



## Inside:

- Ark. women celebrate missions at Engage
- Lovelace entertains during Golden Age Conf.
- Prather honored for communications work
- Associational annual meetings schedule
- 'Thank you' goes a long way

## ABSC President Greg Sykes

From journalism school to the pastorate

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# Community comes together around 'one kingdom'

Sarah Davis  
Arkansas Baptist News

ALMA - Carrie Jernigan was just taking her kids shoe shopping for an upcoming family vacation when her daughter, Harper, brought a pair of Avengers shoes to her. Harper had noticed a classmate from school had shoes that were too tight and had holes in them, and she asked her mom if they could buy the shoes for her friend.

"I said, 'Yes,' but I looked down and I could tell they were small," said Jernigan, an attorney for Settle Jernigan Law in Fayetteville and member of Kibler Baptist Church, Alma. "I just jokingly said to the clerk, 'Looks like I may have to buy out all the shoes.'"

The employee at Payless, which was going out of business, laughed and then said, "Would you really consider doing that?"

A few days later, Jernigan found herself with 1,500 pairs of shoes.

Jernigan told her pastor, Lee Denton, that she had bought all the shoes, but she was going to give them away anonymously. She spent most of the summer trying to give the shoes away. However, the new school year was approaching, and she still had plenty of shoes left.

"When I found out Car-

rie had purchased the shoes back in the early summer, I had mentioned to her that we could make it a big event," said Denton. "After she shared her initial Facebook post, it went viral within 24 hours, and we were scrambling to decide what, when, how and where."

Jernigan's Facebook post was asking for a location where she could set up all the shoes and give them away to the community. It later was updated with details of the River Valley Kickstart that would be held 2-6 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 10, at the Alma Middle School gym - 17 days after the Facebook post went live.

The viral post also got the attention of major national news outlets.

"That first national news story let me talk about God and kept it in the article," said Jernigan. "That's when I knew that if MSN on their lead story is me and these shoes and they did not cut out me talking about God, God was going to do something big."

Jernigan was also featured on the national talk show "Strahan and Sara," where they gifted her \$30,000 worth of school supplies from Staples.

With national attention, Jernigan was able to raise more money for the back-to-school event and purchase more shoes and more school supplies. Local businesses and churches



Carrie Jernigan and her daughters, Harper, middle, and Campbell, left, with the shoes they bought at Payless' going-out-of-business sale.

also chipped in with the event and donated money to help kids get ready for school.

"The event could not have gone better," said Jernigan. "Someone said that God was in every nook and cranny in that school, and that was so true. Where everything could have gone wrong, or a few bad things could have gone wrong, nothing did."

Before the doors were even opened, 1,500 people were already waiting outside with the heat index at 114 degrees.

During the River Valley Kickstart, 150 volunteers from Kibler Baptist Church and 50 volunteers from the community gave away 1,200 backpacks, 2,300 pairs of shoes, 6,500 bottles of water, school supplies and thousands of dollars worth of gift cards to Sonic,

McDonalds, Taco Bell and Chick-fil-a. The event also featured free dental screenings, health screenings, physicals and haircuts.

City officials estimated there were around 5,000 people at the event - the population of Alma is 5,748.

"There were so many people, I thought we were going to run out of shoes. I thought we wouldn't have enough backpacks," said Jernigan. "Everybody kept talking about Jesus with the fish, and that's exactly how it felt."

According to Denton, this was the largest "missionary event" in the history of Alma.

"We normally give away

See **KICKSTART** page 6

## Who's Your One? Tour equips believers for evangelism

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. (BP) - As a committed Christ follower, Mark Hoover, pastor of First Baptist Church in Hayti, Mo., is looking for a new "one."

After witnessing long distance to his brother, Dusty, who lives in their home state of Mississippi, Hoover saw him come to Christ. Inspired by what God had done in his life, Dusty drove several hours to Hayti where Hoover baptized his brother Sept. 8.

All across the United States, the evangelism team at the North American Mission Board (NAMB) has heard similar stories during the Who's Your One? Tour of how the movement has led to life change.

Those stories can serve as a hopeful sign for Southern Baptist churches that are working to reverse a decades-long decline.

The Who's Your One? Tour is coming to Arkansas Oct. 27-28 to Cross Church's Fayetteville campus.

Johnny Hunt, NAMB's senior vice president of evangelism and leadership, will lead a rally Sunday evening, with breakout sessions led by Nick Floyd, senior pastor of Cross Church; Vance Pitman, senior pastor of Hope Church, Las Vegas; Allan Tay-

See **ONE** page 2



Hunt

## ABN classifieds get results!

Read them on Page 10.

The ABN classifieds are a great way to advertise for your church, ministry or business. You can now submit a classified ad via the ABN website at [arkansasbaptist.org/ads](http://arkansasbaptist.org/ads)

## Classifieds

**WANTED** - I am looking for a person to help with my business. Please contact me at [phone number].

**FOR RENT** - A beautiful home for rent in [location]. Call [phone number] for more information.

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT** - Need help with your computer? We offer affordable technical support services. Contact [phone number].

**LEGAL SERVICES** - Providing legal advice and representation for individuals and businesses. Call [phone number].

**FINANCIAL SERVICES** - Offering investment and financial planning services. Contact [phone number].

**HEALTH SERVICES** - Providing holistic health and wellness services. Call [phone number].

**EDUCATIONAL SERVICES** - Offering tutoring and educational resources. Contact [phone number].

**ARTS AND CRAFTS** - Selling handmade goods and art supplies. Visit [website].

**REAL ESTATE** - Helping you find your dream home. Call [phone number].

**TRAVEL SERVICES** - Offering travel packages and booking services. Contact [phone number].

**RESTAURANTS** - Enjoy delicious food and drinks at our local eateries. Visit [website].

**ENTERTAINMENT** - Providing fun and entertainment for all ages. Call [phone number].

**COMMUNITY SERVICES** - Supporting local organizations and initiatives. Contact [phone number].

**RELIGIOUS SERVICES** - Offering spiritual guidance and religious supplies. Call [phone number].

**PERSONAL SERVICES** - Providing personal care and grooming services. Contact [phone number].

**BUSINESS SERVICES** - Offering business consulting and marketing services. Call [phone number].

**CONSTRUCTION SERVICES** - Providing construction and renovation services. Contact [phone number].

**LANDSCAPE SERVICES** - Offering landscaping and maintenance services. Call [phone number].

**PLUMBING SERVICES** - Providing plumbing and pipe repair services. Contact [phone number].

**ELECTRICAL SERVICES** - Offering electrical wiring and repair services. Call [phone number].

**PAINTING SERVICES** - Providing interior and exterior painting services. Contact [phone number].

**CLEANING SERVICES** - Offering commercial and residential cleaning services. Call [phone number].

**HAIR SERVICES** - Providing haircuts, styling, and coloring services. Contact [phone number].

**BEAUTY SERVICES** - Offering beauty treatments and skincare services. Call [phone number].

**YOGA SERVICES** - Providing yoga classes and workshops. Contact [phone number].

**DANCE SERVICES** - Offering dance lessons and classes. Call [phone number].

**MUSIC SERVICES** - Providing music lessons and instruments. Contact [phone number].

**SPORTS SERVICES** - Offering sports equipment and athletic wear. Call [phone number].

**BOOKS AND MEDIA** - Selling books, movies, and music. Visit [website].

**FLORAL SERVICES** - Providing fresh flowers and arrangements. Contact [phone number].

**EVENT SERVICES** - Offering event planning and catering services. Call [phone number].

**WEDDING SERVICES** - Providing wedding planning and services. Contact [phone number].

**BIRTHDAY SERVICES** - Offering birthday party planning and supplies. Call [phone number].

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES** - Providing Christmas decorations and gifts. Contact [phone number].

**GRADUATION SERVICES** - Offering graduation gifts and services. Call [phone number].

**ANNIVERSARY SERVICES** - Providing anniversary gifts and services. Contact [phone number].

**VALENTINE SERVICES** - Offering Valentine's Day gifts and services. Call [phone number].

**EASTER SERVICES** - Providing Easter baskets and services. Contact [phone number].

**PASCHA SERVICES** - Offering Pascha gifts and services. Call [phone number].

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## ABN Digest

Stories of interest  
to Arkansas Baptists

### Williams announces jump in enrollment, prayer board

WALNUT RIDGE - A record freshman class has pushed enrollment up by more than 12 percent on the campus of Williams Baptist University (WBU). The university announced its fall enrollment numbers at its recent Board of Trustees meeting.

Enrollment is up across nearly all categories at Williams this fall, led by a class of 198 freshmen. That figure represents a 26.9 percent increase over last year's count of 156 freshmen. The freshman class is the largest since Williams became a four-year institution in 1984 and is one of its largest ever.

Williams has an on-campus enrollment of 517 this semester, which is a 12.6 percent jump from the 459 students enrolled last fall.

"We are elated with the fall enrollment numbers, which reflect the hard work of many people across the WBU campus. We especially commend Angela Flippo, our vice president for enrollment management, and her entire team in the admissions and financial aid offices. They have done incredible work over the past year, and we are reaping the rewards this fall," said Stan Norman, WBU president.

Total enrollment at WBU, which includes on-campus, online and off-campus extension numbers, stands at 553, an improvement of 11.6 percent over last year's number of 497.

The university also enjoyed an increase in its full-time equivalent (FTE), which is an important budget number for colleges and universities. The total FTE at Williams stands at 538 this year, which is a 12.3 percent increase.

In other business, WBU's Board of Trustees approved a prayer advisory board for the school and elected 2020 officers.

