



# The Baptist Life

A Monthly Publication of The Middle Florida Baptist Association  
Connecting Baptist Churches in Jefferson, Madison And Lafayette Counties

January 2021

## *Middle Florida Baptist Association*

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### **Extended (15 month) Budget Update as of December 31**

Year To Date Budget Receipts	\$ 106,722.37
Year To Date Goal	\$ 101,000.00
Year To Date Expenditures	\$ 95,893.75

## **Please pray for our churches and pastors**

Bethel Creek

Beulah

Brewer Lake

Central

Cherry Lake First

Concord

Elizabeth

Faith

Fellowship

Greenville

Harmony

Hopewell

Lamont

Lee First

Macedonia

Madison First

Mayo

Midway

Morningstar

Mount Olive

New Home

New Macedonia

Olive

Pine Grove

Pinetta First

Pleasant Grove

Riverside

Sirmans

Saint John's

The Journey

Unity

Chad Little

Greg Ragans

Michael Hornback

Daryl Adams

Murrell Bennett

Jamie Ford

Sammy Hiers (I)

John Myrick

Jackie Watts

Shaun Gay

Billy Rice

Mark Holley

Lucas Morgan

Trent Abbott

Gabe Krell

Rick James

Matt Thompson

Joe Rowe

Will Jacobs

Chris Roth

Dave Musgrave

David During

Michael Bass

Allen Hawkins

Keith Grimes

Bryant Thigpen

Wayne Hudson

Pat Raulerson

Jerry Buchanan

(I) indicates interim pastor

## All Around The Middle

Perhaps there is never a good time to talk about money. So let's go ahead and do that now.

Thank you all who gave last year to the work of our Middle Florida Association. YOU are the Association and you make it possible for us to serve you and work with you to build God's Kingdom here in our region as well as around the world. As I mentioned in our recent Association Council meeting, the Association exists to serve the churches, the churches do not exist to serve the Association. We are subordinate to our churches. And I am grateful for the privilege to work with you.

This past year has been an unusual one for our Association beyond the pandemic. In June of last year we voted to change our administrative year from October through September to January through December instead. To cover the additional three month period in our bookkeeping, we changed last year's budget from a 12-month budget to a 15-month budget. So it is difficult to compare it to previous years other than to look at averages.

Additionally, \$9,875.24 of our receipts came from sources other than our churches. This includes the \$9,400 we received through the Payroll Protection Program.

So, yes! You folks did a great job of giving during a very unusual and challenging time. And while we did spend less than we received from our churches, we did not reach our budget goal.

Who knows what this year will bring? I certainly don't. Some are anticipating diminished giving to churches. But I'm not worried. As long as we work together and our folks give to our churches as God leads them to, I believe we will have all the money we need to do the work we are called to do.

The old saying is true: we are stronger together. I'm glad we are working together to make disciples here in our communities. And I'm glad you support our work. Thank you.

## Share Your Information

If you have information about your church or its people that you would like shared on our web site, Facebook page, calendar or newsletter, please let us know. Contact our office staff any time. If we need to make any corrections, please do not hesitate to let us know.

## Transitions

Jeff Bailey has resigned as pastor of Greenville Church to accept the call to Chestnut Grove Baptist Church in Lewisport, Kentucky. His last Sunday at Greenville was January 3. Please pray for Jeff, his wife Janet as they begin this new chapter of ministry in their lives.

## Challenge 2025 Gathering



Pastors and church leaders should plan to attend next month's Challenge 2025 Gathering at Orlando's First Baptist Church on February 16. Check-in will begin at 8:00 am that day. There will be breakout sessions and general sessions before and after lunch. Along with many breakout session leaders, guest speakers scheduled to speak include Paul Chitwood (President of the International Mission Board), Kevin Ezell (President of the North American Mission Board), Erik Cummings (President of the Florida Baptist Convention) and Tommy Green (Executive Director of the Florida Baptist Convention).

To register or find more information, visit the website for The Gathering at:

<https://flbaptist.org/challenge-2025/>

## Human Life Protection Amendment

If you or your church have signed petition forms for adding a proposed constitutional amendment to the 2022 ballot that will protect human life, please send them to Protect Human Life Florida or bring them by our office. We will mail them for you if you bring them to us.

