

The West Virginia Baptist Newsletter

August—September 2023

Brothers' Keeper Celebrates 23rd Year of Ministry

Brothers' Keeper (BK) is a week-long youth mission work camp held every summer at **Parchment Valley Conference Center**. Celebrating their 23rd year of ministry, this year's group expanded beyond Jackson County and also included some projects in Kanawha County. The Kanawha County projects were part of an "inner city immersion" experience being led by Parchment Valley board members, Don Biram (pastor, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Charleston) and Jim Hewitt (pastor, Charleston Baptist Temple).

More than a thousand homes have been repaired as a result of BK over the years, and this year's camp added to that total.

Representing five different states, 145 youth and volunteers completed a total of 40 projects around the area. These projects included handicap ramp installations, deck repairs, painting and more.



Carter Crihfield leads a time of prayer.

In addition to the work projects, the youth enjoyed a time of worship every evening. There were numerous guest speakers who challenged us to live out our theme, the worship team from Pine Grove Baptist Church (Parkersburg) did an extraordinary job, and we were able to enjoy Parchment Valley's newest addition – the Whippoorwill Covered Campfire – with Pastor Sam Gasaway leading us in campfire songs each night. It was also incredible to listen to the testimonies of the youth as they shared about how God had changed their lives that week. **Five teenagers made decisions to give their hearts to Jesus!**



One of our BK teams installed a ramp on a homeowner's porch.

Churches and business owners alike came together to help fund each of these projects and provide food for the campers. Without these sponsors, there is no way we could live out this year's theme of "Intentionally Engaging Communities for Christ."

Carter Crihfield, a student at Ripley High School and member of our BK leadership team shared this about his experience:

"We don't realize how blessed we are until we meet someone less fortunate. As a local teen, I am glad I could make a difference. Sometimes all we need is a walk with the Lord. BK is a great experience to be a part of. We change people's lives while God is changing ours. We all learn good work ethics and teamwork skills that help strengthen our communities. I have met lots of great people through BK and built many friendships. I'm happy to see so many people come from different states just to help my town. BK is quite the privilege to be a part of. I can't wait for BK 2024!"



Parchment Valley intern, Garrett Keen, leads a devotion during campfire.

Brothers' Keeper is just one of the ways we live out our mission at Parchment Valley of being a place "where lives are changed." Your prayers and financial support are truly making a difference.

Please continue to pray for these young people as they impact the kingdom. Brothers' Keeper is a wonderful mission camp that changes the lives of both the homeowners and the participants. **Plan now join us next year on June 16-21 for BK 2024.**

Frank Miller
Parchment Valley Director of Operations

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

Family Reunion

Webster's Dictionary defines the term *family reunion* as "a large gathering for family members." That describes well the Annual Meeting of the West Virginia Baptist Convention. It is a time we set aside to gather with our Baptist family from all around the state! It is a wonderful occasion to encourage one another and experience the rich fellowship and relationship-building opportunities that have come to define us as WV Baptists! Each year, we gather to celebrate the kingdom-advancing work the Lord has allowed us to accomplish together and to look ahead with great expectation to the opportunities He has for us in the coming year!

This year, we will be gathering at the South Parkersburg Baptist Church on October 19th and 20th. We continue our theme of "Intentionally Engaging Communities for Christ" with a focus on the action word, *engaging*. It is possible to have the very best of intentions to be a church that reaches people outside the walls and to have a clear sense of who it is the Lord has called our local church to reach, however, life change can only happen when the two are brought together with a plan of action. As the local church, we are called to intentionally *engage* the community Christ has given us as a mission field.

Recently, I had a wonderful conversation with Dr. Verlon Fosner. For the last 20 years, Verlon served a local church that, like so many, was now facing decline. Wanting to reverse this trend, and, more importantly, with a strong desire to reach the unchurched in the communities that surrounded the church, Verlon and the congregation began to experiment with different ways to engage those outside the church with the Gospel. One of the things that impressed me with Verlon was his humility to admit that it took numerous failed attempts before they found one that would prove successful. Finally, they settled on the New Testament approach of what he calls the Agape' Meal. As I listened to Verlon describe how a simple meal could provide a powerful opportunity to build relationship and share the message of Jesus, I thought of Mark's Gospel when he wrote,

"While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: 'Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?' On hearing this, Jesus said to them, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'" (Mark 2:15-17).

What began as a local outreach initiative of a 90-year-old church is now being embraced by numerous congregations nationally as the church sees the increasing need to reach those outside the walls for Jesus Christ. Verlon will be the keynote speaker at this year's Annual Meeting, where he will provide more insight into the "Dinner Church" method of reaching people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I want to personally invite you to join us for a WV Baptist *family reunion* at South Parkersburg Baptist Church in October! I and the staff of the WVBC hope to see you there!

Blessings,
Mike

Download the WVBC APP!

Have the WV Baptist Newsletter delivered to your phone!



DOWNLOAD NOW:
<https://tithely.app.link/wvbc>

Vol. LXXXX, Issue 05 August-September 2023

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DOING CHRIST'S WORK *together*

by Intentionally Engaging Communities for Christ

Jon Villers Called as New Southeast Area Minister

The Executive Committee, acting in their role as Personnel Committee, voted unanimously to call Jon Villers to serve as Southeast Area Minister.

“We are truly excited to have Jon join our WVBC team,” wrote Mike Sisson. “Jon has faithfully served the Convention in many different roles over the years, so we know he has a genuine heart for the ministry and mission of our WVBC family! Jon brings to his role a passion for the local church and the pastors who serve them. Jon’s greatest strengths are his relational personality and vast ministry experience in the local church. He will serve the southeast area churches well with his gifts.”

