

The Missouri Missionary Baptist

“Holding Forth The Word of Life”

Philippians 2:16

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One Hundred Years from NOW!

by Jeff Swart, BMAA President

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Five thousand pastors were recently surveyed and asked, “What do you think is the greatest need in the church today?” Interestingly enough, 98% listed as their number one or number two response: “To get the laymen involved in doing the work of the ministry.” The results of this survey is certainly no surprise to pastors since most of them know that the Pareto Principle is true: 20% of the people do 80% of the work in the church.

It is amazing to me how busy people are today. Everyone is busy! From the family with children to the retired couple, everyone complains about being busy. I confess that I too am busy. Have you noticed that busy people are never too busy to stop and tell you how busy they are? In fact, I have done that very thing!

I am not alarmed at the fact that almost everyone is busy, but I am alarmed at what they are busy doing. Most believers are busy doing things that have nothing to do with the Lord’s work. Therefore, when they run out of time, guess who gets cut out of their busy schedule? That’s right — God.

When addressing the subject of priorities, Jesus shared this commandment with His disciples, “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matt. 6:33 NIV). What “things” was Jesus referring to? He promised that, if we put Him first, He would provide the

food, drink and clothing that we need. (Matt. 6:25-32) So the principle is simple — if you want to save some time in your busy schedule, put Jesus first in all things and then He will provide the essentials of life.

Someone once penned these thought provoking words: “One Hundred years from now, it won’t matter if you lived in a Fifth Avenue mansion or in an alley shack; whether you wore expensive suits or hand-me-downs; whether you were known among the world’s elite or to the vast army of nobodies...”

So the next time you are about to break under the load of a busy schedule, think about what will matter a hundred years from now. In reality, only what you have done for Christ will matter then! If that is all that will matter then, that is all that should matter now!

Can COVID-19 Stop Us?

by: Jordan M. Tew, Assist. to the Director of Baptist Publishing House

Dear friends, I am concerned about the current state of our churches. Consider what has become “normal” for us: we are barely meeting for weekly worship, some congregations have eliminated singing praises to our Lord, most churches are not actively going out into their communities to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus, and Sunday School classes are off the table in a growing number of churches. What in the world is going on?

Now before anyone takes offense at these words, let me assure you I understand there are churches and individuals who have decided to cancel various meetings and have made changes to better protect their health and safety. I applaud that and understand those decisions are difficult to make. There is a need to abide by the law of the land, if possible and if it does not go against the commands of the Bible.

However, an ongoing lack of corporate worship, evangelism, and Bible teaching can never become “the new normal.” God’s Word and His mandate to His churches have not changed. Are we being faithful during these days? Are we preaching the Gospel as we ought? Are we worshipping as the Bible instructs us? Are we baptizing and taking the Lord’s Supper? Are we neglecting anything God has commanded us?

I wonder if covid-19 is the biggest obstacle we will face in our lifetime? I would assume it is not. If this virus proves to be an ongoing setback for our churches, then how will we respond to the other trials Christ has promised we will face? How will we handle famine, nakedness, and sword or persecution, hatred, and false prophets (Romans 8, Matthew 24)? Will we stand on the promise that Hell itself will not prevail against us or will we merely limp along until Jesus returns?

The truth is, God’s people have always assembled and ministered despite trials. In the roughly 2,000 year span since Jesus walked on this earth, His churches have faced persecution, plague, war, starvation, terrorism, economic instability, and governmental opposition. How we handle our current situation will impact our children and our grandchildren directly.

God’s people are well-acquainted with suffering and difficult times. In fact, we have often thrived under harsh conditions and God has used times like our own to usher in great outpourings of salvation and revival. We have not been called to comfort or safety. We have been called to faithfulness. Will covid-19 stop us? Perhaps a better question is “Can covid-19 stop us?”

Consider the words of our Savior and the Cornerstone of your church: “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Attention Churches

Due to continuing health issues, Bro. David Griggs has informed the editor that, after 30+ years he is resigning as pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in St. Louis and the church has voted to disband. They are selling their property and have two offers at this time. They also have some song books, a good piano and an organ and other items that they would love to see used in other churches. If you are interested contact Bro. Griggs at 314-724-4204.



Attention Church Treasurers:

The BMA of Missouri Loan Committee wants you to know that due to our Treasurer Bro. David Griggs’ health issues, please send all offerings and loan payments until further notice to:

BMA of Missouri Loan Committee
% Dennis Baker
5146 Darkmoor LN
Imperial, MO 63052

Dennis Baker, President

Note: Bro. Griggs’ address will be changed, so please make sure you send offerings for this department to Bro. Baker!

Don’t Let the **Noise**
of this **World**

Keep You From Hearing
the

Voice of God!



NEWS BRIEFS



HELLO to All from **Oak Hill Baptist Church in Alton, MO.** We hope everyone had a blessed and safe Fourth of July. It seems like summer just started and now it is almost over. Hopefully this month our local Schools will start and be able to teach our youth. Most of the time kids do not want to go to School and learn but I think now they are looking forward to it. July 19th Bro. Ed and Sis. Theresa had a weekend off. Bro. Tom Foster Sr. filled-in for Bro. Ed and, like he always does, he did an excellent job of preaching God's Word. July 26th, after our morning service, we had our Graduation Dinner for our graduates. Even though it was a couple of months late I do not think that mattered. We wanted to show them we were happy and proud of their accomplishments. In August we have five Sundays, which means we will have our fifth Sunday dinner. Hopefully we will be able to have it! Everyone is always welcome to come and eat with us. This month we have quite a few birthdays to celebrate. Until next month, when I hope I will have some good news to tell you, we will be praising and honoring our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. God Bless!!
Edward Casey, Pastor • Jennifer Williams, Reporter

