

CONCORD COVENANT

INDIVIDUAL CHURCHES UNITED IN FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION.

The mission moves forward

ANNIE ARMSTRONG
EASTER OFFERING
FOR NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS

WHAT'S

IN THIS ISSUE:

DOM | 2
EARLS' FRONT PORCH | 3
MINISTRY ASSISTANT | 4
BOOK REVIEW | 5
MISSIONS | 6
MINISTRY POSITIONS | 7
CALENDAR | 8
PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES | 8
RESOURCES | 9-10

OFFICE HOURS:

MONDAY | 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
TUESDAY | 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
WEDNESDAY | 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
THURSDAY | 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
FRIDAY | 8:00 AM – NOON

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JOIN NAMB IN MOVING THE MISSION FORWARD

The Week of Prayer for North American Missions is observed by Southern Baptist churches to pray for North American missionaries, their ministries and their families. Prayer is the fuel for spiritually sustaining these missionaries in places where the gospel is greatly needed, but often opposed.

The official date for the Week of Prayer is the first Sunday in March through the second Sunday (March 7-14, 2021). Your church can choose this date or another time during the Easter season to participate.

The theme for 2021 is: "The Mission Moves Forward", centering on 1 Corinthians 15:58, which says: "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the Lord's work, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

HOW CAN CBA CHURCHES GET INVOLVED?

1. **JOIN CHURCHES AROUND THE UNITED STATES IN THE WEEK OF PRAYER.** Prayer guides and other promotional resources are available at anniearmstrong.com
2. **COMMIT TO GIVE.** The national goal for 2021 is \$70 million. Pray about setting a challenging goal for your church.

A WORD FROM OUR DOM



Dear CBA Churches,

The month of February threw some real challenges at us; freezing cold, ice and several inches of snow. For a few weeks we saw a lot of challenges. One of the great things about winter is we know that spring is right around the corner. Spring is a time for planting, growing and seeing new life. As we think about planting and growing, isn't that what we should be about for the Lord? In Mark's Gospel we see a number of parables to include the Parable of the Growing Seed.

²⁶ "The kingdom of God is like this," he said. "A man scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷ He sleeps and rises night and day; the seed sprouts and grows, although he doesn't know how. ²⁸ The soil produces a crop by itself—first the blade, then the head, and then the full grain on the head. ²⁹ As soon as the crop is ready, he sends for the sickle, because the harvest has come."

(Mark 4:26-29, CSB)

I believe that Jesus challenges His disciples, which also includes us. We can see two things at best for which man has control: 1. To scatter seed (vs 26); and 2. To put the sickle to work (vs 29b). But there are far more uncontrollable things when it comes to producing a harvest: 1. The soil produces all by itself (vs 27-28a); 2. God makes it grow and become ready (vs 28b-29a); and 3. God brings the harvest (vs. 29c).

While Jesus clearly indicates that God the Father has control of the growing and the ultimate harvest, it is also clear that God has chosen to allow us to be fellow workers with Him. God clearly allows man to be involved with scattering the seed of the Gospel and to have the privilege to bring the harvest in by being a witness to God's salvation in someone's life.

Isn't it interesting how man often wants to be in control of the things he ought not to control? But how do we react when God does give us the control of something? God has given you and me full control to spread the seed of the Gospel. Whether the seed takes root and grows is not our control. But the more seed we sow the more opportunity that the seeds will take root. God is essentially saying to Christian men and women, I trust you with that. I trust that you who have the Gospel will spread more seeds of the Gospel so others can grow to the harvest of salvation. What about when God brings a crop to harvest? Are you willing to put the sickle to work and to encourage people to come to Jesus for salvation? Only God can draw people to Himself, but are you willing to work in God's harvest field?

