

# Connections

LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

JULY 2022

VOL XII: ISSUE 7 LBCPC.ORG



**Celebrating  
Charles Keowns  
40th Anniversary  
of music  
Sunday July 10th  
during the  
11:00 Service**

**Reception Sunday Evening  
5-7pm in Lakewood FAC**



# A Message from M.R. Hamilton

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SENIOR PASTOR, LBC

I can't believe it is July already and summer is here. As a matter of fact summer came in June this year and I am struggling to find a way to put a positive spin on triple digit weather. You see I really do live looking for the positive in anything and everything God sends my way. God really did say he had a plan for us and it was to bless us and not curse us, to give us a hope and a future. Perhaps it's just me but it seems that most people today are not spending near enough time searching for their blessing promised in their future because they have lost hope it is really out there. How many of us are already disappointed in tomorrow and are expecting things to just get worse? Now be honest no one is looking! Chicken little has grown up and taken over leadership of our world and convinced most people the sky is falling. Good news: Chicken little was wrong then and she is wrong now because the world today is no different than it was when you were a child. You grew up in a world with a loving God in control and now you are all grown up. I'm here to remind you that you still live in a world under the control of the very same loving God.

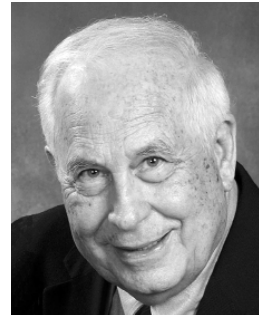
Now back to the weather, it really is crazy hot these days and I mean triple digit hot so just how do you put a positive spin on that reality? Just think about how blessed we are to live in Alabama in this July heat. People in other parts of the country don't have a lot of these benefits like the fact that we never have to worry about a thief waiting in the back seat of our cars. In July nobody blames you for always eating ice cream. Friends

don't forget your grass curls up and dies and you don't have to cut it but once a month as long as you can keep someone from putting water on it. Not only that just think how low your heating bill is in July and tell me we are not blessed.

This July no matter how hot it gets it's going to be one of the best in my lifetime as my grandbabies are coming to stay and walk around the pond with their Papa. **Our God is a God of seasons and every season has a purpose and that purpose is good because it comes from a really good God.** I am excited to see it coming and I am in no way disappointed and that is because I am expecting a blessing. I want to learn to wake up each day like it was Christmas morning. I want to fall asleep each night just like I did as a child on the night before Christmas, full of anticipation and expectation of something great when I wake the next morning. God told me to live that way. He told me to become like the child I once was full of hope and expectation because I know the plan He has for me and He plans to bless me. No amount of triple digit weather can change any of those facts. Oh how I need to learn to remember who God is and who I am in Christ Jesus so I can live free from fear and worry and celebrate a life more abundant and free that Jesus promised to me. Wow! It really is hot here in July just the way I like it!

God Bless  
Brother M.R.

# A Message from Dr. Jerry Horner



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*MINISTER OF DISCIPLESHIP & OUTREACH*

As we observe the birth of our nation, we cannot fail to realize that the walls that made America great are crumbling, taking our country apart a stone at a time, and we are in grave danger. I'm not an alarmist, but I grieve for our nation because of its downward trend. We are reaping the harvest of forgetting God, and His wrath is in the imminent foreground for this country unless we repent and get right with God. Over the past years we have surrendered our foundational principles progressively day by day, a step at a time, stepping backward toward anarchy and socialism. We are witnessing the collapse of morals, skyrocketing inflation, the spread of anarchy, the glorification of perversion, the callous murder of millions of babies, and blatant political corruption. We have almost reached the bottom of the garbage can, where there are no absolutes, where the public decides what is right and wrong, and tolerance is the order of the day. Those who are intent on taking over this nation hide behind social issues and seek to blackmail us with shame and guilt over our intolerance of evil.

"If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psalm 11:3). There is much we can do, and I stand on God's word when I declare that this downward trend can be changed. First, however, we need a generation of spiritual and political leaders who have the courage to stand in the gap and proclaim, "Thus says the Lord" (Jer. 29:4), and who will fearlessly expose the problem, instead of quibbling, making excuses, and placing the blame everywhere but the real source. Nehemiah faced a situation that parallels ours, and he mourned and prayed (Neh. 1:4). When we pray as he prayed, we will see the same restoration that he experienced. How did he pray?

It was a prayer of contrition. He wept, mourned, fasted, and prayed (Neh. 1:4). The church has forgotten how to weep, fast, pray, and seek the face of God with such intensity. There is no way that America will come back to God until those who profess to know Him begin to pray a prayer of brokenness. "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14).

It was a prayer of confession. Nehemiah confessed his own sins and those of the nation (Neh. 1:6). We must nationally repent, but it accomplishes nothing unless we individually repent. It's not enough to cry and mourn over the condition unless you are willing to repent. Without personal repentance, you'll never be a part of the solution, but a part of the problem.

