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Proclaimer

SBCVirginia
You are not alone.

2026-2027
Winter
Volume 28 • Issue 3

Proclaimer

Winter 2026-2027
Volume 28 • Issue 3

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The SBC of Virginia 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.

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BULLETIN INSERTS — single and two-to-a-page



Stephen Cox
Thailand • November 8, 2026

Pray for Stephen Cox and his team as they share the Gospel in northern Thailand through the International Mission Board.

When Stephen first moved to Thailand, he often heard, "To be Thai is to be Buddhist." This is a region where fewer than one percent of people are evangelical Christians.

Many Thai believers shared that they grew up without access to the Gospel. Knowing most people in Thailand use social media, the team launched a digital outreach strategy to connect with hearts online.

They trained local believers to respond to online messages and follow up in person. Their first ad asked, "How can we pray for you?" It was a timely question during national tragedies, including flooding in Chiang Mai and a deadly school bus fire in Bangkok.

The ads acknowledged the brokenness and pointed people to the Gospel and disaster relief resources. One ad featured the testimony of a Thai believer. The campaign reached more than 980,000 people. Over 70,000 watched the testimony in full, and more than 500 responded, wanting to learn more.

Pray for Stephen and his team as they continue using digital tools to make the Gospel accessible across Thailand.

52 SUNDAYS

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SLIDE GRAPHICS — standard and wide-screen



Leo & Miosha Robinson
Montreal

52 SUNDAYS



52 SUNDAYS

Leanne Stack
Ukraine

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS

Connect the offering plate to the mission field.



From the Executive Director

bautry@sbcv.org brianautry.com facebook.com/brian.autry.70

As I think about the churches of the SBC of Virginia this fall, I keep returning to Acts 9:31:

> *"So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied."*

That verse gives us a compelling picture of the church. Churches were being strengthened, encouraged, and multiplied. But at the heart of that growth were two spiritual realities: the church was walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

As I have been praying on that verse the past month or so, two phrases come into focus for my prayers for churches: reverence for the Lord and reliance on the Holy Spirit. Two prayers I make for churches in Virginia, across America, and around the world.

Reverence for the Lord. To walk in the fear of the Lord means to live with a deep awareness of who God is. He is holy, sovereign, worthy of worship, and worthy of obedience. The early church understood that Jesus Christ is Lord and that the church belongs to Him.

Churches face pressures from every direction. Culture changes. Methods change. Technology changes. Communities change. Yet our foundation cannot change. God is still holy. His Word is still absolutely true. Jesus is still Lord. And the Gospel is still the power of God for salvation.

My prayer for SBCV churches is that we will be churches that walk in the fear of the Lord—churches that love inerrant God's Word, treasure the Gospel, pursue holiness, and seek above everything else to glorify Christ.

Second, we need **reliance on the Holy Spirit.** Acts 9:31 says the church walked "in the comfort of the Holy Spirit." The early believers were not advancing the mission of Christ in their own strength. They depended upon the Spirit to empower, encourage, guide, and sustain them.

So must we.

We believe in planning, leadership development, church planting, revitalization, missions, and wise stewardship. But none of those things can replace the power of the Holy Spirit.

We are absolutely dependent upon the Holy Spirit. Pastors depend on the Holy Spirit to preach with power and shepherd with wisdom. Church planters must depend on the Holy Spirit to establish new Gospel fellowships. Our next generation needs the Spirit of God to open their hearts to the truth of the Gospel. Our communities need more than better churches. They need churches filled with believers who are walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer is not merely something we do before ministry. Prayer is part of ministry because it declares our dependence upon the Lord. And then notice what happened in Acts 9:31: **the church multiplied.** The believers revered the Lord, relied upon the Spirit, and God brought the increase. Every story you read in this magazine that mentions church health, planting, missions, and ministry progress is all because of the Lord. To God be the glory. God's Word and our mission have not changed—Let's go!

That is my prayer for the SBC of Virginia. May we walk in reverence for the Lord, minister in reliance upon the Holy Spirit, and trust God to multiply His church across Virginia and around the world.

Your brother in Christ,

Brian Autry

MINISTRY & EVENTS | 2026 2027

November

8-10 **Annual Homecoming**
The Heights BC, South Chesterfield

21 **Discipulado Biblico Relacional**
Thomas Road BC, Lynchburg

29-12/6 **Week of Prayer for International Missions & Lottie Moon Christmas Offering**

December

11/29-12/6 **Week of Prayer for International Missions & Lottie Moon Christmas Offering**

7 **Coaching Map**
Ministry Support Center, Glen Allen

7-8 **Church Plant Training**
Ministry Support Center, Glen Allen

January

12 **Send Network Connect**
Roanoke

14 **Send Network Connect**
Richmond

15-16 **Youth Evangelism Conference**
London Bridge BC, Virginia Beach

19 **Send Network Connect**
Springfield

19 **Send Network Connect**
Norfolk

24 **Sanctity of Life Sunday**

26 **Noble Warriors Leaders Conference**
Staples Mill Road BC, Glen Allen

February

20 **Noble Warriors Men's Conference**
Parkway on the Mountain, Roanoke

20 **Seminario por un Dia**
Ministry Support Center, Glen Allen

23 **Winter Bible Conference**
Fincastle BC, Fincastle

March

6 **Kids Ministry Conference**
Swift Creek BC, Midlothian

6 **Noble Warriors Men's Conference**
Spotswood BC, Fredericksburg

9 **Send Network Connect**
Roanoke

11 **Send Network Connect**
Richmond

13 **Kids Ministry Conference**
Northstar Church, Blacksburg

13 **DR Round Up**

16 **Send Network Connect**
Springfield

16 **Send Network Connect**
Norfolk

20 **Kids Ministry Conference**
Kempsville BC, Virginia Beach

20 **Noble Warriors Men's Conference**
The Chapel, Richmond

28 ***Easter***

STAY UP TO DATE
by scanning this QR or by visiting **sbcv.org/calendar**.

