

# The West Virginia Baptist Newsletter

December 2021 - January 2022

## Intentionally Engaging Communities for Christ



More than 250 people gathered this year at Mount Vernon Baptist Church (Teays Valley) for our 156th Annual Meeting. Even more watched online as we celebrated how God has worked since our last in-person gathering two years ago. It was also a great time of reconnection and renewal, and it was an opportunity to unveil next year's emphasis of: **Intentionally Engaging Communities for Christ**.

During his Executive Minister Address, Mike Sisson noted that the pandemic did not necessarily create any new ministry problems, but rather it brought to the surface many of the problems that had already existed. One such problem is the fact that, pre-pandemic, some surveys estimated as much as 88% of our state was unchurched (a statistic that is in danger of trending even higher). While we have recently launched a new church planting initiative, in partnership with *Stadia Church Planting*, we also recognized there are numerous opportunities for local churches to start microchurches in their own contexts. Microchurches are simply micro-expressions of church aimed at meeting people where they already are. During the Annual Meeting, several examples were given of microchurches that individuals from our West Virginia Baptist Convention (WVBC) family have started. One takes place in a fire station, another in a hospital and another at a football field. Each of these examples are reproducible, as well as effective in **intentionally engaging communities for Christ**.

Another problem that surfaced was the fact that churches often lack a clear discipleship pathway, defined as *an intentional plan or strategy to make sure people are being disciplined*. A testimony was shared by Caleb Villers on how he has benefited from the WVBC's pathway. There was also a workshop offered to help provide churches with resources to develop their own plan. In a time when many churches were forced to go online, it quickly became apparent that a defined pathway is necessary for **intentionally engaging communities for Christ**.

Our Annual Meeting keynote speaker, Jeremy Myers, identified another challenge many churches face: the disconnect between generations. He shared about some practical ways that he has helped senior adults and youth connect, but he admitted success is more likely when it is initiated by the senior adults toward the youth. Not only is this a significant need in churches, but also needed throughout our state. In West Virginia, nearly 60% of grandparents are involved in raising their grandchildren. While much could be said as to the reason for this scenario, the reality is that this presents a great opportunity for discipleship! Biblical, intentional grandparenting is a great way to **intentionally engage communities for Christ**.

One last opportunity that was shared was about leaving a legacy. Over the past 156 years, there are hundreds of legacy stories that could be shared about how people gave of their time, their intellect and their resources to impact the next generation. We as a WVBC family have greatly benefitted from those legacies. As generations pass, it has become increasingly apparent that we need to consider how best to establish our own legacies. In what ways does God want to use us to **intentionally engage future communities for Christ?**

It was great to once again be together in-person with our WVBC family! We are already looking forward to doing it again next year. However, between now and then, we have a lot of work to do! In a state that is quickly aging, and in a world that is desperate for hope, may the words of Jesus resound: *"I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest!"* (John 4:35).

In 2022, let's continue doing Christ's work together by **INTENTIONALLY ENGAGING COMMUNITIES FOR CHRIST!**

*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**

by Mike Sisson, Executive Minister



West Virginia  
Baptist Convention

## We Have a New App!



Scan this QR with your smart-phone to download our new WVBC app!

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## Christmas ... shared

For Christians, who are eternally grateful for the precious gift of their salvation and promise of everlasting life, Christmas is a very special occasion indeed! It is that time of the year when we remember that the God we love, and more importantly who loves us, sent His Son to redeem us from our sin and its terrible consequences. We celebrate with joy the birth of Jesus Christ the Savior for the entire world.

The Christmas story, as it is recorded in the Holy Scriptures, is an amazing account of that glorious day when our Savior, Jesus Christ, first arrived on the scene in the form of a babe laid in a manger, surrounded not by priests and kings, but rather by sheep, donkeys and cows. However, something else took place that night that was also without precedent anywhere in Scripture. It was the grand and spectacular announcement of Christ's arrival by an entire host of angels! Here is the account:

*And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this [shall be] a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. (Luke 2:8-14 KJV)*

Wow! A huge angelic choir surrounded by the radiant glory of God shouting and singing the good news of the birth of a Savior for everyone! Clearly, God was not going to let this great and joyful event go unannounced! In fact, we later learn that wise-men from the east saw a remarkable star and followed it a great distance just to see the Savior. Even the evil king Herod was made aware of the location of the Savior's birth by the chief priests and scribes. Someone once said, "Good news travels fast." And in the case of our Savior's arrival, God made sure this was the case.

I was thinking, since we [Christians] are the direct beneficiaries of the coming of Jesus Christ our Savior, and since it is clear that God, Himself, thought it was an event worthy of the utmost publicity, perhaps we should take this opportunity to make certain we share this Good News with as many people as we can. After all is that not what Jesus asked us to do when He said, "you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"? (Acts 1:8b NIV)

In 2022, the WVBC Family will be encouraged to be "Intentionally Engaging Communities for Christ." This includes finding creative ways to do just what God did on the occasion of the Savior's birth: to find as many opportunities as possible to share the Good News of Christ's gift so that people walking in darkness might see the great light! And those on the verge of hopelessness might receive the ultimate gift of hope!

This Christmas season let us make a concerted effort to make sure unchurched people are invited to meet our Savior and pray that they will come to embrace Him as Lord and Savior of their life.

Merry Christmas,  
Mike



## Officers Installed During our 156th Annual Meeting



*Keith George, right, installed our new officers during the fourth session of our WVBC Annual Meeting.*

On October 22nd, as part of the business session of our 156th Annual Meeting, Cari Pauley was installed as the next president of our West Virginia Baptist Convention (WVBC) family. Cari is a full-time teacher at Lincoln County High School and is a long-time member of Forks of Coal Missionary Baptist Church (Coal River) in Alum Creek, West Virginia.

