

The Missouri Missionary Baptist

“Holding Forth the Word of Life” – Philippians 2:16

Volume LXXXVI

St. Louis, MO • May 14, 2024

Issue No. 5

Open Letter from the New BMAA President

Charles Johnson

Dear Churches of the BMA of America:

I am very humbled at your recent vote to elect me as your president this year. This is not an office I desired, but I accept it as God's Will and direction. I pledge to you to do my best with the Lord's help and guidance. I ask of you the same two things asked of the churches I have pastored: 1) remember I am human, and 2) be sure to pray for me.

I was born in 1952 to godly parents who started their married life in 1930 as tenant farmers in East Texas.

I graduated from Jacksonville College in 1972 and worked in teaching, coaching, maintenance and administrative positions in public schools for forty years while also serving as a bi-vocational pastor. Since 2015, I have been in the full-time pastorate.

In 1972, God gave me a top-notch helpmate when I married Charlotte Harrell, a "P-K" whose daddy Melvin Harrell was a longtime, faithful BMA pastor in Wood County, Liberty, and Hopkins County Associations in northeast Texas. We have been blessed with a son Dr. David Johnson of Tyler, TX, a daughter and son-in-law Mary Ann and Brian Mauk who are both educators and church youth directors, and two granddaughters Triniti and Allie Mauk.

I was saved at age 12 during a revival meeting held by Bro. Mike Reed. I surrendered to preach at age 16 during a revival meeting held by my uncle Don Hymer. I was ordained to the Gospel ministry in March 1971 while attending school in Jacksonville. I have been privileged to serve as pastor of three BMA churches in the past fifty-three years and am going on year 40 at my current field at Rosewood Baptist Church at Gilmer, TX. I have been in the BMA my entire earthly life plus nine months! My grandmother Zelma Hymer was a messenger in 1950 at Lakeland, Florida, when the BMA (then NABA) was formed. I love and believe in the work and ministries of the BMA at all levels.

Please mark your calendars for April 22-24, 2025, which will be our next annual national association meeting at Pathway Baptist Church in Waxahachie, Texas. Preliminary plans are already being developed around a theme of the importance of local churches.

Brotherly,
Charles Johnson

Business of the National Association

Jeff Herring, *via Baptist Trumpet*

Following the president's message on Tuesday night President Cliff Johnson recognized Coordinating Council Chairman Richard Smith to present the recommended changes to the Principles of Cooperation from the Coordinating Council.

- Recommendation #1 — Remove “annually” and change to “when necessary” regarding electing the directors of all departments (Lifeword, Missions, Baptist Publishing House, BMA Financial Services, Moral Action and Daniel Springs Camp).

- Recommendation #2 — Remove the requirement that a member of the Coordinating Council be elected “from the floor” each year on a staggered basis to serve a three-year term. This recommendation would also allow the Nominating Committee to present nominees to serve on

the Missions Advisory Committee by removing the “except the Missions Advisory Committee” from Section 2 under Article XX — Nominating Committee.

- Recommendation #3 — Remove the specific wording regarding the timing and required sessions under Section 2 under Article XXI — Meetings, and replace it with wording that allows more flexibility for scheduling and planning the national meeting.

- Recommendation #4 — Changing the board for BMA Financial Services to consist of nine (9) members instead of fifteen (15).

- Recommendation #5 — Regarding the duties of the Coordinating Council, in Section 3 of Article VII — Coordinating Council, add the duty that an orientation for the chairman of

Baptist Missionary Association of Missouri Missions Symposium and Semi-Annual Meeting

Bethel Missionary Baptist Church
Lonedell, Missouri

May 17 - 7:00 p.m. • May 18 - 9:00 a.m.

2024 LADIES RETREAT “SEASONED WITH GRACE”

Let your speech always be with grace,
seasoned with salt, that you may know how
you ought to answer each one.
Colossians 4:6

Location
Drury Plaza Hotel
Cape Girardeau Conference Center

Speaker
Yalanda Merrill

Praise and Worship
Mollie Kingston and Valerie Owens

Retreat Fee \$60 which includes lunch on Saturday
Deadline to register is August 23

Hotel rooms
\$145 (plus tax) Includes supper and breakfast

Deadline to register with the group rate is August 4

To make reservations:
Call 1-800-325-0720

Group info:
Women's Missionary Auxillary of Missouri
Group# 10079578



department and agency boards and committees be provided each year at the national meeting by the Coordinating Council chairman and the executive director of BMA Financial Services.

The first point of discussion began with a point of order, noting that the first recommendation “seemed to be beyond the scope of the instructions given to the Coordinating Council” to “determine a more efficient and effective plan to carry out the annual meetings” of the association. The vote on the objection did not reach the threshold of 2/3 to pass.

• See **BUSINESS** page 7 •

State Missions

Dear BMAMO churches,

I certainly hope this article finds you doing well in the grace of the Lord.

A lot has happened since our last article. We have had our men's retreat and it went amazing.

We have had our National Association meeting, where you were represented by my wife Dawn, daughter Molly, and son Benjamin, and myself as your state Missions Director at a booth in what is affectionately called the "booth area" of our National Association.

We pretty much filled up our summer calendar with churches to present missions in Missouri and the assessment. I could not be more excited and thrilled about what God is doing through this effort.

Now let's transition from a status report to what we have been going through with this article from Thom Rainer on healthy churches.

According to Thom Rainer, the sixth area is, "Healthy churches take membership seriously."