Are you a seed sower for Jesus? God has given you the authority and the responsibility. Will you do it? Is your church a seed sower for Jesus? Who owns seed sowing in your church? Could it be you? As we look around us in our community, state, nation and world, there is a lot of barren land that is in need of a fruit producing crop. Church before us is a mission field. God says to sow the seed. Then, He tells us to allow Him to grow it and bring it ripe unto harvest. Then, He asks us to join Him in the joy of seeing His harvest come to be.

What a joy to be a seed sower for Jesus. As we prepare for the Annie Armstrong Easter offerings won't you accept God's invitation and directive to sow the seeds of the Gospel? Not only through your financial giving, but through your prayers and opportunities to be on Mission for the Lord.

In Christ,

Bro. Alan

THE EARLS' FRONT PORCH:

Hello, I am Paula, wife of your Director of Missions, Alan Earls. I will be sharing a little about us over the next several months. So welcome to our porch.

March is upon us and the Annie Armstrong Easter offering begins soon.

I remember learning about Annie Armstrong as a young GA girl back home in Kentucky. Miss Annie was a big deal especially to my Granny Ruth and Mama. They admired all the ways she organized women to pray and give, but to also meet the needs around them.

My Granny Ruth would always tell me "giving starts at home." Take care of your neighbors and loved ones and give to missions. Through the Annie Armstrong Easter offering every single dollar given supports thousands and thousands of missionaries across the U.S. and Canada.



One year I came in from school and my Mama was making something out of blue Clorox bottles. She had the pinking shears and ribbon out and was cutting the bottles to look like Easter Eggs. We worked hard to fill them with bills and coins for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. They turned out so beautiful and it was a joy to give to our missionaries. Mama always had creative ways to make giving fun.

Some of you may not know this, but the North American Mission Board is supported by three main sources. The largest source is the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering funding 50 percent of everything they do. Next is our Cooperative Program (CP) at 35 percent and finally 15 percent come from other sources.

Our missionaries are following the Great Commission of going out and making disciples and training them. They are giving up many wants and sometimes needs to share the gospel. Isn't it awesome we can be a part of helping them share the gospel of Christ with others through prayer and giving.

I sure hope you will take this into consideration when you think about how you can support our missionaries in the U.S. and Canada.

Many people need to come to faith. They will not do this without someone sharing the gospel with them.

Let's celebrate Easter in a mighty way and set high goals to achieve for kingdom building!

Until we visit again,

Paula

CHOOSING TO WORSHIP



Hi! I am Alicia Amos, the Ministry Assistant here at the Concord Baptist Association. Many of you have probably seen or heard my name in passing over the past year or so, some of you have probably met me in passing, but Bro. Alan asked me to put a face to the name and share a bit of my heart with you this month.

As I sit here writing to you, I am just a little over a month away from the due date of my first baby. The closer her arrival draws, the more that I reflect on the long road that we've taken to get here. It's funny, but the thought that keeps springing to mind is stretch marks. Any mama will tell you that these are one of the great "joys" of late pregnancy. As I reach the end of my pregnancy, I'll tell you that I have collected quite a few of these. But I don't mind as much as I thought I would. My skin now proudly displays these physical stretch marks, evidence of the precious little life growing inside, but when I look in the mirror every morning, I am reminded of the invisible ones that I wear on my heart. Stretch marks that have come from a long season of waiting to birth a child that month after month, year after year didn't come.

I don't search for a remedy to remove these marks. They may be ugly to some, but to me they are a sign of life.

What do you do when your worst fear is realized? Do you withdraw from the world, from God? Do you paste on a smile and suffer in silence? Do you let your grief stifle you? I won't lie, initially that was my response. I felt forgotten and alone. I felt weak. I felt angry.

"I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

My soul makes its boast in the Lord; let the humble hear and be glad.

Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together!

I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.

Those who look to Him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed."

