

The West Virginia Baptist Newsletter

December 2017-January 2018

West Virginia Baptist Convention Executive Board Hires Executive Minister



Dr. Michael B. Sisson

In a special called meeting on November 11, 2017, the Executive Board of the West Virginia Baptist Convention, acting on the recommendation of the Executive Minister Search Committee voted to hire Dr. Michael B. Sisson as the executive minister for the West Virginia Baptist Convention. Sisson will begin his duties on April 1, 2018. Until that time, Dr. Michael Stephens will continue in the interim role.

Sisson is currently the senior pastor of Crab Orchard Baptist Church (Greenbrier-Raleigh). He has served in that position for nine years. Prior to coming to Crab Orchard, he served the pastorates of Sutton Baptist Church (Elk Valley) and New Life Baptist Church in Shady Spring.

Sisson earned his Master of Divinity from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he received the Wilbur T. Elmore Prize in Church History and earned his Doctor of Ministry in Renewal of the Church for Mission from Palmer Theological Seminary.

Sisson's leadership experience includes having served as the president of the West Virginia Baptist Convention and the president of Pastors4Pastors: the West Virginia Baptist Ministers' Council. Sisson currently serves as chair of the West Virginia Baptist Convention School of Christian Studies and on the Board of Admissions for the Palmer Seminary Doctor of Ministry in Contextual Leadership. He has served on many boards and committees within the West Virginia Baptist Convention including the Committee on Ministerial Standing, Baptist Campus Ministries Board and the Executive Board as well as various committees and working groups.

Sisson is an adjunct professor for the Palmer Theological Seminary, teaching courses in the Doctor of Ministry and Master of Divinity academic programs. He has developed and led semi-

nars and workshops on a variety of topics including Church Transformation, Leadership, Ministry Team Building and Visioning as an array of venues. He teaches regularly in the West Virginia Baptist Convention School of Christian Studies.

Sisson's passion for ministry is directed toward the transformation and strengthening of the local church. He strives to use the gifts God has equipped him with as leader, teacher and communicator to assist the local church and its leaders to become missional-minded, intentionally sharing the love of God and the message of hope found in Jesus Christ in their local communities.

Sisson said, "I am deeply humbled by the opportunity to serve the West Virginia Baptist Convention and appreciate all the prayers and encouraging words I have already received. It was the early Baptist missionary, William Carey, who is quoted as saying, 'Attempt great things for God; expect great things from God.' These words no doubt formed his ministry and mission as he stepped onto an unknown mission field in India and as he undertook the monumental task of translating the Bible into at least seven new languages. Carey's words describe the excitement and anticipation I feel as I look forward to working with a gifted Convention staff in serving the many wonderful churches of the West Virginia Baptist Convention! We worship a God of endless possibility expectantly looking to Him to guide us into the future."

Sisson currently resides in Crab Orchard, with his wife of 34 years, Lorie, their dog, Abby and cat, Sam.

Past president and chair of the Search Committee, Mark Wood said, "The search committee is grateful for the prayers of our West Virginia Baptist Convention family and we are excited about what Dr. Sisson will bring to the life and ministry of the West Virginia Baptist Convention."

The West Virginia Baptist Convention has 371 churches in the state and is involved in ministry around the world through International Ministries and its mission partnerships.

The mission of the West Virginia Baptist Convention is to **empower** local churches to be Christ honoring communities of faith and to help them fulfill their mission by **enabling** them to do together what they cannot do alone.



There's an App for That!

The West Virginia Baptist Convention app is available for Android and Apple products. Download yours today!

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Parkersburg Association Hosts a Party in the Park for 2017 Annual Association Meeting

by Casey Dawson,
pastor, Sunrise Baptist Church (Parkersburg)

Historic, legendary, cutting edge, life transforming, gospel sharing - these are all ways of describing the 2017 annual association meeting of the Parkersburg Association, which we called "The Party In The Park."

The Parkersburg Association Executive Board has been in prayer for over a year about the direction we were going and the vision we were being called to. Stemming from that prayer, we met with several local pastors and decided we needed some change and some fresh ideas. We discerned the Lord gave us a new vision with three points: for our churches to start working together as one body, to go outside the walls of the church to be Jesus and to reach the younger generation with Jesus.

From that vision, we were led to change the entire format and location of our annual association meeting. We held our first ever annual association meeting at the local city park and over 200 people attended the business meeting. With the idea of moving outside the walls of the church, we walked from our annual association meeting location within the park to the band shelter, where we met the public. We had inflata-



bles, face painting, displays from various churches with ministries offered, two local praise bands and the main attraction: The Jason Lovins Band. And I can't forget the food giveaway. We gave away over 800 hot dogs, chips and drinks to the community in the name of Jesus. Through this love, Frank Miller, director of Parchment Valley Conference Center, had the awesome opportunity to lead a young lady to salvation in Christ.

We are excited to share we had well over 700 people attend throughout the afternoon in our community outreach portion of the meeting. We know of a family of seven that started attending one of our local churches due to this historic event. Three of those family members have accepted Christ and been baptized.



These are the ways we know of that Jesus reached people at the Party in the Park, and we are thoroughly convinced the seeds of this event will blossom for years to come. We pray the courage of the Parkersburg Association Executive Board can encourage others and begin a movement across West Virginia where other associations can find new ways to become Jesus.

Photos by Casey Dawson

The Structure of Our Hope

Taken from the Interim Executive Minister's Address at the 152nd Annual Meeting on October 20, 2017.



Dr. Michael Stephens

One of my early introductions to the Baptist family came in October 1968 when I transported a group of Youth Leader Core students from Parkersburg to Camp Cowen, where Betty Crouch, one of the leaders and Robin Crouch presented the *Four Spiritual Laws* from his work at Marshall University with Campus Crusade for Christ. One of the key scriptures was Ephesians 2:8-9, "**For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the free gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.**" As a 20 year-old, ten years as a Christian, this passage forever lifted the burden of legalistic try harder, but never measuring up teaching/preaching to which I had been subjected. It has kept me keenly aware I am only able to do what I do by God's grace (unmerited favor), and I had very well better extend to others that same grace!

More recently, 20-25 years ago, I discovered verse ten of that same passage, "**For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**" In short, God created us as well as the work He designed us to do. Who God has designed us to be naturally leads into what we are designed to do.

That is why the first half of 1 Peter 3:15, God's call to "**Sanctify the Lord in [our] hearts**" - i.e. give Him His rightful place first and always - so clearly lays the foundations for every decision we make, and prepares us to "**always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks a reason for the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear [gentleness and respect].**"

While there is much hope in the powerful witness through our various ministries, many people do not see them working together as integral parts of the whole. Like the body of Christ, Romans 12:1-8, no one part of our West Virginia Baptist Convention family is more or less important. Each of us is more or less drawn to one or more parts (ministries) according to the passion and gifting God has placed in us. Given His rightful place in our lives, the personal powerful presence of God drives us all as we study in the word, fellowship with other believers, share the Lord's supper and pray (Acts 2:42-46). The more one engages his or her world with the "**hope that is in us,**" the result is still the same: "**favor with all the people, and the Lord [adding] daily those who [are] being saved.**" (Acts 2:47)

For us, those parts are American Baptist Men, American Baptist Women's Ministries, Baptist Campus Ministries, I-Teams, Cowen, Youth Ministry Planning Team, Youth Leader Core, Discipleship, Outreach, Stewardship, Leadership, School of Christian Studies, Children's Ministry, Parchment Valley Conferenec Center, Brothers' Keeper, Area

Ministry, Support Staff, Executive Board, Bowen Trust, Baptist Education Society, Historical Society, American Baptist Home Mission Societies, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (International Ministries), Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board and every local church and believer who serves as the foot soldiers for mission and ministry to their community, and for those I might have missed, you fill in the blanks.