I will be quick to say that this is an area that Bethel certainly can take strides of improvement in and, not to be anything but relevant and transparent, we do still hold to the doctrines of our specific denomination that we hold closed communion and we require people that do not have scriptural baptism to submit to just that. Now, this article isn't about that as much as it certainly involves those things when it comes to being a church, on whether or not we hold church membership seriously.

This is what I try to teach our people. I've had this discussion with our men: we are the gatekeepers (meaning the people that have the conversation with the prospective church members), and the people that we allow in affect our churches for eternity.

It is so important to make sure that they are saved, scripturally baptized, and that they believe and understand the doctrines, the teachings of this local church that they are joining.

I believe the before-stated principles are the absolute bare bones necessity of taking church membership seriously, but I also believe it goes far beyond that as well.

What do our church members understand and know about the scriptural commands of loving one another? What do they understand about how a body works?

One of the more difficult things that I have faced here in this ministry is the idea of the word "church." I have found that in 2024 that word means so many things that it really doesn't mean anything anymore. I have tried to point people back to the word "body." We are a body and we are members with one another and we form one representative body of Jesus Christ. For me, that changes everything. So now, know that the Church Covenant on the wall is not just man's words but it is a compilation of Christ's words that we are covenanting together in a bond of trust, not distrust. Distrust is based on a contract, but trust makes a covenant one with the other



MISIÓN BELÉN (Bethlehem Mission)

Juan Fernandez

pastorjuanfernandez@gmail.com • 618-581-8056

They who sow in tears shall reap with joyful singing. He who goes back and forth weeping, carrying his bag of seed [for planting], will indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him. (Psalms 126:5-6)

A new beginning has been marked for our ministry among Hispanic families. Join us to pray as we seek the Lord's guidance and providence to use our lives and service to reach out to our Hispanic friends and families. Pray God's grace to be abundant and fertile soil as we plant the precious seed of the gospel.

Praises

- God's faithfulness and blessing of fellowship with our church family in Lindsay Lane Baptist Church. We were invited to have communion and celebrate God's goodness and forgiveness. Thank you, Pastor Brian Meade and leadership, who always have been such blessing and encouragement.

- I was able to attend the Men's Brotherhood Retreat this past week. Such blessing and joy to worship and be blessed by the presentation of God's message of love and reconciliation to men – praise the Lord! We can't wait for the Brotherhood fishing tournament coming up soon.

- After the BMA National Meeting we traveled to Houston to visit my parents. My mom's health has not been the best. Martha is 68 years old and has been through a series of medical examinations. God has been good by providing an affordable insurance for her and my dad. My dad's health continues the same. Dementia has been affecting so much of the way he relates to us as family. The most challenging moment is right after meals, when he thinks and expresses the need to be fed. We were happy to see that Victoria, Eleanor and Juanito spent quality time with Abuelito and Abuelita. God is so good. While we visited, we had the opportunity to help on some paper work for these next months regarding his faith and labor of faith with the church in Reynosa, Mexico, and some personal files that needed to be updated. We enjoyed so much

Financial Report BMA Of Missouri Missions April 2024

<u>Checking Account:</u>	
Balance March 31, 2024	\$ 26,032.89
<u>Income:</u>	
Missions	\$ 4,753.16
Insurance reimb	<u>3,351.29</u>
Total Income	\$ 8,104.45
Total Available	\$ 34,137.34
<u>Expenses:</u>	
Director, salary	\$ 450.00
Secretary, salary	200.00
Juan Fernandez, support	2,333.33
Director, mileage, etc.	743.92
BMA meeting	361.28
BMAMO shirts	1,677.00
Website	<u>39.95</u>
Total Expenses	\$ (5,805.48)
Balance April 30, 2024	\$ 28,331.86
<u>BMAMS Revolving Loan Investment:</u>	
Balance March 31, 2024	\$ 116,589.53
Interest	<u>726.69</u>
Balance April 30, 2024	\$ 117,316.22
Total in All Accounts April 30, 2024	\$ 145,648.08

to act and live a certain way.

Of course, you know that these articles are not going to exhaust any one given subject, but I'll leave these thoughts with you to chew on and pray through. Let's make sure, pastors and churches, that we take membership seriously. God did not give his Son for a social club. He gave Him for a local, visible, body of called-out believers.

May the Lord richly bless you is my prayer.

Bro. Ben

visiting with my sisters and other friends who pray for us and are excited on the work we are doing for the Lord, Praise the Lord for times like these.

- The purchase of a grill for our cooking meals for our weekly fellowship gatherings.

- The repair of the generator for our daily outreach and a new prayer tent. Brother Mike Heart donated a tent three years ago, and we have used it in a way that the Lord knows we needed a new one. Thank you, Brother Mike, for blessing us with your generosity.

New Contacts

We have been privileged to meet new friends in Granite City, Illinois. We have different spots where I can set up our prayer tent and reach out to our Hispanic friends in the city. We are excited to see how the Lord will expand his church in the area.

• See MISIÓN BELÉN page 8 •

The Missouri Missionary Baptist

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WMA

2024 State WMA Sponsored Retreat Information

The committee is busy working on retreat details and we would love your assistance with the following.

Cookbooks

With the theme "Seasoned with Grace" in mind, we will be compiling a cookbook for you to take home. To do this, though, we need recipes. Just one recipe per person will be sufficient. Think back to your favorite recipe or a family favorite. It could be a recipe that has been passed on to you from someone else like your grandmother, favorite aunt or a special lady or man in your life. If there is a special "short" story behind your recipe, include that as well.

