



Birmingham Baptist Association

Churches working together...to meet needs...to change lives.

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A word from our Executive Director

Well, we have come to the last month of 2014! As we all prepare ourselves for the Christmas season may we truly take time to reflect on our relationship with Jesus Christ and with each other!

Our world is in desperate need of the message of Christmas! The message of Christmas is a message of salvation; hope; love; and forgiveness all of which the people of the world need to hear including the 2 million lost people in Alabama!!!

As you think of giving this year I want to encourage you to remember the ministries through the Birmingham Baptist Association. Our churches do a great job in my opinion of supporting SBC causes through our gifts through our Cooperative Program and the two special offerings that are collected each year that also goes to the two mission agencies of the SBC.

Alabama, the leading State Convention in Cooperative Program giving, will give 46.5 % of its annual budget of \$40,500,000.00 to SBC Causes. On top of that we will give an additional \$11, 600,000.00 to the Lottie Moon Christmas offering and \$6,100,000.00 to the Annie Armstrong Easter offering. Praise the Lord!!

The State convention will keep 43.5 % to support Alabama mission enter prizes and 10% will be used to support shared ministries within the state.

The local association does not receive any funding through the Cooperative Program for operating purposes. We only receive what the local churches of our association give. This past year that will total right at \$600,000.00 and our goal is \$625,000.00, and next year we have reduced that amount to \$575,000.00 because it doesn't look like we will reach our goal this year!

We already have to do fundraising events for the first time in our history to find additional operating funds to support the ministries of the BBA!

*A word
from
Bro. Mike*

The financial support to the local association is diminishing fast! We will not be able to continue to offer the ministries that we have offered for over 185 years to our churches and to the inner-city ministries we offer on behalf of the churches in the BBA, if we do not turn this situation around! Folks, we are losing our home base!!

This is true of associations all over Alabama and even our State Convention has had to cut its budget a million dollars a year for the last 2 years!

Jesus said begin at Jerusalem and then move out to the uttermost parts. We are going to the utter most parts and neglecting the needs in our own Jerusalem!

My goal as a Director of Missions is to first focus on the needs of our churches; our city; our beloved state and grow healthy churches and keep the home base strong as a launching pad for overseas mission opportunities.

I pray that many of you will join with me in seeking to reach the 2 million lost and unchurched people in Alabama, many of whom live here in Birmingham, as we also reach out to the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ! We must maintain a healthy balance in our support at all levels of our work which in my opinion we are not doing!

We would be short sighted to keep all of our resources at home, but it is just as short-sighted to send it everywhere in the world and then lose our strong home base which has always been the "launching pad" of support for all that we do in the world.

As we begin a new year next month, I pray that it will be the best year ever for our Association, our State Convention, and our mission work around the world!

Have a Merry Christmas!

In the work together,
Bro. Mike

Bro. Mike

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Stay informed about your BBA.

SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER

Send your e-mail address to news@bbaonline.org to receive our monthly updates.

Remedy is in need of used medical equipment.

To donate your used medical equipment, please call (205) 783-9170 or e-mail remedy@bbaonline.org.



Non-profits distribute Christmas stockings to hundreds of children through Season of Our Savior

What does it take to make a child smile?

by Linda Pair

Oh, how we would all love to be there again. Childhood was a wonderful time of innocence and delight! I remember many Christmas mornings and the joy I felt when discovering what Santa had brought. All my dreams had come true! However, a truly valuable lesson my parents taught me was to give. Every Christmas Eve we departed from our house with a trunk load of presents and Christmas goodies. We would go from house to house to share our love and celebrate the season. Later in the evening on Christmas Eve we visited a couple of houses to assist Santa in his deliveries. I have never forgotten those “lessons of love”. It was not so much in the presents or Christmas goodies, but in the sacrificial love my parents demonstrated toward others.

At the Birmingham Baptist Association during Christmas we celebrate “Season of our Savior”. Stockings and cakes are collected on December 10th and the area shelters and agencies pick them up on December 12th. These shelters house women and children and the stockings are left for the children on Christmas Eve. Ladies from Alabama Teen Challenge volunteer to help sort and complete order request. Cakes are frozen and used during the days of Christmas at the shelters. Meals on Wheels cuts the cakes and serves them the week of Christmas. Their clients are thrilled to get a special piece of Christmas cake.

Some of the local men’s shelters receive some of the stockings as well. The men give a stocking to their children or grandchildren. This might seem like a small thing, but it builds



Photo by Toni Wall

LAKESIDE BAPTIST DELIVERS STOCKINGS - Tom Toone, Joel Howell, Beverly Toone and Sammie Howell delivered hundreds of stockings to the BBA office that were collected by Lakeside Baptist Church for Season of Our Savior.

the men’s self-esteem and helps in their rehabilitation process. I never realized that until one of the Directors at the Firehouse Shelter shared that with me and reminded me of the blessing of giving.

