

# mission:world

MAGAZINE

*The American Church Dream*

July - August 2020 ::: The Great Commission Magazine of the BMA



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**BMA Missions** seeks to facilitate churches in fulfilling the Great Commission through assessment, training, coaching, and missionary care.



**Lifeworld** assists in taking the gospel throughout the world through radio, television, the internet, and mobile devices.



**Ministers Resource Services** helps meet the financial planning needs of BMA pastors and staffs.



BY: Donny Parrish  
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# The American Church Dream

“Plant churches in America? There’s a church on every corner now! We ought to be helping them!”  
Ever heard anyone say that? I have. I understand why some folks might feel that way. There are a lot of churches in America that are struggling. Many are on death’s door. Should we be helping them? Yes. And should we still be planting new churches? Yes.

There are great reasons to plant new churches in America! New churches reach more people than existing churches. New churches reach a new generation of people, more new residents, and new people groups more effectively than do existing churches. The average new congregation will bring six to eight times more new people into the life of the body of Christ than an older congregation of the

same size. New congregations, in general, are forced to focus on the needs of its nonmembers, simply to get off the ground.

Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) Missions is focused on church planting in the U.S. In this issue of mission:world, you will enjoy the journey of those called to plant new churches in America. Their passion for the souls of people and their desire to reach those far from God will inspire and challenge you. Will you join me in prayer for these missionaries? Will you pray that God will raise up many more to take the message of salvation to a nation that desperately needs a touch from God?

The best reason to plant new churches in America? Jesus told us to! Matthew 28:18-20 is a call to make disciples! That happens best in the context of a local church.





BY: Larry Barker |  
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# THE AMERICAN (CHURCH) DREAM

**T**he dream of the American church, I pray, is that the people of God, saved by the power of God, will live for the purposes of God while carrying out the mission of God. The e-book *Made for More* says it well, “The role of the local church is to be the mobilizing home base. This empowers all disciples to discover their personal calling and then deploy them to express the fullness of Jesus into every corner of culture and into every sphere of society.”

As the North America Director of Church Planting and Church Health, our team’s dream is in agreement with Mark Clifton of North American Mission Board (NAMB), “We are committed to decreasing the death rate of existing churches while simultaneously increasing the birth rate of new churches!” Our dream is to plant churches that are reaching unbelievers with the gospel and are committed to training them to be disciples who make disciples, then seeing true biblical multiplication occur to the fourth generation.

What is the American Dream for your church? Our culture has embedded into us from day one that bigger is better (it is not necessarily bad) and that success is the size of the attendance and offering! Will Mancini has asked if we have turned the Great Commission of go and make disciples into “Go into all the world and make more worship attenders.” The American church, if its goal is to be a biblical church, must be a disciple making church.

We would certainly agree that the Bible is the guideline for how churches should function and operate. The Bible is the moral baseline for our lives and the gold standard for our faith and practice. There are also cultural and contextual principles that must be considered for how a church will effectively reach their community. Paul said, “I have become all things to all people, so that I may by every possible means save some.”

It takes all kinds of churches to reach all kinds of people. God made every single one of us unique and every church should be the same in truth but has the freedom to look different. Scripture does not reveal the logistics of daily decisions such as when, where, how, or even the what. That is the job of the Holy Spirit. In John 16:13 Jesus says, “When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth.” The Holy Spirit leads the way because it is a journey of following Him.

Scripture does not tell us where to pastor or whether we are called to pastor. Scripture does not tell us whether to use a hymnbook or to project the words on the wall. Scripture does not tell us to move here and plant a new church. Why? Because it is a process of being in His word and moving forward as the Holy Spirit directs. Galatians 5:25 says, “Since we live by the Spirit, we must also follow the Spirit.” We know that the Holy Spirit will never lead us contrary to His Word!

The Holy Spirit directs us where to go, when to go, and when to change our plans and directions. In Acts 16:7 we read, “When they came to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.” The right place to minister was given to Paul by the Holy Spirit. Paul was called to plant churches and when he planned to preach the truth in Asia the Holy Spirit forbade him. There is a calling to plant but there must also be clear confirmation of where to plant.

The dream of the American church must be to make disciples of all people everywhere as the Lord permits. As we make disciples who make disciples, we then see churches planted out of our disciple-making efforts. These church plants are to be biblically sound and culturally relevant. Truth is timeless but it does not reveal the here and now. That is why Jesus sent the Holy Spirit who abides in every believer to guide us and direct us with the principle of, “If the Lord permits.”

We must be careful of adding extra-biblical stipulations and requirements on other churches because they do things differently. This all too often is judgmental at best and legalistic at worst. The scriptures give us the guidelines and boundaries that create the border of where our ministries should function. Within these biblical parameters there is much liberty and freedom for the Holy Spirit to be our guide. Maybe we are majoring on the minors while minoring on the majors.

What are the majors? The Bible should be our standard of truth and baseline; the Holy Spirit should be our guide; prayer should be our

indispensable source of God’s power and wisdom; making new disciples should be our pattern; churches planting churches should serve as our model; contextualization should serve as our liberty; and multiplication should be our goal. Our mission is to carry out the Great Commission, and these seven values form a funnel that all of our strategies, approaches, and planning must go through.

Why do we need church planters? First, because Jesus said, “The harvest is abundant but the workers are few.” Second, because He also said, “Pray to the Lord of the harvest that He would raise up laborers.”

We are called God’s co-workers. It has been stated well that, “God is not dependent on us but neither is He independent of us.” God’s heart runs through our hearts as we seek to co-create with Him. This requires high God-awareness along with a high self-awareness.

God has a big dream for your life. Ephesians 2:10 tells us, “For we are His creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them.” That means God had a

dream for your life before you were born, and He created you uniquely to fulfill that dream. God’s work in your life is to redeem His purposes for you that Satan has tried to sabotage and destroy. Are you being who God intended you to be? Are you fulfilling God’s calling on your life?

Here are a couple of examples of new church planting efforts that are striving to fulfill the seven values that I have mentioned for our dream for the American church multiplying and reaching unbelievers with the gospel.





First, is the story of Antioch Baptist in Conway, Arkansas finding a young man, Andy Comer, to plant a church in Georgetown, Texas. The beauty of this partnership, which cannot be overstated, is a local church that allowed a planter to intern for training, recruited a core team, supported them 100 percent financially, and then sent this team out. This was also a team effort between Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) church planting and the church because we were able to add to their journey assessment, training, and coaching.

Second, although quite different yet quite similar, is Red Oak Baptist Church in Harrison, Arkansas who invested in a young man, Christian Malone, who was raised there. He headed off to Bible college, finished his master's degree and then returned home for a season of serving on staff while being mentored and trained. Red Oak then sent him to Minneapolis, Minnesota fully funded by the church to plant there. Once again BMA Missions was able to provide assessment, training, and ongoing coaching.

Antioch Georgetown in Texas is now a self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting

church focused on carrying out the Great Commission that they have embraced. The Malones are very early in their church-planting journey having arrived in Minneapolis in June of 2019. They have begun Bible studies in their apartment high rise. They have been preparing to launch and are prayerfully planning the next stages of this plant.

The need for more church plants focused on evangelism/discipleship cannot be understated. Seven states in the US are now classified by missiologists as unreached people groups because less than 2% of the population is evangelical. There are five to seven more states that could easily be classified this way very soon if the current trends continue. Something must change because recent studies indicate that every baptism is costing the American church over two million dollars on average.

Dream big because Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now to Him who is able to do above and beyond all we ask or THINK, according to the power that works in us."





Moving into the

BY: Donny Parrish  
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# me Culture

**H**ave you ever watched the sun rise off of the coast of California or felt the mist of a New England afternoon when the sun sets over the Atlantic? Maybe you have enjoyed an evening walk through the humidity of the French Quarter on a New Orleans summer afternoon or felt the chill of a Windy City day during a Chicago winter. From north, south, east, and west, America looks different, feels different. It's a kaleidoscope of mountains, flatlands, swamps, hills, deserts, and beautiful landscape. She is as diverse a land as any place in the world.

America's people in many ways reflect its diverse landscape. From the people who live in concrete jungle of New York City to the cowboy spirit of the people living on the high plains of West Texas, to the people who live the Country Music lifestyle of Nashville, Tennessee to the people who reside in suburbia Seattle, Americans are as different as the land on which they live. They think differently. They respond differently. Most importantly, they hear differently.

Since her inception, Lifeword has been committed to speaking the gospel of Jesus in a language that people can understand. We call that their "heart language." All around the world, in 75 different languages, Lifeword has taken this commitment seriously. Each broadcast/telecast is scrutinized for not only language accuracy, but also for contextual relevance. It is not enough for us to present the message of Christ in a language. Lifeword's goal is to push for understanding. We want to communicate the heart language of the listener.

The year 2020 finds Lifeword striving to do the same in America. Just as people around the world must be presented with the gospel of Jesus in their heart language, America needs to hear and understand the gospel, too. A "one-size fits all" approach to sharing the gospel will not be as effective as tailoring each broadcast to the culture where people live.

