

# Around the State: ETBU band and choir travel to Israel

March 29, 2023



The East Texas Baptist University Symphonic Band plays a concert under the direction of Nathan Phillips at the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem. (ETBU Photo)

The East Texas Baptist University symphonic band and concert choir traveled to Israel as part of the Global Study and Serve program in early March. Concert tour leaders were **Thomas Sanders**, ETBU provost and vice president for academic affairs; **Justin Hodges**, dean of the School of Communication and Performing Arts; **Nathan Phillips**, director of bands; college organist **Cathy DeRousse**; and **Lynette Vincent**, assistant professor of music. In addition to three scheduled concerts at the Garden Tomb, the group also offered impromptu performances at the Mount of Olives and the Church of St. Anne. The ETBU musicians also led in worship at the Baptist Village at All Nations Church in Petah Tikva and at the Baptist Church of Nazareth. "Every mission trip takes preparation, but our students and faculty sacrificed weekdays and weekends to learn and prepare to lead in worship, including learning two anthems in Hebrew.

They led in worship at ancient sites and in Hebrew-speaking and Arabic-speaking congregations, as well as a special concert at the Garden Tomb," Sanders said.

The Soundings Project at Baylor University has received a two-year grant extension from the Lilly Endowment. Led by **Darin Davis**, clinical professor of moral philosophy in the Honors Program and director of the Institute for Faith and Learning at Baylor University, Soundings will continue to serve as a hub of innovation for 12 congregations as they reflect deeply and theologically about the nature of vocation. The grant-funded initiative is part of a national initiative, Called to Lives of Meaning & Purpose. Soundings, which received \$1.5 million in funding from the Lilly Endowment in 2018, has worked throughout the first five years of the project to guide congregations through varying initiatives that all aim to deepen their biblical and theological understanding of calling. "It's been a joy to walk alongside these churches as they develop models and approaches to understanding vocation that are specific to their congregation," Davis said. "These churches are faithfully working to follow what their God-given callings are, not only individually, but collectively. There is a growing awareness that the whole notion of calling is so central to their mission and should be a guiding force in the way ahead."



Ben Carson spoke in chapel at

Dallas Baptist University. (DBU  
Photo by Exauce Madjibe)

**Ben Carson**, the former director of pediatric neurosurgery at the John Hopkins Children's Center who served as U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development from 2017 to 2021, spoke at Dallas Baptist University as part of the Distinguished Gallup Lecture Series. Carson is founder and chairman of the American Cornerstone Institute, an educational resource committed to preserving the founding American principles of faith, liberty, community and life. "Our history is so vitally important. We should learn from it, not erase it," Carson said in his chapel address at DBU. "It is the basis of identity, and identity is the foundation for beliefs. If you interrupt this chain, you become like a leaf blowing in the wind." At a luncheon for DBU faculty and staff, Carson emphasized the need to take personal responsibility to preserve America's founding principles in the face of moral deterioration and increasing exclusion of God from public life. "God is looking for individuals who are willing to be used for his purposes," Carson said. DBU established the Distinguished Gallup Lecture Series in 2003 to bring renowned leaders to campus to offer insights on faith, scholarship and public service.



"The Art of the Last Supper," an exhibit featuring pieces from around the globe, is on display at

Mabee Regional Heritage Center on the Wayland Baptist University Plainview campus.

“The Art of the Last Supper,” an exhibit featuring pieces from around the globe, is on display at Mabee Regional Heritage Center on the Wayland Baptist University Plainview campus through April 29. “The exhibit features a collection of artworks depicting the biblical scene of the Last Supper of Jesus on earth before his betrayal, arrest, crucifixion and resurrection from the dead,” said **KayLyn Bean**, who directs the three museums that are part of the Mabee Regional Heritage Center. The Mabee Regional Heritage Center is open Tuesdays through Fridays and on Saturdays after April 15 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The museums will be closed for Good Friday on April 7.

The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor will host its 84th annual Easter Pageant next week. Performances of the student-led pageant are scheduled at 12:30 p.m., 3 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on April 5 in front of Luther Memorial on the UMHB campus. All performances will be free and open to the public. The pageant will be available live online on the [UMHB Facebook page](#) and at [umhb.edu/live](http://umhb.edu/live).

The second annual Big Country Hymn Sing is scheduled at 2 p.m. on April 4 in the newly remodeled Logsdon Chapel at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene. The afternoon of worship will include singing favorite hymns such as “To God Be the Glory” and “Blessed Assurance.” For more information, email [cassie.mattern@hsutx.edu](mailto:cassie.mattern@hsutx.edu) or call (324) 670-1017.

## Anniversary

20 years for **Steve Wells** as senior pastor at South Main Baptist Church in Houston.