

The West Virginia Baptist Newsletter

April—May 2024

Construction Begins for the Sunny Day Activity Center



(From left to right) Caleb Villers, Camp Cowen Board Chair; Maci, Audie and Ada Villers; Jill Narraway, WVBC Director of Camping and Youth; Sandy Foster Currey, Camp Cowen Board Member; Mike Sisson, WVBC Executive Minister; Todd McClure, WVBC Minister of Missions and Finance; Erich Reggi, WVBC President; Brandon Grigsby, Pray Construction President

We have officially broken ground to begin the construction of the **Sunny Day Activity Center** at Camp Cowen. The initial phase of construction will take place through the end of May, pausing during the summer camping season. It will then recommence in August with construction expected to be complete by November.

“As we break ground for the Sunny Day Activity Center,” said Jill Narraway, WVBC Director of Camping and Youth, *“we know this is so much more than just another building. Since 1943, God’s faithful people have supported the facility expansions at camp in order to accommodate more campers. The WVBC is invested in the life-changing impact camp has in reaching thousands each year with the gospel. As a year-round building, the construction of Sunny Day increases our ministry reach during our summer camps and also gives us more opportunities throughout the year!”*

Rob Ely was the director when the initial vision was cast. He said of the occasion, *“The Sunny Day Activity Center will make a daily impact at Camp Cowen. The weather so regularly impacts programming, but this building will be a great asset for the weekly camps. It will also be a great place to develop leaders. The dream was to honor the incredible leaders who came before us and to invest in today’s generation. The Sunny Day Activity Center will certainly accomplish that.”*

To date, just over \$1,200,000 has been raised toward the \$1,500,000 project. Of that total, nearly \$700,000 has been donated in the past six months! Those donations have allowed contracts to be signed and construction to begin. However, the remaining \$300,000 must be raised by the end of fall.

Join Us in Fulfilling the Dream



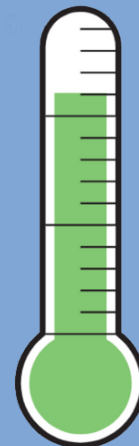
WAYS TO GIVE:

Send checks to the WVBC office, with “Sunny Day Activity Center” written in the memo line.

Give online at campcowen.org or by scanning the QR code.



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



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

WVBC Family: Who Are We?

The Easter story is often titled “The Greatest Story Ever Told!” It is true that following the narrative of Jesus during His triumphal entry into Jerusalem riding on a donkey, to His betrayal, mock trial, beating, crucifixion and resurrection from the dead is a remarkable story. However, it is so much more. It is the account of Jesus’ sacrificial death and subsequent resurrection from the dead to redeem us from the sentence of death and restore us to a right relationship with God. It is the reality that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). It is a theological truth that, “For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21). And it is a humble reminder that causes us to ask, as the psalmist did, “What is mankind that You are mindful of them, human beings that You care for them?” (Psalm 8:4).

It is within these realities that the West Virginia Baptist Convention finds its identity and purpose. When we proclaim our mission of “Doing Christ’s Work Together,” it has, as its focus, our desire and willingness to be used of God to change lives in two primary ways: for people of all ages and demographics to come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior and then to grow from that commitment to follow Him as their Lord. We often refer to these as evangelism and discipleship.

These two factors inform everything we strive to do together as the WVBC Family of Churches. We join hands and hearts because we know that by doing so, we can extend our reach and ability to influence more people for Christ than we could ever do alone.

We often point to Camp Cowen and to various association camps as examples of how to touch the lives of numerous people of all ages – some who may otherwise never hear of the wonderful message of Jesus’ love and forgiveness. However, church camps could never happen on these large scales unless local churches pull together to provide the volunteers, leaders, prayers and financial support as well as inviting and bringing those who attend each week.

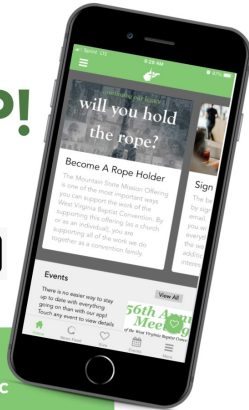
This same emphasis on changing lives for Christ informs every ministry we share together. It is found in our work with international missions and supporting those serving globally; in Baptist Campus Ministry as they take changing lives for Christ to college campuses across the state; at Parchment Valley as it reaches and equips people with education opportunities, conferences, training events and camps; at Brothers’ Keeper as it ministers and shares Jesus’ love with some of the poorest in Jackson County; at Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies, Internships, Mentoring and the Palmer Seminary Partnership as they actively train and equip leaders to serve churches and help them to be more effective in reaching their communities for Christ and teaching people to walk in His ways; in programs that help safeguard children to ensure safe ministries for children and youth to learn about Jesus; in ministries such as the Engaging Mental Health with Hope initiatives, teaching grandparents how to disciple their grandchildren and equipping local churches to be more effective in outreach through opportunities like the Dinner Church strategy of using the simple meal as an opportunity to introduce people outside the church to Jesus.