You may email your recipe to Lisa Cox at Lnf_01@yahoo.com. Deadline to submit a recipe will be July 31, 2024. That will give Lisa (and helpers) time to copy and compile the books and bring them to the retreat.

Welcome Bags

Amy Asher will have the task of putting together the welcome bags. To do this, she will need

contributions from all of you. We will plan for 150 bags. You may bring your items to camp the week of July 29th – August 2nd. If that is not possible, then you can ship items to her at the following address: 615 W. Brejle St., Steeleville, IL 62288.

The deadline for donating items for the welcome bags will be August 23, 2024. This will give Amy (and helpers) time to put the bags together and ready to transport.

If you have any questions concerning either of these requests, you may contact the ladies through Facebook Messenger or through their email: Amy Asher is rabca@frontier.com, Lisa's email is listed above.

Table Centerpieces

You all have been so generous the past couple of years with donating centerpieces, and it seems like they have been well received by all as they have been given away as attendance prizes. If you are able to donate one or more, we would love to have them at the

hotel as early as possible on Friday afternoon, September 6th. If you wish to donate one or more but cannot get them to the hotel, you can contact any of the following ladies and make arrangements for them to transport your centerpiece: Amy Asher, Sara Buckley, Lisa Cox or Janet Widger.

Silent Auction

Tracy Goede and Tanya Hutton will team up and coordinate the silent auction. Again, if you can have your donations at the hotel as early as possible, it would be a great help to these ladies. We do not want them to miss out on any of the retreat because they are placing items out on the tables.

If you refer back to the March 2024 paper, you will see other pertinent information concerning the retreat. We will also be posting information very frequently on the Missouri WMA Facebook page as well as an event page that has been created.

We are all appreciative of your assistance with making the retreat a wonderful time for all.

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Camp Garwood

Greetings from camp. Please find attached the quarterly financial statement from camp. It's not often that a camp financial report is considered a blessing. But this one is! Back in April our funds were running low due to the Dorm 7 remodel. At the time we had less than \$1000 in the account. I made a post concerning our need on Facebook and we instantly began receiving gifts to help. We received support from campers long ago. Folks that fondly remember camp as a child. From current campers. Also from folks that have never been to camp but like what we do.

The Lord has truly blessed, and at a time that finances are tight for everyone. We have since been able to pay off the insurance and make material purchases for the dorm. Our current balance is roughly \$10,000. And we have much of what we need to complete the Dorm 7 project. We will spend a couple thousand this week on blocks, doors, mortar and miscellaneous supplies. That will carry us through May before we need anything else and at that time should be more finishing type supplies.

It's time to start looking at non-dorm jobs, and there is plenty to do. Give me a shout, and I'm sure we can find something for you.

We've had a couple fantastic events at camp this Spring. The college retreat wasn't crowded – but it was an absolutely wonderful time. I look forward to the next college-age retreat.

The New Madrid County Central HS track team came one weekend. They spent a few hours working, helping do some cleanup on the dorm project, and then played paintball. They were a lot of fun and help.

The dual Brotherhood/Renewal weekend was exceptionally great. We had 70 men and great messages. There was a lot of fellowship and a wonderful weekend, despite the torrential downpours.

Since the beginning of the year we have been at camp over 20 times working on the dorm traveling over 3500 miles. At the time of this writing we plan to hang sheetrock on Saturday (May11).

Here is a short list of Dorm 7 jobs: finish sheetrock, paint, install doors

(interior and exterior), block up old door, tile seven showers, grout showers, finish HVAC, finish electric, finish plumbing.

There are some other jobs in case we get bored: Dorm 9 loose toilet, mowing, spray bugs, basketball pavilion electric and water, seal Tabernacle raccoon attic access, roof leaks in Dorms 1, 2 and 7.

We count weekends because that's when we do most of the work. We have 12 Saturdays until camp week. When we look at the jobs and count the weekends left the math doesn't add up. I'm confident it will all work out.

I'm posting progress pictures on our Facebook group; be sure to check it out. Or, better yet, come by camp some weekend and help.

We're looking forward to the GMA retreat June 28-29th.

And of course camp week is July 29 - Aug. 2. Answer the Call – "And

Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." (Mk 10:49)

Chris Polk

Camp Garwood Financial Report Oct 1, 2023 - April 30, 2024

<u>General Fund</u>	
Beginning Balance	\$ 48,332.85
Received	28,989.37
Disbursements	(58,469.18)
Ending Balance	\$ 18,853.04
<u>Food Fund</u>	
Beginning Balance	\$ 0.00
Received	300.00
Disbursements	(1,667.48)
Ending Balance	\$ (1,367.48)
<u>Insurance Fund</u>	
Beginning Balance	\$ 0.00
Received	0.00
Disbursements	(6,351.29)
Ending Balance	\$ (6,351.29)
Total Account Balance	\$ 11,134.27

• Updates from Our Churches •

Lindsay Lane, Florissant

Greetings from Lindsay Lane.

A lot has happened this month. Our Saints Alive fellowship was sort of sparse, but we had a lot of fun.

Ten of our congregation journeyed to Branson to attend the national meeting. There was a lot of fellowship, seeing family and friends, as well as Spirit-filled messages and uplifting music.

While in Branson our young at heart In-N-Out group took in some of the fun things to do while other ones rested. While on our journey it was discovered that one in our group had been given some funny money. As she was trying to purchase some bottled water, it was pointed out to her that this was counterfeit and that the folks there would need to turn this over to the police! Unbeknownst to her, it was discovered standing in the next line there was a law official. It was suggested we vacate the building, which we did quickly even though it was not anything to feel guilty about! These things just happen! We saw the musical Esther and were very impressed by the altar call at the end of the show.

