

NEWS BRIEFS

CANADIAN PASTOR ARRESTED FOR HOLDING CHURCH SERVICE IN DEFIANCE OF RESTRICTIONS → Page 3

Opinion

Gary Ledbetter, Editor

Reaching places you've never been

→ Page 2

Texas

Jacksonville College announces Lightner as new president

→ Page 9

Texas

EQUIP to offer 'best ministry training' in-person Aug. 14

→ Page 10



Texas

The Longest Year: Student ministers personalized pandemic outreach

→ Page 11



TEXAS

CULTURE OF GENEROSITY MARKS GREAT HILLS IN AUSTIN

↓
Page 8



TEXAS

LINGLEVILLE CONGREGATION BUILDS PASTOR A HOME

↓
Page 16

SOUTHERN BAPTIST **Texan**

JUNE 2021
VOLUME 20 • NO. 6

NEWSJOURNAL OF THE
SOUTHERN BAPTISTS
OF TEXAS CONVENTION

texanonline.net

BEAST FEAST

SE Texas event features Phil Robertson, draws 3,500 in Beaumont despite storms

By **Kayla Rinker** | TEXAN Correspondent

Just moments after Duck Dynasty star Phil Robertson wrapped up the invitation at the close of his message, the severe thunderstorm that had threatened to wash out Beast Feast all day finally broke loose.

“One of our guys said he stood out in it and it felt like he was being sandblasted with rain pellets,” said Bruce Stinson, pastor at First Baptist Church Hamshire and one of the evangelistic event’s founders. “The people who got saved this year at Beast Feast definitely did not do so because they were comfortable. It was a

See **BEAST, 6**



Duck Dynasty’s Phil Robertson spoke to the crowd of some 3,500, sharing the story of Jesus.
PHOTO BY BLAINE GONZALES

Russell Moore announces departure from ERLC



PHOTO BY KAREN RACE

By **George Schroeder**
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE Russell Moore is leaving the SBC’s Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, ending an occasionally controversial eight-year tenure, to take a role with Christianity Today.

Moore, who has served as president of the ERLC since June 2013, announced May 18 that he will begin a role this summer as a public theologian for what the magazine described as “a new Public Theology

See **MOORE, 13**

Roundup: Greear challenges college leaders to be gospel multipliers

SEE FULL STORY • PAGE 7



FROM THE EDITOR Gary Ledbetter

Reaching places you've never been

Indiana was a delight. My first and third full-time ministries were among the Hoosier Baptists.

My first year working for that state's convention, I drove 30,000 miles visiting churches in the state. I came to know it well and love it. Indiana is mostly rural in land use but metropolitan in population. I gravitated toward the miles of cornfields so high you couldn't see over them on county roads. But people were moving to larger towns and cities. Metro Indianapolis was about a million people, but the city itself had only four Southern Baptist churches inside the loop. In that day, none of those four would have been a top-20 church in the Dallas Baptist Association. Most of the SBC churches, urban or rural, were pastored by bi-vocational men with little formal education. The story of Indiana is repeated, even magnified, in other Midwest states, New England states and the West.

Were Southern Baptists the only game in town? Nope. There were other evangelistic groups—Independent Baptists, Christian churches, Pentecostals, and some good American Baptist churches. American Baptists usually had the local First Baptist in a town, leaving the first SBC church to be called "First Southern Baptist." But American Baptists had failed to reach the North to the degree Southern Baptists had reached the South. By the early 1990s, metropolitan and New England ABC churches—the larger ones—were wracked with the same theological chaos we've seen split other denominations. Absent a reformation, that denomination is not going to plant churches to sufficiently reach the areas where Southern Baptists



are relatively few. They lack the will and the theological underpinnings. So Southern Baptists are there.

Southern Baptists have been in the North and West only since the late 1950s; that's less than half the lifespan of some southern conventions. And that difference in heritage means that the churches in the North, even those pushing 80 years old, are smaller and less wealthy than their southern counterparts that fuel Baptist work from Texas to North Carolina. That's where a great trait of Southern Baptists kicks in. Using the North American Mission Board, state-to-state partnerships and even church-to-church partnerships, we are pouring great wealth and energy into non-South areas.

My experience in and affection for newer work areas makes me thrilled to see the SBTC making a commitment to Southern Baptists in other regions. Executive Director-elect Nathan Lorrick has initiated a plan to raise an endowment to provide ongoing help for church planting and church revitalization in non-South states. Perhaps you saw the article in our May TEXAN. I wanted to highlight it again and give you a personal perspective.

After spending 12 years in the Midwest, preaching in Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Illinois, Indiana and Missouri during the time I was working in two denominational roles, I was struck by the lack of resources I took for granted while in Texas. There is also a real shortage of trained pastors and leaders. Smaller midwestern churches just don't draw long-term pastors as easily—especially to a region so foreign to southern men looking for a ministry. Having experienced mentors in the state office or teachers able to travel means a lot in places like Red Oak, Iowa, or Roachdale, Indiana. Southern Baptists live in those places, as do lost people. I believe that the local state convention knows or should know best the places in greatest need of a new start or shoring up. The SBTC's

state-to-state initiative will facilitate the strategic use of funding that our larger and wealthier state convention can provide.

This spirit of missionary generosity is not a new thing to our convention. The SBTC Executive Board has granted more than \$4 million to North American out-of-state work, beyond mission offerings and Cooperative Program giving, since its founding in 1998. The SBTC is the newest of all the state conventions, but we have been blessed with diverse, generous and well-established churches. This newest initiative will ensure ongoing strategic partnerships wherein those blessed with great strength have the joy of encouraging folks working far over the horizon.

Thirty years ago, I heard a couple of denominational leaders fussing about the poor return they were getting from the money they provided to new work areas. They weren't questioning if it was doing any good; they were saying their own ministries weren't getting enough back financially. I had just returned from preaching to a joyful new congregation meeting in a building with no running water. That's right, an outhouse out back. They were evangelistic, lean and generous. So those comments from other leaders hit me wrong. I answered their question in a column in which I said, "It's missions, not the stock market." They barked back at me, but I was right. The SBTC was formed a few years later by men and women committed to impacting the world, including the U.S. Gladly, that inward focus by Southern Baptist leaders is far rarer today.

Missionary zeal continues in your state convention today. If you find a way to encourage, praise or support this effort to reach far-flung areas of North America, you'll be making a worthwhile kingdom investment. ✝

gledbetter@sbtxan.com
@sbtxan



SOUTHERN BAPTIST
TEXAN

VOLUME 20 ISSUE 06 JUNE 2021

Jim Richards, Executive Director
Gary K. Ledbetter, Editor
Jane Rodgers, Managing Editor
Gayla Holt Sullivan, Circulation Manager
Russell Lightner, Designer

Correspondents:
Rob Collingsworth
Michael Foust
Erin Roach
Sue Sprenkle
Karen L. Willoughby

The Southern Baptist TEXAN is the official newspaper of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, P.O. Box 1988, Grapevine, Texas 76099-1988. Toll-free 877-953-7282, Phone 817-552-2500, FAX 817-552-2520. Email: gsullivan@sbtxan.com

Obituaries, memorials and classified advertisements listing items and services for sale will be published at a cost of 30 cents per word with a minimum of \$10. Copy is limited to 100 words and must be submitted within three months of death or event. Submit information to gsullivan@sbtxan.com. Several forms of advance payment are available.

Letters to the editor should be limited to 250 words and should refrain from personal attacks. Submit by email to gsullivan@sbtxan.com or mail to the address above.

Individual subscriptions are free of charge within Texas. A \$10 per year donation is requested for out-of-state subscriptions. Email changes to gsullivan@sbtxan.com.



*A higher standard.
A higher purpose.*

▶ texanonline.net
▶ sbtxan
▶ sbtxan

What's Next?

sbtxan.com/events



June

Full calendar, use your phone's camera to scan QR code. →



13-16 SBC Annual Meeting & Send Conference
14 SBTC Reception @ the SBC • 7:30-9:30 PM

Nashville

18-19 **Capacitarte Regional Conference**
Belmont BC, Odessa

24 **RevTalks Online**
Zoom

25-26 **Pastor & Wife Retreat**
Omni Houston Westside

JUNE 28- JULY 2 **m3 camp**
Highland Lakes, Spicewood

July

For more details on SBTC events visit sbtxan.com/events

5-9 **m3 camp**
Highland Lakes, Spicewood

9-10 **Capacitarte Regional Conference**
Iglesia Bautista Trinidad, Laredo

11 **Special Needs Ministry Sunday**

15-19 **m3 camp**
Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, OK

26-30 **m3 camp**
Camp Zephyr, Sandia

28 **SBTC Chapel Grapevine**

All in-person events subject to change based on COVID conditions.

Biden HHS overturns policy that protected religious liberty in health care

The Biden Department of Health and Human Services in May overturned a Trump-era gender policy that Christians within the health care industry said had protected religious liberty.

Under the new Biden policy, discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity within health care is now prohibited.

At issue is a section of federal law that prohibits discrimination based on sex. The Trump administration had interpreted it as referring to "male or female ... as determined by biology." That policy was supported by the Christian Medical & Dental

Associations. CMDA said in 2020 that the Trump policy would "help protect medical judgment and the exercise of conscience in healthcare."

The Trump-era policy protected Christian doctors and nurses when decisions arose about gender-transition procedures, including surgery.

Luke Goodrich, an attorney with the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, said the Biden HHS rule would "punish doctors and hospitals if they won't perform harmful gender-transition procedures against their conscience and medical judgment."

Brent Leatherwood of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission also criticized the new rule.

"We don't need a federal government forcing medical professionals to violate their consciences," said Leatherwood said. "This decision by HHS unfortunately does just that. Coercing doctors and



nurses to provide medical care that goes against their best judgment for the well-being of their patients is a bridge too far."

—BECKET FUND, BAPTIST PRESS

'Finding hope': Bible reading among Americans increased in 2020, survey shows



A worldwide pandemic that forced Americans to forego their hobbies and stay at home also led millions to turn to Scripture, according to a new poll.

The "State of the Bible" survey by the American Bible Society and Barna found that an estimated 181 million Americans opened a Bible in 2020, an increase of 7.1 percent over the 169 million Americans who did so in 2019.

The survey was conducted in January among 3,354 adults.

One in six adults (16 percent) said they read the Bible most days of the week, an increase from 12 percent who answered that way the previous year.

One-quarter of Americans (24 percent) said their Bible reading increased in 2020.

Although 29 percent of adults said they never read the Bible, that's the lowest percentage since 2016.

"Over the past year, Americans have faced a once-in-a-century pandemic — along with significant political and social unrest," said John Farquhar Plake, director of ministry intelligence for the American Bible Society. "However, our research shows that in the midst of incredible pressure, Americans are finding hope and resilience in the Bible. This marks the fourth straight year in a trend of Americans moving toward the Bible, with COVID-19 encouraging many of us to look to faith for answers. There's an astounding opportunity right now for the church to answer our nation's pervasive trauma and pain with the hope and healing of God's Word."

—AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

Canadian pastor arrested for holding church service in defiance of restrictions



Legal battles in the United States over church restrictions have largely ended thanks to friendly court rulings, but congregations throughout Canada were still facing them in April and May.

In Calgary, Alberta, longtime street preacher Artur Pawlowski of the Cave of Adullam congregation was arrested and placed in jail in early May after defying COVID-19 health restrictions. A viral video showed at least six police cars ordering him and his brother, Dawid, to pull over on the side of a highway, where they were handcuffed and led to police vehicles. They were charged with organizing an illegal in-person gathering.

In Edmonton, Ontario, police in April used their vehicles to block entrances to the parking lot of GraceLife Church to prevent the congregation from gathering. Police also erected temporary fencing. The church had met despite health restrictions.

Elsewhere in Ontario, a Canadian judge in late April ordered the doors of Trinity Bible Chapel in Waterloo to be locked by police after the pastor, Jacob Reaume, led worship services in defiance of local restrictions.

Reaume, in several blog posts, criticized the government and argued the outbreak did not warrant the stiff restrictions.

"Not one of our pastors has ever buried someone who has died of COVID," he wrote. "Caesar can have the brick and mortar. We've kept the church for Jesus. He who seeks to preserve his church will lose it, but he who loses the church for Christ's sake will keep it."

—CALGARY HERALD, CBN, CTV, CHRISTIANITY TODAY

GuideStone trustees elect Dilbeck to succeed Hawkins



D. Hance Dilbeck Jr., executive director-treasurer of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma since 2018, was unanimously elected GuideStone® president-elect during a called meeting of the trustee board on May 20.

