

Walk With Me: A Call to Discipleship



“Disciple-making is inviting people to walk with us as we walk with Jesus.” That is how Bill Mowry introduced the first of his two keynote addresses during this year’s **WVBC Annual Meeting**. Sharing from his 40+ years of experience on staff with The Navigators, Bill described his passion as being “to de-professionalize and unclutter the Great Commission so that the everyday Christian can feel they have a part in it.”

Bill is the author of several books, including *Walk with Me* and *The Ways of the Alongsider*. Both books have been widely used and promoted across our WVBC ministries in recent years. He pulled from both of these resources as he encouraged the 200+ in attendance to remember that discipleship is not a task reserved solely for pastors. Rather, it is a task for all believers.

“Discipleship is a slow process,” Bill explained. “It cannot be measured in terms of speed and efficiency like we measure other things in life. We go slow for excellence ... we go slow in order to love ... and we go slow to go deep.” He concluded by challenging us to adopt a kingdom mindset, rather than one that is simply circumstantial. “Choose to be faithful in the place that God has placed you,” he concluded. “Choose to think about the kingdom and not just the circumstance that He has put you in.”

As we kick-off the final year of our theme of “Intentionally Engaging Communities for Christ,” our emphasis for 2025 will be focused on the final part of that phrase— for Christ.

We are also placing a major emphasis on prayer for the coming year, inviting our WVBC family to join us in a concentrated effort to pray. We invite you to pray for your WVBC family, to pray for other churches and to pray for those who need to know about Christ. “Discipleship starts with prayer,” Bill shared. “Begin by praying for that one person God has put in your life.”

The WVBC Annual Meeting is always a great celebration, as we reflect on all that God has done over the past year. It is also always a time of both networking and learning (or re-learning) about our various ministries. However, what people always enjoy most is the family-like atmosphere that surrounds every meeting. It is like a reunion every time we get together!

If you missed this year’s reunion, then we invite you to join us for our next big reunion: our Annual Training Event, held Saturday, February 1st at Parchment Valley. This one-day event will contain workshops for everyone. You can find registration details and a list of workshops on Page 10.

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

A Call to Prayer!

Michael Green, in *Evangelism in the Early Church*, points out that the first Christians placed a great emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit, which he adds is clearly demonstrated in the book of Acts. In contrast, he writes, "The Western Church has grown too dependent on words, and not nearly dependent enough on the power of the Holy Spirit ... Instead of being a community demonstrating the Lord's power, we have become one who talks incessantly." As the apostle Paul explained, "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power" (1 Corinthians 4:20).

We live in a time of tremendous opportunity for the Gospel. However, to build on this opportunity, we will need to be both guided and empowered by the Lord through His Holy Spirit. **As we begin 2025, I would like to request the entire WVBC family of churches to unite in prayer!** A prayer that will, in all humility, ask the Lord to unite our heart and will with His. Praying boldly that our hearts will be broken with the things that break His heart. Praying that we will be aware of the opportunities around us and that we will seek, with all our being, to join Him where He is leading. Corrie ten Boom reminds us that, "prayer is the steering wheel not the spare tire." This is because "at the profoundest depths in life," Elton Trueblood explains, "men talk not about God but with Him."

While prayer includes bringing our petitions before the Lord, prayer has the profound purpose of aligning our will with God's will and our heart with His heart. Mother Teresa captured this when she said, "Prayer is not asking. Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God, at His disposition, and listening to His voice in the depth of our hearts." Because "In prayer, real prayer," writes Richard Foster, "we begin to think God's thoughts after Him: to desire the things He desires, to love the things He loves, to will the things He wills. Progressively, we are taught to see things from His point of view."

Søren Kierkegaard points out, "The function of prayer is not to influence God, but rather to change the nature of the one who prays." Prayer then is not the lever by which we move God, it is the lever by which God moves us. Andrew Murray further acknowledges that, "prayer is not monologue, but dialogue. God's voice in response to mine is its most essential part."

The call to prayer that I ask you to consider this coming year is for our entire WVBC family to seek the Lord's heart and mind so that we fully align ourselves with His will and that His power may work in and through us to reach our world for Jesus Christ.

Blessings,
Mike

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MINISTRY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Minister to Youth (Part-Time)

Location: Milton area

Director of Music (Part-Time)

Location: Beckley area

Pastor of Student Ministries (Full-Time)

Location: Hurricane area

Youth Director (Part-Time)

Location: Marion County

Senior Pastor (Full-Time)

Location: Charleston area

Pastor to Youth (Part-Time)

Location: Jackson County

Pastor (Full-Time)

Location: Barbour County

Student Ministries Pastor (Full-Time)

Location: Parkersburg area

Senior Pastor (Part-Time)

Location: Huntington area

Church Pianist (Part-Time)

Location: Charleston area

Music Director (Part-Time)

Location: Charleston area

Visit wvbc.org to learn more

Pastor Mark Stump Receives Ward W. Hibbs Ministerial Award

*Written by Brenda Gibson,
(Originally published in the Braxton Citizens' News)*

Gassaway Baptist Church Senior Pastor Mark Stump has been named the recipient of the **Ward W. Hibbs Ministerial Award** by the West Virginia Baptist Convention.

