James shared that the three decades he has served at the ABSC have been defined by the three executive directors whom he worked under: Don Moore, Emil Turner and Tucker. James thanked the three men for their leadership and friendship.

An Oklahoma native, James started his ministry as associate pastor of Trinity Baptist

Church in Pauls Valley, Okla., in 1973. In 1974 James married his wife, Peggy.

In 1976 James became Baptist Student Union (BSU) director at Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College in Miami, Okla., serving there until 1982. In 1981, James and his wife welcomed a son, Nathan, who today serves as co-pastor of Epoch Church in Little Rock, where he pastors his parents.

In 1982 James became Metro BSU director in Tulsa, Okla., and in 1983 he became director of religious activities and BSU at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, Okla., where he served until coming to Arkansas in 1987 to serve in the position that he currently holds.

James is a graduate of Davis High School in Davis, Okla., and he holds a Bachelor of Arts in Education degree from East Central State University in Ada, Okla.; a Master of Divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

"If I had not been here (Arkansas), there would have been somebody else, and the work would have gone on; great things would have happened," James said.

"It's not about me; it's about God and Him allowing me to become a part of this."

Contact Caleb Yarbrough at caleb@arkansasbaptist.org.



asked, 'If David James has had an impact on your life in ministry, just raise your hand.'

"Hands all across the room went up. As I reflected on it, I knew the truth was that even the hands that didn't go up were influenced by this man," he said. "I'm not sure that there is anybody in campus ministry today that David James hasn't had some form of impact and influence on."

Noe presented James with a

ministry before transitioning to the local church after being burdened that the local church was the place where college ministry should take place, as opposed to campus ministries.

"So in a lot of ways, we might have had differing philosophies. Yet, what's fun is that early on I figured out that with David, it wasn't about philosophy; it was about reaching people for Jesus," Sykes said. "We can argue about phi-

Paragould site launch attracts 1,000+

JONESBORO – Twenty-two people were baptized, and an overflow room had to be utilized during the launch service of a new campus of Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro, Sunday, Aug. 12 at Greene County Tech High School in Paragould.

“This was our first Sunday. We were in an auditorium that seats 999 people, and we had 1,055 people there,” said Breck Freeman, administrative pastor of Central Baptist Church and former associate missions team leader at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. “We had an overflow room. ... That was one of the most amazing things.”

“We had 15 people scheduled for baptism, but seven people who had already been saved came forward to be baptized,” said Freeman.

In addition to those counted during the worship service held in Greene County Tech’s auditorium, 219 children and church workers brought the church launch’s total attendance to 1,274.

Before launching its Paragould campus, Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro, had two



People attending the launch service of the Paragould campus of Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro, stand outside Greene County Tech High School Sunday, Aug. 12.

Jonesboro campuses and a Newport campus. In the works for more than a year, Central Baptist’s Paragould campus was born out of the church’s recognition that around 200 church members were commuting to its other campuses from Paragould, according to Freeman.

Eighty-seven people attended Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro’s Paragould campus’ first new members’ class on the last Sunday of July. The

next new members’ class is set for the end of August.

With 44,000 people in Greene County, around 44 percent of the population has no church affiliation.

“I think Central Baptist Paragould will give people a place to go,” said Freeman. “It’s a multi-generational church. Children to senior adults were all present on the first day. It’s a family atmosphere, but it’s also a church where single people can come and find their

place. It’s where high school and college students can find their place.”

Central Baptist’s Paragould campus is already planning to add a second service to accommodate its first-ever service attendance.

According to Freeman, Central Baptist Church is currently seeking to purchase property for a church building in Paragould, a project they hope to begin within the next 18 months.

Camp Joshua trains pro-life leaders

HUMPHREY – In a day of legalized abortion, a special camp in Arkansas is being proactive in training students to be pro-life leaders and lifelong advocates of a pro-life message.

Camp Joshua, held at the Crossheirs Retreat Center in Humphrey, gathered students from across the state July 27-29. The camp is sponsored by Arkansas’ Right to Life and is serious about educating students to “fight the culture of death” that permeates today’s society.

“Camp Joshua is one weekend and is permanently focused on the education of high school students,” said Laura Osborn, camp coordinator. “It is something done across the country in different states by Right to Life organizations.”

Arkansas’ Camp Joshua was started in 2006 to train students to confidently defend their pro-life views and enact pro-life efforts in their high school and community.

“I found out about Camp Joshua from my youth pastors,” said Hunter Johnson, a member of Journey Church in Perryville. “I wanted to go because I thought it would be a great opportunity to learn more about what I stood for and meet new people.”

Camp Joshua is not a Bible camp, but it is modeled after Joshua in the Bible. Just like the young leader who knocked down the walls of Jericho, students at Camp Joshua are taught how to knock down the walls of the culture of death represented by abortion.

It is open to all religious denominations and not affiliated with a particular religious group.

“The way the weekend is set up is that we have people come in and speak on different pro-life topics,” Osborn said. “A lot of focus is on abortion, but we also cover euthanasia, assisted suicide and stem cell research.”

Camp Joshua sessions also

include lessons called Pro-Life Persuasion and The Impact of Abortion.

“For me personally, one of my favorite things about Camp Joshua is the talk called The Impact of Abortion,” Osborn said. “We have women who come in and speak about their experience when they had an abortion. They talk about their post-abortion syndrome and their PTSD (post-traumatic stress syndrome) that resulted from their abortion.”

Students are greatly impacted by hearing personal testimonies from women who have had abortions and doctors who have performed abortions, she said.

“I enjoyed learning about what it means to get an abortion and how the process goes,” Johnson said. “I’ve learned there are a lot of consequences from having an abortion such as nightmares and other health problems.”

The session Pro-Life Persuasion is a crash course on how

to argue and defend your pro-life views against someone who is pro-abortion or pro-choice.

The last day of the weekend, the students toured the Arkansas State Capitol and met with Rep. Andy Mayberry during the How to Get Involved with Your Local Government session. Students were taught how to find and contact their representatives.

“Arkansas is a pretty pro-life state, but I hope we can effect change on a larger scale as this camp grows bigger and more powerful in other states that aren’t pro-life,” Osborn said. “If you ever want to change anything, education is key.”

For many students who attended Camp Joshua, their worldview was transformed.

“This camp changed my whole outlook on abortions,” Johnson said.

“Going to Camp Joshua changed so many things in my life and the way I viewed them. I am so thankful for the opportunity.”

ABN Digest

Stories of interest
to Arkansas Baptists

‘New’ Baptist Hymnal celebrates 10 years

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) – LifeWay Christian Resources is celebrating the 10-year anniversary of the latest Baptist Hymnal this August. It’s a milestone Mike Harland, director of LifeWay Worship, finds humbling – especially considering a physical form of the 2008 hymnal wasn’t initially supposed to exist.

“The original idea was that a new hymnal for Baptists would be digital only,” Harland said. “But we did extensive research and discovered almost half of the churches we served still held hymnals every week.”

