

# PROCLAIMER

2022 | VOLUME 24, ISSUE 3 • Telling the stories of Vision Virginia

*"Declare* His glory  
among the nations,  
His *marvelous* works  
among *all the peoples!*"

*Psalm 96:3 (ESV)*

Fresh Wind  
of God  
*Page 7*

A Gospel  
Legacy  
*Page 10*



**SBCVirginia**  
*You are not alone.*



# PROCLAIMER

Winter 2022-23 — Issue 3

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# You Are Not Alone

## THE LORD IS WITH YOU

For over 25 years, churches have joined together through the SBC of Virginia to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ to reach our neighbors and the nations. Our prayer is to see strong churches with a bold commitment to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20). For the past several years, we have embraced the mantra, *You are not alone!* We see the need to partner together for missions and to encourage each other. However, we must remember the foundation of “You are not alone”—Jesus said, “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20b, NASB).

As we say *You are not alone*, keep in mind the awesome biblical promise: “The Lord is with you.” The importance of the presence of God is seen throughout the Scriptures in the lives of leaders like Moses, Joshua, and many others. During a time of exile for the people of God and of tremendous political turmoil, our Lord God said through the prophet Isaiah:

*“Fear not, for I am with you;  
be not dismayed, for I am your God;  
I will strengthen you, I will help you,  
I will uphold you with my righteous  
right hand.”* (Isaiah 41:10, NKJV)

At this year’s SBCV Annual Homecoming in Roanoke, we are asking for the SBCV partnership of churches, for our brothers and sisters in Christ, to celebrate His presence and seek His face like never before. I don’t want to serve—and we must not try to lead—without seeking to follow the Lord and depend on His presence and power (Exodus 33:15).

In January 2023, we will have a special call to prayer for pastors. Throughout 2023, we will encourage one another as we pray together and embrace the presence of God in our work together. As we serve in so many ways, like disaster relief; planting and revitalizing churches; sending missionaries... we must always keep in mind the necessity of the Lord leading us and empowering us.

I am so thankful we are able to say to one another, *You are not alone*. As the Lord leads us to make disciples of all nations, let’s also remind each other of the promise of His presence: “The Lord is with you.” Praise the Lord for His presence!

Your brother in Christ,



Brian Autry



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# PRAY FOR MISSIONARIES

## *around the globe*

"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)



### Steve & Toni Chambers

📍 New York

Let's pray for Steve and Toni Chambers. They are two of our North American missionaries planting a new church on the Upper West Side of New York City. Often they are out on the street so they can talk to people about Jesus. It takes time to get to know New Yorkers, but Steve and Toni are committed to lead their church to reach many for Christ. We support Steve and Toni through the Cooperative Program.



### Angela Dawson

📍 Southeast Asia

Today let's pray for Angela Dawson, one of our missionaries serving in Thailand — we support her through the Cooperative Program. Angela is not married. Before she went to Thailand after a Stateside visit, she was told she probably would not ever have a husband or family. She went anyway. Then, in Thailand, she found a new ministry by providing a home to teenage girls abandoned by their families. They call her Mom as she teaches them about Christ. Let's pray for Angela.

**52**  
SUNDAYS

Each missionary highlighted in 52 Sundays is supported by your church's giving through the Cooperative Program. Find more missionaries to pray for by visiting [sbcv.org/52sundays](https://sbcv.org/52sundays).





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## Central Virginia BIBLE CONFERENCE January 29-31, 2023



**Dr. Danny Akin**  
Sunday - 7PM

*President*  
Southeastern Baptist  
Theological Seminary,  
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**Dr. James Merritt**  
Monday - 7PM

*Pastor*  
Cross Pointe Church,  
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**Dr. Kevin Smith**  
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# Fresh Wind of God

What once was hailed as a thriving railroad community is now best known as the resting place for the beloved missionary to China, Charlotte Digges "Lottie" Moon. Lottie Moon is buried in Crewe Cemetery, in Crewe, VA in Nottoway County.

The Norfolk and Western Railway (N&W) pre-planned and built the town of Crewe in 1888. The town was named for the large railroad town of Crewe, England. Norfolk & Western designed the town, first and foremost, to support the operations of the railroad as a divisional halfway point between the cities of Norfolk and Roanoke. In the 1950s, the railroad repair facilities diminished in importance as the switch to diesel-electric locomotives required less labor and equipment.

Like many Southern Baptist churches across the Commonwealth, **Crewe Baptist Church** flourished for more than 100 years while serving God and the community. But like the decline in railroading and other labor-intensive industries, the glory days of this rural church seemed to be over.

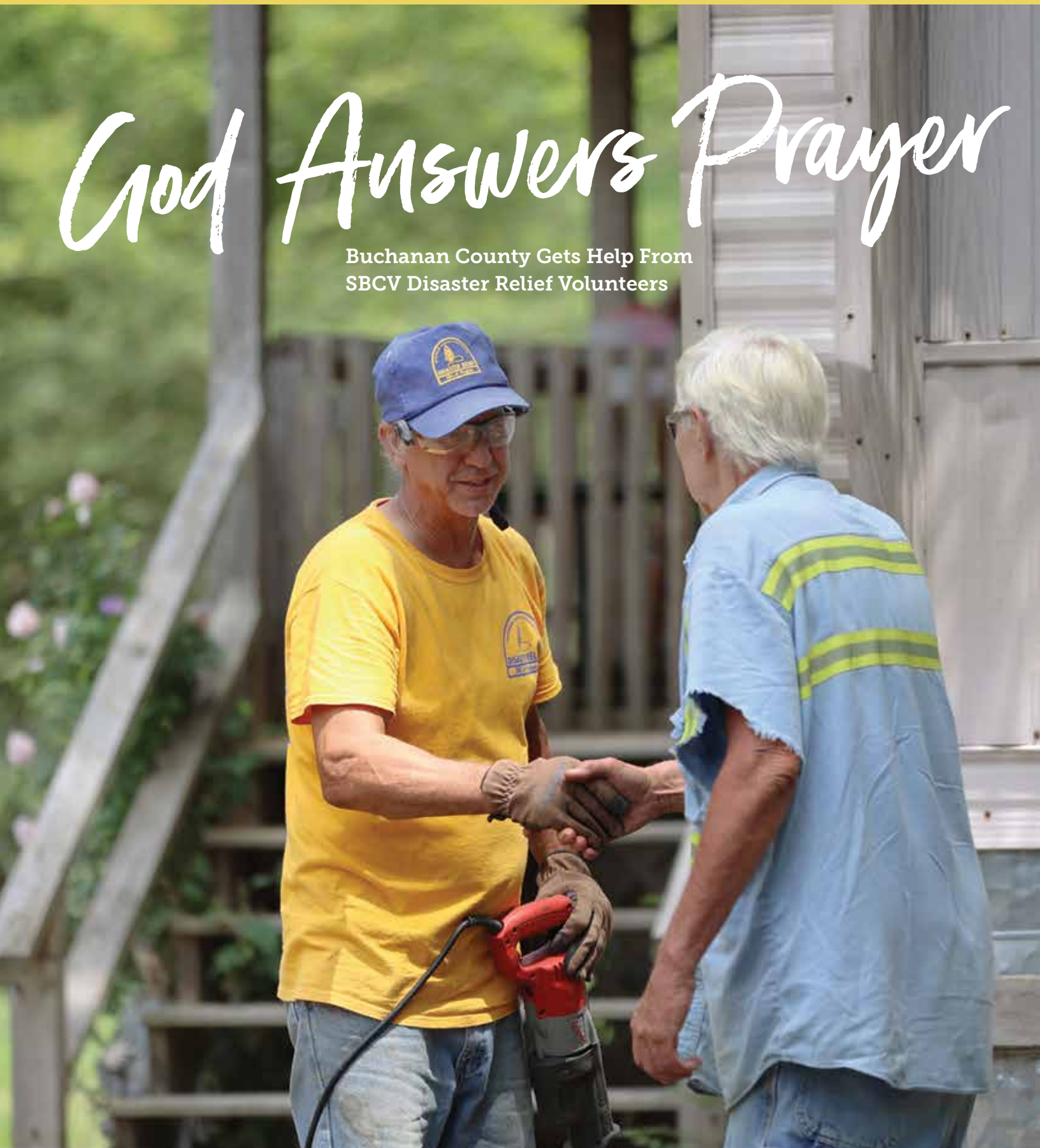
However, a fresh wind of God has been blowing once again through Crewe Baptist Church due to its focus on the Gospel! Many people have recently professed Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior and have publicly followed His example of water baptism through immersion.

