

The West Virginia Baptist Newsletter



October-November 2021

Come Join Us for Our 156th Annual Meeting

Every year, the Annual Meeting of the West Virginia Baptist Convention family marks the launch of a new season of mission and ministry. Our theme for 2022 is ***Intentionally Engaging Communities for Christ***. However, for a theme to have meaning and purpose it must be both clearly relevant to God's purposes in our world and deeply rooted in scripture.

As Christians, we recognize there is a great spiritual battle raging for the hearts and minds of men and women across our nation. We now find ourselves in a cosmic struggle between Christian truth and a morally indifferent culture. This spiritual wrestling match appears to be what the apostle Paul was alluding to when he wrote, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Ephesians 2:12). Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the reality of non-Christians walking through the door on any given Sunday morning is highly unlikely. However, these are the very people Jesus loved and died on the cross to save.

Jesus knew His church would need to mobilize to be successful in reaching people just like these. Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:18-20). Four things in Jesus' command worth noting. First, Jesus reminds us He is sending us out under His authority. This means He is sending us out with His endorsement and empowerment. Second, He said, "go and make" not "come and hear." The phrase "go and make" has an intentionality about it. The need for the mission is urgent and the objective accomplishable. Third, we have a responsibility to evangelize and make disciples by teaching them to understand and live out the truths passed on to us in scripture. And lastly, we have the ultimate promise we will never go it alone. Jesus promises He will always be present with us and in us until the very end of time.

Embracing Jesus' command to go while acknowledging the growing difficulty of "engaging" people with the Gospel will require a willingness to meet them where they are. The apostle Paul addressed overcoming this challenge. He wrote, "I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings" (1 Corinthians 9:22b-23). Paul is not sug-

gesting compromising the truth or embracing sin, he simply recognizes that to reach people he must first meet them where they are. That is our focus for 2022. Finding ways to remove barriers to reach people for Christ by meeting them where they are.

During this year's Annual Meeting you will hear the vision for how we can accomplish this by Doing Christ's Work Together. You will hear about microchurch initiatives. Think of these as hometown missionaries being sent from your local church into the mission field in your neighborhood to share the gospel with the people who live there. The truth is there are many people, who for a variety of reasons, do not and will not attend the local church, but desperately need Jesus Christ in their lives. Microchurches are about going and making disciples by meeting them where they are.

Another area we hope to be more intentional in is discipleship. Discipleship takes place in the home as well as the church. For example, scripture encourages parents to be active in discipling their children, "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise" (Deuteronomy 6:5-7). However, grandparents have a role to play in discipleship too. In West Virginia, statistics indicate over 50% of grandparents are raising their grandchildren. While this is indeed a sad statistic, it also points to the need for grandparents to be active in discipling their grandchildren. Scripture speaks often of the important role of Biblical grandparenting. Moses instructed grandparents, "Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children" (Deuteronomy 4:9).

These are only a few of the opportunities the Lord has before us in 2022.

Join us October 21-22 at Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Hurricane for a wonderful time of fellowship, worship, being challenged from God's word and listening for His vision for the WVBC family as we work together to build His kingdom for His glory!

Blessings,
Mike Sisson,
Executive Minister, West Virginia Baptist Convention

The West Virginia Baptist Convention is a family of churches committed to reaching all generations for Jesus Christ both here and abroad by equipping one another to be healthy, growing and unified in Christ and for Christ.

Doing Christ's Work Together



West Virginia Baptist Convention

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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Delegate Registration

Registration Fee:

(Please check the meal reservations you wish to secure and include the cost with your total registration. Registration packet and meal ticket(s) will be available for pickup at the annual meeting registration area.)

Please use a separate form for each person. (Copy as needed.)

Name:	
Name on Tag:	
Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
E-mail:	Phone:
Church:	
Association:	

DELEGATES MUST HAVE THIS FORM SIGNED BY CHURCH CLERK OR PASTOR.

Clerk or Pastor signature on line above please.

	<i>\$20.00 - ___ Delegate, ___ Visitor, ___ Exhibitor Required Fee - Please Check One Above.</i>
	<i>\$12.00 - American Baptist Men</i>
	<i>\$6.00 - ABW Ministries - Women's Day</i>
	<i>\$10.00 - Members - Pastors4Pastors Ministers' Council Event (Includes Lunch)</i>
	<i>\$25.00 - Non-Members - Pastors4Pastors Ministers' Council Event (Includes Lunch)</i>
	<i>\$15.00 - Baptist Campus Ministries' Banquet</i>
	<i>\$12.00 - WV Baptist Historical Society</i>
	<i>\$10.00 - Ministers' Wives' Fellowship</i>
	<i>\$10.00 - Palmer Theological Seminary Luncheon</i>
	<i>Total Enclosed Make checks payable to WVBC and mail to: Annual Meeting Registrar, P.O. Box 1019, Parkersburg, WV 26102.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Executive Board Report	<i>Please check the line at left if you would like a copy of the Executive Board Report.</i>

Child Care:

Please check appropriate box(es). List names and ages of children.

Women's Day	WVBC Session 1	WVBC Session 2	WVBC Session 3	WVBC Session 4

Registration Deadline:

Please have your registration postmarked, with money enclosed by October 11, 2021.

156th Annual Meeting Schedule

Thursday, October 21

9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Pre-Convention Activities

2:45 p.m. Session 1

Welcome and Opening Prayer - *Ryan Stoner*

Welcome from Host Church - *Ron McClung*

Business Meeting 1 - *Ryan Stoner*

Executive Minister Address - *Mike Sisson*

5:00 p.m. - Dinner Break

Baptist Campus Ministry Banquet

6:30 p.m. Session 2

Welcome and Opening Prayer - *Cari Pauley*

Ward Hibbs Award - *Tim Barry*

Annual Sermon - *Rick Bergdoll*

Communion

8:30 p.m.

Alderson Broaddus University Reception

Friday, October 22

7:30 a.m.