Dilbeck will serve alongside GuideStone President O.S. Hawkins starting this summer. Trustees and GuideStone anticipate a period of transition between Hawkins and Dilbeck that will culminate in Hawkins becoming president emeritus and Dilbeck becoming president and CEO in the first quarter of 2022.

Dilbeck earned an undergraduate degree in religion from Oklahoma Baptist University and a Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He pastored Oklahoma churches for three decades, including 15 years leading Quail Springs Baptist Church in Oklahoma City. During his tenure, Quail Creek tripled in size and planted 32 other churches.

Dilbeck's extensive denominational experience includes chairing the boards of trustees of Oklahoma Baptist University, Southwestern Seminary and the International Mission Board. He has also served as second vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Steve Dighton, search committee chair, said the committee solicited feedback from "our Southern Baptist family" for three months, allowing another month for recommendations.

Hawkins expressed his confidence to trustees in their selection, calling Dilbeck "one of the most respected men in Southern Baptist life."

Dilbeck's wife, Julie, has served as a GuideStone trustee since 2019. She resigned her post at the called meeting and did not vote in the selection process.

—GUIDESTONE

Lubbock voters ban abortion, approve 'sanctuary city for the unborn' initiative



The 11th-largest city in Texas now prohibits abortion thanks to a voter-approved initiative. Voters in Lubbock, Texas, in May approved an initiative that makes it a "Sanctuary City for the Unborn" and prohibits abortion within the city limits.

Although other localities had approved similar initiatives, Lubbock was the first one with an abortion clinic to do so.

The initiative passed, 62-38 percent.

"The Church of Jesus Christ banded together, stepped up to their role, their God-given role, and said we're not going to let babies be killed in our city,"

Jim Baxa of West Texas for Life said, according to the Lubbock Avalanche-Journal. "All these churches banded together. There were 200 churches in the City of Lubbock, working together to stand up for life. It's excellent."

Planned Parenthood operates a clinic in Lubbock. Planned Parenthood of Greater Texas said it was "carefully reviewing the impact of the ordinance" and "will make decisions soon regarding the availability of abortion services in Lubbock."

A lawsuit is possible.

—LUBBOCK AVALANCHE-JOURNAL

WITH GRATITUDE FOR YOU ALL



Jim Richards
Executive Director

jrichards@sbtexas.com
@RichardsJim

This is my last executive director's column for the TEXAN. Believe it or not, words fail me. I could never express my thanks to the many people who have made this journey such a joy.

God gave me an assignment that was for his purpose, and by his grace I have finished my course.

I will leave it to the historians to comment about my service. I leave it to the Eternal Judge to determine the efficacy of my work for his glory.

Not wanting to sound melancholy, I must reiterate my thankfulness about the next and final chapter of my life and ministry. When I was called to preach at age 17, God did not give an expiration date. I will seek to be used of him until I can no longer physically proclaim his unsearchable riches. My "yes" is on the altar for whatever he has in store for me.

My wife, June, has given sacrificially of her life to further the cause of Christ. She answered God's call the summer before we met. All through these years she has fulfilled that calling from Jesus as well as being a cheerleader for me. God gave me an incomparable helpmate. She was truly the first lady of the SBTC in more ways than one.

Our children supported my SBTC work. Our girls, Rachel and Rebekah, were out of the house when we moved to Texas, but they were impacted by my schedule. Our son, Nathan, was eight years of age when I became executive director. Unlike the girls who saw me as their pastor, he grew up knowing me in a different role. Without complaint,

“
AS TO THE FUTURE OF THE CONVENTION, I COULD NOT BE MORE OPTIMISTIC.
”

he accompanied me many times on road trips. After reaching adulthood, he remained a prayer partner as did the girls. Since the founding of the convention, June and I have been blessed with five grandchildren. Now, I will have more time to be with them.

I would be remiss if I neglect mentioning the staff with whom I have had the privilege to serve. Some of God's choicest servants did yeoman's duty to benefit the churches. Some were with us for a brief time as God moved them to other places of service. Others were with me for over a decade. The list of people worthy of recognition is too long for me to share. However, there is one who has been a stalwart: Joe Davis. He has been a right arm to me for over 20 years. Integrity is his hallmark.

As to the future of the convention, I could not be more optimistic. Our new leadership in Nathan

Lorick will continue to hold to the uniqueness of the SBTC while remaining flexible in meeting the needs of the churches. William Carey said, "The future is as bright as the promises of God." As long as the convention is a confessional fellowship based on the inerrant Word of God, it will be blessed. This does not mean there will always be financial and numerical growth. It does mean that God will honor those who honor his Word. The rising generation is ready to take the mantle.

The winds of chaos are blowing in our nation. Unfortunately, most churches resemble the culture in mirroring the dysfunction. My prayer for the future, for my children and grandchildren, for the SBTC\SBC, is that God will have mercy and send a spiritual renewal to the saved and a spiritual awakening to the lost. This is my heart for the future.

So, as I end my time as executive director of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, I leave you with a grateful heart. I have been blessed so much more than I have contributed. May God bless you, your family, your church and the efforts we do together as the people known as the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention. ✠

Praying for souls



Kie Bowman
SBTC President

kbowman@hpbcc.org
@KieBowman

Christian history repeatedly tells the story of powerfully effective evangelistic advances that trace their origins to prayer. Pentecost is our first example. After Jesus rose from the dead, the disciples were suddenly equipped with eyewitness evidence of the risen Savior.

Yet in spite of the Resurrection, there exists no record of a single soul being saved or baptized for 50 days. It wasn't until after the 10-day prayer meeting in Jerusalem that one sermon led to thousands of conversions and 3,000 baptisms.

Moving forward in history we meet a young George Whitefield, who would come to be known as "the father of American evangelism." While he was a student at Oxford in the 1730s, he prayed with unusual fervency. His prayer life was the key to his future success in evangelism. In his diary, he wrote, "I spent whole days and even weeks on my face before God." Later, his evangelistic ministry led thousands to faith in Christ and shook the New

World awake to God in the pre-revolutionary Great Awakening. His secret was his strangely intense dependence upon prayer.

In New York City, in 1857, a dying church launched a noon prayer meeting that grew so quickly it was soon spreading to other major cities of the United States. Within 18 months, more people were saved per capita than at any time before or since in U.S. history. The phenomenon has been called the Prayer Revival of 1857-1858.

On the mission field, prayer was also the key to many people coming to Christ. In India, John "Praying" Hyde wasn't particularly skilled in learning the complicated languages of the people groups, and he lacked some of the natural gregariousness expected of a missionary. In the late 1890s Hyde was in Punjab, India, seeing little success. Starting in 1899, however, he began frequently spending whole nights in prayer for the conversion of souls.

In 1904, convinced the problem for the missionaries was spiritual, Hyde began leading a wider movement of prayer for evangelistic results. By 1908, Hyde was praying to see one person saved and baptized every day of the year. Through the growing intensity of his prayer life, he saw that vision come to fruition. The next year he doubled his goal to pray for two people a day to be saved and baptized. That year he saw 800 people come to Christ. By the time of his early death at age 47, if four people had not confessed Christ that day, Hyde refused to eat or sleep until he had "prayed through," resulting in at least four people saved per day.

I could go on but space does not permit me to recount the miracles of prayer experienced by "Father" Nash, the prayer warrior associ-

“
PRAYER IS CERTAINLY NOT THE ONLY FACTOR FOR REACHING MORE PEOPLE FOR CHRIST, BUT IN ITS ABSENCE, NOTHING ELSE WILL BE ABLE TO TAKE ITS PLACE OR MAKE UP FOR ITS OMISSION.
”

ated with the evangelist Charles Finney. Also, the Welsh Revival, which spread all over the world in the early 20th century, essentially started as a youth prayer movement. The Shantung Revival among Baptist missionaries in the late 1920s and early 1930s was likewise the result of a renewed commitment to prayer.

In our own times, the prayer revival at Northeast Houston Baptist Church, led by Pastor Nathan Lino, has produced an unprecedented number of people coming to Christ and being baptized. A similar revival in the Nashville area has seen hundreds of people baptized this year following Pastor Robby Gallaty's months of private prayer.

God is still answering prayer when Christians pray for souls to come to Christ. One of the most important keys to a more effective evangelistic harvest is more prayer. Paul said it like this: "Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved" (Romans 10:1 ESV). Obviously, Paul's prayer was passionate as he described it as his "heart's desire." His prayer was also straightforward interces-

sion as he simply described interceding for his Jewish friends and family as an appeal to God that "they may be saved."

More prayer is the key to more people coming to Christ. Billy Graham once observed that there were three ingredients for a successful evangelistic crusade—prayer, prayer, and prayer! The same is true in our personal lives and our churches.

As churches, we are challenged to pray for the lost as we begin our public worship services:

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:1-4).

Are you regularly praying for the lost to be saved? Is your church a "house of prayer" focused intently on the salvation of many souls? If not, why not?

Prayer is certainly not the only factor for reaching more people for Christ, but in its absence, nothing else will be able to take its place or make up for its omission. As S. D. Gordon once observed, "You can do more than pray after you've prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you've prayed."

If you want to be more effective in evangelism you need to pray more in secret and with others in prayer meetings, interceding for the lost to be saved. Scripture, history, and experience leave us no alternative but to pray for souls. ✠

HONORING THE PAST, EMBRACING THE FUTURE



Nathan Lorick
Executive Director-Elect
nlorick@sbtexas.com
@NathanLorick

It's good to be home. In fact, when I drove my vehicle back across the Texas state line in March, I felt a sense of excitement, gratefulness, and anticipation for all that God will do.

I am extremely honored to serve the churches of the SBTC. As I think about the task that lies ahead, I am overwhelmed with gratitude for those who have led us up to this point. From the very beginning, men like Ronnie Yarber, T.C. Melton, Casey Perry and countless others have poured their lives into furthering the kingdom through the ministry of the SBTC. However, there is one man who deserves to be honored with the highest accolades: Jim Richards.

Jim Richards has been a faithful leader of the SBTC for 23 years. His leadership is unparalleled; his integrity is impeccable and his love for the SBTC and its ministries is inspiring. All of these things are commendable and observable.

However, the Jim Richards I know and have had the opportunity to serve under and now alongside, is much more than the things the public sees. First, he is faithful to the Lord in his walk. I have on occasion had the opportunity to stay in his home.

“
IN A WORLD THAT IS EVER CHANGING, WE MUST ALWAYS BE ADAPTING TO BETTER SERVE OUR CHURCHES WHILE HOLDING FAST TO BIBLICAL TRUTHS AND OUR CORE VALUES.
”

gentle and loving and makes me want to be a better husband and father. Third, he is a mentor and friend. There have been many times when he would send an unsolicited text or email letting me know he is praying for me. All of these things, though not public, are what makes Jim Richards who he is. I have had few men make the impact on my life as he has done. So, we say to Dr. Richards, thank you for your leadership and for giving your life to the SBTC. We are better because of you.

Anytime there is transition, we honor the past but must embrace the future. If the Lord allows and carries his coming, there will be much time in the days ahead to discuss the future. In a world that is ever changing, we must always be adapting to better serve our churches while holding fast to biblical truths and our core values. Victories and challenges are sure to arise. However, one thing will always ring true: the SBTC is here to reach Texas and impact the world! 🌎

Early in the morning, you would find him in his study, reading the Word of God and praying for the people and churches of the SBTC. This was not on some large stage, but in the shadows; there, you find faithfulness.

Second, he is a family man. I have been challenged and encouraged as I have seen Jim Richards love his wife and kids. He is



texanonline.net

Current Events. Relevant Topics. **Gospel Stories.**

SUBSCRIBE
EST. 2001



The NRB 2021 Experience

NRB 2021
CHRISTIAN MEDIA CONVENTION

+ JUNE 21-24
GRAPEVINE, TX

Special \$99 Lunch and 1-Day Pass for Texas Church Staff

Explore the world's largest gathering of Christian communicators right here in your backyard!

Get equipped to grow your church, reach more people with your message, and engage your community effectively.

Go to NRBCONVENTION.ORG/EXPERIENCE to learn more and register!



Attendees at the 2021 Beast Feast at Beaumont's Ford Pavilion venue enjoyed exhibits and concession-style food. Beast Feast changed from a men's banquet to a family-friendly outdoor event this year. PHOTO BY BLAINE GONZALES

BEAST

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

great night all around and we are still counting the victories.”