Greetings from **Lindsay Lane Baptist Church in Florissant, MO,** to our sister churches once again! We pray that everyone is keeping safe in these uncertain times. As we face each day we are reminded of God's promises and are so thankful. We have read the back of the book and we know how the story ends! Our hope is in Him! We have started having Sunday school classes again and it is so good to fellowship again. While enjoying the book of Amos we are missing the lessons that Bro. Crawford made for us each week while we were in quarantine. Bro. Brian has kept us in awe with messages from God's Word reminding us why we are here! We earnestly ask for your prayers as we are in a fight to keep witnessing in the Florissant area. If you are on Facebook I'm sure you're enjoying all the pictures and articles regarding Camp Garwood from by gone days. Thank you to those capable of posting those! There are so many prayer needs right now and I'm so thankful we have The Great Big God that already knows those needs! Pray for our country, our leaders, our enemies, pastors, our churches, and each other! We are praising God for answered prayer as Sis. Valarie Dixon is home and hopefully will be moving closer to church. Sis. Sheila Shell recently fell and fractured her hip and is out of commission for now. Sis. Rachel Leal is recovering from a concussion and Bro. Buddy Graham is having some health issues. We are so thankful for those who have been able to attend services. Fellowship is very important! Even though we are careful we can still smile! Till next month, may God find us faithful!
Brian Meade, Pastor • Kathy Chapman, Reporter.

At **Ohlman Baptist Church, Bunker, MO** July has come and gone, just like at all the rest of our churches. But even with some of the members missing services due to vacations, our Sunday morning attendance is increasing with visitors almost every week. Bro. Larry May has the responsibility of contacting men to fill the pulpit, and we pray for him as this can be stressful. Fortunately, Bro. Sam Wisdom has filled in on short notice and his brother, Bro. Tom Wisdom has preached a few times. We recently had Bro. Bryce Wilson for the first time. Everyone seemed to enjoy him. We have other men who have been contacted and are looking forward to hearing them in the future. The best news that the entire church and community had been waiting for came on July 16th when we could officially call Baby Z, Zyah Harper, a couple weeks after her first birthday. Dalton and Allison Harper were first introduced to her when she was 19 days old and wrapped her little fingers

around their hearts. We look forward to watching her grow physically and spiritually. We will be starting the Wednesday night program in August. Some adjustments may have to be made but our faithful workers are up to the challenge. Continue to pray for Juanita May's mother, Sis. Lorene Latham as her health is failing and the family is having to make adjustments and decisions concerning her care.

Janet Widger, Reporter

Abundant Life in Christ, Charleston, MO reports that in July we continued to offer a full slate of services. Some of our people are coming and some are not. We held VBS in July and rejoice that KJ and Dominick made professions of faith during it. A few of us were also able to represent at a church camp where Pastor Dunlap was one of the evangelists.

Rodney Dunlap, Pastor

Greetings to all from **Bethel Baptist Church in Sikeston, MO.** I am reporting some old news since I missed sending in a report last month. May 31st we lost one of our dearest and oldest members, Sis. Glenda Newman went home to be with Jesus. She will be sadly missed, but remembered for her faithfulness to church when she was able to come. Her last days were spent in the nursing home and she was not able to attend. She would always say, "I don't know why the Lord keeps me here, I am of no use to anyone." She wanted to go home to be with Jesus and the loved ones that left before her. We called off our Vacation Bible School and Easter program because of the covid-19 virus this year. After much thought, Sis. Donna decided to go ahead and have the Easter program. It will be August 9th during the evening service. We are so thankful for Sis. Donna as she faithfully works with the youth. We partnered with "aspire" again this year and

filled quite a few baby bottles with our change. We are back to our regular services and having separate classes again. Father's Day we celebrated our fathers with a special service and a few tokens of our appreciation of them all! One of our members surprised us with a gender reveal for the upcoming birth of their baby! Zach & Makayla Kinder had some refreshments for everyone to attend and find out that they will be having a boy!! Congratulations Zach, Makayla, Paisley & baby boy Kinder!! God is so good!

Billy Davis, Pastor • Joan Wood, Reporter

Greetings from **Briar Baptist Church, Doniphan, MO!** July was sure a good month! Part of July's blessing started with June 28th when Sis. Claudina Massey was baptized and became a member of Briar! Sis. Claudina is the daughter of Bro. Bob & Sis. Yvonne Hill. Hallelujah! we are growing! Briar hosted the Youth in Harvest for July and we had a guest speaker, Bro. Brantley, a missionary to Argentina. Again, I was unable to attend because of having a back surgery. Maybe this month I will be able to attend, for I have sure missed not being there for the last 2 months. Hopefully this month we will be able to attend the 3rd Sunday Singing too. The singing for August will be on the 16th at Antioch M.B.C. in Oxly, MO at 2:00 to 3:30. The Prayer Breakfast will be August the 15th at The Corner Cafe just north of Doniphan, MO on Hwy 21 at 9:00 a.m. and the Youth in Harvest on the 14th at Friendship M.B.C. in Harviell, MO at 7:30 p.m. We are sure looking forward to seeing everyone at these events this month. We sure missed not being at Camp Garwood this last week of July, and are praying that next year we will be there! May God continue to bless us all! Continue to pray for our country, our leaders, our Pastors and the churches without Pastors.

David Grubb, Pastor • Yvonne Hill, Reporter

Landmark Baptist Church, DeSoto, MO. sends our greetings to all of our sister churches and hope that everyone is doing well in their service to our Lord. Bro. Denver Page brought the message on the morning of July 5th, and Bro. Randy Causey brought a devotional that evening. In the morning service, July 12, Bro. Buddy Johnson and his wife, Taffy, were with us. What a blessing they were to all who were privileged to attend. He told us about what they had ahead of them on the field in Ecuador, then preached a powerful challenging message. We were overjoyed that they were able to spend the afternoon with us and we accompanied them to Friendship, St. Clair for the evening service, where we heard another challenging mes-

• Continued on Page 4 •

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FINANCIAL REPORT BMA OF MISSOURI MISSIONS • JULY 2020

General Fund:

Checking Account:

Balance June 30, 2020		\$	44,508.62
June Receipts:			
Missions:	\$	2,153.61	
Total Income:	\$	2,153.61	\$ 2,153.61
Total Available		\$	46,662.23
Disbursements:			
Director, Salary	\$	650.00	
Bank Fee	\$	12.00	
Total Disbursements	\$	662.00	\$ (662.00)
Balance June 30, 2020:			\$ 46,000.23

Bank of America Savings Account:

Balance June 30, 2020		\$	1,101.22
Interest:	\$.01	\$.01
Balance July 31, 2020:			\$ 1,101.23

Investment in BMA of Mississippi Revolving Loan Fund:

Balance June 30, 2020:		\$	106,872.80
Interest:		\$	0.00
Balance July 31, 2020:			\$ 106,872.80

Total of all Funds July 31, 2020: \$ 153,974.26

Exciting Updates from Baptist Publishing House!