Per our bylaws, the succession plan of president follows the pattern of pastor - layman - laywoman, each serving one year terms. Also installed during the meeting was Don Biram (pastor, first vice-president), Erich Reggi (layman, second vice-president), David Hoge (secretary) and Todd McClure (treasurer).

Immediately following the installation, outgoing president, Ryan Stoner, presented Lois Merritt with a plaque to thank her for her faithful dedication to our WVBC family. Lois has served as the WVBC secretary for the past 18 years. After a minute-long standing ovation, Lois replied, "It has been the greatest joy of my life!" We are grateful for the leadership offered by both Ryan and Lois during this past year.

Would you join us by praying for our new officers? Ask God to grant them with wisdom as we continue **doing Christ's work together.**



*Ryan Stoner presents Lois Merritt with a plaque to thank her for her faithful dedication.*

## A New Library at the Parchment Valley Conference Center

**The Rev. Dr. William R. Thomas Memorial Library** was officially dedicated on Wednesday, September 29th at the Parchment Valley Conference Center. This event was the culmination of several years of discernment and planning.

As the host of Palmer Theological Seminary's West Virginia Program, Parchment Valley was already the recipient of a donation from the seminary's library. Shelves were built a few years ago in a hallway in the Santrock Education Building by Northwest Area Minister Mark McCloy. However, regular

donations of books soon overran the limited space.

Before the recent pandemic, the Parchment Valley Board, acting upon the recommendation of Assistant Director Teresa Miller, decided to utilize the upstairs space in the Santrock Education Building to house the books. It was around the same time that Mary Thomas donated numerous volumes of books following the untimely death of her husband.

Dr. Thomas was a 1974 graduate of the seminary (then Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary) and for several years coordinated the West Virginia Program. Naming the library in his memory seemed to be a fitting tribute to his rich legacy. He also had served as pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church (Parkersburg), as well as an interim for numerous churches within our West Virginia Baptist Convention (WVBC) family.

The dedication ceremony included remarks from the Interim Dean of the seminary, Kimberlee Johnson, and program director, Allan Copenhaver. The last three Executive Ministers of the WVBC, Lloyd Hamblin, David Carrico and Mike Sisson, also shared special memories about Dr. Thomas.

The library is available to all pastors throughout West Virginia who need access to theological works. For specific availability, please contact Parchment Valley Conference Center.

To learn more about Palmer Theological Seminary's West Virginia Program, contact Allan Copenhaver at [rcopenha@eastern.edu](mailto:rcopenha@eastern.edu).



*Allan Copenhaver presents a plaque to Mary Thomas during the library dedication ceremony.*

## Over 150 Attended Our Fall Children's Rally

Written by Emily Fordyce  
volunteer, WVBC Children's Ministry

It was a chilly but beautiful day on Saturday, November 6th. But it was the perfect day to host our annual Fall Children's Rally at the Parchment Valley Conference Center. In total, 111 children and 42 leaders from 17 churches rallied together to learn about God and grow in His ways.

With the theme, "It's a Zoo Out There!" the children were challenged with five zoo-themed lessons that taught them how to better seek the Lord. These were reinforced with various stations that offered them tools on how to live these lessons out. They were also challenged to quote their memory verse in their head as they shuffled between the Greenlee Activity Center and the Santrock Education Center. This year's memory verse was Jeremiah 29:13: "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

With each of our rallies, a mission project is provided for the children to participate in. This year's project was collecting school supplies for the Bob Burdette Center, an afterschool program housed at Emmanuel Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) in Charleston. In total, the children donated over 400 items! This is always a highlight for many of our groups.

When asked about their favorite part of the day, several children said they enjoyed the crafts - especially making the parrot. Others said they enjoyed the games, others enjoyed learning



Children enjoy a time of games and interactive worship in the Greenlee Activity Center at Parchment Valley Conference Center.

to peel bananas with their feet and, of course, everyone enjoyed lunch!

Children are such an important responsibility given to us by God. It is an honor and a privilege to be able to serve these children and help them grow in their walks with Christ!

**We hope you can join us for our Spring Children's Rally on March 5th at Parchment Valley. These rallies are an important way in which we intentionally engage communities for Christ.**

## Junior High Convention

We often underestimate the power of community and of gathering with our brothers and sisters in Christ - Junior High Convention was a poignant reminder of that truth!

*"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33)

Without a doubt, we know that our world is full of trouble, heartache and pain. Youth are not exempt from experiencing that turmoil. In Christ alone, we are offered peace in the midst of whatever we face - whether joys or struggles.



Eric Seckman and Kyle Huffman lead a time of worship.

On November 12-13, students in grades 6-9 gathered at Parchment Valley Conference Center. Coming from eight different churches from around the state, the Lord powerfully met us as we gathered together for music, crazy games, laughter, food, discussions, worship, scripture and teaching... all in community. During this year's Junior High Convention, the Lord reached another generation of students with the hope of the gospel and the call of His true love and perfect plan for their lives.

Eric Seckman (*pastor of worship and student ministries, South Parkersburg Baptist*) spoke about the importance of having a strong foundation. It is on this foundation that we build our lives, being grounded in Christ alone. With His presence always with us, we are never alone! The Spirit, almost like a heartbeat, is constantly calling us, leading our lives and interceding on our behalf.

The truth of Scripture through the worship also rang loud and clear. Kyle Huffman (*pastor of student ministries, Oakwood Baptist Church*) led us in worship throughout the weekend.

