



August/September 2023

Mark Your Calendars

The Blue Ridge Baptist Association annual meeting will be held on:

October 9th, 2023 at SOUTH END BAPTIST CHURCH

506 Carrollton Drive Frederick, MD 21701.

Registration will begin at 6:30 PM, with the meeting starting at 7 PM.

Our special keynote speaker will be Rev. Tom Stolle, Executive Director of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware.

We're asking every church to send messengers so that they can represent YOUR church and be involved in local missions in the Blue Ridge region. There will be great music and worship, fellowship, food, resources and encouraging news about what God is doing in our churches and communities.

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE !!

This year's theme is:

A New Commitment to Christ's Great Commission

Matthew 28: 18-20 "And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."



Dave's Corner

aka Free Stuff to help Churches!

It sure is HOT out there! Summer is here and fall is coming. BRBA has items that can help YOUR church in the months ahead!

Whether you still have VBS in August, plans for Back to School events, or End of Summer celebrations, Blue Ridge has equipment that can make your outreach fantastic.

Our Block Party Trailers are available for you to reserve and utilize. We have many concession items such as cotton candy machines, popcorn machines, games, a bounce house, and since it is so hot.... (just a reminder), SNOW CONE MACHINES.

We also still have many FREE items to donate to your church if you have need. Contact me at dave@blueridgebaptist.org and I'll be happy to make arrangements to meet you at our storage facility in Hagerstown so you can take a peek at what we have.

We want to remind you too that the Association web site www.blueridgebaptist.org also has a reservation option for you to request use of the Block Party Trailers, shuttle vans, or equipment. To search for something specific - use the drop down menu to find the equipment that you need. Let me know what you are in need of and I will let you know if we have it!



May God fill your day with many blessings, Pastor Dave

Your Prayers Are Needed

PRAYER CHAIN:

Please pray for the following churches searching for Pastors:

- * First Baptist Church of Frederick, MD
- * Third Day Community Church of Jefferson, MD
- * Valley Baptist Church of Middletown/Jefferson, MD
- * Whips Cove Christian Church of Warfordsburg, PA

Praise the Lord for answered prayer - DOM Bruce Conley is finally out of Afib and his heart is in regular sinus rhythm!

THIRD DAY COMMUNITY CHURCH is looking for a new place to meet. Their lease is up October 1. If you know of a building for sale or rent in Frederick County, MD please contact Director of Missions Bruce Conley so he can provide that information to their search committee.

