



Blue's News

From the Home Desk of Richard Blue

The Coronavirus Pandemic has set our world on end no doubt. Every person, home, business, school, community, church, and organization has been adversely affected by this unexpected pandemic. Many in our state have been stricken with this disease and because of the virus many families are walking through the valley of the shadow of death. Each person is affected in some way. Currently, several of our churches have members with the Covid-19 virus, but most do not have anyone with the disease.

Yet, our Lord was not caught off-guard by this pandemic. We look to God for protection, mercy, and grace in these days. The Scripture I look to at this moment is **Proverbs 3:5-6, *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*** Our faith is challenged and we will find that our God...***will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).***

Our pastors and churches are to be commended in their response to the Coronavirus Pandemic. Our churches have worked hard to provide ongoing ministry to their congregations. Livestreaming or recording services have enabled our churches to keep many of their congregants involved in the life of the church. Online and other creative ways of giving have kept our churches afloat in March.

Following the Stay-at-Home order was issued by Governor Edwards earlier in March, the ELBA offices have closed and KaRetha and I have made arrangements to work from our homes. The Christian Counseling Center has used Telemed video meetings for their sessions with some necessary exceptions. Other actions were taken to reduce expenses. These will be included in a full report to the Executive Board on May 4th.

Other actions were taken to firm up the association's finances for the coming months. You will be pleased to know that a one-time gift from the Georgia Barnett State Mission Offering was given to the association to aid in our finances. I want to thank our churches who gave in March and thus far in April.

I attend a weekly online meeting with other Associational Leaders and Dr. Steve Horn of the LBC. These meetings provide updates on State and Federal directives as they relate to our churches. I also attend other online webinars on the SBA Paycheck Protection Program, and I communicate detailed information on our associational web site and through Facebook. I have hosted one Zoom Video Conference Meeting with our pastors and I am planning another soon. My wife and I are doing prayer drives to our churches praying for our pastors, staff, and churches.

When do we reopen??? This is a difficult question to answer as the government has not set a definite date for reopening at the time of this article. I will post something on the www.elbamissions.org website and on FaceBook when I hear something definitive.

Beware! Church leaders and consultants are in agreement that we should not expect an overwhelming first Sunday attendance when the stay-at-home order expires. It is believed it will take a few weeks for our congregations to acclimate to the new normal, and some churches will never be what they were before.

This void gives our churches an opportunity to evaluate their structure and internal ministries. If there is a need to change a church's ministry structure, this may be the time to make those changes: reorganizing, adding new ministries, or deleting any ministry that is no longer effective.

Do not expect church finances to bounce back full steam. There is a rule of thumb that for every one bad month of business, it takes three good months of business to break even. Our churches will spend the remainder of the year just trying to break even from this crisis. Do not lose hope. Keep your eyes focused on the Lord, do the things you can do, and do not fret over the things you cannot/or no longer can do.

How do we proceed with Associational Life? David Lane and I have agreed that we should take things a day at a time. If the governor allows the stay-at-home order to expire April 30, 2020, then we can expect to have an Executive Board Meeting only on Monday, May 4th, 6:30, in the large meeting room of the ELBA Mission and Ministry Center. Expect Social Distancing mandates to be in effect: limits on meeting size, sitting separate and apart, and observing good hygiene rules. If you are sick, or do not feel well, please excuse yourself from the meeting. In the event that the stay-at-home order has not been lifted, then our Executive Board Meeting will be held by a Zoom Video Conference on Monday, May 4, 2020, beginning at 6:30 p.m. We can have up to 100 people online and for longer than an hour if needed. Executive Board Members will be notified by email and text message with Zoom Meeting instructions. I further recommend that officers and team leaders provide a detailed report of their area of ministry for publication, but limit speaking to their reports. No doubt, time for questioning will be necessary. This will limit our meeting time footprint.

Information for churches:

Lifeway has cancelled all Centri-Kid, Mission-fuge, and Centri-fuge Camps that begin in June.

Camp Living Waters, Camp Tall Timbers, and other state Baptist Encampments are waiting on the governor's stay-at-home order decision before decisions are made about June Camps.