We are truly blessed in the West Virginia Baptist Convention. When we gather as a family of churches, Christ's presence is powerfully in our midst.

**Mark your calendars for February 25-27, 2022, and join us for Senior High Convention at New Baptist Church.**

Jill Narraway,  
Associate Director of Camping and Youth

## BCM: God is Opening Doors for the Gospel

One of the challenges we faced last year was the fact that Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM) could not gather in-person on several of our campuses across the state. That made it hard to meet and recruit new students. However, this year has been a different story and we are excited about how God is granting us favor and opening doors for the gospel.

At Alderson Broaddus, for example, their BCM was asked to participate in several of the school's homecoming activities. They won the school sidewalk competition, filling the sidewalks with Bible verses. They also celebrated one of their members, Eyana Dixon, being crowned as homecoming queen!

At Marshall, they were also invited to participate in the school's homecoming activities, and one of their members, Caroline Kinder, was named Miss Marshall. Those activities and other events have allowed them to meet several new students.

At Fairmont State, their BCM has organized several campus outreaches, including one where they partnered with other campus ministries to hand out hot chocolate and donuts. This has opened doors for them to meet and serve over 100 students and faculty members.

At Concord, Tim Mitchem is in his first semester as the new associate, and they have dozens of new students who are attending BCM.

At the University of Charleston, they were once again able to host their annual Thanksgiving Dinner and serve several dozen international students. They missed doing this last year.



*Fairmont State BCM participating in a campus-wide outreach event.*

At Potomac State, Marissa Earle, their BCM president, was recently awarded the school's first ever *Climb Higher Award*, an award which recognizes resiliency, kindness, a positive attitude and an outstanding work ethic inside and outside of the classroom. Marissa helped start BCM on that campus just two years ago.

We are grateful for the doors God has opened for us this year, and we look forward to seeing which doors He opens in the spring semester. Would you join us by praying for these new relationships to deepen and for more lives to be changed?

Thank you for your support of BCM, where our mission is to **"change lives that change the world."**

*Rob Ely,  
Director of Student Ministries*

## Internship Opportunities

### Are you a young adult interested in exploring a call into ministry?

We have internship opportunities available for both those interested in exploring a call to foreign missions and those interested in exploring a call to local church ministry. For both types of internships, you will receive resources pertinent to your interests, be assigned a mentor and have the opportunity to carry out your internship alongside one of our global partners or within a West Virginia Baptist Convention church.

**The deadline to apply is December 31st.** To learn more, scan the QR code below or visit [www.wvbc.org](http://www.wvbc.org).

### Apply to be a Missionary Intern

Customized 3-6 week internships alongside one of our full-time missionary partners



### Summer Ministry Internships

An opportunity to help young adults discern their calling to ministry by giving them opportunities to serve within our family of churches and placing them under the guidance of mentors.





West Virginia  
Baptist Convention

# Training Annual Event

Saturday, February 5, 2022

Parchment Valley Conference Center

## REGISTRATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Church: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Note: Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies students are eligible to receive course credit for participating in two workshops. In order to get credit, please mark the program you want the credit applied to:*

- Congregational Transformation (Three-Year Program)  
\* Must take two discipleship workshops (marked with \* )
- General Studies (Two-Year Program)  
\* Pick any two workshops from the list

### REGISTRATION FEE:

- \$25 Annual Training Event Fee
- \$27 Additional Fee for School of Christian Studies (SCS)  
or
- \$37 Additional Fee for SCS Couple

If your church is planning to bring 10 or more individuals, contact our office to receive a discount.

## WORKSHOP LIST

Select one morning and afternoon workshop

### Morning Workshops (10:15 AM)

- Discipleship Pathway for Children and Youth \*
- Leading Intentional Engagement and Growth \*
- Intentionally Engaging College Students \*
- Intentionally Engaging Communities through Microchurches
- Exploring a Call to Ministry
- Community Ministry
- Deacons
- Church Clerks
- Treasurers and Financial Secretaries

### Afternoon Workshops (1:00 PM)

- Disciples Making Disciples \*
- Church Remissioning
- Growing Your Online Presence
- Church Security: Grants and Resources
- Re-launching Your Global Missions Program
- Setting Boundaries When Dealing with Addiction
- Leaving a Legacy: Estate Planning
- Intentionally Mentoring Young Leaders
- Trustees

## EARLY REGISTRATION ENDS FRIDAY, JANUARY 28

Registrations received after January 28 will not include lunch.

**Make checks payable and mail to:**  
 West Virginia Baptist Convention  
 P.O. Box 1019  
 Parkersburg, WV 26102

Or register online at: [www.wvbc.org](http://www.wvbc.org)

## SCHEDULE

9:00 AM	Registration - Hill Hall
9:30 AM	Worship - Hill Hall
10:15 AM	Morning Workshops
Noon	Lunch
1:00 PM	Afternoon Workshops
2:30 PM	Dismissal

# Global Missions Update: We Are the Kingdom Now

*Written by Keith and Deborah Myers  
Global Servants, International Ministries*

Life certainly has slowed down in the past year and half. Pre-COVID we were full throttle and over our heads in ministry. The scope of our ministry covers four states and 35 churches in southern central Mexico. There is no one here to say speed up or slow down in ministry or life. This is something left to our own discretion. The sudden stop turned out to be a blessing for both of us. The initial pause gave us the opportunity to reflect on our spiritual, mental and physical health; think Psalm 51:10: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." As travel restrictions have lightened, we have gradually began revamping our travels and ministries; however, at a substantially diminished pace.

