

The OKLAHOMA BAPTIST

Serving Churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of Oklahoma

Volume LXI

MARCH 2026

Number 3

Plans Are In Place for the BMAA 77th Annual Meeting

Greetings, fellow B M A churches! Plans are underway for the 77th annual association meeting of the BMA of America.

The dates are set for April 21-23, and we will be meeting in Conway, Arkansas, in the facilities of our gracious hosts Antioch Baptist Church and Central Baptist College.

The meeting will be built around the theme "UNTIL THEN" and centered on the commissioning verse of Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

We know by His Word of the imminent return of our Lord. "Until then," however, we have a calling and mission to fulfill.

The first century Christians believed Jesus was coming in their lifetimes. They were not standing idle waiting for the Lord's return but were faithfully up and about the Master's business.

The annual national BMAA meeting will be a time of worship and fellowship as well as caring for the most important business on earth---the Lord's business.



Although we may have to stay later on the first two nights, we are attempting to finish the association's business on Wednesday night, so messengers will be free to return

home early Thursday.

We are looking prayerfully forward to Bro. Ashraf Sara's annual message, an always productive WMA ladies' and men's Brotherhood meetings, and an inspiring pastors' conference scheduled by Healthy Church Solutions.

Conway is a bustling city north of Little Rock. Three colleges including CBC are located there. Conway is also the headquarters of BMA Global.

Perhaps this will be a good time for messengers to tour and visit the offices of missions, LifeWord, and other BMA agencies located at 611 Locust Street in Conway.

Several nice hotels and eating establishments will be available for your needs. A list of available lodging may be found on the website bmaamerica.org under the "Events" link.

There is also a tentative schedule of events at the website.

I urge each local BMA church to send your three messengers and other guests to this most important meeting. Please consider giving a generous offering to help with the expenses of this gathering and other related costs during the year. I hope to see you in Conway on April 21.

Brotherly

Charles Johnson, BMAA President

For more information on events for the week, see pg 5

UPCOMING EVENTS

CBC Stampede Preview

March 4, 2026

CBC 7th Annual Gala

March 6, 2026

BMAO Central District Midyear Meeting

March 7, 2026

BMAO State Midyear Meeting

April 4, 2026

BMAA National Meeting

April 21-23
Conway, AR

A Timothy in Romania

How World Missions Day Invests in Leaders Who Multiply

By Larry Barker

The apostle Paul once asked a simple, but powerful, question through his example: Do you have a Timothy? Are you investing your life in developing leaders who will carry the gospel forward?

That question lies at the heart of World Missions Day, celebrated by BMA churches on February 22.

And it is beautifully illustrated in the story of Dani Bagosi: a pastor, church planter, and leader in Romania whose life was forever changed through faithful gospel investment.

More than two decades ago, my family was preparing to move to Romania. God burdened our hearts for the nation's

pastors, men who often shepherded three or four churches at a time, traveling long distances and serving with limited resources.

One of those pastors was George Padure, and I asked him to introduce me to a young seminary student who might benefit from encouragement and support.

My heart was to be a Paul to a young Timothy.

That student was Dani Bagosi. At the time, Dani was working full-time as a salesman while studying theology at Immanuel University in Oradea. For three years, he rode his bicycle more than 30 miles each day, traveling to work and school, often surviving on only four to five hours of sleep.

As graduation approached, Dani reached a breaking point. Without an additional \$50 per month, he would be forced to quit his studies in order to help support his mother and sister.

Dani prayed, trusting that God would provide.

One week later, Pastor Padure introduced us. In a moment only God could orchestrate, the

exact need Dani had been praying over was met—\$50 a month to continue his education.

That decision, made in obedience and faith, changed generations.

Today, Dani and his wife, Claudia, serve as ChangeMakers in Romania. Together with their three children, they are faithfully sharing the gospel, training leaders, and planting churches.

Most recently, they planted Agape Baptist Church on the south side of Oradea, evidence of how disciples become leaders, and leaders multiply churches.

Stories like Dani's are happening all over the world. Through World Missions Day, churches partner together to invest in men and women who are being trained, sent, and sustained for long-term gospel work.

When churches give, they are not just supporting missionaries; they are helping raise up the next generation of Timothys. And those Timothys are changing the world.

For more information about World Missions Day visit bmaglobal.org/worldmissionsday.



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"I Was Just Thinkin' "

By Narita Roady

"DID YOU SAY SOMETHING?"