We're excited to share two things with you!



First, we will be providing Sunday School Teaching Videos each week via Facebook and Youtube. These will be pre-recorded so everyone can view at their own convenience. We want to provide this so churches that are not having Sunday School

can still have the ability to have the class taught online. The videos will appear on our Facebook and Youtube pages each Sunday morning before 10 a.m. Make sure you order the Baptist Expositor books so your people can follow along each week.

Second, we would like to remind you that you can now order the fall curriculum. The fall quarter begins on September 6. Therefore, you will want to order by August 21 to make sure you get your



books in plenty of time. Order today so you don't forget about it later!

In Christ Alone, *Jordan Tew* Assistant to the Director

Hollering in the Car

by The Late Jim Sayers

I recently read about a man who was sitting in his car at a stoplight. The person in front of him was going through papers on the seat of her car. When the light changed to green, she paid no attention.

Soon the light turned red again, and the man behind her began to scream at her and beat on his steering wheel, even though his car windows were closed and she couldn't hear him. Suddenly, his tantrum was interrupted by a policeman tapping on his car window and ordering him to get out of his car.

The man protested saying, "You can't arrest me for hollering in my own car!" After two hours in a holding cell, the arresting officer advised the man that he was free to go. The man stormed out of the cell and said, "I knew you couldn't arrest me for that! You haven't heard the last of this!"

The officer replied, "I didn't arrest you for hollering in your car. I was directly behind you at the light, and I saw you screaming and beating on your steering wheel. So I said to myself, 'What a horrible man.' There was nothing I could do to you for your temper fit; then I looked at your back bumper and noticed the 'Choose Life' license plate. I also noticed the bumper sticker which said, 'Jesus Is Coming Soon.' Then I saw the fish symbol and the cross on your rear view mirror, so I arrested you because I thought you must have stolen the car. I just didn't believe a Christian would act like you were acting!"

Think about it! "Those who are short-tempered do foolish things..." (Proverbs 14:17). Usually when we lose our tempers, we lose our testimony, our friends and fellowship with our best friend, Jesus! (via Baptist Trumpet)

From Our Missions Director...

This week I have been contacted by representatives of two of our churches who wanted to get some advice or help in the dispersion of funds and/or items from their churches who have reached the point of closing their doors.

Needless to say, this is not the kind of news we want to hear, but it is becoming a reality too often. Neither of these decisions are the result of anything that has happened in the last few months of upheaval in our country, but are the result of separate circumstances in each church and have been made after much prayer and soul-searching.

I commend those in charge of both these churches for wanting to make sure their assets and property are used in a way to help other churches or various ministries of our associated work and that is why they have made contact for assistance or guidance in these matters.

In the last year I have had conversations with several local churches who are showing concern over decreasing attendance and lack of growth due to various reasons including, a lack of pastors who are available, decreasing funds coupled with increasing costs, decreased interest or enthusiasm in church growth, or just overall weariness in working as God leads.

I realize there are Biblical remedies for all of our problems and we should never want to give up doing what we can to keep our doors open.

But there are also times when God is no longer working through certain congregations and He is ready for those involved to seek His guidance and do whatever will help all involved. Sometimes we reach the point when we must move on and get refocused and refreshed spiritually, just like we need refreshed physically, morally, and intellectually.

When we see our fellow Christians making some decisions that we are not pleased with we need to be careful to

not criticize them, but show love and give encouragement to them as they seek God's will. Even if our friends in Christ are getting on the wrong track, we need to follow Paul's advice to the Galatian Christians in Galatians 6:1. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Never condone any wrong but encourage what is right.

I'm not condemning those churches who feel they must close, but I am encouraging us to prayerfully help one another to do what God knows is best and to encourage those who have to make some very difficult decisions at various times in their ministry.

We know not what we might face in the days ahead, but we know God knows all things and He will guide us to do what is best as we seek His leadership.

Let's pray for one another as we follow God!

• **NEWS From Page 2** •

sage. Remember them in your daily prayers as they are scheduled to leave for Ecuador August 10th. Sunday morning, the 19th, Denver preached at Mt. Olive, Salem. That was quite a trip, but they certainly have some wonderful people worshipping there. We are very happy that the Lord led us to call Bro. Benjamin as pastor, and doubly blessed that he felt led to accept the call. He's been bringing some very good sermons each time he steps behind the pulpit. He joined the church July 15th, on the promise of a letter from Westview, Jefferson City. We will be talking about an ordination service in the months to come. Denver's nephew, Tommy Huggins, was called home on the 29th and we were able to go to his funeral August 1st, at Rector, AR. Thanks to all who had been praying for him. Sis. Debbie Steinbach spent a month in Alaska with her daughter. She needs your prayers as she's having some health problems right now. Also, Sis. Jackie Couch finally had surgery for a growth in her eye area. They did quite an extensive surgery from which she is now recovering. So much sickness and so many prayer requests! We've also had prayers answered for which we praise our Lord and our God. Until next month or the Lord's return,

Benjamin Kingston, Pastor • Sharon Page, Reporter

Hello to all of you from **Lower Doe Run Baptist Church, Ellington, MO.** We rejoice to be able to worship together. We were sad to have to cancel the Logan Creek Association to meet at Mt. Olive Baptist in Salem on August 8th. We really miss meeting with our sister churches. We resumed our brown bag lunches and afternoon services. The Ladies Bible Study continues with the singing, praying and studying scriptures. Our pastor has poured out his heart for missions and how the early church in Acts encourages us still. "There is much to do, there's work on every hand, Hark the the cry for help comes ringing thru the land... Lord, Send Me" Page 144 in the old Favorites Songs and Hymns. We are also regularly blessed with special music from Sis. Dianna Meade and her selections go so well with the message of the day. Continue to pray for our members that are so faithful even though they are in physical pain.