Truly we are the most effective in our efforts to change lives for Christ when we do so together. When we believe together, pray together, serve together, share our talents and gifts together, and financially support these ministries by giving together! As Emily Dickinson once wrote, “Let us all join hands so that no one will be lost.”

Many blessings,
Mike

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Have the WV Baptist Newsletter delivered to your phone!



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

Vol. LXXXXI, Issue 03 April-May 2024

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DOING CHRIST’S WORK *together*

by Intentionally Engaging Communities for Christ

David Hulme Announces Retirement

David Hulme has announced his retirement from his role as Northeast Area minister, effective July 1, 2024. David has always been a supporter of the ministries of the WVBC. He came to the staff as Area Minister in 2016 after serving 33 years at the Clarksburg Baptist Church with the final ten years as Senior Pastor. During his time on staff as Northeast Area Minister, David faithfully served the 95 churches in the Broad Run, Eastern, Fairmont, Goshen, Judson and Union Associations by caring for pastors, assisting pulpit committees, receiving new churches into the Convention Family, celebrating landmark occasions, resourcing churches and pastors, and overall encouraging them in the Lord!

In addition, David worked closely with the Outreach Commission in providing resources to churches as they launched digital ministries during the pandemic, assisting with re-missioning, introducing the Dinner Church Initiative and partnering with Renew Transformational Strategies to offer churches Health Check-Ups. Along with these ministries, David worked closely with the churches of Cuba. He has led and co-led numerous mission trip groups of WVBC people to serve short-term in Cuba. He continues to assist the churches there with much-needed resources for ministry and humanitarian needs.

While we are happy for David and his wife as they begin this next chapter in retirement, we are also sad to see him leave the staff. Mike Sisson points out, "You only need to visit a church or attend an association meeting with David to see how much they appreciated him and his ministry. I would often tease him about never sitting down to eat at an association meeting meal because he would wander around, visiting with people the entire time."



David Hulme and his wife, Joannie

David said of his time on staff, "It has truly been a joy to serve the pastors, churches and associations of the Northeast Area, as well as the West Virginia Baptist Convention family as a whole, for the past eight years. I cannot thank all of you enough for your prayers, your support and the loving spirit with which you have welcomed me into your churches, hearts and lives."

When asked about how he plans to spend retirement he said, "There are no specific plans...but I want to spend time with family, maybe travel some and continue the mission work in Cuba."

Kevin Sions Transitions to Northeast Area Minister



Last month, Kevin took a group of BCM students to Puerto Rico.

During a specially called Executive Committee meeting on Friday, March 8, the proposal for a staff realignment that would move Kevin Sions into the role of Northeast Area Minister following the retirement of David Hulme was approved unanimously. Several factors were considered in the staff adjustment. The first being Kevin's role as Associate Director for Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM) in the Northern District. Taking into consideration Kevin's passion for ministry to college students, and after discussions with Rob Ely who oversees BCM, it was agreed that with the geographical overlap of both ministries, Kevin could effectively continue his work with BCM in this area.

Each Area Minister is assigned a second portfolio which is based on their area of expertise and passion. In David Hulme's case, his portfolio was outreach, including church re-missioning, church planting and the Dinner Church Initiative. David's portfolio will be shifted to Evan Arkell, who not only has a passion for these

ministries but is nearing the completion of his doctorate which will complement his new portfolio. This will allow Kevin the necessary time to engage with BCM as his second portfolio. Kevin feels this will strengthen his work with BCM because he will have more opportunity to build relationships with local churches and leaders that he can then invite to partner with BCM.

The second factor was the relationships and respect Kevin already has with many of the Northeast Area churches. Having grown up in the eastern panhandle, and having served in churches in different capacities, he already has many strong relationships and a good deal of familiarity that will assist him in serving those churches well as their area minister.

Mike Sisson added that what drew him to consider Kevin for the role was his observations of him over the past six years. "Kevin has a pastoral heart and calm demeanor, which are important qualities in ministering as a pastor to pastors. He takes time to process, which allows him to speak with wisdom rather than responding with a knee-jerk reaction in important decisions."

Kevin said of the opportunity, "I am grateful for the opportunity to transition into the role as Area Minister. I am looking forward to walking alongside churches and pastors and continuing to build relationships. Serving with BCM has provided a unique experience to see young adults create community through relationships that are centered in Christ. Having the same opportunity to see churches do the same is truly humbling."

We ask that you pray for Kevin and his family as he enters this new chapter in ministry.

mountain state MISSION OFFERING



INTENTIONALLY ENGAGING COMMUNITIES FOR CHRIST

By holding the rope for the **Mountain State Mission Offering**, you are supporting the work we do together as a WVBC family.

