

The West Virginia Baptist Newsletter



October—November 2026

Thank You for Showing Up

Written by Mark Evans
Pastor, Weston First Baptist Church

For more than a month now, our church and our community have been walking through something none of us ever expected. We have witnessed tremendous loss. Homes and businesses were devastated. Families were displaced. Our own church sustained significant damage. In those first hours and days, the needs seemed overwhelming.

But then something beautiful began to happen... **You showed up.**

Churches showed up. Ministries and organizations showed up. Businesses showed up. Neighbors showed up. Friends and complete strangers showed up.

Some of you came wearing rubber boots and work gloves and helped carry waterlogged belongings to the curb. Some of you tore out damaged materials, shoveled mud and power-washed floors.

Some spent long hours unloading supplies, sorting donations, stocking shelves, filling boxes and serving our neighbors through our distribution center next door. Some stood over stoves, grills and kitchen counters preparing meals. Others packaged them, served them, delivered them or provided the money necessary to purchase them.

Some drove people where they needed to go. Others traveled miles collecting donated supplies and then brought truckloads and trailer loads into our community.

Some donated bottled water, food, cleaning supplies, hygiene products, tools, building materials, pet supplies, paper products and countless other necessities. Some gave financially, sometimes quietly and anonymously, simply saying, "Use this wherever it is needed."

Some prayed. Some called. Some sent cards and messages. Some hugged people who needed a hug. Some sat patiently and listened lovingly as someone shared the story of what they had lost.

And still others simply asked: "What can I do?"

To every church, ministry, organization, business, volunteer, donor, first responder, community leader, neighbor, friend and individual who has helped Weston First Baptist Church or the people of our wonderful community in any way... **THANK YOU.**

And those two words hardly seem sufficient because I have been truly humbled by your love, compassion, and generosity.

There are simply too many of you to name, and I would never want to unintentionally leave someone out. But please know this: **your kindness has been seen, your work has mattered, and your generosity has made a difference.**

Scripture tells us in Hebrews 6:10: *"For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints."*

There have been moments during these past several weeks when the needs seemed enormous. But again and again, someone would arrive with exactly what was needed—a pair of hands, a hot meal, a truckload of supplies, a financial gift, a prayer or simply an encouraging word.

As a pastor, one of the things that has moved me most has been watching the body of Christ serve. Different churches, ministries and communities coming together from near and far, joining arm in arm and demonstrating the love of Christ.

When someone is hurting, when a need is not being met, denominational names and church signs become much less important than simply asking: "How can we help?"

Paul writes in Galatians 6:2: *"Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ."*

We have watched that verse come alive before our eyes.

And yet, we realize that our work isn't finished. Recovery will take time.

Some families still face a very long road. Homes and businesses are being rebuilt. Our church continues its own restoration. Needs are changing, but needs still remain.

Yet we move forward encouraged because we have been reminded of something these past three weeks: **We do not walk alone.**

So, from this pastor and the congregation of Weston First Baptist Church, and from a heart that is more grateful than these words can adequately express:

Thank you. Thank you for coming. Thank you for giving. Thank you for serving. Thank you for feeding people. Thank you for cleaning. Thank you for praying. Thank you for loving our neighbors. And thank you for reminding us—through your actions—what Christian compassion looks like.

May God bless every person who has poured something of themselves into our church and community during these difficult weeks.

And may all of us remember that ultimately, the glory belongs not to any church, organization or individual, but to Jesus Christ, whose love compels us to love and serve one another.

From all of us at Weston First Baptist Church: **Thank you for showing up. Thank you for helping carry the burden. And thank you for loving our community.**

We will never forget it.

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

Thank You, Volunteers!

mountain state MISSION OFFERING

DOING CHRIST'S WORK *together*

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*Expect great things from God,
attempt great things for God.*



by Mike Sisson, Executive Minister

A Tale of Two Congregations

The theme this year for our WVBC family is “Expect Great Things from God, Attempt Great Things for God,” with its scriptural foundation found in Paul’s letter to the church in Ephesus, “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding, abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us” (Eph. 3:20).

So, what happens when God’s people step out in faith believing that He truly can strengthen them with His power to accomplish more than they could even imagine? There are two congregations that provide witness of God’s working in powerful ways.

Recently, I attended the dedication service of Scarbro First Baptist as they began services in their new church building.

First Baptist is a small congregation founded in 1904 that took a monumental step of faith by moving from their aging building to a medical complex that they completely renovated into a beautiful church. Pastor Kenny Smith, celebrating his 23rd year as pastor, was quick to point out in his dedication sermon that God must receive all the glory. He explained that this move and renovation could not have happened without the grace, power and intervention of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord worked through church members of all ages who faithfully stewarded their time and talent to complete many of the renovations themselves.