If you have not yet done so, you can find the petition and other information by visiting their website:

<https://humanlifefl.com/petition/>





### Children's Mission Day

Children's Mission Day is coming up on Saturday, February 13 at Fellowship Church in Madison. The address is 1997 NE Colin Kelly Highway. It will begin at 9:30 and end at 12:30. Lunch will be provided.

Boys and girls in grades 5K through 6 are encouraged to come learn about every day, local and international missions from Annie Armstrong, one of the founders of the Women's Missionary Union (WMU). They will be able to visit international mission fields in Romania, China and Haiti and hear about local missions that have an eternal impact such as Operation Christmas Child, World Crafts, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Pickett Lake Children's Camp, Florida Disaster Relief and more!

Be sure to bring your Baby Bottles full of loose change for one of our local missions, A Women's Pregnancy Center here in Madison. We will also be collecting other items such as diapers and hygiene items for Lafayette Health and Rehab along with unscented lotions, socks, body wash, as well as canned and boxed goods for the food pantries in our area.

This event is sponsored by our Association's Women's Missionary Union. They are interested in involving women of all ages in mission education and mission support. For more information or if you are a WMU member interested in helping with the event that day, contact our leader, Iris Wesson (Hopewell). Her phone number is (850) 973-7415 and her e-mail address is: [iriswesson@yahoo.com](mailto:iriswesson@yahoo.com). We look forward to seeing you there!

### George Liele Day And Banquet

For the first time ever, February 7 has been designated by the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention as 'George Liele Sunday'. The day has two emphases. The first is to recognize the work of church planters, evangelists and missionaries. The second is to appreciate the significant contributions many African-Americans like Liele have made across the centuries to Christianity in general and particularly among those churches that are now part of the Southern Baptist Convention. Many consider Liele the first foreign missionary from the United States. He went to Jamaica in 1782, thirty years before Adoniram Judson left for Burma.

To help celebrate this observance, our Association is hosting a dinner for pastors, key church leaders and their spouses on Thursday evening, February 11 at Fellowship Church in Madison. The address is 1997 NE Colin Kelly Highway. It will begin at 6:30 with a dinner. For more information contact our Association office.

### Camp Pickett Lake Work Days

There are a couple of projects at Camp Pickett Lake for which volunteers are needed. There are two work days scheduled. The first is set for Saturday, February 6. The second will be on Saturday, March 27. Both will begin at 8:30 and lunch will be provided each day.

These projects will involve working with sheet metal, so plan to bring a good pair of work gloves. There may be other smaller projects to complete as well. For more information contact camp manager, Tim Kinsey at 386-249-1123.

### Association Office Work Day

Before spring arrives in March, we could use your help with some pruning and cleaning at the Association office. We have very few tools here, so please bring your shears, trimmers, saws and other tools you could use to help trim bushes and trees. You should probably also bring a good pair of work gloves.

If you would help, join us on Saturday morning, February 27 at 9:00 am. We look forward to seeing you then.



## Operation Christmas Child: Final Report

The 2020 National Collection Week for Operation Christmas Child was approached with much prayer waiting to see how the Lord was going to bless the ministry during a troubling and difficult time. Well, God indeed did bless tremendously. We realized that some churches might not be able to participate in 2020 and some might be able to participate on a limited basis; but we also knew that God would supply the shoeboxes needed to reach children around the world with the Gospel. Even though some churches that participated in 2019 were not able to participate in 2020, we had NEW churches step up to the plate and contribute shoeboxes. What a blessing!

Our final totals for the Suwannee Valley Area were amazing. During National Collection Week, 15,867 shoeboxes were physically brought to one of our drop-off sites. In addition, there were 669 shoeboxes packed online, for a total of 16,536 shoeboxes for our area. That is only 484 shoeboxes less than the total for 2019. God's people are truly a giving, generous people, even in difficult times. Our true goal is to get the Gospel to children using a simple shoebox as a tool to get them to an event where they can hear about Jesus.

If your church packed shoeboxes online exclusively, please contact us so that we can record that your church participated. We received online shoebox totals but were not given any information as to who packed them. This would help in our record keeping.

Thank you for your participation in this ministry. Our desire is that you will continue to support the ministry through your prayers, financial contributions and shoebox donations.