Statewide Goal for 2024:

\$400,000

Ministries Supported by the MSMO

- AB Men of WV
- AB Women's Ministries of WV
- Area Ministry
- Baptist Campus Ministry
- B.W. School of Christian Studies
- Camp Cowen
- Discipleship Resources
- Emergency Pastoral Aid
- Leadership Events and Resources
- Mental Health Resources
- Mentoring for Pastoral Excellence
- Ministers' Wives' Fellowship
- Ministry Internship Program
- Missionary Internship Program
- Mission Education & Resources
- New Church Planting
- Parchment Valley
- Pastors4Pastors
- Senior Adult Resources
- Weirton Christian Center
- WV Baptist Education Society
- WV Baptist Historical Society
- Youth Events
- Youth Leader Core
- Youth Ministry Planning Team

Resources available at MountainStateMissionOffering.org

Senior High Convention: Created by God, in God and for God



Bryan Marvel was the keynote speaker for Senior High Convention.

"All of who you are is found in who Jesus is: you are blessed, you are chosen, you are redeemed, you are sealed."

Speaker Bryan Marvel conveyed powerful truths from God's word to over 150 people attending **Senior High Convention** on February 23-25. *"Jesus didn't come to make bad people good. He came to make dead people alive!"*

Knowing the truth of our core identity comes from knowing who God is and what that means for our lives. Through the life-changing message of the gospel, teens were encouraged to experience the transforming love of God, challenged to hear God's specific call on their lives and invited to live lives of worship to the one true God.

Events like Senior High Convention bring together youth from across the WVBC for a weekend of community, worship, evangelism and discipleship. Shinnston First Baptist Church hosted, and the weekend was filled with worship led by Kyle Huffman, high-energy activities, learning sessions, good food and tons of fun!

Don't miss out on our Summer Kick-Off, held at Camp Cowen on May 10-11. This will be a celebration of the end of the school year, as well as an opportunity to help prepare camp for this coming summer. You can register for \$5/person or a maximum of \$35/group at: <https://summer-kickoff-2024.eventbrite.com>

You can also learn more about other upcoming Youth Ministry Planning Team (YMPT) events by following [@wvbc_ympt](https://www.facebook.com/wvbc_ympt) on Facebook or Instagram, or by visiting the youth ministry page on our website at: wvbc.org/ministries/youth.

SCHEDULE

- APRIL 19-20 Senior Day (2024 graduates)
- APRIL 19-20 Worship Summit
- APRIL 26-27 AB Men's Work Party
- MAY 10-11 Summer Kickoff
- JUNE 3-6 Intern & Gopher Training
- JUNE 7-9 Younger Midler (grades 2-4)
- JUNE 9-15 Junior High 1 (grades 7-9)
- JUNE 16-22 Junior 1 (grades 5-6)
- JUNE 23-29 High School 1 (grades 9-'24 grads)
- JUNE 30-JULY 6 Junior 2 (grades 5-6)
- JULY 7-13 Junior High 2 (grades 7-9)
- JULY 14-20 High School 2 (grades 9-'24 grads)
- JULY 21-25 Raleigh/Rockcastle
- JULY 26-29 Family Camp
- JULY 30-AUG. 2 Older Midler (grades 3-5)
- AUG. 2-4 AB Men & Boys Camp
- AUG. 9-10 Camp Global

REGISTER NOW

Online or mail-in available at campcowen.org/register

Camp Cowen 2024

THEME

*"Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love."
-1 Corinthians 16: 13-14*



Have you ever wondered what it means to be brave? We have plenty of examples of bravery in movies, video games, books, and real-life examples too. Yet, our world has contradictory messages

on bravery. On one hand, students are encouraged to live confidently and make choices that are brave. On the other, students hear messages of worry, doubt, and fear. So, what **does** it mean to be brave?

God calls believers to a better way of understanding life and living in our world. Our lives can be radically changed when we live knowing God is in control and God is at work around us. We can grow strongly rooted faith, choose to live courageously, gather our strength from God, and let love permeate all we do.

More Than 200 Individuals Attended This Year's Annual Training Event

More than 200 individuals attended this year's **Annual Training Event**, held Saturday, February 3rd, at Parchment Valley Conference Center. This annual event is designed to be a day of worship, fellowship and workshops to help individuals better serve Christ and His church. During this year's event, attendees could choose from 21 different workshop options, including both the standard church officer workshops and several workshops built around our WVBC theme of "Intentionally Engaging Communities for Christ." The Discipleship Commission also provided several workshops that continued their emphasis on mental health.

Troy Nesselrode, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Parkersburg, shared, "*The Annual Training Event is such an incredible opportunity to fellowship and network within our WVBC community as we learn, share and grow together. This year, I participated in the workshop for Short-Term Mission Trip Leaders. It was well-organized and very informative. I am now much better prepared to engage with the missional opportunities God might put in front of me.*"

In addition to the workshops, the West Virginia Baptist Historical Society placed several artifacts on exhibit, including a century-old pump organ from one of the chapel cars. Southeast Area Minister, Jon Villers, played the organ during the morning worship, leading attendees in the song, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

If you were unable to attend this year's event but need resources or training for your church leaders, contact Todd McClure at todd@wvbc.org. We would love to provide you with resources from this year's event, or we can also provide you with training specifically tailored to your needs.