Many years back I had Sunday morning nursery. We, like most churches, have an age at which children may no longer stay in nursery.

Services were ready to begin and I had all the toddlers occupied, when the door flew open. Laughing and giggling, in burst our granddaughter, Abbie, and her friend.

They were joyfully anticipating an hour or more of play, but there was a problem. My granddaughter was a year over nursery age and her little friend was in her last year.

I explained to Abbie that she could not stay. Of course, first there was shock, then begging and lots of tears. I firmly and gently maneuvered her out the door.

Several times she would crack the door and stick in her best tearful, sad face, hoping to weaken me. Each time I explained why she couldn't stay and shut the door.

After about 10 minutes I opened the door and she was sitting right outside, head against the wall sobbing her heart out. I explained again and told her to go to her Aunt Ashley in service.

I shut the door and after 15 more minutes decided to check and she was still there crying inconsolably. Her face was red, eyes swollen and I won't even describe her nose!

I cleaned her up and knew I saw she wasn't budging. Blessedly Aunt Ashley came looking for her. Before they went into service, being a good aunt, explained why she was not allowed in nursery.

"Abbie," she said, "you need to be in church listening to Papa preach."

"Why?" came the weepy reply.

"Well," Ashley continued, "When Papa preaches he tells us things that God wants us to hear about Him and His Word. If you are back in the nursery

playing with toys you won't hear God speak to you."

After calming her down, they took their seats and Abbie leaned over and whispered, "How does Papa know so much?"

"God has called Him to preach," Ashley answered.

Next came another subtle whisper, "Am I too young to be a preacher?"

"God says in the Bible that women can't be preachers," her patient aunt enlightened.

"I see you up there all the time,"

"I am the song leader, not the preacher."

"Oh," the tiny voice responded, "you're the singer."

Finally in service, they sat in silence for a while, Abbie very still and listening, when suddenly she leaned over and quietly added, "Boy, God has sure given Papa a lot to say today!"

Yes, God wants us to listen to Him. It goes along with the old saying, "God gave us two ears and one mouth because He wants us to do twice as much listening as talking."

Unfortunately we are sometimes like little Abbie, off playing with our "toys" of worldly interests, oblivious to what He has to say. There is no doubt that the Lord wants be attentive to Him.

In fact, eight times in the Bible the Lord says, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear", and Matthew 11:15 is one of those.

You must agree that for the Lord to

repeat something eight times, it is as if He is saying, "Listen up! This is really important!"



The question remaining is do you REALLY want to hear what God has to say? Scripture tells us of certain types of listeners and it is time to dig deep and find out, the question is what kind of a listener are you?

Hebrews 5:11, describes the first hearing impaired Christian, "Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing."

These Christians were slow and sluggish in what they heard. In other words, they were lazy about paying attention. They had become shallow spiritually.

Now this isn't talking about their ears, but their minds and hearts. This is far more than catching a quick nap during the preacher's sermon. This is a serious boredom with the things of God.

Their appetites had been filled with worldly things instead of real spiritual food. This is much like children who eat too many unhealthy treats such as candy, chips and pop.

After a steady diet of junk they are no longer interested in nourishing food, which in turns makes them lethargic and disinterested in what is nourishing.

"A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself." Proverbs 18:2

Such hearers have lost their hunger and enthusiasm for the things of God they had as a new babe in Christ. Gone is their desire to pray, study, and worship instead, apathy and indifference take over.

("Did You Say Something?" cont on pg)

BMA Pastor Writes Autism Ministry Book

Ministry Across the Spectrum: Autism, Faith, and the Local Church by W. Russell Threet (Pastor of West Park Baptist in Ozark, AR) offers practical, biblically grounded guidance for inclusive ministry

Baptist Publishing House is pleased to announce the release of *Ministry Across the Spectrum: Autism, Faith, and the Local Church* by pastor and biblical counselor W. Russell Threet.

This timely resource addresses one of the most overlooked mission fields in the church today: individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and the families who love and care for them.

Drawing from personal experience as both a pastor and a parent of an autistic child, Threet writes with clarity, compassion, and theological depth.

The book explores autism from a biblical worldview and provides churches with practical tools to better welcome, disciple, and support ASD families within the life of the local congregation.

"Many churches genuinely want to help but feel unsure or unprepared," Threet explains. "This book is meant to be a starting point—offering simple, faithful steps so that families affected by autism can truly feel at home in the body of Christ."

