

July 2018
Newsletter

Bethel Baptist Association
"Strengthening Churches in Sharing Christ"

HAPPY 4TH OF JULY

"SO IF THE SON SETS YOU FREE, YOU WILL BE FREE INDEED" JOHN 8:36

The Bethel News

**Southwest Georgia Regional
Sunday School Worker Training Event**
Saturday, August 11, 2018 8:30 A.M. - 12:15 P.M.

First Baptist Church Cairo
505 North Broad Street, Cairo, Georgia 39828
Keynote Speaker: Dr. Greg Frizzell



Workshop Leaders:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Pre-School SS Workers | - Joy Brenneman (Northside, Tifton) |
| Children's SS Workers | - Josh Williams (FBC Moultrie) |
| Youth SS Workers | - Garrett Grubbs (Sherwood, Albany) |
| Adult SS Workers | - Steve Vaughan (Thomasville Road, Tallahassee) |
| S.S. Directors | - John Yates (Morningside, Valdosta) |
| Pastors | - Dr. Greg Frizzell (Oklahoma Baptist Convention) |

Schedule:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 7:30 A.M. - 8:30 A.M. | Registration |
| 8:30 A.M. - 9:30 A.M. | Workshop Session 1 |
| 9:30 A.M. - 9:50 A.M. | Break |
| 9:50 A.M. - 10:50 A.M. | Workshop Session 2 |
| 10:50 A.M. - 11:10 A.M. | Break |
| 11:10 A.M. - 12:15 P.M. | Plenary Session with Dr. Greg Frizzell |

Pre-register w/BBA Office by
Monday, August 6th
Cost: \$10 per person (payable at the door)
Make checks out to
Grady County Baptist Association

"Missionary Musings"

By the time you read this newsletter, we will be wrapping-up our **Children's Summer Camps** at Kolomoki Mounds State Park for another year. I will give you a complete report on our 2018 **Arise** Camps in the August edition of *The Bethel News*.

But this month I want to return to our discussion of **church revitalization** and Mark Clifton's probing question we proposed at the end of last month's column: **What about a dying church brings glory to God?** (from *Reclaiming Glory* by John Mark Clifton, Broadman & Holman Publishing, Nashville, TN, 2016, pg.11).

I hope you've given some prayerful thought and consideration to this. The answer that keeps leaping out at me is, sadly, **Nothing!** There is nothing about a dying church that brings glory to God. Such a church is a poor witness to its community and to a critical, skeptical world.

So, what is the solution for a dying church? If you feel that you are a part of such a church, you and other members have been wondering, **How can we get out of the mess we're in?** Well, the Good News is that **with God all things are possible** (Matt. 19:26). But we have to make a choice to stop doing things the way we have been and to earnestly seek His guidance and His transforming, life-giving power for His church.

In Chapter 3 of *Reclaiming Glory*, John Mark Clifton proposes four **pathways** toward **replanting** a church (pp. 35-51). With acknowledgement to him for igniting my thinking on the subject, I would like to modify his list to propose

six different choices that a dying congregation might make:

1. The first option is to do **nothing** at all, but to continue **just as we have been**. This is not a pathway to church revitalization but, sadly, it is the choice of most dying churches, as evidenced by grim statistics I quoted last month. The **end** result of this choice is that the church eventually disbands and leaves behind an empty, abandoned building.

The next five options are possible **paths to revitalization**:

2. The church can experience internal revitalization through true **revival** - not a series of special meetings, but a period of **repentance** and **returning** to God's biblical principles for life as His people. It is characterized by intense prayer and reconciliation between church members, and results in a renewed outward focus on evangelism and missions. It is 100% a work of the Holy Spirit, but the church members must **yield control** to Him!

3. As the church members pray and seek God's direction, the Holy Spirit sometimes leads them to **share** their church **facilities with a new church plant** or church plants. In doing so, they are exercising good stewardship of their material resources while catching the excitement of participating in something new!

4. Or, the Holy Spirit may lead them to **merge with another congregation**, old or new. This is particularly difficult to pull-off in Baptist circles due to our polity, but if both congregations are overwhelmingly supportive of the concept, they can work out the

kinks, with God's help.

