

West Virginia Baptist Convention and Baptist Churches of Puerto Rico Begin MissionQuest Project for Young Adult Leaders

The West Virginia Baptist Convention and Iglesias Bautista de Puerto Rico (Baptist Churches of Puerto Rico) have again begun a joint project focused on young adult

leaders. **MissionQuest** is designed for young adult learners to be in a yearlong program of cross cultural study, theological reflection and mission education, in a cohort with participants from West Virginia and Puerto Rico. In 2013, a similar program titled Project Hope was one of the first projects started in our partnership with Puerto Rico.

Members of the **MissionQuest** team from West Virginia are: Lily Corathers, Jordan Lallemon, Drew Mullins, Emily Fordyce, Gage Ross and Madison Cooper. Each participant was specifically invited to join the group and has committed to monthly meetings online and face to face, both in Puerto Rico and West Virginia. Prior to meetings, the team has reading, written and reflection assignments. Face-to-face meetings with the Puerto Rican members include study, discussion, fellowship and planning for a team mission trip scheduled for December 2017.

"If we want leaders who have a passion for mission and who have the knowledge and skills to minister in a cross cultural world, we need to give our young adults the time, attention and

opportunity to learn and develop in these areas." says Lisa Simmons, associate in Mission Support and staff to the team.

"MissionQuest gives these young adults a boost in their abilities and helps them to have the experiences they need to be in ministry whether out of the country or in our own diverse country."

Teachers and facilitators from the United States and Puerto Rico give leadership to the sessions. Some participate through Skype, while others are present in meetings. Dr. Doris Garcia, president to the seminary in Puerto Rico, recently joined the team for a session, and Rev. Juan Aragon will be attending in June to facilitate a session on Cultural Intelligence. "The team has the opportunity to learn and interact with leaders on a variety of subjects related to cross cultural work and missions. This project gives them a large-

er worldview than they might have had otherwise." said Simmons.



(Above and below) Members of the MissionQuest Project and staff members.



Lisa Simmons

Associate in Mission Support

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.

by David L. Carrico, Executive Minister



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Vol. LXXXIV, Issue 03 April-May 2017

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Anticipation



Dr. David Carrico

The spring months are a season of waiting for the warmth of the weather to heat up the earth to lead us to a time of planting, of expectation, of hope for a new crop to fill our fields and gardens. Spring is a time of renewal, a season of anticipation. We can talk in all kinds of agricultural terms about the warm weather, but what about spiritual terms of anticipation?

The Resurrection reality we call Easter has its own celebration - a time to retell the story of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. The Resurrection of our Lord is the most hope-filled event of all of history. For most people, the tomb is a symbol of the finality of death, but for the believer it is the gateway to eternal life! For millions of folks who profess Christ as their risen Lord, the Easter season is not just an excuse to buy chocolate, new clothes and greeting cards. The Resurrection is central to who we are as believers. The Resurrection is more than an event that happened long ago and far away. It becomes a present experience in the heart of the believer that transforms all of life.

Christians quickly identify with Christmas. It is a culturally enjoyable Christian holiday and most folks, believer or not, celebrate that season of the year.

Yet, are we really Christmas people? Maybe as believers we identify more closely with the cross and its story as it reminds us of the suffering and willing sacrifice of our Lord. There are times we need to be reminded of the act of grace that saves us.

The suffering of the cross in an age of comfort is a powerful reminder of God's love.

We understand the worth of Christ to all of humankind, but how do we establish our worth? Simply, by being a recipient of the grace of God. In spite of our sinfulness, we were worth the life of God's own Son on a cross to redeem us. Our worth, our "justification," is based on nothing else but grace and grace alone. Our walk with the risen Lord means we enter into a new relationship with Him, giving our lives a new sense of worth and value.

Our real worth lies in being sons and daughters of God. One day, when the real accounting for life is held will you be able to proclaim, "Yes, Jesus loves me!" Are you ready for that day? Are you anticipating that day?

Your challenge is to be a person of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Remember, the cross is empty, the tomb is empty and our world is full of the risen Savior! Hallelujah!

Blessings



Come join us for a day of interactive learning as we close out this school year by focusing on the final portion of this year's theme: Ask Why? Now that we have looked at dying to ourselves and finding new life in Christ, it is time to discover together how to share that new life with those around us.

The event will begin with registration at 8:45 a.m. and close out at 4:00 p.m. You won't want to miss it!

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20

April 22, 2017 Genesis Fellowship

Speakers: Robin Crouch and Dan Londeree

Music: Genesis Fellowship Praise Band

For more information, visit www.wvbc.org or contact Jennifer at jennifer@wvbc.org or 304.422.6449.

Kim Weaver,
Director, Weirton Christian Center

Weirton Christian Center Nears Fundraising Goal

Our vision for a new **Weirton Christian Center** building is becoming reality. The outpouring of support and prayers have been phenomenal. We are only 5% away from reaching our goal! Our 40% match has been received. The Christian Fellowship Foundation has so much faith in our fundraising efforts they have provided their funds even though we have not yet reached our 60%. With only 5% to go, and the risk of losing \$125,000 if we do not break ground in May, we are sure God is orchestrating all for the good of the center and the futures of our children.

The outpouring of our Baptist family has been tremendous. We have received over \$90,000 as of the writing of this article! I know of churches still trying to raise the \$1,000 challenge by our deadline and we really appreciate the efforts and prayers of every church, every American Baptist Women and Men's group and every individual who has sent financial support for this building. What a blessing to know you are all with us in this challenge to raise the funds for a debt-free facility in which to start our second century.

Our community has also been very supportive of our ministry and the **Build-A-Building Project**. The Serra Foundation presented us with \$10,000 and Hancock County Savings Bank has provided \$8,000. Most recently, the Weirton Rotary Club presented us with \$10,000 and Brooke Rotary Club another \$500. The All Saints Greek Church American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) Men and Daughters of Penelope, who provide Thanksgiving dinner each year, were moved by a challenge

from one of our big supporters, Steve Psaros and his wife, Heidi. They were able to raise \$6,000 from members.

We are close to being able to start construction. It is our 100th year, God is moving and wants this ministry around for another century. Our community showed its support recently by holding a "Stuff the Bus" Bowl-a-Thon fundraiser at Holiday Lanes, sponsored by their youth bowling league. In the first half hour, the Brooke County school bus was full of snacks, paper products and center needs. We proceeded to unload three 15 passenger and two eight passenger vans into the **Weirton Christian Center**. Besides stocking the center, we were presented with a check for \$5,000, and donations are still coming in. It was moving to see many people thinking of us in one day in so many ways. We have received front page newspaper and television coverage for the last two weeks, and billboards have been donated to us all over town.

The new **Weirton Christian Center** will be happening in 2017. Thank you for being a huge part of bringing this vision to reality. Please to continue to pray for God's will to be done in every decision along the way.

Save the Date:

100th ANNIVERSARY PARTY - SEPTEMBER 16, 2017 at the Pepsi-Cola Roadhouse in Burgettstown, PA - just six minutes from Weirton hotels on Three Springs Drive.

Brothers' Keeper Enters 17th Year of Service

Greetings Church Leaders,

It is hard to fathom that 17 years ago, a group of West Virginia Baptist Convention church and community leaders came together and met at Parchment Valley Conference Center to pray about assembling a team to go and bring hope to those less fortunate families in our community. The passage of scripture, Matthew 25:40 was unanimously adopted as the theme, **Be My Brothers' Keeper**.



Since the inception of this week-long missional camp, hundreds of families have been blessed through the skilled hands of our crew chiefs and adult chaperones, accompanied by 7th-12th graders eager to learn a trade, fellowship with other Christians and be a beacon of hope in difficult times.

We are blessed through the donations of our churches and business sponsors which enable us to purchase much needed building supplies for the construction of wheelchair ramps and minor home repairs.

Brothers' Keeper has witnessed homeowners and youth alike making a first-time decision for Christ and homeowners shedding tears of joy in evening worship, because they can return

to their homes feeling hopeful, even being confined to a wheelchair.

The work crews have such a can-do attitude and that means any challenging situation can be overcome. We thank God as He continues to raise up faithful people in our churches who invest their time in **Brothers' Keeper**, and are now pastoring churches, being a light to their community.

Brothers' Keeper receives groups from across West Virginia and Ohio. This year, my daughter and husband are excited to bring their youth group from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to serve.

I thank you for 17 years of committed, hard work and a positive attitude in selfless service for our Lord and fellow man. Youth group registration begins this year on Sunday, June 25th and the program lasts through Friday, June 30th, 2017. Our **Brothers' Keeper** mission statement declares: **Our mission is to give our youth the opportunity to grow in Christ and to impact our communities for Him through service.** God is good all the time; all the time God is good, and for this we are very truly grateful.