Ministry Across the Spectrum walks readers through real-life church scenarios involving three fictional families who represent different points on the autism spectrum.

Through these stories, pastors, church members, and parents gain insight into common challenges surrounding Sunday School, worship services, church events, evangelism, counseling, membership, and more.

Each chapter concludes with practical applications tailored to pastors, people in the pew, and autism families.

Endorsements from church leaders highlight the book's impact:

"Bold, convicting, and clear... After reading this book, the church will no longer have an excuse for neglecting this part of the community."

Dr. Clif Johnson, Pastor
Garrett Memorial Baptist Church

"This book will help churches to love, evangelize, and disciple autism families in a way they never thought possible."

Jordan M. Tew, Executive Director
Baptist Publishing House

"This book is an excellent resource for believers seeking to minister effectively to those impacted by autism."

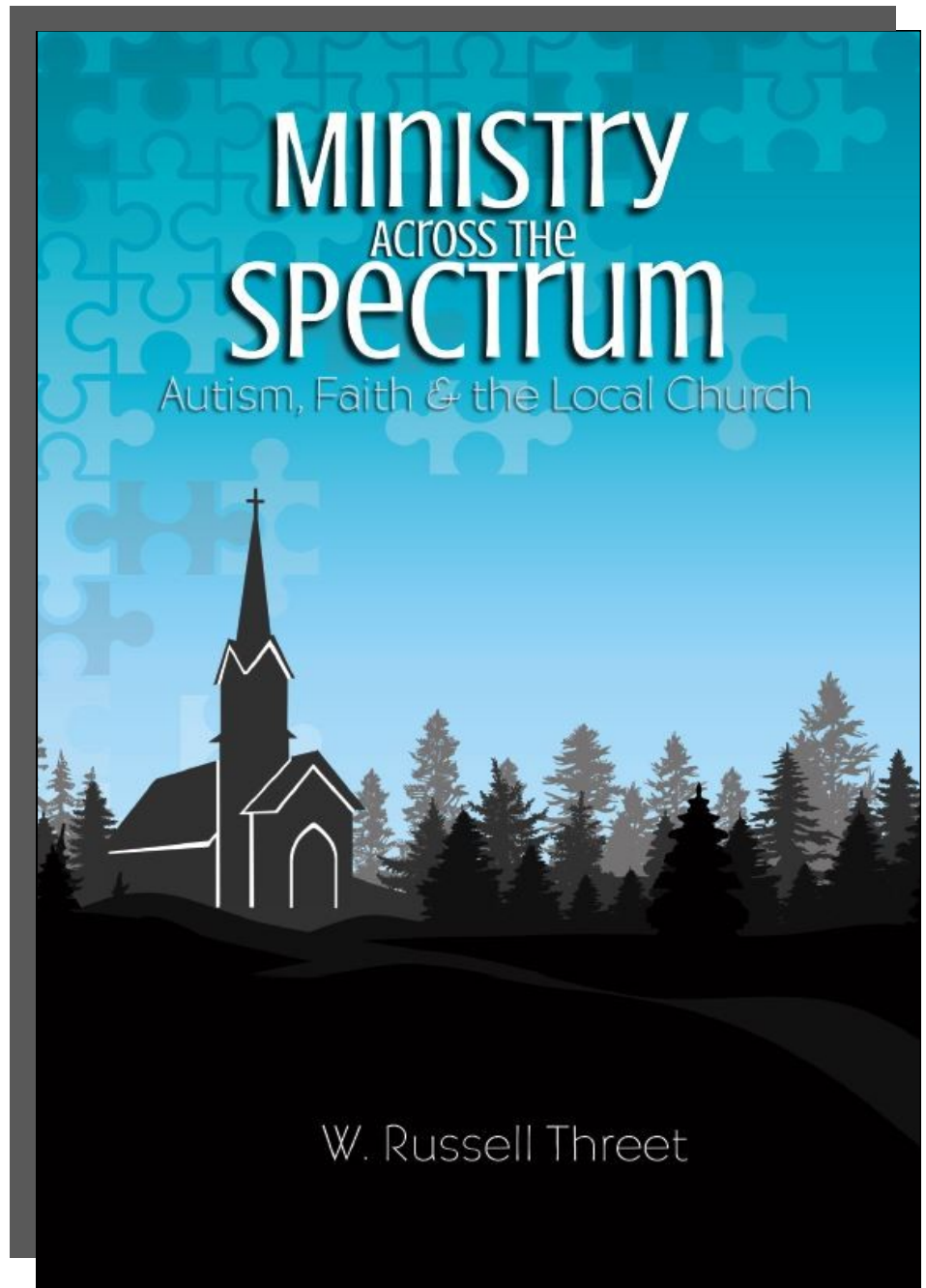
Bart Herrington, Pastor

South Main Missionary Baptist Church

The book also includes helpful appendices with basic training material, communication tips, sensory considerations, and sample checklists for churches, teachers, greeters, and parents—making it a hands-on guide for immediate use.

Every church needs a copy of this ministry manual.

Order at baptistpublishinghouse.com or 888-727-8715



“Thank God for the God of Second Chances”

One of the most amazing truths about the Scriptures is the reason why they even exist. That the God of the universe would choose to reveal Himself to us at all. That He would want to show us how to live our best lives by writing us this love letter is incredible. He is speaking to us through this His Word, and we have the ability to know His will because of it.

But what if God has already revealed his plan to me and, for whatever reason, I chose not to follow through?

What if I have already missed his call, and ignored his purpose?

If I make my commitment today to do whatever He shows me in His Word, might He give me another chance?

Now the Word of the Lord came to Jonah...

Jonah 1:1

Now the Word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time...

Jonah 3:1

I receive a lot of comfort from these two verses. I'm assuming most people know the story of what happens between them.

Rebellious running, sudden storm, confused crew, costly confession, fed fish, penitent prayer, and prophet puke. That pretty much covers the first two chapters.

Take the time right now, even if you've don't it before, to read the book of Jonah. It won't take long.

Notice between chapters one and three nothing changes. The Lord is the same, the Word of the Lord is the same. Keep reading the story and you'll find even Jonah has not changed much. Just a tad more open to God's request.

