

Your

THE NEWS JOURNAL OF THE BLUE RIDGE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

J U N E / J U L Y 2 0 0 9



Host a Seminar

Phil Graves is available to teach a free seminar called "Beyond Point and Shoot: Using Adobe Photoshop Elements to create Jaw Dropping Photos". This is a great way to reach your community and get them into your church. Contact phil at phil@blueridgebaptist.org

✧ VBS is Coming! ✧

Take a thrilling ride across the land down under with LifeWay's Boomerang Express! As kids wind their way across Australia, they'll discover the vastness of God's love, and they'll learn that no matter where they go or what they do in life-it all comes back to Jesus.

The BRBA is excited to know that most of our churches will be hosting a Vacation Bible School this summer. Lifeway has created a fun, adventure for all your students called Boomerang Express. We know that God is going to bless you and your workers as you serve Him.



Please make sure you send us pictures and stories for our Aug/Sept. issue. We would love to share them with our other churches. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help or encourage you as you host your community for VBS!

Did someone say cheese?

Here are a couple great jokes to share with your friends and family...

"I went to a bookstore and asked the saleswoman where the Self Help section was, she said if she told me it would defeat the purpose."

"A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two-tired."



An Open Letter to BRBA Churches

from your Director of Missions - Bruce Conley

To All My Friends in the BRBA,

First of all, let me take a moment to express my heart-felt appreciation to all of you who supported me and my family over the last couple of months with your prayers, notes, cards, encouraging words, hugs, and acts of kindness. Without your support, we certainly would have had a much tougher time facing the death of my mother, and the situation with my daughter Allison being suddenly hit with a debilitating illness.

It was very hard for me to grasp the speed with which my mother's health deteriorated. In mid-December, she was still driving herself to the store, meeting friends for lunch and within the span of 5 months the downward spiral of her health took a huge toll, and she was gone. If there is one thing that I have learned in my time on earth - it's that life is fragile, and precious - and something to be cherished and enjoyed. It's a gift from God that should be truly appreciated every day we have it.

The Christian music group Casting Crowns said it best, in their song: "*Who Am I?*"

*Who am I?
That the Lord of all the earth,
Would care to know my name,
Would care to feel my hurt.
Who am I?
That the bright and morning star,
Would choose to light the way,
For my ever wandering heart.*

*Not because of who I am.
But because of what you've done.
Not because of what I've done.
But because of who you are.*

Chorus:

*I am a flower quickly fading,
Here today and gone tomorrow.
A wave tossed in the ocean,
A vapor in the wind.
Still you hear me when I'm calling,
Lord you catch me when I'm falling,
And you told me who I am.
I am yours.*

Please continue to pray for Allison. While her battle with *GILLIAN BARRE SYNDROME* is finally showing some small signs of improvement, the doctors tell us that it will be 6 months to 1 year before she can rehabilitate herself to the point of living life with some degree of normalcy again.

No matter what storm or season of life you may be going through - always remember the encouraging words found in Deuteronomy 7:9, which says: "*Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; He is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.*"

In His continued service,

Bruce M. Conley



The Top Ten Reasons for Churches to Twitter

from your Media Guy - Phil Graves

Twitter is growing in popularity right along with Facebook. So, why should the church care? Here's my top ten reasons for churches to Twitter:

1. You can connect to cell phones via text messaging. So, any member with a cell phone would be connected.
2. Twitter is faster than email, easier than phone calls, and more manageable than group text. You can notify people instantly because it's a cell phone text (or at least can be) as opposed to email which people may not check regularly. It's especially helpful for urgent messages ("The youth group will be a little late getting back from the concert") and last minute reminders.
3. Twitter can give visitors a personal insight into your ministry. Non-church members can get a very good idea of what the people and ministry are like just from viewing the tweets.
4. You can include links in tweets such as links to more info, signup forms, or just a link to your church website. This can improve responsiveness from congregants and increase traffic to your website.
5. You can put feeds on your website. This is extremely helpful in keeping the pages of your church website up to date with the latest news while informing your members at the same time.
6. You can use twitter to develop relationships between staff and members as well as members and members. While there are many reasons people may visit or join a church, relationships tend to be what keep members. Twitter gives another way for members to develop more

personal relationships with each other. Twitter also gives a way for members to be more personally connected with the pastor and other church staff. This is especially good for larger congregations when the pastor and staff don't have enough time to show individual personal attention to all the church members in the meaningful way.

7. You can send sermon point reminders during the week so members keep the sermon message in mind. Do the same for Bible studies, youth group messages and Sunday school memory verses.
8. You can have multiple Twitter accounts so you have one for each ministry. This allows communication with your members to be targeted so people are only receiving messages related to them.
9. Twitter is world wide. Anywhere people have their cell phone or internet access they can receive your church's Tweets or post Tweets themselves.
10. Twitter is free and simple enough that most anyone can use it.