The result of this research was for LifeWay to produce three resources simultaneously – a new physical hymnal, a site for digital worship resources in lifewayworship.com, and full accompaniment orchestrations of every song in the hymnal.

“We had five production teams that would each deliver 20 completed songs per month,” recalled Grammy-winning producer Greg Nelson, who worked on the orchestrations. “This continued for 10 months until we had recorded 1,000 songs.”

According to Nelson, it was the largest recording project in the history of Nashville – a feat especially notable considering the city is known more for honky-tonks than hymnals.

In addition to recognizing the scale of the project, Harland said he felt its weight, knowing it would have an immediate impact on the body of Christ and that it would represent church history for years to come.

“Hymnals are something anthropologists and historians study,” Harland said.

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)

The future of Baptist news

Earlier this month the Board of Directors of the *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) gathered in Little Rock to celebrate the work of your state newspaper and to consider strategies to keep its ministry healthy and moving forward into the future.

It goes without saying that the work of all traditional newspapers – not just those carrying Baptist news and information – has undergone a seismic shift in recent years.

While secular, for-profit newspapers have always been dependent on subscriptions and advertising revenue, Baptist newspapers have been dependent on a combination of paid subscriptions, Cooperative Program (CP) funding and advertising revenue.

This model has worked well for many Baptist newspapers – even as print readership declines – but today it faces increased challenges from rising postage and printing costs.

I've written in this space many times of the great reach the ABN has throughout our state through both print and digital readership. Today, digital readership – meaning those who access our newspaper through our Facebook page, other social media and at arkansasbaptist.org – has never been greater and rivals the number of our paid print subscribers.

The challenge moving forward is declining revenue of print subscribers and replacing this revenue, which supplements the cost of printing and mailing the newspaper that most of you still hold in

your hands every two weeks.

For many years the CP has supplemented the cost of the print version of our newspaper. However, as you have read in news stories beginning in 2016, the ABN is receiving less and less funding beginning this year – approximately \$21,000 less in 2018, and culminating in about \$105,000

in total reduction in funding by 2022.

This means that in the year 2022 and following, the

ABN's budget will be approximately \$105,000 less per year than in 2017.

For a small entity like the ABN, this is a significant loss in funding, but it won't mean the end of your independent Baptist newspaper – that is, unless Arkansas Baptists cease to support it.

As we move forward, the ABN board and staff will be exploring practical and creative ways to replace the aforementioned loss of CP funding.

One way will be an increase in print subscription rates. The ABN has not raised its baseline subscription rates in more than 10 years, and we all know how much more things cost today than they did 10 years ago.

However, as mentioned, a healthy measure of innovation and creative strategies will be employed to minimize an increase in subscription rates so you and your church can continue to enjoy receiving a print version of the ABN delivered to your home if you so choose.

These are exciting days as your Baptist newspaper meets

challenges and moves the work of Arkansas Baptists forward through the dissemination of news and information important to the propagation of the gospel of Jesus Christ in Arkansas and throughout the world.

Arkansas Baptists – working together to support our cherished Baptist newspaper heritage – will ensure that the charge of the ABN mission statement will continue today and for generations to come, which states:

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



The Arkansas Baptist News Board of Directors meets in Little Rock Aug. 9.

Arkansas and beyond.

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

"We advocate for the cause

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

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

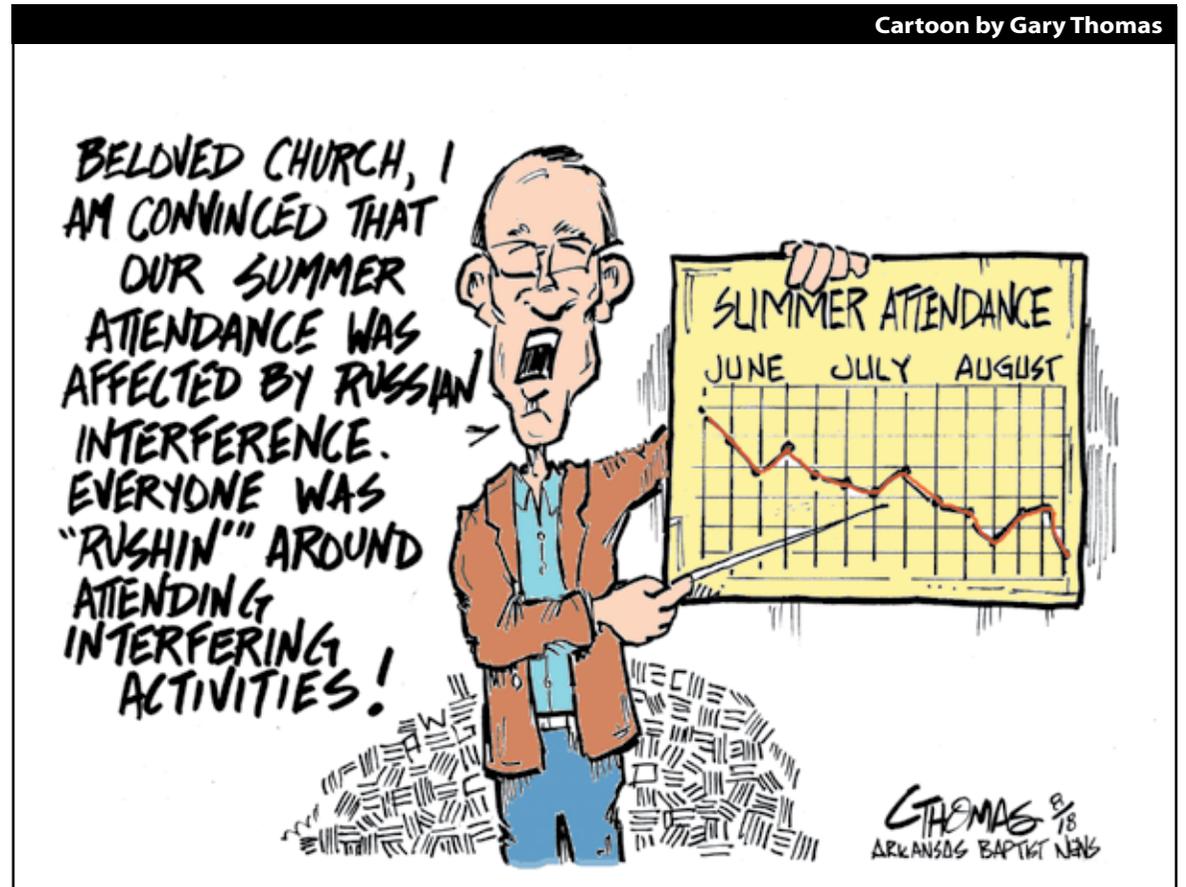


Pressing On

Tim Yarbrough

Phil. 3:14

Cartoon by Gary Thomas



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The moral argument

Atheists are more vocal than ever. Thus, it is a good idea to know a few arguments for the existence of God. Over the next few columns, I'll detail a few arguments in a conversational tone. If you meet an atheist, it will probably be at work, in your neighborhood or among your family. So these conversations about God – in such settings – need to be approached with a winsome, yet conversational, tone.