--Susan Crocker, OCC Area Coordinator

## Ministry Opportunity For Singers

Lake Park of Madison Nursing and Rehabilitation is looking for churches to come and sing to their residents. The singing will take place outdoors for the purposes of social distancing. If you or your church group are interested, please contact Maggie Kelley, Activities Director at (850) 973-8277. This is a great opportunity to share the love of Jesus with those who cannot attend church services easily.

## February Is 'Love Packages' Month

Again this year WAFT radio in Valdosta is sponsoring a used-literature collection drive in cooperation with the folks at 'Love Packages' ministry. Love Packages is a ministry aimed at putting Christian literature and Bibles into the hands of people around the world. They send them to ministries in many poor countries to distribute freely to people hungry for the Word of God. For more information, you can visit their website at:

[www.lovepackages.org](http://www.lovepackages.org)

During the month of February, you can take your contributions to WAFT Radio Station. Their address is 215 WAFT Hill Lane in Valdosta. Or locally, you can take them to Uphold's Feed at 644 South Duval Avenue in Madison. They will be accepting your contributions Monday through Friday from 8:00 until 5:30 and on Saturday between 8:00 and 1:00. Here are some basic guidelines for your donations:

### What you can bring:

- Bibles (new or used)
- Tracts
- Reference Books & Commentaries
- Christian Books & Paperbacks: adult or children, nonfiction
- Magazines: Any magazine from a Christian publisher but not from a denomination such as GA/RA magazines, Mature Living or Mission Mosaic.
- Sunday School Supplies: adult/children quarterlies and teacher books
- Daily Devotionals: Upper Room, Daily Bread, In Touch, etc.
- Puppets, Noah's Ark, Bible games, Nativity sets, biblical puzzles: most anything that helps to present the gospel especially to children

### Please DO NOT send:

- VHS/Tapes/Records/8-tracks
- Guideposts
- Handiwork, loose or busy papers
- Secular books (other than dictionaries)
- Christian fiction
- GA/RA magazines, Mature Living or Mission Mosaic magazines
- Library Books

## Campers On Mission: Tow Vehicle Needed

Fred and Karen Batagnani are members of Lee First Church and are active members of Campers On Mission. Campers On Mission is a group of volunteers who travel to ministry-related construction work sites and camp there while they help with the project taking place.

The Batagnanis need to replace the truck they had been using to tow their camper to various work sites through the years. They are looking for a truck that can pull their 35-foot long fifth-wheel camper. They have no particular preference regarding the make or color of the truck, but it should have an 8-foot long bed. They would prefer  $\frac{3}{4}$  or 1-ton truck as long as it has the towing capacity is 10,000 pounds or more and they would rather it have an automatic transmission. They are flexible on some items such as it being a single rear wheel or dually or a gas or diesel engine. With all the traveling they will do, they would prefer an extended or crew cab with amenities associated with traveling such as blue tooth, leather seats, back-up camera, navigation system and such. It should have brake assist or a tow-haul feature. They expect it will be a 2007 model or newer, but are most interested in lower mileage and the condition of the truck. They have a budget of around \$20,000.

If you know of a truck like that, the seller can contact them at (850) 464-4930 or (850) 973-2474. Thank you.

## Calendar of Events

### FEBRUARY 2021

- 6 Camp Pickett Lake workday beginning at 8:30
- 7 George Liele Day
- 9 Executive Committee meets at 6:30 pm
- 11 George Liele Banquet – 6:30 pm at Fellowship Church
- 13 Children's Mission Day – 9:30 am to 12:30 pm (lunch provided) at Fellowship Church – collection of baby bottles for A Women's Pregnancy Center
- 16 Florida Challenge 2025 Event – 8:00 am to 4:00 pm at First Baptist Church of Orlando
- 17 Ash Wednesday – first day of Lent
- 20 Seven Gables Food Ministry in Mayo – 8:00 to 10:00 am
- 27 Association Office workday beginning at 9:00

### MARCH 2021

- 9 Association Council – 6:00 pm at the Association office
- 14 Daylight Savings Time begins
- 20 Seven Gables Food Ministry in Mayo – 8:00 to 10:00 am
- 27 Camp Pickett Lake workday beginning at 8:30
- 28 Palm Sunday

*Middle Florida Baptist Association*

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