Angel was raised Catholic in Mexico. For the past few years, he has been living in Crewe with his wife, a longtime member of Crewe Baptist Church. Angel and his daughter met several times with Pastor Dallas Smith. After confirming their faith in Christ, Angel and his daughter attended discipleship classes and were baptized together on August 21, 2022. They were one of three families who stepped into the baptismal waters that day to the applause of the congregation and the heavenly hosts.

At the end of the baptismal service, all candidates were welcomed into Crewe Baptist Church's membership by unanimous acclamation. As the baptized individuals were being presented to the church, one of the men said, "I knew becoming a Christian was going to be thrilling...but I never thought I would be baptized with an 'Angel.'" ■

# God Answers Prayer

Buchanan County Gets Help From  
SBCV Disaster Relief Volunteers







**R**oger Van Dyke recalled, “The rain kept comin’—it came so fast.” His wife, Rhonda, added, “We looked over, and the water was creeping under the baseboards.”

Their vivid memories were from the night of July 12, 2022 when up to six and a half inches of rain fell over regions of Buchanan County in a short, three-hour period.

Van Dyke continued to describe the horrifying aftermath: “There was houses in the middle of the road, cars in trees—it was devastating. People lost everything. After the flood, I guess I just laid in bed and cried. And then the good Lord started sending you all.”

An SBCV Disaster Relief assessment team arrived days after the flood to prepare the way for teams to begin working. It was then that the yellow shirts of Disaster Relief met the Van Dykes and offered help.

One of those lending aid was Paul Thomasson of **LibertyLive.Church** in Hampton. “It’s work to clean out a house or cut trees or to rebuild,” Thomasson shared.

***“The rain kept comin’— it came so fast.”***

Work indeed. Flood relief crews must remove all household items, mud, and debris before pulling up flooring and subflooring and removing drywall and insulation at least one foot above the flood line. All of these things must be done before pressure washing, mold remediation, and drying.

“But it’s worth the smile on their faces and the impact it has on the folks who are suffering,” Thomasson concluded.

When asked what motivates him to lead a team for such a task, Bob Johansen of **Maysville Baptist Church** in Buckingham County explained, “We are here because we love Jesus—not because we love to work. We are here because Jesus calls us to do this, and we need to be obedient to the call.”

In a society that is more and more cynical about church, the sacrificial work and dedication of Disaster Relief volunteers can be a strong argument for the reality of Jesus. The impact of

this kind of selfless love is one of the reasons Jesus charged His followers in Matthew 5:16, “...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven”(CSB).


“We are here to do a job,” said Joey Schnepf of **Crewe Baptist Church** in Nottoway County, “but our main job is winning souls for Jesus.”

The Van Dykes saw God’s love in action, and it made all the difference. From lying in bed, filled with despair, to being filled with hope and gratitude, the Van Dykes’ path was changed by the loving service of SBCV Disaster Relief volunteers.

“We put it all in God’s hands and here you are!” said Roger Van Dyke, choking back tears. ‘Thank you!’ ■

#### RESOURCE:

For more information on Disaster Relief, visit:

 [sbcv.org/disasterrelief](https://sbcv.org/disasterrelief)

# A GOSPEL *Legacy*



“For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in... ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’” Matthew 25:35 and 40 (CSB)

Such is the beautiful legacy of Jim and Diana Martin. Their love for Jesus and refugees has continued in **New Life Fellowship Church** (NLF) in Roanoke, VA even after a loss of life and health. Without the Martins, NLF may never have become a church.

Through the outreach of churches in the Roanoke Valley, both SBCV and non-SBCV congregations, this group has served the Nepali and Burmese communities in Roanoke since March 2010.

Jim and Diana started New Life Fellowship while attending **Rainbow Forest Baptist Church** in Troutville (a founding church of SBCV). Initially, they brought refugees to Rainbow Forest until the number grew to the point that transportation became an issue. They needed a space closer to where the people lived, so they then rented meeting rooms at the Jefferson Center, Roanoke’s premiere performing arts and cultural center. Several SBCV churches provided NLF with monthly financial support on a consistent basis for over 10

*After a fun day at the park with the Nepalis and their families, Jim and Diana Martin gathered everyone together for a picture to commemorate the fellowship.*





Jim and Diana Martin  
(front row, 2nd &  
3rd from the right)  
with their beloved  
Nepali people after a  
Christmas celebration  
service in 2013



years. Rainbow Forest also allowed the new church to use two vans (often with gas provided) to transport children and families to church services, mid-week Bible studies, monthly youth meetings, and special events.

