



*Acts 1:8b "...and you will be my witnesses..."*

**Relationship Based**

**Evangelism Centered**

**Service Oriented**

**Training Focused**

December 2010 / January 2011

# Good News

Acts 1:8b "...and you will be my witnesses..."

Volume 41, Issue 3



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

Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:10-11 (NKJ)

### LBC Annual Disaster Relief Training

January 21 & 22, 2011

Camp Living Waters – Loranger, LA  
 For a complete listing of training schedules:  
[www.LBC.org/DisasterRelief](http://www.LBC.org/DisasterRelief)

**Deadline to register is January 7, 2011**

### LBC State Evangelism Conference 2011

January 24-25

Broadmoor Baptist Church, Shreveport  
 For information contact Wayne Jenkins at  
 318.448.3402, or [evangelism@lbc.org](mailto:evangelism@lbc.org)

### Preteen Invasion

Invading the Darkness with the Light of Truth

January 8, 2011

Louisiana College ~ Guinn Auditorium  
 For all 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Graders  
 Featuring: Ed Newton, Speaker

Kids Celebration, Broken Vessels, Warren Morris  
 For More Info: [www.LBC.org/Invasion](http://www.LBC.org/Invasion)

### Call to Prayer

Pray for the churches in our association.

Other prayer opportunities:

- BAGBR Monthly Prayer Meeting, 7:00 p.m.  
 Goodwood Baptist, January 3
- LA Life March, January 22, 10-noon,  
 Participants gather behind the Old State Capitol.

### BAGBR Semiannual Meeting

Tuesday, April 5, 2011

Location: TBA

**Pastors, elect your messengers for the meeting.**

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## **How to Diagnose Sick Churches and What to Prescribe for Them**

**Rodrick E. Conerly, Executive Director**

Once again the traffic on the interstate slowed to a crawl. Brother Vision Nary muttered a prayer as he sat in the traffic.

"Lord, please help the woman in the blue suburban. If she keeps driving like that she is coming to see you soon."

Vision was perplexed about the number of weak churches in the Association that seemed to be on hospice. He was on his way to discuss the problem with Dr. Profess Soar at the Chata City Theological Seminary.

As the traffic began to move again, Vision estimated that only about 10% of the 100 plus churches in the Association were thriving and growing. Most of these were new churches.

The time in traffic gave him time to talk with God about the churches.

"Lord," he asked, "How do you diagnose a sick church? A doctor recognizes a sickness and prescribes treatment. What prescription is needed for a sick church?"

As he thought about the churches he concluded that 10% had not grown through baptism and conversions in years. This group he named the Hospice Group. They were dying. Another 20% of the churches had maintained their membership, but primarily through transfer of membership from the Hospice Group. He named this group the Critical Care Group. If their maintenance mentality didn't change, they soon would be in the Hospice Group. Most of the activities of both groups had turned inward to their membership.

As he turned onto the seminary campus parking lot the remaining 60% of the churches came to mind. Although not dying or sick, they did not show signs of healthy growth. They certainly weren't thriving. He named this the Denial Group because they were in denial of the fact that they had stopped growing.

As he walked toward the office building he heard Dr. Soar call his name. Soon they were sitting at an outside patio table drinking coffee. Within a few minutes Bro. Nary had explained the problem of the sick and dying churches in the Association.

"Well, Vision," said Dr. Soar, "This is an intriguing problem. How do we diagnose a sick church? And once we have a diagnosis, what do we prescribe to make it healthy?"

"Vision," continued Dr. Soar, "the first question to ask is 'What are the five functions of a healthy church?' Once we know how a healthy church functions, then we can make a prescription for a church that is not fulfilling one or more of the five functions."

"The five functions of the church?" asked Bro. Nary. "I haven't considered the functions of the church. Let's see, a primary function of the church is worship."

Dr. Soar realized that God had led Brother Vision Nary to a moment of insight. He decided that Vision needed to connect these five functions together as the prescription for a healthy church. Without any one of them the church could not thrive and grow.

"Yes." said Dr. Soar, "What else?"

Vision leaned back in his chair away from the table, gazed upward, and said, "In order for more people to worship God, evangelism must be done. So evangelism is a function."

"That's right," coaxed Dr. Soar. "What else? The church has five basic functions."

"Hum," mused Vision, "along with evangelism we must disciple the new believers. That's three. What are the other two functions Dr. Soar?"

Dr. Soar asked, "Brother Vision let's talk about the White Column Church. Does it provide for the homeless, for single parents, or after school programs for the neighborhood children?"

"Well, yes they do," affirmed Vision. "They feed the homeless and have a weekly Bible study for them. They also offer before and after school care for children in the downtown area. But, how does that fit?"

