

Mobile Baptist Association
Executive Committee Report

July 11, 2016

Brother Thomas Wright, Associational Missionary

Emphasizing Biblical Prayer, Evangelistic Ministries, Church Development, Church Planting, Partnership Missions

“The Lord Appointed 70”

Luke 10:1 describes Jesus launching a first century Prayer Walk. He designated 35 pairs of believers for a specific task. He “sent them ... to every town and place where He Himself was about to go.” In verse 2, He told them to “pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His Harvest.” In verse 3, Jesus says, “Now go...” (HCSB). Our MBA Evangelism and Biblical Prayer Committees are challenging our churches to Prayer Walk every street in Mobile County in 2017. There will be simultaneous weekends planned, as well as additional dates needed to cover the County. Stay tuned for details. The SBC Executive Committee offers a free Prayer Walk training piece at sbc.net/inallthingspray/resources/TakingPrayertotheStreet.pdf. Your Associational Missionary had the privilege of writing that piece during my days at NAMB.

Church Revitalization/Planter Training at West Mobile Baptist Church

Current research indicated 75% of SBC churches are plateaued or declining. Those national figures are consistent with Mobile County churches. Each of those churches would benefit from this training. It is very practical and provides pastors and lay leaders with information about starting and revitalizing churches. Taught by experienced Church Planters with application to any congregation wanting to prevent or reverse decline. The principles for new work apply to existing churches. The event **begins with lunch at noon on Thursday, September 22, and ends Saturday, September 24 at 4:30 p.m.** The \$25 cost includes a binder of practical materials, snacks and meals. (\$100 for non-Alabama Baptist Churches). It is worth the investment of time. Registration is required. Register at alsbom.org/event/alabama-church-planting-basics.

2017 Budget Update

The Budget and Finance Committee has approved the draft of the 2017 MBA Proposed Budget. You will receive it in the September meeting. It is balanced.

We have reduced the MBA Budgets by \$159,256 since 2008. As you recall, we lost \$54,000 in subsidies from NAMB for IM and CDD positions. Health insurance costs have increased \$26,000. We are being told to expect another significant insurance premium increase this coming year. We already have reduced the level of care we formerly provided to a plan with higher deductibles and out of pocket expenses. We have reduced insurance costs by having a part time Director of International Ministries and a retired Interim Director of CWP. We have not been able to provide raises for the staff in the last seven years. We have reduced office days to four. We are praying and working to sell both facilities and combine them into a more efficient facility with lower overhead expenses.

We would be in dire straits indeed if so many churches had not faithfully increased their Cooperative Giving to the MBA. We need other churches to redistribute their missions tithe to the MBA. We average .91% of church gifts coming to the MBA.

Future Focus Committee (FFC) Update

Please do not forget to pray for the FFC and the needed gift of property and the timely sale of the two current facilities. Dr. Roy Stebbins, and the committee, continue to implement the vote of the Annual session.

Please remind your people of the need and process to sell and combine our aging International Ministries building and MBA office building. The committee is reviewing designs for streamlined and efficient use of the combined facilities in a new, central location. 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 capabilities. Obviously it is impossible without the Lord’s intervention. It will require the active involvement of cooperative-minded, missions-oriented people. The minimum needed facility cost, currently at \$1.2 million dollars, exceeds the possible \$1 million dollars we might receive from the sale of the two facilities.

We still 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 location needs quick access to I-65 or I-10. We recognize this is

considered prime location requiring fervent prayer and a generous donor(s). We will need the donation of materials, furnishings, labor and money. It is definitely a God-sized challenge that has been accepted through careful research and stewardship considerations.

Two Good Podcasts

SBC today podcast is posted once a week with news from across the SBC. Bible Answer Man is informative for those who like Hank Hanegraaff.

A Helpful Website

A recent call about protecting our children located this helpful site alsbom.org/safe. Good guidelines on your responsibility to protect the privacy of church members, but protect children from predators.

August 29-September 10; Team to Holy Land

Our team of seven is doing several projects at the IMB facility jerusalemprayercenter.com. We need to raise \$2,345 for the materials. Please let us know if you have mission project dollars to help our IMB workers in Israel.

The MBA is a Multicultural Association

It is appropriate to acknowledge the tremendous progress being made from our identity as a predominately “White” Association to a Multicultural Association. We have identified 72 Language Culture groups in Mobile County. MBA churches now include 11 African American Churches, autonomous churches among Laotians/Thai, Vietnamese and Koreans, and missions/outreach to Filipinos, Cambodians, Deaf, Eastern Europeans, Filipinos, Hispanics, Japanese and Middle Eastern peoples.

Pledge Group for Racial Reconciliation

It has been encouraging to be an invited participant in the “Pledge Group.” This local gathering of believers is seeking to build bridges in Mobile County. It particularly has been gratifying to hear from those who have seen the consistent efforts of MBA churches and leaders to include African Americans in our churches and African American churches in affiliation with the MBA. Satan works by breaking relationships. We continue to hold out hands of welcome and friendship.

Church Changes, New Pastors and Churches Seeking Pastors

Welcome John Blackwell as new pastor at Citronelle First. Hope Church in Citronelle has merged with FBC Citronelle. New pastors are: Billy Kendrick at Lafitte, Mike Staton at Manor, and Billy McQuarter at Azalea. Micah Gaston is the new Campus Pastor at 3Circle Midtown. Phil Boyles has transitioned to Pastor of Pastoral Care for all the 3Circle campuses.

Please pray for the churches seeking a pastor and please let us know when their statuses change: Cedar Creek, Faith (Mobile), Gulferest, Hope of the Nations, Citronelle Memorial, Semmes FBC, Seven Hills and Trinity.

Recommendation for Missions Tithe

The SBC has long recommended that churches give a Cooperative Missions tithe of 7% to CP and 3% to the local association. Recent adaptations have recognized some churches wish to give 2% to additional missions’ options, 5% to CP and 3% to the Association. Note the Associational allotment did not change.

If MBA churches were to tithe 3% of current total income to the MBA, we would double our budget.

Please present this giving formula to the church Finance Committee for consideration. Following this giving formula will allow the MBA to meet staff, facility and new work needs.

Orientation Guide for Church Staff and Churches Exploring MBA Membership

Please visit mobilebaptists.org for a copy of our Orientation and New Member Guide. It presents an overview of MBA ministries, staff, philosophy and strategy. It also includes a membership application for churches wanting to explore membership with the MBA. Please download a copy for your staff and share a copy with potential mbers.