Paul must have been amazed when he entered the city of Athens. The people living in that city were on the god cafeteria plan. There were evidently many idols that had been set up for public worship. They were a part of the daily life of the people. When Paul began to preach to the people about Jesus and the resurrection, the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to try to use their intellect and philosophy to debate with him. So, when they invited Paul to the Areopagus to state his case for Christ, his ability to speak the language of the people in Athens came to surface.





“Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To The Unknown God. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you” (Acts 17:22-23). They were religious. But they didn’t know Jesus. Paul was on a mission that day. His mission was to introduce Jesus to the people of Athens and to do it in a cultural language that they could understand. These people were living in a different world. In fact, they had an entirely different worldview. If he was going to reach into their lives and present the need of a Savior, he was going to have to speak their language, a language that they could understand. And that’s just what he did.

“For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To The Unknown God. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you” (Acts 17:23).

He even quoted one of their well-known intellectual poets of the day.

“For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring” (Acts 17:28).

Paul was speaking their language.

In 2020, you will begin to see more English language broadcasts on social media coming from Lifeword. Our intent will be to move into various cultures where the Light of the gospel needs to penetrate darkness. We will engage people who are living in those cultures every day to produce gospel content where people can really understand what it is we are saying about Jesus. The Lifeword business model will not be to own content, simply to provide a platform for gospel-centered, biblically accurate messages to be heard.

Already at work is new content production for the following cultures in America: the American deaf community, US high school and college students, the Millennial generation, children’s broadcasts, the African American community, family/marriage enhancement, Pakistani Americans, US cowboy culture, and Arabic speaking Americans. Soon there will be a Christian news outlet on Lifeword.org giving watchers a first-hand account of how God is moving around the world. Day by Day (a daily Bible-teaching broadcast), the Lori Cline Show (women’s broadcast), and Luis Ortega’s weekly Spanish-speaking videos have already proven themselves to be effective social media centered broadcasts, daily garnering thousands of views. The goal is to set English speakers as a template for other language groups to emulate.

“Who Is Jesus to You?” Lifeword is now asking that question of people around the world in 75 languages. Across social media platforms around the world, Lifeword is putting that life-changing question in front of people every day. More importantly, Lifeword is giving people the answer to that question!



Imagine for a moment that you live in Saudi Arabia. You are scrolling through your Facebook or WhatsApp newsfeed and you see this question posed to you, “Who Is Jesus To You?” You may have been raised in the Muslim faith, but the person of Jesus Christ has always been of interest to you. You decide to click on the icon. Immediately your phone or computer is taken to the Lifeword Cloud, [lifeword.org](http://lifeword.org). There you see a dialogue box that says “languages.” Your heart language is Arabic, so you scroll down the list of languages to find Arabic. Once you click on your heart language, the entire website converts to Arabic. Pastor Charlie Costa is on the screen and he begins to speak to you about the person of Jesus Christ, who He claimed to be and how you can make Him your Savior. In addition, there are many other Arabic speaking broadcasts on the site to allow you to know more about the Christian faith in your own heart language.

In addition, Lifeword is helping Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) missionaries plant new churches all around the world. We are giving missionaries broadcast and internet tools that will allow them to introduce themselves to a new community and the opportunity to continue to have an on-going presence over the airwaves and internet.

Lifeword is committed to taking the life-changing gospel of Jesus to the entire world. But it’s not enough just to have a broadcast. We want to broadcast in a language that is understandable and relevant to the culture we are speaking to. That takes seeking out people that understand and are relatable to each culture. That takes much planning and time. But it’s worth it—because people are looking for answers to life’s greatest problems in these challenging days. And, more and more people are searching out these answers on the internet.

Lifeword is there. Giving hope. Giving people Jesus.

We tell the story!





# WHY HAS EVANGELISM DECLINED?

BY Ed Stetzer  
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I believe both mission and evangelism are important for both individual followers of Christ and to churches, but I also believe evangelism will fall off our radars if we aren't intentional to prioritize it.

We have entered a decade or two lull in evangelistic passion among evangelicals now. This is ironic since “evangelical” and “evangelistic” come from the same root word which means gospel, good news, or evangel. I think there are several reasons for this.

First, there's been a bit of a backlash to past models that seemed reductionistic and mechanistic.

Os Guinness in Fool's Talk observed how “recent forms of evangelism are modeled not on classical rhetorical or even on good communication theory, but on handbooks for effective sales technique.”[1]

Some are bothered by the idea that evangelism is boiled down to asking people to answer two questions: “If you were to die today, do you know for sure you'd go to heaven?” And, “Do you know for sure you are going to be with God in heaven?”

Over time, people increasingly felt these were reductionist and mechanical, so (for good or for bad) they moved away from them.

You're more likely now to find Christians make jokes about the way they used to do evangelism than actually do evangelism. Instead of starting with our questions, we should start where people are and walk them to the gospel.

Second, many believers don't have confidence in the gospel.

A LifeWay Research study found about half the people who regularly attend an evangelical church give a pluralistic or a universalistic answer to questions about the need for people to know Christ.

A higher percentage would likely be functionally universalistic or pluralistic. Showing how the gospel and Scripture connect to and help make sense of all of life -- not just our spiritual life -- can grow confidence in it. One study found Millennials are four times as likely to stay in church when shown how the Bible applies to all of life, including their career.



Third, it's getting harder to share the gospel in a context where people are further away from what their parents or grandparents believed.

You're starting with people who are far more secular than before. This means there's a greater gap between what you believe and what they believe, so the starting point for sharing Christ is different. You can't assume they believe things like you. Like Paul at Mars Hill, we can start where they are and show them Christ.

A fourth issue is a sort of spiritual replacement, replacing evangelism with another spiritual emphasis.

Today, we talk more about social justice or societal transformation, seeing that they are clearly important and part of the mission. However, we'd be naive to think that some will not lose their evangelistic focus as they gain a passion for other aspects of the mission.

"We still believe in evangelism," we say. But saying, "We still believe in evangelism," means you're about a decade from not believing in evangelism, because what we neglect in one generation is often rejected in the next.

You can (and should) add important issues without subtracting a focus on evangelism.

A fifth issue is our lack of compassion for the lost around us.

Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Pray to the Lord of the harvest" (Matt. 9:37). Just before these verses Matthew describes Jesus' emotional state, observing Jesus had compassion for them. The term "compassion" means the visceral organs – a deep, gut-wrenching affection.

It's strange that Matthew would describe the emotional state of Jesus, but this reveals Jesus' heart was and is for people who do not know Him.

One of the reasons people don't share the gospel is they don't share the deep compassion of Jesus. Do we care for people? If not, do we care about the fact that we don't care?

I pray that people might weep with Jesus, might look over their city and weep because they are like sheep without a shepherd. People don't care how much we know about God unless they know how much we care about them.

Sixth, there's a fear of not having the answers to questions people raise.

Sharing the gospel in the 1950's was simpler for many: even people who didn't go to church thought that the church was good. If someone shared the gospel with you, you knew the general framework of the gospel. You knew that God wrote a book called the Bible; you knew He sent a son, but you didn't really understand how you might know Him personally.

Evangelism in a Christendom age was largely driven by telling people the details of what they already had an idea about, more or less connecting the dots for them.

Now, if somebody says, "Why is Jesus the only way?" what would we say? Or if someone says, "What do you believe about creation?" how do you respond? There are a hundred things people could say, so believers get nervous that they won't know what to say.

For people who are afraid, I would say, "You can say 'I don't know.'" Nowhere in Scripture are we told to answer every question a person has. We are told to give them the hope found in Christ (I Peter 3:15). What a great opportunity to show humility, and to learn and listen together so that you can share with your friend who doesn't know Christ.

Here's a final issue: some people think their lives aren't good enough for them to be witnesses.

"If I was only more godly, I'd witness," they think. The gospel means good news. Here's some good news for the Christian: God uses broken, messed up people, just like you.

One of the things I love about witnessing is I can be open and share that I too am imperfect and broken but Jesus saved me, and He's making me whole. That authenticity and vulnerability is effective in sharing Christ today.

I left LifeWay Research three and a half years ago—a job I loved—to spend the rest of my ministry helping to bring us back to a greater conviction that women and men without Christ are dead in their trespasses and sins, and need to hear and respond to the good news of the gospel.

[1] Os Guinness, *Fool's Talk: Recovering the Art of Christian Persuasion* (Downer's Grove: IVP Books, 2015), 41.





# 7 HABITS OF OUTWARDLY LOOKING CHURCHES

BY: Thom Rainer  
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**I**t was not a dramatic moment in time. Instead it was subtle, almost too subtle to be noticed. It became evident first in mainline churches. But evangelical churches followed a few years later. The erosion was slow, but it became glaringly apparent after several years.

The change of which I speak is the movement away from outwardly focused ministries in churches. Over time, most of the resources of time, money, and ministries have shifted more toward the members. Churches are now gathering in holy huddles with little intention of breaking out into a world of lostness and loneliness.