We actually had a Christmas cake that turned into a Birthday cake! A few years ago, one of the shelters was late picking up their order of stockings. There were no cakes left and they were disappointed. It seems a family of five had just checked into their transitional housing. That day a young lady in that particular family turned 15 and there would be no birthday celebration for her. Suddenly, God brought to my re-

membrance the whipped cream topping cake with strawberries that had to be refrigerated. Everyone had totally forgotten about it, but God had plans for that special cake!

So, what does it take to make a child smile? It takes genuine love from the heart. Love could be demonstrated in a toy or just a hug. This Christmas season remember the joy of Christmas and the wonderful gift of God’s son, Jesus. Bring a smile to a child’s face and it will bring a smile to your heart.



Photos by Toni Wall



UPDATES

Agency Brunch

Our annual BBA Agency Brunch was well-attended by the leadership of many non-profits in the Greater Birmingham area. Pictured is Butch Henderson, Church and Community Specialist for the BBA; Foster McClain, Community Resources Representative for the City of Birmingham; and John Cook with Metro Changers Ministry.

Franklin Graham Festival

Church leaders gathered at the BBA office to learn more about the plans for the Franklin Graham Festival that will take place in August of 2015. Pictured are Kevin Moore, Carlos Gomez, Cary Hanks and Pablo Moscoso.

CHURCH SPOTLIGHT - McElwain Baptist Church ministers to the elderly and shut-ins

Loving Touch Ministries Celebrates 41st Anniversary

by Patsy Arnold

October begins the 42nd year of the Loving Touch Ministry of McElwain Baptist Church. Our records indicate during that time more than 49,000 visits have been made to demonstrate the love and compassion of Jesus. Assembling 145 gift bags and getting the assignments ready to be picked up is a matter of team work each month. Joe and Patsy Arnold who started the ministry, Rachel Meads and Addie Chandler make sure this happens each month. Of course, the real heroes are those 54 Loving Touch ministers who make the visits month after month.

A favorite scripture for this ministry is Galatians 6:9 which says, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

Loving Touch Ministry wants to let everyone know how the Lord has shone His faithfulness to them by allowing and enabling

them to complete 41 years of ministry.

Bill Buchanan and his daughter, Julie, organize and put together the pieces of the Loving Touch leaflet each month that is included in each gift bag distributed. Mary Buchanan is the "eagle eye" who looks for grammatical and spelling errors. Kathi Parker in the McElwain church office does the printing and folding of the leaflet each month.

Jo Anne Beck has literally turned her garage into a workshop for Loving Touch. She searches continually for the beautiful cards and colorful treats and stores them until just the right season to include them in your gift bag. Whether it is a Christmas card, a poem, or a butterfly, she looks for ways to help you understand how precious you are in the Lord's eyes.

For more information about Loving Touch Ministry, please call McElwain Baptist Church at (205) 956-0388.

MINISTER'S CONFERENCE

2015 SCHEDULE

JANUARY

January 5 - Dr. Gary Fisher

January 12 - Rev. Harper Shannon, Retired

January 19 - Rev. Michael Wesley, Pastor, Greater Shilo Missionary Baptist Church

January 26 - Executive Board meeting, Shades Mountain Baptist Church

FEBRUARY

February 2 - Rev. Nathan Daniels, Westmont Baptist Church

February 9 - Rev. Jon Killingsworth, Pastor, Springville Baptist Church

February 16 - Rev. Steven Weems, Pastor, Huffman Baptist Church

February 23 - State Evangelism Conference

BBA Contributions From Churches

January - October 2014

Budget Requirements	\$520,833
Actual Contributions	\$480,218
Budget Shortfall	(\$40,615)

Thank you for your generous and sacrificial contributions to the work of Birmingham Baptist Association. Partnering together we can accomplish ministry that an individual church could not.

Michael Ethridge,
BBA Director of Operations

Church Choir Coral Music Available

Allan Headley, longtime Minister of Music, has accumulated a large supply of choral music for church choirs over his forty plus years of ministry. He is interested in donating his collection to any interested church. You may contact Allan at 205-902-0972.

BBA Holiday Office Hours

Office will be closed December 22-25.
Office will be closed December 31- January 1.

Merry Christmas to you and your loved ones!

From your Birmingham Baptist Association local missionaries



Bro. Mike, Bonnie and Michael



Carla, Toni, John C., Linda and Margie

MERRY CHRISTMAS



Keith and Pat



Bonnie, Sammy, John Mark, Diane, Reynard, John K., Meg, Butch and Katie

Wishing you a Merry Christmas! From your
Birmingham Baptist Association missionaries



Cherri and Butch