Over 200 individuals gathered for this year's event.



Jon Villers playing the pump organ during morning worship.

Celebrating Two Salvations at the Spring Children's Rally

*Written by Emily Fordyce,
Volunteer, Spring Children's Rally*

Saturday, March 3rd, was a perfect day for our annual **Spring Children's Rally** at Parchment Valley! Over 200 children, along with their amazing adult leaders, joined together to learn more about Jesus and how to "Tell HIS Story." The children engaged in crafts, songs and lessons to not only understand His story, but to learn how to share it with others.

Kristie Norris, Children's Director at Crab Orchard Baptist Church, said "Our kids liked learning more about the parables, and it was good that every session reiterated what a parable was and also that they reviewed the Bible verse of the day in every session." The lessons were interactive as the children acted out the characters in the stories. Some even won "academy awards" for their acting. They found the lost sheep, scattered seeds outside, built towers and painted rocks. Teachers did a great job engaging with the children and helping them learn more about Jesus.

The children were encouraged to bring items to donate to Lily's Place in Huntington. In total, they brought over 180 items to donate to that organization. **The best news that we can share is that we also had two children accept Jesus as their Savior at the event!**

Plan to join us for the Fall Children's Rally on November 2nd at Parchment Valley.



Sawyer Bond and Weston Dunlap singing "O Happy Day."

A.I. in Ministry: A Look into the Future



Over 20 ministry leaders attended the Pastors4Pastors event.

On March 1st, **Pastors4Pastors** held an event at Parchment Valley Conference Center, led by Dr. Trent Eastman, that delved into the topic of "Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) in Ministry: A Look into the Future." The event explored the potential of A.I. in enhancing various aspects of ministry, ranging from Bible study to sermon preparation. Trent's presentation provided valuable insights into leveraging technology to deepen the impact of pastoral work.

The interactive discussions among attendees fostered a collaborative atmosphere, shedding light on innovative ways to integrate A.I. responsibly in religious practices. Overall, the event proved to be a thought-provoking experience, inspiring attendees to consider the evolving role of technology in shaping the future of ministry. It was great to see over 20 ministry leaders gather for this event. Special thanks to Sam Gasaway for leading a time of worship.

Digging Deeper into 2 Samuel



Dr. Trent Eastman presenting on the book of 2 Samuel.

The **Ninth Annual Bible Conference** was held at Parchment Valley on March 2nd, exploring the book of 2 Samuel. Over 60 people attended the study, which offered participants a chance to study the book in-depth. Trent Eastman, pastor of New Baptist Church and also an adjunct professor for Palmer Theological Seminary, presented the study and did a fabulous job.

With the children's event simultaneously taking place at Parchment Valley, the Bible Conference was held in Hill Hall – the perfect venue. The study was a good time of learning and digging deeper into the Word of God. It was a special treat this year to dig deeper into the life of King David, and explore both his strengths and weaknesses. Trent skillfully demonstrated how to properly illustrate such a study using modern technology and tools. Many thanks to all those who worked behind the scenes to bring the event about. A study is planned for the same weekend next year, which is always the first Saturday of March.

90th Annual Women's Conference

Sponsored by ABWM of WV \$25 for Saturday and includes lunch

Pass the Torch!

SPEAKER: Kim Conrad MUSIC: New Creation

June 1, 2024 at Parchment Valley



Learn more at abwmwv.org



Spring Golden'eers Conference

"A conference for adults 55 years of age and older."

May 6 - 8, 2024

Parchment Valley Conference Center

Theme: Spring Into Action

Colossians 3:23



Join us for bible study, evening group activities, music by the Randy White singers, indoor/outdoor games, book store, puzzles, crafts and much more.

Bible Study Leader: Jerry Losh

Seminar with Kelly Young on Wills & Estate Planning

For more information, visit: wvbc.org



PALMER

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

SAVE THE DATE: TUESDAY, MAY 21

Seminary Open House

Time: All day

Location: Parchment Valley, Santrock Education Building

Have you considered attending seminary? Please join us and sit in on an actual class. Lunch is provided!

Graduation Banquet

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: Parchment Valley, Hill Hall

All are welcome to join us as we celebrate the Class of 2024. You can RSVP on the Palmer WV Facebook page.

Fall Semester Details:

Fall Course Schedule

New Testament Study I—Instructor: TBD

Organizational Management and Leadership—Instructor:
Dr. Mike Sisson

Greek—Instructor: Dr. Trent Eastman

Doctor of Ministry Cohort

We are actively recruiting for a cohort to begin this fall semester. Our target goal is six students.

Application Deadline: June 30, 2024

For more information, contact Dr. Allan Copenhaver, program director, at (304) 763-8564 or rcopenha@eastern.edu.

Baptist Campus Ministry Expands to Davis and Elkins College

The mission of Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM) is “changing lives that change the world.” Specifically, BCM targets the more than 60,000 college students that study in West Virginia. Since 1967, BCM has carried out this mission and now has hundreds of graduates who are changing lives as church leaders, missionaries and business people around our state and around the world.