The Martins took their first step in ministering to refugees by offering to help a family from Iraq. Hand in hand with the local Refugee and Immigration Resettlement Organization, the Martins went from one step to full involvement. They soon traded their cars for mini vans to take refugees to doctor appointments and school meetings. They used their bare basement as storage for donated clothing and furniture for the refugees they loved. (The *Proclaimer* documented their influence in the November 2013 issue, page 10.)

Diana was at the hospital for births, hosted scores of birthday parties, and

organized soccer camps. She provided sewing classes for the women and took them on field trips. One time, she arranged a trip to a farm for some of the older refugees. They were delighted to discover plants they remembered from their home country.

As the Martins served, the refugee families came to love and trust them. When Jim and Diana spoke of Jesus, the refugees wanted to know more. The church the Martins started continues today in Roanoke, now meeting at Church@GrandinVillage. Some of the children Diana organized birthday parties for can now be found leading in worship.

In December 2019, Jim and Diana Martin left the ministry due to medical issues. Diana passed away on December 31, 2021. Shauna, her daughter, chose to have her celebration of life gathering in

Roanoke with the people who loved her so much. More than 100 people filled the auditorium to share memories of Diana, known as Grandma or Mom to many. Jim, his health in decline, now lives in Colorado.

New Life Fellowship continues to be an active and thriving church body. In the past two years, NLF has reduced external support as the church has matured and its internal giving has increased. Their goal is to be self-supporting in the not-too-distant future. Church leader Tom Story expressed to SBCV, "Thank you for your unwavering financial and prayer support over these many years!" Even more so, we can say, "Thank You, Lord, for the loving legacy of Jim and Diana Martin!" ■

---

*Many details provided by New Life Fellowship and its administrator, Tom Story*





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Sept. - Oct.  
Christmas  
Backpacks



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**March 4, 2023**

Lifeway Guests: Chuck Peters  
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Swift Creek Baptist Church,  
Midlothian



**March 11, 2023**

Lifeway Guests: Bekah Stoneking  
& Bethany Phillips

8:45 AM - 3:30 PM

Fellowship Community  
Church, Salem

Details at [sbcb.org/kmc](https://sbcb.org/kmc)





# Inspire

A word of hope, support, and encouragement

“I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.” Psalm 27:13 (NASB)

## WINNING THE Battle of Despair

King David, the warrior of God, is one of my favorite examples of faith in action. Given the calling in his life, he had many distractions as he served God faithfully. He was not a perfect man, but he was a faithful man (Luke 18:8). All through the Psalms written by David, he expresses and proclaims an undying love and allegiance to the God of His faith.

In this particular Psalm, David says, “...he would have despaired....” The *New Oxford American Dictionary* defines “despair” as “**the complete loss or absence of hope, the presence of desperation, distress, pain, anxiety, etc.**” Does this sound familiar globally right now? Often it may be easier for our attention to be captured by God's goodness. We certainly want God's deliverance and blessings, failing to realize that our trust in God grows in the trials and the distressful times of life (James 1:2-3).

David, whose life was his faith, depended on God's Word to sustain him as he walked by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7). In our verse above, David said despair would consume him, “...if he had not believed He would see...,” yet David exercised faith and believed in God.

When times were tough, David reminded himself and delighted himself in the things of God (1 Samuel 30:6). David knew the goodness of the Lord because he believed in God's faithfulness in desperate times. God will always be near to those who would believe before they “would see.”

Sure, you may not see your way through your current circumstance. You may be waning in hope and growing weary, but draw near and allow your faith to make God's goodness your present reality. Make this the day you **believe**—truly believe—then **see** God's goodness in your life and the land!

**Prayer:** Dear Lord of heaven and earth, thank You that Your goodness rescues my faith and frees me to believe in You. You alone are the author and finisher of my faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.



**Milton Harding**

Special Assistant for Prayer and Care

✉ [mharding@sbcv.org](mailto:mharding@sbcv.org)

# Pastor Fellowships

Fostering  
Relationships  
and Forging  
New Friendships



“

**When you have  
a guy who has  
stood with  
you on your  
darkest day... not  
because of what  
you can do for  
him or because  
of who you  
are, but simply  
because he  
believes in you.  
That's when you  
know you are  
not alone.**

Each month, pastors gather in fellowships around the state, each gathering with its own DNA. Some are slightly formal, some educational, and some more relational. But the purpose is the same for all—to be reminded that SBCV pastors and churches are not alone.

Pastor fellowships take place regularly in six areas across the Southwest Region. Although the fellowships meet in different places and at different times, these six groups of pastors share time together in God's Word and in prayer and share updates on what's happening in their families, their churches, and the convention.

*"I think we found that not only are we encouraged by fellowships, but we are also dependent on them. We especially were during the pandemic because as our flocks were dispersed, so to speak, we found ourselves missing fellowship."*

*Pastor Tim Varnadore, Silver Leaf Baptist Church, Rose Hill, VA*

*"Sometimes it seems that every part of a pastor's life is designed to alienate him from others: He has to deny his family by spending time away from them, and he must keep himself separate from the church in order to teach and discipline her. In the eyes of the world, he is seen as pious and judgmental. Fellowship with other pastors gives a lonely child of God a chance to connect with people who are experiencing the same things. It is a time of strengthening and encouragement that can't be found anywhere else."*

*Pastor Tommy Shell, First Baptist Church, Pound, VA*

*"For me, a pastor fellowship does several things: it encourages me, it challenges me and, in some ways, it helps sharpen my vision for the church. It does what the Bible says fellowship will do—it edifies me because, as a pastor, you can feel very alone even among a lot of people at church. At these fellowships, it's encouraging to know you're not alone, especially in your experiences."*

*Pastor Rob Haynes, First Baptist Church, Jonesville, VA*

*"Over the years of fellowship time with other pastors, I hear them talk of the various problems they are dealing with and struggles they presently face. And I walk away thanking God for His mercy on me and the many others he has spared from the things that could go horribly wrong. God's hedge of protection around me and His wonderful church, that He allows me to pastor, is far more than I deserve."*

*Pastor Jack Rutherford, Sharon Baptist Church, Rural Retreat, VA*

*continued on next page*



"Sometimes the benefits of being part of a pastors' fellowship are more far reaching than we may think. We can feel as if we are all alone and that no one is experiencing what I am or facing the challenges I am facing. I think about the fact that there is encouragement in the meetings and that we are not alone. There are people, other men and families, walking the same path. We make friends and support one another."

*Pastor Lonnie Brooks, East Stone Gap Baptist Church, East Stone Gap, VA*

"I have seen pastors who participate in pastoral fellowship consistently have longer and more successful ministries. I think that comes from not feeling abandoned or alone and from being open to different ideas, learning from one another, and being open to loving criticism or neutral party cautioning on certain issues."

