

# The Central FOCUS

"Experiencing God Together!"

Central Baptist Association

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## Churches:

Argenta  
Arthur  
Atwood  
Boody  
Calvary  
Emmanuel  
Fellowship  
Findlay  
Forsyth  
Galilee  
Hammond  
Heyworth  
Lincoln  
Lovington  
Mt. Zion  
Shiloh  
Sullivan  
Summit Avenue  
Tabernacle  
Tri-Valley

## Mission Statement

*Central Baptist Association exists to foster relationships among churches in order to assist them in fulfilling the Great Commission.*

*The Vision of CBA is to see churches collaborating together to build the Kingdom of God.*

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# Church Revitalization Nine steps to new life.

By Kayla Ricker

Close the doors, or change.

That was the decision Wornall Road Baptist Church in Kansas City faced in 2006 when attendance dwindled to less than 20 and they could barely pay their utility bills.

The church started in 1921 and after decades of effective ministry, Wornall, like many other churches, started to lose its passion for making disciples. They entered into a period of slow decline as more attention was focused on those who remained than it did on those in the community who were still unreached.

But the good news is that the congregation listened to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and Wornall Road Baptist Church chose the road that led to change.

"When a dead church comes back to life, the community can't ignore

that our God is a great God. [He] gets all the glory," said John Mark Clifton, who stepped up to lead Wornall Road when they were at their worst, encouraging them to replant. He is now the National Legacy Church Strategist for the North American Mission Board (NAMB).

During his breakout session at the 2015 Midwest Leadership Summit, Clifton said more than 4,000 U.S. churches of all types close their doors each year—900 of which are Southern Baptist. He said the recent focus on church planting has increased the planting rate to about 1,250 a year, but unfortunately the church death rate has stayed about the same.

"It feels like you're gaining ground and you're getting closer to the goal, but the goal keeps moving further out of reach," Clifton said. "That's why we need Legacy Church Planting.

"We want to plant a new church in a declining church and teach them how to sustain and train for generations. If people believe churches have a shelf life, they start to believe the gospel has a shelf life."

Clifton said that today Wornall Road Baptist is a thriving, multi-generational, neighborhood church. It has planted or provided assistance to nine other congregations in the past seven years and even has a one-year internship program for young men called to replant churches that are struggling. Wornall is fully committed to walking alongside those congregations that are taking the brave step to replant themselves.

And their transformation proves that there is indeed hope for struggling churches.

Clifton outlined nine areas that must be addressed in order to transform a fading church into a legacy church. When a struggling congregation embraces these kinds of changes, it is well on its way to revitalization.

"They think fondly of past revivals and 1970's mission trips rather than focus on what God's doing right now," Clifton said. "What a church has accomplished in the past is never as important as what it is doing for God in the present."

**1. Do everything for God's glory.** It's not about keeping people from leaving; it's about God's glory. When every decision, big or small, is

made with God's glory in mind, that is a huge indicator of a healthy church.

**2. Stand firm in commitment to the Gospel.** The church should no longer find joy in nostalgia; they should find it first and foremost in Jesus. Let go of the past.

**3. Be consistent in prayer.** Satan never leaves easily from that which he has dominion. There is true spiritual warfare happening in a church that is being reborn, and a congregation must be bathed in prayer in order to conquer the evil one and reclaim Christ's church.

**4. Practice efficiency in organization and leadership.** This starts with the pastor. Aging churches often value the process more than the outcome. A new church is on the balls of its feet ready to pivot, while a stubborn church digs in its heels.

**5. Focus on incarnational ministry.** A church has to love the neighborhood it's in. It must desire to serve everyone. In order to introduce people to Jesus and the Gospel, a church must communicate love to their

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**FREE CHILDCARE**  
Provided by Disaster  
Relief Childcare Team.  
(Please pre-register  
your children)

# priority

## Women's Resource Conference

April 29-30 | Tabernacle, Decatur

**COST: \$25**  
**Includes lunch**  
**on Saturday.**

Your church will benefit from the outcome of women joining us at this conference. Women will have the opportunity to be taught by some of today's top ministry leaders and authors, experience worship among friends on similar journeys, participate in breakouts led by our experienced leaders, and missionaries, plus learn from peers like yourself ministering in the local church.

The exhibit hall will offer the opportunity to sample resources available for your ministries, and there will be a WorldCrafts and LifeWay store on-site.