The first argument I'd like to discuss is formally known as the moral argument. Many atheists claim to be atheists because of something known as the problem of evil. Simply put, the problem of evil asks: If God is all-powerful, all-knowing and perfectly good, why do bad things happen? The best explanation – according to atheists – is that bad things are proof God doesn't exist. But the moral argument turns the problem of evil on its philosophical head.

The motivation behind the problem of evil is a sense of justice or goodness. But if God doesn't exist, then neither does goodness or ultimate justice. In other words, in order for evil to exist, there must be good. But good doesn't exist if God doesn't exist. Thus, one can't have a problem with evil unless God exists.

The argument looks something like this: If God doesn't exist, then objective morality doesn't exist. But objective morality exists. (In other words, it is really wrong when a human being is murdered.) Therefore, God exists.

Perhaps the atheist could reply: "Well, good and evil are simply terms we use to classify things that we like or dislike." If that were the case, however, morality wouldn't be objective; it would be subjective. Objective morality is the idea that morality is not defined by beliefs, feelings or desires; it is grounded in something else. In other words, if morality is objective, one can't say: "I just feel like it is wrong to judge a person for how he chooses to live." With objective morality, ethical standards are not set by how one feels or believes or what one desires. Morality is grounded in something far deeper – it is grounded in God.

Subjective morality, on the other hand, is the idea that morality is developed by humanity, cultures or nature. In other words, there is no ultimate wrong, according to subjective morality. Any labeling of something as "good" or "bad" is a mere opinion about a specific action.

But here is the problem with subjective morality: What is wrong today may not be wrong tomorrow. Or what is wrong to me may not be wrong to you. Furthermore, there is no such thing as ultimate evil if morality is subjective. In other words, if subjectivity were true, that would mean that genocide and other atrocities aren't really wrong. They are just culturally unacceptable.

We all seem to be appalled when we hear of some horrific crime or tragedy. It is like there is this inner sense that murder is wrong – not just wrong culturally or personally, but really wrong. To claim that there is some moral law, however, there must be a moral lawgiver. As C.S. Lewis wrote, "If there is an objective Moral Law, and none of us made it, there must be something else that produced the Moral Law, a Moral Law-giver..." That moral lawgiver is God.

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



Deep Waters

Chad Meeks

An important report to Ark. Baptists

As reports of the impact of Arkansas Baptists on children and students come in, it is breathtaking how God has worked among our young people this summer! More students were involved in ministry, and more children and students made spiritual commitments than we have seen in recent years.

Camp Siloam is thankful for how God has blessed it with a new dining hall and 5,774

campers. Decisions made at the camp this summer include 459 salvations and 266 students exploring a call to missions or ministry.

Super Summer expanded to two weeks this summer, with 3,100 in attendance, and many significant spiritual commitments made, including 360 salvation decisions.

PraiseWorks and JoyWorks, held at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, registered 881 campers with

hundreds of spiritual decisions made.

Camp Paron had 2,700 campers, which is an 18 percent increase over last summer. One of the camps there, Engage, was a stellar spiritual week.

CentriKid at Williams Baptist University in Walnut Ridge hosted 340 campers.

We are still getting impressive reports from large church summer camps, vacation Bible schools, sports camps, mission trips and associational camps.

We should respond to these reports in three ways. First, we should simply thank God and rejoice at the incredible blessings that He has poured out on us this summer. Second, we should pray intently for the ministries to our children and students. They need to grow, strengthen and be financially blessed. Lastly, we need you to commit to be personally involved, engaging



Executive Directions

Sonny Tucker



children and students at your church and finding ways to personally and individually pray for them, and strengthening children and student ministries across the state.

Arkansas Baptists, God has truly blessed us this summer. Let's celebrate and move forward with great hope and anticipation.

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

Keeping the 'unity of the Spirit'

Recently, I had the privilege of seeing the plans for this year's Pastors' Conference prior to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Annual Meeting in October. All I can say is that I was blown away by what John McCalum, pastor of First Baptist Church, Hot Springs, and his crew have put together for our convention.

It will be such a practical, encouraging time featuring Arkansas pastors whom you know and trust. It's not my place to break all the news and info, so I'll just leave it at that . . . but it will be special.

I've also had the chance to see the developing plans for the annual meeting as well, and they are also coming along. It, too, will be practical, inspiring and encouraging.

All of this gets me excited about spending those three days together with my greater Arkansas Baptist family, which, conversely, reminds me of how discouraged I

was upon leaving this year's national convention annual meeting.

To be honest, I felt like it was a train wreck. Certainly, some good things happened, but the atmosphere was tinged with disunity and

frustration. We even took a vote, had people walk out after the vote, and then

stage a "sit-in" protest afterward. To me, this was more reminiscent of a dysfunctional political convention than a denominational meeting.

In saying all of this, I'm not trying to take a position on any of the issues or drama. In fact, I'm doing the opposite: I'm trying to hold myself accountable in my role in Arkansas to prevent such a feeling from recurring on the state level this fall in Jonesboro.

We must keep our eyes on the things that count. We must celebrate missions, evangelism, church growth, church health and biblical preaching. We must continue to promote

diversity and multi-generational leadership. And we must fight for unity.

Fighting for unity starts on a personal level. One key about biblical unity I've learned is to accept that I am not perfect and perhaps there is something I don't know or fully understand about the other person's position. As Max Lucado has wisely written, "Unity doesn't begin in examining others but in examining self."

As we head toward our annual meeting, let's give one another the benefit of the doubt. Let's be patient and kind. Let's make phone calls and have personal visits about areas of disagreement before the convention, rather than trying to grandstand during the meeting. Let's remember that Christ encouraged us to be peacemakers (Matt. 5:9), and peacemakers, as Ephesians 4:3 (CSB) puts it, "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Greg Sykes is pastor of First Baptist Church in Russellville and president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Letters to the Editor welcomed

The *Arkansas Baptist News (ABN)* welcomes Letters to the Editor regarding issues of concern to Southern Baptists in Arkansas. Send Letters to the Editor to tim@arkansasbaptist.org or to our mailing address. Letters must be typed, double-spaced and 300 words or less (fewer words, the better). Letters must be signed and marked "for publication" and may be edited to fit space requirements.

Page: Tort reform amendment is not a pro-life issue

Among all the various candidates and issues on November's general election ballot, Arkansas voters may have the opportunity to cast votes for or against Issue One, commonly referred to as a tort reform amendment.



Faith & Ethics

Larry Page

by voters.

A lawsuit has been filed against Issue One and is currently pending in the courts. It remains to be seen whether

Issue One will remain viable or be rendered null and void by the courts. For now, it should be assumed that Issue One will survive the legal challenge.