More than 3,500 men, women and children attended this year's Beast Feast held at Beaumont's Ford Park Entertainment Complex on May 11. This was the third year for the event and each year it has grown both in attendance and in lives being changed.

“As of right now we have 32 confirmations of people who accepted Christ,” Stinson said. “Everything that was within our control went very well and the things outside of our control, like the weather ... well, we did what we could do.”

But God wasn't surprised by the storm, and Stinson said he believes God had a plan with that, too.

“What if there was a man who had originally planned to go fishing that night and decided to attend Beast Feast instead because of the impending storm?” he said. “The Lord could have called that storm for such a time as this, so although we can't control the elements, we are on the side of the one who does.”

This year's Beast Feast keynote speaker was Phil Robertson, a.k.a. “The Duck Commander.”

On stage the professional hunter, businessman and television show star revealed that while he definitely enjoys being a fisherman, God has blessed him with the ability to be a great “fisher of men” by proving that loving Jesus and being a manly man are not mutually exclusive.

“I've heard Phil preach before, but I had never heard him preach the gospel like that,” Stinson said. “He preached for an hour taking the crowd from Genesis to Revelation: from the cradle to the grave. It was the clearest gospel message I've ever heard, and he didn't hold anything back. Along the way he also intelligently refuted every point of argument that a person might have about God and his plan for salvation through Jesus. It was absolutely incredible.”

A family-friendly focus

The planning and preparation for Beast Feast occurred in partnership with representatives from both FBC Hamshire and Calvary Baptist Church in Beaumont. This year marked the churches' second year working together in order to put on a bigger, region-wide event. Beast Feast started as an outreach targeting men and their sons. But after praying about it, the team realized that the targeted group already spent enough time off work in boats or hunting blinds—away from their families.

“Why would we want to create another event that separated these men from their families?” said Clay Jones, missions pastor at Calvary. “Beast Feast offers these men the opportunity to share something they love with their families.”

Additional highlights of the evening included live music performed by members of both Calvary and FBC Hamshire, pulled pork sliders catered by Wings of the Spirit and Mercy Chefs (two organizations that provide food in disaster relief settings), and an array of carnival-like exhibits, products and demonstrations featuring the great outdoors, as well as other programs and ministries geared toward families.

“From 400 attendees the first year to 3,000 last year, then 3,500 this year, I never would have dreamed it would get this big this quick,” Stinson said. “In our next meeting we will debrief and look at everything from top to bottom and see what worked well and what can be improved, so that we can give God even more glory because that's what it's all about. From the very first day we agreed that nothing we did would ever be about the bottom line. It's all about reaching more and more people. What the Lord is doing is just incredible.”

A bigger vision

While individual lives have been forever impacted because of Beast Feast, the team has also allocated a portion of the funds raised to help fulfill the vision of one of its founding members, Jake Stone.

“Jake had a vision to buy a piece of land to be used to take underprivileged, fatherless or physically disabled kids hunting,” Jones said. “We lost Jake in a tragic car accident over the summer. We will honor him by moving forward toward this dream.”

Stinson admitted feelings of frustration over the death of Stone, who had “turned his life around” and was passionate about reaching men with the gospel.

“It's difficult, but I trust God that his way is perfectly permissible, and I see how he is continuing to use Jake to reach people even though he's gone. I believe that Jake will get rewards and I can't wait to see what God does because of the legacy of his life,” Stinson said.

Jones said one reason he believes God has blessed Beast Feast so tremendously is because its purpose seeks to tackle one of the biggest problems in the world today: the lack of godly fathers in homes.

“This is often the root of all other issues,” he said. “We feel that if we



▲ Beast Feast Guests listen to Robertson, who finished just before torrential rains fell. PHOTO BY BLAINE GONZALES

▼ The Ford Pavilion stands were filled as guests heard speakers and participated in worship led by a combined band from FBC Hamshire and Calvary churches. PHOTO BY CLAY JONES



can bring men face to face with the gospel, lives will be changed, and they will become better fathers, husbands, employees, etc.”

“We want to glorify God. We want to see souls saved. We want to see families strengthened,” Stinson said.

Jones said they would be happy to answer questions or offer guid-

ance to churches or associations that may want to put on an event like Beast Feast in their areas. For more information, email Jones at cjones@calvarybeaumont.com.

“While we are not experts, we do feel like there are some things we have learned—mostly through mistakes—that would benefit others,” Jones added. ☞

STAND FOR LIFE

with us

We believe in the dignity of every human life because each person is created in the image of God. As the ERLC continues to stand for life, we will resource the local church through curriculum, content, and events; advocate for pro-life legislation, and place life-saving ultrasound machines in pregnancy resource centers. Believing that abortion can end in our lifetime, will you join us as we STAND FOR LIFE?

ERLC
learn more at ERLC.com/STANDFORLIFE

WE ARE THE NEW
LIFE GENERATION

STAND

round up

By Rob Collingsworth
TEXAN Correspondent

Photos by H&G Photography

FORT WORTH The Southern Baptists of Texas Convention's annual Roundup collegiate ministry event kicked off Wednesday night, May 12, with worship and a message from North Carolina pastor and Southern Baptist Convention president J.D. Greear.

Speaking at Common Grounds, part of Christ Chapel Bible Church in Fort Worth, Greear challenged college students to lay down their "yes" and be willing to go wherever the Lord calls them.

Roundup, which has been held for the last decade, drew over 250 college students and ministry leaders from eight states this year. Mitch Tidwell, SBTC collegiate ministry associate, called the event unique in that it targets college ministry done in the local church rather than through parachurch organizations.

"The biggest thing here is that this is an event for local churches," Tidwell told the TEXAN. "In almost every other area of ministry in the building, that's a no-brainer, but in the college world and in Southern Baptist life, it is one of the only events specifically designed for church-based college ministry. I just love that we're investing in that and have decided to put resources behind that."

"This is the conference that the church-based leader comes to and they are the primary target audience. And I think that's what makes Roundup what it is."

Encouraging kingdom growth

Greear's message to open the event focused on "the most strategic mission field," as he challenged college students to not miss the opportunities God has presented them for kingdom impact.

He shared the vision of The Summit Church, which 12 years ago set a goal to plant 1,000 churches. According to Greear, 468 churches have been planted in that time by over 1,400 Summit members—mostly college students—who have been mobilized.

... IN THE COLLEGE WORLD AND IN SOUTHERN BAPTIST LIFE, IT IS ONE OF THE ONLY EVENTS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR CHURCH-BASED COLLEGE MINISTRY.

Mitch Tidwell, SBTC collegiate ministry associate

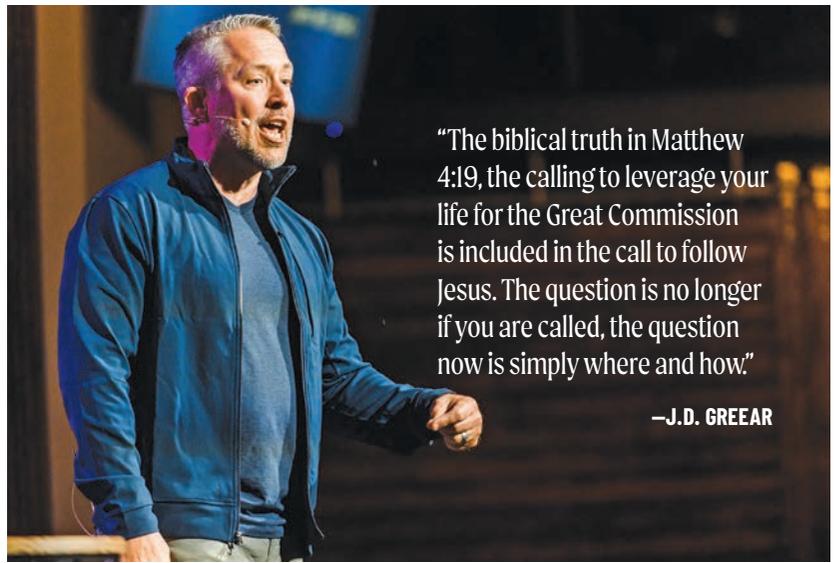
Greear described Summit's practice of meeting with college seniors active at the church.

"We meet with our seniors and say, 'God loves you. We've got a wonderful plan for your life. Will you put your yes on the table and let God put it on the map?'" he said. "We say to all of them that unless they've heard from God audibly or turn 30 years old, whichever comes first, they need to plan on spending at least the first two years after they graduate on one of these church plants."

Greear next discussed the rapid spread of the gospel after the resurrection of Jesus, citing statistics from sociologist Rodney Stark that there were likely only about 7,500 Christians at the end of the first century.

With only 7,500 believers with "no money, no political influence," whose very faith was illegal, Christianity spread to over "half the Roman empire" so much that the emperor converted 200 years later, Greear noted. He cited Stark's explanation that the early church "had a sense that the Great Commission belonged to every single believer, that every Christian was responsible to multiply, every church was responsible to multiply."

"The DNA of multiplication was in every single believer, so that they all understood that it was their responsibility to go make disciples."



"The biblical truth in Matthew 4:19, the calling to leverage your life for the Great Commission is included in the call to follow Jesus. The question is no longer if you are called, the question now is simply where and how."

—J.D. GREEAR



Greear suggested we may be seeing the end of the megachurch era, that the movement "hasn't really quite worked" because of a lack of emphasis on multiplication: "the one thing that actually would multiply the church forward in every single generation."

Noting there are more Southern Baptist churches in America than there are Starbucks, McDonald's and Subways combined, Greear asked, regarding the spread of the gospel: "What if just a third of those churches understood it was their responsibility to multiply? And what if each of them said we're going to have one church that we plant this year?"

He challenged college students who are "coming online" at a strategic point in church history, as the COVID-19 pandemic draws to a close, to see ways in which the past year opened doors for the gospel.

Calling all Christians

"You're alive in a moment when God is doing something," Greear urged, enumerating five "mind shifts" necessary for the church to embrace a culture of multiplication:

1. The greatness of the church occurs only through individual members filled with the Spirit.
2. Unchurched and de-churched people can only be reached by disciple-making disciples.

3. Every believer is called.
4. God multiplies the ministry only as we give it away.
5. Risk is right for the Great Commission.

Calling is for every Christian, Greear said, not just a mystical, sacred moment for a few.

"The biblical truth in Matthew 4:19, the calling to leverage your life for the Great Commission is included in the call to follow Jesus," he said. "The question is no longer if you are called; the question now is simply where and how."

He challenged the college students to intertwine their commitment to the gospel with their other gifts and passions, leveraging all their talents for kingdom impact.

The rest of Roundup was held at First Baptist Colleyville, May 13-14, and featured Drew Worsham and Dusty Thompson addressing the general sessions. Breakouts and panels led by more than two dozen experts along tracks for student leaders and pastor and college ministers allowed participants to choose among more than 20 topics, from leadership development to counseling to conflict resolution to discipleship to communications to evangelism.

Next year's Roundup is scheduled for May 11-13, 2022, its location to be determined, Tidwell said. ☒

SHAPED BY SCRIPTURE.
SENT TO SERVE.

CRISWELL
COLLEGE

Undergraduate majors include:

- Biblical Studies
- Christian ministry
- Psychology
- Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Education

Master's programs include:

- Christian Leadership
- Christian Studies
- Counseling
- Theological and Biblical Studies
- Divinity

criswell.edu

Culture of generosity marks Great Hills in Austin

By Erin Roach

TEXAN Correspondent

AUSTIN Great Hills Baptist Church in Austin has cultivated a culture of generosity as it focuses on accomplishing the Great Commission locally and throughout the world, pastor Danny Forshee said. Recently, that included helping people pay off medical debt amid COVID-19.

The church gave more than \$50,000 to a ministry that pooled resources to pay off \$4 million in medical debt for 4,000 families in Central Texas, Forshee told the TEXAN. "It was such a blessing to be able to do that. Now we're starting to get thank you letters from these people. It's so encouraging," he said.

When the pandemic began, a Great Hills church member gave a check for \$25,000 and said, "Help our people. I know some of them are really going to need help," Forshee recounted. The church used that money to help people with rent, groceries and other needs.

"Our church is just so generous," Forshee said, marking a new day for a congregation that declared bankruptcy in the '90s.

Great Hills has a history of taking the gospel to the nations, the pastor said. They adopted an unengaged people group in India about eight years ago and have sent teams each year except 2020.

