

## **SECTION II**

**Annual Business Session Program and Minutes**

**AND**

**Accelerate Conference Program**

The 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the  
Baptist Resource Network of PA/SJ

# **ACCELERATE**

BAPTIST RESOURCE NETWORK OF PA/SJ



ANNUAL BUSINESS SESSION | OCTOBER 8, 2024



**2024 Baptist Resource Network of PA/SJ  
54<sup>th</sup> Annual Business Session**

October 8, 2024, 9 a.m.

Holiday Inn Harrisburg-Hershey Hotel  
604 Station Rd, Grantville, Pa 17028

- 1. Welcome & Opening Prayer**
- 2. Video, Understanding the Annual Business Session**
- 3. President's Report**
- 4. Seating of Messengers**
  - A. Report by Credential and Enrollment Committee
  - B. Questions and vote
- 5. Video, BRN Annual Update, Barry Whitworth, Executive Director/Treasurer**
- 6. Nominating Committee**
  - A. Report
  - B. Nominating Committee's presentation of Convention/Board President
  - C. Questions and vote
- 7. Test Your CP IQ**
- 8. Video, Cooperative Program**
- 9. SBC Executive Committee Greetings, Brandon Porter**
- 10. Finance & Operations Committee**
  - A. [brnunited.org/budget25](http://brnunited.org/budget25)
  - B. Presentation of current BRN financials
  - C. Presentation of 2025 Annual Budget
  - D. Questions and vote
- 11. Video, IMB Report**
- 12. Recognition of Board Members**
- 13. Video, NAMB Report**
- 14. Closing Remarks & Prayer for the Coming Year**

**Business Session Financial Report**  
January – August 2024



**Income:**

Cooperative Program	\$ 765,726
North American Mission Board	\$ 241,667*
Special Offerings	\$ 233,599
Other Income	<u>\$ 286,407</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,527,399</b>

**Expenses:**

Global Missions	\$ 486,281
Operations & Personnel	\$ 545,381
Church Servicing & Resourcing	<u>\$ 483,061</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,514,723</b>

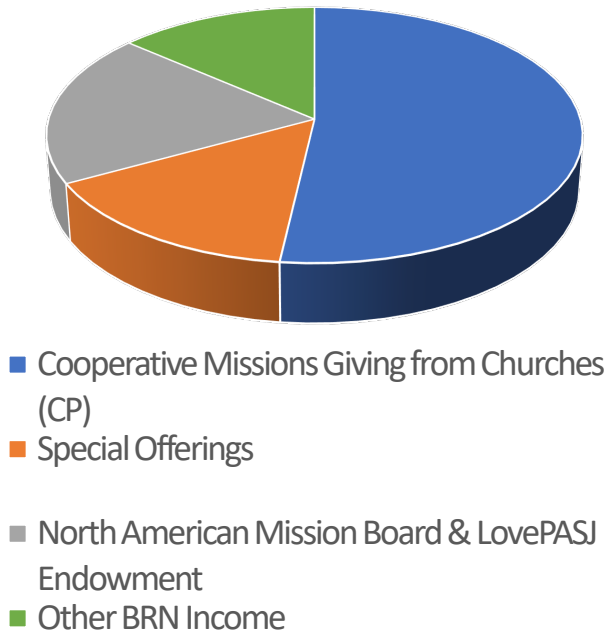
**Notes for the January – August 2024 Financials:**

1. The BRN team has worked closely with the Executive Board and Executive Board Leadership Team to advance forward through several high inflation years.
2. We rejoice that cooperative missions giving through the Cooperative Program is 6.4% ahead of this same period in 2023.
3. Global missions funding increased by 13.5% from this time in 2023.
4. All expense areas in 2024 are operating below budget to date.
5. The BRN's 2023 Financial Audit, by an outside auditor, was successfully completed with accompanying financial statements. The review showed sound financials, investments, and financial practices.
6. Thank you for your generous giving to the Cooperative Program, the unified giving plan for missions! As your church gives to Cooperative Program know that it fuels the acceleration of Kingdom movement for God's work in Pennsylvania/South Jersey, the nation, and the world.
7. If you would like more information on these financial reports, please see the Finance & Operations Committee Chairman, Dr. Brennan Coughlin.

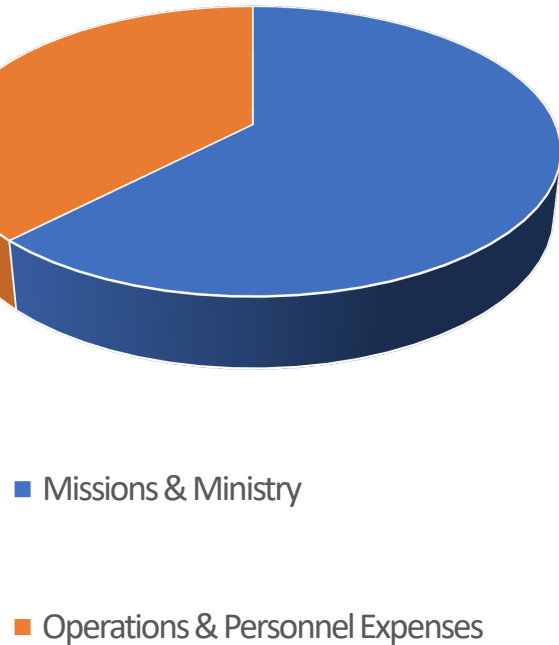
\*Does not include Church Planter Funding which is recorded in a Designated Account.

**Baptist Resource Network of PA/SJ**  
**Proposed 2025 Budget**

**2025 Anticipated Income**



**2025 Anticipated Expenses**



**Anticipated Income:**

Cooperative Missions Giving from Churches (CP)	1,220,000
Special Offerings	357,000
North American Mission Board & LovePASJ Endowment	456,000
Other BRN Income	320,750
<b>Total Anticipated Income</b>	<b>2,353,750</b>

**Anticipated Expenses:**

Missions & Ministry	1,464,787	62.3%
<i>Global Missions, Special Offerings, Church Servicing, and Church Resourcing</i>		
Operations & Personnel Expenses	888,963	37.7%
<i>BRN Executive Board Expenses, Operational Costs, Facility, Salaries, &amp; Benefits</i>		
<b>Total Anticipated Expenses</b>	<b>2,353,750</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

>The above represents about a 5% increase in CP receipts from churches and an increase in CP giving beyond PA/SJ of 1%.  
 >CP sent nationally has increased 7.9%, from 26.1 to 34%, between 2018 and 2025.

