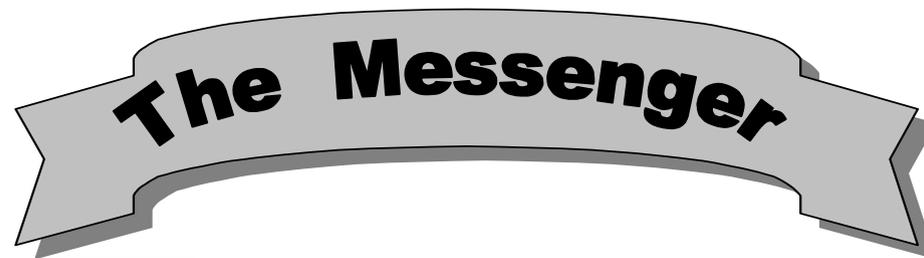


P. O. Box 516
Talladega, AL 35161
Phone: (256) 362-7173
Fax: (256) 268-8803
www.crba.org



Linda Cotton, Ministry Assistant
Sandy Locke,
Financial Ministry Assistant

March 26, 2020

Associational Prayer Requests

Please pray for these churches that are without a pastor. Also pray for their Pastor Search Committee:

Brecon FBC, Mignon, Oldfield, and Shelvin Rock

Churches with Interim Pastors:

Cartersville: Rev. Harold Bannister
Five Points: Rev. Joshua Bell
Mountain View: Rev. Roger Singleton
Odena: Rev. Trull Hill
Rocky Mount: Rev. John Vogel
Southside: Rev. Josh Henderson
Union Springs: Rev. Charles Bradshaw

Please be in prayer for the **Director of Missions Search Team** as they begin to search for the next Director of Missions: Robert Klotz, Kevin Jones, Mike Snyder, Max Buttrum, Skip Parvin, Mac McCaleb, Lisa Compher, Tommy Strickland

Rev. Tommy Strickland's granddaughter, Tobie Lynn Strickland, was born prematurely on January 10, 2020. Pray for Tobie Lynn, her parents, Joseph and Jessica, and her big brother, Sammy. Brother Tommy is the pastor of Ridgeview Baptist Church.

Our leaders, federal, state, and local as they continue to lead us through the COVID-19 pandemic. Pray that the churches of the Coosa River Association will continue to minister to those who need the hope of Jesus in their lives in the midst of this trying time.

Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee will meet for their regularly scheduled quarterly meeting on Thursday, April 16, 2020 at the Coosa River office at 6 PM. The committee is composed of all pastors, association officers, and an elected representative from each church. The committee conducts the business of the association during the year.



To the following Coosa River pastors, ministers, staff members and spouses:
Mar 30-Stephen Collins, Immanuel
Apr 2-Kim Dulaney, Refuge; Tripp Dickson, Sylacauga FBC; Jamie Davis, Lincoln
Apr 4-Dwayne Shurum, Russell Chapel
Apr 5-Cricket Mullins, Stemley
Apr 6-Debbie Morgan, Blue Eye
Apr 8-David Mitchell, Oak Grove FBC

Faking Faith is not Saving Faith

Elias Keach was the son of the great Benjamin Keach of London. His father was a man of great faith. A man who withstood persecution and torture, yet would not be silent of Christ. Benjamin continually preached about the vast difference between an outward appearance of change and the true inward change that only salvation in Christ can grant. One day, Elias decided to run away from his father and his words. He boarded a ship to America. When he walked off the vessel, he was

dressed in his father's robe and collar. Thinking he was a minister and finding out he was the son of the great Benjamin Keach, they asked him to preach. The young Elias, came to their church and walked up to the pulpit. He began to preach, what many believed was just a regurgitation of one of his father's sermons. About halfway through, Elias stopped. A look of terror and dread came over him. He could not mutter another word. The congregation, thinking something was

wrong, quickly gathered around him. Suddenly, Elias cried out to God for mercy and forgiveness. It was on that day, Elias would come to true faith in Jesus Christ. His father once said, "What can render the state of a person worse than to be an enemy of God, Jesus Christ, and the power of godliness; and yet to think he is holy and a good Christian?"

Rev. Jeff Weathers,
Moderator-Elect, Coosa River Assoc
Pastor, Sycamore Baptist Church

Coosa River Response to COVID-19

Brothers and Sisters,

These are strange times! In the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak, our church building is dark, and I am sitting at my dining room table at home. It is Wednesday, March 18 as I am writing this, and no preparations are being made for our evening meal, Bible studies have been pre-recorded and uploaded, and the church building is quiet. Churches throughout our association are making difficult decisions, seeking to navigate through uncharted waters and an unprecedented season. This past Monday, March 16, our weekly gathering of pastors discussed what our churches were doing to heed warnings from health authorities while still accommodating services, and within hours of that meeting, the President gave a new directive, and much of our plans began to change all over again. In this season of ever-changing adaptations to the way we do ministry, may I share a few thoughts with you?

First, and most importantly, God still sits enthroned in power, might, and majesty. He is unsurprised and unshaken by events that have our heads spinning. What is more: He has promised that He will use this season of turmoil for His glory and our good. Brothers and sisters, even when we cannot see the outcome or how that purpose of God's glory and our good will ever come to pass, we believe His promise and we trust His purpose.

Second, brother Pastors, none of us has been here before. None of us took this class in seminary! Opinions are

swirling around about what to do. Listen to the Spirit, not the loudest voice on the internet. Listen to health experts, not the most vocal non-medical opinion. Make the decision you believe is best for the flock entrusted to you and be obedient to the Lord as you have felt His leading. If your church – as many are finding it necessary to do – has determined not to meet in person but to stream the service online, trust me, if I can figure out how to do it, so can you. Don't let my age and my stylish mustache fool you: technology is not my thing. If I can figure it out, anyone can. Trust the Lord. Shepherd the flock. Be faithful in this season.

Lastly, brother or sister church member, pray for your pastor and be understanding. He has never had to make a decision like this before – none of us has. Some will be critical saying he did too little too late, others that he is doing too much too soon. Be supportive. Be an encourager. Heed his advice. And pray that he will have peace with his Spirit-led decision. Let us all be faithful in this season.

We've never done things this way before. That terrifies all of us as good Southern Baptists! All of this is new. All of this is different. But one thing remains the same, and in that we take refuge: our God is still on His throne.

Grace and Peace,
Robert Klotz
Senior Pastor, FBC Talladega

Bulletin Board

March 29

~~Darrell and Dawn Ritchie in concert at Hepzibah Baptist Church at 5 PM~~

March 29-April 1

~~Revival services at Childersburg First Baptist Church with Dr. Bob Pitman, guest evangelist~~

April 4

~~VBS Extravaganza at Hepzibah Baptist Church from 8:30 – 11:30 AM~~

April 16

Executive Committee Meeting at the association office at 6 PM

April 23

Association WMU Annual Meeting at Stockdale Baptist Church at 6:30 PM. Candace McIntosh, Executive Director of Alabama WMU, is the speaker. This meeting has not be cancelled as of now. Watch for details as the time draws nearer.

Publication Deadline

The Messenger is published on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. Do you have an announcement or event that you would like to have covered in an upcoming edition of *The Messenger*? Contact Linda at the Coosa River office by the **first or third Monday** of each month.
Phone: (256) 362-7173
Fax: (256) 268-8803
E-mail: lcotton@crba.org