For lack of room or time, I will simply lift up three major new opportunities. Cowen and youth ministry in general have done an outstanding job of leading children and youth to Christ on behalf of and alongside many of our churches. Youth Leader Core and the Youth Ministry Planning Team have done well at mentoring youth in leadership. Baptist Campus Ministries has continued the process with students on our college and university campuses. The Sunny Day Leadership Center has the potential to formally and powerfully move that process forward and expand it beyond college and university students. Drs. Lee, ABC/USA General Secretary, and his wife, Lois Spitzer, from their personal Endless Possibilities trust fund, have awarded a \$500 gift, and along with our Thursday convention offering, resulted in \$1,621 toward the Sunny Day Leadership Center. Please consider how God may inspire you to support this vital ministry opportunity.

Adult Discipleship: Faith in the Workplace is a natural continuation of the same process for adults. This new emphasis has potential to powerfully engage every believer in overcoming the "Monday Morning Atheist" syndrome, where we put on spirituality for church but turn it off at work. While there is pressure to do otherwise, if God's presence is the only true source of our hope, how can we not engage the workplace with all God has given us in Christ? You will be hearing more about this from Lisa Simmons, director of Discipleship Ministries and our Discipleship Team. Meanwhile, check this out at www.worklife.org.

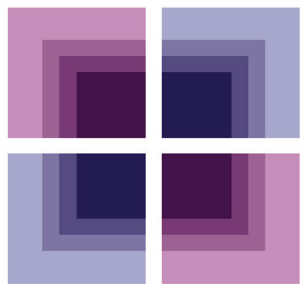
The third opportunity is the selection of our new executive minister. With the retirement of Dr. Max Hill, there will also be a search for a new Southwest area minister. We have specifically prayed over the search committee and trust God has worked through them. Now I pray you all will be as encouraging and supportive of the new executive minister as you have been for me during this interim period.

Finally, Dr. Lee Spitzer's story as a young non-religious Jewish boy from Brooklyn, New York, coming to Christ, was a powerful example of one primed to hear our reason for hope, and was a very fitting climax to our West Virginia Baptist Convention Annual Meeting family time. Miriam Adeney, in her book *Kingdom without Borders*, tells numerous similar stories of Islamic people and others with little exposure to Christians, who have had direct encounters with Christ and sought believers to nurture them. May God give us open hearts and spiritual discernment to tune in to those who may be ready to hear the "**reason for the hope that is in us.**"

Generous Congregations

“But generous people plan to do what is generous, and they stand firm in their generosity.”

— Isaiah 32:8 NLT



The **Retired Ministers and Missionaries’ Offering** provides financial support for retired ministers, missionaries and widowed spouses who have helped build our churches and their witness. Your church’s offering makes it possible to provide emergency assistance in times of crisis, and to send “Thank You” checks to those who are eligible. Your gift reminds the spiritual leaders who have served that they are not forgotten and provides assistance to those facing financial hardships.

Your generosity is a source of inspiration and gratitude.

Retired
Ministers +
Missionaries
Offering
2017

Goal: \$120,000

American Baptist Churches USA



Seeking West Virginia Baptist Convention Southwest Area Minister

The Executive Committee of the West Virginia Baptist Convention is accepting applications and resumes for the staff position of **Southwest Area Minister**. All applications must be received in the Convention office by **December 15, 2017**.

Applicants must have a Master of Divinity or equivalent and a minimum of ten years professional ministry experience.

Area Ministers serve as resource persons to the churches in their area. **Area Ministers** work closely with the leadership of the assigned associations to accomplish the mission of the association in conjunction with the Convention mission and purpose. **Area Ministers** work to resource pastors and provide pastoral care for them as needed. Area Ministers serve as transformational leaders for the churches of their area.

In addition to serving as an **Area Minister**, the position will require service in other areas of Convention life according to the gift mix of the **Area Minister** and the ministry needs of the Convention and its associations.

The **Area Minister** will report directly to the executive minister of the West Virginia Baptist Convention and relate to the Executive Board and Committee through one of the four Commissions of the Convention.

For more details of the job description, please visit www.wvbc.org and look under the News Updates and Event Information section.

Applications should be sent to: WVBC AM Search, P.O. Box 1019, Parkersburg, WV 26102 or by email to: adams@wvbc.org.

Parkersburg First Baptist Church Celebrates 200 Years

Parkersburg First Baptist Church (Parkersburg) reached a ministry milestone on October 11, 2017. The first meeting of the church listed 24 members, most of whom had been members of the Mount Zion Baptist Church (Parkersburg). Rev. James McAbey, a newly ordained minister, was named as pastor. The congregation met in homes, in the county courthouse and at a school until a structure could be erected. Numerous worship gatherings and Sunday Schools were sponsored by the church and these laid the foundation for some of the churches that currently make up the Parkersburg Association.

The Parkersburg Association formed at Parkersburg First Baptist Church in October 1818. The association included Mount Zion Baptist Church; Hughes River Baptist Church (Wood County); Bethesda Baptist Church (Wirt County); Marietta, Ohio First Baptist Church; and Parkersburg First Baptist Church. The first meeting of the association was held in 1819 with Parkersburg First Baptist Church serving as the host.

The West Virginia Baptist Convention traces its beginning also to Parkersburg First Baptist Church. Delegates from Broad Run, Judson, Mount Pisgah, Parkersburg, Teays Valley and Union Associations met at Parkersburg First Baptist Church to form the Baptist General Association of West Virginia - now the

West Virginia Baptist Convention.

The 200th anniversary celebration weekend included planting spring bulbs throughout the city, a handbell concert by a community ensemble, worship, dinner and an anniversary program. The program included several speakers, including local and state officials and representatives from the association and the Convention. Congratulatory letters were read and guests were acknowledged. The anniversary committee invited the congregation to place items into a time capsule for posterity.

Parkersburg First Baptist Church continues to actively minister in the city of Parkersburg with the Parkersburg Baptist Association, the West Virginia Baptist Convention and with its partner missionaries serving abroad. The pastor, Rich McClure, has served at Parkersburg First Baptist Church since 1998.



As a part of the church's 200th anniversary, Parkersburg First Baptist Church refurbished the 146 year old steeple. Photo by Rich McClure.

by **John Simmons**, Associate Executive Minister
Missions and Administration

Circle The Wagons?



Used with permission from
Q-files.com.

