

PROCLAIMER

2017 | volume 19, issue 2

telling the stories of
visionvirginia

"Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with

POWER OF

prayer

thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." - PHILIPPIANS 4:6

contents

The Power of Prayer— With God's help...victory is already secured!



PROCLAIMER

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Not Just IN AN EMERGENCY

I remember the first time I flew on an airplane. It was right after I graduated from seminary, and we were flying to a pastors' conference in Jacksonville, FL. The flight attendant gave the emergency instructions and modeled how to put on the oxygen mask in the event of a loss in cabin pressure. Having flown many times since then, I really don't pay much attention to the pre-flight instructions anymore.

As Christians and as church leaders, there may be times when we need to be reminded and also remind the churches we serve about the Lord's instructions for our journey in this life. Please allow me a moment to encourage you and the church you serve in the area of prayer.

Many people view prayer as an emergency oxygen mask. However, prayer is not an oxygen mask just to be used in times of emergency and crisis. Prayer is more like breathing itself. Martin Luther wrote, "To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing."

The Apostle Paul prayed often and encouraged believers to pray. He was a person of prayer and called on churches to be people and places of prayer. In his first letter to the Thessalonians, he closed by simply asking them, "Brothers, pray for us" (1 Thessalonians 5:25, ESV).

Please join me in calling SBCV churches to be people of prayer. Through our Gospel partnership, the SBCV missionaries and ministry team pray for you. We pray for churches seeking pastors, pray for church planters, pray for churches celebrating and for churches in need. As SBCV pastors and staff gather at pastor networks, power meals, and fellowships, we pray. May the SBCV partnership of churches be a family of prayer. May we be like the Apostle Paul and be a state convention of churches who recognize our dependency upon the Lord. May we find ourselves saying, "Brothers, pray for us."

As I close, I want to point you to a prayer resource that you may find helpful. It is called *52 Sundays*. It gives your church an SBC/SBCV missionary or church planter to pray for each week. To the right is a link to the resources on our website.



Brian Autry
Executive Director
SBC of Virginia

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As always, SBCV missionaries and staff are ready to assist you in your mission. Please let me know if I can do anything for you or your church. I would love to visit with you. Don't hesitate to call or email.

RESOURCE

Website: sbcv.org/52Sundays

Phone: 804-270-1848

Email: bautry@sbcv.org

52 Sundays is a powerful missions resource filled with weekly devotions and highlights of missionaries connected to our SBC Great Commission partners. Each week, coupled with a devotion, is a challenge to pray boldly for those on the local, national, and international mission field.

May SBC of Virginia churches come together to strengthen one another in God's Word and pray for these bold missionaries.

DOWNLOAD THE BOOKLET &
OTHER RESOURCES AT
sbcv.org/52sundays





SBCV volunteers gather in front of our nation's Capitol to begin a prayer walk.

While walking around the Capitol, SBCV prayer walkers sit for moments of focused prayer.



Prayerwalking Around the Capitol

IT STARTED AS AN IDEA.

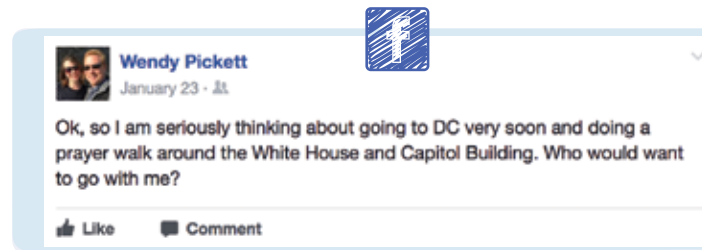
Why not stop talking among ourselves about the issues impacting our country and start talking to God? What could God do through a few Christians who took one day and put feet to their prayers?

Mostly by word of mouth and through social media, Wendy Pickett began promoting an event that came about after she posted a simple question on Facebook on January 23: "Ok, so I am seriously thinking about going to DC very soon and doing a prayer walk around the White House and Capitol Building. Who would want to go with me?"

Wendy is the wife of Brandon Pickett, associate executive director of the SBC of Virginia. She is also a member of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg. "We, as Christians, who believe in prayer, have the power to make the change that we are so desperately wanting," she says. "Yet it seemed all I ever heard was complaining and talking about how bad everything was. And so, I decided that I was going to DC to pray and wanted to know who would go with me. I know there is power in numbers."

That one Facebook question spurred a lot of interest and response. Just a few weeks later on February 17, the day of the prayerwalk had arrived and there was a new question: What could God do with about a dozen people from five different churches who came together and prayed for our nation, for our leaders, and for a local church to make a dramatic impact in one of the most influential cities in the world?

"I felt a combination of relief and happiness and determination," Wendy explains. "There were people who felt the same way I did and were happy to be there. They believed just as strongly as I did in the power of prayer and the impact that it has. The Friday morning started out at Waterfront Church, an SBCV church plant in DC. Pastor Zack Randles opened their time with prayer, a devotional, and an explanation of what God is doing in the city and in Waterfront church. Pastor Zack shared with the group how "underground" prayer meetings—led by government officials—are happening



around the city. After this revelation, the group prayed again and walked up New Jersey Avenue just a few blocks toward the US Capitol.

"It was a wonderful experience having SBCV volunteers prayerwalk near our church in our nation's capital," says Pastor Zack.

Wendy says she was pleasantly surprised to hear about the Christians who were having Bible studies and prayer meetings on a regular basis in DC. There are a number of SBCV church plants in Metro DC, and more are being started each year. There is also a movement underway of Christians in government positions who have answered the call to win their city for the Lord.

Pastor Zack has been encouraged by what God has done and continues to do since the prayerwalk. "Since [that day], we've signed a lease on a storefront in our current building, which will serve as our children's and small group space. With our church being less than a mile from the Capitol building and a couple of blocks from the Nationals' stadium, this is no small miracle! We move into the space in September!" He has seen a notable increase in people visiting, getting saved, and joining the church since the prayerwalk.

"It is encouraging to know that we are not alone and that godly people are surrounding our church and the people we shepherd in prayer," says Pastor Zack. "Keep praying for us! The Lord is at work!"

Wendy looks forward to hearing about future prayerwalks. "I think this is something that SBCV churches could come together and do multiple times a year. It is something that an individual can do on their own or gather a group from their church or even organize multiple churches. Anyone can do this!"

FOUR FIELDS TRAINING

Making a Local/Global Impact



From South Richmond to the Villages of Liberia

TESTIMONY — ANSUMA KAMARA

Pastor Associate, Tabernacle of Praise Ministries International, Richmond, VA

“I was born and raised in a loving and caring Muslim home and was brought up with a rich Islamic and African culture. In such a background, I experienced what every other Muslim experiences. While studying in Kuwait to become a Muslim imam, the Lord Jesus revealed Himself to me. I gave my life to Jesus Christ and started attending church in Kuwait. In 1989, I abandoned my Islamic studies and returned to Liberia.

“After graduating from Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary, I

served several churches and taught in many other Bible colleges and seminaries, including Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary, and led many to Christ, including Muslims.

“I moved to the US in 2008. I affiliated with Salem Church, where I was privileged to serve. I taught a small group Bible study and also taught how to reach Muslims with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

“Joe Reeves invited me to Richmond with a ministry opportunity. I currently serve at the **Tabernacle of Praise Ministries International**,

where Pastor Reeves pastors. I am using *Four Fields* training for disciple-making at the church.

“*Four Fields* training has been a real blessing in fulfilling my desire to reach out and make disciples. It is so simple that it does not require a seminary degree. My desire now is to take this training to Liberia.

“My wife and I have a burning desire for the Muslims of Liberia to know Jesus. There are many believers who desire to be involved with Muslim outreach, but they lack the training, resources, and

leadership to do so. We plan to return to Liberia. As Muslims come to Christ, we will work to strengthen them in their faith, with the goal that they will, in turn, share the love of Christ with their family, friends, and community. The *Four Fields* training fits in here—to help make disciples and establish house churches.

“We will conduct training workshops for church leaders, helping them understand the *Four Fields* training to reproduce disciples and churches. We will also work with

local churches to organize outreach in nearby villages. I believe this is the simplest and most effective method of disciple-making. Our goal is to create a movement of disciple-multipliers. By telling my story and Jesus’ story, lives will be touched.”

RESOURCE

Website:

4fields.net

Multiplying Discipleship at Fort Belvoir

TESTIMONY — GEORGE HAMILTON

Co-Pastor, Pillar Church of Woodlawn, Alexandria, VA



At **Pillar Church of Woodlawn**, we believe that Jesus has called His Church to a ministry of Gospel multiplication through evangelism, discipleship, and church planting. *Four Fields* training brought to us by the SBC of Virginia has given us the platform we need to successfully complete our mission where God has placed us outside of Ft. Belvoir, VA (Washington, DC). It does so by synthesizing

key elements of following Christ into simple, teachable, and reproducible steps. It is so functional that we have adopted it as both a church planting model and as our standard model of discipleship for our members, thereby equipping our members and our church planting apprentices with the same disciple-making tool. Thank you, SBCV, for providing this training and giving us a reproducible platform to make disciples here and equip them to carry the Gospel message around the world!

THE DYNAMICS OF FOUR FIELDS TRAINING

Four Fields, which includes *Training 4 Trainers*, was developed internationally out of a need to train leaders to reach their own people groups with the Gospel and to make multiplying disciples through multiplying churches. It worked so well that returning leaders brought the training to the US and bathed it in the American context. Even churches like First Baptist Church of West Palm Beach, FL and First Baptist Church of Woodstock, GA are using this process and experiencing explosive evangelistic growth.