Jon grew up in Wirt and Calhoun Counties. He is the son of Rev. Lewis and Louise Villers. Jon learned much from his parents’ example, as Lewis served bi-vocationally as pastor in three different churches in three different associations and Jon’s mother, Louise, was a teacher’s aid assisting in math development and special needs at Wirt County High School where Jon completed his high school education. After graduating, Jon continued his education earning a double major in Accounting and Management Information Systems from Alderson Broaddus College, a Master of Business Administration from Averett College and a Master of Divinity degree from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Jon is currently pursuing a Doctor of Ministry degree from Palmer Seminary and anticipates graduating in 2024.

Starting with a ministry internship while still in college, Jon has served churches in Wood, Mercer, Monroe, Kanawha, Jackson and Barbour Counties for more than 30 years. Most recently, Jon served as the lead pastor of Philippi Baptist Church since 2010 along with being an adjunct professor at Alderson Broaddus, teaching classes in business and religion. In August 2020, he accepted the added position of interim chaplain at Alderson Broaddus, and in October 2020, he was awarded the Ward W. Hibbs Ministerial Award for town and country pastors. Over nine years ago, Jon helped start a Christ-centered 12 step program called Celebrate Recovery Barbour County, focusing on the hurts, habits and hangups we all walk through.



Jon Villers began his new role on July 10, 2023.

Jon is married to Koreen, who serves as the WVBC Director of Discipleship. Jon and Koreen have been blessed with four children and their spouses, Caleb (Maci), Allison (Logan), Thomas (Beth) and Bobby (Leah), and soon to be five grandchildren: Audie, Elliot, Ada, Izzy Blake (due in August) and Nora Renè (due in December).

Jon has a heart for building relationships in the Kingdom of God. He wants to walk alongside churches and their pastors while sharing Jesus’ love. He is excited about being an encourager for the 90+ churches and their pastors of the Southeast area of the WVBC. Jon’s hobbies include table tennis, racquetball, disc golf and Rook. Oh yes, and collecting the color orange!

A FREE event for members of our WVBC family!

Youth Mental Health First Aid teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among adolescents ages 12-18.

When? Saturday, August 26th
from 9 AM—4 PM

Where? Emmanuel Baptist Church (Parkersburg)

Register by August 13th at:
www.wvbc.org



Mental Health FIRST AID

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MENTAL WELLBEING

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Leslie Turley Retires from International Ministries After 29 Years



Leslie (center) was honored with a retirement party at IM's office on June 9th. Pictured alongside her is David (left) and Jim Bell (right).

After 29 years of service with International Ministries (IM), Leslie Turley officially retired on May 31st. For the first 21 years, she and her husband, David, served as IM global servants in Japan and Okinawa. For the past 8 years, she has served as IM's Area Director for Southeast Asia and Japan.

IM's Executive Director and CEO Sharon Koh commented, "Leslie did a tremendous job of being available for her area's global servants in a wide variety of ways. At the same time, she also deepened many of our international partnerships in the region. She will be sorely missed in Southeast Asia and Japan."

David and Leslie were originally commissioned by our WVBC family to serve with IM in 1991. Not only have they done a tremendous job of representing IM, but they have also done a tremendous job of representing the WVBC.

Todd McClure said of Leslie, "She was my go-to person anytime I had a question about missions. I thoroughly enjoyed working with her, especially over the last couple of years with the appointment of Sarah McCloy as a missionary in her area. She understands the culture of our state and is part of our family. I am excited to see how God uses her in the next chapter of her life."

Though she is retiring from IM, she is not stepping down from ministry. She will continue to volunteer her time in an advocacy role for the people of Myanmar/Burma. She has been a leading voice for these people since the military coup in 2021.

Replacing Leslie in her role is Kyle Witmer, who has been serving with IM in Thailand since 2014. Prior to his role with IM, Kyle served as pastor of a church in Indiana. His pastoral heart and knowledge of the region will be great assets in his new role.

Reflecting on her time, Leslie added, "It has been an honor for me these past eight years to serve our global servants and our partners in Southeast Asia and Japan and to see God at work in a mighty way. Please join me in praying for Kyle as he begins this unique ministry and as God uses his experiences as a pastor and teacher as well as his gifts and talents for service for the kingdom."

Camp Global
at Camp Cowen

AUGUST 11-12

Camp Global is our family missions camp at Camp Cowen that is designed to inform, inspire and equip you with ways to better make disciples of all nations.

This year's theme is: **How to Better Care for Our Missionaries**

Missionary guests include:

- David and Joyce Reed
- Rick and Anita Gutierrez
- Tim and Stacy Reese
- J.D. and Rhonda Reed
- Reid Trulson
- Jeni Pedzinski

Learn more or register at:
wvbc.org

world mission offering

The **World Mission Offering** is the best way to support the entirety of the work of **International Ministries**.

Give generally to help fund administrative and development costs OR designate your offering toward a specific missionary's personal support.

Resources available at:
WorldMissionOffering.org

Camp Cowen Serves as a Base Camp for Thousands of Youth

base camp

(noun) a main encampment providing supplies, shelter and communications for persons engaged in wide-ranging activities, such as exploring, reconnaissance, hunting or mountain climbing.

Since 1943, the **WV Baptist Camp at Cowen** has been a place "where people meet Jesus and grow as His disciples in a community of faith." For many, camp is their home away from home, the best vacation ever, a place to be with Jesus, sacred and holy ground. Camp is where: people are saved, life-long friends are made, lives are changed, vocational calls are heard and disciples are equipped for life and ministry. Each summer, Camp Cowen is a base camp for thousands of campers.

