



Ark. faces same-sex suits

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansas has been hit with another lawsuit in the aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court decision striking a key provision of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA).

On July 15, a second lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court in Little Rock in an effort to overturn the ban on same-sex marriage in Arkansas.

The suit, filed by three same-sex couples in Pulaski County, challenges the constitutionality of Amendment 83 to the Arkansas Constitution and state laws pertaining to marriage, the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* reported. On July 2, two White County residents filed a lawsuit in Pulaski County Circuit Court al-

leging that Amendment 83 violates their rights.

Arkansas voters approved a referendum in 2004 on the amendment by a whopping 753,770 to 251,914 votes. Legislation enacted in 1997 requires Title 9, the family-law part of the Arkansas Code, to define marriage as the union between a man and a woman and prohibits the issuance of a marriage license to applicants who do not fit that definition, according to the *Democrat-Gazette*.

The law prohibits the state from recognizing same-sex marriages legitimized in other states or countries.

Both lawsuits were filed in Arkan-

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YEC Aug. 9-10 in Little Rock

HUNDREDS OF YOUTH will gather Aug. 9-10 for a time of worship and learning during the 2013 Youth Evangelism Conference (YEC), which will feature speakers, popular Christian bands, a drama/comedy ministry team and an outreach ministry, in addition to a new training element.

The conference, sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) evangelism and church growth team, will be held at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock.

“The YEC is a great event to begin a school year of student ministry,” said David Bond, ABSC evangelism and church growth team member. “Students will not only hear the gospel, but be challenged and equipped to share with their friends.”

Speakers are Alex Himaya, the founding and senior pastor of the CHURCH.at (sic) in Tulsa, Okla., who previously served as youth pastor at Cross Church Springdale, and Brian Mills,

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Clockwise from left: The Museum, Brian Mills, For King and Country, Brad Bennett, Team Wordplay and Alex Himaya.



World Changers touches up Little Rock

Ruth Jeon (foreground) and Meg Maynard, both of Texas, take part in recent World Changers projects in Little Rock. More than 400 students and adults participated in World Changers in Little Rock July 8-20. In the two-week period, teams did construction work and led sports camps, vacation Bible schools and backyard Bible clubs. Each week saw 11 churches from across the country bring volunteers. The groups were hosted by Life Line Baptist, Little Rock, and more than 30 churches from central Arkansas supported the volunteers during the projects.

400 vols reach thousands at Mission Hot Springs

Jessica Vanderpool
Arkansas Baptist News

HOT SPRINGS – More than 400 volunteers spent the hot days of June on mission. But their missions event didn't require them to have a passport, board a plane or pack their bags for a week out of country. Instead, they stayed right in their own community.

This was the second year for the local missions event, dubbed Mission Hot Springs, which is a ministry of Hot Springs Baptist Church. The event seeks to minister to the city of Hot Springs and surrounding areas and is completely led, support-

ed and driven by volunteers.

Together, the participants, many of whom were members of Hot Springs Baptist, took part in yard work, community Bible clubs, block parties and evangelism June 24-28. They made 385 personal, one-on-one presentations of the gospel, and about 70 people accepted Christ. In addition, they distributed about 3,000 tracts and

1,000 Bibles, and they served about 4,000 meals.



Children listen to a message during Mission Hot Springs.

Manley Beasley Jr., senior pastor of Hot Springs Baptist since 2006, said the idea for Mission Hot Springs stemmed from a conversation between him and a fellow staff member following a mission trip to Nebraska a couple years ago. They noticed the “phenomenal” results of the mission

trip – more than 30 salvations and many people learning how to “impact a community for Christ” – so they began discussing why they did not see that locally. Beasley said they realized it was because they didn't do mission trip-type ministry locally.

So they began talking about implementing the elements of a mission trip – such as strategy and organization – locally and seeing if they could achieve a “similar impact,” Beasley said, adding that it was also a way to get more people involved.

Their goal for the first year was to have 200 volunteers. Instead, they

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Cocklebur Baptist, Ward, 'Reaches the Rock'

Caleb Yarbrough
Arkansas Baptist News

LITTLE ROCK - One would expect a church with the name "Cocklebur" to be small and rural. What one wouldn't expect is for Cocklebur Baptist Church to have such a large heart for missions and outreach.

Located in Ward, missions has always been a priority of Cocklebur Baptist - but it took partnering with other churches and organizations to bring their first youth group mission trip to fruition.

Reaching the Rock, Cocklebur's recent youth mission trip was held throughout Little Rock and North Little Rock July 8-12 and was planned almost exclusively by Blake and Sarah Duvall, who serve as Cocklebur's volunteer youth ministers.

Blake Duvall said the church brought 15 youth between the ages of 12 and 17 on the trip and that Calvary Baptist Church, Little Rock, hosted the group for the week.

"Our No. 1 concern when we felt the Lord calling us to do a mission trip was finding a place to stay. ... Calvary stepped up and said, 'We'd be cool with that,'" said Duvall.

He said Cocklebur's youth had the chance to minister in a variety of ways during the five-day mission trip, including by working with Our House, a shelter for working home-

less; The One, a homeless mission; Arkansas Rice Depot, the largest food bank in Arkansas; Woodland Heights retirement center in Little Rock, and Arrington Apartments in North Little Rock.

"With our group, we are hoping that God would open our eyes to the needs of those around us. ... The Bible calls us to serve and to look out for the poor and needy, and that is what we are doing every morning," said Duvall.

Scott Martin, North American Mission Board missionary and Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) ministry consultant, was Cocklebur's main ministry partner during the week.

"Scott was very helpful in setting us up with Our House, The Rice Depot and also Arrington Apartments. He came out to encourage us each day and just to check in to see how things were going," said Duvall.

"It was an easy fit for this group," said Martin. "They wanted to do

something that was impactful, and we had the opportunities here in Little Rock. They'll keep coming back. The kids here that they have served have already asked them to come back."

Cocklebur also partnered with Stanley Johnson, ABSC church planter, who recently started a church in Arrington Apartments. During the week, Cocklebur hosted a vacation Bible school every afternoon in the apartment complex.

"Probably the biggest blessing for us was to watch our stu-

dents minister to the children at Arrington. They really connected with each other and loved on one another. A few of our students even gave out their phone numbers, and some of the children have been calling them, asking when we will come back out. We are very excited to see what the Lord is going to continue to do in the lives of our students and feel a revival is coming," said Duvall.

In addition to their morning and afternoon ministry sessions, the youth took part in worship services at Calvary each evening.

Duvall set numerous goals for Cocklebur's youth on their first mission trip.

"The main things we wanted our students to get out of this week was for the Lord to open their eyes to the needs of others around them, for them to see that they can make a difference even in menial tasks, for the Holy Spirit to move in their lives and draw them to a closer relationship with Christ and to come together as a group and really bond with one another," said Duvall.

According to Duvall, the youth not only accomplished his goals, but also were blessed by their first missions experience and look forward to becoming more active in missions work in the future.

"Partnership is vital, especially for community outreaches," said Martin.

"We had some really good comments from the kids. The main thing is that they said that they really want to come back and connect again with those same children that they served. And even with those same organizations, they said that they want to develop consistent outreach to those places too."