Please visit [brnunited.org/accelerate](http://brnunited.org/accelerate) or [brnunited.org/budget25](http://brnunited.org/budget25) for an expanded budget

# Excerpts from the Baptist Resource Network's Constitution & Bylaws

## *Relating to Messengers and Voting*

### ARTICLE IV-MEMBERSHIP

#### SECTION 1

The BRN shall have members. Members shall be churches that are defined as cooperating Baptist churches and have been approved for membership with the BRN. Churches desiring to be members and the removal of churches shall be evaluated in accordance with procedures outlined in the BRN Policy Manual.

To be eligible for membership, a church must meet the definition of a cooperating church which is a church that:

- Regularly contributes to the Cooperative Program (CP),
- Affirms in belief and practice the most recent *Baptist Faith and Message* ·BFM· as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in Annual Session, and
- Regularly completes the Annual Church Profile (ACP).

#### SECTION 2

The BRN shall allow member churches to participate in the voting affairs of the BRN's Annual Session. Member churches shall send messengers to the Annual Session to act on behalf of the member church. To be sent as a messenger, the individual must:

- Be a member or active participant in good standing of the sending church, and
- Personally affirm the most recent BFM in belief and practice.

#### SECTION 3

The number of Messengers selected by their respective churches shall be according to the following criteria:

- (a) A cooperating member church during the BRN's fiscal year preceding the Annual Session and/or during the current year is entitled to three (3) messengers.
- (b) Additional messengers from a church, up to a maximum of twelve (12), are authorized as follows:
  - One additional messenger for each fifty (50) resident members reported in the ACP, not including members of chapels/missions.
  - One additional messenger for a seven percent (7%) contribution to the Cooperative Program, and an additional messenger for each percentage point beyond that (indicated by a comparison of undesignated gifts reported in the ACP with BRN fiscal year receipts).
- (c) A mission not yet constituted shall be entitled to two (2) messengers in addition to the messengers of its sponsoring church.

#### SECTION 4: Removal of Messengers

If it becomes known that a messenger is not acting in accordance with the BFM, in faith and/or practice, such messenger may be removed in accordance with procedures outlined in the BRN Policy Manual.

### ARTICLE VI-MEETINGS

The BRN shall have an annual gathering which shall include member churches. At this gathering the messengers of member churches shall participate in the BRN annual business portions of the gathering. The annual business portion of the gathering shall be known as the Annual Session. The BRN will determine the meeting location, date, times, and other meeting details. In case of an emergency, the President, with the consent of the Executive Board, may call a special business meeting.

## Executive Board and Committees

### **Outgoing Executive Board Members:**

Mike Blackie, Pastor, Catalyst Church, West Region

Jerome Coleman, Pastor, First Baptist Church of Crestmont, Greater Philadelphia Region

### **New Executive Board Members Elected:**

Term Expiring 2025 (vacancy of Alfonzo Toney):

Anthony Peña, Layperson, Fellowship CrossPoint Church, South Jersey Region

Term Expiring 2026 (vacancy of Kim Carson):

Jack Bowser, Layperson, Harvest Community Church Kittanning, West Region

2025-2027 Terms:

Darius Nable, Pastor, The Church of the Good Shepherd Cherry Hill, South Jersey Region

Robert Sheldon, Pastor, Greencastle Baptist Church, Central Region

Kenneth Sachs, Pastor, God's Field Church, West Region

### **Executive Board Members to be *Re-elected* for 2025-2027 Terms:**

Brennan Coughlin, Pastor, Fellowship CrossPoint Church, South Jersey Region

Eric McMahon, Pastor, Watershed Church, Greater Philadelphia Region

John Toone, Pastor, East Shore Baptist Church, Central Region

### **Current Executive Board Members:**

Expiration 2025

Deb Beswarick, Layperson, Harvest Community Church Kittanning, West Region

Ryan Day, Pastor, Wrightsdale Baptist Church, Central Region

Charles Fricker, Pastor, Harvest House Community Fellowship, Central Region

Jennifer White, Pastor, Keystone Community Fellowship, Greater Philadelphia Region

Expiration 2026

Jason Hunter, Pastor, First Baptist Church Clarion, West Region

Brian King, Pastor, Ezekiel Baptist Church, Greater Philadelphia Region

Christopher (Buff) McNickle, Layperson, One Hope Church, South Jersey Region

Jennifer Musser, Layperson, Bucks County Community Church, Greater Philadelphia Region

John Velarde, Layperson, Riverbend Community Church, Central Region

*\*Pastor denotes Senior/Lead Pastor or Wife*

#### **Administrative Committee**

Brian King Sr, Chair

Deb Beswarick

Mike Blackie

Jerome Coleman

Charles Fricker

Jason Hunter

Jennifer Musser

Anthony Peña

John Toone

#### **Finance & Operations Committee**

Brennan Coughlin, Chair

Jack Bowser

Ryan Day

Eric McMahon

Buff McNickle

Darius Nable

John Velarde

Jennifer White

#### **Nominating Committee**

Buff McNickle, Chair

Deb Beswarick

Charles Fricker

Eric McMahon

## **Standing Committees:**

### **Nominating Committee**

Deb Beswarick, West Region

Christopher (Buff) McNickle, South Jersey Region, Chair

Charles Fricker, Central Region

Eric McMahon, Greater Philadelphia Region

### **Credential & Enrollment Committee**

Mike Blackie, Catalyst Church

Buff McNickle, One Hope Church

## **BRN Office of President**

Duties of the BRN President as defined in the Constitution and Bylaws:

1. Annually, the President shall be nominated by the BRN Executive Board and presented to the messengers in Annual Session. This officer role shall be elected annually by at least a two-thirds vote of the messengers present and voting at the BRN Annual Session. If the nominated candidate is not affirmed by two-thirds vote, the BRN Executive Board will request a re-vote or present another candidate.
2. The President shall preside over the Annual Session. The President may appoint other committees when requested by the body. In the event of the President's disqualification or incapacity to serve, the Vice President shall succeed in order. The President shall oversee the BRN's rule of order at the Annual Session and any Special Called Meeting.
3. The President of the BRN shall be the Executive Board President and serve on the board.
4. The President shall chair both the Administrative Committee and Executive Board Appointment Committee.

