



Merry Christmas

**The Baptist Association Staff
& Judson Baptist Retreat Center
wish you a Christ centered
Christmas and New Year.**

**Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,
and shall call his name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14**

2010 Important Dates

BAGBR Bi-Vo / Small Church Pastors & Wives Retreat
January 22-23, Judson Retreat Center

BAGBR Mission Forum / Semi-annual Meeting
April 23 -24, Jefferson Baptist Church

Blitz on the Bayou Sunday School Training
August 14, Greenwell Springs Baptist Church

In This Issue...

Baptist Collegiate Ministry at LSU	6
Bible Drills	4
Bi-Vo / Small Church Retreat	8
Small Church Pastor of the Year	3
Christmas Programs	5
Ministry Assistant Training	6
Seafarer Ministry	8
Judson Retreat Center	7
Ministry Opportunities	8
Prayer Ministry	3
Spring 2010 NOBTS Extension Schedule	6



**2009
National Goal: \$175 million
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering**

Pastor Red Brick's Disquieting Realization Rodrick E. Conerly, Executive Director

Over the weekend, Pastor Red Brick had made a discovery in his attic. Woodworking had been a hobby of his for years. As time passed, he had devoted less and less time to his hobbies and more time to his work at the church. An outcome of his recent annual physical was the strong suggestion from his doctor to take time for himself away from the church. The resulting "I told you so" glare of his wife prompted him to begin the search for his woodworking tools he had stored in the attic. He had done a lot of the cosmetic renovation of the house over the years and a few things needed fixing. Now he was on a search for those tools.

He had found most of his tools, but he could not remember where he had put his orbital sander. As he went through different storage chests and boxes, he came across a souvenir from his trip to Israel ten years earlier. He pulled it out of the black metal footlocker and the old wineskin began to crack in his hands. When he had stored it away ten years earlier it was in great shape. He recalled how he had used it as a visual prop in his sermon about new wine and old wineskins. The effect of pouring "wine" into the then new "wineskin" served as a great visual demonstration of the challenge he had given the church years earlier. But now it was old and dry. The stitching had dried from the heat of the attic and it began to fall apart as he held it. As he considered how he could again use the wineskin in a sermon, he stumped his toe against the orbital sander in the box next to the footlocker. Convinced that he would use the wineskin again to help with a sermon, he brought it down from the attic along with the woodworking tools.

As he worked all day Saturday refurbishing and replacing different boards and fixtures, he could not get the wineskin out of his mind. His years of experience of discerning the guidance of the Holy Spirit told him God had something to say to him through the old, dry, cracking wine skin.

So, the following Monday morning, Pastor Red Brick was having a difficult moment. During his morning quiet time and Bible reading he reread the familiar parable of Jesus. He read the account found in Matthew, Mark and Luke about not pouring new wine into old wineskins. He reached a disquieting realization about White Column Church. As was his habit when he had these moments of Holy Spirit uneasiness, he began to walk the halls of the church. He soon found himself in the sanctuary. He found himself behind the pulpit gazing over the pews and he began to weep. For the first time in his ministry the truth of the parable revealed his church to be the "wineskin" rather than the "new wine."

Pastor Red Brick realized that the historical White Column Church, whose history predated the Civil War, with some of the buildings predating the Great Depression, whose days of greatest growth had been after World War Two, was no longer a thriving and vibrant place where the city came to worship on Sunday.

"What has happened?" he asked himself as he wiped a tear from his face. "Where did we make a wrong turn?"

The truth is that no sinister forces had worked against the White Column Church. During the 1960's the church, along with the city, had experienced tremendous growth. White Column Church had started half a dozen churches across the city through the

the 1960's, 70's and the early 80's. But during the 1990's and early years of the 21st Century, as the members moved further and further away from the downtown area and into new subdivisions, the membership of White Column began to drop as those members joined new churches in the new subdivisions. And now, as 2010 was looming, Pastor Red Brick saw the White Column Church as the dry wineskin.