For more ABN Digest, go to  
[arkansasbaptist.org/abn-digest](http://arkansasbaptist.org/abn-digest)

# Ark. women celebrate missions at Engage

Sarah Davis  
Arkansas Baptist News

CONWAY - Women from around the state gathered for the Arkansas Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) 2019 Engage Conference and annual meeting Sept. 21 at Woodland Heights Baptist Church, Conway.

"The purpose of Engage and the WMU annual meeting is to bring women of all ages together to participate in missions experiences that will inform them about missions; make them aware of Southern Baptist and Arkansas Baptist

missions activities, emphases and goals; and strengthen fellowship among women in our state," said Debbie Moore, executive director for Arkansas WMU and member of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) missions team.

Andrea Lennon, women's ministry specialist for the ABSC and founder of True Vine Ministry, was the featured speaker at the conference. Lennon shared a message from 1 Corinthians 15:58 and encouraged women to stand firm in their faith.

"It is because of Jesus'

death, burial and resurrection and us placing our faith in Jesus' death, burial and resurrection that we are a member of the family of God," said Lennon. "We need to unpack the position that we have in Jesus Christ because that is what is going to fortify us to stand firm."

Lennon gave three foundational truths from the verse that encourage Christians to stand firm: they are loved by God, they are chosen by God, and they are called to be God's hands and feet.

"Engage 2019 was a day filled with worship, missions and fellowship all for His glory," said Moore. "I was encouraged to see Arkansas Baptist women - and a few men - giving praise to God and being challenged to live lives that please Him. Andrea Lennon challenged us to live 1 Corinthians 15:58."

The conference featured breakout sessions during the day.

Lennon led two different breakout sessions. "Sitting at the Table with Jesus" explored the lives of Naomi and Ruth and gave practical ways for women to keep their love relationship with Jesus vibrant throughout the day. "Leadership and Legacy" explored the lives of the four friends who took a paralytic to see Jesus and encouraged women to

think outside the box as they lead and serve.

Kristy Carr, senior hub manager on the executive leadership team for national WMU, led a breakout session on the refugee crisis and taught women about the refugees in their community, state and around the world. Carr also encouraged women to get involved in missions and ministry efforts to reach out to the refugees.

"Shea," a Southeast Asia missionary for the International Mission Board, spoke on what God is doing in Southeast Asia and how women can partner in sharing Jesus and making disciples among the peoples there.

Travis McCormick, consultant for the ABSC missions team, spoke on how to make disciples who make disciples.

Jana McKnight and Vickey Lloyd, vice president of the WMU executive board, led a breakout session as Bertha Louise Cooper and Berniece the Cleaning Lady to remind women what the WMU is all about.

"Women who participate in Engage will be impacted and will impact their churches to be more informed and effective mission prayers, givers, doers and senders," said Moore.

Contact Sarah Davis at [sarah@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:sarah@arkansasbaptist.org).



A woman prays during a time of worship at Engage Sept. 21 held at Woodland Heights Baptist Church, Conway. Photo by Sarah Davis

## ONE

continued from page one

lor, executive pastor of ministries at First Baptist Concord, Knoxville, Tenn.; and Catherine Renfro, NAMB marketing consultant.

At a Sept. 29 rally held at Christ Place Church in Flowery Branch, Ga., Hunt shared the reality facing the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention, in which baptism numbers hit a seven-decade low in 2018.

"You go back, we had half the number of churches, we had one-eighteenth the amount of money then than we invest now," Hunt shared with the crowd of more than 750. "So, we're doing less with so very much more."

Though Hunt does not shy away from reality, he refuses to allow the negative trend line to

breed negativity in his message to Southern Baptists. Who's Your One, an evangelism effort that encourages believers to focus on reaching one lost friend or family member, provides an attainable approach.

"If indeed one in 10 that attends our churches on Sunday morning were to win their one to Christ," Hunt said, "we would not only double baptisms, we'd have the single greatest year in the history of our denomination."

Every Who's Your One Tour stop includes a Sunday evening rally followed by Monday morning training sessions with practitioners who are seeing success in evangelism in their contexts. They have made progress despite the cultural challenges affecting North America.

### The value of small groups

While casting a large vi-

sion is the place to start, Taylor shared about the strategic importance and value small groups have in evangelism.

"I want to challenge you that your strategy should be your small group ministry," Taylor said. "Mission is best accomplished in the context of small groups."

Taylor, former director of Sunday school and church education ministry at LifeWay Christian Resources, cited a LifeWay study that illustrates the important role small groups play in evangelistically effective churches. Most churches have small groups, Taylor said, but few churches use them to reach their communities.

"It's time we turned our small groups into mission teams," he said. "The mission is everything."

Steve Gaines, pastor of

Memphis-area Bellevue Baptist Church and past president of the SBC, concluded the morning's training session by walking through the steps Bellevue takes to reach its city.

While the church can and should do a lot of good things, Gaines said, the goal of everything Bellevue does centers on sharing the gospel with its community.

"We at Bellevue want to make disciples," Gaines said. "Making disciples is not just getting some existing Christians and having a Bible study. If making disciples does not include winning people to Jesus, sharing the gospel with lost people, then there is no evangelism in the Great Commission. ... It is 'make disciples,' then baptize disciples, then teach disciples - all that Christ has given us."

For more information, visit [whosyourone.com](http://whosyourone.com).

# Sykes: Every believer has a role to play

Caleb Yarbrough  
Arkansas Baptist News

RUSSELLVILLE – Greg Sykes has had an eventful year.

In addition to his role as senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Russellville, and completing his final term as Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) president, Sykes' church – by nature of its location and convictions – has found itself in the middle of the battle over bringing a casino to Pope County.

Sykes admittedly does not enjoy dealing with political controversy and would rather be focusing all of his efforts on ministry. However, when the options are standing up for truth or not doing so – Sykes adamantly chooses the former.

Many of us, in hindsight, find that our past experiences, unknowingly to us at the time, prepared us to carry out God's call on our lives. For Sykes, his unconventional path to the pastorate equipped him with handy tools for dealing with the current political challenges facing his church and community.

From his working-class roots to his time spent covering the Arkansas Razorbacks men's basketball program during a 1994 NCAA Championship season, to his unlikely path to vocational ministry and the pastorate, Sykes' story is equally interesting and encouraging.

Sykes, who grew up in Cabot where he was saved at age 12, said he really began digging deeper into his faith while a student

at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

A longtime Razorbacks fan, Sykes enrolled in the print journalism program at the University of Arkansas after graduating from high school with hopes of covering the school's various athletic teams.

"Sports was just the honey hole," said Sykes. "I was one of those sad individuals that, especially early as a believer – I might quote three (Bible) verses by the time I was 18. But you want a minutia sort of fact from 1946 about the Razorbacks, and I could probably tell you something. That's just who I was, and it



Greg Sykes, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Russellville, and president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, took an unlikely path from journalism school to vocational ministry. Photo by Caleb Yarbrough

was a passion, and it was a lot of fun."

After graduating with a degree in journalism and political science, Sykes enrolled in a master's program in journalism at the University of Arkansas, but he began questioning whether or not a career in secular journalism was compatible with his Christian convictions.

"I began to reconsider, 'Can I be an authentic believer in Jesus who really cares about worldview – and that's going to filter everything I do? Can I really do that in this industry?'" said Sykes. "If I was going to be in the secular industry, I didn't see a future for an overtly Christian journalist."

After redirecting his career away from journalism, Sykes

a period of 10 years, and, what do you know, I wake up and I'm on staff of a great church in Dover. ... That was a very encouraging time."

While living in Conway, Sykes met and married his wife, Jamie, who was a member of First Baptist Church, Russellville. After marrying, Sykes joined his wife as a member of First Baptist, where he sat under the tutelage of the church's longtime pastor Stephen Davis.

"I kind of just fell in love with the way things are done here (at First Baptist). But then I was hired at Dover (First Baptist), but around that time Stephen began to implement this model of, 'Let's make sure we value DNA more than we value resume,'" said Sykes.

While academic credentials and past job performance have their place, Sykes said that Davis wanted to place the utmost emphasis on identifying leaders who were not only called to serve at First Baptist, but also whose passions, personality and strongest held convictions aligned with those of the church and its existing staff.

Sykes was hired by the Russellville church in 2001 to minister to children and families. At that time he was the youngest member of the church's staff. After serving in multiple roles on the church's staff, including education pastor and later associate pastor, over the next 10 years, Sykes was the second oldest staff member.

When Davis transitioned to

retirement after nearly three decades as pastor, Sykes was called as the church's new senior pastor in 2011, not as a result of his holding a doctorate from a well-regarded seminary or having pastored a large church in a far-off city, but due to his heart for ministry – the ministry of First Baptist – as evidenced by his years of service to the church and his commitment to the church's unified purpose.

"There's something in the water here that says, 'There is not a class difference between your pastoral leadership and your church members. We're all on the same team. We're all pulling on the same rope. The kingdom is so big, we all have to be engaged,'" said Sykes.

"I'm all for formal seminary education. My journey was not that way. I got a secular degree, back-doored ministry (and) did online education," said Sykes. "(First Baptist Church, Russellville) didn't say, 'Hey, you're not qualified to do ministry. You need to go away for three years and come back, and we'll talk.'

"I was always pressed to look in the New Testament. ... He (Jesus) didn't call anyone to be a disciple who had a professional seminary background or advanced theological degrees. They were salt-of-the-earth, everyday Joes," he said.

Sykes' story vividly illustrates that every Christian, regardless of background or experience, has something to offer that God can use to further His kingdom.

