

*Remarks for the
Mount Pleasant Church Revival
March 19, 2003*

■ Recognize Rev. Lamar Walker

- Circumstances changed plans to speak at this revival last year
- Thankful / pleased to be here this year

■ This is a difficult time for all Mississippians
/ Americans

- War (or threat of war) changing life for us all

- Difficult to describe pride felt in role Mississippians playing in war on terror
 - More than 4,000 Guard / Reserve personnel on active duty
 - Many more already serving full-time in military
 - Keep them in our prayers

- Tonight we're here for a revival
 - Work of this church and community of faith is a constant revival
 - Revival, in some definitions, refers to “a restoration of life, an awakening”

- Believe Mississippi is going through a revival
 - In its commitment to making the most of the promise of *all* its people, in all areas of the state

- Revival begins begins with how we care for one another
 - Begins with efforts on health care, education, and jobs that put food on the table and roofs over our heads

- Story of Jordan / 15-point buck / priorities
 - If we want to succeed in our revival,
have to set priorities for how we want to
reach our goals and achieve our dreams

- Always believed God makes dreams a size
too big so we can grow into them
 - Mississippi is growing; we're growing
fast and we're growing together

- Best way to do that is through investing in
education and creating jobs
 - Everybody benefits from good schools

- Education must be first priority for MS
 - Making great progress
 - Teacher pay / 49th to 19th when fully implemented
 - Test scores up / accountability standards stronger than “No Child Left Behind”
 - Princeton Review: MS has 6th best testing system in nation
 - MS 6th in nation in National Board Certified Teachers
 - Computers in Classroom

- Keeping education a priority with a budget that puts Schools First / 62 percent
 - MS first state in nation to fully fund education and fund it first
 - Other states cutting to the bone

- We're proving to the people of MS that we're serious about education
 - Making the investment now for dividends tomorrow

- When it comes to education, we mean business
 - Business means jobs

■ Job creation from January 2000 to February 2003

- 2,103 new and expanded facilities
- 50,253 new jobs
- Total investment of \$14.1 billion

■ MS Rural Economic Impact Authority

- \$20M to help with economic development in rural areas
- Funding to cover workforce training at community colleges

- MS's potential not exclusive to metropolitan areas
 - Promise of our people is just as strong in rural areas
 - Fighting to bring quality jobs to every Mississippian

- We have to look to the future of MS / where do we want to go?
 - Good schools / good jobs / good communities

- Now more than ever I pray every day for strength to do my job
 - Want to ask you to lift prayers up as well
 - Pray for President / soldiers / innocent civilians