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

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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.

Torrential rain struck north-central West Virginia in July 2026, catastrophic flash flooding devastated communities. SBCV Disaster Relief volunteers helped residents recover.

View the Disaster Relief video at:
tinyurl.com/DR-BuckinghamWV



First-Time Volunteers

When torrential rain struck north-central West Virginia in July, catastrophic flash flooding devastated communities, including Buckhannon and Weston. Roads were washed out, homes flooded, and lives were lost. In the weeks that followed, SBC of Virginia Disaster Relief volunteers arrived to help residents recover.

For several volunteers, this was their first deployment.

Gloria Williams of **Unity Baptist Church** in Prince George had been Disaster Relief certified for three years but had never deployed. A self-described "extreme introvert," Williams was stepping well outside her comfort zone.

"Going anywhere without my husband was very overwhelming for me," she said. She also worried about not knowing what to do or how to do it.

Keith Noell of **Fellowship Community Church** in Salem understood those concerns. "I was anxious about everything because I had never been before," he said. "My wife reminded me that it was a step of faith."

What Williams and Noell found were organized teams, meaningful work, and homeowners deeply grateful for their presence. Team Leader Darryl Klopp of **Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church** in Boston, Virginia watched the transformation unfold.

"Not knowing what to expect can be an obstacle," Klopp said. "But by the end of the week, they were excited and fired up to come back."

First-time chaplain Leon Bryant of **First Baptist Church of Norfolk** had concerns of his own. Because of physical limitations, Bryant wondered whether he would be



accepted as part of the team. Instead, he found himself immediately welcomed. “I just blended in, and it was just like we had known each other forever,” Bryant said.

Bryant went on to have a fruitful week of ministry, personally leading two survivors to faith in Christ.

Asked what he would say to other trained volunteers who may be hesitant to deploy, Bryant encouraged them to simply trust God and take the first step. God will provide what is needed. He compared it to sharing Christ: “Don’t worry about what you are going to talk about. God’s gonna give you the words for the conversation.”

Over two weeks, SBCV Disaster Relief volunteers contributed more than 600 hours of service, completed dozens of work orders, and saw three people place their faith in Christ.

Williams returned home with a similar challenge, “Just take that first step of faith. God will do the rest of it.” ●









Jesus Is the Builder

By Dr. Doug Echols

This year marks my 28th year serving as a pastor of a local church. During that time, God has given me the privilege of pastoring three churches within the SBCV. Each of these churches holds a special place in my heart. When I think about these churches, I am immediately reminded of Jesus' words in Matthew 16:18.

Jesus states, *"…I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* This powerful verse reminds us of three important truths about Jesus and His church.

First, **Jesus is the builder of His church**. We have some wonderful pastors in our convention of churches who are gifted in many ways. I thank God for each of these pastors and their churches. However, the church is not built by pastors, elders, or deacons. Jesus is the church's master builder and the cornerstone (Eph. 2:19-21). Any church built on a different foundation will ultimately fail.

Second, **Jesus promises to build his church**. The church is not the brick and mortar but the "ekklesia," or "the called-out ones." I thank God for the churches of the SBCV and for those I have been part of throughout my life. I was saved, baptized, and called into the ministry at Zion Hill Baptist Church in Fincastle, Virginia. Zion Hill is a rural church founded in 1833. I currently serve at Bethel Baptist Church in Yorktown, Virginia. Bethel is in a suburban community that serves many military families and professionals. These churches differ in many ways, but both are churches that Jesus promises to build.

Finally, **Jesus promises that the church would be an unstoppable force**: "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." There have been many attempts to halt the spread of the Gospel, from the early church in the book of Acts to the present day. Every one of those attempts has ultimately failed. There is nothing that can stop Jesus' church!

Let us thank the Father for the church that Jesus builds. I pray that we will be encouraged, knowing that as we advance the Gospel together, nothing can prevail against His church! ●



Pastor Doug Echols, Senior Pastor at Bethel Baptist Church in Yorktown and President of the SBC of Virginia.

First-time in the United States: *Spanish Residency Builder Training*

THE NEED TO PLANT CHURCHES IS URGENT.

There are approximately 68 million Hispanics and Latinos in the United States, meaning nearly one in five people in the country is Hispanic or Latino. In Virginia, Hispanics and Latinos make up approximately 11% to 12% of the population, representing more than one million people. Given this reality, the need to plant churches is urgent.

The SBC of Virginia firmly believes in the biblical principle found in 2 Timothy 2:2:

> *"What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."*

This passage calls us to raise up leaders through sound doctrine, mentorship, guidance, and pastoral care. As these leaders are equipped for ministry, they can be sent to engage communities with the Gospel, make disciples, and plant new churches. In partnership with Send Network, the SBCV has spent several years developing strategies to reach Hispanics across North America and has invested resources in Spanish language ministry.

The SBCV's Hispanic Ministry along with Send Network Español are working together to reach communities and cities through church planting. This challenge is significant because Hispanic churches often have fewer leaders with an established Southern Baptist Convention ministry track record than many English-speaking churches. In response to this need, the Spanish-language residency movement was born.

For the first time in the United States, Residency Builder training was offered in Spanish, with Virginia serving as the host location. During the Residency Builder, church leaders are equipped to walk alongside someone who may be called to plant a new church. Through hands-on ministry experience, biblical and theological training, mentorship, leadership development, and active participation in the church's mission, candidates receive the preparation needed for future church planting.