This year's breakouts will have a student track appropriate for our teenage girls in grades 9-12.

**Some of the breakout sessions include:**

**Moving from Events to Transformational Experiences in our Women's Ministries**-This breakout will focus on why offering women connection points into ministry involvement and having a clear purpose to events can change your women's ministry.

**Girl Talk Essentials**-Discover three questions girls of all ages ask all throughout their lives and how it impacts the way they live and relate to one another.

**I'm Brand New to Leadership, Help! How am I Supposed to Lead Women**

**Hi Ho, Hi Ho, It's Off to Work I Go**-What does it look like to bring a biblical worldview into your workplace, and can that really be a catalyst to lead a co-worker to Christ?

**When Your Church is Hurting**-Learn practical, biblical principles that can help you weather the storms of life while leading those around you.

**Living Sent** - Extracting the Moments in Everyday Life  
The Gospel came to save us, but not to stop with us. Every believer has been sent with the Gospel message, yet that assignment intimidates many of us. Let's un-complicate Gospel sharing by extracting Gospel moments in our everyday lives.

**More than Meetings...Making Disciples that Make Disciples**  
You will learn the principles and practices that turn a small group into a disciple-making group.

**Preparation for Persecution: Helping Women Develop a Plan to Stand**-The instruction given in this breakout will offer you both biblical and practical ways that you and the women in your church can develop a "plan to stand" for when it's needed most.

**Your Quiet Time Should Change You**-This session will share practical methods on how we can practice time in God's word in a way that compounds our understanding and fuels our sanctification, and help others you serve experience the same.

**Unexpected Places for Unknown Reasons**-What are the reasons and benefits for the "unexpected places" in our lives? You can be in the middle of the wilderness and still be in the middle of God's will for your life and ministry.

Conference details are available on our web page, but please let me know if there is anything I can help you with to have women from your church join us.

## *All for Him 5k Run/Walk 2016*

**Location:** Fairview Park, 1455 West Fairview Park Drive, Decatur, Illinois 62522

**Cost:** \$20 per person, includes t-shirt and participant medal. You must register by April 17 to guarantee receiving a t-shirt.

**Time:** Registration and packet pickup - 6:30 a.m. at the pavilion and the race begins at 7:00 a.m.

**New this year!**

1) 1 mile fun run/walk for all ages! (Registration required.)

2) *Virtual Option* - Register online and submit your time by May 1 to BarbTroeger@IBSA.org and we will mail you your t-shirt and participant medal.



## 2016 IBSA Ministers' Wives Retreat

**March 18-19, 2016**

### *Where do I fit in this crazy world?*

Sometimes we can find ourselves looking at our world and asking ourselves, Do I Fit? Am I supposed to fit? Am I using force to make myself fit? How could I ever fit in this crazy world? Our world is changing and it can look a little crazy at times, but you do fit? Fitting may not always be comfortable, look like it makes sense, or last for more than a short season, but you do fit. Life is a journey and we can find peace and joy in our journey of fitting into God ordained plans for our lives.

Our guest speaker will be [Rachel Lovingood](#). She is co-author of a Bible study for ministers' wives, *In Our Shoes: Real Life Issues for Ministers' Wives by Ministers' Wives* and *Salvaging My Identity; a 40-Day Journey for Girls and Young Women*. She uses her passion for Christ,



energetic style and her sometimes crazy sense of humor to encourage and teach women to find the answers they need from the only true source of wisdom - the Bible. She is a wife (of a minister), a mom (of three fantastic kids), a friend, a writer, and a teacher.

**Cost: \$20, includes meals, conference only, no housing**  
**\$55, includes meals, double occupancy hotel room**  
**\$95, includes meals, private room**

**Friday, March 18**

**1:30 - 3:00 p.m.**

**General Session,  
at the Hilton,  
downtown Springfield**

**Saturday, March 19**

**All Saturday activities will be  
held at the IBSA Building.  
9:00 - 10:00 a.m.**

For more information or to register, contact Carmen-Hasley@IBSA.org; (217) 391-3143.

Continued from Front Page

community no matter who they are or where they are in life. Healthy churches strive to get this message across.

**6. Be generous with resources.** Redeem the building. Think outside the church walls. Does the local high school football team need someone to host Thursday night spaghetti dinners? Come on in. Would that unused space make a cool kids' birthday party room for the community? Transform it.