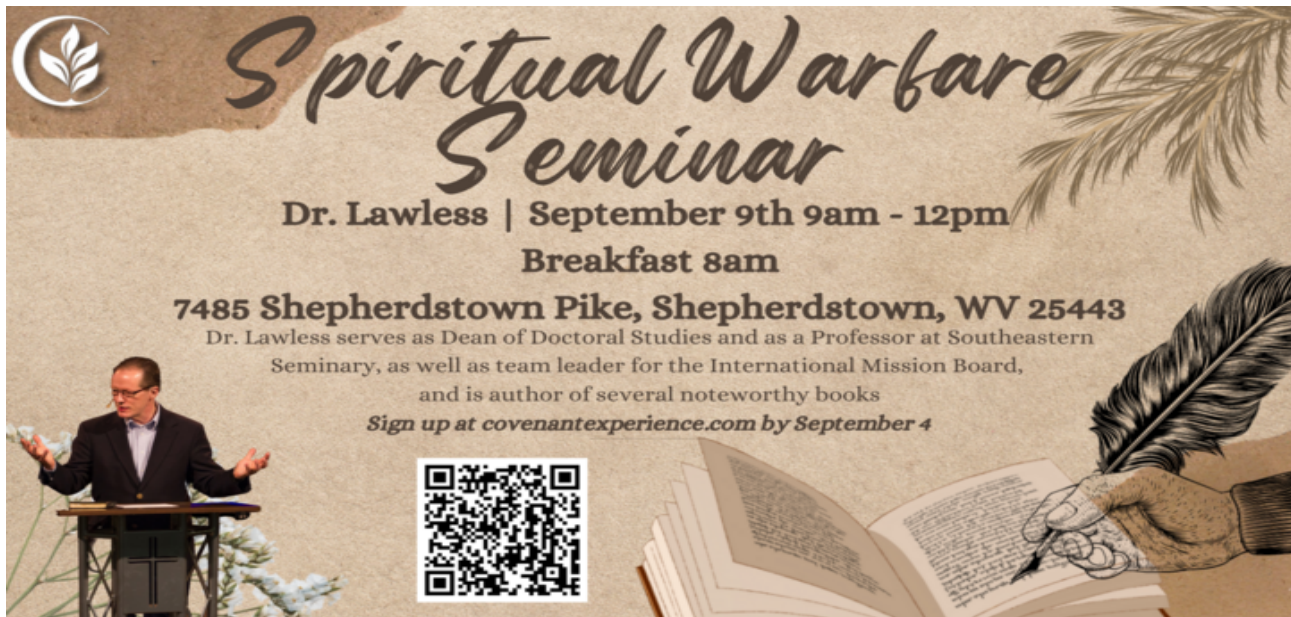
Pray for Calvary Baptist Church in War, WV as they seek a new pastor. BRBA has a ongoing 3 year partnership with that church in southern WV. Workers are needed to help them do repairs and upgrades to the parsonage while it is unoccupied. If you can help - please contact the association office (240) 818-8760 or bruce@blueridgebaptist.org

Eglise Baptise Hatienne du Calvaire (our Haitian Church in Hagerstown, MD) is looking to start a new Haitian Mission Church in Chambersburg, PA. Pray for Pastor Jean Claude who is preparing to be sent out from the Hagerstown congregation to lead the new church plant. Pray for negotiations currently underway for space for the new church plant to meet in.

Please pray for our local DISASTER RELIEF volunteers as they travel to New England in August to do flood recovery work with the Baptist Convention of New England. Pray for safe travels, safety with power equipment, and pray that the intense summer heat will subside while they work. Pray also for many gospel conversations with those people who they seek to serve.



Covenant Church, one of our Member Churches, would like to invite you to:



Spiritual Warfare Seminar
Dr. Lawless | September 9th 9am - 12pm
Breakfast 8am
7485 Shepherdstown Pike, Shepherdstown, WV 25443
Dr. Lawless serves as Dean of Doctoral Studies and as a Professor at Southeastern Seminary, as well as team leader for the International Mission Board, and is author of several noteworthy books
Sign up at covenantexperience.com by September 4

The poster features a man speaking at a podium on the left, a QR code in the center, and an illustration of a hand writing in a book on the right. A leafy branch is in the top right corner.

Pastors Fellowship Breakfast

Hosted by Hagerstown Church Sept 23rd 8-10am

Please register by going to: <https://blueridgebaptist.org/breakfast/>

Registering will help Hagerstown church to plan how many to account for with food and drink. The deadline is Sept 11th.

***Note: Our pastor's breakfasts have always included lay pastors, elders and deacons too! Bring your leaders with you so we can spread the blessings!*



What's Happening!?!

- 1. Seeking Unity in the SBC: Roundtable Discussion with SBC President Bart Barber**
Westminster Baptist Church on August 25th
Mountain City Church on August 26th

SEEKING UNITY IN THE SBC

A Roundtable Discussion

Featuring special guest Bart Barber, SBC President



Please visit the BCM/D Website at www.bcnd.org for more information including registration
Or call 800-466-5290

- 2. Step Up Men's Retreat**
First Baptist Church of Upper Marlboro on Sept 23rd

Please visit the BCM/D Website at www.bcnd.org for
more information including registration
Or call 800-466-5290



- 3. Town Hall Meeting**
Bethany Church Columbia on Sept 29th

Please visit the BCM/D Website at
www.bcnd.org for more information
including registration
Or call 800-466-5290



LET'S TALK VBS!!!!

