

Proclaimer

SBCV • Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia • www.sbcv.org

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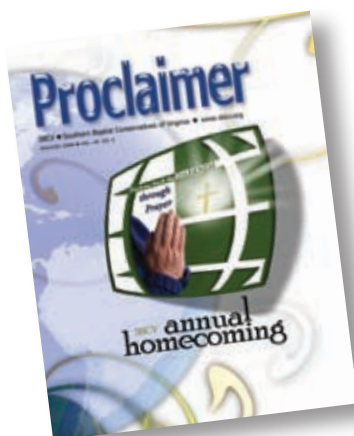


SBCV annual
homecoming



SBC OF VIRGINIA

The SBCV is a fellowship of Southern Baptist Convention churches cooperating to assist local congregations in their task of fulfilling the Great Commission as commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ.



NOV • DEC 2008, Vol. 10, No. 6

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



News media recently aired a story about a luxurious yacht first launched in 1981. It was designed and built for Saddam Hussein. It has plush suites, golden bathroom fixtures, and Jacuzzis. It is valued at more than \$150,000,000. It has a full-time staff of more than thirty on duty 24/7.

Can you guess how many guests have set sail aboard this floating palace during her twenty-seven years? Zero. You read it correctly. Zero. All of that potential squandered, unused.

Yet there is something still more tragic — the underutilized resource of prayer. James captured this tragedy in a phrase: “You have not because you ask not.” The shame is not unanswered prayer; it is unoffered prayer. I would have to be first in line to confess my shortcomings in this arena.

If we are to push back the darkness, prayer is our battering ram. Paul revealed repeatedly his conviction that prayer and evangelistic progress are inextricably linked. Note these Scriptures:

“I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.” Romans 15:30

“Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.” Ephesians 6:19

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.” Colossians 4:2-4

In this edition of the **Proclaimer**, you will hear the stories of how God is moving to dispel the darkness as His people pray. May it serve to motivate us all to get on board and discover the riches of His provisions for His work!



Jeff Ginn



Dr. Ginn's Itinerary

NOV 2

Bermuda Baptist Church, Chester

NOV 9

Fishersville Baptist Church, Fishersville

NOV 16

Grove Avenue Baptist Church, Richmond

NOV 23

Iglesia Bautista El Refugio, Richmond

DEC 7

Worsham Baptist Church, Farmville

DEC 14

Rileyville Baptist Church, Rileyville

Taste See

Psalm 34:8



2009 SWAT Weekend Connection

February 6-7th

The Omni Hotel | Charlottesville

Guest Speaker: Kay DeKalb Smith



For more info and to register: www.sbcv.org/swat

Calendar

2008 dates to remember

SBCV Calendar

november - december

10-11 **SBCV Annual Meeting** — First Baptist Church, Roanoke

30-12/7 **Week of Prayer for International Missions**

january

1 **New Year's Day**

28-30 **Church Central Training**

february

6-7 **SWAT Weekend Connection** — The Omni Hotel, Charlottesville

19 **Church Planting Network (CPN)** — statewide

20-21 **Disaster Relief Training**

27-28 **Student Pastor Retreat** — Great Wolf Lodge, Williamsburg

27-28 **Disaster Relief Training**

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MORE THAN REST

In the rural area of southwest Virginia, Lime Hill Baptist Church embraced an opportunity to minister to bikers from across the nation. One Sunday in June, the church moved its morning service outside for hands-on ministry. With a "million-dollar" tract, food, drinks, and first aid, many bikers received more than rest; they heard what it means to have a relationship with Jesus.

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ASK ME IF I CARE

Linda Austin, Appalachian Trail director for First Baptist Church of Damascus, discovered what God can do with a Dollar General t-shirt.

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PRAYER IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Pastor Alan McCullough and two mission teams from Rileyville Baptist Church learned first-hand about the power of prayer. They saw the hand of God push open the door to Coghlan, a neighborhood in Buenos Aires, Argentina — marked as difficult to reach, requiring long-term, consistent contact. Rileyville Baptist and many others are now convinced prayer makes a difference.

MISSION opportunities 09

Virginia Soldiers R & R Kits
January::February 28

Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
February::March 8

Evangelism Packets
February::March 31

Witnessing Bracelets
March::April 30

Southern Cross Bibles
April::May 31

DC Unwed Mothers/Babies Packs
June::July 31

State Missions Offering
August::September 30

Christian Libraries for Overseas
October::November 30

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
November::December 6

www.sbcv.org/projects

Yellow Shirts

A SIGN OF HOPE

by Mark Gauthier, Strategic Missionary Associate

As Don Cokes, Church Enrichment Missionary for the SBC of Virginia Southeast Area, and I surveyed the destruction around Suffolk, left by an F3 tornado, we spotted them off in the distance — yellow shirts. For many, in the wake of disaster, these shirts have come to represent hope, healing, and physical help. On this particular day, the “shirts” were Carl and Bonnie Perry of Enon Baptist Church in Chester. As we approached the home they were visiting, we noticed that Carl and Bonnie were in prayer with the homeowner, Bob.

Bonnie later informed us that the team had spent the previous day cutting, clearing, and moving tree branches from Bob’s home. Various team members had shared with him their testimonies and God’s love. When the team arrived this particular morning, Bob told them he did not need their services. He encouraged them to go help the others in his community, but asked them to return for lunch later that day.

As we walked around the neighborhood, damage from the destructive winds left us speechless. Over the roar of chainsaws and generators, Bonnie called out for us to come meet Bob; he had some exciting news to share. With tears on his cheeks, Bob told us he had just prayed, asking Jesus to come into his life and heart. Praise God! As my heart jumped for joy, I was reminded that this is what Disaster Relief Ministry is all about—leading others to faith in Christ. It is not about the meals we prepare, the trees we cut down, or the homes we repair; those are merely the doors He opens through which we go and minister in His name.

By Friday, the “yellow shirts” were beginning to pack up and return

home. The Perrys had determined they would stay on so they could accompany Bob to church on Sunday, introducing him as a new brother in Christ.

Disaster Relief Ministry and the yellow shirts represent far more than just the meeting of physical needs.

