

1. Mike Massar Selected as CBF-LA Transitional Coordinator
2. Party in New Town
3. Rachel Held Evans Coming this Fall
4. In the Crow's Nest Looking for Praise - Mike Anderson
5. Bags of Hope Set for August 1
6. Holmes/van Rheenen Coming to Louisiana

**National Assembly June 17-19 Dallas**  
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## Dr. Mike Massar Selected New CBF-LA Coordinator

### Charged with exploring regional partnership

The CBF-LA Coordinating Council is happy to announce that Mike Massar has been chosen to be the next leader for CBF-LA. His title is Transitional Coordinator reflecting this important time of discernment in determining what comes next for CBF-LA and an acknowledgement that his pastoral and administrative skills are uniquely suited to lead the Louisiana Fellowship through the next chapter.

Dr. Massar has studied at Baylor University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Mansfield College of Oxford University, and The Graduate Theological Foundation. Mike grew up in west Texas and met his wife, Lisa, at Baylor. She is an early childhood consultant and curricular writer. They have three children - Matt, a Houston attorney, is married to Meredith; Patrick directs marketing for a computer firm in Charlotte, North Carolina; and their daughter Meredith is completing her Ph.D. in art history at Cal-Berkeley.

With over 30 years' experience in ministry, Massar is currently Co-Pastor at University Baptist in Baton Rouge where his duties have been adjusted to allow him to take this part time position with CBF.

Ron Perritt, Moderator for CBF-LA stated Mike "has years of experience with CBF. He has already begun to communicate with the Council and share ideas of how we can better support CBF in our state and aid in our mission work through 'Together for Hope.' We are looking forward to good leadership in the coming months. . . We would also like to thank Kyle Kelley who has agreed to stay on as our Communications Coordinator and continue to publish our newsletters and maintain our website."

In recent weeks the Coordinating Council has begun to explore a regional partnership with CBF Mississippi reflecting a larger trend in CBF life in which state fellowships have found strength and synergy in pooling resources and energy. It is a task the council has charged to Mike in his job description: "Actively participate in the process of exploring merger possibilities with Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Mississippi. Active participation will include attending meetings of any exploratory teams, developing listening sessions and seeing the process through, should both states decide to merge."

Members of both state Coordinating Councils have had two recent exploratory meetings and have involved Bo Prosser of CBF national in the conversations. As Interim Coordinator



Mike Massar

present for those initial meetings, Kyle Kelley noted, "We have a lot in common, share a similar vision and we are making some great friendships that can only strengthen our common work in areas such as Together for Hope regardless of the final result of this discussion."

Martha Strong, Moderator for CBF-MS stated, "the Coordinating Council for CBF-MS is excited about exploring opportunities for more ways that our two states can work together for ministry and mutual encouragement." At Bo Prosser's suggestion both states will enlist four people from their respective Fellowships to serve as a

"listening task force" in both states. These groups will gather information during the next several months from CBF-affiliated individuals and congregations in both states about their needs and interests.

Mike Massar, after a recent conversation with Christian Byrd, CBF-MS Field Coordinator, stated, "we are making some exciting plans about our 'state/regional' meeting at the General Assembly in Dallas. We are also engaged in plans to get our two groups together in the coming months. Hopefully, we will have a schedule of those ready for our meeting in June. Some encouraging things are taking place as we look for ways to partner in the future."

Mike can be reached at [mikem@ubc-br.org](mailto:mikem@ubc-br.org) or 225-766-9474.





**Church for the Highlands youth** partnered with Lake Providence residents of the New Town community last month in celebration of their new community association, part of Jenny Hodge's work of community development and empowerment. Festivities included hot dogs, snow cones, jump house, bowling, karaoke and face painting with lots of laughter and community pride.

**Rachel Held Evans - Stagg-Tolbert Forum Speaker**

Thanks to the generosity of St. Charles Avenue Baptist Church and the Mabel Palmer Lectures in partnership with the Stagg-Tolbert Forum, nationally recognized Christian author Rachel Held Evans will be coming to New Orleans. She will speak at the Forum **November 7** and preach in the Sunday morning service the next day at St. Charles Church. Author of 3 books, Evans is best known for her engaging blog, which garners over a quarter million visits each month. See [rachelheldevans.com](http://rachelheldevans.com).



**Bags of Hope August 1 - Lake Providence**

Our annual drive for school supplies; Volunteers and funds needed. Contact Jenny Hodge at 318-418-5133 or [hodgejv@gmail.com](mailto:hodgejv@gmail.com).

**Holmes/van Rheenen Visit in Fall**

Keith Holmes and Mary van Rheenen, CBF Field Personnel to the Romany will be in the States October - December; Contact them at [holmes@cbf.net](mailto:holmes@cbf.net) to speak to your church or group. Read their prayer updates at [cbfla.org](http://cbfla.org).

**In the Crow's Nest Looking for Praise**

by Mike Anderson

We love to give and receive awards and recognition and praise. Everybody likes encouragement. We don't have enough. We should be like the sharp-eye lookout atop the crow's nest, keeping a watch for fish. We should take every opportunity to encourage one another.

There's more than enough criticism. Most criticism is destructive. Reckless criticism is like a man on a wrecking crew yanking a plank off the side of the house. Encouragement is like a carpenter nailing up a plank. We are all working on a building. With our words and actions we either build a house or we tear it down.

Jesus assigns you to His building team. We are to be partners building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:12). The danger we don't see is, whatever we do, encouraging or tearing others down, we aren't merely doing it to others. Our work is on our own house we live in as well as the other person's. When we encourage someone, we are building our own house. When we are hurtful, mean spirited with words,

we aren't doing a lot of damage to the other person. But we are doing a lot of harm to our own building.

Praise trumps criticism. You can't make too many mistakes praising others for good things they are trying to be and do. Join me and let's pledge to be part of God's "A-One" Building Team, building up one another.

While we might appreciate praise from others, desire praise of God. Praise of man is of limited value compared to the praise from God. In fact it's wrong to strive for man's praise. Let man's praise be the consequence of simply doing what you should. But put all your energy into seeking God's praise (John 5:44). God's workman has nothing for which to be ashamed.

Now climb up in that crow's nest and look for opportunities to encourage one another, and make yours a loving church.



Mike Anderson is Pastor of Haynes Ave. Baptist Church in Shreveport, facilitates the Pastors Peer Group of North/Central Louisiana and is a past CBF-LA Moderator.



CBF-LA Ministry Budget \$ \_\_\_\_\_       New Church Start \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
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