WHY is *Four Fields* so EFFECTIVE?

Heart of God

The *Heart of God* section equips disciples to embrace their community or people group through a deep sense of conviction—seeing their people through God’s perspective. *Heart of God* includes what it means to abide in Christ and be desperate in prayer for their people.

Reproducing Evangelism

This section equips disciples to naturally and effectively share their faith with those in their sphere of influence. What makes this section so powerful is that it equips leaders in how to start discipling new believers immediately after they come to Christ. This 411 training equips new Christians to grow in and share their faith.

Reproducing Discipleship

The *Reproducing Discipleship* section trains Christians to grow and multiply as disciples of Jesus Christ. Basic tools are provided in how to disciple others.

Reproducing Churches

This section trains leaders in how to develop the key functions of a healthy new church and enable the new church to multiply. *Reproducing Churches* expects leaders to multiply.

Reproducing Leaders

The *Reproducing Leaders* section teaches leaders how to develop equipping networks to multiply new leaders.

These church planter prayer cards are available for you to view and download at sbcv.org/planters. You may also view many other church planter profiles there.

PRAYER for Church Planters

"Then Jesus came near and said to them, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'"

Matthew 28:18-20 (HCSB)



pray for **The Reeves Family**

Tabernacle of Praise Ministries International

MEETING AT
2668 Hull Street
Richmond, VA 23224

BIRTHDAYS: Joe (February 16), Teneh (September 12)

PRAYER NEEDS

PRAY for our new church plant in Petersburg, VA.

PRAY for our new church plant in Monrovia, Liberia.

PRAY for a French-speaking worship service. We are currently praying and seeking French-speaking individuals within the African community.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP! (needs)

- Mission teams to help renovate our building and participate in door-to-door evangelism, block parties, and youth events
- Partners to help with new church plants in Petersburg, VA and in Liberia
- Support to help reach the homeless population through food and clothing distribution and by starting a Christian AA program at the church



pray for **The Gwinn Family**

Northwood Fellowship

MEETING AT
139 West Main Street
Saltville, VA 24370

BIRTHDAYS: Billy (December 23), Amanda (February 21)

PRAYER NEEDS

PRAY for a continued movement of God within our church as we win souls for the Kingdom of God.

PRAY for our leadership team as we develop this plant to where God wants us to be.

PRAY for us as we develop relationships within the community and with community leaders.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP! (needs)

- Financial partners for 3-5 years
- Mission team to help with construction on the building
- Worship team for 3-6 months until we can establish our own

Stop Being So Political

GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

Victoria Cobb
President,
The Family Foundation
of Virginia



John Stonestreet of the Chuck Colson Center recently wrote in response to those who maintain that Christians should “stop being so political and focus on proclaiming Christ”:

But this isn't how a Christian world-view works. The scriptural premise, that God made human beings in His image, naturally leads us, as it has Christians throughout history, to protect and cherish those who bear that image. Ignoring evils perpetrated against bearers of the divine image denies what we know to be true about God.

Imagine, if you would, the world without William Wilberforce, a member of the British Parliament whose faith led him to fight for the abolition of slavery—through politics. In our own country, we can point to the faith of abolitionists and many religious leaders of the civil rights movement that led the change that made us better through their political activism. Simply put, we cannot separate our faith and worldview from any aspect of culture, including public policy and politics.

Please understand, issues like the sanctity of life and the definitions of marriage and gender are not primarily political—they are quintessential spiritual issues being debated in the political square. A silent pulpit leaves defining those issues to those antithetical to our worldview.

Pastors, you have not only the moral authority but the legal right to speak about

issues that have eternal consequence. Despite what you may have been told by some, you will not lose your IRS non-profit status by addressing important issues of our day nor by addressing the positives or negatives of elected officials or candidates for office. You are also free to host candidate forums in your church, as long as you invite all qualified candidates regardless of political party so that your congregation can learn more about them and where they stand on issues.

You are also free to distribute non-partisan candidate education pieces such as Family Foundation Action General Assembly Report Cards that score members of the Virginia legislature and Family Foundation candidate voter guides that provide differences between candidates on values issues. Each of these is available on our website at www.familyfoundation.org.

Most important, however, is your voice and your willingness to address key moral issues of our day. History is replete with pastors leading the way for social change, often times through political action. Our nation is in desperate need of that kind of leadership today.

RESOURCE

Website: familyfoundation.org

Contact: Victoria Cobb

Email: victoria@familyfoundation.org

LOCKING ARMS from Across the Com

Northwood Fellowship

There's just something special about a partnership between churches!

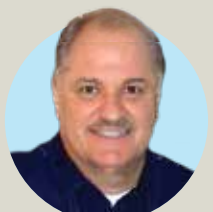
It reminds us that we're a part of something much bigger than ourselves, our location, or our city. It says, "We're in this together" and that "When you grow and see success in reaching your area, we benefit too." Why? Because our churches are wrapped up in the same purpose—bringing hope to a world in desperate need of a Savior!



BILLY GWINN
Church Planter / Pastor
Northwood Fellowship
Saltville, VA



DON PAXTON
Pastor
Rosedale Baptist Church
Abingdon, VA



GREG BRINSON
Pastor
London Bridge
Baptist Church
Virginia Beach, VA



TODD ELLIS
Missions Pastor
London Bridge
Baptist Church
Virginia Beach, VA

Church planter Billy Gwinn of **Northwood Fellowship** in Saltville, VA has been blessed with two partner churches whose investments have been invaluable. His partner churches have also, in turn, been blessed.

GWINN Through the calling God has given me to be a church planter, we often fear how things will work out both financially and spiritually, especially being in an area where economic opportunities are almost non-existent. However, I have found that God always supplies what we need. Often in ministry, Satan will attack by discouraging people into thinking they are alone and that no one cares what they are facing—it destroys a healthy mindset in Christ. However, through the SBCV and our partnering churches, I know I am not alone. Dr. Don Paxton [pastor of Rosedale Baptist] has been a blessing as a proven mentor, friend, and accountability partner. He is always there to guide, strengthen, pray with, and support us. **Rosedale Baptist Church** members have helped us clean and build walls and even repaired our heating unit during the winter. Most importantly, they have prayed for us through the beginning process of being who God wants us to be in Saltville, VA.

PAXTON When Billy Gwinn first came to Southwest Virginia to pastor, I quickly took note of how God was using him. The church he pastored was baptizing dozens of converts and growing at an awesome rate. Billy is a soul winner, and anyone called to plant a church better know how to win the lost. Billy is also a man of faith who believes *God can*. He challenged that small church to believe God and to do things it had never attempted.

When Billy shared with me his interest in planting a church, because of his humble faithfulness, I immediately wanted our church to support him wherever the Lord would call him.

Northwood began as a Bible study in Billy's home and, in just a couple of weeks, they had 40+ in attendance. When I met with them to share how

they could become a church plant through the SBCV, they were up to 54!

They used a local school building for the summer, then moved to a store front in the downtown section of Saltville, where they currently worship. Several members of Rosedale took part in work days to clean and rehab this old store to make it into a place of worship. The result of this was not only great for Northwood Fellowship, but Rosedale also experienced a renewed commitment and excitement for missions and outreach.

On March 19, I had the joy of preaching Northwood's dedication service with 90 in attendance. Two adults came to Christ in salvation, and a young couple joined the church. There is a spirit of revival in Saltville because of Northwood Fellowship. There is an attitude of service and witnessing in Northwood because of Billy's faith that God is able to do all things. What a joy to see what God has done and to know it is only the first fruits of what is to come!

GWINN Another one of our partner churches is **London Bridge Baptist Church**, led by Pastor Greg Brinson. I can honestly say their prayers and support have greatly strengthened our church plant. Our people are thrilled that another church at the other end of the state cares and shows their support with the many things they do for us here in Saltville. Their staff pray for us daily and are always calling with encouragement and support. We are excited about their visit coming up this summer.

BRINSON / ELLIS Northwood Fellowship and planter Billy Gwinn are an answer to prayer. For months, we knew the Lord was calling London Bridge to partner with a church plant in Virginia. As we read and heard about the SBCV church planting efforts in the Appalachian area, we prayed and sensed that was where the Lord wanted us to focus our efforts. We met with the

monwealth

*What a joy to see what God has done and to
know it is only the first fruits of what is to come!*

SBCV team and then visited the area on a prayer and vision trip, which was led by church planting strategist Randy Aldridge. The Lord confirmed Northwood as the church plant with whom we should partner. We resonated with Pastor Billy's heart and vision and the work he started there in Saltville. We returned from the vision trip confident we were in the center of God's will. In less than a month, the leadership team and members at London Bridge were ready to join arms with Northwood.

As we have moved forward with the partnership, we have realized more and more that God unifies and strengthens His local churches when they work together. London Bridge is benefitting from the new and unhindered work of a church plant, and Northwood is benefitting from the experience and systems of London Bridge. We are both excited about what the Lord is doing!

GWINN Through our ministry partnerships with Rosedale and London Bridge, I know that God is going to answer our prayers to be the light of Christ in this community of Saltville. Our church family and I can truly say that with God, the SBCV, and our ministry partners, we are not alone. If I can encourage any church in the SBCV to do anything, it is to come alongside a church plant and help them through prayer, encouragement, and finances. You will be blessed.

RESOURCE

Websites:

facebook.com/NorthwoodFellowship

rbcabingdon.org

londonbridge.org

Contact: churchplanting@sbcv.org

If your church would like to partner with an SBCV church plant, email churchplanting@sbcv.org



do Mission Projects 2017



Bedding for Students in Guam

Pacific Islands University in Guam exists to provide accessible, excellent, transformational Christian higher education and ministry training to the people of Micronesia and the Pacific Islands. Their mission is to prepare men and women with a biblical worldview for leadership and service in life, work, and ministry in the global community and the Church. Many of their students need basic bedding (such as sheets and pillowcases) and clothing.



