

# BCV VOICE

SUMMER 2024



601.952.2422

P.O. Box 27  
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[baptistchildrensvillage.com](http://baptistchildrensvillage.com)



## 2024 Bi-Annual Alumni Reunion

The Baptist Children's Village hosted its bi-annual alumni reunion in July. Former residents and staff from the 1940s until the late 1980s met at Eagle Ridge Conference Center in Raymond. The weekend included a trip to our Dickerson Place Campus, where Campus Director Kelsa Thames provided summer refreshments and a tour of the campus. Executive Director and alumnus Sean Milner gave a brief ministry update and enjoyed reminiscing with his BCV family. Alumni reflected on memories sparked by pictures and yearbooks that were made available for them to enjoy during their fellowship time. One of those alumni, Karen Dennis Donovan from Kentucky reflected on her time on the Flag Chapel campus, "I wouldn't be here today had I not gone to The Baptist Children's Village. It was so great to see my family and especially great to see Coach Self." Similar sentiments were expressed about Coach Johnny Self, former Activities Director, who invested in hundreds of children and created lasting memories even today, as evidenced by these sweet expressions.





2024 Bi-Annual Alumni Reunion (continued)









# Jesus Encounter on the Lazy River

By Emily-Kate Ford

It was a hot summer day when the staff and residents of Dickerson Place Campus concluded their day at Gulf Islands Water Park. They had spent the entire day enjoying the rides, basking in the sunshine, and creating memories together. Thanks to a generous donor, the campus rented a cabana and enjoyed a day at the park.

As the day neared its end, the group decided to unwind by floating along the lazy river. While navigating around the lazy river and venturing into the wave pool, an unexpected question was directed at Kelsa Thames, the Dickerson Place Campus Director.

"Mrs. Kelsa, what do I need to do to be baptized?" asked one of the teenage boy residents. "I want to follow Jesus," As the group navigated the waves, it was clear that this young man had something weighty on his mind. He and Kelsa made their way back to the lazy river for a heart-to-heart conversation. The young man expressed his desire to surrender his life to

Jesus because, "He is like the coolest person I know." He understood that he was a sinner in need of a savior, and his only hope was Jesus. So, while drifting along the lazy river, the young man committed his life to Christ.

We are thrilled to celebrate this young man's newfound life in Christ. We recognize that none of this would be possible without the incredible support of our donors. It is solely because of their generosity that we can offer life-changing opportunities and create lasting memories for our residents. Our other campuses had the chance to visit a variety of destinations, including Branson, Missouri; Gulf Shores, Alabama; Six Flags Over Georgia; the Ark Encounter; and even a Fishing Charter. While these trips provide numerous enjoyable experiences, we can be amazed at how God uses them to influence and develop our young men and women, just as He did with the young man from Dickerson Place.





# Love Out Loud Touches BCV

By Emily-Kate Ford

Twelve years ago, Northcrest Baptist Church in Meridian embarked on a wonderful journey when they launched **Love Out Loud**, a week dedicated to community missions. During this special week, volunteers come together to participate in a variety of unique mission projects, all with the common goal of spreading love and kindness to their neighbors. One initiative of Love Out Loud involves the thoughtful act of purchasing backpacks and school supplies for each resident at The Baptist Children's Village.

Each year, Northcrest Baptist Church's Administrative Coordinator, Laura Craig, contacts Tim McWilliams, the BCV Director of Partner Ministries, to obtain the supplies list for each resident. Tim collaborates with BCV campuses to gather the supply lists from every child's school across the state and shares the information with Laura. Church members and volunteers then "adopt" a child and purchase a backpack and the required supplies for the student.

When asked about the significance of Love Out Loud, Northcrest's Administrative Coordinator explained, "Many of us take growing up in church and having a Christ structure for granted. We just want to share Christ, His love, and who He is with our community." This is achieved through