Television westerns were big when I was young. Shows like: *Bonanza*, *Big Valley*, *Wagon Train*, *The Lone Ranger* (my favorite) and many more. We would gather around the television - adjust the rabbit ears - and watch these shows in

black and white grainy moving pictures. The drama of the stories would capture our imagination and take us “back in time” to the days of the Oregon Trail and the settlement of the Wild West.

The wagon train was a popular way for the early pioneers and settlers to travel west. An experienced traveler would lead the group of wagons on the known trails to help the people get to their new homesteads. As they traveled they would often venture into “enemy” territory and come under attack from the native people whose land the settlers hoped to occupy. When an attack came, the leader would make the signal to circle the wagons so the group was protected on all fronts from the attack.

When the wagons were circled, the focus was always outward! Their only purpose of circling was to survive the skirmish; realign and move onward to the destination. The longer they remained in the circle the more likely it was they would not survive.

There are many lessons we can learn for the church from the wagon train.

1. *We must be vigilant as we work to accomplish the mission God has for us.*
 - a. The mission is critical.
 - b. The enemy is real.
 - c. Distractions take us away from our purpose.
2. *We must be very wary of circling the wagons.*
 - a. There will be times when it is necessary for survival.
 - b. It must be a temporary move that deals with a real attack.
3. *We must not lose sight of the mission!*
 - a. To remain circled is to die.
 - b. The mission is why we exist.

“If you circle the wagons, you stop communicating with people who don’t think the same way as you to avoid their ideas. It can also mean to bring everyone together to defend a group against an attack.” (Taken from UsingEnglish.com)

One of the things that disturbs me most is when a church decides it must cut missions out of its budget in order to make ends meet. That move is always an indication of death! The church that is not focused outward and engaged in mission though it may present a united front - circled wagons - is a prime target for the enemy.

My prayer for you, your church and our Convention is we never stop moving on the journey for which God has called us together.

Committed to Missions



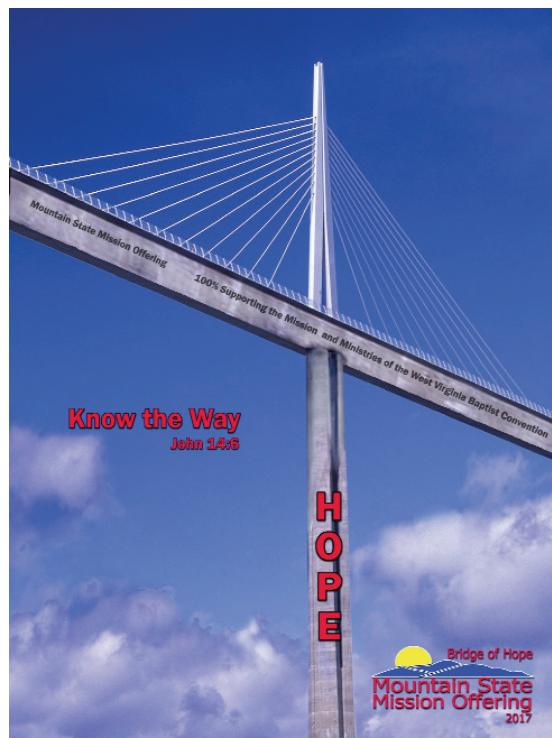
Bridge of Hope Mountain State Mission Offering

*100% Supporting the
Mission and Ministries of the
West Virginia Baptist Convention.*

*Received as of October 6, 2017:
\$238,161.*

STATE GOAL: \$290,000

*“I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the
Father, but through me.” John 14:6*



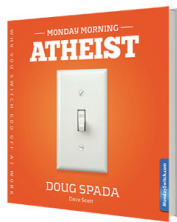
Adult Discipleship: Faith in the Workplace Emphasis 2018

Come and join the movement! There is no reason to be a spectator! Everyone can be a participant in the 2018 Discipleship emphasis: *Faith in the Workplace*. The theme begins January 1, 2018 and now is the time to prepare.

The Discipleship Commission invites everyone to join in the study, the emphasis and movement that will equip workers (in whatever area you work) with tools to grow in Christ in the workplace, make a difference in the workplace and reflect Christ in the workplace by understanding work as worship.

Churches will benefit in joining the movement too. Research has shown regular, intentional attention to workers (which is just about everyone in the church) can help the church be relevant in work culture, increase volunteerism and giving, grow whole life discipleship, develop "home" missionaries as workers see their jobs as mission fields and increase attendance as the church cares about workers and their work.

Pastors have received information on how the church and its members can be participants in this movement via a packet of information, which included the book, *Monday Morning Atheist: Why We Switch God Off at Work and How You Fix It*. Recommended materials are from WorkLife (www.WorkLife.org). This organization is one of the premier organizations in the area of growing disciples through the workplace.



Materials available for use include:

- The book, *Monday Morning Atheist*

- A six-week study for workers titled *The Switch*
- Six weekly encouragement texts (free sign-up)
- Online videos, stories, devotionals and more
- Thirty Thrive Guides, which can be downloaded and given out at church or read online
- A free one-year subscription for all participants to the WorkLife Switch Tool (weekly online resource)
- The Church WorkLife Guide (Biblical framework for work, first-hand experiences, why addressing work is important, best practices and ideas).

Churches are encouraged to make this a yearlong emphasis. Materials from WorkLife can be used to customize a plan for each church.

Additionally, the Discipleship Commission is offering 52 weeks of discipleship texts, which will be sent to any individual who signs up. These texts are encouraging, thought provoking and inspiring and will arrive once a week on your cell phone. Please copy and share at your church, with family and friends.

Let's do something together to learn, grow and mature in our Christian journey.

For more information, contact Lisa Simmons, director of Discipleship at lsimmons@wvbc.org or 304.273.9693.

Lisa Simmons
Director, Discipleship Ministries

Weirton Christian Center Celebrates 100 Years

In honor of 100 years of service to the community, Weirton Christian Center celebrated the past, present and future plans for a new state-of-the-art facility with over 350 people on Saturday, September 16, 2017. Since it's Baptist beginning in 1917, the Weirton Christian Center has been helping to make life a little better for the people of Weirton. From citizenship and English classes for the immigrants coming to work at Weirton Steel, to being the community center for social and recreational activities prior to the Millsop Community Center, to the current free afterschool, preschool and summer programs for children ages three to 18, Weirton Christian Center has and continues to reach out to the entire community.

It was a wonderful evening with memories shared from the stage by Vince Monseau, Donna Durkin and others; and from the many photo albums on display.

Many community leaders were in attendance, such as the mayor of Weirton as well as representatives from the city council, county commission, Business Development Center, Weirton United Way and many leading businesses who helped to sponsor our event. From the West Virginia Baptist Convention office, Michael Stephens, John Simmons, Joan Hall and others attended. Marilyn Turner-Triplett represented American Baptist Home Mission Societies.

Groundbreaking of the New Building

The original plan for the new building may not be the

plan underway, but God has taken charge of the situation and will see it to fruition. He has brought us an amazing contractor who saved us from making a major mistake by implementing the original plan. He has brought so



Groundbreaking of the new Weirton Christian Center took place on September 17, 2017.

many foundations, churches, individuals, organizations, businesses and grantors together. At this point, we have exceeded our original goal. I am sure He will continue to bring funding in to complete this building debt free.

