BMA of America meets in Oklahoma for 64th Annual Meeting

By JERRY FULTON
Baptist Progress Editor

The Sixty-fourth Annual Meeting of the Baptist Missionary Association of America (BMAA) began the evening of April 22 with a patriotic theme. Following a welcome to church messengers by Congressman James Langford and a worshipful concert by the Jacksonville College Choir, Ed Stephenson, president of the BMAA, called the meeting to order.

Stephenson, who in addition to serving as president of the BMAA, is pastor of Springhill, Greenbrier, Ark., was introduced to preach the presidential message by Rocky Goodwin, founder and director of Evangelistic International Ministries and a longtime friend. Using Luke 2:49 as the key verse of his sermon, the president borrowed the theme of the meeting as the title of his message.

Citing various verses, the president said, “We must be certain that we are with Jesus.” He continued that other “musts” for Christians include being people with a Great Commission commitment and people who worship in spirit and in truth.

Stephenson went further to say, “There are some ‘musts’ we are not doing.” Using Solomon as an illustration, he focused on the fact that the king begged God during a national crisis to revive His people in 2 Chronicles 7. “God’s answer,” Stephenson said, “was that Solomon and his people would be required to do some things first.” The “musts” required of Solomon and his people were to humble themselves, pray, seek God’s face and turn from their wicked ways. “Only when they had done what was required of them,” the president said, “would God hear from heaven, forgive their sin and heal their land.” He suggested that America is in a national crisis and in need of doing the same as was required of Solomon and Israel.

Proposed amendment, DiscipleGuide and more

Tuesday afternoon, accepted into the BMAA were four new congregations, including: Charity, Ward, Ark.; Jacob’s Well, Plano, Ill.; Bible, Beebe, Ark.; and The Crossing, Slidell, La.

A proposed amendment to Article XV—Committee on Arrangements/Production—of the Statement of Principles of Cooperation was presented that would comprise a committee of seven, including the president, vice presidents, director of DiscipleGuide Conference Division and three members of the committee on arrangements, to review facility recommendations from the committee on arrangements. The committee would also plan the production, set a budget and promote the national meeting. The amendment was approved during the fourth general session Wednesday morning.

Scott Attebery, executive director of DiscipleGuide Church Resources, presented a report for the department he leads. The director included in his remarks, “Every church experiences challenges in their quest to fulfill the Great Commission. DiscipleGuide’s role is to understand those challenges and create solutions in the form of resources.” Attebery continued, that having conducted surveys and questionnaires to solicit feedback, DiscipleGuide is now making improvements. Referring to the BMAA’s resource department as “The New DiscipleGuide,” the director emphasized that the 2013 Pastor’s Oasis Conference will have a broader focus.
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aimed at young families and will offer more equipping as each BMAA church planter will be present at the 2013 event. Attebery announced that the new online SOAR Bible study curriculum will launch in the fall after a release party at the SOAR Conference in July.

In recent years, there has been a concern for the finances of DiscipleGuide. By making some difficult decisions, including a reduction in staff, the department was able to present a balanced budget to messengers in Oklahoma and also forecast a small profit.

Attebery added, “Some of the current development taking place centers around new opportunities in evangelism and missions.” The department will be working closely and sharing resources with the BMAA Department of Missions and Lifeword and will also partner with other Christian resource organizations such as LifeWay to develop customized resources for churches.

Curriculum for students interested in missions trips will soon be offered that will explain the BMAA’s philosophy on missions. An English as a second language curriculum is also being made available for English speaking Christians to use worldwide as a tool to share the gospel with those who would like to learn the English language.

Other highlights of things to come include a new children’s curriculum called DiscipleKids. The curriculum will include communication given to parents, so that they can be aware and involved in what their children are learning in Sunday school each week.

Finally the director spoke of upcoming visits that will be offered to pastors, staff and anyone interested with him and other BMAA directors called “Think Tanks.” The “Think Tanks” will allow questions to be asked of the directors and also provide an opportunity for department leaders to learn how to better discover and meet the needs of BMAA churches.

Scott Attebery was elected to continue serving as executive director of the department. A feasibility study to explore the possibility of relocating the DiscipleGuide publishing division to Conway, Arkansas was also approved.

Following the session, the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary hosted their annual Seminary Friends Dinner (see page 7).

Annual Message

The annual message was delivered by DiscipleGuide Executive Director Scott Attebery, who was introduced by his father, Charles Attebery, director of the BMAA to Lifeword Foundation. His sermon was delivered with exceptional zeal and grace, as he preached from Genesis 15 concerning the Lord’s faithfulness.

He noted that the Lord made a covenant with Abraham. Abraham asked for signs to be certain he was in the will of God. Although Abraham would never be able to fulfill total faithfulness to God, the Lord still showed His faithfulness to Abraham. Attebery said, “Everyday depends on God’s faithfulness, not our faithfulness.”

“Because Abraham believed God,” Attebery preached, “it was counted to him as righteousness.”

The director explained that even when a dad is not always faithful to his child or a pastor is not always faithful to his church, the Lord is forever faithful.

In closing, he noted that Christians need only to look to the cross for a sign from God. “It was on the cross,” he said, “that Jesus gave the sign, ‘I cross my heart and choose to die,’ not because God had failed but because we have failed.”

“When I look to the cross,” Attebery said, “I am looking at my Savior’s faithfulness, and when I do, it is credited to me as righteousness.”

Moral Action, Coordinating Council

Wednesday morning, business resumed with committee, auxiliary reports, as well as a report by Dr. John Adams, executive director of Moral Action.

Adams began, “Moral Action must be a great part of our lives. We must be morally bound by God’s Word to live right, do right, speak right, give right and to fight the wrong.”