Melvin Meade, Pastor • Carolyn Meade, Reporter

Ozark Heights Baptist Church, Potosi, MO. Today, I am writing to you from quarantine inside my home. I have been sick for about 11 days now and have tested positive for Covid-19. I know that many may be in the same struggle right now. Whether you are sick, know someone who is sick, or are trying not to get sick, each of us can cling to the wisdom written in Scripture. Specifically, 2 Corinthians 4:18 reminds us, "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." This pandemic is hard to ignore right now. Everywhere we look, we can see signs of sickness, anxiety, and caution. However, that is all temporary. Our hope remains the same. All of this world will pass away and the only thing left will be Christ and His glory. Stand firm in your faith brothers and sisters. No matter what happens to this body, eternity is what we live for each day. God bless you.

Brian Kingston, Pastor

Bethany Baptist Church, St. Louis, MO is continuing to meet each Sunday morning at 10:45 and it is good to see some who have been unable to attend coming back. Thanks for your prayers for Bro. Earl Johnston (still in the hospital), Sis. Eunice Compton (back in the nursing home recovering from the Virus), Sis. Ella Beeler (having tests), and our church as we search for a pastor, James Hoffmann, Interim Pastor

Greetings from **First Baptist Church Potosi, MO.** The Celebrate Recovery Praise Band opened the month of July with leading the worship service. Pastor Jim was on vacation, so Pastor Kevin brought the message. The FBC kids club met each Wednesday for fun and activities while learning about God. The teens met at 2:30 and prepared activities for the children in addition to going out to complete work for some of the elderly in the church. Sunday School classes opened again, and we were so excited! Early service is now at 8:00 a.m., Sunday School at 9:00 a.m., and regular service at 10:00 a.m. We are following restrictions that are necessary, but it so hard not to give someone a hug. One of the benefits of this is that you get to the restaurants before most churches are out. Pastor Jim has been going through the books of the Bible in his Sunday morning messages. He has taught some very good lessons. We lost one of our long-time members this month. Bro. James Simpson passed away after a long illness. He was the music director for 60 years; he retired when he was 80. Now he is rejoicing in heaven with his brothers Willis, Robert, and Roland. It reminds me of the song "That Will be a Great Reunion Day." Uncle James was the last of that generation to go be with the Lord. Celebrate Recovery leaders completed a virtual summit that lasted for two days. It seemed long, but provided a lot of important information. The Lord is coming soon, so let us be diligent in our work for Him. Please pray for us as we pray for you.

Jim Ainley, Pastor • Deborah Rauhut, Secretary

New Testament Baptist Church Sullivan, MO reports that God really blessed our church's **Mid-Summer Blast** during the month of July! Every Wednesday evening from 6:00 p.m. -8:30 p.m. we met at the church at **Mystery Island**, where we tracked down the one true

God. What a blessing it was to serve together as a church family. We had a great group of volunteers with over 50 adult and teen workers! And God blessed us with 70 different kids throughout the month. Our teachers taught some awesome truths about our amazing God -- He is Almighty, He is all-knowing, He is all-powerful, He is everywhere, and He is trustworthy. We praise HIM for the 3 salvations during **Mid-Summer Blast** and look forward to following up with each of them to encourage them to follow the Lord in believer's baptism. All the kids also gave a love offering for our BMA Mississippi Baptist Children's Home. They gave a total offering of \$559.50. We give all the glory to God for all the great things He did. He alone is worthy! (Revelation 4:11)

Josh Wright, Pastor

**Pictures of
New Testament Baptist Church's
Mid-Summer Blast**



**Clarification From BMAA
Coordinating Council**

BMA of America Vice President Mark Livingston has assumed the pastorate of a church not affiliated with the BMA. Chairman White's remarks are in response to this event.

What happens when an officer or committee member leaves the BMA? I hope to answer some questions I have personally been asked concerning this subject. Regardless as to whom the person might be, when they leave our association and are no longer a member of a BMAA church their positions automatically become vacant and will be filled at our next annual Association meeting or as stated in our Articles of Agreement.

Paul White, Chairman, BMAA Coordinating Council

Missionaries Waiting??

Cris & Alicia Samson • Philippines

We are ready to return to the field as soon as the Lord allows. The Philippines has restricted travel since the beginning of the pandemic, and they continue to monitor travel closely. Because Cris is a Filipino, our understanding is that our family could return to the Philippines with little difficulty as far as travel is concerned, but since we do not have a place to live, a vehicle or any physical belongings, it will be difficult for us to get settled with the current restrictions. We are trusting God to give us wisdom in making the best decision for our family.

As many of you know, I (Alicia) have been studying to take the US Medical Licensure Exam (USMLE) for doctors. Since all my schooling was done outside of the U.S., the process has been lengthy and quite confusing at times.

While thinking that I had a good understanding of the requirements, the pandemic opened my eyes to my lack of understanding.

June 8, 2020, I was finally given permission to take the first step of the USMLE. Sadly, I did not pass the exam, but God is sovereign, and He has helped us understand His will and direction through all of this.

What I originally failed to realize was that once I have passed any part of the USMLE, I have a maximum of seven years to complete the first two steps and enter a U.S. residency training program. If I do not enter a residency program in the U.S., I will lose all the completed parts of the licensing process. A residency can take anywhere from three to six years, depending on the field of study. The third and final step of the testing process is taken after completion of the first year of the residency program, at which point the USMLE is complete and a US medical license can be issued.