Bibles for Homeless Women

We have been given the opportunity to minister to women in a local homeless shelter and a drug rehabilitation center. Most of these women have a past that includes child abuse, human trafficking, spousal abuse, and other hardships. More than anything, they need Jesus, and we have the opportunity to share His love through discipleship and giving them a copy of God's Word.

To learn more, visit:

sbcv.org/missionprojects

Inspire

A word of hope, support, and encouragement

Milton Harding
Pastoral Relations Associate



So We Speak

As the momentum of evil in this dark culture swells, it seems to me the silence of the Church's voice is deafening! The Church, I believe, is certainly on a collision course with evil that cannot be avoided if Jesus tarries. It is with great hope and great confidence that I submit to the shepherds of God, that we, because of God Almighty, hold the keys to deliverance. Nothing will hinder God from building His Church (Matthew 16:16), not even the Church—nothing will stop it! That is comforting and encouraging!

In July 2012, I received a newsletter from the SBC of Virginia's newly appointed executive director, Dr. Brian Autry. He set the course for the churches of the SBCV under his watch—the course we should expect to travel together as a “coalition of churches” to do our part in the Great Commission. Among the five points he offered, one in particular captured my heart deeply: “...our allegiance must be to the Lord Jesus and His Gospel...” These words rang out in my spirit, not only because they came from a pastor's heart (who was now leading the SBCV), but that they ultimately came from the mouth of God (Matthew 17:5–8).

Unknown to Dr. Autry, his vision, particularly his commitment to the Word of God, paralleled a message I received from God at a Watchmen on the Wall conference two years prior. I was so stirred in my heart, I reached out to Dr. Autry to thank him for his words, pray with him, and surrender my support in undergirding him and his role in staying true to the Lord.

Dr. Autry used Acts 9:31 as his theme verse: “...So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.” Let us consider for a moment Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians 2:4: “...but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts...” Paul frames a path somewhat in who we are, whose we are, and how we are to proclaim God's name.

First, he says we have been “approved” by God. Brothers, if you are called as a shepherd, it means you have been tested, examined, and recognized by God as genuine—a Gospel vessel proclaiming the Word of God boldly at every turn (this is also a great examination to determine if you're truly called).

Then Paul says, “...to be entrusted with the gospel...” That means that God, based on His examination and testing of pastors' hearts, placed the Gospel in our care. This came with a trust covenant between shepherds and the Almighty of the universe.

In 1 Corinthians 9:17, Paul says, “...I have a stewardship [caretaker of the gospel] entrusted to me...” (NASB). This trust is not something we should take for granted but, in light of the Church and the cultural platforms He provides, we will speak His truth into all situations without wavering. This leads me to my final point of this passage.

When one is approved (genuine) by God and entrusted (steward

of truth) with the Gospel, his natural response is to speak it. Paul says, “...so we speak...” Paul not only says that speaking is the normal, natural progression of one approved and entrusted, but we speak truth not as pleasing men but as pleasing God, Who examines our hearts. God is the one to Whom we have to answer, not man.

Shepherds can be protective of themselves in this evil, antichrist climate so as not to offend or to lose or be pushed out of their ministries—for fear of being ridiculed or persecuted, both in and outside of the church. Listen to what Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 2:2. This is what one should encounter when he remains true to the Lord: “...but after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition” (NASB). Suffering, mistreatment, and much opposition should be experienced when we do what God has called us to do. Given the condition of the land, as shepherds of God's people, we are either being bullied or intimidated by the culture and afraid to proclaim, “thus sayeth the Lord,” or we truly recognize our anointed approval and God-given stewardship of the Gospel and “...so we speak...”!

I love you, brothers, and I'm praying that God will give you boldness to stand firm and proclaim His powerful, life-changing Word.

All Scripture references are from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless otherwise noted.

FOLLOWING GOD'S CALL

Rather Than the Roar of the Crowd

by Timothy Cokes, guest writer, student at Liberty University

Liberty University recruited 6-foot 5-inch, 315-pound Ethan Callison in 2012. Although the plan was for him to be a lineman for the football team, Ethan felt a call to student ministry and would have attended Liberty regardless of his football status. He began on the team as a non-scholarship player and ended up making the roster.

After completing his freshman year, Callison says he felt a different call on his life. He told his family that his next year playing football would most likely be the last. At the time, he was serving as the student pastor at his home church, **ClearView Church** in Waynesboro, VA.

"My pastor, John Hamric, really took me under his wing while I was in high school," Callison says. "He showed me a lot of things about ministry, and I really developed a passion for lost souls. He even allowed me to serve as an SBCV intern in our youth ministry for a couple of summers. I am grateful to the *Vision Virginia* Missions Offering for making that possible."

During his time serving at ClearView, Callison felt like he was cheating his church by playing football. "I was selfishly pursuing playing football," says Callison. He thought to himself, "I know I'm called to ministry, so why am I dabbling in other things that are taking me away from my calling?"

In a meeting before his junior year, Callison's position coach told him he was penciled in as the starting center for the next season. It was in that meeting that this young football player told his coach he wouldn't be playing football that year. "His jaw just dropped," Callison recalls. "He was just dumbfounded." Nevertheless, the coaches at Liberty University wished him well in his ministry pursuits.

In April 2015, Callison began an internship at **Fellowship Community Church** in Salem, VA. Since that time, he has grown in his ministry responsibilities, and opportunities have abounded. After he finished his degree at Liberty, Callison began serving full time as the student director at Fellowship's North Campus. In the fall of 2016, he was named as campus pastor.

Callison gives God all of the glory for working out the smallest details in his life. "Our God is not a God of coincidences. Our God is an intentional God."

Callison encourages athletes to look to Christ and find purpose in Him, not athletics. "If your identity is found in sports and not in Christ, then sports is your god and sports is your idol."

Ethan Callison looks forward to the work that God will continue to do in his life and his ministry. "No matter what position, no matter what job I hold, my calling is to be a servant of Christ."

Pastor Ethan Callison and his wife, Katie



REDEFINE

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CONFERENCE

JUL 25 - 26
ORLANDO, FL

LEADERS



THE DRIVE OF THIS
CONFERENCE IS TO
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A group of students in a gymnasium are forming a human pyramid. In the foreground, three students are in a crouched starting position on the floor. Behind them, another student is crouched, and a fourth student is standing on their shoulders. At the top of the pyramid, a student in a grey hoodie with 'TUNTA' on it is standing and smiling. In the background, a large crowd of students is sitting on bleachers, watching the activity. The gymnasium has blue curtains and overhead lights.

Fifth Quarter

PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CHURCHES IMPACTS
STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY

by Shawn Ames, SBCV Student Ministry Strategist

It was a February Friday night in Danville, VA. The air was electric with excitement, the gym was full of people, and only the PA system could cut through the ambient noise. Students were snaking their way through the crowd in their typical three-to-five-person groups looking for a spot to sit down in the bleachers, as the walls around the basketball court began to bear the weight of the overflow crowd. You'd be forgiven for thinking you were at a basketball game between archrivals—but the basketball games were over, the victories had already been determined, and this crowd had come for something different.

As chaperones spread around the perimeter of the gym-turned-meeting hall, an energetic master of ceremonies came to the center of the room, welcomed the masses, and tried to bring order to the chaos. He introduced himself as Pez. I immediately imagined one of my favorite stocking stuffers from childhood. But this was no diminutive candy dispenser; this was Pez, The Instruction Giver. To many in the crowd, he was no stranger. While he spends most months of the year as a college student and athlete, he uses his summer months to minister in youth camps. It was at such a camp that the students at **The Tabernacle** in Danville became acquainted with him. His zany efforts soon gained traction, and the audience quickly became focused on his instructions. One might say—and pardon the pun here—he had them eating out of his hand. But Pez wasn't the point of this gathering. This event had been brought about by a group of youth pastors who wanted to do something big for their community.

Three months earlier, Allen Payne, student pastor of The Tabernacle, approached me about his desire to connect with other SBC of Virginia youth pastors to do an area-wide youth outreach. I was able to connect Allen with two other youth pastors (Roger Jones of **North Main Baptist Church** and Ross Riley of **Shermont Baptist Church**), who had been working on a regional DiscipleNow (DNow) event for a couple of years. Together, we four SBCV next-generation ministers began to plan the event that was now unfolding before my eyes.

In the beginning, we weren't sure how many churches would be willing to partner for this. Although Danville is a city full of churches, the churches don't always want to cooperate on events. Fortunately, there was a good bit of evidence that the time was ripe for an area-wide student outreach. The three Danville youth pastors began reaching out to other pastors and youth pastors. Planning meetings

grew to over a dozen ministers, and many more said they were on board. The event would be called Fifth Quarter (not original with us, to be sure). It would take place on a Friday after area basketball games were over.

We had selected a speaker and had made arrangements to fly Pez into town as our emcee. Various churches volunteered to buy door prizes to encourage youth to come, pizza had been ordered, parking lot attendants had been enlisted, and the night seemed to

be all set. Initially, we thought the gym could easily hold 300. That number sounded like a longshot to me. I was going to be happy with 150. As the day approached, we began to get excited about the possibilities. A simple Facebook advertisement for the event was shared over 2,900 times. Needless

Evidence of

what cooperation

can bring about...

a room full of

students from all

over the region



An exciting night in Danville when a crowd of 565 students (representing 85 different churches) packed the gym for an area-wide outreach event



Teamwork in action as students compete in a tug-of-war

to say, we began planning for an overflow crowd.