Education Society Breakfast

8:30 a.m. - Workshop Session 1

9:15 a.m. Session 3

Welcome and Opening Prayer - *Don Biram*

Recognition of New and Retired Pastors - *David Hulme*

School of Christian Studies' Graduation - *Mark McCloy*

James Anderson, Sr. Bivocational Pastor Award - *Jim Anderson*

Keynote Address: *Jeremy Myers*

11:15 a.m. - Workshop Session 2

12:00 noon - Lunch Break

Luncheon Opportunities

West Virginia Baptist

Historical Society

Ministers' Wives' Fellowship

Palmer Theological Seminary

2:00 p.m. Session 4

Welcome and Opening Prayer - *Ryan Stoner*

Business Meeting 2 - *Ryan Stoner*

Installation of Officers

Keynote Address - *Jeremy Myers*

Sending Out - *Mike Sisson*

AB Men's Camp: What is a Blessed Life?

On a beautiful summer weekend in August 2021, dozens of men across West Virginia gathered for our American Baptist Men's Camp at Camp Cowen. For decades, this body of believers has assembled every summer to lift up the name of Jesus and enjoy a time of incredible fellowship. Last year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we missed being able to host camp. This year, it was great to be back together!

Dr. Jeff Davenport, the senior pastor at Hurricane First Baptist Church (Teays Valley), served as this year's keynote speaker. Preaching from Psalm 128, he challenged us to consider our theme of, "What is a blessed life?"

Monty Foster, the pastor at Barboursville Baptist Church (Guyandotte), served as our worship leader. Monty did an incredible job of leading us, and it was during worship around the campfire that several men began pouring out their hearts, praying for healing and renewal.

We were also challenged by both of our weekend vespers speakers. Michael Hatfield, the pastor at Logan First Baptist Church (Logan-Mingo), reminded us on Friday evening to fear God and trust in Him. On Saturday evening, Patrick Vincent, the pastor at Willow Tree Baptist Church (Fairmont), rallied our men to join in an amazing and powerful circle of prayer, where we petitioned God with dozens of needs. Many of those prayers were answered that very same weekend!

One of those answered prayers came on Sunday morning when one of our first-time participants gave his heart to the Lord! Immediately following, we walked down to the river that runs alongside camp and celebrated as our new brother got baptized! It was a great way to conclude our weekend!



Patrick Vincent (front) leads the men in a time of prayer.

The mission of the American Baptist Men of West Virginia is to bring men into a saving relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. In addition to our annual camp, we also do this through local and statewide gatherings, through discipleship opportunities and through our disaster relief work. If you are interested in learning how you can get involved, contact me at miller@wvbc.org.

What a blessed life we live! But we also have a responsibility to be a blessing to the next generation of leaders. That is what our mission is all about!

*Frank Miller,
WVBC Advisor, AB Men of WV*

Summer 2021: Thankful to be Back at Camp!

It is no easy task to describe the reaction of campers, counselors and volunteers as they returned to camp in 2021. How do you encapsulate the sheer joy, shrieks of excitement, bits of apprehension, sighs of relief and ear-to-ear smiles as more than 1,000 campers, counselors and volunteers attended camp this summer? This has been a blessed year, no doubt about that!

We know the West Virginia Baptist Camp at Cowen is indeed holy ground; a place where people truly meet Jesus. In 2020, we were keenly aware this blessed facility was missing one of the most important components: people! And in 2021, we celebrate the immense blessing of both the facility and the power of the camp community with which the Lord has truly blessed the West Virginia Baptist Convention!

A testimony to the Lord's goodness: COVID-19 wasn't the story of 2021. While significant mitigation protocols were put into place to allow camp to operate during a global pandemic, these protocols allowed us to move forward in ministry. They did not define our summer. The main thing is still the main thing as the West Virginia Baptist Camp at Cowen continues to be a place *"where people meet Jesus and grow as His disciples in a community of faith."*

Our theme, "Everyday Hero," spoke powerfully to children, youth and adults alike. We were refreshed, equipped and inspired knowing we are loved by God, who is the Hero for every circumstance we could ever face. We are loved by a God who meets us in our weaknesses and equips us in our strengths, and

we are part of God's redemptive story as we share the good news of the gospel with our world!

This summer's numbers may have been smaller, but God is good all the time and His work was evident at camp this summer. With 39 first-time decisions, 36 rededications, seven called to Christian service and already eight baptisms back in home churches we join together in thanksgiving for the blessing of the camping ministry!

We're especially thankful for the West Virginia Baptist Convention family of churches who faithfully support, promote and make this ministry possible!



One of the many smiling faces attending Camp Cowen this summer.

*Jill Narraway,
Associate Director of Camping and Youth*

Camp-in-a-Box Fall Devotional

Join us every day for Bible study, prayer & worship

Sunday: Worship

Monday: Armor of God

Tuesday: Fruit of the Spirit

Wednesday: God is the

Hero for Our Every Need

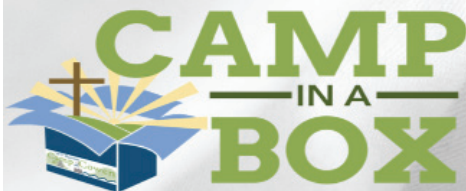
Thursday: Everyday

Hero in the Bible


Friday: Everyday Hero

in Our Lives

Saturday: Prayer



Follow along online:

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Order Your Devotional

[www.campcowen.org/
campinabox](http://www.campcowen.org/campinabox)
or call 304-422-6449

\$4/devotional

56 days

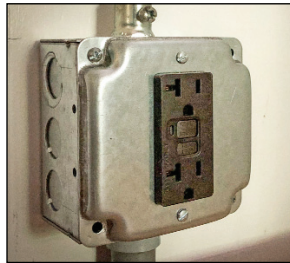
Messages from your
favorite Camp Cowen
counselors, pastors &
directors

Cowen Cabin Upgrades Continue

Cabins are one of the most essential buildings at the West Virginia Baptist Camp at Cowen as they provide a “home away from home” during a stay at camp. Many of these well-used and well-loved cabins have been in need of extra attention. In the summer of 2020, the Adopt-a-Cabin program began restoring and updating the oldest camp cabins with new paint, light fixtures, outlets and curtains. Minor repairs were also made, along with interior and exterior cleaning.