## **BRN Presidential Candidate Bio**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Election Term**

Rev. Jason Hunter is the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Clarion, PA. He has served as a pastor for 20 years, with 13 years of service in Clarion. He has served several years on the BRN's Executive Board with the last three years serving as the Vice-President. Rev. Hunter graduated from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary with a MDiv. He is married to Shelley Hunter and has one daughter and one son.



The BRN wishes to thank our SBC partners for participating  
in our Annual Business Session.

Please stop by their tables in the lobby.



**imb**

INTERNATIONAL  
MISSION BOARD



**GuideStone**<sup>®</sup>  
Financial Resources

BRN Accelerate Conference  
54th Annual Business Session  
October 8, 2024

Welcome and Opening Prayer – Dr. Brian King, Ezekiel Baptist Church

Video, Understanding and Annual Business Session – Elizabeth Bengé

Program Highlight: Mission Dignity – comes along side retired missionaries with financial support

President's Report – Dr. Brian King

Seating of Messengers – Mike Blackie and Jennifer White

Report by Credential and Enrollment Committee – there are currently 111 messengers registered and 126 guests seated  
Questions and Vote -

Video, BRN Annual Update, Barry Whitworth, Executive Director/Treasurer

We closed 2023 with 286 affiliated churches, but as of September 1 of 2024 we now have 313 churches

In 2023 the BRN staff made 6945 connections with pastors, churches, and partners  
As of September 1 of 2024 we have made 4,173 connections with our pastors, churches, and partners

So far in 2024 we have given 46 ministry grants totaling \$46,515, a Serve PA/SJ grant totaling nearly \$32,000 and 113 Evangelism grants totaling \$118,060; this includes evangelism grants to 81 churches, 13 church plants, and 15 campus ministries  
So far this year we've had 12 pastoral blessing events and have blessed over 60 pastors and their families

The BRN Guest House has been used by 8 pastors and their wives since the last Accelerate Conference

Also 25 groups utilized the Volunteer Mission House in Harrisburg, not counting the individuals and small groups that stayed one to two nights while traveling for disaster relief work

Despite being closed for most of the summer for renovations, another 18 groups, including the teams who worked on the house, utilized the Warren Mission House in Pittsburgh

This year 6 Guidestone mission recipients received a 13th check from the BRN

Two BRN churches also gave gifts to Mission Dignity through the BRN

The BRN also provided additional Guidestone benefits for 81 pastors

We had 15 individuals serve alongside our churches within our accelerated internship program this year

In our PA/SJ effort we had 294 volunteers from 27 BRN churches and 8 other churches and organizations participated in our Serve Erie missions effort last month and 5 other churches who piloted a mission month initiative this summer

According to our data collected through the 2023 Annual Church Profile (ACP), there were 1602 baptisms recorded last year, a 61% increase in baptisms over 2022, which is 1 baptism per every 12.8 members

There were 31,234 ACP reported Sunday morning attendees and 20565 members in our churches

As of September 1 of 2024, our team had 192 Next Step conversations with churches and 34 churches have completed their next step

Overall, 112 total individual churches have taken their next step on our way to BRN's 150 individual church goal

We have recorded 181 next steps taken overall, this is because some churches have taken up to five next steps

#### Nominating Committee – Pastor Buff McNickle

Report – churches are represented on the Executive Board, each region, based on certain criteria are represented; Pastor Rob Sheldon and Pastor Ken Sachs were presented to fill open positions on the board

Nominating Committee's presentation of Convention/Board President – Dr. King is rolling off as President and Pastor Jason Hunter was presented to fill the role of Board President

Dr. Brian King opened the floor to discussion for nominee Jason Hunter

Questions and Vote – Motion was passed to appoint Jason Hunter as Board President

#### Test Your CP IQ

Everyone was encouraged to take out their phones and answer the questions online, then Dr. King read the questions and answers to the group

#### Video, Cooperative Program – created by Communications Director, Shannon Baker

- Asks the individual churches to fund ministries, which was adopted in 1925
- Through your church, a portion of what God provides, goes to the CP
- Reaches people in your state and around the world
- This amount is sent to the BRN to be shared locally, nationally, and internationally
- Messengers at the BRN annual business session from your church and other churches decide what percentage of CP gifts stay here to support local missions and ministries
- Messengers also decide on the percentage to be forwarded to the SBC for North American and International Missions and ministries
- The BRN uses their percentage of the CP funding for ministries such as:
  - Church servicing
  - Resourcing

- Coaching training
- Disaster and Crisis Relief (DR)
- Multiplying church centers
- Next Generation
- Partnerships
- Pastor/Staff benefits and more

Whatever a local church, decides to give to CP all goes toward impacting lostness in PA/SJ, the US and Canada, and around the world

By your generous giving, people all around the world hear the gospel and receive Christ

SBC Executive Committee Greetings, Brandon Porter, VP Convention Communications for SBC Executive Committee

Attends a small church that is a re-plant, from which the Lord has raised up 2 missionaries to go across the world; their salary, benefits, everything is taken care of through other churches partnering in the Cooperative Program; 600 church planters all across the country; chaplains serving in our armed forces; disaster relief, second to none, offering help across the southeast, devastated by Hurricane Helene; SBC provides a 50% discount to pastors and missionaries as they come and prepare in our seminaries; today we say thank you and ask you to continue and to go back to your churches and thank them and teach them about the Cooperative Program. Our small churches coming together, giving, praying, sending, going, accomplish more for God than we could do on our own.

