

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

Staff Updates

Pastor Anniversaries

Chuck Pourciau	1999	Broadmoor
Michael Reichard	2011	Koran
Bill Treadway	2013	Mt. Gilead
Larry Earhart	2013	Salem
Brad Kirby	2022	Eastwood

New Staff

Westlake: Mark Bevill, Interim Pastor

Staff Changes

Belcher: Rick Daniels, Pastor, from interim

Sympathy Bruce Parrish
1936-2023

Former Director of Missions, Bruce Parrish, passed away on February 27, 2023. Bruce served the churches of Northwest Association from 1983 until his retirement in 1998. Bruce’s burial was at the National Cemetery in Mountain Home, TN.

HEROES!! WALK FOR LIFE
CARE PREGNANCY CENTER
SATURDAY
APRIL 22, 2023
Registration is open now!
GIVETHEOPTIONS.COM
318.861.4600

DON'T MISS OUT!
APRIL 25 - SHREVEPORT
9AM-3PM
Association Office

Affirmed & Encouraged
LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF BAPTIST MINISTRY ASSISTANTS
DESIGNED FOR CHURCH ADMINISTRATIVE/MINISTRY ASSISTANTS AND SECRETARIES.
Register Online: louisianabaptists.org/labma or call Jeff Ingram, 318.448.3402

\$15.00
Includes Lunch

Fellowship Trips

Ellerbe: Israel Trip, Feb. 1-10, 2024. Bethlehem, Nazareth, Cana, Jordan River, Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, Mount Carmel, Caesarea, Garden of Gethsemane, Golgotha, Garden Tomb, Beersheba, & 23 more Biblical sites. \$4,440. Contact Dennis Sims, Dennis@EllerbeBaptist.org
FBC Keithville: Savannah, Jekyll Island & Beaufort, South Carolina. May 21-27, 2023. \$851.00 per person. For reservations or more information, contact Linda Haydel, 318-455-9571.

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Shreveport LA 71129
318-686-5736 FAX: 687-9701
Return Service Requested
E-mail: carlene@nwlba.org
Website: www.nwlba.org
[www.Facebook.com/NWLBA](https://www.facebook.com/NWLBA)
Hours: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm/Mon-Thur.
8:30 am - 12:00 noon/Friday
Lane Moore, Director of Missions

Non-Profit Org
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Shreveport LA
Permit 37

Brookwood: Shreveport Chapter of Reasons To Believe. Live presentation “Investigating the Resurrection,” April 11, 6:30pm. For more info to schedule this presentation in your church, contact Mark Riser, markriser1@comcast.net.

WALK FOR LIFE
PSALM 139:14
BIG-CAMP EXPERIENCE!
SMALL CAMP PRICE!
\$195
PER KID
Week 1 – June 19–23
Week 2 – June 26–30
Register @ [Bethanyc3.com](https://bethanyc3.com)

BETHANY STUDENT CAMP
JUNE 12-16, 2023
REGISTER @ [BETHANYC3.COM](https://bethanyc3.com)

BROKEN VESSELS
THE SQUATCH
GERALD FADAYOMI
\$240

Staff Opportunities

PASTOR	MUSIC	YOUTH	CHILDREN	OTHER
Emmanuel - FT/Bi-Vo Haynes Avenue - Bi-Vo Shreve City - Bi-Vo Westlake - Bi-Vo	Belle Park - PT Lakeview - PT Westwood - PT	Barksdale - PT Blanchard - FT Eastwood - FT Mooringsport - PT North Keithville - PT Plain Dealing - PT/FT Princeton FBC - PT Westwood - PT Vivian FBC - FT	Belcher - PT Ferry Lake - PT	Bethany - Nursery Coordinator - PT Blanchard - Hourly Nursery Workers Emmanuel - Janitor/Custodian - PT Norris Ferry - Administrative Assistant - PT New Birth - Children’s Church - Volunteer

Northwest Louisiana Baptist Association

Baptist News

Churches, Missions &
Ministries Working
Together To Be
More Effective

VOLUME 53, NUMBER 4
April 2023



WHERE DID ALL THE CHRISTIANS GO?
Are We Living In A Post Christian Culture?

Christianity in the United States has undergone dramatic change in the last few decades. However, for the vast majority of you who receive the Association newsletter, those changes may be very small. You’re still a member of a Baptist church and you’ve been serving in the same ministry for years. Your closest friends are followers of Christ and you’re grateful that your immediate family knows the Lord.