At the base camp, God has met with us in powerful ministry moments this summer. Here are just a few:

- **Younger Midler** (June 2-4) experienced a new record-high of 184 campers who were singing, dancing, playing and learning about God.
- **Junior High 1** (June 18-24) experienced a revival that spread throughout one entire cabin. Every boy in that cabin group was either saved, felt the Lord's call to repentance and rededication, or was discerning the Lord's call to ministry.
- **High School 1** (July 2-8) experienced God's presence in an overwhelming way during worship, and camp was indeed a "thin place" where worship in song was sweet and the Word of God came to life.

Stories from each week continue to be shared, and we are thankful for God's provision, protection and blessing!



Coloring Group during Junior 1 Interest Groups.

The **Young Leader Summer Internship Program** brought over 20 high school students to work as summer staff this summer. Some worked for two sessions, others worked for four sessions and some worked six sessions. While camp staff looked different with high school students filling the ranks, God undeniably facilitated growth, effected life change and developed leadership skills in these summer interns.

The summer of 2023 is one to remember as we celebrate 80 years of camping ministry at the WV Baptist Camp at Cowen. Thank you for your prayerful and faithful support! Continue to pray for the students, families and churches with whom we were blessed to minister this year!

Jillene Narraway
Director of Camping and Youth

BAPTIST CAMPUS MINISTRY

Changing Lives that Change the World

Alderson Broaddus
Tuesdays @ 8:38 PM
Wilcox Chapel

Concord University
Thursdays @ 8:00 PM
AB Conference Room

Fairmont State
Tuesdays @ 8:08 PM
Wesley Foundation

Glenville State
Wednesdays @ 7:30 PM
Anchor Bible Church

Marshall University
Wednesdays @ 9:15 PM
Campus Christian Center

Potomac State
Wednesdays @ 7:00 PM
Heritage Room

WVU Tech
Thursdays @ 7:00 PM
Life Science Building 208

West Virginia University
Tuesdays @ 8:07 PM
NRCCE 101

To get connected, ask a question, or schedule a campus tour, contact

Rob Ely - ely@wvbc.org or 304-532-3166

Kevin Sions - sions@wvbc.org or 304-534-0597

BCM Sunday

For more information and to request materials,
contact kayla@wvbc.org

- hear from students
- support the ministry
- promote to your church

OCTOBER 1st

89th Annual Conference for the American Baptist Women's Ministries of WV

Written by Sandy Foster Currey, Conference Coordinator,
American Baptist Women's Ministries of WV

The **American Baptist Women's Ministries (ABWM) of West Virginia** gathered at Parchment Valley Conference Center on Saturday, June 3, 2023, to celebrate 89 years of working in "God's field." For nearly a century, these ABWM "fields" have enjoyed the fruit of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ through the planting of new women's groups and caring for the groups that have been meeting for many decades.

Pre-Conference activities began Friday evening with a cookout and campfire at the new Whippoorwill Covered Campfire. Brian and Sara McClure led the women in a time of praise and worship. On Saturday, over 100 women gathered for the day's events in the Greenlee Activity Center.

The Annual Conference is always a time to celebrate the ministries and projects the women have participated in over the last year, including:

- **2023 Special Project:** seating for the covered campfire and new playground equipment at Parchment Valley.
- **2023 Mission Outreach Project:** restoration retreats for indigenous women leadership development in Mexico.
- **2023 WV Hope:** support for Gabriel Project, Hope Center Ministries, Union Mission and the Weirton Christian Center.
- **Project Good Samaritan:** a ministry that provides a helping hand to family members of hospital patients.
- **Love Gift:** an extra gift to the United Mission Support of the American Baptist family..
- **Girls Scholarship Program:** providing financial assistance to 13 girls from our WVBC churches for this academic year.



The women gathered together in the Greenlee Activity Center.

Koreen Villers was the keynote speaker for the day and spoke on the following three topics:

- "Planting the Seed," in which she highlighted a newly formed women's group ("Bloom") from Elkins First Baptist Church.
- "Caring for the Seed," in which she highlighted Charleston Baptist Temple's ABWM, sharing about how they care for and mentor one another
- "Saving the Seed," in which she highlighted the importance of recognizing and preserving the church's ministry. Sand Fork Baptist Church presented a video collage during this time of the history of their church, dating back to 1879.

Overall, it was a fun day that was filled with the renewal of friendships and recognition of the importance of our never-ending work in "God's field."

We hope you will join us for one of our fall events: Spiritual Growth Retreat (September 15-17) and/or our Women's Day event (October 19) that is part of the WVBC Annual Meeting.

Fall Golden'eers Conference

September 11-13, 2023

Parchment Valley Conference Center

A conference for adults 55 years of age and older

Theme: Listen Up! Speaker: Jeff Davenport



Join us for Bible study, evening group activities, music, crafts and more. The conference will begin on Monday at Noon and end on Wednesday at 11 AM.

Register at wvbc.org

American Baptist Women's Ministries of West Virginia Spiritual Growth Retreat

"Hats & Holiness"



Does Your Daily Walk
Exude Holiness,
Regardless of the
Hat You Are Wearing?

"Make every effort to live in peace with all men and be holy. Without holiness no one will see the Lord."

