



# Richland Baptist Association Newsletter

November 2023

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

What a blessing our Lord poured out upon our churches during the Simultaneous Revival. Brother Casey and Brother Ruben preached the Word! That was followed by the Man Church Conference. The men that attended were blessed by hearing the Word presented by two wonderful men of God. We plan to make these events an annual occurrence and ask that you already begin to pray for God to move in the planning stages all the way to the completion of the events.

Although each day should be a day of Thanksgiving, we have set aside the month of November to have a day of collective Thanksgiving for our country. Sadly, this is a tradition that is observed by millions and yet very few rejoice each day in giving thanks to our Lord for all the blessings of life. Let us commit to thanking our Lord each day.

Thanksgiving is also the official beginning of the holiday season that will last until after the new year. I want to encourage you to make a listing of the things that you are most thankful for and tell the Lord how you feel about what he has done in your life. After Thanksgiving, take time to prepare your hearts for the celebration of our Lord leaving His Home and His Father to come and dwell among His creation. Make plans now to attend the various events that will be offered by our associational churches.

Raymond Perrin, one of our Associational Music Ministers, along with First Baptist Rayville and other church choirs within our association, will be presenting a musical "Savior For All". What a blessing it was to attend such a wonderful presentation of the Gospel through music last year. This year is going to be a GREAT BLESSING TO ALL! It will be held at the Rayville Arts Center and will be presented several evenings. Bring your family and your friends! This is a great outreach opportunity for your church. I will be providing more information as we get closer to the month of December. I look forward to seeing you there!

Words cannot express my thankfulness to our Lord and to each one of you for allowing me the privilege of serving you as your Director of Missions. What a blessing you are to me!

Johnny

## Upcoming Events for the Month of November 2023

Nov 05: Homecoming at Bethlehem Baptist Church.

Brother Keith Stephens and the church family invites everyone to join them. The service starts at 10 with music and Brother David Shirley will bring the Annual Homecoming Message. A Pot-Luck lunch will be shared after the morning Worship Service. If you can not attend the Worship Service because of obligation to your own church, you are invited to share the pot-luck meal with them.

Nov 05: Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church

Nov 07: Encampment Meeting @ 6:30 PM

Nov 09: Pastor and Staff Conference @ Big John's Rayville At 11AM

Nov 11: Vacation Bible School Preview @ Baptist Building Alexandria

Nov 12: Widow and Orphan Sunday

Nov. 13-14: LBC Annual Convention @ Franklin Street Baptist New Orleans

Nov. 19-20: YEC @ Rapides Coliseum Alexandria

Nov. 23: Happy Thanksgiving!!

## Upcoming Events for the Month of December 2023

Dec. 01: Pastors/Staff (Wives/Husbands) Christmas Party 6:00 PM

Dec. 03-10: Lottie Moon Week of Prayer

Dec. 09: "A Savior for All" Musical Presentation @ Rayville Arts Center 6PM

Dec. 10: "A Savior for All" Musical Presentation @ Rayville Arts Center 6PM

Dec. 25: Christmas Day! (Celebrate Christ becoming flesh with your family)

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among men!"  
Hallelujah What a Savior! Merry Christmas!

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

## Opportunities to Serve

Pastor: Beouf River Baptist  
Bethel Baptist  
First Baptist Rayville  
Lone Cherry Baptist  
Newton Baptist

Youth Minister: Alto Baptist  
First Baptist Delhi  
Mangham Baptist

Music Minister: First Baptist Archibald

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

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# Something to Think About...

I know many of us have our eyes towards the eastern skies as we hear the news and see what is going on in our world. We keep looking for the big grand neon signs of our Lord's return. All the while missing the biblical truth that His coming will be "like a thief in the night". We see this evidenced as far back as when Elijah was told to go out and look for the Lord passing by. There was a wind powerful enough to split mountains, an earthquake, and even a fire (unique because the Lord had appeared as a pillar of flame to ancient Israel in their deliverance from Egypt), but scripture affirmed each time that "the Lord was not in the \_\_\_\_\_." Ultimately, the Lord was in a gentle whisper. How often do we jump at big things only to miss where God really is at work?

That would make for a really great topic for the column this month with Thanksgiving and all and being thankful for the little things. However, I want to travel a little further down this path with something that struck me recently. Just like we look for the big neon signs of the imminent return of Jesus, we in the same way look for big flashing signs of the forces of darkness working toward the end. Things like the revealing of the antichrist, the mark of the beast, the widespread persecution of the church are looked for in broad strokes. How many of us have seen those posts fly by on social media about some new microchip or implant that is sure fire to be the mark of the beast? Or perhaps some mathematician somewhere has finally cracked the code to calculating the number of the beast to reference a particular significant figure in politics or on the world stage? It is almost as if we assume because of the sins of pride and boasting that the enemy's appearance or revealing will somehow be the opposite or an antonym of how Christ has revealed himself (as a tiny baby in a little backwoods town).

Scripture has this to say about how the enemy presents himself:

12 But I will continue to do what I am doing, in order to deny the opportunity of those who want an opportunity to be regarded just as our equals in what they boast about. 13 For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For **Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.** 15 So it is no great thing if **his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness.** Their destiny will be according to their works.

-2 Corinthians 11:12-15

So the enemy is not going to be obvious like many of us assume. Instead of being boisterous, bold, and upfront, he will mimic the holy even to the point of being subtle in a gentle whisper (how many times have we heard that whisper of temptation in our ear?). I experienced this same thing recently in an unexpected place.

I was taking a typical training required by my workplace to prevent harassment and discrimination. Since it happens every year, I usually autopilot cruise through it just to get it over with. This year I noticed though that there was more concerning religion as a characteristic by which people might be discriminated against. While defining religion they recognized the world majors (Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, etc.), but there was also reference given to smaller sects that may have odd practices that are foreign to your experience. It actually was sounding like including things that would be on the very edge of what at one time we would have called **cults**. But the part that really caught my attention was when **harassment** as far as religion was defined as including **"unwelcome attempts to convert people"**. I know some would argue the finer points of what "unwelcome" means, but this to me was a subtle quiet attack on the ability to evangelize within the workplace. See, we expect some large overnight outlawing of Christianity, but instead the enemy slowly takes away the freedom to follow Christ in obedience by starting to make evangelism the equivalent of unwelcome religious harassment. How many people would have never heard the gospel if they were allowed to stop it from being shared because it was "unwelcome". If it was welcome, they are already practically a convert. Sadly, too many Christians feel evangelism is an unwelcome aspect of their faith even before attempts at restricting it are being made subtly.

- Jonathan Young

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