Today, only one in four Americans claim to be a practicing Christian. That number was two out of four just before 9/11 occurred. Researchers define a practicing Christian as *someone who says their faith is very important to them and they’ve attended church in the last month*. So where did all the “Christians” go? The results are evenly split. According to Barna Research, half of them fell away to a very inconsistent faith engagement and the rest moved out altogether to an atheist/agnostic segment. This begs the question, were these people ever true believers in the first place? (1 John 2:19)

Who does your church need to reach in a post-Christian culture?

1. The Soft-Hearted Skeptic

While some unbelievers are staunchly against the things of God, many of them are not. Many people in your community are not anti-God, anti-church, or against the gospel. They are open to exploring the concept of faith, but are confused by the multitude of messages from friends, the Internet, and TV concerning what is true Christianity.

2. The Runaway or Prodigal

Unfortunately, “de-churched” is a real thing. Many people have been wounded by the church and have no plans to return. On Easter Sunday this month you might see a few in your church. Our communities are filled with church dropouts, people who once engaged regularly but have gotten out of the habit or given up on God. The challenge for the church is to lead these people back to a fresh hearing of Christ.

3. The Cultural Christian

Outside the southern region of America, this group is close to extinction. A little persecution has always had a way of winnowing out fair weathered Christianity. For us in the Bible-belt, cultural Christians may be our biggest challenge. These Good people know the right answers and are comfortable with the things of God. *“Having a form of godliness but denying its power.”* (2 Timothy 3:5) They conflate local church culture, patriotism or morality with Christianity. These are the “good ole boys and girls” who would do anything for you if you had a need. Getting this person on a true path to discipleship will take a work of the Holy Spirit before they see the Kingdom of God.

If the Lord tarries another few decades, and the trajectory doesn’t change, we are likely on a path in decline similar to what Christianity has become in Great Britain and Europe. But at the same time the fields couldn’t be more ripe for harvest. Additional Barna Research stated that 44% of U.S. adults say they are now more open to God than before the pandemic, and 74% said they wanted to grow spiritually, but weren’t sure how.

Stay faithful. There are many people to reach for Christ. Have a Blessed Easter Sunday.

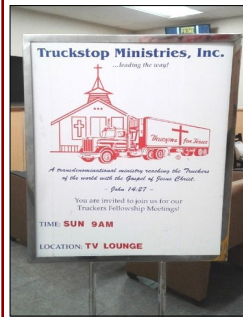
Lane

Compassion Ministries John Anderson

ON THE ROAD AGAIN!



Other than singing and preaching, the trucker church service at I-20 & Hwy 79 might not resemble your service. Plus, it's a different group of people each week. **Tower Baptist** on Hwy 169 or **Shreve City Baptist** provide men each week to minister to the thousands of truckers who stop at one of the busiest intersections you'll find west of Shreveport. For the past seven years several men have been



faithful to gather in the TV Lounge each Sunday morning to lead worship and preach the gospel and often still have time to return home before their own church service begins.

Comments from the truckers: "I was heading down the interstate and something made me stop. I'm so glad I did." "It was exactly what I needed to hear this morning." "I was wondering when I got to town where I might go to church and here

you guys were." "This is great. Most churches have no where to park a big rig and I can go to church at Flying J."

If your group would like to be a part of this ministry, contact me at janderson@nwlba.org or 318-230-3446. There is always a place for you to serve.



Bethany Camp & Conference Center Trey Miller, Director

First Quarter 2023- AMAZING!



What a start to the 2023 season at Bethany! Already over 1,500 people from 17 different churches have come to Bethany for camps, retreats & day events. I'm so grateful for the dozens who

have made commitments of their lives to Christ.

The grass is growing on nearly 90 acres of property and that means spring is here and summer is just around the corner. This year we are expecting one of our biggest summers ever. There's not a spare week on the calendar with over 2,000 students signed up for various camps and retreats. We are excited and ready for 10 wonderfully busy weeks of non-stop ministry.

Because of that, we are currently seeking additional summer staff to round out our team. If you know of a high school or college-age student looking to serve this summer and make some extra money, give me a call or fill out an application online at Bethanyc3.com. It's going to be an amazing summer of ministry in 2023.



Observations from your DOM...

I shared this information with pastors at our last Executive Board meeting.

CHURCH TRENDS TO LOOK FOR IN 2023

1. Local churches will see a greater concerted effort towards evangelism than previous years.

Pastors and church leadership are beginning to realize they can't grow a church with cultural Christians and transferring church membership. If churches are going to make disciples, it must begin with evangelism.