It didn't take long in the restoration process before the critical need was identified for replacing windows and upgrading electrical service inside the cabins. As we've all come to know so well during the pandemic, proper air circulation is key to a safe guest experience. Keeping old windows in good repair is no easy task as finding replacement parts of rehabbing screens is difficult. With each cabin having six windows the cost of replacement adds up quickly across the 12 original-style cabins.

Broad Run cabin was the first (Broad Run pride does run deep) to receive donations toward the replacement of windows. As the summer continued Fairmont, Kanawha



Valley Association, Kanawha Valley Young People cabins also were adopted and new windows installed. Three more cabins have windows on order with each set of six windows costing around \$2,600. What a blessing to watch God provide!

But God wasn't done with cabin renovations as David Withers, Rick Elkins and a few other volunteers worked on upgrading the electrical service in two cabins, providing a new circuit panel, conduit, wiring, lights, switches, heaters, smoke detector and five outlets per cabin. Seeing this important work moving ahead, donors have stepped forward to contribute to the purchase of supplies for more cabins totaling near \$1,000 in supplies for each cabin.

The continued financial donations and the countless volunteer hours are appreciated and we offer our gratitude for faithful supporters who allow these projects to take place and we look forward to continued work this fall and in the coming spring.

The Withers' Family: Helping People Meet Jesus

The West Virginia Baptist Camp at Cowen has been a place ***“where people meet Jesus and grow as His disciples in a community of faith”*** since 1943. The Withers' family has been involved since the initial formation of camp and has had six generations of family members involved.

Prior to 1943, A.B. Withers led annual revivals at nearby Camp Caesar. A.B. served on staff with the West Virginia Baptist Convention (WVBC). During one particular revival, his son, Gordon, and a few others were building a trail when they discovered a large rock formation that “would be a wonderful place for a campfire.” Later, they discovered another area they thought would make a great vespers location. After sharing their findings with the WVBC board, the land was immediately purchased and the West Virginia Baptist Camp at Cowen was formed!

Gordon later directed the first camp in 1943. Two of his sons, Bob and Dick, served as part of the first camp staff. Dick served as the first camp lifeguard, and they both had the responsibility of preparing meals, building trails and continuing to clear away brush. Dick met his wife, Elizabeth, at camp and Bob's wife, Ruth, also served on staff as the first camp nurse.

Gordon's other son, Bill, was also involved. In later years, when camps were separated by age groups, Bill preceded his father as the director of Junior High 1 camp. Bill followed in the footsteps of his father and his grandfather by becoming a pastor. He served as a pastor within WVBC churches for more than 40 years, also serving as president of the West Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

Bill's son, David, and his wife, Barbara, are now active at camp and are members of Fifth Avenue Baptist Church (Guyandotte). David admits he was at one time intimidated by the spiritual heritage of his family wondering how he, as an electrician, could live up to their legacy. But recent years have provided him the opportunity to use his electrical skills to upgrade many of our buildings, provide lights for the ballfield and assist with many other projects. These upgrades were much needed and go a



Bill (left) and David (right) Withers at Camp Cowen

long way in enhancing the quality of our camps. This summer, he also began rewiring many of our cabins, a project that is expected to take a few more years.

Each of David and Barbara's children have also attended camp, and several of their grandchildren, too. One of David's goals is to live long enough to take all of his grandchildren to camp, making sure they to know about their family's heritage.

The Withers' are just one of hundreds of families who have been involved at camp. However, their story reminds us that you don't have to be a pastor to leave a spiritual legacy. Within their family, they have nurses, lifeguards and electricians, all of whom have had an enormous impact! The West Virginia Baptist Camp at Cowen is grateful for their involvement as well as the thousands of other men and women who have volunteered their time over the past 78 years. It is because of their commitment and the diversity of our volunteers that we can be ***“a place where people meet Jesus and grow as His disciples as a community of faith.”***

Back to School In-Person

CHANGING LIVES THAT



CHANGE THE WORLD

This semester is an opportunity Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM) did not have last year at this time. Students desire to connect with a community in Christ. Hear what is happening around BCM throughout the state:

“We’ve met twice this semester with 20 students joining us for worship, and we passed out a ten-week personal devotional for each student. During the semester, we’re focusing on *4 Chair Discipling* by Dann Spader. I am very excited to be back on campus, meeting students in-person and planning events!”

- **Anthony Pratt (WVU-Tech)**

“We met at Queens Point Coffee Shop for some great coffee, food and games. We had a great time of fellowship and Bible study. We are excited about our next event: an evening on the “Quad” consisting of yard games, grilling, campfire and worship.” - **Shannon Earle (Potomac State College)**

“We were privileged to be invited by the Campus Activities Board to join their efforts in doing a combined event to kick-off the fall semester. Over 100 students participated in outside games and s’mores. Then we had 19 stay for songs, speak-

ing and small groups!” - **Jon Villers (Alderson Broaddus University)**

Please continue to pray for BCM and our leaders as we carry out this mission on nine campuses in West Virginia. When you and your church give to BCM, you provide opportunities for college students to be disciplined through Biblical teaching in a community that connects them with one another for support and encouragement. Thank you for your continued support and please consider how you and your church can partner with this exciting ministry!

Kevin Sions,

Northern Director for Baptist Campus Ministry



BCM at Potomac State College

Fall Children’s Rally

For children currently in grades K-5, sixth grade optional.

November 6, 2021
Parchment Valley Conference Center

Register online at www.wvbc.org.
Early bird cost: \$13.00,
if postmarked by October 18, 2021.
\$25.00 after October 18 or at the door.

