

The Messenger

Vol. LXXI

Holston Baptist Association

NO. 1

January, 2025

FROM THE DESK OF THE AMS

by Troy Rust

Protection

This article will be featured in the January 8 edition of the Baptist and Reflector for Sanctity of Life Sunday.

I do not remember who said it, but I was permanently impacted by the thought that every Christian must decide to live a life of either self-preservation or self-sacrifice. The first option looks like the world, and the second one looks like Jesus. My whole life has been spent in an America that chases hard after unrestrained individualism. Ideas that would have been considered shameful or at least hidden from the public eye in previous generations are now celebrated in the streets and normalized through the media. The expressive individualism of the modern age lives by a mantra that says, "I can live however I want to live and no one can tell me I'm wrong!"

This mindset reserves unlimited freedom for self and everyone in agreement,

but quickly denies the same freedom to anyone who disagrees. If you follow this thinking to its logical conclusion, you will stop at nothing, including murder, to get what you think you deserve.

When God gave the law to Moses, He included specific instructions for the most vulnerable people in the land, including foreigners, widows, orphans, and the poor. He reminded the Israelites that they were strangers in Egypt, implying that they should have empathy for people without the provisions of their homeland. Have you ever wondered why God brings foreigners to America? We do not know all the details, but we do know that God calls us to show kindness and share the gospel.

continued on p2



The Joy of Renewal

by Anna Huggins

There is a quietness in nature as snow is falling, that brings to my mind Psalm 46:10 (ESV), "Be still and know that I am God". The clean, freshness of snow paints a beautiful picture of God's work of salvation in our lives.

continued on p4

Protection

continued



Sanctity of Life Sunday will be January 19, 2025

While we do not want outsiders (or insiders) to break our laws or further paganize our culture, we do want them to worship Jesus. Whether they come for a short visit or stay for a lifetime, we should seek to have as much gospel impact as possible on people coming from other countries. You do not have to support illegal immigration to believe that God brought them here for a life-transforming purpose and that you should play a part in that process.

Abortion was legalized in the United States just under eight months before I was born. Had my parents not feared the Lord, I could have been a “family planning” statistic.

Although *Roe v. Wade* was overturned, many activists are doubling down on the right to abortion at any stage in the name of women’s healthcare.

Any honest and discerning person knows that this debate has nothing to do with healthcare. In fact, abortion often does far more to harm the mother than giving birth does. This deceptive narrative is a poor attempt to cover the reality of premeditated murder. Have you ever wondered why our culture is so obsessed with abortion? I think the answer comes down to a few words: responsibility, inconvenience, embarrassment, and pain. The first three are pretty self-explanatory, but what about pain? I cannot imagine the pain connected to rape, incest, or genetic abnormality, but I know the character of our God! Not only does abortion not make these trials magically go away, but it also robs God of the glory He receives in the midst of pain. He can write a powerful ending to a shameful start. He can also conform us to the image of His Son by way of dark valleys we would never seek.



The Joy of Renewal, cont'd.

As the new year leads us to think of new beginnings, or renewing of goals and tasks, we should also take a look at where our lives align with God's plan. To begin, Psalm 51 is a helpful guide.

Take a look at verses seven, ten, and twelve (ESV): "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow....Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me....Restore unto me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit."

After the busyness of the Christmas season, it is easy to be overwhelmed. How do we accomplish all that needs to be done? What about the struggle a loved one is facing, how can we help? Or with our own sickness and despair, where is the Lord? "So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day." 2 Corinthians 4:16 (ESV).

We are not left alone to face what life brings, and can know Jesus better through the living of our days. In John 15, Jesus speaks of abiding in his love, the reason he has come. "These things have I spoken to you that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full," (verse 11, ESV).

As a young adult, the last of Colossians 1:27 (ESV) helped explain my relationship to Jesus, which is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." This has made a difference in guiding me to press on, to be true, and faithful, for the Lord is within me.

This verse follows Paul speaking of his sufferings, yet he continued in sharing the Word of God. He also speaks to our purpose and task, to make known the mystery of Christ, and the riches of his glory. The joy we celebrate of Jesus Christ at Christmas, is the Good News for all people. He came to be our salvation. In the stillness of knowing God, Psalm 46:10 continues, "I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in all the earth!" In this new year, let the Lord restore the joy of your salvation, and be a willing spirit to fulfill the task of sharing his joy! Blessings,
Anna Huggins



THANK YOU!

We were blessed with teachers, roofers, and more in 2024, and we couldn't minister without you! Thank you so much!

One-Day Revivals January 19



The Fellowship of Tennessee Baptist Evangelists is partnering with thirteen local churches, many of whom are Holston Baptist churches on Sunday, January 19 for one-day revivals all across Johnson City, Gray, Jonesborough, and beyond!

January 19 marks the day many Southern Baptists recognize as “Sanctity of Life Sunday,” where we reaffirm our convictions that human life is inherently dignified from the point of conception to natural death. You can find the schedule of evangelists and churches here.