By now, staff members of the church became aware of his weeping. They began to look into the auditorium.

"Should we go in and ask what is wrong?" asked the receptionist to Red's secretary. A look that said, "I don't know" was all the secretary could do. About that time Red began to pray as he leaned with both hands on the corners of the pulpit.

"Oh God! Help this church to die to all things related to its past and to be born again to its future. We no longer can live in the past. And God, start with me. Peel away what is dry and brittle in my life until you recreate a vibrant heart for you. Change me into the man you need me to be and pour you Spirit on this church. Make it a new wineskin which you can fill."

God had given Pastor Red Brick a glimpse of the future for his church. What he saw stunned him. White Column Church was going to die. And God had given him two choices as to how it would die. The choice was up to him and the church members.

The simplicity of the future was shocking. *Quite simply, White Column Church could die because of its continued and hidebound resistance to the changes taking place across the area. Or, the church could die in order to live.*

Pastor Red Brick was weeping because he knew that as an institution, the church must choose. To fail to choose would be the easiest choice. If the institutional church does nothing, then the choice is made already. The church as a vibrant part of the local community will die, and in many cases already has died because the members were uncertain of what would take place.

Across our convention today, churches faced with change are choosing not to make a choice. They are choosing what they have because it is more comforting than a future of uncertainty and discomfort about what might take place.

Pastor Red Brick decided that six things were necessary if White Column Church *was to die in order to live again.*

First, he had to become knowledgeable of the dynamics of the changes taking place in the city so that he could lead the church to embrace the new residents living within the shadow of the steeple of the church.

Second, the church must understand the variety of ways change is emerging in the local environment around the church.

Third, the church must find new ways to proclaim the Gospel in an ever changing world.

Fourth, the church leaders must accept the fact that the traditional place held by the church in American society no longer exists.



A Message from Michelle Lesley *Prayer Coordinator, BAGBR*

*“Do not open until Christmas!”
“No peeking!”
“It’s a surprise!”*

Good grief. I’ve been hearing those scoldings since I was a little kid. Don’t you hate having to wait until Christmas to open a present that’s just sitting there under the tree calling your name? I’m a firm believer that presents were meant to be opened. NOW.

Well, the BAGBR prayer ministry has, not one, but *two* presents for your church that you can open, and start praying about, RIGHT NOW! Starting in mid to late January 2010, we will be kicking off two new prayer initiatives that your church will want to get in on:

Bride Awake Prayer Meetings:

Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. Matt. 25:5

The Bride of Christ in America is falling asleep. (Sometimes, literally. Ask any pastor.) We’ve become numb to, or even defend, our own worldliness. Some estimate that over 80% of churches are in decline or plateau. Our impact on society is rapidly deteriorating. We, the church, are ripe for another Great Awakening.

To that end, and with an eye to the fact that most great moves of God begin with corporate prayer, we are beginning the process of scheduling weekly prayer meetings for the purpose of praying for revival in our city, association, state, and nation. Each week, a different BAGBR church will host the prayer meeting, which will be open to every member of every church in the Association. This will not be a worship service or Bible study, but simply one hour a week for God’s people to come together and spend time in prayer.

House of Prayer Conferences

...I will... make them joyful in My house of prayer...For My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples. Is. 56:7

In poll after poll, pastors and church members alike say that the number one need of the church is more prayer. Is your church a “house of prayer”? Would you like it to be? Need a little help getting started, or maybe a refresher course? Do we have a deal for you!

I’ve been to some great prayer conferences that have inspired me and helped me with my personal prayer life, but they can be expensive, they usually involve at least a little travel, and, unless the majority of your congregation attends together, they rarely have much impact on an individual church.