The workers are trained to share a cup of water in the name of Jesus. They pray, sweat, and at times, weep together as they see God at work in and through their lives.

Bob is a changed man, looking at life through new eyes. Bonnie and Carl were also changed when they saw God use them to touch a life for eternity. Please remember all of our Disaster Relief workers as they minister in the name of Jesus, both physically and spiritually.



*The yellow shirts
represent far
more than just
the meeting of
physical needs.*



Block Party Trailer **AN ANSWER TO PRAYER**

by Don Cockes, Church Enrichment Missionary, Southeastern Area

For Kenny D'Auria, the worship leader at Restoration Church Phoebe Baptist in Hampton, it all started as a vivid dream. He dreamed about an enormous party to reach the community, and the details seemed so real. There were activities, live music, and neighborhood residents milling around and having fun. Church members were sharing the Gospel with those who had come. When Kenny awoke, he recognized the dream as a divinely inspired method to "restore" Hampton by pointing its citizens to Jesus. When he shared his dream with the staff and church leaders, they embraced the idea as God-sent

These trailers are available to SBCV churches at the minimal cost of restocking the supplies. Since block party trailers were a newly available resource, Kenny was unaware of the means to fulfill the church's dream. Needless to say, Kenny was caught off-guard when

SBCV block party intern, Dalton Stoltz



RESOURCE:

The SBCV has block party trailers available. Contact your area missionary to reserve a trailer, and let us help you impact your community for Christ.



and began to investigate its feasibility. They talked to community leaders, who began to share the excitement that was already building within the church family.

Their excitement, however, was soon met with the reality of how much such an event would cost. There were costs involved with providing tables, chairs, staging, audio resources, carnival equipment, and much more. The anticipated cost was beyond the church's ability to provide. The dream seemed to be at a dead end. Kenny describes the situation by saying, "We had a 'no' on the one hand, but a 'go' on the other hand." The staff members prayed fervently over the situation. Little did Restoration Church know that the Lord was already at work on its behalf.

The SBCV has a number of block party trailers deployed throughout the state. Each trailer contains a moon bounce, a snow cone machine, a popcorn machine, carnival games, tables, chairs, and audio equipment.

SBCV block party intern, Dalton Stoltz, called him to offer the very things the church leaders thought were inaccessible just the day before. Kenny began to weep with joy. The Lord had fulfilled a dream that seemed impossible. He recalls, "God was just proving Himself, once again, to be faithful. He had sent me a dream of making a difference and wanted me to trust Him to work out the details. Then He placed a barrier in the way so that I would trust

Him...He blew me away when He removed all obstacles, when I merely trusted Him."

Partnering with other neighborhood churches, the SBCV, and several community organizations, Restoration Church held its first community block party on September 13. The block party included local bands, a flag football tournament, and a ministry to local law enforcement and public safety officials. For Kenny D'Auria, it all started with a dream bathed in prayer, which God made a reality.



Prayer Evangelism Conference
Putting feet to your prayers

March 20-21, 2009

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- » Fredericksburg
- » Roanoke
- » Wytheville

Interested? Call 888.234.7716 or visit
www.sbcv.org/evangelismconference





More Than Rest

by Ron Bradshaw, Pastor, Lime Hill Baptist Church, Bristol

LIME HILL BAPTIST CHURCH



In April 2008, Bike Virginia approached Pastor Ron Bradshaw of Lime Hill Baptist Church in Bristol to see if the church would be willing to serve as a rest stop for 2,000 bicyclists in June. Here is Pastor Bradshaw's testimony of how the Lord used that open door for His glory.

"It took the leadership of Lime Hill Baptist Church only minutes to realize what an opportunity this was for our rural church in southwest Virginia. The planning committee began preparing to maximize this opportunity for ministry. We were told by Bike Virginia that not all bikers would stop and that when they did, it would be for food and water only and that they would move on quickly. Our rest stop at Lime Hill was scheduled for 7:30-11:00 AM one Sunday in June. We moved our morning service outside, and I instructed my church that our service would be hands-on as we ministered to the bikers.

"We had a total of 53 volunteers who served and ministered to over 1,800 cyclists. Our grounds were covered with bikes and people. We

became know as the 'Million-Dollar Church' because we bought 2,000 tracts that were designed and shaped to look like a million-dollar bill. The back of each bill contained a presentation of the Gospel and a million-dollar question about receiving Christ for the forgiveness of sins. Most were very receptive of the tracts. Dale Helton and Willard Leonard stepped up and handed out tracts while talking to the folks. We set up a tent area with live gospel music, and the 10-minute stays we expected turned into 30-45 minutes, with each of us having an opportunity to talk to the bikers and share the love of Christ.

"Priscilla Barker led our efforts in making 750 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, which we quartered and served. The making of the sandwiches started at 4:00 AM. Many joined in and baked 1,500 muffins. We served over 250 gallons of Gatorade, 1,000 cookies, along with sliced fruit and pretzels. Jerry Rector directed the flow of traffic and greeted everyone. Jerry's wife, Barbara, a registered nurse, directed our first aid tent, and Margaret Love led a group to hand out stickers of Lime Hill Baptist Church.

"Bike Virginia reported that 42 states and several countries were represented in the group of bikers. I was able to share with a man from Israel and another from Canada. One man from California remarked about all the churches the bikers had passed on the trail rides. He asked what type of church we were, and I informed him we were a Southern Baptist church. He replied that there are not many Baptist churches where he lives. I had the opportunity not only to share with him about Southern Baptists but also about his relationship with Christ. He said he had a relationship with Christ but did not attend church. I let him know that I would be praying for him.

"We ended the day with many testimonies and memories. Anthony Mangrum, one of our singers, played his keyboard and sang, and some of the bikers joined in with the old hymns and even made some requests. The bikers seemed to enjoy themselves, and I pray God used us to share a smile, a testimony, and a witness for Christ, all for the glory of God on that Sunday in June 2008. We realized that you never know how or when God will give you the opportunity to reach thousands of people for Christ."