Recognized Dr. Tim Boger

Finance & Operations Committee – Dr. Brennan Coughlin, Committee Chairman

[Brn.united.org/budget25](https://brn.united.org/budget25) – we have had our best financial year ever; CP giving is the highest it's ever been

Presentation of current BRN Financials – page 2 in our Accelerate program was highlighted to point out the financial report from Jan-Aug 2024

We are increasing the amount of money being sent forward out of PA/SJ to the national CP by 1%, this moves us from 33% to 34%, in 2025 we will be on track to be sending 34%; our resources are helping to keep over 3,000 IMB missionaries on the field; we are proposing a 4.6% increase for 2025, half of which constitutes the increased giving toward the national CP program; this budget is pointing to 37.7% to fuel BRN operations

Presentation of 2025 Annual Budget – Dr. Coughlin proposed the budget for 2025

Questions and Vote – a motion was brought to the floor to approve the 2025 budget, motion was carried

Video, IMB Report – Paul Chitwood

The gospel work that was done over the last year reached 155 countries

We worked to address the world's greatest problem – lostness  
Through your church's giving through the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas offering, southern Baptists are sending and supporting almost 3600 IMB missionaries sharing the gospel around the world along with the 2700 missionary kids who are part of those families  
Through your support, you have contributed to the IMB's work of sharing the gospel face-to-face with nearly 500,000 people and accompanied by our digital engagement strategy, over 1,000,000 people  
In response to hearing the good news, 141,000 people around the world professed faith in Jesus

Recognition of Board Members – rolling off are Dr. Jerome Coleman and Pastor Mike Blackie

They were presented with certificates for their faithful service on the Executive Board.

Video, NAMB Report – Kevin Ezell

Thanked Dr. Whitworth and how he helps lead the churches give to Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and the Cooperative Program  
Since 2010, southern Baptists have planted more than 11,000 churches  
As you look for mission opportunities for your church, Send Relief has multiple ways to engage. You can send mission teams to one of our ministry centers, participate in a Serve tour, or download one of their ministry guides and start a new compassion ministry right in your own community  
Because we partner with IMB, Send Relief lets you have an impact right around the corner or clear across the globe

Closing Remarks & Prayer for the Coming Year – Dr. Brian King

God's not finished with us yet. Philippians 1:6 being confident of this, that He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus  
This was the last time Dr. King spoke in his role as President  
Working with us all has enriched his life and his ministry  
God has done remarkable things in our convention since 1958  
BRN PA/SJ has over 300 churches participating in the BRN, despite all that growth, God is not finished with us yet.  
The message in Philippians was written for all of us in Christ  
God is not finished with us yet, so let us serve boldly  
Hebrews 4:16 let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God, there we will receive His mercy, and He will find grace to help us when we need it  
God sent Jesus through grace, mercy, kingdom and love, the fullness of God in him preached, raised the dead, cast out demons, fed 5,000, changed water into wine, outsmarted the religiously right, after 3 ½ ministry Jesus was tried, spat on, nailed to the cross, hung between two sinners and cried out God, forgive them, and told the one beside him that he would be with him in paradise, He then bowed his head and

died. He was in the grave all Friday afternoon, all Friday night, all Saturday and part of Sunday morning, but before the rooster could crow, the Son got up from the grave. Hebrews 2:14..."so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power over death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death." When Jesus got up from the grave He snatched back power from Satan, that what was lost through Adam is now back through Him. He said all power is in My hand, 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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. With praise and adoration and not because of what Paul and Phil 1:6 says but Jude 1:24-25, now unto him who is able to keep you from stumbling and present you flawless before the presence of his glory with joy, to him alone be glory, majesty, dominion and power, now and forever more. II Timothy 1:12 nevertheless I am not ashamed for I know and am persuaded that he is able to keep what I have committed to him until that day.

To the staff and all BRN, BE BOLD and hold on to God's promises and His unchanging plan because nothing shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus

Be steadfast, unmovable, always unbounding in the world because you know that your labor is not in vain.

To God be the glory.

Dr. Brennan Coughlin and Dr. Barry Whitworth thanked and recognized Dr. Brian King and presented him with a certificate and a plaque in appreciation of his service.

Video highlight: Ministry Investments

the ministry fund is professionally managed, existing for 35 years

Minutes submitted by Jennifer Musser, October 25th, 2024.

# **ACCELERATE**

BAPTIST RESOURCE NETWORK OF PA/SJ



ANNUAL GATHERING & BUSINESS SESSION | OCTOBER 8, 2024

# The **SIMPLE** Solution for **MINISTRY FUNDS**

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**BAPTIST RESOURCE NETWORK OF PA/SJ**

**54th Annual Meeting of the  
Baptist Resource Network of PA/SJ**

**HOLIDAY INN HARRISBURG-HERSHEY**

*604 Station Rd., Grantville, PA, 17028*

**"The righteous are bold as a lion" (Proverbs 28:1).**



**Baptist Resource Network  
Pennsylvania/South Jersey**



**ACCELERATING KINGDOM MOVEMENT**

# ACCELERATE CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 8, 2024 | HOLIDAY INN HARRISBURG/HERSHEY HOTEL

## ACCELERATE

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**BRN United** is a member of the  
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the Evangelical Press Association.

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# Hello, BRN Family!

WELCOME to our 4th annual Accelerate Conference. This year's Accelerate Conference theme is "Bold: Next Level." I believe there has never been a better time to be bold... bold in our prayer, bold in our witness, and bold in our belief that God will do great things! Proverbs 28:1 says, *"The wicked flee when no one is pursuing them, but the righteous are bold as a lion."*

We are trusting God for even greater things through the Baptist Resource Network and our family of churches. At this year's conference, Dr. Larry Anderson, BRN director of church health, and I will seek to boldly proclaim God's energizing power in our keynote presentations and as we unveil the BRN's "Next Level Blueprint," which is designed to encourage and assist BRN churches to move to their next level in ministry. In our third keynote presentation, we will hear from four BRN church pastors who will share how they have been bold in moving their churches to the next level. We also will host 12 one-hour breakout sessions from bold speakers who will challenge BRN churches and pastors to be bold in every aspect of ministry.

It is my desire that BRN churches all over our network will dream and act boldly, take hold of all that God has for them, and inspire others to have courage and rise up to do more than ever for God's Kingdom.