"Outside the Cooperative Program, they receive probably most of our financial support," Forshee said. "There were no known believers in this people group in India, and now there



Great Hills Baptist Church in Austin is a longtime missions-supporting congregation. An example is leading Vacation Bible School in Panama.

are many believers, and churches have been started. That just thrills me."

Great Hills gives 7.5 percent of undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program, which amounts to around \$300,000, the pastor said. "Our goal is to keep going up incrementally until we reach 10 percent."

When Forshee arrived at the church nearly 11 years ago, it had a \$7 million debt, but "God worked miracles," and a couple of years ago the debt was eliminated. "That absolutely liberated us," he said, adding that now they're able to give more to missions.

"We try to have a giving culture where to whom much is given, much is required, and we try to be a conduit," Forshee said. "God blesses us, and we bless the nations."

Forshee recently served as chairman of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention Executive Board, giving him a closer look at how the 45 percent of Cooperative Program receipts

that stay in Texas is spent.

"The SBTC says they support church planting and missions, and I'm telling you they do," he said, commending the convention for forwarding 55 percent to national and international missions and ministries—the most of any Southern Baptist state convention.

When Forshee recently reminded the Great Hills finance committee of the many ways Cooperative Program dollars help reach the world for Christ, he said it was "an easy sell."

"I always like to share my testimony of, 'Look, I don't know that I could have gone to Southwestern Seminary in the '80s. Ashley and I had just been married 10 days. We had no money, and here we go moving to Fort Worth, Texas, and I was able to enroll and have half of my tuition paid for,'" he said.

A ministry at Great Hills that has been successful at reaching people is their English as a Second Language effort, Forshee said. The volunteers "do a great



The pandemic gave Great Hills Baptist Church in Austin new opportunities to be generous toward the community, communicating the love of Christ by making gift cups for employees of local grocery stores and nursing homes.

job of teaching English and building relationships with people from all over the world. I think there were 25 nations represented in the last class before COVID."

Another ministry that was going well before COVID was Respite Care, which helps the families of Alzheimer's patients. Each Tuesday, the caregivers could take their loved ones to the church where a team of volunteers would welcome them, color with them, play games, feed them and "just love on them for a few hours" while the caregivers got a break, Forshee said.

Attendance at Great Hills was between 800 and 900 before COVID, and since then it has hovered around 500 people. The church suffered a setback in February when the building had a "catastrophic flood" during the winter freeze and the wor-

ship center couldn't be used.

As the church moves forward, lives are being changed. In April, Forshee preached on baptism, and then a man accepted the invitation to receive Christ as Savior. As one of the pastors counseled him, the man said he wanted to be baptized right then. Though it was the end of the service and the baptism wasn't planned, they went ahead with it, and people were cheering the man's new commitment to Christ, Forshee said.

Discipleship is a vibrant emphasis at Great Hills, where men are being disciplined in small groups with men and women are being disciplined in small groups with women, Forshee said. Spurred by that, the lead guitarist in the worship band was able to lead his parents in Mexico to Christ via Zoom. ✠

Una cultura de generosidad caracteriza a Great Hills en Austin

Por Erin Roach

Corresponsal del TEXAN

AUSTIN La Iglesia Bautista Great Hills en Austin ha cultivado una cultura de generosidad mientras se enfoca en lograr la Gran Comisión a nivel local y en todo el mundo, dijo el pastor Danny Forshee. Recientemente, eso incluyó ayudar a las personas a pagar sus deudas médicas en medio del COVID-19.

La iglesia donó más de \$50,000 a un ministerio que reunió recursos para pagar \$4 millones en deudas médicas para 4,000 familias en el centro de Texas, dijo Forshee al TEXAN. "Fue una gran bendición poder hacer eso. Ahora estamos empezando a recibir cartas

de agradecimiento de estas personas. Es muy alentador", dijo.

Cuando comenzó la pandemia, un miembro de la iglesia de Great Hills entregó un cheque por \$25,000 y dijo: "Ayude a nuestra gente. Sé que algunos de ellos realmente van a necesitar ayuda", relató Forshee. La iglesia usó ese dinero para ayudar a las personas con el alquiler, los comestibles y otras necesidades.

"Nuestra iglesia es tan generosa", dijo Forshee, haciendo énfasis a un nuevo resurgir para una congregación que se declaró en bancarrota en los años noventa.

Great Hills tiene una historia de mantenerse enfo-

cados en llevar el evangelio a las naciones, dijo el pastor. Hace ocho años adoptaron a un grupo no alcanzado y olvidado en la India y han enviado equipos misioneros cada año, excepto en el 2020.

"Probablemente ellos y el Programa Cooperativo son los que reciben la mayor parte de nuestro apoyo financiero", dijo Forshee. "No había creyentes en este grupo de personas en la India, y ahora hay muchos creyentes; y se han iniciado iglesias. Eso me emociona".

Great Hills da el 7.5 por ciento de los ingresos no designados a través del Programa Cooperativo, que asciende a alrededor



At Great Hills Baptist Church in Austin, the members take care of one another, the pastor said. For instance, they write notes to those who are homebound. PHOTOS SUBMITTED

de \$300,000, dijo el pastor. "Nuestro objetivo es seguir aumentando gradualmente hasta llegar al 10 por ciento".

Cuando Forshee llegó a la iglesia hace casi 11 años, la

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Jacksonville College announces Lightner as new president

By Jacksonville College & TEXAN Staff

JACKSONVILLE, Texas The board of trustees of Jacksonville College voted unanimously to elect Joe Lightner as the president of the college on April 29, the college announced.

Lightner, currently the college's vice president of executive affairs, will succeed Mike Smith who has served as the school's president for the last decade.

"Dr. Lightner is highly qualified and experienced to lead Jacksonville College to the next level. The best days are ahead for Jacksonville with Dr. Lightner as president," Smith said upon Lightner's election.

"The Lightners understand that they have been called to serve here for such a time as this. We welcome them and look forward to watching how the Lord will guide them in leading our college into the future," said Donnie Page, chairman of the college's board of trustees.

Lightner holds a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, a Doctor of Ministry from Liberty University, and will complete a Doctor of Philosophy in biblical ministries at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He also holds a Bachelor of Science in business administration from the University of Arkansas. He has served churches and parachurch ministries in a variety of leadership capacities.

Lightner will serve as president-elect under Smith until July 15, 2021, when he will assume the helm of Jacksonville College. ✠



Nathan Lorick, SBTC executive director-elect, presented to Joe Lightner, Jacksonville College president-elect, a \$300,000 check from the SBTC for campus renovations on May 14. The grant was approved by the SBTC Executive Board at its meeting in Fort Worth on April 20. The SBTC's formal relationship with Jacksonville College, the only Christian junior college in Texas, began in 2004. The college receives a percentage of the convention's in-state Cooperative Program budgeted annual receipts and has received additional special grants through the years. This most recent grant will be used in the renovation of existing student housing and the restoration of Buckner Chapel.

"I am so grateful for the SBTC's support of Jacksonville College's mission to capture the minds and hearts of students for Christ. This special grant will further develop the college's property, enabling us to reach more students for Jesus," Lightner told the TEXAN. PHOTO SUBMITTED

GREAT HILLS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

iglesia tenía una deuda de \$7 millones, pero "Dios hizo milagros" y hace un par de años la deuda fue eliminada. "Eso nos liberó absolutamente", dijo, y agregó que ahora pueden dar más a las misiones.

"Tratamos de tener una cultura de generosidad en la que creemos que a quien se le da mucho, se le requiere mucho, y tratamos de ser un canal para esto", dijo Forshee. "Dios nos bendice y nosotros bendicimos a las naciones".

Forshee se desempeñó recientemente como presidente de la Junta Ejecutiva de la Convención de los Bautistas del Sur de Texas, lo que le permitió dar una mirada más cercana a cómo se utiliza el 45 por ciento de los ingresos del Programa Cooperativo que permanecen en Texas.

"La SBTC dice que apoyan la plantación de iglesias y las misiones, y yo les puedo confirmar que lo hacen", dijo, y elogió a la convención estatal por enviar el 55 por ciento a las misiones y a ministerios nacionales e internacionales, la cual es una cantidad mayor a la



Members of Great Hills Baptist Church in Austin serve faithfully, including picking up trash on an adopted city street. PHOTOS SUBMITTED

que regularmente dan el resto de las convenciones.

Cuando Forshee le recordó recientemente al comité de finanzas de Great Hills las muchas formas en que los fondos del Programa Cooperativo ayudan a llegar al mundo para Cristo, dijo que fue algo "fácil de vender".

"Siempre me gusta compartir mi testimonio de, 'Mira, no sé si podría haber ido al Seminario Southwestern en los años 80. Ashley y yo llevábamos diez días de casados. No teníamos dinero, y aquí nos mudamos a Fort Worth, Texas, y pude inscribirme y pagar la mitad de la matrícula'", dijo.

Un ministerio en Great Hills que ha tenido éxito en llegar a la gente es su esfuerzo de enseñar Inglés como Segundo Idioma, dijo Forshee. Los voluntarios "hacen un gran trabajo enseñando inglés y construyendo relaciones con personas de todo el mundo. Creo que hubo 25 naciones representadas en la última clase antes del COVID".

Otro ministerio que estaba funcionando mucho antes del COVID era uno llamado Cuidado de Relevó, una ayuda para las familias de pacientes con Alzheimer. Cada martes, los cuidadores podían llevar a sus seres queridos a la iglesia, donde un equipo de voluntarios los recibiría, y harían actividades con ellos como colorear, jugar, alimentarlos y

"simplemente brindarles amor por unas horas" mientras sus familiares a cargo tomaban un descanso, dijo Forshee.

La asistencia a Great Hills estaba entre 800 y 900 antes del COVID, y desde entonces se ha mantenido en 500 personas. La iglesia sufrió un revés en febrero cuando el edificio sufrió una "inundación catastrófica" durante la helada del invierno y no se pudo utilizar el auditorio.

A medida que la iglesia avanza, vidas son cambiadas. En abril, Forshee predicó sobre el bautismo y luego un hombre aceptó la invitación de recibir a Cristo como su Salvador. Luego de que uno de los pastores le ofreciera consejería, el hombre dijo que quería ser bautizado en ese momento. Aunque ya era el final del servicio y el bautismo no estaba planeado, siguieron adelante y lo bautizaron mientras la gente estaba celebrando con él su nuevo compromiso con Cristo, dijo Forshee.

El discipulado es un énfasis muy fuerte en Great Hills, donde los hombres están siendo discipulados en grupos pequeños con otros hombres y las mujeres están siendo discipuladas en grupos pequeños con otras mujeres, dijo Forshee. Esto mismo fue lo que animó al guitarrista principal de la banda de adoración a presentarle a Cristo a sus padres por medio de Zoom, ya que residen en México. ✠

Earn **1.85% APY**
for a **7-month term**
& maximize your ministry's impact

sbtexasfoundation.com/summer-promo



Promotional rate is available through August 31, 2021. Church Expansion Term (CET) investments are available to Texas churches and ministries.

EQUIP to offer 'best ministry training' in-person Aug. 14

By Jane Rodgers
Managing Editor

HOUSTON EQUIP, the one-day church training event sponsored by the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, will return in-person this summer. While the 2019 EQUIP conference saw 2,500 attending, the 2020 event was held fully online in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

EQUIP 2021 promises to be back better and bigger than ever on August 14 at Champion Forest Baptist Church, 15555 Stuebner Airline Road in Houston.

"We will have 300 breakouts this year with over 100 different expert speakers," Mark Yoakum, SBTC director of the event, told the TEXAN.

At only ten dollars per person, which includes lunch, EQUIP is a bargain by any estimation.

"It's so affordable, basically the cost of lunch," said Charles Draper, associate pastor of families and discipleship at Spring Baptist Church.

Spring Baptist brought large groups to EQUIP in

“MY OPINION IS THAT EQUIP IS THE BEST MINISTRY TRAINING AND EQUIPPING THE SBTC OFFERS, ESPECIALLY FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL AND SMALL GROUP MINISTRY.”

Charles Draper, associate pastor of families and discipleship at Spring Baptist Church

2017 and 2019, Draper told the TEXAN. "The fact that we had more than 80 both years says our folks saw value in the equipping for ministry that the SBTC EQUIP conference provides."

Draper noted the benefits that leaders in all age group ministries—from preschool to senior adult—can receive from training at EQUIP. Children's leaders, life group leaders, Bible study teachers, ministry directors or coordinators: all can acquire ministry tools at the conference.