The director stressed that BMA churches morally, must not despair, be embittered, or compromise. Adams also listed several items with which churches may join with Moral Action in rejoicing. Among those listed was the purchase of a new van, made possible by contributions received from the 2012 Freedom Offering. The van is being used to travel to Washington, D.C. and other destinations as Adams represents the interests of the BMA of America where morality is concerned and conducts God and Country rallies around the nation.

Adams shared that Moral Action presented the 2013 Moralist Award to the late Dr. Roy McLaughlin and his wife, Neva, for their contributions to the ministry of the agency. McLaughlin led the agency for several years prior to his death and the election of Adams as executive director.

Among the recommendations approved for Moral Action were that BMA churches schedule June 30 or July 7 as the Moral Action Freedom Offering Sunday. Five Moral Action resolutions were also approved.

Coordinating Council

In speaking to messengers, Paul Bullock, chairman of the coordinating council, voiced the council’s support for the BMAA Department of Missions and Lifeword Media Ministries integration efforts. On behalf of the council, he also commended DiscipleGuide Church Resources in its continued efforts to fully merge multiple departments and its stated goal of wanting to be a part of the integration process.

After congratulating the other BMAA departments and agencies on their successes, Bullock noted, “The greatest resistance to change is seeing the possible pain it might cost, but the greatest argument for change is seeing the possible gain it might bring.

He continued, “Our greatest challenge as an association is to continue to focus or, if necessary, to refocus on the things “we must” do.

Lifeword Media Ministries

Steve Crawley, executive director of Lifeword Media Ministries, emphasized that as God’s children, “we must have a passion for God and His honor.”

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He also cautioned, “As we look to the future, we must embrace a God-given plan rather than fabricated tactics of our own.”

Crawley called for innovative measures concerning the ministries of the BMAA and to prayerfully seek God’s guidance in using the latest technological advances.

Finally, the director said, “The Lord’s work should receive no less emphasis when it comes to stewardship of resources.”

Rick Russell, who directs the broadcasting team for Lifeword, envisioning helping the Lifeword’s broadcast partners around the world become self-governing, self-supporting and self-extending ministries. He further hopes to lead his team in making Lifeword’s media programs more effective in ministering to people who are physically within reach of BMA churches and church plants.

Russell plans to encourage and empower local programming, “so that the indigenous leadership from each church and church plant will be more likely to create programs that appeal to their own people.”

Donny Parrish, director of the Lifeword production team, said his team will “strive to meet the challenge of providing production services not only for Lifeword but also for all BMAA departments. He continued that the goal would be to provide the highest level of service at the lowest possible cost.

Among items approved by messengers were setting Oct. 16, 2013 as the date for the 34th Annual Walk for the World. Steve Crawley was also reelected as the department’s executive director.

Committee on Arrangements

Gatlinburg, Tennessee will be the site of the 2016 BMAA Annual Meeting. The meeting will be April 25-27, 2016 at the Gatlinburg Convention Center. The Glenstone Hotel has been designated as the primary hotel.

Messengers also approved that effective with the 2017 meeting, the association begin rotating meetings between three areas contingent upon the availability of suitable facilities and that a wildcard location be chosen every fourth year. The three areas are Dallas/Fort Worth, Central or Northwest Arkansas and Jackson, Mississippi.

While worshipful music was provided by several churches, one very special musical guest was Grammy Award winner Jody Miller, who sang the classic, “Wings of a Dove,” Wednesday. Ms. Miller is a member of Pleasant Hill, Blanchard, Okla.

Ministers Resource Services

Ron Chesser, executive director of Ministers Resource Services, reported that each pastor, church staff member or employee of the BMA who had retirement funds in the BMA Long Term Growth Portfolio had a growth of 11.5 percent posted to their account during 2012. The average growth for the past 10 years is 7.58 percent. Those who had their retirement funds vested in MRS’s Fixed Income Portfolio saw a return of 3.25 percent posted to their account during 2012.

Ron Chesser was reelected as executive director of MRS. Sunday, Oct. 27, 2013 was approved as the day churches are asked to receive a special offering for the agency.

Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary

Dr. Charley Holmes, president of the BMA Theological Seminary, reported 177 individual students enrolled in courses taken for credit during the fall 2011 through fall 2012 semesters. Additionally, several dozen non-credit courses were offered to Latin American students utilizing the seminary’s videoconferencing technology.

Holmes shared that the seminary has begun offering two degrees online: 1) The Associate of Divinity Degree is for those over 25 years old with no previous college experience and can be completed in two years or less, 2) The online Master of Arts in Religion can be earned in two years.

Messengers affirmed a budget of $1,338,325 for 2013. Dr. Holmes appointment to another term as president of the seminary was also affirmed by church representatives. May 19, 2013 will be Graduation Sunday, when BMA churches are asked to offer special prayer for seminary graduates and receive an offering for a special scholarship to support the training of future BMA pastors and missionaries.

Holmes spoke of the evangelistic effort that took place on Monday afternoon called the Norman Invasion. Fifty-two participated in going door to door on behalf of the New Generation Baptist Church (a new church plant) that is led by Pastor Steve Puckett. In less than two hours, 175 contacts were made, the gospel was presented 41 times and eight people were saved. Twelve more individuals expressed interest in having Puckett visit them with more information about the church.

Vice President Paul White welcomes representatives of petitioning churches
“What if this happens?” My response to that question is usually, “but what if it doesn’t happen? What if Jesus comes back tomorrow morning and takes us all home to heaven?”

The purpose in making a statement like that is not to discount the other person’s feelings. It is to get them to start thinking in a more productive manner. Whatever you are worried about today; it would be ridiculous to worry about it if you knew for a fact that the Lord was going to rapture us the next day. You who are worry warts are thinking; “Yes, but we don’t know if He will come tomorrow.”

The point is you do know the One who holds tomorrow in His hands, right? That’s a fact. The Lord has the entire future of humanity in His grasp. And He does love you, right? And His will for you is perfect, good and acceptable (Romans 12:2), right? His grace is more than enough to get through anything that comes into your life, right?

