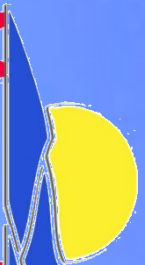




**Know the Way**  
**John 14:6**

  
**Bridge of Hope**  
**Mountain State**  
**Mission Offering**  
**2017**

**DISCIPLESHIP & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Weirton Christian Center  
Leadership Training  
Worship and Music Conference  
Children's Rallies  
Golden'eers  
Parchment Valley  
School of Christian Studies  
Hispanic Ministries

**MISSION SUPPORT**

Missionary Deputation  
Mission Education  
Camp Global  
MPT/MPN Coordination  
Mission Engagement  
Mission Partnerships  
Stewardship Education

**AREA MINISTRY**

Association Support  
Church Consultation  
Pulpit Supply  
Pastoral Support  
Search Committees  
Coaching  
Conflict Resolution  
Church Development

**STUDENT MINISTRIES**

Baptist Campus Ministries  
Camp Cowen  
YMPT - YLC  
Senior High Convention  
Junior High Convention  
Omega & Fall Rally  
Youth Ministry Support

**CONVENTION AUXILIARIES**

American Baptist Men  
American Baptist Women's Ministries  
Retired Ministers and Mates  
Ministers' Wives  
West Virginia Baptist Historical Society  
West Virginia Baptist Education Society  
Ministers' Council

**COMMUNICATIONS**

The West Virginia Baptist  
Mountain Topics  
Mission Matters  
Discipleship Now  
[www.wvbc.org](http://www.wvbc.org)  
[www.parchmentvalley.org](http://www.parchmentvalley.org)  
[www.campcowen.org](http://www.campcowen.org)



# Bridge of Hope

## Mountain State Mission Offering 2017

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- Sermon Starter
- Children's Messages
- Mission Moment
- Promotional Ideas
- Bulletin Inserts
- Sample Offering Envelope
- MSMO Poster
- Order Card

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by calling 304.422.6449

Information available online:  
[www.wvbc.org](http://www.wvbc.org).

Most of us will never forget the events of June 23, 2016. One storm after another passed through West Virginia causing catastrophic flooding along the wide path of the storms. Homes, schools and businesses were destroyed, with communities like Richwood, Rainelle, Clendenin and Birch River devastated by the destruction. As the waters rose the rescue teams were called to action. Many lives were saved – sadly many were also lost.

Recovery from these kinds of events continues long after the news media has moved on to a new story. We continue to support the efforts of our recovery teams as they continue to identify needs in their communities.

At the Crossing Plaza, off the Elkview exit of I-79, the bridge to the plaza washed away in the floods trapping 200 people. It took a couple of days to build an escape road for the people trapped there. Businesses in the plaza were completely cut off from supplies, employees and customers. Without a bridge there was no access.

As the anniversary of the floods nears, there is still not a bridge to the plaza. 500 people have lost their jobs. Businesses have lost millions. All the while the owners, government officials and the courts argue over who is responsible for replacing the bridge.

With a bridge, businesses could reopen. With a bridge, workers could earn wages. With a bridge, government could collect taxes. With a bridge, shoppers could get their groceries, travelers could have food and lodging, and families could have needed resources to help in their recovery. With a bridge, the community would have hope for a full recovery.

In spiritual matters, people also need a bridge – a bridge of hope. Jesus said, "I am the way..." We can, like the people passing the blame for the Crossings Plaza bridge, ignore the needs of lost people. Or we can share Jesus with people so they can see the way, and in knowing the way, they cross the bridge to eternal life.

The theme for the **Mountain State Mission Offering** this year is: "BRIDGE OF HOPE." You will notice that we have used a single pier bridge on our posters and materials instead of one of our famous WV bridges. This was because we wanted the symbol for the offering to remind us of the cross – the ultimate bridge of hope.

I invite you to celebrate with me the great things God has done through our mission together. 100% of the **Mountain State Mission Offering** supports the ministries of the West Virginia Baptist Convention as we, together, bring God's message of hope to the world.

Thank you for supporting the **Mountain State Mission Offering!**

## Children's Messages

### #3. Following Jesus Using God's Map

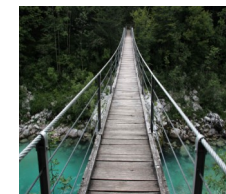
Objects: A map and a portable GPS or cell phone

Scripture: **Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6 (NIV)**

There was a time when a person going on a trip wouldn't think of beginning their journey without a road map. (Hold up the map for the children to see.) The map was very helpful to the travelers in finding the way to where they were going. Today we seldom ever use a road map. Do you know why? Most of us who own a car also have a GPS in our car, (hold up the GPS) or we use the map on our cell phones.



How do these work? When you are ready to go somewhere, you type in the address where you want to go and the GPS connects to a satellite above the earth and computes the path to your destination. As soon as you start driving, a map appears on the screen and a voice from the GPS gives you turn by turn directions. "Turn right on Main Street in one mile, turn right in one half mile, turn right in 150 feet, turn right." What happens if you miss your turn? The GPS says "Recalculating" and immediately computes a new route to get you back on the right path to your destination.