*Pastor Shea Shrader, Harmon Memorial Baptist Church, Grundy, VA*

"Fellowships provide an opportunity for interaction and relationship building with other pastors that I would be lacking otherwise."

*Pastor Justin Hall, Cedar Bluff Baptist Church, Atkins, VA*

"Fellowships are a time where I can relax, knowing I'm with my brothers. It's like a breath of fresh air, not in competition nor is it about the numbers."

*Pastor Chad Johnson, Fellowship Baptist Church, Meadowview, VA*

"It's easy to feel alone in ministry. Fellowships have been great opportunities to be myself and share my struggles with others who understand the complexities of pastoral life. They've led to friendships, times of encouragement, much-needed prayer, and laughs. We've been blessed to have local SBCV fellowships act as a springboard to fostering pastoral community. Because of them, I know I'm not alone."

*Pastor Steven Bednar, The Vine Church, Abingdon, VA*

"When you have a guy who has stood with you on your darkest day or stood by you in the face of your greatest challenge, not because of what you can do for him or because of who you are but simply because he believes in you. That's when you know you are not alone."

*Pastor Allen Roberts Jr, Euclid Ave. Baptist Church, Bristol, VA*

When we invest both our time and ourselves in a relationship with other pastors, we are fostering a relationship that just might help us through the darkest time of our ministry or the most challenging time in our personal life. We are forging a friendship, a brotherhood that will last a lifetime. ■







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# NOT ALONE PODCAST



Conversations and stories through and for SBC of Virginia churches that are intended to strengthen, challenge, and encourage us all to boldly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ

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**nextgen** 

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**sbcv.org/nextgen**

# Shared Heartbeat

## The Benefits of Partnership

**W**hat happens when two churches from two different cultures form a true partnership? **Cave Spring Baptist Church** (Roanoke) and **Iglesia Gracia Redentora** (Vega Baja, Puerto Rico) have both seen great benefits from their growing partnership. Cave Spring (CSBC) first traveled to Puerto Rico in December 2017 as a part of the SBCV Disaster Relief response to Hurricane Maria. After helping meet the physical needs resulting from the hurricane, SBCV churches began to meet spiritual needs in Puerto Rico through church planting partnerships with Send Network Puerto Rico. After a quick tour of the island and meeting several church planters, CSBC met one final planter before heading home: Xavier Torrado of Iglesia Gracia Redentora (IGR). With a clear shared commitment and vision, the two churches prayerfully entered into a new partnership.

“From the start, we both wanted an ongoing relational connection beyond just sending teams,” shared Allen James, CSBC’s pastor of community and missions. “We wanted a partnership where each church encouraged and served the other. We wanted to build a true Gospel friendship between the two churches.”

CSBC began taking trips to Vega Baja twice a year to help IGR reach its community with the Gospel and train leaders within the church. The churches have partnered in sharing the Gospel door to door, serving a local elementary school, hosting Vacation Bible School, doing community service projects, and prayer-walking through the neighborhoods around the church. Torrado shared, “It’s always a joy to work on God’s mission, but it’s even more joyful when God puts partners alongside us to work for His Glory.”

In June of this year, CSBC sent a team to help IGR with Vacation Bible School through manpower and resources. Allen James said, “We were encouraged to find that most of the children who came spoke good English—they laughed at our attempts at Spanish and told us they understood our English better.” The

team enjoyed helping with VBS and the times of fellowship, prayer, and worship with the church. One conversation with Pastor Torrado led to a discussion of CSBC’s upcoming Serve Roanoke week, a student camp and local outreach event. Within 24 hours, IGR had recruited four students to participate in Serve Roanoke as well as a young man to lead their team. The five volunteers flew to Roanoke and participated in Serve Roanoke and stayed at the church each night, along with more than 50 students from CSBC. By the end of the week, many new friendships had formed between the students and the team from IGR.

These are the benefits of true partnership. A shared vision, a shared desire to see the Gospel spread, shared resources, and the sharing of lives spent for God’s glory. Torrado explained, “We believe that a partnership is not about only one side serving the other. This is the beauty of this relationship. This is something that pastors from both churches always keep in mind—how to develop a mutually beneficial relationship in this partnership.”

James echoed the same heartbeat. “We’ve received much more than we’ve given through our partnership with Iglesia Gracia Redentora. People want to make a difference. They want to be used by God. They want to be stretched and challenged. This partnership has accomplished all that and more. Every CSBC member who has gone to Puerto Rico has been blessed and wants to go back.”

The partnership between CSBC and IGR is one of over a dozen church-to-church partnerships between SBCV and Puerto Rican Baptist churches. ■

### RESOURCE:

*To pursue a partnership with a Puerto Rican church or church plant, contact:*



[missions@sbcv.org](mailto:missions@sbcv.org)





**"We wanted a partnership  
where each church encouraged  
and served the other...  
a true Gospel friendship  
between the two  
churches."**



# The LORD is WITH YOU

At this Annual Homecoming, we will focus on the presence of God. We will hear stories of how God is moving in incredible ways. We will have the privilege to worship together and be challenged by God's Word—and throughout it all, be reminded that you are not alone. The Lord is with you!



**Sunday, Nov. 13**  
5:15 PM – 8:30 PM

**Monday, Nov. 14**  
8:30 AM – 8:45 PM

**Tuesday, Nov. 15**  
8:30 AM – 12:30 PM



**First Baptist  
Church** *Roanoke*



## Featured Speakers

**2022 ANNUAL  
HOMECOMING**



**Dave  
Earley**

First Baptist  
Church (Grove  
City, OH)



**Clint  
Pressley**

Hickory Grove  
Baptist Church  
(Charlotte, NC)



**H.B.  
Charles**

Shiloh  
Metropolitan  
Baptist Church  
(Jacksonville, FL)



**Bruce  
Frank**

Biltmore Church  
(Arden, NC)



**Stan  
Parris**

Franklin Heights  
Baptist Church  
(Rocky Mount, VA)



**Brian  
Autry**

SBC of Virginia

## Special Guests



Special Guest on  
Sunday Evening

**Meredith  
Andrews**

Christian Music Artist



Special Guest on  
Monday Evening  
**Liberty University  
Worship Choirs  
& LU Praise**

Gospel Choirs

## Nearly 20 breakouts covering

- Children's Ministry
- Chinese Fellowship
- Church Planting
- Communications
- Evangelism
- Foster Care
- Hispanic Ministry
- Ministry Wives
- Missions
- Men's Ministry
- Multi-Cultural Congregations
- NextGen Ministry
- Prayer
- Revitalization
- Sunday School
- Women's Ministry
- Worship Ministry



Give the gift of the Gospel  
with a Christmas backpack.  
[sbcv.org/backpacks](https://sbcv.org/backpacks)

*Register today at* [sbcv.org/homecoming](https://sbcv.org/homecoming)

General sessions and select  
group sessions will be  
interpreted for the Deaf.

