

PROCLAIMER

2019 | VOLUME 21, ISSUE 1 | Telling the stories of *Vision Virginia*

***“I HAVE COME
SO THAT THEY
MAY HAVE LIFE
& HAVE IT IN
ABUNDANCE.”***

JOHN 10:10



*You are
not alone.*

Brian Autry

Executive Director
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From the Executive Director

Revitalize!

Over 20 years ago, a noted pastor highlighted a verse I go back to from time to time as my hope and prayer for the Lord's churches: "So the church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace, being built up and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, and it increased in numbers" (Acts 9:31, HSCB). I pray that churches across all of Virginia, DC, the USA, and around the world will see God move in such a way. I love the directness and clarity of the description given to God's work through His churches: churches were built up, edified, strengthened. They walked in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit. God's people multiplied!

The SBC of Virginia was founded as a Gospel partnership of Southern Baptist churches, worshippers of God, saved by Jesus, seeking to walk in the Holy Spirit—committed to God's Word. Like Paul's first missionary journey, SBC of Virginia churches united together to make disciples, plant churches, and reach people with the Gospel.

When Paul set out on his second missionary journey, the Bible tells us, "He traveled through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches" (Acts 15:41, HCSB). Do you see that? After planting churches, they were strengthening the churches. The same is true about our Gospel partnership and coalition of churches known as the SBC of Virginia. I believe the Lord wants to strengthen and revitalize churches. Here are three aspects to revitalizing churches:

■ **Personalized plan.** We must seek the Lord and His wisdom as we share the Gospel and serve the community. Concrete, clear, and tangible next-step goals can help.

■ **Strategic partners.** Simply put, you are *Not Alone*. We are a partnership and coalition of churches where pastors, leaders, and churches can help one another.

■ **God's power.** I believe our team can help with the first two aspects, but most of all, I want to make sure that we recognize our need for God's power. In our weakness, God's strength can be displayed for His glory. We need to start here.

Your brother in Christ,

Brian Autry



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28



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THE MAGAZINE OF THE SBC OF VIRGINIA

contents

Volume 21 • Issue 1 • Spring 2019

- 2 Revitalize!
- 5 A Thriving Church in Small-Town America
- 6 The Power of an Invitation
- 8 Why Not Disciple Who You Have?
- 9 Testimony: from a Former SBCV Pastor
- 10 Up the Creek Without a Pastor
- 12 Planting Partners Network
- 14 Sent: Resonate Church
- 15 Serve 757
- 16 Marks of a Healthy New Church
- 17 New Movers
- 18 Prayer for Church Planters
- 19 Not Your Average Week
- 20 Bless Every Home: Same City,
Different Churches, Same
Mission
- 22 Neighbors, Nations, Not Alone
- 24 Partnering with Compassion
- 26 Inspire: God's Remedy for Vanity
- 27 What Every Church Can (and Should) Do
- 28 Abundantly More!
- 30 Empowered
- 32 Arise2Read
- 33 Back to the Bible
- 34 A Fruitful Hispanic Conference
- 35 Un Ministerio Muy Fructifero
- 36 Not This Way
- 38 Håfa Adai!

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JAMES TAYLOR, Senior Pastor, Red Lane Baptist Church

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A Thriving Church in Small-Town America

God not only wants Christians to thrive;
God also wants churches to thrive.

Churches thrive when their members walk together in faithfulness, striving to grow in their discipleship. **Little River Baptist Church** has experienced abundant life over the past decade.

Tim Chrisman became the pastor of Little River Baptist Church in Bumpass, VA in 2009. Bumpass is a small town located about an hour from Charlottesville and 45 minutes from Richmond. Little River Baptist Church was established in 1791 and had experienced decline in the recent years before Chrisman came. Pastor Chrisman developed a vision for the church to thrive in its location.

"Coming to Little River was a miracle," recalls Chrisman, because even getting to the church was through a series of unlikely connections and divine encounters. In a small community, door-to-door evangelism and visitation were still welcomed. Through the hard work of getting to know the community, the mission of the church moved forward. Two years of relational investments resulted in a harvest of disciples being made. "In 2011, we had 21 baptisms," says Chrisman. "It was the largest in recent church history."

Sunday morning church attendance rose to 70. As the church continued to grow, it had to adjust to the realities of small-town America.

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Some couples moved out of the area for job opportunities and older members passed away.

Pastor Chrisman believed they needed a niche of ministry in the community. This came through engaging with area homeschoolers. A homeschool community developed, which opened a door to reach children. Each week, 50 children utilized Little River's facility for a homeschool co-op. The

church also reached 50 children through VBS and became engaged in Good News Clubs at local public schools.

In 2018, Chrisman joined the revitalization cohort of the SBC of Virginia. The cohort is a group of 8 to 10 pastors who partner for one year for mutual support and encouragement in church revitalization. That same year, 11 people joined the church in a four-month period, raising the church's Sunday attendance to 80.

Little River Baptist Church has a fresh emphasis on Sunday School and an intentional plan to focus on the future growth of the church. This church proves that with a dedicated pastor, a faithful congregation, and a love for the community, churches can thrive in small-town America.

Scripture reference is from the Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB)

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FOR GOOD WORKS,
which God prepared beforehand,
that we should walk in them.

EPHESIANS 2:10 (ESV)



The Power of an Invitation

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF GROTTOS

It started with a sixth grader. **First Baptist Church** (FBC) in the small town of Grottoes, VA now has almost five percent of the town attending each week, and it all began with a student who invited his friend to church.

The friend came and brought his parents and sister. God worked in such a way that three of them were baptized. Then they started inviting people too—grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and neighbors. The sixth grader continued to invite people too. Now more than two dozen regular attenders—Sunday School teachers, finance team members, outreach leaders, men's leaders, prayer leaders, and new members—can be traced to the simple invitations of a middle school boy.

Numerous surveys confirm that people start attending church simply because they are invited—and the overwhelming majority were invited by a friend, not a pastor or a postcard in the mail. The Bible indicates that loving God means loving others (Luke 10—The Parable of the Good Samaritan) and, as the Father sent Jesus, so also, He is sending us (John 20:21) to our neighbors, friends, co-workers, classmates, and family.

After serving for a time in youth ministry in Central Virginia, Mark Wingfield, his wife (Melanie), and their children moved to the Shenandoah Valley in 2009. Wingfield had grown up in the area, and he had a heart for the region.

Over time, he received opportunities to preach, and he fell in love with the people of this small, country church. First Baptist Church of Grottoes called Mark Wingfield as pastor in 2012, and God's blessings followed. The first Sunday he preached there, 25 people (mostly senior adults) were spread throughout the sanctuary. Now the church runs multiple services, its classrooms and parking lot are full, and the congregation has purchased six acres of land a mile away for a future relocation.

The stories of God's fingerprints abound. One mom regularly asked for prayer for her son and his wife. The two eventually responded to an invitation from an FBC attendee, and now both are Christians and active leaders in the congregation. A senior adult invited her daughter who,

Pastor Mark Wingfield and his wife, Melanie

although initially reluctant, became a regular attendee and eventually professed faith in Christ. A young man is now being mentored and disciplined one on one by Pastor Wingfield because his family invited him to church.

“There’s no real secret to what’s happened,” says Wingfield. “We made a commitment to live in the community, get involved in the town, and regularly invite others. God has taken that obedience and multiplied it dozens of times.”

A beautiful picture of this came when the church decided to help people at the only grocery store in town carry their bags to their cars. While assisting a 90-year-old woman, they asked how they could pray for her. She mentioned that her brother in West Virginia had died and she had no way to get to the funeral. FBC members arranged a ride for her, and she has been attending the church ever since.

The church has also demonstrated a Kingdom mindset by sharing its facilities with church plants; helping other small churches do VBS collaboratively; and joining in outreach projects with other churches, such as a fall festival and a live nativity. This Kingdom-first perspective is clearly evidenced in the ministry and growth of First Baptist Church of Grottoes.

“The church has not experienced things like this before,” Pastor Wingfield observes, “but it helps us understand the big picture of what God is doing in the Shenandoah Valley.”

FBC Grottoes is demonstrating to its community that they are *Not Alone*. Jesus put it this way, “By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35, HCSB).

A Challenge to Consider

In your church, challenge your people to invite others. Provide resources and opportunities to invite family, friends, and neighbors. Get involved in the community.

You can’t love your neighbor if you don’t *know* your neighbor—**consider joining Bless Every Home** to help you pray, care, share, and disciple (sbcv.org/blesseveryhome).



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Why Not *Disciple* Who You Have?

"Go, therefore, and make disciples" was Jesus' final command (Matthew 28:19, HCSB).

When Jesus' final command becomes the first priority in a local church, Jesus will be glorified.

In August of 2013, when Pastor Mike Mueller came to **Rock Hill Baptist Church** in Stafford, VA as an interim pastor, making disciples was not the priority of this small, rural church. Rock Hill, founded in 1812, was desperate for an under-shepherd who would love and lead the people back to the basics of being a Gospel-centered church. By 2015, God was mending hearts together, the congregation had embraced Pastor Mueller and his leadership, and a call was extended for Mueller to be the senior pastor.

We have witnessed a great deal during our time attending Rock Hill. We now are blessed to have Michael Mueller and his wife, Judy, as our shepherd, leading and directing us [by] God's Word through hardships and joys. As of late, there have been several answered prayers, and some would be called miracles. We have grown stronger in prayer and faith.

Shirley Tolson, member since 1961

Pastor Mueller felt called to lead Rock Hill to prioritize disciple making. "I began early on to meet with 12 to 15 of the core members of the church," he recalls. "We began to study and to discuss [the question], 'What is a disciple?'" They discussed subjects like stewardship, leadership, and how to make changes without tension.

Recently, Rock Hill members completed a three-and-a-half-year *DisciplePath* course with the goal of "Finishing the Great Commission Through Intentional Disciple Making." This discipleship journey allows church members to evaluate which of four stages best describes their current spiritual journey and learn how to grow into the next stage.