You are one of His kids (2 Corinthians 6:18). He says He will meet all of your needs (Philippians 4:19). He is constantly present to help you (Psalm 46:1). He will never leave you or abandon you (Hebrews 13:5). He has a great heavenly host encamped round about you (Hebrews 12:1). Goodness and mercy are following behind you every single day of your life (Psalm 23:6). He is going out ahead of you to make your way straight (Isaiah 45:2).

So, what are you upset about? Is the Bible true? Then, all of these scriptures are true. Do you know my King? King Jesus says that no matter what problem you face in life; He has already overcome it (John 16:33). So have an attitude of good cheer. Nothing can overcome you. You are more than a conqueror because of Jesus (Romans 8:37).

I’m not condemning you for your anxiety. I am trying to shine some light on a pathway you need to consider. That pathway is called, “trust in the Lord more.” And stop feeling guilty right now because you know you should trust the Lord more, and you don’t.

Let’s just agree to start allowing the Lord to work in us a new response to the events of life. It may be a miraculous, instantaneous healing. It may be a lengthy journey through a strange valley like the Israelites had to walk through. It is these long walks with the Lord that our faith grows and gets strong. But you must first begin by knowing that God can, and will, deliver you from your fears, worries and anxiety.

God has the power to do it. Jesus has been given all power and authority on earth. Jesus died for you. If He already gave His life for you because He loved you so much, why do you think that now He is going to withhold anything from you that is good? He already gave the best. He loves you, and wants the best for you.

Start your pathway to victory over anxiety, fear and worry by filling your mind with the truths of God’s Word. I have listed many scriptures above that can offer comfort to you. You should read one; or many of them every single day. I would strongly encourage you to memorize some of them so that when you are hit with an overwhelming sense of dread, you can quote it.

We never know where worry will strike. But we know the truth of God’s Word can strike back and extinguish all the fiery darts that the enemy sends to us; trying to get our mind off of God and onto our problems. Quoting scripture and worrying about something cannot occupy the same brain space at the same time. Worry may creep back in if you allow it; but it won’t be there at the exact time of uttering the Word of God. Try it!

Next, learn that you can control your thinking. You are what you think about. You are just into a habit of thinking that taps into the potential of despair in every situation.

We develop habits of thinking. We walk down pathways, or patterns of thinking. You need to ask God to help you start new ways of thinking. It isn’t going to be easy. You have developed this habit over a period of years. But with the power of God, it can be broken.

Philippians 4:8 tells you what to think on. The good, the lovely, anything of praise. Are you literally starving to death? Do you have something to eat today? Do you have some form of shelter to go to and get out of the rain?

Sometimes we are so spoiled, that we focus on things to worry about; yet our basic needs for survival have already been met by God. Focus on that and praise Him. We are told in 2 Corinthians 10:5 to capture our thoughts for Christ.

When you are letting your mind run with worry; stop. Tell yourself “STOP!” Capture your thoughts. Quote scripture. Thank God for something good you have in your life. Sing a praise song instantly. Don’t go down that pathway.

Pray about everything. Philippians 4:6 tells us to not worry about anything, but pray about everything. Don’t have a meager prayer life. Have a constant lingering daily prayer life. You pray to God throughout the day. You don’t just ask Him for things. Sometimes you just thank Him and tell Him you love Him.

Spend a lot of fellowship time with God. You worry less when you walk with the Lord more. I’m not saying you can’t take a medication. I’m saying that is not the only answer. We must grow in our relationship spiritually. We must trust the Lord more. The closer you get; the more you trust Him. “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

Dr. Travis Plumlee is a full-time professional speaker and leads Family Ark Ministries. He is national board certified as a therapist/specialist in various areas of human behavior. For more information or to contact him, visit www.travisplumlee.com.
**Fake Fruit**

By SCOTT ATTEBERY

I remember walking into my mother’s kitchen, picking up a plump red apple, and taking a bite. The bite marks are still there — in my mother’s plastic apple. To this day, it sits in a bowl on mom’s kitchen counter with other decorative plastic fruit.

Looking back, the experience is comical. But it is also educational.

Paul defines the fruit of the Spirit as “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”

Notice this is the fruit of the Spirit — not the fruit of my best efforts, social reform, behavioral modification or cultural influence. The only way to obtain this fruit is through the Spirit. Anything less is fake fruit.

For instance, I may act (fake) like I am patient when the shopper in front of me has 47 items at the 12 items or less line. I may smile as they look back and give me the obligatory “sorry.” I may stand silently and keep my cool on the outside and by all appearances look patient. But if on the inside I am boiling over in frustration, and screaming at the shopper inside my head, I am obviously not patient.

In other words, I can do a lot of things to look and act like I have the fruit of the Spirit on the outside, but unless I am truly changed on the inside, it’s just fake fruit. It is empty, useless and amounts to no more than decoration.

Why is this important? Because Jesus is concerned about the inside. Consider what he told the Pharisees:

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.”

(Matthew 23:27-28)

If you don’t have real fruit of the Spirit — the kind that requires divine transformation in your life, consider this a red flag. Fake fruit doesn’t exist in heaven.

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**God specifically answered my specific prayer**

By PAUL GAUNT

The gospel trail hasn’t been a cake walk for me — especially during those starting out years.

While I was certain of God’s calling on my life, at age 19, I was still sliding down the back-slope of “fools hill.”

A much-too-strenuous social life at Jacksonville College landed me a “sabbatical” in my education pursuits, making me a sitting duck for Vietnam in 1969.

The dreaded “greeting” letter from Uncle Sam came early in February of that year while I was living in Waco. At the suggestion of my wise father, who was not only a Baptist preacher, but a Navy veteran, I opted for a six-year hitch in the Navy where Dad said “you’ll at least get three squares a day and sheets to sleep on.”

