

Baptist Progress

Baptist Progress, P.O. Box 2055, Waxahachie, Texas 75168
Postmaster: send change of address to
500125

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS | MAY 2020 | VOL. 107 | NO. 05

INSIDE



PAGE 4
2020 GRADUATES



PAGE 9
DRIVE-IN MEETINGS



PAGE 11
TEXAS BAPTIST HOME
FOR CHILDREN

SOME CHURCHES RESUME IN-PERSON WORSHIP SERVICES, OTHERS WAIT



By **JERRY FULTON**
Editor of Baptist Progress

Although the Lord knew what was coming in the Year 2020, most, if not everyone else, were caught off guard. Almost overnight, the COVID-19 Pandemic has changed the way things are done in society. Who would have thought there would be a shortage of paper goods and meat, or that businesses would be shut down in the United States of America a few short months ago? Most have awoken to a whole new world.

Perhaps no group has been affected as greatly as local churches. Never in one's wildest imagination would the thought have appeared that churches would be closed for worship and regular gatherings for weeks on end. Still, this has become reality for thousands of congregations across America as federal, state and local governments attempt to ensure that their citizens are not infected with the coronavirus.

Since Texas Gov. Greg Abbott initiated Phase 1 of society reopening, some churches have resumed services, others have plans to reopen and still others are left wondering when it will be safe for them to do so. Of course, the governor has made clear that his orders do not apply to churches, as he has promised to defend the right

of religious and church groups to freely assemble as they see fit in Texas. In spite of his clarification, some local governments have attempted to apply their orders to include churches.

Recently, *Baptist Progress* surveyed Texas pastors and churches by email asking where they stood in their plans to resume normal activity. Most of the churches who responded to the survey, who have yet to resume in-person worship services, had plans to do so by the Sunday after Mother's Day, May 17. These include Concord, Gilmer; Farley Street, Waxahachie; Grace Temple, San Angelo; First Ora, Huntington; New Hope, Mineola and Northside, Conroe. These churches have social-distancing plans in order, with some planning to offer multiple worship services to safely practice social distancing. Others including Pilgrim Rest, Emory and Cross Roads, Pittsburg have scheduled later dates to once more conduct in-person worship services.

Farley Street, Waxahachie, like most other churches, has offered their Sunday morning worship services online for the last several weeks. In addition, the church has offered an online Tuesday devotional by Senior Pastor

Richard Smith, Wednesday night Bible Study and *Pastor's Connect*, a round table discussion by the church's pastors, which is livestreamed on Thursdays.

Some churches, such as Rosewood, Gilmer, stated that they will abide by the governor's suggestion of limiting crowds to no more than 25 percent capacity in most areas of the state. Pastor Charles Johnson said, "I am not going to turn away anyone." The Gilmer church, like Farley Street, Waxahachie and most others, has livestreamed worship services and reported an average of 1,000 online viewers each Sunday. On Easter Sunday, Rosewood, Gilmer had 5,000 to join them online—10 times their usual Easter attendance. Like other churches such as Cornerstone, Jacksonville and Northside, Garland, Rosewood has also offered drive-in services where members park their cars in the parking lot and listen to a broadcast of the live sermon. Cornerstone, Jacksonville even had their members to honk and flash their lights in place of "amens."

SOME CHURCHES RESUME continued on p. 14



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Baptist Progress

USPS: 043120 • ISSN: 005-5751

Published every third week of the month by
the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas

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P.O. Box 2085 • Waxahachie, Texas 75168
972-923-0756 (office) • 972-923-3534 (fax)

www.baptistprogress.org

Periodical postage paid
at Waxahachie, Texas 75165
and at additional mailing offices

SUBSCRIPTION RATE:

Mail Church Plan: \$1.75 per month
E-Mail Church Plan: \$1.25 per month
Mail Subscription: \$24.00 per year
E-mail Subscription: \$18.00 per year
(Advertising Rates Available on Request)

Postmaster: Send address changes to
Baptist Progress, P.O. Box 2085,
Waxahachie, Texas 75168



\$108 for 108 Years Anniversary Offering

By **JERRY FULTON**

Baptist Progress was established as the official publication of the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas in 1912. The purpose of *Baptist Progress* is to promote interest in missions, evangelism, benevolence and Christian education among the churches of the BMA of Texas.

Later this year, *Baptist Progress*, will celebrate 108 years of ministry. Each year, during the month of June, we humbly request a special anniversary offering of **\$108 for 108 years of ministry** from churches, classes, groups and individuals. We understand with the COVID-19 Pandemic that things might be different for you this year. If you cannot give, we certainly understand. However, if you can give, we will deeply appreciate your offering to help us meet our budgetary needs.

The goal of our anniversary offering is to raise **\$10,000** to meet our budget for the year. A list of those who give will be published in a future issue of *Baptist Progress*. Offerings may be mailed to:

Baptist Progress
P.O. Box 2085
Waxahachie, Texas 75168



▲ Jerry Fulton

BMA of America voting results

2020 BMA NATIONAL MEETING RECOMMENDATIONS— VOTING RESULTS	In Favor	Opposed	Abstained
Proposed Change to the Amendments to the Statement of Principles of Cooperation Article X - Department of Camp Ministries	188	1	1
Proposed Change to the Amendments to the Statement of Principles of Cooperation Article XII - Publications Department	188	1	1
Proposed Addition to the Amendments to the Statement of Principles of Cooperation Article XVII - BMA of America Service Team	184	3	3
Proposed changes to the old Article XXIV Amendments, new Article XXIV Section 1, Letter A & Section 2, Letter A	186	2	2
DiscipleGuide Board Recommendations	182	3	5
Lifeword Board Recommendations	185	4	1
BMA Seminary Trustee Recommendations	186	2	2
Advisory Committee Recommendations for the Missions Department	182	3	5
Moral Action Board Recommendations	184	3	3
Ministers Resource Services Board Recommendations	186	2	2
BMA Foundation Board Recommendations	186	2	2
Resolution on Beholding the Majesty of God	154	15	21
Nominating Committee Report	182	3	5

Dr. John Adams Award/ Moral Action Scholarship Fund

By **DR. JOHN ADAMS**

Moral Action Executive Director

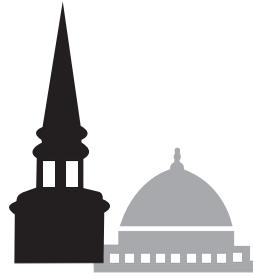
In 2019 the Dr. John Adams Award/Moral Action Scholarship fund for BMA Seminary students was announced from BMA Seminary President Dr. Charley Holmes and Moral Action Director Dr. John M. Adams (along with the Adams Award Sub-Committee – Dr. Kevin Clayton, Richey Hester and David Inzer).

The letter said, in part: *“The BMA of America and the BMA of Mississippi Moral Action Boards of Trustees have established an Adams Award/Moral Action Scholarship Fund at the BMA Theological Seminary in Jacksonville, Texas by unanimous vote.”* The scholarship fund has \$26,000 as of April 1. This is a continual/perpetual fund.

“We humbly ask for your support (in these special offerings, and that your church consider) the possibility of placing this in your church budget as ‘Adams Award/Moral Action Scholarship Fund’”. Offerings should be sent to Moral Action, P.O. Box 305, Mantachie, Miss. 38855.

SCHOLARSHIP TERMS

The Adams Award, sponsored by the BMAA Moral Action Committee in honor of Dr. John Adams:



- The scholarship will be awarded each fall semester to an exemplary student preparing for pastoral ministry.
- Preference will be given to students with limited financial support from other sources.
- Preference will be given to BMA students.
- First semester students are not eligible.
- Applicants must have a minimum GPA of 2.5.
- Recipient will be selected by BMATS Scholarship Committee with subsequent notification to BMAA Moral Action Committee.

Dr. John M. Adams is the executive director of BMAA Moral Action. Contact him at Moral Action - BMA of America . P.O. Box 305 . Mantachie, Mississippi 38855 or visit www.macbma.net for more information.



The silver-lining in COVID-19

By **PAUL GAUNTT**

Pastor of First, Palmer

As I was listening to my friend Dick Sisk, from Memphis, Tennessee, during his daily Bible study of Habakkuk on Facebook, I was struck by a comment he made concerning the experience of the three Hebrew children in Nebuchadnezzar fiery furnace.

He said, “God doesn’t remove the fire from our lives, but He does go with us through the fire. The only thing that burned in the fiery furnace was the rope that bound the Hebrew children.”

Oh, how that applies to our situation today. We are begging and pleading with God to remove the coronavirus. Perhaps it could be He is using it as a tool to strip us of the ties that may be binding us today.

One great result I can see is the fact, as a church, we are less bound up within our four walls, in a “holy huddle.” Suddenly, pastors are discovering technology, and are preaching to a camera, or a laptop computer, the message of Christ, and posting it on Facebook, or Youtube, causing the message to literally travel around the world. We may not

always have that opportunity, but for now we do.

It is a pleasant surprise to see the view meter under the recording, and see the hundreds of hits the message has had. Where the message might be heard by a hundred people in church, is now being observed by several hundreds or thousands.

