

# BCVVOICE

FALL 2024



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baptistchildrensvillage.com



## YDIP Staff Launch New Discipleship Book

**Y**outh Detention Intervention Program (YDIP) staff, in collaboration with Dr. Kevin Ivy, has developed discipleship curriculum for use with incarcerated teenagers with whom they work. *The Way to a Godly Life* is an all inclusive discipleship plan designed to equip new Christians to grow in their faith. By incorporating the qualities found in 2 Peter 1 and the spiritual disciplines of the Christian faith, this curriculum provides a road map for growth in Christ-likeness.

In 2022 this new YDIP ministry was formed under the umbrella of The Baptist Children's Village ministry who has a rich heritage of sharing the gospel with hurting children and families. The mission of YDIP is to "ensure that every Mississippi detained juvenile is impacted with the Gospel of Jesus Christ." In its first two years the program staff and volunteers saw 60 young people

in juvenile justice centers make professions of faith. This great victory led the BCV to see the need for a discipleship program. Every day the BCV sees more and more young people come to faith in Jesus Christ through the Youth Detention Intervention Program. The hope of this curriculum is to ensure that they are equipped to grow in their faith and to share the hope they have with others.



Darron Byrd and Jordan Byrd



Darron Byrd and Jordan Byrd launches new discipleship book





Annual John Sandifer/Doug Jones Memorial Ride and BCV Caravan

## Harley Davidson Christmas Memories

For at least 33 years Harley-Davidson of Jackson staff and volunteers have been showering BCV children with Christmas cheer. In those early days, employees and customers would visit the India Nunnery Campus, then in Jackson, and let the children ooooo and ahhhh over the shiny loud motorcycles, enjoy a hot dog at the pavilion with them, then leave them with some gifts.

Led by Harley-Davidson Owner and General Manager, Earl Rottman, and Service Manager Homer Orr, the annual John Sandifer/Doug Jones Memorial Ride has morphed

into a biker and BCV van caravan from Trustmark Park to the Harley shop on I-55 South. Children are overwhelmed by the Jackson Police and Hinds County Sheriff motorcycle escort down the interstate. These officers may not ever realize what a difference it made in a child's life to see a friendly law enforcement face and simple act of kindness. So many have only known them in the context of tragedy and sadness.

Once at the shop, children and staff are directed to the beautiful, enormous deck where motorcycle clubs and staff have grilled hamburgers and hotdogs, and baked

desserts for them to enjoy. The highlight though just might be Santa engaging with them over their lunch. That is until he invites them to take a picture with him and receive their very generous gifts.

Photographer Matt Sweeney, owner of N-Focus Photography, and his wife Pam set up his professional equipment and take a keepsake Santa picture for each child.

Beginning right after Labor Day each year, BCV staff collect wish lists from children and that list is passed along to elves at the Harley shop. Customers are invited to choose a name to provide gifts for,





or give money for the elves to shop with. Most recently that lead elf has been Karen Hathcock. She leads her team to shop and then spend time wrapping and organizing gifts, checking lists a second and third time to be sure no one is left out, including those children who arrive just before the party begins. There are no adjectives to describe the generosity of these volunteers and of Earl and Homer who close their shop and work with their customers to put smiles on children's faces. They have continually gone the extra mile to search for just the right gift to fill a wish. They saw to it that bike tires were aired up, and that every bike or scooter requested also came with a helmet.

They each have special memories of children who opened that gift they requested but never thought they would receive, and of the tears and shouts of joy that erupted in that moment. Perhaps Earl's profound love for children was nurtured in his early years as he watched his mother

care for babies while they waited for adoption. Karen too has a special place in her heart for displaced children adopting her own daughter. God uses all our experiences to mold us and use us in ways we often don't expect. It was the choice of each, however, to respond to the opportunity to give of themselves for these children in this way repeatedly.

This year will be the first year in over thirty years that there will not be a John Sandifer/Doug Jones Memorial Ride to benefit The Baptist Children's Village since Earl and Homer are retiring from their very successful Harley-Davidson of Jackson business. We honor them for their generosity and sacrifices, not just for our children but for the veterans and military they regularly honored with trail rides and elaborate air shows. Their tough exteriors are no match for the shy grin of a little girl, or a wide-eyed little boy receiving his first bike.

Thank you Earl and Homer and your army of friends who shared in your generosity and thoughtfulness toward our Baptist Children's Village children for over 30 years.