So, there I was, lying in my bunk in basic training in San Diego, Calif. totally overwhelmed with uncertainty about where God’s providence was going to take me. I recall the night as though it were yesterday, and the very specific prayer I prayed to the Lord.

“Dear God, I still feel called to the ministry — but it looks like I’m on the shelf for at least the next four years. So I’m asking you to please cause my path to cross with Bro. Buster Jackson, who is a Navy Chaplain here on the West Coast. (as if I had to inform God as to Chaplain Jackson’s whereabouts) I’d like to work with him in some way, and be involved in ministry. Will you please, somehow, make that happen?”

That was in May, 1969.

Fast forward to September of that same year — I walked aboard the USS Shangri-La, stationed in Mayport, Fla. — an old World War II carrier that was slated for “her” twilight cruise — to Vietnam, and later de-commissioned.

As I walked up the after brow to board the ship, the first people I met were 3 chaplain’s clerks — it was as if God purposely stationed them there as a welcoming committee to direct me to the Chaplain’s office where I started to work immediately.

In February 1970, the new senior chaplain reported aboard the ship. A rather stocky-built man, slightly shorter than I was, and wearing horn rim glasses, his furrowed brow suggested he was all business. Remove his Navy uniform with the three bars on his shoulders, and put a white suit on him with a white hat, and he would be a dead ringer for Boss Hog.

“Gauntt, I understand you direct music, and you’re a licensed preacher.” he said in a typical full commander’s tone.

“Yes sir.”

“You’ll be my music director, and I’ll use you to conduct the Protestant Noon Devotional while we’re out to sea. And I’ll probably want you to preach some.

I get chills and a tear even today as I look back on the awesome way God answered that specific prayer months earlier. No, it wasn’t Buster Jackson, but Chaplain Robert Tatum, who had pastored Baptist churches on the Texas coast and was a native of Sugarland, Texas, had no way of knowing what kind of specific answer he was to the specific prayer this preacher boy prayed that night in bootcamp. I had opportunities to preach, not only on the ship, but at a mission church in the Philippines, directed music on the ship, prepared the worship bulletin, helped man the ship’s library, and other ministry opportunities. To this very day, 43 years later, I still converse with Chaplain Tatum on the phone every few weeks. My experiences with him alone would fill a good sized book.

Not only was I not put on the shelf, ministry-wise, but I probably did far more preaching during those two years aboard a ship (which incidentally, circumnavigated the globe in 1970) than I would have in East Texas.

Looking in my rear-view mirror, I can see clearly how God honored a specific prayer request, and ordered my steps. And do you know what? His plans for you have been specifically ordered, and He will specifically bring them to pass.

Paul Gauntt is the former BMA of Texas Department of Church Ministries director. He has served several churches as pastor, and is a correspondent and featured article writer for Baptist Progress. Contact him at paul.gauntt@att.net.
Graduation

By Dr. MIKE SMITH
Jacksonville College President

My first graduation was from Cochran Elementary 1963 in Raccoon Bend, Texas. There were six in my graduation class. My life is full of fond memories from attending this small oilfield community school located on the Brazos River. Graduation is a special time for everyone, including those at Jacksonville College.

Jacksonville College Commencement
Date: May 10, 2013
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Location: Curtis Carroll Field House
Speaker: Steve Cowart,
Pastor of Eighth Avenue Baptist Church in Teague, Texas

The candidates for graduation listed below have built memories from their short time at Jacksonville College. Our prayer is that we have instilled within them a love of God and a desire to continue their academic pursuits. We invite you to attend.

Sabrina Shunta Alexander - Henderson, Texas
José Sacramento Alvarez - Jacksonville, Texas
Laura Best - Star, Texas
Hannah Leanne Birmingham - Rusk, Texas
Joshua Bradley - Troup, Texas
Breanna Burford - Dallas, Texas
Tabitha Lynn Clark - Hempstead, Texas
Kristen Kay Cole - Jacksonville, Texas
Steven Corey Cowart - Teague, Texas
Stephen L. Davenport - Teague, Texas
Jonathan Cecil Domahoe - Brookeland, Texas
Kennedy O’Neal Eubanks - Pendleton, South Carolina
James Buford Gilmore - Rusk, Texas
Dezzarrick Miguel Hamilton - Waco, Texas
Austin Montgomery Hardisty - Corinth, Texas
Shuntivas N. Horn - Jacksonville, Texas
Marlen Lara Jimenez - Jacksonville, Texas
Montrice Jones - Jacksonville, Texas
Carmela Estrada Lara - Jacksonville, Texas
Charissa Alé Easter - Brenham, Texas
Jacqueline Logoda - Jacksonville, Texas
Terry Laquil - Jacksonville, Texas
Kelsey Brooke Lybrand - Jacksonville, Texas
Veronica Nireles - Jacksonville, Texas
Presley Shae Montgomery - Mexia, Texas
Maria Cleoenia Perez - Jacksonville, Texas
Nefra Oralia Rangel - Jacksonville, Texas
Joshua Carl Reimers - Arlington, Texas
Victoria Rico - Jacksonville, Texas
Jasmine Rishayla Robinson - Fort Worth, Texas
Joaniki Sade Robinson - Marshall, Texas
Chelsea Maria Rogers - Ruston, Louisiana
David Chris Singhateh - Gavle, Sweden
Kalyn Renee Shorter - Bossier City, Louisiana
Sarah Elizabeth Southerland - Temple, Texas
Mandie Marie Tippit - Sulphur Springs, Texas
Diana Velez - Jacksonville, Texas
Elizabeth Grace Woods - Orange, Texas
Guadalupe Azhel Zavala - Jacksonville, Texas

The students listed are candidates for graduation to receive an Associate in Arts degree and/or Associate in Science degree. If all graduation requirements have been met, certification of graduation is confirmed by the Academic Dean’s office.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Early Registration for May-mester, Summer and Fall
April 8 - May 3

Awards Night
May 3 at 7:00 p.m. in Buckner Chapel

Commencement
May 10 at 7:30 p.m. in the Curtis Carroll Field House

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration for Summer and Fall 2013 begins again on May 20.
Placement testing: May 14 at 2:00 p.m., May 31 at 8:30 a.m., and July 5 at 8:30 a.m.
Class schedule:
May-mester 2013: May 15 - May 31
Summer I: June 3 - July 5
Summer II: July 8 - August 8
Fall: August 22 - December 12

Full course schedules are available on our website at www.jacksonville-college.edu.
For more information, contact Admissions at (903) 586-7110, admissions@jacksonville-college.edu.