The Four Stages:

1. **Come and See**—little commitment; attending church; coming to know Christ
2. **Follow Me**—learning to pray and read the Bible; basic stewardship
3. **Be with Me**—growing in one's walk with Christ and in personal evangelism
4. **Remain in Me**—seminary level for committed leaders of the church to multiply other disciples

I feel that God has truly blessed my life, my family's life, and the Rock Hill Baptist Church family over the past three years by our willingness to be obedient to Him, following Christ's example of discipleship and being a disciple-making church. Everyone is encouraged to learn his/her current level of spiritual maturity and to grow spiritually in prayer, studying the Word, witnessing, and fellowship. God uses each of us to reach out and share with others from where each of us is in our individual walk with Him. Some are new in their walk and are still finding out what church is and who/what God is all about. Some have chosen to follow Him and become disciples, and now they are growing in their faith. Some have deepened their relationship with God and are sharing their faith with others (disciple making).

Todd Scroggins, member since 2013

What has God done since RHBC returned to the priority of making disciples?

- Since 2013, weekly Sunday worship attendance has grown from an average of 35 to a high of 86 or more.
- Since 2013, 31 people have professed Christ through baptism and 46 new members have joined the church.

■ The church has made an intentional effort to become a welcoming church, partnering with neighboring churches in discipleship efforts and allowing visitors to serve. According to Mueller, Rock Hill is now known in the community as a friendly church.

■ Through strong lay leadership, the children's ministry has grown from 6 to an average of 25–30 children.

■ Rock Hill is becoming an Acts 1:8 church, doing missions locally, in North America, and in countries around the world.

■ Sunday School has been restructured by affinity groups, and there is a stronger emphasis on accountability.

■ One affinity group focuses on equipping leaders to start new groups. Leaders from this group are now training others.

■ The church is meeting its budget, and giving is at its highest level in years.

Rock Hill is equipping new teachers and leaders for key positions in the church and looking forward to using the evangelism tool, Bless Every Home, to pray for and reach its community. Due to the building's limited space, it is now considering starting a second Sunday worship service.

Through disciple making, God is building the faith of His people as they have seen Him do extraordinary things through prayer. The future of Rock Hill Baptist Church looks bright.

"It is amazing to hear some of the testimonies of how people in the church have been used and touched by God—how many have been able to share their faith with others, having never been comfortable doing it before," says Todd Scroggins. "I am excited, and I thank God for what He is doing at Rock Hill."

As Pastor Mike Mueller says, "Most churches are moaning in the shadows of strong, larger churches. Why not disciple who you have?"



Testimony

from a Former SBCV Pastor

Editor's Note: *Pastor Barry Ginn served on staff at Monumental Baptist Church in Petersburg for 16 years (12 ½ years as senior pastor). During that time, he grew to love the fellowship of churches that make up the SBC of Virginia. Recently, the Lord moved him and his wife, Lisa, out of Virginia due to health reasons. But he is still serving the Lord in ministry and shares this testimony of God's faithfulness and the incredible influence of SBCV on him and his new ministry at Shoreline Park Baptist Church in Bay St. Louis, MS. (right)*

Thank you for the opportunity to brag on how big our God is and how instrumental the SBCV has been in my life.

For a number of years, my wife has suffered with chronic pain. We were blessed to have facilities and doctors nearby but could never get a diagnosis or a plan of treatment that seemed to help or work. About two years ago, Lisa and I began to pray, as we had many times before, that God would intervene and that we would be obedient. God answered our prayer! But not the way we expected or even wanted.

Years ago, while serving in the Marines, we served close to an Air Force Base in Biloxi, MS. They had incredible medical staff and facilities. We drove from Virginia to the Mississippi Gulf Coast one week and prayed that this might be the answer. God was faithful in answering our prayers.

We drove back to Virginia, and I resigned as pastor of Monumental Baptist—a church family whom we loved dearly. We were also leaving our son, Derek, in Virginia because he couldn't make the move with us. After resigning, we found a church on the Mississippi coast that was looking for a pastor. God, in His infinite wisdom, placed us in a church that was more than 1,000 miles away. I look back and see how gracious God is, and I am overwhelmed.

The church to which God called us was small in number, yet God has blessed us and we have seen it double in size in less than 15 months. Our baptism to average attendance ratio is 2.5 to 1. Giving is up exponentially. Our Sunday School has doubled. For future expansion, the church recently purchased a piece of property that joins the existing property. Renovations have been made to the offices, kitchen, Sunday School



classrooms, and the exterior of the church.

In closing, I would like to say, "thank you" to SBCV's executive director, Dr. Brian Autry, Brother Steve Bradshaw (regional missionary for the Central Region), and the entire SBCV staff. I am grateful for the investment you made in me as a pastor of the SBCV, for the invaluable training you offered, and for your partnership and friendship in the Gospel.

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Up the Creek Without a Pastor

Hunting Creek Baptist Church



“Finding your church’s next pastor is as serious as an organ transplant.”

That’s how William Vanderbloeman describes the pastor search process in his book, *Search: The Pastoral Search Committee Handbook*. Having assisted several hundred churches and having worked with over 10,000 pastoral candidates, he is widely regarded as an authority on the subject. With such a serious matter at hand, a church needs to seek God’s face and prepare with the proper tools.



In March 2018, Hunting Creek Baptist Church in Big Island, VA

found itself “up a creek” without a pastor. Since the average length of a church’s pastor search is between 12 and 24 months, it was beyond expectations when the church celebrated the installation of its new pastor just nine months later. The Lord led the search team members every step of the way and clearly directed them to the pastor He had for the congregation, Rev. Ken Bledsoe.

Perhaps your church is beginning the search for a pastor and would like to glean from another church that has recently walked this path. Here are some grains of wisdom from Hunting Creek’s pastor search process.

PASTOR SEARCH TEAM

Potential search team members need to understand the degree of commitment required to serve in this capacity. At Hunting Creek, Morgan Osbourn, a retired businessman, chaired the team.

He recalls, “This was the most time-consuming and spiritually intense thing I’ve gone through in several years. I was literally exhausted when we were finished.” Although it’s a rewarding process, the search team invests the most time and energy in the process.

TRAINING AND RESOURCES

To prepare for the task ahead, the team received training and consulted resources. Osbourn notes, “The connection with the [SBCV] regional missionary was very helpful—I didn’t even know this sort of help was available.”

He also relied heavily upon Vanderbloeman’s book, which was provided to each team member as a part of the SBCV Pastor Search Committee Training. Other vital tools included an SBCV-provided demographic study and LifeWay’s Compensation Study. According to Chairman Osbourn, each of these resources helped the team complete the tasks necessary to progress through the phases of the search process.

UNITY AND THE CHURCH SURVEY

What most surprised Osbourn about his experience leading the search team was the unanimity among the team members on the right candidate. “We were a pretty diverse group.... When that happened, it was pretty amazing.”

He attributes their agreement to an early step in the process—the church survey. A church survey provides the committee members a better understanding of the needs and expectations of individual church members. The committee compiled the survey results and compared the findings to biblical principles of pastoral leadership. This helped them outline important qualities to seek in potential candidates. Survey results help the search team members better represent the interests of the entire congregation.

Because of the survey, “We never got too out of bounds regarding the parameters we were looking for in a candidate,” Osbourn recalls.

INTERIM PASTOR

Another source of assistance for Hunting Creek was its interim pastor. Not every church chooses to utilize an interim, but Hunting Creek hired retired pastor, Dr. Philip Parker, to fill the pulpit and offer counsel to the search team.

An interim, explains Parker, “can help the committee review the prospective candidates and provide insightful information based upon his years of pastoral experience.”

COMMUNICATING WITH A CANDIDATE

When reflecting on what led him from New Jersey to Virginia, Pastor Bledsoe, recalls, “It certainly has a great deal to do with prayer, honesty, transparency, and what I believe was healthy advice and the right leadership on the search team.”

The search team had sent him a questionnaire to complete. “The early questionnaire was fairly thorough and, in some ways, intriguing,” says Bledsoe. “A great deal can be understood about a church by the questions they ask. The questionnaire significantly reflected areas of ministry that the church had been wrestling with over the last few years. It helped in the interview process to explore those areas.... The team was very upfront with me. That helped me be upfront with the team about my giftedness and calling.”

SELECTING A NEW PASTOR

With a search team ready to seek God’s face and armed with trustworthy resources, Hunting Creek Baptist Church found its next pastor. If your church is in need of a pastor, contact your SBCV regional missionary to get started. The SBC of Virginia stands ready to help.



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Planting Partners Network

In the spring/summer 2017 edition of the *Proclaimer*, we published a story about a group of SBC of Virginia pastors who came together regularly to pray for a church planting movement in their area of the state. They are now called the **Planting Partners Network**, with one network in Lynchburg and one in Wytheville.

Planting Partners is a network of church pastors/leaders committed to making disciples and planting churches. Our strategy is to identify and define by geography or people group our focus area and develop affinity partnerships in order to multiply our efforts.

Lynchburg Network

Brian Edwards, Hope Church, Danville, VA

"One of the most beautiful realities of Jesus' Commission to His disciples in Mark 16:15 was that it required the disciples to embrace cooperation and collaboration. That is why Jesus entrusted His Commission to disciple(s) and not one individual disciple. Had Jesus desired to reach a neighborhood, He could have said to John, 'go into that neighborhood and preach the Gospel,' and John would have likely been capable of fulfilling that mission. But Jesus' mission was bigger than a neighborhood, a city, a state, or a continent. His desire was and still is to see the Gospel made available to every man, woman, and child everywhere in the world. John R.W. Stott said, 'We must be global Christians with a global vision because our God is a global God.' That is the enormity of the Great Commission. Jesus' words of expectation that day were so challenging and the scope of His vision so expansive, the disciples were forced to think

beyond themselves as individuals and join hands to combine their efforts. If they had any hope of initiating the Gospel tsunami that Jesus desired, it would require them to work together. That was true in their day and that is still true in our day.

"Regardless of our personal resources, our unique visions, or our individual abilities, we cannot accomplish the Great Commission on our own, and that is one of the primary reasons I love the heart of the SBCV and our Planting Partners Network. Even the words, "Partners Network," assure me that I am not alone, but I am surrounded by fellow laborers who are equally committed to the increase of the Gospel. The word, "network," increases the intensity of my efforts because it dispels my feelings of isolation and promises me that there are other pastors and leaders with a passion for the advancement of the Gospel through the local church. Having Gospel partners gives me the audacity to believe that the Commission given to us by Jesus is being fulfilled.