Contact Caleb Yarbrough at caleb@arkansasbaptist.org.



Children make crafts during Cocklebur Baptist's VBS held July 8-12 at Arrington Apartments in North Little Rock.

YEC

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lead student pastor at all campuses of Long Hollow Baptist Church near Nashville, Tenn., and author of "Checkpoints: A Tactical Guide to Manhood."

The band For King and Country will perform a Friday night concert, and The Museum will serve as worship band for the event.

Team Wordplay - a comedy/drama ministry team - will also be featured at the event.

The preshow will feature Brad Bennett of Real Encounter Outreach, an outreach ministry that features mountain bike and motorcycle stunt riding and flatland BMX.

The conference will also include a new training element this year, said Bond. He said Mills will lead a session for youth leaders that will focus on campus ministry and student evangelism.

"The training element of the YEC ... allows youth leaders to hear proven practices for serving on school campuses, increasing student baptisms and using regular meetings and strategic events to reach students for Christ," said Bond.

"We are also going to implement a personal evangelism training segment into one of our main sessions.

2013 ABN student ministry resources directory

FOR THE SECOND year, the Arkansas Baptist News (ABN) is offering a special advertising directory focused on student ministry resources. The directory will be published in the Aug. 22 edition.

The directory is open to those offering student-related ministries and resources. Ads will be organized according to the type of ministry offered, such as youth and children's speakers, musicians and bands, drama and improv, creative ministries and children's programs.

"The student ministry advertising directory presents a unique opportunity for both advertisers and student ministers," said Tim Yarbrough, ABN editor. "Advertisers benefit by having their ministries placed in a categorized section, which will be viewed by 20,000-plus Arkansas Baptists statewide. Meanwhile, student ministers can use the section to find the resourc-

es they need at a glance."

He explained the issue of the ABN containing these ads will be distributed beyond the usual realm of subscribers. Arkansas Baptist youth ministers - subscribers or not

evangelism section, which will include coverage of the 2013 Youth Evangelism Conference (YEC), an annual event attended by hundreds of students.

"It is going to be a powerful issue seen by thousands of Arkansas Baptists. It would be a great way to share with others the resources you provide for youth ministry," said Yarbrough.

Though larger ads are welcome, two general sizes of ads are available at a discounted rate - 4.75 inches wide by 2 inches tall; and 2.25 inches wide by 2 inches tall.

Each ad will include the advertiser's/ministry's name, contact and website information, a photo and a brief description of the ministry.

Advertising deadline is July 29. For more information or to advertise, contact Jessica Vanderpool at jessica@arkansasbaptist.org or 501-376-4791, ext. 5154.



- will receive a free electronic version of the newspaper so they can use the directory as a resource.

Yarbrough said it is particularly appropriate for the advertising directory to be published in the Aug. 22 edition due to the fact that it is the edition that will feature a youth

Brad Bennett will be there as a 'preshow,' which is an example of attractional event evangelism as well," Bond added.

"We will also have booth displays

with examples of mission opportunities. So, we hope that the weekend will expose students/leaders to a large variety of possibilities for youth evangelism."

To register, visit www.yecarkansas.com.

For more information, call 501-376-4791, ext. 5128, or email kwest@absc.org.

Mugs Café opens in heart of Argenta

Caleb Yarbrough
Arkansas Baptist News

NORTH LITTLE ROCK – After months of preparation and lots of support from numerous individuals, churches and organizations across central Arkansas, Mugs Café held its grand opening and ceremonial ribbon cutting July 15.

Located in the heart of the Argenta Arts District in downtown North Little Rock, Mugs Café is not the average trendy java joint. Mugs is home of the Church at Argenta, a recent church plant started by Michael Carpenter, Arkansas Baptist State Convention church planter and owner of Mugs Café.

“Our vision is to become Argenta’s ‘third place.’ Third places are places other than home and work, but places where you can work and also feel at home. We want to be that community space for people,” said Carpenter. “We say we are a place where you can eat and drink without the pressure to consume and move on. Most restaurants’ expectation is for you to sit down, get your food, eat it and leave. Here that expectation is not put on our customers.”

One way Mugs Café is attempting

to create a welcoming environment is by using technology to streamline their customers’ experiences. Orders are taken on an iPad connected to a cash register, and customers have the option to pay via a service called “Square Wallet,” which through a free smartphone application, allows customers to check out by simply telling the cashier their name.



Carpenter

In addition, Mugs and the Church at Argenta use social media to promote their business and ministry respectively. Both have websites that feature blog rolls and constantly update their Facebook and Twitter accounts with special events and interesting blog posts.

Jerry Gay, associational missionary for North Pulaski Baptist Association, attended the ribbon cutting and said he and North Pulaski Baptist Association were happy to have the Church at Argenta and Mugs Café join them in ministry.

“We began praying for a work like this about six years ago, and we were excited to see how God is working in Michael’s life and with the team that he put together. I think that this (Mugs Café) is poised to be a success, both as a business and as a church,” said Gay.

The Church at Argenta has been

meeting at the home of Carpenter and his wife Amanda for the past few months and will begin meeting at Mugs Café July 21.

According to its website, the church’s goal is to create a local body of believers that live life together, rather than simply focusing on a traditional once weekly meeting.

“We will continually hold out the promise that it is possible for humans to unite with one another, offer their individual gifts and share a common commitment to God’s mission. ... What you can expect from The Church at Argenta is so much greater than what happens on any given Sunday,” the website states.

Central Baptist Church, North Little Rock, is the sponsor church for the Church at Argenta and has watched the coffee shop develop from a prayer-soaked concept to a reality. Wyman Richardson, Central’s pastor, attended the grand opening.

“Central Baptist Church ... is thrilled with the launch of Mugs Café and The Church at Argenta,” said Richardson. “It is a fascinating, unique and fresh expression of the Body of Christ, and we wait with bated breath to see all that God is going to do in and through this body of believers.”

Contact Caleb Yarbrough at caleb@arkansasbaptist.org.

LAWSUIT

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after the U.S. Supreme Court last month struck down parts of the federal Defense of Marriage Act, effectively extending federal recognition of marriage to legally wed same-sex couples.

Larry Page, executive director of the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council, said following the announcement of the July 2 lawsuit: “After the U.S. Supreme Court issued its ruling last week on the federal Defense of Marriage Act, it was nearly a given that lawsuits to overturn state laws that restricted marriage to heterosexual couples would be lodged. No one thought it would be as soon as the Arkansas case was filed, but proponents of the homosexual agenda apparently feel the need to take advantage of the momentum the court’s decision has given them.”

Page said the majority opinion in the DOMA case, written by Justice Anthony Kennedy, featured two prominent arguments that have bolstered the resolve of the same-sex marriage devotees.

“First, the decision was based on an ‘equal protection under the law’ rationale – a virtual invitation to make claim that a bar on same-sex marriage is a per se deprivation of equal rights and a prima facie case

of unconstitutional discrimination,” Page said. “Second, Justice Kennedy essentially accused defenders of traditional marriage of harboring animus toward and being bigoted against those same-sex couples seeking to marry. That, too, seemed to be an enticement to take the winning polemics of the DOMA argument to their logical extension and simply rule all bars to same-sex marriage to be unconstitutional denials of a fundamental right.”