Contact us today to participate with the greatest mission camp in the Mountain State at Parchment Valley Conference Center, 304.372.3675 or go online at parchmentvalley.org for more detailed information on how your youth group can participate in **BK 17**. Be the light God has called you to be!

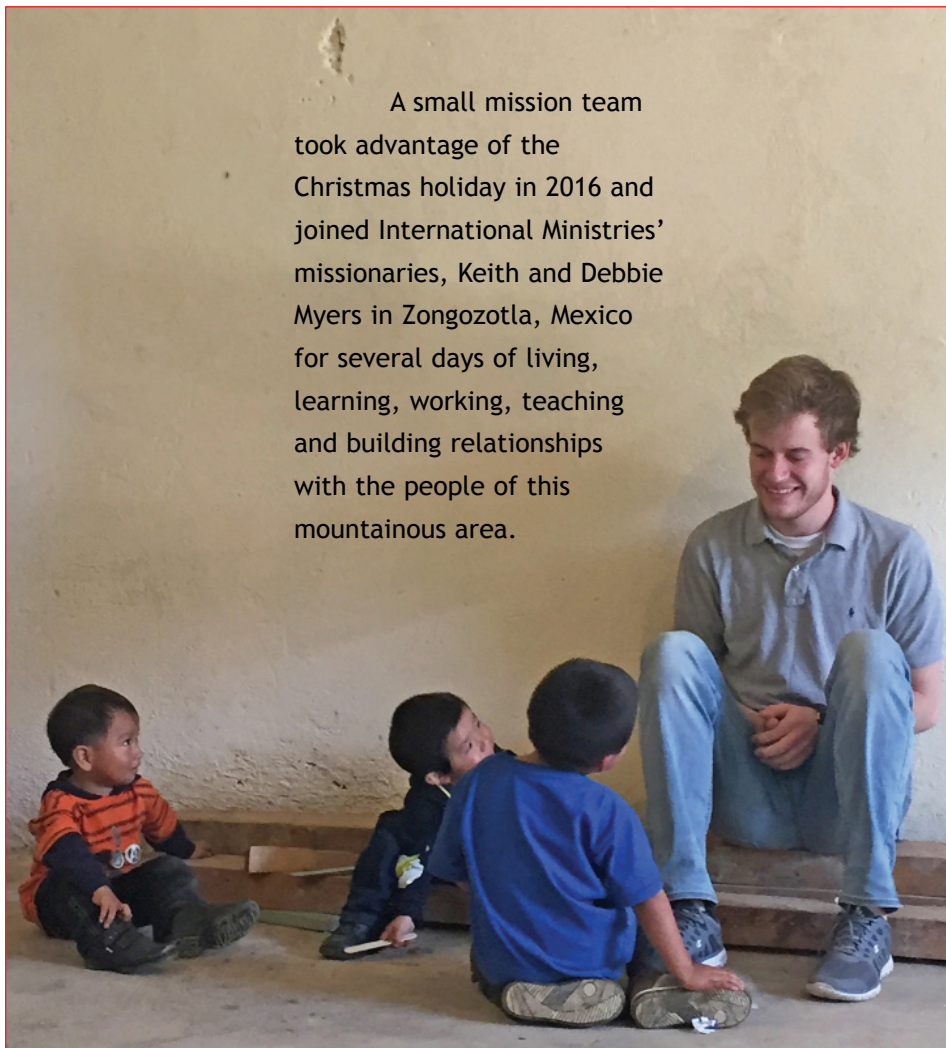
Have a blessed day,

Frank Miller

Director of Operations, Parchment Valley Conference Center

Mission Diary: Zongozotla, Mexico

A small mission team took advantage of the Christmas holiday in 2016 and joined International Ministries' missionaries, Keith and Debbie Myers in Zongozotla, Mexico for several days of living, learning, working, teaching and building relationships with the people of this mountainous area.



(Above) Zachary Stevens, mission team member, spends time with a few of the smaller residents of Zongozotla.

Keith and Debbie, along with their children, Baillie and Boyden, have served for the last four years in Mexico working with rural indigenous churches. The mission team had the opportunity to hold two afternoon Bible story sessions with the children in Zongozotla, a women's session and also a men's session. They also enjoyed a friendly game of soccer with the youth and led a discipleship session with the group.

Additionally, the team had the opportunity to work in the fields picking coffee, learning what it REALLY takes to be a coffee farmer. The men of the group joined with the men of the Zongozotla church in digging out an earth bank and

installing a drainage system for a widow in the village as well as repairing a room in her house. The girls spent significant time learning about life in the village and what it was like for the people now and in the past.



Team members took the trip for various reasons. For Andrew Ely it was all about wanting to put "feet" to the Great Commission and help with discipleship. Andrew's wife, Emily, shared that as a couple they are trying to discern a call to career missions and the trip added to their knowledge. Zachary Stevens also wanted experience in mission work and the trip was affordable.

Emily relates, "During our time in the village the Lord showed me He truly can break down all barriers!" Despite language differences, the team and church members were still able to study, share, learn and worship together. Andrew shares, "One of my biggest learning moments was the realization that "reached" people groups are in desperate need of discipleship ... they are now in need of people to allow them to grow into mature believers." For Zachary, the beauty of different forms of worship was important. "I knew it existed, but just watching people worship God so differently than I see it here at home was such a beautiful moment and a blessing as well."

All three team members encourage others to take a mission trip. Zachary says, "If we are educated on other cultures and peoples, we can have a better sense of how to reach out to them, to show hospitality to them and ultimately to plant seeds of Christ and love in them." For Andrew, "Missions can have an impact on your worldview that can be life-altering." Lastly Emily shares, "Why not spend your Christmas, spring and summer breaks serving the Lord alongside missionaries such as the Myers. I promise, you won't regret it!"

The trip was sponsored by the West Virginia Baptist Convention Mission Support Department.

Lisa Simmons
Associate in Mission Support

The Light of Life



Last May, Lisa and I drove to northern Ohio to pick up five pullets. Lisa had wanted to keep chickens for a long time and was very excited to finally have hens to call her own. Chickens

are interesting pets. Each bird has its own unique personality. They each have a name and over these past few months, they have grown and grown used to life in the Simmons' back yard.

As the birds matured they started laying eggs. It is a lot of fun to go to the henhouse each afternoon and collect the fresh eggs. As winter approached production decreased dramatically. Instead of getting 30 eggs a week we only got ten. We learned from experienced chicken people this was normal and not to worry.

An amazing thing happened as the days began to lengthen this spring - the production of eggs began to increase. I learned the more time the hens were exposed to light, the greater their production of eggs.

Think about it - the more time spent in the light, the more productive they are.

The same can be said of us in a spiritual sense. I truly believe the more time we spend with the Light (Jesus) the more productive we will be in our Christian work. Our lack of production is directly related to how much time we spend with Jesus.

- If we want our churches to produce disciples - we must spend time with the Light.
- If we want our churches to impact our communities - we must spend time with the Light.
- If we want to reach the lost with the Gospel - we must spend time with the Light.
- If we are to be the healthy-missional people of God - we must spend time with the Light.

Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12 (NIV)

I invite you in this season of Easter to spend more time with Jesus so your Christian work is fully producing the harvest God desires.

Committed to Missions

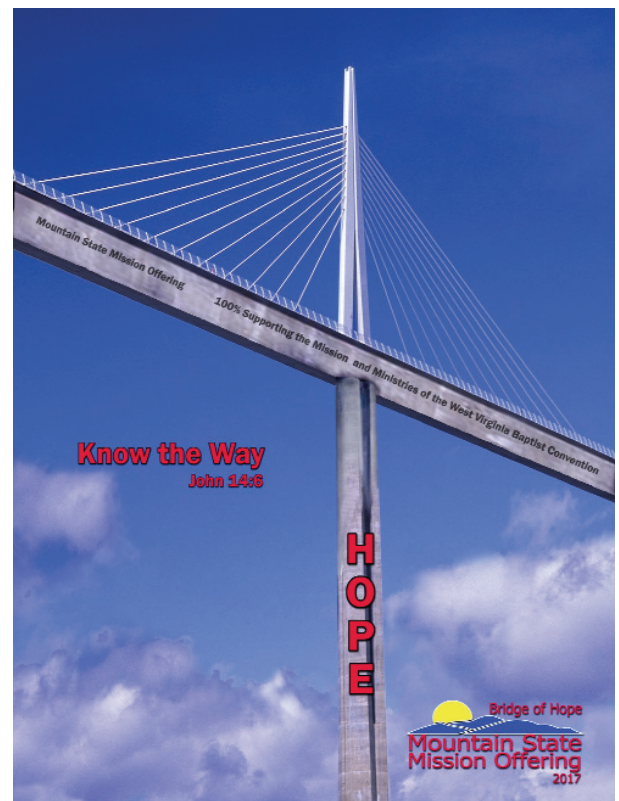


Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14:6

STATE GOAL: \$270,000

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West Virginia Baptist Convention.*

Promotional materials will be mailed in April.