Childcare will be available during  
main sessions for children up to 4  
years old (pre-registration required)



**SBCVirginia**  
You are not alone.



# Bless Every Home Reaches Over 100,000 Families in Virginia





**Bless Every Home** continues to be the strategic tool recommended for churches to reach neighbors with the Gospel. To date, 176 SBCV churches are using Bless Every Home, and 3,643 church members have adopted 102,236 homes to pray for, care for, share with, and disciple.

Stan Parris, pastor of **Franklin Heights Baptist Church** in Rocky Mount, VA, recently reported his church's goal of praying for and reaching 10,000 homes in Franklin County through Bless Every Home. Parris says their desire is to reach every family in the county.

Larry and Susan Mason from **Salem Baptist Church** in Manakin-Sabot wanted to reach their neighbors with the Gospel. After attending SBCV's Annual Homecoming in 2021, they learned about Bless Every Home. This elevated their passion to share Christ's love in practical ways. One of the neighbors they prayed for stopped them one day to let them know he got saved, was baptized, and had begun attending church.

"Every encounter now is intentional," shares Larry. "I'm always looking for the Holy Spirit just to open the opportunity to share Jesus with them."

## Bless Every Home is now available in Spanish.

Bless Every Home is **now available in Spanish**. Sergio Guardia, SBCV Hispanic strategist, says, "This is a blessing to the outreach and evangelistic ministry to the growing number of our Spanish-speaking churches."

For more information on Bless Every Home, check out: [sbcv.org/blesseveryhome](https://sbcv.org/blesseveryhome) or scan this QR code.



You can view this testimony firsthand by visiting: [sbcv.org/bless-every-home-2022-vision-virginia](https://sbcv.org/bless-every-home-2022-vision-virginia) or by scanning the QR code to the right.



## Coming Soon: Saturate USA

This **church resource** can be used to share the Gospel through a neighborhood blitz that includes maps, door hangers, brochures, and videos. For more information, visit: [saturateusa.org](https://saturateusa.org).

# ENCOURAGED **Spiritually** **Refreshed**



Women gathered from across the Commonwealth to learn from and fellowship with authors, speakers, and women of the same mindset and heart.



Events like SBCV's Women's Ministry Leadership Forum give women "an affordable opportunity to be poured into, encouraged, and learn from some of the best authors, speakers, and local worship leaders that our dedicated state Women's Ministry Team brings to our area," shared Valerie McKee, women's ministry director at **Alexander Baptist Church** in Chesapeake. McKee, a longtime attendee of SBCV's women's events, was one of over 100 women's ministry leaders who gathered August 5-6 at Virginia Crossings Conference Center in Glen Allen for this year's forum.

With the theme of *Engage*, speakers encouraged attendees to engage with God and with each other for spiritual and emotional health. The featured speakers for the two-day event were Missie Branch and Leslie Hildreth. Branch is the chairperson of Lifeway's Board of Trustees as well as the assistant dean of students for women and the director of Graduate Life at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Hildreth is the women's discipleship director at The Summit Church in Durham, NC.

In addition to hearing from Branch and Hildreth, attendees heard from Bonnie Hester, women's ministry director at **Kempville Baptist Church** in Virginia Beach, and Leslie Honig, women's ministry director at **Spotswood Baptist Church** in Fredericksburg, who shared how the Lord ministered to them during recent traumatic and tragic events in their lives. Their powerful and moving testimonies helped women understand that because of the community of faith among SBCV churches and the prayers of fellow believers, they are not alone.

"I would strongly encourage women to consider bringing other ladies on their team with them to the forum [in the future]," McKee shared. "Not only will your time together outside the walls of the church be a blessing, but so, too, will be the networking opportunities with other leaders of like mind. As a result of attending, I came home personally encouraged and spiritually refreshed. I'm ready to apply what I learned and share with my leadership team and friends."

As women continue to serve and lead the women in their churches, the SBCV's Women's Ministry Team is committed to providing affordable, relevant, and Christ-centered training events. ■

#### RESOURCE:

*If you're interested in more information about ministry events in your area, visit:*



[sbcv.org/women](https://sbcv.org/women)



**Engage Women's  
Leadership Forum**  
100+ women's ministry  
leaders attended!





**STAN PARRIS**  
Pastor,  
Franklin Heights Baptist Church  
Rocky Mount, VA

“

**How often do we get distracted, busy, or just not focused, and we miss out on the presence of God?**

## Are You Paying Attention?

Flying is not my favorite way to spend my time. It can be taxing, especially now with cancellations and limited flights. When I do fly, I sometimes feel sorry for the flight attendants. Part of their job is to educate the passengers on the safety protocols of flying on an airplane. Most of you know the routine. They stand before the passengers and teach us how to buckle our seat belts. They point to the exit rows and remind us that our seat cushions can be used as flotation devices. They demonstrate how to properly put on the oxygen mask in the event that the cabin loses pressure and make it a point to share that if someone beside you needs assistance, you should put your mask on first before helping out.

Do you ever look around at the people on the plane while this discussion is happening? Basically, no one is paying attention. They have their earbuds in, their phones in hand, and they're reading magazines and books. It's almost as if they are doing everything but listening to the flight attendant who is standing right in front of them.

I wonder if God ever feels like one of those flight attendants. God is a God who speaks. God saves. God redeems. He promises, through Jesus Christ, that His presence will guide us, lead us, and comfort us. How often do we get distracted, busy, or just not focused, and we miss out on the presence of God?

The psalmist declared in Psalm 8:1 (ESV), *"O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens."* The personal name of God reminds us that He is the absolute existing One who depends on nothing and that everything else depends on Him. David's reminder of the majesty and the greatness of God points us to our need of Him.

If you believe in the majesty and greatness of God, then you certainly would never pass up the opportunity, or should I say privilege, to connect with Him. That is why Paul tells us in Colossians 4:2 (ESV) to *"Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving."* We have the privilege to know Almighty God and His power through prayer.

This is so meaningful to me. When I focus on the majesty and greatness of God, it puts all of my problems into the proper perspective. It also reminds me that all of God's promises are true. So, in my disappointment, the Lord is with me. In my anxiety, the Lord is with me. In my broken dreams, the Lord is with me. In my loneliness, the Lord is with me. As I am sharing the Gospel, the Lord is with me.

