

CONNECTIONS

LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH JULY 2026 VOL XVI: ISSUE 7 LBCPC.org



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AMERICA



A Message from Andrew Spires

LEAD PASTOR

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Summer is here, and while we've experienced a lot of rain lately, & not as much heat, I'm sure that normal southern heat is on the way! Our schedule has also been heating up. As I write this, we've just returned from both the SBC Annual Meeting in Orlando & our Belize Mission Trip. Allow me to use this article to recap both of these for you.

First, the SBC Annual Meeting:

As mentioned, the SBC Annual Meeting was located in Orlando, FL, this year. There were 21,144 attendees & 11,692 messengers from local SBC churches around the country. Josh & Jeani Elliott, Zack White, along with Paige & I, were proud to go & represent Lakewood as messengers this year. This group of five represents the largest group from Lakewood in my 18 years here at LBC. The highlight each year is the missionary sending ceremony, where the International Mission Board (IMB) recognizes & sends new missionaries overseas. This year, Southern Baptists sent 63 new IMB missionaries to the field, which joined the over 3,500 other IMB missionaries already stationed around the world. Some of these missionaries' voice & visage had to be changed & obscured since they are being sent to parts of the world that are fiercely opposed to the Gospel message. Please pray for these families & individuals who have answered the missional call to serve the Lord abroad. As always, we heard the reports from the individual institutions & ministries of the SBC: the seminaries, Lifeway, IMB, NAMB, ERLC, & WMU, etc. All seminaries reported increased enrollment & graduation rates. The WMU has a new director. Sandy Wisdom-Martin has retired after many years of service & the new director is Carolyn Fountain. The SBC also elected its new president. The

outgoing president, Clint Pressley from Hickory Grove Baptist Church of Charlotte, North Carolina, was succeeded by Willy Rice from Calvary Church in Clearwater, Florida. Pastor Rice also had the opportunity to give a rousing message on unity & endurance in the SBC Pastors' Conference that I thoroughly enjoyed. He is known to be a clear conservative voice & holds to the inerrancy of scripture & that scripture should solely guide our doctrine & practice. I also really enjoyed Pastor H.B. Charles' message on unity in the church out of Eph. 4:1-6, at the Pastor's Conference as well. As you may have heard, Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, advanced the "Truth and Unity Amendment," which essentially holds the office of pastor in the local church to qualified men according to scripture. This was meant to be a clearer statement than the 'Law Amendment' that failed to pass at the last Annual Meeting by a two-thirds majority. I encourage all of our people to read and understand the Baptist Faith & Message 2000, & its clear statement on complementarianism. This argument is never about ability but about accountability to the clear instruction of the Word of God. Dr. Mohler's amendment passed resoundingly with over 74% of messengers voting in the affirmative. It will need to pass again by a two-thirds majority at the 2027 SBC Annual Meeting to be enacted. I look forward to Lakewood's continued involvement at the SBC Annual Meeting for years to come. Thank you for sending us as your representatives.
(continued)

Now, the Belize Mission Trip:

I cannot remember the exact number of trips, but I have been leading mission teams to Belize with International Servants for around twenty years. However, this is our first full-scale mission trip back to Belize since COVID. As always, we love to focus on the children of Belize & we took this year's Lifeway theme, Illumination Station, along with us. The team was comprised of the following members: Josh Elliott, Garrett Kee, Beth & Georgia Kate Parkman, Tony, Mary Sue, & Samantha Saxon, Norberto Rodriguez, Ian Costello, Jacob Laboy, Jacob & Jordan Baker, & myself. Though we've been there so many times, we experienced some new things. The kids we led in VBS this time were older, ranging in age from 8 to 16 years old. As such, we were able to have real Gospel conversations with many of the older ones & many made professions of faith. We were also able to introduce & connect them to a local Baptist pastor, Miguel Tush, for discipleship & growth. I have watched Miguel grow into the man he now is, following in his father's footsteps. He first pastored Santa Rosa Baptist Church, & now, San Roman Baptist. Miguel's father, Chrisantos, was a good man & friend, & he was the key Baptist pastor in the southern part of Belize for iServants. Unfortunately, we lost Pastor Chris during COVID. His sudden passing left a huge hole in the leadership structure among the Mayan Baptist Churches. After initially resisting the call to step into his father's role, Miguel has now stepped up & God is using him in a similar way to his father. Our people were graciously invited to his home, which is a collection of dirt-floor, thatch-roofed buildings common in rural Belize. Many of our first timers were stunned at the simplicity of their way of life & the fact that though they do not have much in the way of material possessions, they are joyful, family-centered believers. I thank God for Miguel, & others like him, who lead others to the Lord in Belize, week in & week out. Our people also had the opportunity to feed the children, literally meeting the kids that we help to feed monthly through our Feed-A-Child offering here at Lakewood.