Hispanic Ministries: The Path of Central American Immigrants - El Camino de Migrantes Centroamericanos

My friend, Uziel, is one of the thousands of Central American youths who have migrated to the United States searching for a better life.

Originally from Aldea Miramar - a Mayan, Mam-speaking community in San Martin Sacatepéquez, Guatemala - he migrated to the United States ten years ago, when moving through Mexico was relatively easy.

He was in 11th grade when a deported friend, who lived and worked in the United States for a year, told him, "It's good living over there. There is a lot of work."

Growing up, Uziel heard stories about the money one could make in the United States.

"I thought about it for a while," he recalled. "I told my parents, but initially they opposed the idea. My father worked in the fields growing corn and beans; we had enough to buy food, but nothing else."

The "coyote" (smuggler) who would take him from his village in Guatemala to the United States charged \$6,000. To get the money, his parents had to pawn their home. They weren't sure about it, but after considering the idea, they made the decision to support him.

"My goal was to come to the United States to work to give a better life to my family, send money and build a house," he said.

Like Uziel, the hope for a better life drives the migration of thousands of Central Americans to the United States.

Regarded as one of the most dangerous journeys in the world, their sojourn through Mexican territory exposes them to multiple life-threatening obstacles and risks. Yet, the burning vision of a better future impels and inspires them to confront with faith the sacrifices, uncertainties and perils of the journey.

"As we went through Chiapas," he said, "we pretended to be street vendors to go unnoticed. The smuggler made us stop at several houses where people treated us with indifference."

In Mexico, migrants are an exploitable target for criminal gangs and corrupt officials. They are invisible victims of theft, abuse, kidnapping and human trafficking.

Poor migrants, who can't afford a "coyote," ride on top of "La Bestia" (The Beast), a freight train that gets them through Mexico. On its northward route, "La Bestia" is a silent witness of untold stories of murder, mutilation, extortion, kidnapping and rape.

Female migrants are particularly vulnerable to sexual assault. In fact, six out of every ten female travelers are raped. They are often forced to sleep with "coyotes" in exchange for protection.

Aware of the grim reality that awaits them, and to prevent a pregnancy from rape, they employ Depo-Provera, a contraceptive injection that works for up to 12 to 14 weeks.

This is why the journey through Mexico is dubbed "the path of misery."

In response to the surge of Central American migrants, Mexican authorities - with funding from the United States - implemented a crackdown and increased surveillance of the southern border to deter migration. Migrants are now following more dangerous alternative routes, increasing their vulnerability and risk of death, theft, abuse, kidnapping and human trafficking.

Uziel's pilgrimage through Mexico included Tapachula, Chiapas; Puebla; Mexico City; and Altar, Sonora.

For thousands of migrants, Altar marks the last stretch in their perilous journey to a better life. In Altar, Uziel went to a safe house where at least 400 people waited to cross the border. The following day, he and 50 others rode a bus to a place where they were to continue the arduous pilgrimage across grueling and unforgiving terrain.

His group trekked through the desert for six nights. "I know people die in the desert or freeze to death in the mountains while trying to come here [the United States]," he lamented. "I didn't feel afraid because I was used to walking in my village, but there were many people from the city who were very afraid." "An older man broke his foot," he added. "Fortunately, he was with family who helped him keep moving. Another man and his child, after five hours in the desert, were unable to keep going and went back."

Uziel said, "At one point I felt exhausted. I was so cold, and my legs got numb. I was afraid. I thought I wasn't going to make it. I thought I should have stayed. Why all this suffering? I wondered."

"But, I remembered the debt," he said. "I couldn't let my parents lose their home, and I kept going."

"No immigrant said they went out into [the desert] to get a deeper understanding of the mystical writings of Saint Anthony or any of the desert fathers or mothers," observed Daniel Groody.

Deep down, migrants know very well the challenges lying before them, even the lingering threat of death. But time and again, their stories are about the willingness to sacrifice, not only for their own personal benefit, but also for the good of the people they love.

"If you had the chance to stand before government authorities, what would you tell them?" I asked Uziel. He laughed nervously. I said, "Seriously, what would you say?" He got quiet, thought for a few seconds and said, "We're not stealing from anybody. We're not bothering anybody. Give us the opportunity to work. We're people with a desire to succeed."

Uziel added, "Unfortunately, we don't have the same opportunities in our country. Before God we are all the same. It doesn't matter your skin color, race or where you're from. Give us the opportunity to continue working and living in this country. We're here because we want a better life."

We are living in times of excessive fear and polarization. Fear drives us to build walls of hate and prejudice. As followers of Jesus, our call is to build bridges of love, hope and reconciliation.

Unless you encounter an immigrant and listen to his or her story, your perception will most likely continue to be informed and shaped by fear, prejudice and the media. So, I invite you to get out of your comfort zone and be intentional about meeting an immigrant in your community. In listening to his or her story, you will discover someone who, like Jesus, relinquishes everything in self-sacrifice, self-emptying and self-offering for the sake of those He loves.

May God continue to bless you!

Previously published at <http://www.ethicsdaily.com/migrants-sacrifice-risk-death-for-chance-at-better-life-cms-23910>

School of Christian Studies Now Digital

Behold, I will do something new, now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. Isaiah 43:19

This word of hope was spoken through Isaiah to the Israelites about a future time of deliverance. It was most likely hard to imagine, as what they needed delivered from had yet to happen. For them, the time would come when what they needed more than anything was a way home. In this passage, God promises to provide it - and water as well. Perhaps nothing is more refreshing than the presence of water to one who is thirsty. We would do well to remember the people to whom Isaiah was writing lived in a dry place.

I believe God is always watching out for the needs of his people, and that includes his people today. Sometimes, our humanity causes us to shy away from something new, but God often does new things. The Bible says He even makes us new. We are “new creations” through our relationship with Christ. The challenge when confronted with newness is to know what to keep of the old and what to change with the new. Often, new things arise when we are confronted with new challenges.

All of us who take God’s word seriously know God expects us to continue to study and try to improve ourselves that we might serve Him better. We often quote Paul’s commendation to Timothy, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” The King James Version

Russia Mission Partnership Update

by David Bess, pastor, Beulah Baptist Church (Union)

Nearly one year ago, a new Russian law was passed that considerably restricts the ability of non-Russian citizens to preach, speak, teach or share before group assemblies. This law was intended to combat terrorist leaders from rallying groups within the country, but has had far-reaching consequences for both Russian and non-Russian Christians. My wife, Jeannie, and I traveled to Russia February 15-20, 2017 to meet face to face with Ryazan Baptist pastors and church leaders to determine a strategy for the mission partnership in light of this new law. God blessed and provided insight that will enable ministry to move forward despite the government restrictions. The following guidelines for future trips have been adopted.

OBSERVE. The dedication to Christ of Ryazan Baptists has been a great source of inspiration to West Virginia Baptists throughout the partnership. In regards to specific ministry activities such as preaching, teaching, singing and other ministry activities in front of congregations, West Virginia Baptists will only observe the work of their Ryazan Baptist friends. This observation will enable them to deepen their relationships. It will also provide information and inspiration to take back to West Virginia Baptist churches.

makes the case for this even stronger by using the phrase, “Study to show thyself approved ...” The need to study and learn has not changed - it’s an old thing, but still a good thing. The challenge is finding new ways to fit learning and study into our schedule.

For many, the current boom in technology has not led to shorter worker hours and less time on the job, but instead has resulted in people taking multiple jobs and possessing greater ability to bring work home. For those of you who want training, but struggle to fit it into your schedule, the West Virginia Baptist Convention has developed the Digital Learning Initiative. Simply put, this project is taking the Pastoral Ministry track of the School of Christian Studies (an old thing that works) and making it available in a new way, through an online learning platform. In the near future, all basic level classes will be offered in three ways: face-to-face, live streaming and in a completely (new) online format. By fall, we hope to offer all three options for all of our classes, with students being able to pick the format that works best for them, and even having the ability to switch back and forth between formats. For now, a pilot group of about 30 students have begun the test phase of this initiative with the Theology I (T-01) six-week class.

At the West Virginia Baptist Convention, we take your desire and need to learn seriously and will continue to strive to provide quality content in multiple ways.

*Blessings,
Mark McCloy, director, School of Christian Studies
and Northwest Area Minister*

BEFRIEND. West Virginia Baptists traveling to Ryazan are not missionaries, but friends. They go to visit and spend time with fellow Baptists. Making this distinction not only clarifies the true nature of the journey, but also reduces the possibility of friction with Russian authorities.