-Hebrews 12:14

September 15-17, 2023

Parchment Valley Conference Center

Keynote Speaker ~ Kathy Hudson

Willa's Bookstore ~ Brian & Sara McClure ~ Worship Leaders

Kim Pickrell ~ Coordinator (304)481-2632 pickrellk@aol.com

158TH ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE WEST VIRGINIA BAPTIST CONVENTION



OCTOBER 19-20

South Parkersburg Baptist Church

1655 Blizzard Drive, Parkersburg, WV 26101

— — — — —
**INTENTIONALLY ENGAGING
COMMUNITIES FOR CHRIST**

“And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.”
- John 1:14 (KJV)

SPEAKERS:



Mike Sisson
Executive Minister



Phil Wayman
Annual Sermon



Dr. Verlon Fosner
Keynote Speaker

Register online at wvbc.org

Host Church Welcome Letter

Dear West Virginia Baptist Family,

Matthew 17 shares the account of Jesus' transfiguration – how he was radiant in glory in the presence of three of his disciples. Peter responds by requesting to build three shelters, one for Jesus, Moses and Elijah. However, the shelters weren't necessary as they weren't able to stay there on the mountaintop. Rather, they descended from the mountain, for that is where the people were, and it was with the crowds that they were to engage.

This is something that we are all to do as followers of Jesus – intentionally engage our communities “the crowds” with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Engagement is also one of the reasons for this annual meeting – to come together and engage with one another as fellow believers and churches in worship, to share stories of what God is doing, ideas and strategies that have proven to be fruitful, and words of encouragement. I'm sure that we would all agree that it is an amazing honor and privilege to be invited to intentionally engage with our communities as ambassadors of Christ.

It is my privilege to invite you to South Parkersburg Baptist Church for the 2023 Annual Meeting of the WVBC. My prayer is that we will truly engage with one another, that it will be a “mountaintop experience” for each of us and that we will be encouraged and inspired to engage others with the love and grace of Jesus as we return home.

May God continue to bless you and your churches as we pursue and proclaim the kingdom of God and participate in what God is doing in the world!

Pastor Rich Blain

Worship Leader

Eric Seckman

Eric is the Pastor of Worship and Student Ministries at South Parkersburg Baptist Church. He is a graduate of the WV Palmer Seminary program and has served as a worship leader since 2009. He is also the worship leader for two WVBC camps at Cowen (HS1 & JH2). He resides in Davisville with his wife Amanda and his daughter Sophie.

Lodging Options

Holiday Inn Express & Suites - 304-489-4111
80 Nicolette Rd, Mineral Wells, WV

** A discount is available at this hotel by mentioning “WVBC Group Rate” when making the reservation.*

Local Arrangement Committee



Back row: Patsy VanMeter, Carla McCartney, Tena Harper, Monica Haines and Linda Cowen;

Front row: Rich Blain, Steve Cowen, Curtis Brown and Marilyn Perry

Not pictured: Eric Kendall and Nancy Weaver

Meet the Speakers

Verlon Fosner - Keynote Speaker

Verlon has been in church leadership for over 35 years and, for the past 20 years, has served a 93-year-old church in Seattle, Washington. In 2004, their long effective church began to decline, and they were faced with the decision: move to the suburbs or become an urban church. They felt called to not only stay but to dive further into the urban neighborhoods of Seattle – especially the ones with a sparse church presence. After numerous failures, they decided to try the Agape' Feast church model talked about in the New Testament. And to their great surprise they found an immediate intrigue among the unchurched Seculars living in Seattle neighborhoods. Within a year, they had hundreds of Seculars as friends, gathering around their tables and talking about Jesus. What began as an urban Dinner Church spread into a multi-site Dinner Church Congregation, and then expanded into a national Dinner Church Network. In 2014, Verlon received a Doctoral degree for his research on “The Dinner Church of the Apostolic Era” and has written three books on the subject. Then in 2016, Verlon and Melodee joined the Fresh Expressions North America team to lead the Dinner Church Collective.

Phil Wayman—Annual Sermon

Phil is the senior pastor at Clarksburg Baptist Church, where he has pastored for six years. His aspiration is to connect people with Jesus Christ, aligning them with their true purpose of living in relationship with God. He holds Master's degrees in both Pastoral Theology and Leadership. He is blessed with a wonderful wife, Tori, and two amazing kids, Noah and Chloe.

Annual Meeting Schedule

Thursday, October 19

9:30 AM—2:00 PM: Pre-Convention Activities

2:45 PM: Session 1

- Welcome from the Host Church
- Business Meeting 1
- Executive Minister Address

5:00 PM: Baptist Campus Ministry Banquet

6:30 PM: Session 2

- Ward Hibbs Award
- Annual Sermon
- Communion

8:30 PM: Alderson Broaddus Reception

BAPTIST CAMPUS MINISTRY

BCM Banquet (All are invited) - \$15

Time: Thursday, October 19 at 5:00 PM

Location: South Parkersburg Baptist Gym

* All proceeds benefit the ministry of BCM

Alderson Broaddus University

Alderson Broaddus University Reception (All are invited)

Time: Thursday, October 19 at 8:30 PM

Location: South Parkersburg Baptist Fellowship Hall

Friday, October 20

8:30 AM: Workshop Session 1

9:15 AM: Session 3

- Recognition of New and Retired Pastors
- Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies Graduation
- James Anderson, Sr. Bivocational Pastor Award
- Keynote Address

11:15 AM: Workshop Session 2

12:00 PM: Lunch Break

1:30 PM: Exhibit Hall with Dessert

2:30 PM: Session 4

- Business Meeting 2
- Installation of Officers
- Keynote Address
- Commissioning

Pre-Convention Activities

Registration for Pre-Convention activities are done on the Annual Meeting Registration form even if you are not planning to attend any of the Annual Meeting sessions.

