

Mobile Baptist Association  
**Executive Committee Report**

April 7, 2014

Brother Thomas Wright, Associational Missionary

*Emphasizing Biblical Prayer. Evangelistic Ministries. Church Development. Church Planting. Partnership Missions*

**Be Ready in Luke 12:35**

The sermon of Jesus in Luke 12 provides many important lessons for ministry. In verse 35, He warns His followers, “Be ready for service and have your lamps lit” (HCSB). It is easy to see the depth of application from this one short expression of biblical truth. The enemy lulls us into complacency. Lamps burn out. They need fuel and new wicks. If we are not attentive, our lamps will go out. We will sit in the dark. We will not be ready to respond to opportunity or danger. Even committed believers, and leaders, can become satisfied with the status quo. We accept change only when we clearly see the price of stagnation.

Dear ones, last week I toured a massive church building that now sits empty. It once was full of running children, committed teachers and lost people seeking Jesus. Now there are holes in the ceiling, thick dust on unused office equipment. A wall sized map of the city still hangs in a prominent location. This did not happen overnight. A lamp went out. Leadership chose to ignore the changing community and the changing culture of Mobile. This can be duplicated in every church in Mobile if we do not maintain our daily readiness for service. This can happen to our association as well. We have studied the data, we have documented the cultural changes, we have seen what must be done. And change is in our future!

**Ready for the next 50 years: Future Focus Committee**

Dr. Roy Stebbins is providing exceptional leadership as chair of the committee. The data is driving the decisions and conclusions presented in today’s report. It is significant to have a recommendation from five key leadership committees, representing over 40 people. As you know, if you get 40 Baptists in a room, you get 47 opinions. Collectively our Moderators, join International Ministries, Building and Grounds, Finance and Future Focus that these changes are required to be ready for effective, cooperative evangelistic ministry in the next 50 years.

Careful analysis of the data clearly shows that combining and updating two aging facilities is necessary. Inaction will result in increased maintenance costs, decreased ministry functions, limited access and poor stewardship of missions dollars.

The committee has preliminary designs for streamlined and efficient use of the combined facilities. The design *decreases* facility size *and costs* by 4,501 sq. ft. The design *increases* meeting space, office space, work space, volunteer housing and Disaster Relief response capability.

Analyzing the facts also show it is impossible without the Lord’s intervention. It will require the active involvement of cooperative-minded, missions-oriented people and congregations. The minimum needed facility cost, currently at \$1.4 million dollars, exceeds the possible \$1.1 million dollars we might receive from the sale of the two facilities. We will need the donation of at least 3.5 *buildable* acres in a location accessible to our churches and centrally located for effective seafarer ministry. This means quick access to I-65 or I-10, which is considered prime location. We will need the donation of materials, furnishings, labor and money. So a vote to approve is a vote to help make it happen.

**Rebranding the Impact Mobile Associational Offering to the Future Focus Offering**

The finance committee suggests rebranding the Impact Mobile Associational Offering to support the Future Focus facility recommendation. It is an existing funding process that churches and individuals can use to raise awareness and accomplish the need.

### **Ready for International Involvement in Sub-Sahara Africa**

Building programs often result in an inward focus. We will need to continue looking outward for effective evangelistic ministry. There is opportunity to join a team serving IMB workers in a limited access country in Africa. The team will conduct children's ministry and encourage adult workers. Leaving on Sunday Sept. 21 and returning on Friday Oct. 3. Total expenses are \$3,200. A \$500 deposit is due by the end of April. Please contact me for more information.

### **Ready for LEAD Continuing Education Center to begin this fall**

The Lord has led Gerald and Brenda Burch to lead the MBA Bible training center. Our curriculum will provide practical, biblical training for Sunday School teachers, Deacons, Elders and ministers. It will be called LEAD and the accreditation comes through Golden Gate Seminary.

At the May 5 Minister's conference we also will be presenting a partnership relationship with Southwestern Seminary to invite ministers to teach at seminaries in developing countries.

### **Ready for Training for Church Planting and Church Revitalization, July 24-26**

We have had over 70 people participate in two ALSBOM/MBA sponsored Basic Training Journey seminars. We are offering it again July 24-26 at Sage Ave. Register online at ALSBOM.org under "Training Events" then "Basic Training Journey." The \$100 fee is waived for MBA/SBC churches. Others are welcome to attend. In the last 50 years the MBA has had a net gain of 28 churches and population increase of 98,691! We need new churches.

May 14 at 8:00 a.m. the Church Planting Committee will be leading a People Search to identify priority areas for new Anglo, African American and Ethnic churches. Pray and join us.

### **Ready for Church changes, new pastors and Churches seeking pastors**

Please pray for the churches seeking a pastor and please let us know when their status changes: Fulton Road, Kushla-Bethany, Smithtown, Spice Pond and Manor. Please welcome Dr. Steve Walter to Moffett Road Baptist Church. The Cornerstone has become 3Circle church, Semmes Campus. Chris Bell is pastor and Rodney Phillips is the campus pastor.

### **Ready to Share Online information**

Updates to events, meetings, missions opportunities and training are kept on the MBA web page and our Facebook page. Please encourage your people to [www.facebook.com/mobilebaptistassociation](http://www.facebook.com/mobilebaptistassociation).

### **Financial Report**

Thank you for your ongoing, and in many instances sacrificial, financial support. The reduced insurance coverage for the staff is helping us maintain a balanced 2014 budget that funds the \$5,500 subsidy reduction in the CDD supplement. The \$22k subsidy we formerly received from NAMB is being reduced \$5,500 a year until it is gone in 2017. We need that amount in additional income in each of the next three years to fully fund the Church Development Director position.

In 2012, 78 MBA churches completed a Uniform Church Letter (UCL).

Those 78 churches reported a total income of \$42,900,991.

Their total giving to Cooperative Program (CP) was \$2,086,023 (which is 5%).

Those 78 churches gave \$368,030 to the MBA (which is 1.16 percent)

The SBC has long recommended that churches give a cooperative missions tithe of 7 percent to CP and 3 percent of to the local association. Following this giving formula will allow the MBA to meet staff, facility and new work needs with an income double our current budget.

Please teach your members about the ministries of the MBA. Those who are aware of what we do gladly support the work. When your finance committee is considering support for a parachurch organization, please allow the MBA equal time to present our strategy, ministries and effective use of missions dollars.