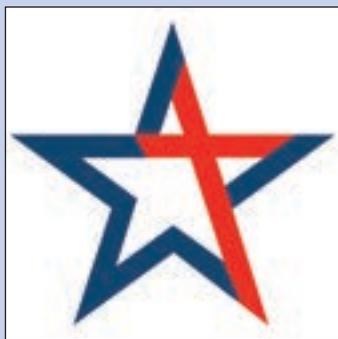


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HOMECOMING 2017

PARRISH *to be nominated* *for* EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR *of*

Lifeword

MEDIA MINISTRIES

By **HOLLY MERIWEATHER**

Lifeword Media Ministries

Lifeword's board of directors would like to announce Donny Parrish as the nominee for executive director of Lifeword. Dr. Steve Crawley announced his resignation on Feb. 1 after serving six years as executive director.

Parrish has been serving BMA churches almost 40 years. His relationship with Lifeword began in 1990 when he was hired to create Lifeword's video ministry. Parrish also led the conference division of DiscipleGuide for over 25 years and the student missions division of BMA Missions for 10 years, all the while continuing to provide creative content and serve as a radio personality for Lifeword.

In 2012 he returned to BMA of America from Fellowship Church in Forney, as BMA Productions team leader. In September of 2016 he was reassigned to the Lifeword team full time to focus on broadcast outreach to the United States.

Donny and his wife Datha have been married for 38 years. They have two daughters: Brittany, who moved to heaven in 1992, and Samantha, who lives in Queens, New York.

His nomination will be presented at the BMA National Meeting May 1-3.





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making progress

BMA of America coming to Texas

By **JERRY FULTON**

It's almost time! The BMA of America will hold its annual meeting at the Arlington Convention Center May 1-3, 2017. The headquarters hotel will be the Sheraton Hotel. I hope each church is making plans to send messengers. On this page, you will find a schedule for the meeting. Hotel information can be found on page 5 of this issue.

MORE SUBSCRIBERS NEEDED

Is your church on the Baptist Progress Church Plan? The Church Plan allows churches to pay for the subscriptions of each member household at a discounted rate. When new members join, don't forget to add them to your Church Plan so they can begin receiving one issue of Baptist Progress each month. If your church is not on the Baptist Progress Church Plan, please join! I'd be glad to provide you with more information if your church is interested.



▲ Jerry Fulton

68th Annual BMA of America National Meeting May 1-3, 2017 Arlington Convention Center Arlington, Texas

Program

Monday Morning, May 1		Tuesday Evening, May 2	
8:30 Display/Exhibit Set-up		7:00 General Session — 3	
2:30 Registration Set-up (Enrollment and Finance Committee)		Congregational Singing	
Monday Evening, May 1		Special Music	Samantha Parrish
7:00 General Session — 1		Introduction of Speaker	Terry Kimbrow
President's Message	Paul White	Annual Message	Donny Parrish
Tuesday Morning, May 2		Hand of Appreciation	Richard Smith
8:00 Brotherhood Meeting	Room: M7 & M5	Wednesday Morning, May 3	
9:00 WMA Meeting	Room: Grand Hall Salon A	8:30 General Session — 4	
9:30 Committee Meetings		Reporting	
DiscipleGuide	Room: M1	Seminary	
Lifeword	Room: M2	Lifeword	
Missions	Room: M4	Ministers Resource Services	
Moral Action	Room: M9	11:00 Breakout Sessions	
Seminary	Room: M10	1: Understanding the Times	Room: M1-4
Nominating Committee	Room: M11	2: Defending the Faith with Ancient Documents	Room: M9-12
10:00 Women's Conference		3: How Individuals and Churches can Influence Their Legislators	Room: M5
Topic: "When Life Gives You Lemons... Grace Wins"		4: The Future of Latin Ministry in the United States	Room: M7
11:00 Breakout Sessions		12:00 Missionary Wives Lunch and Session	
1: Missions Spending in the Local Church	Room: M1	Lunch	Room: M6
2: Disciple-Making Churches	Room: M9	Meeting	Room: M8
3: Honoring God With Our Finances During Life & Beyond	Room: M5	Wednesday Afternoon, May 3	
4: BMA Retirement at Ministers Resources Services	Room: M7	2:00 General Session — 5	
Tuesday Afternoon, May 2		Reporting	
2:00 Breakout Sessions		Coordinating Council	
1: Missions Spending in the Local Church	Room: M1	WMA	
2: Disciple-Making Churches	Room: M9	Moral Action	
3: Understanding the Times	Room: M3-4	3:00 Guest Speaker	
4: So You Want to Go to School	Room: M12-12	Jack Graham, Pastor	
3:00 General Session — 2		Prestonwood Baptist Church, Dallas, TX	
Reporting:		Wednesday Evening, May 3	
BMA Foundation		7:00 General Session — 6	
Master's Builders		Missions Report	
DiscipleGuide		Missions Commissioning Service	
Brotherhood		Enrollment Committee Schedule	
5:30 Seminary Dinner	Room M5-B	Monday	2:00-4:00 p.m. 6:00-7:00 p.m. and 30 minutes after session
General Sessions		Tuesday	8:30-9:00 a.m., 2:00-3:00 p.m. 6:30-7:00 p.m. and 30 minutes after session
Registration		Wednesday	8:00-8:30 a.m.
Exhibits			
Grand hall Salon A			
Outside of Grand Hall			
Grand Hall Salon B			

Q & A Christian

GOT QUESTIONS?

Question:

"WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT SPIRITUAL WARFARE?"

Answer:

There are two primary errors when it comes to spiritual warfare—over-emphasis and under-emphasis. Some blame every sin, every conflict and every problem on demons that need to be cast out. Others completely ignore the spiritual realm and the fact that the Bible tells us our battle is against spiritual powers. The key to successful spiritual warfare is finding the biblical balance. Jesus sometimes cast demons out of people; other times He healed people with no mention of the demonic. The apostle Paul instructs Christians to wage war against the sin in themselves (Romans 6) and warns us to oppose the schemes of the devil (Ephesians 6:10–18).

Ephesians 6:10–12 says, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." This text teaches some crucial truths: we can only stand strong in the Lord's power, it is God's armor that protects us, and our battle is ultimately against spiritual forces of evil in the world.

Ephesians 6:13–18 is a description of the spiritual armor God gives us. We are to stand firm with the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, and by praying in the Spirit. What do these pieces of spiritual armor represent in spiritual warfare? We are to know the truth, believe the truth, and speak the truth. We are to rest in the fact that we are declared righteous because of Christ's sacrifice for us. We are to proclaim the gospel no matter how much resistance we face. We are not to waver in our faith, trusting God's promises no matter how strongly we are attacked. Our ultimate defense is the assurance we have of our salvation,

an assurance that no spiritual force can take away. Our offensive weapon is the Word of God, not our own opinions and feelings. And we are to pray in the power and will of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is our ultimate example of resisting temptation in spiritual warfare. Observe how Jesus handled direct attacks from Satan when He was tempted in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1–11). Each temptation was combatted with the words "it is written." The Word of the living God is the most powerful weapon against the temptations of the devil. "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11).

A word of caution concerning spiritual warfare is in order. Nowhere in Scripture are we instructed to cast out demons or even to speak to them. The name of Jesus is not a magic incantation that causes demons to flee from before us. The seven sons of Sceva are an example of what can happen when people presume an authority they have not been given (Acts 19:13–16). Even Michael the archangel did not rebuke Satan in his own power but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (Jude 1:9). When we start talking to the devil, we run the risk of being led astray as Eve was (Genesis 3:1–7). Our focus should be on God, not demons; we speak to Him, not them.

In summary, what are the keys to success in spiritual warfare? We rely on God's power, not our own. We put on the whole armor of God. We draw on the power of Scripture—the Word of God is the Spirit's sword. We pray in perseverance and holiness, making our appeal to God. We stand firm (Ephesians 6:13–14); we submit to God; we resist the devil's work (James 4:7), knowing that the Lord of hosts is our protector. "Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken" (Psalm 62:2).