Calvary Baptist Church

- Location: Johnson City
- Evangelist: Scott Carter

Sinking Creek Baptist Church

- Location: Johnson City
- Evangelists: Charles “Toonie” Cash, Ms. Carolyn Reed

New Salem Baptist Church

- Location: Limestone
- Evangelist: Keith Cook

University Parkway Baptist Church

- Location: Johnson City
- Evangelist: Dennis Deese

Oak Grove Baptist Church

- Location: Gray
- Evangelist: Glen Denton

New Life Baptist Church

- Location: Bluff City
- Evangelist: Randy Gilliam

Harmony Baptist Church

- Location: Jonesborough
- Evangelist: Phil Glisson

River of Life Baptist Church

- Location: Piney Flats
- Evangelist: Jeffery Harvel

Piney Flats First Baptist Church

- Location: Piney Flats
- Evangelist: Dr. Phil Hoskins

Boones Creek Baptist Church

- Location: Johnson City
- Evangelist: Dr. Harold Hunter

Gray Station Baptist Church

- Location: Gray
- Evangelists: John Rushing

Beulah Baptist Church

- Location: Kingsport
- Evangelist: W.S. “Skip” Youngcourt

Classifieds: Job Board

Visit holstonba.org/jobs to view more information or apply for the listed openings.

Doe River Baptist Church

Music Director

Elizabethton, TN

Part-Time

Doe River Baptist Church (Elizabethton, TN) is seeking someone who is eager to share their gift of music as a part-time Music Director.

Cherokee Baptist Church

Bi-Vocational Senior Pastor

Jonesborough, Tennessee

Part-Time

Please send resume, references and cover letter (experience and vision) to Cherokee Baptist Church, 143 Mayberry Rd. Jonesborough, TN 37659. ATTN: Pastor Search Committee or via email: cherokeepastorsearch@gmail.com.

Oak Grove Baptist Church

Music & Worship Leader

Gray, TN

Part-Time

We are looking for someone with experience and preferably Music Education to help us develop a blended style worship service.

Towering Oaks Baptist Church

Facilities Manager

Greeneville, TN

Full-Time

Towering Oaks Baptist Church is seeking a hands-on Facilities Manager.





Jan 2	Jan 5	Jan 20	Jan 29
Keith Smith	Pete Booher	Sherrel Nave	Albert Bentley

Holston Baptist
Bible Institute
Pastoral Leadership
in a
SMALL CHURCH
Starting January 20



January **2025**

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Spring Executive Board Meeting

ON Thursday, January 16, the HBA Executive Board Meeting will be held at First Baptist Church in Jonesborough at 10:00 a.m. Lunch provided afterwards.

Leading Small Churches Class Start

The Spring term of the Holston Baptist Bible Institute starts later this month with Seminary Extension's *Pastoral Leadership in a Small Church*. This practical course will be taught by HBA Pastor Willie Lunsford (Clark Street, JC).

The cost to attend is \$50, which also covers cost of course materials.

Class begins on Monday, January 20 at 6:00 p.m.

Visit holstonba.org/bible-institute to register today!

Pray for Churches Without Pastors

- Blountville First Baptist
- Boone Trail
- Cherokee, Jonesborough
- Colonial Heights
- Clifton View
- Friendship Chapel
- Muddy Creek
- Piney Flats First Baptist
- Tennessee Avenue





SAVE THE DATE

Associational Bible Drill
April 8th, 2025
6:00pm
(Location TBD)

State/Regional Drill:
 April 26th
 Wallace Memorial
 Knoxville, TN

It's not too late to start Bible Drill this Spring, see contact info below for help starting Bible Drill at your church!!



Questions? Call Susan Schiwitz (423-794-8182) or Anna Huggins (423-767-0578)

BREAK-

{ For Sunday School and Small Groups Ministry }

THROUGH

MINISTRY COHORT
SPRING 2025

MISSIONS GET-TOGETHER

what **JOY**



APRIL 4-5 * **FIRST BAPTIST DICKSON**
DICKSON, TN



Visit TNWMU.ORG for Event Schedule, Breakout Sessions, Lodging Recommendations and more!

HBA WMU Directors Roundtable Event

On Saturday, February 1, all local church WMU directors and leadership are invited to join Anna Huggins at the HBA Office downstairs fellowship hall for a WMU roundtable discussion event.

This gathering will focus on associational efforts to accomplish more of the Great Commission together than we could apart. Light refreshments will be available!

IN CHRIST

The True Identity of the Believer

FEB 21-22 2025

Conferences for Men & Women

\$25

holstonba.org/conference

1012 Seminole Drive Johnson City, TN 37604

Kids 12-17 Free

with Hershael & Tanya York



Rediscover your true identity

The world in which we live, work, raise kids, and watch Netflix is confused about what human flourishing looks like. This confused world needs the Christian message to remind us of how Men and Women find their true identities *In Christ*.

For two days in February, Hershael and Tanya York will offer biblically-focused teaching on being *IN CHRIST: The True Identity of the Believer*.

These parallel conferences are for men & women of every age and stage of life.

Friday

6:00 p.m. - Dinner

6:45 p.m. - Childcare Drop-off

(Please register in advance)

7:00 p.m. - Main Session

Saturday

Breakfast - 8:00 a.m.

Session - 9:00 a.m.

Breakouts - 10:00 a.m.

Session - 11:00 a.m.

COST:

- Adults (18 & up) - \$25
- Children (12-17) - Free
- Children (under 12) - childcare available upon request
- Groups of 10+ Adults - \$20 per adult



Hosted by Southwestern
Baptist Church
1012 Seminole Dr
Johnson City, TN 37604

REGISTER NOW!

Scan the QR code to visit holstonba.org/conference