The Rev. Dr. Michael Sisson, Executive Minister of the WVBC, made the presentation during a special ceremony at Calvary Baptist Church in Oak Hill October 17.

Named for the late Rev. Ward W. Hibbs, who inaugurated an in-service collegiate training program for ministers at Alderson Broaddus College in collaboration with the WVBC, the award is given annually to a pastor who has made an outstanding contribution to strengthening the ministry of town and country churches.

In presenting the award, Dr. Sisson acknowledged Pastor Stump's 44 years in pastoral service to the Lord and recounted the accomplishments of his ministry, which began with his ordination April 4, 1982 at Little Union Baptist Church where he served three years as youth pastor before accepting the call to pastor Gassaway Baptist Church, where he has served for the past 41 years.

Under Pastor Stump's leadership, GBC has grown numerically, requiring three sanctuary remodels and, at one time, three morning worship services before a new church building was constructed and opened in April 2014.

"While the church's physical growth is a testimony to its witness," Dr. Sisson said, "this year's recipient will be quick to tell you that his emphasis in pastoral ministry is always to bring glory to God through worship, spiritual growth and transformation."

Sharing Pastor Stump's concept of worship, Dr. Sisson said, "Worship that is intentional leads to discipleship, which leads to service, which leads to fellowship, which leads to evangelism, which leads again to worship."

Dr. Sisson described Pastor Stump's leadership at GBC as having developed a culture of mission work. From youth to adults, the mission emphases encompass local, state, national and international with the focus of serving people and providing a witness for Jesus Christ.

Among the myriad of mission projects undertaken by GBC have been their support of missionaries and participation in short-term mission trips, youth service in annual missions, youth and adults volunteer service at the local foodbank, provision of meals for athletic teams at the local schools, disaster relief, the rebuild of houses for people in need, provision of a prom closet and dinner for local students, and replacement of roofs and the construction of handicap ramps on local homes. In all of these projects, the church has provided generous donations and numerous volunteers.

The culture of growing as disciples and serving others is built into the church's organizational structure, Dr. Sisson said. At GBC, ministry teams have replaced boards and committees. Sunday School has been reimagined to do away with age-based classes to focus on the topics and subjects relevant in everyday life and



Mark and Darlene Stump accepting the award, joined by Jon Villers (left) and Mike Sisson (right).

the Bible's guidance. Multiple small groups meet practically every day of the week at the church. New believers and members participate in a yearlong discipleship foundations class, after which 90 to 95 percent of completers become active in ministry.

Dr. Sisson noted that Pastor Stump also leads an overtime class following the sermon each Sunday during which those who want to ask questions or discuss the sermon have the opportunity to grow deeper in their faith.

"In addition to all this, he is a man of great faith, integrity and commitment to the Word of God," Dr. Sisson said in honoring Pastor Stump with this special award.

In accepting the Ward W. Hibbs Award, Pastor Stump said, "I learned early on that John 15:5 is right when Jesus said, 'Without me, you can do nothing.' I also learned that with men, there are some things that are impossible, but not with God. All things are possible with God.

"And we have seen, in the 41 years that I have pastored Gassaway Baptist Church, things that were deemed impossible without God," Pastor Stump said. "We have seen God work in so many different ways and bless and do things nobody else thought we could do. God has done some wonderful things."

Expressing his thanks to the West Virginia Baptist Convention, Pastor Stump credited the Convention with his ministerial growth, citing training opportunities and leaders, like Jack Eades, Lloyd Hamblin and Jim Crouch, that were especially inspirational to his spiritual leadership.

Pastor Stump also thanked his wife of 48 years, Darlene, for her devoted support and encouragement through the joys and trials of their journey in the Lord's service. In addition, he expressed gratitude to his children, Allen and Stephanie, and his grandchildren for their sacrifices and support throughout his ministerial service.

Pastor Stump spoke too of his church members whose ongoing love and support spur him on to minister despite the physical crises he has experienced in recent years.

Foremost, Pastor Stump emphasized that the glory goes to the Lord for the rich blessings that his church has enjoyed during his ministry, saying, "God did it all."

Camp Cowen 2025

Camps

APRIL 4-6 Women's Camp	JUNE 29-JULY 5 Junior 2 (grades 5-6)
MAY 9-10 Summer Kickoff (grades 6-12)	JULY 6-12 Junior High 2 (grades 7-9)
JUNE 6-8 Younger Midler (grades 2-4)	JULY 12 Senior Day (2025 graduates)
JUNE 8-14 Junior High 1 (grades 7-9)	JULY 13-19 High School 2 (grades 9-'25 grads)
JUNE 15-21 Junior 1 (grades 5-6)	JULY 25-28 Family Camp
JUNE 21 Senior Day (2025 graduates)	JULY 29-AUG 1 Older Midler (grades 3-5)
JUNE 22-28 High School 1 (grades 9-'25 grads)	AUG 1-3 AB Men & Boys Camp

Other Dates

MARCH 14 Staff Applications Due	MARCH 28-29 Staff Interviews	APRIL 25 Wear Your Camp Shirt Day
APRIL 27 Cowen Sunday	APRIL 25-26 AB Men's Work Party	MAY 30-JUNE 1 Gopher & Steward Training

Camp Cowen 2025 registration opens February 24!