Homer Orr, Karen Hathcock, Earl Rottman



Santa and His Helpers



Staunch Santa



Photographer Matt Sweaney and Wife Pam



# BCV TRIBUTE GIFTS

July 16, 2024 through October 15, 2024

Throughout the year, families memorialize and honor family members and special friends with a gift to The Baptist Children's Village. Small groups honor teachers and the special people in their lives. For each tribute gift received, the donor receives an acknowledgment letter and receipt. A personal letter is sent to the honoree informing them of the gift given in their honor. Family members are informed of a gift given in memory of their loved one. The BCV is herein publishing the list of honorees and donors recently received. We are grateful to the many thoughtful donors who pay tribute to the special people in their lives.

You can visit [baptistchildrensvillage.com/give](http://baptistchildrensvillage.com/give) or use the enclosed envelope to give a gift of honor or memory for your loved one(s) to The Baptist Children's Village.

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Gift from Sandy's son



Sandy Love

## A Love for Sewing and Listening

**S**andy Love turned 82 at the end of October but she is young at heart and still enjoys teaching and investing in teenagers. She says many people who are considering adopting or fostering children pursue younger children but she has always been drawn to teenagers. She believes most of them just need to know they are being heard. A specific conversation with a young lady confirmed that in her heart several years ago. She was explaining that God gives everyone talents and remarked that hers was sewing. The girl responded, "Oh, He gave you more than that, you listen." For that teenager, that day, listening was the greatest gift you could have given her.

Sandy began sewing at the age of five with her grandmother on a treadle sewing machine before she could really reach the pedal. After 76 years, she still loves it. Her alterations business allows her to meet many interesting people and pursue another passion of hers . . . sharing Jesus. "They aren't getting out of here without a word about Jesus," she explains with her big engaging smile. Her clients include countless people

in southwest Mississippi and some as far away as North Carolina and Washington DC. She explains that some who have family out of state will bring alterations to her when they come to visit their family. Some congressional staff ship garments to her to be altered or bring them when they come home. There is no doubt that her expertise and patience with the tedious has served her well. Not all seamstresses take the time to give such attention to detail as Sandy. It was a sheriff who actually taught Sandy about the pleats and crease angles required for law enforcement and military uniforms.

I came to meet Sandy after she agreed to alter a homecoming dress for one of our BCV girls. She has a special place in her heart for The Baptist Children's Village. In 1980 Sandy Love and her husband adopted a young lady from the BCV. She was one of five children that the couple adopted and raised with her one biological child. Additionally she had 22 foster children in the 10 years they served as foster parents. Today she has children and grandchildren who are master craftsmen, doctors,

social workers and one newly retired from the National Weather Service.

With the encouragement of her husband, Sandy started her alterations business in her home after she retired from bellsouth. Today, with the passion she had on that first day, she sews for her community and beyond, teaches the next generation her craft, and listens well. We are so grateful for her kindness to our beautiful young lady, and for her lifetime investment in teenagers who often just need someone to listen.



Genius Organization





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## Personal Reflection

I have been challenged of late to consider the value of listening, not just in my own

life (though periodic self-evaluation of that life skill can't hurt). My visit with precious Sandy Love set my thoughts in motion. The teenager she was teaching to sew was right, what a gift to be able to genuinely listen in a way that makes the other person feel, not just that they are heard, but that you care about them and what is or isn't working in their life in that moment. On my way home from my visit with her in south Mississippi I wondered, "Is it just our current fast paced culture that seems to be absent of good listeners?" I mean Mrs. Sandy is 82 years old. "Do even gifted listeners today find it a challenge to truly hear and understand others in the chaos of our world today?" As I consider even our Biblical mandates as believers, "How am I responding to others in

conversation? Do they feel heard? Are they certain I care?" I really do but do they know it. James 1:19 says, "My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." I think I am more aware today of my listening practices as I consider my conversation with Mrs. Love and James' instruction. I am also now more aware of great Biblical personalities and their strong listening ability. I recently ran across a blog post by Jim Gossweiler highlighting Moses and his ability to listen.

*"Moses' capacity to listen extended beyond his relationship with God. He also attentively listened to the needs, concerns and frustrations of the Israelite people he led. In Exodus 18, his father-in-law, Jethro, offered wise advice to delegate leadership responsibilities to capable individuals. Moses actively listened, recognizing the value of shared responsibility, and adopting Jethro's*

*counsel, which eased his burden and improved the organization of the community. Furthermore, when the Israelites complained and doubted their provision in the wilderness, Moses patiently listened to their grievances. Instead of dismissing their concerns, he empathetically listened and interceded on their behalf. Through his empathetic listening, Moses fostered a deep sense of trust, unity, and loyalty among the Israelites, which propelled them forward as a united nation."*

I have not really ever thought of Moses in this way but if Moses can listen patiently and actively to a whole nation of grumblers, perhaps I can encourage those in my sphere by being a better listener.

Chrystelle Thames

Director of Communications