Over this time of contemplation, we asked our pastors to reflect as well. As many of you know, we were able to launch small family gardens in various communities of the Council of Rural Indigenous Evangelicals of Mexico, AR, (CICEM) to promote healthy lifestyles. Additionally, our pastors asked us for a basic training manual on baptisms, communion and baby dedications. We have had regional events in each of our zones equipping and training the pastors in these areas. Our hope is to have these trainings completed by the first quarter of next year.

This past August, Hurricane Grace impacted several of our communities in the northern mountains of Puebla. Some families lost roofs and were inundated with mud. In collaboration with International Ministries global servant, Peter McCurdy, The Baptist

Seminary of Mexico City and other missionaries (Hil and Mathilde Assad), we were able to provide 500 blankets, replace roofing for 30 families and distribute grocery packets for 50 families.

Jesus is the king of the kingdom whose body we are, and so we are the kingdom now. It is God who reveals where He is at work and invites you to join. We are grateful for the prayers and financial support of the West Virginia Baptist Convention churches and know that our ministry is not possible without you.



*Keith and Deborah Myers are International Ministries global servants.*

## Camp Cowen 2022 Schedule

Summer Kick-Off - May 13-15	Younger Midler - June 3-5
Junior 1 - June 5-11	Junior High 1 - June 12-18
Junior 2 - June 19-25	High School 1 - June 26-July 2
Junior High 2 - July 3-9	Senior Day - July 9
High School 2 - July 10-16	Raleigh/Rockcastle - July 17-21
Family Camp - July 22-25	Older Midler - July 26-29
Camp Global - July 29-31	AB Men's Camp - August 5-8

**Registration will open early spring at [www.campcowen.org](http://www.campcowen.org).**

# 156th Annual Meeting



The American Baptist Men at Men's Day



The gymnasium was full for the Baptist Campus Ministry banquet



More than a dozen new pastors were recognized



Jerry Losh led a workshop on Intentional Grandparenting



Rick Bergdoll delivered the annual sermon



Jeremy Myers served as the keynote speaker



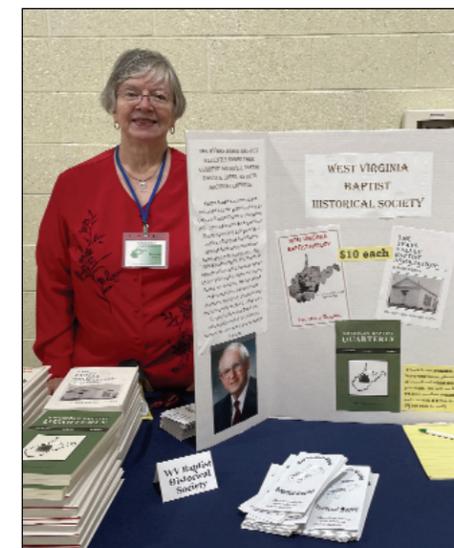
The 2021 Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies graduates



Robert Keane was presented this year's Ward W. Hibbs Award



The WV Baptist Education Society meeting during breakfast



Koneda Devrick at the Historical Society display



Ron McClung led the time of communion



The Mount Vernon Baptist Church choir



Mike Sisson gave his annual Executive Minister Address



The Annual Meeting presents a great opportunity for fellowship



The Minister's Wives Fellowship luncheon



Jim Adkins (left) speaks with global servant Rick Gutierrez (right)



Several of our WVBC officers talking during a break



Upcoming global servant, Sarah McCloy, was introduced



Tony Nutter served as the worship leader

## A Microchurch at Capital High School

A **microchurch** is simply *a micro expression of a church*. Fulfilling the command of Jesus in Matthew 28, their purpose is evangelism, discipleship and multiplication. Rather than spending all our efforts on programming and trying to attract people to our existing church, we instead disciple and train ordinary people and send them to be "missionaries" in places where God has already planted them.

One such example of a microchurch started several years ago on the sports teams at Capital High School in Charleston. Jeff Biddle had already built relationships with several of the athletes on the Capital football and basketball teams, which provided him an opportunity to get more involved through supplying those teams with pre-game meals. Over time, he was able to disciple many of the student-athletes who went on to disciple others on their team and in their community. Quickly, disciples were being multiplied throughout both teams.

Jeff recalls that a fun tradition emerged where if someone wanted to know how to surrender their life to Christ, they would all meet together at a local Chinese restaurant. These conversations led to several dozen students deciding to get baptized, which then led to an increased need for discipleship. Eventually, this group decided to plant New Hope Community Church in Charleston, which still has a major emphasis on sports ministry. Now, many of these students are serving as leaders within the church, as well as serving as coaches and mentors for the same teams they played on several years ago.

Not all microchurches end up as church plants. In fact, most do not. But the reason microchurches are so often successful is that they help us flip our traditional ministry mindset by tak-

ing the church to the community, rather than expecting the community to come to us. Across our state, microchurches are popping up in neighborhoods, coffee shops, gyms, places of employment, soccer fields and more.

**Are you interested in learning how you and your church can start some microchurches? Contact David Hulme at [hulme@wvbc.org](mailto:hulme@wvbc.org).**

Microchurches are one of the many ways that we are **intentionally engaging communities for Christ.**



*A group of students playing basketball at the North Charleston Community Center.*

## Clara Lamp - Still Holding the Rope

Forty years after her death, Clara Lamp continues to hold the rope for ministries and churches within our West Virginia Baptist Convention (WVBC) family.

Clara was born on June 20, 1883, to George C.S. Lamp and Eliza H. (Medley) Lamp. She was the fourth of five children -- James, John, Cora, Clara and Jesse Doris. The family lived on a farm in southwestern Wood County. They attended New England Baptist Church (Parkersburg) and several generations of the family are buried in the church cemetery.