Contact Caleb Yarbrough at [caleb@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:caleb@arkansasbaptist.org).

## ABN Digest

Stories of interest  
to Arkansas Baptists

### CP exceeds budget for 5th consecutive year

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) – For the fifth consecutive fiscal year, contributions to Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) national and international missions and ministries through the Cooperative Program met and exceeded budgetary expectations.

As of September 30, gifts received by the Executive Committee for distribution through the CP Allocation Budget totaled \$196,731,703.44. This exceeded the \$194 million annual projection to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America by \$2,731,703.44 or 1.41 percent.

"Southern Baptist churches continue to do more together than we could ever do on our own," said SBC Executive Committee President and CEO Ronnie Floyd in a statement.

"Cooperating together to reach every person for Jesus Christ in every town, every city, every state, and every nation is exactly what the Cooperative Program is all about. This is why I want to say, 'Thank you,' to every church giving through the Cooperative Program, as well as thank each pastor and church leader for leading your church to join us in this grand worldwide task. Together we have exceeded our budget goal this year by \$2,731,703. Reaching the world with the gospel is the only reason this network of churches called Southern Baptists exists."

While the budget total was exceeded, year-over-year gifts remained relatively flat with a slight decrease of \$313,124.70, or 0.16 percent, below last year's total of \$197,044,828.14.

Oct. 1 marked the start of a new fiscal year for the SBC. The convention-adopted budget for 2019-2020 is \$196.5 million.

For more ABN Digest, go to  
[arkansasbaptist.org/abn-digest](http://arkansasbaptist.org/abn-digest)

**ABN**  
ARKANSAS BAPTIST NEWS  
PODCAST

Listen to a longform conversation with Greg Sykes, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Russellville, on the most recent edition of the ABN Podcast. Sykes discusses his ministry, the Razorbacks, the state of the Christianity, the current battle over bringing a casino to Pope County and more.

Listen at [arkansasbaptist.org/podcast](http://arkansasbaptist.org/podcast)

# Editorial & Opinion

*"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have..."*

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

## The sad state of mainstream media

I've spoken to a lot of Baptists recently who have ditched cable because they can no longer stomach – nor desire to support – the filth spewing daily from their TV sets.



### Pressing On

Tim Yarbrough

Phil. 3:14

up the family and reinforce values our country once espoused.

While mainstream national TV news long ago fell to progressive liberals and leftists, when I was younger their influence was much more subtle and subversive than it is today.

If you were living in the

Like me, they are opting for online sources or over-the-air channels from a bygone era that actually attempted to lift

1960s and 1970s, TV news anchor Walter Cronkite, "Uncle Walter," was the overwhelming choice of Americans who looked to get what they thought was a contextualization of the day's events.

Cronkite famously ended each of his broadcasts with "That's the way it is," which was reassuring to many Americans during a tumultuous time in our country.

Fast forward to today, network TV news now competes amid a 24-hour news cycle, sensationalizing everything from wildfires in California to road-rage incidents in Russia.

But it is these organizations' collective attempt to sell the American public about politics that is most disturbing. Among other things, they give a platform to the worst

actors in our society.

It is a fact that most of middle America is socially and politically conservative and doesn't hold the view that America is a horrible place that many on the East and West Coasts embrace.

Sure, our country has massive problems ultimately stemming from our sinful nature, but I still think most Americans feel that, through hard work, coming together and not hating one another, we can build a better future for all.

For followers of Jesus Christ like Arkansas Baptists, we know that our only hope is through the knowledge and saving grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We hold high our religious freedom, so that we can

maintain the opportunity to witness to others about the reconciliation offered through Christ.

The state of the mainstream media in our time is why it is important that Arkansas Baptists continue to support their state Baptist newspaper, where grassroots Baptists still have a voice in matters concerning them and are informed about contemporary messages and issues contrary to their faith.

While some state conventions no longer see a need to provide such a news outlet, it is my prayer that Arkansas Baptists will continue to support their newspaper through ongoing financial and prayerful support.

Tim Yarbrough is editor/executive director of the ABN.

### Letter to the Editor

#### A note to the editor

I'm writing you this note to say thank you for the excellent work you and your staff do on putting together and providing for the news needs of Arkansas Baptists. Your detail to quality and your excellent reporting on issues that are relevant and vital to our sister churches across this great state are such a blessing. I've been reading the *Arkansas Baptist (News)* almost all of my life, even the 18 years I spent in Texas. I would go to the seminary library every two weeks to get a look at what was happening back home.

I remember Charlie (Warren) and all those folks who made the *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) personal and remembered you at state or national conventions. You have certainly carried on that heritage, and I look forward to getting my digital and paper copy every two weeks. I want to know what is going on and how to pray and celebrate, mourn or help my brothers and sisters across this great state of ours. The ABN helps me stay connected and have a small part in unity and kingdom partnership across the state.

I'm excited about the new

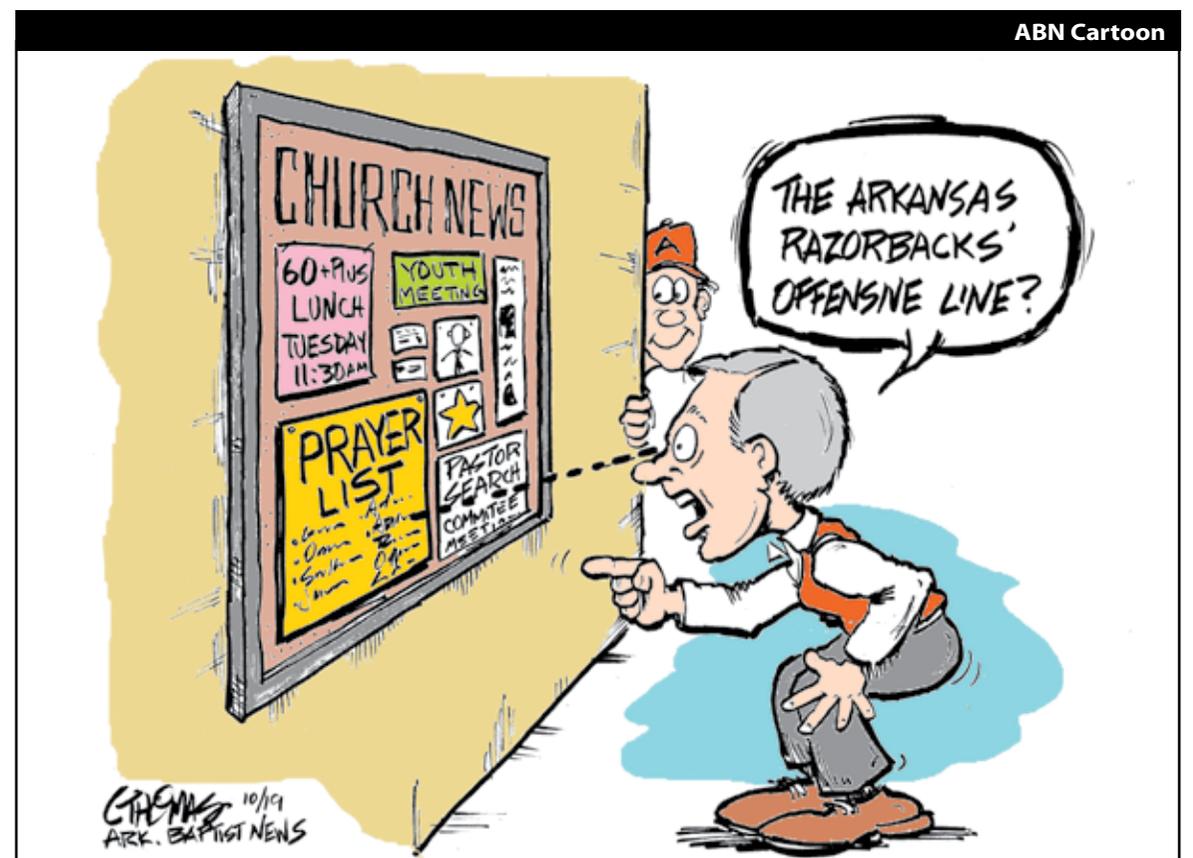
features and different ways of having the news available as my need arises. I'm looking into the church newsletter option for the back page of the paper. It's a great and valuable tool that you are making available to any size church at a very affordable rate.

I like that the paper has so much variety, and you try to be fair and even across the board on opinions and thoughts. You tackle the hard issues with fairness, and you give equal time to other needs and stories that bless our people. I don't have a lot of time to sit down and read other materials outside of my studies for sermons and lessons, but I take the time to read the ABN.

I know newspapers and that sort are on the way out in many areas, but I, for one, want to say, "Thank you," and thanks to Arkansas Baptists for keeping such a valuable tool alive and well. God bless you, Tim, and all the ABN staff. I just thought you needed to know you are a blessing.

In His blessed steps (1 Peter 2:21),

Alan Brown  
Berryville



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## Is the Bible reliable? – Part 2b

Most Christians claim that the Bible alone is the Word of God. That means, in the strongest sense of the idea: The Bible – and the Bible alone – is given to us by God. Since it is God’s Word, it has authority.

But many major world religions claim to have sacred and divine texts. How do we know that the Bible alone is the Word of God? Make no mistake: It is a major claim to say, “The Bible is the only divine text that humanity possesses.” So how can we make such a claim?