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(PART 2 OF 2)

Thanks to all who responded to Ursula Criscuoli's captivating story in the February Heart Connection. The effects of those war time atrocities did not end for her when the peace treaty was signed. Even after being released from the Russian prison camp, times were hard for Ursula and her mother. Life was dismal and dreary with no money and barely enough food. "In 1948 papa returned, but every time there was a knock at the door" she said, "we froze, fearful the enemy would take us away again."

Her seizures continued but medication helped. After high school graduation, she fell in love and wanted to get married but papa said "No." In 1954 her fiancé, and his family, moved to America but he promised to marry her when she could join him. On her 21st birthday papa agreed and in May 1956, with one small trunk, a wedding gown and \$300, she set sail for New York City with big dreams about her new life in what she called a "beautiful free America."

Upon arrival, those dreams quickly faded when her fiancé wasn't there to meet her. Not knowing what to do, and not being able to speak English, Ursula sat quietly on her trunk for four hours until an interpreter approached, read the letter from her fiancé and made the phone call. When her future mother-in-law arrived she knew at once she was not welcome. Later that evening the man she had hoped to marry confirmed it. He took her money and in a cruel rage, burned her wedding gown.

With a shattered heart, an empty purse and the clothes on her back she started walking until she came to the Hudson River where a park bench became her new home for the next three days. Crushed in spirit and with all hope gone, she decided to end her life. When it was dark, she walked closer to the water, said goodbye to her parents, asking their forgiveness, when "all of a sudden" she said, "I had this urge to pray. I didn't know how, nor did I want to, but a voice inside kept saying 'pray, pray.' I wanted to die but it seemed that someone was holding me down. Looking up into the fog I remembered the elderly man with white hair in that cold cruel prison camp. 'Just pray,' he'd say. 'Jesus is with you.' Suddenly I knew He was and with all of my heart I cried out for help. While still on my knees, the police came and took me to the station where an officer translated my story. He took me home to his wife and they cared for me several weeks, finding work for me in a flower shop. It was there that I met my husband, and together we had eight children.

As Ursula shared her story, I was shocked. I was angry. And I was sad. But oh what a thrilling conclusion! In spite of her suffering and loss, Ursula knew that God had heard her prayer, saved her life, saved her soul, and had brought her to a loving church to learn and grow through His Word. The memory of her horrible past was replaced with a joyful testimony of faith and grace—a picture of ashes to beauty! What a clear description of our mighty sovereign God who rescues and redeems souls, removes fear, restores hope, refreshes hearts, and refuses to let go of His children! A broken Ursula was finally free—a conqueror indeed! And we can be too through Jesus Christ—no matter what! (Rom. 8)

Pat Quesenbury has been active in ladies' ministry for years. She is a pastor's wife, mother and active member of the Women's Missionary Auxiliary. Contact her at pquesenbury@gmail.com.



BMA of america



Eighth Avenue to celebrate 100 years of ministry, March 26, 2017



On March 26, 2017, Eighth Avenue, Teague will celebrate 100 years of ministry in Teague. The day will include great singing and preaching, remembering the past and recognizing the achievements and blessings of the Lord during these 100 years.

After a morning program and worship service, beginning at 10 a.m., there will be a catered lunch in the Christian Life Center, followed by a time to visit and enjoy old friends and new acquaintances.

Pastor Roy Prather and the Eighth Avenue family invite you to join them for this day of honoring the past, celebrating the present and embracing the future.

In March 1917, two ordained Baptist preachers, one deacon, and their families placed their church letters in what was then known as the BMA Baptist Church of Christ. Later that year, the name of the church was changed to Second Baptist Church. Finally, in 1919, after purchasing property at the corner of Eighth Avenue and Elm Street, the name was changed to its current name of Eighth Avenue Baptist Church and the congregation has met regularly at this location.

Through the years, Eighth Avenue Baptist Church has been led by a total of 14 men as pastor, beginning with Bro. J.W. Hamilton in 1917. Of note, Bro. H.L. McKissack served over 30 years as pastor, and Bro. Royce Sanders over 20 years.

These men were assisted during these years by at least 15 men in the positions of assistant pastor, music minister or director, and youth pastor or director. Also during this time, the property of the church has increased to accommodate a growing congregation. Currently, the churches facilities include three separate buildings for worship, education and activity covering one city block and portions of two more. The church also owns two homes for use by church ministers.

Register your group for Daniel Springs Camp

By **SCOTT ATTEBERY**

Daniel Springs has served BMA churches for over 50 years. In that time, the camp has witnessed more than 10,000 young souls make professions of faith in Christ. This Summer, bring your children and youth to experience the “Daniel Springs Difference.” They will love the games, recreation, devotionals, and worship services led by our trained college staff.



The 2017 theme “Do Something” will focus on how we should show Jesus’ love to others by how we live our lives. Jesus showed love to people not just by his words but by his ministry of service while on earth. Throughout Scripture, there are many examples of Jesus’ servant leadership. To the crowds that followed him, he gave new life (physical and spiritual) to the sick, the crippled, the hungry and the outcast. To those closest to him (his disciples), he invested in them as individuals and as a group by humbly serving and teaching them. Jesus is the ultimate example of the “Do Something” theme: He showed his love through service to others.

For more information, or to register your group, visit danielsprings.com/register today!

Dr. Scott Attebery is the executive director of DiscipleGuide Church Resources. Contact him by email at scott@discipleguide.org, on Facebook: Scott Attebery or Twitter @scottattebery. Visit www.DiscipleGuide.org.



Student ministers benefit from Great Escape

By **JEFF HERRING**

Student Pastor, Oak Park Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas

DiscipleGuide
CHURCH RESOURCES

Who wouldn’t love to escape the cold of winter and spend a few days in the sun while also gaining a renewed passion and purpose for ministry?

My wife and I have been attending the Great Escape conference since it began. It is something we look forward to every year. Many would say this is because the conference takes place on a cruise ship, but that is not the primary reason. From the beginning, this conference has been focused on providing an “escape” from the overall pressures and demands of ministry. There is no better place for this to happen than on a cruise ship in the middle of the ocean. My wife and I can truly “unplug” and spend time being renewed in our passion and purpose for ministry. What we look forward to the most every year is connecting with old and new friends that are in ministry and can relate to the challenges and struggles we all face in ministry. The time we are able to spend together during the conference simply encouraging and praying for one another is without a doubt the main reason we look forward to the Great Escape conference every year.

As I listen to the speaker each year, I am always challenged, and God seems to show me just what I need to hear and why he allowed me to attend the Great Escape. Over the years, the subject of the conference has varied from foundational ministry truths to keeping your marriage a priority in the midst of a busy ministry schedule. This year’s conference emphasized very practical ways to incorporate family ministry into the culture of the church. Dr. Timothy Paul Jones shared the biblical foundation for the role of families and how the church must come alongside to equip and hold up the family unit as the primary discipler of children. I was challenged to be more intentional in equipping and challenging the parents of our church to take up their God-given role as disciple makers.

I would encourage any church leader to strongly consider attending the Great Escape conference next year. The balance of “getting away” and solid biblical teaching will provide rest for those weary in ministry, renewal of purpose for those who are feeling inadequate, and relationships with others who can relate to the life of a ministry family. We are thankful for our church that not only allows us to attend but also provides the means to make it possible. Without a doubt, this is one of the best investments our church makes in our ministry, and I would encourage churches to consider not only allowing but also providing the means for their church leaders to attend. Either way, the Great Escape is a great conference for ministry leaders, and I can’t wait for next year!

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BMA FOUNDATION

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News of America



Quitman Chamber of Commerce names Fred Morrow Clergy of the Year 2017

By MARK GOSS

On Sept. 11, 1940 a unique man was born, a man who would go on to impact lives all over Wood County and throughout the state. With his powerful testimony, dedicated life and desire to help others, he never meets a stranger and has an uncanny ability to make everyone feel welcome.

Born in Oak Grove, he was one of nine children. He graduated high school in 1959 and went on to work at Timco in Greenville. During this time, he attended barber school in Dallas and worked with his dad part-time at his shop in Quitman. He later bought a shop in Mineola where he barbered for 13 years.

