

# STATE MISSIONS SERVICES FOR CHURCHES AND ASSOCIATIONS

## EXECUTIVE TEAM

Dr. Steve Horn, Executive Director

What can you say about 2020 that hasn't already been said?

As you review the following reports, you'll discover some of what God did through our cooperative missions and ministries in what was, without question, one of the most challenging years in recent memory. Even in the midst of a pandemic and natural disasters, God's spirit was at work, God's people were at work, and lives were changed. So, I encourage you to take a few minutes and review these reports.

I've shared with you before that one of my favorite passages of scripture is found in 1 Samuel chapter 7 where Samuel called on the Israelites to put away their foreign Gods and serve the Lord. While the Israelites gathered, the Philistines decided it was an opportune time to attack. As Israel continued to repent and worship, God thundered against the Philistines throwing them into confusion while, at the same time, empowering His people to drive them back. Following that victory, Samuel set up a stone and called it Ebenezer, which means "the Stone of Help." As he stood before God's people Samuel declared, "thus far the Lord has helped us," (1 Sam. 7:12).

I believe 2020 was an Ebenezer year for Louisiana Baptists. God helped us adapt as the pandemic raged among us. He provided creativity, encouragement, technology and, in many cases, helped us thrive even when we could not meet in person. To add David's declaration to that of Samuel's, in 2020, we experienced again that God was "an ever-present help in times of trouble," (Psalm 46:1).

How do we move forward as we prayerfully begin to put the pandemic in the rearview mirror? I believe it begins by each one of us looking inside ourselves and pleading with God to let revival begin in us. In these days of 24-hour news cycles and social media, it's easy to focus on what's going on around us and overlook what needs to happen within us.

God has been burning Psalm 139:23-24 in my spirit over the last several months. It's there David says, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Notice he says, "search me," "know my heart," "test me," "know my anxious thoughts," "see if there be ANY offensive way in me," and "lead me." This was all about David doing business with God. I believe God wants to do the same IN each one of us.

**If revival begins within us, it can then spread among us. Over the next several months, please join me in praying this simple prayer, "Lord, change me."**

Praying for your personal revival – and mine!

## **BUSINESS AND INFORMATION SERVICES TEAM**

Dale D. Lingenfelter, Director

The Business and Information Services Team serves as a support group for all the work of the LBC State Missions Services. The team provides expertise in the areas of financial accounting, information technology, facilities maintenance, office services, and human resources as well as providing hosting and program services for conferences and camps through Tall Timbers. Our goal is to enhance and support the work of all LBC Teams, so they accomplish the missions and ministry goals of the Convention.

In addition to coordinating the Annual Church Profile (ACP) process for the state, Shana Johnson serves as **Information Services** Support Manager and is responsible for the overall information technical support systems of the Convention and provides assistance to several state entities that are housed within the Baptist Building. In cooperation with other SBC state conventions and national SBC entities, Information Services has been instrumental in developing an online database of all SBC congregations and leadership. This program has become the national database for all SBC congregations and all SBC entities, both state and national. The database consists of all information collected through the ACP each year, as well as information directly communicated to the office. All information is retained to maintain historical statistical and leadership information for each reporting congregation. Through her team's effort along with assistance from the entire State Mission Services Staff, ACP reporting of all Louisiana Baptist congregations maintains an above average reporting percentage within the SBC network of congregations.

The LBC **Accounting Team** provides competent tax and accounting information to Louisiana Baptist churches. In addition to supporting the finances of State Missions Services, we assist with questions on Budgeting, Accounting, Payroll Taxes, and Church Accounting issues. We are here to help you! Our contact information can be found on the LBC website. In addition, consistent with prior years, the Louisiana Baptist Convention received an excellent review on our Annual Audit Report.

**Tall Timbers** experienced no programmed summer camps in 2020 due to the pandemic – the first time in camp history. In addition, the campground sustained wind and flood damages from Hurricanes Laura and Delta respectively in the fall of 2020. However, director, Josh Bumgardner, and a reduced staff worked through the year to improve the facilities while hosting much fewer guests. The staff trusted in God's provision through the hardships of 2020, knowing that the need would be great for guests to reconnect at retreats and summer camps in 2021! Hotel room renovations will resume in 2021, as well as the completion of a new cabin, and the start of construction of a new swimming pool.

The Business and Information Services Team considers all of its various areas of support work as ministry unto the Lord. We count it a privilege to serve our Lord by serving our colleagues and Louisiana Baptists in the work of reaching Louisiana for Christ and strengthening our churches.

## **BAPTIST COLLEGIATE MINISTRY**

Mark Robinson, Director

Every report of 2021 will mention literally if not implied the Covid-19 pandemic's impact on ministry. BCM is no exception to this rule. We were impacted greatly by having to find new ways to reach students virtually and in person. The struggle made us better at reaching students because it gave our leaders new skill sets. We entered summer with loosened restrictions and had a very good summer missions program. Among the hundreds of students that went out to serve on mission this summer, we sent three GoLa VBS and youth ministry teams out. The Louisiana teams saw over 65 new decisions to follow Christ. Also, we assisted Level Ground Church of New Orleans in having their very first Vacation Bible School. One team spent the summer assisting churches in the Wyoming Baptist Convention in VBS, community evangelism, compassion ministry, youth ministry, and as camp counselors. That team saw 24 decisions for Christ.