Page

Page said he believes the Supreme Court is attempting to be more and more “politically correct.”

“What we are witnessing is the metamorphosis of the U.S. Supreme Court – it has ceased being a fair and impartial arbiter of legal disputes in which it interprets the law. (It) has transformed itself into a forum in which political correctness and the whims of popular opinion dictate its decisions, rather than the strict letter of the law or the will of the body politic as manifested in legitimate elections,” he said.

“The Founders of this Republic – as expressed most eloquently by Thomas Jefferson – most feared an active judiciary that was not duty-bound by the law, but rather would let itself be carried along by the various and arbitrary predilections of its members. A sad day indeed.”

Amendment 83 defines marriage in Arkansas as being only between one man and one woman. Arkan-

sas is one of 35 states that prohibit same-sex marriage, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) website. Thirteen states (including California) and Washington, D.C., now allow same-sex marriages. (Recently passed laws in Delaware, Minnesota and Rhode Island take effect this summer.) Four states allow same-sex couples to enter civil unions (including three states that prohibit same-sex marriage), according to the NCSL.

The latest lawsuit in Arkansas says Amendment 83 and state law violate the right to equal protection and due process of law under the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the *Democrat-Gazette* said.

“Arkansas law denies plaintiffs and other same-sex couples the fundamental right to marry,” the *Democrat-Gazette* reported the lawsuit as stating.

The lawsuit sets out three separate ways Amendment 83 and the pertinent state laws violate the 14th Amendment, the *Democrat-Gazette* reported, by (1) depriving some people of the “fundamental right” to marry, (2) discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation and (3) discriminating on the basis of gender.

In a 5-4 decision June 26, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a key provision of the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). In addition to their federal decision regarding DOMA, the court ruled in California’s Proposition 8, essentially legalizing gay marriage in California.

ABN Digest

Stories of interest to Arkansas Baptists

Baptist Health cuts 170 jobs across its system

LITTLE ROCK – Baptist Health of Little Rock announced July 16 that 170 workers in its system are losing their jobs. The layoffs are immediate and were to be completed by week’s end, *Arkansas Business* reported. The cuts will “not impact the quality of clinical patient care, ... and they are consistent with actions other hospitals have taken,” Mark Lowman, a Baptist Health spokesman, said in a statement to the business journal. Baptist Health has hospitals in Little Rock, North Little Rock and Arkadelphia and about 7,300 workers. Layoffs target employees who aren’t nurses.

Internet freedom vital to religious freedom

WASHINGTON (BP) – Internet freedom is vital to religious freedom, and the United States should make greater efforts to breach the firewalls of repressive regimes, in the view of Baptist public policy specialist Barrett Duke. Speaking at a religious liberty conference, Duke said the federal agency that oversees international media – the Broadcasting Board of Governors – should dramatically increase its support of technology to breach Internet firewalls established by authoritarian governments. Oppressive states are using a variety of methods – including connection disruptions, content blocking and violence against bloggers – to restrict online speech, according to a 2012 report that identified the countries with the worst Internet freedom records as Iran, Cuba and China.

Church marriage policies tightening

ALEXANDRIA, La. (BP) – Churches are beginning to add a stipulation in their bylaws that their ministers perform only traditional marriages on their premises, in response to the Supreme Court’s same-sex marriage decisions in late June. Greg Erwin, a Baton Rouge attorney who represents the Louisiana Baptist Convention, said, “The ruling means the same for Louisiana churches as for churches in all states, except that in states where they have banned discrimination based upon sexual orientation, churches are more at risk than churches in states that would not pass such a law.”

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

The impact of your Baptist newspaper

I was reminded again recently at the annual Arkansas Press Association (APA) SuperConvention meeting of the significant impact of your state Baptist newspaper.

Our regular readers know the *Arkansas Baptist News* is not only the No. 1 religious newspaper in Arkansas, it is also one of the top 10 subscription-based newspapers – religious or secular – in the Natural State.

At the APA meeting, I met some wonderful folks who publish and edit newspapers across our great state. While there were some larger newspapers in attendance, such as the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, most of those attending represented the smaller dailies and weeklies.

And that's where we find our commonality.

You see, any good student of journalism will tell you that "all news is local," meaning people who read

your newspaper expect you to cover the things that affect and concern them the most.

That's not to say readers never want to hear about state or national affairs, but rather a good newspaper will strive to strike a balance by informing them on how these events directly impact their lives.

That's how we go about our ministry at the ABN, always striving to tell the story of Arkansas Baptists first, then seeking to provide context for everything else that may impact your life and ministry as you seek to make Jesus Christ known in your town, state, nation and world.

Many of the publishers and editors I met at the APA convention are people of faith just like you and me. In fact, a publisher of a small weekly told me proudly, "I put a Bible verse on the front page every week!" He added that he sometimes receives comments from readers of how the

per will strive to strike a balance by informing them on how these events directly impact their lives.

That's how we go about our ministry at the ABN, always

PRESSING ON

Tim Yarbrough



verse blessed their lives.

If you are a pastor, other church staff or church member, help pass the word to others you meet about our state Baptist newspaper and encourage them to subscribe.

Together, we all make an enormous impact on Arkansas, and we need everyone to read how God is using Arkansas Baptists each and every day to further the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Building a firm foundation in children

Broken foundations are costly and heartbreaking. No matter how beautiful or impressive a house is, the future can bring only trouble for a structure when its foundation is unsound.

It is always better in the long run to invest the necessary time and effort in getting the foundation sound and true.

This principle holds for growing lives just as surely as it does for constructing buildings.

Without the proper spiritual basics, a life is doomed to trouble in this life and destruction in eternity. Living without the knowledge of God's Truth is like putting up walls on sand or clay.

Great efforts will be necessary to constantly patch and repair damage, and in the end, the walls will fall despite all effort.

The fundamentals of faith should be prayerfully and carefully laid in the life of a person before reaching the teenage years.

Once we become adults, we begin building our lives. If we discover that the foundation we received is unsound, then we must decide whether we will start all

over and rebuild or keep trying to make due with what we have.

If we build a life on anything but God's Truth, the struggles and temptations

of this age will eventually find the weaknesses. Stubborn pride, frustration or despair can easily persuade us not to do the difficult work of starting over from the ground up.

Since anything is possible with God, lives can be remade successfully at any time. Better to get it right the first time, however, be-

cause we do not know when our lives in this world will come to an end.

When we teach our children God's Truth, then we are giving them the chance to build their lives on the Rock.

We cannot save them or force them to be saved, but we can remove as many obstacles as possible. We can make sure they know about God's love and about His plan of salvation and blessing.

We advance God's kingdom when we labor to build firm spiritual foundations in the lives of children. Such labor is not in vain.

May God's Spirit empower us to keep the faith alive in our own hearts and in the hearts of our children.

Richard Foster is pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Camden. This article first appeared on his blog, *Brother Richard's Blog*, at <http://brotherrichardsblog.com>. Read more Arkansas Baptist blogs at www.arkansasbaptist.org/abn-blogroll.