▲ The Jaguar Day Across Texas offering is our continued effort to raise money for student housing and the ministry needs of the College. We ask you to pray and give sacrificially on Sunday, May 5.

▲ Jacksonville College Singers perform at the annual Spring Concert
Seminary Friends Dinner

By JERRY FULTON
Baptist Progress Editor

As always, Dr. Charley Holmes and the staff of BMA Theological Seminary hosted a wonderful dinner for alumni and friends of the educational institution. Holmes recognized Gaylan Henry, the recipient of the 2012 Kellar Award to pray prior to the delicious barbecue meal. Henry, who, due to health reasons, was not able to receive his award in person last year thanked Dr. Holmes and the seminary trustees for the honor.

Following the meal, Holmes recognized other past recipients of the Kellar Award. He then called Buddy Johnson to the podium to present him with the 2013 award. Johnson surrendered to the ministry at the age of 21, while a student at Jacksonville College. He later earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas and a Master of Arts in Religion from BMA Seminary.

Johnson pastored BMA churches in Etoile, Jacksonville and Texarkana, before becoming a BMAA missionary to Mexico in 1973. While on the field, he led in the planting of 53 churches and missions, founded a Bible institute (the current Instituto Bíblico Asociacional) and was instrumental in the opening/operation of a bilingual elementary school, known as the Martha Johnson Elementary School.

In 1999, he moved back to the United States and pastored in Texarkana, Texas until the Lord called him to his current ministry as Hispanic Coordinator and Church Planting Trainer for the Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) of America. In this capacity, he has lived in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Colorado.

Johnson is also active as a trainer (Senior Master Trainer) for DCPI (Dynamic Church Planting International) and frequently travels to Spanish-speaking countries for both the BMA and DCPI. Buddy and Taffy have 6 married children and 12 grandchildren (plus one on the way!).

Johnson’s family was in attendance to witness his acceptance of the award. Johnson thanked Dr. Holmes and the seminary, introduced his family and shared stories of his years in the ministry. The largest crowd to ever attend the Seminary Friends Dinner greeted and congratulated Johnson.

Two ordained as deacons at Simmons Hill, Diana

By CHARLES JOHNSON
Pastor, Rosewood, Gilmer

DIANA, TX—Simmons Hill, Diana held an ordination service April 14, to ordain Dub Clark and Darrell Veitch to the office of deacon. A large number of family, friends and fellow church members were on hand for the event.

Bob McDonald was the moderator, and Arthur Ogden served as clerk of the presbytery. Raymond Stokley led the ordination prayer, and Charles Johnson questioned the candidates.

Pete Edward Dugger, pastor of Simmons Hill, brought the combined charge and message to the candidates and the church. Cindy Clark and Robby McDonald sang special music.

Simmons Hill is in Liberty Association and is located in western Harrison County near the town of Diana.

An Expression of Everlasting Love

Many of our friends choose to honor or remember a family member, a friend, or an associate with a gift for the children at the Baptist Home. Texas Baptist Home, in turn, notifies the appropriate person. Listed in capital letters are those honored or remembered from 3-1-2013 to 3-31-2013.

ENDOWMENTS

MYRA STOKES: Bill Stokes

HONORARIUMS

BONNICE MCBRIDE: Westside, Nacogdoches
CLYDE MCLEOD: Peggy Ibrahim

MEMORIALS

MR. & MRS. ROY ANDERS: Raymond & Opal Anders
SIDNEY BERRY: Bro. & Mrs. Charles M. Johnson
AVA LEE BLACK: Temple, Mexia
JAMES “BUDDY” BRAGG: Jerry West
EDWIN ODEAN BROWN: Mrs. Nila Brown
LAVERN CAFFEY: J. C. & Anita Lassiter, E. K. & Peggy Sandifer
BOBBY COSPER: Mrs. Virginia Cosper
LANCE DUDLEY: Sally Dudley
SARAH FINK: Fair Park, Tyler
JIM GENTRY: Red Springs, Tyler
MR. & MRS. E. A. GOSSETT: Raymond & Opal Anders
HEATH GREEN: Jimmy & Cynthia Green
ARLENE GRIGGS: Mr. A. C. Griggs
RAYMOND HANSON: J. C. & Anita Lassiter
TOMMYE HARDEN: Mrs. Nila Brown
PEGGY HONEYCUTT: Jimmy & Carla Shipp
SAM JACKSON: L. M. & Ann Jackson
MARY LAMBERT: Mrs. Linda Lewis
JOE LISA: Mrs. Mary Liska
J. T. LONG: Community, Killeen
GORDON LOWREY: Joe Edd & Janelle Smith
MARSHA LUSK: Billy L. Lusk
VELMA LUSK: Billy L. Lusk
DELORES McNEELEY: Jack McNeely
BERtha NOBLE: Mrs. Eugenia N. Boley
MALCOLM W. OSBOURN: Glenn Horton, Bro. & Mrs. Charles M. Johnson
YVONNE PIERCE: Nelson & Veda Womack
BEATRICE ROWLETT: Community, Killeen
KRISs RUSSELL’S MOM: James C. & Pam Moore
DAMON L. SMITH: Patricia Ann Smith
Mable Spurgeon: Mrs. Linda Lewis
LARRY STEWART: Calvary, Ennis
MR. & MRS. EDWARD F. TALBOT: Mr. & Mrs. Roy Talbot
JANET & BRO. VERNON TAPP: Mr. & Mrs. Claude Wakeland
HUGO TORRENS: Bro. & Mrs. Charles M. Johnson
JEFF WADE: Larry & Pat Kearby, Stanley & Doris Ann Allen
Neta Weatherby: Stanley & Doris Ann Allen
LAVEREL WOMACK: Nelson & Veda Womack