"In our Planting Partners Network, I have witnessed a beautiful selflessness for the sake of fulfilling Jesus' Commission to His disciple(s). I have witnessed church leaders embracing, 'for Thine is the Kingdom' and refusing to be rendered ineffective by living 'for mine is the Kingdom.'

"This Easter, Hope Church will celebrate the effectiveness of the Planting Partners Network as we launch our first church plant since partnering with the SBCV. The encouraging conversations, shared experiences, wise council, and

invaluable training will all be realized when yet another voice is added to the multiplied thousands of voices fulfilling Jesus' command to 'preach the Gospel.' I have personally witnessed the impact of hand-in-hand, arm-in-arm ministry, and it is invaluable. Hope Church could never express how grateful we are for the passionate leadership and needed guidance of Randy Aldridge [SBCV church planting strategist] and the continuing support of our SBCV partners. Together, I believe we will continue the important work of the Great Commission just like Jesus' disciples did, through cooperation and collaboration."

Wytheville Network

Wendell Horton, Sky View Missionary Baptist Church, Fancy Gap, VA

"The Planting Partners Network has been a blessing to me in several ways. To hear everyone's perspective on church planting and what it takes to have a successful church plant has broadened my own perspective. The network has helped me realize that my way of church planting may not be wrong, but it is only one way of many ways to plant. Geographical location, personality of the planter, make-up of the planting team, and amount of support all are factors in how the church plant looks. I would be remiss if I did not mention how the prayer time with like-minded brothers has encouraged me and given me a glimpse of what heaven may be like."



If you happened to die today, do you know if you would GO TO HEAVEN?

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A Admit you're a sinner who needs to be saved.

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

B Believe that Jesus died for you and rose again.

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."

C 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.

Sent Resonate Church

Ten years ago, youth pastor Mike Cauthorne was sent out of **Winn's Baptist Church** in Glen Allen, VA to plant a new church in Mechanicsville. **CenterPoint Church** is now a thriving community of believers who continue to reach their neighborhood with the Gospel. With established elders, a discipleship emphasis, and an energetic worship service on Sunday morning, what's next?

In the fall of 2016, a casual conversation between Cauthorne and SBCV church planting strategist Josh Turner turned in to a conversation about church planting.

Cauthorne recalls, "I remember Josh asking me, 'When are you guys going to plant a church?'" This question made an impact. God had already been speaking to Cauthorne about church planting but in a different way. Instead of his church partnering with another planter, God was calling Cauthorne to plant again. He shared with CenterPoint's executive pastor and elder Pete Catlin and other elders, and they affirmed this was the direction God was leading. CenterPoint embraced the biblical example to send a team from their church to plant another church with Pastor Cauthorne. The next question was, "Where?"

Through God's provision, the Cauthornes had moved to North Chesterfield two years prior, and this became the target area for a new church. Turner and Cauthorne met with SBCV associate church planting strategist and

church planter Steve Gentry, who had planted only a short distance away, to discuss the need. Gentry was encouraging and supportive of a new church in this fast-growing area of Chesterfield County. North Chesterfield was one of the fastest growing residential and commercial areas in Richmond—a fitting place to plant a new church.

After CenterPoint prayerwalked the area, God opened a door that secured a meeting location for the new plant, **Resonate Church**. It would meet at Skipwith Academy in Westchester Commons. Westchester Commons is the retail component of the Watkins Centre development at state Route 288 and Midlothian Turnpike in Chesterfield County.ⁱ Watkins Centre was zoned in 2006 for 1.3 million square feet of retail space and 2.1 million square feet for offices on 640 acres.ⁱⁱ Just recently, construction began on a 1,500-unit apartment complex adjacent to Westchester Commons, where many new families will move and make this area their home.

On Sunday, December 2, 2018 at CenterPoint Church, the elders and members laid hands on the Cauthornes and five other families and commissioned them

Then after they had fasted, prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them off.

Acts 13:3, HCSB

to "the work that God had called them to." One of those families, Keith and Roxanne Scott, will be relocating to adjacent Powhatan County where Keith will serve as the assistant pastor of the new plant. On January 6, 2019, Resonate Church launched its first public worship service.

When is your church going to plant a church?

ⁱ Llovio, Louis. *Richmond Times Dispatch*. March 2, 2009.

ⁱⁱ Ibid.



Serve 757

On a Saturday in October 2018, Pastor Doug Echols and a group of volunteers from **Bethel Baptist Church** in Yorktown, VA, cleared debris from the yard of an elderly woman in York County. They were there as part of a community outreach ministry called Serve 757. Pastor Doug Echols created this opportunity for the church body to reach their area code (757) with the Gospel by having a greater presence in the community.

"Serve 757 is a way that we can take the Gospel outside of the four walls of our church," Echols explains.

On that Saturday morning, 103 volunteers gathered at the church to receive their assignments from Serve 757 coordinator Kay Phillips and prepare to go out to their ministry sites.

"Serve 757 gives people from all ages the opportunity to serve in many different ways," says Echols. "One of the highlights of the day was seeing people from age 4 to 74 serving side by side."

Volunteers served in a variety of ways:

- Making baby blankets for CareNet, an organization working to support and encourage women facing a crisis pregnancy situation. CareNet helps them see that there are alternatives to abortion and helps meet their needs.
- Serving at THRIVE, an organization that works with the needy in Hampton Roads. Teams assisted with several tasks, like sorting food and shoe donations.
- Doing ground maintenance at the Natasha House, which provides temporary housing to women and children in need.
- Writing encouraging notes for church members deployed with the military and for those in nursing homes or in the hospital.
- Fixing trays of cookies and goody bags to deliver to first responders.
- Visiting four nursing homes and encouraging residents through music and singing.
- Paying for customers' laundry at laundromats and offering to pray with them. Because of the unusual nature of this act of kindness, many doors were opened to engage in Gospel conversations.

Debbie Messick, who volunteered at the laundromat, recalls that day:

We encountered many thankful people at the laundromat who were amazed that we were there to greet them and pay for their laundry. We had the opportunity to pray with each person. I think there was only one who refused prayer.... My prayer is that those we talked to who do not yet have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ will come to know Him. We continue to pray for those we met, and we do plan to return. We feel this had a great impact on our community—to go outside the walls of our church and meet people where they are and share the love of Christ and the Word of God for His glory.

Serve 757 brought the church to the people instead of waiting for the people to come to the church. Bethel Baptist Church members were the visible representation of Jesus reaching out in a practical way to those who desperately need a Savior. "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life—a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45, HCSB).



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Marks of a Healthy New Church

“Hampton Roads Fellowship is a church seeking, by God's grace, to display the character of God, through the people of God, ultimately to the glory of God.”

That is what you'll hear as you worship with the folks at **Hampton Roads Fellowship (HRF)**. This young church was planted five years ago under the leadership of Pastor Miguel Davilla. The desire to plant a church where people can hear the Gospel and experience the Gospel's power has been a long-time burden for Davilla and many of the members of HRF.

The leaders have labored to ensure the church is characterized by Gospel faithfulness and Gospel reality. Regarding Gospel faithfulness, the focus has been on clear and accurate Gospel proclamation. Regarding Gospel reality, they have focused on experiencing the beauty of the Gospel in relationships.

SBCV church planters are taught that the foundational building blocks of vision, mission, and values are important in setting the direction and culture of a healthy, new church. When the direction and culture of the church are focused on God and His mission and are adhered to with intentionality, a healthy church can emerge. Such is the story of Hampton Roads Fellowship.

When asked about the hallmarks of health at HRF, associate pastor Tony Shepherd points first to the Gospel. “When both Gospel faithfulness and Gospel reality come together, you end up with Gospel culture. Gospel culture is a critical part of displaying the character of God. And that culture makes possible an environment in which the Gospel is experienced and seen as it begins to shape the way we relate to one another. A Gospel culture is a compelling picture to the world that God has come down to us in the person and work of Jesus, and that He reconciles guilty sinners to Himself and to one another.”

The leaders and members of HRF have intentionally made the Gospel that which shapes who they are. Shepherd continues, “The Gospel culture of HRF is summed up in three words: Gospel + safety + time. It is lots of good news for bad people + a non-accusing environment to confess sins together + unrushed time to grow in grace. The church should be the safest place for sinners who

need a Savior. It should be the safest place for weary people who need rest. It should be the most encouraging place for the downtrodden who need hope.”

Church membership is the second hallmark Pastor Shepherd identifies. He explains that guarding the Gospel culture established at the church requires the effort of all of the members. Every member takes an active role in overseeing each other's discipleship. Members are encouraged and assisted in forming discipling relationships, caring for one another, taking responsibility for each other, and in living their lives in community with others. Pastor Davilla often reminds the body, “The most important role in the church is not the elders or the deacons, but the members.”

Shepherd identifies the third hallmark of HRF as its leadership. At the church's recent fifth anniversary, the church family selected three additional elders to serve alongside Pastors Davilla and Shepherd. “These are men chosen by the members themselves—men who have already been doing the work of eldering. The congregation had a chance to affirm them as those they are willing to follow,” says Shepherd. “It's good to have men who have been serving the church well as members for years affirmed by the congregation that they have led by example and fit the qualifications for elders.”

In addition to these elders, HRF also has nine deacons who serve in a variety of places in the life of the church. They were also affirmed by way of congregational votes, just like the



elders. Shepherd reports, “These are people whom the congregation itself sees as fitting the requirements and loving the family well. The Lord is giving us all of the spiritual gifts of service we need to love [the body] well, honor the Lord, and do good to our neighbors.”

A fourth hallmark of health is that HRF is a sending church. They seek to obey the Great Commission by making disciples through proclaiming the Gospel to the ends of the earth. “We've had a few members resign recently to go to another church to serve the needs they see there,” Shepherd explains. “We have had others leave us to start new churches, and we are excited about the idea that God may use us to bless other churches as we continue to be blessed by others!”