This building will give our children a safe place under one roof to learn about a personal relationship with our Lord and receive what they need to grow and thrive into adults who want to make a difference in this world.

Thank you to our West Virginia Baptist family of churches and individuals who have raised \$95,000 of our \$150,000 project goal! Thank you for helping us make this happen and by continuing to fulfill God's mission in Weirton by supporting over 200 children from three-18 years old and their families annually. Your support means so much to our ministry.

Twelve Graduate from the School of Christian Studies



The School of Christian Studies held its annual graduation ceremony on the Thursday, October 19th evening session of the 152nd Annual Meeting of the West Virginia Baptist Convention.

Those present to participate in the ceremony are pictured above and are as follows (l to r): bottom row - Mark McCloy, director, School of Christian Studies; Timothy Steven Berry, diploma in Pastoral Ministry; Joyce Lavonne Compton, diploma in Pastoral Ministry; Rindi G. Huffman, diploma in Pastoral Ministry; second row - Toby Dewayne Wagoner, diploma in Pastoral Ministry and diploma in the Advanced Ministries two-year program; Charles William Stewart II, diploma in Pastoral Ministry; James Herschell Johnson, diploma in Pastoral Ministry; and Gary Roy Daniels, diploma in Pastoral Ministry. At right are graduates Michael S. Cool, diploma in Pastoral Ministry and Rondlynn K. Cool, diploma in Pastoral Ministry.

Those who were not present included: James Lee Adkins, diploma in Pastoral Ministry; Sarita Karen Gumm, certificate in Teaching Ministry; and Benjamin Lynn Simmons, diploma in Pastoral Ministry.



Mother, Rondlynn Cool, and her son, Michael Cool, graduate together from the School of Christian Studies.

Meadows Receives James Anderson, Sr. Award for Bivocational Ministry



(L to r) Jim Anderson, Southeast Area Minister with James Anderson, Sr. Bivocational Award winner Dan Meadows, along with Bonita Meadows, Mary Jo Slater and Larry Anderson.

During the Friday afternoon session of the 152nd West Virginia Baptist Convention Annual Meeting, held at New Baptist Church (Guyandotte), Rev. Dan Meadows, pastor of Goshen Baptist Church (Goshen) was honored as the recipient of the Fifth Annual Rev. James Anderson Sr. Bivocational Pastor Award.

The award is presented each year to a bivocational pastor or retired bivocational pastor selected by the area ministers who has served at least ten years in a convention church, and also has a love for associational and community ministry as personified by Rev. James Anderson, Sr. during his lifelong ministry within the West Virginia Baptist Convention.

After sharing some stories about his father and a biography of Rev. Meadows, Rev. Jim Anderson Jr., Southeast area minister, West Virginia Baptist Convention, introduced his sister, Mary Jo Slater, and brother, Larry Dale Anderson, who presented the award.

Pastor Meadows asked his wife, Bonita, to join him on stage sharing his joy for all her help in his ministry, and gave thanks to the Anderson family for establishing the award and the West Virginia Baptist Convention Area Ministers for selecting him.

Spitzer Awards Endless Possibilities Grants



Mary Beth McCloy receives one of the Endless Possibilities grants from Dr. Lee Spitzer.

Drs. Lee and Lois Spitzer have always sought to be generous and faithful stewards of their finances. They have consistently supported all parts of the ABC/USA family through their offerings. The Spitzer family has created the "Endless Possibilities Charitable Fund" to gift ministries that are outreach oriented, experimental and creative.

Dr. Spitzer was excited to award two grants at the 2017 Annual Meeting. One grant was given to the Sunny Day Leadership campaign. The second was given to the joint aquaponics project of Comunidad Nueva Esperanza (Good Hope) and Lifespring Community Church (Good Hope).



Rob Ely (r), receives an Endless Possibilities grant from Lee Spitzer (l) for the Sunny Day campaign.



Annual Sermon Speaker, **Trent Eastman**, pastor, New Baptist Church, Huntington

The West Virginia Baptist Convention 152nd Annual Meeting



"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6

Keynote Speaker, **Jeffrey Jones**, author of *Facing Decline, Finding Hope: New Possibilities for Faithful Churches*



Charles William Stewart II (I), is recognized as the new pastor of Reedy Baptist Church (Good Hope) by **Mark Wood**, 2016-2017 Convention president.



Joan Hall, administrative assistant, Mission Support, West Virginia Baptist Convention, with her display for the Mountain State Mission Offering.



Jody Pistore (I), pastor, South Charleston First Baptist Church, presents the gavel to 2017-2018 West Virginia Baptist Convention incoming president, **David Hoge**.



2017 Ward Hibbs Winner, **John Vannoy**, pastor, Rush Run Baptist Church and Enon Baptist Church, Grantsville



Rob Ely, director of Student Ministries, and **Jill Narraway**, associate director of Camping and Youth, both of the West Virginia Baptist Convention, share about the Sunny Day Leadership and Activity Center.



Guest Speaker, **Lee Spitzer**, general secretary, ABC/USA, signs a copy of his book, *Baptists, Jews and The Holocaust* for **Sue Hamric** of Spencer First Baptist Church (Good Hope).



2017-2018 Officers of the West Virginia Baptist Convention - (l to r), **Lois Merritt**, secretary; **John Simmons**, treasurer; **Doris Toothman**, first vice-president; **David Hoge**, president; and **Lee Boso**, second vice-president



Jana Raines, president, Pastors 4 Pastors: The West Virginia Baptist Ministers' Council, recognizes Ministers' Council members (l to r): **William Thomas**, treasurer; **Erik Kendall**, first-vice president; **Richard McClure**, spring event coordinator; and **Richard Sargent**, member at large



Mike Stephens, interim executive minister, West Virginia Baptist Convention



Photos by Zola Miller.



by Roger Adams, pastor, ClearView Fellowship
(Greenbrier-Raleigh)

For those of you who attended the West Virginia Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in October 2017 and if you went to the exhibit hall, you were introduced to Samaritan's Feet International. Samaritan's Feet (no relation to Samaritan's Purse) is a ministry dedicated to providing shoes to people all over the world.

Manny Ohonme, the founder, was given his first pair of shoes at age nine by missionaries. According to Manny, it changed his life. After a successful career in technology, he was led to start Samaritan's Feet. I met Manny at the Final Four Basketball Tournament two years ago and was overwhelmed by his testimony and his heart.



John Vannoy, with 794 pairs of blessings.

Our church has purchased over 1,700 pairs of shoes to send to Samaritan's Feet. This year, I asked Samaritan's Feet to set up a display at the Annual Meeting and they accepted an invitation from the West Virginia Baptist Convention Planning Committee.

Eddie Bennett, director of Global Logistics, was at the booth for Samaritan's Feet sharing their story. He was able to meet many of you and talked to some of our missionaries. He hopes to partner with us in collecting and distributing shoes in our state and around the world.