If approved by voters, Issue One will put maximum caps on attorneys' fees, punitive damages and non-economic damages in civil lawsuits in personal injury and wrongful

death cases. Issue One also will grant to the legislature the authority to promulgate certain rules and standards dealing with pleading, practice and procedures for the state's courts.

Generally speaking, Issue One puts doctors, hospitals and nursing homes on one side against trial attorneys and the judiciary on the other side. These opposing forces are organized, well-financed and will flood print and electronic media with a massive amount of advertising between Labor Day and the election on Nov. 6. Voters will need to exercise discernment

to cut through all the "spin."

The Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council (AFEC) is not taking a position on this issue, since it falls outside of our areas of focus. However, we are concerned that some in the debate are positioning it as a "pro-life" issue. It is decidedly not a pro-life issue; it is an economic issue and a legal issue.

"Pro-life" has been and should continue to be associated with preserving the lives of unborn babies and protecting them from abortion. Overwhelmingly, that is how "pro-life" is defined and understood in the public

square. Webster's New World Dictionary's definition of "pro-life" is "opposing the legal right to abortion."

It is ill-advised to characterize this pitched battle between trial attorneys, wanting to continue to reap huge contingency fees on one hand, and doctors, hospitals, and nursing homes, seeking to protect their bottom lines on the other, as a pro-life issue. To give the term pro-life such an expansive meaning is to risk stripping it of its essence, which is to advocate for and defend innocent, defenseless unborn children.

AFEC does not question the motives – only the wisdom – of those seeking to make this a pro-life issue. We would ask them to consider the unintended consequences and ramifications of using pro-life to advance a political agenda in what is essentially an economic/legal issue, including compromising the integrity of the pro-life position. Let's keep the focus for pro-life where it belongs – on the babies at risk in the womb.

Larry Page is executive director of the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council (AFEC). Visit arfaith.org for more information.

ABSC

continued from page one

Formula Study Committee recommended in August 2016 a new formula that would result in increasing the amount Arkansas Baptists send to SBC causes from 43.77 percent to 45.82 percent by 2022. Messengers approved the new formula at the 2016 annual meeting. (Read related story, "ABSC CP budget approved for 2019" in the May 31, 2018, edition of the *Arkansas Baptist News*).

The budget will now be recommended to messengers attending this year's ABSC Annual Meeting to be held Oct. 23-24 at Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro.

Church staff protection

The board approved a major change to the Arkansas Baptist Church Staff Protection Plan, which has been administered through GuideStone Financial Resources.

The plan will be amended in 2019 to provide funding only for senior pastors of ABSC "participating churches" (churches that give through the CP).

Starting in 2020, the ABSC will cease funding for the Church Staff Protection Plan entirely, eliminating all convention support of the plan for all church staff, including senior pastors.

A Benevolence Committee with the purpose of assisting "financially pastors and staff members who have financial needs they cannot meet" will

replace the plan in 2020.

Tucker said the cost to the ABSC through GuideStone is now \$180,000, adding that he feels the funds can be better spent through the establishment of a Benevolence Committee.

Beginning in 2020, the Benevolence Committee will provide financial assistance based on several factors, including termination, loss from fire or natural disaster, disability, death of a husband, medical and funeral expenses, as well as for other needs approved by the committee.

In other business, the board:

- Heard a testimony from Adam Venters, the new Metro BCM campus minister at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR).

- OK'd a Program Committee request to approve 2019 goal recommendations for all ABSC teams.

- Heard a report from the Operating Committee regarding the convention's annual audit, which was performed by the accounting firm of Thomas and Thomas of Little Rock.

- Recognized the following outgoing board members: Ernest Bradshaw, First Baptist Church, Dumas; Clay Cunningham, First Baptist Church, Benton; Julia Ketner, Hebron Baptist Church, Little Rock; Donna Reppond, Pleasant Valley Baptist Church, Heber Springs; Larry Ring, First Baptist Church, Viola; Don Selph, Franklin Baptist Church, Franklin; Barry Smith, New Hope Fellowship, Springdale; Tom Stover, Thornburg Baptist Church,

Perryville; Terry Thompson, Crossgate Church, Hot Springs, and Donny White, First Baptist Church, Sparkman. Also recognized, but not present, were: Randy Cameron, First Baptist Church, Bentonville; Randy Dixon, Cedar Grove Baptist Church, Arkadelphia; Doug Inzer, West Side Baptist Church, Greers Ferry; Mark Methvan, First Baptist Church, Lead Hill; Don Neal, Calvary Baptist Church, Harrisburg; Eddi Settles, First Baptist Church, Corning; Eric Smeltzer, The

River Bible Church, Mountain Home, and Bev Turner, East Side Baptist Church, Fort Smith.

- Announced the next meeting of the board will be held immediately following the Tuesday, Oct. 23, afternoon session of the ABSC Annual Meeting at Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro. The final meeting of the board for 2018 will be held at 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, Nov. 27, at the Baptist building in Little Rock.

Contact Tim Yarbrough at tim@arkansasbaptist.org.

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Ouachita sets fundraising record of \$17.2 million

ARKADELPHIA – Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia has received a record \$17.2 million in private support in academic year 2017-18.

The fundraising total surpasses the previous record set in 2005-06 by almost \$1 million.

“We are fortunate to work with alumni, friends and churches who believe in, and give so generously in support of, the mission and vision of Ouachita,” said Ben Sells, president. “Our donors appreciate our success in developing leaders in so many walks of life and extend our impact around the world.”

Of the \$17.2 million given, 58 percent is in the form of cash and pledges. The remaining 42 percent is in realized estate bequests. The bulk of the funds, approximately \$12 million, will be applied to annual

and endowed student scholarships. The remainder is earmarked for programs, facilities and strategic initiatives.

In the previous academic year, 2016-17, total fundraising was \$12.3 million.

“We are proud of the fact that most of our giving comes from individuals and Arkansas Baptist churches,” said Terry Griffin Peeples, vice president for development at Ouachita. “But alumni support is vital.”

Ouachita’s success runs counter to national trends in higher education, which has experienced a 25-year decline in the percentage of annual alumni giving. At Ouachita, alumni giving slightly increased last year to 19.75 percent. The university has approximately 12,700 alumni.

The median alumni giving percentage for private universities in 2017 was 17 percent.

For public universities, that number was 4.8 percent.

“We believe that our donors are responding favorably to the momentum we are enjoying here,” Sells said. “Last fall, we experienced a significant increase in freshmen, were recognized for the highest graduation rate in the state and achieved a high placement rate for graduates. Our alumni, students and friends are excited to see Ouachita on the rise, and we are poised for continued growth.”

Last December, Ouachita’s Board of Trustees adopted a five-year plan that includes six strategic directions: 1) Sustain Christ-Centered Identity, 2) Advance Faculty/Staff Support, 3) Ensure Transformative Learning, 4) Grow Residential Learning, 5) Diversify Educational Offerings and 6) Strengthen Key Partnerships.