While in Branson we received word that our oldest brother, Fred Fields, had passed on to Glory. Even though we were expecting this, it was a blow to our family. Fred had been a faith-

ful deacon at Zion Baptist Church. He and Pat attended Faith Baptist and Ridgeway Baptist Church until their health prevented them from doing so. Funeral services were held the 29th at Newcomer Funeral Home with Ron Fields officiating. Burial was at Jefferson Barracks cemetery. He will be missed. We thank the folks at Zion for graciously letting us use their facilities to fellowship as we gathered together to enjoy a meal. We so appreciate each one that helped us.

'Til we meet again, God bless!

*Brian Meade, Pastor
Kathy Chapman, Reporter*

Stony Point, Mineral Point

Greetings from us here at Stony Point!

We had a beautiful Easter service that began with a wonderful breakfast. Thank you, Barb, and everyone who contributed. Sunday school and the regular sermon that day just seemed to be something extra special, and I for one could feel God's presence even more strongly. As we sang it seemed we sang louder, better and more joyfully. The sermon Brother Claude shared was heartfelt and meaningful as it usually is, but he really touched hearts on that day. Our small country church was almost packed full, and it was a joyous service. We hope everyone else had as wonderful a

service and a great day with friends and family!

We are looking forward to getting together for bowling night on May 6th.

We are all still praying for our churches. Brother Claude and Sister Bea have been able to visit a few this last week.

Hoping everyone has a good month. God bless.

*Claude Evans, Pastor
D. Stegall, Reporter*

Landmark, DeSoto

Hello, dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

Just an FYI, God is STILL in the business of ANSWERING PRAYERS! We have a new pastor at Landmark! Bro. Len Young and his lovely and talented wife, Rebecca, have joined our church family. What a blessing they've already been to us. Bro. Young delivers God's Word in a forthright and easy-to-understand manner (which I personally appreciate greatly). Sis. Young is a skilled and talented pianist and has a beautiful singing voice as well. And they are both super motivated to serve the Lord. We thank God for sending them to Landmark and are looking forward to accomplishing great things together.

We've been able to have a couple of informal luncheons (sandwiches and picnic-style side dishes) in our fellowship hall. We are still in the process of getting it more organized. Thanks to Sis. Terry

Smith, Bro. Dale Hawkins, Bro. and Sis. Causey, and other members for working so hard on this project.

And hey, YOU'RE INVITED! We will be hosting the Washington County District WMA and Brotherhood Quarterly Meeting on Friday, June 7, at 7:30 p.m. ALL are welcome! You don't have to be a WMA or Brotherhood member to attend. We always have a great time of fellowship and worship, and of course a dinner afterward. We're Baptists – we love both spiritual AND earthly food.

We have been blessed with visitors on several Sundays, some repeat visitors. We are praying they decide to make Landmark their church home.

There are still several in our congregation that need your prayers for health and other issues, and we continue to keep all of you in our prayers also. God never said He'd stop all the storms in our lives but that He will be with us throughout the storms.

We pray that God continues to bless each and every one of you until next month, or until He comes again, whichever happens first!

*Len Young, Pastor
Barbara Williams, Reporter*

Bethel, Sikeston

Greetings from Bethel, Sikeston.

April 14th during the morning service we honored our deacons with a special service, a gift of appreciation, and afterward served lunch. We appreciate Bro. Joe McElroy and Bro. Matt Bolen for everything they do. They both are true, faithful servants of God. Bro. Mike and Sis. Ruth Poirier were with us for the evening service. Bro. Mike gave an inspiring message and an update on their mission work. It is always a blessing to hear from Bro. Mike and Sis. Ruth for all the work they are doing on the mission field.

On the 21st we were blessed to have a young lady, Daisey Loyd, come and play

her violin for us. She is a very talented young lady who was invited to play at Carnegie Hall in the orchestra; what an honor!

April 28 – May 1 we had revival with Bro. John Tarter, pastor of Mount Calvary MBC in Sikeston. He brought us uplifting messages each night about the church.

We are supporting Aspire again this year by filling baby bottles with our change. This is truly a mission to support!

On May 14 we will be honoring one of our young members for graduation. Congratulations, Tristen King!

Mother's Day is coming up May 12, and we will be honoring them with a special service. I know by the time you get this paper it will be passed, but we just pray all you mothers had a very special day! We also want to wish all you fathers a special and blessed day!

Please keep us in your prayers as we keep you in ours. God bless you all!

*Billy Davis, Pastor
Joan Wood, Reporter*

Oak Hill, Alton

HELLO from Oak Hill!

We added a new member on April 28th when Bro. Ed baptized Robyn Carswell. The Lord had saved her previously, and Robyn decided to join Oak Hill Missionary Baptist Church.

On May 5th we had a graduation dinner for our two seniors graduating from Alton High School, Tatum Finley and Kendra Infracco. We are treating this dinner like our fifth Sunday, with no evening services. We give our graduating seniors a King James Study Bible to help if they need direction throughout their lives. Wednesday night, May 8th, we are dismissing our services to support the Baccalaureate services at Alton High School.

We are having Vacation Bible School, "Camp Firelight," May 22-24, 6:00-8:00 p.m. each night. We are excited about VBS, and we pray

~ Upcoming Events ~

BMA of MO Missions Symposium

& Mid-Year Meeting – May 17-18 (7:00 p.m./9:00 a.m.); Bethel, Lonedell

Revival – May 19-22; 7:00 p.m.; Mt.