To find out more, go to samaritansfeet.org, or call 980.939.8150. Also feel free to contact me at 304.545.7263.

Jim Anderson, Southeast Area Minister

Oak Hill Baptist Church Celebrates 125th Anniversary

On September 2, 2017, Oak Hill Baptist Church (Fayette) began its 125th anniversary



celebrations with former pastors and interim pastors, David White, Larry Hooper, David Sneed, Charles Bright and Jim Anderson participating in the worship service. Pastor Sam Blaylock

thanked everyone for their contributions; a group photo was taken and a fellowship dinner followed.

Sutton Baptist Church Celebrates 160th Anniversary

On September 17, 2017, Sutton Baptist Church (Elk Valley) celebrated its 160th anniversary with morning and afternoon services. Rev. Charlie Bolen, who grew up in the church and Rev. Richard Sargent, former pastor, spoke in the morning; Rev. Jim Anderson, Southeast area minister, West Virginia Baptist Convention, spoke in the afternoon and presented a certificate of appreciation from the West Virginia Baptist Convention to pastor Dr. Allan Copenhaver. A fellowship luncheon was held between the two services with many pictures and memories shared by the church.



Left to right: Dr. Allan Copenhaver and Rev. Jim Anderson

Villers Ordained at Summersville Baptist Church

On the evening of September 17, 2017, an ordination service, approved by the Hopewell Association, was held for Rev. Caleb Villers, youth pastor, at



Left to right: Rev. Jon Villers, Mrs. Koreen Villers, Rev. Caleb Villers and Rev. Lewis Villers

Summersville Baptist Church (Hopewell). Southeast area minister, Rev. Jim Anderson welcomed everyone. Caleb's grandfather, Rev. Lewis Villers opened in prayer. Caleb's mother, Koreen, shared a beautiful song and his father, Rev. Jon Villers gave the charge to the candidate and the church from II Timothy 2:1-7. Dr. Dana Gatewood, senior pastor, led the laying on of hands service and a fellowship time was held afterwards.

The Power of a Dream

Where there is no vision, the people perish.
Proverbs 29:18a (KJV)

God is in the dream business. He gives dreams to men and women and He makes dreams come true. Without such dreams, not much new happens. It is with great pleasure we celebrate with one of our newest churches, the next step in their church life as yet another such dream came true and they met for the first time in their new facility. Up to this point, New Found Freedom Baptist Church (Little Kanawha), located just north of Glenville, has been meeting in the pastor's living room on Sunday mornings for Sunday School and worship. Earlier, I had the opportunity to join them one Sunday. There is something special and right about worshipping the Lord together. Something that defies location and setting. Something that is



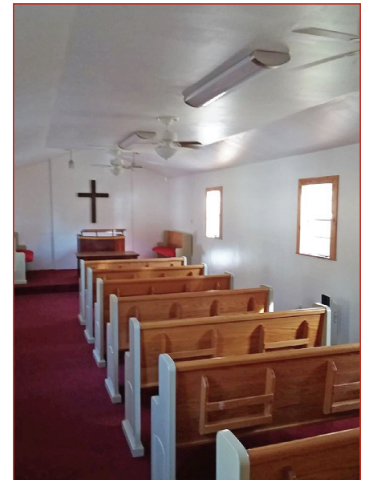
Thinking outside of the box.

made real by the sincerity of His people.

Make no mistake, this article is a celebration. Together, we rejoice in what God is doing in this rural area and in the lives of its people. We also celebrate all those who have donated

time and resources to make this happen - churches, individuals and other parts of the Convention family. You know who you are and, more importantly, God knows. Some of the funding for this project came from you, and thus all the faithful have a part in this. Hebrews 6:10 says God does not forget when you minister to his saints.

Perhaps you are thinking, "I have never seen it done that way before." And who has? I often see these storage buildings at various locations around the state, and have even thought about buying one a time or two. But I never thought of turning one into a church. And that is the beauty of working together - we have a greater chance to catch the bigger vision, and to find ourselves in places and doing things we never imagined were even possible.



Inside the new home of New Found Freedom Baptist Church.

Northeast Area News

David Hulme, Northeast Area Minister

Weston First Baptist Church Celebrates 150th Anniversary



The Lewis County Commission presents an anniversary proclamation to members of Weston First Baptist Church. Photo by Darlene Swiger, courtesy of NCWV Media.

Weston First Baptist Church (Broad Run) began their yearlong 150th anniversary celebration this September 2017 with the theme, "Promoting the Words of God." The church was organized September 14, 1867, when representatives of several local churches met at the Lewis County Courthouse to propose a Baptist church in Weston. During September, the celebrations included worship services, guest speakers, musical groups, special presentations, dinners and an ice cream social with music on the courthouse lawn. Rev. Kenneth Miller is pastor.

North Mill Creek Holds Fall Festival

North Mill Creek Baptist Church (Eastern) held their Fall Festival, October 28-29, 2017. The event, which also serves as an outreach to the community, featured a hayride, games, cake walk, food and prizes on Saturday. Sunday featured Sunday School and worship, with Rev. David Hulme, Northeast area minister, West Virginia Baptist Convention, preaching. Pastor Duke Thorne and his wife, Rosa, were also honored with a surprise pastor appreciation tribute. The event concluded with a meal following worship.

West Virginia Walk for Water

Clarksburg Baptist Church (Union), combined with community sponsors to host the 2017 West Virginia Walk for Water at the Clarksburg City Park. More than 200 walkers participated in the event to raise awareness of the global water crisis.

Participants were encouraged to carry a bucket of water three miles to symbolize the



Clarksburg Baptist Church and the local community participate in the WV Walk for Water event. Photo courtesy of WBOY.

burden millions of women and children bear each day. The event raised over \$17,000 for Water Mission, which works globally to design, build and implement safe water, sanitation and hygiene solutions.

Max Hill, Southwest Area Minister

Coal River Association Celebrates Worldwide Communion Sunday

On October 1, 2017, several churches of the Coal River Association gathered at Forks of Coal Missionary Baptist Church (Coal River) to celebrate Worldwide Communion Sunday under the overall leadership of association moderator, Rev. Anthony Pratt, pastor of Racine First Baptist Church (Coal River). An association mass choir, under the direction of Mr. Jerry Skeenes, music director at the host church, provided several selections of worship music. Pastor Terry Sponaule of Sand Fork Baptist Church (Coal River), preached an inspirational Lord's Supper sermon. The association pastors served communion to the assembled faithful. A time of fellowship and refreshments, provided by the host church, capped off the evening.



The Coal River Association Choir performs at Forks of Coal Missionary Baptist Church for Worldwide Communion Sunday.

Since 1933, various Christian denominations have celebrated Worldwide Communion Sunday on the first Sunday in October as an expression of Christian unity.

Saint Paul Missionary Baptist Church Celebrates 150th Anniversary

Saint Paul Missionary Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) has spent much of this year celebrating its sesquicentennial. Regular events have focused on the church's history and ministry in the city. What a testimony of faith to minister to your community for 150 years. Surely, this is an occasion for celebration.