American Baptist Men of WV - \$25

Registration: 9:00 AM at South Parkersburg Baptist

Event Location: Oil & Gas Museum (Tour)

* Shuttle is available for transportation

American Baptist Women's Ministries of WV - \$6

Registration: 9:00 AM at South Parkersburg Baptist

Event Location: South Parkersburg Baptist Sanctuary

Speaker: Claire Cottrill

Missions Speakers: Anita Gutierrez and Joyce Reed

Topic: Engaging God Mentally and Emotionally

* Nursery provided for preschool children

Pastors4Pastors - \$25

Registration: 9:00 AM at South Parkersburg Baptist

Event Location: South Parkersburg Baptist AMP

Speaker: David Reed

Topic: Pastoral Soul Care

WV Baptist Education Society Lunch (Members Only)

Time: Thursday, October 19 at Noon

Location: South Parkersburg Baptist Fellowship Hall

Cost: FREE

Friday Lunch Options

Ministers' Wives' Fellowship - \$12

Location: South Parkersburg Baptist Fellowship Hall

Palmer Theological Seminary - \$12

Location: South Parkersburg Baptist Gym

WV Baptist Historical Society - \$15

Location: South Parkersburg Baptist AMP

Speaker: Mary Beth McCloy

Topic: The Importance of Sharing our Stories

Keynote Addresses

Title: A 1st Century Church for the 21st Century

Time: Friday at 9:15 AM (during Session 3)

Title: Practical Steps to a New Future from the Past

Time: Friday at 2:30 PM (during Session 4)

Annual Meeting Registration Form

This registration form can be used by delegates, visitors and exhibitors. Please use a separate form for each person. All mail-in registrations must be postmarked by October 9. Online registration will be open on wvbc.org until October 15.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Church: _____ Association: _____

REGISTRATION TYPE:

Delegate (\$20)

Non-Delegate (\$20)

Exhibitor (\$20)

NOTE: DELEGATES MUST HAVE THIS FORM SIGNED BY PASTOR OR CHURCH CLERK

Pastor or Clerk Signature: _____

PRE-CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Please mark any pre-conference activities you plan to attend.

American Baptist Men of WV (\$25)

American Baptist Women's Ministries of WV (\$6)

Pastors4Pastors (\$25)

MEAL OPTIONS

Please mark any meals for which you wish to purchase tickets.
They will be available for pickup at the registration table.

THURSDAY AT 5 PM:

Baptist Campus Ministry Banquet (\$15)

FRIDAY AT NOON:

Ministers' Wives' Fellowship (\$12)

Palmer Theological Seminary (\$12)

WV Baptist Historical Society (\$15)

CHILDCARE

Childcare is available during the following sessions. Please list the names and ages of children you will be dropping off.

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

Registration Fee Total: _____

Upcoming Events

Special Event

Pastors4Pastors

Dinner Cruise



Fri. Aug. 18, 2023 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
601 Front Street, Marietta, OH

VALLEY GEN

A Special Couples Event for
Active & Retired Pastors and their Spouses
across the West Virginia Baptist Convention



Enjoy Pastor and Christian Comedian
Bobby Benavides



Cruise Menu includes: Prime Rib, Creamy Mediterranean, Chicken, Baked Potatoes, Green Bean Casserole, and House Salad, Desserts are White Chocolate Blueberry Lasagna and Cheesecake.

Cost: \$100 per couple

Register today at wvbc.org

HOSTED BY MINISTERS' WIVES' FELLOWSHIP

Marriage Retreat



NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH, PARKERSBURG

A ONE-DAY MARRIAGE RETREAT
LED BY ROGER AND CAROL ADAMS

AUGUST 19, 2023

COST: \$30 PER COUPLE

REGISTER AT WVBC.ORG

FALL RALLY

September 22-23

Camp Cowen



Summer may be over, but there's still one last chance for

- Campfire
- Worship
- Bible Study
- Games
- Time with Friends
- AND MORE!

Registration info coming soon at wvbc.org/ministries/youth

WV BAPTIST CONVENTION

Ministers' Wives' Retreat

September 29th & 30th

Beginning with dinner at 6:00 p.m. on Friday and ending at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday

Staff house at Camp Cowen

Speaker: Christie Eastman

Based on the book
"How to Thrive as a Pastor's Wife"
by Christine Hoover
(order an advance copy and begin reading)

Cost \$40 or \$20 for Saturday only



Register at wvbc.org

Northwest Area News

by **Mark McCloy**, Northwest Area Minister

Signs of New Life in the Northwest



A full house at Ravenswood First Baptist Church during their Good Hope Association revival.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.
- Psalm 119:105

Following a challenging season of life for many people and churches over the past few years, it is a real blessing to be able to report of numerous good signs of new life here in the northwestern part of West Virginia. Many churches have hosted Vacation Bible Schools, several have seen a new surge of youth head off to camp, and gatherings and events – such as concerts, revivals, and picnics – are once again being planned and held. I have also heard of many churches seeing new conversions and baptisms. Mission trips are once again taking place and the work of the Lord is progressing. Praise the Lord!

As we begin moving in the right direction, let us remember to thank God, not only for our successes but also for His work which continues in our sister churches and abroad. Remember that the church down the road is not our competition, but our teammate. It is often easy to slip into a worldly mindset, where we think about growing our “kingdom” rather than God’s kingdom. Let us thank the Lord for new life, both in our churches and in other churches, as well.