“Hampton Roads Fellowship is driven by one main thing—to make God's character visible to a watching world,” says Shepherd. “We are learning so much and are eager to see the Lord continue to honor His name through us and other churches as well.”



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New Movers

At the same time, pray also for us that God may open a door to us for the message, to speak the mystery of the Messiah, for which I am in prison, so that I may reveal it as I am required to speak. (Colossians 4:3-4, HCSB)

It all begins with prayer, says Pastor Rich Shipe. “Colossians tells us that we are to pray not just for salvation but also for opportunities. And we’ve found that this is a prayer that God loves to answer!”

Harvest Bible Chapel Ashburn started core team meetings in mid-2017 and small groups in early 2018. Weekly worship services launched on April 15, 2018. To reach and connect with people, the leaders have always encouraged the congregation to connect with the people God has put around them—their neighbors, co-workers, etc. The people of Harvest have embraced their personal mission field and the belief that each person is part of God’s plan for sharing the Gospel with those they encounter.

“We’ve already seen some fruit from this approach.”

—Rich Shipe, Pastor, Harvest Bible Chapel, Ashburn, VA

One vital resource for Harvest has been the “new movers” list that the church receives each week from Bless Every Home. Loudoun County has consistently been one of the fastest growing counties in the country. Ashburn happens to be the center of most of Loudoun’s growth over the last 15 years, and there is no end in sight to the rapid expansion.

Shipe explains, “We send a postcard invitation to the ‘new movers’ list that basically says, ‘Welcome to the neighborhood! We’re new too!’ We’ve already seen some fruit from this approach—for example, one great new family who had just moved here from Seattle and was having trouble finding a church.”

Harvest members pray and look for open doors to build relationships and share the Gospel. “We continue to encourage this outreach,” says Pastor Shipe, “by sharing stories with one another of even the little ways that God opens doors.” Stories of answered prayers edify the entire body and glorify the Lord.

Are you and your church family praying for opportunities and open doors?

MORE INFO

For more information on how your church can use Bless Every Home as an outreach tool, read the Bless Every Home article in this edition (page 20) or visit sbcv.org/blesseveryhome.



PRAYER for Church Planters

For downloadable
prayer cards and more
information on these and
other church planters, go
to sbcv.org/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)



The Collison Family
Church Planter

PILLAR CHURCH OF WOODLAWN

9001 Richmond Hwy, Alexandria, Virginia

Email: brian@pillarwoodlawn.com

BIRTHDAYS:

Brian, February 24 / Kirsten, May 30

PRAY:

- ▶ for continued grace as we build, develop, and unify as a church body.
- ▶ that disciple-makers would continue to come, catch the vision, and join our efforts.
- ▶ that we would be sensitive to join God in His ministry.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- ▶ serve through canned food drives, hospital prayer ministry, etc., and love our neighbors through block parties, community dinners, appreciation events, etc.
- ▶ adopt a military neighborhood—for more information, email missions@pillarwoodlawn.com.



The Shannon Family
Church Planter

THE MISSION CHURCH

4210 Colley Ave, Norfolk, Virginia

Email: charles@missionchurchva.org

BIRTHDAYS:

Charles, February 26 / Jaqueline, September 17

PRAY:

- ▶ for team members to join us in establishing firm roots for the new church.
- ▶ for opportunities to serve the military families in Norfolk.
- ▶ for our outreach at Norfolk State University.
- ▶ for meaningful, mutually beneficial, and long-term partnerships with other local, regional, and statewide churches.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:

As we minister in the urban center of Norfolk, VA, we desire to partner with local churches for long-term relationships that are marked by prayer for The Mission Church, support for local community outreaches, and financial contributions.

NOT Your Average Week

The final week of Disaster Relief (DR) teams working in Dawson, GA after Hurricane Michael began like countless other weeks, with new teams getting to know each other, the church, and the community. Assessors were out coordinating jobs to be done, team leaders had the teams out beginning the work after safety briefs, and the Incident Command (IC) team was beginning to plan for closing down the site at the end of the week. But the week would be anything but average by Friday.

On Monday, a team was scheduled to do some work at a home and arrived to find that the homeowner was away. This is not unusual, as homeowners try to balance life, work, and recovery from a disaster. So the team arranged to work the following day. Things went well Tuesday. Trees were cut, debris was removed, and the Gospel was shared with the homeowner. While they were there, one of the team members noticed a young man walking down the road. The volunteer shut down his chainsaw and walked over to talk with the man, ultimately sharing the Gospel with him. This young man named Tobias said he had been wanting to talk with someone about God for a while. He ended up asking Jesus to be the Lord of his life! If the DR team had been able to do the work as planned on Monday, Tobias would still be walking the streets of Dawson today, lost, and headed for hell. Praise God for divine appointments!

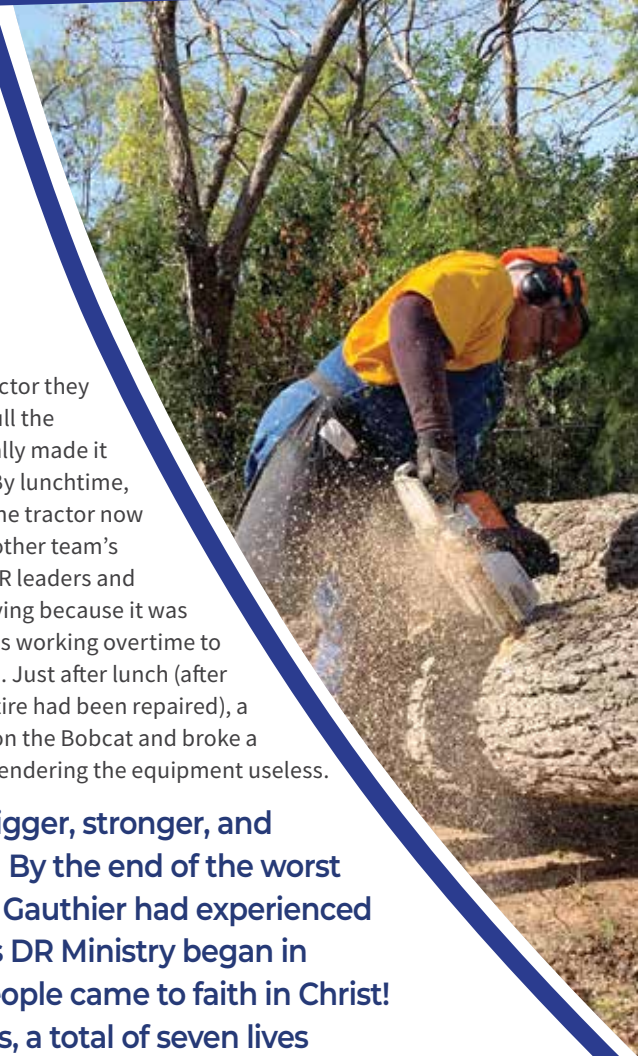
The week progressed as usual for the next couple of days. On Friday, the teams departed after breakfast and the daily safety brief. About 20 minutes later, SBCV Disaster Relief director Mark Gauthier received a phone call that the one of the trailers had a flat tire and the team would be delayed in starting work. A few minutes later, the other team called to report a flat tire too! When the teams got back on the road and headed to their job sites, one of the trucks went off the road and got stuck in the mud.

They used the tractor they were towing to pull the truck out and finally made it to the work site. By lunchtime, word came that the tractor now had a flat and another team's Bobcat did too! DR leaders and teams began praying because it was obvious Satan was working overtime to disrupt the teams. Just after lunch (after the Bobcat's flat tire had been repaired), a large branch fell on the Bobcat and broke a hydraulic block, rendering the equipment useless.

But God is bigger, stronger, and ever-faithful! By the end of the worst DR workday Gauthier had experienced since SBCV's DR Ministry began in 2002, five people came to faith in Christ! In seven days, a total of seven lives were changed for eternity because of the ministry of Disaster Relief.

All of this was possible only because of the faithful prayers, sacrificial giving, and incredible volunteers who are willing to go. Without the churches of the SBCV and your faithfulness, this vital ministry would not exist. In 2018, hundreds of volunteers from over 45 SBCV churches invested more than 31,000 hours of volunteer time bringing help, healing, and hope to those impacted by disaster. Thank you!

As the 2019 training season begins, prayerfully consider attending one of the nine scheduled trainings across the Commonwealth to become a trained volunteer.



VISIT SBCV.ORG/DR FOR MORE INFORMATION.

*Mark your calendars for these spring
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◆ MIDLOTHIAN

APRIL 27
◆ ROANOKE

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◆ CENTREVILLE

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DISASTER RELIEF
SBC of Virginia



SAME CITY, DIFFERENT CHURCHES, SAME MISSION

The scribes asked Jesus which was the first commandment of all. He answered them in Matthew 22:37–40, “Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (NKJV).

So, Jesus gives us the two most important commandments and sets them in priority:

1. Love God
2. Love Your Neighbor

Notice, the greatest and second greatest commandments are not inwardly focused. They have nothing to do with me or my needs or making myself happy or reaching my personal goals and aspirations; rather, the top two commandments of Jesus focus on my relationship with God and others.

Recent research reveals that we do not know our neighbors and cannot even call them by name, much less love them as ourselves as Jesus commands.

At our 2018 Annual Homecoming held at LibertyLive. Church in Hampton, VA, the SBC of Virginia introduced

Bless Every Home, a brand-new initiative designed to help churches and plants reach their communities with the Gospel. Through an interactive website, church members are given an opportunity to be lights to their neighbors. By utilizing the latest demographic information, a church member can choose to receive daily prayer reminders for five families by name—families who live near them. When the church member reports praying for those neighbors, the map on the website map show shading that there is prayer coverage of the area. The strategy does not stop with **prayer**, however; it resources “lights” (church members who register to participate in Bless Every Home) to ably **care** for their neighbors, **share** the Gospel with them, and **disciple** them for a life journey of faith.

Two churches in the city of Colonial Heights have enthusiastically embraced this initiative: **The Heights Baptist Church** and **Mount Pleasant Baptist Church**. Two different congregations in the same city and with the same mission have enthusiastically chosen Bless Every Home as their strategy to obey Jesus’ command.