ENCOURAGE. The presence and companionship of West Virginia Baptists has been a great source of encouragement to Ryazan Baptists throughout the partnership. While visiting in Baptist churches throughout the Ryazan oblast, West Virginia Baptist teams will share meals, spend time in homes and receive requests for prayer and financial assistance. They will also exchange gifts and other tokens of friendship.

SUPPORT. In the past, work teams from West Virginia have been very helpful to the churches of the Ryazan Baptist Union. These work teams may continue in assisting with construction, renovation and other projects among the Ryazan Baptists as manpower and resources are available. Upon returning home, the support will continue through persistent prayer, electronic communications and monetary gifts.

A summer trip (July or August 2017) is now in the planning stages, with several people already expressing interest. God continues to move powerfully in this cooperative effort between West Virginia Baptists and Ryazan Baptists that spans nearly two decades. For more information, contact Dr. David Bess at bessdr@wvusa.org.

 MISSION SUPPORT		 PER CAPITA														 SUPPORT	
South Parkersburg	106,265	Bethel, Morgantown	1,267	Fifth Avenue	68,243	Fifth Avenue	5,210	Hurricane First	12,233	Hurricane First	20,541	Beulah, Grafton	6,409	Hurricane First	26,106	Crab Orchard Missionary	49,390
Saint Albans First	90,523	Send the Light	1,041	South Parkersburg	60,563	Beulah, Grafton	5,138	Simpson Creek	11,762	Simpson Creek	18,115	Hurricane First	3,203	Ravenswood First	16,243	Saint Albans First	46,388
Simpson Creek	84,958	New Life Ministries	520	Charleston Baptist Temple	36,628	Saint Albans First	4,516	Albright	11,272	Emmanuel, Charleston	17,800	Broad Run	3,075	Barboursville	13,020	Fifth Avenue	44,723
Fifth Avenue	79,905	Mount Pisgah	469	Lubeck Community	21,612	Williamson First	4,381	Beulah, Grafton	10,713	Vienna	17,287	Gassaway	2,776	New	13,000	South Parkersburg	39,694
Crab Orchard Missionary	77,581	Hopewell, Mount Alto	399	Oak Hill	21,179	Crab Orchard Missionary	3,197	Gilboa	10,658	Saint Albans First	17,286	Indian Fork	2,649	Parchment Valley	12,909	Simpson Creek	39,535
Hurricane First	75,536	Willow Tree	398	Rainelle First	17,700	Indian Fork	2,649	Crab Orchard Missionary	9,631	Beulah, Grafton	13,132	Charleston Baptist Temple	2,415	Wayne	10,336	Hurricane First	30,051
Vienna	61,177	South Fork	397	Calvary, Oak Hill	17,108	Shuck Memorial	2,468	South Parkersburg	9,134	South Parkersburg	12,750	South Parkersburg	2,250	Summersville	8,000	Beckley First	24,930
Beulah, Grafton	47,219	Wilsonburg	368	New Martinsville First	15,251	Vienna	2,359	Saint Albans First	5,204	Bethesda, Barrackville	9,736	Romney First	2,164	Genesis Fellowship	7,498	Charleston Baptist Temple	23,781
Charleston Baptist Temple	46,967	Albright	327	Madison	15,000	South Parkersburg	2,303	Toned Missionary	5,200	Willow Tree	9,563	Philippi	1,944	Grass Lick	6,292	Vienna	23,614
Beckley First	41,539	Auburn	315	Judson, Belle	13,997	Guyandotte Missionary	2,200	Kenova First	5,000	Emmanuel, Parkersburg	8,795	Summersville	1,840	Kenova First	6,250	Elkins First	20,918
Emmanuel, Parkersburg	40,524	Beckley First	305	Shuck Memorial	11,511	Open Arms	2,124	Vienna	4,965	Beckley First	8,025	Saint Albans First	1,831	Judson, Winfield	6,068	Emmanuel, Parkersburg	20,021
Summersville	29,862	Charleston Baptist Temple	294	Summersville	11,482	Bethesda, Barrackville	2,000	Milton	4,837	Mill Creek, Leroy	7,248	Emmanuel, Parkersburg	1,805	Pea Ridge	6,000	Ravenswood First	16,626
Emmanuel, Charleston	29,555	Toned Missionary	285	Racine First	11,177	Petersburg First	1,899	Goshen	4,743	Sabraton	6,929	Weston First	1,601	Reynoldsville	5,629	Summersville	15,591
Gassaway	28,983	New Martinsville First	285	Highlawn	10,750	Nutter Fort First	1,882	Sistersville First	4,090	Matewan	6,421	Springdale First	1,459	Beulah, Grafton	5,589	Lubeck Community	14,394
Lubeck Community	28,562	Calvary, Oak Hill	280	Meadow Grove	9,956	Charleston Baptist Temple	1,875	Gassaway	3,827	Enon, Salem	6,300	Beulah Ann Missionary	1,350	Mill Creek, Leroy	5,492	Parchment Valley	13,751
Elkins First	26,294	Flint Chapel	279	Emmanuel, Charleston	9,605	Little Capon	1,816	Charleston Baptist Temple	3,824	Crab Orchard Missionary	6,275	New Martinsville First	1,212	Harmony, Southside	5,400	Oak Hill	13,500
Willow Tree	25,884	Sistersville First	278	Fayetteville	9,255	Emmanuel, Parkersburg	1,562	Wheeling First	3,678	New	6,000	Hanover Missionary	1,200	Lacoma Missionary	5,059	New	13,320
Madison	25,384	Saint Albans First	273	Dorcas	8,545	Milton	1,448	Sand Fork	3,638	Dunbar First	5,848	Wilsonburg	1,190	Kanawha City	4,200	Barboursville	13,154
Beulah Ann Missionary	25,326	Oak Hill	265	Shinnston First	8,060	Beckley First	1,433	Ravenswood First	3,546	Spencer First	5,500	Crab Orchard Missionary	1,157	Parkersburg Baptist Temple	4,000	Rainelle First	12,191
New	25,307	Indian Fork	264	Gilboa	8,034	Fayetteville	1,408	Mount Pisgah	3,286	Bethel, Morgantown	5,362	Willow Tree	1,125	Hopewell, Mount Alto	3,621	New Martinsville First	11,289
Ravenswood First	24,974	Matewan	254	New England	7,268	Fairmont Baptist Temple	1,380	Fairmont Baptist Temple	3,271	Connolly Memorial	5,070	Old Greenbrier	1,111	Toned Missionary	3,007	Calvary, Oak Hill	11,119
Oak Hill	24,371	Sabraton	251	Hurricane First	7,173	Jordan Run	1,379	Fifth Avenue	3,032	Pine Grove First	4,950	Vienna	1,037	New Hope, Parkersburg	3,000	Wayne	10,336
Milton	23,527	Dorcas	247	Salem	7,119	Philippi	1,375	Emmanuel, Parkersburg	2,953	Oakwood	4,800	Madison	1,031	Forks of Coal Missionary	3,000	New Life Ministries	10,075
Calvary, Oak Hill	23,233	Meadow Grove	247	Oakwood	6,625	Old Greenbrier	1,348	Enon, Salem	2,637	Fairview, Forest Hill	4,800	Bethesda, Barrackville	1,025	Matewan	2,821	Madison	9,797
Parchment Valley	22,931	Parchment Valley	244	Weirton Heights Memorial	6,564	New Martinsville First	1,300	Dunbar First	2,520	Broad Run	4,612	Morgantown First	1,010	Buckhannon First	2,750	Judson, Belle	9,447
New Martinsville First	22,786	Forks of Coal Missionary	241	Gauley Bridge	6,215	Racine First	1,283	Mount Vernon, Hurricane	2,479	Parkersburg First	4,368	New	1,003	Indian Fork	2,649	Beulah Ann Missionary	8,912
Gilboa	22,100	Rush Run	237	Saulsville	5,973	Summersville	1,253	Salem	2,409	Hopewell, Mount Alto	4,345	Rockcastle	1,000	Crab Orchard Missionary	2,495	Beulah, Grafton	8,416
Dunbar First	21,629	Ravenswood First	236	Mount Zion, Mineral Wells	5,898	Rainelle First	1,210	Union, Milton	2,400	Wilsonburg	4,295	Spencer First	1,000	Sistersville First	2,460	Dunbar First	8,103
Petersburg First	21,416	Crab Orchard Missionary	228	Philippi	5,807	Hanover Missionary	1,200	Forks of Coal Missionary	2,277	Romney First	4,098	Williamstown First	935	Tallmansville	2,421	Shuck Memorial	8,075
Mount Vernon, Hurricane	21,179	Beulah, Grafton	228	Diamond	5,744	Wilsonburg	1,156	New Life Ministries	2,250	Old Greenbrier	3,900	Forks of Coal	900	Parkersburg First	2,415	Genesis Fellowship	7,498
Rainelle First	21,155	Simpson Creek	222	Hamlin First	5,568	Pea Ridge	1,100	Elkins First	2,222	Williamson First	3,838	Little Capon	875	Pine Grove, Parkersburg	2,268	Fairmont Baptist Temple	7,380
Fairmont Baptist Temple	20,648	Scarbro First	219	Hope, Frametown	5,499	Weston First	1,059	Hepzibah, Flemington	2,100	Dorcas	3,753	Ravenswood First	871	Emmanuel, Parkersburg	2,220	Racine First	7,342
Sabraton	20,059	Dunbar First	216	Sistersville First	5,430	Sabraton	1,052	Little Capon	2,083	Parchment Valley	3,740	Calvary, Oak Hill	762	Open Arms	2,124	Highlawn	6,857
Sistersville First	20,034	Enon, Grantsville	211	Big Tygart	4,989	Buckhannon First	1,025	Lubeck Community	2,065	Genesis Fellowship	3,698	Hopewell, Mount Alto	724	Gassaway	2,057	Shinnston First	6,808
Bethesda, Barrackville	19,421	Helen	210	Petersburg First	4,958	Rockcastle	1,000	Hopewell, Mount Alto	2,060	Harmony, Burton	3,647	Sunrise	717	Mannington First	1,870	Meadow Grove	6,524
Barboursville	17,252	Concord	208	Grafton First	4,790	Holly River	1,000	Cyrus	2,039	Everson	3,600	Elizabeth	688	Spencer First	1,750	Judson, Winfield	6,497
Pea Ridge	16,675	Harmony, Southside	208	Main Street	4,652	Bethany	981	Rockcastle	2,000	Breckenridge	3,600	Glenville First	673	Williamson First	1,665	Harmony, Southside	6,368
Harmony, Southside	16,190	Fairmont Baptist Temple	206	Williamson First	4,616	South Fork	946	Bethesda, Barrackville	2,000	Summersville	3,553	Sabraton	654	Petersburg First	1,540	Grass Lick	6,338
Racine First	16,180	Racine First	202	Elkins First	4,537	Willow Tree	927	Mill Creek, Leroy	1,990	Cook Memorial	3,552	Oak Hill	652	Sutton	1,516	Pea Ridge	6,330
Mill Creek Leroy	16,168	Chapel	202	Cooper Memorial	4,345	Cyrus	925	Hamlin First	1,865	Pea Ridge	3,500	New Hope, Parkersburg	628	Wilsonburg	1,500	Kenova First	6,250
Genesis Fellowship	16,146	Salem	202	Enon, Grantsville	4,091	Parchment Valley	862	Beckley First	1,732	New Hope, Parkersburg	3,470	Fairmont Baptist Temple	622	Danville First	1,500	Romney First	6,200
Kenova First	16,100	Fifth Avenue	200	Nitro First	3,949	Morgantown First	855	Nutter Fort First	1,650	Milton	3,468	Starcher	617	Springdale First	1,459	Fayetteville	6,163
Hopewell, Mount Alto	15,960	Lauckport	195	Summit Missionary	3,812	Ravenswood First	835	Buckhannon First	1,584	Highlawn	3,432	Lauckport	600	New Martinsville First	1,200	Sistersville First	5,978
Judson, Belle	15,944	Springdale First	195	Vienna	3,535	Mannington First	804	Calvary, Oak Hill	1,496	Fairmont Baptist Temple	3,420	Mount Vernon, Hurricane	585	Page	1,200	Emmanuel, Charleston	5,973
Spencer First	15,691	Madison	188	Olive Branch, Nettie	3,474	Oak Hill	770	Harmony, Burton	1,463	Rockcastle	3,400	Kanawha City	572	Shinnston First	1,200	Williamson First	5,893
Shuck Memorial	15,151	Mountain	187	Rockcastle	3,453	Forks of Coal Missionary	737	Racine First	1,452	Kingwood	3,318	Saint Paul, Fairview	550	Sago	1,200	Reynoldsville	5,629
Highlawn	15,064	Emmanuel, Parkersburg	186	Union, Milton	3,439	Calvary, Oak Hill	721	Rock Grove	1,431	Nutter Fort First	3,215	Hopewell, Victor	550	Helen	1,200	Mill Creek, Leroy	5,552
Albright	14,703	Hampton	180	Old Greenbrier	3,300	Meadow Grove	668	Kanawha City	1,362	Williamstown First	3,200	Mount Pleasant, Fr. Creek	550	Concord	1,200	Dorcas	5,403
Williamson First	14,556	Barboursville	178	Page	3,235	Dunbar First	660	Guyandotte Missionary	1,360	Madison	3,140	Lubeck Community	545	Sabraton	1,200	Kanawha City	5,271
Oakwood	14,443	Union, Fairview	177	Saint Paul, Fairview	3,216	Madison	655	Grass Lick	1,337	Morgantown First	3,050	Hampton	517	Lovers Leap	1,200	Gilboa	5,224