### Deep Waters

Chad Meeks

Since the Holy Spirit resides in each believer, Protestant Evangelicals claim the people of God (Christians) are able to discern and recognize that which comes from God. In other words, the Bible is Spirit-attested and self-attesting. The Westminster Confession says, “Our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority [of the Scriptures] is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.” This captures the sense of the self-attestation. As one reads it, one can tell that there is something about it; the Spirit enlivens the soul as one reads and follows its words. As one of my college professors put it: “The Bible is the only book that reads you while you read it.”

But this self-attesting feature also means that we know Scripture is Scripture because Scripture tells us it is. For example, when referring to “sacred Scripture” – or the Old Testament – in 2 Timothy 3:16 (ESV), Paul wrote, “All Scripture is breathed out by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness...” Clearly, we would take Paul’s words to apply to the New Testament as well because Peter claimed that Paul’s writings are Scripture in 2 Peter 3:15-16. And the four Gospels record the very words of Jesus (the God-man).

Many opponents of the Bible, however, will argue that the Bible cannot attest to its own inspiration; such an attestation, they claim, is circular. In other words, many critics claim it is a mistake in reasoning to state, “The Bible is God’s Word because the Bible says it is God’s Word.”

The important question here is: At what point do we hit the circular bottom?

For example, we trust reason because we say it is reasonable to do so. Is that circular? If Scripture has the authority Christians claim, what “evidence” would one trust to authenticate or verify that it is authoritative? Would that “evidence” then become (in some way) superior to or equal to Scripture?

If a text claims to be the Word of God, then its claim should be based on the impact of its work. Does it seem to be doing what one would expect the Word of God to do? Does the information contained in the document seem to be truthful and in accordance with what one would expect from the Word of God? Has the document been proven not to be the Word of God?

In my opinion, it is rational to believe something is the Word of God if it claims to be, seems like it is, and hasn’t been disproven to be.

Chad Meeks is associate pastor of youth and discipleship at Cedar Heights Baptist Church, North Little Rock.



## The great honor of serving on a pastor search committee

One of the greatest honors that can be bestowed on a church member is to serve on a pastor or staff search committee. Churches typically choose membership on these teams from among their most seasoned and trusted church members. Here are several thoughts for these esteemed individuals who are privileged to serve on these search teams.

**Serve with honor.** Your church has granted you this great honor, and so your service must be conducted in an honorable matter. How you question potential candidates, how you treat their families and how you guard confidentiality with respect to their current places of service are incredibly important. Treat

your candidates and prospects in such a way that even those who are not called to your church have great feelings of respect toward your congregation.



### Executive Directions

Sonny Tucker

**Serve with trust.** This is one of the greatest actions of trust that a congregation can bestow on a member. They trust you to represent their will and wishes. They trust you to involve them in the pastor search process through church questionnaires, church dialogue sessions and regular updates. They trust you not to attempt to change the church DNA or radically alter the church’s direction without the authority and input of the congregation. They trust you to operate without a hidden or veiled

agenda.

**Serve with prayer.** God must orchestrate the timing and process of calling a new pastor and staff member. Spiritual discernment is needed on timing issues, the candidate’s family needs and the congregation’s readiness to embrace a new pastor.

**Serve with assistance.** There are lots of helps and resources available for search committees. Two excellent resources are “Seeking God to Seek a Pastor” by Greg Frizzell, and “The Search Is On” by Arkansas Baptist State Convention staff. Your state convention’s search manual contains a strongly proven process for your committee.

Thank you for serving your church and the kingdom!

J.D. “Sonny” Tucker is executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

## Meaningful connections at the AM

Beginning on Monday, Oct. 21, perhaps the biggest Arkansas “family reunion” will convene at Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock. Everything kicks off with the Pastors’ Conference, followed by the two days of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Annual Meeting.

No one gets any financial incentives based on overall attendance, so I sure hope you’ll consider my plea for your attendance to be sincere. I really just want everyone involved in Southern Baptist life in the state to come, connect or even reconnect (depending on your circumstance) and celebrate all that God has done and is doing through our partnerships for the gospel.

Pastor Dave Hughey has spearheaded the planning for the Pastors’ Conference, and I know you’ll be blessed by the workshops and preaching. Messages of encouragement

by David Allen, Mike Spradlin, H.B. Charles and Steve Gaines are certain to be highlights. And, if you’re like me, sometimes we all just need to be reminded that God is big; He is on the move and the kingdom is worth it.

Then we’ll transition to the annual meeting, and I’m grateful to be able to share



### President’s Perspective

Greg Sykes

that Arkansas’ own, and our new Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee President, Ronnie Floyd, will be joining us to deliver a charge and an update regarding the state of the SBC. Jamar Andrews, lead pastor of Word Baptist Church, Jonesboro, and state convention Executive Director J.D. “Sonny” Tucker, will also be preaching the Word.

Of course, there’s much, much more than that available to you at this family reunion. You’ll hear some inspiring reports of what God is doing throughout our state

on Tuesday night during a celebration anchored by the Arkansas Master Singers. You can catch up with old friends at the seminary luncheons, and there are other roundtables available for student pastors, women’s ministry leaders and preschool and children’s directors.

All in all, it is wall-to-wall inspiration and encouragement, and it’s a free update on the power of the Cooperative Program and the advance of the gospel. I sincerely hope to see you there. And if we’ve never had a chance to meet, please come introduce yourself. It’s my last formal time to serve in this capacity as president of the convention, and I’d love to do more than just conduct a few business sessions; I’d love to make meaningful connections with the servants of the Lord in Arkansas who are making a difference for the next generation. Come see me!

Greg Sykes is pastor of First Baptist Church, Russellville, and president of the ABSC.

## Letters to the Editor welcomed

The Arkansas Baptist News (ABN) welcomes Letters to the Editor regarding issues of concern to Southern Baptists in Arkansas. Send Letters to the Editor to [tim@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:tim@arkansasbaptist.org) or to our mailing address. Letters must be typed, double-spaced and 300 words or less (fewer words, the better). Letters must be signed and marked “for publication” and may be edited to fit space requirements.



# Lovelace entertains during Golden Age Conference

WALNUT RIDGE – Christian comedian and musician Tim Lovelace entertained a full house at the annual Golden Age Conference Sept. 26 at Williams Baptist University (WBU). The event, sponsored by Baptist associations across northeast Arkansas, attracted a crowd estimated at 500.

Lovelace moved from guitar to piano and back again as he performed comedic songs, weaving inspirational stories and devotional thoughts into his presentation. Lovelace is a Grammy- and Dove-nominated artist and host of the

TV series, “The Music City Show.”

The event is sponsored each year by the Big Creek, Black River, Current-Gaines, Greene County, Mt. Zion, Mississippi County, Rocky Bayou, Tri-County and Trinity associations. Also sponsoring the

conference were the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, Arkansas Baptist Children’s Homes and Family Ministries and the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.

The Golden Age Conference is held in WBU’s Manley Chapel, with lunch

in the Southerland-Mabee Center.

Next year’s event is slated for Sept. 24, and the featured speaker will be Johnny Hunt, senior vice president of evangelism and leadership at the North American Mission Board.

## 2019 associational annual meetings schedule

Association	Date	Place/Time
Arkansas River Valley	Oct. 8	Second Baptist, Russellville, 4:30 p.m.
Arkansas Valley	Oct. 21	First Baptist, Helena, 3 p.m.
Ashley	Oct. 8	Southside Baptist, Hamburg, 4 p.m.
Bartholomew	Oct. 14	First Baptist, Warren, 6:30 p.m.
Big Creek	Oct. 11	Spring River Baptist, Hardy, TBA
Black River	Oct. 12	First Baptist, Walnut Ridge, 10 a.m.
Buckner	Oct. 10	Long Ridge Baptist, Booneville, 7 p.m.
Buckville	Oct. 13	Mt. Tabor Baptist, Jessieville, TBA
Caddo River	Oct. 13	Refuge, Story, 3 p.m.
Calvary	Oct. 15	Calvary Baptist, Searcy, 3 p.m.
Carey	Oct. 14	First Baptist, Sparkman, 5 p.m.
Caroline	Oct. 8	Lonoke Baptist, Lonoke, 6 p.m.
Centennial	Oct. 14	First Baptist, DeWitt, 6:30 p.m.
Central	Oct. 17	Central Baptist, Hot Springs, TBA
Clear Creek	Oct. 15	Woodland Baptist, Clarksville, 3 p.m.
Concord	Aug. 25	First Baptist, Greenwood, 5 p.m.
Conway-Perry	Oct. 15	Stony Point, Houston, 6 p.m.
Current-Gaines	Oct. 15	New Hope, Pollard, 6 p.m.
Delta	Oct. 13	Dermott Baptist, Dermott, 6 p.m.
Diamond Lakes	Oct. 8	Antioch Baptist, Royal
Faulkner	Oct. 10	Second Baptist, Conway, 6 p.m.
Greene County	Oct. 8	Beech Grove Baptist, Paragould
Harmony	Oct. 14	First Baptist, White Hall, TBA
Independence	Oct. 13	West Baptist, Batesville, 3:30 p.m.
Liberty	Nov. 4	Immanuel Baptist, El Dorado, 4 p.m.
Little Red River	Oct. 14	First Baptist, Heber Springs, TBA
Little River	Oct. 8	Oak Grove Baptist, Ashdown, 5 p.m.
Mississippi	Oct. 15	North Tenth Street Baptist, Blytheville, 5:30 p.m.
Mt. Zion	Oct. 14	First Baptist, Lake City, 5 p.m.
North Arkansas	Oct. 15	Southern Heights Baptist, Berryville, TBA
North Central	Oct. 14	First Baptist, Fairfield Bay, 3 p.m.
North Pulaski	Sept. 23	North Hills Baptist, Sherwood, 6 p.m.
Northwest	Oct. 14	Twelve Corners Baptist, Garfield, 6:30 p.m.
Ouachita	Jan. 18	Calvary Baptist, Mena, 9 a.m.
Pulaski	Nov. 19	First Baptist, Little Rock, 6 p.m.
Red River	Oct. 13	First Baptist, Arkadelphia, 4 p.m.
Rocky Bayou	Oct. 17	First Baptist, Oxford, 6:30 p.m.
(Two nights)	Oct. 18	First Baptist, Evening Shade, 6:30 p.m.
Southwest Arkansas	TBA	TBA
Tri-County	Oct. 28	Union Avenue Baptist, Wynne, TBA
Trinity	Oct. 28	Calvary Baptist, Harrisburg, 5 p.m.
Wash. Madison	Oct. 14	Elmdale Baptist, Springdale, 5 p.m.
White River	Oct. 7	Hopewell Baptist, Mountain Home, 4 p.m.