The event helped Southern Baptist churches launch training and mentoring pro-

68 million

UNITED STATES

There are approximately 68 million Hispanics and Latinos in the United States. Nearly **one in five people** in the country are Hispanic or Latino.





VIRGINIA

In Virginia, Hispanics and Latinos make up approximately **11% to 12% of the population**, representing more than one million people.

1 million

SBCV's Hispanic Ministry and Send Network Español are working together to reach communities and cities through church planting.

grams for new church planting candidates.

The training was conducted through a partnership between Send Network Virginia and Send Network Español. Ten churches from Virginia, Florida, and West Virginia participated in the two-day event held March 6-7, 2026. Church leaders came eager to learn a system to better equip future church planters.

Pastor Henry, a church multiplication leader in West Virginia, drove more than six hours to attend. He said the training gave him the vision to implement a new residency program at his church.

Likewise, Pastor Víctor Turcios of **Iglesia El Sembrador** in Chesapeake already has a candidate preparing to enter a Spanish-language residency in the Hampton Roads area.

The challenge is great, but so is the opportunity. Millions of Hispanics need to hear the Gospel. The impact extends beyond a single trained church planter. The goal is to raise up leaders who will be sent out to make disciples, develop new leaders, and help plant new churches, multiplying Gospel impact for generations to come. ●

FOR THE FIRST TIME in the United States, **Residency Builder training was offered in Spanish**, with Virginia serving as the host location.

KOREAN *Church Planting* REVIVAL

While Korean-speaking churches are the third-largest language group within the Commonwealth of Virginia and the SBC of Virginia, there have been no new Korean churches started in the past ten years. But something has changed.

Daniel Ko, Korean Church Fellowship Coordinator with the SBC of Virginia, reports that multiple prayer gatherings focused on ministry to second-generation Koreans have been held. In the fall of 2025, six Korean-speaking believers joined a cohort to consider church planting. After years without Korean church-planting candidates, six Korean-speaking candidates attended a church-planting assessment in spring 2026. Several of these candidates also intend to plant English-speaking, multicultural churches focused on second-generation Koreans. One candidate, Myungho Joo, recently launched **Washington IEUM Baptist Church** in Springfield, which will focus on first-generation Koreans.

In April, Send Network Virginia held its first Korean Church Planting Assessment, during which three church planter candidates and their spouses were assessed by a team of veteran Korean ministry leaders. Most of the assessors and sending churches had never been involved in planting a church. Through their combined efforts, six Korean churches are now directly involved in church planting. These churches include **Labri Baptist Church** in Washington D.C., **Jerusalem Baptist Church** in Fairfax Station, **Peninsula Korean Baptist Church** in Newport News, **Jerusalem Korean Baptist Church** in Fairfax, **Virginia Korean Baptist Church** in Fairfax Station, and **Washington Mongolian Church** in Arlington.

One assessor, Luke Do, pastor of Peninsula Korean Baptist Church, said his experience during the assessment motivated him to return and encourage his church to become a sending church. Another sending pastor apologized for previously focusing too exclusively on his local church and isolating himself within a Korean ministry context. He promised to tell other Korean pastors not to plant churches alone, but instead to do it in partnership with other

> “…God has sent all the nations here to Virginia. **I can be a missionary, right now**, to all the nations.”

SBCV churches and receive support from Send Network Virginia.

Recently at the Church Planter Family Day, Soyoung Joo, the wife of church planter Myungho Joo, explained the impact of working in partnership versus ministering alone: “I used to think perhaps God would send me to different nations as a missionary. Today, when I saw all the people from so many different nations at the Church Planting Family Day, it touched my heart and made me realize that God has sent all the nations here to Virginia. I can be a missionary, right now, to all the nations. Also, I feel stronger in my role because we are all partners together to reach the nations.” ●



More than 40 attendees are being trained in evangelism methods.



Pastor Yong Cho of Jerusalem Korean Baptist Church. This church provided assessors and partnership for some of the new Korean church planters.



Church Planter Myungho Joo leads one of the first services for Washington IEUM Baptist Church.

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MISSION PROJECTS 2027

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SUPPORTING PREGNANCY RESOURCE CENTERS

Support your local Pregnancy Resource Center by learning about their current needs and how your family, small group, or church can get involved. These centers play a vital role in communities across Virginia. Also, join us in April for the March for Life in Richmond—gather a group and take a stand for life!

SBCV.ORG/FORLIFE

MISSION PROJECTS provide opportunities for families, small groups, and churches to engage their community and serve others for the glory of God.

You weren't meant
to do ministry alone.

Send Network *Connect*

Send Network Connect brings together church planters, spouses, and local pastors for practical training, honest conversations, and Gospel-centered partnerships and training that help reach more communities with the hope of Christ.

SBCV.ORG/SNCONNECT

JANUARY
12 ROANOKE
14 RICHMOND
19 SPRINGFIELD & NORFOLK

MARCH
9 ROANOKE
11 RICHMOND
16 SPRINGFIELD & NORFOLK

NOBLE WARRIORS. LEADER'S CONFERENCE

2027

NOBLE WARRIORS. MEN'S CONFERENCE

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noblewarriors.org

January 26
Leader's Conference
Richmond, VA



Fred Luter | Will Basham | Scott McConnell

February 20
Roanoke Men's Conference



Duce Branch | Tom Joyce

March 6
Fredericksburg Men's Conference



Crawford Loritts | Wil Moore

March 20
Richmond Men's Conference



Danny Akin | Bryan Loritts



LEVERAGING A LITTLE BIT OF summer

Together, campers engage through a variety of servant ministry projects.

Family Fusion Camp will be renamed in 2027: **FAMILY IMPACT WEEKEND.**

More information coming soon!