Olive, Salem; various evangelists

VBS – May 22-24; 6:00-8:00 p.m.; Oak Hill, Alton; "Camp Firelight"

VBS – June 2-6; 6:00-8:30 p.m.; Bethel, Lonedell; "SCUBA Diving into Friendship with God"

VBS – June 3-7; Kewanee, Kewanee
Washington County District WMA and Brotherhood – June 7; 7:30 p.m.; Landmark, DeSoto

MO Brotherhood Fishing

Tournament - June 15; 8 a.m.-Noon; Council Bluff Lake

MO GMA Retreat – June 28-29;

Camp Garwood

SOAR '24 "All In" – July 3-5; Loews

Arlington Hotel; Arlington, Texas

Revival – July 8-12; Kewanee,

Kewanee; Clif Johnson, evangelist

BMA of Missouri Camp – July 29-Aug. 2; Camp Garwood

WMA Sponsored Ladies Retreat – Sept. 6-7; Drury Plaza Hotel Cape Girardeau Conference Center

Send event info to mmbpaper@gmail.com.

that the Lord will be blessed through our efforts!

Until next month, when I hope I will have some more good news to tell you. Until then we will be praising and honoring our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! God Bless!

*Edward Casey, Pastor
Jennifer Williams, Reporter*

Abundant Life in Christ, Charleston

It has been an eventful two months for us here in Charleston. The best news by far is the profession of faith of Johanna. Praise God!

We began serving breakfast before Sunday School and immediately saw a sizeable increase in attendance on Sunday mornings. While we realize the motivation of those now attending who formerly weren't may not be pure, the gospel they're hearing while they're here is, and we have had a few of our kids asking good questions about salvation since they've weekly been under the influence of the gospel.

We also reached a notable milestone with the 100% completion of our building. [See pictures below.] We moved into our building (our FIFTH location!) July

2, 2017. Upon that move-in date, the floors were bare concrete, and "sanctuary lighting" was comprised of eight floor lamps placed along the edges. Bare wires for future lighting dangled from the ceiling. Sanctuary walls consisted of partially finished sheetrock. Classroom walls and ceilings consisted of roughed-in sheetrock. We had one functioning bathroom. We had no altars, although the edge of the platform ably served the purpose. The front door space was covered with plywood. Over the course of the last seven years, we have incrementally finished the building room by room and added sidewalks, a covered porch, a lit steeple, and a lit cross to the exterior. During the last two months we finished our last interior project: the building of our audio-video booth. With that, the journey was completed. We're thankful that we have been 100% debt-free on this building from the time we bought the original acreage right up through its completion. While we did set aside building funds every month ourselves, we also received notable help along the way. The most notable of this help

came from the members of Dayspring Missionary Baptist Church in Jackson and Springdale Missionary Baptist Church in Fenton. Both of these churches tragically disbanded, but upon the selling of their buildings, both congregations blessed us tremendously as we were saving toward our commitment of getting our building built debt-free. With our building now complete, our next project is landscaping the grounds. We do not have a hard timeline for this project, as we will also be cash flowing it and also retaining an emergency building fund.

Rodney Dunlap, Pastor

Kewanee, Kewanee

We extend our condolences to the family of Mr. Ed Bickstaff. Mr. Ed passed away on April 18. We are thankful to know that he gave his life to the Lord a few years ago and is now in his eternal home in Heaven.

On Sunday, April 28th, we had our "Reaching Out" Sunday with a meal after services. John Luke Taylor was baptized this Sunday as well. Ella Kate Waymon was saved and will be baptized on Sunday, May 12th. Mr. David

Harris has been saved and has asked to follow the Lord in scriptural baptism. Keep him in your prayers as he battles some health problems.

Our men held their monthly "Coffee and Devotional" on May 4th. On Sunday, May 5th, we held our annual youth fundraiser auction. The church enjoyed eating tacos, bidding on silent auction items, and having a live baked goodies auction. The money goes to the youth group for events during the year. Everyone had a great time!

On Sunday, May 19th, we will celebrate our graduate. We only have one high school graduate this year, Ayden McCannless. He is the grandson of Randy and Emma Fowler.

The youth will be attending the SOAR youth conference that will be held July 3-5, 2024. Our annual Vacation Bible School will be held June 3-7 with kickoff taking place June 2 at 6 p.m.

On June 28-29, the GMA's will have their annual retreat at Camp Garwood. If you have any girls interested in coming, please email Lisa Cox, Lnf_01@yahoo.com, or call her at 573-748-0865.

Our summer revival will be

July 8-12 with Bro. Clif Johnson of Lifeword. Sign-ups for Camp Garwood will be soon! Be praying for camp!

Please "like" our Facebook page, Kewanee Missionary Baptist Church, to keep up with future events.

*Dan Wisely, Pastor
Lisa Cox, Reporter*

First, Potosi

Greetings from First Baptist Church, Potosi. We have had a very busy month.

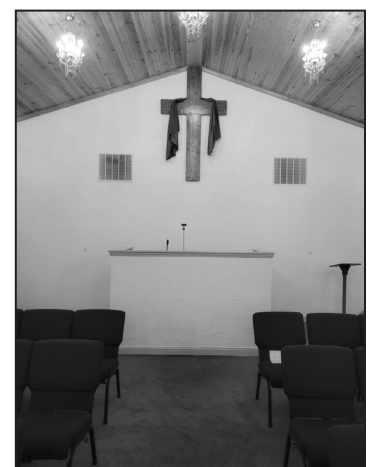
We have several preparing for graduation. Baccalaureate is this Wednesday. We recognized our graduates Sunday, May 5. Our children's choir has been practicing on Wednesday nights to be ready for Mother's Day. They always perform very well.