VIEWPOINT

Richard Foster
Grace Baptist Church
Camden



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Send letters to the editor to tim@arkansasbaptist.org, to our fax number or mailing address. We prefer letters typed doublespaced, and they must be 300 words or less. Letters must be signed and marked "for publication."

Letters may be edited for style. A letters policy statement is available on request. Opinions expressed in letters are those of the writer alone, and publication should not be considered an endorsement.

Advertise in the *Arkansas Baptist News* by calling 800-838-2272, ext. 5155, or in the Little Rock area, call 376-4791, ext. 5155.

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Baptists Ask

I find it hard to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," when I have so much already. What should I do?

For most American Christians, the "daily bread" part of the Lord's Prayer seems redundant. Because most believers live an affluent, middle-class lifestyle, how should they understand this prayer?

"Daily bread" probably alludes to two Old Testament passages. It reminds readers of the daily manna the Israelites received in the wilderness. God fed all of them during their 40-year journey (Ex. 16; Deut. 8:3). It also alludes to Agur the Sage, who prayed, "Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread" (Prov. 30:8). Jesus' prayer reminds believers that God provides for their needs, and that should be sufficient.

Oftentimes, God provides Christians more than enough food. This is especially true in the U.S., with one out of every three Americans being obese. Ironically, one out of every six Americans goes to bed hungry. Because believers have received so much, God challenges Christians to share what they have received. Haddon Robinson notes that because the prayer is corporate ("give us ... our daily bread"), God wants believers to meet each other's needs. It is a duty – a command – to help others receive nourishment.

How should affluent Christians pray this part of the Lord's Prayer? First, they should give thanks when they have more than enough. Every good thing comes from God, whether it be food, their incomes or their livelihoods. Second, believers should recognize the corporate opportunity of the prayer and ask how they might meet the needs of those who do not have enough. They can give generously to families in need, whether personally or through food banks, church pantries and shelters. When God provides more than enough, believers must provide for those who have so little.

Ken Gore is chair of the department of Christian studies at Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge. To submit a question, email tim@arkansasbaptist.org or call 501-376-4791, ext. 5153.



Gore

What we can learn from VBS?

According to statistics published by LifeWay Christian Resources, more than 3 million children enroll in vacation Bible school (VBS) each year. That is incredible! VBS is highly recognized as the most effective evangelism strategy we have now and have ever had. When you consider the effectiveness of VBS in baptizing people into the kingdom of God, it makes you wonder why we relegate VBS to a children's program when there is so much we can learn about reaching people.

Here are just a few lessons we can learn from VBS:

First, it reminds us the gospel has not lost its power. The Bible says unequivocally that the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation." It is incredible how many children give their lives to Jesus in response to the clear gospel teaching that occurs during VBS week. Every year the heart of your church is stirred and encouraged watching the baptisms that come after decisions made in VBS.

Second, VBS reveals how far removed we are from a true passion for the lost. We are burdened about seeing people rescued from hell above all else. While people will "amen" this statement, baptisms continue to decline in our denomination. If we are to reach lost folks, and VBS is such a strong and effective evangelism tool, why is it relegated to a once-a-year children's program? Seriously, if it works so well, then why not do it more often? We are so caught up in our paradigm of church that we are missing a very simple plan to see more people saved. Why not do it two times – Christmas break and spring break? Why not create a VBS-style children's service? If it works so well, then why do we hesitate to use what works? Maybe we are not as willing to pursue the lost as we might think.

Third, VBS illustrates the impact of focusing on children's ministry and reaching families. Lost and unchurched people love to come to VBS. They will gladly enter a church they have never attended to register their children for VBS. A VBS sign is the most effective sign a church can ever post. Why not provide

a children's ministry that does the same thing? Parents will do anything for their children. They will come to your church when you cater to their children and love them.

Fourth, we learn how to equip members in the church to become better soul winners. I have been challenging our church for years to realize it is not difficult to become a soul winner – just teach third grade! VBS focuses on teaching the gospel, and therefore, it equips you to be a soul winner. The ABC method of explaining the gospel works more than

just one week per year. Youth volunteers have been saved after learning it. We take it on mission trips. Many of our members led their first soul to Jesus using the ABCs during VBS. If your church did more with VBS and children's ministry, how many soul winners could be equipped in your church?

Fifth, VBS teaches us how to minister effectively to children. It is not difficult. The VBS components are simple yet powerful: prayer coverage, a focus on the gospel, teaching Bible verses, the power of music as a teaching tool, any amount of creativity adds great energy, children respond to love and involving the entire church pays huge dividends. Every church can do those things regardless of size, budget or location.

It is astounding that churches everywhere ignore the true importance of VBS. It is not merely a children's program, but a highly effective evangelism strategy. Do not ignore the lessons your church can learn in reaching the lost. More importantly, do not ignore this tool for seeing people saved. Gather a group of people and sit down with the pastor to explore how the lessons of VBS can help you reach more lost people. Develop your children's program. Start a VBS-style children's service. Add a family component to your morning service that engages children and parents. Create some VBS-type events. Why not? VBS has taught us it works.

Greg Addison is president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and pastor of First Baptist Church, Cabot.



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Greg Addison

Left behind

I recently preached a missionary commissioning service at First Baptist Church of Raytown, Mo., for a family who is being deployed to an undisclosed area of the world. I love preaching these special events, as they are always occasions filled with joyful anticipation, fervent prayer, thanksgiving and cheerleading. But this one was different. This service was for my baby sister, her husband and their four children. This time my heart felt more pain than excitement; and I felt more like a proud brother than commissioning preacher. For the first time in my life, I felt the complex set of emotions experienced by missionaries' extended family members.

Through the years, Arkansas Baptists have seen many missionaries sent from our churches to the ends of the earth. We pray for our missionaries, encourage our missionaries and love on them when they come home for a stateside assignment. Many of our churches provide mission houses, automobiles and other resources for them during their short periodic stays in America. But, I realize that too often we forget to encourage, pray for and minister to the families of those missionaries who are in our churches.

Here are some ways to consider ministering to the mothers and fathers whose children and grandchildren are serving as missionaries, the children whose parents or grandparents are serving as missionaries or the siblings and other family members of missionaries in your congregation:

(1) Send a personal card, letter or email to let them

know you are truly praying for the missionaries and also for them. This is particularly special around holidays and birthdays. (2) Assist them in periodically making a Skype call (live video chat over the Internet). (3) Schedule a Skype call during a worship service and having a special time of prayer for both the missionaries and the family members who are in your church. (4) Host a fellowship. This time should include prayer, encouragement and an opportunity for family members to share stories and talk about how

they celebrate birthdays and other special occasions long-distance. (5) Publicly recognize the birthdays and wedding anniversaries of the missionaries who have family members in your church. Invite family members to participate and help lead in a time of focused prayer for the missionaries. Pray for the family members of those missionaries. (6)

Remember there is always added stress when a family crisis occurs (accident, death, trouble with a child, etc.) and family members (the missionaries) are unable to be there. This is hard on both the missionaries and the family members at home. Be sensitive to these needs.