*Editor’s Note: This list of associational meetings was provided by Arkansas Baptist State Convention and by contacting individual associations. If you would like to request a representative of the Arkansas Baptist News to speak or to provide an exhibit at your annual meeting, please call 501-376-4791, ext. 5153, or email [abn@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:abn@arkansasbaptist.org).*

## KICKSTART

*continued from page one*

400 backpacks a year, but this year was altogether different,” he said. “God supplied the platform and absolutely showed out in the River Valley.”

Next year, Denton hopes to host the event again “with a little more than 17 days to plan.”

“I think so many times in our community that our businesses are not working with our churches and our people,” said Jernigan. “Everything is so individualized. We had almost every big church in town help, almost every business,

the mayor, our police forces, almost all these elected officials. There is just one kingdom. ... I think the event is exactly what God wanted that day – that there was a showing of all these different types of organizations that can work together for Him.”

Contact Sarah Davis at [sarah@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:sarah@arkansasbaptist.org).

**Pull for Arkansas families**

**Trap Shoot**

**Friday, Oct. 25**

Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation Shooting Sports Complex  
2800 Graham Road, Jacksonville, AR 72076

**Shotgun start: 8, 9, 10 a.m.**

**Registration: \$1,000, 5-member team**  
(includes clays, lunch, gift, shooting stations)

**For information: Contact John Ross at 501.658.5293**

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October 13, 2019

# GLOBAL HUNGER SUNDAY




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[www.absc.org/globalhunger](http://www.absc.org/globalhunger)

## ABCHomes' Prather awarded for communications work

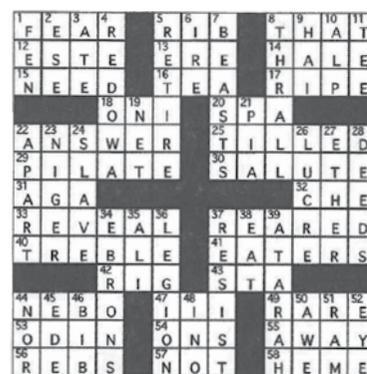
LITTLE ROCK - Stella Prather, director of communications for Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries, was honored recently at the annual ARcom

Awards ceremony held at the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center in Little Rock.

The awards competition and ceremony were organized jointly by the Arkansas chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and the Arkansas chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC).

Prather was recognized in a multimedia category for "Help Us Set the Table 2018 Thanksgiving Offering Video" and in two public relations categories for its 2018 Thanksgiving Offering campaign and Christmas Appeal campaign.

See the ABN crossword, page 9



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### Lighting & Sound

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AVL review

### Stained Glass

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http://www.sooosstainedglass.com  
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-Jen, Ouachita Online graduate



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# Pastor-staff appreciation: 'Thank you' goes a long way

By Mark M. Dewbre

NORTH LITTLE ROCK – Thank you! There is nothing like a heartfelt “thank you.” It warms the heart, and it lets individuals know that they’re doing a good job and are appreciated for the work being done. However, it’s not uncommon for us to overlook the “thank you” simply because we don’t think about it or we begin to take for granted the person doing the work. This is why I’m so grateful to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention for taking the time and effort to highlight during October how important it is to thank those who have taken on the responsibility of leading our churches across Arkansas.

Perhaps you’ve never thought about it, but the truth is ministry can be lonely and

thankless at times. It’s understood that to do ministry we are encouraged to give ourselves away, and for most of us the work itself is the reward. We know that it’s not about getting recognition for work we are called to do. We also know that most of what we do will never be seen by anyone, and we are content in knowing that God knows.

That being said, I would like to remind all of us that the men and women who have answered God’s call to ministry deserve a heartfelt “thank you.”

Thank them for giving up precious family time to spend time with members of their local congregations – for the time and effort spent strategizing on how to grow the church and win the lost, visiting people in the hospital, preparing

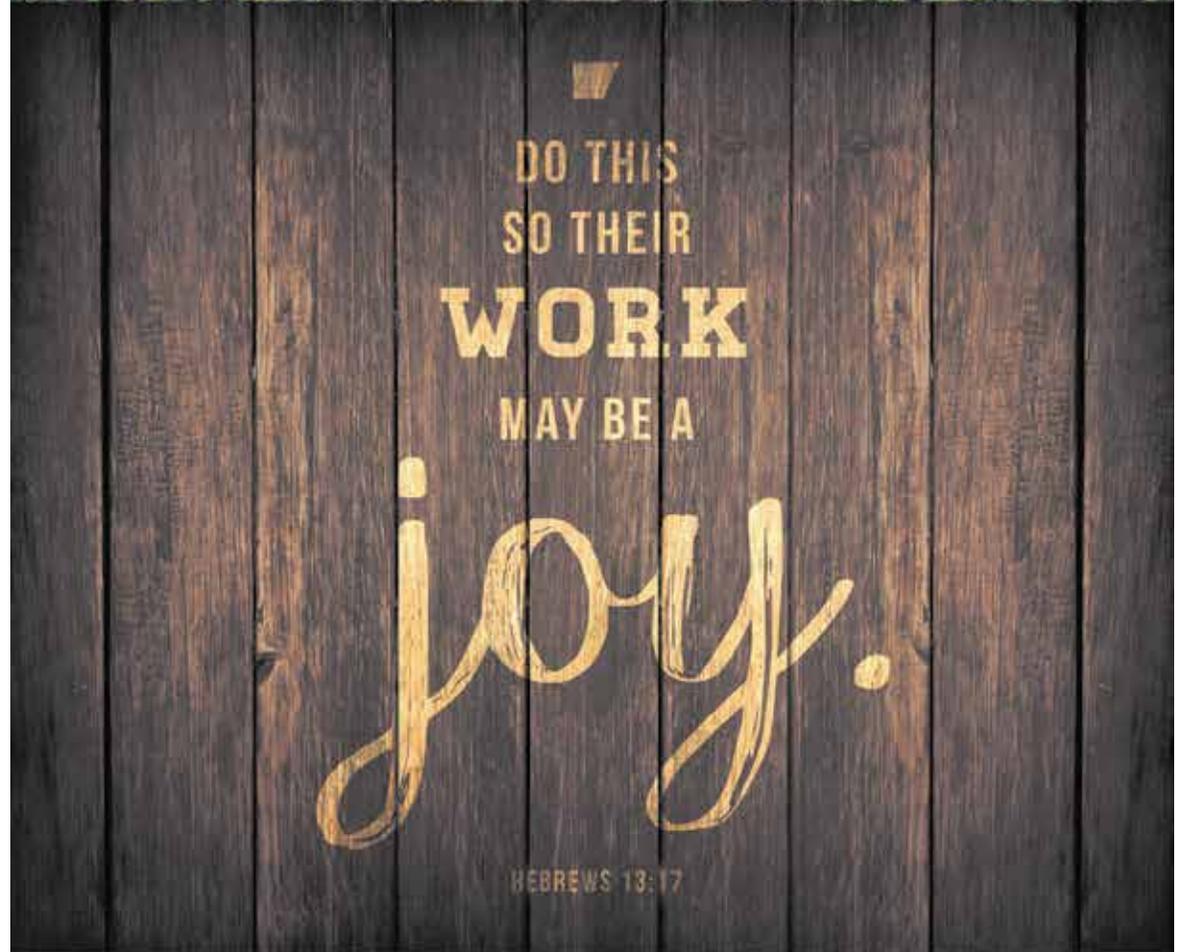
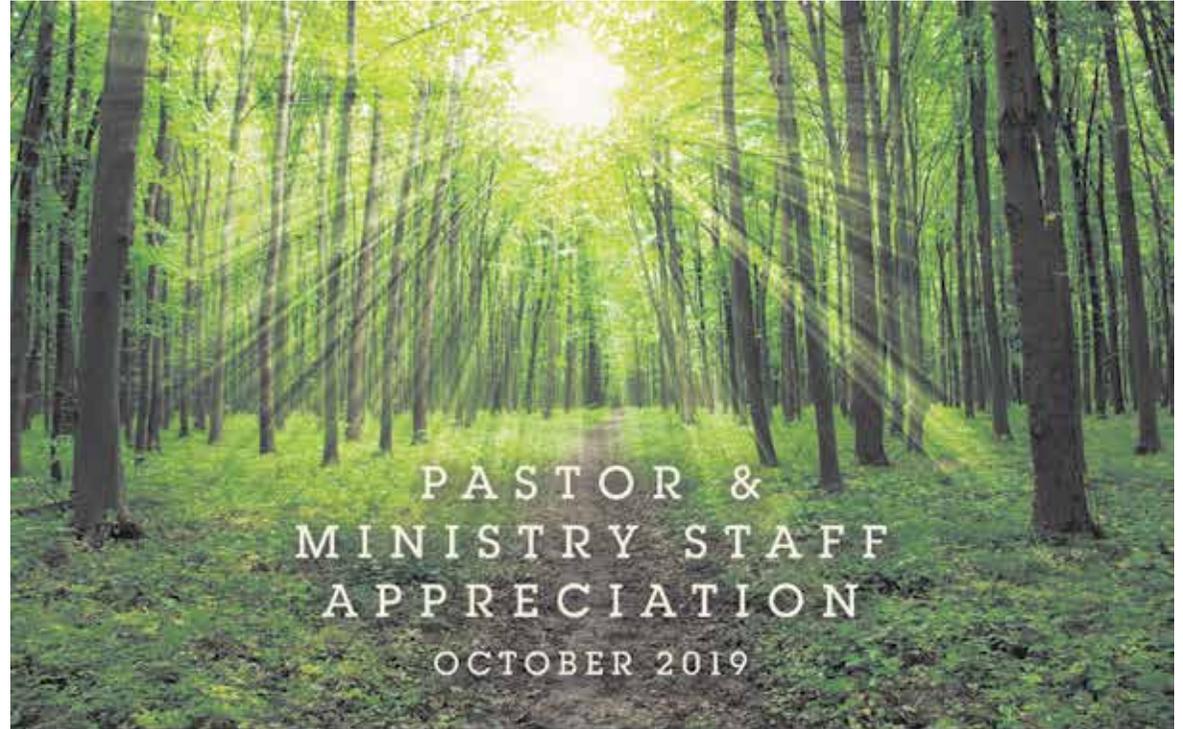
to teach and preach, working with deacons and other leaders in the church, recruiting volunteers, dealing with church finances, counseling those in need, working with