The most recent of the celebrations was the Fall Revival, which was held October 9-11, 2017. Enthusiastic crowds marked this wonderful series of meetings. Various guest musicians as well as the church's own provided powerful music for the services. Rev. Dr. F.D. Sampson, Sr., recently retired pastor of Friendship Baptist Church of Houston, Texas, inspired the congregation with inspirational Biblical sermons night after night.

Rev. Dr. Michael Poke provides pastoral leadership for Saint Paul Missionary Baptist Church. He has served the church since 2001.



Southwest area minister and executive minister of Missions and Ministry, Dr. Maxwell Hill, will be retiring December 31, 2017. He has been with the Convention for 13 years.

Coming Events

DECEMBER 2017

December 25-26

Christmas Day Holiday

West Virginia Baptist Convention Office CLOSED

JANUARY 2018

January 1, 2018

New Year's Day Holiday

West Virginia Baptist Convention Office CLOSED

January 5, 2018

West Virginia Baptist Convention Executive Committee

Parchment Valley Conference Center/Santroek Education Center Begins at 6:30 p.m.

January 6, 2018

West Virginia Baptist Convention Executive Board and Commission Meetings

Parchment Valley Conference Center/Santroek Education Center Begins at 9:00 a.m.

2018 Camp Cowen Dates

Women's Camp	April 13-15
Older Midler	June 3-6
Younger Midler	June 8-10
Junior 1	June 10-16
Junior High 1	June 17-23
Junior 2	June 24-30
High School 1	July 1-7
Junior High 2	July 8-14
Senior Day	July 14
High School 2	July 15-21
Family Camp	July 27-30
AB Men and Boys Camp	August 3-5
Camp Global	August 10-12

All registration forms are available by calling Jennifer at the West Virginia Baptist Convention office at 304.422.6449. You may download any of the forms online at www.campcowen.org. Don't forget to print off a health form for each individual attending.

Leadership Updates

MR. LARRY FLEMING to Glenville First Baptist Church (Little Kanawha) as interim pastor in October 2017

MR. TONY FOREMAN to Williamstown First Baptist Church (Parkersburg) as senior pastor in August 2017

REV. RICHARD HEPLER to Broad Run Baptist Church (Broad Run) as interim pastor on October 1, 2017

MR. SCOTT MCCLURE to Williamstown First Baptist Church (Parkersburg) as student pastor in September 2017

REV. JEFF A. SEVY to Open Arms Baptist Church (Hopewell) as pastor on October 1, 2017

MR. BILL STEWART to Reedy Baptist Church (Good Hope) as pastor in October 2017

DR. WILLIAM R. THOMAS to West Union Baptist Church (Broad Run) as interim pastor in October 8, 2017

2018 Church Officers' Training Event

February 3

Parchment Valley Conference Center

The cost will be \$15 per person for the day, including lunch.
If you bring eight from the same church, the next two registrations are at no cost.

Each participant will select one workshop for the morning session and one for the afternoon session.

Schedule

9:00 a.m.	Registration - Hill Hall
9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	Worship - Hill Hall
10:15 - 11:45 a.m.	Workshop Session #1
12:00 Noon - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch - The Barn or Greenlee
1:00 - 2:30 p.m.	Workshop Session #2
2:30 p.m.	Head home

Registration Deadline: Registrations must be postmarked by Friday, January 19, 2018 and include money for all attendees registered. After January 19, the fee is \$25.00 per person and lunch is not included.

Workshops Include:	10:15 A.M	1:00 P.M.
• American Baptist Women's Ministries - Women's Leadership Academy	PART A Projects and Activities	PART B Projects and Activities
• Children	A.M. SESSION	REPEAT
• Christian Estate Planning	A.M. SESSION	REPEAT
• Church Security	A.M. SESSION	REPEAT
• Clerks	*	P.M. ONLY
• Deacons	A.M. SESSION	REPEAT
• Dealing with Addiction	*	P.M. ONLY
• Discipleship - Faith in the Workplace: Planning for the Year	A.M. ONLY	*
• Drug Awareness	A.M. ONLY	*
• Exploring a Call	A.M. SESSION	REPEAT
• Financial Secretaries, Treasurers and Finance Committees	A.M. ONLY	*
• Missions - All You Want to Know and More!	*	P.M. ONLY
• SCS ADVANCED - Community Transformation	PART A	PART B
• Senior Adults	A.M. ONLY	*
• Technology	A.M. SESSION	REPEAT
• Trustees	*	P.M. ONLY
• Worship and Music	A.M. SESSION	REPEAT
• Young Adults	A.M. ONLY	*
• Youth	*	P.M. ONLY
* No workshop available.		
NOTE: ALL WORKSHOPS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.		

School of Christian Studies (SCS) ADVANCED Information:
The ADVANCED class, Community Transformation, held during this event is part of the SCS ADVANCED Congregational Transformation three-year program of study. This event will give you the opportunity to complete one of the classes in this program. A mailing will be sent to all students regarding this opportunity. This event may also be attended by ADVANCED students to fulfill one class requirement for the original two-year program.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.

Individual/Couple/Church: _____, Church Code: _____
 @ \$15.00 = _____, Check Amount: _____, Balance Due: _____
 Check: Individual/Church/Other _____, Check #: _____
 Date Received: _____, Lunch Ticket: _____

FEBRUARY 2018 CHURCH OFFICERS' TRAINING REGISTRATION FORM

Attention: Church Group Contact Person.

A contact person must be chosen for all church groups.

Please send all church group registrations in one envelope.

One check may be written for all registrations. If you plan to use the pay for eight and bring two free rule, please make sure the free participant(s) check the box on the left side of this form. After the first ten, the "pay for eight bring two free" begins again.

If you have any questions, please contact Donna at snyder@wvbc.org or 304.422.6449.

Please complete the following information:

I am registering as (Please check all that apply.)

- an individual/couple,
 part of a church group (send form(s) in with church)
 I am the contact person for the church group.
 My church has met the requirements. I am a free participant.

Name: _____

(One form per person, but you may write one check and return in one envelope.)

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Church: _____

Preferred way to contact: telephone or e-mail

Phone or e-mail address: _____

Please check the appropriate fee box(es).

\$15.00 Leadership Conference Fee (REQUIRED)

\$25.00 School of Christian Studies ADVANCED Single Fee

*Please note: \$15.00 conference fee must also be paid.

\$35.00 School of Christian Studies ADVANCED Couple Fee
 (One form per person, but you may write one check and return in one envelope.)

**Please note: \$15.00 per person conference fee must also be paid.

Total Enclosed (Please write in blank at left.)

Please list the title of the workshop(s) in the spaces below.

Workshops **must** be chosen at this time.

1.) List choice for a.m. workshop: _____

2.) List choice for p.m. workshop: _____

SCS ADVANCED Students only:

Please select one program you want this credit applied to.

New Congregational Transformation Three-Year Program
 You must choose Part A and Part B of the SCS ADVANCED Personal Transformation workshop.

Original Two-Year General Studies Program - one credit
 You may choose any combination of workshops.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE:

REGISTRATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY FRIDAY, JANUARY 19, 2018 AND INCLUDE MONEY FOR ALL ATTENDEES REGISTERED.