These are just a few things you can do. There are certainly more. Consider what you and your church can do to reach out to these family members. It is not just the missionaries who make a sacrifice; it is their family members too.

Eric W. Ramsey is president of TCWM, based in Mountainburg.



ANSWERING THE CALL

Eric Ramsey

Freeman Heights 're-energized for cause of Christ'

Jessica Vanderpool
Arkansas Baptist News

BERRYVILLE - More than 80 members of all ages from Freeman Heights Baptist Church, Berryville, took part in the first-ever Mission Berryville, a weekend mission project held June 28-29.

Participants ministered in 10 locations. Acts of service included taking 10 cents off a gallon of gas, paying for car washes, paying for the use of Laundromat washers and driers and helping with community cleanup. In addition, they held a backyard Bible club, prayer walked and did door-to-door evangelism.

"The purpose of Mission Berryville was to be a physical representation of the love of Christ to our community," said Josh Comer, pastor of student ministries at Freeman Heights Baptist who helped plan the event and was in charge of media for the event. "We wanted to show our community that Freeman Heights cares about them because Christ first cares about us."

He said they wanted members to transition from the building to being in the community.

"We wanted to let our city know

that Freeman Heights was a place where Christ is worshipped and where people, no matter whom they are, matter to Christ," he said.

Comer explained it was meant to mirror the state convention's Acts 1:8 One Day Mission Trip.

He shared that though they don't know of any decisions made for Christ as a result of the event, they were able to plant "the seed of the gospel into many different people throughout the weekend."

"Mission Berryville also made our members see that sharing the love of Christ is not only what we are called to do, but that it is as simple as caring for someone enough that they

see Christ through us," Comer said. "When we had our celebration service Saturday evening, the overwhelming response from our people is, 'This is something we can do,' and, 'There's no reason why we can't keep this up,'" he said. "Our church family has been re-energized for the cause of Christ in our community."

Senior Pastor Alan Brown said he heard from members of all ages who were excited to continue serving. Some are even finding short-term mission projects in Arkansas to plan for the fall.



Brown

"When I think of Mission Berryville, there is a Scripture passage that seems to explain it best," he said, quoting Philippians 2:1-3 (NKJV; parentheses added), which says, "Therefore if there is any consolation (encouragement) in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish

ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself."

"That really sums up what our people were like when over 80 members of our church family showed and served each other and the community where we live," Brown said. "One member said it best, 'I think this may have done more good for the church than anything else.'"

Contact Jessica Vanderpool at jessica@arkansasbaptist.org.

Back to School

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

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

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

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Acts 1:8 One Day Mission Trip

Saturday, Oct. 5

Harrison Area

A Mississippi River Ministry Project

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$10 (includes lunch, special dietary needs not provided)

Deadline to register: Sept. 18

(Team assignments for registrations received after Sept. 18 will be made by coordinator and informed by email only)



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

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

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

Ministry Opportunities

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

Pentagon chaplain preaches at FBC Stuttgart

STUTTGART – Deputy Pentagon Chaplain Kenneth R. Williams – an Arkansas native and graduate of Ouachita Baptist University – shared about how to prepare for “the battles of life” July 7 at First Baptist Church, Stuttgart.

Williams and Sam Roberts, pastor of First Baptist, attended Ouachita Baptist together. Roberts said Williams was a natural one to invite as the church celebrated its freedom around the Fourth of July holiday.

Williams urged the congregation to pray for the work of all chaplains and especially those serv-

ing under the endorsement of the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.



Williams

Members received chaplaincy prayer cards in the morning bulletin.

“I’m Baptist. I don’t do a Catholic Mass. I don’t do a Jewish service. I don’t do a Muslim service. I do a Protestant service. My service is much like what you are having this morning,” said Williams.

Williams said he does his best “to present God’s message and God’s Truth in a way that people will receive Him as their Savior and Lord.”

“I can’t do anything outside my

faith,” he said. “The Army – the government – can’t make me do something that I don’t believe in.”

Williams said while the United States faces numerous cultural challenges – such as the recent ruling against the Defense of Marriage Act – he cannot “be forced to do things against my theology and my doctrine.”

He shared from Matt. 4:1-11, where Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tested by the devil.

Williams shared about his own wilderness experience when his wife of 28 years, the late Linda Darling from Crossett, died of cancer.

“Sometimes when we find ourselves in a desert or a battle, we whine or complain (to God),” he said.

Williams said people must realize sometimes God leads them to the desert for a particular reason and for a particular purpose. In the passage from Matthew, for example, Williams pointed out the three temptations of Jesus are all about Jesus “using His power for

selfish reasons.”

Quoting Hebrews 4:14-16, Williams said Jesus sympathizes with people’s weaknesses because He has been tested. Jesus is our example and direction.

Williams said he went through a very lonely time following the loss of his wife, but God saw him through it in ways he never imagined.

“God has a great way of giving you what you need when you need it,” said Williams.

“God began to work in my heart and to purify me, until I got to the point where He said, ‘OK, now you’re ready. Now you’re ready for what I have for you.’ And He brought me through the desert and taught me what I needed to know,” he said.

“This sermon is not about Ken Williams finding a wife,” Williams told those present. “This sermon is about us being willing to accept the desert experience and fight the battle of selfishness, so that God prepares us for what He has in the future.”

Charitable Giving Tip

OFFERING LOVE

Is the offering that you present to God this week reflective of your love for Him? Giving and love are always found in tandem. **“God so loved the world that He gave ...”** (John 3:16) If you aren’t convinced, just ignore your spouse’s birthday or wedding anniversary! Giving in the Old Testament was a duty under law. Today giving is a privilege under grace. We give to show our love for our Savior and to advance His name in all the world. Generosity springs from a heart of love.

If you want to explore more ways to show your love for God through giving, please give us a call.



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Sold Out youth conference set for Aug. 17

RUSSELLVILLE - Youth from Russellville and surrounding areas are invited to attend the Sold Out conference set for Saturday, Aug. 17 at Fair Park Baptist Church, 615 S. Knoxville Ave., Russellville.

Kirby Vardeman, pastor of LifeStone Church in Russellville, is the organizer of the event. The conference theme is Marvelous Grace.

"Sold Out is back, and this year is better than before," said Vardeman. "Our emphasis in this year's conference is on the gospel of God's grace. His grace saves us, sustains us

and changes us. His grace is what helps us to be the Church that He saw us being as He died for us."



Ham

More than 60 youth attended last year's conference, but Vardeman said he expects more than double for this year's event.

Speakers included at the conference are Brad Morgan, LifeStone Church student pastor, and Jay Ham, equipping pastor for missions, outreach and recreation at First Baptist Church, Russellville.

The Elliott Andrews Band of Crossett will be featured

in worship, and the worship leader for the day is Paul Rideout, LifeStone Church worship pastor.

Vardeman said the main session will be "a time of powerful worship focusing on God and His grace through instrument and song, along with teaching relevant to the students to glorify God and stir His

people to act out in love for Him."

There will also be breakout sessions "in which students can more closely focus on the teaching and openly discuss how what they have learned can change how they live," Vardeman said.

A mission emphasis will give students the opportunity to hear about various people groups around the world and how each can participate in reaching their city, state, country and world through Jesus as well.