our children and youth, casting vision, and then leading in getting it done.

For all of these things and more please remember to say, “Thank you,” to those

who have answered God’s call to serve local Arkansas churches.

Mark M. Dewbre is administrative pastor at Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock.



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2019 Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation  
(PS Form 3526)

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a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 14,809. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 13,263.

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(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies): Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 1,183. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 10,896.

(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies): Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 1,713. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 1,574.

(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: None. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: None.

(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS® (e.g., First-Class Mail): Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: None. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: None.

c. Total Paid Distribution: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 13,896. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 12,470.

d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail):

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(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies included on PS Form 3541: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 258. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 257.

(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS® (e.g., First-Class Mail): Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: None. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: None.

(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means): Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 47. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 35.

e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 730. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 697.

f. Total Distribution: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 14,626. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 13,167.

g. Copies Not Distributed: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 184. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 96.

h. Total: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 14,810. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 13,263.

i. Percent Paid: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 95%. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 95%.

16. Electronic Copy Circulation

a. Paid Electronic Copies: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 374. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 371.

b. Total Paid Print Copies + Paid Electronic Copies: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 14,270. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 12,841.

c. Total Print Distribution + Paid Electronic Copies: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 15,000. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 13,538.

d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies): Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: 95%. No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: 95%.

I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

17. Publication of Statement of Ownership is required. Will be printed in a general publication in the October 10, 2019 issue of this publication.

18. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties). Timothy L. Yarbrough, Editor/Executive Director, Sept. 27, 2019.

# Gospel Games

*"An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules."*

2 Timothy 2:5 (CSB)

## ZERUBBABEL THE RESTORER

In the book of Ezra, Jesus is seen in the life of a man named Zerubbabel. God used Zerubbabel to lead His people out of Babylon to rebuild the Temple and restore worship in Jerusalem.

*"Who is among you of all of His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem." Ezra 1:3*

Color the picture of Zerubbabel.

Look up Psalm 23:3 and fill in the blanks to discover what God desires to restore in your life.

"He \_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_;  
He \_\_\_\_\_ me in \_\_\_\_\_ of  
\_\_\_\_\_ for His \_\_\_\_\_  
sake." Psalm 23:3



**ARKANSAS BAPTIST NEWS**

**Across**

- 1. "ye that \_\_\_ God, give audience" (Acts 13:16)
- 5. What God took from Adam
- 8. "God saw \_\_\_ it was good" (Genesis 1:25)
- 12. This (Sp.)
- 13. Before (poet.)
- 14. "lest he \_\_\_ thee to the judge" (Luke 12:58)
- 15. "the Lord hath \_\_\_ of him" (Luke 19:31)
- 16. Oolong is one
- 17. Mature
- 18. Naval agency (abbr.)
- 20. Place of rejuvenation
- 22. "A soft \_\_\_ turneth away wrath" (Proverbs 15:1)
- 25. "And the desolate land shall be \_\_\_" (Ezekiel 36:34)
- 29. "He went to \_\_\_ and begged the body of Jesus" (Matthew 27:58)
- 30. "Samuel came; and Saul went out...that he might \_\_\_ him" (1 Samuel 13:10)
- 31. Title of respect in Turkey
- 32. Guevara

33. "To \_\_\_ his son in me"

- (Galatians 1:16)
- 37. "And he \_\_\_ up the pillars before the temple" (2 Chronicles 3:17)
- 40. Clef
- 41. "Be not among...riotous \_\_\_ of flesh" (Proverbs 23:20)
- 42. To arrange, with "up"
- 43. Union is one (abbr.)
- 44. "Bel boweth down, \_\_\_ stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts" (Isaiah 46:1)
- 47. Roman toddler's age
- 49. "it is a \_\_\_ thing that the king requireth" (Daniel 2:11)
- 53. Norse mythological figure
- 54. Belonging to Peleg's son, who revolted against Moses (Num. 16:1)
- 55. Word in title of Christmas carol
- 56. Civil War soldiers familiarly
- 57. "Elias is come already, and they knew him \_\_\_" (Matthew 17:12)
- 58. Iron-containing pigment of hemoglobin

**Down**

- 1. Swamp

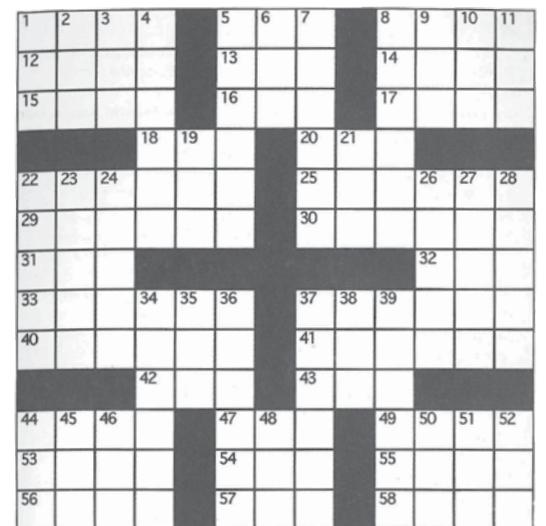
2. Direction

- 3. Enjoyed a repast
- 4. Bohemian dance
- 5. "\_\_\_ ye from him, that he may be smitten and die" (2 Samuel 11:15)
- 6. Wrath
- 7. "That which was torn of \_\_\_ I brought not" (Genesis 31:39)
- 8. To enslave
- 9. "And he went...where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and \_\_\_" (Genesis 13:3)
- 10. Swiss mountain
- 11. Summer shirt
- 19. Hair \_\_\_
- 21. Swedish feminine name
- 22. "And the land shall mourn, every family \_\_\_" (Zechariah 12:12)
- 23. "Simeon that was called \_\_\_" (Acts 13:1)
- 24. \_\_\_ driver
- 26. "not greedy of filthy \_\_\_" (1 Timothy 3:3)
- 27. City of Judah allotted to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 15)

28. "I will recompense them according to their \_\_\_"

- (Jeremiah 25:14)
- 34. Belonging to a city near Jerusalem (var.)
- 35. \_\_\_ Baba
- 36. "My name is \_\_\_: for we are many" (Mark 5:9)
- 37. "\_\_\_ the devil and he will flee" (James 4:7)
- 38. "thou shalt not \_\_\_ of it" (Genesis 2:17)
- 39. Mother of Onam (1 Chronicles 2)
- 44. Conjunction
- 45. Netherlands city
- 46. Lettuce variety
- 48. Daughter of Cadmus
- 50. Stand in \_\_\_, and sin not" (Psalm 4:4)
- 51. Drive into
- 52. "when thine \_\_\_ is single, thy whole body is full of light" (Luke 11:34)

## AB Crossword puzzle



Crossword answer, page 7

Crossword by Barbour Publishing, Inc.

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*Editor's Note: The Arkansas Baptist News would love to share your church news with the state. Send your information to sarah@arkansasbaptist.org or call 1-800-838-2272, ext. 5153. Please submit information three weeks prior to the event.*

## Obituaries

**John William Fox**, of Roanoke, Va., died Sept. 18.

A native of Fort Smith, Fox served as a pastor in Arkansas, Indiana and Virginia. He also served as the director of missions of Henry County Baptist Association in Virginia and a regional mission resource consultant for the Virginia Baptist Mission Board.

Fox was preceded in death by his parents and his sister.

He is survived by his wife, two daughters, four grandchildren, a sister and brother.

A funeral was held Sept. 23 at Bonsack Baptist Church, Roanoke, Va.

**LuVerne Isbell**, 89, of Humnoke, died Sept. 23.

Isbell was a member of Stuttgart Harvest Church where she served as a member of the music team and played the bass guitar.

In 1970, Isbell won a national song writing contest for her song, "Gentle Thoughts on Jesus." Isbell wrote more than 100 songs, and many of them were published and performed by national artists like The Catholics and The Florida Boys.