## HOW IT HAPPENED

How did this negative trend develop? Though many perspectives could be offered, allow me simply to share the practical perspective. There was a time

when most churches had an outreach ministry. And more times than not, this ministry was a type of program with predictable patterns.

But church leaders, vocational and lay alike, became program averse. So they slowly began eliminating outreach programs in their churches. I understand why this development took place. The programs seemed ineffective, not culturally relevant, and often cumbersome to lead and implement.

The problem, however, is that nothing replaced the programs. And the mild culture of outreach in churches was replaced with no culture of outreach. At the same time, more churches started sending members on international mission trips. This development was good. But it gave many in the church a sense of false comfort that the church was really outwardly focused.

The problem was that many times the local community became a neglected mission field.

## POSSIBLE BEGINNING POINTS FOR AN OUTWARDLY FOCUSED CHURCH

So I began asking leaders in outwardly focused churches about their practical steps. I made certain the leaders were in different size congregations lest I offer suggestions limited to one group of churches. The leaders were in churches with worship attendance ranging from 50 to 2,500.

The answers I received were immensely practical, very helpful, and highly doable. Though this list is by no means exhaustive, here are seven of the more common habits.

1. The church takes time during each worship service to pray for the community. Prayer is powerful; and the church members become more focused about their communities.
2. A volunteer or staff person is accountable for the outreach ministry of the church. If no one has leadership responsibility, it does not get done.
3. A regular report is provided to church members about outreach and ministry efforts in the community. What gets reported gets done. Have you noticed most churches provide financial reports to the church members? That says the money is important. We need at least equal emphasis on the importance of outreach ministries.
4. Churches have regular “mystery” guests come to the worship services. One church leader told me that his church asks someone in the community to be a mystery guest every quarter. Those guests are always first-time guests, and they share their experiences with leaders later that day or week. The church members thus get to see the worship services through the eyes of a community member.
5. The church gives obsessive attention to their websites. A church website is the new front door for churches. It’s almost always the first place prospective guests go. These websites should be designed in a very guest friendly way.
6. The churches are intentional about scheduling ministries, events, and activities for reaching the community. One pastor told me that his church always focuses on one key community outreach ministry per month. The church’s attendance is less than 80, but it was under 40 two years ago.
7. Churches are intentional about connecting with their communities through social media. It is mind boggling that we have the most pervasive form of communication in history, but very few churches use it strategically. I know a pastor in a rural community who worked with a Millennial and asked her to lead the social media outreach. It has been a great success because someone is responsible for it.







# SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

The Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) of America Chaplaincy is a mission-minded ministry but one that sends qualified BMA ministers from our churches into secular organizations.

We currently have 23 BMA endorsed chaplains serving in the military, prisons, police departments, hospitals, hospice settings, and corporations. While our churches might individually endorse many more chaplains into similar organizations, I am not responsible for these types of endorsements. The reason is because many institutions do not require an endorsement by a denominational official and that is what I am: the BMA endorsing agent. Many smaller organizations require only a verbal agreement for a minister to become their chaplain. Others may ask for a local pastor’s recommendation; while others may not even require the chaplain to be a licensed or ordained minister.

However, generally speaking, larger organizations tend to have greater prerequisites for chaplains. A large hospital may require the applicant to possess Clinical Pastor Education training and a

denominational endorsement. The U.S. military requires the applicant to have both an accredited bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree in religion, along with pastoral experience with a denominational endorsement. A certain corporation that has hired one of our chaplains, requires him to speak Spanish fluently for their many Hispanic employees. Organizations that provide living wages for their chaplains tend to have higher standards for employment overall.

Similar to our pastors who have surrendered to church ministry, our chaplains have a calling to this unique ministry environment. Their ministry is not in a church setting, but rather to the diverse workforce of varied organizations. Our chaplains are invited to join these organizations by the leaders or owners, in order to provide moral and spiritual guidance for their employees, or to those they service.

A recent poll revealed that 43 percent of Americans are “unchurched,” meaning they have never attended church. The survey also revealed that 34 percent of Americans are “de-churched.” In other words, these people have gone to church, but for various reasons have dropped out of church and say they do not plan to return. However, nearly all





CAPT David L. Cline, U.S. Navy



CPT Chris Freeman, MS State Guard



LT Matthew Dean, U.S. Navy

these people are employed. Whether unchurched or de-churched, 77 percent of Americans do not attend church. This is where the unique ministry of our chaplains come into play. Our chaplains enter those workplaces and become witnesses of God's grace as they minister in those unique environments. Many of these people have no pastor but will quickly call on their chaplain when a crisis or spiritual need arises. Our chaplains are in their workspaces, engaging them and sharing God in their lives. This is a tremendous opportunity for the BMA to extend the gospel outside of our church walls and into the very lives of those who otherwise would not enter a church building.

Employers invite chaplains into their organizations because they value having a spiritual influence

among their people. Chaplains are typically "infused" into the very fiber of their staff and become co-members of their leadership teams. Chaplains are empowered with the ability to provide ministry to everyone who works for them. They are also appreciated for possessing the ability to be a visible and viable, moral compass to the entire workforce, literally becoming the representative of God in the workplace.

Whether our BMA chaplains serve in the military, civic, institution, or corporation, they are an extension of the mission work of our churches, taking the truth of God's word into the varied workplaces to which they are called.

Do you have a calling for chaplain ministry? Contact me to discuss the many possibilities.

Dr. Scott Carson, (Army, COL, Retired) Chaplaincy Director



BY: Scott Carson  
BMA Missions  
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# PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

BY: COL Kevin Guthrie |  
U.S. Army  
Washington, DC



**A**s Chief of Resources for the US Army Chaplain Corps at the Pentagon, I have a job that most chaplains try to avoid. Many of my peers assume that ministry within the massive concrete walls of this five-sided building must somehow be absent from existence. While the nature of my work is exceedingly complex and often stymied by regulatory riddles, I have been entrusted with an important ministry opportunity: finding funding so soldiers and their families may exercise their right to the free exercise of religion. This funding enables Army Chaplains to minister to soldiers and families all over the globe. An additional ministry opportunity I have is to oversee and manage the Strong Bonds program, the largest retreat-based couples and family ministry in the world, training nearly 100,000 people at 2,500 events annually.

Truthfully, I've spent considerable time wrestling with an immense bureaucracy and never-ending cycles of digital paperwork within the Pentagon, all for the sake of chasing resources for ministry. I seem to have a knack for the work, which apparently contributed to the reason for my lengthy seven-year tour in DC. Thankfully I've also found time to develop meaningful professional relationships within the Pentagon. This has opened the opportunity for me to both influence and minister to Army leaders in a workplace filled with endless cubicles. Work endeavors often lead to moments in which personal ministry, prayer, counseling, and sharing of scriptures happens with senior leaders as well as employees throughout the building.

Just as the churches of the Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) of America have faced rapid religious and societal change, the US Army Chaplain Corps is striving mightily against recent cultural pressures. These pressures promote abandonment of communal worship, social isolation, and destruction of meaningful human connection.

The current generation of soldiers coming into the Army retain this tendency, which can often lead to the abandonment of faith and an increase in negative behaviors such as sexual assault, spousal and child abuse, substance abuse, and suicide, all of which erode readiness for combat. Recognizing this crisis, the Army's Chief of Chaplains, Chaplain (Major General) Thomas Solhjem, made "People" and "Community" the top two religious support priorities for the Chaplain Corps. CH Solhjem said, "As we care for the soul of the Army, we will invest in people, connect them in spirit, and cultivate community."

Building a community always comes back to the core, its human members...people. We know this, intuitively, but it seems the more "community" has become important to leaders, the more that technocrats rise to build charts, graphs, and programs. To combat leaders who focus on themselves or prefer to direct from the top down, our Army leaders emphasize relationships, not statistical progress, as a measure of health. As part of that goal, chaplains are encouraged to model relationship-building and to offer hope for a better life.

Unfortunately, coronavirus recently inserted itself into the middle of our lives, impacting the way we worship together collectively. This now amplifies societal pressure to self-isolate and causes further loss of human connection. I am hopeful that the promise contained within Philippians 4:6-7 will be passed along (virally): "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." God's promises are not on lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic. While we may be physically separated from each other, we can search for new ways to care for the soul of our people, and to build community.





Antioch Georgetown worship service

BY: Andy Comer  
 Antioch Georgetown  
[antiochgt.com](http://antiochgt.com)



# ANTIOCH GEORGETOWN

I'll never forget that phone call in December of 2014. The pastor on the other end asked a very direct question: "Have you ever thought about planting a church?" My initial response was, "Yes, but..."

You see, I was thinking about planting. God was stirring in my heart and in the heart of my wife about the possibility of picking up our family and moving to a new area to start making disciples. "Yes, but..." I wanted to move on my terms. I wanted God to iron out all the details first. I wanted to know exactly where, who, how. "Yes, but..."