Southwest Area News

by **Evan Arkell**, Southwest Area Minister

Coal River Association Celebrates Spring Sing

On May 21, the Coal River Association celebrated their annual Spring Sing at Madison Baptist Church. Most of the association churches participated, whether by their choir or soloists. However, as good as the adults were, as usual, it was the kids that stole the show. Both Olive Baptist Church and Racine First Baptist Church had children’s choirs participate and did a fantastic job leading the congregation in worship. At the end of the program, all of the church choirs gathered together to sing a couple of beautiful songs to conclude the time of worship. Of course, as Baptists, we had to conclude the evening with some cookies and punch. It was a wonderful evening to celebrate our Lord together.



The combined choir singing at the Coal River Association Spring Sing.

Clendenin First Baptist Church Celebrates 125 Years of Ministry



Mike Sisson, Evan Arkell and Joe Seese During the 125th anniversary at Clendenin First Baptist Church.

On June 11, Clendenin First Baptist Church celebrated 125 years of faithful service to the Clendenin area. Mike Sisson and I were on hand to help the church celebrate their special day. We were able to offer the church a certificate from the WVBC and another certificate from the WV Baptist Historical Society. Along with the giving of certificates, the day was celebrated with some special music, an uplifting and encouraging message from Mike and a time of reflection from times past with former Clendenin FBC pastor, Archie Snedegar, sharing several memories. The church and Family Life Center were decorated beautifully for the service and, once again, a time of fellowship and food followed the worship service and celebration.

Northeast Area News

by David Hulme, Northeast Area Minister

FBC Wallace is a “Herald of Hope”



The “Herald of Hope” chapel car Sunday School class in 1915.

The “Herald of Hope” was the sixth of seven railroad chapel cars used by the American Baptist Publication Society, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, to plant Sunday Schools and churches across the United States. A sanctuary and parsonage on rails, they could easily be sidetracked in small towns and people invited to hear the gospel.

On April 8, 1915, the “Herald of Hope,” arrived in Wallace, WV, an oil town on the Short Line Railroad. It’s pastor, William Newton, secured the use of a poolroom and organized a Sunday School with 45 members. When “Herald of Hope” left Wallace for Lumberport on May 17, 1915, that Sunday School became Wallace First Baptist Church.

A picture of the “Herald of Hope” hangs in the sanctuary of Wallace FBC. In that picture is Julie Swiger. Julie, a mother of 13 children, took in washing as a fundraiser to help buy materials for the church. Also in the picture is her ten-year-old son, Dallas

Swiger. He and his brothers helped carry water, food and other materials during the construction of the church. When the bell was installed, children of the church rang it (a tradition that continues to this day).

Today, Wallace FBC is pastored by a descendent of members of that 1915 Sunday School, Pastor Keith Swiger. Julie was Keith’s great-grandmother and Dallas was his grandfather. Keith’s heart for his hometown has led him, and the church, to be intentional and creative in engaging the Wallace community for Christ.

Pastor Keith and Wallace FBC, partnering with other local pastors and churches, provide bi-weekly community meals, work with youth and children (including a week-long summer reading camp), engage parents of those young people with the gospel and provide food and necessities to families in need. Much like the chapel car, Keith and the church are heralds, bringing hope to their community.



Wallace First Baptist Church is continuing to make an impact today.

Southeast Area News

Submitted by Jim Anderson

Golf Scramble for Bolivia Missions

A field of eight teams gathered together on Saturday, June 17th for the 17th annual WV Baptist Churches Golf Scramble for Bolivia Missions at Greenbrier Hills Golf Course in Rainelle.

Churches represented included Millbrook Baptist, Old Greenbrier Baptist, Sewell Valley Baptist, Rainelle First Baptist, Oakwood Baptist and Send the Light Fellowship, as well as members of the Greenbrier Hills Golf Club.



The first place team consisted of (from left-to-right): Glenn Anderson, Jim Anderson, Greg O’Neal and Michael Nutter.

The Oakwood Baptist/Send the Light Fellowship combined team finished 1st shooting a 57 with the Sewell Valley Baptist team coming in 2nd with a 58. All golfers also received prizes from the House of Hope in Bolivia.

It is with great praise to our Lord that \$2,640 was raised to support the House of Hope ministries which includes Helen Baptist, Old Greenbrier Baptist and Millbrook Baptist sponsoring holes. This was the 2nd most ever raised since the inception of the tournament.

Carmen Flores Choque, director of the House of Hope, sends her thanks to all the above and for all of WV Baptist Convention churches that support their mission efforts. In Bolivian currency, that \$2,640 is worth over \$18,000 and will be a special blessing as ministries are in full swing after the difficult COVID years. She also wishes to let everyone know that all the House of Hope family, as well as partners, are well and anxious for short-term mission groups to once again return.

Finally, special thanks goes out to course manager, Terry McClung, and his staff. Without their hard work, this tournament would not have happened. **Plans are in place for June of 2024 for the 18th annual tournament to be held again at Greenbrier Hills.**

JAMES GORDON “JIM” CRANDALL, 79, of Kingwood, died on May 17, 2023. He was a member of Kingwood Baptist Church, where he served as a trustee.

REV. GILBERT C. “JUNIOR” DODSON, JR., 96, died on May 25, 2023. He was a retired minister from Black Eagle Baptist Church in Mullens. During his 63 years of ministry, he served as pastor to many churches throughout the area.

ERNESTINE O. NIGH, 95, of Fairmont, died on June 3, 2023. She was a member of Fairmont Baptist Temple, where she served as the organist.

THOMAS MADISON “TOM” OXLEY, 78, of Oak Hill, died on May 30, 2023. He was a member of Oak Hill Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon, trustee and Sunday School teacher.