Our long-time friend in Picayune, Mississippi, was watching our son-in-law, Matt Loafman, preaching from the pulpit of Central Baptist of Lancaster, and commented on how much she enjoyed it. He was preaching in virtually an empty auditorium, but the message was traveling hundreds of miles away.

Tragic and heartbreaking as it is, seeing thousands of people suffer and die from COVID-19, there is still a silver lining: (1) We are having a golden opportunity to be still and know that God is God; (2) We are, of necessity, moving the message of Christ from within our walls and broadcasting it to the world. (3) We find ourselves praying, as never before, for our families and churches.



Unconditional Love On Display

I wanted to play basketball with friends—not get my picture made! Mama never raised her voice but quietly insisted that I stand beside her so Aunt Opal, visiting from California, could take our picture. I didn’t argue with Mama. It would have made no difference and most assuredly would not have been in my best interest if Daddy had discovered me in the act. I tried that when I was much younger and it didn’t turn out well. He happened to walk into the room during one of my loud disagreements with Mama



over how to fix my hair. That’s when Daddy explained with the help of a hair brush that being disrespectful to Mama was never an option. His “talk” was thorough and memorable. Unforgettable. So on this day many years later I was compliant and obedient when asked to skip basketball and take pictures. But if you look closely my body language told a different story. With tight fists I stood still and endured, resolving in my heart that no one could make me smile.

Mama loved me anyway. I was inconsiderate and hateful with a stinking attitude but she never took her loving eyes off of me. Smiling and hugging my stiff, unresponsive body, she reminded me that staying home with Aunt Opal was the right thing to do. Mama was taken from us in a fatal car accident in 1959 but the lessons she lived out in front of me remain alive and crystal clear. I keep this picture on my desk as a reminder of her unconditional love even when I least deserved it.

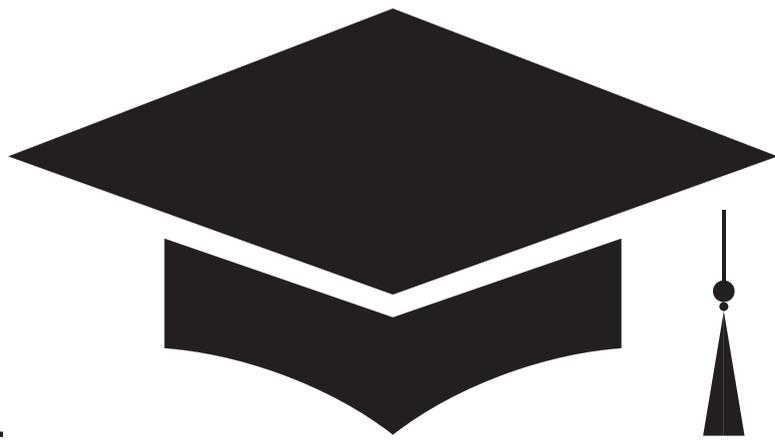
Today, I know where that genuine, always forgiving love came from. She had an intensely personal relationship with Jesus Christ and spent a lot of time getting acquainted with His words and His ways. What she learned, she mostly lived out and sometimes shared. I caught the good news both ways and have been forever grateful.

My Mama wasn’t perfect but the Savior she so wanted to imitate was. Talk about unconditional love! Jesus had more than a stubborn 11 year old child to deal with. Some grown-ups who followed Him for 3 years and some of those closest to Him often missed the point and failed to believe. Even the image of Jesus on the cross with nails in His hands and feet and a crown of thorns on His head was not enough for many. Rejection. Betrayal. Pain. Unbelief. Nothing and no one could keep Jesus from going to the cross. That was His reason for coming into the world. And so it happened. On that day 2000 years ago authentic, unconditional love was on display for all who stood and watched. Today it’s an unfolding theme throughout Scripture, with a personal invitation for all who believe and receive it. I love the account in I John 4. It’s all about God’s amazing gift. Read it. Rejoice because of it and share that love with someone else... Unconditionally!

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.



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



CLASS OF

2020

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES

Following is a list of graduating seniors from BMA of Texas churches:

ANTHONY DRIVE, ENNIS

Lexi Barak
Alec Cabezas
Cully Clark
Cole Holley
Cole Reno
Marshall Sladeczek

ANTIOCH, CARTHAGE

Hannah Whatley

ANTIOCH, GILMER

Neil Aga
Nick Anderson
McKayla Caldwell
Jesse Cox
Holton Hutto
Hunter Hutto
Wyatt Hutto

BEACON HILL, WACO

Daniel Ford

CALVARY, FAIRFIELD

Modesto Cortez
Chandler Noble
Erin Rachel
Ty Wooden

CAMILLE ACRES, LONGVIEW

Emily Henry
Kelli Lyke

**CHURCH AT CREEK'S END, SPRING
(VICTORIA EN CRISTO)**

Jazer Maldonado

CONCORD, GILMER

DeLaney Wilson

CORNERSTONE, JACKSONVILLE

McKenzie Nabi
Jordan Pollard
Michelle Rodriguez
Evan Trezise

CRAFT, JACKSONVILLE

Mackenna Dement

CROSS ROADS, PITTSBURG

Jami Blackstock
Dustin Burke
Willie Dale Fletcher
Anthony Jones

EIGHTH AVENUE, TEAGUE

Macy Guerrero
Ty Gilbert
Megan Holmes
Cache Peters
Conner Smith
Sydney Smith
Brooklyn Thompson

ENON, GILMER

Luke Thomas Davidson
Tanner Travis Shipp

FARLEY STREET, WAXAHACHIE

Mica Harvey
David Moore
Conner Perry
Travis Prewitt
Trevor Prewitt
Bernice Rodriguez

FIFTH STREET, LEVELLAND

Geneva Cortez
Lindsey Fowler

FIRST, GRANDALL

Laken Haggard
Zachary Lewis
Autumne Gagnow-Morrell
Mercedes Waits

FIRST, NEW CANEY

Shelbi Grace Fitzgerald

FIRST, NEW SUMMERFIELD

Brady Fickey

FIRST, PALMER

Paten Anglin
Pedro Barboza
Tanner Harper
Jenna Schmidt

GLENFAWN, CUSHING

Bradley Dean Boatman

HUBBARD CHAPEL, QUITMAN

James Bambeck
River Chaney
Nathan Ruiz
India Tullis

KELTYS FIRST, LUFKIN

Kayleigh Bolyard
Carson Daniel
Chaz Hall
Virgel Robertson

LAKERIDGE, LUBBOCK

Eve Helak
Charli Martin
Rachel Severin
Hayley Turner

LANDMARK, CUSHING

Hailey Lynn Gordon
Logan Mitchell Leutwyler

LITTLE MOUND, BIG SANDY

Matthew Phillips

MAHL, NACOGDOCHES

Michael Engle

NAT, CUSHING

Bethany Dawson

NEW HARMONY, TYLER

Sadie Dutton
Taylor Lane
Jenna Thornhill

GRACE TEMPLE, SAN ANGELO

Ethan Catoe
Kaleigh Falcon
Lexi Vallandingham
Dylan Ware

NEW HOPE, MINEOLA

Jacob Cameron
Josh Cameron
Carlee Hennessy
Stormy Troyer

OLD BETHEL, CANTON

Madison Baugh
Craig Black
Kaitlyn Crudgington
Coby Dougherty
Micah Everitt
Colbey Johnson
Mary Kate Key

ROSEWOOD, GILMER

Nick Anderson
Kaylee Clemens
Dusti Click
Olivia Everett
Gage Goddard
Kyle Jones

Hunter McNeel
Macey Russell
Azlee Whiteside
Raylee Willie

SAND FLAT, GRAND SALINE

Aubrey Fitzpatrick
Brandon Holland
Layla Prock
Leanna Wilson

SAND SPRINGS, MINEOLA

Jacob Dailey
Savannah Edwards
Josh Etheridge
Emily Gonzalez
Tim Mitchell
Makenzie Parker
Mattie Perry

SHADY GROVE, PURDON

Paden McDaniel

SIMMONS HILL, DIANA

Christi Gallagher

WALNUT STREET, WINNSBORO

Noah Azlin
Andria Blair
Ian Dierflinger
Tina Dlabaij
Jenna Haney
David Jones
Levi Reed
Dawson Whitehurst

WARD PRAIRIE, FAIRFIELD

William Conner Jackson



Adjusting to COVID-19

By **DR. MIKE SMITH**
Jacksonville College President

The COVID-19 crisis of 2020 has forced the whole world to make major adjustments. In every area of life, change has taken place. We see this in jobs, restaurants, sports, travel, family gatherings, friendships, shopping, churches, and yes, in education. Jacksonville College is no different. During spring break, government recommendations required us to inform our students not to return to campus. The remainder of the semester would be completed online and/or remotely. As a tribute to our staff, this transition took place with few problems. Our technology was in place thanks to our information technology team, Chief Information Officer Mike Creech and David Anderson. Academic Vice President Marolyn Welch and her staff implemented strategies over the past several years to increase growth in online education to the point where we were already approved to offer a degree online. Last May, Jacksonville College had its first student to complete all course work for an associate degree online. Her first time on campus was for graduation.

