



Loved with a Steadfast Love

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:22-23
RSV

Jeremiah was depressed, as gloomy as a giraffe with a neck ache. Jerusalem was under siege, his nation under duress. His world collapsed like a sand castle in a typhoon. He faulted God for his horrible emotional distress. He also blamed God for his physical ailments. "He [God] has made my flesh and my skin waste away, and broken my bones" (Lam. 3:4 RSV).

His body ached. His heart was sick. His faith was puny. . . . He realized how fast he was sinking, so he shifted his gaze. "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness. 'The

Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him'" (vv. 21-24 RSV).

"But this I call to mind..." Depressed, Jeremiah altered his thoughts, shifted his attention. He turned his eyes away from his stormy world and looked into the wonder of God. He quickly recited a quintet of promises. (I can envision him tapping these out on the five fingers of his hand.)

1. The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.
2. His mercies never come to an end.
3. They are new every morning.
4. Great is thy faithfulness.
5. The Lord is my portion.

The storm didn't cease, but his discouragement did.

—Fearless
Thank you precious Savior, that your love is steadfast. Thank you that your mercies are new every morning. Thank you for your great faithfulness, not only to me but to all your people from the first day of cre-

ation. When I am tempted to become depressed and distressed, may I choose to gaze on you. May I remember that you are my portion. May I hope in your unceasing love, amen.

Inasmuch as there is none like You, O Lord (You are great, and Your name is great in might).

Jeremiah 10:6

God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:9

He is the living God, and steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall endure to the end.

Daniel 6:26

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courts.ms.gov/aoc/courtinterpreter/registry.php.

Twenty-three interpreters currently are credentialed by AOC. Languages include Spanish, Mandarin Chinese and Portuguese. Credentialed interpreters include 21 Spanish speakers, one Portuguese speaker, and one who speaks Mandarin Chinese.

There is a need for Vietnamese speakers, but none have been credentialed yet.

Nine interpreters are certified, and 14 are registered. Interpreters live in Bay St. Louis, Biloxi, Brandon, Clinton, French Camp, Gulfport, Hazlehurst, Meridian, Newton, Ocean Springs, Oxford, Pontotoc, Tupelo and Vicksburg as well as Cordova, Goodlettsville, Memphis and Nashville, Tenn., and New Orleans. Interpreters credentialed by AOC are available to travel statewide.

AOC adopted Standards for Court Interpreters and a Code of Ethics for Court Interpreters on Oct. 17, 2011. The rules for court interpreters apply to municipal court, justice court, youth court, county court, circuit court, chancery court and grand jury proceedings. Rules regarding certification are at this link: http://courts.ms.gov/aoc/courtinterpreter/rules_on_standards.pdf. Other information about the interpreter program may be found here: <https://courts.ms.gov/aoc/courtinterpreter/courtinterpreter.php>.

For additional information, contact Administrative Office of Courts Deputy Director Lisa Counts at lcounts@courts.ms.gov.

School district campaigns to address county teacher shortage

Press Release

There are 2000 teacher vacancies in Mississippi, and the Holmes County Consolidated School District is aggressively campaigning to fill nearly 100 of them.

"We are not just looking for warm bodies; we are seeking highly qualified and certified teachers for our children of Holmes County," said James L. Henderson, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools, during a press conference, Friday, January 18. "We are seeking the best, brightest and most collaborative teachers."

Flanked by students of his Superintendent's Roundtable Advisors (SRAs), parents, executive team, members of the Board of Education, county officials and other stakeholders, Henderson delivered a brief slide presentation delineating the logistics of the major, board-approved "Will You Be My Teacher?" campaign.

The campaign consists of, but is not limited to, a bill-

board campaign covering various areas of the state, radio public service announcements, posts on major social media platforms, a recruitment video, and newspapers ads.

"And, of course, as always, word of mouth," said Henderson. "We need everyone to help us get the word out. Someone may have a highly, qualified educator in their family who might want to return home to make a positive difference in our children's lives. We want that educator!"

One of the major and most critical rating components the Mississippi Department of Education uses to assess school districts is the number of certified teachers that they have.