After January 19, the fee is \$25.00 per person and lunch is not included. It will be on your own.

Please make checks payable to and mail to: West Virginia Baptist Convention Church Officers' Training, Attn: Donna, P.O. Box 1019, Parkersburg, WV 26102.

ORA JEAN ALLMAN, 83, of Jane Lew, died October 21, 2017. She was a faithful and active member of Broad Run Baptist Church (Broad Run), where she was a deaconess and choir member. She also served on many missionary boards, organized Christmas dinners, directed Christmas plays, organized Christmas gift programs for the less fortunate, directed Bible School and published the church newsletter. She served as president of American Baptist Women's Ministries, served on the Broad Run Association board and founded the Care and Share program.

CLOYD BLANKENSHIP, 93, of Mullens, died October 24, 2017. He was a member of Highland Avenue Baptist Church (Rockcastle), where he served as a deacon.

ALBERT D. "PAW PAW SUG" BOOTHE, 93, of Belva, died October 18, 2017. He was a member of Gauley Bridge Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), where he was involved in the American Baptist Men's ministry.

WESLEY HADDON BROWN, 86, died October 13, 2017. He was an American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) alumnus. He served in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Israel.

DAVID EDWIN BUNCH, 74 of Huntington, died October 24, 2017. He was a lifelong member of Fifth Avenue Baptist Church (Guyandotte), where he was former president of the Homebuilders' Sunday School Class.

KENNETH (KEN) T. CAIRNS, 81, of Deland, Florida, died August 20, 2017. He was an American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) alumnus. He served in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

PATTY FINCHAM, 81, of Brenton, died May 13, 2017. She was a devoted member of Cook Memorial Baptist Church (Rockcastle) for many years. She served as clerk, was a faithful member of American Baptist Women's Ministries and spent many hours as a volunteer church secretary.

MAURICE PAGE "SHAB" FITZPATRICK, 84, of Diamond, died October 4, 2017. He was a 58-year member of Diamond Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), where he sang in the choir, taught Sunday School and was a youth leader.

PHYLLIS ILENE FOX, 86, of Spencer, died October 13, 2017. A lifelong member of Gilboa Baptist Church (Good Hope), she served as a Sunday School teacher and youth ministries' leader for a number of years. She also shared her love of music as a pianist for the church for many years and was active in the church's American Baptist Women's Ministries' group.

MARGOT F. HAKES, 88, of West Yarmouth, Massachusetts, died August 28, 2017. She was a Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (WABFMS) alumna. She served in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and India.

JAMES PAUL HAMRICK, 70, of Webster Springs, died September 25, 2017. He was a member of Webster Springs First Baptist Church (Hopewell), where he was a trustee and deacon.

ALICE BROWN HARRISON, of Man, died September 22, 2017. She was a member of Man First Baptist Church (Logan-Mingo), where she had served in the following capacities: pianist, organist, church clerk and member of various committees.

SARAH KATHRYN "KATIE" LAMBERT, 93, of Kanawha City, died October 13, 2017. She was a devoted member of Kanawha City Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) for nearly 60 years, where she served as a deaconess, choir member and was active in many related church organizations, including American Baptist Women's Ministries.

LAFIE LYNN MARKS, 71, of Glenville, died September 28, 2017. He was an active member of Glenville First Baptist Church (Little Kanawha), where he served cheerfully in several capacities.

CARMAN O. MARTIN, 90, of Fayetteville, died August 31, 2017. He was an active member of Fayetteville Baptist Church (Fayette), having served as deacon and past president of the West Virginia American Baptist Men. He was also very active in the Men's Baptist Camp at Camp Cowen, leading many work teams there over the years.

VIRGINIA MARIE "JEN" (ADAMS) MATHENY, 34, of Lost Creek, died September 20, 2017. She was a member of Vermont Baptist Church (Judson).

WILLIAM PATRICK MCGHEE, died September 6, 2017. He was a member of Highland Avenue Baptist Church (Rockcastle), where he played the organ and served as church secretary. For many years, he conducted the Mullens Community Christmas and Easter Cantatas.

DAVID COLVIN MELLQUIST, 76, died October 9, 2017. His most rewarding work was doing the Lord's work as a deacon, pastor and association missionary. He was the father of Koreen Villers, director of Children's Ministries, West Virginia Baptist Convention.

GERALD L. MORGAN, 80, of Vienna, died September 17, 2017. He pastored many churches including Parkersburg First Baptist Church (Parkersburg), Clendenin First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), Sistersville First Baptist Church (Panhandle), Marmet First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) and Mabscott First Baptist Church. He also served as interim minister for many churches: Glenville First Baptist Church (Little Kanawha), Wheeling First Baptist Church (Panhandle), Kanawha City Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), Oakwood Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), Ravenswood First Baptist Church (Good Hope), Mount Zion Baptist Church (Parkersburg), South Parkersburg Baptist Church (Parkersburg) and Lauckport Baptist Church (Parkersburg). He also served as interim minister at Marietta, Ohio First Baptist Church. He was president of the Wood County Ministerial Association, served the Chaplain Association at Camden Clark Memorial Hospital, was moderator of the Parkersburg Ministerial Association, was president of the West Virginia Baptist Convention in 1996 and president of the Educational Society for the Convention for several years.

VELMA JUNE NUZUM, 86, of Shinnston, died October 20, 2017. She was a member of Shinnston First Baptist Church (Judson). She sang in the church choir and served on the bereavement and social committees. She formerly held the office of church clerk.

ROBERT DOUGLAS ORE, 76, died October 2, 2017. He was a member of Clendenin First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), where he served as an usher, deacon and trustee.

CONNIE LYNN ROGERS, 59, of Huntington, died, September 18, 2017. She was an active member of Fifth Avenue Baptist Church (Guyandotte).

ROBERT J. ROMICK, 91, of Martins Ferry, Ohio, formerly of Wheeling, died October 8, 2017. He was a pastor whose ministry spanned from 1957 to 2017, with churches in Pittsburgh and three pastorates in New Jersey. More recently, he was pastor at Wheeling First Baptist Church (Panhandle) for over 14 years, started Dallas Pike Baptist Church (Panhandle), was interim minister at Martins Ferry First Baptist Church and Wellsburg First Baptist Church (Panhandle) and most recently, was the associate pastor at Agape Baptist Church (Panhandle).

JOHN LAMBERT SKEANS, 96, of Huntington, died October 7, 2017. He was a member of Huntington Baptist Temple (Guyandotte) for more than six decades, where he served in various capacities, including include chairman of the board of deacons, board of trustees and treasurer.

OTIS MILTON SMITH, 86, of Diamond, died October 6, 2017. He was a member of Diamond Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley).

JAMES RICHARD STOUT, 76, of Hurricane, died September 7, 2017. He was a member of Hurricane First Baptist Church (Teays Valley), where he was a member of the board of trustees.

LINDA L. UNDERHILL, 73, of Kingwood, died October 2, 2017. She has been a member of Kingwood Baptist Church (Goshen) since 1974, where she had served as custodian, nursery worker, greeter and delivered bulletins to shut-ins.