A second congregation is actually the story of the faith journey of two congregations that felt the leading of Jesus Christ to become one church family. In 2021, New Hill Community Church, a relatively young church plant of 14 years, and the Sabraton Baptist Church, founded in 1917, began to sense the calling of the Lord to join the two congregations together. After spending time in prayer seeking the Lord’s will and guidance, the two began the process of becoming one church family. Now five years later, the church has grown both spiritually and numerically as they embrace their mission of “Loving the Word. Making Disciples. Contending for the Faith.”

As the Lord has blessed the church to grow to around 220 worshippers, the need arose to once again step out in faith. After much prayer and discernment, a sanctuary renovation and expansion project has begun.

Much like Pastor Smith, Pastor Stephen Dodrill is very quick to acknowledge that all the credit and glory must go to God for His work in this faith family.

So, what happens when we, in faith, expect great things from God and then attempt great things for His glory? In the words of the old hymn, we will find ourselves singing the refrain, “To God be the glory, great things He hath done!”

Blessings,
Mike



The new building for Scarbro First Baptist Church.



All ages helping with the renovation of Scarbro First Baptist Church.



Sanctuary expansion at Sabraton Hill Baptist Church.

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 5. Online registration will be open on wvbc.org until October 11. Please mail forms to PO Box 1019, Parkersburg, WV 26102.

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 (\$15)
_____ American Baptist Women's Ministries of WV (\$11)
_____ Pastors4Pastors (\$20, \$15 for members)

* Please mark if you need a Gluten Free meal option: _____

KIDS LUNCHES

Please mark how many kids lunches you will need for each day.

_____ Thursday (\$6 each) _____ Friday (\$6 each)

MEAL OPTIONS

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

THURSDAY:

_____ Baptist Campus Ministry Banquet—5 PM (\$25)

FRIDAY:

_____ Ministers' Wives' Fellowship—Noon (\$15)
_____ WV Baptist Historical Society—Noon (\$20)
_____ Palmer Theological Seminary—Noon (\$15)

* Please mark if you need a Gluten Free meal option: _____

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: _____

Youth Leader Core: Knowing, Growing, Relating, Serving and Calling

This August began a new chapter of **Youth Leader Core (YLC)** as thirteen students representing ten WVBC churches embarked on a journey of personal discipleship and leadership development. Since 1978, YLC has faithfully invested in generations of young leaders from our churches. Each year, students called and commissioned by their local churches are empowered to learn about themselves, grow in their faith and discover ways to live out their beliefs and ministries.

But what makes YLC such a vital and impactful program? It begins in the **local church**, where pastors and church leaders identify students who are serious about their Christian faith and demonstrate leadership potential. In partnership with the WVBC, these students gather with adult facilitators for five weekend trainings designed to help them understand themselves, develop practical skills, practice ministry and discern God's calling. Throughout the year, YLC challenges students to **know yourself, grow yourself and lead others as you follow Jesus**.

What do those five weekends look like? YLC gathers at host churches for training, fellowship, worship, Bible study, discernment and leadership development. Each weekend builds upon the one before it:

Weekend 1 - Knowing: Who am I, and who am I in Christ?

Weekend 2 - Growing: How do I take responsibility for my own growth?

Weekend 3 - Relating: How do I live and lead well with other people?

Weekend 4 - Serving: How do I use what God has given me for others?

Weekend 5 - Calling: Who is God calling me to become, and how will I live this out?

YLC formation happens not only during these five weekends, but also in the weeks between them through three important practices: **homework, mentoring and journaling**. Homework gives students opportunities to reflect, process and practice the skills introduced during each weekend. A YLC Advocate walks alongside each student, providing encouragement, accountability and support. Journaling gives students intentional space to recognize their own growth and pay attention to the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.



Students participate in Bible study during YLC weekend.

The impact of YLC extends far beyond five weekends. Since 1978, YLC participants have carried what they learned into churches, families, careers, communities and ministries. They have pastored churches, led their peers, served their communities, built families, pursued meaningful careers and continued growing as disciples of Jesus, living out their unique gifts within the body of Christ.

That is why we continue to invest in YLC. More than simply developing better student leaders, we are partnering with local churches to help young people discover who God has created and called them to be, and equipping them to faithfully live out that calling wherever God leads.

Thank you for your continued prayers, encouragement, and support of Youth Leader Core and the next generation of Christian leaders!



Students at Camp Cowen during first YLC Weekend.



YLC students enjoying meeting new friends.