Every summer, the SBC of Virginia hosts two distinct camps: Student Fusion Camp for students and Family Fusion Camp for families. Both camps emphasize servant evangelism by providing training, resources, and ministry opportunities that equip participants to share their faith and serve local communities effectively.

Fusion Camps aim to build lasting Gospel partnerships with local churches and community organizations, all centered on sharing the love of Jesus. These partnerships include serving alongside SBCV church plants and churches in revitalization, praying for and serving their neighbors through food distribution, community block parties, and special events, as well as prayer walking and canvassing. These partnerships also involve working with community service organizations and local schools to meet community needs and to strengthen partnerships with churches, creating additional ministry opportunities that continue after the camps conclude. In addition, teams deliver treat trays to local first responders and pray over them with care. Through these ministry projects and many others, students and families are encouraged to step out in faith, be courageous, and share the Gospel with others. Each summer, churches and communities are impacted by the compassionate ministry of Fusion Camps.

Student ministries and families who participate in Fusion Camps benefit by being equipped to share the









Gospel and their faith in Christ with others. This equipping not only helps during the camp but also extends well beyond it, fostering ongoing ministry within their home churches and communities. Camp participants also engage in ministry together, applying what they've learned through a variety of servant ministry projects. Additionally, participants are spiritually encouraged through daily devotional materials, worship services, and dedicated time with their church groups and families. These opportunities allow them to study God's Word and worship together as part of the broader Body of Christ.

The overall prayer for Fusion Camps is that the Lord would use these opportunities to provoke students and families alike to grow in their love for Christ and in good deeds done in His name (Hebrews 10:24). Fusion Camps create a unique opportunity for students and families to experience a fresh encounter with the living God and, out of the overflow of that encounter, to passionately share Christ while humbly serving others. It is a blessing to provide opportunities for the now and next generations to be equipped to share Christ, engage in ministry together, and be encouraged as they continue to grow in their relationship with King Jesus! ●



You can view the 2026 Student Fusion Highlight video by scanning this QR or by going to: vimeo.com/1212383665

What Happens When the Bottom Falls Out?



As believers, we are reminded that "all things work together for the good of those who love God: those who are called according to His purpose." ROMANS 8:28, CSB

"Not alone" is a thread that has run through every part of who we are as the SBC of Virginia. In fact, it is at the core of our identity. Our mission is to come alongside local churches as they reach their neighbors and the nations with the Good News of Jesus. We walk with churches as they are planted, revitalized, mobilized, and engaged in ministry. But what happens when the bottom falls out? When everything falls apart? What about congregations that have worshiped and served together for decades, only to find themselves divided, hurting, and hopeless, feeling completely alone?

This is where the beauty of partnership and the relationship between a church and the SBCV shine most brightly.

That was exactly the situation **Thomas Village Baptist Church** in Duffield faced. Everything the congregation had known about Thomas Village was suddenly different. A close-knit church family of more than 40 years found itself divided, grieving, and deeply wounded.

Dr. Jeff Iorg, speaking on leading through major change, said, "When going through major change, people grieve just as they do when they lose a loved one, and grieving people don't think right." With that reality in mind, the regional strategist went to work, knowing that the members who remained at Thomas Village would need intentional leadership during the interim period.

That is exactly what the Lord provided: a seasoned retired pastor who could help a grieving congregation rediscover hope and health through prayer and the Gospel message.

Pastor Don Paxton began serving as interim pastor at Thomas Village in January 2026. He led prayer gatherings and walked alongside church members as they pursued forgiveness and healing. Soon, healing began, and hope started to grow. New faces appeared in worship services, and people began professing new life in Christ.

By February, the church was celebrating the baptisms of new believers. By mid-summer, 13 new believers had been baptized and were becoming part of the life of the church.

Deacon Keith Roach said, "I haven't seen anything like this since the church's early days over 40 years ago. I believe what we have gone through was just the Lord pruning the church so it would produce more than before."

That is certainly what Jesus taught in John 15.

Otis Bowen, who has served as a deacon for more than 40 years, said, "You can feel the Lord at work here, and you can feel that the love we have for one another is real."

As believers, we are reminded that "all things work together for the good of those who love God: those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28, CSB).

Even when the bottom falls out, you are not alone. Lean into your partnership with the SBC of Virginia. Intentional transitional ministry may be one way the Lord brings healing and hope to your church. ●

You are not alone.

NOW We're Going



> We have **prayed**.
>
> We have **given**.
>
> Now we are **going**."

This is how Pastor Adam Blosser sums up the way **Goshen Baptist Church** in Spotsylvania has grown in its missions engagement over the past 10 years since his arrival as senior pastor. Throughout its 154-year history, Goshen has been a faithful Great Commission church, even seeing former pastors such as Rob Moore sent through the International Mission Board (IMB) to the nations. Faithful members like Linda Shrum have served on the Standing Rock Reservation in the Dakotas.

Today, however, is a new day as Goshen expands their global footprint and endeavors to play an important role in reaching the unreached and seeing churches planted in Virginia, in North America, and to the ends of the earth.

Pastor Adam has led the church to raise their eyes and see the fields that are white unto harvest.

"The call to take the Gospel to our neighbors and the nations has been a huge emphasis for our church over the last 10 years. While our giving to missions increased almost immediately and has continued increasing, building real, meaningful mission partnerships took more time, and we are really just beginning to see that effort flourish. We celebrated our 150th church anniversary in 2022. At that time, we adopted a 5-10 year vision for our church with specific goals covering all areas of church life. A big part of that was national and international missions," Blosser explains. And the goals are robust.







Within the United States

✓ **Plant a new church.** Play a significant role in planting one new church by the end of 2027 and a total of three new churches by the end of 2032.