‘I AM DIXIE JACKSON’ – Linda Moore (left) and Eva Williams, both of Steel Bridge Baptist Church in Lonoke, prepare 2018 Dixie Jackson State Missions Offering resources for mailing recently at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention building in Little Rock. The 2018 theme is “I am Dixie Jackson.” For more information visit abs.org. Photo by Marissa Pilcher

**MEETING SPACES
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Block party ministry 'sparked a fire' in church

Sarah Davis
Arkansas Baptist News

HAMPTON – A new ministry at First Baptist Church, Hampton, is using hot dogs and games to share Jesus Christ.

Paul Reams started pastoring First Baptist in the spring of 2017. Seeing that the town was full of youth and children, Reams felt led to start a block party ministry.

"The state convention offered a block party festival in Beebe. Our church has a heart for missions, so I got a group together to go and see what the ministry was all about," said Reams. "My hope was just to get them to agree to start our own ministry at some point. They saw the potential impact, and by the time we had gotten back to Hampton, they were already making plans to start a block party ministry."

The church began getting everyone trained for the new ministry. They offered CPR, inflatable and evangelism training.

The ministry was completely equipped through donations from the church. Reams shared pictures of items that the church needed and received several donations very quickly.

"One Wednesday evening,

I was sharing some needs we had as well as what I thought would be a longterm, down-the-road item, which was a trailer," said Reams. "I shared a picture of the trailer we would try to get at a later date and the cost of the trailer. I passed the picture around and asked our church family to begin praying for this."

Later that night, Reams received a phone call from a church member. He and his wife had been carrying a check in their Bible they felt led to give but were waiting for clarity on what to give it for. The church member said the check was written for \$50 more than what the trailer would cost.

"That was truly a God thing!" said Reams. "We've seen God show up and do what only He can do in many other ways as this ministry continues to grow. It has excited our church family about missions."

The pastor said nearly anyone can be a part of a block

party ministry.

"It is a ministry that people can be a part of regardless of age or ability," said Reams.

The trailer includes two inflatable bounce houses and a

First Baptist used items from the trailer for their VBS kickoff, and several churches have asked them to minister in their communities.

The church took the trailer with them to Lincoln, Neb., at the end of July for four block parties. Three of the parties were for new church plants, and one block party was for a church restart. A

total of 81 spiritual decisions were made.

First Baptist also hosted a block party on Aug. 4 in El

Dorado, and 23 spiritual decisions were made.

"Block parties are an outstanding outreach tool in reaching your community for Christ," said Breck Freeman, former assistant team leader for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's missions team and current executive pastor at the Paragould campus of Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro.

"A block party helps churches focus on local missions of reaching their neighbors across the street," he said.

For more information on starting a block party ministry in your church, contact the ABSC missions team for guidelines and recommendations.

Contact Sarah Davis at sarah@arkansasbaptist.org.



Members of First Baptist Church in Hampton pause during a recent block party conducted by the church.

variety of smaller games like volleyball, washers, horseshoes, bean bag toss games, Frisbees and cardboard box relays. The ministry is also equipped with two grills, two generators, a lemonade stand, a snow cone machine and a popcorn machine.

"The block party has really sparked a fire in our church," said Reams. "I have reminded our people that we are not doing this to share a hot dog with people; we are using that hot dog to share Christ with them."

ENGAGE

continued from page one

low-income county residents since 1976. Participants are encouraged to bring these items to support the CJOHN ministry: bars of soap, peanut butter, macaroni and cheese, tuna, quart-size freezer zip-lock bags and toilet paper.

"My prayer is that this day-long celebration will be a catalyst for Arkansas women to engage in missions on a regular basis. Always praying, giving and going — Arkansas WMU believes in missions for life," Moore said.

For more information or to register, go to absc.org/engage.

Contact Margaret at margaret@arkansasbaptist.org.



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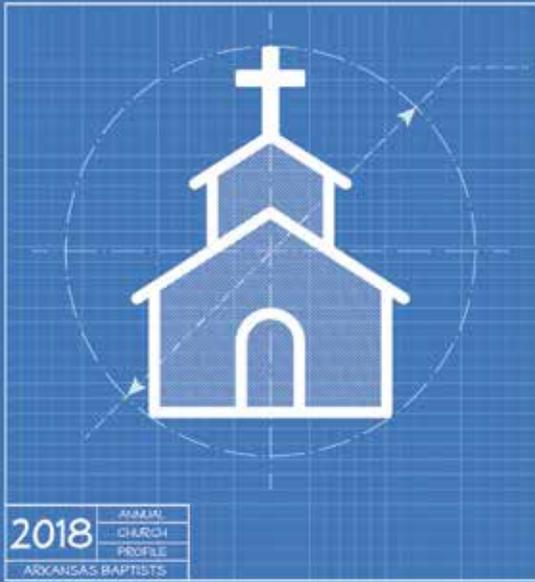


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Annual Church Profile

2018 ANNUAL CHURCH PROFILE ARKANSAS BAPTISTS

The ACP is an important tool for your church, your association, and the state and national conventions. The data collected is used to identify trends in church attendance and participation. This information is then used to plan outreach and training events, thereby assisting churches in achieving the mission of reaching the lost for Jesus.

The Statistical Profile is a 13-question snapshot of a 12-month period in the life of your church. The Leadership Profile should be updated with contact information for church staff.

Be on the lookout for your church's Annual Church Profile (ACP) packet. It should arrive sometime in late August to mid-September.



Ouachita's Elrod dies at 87

ARKADELPHIA - Ben M. Elrod, former president of Ouachita Baptist University (OBU) and Arkansas pastor, died Aug. 7 at age 87.

A 1952 graduate of OBU, Elrod received his Bachelor of Divinity and Doctor of Theology degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He also earned a Doctor of Education degree in higher education from Indiana University in Bloomington, Ind.

Elrod served as the president of OBU from 1988-1998. He also served as a member of the OBU's Board of Trustees and as vice president for development. He was named chancellor following his retirement as president.

Elrod led the university in raising \$57 million during Ouachita's Decade of Progress Campaign, overseeing the construction of Jones Performing Arts Center (1992) and Harvey Jones Science Center (1997).

In 2015, he was honored with the dedication of the new Elrod Center facility.

Elrod served as pastor of churches in Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma. He was president of Oakland City College in Indiana, Georgetown College in Kentucky and Arkansas' Independent Colleges and Universities.



Elrod

He served as president of the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools and was named the 1997-98 Outstanding Christian Educator.

Elrod is survived by his wife of 67 years, Betty Lou; two children; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. His parents, Searcy and Frances Sadler Elrod, and his brother, John Walter Elrod, preceded him in death.

Funeral services were held Aug. 11 at First Baptist Church, Arkadelphia, and were followed by burial at Greenwood Cemetery in Rison, Elrod's hometown.



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6:30-9:30 P.M.