So what happened? This was God's man, carrying the awesome responsibility of bringing God's message to people. But, it became too much. The proclamation he was charged with was too heavy a burden for him.

The folks from Nineveh legitimately were a scary bunch, not a group to be taking bad news well. So he ran away. Took the first boat out of town and tried to flee God's direction by going in the opposite direction.

He heard what God said, and it “unnerved” him. It wasn't something he wanted to do, so he didn't.

Is this where you are? You used to read the Bible, but what He was revealing was not too appealing. You heard the voice of God and you turned a deaf ear to the call. He spoke, but you chose not to hear in that moment.

God's Word said forgive the person who offended you.

(“The God of Second Chances,” cont on pg 7)

“If you are feeling convicted by the direction of what you're reading here...good.

Maybe it's time we got a little convicted. But don't let feelings of conviction hinder your desire to return to His Word now.”

Welcome to the 2026 National Meeting

We are delighted to invite the churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of America to the 2026 National Meeting. The annual National Meeting is a great time of homecoming and fellowship for the BMA family.

My name is Donny Parrish, and I am honored to serve as your BMA Conference Director. It is my joy to support you throughout this meeting. If you need assistance or have questions, please reach out to me at 501.329.6891 or donny@lifeword.org. I look forward to connecting and serving alongside you.

Event Details

Dates: April 21–23, 2026

Location: Antioch Baptist Church, Conway, Arkansas

We are deeply grateful for the Antioch Baptist Church family and their faithful service to the messengers of the BMA. Their hospitality and support are a true blessing to us all.

Meeting Highlights

Inspirational Messages: Hear from Bro Charles Johnson and Ashraf Sara.

Uplifting Worship: Enjoy music led by the Antioch Worship Choir and the Worship Team from First Baptist, Magnolia, Arkansas.

Pastors Conference: Healthy Church Solutions offers encouragement tailored to the needs of BMA Pastors.

Women's Conference: Sponsored by the National WMA and hosted by Central Baptist College, this event promises inspiration and fellowship.

Global Impact: Celebrate what God is doing worldwide through BMA Global church-planters.

Honoring Legacy Missionaries: Join us in recognizing those who have served faithfully through the years.

Registration & Resources

Meeting Schedule, Registration, and Contributions: Visit <https://bmaamerica.org/nationalmeeting/> to preregister, contribute to the National Meeting Minute Fund, reserve a display table, and view suggested hotel accommodations.

