

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



**JUNE / JULY 2021**

## **OUTDOOR MOVIE EQUIPMENT COMING SOON TO BRBA**

The Blue Ridge Baptist Association has been approved to receive a \$4,000 grant from our partners in the Baptist Convention of MD/DE to purchase and assemble an outdoor portable theater set up, including an inflatable large projection screen and a high lumen output video projector. Once assembled, any BRBA church will be able to borrow the system at no cost for outdoor movie showings and / or outreach events. BRBA will cover the cost for licensing to show certain films to small crowds.

We're grateful for the grant, and will keep you posted as the theater equipment becomes ready!



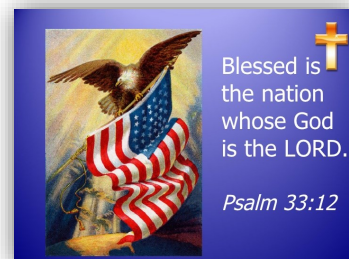
## **Showcase of JUNE and JULY Events...**

### **JUNE**

- 5:** BCM/D & Banquet Network Special Needs Conference (see article) **8:30 – 12:30pm**  
The Church at Severn Run 8187 Telegraph Road Severn, MD (see article)
- 7-8:** Pastors & Pastor's Wives Appreciation Overnight Event **9:15am - 10pm**  
Skycroft Conference Center (see article)
- 10:** \* Church Revitalization Webinar Series  
BCM/D **Topic** - "Do the Works You Did at First" – *Getting Back to Basics in Church Revitalization* Dr. David Jackson **ZOOM 10am**
- 12:** Disaster Relief Training **9:00 - 3:30pm**  
Calvary Baptist Church, 206 East Courtland Place Bel Air, MD
- 14:** Flag Day
- 13-16:** SBC Annual Meeting Nashville, TN
- 20-25:** ReCharge Kids Camp Skycroft (see article)
- 27-7/2:** ReCharge Kids Camp Skycroft (see article)

### **JULY**

- 2:** ReCharge Kids Camp Skycroft (see June Calendar & article)
- 4:** 4th of July
- 5-9:** ReCharge Kids Camp Skycroft (see article)
- 12-15:** CentriKid Camp Skycroft (see article)
- 19-22:** CentriKid Camp Skycroft (see article)
- 24:** Pastor Thom Smith's Memorial Service
- 26-29:** CentriKid Camp Skycroft (see article)



### From your Director of Missions ....

So many of our churches are excited to begin scaling back on COVID safety measures that have fractured weekly church attendance and participation, and I am thrilled too. The scourge of Covid-19 can't go away fast enough for me. Thanks be to God for his provision and protection in and out of difficult times, and I commend each and every one of our churches for all that you have done to continue ministry, while also keeping your church families safe.

As summer begins - and we all get back to some sense of normalcy - I would like to encourage everyone not to rush the process, but to enjoy the experiences that we will all soon share - to hug and love on family and friends who we previously kept at a distance. If some folks still feel the need to continue to wear masks, or social distance a bit - don't think poorly of them, and please respect their decisions to do so. I know that with my liver transplant history, I still have to be somewhat careful, even though I am vaccinated. Psalm 133 says it best; *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"* I'm SO looking forward to some of that!

Let me also challenge you to support **SKYCROFT** Baptist retreat center this summer whenever they advertise an event, or offer a camp opportunity. The last 16 months with Covid has been brutal on them financially, emotionally, and logistically - but they have weathered the storm very well. Take a look and see how you can support them at [www.skycroft.org](http://www.skycroft.org)!

Please pray for the **Southern Baptist Convention** annual meeting and convention in Nashville in June too. There has been more than a little turmoil behind the scenes in the SBC, and a new President of the Convention will be selected who might facilitate healing, correction, and pave the way for God's Holy spirit to be released in a fresh way our denomination and churches.

**As the Blue Ridge Baptist Association begins to exit the Covid-19 season, we find ourselves in financial downturn that has taken a toll. In April we spent about \$1,700. more than we brought in from our churches. If your church has fallen behind in sending gifts, please catch up. If there is a way that you could give a little more to local missions as you plan your 2022 budget, then please consider that as well.**

**Taking into consideration the financial downturn of the last 2 years, BRBA is making the following very difficult decisions to cut costs, and balance our budget:**

- 1) Our administrative assistant's hours are being reduced by 50% effective June 1, 2021. If you contact Karen, it may take a bit longer to get a response to your email or voice mail message, but she will still respond to your needs as promptly as possible.**
- 2) For 19 years BRBA has been the only Association in our region that paid for web and computer support, IT/ Tech advising, and building of web sites for each and every church that had need. This has been an amazing accomplishment, and has helped many of our church plants and small churches with consulting in a field where hiring a professional can be quite costly.**