"Vision, those are ministries," said Dr. Soar, "and ministry is a function of the church. So, that is number four. What's number five?"

"Let's see, said Vision, "Worship, evangelism, discipleship, and ministry. What is the last function."

"Vision," asked Dr. Soar, "when a church feeds the people on the streets, what happens? Do they just come, eat and leave?"

"Well no," said Vision, "The street people and the church members interact. A certain bond, or relationship, develops."

"Exactly," responded Dr. Soar, "A vital function of the church is the development of relationships. This function we call fellowship."

"Now," continued Dr. Soar, "A definition of each of the five functions will help show how they relate to each other."

Worship – meeting God

Evangelism – sharing about God with another

Discipleship – growing all believers in their faith

Ministry – meeting needs in Jesus' name

Fellowship – sharing life through Jesus

These functions are connected as a circle and also as a Star of David inside the circle. In this way every function is connected to the others. If one of the functions cease, then the connections of the circle are broken and the church suffers."

"Oh, I see," exclaimed Vision, "A church may do great with worship and fellowship, but without evangelism, disciple, and ministry, then no new converts enter the church to keep the church growing."

## *How to Diagnose Sick Churches and What to Prescribe for Them*

*continued from page 2*

That is right Vision," affirmed Dr. Soar, "Too often as communities transition from one ethnic group to another, or as the members age, ministries to the community and evangelism in the community suffer. Eventually, the church turns inward until the church only ministers to its members."

"Well," asked Vision, "That helps me with the diagnosis. But, what do you prescribe we do?"

"I am convinced," said Dr. Soar, "That if we refocus the churches in the Denial Group on the five functions of a healthy church, then some of them will restart those functions that had ceased and become viable again. This group can be revitalized."

"Some of the churches in the Critical Care Group will require help from stronger sister churches. The important question is 'Will the weak church accept help and do whatever is necessary to reach the community and become vital again. This group of churches will need a rebirth of a new congregation."

"And," he continued, "Eventually the churches in the Hospice Group will die. But, this is not the end of our work there. A new church can be started in the same facility. This group will need a new church start."

"Wow! Dr. Soar," exclaimed Bro. Nary, "What you are proposing will take a lot of time, planning, and cooperation."

"That is right Bro. Nary," affirmed Dr. Soar, "But keep in mind these churches have been unhealthy for years. Patience and wisdom from God is needed to return these churches to a healthy state where all five functions of the church exist."

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If you would like to discuss the health of your church and its five functions, please contact the Association office.



### ***NOBTS Extension Center 2011 Spring Schedule***

**Rodrick Conerly, Director**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Course Name</b>
M	2-5	OT Elective: Genesis and Exodus
M	5-6	Personal Spiritual Disciplines
M	6-9	Building Healthy Church Relationships
TH	6-9	Practice of Evangelism

To request a catalog and an application, please contact the NOBTS Enlistment Office at [enlistment@nobts.edu](mailto:enlistment@nobts.edu).



## ***Notes from Dennis Allen***

**Assistant to the Executive Director**

### **TIME**

Have you ever thought that time means nothing to God only man. We each have only so much time on this earth. Some have more time than others. As one grows older, he or she can sometimes become reflective and think what if. Looking back can help if we learn by our mistakes. It can also give us a way to measure our progress.

As I look back, I am encouraged by the progress we have made as an association. I feel blessed to be part of an association where evangelism and ministry are primary. Our churches and pastors have a zeal for the lost and support the association in its efforts to start and build new churches. We are seeing new church starts take hold, grow and become strong viable self-sustaining churches.

Even in difficult times ministries continue to grow. We had a wonderful church training effort sponsored by BAGBR, LBC and LifeWay through Blitz on the Bayou, there was a great response to Buckets of Hope for Haiti, and the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women in St. Gabriel will begin NOBTS classes during 2011. Your support continues to assist the Seamen Center in Gonzales as Director Sylvester Wilson and Assistant Director Mike Hamilton maintain the center for the seamen, and the Baptist Collegiate Ministry at LSU. Just so you know, BAGBR gives more to the BCM at LSU than any other association in our state and Director Steve Masters does a great job.

It is our desire not only to continue these ministries but to increase. The seminary at Angola continues to grow and exert a powerful influence in that prison and 54 prisoners receive degrees this year. Hats are off to Dr. John Robson for his leadership and dedication at Louisiana State Penitentiary. Who knows or how can we ever measure the contribution Judson Baptist Retreat Center has made to the countless young boys and girls through the years and now to senior adults also. Thanks to RTC Coordinator Eugene Morris, Assistant Director Steve Myers and their staff for the countless hours they spend planning and making sure the camp runs smoothly.

There are many challenges ahead of us. With the Lord's help, Baptist in the Greater Baton Rouge Association will meet all the challenges.