BCM also held its first annual sermon scholarship competition. BCM students from around the state submitted videos of their sermons to a committee that listened and evaluated the presentation. Five young men were awarded scholarships for excellent submissions. We are planning to continue this program in 2021-22.

Below is an evaluation of impact the Covid changes brought to BCM. Shutting down for the quarantine allowed us to accomplish several important tasks for our ministry.

1. Buildings received much need updating and maintenance.
2. Staff received extra training in the area of digital communication including Webex seminars, Zoom meetings, and meeting rooms in FB groups.
3. We began to utilize these formats for reaching out to incoming freshmen earlier than ever by forming freshman meet and greet groups on Zoom weekly.
4. The University campuses became more generous by giving us contact information for incoming freshman and relying on BCM staff to serve in an advisory capacity with the campus officials and meeting crucial needs in the quarantine response period.
5. International student ministry has had an all-time high impact this summer, particularly at LSU. These students were stranded on campus without work visas or campus cafeterias. The BCM has been providing boxes of groceries, through donations, to around 90 families a week throughout the year.
6. Emphasis had to move from large events to primarily Gospel appointments and Discipleship.

There are many more good things that came from this time of struggle.

This fall BCM staff and facilities will be utilized to continue to reach the University city all over our state. There are adaptation plans in effect at every campus, and we will continue to strive to proclaim the Gospel daily.

## COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

John Kyle, Director

### Pivot

Pivot became one of the most frequently used words of 2020. Due to the changing nature of the pandemic, we went from “all systems go” in January to lockdowns and quarantines in March, and finally a gradual lessening of restrictions as the year progressed. In 2020, you didn’t pivot just once. Pivoting became the norm as we attempted to prayerfully discern what God would have us do during what certainly was the most tumultuous year in recent memory.

We pivoted in WHAT we communicated.

Events were cancelled. Churches and individuals had to be informed. Information relating to the pandemic was regularly compiled, released, and updated. Resources designed to assist churches in navigating regulations, procedures, assistance, and practices were posted.

We pivoted in HOW we communicated.

Due to COVID, almost everything communicated had to be done via the website and social media. With the exception of the PPP (Payroll Protection Program), there was little to no regular mail or correspondence distributed.

In collaboration with our I.T. team, we utilized Zoom and GoToWebinar® software to virtually gather groups to communicate, encourage, and pray for one another. Some of the virtual events included:

- Small/Medium/Large church webinars dealing with the pandemic
- Statewide online prayer meeting
- Encourage webinars for pastors and pastors’ wives
- Digital ReGroup Sunday School and Small Group training

This online communication was particularly helpful when the hurricanes hit in late August and September.

We pivoted in WHEN we communicated.

Pandemics and hurricanes don’t keep regular office hours. Working remotely, the Communications Team posted and updated information as soon as it was received to assist churches and individuals looking for information and assistance. It was not unusual to post several times a day in an effort to keep the information current.

We also pivoted relating to our efforts to seed God’s truth in every heart and every home via *Here for You*, our multi-media evangelistic outreach. COVID-related commercials were created, aired, and posted resulting in touching 95% of TV households across the state. Those commercials can be viewed by visiting [HereforYou.org](https://www.HereforYou.org) and clicking on Videos. In addition, more than 224,000

people were reached each month via social media and streaming services and our partnership with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association saw 1,273 people indicate a decision for Christ!

What do these numbers mean? They indicate the seeds of God's truth were scattered in hearts and homes across the state – even during a pandemic! God promises that “some” of those seeds find good soil and the return on those seeds is 30, 60, up to 100 times more than what was scattered, (Matthew 13:3-9).

Visit [LouisianaBaptists.org/hereforyou](http://LouisianaBaptists.org/hereforyou) and enter, luke1423 to see how your church can connect with *Here for You*.

Keep current on opportunities by following Louisiana Baptists on Facebook (@LouisianaBaptists), Twitter (@LaBaptists) and Instagram (labaptists) and regularly visit [LouisianaBaptists.org](http://LouisianaBaptists.org) for resources and updates. You can also sign up to receive a weekly e-newsletter.

It is our prayer that you were blessed, encouraged, and assisted by these efforts. Thank you for your patience and encouragement amidst all the pivoting of 2020.

## **EVANGELISM AND CHURCH GROWTH TEAM**

Keith Manuel, Director

"Change Me" was the emphasis of the Evangelism Conference hosted by Summer Grove, Shreveport. We were challenged, equipped, and thrilled to gather online and in-person. Next year's ECON will be January 24-25, 2022. Our host is First, Covington.

Sean Keith is your Sunday School, Discipleship, and Revitalization Strategist. The Digital ReGroup Conference reached 1,000 participants, and helped equip pastors, staff, and lay leaders to reach their communities with the Gospel through small groups. Sean has spent much time preparing materials with a diverse group of pastors and church leaders to assist congregations with "ReFresh," a way for churches to start fresh and anew, especially in light of the pandemic.

Your Adult Ministries and Church Administration Strategist is Jeff Ingram. He coordinated the Senior Adult portion of ECON 2020 which was still well attended, despite the pandemic. He also led meetings across the state for the Louisiana Association of Baptist Ministry Assistants. His work in Church Administration is mainly in consultations with churches/associations that cover the following areas: Pastor/Staff Salary Breakdowns; IRS Compliance; Best Practices for Church Finance Committees; Church/Associational By-Laws; Code of Ethics for Ministerial Staff; Church Staff Job Descriptions; and Sexual Harassment & Abuse. Jeff also connects Louisiana Baptist churches with the GOLLA teams to help our churches with VBS and other summer ministry projects.