Every ten years, institutions accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges are required to adopt a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to be implemented over a five-year span. Jacksonville College's QEP, "Going the Distance with Distance Education," was adopted last year. Consequently, we had plans in place that allowed us to quickly move the remaining weeks of the spring semester to an online/remote format.

Will face-to-face on-campus instruction cease? I hope not. We plan to offer on-campus classes in August. However, online instruction will continue to grow.

As educational institutions have adapted to the online format, churches have also adapted to offer services through various online formats. Few of us realized how many church members

would be watching services through Facebook and YouTube and even through video conferencing.

While we are blessed to live in a time when we can continue to meet virtually, we were not created to live apart from each other. We desire and need contact with others. This is what makes it so difficult for our students who looked forward to the on-campus college experience. Athletes who trained to compete this spring in tennis, golf, and cross country will have to wait another year. Young men and women looking forward to growing strong friendships at Jacksonville College, often in hopes of marriage, will have to develop those relationships online for now. Students looking forward to graduating in May will have to wait another year to participate in commencement with Spring 2021 graduates.

As a preacher, I have had several ask me if this the end of the world. My answer is that I personally hope so. I, like the apostle John, pray, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20). I am ready for Christ's return. However, many are not. I believe God will use coronavirus outbreak for His glory. He is calling unbelievers to repentance and believers to return to Him as their first love. As people all over the world are faced with their own mortality, now is the ideal time to share the gospel. We can still communicate with others through the phone, through mail, and through social media and other online tools. Instead of spending our free time watching television, we need to be telling others about Jesus.

We also need to see this time of social distancing as an opportunity to spend more time in God's Word and in prayer. We know we serve a sovereign God who is in control even in this pandemic. We should be seeking to know His will. What is the Spirit saying to the church? What is the Spirit saying to Jacksonville College? What is the Spirit saying to Mike Smith?

PROSPECTIVE GRADUATES

Jacksonville College congratulates the following prospective members of the Spring 2020 graduating class:

- VANESSA AGIS** of San Antonio
- DAWN ALDAVE** of Houston
- KAILEY BALDREE** of Arlington
- BRIANNA BARTON** of Tyler
- MCKAYLA BLACK** of Sealy
- SARAH BROOKS** of Jacksonville
- MONICA CHACON CORDOVA** of Humble
- ANDRE LUIZ DE MELO GUEDES** of Brasilia, Brazil
- NAKENDRA ELLIS** of Cleveland
- LAUREN FREEMAN** of Rockwall
- CECILIA GALLEGOS** of Jacksonville
- GALILEA GALVAN** of Jacksonville
- CRISTIAN GARZON** of Goodrich
- TAYLOR GLIDEWELL** of Jacksonville
- BRYAN GONZALEZ** of Jacksonville
- HANNAH GRISSOM** of Spurger
- BRANDY GUERRERO** of Lufkin
- SETH HELLWIG** of Jacksonville
- DAVOR JAKOVLJEVIC** of Santiago, Chile
- ENDY LOPEZ** of Fresno
- VICTORIA LOREDO-CASTILLO** of Jacksonville
- DIMICHAEL MCCULLOUGH** of Jacksonville
- ALONNA MCGAHEE** of Cocoa
- CITLALLI MEDELLIN** of Jacksonville
- MICHAEL MILES** of Jacksonville
- MADISON MINTER** of Rusk
- MICHAEL MUMBA** of Lusaka, Zambia
- TIAGO HENRIQUE PEREIRA** of Praia Grande, Brazil
- JACIE POLLARD** of Jacksonville
- JANIE RANGEL** of New Summerfield
- NOAH SAENZ VASQUEZ** of Ennis
- ABEL SANDOVAL** of Jacksonville
- LUIGI SERVIN** of Jacksonville
- CHLOE SIFFORD** of Teague
- JACOB SULLIVAN** of Celeste
- TAYLOR SWINNEY** of Jacksonville
- DANIEL TERAN** of Cordoba, Mexico
- JANIAH TRUSCOTT** of Jacksonville



2020 BMA Salary and Benefits Survey

Ministers Resource Services and BMA America Information Services are partnering on the first BMA Salary and Benefits Survey. The purpose of the survey is to provide churches with benchmark data to inform and assist in the establishment and maintenance of viable compensation packages for their pastor and staff.

Of course, the data resulting from the study will be made available with respect for the autonomy of each local church, but we hope the information will provide churches an objective resource in considering appropriate staff compensation.

To provide the most comprehensive assessment, we encourage EVERY church pastor and staff member to complete the survey. Your participation is completely anonymous. An email about the survey will be sent to every church on May 5 with a completion deadline of May 29. A link to the survey can be found at <https://bmaamerica.org/salariesurvey/>

For questions about the survey contact:

John Meriweather (BMA Information Services) john@bmaamerica.org or 501-499-6810 or

Steve Crawley (MRS Executive Director) steve@bmaamerica.org or 501-472-0517.



Lifeword adds new broadcasts and production partners

By **HOLLY MERIWEATHER**

BMA of America

Today Lifeword is broadcasting a clear presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ in 75 languages to 123 countries of the world. Over one-fourth of the population of the world can hear and understand its broadcasts. Throughout the ministry's 55-year history of broadcasting, one principle has remained the same: Lifeword is committed to speaking in the heart language of those hearing or watching a Lifeword presentation.

"America speaks many languages," said Lifeword Executive Director Donny Parrish. "Most people technically speak English, but their cultural language sounds very different. It would be difficult, if not impossible, for our team to know how to speak the message of Jesus effectively in each of these languages. But if we are going to share Christ with them we must be able to speak their heart language."

Lifeword is now partnering with several ministries who are doing a great job of bringing the message of Jesus to their own cultures. Some of these ministries are very well known. And some have done a great job of producing quality content but lack the means to broadcast what they have produced. This is where Lifeword Cloud technology becomes very important. "The Lifeword Cloud has revolutionized how Lifeword is doing ministry. It's enabling us to speak to segments of American society that we could only dream about reaching in the past," said Parrish.

Look for these new broadcasts on the Lifeword Cloud very soon.

MXTV

MXTV is a Christian TV Show that speaks real, life-changing truth, empowering young people to find Jesus and truly live. Their promise is to be a voice for generations ahead.

FAMILYLIFE

The mission of FamilyLife is to effectively develop

godly marriages and families who change the world one home at a time.

DENNIS RAINEY

Dennis began the ministry of FamilyLife in 1976. He stepped away from leading that ministry in 2019 and is now writing and sharing God's love for the family.

LAUREN CRAWLEY SHOW

Lauren joined the Lifeword team in 2019. Her love for the Lord and her unique ability to communicate God's truths to young women soon became apparent to the staff. Look for Lauren's broadcast to girls and young women very soon.

COWBOY CHRISTIANITY

Cross Brand Cowboy Church's mission is to reach the unreached and teach the reached. With the cowboy culture as their primary target, they strive to create opportunities and environments that are accessible, uncomplicated and non-judgmental so people can follow Jesus.

AMERICA'S DEAF COMMUNITY

According to Deaf Bible Society, 98 percent of deaf are unreached by the gospel. Lifeword is joining forces with folks like John Bienlein with Master's House Deaf Church in reaching the older demographics and Brandon Gaskin with *Deaf Millennial Project* in reaching millennials.

Lifeword will continue to expand its menu of broadcast opportunities to America. Parrish says that this effort returns the ministry back to its roots. "Harold Morris, founder of the ministry of Lifeword, said this: 'Truly, America is one of the greatest and most needy mission fields of the hour, and I am persuaded that unless we give our best to make Jesus known to our own country that the liberty, peace and prosperity we know now will not long endure.' Harold Morris's heart was to make Jesus known to the world. That included America, too. "

Baptist Medical Missions International

By **ANGELA RICE**

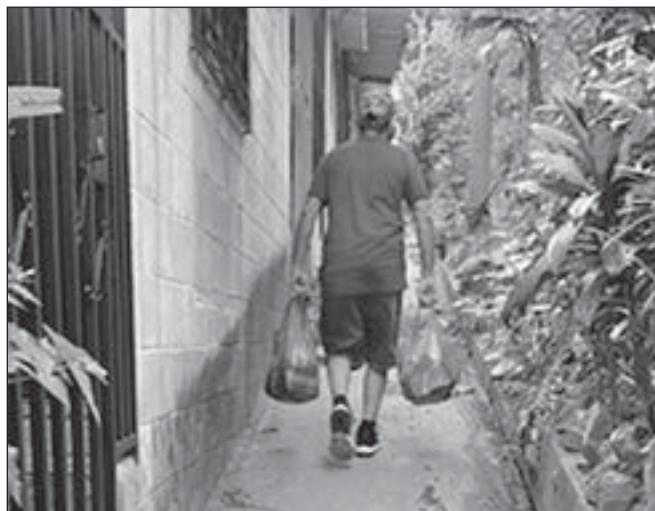
Baptist Medical Missions International

BMMI is ministering in a different way during the recent pandemic. Our usual trips have been canceled, but God has opened up ways for us to minister to the nations from right here at home. Your donation will help provide food and medicine to our missionaries and church planters to help those in need during these desperate times.