As I think back, I was not yet completely surrendered to God's agenda. I was mostly surrendered. Thankfully, in God's grace and mercy, over the next nine months, He moved us from mostly surrender to fully surrendered. We moved to Conway, Arkansas to be active in the ministry of Antioch Conway. After two years, Antioch Conway sent us out with a team of twenty-five adults and

a dozen kids to plant Antioch Georgetown in Georgetown, Texas—a fast-growing city just north of Austin, Texas.

Here's the truth God showed us through our journey. We cannot live out God's plan for our lives mostly surrendered. In every area of our lives, we must be fully and completely surrendered to the Lord's direction. That's what you see in the church at Antioch in Acts 13. They were completely surrendered!

"As they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then after they had fasted, played, and laid hands on them, they sent them off" Acts 13:2-3.

Did the church in Antioch respond with "Yes, Lord, but not Barnabas and Saul. They are too valuable to us here in Antioch," or "Yes, Lord, but give us some more time. We don't feel ready"? Not at all! Because they lived in full surrender, they



were more than willing to do exactly what the Holy Spirit was leading them to do. God used the church in Antioch to send Paul and Barnabas to begin a church planting movement, of which I argue, we are still seeing the effects today!

However, it's important to understand there were some patterns present in the Antioch church that facilitated their full surrender. Here are five clear norms evident in the church at Antioch.

First, they were a teaching church. In Acts 13:1, we are given a list of teachers who were active in the church. The church at Antioch wasn't just a social gathering, but rather a gathering of people centered around the teaching of God's word. You'll never fully surrender to God's plan if you're not fully engaged in God's Word.

Second, it was a worshiping church. The church heard from the Holy Spirit while they were worshiping the Lord! Worship is the simple act of drawing near to God by ascribing Him worth. We can worship through giving, singing, fasting, sharing, praying, and even through our obedience.

Next, we see the church in Antioch was a listening church. They clearly heard the Holy Spirit speak. The Scriptures record a detailed account of what the church heard. It wasn't a vague, "send someone somewhere." It was a specific who, "Barnabas and Saul," with a specific what, "the work to which I have called them."

Fourth, it was a praying church. The church at Antioch didn't move presumptuously or



Andy Comer, Ben Brandon and Stephen Castleberry

prematurely. They spent time fasting and praying together! When a church prays together, there is a unifying alignment that occurs around the mission of God. Because they prayed together, they were empowered to surrender together.

Last, the church in Antioch was a sending church. They were willing to let go of valuable resources. The ultimate test of surrender is the answer to the question, "Are we willing to let go?"

Here's the bottom line. Healthy churches plant healthy churches. Churches where teaching, worshipping, listening, praying, and sending are the norm will plant healthy churches. The fact is we reproduce who we are, not who we think we are. What area of your life are you not living in full surrender? Are you guilty, like I was, of living mostly surrendered? Are you more likely to say, "Yes, but..." or "Here I am, send me"?



Antioch Georgetown members gather for worship



# TWIN CITIES

BY: Christian Malone  
BMA Missions  
[bmamissions.org](http://bmamissions.org)





Churches planting churches is the ultimate fulfillment of the Great Commission. Christ's command to go and make disciples of the nations is carried out by local congregations who send of their own members to reproduce new churches in new places. We have the great privilege of being a small part of this wonderful commission through our new church plant in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Our church planting team moved to the Twin Cities in June of 2019 sent by a thriving congregation in Harrison, Arkansas. Our sending church, Red Oak Baptist, began as a church plant over twenty years ago and has grown and matured to the point of being able to fully support us as its first church plant! More Grace Baptist Church is the direct result of the obedience and faithfulness of a small, local congregation that desired to be used of God to make an impact for Christ throughout the world.

Our desire is to continue this tradition of spiritual multiplication by being a church that plants more churches. The mission is the same; the field is different. We believe that where there are many different people, there is a need for many different churches. From diverse urban communities, to the affluent suburbs, the Cities are in great need of more biblically-sound, gospel-centered churches. The Twin Cities Metro is home to over 3.5 million people from across the globe, offering one of the largest and most diverse refugee populations in the United States. Much of the "unreached" world from many restricted nations have chosen to make the Cities their home,

making it a unique place for ministry.

The launch of More Grace Baptist Church was set for Easter 2020, but with the spread of COVID-19 our plans have been changed rather significantly. We still plan to launch in Crest View Elementary School, a small school in the heart of our community. The teachers, staff, and administrators of Crest View have been amazing to work with and we are excited to be able to serve them in the future!

However, with the recent global pandemic, we, like many other churches, are in the process of seeking the guidance of the Lord in how to move forward. Since June, we have been able to build our launch team by meeting several wonderful couples here in the Cities who are passionate about church planting. While the physical launch of the church has been indefinitely postponed, we are hopeful that God will use our small team to be a shining light of His goodness and love during this dark time. We are grateful for the opportunity to live out our faith in trying times so that the faithfulness of God will mean that much more to a world in desperate need of hope!

We ask that you join with us in prayer as we continue to grow our launch team and seek to make use of all that God has provided to reach our community with the gospel. We are hosting weekly online services and actively seeking safe community service opportunities to show the love of Christ to our neighbors in practical ways. We cannot wait to see what God will do through this time of trial for His glory, both in our small church plant and around the world!



Christian & Michelle Malone Family





BY: Adam Batarseh  
BMA Missions  
[bmamissions.org](http://bmamissions.org)

# ARABIC HOME BIBLE STUDY

*“We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.” 3 John 8*

**B**aptist Missionary Association (BMA) Orlando Arabic Language Ministry started around three years ago in a Bible study at my home. After we had talked with Pastor Larry Barker and Pastor Ashraf Sarah, God opened doors for my wife and I to start visiting a family from Jordan. They began to come to the Bible study at our home. Soon, we had around ten to twelve people attending. We then moved to a small chapel at First Baptist Church of Orlando, joining with a few people there. As they were without a pastor, we began hosting a Sunday evening service at the church. Now we have anywhere from fifteen to twenty in attendance, sometimes more. Each week different people come. We are praying now about starting a mid-week service for those who can't attend on Sunday.

My wife and I continue to visit other Arabic families, sharing the gospel with them and praying with them at their houses. We need your prayers. Because of COVID-19, we can no longer visit these families or hold a church service at the church. However, we have created a church group on WhatsApp. We make recorded messages or short videos and share them with our contacts. We continue to pray for the future of this church.

Please keep us in your prayers. We have several plans for the church, including special services and dinners to encourage new people to come to church. The Arab people in Orlando live at many different locations. We try to serve them as best as we can. Thank you to our BMA family for your prayers and all you do to support us.



Adam Batarseh and his home bible study

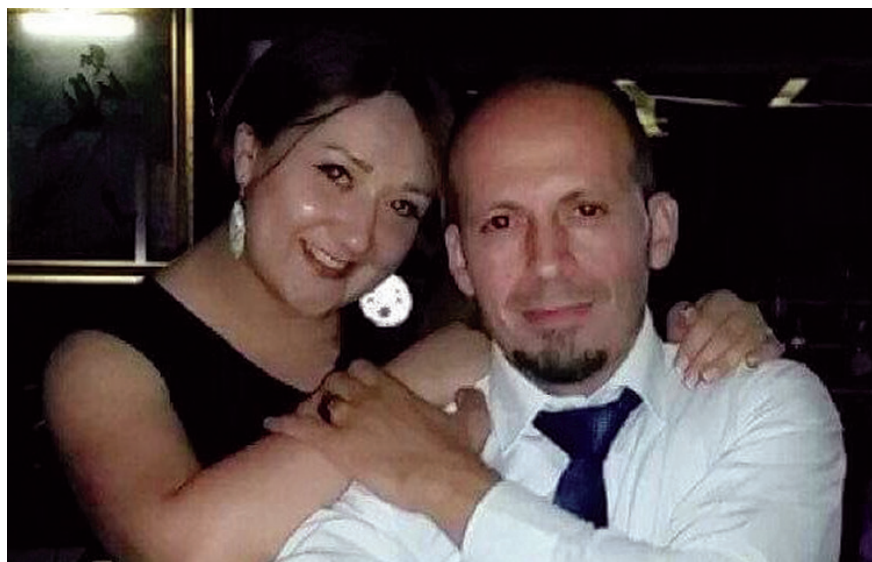


## Reaching Arabic Speaking Americans

BY: Larry Barker  
BMA Missions  
[bmamissions.org](http://bmamissions.org)

“**M**any North American leaders in Christian mission and evangelism would consider immigrants arriving in North America from all around the world a key opportunity to engage and reach the nations with the gospel. While that certainly holds true, it should also be taken into consideration that the largest number of immigrants coming to North America are already Christian, many of whom are arriving with a missional call. Many church leaders pray daily from Luke 10:2 that the Lord of the harvest would send more workers to North America. One answer to this prayer are the arrival church planters who are emerging from immigrant communities all across North America.” –Daniel Yang, Send Institute

This describes several of our church planting efforts here in North America. God answered our prayers in sending forth laborers by bringing them here from other countries. Our church planters, Adam and Noor Batarseh, are products of Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) work in the country of Jordan as we have cooperated with national ChangeMakers over the years. God guided them, brought them here, and now they are building relationships and sharing the gospel with Arabic speaking people from many different nations!



