



Impacting The 804

The area code for much of Central Virginia is 804. When churches consider reaching their Jerusalem with the Gospel and ministering in their local area, their area code often becomes a geographical boundary. In some cases, it is an avenue to set a God-sized goal, to broaden the reach of the local church, and to partner with other churches to accomplish more than they could alone.

The Heights Baptist Church in Colonial Heights has heeded the call to love and reach the residents, schools, and first responders and to partner with compassion ministries in the 804 area code. While this is an ongoing churchwide endeavor, they set aside particular days throughout the year for a larger impact.

The Heights' missions pastor, Wes Rose, reported that on one Saturday, 36 projects were completed with 564 church volunteers involved. The projects were divided among various ministries to show the love of Jesus in their community.

Projects included packing 1,560 bags of food for the Chesterfield Food Bank; preparing 674 food bags and 200 toiletry bags for the unsheltered; and making over 600 sandwiches. Donation sites collected two van loads of food, Gatorade, and water for a local ministry and three carloads of men's clothing to benefit a local clothes closet for the unsheltered. Another truck was filled with supplies for the Pregnancy Help Center of Chesterfield. Yet another truck was filled with school supplies and treat bags for teachers. The church delivered 720 handwritten notes to encourage teachers for the upcoming year. They also provided a barbecue meal for 110 first responders throughout Hopewell, Petersburg, and Richmond and for local DMV employees.

The day also included ministering to shut-in church members and neighbors in need with around 30 baskets of goodies. The church family helped refurbish homes, provide lawn care, do yard work for local schools, and clear trails at a local Christian campsite. They visited nursing homes, and the sewing ministry made goods for upcoming international mission trips.

Pastor Rose said, "Work in our community doesn't end here. We have more opportunities to serve in other ways throughout the year." As a matter of fact, The Heights Baptist Church has a designated missions desk in the foyer for people to learn of opportunities and sign up to meet the needs.

SBCV Student Fusion Mission Camp Convenes in the 804

SBCV's 2023 Student Fusion Mission Camp brought 183 students, chaperones, and volunteers representing 18 churches to **Bethany Place Baptist Church** in North Chesterfield June 19–23. The days were filled with morning devotions, a sendoff rally into the mission field, mission projects, free time, evening worship, and church group time. **Parkway Baptist Church** (North Campus) in Chesterfield provided worship music, and Josh Weatherspoon, pastor of **The Way Church** in Glen Allen, was the guest preacher.

Student Fusion is designed to involve students in local missions. While gathering in the 804 area code, youth groups partnered with local churches and plants to minister to their members and the local community.

This year, Student Fusion included 10 projects, such as landscaping and cleaning at 3 public schools; maintenance projects at homes; prayer walking and canvassing

neighborhoods for 6 local churches; working with 2 partner ministries (The Fix Ministry and Noble Warriors Men's Ministry); and helping an international missionary family move into a mission house.

With the International Mission Board office located in the 804 area, students received a special treat—a tour of the headquarters in Richmond and the opportunity to learn about IMB's new initiative, Project 3000, from staff member, Kelly Zbinden (imb.org/missionary-explorer).

Bless the Tri-Cities of the 804 Preludes the SBCV Annual Homecoming

The 2023 SBCV Annual Homecoming will also take place at The Heights Baptist Church in Colonial Heights November 12–14. The day prior, Saturday, November 11, is set aside to partner with area churches and plants in mission projects for their church members and community. Because Annual Homecoming will be in the 804 area code this year, the mission focus will be on the tri-cities of Colonial Heights, Petersburg, and Hopewell, where many people live under the poverty level and/or are in need of food and shelter. Many in these cities are unreached, unsaved, and unchurched.

Bless the Tri-Cities Mission Day will encourage churches from around the state to partner with a local church or church plant in its ongoing ministry efforts. There are already 10 churches planning for this designated day of missions. If your church would partner with one of these churches in the 804, it would double the impact in the tri-cities. ■