✓ **Respond to natural disasters.** Send church members through the SBC of Virginia Disaster Relief to respond to three natural disasters by the end of 2027 and ten natural disasters by the end of 2032.

Around the World

✓ **Establish mission partnerships** in two locations around the world. This includes partnering with local churches and long-term missionaries and involves short-term trips.

✓ **Adopt an unreached people group.** Adopt one unreached people group to focus on praying for and reaching with the Gospel.

✓ **Mission education.** Establish a means of mission education within the church.

So how is it going?

Pastor Adam says the church is now reviewing their progress as the church approaches its 155th anniversary.

"We currently have two international partnerships and two national church planting partnerships."

The church adopted the S family, who are Virginia IMB workers serving in Southeast Asia, that needed church and pastoral care. Pastor Adam visited them in November 2025, and the church actively prays for and supports their work. Another IMB couple from Virginia is working in North Africa, and Goshen has been praying for their work and is preparing to visit them soon. The church is also preparing to adopt the unreached people group this couple is working to reach.

Locally, Goshen is a major partner of Impact Church in Fredericksburg, led by Pastor Brandon Hembree and his family.

"They met in our building for a time when they were first assembling their core team. We support them financially. We pray for them regularly. And we have done ministry together some here in the area," Pastor Adam recalls.

Goshen's church planting involvement also extends beyond Virginia.

In November 2023, Blosser joined a vision trip to Puerto Rico with SBCV pastors and connected with church planter Christian Acevedo. In 2025, Goshen took its first partnership trip to Puerto Rico and began financially supporting the work of Iglesia Bautista Castillo Fuerte in Gurabo. That relationship continues to flourish.

What about Disaster Relief?

The church has a long history of serving others and has recently sent several teams to Mountain City, Tennessee, to serve alongside SBCV Disaster Relief and Rebuild teams. And all of these partnerships are happening simultaneously.

On August 16, 2026, Goshen Baptist celebrated what the Lord is doing through Great Commission Partnerships as three teams had served in one month around the globe.

The Lord has called every church of every size and every age to faithfulness to the Great Commission. This task requires every church to play its part.

At Goshen Baptist Church, about 103 average weekly worship attendees are partnering with churches, church plants, and missionaries to play their role. And the church gets to reap the benefits as well. Pastor Adam remarked, "I am very excited about what God is doing in our church through our missions efforts both nationally and internationally." ●

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

If your church wants to take the next step in Great Commission faithfulness, contact your Missions Mobilization Team.

missions@sbcv.org



A Gospel Invasion Around the Corner



Gospel Acres ‘26

On Saturday, July 27, 2026, more than 50 missionaries from **Muddy Creek Baptist Church** (MCBC) in Powhatan converged at Cozy Acres Campgrounds. Muddy Creek and the owners of Cozy Acres partnered to host an afternoon of ministry for about 160 campers. The goal was simple: to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with campers through actions and words. The event was called Gospel Acres ‘26.

How did it happen? It began when the Holy Spirit prompted the church to seek a local, hands-on mission opportunity for the entire church. Muddy Creek is a rural church surrounded by farmland, yet a popular campground is less than eight miles away. Some people visit for a weekend, some for a week, while others stay long-term. In many ways, it functions like a small town, filled with hundreds of adults and children whom the church can reach with the hope of God’s kingdom.

Some people need prayer, others need encouragement, a listening ear, or a clear presentation of the saving Gospel of grace. All of them need to experience God’s tangible love. This became the mission focus. The church trusted that God would lead the people He wanted to come to Cozy Acres that weekend and prepare their



hearts just as He prepared church members.

Initially, prayer focused on seeking God's direction for carrying out this outreach. Because God often exceeds our limited expectations and requests, the church prayed boldly and planned boldly. With that mindset, one decision was easy: this would be a targeted outreach, exclusively for campers rather than a community-wide event. They believed God was sending them to reach the campers at that place on that day.

Preparation included constant prayer, evangelism training for the church, planning meetings with Cozy Acres leadership, church meetings, and countless other details. Special t-shirts were designed for every missionary to wear. This made it easy for campers to identify someone they could approach for prayer, spiritual conversations, questions about the Gospel, or simply friendship.

What did the outreach look like on Saturday, July 27?

The event took place in a large, beautiful barn-style building. Muddy Creek missionaries arrived early to pray, review the plan, form ministry teams, and complete setup. Excitement filled the air as they looked to God to move among them.

The event began at 4:00 PM with live music and concluded at 7:00 PM with another set of live music and worship. Throughout the evening, a catered dinner from a local barbecue restaurant was served, followed by ice cream for dessert. The church went all out!

One tent offered giveaways, including Bibles, copies of the Gospel of John, Gospel tracts, and other resources. Another tent provided free T-shirts designed specifically for campers, both adults and children, to remember the event and their experience. Campers love collecting shirts from their adventures, and Muddy Creek wanted to give them something personal, memorable, and Gospel-centered.

They also distributed ministry materials as people arrived. Our children's ministry team arrived prepared with activities and gifts for children to take home.



When the evening ended, Muddy Creek missionaries were filled with joy, and campers had experienced the love of Christ and heard about His saving work. When a church's heart burns for the lost, this kind of ministry is like gasoline on a fire.

Churches should take a close look at the missions opportunities around them. If they do not immediately see any, they should keep praying. Continue praying until the Lord of the Harvest reveals it. He has already told us that the harvest is ready. Let us be the workers who enter the fields with sickles in hand and encouragement on our lips. ●



A Meal, a Mission, and an Open Door

Congregations are demonstrating the beauty of ***Gospel partnerships*** by combining their time, resources, and people to reach an international mission field in Southeast Virginia.