As a young adult, Clara moved to Parkersburg where she worked as a telephone operator and later as a seamstress and office assistant for a doctor. When Clara's father died in 1933, she and her sister, Jesse, returned to manage the family farm. Jesse



*Clara Lamp is still holding the rope for New England Baptist Church*

died in 1948 and soon afterward Clara moved back to Parkersburg, where she joined Parkersburg First Baptist Church (Parkersburg). It is uncertain when she sold the farm, but after doing so, she hired Attorney Roger Redmond (also a member of Parkersburg First Baptist Church) to put her affairs in order. Clara's desire was that three organizations be named as beneficiaries -- New England Baptist Church was to receive one half of her estate, Parkersburg First Baptist Church was to receive one quarter and the newly formed West Virginia Baptist Conference Center (Parchment Valley) was also to receive one quarter. The sole agent of the estate was to be the WVBC.

Clara Lamp died on April 7, 1978. She is buried at the New England Cemetery next to several of her family members. The initial estate of \$121,644 was invested so quarterly disbursements would come from the growth. Today, the principal has increased to more than \$770,000. Because of that investment, Clara Lamp is continuing to hold the rope for each of these ministries.

**Did you know you could also setup an estate to support your church or any of our WVBC ministries?** At the WVBC office, we currently manage several dozen estates, just like Clara Lamp's, that continue to have a significant impact on the work we do together. The initial investment may not be large, but over time the investment can grow, allowing you to support Christ's work for generations to come!

**To learn more about how you can setup a legacy gift, contact Todd McClure at [todd@wvbc.org](mailto:todd@wvbc.org).**

## Seeking Locations for National Men's Prayer Breakfast



**2022 NATIONAL MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST**

**FEBRUARY 26, 2022**

**VARIOUS LOCATIONS AROUND THE STATE**

In-person locations throughout our state are now being sought for this important day in the American Baptist Men's ministry year; a time for our West Virginia Baptist Convention (WVBC) men to gather together for prayer and Bible study, while enjoying breakfast with friends.

If your church is interested in hosting a prayer breakfast on that date, please let us know. The reported sites will be posted on our website and publicized via e-mail. We can also help provide you with speakers and materials to help you coordinate your breakfast.



*2019 National Men's Prayer Breakfast at Crab Orchard Baptist Church*

This year's prayer breakfast offering will go to support the WVBC's Ministry Internship Program, which is instrumental in raising up the next generation of leaders. This offering aligns with our mission of seeing more men raised up and brought into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ, our Lord.

We hope you can join us on February 26th! Gather the men of your church and let's intentionally engage our communities for Christ with a morning of prayer!

**For more information, contact Frank Miller at 304-372-3675 or at [miller@wvbc.org](mailto:miller@wvbc.org).**

# Annual Bible Conference

## "Life in the Wilderness" - The Book of Numbers

Featuring: Dr. Trent Eastman

Saturday, March 5, 2022

Parchment Valley Conference Center

Register online at [wvbc.org](http://wvbc.org)



# Southwest Area News

*Evan Arkell*, Southwest Area Minister

## Two More Ordinations

It is always a blessing to see our associations and churches continue to recognize God's call to ministry through the practice of ordination. We continue to see folks stepping out to



*Pastor Don Stennett was ordained by Hampton Baptist Church.*

answer God's call on their lives, which is quite refreshing in these times where it can be a struggle to fill open pulpits. Since the last newsletter, following the Kanawha Valley Association's ordination council vote to move forward, Hampton Baptist Church hosted Pastor Don Stennett's ordination service. It was also a blessing for the Guyandotte Association's ordination committee to meet with Fifth Avenue Baptist Church's Associate Pastor of Youth and Young Adults, DaVontae Edwards, to recognize his ordination.

## Celebrating Anniversaries

While all of our churches turned another year older this year, it was an honor for me to attend a special homecoming service celebrating 50 years of ministry at North Hills Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley). On the same day, Dr. Mike Sisson was at Judson Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) as they celebrated 100 years of ministry!

God continues to bless us all in so many ways, and so as we gather through this season in our homes, churches and other places to celebrate the birth of our Savior, let us be a blessing to those around us who need the light and love of Christ in their lives. May the Lord bless you through this Christmas season and in 2022!

# Northeast Area News

*David Hulme*, Northeast Area Minister

## Let's Celebrate!

There have been a lot of things to celebrate throughout the Northeast Area...

### Simpson Creek Celebrates its 250th Anniversary (plus one)

Simpson Creek (Union) celebrated 250 years (plus one) of ministry in a special worship service, September 12. The "plus one" was a result of their not being able to celebrate their 250th last year.

### "Cookies for a Cause" Project

Elkins First Baptist Church (Union) celebrated the importance of healthcare workers by assembling 151 bags containing cookies and coffee and delivering them to Davis Memorial Hospital.

### Baptism at Freeman's Creek

Freeman's Creek (Broad Run) celebrated the baptism of eight people who gave their hearts to Christ through the church's Ignite youth ministry.

### Pastor Appreciation Month

Many of our churches honored the ministry of their pastor this month. They showed their appreciation in a variety of ways including dinners, picnics and gifts.