Preparations are being made for the SHINE conference 2024. We are collecting supplies for VBS. Check the list on the church page. Summer activities are just around the corner. U-Turn continues their study on prayer, while MOPS and other outreach groups continue their programs. Overflow has an abundance of clothing and shoes, and we go through the food very quickly. We have a

• See UPDATES page 6 •



Abundant Life in Christ Renovations



• **From UPDATES page 5** • lot of people who volunteer in several organizations within our church.

I have an acronym I like to use often – TASAPIO, which stands for Take a Smile and Pass It On. We don't know when someone needs a smile. Please pray for us as we pray for you.

*Jim Ainley, Pastor
Deborah Rauhut, Reporter*

Mt. Olive, Salem

Hello from Mt. Olive.

March 8, we had five members participate in the trivia night at Ohlman Church. It was a wonderful night of fellowship and fun! Sunday, March 17, we had three visitors from Gentry, Arkansas, join us for Sunday school and worship. March 23 we spent the day at the church house doing some cleaning, rearranging, and redecorating of classrooms. We enjoyed the time we spent together taking care of God's house!

We were also busy the month of March practicing for our Easter Sunday presentation, "It's Empty, He's Alive!" We had four visitors who chose to spend their Easter morning with us. March 21 our WMA reached out to the EMT's in Dent County. Bro. Jimmy Rayfield made the delivery of the baked

goods to the hospital for us. We were told that it was very much appreciated.

Another outreach from our WMA was to one of our own. Some of our WMA ladies made a visit to Sis. Pauline Swearingin to offer her encouragement since Bro. Orville was in the hospital. April 12, Bro. Orville went to be with the Lord. He was a wonderful, godly man who spent many years attending Mt. Olive. He was the song leader for many years. He will be deeply missed by our church. Please remember Sis. Pauline in your prayers.

We had five of our members attend the national meeting of the BMA of America in Branson. Three of our ladies attended the national WMA meeting. Bro. Larry and Bro. Steve Gillam attended the Brotherhood Renewal Retreat, April 26 & 27 at Camp Garwood. We had to postpone our "Church at the Campground" that was set for Sunday evening, May 5, due to weather conditions.

We will be having a revival May 19-22. This is the line-up of our evangelists: Sunday, Bro. Ben Kingston; Monday, Bro. Brian Kingston; Tuesday, Bro. Bryan Buckley; Wednesday, Bro. Lee Miller. Everyone is invited! We would love to have

you join us!! Services will start at 7 p.m. each night.

Thank you again to our prayers warriors for keeping Mt. Olive in your prayers! We appreciate the prayers you pray on our behalf!

*Larry Nash, Pastor
Deiatre Gillam, Reporter*

Ozark Heights, Potosi

Greetings to all our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. We hope this report finds you well.

We've had some great services since we last reported. We had a wonderful Easter service, followed by an egg hunt enjoyed by the little ones. We have been blessed with visitors that have been coming and pray that God will continue to bless our church. Bro. Brian attended the BMAA conference along with Bro. Jeff Moorman of Central Baptist in Union.

We had our 62nd annual homecoming on May 5th with many in attendance. Bro. Leonard Compton was able to join us and tell of his times of pastoring Ozark Heights. It was a special time to see him and hear about his commitment to Ozark Heights. Sis. Linda Fenstermaker told of the history of the church since it was a mission led by Bro. Perry Ward. We have come a long way over 62

years and enjoyed many great pastors throughout the years. Bro. Gary then preached a message on the great homecoming that we will have when Jesus returns for His followers. We had a wonderful and powerful worship service. Afterward we enjoyed a great homecoming feast in our fellowship hall. We have so many amazing cooks who are always ready to provide a delicious feast; we thank you. Bro. Jimmy Gilliam and the Christian Crossroads blessed us with wonderful Spirit-filled singing.

Bro. Brian resigned as pastor on Sunday, April 21, feeling that God was calling him away. We have enjoyed eight years with Bro. Brian as pastor; we pray that God will use him in a great way. There are so many churches that could use a strong and dedicated man of God. We are saddened but know as God led Bro. Brian, He has already prepared another to lead Ozark Heights Missionary Baptist Church. Please keep Ozark Heights in your prayers as we seek God's leadership.

Gary Gilliam, Reporter

Lower Doe Run, Ellington

His coming is so near we can almost hear the trumpet! The nearer His coming, we long to be with His

people and the fellowship of the brethren. LORD, come quickly! Then our prayer is, LORD, call the lost to You that they may find peace in the storm to come.

Here at Lower Doe Run we see new attenders almost every week. We sincerely hope that God will touch hearts to be saved and to be committed to His church. We are expecting a visiting preacher this Sunday, Mother's Day. We have three seniors graduating this month. One is in a nursing program, and two others are already in full-time work. Pray they will always keep Christ front and center.

We have so much sickness and pain among our elderly. Some choose to stay home – others come in spite of their pain. One dear 90-year-old great grandma came to the altar to pray for family members, especially great grandchildren. After getting home her son gave her news that his grandson had been saved that morning at another church. Praise God for answering heartfelt prayers.

We look forward to the upcoming mission symposium at Bethel, Lonedell, and other meetings where we can fellowship and give and receive encouragement.