In May alone, Lakewood sent over \$7,000 to feed Belizean children, which was the largest single monthly donation we have ever had. At \$12.50 a month, what we might spend on one meal at a local fast-food restaurant, we feed a child for a month, a simple meal of chicken & rice. The food we help to provide keeps children in their homes longer, keeps them off the streets, out of orphanages, & out of the evil of human trafficking. Thank you to all who faithfully give in the mission offering jugs located in the sanctuary, upstairs children's building, & FAC, or by giving in the offering plate or online. I pray that more of us will be willing to donate this small & simple amount of money to care for the physical needs of others, to open the door for the Gospel. We look forward to our future partnership with International Servants & I pray that God impresses upon the hearts of many of our people to go & serve there in the years to come.

Finally, please pray for both the Romania & New England mission teams. By the time you read this, the Romania Team of ten LBC folks will be in Romania & serving the people through VBS, a student rally, church services, & a summer camp for students. The New England team, comprised of twenty-one people, leaves just three days after Romania returns. If you've missed out so far on giving towards our mission efforts this year, & you still wish to, then feel free to donate towards the paint expense for Legacy Church in Sutton, Massachusetts. This is the NAMB church revitalization effort that we have partnered with in New England this summer. This church started as First Baptist Church of Sutton, before America was a nation (1735), & they have endured through thick & thin. The building we will be serving in & working on dates from the 1840's. Charles Keown & Paige Spires will be leading our team efforts in getting as much of their building patched, primed, & repainted so they can do ministry for years to come.

I am so excited about the opportunities Lakewood has to be a part of the 'BIG C' Church, both here, there, & around the world. Never forget, the best is yet to come!

A Message from **Josh Elliott**

STUDENT & YOUNG ADULT PASTOR



Hey Church!

There are mission trips that you remember because of what you accomplished, and there are mission trips that you remember because of what God accomplished. Our recent trip to Belize was certainly both. To begin with, it was hot. VERY hot. Yet through the heat, long days, and full schedule, our team served joyfully and worked well together. From the moment we arrived until the time we returned home, there was a clear spirit of unity as everyone used their gifts and abilities for one purpose: the glory of God.

One of the greatest blessings of the week was the opportunity to encourage and serve alongside our missionary partner, Dr. Paul, and Pastor Miguel. Missionaries and pastors often spend their lives pouring into others, so it was a privilege for our team to come alongside them, support their ministry efforts, and remind them that they are not laboring alone.

Our team also had the opportunity to lead VBS throughout the week. The laughter, songs, games, and Bible lessons created many opportunities to share the gospel with children from the village. We rejoice that there were children who made professions of faith in Jesus Christ. What a reminder that God's Word never returns void and that He is still drawing people to Himself from every nation and tribe. We also had the privilege to train a local youth group from further south in Belize that will recreate VBS throughout the villages over the next year! Many other children will hear the gospel because of this, and I can't wait to see the Kingdom impact they have.

Of course, mission trips are also filled with unforgettable memories and experiences. In my case, I was apparently surrounded by a very persuasive group of people who convinced (or perhaps peer pressured) me into jumping off a two-story pier into the ocean. Somehow, I survived to tell the story. I also stepped out of my comfort zone and enjoyed both gibnut and iguana, experiences I never imagined I would add to my resume. While these stories may bring smiles, they point to a larger truth: mission trips change us. They broaden our perspective, strengthen our faith, deepen friendships, and remind us that God is at work all over the world.