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*CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: 1) Dr. C. Michael Hopkins, Senior Pastor, accepts a certificate from WVBC Executive Minister, Dr. Michael Sisson, recognizing Simpson Creek's 250 years of ministry. 2) Members of First Baptist Church, Elkins, deliver gift bags to Davis Healthcare workers. 3) Pastor Josh Radcliff and Earle Garrett baptize a young person from Freeman's Creek. 4) First Baptist Church, Petersburg, honors Pastor*

# Northwest Area News

*Mark McCloy*, Northwest Area Minister

## *Celebrating - More Than a Lifetime*



*Auburn Baptist Church celebrated their 175th Anniversary this year.*

Many years - perhaps even most years - we have some churches celebrating significant anniversaries. The purpose of these celebrations is not just to reflect on being old, but to think back over the years of service and rejoice in all the ministry that

## Southeast Area News

*Jim Anderson*, Southeast Area Minister

### *Charlie Bolen Receives the 9th Annual James Anderson Sr. Bi-vocational Pastor Award*

During our West Virginia Baptist Convention (WVBC) Annual Meeting, I, along with my sister, Mary Jo Slater, had the honor and pleasure to present our father's award to Charlie Bolen, pastor of Judson Baptist Church, Belle (Kanawha Valley).

Charlie's life of service to our Lord began in July of 1987 when he was baptized and later acknowledged the call of God to preach the Word through Sutton Baptist Church while graduating from Glenville State College with a BA in Business Administration. From there, he graduated from the Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science and, having married the love of his life, Kelli, moved to Richwood, WV. It was there where he worked as a funeral director for White Funeral Home and became the pastor of Little Laurel Baptist Church, where he was ordained into pastoral ministry.

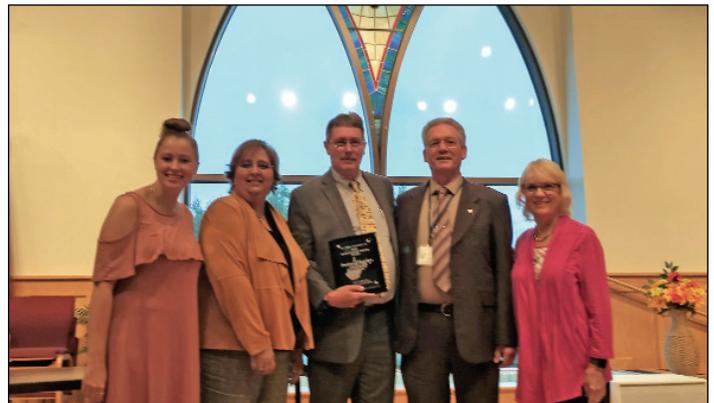
In the summer of 1996, Charlie answered the call to pastor Grass Lick Baptist Church in Kenna, and it was there where he and Kelli welcomed four children into their family: Karlee, Jodee, Andrue and Maloree. Currently they now also have two grandsons, Danny and Reed.

In 2005, Charlie was called to pastor Judson Baptist Church in Belle. In addition to serving as senior pastor, he also began his school bus driving career for Kanawha County Schools. Currently while still serving as pastor of Judson Baptist Church and driving the school bus, he also teaches and trains new and existing bus drivers through the West Virginia Department of Education.

God has accomplished in this place. In many ways, our human birthdays are sort of the same way. A birthday is more than a celebration of longevity. It is also a special time of rejoicing in life.

What has God been doing recently, not only in your life, but in the life of your church? One of the great things about the life of the church is that it can span more than one human lifetime. As you think about the history of your church, remember the fact that it is His-story (Jesus') of how God has acted in the lives of countless people. Going back and looking over some of these stories can be amazing. How did they used to do things where you worship? How did your church come into existence? Who founded it and why? Who helped them? Who was there to celebrate their first Sunday?

For those of you in my area celebrating anniversaries this year (Auburn, First Baptist Spencer, First Baptist New Martinsville), may God bless your remembrance of the past, but more importantly, may He guide you into a blessed future as you serve Him.



*Charlie Bolen is presented the award during our WVBC Annual Meeting at Mount Vernon Baptist Church.*

In 2019, Charlie was diagnosed with bladder cancer and after two years of surgery and treatments is cancer-free, thanks to the prayers of many within our WVBC family. As he continues to get checked every three months, he and his family still covet your prayers.

This upcoming May 16th, Charlie and Kelli will celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary and prayerfully will be in Israel on a trip led by Ron McClung, pastor of Mount Vernon Baptist Church (Teays Valley).

Charlie desires that everyone know that apart from Jesus he is nothing and without Jesus Christ he can do nothing. Charlie quotes, "All glory belongs to Jesus Christ! Whether behind the pulpit or behind the steering wheel of the school bus, it has always been, is and will always be ALL ABOUT JESUS!"

September 2021 - October 2021

**RICHARD DALE ALIFF**, 87, formerly of Williamson, died September 4, 2021. He was a very devoted and faithful member of Williamson First Baptist Church (Logan-Mingo).

**PEGGY ANN BRANHAM**, 84, of Ragland, died September 14, 2021. She was a faithful member of Connolly Memorial Baptist Church (Logan-Mingo) for more than 50 years, where she served as a deaconess, a choir member and a member of the Women's Fellowship Club.

**LOUIS GARRETT GAUNCH**, 51, of Barboursville, died September 27, 2021. He was a member of Pea Ridge Baptist Church (Guyandotte), where he served his church in countless ways, including teaching children, serving in leadership and, best of all, making muffins for his church.

**HAROLD PARSONS GOTHARD**, 94, of Poca, died October 6, 2021. He was a member of Poca Baptist Church (Teays Valley), where he served as a deacon and choir director and enjoyed the fellowship of his church family.

**RONALD JUNIOR HAUGHT**, 82, of Fairview, died September 20, 2021. He was a member of St. Paul Baptist Church (Fairmont), where he served as a deacon and taught Sunday School.

**MISTY DAWN NICHOLS HENSON**, 40, formerly of Martin County, KY, died September 21, 2021. She was a member of Williamson First Baptist Church (Logan-Mingo).