Shortly after, he met a beautiful, lovely, wonderful, smart, athletic, marvelous, darling, graceful girl who could cook too! He married her on July 2, 1961. (I bet you can guess who that quote was from!)

In 1962, the Lord touched and then called him into the ministry. He was licensed and ordained at Clover Hill, Quitman. He then was called to Sand Springs, Mineola; Hubbard Chapel, Quitman; Red Springs, Tyler; Forest Hill, Quitman; Sharon, Winnsboro and finally at New Hope, Mineola



where he has served faithfully for 25 years.

While at Clover Hill Baptist Church, his first son Michael Dale made his appearance on Christmas Eve in 1962. While pastoring, he also attended Jacksonville Baptist College and some seminars, and extended courses from the Baptist Missionary Association of America.

While pastoring at Red Springs, Tyler, their second son, David Mark, was born. He enjoyed watching his two sons grow up in a tight-knit community and bless families all around. Unfortunately, David Mark passed away in 1988, survived by a daughter, Ashton.

He was also blessed to be mentored by some incredible men who allowed the Lord to speak through them and teach him throughout the years. He has always been a bi-vocational pastor: pastoring a church and working a job.

He has served as the chaplain for Bluebonnet Hospice, Heritage Hospice and is currently the chaplain for Hearts Way Hospice in Winnsboro. He has served as a trustee for the Texas Baptist Home for Children in Waxahachie as well as the Old Settlers Reunion in Quitman. He worked as the Wood County Tax Assessor/Collector for many years and was a licensed Realtor for Century 21.

In 2002 he experienced a trial like no other. His vision began to fade to where he could not see to read or drive. He was able to find wonderful doctors who did surgery and created glasses that helped him be able to determine shapes and big letters.

Being a hospice chaplain has been such a blessing to him and through him. He enjoys being able to use his abilities to help and comfort people even though he cannot see to drive or read easily. He loves that he can still do this and preach as he so loves to do.

His is a name known throughout the county for his genuine caring and his practical joking which brings heartfelt laughter throughout the room.

Quitman Chamber of Commerce is proud to name Bro. Fred Morrow Clergy of the year 2017.

Note added: This is the only time in his life he was speechless.

IT'S TIME! TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS FOR THE 2017 BMAA MEETING IN ARLINGTON, TEXAS

The 2017 session of the Baptist Missionary Association of America will meet May 1-3 at the Arlington Convention Center in Arlington, Texas.

The Committee on Arrangements has made its review and plans for the 2017 annual Association meeting. The facilities and hotels are looking forward to our meeting there. There is plenty of space for all of our meetings and lodging. We hope that you will make your reservations early. Most of the hotels can make your reservations either by phone or online, but you must identify that you are with the Baptist Missionary Association of America.

SHERATON, ARLINGTON (HEADQUARTERS HOTEL):

\$135 per night (Single & Double)
(800-325-3535)

HILTON, ARLINGTON:

\$135 per night (King & Double)
(817-640-3322)

CROWN PLAZA:

\$109 per night
(817-394-5200)

Bro. Pastor, we need your help. When the BMAA Committee on Arrangements contracts with a convention center to host our annual meeting, the rental fee is normally tied to the number of hotel rooms we expect our attendees to use during the meeting. The rental fee in Arlington is contingent upon our use of rooms blocked at the designated hotels. The rental fee will increase by the daily cost of each room not used.

The Committee on Arrangements has negotiated terms in Arlington that will allow the conference center space to be greatly reduced if we use the total number of rooms blocked at the designated hotels/motels. Please help us fill these first to cap the cost of the rental space.

Our association has had to pay extra in the past years because many of the blocked hotel rooms were not used. Please help us avoid a situation like that this year.

We appreciate your help.

Jerome Cooper
Charles Attebery
Jackie Manasco

BMAA Committee on Arrangements



A successful staff

By DR. ALLEN TILLEY

Adding church staff can be a time of celebration, but it can also be a time of great heartache for both the staff and the church. Careful planning and consideration should be given when calling staff. Uprooting a man and his family and moving them to a new location is not only expensive, but it can be heart-wrenching if it doesn't work out. Below are the answers to a recent email I received on the subject of staffing.

What order should new staff be added? After the pastor, the adding of church staff depends on the size of the church and its finances. Staff should never be added, thinking that they will attract new people who can help pay for their salaries. If I were starting from scratch, my first staff would be a worship leader, since worship helps hearts reach God. My next choice would be a youth leader. Families almost always go to a church that is prepared to minister to their children. Next, a growing church needs an administrator to take the load off the pastor. An administrator oversees the budget, the buildings, enforces policies, and acts as a human resources director. The next two positions I would call, in order, is a children's leader and then a mission's leader.

Why are job descriptions important? While experienced staff will know how to effectively lead their ministry areas, job descriptions are for both the staff and the church. Too often, church members think the staff is at their beckon call for any reason. Job descriptions help church members understand the

“Effective staff are vital to the growth of your church. Treat them that way and God will bless your church.”

duties of the staff. They also hold the staff accountable and serve as a benchmark when considering pay raises or promotions.

What characteristics are necessary? Depending on the size, location, and makeup of your church, the level of education or experience the church requires will vary. Things that I look for include a team spirit, a growing walk with Christ, one who

tithes, humility, and someone who is loyal to the pastor. On a personal note, I believe the pastor should have the ability to hire and fire staff for cause. Unlike church members who are volunteers, staff need to know they are accountable to the pastor.

How can we keep our staff? Turnover in staff can be avoided by making your staff feel appreciated. Encourage your church to write them cards of appreciation. Remember their birthdays and the birthdays of their families. Take them out to lunch or dinner often. Celebrate their anniversaries with the church by giving them praise and gifts. At Christmas, give them offerings or a bonus. Provide their health insurance. Most of all, keep their compensation packages competitive with other churches.

Effective staff are vital to the growth of your church. Treat them that way and God will bless your church. Mistreat your staff and word will soon spread, preventing qualified staff from ever considering your church.

Dr. Allen Tilley is pastor of First Baptist Church of Carthage, Texas. He has over 30 years of pastoral experience, and God has continually blessed his ministry with dynamic spiritual and numerical growth. Contact him at allen@firstbaptistcarthage.com.



REVIVAL

Woodland Missionary Baptist Church, Gilmer, Texas

April 10-14, 2017

Services begin at 7 pm, nightly

Messages by:

Monday: Jim Crump • Tuesday: Jayson Bob Coker • Wednesday: The Hamptons

Thursday: Jack Hoffpauir • Friday: Hugh Casey

The church is located off SH 300 at 6049 FM 3358. Pastor is David Mayhan.

Everyone is welcome.

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The idol of success

By LARRY BARKER

How do you determine greatness or success? The world has a different definition than the Word of God gives to us. American culture wants us to believe that it is all about how big our ministries are and how many attend on Sunday mornings. At a recent men's prayer breakfast the pastor who spoke said, "The world judges greatness by how many people serve us. Jesus judges greatness by how many people we serve." The drive to be great at something can cause us to lose sight of what really matters if we are not very careful!

We can allow the idol of success to slip in and dominate our thinking and our motives. Have you ever noticed how some can turn every conversation into a competition? If we have a had a major surgery and share about it's difficulties invariably there is someone whose horror story is much worse than ours. Unfortunately, we want the conversation focused on us more than we are concerned about the other individual's troubles. If the idol of success begins to control us then we will desire for every conversation to revolve around ourselves.

In *Gaining by Losing*, J.D. Greear says, "Ministry, you see, is a great place for guys with the idol of success to hide, because we can mask our selfish ambition in the cloak of doing great things for God." Meditating on this statement has caused me to prayerfully consider if my prayer is truly that of John the Baptist, "He must increase and I must decrease." We must be willing to face the reality that it is not only athletes, movie stars, and other celebrities who can struggle with their egos. Are we using people to build our churches or are we using our churches to build up people?

All of us have seen individuals who blow their own horns a little too much. Have we not also been guilty of that a time or two? We enjoy pointing out that our church is better than your church because of the name we have chosen, the style of music we use, or the number of services and programs that we have. Or we simply imply that another Christian is not as spiritual as we are because of how we follow and serve Christ. We may not openly say it, but we feel like the Pharisee of old, "God, I thank you that I'm not like other people!"