Brandon Lewis serves as your Youth Strategist. The Youth Evangelism Celebration ministered to 1,100 youth and adults in-person and online with many different spiritual decisions made during this powerful gathering. Camps were held this summer at Tall Timbers with 850 teens gathering for worship, equipping, and fun. Twenty-eight students made professions of faith and ten students

indicated a call to ministry. In addition to the spiritual decisions made, students learned how to share their faith to return to their home mission field equipped to impact others with the Gospel. Students gave over \$4,600 for missions during these camps. Prayerfully, YEC will return to the Rapides Coliseum on November 21-22, 2021. Speaking this year is Clayton King with worship led by the Jason Lovins Band. Our concert guest this year is Crowder. For the safety of our students, our leadership continues to meet with Rapides Coliseum personnel to monitor the COVID situation and to follow appropriate protocols given by the state/national medical community.

Serving as your Children's Ministry Strategist is David Anderson. This year our children's camps returned to Tall Timbers with attendance of over 900. We know of 107 students who made professions of faith and the children gave \$4,400 to missions. VBS trainings were held in two locations this year with plans to expand locations in 2022. The Childhood Education Workshop which was cancelled last year returned with almost pre-pandemic numbers.

The Evangelism & Church Growth Team loves to serve you by providing training for your leaders and church members in evangelism, discipleship, administration, and age-group ministries. You may get updates from our team on Facebook by liking and following our page "Evangelism & Church Growth Team of Louisiana Baptists."

## **MISSIONS AND MINISTRY TEAM**

John D. Hebert, Director

The Missions and Ministry Team of the Convention remains committed to helping our churches reach their full potential in reaching our state for Christ. Highlights for the year include a highly successful church planting effort, strides in our compassion ministry engagement with churches, and a growing mission builder program. These highlights accompany the execution of new strategies in Women's Missions and Ministry, Partnership Missions, Disaster Relief/Men's Ministry, and Missions Education.

### **Church Planting**

James Jenkins, Director of Church Planting, continues to lead the effort of Church Planting. His team is comprised of Lane Corley, our Anglo-Church Planting and Replant Strategist, and Carlos Schmidt, Language Church Planting and Partnership Missions Strategist. In partnership with our churches and associations, this team has worked to meet the goal of the 2020 Presidential Commission to plant 300 new churches by the year 2021. Even with the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, that number is now 277 or 92% of the goal. Churches planted since 2010, have now led over 17,000 people to Christ and church membership. Church planting has helped Louisiana Baptists to reach every people group including Anglo, African American, Vietnamese, Burmese, Chinese, Korean, Haitians, Eritrean, Arabic, Hispanic, and Portuguese.

Church Planting Orientation has moved online, with over 200 logging in for a monthly orientation to Church Planting and Replanting through Louisiana Baptists since April 2020. Greenhouse training for Church Planters is also moving to an online format with fewer in person retreats in the future. In the fall of 2021, church multiplication events will return with new roundtables on starting simple, disciple making movement focused churches and ministries.

### **Language Church Planting and Partnership Missions**

Carlos Schmidt has continued to foster and affirm all the existing partnerships Louisiana Baptist churches and organizations have with missions' projects in the United States and the rest of the world. These partnerships include Haiti, Belarus, Brazil, US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Brownsville/Matamoros, Cape Bretton Island Canada, Yucatan Mexico, and Madrid. Carlos led Missions Ready Roundtables at New Orleans Baptist Association, CenLa Baptist Association, Washington Baptist Association, William Wallace Baptist Association, and Gulf Coast Baptist Association. Missions Ready Roundtables were scheduled in other associations, but had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Carlos partnered with the Baptist Association of Greater Baton Rouge to host two quarterly Asian Missions Leaders Fellowships. He also spoke at FBC Lafayette WMU meetings. He co-led in the formation of a Hispanic Southern State Hispanic Missions Coalition with the purpose of motivating, training, and mobilizing Hispanic churches in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida, and Louisiana to local and global missions' opportunities. Carlos also is working in close relationship with "Mueven y Conmmueven" (formerly IMB Hispanic Mobilization), in missions local and global networking. Carlos has also participated in Zoom conversations with IMB personnel and with Southern States Partnership Missions leaders. Carlos has made IMB missions' trainings available to churches who have requested assistance.

The Church Planting trip to Belarus in July 2021 was cancelled due to political unrest in the country.

### **Compassion Ministries**

Jeffrey Cook leads efforts to engage Louisiana Baptist churches in Compassion Ministries. Many of our Louisiana Baptist churches are involved in some kind of Compassion Ministry seeking to: 1) Meet needs, 2) Build Trust, 3) Share the Gospel, and 4) Connect People to the Local Church. Jeff is assisted by a team of Association Compassion Missionaries (ACM) in several statewide associations. These workers are John Anderson, Deanna Corbett, Patrick Magee, and Pam Walker. Each ACM has hosted "Start Something"/Church Without Walls" meetings to encourage area pastors and church leaders to start new works of Compassion Ministry.