2. The year 2023 will see an increase in church adoptions.

An adopted church is a congregation that comes into the family, care, and authority of another healthier church.

3. More churches will have specific national & global partners.

Churches will seek to partner with churches in other nations, particularly where the gospel is spreading the most rapidly. This trend is more than an increase in mission giving. It's an intentional and strategic partnership with a specific church or churches in addition to their regular mission giving.

4. The time frame between pastors will be longer than ever.

Years ago a long interim was 8-12 months. Today many churches are into their second and third year of a search.

5. Because of #4, the number of interim pastors will be greater than ever.

6. More pastors and staff will become bi-vocational and co-vocational.

The bi-vocational pastor exits because of financial constraints for the church. The co-vocational pastor could be full-time if his church desired, but he chooses to remain in a secular vocation to help the church financially and to keep future employment doors open.

CULTURE WATCH & National News



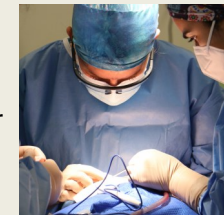
Researchers Say Ancient Tablet (840 BC) Has Been Deciphered

New analysis of an ancient Levantine artifact may have revealed a reference to a key figure of the Old Testament. Two French scholars, Andre Lemaire and Jean-Philippe Delorme, say they have identified a reference to the "House of David" on the Moabite Stone, otherwise known as Mesha Stele, a basalt rock with inscriptions that date back to the ninth century before Christ, according to the *Jewish News Syndicate*. The reference could corroborate the biblical account of King David. A photographic method called Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) captures a subject's shape and color to reveal surface information invisible under normal examination.

Source: Western Journal

Catholic Hospital Must Perform Gender Transition Surgeries

St. Joseph Medical Center in Baltimore, violated Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, by refusing to perform gender transition surgery, a federal judge ruled in the District of Maryland. The opinion comes many months after two circuit courts, the 8th Circuit and 5th Circuit, had ruled that Section 1557 did not require Catholic hospital systems to perform gender transition procedures. The judge refused to permit St. Joseph's argument for a religious exemption based upon the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, because it is now owned by a state entity.



Source: Washington Stand

Masks Did Nothing For Covid: New York Times Op-Ed



Dr. Tom Jefferson, Oxford epidemiologist, and 11 colleagues conducted the study for *Cochrane*, a British non profit that is widely considered the gold standard for its reviews of health care data. The data sampled 610,872 participants in the United States as well as other countries. Their conclusions were that cities and states with mask mandates fared no better against Covid than those without. Dr. Jefferson stated, "There's just no evidence that they make any difference, and the N-95 masks weren't any better"

Source: New York Times

Attacks On Church Buildings Nearly Tripled Since 2020

Attacks on church buildings occurred in 45 states and the District of Columbia. These cases include everything from arson and gun-related violence to vandalism and bomb threats. "The pace of hostility is only increasing," stated the assistant director of the Center for Religious Liberty at Family Research Council.



Source: Family Research Council



THE BAPTIST FAITH & MESSAGE

What We Believe
as Southern Baptists

The following is another in our series of columns on the Baptist Faith & Message 2000.

Article II-B: God the Son

"Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord."

Jesus is one person in two natures: divine and human. As the apostle John writes, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." (John 1:14) If Jesus is not divine, he cannot be the Christ. If he is not human, he cannot be our Mediator. Historic Christianity affirms belief in one infinitely perfect, eternal, and personal God, the transcendent creator and sovereign sustainer of the universe. This one God is triune, existing eternally and simultaneously as three distinct, but not separate persons; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The New Testament writers consistently affirm the deity of Christ, calling him God (John 1:1), the creator (John 1:3, Col.1:16), and equating him with the Father (Heb.1:3).

1. Jesus claimed equality with God. (John 5:18, 10:30, 17:5)
2. Jesus receives worship. (Matt. 28:17; John 20:28)
3. Jesus forgives sins. (Mark 2:1-12)
4. Jesus teaches with divine authority. (Mark 1:21-22; John 8:13-20; 12:49-50)
5. Jesus demonstrates the attributes unique to God: Omniscience (John 16:30); Omnipotence (Matt. 28:18); Omnipresence (Matt. 28:20); Eternality (John 1:1); Immutability (Heb. 13:8); Divine Authority (John 5:22). Even the Father Calls Jesus God (Heb.1:8).

**Next month: Article II-C of the BF&M:
God the Holy Spirit**