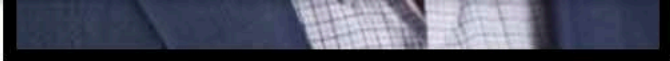




WELCOME NEW PASTORS TO THE BLUE RIDGE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION !!

Valley Baptist Church in Jefferson, MD has called Josue Rodriguez to be their new pastor.





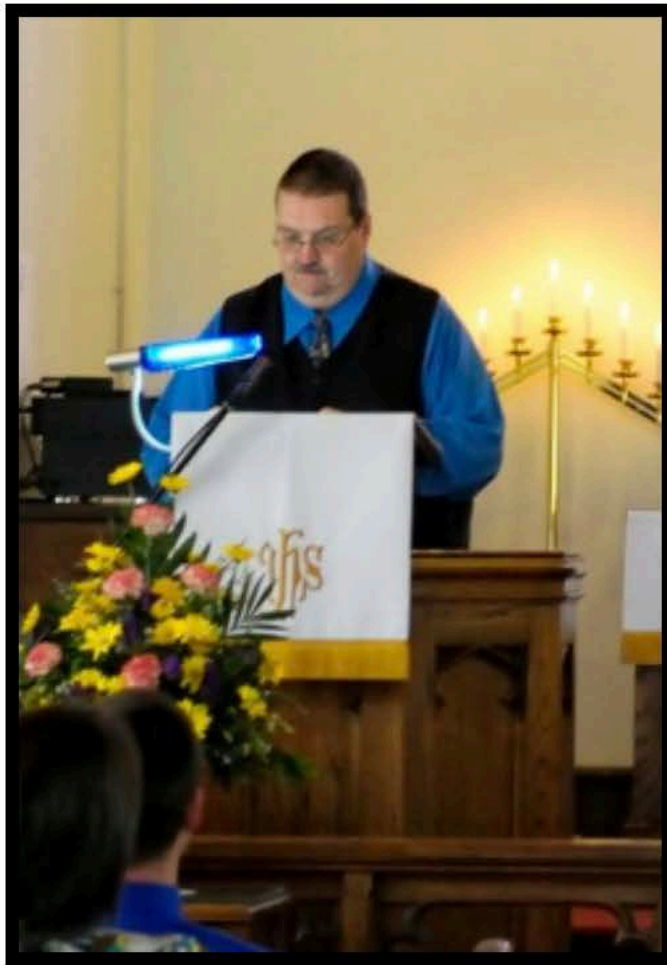
Pastor Rodriguez lives in New Market, MD. He previously served in a Sovereign Grace Church – and has led multiple mission trips to Cuba, which is his passion. He has a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Puerto Rico, and will work bi-vocationally while serving as pastor at Valley Baptist Church. He is fluent in Spanish and English. We look forward to working with Pastor Josue!



First Baptist Church of Frederick, MD has called Rev. David E. Cooper to be their next senior pastor effective July 1, 2026. David is retired from the U.S Army as a military Chaplain. He also has experience leading civilian churches before and after his 25 years of military service.

David was brought to faith as a child in a Southern Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi, and has served folks from many denominations over his ministry career. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Georgia State University, a Masters of Divinity from Asbury Theological Seminary, and a Doctorate of Ministry from Erskine Theological Seminary.

Pastor David is married to his wife Sandy, and they have three adult children with families of their own. He also plays guitar, and has been an avid horse trainer. We are very much looking forward to welcoming Dave and Sandy to the Blue Ridge Family and working along side of them for expansion of the gospel in our region!



A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM YOUR DOM

I wanted to take a moment to thank ALL of our churches and leaders for praying for me and being flexible regarding my availability (or lack thereof) over this summer season. Between an oral surgery that I have been waiting over 3 years to get, and a recent barrage of heart issues that have cropped up ... this summer has become anything BUT a vacation for me.

The oral surgery was rather invasive, as my upper jaw needed some reconstruction and bone grafting in order to make sure my mouth could be fitted with steel posts to accommodate a snap in denture. What we thought would be a 2.5 hour surgery turned out to be over 7 hours – with an overnight stay at Medstar Washington Hospital Center. It's been almost 4 weeks since that surgery, and I can now speak / preach but I have a rather distinctive lisp. The worst of the oral surgery woes is behind me now.

