

BWA leaders note ‘What women these Christians have!’

July 18, 2025

J. Merritt Johnston, executive director of Baptist World Alliance Women, urged women to live Jesus-shaped lives so the world will note, as a 4th century pagan intellectual did, “What women these Christians have!”

Lifeway’s Ben Mandrell called as Bellevue pastor

July 18, 2025

Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., called Ben Mandrell as senior pastor. Mandrell has served as president and CEO of Lifeway Christian Resources since 2019.

Around the State: Wayland team joins sports ministry and

missions in Alaska

July 18, 2025

In the tiny village of Ninilchik, Alaska—where the road ends and Cook Inlet begins—a team from Wayland University brought more than sports skills and service projects this summer.

Multi-generational flood recovery team deploys

July 18, 2025

Matt Enriquez called his 89-year-old grandfather, Ramiro Peña, to tell him he was deploying to Kerrville. He ended the call with a surprise proposition.

Texans on Mission volunteers help Hill Country families

July 18, 2025

John Vlasek stands in the middle of his home, stripped bare of furnishings, walls, ceilings and flooring. Even his rock fireplace is gone.

John MacArthur, controversial pastor and radio host, has died

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John MacArthur, megachurch pastor, culture warrior, author and longtime voice of the “Grace to You” radio program, has died.

Bible study leaders challenge Baptist World Congress

July 18, 2025

Ralph West, founding pastor of The Church Without Walls in Houston, challenged global Baptists to embrace a “theology of reconciliation.”

Persecution and violence

addressed at BWA Congress

July 18, 2025

Bruce Webb, pastor of The Woodlands First Baptist Church, recounted the history of Baptist advocacy for freedom of religion during a breakout session at the Baptist World Congress focused on the persecution of Christians.

Buckner honors orphans who fled Vietnam 50 years ago

July 18, 2025

Buckner International hosted a reunion July 12 honoring Vietnamese orphans who fled Vietnam 50 years ago, arriving in Dallas after a two-month journey on June 12, 1975.

Recently, seven of the orphans from Cam Ranh with their families returned to Vietnam marking the 50th anniversary of their journey.

Representatives from Buckner International joined them on the trip to Saigon and Cam Ranh, which for some was their first time back in Vietnam.

The trip to Vietnam included a return visit to the site where Cam Ranh Christian City Orphanage once stood. While there, they distributed shoes to children in need.

During the reunion ceremony, Albert Reyes, CEO of Buckner, noted the words of James, Jesus' half-brother, inspired founder R.C. Buckner to begin

the organization.

James 1:27 says “religion that God our father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”

Reyes told reunion attendees that was the driving passage that he saw and from the very beginning those two groups are the “focus of our work—care for children and senior adults.”

“Your experience and your story is woven into the larger Buckner picture that now stretches all around the world,” Reyes said.

The Buckner reunion event gave the orphans a chance to reflect on five decades of impact and changes—in their home country and in themselves.

To conclude the reunion, Buckner dedicated a bench as a memorial to honor Pastor Nguyen Xuan Ha and Pastor Jim Gayle for their efforts in caring for the orphans at Cam Ranh Christian Orphanage.

The orphans' journey, 50 years ago

During the final days of the Vietnam War, 69 Vietnamese orphans traveled across South Vietnam. The children spent two days on a broken boat on open seas until they made it to the United States and eventually were transferred to Buckner Children’s Home in Dallas on June 12, 1975. Their arrival in Dallas garnered [national attention](#) as the largest single group of refugees from Vietnam.

North Vietnamese military forces were sweeping through south Vietnam in the spring of 1975. The city of Cam Ranh began to collapse, leaving the Cam Ranh Christian City Orphanage with the difficult choice of fleeing.

Thirteen caregivers and their children fled with orphans, accompanying

them as they boarded busses bound for safety.

When Saigon fell, the group made their way to the South China Sea on a leaky boat that failed two days into the voyage.

They were rescued and towed into Singapore where they waited five days without food or water before Southern Baptist missionaries intervened.

The group flew to the United States and made it to Buckner Children's Home where about half of the children eventually were adopted.

Those who were not adopted remained on the fourth floor in the children's home dormitory, where they were given English lessons to prepare them to enroll in Dallas Independent School District.

The group has remained close through the years.

Sam's salvation story

Sam Schrade (Sang Nguyen) a toddler at the time, was one of the orphans. Years have passed since the day he arrived at Buckner Children's Home.

He now runs a media company covering sports for ESPN and Fox Sports in Houston where he resides with his wife and children.

"I was able to go back for the first time in 50 years two weeks ago. My dad was an American soldier. My mom was Vietnamese ... I wasn't very wanted. They did not need me. And I was amazingly scooped up by the Cam Ranh Christian Orphanage," Schrade said.

Schrade reflected on the trip he made back to the place he once called home. He considered how far God brought him and the rest of the orphans.

"It is hard to know how far we've come in life when we don't know where we started. And for this trip, for me, it meant seeing where we started.

Now I know how far we've come," Schrade added.

"We were transferred here. I was three years old. The fact that Buckner facilitated Christian homes changed my life. My mom led me to Christ in fourth grade. I became a Christian and all of us in the group have a lot of gratitude," Schrade concluded.

Buckner International Communications contributed to this story.

Global Baptists challenged to live the gospel

July 18, 2025

Featured speakers at the Baptist World Congress challenged global Baptists to live out the gospel by caring for neighbors, making disciples, pursuing justice, advocating for freedom, and bearing witness to the transforming power of Christ.

Following Jesus means caring for the poor

July 18, 2025

Good news for the poor exists, and his name is Jesus, Tim Costello,

executive director of Micah Australia, told a July 9 symposium on aid, immediately prior to the Baptist World Congress.

Brothers immersed in disaster response after flood

July 18, 2025

The Wheat brothers are well-known as ministers in this part of the Texas Hill Country. Robert serves as director of missions for Hill Country Baptist Association, while his brother John is pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Kerrville.