For more information or to register, visit <http://soldoutconference.com> or call 479-567-8850.



Morgan



North Pulaski Association on mission

Members from six North Pulaski Baptist Association churches joined together to serve in Puenbo, Ecuador, June 21-29. Team members built cabinets and painted in a church and school. Other members worked in church members' homes. One of the team leaders led a conference for local pastors in evangelism. A partnership team toured the greater Quito area to make an assessment of potential future partnerships.



Mexico missions

A mission team from Washington Madison Baptist Association recently spent a week in Matamoros, Mexico. The team of 12, representing seven churches, did repair work at a children's home and conducted two eyeglass clinics where 29 people prayed to receive Christ.

Classifieds

PASTOR

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

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

First Baptist Church, Dumas, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send resumes to First Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, 200 East Waterman, Dumas, AR 71639 or email to FBCdumas@centurytel.net.

Coronado Baptist Church of Hot Springs Village is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send resumes to Coronado Baptist Church Pastor Search Committee, coronadobap@sbcglobal.net or mail to 198 Carmona Center Drive, Suite 4, Hot Springs Village, AR 71909.

First Baptist Church of Lewisville is seeking a **pastor**. Send resumes to Pastor Search Committee at P.O. Box 97, Lewisville, AR 71845 or email to lewfbcc@whiti.net.

First Baptist Church, Lecompte, is seeking a **pastor**. Send resume to First Baptist Church Lecompte, Attn: Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 1070, Lecompte, LA 71346. Located 15 minutes south of Alexandria, La. Beautiful campus - great growth potential. Contact: 318-776-9487.

New Hope Baptist Church, Omaha, is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Email resume to newhope@omahaweb.net or contact Bonnie at 870-426-3984.

OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

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

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

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

First Baptist Church of Judsonia is seeking a **part-time minister of music**. Email resumes to fbccjud@gmail.com or call 501-279-6748.

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

West Fork FBC is seeking a **full-time minis-**

ter to students who is excited and experienced in developing and reaching our young generation and their parents. Send all resumes and correspondence to hclowerhunt@yahoo.com.

First Baptist Church, Wagoner, Okla., is seeking a **full-time children's minister**. Please send resume to First Baptist Church, Attn: Mark Pointer, 401 N.E. 2nd St., Wagoner, OK 74467 or mark@fbcwagoner.com. Contact person is Mark Pointer: 918-485-2428.

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

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

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

MISCELLANEOUS

Williams Baptist College, Walnut Ridge seeks a qualified individual with law enforcement experience to serve as **director of campus safety**. Applicant must be a commissioned security officer through the Arkansas Board of Private Investigators and Private Security Agencies and have an associ-

ate's degree (bachelor's degree preferred), as well as commitment to the college's values and mission. For a complete job description: williamsbaptistcollege.com/employment. Submit application materials, including a letter of interest, resume and contact information, via email to hr@wbcoll.edu. Applications accepted until position is filled.

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East Mt. Zion Trinity Baptist VBS missions trip

East Mt. Zion Trinity Baptist Church, Clarksville, sent 11 members to assist First Baptist Church in Big Piney, Wyo., with vacation Bible school in June. Van Edwards, pastor of Big Piney, is a former member of East Mt. Zion Trinity Baptist. About 50 children attended the vacation Bible school with three children making professions of faith.

Oak Grove Baptist VBS

Noah Pounds (front), Chase Crow (back left) and Marty Lansdell (back right) take part in vacation Bible school, hosted June 17-21 by Oak Grove Baptist Church, Ashdown. There were 110 in total enrollment, one profession of faith and many seeds planted.



World Changers impacts LR

LITTLE ROCK - "Change the city; change the world." This was the theme of nearly 400 students and adults participating in World Changers in Little Rock July 8-20. In the course of two weeks, the students from all over the country learned how to be servants by meeting the physical and spiritual needs of Little Rock.

The students lodged at Life Line Baptist Church, Little Rock, but about 30 other local churches helped make these weeks successful.

"God uses World Changers to change the world, and that's just what they do through their sacrificial giving and service and sharing of the gospel of Jesus Christ. These two weeks have brought 400 students (and adults) to Little Rock, and lives have been changed for eternity," said Jeff Dial, pastor of Life Line Baptist.

Formerly of the North American Mission Board, World Changers has undergone several changes since becoming part of LifeWay Christian Resources. For example, LifeWay has increased safety regulations and

now only allows participants over the age of 18 on roofs.

These and similar changes have brought new opportunities. For the first time in the 10 years World Changers has been in Little Rock, the city hosted two project weeks.

One hundred ninety-eight students and adults came to Little Rock the week of July 8 for the first community service-focused project in this city. While 11 crews still did construction work, there were

also five outreach sites where sports camps, vacation Bible schools and backyard Bible clubs were held.

The second week, July 15-19, was a more traditional World Changers week. Two hundred students and adults participated in construction work and painting.

"It's cool to see that our church isn't the only one who wants to change the world," said Hunter Clampit, 18, of Harrisburg. "I love to meet people from other places who have the same passions I have."

Together, students like Clampit are changing the world for Christ.



World Changers participants gather at the capitol to pray for their mission.

Obituaries

Kenneth Lee Boyd, 79, of Austin, died July 6. He was a member of First Baptist Church, Ward, where he served as a deacon. He was also a member of Arkansas Nailbenders for Jesus and a veteran



of the United States Army. Boyd was preceded in death by his parents and first wife, Jean Boyd. He is survived by his wife, Margaret Wright Bittle Boyd, retired employee of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention discipleship, evangelism and Sunday school department (now evangelism and church growth team), two sons, three daughters, two stepchildren, a brother, a sister, nine grandchildren,

four step grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren and three step great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held in July at First Baptist Church, Ward. Memorials may be made to First Baptist's building fund.

Church life

Crossgate Church, Hot Springs, sent a team to Ecuador June 15-22. The team worked in three schools sharing the gospel through song, drama and skits. The team also visited several local communities, giving out food baskets and witnessing.

Fifty-five students from **Crossgate Church, Hot Springs**, attended Student Life Camp in Tenn. Four students received Christ and others rededicated their lives.

First Baptist Church, Scranton, is celebrating its 45th anniversary

during the 11 a.m. worship service Aug. 4. Lynn Riley, Arkansas Baptist State Convention evangelism and church growth team member, will serve as speaker. All former pastors and members are invited.

Walnut Street Baptist Church, Jonesboro, recently participated in the Military BibleStick project with Faith Comes By Hearing. The "BibleStick," a digital audio player, allows men and women serving in the military to listen to the New Testament at any time.

East Side Baptist Church, Mountain Home, will host a Living Proof Live Simulcast with Beth Moore on Sept. 14. Simulcast hours are 8:30 a.m. until 3:15 p.m. For more information, contact the church office at 870-425-3689.

Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock, will host their

annual 5K run benefiting Shepherd-ing His Flock adoption ministry at 7:30 a.m. Aug. 17. For more information, call 501-455-3474.