Thanks once again for the honor and privilege of serving you,  
Dennis E. Allen

### **Baptist Association Greater Baton Rouge**

**Semiannual Meeting**

**Tuesday, April 5, 2011**

**Location: TBA**

**Pastors, elect your messengers for the meeting.**

## *Praying for Our Churches...*

BAGBR churches seeking pastors include:

- Broadmoor Baptist
- Cedarcrest Baptist
- Courtaleau Baptist
- Dutchtown Baptist
- Erwinville Baptist
- False River Baptist
- Courtaleau Baptist
- Fellowship Baptist, Central
- First Baptist Central
- First Baptist New Roads
- Foster Road Baptist
- Immanuel, Baton Rouge
- Istrouma Baptist
- New Life Church of Baton Rouge
- Stevendale Baptist
- University Baptist



**LSU BCM**  
Steve Master, BCM Director

Each December, during the week after finals, our BCM sends a team of students to work at the Bowery Mission in lower Manhattan, New York. The Bowery Mission was established in the 1800's as a ministry to the homeless and the needy.

Our 30 students and staff live on site for a week. They help prepare and serve three meals a day for over 100 homeless people. They deliver food to the needy across New York City. They sort clothing, organize food pantries and help in many other ways.

What's impressive about the Bowery Mission is how they take people in off the street, provide them with a place to live, help them find a job and introduce them to Christ and then disciple them.

In early January, I will take a group snow skiing to Breckenridge, Colorado. This is a fellowship and Bible study trip. During the day the students ski. At night they participate in Bible study and prayer. The trip is a great way for students that do not know each other to become close friends.

On Friday night, February 4 and Saturday, February 5, we will participate in the annual State Collegiate Evangelism Conference in Pineville. Several hundred college students from across the state will come together for a time of worship, Bible study, seminars, prayer and fellowship.

During the Mardi Gras holidays I will lead a Transitions Mission Trip to Mission Arlington, Texas. This trip is for juniors and seniors in high school and freshmen in college. We invite students in this age group from your church to participate.

We will not be going to Mexico over Spring Break due to the drug cartel wars and the violence and danger in that country. Please pray for us as we make decisions on where we will go instead.

Our Monday Lunch attendance for the fall semester has been 200 each week. Our TNT attendance has also been 200 each week. We are having an exciting semester.

Thanks for your support.  
Steve Masters, Director BCM LSU

## ***PRETEEN INVASION***

**Invading the Darkness with the Light of  
Truth**  
**January 8, 2011**

**Louisiana College ~ Guinn Auditorium**

**For all 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Graders**

**Featuring: Ed Newton, Speaker**

**Kids Celebration, Broken Vessels, Warren Morris**

**For More Info: [www.LBC.org/Invasion](http://www.LBC.org/Invasion)**



**BIBLE DRILL  
TRAINING RETREAT**  
**January 21-22**

**Tall Timbers Conference Center**

For more information or to register call  
1.800.622.6549 or email [bible-drill@lbc.org](mailto:bible-drill@lbc.org).



## Judson Baptist Retreat Center

Eugene Morris, Coordinator

### Fall News

**Thirty-one groups have utilized the Retreat Center since August!** These groups have been from many different age groups all the way from children's choirs to senior adults! Our last Senior Adult Fish Fry boasted over 100 in attendance and enjoyed the music of "Friends", a group out of the Baker/Zachary area. These wonderful musicians delighted listeners with "oldies" and good Gospel singing! This event ended with a luscious meal of fried catfish, potato salad, cole slaw and sweet potato roll for dessert!

### Senior Adult Fish Fry Dates for 2011

February 9, 2011

May 10, 2011

August 9, 2011

November 8, 2011

**Call 225.634.7225 to register**



**Our Fall Mother/Daughter Horse Weekend**, which was held on October 29-31, 2010, was also a great success! We had 21 in attendance and our theme was "Our Way.....God's Way." Our mothers and daughters experienced breakfast trail rides, scavenger hunts on horseback, riding lessons, bonfires, lessons on communication from our horses and Bible study time together.

One mother wrote this of her weekend at JBRC: This was our third time at mother/daughter horse camp and it was just as sweet as the first. We go and will continue to go to horse camp for many reasons. First of all, we enjoy the fact that we get to go somewhere "just the two of us." We enjoy the time together. We also enjoy the time with our friends, as well as, the friends that we go with and the friends that we made at previous horse camps. I enjoy talking and getting encouragement from the other mothers about what they are going through. Mother/Daughter retreat will always hold a special place in our hearts! It gives us a chance to get away from the everyday crazies of life, to take a deep breath and regroup. To get our compass lined up with God's "trail" for our lives!!!