The humble love serving the Lord and they do not do it to be noticed. They also do not care who gets the credit

as long as Jesus is glorified. In *Uncommon Life Daily Challenge*, Tony Dungy says, "Have you caught yourself saying or doing something with an intentional 'look at me' attitude? It can happen to anyone. And so can falling flat on your face and eating humble pie. A sign of spiritual maturity of a person who is truly seeking God has always been and always will be humility. Isaiah 42:8, "I am Yahweh, that is my name; I will not give my glory to another."

Could this be why we see other churches as our competition? We have to advertise and market ourselves for those interested in the way we approach ministry. Could this be why most church growth is by other church members changing churches and all we are doing is reshuffling those who already know Christ? With only 17 percent of the population in church on any given Sunday should we not be looking to reach the unchurched and those who are far from God? Matt. 23:12 says, "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

Here are some suggestions to defeat the idol of success that can raise its ugly head in our hearts.

First, pray for your church to experience revival. Ask God to burden your hearts for the lost. Everyone who is a child of God has a grace story that needs to be shared with others. Tony Dungy says it this way, "God is the author of our platform, and He gives us the privilege of using it to influence others." You may not have the platform of being a Super Bowl winning head coach but that doesn't mean there is not someone who needs to hear your story of grace.

Second, ask God to send revival to the other churches in your city. Pray that every church will get right with Him and His book and obey His Word completely. Ask God to raise up spiritual leaders in every congregation to call their members to holiness and convict the members of their unconfessed sin. It takes all kinds of churches to



reach all kinds of people and if a church is preaching the truth we should be for them. Do not focus on getting more members but focus on what Jesus said, "I have come to seek and to save that which is lost."

Third, be willing to love people until they get it. Jesus challenges us in John 13:34-35 to love others just as He has loved us. Think about people in your circle of influence who would benefit from you loving them the same way Jesus has loved you. Think about that person who is difficult to get along with at work. Think about that neighbor who has a way of pushing your button. Picture that person right now who honestly does not deserve your love. What would happen if you committed to love that person until they experienced the love of God in their own life?

Tony Dungy shares that his high school football coach said, "Talent is God-given—be thankful. Praise is man-given—be humble. Conceit is self-given—be careful." Be careful of allowing "success" to become your idol. It can cause you to be more interested in "your" kingdom than His kingdom.

Larry Barker is the pastor of Cornerstone, Jacksonville. He also serves as the operations director for North American Missions. For more information or to contact him, visit www.bmamissions.org.



BMA TEXAS

MISSIONS

Your Church's Mission Movement in Texas



By HEITH MITCHELL

A WORD FROM YOUR MISSION OFFICE

Satan doesn't sit idle when ground is taken that he controlled. Every planter can attest to that and we at the mission office can too. The spiritual warfare has been apparent this month. "Greater is He that is in us" though and God's power and grace have been equally apparent. It continues to be a joy to serve your missionaries and to get to know each of you and your churches. I have some open dates in the next few months and would love to share with your church about your Texas Mission Movement.

A WORD FROM YOUR MISSIONARIES ARNULFO MALDONADO— TEXAS HISPANIC MISSION COORDINATOR

We are growing and with that comes growing pains. One is a lack of traveling expenses to move forward and provide the message of hope all over Texas to the Spanish speaking communities. We are meeting with a second church in Mesquite, Texas to see the possibility of starting a Hispanic group there at Calvary First, Mesquite. We have traveled to the Lubbock area and have three different churches requesting Spanish speaking groups. Thank you Jesus and please send some funds in to accomplish the need. Amen



▲ Arnulfo Maldonado

MATTHEW PRATHER— THE BRIDGE MISSION, MIDLOTHIAN/WAXAHACHIE

It is hard to believe how fast this year is going. We are busy meeting new people in many different ways. We have adopted a local Elementary school where we are building relationships with the teachers and staff. In the short time we have been doing this it is great to see the school reach out to us when they have a need. Continue to pray for this relationship. We have a couple of service opportunities this coming month to allow us to show the love of Christ to others and build relationships. We continue to have monthly Sneak Peek Services as we move toward launching a new church in the near future. Continue to pray for us a location that we can meet in long term. We have met in multiple locations in the past five months and would love to find a permanent location. Thank you for your continued support and prayers.



▲ Matthew Prather

TOBY GOODMAN— INTERN, JACKSONVILLE

These are my thoughts on this passage, and what I gather in my time in life of waiting and stretching.

James 1:2-4 "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." The "temptation" mentioned here is not a sin temptation, but rather hard times. Trials, or "tough times." This, I believe is what God is allowing me to go through in my life.

Many of you are the same way. Wondering, "Why God?" But don't worry, look at the rest of the passage, and you'll see that you'll gain patience and wanting nothing. This is part having trust, becoming like Christ. Just hang in there and keep obeying God's commands.

RICK SYDNOR— LIFE CHANGE MISSION, LINDALE

During the month of February, Life Change Fellowship hosted a Valentine Dinner Worship. Dr. Ron Wells with Centrepoint Ministry came and spoke about marriage and communication. We also held two events at Brookshires Grocery store. We handed out flyers and cookies about our church plant and upcoming events. Great time talking to people.



▲ Toby Goodman



▲ Rick Sydnor

BRANDON DURHAM— REDEEMER'S LOVE MISSION, HOUSTON

10,000 square feet! That's the size of our new space; bigger than regulation two basketball courts! Our hearts are filled with gratitude and excitement as we move in March 12. God dropped this blessing right into our laps! By His grace, we've been bursting at the seams in our living room (30+), and were days away from pulling the trigger on another meeting space when Houston's First Baptist reached out, expressing an interest in having a local church presence in their Outreach Center (in our neighborhood)! We really feel the weight of responsibility entrusted to us with this new space, and desire to steward it for God's redemptive purpose. Pray for us this month as we launch three new community groups and continue to strive



towards our two BIG goals of recruiting 40 "launch team" members and establishing six total community groups by August 2017. Thank you!

CLIFF ROBERTSON— INTERN, LAKE JACKSON

Hi! As we prepare to meet the public in a very intentional way (walking through RV Parks), we are excited and need your prayer. We begin a service on Monday nights this next week that are small but exciting. Pray for the Carpenter's House!



▲ Cliff Robertson

CHRISTIAN MARTINEZ— INTERN, JACKSONVILLE

I remember Larry Barker's words on spending some time to work on ministry and not only in ministry. Sometimes we need to stop for a moment with the busyness of everyday ministry and analyze what is going well, what we can do better, and the steps to follow. We also need to constantly meditate on God's purpose according to His revealed Word. I need to remind myself that this is not my plan. God already has a plan to save sinners and build His church for His glory. He tells us in His word how His church is to relate to one another and to outsiders in order to represent Him. I am learning to be a better student of His word in order to be more obedient and less innovating when it comes to lead His church. After all He is the good Shepherd who knows the best for His sheep.



▲ Christian Martinez

JOHN HARRIS— FOUNDATIONS COMMUNITY MISSION, BENBROOK

Thank you for praying for us, and for encouraging us this month! We are thankful for the challenges we have faced, as those challenges bring us into contact with people, and give us a chance to grow in living by faith. Pray that God prepares hearts to hear the gospel and follow Him, and that we are able to be faithful witnesses and disciple-makers! We love you all!



▲ John Harris

WILL HUTCHINSON— RESONATE COMMUNITY MISSION, HUTTO

Life can be difficult and harsh at times. We all know this and we have seasons in our lives like this. As Christians we

BMA TEXAS MISSIONS continued on p. 11

JACKSONVILLE COLLEGE Homecoming



During Homecoming weekend at Jacksonville College, Sherry Decker, president of the Texas Women's Missionary Auxiliary (WMA), posed for a picture with the College's new Kubota tractor. The tractor was last year's Texas WMA project, and it arrived in time for Homecoming. We are very grateful to the WMA and the alumni who helped raise the money for this much needed vehicle.