Adam and Noor Batarseh





JESUS  
CHANGES  
EVERYTHING

# Perspective Through Crisis

BY: Todd Cox  
StonePoint Church  
[stonepoint.org](http://stonepoint.org)

Todd Cox preaching at StonePoint church

**A**s I write this article, we are all in the midst of the COVID-19/coronavirus pandemic and are dealing with unprecedented times as a church, country, and world quite frankly. However, as we all know who put our faith in Jesus, God is sovereign, on His throne, and is not surprised or caught off guard by this at all. I actually believe God will use this time to draw men, women, and children to Himself and to help people re-focus on Who He is and in Whom they should be putting their faith and trust.

I am reminded of Jesus telling Peter and the rest of His disciples that He will grow His church and the gates of hell will not prevail! God will use what Satan intended for evil to save many lives; His Word will not return void. During this time, Jesus is still drawing people to Himself; and if we are poised properly, we too will be part of His plan to be conduits of His message as we stream on social media platforms and see that we are reaching far more people now than we were before! That has certainly been the case for us here in North Georgia at StonePoint Church.

This coming October, we will celebrate our four-year anniversary since officially launching. We have experienced many ups and downs through the process, but we are so thankful that we have had faith to continue to reach people and trust in God for the outcome. We are currently running around 100 people weekly with an even greater reach if we were to include our online presence and audience. We were ready to baptize another five people on March 22, and in fact, we were going to be launching two services on March 29, but we had to delay that due to the coronavirus. The good news is that we have actually increased our reach four to five times our viewership of our Sunday messages, and more people are getting connected than ever before.





Our church staff and leadership have been phenomenal during this time of crisis! We thankfully have been able to pivot pretty quickly to adjusting our services and other groups. I'm thankful that we had already been livestreaming our Sunday services for the past three years on Facebook and then sharing them also on our website, iTunes podcasts, and YouTube. We also had already been doing online giving for the past few years as well. Since we have been consistent in our messaging of these things, we have been able to continue to share that as a way to give.

Our church staff has also been taking turns sharing daily devotionals on social media throughout the week along with some days including live worship. During these streams we interact with those viewing and ask them to share the stream with others. We also have found it effective to have our wives be communicating with those watching while we are streaming Sunday services. This has allowed better interaction and feedback as well as boosted the way people are able to see the post.

I have also had the opportunity to represent our church and the capital "C" church, as I help co-lead a county wide ministerial association of local pastors and non-profits in our community to help reach more people in a collective and unified way. Right now, we are able to show leadership and unity especially during this crisis and to reach more people for Jesus as we show action and love to the community in need.

We are anxious to get back to meeting in person again for sure; and I pray that when this article is published that will be the case. Although I am ready to get back to meeting in person, I pray that it won't just be back to the way we might think of as normal. I pray there would be a new normal and that more people would be in our churches and more people would be following God even closer as a result of this time of trial.

I want to thank the people, the churches, and the leadership of the Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) for all of your prayers and support for us as a mission church plant. It is because of your prayers and financial support that we are a healthy church body and are on our way to continue to grow and see more lives changed here in North Georgia! Blessings and thank you to all!



StonePoint Church streaming their services on Facebook



# CHRIST WILL BUILD HIS CHURCH... IN UTAH!

BY: Gavin Roberts  
BMA Missions  
[bmamissions.org](http://bmamissions.org)

**H**ello BMA family! Haley, Finley, William, and I are excited to serve as your church planters to Morgan, Utah. We are thankful for this opportunity and the call that God has placed on our lives.

Morgan County in Utah sits just outside of the Salt Lake Valley in the Wasatch Mountain range. It is home to roughly 12,000 residents. The town of Morgan has a population of around 6,000. It is the smallest county in the state of Utah geographically speaking but has the second highest percentage of its population that belongs to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS). Over 80 percent



of the population was on the LDS church roll as of a study completed in 2018. Until this year in Morgan County, there has only been one religious meeting of any kind that was not associated with the LDS church. This church plant is what we are going to lead. Recently there has been an independent Baptist church plant start up in Mountain Green just north of Morgan city.

It is difficult for many of us to imagine a one-horse town without a Baptist church, let alone an entire county with no evangelical presence! Sadly, this is the reality for the people in the Morgan Valley. Morgan is not so different than the rural towns that many of our Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) churches call home. The people there love hunting, fishing, skiing, riding four wheelers, hiking, and Friday night football games. They have a couple of excellent greasy spoon burger joints that serve top notch milk shakes (You have to come try one!). The people love their horses and farm life. The difference in Morgan and many of our hometowns is the absence of gospel preaching churches.

The need for Bible believing churches in Utah is certainly not limited to the city of Morgan. The state as a whole is less than two percent reached, making it one of the most unreached states in the U.S. and around the world. Our plan, by God's grace, is to see a reproducing church established in the town of Morgan. We hope that from this church we can plant churches in other towns throughout the valley. Locations for our next plants will likely be Coalville to the south and Mountain Green to the north.

It is a blessing that we are not going to be attempting this work alone. We will be going as a

pastoral team with my twin brother Chase, his wife Becky, and their two little ones, Davy and Elizabeth. Our launch team will consist of our two families and two to three families that have been part of the existing work. We are thankful to have a team to start this journey with.

The reality is that churches in much of rural Utah will not be able to afford a full-time pastor. For the purposes of sustainability and community outreach,

we hope to work in the area. Chase hopes to teach and coach in the school. I plan to do lawn care and landscaping. We pray that these will be avenues by which we can support our families for many years on the field, but that primarily they will result in relationships that produce gospel conversations. Lord willing, one day soon, they will produce disciples!

While we understand that this task will be a daunting one, we trust that God will do what He has promised He will do; He will build His church. Utah is no exception!

We are excited to go and proclaim to the people of Morgan the good news of Jesus. We are going to go get after it and see what our great God can do! Psalm 67:1-3 says this, "May God be gracious to us and bless us and make His face to shine upon us, that Your way may be known on earth, Your saving power among all nations. Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You!" We pray that the people of Morgan County in Utah will join us in praising the good God we serve.

Thank you for affording us this opportunity of a lifetime. We look forward to serving for many years in Utah for the glory of God and the good of others. We are excited to do this together with you!



Gavin, Haley, Finley, and William Roberts





# Building a Missions Legacy in Colorado

BY: John Smith  
Majestic View Church  
[majesticviewchurch.org](http://majesticviewchurch.org)

Worship service at Majestic View Baptist Church

**D**uring the time I was a student at Central Baptist College in 1976-1981, the Lord gave me a dream of planting a church. In 1996, Brother Jack Courtney, Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) director, had the vision to train BMA church planters. He led the BMA to join an outside organization called Dynamic Church Planting International (DCPI) founded by Paul Becker. Brother Jack and Brother Paul became my mentors as I became a new church planter.



At DCPI, Brother Paul cast a vision that making disciples was the foundation of planting a church. He also challenged us that our DNA should include being a church that plants daughter churches.

In July of 1996, my wife (Debra), my children (Julie, Caleb, Joy, Joanna, Jessica, Matthew, and Nathan) and I began a journey to plant a 'church planting church' in Kiowa, Colorado. Soon after our arrival, the Lord led us to the Brian Janes family who was praying for a pastor to come and plant a church. They joined us to begin Majestic View Church. They faithfully serve Jesus with us to this day.

That fall we began to disciple and host small group Bible studies. On March 9, 1997, we had our first public worship service with 122 people. Within a year we had grown to over 200 people.

Majestic View has been directly involved in six BMA church planting attempts in Colorado. Today, three of those churches preach the gospel to a region that is 85 percent unchurched. Brother Richard Payne planted River of Grace Church in Pueblo West, Colorado. Today, this congregation is pastored by Brother Paul Medved. Brother Rick Mills has pastored Majestic Valley Church in Elizabeth, Colorado since it began. Thousands of souls have been involved in the ministries of Majestic Valley Church and its daughters, and hundreds have been saved. The Lord has done great things in Colorado since 1996.

In recent years, the Lord has allowed Majestic Valley to send some of our 'own' to various parts of the world. One of our young ladies served for several years in an orphanage in India. Within the next year, this young lady, Kate Day, will be serving with her new husband, Andrew, as they try to reach the nomadic Bedouins of Chad on the African continent. One of our young men, Brandon Culp, served with 'Casa por Cristo' in Mexico and Guatemala for ten years. Another of our 'girls' Meagan Kelly married a man with a vision for church planting in his own native country. Today, Joshua and Meagan Phiri are BMA missionaries to the country of Zambia. Our son Nathan served Majestic Valley for 15 years as youth pastor. He is now youth pastor for First Baptist Church of Roswell, New Mexico. He also serves with Dare to Share Ministries actively teaching youth pastors

to make disciples. Recently, a young couple shared their burden to be tent maker missionaries in Portugal. Who knows what our Lord is going to do...and all this from a little town of 700 people in the middle of nowhere, Colorado! (Kiowa is not even in the 'Bible Belt!') What a God we serve!