These churches’ senior pastors (Randy Hahn at The Heights and Joey Anthony at Mount Pleasant) took some time to answer a few questions about their churches’ experiences with Bless Every Home.

Bless Every Home **RESOURCES**



PRAYER

Prayerwalking Guide

*B.L.E.S.S. Acronym for Prayer,
Care, and Share*



CARE

*What Is Servanthood
Evangelism and How Do I Begin?
Practical Applications of Servant
Evangelism*



SHARE

*3 Circles: Life
Conversation Guide
The Story*

www.whosyourone.com



DISCIPLE

*The Beginning: First Steps for
New Disciples Workbook
(5 Sessions)*

*Communities of Hope
(8-12 Weeks)*

These resources are available at sbcv.org/blesseveryhome



Randy Hahn, Senior Pastor,
The Heights Baptist Church,
Colonial Heights, VA



Joey Anthony, Senior
Pastor, Mount Pleasant
Baptist Church, Colonial
Heights, VA

What drew you to the Bless Every Home (BEH) initiative?

Hahn: We want to touch every bit of our area code (804) with the ministry, the Gospel, the goodness of God. When I saw BEH, it fit our vision to get to every part of 804, but also because this is something everyone in our church can do. Everyone can feel like they are a part of contributing to the vision of our church.

Anthony: We are constantly reminding our people at Mount Pleasant to “Meet people where they are and point them to Jesus.” We must be willing to do that in our own neighborhoods, and there is no better way to get started than to pray for our neighbors!

What are some of the advantages of this tool?

Hahn: Everyone can do it—everyone can tailor it to his/her own comfort level, skills, abilities, time, and availability. It makes it real to see the map where God has placed me and to be able to see the names of the people all around me. It makes me want to be a faithful steward of the street God has me on.

Anthony: Anyone and everyone can participate. Taking the first step of praying for your neighbor begins a process of actually thinking about your neighbors. In today’s culture, we tend to isolate ourselves and become very comfortable going into our homes, shutting the door, and living inside our “bubble.” This tool helps us to see our neighbors as people...people just like us...people who need Jesus too.

What is your strategy in launching the initiative?

Hahn: We actually introduced it through a two-message Christmas series. We let people sign up and run with it for a couple of months in a soft launch, and then we relaunched it at the end of February when I preached a vision message. We will help every person sign up and see they can do this.

Anthony: I introduced it during a sermon where we talked about Jesus being the Light and how we are to reflect that light in our words and actions. I will also be preaching a series from the Gospel of John called, “Only Jesus: Seeing the Savior in a Selfie World.” Instead of being so preoccupied with ourselves, we are to keep our eyes on Jesus and point others to Him.

We will be reminding our people to take the initiative to pray and then love on their neighbors, meet them where they are, and point them to Jesus. We also showed a video to introduce BEH then shared a step-by-step tutorial on social media.

How are you encouraging and enlisting people to be lights in their community?

Hahn: Being a light in the community is how every person fulfills the vision of our church, and now we are showing them BEH is a tool for every single one of us.

Anthony: We are using bulletin inserts, announcements, and social media to enlist people to participate.

Do you have any Bless Every Home stories?

Hahn: Our staff started utilizing BEH in October and adopted nearly 500 homes. In three weeks of our soft launch, our church adopted over 5,000 homes. People started using the tool right away.

Anthony: We have just started using the tool, but we already see evidence of this working through our fire prevention ministry with the local fire departments. Not only can we pray for the people in their homes, we can care for them by helping protect them. One life has already been saved by one of our installed detectors. Now we can take the next steps in telling them that salvation comes from Jesus.

While this is an evangelism strategy tool, how do you see it benefiting other ministries in the life of the church?

Hahn: It just starts to make everything real. Why we evangelize, why we disciple, the reputation of a church in the community—all of that becomes personal when you are trying to pray, care, share, and disciple on your street.

Anthony: As with all evangelistic tools, it enables the people of God to step out of their comfort zones, look beyond themselves, and point others to Jesus. Once folks begin to do that, hopefully a fresh wind will blow on the believer and it will affect their praying, serving, giving, and going...

God has strategically called these pastors to serve different churches in the same city to accomplish the same mission—to help their congregations love God and love their neighbors as themselves. The same FREE, interactive tool is being used by the Lord to prompt people to pray, care, share, and disciple their neighbors.

For more information about **Bless Every Home** or to learn how to sign up to **be a light** or register your congregation as a **partnering church**, visit sbcv.org/blesseveryhome.



Neighbors, Nations, Not Alone

Annual Homecoming
2018—SBC of Virginia

“I left the SBCV Homecoming more in love with Jesus and more committed to His mission than when I arrived.”

— **Rob Pochek**, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Charlottesville, VA



Pochek was one of the more than 1,500 people who attended Annual Homecoming for the Southern Baptist Convention of Virginia. The gathering was filled with worship, sermons, breakouts, and business meetings at LibertyLive.Church in Hampton, VA.



Southern Baptist Convention of Virginia 2019 officers are (from left) Secretary Tim Ma, Second Vice President Charles Maney, First Vice President Rob Pochek and President Eric Thomas.

Church messengers brought more than 3,900 backpacks with them for the Christmas Backpacks mission project. These backpacks provided impoverished children in Appalachia with school and hygiene supplies, gifts, and the Gospel message just in time for Christmas.

“We join in Gospel partnership not just for our mutual benefit but to reach our neighbors and the nations with the Good News of Jesus Christ,” reported Dr. Brian Autry, executive director of the SBC of Virginia. “We are not alone, so they are not alone.”

Praise and worship were led by LU Praise from Liberty University in Lynchburg and the worship team and choir of LibertyLive.Church in Hampton. Keynote speakers included David Platt, teaching pastor of McLean Bible Church in Vienna, VA and former president of the International Mission Board (IMB), who led Sunday night.





Messengers to the SBC of Virginia 2018 Annual Homecoming donated more than 3,900 backpacks in the Christmas Backpacks outreach for children in need in Appalachia. Former Southern Baptist Convention President Fred Luter, senior pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, spoke to the SBC of Virginia during the group's 2018 Annual Homecoming.



His message included a Spirit-led moment of the congregation praying and crying out to the Lord.

"If you want to live, you have to die to sin," Platt shared on Sunday evening. "We are prone to sin, but that's just it. We hate that. We hate that we are prone to sin. We don't want to sin. And when we do, we confess it before God and before others, and we repent, we turn from it. We don't toy with it. We don't treat sin. We run from it."

"Our Annual Homecoming is so vitally important," shared Pastor Eric Thomas of First Baptist Church in Norfolk. "Perhaps my favorite moment was listening to Pastor Billy Gwinn from Saltville talk about sharing the Gospel and seeing God do amazing things through his church. What an inspiration to see what God can do through His people simply sharing the Gospel!"

SBCV welcomed 28 new church affiliations at Annual Homecoming, which brought our total to 740 churches. The event also provided 19 ministry topic breakout sessions, which were well attended, and 43 exhibitors, which included a LifeWay store and a mission trip scholarship drawing.

The 2019 Annual Homecoming will be held at First Baptist Church in Roanoke, VA on November 10-12. Keynote speakers slated to take the stage include O.S. Hawkins, H.B. Charles, Vance Pitman, and Ken Whitten.

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Partnering With Compassion



Pastor Allen McFarland



On November 10, 2018, in conjunction with the SBC of Virginia's Annual Homecoming, over 300 volunteers from 19 churches converged on Portsmouth and Seaford, VA to serve together in various Gospel and compassion ministries. The event was the third of an annual Crossover event seeking to share the love of Christ through Gospel compassion in cities near Annual Homecoming sites.

"Bless Portsmouth was born out of a desire to see SBC of Virginia churches partner together with and for the city," says Brad Russell, SBCV's team leader for Mobilization. "Continuing partnerships have been created since 2017's Bless Petersburg event, and our prayer is that similar partnerships between churches, schools, and organizations will grow out of Bless Portsmouth, all for the purpose of the

Gospel being shared, disciples being made, and churches being planted."

The process began with leadership from six host churches from around Portsmouth gathering for prayer and to strategically reach the city, specifically working through schools and community outreach. In response to this new and growing partnership, Pastor Allen McFarland of **Calvary Evangelical Baptist Church** in Portsmouth shared, "It's a blessing because we are not alone."

Volunteers showed up on a blustery Saturday to serve through 10 projects around the city of Portsmouth. Thirty volunteers even came all the way from Martinsburg, WV. Ethan Kerns, the student and young adult pastor of **Westview Baptist Church** in Martinsburg, explained that

they came to Bless Portsmouth, “hoping that this [would foster] a desire within the congregation to do this more and to be mission focused.” Projects during Bless Portsmouth included providing a meal at a women’s shelter, evangelizing door to door, painting at schools, doing yardwork, delivering snacks, and praying with first responders.

A new initiative for 2018 was a large-scale meal-packing event held at **Seaford Baptist Church** (Seaford, VA) in partnership with Send Relief (NAMB) and Meals of Hope. Church and community members gathered for meal-packing shifts to measure, weigh, and pack nearly 70,000 meals to be used in SBC of Virginia Hunger Ministries, in Disaster Relief settings, and as far away as Puerto Rico.

“Events like this are more than events,” shared Michael Howard, senior pastor at Seaford. “They are truly Gospel partnerships. It’s encouraging to local churches to be able to work alongside other congregations and see that we are not alone in advancing God’s Kingdom.”



For the second year, churches partnered with Send Relief (NAMB) and the Red Cross to install smoke detectors in homes. Cal Myers, campus pastor of **DC Church’s West Portsmouth Campus**, led the Home Fire Prevention Campaign and was encouraged by the Gospel witness they were able to have. “Sometimes in doing activities like this, you feel stymied in talking about Christianity and your church. This was absolutely not the case with our event. We were able to meet a tangible need in Portsmouth and talk about fire safety. Additionally, we were able to share about our church and our Christian faith.”

Through this Gospel partnership, not only were people fed, schools supported, and homes protected, but three people came to faith in Jesus through the

witness of SBC of Virginia churches.

James Taylor Jr., senior pastor of **The Village Church** of Portsmouth, may have said it best: “When the SBCV comes together as a team...it helps to promote the Gospel.”