Information on the Paycheck Protection Plan will remain on the elbamissions.org website through the first week of May and then archived.

I'm here to serve. Call me if you need me. If you cannot get through, I'll call back as soon as I can. Thank you for letting me serve the Lord and you through ELBA.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE CHURCHES
March-April 2020

Church	MTD	YTD
Agape	\$0.00	\$0.00
Amite	\$0.00	\$3,928.57
Bethel	\$0.00	\$334.77
Carroll	\$302.72	\$302.72
Central	\$0.00	\$0.00
Christ Community	\$0.00	\$2,534.00
Colyell	\$1,543.57	\$3,615.11
Denham Springs FBC	\$0.00	\$4,041.10
Don Avenue	\$0.00	\$1,269.87
Emmanuel	\$0.00	\$1,391.20
Faith	\$0.00	\$0.00
French Settlement	\$0.00	\$661.45
Gray's Creek	\$0.00	\$899.00
Greater Third Zion	\$0.00	\$0.00
Head of Island	\$0.00	\$291.20
Hebron	\$359.53	\$1,177.02
Holden	\$160.24	\$909.62
Judson	\$1,548.98	\$6,466.98
Live Oak	\$0.00	\$7,693.65
Livingston FBC	\$504.00	\$2,392.00
Macedonia	\$0.00	\$0.00
Magnolia	\$200.00	\$600.00
Maurepas	\$0.00	\$243.00
Midway	\$0.00	\$346.47

Church Contd.	MTD	YTD
New Bethlehem	\$0.00	\$248.44
New Covenant	\$0.00	\$0.00
Northside	\$0.00	\$1,875.62
One Life	\$0.00	\$443.00
Pine Grove	\$0.00	\$1,357.49
Red Oak	\$0.00	\$600.00
River of Life	\$0.00	\$0.00
Riverside	\$0.00	\$742.53
Salem	\$0.00	\$0.00
Satsuma	\$0.00	\$250.00
South Walker	\$0.00	\$0.00
Southside	\$0.00	\$300.00
The New Beginnings	\$0.00	\$382.42
Victory	\$0.00	\$817.05
Walker	\$0.00	\$6,292.30
Watson	\$0.00	\$2,286.79
The Way Church	\$0.00	\$675.00
Community Church Spfd	\$50.00	\$200.00
Walker Community	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Contributions	\$4,669.04	\$55,568.37

Capital One	\$84,423.78
Louisiana Baptist Foundation	\$599,454.53
TOTAL Checking & Savings	\$683,878.31

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

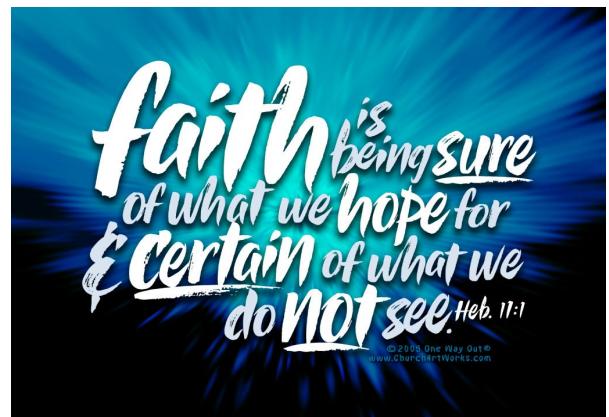
Tuesdays at 10:00am—Pastors Prayer Time
(Zoom Invitation by Bro. Richard)

MAY 2020

- 3 Executive Board Meeting, 6:30pm
- 7 National Day of Prayer
- 10 Mother's Day & Christian Home Week
- 25 Memorial Day

JUNE 2020

- 21 Baptist Men's Emphasis
- 21 Father's Day & Summer Begins
- 28 Citizenship and Religious Liberty Sunday



Please pray for our churches currently seeking pastors:

Carroll Baptist Church, Walker Baptist Church, Don Avenue Baptist Church,
and First Baptist Church, French Settlement

Eastern Louisiana Baptist Association

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The next ELBA Newsletter will be mailed in July. Updates will be emailed as needed.

If you are not presently on our email list and would like to be included,
please send the information to info@elbamissions.org.