Sometimes reaching the nations does not require crossing an ocean. Sometimes it simply means driving a few miles on Interstate 64 with a meal in the back seat.

That is exactly what members of **Peninsula Chinese Baptist Church** (PCBC) in Yorktown, Virginia, have been doing as they invest in Chinese students studying at William & Mary. Week after week, volunteers make the trip from Yorktown to Williamsburg, preparing home-cooked meals, building friendships, and creating opportunities to share the hope of Christ with students who are far from home.

What makes this ministry especially encouraging is that it has become a collaborative effort among several Chinese Baptist churches across Hampton Roads. Together, these congregations demonstrate the beauty of Gospel partnership by combining their time, resources, and people to reach an international mission field that God has brought to Southeast Virginia. The ministry reflects Peninsula Chinese Baptist Church's long-standing commitment to serving Chinese students in the Williamsburg area through Bible study, fellowship, and discipleship.

For many students, the weekly gathering offers much more than dinner. It provides a welcoming community, genuine friendships, and a place to ask life's biggest questions. Around the table, conversations naturally move from academics and life in America to the good news of Jesus Christ.

Paul, a leader from PCBC, shares, "Brothers and sisters in the church see how God has brought the mission field to our

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...”

Matthew 28:19, CSB



doorstep. We are blessed with the opportunity to share the Gospel with these students and to be co-laborers. God gives the growth, and we give Him the glory!”

This ministry is a powerful reminder that God is bringing the nations to our neighborhoods. International students often arrive knowing few people and searching for community. Through simple acts of hospitality, faithful churches have the privilege of introducing them to the love of Christ.

As Southern Baptists, we celebrate partnerships like this because they embody the Cooperative Program spirit, not simply working alongside one another, but joining together to accomplish more for the Kingdom than any one church could accomplish alone.

The nations are coming to Virginia. Faithful churches are opening their doors, setting another place at the table, and trusting God to change lives, one meal, one conversation, and one friendship at a time. ●

Send Network CONNECT: Better Together

Together, we can *reach* more.

Together, we can *send* more.

Together, we can *plant* more churches.

CHURCH PLANTING was never meant to happen alone, and church planters were never meant to serve alone.

Healthy church planting depends on strong relationships among church planters, established pastors, churches, spouses, and ministry partners who share a common mission. That spirit of partnership is at the heart of Send Network Connects, these gatherings are designed to bring church planters, their wives, and local pastors together for encouragement, meaningful relationships, and timely, practical training.

Together, we can reach more, send more, and we can plant more churches.

That kind of partnership is especially important as churches seek to reach communities across Virginia and around the world. Church planters need the encouragement and wisdom of established pastors, while established churches benefit from the passion and missional focus that planters often bring. When those relationships are strong, everyone benefits, and ultimately, the Kingdom advances.

These two-hour gatherings provide an opportunity for pastors, planters, and spouses to talk honestly about the challenges they face in ministry and everyday life. Topics are timely and practical, addressing the realities of church planting, pastoral ministry, leadership, marriage, family, and mission.

Each Connect includes a speaker, question-and-an-

Church planting was never meant to happen alone, and church planters were never meant to serve alone.

swer time, prayer, and discussion, creating space not only for learning but also for building relationships with others serving in the same region.

Send Network Connects take place throughout Virginia in the Central, Northern Virginia, Southeast, and Valley regions, generally three times during the fall and spring. Lunch is served and may be enjoyed on-site, providing additional time for fellowship and connection. Participants who need to return to their families, churches, or communities may also take lunch to go.

The format is intentionally simple. The goal is not to create another large event to attend, but to create space for relationships to grow.

Church planting is stronger when planters know pastors, pastors know planters, spouses are encouraged, churches are connected, and everyone understands they are part of something bigger than themselves. In that sense, we gather together, grow together, and advance the mission together. ●

INTERESTED IN ADVANCING THE MISSION TOGETHER?

If you are interested in finding out how you can connect in your region, visit our website.

sbcv.org/snconnect

Because of your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now."

PHILIPPIANS 1:5 (ESV)


Arraigadas en Cristo
BIENVENIDAS
Arraigadas en CRISTO


MINISTERIO DE MUJERES



Arraigadas en Cristo

Rooted in Christ

The SBC of Virginia Hispanic Women's Conference, Arraigadas en Cristo, was more than a women's event. It was a powerful movement of God in the hearts of more than 400 women.

Without a doubt, a gathering of sisters in Christ brings joy and encouragement. Yet when that fellowship is combined with the blessing of seeing lives transformed, filled with hope, and strengthened through God's Word, it becomes more than an event. It becomes a visible expression of God's grace poured out among His people.

This year, attendees had the special privilege of hearing from Cathy Sheraldi de Núñez, a physician and international conference speaker. Sheraldi de Núñez challenged Hispanic women to live for the glory of God in a world that often stands in opposition to His divine design.

While preparing for the conference, the ministry leaders prayed that through this conference everyone would be reminded of the importance of building their lives on a solid foundation.

"Being rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, and overflowing with gratitude." Colossians 2:7

Throughout preparation, the conference leaders prayed that through this conference the Word of God would be planted in the hearts of those who attended and bear fruit that is pleasing to Him. God is good, and His favor was evident every step of the way.

After participating in the breakout session, From Shame to Freedom in Christ, one sister commented, "You can take pictures of me now; I will not hide anymore." Others shared, "For a long time, I would say years, I spent complaining about doing everything at home. At Arraigadas en Cristo, I learned that I need to stop complaining and rejoice in the Lord." Another participant said, "At Arraigadas en Cristo, I learned that men and women have equal value, but our roles are different."