*Melvin Meade, Pastor
Carolyn Meade, Reporter*



Brotherhood/Renewal Retreat

The Men's Retreat met at Camp Garwood Friday evening and Saturday morning, April 26-27. According to Brotherhood President Bryan Buckley, some 70 men attended from 17 churches. Kicking off the event was a supper of boiled crayfish, boiled shrimp, fried fish and the trimmings. This was followed by door prizes and the evening message by Bro. Claude Evans.

Saturday morning activities included brunch, a message by Bro. Mike Hearst, followed by skeet shooting and cornhole toss.

Plans are being discussed for a fall Brotherhood retreat. Watch for dates and other information.

(Photos by Bryan Buckley and Don Burke.)





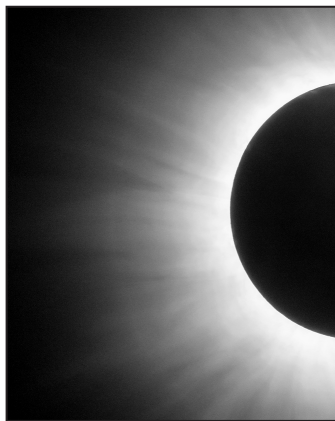
From a recent post on the National WMA blog
 (<https://www.nationalwma.org/blogs/>)

Total Eclipse of the Heart

Judy Wallace

Have you heard there was a total solar eclipse across the center part of the United States recently? If not, where have you been?! Predictions of increase in traffic, low gas supplies, huge increases in the number of people in your area, and the need for those all-important glasses were all signs of a major event that captured everyone's thoughts.

Though the shadow of the moon obscured the light of the sun for a few short minutes on April 8, there are other experiences that can be considered an eclipse. The definition of eclipse includes any dimming or obstruction of light, a reduction or loss of splendor, or being overshadowed by another.



It makes me wonder, is there anything that is obscuring the Light in our lives? Jesus declared Himself to be the Light of the world. He called us to be salt and light. Are we? He took us from the kingdom of darkness and placed us in His glorious kingdom of light. Can others tell?

Do others see that Light or is there an 'eclipse' of some kind in our lives; an obstruction that prevents the Light of Christ from shining through? What thoughts are you consumed with that prevent you from keeping your mind on Him? What activities take first place over an intimate time with God? What are you focused on horizontally that keeps you from being focused on Him vertically? Do you depend on His strength to live each day? Are you watching for His soon return?

A majestic display of God's creative power was seen by millions as the moon blocked the sun. YOU are part of His creative power too! You are His workmanship made to display Him from the countenance of your face, the tone of your voice, the works of your hands, and the interactions you have with every person God puts in your path.

Don't let your own life obstruct His glory. Don't try and overshadow Him by depending on your own talents, gifts, and abilities instead of on Him directly. He is, after all, the Giver of all of those things.

Many looked to the sky that day. We should too; longing for the return of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and letting our lights shine so others can be looking for Him too!

Response: "Much time was spent by many in preparing for the solar eclipse. May I spend my time depending on You, Father, to direct and empower my life to do Your work through the power of Your Spirit. Keep me dependent on You so that I may never obscure Your light from others but instead light their way to You."

Scriptures: Luke 1:76-79; 11:35; John 8:12; 12:35, 46; 2 Corinthians 4:6

• From BUSINESS page 1 •

The discussion on the first recommendation continued with some questions regarding what the wording "when necessary" meant and what situations that covered or did not cover. Other discussion revolved around how removing the annual election of the directors would not give the churches (associational body) the opportunity to approve or disapprove every year at the annual meeting. After over an hour of friendly discussion with varying opinions expressed, discussion was closed.

Discussion on Recommendation #2 then began. The discussion seemed to revolve around the same concern — that it would remove power from the churches (associational body) by not giving them the opportunity to elect members from the floor.

The remaining recommendations were presented and discussed very briefly before the meeting concluded for the night.

Following the Legacy Missionary and Commissioning Service on Wednesday afternoon, the business session was opened for the vote on the recommendations without discussion. Recommendations #1 (regarding annual election of directors) and #2 (regarding removal of "from the floor" for Coordinating Council) did not pass. Recommendations #3 (more flexibility for annual meetings), #4 (BMA Financial Services Board) and #5 (Chairman Orientation) passed.

After the annual sermon on Wednesday evening, the third business session took place for the election of officers and annual speaker for 2024-2025. Dr. Gary O'Neal (pastor of Oak Park Baptist Church in Little Rock, AR) was elected to bring the message next year with Mike Goodwin (pastor Bethel #1 Baptist Church in Rison, AR) to serve as the alternate. The officers elected are:

- Charles Johnson (pastor of Rosewood Baptist Church in Gilmer, TX) was elected to serve as the president.
- Dr. Gary O'Neal (pastor of Oak Park Baptist Church in Little Rock, AR) was elected to serve as the first vice-president.
- Dustin Wisely (pastor of First Baptist Church in Magnolia, AR), was elected to serve as the second vice president.
- Greg Medenwald (pastor of Magnolia Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, MS), was elected to serve as recording secretary (term to expire in 2027).
- Randy Murphy (pastor of First Baptist Church in Gurdon, AR), was elected to fill the vacancy left by the death of long-time recording secretary Jerome Cooper (term to expire in 2026).
- Randy Shepherd (pastor of Spring Lake Baptist Church in Texarkana, TX), continues to serve as recording secretary (term to expire in 2025).