A Continent of Opportunity

*Written by Kyle Williams,
International Ministries Global Servant*



Kyle Williams teaching a seminary class in Thailand.

Nearly half of the world's population lives in Asia, making it one of the most important regions for the future of the global Church. Yet Christianity remains a small minority across much of the continent. Many communities have limited access to local churches, trained Christian leaders, theological education and resources.

In Southeast Asia, countries such as Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar have small Christian populations. Many churches are concentrated in particular ethnic or geographic areas, while rural, remote and border communities often remain isolated and under-resourced. Some groups still lack Bible translations in their own languages.

China and India highlight the scale of this challenge even more

clearly. With nearly 3 billion people between them, these two countries are home to vast populations where Christians make up only a small percentage. Many communities have limited access to Christian witness, discipleship, leadership development and theological training. For many churches, the challenge is not a lack of desire to serve, but a lack of people, training and resources.

For many Asians, Christianity is closely associated with colonialism during the 18th and 19th centuries. This history has contributed to skepticism and, in some places, hostility toward the Church. Yet throughout that same history, Christians established hospitals and schools and created safe places for girls and women when few alternatives existed.

Today, the greatest opportunity is to strengthen the Christian communities that already exist. This means investing in indigenous leaders who understand their own cultures and equipping them to serve effectively. Our role is to come alongside these churches and leaders, helping them better love their families, neighbors and even their enemies, as Jesus taught.

Through leadership development, theological and practical training, church networks and partnerships, small Christian communities can multiply their capacity to serve their neighbors and bring hope, reconciliation and transformation to some of the most densely populated and least-reached areas of the world.

Kyle and Katrina Williams are International Ministries global servants. If you want to learn more about their ministry, visit: internationalministries.org/author/kk-williams/

Showing Up Where Hope Is Needed

This summer, First Baptist Church of Williamstown (FBCW) sent 22 youth and adults to Honduras for a week of service. Their mission work included building one-room houses, feeding school children, visiting Honduran troops at a military base, worshiping alongside local believers in several churches and visiting patients and families in a hospital.

The conditions at the hospital were shocking. The mission team's first impression came from family members camped outside the facility on flattened cardboard boxes. They desperately wanted prayer for their loved ones inside the hospital. Before entering the facility, youth and adult team members stopped to pray with as many people as possible.

Conditions inside were far different from what they might have expected in a hospital back home. One couple sat crying beside their deceased child. One baby had been born with its intestines outside of its body. A woman underwent surgery without anesthesia. Everywhere they looked, it seemed that hopelessness was present.

Mark Elliott, FBCW Youth Pastor, shared, "What I know is that we are not called to have the right opinion about a hospital system. We are called to show up in it with bread in our hands and prayer on our lips, and today that is exactly what our team did."

John 5:1–15 describes Jesus in Jerusalem for a feast. Rather than going straight to the festivities, He stopped at the pool of

Bethesda, where a crowd of people had gathered. They waited at the pool, hoping to be healed. Time and again throughout the Gospels, we see Jesus intentionally interrupting His schedule to be with people in need.

So it was with the FBCW mission team. They allowed God to interrupt their fear, their shock and their own opinions and, instead, to show them people in need. Through touch and prayer, they became the presence of God to countless people that morning.

To the many people who supported and prayed for this trip, thank you!

Four people professed faith in Christ, dozens of others had their hopes lifted and God received all the glory.



FBCW Mission Team in Honduras

Fairmont State BCM: From Campus to Mexico

“Changing lives that change the world.” For **Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM)**, that is more than a motto—it is a lifestyle that BCM associates challenge students to live out during their years on campus.

In August, Stan and Karla Carr took seven BCM students from Fairmont State University to Oaxaca, Mexico, where they served for a week alongside International Ministries global servants Keith and Deborah Myers.

On their first Sunday, the team attended a church in Calihuala, Oaxaca, where Karla shared a message and the team enjoyed a meal in Pastor Emiliano’s home. The remainder of the week was spent in Huacapa, serving the local church and community.

A two-day power outage gave the team a glimpse into the challenges faced by the community, while also revealing the resilience and joy of its people. The church partnered with the city government to give the team an opportunity to clean and paint the local government office building. It was the first time the church had participated in this type of community service, and everyone was grateful for the opportunity to serve together in unity and fellowship.

The team also helped with several church projects, including improving the church bathrooms by making them more functional and installing proper water and drainage lines. They also assisted with Vacation Bible School, which welcomed about 15 children from the community who enjoyed skits, games and crafts.



BCM students enjoying a meal in Fidel and Hosafa’s kitchen.

