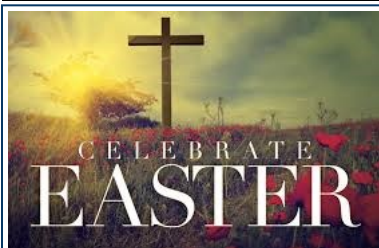


# The Blue Ridge Pulse ...the news journal for churches in the Blue Ridge Baptist Association



**APRIL / MAY 2021**



*On this Easter, take time to remember all those who sacrificially serve others, the armed forces, the doctors and nurses, volunteers and teachers and all others who never count the costs of blessing others. Say a special prayer for them and ask God to bless them and their loved ones this Easter! May we always remember the true meaning of Easter.*

In appreciation for all you do to serve the Kingdom of God, the Baptist Convention of Maryland and Delaware cordially invites **Pastors and Pastors' wives** to attend one of our Appreciation Events this Spring. The event will take place on **May 24 - 25 and June 7 - 8**.

Pastors and Pastors' Wives

*Appreciation*

Each event features; a unique daytime activity for Pastors, a special tea for Pastors' wives, a choice dinner, worship band, featured speaker, and much more! If your schedule permits, Pastors and Pastors' wives may also enjoy overnight accommodations on the beautiful mountain top at Skycroft Conference Center. Total event capacity **limited to 60 people**. For Questions Contact: Demetra Bennett [dbennett@bcmmd.org](mailto:dbennett@bcmmd.org).

## Showcase of **APRIL** and **MAY** Events...

### APRIL

- 4:** Easter
- 6:** Minister's Fellowship Meeting  
*Topic - Expository Preaching*  
*Dr. Jim Shaddix* **ZOOM 11:30am**  
*Link information on Montgomery Baptist Association Website*
- 8:** \* Church Revitalization Webinar Series  
BCM/D *Topic - The Spiritual Mechanics of Revitalization* *Dr. Terry Rials* **ZOOM 10:00am**
- 10:** BCM/D VBS Clinic In-Person **9:00 - 2:00pm**  
(Allen Memorial Baptist, Salisbury, MD)
- 11:** Baptist Doctrine Sunday
- 17:** MD/DE Recovery Unit Workday at Faith
- 18:** SBC Seminaries Sunday
- 23:** BCM/D 2021 VBS Mini Clinics *(Virtual)*  
**2:00pm & 7:00pm**  
*Topic - Sharing the Gospel with Kids*  
*Topic - Safety, Security, and COVID*
- 24:** The National Christian Choir Performance  
Hagerstown City Park Bandshell **4pm**
- 25:** Cooperative Program Sunday

### MAY

- 1:** Disaster Relief Training at Faith **8:30-3p**
- 2:** Senior Adult Sunday
- 4:** Minister's Fellowship Zoom Meeting  
*Topic -* **ZOOM 11:30am**  
*Link information on Montgomery Baptist Association Website*
- 6:** National Day of Prayer
- 6:** \* Church Revitalization Webinar Series  
BCM/D *Topic - Church Revitalization in the Asian-American Church (Asian American Emphasis)* *Peter Yanes* **ZOOM 10:00am**
- 6:** \* Church Revitalization Webinar Series  
BCM/D *Topic - Church Revitalization in the Hispanic Church (Hispanic Emphasis - IN SPANISH)* *Dr. David Lema* **ZOOM 6:30pm**
- 9-15:** Christian Home Week
- 13:** BCM/D Teaching Roundtable **7 - 9pm**
- 15:** BCM/D Teaching Roundtable **9 - 11am**
- 24-25:** Pastors & Pastor's Wives Appreciation Overnight Event **10am - 10am**  
Skycroft Conference Center (see article above)

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS:

### *“When Your Plans Change”*

As human beings, we make our plans in life, and often those plans change. We think we know what we want in life, but then change, hardship, heartache comes along and causes a huge detour in our path. We do our best to follow God and His purposes for our lives, because we know the scripture that says: *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.* (Romans 8:28)

But I also know all too well that in my Christianity - hearing the above verse when you're still stinging over a loss can feel terribly painful. Ignoring real feelings won't bail us out of hardship though, or make us a better person. Dealing with life when it doesn't go as planned is a lifelong journey.