"My opinion is that EQUIP is the best ministry training and equipping the SBTC of-

fers, especially for Sunday School and small group ministry," Draper said.

In addition to the quality of training, Draper said that it is also encouraging to join together with those from other churches engaged in the same work of sharing the gospel.

"We share ideas in breakout sessions and learn from one another as well as from the speakers in each session," he said. EQUIP also "gets our folks connected to a network of ministry leaders and training resources for further leadership development."

Neal Livingston, Spring Baptist children's minister, echoed Draper's sentiments, noting that EQUIP encourages leaders by allowing them to "think beyond just the four walls of a classroom or church setting." He added that EQUIP also promotes "ongoing relationship building with others on the same journey of caring deeply for the local church."

In short, EQUIP is a most worthwhile bargain for ministry tools, ideas and networking.



George Ohmstede, pastor of First Baptist Church Dayton, said he, his wife, and staff members have attended EQUIP twice and watched online as well. While he will be leaving soon for another pastorate, Ohmstede confirmed that FBC Dayton plans to return to EQUIP this year.

"It's a great resource," Ohmstede told the TEXAN of EQUIP, especially noting the help he had received in revitalization at FBC Dayton.

"By using resources from the EQUIP conference, we were able to see growth take place and unity take place, and we are leaving with a healthy environment in place for the next guy to be able to come and build upon," Ohmstede said.

EQUIP enabled Ohmstede to see "how everybody else was doing things and to gain knowledge and wisdom, and to be able to take

what works for us and use that [at Dayton]."

EQUIP 2021 will feature Ronnie Floyd, president of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, as keynote speaker. Breakout sessions will run the gamut from preschool, children's, student and collegiate ministries to adult, senior adult and multiethnic ministries. Training will be offered in more than 20 ministry areas including church technology, evangelism, missions, church planting, worship, chaplaincy, next gen and leadership.

Lay leaders, deacons, teachers, Bible study leaders, pastors: EQUIP has something for everyone who desires to make a difference in the church.

EQUIP runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 14.

To register and for more information, visit sbtxan.com/equip.

Youth Alive 2021

Presented by Tim Lee Ministries

SPEAKERS



Johnny Hunt



Ergun Caner



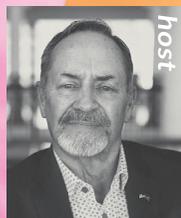
Tommy Oglesby



Clark Boshier



Brad White



Tim Lee

Sports Tournaments
Design Expo
Comfortable Lodging
Late Night Parties
Zip Line
Rock Wall
Jet Ski Tubing
Water Slides
Swimming
and SO MUCH MORE!

MUSIC



Marc Ivey

Social Distancing Guidelines will be Followed.



Special Concert by

Jordan Feliz

Rise UP

July 12-15 2021
Camp WOW
Stuart OK

For more info, visit: www.youthalive.camp

Call to register: 800.872.9979 or 972.276.3168
or Email: amber@timlee.org

The Longest Year: Student ministers personalized pandemic outreach

By Sue Sprengle
TEXAN Correspondent

When the pandemic hit last year, student pastors around Texas say they had an easier time than most. They were used to changing. After all, they are normally the first in the church to try out new things.

Student ministry is known to be flexible, maybe even fluid. Trends and technology are constantly changing for teenagers, and

student ministers must keep up. These ministries take shape according to what is needed by the specific teenagers in their groups.

During COVID and remote learning, Zoom fatigue was real for students who spent the majority of their time on the platform for school. While the rest of the church moved to mostly streaming, student ministers had to find other ways to meet the needs of their teens. They discovered some “new and old” ways to disciple that they plan to keep in hope of growing healthier disciples.

Join three student ministers from across the state as they share how the pandemic affected their ministries and where they are headed now. 📺



What do you need?

Carlos Cameron
Nassau Bay Baptist Church, Houston

For Carlos Cameron, student ministry at Nassau Bay Baptist Church in Houston began to change with his standing “socially distanced” on a student’s porch. He delivered care packages to students on their birthdays and for last year’s graduates. He saw joy on faces as students realized the church met them where they were.



“That’s when we became intentionally intentional,” the associate pastor of students remembers. “They had come to us on campus and did everything at the church. Then, we had to go to them. That shifted everything.”

One thing Cameron noticed was that students became more vocal about what they needed ... all he had to do was ask. At first, Zoom was a big thing and groups met online. The students asked if they could spend time praying. So they let the students lead Zoom prayer meetings. When everyone got tired of streaming, students asked to meet in small groups outside. So the team came up with outside, socially distanced “drive-in” style meetings. Students even suggested topics—such as depression and anxiety—for Cameron and his leaders to cover.

“What this pandemic revealed to me is that students want to be involved, and they wanted a reason to be involved. COVID helped them branch out of their comfort zones,” he said. “We’ve doubled our size during the pandemic and grown in our relationships with Christ because students were excited to spread the gospel and be more evangelistic. Students understood our desire to invest in them as individuals.”

Once they started meeting back on campus and face-to-face, Cameron’s team worked hard to keep this new culture. It’s one he plans to continue to cultivate. Students now lead all prayer time, often spending more time in prayer than he would have done. He said he continues being intentional by asking students, “What do you need?”

“That’s not a surface question. It’s real,” Cameron emphasized. “Involve students in the direction of the ministry. This is something we always say we do but weren’t really being intentional about. We changed that, and now I’m just sitting back and watching God do amazing things.” 📺

Be an influencer

Marcus Eaves,
New Beginnings Baptist Church, Longview

In a generation of influencers, New Beginnings Baptist Church in Longview stepped up its presence on social media platforms during the pandemic. It was so successful that they continue to use social media as an active part of ministry - not just as a place to post announcements and fun pictures but as a place for serious, life-changing messages.



Marcus Eaves, minister to students, explained that when everyone was basically homebound, he noticed that his students turned to social media to fill their down time. Before the pandemic, student ministry competed for attention against the overwhelming number of activities students were involved in. This changed during stay-at-home orders. There were fewer excuses to not be involved, so his team went to work being influencers on social media (and mentoring students on how to do the same).

On Instagram, @nbbcbstudents became the place to be. Challenges, accompanied by devotionals, engaged students. The challenges often reflected the lesson of the week. For example, a lesson on “being a servant” included challenges to do things a servant might do. Some challenges were pure fun, like throwing paper airplanes and measuring the distance as a competition. Tuesdays became “Testimony Tuesday” where students shared videos of what God was doing in their lives.

“We really leveraged social media well, and as a result added close to 300 new followers on our Instagram account,” Eaves says, noting that the effort was about more than just gaining followers. “It was really a way to positively engage students during a time in their lives when they needed it.”

Students dove into sharing their testimonies via social ministry. Some did it via video while others wrote out short posts. Hannah Haney shared how God radically changed her life, bringing her out of depression and an identity crisis. Her video received over 1,000 views, reaching way beyond the church’s own student ministry box. She encouraged many students in their faith and brought friends with her. One student trusted Christ for salvation as a result.

“One thing I learned is that when plans change, and problems arise, these can actually be great opportunities in disguise,” Eaves said. “Situations and life change but the call to make disciples does not.” 📺

Decentralizing

Anthony Watt,
Paramount Baptist, Amarillo

Believe it or not, Anthony Watt misses a few things from the pandemic ministry time last year. And it’s not just because his job changed at Paramount Baptist Church, Amarillo, from student pastor to discipleship pastor. He misses the extreme closeness of students and leaders that the pandemic brought.



That closeness came after his team realized students were tired of Zoom classrooms. Numbers dwindled and no one wanted to participate in the weekly online meetings. Students craved real relationships and opportunities to bond.

So Watt decentralized the youth group.

It’s an old concept—thousands of years old. He followed Jesus’ example of discipleship.

“Jesus preached to the masses, had his 12 disciples and then had his three,” Watt explained. “So every leader met with three students for discipleship and prayer and then they asked those three to meet with three and [so on].”

Watt is quick to point out that the student ministry didn’t “thrive” but maintained. However, he saw something important happen. Students bought into the plan. They liked decentralizing and forming those closer bonds. The ministry quickly went from a program of Watt’s reaching a large group to students reaching out to one another on a personal level. Leaders brought back stories of students spending time with God and growing in their faith.

Choosing to decentralize didn’t change the principal goals of the church’s ministry. Watt always wanted students to spend time with the Lord and talk about him.

“If those two things happen, they will grow the kingdom and grow with God,” Watt pointed out. “Our purpose doesn’t change, but our methods might.” 📺

Baylor provides path for LGBTQ campus group, says position unchanged on sexuality

By Scott Barkley
Baptist Press

WACO Baylor University's Board of Regents approved a resolution on May 14 that paves the way for an officially recognized LGBTQ student group on campus while attempting to reaffirm the university's commitment to a traditional, biblical perspective on homosexuality and marriage.

Describing a "challenging situation," the resolution said the regents remained committed to "core commitments of our Christian mission," including: "the biblical understanding that sexual relations of any kind outside of marriage between a man and a woman are not in keeping with the teaching of Scripture"; "the dignity and worth of all, regardless of sexual orientation [or] gender identity"; and "providing a welcoming, supportive educational environment based on civility and respect for all."

The resolution said the board of regents "recognize that Baylor's LGBTQ students continue to seek care, con-

nections, and community on our campus and a sense of belonging within the Baylor family," and charged Baylor President Linda Livingstone "to determine the appropriate pathways to provide additional care, connections, and community for Baylor's LGBTQ students, including the possibility of establishing a new, chartered student group that is consistent with Baylor's core commitments ... and the University's policies and statements."

Baylor was founded in 1845 through the Union Baptist Association, predating the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) by three years. Baylor pulled away from direct control by the BGCT in 1990, when it established an independent governing board, but ties between the state convention and the school remain.

The BGCT budgeted \$1,627,900 toward Baylor in 2020. The BGCT has earmarked \$1,541,542 toward the school in its 2021 budget. Baylor's operating budget for 2021-22, which was approved Friday by the regents, is \$789.4 million.



According to Baylor's Statement on Human Sexuality, the university affirms "purity in singleness and fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman as the biblical norm. Temptations to deviate from this norm include both heterosexual sex outside of marriage and homosexual behavior." It also includes language that "students will not participate in advocacy groups which promote understandings of sexuality that are contrary to biblical teaching."

Baylor's policy on sexual conduct states that the school "will be guided by the biblical understanding that human sexuality is a gift from God and that physical sexual intimacy is to be expressed in the context of marital fidelity. Thus, it is expected that Baylor students, faculty and staff will engage in behaviors consistent with this understanding of human sexuality."

"We look forward to moving forward on the charge in that resolution and doing it in a way that respects the principles outlined there and respects our values and mission and then our deep care for our students," Livingston told reporters afterward, according to the

Waco Tribune.

But R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, during his daily podcast "The Briefing," characterized Baylor's decision to officially recognize a LGBTQ student group as among "the most significant tripwires" for a school that calls itself Christian.

"If a university or college, or for that matter, a seminary is not abundantly clear about its convictions and the binding nature of those convictions," Mohler said, "if it actually begins to recruit students or even to accept students who hold to a contrary view and then allows official recognition of that group ... you have just sown the seeds for the revolution of your own institution."

The decision by the regents comes amid continual conversation regarding the issue during recent years.

In 2015, the school altered its sexual misconduct policy, removing language regarding homosexuality. In 2019, an unofficial LGBTQ student group at Baylor received more than 3,000 signatures of support from alumni, faculty and other students in its attempts to receive charter status. According to the

Waco Tribune-Herald, Livingstone recommended that the group, Gamma Alpha Upsilon, not be provided the charter but a new group to be formed that included its members in order to provide a "clean slate."

In October 2020, Baylor's student senate called on the school to reinterpret its statement on human sexuality, approving the bill "No Crying on Sundays" in a 30-15 vote. That measure also called for the addition of a nondiscrimination clause to Baylor's policies for student organizations. Dissenting student senators termed the discrimination argument sought by the bill's authors as "repugnant."

The school's statement on human sexuality encourages students struggling with those issues to take advantage of outlets offering confidential discussion and support through the school's Spiritual Life office as well as its counseling center.

According to the regents' resolution, "as an important and faithful expression of our Christian mission, we desire to establish trust with our LGBTQ students so that, among other things, they might seek out the resources provided by Baylor." ❧

SBC messengers to vote on Vision 2025 in Nashville



By Baptist Press

NASHVILLE Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville, June 15-16, will vote on the adoption of Vision 2025 as a strategic plan. "Vision 2025 renews our call as Southern Baptists to reach every person for Jesus Christ in every town, every city, every state and every nation," SBC Executive Committee President Ronnie Floyd told Baptist Press this spring.