A new ministry has started in New Orleans that will have state-wide implications. Jacob Crawford is leading a Disciple Making Movement in New Orleans, utilizing Disciples Bible Study Strategies. Jacob is assisting our Louisiana Churches by training church leaders in DBS. Also, a Compassion Ministry Readiness Tool is being developed for online use to prepare churches to start Compassion Ministry.

### **Women's Missions and Ministry**

COVID cancellations affected fall and spring women's events in 2020-2021, but they also gave opportunity for other ways of connecting with our audiences. Louisiana Baptist women donated and packed over 900 gift boxes for the incarcerated women. Ministry to Ministers' Wives partnered through the Louisiana Baptist website with the executive office for a night of encouragement in October. Embrace, the event for all Louisiana Baptist women, was held in March 2021 as a hybrid event. Women gathered in person for a one-day Bible teaching and

worship event, while breakout conferences were offered on the Louisiana Baptist website. Four leader training events are scheduled in 2021.

Mission offering giving shows impacts of COVID, the hurricanes in 2020, and the ice storm of 2021. The greatest story, though, is the giving of many faithful churches. Our prayer is to be joined by more mission giving churches in 2021.

- Georgia Barnette State Missions Offering (Jan. 1-Dec. 2020)  
Received \$1,324,609.16                      State Goal \$1,700,000
- Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions (Sept. 1, 2020-Aug. 31, 2021)  
(Report current as of June 2021)  
Received \$3,695,822.87                      State Goal \$5,200,000
- Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions (Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2020)  
Received \$1,272,306.16                      State Goal \$2,200,000

Janie Wise serves as Women’s Missions & Ministry Strategist.

### **Missions Education**

Missions Education had a wonderful start to 2021. The first event of 2021 was M-JAM at Tall Timbers. The great part about this exciting mission’s event is that children were able to hear the Gospel message in a fun and exciting way and learn how to share it with their friends. Students were also able to meet a young pediatrician who serves with the IMB in Africa and learn about her ministry there. The 2021 total attendance for M-JAM will be higher than 2019, since we will add our first fall M-JAM at Parkview Baptist in Baton Rouge on October 30.

Our 2021 camp numbers have exceeded our 2019 camp totals! We are hosting two camps this year as opposed to only one camp in 2019. Over 550 people will be in attendance between both camps.

Jess Archer will be conducting several “Women Who Lead” training events around our state.

### **Men’s Ministry and Disaster Relief**

Men’s Ministries experienced a change in leadership in 2021. Dr. Gibbie McMillan retired, and Dr. Stanley Statham was hired to lead our efforts in Disaster Relief and Men’s Ministries.

Disaster Relief was able to conduct all five of our in-person training events that were held January-March 2021. The first training in New Orleans followed the strict COVID-19 guidelines for masking and social distancing. We had just over 300 volunteers attend the five training events.

We have made a concerted effort to increase online training options. In part, we desire to engage the younger generations in Disaster Relief training and believe they will be more likely to take part in the training if online courses are offered. We also want to be better prepared for future pandemics and other possible problems that could force another shutdown. We are currently planning on offering training in-person, online, and a hybrid model.

On May 17, 2021 Lake Charles had about 1,200 homes flooded that initiated a Disaster Relief deployment. We had about seven state conventions deploy DR teams to assist us with mud-out



efforts. Again, COVID did not keep volunteers from responding to the needs of those impacted by the flood.

Volunteers also returned to the Bahamas for the rebuild at St. Matthews Baptist Church. They were required to have COVID tests before leaving the states and before returning. We hope to be able to send more groups in the near future to assist with the rebuild.

### **Mission Builders**

Mission Builders strategist, Mike Shumock has worked with seven churches and one mission as well as putting on a roof for one church damaged from Hurricane Delta. He also consulted with and helped ten other churches and projects securing labor, materials, and providing information about construction needs.

## **PASTORAL LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Ray Swift, Director

The Pastoral Leadership Team is available to serve churches of all sizes across Louisiana. Assistance includes training and working with pastor search committees, resumé services, leadership development, church administration, and prayer resources. We believe every church, of every size, in every area, is necessary and valuable in maximizing Gospel impact, and we are committed to assisting you towards that end.

**Shepherd's Rest:** From time to time, pastors need to step away to reflect and be refreshed. Your Cooperative Program gifts provide the opportunity for a four-week sabbatical for the pastor at no cost to the church. For details visit [louisianabaptists.org/shepherdsrest](http://louisianabaptists.org/shepherdsrest).

**Resume Services:** Launched in March 2021, [GoServeLA.org](http://GoServeLA.org) allows churches to post open ministry positions. Pastors and ministers seeking opportunities to serve can also confidentially post their resumes on the site. As of this writing, over 100 positions have been posted by churches.

**Transitional Interim/Supply:** Transitions can be tough, but they don't have to be tumultuous. Trained pastors are available to assist churches during the transitional period between pastors. Pastor Search Committees can also be prepared and equipped for their assignment. If a need arises for pulpit supply while the pastor is out, Louisiana Baptists staff are available to assist as schedules permit.

**Granberry Counseling:** Counseling is part of ministry. But there are times when the counselor (pastor) needs some Godly counsel for themselves or their families. Granberry has twelve (12) counseling centers across the state with licensed and trained counselors. Whether the need is for an individual, couples or families, a Godly, confidential listening ear is available. And, thanks to your participation in the Cooperative Program, there is no cost for pastors and ministers. Log on to [granberrycounseling.org](http://granberrycounseling.org) to set an appointment.