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2018 STATEWIDE PRAYER GATHERING FOR PASTORS AND ALL MINISTERS

Obituaries

John Wesley Perkins, Jr., 89, of Little Rock, died Aug. 2.

He served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War.

Perkins was a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and served in churches in Texas, Missouri, Illinois, Louisiana and Arkansas. He concluded his ministry on staff at Geyer Springs First Baptist Church in Little Rock in 2004.

In Illinois, Perkins led individual churches in their educational and building programs for the Illinois Baptist State Association.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 65 years, Betty Perkins, and a sister. Perkins is survived by four sons, 11 grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and two sisters.

Funeral services were held Aug. 7 at Geyer Springs First Baptist Church. Burial followed at Arkansas State Veterans Cemetery in North Little Rock.

Greta Lisenbey, 72, of White Hall, died Aug. 4.

Lisenbey was a member of Hardin Baptist Church where she worked as a secretary for 30 years.

Lisenbey was preceded in death by a daughter, Cheryl Claudette Lisenbey; her parents, Arnold and Opal Johnson Crosby, and two brothers, Herbert Crosby and Robert Ed Crosby.

She is survived by two daughters, Tonya Lisenbey

and Jareta Moore; her sister, Wilma Taylor; a brother, Dene Crosby; and a grandson, Spencer Moore.

Funeral services were held Aug. 7 at Chapel of Ralph Robinson and Son.

Church life

East Mt. Zion Trinity Baptist Church in Clarksville will host The Diplomats in concert at 10:30 a.m., Sunday, Sept. 2. **First Baptist Church,**

Scranton, celebrated its 50th anniversary Aug. 5. Travis McCormick of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention presented Franklin Piercey, pastor, with a certificate of recognition.

James Cox of Oklahoma City will join Freeman Heights Baptist Church in Berryville as the church's worship and student pastor in September. Cox and his wife, Sarah, have two daughters, Corbyn and Makaylah.

Classifieds

PASTOR

New Freedom Baptist Church of Malvern is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Please mail resume to PO Box 957, Malvern, AR 72104.

First Baptist Church of Maumelle is seeking **full-time pastor**. Please send resume to First Baptist Church, ATTN: Pastor Search Committee, 100 Valencia Drive, Maumelle, AR 72113, or email to: searchcommitteebcm@gmail.com.

First Baptist Church, Horatio, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee, FBC Horatio, P.O. Box 296, Horatio, AR 71842, or email resumes to: fbchoratio@windstream.net.

Otter Creek Community Church is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Accepting resumes through October 21st. Send resume to: info@theocchurch.com or 13000 Quail Run Dr., LR, AR 72210.

Union Baptist Church, a rural church with a big heart, is seeking a **full-time traditional Southern Baptist pastor** with a vision, who supports the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message. Resumes with a link to a sermon video or audio may be emailed to unionbaptistchurch1@yahoo.com or mailed with a sermon DVD to Pastor Search Committee, Union Baptist Church, 144 Crain City Road, El Dorado, AR 71730.

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

Marshall Road Baptist Church is seeking a **full-time senior pastor**. Please send re-

sume to 821 Marshall Road, Jacksonville, AR 72076 or marshallroad@comcast.net.

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

First Baptist Church, Harrisburg, is seeking candidates for a **full-time pastor**. The preferred candidate will be an experienced, ordained pastor with a seminary degree consistent with Southern Baptist theology. Send resumes to the Pastor Search Committee, 201 West Jackson St., Harrisburg, AR 72432, or VickieMorris@harrisburgfbc.com.

Tillar Baptist Church in need of **full-time pastor**. Send resume to: Tillar Baptist Church, PO Box 116, Tillar, AR 71670.

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

OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

Full-time custodian position. Calvary Baptist Church, Little Rock, AR. Call 501-663-8303 for information.

The Northshore Baptist Association (Southeast Louisiana) is seeking resumes for an **associational mission strategist (DOM)**. Interested persons should visit www.northshorebaptists.net/search.

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

First Baptist Church, Hardy, looking for **full-time associate minister to young fami-**

lies. Need someone who has the heart to work with young adults and give guidance to ministry of children and youth. Send resume to P.O. Box 27, Hardy, AR 72542-0027.

First Baptist, Heber, is seeking a **full-time youth pastor**. Submit resume and cover letter to phyllis@fbcheber.org or 201 N. 4th Street, Heber Springs, AR 72543.

FBC in Mulberry, AR, is prayerfully seeking an **associate pastor for student/worship ministries**. We are a small-town church building a culture of discipleship with an outward focus. Please send resumes with references to fbcmulberry@windstream.net.

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Cabot, is seeking **bi-vocational praise/worship leader**. Contact 501-676-8336.

Farmington First is seeking a **full-time student minister** for established youth ministry. Looking for someone to take students deeper in the faith and equipping them to reach others. Experience and a theology degree preferred but not required. Send resume to personnel@farmingtonfirst.com.

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church is seeking a **full-time youth pastor**. Please send resume to: Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, 24310 N. Sardis Rd., Bauxite, AR 72011 Att: David Littleton.

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Bauxite, AR, is seeking a **worship leader**. Please send resume to Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, 24310 N. Sardis Rd., Bauxite, AR 72011 Att: Steve Barnes.

Cullendale First Baptist, Camden, AR, is seeking a **full-time children's minister**. College and/or seminary degree required. Submit resume to wadetototy@cullendalefbc.org or mail to 1850 Cash Rd. SW, Camden, AR 71701.

Monte Ne Baptist Church, Rogers, AR, is

seeking a **youth pastor** to build a strong youth group to bring glory to God. If interested please contact Pastor Mack Mills, 479-636-5390 or mnbrogers@att.net.

First Baptist Church, Clarksville, AR, is **seeking a full-time student minister**. Please send resume to info@fbcclarksville.org.

Concord Baptist Church, a vibrant and growing church in Anderson, SC, is seeking an **associate pastor for worship and music**. This person must have the calling, gifting, training and heart to lead a large and diverse ministry of worship. We are excited about our future! For a job description and/or to submit a resume/profile please contact jjames@concordbaptist.com. Please also visit concordbaptist.com for more information about our congregation.

FBC, Prescott, is seeking an energetic **part-time music/choir director**. Please send resume to: FBC Prescott Personnel Committee, PO Box 447, Prescott, AR 71857.

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

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

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

First Baptist Church of El Dorado, AR, is seeking to hire an **associate pastor of worship**. This full-time position is responsible for developing and leading a church-wide worship ministry, which promotes the development

of fully devoted followers of Jesus. Interested candidates can submit a resume with cover letter by mail (200 W. Main, El Dorado, AR) or email jonathan.kelley@fbceldorado.org.

MISCELLANEOUS

Beech Street Communications is seeking a **full-time executive director** to lead a TV Ministry for KLFV TV, a Christian broadcasting station, affiliated with Beech Street First Baptist Church in Texarkana, Arkansas. Submit a resume or request more information by emailing klfv@yahoo.com.