The game plan for my heart pain and discomfort has recently changed after a review by my cardiac surgeon at Winchester Medical Center. I am now scheduled for a cardiac catheterization in about 2 weeks to see if there are any blockages in arteries to my heart. Following that procedure I may still need a heart ablation to get my heart beating back in normal rhythm.

Please keep the prayers coming my way through July and August! If all goes well, I hope to be back in 100% tip-top shape by September, so we can all fellowship together at the BRBA annual on October 12th (Columbus Day) at the First Baptist Church of Frederick, MD at 7 PM. I continue to work as I am feeling up to it to serve the Association, and you are welcome to call / text / or email me any time. If there is a slight delay in my response ... I pray you will understand the reasons behind the pause.

God is doing some GREAT things in our association and in so many of our churches! I'm honored to play a small part in His amazing work and watch-care over us all.

Psalm 105:1 "Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples!"

Blessings,

Pastor Bruce Conley
Director of Missions; BRBA

EMMITSBURG COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH GETS A NEW HOME!



For many years ECBC has met in rental space to hold church services. At first they met in a local Elementary School. Later they rented space in a cozy strip mall /

commercial building that provided lots of parking, because the other tenants closed their businesses on Sundays. Pastor Joe Engel and other church leaders have prayed diligently – seeking God for a more permanent space of their own, or possibly land that the church could build on.

In April, a local church in downtown Emmitsburg contacted Rev. Engel with a proposition. Incarnation United Church of Christ had suffered from a dwindling membership for many years, and recently the few remaining church members decided that it was time to close the church doors. Leaders at IUCC asked ECBC if they would take over the beloved church building as a GIFT. Needless to say, Pastor Engle and the church members were overwhelmed by the offer to let this growing Baptist church take over their church property. The act of generosity came out of the blue – but answered so many years of prayers for Emmitsburg Community Baptist Church!

As ECBC prepares to receive this extremely gracious gift – they continue to celebrate the goodness and provision of God. A dedication service has been set for September 20th at 10:30 AM in the new (to them) church building, and folks from all over the Association are invited to attend. The dedication will be at 124 W. Main Street, Emmitsburg, MD. Come celebrate this lasting and tangible gift to God's people.

GOD IS GOOD ALL THE TIME!!



September 9, 2026 | 9:00 AM

BRBA Pastors' Breakfast

Meet the New Pastors!

September 17, 2026

(BRBA + BCMD) Senior Adult Luncheon

 Bob Evans

1505 Garrett Drive

Frederick, MD 21702

September 24–26, 2026

Pastors' Wives Retreat

 Annapolis, MD

October 12, 2026 | 7:00 PM

Registration begins at 6:30 PM

Blue Ridge Baptist Association Annual Meeting

 First Baptist Church of Frederick

October 15, 2026

Evangelism Training

 Skycroft

 *Time TBD*

November 9–10, 2026

BCM/D Annual Meeting – “The Gathering”

 *Location TBD*

December 1, 2026

The Pastors' Conference

 First Baptist Church of Laurel



BLUE RIDGE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Renewal Gatherings

Wherever we are in the journey, the one thing every *pastor* needs to experience is renewal and space to be refreshed in the presence of God. Through guided practice, honest conversation, and shared encouragement, pastors are invited to reconnect with their own souls and be equipped with practical skills to be strengthened for sustainable ministry, long-term resilience, and joy.

Dan Hyun (BCM/D Director of Formation and Health) will be our facilitator for this experience.



When: Tuesday, September 22, 10am-12:30pm



Location: Hagerstown Church
15 High Street, Hagerstown, MD



Lunch is included, so let us know you will join us by emailing dhyun@bcmnd.org.

Renewal Gatherings are a cooperative effort between the Blue Ridge Baptist Association and the BCM/D.

**Find a Renewal
Gathering Near You!**

bcmnd.org/renewal-gatherings

BCM/D





VBS OUTREACH ABOUNDS IN BLUE RIDGE !!