**Singing Ministers & Singing Women:** These volunteers gather each August to prepare for concerts in local churches, detention centers, youth intervention programs, and prisons. As they

share their talents, they also share their faith. For more information visit [LouisianaBaptists.org/pastors](http://LouisianaBaptists.org/pastors).

The Pastoral Leadership Team is excited and available to assist all Louisiana Baptist pastors and churches. Please let us know how we can serve you.

### ***LOUISIANA BAPTIST MESSAGE***

Dr. Will Hall, Executive Editor

#### ***BAPTIST MESSAGE***

Since our report to the Convention in November, the *Baptist Message* has been busy on multiple fronts:

- Our team has implemented a new publication schedule, trimming our print editions from 24 to 14 per year. This has caused us to be more mindful about the time-sensitive nature of some events to make sure we give enough advance notice to our readers so that they can plan to attend. Likewise, we are learning how to better integrate our coverage of events in our online reporting as well as our social media communications – giving advance notice of the events as well as publishing what resulted.
- On that note, we are working with our web developers to assess the utility of offering a phone edition to subscribers as an option for receiving our news reports, feature articles and information updates. Those who have a print subscription will have free access to the online content that originates in our newsroom. Those who purchase a web subscription would have the same access. Anyone without a paid subscription would have to pay a per article fee or simply subscribe.
- Until we complete the web architecture, the online paywall will remain off and the content will be accessible to anyone.
- In that regard, we are working to develop an RSS feed that would allow churches to post our headlines on their websites to add a dynamic component to their online content – and we already have a prototype. Members would simply visit their church website and click on the *Baptist Message* headlines to access our content. Again, individuals who have a paid subscription (print and online) will be able to view all the content that is accessible through the RSS feed.

In addition to the structural changes that we are working on, we have moved forward in developing a new feature for the web and print editions. The *Baptist Message* has obtained a repository of more than 6,000 Christian cartoon panels and already we have added this new content to the website. Now, we are looking at regularly using these in our print editions, possibly within a redesigned special features page.

As for reporting, we have been following numerous developments within the Southern Baptist Convention, including the lawsuit loss by the North American Mission Board at the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals and the subsequent denial of its appeal by the U.S. Supreme Court. The case, *North American Mission Board v. McRaney*, now returns to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi.

In effect, the Supreme Court decision means Will McRaney, the former executive director of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, has prevailed in his effort to finally depose witnesses, including NAMB President Kevin Ezell as well as past and present trustee and employees. His legal team will now have an opportunity to present evidence to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi in his claim about NAMB's "intentional interference with business relationships, defamation, and intentional infliction of emotional distress" related to his termination by the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware.

Likewise, we have covered other critical issues related to the SBC such as the growing tensions about Critical Race Theory; the sudden resignation of Russell Moore as president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission; and a growing plagiarism scandal involving newly elected SBC President Ed Litton, pastor of Redemption Church in Saraland, Alabama.

We also have followed closely the growth of the Conservative Baptist Network, more than 10,000 pastors and other individuals have joined, especially because of its origins in Louisiana, and now the formation of a state chapter here.

But our bread and butter continue to be the stories of Louisiana Baptists' missions and ministries.

Last year, we completed a 10-part series updating Louisiana Baptists' progress on completing the 10 goals of The President's 2020 Commission Final Report.

One quick note: Due to pandemic restrictions and multiple natural disasters, Louisiana Baptists did not meet the goal of completing the 300th church plant in 2020 (since 2013). But our church planting strategists tell me that we possibly will celebrate that milestone sometime in 2021!

This year, we have been following up on the continued push by our congregations to fulfill their ministries while coming out of the pandemic restrictions as well as emerging from the devastation of three hurricanes and two major storms. We have been ecstatic to report, that through all the challenges, the Gospel has continued to move forward in the state and beyond our borders because of the continued cooperation among Louisiana Baptists.

## **OFFICE OF PUBLIC POLICY**

The hectic pace for the Office of Public Policy has continued from 2020 into 2021. Last year, the Office of Public Policy was actively engaged at the national level with such issues as the C.A.R.E.S. Act and making sure that churches and evangelists were included in the Payroll Protection Program if they chose to participate. We also worked with federal policymakers to

change the subsequent rules from the Small Business Administration to remove language that would have conflicted with our Louisiana Baptist beliefs about marriage and human sexuality.

This year, we have made our position known to national lawmakers regarding the so-called “Equality Act,” which would remove the protections of our First Amendment rights that are outlined in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. Essentially, the “Equality Act” would prevent the expression of our beliefs, thereby elevating the rights of lesbians, gays, and transgender individuals above those of Christians. The bill, H.R. 5, passed the U.S. House and is awaiting action in the Senate, but could be on hold for a while because of the threat of a filibuster by conservative members.

As important as that legislation is in its potential impact on religious liberty, there were equally critical bills in Baton Rouge, and the Office of Public Policy was there to represent the voice of Louisiana Baptists during the legislative process. We worked with state legislators and staff to influence the wording of legislation; testified before committees, providing key research to shed light on issues; and sometimes simply went the record to state Louisiana Baptists’ consensus beliefs about the matter as an appeal to legislators to do the right thing.

Fortunately, there are faithful men and women who are elected officials or key staff members, and they are working hard, too; and a number of these Christians are Louisiana Baptists.