You can sign up for Twitter at www.twitter.com. If you would like some help getting started using Twitter, please contact Phil at 301.788.7424 or phil@blueridgebaptist.org. You can follow Phil's Twitter feed at www.twitter.com/skstarkiller

PrayerFirst

I Say Hello, You Say...

from your Prayer Coordinator - Mae Argilan

Goodbye. Doesn't it seem like a lot of people have passed on this winter? So many people have asked for prayer as someone dear to them is slipping away, or consolation for a family that has lost someone through disease or violence.

Loss has never been easy for me. I can't even keep it together when a pet dies.

For every hello there must be a goodbye. But for every loss there is always a gain. It's all part of the divine design. If all life is a gift of God, then every death is also a gift.

Loss can leave a psychic scar; whether it's a job, a person, or a possession. We need to pray compassionately for anyone who is suffering. But we can also pray intelligently. There is no growth without the hello-goodbye part of human existence. There is no forward progress without actively letting go. There is no resurrection without passing through the valley of death.

So, you're in your prayer closet and the ache of loss is beating inside your chest. You can't even push past the emotional turmoil, and your thoughts are racing everywhere except to the Throne. How can you possibly pray effectively?

The 15th century poet Kabir wrote, 'I felt in need of a great pilgrimage so I sat still for three days and God came to me.' I suggest a method that might help center your thoughts might be to first express an attitude of gratitude for some of your favorite hello/goodbyes. Here are some that come to my mind.

Some good goodbyes: breaking a bad habit, dropping a few extra pounds, the last freeze of winter, final sniffle of a cold, last day of school, a visiting relative who stays too long.

Some fun hellos: the safe arrival of a new baby, the arrival of a tax refund, first day of vacation, meeting a new friend, Christmas morning.

As your list grows longer, the Lord draws closer. The best hello ever.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays

June 1 John Koontz
17 Kathy Rickard
28 Joanne Jordan

July 11 Drew Boswell
17 Kimberly Boswell
18 Bruce Conley
24 Kathryn Lowrey

Anniversaries

June 8 Ken and Joan Oyerly
11 Kevin and Sandy Marsico
12 Delbert and Kimberly Pope
20 Larry and Pam Eubanks
23 Everett and Jennifer Powell
24 Bill and Hilary Cooper

July 12 Drew and Kimberly Boswell
18 Ed and Joanne Jordan
23 Ken and Joan Stalls



Spotlight on Smithsburg Valley Church

“We genuinely like each other”

Enjoying being on the spiritual journey together is what has shaped this church since it began as a home Bible study in a Smithsburg home. This church has defied conventional thinking for the past 20 years. They didn't follow any model, only their belief that God would grow the church however and whenever He desired. There wasn't a search strategy for finding a leader. There wasn't a set of regulations, or behaviors. It's always about relationships, as reflected in their motto:

To help people grow in their understanding of God and in their devotion to the living Jesus.

The first full-time pastor of Smithsburg is Allen Youngbar. After serving in Portugal Allen and Deb settled back in Washington County and found a home with the Smithsburg congregation at the Chewsville community center. They were serving there for about a year when the bi-vocational pastor decided to move on, and Pastor Allen was elected to pick up where Don Taylor left off.

They think of their church as a living *organism* rather than an *organization*; more about the fruit of maturity than the next hot program. In 1996 they built on their property at the corner of 64 and Bikle Road and saw an increase in attendance. But within a year the curiosity wore off and membership fell. The vision of providing a spiritual presence in the community had been established, but it looked like God was demanding more of them. Perhaps they had become more about conformity and less about acceptance. To reach out authentically it had to be about becoming all things to all people, as admonished by Paul's teaching. It was time to get into the 'life transformation' business. As a result Smithsburg Valley has won a reputation in the community as being seeker friendly.

Allen learned about the importance of communication during his foreign mission service. He could have preached the most eloquent sermons in English, but to bring the good news to the unsaved required using his embarrassingly

broken Portuguese. He also feels that Christians should always be on the cutting edge of technology. He's found that utilizing video clips during his messages makes the sermons seem shorter, which appeals to the visitors, as evidenced by the many young families that attend the contemporary service.

Curtis Miller has been worship leader of the praise band for over 10 years. He lends his youthful style to the contemporary service, as well as the ONE worship service that meets the 1st Friday of the month. Now that attendance has blossomed to over 150, Pastor Chris Walls has been added to the staff. With 2 Sunday services, a variety of mid-week activities, and new members joining all the time Chris is the Pastor of Life Connections.

Allen feels that his own spiritual life has grown along the same path as the church body. He is always trying to discover who he is independent of his past experience. Smithsburg is parenting a church plant in Waynesboro, but he would also like to start a church satellite sometime in the future. He continues to refine methods to welcome the outcasts, but is also focusing on the unity of the membership feeling that a good spirit can be very contagious.