God Is Still Active

by Don Matthews, Church Enrichment Missionary, Central-East Area

to speak. Dr. Heppner describes, “[Dr. Becton] was talking, articulate—clear as a bell. Dr. Becton spoke with intensity and a furrowed brow, though his eyes never opened. It was then [that] I realized it was not a man—rather, this was the Holy Spirit [speaking]. The room became very, very quiet, and we listened like sponges, so intently.”

While under anesthesia, Pastor Becton quoted Jeremiah 29:11, “I know the plans that I have for you...” and Ephesians 3:20-21, “Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask...” Dr.

Sundin shares, “The Holy Spirit was speaking directly to me. He comforted me, [essentially] saying, ‘God has such great plans for you, Dr. Sundin.’ The Spirit moved through that operating room, and no one could speak. When the operation was over, I went to the bathroom and wept. [They] were tears of joy!” The Lord had given Dr. Sundin the encouragement and confirmation that he so desperately needed.

Just a few moments later, Pastor Becton uttered, “someone here feels used up and worthless...it is not true.” With those words, the Lord spoke straight to the heart of Carol Miller, the surgical nurse. He summed up the feelings she had just expressed to her team the week before, and He refuted the lies that Satan had been feeding her. Carol recalls, “Dr. Becton’s lips were moving, but *God* was telling me He had a purpose for me—[essentially] telling me, ‘Carol, let me have it—all your hurt and pain—just give it up,’ and that’s what I did.” Carol explains that when the Devil knows he can’t have a person’s soul, he goes after his/her mind. That is exactly what he had done to her, convincing her she was no longer of value. The Lord, however, wanted Carol to know that her life had value.

“I do not remember what was said,

but what I do remember [is] that everything seemed perfectly clear to me,” Pastor Becton recalls. The Lord even spoke that day to the heart of Pastor Becton himself with the words, “Time is short, and many must come.” That short sentence has changed Pastor Becton’s perspective on ministry. “This has increased my urgency to be personally involved and to lead my church to be urgently involved in seeing people come to know Christ,” says Pastor Becton. As for the way in which his life has been impacted the most by this experience, Pastor Becton explains, “I have a deep desire for holiness and an understanding that God is God and He is still active.”

It wasn’t until after the surgery that Pastor Becton learned that a hospital staff member’s husband had recently been walking the halls, praying for the spiritual condition of the doctors and nurses. What a testimony to all believers never to underestimate the power of prayer.

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”
James 5:16b

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.”
Ephesians 6:18

It all started with a man of prayer. An administrative assistant’s husband walked through the halls of the medical offices where his wife worked, praying for the spiritual well-being of the doctors and nurses. He could have never expected what would happen next or how specifically his prayers would be answered in the most unusual way.

When Pastor Mark Becton of Grove Avenue Baptist Church in Richmond went in for routine surgery in August 2006, he had no idea how the Lord would use him that day or how a man of faith had been praying for the hospital’s staff. He didn’t know the surgical team or their personal struggles. He wasn’t aware of the encouragement they needed, but the Lord knew. The surgeon, Dr. Burton Sundin, had recently been questioning God’s plan for his life, and the surgical nurse, Carol Miller, had just told her team the week before that she felt used up and worthless to God. They deeply needed personal encouragement, and neither expected it to come from a fully anesthetized patient.

Dr. Gail Heppner, the anesthesiologist on duty that day, recalls the moment she realized something spectacular was taking place. Given her expertise, she knew Pastor Becton was under anesthesia, yet he began



ASK ME IF I CARE

by Linda Austin, Appalachian Trail (AT)
Director for First Baptist Church of Damascus



It was Thursday during Trail Days — the day all hikers look forward to with great anticipation! It was the day of the FREE HOMECOOKED MEAL! I found myself wearing some of the tomato sauce meant for the homemade chili pot — a substitutionary delicacy offered to the poor souls who missed the home-cooked



Appalachian Trail hikers start to line up for their hot meal.

meal tickets and had to settle for grilled hot dogs in the back yard. Forgetting the change of clothes that I usually throw in the car during Trail Days for those just-in-case-moments, I headed down the street to the local Dollar General store to find a replacement for my soiled t-shirt. Finding no smalls and only two mediums, I had a choice: either serve the hikers for the rest of the

day in a shirt sporting a skull and crossbones or one that bore the words, “ASK ME IF I CARE.” I wasn’t thrilled with my choices but couldn’t continue to wear what I had on (lest I acquire another trail name!). I made my purchase. Once back at the church, I made the change and began to witness God using my \$6 t-shirt for His good purpose.

At 6:00 PM, the blessing was offered and the back door of First Baptist Church of Damascus was opened. The first 100 of the 300 invited hikers pressed their way along the tiled path to the fellowship hall. The first hiker who came through looked at me and asked, “Do you care?”

“Of course I care!” I replied emphatically.

With that loud proclamation, I delivered a hug to a gnarly young man who hadn’t had a bath in many days. He laughed with delight. Each time I saw him after that, he would say to whomever was close by, “Ask her if she cares!” Each response to that question was delivered with the same hug. Each hug brought laughter from all of us and the assurance that the hikers were welcome



Hikers enjoy a home-cooked meal.

and that we did indeed care. It was nearly midnight by the time I exchanged that shirt for my pajamas. I cannot tell you how many times in those few hours I was asked that question or how many hugs I delivered.

As that day came to an end, I found myself absolutely overwhelmed by God’s goodness. Who would have thought that He would use a Dollar General t-shirt to deliver such a healthy dose of His love or to bless me in ways that I cannot explain? Through the Appalachian Trail (AT) hiker ministry, I have seen God work in such unexpected ways! Now I can even add tomato sauce stains to that list! What an awesome God we serve! He pours Himself out on us again and again, especially during Trail Days when He uses smelly, hungry AT hikers to deliver those blessings.

Ask me if I care...