The work by the Office of Public Policy included:

-- Sen. Beth Mizell, a member of First Baptist Church, Franklinton, championed S.B. 156 *Fairness in Women’s Sports Act* that was drafted to protect the rights of girls and women by preventing biological males (who self-identify as women) from participating on teams designated for females. She successfully navigated the measure through both chambers, but the legislation was vetoed by Gov. John Bel Edwards. The Office of Public Policy worked with Sen. Mizell and other conservatives to rally pastors to successfully persuade lawmakers to vote for a historic veto override session. The Senate voted 26-12-1 to overturn the governor’s veto. But 10 House members who voted for the measure during the regular session did not vote for it this second time, and the governor’s veto was sustained, 68-30-6, two votes short of the needed override tally.

-- The Office of Public Policy provided testimony against H.B. 67, which would have legalized prostitution and elevated it to the same status as any line of work in the state. Despite testimony from proponents that mocked “morals” and urged members of the House Administration of Criminal Justice Committee “not to look to your pastor” for guidance about prostitution, the bill failed to get out of committee.

-- Rep. Danny McCormick, a member of Trees Baptist Church in Vivian, sponsored a religious liberty resolution to express the legislature’s intentions regarding executive order violations that involve the exercise of constitutionally protected religious freedoms. The Office of Public Policy presented the bill to committees in the House and the Senate, emphasizing its potential to de-escalate conflicts when critical ministries (feeding, disaster relief, Celebrate Recovery, etc.) must be performed during statewide emergencies. Both chambers adopted the measure, 67-20-18 and 23-13-2, respectively.

-- Sen. Mizell and Sen. Heather Cloud worked with the Office of Public Policy to extend the life of two legislative task forces that were formed largely because of resolutions adopted by Louisiana Baptists. Mizell championed S.C.R. 68 which ensures that she will continue to lead the state effort to develop legislation to incentivize counseling for couples considering marriage and reconciliation sessions for parents in distressed marriage relationships. Meanwhile, Cloud pushed through S.C.R. 195, which renews the state effort to protect children from exposure to pornography. The work of these two groups was interrupted by the pandemic restrictions of 2020.

Moving forward in 2021, the Office of Public Policy will be working with local Louisiana Baptists and other faith groups in Tangipahoa Parish, to defeat the upcoming ballot referendum which would allow a defunct riverboat casino in Shreveport to relocate to Slidell. Also, two state groups, the Kentucky Baptist Convention and Kansans for Life, have reached out to Louisiana Baptists for help in passing statewide ballot measures like the Love Life Amendment that passed in Louisiana in 2020. The Office of Public Policy will continue to provide consulting support as they push to protect the pro-life laws in their respective states.

## **LOUISIANA BAPTIST FOUNDATION**

Dr Jeffrey Steed, Executive Director

Thank you, Louisiana Baptists, for the opportunity to partner in ministry. God is continuing to bless your Louisiana Baptist Foundation and we are grateful. We ended 2020 with over \$187 million in assets under management that represents funds owned by Louisiana Baptist churches and other ministries as well as gifts perpetually managed for Kingdom-impact. Every dollar generated on these funds represents another dollar to advance the Kingdom by spreading the Gospel.

In 2020, the Foundation adopted the LBF Vision200™ that will help provide the strategy of the Foundation for the next 20 years as it seeks to partner in ministry with churches and other ministries. We are driven to advance the Kingdom...one dollar at a time, one ministry at a time, one life at a time. The overall vision of this plan is to specifically advance the Kingdom through the Foundation's ministry by \$200 million over the next twenty years or less. Specifically, the Foundation will benefit the Kingdom through (1) facilitating planned gifts (example: non-cash gifts, estate gifts, charitable gift annuities, endowments, donor-advised funds and other special gifts beyond cash), and (2) serving churches and other ministries with funds management as well as other services to enhance their impact.

To accomplish the goal of \$200 million over the next 20 years or less, the Foundation has four overall objectives:

- (1) **Planned Giving:** The following are provided for a comprehensive planned giving emphasis:
  - A. Providing educational content to churches such as the *Louisiana Legacy* publication to provide to members practical ways they can benefit their church beyond cash,
  - B. Speaking in churches and other ministry organizations to educate constituents on being good stewards related to their estates,
  - C. Having robust planned giving website content,

- D. Sending periodic communications to constituents,
- E. Providing confidential one-on-one meetings with prospective donors on benefiting the Kingdom,
- F. Having the infrastructure in place to facilitate the logistics of special gifts, and
- G. Providing an opportunity for every Louisiana Baptist to obtain a free basic Will document when at least tithing her/his estate to a church and/or other ministry.

(2) Church/Ministry Services: Based upon a recent survey among Louisiana Baptist pastors, additional services are being added over time that focuses on church financial/management services. These additional services are part of the Foundation's additional overall emphasis, ChurchBiz Central™. The Foundation plans to launch the following additional services in 2021: church loans, payroll services, and capital/stewardship campaigns.

(3) Comprehensive Marketing Plan: The Foundation's comprehensive market plan initiative uses multiple communication channels that focus on the Foundation's services to help advance the Kingdom. The initiative also will further build its exposure across various social media platforms.

(4) Operations: The Foundation will continue to have a well-skilled and well-experienced staff that seeks to provide churches and ministries with top-tier service to help those organizations further enhance their impact on the Kingdom.