Stan shared the message at the church on Wednesday evening. Church members then expressed their heartfelt thanks to the team for their support throughout the week and applauded their valiant attempts to speak Spanish. Pastor Fidel enjoyed teaching the students Spanish words and phrases, and many of the students were soon conversing with children during VBS.

On the trip home, several students expressed a desire to either return to Mexico permanently or participate in the next mission trip. As many can attest, mission trips like this impact not only the communities being served but also the participants themselves.

Thank you to the many individuals and churches who supported this trip and continue to support the work of BCM. This ministry truly is “changing lives that change the world.”

WVBC YOUTH MINISTRY PLANNING TEAM PRESENTS

ONE

MANY PARTS ONE BODY

ROMANS 12:4-5

SENIOR HIGH CONVENTION


**NOVEMBER
13-15, 2026**


**OAKWOOD
BAPTIST CHURCH**
CHARLESTON, WV


**FOR STUDENTS
IN 9TH - 12TH GRADE**
WORSHIP | BIBLE STUDY
FELLOWSHIP | COMMUNITY

LEARN MORE & SIGN UP AT
WVBC.ORG/MINISTRIES/YOUTH

DIFFERENT
PEOPLE.
DIFFERENT
STORIES.

ONE BODY
IN CHRIST.

2026 Statistics

Total Campers: 1,696

Salvations: 101

Rededications: 90

Calls to Ministry: 26

Desire to be Baptized: 46

Camp Cowen



Fun in the sun!



Camp Staff serving campers at the store.



Cabin competitions deepen teamwork and keep campers active.



Crafts, games, and activities for days!



Junior 2 campers having a BLAST!



Time spent in God's word is the cornerstone of growing in faith.



Junior 1 campers showing us



Interest groups provide



High School 1

Summer Recap



EPHESIANS 3:20-21



the fun and games never end!



Friendships and fun all summer long!



Beautiful moment during worship in Hylbert Hall.



time to learn new skills.



Small groups are key component of discipleship at camp.



Mario Kart races are SO MUCH FUN!



playing games on Day 1 of Camp.



It may have been HOT this summer, but Junior 2 campers cooled off with water games.



Alone time with God is an important piece of hearing from God's Word.



Object lessons bring gospel truths to life.



What a beautiful sight of multigenerational worship in Vespers during Family Camp.

The West Virginia Baptist / October - November 9

Ministry Internship Program

The Ministry Internship Program provides individuals with the opportunity to explore their long-term calling to ministry by giving them an opportunity to serve within our family of churches and placing them under a mentor for a summer-long internship. Internships are customizable to the interests of the applicant, but include pastoral ministry, youth ministry, worship ministry, communications or intercultural ministry.



To apply for next year's program—or to request an intern for your church—visit wvbc.org or scan the QR code above.

Lilly Knight Serves as a WVBC Ministry Intern

*Written by Jared Fitzwater
Youth Pastor at Clarksburg Baptist Church*

This summer, Clarksburg Baptist Church was blessed to have Lilly Knight serve as a summer ministry intern. Lilly was a tremendous blessing to both our Children's Ministry and Student Life Ministry, serving faithfully with a joyful spirit and a genuine heart for people.

Throughout the summer, Lilly invested in the lives of children and students through weekly ministry, special events and two summer camps. She participated in Camp Cowen's High School 1 Camp and FUGE Camp at Cedarville University in Ohio, where she helped build relationships with students and encourage them in their faith.

Lilly's willingness to serve wherever she was needed made her a valuable part of our ministry team. We are grateful for the time, energy and heart she poured into our church and especially into the next generation. We praise God for the way He used Lilly this summer and pray that He will continue to guide and equip her as she grows in her relationship with Christ and her calling to serve Him.

Lilly was one of several interns who served this summer through our WVBC Ministry Internship Program.



Lilly Knight leading the youth at Clarksburg Baptist Church.

The Trash Bag That Changed a Life

At our **Parchment Valley Conference Center**, the rolling hills of West Virginia provide more than a scenic retreat; they offer a place where lives can be changed through everyday moments of humble service and unexpected grace.

This summer, during a busy youth camp, that transformation unfolded in an unlikely place—amidst brooms, toilet brushes and overflowing trash bins.

Being short-staffed meant I needed to help with maintenance and housekeeping throughout the week. A curious young camper began shadowing me, repeatedly asking, “Why, as the director, are you cleaning bathrooms and taking out trash?” My answer was simple: “Every task we do is done for the joy of the Lord!”

We try to instill in our staff the mindset that every job is a way to clear the way to the cross. By eliminating distractions, we allow people to better hear the Gospel.