YOUR SUPPORT
MAKES A
DIFFERENCE AS
WE ADVANCE THE
KINGDOM OF
GOD TOGETHER!

2016 Top 50 Mission Giving Churches of the West Virginia Baptist Convention

Doing
together what
we cannot
do alone!

American Baptist Women's Ministries
of West Virginia

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

June 2-4, 2017

Parchment Valley Conference Center



Speakers: Jeff and Beth Davenport

Jeff is senior pastor of Hurricane First Baptist Church
(Teays Valley)

Theme: "Getting to Know You"

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. Ephesians 1:17

For more information, visit www.wvbc.org or contact
Kim Mack, Conference Coordinator Elect at
304.206.8247 or kmack@cyclopswv.com.

West Virginia Baptist Convention

Worship Conference

For Worship Leaders, Musicians, Pastors,
Sound and Visual Techs and more!

Saturday, June 17, 2017

Clarksburg Baptist Church

9:00 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Cost: \$15.00 per person

Register four from one church and
get the 5th person free until June 1, 2017.

After June 1, \$25.00 per person.

There will be eight different
workshops to choose from.

Love Gift Top 50 for 2016



Love Gift is a financial contribution over and above our regular giving. It is given out of a sense of LOVE, FAITH and GRATITUDE to God for all of His blessings, and in recognition of our need to share these blessings with others. One way to express our faith is by giving. We give of our time, talent, money and ourselves. As our faith grows, we realize our God, in whom we trust, really loves and cares for us. As a result, our desire to give grows, too. **Love Gift** is one of the ways we express our faith and love. It is an offering to God.

Take time to assess what you offer to God. How do you love God? Count the ways. Let your Love Gift offering reflect your love for God and Christ's Church and its ministries.

Less than 50 percent of American Baptist churches currently participate in **Love Gift**. Does your church support **Love Gift**? American Baptist mission needs your support!

Love Gift has great potential to empower American Baptist mission in this century. If your church does not have organized women's ministries, you can still participate in **Love Gift**! Meet with your region's Minister of Mission Support, to discuss and plan your **Love Gift** promotion.

Text taken from
http://www.abcusa.org/what_we_believe/mission/mission-giving/funding-the-mission/united-mission/love-gift/

Hurricane First	7,173
Fifth Avenue	5,723
Vienna	3,535
Oak Hill	3,179
South Parkersburg	2,851
Milton	2,703
Emmanuel, Charleston	2,606
Charleston Baptist Temple	2,491
Everson	2,377
Beulah, Grafton	2,338
Racine First	2,177
Fayetteville	2,030
Sabraton	1,936
Saint Albans First	1,878
Bethel, Rio	1,823
Diamond	1,744
Crab Orchard Missionary	1,701
Beulah Ann Missionary	1,658
Dorcas	1,587
Summersville	1,482
Harmony, Southside	1,465
Beckley First	1,363
Goshen	1,354
Main Street	1,352
Judson, Belle	1,321
Emmanuel, Parkersburg	1,320
Calvary, Oak Hill	1,285
Parkersburg First	1,232
Cook Memorial	1,193
Bridgeport	1,139
Weirton Heights Memorial	1,087
Wilsonburg	1,083
Fairmont Baptist Temple	1,072
Parchment Valley	1,061
Mount Vernon, Hurricane	1,059
Petersburg First	995
Boothsville	943
Enon, Grantsville	941
Lauckport	937
Lubeck Community	928
Auburn	906
Philippi	807
Concord	800
Bethel, Morgantown	794
Union, Milton	755
Oceana First	750
Dunbar First	736
Judson, Winfield	736
Page	735
Welch First	712

Southeast Area News

Jim Anderson, Southeast Area Minister

Southeast Area Associations Turn Out for American Baptist Men Prayer Breakfasts

On February 28, 2017, men from all over the Southeast Area gathered together for the National American Baptist Men's Prayer Breakfast. Rev. Jim Anderson, Southeast Area Minister, attended both the Hopewell and Fayette Association's breakfasts due to their close proximity and different starting times. Reports were given saying Hopewell had 57 men in attendance and Fayette had 30. Other association numbers included Greenbrier-Raleigh and Elk Valley, each with 45 men. The breakfasts, but more importantly the fellowship and prayer time together reminded all of us how vital it is to spend time not only with each other but with our Lord in prayer.