One of the best parts of a flight for me is when the plane is just about to land. You get a great view of where you are traveling, and you have the anticipation of what you will enjoy or do while you are there. The best landings are when you arrive home. There will be a day that all of God's people arrive home and anticipate the great adventure of being with the Lord for eternity. But we are not home yet! Until then, we need the Lord's presence and power. Are you paying attention? God is speaking.

He has promised us that as we give our lives to the Great Commission, He will be with us. Don't lose heart. Don't grow weary. Seek the Lord. One day, you will arrive safely home.



?

If you happened to die *today*,  
do you know if you will go  
to heaven?

God says you must be born again.  
The Bible gives us a simple plan of salvation.

Admit that you're  
a sinner who  
needs to be saved.  
"For all have sinned  
and fall short of the  
glory of God."  
(Romans 3:23)

Believe that Jesus died for  
you and rose again. "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." (Romans 10:9)

Commit to accepting Jesus as your Savior and  
Lord. "For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall  
be saved." (Romans 10:13)

Claim His gift of salvation. Believe, and you will be  
saved. All that's left for you to do is to receive Jesus  
into your heart as your personal Lord and Savior. If  
that is your sincere desire, then talk to God from your  
heart. Contact us today to let us know your decision  
and any questions you have: [info@sbcv.org](mailto:info@sbcv.org).



# SEMINARY *for* A DAY

Coming in 2023

Training and equipping with  
seminary professors, ministry  
leaders, and church practitioners  
...in a day, close to home.

[sbcv.org/seminaryforaday](http://sbcv.org/seminaryforaday)

# equip WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

AWAKEN! • ISAIAH 43:19A

Join us for our equipping events  
held throughout the Commonwealth.

WITH  
**RACHEL  
LOVINGOOD**

**February 25**  
Bethel Baptist  
Church, Yorktown

**April 1**  
Spotswood Baptist  
Church, Fredericksburg

WITH  
**JESSIE  
SENECA**

**May 13**  
North Roanoke Baptist  
Church, Roanoke

register at a location near you  
[SBCV.ORG/EQUIP2023](http://SBCV.ORG/EQUIP2023)

# PASTOR MISSION VISION TOURS

Join other SBCV pastors to see for yourself the  
mission opportunities available for your church.

To get started, find a tour at

[sbcv.org/visiontours](http://sbcv.org/visiontours)

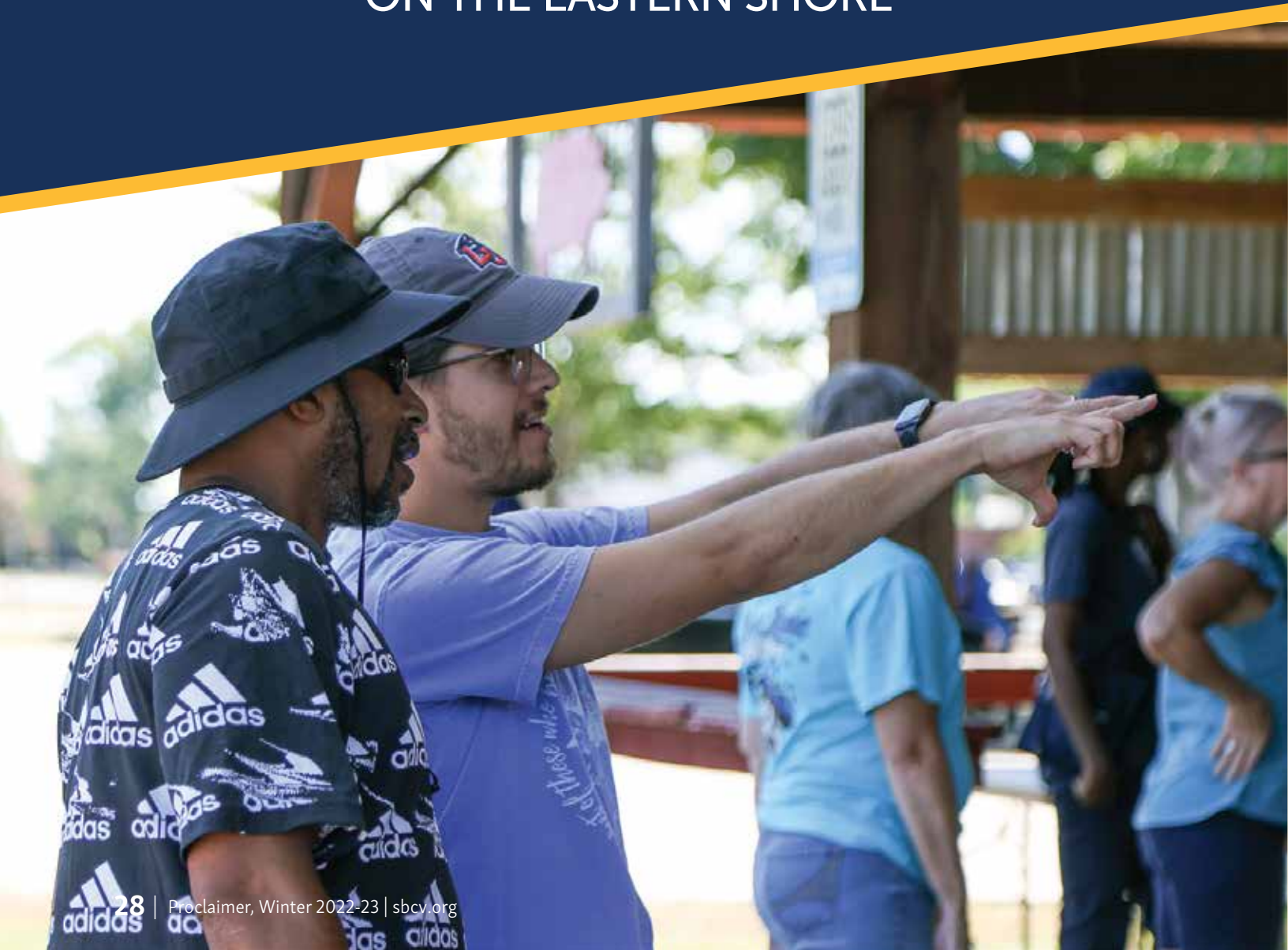
**Puerto Rico**  
January 23-26, 2023

**Dakar, Senegal**  
February 12-18, 2023

**Buenos Aires, Argentina**  
March 26-31, 2023

# 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.” ■





# Entrenamiento "Iglesias en Desarrollo"

Esté atento para el  
entrenamiento  
de su zona este 2023

Iglesias saludables y fuertes se conforman por miembros espiritualmente maduros. Es por eso que queremos apoyar a nuestras iglesias para equiparlas en la obra del ministerio.