That’s why the BAGBR prayer ministry wants to bring the *House of Prayer* conference to you. Want to have a one hour seminar on prayer during your Wednesday night prayer meeting? A half-day workshop one Saturday morning? A guest speaker at a small group meeting? A breakout session during a retreat? Let us

know your needs, and a 1-3 person team of prayer coordinators from the BAGBR prayer ministry will come to your church and share with you about becoming a *House of Prayer*. (No speaking fee or honorarium.)

If your church would like to host a *Bride Awake* prayer meeting (our facility needs are minimal) or a *House of Prayer* conference, please contact Michelle Lesley, Associational Prayer Coordinator, through the BAGBR office for further details. As always, information on all prayer initiatives, as well as other helpful information on prayer can be found at www.bagbrprayer.blogspot.com.

Reverend Charles Marceaux *Small Church Pastor of the Year*



Dennis Allen, Roddy Conerly, Charles Marceaux

Rev. Charles Marceaux has been honored as the Exemplary Small Church Pastor of the year. The award was given by the LBC and takes into consideration all areas of pastoral ministry, evangelism, leadership and missions. Rev. Marceaux is the pastor of Broussard Grove Baptist Church in Prairieville and also is the Second Vice President of the LBC. This is the second time he has received this award.

Pastor Red Brick’s Disquieting Realization (continued from page 2)

Fifth, he had to help the church see that the traditional forms and structures of doing ministry that once led to tremendous growth must be reborn in light of modern culture.

Sixth, he had to lead the church to re-vision the White Column Church so that it would participate in God’s preferred future for His Church.

Pastor Red Brick knew that the choice was about HOW to die. Death is inescapable, even for churches. One generation of leadership must move on for the next generation to move forward. An important aspect of the new generation taking up the leadership role is that change will take place. Not to change is to choose to die by indecision. Choosing to allow some things to pass away is to choose what will continue and what will be the new ways to proclaim the Gospel.

Red Brick prayed, “Oh, Lord, White Column Church can decide to die by choosing to do nothing and change nothing, slipping away into a quiet slumber that the world will never notice. Lord, help us choose to die to our old way of doing things so that Your church can live. Help us to fulfill your preferred future for Your Church.”

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Praying for Our Churches...

BAGBR churches seeking pastors include:

- Bluebonnet Mission on Perkins
- Dutchtown Baptist
- Erwinville Baptist
- False River Baptist
- First Baptist Baton Rouge
- First Baptist Donaldsonville
- First Baptist Plaquemine
- First Baptist Port Allen
- Fordoche Baptist
- Oakcrest Baptist
- New Life Church of Baton Rouge
- University Baptist



Notes from Dennis Allen *Assistant to the Executive Director* **Church Growth**

What causes churches to grow?

There are all kinds of churches. For example:

- 1.) There are "old line" traditional churches. If you enter a traditional church for worship, you know what is going to happen, how the minister will dress, the type of songs that will be sung and how things will conclude.
- 2.) Today we also have the "ultra modern" churches. One person once defined them as the "What's Happening Now Churches." These are high powered churches with all the latest in technology. The service is filled with young people, the music is loud and the service may seem to be somewhat disorderly.
- 3.) There are also television or electronic churches. These churches have no buildings only a Post Office Box number.
- 4.) We have independent churches and churches who work as part of a denomination or larger group.

Some churches are experiencing phenomenal growth while others are declining in membership and worship. Interestingly, research has not found one type of worship to be more effective in attracting people than the other. So, what causes a church to grow and what is a church supposed to do?

The best way to answer these questions is to look at the biblical history of the Christian church.

- 1.) Acts 1:15: The first number of believers recorded after the 12 Apostles is 120.
- 2.) Acts 2:41: Our next number is 3000 souls followed by the number of 5000 believers.
- 3.) Acts 5:14: The number is simply given as multitudes (a great number).

What are churches supposed to do? It's simple. Churches are supposed to grow.