(Psalm 34:1-5, ESV)

I remember reading this and how impossible it felt to offer my praise in the midst of what felt like my deepest tragedy. It felt impossible to see God's goodness, when I looked at my life and saw my deepest fears being realized. But it was there, in the midst of all that was happening and all the grief...it was in the places that I feared the most that I found Him. I may have felt forgotten and alone, but I heard Him speak in His Word that He had not left me. I may have felt weak, but He showed Himself as strong enough. I found a God who is good, even when life is not. A God that I can praise at all times, no matter what my circumstances, because my outcome does not determine His goodness. He is good no matter what. Despite the grief and the struggle of the five years we waited to be blessed with a child, God took what Satan meant to harm and used it to do something beautiful in my heart. I have the stretch marks to prove it. Pregnant or not, that's the real victory.

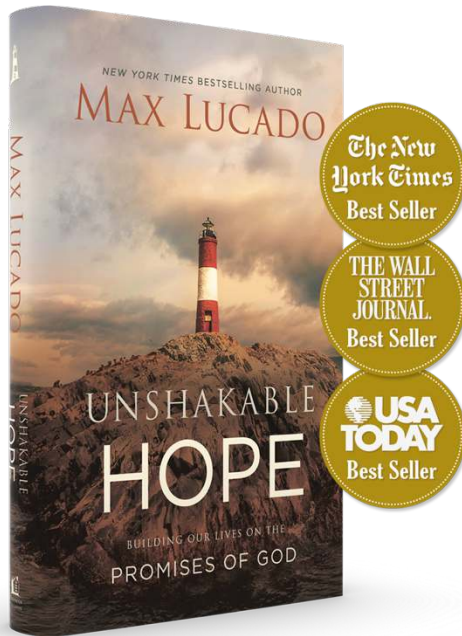
Let us always choose to worship, choose to declare that He is good, even when life is not.

Blessings,

Alicia

UNSHAKABLE HOPE BY MAX LUCADO

BOOK REVIEW BY SARAH KENNEDY



Unshakable: unable to be changed, disputed or questioned.
Hope: the confident expectation of what God has promised.
(<https://languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/>)

An unshakable hope, therefore, is a confident expectation in what God has promised that is unable to be changed, disputed or questioned. In his fortieth book, Max Lucado turns his focus to the promises of God.

By one man's count, there are 7,487 promises in the Bible given specifically to us, His children. Quoting 2 Peter 1:4 NIV "(God) has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature", he lays out basic truths about the role of God's promises for the believer. Why are they there? What is their purpose? What do we do with them now that we know them?

He calls believers 'People of the Promise' and with each chapter focuses on a different promise from God's Word. He freely tells us the promises he chose are his own personal favorites. You will find, he chose promises that serve as a solid foundation for believers to stand on, promises we should not only know, but live by each and every day.

I personally like how each chapter begins with a story and leads to scripture and truths that give us a greater understanding not only of the promise but how this promise is intended to draw us closer to God. I have not read all forty of Max Lucado's, books but I have read a good number of them over the years. I have always appreciated his ability to write to the average believer. His books are extremely readable and relatable. He writes in such a way I don't have to struggle to figure out what he is saying. I also appreciate his liberal use of scripture throughout the book. The truths we find here are straight from God's word. It is not church doctrine or personal opinion. He also uses what I personally think of as 'soundbites.' Throughout the book you find sentences that summarize his point that seem to jump off the page and make you go find a pen to write it down so you don't forget.

Unshakable Hope was published in 2018, well before this world of virus and quarantine. It's just another example of how our awesome God works in that He inspired this author to write a timely message for our world even before we knew we were going to need it.

This book is available from LifeWay and most, if not all major book retailers. There is a study guide and a DVD available as well. In my opinion this would be an excellent choice for a personal or a small group study.

MISSIONS CORNER:

PASTOR HEBER MENA TRAVELS TO EL SALVADOR TO PROVIDE EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND RETREAT

Originally printed in the February 2021 Issue of the Future Leadership Foundation's Newsletter



Heber Mena will be a busy man in February, traveling to work with pastors and other leaders throughout the country of El Salvador.