For more information, visit campcowen.org.

Update on the Sunny Day Activity Center

What a difference a year makes! In March, we broke ground, excavation began, the foundation was poured in May, the building was constructed in August and the active construction phase was complete in November!



Construction on the Sunny Day Activity Center is almost complete!

From the October 2023 announcement of reinstating the campaign to now, nearly \$1 million has been contributed to this project! Thank you for your sacrificial giving to the vision of the Sunny Day Activity Center. As we approach the final steps toward the \$1.5 million cost, we appreciate each donor partnering to complete this fundraising goal!

As each piece was installed, donations of sports equipment were received, furnishings were ordered, and each piece was put in place – we are so thankful for the Lord's faithfulness in fulfilling this dream, which began in 2015. Over this winter, while the final phases of the project are completed, we look forward to the opening of the facility and the joy of what this building will offer – to camp, to the convention and to the community.

This is more than just a building. This coming summer, the Sunny Day Activity Center will provide secure indoor recreation space no matter the weather. The year-round building is opening doors to expanded programming through all seasons. Additionally, we are prayerfully discussing ways this building can bring needed resources and opportunities to Webster County.

We hope you will join us this spring when we gather to dedicate Sunny Day Activity Center and officially open doors for ministry! Stay tuned for details!

BCM Fall Retreat: Seeking God and Growing as Disciples

In October, **Baptist Campus Ministry** celebrated a semester full of growth and fellowship with Fall Retreat at Camp Cowen. Students from around the state said the retreat was fun, cathartic, challenging, convicting and engaging. There were 85 people working together to seek God and grow as disciples.

Speaker Jonathan Butcher, a recent Marshall and Palmer Seminary graduate, offered the challenge to “value people as God values people!” Using the book of Acts, he taught life lessons about “loving everyone the same.” That created a desire for community among the students as they spent time with weekend small groups—or as we call them in BCM, iTeams. Those iTeams also engaged in fun activities to develop the skills in forming communities, which is so important on each campus.

Jonathan also encouraged the students to be committed to daily prayer, challenging them to pray with boldness for God to use them to make a difference on their campus. We are all praying to a powerful God—let us live with confidence in Him!

The weekend also had teaching, worship, a great campfire led by Caleb Villers and a prayer service on Sunday morning. Students used this time to pray through the Lord’s Prayer, offering up the concerns of others along with their own needs.

Pastor Monty Foster and Youth Pastor Jordan Casto from Barboursville Baptist Church shared about their calls to serve the Lord. They challenged the students to pray and seek God as they



There were 85 people at this year’s BCM Fall Retreat

look to serve Him with their lives. Our leaders for today and tomorrow will rise from this generation!

Continue to pray for BCM and for future opportunities to expand our reach. We need laborers to serve both BCM and the local church, and your prayers and support make all the difference.

As you consider your financial plans for 2025, we ask that you make Baptist Campus Ministry part of your budget. Join our \$25 for '25 campaign by pledging \$25 a month for 2025. Will you join us in making an eternal impact?



The **Missionary Internship Program** places individuals alongside one of our long-term missionary partners for a 3-6 week internship based off their interests and geographical preferences. We will assist individuals with raising their own support, and they will also participate in several training events on the topics of mission theology, culture, conflict resolution and much more.

The application deadline is January 31, 2025.

Apply at www.wvbc.org

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 the guidance of a mentor for a summer-long internship. Internships are customizable to the interests of the applicant, but include pastoral ministry, youth ministry, worship ministry, technology, or intercultural ministry.

Apply now at wvbc.org



Congratulations Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies Graduates

Prior to the **Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies**, over 70% of our bi-vocational pastors had no training at all. Thankfully, those days are gone. The school's mission is to provide a basic level of courses in all areas of practical ministry. Although originally envisioned as a training program for bi-vocational pastors, the School of Christian Studies is designed to meet the practical needs of any person interested in expanding their spiritual maturity, biblical knowledge and ministry skills.

Over the last year, the number of in-person locations has grown exponentially. For our last course, it was taught in nine different locations around the state. Additionally, we offer online courses that can expedite the student's studies. Our goal is to make sure training is accessible and affordable to anyone who desires it.

Graduation from the BWSCS is also a pathway for ordination and is being accepted by Palmer Theological Seminary.

At this year's WVBC Annual Meeting, we celebrated the graduation of the following students:

- Brian Angus** - Diploma in Pastoral Ministry
- Elbert Brady** - Diploma in Pastoral Ministry
- Charles McCroskey** - Diploma in Pastoral Ministry
- Kendra Rogers** - Diploma in Pastoral Ministry
- Heidi Jo Wise** - Certificate in Teaching Ministry



Mark McCloy reading the names of the 2024 BWSCS graduates

The next cycle of our in-person locations begins again in January with New Testament I (B-03). Church History (H-01) and Hospital Ministry (E-04) are also being offered as online courses in January.