Women's Conference Information: For details about the National WMA Women's Conference, visit <https://www.nationalwma.org>.

We anticipate a sweet time of fellowship and Christ-centered worship as we gather to take care of the Lord's business together.

"That Reminds Me"

By Jesse Spurlock

"Cell Phones"

I just read an article that Danish researchers reported in a study that cell phones won't cause brain damage. I thought that was interesting and comforting as I have a cell phone and probably will continue to use it.

However, I've seen some folks use the cell phone in such a way I can readily understand why someone thought they might have been brain damaged, and launched a study to find out if the cell phone caused them to act that way, or if they used them that way because of their brain damage.

The other day a driver came up behind me as we approached Fort Smith Junction on the I-40. He was going well over 70mph.

He swerved, barely missing the rear of my pickup, to pass me on the right and then back into my lane. He entered the deadly curve at the Fort Smith Junction while holding a cell phone to his ear with his left hand and steering with his right.

That led me to wonder which came first with him, the cell phone or the brain damage. Amazingly, he made it through without crashing.

He only used both lanes and both the inside and outside shoulders a couple of times. Not bad for a one handed, brain damaged driver.

I fully realize someone will think that, as a preacher, I shouldn't even think bad things about such a driver and really ought not to say anything bad, or infer he might be brain damaged. I ought to just pray for him.

Well, I did pray, but it was for myself for what I thought when he served just enough to clear my rear bumper and sailed by on my right and partially in my lane.

The fact I didn't say aloud what popped

into my mind about him ought to count for something.

Cell phones, when used properly, are one of the greatest tools we have today. They allow us to be reached in emergencies and notify the authorities when we happen upon a tragedy.

It's amazing the phones have been reduced in size so they can now be carried in the shirt pocket. (That's a good place for your cell phone when you're driving.)

It also should be noted you don't have to answer the cell phone when you are driving 70 mph. You could pull over and answer it. Or you could call them back when you find a safe place to stop. The caller's number is on the phone.

Now, I want to make it clear I really don't think folks are actually brain damaged who use their cell phone

while driving. I think most have enough sense to know they shouldn't use it that way, but they do anyway.



Probably most don't think anything will happen while on they're on the phone.

However, most of us have never had a traffic accident we expected to have. Had I expected mine, I would've been doing something differently.

By the same token, when someone knows there's a hell and that Jesus is the only way of salvation, they often aren't immediately saved. They aren't brain damaged.

They're like the cell phone user driving in heavy traffic. They don't expect anything to happen. However, physical disaster often results in traffic, as does spiritual disaster in the rejection of Jesus.

If they knew they were going to have an accident while on the phone they wouldn't have been on the phone.

If they knew they were about to be called to face Jesus they wouldn't have postponed accepting Him.

**Sunray Baptist Church
commemorating their 79th anniversary
March 21 with a Homecoming Sing**

**Message and potluck lunch
March 22 featuring gospel music**

**Homecoming Sing
featuring Southern gospel artists
The Williamsons and Mark Bishop**

**Join us for the morning worship service
with Bro. Mark singing and Bro. Dennis Clark bringing the message.**

Participate in the potluck lunch

“Did You Say Something?” *cont from pg 3*

***“God gave us two ears and one mouth
because He wants us to do twice as much
listening as talking.”***

Do you find reading the Bible boring? Are church services simply an endurance test, of monotony, watching the clock until the preacher is done? Do you find it is easy to resist the conviction of the Holy Spirit? Are Bible classes dry and uninteresting? If so, you have become “dull of hearing”.

Another type of Christian that has a hearing problem is found in, 2 Timothy 4:3-4, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

We have a generation today with such ears. If what they hear does not make them feel good or amuse them they are

not interested. For such a believer the preacher needs to be a cross between Bill Cosby and Mark Twain. Not only must the preaching be entertaining it must not step on their toes.

Favorite sins are off limits as are anything that may require accountability, repentance or change on their part. Sound doctrine and truth are taboo.

Those with “itching ears” aren’t just limited to church but carry over into what they read. The Bible therefore is no longer part of their reading material. When needing advice concerning their conduct or decisions they must make, you will find them on the door step of those who will tell them what they want to hear.

This is usually people of like mind. They avoid true Christian counsel from

their pastor or mature believers.

“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.” Proverbs 12:15

In fact where they once may have had close fellowship with fellow Christians, now they avoid them like the plague. They would rather believe a “fable” or a lie rather than hear the truth.