Your Missionary to PA/SJ,

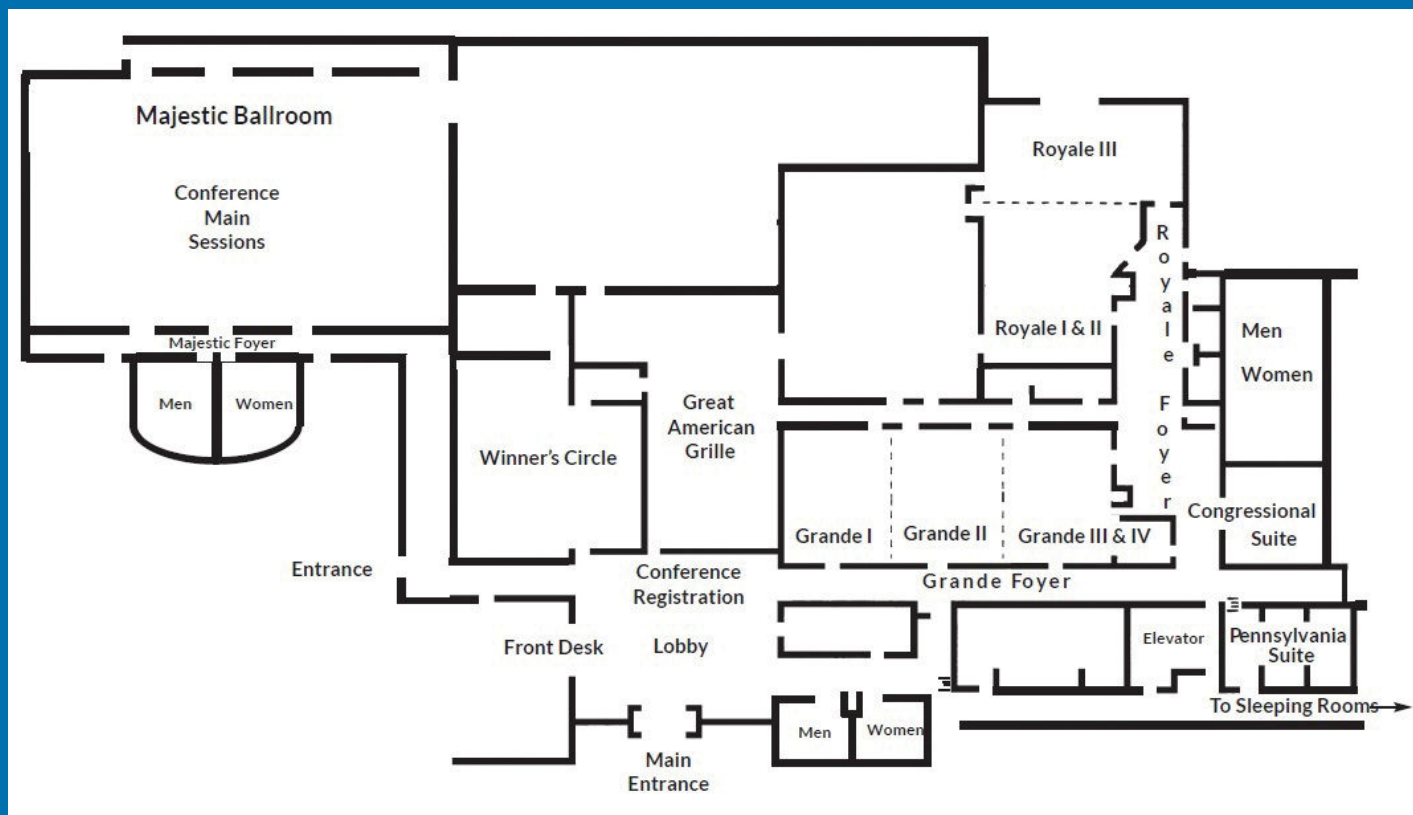


**DR. BARRY WHITWORTH**

*Executive Director,  
Baptist Resource Network*

# GETTING AROUND

## THE HOLIDAY INN HARRISBURG HERSHEY HOTEL



### HOLIDAY INN HARRISBURG HERSHEY HOTEL

604 Station Road  
Grantville, Pennsylvania

#### REGISTRATION

Registration is located in the Lobby near the Front Desk. You must stop by registration, even if you pre-registered online, so that we can provide you with a meeting information packet and a name badge.

#### MEALS

Prepurchased breakfast will be in Grande II, III and IV. Breakfast can be purchased at the Great American Grille, if desired. Lunch will be at the Great American Grille.

### EXPO

Displays are located in the Majestic Foyer and adjoining hallway, as well as the Grande Foyer and Royale Foyer.

#### SPONSOR & VENDOR BINGO\*

To be entered to win a gift basket, please visit at least ten (10) of our sponsors & vendors and have them mark their logo on the provided form. Fill out this form and place the whole bingo flyer in the container of the gift you would like to win.

All entries must be received by the start of the 3:30 p.m. main session. Drawings will take place in the main session room after 4:30 p.m.

### GIVEAWAYS

\*You must be present in order to receive a giveaway. No purchase is necessary. Thank you to our sponsors and vendors, who made this possible.

#### NOTE

Schedule and participants are subject to change.