**JOSEPH MICHAEL PAUGH**, 70, of Weston, died October 10, 2021. He was a member of Murphy's Creek Baptist Church (Broad Run), where he served as a deacon and an assistant Sunday School teacher.

**STEPHEN LEE RICHARDSON**, 74, of Oak Hill, died October 23, 2021. He was a faithful member of Calvary Baptist Church of Oak Hill (Fayette), where he served as a deacon, a Sunday School superintendent and teacher, and as a church treasurer.

**FAYE EASTERLING SCALF**, 91, of Sidney, KY, died August 18, 2021. Her life in the church began in 1975 when she was saved at Williamson First Baptist Church (Logan-Mingo). She was a member of the COD Women's Sunday School class, the American Baptist Women's Ministries and, one of her favorites, the Kitchen Committee.

**KELLI DAWN SMITH**, 51, of Glen Morgan, died October 3, 2021. She was a member of the First Baptist Church of Scarbro (Fayette), where she served as treasurer and choir director.

**DARRELL SILAS STEPHENS**, 100, of Parkersburg, died September 27, 2021. He was a 60+ year member at Vienna Baptist Church (Parkersburg), where he served as a deacon, usher, trustee and member of the choir.

**RUTH ANN (MOORE) VERNATTER**, 83, of Williamson, died September 29, 2021. She was a member of Williamson First Baptist Church (Logan-Mingo), where she served on the Kitchen Committee and was a faithful member of the COD Women's Sunday School class and the American Baptist Women's Ministries.

## Leadership Updates

**REV. SHANNON EARLE** to Petersburg First Baptist Church (Eastern) as senior pastor on October 1, 2021

**REV. FRANK KETTERMAN** to Petersburg First Baptist Church (Eastern) as associate pastor on October 1, 2021

**MR. TREVOR PULLEN** to Victory Baptist Church (Broad Run) as pastor on September 12, 2021

**MR. CHRISTOPHER TATMAN** to Birch River Baptist Church (Elk Valley) as pastor on October 17, 2021

Retired  
Ministers &  
Missionaries  
Offering  
2021

Support RMMO at [abc-usa.org/rmmo](http://abc-usa.org/rmmo)

## December 2021

**DECEMBER 1** -The ministry of Orlando Baptist Church (Elk Valley Association)

**DECEMBER 2** - Ann Clemmer, International Ministries Global Servant to the Democratic Republic of the Congo

**DECEMBER 3** - The ministry of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church; Michael Harriman, pastor (Goshen Association)

**DECEMBER 4** - The ministry of Danville First Baptist Church; Danny Mitchell, interim pastor (Coal River Association)

**DECEMBER 5** -The ministry of Auburn Baptist Church; Harry Drake, pastor (Harrisville Association)

**DECEMBER 6** -The ministry of Mill Creek Baptist Church; Robert Keen, pastor (Good Hope Association)

**DECEMBER 7** -The ministry of Clendenin First Baptist Church; Joe Seese, pastor (Kanawha Valley Association)

**DECEMBER 8** - David Hulme, Northeast Area Minister, WVBC

**DECEMBER 9** -The ministry of Sistersville First Baptist Church; Darrell Mayfield, pastor (Panhandle Association)

**DECEMBER 10** -Ivy Wu, International Ministries Global Servant to South and East Asia

**DECEMBER 11** - The ministry of Bridgeport Baptist Church; Rodney Kittle, pastor (Judson Association)

**DECEMBER 12** - The ministry of Clearview Fellowship; Roger Adams, pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh Association)

**DECEMBER 13** -The ministry of Williamson First Baptist Church; Jarrod Belcher, pastor (Logan-Mingo Association)

**DECEMBER 14** -The ministry of Richwood First Baptist Church; Gary Carpenter, pastor (Hopewell Association)

**DECEMBER 15** - Bill Clemmer, International Ministries Global Servant to the Democratic Republic of the Congo

**DECEMBER 16** - The ministry of Enon Baptist Church; John Vannoy, pastor (Little Kanawha Association)

**DECEMBER 17** - Sarah Chetti, International Ministries Global Servant to Lebanon

**DECEMBER 18** - The ministry of Bethel Baptist Church; John Vetter, pastor (Eastern Association)

**DECEMBER 19** - Denise Aragon, International Ministries Global Servant to Mexico

**DECEMBER 20** - Mike Lowery, International Ministries Global Servant to Democratic Republic of the Congo

**DECEMBER 21** - Kevin Sions, Northern Director of Baptist Campus Ministry, WVU

**DECEMBER 22** - JD Reed, International Ministries Global Servant to Bolivia

**DECEMBER 23** -The ministry of Page Baptist Church; James Keith Cook, pastor (Fayette Association)

**DECEMBER 24** - Our families as we gather together to celebrate the birth of our Savior

**DECEMBER 25** - Prayer of thanksgiving for a Savior that was born to save the world

**DECEMBER 26** -The ministry of Mount Olive Baptist Church; Timothy Black, pastor (Broad Run Association)

**DECEMBER 27** - Koreen Villers, Director of Discipleship Ministries, WVBC

**DECEMBER 28** -David Sagar, International Ministries Global Servant to India

**DECEMBER 29** - The ministry of Huntington Baptist Temple; Andrew Magnusson, pastor (Guyandotte Association)

**DECEMBER 30** - Lori Mann, International Ministries Global Servant to Southeast Asia

**DECEMBER 31** - The ministry of Mannington First Baptist Church; Ethan Starcher, pastor (Fairmont Association)

## January 2022

**JANUARY 1** - Pray for a blessed New Year

**JANUARY 2** - The ministry of South Fork Baptist Church; Tom Burrill, pastor (Harrisville Association)

**JANUARY 3** - The ministry of Flint Chapel Baptist Church; Jim Anderson, interim pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh Association)