The true test of that joy came one of the final nights of camp. The gym, which had been transformed into a chapel, needed cleaning. One trash bag was too heavy to lift from the can, so I dragged it outside and climbed into the bed of a pickup truck to remove it. Under the watchful eye of my young camper friend, the inevitable happened. The bag split down the side, covering me and the pavement with garbage, liquids and sticky residue!

Instead of frustration, I laughed. The young man rushed outside and asked, “Why are you laughing?” I explained that the mess was actually a testimony to the abundance we had experienced—the food provided, the drinks shared and the joyful fellowship that created the waste in the first place. It was a tangible reminder that true joy resides in the heart, regardless of our circumstances.



Parchment Valley has been the site of 36 baptisms so far this year.

The next morning, the camp pastor asked to use the pool for baptisms. As I helped prepare, I saw my young friend walking down the stairs into the water. When he came out, I asked what had happened.

He told me that after witnessing the garbage incident, he couldn't stop thinking about the joy I had displayed. He wanted that same joy. That night, he had gone to the altar in tears, asking God for it.

As he was baptized, he told everyone, **“I am different now!”**

The mission of Parchment Valley is to be a place “*where lives are changed.*” We praise God that He can change lives through something as simple as a split trash bag and a joyful laugh. When we serve with a willing spirit, God can use even the messiest moments to change lives forever.

See you soon!

Peter Coffey, Parchment Valley Director of Operations

Fall Children's Rally

For children currently in grades K-5, 6th grade is optional.

Saturday, November 7, 2026

At Parchment Valley in the Greenlee Activities Center

COST

\$15.00

if registered by Oct 13th

\$28.00

if registered after Oct 13th

T-shirts are also available
for **\$12.00** if ordered by
Oct 13th

**SURPRISE
PARTY**

REGISTER

Register at wvbc.org

- OR -

Scan the QR Code:



Northwest Area News

by Mark McCloy, Northwest Area Minister

Summer Excitement

Not all excitement is good. We have experienced many challenges this summer, like storms and illness. Some have found themselves on the receiving end of lightning strikes and floods. But we thank God that He has brought us through and that we have one another to depend upon.

There have also been many positive experiences.

- Elizabeth Baptist licensed Brian Watson and called him as their associate pastor.
- Cairo Baptist also licensed Brian Flanery and called him as their interim.
- Following Bob Keen's retirement, Mill Creek Baptist ordained Jason Wilson and called him as their interim.
- Following Judi-Bartlett Tome's retirement from Parkersburg First Baptist, they called Chad Mugrage as their interim pastor.
- Shelly Dawson was called as pastor of Goose Creek Baptist.
- Danny Shrekengost was called as pastor of Two Runs Baptist.



Ordination of Jason Wilson by Mill Creek Baptist Church.

Additionally, several others are working on their ordination process, Harrisville Baptist is building a new multipurpose building and Newark Baptist is buying land for future development.

We thank God that He is with us no matter the nature of our excitement!

Southwest Area News

by Evan Arkell, Southwest Area Minister

Thank You for Flood Relief Help

There are too many churches and individuals to single out, but I want to thank each of you who gave during our disaster relief opportunities. I also want to thank the churches that made themselves available as drop-off points to keep everything flowing smoothly. We had our share of flooding in the southwest region this summer, and you not only gave toward that, but you also gave to help with the larger floods in Lewis and Upshur counties. Words cannot express the appreciation that I have for you!



Brother Rick Marrone preaching the message at Big Hurricane Missionary Baptist Church.

Associations Enjoy Fellowship at Special Events

On August 9, the Coal River Association celebrated its annual picnic as several churches from the association joined together for worship, fellowship, fun, and food. Thomas Dotson from Danville First Baptist made sure the sound system was set up correctly, Ian Randant from Racine First Baptist led worship and Pastor Anthony Pratt from Racine First Baptist provided an inspiring message using a picnic basket as his prop. It was quite a warm day, so everyone was excited to move to the basement of Danville First Baptist for the meal.

On August 30, the Twelve Pole Association celebrated the fifth Sunday together, as they do on every fifth Sunday evening, at Big Hurricane Missionary Baptist Church. Pastor Tim Preston from Fort Gay First Baptist led the service and congregational singing, and Pastor Tony Perry from Big Hurricane Missionary Baptist sang a special solo. Many prayer requests were shared and several testimonies were given about how God has touched people. Rick Marrone from Fort Gay First Baptist preached a powerful message based on the song *Jesus Loves Me*. Of course, following the service, refreshments were served, providing a great time of fellowship.