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A Story of the Heart

by Tony Inmon, Church Planting Strategist,
Midwestern and Southwestern Areas



The doctor called it a “textbook” pregnancy — that is, until it came time to deliver. After just a few hours of labor, Jeremy and Tonya Minor’s new daughter, Elle, had arrived, but their joy quickly faded. Tonya recounts, “There was nothing that could have prepared me for the trial our family was about to face.” The doctor and nurses took Elle away immediately after recognizing that the upper half of her body was purple and her lips were blue. The Minors soon learned that Elle had a heart murmur and would need to be transferred to UVA. The delivery room grew silent as the shock settled in. The doctor reviewed the risks of transfer with Jeremy and Tonya and took pictures of Elle just in case she didn’t make it. Tonya describes, “This was the point that, as a mother, my throat closed and my head started spinning.” A few hours later, they were driven to UVA and were told upon arrival that Elle had a heart defect and would need major surgery to repair it. They could expect her to be in the hospital for at least a month and a half.

The Minors had been planning to move from North Carolina to Bedford, Virginia to join the church planting team for Bedrock Community Church when they learned they would soon be blessed with a third child. For the next nine months, Tonya had a perfectly normal pregnancy, and now this. Helpless and in utter dependence on the Father, Jeremy and Tonya called upon their friends, family, and fellow believers to pray. Someone even started a blog and a Facebook page for people to receive updates and to send encouraging words. Soon, believers from all over the country were praying. Even strangers who read the blog pitched in to help. An apartment in the Charlottesville area was provided, cleaned, and stocked with food for the family during this uncertain time. If she survived the surgery, Elle would face a long period of recovery, and the family would have a place to stay nearby.

Holding their little girl close in their arms just hours before her surgery, the Minors were on an emotional roller coaster. Anxiously, they lifted up prayers, and the Lord filled them with an unexplainable peace that He was in control, no matter the outcome. Tonya explains, “There is something supremely supernatural about the prayers of God’s chosen ones.” For eight hours, they were comforted by God while Elle lay on the table in surgery. When the doctors finally emerged from the operating room, they declared that the surgery went perfectly and that Elle would be fine.

As Elle healed in the NICU, it became obvious to all that her recovery could not be going any smoother. Instead of spending a month and a half in recovery, she was out of the hospital after



from the President

A. Timothy Hight, Ph.D.
Main Street Baptist Church, Christiansburg

We are preparing to celebrate another great year of missions and ministry in the SBCV.

I am so grateful to be a part of a state convention that constantly proclaims with the Psalmist (Psalm 66:5), “Come and see what God has done, how awesome His works in man’s behalf!” God has proven Himself abundantly faithful on our behalf, and for this, He should receive our most joyous praise and thanksgiving.

As we are privileged to be gathered together for our 2008 Annual Homecoming, our attention is focused on “Pushing Back the Darkness through Prayer.” Not one of us would deny the reality of spiritual darkness that pervades our culture. While our mission efforts make headway on several fronts, we seem to be losing the larger war. It is almost as though Christ agonizes over our dark world and comes and finds us sleeping instead of praying (Matthew 26:37ff).

The Scriptures, as well as years of human history, teach us that God can and will do great things without preaching, without churches, and without great programs and personalities; but God will do no great work of spiritual awakening and revival without prayer. It is the incontrovertible foundation of everything spiritual and eternal. We have long been exhorted that we must not consider prayer a trivial luxury, but rather a critical necessity.

May God give us in this historic meeting of our convention the heart to be found crying out to God with the spirit of the great prophet: “Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before you! As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before you! For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you” (Isaiah 64:1-3).

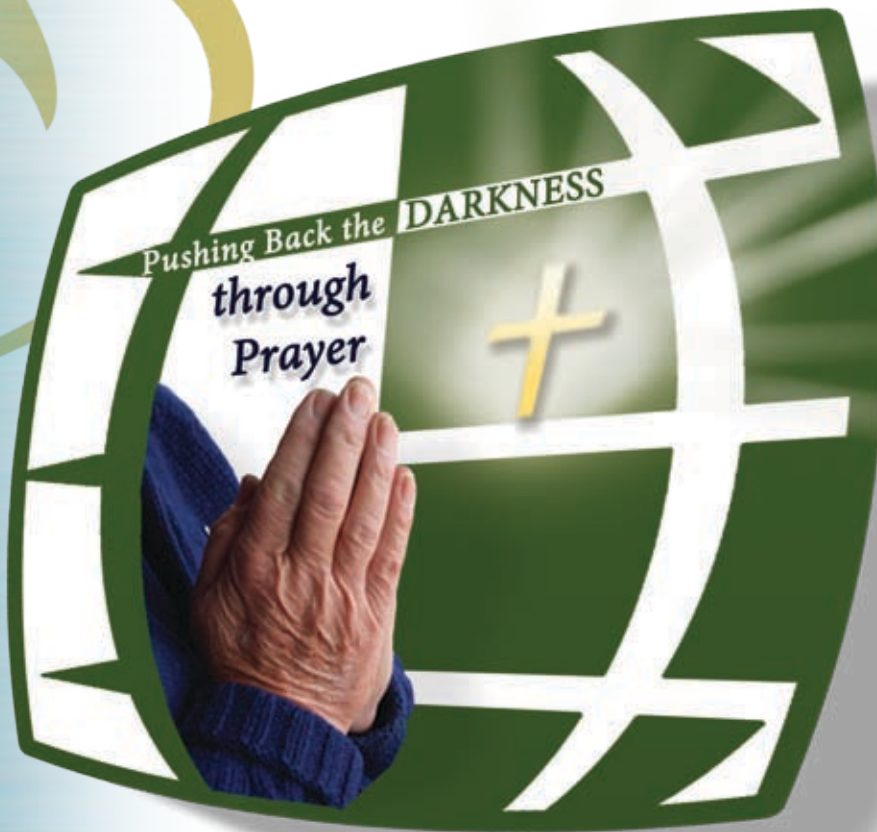
It may well be true that what we are as a convention before God in prayer; that is what we shall be before men — that much and no more.



only two weeks. Only God knows why Elle had such a tough start to life, facing serious surgery just days after her birth. Tonya says now that as she rocks her little girl to sleep and looks at the scar on her chest, she recalls what she went through and thinks of Jesus’ scars and what He endured for us. One truth we know for certain: a caring community shows its heart when believers lift up our most precious needs in prayer and declare our total dependence on the Lord. That truth is the heart of this story.