Please contact Tracie with questions at
temerick@wvbc.org or 304.422.6449.

“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13 (NIV)



OUT THERE!

SCHEDULE

9:00 a.m.	Registration
9:30-9:50 a.m.	Welcome, Instructions, Singing
10:00-10:40 a.m.	Lesson 1
10:45-11:25 a.m.	Lesson 2
11:30-12:10 p.m.	Lesson 3
12:15-12:45 p.m.	Lunch
12:45-1:10p.m.	Singing
1:15-1:55 p.m.	Lesson 4
2:00-2:40 p.m.	Lesson 5
2:45-3:00 p.m.	Singing, Closing

MISSION PROJECT

SCHOOL SUPPLIES:

Box 24 Crayons,
Box 12 Colored Pencils, Box 10 Markers,
Glue Sticks, Children/Youth Scissors,
Large Pencil Boxes,
College Ruled Notebooks

For the Bob Burdette Center in
Charleston

T-SHIRTS

Pre-sale only.

No t-shirts will be for sale at the rally.

Cost: \$11.00 each

Must be pre-ordered and pre-paid by
October 18, 2021.

Parchment Valley Bow Hunters Build New Crosses

*Written by Tim Hazlett,
volunteer, Parchment Valley Conference Center*

In 1998, Parchment Valley (PV) began a relationship with a group of men united by two passions: God and bow hunting.

These two passions eventually birthed something much larger: an annual men's retreat and hunt. What began as a four-day event mostly built around hunting has now evolved into a six-day event that includes Bible study, prayer and the opportunity to build lasting relationships with other men. This annual event has increased our love not only for each other, but also for God!

In 2009, Frank Miller became the director at Parchment Valley. Frank is the master of developing deep friendships, and it did not take long for him to embrace our group of bow hunters. Not only did this friendship open the door for us to host our annual Bow Hunter Retreat at Parchment Valley, but it also provided us with other opportunities to serve. Frequently, our bow hunters come to Parchment Valley to host work parties, volunteering their time to pour concrete, patch fences, do electrical work and just "help out." Many of our bow hunters have fallen in love with this place!

Fast forward to 2020, in the midst of a global pandemic, and God proved Himself to still be in control. Initially, it appeared

that our annual retreat would not happen. However, some changes were made and precautions were put in place, and we were still able to host our retreat with a smaller group. Then, in 2021, the ice storm of the century hit western West Virginia. Our bow hunters pulled together a group of men to render assistance to Parchment Valley, removing dozens of fallen trees across the property. From this brief four-hour work party, another event sprung forth! God was moving us in a direction, and we simply did not realize it.



In May, a four-day work party and "turkey hunt" took place at Parchment Valley. I intentionally put "turkey hunt" in quotes because our hunting success was dismal, to say the least. However, the work we accomplished over those four days was tremendous! And it was there that God began to stir in us another project. Many years ago, Parchment Valley had a set of crosses that sat on the hill. Frank has long desired to see new crosses erected in their place. Well, on June 20th, the work began and by the end of July, a new set of crosses had been put in place. Our group loved being a part of this project!

You never know God's long term plan, but you must always be willing to get on board and ride it to the end. The Parchment Valley Bow Hunters have enjoyed our relationship with Parchment Valley. We hope each of you enjoy the new crosses!



Biblical Intentional Grandparenting Seminars

Are you ready to "Grandparent on Purpose?"

For some of you, this seminar will affirm the good things you are already doing with your grandkids. For others, it will shake your world and give you a brand new perspective on what it means to be a grandparent. Whether you are on one end of that spectrum or the other -- or in the middle somewhere -- you are going to be deeply impacted by these few hours.

You will go away filled up with inspiration, ideas and tools to help you realize your potential to grandparent successfully. You will unlearn some things, and relearn others. Your passion for your grandkids will be kindled even higher and you'll go away changed. More importantly, those precious grandchildren of yours will benefit, and they will never be the same because you have listened, learned and grown yourself.

Check-in will start at 9:00 am and the seminar will end at 3:30 on the following dates and locations:

October 23, 2021 – Emmanuel Baptist Church, Charleston

October 30, 2021 – Hurricane First Baptist Church

November 13, 2021 – Fairmont Baptist Temple

November 20, 2021 – Vienna Baptist Church

Cost: \$30 per person – includes: seminar, workbook, lunch and snack breaks

\$50 per couple – includes: seminar, one workbook per couple, lunch and snack breaks for both people

The registration deadline is one week before each event.

Register online at www.wvbc.org.

Thank You, Volunteers!



By doing Christ's work together God used you to:

- Help **39** youth meet Jesus for the first-time at Camp Cowen
- Introduce **49** people to Jesus at Parchment Valley Conference Center
- Make enough salsa to raise more than **\$25,000** for local missions
- Help repair **dozens** of homes and churches through Brothers' Keeper and disaster relief work
- Deliver more than **130,000** pounds of food across our state
- Disciple **hundreds** of students in our schools and on our college campuses
- Impact **thousands** of lives around the state of West Virginia

Thank you for being the hands and feet of Jesus!



by *Todd McClure*, Minister of Missions, Finance and Communications

The Reeds Return to Bolivia

After 15 months away, J.D., Rhonda and Nathan Reed have returned to Bolivia for the start of their third term.

The Reeds were scheduled to be in West Virginia for most of those months as part of their home assignment. A traditional term for International Ministries' (IM) global servants is four years on the field and then one year at home, re-raising support. For the Reeds, their home assignment began early due to both rising COVID-19 cases and political tension in Bolivia. In what would normally be a year full of church visits, their home assignment was a bit different.

It was originally J.D.'s idea to try a virtual mission trip. In the spring of 2020, this one-hour Zoom session provided them with the opportunity to provide a ministry update while most of our churches were not meeting in-person. This also opened the door for other global servants to host similar meetings, and the West Virginia Baptist Convention's (WVBC) Virtual Mission Trip Series became something that will likely continue for many years.