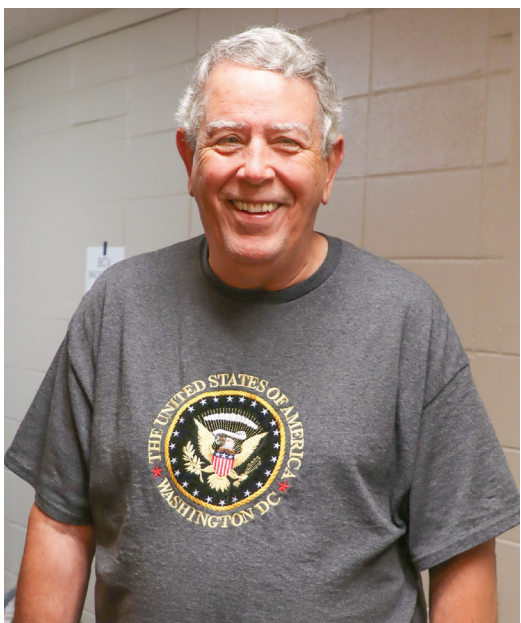


collecting supply-filled backpacks for The Baptist Children's Village, providing teachers with 'survival kits,' assembling and distributing hygiene bags, and more.

Bob McCaan, a dedicated Love Out Loud volunteer, personally understands the significance of the backpacks. As an alumnus of The Baptist Children's Village, Bob has experienced the blessing of churches and volunteers supporting the ministry. "If it hadn't been for The Baptist Children's Village, I

wouldn't be where I am today," Bob shared. "That place is so special to me."

This yearly tradition for Northcrest Baptist Church and the Meridian community has touched the lives of many BCV residents. It is a wonderful example of The Church being Jesus's hands and feet. We are thankful for Love out Loud's initiative and for the many volunteers who partner with us as we share the good news of Jesus Christ with at-risk children and their families.





# BCV Leadership Recognizes Team Dedication

Since HR Director Karen Rikard joined the BCV team in August of 2018, she has longed for the opportunity to recognize BCV staff throughout the state for their service to the ministry. The Leadership Team is so grateful for the staff and the sacrifices they collectively make for our children and families, and for each other. Karen, along with HR Associate Kassidy Gautier, is excited now to launch the staff service awards program as an expression of God's kindness and our gratitude. Although staff members work hard daily without consideration of self, we know from comments already received from several of them, this act of gratitude is a huge encouragement to them on the tough days. Moving forward awards will be presented annually to staff who have dedicated 5, 10, 15, 20 and over 30 years to this mission. Please pray for this team and join us in expressing our gratitude to our gracious God.



■ Chrystelle Thames • 42 Years



■ Sharon Rosamond • 32 Years



■ Myra Ward • 28 Years



■ Celeste Cade Hickman • 27 Years



■ Barbara Griffin • 22 Years



■ Brenda Ulmer • 18 Years



■ Felecia Allen • 15 Years



■ Debbie and Buddy Hawes • 15 Years



■ Troy Carter • 12 Years



■ Kimberly Reed • 12 Years



**"For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you,  
for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God".**

**1 Thessalonians 3:9**



■ Charlie Rogers • 10 Years



■ Sergio Trejo • 10 Years



■ David and April Whiteside • 8 Years



■ Dawn Barnhardt • 6 Years



■ Shane Ashley • 5 Years



■ Lakeisha Broyles • 5 Years



■ Anna Collier • 5 Years



■ Mandy and Wayne Daniel • 5 Years



■ Michael and Marjorie Hyde • 5 Years



■ Miranda Leonard • 5 Years



■ Tim McWilliams • 5 Years



■ Karen Rikard • 5 Years



# Quarterly Board Meeting

The 15-member board of trustees ended the fiscal year with its fourth quarter meeting. Mike Drake serves as President and presided over the meeting. The trustees received an annual financial report from Executive Director Sean Milner and a program report from Director of Programs Charlie Rogers. The trustees also received a properties and personnel update from Director of Human Resources Karen Rikard and Director of Finance Sharon Rosamond. The board is made up of trustees elected by the board and recommended to the MBCB to be presented to and voted on by the messengers at the Mississippi Baptist Convention. The board provides oversight and accountability for the executive director and the agency.



## Executive Wives on Mission at the BCV

Mississippi Southern Baptist Convention Executive Director-Treasurer Shawn Parker and his wife Elizabeth hosted Southern State Convention Executives and their wives for their annual conference. While the men were meeting and taking care of business, the wives were busy with business of their own. Elizabeth invited Residential Family Care Program Manager Hannah Humston to share about the BCV program launched in June and have lunch with them. Wives from the various state conventions painted door hangers for the families while they learned about the Waynesboro based program; and a few other

things about our Baptist Children's Village of Mississippi.