A group of women from New Jersey participated and reflected, "Each session strengthened our faith and truly left us renewed. We prayed and sang together, encouraged one another as pastors' wives, and shared testimonies of our struggles as we serve in ministry."

Another woman shared, "When I heard that the theme of the conference would be Rooted in Christ, I was very excited because I constantly struggle with the biblical design for marriage. One of the greatest changes God brought about in my heart was regarding leadership in my home. At this conference, I came to understand and appreciate God's perfect design for marriage."

May God continue to encourage, strengthen, and equip His people for His glory. •

> *"Being rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, and overflowing with gratitude."*
>
> Colossians 2:7

Prayer Partnership HAS CAMPUS IMPACT

On the National Day of Prayer in May 2025, church leaders from approximately 10 SBC of Virginia (SBCV) churches gathered to pray for the 40,000 students from 140 nations at George Mason University (GMU) in Fairfax, Virginia.

These church leaders' commitment to making a Gospel impact at George Mason has led them to gather on campus each month to pray for the university. As a result, there is much to celebrate in answered prayer.

Spiritual Conversations

Prayer partners have joined Kirk Kellogg, the lead pastor of **Bread of Life Church** in Alexandria, to engage students in spiritual conversations each week at a rented kiosk on campus. Hundreds of GMU students, including atheists, agnostics, Hindus, Muslims, Jews, and Baha'is, have heard the Gospel from these faithful ambassadors. Pastor Kirk shared that "two college students from a well-known Muslim country laughed giddily when they received the Gospel of John in Farsi."

Prayer, Friendship and Food

The Lord is also using partnership to strengthen Moses Duvvur's campus outreach. Duvvur is a GMU alumnus and a Send Network Virginia church planter. **Agape Church** in Chantilly primarily reaches students from India and South Asia with the Gospel through prayer,



friendship, evangelism, weekly food fellowship (serving approximately 80 to 100 meals each week), host-family connections, and intentional Gospel conversations. Duvvur asserts, "there are several GMU students who were initially reached through this ministry that are now actively participating and serving at Agape Church, becoming part of the church family and joining us in ministry." The GMU prayer team is praying not only for these students to come to Christ but also for disciples who will one day carry the Gospel back to India, South Asia, and other nations.

A Wrestling Connection

Daniel Ko, an elder at **Labri Baptist Church** in Fairfax, has met the spiritual battle head-on by serving as the wrestling team chaplain at GMU. God has exponentially expanded Ko's ministry from a single Bible study with one wrestler to two Bible studies, through which more than 20 wrestlers have professed faith in Jesus Christ. Several new believers on the team will be baptized at the third annual Burger Day, which Ko hosts for the wrestlers. Ko states, "The goal of his chaplaincy ministry is to make disciples who, in turn, make disciples of Jesus Christ."

Reaching the Next Generation

God has used prayer partnership to lead **Calvary Hill Fellowship Church** in Fairfax and to send Henry Jung to plant a campus church at GMU. Pastor Jung, a GMU alumnus, is passionate about reaching the next generation and the nations at George Mason University through this Gospel partnership among churches.

Pushing Back the Darkness Through Partnership

From a missional perspective, George Mason University presents a unique opportunity to push back darkness among the nations, the next generation, and people from a wide variety of religious backgrounds. God is using the prayers of His people to send laborers into this harvest field and to transform lives through the power of the Gospel. Please pray that churches throughout the Fairfax area will continue to pray and partner together so that lasting Gospel impact will continue to be seen on the campus of George Mason University. ●



Making Connections & Showing Up

A Church Planting Vision Tour









A Journey from Cooperating to Supporting to Sending

In April 2025, Pastor Sam Knaus went on a Send Network Virginia church planting vision tour in the Washington, D.C., metro area. As pastor of **First Southern Baptist Church** in Hurt, Virginia, he was looking for ways to connect his church more directly to the mission it had always supported through its cooperative giving.

Like all pastors, Knaus and the team of elders at First Southern Baptist Church (FSBC) were looking for ways to remind their church of the bigger mission. They found those connections right in their backyard during a simple two-day vision trip.

"We had gotten comfortable and needed the outward focus," Sam explained. "I saw how many different kinds of churches were being planted on this trip."

During the vision trip, participants met 15 church planters. Each planter had a unique focus in their mission as a result of planting in a different context—downtown, inside the Beltway, in the suburbs, among people who spoke different languages, and in a variety of communities.

When Knaus brought what he had experienced back home to his leaders and the church, they quickly connected with the people they had met and supported these new church plants. Since then, FSBC has financially supported and shown up to serve at five new church plants. Different leaders from the church have become personally involved, checking in with church planters and even participating in coaching relationships as the planters develop and refine their ministry strategies.

By the end of 2025, that fresh focus began to draw the church into something greater. They started thinking about their own region and realized, in Knaus' words, "We can do this too!"

That realization began to turn into a plan with one of their elders, Bobby Lamb, to plant a new church in Gretna, Virginia, just down the road from FSBC. A group of people from Gretna had already been traveling to Hurt to be part of the church, and Lamb had been leading a growing Bible study there with those members. They began to see an opportunity.

Reflecting on the journey, Pastor Sam shared, "Partnership put us around planters, sending churches, and SBCV catalysts that helped us start thinking like a planting church."

On Easter Sunday this year, FSBC celebrated with 40 fewer people in attendance. Just up the road, church planter Bobby Lamb and the members FSBC had sent out, gathered to launch **Mission Point Baptist Church** in Gretna.