I would like to debunk some common myths about church growth:

- 1.) "We do not have the financial strength we need to develop the programs we need to grow." Simply put, "We don't have the money." What is wrong with this myth? Jesus had no money or home. On their way into the Temple, Peter and John told the lame man, "Silver and gold have we none" (Acts 3:6). The point is, early Christians had little or no money yet the church experienced growth.
- 2.) "We need the support of the local community and do not have it." The problem with this statement is that the early church was opposed on every side by the religious and political community. The Jewish religious leaders and the Roman government were against the early church.
- 3.) "We cannot grow because we do not have the proper physical facilities." The problem of the lack of facilities cannot be used as a reason why a church is not growing because the early church had no facilities. The evidence is that they met in the streets and in the homes of those willing to let them in.
- 4.) "We cannot grow because we do not have the right programs." The early church had no programs.
- 5.) "We cannot grow because we have no trained leaders." Once again, we are reminded that Jesus chose His disciples from the working class. We find in Acts 4:13 that Peter and John were uneducated and untrained men.

To learn what caused the early church to grow can be determined by what the opposition to the church had to say.

1. The High Priest, the Sanhedrin and most Jews of the time saw only one reason for the phenomenal growth of the Church and that was the preaching of Jesus, His life and resurrection! In Acts 4:17, Peter and John are beaten and told to preach no more in the name of Jesus. We must remember that it was Jesus who died on the cross for our sins, Jesus who rose from the grave, Jesus who changes lives and Jesus alone who can save a person's soul.
2. Everywhere the early Christians went they PREACHED THE GOSPEL and the church grew.
3. Paul gave Timothy a charge in 2 Timothy 4:1-2 to preach the Word! It is the words of Jesus that our world needs. The early church grew because they PREACHED THE WORD, they BELIEVED THE WORD, and they ACTED ON THE WORD OF GOD.

My firm belief is that the church of today will grow because God has ordained it to grow! Isaiah wrote that the increase of His kingdom shall know no end and the Gentiles shall come to the light and kings to the brightness of His rising.

Bible Drill LA Training Retreat **January 15-16, 2010** **Training for Everyone!**

All forms & detailed information concerning fees, registration and lodging are available at:
www.lbc.org/bible Drill/ 1-800-622-6549

ASCENSION BAPTIST

Title: *A Baby Changes Everything*
Date: Sunday, December 20 at 6:00 p.m.
 Free to the public; Childcare provided

BAYOU PLAQUEMINE

Title: *Hope Has Hands*
Date: Sunday, December 13 at 11:00 a.m.

BROUSSARD GROVE

Title: *J.O.Y. Force: Jesus, Others, You*
Date: Sunday, December 6 at 6:00 p.m.
 Presented by the Broussard Grove Kingdom Kids Choir
Title: *Light of the World*
Date: Sunday, December 13 at 6:00 p.m.
 Presented by the Broussard Grove Adult Choir

COMITE BAPTIST

Title: *Peace On Earth*
Date: Sunday, December 13 at 6:00 p.m.
 Comite Auditorium
 Presented by the Adult Music Ministry of Comite Baptist Church
 Free to the public; Nursery provided

DUTCHTOWN BAPTIST

Title: *Christmas Shorts*
Date: Sunday, December 6 at 6:00 p.m.
 Presented by the Children's Choir
Title: *Christmas Musical*
Date: Saturday, December 12 at 6:00 p.m.
 Presented by the Adult Choir

FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST

Title: *Glorious Impossible*
Date: Sunday, December 20 at 6:00 p.m.
 Free to the public; Childcare provided.