Then came the night of the event. I was standing there looking at a crowd of 565 students representing 85 different churches. I walked around and asked youth pastors and chaperones their thoughts on what was happening.

“I think it is great that [the community] sees a church that is packed on a Friday night...that different people from different churches can come together,” shared Ross Riley.

Casey Stowe from **Bridgetown Church** responded, “Unity...I think it is so awesome that every church in the city of Danville and the surrounding area can come together.”

Tyler Morris, also of Bridgetown Church, quickly agreed. “... The amount of kids and the amount of different churches represented tonight is good for unity in the church as well as outreach outside the church.”

Wayne Porch, a parent and chaperone from The Tabernacle, was serving pizza to students as they entered the event. He said to me, “Kids in Danville are

always complaining, ‘we have nothing to do.’ ...The youth in Danville have needed it for a long time... we’ve always been kind of segregated into groups... especially by schools and by cliques, and even by churches. And even though we know people in each church and each clique, until we get together in an outing like this, you know, we’re not together.”

Kevin Begley brought his youth all the way from **Grace Baptist Church** in Virgilina. Standing before us was the evidence of what cooperation can bring about—a room full of students from all over the region. “There is so much competition between churches, and that’s got to stop,” Kevin explained. “That’s just got to stop!”

As the games drew to a close, Pez introduced the speaker for the evening, Dr. David Wheeler, North American Mission Board missionary and Liberty University professor of evangelism. He spoke about the difference between toxic religion and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I estimate that over 60 students stood up in front of their peers, confessing to living a “toxic, religious” life. Then each picked a person sitting nearby and repented to that person and committed to going forward living for Jesus. Several others responded that they needed to be saved. Then they came forward to receive counsel and pray with an adult.

What a night and what a demonstration of what God can do through leaders and churches who are willing to work together! It reminded me that the Church of Jesus is one team, and He works in mighty ways when we come together to serve Him.



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CHURCHES HELPING CHURCHES



Accessible to All

Reaching the Community With an Open Front Door

Pastor John Pickett of Campbell Ave. Baptist Church in Lynchburg, VA, had a vision for his church to be revitalized and its community to be reached. The church was establishing a culture of discipleship and seeking to interact with the community to share the Gospel. However, they had a facility issue that would have depleted their budget to resolve.

The entrance to Campbell Ave. Baptist Church was not handicapped accessible, and there was no main-level bathroom that was accessible for those in wheelchairs. Not only did the church want to bring the building up to current standards, there were also many faithful members who needed the assistance of such an entrance and restroom facility.

Liberty Baptist Church in Appomattox learned of Campbell Ave.'s vision and its

need. With a desire to support Kingdom work, they gave of their resources and volunteers to partner with Campbell Ave. Baptist Church and resolve the need.

Liberty contracted Piney Ridge Construction Company to secure building permits and perform the large-scale construction work. After several weeks of volunteer labor and the work of Piney Ridge Construction Company, the project was complete. Because of a sister church's spirit of partnership, Campbell Ave. Baptist Church can continue its mission to reach the community with an open front door that is accessible to all!

RESOURCE

Websites:

libertybconline.org

tinyurl.com/campbellavebc



At the Crossroads of the Past and the Future

WHAT DOES A CHURCH DO WHEN IT'S
STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE BUT LONGS TO SEE
ITS COMMUNITY REACHED WITH THE GOSPEL?

WHAT DOES A CHURCH DO WHEN THE
CONGREGATION IS AGING, **UNITY IS HARD TO
FIND**, AND HISTORY SEEMS TO BE CATCHING UP?



Amelia Baptist Church

(ABC), like many churches, found itself at a crossroads of the past and the future, of heartache and possibilities. Only the power of God could give them a new and brighter future.

After several years of hardship and trials, the church's leaders began praying for a way forward. They contacted the SBC of Virginia, and Derrick Adams, a young pastor, began filling the pulpit on an interim basis. Pastor Derrick and his family came to Amelia after serving several churches in Ohio and Virginia. At ABC, they served alongside a congregation that brought healing to Derrick's life after some trying years in ministry. "The people of Amelia Baptist have loved me and my family and made us feel at home," says Pastor Derrick. Needless to say, this Spirit-filled love was reciprocated.

The story of new life at Amelia is one of a pastor's love for his people and the people's love for their pastor. As this love and trust have grown, so has their belief that God has a plan for their church.

"A great group of people now gets involved in all kinds of ministry. From reaching our community by serving [local] sports teams or putting on a community movie night, to praying for and reaching the nations through missions partnerships in Washington, DC and Barcelona, it is a new day of life and ministry at ABC," says Pastor Derrick.

Long-time member Michelle McDonald agrees. "With new families and new ministries, we seem to have a new life at the church."

"ABC's partnership with the SBC of Virginia has played a great role in our growing health," Pastor Derrick believes. "We continue to take advantage of many training and ministry opportunities that the SBCV offers." From children's leader training to missions training, Amelia Baptist Church and the SBC of Virginia form a strong partnership to reach Amelia County with the Gospel.

McDonald believes that a new day has dawned at ABC. "Now people are learning that we love each other and love them. Now reaching our community is possible because the idea of what Amelia Baptist Church stands for has changed."

Healing at ABC is happening through the love of God displayed in a pastor's love and a congregation's love. Now that the church is being mobilized not just to look inwardly but to reach out to its community and the nations with the Gospel, the people of this rural area know they are loved.

More than five different SBCV churches are partnering to serve in Barcelona this year. Trip dates are July 13-22 and October 18-26.

RESOURCE

Website: ameliabaptistchurchva.com



Pastor Derrick debriefs the church family after a Barcelona mission trip.

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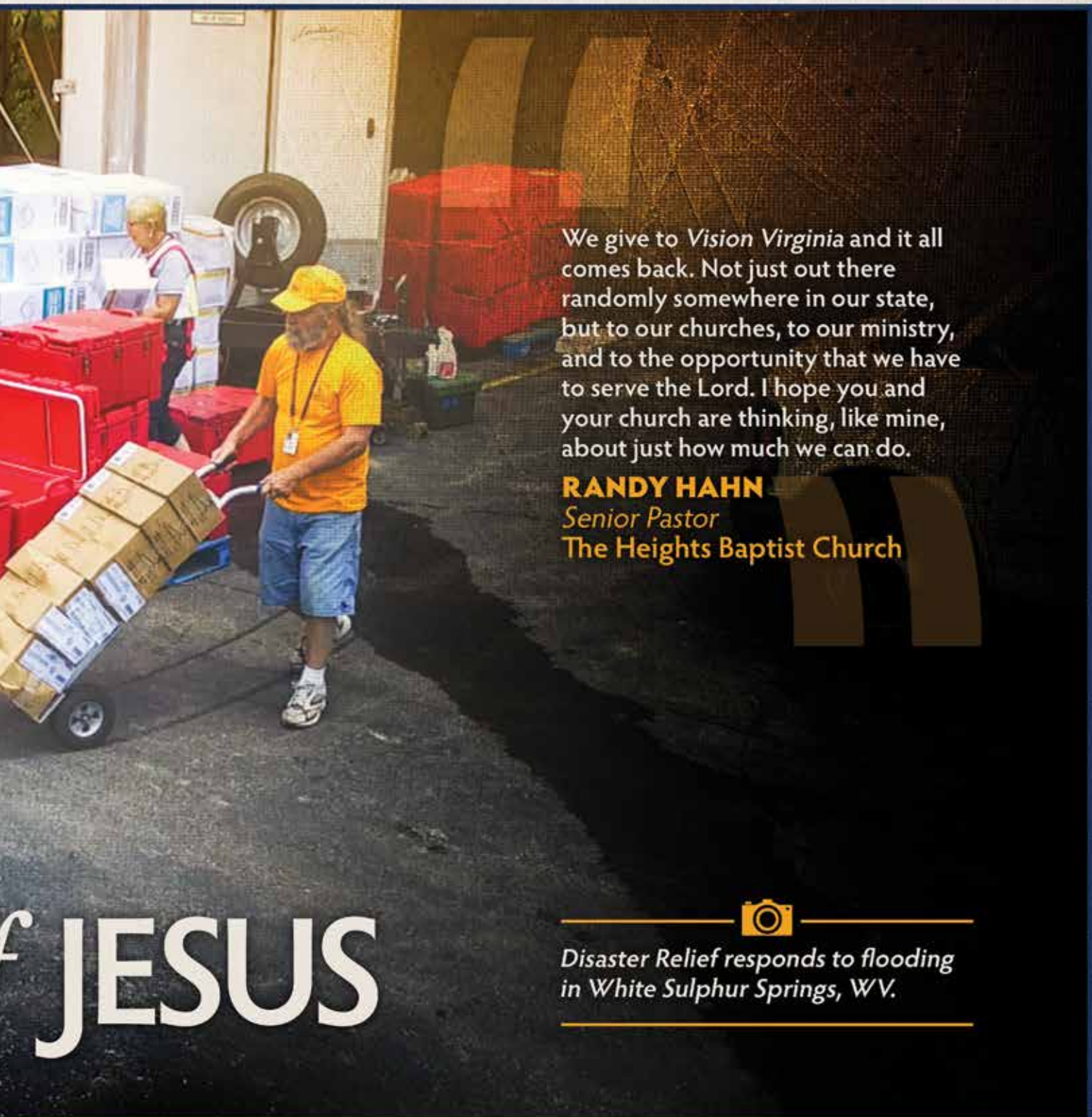
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RANDY HAHN

Senior Pastor

The Heights Baptist Church

of JESUS



*Disaster Relief responds to flooding
in White Sulphur Springs, WV.*

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Meeting the Needs of a Flooded Community



When Hurricane Matthew hit Virginia Beach on Saturday, October 8, 2016, it had been downgraded to a tropical storm. However, record amounts of rain fell in Hampton Roads that day. The Windsor Oaks section of the

ruined furniture, and doing whatever needed to be done. The devastation was huge, and we quickly realized the needs were far greater than our church could meet. So after the first week or so, we concentrated our efforts on a few families with whom we'd made a connection."