Already, funds have been sent to El Salvador and Vietnam. We are in the process of evaluating other areas that BMMI has built relationships over the years. God bless you and thank you for your support.

To join in the fight for health during the COVID 19 pandemic, send your donation to:

BMMI
PO Box 878
Conway AR 72033



The Gift That Gives Back

It's a Charitable Gift Annuity offered by the BMA Foundation.

Receive

- Income for life (partially tax free)
- A federal income tax deduction the year of the gift
- God's work benefits at the time of your death

Current Rates (3-2020)

Age	Rate
65	4.7%
75	5.8%
85	8.0%

Contact BMA Foundation Executive Director Charles Attebery for more information.
charles@bmaamerica.org or call 501-472-2183





INSIGHTS *for* PASTORS

Secrets to a long pastorate

By DR. ALLEN TILLEY

I just celebrated my twenty-first anniversary as pastor at my church. Although we've had lots of ups and downs over the years, I'm more in love with the church than when I first started. Pastors often ask me for the "secret" to a long-term pastorate. While no single formula exists, the following eight "secrets" have guided me along the way.

Secret #1: There is no secret. While there are lots of things that can shorten a ministry, no one answer fits every pastor or church because God created us uniquely different. The best advice I've received was from a Rick Warren conference years ago. He said, "Don't take my program back home and try to implement it without considering your personality and your church's identity. If you do, it's sure to fail."

Being a pastor, I love acronyms (if you don't believe me, ask my people). For me, the following seven remaining "secrets" can be best summarized with the word: **G.L.O.W.I.N.G.**

Secret #2: Grow spiritually. Being a pastor means we are involved in the fiercest of spiritual battles. Satan is never happy with churches or pastors. As a result, an intimate walk with the Lord is not only preferred; it is mandatory. Although we never "arrive" spiritually, we must passionately cling to Him, growing, developing, and maturing in our relationship with Him.

Secret #3: Love people. Let's face it men. We are in the

people business. Yes, people can be messy creatures who seem broken continuously. Our job isn't to fix people but to love them in Jesus' name. Being under-shepherds to the Great Shepherd, we must genuinely love all the sheep not just those who are loveable. Your people will be willing to overlook your faults if they know that you love them unconditionally.

Secret #4: Outwardly focused. Pastors and churches that emphasize fulfilling the Great Commission tend to have fewer problems whereas pastors and churches that treat the church like a country club for the saints become self-centered and critical. As pastors, we must teach our people that winning and discipling the lost must come before personal conveniences.

Secret #5: Weather Storms. No ideal jobs exist, even for pastors. By running at the first sign of trouble, we rob ourselves and our people of the insights that can only be learned by sticking together through tough times. My mentor, E.D. Sarratt, once said, "If the grass looks greener on the other side, it's probably because there is a septic tank over there." Instead of letting the naysayers get the best of you, give them over to the Lord, love on them, and keep pressing forward.

Secret #6: Inspire by example. I pastor with these three thoughts always in mind. First, my people would rather see a sermon instead of hearing a sermon. Second, a picture paints a thousand words. Third, faith is more caught than it is taught.

Therefore, I must live how I expect my people to live. To do differently is hypocritical.

Secret #7: Never abuse trust. Both our position and our tenure generate trust. It takes years to build but only seconds to destroy. Although we cannot live up to man's expectations, we must be men of integrity and faith at all times. We must also guard our people's confidentiality, even when we feel threatened by those same people. Once people know they can trust us, they will follow us.

Secret #8: God's grace. A long-tenured pastorate is the result of God's grace working on our behalf. In my ministry, God has blessed more in spite of me than because of me. When you pray, ask God to let you grow old together with your people. I believe that's the kind of prayer that God loves to answer.

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.



2020 SOAR Student Conference will be online

By CHRIS VINES & NICK JACOBSEN

We don't need to tell you of all the effects Covid-19 has had on our communities, country and world. However, it seems fair and forthright to write briefly on the current plans for SOAR 2020.

First, SOAR 2020 will NOT be cancelled. Second, for the first time in over 30 years, SOAR Student Conference will be completely ONLINE and will be totally FREE.

SOAR Student Conference has always been for the churches of the BMA and during a time such as this, SOAR is committed to serving our local churches. July 2020 is still a few months away, and though some health officials anticipate this pandemic to be controlled by then, the reality is, the economy will not have recovered.

As a result, it is possible that many of our churches could be financially unable to even consider attending SOAR 2020 in Dallas.

Therefore, remaining consistent with our vision to be a blessing to our churches, we want SOAR 2020 to be an event all of our churches can easily attend. Moving SOAR 2020 completely online has not been an easy decision, but it is an opportunity for which we are incredibly excited. We have been looking forward all year to our theme of "Multiply" and we hope God's glory and his followers will be multiplied more than we ever imagined.

There will be more details to come, so visit gosoar.com



or Soar Conference on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

From the SOAR team, we love you, and can't wait for SOAR 2020 ONLINE!



A word from your Missions Office

By HEITH MITCHELL

God is faithful! You, the churches of the BMA of Texas, are faithful! Your missionaries are faithful! As I write to you for the second time during this crisis, this is what I am pleased to report.

God is faithful! He is sustaining and protecting the work of BMA of Texas Missions. He is even advancing the Kingdom during this trying time. He is faithful to guide us, provide for us and protect us. We both expect it and are awestruck by it, I want to praise the Lord!

You are faithful! God is using you to sustain this ministry. You are walking this crisis and are still walking in faith. I know this because you continue to faithfully provide for your supported missionaries. This has been amazing encouragement to each of them. They know you love and care about them because you haven't neglected them in your own hardship.

Your missionaries are faithful! They have seen 18 salvations since the shutdown! They are taking care of their people and reaching out to and serving their community. The men are putting in more hours than ever. They could use your prayers and words of encouragement.

I ask you to pray for your missionary Nick Brockway in the town of Meadow, Texas. Nick and Jennifer had their fifth child named Tripp this month. He has a heart issue and Down Syndrome. Tripp is progressing but has spent 3 weeks in the hospital with at least a month to go. Pray for baby Tripp and his family.

We would love to share with your church about what God is up to and show you how you can be involved. I am personally available to come and share. We also have tools we can provide you to help you become a partner in church planting. Reach out to us.

A word from your missionaries

CESAR CANTU—
INTERN PREPARING FOR WEST COLUMBIA
CESARHCANTU42@GMAIL.COM

Let us not be afraid to fail.

Matthew 14:28-29 says "And Peter answered him, 'Lord if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' He said, 'Come.'" So, Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, 'Lord, save me.'



▲ Cesar Cantu

In this encounter, Peter learned what it felt like to move in a direction Christ was asking him to move. Yet the anxiety of the situation causes Peter to fear and lose focus. What we see as failure, Christ used to build confidence and caution at the same time in Peter. We should be so bold to ask God to

command us to come.

Prayer Needs:

My prayer is for an opportunity to move into the community of Brazoria County.

WESLEY BURKE—
REDEMPTION BAPTIST MISSION, NACOGDOCHES
WESLEYDAVIDBURKE@GMAIL.COM

God is sovereign even when his church is forcibly scattered. May the scattering from this pandemic grow all of your hearts to value the gathering more in days to come.

Prayer Needs:

Pray that we will be able to share the gospel in a post COVID-19 world.

MIKE WATT—
CROSS-WORK MISSION, TAHOKA
MIKE.WATT@CROSSWORKCHURCH.ORG

It's been a sprint of a marathon thru this crazy time. Pray we run this race well!

JESSE HALES—
STARTING POINT MISSION IN ROUND ROCK
HALESJESSE@GMAIL.COM
DUAL SUPPORT BMAA/BMAT

At the end of February, our six month internship with Antioch, Georgetown ended and we met with the leadership of both the BMA of Texas and the BMA of America. They were excited to see what God has been doing. With that, they shared the same main concern we have had from the beginning which is our lack of another missionary family to partner with in this ministry. It's not impossible for one family to start a church on their own, but history and scripture show that it is much preferred to minister with a partner. We've been praying for such a partner since we first felt God leading us here.

The leadership of both associations agreed to continue to support us with the understanding that we would keep praying and actively seeking such a partner in ministry. They also asked if we would be willing to pray about the possibility of merging our ministry and partnering with Chris Mindi, another BMA church planter nine miles away in Leander. Chris and I went through assessment together and moved to the same area at the same time with the same purpose to start a new church and see people saved and grow



▲ Wesley Burke



▲ Mike Watt



▲ JESSE HALES

in God. We have both been praying for a long time, asking God to give us a ministry partner. As they asked if I would pray about it, they made sure I didn't feel any pressure from them to answer one way or another but simply pointed out from their observations that we seemed to be a great match for each other. I told them I would pray about it.

After having several meetings with Chris and Sarah and reaching out to several of our closest prayer warriors, we spent time waiting on God and praying for clear direction. After about a month and a half I felt that God had clearly knit my heart together with Chris' and made it clear that we were to join them in ministry.