Learn more about the **Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies** under the education tab at wvbc.org.

Seeking locations for host churches

MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

FEBRUARY 22, 2025

To host a location, contact: Tracie Emerick at temerick@wvbc.org

Rose Copenhaver Installed as 119th President of the WVBC

It was a great time of celebration during the final session of our WVBC Annual Meeting, as Rose Copenhaver, member of Fairmont Baptist Temple, was installed as the 119th president of our WVBC family. During her installation, her husband and pastor, Allan Copenhaver, shared the following three traits about Rose that he felt would serve her well as WVBC president for the next year: “Rose has a gift for serving the least of these ... she has a gift for challenging the status quo ... and she has a gift of doing things with excellence.”



Roselee Copenhaver was installed as WVBC President by her husband and pastor, Allan Copenhaver, during the 2024 WVBC Annual Meeting.

As part of the presidential cycle, Rose has served on the Executive Committee as Vice President and previously as Second Vice President. She has also served on the WVBC Stewardship Commission for the past two years.

Mike Sisson commented on her appointment, “Rose has a heart for God and for others, especially those who are less fortunate or struggling. Much like Jesus, when she sees people distressed or downcast she, too, is moved with compassion to try to help them. Both in her ministry at the church and in her role as an LPC at East Fairmont High School, Rose brings a positive influence and a willingness to assist students and others to face the challenges life sends their way. I look forward to the opportunity to serve alongside Rose in her role as president in the next year.”

Also installed during the meeting was Chad Mugrage as first vice president, Michael Cornell as second vice president, David Hoge as secretary and Todd McClure as treasurer. The 2025 slate of board members was also approved.

We want to express our gratitude to Erich Reggi, who served as president this past year. We also want to say thank you to the many individuals who served on boards.

Please join us over the next year by praying for Rose and our other officers as we seek to “intentionally engage communities for Christ.”

2025 ANNUAL BIBLE CONFERENCE

Saturday, March 1, 2025
Parchment Valley Conference Center

A STUDY OF ACTS, FEATURING DR. TRENT EASTMAN

REGISTRATION OPENS JANUARY 1ST

Join also for the Pastors4Pastors Pre-Bible Conference event, held on Friday, February 28th at Parchment Valley. Learn more at wvbc.org.



Palmer Theological Seminary Luncheon



Erich Reggi, 2024 President



Kevin Sions welcoming and praying over new pastors



Bill Mowry speaking to pastors



More than 100 ladies participated in Women's Day



Delmas Wolfe receiving the James Anderson, Sr. Award



Corey Brooks delivering the Annual Sermon



Some of the AB Men at Hawks Nest State Park



Baptist Campus Ministry Banquet



DOING CHRIST'S WORK *together*
by Intentionally Engaging Communities for Christ



Mike Sisson during his Executive Minister address



The Pastors Choir leading the congregation in a gospel medley



Mark Wood sharing about Dinner Church



Host Pastor Greg Swisher



WV Baptist Education Society Luncheon



More than 225 individuals attended this year's Annual Meeting at Calvary Baptist Church.



West Virginia
Baptist Convention

Annual Training Event

Saturday, February 1, 2025

Parchment Valley Conference Center

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Church: _____

***Note:** Students in the General Studies program of the Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies are eligible to receive course credit for participating in two workshops of their choice.

_____ Request BWSCS Course Credit

REGISTRATION FEE:

- _____ \$25 Annual Training Event Fee (includes lunch)
* Registrations after January 24 will not include lunch
- _____ \$27 Additional Fee for Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies (BWSCS)
- _____ \$37 Additional Fee for BWSCS Couple

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

SCHEDULE:

9:00 AM	Registration (Hill Hall)
9:30 AM	Worship (Hill Hall)
10:15 AM	Morning Workshops
Noon	Lunch (Gym or Barn)
1:00 PM	Afternoon Workshops
2:30 PM	Dismissal

WORKSHOP LIST

Select one morning and afternoon workshop:

Morning Workshops (10:15 AM)

- _____ Short-Term Mission Trip Leader Training (Part 1)
- _____ Cultivating Good Soil: Spiritual Disciplines for a Receptive Heart
- _____ The Dinner/Table Church Experience
- _____ Reducing the Risk
- _____ Grandfamily Support Group Development
- _____ Walk with Me (Discussion on Bill Mowry's Book)
- _____ Navigating Church Antagonists: Biblical Strategies for Resolving Conflict
- _____ Leading Change: Moving the Church Forward
- _____ The Church and Facebook
- _____ How to Archive
- _____ Church Treasurers and Financial Secretaries
- _____ Church Clerks

Afternoon Workshops (1:00 PM)

- _____ Short-Term Mission Trip Leader Training (Part 2)
- _____ Personal Discipleship Through the Bible
- _____ Micro Church / Micro Gatherings—How Do They Work?
- _____ Improving Church Security: Resources and Ideas
- _____ Women's Ministries in the WVBC
- _____ I'm Listening: How to be Present When Others are Hurting
- _____ Youth Ministry: Exploring Realities of Ministry to Digital Natives
- _____ Guiding Your Church to Joyful Service
- _____ Who Are We?: Exploring the WVBC
- _____ The Herald of Hope Chapel Car Ministry
- _____ Church Trustees
- _____ Deacons

Register for the Annual Training Event online at: www.wvbc.org

Kids Learned How to Pray at Fall Children's Rally

*Written by Emily Fordyce,
Member of Children's Rally Leadership Team*

The annual **Fall Children's Rally** took place on November 2nd at the Parchment Valley Conference Center. There were over 200 kids and adults, representing 21 WVBC churches, that joined for the day.