A few months later, they had another idea. Presented with the opportunity to receive a \$10,000 grant for the Fundación Proyecto de Esperanza (House of Hope), they invited individuals and churches to make 10,000 masks for students at Wheaton College. WVBC churches led the way in that effort and the grant was given. The House of Hope relies heavily on funds brought by short-term mission teams, but with all mission trips cancelled last year, that grant proved to be critical!

Later that fall, J.D. had another idea: hosting a disc golf tournament at Parchment Valley. J.D. serves as the IM coordinator for the Masters for Theological Studies in Latino/a Ministries (MTS) program through Palmer Theological Seminary. This program trains more than 60 students throughout the Latin American world, providing them with much-needed theological education. The well-attended disc golf event raised both funds and awareness, and it sparked one last creative fundraising idea.

The task of raising several hundred thousand dollars can easily be viewed as daunting, but when breaking down the cost of each student's need to participate in the MTS program, it was calculated to be around \$200 per month. This led to the creation of the Adopt-a-Student program, where churches, small groups and individuals could choose to "adopt" a seminary student for two years, providing a scholarship for their education. Making a major push this past summer, around half of the students were adopted. That means more support is needed!

For the Reeds, the last 15 months have been busy. Though they haven't physically traveled far, God has used them to accomplish a great work! Also during that time, they celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary, watched both of their daughters get married and reunited with many friends.

Please join us in praying for them as they enter their third term of missionary service.

Adopt-A-Student

Partnering to train Latin American Seminary Students for ministry

The MTS program has graduated 114 students since the start of the program in 2015. Today, it provides education to more than 60 students on three continents!

Are you interested in adopting a student?

Your commitment of \$200/month for two years provides a scholarship for one student. Will you consider sponsoring a student yourself, or with the help of your church or Sunday School class?

Your gift will literally train a minister that can effectively lead a church and help transform a community.

To learn more, contact Todd McClure at todd@wvbc.org.



Meet the 2021 Youth Ministry Planning Team

SARAH DAVIS



Hello! My name is Sarah Davis and I attend Hurricane First Baptist Church (Teays Valley). I am a senior at Hurricane High School, where I am involved in the National Honor Society, the National English Honor Society, the International Club and the girls' tennis team. Some of my interests include writing for my blog, traveling, going to Camp Cowen, watching the news and working with media.

AILLEA ELKINS



Hi there! My name is Aillea Elkins and I'm a member of Oakwood Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley). I go to George Washington High School, where I participate in many clubs (Beta, Spanish, Recycling), run my own club and mainly spend a lot of my time doing school work. I love to go to youth group on Wednesdays, read curled up on the couch and watch Marvel movies with my parents.

ISAIAH MONCRIEF



Hey! My name is Isaiah Moncrief. I go to Saint Albans First Baptist Church (Teays Valley) and I attend Cross Lanes Christian School. I play soccer, tennis, basketball and run track. My favorite things to do are draw, read, play video games and sports.

TRISTAN GILBERT



Howdy, my name is Tristan Gilbert and I go to Pine Grove Baptist Church (Parkersburg). I am in the marching band and some of my interests are music theory, Star Wars and Lord of the Rings.

ZENNA ZWOLL



Hello! I am Zenna Zwoll and I am a junior at Calhoun Middle/High School. I attend Spencer First Baptist Church (Good Hope). I am involved in band, the percussion ensemble, the Spanish Honor Society and my local 4-H club.

ABBY LUCAS



Hello! My name is Abby Lucas. I go to Summersville Baptist Church (Hopewell) and I'm a senior at Nicholas County High School. I am the woodwind section leader in the Marching Grizzlies Band. I enjoy going to Camp Cowen, cuddling my cats, baking cookies and making art.

EMMA WALKER



Hi! My name is Emma Walker. I go to Oakwood Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) and attend George Washington High School in Charleston. I love Spanish, art and music.

BEN MARSH



Hi! My name is Ben Marsh and I attend Summersville Baptist Church (Hopewell). I go to Nicholas County High School, where I play on the golf team. My interests are going to the lake to swim, Camp Cowen, golf and hanging out with my friends.

Junior High Convention

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Southwest Area News

Evan Arkell, Southwest Area Minister

God is on the Move

It was a busy and blessed end of summer, which is now rounding into fall. While we all hoped COVID-19 would be just a memory, we continue to learn how to be flexible in the ever-changing circumstances in which we find ourselves. While these issues can keep us from doing many of the things we had planned, it can't keep God from carrying out His plans.



Handley Baptist Church Deacon Ordination Service

I was blessed in the month of August to have the pleasure to participate in deacon ordinations in two different churches, and in one pastor ordination council meeting. On Sunday, August 8, 2021, Handley Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) celebrated the ordination of five new deacons within the church. The following Sunday, August 15, 2021, I was able to participate with Yawkey Missionary Baptist Church (Coal River) as they celebrated the ordination service of one new deacon within their congregation. It was a wonderful blessing that these six gentlemen said, "Yes," when God called them to this ministry of servanthood. There was a great time of worship at both churches and, of course, an abundance of delicious food following these special services!

On August 22, 2021, Hampton Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) hosted the association for the ordination council meeting, aka the interrogation, for Pastor Don Stennett. The Kanawha Valley Association churches were well represented and delivered many great questions to Don as he defended his ordination position paper. Following the question session, the ordination council, made up of the association church pastors and member representation, unanimously voted for the recommendation that Hampton Baptist Church move forward with Don's ordination service, scheduled for October 10, 2021. God is on the move!

Northeast Area News

David Hulme, Northeast Area Minister

Union Association Holds Annual Picnic and Sing

Churches from around the Union Association gathered Sunday, August 8, 2021, at Grafton First Baptist Church (Union) for their annual picnic and sing. A time of fellowship preceded the picnic, featuring games for all ages.