5. Or, the Holy Spirit could lead them to actually **re-plant the church** to reach a different group of people. This may or may not entail a change of location. It may or many not entail a name change. But it will always require that the church leadership **relinquish control** to a new set of leaders, often through the involvement of a ministry partner such as a Mission Board or the local Association.

6. A final option is that the congregation may vote to disband but to leave a Kingdom legacy by donating the church property to a new church plant or to a ministry partner, such as the local association, who will utilize that property to help start a new work or new works.

Did you notice that the last five options all have one thing in common? They all involve a willingness to **change** and to relinquish or give-up **control** of something to someone (or someone else). The first option (the one most dying churches take) is all about **hanging on** to what we've got. Interesting!

Hope you're having a great Summer. And have a safe and happy 4th of July!

Bro. James





**NEXT
Missions Coordinating
Committee**

July 16th, 6:30 pm @ Assoc. Office

(NOTE: Ministry Project Proposals and New Work Requests need to be turned into BBA Office by Thursday, July 12th.)

Damascus Baptist Church

Randolph county

Saturday, July 28th 6:00 pm

Gospel Sing

Featuring - Sandra and Friends
(from Adrian, GA)



Administrative Team Meeting

Thursday, July 19th @ 6:30 pm; Assoc. Office

Strategy Meeting

Thursday, July 12th @ 7 pm; Assoc. Office.

All County Coordinators for the 2018

Christmas Backpacks project should attend this important meeting.



Arlington	677.05
Bethel	524.87
Beulah	683.90
Blakely FBC	1,444.67
Bluffton	316.79
Carnegie	
Coleman	
Colomokee	337.98
Cuthbert FBC	512.50
Damascus (E)	
Damascus (R)	237.84
Edison	153.10
Enterprise	1,225.89
Faith	
Fort Gaines	726.95
Georgetown	
Leary	273.26
Milford	493.00
Morgan	
Morris	
Mt. Gilead	
Mt. Hebron	400.00
Mt. Vernon	
New Bethel	
New Hope	68.60
New Zion	
Rehoboth	
Salem	
Shellman FBC	200.00
Shiloh	708.00
Southside	225.00
Sowhatchee	191.46
Springvale	
Vilulah	50.00
Individuals	
TOTAL	9,450.86
Balances June 27 (2018)	
General Fund	17,776.59
Designated Fund	11,946.89
New Work Fund	7,580.36



A Total Church Leadership Equipping Event

GOGeorgia Conference - Mabel White Baptist Church

1415 Bass Road, Macon, GA 31210

\$45 Until August 10th - \$55 At the door

120 topics, National Speakers, Special Music

<https://gogeorgia.net>

Thank you!

Bethel Baptist
Association
124 Bay Ave.
PO Box 398
Edison, GA
39846

Change Service
Requested

The Bethel Baptist Association

Dr. James Holloway, Associational Missionary
Kathy Hardwick, Ministry Assistant
Joyce Jarrett, Financial Assistant
Phone 229.835.2887
FAX 229.835.2023

E-mail: bethelbaptist@windstream.net
Website: www.bethelassociation.com

Presort Standard
Mail (B)
US Postage Paid
Mailed from Zip
Code 39846

Permit # 7

upcoming **EVENTS**

July 2018

- 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY (Assoc. Office closed)
- 12 ðChristmas Backpacksö Strategy Meeting - Assoc. Office 7:00 pm
- 16 Missions Coordinating Committee - Assoc. Office, 6:30 pm
- 19 Administrative Team - Assoc. Office, 6:30 pm

August 2018

- 7 ðBarnabasö Group - Assoc. Office, 11:00 am
- 11 SW GA. Regional Sunday School Training - Cairo FBC, 8:30 am - 12:15 pm
- 17-18 ðGO Georgiaö Church Leadership Conference - Mabel White BC (Macon)

September 2018

- 3 LABOR DAY (office closed)
- 4 ðBarnabasö Group - Assoc. Office, 11:00 am