When we are trying to follow Jesus in our daily life, it would be nice to have a GPS to lead us in the right direction, wouldn't it? It would be nice to have something to keep us on the right path and keep us from getting lost...something that would help us get back on the right track when we make a wrong decision.

That is the way Jesus' disciples must have felt when Jesus told them that he was going to leave them. Jesus said to them, **"I am going to prepare a place for you and when everything is ready, I will come and get you so that you will always be with me. You know the way to where I am going." One of the disciples whose name was Thomas answered Jesus, "No, we don't, Lord. We don't even know where you are going, so how can we know the way? Jesus answered him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."**

### Promotional Ideas

1. If the church uses screens or TV's, include pictures of bridges as the background clipart, along with the logo of "Bridges of Hope."
2. Have elementary students draw or make bridges and place them in a display or place them in various places around the church.
3. Make a poster of a bridge with no floorboards. Add floorboards as certain monetary goals are reached for the MSMO.
4. Make a wooden bridge with no floorboards. Add actual pieces of wood as certain monetary goals are met.
5. Place a carpet runner on the floor. Challenge everyone to place quarters on the carpet until it is full. (Perhaps have the youth or elementary students in charge of using double-sided tape to place them in an orderly fashion on the runner.) The runner can be large or small depending on your church or each Sunday School Class could have a runner that they try to fill with quarters.
6. Decide four ways your church benefits from the MSMO. (Cowen, training teachers, youth events, etc.) Each week have someone (youth or adult) tell how MSMO has helped the church using one of the four highlighted benefits.

Children’s Messages

#2 The Bible is our Compass

Scriptures: *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”*  
*Psalm 119:105*  
*Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6 (NIV)*

I am sure that probably all of you have seen a compass. A compass is used to find the right direction to get you to where you want to go. The compass has four main directions: they are North, South, East and West. The needle of the compass always points North. If the needle is pointing in that direction (point to the North) and I want to go South, I would go that direction. (point in the opposite direction from what the needle is pointing).

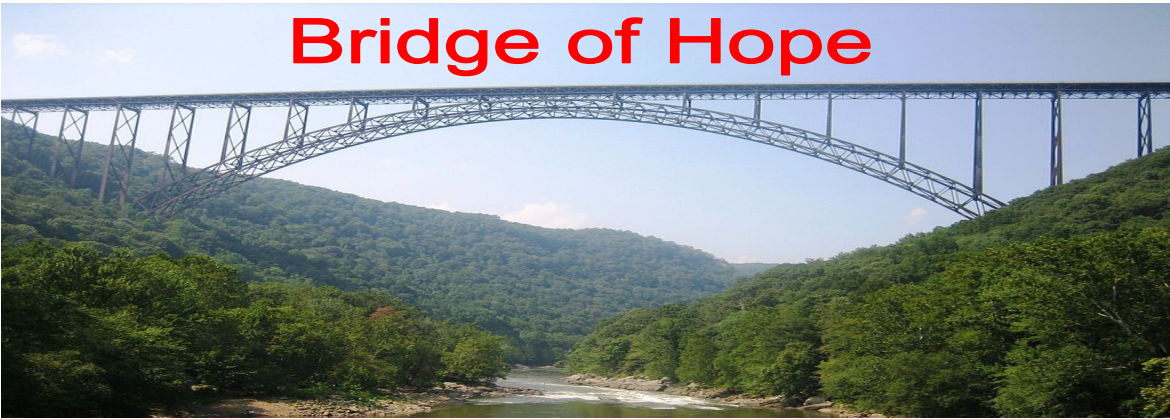


With the needle pointing North, if I wanted to go East, I would go in that direction (point to the East). If the needle sometimes pointed North and at other times it pointed to the South, East, or West, I would never be able to use the compass to find my way. I would wander around, hopelessly lost. The compass must always point in the right direction if we are going to use it to guide us.

When we are trying to find our way through the journey of life, God has given us a compass to guide our path. That guide is the Bible, God's Holy Word. The truth that we find in the Bible never changes. It will always point us in the same direction. It will always point us to Jesus.

Some people use their feelings to help them to decide what they should do. That's not good. Our feelings change from day to day and they cannot be trusted. Besides that, just because we feel good about something, doesn't mean that it is the right thing to do.

Some people choose what they will do by what's popular. That is not good either. Just because everyone else is doing it, doesn't mean that it is the right thing to do, does it? Tomorrow everyone might be doing something else. There is only one thing that we can trust to always point us in the right direction, and that is the Bible. It will always point to Jesus and Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no man comes to the Father but by me."*



(Date)

Dear Congregation:

One of the most iconic bridges in the world is located here in West Virginia. The New River Gorge Bridge, located in Fayette County, set records when it was built and remains one of the most photographic bridges in history.