"I enjoy working with the people," states Heber, a Field Services Director for Future Leadership Foundation. "They have a strong hunger for learning, teachable spirit, and servant hearts." It doesn't hurt that he is also a native of El Salvador! It is an added blessing for FLF to have members of its leadership team that, as Heber says, knows "the culture, the language, and understands their needs firsthand."

Working with the El Salvador Baptist Association (ABES) and Theological Baptist Institute of El Salvador (ITBES), the trip is being planned to maximize his time there during the Feb. 23-27 trip. Plans that have been developed with Gladys Ortiz, president of both ABES and ITBES, will concentrate on three areas:

Theological Education: Continuing an FLF/ABES/ITBES certification program, Heber plans to teach "Soteriology" (the doctrine of salvation) to 60 pastors and leaders in three different parts of the country, hosted by local churches and ABES.

Leadership Training: Heber will be working with the ABES association and ITBES Board on "Becoming a Change Leader."

Pastors Retreat: "Ministering during this COVID-19 pandemic has left our pastors tired, burdened, overwhelmed, anxious, and depressed," observes Heber. "So, I would like to provide a time for replenishment, encouragement, and fun!" Plans are to focus on "Courageous Leadership," based on Joshua 1:5-9 and using John Maxwell's *Today Matters*. In addition to encouragement and fun, a goal of the retreat will be recognition and appreciation. FLF will provide food, snacks, and a small gift for each attendee.

How can you pray?

Heber Mena asks for your prayers in three specific areas as he prepares for the February trip:

- Safety and protection from COVID-19
- That God will use him to encourage, lift up, love, serve, and add value to the pastors and leaders he will be serving
- That God will financially provide for all of the planned events for these pastors and leaders

Heber will be sharing a report on the trip in a future issue of *Reaching Across*.

Photos: (Top) Heber Mena conducts a leadership training session in July 2019.

The CBA Missions Corner is an opportunity for CBA churches to share special missions and ministries for which they are a part. Please forward any special mission/ministry in which your church is involved to Alicia Amos at office@cbamo.org so we can include your mission and ministry to *Make Disciples of All Nations*.

LOVE DEMONSTRATED THROUGH SALVATION

No greater love was demonstrated throughout history than when Jesus who is God the Son, came from heaven to earth to die on the cross and pay the penalty for the sins of mankind. The road to salvation and understanding the love of God is found in God's word:

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:23)

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." (Romans 10:9-10)

"for, Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Romans 10:13)

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12)

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

"Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. ³³ But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven." (Matthew 10:32-33)

"If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God." (1 John 4:15)

If God has drawn you to Himself and you are ready to accept Jesus as Lord and the love He offers; say and mean the following prayer:

Dear God, I know I'm a sinner. Please forgive me of my sins. I turn from sin and turn to Jesus. I believe that Jesus is God the Son who died and shed His blood on the cross for the payment of my sins, was buried and that He rose from the grave three days later. Father, I want Jesus to come into my life. I want Jesus to be my boss and Lord. Thank you for saving me. In Jesus name, Amen.

MISSIONS OPPORTUNITIES FOR CBA CHURCHES

Mission Opportunities in North America:

The Concord Baptist Association is prayerfully considering possible Missions partnerships between CBA churches with churches in Minnesota/Wisconsin and Montana. If you or your church is interested in traveling to these states and participating in a Vision trip to explore a church partnership, please contact Alicia at office@cbamo.org or Bro. Alan at alaneails@cbamo.org

Mission Trip to El Salvador:

The Concord Baptist Association is exploring another mission trip to El Salvador. The specific date, time and specific mission is still being considered. If you feel God calling you to a short term inter-national mission trip, please pray and seek God's guidance to determine if this trip is for you. We will be sharing more information as it becomes available. In addition to your calling and spiritual preparation, one of the first steps is to check your passport to ensure that it has not expired. If you have never received a passport, please follow the following link: <https://www.usa.gov/passport>

Opportunities in Montana:

Bro. Alan will be heading to Montana from May 3-8 with a group from the MBC. There, he will explore the opportunities for the Concord Baptist Association to partner with MBC connections within the state to aid in the advancement of the gospel.