This year's theme was: "Pirates Who Pray." Throughout the day, children were encouraged to reflect on their prayer life, taught how to pray in all situations and challenged to continue to grow in that discipline.

The day started with several different prayer stations. These stations encouraged the children to consider their sin and ask for forgiveness, to pray for those who need healing, to reflect on the gifts God has given them and to give thanks for God's many blessings. Koreen Villers also taught the children a "pocket prayer" they can say when they feel overwhelmed or worried.

During the Bible lessons, the children learned why and what to pray. They also learned how to rely on Jesus for help in doing what is right. The pirate theme encouraged the children to be in the daily habit of asking Jesus to help them navigate both the smooth waters and rough seas of life.

Every rally also has a mission project for students to donate toward. This year's mission project was the Sunny Day Activity Center at Camp Cowen. The children donated lots of items, including volleyballs, basketballs, soccer balls, footballs, playground balls, scrimmage vests and cones. These will come of good use next spring when the new facility is completed!



Kids posing for a group picture at the Fall Children's Rally.

The children enjoyed worshipping through music with Tony Nutter and Sam Gasaway. There were lots of motions, lots of clapping, lots of dancing and lots of smiles! It is always an awe-inspiring day when our WVBC children can come together, learn more tools to keep in their faith toolbox and grow together in the Lord.

We hope you that will join us for our Spring Children's Rally, scheduled for March 1, 2025, also at Parchment Valley Conference Center.

JUNIOR HIGH CONVENTION



TEACH ME YOUR
Paths
PSALM 25: 4-5

Summersville Baptist Church
February 21-23
Grades 6-9

\$40 per person until February 7th

**Join us for a weekend of worship,
Bible study, fellowship, and fun!**

Register at
wvbc.org/ministries/youth

Northwest Area News

by **Mark McCloy**, Northwest Area Minister

God Continues to Raise Up Leaders

“Real leaders are in short supply.”

- J. Oswald Sanders, 1967

With these words, Sanders starts the second chapter of his popular, and enduring, book on leadership. He then points out that not only is the church always searching for good leaders, but that in the Bible, God was doing much the same.

Think about how Samuel searched through the entire family of Jesse before coming across David – who would be king, and was “a man after God’s own heart.” The home of a sheep herder and farmer in Bethlehem, Judah sure seemed an unlikely place to find the next leader of Israel, but that is where he was. Leaders are rare and precious today, as well. During my recent visit to Japan, while visiting Sarah (my daughter and our missionary), I discovered that much the same is also true there. Therefore, it is exciting and worth celebrating that God continues to raise up leaders.

Since our last issue of the newsletter, The Journey on Park Avenue (formerly Baptist Temple – Parkersburg) has ordained Bonnie Smith; Mt Zion (Parkersburg) has held an ordination council for International Ministries Global Servant Debbie Myers; Glenville First Baptist (Little Kanawha) has held an ordination



Deacon ordination at Ravenswood First Baptist

council for their youth pastor Jared Fitzwater; and Ravenswood First Baptist (Good Hope) ordained a large number of deacons. They also appointed Richard Massey a deacon emeritus. Several other leaders are active in the ordination process.

At the same time, we welcome the following leaders to new positions: Rev. Frank Miller is now senior pastor at New England Baptist (Parkersburg); Rev. Larry Fisher is the new senior pastor at Mount Pisgah (Little Kanawha); Pastor Charles McCroskey is the new senior pastor at Smithville (Harrisville); Rev. Michael Hower-ton is Interim Pastor at Lauckport (Parkersburg); and Pastor Ethan Tawney is the new youth pastor at First Baptist Ravenswood (Good Hope).

Northeast Area News

by **Kevin Sions**, Northeast Area Minister

Rock Grove Baptist Celebrates 150 Years

Rock Grove Baptist (Broad Run) celebrated 150 years of ministry on October 13th. The church invited their families, guests, former pastors and area churches to worship with them as they celebrated and remembered God’s faithfulness over the years. Several people shared through song and testimony about the goodness of God. The church also planned a marriage retreat this fall at Stonewall Resort.



Youth singing during Rock Grove Baptist’s celebration service.

Clarksburg Baptist Starts New Ministry

Clarksburg Baptist (Union) started a new Sunday evening ministry: Together Nights. During this time, the ministry focus is on fellowship, community and mission as people gather together to share a meal, worship and listen to teaching and/or learn about a ministry partnership.