SBCV annual homecoming

The Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia



PRAY

NOV 10-11 '08

First B

SPEAKERS



Junior Hill



Dave Earley



John Avant



Jeff Ginn



Tim Hight

Baptist Roanoke

SCHEDULE

MONDAY, NOV. 10

11:00 AM, Registration

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Complimentary lunch provided for all messengers and guests, served by SBCV Disaster Relief Team

AFTERNOON: SESSION 1

1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Special Music: Sounds of Liberty

Business Session:

- Treasurer's Report
- Executive Board Recommendations

Special Recognition: Nehemiah Awards

State Missions Report:

- State Events
- Women's Ministry
- Students Ministry
- Missions Mobilization

Introduction of Theme, PRAYER

Speaker: Tim Hight

EVENING: SESSION 2

6:30 PM – 9:15 PM

Special Music: Sounds of Liberty, Charles Billingsley, Liberty Univ. Center for Worship Choir

Special Recognitions:

- The Macedonia Award
- Eagle Awards

Prayer Challenge

Theme Interpretation and Testimony of Praise

Prayer Emphasis: Church Planting

Speaker: Junior Hill

TUESDAY, NOV. 11

8:00 AM, Registration

MORNING: SESSION 3

8:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Special Music: Kendra Penn

Business Session:

- Executive Board Report
- Resolution Committee

Special Recognitions:

- The Pentecost Award
- NAMB Baptism Award

Prayer Challenge

Theme Interpretation and Testimony of Repentance

Speaker: Dave Earley

Prayer Emphasis: Personal Time of Prayer

AFTERNOON: SESSION 4

1:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Special Music: This Hope

Special Recognitions:

- Remembering Pastors
- Signing of Intra-State Partnership with Dakotas State Convention

Business Session: Election of Officers

SBCV Partner Reports:

- The Banner
- LifeWay
- Guidestone
- Ethics and Religious Liberty
- International Mission Board
- North American Mission Board

Prayer Emphasis: Small Groups, for Missions

Prayer Challenge

Theme Interpretation and Testimony of Asking

Speaker: John Avant

EVENING: SESSION 5

6:30 PM – 9:15 PM

Special Music: This Hope, First Baptist Church Roanoke Choir

Prayer Challenge

Theme Interpretation and Testimony of Yield

Special Recognition: Commissioning of Dr. Jeff Ginn as Executive Director-Treasurer

Speaker: Jeff Ginn

Prayer Emphasis: Corporate Prayer

Business: Introduction of Officers

MUSICAL GUESTS

Sounds of Liberty



Charles Billingsley



This Hope



Vacation Bible School

KICK IT UP A NOTCH

by Steve Bradshaw, Church Enrichment Missionary,
Central-West Area, and Shawn Ames

What are the keys to a successful VBS? As the director of the Learning Center for Preschoolers and the VBS director at The Tabernacle in Danville, Carolyn Burdette knows some keys to success. Carolyn has also served on the SBCV State VBS Team for the past four years, training and equipping VBS preschool leaders in the central area of Virginia. This summer, The Tabernacle had nearly 500 kindergartners through sixth graders, over 200 volunteers, and over 80 decisions for Christ in its week-long morning VBS. More than happy to share their strategies for success, Carolyn and Ministry Resource Pastor Joey Bray give some helpful hints.

Pastor Joey shares The Tabernacle's keys to success:

Volunteers: Enlist more volunteers than you think you'll need. Intentionally bridge the gap between student and leader ratio. Many of the 215 volunteers at The Tabernacle used personal vacation time to participate in our daytime VBS. Over 90% of these were repeat volunteers from previous years.

Leadership: Choose the right director. The director's role to oversee and facilitate the details, coordinate leaders, and motivate volunteers is vitally important.

Prayer: Pray early and often. At The Tabernacle, the names of all pre-registered children are placed on magnetic cards and displayed on a magnetic prayer board. Church members take the magnetic cards and put them on their home appliances or inside their cars as reminders to pray for the children prior to and during the VBS week.

Coordination: Be sure to have coordination and participation from the church pastor, other ministers, staff, and the facility director. They are essential to the promotion and enthusiasm of VBS. It takes a team effort.

Invite: Invite previous participants. At The Tabernacle, a letter is sent to previous years' participants, encouraging pre-registration. The first contact is made at least six weeks prior to VBS so families can add the date to their calendars.

In 2008, SBCV had the opportunity to impact close to 200 churches who took advantage of the 12 regional VBS clinics throughout the state. Four regional training teams, composed of members of SBCV churches, led the clinics, which were attended by well over one thousand people.



Carolyn Burdette,
VBS Director,
The Tabernacle,
Danville

Carolyn explains, "If you want to kick it up a notch..."

Require Quality: Expect your leaders to do more than just read a Bible story or place pre-packaged decorations on a wall. Do a drama with costumes and props, and make the lesson come alive. Keep it exciting.

Focus on the Bible and Salvation Message:

While the theme, curriculum, and decorations create the atmosphere, the message of Jesus revealed in God's Word should be the most important focus.

Provide Curriculum and Training Early:

Participate in the area VBS clinics for some great ideas. Distribute the curriculum at least three months prior to your VBS.

Use Media: Make a VBS DVD to remind the students of the fun they had and what they learned during the week. Include the Gospel message presented by the pastor. The DVD serves as an evangelistic outreach tool as the children share it with family and friends.

Go the Extra Mile: Follow up! Have volunteers write personal notes to the VBS participants. Include the theme evangelistic card and encourage the children to come to Sunday School.

If you want to grow your VBS, consider classes for all ages (including adults). Add a language track for ethnics in your area or a special needs class.



Special needs VBS class
at Timber Ridge Baptist
Church in Bedford.