**JANUARY 4** - The ministry of Big Hurricane Baptist Church; Anthony Perry, pastor (Twelve Pole Association)

**JANUARY 5** - Ingrid Roldan-Roman, International Ministries Global Servant to Panama

**JANUARY 6** -The ministry of Hope Baptist Church; Richard Demastus, pastor (Elk Valley Association)

**JANUARY 7** -The ministry of Shinnston First Baptist Church; Kevin Nuzum, pastor (Judson Association)

**JANUARY 8** - The WVBC Executive Board meeting today at Parchment Valley

**JANUARY 9** - The ministry of Sago Baptist Church; Wease Day, pastor (Broad Run Association)

**JANUARY 10** -Kyle Witmer, International Ministries Global Servant to Thailand

**JANUARY 11** - Ann Borquist, International Ministries Global Consultant

**JANUARY 12** -The ministry of Beulah Ann Baptist Church; Gregory Lunsford, pastor (Guyandotte Association)

**JANUARY 13** - The ministry of Wellsburg First Baptist Church; Jared Jimenez, pastor (Panhandle Association)

**JANUARY 14** - The ministry of Grantsville First Baptist Church; Ron Chesser, pastor (Little Kanawha Association)

**JANUARY 15** -The ministry of Crany Baptist Church; James Walker, pastor (Rockcastle Association)

**JANUARY 16** -The ministry of Lover's Leap Baptist Church; Milburn Pack, pastor (Hopewell Association)

**JANUARY 17** -The ministry of Olive Baptist Church; Joshua Clay, pastor (Coal River Association)

**JANUARY 18** -The ministry of Flemington Baptist Church; Garry Whitescarver, pastor (Union Association)

**JANUARY 19** - The ministry of Comunidad Luz Y Vida; Moises Sarivar, pastor (Eastern Association)

**JANUARY 20** - Andrea Fling, Bookkeeper, WVBC

**JANUARY 21** -The ministry of Grass Lick Baptist Church; Jimmie Compton, pastor (Good Hope Association)

**JANUARY 22** -Joseph Vo, International Ministries Global Servant to Vietnam

**January 23** -The ministry of West Warren Baptist Church; Robert Scharnhorst, pastor (Fairmont Association)

**JANUARY 24** -The ministry of Masontown First Baptist Church; William Winston, pastor (Goshen Association)

**JANUARY 25** - The ministry of Sunrise Baptist Church; Casey Dawson, pastor (Parkersburg Association)

**JANUARY 26** -Carmella Jones, International Ministries Global Servant to Hungary

**JANUARY 27** - Evan Arkell, Southwest Area Minister, WVBC

**JANUARY 28** - The ministry of Saint Paul Baptist Church; Michael Poke, pastor (Kanawha Valley Association)

**JANUARY 29** -The ministry of Harmony Baptist Church; David Radcliff, pastor (Teays Valley Association)

**JANUARY 30** -Faye Carol Yarbrough, International Ministries Global Servant to South Africa

**JANUARY 31** - The ministry of Minden Baptist Church; Ronald Richards, pastor (Fayette Association)

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

# Upcoming Events

## JANUARY 2022

**January 7**  
**West Virginia Baptist Convention**  
**Executive Committee**  
 Parchment Valley Conference Center

**January 8**  
**West Virginia Baptist Convention**  
**Executive Board and Commission**  
**Meetings**  
 Parchment Valley Conference Center

**January 15**  
**Bobby Wood School of Christian**  
**Studies Digital Learning Initiative:**  
**Theology I (T-01)**  
 Online

**January 15**  
**Bobby Wood School of Christian**  
**Studies Digital Learning Initiative:**  
**Evangelism (Mod-06)**  
 Online

## FEBRUARY

**February 5**  
**Annual Training Event**  
 Parchment Valley Conference Center

**February 25-27**  
**Senior High Convention**  
 New Baptist Church, Huntington

## MARCH

**March 5**  
**Annual Bible Conference**  
 Parchment Valley Conference Center

**March 5**  
**Spring Children's Rally**  
 Parchment Valley Conference Center

**March 15**  
**Bobby Wood School of Christian**  
**Studies Digital Learning Initiative:**  
**Theology II (T-02)**  
 Online

**March 15**  
**Bobby Wood School of Christian**  
**Studies Digital Learning Initiative: Intro**  
**to Missions (Mod-03)**  
 Online

## APRIL

**April 8-9**  
**American Baptist Men Work Party**  
 Parchment Valley Conference Center

**April 22-23**  
**American Baptist Men Work Party**  
 Camp Cowen

# West Virginia Baptist Newsletter Submissions

Send submissions for *The West Virginia Baptist* to: [thewvbaptist@wvbc.org](mailto: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,

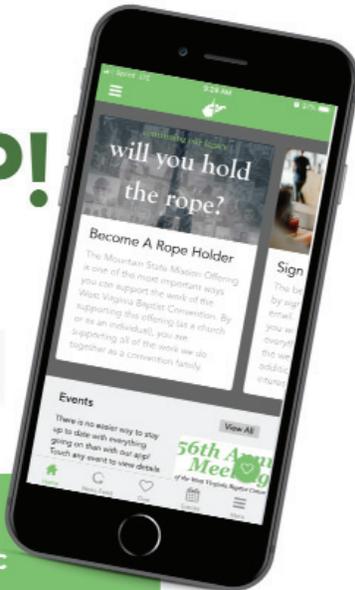
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