Currently, HCCSD has 58 of its vacancies filled with non-certified teachers, and it has 30 teachers with one-year non-renewable licenses. This is nearly half of the district's 202 teachers. Ant-

icipated retirements and resignations will add to the number of openings for August 2019.

According to recent MDE data, only 515 education majors are projected to graduate from all Mississippi teacher preparation programs in May 2019. The teacher shortage and pool of available teachers is critically unbalanced.

The campaign also includes a slate of college/university teacher career fairs throughout the spring. Superintendent Dr. James L. Henderson intends to visit those fairs, along with members of his staff, to speak to teacher candidates personally. They will highlight some of the reasons for teachers to come to Holmes county, including housing assistance, competitive salaries, comprehensive benefits and certification preparation.

Dr. Henderson revealed that he is seeking approval from the board of education to reimburse the cost of successful Praxis exams—a license requirement—to teachers who agree to a three-year contract with Holmes County Consolidated School District.



My friend just ended his deer season on January 30th in Alabama. On the last day of the month he bagged a nice eight-pointer on a piece of property that had gone untended and had always been relegated as his least favorite and most undesirable. This normally would not mean very much except for the fact he did the same thing the year before. The other leases had been given better treatment. He had spent time on them. He had planted food plots and managed the property to hold deer throughout the year. This property just looked more capable and promising than the other. And after all, since the lease on the neglected property was cheaper, it couldn't be as good as the more expensive ones. Could it? With a two-year success rate, my friend is beginning to rethink the worth of that which seems unlikely.

As I listened to his story, I was immediately reminded how this same scenario is played out in many different areas of our life. We simply overlook that which seems unlikely. When it comes to possessions, this may not be a big deal, but when it comes to people it is everything. Let me ask it plain and simple. Who are you overlooking because they seem too unlikely or too convenient? Whose work are you ignoring because it may not be in the forefront or exotic enough? Who have you bypassed in order to get to someone who has great references and resumes? Whose results have you ignored because those results did not come from a

more polished business or ministry model? Who have you walked past in order to get to someone who lives in another city or country? I've noticed in the church world, we will send mission teams to another state, and a church in that state will send their team to us. Could it be we are overlooking the obvious for the ornamental? Could it be we have spent too much time and money on that which looks good and have neglected that which is the most productive? Maybe we need to do like my friend and rethink where we are spending our time and money. Maybe our most productive places and people are those that God puts us around every day.

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Court language interpreter seminar set in Jackson

The Mississippi Administrative Office of Courts seeks bilingual speakers to work as courtroom interpreters.

The AOC will introduce bilingual speakers to the requirements for court interpreting during a seminar scheduled for Jan. 31-Feb. 1 in Jackson.

The Ethics and Skill Building Seminar will be held at the Mississippi Supreme Court, 450 High Street in Jackson. The program will be in the First Floor Training Room.

The registration deadline is Jan. 18. A registration fee of \$100 includes the seminar and lunch for both days. The registration form is at this link: <https://courts.ms.gov/aoc/courtinterpreter/forms/Registration%20Form%20Jan%2031%202019.pdf>.

Participation in a court language interpreter seminar is the first step in the program which will train, certify, and test individuals who wish to serve as interpreters in Mississippi courtrooms. Candidates to become interpreters must already be fluent in English and a second language, and must develop an understanding of court proceedings. The seminar will provide an introduction to court proceedings. The program will introduce participants to the role of the court language interpreter, ethical

requirements, modes of interpretation and credentialing requirements.

Participants should arrive by 8 a.m. Jan. 31 to sign in. Presentations are scheduled 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. both days.

The AOC developed the Mississippi Court Interpreter Credentialing Program to assist state courts in their endeavors to provide equal access to justice for limited English proficiency individuals.

AOC Deputy Director Lisa Counts said, "For people of limited English proficiency, understanding and exercising their legal rights may be difficult and could result in the denial of meaningful access to the justice system. It is the responsibility of the courts to ensure meaningful access to justice for all people in the United States, whether the person speaks English or another language. Our Constitution and laws demand it."

The AOC program provides all state courts with a list of language interpreters who have demonstrated proficiency in oral and written interpretation of court proceedings. The credentialing program provides two levels of proficiency: registered and certified. Certified is the more advanced level. The registry is at this link: <https://>



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