YEC

YOUTH EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

The annual SBCV Youth Evangelism Conference was held on Thursday and Friday, August 7-8 at Liberty Baptist Church in Hampton. In attendance were 780 students and staff representing 35 churches. This year's theme was "CURE: Do you have it?" The front of the camp t-shirt bore this important question, while the back pointed people to Christ as the "CURE" for life's issues. Students received a special evangelism card, which contained the key question on the front and the answer on the back: Christ, Unconditional Love, Repentance through Relationship, Everlasting life. Evangelist Algernon Tennyson was the keynote speaker. Algernon built relationships with the students so easily that they were eager to listen when he delivered the messages. Downhere led the worship and concert, and Clear Vision Drama provided the visual illustrations. There were at least five recorded decisions for Christ, over 29 rededications, and scores of others committing to be a bolder witness of the "CURE." Breakout sessions provided training and equipping for students to share the Gospel through such means as door-to-door canvassing, theme park engaging, block parties, acts of service, beach reach, etc. Local missionaries and churches worked to provide the avenues by which the students could put their new skills to use.

YEC '09

Mark your
calendar!

**Aug. 6-7
2009**

A Super Summer!

by the Studentz Camp Leadership Team

The fifth annual SBCV **Studentz Camp** was held at Liberty University, July 7-11, with 929 weeklong campers, staff, and "Camp for an Evening" attendees. This year's theme was "REBOOT: Control, Alt, Delete." Students were encouraged to surrender control to Christ, altering and deleting certain things in their lives in order to live for and reflect Him. Students from 56 churches heard the Word of God and listened to the heart of this year's camp speaker, Jamie George. The invitation was personal, as Jamie spoke directly to those who responded. Joel Engle led worship, and skits, monologues, and videos by Clear Vision Drama helped drive the message home. On Wednesday night, an additional 150 students from as far as the D.C. area attended "Camp for an Evening." Pocket Full of Rocks was the featured concert band for this special night. Churches had the option of participating in a missions track during the week. Over 225 students participated in the track, helping Bedrock Church, a church plant in Bedford, with outreach. Through faithful door-to-door canvassing, the students visited every house in Bedford and assisted with

simultaneous block parties.

During the week, 32 people came to Christ, and 20 rededicated their lives. As evidenced by the overwhelming response to the altar call each night, the Lord was at work even beyond the recorded decisions. Church group time followed each evening's worship service, and there were many nights when entire youth groups were reconciled to Christ and to each other at the altar. Many student pastors reflected that while the invitation was given during the worship service, many decisions were made when church groups came together for a time of reflection.

CAMP '09

**June
22-26
2009**

Student Pastor Retreat '09

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SBC OF VIRGINIA

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Great Wolf Lodge, Williamsburg

www.sbcv.org/studentz/spretreat

Our Journey

SEEKING GOD'S CHOSEN MAN

by Darrell Webb, Church Enrichment Missionary, Northern Area

For the third time in six years, Ramoth Baptist Church in Stafford was without a senior pastor. To say the congregation was discouraged would be an understatement. Before forming a Pastor Search Committee (PSC), the church family prayed for forty days.

The PSC was clearly God-chosen, a cross-section of the church, encompassing different ages, experiences, and passions. Some were first-timers, in need of training and a starting point. Even those who had served before wanted training to unite the PSC in purpose and in understanding. Darrell Webb, church enrichment missionary for the Northern Virginia and the D.C. Area, provided the committee with training and materials. Armed with a little knowledge and a lot of hope, they decided to gather information.

The PSC collected church membership profiles and congregational response sheets. They sponsored a "Focusing on the Future" town hall meeting, providing an opportunity for church members to discuss the church's future. From all of this information, they created a pastor candidate profile.

The PSC received the first packet of resumes. They rated each resume based on their profile. They believed that God's hand was guiding when the same four names appeared on each of their lists. Unfortunately, mistakes were made with this first group. God used candidate responses or a lack of consensus among committee members to close each door. The committee became discouraged. *Did the lack of consensus mean the members weren't united? Was the bond that had united them damaged beyond repair?* Individually and as a committee, they repented to the Lord each time dissension over a candidate occurred, asking Him to forgive them if they had in any way stepped out of His will. They continually prayed for clarity, desiring to know God's will with complete certainty. The team moved forward but was devastated when the "perfect" candidate didn't feel called to Ramoth. Again dissension filled their ranks, and some talked of disbanding, but they persevered because they believed in God's call on their committee. They continued to pray for clarity.

A turning point occurred at the close of the church study course, "Contagious Christian." The thirty people in attendance openly shared with one another their thoughts

and concerns. The session ended with Spirit-led prayer. The members of the PSC who participated that night emptied themselves before God and heard His voice. As committee member Jo Embrey explains, "[We] poured out our hearts to God for help, forgiveness, and wisdom."

United in purpose, the PSC pursued another candidate, but he didn't sense God's call. At that time, the church had been without a pastor for a year and a half, and Byrd Pritchett, chairman of the committee, says, "I came close to stepping down." Another member, Chris Knight, adds, "We tried and tried and tried but seemed to be getting nowhere." A former pastor met with them and offered encouraging words. "When unity happens, it will blow you out of the water!" At that same PSC meeting, Byrd handed out a new resume. As they read it, they felt a quiet excitement and soon met with Pastor Brent Vickery over dinner. Each member felt a conviction that this was the man God had chosen.

Pastor Vickery's journey was equally fascinating. He was the senior pastor at a church in Florida when he heard about Ramoth. He visited the website weekly, learning about the church and the area. He even called the church office and left a message, but this was during the committee's pursuit of the first "perfect" candidate. Months went by. On one weekly visit to Ramoth's website, God spoke. "What are you going to do about it?" Pastor Vickery submitted his resume precisely when the PSC had hit rock bottom. He felt God's clear call to Ramoth, and the PSC heard God's voice too. By a unanimous vote, Pastor Vickery became Ramoth's senior pastor on June 8, 2008.

The journey of both the committee and the new pastor was God-led. The Lord used disappointments, discouragements, and rejections to close doors and

steer everyone toward His will. Committee member Suzanne Krein believes "God withheld His peace and used dissension on the PSC to close some doors that were hard to close." In the end, however, God's timing was perfect. He orchestrated the pastor's call, the PSC's unity, and the church's readiness. They can't wait to see what God will do through His chosen man at His chosen time and place. Be not discouraged for God is at work. This story reminds us that when we continue to seek the Lord first, He will provide.