Over the weeks and months that followed, Princess Anne Plaza took up over \$3,000 in love offerings to help families, provide meals, and purchase gift cards. Church members worked with an influential member of the community, who used her connections to encourage local restaurants to donate food. They fed people lunch every day for over a month!

The needs were great, and the SBC of Virginia sent a callout to Disaster Relief volunteers from across the state to go and help. Princess Anne Plaza allowed the church building to be used as a staging area and point of coordination for the Disaster Relief efforts.

Even though it's been months since the storm, the community is still suffering, and Princess Anne Plaza Baptist Church is still meeting needs in the community. One of the church's

We just concentrated on doing what we could and showed these folks the love of Christ in a tangible way.

”

community groups recently helped a displaced family move back into their home after six long months.

"When this situation hit our neighbors, we knew we could not do everything that needed to be done for everybody, but we could do something," says Pastor Daniel. "So we just concentrated on doing what we could and showed these folks the love of Christ in a tangible way."

Their efforts were not in vain. Through the church family's work, opportunities arose to share the Gospel. Because they saw needs and took action, Gospel seeds were sown among people with whom they may not have been able to connect otherwise.

Within two miles of the church, over 200 homes were flooded.

city was particularly impacted with unprecedented flooding. That area happens to be in **Princess Anne Plaza Baptist Church's** backyard. Within two miles of the church (one of the most densely populated areas of the beach), over 200 homes were flooded. Church members alerted Pastor Daniel Mackey of friends they knew who were affected. Pastor Daniel then mobilized a group of folks from the church to meet the needs.

"Initially, we helped anyone we could," recalls Pastor Daniel. "We were going house to house, helping rip out soaked carpet, hauling out

RESOURCE

Website: plazabaptist.net

Contact: Daniel Mackey

Email: daniel.mackey@plazabaptist.net

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INTO THE WORLD

Getting Out of the Church Building



Dan Olson

Missions Director of
Cornerstone Baptist Church

“I used to think the ‘mission field’ was a place far away, but it’s often closer to your church than you realize. It could be down a street you’ve never traveled or around a corner you’ve never seen. We found our mission quite unintentionally.”

Cornerstone is a small but growing church in Fredericksburg, VA. It is an Acts 1:8 church seeking to reach its Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth with the Gospel. Through Disaster Relief, English as a Second Language (ESL), and orality training opportunities with the SBC of Virginia, their love for the peoples of the world has grown. Of 150 people in the congregation, 40% have been on short-term mission trips through **Cornerstone Baptist Church**. While the Lord has expanded their reach to places like El Salvador (where they have a missions partnership), He is also using them to reach 13 people groups just miles from the church doors.

Dan Olson: “I was driving my wife (a teacher in the local elementary school) to her student’s home to deliver an assignment when we turned a corner into a tucked-away neighborhood in South Stafford, VA, just a few miles from our church. We knew the area by reputation but had never visited. In a moment, we had crossed a line from our comfortable suburban world into a small, densely populated neighborhood with visible signs of need. This community had a high percentage of families living below the poverty level. There was a large population of immigrants and refugees from Asia, Central America, and Africa. We felt like strangers in a world we didn’t know, but the fear and awkwardness were accompanied by an immediate burden and stirring we both felt in our hearts.

“In the following weeks, our family visited the neighborhood as often as we could. Because most of the children recognized my wife from school, we were immediately welcomed by the neighborhood kids and their parents. We didn’t realize then how much God would use my wife’s position to open doors and break down barriers. As our visits continued, we researched and prayed about how we could get our church involved in ministering to this troubled neighborhood. We learned that over the past several years, many area churches had tried to reach the community. Some tried busing children to church or Vacation Bible School. Others held one-time evangelistic events in the local park. But those efforts weren’t reaching the adults. We felt that the key to reaching the neighborhood was to establish a permanent presence inside the neighborhood from which we could build lasting relationships with the adults. We knew this approach would take a long-term commitment, but we were prepared for the long haul.

EARLY SUCCESS

“We learned early on that when God gives you a burden, He will not leave you to do it all yourself. He will bring others alongside you with the same burden. When we shared with our congregation our desire to establish a presence in the neighborhood, many stepped forward to help.

“We decided to start a ‘Party in the Park’ with snacks, games, crafts, and Bible stories every Wednesday evening in the summer.

To kick it off, we held a three-day Vacation Bible School in the park. It was a huge success. We had more than 40 kids (and even some parents) attend. On the last day, we told the kids we would see them every Wednesday evening in the park for the rest of the summer. We thought we were off to a great start. We had no idea our plans would come to a screeching halt.

Chris Brown, senior pastor of Cornerstone, testifies, “When we first began reaching out to our local community, I would have never imagined the impact it would have on our entire church. It began with just a few people going out on a Wednesday evening during the summer to repair children’s bicycles. We developed friendships with the children and their families through this ministry. There was an excitement within each person who served, as they came back and were able to tell their stories of the opportunities they had to share the love of Jesus Christ through their words and actions. More and more people began to join in this outreach each week.”

DISAPPOINTMENT

“The day after the VBS in the park, our church received an angry phone call from the leaders of the community homeowners’ association. We were told that the park was private property and we did not obtain the approvals



Newly arrived refugees from the Middle East were excited to receive their first Christmas gifts.



Relationships within the community were built through a variety of activities in the neighborhood park. Cornerstone called it Party in the Park!



In a tucked-away South Stafford neighborhood, Cornerstone ministers to immigrants and refugees, many of whom live below the poverty line.

we needed from the community leaders. “As much as we tried to apologize for the oversight, we were told in no uncertain terms that we were not welcome in the neighborhood. It was a crushing blow. Our last words to the kids at VBS were that we would see them every Wednesday and now, like the churches before us, we, too, had vanished from the neighborhood. It was especially troubling to think of the kids who, at such a young age had already experienced so much disappointment from adults who didn’t keep their word. We prayed that God would open the door again, but the community leaders would not yield.

“I began studying the book of Acts to see how the early church dealt with such failures. What I learned was astonishing. God often called the early missionaries to cities where they were ultimately rejected, beaten, or imprisoned. ‘Why would God call His faithful to failure?’ I asked. I learned that God seeks our obedience, not our success. Success or failure in mission work is for Him to decide. We are to stay focused on doing His will, regardless of the outcome.

THE DOOR OPENS

“We continued to pray through the summer and into the fall that God would open a way back into the neighborhood. In mid-December, God reopened the door in a mighty way. Some Christian brothers contacted our church to ask if we knew of any families in need that Christmas. They explained that each year, a group of families join together to prepare 40 stockings for children but had not found anyone in need this year. Recognizing that God was giving us another way into the community, we asked if it were possible to prepare 10 times that amount of stockings.

“We called the same community leaders who had expelled us from the neighborhood the previous summer and asked if they would allow us to deliver Christmas stockings to every home in the neighborhood. Despite their previous rejections, this time they accepted our offer. Over the next three days, our church scrambled to prepare 400 Christmas stockings. On Christmas Eve, church members went door to door throughout the neighborhood and were welcomed at every house. Some newly arrived Muslim refugees from the Middle East were so excited to receive their first Christmas gifts, they took photos of the delivery team to share with their families back home. The neighborhood leaders were so touched by our generosity, they gave us total neighborhood access from that point forward!

PARTY IN THE PARK!

“With full access to the neighborhood once again, we jumped full force into our plan to use the park as our community contact zone. Over the next few summers, God blessed the Party in the Park Wednesday evenings. We built relationships with neighborhood adults and children through a variety of activities, such as bike repair, arts and crafts, food distribution, and Bible stories in English and Spanish. God continued to add ministry partners. We connected with Christians who lived in the neighborhood and worked hand in hand with area churches that wanted to help. Slowly, one person at a time, we began to see lives change. But we were still limited in what we could do at the park. Every fall, as the weather changed and the days grew shorter, we would say goodbye until the following spring. We began praying that God would provide a way to work in the community year round.

GO DO GOD’S WORK!

“The idea of renting a home in the neighborhood had been discussed, but all of the houses were individually owned and rental prices were abnormally high. We would have to find a house for free. We began praying for a miracle. Right across the street from the park was a vacant house. It was in the ideal location, but the house was in very poor condition. After mobilizing our church to pray, we set up a meeting with the owner to see the house. The place was in shambles. Carpet, floors, plumbing, and appliances were all in need of replacement. Knowing we were from a church and expecting we would ask to rent the home at a reduced rate, the owner asked us to make an offer. ‘We have nothing to offer,’ I replied. Then the owner asked an interesting question: ‘What did God *tell* you to ask for?’ I prayed silently as I began to explain how we felt God was leading: ‘God told us to ask for a deal so outrageous that no good businessman would accept it—so we would know that it is a miracle of God.’ The owner was quiet for

a moment as I prayed silently, waiting for his response. ‘Well, I guess I’m not a very good businessman.’ He handed me the keys and said, ‘Go do God’s work.’