“Our hope,” said Russell, “is that we will see ‘Bless’ partnerships pop up all over the Commonwealth—that we won’t wait for the next event but that churches will see this SBC of Virginia partnership as an opportunity to bless our neighborhoods and cities and, ultimately, to see lives eternally changed.”



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mharding@sbcv.org

GOD'S REMEDY FOR VANITY

Godly repentance in Christendom seems to have all but become extinct. Have we become so numb to God's desires that we've wagered forgiveness for vanity? God's eternal call to holiness and integrity includes repentance—individually and churchwide. Could it be that there is a famine for hearing the Lord's call to repentance (Amos 8:11)? In fact, I strongly believe it is God's mercy, allowing a partial judgment while calling His church and the world to repentance (Acts 17:30-31). It seems that the church body's relationship with God has become vanity. We've insisted on incorporating worldly ways in our walk with Him, and it will never work! Repentance requires obedience. Obedience is our love for God (John 14:21). God gives us His Word on how we are to be in relationship with Him. It's simple—if we choose not to obey, then our consequences are set and activated at His command.

Unchanging Ways

These Kingdom principles couldn't be more evident than in 2 Kings 17. The back story is Israel's unchanging ways of disobedience and rebellion. They learned and followed the ways of the land (culture) even though God's instructions were clear, "... **do not learn the ways of the land.**" There is nothing more provocative to God than His children offering him a relationship that is worldly, compromised with rote presentation (Isaiah 29:13). God instructed Israel, as He does us, on how to worship Him... "*Yet the Lord warned Israel and Judah through all His prophets and every seer, saying, 'Turn from your evil ways and keep*

My commandments, My statutes according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you through My servants the prophets." Israel blatantly, if not arrogantly rebelled, "... *However, they did not listen, but stiffened their neck like their fathers...and they followed vanity and became vain...*" Sound familiar in God's Church today?

Our Pursuit of Him

In our pursuit of Him, we must heed His instructions and warnings. I say to the Church that a compromised Gospel leads to an improvised Gospel, and an improvised Gospel leads us to a syncretized relationship! In fact, the prophet Jeremiah says, "...if we run after emptiness, we will become empty..." and it will show in our personal and congregational relationship with God (Jeremiah 2:5). God's lovingkindness is true, pure, and everlasting, as well as His response to us when we choose not to repent. Our congregational worship (relationship) reflects the content of our personal worship. If our personal worship has become vanity, then so have our gatherings. Have we tolerated and grown comfortable with the "ways of the land?" God will not accept empty reverence, nor should He have to. The purchase price was too great for us to have an intimate relationship with the El Shaddai! Should we assume that God wasn't serious? That He sent His Son to set us free so that we might live however we choose? May it never be! God showed us His heart's intent by way of the cross. He was all in, even when we were still sinners (Romans 5:8).

Our Need to Repent

So, then, what should be our reasonable act of worship towards Him (Romans 12:1)? Biblically, our first "love step" is obedience. According to the Apostle Paul, God grants us repentance when we are genuinely sorry (2 Corinthians 7:9-10). Repentance is not something that God automates or even dictates. Repentance is God-given, conscious conviction creating in us a desire to repent. Once we as leaders and followers agree with God regarding the vanity of our worship (relationship), then not only will we repent (leadership) but we will lead others (congregations of God's people) to repent as well, thus glorifying God.

Finally, God tells us up front—if we choose to continue in a spirit of idolatrous worship, then there is a price to pay. In Israel's case, God physically sent them into exile. Though there is a level of protection in exile, it is not without hardships. Hardships will last until we repent. And while God never disowns us, He does discipline (Hebrews 12:6). Brothers, it is time...it is time...it is time! We must be bold enough to repent of the sin of compromise, conforming, and continuing our syncretistic relationship with God. We need to be refreshed and restored, but repentance comes first! It is time for us to lead our church community (and all Christians) to repent. Remember, revival always begins with repentance. I've heard much made of seeking God for revival, but shouldn't we be seeking Him for repentance?

Love you all!

What Every Church Can (and Should) Do

PARTNERING TO REACH THE NATIONS

What would it look like for EVERY SBC of Virginia church to play an equal role in reaching the nations with the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

Maybe this seems like a silly question. Budgets, attendance, and other factors seem to make it impossible for churches to play an equal role in the Great Commission. Of course, churches of differing sizes and financial realities cannot play equal roles in Gospel mission in every way. But it is possible for EVERY church to play an equal role in the most essential way.

Each church has a unique context.
EVERY CHURCH has the same Spirit.

Each church has a unique giftedness.
EVERY CHURCH has the same Commission.

Each church has a unique platform.
EVERY CHURCH has the same power.

Each church has a unique calling.
EVERY CHURCH has the same provision.

As Erik Raymond writes, “Prayer fuels mission—because the Mission is God’s mission. We are simply asking Him to do what we know He wants to do—and to do it through us.” One would be hard-pressed to find a place in Scripture or in Church history where a move of God’s Spirit to reach people with the Gospel was not preceded by and bathed in prayer. Therefore, it would be foolish to think that God is not still working and moving through and in response to the prayers of His people. Here are three questions to help SBC of Virginia churches diagnose whether they’re playing an equally vital role in God’s mission:

IS MY CHURCH PRAYING? This is the obvious starting point. Does action

precede prayer or vice versa? Are neighbors and nations placed before the congregation regularly with the belief that God wants to move in power in people’s lives?

HOW CAN MY CHURCH PRAY MORE? Or maybe the better question would be HOW CAN MORE OF MY CHURCH PRAY? What methods and times are being utilized to engage church members in praying for neighbors and the nations? What would it look like for weekly worship services to be times of God’s people praying passionately for God to move among the nations? What can be replaced by prayer in the church’s weekly gatherings? Because nothing can replace prayer.

HOW CAN OUR CHURCHES PRAY TOGETHER? Imagine SBC of Virginia churches united to pray for the same peoples and for the same powerful work of God. In 2019, SBC of Virginia is partnering to pray for and with the IMB’s work in Europe among NAME (North African and Middle Eastern) peoples. An initiative called The Changing Face of Europe is an opportunity for churches to commit to pray daily/weekly/monthly for the work of the Gospel among unreached peoples who have migrated to the European continent. As God has moved unreached peoples nearer to a Gospel witness, SBC of Virginia churches are asking God to move these peoples out of darkness into light. What will God do as His people partner to pray together?

“Prayer fuels mission—because the Mission is God’s mission.”

—Erik Raymond, Author and Preaching Pastor at Emmaus Bible Church in Omaha, NE

If the mission is God’s mission (and it is), then to move forward in mission without prayer leaves our churches in jeopardy of moving forward without God. As E.M. Bounds writes in *The Weapon of Prayer*, “One of the constitutional enforcements of the Gospel is prayer. Without prayer, the Gospel can neither be preached effectively, promulgated faithfully, experienced in the heart, nor be practiced in the life. And for the very simple reason that by leaving prayer out of the catalogue of religious duties, we leave God out, and His work cannot progress without Him.”

PRAY...PRAY MORE...MORE
PRAYING...PRAY TOGETHER.

Raymond, Erik. “Prayer and Mission Are Inextricably Linked.” March 17, 2015. <http://tinyurl.com/prayer-linked>

Bounds, E.M. *The Weapon of Prayer*.

GET
INVOLVED

To join in praying for these unreached peoples, sign up to receive weekly emails at sbcv.org/changingeurope and follow on social media at [instagram.com/changingeurope](https://www.instagram.com/changingeurope) and twitter.com/changingeurope.

Abundantly More!

*"Now to Him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us—to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."
~ Ephesians 3:20-21
(HCSB)*

Thank you, churches!

Christmas
Backpacks
2018

Are you and your church interested in blessing a child at Christmas?

If you answered yes, then start making plans now to join us this year. Go to sbcv.org/backpacks to find updates and more information. If you have any questions, contact Sarah DeJarnette at sdejarnette@sbcv.org.

Volunteers load backpacks onto the Send Relief truck at Annual Homecoming.



Children at a Kentucky school learn of God's love as they receive their backpacks.



We praise God that backpacks were donated abundantly more than what was asked or even imagined! The state goal was 3,000 backpacks, and we collected almost 4,000! Your generosity helped show the love of Christ to thousands of children this past Christmas. **Thank you!**



Children at Villa Heights Baptist Church in Roanoke pray for the children who will receive their backpacks.

Some backpacks were used as a means to encourage refugees living in Northern Virginia.





Empowered

EPHESIANS 3:20-21



Not Alone has become more than a slogan for the SBC of Virginia; it has become a thread that runs through the heart of all we do in strengthening, mobilizing, planting, and revitalizing churches to fulfill the Great Commission. The theme of *Not Alone* sometimes feels different, though, to churches in the Southwest Region of the Commonwealth. Many churches in rural settings feel alone with struggling communities, increasing hardships, and declining congregations. Many have believed help was too far away.

In September 2017, they shared their concerns as SBCV's executive director, Dr. Brian Autry, sat down with a group of pastors from across the Southwest Region. They asked him, "Why doesn't SBCV have conferences closer

than Roanoke?" and "Why is Homecoming always so far away?" Autry asked questions to find out what kind of conference they wanted, where they wanted it, and whom they wanted to speak. He, along with the SBCV, responded with SBCV's first Southwest Empowered Bible Conference. It was a powerful opportunity for churches to learn more about the Gospel partnership available through the SBC of Virginia, to put their hands on the pulse of the SBCV, and to feel connected to the rest of the state.