During their most recent meeting, the BCM Board voted to expand their outreach by starting a new group at Davis and Elkins College (D&E). BCM had previously had a presence on that campus but hasn’t been active in recent years. Brett Rinehart, pastor of Elkins First Baptist Church, was hired as the BCM associate.

Brett began pastoring First Baptist in 2021. Prior to that, he served as the Youth Pastor at Sand Fork Baptist Church. As an undergraduate student at Glenville State University, Brett led a Bible study through BCM. He credits that as being influential to his pastoral calling.

At D&E, BCM meets every Tuesday night at 9:00 PM in the chapel. Please join us by praying for Brett, the students at D&E and all of our BCM leaders as God uses them to “change lives that change the world.”



Brett is pictured with his wife, Lasa, as well as their three children: Liam, Lincoln and Lakelyn.

23 Churches Hosted This Year's National Men's Prayer Breakfast

On February 24th, the **American Baptist Men (ABMen) of West Virginia** joined ranks with men across our nation and conducted our annual **National Men's Prayer Breakfast**. As thousands of faithful men assembled, the intentions were to pray for one another, our missionaries, our pastors and our churches. In total, 23 churches across the WVBC hosted a prayer breakfast.

Anthony Pratt, pastor of Racine First Baptist Church, shared, "We enjoyed a great prayer breakfast with the Coal River Association. We had 45 in attendance from seven different churches. We also received a wonderful message from Terry Sponaugle, Prayer changes everything!"

Jim Mitchell, member of Fifth Avenue Baptist Church in Huntington, shared, "We had a great turnout of 65 men and boys, representing 11 churches from the Guyandotte Association. We were led by Monty Foster (pastor, Barboursville Baptist Church), and we also enjoyed hosting Rob Ely and a couple of students from Marshall Baptist Campus Ministry."

In addition to prayer and fellowship, the men also collected an offering for their new scholarship fund. Established last year, this fund exists to help young men from our WVBC family who are entering college or technical school.

If you would like to know more about the scholarship or about the ABMen, you can visit: wvbc.org/ministries/auxiliaries/american-baptist-men-wv/.



The Guyandotte Association's breakfast was held at Camp Ona.



The Fairmont Association's breakfast was held at Bethesda Baptist.



BROTHERS' KEEPER

A REGIONAL MISSION WORK CAMP
FOR YOUTH IN GRADES 6-12

JUNE 16—21, 2024
PARCHMENT VALLEY
CONFERENCE CENTER

Dear WVBC Family,

Brothers' Keeper (BK) is a ministry that has been serving the Jackson County community every summer since its inception in 2000. During that span, nearly 1,000 home projects have been completed and dozens of individuals have given their lives to Christ—including five students just last summer!

As we prepare for BK '24, I want to invite you to join us this year in one of the following ways:

- **Bring a Team:** Bring a team from your church to participate in this year's event.
- **Crew Chief:** Volunteer your time by leading one of our many mission projects.
- **Sponsorship:** With a \$500 sponsorship, your church or company will be printed on this year's BK shirts

Early-bird pricing ends on May 1st. To learn more about Brothers' Keeper, visit: www.parchmentvalley.org.

- Frank Miller, PV Director of Operations

Northwest Area News

by **Mark McCloy**, Northwest Area Minister

New Beginnings

"Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time..." (Jonah 3:1)

The verse we most often focus on in this small book is found at the end of chapter one, and involves the whole fish thing: "Now the Lord provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah..." But the one I like better is at the start of chapter three, where God gives Jonah a second chance. It is almost like a new beginning in the story. Aren't you glad that God is a God of new beginnings? All of us – people, churches and even the world around us – occasionally need a new beginning. In nature, the new beginning is called Spring, and as I look out the window this morning, it is upon us. The daffodils are blooming, the tulips are growing and I am reminded of God's renewing power. God has not forgotten us, the darkness and cold of winter are nearly past and new life is springing up again.

New beginnings happen in our churches too. I am pleased to congratulate Grass Lick Baptist Church on calling a new pastor, Branden Deskins and his wife Rachel. I wish all of them well as God begins "a new thing" in their midst. May God bless this new season! Wherever you are, either in your church or in your own life, remember that God does not forget His people. He will, in His time, provide times of refreshing and renewal for you. *"Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert."* (Isaiah 43:19, KJV)



Branden Deskins, his wife Rachel, and children Denton and Ember.

Southwest Area News

by **Evan Arkell**, Southwest Area Minister

Annual Bible Conference

On the first Saturday of each March, the WVBC hosts our Annual Bible Conference at Parchment Valley. This year was no different. On Saturday, March 2, 2024, a good crowd from quite a few different churches gathered at Parchment Valley to take a deep dive into God's Word. The chosen study this year was 2 Samuel. The presenter was Dr. Trent Eastman, pastor of New Baptist Church in Huntington, a member of the Guyandotte Baptist Association. Pastor Trent led us through the highs and lows of David's kingship and also led us through the corresponding Psalms that give an understanding of what was going through David's heart and mind during many of the events. There was obviously way too much information to cover in this short article, but I believe everyone in attendance left with a much better understanding of this Old Testament treasure. I was pleased with how many southwest area churches were represented.