She was preceded in death by her parents, 12 siblings, her husband and her son.

Isbell is survived by a brother, two children, nine grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

A funeral was held Sept. 28 at Stuttgart Harvest Church followed by burial at Hamilton Cemetery in the

Hamilton Community.

## Church life

**Calvary Baptist Church, Fort Smith**, will host The Batchelor Family in concert at 11 a.m., Sunday, Oct. 20.

**First Baptist Church, El Dorado**, will host a Trunk or Treat 4:30-6:30 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 24.

**Calvary Baptist Church, Little Rock**, will host a Fall Family Festival from 4-6 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 27.

**First Baptist Church, Har-**

**ison**, will host a Fall Festival Pumpkin Patch Party from 4-7 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 27.

**First Baptist Church, Pine Bluff**, will host a Fall Festival from 5:30-6:30 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 30.

**Barcelona Road Baptist Church, Hot Springs Village**, will host a Fall Festival from 5-6:30 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 31.

**Cedar Heights Baptist Church, North Little Rock**, will host a Harvest Festival from 6-8 p.m., Thursday, Oct.

31. There will be games, bounce houses, door prizes, trick or treating and hayrides.

## On the move

**Michael Conyers** is serving as pastor of Natural Steps Baptist Church, Roland.

**Tyler Emery** is serving as pastor at Witt's Chapel Baptist Church, Maynard.

**Robby Shearon** is serving as pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Harrisburg.



7th - 12th grade  
an all-girls  
retreat  
February 14-16

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[arkansasfamilies.org](http://arkansasfamilies.org)



# Classifieds

## PASTOR

Mountain Home Baptist Church, Mountain Home, AR, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send resumes to MHBC Search Committee, 1960 Glenbriar Drive, Mountain Home, AR 72653 or e-mail to: [mhbcpsc@gmail.com](mailto:mhbcpsc@gmail.com).

FBC of DeValls Bluff is in search of a **full-time pastor**. Please send resumes to Bruce Wolfe, PO Box 358, DeValls Bluff, AR.

First Baptist Church Clarendon, AR, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send resumes to FBC Search Committee, PO Box 324, Clarendon, AR 72029 or email to: [info@fbccclarendon.com](mailto:info@fbccclarendon.com).

Plum Bayou Baptist Church, Wright, AR,

seeks a Bible-believing **bi-vocational pastor**. Please submit resumes to [pattireed23@hotmail.com](mailto:pattireed23@hotmail.com) or mail to PBBC-Pastor Search, 7811 Hwy 256, England, AR 72046.

Ebenezer Baptist Church, El Dorado, AR, in search of a **full-time pastor**. Send resumes to Pastor Search Committee, 1942 N. Wyatt Drive, El Dorado, AR, 71730 or e-mail to [myebcchurch@yahoo.com](mailto:myebcchurch@yahoo.com). Resumes will be accepted until November 1.

Lexa Baptist Church is searching for a **full-time pastor**. Please send your resume to PO Box 189, Lexa, AR 72355.

FBC, Camden, is seeking **full-time senior pastor**. Send resume to [FBCcamdenPSC@gmail.com](mailto:FBCcamdenPSC@gmail.com).

Rector First Baptist Church seeks **full-time senior pastor**. Send resume to [rectorfirst@gmail.com](mailto:rectorfirst@gmail.com) or PO Box 197, Rector, AR 72461.

## OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

Maple Grove Baptist in Trumann is needing a **full-time minister to youth**. Send resumes or questions to [jimduffel@gmail.com](mailto:jimduffel@gmail.com).

First Baptist Church of Danville is now seeking a **ministry assistant/secretary**. Applicants should have good interpersonal skills, general knowledge of all office equipment and supplies, ability to maintain confidential com-

munications and be able to deal with various types of personalities, both on the phone and in person. Experience with Microsoft Office, including Word, Excel, basic accounting/book-keeping procedures and good organizational skills are preferred. Hours 8 am - 4 pm Monday - Friday. Interested applicants should submit their resume to FBC, PO Box 877, Danville or email [fbcdan@arkwest.com](mailto:fbcdan@arkwest.com).

Viola FBC seeks a **full-time or part-time student pastor**. For info, contact "Youth Pastor Search Committee" by text: 870-321-3676, email: [sjperryman@outlook.com](mailto:sjperryman@outlook.com), or mail: PO Box 295, Viola, AR 72583.

East Baptist Church, Wynne, AR, seeks **bi-**

**vocational music minister** to lead and direct overall church music ministry and lead blended style of music in worship. Must adhere to So. Baptist doctrine. Some technical skills required. Resumes to [jfryer444@yahoo.com](mailto:jfryer444@yahoo.com), or PO Box 538, Wynne, AR 72396.

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**ABN**  
ARKANSAS BAPTIST NEWS

OCTOBER 13, 2019

The Ephesian believers were reminded of their calling and encouraged to walk in a way that reflects that calling. Paul used the word “walk” to describe the activities of one’s life. Our lives should give evidence of who we are in Christ.

The Christian life is not meant to be lived in isolation but in community. Theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer began his “Life Together” with Psalm 133:1, “How good and pleasant it is when brothers can live together” in unity. Unity was key to Bonhoeffer’s understanding of the Church. Unity of the Church is an important aspect of Paul’s theology as well. There are qualities we should have in our conduct because they promote unity. Our conduct should have the qualities of humility, gentleness, patience, acceptance and love (Eph. 4:2-3). With these virtues exhibited, we are “diligently keeping the unity of the Spirit with the peace that binds us” (Eph. 4:3).

Paul pointed out seven “one” statements to emphasize the unity of the church. There is only “one body, one

Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God and Father” (Eph. 4:4-6). These are spiritual realities that unite all believers, but it doesn’t mean there is no diversity in the Church. Each believer has received a spiritual gift by the grace of God (Eph. 4:7). Warren Wiersbe defines a spiritual gift as “a God-given ability to serve God and other Christians in such a way that Christ is glorified and believers are edified.” Di-

versity of gifts functions to help preserve the unity of the Body.

Too often we allow our personal biases and opinions to cause disunity. In the 17th century, an archbishop by the name of Marco Antonio de Dominis wrote, “In necessary things, unity; in uncertain things, liberty; and in everything, charity.” Some things must be defended at all costs. Some things are open to interpretation, and we should give liberty to differences of opinion. All of our actions should be motivated by our love for Christ and others. It is easier to walk together when each person is looking out for the other.

### EXPLORE THE BIBLE Walking together

EPH. 4:1-10 (HCSB)

The ideas of the sovereignty of God and the human free will are difficult concepts to understand. God is sovereign and completely in control of everything. Paul told us that God has a will for us and it can be known. He wrote, “Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:2).

I am often asked, “If God’s will is so perfect and so important, why doesn’t He just tell us what it is? Why is it so hard to figure out?” These types of questions are usually links to the circumstances in life we are trying to navigate. Whom should I marry? What career should I choose? What university should I attend? Where should I live? Where should I go to church? God does have a will, a plan for our lives, but He allows us some latitude as we make choices.

Pastor and author John Ortberg explains the reason we don’t always have

the clear guidance we seek. He writes, “God’s primary will for your life is not the circumstances you inhabit; it’s the person you become.” If you research the “God’s will” phrases in the New Testament, you will find they speak more to character than to circumstances. It is God’s will that we be “holy and blameless in His sight” (Eph. 1:4). God wills that we develop Christ-like character.

Our holy character development begins with not conforming to this age (Rom. 12:2). Humans are natural conformists. We are good at

adapting, fitting in and fading into the background. God wants us to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:2). When we study and apply God’s Word to our lives, we are more spiritually minded.

Our will controls our minds, and our minds control our bodies. This is why we need to surrender our will to God’s will. When we do, we can discern the “good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.”

### BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE God’s will and my will

ROM. 11:33-12:2; EPH. 1:4-6 (HCSB)

OCTOBER 20, 2019

Moving forward in the mission God has given the Church requires effective leadership. There’s an old proverb that says, “He who thinketh he leaeth and hath no one following him is only taking a walk.” Good leaders have a good understanding of God’s calling on their lives and are led by the Holy Spirit to equip the Church to carry out the gospel mission. This was Paul’s focus in Ephesians 4:11-16.

First, he described the apostle. An apostle is one who is sent out to carry a message or complete a task. Next, he described the prophet. Prophets in the New Testament were like those in the Old Testament in that they spoke forth God’s Word to inspire, correct and motivate. Apostles and prophets were no longer necessary after the completion of the canon of Scripture.

The third leadership role was that of the evangelist. The most famous evangelist of our day was Billy Graham. When Graham first started his evangelistic work, there was an emphasis among evangelists on the Second Coming of

Christ. Graham said, “I would like to do something great for Christ before He returns.” He had no idea at that time how God was going to use him. Timothy George, dean of Beeson Divinity School, said, “Graham transcended his limitations to become an instrument of divine grace for a world starving for some good news.” Evangelists take the good news of the gospel to the world.

Pastors were the fourth leadership role on Paul’s list. The word literally means “shepherd.” This title is taken directly from Christ’s role as the Good Shepherd. The pastor is to preach, teach, lead, care for and protect Christ-followers under his care. This role is connected to the last role – Teachers are to teach the gospel and related doctrinal truths necessary for spiritual growth.

Each of these roles was given so the Church could move forward in unity. The emphasis is on growing in the knowledge of Christ, training for ministry, becoming unified in faith and reaching a level of maturity in Christ through the bond of love.