30 pews - free, to a church in need. Pews are in good condition, natural-stain wood, 13.5' long with green upholstered seat cushions, and 2 book racks on back of each one. Available for pick-up approx. Aug. 23, 2018. Contact church ofc., 501-882-6189 for more info or to schedule a time to see the pews.

1998 24-passenger church bus, diesel power stroke engine, 175k miles, asking \$9k. Call Mike 501-690-1709.

The Pregnancy Resource Center for Southwest Arkansas (PRCSA) in Arkadelphia, AR, is seeking a full-time **executive director (ED)**. The ED is responsible for: implementing the mission and vision of the PRCSA; management of programs, ministries, staff and volunteers; overseeing client services; effective fundraising; and maintaining community/church relations. Email resume and a statement describing your spiritual journey and qualifications to Search Committee at: EDsearch911@gmail.com. Salary is commensurate with qualifications/experience.

arkansasbaptist.org/ads

SEPTEMBER 2, 2018

The book of Galatians doesn't contain Paul's usual greeting. He didn't waste any time getting to the point. Paul was engaging in a battle for the truth of the gospel and true liberty of the Christian life.

False teachers – Judaizers – infiltrated the Galatian church and preached a mixed message of law and grace. They convinced some in the Galatian church that Paul was a self-appointed apostle with no divine commission. This would invalidate his message. If you want to discredit the message, you call into question the authority of the messenger.

Paul's apostolic authority did not come from men but by Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:1). His authority also rested in the fact he founded churches. He was not a stranger coming in with a strange gospel. His message centered on the resurrected Christ. He strengthened the fact of his authority by explaining his motive. He wanted the Lord to "receive glory forever and ever" (Gal. 1:5). This was contrary to the motives of the Judaizers who were self-centered

and self-serving.

Paul was rather perplexed how quickly the Galatians turned away from the true gospel. In essence, they were turning away from the very grace of Christ (Gal. 1:6). They were abandoning grace for law and liberty for legalism. In doing this, they were guilty of perverting the gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:7).

The Judaizers were preaching a false gospel. Paul said anyone preaching another gospel should have a curse on them (Gal. 1:8). Their motive was to win the favor of the people (Gal. 1:10). D.L. Moody was approached just before a meeting in England and told an important nobleman was there. Moody replied, "May the meeting be a blessing to him." Paul, like Moody, was not a man-pleaser. Paul could not win the favor of men and be a slave of Christ (Gal. 1:10).

The gospel of the Judaizers enslaved people to legalism. The true gospel of Jesus Christ rescues people from sin and the evil of this present age (Gal. 1:5).

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

True gospel

GALATIANS 1:1-10 (HCSB)

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Reality check

TITUS 3:3-11 (HCSB)

ceptable behavior. Titus 3:3 is in past tense. Sin should not characterize our lives.

Christians need to do a reality check. Until we are aware of our sinfulness, we will neither look any different from the culture, nor will we impact it. Until we are aware of our own sinfulness, we will never appreciate the goodness, love and mercy of God (Titus 3:4-5). We were once sinners just

like those in the world, but the Lord, through His goodness, love and mercy, saved us (Titus 3:5-7). After Paul told us to

look introspectively at our sin, he then said we need to devote ourselves to good works.

Paul called us to be intentional in our service. Why? Because good works are "good and profitable" for everyone (Titus 3:8). Everyone? Unless we have the world sitting in our churches on Sunday, we are not going to be "salt and light." Transformational engagement of the culture happens in our daily lives as we live for the Lord.

SEPTEMBER 9, 2018

Galatians 2 presents three pictures that answer the question, "How can I please God and not be a respecter of persons?" Orthopraxy (correct behavior) follows orthodoxy (correct belief). In Galatians 2:1-10, Paul painted a picture of legalism, which is right behavior with wrong belief. In Galatians 2:11-14, he painted a picture of hypocrisy, which is right belief with wrong behavior. The third picture is in Galatians 2:15-21, which described pleasing God as right belief with right behavior. This lesson begins with the picture of hypocrisy.

Paul started out this book by establishing his apostolic authority. This authority was exerted in a very powerful way in Galatians 2:11 when he reprimanded Peter (Cephas). Paul said he "opposed him to his face." The word "opposed" is the Greek word *anistemi*, which is a strong defensive word meaning "to hinder or forbid." Why was Paul upset with Peter? Why did Paul say Peter "stood condemned?"

Paul was in a literal battle for the truth with the Judaizers. Peter had ostracized the Gentiles by not eating with them for fear of the Judaizers. In essence, Peter had joined the Judaizers. In doing so, he brought into question the true gospel of Christ. Peter had brought the gospel to the Gentiles in Acts 10. He had the right belief with the wrong behavior. Some Jews and even Barnabas followed his practice. Paul called this a "deviation from the truth of the gospel" (Gal. 2:14). Peter was condemned because

he was guilty of sin by taking a position and practice he knew was wrong.

How do we truly please God and not be a respecter of persons? It is the right belief with right behavior. We cannot change our behavior just to be accepted by others. Through faith in Christ we are accepted and justified before God (Gal. 2:15-17). It is a gift of God's sovereign grace. We should never set the grace of God aside to be a respecter of any person.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

True grace

GALATIANS 2:11-21 (HCSB)

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Open arms

JAMES 2:1-10 (HCSB)

When Mahatma Gandhi was a student, he read the gospels, giving serious consideration to becoming a Christian. He thought the teachings of Jesus held the solution to the caste system that divided his people.

Gandhi attended a service at a nearby Christian church in hopes of talking with the minister about becoming a Christian. When he entered the sanctuary, the usher refused to seat him and suggested he go worship with his own people. Gandhi left disappointed because he felt, if Christianity had a caste system, he might as well remain a Hindu. The usher's prejudice gave him a poor impression of Christianity.

James prohibited the church from showing any kind of partiality or prejudice. He gave two illustrations. He described an individual who attended a service; the man was wearing gold and was dressed in fine clothes. He was offered a good seat in the assembly. A poor man with filthy clothes attended, and he was told to stand to the side or sit on the floor. This was favoritism,

partiality and/or prejudice.

The word "favoritism" in the Greek New Testament literally means "lifting the face" (James 2:1). In our modern vernacular it would mean "taking something at face value" or "judging something based on appearances." Showing favoritism is contradictory with a genuine faith in Jesus Christ. This behavior was also contradictory when James wrote his letter since it was the rich who were oppressing the early Christians (James 2:6).

This kind of treatment stands in direct contrast to God's treatment of the poor, described as "rich in faith" (James 2:5). It violates the "royal law of love" (Lev. 19:18). Such favoritism is condemned as sin (James 2:8-13).