Jesus told us to "go into all the world and make disciples." Majestic Valley Church has continued to go forward because of faithful people who have invested in faithful people who have invested in faithful people who...you get the idea.

The local church began with our Lord 'discipling' twelve. One of those failed, but the eleven disciples who were faithful turned the world upside down by making disciples. Today, many generations later, disciples continue to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with a desperate world.

John 4:38, "I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors." That promise inspired me in 1996 to be faithful, and it still does today!

Thanks Brother Jack, Brother Rufus, Brother Jurl, Dr. Slayton, Brother Johnnie, Dad, Grandpa.... May we be as faithful as you have been!



Worship service at Majestic View Baptist Church





**A**s a pastor I find myself extremely interested in how other church leaders are dealing with different issues of church life and leadership. I read magazines and articles, watch sermons, and have a couple of text groups that I'm a part of for the purpose of feedback in real time; but one of the most powerful tools that has emerged in media in the last several years has been the "podcast." Not unlike a radio show (minus the radio), with a podcast, you listen to one or more hosts discuss pertinent issues and opinions.

For the Healthy Church Podcast, Larry Barker and I began to dream about a platform that could be used to encourage, challenge, equip, and inform

church leaders and others to consider everything in church leadership from first century church directives to current ministry practice. By God's grace the launch of our podcast has been in the middle of this crazy COVID-19 pandemic and has been a great place for us to process and think through how to navigate our families of faith through it all. Our prayer is that something we say through those conversations sparks some ideas and initiatives in other leaders who may be listening.

It's easy in ministry to sometimes feel overwhelmed with a million things—the burden to communicate the Word of God accurately and passionately; caring for your people; a concern for their discipleship and walk with Jesus; raising and



equipping leaders; managing the business of the church; and not to mention a desire to love our families and be present for our kids. As human beings, we're going to fail in each of these areas at times. Our hope is that we don't run from the reality that we are broken men and women in desperate need of the mercy and grace of Jesus in order to accomplish anything (John 15:5). Instead, we desire to acknowledge our weakness as well as God's strength (Phil. 4:13) and encourage one another in authentic communication and honest confession with a teachable spirit. I for one do not have it all together; I do not have it all figured out; and if there's one thing I know for sure, it is that I need people in my life who can encourage me, hold me accountable, and help me become all that God wants me to be. The Healthy Church Podcast cannot do all of those things; but we can be a voice that encourages church leaders to find those things. We want to encourage church leaders to be honest about the reality of the struggle we face and to recognize the need for one another and for conversation that helps us know we're not alone.

Often church leaders can get in a "rut" doing the things we've always done. When you're spinning a lot of plates, it's difficult to look up and consider that there is another way. Our hope with the Healthy Church Podcast is to bring attention to Biblical life and leadership while considering what might be working (or not) in other churches among other

leaders. This podcast is not a time of preaching or in-depth Bible study—it's a conversation. Our desire is to raise questions, inspire creativity, and challenge practices that are not producing the results they used to. If there's one thing the coronavirus has done for the Church, it has given us a small glimpse of what the end times could begin to look like. My point is that we do not have time to just lead the body of Christ with no concern for actual impact on a community. Seven to ten thousand churches are closing their doors every year in the US; we must be intentional to see that our churches aren't a part of a statistic like that. What changes can be made with how we do church and how we make disciples and how we reach the lost in our communities? We have to be asking these questions with less fear of change and more desire for revival.

We're excited to have some amazing guests on the podcast! If you have content suggestions or need help rethinking your current ministry context, we're here to help. We're praying for pastors and church leaders continually, and we hope these conversations offer you a small ray of light in what can seem to be a dark and lonely position of church leadership. Please check out our podcasts at [HealthyChurchPodcast.com](http://HealthyChurchPodcast.com) or on Facebook at Healthy Church Podcast, or your favorite podcast distributor (iTunes, Buzzsprout, Google, etc.). You can also reach us at [info@healthychurchpodcast.com](mailto:info@healthychurchpodcast.com).



Drew, Lori, Daisy &amp; Jovie Cline



Larry and Shelby Barker





# Becoming a **Missional Church** in America

BY: Dr. Steve Crawley

Ministers Resource Services

[ministersresourceservices.com](http://ministersresourceservices.com)

**W**hen scholars define the word church, they usually refer back to the original Greek language and reference ekklesia. This word carries a meaning pertaining to a congregation or assembly of believers. In American vernacular, we more often than not hear the word church to reference a physical place or structure. Within recent years, this common thought of church has been challenged with the development of a movement known as Missional Church. The purpose of this article is to explore some of the characteristics of a missional church, examine what a traditional church might do to transition to a missional mindset, and identify the change in ministry design necessary to shift paradigms.



# MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS OF A MISSIONAL CHURCH

## Holy Spirit Led

The missional church should be Spirit-driven and human-led. According to Darrell Guder, missional churches get their identity, their character, their motivation, and their vocation through God's empowering presence. God is at work in the world today, but He often uses His divine power through humans. Further, Guder concludes that leaders are wise to be sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit as they seek to define their church's "action within the world."

## Multiple Leaders

Rather than building a church around a single individual, missional leadership seeks to share the burden of leadership with the laity and produce new leaders organically. In lieu of a single minister directing all of the congregation's actions, laymen and laywomen should be involved in the church's leadership structure. As leaders develop organically, they should then be able to reproduce themselves.

## Transitioning to a Missional Mindset

For a church to transition from an established and traditional mindset to a missional mindset requires some radical changes. While there are many things that must take place, two are critically important in the paradigm shift.

## Single Focus of the Church is on Missions

Numerous churches have a missions program. It is not uncommon to hear people reference the missions program on equal footing with the youth program, the music program, the visitation program, etc. However, rather than a church viewing missions as one of its many programs, missions is the program defining the church. The missional church is all about fulfilling God's mission on earth, and every activity and action of the church should be part of a funnel that leads to that end. As Reggie McNeal states, for a church to transition to a missional mindset is not about doing church better—it is about doing church differently.

## Change the Measurement of Success

Missional churches do not refer to the same gauges of success as traditional churches, where offerings and attendance are of primary concern. McNeal proposes that a better barometer for determining a church's effectiveness is to see how much of its resources are going for external causes, the number of intentional relationships one is cultivating, the number of people released into service, and the spiritual growth of its disciples.

## Missional Church Ministry Design

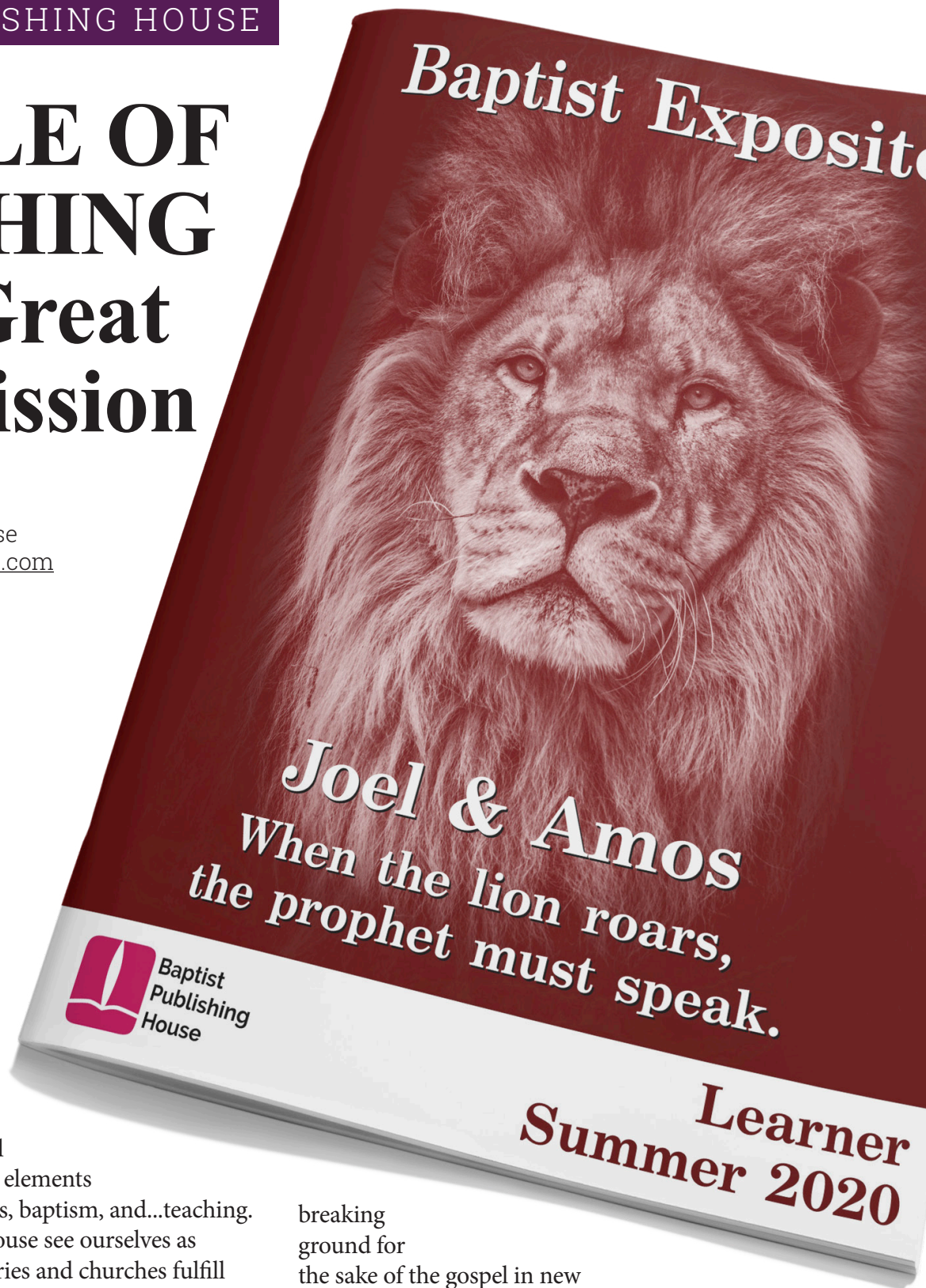
Leaders of established churches often design their ministry process around the weekly worship service. Consequently, most of the church's energy goes toward producing the worship event, since this is the climax of their weekly church experience. In this paradigm, people will usually comment that they "go to church." Hence, whether they realize it or not, they tend to compartmentalize their spiritual lives from their secular lives. With this mentality, church is something that occurs one day out of the week. While they may focus on spiritual things on Sunday, Monday through Saturday will be dedicated to secular thinking (jobs, social activities, school, etc.). A missional ministry design, therefore, must create a radical paradigm shift whereby the weekly worship service is not the center of the universe with regard to one's church life. While the established church may have the weekend worship service as its foundational element, the missional church must establish the church's mission—making disciples—as its foundation.