Bush Ordained at Rainelle First Baptist Church

On January 15, 2017, the ordination service for Rev. David Bush was held at Rainelle First Baptist Church (Hopewell). Participants in the service included the church choir, Mr. Steve Bush, David's father, who shared special music; Rev. David White, retired and former pastor of Oak Hill Baptist Church (Fayette), gave the charge to the candidate; Rev. Bryan Knight, former pastor at Oak Hill Baptist Church, gave the charge to the church; and Rev. Jim Anderson, Southeast Area Minister, lead the laying on of hands. David and his wife, Amy, were honored at the end of the service and David shared some thoughts with his last words being "Church, let's get to work!" A reception followed in the Christian Life Center where there was wonderful food and fellowship to honor David, Amy and their family.

South Parkersburg Baptist Hosts Senior High Convention 2017

South Parkersburg Baptist Church hosted Senior High Convention for the weekend of February 24-26, 2017. The Youth Ministry Planning Team (YMPT) was excited to host speaker Eric Samuel Timm and the Jason Lovins Band for the event, where 315 people from 39 separate local churches gathered to worship as the individual body of Christ. God blessed us with a great weekend.

The picture below is of the youth group from Genesis Fellowship of South Charleston. The painting in the picture was done by Eric Samuel Timm during a song played by Jason Lovins.



The key point of the painting was "God sees all of us as valuable ... not trash!" The night culminated with each youth group giving members a new "name tag" of encouragement. Imagine the joy experienced when peers spoke words of encour-

agement to one another! Thank God for the students who stood up to make a first-time decision to follow Christ, and for the ones who recommitted to live their lives more consistently for Him. The impact of such a weekend can only be measured in eternity, but the YMPT believes it was an incredible weekend for God!

Starcher Ordained at Mount Urim Baptist Church

On January 29, 2017 after a fellowship dinner, the Hopewell Association gathered together at Mount Urim Baptist Church (Hopewell) for the ordination service of Kenneth (Brad) Starcher.

Larry Gawthrop, pastor, Mount Urim Baptist Church welcomed everyone and opened with prayer. The Millbrook Baptist Church (Hopewell) choir provided special music, and former pastors Ryan Trescott and Troy George preached the charge to the candidate and church. Jim Anderson, Southeast Area Minister, West Virginia Baptist Convention led the laying on of hands. After this, Brad, who is director of the Hopewell Association youth, shared scripture and thoughts, and his children led in singing the final song. Steve Martin, pastor of Millbrook Baptist Church, closed with prayer and an afternoon full of fellowship, worship and celebration was enjoyed by all.

Southwest Area News

Max Hill, Southwest Area Minister

Hill Presents Mission Certificates to Highlawn Baptist

This is the time of year when the West Virginia Baptist Convention recognizes and celebrates the good stewardship and generosity of West Virginia Baptist Convention churches. Dr. Max Hill, West Virginia Baptist Convention Southwest Area Minister, presented mission certificates to Highlawn Baptist Church (Teays Valley) and stated, "Having the opportunity to stand before so many of our churches and thank them for their ongoing support is among my favorite Area Minister duties. We never lose sight of the fact that, without that support, our ministry is impossible."

Area Ministers Attend Denominational Meeting

At the invitation of the Fraternity of Cuban Baptist Churches, West Virginia Baptist Convention Area Ministers Max Hill, Southwest Area and David Hulme, Northeast Area, attended the group's 26th Annual Assembly in Havana from February 16 - 18, 2017. This was a non-election year, so the focus of the meeting was a celebration of the ministry of the fraternity. The fraternity, which was founded in 1989 with only five churches, now numbers 42 churches spanning the entire island. Several other groups were represented at the meeting, including the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Canadian Baptist Mission. Following the meeting, the area ministers also had the opportunity to visit the Jordan Baptist Church in Havana, where both have long-standing relationships.

Mark McCloy, Northwest Area Minister

Jazalyn Morgan Gets Ready to Run

Little Jazalyn Morgan has had quite a road to travel. Already, at the age of three, she has had three surgeries on her feet to correct a condition called Bilateral Club Feet. Only the last surgery, however, was successful. What a joy it has been to see Jaz walk, run and play! Even with the success that came with the last surgery, Jazalyn is facing one more procedure to complete the transformation that will allow her to keep both feet straight and not turned inward.

This surgery requires preparation of the feet that calls for Jaz to be in thigh high casts for two weeks prior to the surgery. The casts were applied on February 13, 2017 and again on February 22, 2017. The surgery took place on March 2, 2017 in Saint Louis Children's Hospital in Missouri. She will have casts on after the surgery as well. Her first follow up is scheduled for April 3, 2017 to have the thigh high casts removed and knee high casts applied. Another trip will be on April 12, 2017 to have all casts removed and splints put on. A final visit will take place at a later time. The preliminary and post visits will all take place in Missouri.



Jazalyn Morgan prepares for surgery.

Ravenswood First Baptist Church (Good Hope) members were instrumental in doing fundraisers for the out of pocket expense for the surgery, which was just under \$10,000. The youth had a donut sale, the women's group had a silent auction and individuals gave as well. Additional funds have been received to help with the hotel, food and travel expenses. The Morgan family would like to thank everyone who has been involved with this act of love toward their daughter.

Miracle Flights, an organization whose mission is to improve access to health care by providing financial assistance for commercial air travel to obtain special medical care, has been wonderful enough to arrange all the flights needed for all the trips. The amount of time Jazalyn and her mom and dad will need to stay in a hotel depends on when the flights can get them there and back. For updates and additional information you may contact Ravenswood First Baptist Church (Good Hope), 215 Ann Street, Ravenswood, WV 26164.

Northeast Area News

David Hulme, Northeast Area Minister

Sabraton Celebrates 100th Anniversary

Sabraton Baptist Church (Goshen) celebrated their 100th anniversary, during morning worship on January 22, 2017. Dr.



(l to r) Rev. Scott Whetzel, Dr. James Lutz, Rev. Richard Hepler and Rev. David Hulme participated in the 100 year anniversary of Sabraton Baptist Church.

James Lutz delivered the anniversary sermon. Also participating in the service were Rev. Richard Hepler, Rev. David Hulme, Northeast Area Minister and Rev. Scott Whetzel. A dinner followed the service.

Sabraton has more special anniversary events planned throughout the year.

Pastor Whetzel stresses while the church will celebrate and remember their past, they will also be looking forward to what God has in store for their future.

Tallmansville Ordains Christopher DeBarr

Christopher DeBarr was ordained into the gospel ministry on February 26, 2017 at Tallmansville Baptist Church (Broad Run). Rev. Wease Day delivered the ordination sermon. Other pastors participating in the service were Rev. Tim Lewis and Rev. Greg Miller.

Judson Association Holds Fifth Sunday Sing

The Judson Association held their traditional 5th Sunday Sing, January 29, 2017 at Nutter Fort First Baptist Church (Judson). The well-attended worship time featured a variety of groups, choirs and soloists from several of the association churches. A great time of food and fellowship followed in the church's fellowship area.



Executive Minister Search Committee Update

The Executive Minister Search Committee met with Dr. C. Jeff Woods, Associate General Secretary for Regional Relations, ABC-USA, to begin the search process for a new Executive Minister for the West Virginia Baptist Convention. Dr. Woods functions much like an area minister would in assisting a church through a search process as he advises regional search committees.

The Search Committee will be conducting listening sessions in each area of our region in the coming weeks. In addition to these on-site sessions, the committee will conduct an online survey to collect information from churches, auxiliaries, staff and members.

President Mark Wood chairs the committee and reminds us the discern-

ment process will take time as the Committee seeks clear direction from the Lord as to whom God is calling to be our next Executive Minister. You may contact Mark if you have questions at: markwood65@gmail.com or 304.927.1421.

Please watch future mailings and www.wvbc.org for updates.