# ACCELERATE CONFERENCE



9:00 a.m.	Business Session
10:00	Break/Prayer
10:15	Worship Session 1
10:30	Welcome
10:35	Main Session 1: Keynote: Dr. Barry Whitworth
11:05	Worship Session 2
11:10	Main Session 2: Keynote: Dr. Larry Anderson
11:55	Explanation of Network, Expo Lunch
12:00 p.m.	Networking, Expo, Lunch
1:00	Breakout Sessions 1
2:00	Break
2:15	Breakout Sessions 2
3:15	Break
3:30	Worship Session 3
3:45	Main Session 3: Keynote: Special Guest Testimonies
4:30	Giveaways
4:40	Closing Words - Dr. Barry Whitworth
4:45	Worship Session 4
5:00	Close





**The wicked flee**

*when no one is  
pursuing them,*

**LID**

*but the righteous are*

**bold as a lion.**

Proverbs 28:1



# AT A GLANCE

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Larry Anderson .....	BRN Director of Church Advancement & Evangelism; Pastor, Great Commission Church, Philadelphia, Pa.
Daniel Arter .....	Grace Reformed Baptist Church, Philipsburg, Pa.
Elizabeth Benge.....	BRN Executive Assistant to Barry Whitworth
Mike Blackie .....	BRN Board Member and Pastor, Catalyst Church, Altoona, Pa.
John Cope.....	Send Network PA/SJ Director; Senior Pastor, Keystone Fellowship, Montgomeryville, Pa.
Brennan Coughlin .....	BRN Board Member and Senior Pastor, Fellowship CrossPoint Church, Chesterfield, N.J.
Tom Dawson .....	Senior Pastor, SOAR Church, Woodbine, N.J.
Ryan Day.....	Lead Pastor, Wrightsdale Baptist Church, Peach Bottom, Pa.
Greg Drayer.....	BRN Church Health Consultant (West); Pastor, Rolling Hills Baptist Church, Verona, Pa.
Johnathan Gray .....	President of the Georgia Baptist Foundation/Ministry Trust
Jason Hunter.....	BRN Board Vice President and Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church of Clarion, Pa.
Brian King .....	BRN Board President and Senior Pastor, Ezekiel Baptist Church, Philadelphia, Pa.
Debbie Knowles .....	Pastor's Wife, Christian House Baptist Chapel, Aliquippa, Pa.; BRN Woven Women Assistant
Ron Larson .....	Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church of Delaware, New Castle, Del.
David Ludwig .....	BRN Director of Discipleship and Leadership Development
Eric McMahon .....	BRN Board Member and Pastor, Watershed Church, Philadelphia, Pa.
Buff McNickle .....	BRN Director, Compassion Ministry & Partnership Development
Brian Musser .....	Collegiate Minister, Drexel University, Philadelphia, Pa.
Dan Nold.....	Lead Pastor, Calvary Church, State College, Pa.
Anthony Peña .....	BRN Board Member and Worship Leader, Fellowship CrossPoint Church, Chesterfield, N.J.
Michele Pilla .....	Founder/Executive Director, Wholesome Riches, Camden, N.J.
Brandon Porter.....	Vice President for Communications, Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee
Ken Sachs .....	Pastor, God's Field Church, Ambridge, Pa.
Tim Walker.....	Lead Pastor, Restored Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.
Gerald Waters .....	Pastor, Proclamation Community Church, Philadelphia, Pa.
Barry Whitworth .....	BRN Executive Director/Treasurer
Ricky Wilson .....	Senior Pastor, Christian Faith Fellowship, Downingtown, Pa.
Wes Winebarger .....	Pastor, Travelers Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Attorney R. Davis Younts .....	Baptist Resource Network Legal Counsel, Younts Law



# Accelerate Conference

## Keynote Speakers



### **DR. BARRY WHITWORTH**

***Executive Director, Baptist Resource Network of Pennsylvania/South Jersey***

DR. BARRY WHITWORTH has been in ministry for over 30 years, serving as a mission pastor, associate pastor, church planter, pastor, interim pastor, transitional pastor and planter, church planting strategist, lead church planting catalyst, church planting director, and now executive director. Before his calling as Executive Director of the *Baptist Resource Network (BRN)* in February 2017, he was a church planting missionary and served as the *Multiplying Churches Team* Leader for the BRN. Barry, who has planted churches and served on church staffs in Pennsylvania, New York, and Maryland, says his passion is the local church — to assist and encourage the churches in “reaching the lost [and] discipling the saved.” He seeks to help Pennsylvania/South Jersey Baptists “decrease lostness,” “push back darkness,” and “have an impact in our generation for such a time as this.” He and his wife Beth have two daughters and six grandchildren.



### **DR. LARRY ANDERSON**

***Director of Church Advancement and Evangelism, Baptist Resource Network of Pennsylvania/South Jersey***

DR. LARRY ANDERSON is Director of Church Advancement and Evangelism, BRN; Former President, State Directors of Evangelism, PA/SJ State Director of Evangelism, Nationally; Pastor, Great Commission Church, West Oak Lane area of Philadelphia; Co-Author of “Ask Me Why I’m Not In Church,” “The Pastors’ Diaries: An Intimate Look Behind the Pulpit,” and the recently released “The Pastors’ Wives’ Diaries: A Visible Journal of The Invisible Journey.”

# Accelerate Conference

## Guest Testimonies



### **PASTOR JASON HUNTER**

#### **First Baptist Church of Clarion, Pa.**

REV. JASON HUNTER is the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Clarion, Pa. He has served as a pastor for 20 years, with 13 years of service in Clarion. He has served several years on the Baptist Resource Network's Executive Board with the last three years serving as vice president. Rev. Hunter graduated from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary with a master of divinity degree. He is married to Shelley Hunter and has one daughter and one son.



### **PASTOR ERIC MCMAHON**

#### **Watershed Church, Philadelphia**

PASTOR ERIC MCMAHON, the founding pastor of Watershed Church in Philadelphia, was raised in Tennessee but has deep roots in PA, with much of his family (parents included) coming from the Phoenixville area. Eric has been married to his high school sweetheart, Christy, for over twenty years. Together, they have five amazing children (all still at home). The party never stops with a large family like theirs! Eric loves everything outdoors, especially hiking and golf. He is also a huge fan of all things sports related.



### **PASTOR KEN SACHS**

#### **God's Field Church, Ambridge, Pa.**

PASTOR KEN SACHS is pastor of God's Field Church, a church plant in Ambridge, Pa., that launched October 9, 2022. This multicultural congregation is a great representation of the community in which they serve. He is a 20-year veteran of the United States Navy, from which he retired in 2006. He completed a master of divinity degree in 2018 through Liberty University and is currently enrolled as a candidate for the doctor of ministry program through Gateway Seminary. He is married to Akiko Sachs, recently celebrating their 33-year wedding anniversary this September. They have two children, Gabriel, 29, and Christopher, 27. They also have a Great Pyrenees dog, Bella.