Many of our churches had a great turnout for their local VBS programs! GLORY TO GOD for all who worked hard to get the gospel to local children! We are especially grateful that one of our language mission churches was invited to participate with another BRBA church for VBS! The Haitian children from Eglise Baptiste Haitienne du Calvaire of Chambersburg, PA got to visit with the good folks at Greencastle Baptist Church to enjoy a week of Vacation Bible School together learning about Jesus with the EMERALD CROSSING VBS program.

Children from both churches enjoyed a week of singing, learning, hand made crafts, and growing together as they journeyed through Psalm 23. A special thanks to Maranda Roberts and the team at Greencastle Baptist for putting the program together, and also to Pastor Jean Claude Benoit for arranging transportation for the kids!



MEET BRBA'S NEW TREASURER / BOOKKEEPER

Darlene Ely - a trusted long term servant of the Lord here in the Blue Ridge Baptist Association decided this year to leave her position as treasurer / bookkeeper in order to spend more time with GOOD NEWS CLUBS for kids, and leading women's Bible studies in her area. She will also be traveling more with her husband, John. We are sad to see Darlene leave us, but she has agreed to serve as an assistant treasurer / bookkeeper and back up to our new guy.

DAVE MARSH has begun serving to help BRBA with our financial needs. Dave has experience in doing the books for multiple churches, a Christian school, and other non-profit 501(c)3 organizations. He is well versed with everything we need, and has served in ministry with our DOM before in a church setting. Dave is semi-retired and lives in Hedgesville, WV with his wife Esther.

We want to welcome Dave to the BRBA family. You can meet him at the BRBA Annual Meeting on October 12th (Columbus Day) in Frederick, MD.

SUMMIT TRACE CHURCH FINDS A NEW WORSHIP SPACE

The last few years SUMMIT TRACE CHURCH has been meeting at the KEY SCHOOL in Frederick, MD - but they received notice that the school will be closing down this summer and the building will be going up for sale. Once that news came, the church immediately began looking for alternative spots to meet on Sundays for worship. Several possible options were considered.



They found a perfect space in the local media center / library at Gov. Thomas Johnson High School 1501 North Market Street in Frederick, MD. The church now meets on Sunday mornings at the school. Rob Downs is senior pastor.

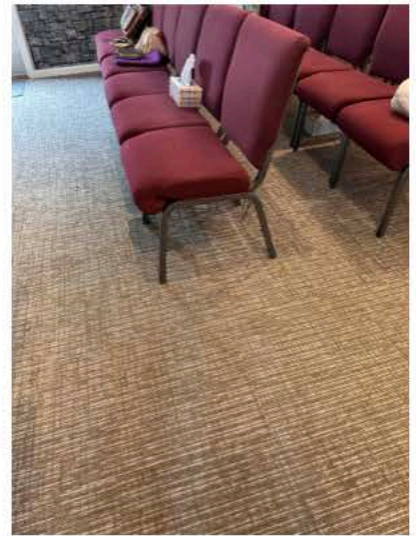
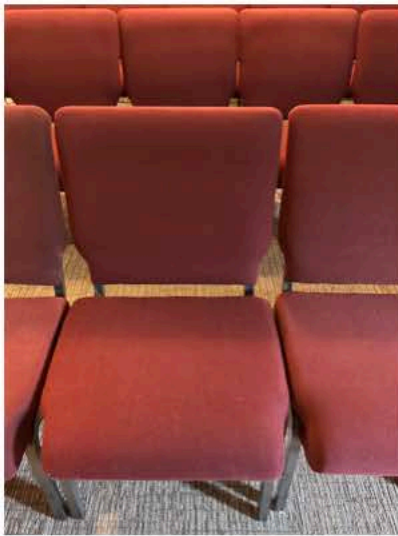
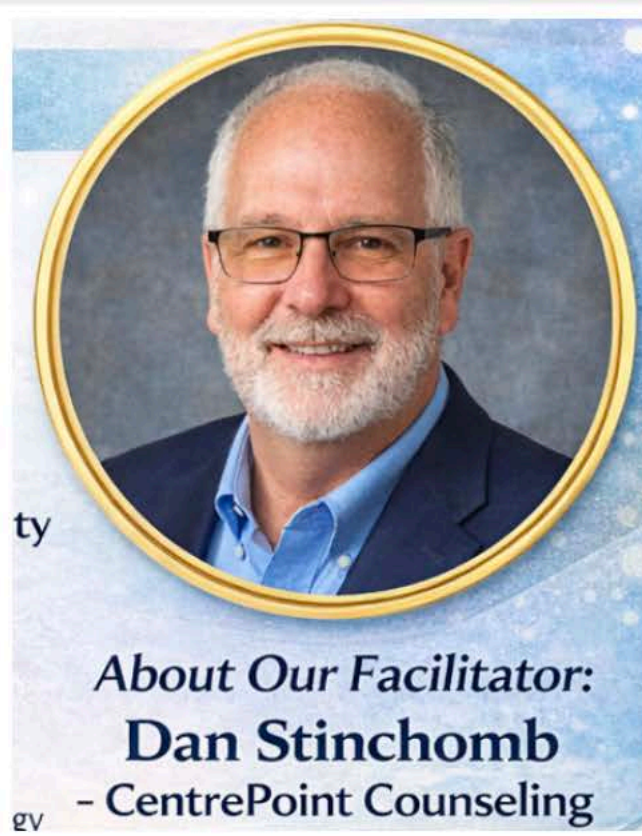