In a BP editorial, Floyd enumerated five strategic actions comprising Vision 2025, summarized below:

Five Strategic Actions

Strategic Action #1: Increase full-time, fully funded missionaries by a net gain of 500, giving us 4,200 full-time, fully funded missionaries through the International Mission Board.

Strategic Action #2: Add 5,000 new SBC congregations to our Southern Bap-

tist family, giving us more than 50,000 SBC congregations through annual increases as follows:

- ◆ 600 new church plants
- ◆ 200 church replants
- ◆ 100 new campuses
- ◆ 350 new church affiliations
- ◆ 1,250 new congregations

Strategic Action #3: Increase total number of workers in the field through a new emphasis on "calling out the called" and then preparing those who are called out by the Lord.

Strategic Action #4: Turn around our ongoing decline in reaching, baptizing, and discipling 12- to 17-year-olds.

Strategic Action #5: Increase our annual giving in successive years and establish a new path of growth that will lead us to reach and surpass \$500 million through the Cooperative Program to achieve these Great Commission goals. ❧

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS OF TEXAS CONVENTION

Texan

RECEPTION AT SBC

For Texans, former Texans, or anyone wanting to be a Texan.

Monday Evening, June 14

Nashville Music City Center

No ticket required.
For time & location visit

sbtexas.com/sbc

Saddleback's ordination of 3 female pastors sparks discussion within SBC

By George Schroeder & Scott Barkley
Baptist Press

An ordination service in early May at Saddleback Valley Community Church in Lake Forest, Calif., reinvigorated an ongoing discussion among Southern Baptists over the title of "pastor" and whether and how that label should be applied to a woman in a ministry context.

A post to the church's Facebook page described the service, held May 6, as part of "a historic night for Saddleback Church in many ways," and noted the church had "ordained [its] first three women pastors."

Saddleback did not respond to requests for comment from Baptist Press.

The women are longtime staff members who have combined to serve more than 70 years at Saddleback. Although their titles have changed, their roles appear largely the same. According to the church's Facebook posts, Liz Puffer is now pastor of pastoral care; Cynthia



Saddleback Community Church in Lake Forest, Calif., held an ordination service May 6 that included three women in various ministry positions with the title of "pastor."

PHOTO FROM FACEBOOK/SADDEBACK

Petty, who formerly had the title of children's minister, is NextGen ministries pastor; Katie Edwards, who serves in junior high ministry, now has the title of student ministries pastor for the church's Lake Forest campus.

Saddleback Church, founded in 1980 by Rick and Kay Warren, is

among the largest churches in the Southern Baptist Convention, with almost 53,000 members and weekly attendance of more than 23,000. Rick Warren is arguably the most recognizable Southern Baptist pastor. The church's elders are all male, as are all its campus pastors.

The church's announcement

kicked off the latest round of debate over the issue of women in ministry, which was a major point of contention during the Conservative Resurgence a generation ago.

SBC Executive Committee President Ronnie Floyd called Southern Baptists to stand on their shared conviction, but also to conduct Christ-like conversations about the issue.

"Baptists believe in the principle of the final authority of the Holy Scripture. This has not changed and we have not moved," Floyd said in a statement. "As a part of our confession of faith in the Baptist Faith & Message 2000, we state clearly: 'While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.'

"Circumstances like these may be complex, but we must work diligently to understand them and to achieve clarity. Ultimately, Southern Baptists will always stand upon the authority of the Scripture." ❏

MOORE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Project." In a message posted to his personal blog, Moore said the project "is devoted to cultivating a forward-looking, joyful, consistent gospel witness."

"I've struggled with this decision," Moore wrote, "because my gratitude for the honor of serving the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission is so deep. As I conclude my time serving Southern Baptists as ERLC president, I am filled with gratitude as well as excitement for the future."

Moore said he was "thankful for Southern Baptists, whom I love and to whom I owe so much."

David Prince, chair of the ERLC's board of trustees and pastor of Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky., expressed gratitude for Moore's service and sadness over his resignation, which is effective June 1, but said the ERLC's trustees would identify a new leader to continue the ERLC's work, which he described as "essential to the SBC." Daniel Patterson, the ERLC's executive vice presi-

dent, will serve as acting president.

Moore was the eighth president of the entity, which is tasked with helping churches understand the moral demands of the gospel and public policy, as well as promoting religious liberty on behalf of Southern Baptists. Originally created by the Convention in 1913 as the Social Service Commission, it became the Christian Life Commission in 1953 and the ERLC in 1997.

In a release announcing Moore's departure, the ERLC noted that under his leadership, the entity advocated for "human dignity, religious liberty and justice before Congress, the White House and the Supreme Court," and touted accomplishments including:

- ♦ Leading a group of faith leaders in a push "for religious liberty for child welfare providers and conscience protections for medical professionals."
- ♦ During a debate in 2017 on tax reform, the ERLC's advocacy helped prevent the elimination of the Adoption Tax credit.
- ♦ Within the last year, the ERLC was involved in ensuring faith-based organizations could access

funds from the Paycheck Protection Program created as part of the COVID-19 relief stimulus package in 2020. During the pandemic, the ERLC worked with local, state and national government officials, attempting to ensure the First Amendment right to religious liberty was taken into account when instituting restrictions on religious gatherings.

But during Moore's tenure, the ERLC has at times been a flashpoint of controversy within the SBC, most notably in reaction to his opposition to candidate and president Donald Trump.

In both the 2016 and 2020 elections, Trump received overwhelming support from self-described evangelicals. But Moore cited character deficiencies he said were disqualifying. In an op-ed column for the New York Times in Sept. 2015, Moore wrote that to support Trump, "evangelicals and other social conservatives" must "repudiate everything they believe." He later attempted to clarify, saying he understood many of Trump's evangelical supporters were motivated by biblical convictions and voted their conscience. But the backlash from some Southern Baptists was fierce.

In 2017, Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas, criticized Moore's "disrespectfulness towards Southern Baptists and other evangelical leaders, past and present." Prestonwood—one of the largest churches in the SBC—announced it would escrow Cooperative Program funds over "various significant positions taken by the leadership of the" ERLC.

In 2017 and 2020, task forces were formed by the SBC Executive Committee to study the ERLC's impact on the Cooperative Program. The 2017 task force reported impact on the CP was "not as significant in fact as it is in perception" and withholding was "lower than anticipated," identifying 14 churches as confirmed as "escrowing, designating or withholding

funds" from CP estimated at a total of about \$1.5 million.

At the 2018 SBC Annual Meeting, a motion attempting to defund the ERLC was rejected by an overwhelming margin.

In a report issued in February 2021, a second EC task force acknowledged both support within the SBC for the ERLC and that some see it as "a source of significant distraction from the Great Commission work of Southern Baptists."

The report cited responses from a questionnaire sent to the SBC's 41 state conventions. Fifteen responded. Without identifying them, the report described those state conventions as serving 60 percent of the SBC's 47,000-plus churches and giving 74 percent of the total Cooperative Program funds received by the SBC Executive Committee.

While several of the state executives who responded "reported little to no negative effect" from the ERLC's ministry, several others reported multiple instances of churches reducing giving or withdrawing from the state and/or national conventions. Collectively, according to the task force report, the state executives reported negative impact on CP giving totaling millions of dollars.

The task force report asserted that "the current perception of the leadership and direction of the ERLC by many Southern Baptists is a substantial impediment to the growth of the Cooperative Program," with "potential for a measurable decline in the near future and beyond" if there are not "quick and significant changes in that perception."

Of Moore's departure, Prince said, "On behalf of the ERLC board of trustees and Southern Baptists everywhere, I want to extend our deepest gratitude to Russell Moore for his eight years of principled, energetic and prophetic ministry. He led with integrity, courage and convictional kindness during tumultuous times." ❏

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS OF TEXAS CONVENTION

2021 Exhibit Qualification Requirements

Approved exhibitors at the SBTC Annual Meeting include (subject to available space) SBTC ministries, SBC agencies, SBTC ministry relationships (under the oversight of the Ministry Relationships Committee of the Executive Board), Baptist associational ministries and any host church. All other entities desiring booth space must submit their requests in writing to Joe Davis at the SBTC, prior to July 1, 2021.

Entities or individuals may share exhibit space with approved exhibitors only with the approval of the Committee on Order of Business. For-profit entities that have no formal relationship with the SBTC shall not be granted exhibit space.

All exhibit material must be in agreement with the SBTC Constitution and Bylaws, which includes the Baptist Faith & Message 2000.

Fundraising or sales that do not conflict with SBTC priorities will be allowed in the exhibit area.

2020 IMB stats show 'ratcheting up' of missions work

By Leslie Peacock Caldwell
IMB Writer

RICHMOND, Va. Having presented the 2020 Annual Statistical Report (ASR) to IMB trustees during their May 13 board meeting, the IMB is now making the full report available to the public.

"I have to admit that I've been a little nervous about that report," said Paul Chitwood to IMB field personnel and staff. Citing the disruptions and unforeseen circumstances of 2020, Chitwood admitted he wondered what statistics would show regarding the progress of mission work.

"Honestly, I expected a

drop off in the vital statistics we track to gauge our efficiency and effectiveness around the world," he said.

"Jesus was obviously talking directly to me when he said, 'Oh you of little faith,' because I was wrong. What we witnessed in our work around the world in 2020 was not a dropping off, but a ratcheting up."

The ASR reveals growth in work across the globe, compared to 2019 statistics, which was also a successful year toward reaching the lost. Significant increases were reported in numbers of those who heard a gospel witness, new believers and new fellowships. Almost

55,000 more new believers were reported last year compared to the year before.

In addition to global highlights, the full-color document shares progress reports on the six components of the missionary task and statistics, stories and photos from each of IMB's nine global affinities. The ASR concludes with a reminder of the 2025 targets to engage unreached peoples and places: send an additional 500 missionaries; mobilize 500 global missionary partners on IMB teams; engage 75 global cities with comprehensive strategies; mobilize 75 percent of Southern



Baptist churches to prayerfully and financially support the IMB; increase giving to the IMB by 6 percent annually.

"As you read through this report, join me in praising God for the significant impact your IMB missionaries

are making in getting the gospel to the nations," Chitwood says in an opening letter to the report. "And please prayerfully consider how God is calling you to reach the unreached today." ✠

—Download a full report at imb.org/asr.

Behind the Lens: Memorial to Remember

IMB PHOTOGRAPHER SHARES STORY FROM PHOTO COLLECTION

By Luke In*
IMB Photographer

March 22, 2021, marked one year anniversary of the first COVID-19 related death in Czech Republic, where I serve. In memory and honor of those lost in the past year, the city of Prague painted over 22,000 crosses in the Old Town Square. Thousands came out to remember their loved ones by writing deceased's names, laying flowers, lighting candles and leaving memorabilia.

My family and I had just returned to Prague from the U.S. the week before, when I saw this memorial tribute on the news. I really wanted to go out and photograph it. However, we were in five days of

self-quarantine and confined to our apartment. On the sixth day, I rushed out to the square to photograph since the weather was calling for rain the next day and I was afraid all those crosses would be washed out.

Soon those names will fade, flowers will wither, and tourists will return to the square. However, loved ones will long be remembered in the hearts of many friends and families.

The Czech Republic has been under a state of emergency since October 2020. The vaccine is becoming more available, but still at a very slow pace. Perhaps, in a few more months, people will begin to see the light at the end of tunnel. Pray that the Light of Jesus will bring hope and healing to people in Czech Republic as they continue to battle in these dark days. ✠

—Luke In* is a missionary photographer serving with his family in Czech Republic.
*Name changed for security



The Czechs, like most Europeans, do not like to be photographed. When I saw this woman kneeling down, I knew what she was about to do, and I wanted to photograph that. Given the short time and emotional situation, I did not want to strike up a conversation before taking photos. I just got down on my knees in front of her and started taking pictures expecting to hear from her "go away." As I kept clicking, she seemed to not mind and continued with her writing. It was one of those "ok vibes" that photographers get from their subject when doing street photography. I inched closer and lowered my camera to the ground to capture her face. When she looked up from her writing, I asked if she had lost someone close to her. She told me that she had lost her boyfriend. The tears welled up in her eyes and I could see pain she was feeling. I shared my sympathies and thanked her for allowing me to take her picture. As I walked away, I silently prayed for God's grace over her and for strength and healing in coming days.