I would encourage each of you to take some time over the coming weeks to speak with someone who was part of the Belize team. Ask them about what they saw, what they learned, and how God worked in and through them. Each team member has stories, and I couldn't possibly include them all in this article, but they all testify to the faithfulness of God.

Thank you for praying, giving, and supporting this trip. Your partnership made this all possible, and we are grateful to have served as an extension of our church family in Belize.

In Christ,

Josh

A Message from the

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEAM



CHILDREN'S CHURCH- This month's children's church theme: **GOD IS GOOD!** Our stories this month magnify God's goodness by revealing His character through different life experiences. The Psalms remind us that God lovingly guides us, speaks to us through His Word, and invites us to live in a way that honors Him. Even in times of sorrow or struggle, we are encouraged to bring our emotions to God and remember His faithfulness. The Psalms also highlight God's care and protection, showing that He is always with us, providing what we need. As we look back on His actions throughout history, we are inspired to give thanks for His constant love and never-ending goodness. Our Monthly Scripture: *The Lord is good to all, and His mercy is over all that He has made. (Psalm 145:9)*

VBS- What an incredible week at Illumination Station! We had a wonderful time shining a light on who Jesus really is through Bible lessons, worship, games, crafts, and lots of fun. Most importantly, we were able to share the love and truth of Jesus with so many children and families. Our high attendance night was 145 children and close to 100 volunteers. A huge **THANK YOU** to our VBS Director Brian Benton and our amazing volunteers who gave their time, energy, talents, and hearts to make this week possible. Every volunteer role mattered, and we could not have done it without you! Our Operation Christmas Child VBS offering raised \$3,278.87! We can't wait to order items for our Awana Pack Night in the Fall! After all the donations were counted, Mr. Shaun was declared the "winner" and got slimed on our final night! We are praying that the seeds planted in the hearts of our children will continue to grow and that they will shine His light wherever they go!

WET WEDNESDAYS- We had a great evening of fun and fellowship at our June Wet Wednesday! We can't wait to do it again in July! Mark your calendars for our next Wet Wednesday on July 15 from 6:00–7:30 pm. Bring your swimsuit, towel, and a friend—we will finish the night with popsicles!

KIDS MERGE CAMP- The wait is over—Kids Merge Camp has arrived! We are excited for an incredible few days filled with worship, Bible study, games, friendships, and unforgettable memories. Please be praying for our campers and leaders as we travel, grow in our faith, and learn what it means to ECHO Christ in our everyday lives. Pray for safety,

meaningful relationships, and hearts that are open to all God has in store this week. We can't wait to see how God moves at Merge Camp 2026!

AWANA- We will soon begin planning for AWANA 2026-2027, and we are looking for volunteers to join our team! Every Wednesday night from 6:00–7:30 pm, we minister to 60–85 children through Bible lessons, scripture memorization and games. Our current leaders do a wonderful job teaching Bible lessons, but we could use additional volunteers to help with: crowd control and classroom support, listening to children recite scripture verses, encouraging and building relationships with kids, and assisting leaders throughout the evening. You don't have to teach a lesson to make a difference!

If you are interested in serving or would like more information, please reach out to Amanda. We'd love to help you find a place to serve in Awana!

OCC PACK NIGHT- Our Operation Christmas Child Awana Pack Night will take place this Fall! Thanks to the generous support from our Spring Festival BBQ Fundraiser and VBS Offering, we are already beginning to purchase items for our shoeboxes. If you would like to help, we would love donations of items from the attached list or new items purchased from Dollar Tree. Monetary donations are also welcome and can be designated "OCC Awana Pack Night." Every item donated helps us share the love of Jesus with children around the world through Operation Christmas Child. Thank you for partnering with us in this ministry!

BIBLE FELLOWSHIP HELP- We are also looking for a 1st/2nd Grade Bible Fellowship teacher to serve alongside Becky Hawkins on Sunday mornings beginning this August. Please reach out to Amanda for more information.

Please continue to pray for our children, volunteers, families, and the person God is preparing to lead this ministry in the future. We are excited to see how He continues to work in and through our children's ministry!