Dinner Church Weekend

Spring is in the air, and as the trees and flowers sprout and the grass grows, we had an opportunity to learn about the possibility of a different kind of growth at the Dinner Church Weekend, March 15 and 16, at South Parkersburg Baptist Church. I am extremely excited to see the fruit that God produces out of this event.

Upcoming Spring Sings

Speaking of Spring, you are welcome to join the Teays Valley Association for their Spring Sing at Hurricane First Baptist Church on Thursday, April 18th at 7 PM. Also, you are welcome to join the Coal River Association for their Spring Sing at Madison Baptist Church on Sunday, May 19th at 6 PM. I am looking forward to praising our Lord through these events!



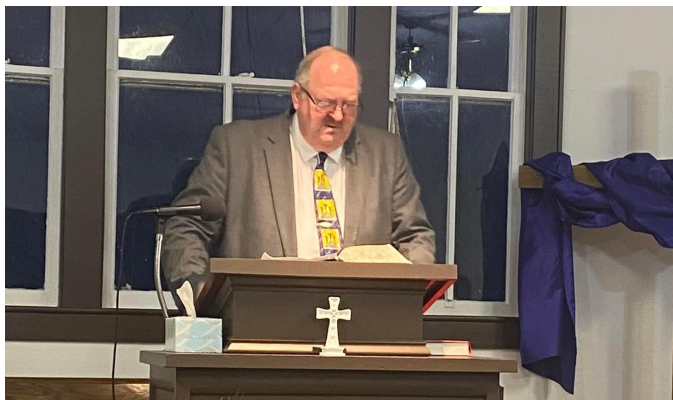
Last year's Coal River Spring Sing welcomed over 125 people.

Northeast Area News

by David Hulme, Northeast Area Minister

Weekly Lenten Services Held in Two Associations

In what has been an annual event for many years, the Fairmont Association and the Union Association each held special Sunday evening services during the Lenten season. Held at different locations, each week, the services offered an opportunity for the associations' churches to come together for worship and fellowship. Offerings taken at the services go to support various mission work and projects of each association.



Greg Blevins preaches for the Union Association Lenten Service.

Engaging Their Community for Christ



The congregation of Comunidad Luz y Vida

Since its beginning in 2010, Comunidad Luz y Vida has engaged the Hispanic community in Moorefield for Christ. Pastor Moises Saravia has led Comunidad Luz y Vida since 2019. Under his leadership, the church has grown both spiritually and in number. The church recently moved to a new location in the city which provides ample space for ministry and growth. Please continue to lift this vibrant faith community in your prayers.

Southeast Area News

by Jon Villers, Southeast Area Minister

Greetings from the Southeast Region of the WVBC! It was such a privilege to share my travel log with you in our last edition of the newsletter. What I did not mention is that I started that journey with 23 miles on the odometer on December 3rd in a convention vehicle that was replacing the vehicle that Jim Anderson, Dana Gatewood and I had all used till it reached 86,000 miles! The reason I mention that is when I pulled in the driveway from the midweek service of FBC Richwood on February 28th, I had just turned over to mile 7,300 on the odometer! That is more miles than starting in Helsinki, Finland, traveling to St. Petersburg, Russia, and using all the Trans-Siberian Highway to get to the other side of Russia at the Sea of Japan while going through eight time zones!! While that would have been quite an amazing journey, the first two months of 2024 have been just as rewarding in meeting God's people stretched near and far over the 12 counties of the Southeast Region!

All five associations had a men's prayer breakfast, and some had two. Thanks to Long Run Baptist (Elk Valley), Fayetteville Baptist (Fayette), Mount Jackson Baptist and Crab Orchard Baptist (Greenbrier/Raleigh), FBC Quinwood (Hopewell), Cook Memorial Baptist and Baileysville Baptist (Rockcastle) for their hospitality. My focus for the first quarter has been to visit every church and contact every pastor in the 30 churches of the Hopewell Association. I have three left that I need to contact!



Ordination Service for Rev. Andy Kiddle at Fayetteville Baptist Church

It was also a joy to participate in my first ordination service as an Area Minister! Rev. Andy Kiddle was called out of Fayetteville Baptist Church and the Fayette Association participated in the laying on of hands to pray for him on February 11th. There was such love and support of both his former church, Crab Orchard Baptist, and his current church where he is serving as lead pastor.

Thanks again for allowing me to serve these amazing 96 churches in the Southeast Region!

CHERYL MIDDLETON ANKROM, 70, of Vienna, died on January 7, 2024. She was a member of Vienna Baptist Church, where she served as a Sunday School teacher and on numerous boards and committees.

LEWIS “JR” BAILEY, 82, of Charleston, died on January 5, 2024. He was a member of Dunbar First Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon.