Bro. Alan will share his findings after his return.



UPCOMING DATES

Revelation Bible Study – Join us at the CBA office on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 am to noon as we study the book of Revelations. The cost of \$20 is to cover the printed materials. *There will be no study on March 30th.*

Pastor's Roundtables – have resumed meeting once a month at the CBA office. The next Roundtable will be held on Tuesday, March 16th at 12:00 p.m. A light lunch will be provided, so please let us know in advance if you plan to attend.

Newsletter Deadline – If you have an item you wish to have in the January issue, please send it to office@cbamo.org no later than Friday, March 19th.

Men and Boys Wild Game Supper –

The Men and Boys Wild Game Supper has been rescheduled for Friday, March 12th at First Baptist Church – California. The doors will open at 6:00 pm, dinner will be at 6:30 pm, and the speaker will go on at 7:00 pm. This year's featured speaker is Brad Clay from Final Descent Outdoors.

The Men and Boys Wild Game Supper planning team is requesting volunteers to assist with the setup/cleanup of this event as well as the donation of a few items. CBA Churches will be receiving a link with a more detailed list and way for churches and/or individuals to commit to help.

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYER FOR...

OUR CHURCHES WITHOUT PASTORS, THE MEN LEADING IN THE INTERIM, & THE MEN GOD IS PREPARING TO LEAD THEIR CONGREGATIONS:

CENTERTOWN (Interim Shawn Higgins)
COLE SPRING (Interim Mark Donnell)
HIGH POINT (Interim Heber Mena)
LUPUS (Interim Billy Bolden)
MT. OLIVE
MT. PLEASANT-CLARKSBURG
PLEASANT HILL (Interim Stephen Bickel)

SAVE THE DATE:

It's time to start thinking about getting summer activities on the calendar!

Mid Missouri Missions Team – 3MT will be held from June 27th-July 1st. This local missions week is open to students who have completed the 6th grade and older. The format will be a little different this year than in years past, so be sure that you are following "3MT- Mid Missouri Missions Team" on Facebook so you won't miss any updates from the 3MT Board.

Concord Builders Team – Concord Builders will hold its annual mission trip July 11th-17th. This team does a variety of construction projects around the area and state. No experience necessary! The only requirement is that you must be 12 years or older (minors must attend with a sponsor) and that you come with a servant's heart. Contact Lucy Engelbrecht (lengel0625@gmail.com) for more details.

Children's Camp – this year's Children's Camp will be held July 18th-23rd at Camp Cedarcrest in Mexico, MO, in partnership with the Heart of Missouri Association. Camp is open to students who have completed 3rd-6th grades. More details will be sent out to churches soon, so be watching for that email!

OPEN MINISTRY POSITIONS

PART-TIME YOUTH DIRECTOR

Corticelli Baptist Church, Russellville, MO, is seeking a part-time youth director. Approximately 15-20 hours a week. \$15,000 per year. Job description can be seen at corticelli.org or call the pastor at (573) 680-0192. Please send resumés to rwseaton@embarqmail.com

CBA SUMMER MISSIONS INTERN

The Concord Baptist Association is now accepting applications for the Summer Missions Internship. You must be available for 10 weeks, beginning June 1st. Hours will vary according to need. Duties will include working with CBA Churches for outreach events (VBS, Sports Crusaders, etc...), Children's Camp, mission projects and other duties as assigned.