It had been just one year since the vision trip that took their church on a journey from cooperating to supporting to sending. The exciting thing is that they are not done yet. They are already looking for an opportunity to do it all again. ●







kids MINISTRY CONFERENCE

FEATURING GUEST TRAINERS FROM
LIFEWAY, GROUP, AND MANY OTHERS

CHOOSE FROM
BREAKOUTS INCLUDING:

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP
SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY
TEACHING TIPS AND TECHNIQUES
VBS TRAINING

DETAILS AT SBCV.ORG/KMC

Midlothian

MARCH 6

Swift Creek Baptist Church
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Blacksburg

MARCH 13

Northstar Church
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Virginia Beach

MARCH 20

Kempsville Baptist Church
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

2027 EVENTS

SBC of VIRGINIA nextgen

DECLARING HIS WORKS ONE GENERATION TO THE NEXT.

January 15-16 **YOUTH EVANGELISM CONFERENCE**
London Bridge Baptist Church, Virginia Beach
Inspiring and equipping students to boldly proclaim the Gospel.

June 28-July 2 **STUDENT FUSION MISSION CAMP**
Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, Colonial Heights
Help your students move beyond their comfort zone and reach communities for Christ.

July 16-18 **FAMILY IMPACT WEEKEND**
Across Virginia
Opportunity for families to build a legacy of mission and partnership alongside fellow SBCV church plants.

visit
sbcv.org/nextgen
for more
information



Missions Projects Kids Can Relate To

In Children's Ministry, missions projects give children the opportunity to learn about cultures beyond the church classroom and to make a difference in the lives of others. Some of the best projects for kids are those they can relate to, such as raising money for school supplies, hygiene kits, or food bags.

In a child's mind, raising $15 for a bag is more tangible than trying to raise $2,000.

1. First, **present** a few projects to the kids so they can vote on and choose one.
2. **Pray** over the project, then set a goal for how many kits or bags to sponsor.
3. Next, **brainstorm** ways the children can raise awareness of the project and watch the Lord work.

Church Body Participation

It is important to inform the church about the project so members can support the children, pray with them, and help unify the church body. One way to create awareness is to have kids hand out cards with the project details on one side and an envelope on the other, encouraging church members to pray for and contribute to the project.

Encourage Children to be Involved

Another option is to hold a lemonade stand or bake sale after church services. Kids should be involved in preparing and baking the items as a way to invest in the project. Children can also be encouraged to take on extra chores or special projects to raise money to purchase one of the kits themselves.

A few kids from **Living Word Baptist Church** in Forest, Virginia, have held bake sales on their own and given all the money to the mission project.

Abigail (age 10) said, "We have been praying about the project in Sunday School since we decided on the project. When we did the bake sale, we not only raised money but also raised awareness of the need in Burundi for these kids to have what they need. It was exciting to see how God answered our prayers and also to share with others what we are doing."

Children's Director Niky Brooks said, "Every year our kids pick a goal much higher than I think we can reach, and every year they exceed our goal. The kids amaze me with their faith and perseverance as we work through each project." •

TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE NEEDS OF YOUR CHURCH SPONSORED MISSIONARIES AND THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE THEY SERVE...

Contact your church missions committee.

For additional ideas and to learn more about the SBCV monthly mission projects, visit:

sbcv.org/missionprojects

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Brandon



from the **EDITOR**

A *Partnership* with Global Reach

Recently, I had the privilege of leading a vision team of SBC of Virginia pastors and their wives to London. It's part of the SBCV's ongoing missions partnership effort in strategic parts of the globe. We went to learn, listen, and see how God might use us to join His work in one of the world's most diverse and populated cities. What we saw reminded us of the strength of partnership: God often opens a door through relationships already formed, then invites more churches to walk through it together.

In South London, we spent time with two IMB missionary couples who have strong ties to the SBCV and our churches: Sam and Caitlin Polhamus and Joe and Laura Pantaleo. Sam Polhamus previously worked on staff with the SBCV, and Joe Pantaleo previously served as student pastor at **Fincastle Baptist Church** in Fincastle. What a great picture of God calling people from among us, sending them to serve, and then giving churches the opportunity to join them on mission.

The South London Team is focused on reaching communities stretching from the Thames to the Channel. Millions from nations across the globe live, work, study, and raise families side by side. The Gospel opportunity is immense. SBCV churches can stand alongside these missionaries and local ministry partners as they build relationships and share Christ with people from around the world.

We saw this on the streets of Coulsdon and Croydon as we walked with these missionaries, sharing God's love with men and women from just about every nation. Whether in a small restaurant at lunch or at a whiteboard outside a shopping center asking, "Where do you see brokenness?", we had real Gospel conversations. One young man accepted Jesus as his Savior! Now, a new church is growing out of the harvest.

For the past three years, our theme at Annual Homecoming has been 'You Are Not Alone: Advancing the Gospel Together'. This is such a strong statement and one that continues to be true. No single church has to carry the whole task. Some churches may feel led to pray consistently for the team.



> “…in South London, **churches** and **missionaries serving together**, each bringing what God has entrusted to them.”

Others may send a short-term group, encourage a missionary family, or help prepare students and families for future service. And churches can partner together on this side of the pond to make sure that the people we send fit the needs on the other side of the pond.

When Paul started his letter to the Philippian church, he said he “gave thanks to my God for every remembrance of you, always praying with joy for all of you in my every prayer because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now” (Philippians 1:3-5, CSB). This was a faithful relationship that wasn’t just a one-time event but supported the missionary work over time. Paul truly saw the members of this local church as partners. And that is what we hope to see in South London, churches and missionaries serving together, each bringing what God has entrusted to them.

These vision trips are an opportunity to recognize a road God has been laying for SBCV churches to join a mission team with deep connections to our family of churches. The invitation is open to pray, learn, and ask how your church might take a next step. From Virginia to South London, we can advance the Gospel—together. ●











SBCVirginia
You are not alone.

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