Two ordained as deacons at Simmons Hill, Diana

By CHARLES JOHNSON
Pastor, Rosewood, Gilmer

DIANA, TX—Simmons Hill, Diana held an ordination service April 14, to ordain Dub Clark and Darrell Veitch to the office of deacon. A large number of family, friends and fellow church members were on hand for the event.

Bob McDonald was the moderator, and Arthur Ogden served as clerk of the presbytery. Raymond Stokley led the ordination prayer, and Charles Johnson questioned the candidates.

Pete Edward Dugger, pastor of Simmons Hill, brought the combined charge and message to the candidates and the church. Cindy Clark and Robby McDonald sang special music.

Simmons Hill is in Liberty Association and is located in western Harrison County near the town of Diana.
Where does all the money go?

By SHARON COLE
Texas WMA Editor

Where does all the money go? I’m sure you’ve asked that question many times when you give your donations and offerings to the Texas State WMA. All monies received by the corresponding secretary are put into different funds for which they are designated.

The Project Fund begins each year in November after the state meeting. Each year a new project is chosen from nominations sent by local auxiliaries. These nominations must be a part of our BMA work and sent to the project selection committee before the state meeting. They research and evaluate the projects submitted and present them to the state auxiliary for consideration and a vote. If you give to the project, your checks or letters must say, “State WMA Project Fund.” You may give specific instructions for it to be divided between the project and general fund. If there are no instructions, all the money is put into the General Fund.

The General Fund is important. Each quarter your local auxiliary and district auxiliary should support the general fund to help supply the following: the cost of printing this Auxiliary page in the Baptist Progress, salaries for the editor and corresponding secretary, other officer expenses including postage and mail-outs, phone calls, travel mileage, teaching aids, office supplies for the corresponding secretary and any other expense approved by the auxiliary. We pay speakers for the state meetings and annual ladies’ retreat and gifts for Miss GMA and Junior Miss GMA at their houseparty. The General Fund is important for the Texas WMA to function and accomplish our goal of pleasing the Lord through our giving.

The Youth Fund is available for the Sunbeam and GMA promoters to use for expenses of their group’s houseparty which includes mileage, postage, phone calls teaching aids, decorations, etc.

In 2 Corinthians 9:7, the apostle Paul writes, “Every man according as he purposeth in heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” Generosity and love are woven into the fabric of the Christian faith. We must demonstrate this attitude by giving to the Lord’s work. As followers of Christ, we have been abundantly blessed. In return, we must give generously to set an example for our children to follow. When we give cheerfully, our stewardship will be a reflection of our love for Christ, because of all he has done for us.

Thanks to all who have so faithfully supported the State WMA with your prayers, money and willingness to serve the Lord in your local WMA. This year we have taken on the task of raising funds to help build a new dorm at Jacksonville College. The increase in student enrollment and the projection of continued growth means there needs to be places for the students to live on campus. Our goal is $15,000. Please pray for God to open hearts and impress upon people the importance of meeting the needs of our students who desire a Christian atmosphere in which to learn. Make Jacksonville College a matter of sincere prayer as the college continues to reach students for Christ as well as give them the basics in higher education.

Send your offerings to Texas WMA Project, Jo Strong, 149 NW Suzanne Terrace, Burleson, TX 76028, 817-480-0888, jokenstrong@juno.com.

District News
The Van Zandt district WMA met with Lighthouse, Payne Springs April 11. The host church served a delicious hamburger supper. President Diana Morris, called the meeting to order. The welcome was given by Lighthouse with the response offered by Oak Grove. The ladies repeated the WMA motto and sang the WMA song.

Bro. Jack Braggs, pastor of Lighthouse presented a devotional from Proverbs 31. Lynda Hill, project promoter, introduced McKay Key to give a report on her mission trip to the Ukraine set for July. Amanda Burch won the raffle for the quilt made by a WMA lady from Old Bethel. All proceeds went to McKay Key’s Mission Trip. Rebecca Taylor, 2nd vice president, introduced the program. The ladies of Lighthouse presented a cute skit entitled “The Ladies of the Curl Up and Dye Salon.” McKay Key sang “Not Guilty.” A total of 45 were present. The banner was won by Grace Baptist Church.

A Special Mother’s Day Message:
Lighten Up, Laugh and Live

A hundred years from now no one will know, or care if your house is spotless, if there are dishes left in the sink, or if you are keeping up with the neighbors. A lady remarked in my presence the other day, “I’ll wait until tomorrow to fill my car with gasoline. I might die tonight, and if I do, I would save that much money.” In amazement I asked her, “What do you plan to do with the money you would save?” She smiled but did not comment. One thing for sure, she wouldn’t be able to take it with her.

So lighten up, be happy. Live each day with the Christian joy God wants you to experience. The command is to “Rejoice... and again I say, rejoice” (Philippians 4:4). It is a sin to live a grumpy life.

A positive attitude is an important tool in this business of living. Do not let responsibilities become overwhelming to the point you lose your sense of humor. You might need to look at life from another angle. You might discover that what you accomplish in a given day doesn’t matter nearly as much as who you have in your life.