BRADEN EUGENE WOLFE, 45, of Oak Hill, died October 13, 2017. He was a member of Page Baptist Church (Fayette), where he served on the deacon board. He was the son of Delmas and Nancy Wolfe.

December 2017

DECEMBER 1 - The ministry of Stump Chapel Baptist Church; Teddy Legg, pastor (Elk Valley)
DECEMBER 2 - Elisabeth McCurdy, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Costa Rica
DECEMBER 3 - The ministry of Bethel Baptist Church; Ed Moats, pastor (Goshen)
DECEMBER 4 - The ministry of Barboursville Baptist Church; Evan Arkell, pastor (Guyandotte)
DECEMBER 5 - Katy Hegarty, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Costa Rica
DECEMBER 6 - Judith Butta, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Discipleship Commission
DECEMBER 7 - The ministry of Boothsville Baptist Church; Gerald Nuzum, pastor (Fairmont)
DECEMBER 8 - David Hulme, Northeast area minister, West Virginia Baptist Convention
DECEMBER 9 - The ministry of Baileysville Baptist Church; Ronald Harvey, pastor (Rockcastle)
DECEMBER 10 - Ivy Wu, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to East Asia
DECEMBER 11 - John Simmons, associate executive minister of Missions and Administration, West Virginia Baptist Convention
DECEMBER 12 - Gerry Prunty, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Outreach Commission
DECEMBER 13 - The ministry of Bethel Baptist Church; Randy Bratka, pastor (Kanawha Valley)
DECEMBER 14 - Jeff Branham, trustee and member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Stewardship Commission
DECEMBER 15 - Bill Clemmer, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary
DECEMBER 16 - Emma Witmer, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Thailand
DECEMBER 17 - Rovaughna Richardson, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Ghana
DECEMBER 18 - Lisa Simmons, director of Discipleship Ministries and Associate in Mission Support, West Virginia Baptist Convention
DECEMBER 19 - Denise Aragon, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Mexico
DECEMBER 20 - Mike Lowery, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
DECEMBER 21 - Kevin Sions, Baptist Campus Ministries' Northern Director, West Virginia Baptist Convention
DECEMBER 22 - Susan Dale, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Leadership Commission
DECEMBER 23 - Lynn Sanson, clerk/treasurer, Fayette Association
DECEMBER 24 - Our families as we gather together to celebrate the birth of our Savior
DECEMBER 25 - Prayer of thanksgiving for a Savior born to save the world
DECEMBER 26 - The ministry of Beckley First Baptist Church; Donald "Doc" Adkins, pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh)
DECEMBER 27 - Koreen Villers, director of Children's Ministries, West Virginia Baptist Convention
DECEMBER 28 - The ministry Little Capon Baptist Church; Tony Baker, pastor (Eastern)
DECEMBER 29 - Maggie Stanton, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Hungary
DECEMBER 30 - Lori Mann, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary
DECEMBER 31 - Susan Scott, clerk, Harrisville Association

January 2018

JANUARY 1 - Pray for a blessed New Year
JANUARY 2 - Spencer Oxford, moderator, Rockcastle Association and pastor, War First Baptist Church (Rockcastle)
JANUARY 3 - The ministry of Bethany Baptist Church; Bradley Tenney, pastor (Union)
JANUARY 4 - Lois Merritt, secretary, West Virginia Baptist Convention and member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Leadership Commission
JANUARY 5 - Ingrid Rold'an-Rom'an, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Panama
JANUARY 6 - The West Virginia Baptist Convention Executive Board meets today at Parchment Valley Conference Center
JANUARY 7 - The ministry of Enon Baptist Church; Larry McKim, pastor (Broad Run)
JANUARY 8 - Melanie Bagao, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Lebanon
JANUARY 9 - Ian Williams, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
JANUARY 10 - Kyle Witmer, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Thailand
JANUARY 11 - Ann Borquist, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Southeast Asia
JANUARY 12 - The ministry of Milton Baptist Church; Allen Stewart, pastor (Guyandotte)
JANUARY 13 - Pamela Thompson, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Outreach Commission
JANUARY 14 - Don Nestor, moderator, Broad Run Association
JANUARY 15 - The ministry of Pine Grove First Baptist Church; Jerry Kuhens, pastor (Panhandle)
JANUARY 16 - The ministry of Big Clear Creek Baptist Church; Glen Kuhn, pastor (Hopewell)
JANUARY 17 - The ministry of Crum Missionary Baptist Church; Greg Ramey, pastor (Twelve Pole)
JANUARY 18 - The ministry of Masontown First Baptist Church; William Winston, pastor (Goshen)
JANUARY 19 - The ministry of Smithville Baptist Church; Charles Leisure, pastor (Harrisville)
JANUARY 20 - Andrea Fling, bookkeeper, West Virginia Baptist Convention
JANUARY 21 - The ministry of Gilboa Baptist Church; Larry Greathouse, pastor (Good Hope)
JANUARY 22 - The ministry of Crossroads Community Chapel; Bryan Cantrell, pastor (Teays Valley)
JANUARY 23 - The ministry of Union Valley Baptist Church; Daniel Cunningham, pastor (Fairmont)
JANUARY 24 - Marijane Kiley, chair, Stewardship Commission
JANUARY 25 - Donna Malcomb, clerk, Hopewell Association
JANUARY 26 - Carmella Jones, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Hungary
JANUARY 27 - The ministry of Send the Light Baptist Church; Jim Anderson, pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh)
JANUARY 28 - The ministries of Enon and Rush Run Baptist Churches; John Vannoy, pastor (Little Kanawha)
JANUARY 29 - Donald Dague, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Discipleship Commission and pastor, Weirton First Baptist Church (Panhandle)
JANUARY 30 - The ministry of Logan First Baptist Church; Michael Hatfield, pastor (Logan-Mingo)
JANUARY 31 - The ministry of Starcher Baptist Church; David Workman, pastor (Kanawha Valley)

West Virginia Baptist Convention staff and missionaries listed are on the occasion of their birthday.

*The staff of the
West Virginia Baptist Convention
pray for each of you to have
wonderful Christmas celebrations
and a blessed New Year.*

**West Virginia Baptist
Newsletter Submissions**

Send submissions for *The West Virginia Baptist* to: thewvbaptist@wvbc.org or mail submissions to the West Virginia Baptist Convention, Attention: Donna, P.O. Box 1019, Parkersburg, West Virginia 26102. If you are submitting text, send typed copy only. We no longer accept handwritten text. We also accept hard copy and digital photos of 300 dpi (dots per inch). Please include a caption for your photo and your name and address if you want your photo returned.

Deadline for submission is the 3rd of odd numbered months.

The **West Virginia Baptist** is a newsletter of the West Virginia Baptist Convention, associated with the American Baptist Churches, USA,

PO Box 1019, Parkersburg WV 26102;
304.422.6449. US Postage Paid at
Parkersburg, West Virginia.

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P.O. Box 1019
Parkersburg, WV 26102-1019



1 John 4:9 (ESV)

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him.

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