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Orville Wright’s 40 Years of Ministry

Pastor Orville Wright’s 40 years of ministry were remembered and celebrated at Boothsville Baptist (Fairmont). The worship service on Sunday, October 6th, included moments of reflection and words of gratitude for Pastor Orville and his wife, Ruth.



Celebrating Pastor Orville Wright’s 40 years of ministry.

Philippi Baptist Celebrates 175 Years

Philippi Baptist (Union) celebrated 175 years of ministry during the weekend of October 26-27. On Saturday, the church had a free soup/salad luncheon as they gave away free clothing and items to the community. On Sunday, the church worshipped and celebrated the years of ministry thankful to God and His faithfulness through remembering the relationships that had been established through God’s leading.

Southwest Area News

by *Evan Arkell, Southwest Area Minister*

Coal River Association Celebrates World Communion Sunday

On Sunday evening, October 6th, several churches of the Coal River Association gathered at Olive Missionary Baptist Church in Julian, WV, as they hosted the association's annual World Communion Sunday service. The evening began with a warm welcome from Josh Clay, pastor of Olive Missionary Baptist Church. We were then led in worship, with special music sung by Brooke Buckner. Following the special music, Josh Hill, pastor of Morrisvale Baptist Church, provided the evening's message. At the end of the service, communion was served, following our Lord's command, "This do in remembrance of Me."

Big Chimney Youth Play Bible Jeopardy

Earlier this year, Dani Boggs, youth leader at Big Chimney Baptist Church, designed a game of Bible Jeopardy to help their youth study the Bible. The youth were very competitive and, with a trophy as the prize, they spent a lot of time studying. The participating youth—Paelin Walker, Jenna Stout, Ashton Walker, Laycey Burdette, Jessa Stout and Jamison Lewis—had a great time and would highly recommend this event to other youth groups. It proved to be a great way to learn Bible trivia and also provided the church with another opportunity for fellowship.

New Deacons Ordained at Forks of Coal Missionary Baptist Church

On Sunday afternoon, November 3rd, Forks of Coal Missionary Baptist Church celebrated with a service of ordination for their two new deacons, Cari Pauley and Rick Kincaid. The church's former pastor, Keith George, preached the ordination sermon and gave the charge to both Cari and Rick. This was followed by a time of prayer for each of them. I then had the pleasure of giving the charge to the congregation, asking them to support these newly called deacons. A wonderful meal was served following the service.



Cari Pauley and Rick Kincaid, newly ordained deacons at Forks of Coal Missionary Baptist Church.

Southeast Area News

by *Jon Villers, Southeast Area Minister*

Revival Season in the Rockcastle Association

We bring you greetings from the Southeast Region! I am so thankful to report that our 96 churches, spanning five associations, are alive and well!

It has been fall revival season for many of our churches, and they are reporting a time of renewal for the Lord. Special thanks to those who participated in the Rockcastle Association's Fall Revival, as we gathered together in October with at least 13 churches over a four-night campaign.

Cook Memorial Baptist was the first church to host. Led by Pastor Chuck Cook, they invited us to attend their Sunday night initiative called The Table, where they have been averaging over 50 people to share a meal together and hear a Jesus Story. We then reconvened in their sanctuary for an old fashioned hymn sing. We rotated pianists and song leaders as we raised the roof in praise to the Ancient of Days!

The other three nights proved to be a continuation of great singing, preaching and fellowship. On Monday, Highland Avenue Baptist hosted with Pastor Gene Addair preaching and the



Revival at Cooper Memorial Baptist Church

Rockcastle Baptist choir singing. On Tuesday, Cooper Memorial Baptist hosted with Brother Richie Walker preaching Koreen and myself singing. On Wednesday, Lacoma Baptist hosted with Pastor Merle Walls preaching and the Cyclone Missionary Baptist choir singing.

We praise the Lord for the continued privilege of living out our faith with others. We can do far more together than we ever can apart!

PAUL E. ALLEN, 95, of Oak Hill, died on September 28, 2024. He was a member of Oak Hill Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon, trustee, Sunday School teacher and youth leader.

BRUCE JERRY BAUER, 71, of Oak Hill, died on October 13, 2024. He was a member of Calvary Baptist Church.

GERALD (JUDD) FRANKLIN BEAVER, 94, of Hurricane, died on October 14, 2024. He was a member of Hurricane First Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon, taught Sunday School and served on several other committees.

REV. BRUCE ALAN BLANKENSHIP, 66, of Philippi, died on October 14, 2024. He was a member of Philippi Baptist Church, and he served in several regional capacities for the American Baptist Churches. He also served in leadership at Alderson Broaddus University for over 30 years.

BETTY J. DEEMS, 101, of Shinnston, died on September 9, 2024. She was a member of Coon's Run Baptist Church, where she served as a Sunday School teacher, choir member, church clerk and member of their American Baptist Women's group.

MARTIN WAYNE EICH, 89, of Charleston, died on July 25, 2024. He was a member of Charleston Baptist Temple, where he served as the Director of Choirs and Minister of Music for 44 years.

LEONARD GEORGE MORRIS, SR., 95, of Oak Hill, died on October 9, 2024. He was a member of Calvary Baptist Church, where he served as an usher, trustee, sound system operator and member of the senior circle.