I've experienced this dozens of times, like when my wife miscarried one of our children that we had been so looking forward to adding to our family. I experienced it when my 2<sup>nd</sup> daughter got *Guillain-Barre Syndrome* and her immune system attacked her nervous system, pushing her from being a healthy young woman to being in a Coma within 48 hours. I experienced hardship and depression when my wife of 35+ years made the decision to leave our marriage. It happened again 2+ years ago when my liver failed, and I expected to die before finding a transplant organ. Now, that same wife who I have loved and cared so much about for my entire adult life – has end stage ALS and is dying much too early.

No one is immune from hardship, pain or sorrow in this earthly life. As I have contemplated my own tough times though – I have discovered some helpful truths that have helped me to get through these rough turns in the road of life. They have helped me to get through each and every hardship and to focus on God's will and plan in every instance, and maybe they will help you too:

- ♦ **We come to a point where we realize that we were never really in control anyway.**

When we make plans, we're telling God how our life is going to be, and He may have other / better things in store for us. I can tell you from experience that my life may have turned out totally different had I not gone through the journey that he laid out for me. Without some of those hard right turns and bumps in my road - I would have turned out to be a very different person. In each and every case, I had to admit that I never really had control in the first place - and down the road I realized that God's plan turned out to be the best way to shape me into the man that He wanted me to become!

- ♦ **When our plans fail, God is still with us.**

The funny thing about plans is they're really more “guidelines” of how we'd like to see our path go. We can feel really alone when our plans fail. When we see loved ones hurting, it can make us feel like God doesn't care for us ... especially if in the hardship we see God still looking out for or blessing others. That could not be further from the truth. Hebrews 10:23 tells us: *“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”*

- ♦ **God ALWAYS has more than one thing to teach us.**

I have found out that it's always a good idea to take a good look back on a situation after it has passed, and take an account of what was learned from going through it. Maybe you found out who was a true friend, and who wasn't. Did that enable you to make better choices of friends later? Maybe you learned that you actually wanted something very different from what you used to think you wanted. With God - every experience is a learning opportunity and a chance to get closer to Him! When you gain some clarity over a dire situation (usually through some distance) - look back and see how it helped you grow as a person and follower of Christ!

The most important thing is to know that hard seasons are just that – seasons. They are usually temporary. And because our God is a God of possibilities (Matt. 19:26) we should NEVER feel like a wrong path cannot be corrected. Praise the Lord ... God is always with us and He allows for U-turns and second chances. If life hasn't gone as you'd planned, you and your Lord go ahead and make a new plan!

Pastor Bruce Conley  
**Director of Missions, BRBA**



# Prayer Request

How can we pray for you?

\* Please continue to pray for Pastor Todd Heishman who is now finished his chemo-therapy treatments.

\* Prayer increases for Linda Conley, estranged wife of DOM Bruce Conley - as she is now with Hospice due to ALS.

\* Please pray for First Baptist Church of Hagerstown while they search for a new pastor. Rev. Bill Miller is now interim at FBC.

\* Please pray for Adamstown Community Church as they also seek a new pastor.

## FREE Virtual Events

Blue Ridge Baptist Association and Montgomery Baptist Association are partnering with Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) through Chris Allen, to have Professors from the Seminary minister to our Pastors and Leaders at our Minister's Fellowship, from January through April 2021.



**April 6th:** Topic - Evangelism - New book "Sharing Jesus without Freaking Out" Dr. Scott Hildreth [shildreth@sebts.edu](mailto:shildreth@sebts.edu) Director of the Center for Great Commission Studies Assistant Professor of Missiology

**May 4th:** Topic - Developing a Digital Ministry Richard Dillard, President of SpiffySites [Richard@spiffysite.com](mailto:Richard@spiffysite.com).