### Summer Camp News

The good news for 2011 is that we will not be going up on our rates for JBRC sponsored camps! Our cost for TIA Camp, Boys' Missions Camp and Girls' Missions Camp will hold steady at \$200.00/camper if registered by the first deadline of April 1, 2011!

#### Summer Camp Dates

Boys' Missions Camp	June 13-17, 2010
TIA Camp	June 27- July 1, 2010
Girls' Missions Camp I	July 4-8, 2010
Girls' Missions Camp II	July 11-15, 2010
Girls' Missions Camp III	July 18-22, 2010
Equestrian Camp (Cost: \$220)	July 25-28, 2010

**Check Out Our Website**

[www.judsonretreat.org](http://www.judsonretreat.org)

for further details on Summer Camp!

**Forms & information will be up by January 1, 2011!**

### Construction News

**Renovation continues on Creekbed and Sleepy Hollow cabins!** Both cabins have had a facelift in the dayrooms with pine siding installed and 20 x 20 ceramic tile floors! Beginning soon will be the renovations on the bathrooms in these two cabins!





## *A Message from Michelle Lesley*

**Prayer Coordinator, BAGBR**

**Anybody out there still make New Year's resolutions?** Statistics show that almost half (40-45%) of us do. While a fourth of those folks fizzle out after just one week, one study shows that after six months, 46% of those who make resolutions are still successful in sticking to—and attaining—their goals. That may seem like a dismal failure rate, but it's over ten times higher than the 4% success rate of those who do not make resolutions.

The most common resolutions people make? You guessed it: losing weight, exercising more, and giving up smoking. All worthy goals, but all temporal goals. Yes, "temple maintenance" is important, but let's face it—at best, we're just keeping the Titanic afloat for a few more years. What about some deep knee bends with eternal significance?

When I talk to church members or pastors about prayer, the most common thing I hear is, "I know I should be praying more," or, "I know my church should be spending more time in corporate prayer." Somehow, we know what we *should* be doing, but knowing isn't translating into *action*. The Bible tells us very plainly in James 4:17: ***Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.***

Ouch. I don't know about you, but I'm guilty as charged. So why don't we resolve to **do** something about it? This year, while we're making our resolutions, why don't we make the first one having a prayer life that's pleasing to God? If 46% of BAGBR's over 31,600 church members are successful at keeping that resolution, we'll have 14,536 new prayer warriors in our association by this summer.

So just how do we go about this "prayer resolution" business?

**Get some Helper.** Sanctification isn't a "pull yourself up by your own bootstraps" kind of thing. It's a work of the heart by the Holy Spirit—the **Helper**. Ask Him to help you with wisdom and humility for setting goals for your prayer life (or, pastors, your church's prayer life), the desire to pray, the strength to pray even when you don't feel like it, and the ability to get back on track when you fail. He delights in helping us obey Him!

**Set yourself up for success.** Sure, Luther prayed for three or four hours a day, but if you set that as your initial goal, you're probably going to fail. Use wisdom and set small, specific, attainable goals to start with. When you reach them, you can ask God to show you how to increase them. For example, you might feel led to start out praying five minutes a day, two days a week. After a while, God may lead you to three days a week, and so on. Pastors—what about adding a few minutes of corporate prayer to the worship service and gradually growing that into a separate prayer meeting? Or a new worship service model with 15 minutes of music, 15 minutes of prayer and 30 minutes of preaching?

**Don't forget.** Write it in your planner. Put a sticky note on your monitor. Tie a string around your finger. Set the alarm on your phone. Do whatever it takes to remind yourself to pray. Another good way to remember is to pair prayer with something you do at the same time every day, for example, praying right after lunch or while sitting in the carpool line at school. There's also a great web site: [www.EchoPrayer.com](http://www.EchoPrayer.com) that you can program to send you e-mail or text message reminders to pray for specific people or at certain times.

**Take advantage.** The BAGBR Prayer Ministry offers a myriad of resources for individuals and churches who want to improve their prayer lives. Come join us for our monthly *Bride Awake* prayer meetings or our weekly South Region prayer meetings. Let us come out and present a *House of Prayer* conference tailored to your church's needs. Take a look at the materials on our web site ([www.bagbrprayer.blogspot.com](http://www.bagbrprayer.blogspot.com)), and join our "Pray BAGBR" page on Facebook. Questions? E-mail Associational Prayer Coordinator, Michelle Lesley, at [praybagbr@yahoo.com](mailto:praybagbr@yahoo.com) or call the BAGBR office.

**Let's covenant together to ask God to make 2011 a year of prayer.**

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### **ESL Workshop – (English as a Second Language)**

**Saturday, February 12 & February 19 ~ Jefferson Baptist Church, Baton Rouge**

**Registration Deadline: January 21, 2011**

**For information contact Julie Sandifer at 225.927.5677**

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