THE HUB

“The housing unit by the park, or Hub, as it became known, was now the new center point for our work in the community. Church members and neighbors converged on the Hub to make repairs. With no budget for the work, donations poured in to cover expenses. Within weeks, the home was in sufficient condition to start an English language Bible study. In the months that followed, a Spanish Bible study, after-school tutoring, English language classes, and a garden ministry were added. The Hub also served as the base for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter outreach events, as well as a free community yard sale and health clinic.

THE MINISTRY CONTINUES

“God’s miraculous provision of the Hub had a profound impact. Even the Muslim English students who meet at the Hub weekly have heard the story of how God provided a place to do His work. In the year since the Hub opened, we have had the joy of watching neighborhood residents changed by Christ. But in truth, mission work is about people, not a place. It has now been seven years since that first drive into the neighborhood, but the plan for how to reach the community has stayed the same: Christians obedient to God’s calling, establishing a long-term presence in the neighborhood from which to show love, build relationships, and proclaim the Gospel. It can happen in a house, it can happen in a park, but it is unlikely to happen within the walls of a church. Christians must be willing to get out of the church building and into the world, however God leads.

PRAY!

“God’s faithfulness to use His obedient people at Cornerstone Baptist Church on His mission has brought many other open doors for missions, from local youth football teams to a burden to support mission efforts in Kenya, Africa.”

Pastor Chris exclaims, “One of the most exciting aspects of these mission outreaches is the fact that we are not a large church! I believe the Lord has used us as a small church in order that He alone will get the glory for all that has been done. We agree with the psalmist when he said, ‘The Lord has done amazing things for us! What joy!’” (Psalm 126:3)

RESOURCE

Website: cssbchurch.org

Backpack Blessings

APPALACHIANS RECEIVE GIFTS OF LOVE

At the SBC of Virginia's Homecoming each year, Disaster Relief trucks are loaded with backpacks for Appalachia, gathered by SBCV churches across the state. In 2016, we received 2,500! As the trucks roll off into the darkness, prayers are offered for those who will receive the gifts of love for Christmas.

Some backpacks travel almost 700 miles to the Impact Center in Hopkinsville, KY. Some then find their way into the hands of Karen Ritchie, a volunteer who aides in distributing the backpacks. In addition to helping at the center, Karen is also a Kentucky Disaster Relief volunteer. She loves distributing the gifts provided through the Backpacks for Appalachia mission project. Of the 50 backpacks the center received last year, Karen personally distributed 10 and was brought to tears as she reflected on the kindness shown and the appropriateness of the backpacks.

The Impact Center serves 20 or more families three days a week. Therefore, the staff members have firsthand knowl-

edge of each family who visits the center, which is sponsored by a cooperative effort of local Southern Baptist churches.

Karen's 10 backpacks went to three families. Moms and dads were encouraged to present the backpacks to their children as gifts from their parents and to add or remove items as needed. Most of the backpacks brim with school supplies, so parents often remove some of the school items to use later in the year. One family decided to save some to give at Easter.

One of the moms said she had as much if not more joy in giving the backpack as her ecstatic child had in receiving it! The child told his mom, "Wow, you must really like school with this school stuff!" The mother was then able to reinforce to her son the importance of a good education.

Karen has been encouraged by how willing the families are to complete and return the Mail Club cards. The Mail Club sends children Bible lessons in the mail.

Karen can't wait until the backpacks arrive this year so that she can once again see the joy of parents being able to provide for their children. Thank you, SBCV churches, for your generosity!

At the crossroads of US Routes 41 and 68 in Kentucky,

you will find the community of Hopkinsville—population 32,634—where the Impact Center is located. In 2006, 200 homes were damaged as an F3 tornado ripped through that community. The town suffered several infrastructure issues with damaged power lines, downed communication towers, and a ruptured gas line. In Hopkinsville, 16.8% of people are living below the poverty line. The community has shown signs of health and resilience, growing numerically and seeing unemployment drop from 13.3% in 2010 to its present low of 5.6%.



Christmas Backpacks
for Children in
Appalachia

Central Appalachia includes 100 of the poorest counties in America in the 10-state region served by the Appalachian Regional Ministry (ARM). A new backpack filled with toys, school supplies, hygiene items, candy, etc. for Christmas is so exciting for boys and girls! ARM will share the Gospel and these gifts of love with children living in poverty throughout Appalachia this Christmas.

Share the Gospel
and a gift of love with a child
in need this Christmas.

To learn more, visit:

sbcv.org/backpacks

KINGDOM GROWTH God's Way

Emmanuel Baptist Church



▲ Pastor Tim Ma



The vision of **Emmanuel Baptist Church** is to establish a discipleship culture that reaches all peoples as one family (the church makes disciples who make disciples). Emmanuel has become a multi-generational, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic church family (about 60% Caucasian and 40% other ethnicities), reflecting the demographics of their community in Manassas, VA. Though there are four ethnic churches that meet on campus in addition to the English-speaking congregation—Arabic, Chinese, Korean, and Hispanic—they are one family.

The senior pastor of Emmanuel, Tim Ma, is committed to strengthening leaders and empowering the church to be the bride of Christ through the power of prayer and God's Word. His focus is lifting up the name of Jesus in every situation the church faces. For every decision that is to be made, he asks, "How will this lift up the name of Christ?"

The family of churches is unified in the Gospel and in the Word of God. This unity is reflected at their monthly fellowship meal. The focus of the gathering is not just on food, but on the family of God coming together and loving one another. For weekly outreaches (like knocking on doors in the community), folks often go together, which enables them to speak to different language groups they encounter. When the ethnic church leaders reach a family who prefers English, they connect the family to the American congregation.

Weekly staff meetings at Emmanuel include the ethnic

pastors (Samir Eldabaa, Joshua Wang, Sun Young Chung, and Ricardo Carrillo). They spend the majority of their time together focused on Scripture and a small amount of time on business or office issues. This keeps their focus on God's Kingdom agenda. Committed to mentoring, Pastor Tim spends time with each staff member and ethnic pastor for individual needs.

Pastor Tim was mentored by strong Christian men. He follows this same pattern, mentoring other men to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ and expecting them to, in turn, disciple their peers. New elders go through teaching classes and mentoring before serving and as they serve. The church is, therefore, being led by godly men who are passionate followers of Jesus Christ and are committed to learning. Pastor Tim focuses on growing disciples, not numbers. He believes that by growing faithful disciples, the faithful will reach people who will become faithful disciples. This will accomplish the Great Commission, God's Kingdom agenda.

When asked about how he balances his time with church and needed rest, Pastor Tim explains, "A can-do attitude—not the least that I can do but what is God's will and purpose in order to lift Christ up." He says that he is committed to "work as unto the Lord six days and rest as unto the Lord one day."

RESOURCE

Website:
ebcnva.org

Bibles Reaching Women in Need

Do you ever look around your home and think bout how many Bibles you have?
Do you ever consider how many people in the world don't own a single Bible
and that many will live their entire lives without access to the Word of God?



There are people around us every day who have never owned a Bible—some of whom for the simple reason that they cannot afford basic needs, let alone a Bible.

We have the opportunity to minister to women in homeless shelters, drug rehabilitation centers, and many other places where women are struggling through life. Most have a past that includes child abuse, human trafficking, spousal abuse, and other hardships. More than anything, they need Jesus, and we can share His love by giving them a copy of God's Word and telling them about Him.

This past November and December, the SBCV Mobilization Team presented to our churches the need for Bibles for these women. We had hoped for several hundred Bibles, but you responded in an overwhelming way by donating over 2,800! This shows your desire to put the Word of God into the hands of as many people as possible. The Bibles went to help women through the following means:

Ministries and churches that...

help **BRING RESTORATION** to women
in **HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

provide a **HEALING HOME** for women
in **DRUG REHABILITATION**

reach **WOMEN IN PRISON**

share Jesus' love with **WOMEN ON THE STREETS**

host an evangelistic event for women of **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** in Virginia and New York City

offer the love of Christ to women in **STRIP CLUBS**

provide spiritual care and a listening
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provide housing, clothing, and other basic
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For many of these ladies, this gift is the first Bible they've ever owned. For those in shelters, they arrive frightened and alone. As someone sits with them and shares Jesus through the Bible, they hear and learn for the first time of His great love and the peace He can give. When they leave the shelter, they will have a Bible to help them grow in their faith and weather the rough times of life.

RESOURCE

Website: sbcv.org/bibles

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—RETREAT—

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National Consultant for Ministry to Pastors' Wives, NAMB

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The Lasting Impact of a Youth Evangelism Conference

Dr. Alvin Reid shared the Gospel with the many students attending the 2017 YEC.

The scene was the gym floor of the Family Life Center at **London Bridge Baptist Church** in Virginia Beach, VA. It was the quiet location designated for pastors, youth pastors, and leaders to counsel their students after the message at the Youth Evangelism Conference (YEC). This year, Dr. Alvin Reid of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary was the keynote speaker. When Reid gave the invitation, he shared the Gospel and emphasized that Jesus was calling students to *follow* Him, not just asking them to act a certain way. Along with students from all over the state, many from **Grace Baptist Church** in Tappahannock chose that day to follow Jesus. Seated around their pastor, Shane Gallagher, were 11 high schoolers who made decisions, 6 of whom chose for the first time to follow Jesus.

Pastor Shane shared the following:

About five years ago, the Lord started opening doors for us in the lives of many of the children and youth in our area who were unchurched, many of whom were in at-risk homes or neighborhoods. These students were exposed to drugs, crime, and gang activity. Over time, we have been blessed to bring them to church and have them participate in children's and youth ministries, retreats, mission projects, etc. We have also gotten to build relationships with their families and have been blessed to minister to them and others in these neighborhoods.