I know God has a purpose for allowing me to become a doctor, and I will continue to pursue my U.S. license. It may take longer than we initially thought, but it will not hinder us from continuing the ministry with the vision God has given to us. Our hearts long to serve God, and that is what we will do.

Once we return to the Philippines, we will continue church planting with a support ministry of medical missions under the scope of my nursing license just as we have been doing in the past. We will utilize the additional resources that the Lord has given to us through some of my former classmates who are now doctors in the Philippines. I will also continue studying for the USMLE. A testing center is available in the Philippines where I can take both Step One and the first part of Step Two at a later date.

Currently, we are doing our best to stay mentally and physically healthy and raise two little boys — Benjamin is 2 years old, and Asher is almost 11 months old. We are thankful for our boys and look forward to what God has planned for their lives. We are enjoying the journey of parenting as it is strengthening our faith, growing us closer to God and helping us learn more about evangelism through teaching our little ones about God and His love.

Cris is doing double duty by helping me improve my Ilongo language skills to prepare me for deeper communication with the Filipino people.

We would like to end with a heartfelt thank you for all your support, prayers, encouragement and love. We could not do this ministry without you. We thank God for each of you and pray that He will greatly bless you, your church and your family. (alicia.ramshur@gmail.com)

Stan & Donna Scroggins • Philippines

It seems that, for the time being, we will not be able to travel back to the Philippines. That means we must stay in the U.S. until the country opens, which we pray will not be too long. In the meantime, BMAA Seminary in Jacksonville, Texas has graciously rented us an apartment on their campus. We will

do our best to keep everyone informed of our travel details.

Thank you to the Southern Arkansas University Association of Baptist Students and Director Chris Lucy for hosting a lunch on July 20 for area pastors to hear updates from Jimmy Walker and us. We enjoyed getting to know these ArkLaTex pastors and "getting them in the know" about our work in Asia Pacific.

Classes are starting at the Bible College, and Donna and I will be teaching our classes on line. This is a first for us, and certainly a first for the Bible College. We can surely see the hand of God is all the "firsts" happening in our world, country and churches. What was to be a disastrous victory for Satan has been a glorious celebration because of the new ways to reach the world for Christ.

With all our furlough appointments fulfilled, we are now sitting, waiting and praying for something to do. Give us a call if we can assist you in any way — preaching, teaching, speaking, or visiting a WMA, Brotherhood, GMA, Galilean group, or even a civic group. Contact us at stanmusical@icloud.com or text/call (573) 489-9549.

Study: Uncertain Times Drawing People to Truth

OneNewsNow - Concerns over COVID-19 have kept many people from large and small gatherings, even when it comes to Christians and studying the Bible. But new research on the subject does show some heartening statistics.

Researcher John Plake of American Bible Society recently told the "Washington Watch" radio program his organization has noticed an increase in curious exploration of scripture.

"When we look at things like Google trends, we noticed that as the coronavirus was leading everyone into lockdowns, particularly on the eastern seaboard, that there was a five-year historic spike on Internet searches around the

Sixty-Five Years in Ministry



Enjoying the Celebration

The Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Salem had a retirement dinner for Bro. Ray and Sis. Dorothy Thurman June 2, 2020. Bro. Thurman has been preaching since he was 17 years old and has preached for 65 years. Sis. Dorothy has faithfully served by his side as he pastored churches in Missouri, Tennessee, Alaska and other areas over the years.

The Thurmans have three children: Craig is a pastor in Alaska, Cindy lives in Jefferson City, MO, and Vaughn lives in Arkansas.

We will miss them so much and pray for them as they "shift gears" after all these years of pastoring the Lord's churches.

Bro. Ray was a bi-vocational pastor much of the time working in various positions such as a car parts salesman, giving bids on auto body repairs, even working on the Alaska Pipeline during its construction.

When he and Sis. Dorothy decided to settle in the Potosi, Missouri area they built the log house they still occupy. This involved cutting down trees on their property, debarking them, dragging them to the building site, cutting, trimming, preparing and even installing them. During all this they continued serving the Lord until recently when their health has prevented them from carrying on an active ministry.

Mt. Olive Baptist Church was blessed to work with the Thurmans and will certainly miss their labors.

word 'Bible,'" Plake relays.

Meanwhile, researchers found a decline in the percentage of Americans who say they never use the Bible on their own.

"That meant that there are actually people who normally have nothing to do with scripture, who are wondering, Well, what does the Bible say maybe about suffering or maybe about injustice," the researcher poses.

As for people who are closely connected to scripture, or what Plake calls "scripture engaged," their studies have taken a step backward.

"Many of them are parents that have been at home. They've been trying to juggle a job through a screen, home schooling their children while their children are still enrolled in their regular schools, and managing all of those things at once," Plake explains. "Consequently we've seen particularly downward pressure among the women of America who normally do very well with scripture engagement, but boy, it just looks like they're not getting the support that they need, and I think it's something that we can address as the Church."

WMA & GMA NEWS

Articles for this column may be sent to

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The Washington County District WMA

will meet with
Landmark Missionary Baptist Church,
DeSoto, MO

Friday, September 11, 2020

at
7:30 p.m.

We Hope to See YOU There!!

Everlasting Smile Shoebox Ministry 2020

This year, more than ever, we are excited to send our Christmas shoeboxes. In each shoebox, there are many fun things that children will enjoy. These boxes are packed with LOTS of love and many prayers are prayed over them. But the most important thing that we can give any child is the opportunity to know Jesus. Our prayer is that through the ministry of Everlasting Smiles, we will open doors for our missionaries to tell families about Jesus and that the Bible inside each box will bring them closer to him.

We are moving forward with our shoeboxes and are ready to receive them. However, this year we have a few changes we want to share with you. Because of Covid-19, we are being careful to do our part and follow guidelines that different locations have put into place. We are thankful that we now have four regional drop-off stations for your boxes.