Mothers need to relax. Be cheerful as much as you’re physically able. Show your kids that underneath that drill sergeant who makes them eat their vegetables, brush their teeth, clean their rooms and see that their homework is done, is really a nice and loving person who is fun to be around. Mothers, take time to play with your kids. They will be grown and gone from home before you know it.

Take time for yourself. Remember, you need to be nurtured right along with your family. You will then be better able to cope with the stress of everyday living. Carry on family traditions, or start some new ones of your own. Your children and grandchildren will remember them with delight long after they are gone. Teach your children new skills. There are so many interesting things to do in life.

Last of all accept the fact that your children are not living with a perfect mother. With that attitude you can better tolerate imperfect children.

(Lovingly reprinted in memory of Mrs. Marie Darst)

Sharon Cole is the editor for the Texas WMA. Contact her at SCole@aol.com. For more information on the Texas WMA, visit www.texaswma.com.
Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, “having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy you all” (2 Corinthians 2:3). Because of many sins in the church Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to call them to repentance. They repented and became obedient to the Lord, established effective ministries, and served the Lord with joy. Paul said, “You are now my joy.”

It’s my joy to work with our church planters and watch them and their families grow in the Lord. Through our process of training and coaching, it’s a joy to see them establish influence in their communities, build effective ministries and reach people for the Lord. Our newest church planter, Joey Cook is making good progress in Prosper. They now have nine families in their small group and he will soon start another one. I ask you to pray for him and all of our church planters.

Another joy I have is visiting our churches, sharing State Missions and preaching the Bible. Recently I visited with two churches in the Valley, one in Edinburg and one in Pharr.

On Saturday, April 6, I visited with Bro. Ray Potter, pastor of Fellowship, Edinburg. We talked about ministry and how State Missions had resources to help churches more effectively reach people in the community. It was a time of encouragement for the pastor and Bryan, his assistant.

Then Sunday, April 7, I preached at Anchor Bible, Pharr. Again my purpose was to encourage, talk about missions and offer assistance. They have a great need for educational space and a fellowship hall and have plans to build an addition to care for more people.

More than a million people live in the area from McAllen to Brownsville. Obviously there is the potential for starting several churches in the valley. It is essential to have the right persons, probably from that area, to start churches. You can put on your prayer list: help us discover church planters for the Rio Grande Valley. We need God’s wisdom, guidance and provision to start churches in many places in Texas.

On Sunday, April 14, I visited with Ebenezer Friendship, Pittsburg. I had a good visit with Pastor Emeritus Duane Turner and the good people of the church. I’ve known the Turner family for many years; his dad, Bro. Ray Turner preached my ordination service in October, 1963, at Central, Lubbock.

Ebenezer Friendship is a strong country church and I enjoyed preaching to them, sharing what we’re doing in State Missions and encouraging them to be faithful in the Lord’s work.

Yes, it’s my joy to visit our churches. I’m available to come to your church, auxiliary group or associational meeting to share Jesus and missions. Just give me a call at 972-923-0757.
MAY 4, 2013
Youth Department Fundraiser
@ First, Judson
2038 FM 1844, Judson, Texas
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Featuring Premier Designs Jewelry, Home Interior, church cookbooks and bake sale.
Come enjoy Shopping for Mothers’ Day, graduation, weddings, birthday, or ‘It’s a good day to be you day!”
For information contact Tim Smith (903) 261-4307

MAY 10, 2013
Commencement
@ Jacksonville College
7:30 p.m. in Bucskner Chapel

JUNE 11-14, 2013
National Galilean Camp
@ Daniel Springs, Gary

AUGUST 15, 2013
LifeWord Media Ministries Rally
@ Rosewood, Gilmer

SEPTEMBER 10-11, 2013
BMAA Missions Symposium
@ Central Baptist College, Conway, Arkansas

OCTOBER 14-15, 2013
Liberty Association Annual Meeting
@ Cross Roads, Pittsburg

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EVENTS

PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

AVAILABLE POSITIONS
Pastor—Corinth Missionary, Grand Saline is seeking a pastor. Send resume to 9734 FM 1255, Grand Saline, Texas 75140 for more information, contact Bobby at 903-829-5370 or Gerald at 903-539-8214.

Pastor—Sand Springs, Mineola is prayerfully looking to fill the pulpit in search of a pastor. Contact the church office at 903-569-9350.

Music/Youth—College Avenue, Levelland is seeking a combination music/youth director who is willing to relocate to our area. Levelland is home to South Plains College and is within 30 miles of Lubbock and Texas Tech University, Wayland Baptist University and Lubbock Christian University. We are about 5 1/2 hours northwest of Dallas. Applicants may mail their resume to CABC, c/o Music/Youth Search Team, 214 N. College Avenue, Levelland, Texas 79336, or e-mail them to shanemc@valornet.com with youth/music deader in the subject line.

Pastor—South Park, Fort Worth is seeking a pastor. Visit fortworthbaptistchurch.org/PastorSearch/ for more information about the church or to submit a resume.

Pastor—Elwood, Wills Point is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Elwood is a smaller congregation with a rich 115 year history. Send resume to Larry Black, 3922 VZCR 3504, Wills Point, Texas 75169, lblacksr47@yahoo.com or call 903-873-8184.

STAFF & PASTOR CHANGES

Leon Ross has reconsidered accepting the pastorate of Elwood, Wills Point and will not be serving as their new pastor. The search for a new pastor at Elwood, Wills Point continues.

ATTENTION CHURCHES!!!
The names of high school graduates will be published in the June 5 issue of Baptist Progress. Please send us the names of your graduates by no later than May 27.