**I regret to report that effective July 1, 2021 - BRBA will no longer be able to offer the services of Phil Graves free of charge. After 19 wonderful years of service, his tenure as a staff member and part-time contractor will come to an end. DON'T WORRY though, Phil will still be available to help your church directly through his private company, ALL SAINTS MEDIA, should you make the choice to use his services. (Of course - you can select any contractor you choose.) If your web site hosting is still through BRBA - and you wish to keep it with us (we'll probably be cheaper than what you could arrange privately) BRBA will start sending our churches bills for those costs so that they no longer fall on us. This is a sad end to a very great benefit to our churches, but budget constraints will no longer allow us to offer all of this as a free service to member churches. We will honor Phil at our October annual meeting for his many years of faithful service to BRBA!**

**3) BRBA is considering selling our Disaster Relief Communications RV and ending that investment into our DR involvement. The aging 1995 Winnebago is supported almost totally by the association, but is rarely used - even during hurricane season. If you know of anyone who might want to purchase this RV (less than 50,000 miles) please contact the association office.**

I have heard so many people say: "I can't wait for things to get back to normal", As your associational missionary - I feel the need to remind you however that God often takes us through drastic life experiences in order to create a NEW normal. He changes things up. Would every BRBA church be able to simulcast or live stream bible studies or services 2 years ago? NO! In Isaiah 43:18 + he says to us: *"Do not call to mind the former things; pay no attention to the things of old. Behold, I am about to do something new; even now it is coming. Do you not see it? Indeed, I will make a way in the wilderness and streams in the desert."*

BRBA stands ready to assist your church with whatever your *new normal* may be. May God bless you all as you find your way forward in Kingdom work!

**Blessings to you all,  
Bruce Conley, DOM**

## IN THE CHURCHES

**Berkeley Baptist Church** ~ After nearly two years, we will be voting to hire a Part-time Associate Pastor: Director of Youth Ministries. Our VBS is over three days in July: one session on the 9th, two sessions on the 10th with breakfast and lunch being provided, and a family fun-day picnic after church on the 11th.

**First Baptist Thurmont** ~ Will be hosting a **SUMMER BASH** June 13 from 10 - noon; VBS Orientation for volunteers June 27 (after church); Frederick Rescue Mission Summer Enrichment July 15 - 22; **DESTINATION DIG VBS** July 18 - 22

**Paramount Baptist Church** ~ Will be hosting a **MYSTERY ISLAND VBS** June 21 - 25 from 6:15-8:45pm.

**Smithburg Valley Church** ~ Will be hosting a 5 day **KID'S CLUB** August 2 - 6 using Child Evangelism Fellowship materials.

**Buck Valley Christian Church** ~ Will be celebrating their 150th Anniversary with an "Old Time" Festival, with games, music and food on June 26 from 3-6p; Outdoor Service with a special speaker, Aaron Meredith, on the 27th at 10:30a. Bring your own chairs and come out to enjoy entertainment and memories. Their VBS will be the **ANCHORED** program on Friday, August 6 from 6:30-9p and Saturday August 7 from 10-2p with closing program during church service on Sunday August 8 at 10:30a.

**South End Baptist Church** ~ Will be hosting a **SOCCER CAMP** July 19 - 23 and a Summer Enrichment program for the Frederick Rescue Mission June 28 - July 2 & July 5 - 9.

## CONGRATULATIONS

Phil Graves, Senior Pastor at First Baptist Church of Brunswick, grins when he tells how his wife, Kristie, approached him with the idea of adopting a second child who has special needs. "She wanted me to tell her she's crazy." But Phil didn't tell Kristie she was crazy. Instead, they traveled across the world just four years ago to bring their daughter, Elliana, home from Armenia. It was an exciting journey, but took a lot of strength. The Graves are ready to once again adopt a child. This time it's a little girl named Bridget, living in a Ukrainian orphanage. Five-year-old Bridget has become sadly famous throughout the internet. Her American parents, unable to have children, arranged for a surrogate. Tragically, her parents abandoned the child when she was born at 26 weeks with physical and mental disabilities.

**If God leads, He will provide provisions for the trip** The Graves said they learned with Elliana that if God opens a door and directs them on a path, He will provide the finances. And they're leaving Bridget's adoption expenses up to Him once more.

It will take at least \$40,000 to adopt Bridget and bring her home. Without advertising, just sharing their story, they have about half of what they need. The couple has a webpage, **PhilandKristie.com**, which shares their story and provides a tax-free opportunity to donate towards the adoption expenses. They hope to finalize the adoption by the end of the year.

## SBC ANNUAL MEETING AND CONVENTION

The 2021 SBC Annual Meeting will move to the Music City Center in downtown Nashville, TN on June 15-16.

According to Ronnie Floyd, president and CEO of the SBC Executive Committee, the shift was made in order to allow adequate space to "provide abundant space conducive to holding a meeting that is efficient, effective and safe for every attendee" while adhering to local COVID-19 protocols. He said the decision was made in collaboration with the City of Nashville, the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center, the Nashville Convention and Visitors Corp., and the Music City Center, and thanked the organizations for what he described as "incredible efforts" during recent weeks.

"The SBC Annual Meeting is a time for Southern Baptists to come together and celebrate how God is moving in and through our convention and churches," Floyd said. "It will be a time for Southern Baptists to reconnect with one another after missing out on a gathering in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic."