Most people photograph standing up, and I've got a lot of those shots too. However, a good photo tip to remember is to shoot at the subject's eye level. In this case, the subject was the flower and it was on the ground. That meant I had to have the camera literally on the ground. My camera is an older model and does not have a flip out screen to help with focus from the ground. So I pre-focused and locked in manual before setting it on ground to take the shot. The lens on the ground plus a wide aperture of f/4 gave a nice, blurred foreground and background, isolating the subject.

Church Positions

PASTOR

- ◆ New Hope BC in League City is seeking a FT pastor. We are an SBTC church that adheres to the Baptist Faith & Message 2000. Send Resumes to PSCNHC@gmail.com.
- ◆ FBC Madisonville is seeking a FT senior pastor. Submit resumes to pastorsearch@madisonvillefbc.org.
- ◆ Coggin Avenue BC, Brownwood, is prayerfully seeking a FT senior/lead pastor. Please email resume, references, and sermon links and a brief answer to the following items to cogginpastorsearch@gmail.com: Why are you interested in this position? Share your salvation experience and vocational call. Explain the message of the gospel.
- ◆ South Avenue BC in Pasadena is seeking a FT senior pastor with a Southern Baptist seminary degree. Effective communication/administrative skills and strengths in preaching and leadership with focus on Bible study. Lead church in community outreach/ministry programs. Work with blended music program. Bilingual - English/Spanish preferred. Forward resume with references to office@southavenue.org.
- ◆ Calvary Baptist in Gainesville is searching for a FT senior pastor. Email calvarygainesville@gmail.com.
- ◆ Living Word in Odessa is looking for a FT senior pastor. We average around 40 to 50 members and we are not reformed nor have a desire to become led that way. Must be a born again Christian and demonstrate the qualities described in Timothy 3:1-7. Email resume to rusty51russell@gmail.com.
- ◆ New Day Church in the Greater Houston area is hiring a FT campus pastor for second location. We are a replant that has a heart for being a biblical and missional church that meets in different locations across the Greater Houston area. Email resume to john@newdaychurch.com.
- ◆ Antioch BC in Lovelady is now accepting resumes for a senior pastor position. Lovelady is a rural community located approximately 100 miles north of Houston. Average worship is currently 80 to 100. Pastoral experience, college degree and seminary graduate preferred. Parsonage available. Send resume to r_dgunnels@yahoo.com.
- ◆ The Barn Fellowship in Grand Saline is seeking a pastor. The present pastor is retiring after founding the church in 2011 and pastoring for over 40 years. The church is debt-free. Email resume to KIM.JS1@Verizon.net.
- ◆ Greenfield Acres BC in Odessa is seeking a bivocational pastor. We are affiliated with the SBTC and adhere to the Baptist Faith & Message 2000. Parsonage is available. Please send resume to Greenfield Acres Baptist Church, 214 W Yukon, Odessa, TX 79764 or gabcsearch@gmail.com.
- ◆ Patillo BC in Lipan is seeking a FT/PT/ or bivocational pastor. Send resume to Patillo Baptist Church, 4791 FM 2803, Lipan, TX 76462 or floyd@floydhendrick.com.
- ◆ Burkeville BC is looking for a FT or bivocational pastor. Please email resume to burkevillebaptistchurch2@yahoo.com.
- ◆ West End BC in Beaumont is seeking a FT or bivocational pastor. Financially secure, loving congregation of 50 average attendance, traditional worship service. We are affiliated with the SBTC. Send resume to webcbeaumont@gmail.com.
- ◆ San Pedro BC, a small rural SBTC church averaging approx. 40 in worship, seeks a PT or bivocational pastor. No parsonage. Send resume to sanpedrobc@yahoo.com.
- ◆ Lakeview BC in Vidor is in search of a bivocational pastor. We will consider a man with limited experience, but who loves the Lord, believes and preaches the word of God, and is willing to work hard to build up our congregation and spread the gospel. Send resume to brett.gray82@yahoo.com. Feel free to visit us on Sundays at 11a.m. at 3280 Hwy 1131, Vidor.
- ◆ Northside BC in Uvalde is looking for a bivocational or semi-retired pastor. Email resume to DWILLIAMS@stx.rr.com.
- ◆ FBC in Crane is prayerfully seeking a senior pastor. Interested candidates should send a cover letter and resume to kelly@shaffer-nichols.com.
- ◆ Campground BC in Woodville is accepting resumes for a bivocational pastor for a medium-sized congregation in a country setting. Email resume to Nick Toparcean at ae5vrradio@gmail.com.

MUSIC

- ◆ First Colleyville Church is seeking a FT worship minister with CrossCreek Network in Colleyville. CrossCreek is a domestic and international church planting network. Other cities are available. Please email a video of you leading worship to Sarai Harding at saraih@firstcolleyville.com.
 - ◆ Marsh Lane BC in north Dallas is searching for a PT worship leader to assist in the transition of traditional worship to a more modern tone with grace and passion. Send resumes to Scott@mblc.org.
 - ◆ Westside BC in Corsicana is accepting resumes for a PT music minister for Sunday morning and evening. Email resume to westside.church@sbcglobal.net or mail to Westside Baptist Church, 1522 N 24th St., Corsicana, TX 75110.
 - ◆ FBC West Columbia is looking for a PT worship pastor. Primary responsibilities include leading the church in spiritual growth through the use of music, seeking to help those in the music ministry to grow in their knowledge and ability in using their gifts. Email resume to GandLSchiller@embarqmail.com.
 - ◆ Crossroads Church in Rowlett is looking for a worship pastor with a strong desire to lead a team spiritually. While this person will certainly lead on stage, their heart should be to equip, empower and platform others. This person should see their role more through the lens of discipleship than music. We are open to considering this position as both FT and PT. Email resume to jcollins@crossroadsrowlett.org.
 - ◆ FBC Denison is seeking a PT worship pastor. We are a church in one of the fastest growing areas of Texas, looking for a disciple and disciple-maker who loves to lead others in worship on Sundays, develop a worship team, and fully partner in carrying out the vision of the church. Two years' experience of leading worship and five years of active church membership required. Itinerant worship leaders will be considered. Resumes and questions to ssuffron@fbcdenison.org.
 - ◆ Pruitt BC is searching for a minister of music. Must be able to lead a blended worship service for small congregation. Ability to lead choir and choral arrangements a plus. Email resume to americanus777@gmail.com.
 - ◆ FBC Granbury is a Southern Baptist Church seeking a worship pastor. Visit frootgroup.com/fbcgranbury. Email resume to mjacobus@frootgroup.com.
 - ◆ FBC of Kennedale is looking for an enthusiastic PT worship pastor to lead the church in engaging worship and reach our growing community with the gospel. Send resume to bryaneason@sbcglobal.net.
 - ◆ Point View BC seeks a minister of music for both contemporary and traditional music styles and work with the ministry team to achieve church mission/objectives. Person must lead weekly rehearsals to prepare for upcoming services and events. Email resume to patty@pointviewbaptist.org.
 - ◆ Travis Avenue BC in Fort Worth is in search of a PT Spanish-speaking worship minister to lead worship for the Spanish service. Se busca un ministro de alabanza part-time que dirija la adoración para el servicio de español. Send resume to jose.arzate@travis.org.
- ### STUDENTS
- ◆ Myrtle Springs BC in Hooks is seeking a FT pastor of student ministry. Duties include leading the student ministry on a weekly basis, teaching weekly, planning student activities, etc. Send resume to kpeters@myrtlesprings.org.
 - ◆ GracePoint Fellowship BC in Magnolia is seeking a FT director of youth ministry (Grades 7-12). For a full job description and/or to submit a resume, please contact ndladd@outlook.com or call the church office at 832-934-2900.
 - ◆ Southmont BC in Denton is seeking a FT minister to college students to equip and disciple students both on and off campus. Coordinate opportunities to connect with students with BSM leaders. Prefer church staff experience. Resumes to jdooley@southmont.org.
 - ◆ Spring Baptist Church is looking for a FT minister to students (junior high and high school) and college-aged people at its Klein Campus. Prefer at least

- two years of prior experience working with students. See job posting at springbaptist.org/jobs.
 - ◆ FBC in Dayton is looking for a FT pastor of student ministries. Email resume to pastorsearchteam@fbcd Dayton.com.
 - ◆ FBC in Bridge City is seeking a FT youth minister. This person should express a call to youth ministry and will lead our church to reach and disciple the youth in our community. if interested, go to fbcbc.org/positions-1.
 - ◆ FBC, De Leon, is accepting resumes for a FT minister of students. Send to Minister of Students Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 228, De Leon, TX 76444 or e-mail to fbdeleon@cctc.net.
 - ◆ Redeemer Church in Tomball is looking for a FT student minister. Email resume to kevin@makingmuchofjesus.org.
 - ◆ First Colleyville Church is seeking a FT student pastor with CrossCreek Network in Colleyville. CrossCreek is an international and domestic church planting network. Other cities are available. Email resume to Sarai Harding at saraih@firstcolleyville.com.
 - ◆ FBC Smithfield, a multi-ethnic, multi-generational church located in North Richland Hills is prayerfully seeking a PT student pastor. We average 50-100 in worship attendance. All interested candidates are invited to view the open ministry position description and complete the employment application process at: fbcsmithfield.com/jobs.
 - ◆ Shadycrest BC in Pearland, south Houston area, is seeking a PT youth pastor. Email Lead Pastor Tyler McKinney at tmckinney@shadycrest.org. (www.shadycrest.org).
 - ◆ Pleasant Grove BC in Boyd is seeking a PT youth leader. Send resume to James@pgbcboyd.org.
 - ◆ Cottonwood BC in Lorena is searching for a PT youth minister Youth Minister. Email resume to thecottonwoodbc@gmail.com.
 - ◆ The Fellowship at Field Store in Waller, a church of 70 members in the greater Houston area, is prayerfully seeking a bivocational associate pastor for youth. See listing in nextstep.sbtexas.com or email resume to jack77son@hotmail.com.
 - ◆ Willow Bend Church is seeking a PT youth pastor with a heart for discipleship and a passion to see kids grow. WBC is a small church in a prominent area with great potential. Successful candidate will love this current generation of kids. Email resume to bob@willowbendchurch.org.
 - ◆ FBC of Owentown has a bivocational youth ministry position available. Interested candidates should request complete job description and/or forward their resume or curriculum vitae to scottywmiles@gmail.com.
 - ◆ CrossRoads Covenant Church in Desoto is searching for a PT high school ministry director. Email resume to Kroyster79@gmail.com.
 - ◆ FBC Wills Point is currently searching for a PT minister to students. The ministry schedule is designed to work with someone pursuing educational goals. Wills Point is a small community 45 minutes East of Dallas. Please submit resumes to search@fbwp.org.
 - ◆ Valwood Park BC in Farmers Branch is looking for an energetic student director to help build a thriving student ministry. We have great resources available and a supportive senior leadership team that will help grow this ministry. Send resume to valwood@valwoodparkchurch.com.
 - ◆ New Hope BC in Bloomburg is searching for a PT youth director. Send resume to dbaxley2@juno.com.
- ### CHILDREN
- ◆ The Church at Quail Creek in Amarillo is searching for a FT children's minister. Resumes should be submitted to kclayton@tcqc.org.
 - ◆ Lamar BC in Arlington is seeking a PT children's minister. See lamarbaptist.org. Send resume to charles@lamarbaptist.org.
 - ◆ Huntington FBC is hiring someone to direct children's ministry activities. See job description at huntingtonfbc.org/hiring. Email resume to byron@huntingtonfbc.org.
- ### COMBINATION
- ◆ FBC Terrell is looking for a FT minister of children and senior adults. Primary role will be leading our children's ministry. Email resume to john@fbcterrell.org.
 - ◆ FBC Taylor is looking for a FT minister of children and families. Interested