ELLEN LOUISE RANDOLPH, 97, of Wilsonburg, died on June 15, 2023. She was a member of Wilsonburg Baptist Church, where she taught Sunday School, served as treasurer and was a member of the church’s American Baptist Women’s Ministries.

JIMMY STAAT RANSON, 86, of Scott Depot, died on May 4, 2023. He was a member of South Charleston First Baptist Church, where he was a deacon emeritus and served as a trustee.

CLARENCE BROWNING “BROWNIE” SIONS, 92, of Petersburg, died on May 19, 2023. He was a member of Petersburg First Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon and trustee. He was also the grandfather of WVBC staff member, Kevin Sions, who serves as the Northern Director for Baptist Campus Ministry.

For Sale

Emmanuel Baptist Church (Parkersburg) has 30 pews and 300 feet of carpet available for sale. For details, contact Evan Frees at 833efrees@gmail.com.

JEANNETTE ALT (WEESE) SIONS, 90, of Petersburg, died on May 1, 2023. She was a member of Petersburg First Baptist Church, where she served as the pianist and organist, sang in the choir and was a member of the church’s American Baptist Women’s Ministries. She was also the grandmother of Kevin Sions.

CARLTON SATOW STEPHENS, 99, of Washington, died on May 22, 2023. He served several churches in various capacities but was most recently a member of Lubeck Community Baptist Church. He was the father of former WVBC staff member, Mike Stephens.

CHARLES RAY “CHARLIE” SWISHER, 80, of Ripley, died on May 5, 2023. He was a charter member of Parchment Valley Baptist Church. From 1990 to 2004, he served as the director of the WV Baptist Conference Center (Parchment Valley), where he was instrumental in numerous facility upgrades including the additions of the Santrock Education Center and the Greenlee Activity Center.

NANCY MILLER CAMPBELL VANMETER, 79, of Charleston, died on May 23, 2023. She was a member of Calvary Baptist Church, where she served as a deaconess, directed Vacation Bible School and helped oversee church dinners and celebrations.

Leadership Updates

ANTHONY LUCAS to Standard First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley) as pastor 5/28/2023

CHAD MUGRAGE to Lubeck Community Baptist Church (Parkersburg) as pastor 3/01/2023

ED ROGERS to Calvary Baptist Church, Charleston (Kanawha Valley) as interim pastor 1/08/2023

JONATHAN VILLERS to West Virginia Baptist Convention as area minister 7/10/2023

MINISTRY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Associate Pastor of Youth (Full-Time)
Location: Bridgeport area

Youth Pastor/Leader (Part-Time)
Location: Beckley area

Student Ministries Pastor (Full-Time)
Location: Parkersburg area

Senior Pastor (Part-Time)
Location: Huntington area

Family Ministry Position (Part-Time)
Location: Charleston area

Church Pianist (Part-Time)
Location: Charleston area

Pastor to Student Ministries (Full-Time)
Location: Parkersburg area

Music Director (Part-Time)
Location: Charleston area

Youth and Family Life Minister (Full-Time)
Location: Huntington area

Minister to Youth (Part-Time)
Location: Ripley area

Minister to Children (Part-Time)
Location: Ripley area

Children’s Ministry Director (Part-Time)
Location: Parkersburg area

To learn more about any of the above positions, visit: wvbc.org

Prayer Calendars

August 2023

AUGUST 1 – The ministry of Mount Pleasant Baptist Church; Michael Wamsley, pastor (Broad Run Association)
AUGUST 2 – The ministry of Minden Missionary Baptist Church; Ronald Richards, pastor (Fayette Association)
AUGUST 3 – Little Kanawha Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
AUGUST 4 – AB Men & Boys Camp beginning today at Camp Cowen
AUGUST 5 – The ministry of Mount Union Baptist Church (Guyandotte Association)
AUGUST 6 – Keith Myers, International Ministries Global Servant to Mexico
AUGUST 7 – Patrick Huffman, member of the WVBC Discipleship Commission
AUGUST 8 – Harrisville Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
AUGUST 9 – Mike Mann, International Ministries Global Servant to Thailand
AUGUST 10 – Eric Kendall, president of the WV Baptist Education Society and member of the WVBC Leadership Commission
AUGUST 11 – Camp Global beginning today at Camp Cowen
AUGUST 12 – Kay Hensley, chair of the Baptist Campus Ministry Board and member of the WVBC Outreach Commission
AUGUST 13 – The ministry of Holly River Baptist Church; Michael Cool, interim pastor (Elk Valley Association)
AUGUST 14 – The ministry of Cowen First Baptist Church; Bryan Barnett, pastor (Hopewell Association)
AUGUST 15 – Greenbrier-Raleigh Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
AUGUST 16 – The ministry of Bethel Baptist Church; Ed Moats, pastor (Goshen Association)
AUGUST 17 – Broad Run Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
AUGUST 18 – The ministry of Beckley First Baptist Church; Bryan Knight, pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh Association)
AUGUST 19 – Teays Valley Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
AUGUST 20 – Good Hope Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
AUGUST 21 – Deliris Carrion-Joseph, International Ministries Global Servant to Mexico
AUGUST 22 – Scott Coats, International Ministries Global Servant to Myanmar and Thailand
AUGUST 23 – The ministry of Forks of Coal Missionary Baptist Church (Coal River Association)
AUGUST 24 – The ministry of Spencer First Baptist Church; Mark Wood, pastor (Good Hope Association)
AUGUST 25 – Brian Morrison, WVBC trustee and member of the WVBC Stewardship Commission
AUGUST 26 – Elk Valley Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
AUGUST 27 – Eastern Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
AUGUST 28 – The ministry of Mount Zion Baptist Church (Fairmont Association)
AUGUST 29 – The ministry of Goose Creek Baptist Church; Sandra Walker, pastor (Harrisville Association)
AUGUST 30 – Jorge Damasceno, International Ministries Global Servant to the United Kingdom
AUGUST 31 – Walt White, International Ministries Global Consultant