## COVENANT BAPTIST CHURCH INVITES YOU TO MEET THE CANDIDATE

Baptist Press reported that pastor Ed Litton, a pastor from Alabama, is being nominated to be SBC President at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville this summer. Covenant Baptist Church will host a meet and greet on May 6, 2021 to answer questions and speak on why he wants to hold the position. He is currently one of three nominees for the slot - along with Southern Baptist Theological President Al Mohler and Georgia pastor Mike Stone. The schedule for the Q&A will be as follows: 11:30: Box lunch provided by Covenant for those who **register in advance**; 12-2: Ed speaks and takes questions. To register for the event, please contact Covenant Baptist at 304-876-2212.



## Make your reservations for Summer Camp!

Crossings is the former ReCharge Summer Camp at Skycroft. Students who have completed grades 6-12 will spend a week together having tons of fun and fellowship as they learn more about Jesus Christ! The schedule is intensive, fun, and challenges youth pastors and their students to grow as followers of Christ. We offer leadership training for both students and adults that is designed to help the youth group in their vision and ministry. Expect to be challenged, encounter God in a new way, and to leave camp changed!

Join Crossings at Skycroft this Summer for "I AM MOSES." Do you know the man and the God behind the story? Make sure you register to experience the beginning, when God brought Moses through the waters so that he could then bring his people through the waters. **Dates: June 20-25; June 27-July 2; July 5-9**

## NEED FOR HOUSING FOR A IMB MISSIONARY FAMILY THIS FALL

Looking for any churches in the BRBA that may have a mission/furlough house or an empty parsonage where Chris Musselman, a Southern Baptist missionary in Germany with the International Mission Board, could stay with his family for one month in October. They are visiting family in Harpers Ferry, WV and attending the stateside conference in Richmond, VA. They have a sweet teenage girl whom they adopted from Guatemala and two boys ages 12 and 6. He would be willing to talk at any churches in the area or help BRBA promote missions in any way he can. Should you know of a place, please contact Bruce Conley at [bruce@blueridgebaptist.org](mailto:bruce@blueridgebaptist.org).





## TEACHING ROUNDTABLE

This is the third year the BCM/D will host Teaching Roundtables. The first roundtable will be held Thursday, May 13 from 7- 9PM and Saturday, May 15 from 9-11AM. The May roundtables will be virtual as we continue to exercise caution regarding Covid-19. These will be led by Dr. Curtis Hill, Senior Pastor of Oglethorpe Baptist Church in Newark, DE. The topic will be Preaching/Teaching to Multigenerational Groups. Also, encourage elders, deacons, teachers, and others from your church who preach and teach to take part in these events.

The next roundtable events will be held in-person from August 26-28 on the topic Preaching/Teaching with an Apologetic Focus featuring Dr. Adam Greenway, President of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Registration will be coming soon, but please reserve these dates on your calendar now.



**Camp Wo-Me-To**

Camp Wo-Me-To, (Camp Women and Men of Tomorrow), began in 1952 as a children's mission camp owned and operated by the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) of Maryland/Delaware. The facilities are used to nurture the spiritual development of His people, to encourage participation in missions, and to increase appreciation and responsibility for His world. Every summer we offer mission camps for Girls, Mother/Daughters and Boys Camps.

Children from your church have an exciting opportunity to attend camps at WO-ME-TO this summer! Girls and Boys will experience Bible study, worship, mission education, recreation, and crafts in an outdoor setting. All COVID-19 and social distancing protocol will be adhered to.

**Camp details are outlined here: <https://campwometo.org/events/>**

## 2021 VBS MINI CLINICS (VIRTUAL)

Join BCM/D online for their first ever **VBS Mini Clinics**! This is a great option for those that cannot make it to one of the in-person clinics. Each of the three mini clinics will feature two of the breakouts from the in-person clinic! Attend all three mini clinics and you'll get all six breakout sessions from the in-person clinic! Missed a few breakouts at the in-person clinic? Hop online and join us for the ones you missed!