SCHEDULED LISTENING SESSIONS

Northeast Region

April 23rd, 2017 at 3:00 p.m.
Fairmont Baptist Temple (Fairmont)

Southwest Region

April 23rd, 2017 at 3:00 p.m.
Mount Vernon Baptist Church
(Teays Valley)

Northwest Region

April 30th, 2017 at 3:00 p.m.
Pine Grove Baptist Church (Parkersburg)

Southeast Region

April 30th, 2017 at 3:00 p.m.
Beckley First Baptist Church
(Greenbrier-Raleigh)



The Executive Minister Search Committee is conducting an online survey to help build a convention profile to aid in their search. If you are a member of a West Virginia Baptist Convention church, we invite you to complete the survey (the link is below) to give your input. The survey will close on May 15, 2017.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WVBCSearch>

Sunny Day Coming to Camp Cowen

The *Sunny Day Leadership and Activity Center* is important to the future ministry at the West Virginia Baptist Camp at Cowen. God has used Camp Cowen in mighty ways since 1943. Throughout that time, Cowen has added cabins, bathhouses, winterized cabins and now a gymnasium and classrooms. The "activity" part of the facility will benefit campers during the summer by providing space for energetic indoor activities. The possibilities to do ministry at camp in the fall and winter increase with the ability to utilize this new facility. Retreats, tourna-

ments and other ideas yet to be discovered will help expand the outreach for a place *"Where people meet Jesus and grow as His disciples in a community of faith."*

The "leadership center" creates more classroom space for camps and establishes learning rooms for additional camps to take place. Leadership is vital to maximize the ministry and stability of the local church and the West Virginia Baptist Convention. Please commit to pray and financially support the *Sunny Day Leadership and Activity Center!*

Man Up! American Baptist Men's Work Weekend - April 28-29, 2017

In 2016, nearly 2,000 campers and counselors worshiped Jesus Christ at the *West Virginia Baptist Camp at Cowen* in Webster County. This year, just as many campers, if not more, are expected! An army of men who are willing to help get *Camp Cowen* ready for 2017 is needed.

But, this year's work weekend is about more than getting *Camp Cowen* ready for 2017. Just like Gideon had an army of 300 men, 300 godly men and boys who are ready to be trained in the word of God is needed so they can impact their families, churches and communities for Christ! You will hear from some of the top leaders around the state via seminars about being a godly man in ...

- *your workplace,*
- *your home,*
- *your marriage,*
- *your school/campus,*
- *your team,*
- *your relationship with God.*

Only ten dollars covers all meals and overnight lodging for the weekend.

The *Youth Work Party* will be held May 19-20, 2017. The youth will gather by 8:00 p.m. on Friday to enjoy a famous Cowen campfire. Saturday will be filled with the necessary cleaning and raking of leaves. It will be an exciting weekend when 200 students show up to work, worship and rake a lot of leaves! Meals will be served at 8:00 a.m., noon and 4:00 p.m.

Leadership Updates

REV. EVAN ARKELL to Barboursville Baptist Church (Guyandotte) as pastor on September 1, 2016

MR. JIM BAKER to Long Run Fellowship (Union) as co-pastor on January 1, 2016

REV. JEFF BIDDLE to Emmanuel Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) as associate pastor of Outreach and Youth on September 11, 2016

REV. SAMUEL BLAYLOCK to Oak Hill Baptist Church (Fayette) as senior pastor on March 1, 2017

REV. AL BOYD to Handley Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) as pastor on February 10, 2016

REV E. JACK COLE to Springdale First Baptist Church (Hopewell) as pastor on March 5, 2017

REV. MONTY FOSTER to Mount Vernon Baptist Church (Teays Valley) as Pastor of Worship and Youth on January 1, 2017

REV. LARRY GAWTHROP to Mount Urim Baptist Church (Hopewell) as pastor on January 1, 2017

REV. BOBBY GOLDSBURG to Nitro First Baptist Church (Teays Valley) as pastor on November 8, 2016

MR. RYAN HADDOX to Beckley First Baptist Church (Greenbrier-Raleigh) as director of Youth and Children's Ministries on January 1, 2017

REV. JIM T. HEWITT to Charleston Baptist Temple (Kanawha Valley) as pastor on July 1, 2016

MR. SAM MYERS to Long Run Fellowship (Union) as co-pastor on January 1, 2016

REV. GREGORY C. SWISHER to Calvary Baptist Church (Fayette) as senior pastor on January 1, 2017

ANNE CRAWFORD ANDREWS, 81, died December 22, 2016. She was a member of Saint Albans First Baptist Church (Teays Valley) since 1962. She was active in the sanctuary choir, the Wifani Sunday School class and the ladies' chorus. She was a member of every church board many times over and served for five years as the church clerk.

STEVEN DOUGLAS BENNETT, 63, of Harrisville, died January 12, 2017. He was a member of Harrisville Baptist Church (Harrisville).

JEAN CABRAL, 64, of Mullens, died January 30, 2017. She was a long standing and active member of Black Eagle Baptist Church (Rockcastle).

RODNEY CANTERBURY, 41, of Clendenin, died January 24, 2017. He was a member of Clendenin First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), having served as a deacon and trustee.

ROY LEWIS CLICK, 79, of Mount Alto, died December 31, 2016. He was a devoted member of Hopewell Baptist Church (Good Hope), where he lifted his voice in praise in the choir and served as deacon, trustee, superintendent and teacher during the many years he faithfully attended.

RONALD L. COLE, 77, of Grafton, died February 23, 2017. He was a member of Grafton First Baptist Church (Union), where he was a trustee and manager.

LORETTA BELLE (CHENOWETH) COONTZ, died February 1, 2017. She was an active member of Valley Bend Baptist Church (Union), having taught Sunday School classes and serving as youth director in earlier years.

CALVIN FITZPATRICK, 78, died January 5, 2017. He was a faithful member of Crab Orchard Missionary Baptist Church (Greenbrier-Raleigh), serving as a deacon, Sunday School teacher and choir member.

ELSIE I. HAIR, 94, of Weirton, died February 12, 2017. She was an active member of Weirton First Baptist Church (Panhandle), having served as a deaconess, Sunday School teacher and Vacation Bible School teacher.

EVELYN HARDMAN, 87, died October 13, 2016. She was a longtime member of Glenville First Baptist Church (Little Kanawha), where she was president of the women's Bible class and active in the women's circle.

JOAN L. (AVERY) LIPSEY, 59, of Parkersburg, died February 16, 2017. She was a member of South Parkersburg Baptist Church (Parkersburg). She loved working with the women in the Jobs Plus Prison Ministry and was on staff and volunteered at Montgomery Community Church both in Cincinnati, Ohio. She later



L. JEAN WESTFALL, 85, of Harrisville, died January 27, 2017. She was a member of Harrisville Baptist Church (Harrisville) since April 13, 1941, where she has been a Sunday School teacher, pianist and choir member. She also led Bible study in her home. Her teaching career began at Morgantown High School. As a Department of Defense school teacher, she taught in the Air Force Secondary Schools in Japan and England from 1958 to 1960. In 1962, she began teaching in Madison, Ohio, where she started the Humanities' Program. She moved on to assistant principal and principal, then superintendent for Madison local schools, Lake County, Ohio, where she retired in 1989.

Jean was chairman of the board of the Union Bank of Harrisville in 1987, the president of the Ritchie County Chamber of Commerce from 1993-1994, associate director of Ritchie County Primary Care, director of the year for CB&T in 1992 and was elected to the Ritchie County Board of Education in 1994, where she served until 2007. Jean served as President of the West Virginia Baptist Convention from 1998-1999.

volunteered at South Parkersburg Baptist Church. She was the wife of Thomas Lipsey, pastor of South Parkersburg Baptist Church.

MARY MADELINE KEADLE, 100, of Forest Hill, died February 11, 2017. She was an active member of Fairview Baptist Church (Greenbrier-Raleigh), where she sang alto in the church choir and was a member of the women's Sunday School class. She was the oldest member of the church.

CHARLES R. MARKS, 87, died March 3, 2017. He was a member of Buckhannon First Baptist Church (Broad Run), where he served as a deacon.

RICHARD LEE MAZE, SR., 70, died January 1, 2017. He was a dedicated member of Saint Albans First Baptist Church (Teays Valley). He served as a deacon, Sunday School teacher and choir member.

IRENE SMOLENSKI MAZON, 98, of South Man, died February 24, 2017. She was a very active member of Man First Baptist Church (Logan-Mingo) for nearly 70 years, serving in various capacities including treasurer, Kids Primary Class Sunday School teacher and Vacation Bible School kitchen worker.

VIOLA L. MOELLENDICK, 91, of Parkersburg, died December 18, 2016. She was a member of Emmanuel Baptist Church. She was bookkeeper for Union Mission in Parkersburg and the International Union of Gospel Missions. She was also an administrator for Charleston Rescue Mission-Hilltop Home for the Elderly.

ERNEST (TINY) MUSSER, 94, of Mullens, died January 17, 2017. He was long-time member Highland Avenue Baptist Church (Rockcastle), where he was a deacon.