Some of our youth are those who started with us as kids and who are now deciding to follow Christ as teenagers. Some who started with us as teens are now leaders in our youth and children's ministries! It is hard to summarize all that God is doing, but it is awesome to rejoice with the angels as we get to be a part of it!

The impact that YEC had on the students from Grace was cultivated through the church building relationships several years ahead. Connections were made by hosting basketball tournaments at the middle and high schools, where the Gospel was shared. Connections were made by encouraging unchurched youth in the area to participate—welcoming them to the church, befriending them, loving them, and being an example of Jesus to them.

In time, when the faithful youth leaders visited the students' homes to talk with them and their parents about attending YEC, the friendship and trust were already present. The atmosphere was ripe to receive a response of, "Yes, I will go."

After returning to Tappahannock, the testimony of the new believers led to other students following Jesus too. Since YEC January 13–14, 2017, a total of 15 students have been baptized at Grace Baptist Church.

Although the Youth Evangelism Conference is just a two-day weekend event, it starts many days, weeks, and sometimes years ahead, and it can have an impact on lives for all eternity.

RESOURCE

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website: gracetappahannock.com

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Women's Leadership

BLOG TEAM

sbcv.org/wmblog

We are honored to introduce you to the SBC of Virginia women's leadership blog team. One of our bloggers is Annie B. Garman, who shares her story below.

Ministry started for my husband, Colby, and me the day our honeymoon ended. We drove from Wisconsin to the suburbs of Washington, DC to start our new life at Stafford Baptist Church. We were both 21 and too naive to know what we were getting into.

Our life changed drastically when Stafford Baptist adopted Iceland as a people group in 2006. There were no IMB missionaries serving there at the time, and this (through the unexplainable working of the Holy Spirit!) really burdened the leadership of our small church. We decided to send each of the staff there for three months to lay the ground work for a new church.

After spending the winter there, our family felt called to return

to Reykjavik as full-time IMB missionaries. Living in Iceland was the hardest thing I had ever done. Learning the language was grueling, the weather was exactly what you would imagine, and the ministry was not as easy as I had hoped. Despite the many trials of the first year, we knew that God had us there for a purpose, and we prayed for a person of peace to help us plant this church.

When we found out that we were pregnant in our second year, we couldn't have been happier. On March 29, 2010, we went to the doctor for our first ultrasound and were hit with the news that turned our world upside down. Our baby was only developing half of her heart. Within a month, we moved back to the States in complete confusion about what our future held. Would she survive? Would we move back to Iceland and finish the task?

When Gracie Garman was born on August 9, 2010 (at 11:12, in case you're wondering!), it was confirmed that her heart defect was very serious and we would not be returning to Iceland. A



THE TEAM

week after she was born, I decided to document the journey of her three open-heart surgeries for others facing similar situations. I needed to write it all down anyway (because that's how I process life), and maybe if I shared my words, they would speak healing and truth into someone's hurting heart.

Five years later, the book, Unexpected Grace: When Your Child Is Born with Half a Heart, was finally complete and published (Amazon.com link provided in the resource box below).

I continue to write because words are powerful. I thought of this the other day when something someone said reverberated in my head for days. I want to make people stop and think about what's truly important in this fleeting life. I try to open up about my struggles so that others won't feel so alone in theirs. I try to make people laugh because life can be so heavy. Most of all, I pray my words will point non-Christians to consider the truth of Jesus and remind Christians of the mission He has left us.

P.S. In case you're wondering, God did send us that person of peace, and Gunnar Gunnarson is now planting Loftstofan Baptist Church in Reykjavik. God is good and finishes what He starts.

The Lord has blessed the SBCV with a team of women like Annie who have God stories to encourage, equip, and inspire you in your journey with Him. We hope you will view the blog as a tool to develop your leaders and help you through the difficult times in your ministries.

SBCV is delighted to have another tool to help support your ministry. New posts appear weekly at sbcv.org/wmblog.

RESOURCE

Book: tinyurl.com/unexpected-grace

Blog: sbcv.org/wmblog

AMY HARRIS

Ever since I was a little girl, God created me to write down my thoughts as a way to process my feelings. As I've grown older, He has fostered my gift of writing into a tool for encouragement, an outlet for prayer and thanksgiving, and a way to bring glory to Him. I can't not write—it's a part of me and the way He created me, and I continue to write to bring glory to Him.

LEXI JUDY

Writing not only helps me process what the Lord is teaching me, but it gives me the ability to communicate that with others. It helps us know that we're not alone in whatever it is we're going through and allows us to center our minds and hearts on the truth of who Jesus is.

JANET CAMPBELL

I write to encourage women to boldly stand for Christ without apology—to remind women it's never too early or too late to begin serving Him!

DOLLY MINK

For me, writing comes as naturally as breathing—and it feels every bit as necessary. To fulfill who I am in Christ, I have to share my faith, my journey, and His love.

ANNIE B. GARMAN

I write because words are powerful. I want my words to burrow deep in hearts and minds and give people a pause. I write so that others will consider their Creator and what's truly important in their brittle lives.

LISA H. BRYANT

My writing and speaking are an act of obedience. When God is working something in my life, it is never just about me. I am compelled to share with others in hopes they will learn too.



Amy Harris



Lexi Judy



Janet Campbell



Dolly Mink



Annie Garman



Lisa Bryant



August 4-5, 2017



Special Guest:
Chris Adams



Intl. Learning Center
Rockville, Virginia



To learn more:
sbcv.org/impact



Chris Adams recently retired as LifeWay's Women's Ministry Specialist. She continues to teach at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Story of Discover Church

757 Church >> 316 Church >> Discover Church

Rob and Cheryl Vincent were both born and raised in Chesapeake, VA and are calling it home once again. In 35 years of ministry, they've had quite an exciting journey.

Rob, a graduate of Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, served on the staff of Atlantic Shores Baptist Church in Virginia Beach for 16 years until he was called in 2009 to serve as pastor of Oak Grove Baptist Church in Carrollton, GA. In the six years he was there, the church grew, as evidenced particularly through baptisms and the church's giving through the Cooperative Program.

Part of the Vincents' ministry for the Lord has been outside of the church walls. As a pediatric nurse, Cheryl has spent her entire nursing career lovingly caring for newborn babies with special needs, most of whom are born premature. Rob and Cheryl have one biological son (now grown and living in Hampton Roads) and have

fostered 57 babies over the last 12 years.

Toward the end of 2014, Pastor Rob contacted SBCV church planting strategist Mark Custalow to talk about God's call for the Vincents to return to Chesapeake to plant a church. A small group of believers whom Rob had known previously had been praying about the needs that existed in the southern portion of the city. Rob was subsequently processed and approved as an SBCV church planter, participated in PLANT training, and got to work on establishing 757 Church in the Greenbrier and Great Bridge sections of Chesapeake (757 is the area code for Hampton Roads). A church member offered his home as a meeting place.

757 Church was one of three SBCV church plants in South Hampton Roads that received funds and some materials when another SBCV church, **Calvary Road Baptist Church** (Chesapeake), stopped meeting and distributed its remaining assets. This act of generosity proved strategic in the birth of these three new churches who were beneficiaries. Little did the Vincents know that receiving legacy gifts would become a recurring part of their story.

In March 2016, as 757 Church sought a public venue in which to meet, they were approached by the remnant of a non-denominational church plant whose founding pastor was soon leaving. The remnant had a meeting place in a public school and plenty of worship equipment but no pastor and little synergy. By the providence of God, these two plants merged into one new church under Pastor Rob's leadership. The newly merged church became known as 316

Church, alluding to John 3:16.

Once again, the fledgling church was helped along through a strategic partnership. Pastor Rob testifies, "God truly has taken us on an incredible journey as a church in a short period of time, and we are blessed far beyond what we could ever think or imagine—and certainly way beyond what we deserve."

The elders of 316 Church began to pray about purchasing a small, vacated church building on 1.5 acres in a different section of Chesapeake. They had been faithfully and sacrificially giving to establish a savings account for an eventual permanent home, but God had a plan that was far beyond their dreams.

Pastor Rob was approached by long-time friend and fellow pastor Bill Keen of **Pleasant Grove Baptist Church** in the same area of Chesapeake where 316 was meeting for worship in a school. Pastor Bill had led Pleasant Grove for 17 years, was beyond retirement age, and had lost his wife to cancer three years before. He was ready to retire, and the remaining remnant at Pleasant Grove voted to unite with 316 Church. The merger included Pleasant Grove's facilities and 20 acres of land. With yet another legacy partnership came a new name—**Discover Church**, "discovering God's amazing love and being that love to the world."

*Church Planter / Pastor
Rob Vincent*





Pastor Rob is still in awe of what took place. “To think that God would open the door for Discover Church to have its very own place to call home—a church property with 20 acres and two buildings—and be completely debt free was a miracle happening right before our eyes!”

“This legacy church plant and partnership began in January of 2017, and we planned to launch April 2, 2017, two weeks before Easter. We had a packed house on that day and baptized two people that morning. God began building some excitement for Resurrection Sunday to come. On that day, the church was filled to the brim with people, and we had the privilege to see three people raise their hands to trust Jesus Christ.”

The church now known as Discover Church has baptized 12 since its beginning in July 2015 (4 of whom have been baptized since January 2017). They have also reached beyond themselves to bless a few other SBCV church plants

and to firmly commit to mission giving through the Cooperative Program.