Each mini clinic is an hour and half with a Q&A at the end, so bring your VBS questions! The evening mini clinic session will be a repeat of the afternoon mini clinic sessions, giving you lots of options to get everything and everyone covered! If you're using one of LifeWay's VBS' (Concrete & Cranes or Destination Dig) it's recommended that you preview the online training videos prior to attending the mini clinic.

**You will receive a link to the training videos once you register for the mini clinic.**

**<https://bcmcd.org/event/2021-vbs-mini-clinics-virtual/2021-02-23/>**

**BCM/D**

**kids**

## Church Revitalization Webinar Series

Join BCM/D in their webinar series on Church Revitalization! These webinars will take place on ZOOM. This webinar series will feature nationally known experts and focus on training, equipping, resourcing, and mapping out a long term strategy for church revitalization.

**The Cost to Attend Each "Live" Webinar is \$5.00**

Cost to Receive a Recording Link to View Each Webinar

After the Event is \$20.00\*

**See (\*) on the front page calendar**

**\*Bi-Vocational Pastors/Leaders email Randy Millwood or Demetra Bennett for a 50% discount on the Recording Link option only. Registrants who opt to view the recording will receive the link within 24 hours after the event and have one week to view the webinar.**

**Event Questions:** Contact Randy Millwood at [rmillwood@bcmcd.org](mailto:rmillwood@bcmcd.org)

**Registration Questions:** Contact Demetra Bennett at [dbennett@bcmcd.org](mailto:dbennett@bcmcd.org)



Church  
Revitalization  
Webinar Series

We cannot **THANK YOU** enough for participating in this year's ACP Submission! With your continued support and much needed assistance, we had a 63% completion. This is great news when compared with other association submissions within the Southern Baptist Convention.

With 2020 being a trying time for so many, we are truly thankful for your continued giving to your BRBA!



### SBC DISASTER RELIEF TRAINING



BRBA is hosting the Southern Baptist Convention Disaster Relief Basic Training on May 1, 2021. The training will take place at Faith Knoxville with check-in at 8:30 and starting at 9:00; training should conclude by 3pm.

Due to COVID protocols, ***the number of participants will be limited and pre-registration will be required***. Registration will be on the BCMD website and you can also contact Demetra Bennett at [dbennett@bcm.org](mailto:dbennett@bcm.org).

Classes offered will include: Introduction to Southern Baptist Disaster Relief, Feeding Team and Recovery Team (chainsaw, flood recovery and temporary emergency repairs). The cost of the training is listed below:

- ◆ Just the training: **FREE**
- ◆ New volunteer first time badge: **\$35**
- ◆ Returning volunteer renewing badge: **\$25**



### FREE

Faith Baptist Church has about 70 metal chairs with cloth seats (red) they would like to give away. If your church would be interested, please contact Diane McQuillen at 301-834-7755.



This year's theme for the Easter offering was "***The Mission Moves Forward***." What goal did your church set to contribute towards the Mission? The Annie Armstrong National Goal for 2021 is \$70 million.

***Hope everyone had a  
blessed Easter  
Celebration!***



### FEMA to Help Pay Funeral Costs for COVID-19-Related Deaths

In early April, FEMA will begin providing financial assistance for funeral expenses incurred after Jan. 20, 2020 for deaths related to coronavirus (COVID-19) to help ease some of the financial stress and burden caused by the pandemic. The policy was finalized today, and FEMA is now moving rapidly to implement this funeral assistance program nationwide.

"At FEMA, our mission is to help people before, during and after disasters," said Acting FEMA Administrator Bob Fenton. "The COVID-19 pandemic has caused immense grief for so many people. Although we cannot change what has happened, we affirm our commitment to help with funeral and burial expenses that many families did not anticipate."

To be eligible for COVID-19 funeral assistance, please visit their website to see what the policy states **COVID-19 Funeral Assistance | FEMA.gov**.



**FEMA**