### **PASTOR TIM WALKER**

#### **Restored Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.**

PASTOR TIM WALKER is the lead pastor of Restored Church in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, an urban church that he planted with a team of friends in 2012. Tim has led Restored to be actively involved and known as a church "In the City, For the City." Since launching, Restored has never had a Sunday without new people, they have now celebrated 175 baptisms, and they are pursuing a disciple-making movement that saturates their city and region with the gospel. Tim also serves on the USA National Leadership Team for The Timothy Initiative, a global disciple-making, church-planting movement focused on multiplying disciple makers, leaders, and churches to the 4th generation. Tim met and married his wife Heather at Restored. They've been married for nine years, have two girls, Lucy and Emily, and they love living on mission together as a family in Wilkes-Barre.





**NEXT**  
(one year)

**NOW**  
(90 days)

**FUTURE**  
(5 years)

**LATER**  
(3 years)

At the Baptist Resource Network and Send Network PA/SJ, we seek to help churches accelerate Kingdom movement. To do that, we are committed to helping your church take your next step in ministry, whatever that step may be, and, ultimately, to help you achieve your next level in ministry.

**What is the “Next Level” that God is calling you and your church to achieve?**

It’s been said that most people overestimate what they can do in one year and underestimate what they can do in ten years. Although ten-year planning may seem too distant, what is God calling you and your church to accomplish in the next 3-5 years, or even this next year?

Let’s have a conversation to get you started!



**THE NEXT  
LEVEL**



# Accelerate Conference Musical Guests



## Worship Team

### ***Fellowship CrossPoint Church, Chesterfield, N.J.***

Fellowship CrossPoint is a Christ-centered, multi-ethnic church in Chesterfield, New Jersey, that exists to connect others to the love of Jesus and help them live on gospel mission. Led by Anthony Peña, the worship team leads a good mix of contemporary and traditional music for their congregation.

NOTE: The Baptist Resource Network will record all of the Keynote and Breakout Sessions so you won't miss any of this great content! The videos will be made available via our weekly e-newsletter, *BRN United*. Not subscribed? That's easy! Just go to [www.brnunited.org/news](http://www.brnunited.org/news) and click the Subscribe button. Your entire church can sign up today!

# Accelerate Conference Emcee



## Dr. Ryan Day

***Lead Pastor, Wrightsdale Baptist Church,  
Peach Bottom, Pa.***

DR. RYAN DAY, a native of Westminster, Maryland, came to Wrightsdale Baptist Church as Lead Pastor in 2020. Prior to Wrightsdale, he served at Grace Baptist Church in Hazleton, Pennsylvania for twenty years. Ryan is a 1998 graduate of Baptist Bible College (now Clarks Summit University) and 2005 graduate of Baptist Bible Seminary. He also holds a doctor of ministry degree from Baptist Bible Seminary.

When he's not ministering at the church, enjoying time with his family, or making plans for the next trip to Ocean City, Maryland, Ryan enjoys presidential biographies, the Baltimore Ravens, and playing guitar in praise and worship settings. He loves Lancaster County and is excited about "Accelerating Kingdom Movement" within the BRN. Ryan is married to Heather, and they have five sons and one daughter.

**PRAYER  
STATIONS**  
*Prayer Changes Things*  
**PRAYERSTATIONS.ORG**

CHANGE LIVES WITH FIVE LITTLE WORDS...

## MAY I PRAY FOR YOU?



Using the simple question, "**May I Pray For You?**" creates a very disarming way to introduce conversation. Most people have a felt need, and are willing to have someone pray for them. This opens the door to then have a conversation and pray for their **REAL** need...

***Their need for Jesus Christ.***

SCAN THE QR CODE ABOVE, OR VISIT: [prayerstations.org/pastor](http://prayerstations.org/pastor)

# BOLD ACCELERATION

## From Moments to Movement

Accelerating Kingdom movement embodies the dynamic process of submitting to the transformative power of the Holy Spirit to propel God's Kingdom forward. This journey involves recognizing and seizing the divine moments of opportunity, whether in personal encounters, congregational gatherings, or global events, and catalyzing them into sweeping movements of spiritual revival, social justice, and discipleship. From past revivals to modern-day missions and church planting endeavors, we witness the Holy Spirit igniting hearts, empowering believers, and orchestrating divine interventions that transcend geographical and cultural boundaries.

*Ephesians 3:20, "Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ..."*

*Acts 17:6, "... These men who have turned the world upside down..."*



# Breakout Session Presenter



**JOHN COPE**

***Send Network  
Director, PA/SJ  
Senior Pastor,  
Keystone Fellowship***

JOHN COPE is founder and senior pastor of Keystone Fellowship and Send Network Director of Pennsylvania & South Jersey for the North American Mission Board. Having grown up in Arkansas, John served as a student pastor there for 16 years before taking on an executive pastor role in Lakeland, Florida. A few years later God began drawing him toward church planting, then one phone call from a connection in Pennsylvania opened the door for ministry in the Northeast. As John puts it, "I almost said no, but God said yes." He and his family moved to Pennsylvania in 2001 and began meeting in a home for Bible study. Since then Keystone Fellowship has continually grown and are currently in the process of planting their eighth church.

John has a bachelor of arts degree in education from Ouachita Baptist University and a masters in religious education from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. John has written and developed a highly effective church-growth, small group development tool titled, "Nothing But Net." Based on Jesus' outreach and ministry examples laid out in the book of Acts, this strategy has been used very successfully in every ministry that John has been involved in. He has taught and trained thousands of ministers and lay people in this biblical approach to ministry through empowerment of lay leadership in fruitful small groups. John is married to his wife, Teresa, and they have three adult sons — two of whom are church planters and a third who serves as an international missionary in the Middle East.