SUICIDE PREVENTION CLASS A SUCCESS!

We want to thank Dan Stinchcomb of CentrePointe Christian Counseling for teaching BRBA church members on the subject of Suicide Prevention as summer started. The class was a great success with about 27 folks attending. A special thanks to Pastor Harold Renner and Greenbrier Baptist Church for use of their building, and for the great coffee and snacks provided to make everyone comfortable. We appreciate your gracious hospitality!

SUICIDE PREVENTION SEMINAR





GIVEAWAY: Chairs, Hymnals & Pulpit Available (shown in the above photos)

First Baptist Church of Thurmont has chairs and hymnals available to give away, and a pulpit is also available from Emmitsburg.

📖 Baptist Hymnals

- **38 Blue Hymnals** – 12th Printing
- **24 Tan Hymnals** – 26th Printing

🪑 Maroon Chairs

Approximately **65–75 maroon chairs** are available. Availability is limited and will depend on First Baptist Church of Thurmont receiving its new chairs in mid-August.

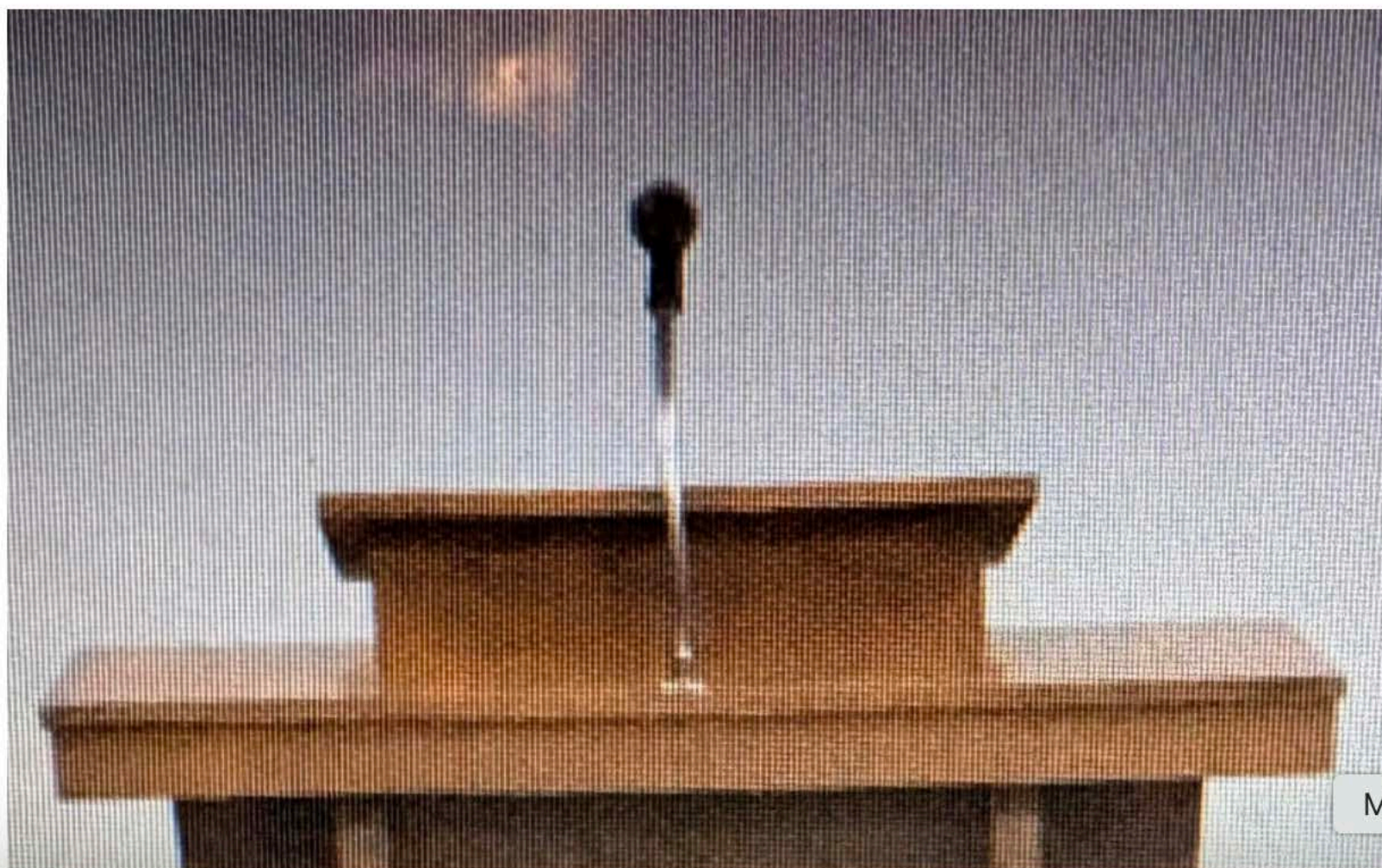
🏛️ Pulpit

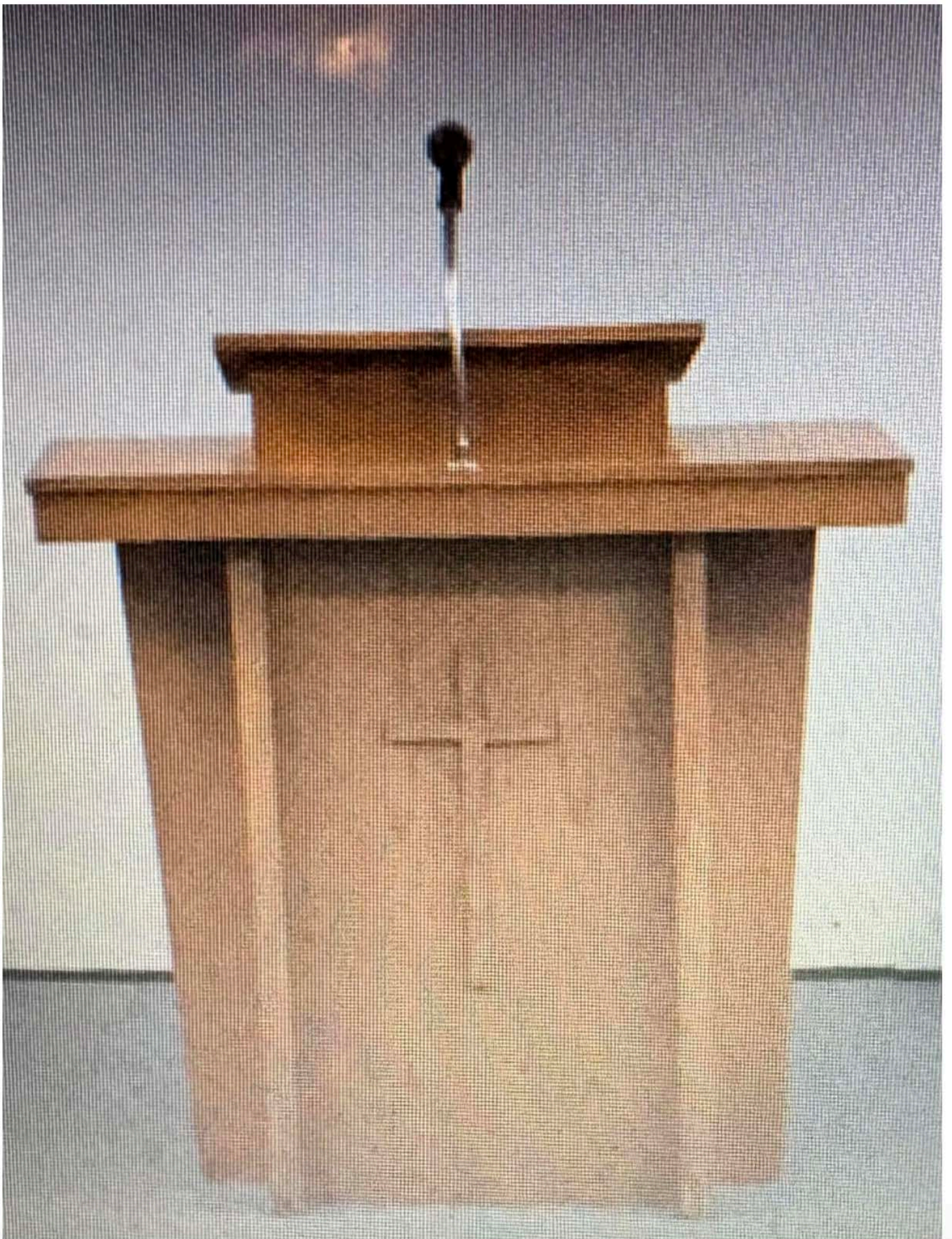
A **pulpit from Emmitsburg** is also available as part of this giveaway.