Northeast Area News

by **Kevin Sions**, *Northeast Area Minister*

Bethany Baptist Celebrates 150th Anniversary



Bethany Baptist celebrates 150 years of ministry.

Bethany Baptist Church (Union) celebrated 150 years of ministry during the weekend of July 4-5. Family and friends gathered together for fellowship, worship and sharing memories of how God's goodness and faithfulness are present in their lives and life of the church.

Long Run Fellowship Hosts Revival

Long Run Fellowship (Union) hosted a revival and homecoming from Aug 16–23. Different speakers shared God's Word while different music groups led worship each night.

Ten Mile Baptist Hosts Three-Day Revival

Ten Mile Baptist Church (Judson) hosted a three-day revival on August 28-30. The revival concluded on Sunday with a baptism service and fellowship meal.



Revival at Ten Mile Baptist Church.

Southeast Area News

by **Jon Villers**, *Southeast Area Minister*

Thank You, Lord, for These Beautiful Feet

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

- Romans 10:14-15

I am here to report on some of those beautiful feet in the Southeast Region!

On August 16th, Lacoma Baptist in the Rockcastle Association ordained Teddy Vanover to be a deacon.

On August 23rd, New Antioch Baptist in the Elk Valley Association ordained Ethan Potasnik into the Gospel Ministry! I got a call a few months ago from Pastor Gary Walker who has been the pastor at New Antioch Baptist since 2012. He is now 89 years old and wanted to know if the Elk Valley Association would help in the ordination of a young man who they had licensed into the Gospel Ministry a year ago. Pastor Gary said he personally had not been able to be in the pulpit since early June and was very thankful for Ethan, who had been filling in for him. It was our privilege as the Elk Valley Association to come alongside New Antioch Baptist to help prepare another set of feet to preach the gospel!

One of our most fervent prayers is that God would continue to call



Pastors Gary Walker and Ethan Potasnik during last year's Pastor Appreciation Dinner.

workers for the spiritual harvest, and I am so pleased to announce those prayers are coming true.

In the southeast region, we currently have three in the Rockcastle Association, one in the Greenbrier-Raleigh Association, one in the Fayette Association and three others in the Hopewell Association who are either in their first pastorate, doing pulpit supply or taking classes and preparing for the ordination process.

Thank you, Lord, for these beautiful feet!

SUZANNA C. BRADBURY, 91, of Culloden, died on August 29, 2026. She was a member of Hurricane First Baptist Church. She previously served as a bookkeeper for the Fairmont Baptist Temple and served alongside her husband on numerous disaster relief mission trips across the country.

OSCAR H. COUNTS, 83, of Roane County, died on August 23, 2026. He was a member of Mill Creek Baptist Church, where he served as Sunday School superintendent and deacon.

MARY ELLEN DAVIDSON, 83, of Buckhannon, died on April 3, 2026. She was a member of Buckhannon First Baptist Church, where she sang, played both piano and organ, and served on numerous committees.

DANIEL “DAN” WILSON FERGUSON, 90, of Kenova, died on August 14, 2026. He was a member of Kenova First Baptist Church, where he served as the Minister of Music.

REV. KELVIN RENE HUDKINS, 77, of Bristol, died on July 26, 2026. He was a retired American Baptist minister and a member of Nutter Fort First Baptist Church.

REV. GARY MARTIN, 83, of Morgantown, died on August 5, 2026. He pastored several churches, including Barnes Memorial Baptist Church, Lumberport Baptist Church and Pruntytown Baptist Church.

GAYE MATHERLY, 90, formerly of Daniels, died on July 31, 2026. She was a member of Beckley First Baptist Church. She and her husband were long-time supporters of Palmer Theological Seminary, and were instrumental in the establishment of the Parchment Valley campus.

CARL EUGENE PEMBERTON, 71, of Barboursville, died on August 29, 2026. He was a member of New Baptist Church.

JOSH ROBERTS, 33, of Kingwood, died on July 10, 2026. He was a member of Kingwood Baptist Church.

REV. ROBERT “BOB” WITHERS, 81, of Huntington, died on July 27, 2026. He was the pastor of Seventh Avenue Baptist Church for 45 years.