Local drop-off stations at churches listed on our website, bmamissions.org/Christmas-shoebox, are still accepting boxes, but we have added additional regional stations as well. These stations will serve as our Conway location does: to pack your shoeboxes and get them ready for shipping. Regional stations will deliver those ready-to-ship boxes to Conway. What a blessing!

Here is a list of the regional drop-off stations that you can utilize, as well as local ones.

Arkansas:

- **BMA America Office**, 611 Locust Street, Conway, AR 72034. Contact: Angela Rice, 214-498-3041
- **Prospect Baptist Church**, 1603 Hwy 349, Jonesboro, AR 72401. Contact: Theresa Book, 870-598-4908 or Mike Book 870-598-7232

Mississippi:

- **Southeastern Baptist College**, 4229 Hwy 15 N. Laurel, MS 39440. Contact: Anderle Foster, 601-344-8656

Texas:

- **Fellowship Baptist Church**, 992 FM 1520, Pittsburg, TX 75686. Contact David Kizer, 903-767-1151

As you prepare to deliver your shoeboxes, we would ask that you please contact your drop-off station and set a time

For Youth Leaders...

A Crazy School Year Ahead!

by Dan Carson, director of the BMA Arkansas Youth Department
(Student Ministry Matters) via Baptist Trumpet

It feels like school was just in session, but it has been five months since our students have been in their classrooms. While they were still in school, it was nothing like years past. They had to struggle through an almost immediate switch to digital learning, which wasn't always the best solution.

In just a few weeks, our students will be headed back to the classroom. I know that is going to look different in communities throughout Arkansas and beyond, but ultimately, many are having to make the decision of digital or in-person.

In my community, Fayetteville schools are dividing their student body into half — half will go two days a week, with the other half going the other two days; the final day will be used as the school cleaning day. It is all very weird, but that is the world that we currently live in.

As student ministry workers and supporters of students, how do we help in these unusual times? Do we just say “chin up!” and push them toward their school buildings? I wish I had a definitive answer to give you, but I don't. This is uncharted territory for us all. However, I do believe we can put some principles in place that will help us as we work with our students and this crazy school year:

- **Pray for our students and their families.** This is never a bad idea. In a good year, school brings with it so much stress and anxiety. New teachers, new friends, new activities, new subjects, and new challenges all make it hard for families to navigate the new school. Now, we add to it a pandemic and it is overload. Pray for peace in the homes of our students and their families. Pray that God will show Himself in big ways as they walk through this unusual time.

- **Be supportive of their choice.** Moms and Dads are having a tough time deciding where their children need to be as they approach the new school year. They are weighing out their options and trying to make a choice that will protect their child and also allow them to have continued growth. Your families may make choices that you don't understand, or even disagree with; but guess what — they aren't your children! God has entrusted little Tommy and Molly into the hands of someone else, and you need to honor that.

- **Only offer your opinion if asked.** This is a tough one for many of us. God has called us to speak truth when we stand in front of students and in front of our congregations. We have a tendency to forget that God has given us two ears and one mouth — we are to listen twice as much we speak. If the fam-

for delivery. This will not only speed up the process but will allow all of us to follow the appropriate CDC guidelines for each location. These might include limiting the number of people delivering the shoeboxes, practicing safe distancing, and wearing a mask as required by that location.

We appreciate you so much for your involvement in this ministry. If you have questions, please reach out to Angela Rice, angela@bmamissions.com or 214-498-3041.

ily asks for your insight, then you are allowed to speak into their family decision. Until then, you need to keep the lines of communication flowing and simply listen.

- **Be ready to minister to disappointed students.** Football, band, choir, cheer, cross country, drama and more are all in flux. Our state government is working to make the best choices it can, but in the end, I expect that we are going to have some disappointed students. Think about the seniors in your group. They have looked forward to their senior year for so long, and now things are going to be weird. Offer words of hope and encouragement from God's Word. Show them how to trust God through the storm. In a practical sense, start planning now how you are going to share encouragement to your students leading up to and on that first day of school.

Each week, I teach an on-line Sunday School for my students. I have to fight the urge to keep saying, “This is just weird.” Yes, it is weird; but guess what, our students already know that so there is no need for me to tell them. My job is to give them the Word and to offer them hope as we all move forward into this new school year. Be ready to offer your students hope and encouragement in the weeks ahead.

They are going to need it!



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The Christian's Relationship to Civil Government

Romans 13:1-14

by Dennis Baker, President BMAMO Brotherhood

Human government was instituted by God to protect the innocent and punish the guilty. It is separate from the church, though both church and state exercise complementary ministries for the benefit of society (Matthew 22:21).

Christians should submit to the authority of the government under which they live, obeying all laws which do not contradict the laws of God, respecting government officers, paying taxes, rendering military service, and praying for the welfare of the nation and its leaders (Romans 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13, 17; I Timothy 2:1, 2). They should vote, hold office, and exercise influence to direct the nation after the principles of Holy Scripture.

Civil authority is not to interfere in matters of conscience or disturb the institutions of religion (Acts 4:18-20), but it should preserve for every citizen the free exercise of his religious convictions.

Churches should receive no subsidy from the government, but they should be exempt from taxation on property and money used for the common good through worship, education, or benevolence." (Article XI. Civil Authority, Doctrinal Statement of the Baptist Missionary Association of America)

It is becoming difficult, if not impossible, for Christians to be loyal to the government. There is great conflict between the prevailing social discussions, interpretation of the law by the courts, and what the Bible affirms to be God's law. Contemporary society makes the criminal the hero and the honest man the villain. We live in a day when evil is good and good is evil.

Contrary to social reform through rioting and rebellion against the authorities, Christians must be in subjection to the laws of the government which do not contradict the laws of God. God established human government because mankind is sinful and must have some kind of authority to maintain order in society. Human life is precious in God's sight. Therefore, government has the God ordained duty to punish murder with capital punishment. From the beginning of human government God gave these instructions for the protection of human life. Genesis 9:6, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."