- applicant should apply at fbctaylor.org/employment.
 - ◆ Peachtree BC in Jasper is searching for a FT youth and music minister. Must be able to teach and lead our youth in Sunday School and Wednesday evening Bible studies and lead our youth in a camp experience once a year during the summer. The worship minister will lead in a blended worship style and be able to play piano, bass and drums as part of the Sunday worship instruments. Send resume to gweaver.1@outlook.com.
 - ◆ Central Baptist Kirbyville is in search of a called FT student/children's minister to lead and disciple young people. A college graduate with Bible training and experience preferred, music and media knowledge a plus. We will prayerfully consider all applicants. Send resumes to cbckville@sbcglobal.net.
 - ◆ FBC Palestine is accepting resumes for an associate pastor of discipleship/education and missions. In addition, there will be responsibilities involving Senior Adult Ministry. Job description is available at tinyurl.com/yx9pp5ow. Email Pastor Tony Watson at tony@firstpalestine.org.
 - ◆ FBC New Caney is currently seeking a music/youth minister. Email resume to fbnewcaney@att.net.
 - ◆ First Colleyville Church is seeking a FT kids and family minister with CrossCreek Network in Colleyville. CrossCreek is an international and domestic church planting network. Other cities are available. Email resume to Sarai Harding at saraih@firstcolleyville.com.
- ### OTHER
- ◆ FBC Mont Belvieu is seeking a FT pastor of family ministries to equip and disciple students and families with preschoolers through high school to wholeheartedly follow after Christ and make disciples. Send resume to search@yourfirstbaptist.com.
 - ◆ Deer Park FBC is searching for a FT associate pastor. Email resume to dpfbcsearch@gmail.com.
 - ◆ FBC Pearland is creating a new position for an executive pastor. This person will oversee and cultivate areas regarding organizational health. This includes areas of administration and team alignment between ministries. For more information on the full job

- description email info@fbcppearland.org.
- ◆ First Colleyville Church is seeking a FT lead planter with CrossCreek Network in Colleyville. CrossCreek is a domestic and international church planting network. Other cities are available. Please email resume to Sarai Harding at saraih@firstcolleyville.com.
- ◆ First Colleyville Church is seeking a FT pastor of community engagement with CrossCreek Network in Colleyville. CrossCreek is an international and domestic church planting network. Other cities are available. Email resume to Sarai Harding at saraih@firstcolleyville.com.
- ◆ Crossroads Church in Rowlett is a growing mission minded church who seeks an executive pastor/associate pastor to help with the needs of our growing church. Being a part of our staff means a desire to work collaboratively with our staff and teams to live the mission God has given Crossroads Church and assisting the lead pastor in leading the ministries of the church. Email resume to jcollins@crossroadsrowlett.org.
- ◆ First Colleyville Church is seeking a FT pastor of spiritual development with CrossCreek Network in Colleyville. CrossCreek is an international and domestic church planting network. Other cities are available. Email resume to Sarai Harding at saraih@firstcolleyville.com.
- ◆ North Richland Hills BC is seeking a PT social media director for NRHBC & Cross Church campuses who will be responsible for posting all materials to all social media platforms. Please send all resumes to Danny Koonce, minister of worship, at dkoonce@nrhbc.org.
- ◆ Crossroads Church in Rowlett is looking for a digital media team lead that not only has an eye for design and content, but a heart for the people on the other side of a screen. This position will work collaboratively with our staff to develop content used to communicate the message of the gospel, and the personality of Crossroads publicly. Email resume to jcollins@crossroadsrowlett.org.
- ◆ North Richland Hills BC is searching for a PT videographer to work with volunteers using Pro Presenter, Live Stream of services and pre & post production of all worship videos and other videos as requested. Please send all resumes to Danny Koonce, minister of worship, at dkoonce@nrhbc.org.

Paid Classifieds

- ◆ Vista Grande Baptist Church in Colorado Springs, CO, is seeking a FT passionate student minister to serve our 7th-12th grade and college-age students who will be responsible to coordinate and oversee discipleship programs, events, activities and general ministry for this age group. He will develop positive relationships with students, volunteers, and parents in order to provide biblically-based direction and coaching. A Master's degree and at least three years' experience in a mid-sized youth group are preferred. Email resume to VGBCYouthpastorsearch@gmail.com.
- ◆ SEARKBN Southeast Arkansas Baptist Network is seeking a FT mission strategist. Send resume to Tim Chennault at office@searkbn.org.
- ◆ Baker Book House pays cash for pastoral and academic religious libraries, large or small. Email quotes@bakerbookhouse.com or call 866-241-6733
- ◆ Parkway Baptist Church in Creve Coeur, MO, is accepting resumes for a full-time student/collegiate minister who would be responsible for leadership, in a well-established junior/senior high youth program, as well as begin a new collegiate-focused ministry in the area. A bachelor's degree in biblical studies and/or 3-5 years' experience in youth ministry is preferred. Position includes a competitive compensation package with benefit options. Interested applicants should send a letter of interest, resume, references, and

- statement of faith to studentsearch@parkwaybaptist.net or by mail to Student Search Committee, Parkway Baptist Church, 12465 Olive Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63141-6499.
- ◆ First Baptist Church of Festus & Crystal City, Missouri, is seeking a senior pastor. Our former pastor retired and the church runs 300+ in attendance. We are located 40 miles south of St. Louis, MO. Our website is fbcfcc.org. Resume or referrals may be sent to fbcfestus@gmail.com for consideration.
- ◆ Are you looking for a place to do missions? We have wonderful opportunities in Port Arthur, Texas to reach people who desperately need Christ, such as conducting Backyard Bible Clubs, VBS, Kidz Musik Clubs for Children, door-to-door outreach and flyer distribution in the community, block parties, etc. We also have the need for skilled laborers to make repairs on our buildings damaged by hurricanes (drywall, painting, etc.). Your team could come for a day, a weekend or a week. Facilities provided to accommodate your group for 30+ volunteers. Contact Bill Brazell at 409-983-5654 or goodnewsbill@gmail.com.
- ◆ First Baptist Church of Dillon, SC is seeking a FT associate pastor of worship. Applicants should have at least 2 years' experience leading worship and a minimum of a 4-year bachelor's degree. For further information and job description, please visit fbcdillon.com/associatepastor. Please send resumes to search@fbcdillon.com.

Lingleville congregation builds pastor a home

By Karen L. Willoughby
TEXAN Correspondent

LINGLEVILLE There's to be a celebratory Texas barbecue at the Lingleville Baptist Church parsonage the first Sunday in June.

Not the old parsonage. The new one, built by the congregation and others for the Ryan Hurt family. Hurt is now in the sixth year at the church, his first pastorate.

"This little parsonage, it humbled us," Hurt told the TEXAN this spring before construction on his family's new home was completed. The former worship leader, telephone company employee and owner of a coffee shop and café in Grandview took a \$100,000 salary cut when he was called to pastor Lingleville. He moved his wife and four children from their dream home in Grandview to a small, dated parsonage on the church property.

"When I knew the Lord was calling me here, I felt the Spirit of the Lord, and I never was more sure of anything that God was going to do things here," the pastor said.

"We sold everything and moved into a 1,000 square foot home, the six of us," Hurt continued. "My wife told us, 'I'll live under a bridge if it brings God glory.' We never griped about it. I told the Lord, 'God whatever you have for us. I don't care.'"

The family learned to live dependent on the Lord, the pastor said.

"I'm sad leaving here because of what this parsonage has made us," Hurt said. "It has been a huge part of my family shifting for the better. I don't ever want to lose that—being humble about it all.

"I don't want to lose sight of the main thing," the pastor said, choking up. "The last six years I've been so excited watching the Lord move. I don't want to lose sight of that."

What's a parsonage?

Church member Keith Moore said he couldn't lose sight of the constant stream of people flowing across the church parking lot to the Hurts' former parsonage.

"I didn't grow up Baptist. I didn't know what a parsonage was," Moore told the TEXAN. "I saw that little house they lived in and it's not much. ... He [the pastor] doesn't get any privacy. His family's trying to have family time and there's always people around. It was just on my heart.

"I felt God was telling me I needed to build him a house," continued Moore, who with his wife, Jean, joined the church four years ago, since moving to their nearby

ranch from Cleburne. "God showed me, what if the whole church pitched in? I went to the elders and the church was more than responsive. It was just overwhelming."

Though not in the construction business—Moore owns 10 restaurants and has ordered

"I think it's taught a lot of younger folks the principle of giving and receiving, the blessing of giving. The family is so thankful, humble,



"I FELT GOD WAS TELLING ME I NEEDED TO BUILD HIM A HOUSE. GOD SHOWED ME, WHAT IF THE WHOLE CHURCH PITCHED IN? I WENT TO THE ELDERS AND THE CHURCH WAS MORE THAN RESPONSIVE. IT WAS JUST OVERWHELMING."

Keith Moore, church member

"WE'VE HAD MORE THAN 100 SALVATIONS SINCE JANUARY. IT'S BEEN A REVIVAL HERE. THESE PAST SEVEN MONTHS WE'VE HAD A BAPTISM EVERY SINGLE SUNDAY. I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT, AND I'VE BEEN IN CHURCH MY WHOLE LIFE."

Ryan Hurt, pastor of Lingleville Baptist Church

houses built for his family over the years—he knew what to do. He became general contractor for the work others did on the pastor's new home, six miles from Lingleville Baptist. Technically it isn't a parsonage, because Hurt, not the church, owns the house.

"I didn't think we'd have enough to do it all the way, but in the end, the house was completely paid for, 100 percent," Moore said. "We've got plumbers, electricians, welders, road builders, landscape guys doing their labor for free. There's other folks too. Septic system [was] put in for free.

"Along the way people have been coming out, saying how can I help? I can't hardly talk about it without crying, without getting emotional," Moore continued.

excited, and you can't put a price on that."

The new house, built on land Hurt bought a couple of years ago, at 2,000 square feet is about twice the size of the old parsonage. It's a one-story-with-loft home, with exterior painted white and a black shingled roof. The wrap-around porch is finished with cedar posts, a striking inclusion to the home's curb appeal.

"They wanted something really humble and pretty conservative," Moore said. "The lady who owns the [local] flooring store wanted to give us the flooring at cost and is talking about going to the church. The air conditioning units were donated by a man [from] my former church. It's been everybody, all-hands-on-deck. I just ramrodded it."

Moore and his wife also gave a matching gift of up to \$100,000 for the home.

One of Moore's prayers each day is that God would show him how to steward the resources he has provided. "What he shows me, I just do it, no questions asked," Moore said. "God has blessed me so much in my

That's a big change from when Hurt was called as pastor in June 2015.

"It's an old, old Baptist church," the pastor said, "There were 38 here my first Sunday and we had over 400 last Sunday, 600 on Easter.

"It's been a place of honesty in my own walk," Hurt said, who came to Jesus from a life as the keyboardist of a major country western band. "My plea is to show God's grace, that no one is so far gone. Jesus can forgive anybody, any of their sins. I think people are hungry for that. Not my preaching but the message, to speak not in a condemning way but in a convicting way filled with grace."

The 20s to 40s demographic has grown Lingleville Baptist, Hurt said. The nursery is at capacity. Five years ago, the worship center moved into the gymnasium. The children's church nearly fills the old sanctuary. Third graders through high schoolers sit in Sunday worship because there is no space available for them to meet in age-level groups. From 70 to 90 teens meet Wednesday nights.

The growth continues in an Erath County town that in 2000 had a population of 100. The church also draws from neighboring communities and the nearby city of Stephenville.

To better meet the needs of the younger adult demographic, the church recently started a Tuesday evening gathering that includes dinner, fellowship, worship and Bible study.

"It's amazing," Hurt said. "On a Tuesday out here in the middle of nowhere we'll have at least 100, and it's growing. They're really modeling discipleship in the way it should be and I think that's the key: discipling others."

Another key to the vibrancy at Lingleville Baptist is its emphasis on outreach, from its popular Living Nativity each Christmas to quarterly mission projects that alternate between local and international emphases. The women of the church started the G-Ma Institute to teach "lost skills" to those who might not know about canning, sewing and the like.

"I'm 60, one of the older ones," Moore said. "What I like is that they teach the Word. He doesn't pull punches and I like that. I think he teaches straight from the Word. ... Sometimes it hits me square in the mouth, and I need it.

"I've never been involved with a group of folks so loving, so willing to work," the businessman continued. "They're just a bunch of hardworking folks, friendly. So welcoming." ❧

business, and he didn't bless me to keep it to myself."

A growing church

Adding to the excitement at Lingleville Baptist, "We've had more than 100 salvations since January," Hurt said. "It's been a revival here. These past seven months we've had a baptism every single Sunday. I've never seen anything like it, and I've been in church my whole life.

"The last several months, every single Sunday has been standing room only," Hurt continued. "It's incredible to watch, especially in today's culture. I'm just blown away by the people's excitement for the Lord. I keep thinking they're going to be mad because they've having to stand up, but they just keep coming."