To reach America for Christ, it may be time we transition from our traditional view of the church and its methods to a missional mindset. When we see ourselves as missionaries and not as mere laymen and laywomen in the congregation, we might be amazed at how God will work through us to accomplish His mission right here in America.



# The **ROLE OF TEACHING** in the **Great Commission**

BY: Dr. Charley Holmes  
Baptist Publishing House  
[baptistpublishinghouse.com](http://baptistpublishinghouse.com)



**T**he Great Commission of Jesus has several elements. These elements are evangelism and missions, baptism, and...teaching. We at Baptist Publishing House see ourselves as being able to help missionaries and churches fulfill the teaching aspect of the Great Commission in their communities.

Our Bible study/Sunday school quarterly, The Baptist Expositor, has been made available to our North American and state missionaries at the reduced rate of only \$5 per quarter. This charge covers the handling fee we pay to the printing company. It is critical to support our missionaries as they are

breaking ground for the sake of the gospel in new and challenging places. While evangelism is essential, teaching also holds a foundational place in both the local church and on the mission field. We are pleased to support and partner with Baptist Missionary Association (BMA) of America missionaries. We are excited to share that The Baptist Expositor is being used world-wide at this time. It has been used in various places throughout



Latin America, the Philippines, and is in the process of being translated for use in Portugal, Cape Verde, Brazil, and Angola. We are also working to translate and provide it to Tanzania.

Thanks to Belinda Caudle and Ricky Williams, we are also very excited to provide The Baptist Expositor in Spanish for free online through the ministry of Editorial Bautista. This ensures Spanish-speaking people in the U.S. and all over the world have access to top-notch Bible study materials. This is very important, as we are seeing an increase in Spanish-speaking churches within the BMA. We want to stand beside our Spanish-speaking brothers and sisters in a tangible way by providing them with sound Bible study curriculum.

Indeed, Baptist Publishing House is a strong missions arm for the BMA. We are here to help not only local churches teach the Bible, but also missionaries across the United States and the world.

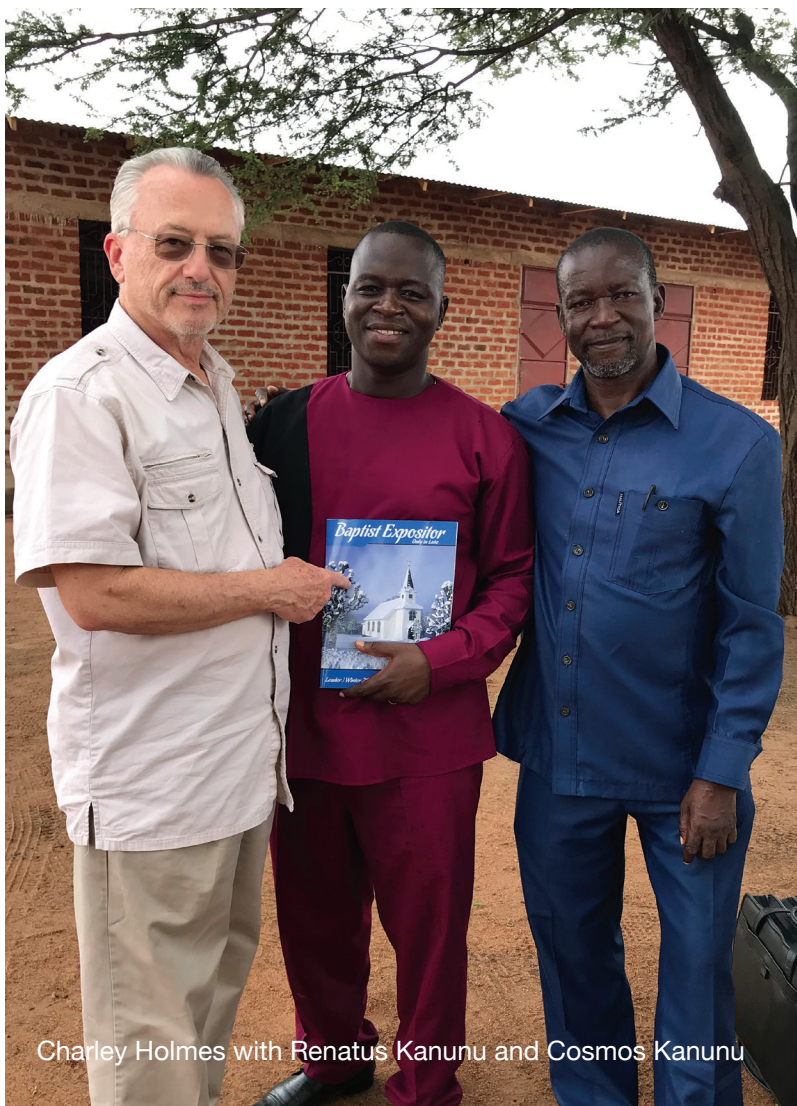
One of our U.S. missionaries, Michael Strong, has used The Baptist Expositor in leading a Bible study group at an assisted living facility near Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is currently planting a church and has used our materials to foster Bible study within his community. Needless to say, we are very pleased to play a part in his ministry.

I have also used The Baptist Expositor during my mission trips to Tanzania with Evangelistic International Ministries (EIM), where I meet with pastors to help equip them for ministry. The church leaders in this nation are very grateful and excited about having access to these materials. Our Bible study curriculum is a solid resource in a region where much of what is available is either biblically unsound or is not Christian at all. The Baptist Expositor is strengthening churches in this African nation.

Beloved, we have a missionary call to spread the knowledge of Jesus Christ all over the world, so that many may come to know Him as their Savior and King. Please pray for us and make a point of using The Baptist Expositor in your church's Sunday school, Bible study, or small group classes. Teaching is a vital part of the Great Commission. Let's join together to obey Christ's command to His churches!



Michael Strong Family



Charley Holmes with Renatus Kanunu and Cosmos Kanunu



# mission:news



**Philippines: Danny Ballard**

We have recently completed our furlough in the U.S. and would like to say thank you to all of the pastors and churches that allowed us to come and share our current ministries with them. As always, we cherished our times of fellowship we had with every person we met along the way. For those who have already partnered with us financially and prayerfully, we are truly grateful for your support. For those of you who plan on supporting us financially and prayerfully in the near future we are also looking forward to you partnering with us. Now that furlough is over, it is so good to be back home in the Philippines where we can continue ministering to the Filipino people. If you would like to contact us our email address is [ballardsphilippines@gmail.com](mailto:ballardsphilippines@gmail.com)



**Nicaragua: Paige Ferrell**

We are busy working with more than 30 families weekly who have children or loved one with special needs. Our team of 4 here in Nicaragua is prayerfully trying to reach the hearts of these families with the gospel of Jesus Christ to share the ultimate hope of eternal salvation. We have so many families coming to us that we are running out of space for anymore! Sadly, we have a waiting list at this moment of more than ten families because we don't have space for them or additional hands to serve them! We need you to prayerfully consider supporting so that we might be able to buy a space of our own and hire additional teachers to meet the eternal needs of these families. Thank you to the many, many BMA churches and individuals who have continuously prayed and supported this work. We cannot fully express our gratitude.