After reading an article in the Baptist Progress about Jacksonville College's need for a cargo trailer, Danny Holifield realized he could meet that need. Danny works as a financial advisor for Edward Jones in Colleyville, and he consulted the investment company about the need. The company agreed to partner with him to purchase the trailer, and Bro. Holifield towed the new vehicle to Homecoming. The trailer will be used by the choir and golf team to carry equipment.

CAFETERIA REQUEST

Jacksonville College needs a commercial gas or electric convection oven for the cafeteria to better meet the needs of the students and employees. For more information, contact Dr. Blanton Feaster, Vice President for Executive Affairs, at (903)586-2528 or bfeaster@jacksonville-college.edu. Please pray about meeting this need.

UPCOMING EVENTS



THIS IS MY STORY, THIS IS MY SONG

An Evening with Fanny Crosby
Written and performed by Shellie O'Neal
March 28 in the Mary S. Lewis Theater

JAGUAR DAY ACROSS TEXAS

Annual Offering for Jacksonville College
Sunday, May 7

Remember to pray for Jacksonville College to be debt free by 2020.

Special Appeal to BMA Churches Concerning BMA of Texas Building Roof

The roof on the BMA of Texas building is in need of replacement. A bid of \$27,422 has been received to replace the roof. We are asking that BMA churches, groups, classes and individuals consider giving to this cause. Offerings may be sent to BMA of Texas, P.O. Box 73, Waxahachie, Texas 75168.

featured speaker
DIANE MORRIS
"DESTINATION: GOD'S WILL"
Saturday, April 22, 2017
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

**LAKE HIGHLANDS BAPTIST CHURCH
LADIES RENEWAL CONFERENCE**
1500 College Street • Sulphur Springs, TX 75482 • 903-885-9188
donnyberry65@verizon.net

Teaching sessions and catered lunch.
This will be a time of spiritual renewal with fun and fellowship with our sisters in Christ.

Bring a friend! We hope to see you there.

NO NURSERY WILL BE PROVIDED

Registration Coupon

Send to Lake Highlands Baptist Church, PO Box 441, Sulphur Springs, TX 75483, along with check for \$15.00 before April 14th. After that date, cost will be \$20.00

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY/STATE/ZIP _____ TELEPHONE # _____
HOME CHURCH _____
E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

An expression of everlasting love

Many of our friends choose to honor or remember a family member, a friend or an associate with a gift for the children of the Baptist Home. Texas Baptist Home, in turn, notifies the appropriate person. Listed in capital letters are those honored or remembered from Feb. 1, 2017 – Feb. 28, 2017.

ENDOWMENTS

MYRA STOKES: Mr. Bill Stokes

E ANN PACE: Karl & Martha Pace

BETTY CAROL BASS TRUST

HONORARIUMS

ALL TEXAS BAPTIST HOME CHILDREN: Earlene Crenshaw

MEMORIALS

WALTER BECKER: Dennis & Ilona Myrice

MAURINE BURKHALTER: Westside Baptist Church, Nacogdoches

M.L. BURTON: David & Sue Stanley

JOHNIE D. CHENAULT: CBC Adult 3 Class; Robert & Jo Ann Bass

NANNETTE COX: Calvary Baptist Church, Midlothian

ANNA JEANICE DOSHIER: Mrs. Bob Thomman

MRS. GERRY DUMAS: Glenn Pool

SHIRLEY EARL: Eunice Class at South Park Baptist Church

MARTHA FRANK: Patsy Bishop

MARY JOYCE GARNER: Allye Fuller and Family

HEATH: Jimmy Ray & Cynthia Green

ROY GENE HEIEN: Billie Sullivan

TROY HOPKINS: Calvary Baptist Church, Midlothian

JOE MAX JOHNSON: Leora Johnson

BRANDT JONES: Charles & Charlotte Johnson; Rosewood Baptist Church

GERRY LANGFORD: Fifth Street Baptist Church, Levelland

ROY LEWIS: Linda Lewis

NOLAN LONG: Jerry Null

EATHEL MITCHELL: Charles & Charlotte Johnson; Rosewood Baptist Church

MRS. DEAN JONES NOLAN: Mary Ann Wylie Ins Agency

SCOTT SEETON: David & Sue Stanley

MARGARET SHICK: Concha Rouse

KENT TRAINHAM: Travis & Brenda Floyd

FRANK WATERS: Jerry Null



Texas Baptist Home recognizes Social Work Month

By **JENNIFER WALKER**

Texas Baptist Home for Children

If you are into basketball, then you are ready for March to be here. Most people know that March means March madness, where colleges compete for the basketball championship. But what some people might not know is that March also is Social Work Month. Social Work Month was established in 1963 and is an opportunity for social workers to spotlight their profession. At Texas Baptist Home, we consider our case workers to be the best social workers around. They work hard every day for Texas Baptist Home's children and families. Here are some testimonies of the TBH case workers favorite memories working at TBH and what makes their job worth it.

"Witnessing the adoption of 5 siblings getting adopted together makes my job worth it."

"Now that I have been in the field for several years, I know this is what I was meant to do. Seeing hurting children heal and families made whole (through either reunification with their biological family or adoption) is such an honor to be a small part of. I feel it is my calling and it is such fulfilling work!"

"Crisis pregnancy has been on my heart since high school.

Now I am fortunate to work with women in crisis pregnancy and encourage them to use their experience to better their lives, as well as facilitate a stable and loving home life for a child and help adoptive parents to expand their families."

"I wanted to get into social work because I know from experience the hope that one person and one small positive seed planted in a child can bring to their lives. If I can do or say something that will give a child or parent a glimpse at their importance and worth, even without seeing a change, I can at least have faith that the seed has a chance at growing."

"It has increased my faith knowing that He is working in the lives of people and He is in the business of redeeming broken situations and making them beautiful for His glory. And, by His grace alone, He has given me a front row to witness this!"

These are just some of the stories from case workers at Texas Baptist Home. During the month of March, will you continue to remember and pray for the lives that the Lord brings through TBH and the case workers who work tirelessly to continue to serve families and children for the Glory of God.

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BMA Texas Missions cont.

know who we can lean on and where to go for help. Living in a culture like ours where church is a F-O-U-R letter word people have nowhere to turn. This year we are seeing men torn apart by their jobs and families are crumbling. Please pray with us that we can be an influence in



▲ Will Hutchinson

these men's lives. Pray that God will direct our speech and guide our steps. People are hurting and we have a God that will be with them. Thanks for your support.

the Porter/New Caney area. We ask that you partner with us in prayer asking God to send forth at least four new families to serve alongside of us as co-laborers in this field. If you are interested in relocating and seeking a challenge in doing mission work please contact us.

PRAYER REQUESTS FROM THE FIELD

■ Arnulfo Maldonado has seen some personal challenges this month with wind damage to his house and a son in a wreck. Let's lift him up. Also pray for God's financial provision to help with the ever expanding ministry he is in the midst of.

■ David Smart the Associate at The Bridge Mission in Midlothian/Waxahachie is about to be a dad. Pray for He and his wife Bethany.

■ Pray for new families reached at The Church at Valley Ranch Mission. They are specifically praying for four new families. Gary and Rhonda Southard are currently moving to better connect with the Valley Ranch Community.

■ Rick Sydnor with LifeChange Fellowship Mission asks that you pray for opportunities and for the energy to make the most of them.

■ Interns Toby Goodman and Christian Martinez are seeking God's direction about where they should start a church.

■ Brandon and Redeemer's Love ask us to pray for Wisdom on organizational aspects (bringing order and sustainability to the chaos.) More workers as we strive to reach our goal of 40 launch team members, and 6 community Groups.

■ Jaime Garcia is beginning his new mission this week in partnership with Shiloh Rd. Baptist Church in Mesquite.

■ Resonate Mission in Hutto is looking to add an associate missionary.

■ The Bridge Mission in Midlothian/Waxahachie is searching for a long term place to meet. They also are praying for three new families on their launch team.

■ Pray that the funds keep up with the goal of 16 new Texas Missions at a time and a hispanic work along side every BMA church that is burdened and willing.