CORA LEE NULL, 87, of Nitro, died on September 7, 2024. She was a member of Nitro First Baptist Church.

GEORGIA LEE (LOUGHRIE) PARSONS, 80, of Parkersburg, died on October 26, 2024. She was a former member at Saint Marys First Baptist Church and a current member of South Parkersburg Baptist Church. At each of these churches, she served in many capacities, including deaconess, Bible School director and member of the choir. She also served with the American Baptist Women's Ministry and held offices in her local association and state board.

KERMIT LEE THOMPSON, 102, of Nitro, died on September 19, 2024. He was a member of Nitro First Baptist Church, where he served as a deacon, trustee, church historian and Sunday School teacher.

SHARLA LEE CUNNINGHAM VICKERS, 81, of Weston, died on October 6, 2024. She was a member of Weston First Baptist Church, where she served as a Sunday School teacher and directed the choir.

LEXIE MARIE WOISNET, 93, of Weirton, died on October 12, 2024. She was a member of Weirton Heights Memorial Baptist Church, where she was a member of the Fellowship Sunday School class and served as treasurer for their American Baptist Women's group.

Leadership Updates

TERRY GOLDEN to Rainelle First Baptist Church as pastor 9/8/2024

DAVONTAE EDWARDS to Dunbar First Baptist Church as pastor 10/1/2024

ETHAN TAWNEY to Ravenswood First Baptist Church as youth pastor 10/1/2024

GREG SMITH to Sunday Road Baptist Church as pastor 10/6/2024

LARRY FISHER to Mount Pisgah Baptist Church as pastor 10/06/2024

MICHAEL HOWERTON to Lauckport Baptist Church as interim pastor 10/06/2024

AUSTIN HELMICK to Petersburg First Baptist Church as associate pastor 10/06/2024

CHARLES MCCROSKEY to Smithville Baptist Church as pastor 10/20/2024

FRANK MILLER to New England Baptist Church as pastor 10/20/2024

Remember
the wondrous works
that God has done.
—1 Chronicles 16:12

Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering

The Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (RMMO) is a congregational offering collected annually in December from participating churches. RMMO funds are distributed as thank you checks to retired ordained ministers and missionaries who have devoted 15+ years to our national denomination, as well as surviving spouses. A certain portion is also allocated for direct emergency assistance.

For resources, visit: abc-usa.org/rmmo/

December 2024

DECEMBER 1 – The ministry of Long Run Baptist Church; Robey Godfrey, pastor (Elk Valley Association)
DECEMBER 2 – Ann Clemmer, International Ministries Global Servant to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
DECEMBER 3 – The ministry of Sabraton Hill Baptist Church; Stephen Dodrill, pastor (Goshen Association)
DECEMBER 4 – The ministry of Racine First Baptist Church; Anthony Pratt, pastor (Coal River Association)
DECEMBER 5 – The ministry of Cairo Baptist Church; Waifford “Pudge” Wolfe, pastor (Harrisville Association)
DECEMBER 6 – The ministry of Mill Creek Baptist Church; Bob Keen, pastor (Good Hope Association)
DECEMBER 7 – The ministry of Gauley Bridge Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley Association)
DECEMBER 8 – The ministry of Bethany Baptist Church (Union Association)
DECEMBER 9 – The ministry of Wellsburg First Baptist Church; Jared Jimenez, pastor (Panhandle Association)
DECEMBER 10 – The ministry of Highland Avenue Baptist Church; Lewis Arnold, pastor (Rockcastle Association)
DECEMBER 11 – The ministry of North Shinnston Baptist Church; Mathew Keith, pastor (Judson Association)
DECEMBER 12 – The ministry of Peterstown Baptist Church; John Pena, pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh Association)
DECEMBER 13 – The ministry of Williamson First Baptist Church; Jarrod Belcher, pastor (Logan-Mingo Association)
DECEMBER 14 – The ministry of Antioch Baptist Church; Larry Peck, pastor (Hopewell Association)
DECEMBER 15 – Bill Clemmer, International Ministries Global Servant to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
DECEMBER 16 – The ministry of New Found Freedom Baptist Church; Lloyd Stewart, pastor (Little Kanawha Association)
DECEMBER 17 – Sarah Chetti, International Ministries Global Servant to Lebanon
DECEMBER 18 – The ministry of Comunidad Luz Y Vida; Moises Saravia, pastor (Eastern Association)
DECEMBER 19 – The ministry of Nitro First Baptist Church; Michael Perry, pastor (Teays Valley Association)
DECEMBER 20 – The ministry of Emmanuel Baptist Church; Kurt Busiek, pastor (Parkersburg Association)
DECEMBER 21 – Kevin Sions, Northeast Area Minister and Northern Director of Baptist Campus Ministries, WVU
DECEMBER 22 – JD Reed, International Ministries Global Servant
DECEMBER 23 – The ministry of Minden Baptist Church; Ronald Richards, pastor (Fayette Association)
DECEMBER 24 – Our families as we gather together to celebrate the birth of our Savior
DECEMBER 25 – Prayer of thanksgiving for a Savior that was born to save the world
DECEMBER 26 – The ministry of Rock Grove Baptist Church; Douglas Moss, pastor (Broad Run Association)
DECEMBER 27 – Koreen Villers, director of Discipleship Ministries, WVBC
DECEMBER 28 – David Sagar, International Ministries Global Servant to India
DECEMBER 29 – The ministry of Pea Ridge Baptist Church; Dan Londeree, pastor (Guyandotte Association)
DECEMBER 30 – Lori Mann, International Ministries Global Servant to Southeast Asia
DECEMBER 31 – The ministry of Union Valley Baptist Church; Bill Lewis, pastor (Fairmont Association)