We are all very excited to see what God is going to do with this new partnership. I'm sure as I have time and space in the future to share more with you about this, you too will see how incredible God is in the way He has brought us and fit us together. He never ceases to amaze me.

Although this will be a big change for us there are a lot of things that will not change. We have made a lot of great contacts here in Round Rock and fully plan to continue to grow those relationships. Nothing is changing about our support or how to send that in. Our dependence on your prayers certainly doesn't change either, nor does our commitment to starting a church to see people saved and growing in discipleship. What does change is now we have a partner and can do that much more effectively. Thank you, and we will do our best to keep in touch more regularly.

Prayer Needs:

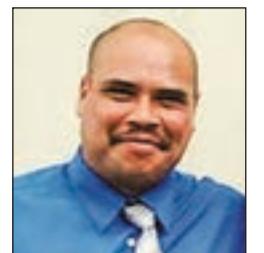
For souls to be saved

For the effects of this pandemic to continue to open hearts to the truth of the Gospel

For guidance as we go through the merging of the two church plants

JAIME GARCIA—
IGLESIA BAPTISTA NUEVA VIDA MISSION, GILMER/MESQUITE
JAIME.GARCIA2911@GMAIL.COM

In Matthew 16:18 we find a beautiful promise for Christ's church and it is the Lord Jesus who says it. That is why we trust that the church will prevail and will go on lighting the earth until He returns. Now that we are quarantined, we have been working through media and many people have rejoiced in hearing words of hope. Thank you for your support and above all for your prayers. I love you all.



▲ Jaime Garcia

BMA TEXAS MISSIONS continued on p. 14

Drive-by prayer/fellowship meetings

By **PAUL GAUNTT**

Baptist Progress Correspondent

Churches have felt the necessity to become creative in ministry during the world-wide COVID-19 Pandemic, and two churches in the Ellis-Hill Association—First, Blooming Grove and Farley Street, Waxahachie, each held a drive by prayer time/fellowship on their respective church campuses.

Bro. Richard Smith, who, for 27 years, has led the Farley Street church as pastor, said his church opened their car line up at 4 p.m. Sunday, April 26.

“The line lasted from 4 p.m. to sometime after 5 p.m.,” Smith said. “It was a very emotional time with people in tears and telling the staff how much they missed us—and we have really missed them too.”

The car line proceeded around the building with the children’s pastor, Aaron Greenwood and his wife, Seana, stationed by the church’s playground on the southwest corner of the church complex, Youth Pastor Jimmy Brock and his wife, Lana, were stationed at the kitchen entrance in the back—Judy Nelson (secretary) and husband, Don, and deacon Randall Waller and wife, Judy, were all stationed at the entrance to the Mother’s Day Out; Executive Pastor Jeremy Franklin and wife, Becky, manned the rear entrance of the office suite and Pastor Smith and wife, Kim, were outside the office entrance on the northwest side of the church.

“The phrase we seemed to hear the most was, ‘we love you and have missed you.’” Smith said. “We estimated that around 100 cars came through the line.”

The pastor noted that one member was so overjoyed at the reunion, he had to make the drive-around three times.

Smith said that when the church does resume services, they will have to be creative in accommodating crowds and yet practice social distancing.

“We are going to seat people in every other pew,” the pastor said. “We have enough space in our worship center to accommodate 250 people comfortably using every other pew, and doing this twice on Sunday morning will enable us to have 500 or more in attendance.”

After six weeks of closure at First, Blooming Grove, with the exception of Facebook livestreaming of the church praise

team and the pastor’s message, Bro. Grady Cashion, who for almost 27 years, has been pastor of the church, couldn’t stand it any longer—he had to see the people.

On the sunny Sunday afternoon, April 26, it became obvious the people felt the same way and, to the pastor’s delight, the car line quickly formed for the drive-by prayer meeting. The event was scheduled for 2-4 p.m.

The staff and their spouses which included not only the pastor and his wife, Kathy, but also Associate Pastor Frank Escamilla and his wife, Tressie; JoAnn Pommerening, the church’s youth director and her husband, Jerry, were all on hand in front of the church, for two hours, wearing masks, as they greeted the flock.

“The people stayed in their cars and we practiced social distancing,” said Cashion. “It was just a great time of fellowship, the staff had the opportunity to greet and pray with everyone, hand out devotional booklets and the people were overjoyed not only to see us, but to see each other even if it was just for a couple of minutes.”

“It was such a blessing to see all the smiling faces,” the pastor said. “While we stood out there, cars just kept on coming by. When it looked like the line would die down, here came some more.”

Cashion said the people were glad to be out of the house, and expressed their excitement about the day when they would, once again, return to church.

“Along with prayer, we offered food, and help with any other needs people had,” Cashion said. “When it was all over, we were so tired, but our hearts were so full.”

The pastor shared how one of the girls in the church drove 40 miles for the event.

“She said, ‘Bro. Grady, I just had to come see you.’” he said with a broken voice. “People just needed to see their pastor, and the pastor needed to see them.”

Cashion said a date for re-opening had not been set as of yet, but their strategy will include, every other pew being used, with six feet distancing for each. Ushers will keep their distance, and everyone will have the option to wear masks.

No pew Bibles or hymn books will be available, and as far as responses to the invitation goes, Cashion said they would probably make arrangements for counseling in a room later.

The pastor estimated that 40-45 cars passed by the front of the church in the hour and fifty minutes.

Both congregations livestream their messages and worship.



▲ Procession of cars at Farley Street’s drive-by ministry



▲ From left: Tressie and Frank Escamilla; Bro. Grady and Kathy Cashion

Just the Crumbs Disaster Relief Ministry

By **LEVON HADEN**

Just the Crumbs Ministry President

As many of you know, *Just the Crumbs* has served in Nashville, Tennessee, since March 12, following a very destructive tornado. Shortly after, COVID 19 began to get national attention, and Nashville was hard hit by the virus, we arrived in Nashville. *Connect Nashville*, a local Nashville non-profit organization that seeks and helps the homeless and elderly in that city, asked us to work with them until the area where we are serving improves. We agreed to help as long as funds and/or needs continue.

We are serving 400-500 meals per day. We swap teams every week to two weeks to allow some downtime for our workers. God has richly blessed us all to stay healthy. We desire your prayers as we seek to allow God to guide us in how long we are used in Nashville.

During this time, we spent several days feeding in Jonesboro, Arkansas, following a tornado. The community came alongside

us. We served until our help became unnecessary. Then after devastating tornadoes in south Mississippi, we provided meals and/or help from four different locations until others took up the feeding. God richly blessed us with donations of food and supplies to be able to serve in all of these locations during such a short time.

We are humbly grateful to every individual, church and organization that reached out to help us in every way possible. It was sweet to see numerous people and organizations step up to help their friends and neighbors. We were also blessed to see crews from other areas come and assist in clean-up. May God bless each one.

Please continue to pray for the individuals we serve and our crews as we serve. Contributions may be made through PayPal: justthecrumbs21@gmail.com, mail to BMAA Missions office in

Conway, Arkansas, or mail to *Just the Crumbs*, 10 Wagon Trail, Sumrall, Mississippi 39482.





When the going gets tough, GMA keeps going

By **GLENDAM CHAMBERLAIN**

The whole world may be shut down, but people never stop needing the Lord. The young ladies of the Girls Missionary Auxiliary have been as active as ever in doing the Lord's work during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

As the number of coronavirus cases grew and basic medical supplies ran short, one GMA, Madalie Gardner, from First, Palmer, got to work. Teamed up with her grandmother, Madalie helped sew over 50 protective facemasks and delivered them to both CPS personnel and her local nursing home. In addition to making masks, Madalie has been writing and sending cards to some of the elderly members of her church to keep in touch while in-person church services are not being held. This sweet gesture has gained her some new pen pals too.



▲ Madalie Gardner of First, Palmer GMA, helped sew and distribute over 50 protective facemasks

Some local GMA groups have been staying connected with each other through online video chats. Sara McGee, National Miss GMA, says that her GMA group at Central, Conway, Arkansas meets every Sunday night in a video chat to do a missions lesson, hear a devotional and to share updates about their week. During this difficult time, it is important for the girls to know that they can still lean on their friends and GMA counselors to support them in whatever ways are needed.

The National GMA Facebook Group, "GMA –

Turning the World Upside Down" has been bursting with activity since the beginning of the pandemic. For several weeks now, two National GMA officers, Emily Henry from Camille Acres Baptist Church in Longview and Lydia Dunlap from Springhill, Greenbrier, Arkansas, have been hosting a weekly show called *Talk Show Tuesday*. On the show, they share encouraging words for their fellow GMA girls, ideas for things to do during quarantine, a short devotional, jokes and questions submitted by other girls, and the show even features special guests!

Several BMA of America missionaries have made live video appearances on the Facebook page, including Jimmy and Julie Walker, Sam and Dawn Freeman, Nichole Downs and the Risner Family. Valarie Fish, the National GMA Evangelism Chairperson, has posted a series of videos called Bible Study Basics, which gives girls practical tips on how to study the Bible. After all, there is perhaps no better opportunity than now to start making personal Bible study into a habit.