Leadership Updates

SHAWN COOK to Black Eagle Baptist Church (Rockcastle Association) as pastor 4/26/2026

SHELLY DAWSON to Goose Creek Baptist Church (Harrisville Association) as pastor 8/25/2026

ROGER GEIGER to Gatewood Baptist Church (Fayette Association) as pastor 8/23/2026

CHAD MUGRAGE to Parkersburg First Baptist Church (Parkersburg Association) as interim pastor 8/23/2026

ETHAN POTASNIK to New Antioch Baptist Church (Elk Valley Association) as assistant pastor 02/16/2025

LARRY SEE to Romney First Baptist Church (Eastern Association) as interim pastor 8/1/2026

DANNY SHREKENGOST to Two Runs Baptist Church (Good Hope Association) as pastor 6/24/2026

MINISTRY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Pastor (Part-Time)
Location: Huntington Area

Pastor (Full-Time)
Location: Clarksburg/Bridgeport Area

Senior Minister (Full-Time)
Location: Charleston Area

Senior Pastor (Full-Time)
Location: Ripley Area

Pastor to Youth and Families (Part-Time)
Location: Ravenswood area

Pastor (Full-Time)
Location: Ripley area

Middle and High School Ministries
Coordinator (Part-Time)
Location: Morgantown Area

Associate Pastor of Youth and Family (Full-Time)
Location: Hurricane Area

Senior Pastor (Full-Time)
Location: Parkersburg area

Pastor (Part-Time)
Location: Parkersburg area

Student Pastor (Full-Time)
Location: Parkersburg area

Senior Pastor (Full-Time)
Location: Parkersburg area

Youth Pastor (Part-Time)
Location: Grafton area

Pastor (Part-Time)
Location: Weirton area

Director of Worship Ministry (Part-Time)
Location: Huntington area

Director of Music (Part-Time)
Location: Beckley area

Youth Director (Part-Time)
Location: Marion County

Senior Pastor (Full-Time)
Location: Boone County

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

October 2026

OCTOBER 1 – Tracie Emerick, WVBC Outreach administrative assistant
OCTOBER 2 – The WVBC Executive Board/Commissions Meetings happening this weekend at Parchment Valley
OCTOBER 3 – Deborah Myers, International Ministries Global Servant to Mexico
OCTOBER 4 – The ministry of Maysel Baptist Church (Elk Valley Association)
OCTOBER 5 – The ministry of Judson Baptist Church; Charles Bolen, pastor (Kanawha Valley Association)
OCTOBER 6 – The ministry of Athens Baptist Church; Timothy Mitchem, pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh Association)
OCTOBER 7 – The ministry of Hurricane First Baptist Church; Jeff Davenport, pastor (Teays Valley Association)
OCTOBER 8 – The ministry of Sarepta Baptist Church; Denise Humphries, pastor (Parkersburg Association)
OCTOBER 9 – The ministry of Belington First Baptist Church; Michael Rexroad, pastor (Panhandle Association)
OCTOBER 10 – The ministry of Prosperity Baptist Church; Jeremy Kerby, pastor (Little Kanawha Association)
OCTOBER 11 – Anthony Pratt, member of the WVBC Leadership Commission
OCTOBER 12 – Jonathan Nambu, International Ministries Global Servant to the Philippines
OCTOBER 13 – Kihomi Ngwemi, International Ministries Global Servant to the Dominican Republic and Haiti
OCTOBER 14 – The ministry of Calvary Baptist Church; Gregory Swisher, pastor (Fayette Association)
OCTOBER 15 – The WVBC Annual Meeting beginning today at New Baptist Church, Huntington
OCTOBER 16 – Jon Good, International Ministries Global Servant to Europe
OCTOBER 17 – The ministry of Emmanuel Baptist Church; Frazier McGuire, pastor (Rockcastle Association)
OCTOBER 18 – The ministry of Forks of Coal Missionary Baptist Church (Coal River Association)
OCTOBER 19 – The ministry of Independence Baptist Church; Carl Trickett, pastor (Goshen Association)
OCTOBER 20 – Robert Bates, member of the WVBC Discipleship Commission
OCTOBER 21 – The ministry of Enon Baptist Church; Larry McKim, pastor (Broad Run Association)
OCTOBER 22 – The ministry of Hopewell Baptist Church; Andrew Robinson, pastor (Good Hope Association)
OCTOBER 23 – The ministry of Lansing Baptist Church; Kenneth Hayes, pastor (Hopewell Association)
OCTOBER 24 – The ministry of Davis Baptist Church; Leroy Shook, pastor (Eastern Association)
OCTOBER 25 – Sherry Husted, member of the WVBC Outreach Commission
OCTOBER 26 – The ministry of Auburn Baptist Church; Timothy Underwood, pastor (Harrisville Association)
OCTOBER 27 – Jonathan Villers, Southeast Area Minister, WVBC
OCTOBER 28 – The ministry of West Warren Baptist Church; Robert Scharnhorst, pastor (Fairmont Association)
OCTOBER 29 – The ministry of Providence Baptist Church; William Spears, pastor (Guyandotte Association)
OCTOBER 30 – David Hoge, WVBC Secretary and member of the WVBC Stewardship Commission
OCTOBER 31 – The ministry of Glen Falls Baptist Church; Bryant Bailey, pastor (Judson Association)