Pastor Brent Vickery and family.



NORTH AMERICAN
MISSION BOARD

BAPTISM AWARD

by Randy Aldridge, Church Enrichment
Missionary, Southwestern Area

Each July in Atlanta, the North American Mission Board hosts the summer State Leadership Meeting of NAMB staff and state leaders across North America. The meeting consists of dialogue, strategy planning, information, and inspiration.

This year, one of the highlights of the meeting was the presentation of baptism awards. In a year when the Southern Baptist Convention at large has seen a considerable decrease in baptisms, the churches of the SBCV have witnessed a remarkable increase. For this reason, the SBCV, along with only three other state conventions, received the "Excellence in Baptism" award. SBCV leaders attribute this success to the evangelistic fervor and emphasis on church planting among theologically conservative churches.

Our prayer is that we would echo the words of the apostle Paul in Philippians 3:13: "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended...." There is still room for improvement, and we plan to keep pressing on.

Power in Prayer Walking

by Larry Black, Church Planting
Strategist, Central-West Area

Lostness, apathy, prayer, and faith are an odd mix of terms, but not when placed in the context of church planting. Consider how prayer and faith can affect a community where lostness and apathy have taken their evil toll. Here is just one example: more than two years ago, research was conducted in the South Hill, LaCross, Broadnax tri-city area to determine lostness. The probe determined that 85% of the people in the tri-city area were unchurched, and the majority were lost.

From what was learned, excitement began to build as Grace Baptist Church of Virgilina adopted the area for a new church start. After prayerful consideration, the church decided to engage these communities with the Gospel. In June 2006, a mission team from Grace led the way, organizing prayer walks and visits in the South Hill tri-city area. Joanne Crews organized an intercessory prayer team that began praying for every address in the Mecklenburg County phone book at least two times. Steve Blosser mapped the tri-city area for prayer walking and trained the teams. By the time they were finished, every home was prayed for as every street was walked.

When Andy Davis was called to be the church planter in November 2007, the Lord began to focus Grace's prayer efforts even more. Organizing the town on a map, the Davises started their journey with fervent prayer and the members of Grace Baptist.

The task seemed monumental at first and



showed little fruit, but the Davises continued to prayer walk and organize community outreach events. Pastor Davis noticed a pattern beginning to emerge; as the church members witnessed at the outreach events, the ones who responded positively were all from the area that had been bathed in prayer through prayer walking and the intercessory prayer ministry. Ken and Kay Currin, the first indigenous team members, are from this area. During an activity following a prayer walk, one woman called to see if she could come and help with the new church. She, too, is from the same area.

Since the first research studies, new surveys conducted throughout South Hill have proven the significant difference focused prayer makes. Similar research shows little to no positive results have come out of communities that received less prayer. Some of these communities have even exhibited antagonism and apathy. Speaking on behalf of the lives changes in the tri-cities, prayer has made the difference, accompanied by a people of faith who chose to reach out.



EPHESIANS 3:20-21

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"BY HIS SPIRIT, THROUGH HIS WORD, MAY YOUR MINISTRY BE EMPOWERED"

The Feet of the Faithful Reach Into New Communities

Fuente de Vida in Brenham, Texas, was a church already investing in missions in its church members' homeland of Mexico. Nevertheless, the Lord prompted Pastor Mario Moreno to seek out additional mission opportunities in Richmond, Virginia. Pastor Moreno called his brother-in-law, Pastor Robert Rowland of Smyrna Baptist Church in Dinwiddie, and asked, "Is there a need for the Gospel to be spread to Latinos living in Metro Richmond?"

Little did he know that the SBC of Virginia had just initiated Studentz

Mission Plant, a plan to assist new and developing church plants through partnerships with established churches.

The plan also includes the discipleship of youth and adults through church planting methodology, which includes training for prayer and personal evangelism. Pastor Rowland put his brother-in-law in touch with the SBCV, and

*by Larry Black, Church Planting
Strategist, Central-East &
Central-West Areas*



through the Studentz Mission Plant, a mission plan was designed for the Fuente de Vida team.

After twenty-two hours of traveling from Texas, the Fuente de Vida team arrived at its host church, Smyrna Baptist. The group was divided into two teams: one to assist a new church plant, Iglesia Vida Nueva at Oak Grove Baptist Church, and the other to train to cultivate new communities through prayer walking, personal evangelism, and the identification of persons of peace. One of the team members commented, "It was a hard week under a hot sun, walking to parks, streets, houses, and villages—there were days that the temperature was 104° F, but we could see how much God does when we put our lives in His hands and give our time to Him." Indeed, God poured out His Spirit on these faithful volunteers as their feet pounded the pavement, praying and sharing their faith. SBCV Hispanic missionary, Clovis Pause, led Bible studies each morning for the group. God stirred the hearts of these faithful servants, and four of the men committed their lives to go to the mission field.

Over just four days, the team made more than 300 contacts, resulting in 33 people praying to receive Christ. The Lord arranged numerous divine appointments for which the team members were prepared due to their training and faithfulness in prayer. The team identified many persons of peace in new communities. These contacts resulted in open doors for new Bible studies, which could result in new church starts.

What about your church? Will you go to new mission fields, assisting with new church starts? Studentz Mission Plant is an opportunity for you to serve new church starts in Virginia and Washington, D.C. Contact your area missionary for more information.



Pushing Back the Darkness in Africa

by Darrell Webb, Church Enrichment Missionary, Northern Area

Sitting in a prison in Philippi, Paul and Silas sang hymns of praise to God. As their praises were lifted up, God broke their chains and set them free. Recently, during a drought in East Africa, God displayed His glory in a similar manner as His people were faithful to praise His name.

Joe Taylor, senior pastor of Westlake Baptist Church in Moneta, VA, recently led a team from his church on mission to Kenya, Africa. They partnered with International Mission Board missionary Bob Calvert to share the Gospel with the Maasai people group. Bob offers this testimony:

"On a very hot day, our small team showed up at one enkang' (Maasai homestead) and there were about 25 Maasai men slaughtering a solid black sheep as a witchcraft sacrifice for rain. The drought had become very bad in this particular area. We politely talked with the elders and asked for permission to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with them.