September 2023

SEPTEMBER 1 – Rhonda Reed, International Ministries Global Servant to Bolivia
SEPTEMBER 2 – Bob Keen, member of the WVBC Discipleship Commission
SEPTEMBER 3 – Stacy Reese, International Ministries Global Servant to the Dominican Republic
SEPTEMBER 4 – The ministry of Grafton First Baptist Church; Todd Jarman, pastor (Union Association)
SEPTEMBER 5 – The ministry of Hampton Baptist Church; Don Stennett, pastor (Kanawha Valley Association)
SEPTEMBER 6 – Michael Koreski, member of the WVBC Outreach Commission
SEPTEMBER 7 – Kanawha Valley Association as they celebrate their annual meeting tomorrow
SEPTEMBER 8 – Todd McClure, Minister of Missions and Finance, WVBC
SEPTEMBER 9 – Mark McCloy, Northwest Area Minister and Director of the School of Christian Studies, WVBC
SEPTEMBER 10 – Fairmont Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
SEPTEMBER 11 – The Fall Golden'eers Retreat beginning today at Parchment Valley
SEPTEMBER 12 – Paul Rollett, International Ministries Global Servant to the Philippines
SEPTEMBER 13 – The ministry of Lacoma Baptist Church (Rockcastle Association)
SEPTEMBER 14 – Eric Thomas, member of the WVBC Stewardship Commission
SEPTEMBER 15 – American Baptist Women's Ministries Spiritual Growth Retreat happening this weekend at Parchment Valley
SEPTEMBER 16 – Twelve Pole Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
SEPTEMBER 17 – Panhandle and Union Associations as they celebrate their annual meeting
SEPTEMBER 18 – Lauran Bethell, International Ministries Global Consultant
SEPTEMBER 19 – Parkersburg Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
SEPTEMBER 20 – Fayette Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
SEPTEMBER 21 – The ministry of Newark Baptist Church; William Cottrell, pastor (Parkersburg Association)
SEPTEMBER 22 – The Fall Youth Rally happening this weekend at Camp Cowen
SEPTEMBER 23 – Coal River Association as they celebrate their annual meeting
SEPTEMBER 24 – Judson and Logan-Mingo Associations as they celebrate their annual meeting
SEPTEMBER 25 – Dwight Bolick, International Ministries Global Servant to Chile
SEPTEMBER 26 – The ministry of Coon's Run Baptist Church; Max "Sonny" Palmer, pastor (Judson Association)
SEPTEMBER 27 – The ministry of Leon Baptist Church; Fredrick Sparks, pastor (Teays Valley Association)
SEPTEMBER 28 – Mylinda Baits, International Ministries Global Consultant
SEPTEMBER 29 – The Ministers' Wives Retreat happening at Camp Cowen
SEPTEMBER 30 – Anthony Pratt, president of the Pastors4Pastors and member of the WVBC Leadership Commission

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

Upcoming Events

AUGUST

- August 4-6**
AB Men and Boys Camp (All Ages)
 Camp Cowen
- August 11-12**
Camp Global
 Camp Cowen
- August 12**
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Community Ministry (Mod-5)
 Parchment Valley Conference Center
- August 18**
Pastors4Pastors / Ministers' Wives' Dinner Cruise
 Marietta, OH
- August 19**
Pastors4Pastors / Ministers' Wives' Marriage Retreat
 New Hope Baptist Church, Parkersburg
- August 26**
Mental Health First Aid for Youth Training
 Emmanuel Baptist Church, Parkersburg

SEPTEMBER

- September 10**
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Caring for People (M-04)
 Various Locations
- September 11-13**
Golden'eers Fall Retreat
 Parchment Valley Conference Center
- September 15**
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies Digital Learning Initiative: New Testament 2 (B-04)
 Online

- September 15**
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies Digital Learning Initiative: Weddings and Funerals (E-05)
 Online
- September 15-17**
AB Women's Ministries Spiritual Growth Retreat
 Parchment Valley Conference Center
- September 22-23**
Youth Fall Rally
 Camp Cowen
- September 29-30**
Ministers' Wives' Retreat
 Camp Cowen

OCTOBER

- October 6**
WVBC Executive Committee
 Parchment Valley Conference Center
- October 7**
WVBC Executive Board
 Parchment Valley Conference Center
- October 13-15**
BCM Fall Retreat
 Camp Cowen
- October 18**
AB Women's Ministries Board Meeting
 South Parkersburg Baptist Church
- October 19-20**
WVBC Annual Meeting
 South Parkersburg Baptist Church
- October 28**
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Ministerial Ethics (Mod-02)
 Parchment Valley Conference Center

Newsletter Submissions

Send submissions for *The West Virginia Baptist* to: thewvbaptist@wvbc.org or mail submissions to the West Virginia Baptist Convention, Attention: Todd McClure, P.O. Box 1019, Parkersburg, West Virginia, 26102. If you are submitting text, send typed copy only. 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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WV Bible Reading Marathon

September 9-13, 2023

Southwest steps of the WV State Capitol Building (along Kanawha Blvd.)
 1900 Kanawha Blvd. E.
 Charleston, WV 25317

For more information, contact:

Casey Dawson (pastor, Sunrise Baptist Church) at revercdawson@gmail.com

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