

# First Baptist Church delivers needed items to hurricane victims

First Baptist Church (FBC) of Donalsonville has been blessed with the opportunity to share the love of Christ by ministering to those impacted by Hurricane Laura. The church's efforts to collect needed supplies was a great success. Several members of FBC helped load the donations, and then the truck and trailer departed Donalsonville and traveled to Malone and Grand Ridge to pick up additional donations.

Other partner groups in the donation, collection and transportation efforts include the Bowen Baptist Association, Friendship Baptist Malone, Malone FFA, Cottondale FFA, the town of Malone, First Baptist Malone, Eastside Baptist Church, United Believers Worship Center, Grand Ridge School, several churches within the Chipola Ministries district, along with many other generous citizens within the communities.

The truckload of supplies ended up at Merryville First Baptist Church in Merryville, Louisiana where the supplies will be distributed to those in need. The truck driver who delivered the donations said he was truly blessed by this experience and added that the people of Merryville First Baptist were so grateful to all who played a part in making it all possible.

Pastor Michael Wingertsahn commented, "We want to give a special thanks to Vicki Baxter for the job she did in coordinating this relief effort and to Thomas Truck Lines and Kelly Baxter for transporting the load. It was a tremendous blessing to be able to partner with other churches and individuals in order to minister to those suffering from the devastating effects of Hurricane Laura."



# Deadline to accept absentee ballots in Georgia extended by three days

A federal judge has extended the time Georgia election officials can accept absentee ballots if they are received up to three days after the General Election on Nov. 3.

In a ruling Monday, Judge Eleanor Ross of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia ordered that mail-in ballots that are postmarked by Election Day must be counted if they arrive by 7 p.m. on Nov. 6, which is within three days of the original deadline.

The ruling looks to calm some fears of absentee voting reliability amid an expected slow delivery by the U.S. Postal Service and huge numbers of mail-in ballots in Georgia and across the country due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"Extending the deadline would ensure that voters who receive their ballots shortly before Election Day are able to mail their ballots without fear that their vote will not count," Ross wrote in her 70-page ruling.

Ross's decision stems from a lawsuit filed in May by the voter registration group New Georgia Project against Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger that aimed to have the absentee acceptance deadline extended beyond 7 p.m. on Election Day.

The judge agreed the mail-in acceptance deadline should be extended but dismissed other claims sought in the lawsuit, including bids to make postage free for absentee ballots and to mail absentee applications to all registered Georgia voters, as occurred for the June 9 primary.

Plaintiffs had also asked for the receipt deadline to be extended by five days, which the judge shortened to three days in her ruling.

More than 7,200 absentee ballots were rejected from among roughly 1.1 million cast in the June primary due to being received after the 7 p.m. Election Day deadline, Ross's ruling noted.

With many more Georgians expected to vote by mail in the upcoming general election, Ross wrote that "the burden on many voters will be severe" if absentee ballots that arrive shortly after the strict Election Day deadline are rejected.

"The court notes it is reluctant to interfere with Georgia's statutory election machinery," Ross wrote. "However, where the risk of disenfranchisement is great, as is the case here, narrowly tailored injunctive relief is appropriate."

The ruling was immediately hailed by Georgia Democratic leaders, who touted the extended deadline as a boost for voter access ahead of the troubled and pivotal general election that will see presidential, U.S. Senate, congressional and statehouse contests on the ballot.

"Today's decision is a huge victory for Georgia voters, and a huge win in the fight for every vote to be counted," said Georgia Democratic Party Chairwoman and state Sen. Nikema Williams, D-Atlanta. "All Georgians deserve to have their voice heard, and in the midst of a global pandemic, it is the responsibility of our democracy to make voting by mail and early voting options as accessible as possible."

Raffensperger's office plans to appeal the ruling over concerns the extended deadline would hinder the ability of local election officials to process ballots in a timely manner, said Deputy Secretary of State Jordan Fuchs.

"Extending the absentee ballot receipt deadline is a bad idea that will make it nearly impossible for election officials to complete their required post-election tasks in the timeline that is required by law," Fuchs said Monday.

Monday's court ruling came as Raffensperger's office launched a new online portal for Georgia voters to request absentee ballots via the internet rather than asking for one by mail or at county election offices.

Raffensperger's office is now pushing to recruit more poll workers for the general election after a shortage during the June primary contributed to long lines and technical know-how issues with the state's new voting machines.

Wendy R. Bunce

Album Debut Concert for her upcoming release:

He is God, I am Me.

Featuring The Mathis Brothers Band from Valdosta

When: Saturday, September 26 at 6 p.m.

Where: Oakview Church of God, 3595 Oakview Church Post Rd. in Donalsonville

There will be a Meet and Greet after the concert and physical CDs will be for sale on site.

You can also buy a digital copy of the album wherever you stream music starting Friday, September 25, 2020.

For more information, visit [www.wendyrbunce.com](http://www.wendyrbunce.com) or Wendy's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/wendyrbunce](https://www.facebook.com/wendyrbunce).

CENSUS 2020

Get counted today at [my2020census.gov](http://my2020census.gov)

# Public invited to Compassionate Friends September 12th reorganization chapter meeting

Compassionate Friends of Southwest Georgia, an organization made up of members who have lost children, will hold a reorganization chapter meeting on Saturday, September 12 at 2 p.m. at 224 South West Street in Bainbridge, and anyone interested in joining the group is welcome and encouraged to attend.

A spokesperson for the group commented, "If one mother or father is helped by what we do, it's all worth it. We have all been through the struggles and are just a group of individuals trying to help others in the community. Come join us!"

Scheduling of the group's monthly meeting and discussing fundraising projects will on the agenda for discussion at the September 12th meeting

For additional information contact June Faircloth at 229-416-6134.

Mark your calendars and make plans to attend . . .

To benefit

Seminole County Warpath on Cancer

Saturday, October 24 at 6 p.m.

Chris Thomas' Arena

Highway 84 East of Donalsonville

Bring your lawn chairs   Refreshments for sale

Love offering will be taken to benefit Seminole County Warpath on Cancer

Gospel groups scheduled to perform:

The Hymn Masters Quartet from Donalsonville

New Voice Quartet from Pelham

Southern Heritage from Donalsonville

Willing Servants from Donalsonville

The sign you want.

The agents you need!

Greg Whittaker, Angie Garland, Sarah Avery and Meagan Weese

Put our team to work for you!

The Whittaker Agency

Greg Whittaker - Owner/Agent/Broker

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