📞 Contact

Contact for the pulpit if interested is NOT Jay Beard at FBC Thurmont, but Joe Engle at Emmitsburg community Baptist - pastorengel@gmail.com

Items are available on a first-come, first-served basis and are subject to availability.





Emmitsburg Community Baptist Church 🏛️ has a free pulpit available to any church that needs one.

Please contact Pastor Joe Engel at pastorengel@gmail.com if interested!!





We are sad to report that THIRD DAY COMMUNITY CHURCH is making preparations to dissolve their charter as a church.

Founded in 2017 by Pastor Joe Lindstrom, the church started with support from the Blue Ridge Baptist Association as a mission church plant. The church was more of an independent evangelical church in the way it was created, but they loved being a part of the local Baptist association, and working with other local churches and pastors doing ministry projects together. Our DOM, Pastor Bruce Conley coached Pastor Lindstrom as a church planter for 5 years after the official start of the mission.

In 2022, Pastor Lindstrom was diagnosed with cancer, and the church prayed fervently for his healing, but he lost his battle with cancer in November that same year. The Blue Ridge Baptist Association was asked by lay church leaders to come in and help after Joe's death, and our DOM was asked to become the "church overseer" in early 2023. It was around that same time that an embezzlement was discovered - committed by a volunteer church treasurer - consisting of tens of thousands of dollars missing from church accounts. Pastor Conley led the investigation into the matter, and was able to get some reimbursement to the church through a prosecution of the case.

With the loss of their Pastor, and the shock of an internal theft being discovered - many attending members left the church. Our DOM was asked to serve the church as Interim Pastor for about 1 year until March 2024, and remaining attendance slowly dwindled. In April 2024 a few lay leaders decided to move forward without a

interim pastor, and the small group that remained (about 7-8 families) started holding bible studies on Sundays led by a layman at a coffee shop in Boonsboro, MD, which was being offered to the group rent free.

In June 2026, the last remaining attender from that group chose to leave TDCC to worship at a church in Hagerstown, MD.

We are now in the process of helping the church to close their doors with integrity and in a God honoring and legal way. We have the help of 2 attorneys to make sure that everything is done in an open and honest way in distributing the church's assets and finances. **PLEASE PRAY FOR THIS PROCESS** - that we are hopeful will be completed by the end of this year.

NOTE: In 2024 at the annual meeting, BRBA created a LEGACY FUND to honor many of our pastors who have served our churches faithfully over the years, and gone on to heaven. Joe Lindstrom was one of those pastors. We're hopeful that some of the assets of THIRD DAY COMMUNITY CHURCH will go to that fund, in order to help support many NEW mission church plants in the future in our region. We're pretty sure that Joe would have liked that.



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