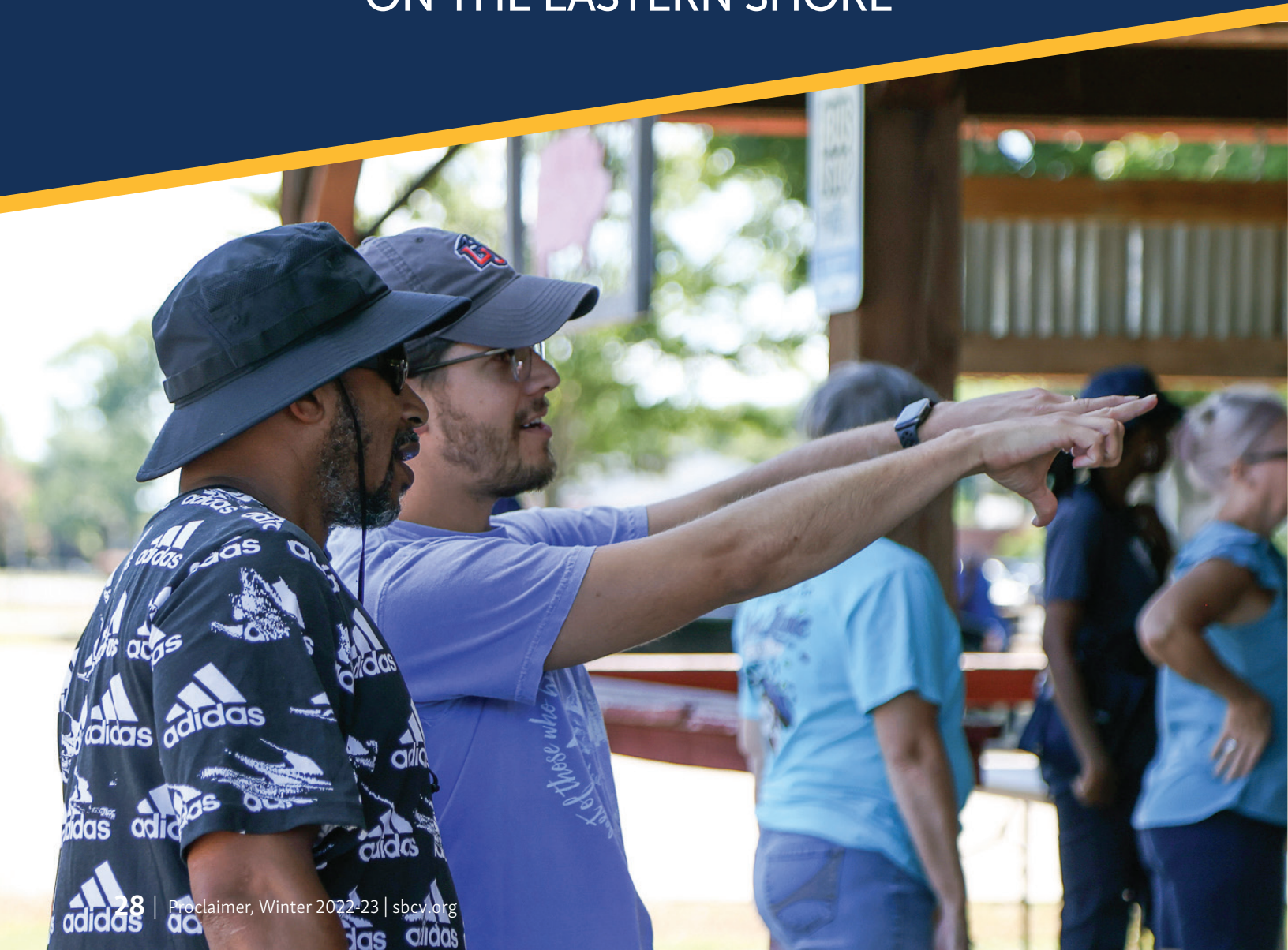


Haitian Block Party

COMING TOGETHER
ON THE EASTERN SHORE





Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God." — So begins Article XIV of the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. Praise God for the ways in which SBCV churches live out this statement of faith!

On Sunday, August 14, 2022, multiple SBCV churches throughout the Southeast Region partnered to advance the Kingdom of God among the Haitian population on the Eastern Shore. A lively block party filled the air with the sounds of children laughing. During the block party, children filled their hands with school supplies for the upcoming new school year.

The partnership displayed that afternoon began years ago. During a Sunday School conference at **Onancock Baptist Church** in Onancock, VA, Pastor John Burr (Onley Baptist Church, Onley) shared with Mark Custalow (former

SBCV staff member) and David Edgell (associate pastor at **First Baptist Church, Suffolk**) about a Haitian population in that area.

When COVID hit, Pastor Edgell and others reached out to see how they could serve the Haitians on the Eastern Shore. Edgell shared, "Our church has been going to Haiti for years. We usually have multiple teams in Haiti each year. So, during COVID, when we could not travel to Haiti, it was a great opportunity to begin ministering to the same community (Haitians) here in the US. We felt that if we could get on a plane and fly to Haiti, then we could



drive the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel to go to the Eastern Shore to minister to the same people group.”

It was during this time of ministering that they met Pastor Waldo Charles (**Tabernacle Saved by Grace**). Pastor Charles was leading the Haitian congregation on the Eastern Shore and had met SBCV pastors in the area. As word spread of what God was doing, Pastor Jonathan Dimanche (minister of missions at **LibertyLive.Church**) wanted to join in, as he is himself is Haitian-American. Pastor Dimanche quickly led LibertyLive to partner in this ministry.

“The block party was great because it gave us an opportunity to meet the needs of these families as they were preparing their children for school and for the body of Christ to minister

together,” Edgell explained. “Multiple churches came together from Holland, Suffolk, Hampton, and the Eastern Shore to show the love of Christ. There was no distinction from one church to another—it was just the body of Christ ministering to Haitian believers and to the Haitian community.

“We distributed over 130 backpacks and numerous other school supplies to this community. The day was full of activities, games, and the fellowship of persons gathering at the Parksley Town Center Pavilion. It is a great example of SBCV churches partnering to carry out the work of ministry to the nations here in the Commonwealth and work to impact our nation. I truly believe we can accomplish more together than we can apart.” ■