East Side Baptist Church, Mountain Home, will sponsor a women's missions event from 6 to 8 p.m. Sept. 30. The "I'm In! RUN?" event will include a meal, music, special speakers and child care. For more information, call 870-453-2575.

On the move

Ryan Cardona has been called to First Baptist Church, Ward, as minister of youth.

Happy Birthday!

to all the missionary kids attending college who are celebrating birthdays in the month of August.

◆ Aug 30: Robyn Getsee, OBU Box 4467, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Thailand.

"Doing the work of an evangelist." II Tim 4:5

Sam Moore is a vocational evangelist and a native of Arkansas. He has the gift of an evangelist and the heart of a pastor. He is available for Revivals, Crusades, Harvest Days and Witness Training.

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

AUGUST 4, 2013

EXPLORE THE BIBLE:

Am I headed for failure?

ECCLESIASTES 5:8-16, 18-20; 6:10-12

Solomon, in Ecclesiastes, infers the question "Is it really worth the effort?" Most of the time, we can also hear his answer, "Certain paths in life lead to emptiness."

God designed our lives to fulfill specific purposes He planned for us. Following His design is indeed worth the effort. To ensure we do follow Him, God gives us some warnings, in His Word, so we can stay on track. He also promises a path that is sure to succeed. Here, the teacher lays them out: (1) In Ecclesiastes 5:10, we learn neither money nor possessions buy happiness. Indeed, many surveys have proven that the most unhappy people in the world are people who place too much emphasis on gaining wealth and possessions. If gaining and storing wealth are at the top of your priority list, then you could be headed for failure. (2) Efforts to stockpile riches are counterproductive to the purpose of God's blessings. God taught us through His Covenant Promise to Abraham that

He would bless us so we could be a blessing to others. If God's blessings are getting stuck with us and not flowing through to others, then we are headed for failure. (3) Contentment in God can result in permanent joy! The Apostle Paul learned how to be "content" in whatever state he was in (Phil. 4:11). All things other than your relationship with God through His Son Jesus Christ can let you down. If you are content with Christ, then you can learn to be content with everything else. To the person who does not hold onto

"things" too tightly, they can actually provide the temporary pleasure that God intends. To the person that is always in need of material possessions, there is simply never enough. In today's consumer-driven culture, we would be wise to remain focused on eternal possessions and inheritance. The wise quote attributed to missionary Jim Elliot is, "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."



Chris Sims
pastor
Pilgrims Rest Baptist
Batesville

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE:

God sends His Son

MATTHEW 4:17-24; JOHN 1:1-2, 11-14, 18, 29

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). The author of John highlights the importance of Jesus and His deity. He is

God but also became fully human when He came to earth and challenged people to repent. John described Jesus as "the Word" (John 1:1). The Word is eternal, having been with God from the beginning (John 1:1-2).

God sent His Son to His people. Though some did not receive Jesus or His teaching (John 1:11), there were many who believed in God (John 1:12). This belief did not come from their own actions, someone else's choosing or physical birth (John 1:13).

In verse 14, John reiterates that Jesus came to earth as a human. He lived, ate and walked with God's people (John 1:14). Through Jesus' life, we have seen the glory of God. John describes Jesus as "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

This grace and truth is seen

throughout Jesus' ministry, as described in Matthew 4:17-24. In verse 17, Jesus says people are to repent. We see this message lived out and spoken throughout His ministry.

The next two sections of that passage show Jesus calling His first disciples and continuing to minister. Jesus' name was known in the land. It is believed Peter and Andrew already were followers of Jesus. When Jesus walked by Peter, Andrew, James and John, they were ready to follow Jesus, even if it meant leaving their jobs and family responsibilities.

Jesus' ministry, as seen throughout Scripture, can be summed up by Matthew 4:23-24. He taught in synagogues, proclaimed the gospel and ministered to physical needs.

Jesus, who was with God from the beginning, came to earth to speak with grace and truth. He showed God's love through actions and words. He is the human example we are to follow. How are your actions and words expressing God's love to others?



Charity Gardner
member
Compass Church
Little Rock

AUGUST 11, 2013

EXPLORE THE BIBLE:

Can I keep on going?

ECCLESIASTES 7:11-14, 15-18; 8:10-12, 16-17

It might be hard to walk into the bank and make a withdrawal of wisdom. Yet, we pursue wealth and often overlook that Scripture tells us wisdom is of even greater value.

Ecclesiastes 7:12 says - money can't save a life but wisdom can preserve it. Our only hope is not the almighty dollar, it is the mighty Savior - Jesus Christ!

Every ounce of wisdom we might gain in this world should be prefaced with this reminder: "Fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom" (Prov. 9:10).

You can never be too "extreme" in devotion to God, but in all other things, we are taught that too much of a thing can be bad. Too much prosperity can lead to greed and pride. The sentiment from Ecclesiastes 7:14 to be joyful in the day of prosperity must be tempered with the warning in verses 15-18 to avoid extremes. We can find joy and contentment during times of poverty or prosperity. A moderate life, however, is very

different than a "lukewarm" life. A lukewarm person may stand for nothing, yet fall for anything. They may not have a firm grasp on the things of God and are therefore not very useful for His kingdom. You

can be moderate, yet still be useful. To illustrate, a moderate driver chooses the middle of his lane to avoid the oncoming traffic on one side and the ditch on the other. Spiritual moderation would be keeping true to the road God has placed you upon without being spun around by others who are going in the opposite direction or falling into the ditch of sin.

God's Word is our great Boundary Marker.

Can you keep on going in your journey of following Christ in spite of the world doing just the opposite? With the ditch of sin looming, can you blaze a trail of purity and integrity?

Maybe it is time those boundary lines in your life got a fresh coat of paint to keep you on the straight and narrow.



Chris Sims
pastor
Pilgrims Rest Baptist
Batesville

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE:

Jesus is crucified and raised

MARK 15:33-39; 16:1-7; 1 CORINTHIANS 15:17-19

Mark is one of three gospels that records the darkness while Jesus was on the cross (Mark 15:33). The Crucifixion took place during the Passover celebration. The Passover was the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt's hands. The ninth plague that came upon Egypt included a three-day darkness followed by the last plague, death of the firstborn (Ex. 10:22-11:9). The darkness at Calvary was God announcing His only Son, firstborn, giving His life for the world's sins.

The only statement Mark records is Jesus crying out in pain as He was taking on the sins of the world (Mark 15:34). This is the first time Jesus was separated from God because of the sin. After about 6 hours of pain, Jesus uttered a loud cry and died (Mark 15:37). His cry brings about a shout of victory as He was willing to become the sacrifice for our sins.

Many onlookers became believers, including a Roman centurion. The centurion had witnessed Jesus taking

on the abuse and death, which led him to say, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" (Mark 15:39, NASB).

The women were going to anoint Jesus' body with spices (Mark 16:1). They were expecting to see Jesus' body lying in the tomb. As the women entered the tomb, they were greeted by angels (Mark 16:4-5), who told the women to tell the disciples about what they had found. The angels told the women Jesus had risen and was on His way to Galilee (Mark 16:6-7).

Jesus wanted His disciples to be encouraged about His resurrection.