CHURCHES IN REVIEW

APRIL 14, 2013

Church SS Worship Additions
Anthony Drive, Ennis 74 93
Cedar Creek, Teague 16 28
Davis Street, Sulphur Springs 94 216
Ebenezer Friendship, Pittsburg 28 52
Farley Street, Waxahachie 365 492
First, Blooming Grove 201 1 by baptism
First, Palmer 59 87
Glade Creek, Gilmer 19 34
Harvest, Lufkin 30 43
Jackson, Joaquin 76 105
Lake Highlands, Sulphur Springs 90 121
Little Mound, Big Sandy 45 52
Merriman Hills, Sherman 18 19
New Harmony, Tyler 298 333
New Hope, Mineola 57 129 2 by letter
Oak Hill, Gilmer 16 51
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden 58 65
Pine Brook, Tyler 25 76
Rosewood, Gilmer 92 150 2 by baptism
Sand Flat, Grand Saline 75 94
Suburban Wood, Humble 37 47
Temple, Mexia 46 50
Tundra, Canton 102 130
Woodland, Splendora 46 82 1 by statement

APRIL 21, 2013

ATTENTION CHURCHES!!!
The names of high school graduates will be published in the June 5 issue of Baptist Progress. Please send us the names of your graduates by no later than May 27.
Let's Be Responsible

By GARY HOUSE

DATE: May 12, 2013
TEXT: Acts 17:1-13

THE LESSON IN BRIEF: Not everyone will give your message the attention you think it deserves. Preach with a teachable, spiritual witness, but be prepared for the negative emotions the gospel sometimes evokes (Acts 17:1-3).

The missionary trio (Paul, Silas, and Timothy) walked from Philippi to Thessalonica, (about 100 miles) one of Macedonia’s most populous and important cities. Thessalonica was a busy city on the lower part of the river Rherus that had become a settlement point for many Jews who had left Judea. Upon arrival, they engaged in intensive evangelism, preaching in the Jewish synagogue there for three weeks in a row, every sabbath day (v. 2). Traditionally, traveling rabbis were invited to speak at local synagogues as a matter of courtesy when visiting a city. Apparently, Paul was asked to speak for that reason. He was obviously well received.

PAUL’S METHOD OF PREACHING WAS BOTH INTERESTING AND INSTRUCTIVE (vv. 2-3). Paul was wise enough to adapt himself to his circumstances and to the needs of the hour. Sometimes he stood before an assembly and reasoned with his hearers out of the Scriptures (v. 2). The sense of give and take conversation. The sense of “opening” is very strong. It means “to expand” or “to force open.” When the Scriptures were read, Paul opened up and explained their meaning. That is what preaching is. Preaching is opening the Scriptures, and thus opening the understanding of one’s hearers to see that all the Scriptures speak of Christ’s sufferings, death, and resurrection glory (Luke 24:27, 44-45).

Thirdly, the apostle’s method in preaching was ALLEGING. He alleged, or proved from the Old Testament Scriptures the necessity of Christ’s suffering death and triumphant resurrection. This word, “allege” means “to put along side,” Paul compared spiritual things with spiritual (1 Cor. 9:9-10). The type shows what the saith, and compared it with a text from Daniel, and put alongside of some passages from the Psalms or one of the other prophets. Thus alleging, or proving from the Word of God the necessity for Christ’s redemptive work. He reasoned with his hearers out of the Scriptures (v. 2). The message Paul preached was Jesus Christ and him crucified. The basis of Paul’s appeal to men was the Word of God alone. He reasoned with his hearers out of the Scriptures (v. 2). The Bible is the only source of divine truth in this world.

SOME BELIEVED AND SOME BELIEVED NOT (vv. 4-9). The preaching of the gospel humbles some and brings them to repentance and hardens others (2 Corinthians 2:14-16). Some of the Jews, many of the Gentiles, and several women, being chosen, redeemed, and called by the grace of God were persuaded by Paul’s doctrine and identified themselves with Christ and his servants (v. 4). However, those who believed not were by no means indifferent.

Not only did they not believe the gospel, they set themselves in opposition to it. How often this is repeated! Would to God the church today had a reputation for turning the world upside down! Instead, the church today has made peace with the world, walks hand in hand with the world, and thus a brother or sister has cancer or a crisis, we would not be able to minister to while putting away any of your personal preferences, expectations or prejudices.

When does God choose to open a door? God will open doors when you are willing to obey His leading. People who are stubborn will not see many open doors. Sometimes we are not sure that we heard God so we wait. There are times when delaying to act is not obedience but rather a lack of faith.

God opens doors when we are willing to listen to Him (vv. 13-15). Observe carefully how the Lord opened Lydia’s heart to respond positively to Paul’s Gospel message. Because of her willingness to listen, she was saved and thereafter invited Paul and company to stay with her. The Lord opens the hearts of key people. God opened the heart of Paul and Silas of the jailor (Acts 16:2). God’s leading.

As God opens the doors for you when you should minister to while putting away any of your personal preferences, expectations or prejudices.

“So Paul will open doors when we believe the gospel of truth, you will find great joy. It is likely that Paul would not have expected God to choose a wealthy woman as the first convert in Europe, but he remained open.

Paul was able to work in Philippi with women, the royal class, the traders, the demon possessed, the military, the magistrates, the jailor and his family along with the prisoners. Paul’s ability to become all things to all men opened many new doors into class, culture and contexts that before he had never been penetrated. Let’s trust the Lord to find a way of the gospel’s entry into all sectors of the world’s ethnic, social and economic classes.

Ask the Lord to keep your mind open to whom He has already opened the hearts of key people. God will open doors when you are willing to obey His leading. People who are stubborn will not see many open doors.

When the mob cried out against Paul, they arrested him and some of the brethren because of their association with Paul, THE CHARGE MADE AGAINST GOD’S CHURCH BY HER ENEMIES WAS A CHARGE THAT GREATLY HONORED IT. Deliberately twisting Paul’s words and his teachings, they accused the saints of God of sin. They sought to turn the Görings, and some of the brethren because of their association with Paul. But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that a brother or sister has cancer or a crisis, we would not be able to minister to while putting away any of your personal preferences, expectations or prejudices.

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