■ Seminary has started back for Arnulfo, Christian, and Toby.

■ The Refuge Church in Terrell, Journey Community Church in Allen, and Community Life Church in Lewisville are into there third month of self support.

■ John Harris of Foundation Community Mission in Benbrook is currently trying to sell his house. They are beginning small groups and discipleship training.

■ Neptaly Molina from the Nacogdoches Mission is waiting on his Religious Work Visa approval.

■ Intern Cliff Robertson is meeting regularly with a growing team preparing to start a church in Lake Jackson in April. Cliff asks, "Pray that the right people continue to come to the leadership team and that the Holy Spirit opens the heart of all we reach out to and that many would come to Christ."

■ Intern Christian Martinez asks prayer for: my expecting wife and baby. For present ministry. For God to raise a pastor. For those who are new in the faith. For intentional discipleship in the church. For future ministry. Direction and for church planting partner.

PRAISE REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

■ Redeemer's Love Mission has outgrown their present meeting place and have found a great building to rent. They are moving in this week.

■ John Harris' house is currently under contract.



GARY SOUTHARD— THE CHURCH AT VALLEY RANCH MISSION, NEW CANEY

God has blessed us by sending a worship leader to aid in our Sunday service. His name is Elias Segovia from Spring. Rhonda and I have sold our home and we are moving into the Valley Ranch area. We know this will aid in the growth and development of the mission work. We continue to covet your prayers and support as we move forward with your BMA of Texas mission in



Obituaries

JOHNNIE L. CROCKER

The Celebration of Life service for Brother Johnnie L. Crocker, age 96, was held at the Sand Prairie Baptist Church in Normangee Feb. 2, 2017. Bros. Larry Andrews, Olan Weaver & Fred Morrow officiated and interment followed in the Willowhole Cemetery. Brother Crocker pastored the Sand Prairie Baptist Church for approximately 47 years. To his delight, he led services in his beloved church the day prior to his death. He was born Oct. 16, 1920 in the Oak Grove Community, Madison County and went to be with his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on Jan. 30, 2017. Brother Crocker was a veteran of World War II serving in the Army from 1942 to 1945 in both Africa and Italy. He proudly was a distinguished member of the "Greatest Generation". After the war, he was employed as a heavy equipment operator building roads. In 1952, he surrendered to God's calling him to preach and was ordained as a minister of the gospel. He then followed Apostle Paul's example, courageously and faithfully



serving as a "bi-vocational preacher." Throughout his ministry, he not only worked in the road construction industry, he later owned his own business pouring concrete and striping parking lots, in which he actively continued until age 92. He lived a hard-working frugal life, pastoring numerous churches. Brother Crocker was dedicated to God, his family, his fellow man and his work.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John D. & Violet (Phallen) Crocker; wife, Mattie Crocker; sons, Jerry Crocker & Royce Hudson; grandsons, Tim & Bill Hudson and brothers, J.D., Jack, Otis, Clifton & James. Surviving family members include daughters, Joyce M. Coleman (Jay C.) of North Zulch and Judy Nickerson (Vance) of Gladewater; daughters-in-law, Erin Crocker of Crowley and Myda Hudson of Rancho Cordova, California; sister, Winnie Fay Gunnels of Huntsville and grandchildren, Bob Hudson, Dan Hudson, Erin Coble, Amy Barzyk, Jeri Lyn Crocker, Troy Coleman, Lezli Montoya & Kristen Tyson. Johnnie is also survived by numerous great grandchildren and great, great grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, the family of Bro. Johnnie Crocker requests that memorial donations be made to the Sand Prairie Baptist Church.



auxiliaries

Serving Christ in GMA

By SHARON COLE

The Girls' Missionary Auxiliary is a church-sponsored missions organization for girls in churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of America. A part of the general auxiliary program of each local church is sponsored by the Women's Missionary Auxiliary.

What has happened to GMA? Are we too busy with other things? Have girls found more exciting things to do in the world? Is it the lack of enthusiasm on the counselors' part? Do we not have ladies willing to take on the challenge of teaching? What is the answer? Have we not impressed upon our girls the importance of learning God's Word and the importance of the church?

The first lessons are about salvation which is the most important. Then they learn about our missionaries, how to cooperate and get along with others, how to be an officer and conduct a business meeting; how to be a part of a team and learn from each other. And there is so much more that GMA does to develop a girl's maturity emotionally, physically and spiritually. The training girls receive help them grow up feeling good about themselves and others.

Yes, the Forward Step Program is intense and there are very long scriptures to memorize, but the program as a whole develops a knowledge of scripture, develops a prayer life and a closer walk with God and develops character like no other program can. Someone posed the question once, "How does one eat an elephant?" The answer is, 'one bite at a time.' When you look at all that is required in each Forward Step, it seems like a lot that can't possibly be done in the time frame suggested. But, each thing is accomplished one 'bite' or step at a time. And in the end, there is a reward for all the hard work.

When the GMA program was developed many years ago, there were ladies who had a vision and a desire to teach girls from 4th grade through 12th grade all the above mentioned things and so much more. But through the years there have been less and less who were motivated. Then one by one, churches began to drop the program for whatever reason; girls grow up and there are fewer to take their place; other programs with less requirements seem more interesting; and many other reasons could be named.

The Miss/Jr Miss GMA program was developed to encourage and inspire girls to achieve even higher goals and be rewarded with that title. It began on the local level, then went to District, State and then National GMA. The process of choosing girls to represent each level is difficult for the WMA ladies given the task of being on the Reviewing

“The Miss/Jr Miss GMA program was developed to encourage and inspire girls to achieve even higher goals and be rewarded with that title.”

Counsel. They have to interview each girl, ask specific questions and judge each girl on their accomplishments and personal presentation. Sadly, in all the BMA churches of Texas, there is only one girl willing to participate in the Miss/Jr Miss Program this year on the state level. She is Autumn Brown from Oak Grove, Canton, Van Zandt District for Jr. Miss GMA. There will be no Miss GMA. No girl 10th grade or above is participating.

DISTRICT NEWS

The Polk County District WMA met with the First Baptist Church of Livingston, Thursday, Jan. 19, 2017. Kylie and Daniel McLendon brought the special music singing with guitar accompaniment four old familiar hymns. Our first guest speaker, Linda Dill, spoke on the AIM Ministries at the Polunsky Prison Unit. AIM stands for Advancing Inmate Ministries. She stated that, "It was no longer about me, but God training men to be leaders in their families, their churches, and their country. These Christian inmates are doing a great work in the prison and have a great need for a chapel." She and her husband are on the Board to build a chapel at Polunsky and asked us to join in prayer for the chapel. She distributed a brochure explaining the AIM Ministries and said, "The only true rehab for prisoners is Jesus Christ." Our second speaker, Barbara Benton, gave an update on the Center of Life in Livingston, which has moved into a new building. She stated they are adding counseling on how to spend wages correctly and giving help in job training. She stated there is a great need for volunteer workers to help in this ministry.

NATIONAL WMA

The National WMA began in 1953 with a vision of supporting missions and/or missions related ministries. God has blessed the Women's Missionary Auxiliary on all levels: local, district and state and national with ladies who have had a desire for spreading the gospel throughout their communities, state, nation and the world. It has been said that missions begins at home: in the local church. It actually began with the first church in Jerusalem, as told in Acts 1:14: "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers." All through the Bible women were involved in benevolence and hospitality and taking care of the temple. They probably weren't called WMA, but still had the same focus and desires as we do today.