It was a prayer of confidence. Nehemiah reminded God of His promises, and boldly said, "I'm holding You to Your word" (Neh. 1:8-10). That's what real prayer is. It's not just thinking up things that you want and then going to heaven with a shopping list. Real prayer is rooted in the firm promises of God's word, finding a promise in the Bible and standing on it. God says, "Concerning the work of my hands, you command me" (Isa. 45:11). Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance to do something; it's laying hold of His willingness to do it.

It was a prayer of commitment (Neh. 1:11). Nehemiah was the personal valet of the king of Persia, and he lived in luxury, far above the poverty and degradation of his own nation. But he was so burdened over the condition of his nation that he couldn't stay in his place of security. So he prayed, "Lord, prosper me in what I'm about to do, because I'm leaving this warm nest and committing myself to my nation." It's not enough to pray the prayer of contrition, confession, and confidence unless you are also willing to pray the prayer of commitment. **It will take all of God's people to change the course of this nation.** We don't have equal talents and abilities, but we can have equal commitment and equal sacrifice.

Someone once asked the comedian Flip Wilson what his religion was. He replied that he was a Jehovah's Bystander. When asked what that meant, Flip explained that they wanted him to be a Jehovah's Witness, but he didn't want to get involved. That may describe a lot of us. We bemoan the deplorable state of our country, but we don't commit ourselves to do anything about it.





## **CHRISTMAS IN JULY**

*Thursday, July 14th*

*6:30pm in the fellowship hall*

**Spaghetti Dinner**

**Bring Cookies to swap and**

**items to pack in**

**Operation Christmas Child boxes**

SPONSORED BY THE WOMENS MINISTRY



**GOD BLESS  
AMERICA**





# A Message from Andrew Spires

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*MINISTER OF STUDENTS & SINGLES*

We all face defining moments in life. Some decisions are bold, significant decisions, like who to marry, where to live, what career path to take, and when to retire. However, many defining moments don't seem that defining in the moment. However, every decision has an outcome; good or bad. The decisions we make today can greatly affect who we will become in the future. Recently, during one of our Friday morning Breakfast Clubs, we examined the life of the Old Testament character named Lot. Lot is overshadowed in the book of Genesis by his famous uncle Abraham (Abram). Lot's story is represented as part of Abraham's story and as such it holds special meaning. Abraham becomes a father figure to Lot, and Lot is tremendously blessed because of God's covenantal blessing on Abraham. Both Abraham and Lot moved their families together, but the land could not support their flocks and soon their shepherds began to quarrel. Abraham and Lot are both facing a defining moment but it isn't clear that either of them knows it at the time.

Let's look at several ways you can show godly wisdom in the defining moments of life.

1. Godly wisdom #1: Who's under your tent? (Genesis 13:1-18)

-Ever heard the saying; "Show me your friends, and I'll show you your future?"

-Verse 9; Abraham gave Lot the first choice of the land, and Lot chose to camp near Sodom (vs. 10).

-Lot chose by appearance, not by seeking God's will. Lot chose to pitch his tent right outside some large cities.

-Verse 12; Abraham settles in the land of Canaan, which we now call the Promised Land. He chooses a solitary life away from the wickedness in the cities.

-Abraham was right where God wanted him to be, but Lot was not.

-Verse 13; "Now the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord." Lot chose to surround himself with sinners." Lot's simple choice would greatly affect his future and have serious repercussions for his whole family.

-At first, Lot lived just outside the city, but before long, he will move inside its walls. Once you start moving towards sin, you will eventually become entangled. You cannot hang around sinful people and think your actions will not be affected.

2. Godly wisdom #2: Hear God's warnings. (Genesis 19:1-29)

-God sends three visitors to Abraham with a warning, one of whom is the pre-incarnate Christ.

-The visitors inform Abraham that God will judge Sodom and Gomorrah for their sinfulness they will be wiped off the map.

-Verse 20; "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous." Sin left unchecked demands God's judgment. We will always reap what we sow!

-This passage portrays the rampant immorality, sexual perversion, and violence of the people in these towns. We all have temptations, and we all sin, but when God convicts us and calls us to repentance we must listen and obey.

-Simple truth; the more you sin, the easier it becomes to sin. Failure begets more failure. Stop dipping your finger into the water of sin to see if it's still hot!

-Verse 26; "But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt." Do not look back at what you've left behind (worldliness), but fix your eyes on Jesus.

3. Godly wisdom #3: You will be rescued. (2 Peter 2:6-9)

-God always provides a way out! You might be tempted to think less of God for destroying two cities? Yet, from another point of view, God sent an angelic rescue party for His people.

-Lot made a poor decision about where to live, and who he surrounded himself with. That one decision soon cost him his home and his wife. Later in his story, the consequences will extend to the rest of this family.

-1 Cor. 10:13; "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."

-Verse 7; "and if He rescued Lot, a righteous man..." On the outside looking in, Lot in no way seems like a righteous man? Yet, when judgment comes and God calls him out of that city, Lot responded in faith. Just like Abraham and us, Lot is counted righteous by his faith.

