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VIEW

Associational Mission Strategist

Finding REST in the Midst of Hurricane Recovery

Pastors,

I have had the opportunity to preach the following message in many of our associational churches. As we continue navigating hurricane recovery, I believe it is a timely reminder of what our Lord offers us in times of tragedy and challenge.

What Does God Offer Us in Times of Tragedy and Challenge?

Psalm 46:1 (ESV)
"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

Psalm 46:10–11 (ESV)
"Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah.

The answer to our question is simple: **God offers us REST.**

R — Refuge from the Chaos

There is only one place we can run for true comfort and refuge: the Lord Himself. Second Corinthians 1:3–4 reminds us that He is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in our affliction.

In these days of recovery, let's be mindful of where we turn when the pressure mounts. The temptation is to run to other things for relief, but may we continually run to the One who can provide the comfort our souls desperately need.

E — Ever-Present Help

Our sovereign Lord was not surprised by this hurricane. He knew what was coming, and He knew the needs of His people. Even when circumstances seem overwhelming, we can rest in the assurance that He is near.

Psalm 46 doesn't promise that we will never experience trouble. It reminds us that **we never have to face trouble alone.** Pastor, remember that the Lord is close to you in the middle of your challenging circumstances. He sees you, He knows your needs, and He remains faithful.

S — Strength for the Weary

Psalm 46 speaks of a river whose streams make glad the city of God. What a beautiful picture of the sustaining grace of our Lord!

In the weariness of hurricane recovery, we need the daily refreshing of His grace—His peace, comfort, wisdom, and provision. We cannot continually pour into others without allowing the Lord to replenish our own souls.

Pastor, stay connected to the Vine (John 15). Spend time with the Lord, even when your schedule is crowded with ministry needs. **Don't become so busy caring for everyone else that you neglect your own soul.**

T — Triumph Is Assured

We have read the Word of God, and we know how the story ends. Our God reigns, His purposes will stand, and one day every knee will bow before Him.

Our triumph does not mean that every circumstance will turn out the way we hope or that recovery will be easy. It means that, through Jesus Christ, our ultimate victory is secure. No hurricane, tragedy, or hardship can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

We serve a victorious Savior, and our hope is firmly anchored in Him!

Pastor, in these challenging days, **don't forget REST.** Run to your Refuge, remember His presence, draw upon His strength, and rest in the victory that is ours through Jesus Christ.

HAPPENINGS IN THE SRBA

Annual Celebration Meeting — November 15

Due to the hurricane, we have rescheduled our annual meeting for **November 15**. I am excited about gathering with you for our **119th Annual Meeting of the Santa Rosa Baptist Association** as we celebrate what the Lord has done and rejoice in how He has walked with us through this season of hurricane recovery.

Here are a few reasons to join us:

1. **Celebrate God's Faithfulness:** Rejoice in what our Lord has done this year through the churches of the SRBA.
2. **Be Encouraged:** Hear from Dr. Clayton Cloer, President of the Baptist University of Florida, as he challenges and encourages us.
3. **Look Ahead:** Learn about some new directions the SRBA is prayerfully considering for the future.

Theme: *Celebrating the Past and Embracing God's Future*
Location: Wallace Baptist Church, Pace
Registration: 2:45 p.m.
Celebration: 3:00 p.m.
Dinner: Approximately 5:30 p.m.

Please RSVP with Patti at the SRBA office. I look forward to gathering with you as we worship, celebrate, and seek the Lord's direction for our future together.

Executive Christmas Party and Banquet — December 7

Location: Avalon Baptist Church, 6 pm

Let's celebrate *Immanuel—God with Us!* Join us for an evening filled with laughter, singing, fellowship, and, of course, good food!

Make plans to attend and begin the Christmas season in community with your SRBA family. You can sign up on the SRBA website.