“We have a long way to go and so much to learn,” shares Pastor Rob. “There are still obstacles to work through and new unforeseen challenges ahead, but our hearts are filled with gratitude and praise. Our God is truly amazing, and we desire to help people in this community and around the world. We want to thank God for this awesome privilege and opportunity, and we also want to thank our partners in ministry at the SBCV. Without your guidance, support, training, and prayers, none of this would have been possible. Planting a church is a huge step of faith, but with our SBCV family, we have felt supported in every way.”



RESOURCE

Website:

discoverchurchva.org

innovative faith resources 

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

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from the EDITOR

Brandon Pickett

bpickett@sbcv.org

facebook.com/brandon.pickett

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A handwritten signature of Brandon Pickett in black ink, written in a cursive style.

The Power of Prayer

“THERE’S SOMETHING ABOUT PRAYING, ‘LORD, SHEPHERD MY FAMILY,’ THAT TRANSFORMS A PRAYER THAT USED TO BE JUST, ‘LORD, BLESS MY FAMILY.’”

That was just a one of the pearls of spiritual wisdom shared by Dr. Donald Whitney at the 2017 SBC of Virginia Prayer Summit.

Prayer warriors from **74 churches** from across Virginia came to New Bridge Baptist Church in Sandston, VA to hear Whitney, professor of biblical spirituality and associate dean at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Dr. Gordon Fort, senior ambassador for the president at the International Mission Board.

Whitney focused on praying Scripture and praying through Scripture, and Fort encouraged each person to prioritize prayer at the top of his/her list for both personal and ministry reasons.

“You need to spend some time in fasting and prayer to prepare your heart,” Fort challenged. “...so that when your time comes to stand before the people to prosecute our case before the throne of God, you will be ready.”

This yearly conference, which is centered on the discipline of prayer, didn’t even exist before 2014 (more than 1,200 people in total have attended since 2014). It is now highly anticipated, and



*Pastor George Giles (l) and
Pastor Bill Hayes (r) catch up
between sessions.*

attendees leave each year with motivation, tools, and even prayer partners. The conference has become not just a time of learning but also of the actual practice of prayer. The conference is further evidence of how highly SBC of Virginia churches value “Fervent Prayer” (one of the five core values of the SBCV).

The verse on the cover is Philippians 4:6, “Don’t worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.” There is so much in that verse that is both encouraging and convicting. But I also love verse 7: “And the peace of God, which surpasses every thought, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

How we need that peace of God in our lives, don’t we? Prayer is the key that unlocks that peace! And isn’t it encouraging that the very peace we need each and every day is the same peace that will guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus? When I start to get anxious about the cares of life and ministry, I need to stop and realize that the anxiety I’m experiencing is a sign that I

haven’t prayed about the situation and am trying to handle it in my own strength.

We know that this is a spiritual battle—but one worth fighting and winning. And with God’s help...victory is already secured!

**Scripture references are from the Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB).*

CORRIE TEN BOOM

Don't pray when you feel like it. Have an appointment with the Lord and keep it. A man is powerful on his knees.

SAMUEL CHADWICK

Prayer is the acid test of devotion.

WILLIAM CAREY

Prayer—secret, fervent, believing prayer—lies at the root of all personal godliness.



RESOURCE

Website: sbcv.org/prayersummit

Hundreds gathered on March 7 at New Bridge Baptist Church to hear Dr. Donald Whitney and Dr. Gordon Fort as they spoke on the subject of prayer.





AN OPEN DOOR

Advancing the Kingdom of God

PHOTOS

top left:

The Women's Ministry of York River Baptist Church catered lunch for the Williamsburg Fire Department.

top right:

Easter sunrise service in the park

right:

Pastor Bill Cashman baptizing in the York River.

When the clock struck midnight on January 1, 2017, not only did a new year begin, but a new church as well! At that moment, **York River Baptist Church** ceased and **Liberty at York River** began. Although there was the natural sadness that comes with the ending of a 33-year-old church, there was great joy and excitement about the future. York River had merged into and become a multi-site location for **Liberty Baptist Church of Hampton**. It's a story only God could write.

Both Pastor Bill Cashman of York River Baptist Church in Williamsburg and Pastor Grant Ethridge of Liberty Baptist Church of Hampton had been praying for direction. Pastor Bill sought the Lord's guidance for himself and the church as he approached retirement. He asked, "What will happen when I retire?" Pastor Grant sought guidance in expanding Liberty Hampton in the Williamsburg area. He said to the Lord, "I have a burden for our sister churches in decline to see the revitalizing of that work in that community." God opened the door for these two churches to find each other.

As Pastor Bill and his wife, Barbara, looked to the future, they expected to retire from York River and possibly attend Liberty Hampton. Instead, God brought Liberty to them. Through a meeting last summer between Pastor Bill and Pastor Grant, God revealed His plan for a new work. Pastor Bill presented the vision to his church, and it was enthusiastically received. York River later met with leaders from Liberty and sensed a true connection. This led to a called business meeting in December 2016, where York River Baptist Church voted overwhelmingly to merge with Liberty Baptist Church. The prevailing feeling amongst York River members was, "It's time!"

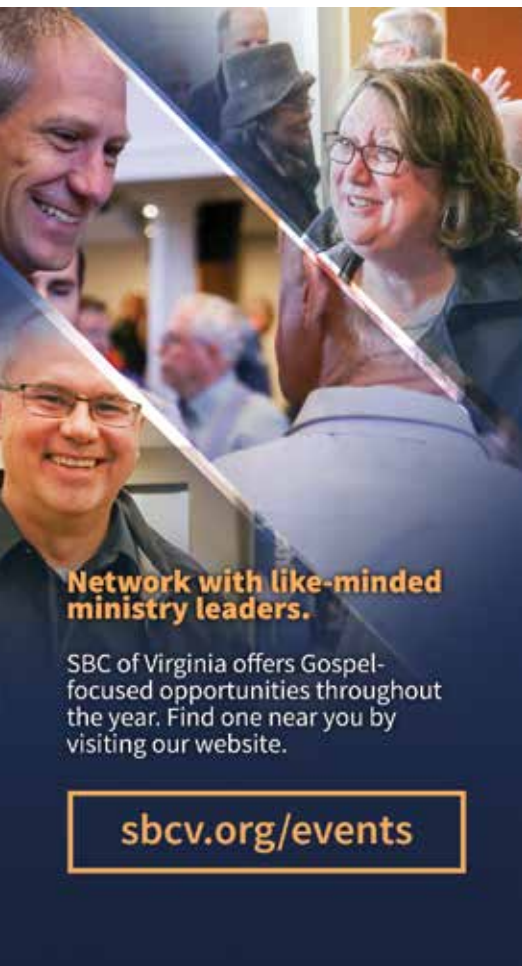


New Year's Day 2017 began York River Baptist Church's transition to Liberty at York River. Pastor Bill is currently filling the role of a transitional pastor and is preaching at York River the same messages that Pastor Grant preaches for the other campuses—Hampton, Harbor View, and Greenbrier. This arrangement will continue until the new campus pastor, John Dickerson (presently the education pastor at the Hampton Campus), and his staff arrive late summer to lead the body of Christ.

At that time, they will begin to livestream Pastor Grant preaching. During the transition period, the church building will be renovated to provide for the Children's Ministry, Student Ministry, and a new worship center. Once everything is in place, Pastor Bill will retire, and he and Barbara will stay on as active members of the church.

There is no doubt that God is doing a new thing at Liberty at York River. As Pastor Grant shares, "This is not about a building or another campus. It's not about bricks and mortar. It's always about people!"

The Kingdom of God is being advanced as the thousands who live in the Williamsburg area are reached with the Gospel. Only God could open one door for two churches and bring them together for His Glory!



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sbcv.org/events



Church Leadership CONFERENCE

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Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

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Romans 10:9, "If you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Commit to accepting Jesus as your Savior and Lord.

Romans 10:13, "For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Would you be willing to pray this prayer with a heart of faith, trusting and believing what the Bible says about Jesus and His love for you?

"Oh, God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died on the cross for me. I believe His shed blood paid the price for my sin, and that His death, burial, and resurrection were all for me. I now receive Him as my personal Savior and Lord. Thank you for forgiving me of my sins and for the gifts of salvation and eternal life. In Jesus' name I pray, amen."

Take God at His Word and claim His gift of salvation.
Believe and you will be saved.



Calendar

view the online calendar at sbcv.org/calendar

JULY

Mission Project:

Shoes for Barnabas Global Link (June/July)

- 13-16 Family Fusion (Eastern Shore)
- 17-21 Fuge Camp (Liberty University, Lynchburg)
- 25-26 SEND Conference (Orlando)

AUGUST

Mission Project:

Bedding for Students in Guam

- 4-5 Women's Ministry Leadership Training (International Learning Center, Rockville)
- 5-12 Sturgis Bike Rally
- 11-12 Church Planter Network (Statewide)

SEPTEMBER

Mission Projects:

Christmas Backpacks for Appalachia (September/October) **Vision Virginia Missions Offering**

- 8-9 PLANT A
- 16 Ride for the Unborn
- 23 Transform Church Leadership Conference (Swift Creek BC, Midlothian)
- 17-24 **Vision Virginia Week of Prayer**
- 30 Church Leadership Conference (North Roanoke BC, Roanoke)

OCTOBER

Mission Project:

Christmas Backpacks for Appalachia (September/October)

- 2-3 Executive Board Meeting
- 12 Church Planter Interviews
- 13-14 Pastors' Wives Fall Retreat
- 27-28 PLANT B

NOVEMBER

Mission Project:

Bibles for Homeless Women (November/December)

- 12-14 Annual Homecoming (The Heights BC, Colonial Heights)
- 23 **Thanksgiving Day**



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