LBF Vision200™ will help the Foundation further move forward in advancing the Kingdom...one dollar at a time, one ministry at a time, one life at a time. The Foundation is grateful to Louisiana Baptists for the many partnerships in ministry around the state. Please contact the Foundation by phone at 877-523-4636 or by email [contact@LBFinfo.org](mailto:contact@LBFinfo.org) if we can serve you.

## **LOUISIANA BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME AND FAMILY MINISTRIES**

Dr. Perry Hancock, President and CEO

In its 121<sup>st</sup> year of ministry Louisiana Baptist Children's Home and Family Ministries continued its mission of providing love, care, and hope in Christ for children and families in need. The Children's Home provided a positive Christian witness through its residential child and family care programs, foster care and adoption ministries, Granberry Counseling Centers, Christian Women's Job Corps, Compassion for Kids, and Orphans Embrace.

The Children's Home provided ministry services for over 3,200 children, families, and individuals. Through its on-campus and off-campus residential programs, 113 children and 42 homeless mothers were served. An additional 195 families received placement referral services.

The Granberry Counseling Centers staff provided professional Christian counseling for 907 individuals during the year. Through its Minister Care program, a partnership with the Pastoral Leadership division of LBC, Granberry provided counseling for 36 Louisiana Baptist minister families.

Christian Women's Job Corp provided educational and job skills training for 25 women and support services for 137 women. The ministry maintained its adult education certification with the state of Louisiana as an official HiSet training and testing site. Through its partnership with

Women's Missionary Union and its World Crafts ministry, CWJC students served as artisans, producing over 200 Christian products.

Through a growing community care ministry, Compassion for Kids, the Children's Home served over 2,000 economically challenged children and family members in northeast Louisiana. Compassion for Kids provides life essentials and the message of Christ, meeting both physical and spiritual needs. Projects are conducted in partnership with local LBC churches and ministries.

The Children's Home also shared God's love in word and deed through its international orphan care ministry, Orphans Embrace. Twenty-six children were served through Louisiana Reach Haiti at its Children's Village in Croix-des-Bouquets.

On campus, construction of the new recreation center was completed. The facility includes a gymnasium and a pool. Construction began on a third family care cottage. The building provides housing for four families who are served through the HomePlace ministry. The renovation of Hope Cottage was also completed. The facility provides housing for terminated LBC minister families and furloughing missionaries.

Louisiana churches once again provided support for the Children's Home through the Annual Children's Home Sunday Offering. Churches also continued to support children and families at the Home through the Fall Food Roundup which provides all the non-perishable foods needed for the entire year. In the summer, churches from across Louisiana donated their VBS offerings to support the children. Many churches provided additional assistance in various ways throughout the year and God used LBC Cooperative Program giving to share His love with those in need.

As a result of the support from our churches and the witness provided by the various ministries of the Home, many children and others experienced the joy of salvation in Christ. Thank you, Louisiana Baptists, for meeting needs and changing lives in Jesus' name through your Louisiana Baptist Children's Home and Family Ministries.

**LOUISIANA COLLEGE**  
Dr. Rick Brewer, President

Louisiana College is a Christ-centered community committed to Academic Excellence where students are equipped for lives of Learning, Leading, and Serving. That mission proved to be both more challenging and rewarding during this past year.

This was definitely a year like no other, and in many ways not one anyone wishes to repeat. The continuing health safety issues from a pandemic with added shutdowns from Hurricanes Laura and Delta, and major interruption of services with an unusual ice storm, added much stress to operations at LC and also to many of our students whose lives were disrupted.

The resilience of our student body, the relevant ways our faculty and staff reached out to students during the time of quarantine, and the reaction of our alumni—stepping up more than ever knowing the financial consequences of this worldwide pandemic.

For all of this and so much more, we give God all the glory!

### **Faith Integration**

This year's fall semester kicked off with Curtis "CZ" Zackery as keynote for "The Awakening" challenging students with the Truth of the Gospel. He is one of LC students' favorite speakers. The first Christ, Church, Culture Conference of the academic year was held in October on the role of women in the 21st century ministry. Speakers included Victoria Dixon, Jess Archer and Dr. Amanda Walker.

In November, LC held another timely topic in its 5th Annual Values & Ethics Series—the biblical response to racism. Former professional baseball player Chris Singleton, whose mother was murdered in the Charleston, South Carolina mass shooting at the Mother Emanuel AME Church, spoke on the message of love and forgiveness. He was joined by Louisiana Sen. Katrina Jackson and Alexandria physician Dr. Greg Bevels.

In the spring, LC held two more C3 events. Dana Harris, the regional director for the Alliance Defending Freedom spoke in March on "Religious Rights and COVID-19." And in April, Prof. R. Keith Lofton from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, spoke on "Calling and Career." Our 5th Annual God in the Workplace Lecture Series was held in March. Keynote speaker was Dr. Jay W. Richards, professor at The Catholic University of America, who spoke on "Money, Greed and God: The Christian Case for Free Enterprise."

In addition, LC signed articulation agreements with Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary allowing students to apply college credits to a Master of Divinity degree at seminary.

### **Grants and Recognition**

Louisiana College was recognized by niche.com as the safest college in the state and the second most diverse. We are extremely proud of these recognitions and will continue to take measures to meet those standards. LC was also named a "Top 30 Christian College" by national research group BestValueSchools.org. This organization recognized schools that meet educational needs and maximize the student experience in the most affordable ways.