Following the picnic, everyone gathered in the sanctuary for a time of worship and singing. Several soloists and groups from various churches shared their messages in song. It was an enjoyable time, especially given the fact that churches of the association had not been together in over a year.



Pastor Moises Saravia

Eastern Annual Association Meeting

Each year, I look forward to the Eastern Association Annual Meeting. That's because it's more than just a meeting, it's a two-day event. The meeting itself is still a couple of hours on a Sunday afternoon; I'm the one who turns it into a two-day event for the West Virginia Baptist Convention staff representatives who travel with me.

This year's trip started on Saturday with a visit to worship with Pastor Moises Saravia (at left) and the congregation of Comunidad Luz y Vida (Eastern). After a great time of worship, we shared in fellowship (and food) with the pastor's family and church members.

Sunday morning began with breakfast at Sue's Country Kitchen, where we generally run into some church folk. That was followed by worship at two churches in Grant County. Pastor Steve Davis led us in a powerful prayer time at Dorcas Baptist Church (Eastern). At Harmony Baptist Church (Eastern), Pastor Gary Crislip shared a timely message from God's word.

After lunch, we were able to visit one of our microchurches at the Petersburg Fire Department. Pastor Rodney Sites and members of the fire department shared stories with us of how God is working in their lives through worship, community and service.

Jordan Run Baptist Church (Eastern) hosted the Annual Meeting, which was followed by a meal in the fellowship hall. A family atmosphere was evident in both the meeting and the meal. God is doing a great work in and through the ten churches that make up the Eastern Association.

Glenville First Calls Putnam

Since the retirement of their much-loved pastor, Glenville First Baptist Church (Little Kanawha) has been searching diligently



Rev. John Putnam praying as he leads worship.

for a new pastor. But as they will attest, searching during a pandemic is not easy. They did the work, had the meetings, met with the area minister (virtually, at that time) and looked through profiles and resumes. They interviewed candidates, listened to sermons and narrowed down the pool, just like they were supposed to do. So, what do you do when the most likely candidate is not found in a stack of profiles, but is a local, recently returned to the area and serving as a school principal? And by the way, he was also not American Baptist, but was ordained outside our denomination. This was some-

what problematic as the church constitution required an American

Baptist pastor be called (a requirement in many of our churches, and intended as a means of protecting the church). You might think this would be the time to throw out the rules or change the rule book, but actually the right thing to do is call your Baptist family, which is exactly what they did. The chair of the search committee reached out to the area minister, who in turn worked with local pastors and leaders to call a special meeting of the association ordination committee. Not surprisingly, leaders of the past have envisioned such a circumstance, and the committee was able to meet with the candidate, go over his conversion, call to ministry, experience and doctrine, and enthusiastically recommend the church proceed with both extending the call and recognizing his ordination within the association. Now, he is an American Baptist with a recognized ordination and one of our pastors. Rather than being tedious, it was actually quite a bit of fun and a great way for everyone to get acquainted.

We wholeheartedly welcome Rev. John Putnam to Glenville First Baptist Church, the Little Kanawha Association and to our West Virginia Baptist family. We also commend Glenville First Baptist Church for working within the system, but still doing things their own way. Besides being an educator and pastor, John and his family also sing and play bluegrass gospel music.

Southeast Area News

Jim Anderson, Southeast Area Minister

Top Per Capita Giving Churches

Every year, we as staff receive various statistical reports on our West Virginia Baptist Convention (WVBC) churches. When I received the report on the top 50 mission giving churches from last year calculated per capita, the amount of giving divided by the number of members, I was overjoyed to see Flint Chapel Baptist Church (Greenbrier-Raleigh) was #1 with \$816.67 per member given!

This church, which I began assisting in 2010 when their pastor began suffering from Alzheimer's disease, is unique in that it is a Methodist Church that by deed allowed the Baptist folk in 1912 to meet 25% of the time each month (we meet every 4th Sunday evening), while Sunday School is a combined service with both Methodists and Baptists.

Over the past 11 years, this church has been so generous in its mission giving not only to our WVBC family, but also to the local community. As with every church, they have lost several members in death to their heavenly reward. In August, they lost Betty Akers, who was our American Baptist Women's Ministries' president for years. But through it all, they have remained faithful to spread the gospel at home, around our state and throughout the world.

I also want to thank and praise our Lord for the other churches in my area that were in the top 50 in per capita giving: Send the Light Fellowship - #3 (Greenbrier-Raleigh), Hope Baptist Church - #7 (Elk Valley), Springdale First Baptist Church - #8

(Hopewell), Mount Hope Baptist Temple - #13 (Fayette), Hopewell Baptist Church - #14 (Hopewell), Helen Baptist Church - #16 (Greenbrier-Raleigh), Fairview Baptist Church - #18 (Greenbrier-Raleigh), Birch River Baptist Church - #27 (Elk Valley), Rockcastle Baptist Church - #30 (Rockcastle), Athens Baptist Church - #40 (Greenbrier-Raleigh) and Mountain Baptist Church - #50 (Hopewell).

It is and continues to be a blessing and honor to serve as the Southeast Area Minister. Thank you for your support!



Flint Chapel ranks #1 per capita in West Virginia Baptist Convention mission giving for 2020.

June 2021 - August 2021

BETTY ANN AKERS, 76, of Creamery, died August 8, 2021. She was an active member of Flint Chapel Baptist Church (Greenbrier-Raleigh), where she served as president of the American Baptist Women's Ministry, secretary-treasurer of the Sunday School and Love Gift coordinator.

JANET BELLE HINKLE BOLTON, 88, of Belington, died August 7, 2021. She was a very active member of Belington First Baptist Church (Union), where she was in charge of the prayer shawl ministry, delivered children's sermons, helped organize Vacation Bible Schools and was church secretary.