"Get the word out that the church's fellowship hall is now available for reunions and volunteer the space for the next election," Clifton said. "Repurpose and redeem."

**7. Develop young men.** Invest in men ages 18-35. This is where the legacy church becomes a reality. The goal is to connect young men, make them disciples, and then teach them to make disciples. You count what's important to you. Don't count attendance; count disciples.

**8. Simplify the strategy.** Church does not have to be complicated. As long as a church exemplifies God-centered worship, makes disciples by providing opportunities and encouraging spiritual and relational growth, and demonstrates local and global service as a lifestyle, it accomplishes Christ's purpose for the church.

**9. Celebrate the legacy often.** A church that transforms from dying to thriving is like a living sermon in its community. Celebrate that. Clifton said many of the original members of Wornall Road Baptist Church still attend there.

"They are like heroes of the faith to the new people," he said. "One of the original ladies passed away recently and several of the young men in the church were pall bearers at the funeral. What a testimony to her faithfulness! She was not alone at the end and the legacy lives on."

For more information about NAMB's church revitalization ministry, visit <http://www.namb.net/revitalization>.

-- Kayla Rinker is a freelance writer living in Missouri. She writes often for Southern Baptist newspapers in the Midwest, including the *Illinois Baptist*.

### Here are 5 signs it's time to revitalize, according to NAMB's National Legacy Church Specialist John Mark Clifton:

**1. Unhealthy reliance on programs.** Faltering churches tend to rely on certain programs. But there is no end-all program that will accomplish the Great Commission in the community all the time. "If there was ever a time that a program did the job, that time is no more," Clifton said.

**2. Over-reliance on personalities.** This takes the focus off Jesus, as well as any changes or growth that might be needed inside the body of Christ.

**3. Inward focus.** Struggling churches are concerned mainly with not losing the people they have. They forget that being a light in the community and serving like Jesus is far more important than the church's building and resources.

**4. Rising frustration.** Declining churches grow frustrated with the community and with each other. Frustration turns into resentment, and a church cannot be Christ's church if it holds on to bitterness.

**5. Missing joy.** Churches just trying to hang on have often misplaced their joy. They are blind to the fact that they have often embraced an idol rather than the joy of their salvation and the gospel message.



## Children's Ministry Day

9:30 AM-March 12, 2016  
at FBC, Mt. Zion  
Registration Open

This is a great opportunity for kids in grades 1 through 6 to experience mission work they can do locally! We will be serving by doing garden work, painting, ministering to ER workers, making projects for nursing home residents, and more! **The cost is \$15 and is not due until the day of the event. You may register by emailing Mallory at [mmcdevitt@fbcmzion.org](mailto:mmcdevitt@fbcmzion.org). Please include student's name, t-shirt size, grade, and phone number.**

### Children's Ministry Day Schedule:

9:45-Arrival  
10:00-Pep Rally  
10:30-Ministry Project  
2:30-Celebration (Parents Welcome)  
3:00-Share Time (Parents Welcome)  
3:30-Dismiss

The cost is just \$15 per person which includes an event T-shirt, lunch, and some ministry supplies. The FBC, Mt. Zion is the CBA location. Go to [IBSA.org](http://IBSA.org) to see the list of projects, then just click on a location to register, and to print a waiver.

**You may register a group without knowing the names, but we are asking for names, t-shirt sizes and payment within 3 weeks of your registration.** If you have any questions, please contact [BarbTroeger@IBSA.org](mailto:BarbTroeger@IBSA.org).

**You need to fill out waiver forms and have them signed by parents to bring to the event.**

## NEXT PASTOR'S GATHERING

Thursday, March 17th, 2016

11:30 AM-12:45 PM

at Emmanuel Baptist Fellowship Hall  
*Randy will provide the lunch, but he needs you to RSVP by the 16th by texting Chris at (217) 521-2420 or email [cbadecaturoffice@yahoo.com](mailto:cbadecaturoffice@yahoo.com)*

Drinks: tea, coffee, water are provided.



## CBA Pastors, Staff & families...

# March

### Birthdays

3-Paige Davis (Arthur)  
5-Tracy Smith (Mt. Zion)  
6-Scott Andrews (Emmanuel)  
11-Susan Baker (Hammond/Lovington)  
24-Tom Miller (Forsyth)



### Wedding Ann.

9-Tom & Kellijo Leach (Tabernacle)  
26-Andrew & Lataine Crowther (Forsyth)





# from the Pews!

**Argenta**-We have been hosting a Financial Peace University video series by Jim Ramsey for the months of February and March. We will be having Jason Michael Frost coming for a concert Saturday, April 2nd, 2016 at 7 PM for a love offering.