MÁS INFORMACIÓN EN

[sbcv.org/entrenamiento](http://sbcv.org/entrenamiento)

# equipada CONFERENCIA DE MUJERES

REVIVE! • ISAÍAS 43:19

No quieres perderte un excelente tiempo de aprendizaje, alabanza, oración y comunión con otras mujeres. Este evento será totalmente gratis, trae a tus amigas y mujeres de tu iglesia.

18 de Febrero de 2023  
Mount Pleasant Baptist Church  
Colonial Heights

ORADORA: MICHEL ISSA

No olvides registrarte siguiendo este link!  
[SBCV.ORG/EQUIPADA](http://SBCV.ORG/EQUIPADA)

# Suscríbete a PROCLAMANDO EN ESPAÑOL



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# INVIRTIENDO E IMPULSANDO A LA GENTE

**En** mayo de 2020 los líderes de nuestra convención se reunieron con el Dr. Troy Temple para soñar con la oportunidad de brindar educación superior a los líderes hispanos en Virginia y los estados circundantes. Estas reuniones se convirtieron en la cohorte hispana para una Maestría en Artes en Ministerios Cristianos. Estos estudiantes se comprometieron a venir al campus de Liberty University dos veces por semestre durante una semana completa. Tendrían clases intensivas con los profesores y trabajarían en sus tareas antes y después de la clase. Las clases se hacían en inglés, con algunas traducciones al español. Parte de la tarea se realizaba en los idiomas mencionados. Es un esfuerzo supremo escuchar una clase de posgrado en un idioma diferente al de tu lengua materna y estos estudiantes dieron lo mejor de sí. Dos años después Liberty



**Estoy agradecido de que SBCV haya invertido en nosotros para que podamos ser mejores líderes para nuestras congregaciones.**

University graduó a cinco líderes de SBCV, que forman parte de diferentes áreas de liderazgo, en nuestro estado.

El pastor Pablo Claros comenzó la maestría con el resto del grupo; sin embargo, mientras trabajaba en la maestría se enfermó y fue hospitalizado varias veces. Pensó que no podría terminar; no obstante, el grupo lo animó a continuar y





## La convención nos anima a estar en la misión y no sólo eso sino que proporciona las herramientas para lograrlo.

los profesores trabajaron con él para que pudiera entregar su tarea mientras estaba en el hospital. Antes de este programa Pablo fue misionero durante nueve años en Palabra de Vida Bolivia terminando una licenciatura en Liderazgo Pastoral en Liberty University.

En sus propias palabras la Maestría lo ayudó a recopilar toda la información bíblica y ministerial anterior y organizarla lo que proporcionó la estructura para su ministerio actual. “Estoy agradecido de que SBCV haya invertido en nosotros para que podamos ser mejores líderes para nuestras congregaciones. El programa de maestría me dió las herramientas para lograr una visión que Dios nos dió. Me siento preparado para pastorear la congregación que Dios me ha confiado.”

Justo después de que Claros terminó el programa lo invitaron a ayudar a una iglesia sin pastor; y, este fue el lugar donde pudo comenzar lo que había aprendido en los dos años que duró la Maestría. La **Iglesia Bautista El Camino** votó por Pablo para que sea su pastor en febrero de 2022. “Estoy agradecido por la inversión de SBCV y Liberty University en mí. Nuestra visión es ser una iglesia conectada al servicio de nuestra comunidad en Richmond y convertirnos en una iglesia que se une a otras iglesias para ayudarlas a cumplir la misión.”

El Pastor Luiggi Reggiardo ha sido el pastor de la **Primera Iglesia Bautista de Woodbridge** por más

de 20 años. En años anteriores el pastor Luiggi había soñado con ir a Liberty University lo que le parecía un sueño lejano. Cuando lo invitaron a formar parte de la cohorte no podía creer lo que estaba sucediendo. Gracias a Visión Virginia este pastor ha podido cumplir uno de sus deseos y crecer en su ministerio. “Los pastores necesitan seguir aprendiendo para poder enseñar mejor. Estoy agradecido de haber sido parte de este fantástico programa. Me dieron herramientas sobre cómo desarrollar discípulos y programas de discipulado, grupos pequeños, evangelismo y consejería pastoral.” El pastor Luiggi está a punto de comenzar un programa de grupos pequeños en su iglesia ¡habiendo un entusiasmo en la congregación sobre lo que se avecina! También quiso animar a los pastores a no desistir de la visión y los sueños que Dios nos ha dado, “hay muchas oportunidades para seguir creciendo, necesitamos pedir, involucrarnos y buscar, si buscamos hallaremos.”

“Quiero agradecer a la SBCV por caminar con nosotros durante este tiempo. Realmente sientes que no estás solo. La convención nos anima a estar en la misión y no sólo eso sino que proporciona las herramientas para lograrlo.” ■

*Imagen de Fondo de izquierda a derecha:*

*Pablo Claros, Diego Buchamer, and Isaías Rocha*

# INVESTING in and ELEVATING Others

**In** May of 2020, SBCV leaders met with Dr. Troy Temple (dean of the School of Divinity at Liberty University) to dream about the chance of providing higher education for Hispanic leaders in Virginia and surrounding states. These dreams developed into the Hispanic cohort for a Master of Arts in Christian Ministries. These students committed to spending a week on Liberty University's campus twice a semester. They would have intensive classes with the professors and work on their homework before and after the class. The classes were done in English, with some translations into Spanish, and part of the homework was done in English and part in Spanish. It was a tremendous effort to listen to a graduate class in a different language than your mother tongue, and these students gave their best. Two years later, five SBCV leaders who are involved in different areas of ministry



**I am grateful that SBCV invested in us so that we can be better leaders for our congregations.**

in our state graduated from the cohort with a master's degree.

Pastor Pablo Claros began in the cohort with the rest of the group, but he got sick and was hospitalized several times. He thought he would not be able to finish, but the group encouraged him to continue, and the professors worked with





## The convention encourages us to be on the mission, and not only that, but it provides the tools to accomplish it.

him to enable him to submit his homework while he was in the hospital. Before this program, Pablo was a missionary for nine years with Word of Life Bolivia, and he completed a bachelor's in pastoral leadership at Liberty University.

Pastor Claros explained how the master's degree helped him gather all the previous biblical and ministry information and organize it in a way that provided the structure for his present ministry. "I am grateful that SBCV invested in us so that we can be better leaders for our congregations. The master's program gave me the tools to accomplish a vision that God gave us. I feel prepared to shepherd the congregation God has entrusted me."