EVENT SCHEDULE

JULY 2026

6:00PM
JULY 15TH **Wet Wednesday**


6:00PM
JULY 15TH **Combined Worship w/Josh
FAC**

6:00PM
JULY 19TH **Member's Meeting**

6:00 PM
JULY 23RD **Men's Ministry
Food & Fellowship - FAC**

6:30PM
JULY 23RD **Jane Ellen Gaines
Baptist Women - F/H**

6:00PM
JULY 26TH **Ambassador's Trio
Scott Bush**



LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

Lakewood Happenings

July 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			No Events Tonight Romania 1		Office Closed Romania 3	Happy Independence Day Romania 4
Romania 5	10:30am Amen Choir Romania 6	6:00pm Alleluia Choir Romania 7	Romania 8	Romania 9	10:00am Table Talk 5:30pm Senior Game Night - Hot Dogs 10	11
5:00pm Deacons Meeting New England 12	New England 13	6:00pm Alleluia Choir New England 14	6:00pm Wet Wednesday 7:15pm Finance Team New England 15	New England 16	New England 17	New England 18
Lord's Supper 6:00pm Member's Meeting 19	10:30am Amen Choir 11:00am Middle School Monday 20	6:00pm Alleluia Choir 21	Student Camp 22	6:00pm Men's Ministry Event 6:30pm JEG/BW Student Camp 23	10:00am Table Talk Student Camp 24	Student Camp 25
6:00pm Concert Ambassador's Trio 26	10:30am Amen Choir 11:00 am Middle School Monday 27	6:00pm Alleluia Choir 28	6:00pm FLYTE night with Parents 29	30	10:00am Table Talk 31	

May Giving

Week	Tithe	RRR	Missions	Other Des.	Totals
5/03/26	\$17,910.71	\$331.00	\$3,416.89	\$922.00	\$22,580.60
5/10/26	\$21,971.00	\$200.00	\$3,770.53	\$2,809.00	\$28,750.53
5/17/26	\$16,530.34	\$244.00	\$8,688.88	\$203.00	\$25,666.22
5/24/26	\$13,249.10	\$220.00	\$4,501.65	\$368.03	\$18,338.78
5/31/26	\$17,650.52	\$625.00	\$1,387.00	\$887.02	\$20,549.54

In Memory of:
Linda Scarborough
For RRR
From Beverly Locke

Faye Hatcher
for Amen Choir
From Glenda Medley
Malinda Wilkes

Wilma Keown
For Amen Choir
From Myra Currier

For Belize Feed A Child
From Pat Holland

For Amen Choir
From Dorothy Robinson
Myra Currier

For Wallace & Wilma Keown
Scholarship Fund
From Lakewood Baptist Church

Welcome New
Member

Carol Chunn

Senior Game
Night

Friday, July 10th
5:30pm
Fellowship Hall
Hot Dogs

New England
Missions Team
Meeting

Friday, July 10th
6:30pm - FAC

- MINISTERIAL STAFF
- **ANDREW SPIRES**
- LEAD PASTOR
- ANDREW@LBCPC.ORG

- **Charles Keown**
- WORSHIP & SENIOR
- ADULT PASTOR
- CHARLES@LBCPC.ORG

- **Josh Elliott**
- STUDENT & YOUNG ADULT
- PASTOR
- JOSHUA@LBCPC.ORG

- **AMANDA OWENS**
- INTERIM VOLUNTEER
- CHILDREN'S LEADER

OFFICE STAFF
Melissa Costello
FINANCIAL ASSISTANT
MELISSA@LBCPC.ORG

Carol Breault
OFFICE & PASTORAL
CARE ASSISTANT
CAROL@LBCPC.ORG

Linda Keown
WORSHIP
ASSISTANT
LINDA@LBCPC.ORG

Jessica White
MEDIA ASSISTANT
JESSICA@LBCPC.ORG

LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH
4011 LAKEWOOD DRIVE
PHENIX CITY, ALABAMA 36867
O: 334.298.6433
LBCPC.org
HOURS: M-TH 8:30AM-4:30PM
FRI 8:30AM-12PM