FBC-BAKER

Title: *A Singing Christmas Tree*
Dates: Saturday, December 5 at 7:00 p.m.
 Sunday, December 6 at 10:30 a.m.
 Free to the public with nursery provided for 0-3 yrs of age.
Title: *The Christmas Story*
Date: Sunday, December 13 at 10:30 a.m.
 Presented by the Joyful Sounds Choir (Sr. Adult Choir)

FBC-PLAQUEMINE

Title: *Child of Wonder*
Date: Saturday, December 5 at 4:00 p.m.
 Presented by the Community Christian Choir.
Title: *Shepherds, Sheep and a Savior*
Date: Sunday, December 6 at 6:00 p.m.
 Presented by the FBC-Plaquemine Children's Choir.
Title: *The Best Gift of All*
Date: Sunday, December 13 at 6:00 p.m.
 Presented by the FBC-Plaquemine Adult Choir; Fellowship following presentation.

FBC-PORT ALLEN

Title: *Jesus, There's Something About That Name*
Date: Sunday, December 13 at 10:30 a.m.

FBC-ZACHARY

Title: *Imagine: A Christmas Worship Experience*
Date: Sunday, December 5 at 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
 Presented by the FBC-Zachary Adult Choir
Title: *Christmas at Bethlehem Gulch*
Date: Sunday December 13 at 6:00 pm.
 Free to the public with nursery provided.

FLORIDA BOULEVARD BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: *The Greening*
Date: Sunday, December 6 at 10:15 a.m.
 Preschool Choirs & Praise Bells will share Christmas songs.
Title: *The Glory of Christmas*
Date: Sunday, December 13 at 6:00 p.m.
 Program includes: Praise Bells, 5 octaves of hand bells, 4 keyboards playing together, a full orchestra and Adult and Children choirs.
Title: *Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*
Date: Thursday, December 24 at 6:00 p.m.
 The service will conclude with lighting of candles and singing carols as we depart from the sanctuary.

JEFFERSON BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: *The Twin Living Christmas Trees*
Dates:
 Friday, December 4 at 7:00 p.m.
 Saturday, December 5 at 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
 Sunday, December 6 at 3:00 p.m.
 Friday, December 11 at 7:00 p.m.
 Saturday, December 12 at 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
 Sunday, December 13 at 3:00 p.m.
 The cost is \$12 each and the ticket office number is 225.926.0902.
 Ticket office hours are M-Th – 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and Friday 9:00 a.m. – noon.

LANIER BAPTIST CHURCH AND SHERWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: *Bringing Christmas Home - Drama/Musical*
Dates: Sunday, December 13 at 6:00 p.m. at Lanier Baptist
 Sunday, December 20 at 6:00 p.m. at Sherwood Baptist Church
 Food & fellowship after each service
 Free to the public; Childcare provided.

ZOAR BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: *The Christmas County Spelling Bee*
Date: Sunday, December 6 at 6:00 p.m.
 Presented by the Zoar Baptist Church Children's Choir
 Free to the public; Childcare provided.



Merry Christmas



Judson Baptist Retreat Center

Eugene Morris, Coordinator

MOTHER/DAUGHTER HORSE WEEKEND FALL 2009

Our Mother/Daughter Horse Weekends are one of the highlights of our fall and spring at JBRC! As you can see from the pictures, a great time was had by all! The most exciting part of this retreat is not about the horses, but what the horses teach our mothers and daughters about communication. Not just communication with each other, but also how important it is to communicate daily with our heavenly Father. Each time we host one of these weekends, none of the participants are ready to leave JBRC when the retreat is over! And our staff feels the same way! How awesome is our God to allow us to utilize our horses to teach these important principles.



Attendees at Mother/Daughter Retreat

2010 JBRC UPCOMING EVENTS

Senior Adult Fish Fry

February 9, May 11, August 10, November 9

Registration at 9:30 a.m., program ends with lunch
at 11:30 a.m.

\$10.00 per person

Register by phone by the first of each month.

Women's Silent Retreat

January 29-31, 2010

Speaker: Becky Brown

When is the last time you had 48 hours alone with
our lord? See www.judsonretreat.org for details.



Mothers and daughters listened to Eugene Morris share a message.



Trail Ride Breakfast

A big hit with the mothers and daughters.