DONNA SUE ESKEW BRYANT, 80, of Bridgeport, died July 31, 2021. She was an active member of Simpson Creek Baptist Church (Union). Her service included teaching the Powell Fellowship Sunday School class for many years; singing, and often soloing in the choir; directing the Gospel Gang, a musical drama performing group for elementary age children; directing MusiCamp for several years, a musical Vacation Bible School in which elementary aged children learned about music, various instruments and performed in musical drama; directing children's choirs; chairing the department of Christian Education for many years; and organizing and leading self-help and mutual support groups through the church such as Tough Love and First Place.

FRANKLIN EUGENE KARICKHOFF, 63, of Buckhannon, died June 27, 2021. He was a member of Bethany Baptist Church (Union), where he was active in all aspects of the church's operations.

BETTY JEAN MCDANIEL, 90, died July 23, 2021. She was a member of Main Street Baptist Church (Teays Valley), where she

formerly served as church secretary.

HELEN JEAN MCCARTY PERINE, 86, of Bridgeport, died August 27, 2021. She was an active member of Reynoldsville Baptist Church (Judson) for over 60 years, where she sang in the choir, taught Sunday School and was a member of the American Baptist Women's Ministries.

BARBARA ATKESON SMITH, of Philippi, died September 3, 2021. She was a member of Philippi Baptist Church (Union), where she was a trustee and moderator and served on many boards and committees. She also sang in the church's chancel choir and taught Sunday School.

MARY HARPER STEWART, 93, of Charleston, died August 19, 2021. She was a member of Emmanuel Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley), where she served as a deaconess and was a member of the American Baptist Women's Ministries.

Leadership Updates

REV. CHARLES B. DRAKE to Fairview Baptist Church (Greenbrier-Raleigh) as interim pastor on August 1, 2021

MR. BRETT M. RINEHART to Elkins First Baptist Church (Union) as senior pastor on June 15, 2021

MR. JASON WAYNE SKAGGS to West Union Baptist Church (Broad Run) as pastor on December 27, 2020

MR. BRIAN K. THOMPSON to Wilsonburg Baptist Church (Judson) as pastor on August 1, 2021

First Annual Pastors' Family Picnic Held at Parchment Valley

Written by Anthony Pratt, vice-president,
Pastors4Pastors: The West Virginia Baptist Ministers' Council

We all can find truth in the saying "Doing ministry together is much better than doing it alone!" On Saturday, August 14, 2021, the West Virginia Baptist Convention Ministers' Council, known as Pastors4Pastors (P4P), joined with the West Virginia



From left to right: Bob and Barbara Keen, Anthony Pratt, Joyce and Herman Robinson

Baptist Convention Ministers' Wives' Fellowship to host our first annual Pastors' Family Picnic at Parchment Valley Conference Center.

It was a great opportunity for pastors and their families to worship and fellowship with other families across the West Virginia Baptist Convention (WVBC). Over 40 individuals joined us for a wonderful time of sharing and fellowship. Mark and Mary Beth McCloy shared a wonderful testimony on how ministry entangles both the husband and wife as they serve together. Jon and Koreen Villers led us in a time of worship, reminding us how important worshipping as a family is as they serve together in an ever-changing world.

While we serve in an ever-changing world, we serve a forever-steady God, and I want to share that P4P and the Ministers' Wives' Fellowship allows pastors and their wives to be part of a network to connect with, pray with and serve along with!

We look forward to connecting with pastors of the WVBC on Thursday, October 21, 2021 for our 156th Annual Meeting Pastors4Pastors Pre-Convention event at the Mount Vernon Baptist Church (Teays Valley) chapel, with Pastor Joe Seese speaking. The Ministers' Wives' Fellowship hopes to see all wives at Women's Day - the American Baptist Women's Ministries of West Virginia Pre-Convention event at the Mount Vernon Baptist Church sanctuary on Thursday, October 21, 2021 at the Mount Vernon Baptist Church sanctuary.

October 2021

OCTOBER 1 - Tracie Emerick, Outreach administrative assistant, West Virginia Baptist Convention
OCTOBER 2 - Juan Aragon, International Ministries' (IM) Global Servant
OCTOBER 3 - Debbie Myers, International Ministries' (IM) Global Servant to Mexico
OCTOBER 4 - The ministry of Bethel Baptist Church; Todd Pauley, pastor (Coal River)
OCTOBER 5 - The ministry of Gentry Baptist Church; Lewis Sanson, pastor (Fayette)
OCTOBER 6 - The ministry of Fort Spring Baptist Church; Joseph Morgan, pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh)
OCTOBER 7 - The ministry of Holly River Baptist Church; Michael Cool, pastor (Elk Valley)
OCTOBER 8 - Patti Long, International Ministries' (IM) Global Servant to Mexico
OCTOBER 9 - Baptist Campus Ministry Fall Retreat happens this weekend at Camp Cowen
OCTOBER 10 - The ministry of Glenville First Baptist Church; John Putnam, pastor (Little Kanawha)
OCTOBER 11 - David Bush, chair, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Leadership Commission
OCTOBER 12 - Jonathan Nambu, International Ministries' (IM) Global Servant to the Philippines
OCTOBER 13 - Kihomi Ngwemi, International Ministries' (IM) Global Servant to Haiti
OCTOBER 14 - The ministry of Handley Baptist Church; Cook Baldwin, pastor (Kanawha Valley)
OCTOBER 15 - Jon Good, International Ministries' (IM) Global Servant to Hungary
OCTOBER 16 - The ministry of Wheeling First Baptist Church; Darrin Wright, pastor (Panhandle)
OCTOBER 17 - Nelson Fisher, site maintenance manager, Parchment Valley Conference Center
OCTOBER 18 - The ministry of Independence Baptist Church; Carl Trickett, pastor (Goshen)
OCTOBER 19 - The ministry of New Baptist Church; Trent Eastman, pastor (Guyandotte)
OCTOBER 20 - Patricia Vannoy, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Discipleship Commission
OCTOBER 21 - The West Virginia Baptist Convention Annual Meeting begins today at Mount Vernon Baptist Church (Teays Valley)
OCTOBER 22 - The ministry of Parchment Valley Baptist Church; Matt Ash, pastor (Good Hope)
OCTOBER 23 - The ministry of Mount Urim Baptist Church; Larry Gawthrop, pastor (Hopewell)
OCTOBER 24 - The ministry of Jordan Run Baptist Church; Charles Stoner, Jr., pastor (Eastern)
OCTOBER 25 - Phil Wayman, vice-chair, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Outreach Commission
OCTOBER 26 - The ministry of Smithville Baptist Church; Charles Leisure, interim pastor (Harrisville)
OCTOBER 27 - The ministry of Freeman's Creek Baptist Church; Joshua Radcliff, pastor (Broad Run)
OCTOBER 28 - The ministry of New Life Ministries; Charles Chipps, pastor (Fairmont)
OCTOBER 29 - Glen Chapman, International Ministries' (IM) Global Servant to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
OCTOBER 30 - Carol Moats, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Stewardship Commission
OCTOBER 31 - The ministry of Hepzibah Baptist Church (Judson)

