



Richland Baptist Association Newsletter

January 2026

From Your Director of Missions (D.O.M.):

Happy New Year! The New Year is a time for new beginnings. I no longer make New Year Resolutions as I found out that they usually went unkept. However, in Christ there are new beginnings each time that we recognize our sins and confess them in accordance with 1 John 1:9. As we confess our sins to God, He is faithful and just to forgive us of those sins and to cleanse us from our unrighteousness. When our Father forgives our sins, He remembers them no more. That is what total forgiveness is all about. We begin anew with our Father that loves us.

With the New Year comes an opportunity to make a stronger commitment to our Lord and His Kingdom work. Just as in the days of Jesus, the fields are white unto harvest and the laborers are few. I want to share with you a truism, if each of us will lead one person to Christ or lead one person to become active within our church, our church attendance will double. If we continue to do this each year, our church will double in size each year. However, it is like the song says of the Father and His children; "My house is full but my field is empty. Who will go and work for me today? It seems my children all want to sit around my table: NO ONE wants to work in My field. Push away from the table, look outside the window pane. Just beyond the House of Plenty lies a field of golden grain. It is ripe unto harvest but the reapers where are they? Brothers and Sisters we are called to be workers in the Field of God! We are not called to sit at the table and do nothing for the One that Died for us. I pray for our Lord's Greatest Blessings to be upon you all!

Please keep up with the monthly newsletters that are sent out to you. Each month you will be notified of events for that month and the following month, sister churches' needs, as well as words of encouragement and love. If you have a special event or any item of interest that will apply throughout the association, please notify us of the event no later than the middle of the previous month of the event and we will publicize it for you in our newsletter and on our website.

Thank all of you for your love, prayers and support that you have shown us in our tenure as your Director of Missions. Because we come together collectively to serve our Lord throughout our parish, we have seen lives changed for eternity in the various ministries that we do together as one Body of Christ.

Yours in Christ,

Johnny

Upcoming Events for the month of January 2026

- Jan. 01: Happy New Year
- Jan. 08: Pastor's Conference @ Big John's Rayville 11AM
We will meet with Dr. Steve Horn, Executive Director, LBC
- Jan. 18: Sanctity of Life Sunday
- Jan. 26-27: Evangelism Conference @ First Baptist Lafayette

Upcoming Events for the month of February 2026

- Feb. 01: George Liele Church Planting & Evangelism Mission Offering
- Feb. 06-07: Collegiate Evangelism Conference @ LCU
- Feb. 06-07: Pause Retreat (Pastor & Wife) @ Tall Timbers
- Feb. 10: Compassion Relief Chaplain Training @ District 8 Assn. Office Natchitoches
- Feb. 15: Focus on WMU Sunday
- Feb. 26: Moving Forward Transitional Pastor Training @ Baptist Building

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

Opportunities to Serve

Please join me in praying for our sister churches that are without a pastor. Also pray for those with other needs. If you know of someone that would serve in any of these capacities, please contact me.

- Pastor: Alto
Bethel
Holly Ridge
Lone Cherry
Westside
- Part-Time Youth Minister: First Baptist Archibald
- Custodian: First Baptist Archibald

**If you have a need in your church, please let us know and we will post it in the Monthly Newsletter.*

Something to Think About...

Ever felt like you needed a vacation to recover from your vacation, a rest from your rest, a holiday from your holiday, and even a break from your break? On the extreme end, seasonal depression is a thing that hits hard and different for many of the people we minister to and even “hurts the healers” around this time of year. One or two losses of people you care about or were special to you can make this season seem even more hollow. The days are shorter and the nights are longer. The weather tends to keep us cooped up and huddled up in blankets and many layers of soft padded blankets, coats, and various other forms of armor against the cold (yes, we have even had a few days of it around here).

You go into a time with all these ideas of projects you are going to get checked off or fun leisure activities you are going to complete. Maybe you might binge that television show or film series or even read that book that you’ve been meaning to get read. However, as your time off draws to a close you feel the weight or burden of things unaccomplished and stuff remaining to be done. Some put this burden on the New Year’s Day event itself only to find perfection as the enemy of improvement or progress.

It can feel very dark in those times. You feel alone, like a failure, and as if nothing has, is, or ever will be good enough. I am not talking about settling for mediocrity, but rather when you feel like even your best efforts are so subpar as to not even be worth it. I was struggling with what to write about this month as Johnny had gotten me the newsletter in mid-December and I procrastinated and forgot about it such that I am doing this on the 5th day of the new year. I also had tremendous writer’s block as tomorrow I put nose back to the grindstone with my tentmaking as a math teacher (Who am I kidding? I am just a math teacher at this point.) My wife could see the struggle and recommended **Psalms 139**.

The first section speaks to what I feel will be truly exciting about heaven. God knows us better than we know ourselves. Other passages of scripture speak to knowing ourselves as we are known by God. We will finally be able to see ourselves the way He sees us. The omniscience of God is an incredible comfort when taken in conjunction with the understanding of His love for us unconditionally regardless. He knows us at our worst and yet loves us the best we ever have or could be loved.

The second portion talks of God’s omnipresence. There is nowhere while borrowed breath is in our lungs or in all of time and creation that we can truly hide from God. The passage speaks of Sheol but on this side of the cross, the only thing that can truly separate us from God is to totally and utterly completely reject Him. God is kind and will not persist with those who have no desire for Him or to be with Him. It also speaks of trying to hide in the darkness. God existed before there was even darkness or light so you can’t even escape Him in any of the created order.

The remainder of the passage speaks to the fact that God not only knows you generally but also personally and intricately. So even when our efforts feel lackluster and in person-to-person relationships we might say “it’s the thought that counts”, God’s thoughts are so far beyond ours that David simply ends Psalm 139 with a request for God to search him and know his heart, concerns, and even where he has gotten off track, and patiently guide him as the Good Shepherd.

- Jonathan C. Young

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