As this newsletter is being published - about 70% of our churches have had Vacation Bible Schools or summer camps to reach children and youth. Many more will host such events in August up until school starts.

VBS can be a great experience for children and adult volunteers. Once again, BRBA is grateful for our partnership with SKYCROFT CONFERENCE CENTER for sending our churches some summer missionaries to help many of our churches!

Here are 3 reasons (from our partners at Lifeway Christian Resources) why your church should consider doing a VBS or summer camp in the future, if you're currently not doing one:

1. VBS IS A DEPENDABLE ONGOING OUTREACH.

For 95 years, Lifeway has provided trusted VBS resources to churches. That effort has helped over 25,000 churches and helped to reach 3 million people annually with the gospel of Jesus Christ.



With a typical five-day time frame, VBS offers a chance to pull out all the stops and create an unforgettable experience. Research shows connections made during VBS result in salvations, discovery of church prospects and potential workers for other ongoing children's programs.

2. VBS CREATES LASTING MEMORIES.

VBS is a special event that creates memories that help lock Bible truths in a child's heart and mind for a lifetime. Creative presentations, games, food, decorations and fun all link together to plant seeds in the minds and hearts of young people. Biblical truths can expose many children to their first hearing of God and his work in the world.

3. VBS IS A PROVEN METHOD TO SHARE THE GOSPEL.

VBS is an intentional evangelistic opportunity.

The biblical content built into the curriculum lays foundational truths that help kids understand who Jesus is and why they need a personal Savior. The relationships you develop with kids and their families can provide long term relationships with people who you never knew in the community before.



VBS is an opportunity to ignite the imagination of your church, involve volunteers for a specific "doable" commitment and connect with the kids in your church and community. The methods you use will create memories. The message you share will change lives.

BRBA applauds each and every church that makes the effort to give kids a memorable experience through VBS and summer camps. Want to know how your church can get in on the action next year? Contact Director of Missions, Bruce Conley and he will help you make plans in 2024!

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNITY IN GOD'S FAMILY

One of the biggest problems in the body of Christ is disunity. Christianity has been fragmented and splintered into so many groups and denominations that our effectiveness seems to have been diminished. After all, how are we supposed to teach the world about truth when our internal disputes cause us to disagree with each other so much?

Far too many Christians are more concerned with minor disagreements than they are with sharing the gospel and expanding the body of Christ. We can have differences of opinion and that is not necessarily a bad thing because humans are thinkers and we have opinions. But our differences must always be clothed with humility and love. When differences of opinion become more important than the unity within the body of Christ, then trouble creeps into the church and also into our hearts.

Paul said to the church at Ephesus: "I therefore, a prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift ¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up of the body of Christ; ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature to the fullness of Christ," (Eph. 4:1-7,12-13).

Paul's challenge is for unity. Because we are saved by the Lord Jesus, we must look to Him and remember HIS humility, and do our very best to emulate Christ. We cannot be unified if we are elevating ourselves above others and squabbling over lesser concerns while people are headed for an eternity without Christ.

1 Corinthians 1: 10-13 says: "I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. ¹¹For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. ¹²What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." ¹³Is Christ divided?"

God puts a group of people together in a local representation of HIS church (not ours) for a reason, so that TOGETHER, in unity, we can all contribute to the glory of God and to further His kingdom under the truth that is the gospel. It should be a joy, not a burden.

Should we allow the enemy to sow discord among our ranks so that we are fighting each other? NO! We should gather our gifts, our talents, our monies, our resources, and direct them towards reaching the lost. Mother Theresa once said: "If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other."

May we put our eyes on Jesus and ask Him to use us, to humble us, and to cause our hearts to elevate the preaching of the gospel to the high rank it deserves, far above our differences.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity. Psalm 133:1

To Jesus be all the glory.

Bruce Conley; BRBA Director of Missions