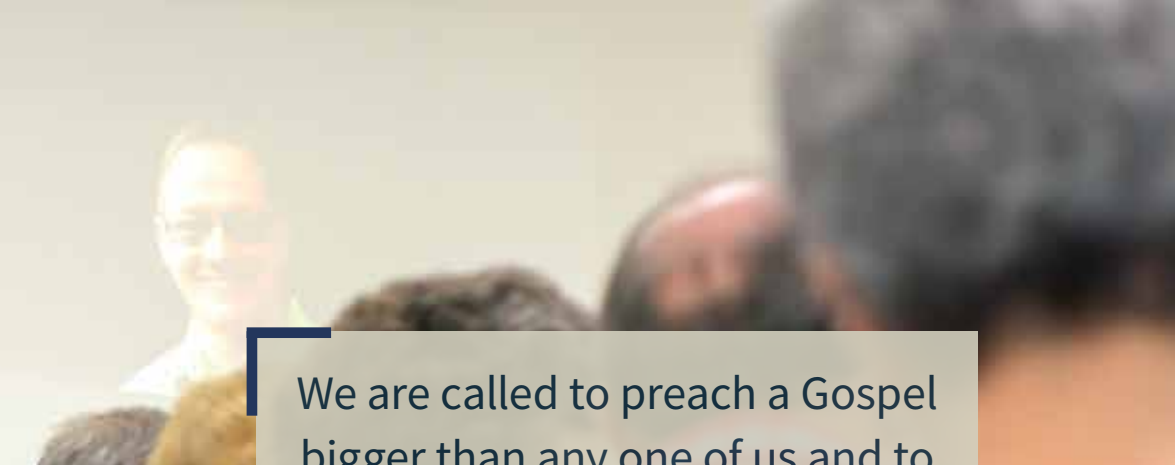
The Southwest Empowered Bible Conference was a one-day event held twice—two different days in two different locations. Day one was held at **Thomas Village Baptist Church** in Duffield, and day two was held at **Cedar Bluff Baptist Church** in Akins. Over the two days, the 24 churches

that came together for the conference were equipped and encouraged through the teaching of both Dr. Chuck Lawless and Rev. Jonathan Falwell. Lawless opened the Scriptures to teach on spiritual warfare, and Falwell unapologetically charged pastors to continue to preach Jesus and be His witnesses no matter the context or situation.

SBCV staff were present to connect with pastors and church members, answer questions, and share resources with the local churches. The conference showed attendees that they were not alone—whether because of their partnership with the SBCV, the teaching from God's Word, or the folks they could connect with right in their area.

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 10:3–5 concerning the battle of the mind: "For though we walk in the flesh,

THEY ARE NOT ALONE IN SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA



We are called to preach a Gospel bigger than any one of us and to reach a lost world that is bigger than we can reach on our own.

we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (NKJV).

As we try to live and minister in a way that brings honor and glory to the Lord, we have this experience in our flesh, and we often need to be reminded that we are prone to allow our feelings to dictate our actions and that we need to recognize the real enemy. The enemy is not people nor the world, but Satan, and he is the enemy of God, so the battle and weaponry are not ours. The battle is the Lord’s. The enemy uses loneliness to attack us because it makes us vulnerable. But we must remind ourselves—and the enemy—of the power of the Word of God and God’s presence with us. You are *Not Alone*. As His child, you have His Holy Spirit inside of you, and He promised that He would never leave

you alone. As the Church, we are *Not Alone*—we have been placed side by side to work together to complete the Great Commission proclaimed in Matthew 28:18–20. And we know, “A cord of three is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:12, NKJV).

You are *Not Alone* so that they are *Not Alone*. We are called to preach a Gospel bigger than any one of us and to reach a lost world that is bigger than we can reach on our own. Through the SBC, we are part of a sending network of churches, reaching the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Through the SBCV, we are also a part of a fellowship of more than 700 churches that are reaching out to say that you are *Not Alone*.

Once the 2018 Southwest Empowered Bible Conference ended, the SBC of Virginia began to look ahead and make plans for 2019. We hope that you and your church will plan to take part in the Empowered Bible Conference this year.



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POINTS
TO PONDER.**

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ARISE 2Read

arise2read.org

DID YOU KNOW?

2/3 of students who cannot read proficiently by the end of the 4th grade will likely end up in jail or on welfare.

In middle-income neighborhoods, the ratio of books per child is

13:1

In low-income families, the ratio is one age-appropriate book for every 300 children.

1:300

61% of low-income families have no books at all in their homes for their children.

CONSIDER...

As God's people indwelt the city of Babylon, He sent the following instruction through Jeremiah, "Seek the welfare of the city I have deported you to. Pray to the Lord on its behalf, for when it has prosperity, you will prosper." (Jeremiah 29:7, HCSB). The words spoken through Jeremiah, true then, are true today too. God desires His people to be lights upon a hill, illuminating Christ in their communities. One needed area of illumination is in the field of literacy. The statistics above reverberate the truth that the good of a community is intertwined with the welfare of all others. Helping a child succeed in reading positively changes the trajectory of the child, the family, and the community for good.

WHAT NOW?

Follow the instructions given in Jeremiah 29—pray for your city on its behalf. Ask God to use you, your friends, your family, small group, or church for the welfare of your community.

This June and July, SBCV churches are invited to participate in a summer project to collect new or gently used children's books (perhaps as a VBS mission project!). The collected books will be used to support a Gospel-centered literacy work in one of Virginia's neediest cities. To learn more on how to participate, go to sbcv.org/bookdrive.

Has God equipped you with a passion for literacy, books, and reading? Is there a stirring in your heart to use that aptitude in your community? Contact Sarah DeJarnette, SBCV Mobilization associate, at sdejarnette@sbcv.org to learn more about becoming a literacy advocate. Check out arise2read.org as a potential resource.

Back to the Bible

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



“I know of no other single practice in the Christian life more rewarding, practically speaking, than memorizing Scripture.... No other single exercise pays greater spiritual dividends! Your prayer life will be strengthened. Your witnessing will be sharper and much more effective. Your attitudes and outlook will begin to change. Your mind will become alert and observant. Your confidence and assurance will be enhanced. Your faith will be solidified.”

— **Chuck Swindoll**, *Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life*, pg. 61.

their lives,” says Teresa Russell, who leads the class. “If we accomplish that, we have met our goal, hopefully culminating in our children leading godly lives by glorifying the Lord in all they do.”

On Sunday nights at Beulah, 17 children (ages 4 to 11) gather around tables where each opens a profound treasure—the Holy Bible. They search with their own two hands to locate a particular book, story, passage, or verse and discover a message of love and truth from God. Older children read aloud while younger siblings learn, listen, and follow along. Within this room of young friends, the presence of the Lord is undeniable and something of eternal significance takes place—the learning of God’s Word, which will serve as a saving grace in the unknown ventures of their lives to come.

“How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word... I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.” (Psalm 119:9, 11, ESV)

Weekly sword drills and Bible calls are used to help practice retention and increase speed, both of which are challenged at associational and state convention competitions.

First Baptist Church of Norfolk has been holding Bible drills for over 20 years. Under the direction of coordinator Vicki Blett, each year concludes with a drill competition in late spring. This year, Beulah Baptist will be joining them.

“Through the use of games, songs, drills, and Bible stories, God’s Word has never been

more fun and more effective in building the church through the early discipleship of our youngest generation,” says Beulah volunteer Diane McGibbons.

Through Bible Drill, SBCV churches are helping solidify the faith of the next generation.

According to research presented in 2014 in *Christianity Today*, 7 out of 10 children who grow up in church will leave the church at age 18. Five will eventually return, but two will leave and never come back. What has promoted this sobering statistic? In a study of 2,000 young adults, only 29% said that faith is their most important influence on parenting. According to this study referenced in LifeWay Kids director Jana Magruder’s book, *Nothing Less*, church and the Bible ranked last in where young adults look for parenting advice.

What can we do to change this statistic? What can we do to ensure that the kids we teach each week don’t grow up to leave the church forever?

Attention! Present Bibles! Start!

If you grew up in church, you may remember these commands from Bible Drill, but perhaps you thought Bible Drill was a thing of the past. Not only are SBCV churches still participating, there has been an influx this year of those starting or restarting Bible Drill as part of their children’s discipleship program. **Beulah Baptist Church** in Lynchburg began one this year because its leadership felt the need to better equip their children to know, understand, memorize, and apply God’s Word.

“The most important goal is to teach the children how to use their Bibles as a standard given by God to guide



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A Fruitful Hispanic Conference

Pastor Fernando Mangieri and family

One of the most fruitful conferences with the SBC of Virginia has been the Annual Hispanic Conference. Catalytic church planter Fernando Mangieri has coordinated this ministry. Pastor Mangieri has recently moved to lead a large ministry organization in Dallas, TX. We interviewed Mangieri to ask him about the impact the SBC of Virginia Hispanic Conferences have had on Hispanic churches and on his ministry.

SBCV: Over the past four years, you have coordinated the SBCV Hispanic Conferences. What kind of impact has this had on developing leaders?

Mangieri: *Coordinating these conferences has allowed me to involve pastors, leaders, and future leaders so that, while walking together, they can see what it means to coordinate a conference, starting with prayer, planning, logistics, and all the details involved. When they became engaged in the process, there was growth in commitment, service, organization skills, and group management.*

SBCV: The SBCV Hispanic Conferences have increased the number of Hispanic churches that are now a part of the SBCV network of churches. How have the conferences accomplished this?

Mangieri: *In the last four years, the network of Hispanic churches has grown by Independent Baptist churches becoming a part and by SBCV churches that were a part (but not involved) getting involved. This was achieved through the topics, the workshops given, and the focus of each conference. The approach is always a response to the current needs of the churches. A very important part of this achievement—reaching new churches that join the SBCV—is all the work prior to the conferences, which consists in visiting, calling the pastors, going to the churches—basically making a bridge between the church and the SBCV.*



SBCV: What have you learned about yourself because of coordinating the conferences?

Mangieri: *I have learned the importance of asking for help from others. There are many waiting to be asked but they need to be asked. I have learned the importance of delegation and to trust others to get things done and to work as a team...and a lot of patience.*

SBCV: How important has it been for the SBC of Virginia to support and promote these conferences and other Spanish language training events?

Mangieri: *I think it has been enriching and a blessing on both sides. As Hispanic churches, we feel supported and we feel a part of the convention to see that they care and invest in our churches. And I believe that the convention is blessed by supporting and including the Hispanic churches as part of a single convention. We have seen the hand of God. During the first conference, we had 130 people from 11 different churches, and this year we had 275 attendees from 26 different churches.*

Pastor Mangieri and his family will be missed! We pray the Lord will continue to bless His Kingdom both through Mangieri's ministry and through future SBCV Hispanic Conferences.