January 2025

JANUARY 1 – Pray for a blessed New Year
JANUARY 2 – C. Michael Hopkins, member of the WVBC Leadership Commission
JANUARY 3 – Molly Juarez, International Ministries Global Servant to El Salvador
JANUARY 4 – The WVBC Executive Board meeting today at Parchment Valley
JANUARY 5 – Aaron Trout, International Ministries Global Servant to Southeast Asia and Japan
JANUARY 6 – The ministry of Macedonia Baptist Church (Twelve Pole Association)
JANUARY 7 – The ministry of Glen Falls Baptist Church; Bryant Bailey, pastor (Judson Association)
JANUARY 8 – Melanie Baggao, International Ministries Global Servant to Lebanon
JANUARY 9 – The ministry of Jackson Mill Baptist Church; William Coffindaffer, pastor (Broad Run Association)
JANUARY 10 – Leigh Ellen Eades, member of the WVBC Discipleship Commission
JANUARY 11 – The ministry of Man First Baptist Church (Logan-Mingo Association)
JANUARY 12 – The ministry of Hope Christian Center; Michael Lewis, pastor (Guyandotte Association)
JANUARY 13 – The ministry of Wolf Run Baptist Church; Jim Higginson, pastor (Panhandle Association)
JANUARY 14 – The ministry of Glenville First Baptist Church; John Putnam, pastor (Little Kanawha Association)
JANUARY 15 – The ministry of Oceana First Baptist Church; Jerry Cook, pastor (Rockcastle Association)
JANUARY 16 – The ministry of Mountain Cove Baptist Church (Hopewell Association)
JANUARY 17 – The ministry of Mount Jackson Baptist Church; Brad Starcher, pastor (Greenbrier-Raleigh Association)
JANUARY 18 – The ministry of Simpson Creek Baptist Church; Sean Wegener, pastor (Union Association)
JANUARY 19 – The ministry of Pleasant Dale Baptist Church; Wayne Litton, pastor (Elk Valley Association)
JANUARY 20 – Andrea Fling, Bookkeeper, WVBC
JANUARY 21 – The ministry of Hill Grove Baptist Church (Good Hope Association)
JANUARY 22 – Sherry Husted, American Baptist Women’s Ministries’ president and member of the WVBC Outreach Commission
JANUARY 23 – The ministry of New Life Ministries; Charles Chipps, pastor (Fairmont Association)
JANUARY 24 – The ministry of Gatewood Baptist Church; Harry Fuller, pastor (Fayette Association)
JANUARY 25 – The ministry of Pine Grove Baptist Church; Michael Rubin, pastor (Parkersburg Association)
JANUARY 26 – Carmella Jones, International Ministries Global Servant to Hungary
JANUARY 27 – Evan Arkell, Southwest Area Minister, WVBC
JANUARY 28 – The ministry of Clendenin First Baptist Church (Kanawha Valley Association)
JANUARY 29 – The ministry of Main Street Baptist Church; Jeff Fetty, pastor (Teays Valley Association)
JANUARY 30 – Faye Carol Yarbrough, International Ministries Global Servant to South Africa
JANUARY 31 – Ammie Rasmussen, member of the WVBC Stewardship Commission

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

Upcoming Events

JANUARY

January 3
WVBC Executive Committee
Parchment Valley Conference Center

January 4
WVBC Executive Board
Parchment Valley Conference Center

January 7
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: New Testament I (B-03)
Various locations

January 15
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Church History (H-01)
Online

January 15
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Hospital Ministry (E-04)
Online

FEBRUARY

February 1
Annual Training Event
Parchment Valley Conference Center

February 23-25
Junior High Convention
Summersville Baptist Church

February 20
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: New Testament II (B-04)
Various locations

February 28
P4P Pre-Bible Conference Event
Parchment Valley Conference Center

MARCH

March 1
Spring Children's Rally
Parchment Valley Conference Center

March 1
Annual Bible Conference
Parchment Valley Conference Center

March 15
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Caring for People (M-04)
Online

March 15
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: WV Baptist History (E-02)
Online

APRIL

April 4-6
Women's Camp
Camp Cowen

April 16
AB Men's Work Party
Camp Cowen

April 26
Bobby Wood School of Christian Studies: Worship and Music (E-03)
Parchment Valley Conference Center

April 27
Camp Cowen Sunday

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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Saturday, February 1, 2025 **Parchment Valley Conference Center**

More information can be found inside on page 10

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