"They kept us waiting for about an hour. We sat on volcanic rocks, which are really toasty as they absorb the heat from the ground! After about 45 minutes, the Maasai translators, two of our Baptist pastors, finally began to tell me that they knew this sort of Maasai and believed that they would never give us permission to tell the stories of Jesus. I asked if we could come back on another day to tell them the Good News. Instead, the folks finally acquiesced and came filing over to the only few acacia trees that had some semblance of shade. All the men were wearing a sliver of black sheep's skin on the middle fingers of their right hands, signifying that they believed in the sacrifice. Traditional Maasai actually believe this short piece of skin is their god, and they trust it to bring rain.

"We were so encouraged to finally be able to share with this crowd; however, it was a short-lived victory. Five of the men refused to greet us, which is very rude even for Maasai, and just walked off. The other 20 came over and called about 20 women to come with them. As we began to share Bible stories, three of the men,

about five feet away from us, began to heckle, make rude gestures, and basically verbally abuse us. I could not hear all of what was being said, but I 'got the drift' because our Maasai pastors, Isak and Moses, were becoming very agitated. Tension was mounting as the spiritual battle was being fought. Somebody must have been praying for us because, at that moment, I recalled Psalm 22:3. This verse states, 'Yet You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel' (NASB). I quoted the verse to Isak and Moses and asked them to start a Maasai praise chorus. They replied incredulously, 'These people are not believers. Why sing praises?' I implored them to start because, based on the verse, we could trust God to show Himself strong. Amazingly, once they began to sing, everything started to change. The people began to clap and sing the chorus, even though they were not believers! Their facial demeanors actually changed. The three hecklers just got up and walked away!

"Most Maasai Christian songs are antiphonal, meaning the leader sings the chorus and the people repeat it; he then sings the verses of the song, and the people repeat the chorus. The first song Isak sang was, 'The God of Daniel Is the True God.' This is always a favorite with Maasai since they themselves have faced lions. The second song was what really got things moving: 'There Is No God Like You, Yahweh!'

"After a bit, we continued to share the stories using the storying cloth. This time, we had a fairly attentive crowd. Once the hecklers were gone, about 40 people got to hear the Gospel, and five people boldly received Jesus Christ that afternoon! What a difference was made when we began praising God! This is a lesson I will never forget, having seen it with my own eyes!"



During the nine days the group from Westlake Baptist was in the East African bush, the team saw a total of 127 people come to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Our God is still raining down miracles as His people are faithful to lift up praises to His name. The praises from God's people will always prevail in pushing back the darkness.

Prayer is Making a Difference

testimony ●



by Darrell Webb, Church Enrichment Missionary, Northern Area

WHAT MAN THINKS IS IMPOSSIBLE IS POSSIBLE WITH GOD.

Pastor Alan McCullough and two mission teams from Rileyville Baptist Church (RBC) learned first-hand about the power of prayer as they went on mission to Buenos Aires, Argentina. The teams were part of the SBCV Rio de la Plata South American Partnership. Pastor McCullough offers this testimony:

"As part of our preparation to go on mission, we were rightly informed that the people in this part of the world were more difficult to reach. It was explained to us that we would do well to engage anyone in a conversation, much less lead a person to Christ. Sociological, missiological, and cultural studies all suggested that the highly educated, culturally sophisticated residents of Coghlan, our adopted neighborhood of Buenos Aires, would require long-term, consistent, and gradual contact to expose them to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Prior to our going, prayers were offered by churches all over the SBCV and beyond. Upon arriving in Coghlan, we saturated the streets with prayer by prayer walking, asking God to move in the hearts of the residents while we were there. Block by block, house by house, we prayed. Some believe prayer walking isn't necessary, suggesting we can pray from a distance just as easily. We found that praying on-site pushes back the darkness in the streets and makes prayer more fervent as you look passersby in the eye and call out to the Lord for every address number on every house. What happened next was the unfolding of the plan of God.

After covering our assigned streets with prayer, asking God to open hearts and minds, my wife and I, along

with a fellow RBC church member, were walking back to the train station to meet our group. We met Ricardo and Alice, who overheard us speaking in English. They invited us, in English, to their viola concert at the train station that evening. We told them we would try our best to attend. We continued our walk

to meet the others in our group. As we talked and processed the things we had heard and seen during our prayer walk, some team members noticed a young man sitting at a table in the park. He seemed to be growing increasingly interested in our joyful conversations. A few of our team members went to him and, within a few minutes, led this young man, Julio, to Christ, using *Por Fe* (*FAITH in Spanish*). God was opening hearts and lives before our very eyes, just as we had prayed.

That evening, we attended the viola concert. During the concert, Ricardo and Alicia made a remarkable offer. They asked us to share mate (pronounced mah-tay), the traditional drink of Argentina. We were told that this was only offered to the closest of friends and was a gesture of affection! We gladly accepted, as our hearts filled with gratitude for the doors God was opening into people's hearts. After the concert, Ricardo and Alicia introduced us to

their family, but most importantly for our mission, introduced us to the president of the Coghlan neighborhood association. Known as the "Friends of Coghlan Train Station," this association holds great influence within the city of Buenos Aires. We shared the purpose of our mission to Coghlan: *to share Christ and, within three years, hopefully start a Baptist church in the neighborhood*. We were welcomed with open arms as they offered to do anything they could to help us accomplish our goal. The president of the association sent out an email invitation to her mailing list, inviting Coghlan residents to our evangelistic event. Other Coghlan association members passed out fliers, inviting friends to the event. We were amazed. This association had been provided to us by the Lord. As we departed the train station that evening, our new friends, a people group considered hard-to-reach, offered us the kiss of friendship on the cheek.

These types of accounts were multiplied throughout our two-week mission. The IMB missionaries admitted these happenings were very different than their experiences in Buenos Aires. The hand of God pushed open the door to Coghlan and we are convinced it is because we prayed. Giving and going on mission is essential, but let us never underestimate the necessity and power of prayer before, during, and after our mission to push back the darkness."



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