November 2026

NOVEMBER 1 – Christy Lafferty, International Ministries Global Servant to Nicaragua
NOVEMBER 2 – The ministry of New Life Ministries; Charles Chipps, pastor (Fairmont Association)
NOVEMBER 3 – The ministry of Guyandotte Baptist Church; Harrison Abbott, pastor (Rockcastle Association)
NOVEMBER 4 – Sandy Foster, second vice president of the WVBC and chair of the WVBC Discipleship Commission
NOVEMBER 5 – The ministry of Logan First Baptist Church; Michael Hatfield, pastor (Logan-Mingo Association)
NOVEMBER 6 – Monty Foster, member of the WVBC Outreach Commission
NOVEMBER 7 – The Fall Children's Rally happening today at Parchment Valley
NOVEMBER 8 – The ministry of Union Baptist Church; Charles Stephens, pastor (Guyandotte Association)
NOVEMBER 9 – The ministry of Macedonia Baptist Church (Twelve Pole Association)
NOVEMBER 10 – Kit Ripley, International Ministries Global Servant to Thailand
NOVEMBER 11 – The ministry of Dixie First Baptist Church (Hopewell Association)
NOVEMBER 12 – Roselee Copenhaver, WVBC past president and member of the WVBC Stewardship Commission
NOVEMBER 13 – The Senior High Convention beginning today at Oakwood Baptist Church
NOVEMBER 14 – The ministry of Murphy's Creek Baptist Church; Wease Day, pastor (Broad Run Association)
NOVEMBER 15 – The ministry of Elizabeth Baptist Church; Leary Vanhorn, pastor (Parkersburg Association)
NOVEMBER 16 – Michael Cornell, first vice president of the WVBC and member of the WVBC Leadership Commission
NOVEMBER 17 – The ministry of Spencer First Baptist Church; Mark Wood, pastor (Good Hope Association)
NOVEMBER 18 – The ministry of LifeSpring Community Church; Claire Weddle, pastor (Teays Valley Association)
NOVEMBER 19 – The ministry of Deep Water Baptist Church; Thomas Skaggs, pastor (Fayette Association)
NOVEMBER 20 – The ministry of Beckley First Baptist Church; Bryan Knight, pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh Association)
NOVEMBER 21 – The ministry of Bethany Baptist Church; Kolten Jones, pastor (Union Association)
NOVEMBER 22 – Jill Narraway, WVBC Director of Youth and Camping
NOVEMBER 23 – The ministry of Chesapeake First Baptist Church; John Reed, pastor (Kanawha Valley Association)
NOVEMBER 24 – Joel Hoefle-Magal, International Ministries Global Servant to Thailand
NOVEMBER 25 – The ministry of Gassaway Baptist Church; Mark Stump, pastor (Elk Valley Association)
NOVEMBER 26 – Count your blessings...name them one by one!
NOVEMBER 27 – The ministry of Glenville First Baptist Church; John Putnam, pastor (Little Kanawha Association)
NOVEMBER 28 – The ministry of Welcome Baptist Church; Clayton Lagasse, pastor (Judson Association)
NOVEMBER 29 – Christina Muteyo, International Ministries Global Servant to Zimbabwe
NOVEMBER 30 – Teresa Miller, WVBC Office Manager

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

Upcoming Events

OCTOBER

October 2
WVBC Executive Committee
Parchment Valley Conference Center

October 3
WVBC Executive Board
Parchment Valley Conference Center

October 15-16
WVBC Annual Meeting
New Baptist Church, Huntington

October 24
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Ministerial Ethics (Mod-2)
Parchment Valley Conference Center & Goshen Baptist Church

NOVEMBER

November 7
Fall Children's Rally
Parchment Valley Conference Center

November 13-14
AB Women's Ministries Board Meeting
Parchment Valley Conference Center

November 13-15
Senior High Convention
Oakwood Baptist Church

November 15
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Discipleship Essentials (M-02)
Online

November 15
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Spiritual Formation (Mod-01)
Online

JANUARY

January 8
WVBC Executive Committee
Parchment Valley Conference Center

January 9
WVBC Executive Board
Parchment Valley Conference Center

January 12
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Old Testament I (B-01)
Various locations

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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THE 161ST ANNUAL MEETING OF OUR WVBC FAMILY



October 15-16, 2026

New Baptist Church

Huntington, WV



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