Hayley Rasco, assistant GMA/YLA promoter for both Texas and National GMA, states "This is just a small collection of stories about the work of the GMA during this crisis. It's beautiful to see these faithful girls acting on the GMA Allegiance to constantly dwell in the realms of prayer, Bible study, faith, love, and service – global pandemic or not."

The National GMA Retreat, annually held in June at Daniel Spring Baptist Encampment, has been postponed until 2021. For more details about GMA be sure to check online at nationalgma.org and texasgma.org.

BE A SUNBEAM SPACE TRAVELER

Texas Sunbeams are planning a fun "Space Travelers" theme for the State Sunbeam Houseparty at Jacksonville College for July 17-18, 2020.

Registration begins on Friday at 4 p.m. and the Houseparty ends with lunch on Saturday. The registration fee is \$15 per person. Three meals and snacks are provided. You will need to bring your own bedding for a sleepover at Collin's Hall (girls dorm).

The SUB and Cafeteria at Jacksonville College will become "Outer Space Environment." Space Travelers will receive an outer space photo booth nametag, a program, crafts and a goody bag. You may want to bring a little cash for offerings and souvenirs at the JBC Alumni Store.

Mrs. Vera Koonce, Texas Sunbeam promoter,

excitedly commented "So the countdown begins now to the future space voyage. Learn about God's outer space creations, enjoy music, great Bible lessons, fun crafts, personal recognition, talent time, snacks, movie-time, games, an exciting maze and fun, fun, fun!"

The Texas Sunbeam project is Water for Christ. All Houseparty information and registration is on www.texaswma.com, click on the Sunbeam tab.

GOD'S WORD GIVE US HOPE

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

D'Andra Smith, Texas 3rd vice president remarks, "We need God's word to give us hope. As our daily lives are disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, we rely more on His promises. While we are sheltering in place we should take time for Bible Study. Reading and studying God's word gives us strength and courage to face the uncertain times we are living in now. Lifeway.com is offering online Bible Studies through June 18. The study E-Book is available for \$5.00 and the video is free."

D'Andra is currently studying *Missing Pieces* by Jennifer Rothschild. Jennifer became blind as a teenager. In her teachings she shares the challenges in her life, encouraging women to look beyond their circumstances. She notes, "The circumstances of the pandemic are something we never thought would happen. The missing pieces in our lives can be unanswered questions, sorrow, disappointment, discouragement or anger. Through this Bible study we are encouraged to trust in the Lord with all our hearts not lean on what we understand, but in all our ways let us acknowledge Him and see how he directs our paths. Let God fill our missing pieces with Himself.

At this time, when we can't study at our churches, we can enjoy online studies at home.

Glenda Chamberlain is the Texas Women's Missionary Auxiliary (WMA) editor. Contact her at gcham33@yahoo.com. For more information about the Texas WMA, visit www.texaswma.com.



TEXAS BAPTIST HOME FOR CHILDREN

All I need

By **JASON CURRY**

You may imagine that Texas Baptist Home for Children (TBHC) is a different place since the government reacted to COVID-19 and placed restrictions on the way we are caring for our kids. The children in care are not able to visit with their biological parents due to the concern over spreading the virus. We have also suspended our site visits with our foster families. We are continuing to see more children enter care during this time with few new families stepping up to care for these kids. As we continue to walk this road know that we are taking safeguards and depending on God to see us through. May is Foster Care Awareness month, please join me in praying for TBHC's ministry.

Pray for God's continual provision for our families, critical precaution for our staff and crucial protection for our children.

The results of this pandemic have had a great impact on all people, whether you are describing the health risk to so many or the risk to a way of life. If you have been directly

impacted, I hope you will experience the provision of God.

I was reminded by my pastor (virtually, on Facebook, at our dinner table) of Psalm 23:1, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." *The Lord is my shepherd I have all that I need.* Right now. Today. No matter what you personally or corporately are going through within these challenging days, God is our Protector, Provider and Peace Giver, He is my shepherd and truly all we need!

I'm just sayin'.

Jason Curry is the president of the Texas Baptist Home for Children. Contact him 629 Farley St, Waxahachie, TX 75165, 972-937-1321 or jcurry@tbhc.org. For more information, visit www.tbhc.org.



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 for Children, in turn, notifies the appropriate person. Listed in capital letters are those honored or remembered from Apr. 1-30, 2020.

ENDOWMENTS

MYRA STOKES: Bill Stokes

E ANN PACE: Karl & Martha Pace

HONORARIUMS

ALL PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE FOSTER PARENTS:

Yolanda Almaraz

PALMER & HOLLIN ANDERSON: James & Susan Anderson

BRO. CHARLES JOHNSON: Dale & Trena Tillery

LINDSEY LAIRD'S BIRTHDAY: Charles & Iris Wilson

JESSICA MOORE'S BIRTHDAY: Charles & Iris Wilson

BRO. RICHARD SMITH: Travis & Allene Meador

THE ADOPTION MINISTRY: Duane & Charlotte Turner

JENNIFER THOMAS: Edwina Walker

MEMORIALS

DANIEL BAKER: Stephen & Tillie Lilly; Mary Child; Roy & Gloria Levee; Matthew Barlow; James Perryman; Ann Pugh; Jeb & Sandi Barney; Jeff & Alicia Hamilton; Vicki Barlow; Gary Nixon; Jerry Null

HAROLD BATEMAN: Don & Mary Ann Vaughn

JIMMY BEASLEY: Travis & Allene Meador

WALTER BECKER: Dennis & Ilona Myrice

SHARRY BELL: Lyndon Bell

LARRY & ROSELEN BOBO: James Bobo

J.B. COKER: Billy Coker

JOHNNIE DAVIDSON: Caleb & Jami Davidson

LOUISE DICKEY: James & Debbie Murphy

PAULINE & AUBREY GANDY: Jerry & Virginia Gandy

DELLA KAY GRIFFIN: Jed & Glenice Whitaker

JAMES & LAURA JONES: Vicky Faltz

WAYNE KEELING: Ida Keeling

JOHN LANDRUM: Robert & Joann Jacobs

MR. & MRS. HARRY J MEYER: Roy Talbot

JACOB 'BUD' MORROW: Charles & Charlotte Johnson

SONNY MURRAY: Vicky Faltz

IMOGENE POSEY: Rita & Dewayne Luedke; First Baptist Church, Centerville

BETTY ROYAL: Randy & Gloria Parks

RANDY SEALE: Jeanette Dorman

RAY SMITH: Temple Baptist Church

ROB STEDRY: Brenda Mewborn

LANDAN MARK THIELE: Eddie & Joyce Booth

E.T. WILLIAMS: Minnie Williams



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memorials-honorariums

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

God disciplines His people

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: June 7, 2020

TEXT: Joel 1:1-20

THE HOOK

What the world, and especially America, is experiencing today is eerily reminiscent of the warning Joel gave the tribe of Judah approximately 2,800 years ago. He reminds them of the assaults on the land, the likes of which they have not seen in their lifetime (1:2)—swarming, violent, hungry locusts devouring the land. Whether it is the devouring locusts of 835 BC, or the pandemic unleashed upon the world, and now giant “murder hornets” that are appearing on our shores in 2020 AD, God the Father knows what to send to a nation telling them (us) to be broken over sin and repent.

THE BOOK

Not much is recorded about the personal life of Joel except

that he was the son of Pethuel, and his name means “Jehovah is God.” Although Joel mentions no king in his work, some writers suggest that Joash, who assumed the throne at the death of his grandmother, Queen Athaliah, who died in 835 BC, was too young to rule, and the priest, Jehoida was like an interim ruler until Joash became of age.

The warning of judgement (verse 4). Joel’s prophecy of the plagues of locusts, paints a vivid picture of the invasion of the southern kingdom (Judah) by the Babylonian Army. But the prophecy extends far beyond that. The locusts are described as (1) Palmerworms (chewing), (2) locusts, (swarming), (3) cankerworm (crawling), (4) caterpillar (consuming), which is believed by some, to be a reference to the four coming world empires, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Much of Joel’s verbiage reminds us of John’s writings in Revelation.

The marks of a fallen nation. a. obsession with earthly pleasures and mind-altering substances (verses 5-7), b. joy in

worship has ceased (verses 12-13) “. . . joy is withered away from the sons of men.”

The call to repentance. (1) Verse 13a - Stand firm (“Gird yourselves . . .”), (2) Verse 13b - Become broken (“Lament, ye priests”). Brokenness begins with the spiritual leadership (a firm warning to pastors today) (verse 13), (3) verse 14 - Cleanse yourselves (“ . . . Sanctify ye a fast. . .”). Fasting, cleanses one so he or she may be more attuned to the call of God. A solemn assembly will follow.

THE LOOK

One great take away from this text is found in chapter 1, verse 3, “Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.” It has been said that a nation is one generation away from total apostasy. That is why it is urgent that spiritual men lead their households to stand for God and the scripture (Joshua 24:15).