## Prayer Request

How can we pray for you?

*\* Please continue to pray for Pastor Todd Heishman who's continuing to recover from the physical toll of cancer and completion of radiation. Pray that God will renew his strength as he starts the next phase of his treatment, including two new chemo meds.*

*\* Please continue prayers for Linda Conley, estranged wife of DOM Bruce Conley.*

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

*\* Please continue to pray from Pastor Jim Goforth, New Life Church in Inwood, WV who had surgery to remove multiple cancerous tumors.*

*\* Please pray for Adamstown Community Church as they also seek a part-time bi-vocational pastor.*

**Pastor Thom Smith's Memorial Service will be at FBC Hagerstown 7/24 at 11 AM**

### Special Needs Conference



#### SPECIAL NEEDS CONFERENCE

Please join BCM/D & Banquet Network on June 5th for a Special Needs Conference. The purpose of this conference is to provide you with training, tools, and resources to equip you and your church to either start a ministry to individuals and families affected by disabilities or to improve your current ministry. If your concern is how to be more effective in outreach, what inclusion

within the church looks like, or you would like to be more knowledgeable in engaging the **world's largest unreached people group**, this conference will provide all of that and more!

You will get to meet 7 different guest speakers from all areas of specialties; Dr. Bergina Isbell, MD of the Mayo Clinic; Blake Davenport, The Banquet Network's Coaching and Volunteer Coordinator ; Tom Stolle, currently serves The Banquet Network as Executive Director; Michael Crawford, pastor and co-founder of The Banquet Network and chief mobilizer; Allison Fournier, military spouse and mom of two (one with special needs); Jim McCaffrey, pastor with Autism; and Kattie Matthews, Coaching + Programs Manager for The Banquet Network and the director of a special needs ministry called Bethany Blessings. **The cost is \$15 and will need to register ahead of time.** This conference will be **in-person and online**. For any questions, please contact Margot Painter

#### Make your reservations for Summer Camp!

Crossings is the former ReCharge Summer Camp at Skycroft. Students who have completed 6-12 grades 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.



## TEACHING ROUNDTABLE

This is the third year the BCM/D will host Teaching Roundtables. 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/>**

### 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@bcm�.org](mailto:rmillwood@bcm�.org)

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



Church  
Revitalization  
Webinar Series

Pastors and Pastors' Wives

## Appreciation

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 next event will take place on **June 7 - 8**.

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@bcm�.org](mailto:dbennett@bcm�.org).



## SBC DISASTER RELIEF TRAINING

BRBA is hosting the Southern Baptist Convention Disaster Relief Basic Training on June 12. This training is designed for those interested in becoming Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers. It's also intended for current volunteers interested in refreshing their skills or renewing their Disaster Relief ID badges. The training will take place at Calvary Baptist Church in Bel Air, MD with check-in at 8:30 and starting at 9:00; training should conclude by 3:30pm.

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@bcmd.org](mailto:dbennett@bcmd.org). Four classes offered include: Introduction to Southern Baptist Disaster Relief, Feeding Team, Recovery Team, Recovery Administration Team.

*The cost of the training is listed below:*

- ◆ New volunteer first time badge: **\$30**
- ◆ Returning volunteer renewing badge: **\$20**
- ◆ Returning volunteers with current badge: **FREE**

There are [Scholarships are available](#) for those who may have a desire to go to training, but cannot pay the fee. Call the BRBA office for more details.

## CENTRIKID CAMP

CentriKid, at Skycroft Conference Center, is an overnight camp for 2 - 6 graders to experience the time of their lives and learn more about the message of Jesus Christ! Camps are staffed by college and seminary students who can't wait to hang out with your kids and love to share Christ through every aspect of camp! Campers will enjoy a week of creative Bible study, exciting recreation, great worship, quiet times, and church group devotions, all designed to present the basic foundations of the Christian life. For more information about CentriKid Camps visit [centrikid.com](http://centrikid.com).



Cost is \$319/person and includes a 4-day, 3-night week of meals, lodging and fun!

**\*\*Churches transferring 2020 deposits to register for a 2021 session should do so by contacting Skycroft at [skycroft@skycroft.org](mailto:skycroft@skycroft.org) or by calling 800-536-6759.\*\***

## CHAIRS

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.



BRBA will host it's first **LIVE** Pastor and Staff Fellowship Breakfast since COVID-19 on **Wednesday, July 7 at 8 AM** at the **Cracker Barrel in Hagerstown, MD**. This is a **NO ZOOM** event. We've longed for 16 months to be able to get together and fellowship again, so let's **DO IT** the Wednesday after July 4th!!



## SUMMER HELP SKYCROFT

We're looking for fun-loving, ministry-minded individuals to join our team as we serve camp and retreat guests!

We have the following positions open!

- ◆ Groundskeeper
- ◆ Food Service Staff
- ◆ Housekeepers
- ◆ Lifeguards
- ◆ Recreation Staff
- ◆ HeBrews Snack Shop Staff

For more details, please contact Emily Reed, Skycroft Director, 800-536-6759.