"Doc" is the Retreat Center praying horse.



BAGBR Seafarer Ministry
Sylvester Wilson
Gonzales Seafarer Center Director

Did you know?

- There are over a million merchant seafarers employed on-board ships throughout the world.
- Seafarers are often contracted to work at sea for periods of 6-10 months at a time.
- The Seafarer profession is considered one of the world's most hazardous.

Did you also know?

- Thousands of seafarers visit the Seafarer Center in Gonzales annually.
- The Seafarer Center staff and volunteers seek to show the love of Christ by meeting the Seafarer's basic needs both physically and spiritually.
- The Center offers such things as: International phone calls, computer use along with instruction on how to email; Chapel services, toiletry items (given in the now famous, "Ditty Bags"), Bibles (in English and foreign language), counseling and prayer and snacks/hot meals.

Brother Sylvester Wilson, Director of the BAGBR Seafarer Ministry invites you to pray for the Seafarer program. Specifically, pray that God will reveal ways to help Brother Wilson, Reverend Michael Hamilton, Assistant Director and the Seafarer Center volunteers faithfully minister to the seafarer with a John 6:37 love..."All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away."

If you would like information or, if you would like to volunteer at the Center, please contact Sylvester Wilson at 225-647-1617 or 226-296-3943. Thank you for your continued support.

Retreat for Bi-Vocational and Small Church Pastors and Wives

Pastors, this is the chance of a lifetime to take your wife on an overnight getaway *paid for by the Association*. There will be good food, fun and fellowship. It will take place on **Friday and Saturday, January 22-23, 2010** at the Judson Retreat Center in Jackson, LA. The Retreat Center has motel-type accommodations but space is limited. To reserve your space or to learn more about the retreat, just give Dennis Allen a call at (225) 296-3943.

Church Staff Updates

Has your website changed? Do you have a new staff member? Please remember to notify us when you have updates, as we do strive to keep our website and databases current. Call Jan at the Association office or send her an email at jan@bagbr.org. Thanks for your cooperation!

Fred Selby Jr., LMFT, LPC-S, NCC, CT, BCETS
Appointed by Governor Bobby Jindal to
Marriage and Family Therapy Advisory Committee

Fred Selby Jr., Associate Director of Granberry Counseling has been appointed by Governor Bobby Jindal to serve on the Marriage and Family Therapy Advisory Committee. This committee serves to examine and qualify all applicants for licensure as marriage and family therapists. It is comprised of three board members appointed by the governor from a list of names submitted by the executive board of the Louisiana Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

Brother Selby is a member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress. His office is located in the BAGBR building on Airline Highway where he offers counseling to individuals and families. Granberry Counseling is a ministry of the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home.

BAGBR MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Glen Oaks Baptist Church - Volunteers needed to paint, add insulation to buildings and trim bushes/yard work. Times available for volunteering: M-F: 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. and Sat: 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Please contact Pastor George Guillory at 225-892-2862 for more information or to schedule a time to serve.

BCM, LSU is now collecting any furniture, home items, or decorations for international students. Many of these students live 1-5 years here in very bare apartments, some with just mattresses on the floor. Any items you donate will be used from year to year to help them feel more at home here. Please call 225-343-0408 or email lsubcm@eatel.net to arrange a drop-off time.

Blitz on the Bayou 2010 ~ Association Sunday School Leadership Training will be held at Greenwell Springs Baptist Church on August 14th with author Josh Hunt as keynote speaker.

Call or email us if you have a church or ministry need or opportunity! Please note that announcements will run for 2 issues, unless BAGBR is contacted with other instructions. Call the BAGBR office at 225-296-3943.



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If you know of someone who would like to receive an electronic copy of the *Good News*, please contact our office at 296-3943 or jan@bagbr.org so that we may add them to our distribution list.

GOOD NEWS DEADLINE

February / March Edition: January 6

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