LUVONNE MEADOWS BREWER, 94, of Dunbar, died on January 1, 2024. She was a member of Dunbar First Baptist Church, where she served as a Sunday School teacher and a deaconess.

BARBARA NORTHEY COFFINDAFFER, 97, of Bridgeport, died on January 10, 2024. She was a member of Simpson Creek Baptist Church, where she served as a Deacon Emeritus and member of the Jessie Johnson Barnes Circle and Temple Bible Sunday School class.

CARLOS RAY HENSLEY, 83, of Milton, died on February 3, 2024. He was a member of Milton Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon and trustee.

HELEN LOUISE HERBERT, 93, of Fairmont, died on January 19, 2024. She was a member of the New Life Ministries Church, where she sang and played the organ.

SANDRA “SUE” STOTTS JARVIS, 79, of Spencer, died on February 20, 2024. She was a member of First Baptist Church of Spencer, where she served as a Sunday School teacher, Vacation Bible School teacher and member of the choir.

FOREST GLEN PERINE, 88, of Bridgeport, died on January 9, 2024. He was a member of Reynoldsville Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon, choir member, Sunday School teacher and past treasurer.

ROGER K. ROSS, 84, of Bridgeport, died on January 28, 2024. He was a member of Simpson Creek Baptist Church, where he served as a choir director, Sunday School teacher, treasurer and member of the Master’s Blend singing group.

GLORIA ANN SHIRKEY, 88, of South Charleston, died on February 11, 2024. She was a member of First Baptist Church of South Charleston, where she served as the chairman of the Board of Christian Education, Sunday School superintendent, and also previously served as a trustee and deacon.

THELMA JEAN THOMAS, 88, of Gauley Bridge, died on January 27, 2024. She was a member of Gauley Bridge Baptist Church.

MARY “MAXINE” (MORRISON) TURLEY, 94, of Milton, died on February 2, 2024. She was a member of Milton Baptist Church, where she served as a Sunday School teacher and sang in the choir.

OLIVE MARIE UTT, 93, of Mannington, died on February 9, 2024. She was a member of Union Valley Baptist Church, where she served as church clerk.

MINISTRY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Mid-High Student Ministries (Part-Time)

Location: Morgantown area

Director of Children’s Ministry (Part-Time)

Location: Huntington area

Senior Pastor (Part-Time)

Location: Parkersburg area

Pastor to Youth (Part-Time)

Location: Jackson County

Pastor (Full-Time)

Location: Barbour County

Pastor (Part-Time)

Location: Weston area

Pastor (Full-Time)

Location: Prunytown, WV

Accompanist (Part-Time)

Location: Charleston 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

Music Director (Part-Time)

Location: Charleston area

Children’s Ministry Director (Part-Time)

Location: Parkersburg area

Are you interested in learning more about any of these positions? Or is there a position at your church that you want to advertise? If so, contact Todd McClure at todd@wvbc.org.

To see a list of available positions, visit: www.wvbc.org

Prayer Calendars

April 2024

APRIL 1 – Ngoc Pham, International Ministries Global Servant to Vietnam
APRIL 2 – Mark Evans, vice chair of the WVBC Outreach Commission
APRIL 3 – The ministry of Plum Run Baptist Church; Daniel Cunningham, pastor (Fairmont Association)
APRIL 4 – The ministry of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church; Michael Harriman, pastor (Goshen Association)
APRIL 5 – Women’s Camp happening this weekend at Camp Cowen
APRIL 6 – Rebecca Stanton, International Ministries Global Servant to Hungary
APRIL 7 – The ministry of New Hope Community Missionary Baptist Church; Christopher Teets, pastor (Hopewell Association)
APRIL 8 – Susan Hegarty, International Ministries Global Servant to Costa Rica
APRIL 9 – Matt Man, International Ministries Global Servant to Southeast Asia
APRIL 10 – The ministry of Harmony Baptist Church; Gary Crislip, pastor (Eastern Association)
APRIL 11 – The ministry of Gentry Missionary Baptist Church; Lewis Sanson, pastor (Fayette Association)
APRIL 12 – AB Men Work Party happening at Parchment Valley
APRIL 13 – John Northeimer, member of the WVBC Stewardship Commission
APRIL 14 – Shigemi Tomita, International Ministries Global Servant to Japan
APRIL 15 – Ginny Prunty, Administrative Assistant to the Executive Minister, WVBC
APRIL 16 – The ministry of Center Branch Baptist Church; Emory Delaney, pastor (Broad Run Association)
APRIL 17 – Greg Swisher, member of the WVBC Leadership Commission
APRIL 18 – The ministry of Hamlin First Baptist Church; Jonathan Butcher, pastor (Guyandotte Association)
APRIL 19 – Worship Summit happening at Camp Cowen
APRIL 20 – Senior Day (2024 graduates) happening at Camp Cowen
APRIL 21 – The ministry of New Antioch Baptist Church; Gary Walker, pastor (Elk Valley Association)
APRIL 22 – The ministry of Harrisville Baptist Church; Robert Perine, pastor (Harrisville Association)
APRIL 23 – The ministry of Marshville Baptist Church; John Mark Camenga, pastor (Judson Association)
APRIL 24 – Corene Smith, International Ministries Global Servant to Brazil
APRIL 25 – Eric Thomas, member of the WVBC Discipleship Commission
APRIL 26 – AB Men Work Party happening at Camp Cowen
APRIL 27 – The ministry of Breckenridge Missionary Baptist Church; Corey Brooks, pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh Association)
APRIL 28 – Thelma Nambu, International Ministries Global Servant to the Philippines
APRIL 29 – Daniel Chetti, International Ministries Global Servant to Lebanon
APRIL 30 – Valerie Osterbrock, International Ministries Global Servant to Malaysia