GROW Teams — An Opportunity to Serve

(Continued on Page 2)

"The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all." Psalm 103:19

Church	09/16/26 10/15/26	2026 Total
Antioch Fellowship	50.00	450.00
Avalon	0.00	5,240.64
Bagdad First	0.00	596.07
Berrydale	482.52	4,130.49
Billory	340.00	2,949.00
Blackwater	137.97	2,087.82
Calvary	0.00	500.00
Cora	0.00	4,498.17
East Side	125.00	1,250.00
Ferris Hill	0.00	12,235.03
Floridatown	150.00	1,200.00
Friendship	0.00	467.92
GB First	350.00	350.00
Harold First	0.00	667.00

Church	09/16/26 10/15/26	2026 Total
Hic. Hammock	0.00	100.00
Immanuel	4,750.00	14,250.00
James Street	0.00	392.66
Jay First	0.00	981.82
Live Oak	50.00	450.00
Living Truth	1,353.24	11,535.00
Midway	0.00	110.00
Milton First	0.00	14,232.94
Mission Casa	100.00	450.00
Navarre First	0.00	5,810.48
New Bethel	133.17	1,320.90
New Life	153.53	1,857.44
Olivet	405.78	5,033.01
Pine Level	234.70	3,543.09

Church	09/16/26 10/15/26	2026 Total
Pine Terrace	3,806.74	19,935.89
Pleasant Home	0.00	3,183.35
Providence	0.00	250.00
Replicate	0.00	750.00
S. R. Shores	246.43	1,845.53
Springhill	0.00	675.00
Stump Springs	0.00	300.00
The Point, SBC	0.00	730.13
Wallace	897.00	10.082.47
Woodbine	200.00	1,800.00
Viet. Christian	0.00	600.00
Viet. Living Faith	0.00	0.00
Anonymous	0.00	7,401.00
Total GIFTS	**15,076.08**	**144,242.85**

Upcoming Events

PASTOR'S PEER LEARNING GROUP MEETINGS:

Milton PLG: Nov.16, 10:30am, at the SRBA office
FBC Navarre PLG: Nov. 19th, 10:30am @ FBC Navarre
Pace PLG: CANCELED - Thanksgiving Holiday

SAVE THE DATE:

November 1 - Daylight Savings Time - **FALL BACK**

November 9-10 - Florida Baptist Convention Pastor's Conference and Annual Meeting "Holy Urgency, *Finish What He Started*." Pastor's Conference Monday, Nov.9th. The Annual meeting will start Nov. 9th in the evening and end in the afternoon on **10th.**

Nov. 15 - Santa Rosa Baptist 119th Annual Celebration - At Wallace Baptist Church 2:34 pm - 5:30pm. Guest Speaker: Dr. Cloer, President of Bible University of Florida. Fellowship Meal after.

November 26-27- Thanksgiving. Office Closed.

December 7th - SRBA Executive Committee Banquet at Avalon BC

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As many of you have heard, we are in the process of organizing the SRBA around several core ministry initiatives. As part of this process, we will be forming ministry teams in the following areas:

- **G — Grow Leaders**
- **R — Revitalize and Replant Churches**
- **O — Outreach to Communities**
- **W — Win the Next Generation**

These teams will help us work together more intentionally to strengthen our churches, serve our communities, and advance the Kingdom of God throughout Santa Rosa County.

If you would like to serve on one of these ministry teams, please reach out to me at the office or on my cell phone at 850-554-0553. I would love to hear from you as we explore how the Lord might use your gifts and experience to serve our association.

As I close, I humbly ask you to pray with me in the following ways:

- **Pray for our pastors.** Ask the Lord to renew their strength, encourage their hearts, and help them remain connected to the Vine (John 15) as they shepherd their congregations through recovery.
- **Pray for our churches.** Ask the Lord to provide the financial resources, volunteers, wisdom, and opportunities needed to rebuild and move forward.
- **Pray for our damaged church facilities.** Several of our churches experienced significant damage and are facing difficult decisions about the road ahead. Pray for clear direction, open doors, and God's provision.
- **Pray for our county.** Join me in asking the Lord to continue working through His churches to bring hope, healing, and the Gospel to our communities.

Lord, give us Santa Rosa County for Your Name and Fame!

It is truly a privilege to serve alongside you in the Santa Rosa Baptist Association. I am continually encouraged as I watch our Lord work in and through each of you. Even in the midst of hardship, He is at work, and I believe we will continue to see His faithfulness in the days ahead.

I look forward to seeing you at our annual meeting in just over two weeks. Until then, remember to REST in Him! **He is on the move. GO JESUS!**

---Dr. Jim Waters, Associational Mission Strategist