The government is to maintain law and order. When it does not do that, the government has failed its citizens. The Christian should be opposed to the breakdown of law and order. The Christian should set the standard by respecting government officials who are enforcing the law. If we break the law we should expect punishment.

Believers must obey government not only because it is our civic duty, but also because it is our spiritual duty. Since the civil government is ordained by God, Christians should support, honor, and respect government. Early Christians refused to worship the emperor or state, but they showed respect by praying for those in authority. It is our Christian duty to pray for the salvation of our government officials.

"Love one another," (V. 8) enlarges the circle of responsibility to other people besides government officials. As believers, our motive for obeying God and helping others is the love of Christ in our hearts. God's Word is more than just a good book to read, it is our instruction book on how to live for the glory of God. The Christian life is centered on building relationships. If we have a right relationship with God, we will have a right relationship with the people who are a part of our everyday life.

by Pastor Ben Kingston • Bethel Baptist Church • Lonedell, MO

Years ago, a man entered my office with a heavy burden and a difficult critique for me. Once I assured him that I was willing to hear what he had to say, he very humbly and candidly told me that he wasn't being fed, that the messages I was bringing were not helping or feeding him spiritually. He didn't want to leave the church but didn't know what to do.

Now before we get into the meat of this article, let me give some needed clarification and direction on this type of subject.

First, we all need to create an atmosphere within our relationships that someone can come to us with this type of burden. Some of us are literally dying for someone to point out a blind spot.

Second, this young man showed tremendous courage and love in wounding me for the Gospel's sake.

Third, as James Dobson teaches, when you are criticized, resist the urge to defend. Always ask yourself, "is there any truth to the criticism?" If there is, and even if it was given in a hateful way, they have done you a favor by pointing out something you could not see for yourself or refused to confront.

As I sat there reeling from the critique that I had just received, I took my own advice and humbled myself and thanked him for sharing with me. I assured him that the issue could be totally on my end and openly shared with him my occasional struggles with sermon prep and such. I then asked him for permission to explain what I call the "discipline of the hearer." I communicated with him that there is so much more going on than an individual listening to a message that was specifically crafted to feed that one person; it's just simply not how it works.

Therein lies the amazing miracle that God does in a sermon crafted by a competent preacher seeking the Lord's word to be given to an entire congregation: if the listener has prepared him/herself, they will receive what God wants them to receive each and every time. Yes, it is also dependent upon the pastor in preparation, praying, and presenting, but let's assume he has done his part.

We still may have a person that walks away thinking "I am not being fed!" Why? Because the hearer has to discipline themselves also, and very much in the same way as the pastor. He or she must have assaulted the throne of heaven and said, "Lord, prepare my heart to hear what I need to hear."

Secondly, they must prepare. This is something that I am completely convinced our congregations do not do because of what I see throughout the churches that I am exposed to: they do not come hungry.

After you have prayed and asked God to prepare your heart, sit there in prayerful meditation and ask these questions:

- Why do I need to be hungry right now?
- What issues or questions do I desperately need answered by God and His word so that I can go to church hungry for what God has to say to me through this pastor and this message?

If we allow God to put His finger on unresolved conflicts, work-related issues, family or neighbor problems, all the things that the devil uses to torture us, the world uses to allure and tempt us, and our flesh uses to divert and destroy us, if we will go to church with those questions and needs and hurts,

for ministers to address religious liberty/persecution issues from the pulpit. The figure was 98% for abortion and 96% for issues of "sexual

wanting to be answered and healed - in other words, if we go hungry - God is going to feed us, I promise!

If we come with the attitude: "OK, Lord, that's not what I wanted to hear, but it's what I needed to hear, so Lord I receive it," I guarantee you we are going to be fed.

In no way was I trying to defend myself, but I wanted him to be aware that while he was "not being fed" in the last few weeks I had at least three families say that they have grown more in Christ than they had previously because of what God was giving them through the messages. I wanted him to know that there is so much more going on in any given message and congregation worship experience than just one person and one preacher; you've got an entire congregation. There are some people at 0 (they don't know anything about Christ), and some people at 10 (they are regularly winning people to Christ and discipling them). That is such a wide gap of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. The preacher is preaching the same message to every one of those people at the same time.

If every person buys into the discipline of the hearer and come prayed up, prepared, and ready to receive, God is going to meet those needs.

P.S. If you are not being fed but you make no preparation to be fed, you "can't listen because it's boring," you allow yourself to be distracted, etc., with all the love I can muster, I say you have not bought into the discipline of the hearer.

"BORING THINGS ARE IMPORTANT!"

May the Lord bless you... is my prayer.

Poll Shows Congregations Overwhelmingly Want Leaders to Speak Out on Moral Concerns • from World Net Daily

A new national survey shows Christian congregations want a "fearless pulpit" in which their pastors speak out on moral and cultural issues, including persecution, sexual identity, and abortion.

The "2020 National Pulpit Survey" by D. James Kennedy Ministries found 99% said it was "extremely important"

• See **MORALS** Page 8 •

My Pastor's Three Greatest Needs

by Steve Crawley, Director Ministers Resource Services

In July of 2018 my pastor at Antioch in Conway, Arkansas, Dr. Jason Aultman, asked each of the national and state department directors who were church members to preach one Sunday of the month. I felt led to share a message titled "How to Be Your Pastor's MVP (most valuable player)," which was my version of an effort John Maxwell spearheaded in the early 2000's.

The thesis of the message was to convey that the single most important thing we can do for our pastor is pray for him daily. Not making supplication on his behalf through vague prayers, mind you, but interceding with specificity.

Charles Spurgeon stated that our prayer life can often be likened to us browsing through a department store: We go here and there meandering around but really don't put much thought into what we are doing.

To aid our church in implementing the challenge of the message, I asked our pastor beforehand for his three greatest prayer needs. I assert that the three requests he made known then are applicable to all pastors, missionaries, and ministers at large today. Please consider the following when praying for your leader.