The application is available at cbamo.org. The deadline for submitting applications is April 5th, 2021.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES:

Ministry Book/Video/Audio Resources

The Association has received a number of materials that can be of great assistance to our churches and especially young ministers coming up. If you are mentoring a leader or minister, please consider these free resources that may help your continued discipleship investment. These resources will be available during the Pastor Round Table and I will make them accessible to our pastors and churches for a month. After this month, I will need to rehome them. However, I want our churches to benefit from them first if at all possible.

Electric Organ

Pisgah Baptist Church has an electric organ available. It is in need of a few minor repairs but is in working condition. For more information, please contact the church at (573) 680-2395.

VBS Materials

Summer is coming! Traditionally, the association orders a VBS kit that is available to churches to borrow. If this is something that your church would be interested in, please email Alicia Amos at office@cbamo.org as soon as you know what dates you would be interested in reserving the kit for.

For the Church Institute through Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

The CBA office is excited to introduce you to a new initiative from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (MBTS). It is called For the Church Institute or FTC Institute. MBTS through FTC Institute is offering free online courses for who may be seeking theological education. These courses are **offered free of charge to anyone within your church that is interested in theological education but is not necessarily after a degree or paying a lot of money**. You are encouraged to click on the link below and see what you think. It is possible for you to offer these courses within your church. The 10-week lesson plans are all online and there is no additional requirement to purchase any additional resources. For the Church Institute is part of Midwestern's core value to serve the church. You do not receive seminary credit, however, upon completion of the course you do receive a certificate and are eligible for Continuing Education Credit, if any of

your licensures would require CEU's. Some of you may have your seminary degree and want to have a refresher; some of you may not have had an opportunity to attend Seminary; some of you are mentoring those called to the ministry and could use these courses in organized mentorship; some of you are seeking to work on leadership development for your church lay leaders and will find this opportunity to greatly help them enhance their Biblical understanding. It is great for Sunday School teachers, small group leaders, pastoral staff, and anyone that desires and needs the training. Oh, and did I mention it is FREE, it is provided to the churches by Midwestern Seminary because their mission is to serve the CHURCH! For more information, please visit <https://ftcinstitute.squarespace.com/>

CHRISTIAN COUNSELING

The Concord Baptist Association is proud to announce a new partnership with Still Waters Counseling, LLC. Still Waters Counseling provides Christian counseling through a Licensed Professional Counselor in the Jefferson City area. Rhonda Myers, MA, LPC is now available to pastors and churches throughout our association. She currently offers Christian Counseling at the Concord Baptist Association office on Friday mornings. If you are aware of anyone in need of Christian counseling, please contact Rhonda Myers by cell phone at (573) 680-3718 or email for an appointment at stillwaterscounselingmo@gmail.com

THE FOUR HORSEMEN

"For the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God." (James 1:20)

Marriage research done by Doctors John & Julie Gottman has determined that the instruction in this scripture is especially useful in relationships (no surprise there)!

What do I mean by that? Gottman's research has determined that four kinds of communication are destructive to a marriage. So destructive that Gottmans call them "the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse". In giving them that name, they are telling us that when those show up regularly, the end (of the relationship) is near! They have plenty of research to support this.

What are these Four Horsemen? They are criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling. Let's take a quick look at each one.

- Criticism – has to do with the partner's character, not the thing they did that upset you. It is attacking who they are. Critical statements often begin "You always..." or "You never..."
- Contempt – This is the condition where you consider yourself superior to the other. You might mock, ridicule, or mimic to make the other feel despised and worthless.
- Defensiveness – Typically a response to criticism; when you are defensive you will throw out excuses or play the innocent victim.
- Stonewalling – This occurs when one partner withdraws from the interaction and becomes silent.

Isn't it the "anger of man" that brings us to the point of criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling?

Next time I want to talk about some antidotes to these Four Horsemen.

This article was submitted by Scott Wegman, M.A. Professional Counseling. He does public speaking on mental health issues related to faith. If you are interested, please contact him via email (gcc.taylor.mo@gmail.com)