It is more than just a great photo, it serves a great purpose. Before the bridge was constructed the route across the gorge was a narrow, winding and timely trip. The new bridge made a great difference for those who travel through the area. It was and will always be needed.

The ministries of the West Virginia Baptist Convention are a needed bridge in our state. While they don’t make travel easier, they do make it easier in offering what is needed the most: hope, specifically, the hope that is found in Jesus Christ.

Jesus’ sacrifice was a bridge between sinful man and a Holy God. That relationship is where our hope lies. As churches of the West Virginia Baptist Convention, we have the responsibility to be a bridge of hope.

As we prepare to receive the **Mountain State Mission Offering** let us be reminded that 100% of it supports our in-state missions. Your contribution builds a bridge of hope that leads to Jesus Christ.

Our MSMO Goal

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Sermon Starter

“ BRIDGE OF HOPE “  
JOHN 14:6

As we prayerfully prepare our sermons, we should never take the text out of the context of the Scripture. The context of John’s Gospel is an emphasis on the Deity of Jesus. John begins with Jesus’ pre-existence and the unity between Christ and the Father God. This gospel mainly consists of what Jesus said rather than what He did. His words are ‘Bridging Concepts’ to the Lord for those who believe.

Verse 6 begins, “*I am the way, the truth and the life.*” Jesus is the way; He bridges the gulf that sin has created between God and His creation. Christ is the spiritual bridge linking the creature with the creator.

Jesus said, “I am the truth.” The gospel reveals itself as God lives out the truth of His love in Jesus. Jesus’ holy person shows us God Almighty Himself and with that the Holy Spirit empowers the believers to live.

The remainder of verse 6 proclaims, “ **No one comes to the Father except through Me.**” A bridge has a purpose to get from one side to another. This verse explains that movement toward God is accomplished by the real eternal hope of Christ’s saving love. A true relationship with God, can only be accomplished through His Son; He is the “Bridge of Hope”. Our prayer is that you know Christ and cross over the bridge and have a relationship with God for all eternity. Jesus is the “Bridge of Hope” for all who seek God.

Know the Way  
John 14:6

Mission Moment

It is amazing how the Holy Spirit can and **will** bring the people of God together to do great things for the Lord. Together with sister churches throughout West Virginia, we (OUR CHURCH) provide both discipleship opportunities and mission opportunities for young adults through the **MissionQuest** program. **MissionQuest** is a yearlong program for young adults to gain a deeper understanding of cross cultural relationships and work, of the theology of mission and of God’s own plan for their lives in this big, but ever shrinking world.



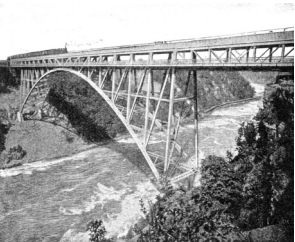
Our support of the **Mountain State Mission Offering** makes this possible through funding of both our discipleship and mission support departments. Continuing support assists in funding new ventures and opportunities, which can and will further God’s work in the US and around the world.

Children’s Messages

#1: Jesus is our Bridge over Troubled Waters

Objects: A picture of Jesus walking on the water; another item could be a child’s toy boat.  
Scripture: Matthew 14:30-33

*And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him and said to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” When they got into the boat, the wind stopped. And those who were in the boat worshiped Him saying “You are certainly God’s Son!” (NASB)*



Have you ever ridden in a car driving on a bridge across a big river? I did that the other day on a cold, windy afternoon. When I looked down, I saw that the water looked very wild, with big waves all through it. I thought to myself, “I am so glad that I’m up on this bridge instead of down in that frigid water.” Soon I was safe on land on the other side. Thank goodness for that bridge!

Let me tell you a story about Jesus’ disciples who were out on a boat in a sea full of waves one day. Jesus and His disciples had been walking and preaching to big crowds for many days and they were tired. Jesus, wanting to be alone so He could pray, asked His disciples to take a boat out on the sea, while He went up on a mountain to pray. As the hours passed, Jesus saw that the wind had begun to blow and the boat was being buffeted by the big waves. His disciples were very afraid.

Jesus walked out onto the water toward the boat. When His disciples saw Him, they were terrified because they thought He was a ghost. But Jesus said, “Don’t be afraid; It is I.” One of the disciples named Peter asked Jesus to command him to walk on the water. When Jesus did so, Peter began to walk towards Jesus!

Just at that moment the wind started to blow even harder, and Peter became very frightened and started to sink into the sea. He yelled out, “Lord, save me!” Jesus stretched out His hand, took Peter’s hand, and asked, “Why did you doubt me?” Soon Peter was safe in the boat with the others.

Just like that bridge that took me safely across the river, Jesus led Peter safely across the waves of the sea. And Jesus will guide all of us through each day of our lives. Peter started to sink when he took his eyes off Jesus and forgot to trust Him. It’s easy to become scared and worried, but we need to remember that Jesus will always guide us and help us through the storms of life to the safety of His arms. We need to keep our eyes on Him always.