The National WMA meeting this year is May 2 in Arlington, Texas at the Arlington Convention Center. It will be a very different schedule to help empower you and your unique needs. The theme for this year's meeting is: "Grace Wins." The meeting begins with registration from 8:45 a.m. to 9 a.m. Between 10 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. there will be five Break-out sessions with different topics from which to choose. Each lasts 10 minutes on how God's Grace helps you win in the areas of Minister's Families; Working with Youth; Through Sickness; In Missions Fields; and In Your Golden Years. Then at 10:30 a.m. you will be blessed with a chalk-talk by Shirley Hoffpauir. A nursery will be provided from birth to 1st grade. Everyone needing a nursery must register with Jo Strong before April 12. The child must have their own supplies for a four hour stay: a mat to sleep on, snacks, toys to play with, etc. The workers have been through background check and certified nursery workers. You must tell the name and age of the child when you register. The room will be M16 at the convention center. Contact Jo Strong at Jokenstrong@juno.com, or 817-480-0888. For more information about the meeting contact: Charlotte Johnson, National WMA 2nd Vice President, chj1054@etex.net or 903-790-1385. The Project for the year has been Computers for BMA schools in India. Send offerings for this project to Pat Duncan, P.O. Box 30, Hardy, AR 72542.

Sharon Cole is the editor for the Texas WMA. Contact her at S9Co@aol.com. For more information on the Texas WMA, visit www.texaswma.com.



EVENTS

2017 SESSION OF THE BMA OF AMERICA

DATE: May 1-3, 2017

PLACE: Arlington Convention Center, Arlington, Texas

HEADQUARTERS HOTEL: Sheraton, Arlington, Texas

SOAR

DATE: July 5-7, 2017

PLACE: Gaylord Texan Hotel, Grapevine, Texas

SENIOR ADULT CONFERENCE

DATE: November 13-15, 2017

PLACE: Branson Hilton Convention Center, Branson, Missouri

BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION 117TH ANNUAL SESSION

DATE: November 14-15, 2017

PLACE: New Harmony Baptist Church, Tyler, Texas

BIBLE CONFERENCE

Security Calvary Baptist Church, 5442 S. Duck Creek Road, Cleveland, Tex. is hosting a one day Bible Conference on April 22, 10:00 Am-3:00 PM. We invite all surrounding community churches to join us for this day of worship and fellowship. There are many guest speakers and singers. Lunch is provided. For more information call Pastor George Drodgy at 713-320-0695.

pastor & staff changes

BILLY SHEETS has resigned as associate pastor of Farley Street, Waxahachie to become pastor of Greenpond, Como.

MARK BRADBERRY has resigned as pastor of Clover Hill, Quitman to become the new pastor of New Bethlehem, Cut and Shoot.

DAVID L. COOK is the new pastor of Myrtle Springs, Quitman.

TURNER HARPER is the new youth minister of First, Rice.

PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

AVAILABLE MINISTER

ROGER MANNING is available for pulpit supply, interim pastor duties, or a permanent call as Senior or Associate Pastor. He is ordained and has over nine years of preaching experience. Resume and past sermons are available at www.rogermanning.com. Roger lives in Waxahachie and can be reached at roger@rogermanning.com or at 402-510-3019.

SCOTT SCHULLE is available to serve as a bivocational pastor. He is a member of First, Maydelle. Contact him at 903-945-0058 or 903-795-3886.

AVAILABLE POSITIONS

PASTOR—Ashmore, Loop is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Tom Ingle, HCR 1, Box 23, Loop, Texas 79342, ingle@scoggindickey.com or call 806-928-8843. ^{7/17}

PASTOR—Shawnee Prairie, Huntington is seeking a bivocational pastor. Send resume to Shawnee Prairie Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1480, Huntington, Texas 75949 or shawneeprairiechurch@gmail.com. ^{4/17}

PASTOR—Nat, Cushing is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Nat Baptist Church, ATTN: David Rideout, P.O. Box 630884, Nacogdoches, Texas 75963, or call 936-569-9983 for more information. ^{3/17}

PASTOR—New Bethlehem, Cut and Shoot is seeking a pastor. Send resume to George Burks, 5992 Forest Dr., Cleveland, Texas 77328, cherylburks@sbcglobal.net or call 281-659-1970. ^{2/17}

PASTOR—Hill Creek, Whitehouse is seeking a pastor. Send resume and recorded sermon to Hill Creek Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 1287, Whitehouse, Texas 75791.

PASTOR—Lost Prairie, Groesbeck is seeking a bivocational pastor. Send resume to 514 FM 3371, Groesbeck, Texas 76642. ^{TFN}

PASTOR—Enon, lola is seeking a bivocational pastor. Parsonage available. For information, call 281-731-7850. ^{TFN}

Church news

ROSEWOOD, GILMER held a marriage seminar Feb. 10-11. A total of 40 young couples from the church family participated in the family enrichment event. Alan Rogers, adult pastor at The Avenue Church in Waxahachie, was the facilitator and leader of the conference. He specializes in the area of family counseling and conducts "Celebrate Recovery" at The Avenue. In the first night's session, the participants went through a variety of activities to identify strengths and weaknesses of their spousal relationships. A formal, candlelight dinner with individual tables for the couples was held on Saturday evening. The "more mature" couples and singles from the church family acted as waiters and waitresses for the others. The older youth provided child care for the younger kids. After dinner, the couples retreated to the worship center which was decorated with a wedding arch on stage. After an encouraging address to "never take your spouse and family for granted," Bro. Rogers and his wife Suzanne led the married pairs in a recommitment of their marriage vows to each other.

Churches in review

FEBRUARY 12, 2017

CHURCH	SS	WORSHIP	ADDITIONS
Antioch, Gilmer	74	115	
First, Blooming Grove	224		1 by baptism
First, Omen	29	84	
First, Palmer	48	83	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	19	43	
Jackson, Joaquin	67	134	
New Harmony, Tyler	305	408	1 by baptism
New Hope, Mineola	66	116	
Olde Tyme, White Oak		61	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	41	51	
Pine Brook, Tyler	34	66	
Piney Creek, Kennard	10	17	
Rosewood, Gilmer	141	265	3 by baptism
Security Calvary, Cleveland	25	63	
Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill	16	20	

FEBRUARY 20, 2017

CHURCH	SS	WORSHIP	ADDITIONS
Anthony Drive, Ennis	58	108	
First, Blooming Grove	197		
First, Palmer	45	65	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	14	34	
Jackson, Joaquin	61	116	
Little Flock, Lufkin	55	60	
Little Mound, Big Sandy	39	44	
Merriman Hills, Sherman	17	28	
New Harmony, Tyler	277	324	
Olde Tyme, White Oak		63	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	43	57	
Pine Brook, Tyler	30	52	2 by baptism
Rosewood, Gilmer	144	259	2 by baptism
Security Calvary, Cleveland	34	48	1 by statement

FEBRUARY 27, 2017

CHURCH	SS	WORSHIP	ADDITIONS
Anthony Drive, Ennis	57	107	
First, Blooming Grove	216		
First, Omen	30	73	1 by baptism
First, Palmer	54	73	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	19	40	
Jackson, Joaquin	72	132	
Little Flock, Lufkin	50	85	
Merriman Hills, Sherman	15	24	
New Hope, Mineola	49	97	1 by statement
Olde Tyme, White Oak		52	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	42	49	
Pine Brook, Tyler	31	57	
Rosewood, Gilmer	125	267	
Security Calvary, Cleveland	26	49	

MARCH 5, 2017

CHURCH	SS	WORSHIP	ADDITIONS
Anthony Drive, Ennis	55	155	2 by baptism
First, Blooming Grove	210		1 by baptism
First, Omen	40	82	
First, Palmer	61	80	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	19	38	
Jackson, Joaquin	71	133	
Little Flock, Lufkin	85	108	
New Hope, Mineola	45	88	
Oak Hill, Gilmer		57	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	37	47	
Pine Brook, Tyler	31	48	
Rosewood, Gilmer	144	238	
Security Calvary, Cleveland	27	58	
Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill	16	19	

Sunday School Lessons

Capturing Jericho

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: April 2, 2017

TEXT: Joshua 6:1-21

GOD STRIKES FEAR IN THE ENEMY— VERSE 1

The inhabitants of Jericho had heard the word from near and far of the victories the Israelites had experienced. They were fearful enough to wall themselves in.

GOD IS ALREADY THE VICTOR— VERSE 2

God has already given Jericho over to Israel - all they had to do was to march in and claim it. Not only the political leadership, but the army. Matthew Henry notes, "God resolves Israel shall be its (Jericho's) master. . .no warlike preparations

were to be made." The event was a complete act of faith on the part of God's people, and totally the work of God.