**Fellowship**-is having Revival Services with Dr. Scott Andrews beginning Sunday, Mar. 13th at 10 AM and 7 PM and Mon.-Fri., Mar. 14th-18th, each weeknight at 7 PM.

**FBC, Mt. Zion**-Christ in the Passover, Sunday, March 13, at 10:15 am. Jesus' Last Supper was actually a Jewish Passover. Chaim Birnbaum of *Jews for Jesus* will re-create the traditional Passover service and explain how it foreshadowed Jesus' death and resurrection in a presentation called "Christ in the Passover" on March 13th. Chaim Birnbaum will set a table with items traditionally used at the Passover and detail their spiritual significance. He will also explain the connection between the events of the first Passover in Egypt and the redemption that Jesus accomplished, as well as the deep bond between the ancient Passover feast and the Christian communion celebration today.

Good Friday Service at 6:00 pm, March 25th.

Experience Easter Live is a powerfully moving, multisensory family event that guides families along Jesus' footsteps during his last days on earth. In this 20 minute tour, you will travel to Jerusalem for Palm Sunday, sit down for the Last Supper, pray in the Garden of Gethsemane, discover the sacrifice of Good Friday, and celebrate freedom from our sins at the empty tomb that first Easter morning. This family friendly even is designed for individuals of all ages to experience the adventure, and assist in discovering Easter and the events leading up to it in a way they'll never forget. Join us at FBC of Mt Zion, 720 W. Main St, on Saturday, March 26th any time between 1-3 pm. At the end of the tour there will be an Easter treat for all the children. For more information contact the office at 864.2055 or visit [www.fbcmtzion.org](http://www.fbcmtzion.org). Easter Service at 10:15 am.

**Summit Ave.**-is starting *Dinners for Six/Eight* in March. This is a combination small group fellowship and outreach project.

**Tabernacle**-has several mission trips planned for this summer. The first one is June 11-18 to Kodiak Island, Alaska where they will help local church

leaders spread the gospel at a yearly multi-day festival on the island. Also in June, an international trip to Dominican Republic is planned to help build a home for a family in need as part of *Casas por Cristo* (Houses for Christ).

Their Annual Chili Cook-off and Dessert Auction held on Sat., Feb. 27th, netted some good results that go towards the mission trips.

A Good Friday Service will be held, March 25th, at 6 PM.

They also are planning to have their Annual Easter Eggstravaganza on Saturday, March 26th, 2016 from 1-3 PM on the church grounds.

**Sunday, March 13th, 2016**  
**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME:**



"We've just sucked one hour of your life away. Tell me... How do you feel?"



**CBA PHONE NUMBER**  
**(217) 615-0192**



## Mark Your Calendar

### March 2016 *Pastor's Wife Appreciation Month*

- 4th-5th-Student & Collegiate Resource Conf. at IBSA Bldg.
- 6th-13th-Week of Prayer for Annie Armstrong Offering
- 10th-Pastor's IBSA Informal Meeting-
- 12th-Children's Ministry Day at FBC, Mt. Zion**
- 13th-Daylight Savings Time Begins
- 17th-11:30AM-12:45 PM-Pastor's Lunch Gather at Emmanuel
- 18th-19th-Minister's Wives' Retreat in Spgfld.
- 20th-Palm Sunday
- 25th-Good Friday
- 27th-**HAPPY EASTER-He is Risen! Hallelujah!!**

### April 2016

- 8th-9th-Disaster Relief Training at Western Oaks BC, Spgfld.
- 10th-Cooperative Program Sunday
- 11th-12th-Resilient Call Retreat at Lake Sallateeska
- 14th at 6 PM-Leadership Team Mtg at CBA/Emmanuel
- 23rd-(9 AM-12 PM) Semi-Annual Meeting**

## HE IS RISEN!

Early on Sunday morning, as the new day was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went out to visit the tomb.

Suddenly there was a great earthquake! For an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled aside the stone, and sat on it. His face shone like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. The guards shook with fear when they saw him, and they fell into a dead faint.

Then the angel spoke to the women. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He isn't here! He is risen from

the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying." *Matt. 28:1-6*