-Verse 8; says there was a war going on inside Lot. He was tormented by the sinfulness all around him. Though Lot was distressed, something kept him in Sodom?

-Are you disturbed by what you see happening in this world? Or do you feel right at home?

-Verse 9; God knows how and when to rescue His righteous people.

Application: First, watch who you surround yourselves with. Your friends are powerful influences and will either lead you towards Christ or away from Christ. Second, heed God's warnings! When God gives direction or convicts you and calls you to repentance do not ignore the voice of the Lord. Finally, remember when you are tempted it doesn't have to lead to sin. Fight! Battle! Obey! Wait patiently on the Lord. His rescue party is on the way!

God bless,  
drew

# A Message from David Stephens

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*CHILDREN'S MINISTER*



We are in the thick of summer. I am actually writing this as I help serve another church in another city on Lakewood's in-state mission trip. We have a vision to unite multiple churches together to serve families in need and a local church body in need. It really is a wonderful thing, when the big picture church is seen in action. Yes, there are people that I don't know that I will be working alongside. We will love on kids thru bible school, cut and clear property, and whatever else is needed to be done. We come to these adventures with open hands, asking 'What Lord, would you have me to do today? We are teaching children to be image bearers of Christ? We are helping out a local church to reach its community for Jesus. We are building new or stronger relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ who are called to ministry leadership.

A verse that has been impacting me lately is Romans 12:2. Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

I as I reflect on this verse, our current political, cultural, and church environment I pray that mission trips like this are an example of the power of the transformed mind. I pray that everyday my thoughts and my attitude are directed to Jesus, His word and the work required of me for each day. I've learned that the things I've done are the sum total of the things I've thought. The most powerful thing in your life is a renewed mind fueled

by the Holy Spirit. This summer as we go about all the craziness of everything we have our hands in, take time to reflect. Remember that we celebrate Independence Day as a subset to the only story that exists; God's redeeming story.

## Calendar July

In July we are taking 45 campers to MERGE July 11- 14, and our team is getting excited. We are team RED, so let the color wars begin. Please be praying over our camp week. This opportunity for our students is transforming in many ways. Pray that hearts and minds will be renewed. If you are interested in helping a camper cover tuition let me know or want to support this work financially let me know.

But, what is most needed is Prayer, Prayer, Prayer!



# Lakewood Happenings

## JULY 2022

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	Happy Fourth of July	6:00pm Women's Ministry Team Meeting			5:30pm Senior Adult Game Night Cold Salads	
	4	5	6	7	8	9
Lord's Supper 5:00pm Deacon's Meeting	9:00am Amen Choir			6:30pm Christmas in July Cookie Swap & OCC Boxes in F/H		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
6:00pm Church Conference			7:00pm Finance Team meets		10:00am Breakfast Club	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
			5:45pm AWANA Wet Wednesday	6:00pm Jane Ellen Gaines Baptist Women	10:00am Breakfast Club	11:00am S&YA Feed the Homeless
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## May Giving

	BUDGET	CTB	MISSIONS	OTHER	TOTAL
5/1	\$26,524.54	\$260.00	\$2,272.18	\$2,143.00	\$31,199.72
5/8	\$20,639.88	\$130.00	\$2,768.30	\$540.00	\$24,078.18
5/15	\$27,185.79	\$20.00	\$881.50	\$334.00	\$28,421.29
5/22	\$12,344.21	\$115.00	\$642.14	\$75.00	\$13,176.35
5/29	\$16,446.54	-	\$1,888.50	\$833.00	\$19,168.04

### ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

<b>SUNDAY</b>	
9:00am	Contemporary Worship
10:00am	Bible Fellowship
11:00am	Blended Worship
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	
6:00pm	Prayer Meeting
6:30pm	Youth Worship



## In Memory of

Byrdie June Skipper  
For General Fund  
From Glenda Medley

Homer Medley 46th Anniversary  
For General Fund  
From Glenda Medley

Kathy Bailey  
For General Fund  
From Glenda Medley

Ronnie Rice  
For Amen Choir  
From Mr. & Mrs. Fred Van Horn  
Norman Davis

Stella Hughes  
For LOAF  
From Patricia Thomas

Martha Hinton  
For Music Ministry from LBC

Mary Joe Williams  
For Womens' Ministry from LBC

*If my people who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

*2 Chronicles 7:14*

### SENIOR ADULT GAME NIGHT

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FRIDAY, JULY 8TH  
5:30PM - FH

BRING COLD SALADS

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

AUGUST 21ST

M.R. & KATIE'S  
RETIREMENT  
SOCIAL

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CONNECTIONS (USPS #463270) is a monthly publication by Lakewood Baptist Church. Periodicals paid at Phenix City, AL.

POSTMASTER: Send all address corrections to: Lakewood Baptist Church, 4011 Lakewood Drive, Phenix City, Alabama 36867