GOD CHOOSES A MOST UNLIKELY BATTLE PLAN— VERSE 3

Just march around the city one time for six days. The priests bear the Ark of the Covenant out front, which is the symbol of the presence of God. No evil empire can withstand the onslaught of a godly nation, totally given to the marching orders of a holy God.

GOD ORDERS THE SOUND OF VICTORY— VERSE 8, 9 & 13

The blasting of the trumpets are a symbol of the everlasting gospel which proclaim victory and liberty.

GOD HAS EXPLICIT ORDERS FOR HIS ARMY TO FOLLOW— VERSE 10

They were not to shout, nor utter a word until the exact time ordered of God. Sometimes impatience overtakes God's people, and they seek to do His bidding on their own terms and schedule.

APPLICATION

We will experience victory in life's conquests, as we follow God's directions exactly. God works His plans in His own time, in His own way, and in accordance to His will. Not only that, God prepares the way for His children, working out all the details. All we must do is be obedient and available to Him.

Defeat at Ai

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: April 9, 2017

TEXT: Joshua 7:1-26

1. OBEDIENCE TO GOD BRINGS VICTORY AND JOY.

The overwhelming victory over Jericho by the Israelites as we studied last week was brought about by the people being strictly and faithfully obedient toward God's battle plan for them.

2. ONE MAN'S SIN BRINGS REPROACH AND DEFEAT UPON ALL THE PEOPLE:

Why? Were the others not innocent? John Wesley casts an interesting slant. "All were punished for their own sin, whereof each had a sufficient proportion. But God took this occasion to inflict the punishment (of Achan) upon the society, partly because divers of them might be guilty of this sin, either by coveting what he (Achan) actually did, or by concealing his fault, which it is probable could not be unknown to others; or not sorrowing for it and endeavoring to purge themselves from it."

3. WHAT IS THE MESSAGE TO US TODAY?

Secret sin becomes revealed: Numbers 32:23 "...ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out."

Secret sin in the camp brings reproach to the whole. God the Father impresses upon the children of Israel, and the message resonates with us today, of the seriousness of sin.

Secret sin brought defeat to Israelites. They were devastated from the conquest of Ai. Is it not ironic that Rahab, a prostitute, along with her family, were the only ones spared in the conquest of Jericho - because she was obedient to the Lord in secretly harboring the spies. Achan, on the other hand, who was a warrior in the battle of Jericho, who, alone, brought defeat on Israel by harboring "the accursed" thing." It was not the immorality of the "accursed thing" itself, but the blatant disobedience of Achan when the Lord emphatically stated that no spoils were to be retained by the Israelite Army with the exception of those things which were already sanctified to the Lord.

Achan's sin serves as a wake up call to us today. Secret sin in the church will one day be revealed and will hurt, if not devastate the fellowship. Paul told the Corinthians "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" 1 Corinthians 5:6

Paul Gauntt is the pastor of First, Palmer. He served for a number of years as the BMA of Texas Department of Church Ministries director. He has served several churches as pastor, and is a correspondent and featured article writer for Baptist Progress. Contact him at pop.gauntt@gmail.com.



SUNBEAM Information

All Sunbeam material is available on the Sunbeam web site (sunbeams-bmaa.net) to download for free. Visuals for each step are available in black and white and in color.

Updates are also available for the Flicker, Ray 1, Ray 2 and Beam 2 steps. Beam1 and Beacon step updates will be available at a later date.

Sashes and badges can be ordered from me at jaslaminack@cox.net or by phone 870-543-9640. The cost for sashes is \$9.60 each and the cost for a set of badges is \$13.24.

Sunbeam workshops will be taught at GMA Camp at Daniel Springs Encampment in Gary, Texas, June 14 & 15, 2017. We welcome you to attend to learn more about the Sunbeam program and our updates.

Please contact me if you need assistance in any area of teaching Sunbeams. This material is an excellent tool to use to teach boys and girls the Word of God. Please pray for Sunbeam counselors as they teach children and for the salvation of these students.

Sherry Laminack
National Sunbeam Promoter
jaslaminack@cox.net
870-543-9640

Sunday School Lessons

Renewing the covenant

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: April 16, 2017

TEXT: Joshua 8:30-35

GOD GIVES ISRAEL A SECOND CHANCE

After the Israelites' tragic defeat at Ai, and the blatant breach of God's command, by Achan, when he kept the "accursed" thing, Joshua 8 demonstrates the grace of God, and His willingness to restore. God gave Israel another opportunity to wage a second campaign against Ai, only this time was different from the first.

The battle plan was ingenious. This time Israel chose to do exactly as God commanded. God's plan was for 30,000 Israelites to lure the King of Ai and his army away from the city, fleeing as though they were about to be defeated again. Then a band of 5,000 of the Israelite army were hidden on the west side of the town and were able

to invade with ease. The army of Ai was trapped with no place to go, hence the destruction of all the inhabitants of Ai. (8:26)

JOSHUA BUILDS THE ALTAR UNTO THE LORD

Joshua followed the Lord's command as was recorded in Exodus 20:25 by building the altar of stones, uncut, and have not been sharpened by any iron instruments. The altar had the inscription of the Law of Moses. All that Moses commanded had been read to the congregation. It was an occasion of great victory and blessing for Israel. The Ark, which was the symbol of the presence of God among them, was also there.

THE APPLICATION

Just because God's people faltered at Ai the first time,

did not negate God's plan for Israel to inhabit the promised land, as was given to Abraham.

Israel put away that which had separated them from God (the accursed thing) and then they were able to enjoy the favor and blessing of God.

Examine the number of incidents where God was victorious, in spite of the failure of His people. For example, Abraham and Sarah defied God's command by trying to produce a son (Ishmael) instead of trusting God to allow Isaac to be born.

Man is prone to defy God's will, and set out on his own, only to be soundly defeated. But God is faithful, and renews us — as He led the Israelites in the renewal of their covenant with Him.

Tricked by the Gibeonites

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: April 23, 2017

TEXT: Joshua 9:1-27

COALITION AGAINST THE JEWS

Because of the Israelite's victories over Ai and Jericho, kingdoms west of the Jordan, which had not necessarily been aligned before, now came together in agreement to defeat Israel.

DECEPTION OF THE GIBEONITES

But the Gibeonites took another approach. Their motive was self-preservation. They felt that if they could put on some old, tattered clothing, pack stale bread, and portray themselves to have traveled a great distance, then perhaps they could get Israel's sympathy and join up with the Israelites. Rather than be in a battle with them and experience certain defeat, they could live under their protection

THE DECISION OF THE ISRAELITES TO ACT, WITHOUT CONSULTING THE LORD.

"And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord." Joshua 9:14. If the Israelites had been attuned to the voice of the Lord, they would have had the wisdom to know they were about to be deceived.

But then that begs the question, "What if the Israelites had sought and received the counsel of the Lord, what do you suppose the outcome might have been? Would the Lord have told Israel to send the rag tag band of people on down the road? Or perhaps kill them? Or would He have directed them

to accept the Gibeonites just as they did? Perhaps the Lord's will was accomplished, despite Israel's negligence in seeking the Lord's counsel.

THE PACT WITH THE GIBEONITES

"And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation aware unto them." The Gibeonites were shrewd in that they were familiar with the Israelite law and knew that the Israelites would have to honor the pact they made with the Gibeonites. This they did, in spite of the public outcry of the congregation. Israel did not go back on their word.

GIBEONITES WERE SPARED

In spite of their deception, they were enjoined to Israel, albeit in the form of slavery. They serve in the tabernacle, Gibeonites were among those who rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, the Ark of the Covenant was located at Gibeon, and one of David's mighty men was a Gibeonite. (I Chronicles 12:4)

APPLICATION

(1) Gibeonites perhaps had wrong motives for hitching themselves up to God's chosen people, but in the long run, they became faithful servants. Does that not happen today? People enjoin themselves to a church for human reasons (i.e. relationships, or activities) and then after exposure to the Spirit of the Lord through His people, they, themselves, find Jesus Christ. (2) Never act apart from knowing God's will.

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