LC was recognized with several grant awards for bettering classrooms, living spaces, academic departments, and athletic areas. In addition, The CENLA Chamber of Commerce named the College's website the No. 1 Business Website in Central Louisiana.

The College was awarded two Board of Regents grants for theatre and business. The department enhancement grants total more than \$135,000 and provided for a business analytics classroom and a new stage for the theatre program.



## **Enrollment and Retention**

Many of the recruiting events we typically hold every year were cancelled due to COVID. The state also cancelled the High School Literary Rally in 2021 as we practiced social distancing.

We continue to grow our numbers of dual enrollment students with home schoolers, Pineville High School, and nearly 50 from Menard High School. LC Admissions team also held mini-college fairs at churches across the state.

At the time of the completion of this report, the College was expecting 350 freshmen, which would be the largest class in the institution's history.

## **Academics and Athletics**

In March, LC had its SACSCOC On-site Reaffirmation Committee visit for our 10-year accreditation review. The committee informed the LC Leadership Team of no finding of non-compliance. Their report will be sent to the Board of SACSCOC for a final decision during the December 2021 annual meeting. The last time SACSCOC had no recommendations for LC was 1991.

LC and CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini partnered to establish the Cabrini Scholars program to provide unique economic support for nursing students. The program provides grant money to eligible students enrolled in the college's Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (ABSN) in exchange for a commitment of a commitment of employment as a registered nurse.

The Master of Social Work program, which began in January 2018, received its accreditation this summer from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The accreditation of this program, which since its inception has been to apply the Heart of Christ to the Hurt of Humanity, strengthens our goal to ensure our graduates are prepared to make a positive difference in the lives of the people and communities they will serve.

We officially moved from NCAA Division III to NAIA in July 2021. Membership in the NAIA provides opportunities for competing regularly in key recruiting areas of Louisiana while offering possibilities for competing for conference, regional, and national championships annually. All sports join the Red River Athletic Conference except football. Football will be a member of the Sooner Athletic Conference. This offers LC the opportunity to gain traction in some athletic areas we hadn't had previously and compete for some championship titles.

## **Advancement and Alumni Affairs**

Your financial gifts to Louisiana College provide scholarships to phenomenal students, support the work of gift faculty, invest in innovative programs, and continue the LC tradition of academic excellence and a Christian commitment.

in the Office of Advancement, we received approximately \$5 million in unrestricted and restricted gifts to the College.

With more than 15,000 alumni worldwide, the Louisiana College Alumni Association was established in 1958 to connect alumni to each other, faculty, staff, and current students. In every way, LC Alumni are an extension of the mission of the college.

Alumni Affairs is doing spotlights on alumni in monthly e-blasts, and this has been added to the alumni page on the LC website.

We have migrated from a list of 68,000 names to about 20,000 with updated correct information in one location, and Alumni Affairs has increased our alumni committee numbers and participants thereby increasing alumni engagement.

Wildcat Club has been reinvigorated with new membership categories to better represent members' specific areas of interest.

### **Refurbishment and Resource Development**

Major renovations were completed this year in Cottingham women's residence hall, and Tudor Hall and English Village, men's residence halls, thanks to generous donor funds. English Village had a complete makeover with new siding on the exterior, and renovations of the interior including new furniture and wall hangings, and new tables and chairs in the Commons Area where students can charge phones and computers, as well as fellowship with students, play games and attend events held in this space.

LC became the first institution in Central Louisiana to partner with Ardeo Education Solutions to offer a loan repayment assistance program that will allow all incoming freshmen beginning this fall to get help repaying student loans.

In resource development, 80% of our existing Wi-Fi network was upgraded and additional expansions to the network produced coverage in all campus buildings. Sixteen classrooms and labs were upgraded with new computers, and 55 laptops were purchased for faculty— most of whom had never had one before.

Canvas was officially launched as the new LMS (learning management system) for LC Fall 2020. With the challenges of COVID and other natural disasters, online education and new hybrid online learning tools were more needed than ever before. The Center for Online Innovation and Development (COID) launched and trained faculty and staff on best practices for tools such as VoiceThread and Teams, which allowed for the use of document cameras (Hover Cam8) and video systems (Vaddio) that were installed in larger classrooms. Students were then able to attend class virtually (synchronously and asynchronously). This move to offering more modality options for students to attend classes required much more work from the magnificent LC faculty, but allowed for better retention and support for students in crisis/need.

In addition to launching Canvas, the COID has developed training and new benchmarks for the creation of online classes that meet Quality Matters standards. According to their website, Quality Matters "course review results in better course design, which makes navigation easier for students, reduces barriers to student achievement, and results in better outcomes." LC has focused on developing new general education courses and business major courses with an emphasis in project management. Students were able to attend classes with more flexibility during the uncertainty of 2020.

Online connectivity was also significantly improved across campus. Access Points (AP) were added across campus to ensure access to the internet. New switches were purchased and installed as well as many other technology upgrades to classrooms, dorms, and study areas. The library also added secure testing sites for online proctored exams.

This report captures the strategic planning and resolve of the last 12 months to rise to the challenges that came before us and the blessings that God has bestowed on Louisiana College. I am grateful for all of the churches of the LBC for your continued support through the Cooperative Program. As the need for Christian higher education continues to grow, your support allows LC to continue offering an affordable and accessible education. It truly would not be possible without you.

Thank you all for your continued prayers and support for this worthy, Christ-centered institution.

We will continue to follow His call.