He also recommends participation in Blue Ridge Association. He observes that BRBA has a real desire to support Baptist work of all kinds in the tri-state area, and excels in stepping in whenever there is a need in any of the churches. Allen appreciates that the same spirit of friendship and unity exists in the association as it does in the church.

Read more @ smithsburgvalleychurch.com





Partnering together to reach our Communities for Christ



Event Calendar

June 23-24

Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting, Louisville, Kentucky

Friday, June 26, 2009 7:00 PM

R.A.'s "Guys Night Out" at Oriole Park - Camden Yards

Cost: \$10.00 per person (food, refreshments, and parking are not supplied)

Tuesday, June 30, 2009 9:00 AM

Coaching Leader Workshop

Location: Baptist Mission Resource Center; Columbia, MD.

When: from 9:00am to 4:00pm

Cost: \$15 per attendee.

Topic: "The Coaching Leader."

Contact: Misty Pearson (800) 466-5290 x222

Sunday, July 10 - 18, 2009

2009 Mission Camps for Girls

Three Exciting Camps to choose from!!!

- Mother/Daughter Camp
 - *July 10-11, 2009 (Entering grades 1-3 and moms or substitute moms!)
 - *\$65/person
- Girls' Camp
 - ★July 12-17, 2009 (Entering grades 4-6)
 - ★\$175/person
- Acteen Overnight
 - ♣July 17-18, 2009 (Entering grades 7-12)
 - ♣\$65/person

Location: Camp Wo-Me-To: 1200 Knopp Road, Jarrettsville, MD

Registration / Contact:

Applications can be found on line at www.bcmd.org. Send application along with a check made payable to BCM/D and mail to: Gail Noda, BCM/D, 10255 Old Columbia Road, Columbia, MD 21046



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Event Calendar (con't)

July 23-25, 2009

Renaissance 516 (formerly Baptist Music Camps/Youth Performing Arts Camps - YPAC)

Location: First Baptist Church of Laurel, MD

For more info and to register go to www.R516.com



July 24 - 25

Horizons 2009 "Navigating Towards the Future"

Horizons offers an opportunity for ALL church leadership to receive quality training for church ministries.

Over 50 Conference to choose from on topics such as:

- Evangelism
- Discipleship
- Small Groups
- Bible Teaching
- Deacons
- Children's Ministry
- Missions

Location:

Skycroft Conference Center

9621 Frostown Road

Middletown, Md. 21769

Cost: Early Bird

\$99.00 Motel on campus (\$125.00 after July 3)

\$65.00 Lodge-bunk bed-bath on hall (\$80.00 after July 3)

\$50.00 Commuter-includes meals, no lodging (\$60.00 after July 3)





In Your Churches

Faith BC

Boomerang Express VBS July 12 - 17

FCA Bible study the 3rd Wednesday of every month 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM

FBC Hagerstown

Block Party VBS kickoff June 13th

VBS June 15-19

Paramount

VBS June 22-26, 6:15 - 9:00 PM

South End

VBS Kickoff on July 27th at Noon-2:30 PM

VBS on June 28-July 2, from 5:30 PM-7:30 PM

"Missionary BarbeQue" in June, time/date: TBA

Contact the church for info www.southendbaptist.com

Greenbrier

Hosting a 'Sports Camp' and VBS July 27th - 31st, 2009

Leading these events will be members of First Baptist Church, Joplin, MO

Call 301-797-3547 or Pastor Coblenz 301-730-4546



Covenant Baptist in Shepherdstown.

Planning a mission trip to Kakamega, Kenya. Women will be leading a women's conference and also doing children's ministry at the church and at an orphanage. Men will do construction work to complete the Children's Sunday School Building for the church.

The trip dates are August 13-16 and the cost is approximately \$3000

If you are interested, Gail Scheffers can be reached at 304-876-2212 x33

Fellowship Middletown

SPECIAL EVENTS

June 6 - hiking/biking trip

June 15 baptism/picnic Brunswick Camp Ground

June 27 - Middletown Independence Day

July 18 - children's carnival

REGULAR EVENTS

Photography club - 2nd Monday evening of the month

Beginners Greek - 1st and 3rd Monday evening of the month

Prospective members class 101 - 4th Monday every other month

Carrot Cake

Submitted by: Mary Jane Snow, Virginia Ave BC

1 1/2 C oil

2 C sugar

4 eggs

2 C flour

1 tsp salt

1 tsp baking soda

1 tsp baking powder

1 tsp cinnamon

3 C carrots, grated fine

1 tsp vanilla

1/2 C chopped black walnuts

Mix as any other cake mix. Pour into three 8 inch cake pans or one tube pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.





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