The paint party instructor was Paula Fleming who launched "The Painting Lady" in 2010. Paula is on staff at First Baptist Church Columbus but pursues this more creative career when not crunching numbers for the church. Although she had a class full of amateurs, after applying her special touch, everyone left feeling accomplished in their attempts at art, and Hannah left with several beautiful door hangers for her ladies.





# BCV TRIBUTE GIFTS

April 16, 2024 to July 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 acknowledgement 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.

## In Honor of

### **Dr. Steve and Melanie Bishop**

Keith and Wanda Lott

### **Calhoun Baptist Assoc. WMU Leadership Team**

Donna W. Brown

### **Ken Causey**

Callie Porter

### **Mrs. Patricia C. Duckworth**

Mrs. Diane Long

### **Brady Edington**

Walt Edington

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### **Mrs. Tenie Quinn**

Faye Ellis

### **Mr. David Rainey**

Mr. Colt Doom

### **James Sadler**

Callie Porter

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Mary Simmons

### **Mr. Jim Veazy**

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Mr. David Putman

### **Ms. Bobbie Walker**

Lisa Riley

### **Norma Jean Wilcutt**

Mr. and Mrs. Bobby D. Ray

### **Mr. Dan D. Wright, Sr.**

Mr. Dan D. Wright

## In Memory of

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William and Pam Cook

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Ken and Darlene Barron

David and Martha Roberts

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Wanda Brown

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Herman and Sharon Dungan



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The Smith Co. Sheriff's  
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### Betty Turner

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Mr. and Mrs. Andy Oakes

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### Wilma Hawkins West

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### Evelyn Smith Whitehead

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Mrs. Nell Cowart

Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Hardy

### Chase Wilbanks

Mrs. Nancy Wilbanks

### Adam Grady Williams

Shelton and Marsha Vance

### Dr. Chad Williams

Ms. Glenda Scarbrough

### Wade Windham

Daniel and Dianne Smith

### Helen Wright

R. W. and Jane Cantrell

### Steve Young

Rev. Danny Young





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## Personal Reflection

As I deliberate over the content for my column this quarter, I suspect I am in the same space as many of you. Summer has come to a close (except for the lingering summer temps). That means we are in full fall schedule swing. Since the business of summer has not afforded a lot of time to reflect before jumping straight into fall, this writing assignment is gratefully allowing me time to reflect. As I do, I find my heart full of gratitude for the kindness of God in my life and in the life of the ministry.

Our greatest blessing is seeing grandson, Joshua, come to know the Lord at Children's Camp this summer and be baptized. How fortunate we were to be a part of that sweet service. Many of our BCV children are hearing about Jesus and making their professions of faith. I never cease to be amazed at how God uses people and circumstances, often unexpected people and circumstances, to draw us to Him and grow us in our relationship with Him. I am grateful for church staff and ministers who sacrifice and provide

opportunities for our children during the summer. I am grateful for our BCV staff who are willing to pause in the chaos of any given day and listen to our children and share about God's extraordinary love for them. I am grateful most of all for the power of the Holy Spirit who is continually at work accomplishing much in our lives though we don't deserve it.

Reconnecting with several of our BCV brothers and sisters at the alumni reunion this summer was a sweet gift. How I love catching up on each other's lives. We miss those who aren't able to make the bi-annual event and we enjoy including them in the tales told around the table, (They may wish they were present to defend themselves). Those conversations always seem to end with a celebration of how God provided, and often protected us in spite of our lack of faithfulness at times. The seeds of God's love for us planted in our young hearts during our time at the BCV, find their way to the surface and sprout beautiful new growth as God reminds us of His constant presence and His faithfulness.

So many different stories and so many twists and turns to those stories. A colleague recently reminded me of this poem written by Corrie Ten Boom that beautifully illustrates the constant work of the Lord in each of our lives.

**Chrystelle Thames**

Director of Communications



### **"Life is but a Weaving" (The Tapestry Poem) by Corrie Ten Boom**

My life is but a weaving  
Between my God and me.  
I cannot choose the colors  
He weaveth steadily

Of't times He weaveth sorrow;  
And I in foolish pride  
Forget He sees the upper  
And I the underside.

Not 'til the loom is silent  
And the shuttles cease to fly

Will God unroll the canvas  
And reveal the reason why.

The dark threads are as needful  
In the weaver's skillful hand  
As the threads of gold and silver  
In the pattern He has planned

He knows, He loves, He cares;  
Nothing this truth can dim.  
He gives the very best to those  
Who leave the choice to Him.