Right after Claros finished the program, he was invited to help a church without a pastor, and he was able to use what he had learned in the two years he'd been studying. In February 2022, **Iglesia Bautista El Camino** voted for him to be its pastor. "I am grateful for SBCV's and Liberty University's investment in me. Our vision is to be a connected church serving our community in Richmond and to become a church that comes alongside other churches to help them accomplish the mission."

Pastor Luiggi Reggiardo has been the pastor of **Primera Iglesia Bautista de Woodbridge** for more than 20 years. In years past, Reggiardo

had dreamt about going to Liberty University, but it seemed like a distant reality. When he was invited to be part of the cohort, he couldn't believe his dream was coming true. Thanks to the Vision Virginia Offering, this pastor has been able to fulfill a desire and be sharpened in his ministry. "Pastors need to keep learning so they can teach better, and I am grateful that I was part of this fantastic program. I was given tools on how to develop disciples and discipleship programs, small groups, evangelism, and pastoral counseling."

Pastor Reggiardo is about to start a small group program in his church, and there is a buzz in the congregation about what's coming! Reggiardo also wants to encourage pastors not to give up on the vision and dreams God has given them. "There are many opportunities to keep growing. We need to ask, get involved, and seek, and we shall find."

"I want to thank SBCV for walking with us during this time. You really feel you are not alone. The convention encourages us to be on the mission, and not only that, but it provides the tools to accomplish it." ■

*Background photo, left to right: Pablo Claros, Diego Buchamer, and Isaías Rocha*

# CALENDAR 2022

## NOVEMBER

- 12 Imitate: College Serve Day (A Bless the Valley Event), Fellowship CC, Salem and surrounding mission sites
- 13-15 Annual Homecoming, First BC, Roanoke

## DECEMBER

- 4-11 Lottie Moon Week of Prayer

# CALENDAR 2023

## JANUARY

- 4-7 IMB Missions College, International Learning Center, Rockville
- 13-14 Youth Evangelism Conference (YEC), London Bridge BC, Virginia Beach
- 18 Church Planting Residency Builder, Central Region
- 23-24 Pastors' Prayer Retreat, SBC of Virginia Ministry Support Center, Glen Allen
- 23-26 NAMB Catch the Vision Tour, Puerto Rico
- 28 Entrenamiento Iglesias en Desarrollo
- 31 Send Network Virginia Summit, Central Region

## FEBRUARY

- 1 Virginia March for Life, Richmond
- 12-18 Pastor Mission Vision Tour, Dakar, Senegal
- 13-15 Churches Planting Churches Catch the Vision Tour, Hampton Roads
- 18 Conferencia de Mujeres Equipadas, Mount Pleasant BC, Colonial Heights
- 25 Equip Women's Conference, Bethel BC, Yorktown
- 28 Taller de Asimilamiento, Lynchburg

## MARCH

- 2-3 Church Planter Assessment Retreat, The Heights BC, Colonial Heights
- 4 Kids Ministry Conference, Swift Creek BC, Midlothian
- 11 Kids Ministry Conference, Fellowship CC, Salem
- 13-16 Seminary for a Day
- 17-18 Disaster Relief ICS/IMT Training
- 21 Student Ministry Leaders' Roundtable, SBC of Virginia Ministry Support Center
- 23 SBCV Tech Conference, Libertylive.Church, Hampton
- 25 IMB One Day (Mission Leader Training)
- 26-31 Pastor Mission Vision Tour, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 28-30 Prayer Summit Tour, Multiple Locations

## CHURCHES PLANTING CHURCHES

# Catch THE VISION TOURS

The best way to catch the vision for ministry in the places that need it most is to see the need for yourself. Catch the Vision Tours are designed to raise awareness of church planting opportunities across the state and build relationships with key ministry leaders.

### Hampton Roads

February 6-8, 2023

### Richmond Metro

April 17-19, 2023

### Washington, DC

May 10-12, 2023

### Harrisonburg

August 28-30, 2023

### Roanoke

October 23-25, 2023

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Foundation**



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with Gallelujah

JUNE 16-26, 2023

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**North American  
Mission Board**

**SBC of Virginia Goal:  
\$1.4 Million**



BRANDON PICKETT

✉ [bpickett@sbcv.org](mailto:bpickett@sbcv.org)

📘 [facebook.com/brandon.pickett](https://facebook.com/brandon.pickett)

🐦 [@brandonpick](https://twitter.com/brandonpick)



# His Strength

I recently had the privilege to lead worship with Parkway Baptist Church in Moseley, VA. One of the songs we were singing was, “Give Me Faith.” One of the sections wouldn’t leave my mind from the time I heard it, all through praise team rehearsal, and long afterwards: *“I may be weak, but Your Spirit’s strong in me. My flesh may fail, my God you never will.”*

In 2 Corinthians 12:9 (NKJV), Paul shares God’s promise—“My grace is sufficient for you, for





“

**His strength is made perfect in my weakness.”**

My strength is made perfect in weakness”—and Paul responds, “Therefore, most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

Something that the Lord keeps showing me is that life is not about my weakness, which is so evident and always there. It’s not about trying to cover up my weakness all the time. It’s not about trying to work to my strength and minimize my weakness. It’s not about trying to muscle up and just get it done. It’s not about working harder, longer, or faster. That’s what the world tells us. That may even be what your parents taught you. But that’s not God’s way.

It’s about *His* strength, which is evident and always there. It’s about elevating and magnifying *His* strength, at all times—to live in the reality of *His* strength—to embrace *His* strength while acknowledging my weakness. In fact, the more I show and admit my weakness, I realize how much *His* strength can be seen.

We have been saying for years that *You are not alone*. And although that means that you are not alone because of the hundreds of churches and thousands of people that

can come alongside and pray for, work with, and support you, it wouldn’t mean a thing if the Lord wasn’t with us!

As I look back over not just 2022 but the more than 25 years of SBCV, I see how God’s presence provided power and protection for mission work, relief ministries, revitalization, church planting, and evangelism. When 800-plus churches can come together, fully reliant on His presence, and in full humility of our own needs and the needs of others, it’s amazing what we see God do in and through us. Just read through the recent 2022 Ministry Report to see just a glimpse of what God did in only one year!

*His strength is made perfect in my weakness.*

What a truth that is! We not only have to acknowledge our weakness, but we also must live in that weakness—not hide it or be embarrassed by it. Instead, we need to understand that it’s in our weakness where God shows up with His power. So, live simultaneously in your weakness and in His power—and watch His mighty hand move in your life, your church, and your entire community.

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**It’s not about working harder, longer, or faster. That’s what the world tells us. That may even be what your parents taught you. But that’s not God’s way.**



**SBCVirginia**

*You are not alone.*

**PROCLAIMER**

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