### EXPLORE THE BIBLE Walking forward

EPH. 4:11-16 (HCSB)

This is an amazing Psalm. I agree with C.S. Lewis who called this Psalm “the greatest poem in the Psalms and one of the greatest lyrics in the world.” This Psalm describes God’s revelation of Himself through His creation, in the Bible, and in the heart of the believer. Our lesson emphasis is on the Bible, but we need the context of the whole Psalm.

Psalm 19:1-6 focuses on God’s revelation of Himself through creation. David powerfully described creation as a wordless book (Psa. 19:3). Creation speaks constantly, silently and universally, declaring the glory of God.

Using a map of the night sky, I hopped from star to star with my telescope looking for an object I had only seen in pictures, the Ring Nebula. When I finally saw it, I simply voiced, “Lord, Your heavens declare Your glory!”

As awesome as creation is, it is inadequate in revealing the attributes of God and His purpose for creation and in assisting us in determining God’s will for our lives. God’s Word is perfect, or ad-

equate, for this (Psa. 19:7). David gave various titles to God’s Word: instruction, testimony, precepts, commandments and ordinances. He also gave various characteristics of God’s Word: perfect, trustworthy, right, pure, reliable and righteous. Mixed in with these titles and characteristics are the benefits that are available from God’s Word: restoration, wisdom, rejoicing and enlightenment. Charles Swindoll said, “While the Lord isn’t likely to speak audibly to you, He is not silent! He has said and continues to say more than we can absorb

and apply.”

God’s Word can be like pure gold, sweet honey and a great reward (Psa. 19:10-12). It can warn us of evil and dangers, keep us from sin, help us to know right from wrong and correct and cleanse us. The key is in verse 11: We must keep His ordinances. Only the Word of God can make our speech and hearts pleasing to God. The study of God’s Word is the most important spiritual discipline, and it is necessary for us to align our will with His will.

### BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE God’s will and the Bible

PSALM 19:7-14 (HCSB)

## Featured commentary writer



Gerald Nash

Gerald Nash is a registered respiratory therapist and EEG technician at Saint Mary’s Regional Medical Center in Russellville. Nash is involved in medical research and is a preaching pastor at Soul Food Cafe Mission. He is involved in missions and also leads a small group and the decision room ministry at Second Baptist Church, Conway. Nash has attended several universities and seminaries, including Williams Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He holds multiple educational degrees, including a bachelor of arts in Christian ministries, a master of arts and doctor of ministry in pastoral studies and a master of arts in theological studies. Nash volunteers on the Cairo Geniza Project deciphering and transcribing ancient Greek and Arabic documents. He loves to read, bass fish, and spend time with his family. He and his wife, Mary Ann, love to travel, explore ancient ruins and go on wild animal safaris.

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**Arkansas Baptist**  
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Volume 118, Number 1  
 January 17, 2019

**Inside:**

- 41st annual March for Life Jan. 20
- Students serve with ABCS DR in Fla.
- Ark. ranked second most pro-life state
- Allen, former SBC pres., dreamer dies
- Blood, Moore discuss evangelism

**ECON Directory**

Arkansas evangelists and ministers available for service  
 page 9

## Modern-day David and Goliath story Pope County residents fight casino they voted down

**Caleb Yarbrough**  
 Arkansas Baptist News

**WHO SHOULD DECIDE** whether or not a casino is built in Pope County? Arkansas voters approved Issue 4 (Amendment 100) in November to allow for casinos to be built in the county, according to the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

The question is: Should it also include language requiring a letter of recommendation from either the county judge or Quorum Court of Pope and Jefferson counties before a casino can be built. If the proposed casinos were to be approved, they would be built in the county, according to the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

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See **CASINO** page 6

## At 99, former Arkansas pastor awarded Green Beret status

**PEARLAND, Texas (BP)** – After World War II, decorated Army veteran Jesse Whitley returned home and became a Baptist pastor and preacher for more than 45 years.

"Sgt." Whitley, who celebrated his 99th birthday Dec. 14, received renewed recognition on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, with Green Beret status for his service in a special forces unit nicknamed "The Devil's Brigade."

It came as a surprise to Whitley, who faced combat action with the First Special Service Force (FSSF) against the Japanese in Alaska's Aleutian Islands and against the Germans in Europe.

Whitley joined the U.S. Army on April 25, 1939, at age 19 in Texarkana, Ark., where he grew up. He was honorably discharged on Oct. 31, 1945.

The Veterans Day ceremony was held at First Baptist Church in Pearland, Texas, where he grew up. He was joined by his daughter, Vicki Cumbie, having moved from Arkansas about a year and a half ago.

Whitley served as pastor of six Arkansas churches: Ebenezer Baptist Church in Warren, Graves Memorial Baptist Church in North Little Rock; Hebron Baptist Church in Little Rock; Centennial Baptist Church in

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On Veterans Day, Nov. 11, World War II veteran Jesse Whitley, 99, received his Green Beret from Sgt. Justin Mayrant of the 19th Special Forces based in San Antonio.

## ECON 2019 set for Jan. 28-29 at Geyer Springs First Baptist

**LITTLE ROCK**—The Arkansas Baptist State Convention's (ABSC) Conference on Evangelism and Church Health (ECON) 2019 will be held Jan. 28-29 at Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock.

This year's guest speakers include Stephen Kendrick, writer and producer, Kendrick Brothers; Junior Hill, vocational evangelist; Charlie Deter, senior pastor, Progressive Baptist Church, Chicago; Robert Smith, Charles T. Carter chair of divinity, Beeson Divinity School, Birmingham, Ala.; and David Allen, Our dear friend, we are also excited to have joining us for the first time

Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, and Paul Chittwood, president, International Mission Board.

David McKinney, worship pastor at Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, will lead worship during the conference.

"I am excited about the speakers who will be sharing with us this year. We will hear messages from some familiar faces including Robert Smith and David Allen. Our dear friend, we are also excited to have joining us for the first time



Kendrick



**Arkansas Baptist**  
Informing, inspiring and involving Baptists since 1901

Volume 118, Number 14  
 July 18, 2019

**Inside:**

- Few churchgoers read the Bible daily
- Mandrell elected Lifeway president
- Southern Baptist Media Day July 28
- Aderholt pleads guilty to misdemeanor
- Ky. pastor serves 69 years at same church

**ABCHomes anniversary**

ABCHomes celebrates 125 years of ministry to children and families  
 pages 7-10



## Super Summer 'feels like home'

**Sarah Davis**  
 Arkansas Baptist News

WALNUT RIDGE – Alabama native Doug Walker has been hired as vice president for university advancement and operations at Williams Baptist University (WBU), according to a Jan. 22 announcement.

Walker leads a major restructuring of the WBU administration, which includes a number of other administrators assuming new responsibilities. Walker will start his new position – which will also include serving as the university's chief operating officer – Feb. 4.

Most recently, Walker served at Trinity International University in DeKalb, Ill., where he was associate vice president for advancement and university relations. Walker served as executive director of the Union University Foundation and director of major gifts at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., from 2009 to 2015.

From 1993 to 2009, Walker was senior vice president for institutional advancement at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

"Dr. Walker brings significant expertise and a wealth of fundraising experience to this position, and we are delighted to have him join us at Williams Baptist University. Doug's desire to be a part of WBU is a strong affirmation of the quality of this institution and the bright future before us," said Stan Norman, Williams Baptist president.

"Soon after my arrival, I began praying that God would lead us to the person who could build upon the strong advancement foundation already here and move us forward in our fundraising efforts. We believe that God led us to Doug Walker, and our ensuing conversations and interactions confirmed that God was



**Arkansas Baptist**  
Telling the story of Arkansas Baptists since 1901

Volume 118, Number 2  
 January 31, 2019

**Inside:**

- Ouachita receives \$800K gift of 'turf'
- Evangelist Bailey Smith dies at age 79
- Christian persecution up worldwide
- Thousands March for Life at Capitol
- Across Arkansas

**Travel Arkansas**

The Natural State offers great getaway destinations  
 page 9

## Williams adds vp, restructures administration

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Walker, Cooper, Baine, Filippo, Andrews, Norman

## Couple returns to Arkansas after taking gospel to Belize

**Margaret Colson**  
 Arkansas Baptist News

**CABOT** – "We know what it is to be attacked by someone with a machete; we know what it is to be on a public bus and have someone jump on the back of the bus with a gun and threaten all of us; we know what it is to be carried off to the local jail. It was an exciting life!"

A missionary's life is far from mundane, just ask Ray and Penny Taffner.

In 2007 the Taffners, both graduates of Williams Baptist University in Walnut Ridge, sensed God calling them to the missionary field of Belize. At that time, their mission focus was planted deeply in Arkansas. Ray started pastoring Arkansas Baptist churches in August 1975 at Rea Valley Baptist Church, Flippin. From there, he served in a number of small rural churches in north central Arkansas and as director of missions in Big Creek Baptist Association and interim director of missions in Independence Baptist Association.

See **BELIZE** page 3



**Arkansas Baptist**  
Volume 118, Number 4

February 28, 2019

**Inside:**

- Allison, Mid-America founder, dies
- Greenway nominated to lead SWBTS
- Paragould CWJ offers 'future, hope'
- SBC editors challenged to 'Press On'
- Gateway offers all master's degrees online

**Christian education**

Arkansas Baptist universities educate future leaders  
 page 8



Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President J.D. Greear speaks to Baptist editors and journalists gathered in Charleston, S.C., following a scathing report by the *Houston Chronicle* and *San Antonio Express-News* about sexual abuse in the SBC. Photo by Caleb Yarbrough

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