Without His death and resurrection, the Christian faith would only be a lifestyle here on earth. 1 Corinthians 15:17-19 speaks of the importance of the Resurrection. Denying the bodily resurrection of Christ would deny our hope for eternal life with Him. We would still be responsible for our sins. As part of salvation, we believe He died and was resurrected for our sins. Are you living your faith out with a belief in Jesus' bodily resurrection?



Charity Gardner
member
Compass Church
Little Rock



ABSC calendar

- **July 26-27: Wellspring and Arkansas WMU 125th Celebration** – Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock
- **July 27-30: Family Camp Week** – Camp Siloam, Siloam Springs
- **July 29-31: Hispanic Children's Camp** – Ouachita Baptist Assembly, Mena
- **July 31-Aug. 3: Hispanic Youth Camp** – Ouachita Baptist Assembly, Mena
- **Aug. 1-2: WEE Workshop II** – Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock
- **Aug. 9-10: Literacy Missions Training Workshop** – ABSC building, Little Rock
- **Aug. 9-10: Hispanic Pastors' Retreat** – Camp Paron
- **Aug. 9-10: Mosaic statewide worship equipping event** – Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock
- **Aug. 9-10: Youth Evangelism Conference** – Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock
- **Aug. 13: Your Church & Money** – ABSC building, Little Rock
- **Aug. 13: Your Church & Money** – First Baptist Church, Nashville
- **Aug. 15: Your Church & Money** – Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro

For more information on events, go to www.absc.org, or call 800-838-2272.

'95% of multihousing residents are lost'

Multihousing conference set for Aug. 24

LITTLE ROCK – The Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) missions ministries team will host the Multi-Housing Missions Conference Aug. 24 at the ABSC building in Little Rock.

The event's goal is to help churches reach those who live in multihousing settings, such as apartments, trailer parks and retirement centers. The conference will give attendees the tools to help reach people in such settings through multihousing ministry or through planting a church in a multihousing setting.

Speakers will focus on multihousing missions development, church planting in multihousing settings and prayer walking. Attendees can also choose to attend one of the following breakout sessions: strategy for multihousing missions, the basics of simple church in multihousing settings or children's ministry.

"Statistics show us that 57 per-



cent of Americans live in multihousing and 95 percent of those people living in multihousing are without Christ. Wow! What a mission field in our back door," said Breck Freeman, ABSC missions ministries

team member and church and community mission strategist for the convention.

Registration deadline is Aug. 16.

For more information, call 800-838-2272, ext. 5150.

Mosaic music/worship training event set

LITTLE ROCK – Only a few days remain before the July 31 registration deadline for Mosaic, a day of training and enrichment for a variety of components that make up the music and worship ministry of the local church.

The event, sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) leadership and worship team, is set for Aug. 9-10 at Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock.

Conference facilitators are Dennis Worley, music and worship minister at Brentwood Baptist Church in Brentwood, Tenn.; Wade Russell, media expert from Elite Multimedia in Memphis and former staff member at The Church at Rock Creek, Little Rock; Darlene Abbott, director of preschool and children's worship choirs at The Church at Station Hill, a regional campus of Brentwood

Baptist Church in Nashville, Tenn., and writer of preschool and children's music and curriculum; Diane Dawson, children's music minister at The People's Church (First Baptist Church) in Franklin, Tenn.

Several Arkansans will also lead sessions. These include Tim Blann, worship leader at First Baptist Church, Sherwood; David Tatum, worship leader at First Baptist Church, Van Buren; Scott Quimby, worship leader at First Baptist Church, Stuttgart; Aaron Williams, worship pastor at Fellowship Bible Church, Little Rock, and his band members, and Don Nichols executive and worship pastor at Levy Baptist Church, North Little Rock.

Conference sessions include: The Life of a Worship Leader, Tech Ministry, Children's Choir Worship Min-

istry, Preschool Choir Worship Ministry, Finale Music Writing Software, Planning Center Online, iPads in Worship, Student Praise Bands, The Adult Praise Band/Team Rehearsal – Putting it all together!, Beginning a Student Worship/Arts Ministry and Piano Ministry in Today's Church. In addition, master classes will be held for rhythm guitar, lead guitar, bass guitar, drum set and keyboards.

"I am excited about providing this training event to those who serve in the areas of music and worship in our churches," said Larry Grayson, ABSC leadership and worship team member. "I am hopeful that all of our worship leaders will take advantage of this opportunity for themselves and for training and encouragement for their ministry teams!"

Register at www.absc.org/music.

MISSIONS

continued from page one

had 400 volunteers participating.

He said they knew the event needed to be led by laypeople so its continuation would not be dependent on who was in leadership. Before they had time to think through whom to enlist, God raised up leadership in the form of two laypeople – church members David Smith and Sharon Plyler.

Beasley said God had put it on Smith's heart to help get the event off the ground. In addition, Beasley said that several years prior, Plyler had worked on a strategy for a local missions emphasis, meaning she had much of what they needed "already laid out."

"So God just pieced it all together. ... When He puts the pieces together, then it just works," Beasley said.

He said he considers this year's Mission Hot Springs to be the church's "most successful local outreach endeavor" since he has been pastor. He explained this is for two reasons – one being the number of salvations and the other being the

number of church members who were able to gain missions training and experience.

He said they hold extensive training for volunteers before the event. Then, the volunteers get to put that knowledge into practice during the event.

As a result of Mission Hot Springs, the church now has more than 400 members who have been trained and are prepared to take part in other missions endeavors.

Katrina Robertson, Hot Springs Baptist member and wife of Shane Robertson, church pastor of discipleship/assimilation, was one of those trained. In addition to taking part in the missions projects, she served as a volunteer on the event's advertising team.

"The whole idea is there is something for everyone" she said, explaining those who had fewer physical capabilities could volunteer on a prayer walking team or an encouragement team.

Even child care was provided for volunteers with children in order to make the missions opportunity available to everyone.

For Robertson, last year's Mission Hot Springs was the first time she had taken part in an outreach endeavor like this.

"Sharing the gospel isn't that scary of a thing,"

she concluded, adding, "Anybody can do it."

"It really kind of ... fires the church up about our calling to minister to and reach our Jerusalem," she said. "The whole week of missions at Hot Springs – it's exhausting but yet it gets everybody excited and revitalized to what it is we're really supposed to be doing."

Smith explained that Mission Hot Springs is a "chance to encourage those people who normally don't participate in mission projects to realize that they can be a part of something greater and bigger than themselves."

"Beginning with the city of Hot Springs, people can see and understand that God is calling them to spread His message of salvation to all the nations of the world," he said. "We want the people of Hot Springs to know that we love and care about them, and even more important, that Jesus loves and cares for them."

He said they are still doing follow-up ministry and seeing fruit from the event.

"Our goal is that this isn't just about a one-week effort, but that it becomes a lifestyle for our church," Smith said.

Contact Jessica Vanderpool at jessica@arkansasbaptist.org.

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ABSC page

News and updates from Ark. convention

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Church opens coffee shop in North Little Rock

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Photo by Tim Yarbrough



Reaching the Rock

Cocklebur Baptist, Ward, serves Little Rock and North Little Rock during their first-ever youth mission trip. Read story on Page 2.

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