BMAA Seminary Seeking Presidential Candidates

The Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary (BMATS) in Jacksonville, TX announces a vacancy in the office of President of the Seminary. The President is the chief executive officer under the Board of Trustees and is charged with putting into effect its policies and regulations, keeping the trustees informed and appraised of the status of the seminary and its program, participating in trustee and committee meetings, and keeping the Board advised of the fiscal status of the seminary. The President is also tasked with general administration of the seminary, including the responsibility for developing and maintaining services and programs necessary to operate the seminary, coordinating internal management for efficiency, quality control, and accountability, as well as acting as chief personnel administrator.

Qualifications:

1. The next President of BMATS should demonstrate a strong dedication to biblical and doctrinal fidelity in alignment with the Baptist Missionary Association of America Statement of Faith and historical Associational Baptist ecclesiology.

2. Upon assuming the duties of the office, the president must be a member of a church affiliated with Baptist Missionary Association of America.

3. The applicant must have spiritual characteristics and sufficient knowledge of Christian Education to be able to relate effectively to faculty and students, the churches and pastors of the BMAA, as well as governmental and other educational entities.

All those who meet the qualifications and would like to be considered for this position are encouraged to send a letter of interest and complete resume to:

BMATS Presidential Search Committee
 c/o Dr. Clif Johnson, Chairman
 Garrett Memorial Baptist Church
 1 Genesis Dr. • Hope, AR 71801
 clif.johnson@bmats.edu

The deadline for submissions is August 1, 2024.

*The Word became flesh
 and dwelt among us...*

Ministers & Ministry Opportunities

Entries are published at the request of the individual or entity listed and should not be considered as an endorsement by the Missouri Missionary Baptist or the BMA of Missouri.

First Baptist Church of Carthage, Texas, a Baptist Missionary Association church which is also dually aligned with the Southern Baptist of Texas Convention, is seeking a full-time senior pastor. Please submit resume to pastor@firstbaptistcarthage.com. Resume deadline is April 5, 2024. (0324)

Pine Ridge Baptist Church, Laurel MS is in search of a pastor. The chairman of the pastoral search committee can be reached at: David McComb, 601-310-4121 or De_mccomb@hotmail.com. (0524)

Ministers and ministries must be associated with the BMA. Entries for available preachers and for churches seeking pastors or staff will be published for three consecutive months; others will be limited to a single issue. Listings may be resubmitted quarterly, subject to editor approval. Send entries, including the name of the church of membership, to mmbpaper@gmail.com.

Jerry Kidd Missions Offering Update

Year after year, the Lord uses BMA churches through the Jerry Kidd Missions Offering. This year is no exception. We are encouraged yet again as many of our directors and staff spent time with your churches throughout World Missions season. Thank you for your hospitality and allowing them to speak to your congregations.

As special offerings continue to come in, we want to express our gratitude. Thank you for partnering with us in God's global commission as we send missionaries to make disciples, develop leaders, and plant churches. We literally could not do it without your support.

There's still time to send in your offering. Designate it to the Jerry Kidd Missions Offering and send to PO Box 878 Conway, AR 72033.

If you have any questions, please contact Sidney Vines, Relationship Coordinator, at 870-826-7757 or sidney@bmaglobal.org



THE GLEANERS

BMA Global's Missionary Families

Through the ministry of Missionary Care, BMA Global is developing an alumni association to create community among our current and former missionary families. Our Gleaners initiative is for all who served through the missions work of BMA America, both international and in the states. This includes all missionary families including the men and women who served and any of their children who grew up on the field. For our care team to stay connected, we need current contact information for each individual and family.

If you did not attend the National Meeting or have not signed up, complete an online registration form at this link: <https://bmamissions.org/missionarycare/>



• From MISIÓN BELÉN page 2 •

We have received some friends into our home. We are so blessed to be prepared to show hospitality to our friends and blessed them as they are welcome and invited to join this labor of faith. Most of our contacts that we are serving are not believers in Jesus, so we continue planting the seed of the gospel as we speak life and bless them by sharing the gospel.



We can reconnect with other friends that may the Lord have them join us as part of our core team, can't wait to have this wonderful support. I had the opportunity to participate in the National Day of Prayer here in the City Hall at Granite, met the mayor and other local pastor-servants that are excited to have us among the group of laborers for the kingdom.

There is a breakfast for men on Tuesday 7:30 a.m. in a local church building, and it has been so encouraging to gather with these men and share our vision to



impact the city with Hispanic men and woman becoming the salt and light this city needs.

An upgrade in our guest bathroom, much needed.

We are so blessed to offer our hospitality and that our friends and family know that our home is a place of prayer and soon a place of worship as we remodel the area in the garage to make it our multipurpose building for the Kingdom's expansion.

Events Coming Up

May 9th – Tree trimming in our home and visit of a contractor to bid on the garage remodeling.

May 11th – Hispanic Health Fair in Fairmont City, Illinois.

May 10th – Mother's Day celebration, 7:00 p.m.

May 12th – Mother's Day cookout; devotional at Lindsay Lane Baptist Church, 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

May 17th – Mission Symposium at Bethel, ministry update.

May 19th – Devotional at Lindsay Lane Baptist Church, 4:00 p.m.

May 23rd – Juanito, our 2-year-old son, is having surgery to remove bump behind his left ear.

May 26th – Ministry presentation and fellowship

June 16th – Father's Day cookout.

June 24th to 28th – First round of VBS in our backyard from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

We are looking forward to joining summer camp this year and have the privilege to come and visit on a Sunday morning to worship with you and your church families. To Him be the Glory!

In His Service, Juan Fernandez and Family