May 2024

MAY 1 – The ministry of Sand Fork Baptist Church (Coal River Association)
MAY 2 – Sarah Matos, International Ministries Global Servant to Mexico
MAY 3 – The ministry of Chapel Baptist Church; Harold Francis, pastor (Little Kanawha Association)
MAY 4 – The WVBC Executive Board / Commission Meetings happening today at Parchment Valley
MAY 5 – The ministry of Faith Baptist Church; Mark Davis, pastor (Union Association)
MAY 6 – The Spring Golden’eers Retreat happening at Parchment Valley
MAY 7 – Nora Kalkman, International Ministries Global Servant to Europe, Middle East and Liberia
MAY 8 – The BCM Beach Week happening this week at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina
MAY 9 – The ministry of LifeSpring Community Church; Claire Cottrill, pastor (Teays Valley Association)
MAY 10 – Summer Kickoff / Youth Work Party happening this weekend at Camp Cowen
MAY 11 – Brian Woofert, member of the WVBC Leadership Commission
MAY 12 – Nzunga Mabudiga, International Ministries Global Servant to the Dominican Republic and Haiti
MAY 13 – Frank Miller, Director of Operations, Parchment Valley Conference Center
MAY 14 – The ministry of Weirton Heights Memorial Baptist Church; William Stout, pastor (Panhandle Association)
MAY 15 – The ministry of Summit Missionary Baptist Church; Larry Addair, pastor (Rockcastle Association)
MAY 16 – Lisa Williams, member of the WVBC Discipleship Commission
MAY 17 – The ministry of Sago Baptist Church; Wease Day, pastor (Broad Run Association)
MAY 18 – Laura Freeman, International Ministries Global Servant to Turkey
MAY 19 – The ministry of Ravenswood First Baptist Church; Toby Wagoner, pastor (Good Hope Association)
MAY 20 – Hermelinda Damasceno, International Ministries Global Servant to United Kingdom
MAY 21 – Lee Ann Hwang, International Ministries Global Servant to Japan
MAY 22 – Don Stennett, member of the WVBC Stewardship Commission
MAY 23 – The ministry of Little Laurel Baptist Church; Ricky Bragg, pastor (Hopewell Association)
MAY 24 – The ministry of Ebenezer Baptist Church; James Asbury, pastor (Twelve Pole Association)
MAY 25 – John Vannoy, member of the WVBC Outreach Commission
MAY 26 – Wayne Niles, International Ministries Global Servant to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MAY 27 – The ministry of Diamond Baptist Church; Bobby Goldsburg, pastor (Kanawha Valley Association)
MAY 28 – Kyle Williams, International Ministries Global Servant to Thailand
MAY 29 – The ministry of Ten Mile Baptist Church; Jeffrey Perine, pastor (Judson Association)
MAY 30 – The ministry of Big Union Baptist Church; Peter Shaffer, pastor (Elk Valley Association)
MAY 31 – The ministry of Elizabeth Baptist Church; Leary Vanhorn, pastor (Parkersburg Association)

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

Upcoming Events

APRIL

April 5-7
Women's Camp
Camp Cowen

April 11
Mental Health First Aid for Adults
Online

April 12-13
AB Men Work Party
Parchment Valley Conference Center

April 16
Mental Health First Aid for Adults
Online

April 19-20
Worship Summit
Camp Cowen

April 19-20
Senior Day
Camp Cowen

April 20
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Weddings and Funerals (E-05)
Parchment Valley Conference Center

April 21
Camp Cowen Sunday

April 26
Pastors4Pastors Book Study
Page Baptist Church

April 26-27
AB Men Work Party
Camp Cowen

MAY

May 3
WVBC Executive Committee Meeting
Parchment Valley Conference Center

May 4
WVBC Executive Board and Commission Meetings
Parchment Valley Conference Center

May 6-8
Spring Golden'eers Conference
Parchment Valley Conference Center

May 6-12
BCM Beach Week
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

May 7
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Discipleship Essentials (M-02)
Various locations

May 12-13
Summer Kick-Off / Youth Work Party
Camp Cowen

May 15
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Communicating God's Word (M-01)
Online

May 15
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Worship and Music (E-03)
Online

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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