**Ukraine: Larry Wood**

We are doing well and are healthy. We are continuing our language studies by email at this time because of quarantine and an indefinite time of lockdown restrictions. Our ministry has changed permanently. We are grateful to the Lord for giving us opportunities to connect even now when the world has changed so much. Please pray for our Zoom English classes reaching people of all ages, for our home church continuing to meet and reach people, for the church services reaching people in our city, for our language studies and culture acquisition, and for our families.





**Philippines: Doug Lee**

We have had a busy summer and are making plans for the new school year which begins August 3rd. God is blessing our church planting efforts with the Ata tribe, Antique Valdarama, and in Libas. Many of them attended the Baptist Missionary Association of the Philippines (BMAP) Youth Camp and VBS. Please pray for our upcoming school year at the Bible College and the Darlene Carey Christian Academy. We are thankful for your faithfulness in prayerful and financial support.

Ramirez family. Please continue to pray Lisa and me. Pray for our health, ministry, and new opportunities to raise our support. The Lord has been gracious to us through the years and we thank you for helping us in the ministry.



**Philippines: Stan Scroggins**

We are finishing up our furlough and will be headed back to the Philippines at the end of July. We have enjoyed promoting missions throughout America from California to New Jersey. Thanks to every church, association, school, VBS, WMA and Brotherhood for inviting us. Of course, we are anxious to get back. The Bible College starts classes in August and we have a lot of catching up to do. As always pray, Pray, PRAY for us. We love you all.



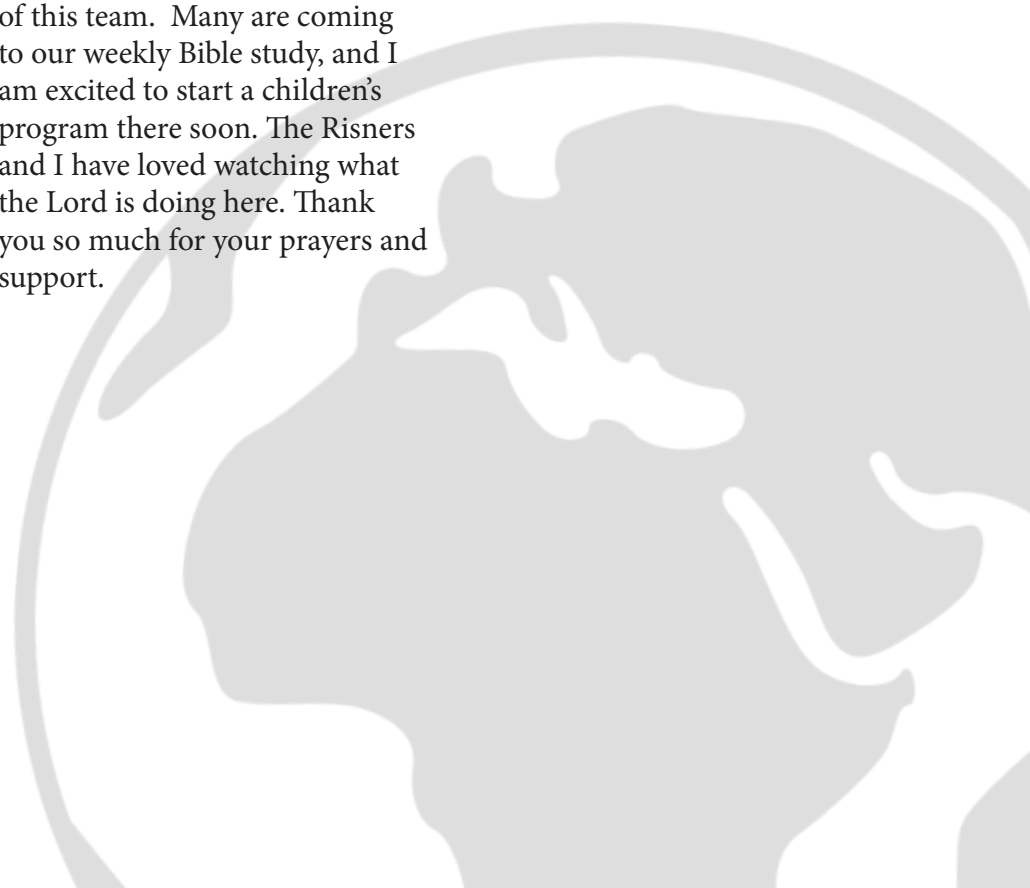
**Romania: Candra Barnett**

I am currently finishing up my first year on the field. The Lord has blessed this year in many ways. I have focused and worked hard on learning the language, and my Romanian is coming along well. The Lord is doing a work here in Santandrei and I have been blessed to be a part of this team. Many are coming to our weekly Bible study, and I am excited to start a children's program there soon. The Risners and I have loved watching what the Lord is doing here. Thank you so much for your prayers and support.



**Philippines: Fil Kakilala**

A new mission was launched in Urdaneta City, Province of Pangasinan, on Luzon Island. This was the result of a family from our BMA church plant, Ali'i Baptist Church in Ewa Beach, Hawaii, who came and witnessed to their relatives with the Gospel. The newly baptized believers are eager to learn more from God's Word. Thank you, Ali'i Baptist and





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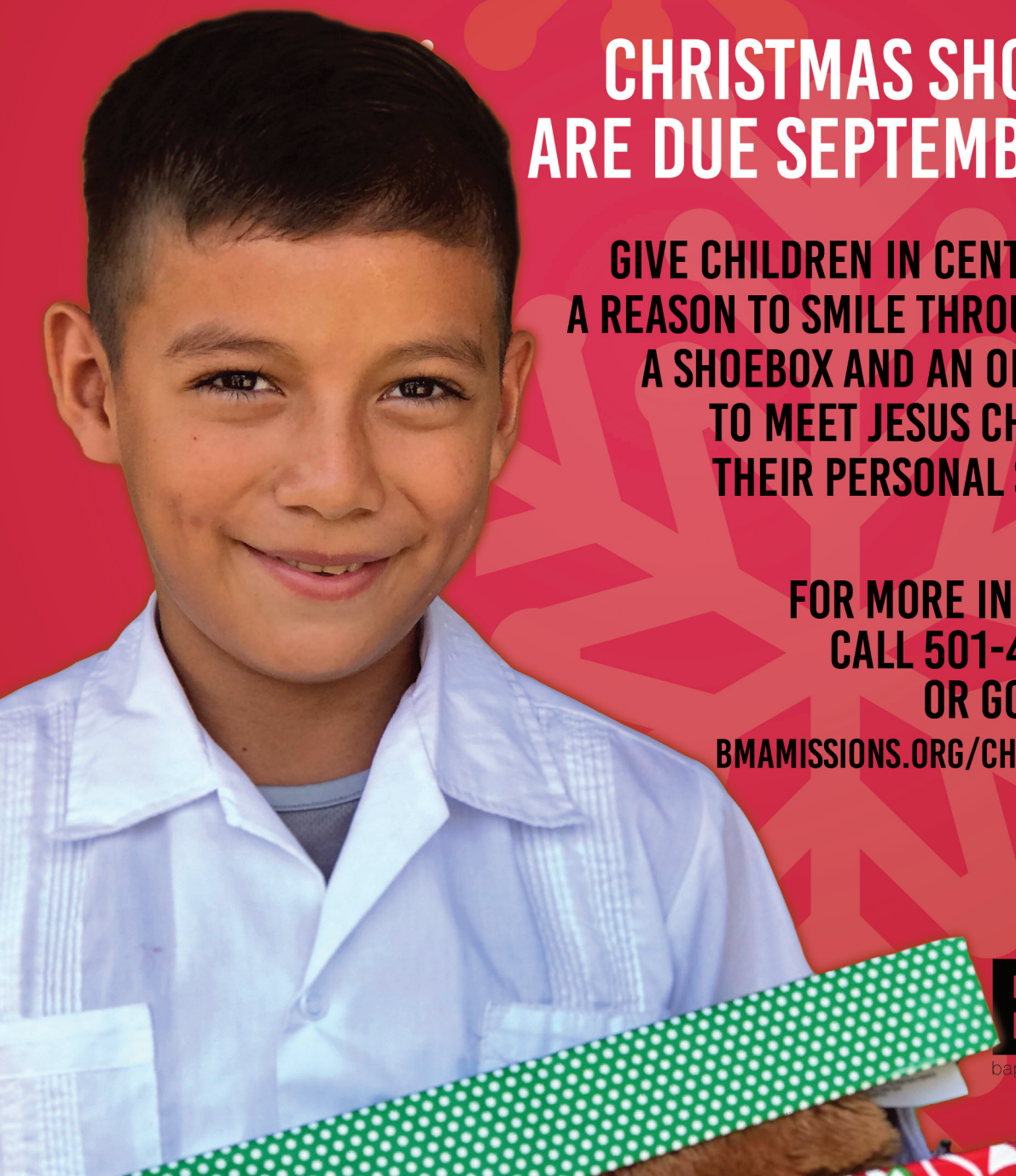
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