November 2021

NOVEMBER 1 - The ministry of Rockcastle Baptist Church; Silas Mullins, Jr., pastor (Rockcastle)
NOVEMBER 2 - Jeni Pedzinski, International Ministries' (IM) Global Servant to Thailand
NOVEMBER 3 - Molly Juarez, International Ministries' (IM) Global Servant to El Salvador
NOVEMBER 4 - Yvette Shafer, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Stewardship Commission
NOVEMBER 5 - The ministry of Goshen Baptist Church; Dan Meadows, pastor (Goshen)
NOVEMBER 6 - The Fall Children's Rally happens today at Parchment Valley Conference Center
NOVEMBER 7 - Sandy Foster Currey, chair, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Discipleship Commission
NOVEMBER 8 - The ministry of Welcome Baptist Church; Chad Raines, pastor (Judson)
NOVEMBER 9 - The ministry of Kenova First Baptist Church (Twelve Pole)
NOVEMBER 10 - The ministry of Union Valley Baptist Church (Fairmont)
NOVEMBER 11 - Remember our veterans who have served our country so faithfully
NOVEMBER 12 - The Junior High Convention begins today at Parchment Valley Conference Center
NOVEMBER 13 - The ministry of Victory Baptist Church (Broad Run)
NOVEMBER 14 - The ministry of Pea Ridge Baptist Church; Dan Londeree, pastor (Guyandotte)
NOVEMBER 15 - The ministry of Pine Grove Baptist Church (Parkersburg)
NOVEMBER 16 - Stan Slade, International Ministries' (IM) Global Consultant
NOVEMBER 17 - The ministry of Hopewell Baptist Church; Andrew Robinson, pastor (Good Hope)
NOVEMBER 18 - The ministry of New Hope Baptist Church (Elk Valley)
NOVEMBER 19 - Cathy Fisher, member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Leadership Commission
NOVEMBER 20 - The ministry of Old Greenbrier Baptist Church; Derek Hall, pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh)
NOVEMBER 21 - The ministry of Mount Carmel Baptist Church; Leon Brown, pastor (Union)
NOVEMBER 22 - Jillene Narraway, associate director of Youth and Camping, West Virginia Baptist Convention
NOVEMBER 23 - The ministry of Starcher Baptist Church; David Workman, pastor (Kanawha Valley)
NOVEMBER 24 - Ruth Fox, International Ministries' (IM) Global Consultant
NOVEMBER 25 - Count your blessings ... name them one by one!
NOVEMBER 26 - Kay Hensley, chair, Baptist Campus Ministry Board and member, West Virginia Baptist Convention Christian Outreach Commission
NOVEMBER 27 - The ministry of Summersville Baptist Church; Dana Gatewood, pastor (Hopewell)
NOVEMBER 28 - The ministry of The Chapel; Chris Moles, pastor (Teays Valley)
NOVEMBER 29 - Christina Muteyo, International Ministries' (IM) Global Servant to Zimbabwe
NOVEMBER 30 - Teresa Miller, assistant director of Operations, Parchment Valley Conference Center and office manager, West Virginia Baptist Convention

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

Upcoming Events

OCTOBER

October 1

**West Virginia Baptist Convention
Executive Committee**

Parchment Valley Conference
Center/Santroek Building

October 2

**West Virginia Baptist Convention
Executive Board and Commission
Meetings**

Parchment Valley Conference
Center/Santroek Building

October 8-10

Baptist Campus Ministry Fall Retreat
Camp Cowen

October 21-22

**West Virginia Baptist Convention 156th
Annual Meeting**

Mount Vernon Baptist Church, Hurricane

October 23

Intentional Grandparenting Seminar

Emmanuel Baptist Church, Charleston

October 30

**Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies
Intro to Missions (Mod-03) One-Day
Class**

Parchment Valley Conference Center
and Zoom

October 30

Intentional Grandparenting Seminar

Hurricane First Baptist Church

NOVEMBER

November 6

Fall Children's Rally

Parchment Valley Conference Center

November 13

Intentional Grandparenting Seminar

Fairmont Baptist Temple

November 20

Intentional Grandparenting Seminar

Vienna Baptist Church

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.

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156th Annual Meeting Protocols

While we are excited to gather in-person at the Annual Meeting, we are aware the coronavirus is still with us and is very contagious. In order to help keep our West Virginia Baptist Convention (WVBC) family safe, we will strive to maintain the following safety measures during the event:

- Social distancing will be observed, when possible.
- To protect others, we ask that you please wear masks when distancing is not possible. Hand sanitizer and masks will be available.
- We ask that you sit with those you travel with during the main sessions.
- If you are running a fever or showing symptoms, we request that you not attend in-person and instead join us online.

Note: All main sessions will also be shown online via our livestream.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in making this year's Annual Meeting safe. We are excited to gather once again with our WVBC family!

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