The Day of the Lord

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: June 14, 2020

TEXT: Joel 2:1-11

THE HOOK

The text today provides us with a foreshadowing of the things to come, as per Revelation. What is the purpose of the sounding of the alarm? Why is gloominess and darkness a part of the impending judgement? The answer is simple—rebellion against God cannot be ignored. The penalty must be paid for sin and corruption to a Holy God, who cannot, and shall not tolerate it.

THE BOOK

1. The alarm must be sounded (verse 1). Men of God have historically sounded the alarm that judgement is coming. The sounding of such alarm must result in men and women trembling in conviction over such judgment, which is “nigh at hand”—not a steady diet of feel-good sermons, pop psychology, and topics designed to soothe and comfort. The earth is woefully lacking in messages of warning of impending doom and judgement, and in the conviction of the “inhabitants.” It’s high time for preaching to stir one to conviction and repentance, and time for people to weep and wail over sin.

2. Darkness and gloominess earmarks the condition of unregenerate man (verse 2). The locusts mentioned in chapter one are so thick, they shade the light of the sun. The days about which Joel spoke, pertained to the impending

attack of the Tribe of Judah by the Babylonian army, but a foreshadowing of the darkness to come as the “Day of the Lord” approaches. Peter referred to Joel 2 as he preached his powerful message in Jerusalem just after the Holy Spirit empowered the church. Acts 2:19-20 “*And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come.*”

3. Vegetation is wiped out (verse 3). This verse pictures the devastation of the approaching enemy (Babylonian army). The terrain before them is as lush as the Garden of Eden, but behind them is destruction and desolation. No one escapes. This imagery reminds us of Jesus’s Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24.

4. The charging army (verses 4-8). Could this be a picture of the battle to end all battles—men mounted on horses in the Valley of Megiddo during the Tribulation? The army is regimented—in lockstep—marching like warriors.

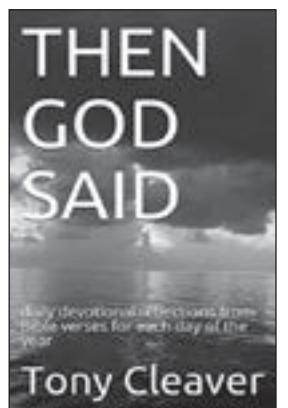
5. The Lord’s Army (verse 11). What happens at the end of the Battle of Armageddon? A vast army, arrayed in white, riding white horses, descending down upon a war-torn earth, with the Warrior of warriors in the lead, Jesus Christ, the Triumphant King (Revelation 19:11-16).

THE LOOK

Look to Jesus—the Only Way to everlasting hope, and eternity with Him.

Dr. Tony Cleaver publishes new book, *Then God Said*

Dr. Tony Cleaver, director of distance education and professor of Biblical Literature for the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary, staff writer of Bible study curriculum for Baptist Publishing House and writer of the newspaper column *Leave It to Cleaver*, has written a new book titled, *Then God Said: Daily devotional reflections from Bible verses for each day of the year.*



There are many voices in our world today with many, many words coming from print, electronic, social and other media. Some people get their information from the Internet and validate it through friends on social media. Some of the words are reliable, many are not.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

Genuine repentance

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: June 21, 2020

TEXT: Joel 2:12-17

THE HOOK

I recall sleepless nights, head upon a sweaty pillow, under deep conviction of sin. Knowing if I died in my sleep, I would spend eternity in hell. Joel's words, "The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?" Thousands of men, women, boys and girls have been hit with that awful truth—and then, God the Father drew them to Him, and they prayed words of repentance and faith, and all fear was gone. The terror of Joel 2:11 is suddenly turned to hope in verse 12.

THE BOOK

1. To escape the wrath of God there must be a turning (verse 12). It must be with the whole heart, a genuine repentance—not empty ritual. Such an experience of grace forgets sustenance (fasting) and is replete with brokenness and mourning.

2. To escape the wrath of God one must believe in God's ability to save (verses 13-14). Like Mordecai told Esther about her great act of faith, "Who knows but what you are come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Esther did not fully know until she stepped out in faith and approached the king's inner sanctum. So, it is with salvation through

repentance and faith.

3. When one escapes the wrath of God through salvation, there is a desire to let it be known (verse 15-17). Someone once said, "God does not call people to be secret agents for Him." It is publicly professed in the assembly. "Blow the trumpet," "gather the people," "Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly..."

THE LOOK

God the Father, must have payment for sin and rebellion—it is available to all who turn to Him in repentance, and in faith in His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9).

God responds to repentance

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: June 28, 2020

TEXT: Joel 2:18-27

THE HOOK

In no way could we ever comprehend the great joy of the Father to heap goodness on His children—but I think He gives us a hint, by permitting us to feel some of the euphoria, and the joy of lavishing our own children—and grandchildren with love, and provisions.

THE BOOK

1. The merciful response of a loving and forgiving God is compassion (verse 18) said he had pity on His people (Psalm 103:13).

2. The merciful response of a loving and forgiving God is provision (verses 19, 24). He gives good things—satisfying things, and He takes away the awful relationship with the heathen (Psalm 103:4-5).

3. The merciful response of a loving and forgiving God is restoration (verse 25, Psalm 51).

4. The merciful response of a loving and forgiving God is a right relationship with Him (verses 26-28). Compassion, provision, protection and restoration are glorious, but none so glorious as our relationship with Him. And that happens when He pours out His Spirit upon us (Joel 2:28, Acts 2:17).

THE LOOK

Because you have turned from sin, and turned to Christ,

you have the promise of a personal relationship with a compassionate, generous, attentive, and forgiving Heavenly Father, and a promise of a glorious future with Him in Heaven.

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.





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Some churches resume in-person worship services, others wait cont.

Of the churches who have already resumed services, the majority reported at least 50 percent of their average congregants have returned. The pastor of one of those churches, Dr. Mark Livingston, of Keltys First, Lufkin, shared that his church family resumed services May 3. The church did not offer a nursery or kids ministries. Food and fellowship time were also omitted. Extra activities, like Sunday school, continue to be canceled for the time being. Furthermore, there were no greeters or ushers. The congregation was encouraged to give their offerings in boxes located at the back doors of the worship center. Two services to allow for social distancing were conducted, one at 8:30 a.m., followed by a cleaning time when the sanctuary was disinfected, then another service began at 10:30 a.m..

Members of Keltys First asked members not to congregate inside, to sit apart on the chairs/pews and to only come in the building 15 minutes before and to leave thereafter. Most members fellowshiped outside after the service.

Livingston said, "For those who came, there was a lot of joy and gladness coming back together. We had about one-third of our congregation, but we expected that. With no nursery we hoped parents would keep the little ones at home (for their safety), and we knew that our older saints would not come, nor any visitors were expected."

The church plans to follow this method through May, then change it in June if possible.

Enon, Gilmer also resumed in-person worship services May 3. It was their first in-person worship service since discontinuing services in mid-March. As Keltys First, Lufkin did, Enon, Gilmer put social-distancing measures in place. Members were directed where to sit and were encouraged to wear masks and gloves while those over 65 or at risk were encouraged to stay home. Of course, the sermon was provided electronically for those who could not attend.

Dr. Ray Thompson, pastor, said, "Physical contact was discouraged, which proved to be awkward to a church that loves to handshake, hug and fellowship."

Purposefully, the worship service was kept very simple and included instrumental playing, prayer and preaching. Following the worship service, Thompson dismissed the congregation by family units through both entrances of the sanctuary, making sure to keep a six foot distance.

The pastor said, "I had to keep myself reminded that folks would feed off my conduct and response, especially the compliance efforts to meet the requirements of the governor." He continued, "I reduced the need to use volunteers or paid workers at the service because of the required training and preventative supplies needed."

Other churches, such as East Mayfield, Hemphill and Bethel, Groesbeck never stopped having services, although they said the number of those attending has been down considerably. As stated above, a number of churches such as Ebenezer Friendship, Pittsburg; Friendship, Mesquite; First, Blooming Grove; Calvary, Midlothian; Little Mound, Big Sandy and First, DeSoto are taking a wait and see approach.

The prayer of many Christians is that the COVID-19 Pandemic will result in a great awakening across the country, that millions will hear the Gospel proclaimed as a result of churches' new methods of reaching the masses and that they will come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

BMA Texas Missions cont.

**SPENCER SIMPSON—
REDEEMER'S LOVE MISSION, HOUSTON
SPNCRSMPSN@GMAIL.COM**

Thank you for your prayers and support that encourage and allow us to bring the gospel to this area of Houston!



▲ Spencer Simpson

Prayer Needs:

Pray for our ability to be a light in southwest Houston during the COVID-19 crisis. We want our community to see the hands and feet of Jesus through our efforts as a local body of Christ.

**JAIME HENRIQUEZ—
FUENTE DE VIDA ETERNA MISSION,
HOUSTON**

No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilians affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer.



▲ Jaime Henriquez

Prayer Needs:

A local and national revival

**GAMALIER LUNA—
NEW MISSION IN EL PASO
GAMALUGA@HOTMAIL.COM**

Beloved shepherds surrendering is not an option. Let's go forward. In Christ there is power.