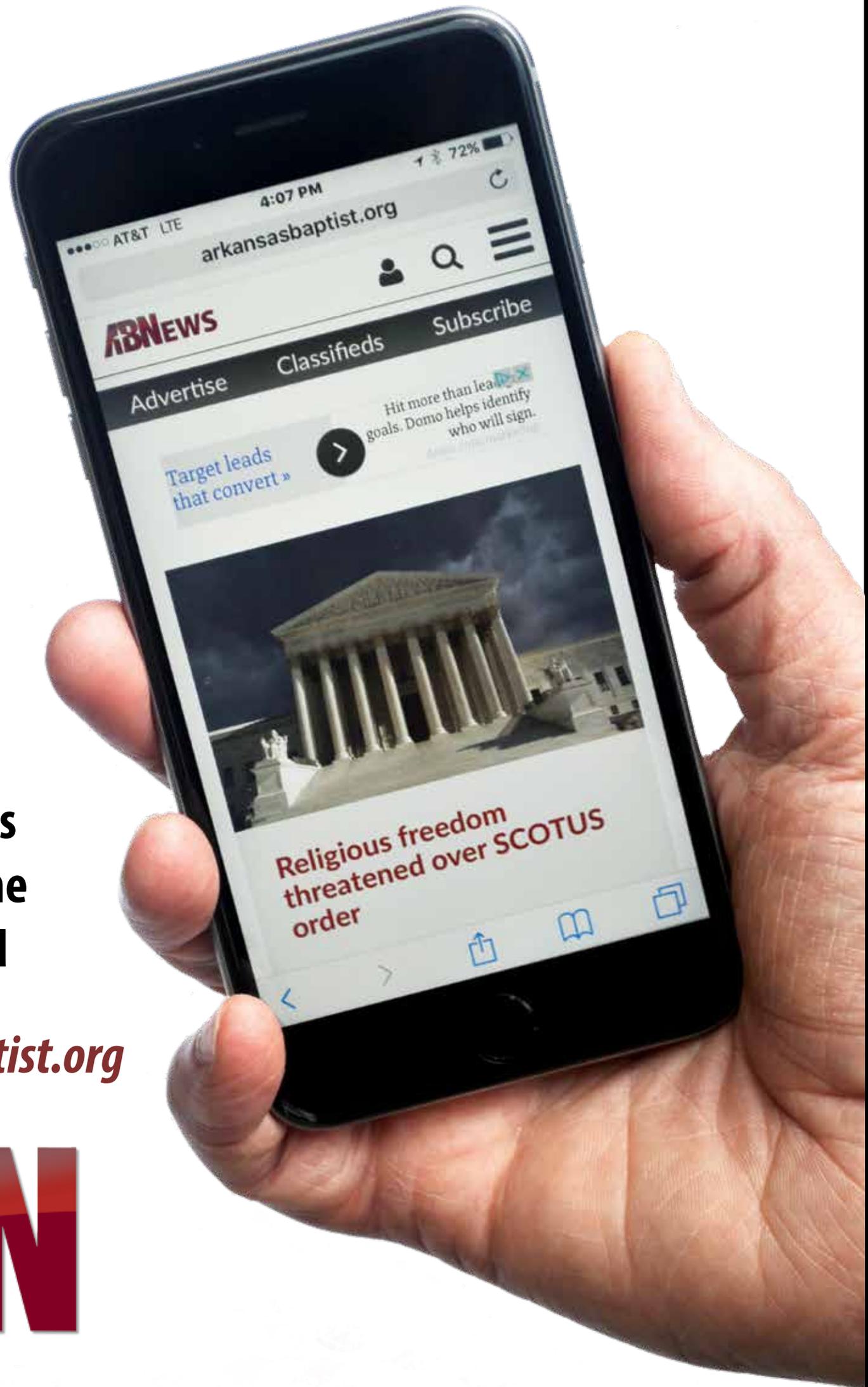
We live in a culture that judges people based on externals like the kind of job you have, car you drive, house you live in and clothes you wear. James made it clear that, although prejudice and favoritism may be common in the culture, they have no place in the church.

Featured commentary writer



Gerald Nash

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



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SCOTUS affirms Ark. judgment; rules for baker

Caleb Yarbrough and Margaret Colson
Arkansas Baptist News

IN RECENT days, America's highest court handed down wins for the pro-life movement in Arkansas and for religious liberty nationwide, in the form of a denied appeal and a ruling.

PP appeal denied

The U.S. Supreme Court refused May 29 to hear Planned Parenthood's appeal of an Arkansas law requiring doctors who provide medication

abortions to contract with a medical specialist with hospital admitting privileges to handle complications.

This action could open the door for Arkansas to become the first state to effectively outlaw medication-induced abortions. The Supreme Court's denial of the appeal means the law will take effect in mid-July if no other legal challenges are filed.

"I am thankful for the discernment used by the U.S. Supreme Court to not address this issue," J.D. "Sonny" Tucker, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC), said.

access to abortion at will, without the normal medical professions must abide."

The Arkansas law was enacted in 2015 but temporarily blocked by a federal judge in 2016. A three-judge panel of the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the ruling in 2017, leading to Planned Parenthood's appeal.

Planned Parenthood in Little Rock and Fayetteville are the primary providers of medication abortion in Arkansas, according to a press release from Arkansas Right to Life

(ARTL), which further states that 550 medication abortions were reported to the Arkansas Department of Health in 2016.

This law "does not stop Planned Parenthood or other abortion providers from performing chemical abortion in Arkansas, what it does do is ensure that women who have complications from the procedure get help from a physician in a hospital if necessary, something everyone should agree on," the ARTL press release reads.

Planned Parenthood argues that it cannot find any Arkansas obstetricians willing to



Good food, community focus of Dumas restaurant

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Southern Baptists to gather in Dallas



DALLAS (BP) - Going into this year's annual meeting as president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), Steve Gaines acknowledged Southern Baptists face critical decisions in the days and months ahead.

"Obviously, we face the challenge of seeking new leaders to fill two of our most important leadership roles - the president of the International Mission Board (IMB) and the

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Inside: WBC chapel to be named for Startup Floyd urges prayer for unity May 3 Ark. Baptists win BCA awards Ark. Baptist retired workers gather CONNECT: Students reach Stuttgart

Bible highlighted, gospel spread in D.C. The Museum of the Bible highlights Scripture as church planters reach Washington D.C. for Christ

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Commandments monument dedicated



Little Rock - Arkansas state Sen. Jason Rapert (center) speaks during the dedication of the American History and Heritage Foundation's 1st Commandments monument on the grounds of the Arkansas Capitol in Little Rock April 26 amid applause and protest.

The monument, protected by four cement pillars (left), is the second of its kind. The original was destroyed June 28, 2017, less than 24 hours after it was installed. Michael Lure (head of Van Buren was charged with first-degree criminal mischief for allegedly using his car to ram the original monument. Lure was committed to the Arkansas State Hospital after being found unfit to stand trial, according to the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.



Daniel Bramlett, pastor of First Baptist Church, Hope, tells about the new Banner Hope Center while Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson (left) looks on.

Photo by Caleb Yarbrough

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