Should they accidentally be in the right place at the right time and hear genuine Bible preaching or teaching their response will be anger toward the one speaking.

Do any of these symptoms fit you?

Thankfully this condition is not a permanent one and God has a guaranteed cure as He does for all our spiritual illnesses.

The only hard part is to swallow the giant pill called CHOICE. (He seems to prescribe that one a lot doesn’t He?)

CHOOSE to acknowledge your sin and ask forgiveness. Next, stop neglecting your time in the Word. Spend time in it daily, no matter how uninterested you may feel.

“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.” Hebrews 2:1

To continue your “treatment”, commit to attending all church services. Look directly at the preacher or teacher and take notes. This will protect you from being distracted.

The final step is to live what you have heard. God even promises us a blessing for hearing and obeying His Word.

“But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” Luke 11:28

God’s waiting, He wants to speak to you right now. Will you listen?

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: John 10:27

“The God of Second Chances” *cont from pg 5*

“No God, I need to hang on to my feelings a little longer.”

Your studies prompted you to share the Gospel.
“I can’t God, they won’t listen to me.”

Break that bad habit. You’re only hurting yourself.
“I know God, but I need it to cope.”

So you ran away from God’s command. Stopped reading, tried to figure out life without His direction. And now all you feel is guilty for a missed opportunity.

If you are feeling convicted by the direction of what you’re reading here...good. Maybe it’s time we got a little convicted. But don’t let feelings of conviction hinder your desire to return to His Word now.

God gave Jonah a second chance to listen. Praise the Lord He is a God of second chances! Could it be that God will give you a second chance?

It’s not too late to return to His Word. God is still speaking to you, He’s never stopped.

Are you willing to listen?

Central Baptist College Fine Arts Announces Spring Performances

One of the great blessings of Central Baptist College is the opportunity to see our students use their God-given talents to glorify Him.

This spring, our Fine Arts Department has an exciting and full schedule that reflects both excellence and ministry.

Our spring season begins with a Fine Arts Tour March 13–16, as our students travel through Missouri, Kansas, and Northwest Arkansas.

During this tour, they will visit First Baptist Church of Galena, KS, for the morning worship service on March 15 and Calvary Baptist Church in Fayetteville for the evening worship service.

If you are in the area, we would love for you to join us. These tours are always a meaningful experience, not only for the churches we visit, but also for our students as they grow in confidence, character, and commitment to Christ.

On March 17 at 5:30pm in the Toland Worship Center, our Instrumental

Ensembles will present a concert highlighting the exceptional musical gifts God has brought to our campus.

The performance will feature our clarinet, strings, and handbell ensembles.

I encourage you to join us and support these students as they share the fruit of their hard work and dedication.

Our Fine Arts ministry continues April 11–13 with a second tour as our band and choirs travel to Lufkin, TX, and Ashdown, AR. During this time, they will minister at Kelty's First Baptist Church, sharing worship and encouraging congregations through music.

They also have the opportunity to perform in the Ashdown public schools. These opportunities allow our students to represent Central Baptist College while growing spiritually and musically.

Our spring performances will culminate with the Spring Concert on April 23 at 6:30pm in the Burgess

Auditorium. This evening will feature our Band, Women's Chorus, Chamber Choir, and Worship Choir.

It is always a joy to witness the excellence, discipline, and heart for ministry that our students bring to the stage.

In addition to these concerts, our Fine Arts Department will play an important role in two significant events in the life of our college. They will provide special music for our 7th Annual Scholarship Gala on March 6 and will participate in the 10th Presidential Inauguration on April 10.

These moments are milestones for our institution, and our students help make them meaningful and memorable.

Because of the extremely busy spring schedule, the CBC Singers could not travel with me to our churches as much as usual.

They are joining me this spring at Herman Baptist Church in Bono, North View Missionary Baptist Church in North Little Rock, and Chenal Valley Baptist Church in Little Rock.

Our Worship Choir and Band will also join me on two separate Sunday evenings at Springhill Baptist Church in Greenbrier.

We would love to bring our students to your church next academic year. Feel free to reach out to me for more information.

I am grateful for the leadership of our Fine Arts faculty and for the dedication of our students. Their work enriches our campus, strengthens our community partnerships, and prepares them to serve wherever God calls them.

I invite you to join us this spring and experience firsthand the impact of Christ-centered Fine Arts at Central Baptist College.