▲ Gamalier Luna

Prayer Needs:

Help me pray to find a place for our church.

**NEPTALY MOLINA—
IGLESIA BAUTISTA MISSION,
NACOGDOCHES
NRMOLINA23@GMAIL.COM**

This quarantine time has been a blessing. I have been able to share more with my family. We have prayed together. I have read the Scriptures more, read the gospel of Matthew, and now, I am in Mark. I'm studying the book for seven steps to plant new churches. I'm also studying the driving



▲ Neptaly Molina

course to get my driver's license. Also, I am studying English. Pray for us.

Prayer Needs:

Pray for my theological classes as they are almost complete.

Pray for my family in Venezuela. My older sisters, Maria Molina, Anaira Molina and Olipa Molina are ill.

Pray that this pandemic will soon pass so I can get my missionary work in shape.



▲ Isaias Rojas Osechas

**ISAIAS ROJAS OSECHAS—
CHURCH PLANT IN SPRING
ISAIAS.ROJAS299@GMAIL.COM**

Thank you very much for praying for and supporting us.

**CHRIS DRIVER—
WEST TEXAS MULTIPLICATION
NETWORK/TEXAS MISSIONARY CARE
CJDRIVER316@GMAIL.COM**

I cannot tell a lie. I'm tired of this whole mess. But in my weariness, I stand amazed in the presence of the Nazarene! I stand amazed at His faithfulness! I stand amazed at His wisdom! I stand amazed at His sovereignty over all things! He has opened a great big door for me to personally reach into the community of Sundown that wasn't there before this virus! I have been invited into fellowship with 15-20 men from Sundown by a young man I ran into at the local hardware store. There is a tremendous opportunity to see God start a church and deeply impact this town for Christ! Needless to say, I am pretty excited about walking through this door! Please pray for us and this opportunity. God is definitely on the move here in west Texas!



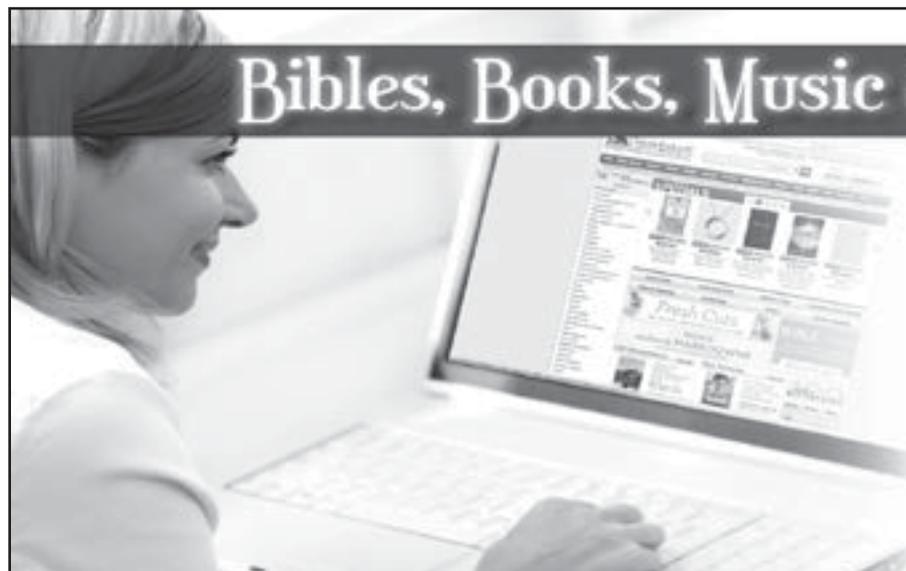
▲ Chris Driver

Prayer Needs:

Sundown, Journey Fellowship, Cross Work Church, Nick and Jennifer Brockway and baby Tripp

Heith Mitchell is the director of BMA of Texas Missions. Contact him at P.O. Box 73, Waxahachie, TX 75168, 972-923-0757 or hmitchell@bmatexas.org. For more information, visit www.bmatexasmissions.org.





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EVENTS

BMA OF TEXAS ANNUAL MEETING

DATE: November 9-10, 2020

PLACE: Farley Street Baptist Church,
Waxahachie, Texas

OBITUARY

MITZI LANETTE GOODWIN

Mitzi Lanette Goodwin, 52, of Warren, Arkansas, passed away April 21, 2020 at the John R. Williamson Hospice



House in El Dorado, Arkansas. She was born June 14, 1967 in Kalamazoo, Michigan, a special daughter of Bro. Rocky Goodwin, founder and CEO of Evangelistic International Ministries, and his late wife, Jeannette Cross Goodwin.

Mitzi was active in the Special Olympics and a silver medal winner in the International Special Olympics in 1983. She was a member of Calvary, Warren. She was very active in putting together thousands of the Shepherd's Bags for Evangelistic International Ministries, a huge fan of Southern Gospel Music and loved listening to Heaven's Echoes.

Surviving, other than her father, are brothers Ken Goodwin and spouse, Ladonna, of Warren, Arkansas and Mike Goodwin and spouse, Ann, of Magnolia, Arkansas. Six nieces and nephews and 18 great-nieces and nephews.

A graveside service was April 24 at Oakland Cemetery in Warren, Arkansas.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred given to the Evangelistic International Ministries Shepherds Bag Ministry, P.O. Box 297, Magnolia, Arkansas 71754.



PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

AVAILABLE POSITIONS

VICE PRESIDENT OF EXECUTIVE AFFAIRS—Jacksonville College is accepting applications for vice president of executive affairs. This is a supervisory position over the business office, human resources, finances, housing, student life, athletics and maintenance. A master's degree is required and a doctorate is preferred. Go online for application, then mail application to Jacksonville College, Attention: Dr. Mike Smith, 105 B.J. Albritton Drive, Jacksonville, Texas 75766. TFN

PASTOR—First, Springhill, Louisiana is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Daniel_Thomas@kinderhawk.com or mail to First Baptist Church, Attention: Rodney Tyler, P.O. Box 247, Springhill, Louisiana 71075. 5/20

YOUTH/STUDENT MINISTER—Antioch, Gilmer is seeking a bi-vocational youth/student minister. Send resume to Pastor Michael Pool, 7391 Giraffe Road, Gilmer, Texas 75644 or to pool-michael@hotmail.com, or call 903-315-6822. 6/20

PASTOR—Gray's Prairie, Scurry is seeking a pastor. Send resume to the church at P.O. Box 206, Scurry, Texas 75158. You may also call Chris Taliaferro at 214-674-8064, Bob Strewert at 903-802-3182 or Willie Niches at 972-754-9405. 6/20

PASTOR—First Missionary, Morton is seeking a pastor. Send resume to jimmysealy@aol.com or to FMBC Box 981, Morton, Texas 79346. TFN

YOUTH MINISTRY—South Park, Fort Worth is seeking a bi-vocational youth director and a youth ministry intern. Visit spbc.life/joinourteam for more information. TFN

PASTOR—Mount Olive, Scurry is seeking a full-time pastor. Send resume to the church at P.O. Box 99, Scurry, Texas 75158. TFN

PASTOR—First, Jacksonville is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee, 210 Philip Street, Jacksonville, Texas 75766 or email to reception@firstjax.org. TFN

PASTOR—Central, Mineola is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Send resume to Pastor Search Committee, 602 N. Line, Mineola, Texas 75773 or email to cburke43@gmail.com. TFN

PASTOR & STAFF CHANGES

CLINTON EVERITT has resigned as pastor of Beacon, Bryan.

* If you are aware of pastor and staff changes, please let us know at Baptist Progress by emailing us at editor@baptistprogress.org.

GOD'S GIFT

HEAVEN IS A FREE GIFT!

It is not earned or deserved. No amount of effort or good works can earn a place for you in heaven. Why? Because . . .

MAN IS A SINNER.

"For all have sinned . . ." (Rom. 3:23) Because of this, man cannot save himself. GOD. On the one hand, God is merciful and does not want to punish us. Yet God is just and must punish sin. God solved this problem for us in the Person of . . .

JESUS CHRIST.

He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins and rose from the grave to purchase a place for us in heaven—*"the Lord has laid on Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all"* (Isa. 53:6).

THE GIFT IS RECEIVED BY FAITH.

Saving faith is trusting in Jesus Christ alone for eternal life. It means resting on Christ alone and what He has done, rather than what you or I have done to get us into heaven. *"Believe on (or trust in) the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved"* (Acts 16:31).

SO MAY WE ASK . . .

Have you received God's free gift of eternal life? The Bible assures us in 1 John 5:13 that we can know we have eternal life.

Do you know for sure that you are going to heaven when you die? The Bible says, *"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."* *If you are willing to repent (turn away from your sin and to the Lord Jesus) you can receive the free gift of eternal life by simply praying: Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner and do not deserve eternal life. But I believe You died and rose from the grave to purchase a place in heaven for me. Jesus, come into my life, take control of my life, forgive my sins, and save me. I am now placing my trust in You alone for my salvation, and I accept your free gift of eternal life.*



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June 4-5

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