LONNIE RAMSEY, 73, of Ireland, died February 26, 2017. He pastored three churches in his 40 years of ministry. He is the former pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church at Right Hand Fork of Freeman's Creek and Poplar Ridge Community

Church, outside of Sutton. He was the current the pastor of Orlando Baptist Church (Elk Valley).

CAROLE RICHARDS, of Charleston, formerly of South Charleston, died January 1, 2017. She was a member of Kanawha City Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) and was formerly a member of South Charleston First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) for many years. She was an active member of the American Baptist Women's Ministries in both churches.

HELEN GAIL ROBBINS, 81, of Huntington, died February 13, 2017. She was a charter member of New Baptist Church (Guyandotte), having been a long-time member of the former 20th Street Baptist Church. She served as a Sunday School teacher, an AWANA (approved workmen are not ashamed) helper and a member of the board of missions of the church. Before her final illness, she had a record seven years of perfect attendance in Sunday School.

HELENA MCVEY SANKOFF, 82, of Charleston, died February 7, 2017. She was a 70-year member of Calvary Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), where she served as Sunday School teacher, deaconess, church clerk, pianist, church historian and choir member.

ELIZABETH SNYDER "LIZ" TINNEY, 87, died December 30, 2016. She was a member of Elkins First Baptist Church (Union), where she had served in the music ministry for many years.

BARBARA BURDETTE WELCH, 77, died February 13, 2017. She was an active member of Emmanuel Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), serving as a deaconess and choir member. She was best known, however, for her tireless work in American Baptist Women's Ministries (ABWM). She served the organization as a church circle leader, board member for the Kanawha Valley Association of ABWM, and as chair of Love Gift for the state board of ABWM.

April

APRIL 1 - The ministry of New Bethel Baptist Church; David Vickers, pastor (Coal River)
APRIL 2 - The ministry of Judson Baptist Church; Charlie Bolen, pastor (Kanawha Valley)
APRIL 3 - Andrew Doyle, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Central Asia
APRIL 4 - The ministry of Calvary Baptist Church; Greg Swisher, pastor (Fayette)
APRIL 5 - Kasey Madden, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Discipleship Commission
APRIL 6 - Rebecca Stanton, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Hungary
APRIL 7 - Grace Reed, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Bolivia
APRIL 8 - Susan Hegarty, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Costa Rica
APRIL 9 - Matt Mann, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary
APRIL 10 - The ministry of Elkins First Baptist Church; Scott Hamby, pastor (Union)
APRIL 11 - Stephen James, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Haiti
APRIL 12 - The ministry of Zion Baptist Church; Cody Lambert, pastor (Teays Valley)
APRIL 13 - The ministry of Williamson First Baptist Church; Jarrod Belcher, pastor (Logan-Mingo)
APRIL 14 - Brandy Stanton, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Hungary
APRIL 15 - Ginny Prunty, Administrative Assistant to the Executive Minister, West Virginia Baptist Convention
APRIL 16 - Praise and celebrate our Risen Savior!
APRIL 17 - The ministry of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church; C. Michael Harriman, pastor (Goshen)
APRIL 18 - Ron Forren, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Outreach Commission
APRIL 19 - The ministry of Hopewell Baptist Church; Michael Anderson, pastor (Hopewell)
APRIL 20 - The ministry of Mount Zion Baptist Church; William Stout, pastor (Parkersburg)
APRIL 21 - The ministry of Providence Baptist Church; William Spears, pastor (Guyandotte)
APRIL 22 - Omega happens today at Genesis Fellowship (Kanawha Valley)
APRIL 23 - The ministry of Freeman's Creek Baptist Church; Philip Heater, pastor (Broad Run)
APRIL 24 - Corene Smith, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Brazil
APRIL 25 - Elijah Williams, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
APRIL 26 - Cristina Parajon, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Nicaragua
APRIL 27 - Laura Parajon, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Nicaragua
APRIL 28 - Thelma Nambu, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to the Philippines
APRIL 29 - Joyce Reed, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Iberoamerica and the Caribbean
APRIL 30 - The ministry of Pleasant Dale Baptist Church; Wayne Litton, pastor (Elk Valley)

May

MAY 1 - The ministry of Chapel Baptist Church; Harold Francis, pastor (Little Kanawha)
MAY 2 - Spring Golden'eers Retreat at Parchment Valley Conference Center
MAY 3 - The ministry of Ebenezer Baptist Church; Mark Booth, pastor (Twelve Pole)
MAY 4 - Isabella Smith, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Brazil
MAY 5 - Laura Freeman, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Turkey
MAY 6 - West Virginia Baptist Convention Executive Board as they meet today at Parchment Valley Conference Center
MAY 7 - Nora Kalkman, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to the Czech Republic
MAY 8 - The ministry of Peterstown Missionary Baptist Church; Bryan Pruett, pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh)
MAY 9 - Andile Jones, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to South Africa
MAY 10 - Jill Lowery, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MAY 11 - Zenith Harless, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Leadership Commission
MAY 12 - Nzunga Madudiga, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Haiti
MAY 13 - Frank Miller, Director of Operations, Parchment Valley Conference Center
MAY 14 - The ministry of North Mill Creek Baptist Church; Bradley Thorn, pastor (Eastern)
MAY 15 - Adison Williams, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MAY 16 - The ministry of North Fork Baptist Church; Darrell Farley, pastor (Harrisville)
MAY 17 - Joshua Barnes, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Mexico
MAY 18 - The ministry of Hebron Baptist Church; Allen Burnsworth, pastor (Fairmont)
MAY 19 - Youth Work Party at Camp Cowen
MAY 20 - Richard Barnes, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Mexico
MAY 21 - Lee Ann Hwang, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Japan
MAY 22 - The ministry of Montgomery Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley)
MAY 23 - The ministry of New Martinsville First Baptist Church; Donald Biram, pastor (Panhandle)
MAY 24 - Michael Grose, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Stewardship Commission
MAY 25 - The ministry of Shinnston First Baptist Church; Kevin Nuzum, pastor (Judson)
MAY 26 - Wayne Niles, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary to Democratic Republic of the Congo
MAY 27 - The ministry of Black Eagle Baptist Church; Gilbert Dodson, pastor (Rockcastle)
MAY 28 - Marc Smith, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Brazil
MAY 29 - Abie Reed, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Bolivia
MAY 30 - The ministry of Reedy Baptist Church (Good Hope)
MAY 31 - Jack Bolick, American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) missionary (youth) to Chile

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

Coming Events

APRIL

April 8

School of Christian Studies Hospital Ministry (E-04) One-Day Class with Jana Raines
Parchment Valley Conference Center

April 14

Good Friday Holiday
West Virginia Baptist Convention
Office CLOSED

April 22

Omega
Genesis Fellowship

April 22

School of Christian Studies
ADVANCED The Gospels One-Day Class with David Moutz
Oakwood Baptist Church, Charleston

April 23

Northeast Region Listening Session
Fairmont Baptist Temple

April 23

Southwest Region Listening Session
Mount Vernon Baptist Church,
Hurricane

April 28-29

American Baptist Men's Work Weekend
Camp Cowen

April 30

Northwest Region Listening Session
Pine Grove Baptist Church, Parkersburg

April 30

Southeast Region Listening Session
Beckley First Baptist Church

MAY

May 1-3

Spring Golden'eers Retreat
Parchment Valley Conference Center

May 2

School of Christian Studies
Communicating God's Word (M-01)
Six-Week Class Begins
Various Locations

May 5

West Virginia Baptist Convention
Executive Committee
Parchment Valley Conference Center

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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2017 CAMP SCHEDULE



WOMEN'S CAMP	March 31- April 2
OLDER MIDLER (grades 3-4)	June 4-7
YOUNGER MIDLER (grades 2-4)	June 9-11
JUNIOR 1 (grades 5-6)	June 11-17
JUNIOR HIGH 1 (grades 7-9)	June 18-24
JUNIOR 2 (grades 5-6)	June 25-July 1
HIGH SCHOOL 1 (grades 9-high school grads)	July 2-8
JUNIOR HIGH 2 (grades 7-9)	July 9-15
SENIOR DAY (2017 high school grads)	July 15
HIGH SCHOOL 2 (grades 9-high school grads)	July 16-22
FAMILY CAMP	July 28-31
AMERICAN BAPTIST MEN AND BOYS' CAMP	August 4-6
CAMP GLOBAL	August 11-13

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 registration forms at www.campcowen.org.
Don't forget to print a health form for each individual attending.

The West Virginia Baptist Camp at Cowen camping program is sponsored by the West Virginia Baptist Convention and is conducted at 276 Baptist Camp Road, Cowen, West Virginia 26206.

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