Un Ministerio Muy Fructífero



Pastor Fernando Mangieri

Uno de los ministerios de plantación de iglesias más fructíferos y de mayor influencia en la SBC de Virginia fue liderado por Fernando Mangieri. Reciente el Pastor Mangieri se mudó a Dallas, Texas para liderar un gran ministerio. Entrevistamos a Mangieri para preguntarle acerca del impacto de las Conferencias Hispánicas de la SBC de Virginia en las iglesias Hispánicas y en su ministerio.

SBCV: En los últimos cuatro años has coordinado las Conferencias Hispánicas de SBCV. ¿Qué impacto ha tenido esto en ayudarte a desarrollar líderes?

Mangieri: Coordinar estas conferencias me ha permitido involucrar pastores, líderes y futuros líderes para que al caminar juntos ellos puedan ver lo que significa coordinar una conferencia, comenzar con oración, planificación, logística y todos los detalles que involucra. Cuando ellos se involucraron en el proceso hubo mayor compromiso, mayor servicio, más habilidades organizativas, y manejo del grupo.

SBCV: Las Conferencias Hispánicas de la SBCV han sido usadas para aumentar el número de iglesias hispanas que ahora forman parte de la red de iglesias de la SBC de VA. ¿Cómo han logrado esto las conferencias?

Mangieri: En los últimos cuatro años la red de iglesias hispanas ha crecido con la asistencia de iglesias que no eran parte de la SBCV y que luego se unieron a la convención, y también por iglesias que eran parte, pero no estaban involucradas y ahora están involucradas. Se logró esto a través de los temas que se trajeron, los talleres presentados, y el enfoque en cada conferencia. Se eligen los temas en base a la necesidad presente de

las iglesias. Una parte importante de este logro que iglesias se unieran a la SBCV fue el trabajo previo a las conferencias, visitando, llamando y yendo a las iglesias, básicamente construyendo un puente entre la iglesia y la SBCV.

SBCV: ¿Qué es lo que has aprendido de ti mismo al coordinar las conferencias?

Mangieri: Aprendí de la importancia de pedir ayuda a otros. Hay muchos que están esperando que se les tome en cuenta para participar. Aprendí la importancia de delegar, confiar en otros para que las cosas sucedan, a trabajar en equipo.... Y aprendí a tener mucha paciencia.

SBCV: ¿Cuán importante ha sido que SBCV apoye y promueva estas conferencias y eventos de entrenamiento en español?

Mangieri: Creo que ha sido una bendición y enriquecedor para ambas partes. Como iglesias hispanas nos sentimos apoyadas y nos sentimos parte de la Convención al ver que nos cuidan e invierten en nuestras iglesias. Creo que la Convención también es bendecida al incluir a las iglesias hispanas como parte de una convención unida. Hemos visto la mano de Dios en todo este tiempo; en nuestra primer conferencia vinieron 130 personas de 11 iglesias, y en la última conferencia tuvimos una asistencia de 275 personas de 26 iglesias diferentes.

Vamos a extrañar a Mangieri y su familia, pero oramos que el Señor continúe bendiciendo Su Reino, tanto a través de su ministerio como de futuras Conferencias Hispánicas.

Not This Way

AN INTERVIEW WITH LYSA TERKEURST

The SBC of Virginia Women's Ministry is partnering with **The Heights Baptist Church** in Colonial Heights, VA to host author and speaker Lysa TerKeurst March 22–23 (the event has already sold out!). We asked Lysa to share a few things regarding her latest book, *It's Not Supposed to Be This Way*. The book focuses on finding unexpected strength through painful journeys.

What unexpected strength has God given you through your journey?

At first, it was simply strength to get through each day. Now I can honestly say the Lord has given me unexpected strength to extend forgiveness and rebuild trust within a framework of truth and grace.

How did you know when it was time to pause in your ministry during this painful journey?

I knew the Lord was really leading me to take some time to heal, process, and pursue both biblical and professional counseling. This sabbatical was something my heart, soul, and family so desperately needed in the midst of that season of heartbreak.

How did you know when it was time to return to ministry?

My family and I had many wise pastors walking with us during that season. Through seeking the Lord's timing and consulting with these trusted friends, we knew when the time was right for me to end my sabbatical. But in every hard moment, I was always determined to continue to do ministry with an even deeper belief in the goodness of our God and a greater empathy for



the heartbreak that happens to us all in this broken world.

Was there a specific Scripture that resonated with you during this time?

*There were many days and nights where I clung to God's Word, so honestly, there were several Scriptures that helped me. But one of my favorite things to read about was how God used dust to bring forth something brand new—like when man was formed (Genesis 2:7) and the blind man was healed (John 9:5–6). I truly believe that from the dust of our shattered places, God can bring new life. I had a chance to unpack this more in *It's Not Supposed to Be This Way*!*

What encouraging words would you give women who might be dealing with a painful journey right now?

Never doubt we serve a God who still does miracles. In the middle of the work He did from the devastation in my marriage, nothing looked like I hoped and everything felt impossible. I prayed a million suggestions to God that never ever came to be. And the number of tears shed in the process about leaked the life out of me. But all the while when I saw nothing, God was doing something. And in His way and His timing, new life came. No matter how impossible that miracle you are praying for seems, please trust that only God knows the full story. He is working. He is hearing and shifting and intervening and convicting and stirring and doing what only He can do. God does some of His best work in the unseen.



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with Jennifer & Linda Barrick

May 4

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from the EDITOR

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Håfa Adai!

That's the greeting you hear everywhere in Guam. It's one I've heard repeatedly over the past couple of years when I've been there with SBC of Virginia mission teams. Håfa Adai is just a casual Chamorro "hello" that doesn't really have an exact English translation. It basically means, "What's up?" or "What's going on?"

I saw that greeting on a coffee mug while in Guam and bought it for my wife, Wendy. The orange and black colors aren't really her favorites but, despite my bad gift-buying decision, the mug has become one of her favorites because of how she interprets it. She likes to say, "Håfa Adai," as a morning encouragement to "Have a Day!"—to take this new day (the new, clean cup) and ask God to fill it with whatever He wants for her that day. She then accepts and embraces the filling of that cup from the Lord for a new day!

Isn't that a great way to start a new day—or a new year? It brings to mind a passage that I've been meditating on—Isaiah 43:18–19 (HCSB): "Do not remember the past events, pay no attention to things of old. Look, I am about to do something new; even now it is coming. Do you not see it? Indeed, I will make a way in the wilderness, rivers in the desert."

This edition of the *Proclaimer* highlights one of the core objectives of the SBC of Virginia: **Revitalization**. When we think of revitalization, that is a great promise to claim! We need to heed the call of Isaiah to stop looking behind but to anticipate a new thing from the Lord—a way in the wilderness and a river in the desert. The NLT says, "But forget all that [the past]—it is nothing compared to what I am going to do." What an amazing truth! No matter whether your past is something you'd rather forget or something you celebrate, it can't compare to what God is going to do now and in the future!

We have already seen this come true in multiple churches this past year, and we anticipate God's revitalizing work in more churches in 2019. Churches that had declined in attendance, baptisms, and offerings (among other benchmarks) are now growing and thriving. What was once a desert is now a river!

Please join us in prayer for this new ministry of revitalization. As we pray together, we will start looking for God to do something brand new in many churches. Then we can truly say every day, "Håfa Adai!"

Brandon

CONNECT

Women's Leadership Conference

A ministry retreat for women who are passionate
to grow in loving God and helping others grow.

with

Dr. Rhonda Kelley

Founder of Women's Academic Programs,
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Mary Margaret West

Girls Ministry Specialist, LifeWay

Dr. Brian Autry

Executive Director, SBC of Virginia

International
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August 2-3, 2019



Calendar

view the online calendar at sbcv.org/calendar

MARCH

- 22-23 Valley Student Conference, First BC, Roanoke
- 22-23 Women's Ministry Conference with Lysa TerKeurst, The Heights BC, Colonial Heights
- 30 Disaster Relief Training, Smith Memorial BC, Williamsburg
- 30 Equipada, Conferencia para mujeres, Iglesia Bautista Spotswood, Fredericksburg

APRIL

- 2 Prayer Summit Tour, Kempsville BC, Virginia Beach (Day)
- 2 Prayer Summit Tour, Parkway BC, Moseley (Night)
- 3 Prayer Summit Tour, North Main BC, Danville (Night)
- 3 Virginia March for Life, Richmond
- 4 Prayer Summit Tour, Fellowship Community Church, Salem (Day)
- 5-6 Equip Women's Conference, Mount Herman BC, Danville
- 5-6 Church Planter Network Weekender, Richmond
- 13 Disaster Relief Training, Swift Creek BC, Midlothian
- 18-20 Four Fields Training, Alexandria
- 21 **Easter**
- 27 Disaster Relief Training, North Roanoke BC, Roanoke

MAY

- 4 Disaster Relief Training, Centreville BC, Centreville
- 4 Deaf Leadership Roundtable, Staples Mill Road BC, Glen Allen
- 4 Equip Women's Conference, Rosedale BC, Abingdon
- 6-7 Executive Board
- 14-15 Engage 24, The Heights BC, Colonial Heights
- 16-18 PLANT A—Church Planting Team Training
- 18 Foster Care & Adoption Summit, Fellowship Community Church, Salem
- 18 No Estamos Solos (Hispanic Spring Leadership Conference), McLean Bible Church, Vienna
- 21 Intern Training, Ministry Support Center, Glen Allen
- 27 Memorial Day

JUNE

- 9-13 Southern Baptist Convention, Birmingham
- 10 Dessert Reception at SBC
- 17-21 Fusion Mission Camp, Manassas
- 20 Church Planter Interviews
- 22-29 South Hampton Roads Mission Project
- 24-28 Fuge Camp, Liberty University, Lynchburg
- 29-7/3 Fuge Camp, Liberty University, Lynchburg

JULY

- 4 **Independence Day**
- 11-14 Family Fusion, Chincoteague Island
- 12-13 PLANT B—Church Planting Team Training
- 15-19 Fuge Camp, Liberty University, Lynchburg
- 15-19 Frame Camp, Hedgesville, WV

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