His Family

Unless you have experienced living in a pastor's family, you have no idea of the inherent burden that some church members place on his wife and children. According to Brian Croft in a May 2020 article in *Tabletalk* magazine, "Eighty percent of pastors surveyed said the ministry has had a negative effect on their families."

He further states that research shows a majority of church members expect their pastor and his family to live at a higher moral standard than they live themselves, leading to the proverbial 'glass bubble.'"

A church leader needs enough margin to pastor his family before he pastors the church. Members should be mindful of boundaries that allow him to prioritize his investment in his wife and children. Years ago, Bro. Arnold Knight shared, "After looking back over my ministry, I wish I had spent more time with my kids and less time worried about disgruntled church members."

Spiritual Vitality

Sundays come awfully fast. Because of many peripheral responsibilities, a pastor's time in the Word may often be confined to sermon preparation. Such action does not necessarily build his spiritual vitality.

In his book *Leading on Empty*, Wayne Cordeiro claims that 85% of what we do we could delegate, 10% of what we do we could train someone to do, but 5% of what we have to do only we can do. This top 5% relates to his wife and children (as mentioned earlier), his health, and his time with the Lord. Our pastor must have the marginal latitude to focus on his top 5%, and at the top of that list is his personal walk with God. He cannot lead us where he has not been, and he cannot give us what he does not have.

A Clear Vision

In Proverbs 29:18(a), Solomon writes, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." This verse does not refer to the importance of vision in leadership but to the importance of a clear understanding of God's Word and directives.

The pastor has a heavy responsibility to seek divine revelation then lead his people accordingly. His challenge is to discern the difference in the latest leadership fads and the timeless truths of God's Word.

Next, as Henry Blackaby states, he must not "sell the vision" but communicate what God has revealed, trusting the Holy Spirit to prepare hearts. This is no small task, and divine intervention on behalf of his flock is paramount.

In conclusion, to the pastors of our churches, you have what I consider to be the highest calling in the world. This calling is the passion of your life. Consequently, though you and your family may not be tired of ministry, you may be tired in ministry. So don't try to be a loner. Share your burdens with your church and give them an opportunity to intercede on your behalf.

To the members of our churches, let's be faithful to pray specifically for the following:

- That God will bless your pastor's family so that they may thrive in their calling

- That God will sustain your pastor's spiritual vitality so that he may thrive in his preaching

- That God will make his vision crystal clear to your pastor that he may thrive in his leading—all for the glory of God!

• MORALS From Page 7 •

identity," including transgenderism and homosexuality.

"The results expose a hunger inside the church for pastors who will tackle tough topics – who will connect the dots between what the Bible teaches and what is happening in the world," said Frank Wright, president of D. James Kennedy Ministries.

But few pastors do that, the group found.

"Barna Research reports that more than 90 percent of theologically conservative pastors agree that Scripture addresses all aspects of life. Yet just 10 percent said they were willing to speak to issues like abortion, religious liberty, and sexual identity from the pulpit," the organization said.

Wright warned there are "grave consequences for silence from America's pulpits and inaction from the church."

"Look no further than today's headlines to see the clear and present danger," he said.

The write-in survey was sent to friends and supporters of the ministry.

On the issue of poverty, 88% said it was extremely important to hear the biblical per-

AVAILABLE PREACHERS

The publishing of a preacher's availability for preaching appointments or pastoral work should not be considered as a recommendation by the *Missouri Missionary Baptist*. Names are published at the request of the individual and will be published until a request is received to remove it.

Douglas Brand, a member of Fellowship Baptist Church in Potosi is available for pulpit supply or as the Lord leads (have experience with Music Ministry). Contact Mike Jarvis (573-854-9075) or Larry Lovvorn (417-766-4077) for references. Contact Doug at 573-315-0930 or 573-315-0931, email dbrandministries@gmail.com

Matt Barker of Nixa, is available for pulpit supply or as the Lord leads. Contact him by phone (501-408-9500) or by e-mail: mattbarker1988@gmail.com

Caleb Houston, youth minister of Kewanee is available for weekend revivals, youth events, and pulpit supply. Contact him at 573-521-7826 or calebhouston@yahoo.com.

Brian Adams, a member of First Missionary Baptist Church of Matthews is available to preach or as the Lord leads. Contact him by e-mail at bkadams27@yahoo.com or by phone 217-779-9264

Denver Page, a member at Landmark, DeSoto, MO is available for preaching as needed. (636) 942-3503



The Master's Builders Continue

The Master's Builders began work at New Beginnings Baptist Church (Mansfield) in Venus, Texas, on July 6. The church needed help on their 30 X 60 foot fellowship hall. Seven Builders helped in building walls and putting up sheetrock and completed the work in two days. Thank you to Bro. Brian Merchant and the church for the great food and fellowship.

We just learned this morning of the Home going of Bro. John Mangum of Ruston, Louisiana. He was one of four men who had a vision for a group of people who would help a church build a place of worship that they otherwise could not have afforded. This was in 1991, and The Master's Builders were formed. Bro. Mangum was our Office Coordinator until January of 2019. Pray for his wife Linda and the family. He was a dear friend who will be sadly missed.

If your church has building needs or if you have any questions about The Master's Builders ministry, you can contact Eddie Sikes at 479-462-1675, Mike Green at 972-935-3877, or David Axe at 903-918-0720.

spective from the pulpit. It was 91% for "support of Israel" and 92% for "Christian heritage."

It was 90% for the role of government, 83% for church in politics/government and 88% for radical Islam.

The survey also asked the respondents if they know what the Bible says about various issues well enough to communicate it to others. Ninety percent said they know its teaching on abortion, 67% on religious liberty, 73% on poverty, 93% on sexual identity, 82% on support of Israel, 68% on Christian heritage, 69% on the role of government, 81% of church in politics and 60% on radical Islam.

On an individual level, 88% said abortion was an extremely important issue, 88% religious liberty, 52% poverty, 80% sexual identity, 78% support of Israel, 78% Christian heritage, 82% role of government, 77% church in politics and 75% radical Islam.