**Happy Birthday**

**TO THE  
COOPERATIVE  
PROGRAM**

**THE FINANCIAL FUEL FOR REACHING  
EVERY PERSON FOR JESUS CHRIST IN  
EVERY TOWN, EVERY CITY, EVERY STATE,  
AND EVERY NATION.**

**The Southern Baptist Convention's  
Cooperative Program turns 100 years old in 2025!  
Let's celebrate! Resources available at [brnunited.org/cp](http://brnunited.org/cp)**

# Defending Your Faith in a Skeptical World

Defend your faith confidently! Learn how to effectively defend and articulate your faith in the face of challenging questions and objections. Explore the importance of apologetics and biblical foundations while gaining strategies for addressing common objections to the Christian faith and engaging skeptics with empathy, clarity, and respect. Learn to navigate difficult conversations and present a compelling case for Christianity in a winsome and persuasive manner. Leave empowered to be courageous witnesses, effectively sharing the Gospel's truth in a skeptical world.

*1 Peter 3:15-16, "... but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, 16 having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame."*

*2 Corinthians 10:1-6, "I, Paul, myself entreat you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—I who am humble when face to face with you, but bold toward you when I am away!— 2 I beg of you that when I am present I may not have to show boldness with such confidence as I count on showing against some who suspect us of walking according to the flesh. 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, 6 being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete."*



# Breakout Session Presenters



**DANIEL ARTER**

***Pastor, Grace  
Reformed Baptist  
Church,  
Philipsburg, Pa.***

DANIEL L. ARTER serves as a teaching pastor at Grace Reformed Baptist Church (Philipsburg, Pa.) and as a chaplain in the Central Pennsylvania region where he lives with his wife, Natalie. His heart in ministry is intentional discipleship with an apologetics focus for the purpose of building up the local church and breaking down the barriers that prevent unbelievers from considering Jesus Christ. Find more information about him and his ministry at [www.danielarter.com](http://www.danielarter.com).



**REV. BRIAN  
MUSSER**

***Collegiate Minister,  
Drexel University,  
Philadelphia***

REV. BRIAN MUSSER is the Baptist Campus Minister at Drexel University. He has served in this role since 2005. He is a commissioned self-funded (support-raising) missionary through the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in partnership with the Baptist Resource Network of Pennsylvania/South Jersey and is appointed to Drexel University through the former Greater Philadelphia Baptist Association. Campus ministry is a unique ministry and Brian engages his University in a unique way. The Church is consistently asking, "How do we pass on the Christian faith to the next generation?" The university searches for how to invite spirituality and religion to be part of the academic process. Students wonder how to connect what they believe with what they do and who they are. On Drexel's campus, Brian stands at the crossroads of all these questions; encouraging churches to understand and intelligently engage future generations with the truth of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, helping the university to see the spiritual questions that are implicit in the knowledge industry and challenging students to think deeply about their hopes and dreams in light of their beliefs. At Drexel, Brian serves as a University-recognized campus chaplain in the office of Spiritual and Religious Life, a part of Student Life. Although not an employee of Drexel, he has earned the respect of the University administration. In the larger Christian community, Brian speaks often on topics that connect churches, young adults, missional engagement, academic institutions. Brian and his wife, Jennifer, are the parents of Julianna, who is a college student at Temple University.

## Serving Others with Courageous Love

Serve boldly and compassionately. Explore the transformative power of love in action and learn practical strategies to help your church be known for expressing empathy and kindness, overcoming barriers to compassion, and being agents of change. Explore biblical teachings and stories that illustrate the importance of loving others sacrificially and selflessly, following the example of Jesus Christ. Leave with renewed passion and practical tools to make a meaningful difference in the world through acts of love and service.

*John 13:34-35, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. 35 By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."*

# Breakout Session Presenters



**BUFF MCNICKLE**

***Director, Compassion  
Ministry & Partnership  
Development***

BUFF MCNICKLE, who planted Grace Falls Church in the Atlantic County region of southern New Jersey, is BRN's director of compassion ministry & partnership development. During the infancy of his new church plant, he and his core team interacted with those who suffer from substance abuse and homelessness, began a ministry of care and compassion to dancers in the local adult entertainment industry, provided afterschool homework help to school children at a local community center for low-income families, built relationships with the workers at a local soup kitchen, and for a small group of believers, encouraged them to break out of their traditions of being mere pew-fillers to be inspired and prepared to carry the gospel into their circle of influence. Pastor Buff was born and raised in Mobile, Alabama. Since 1992, he has served in full-time ministry as a student pastor, family pastor, and minister to singles and young adults. He also served at the University of Mobile as director of student leadership and involvement where he helped build and develop leadership among the students throughout various organizations on campus. Buff and his wife Cissy are blessed to be the parents of three beautiful adopted children, twin boys, Jedidiah and Judah, and Arabella. They live in Absecon, New Jersey.



**GERALD WATERS**

***Pastor, Proclamation  
Community Church,  
Philadelphia***

REV. GERALD A. WATERS SR. is the church planter and first installed pastor of the Proclamation Community Church. He has local roots in Philadelphia where he was born and raised. His educational journey has included Overbrook High School in West Philadelphia, Lincoln University in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and Philadelphia Biblical University (currently Cairn University) in Langhorne, Pennsylvania. He has a bachelor of science degree in Bible and a masters of arts degree in religion from Cairn University. Pastor Waters was also elected to the Who's Who of Colleges and Universities while enrolled at Cairn University. Prior to being called to plant Proclamation Community Church, Pastor Waters served as an associate minister at Proclamation's sending church, Ezekiel Baptist Church under the leadership and mentorship of Pastor Brian D. King Sr. Pastor Waters still serves Ezekiel as a member of the church Elder Board. Rev. Waters was joined in holy matrimony to the beautiful Symara Waters (formerly Murdock) at Ezekiel Baptist Church on May 7, 2005. They have three children; two wonderful sons Gerald, Jr., Jordan and the princess of the family Symone. God has truly blessed him with a remarkable family that gives him immense support in all of his ministerial and life endeavors.



**MICHELE PILLA**

***Founder/Executive  
Director, Wholesome  
Riches, Camden, N.J.***

MICHELE PILLA is founder and executive director of Wholesome Riches, a Christian non-profit organization in Camden, N.J., that exists to support students' physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being in schools. Wholesome Riches works with students, families, school partners, and community leaders to identify needs in the community and build a system of support to meet those needs. Wholesome Riches then develops local strategic partnerships to address these needs with a special emphasis on emotional and spiritual support. Michele, a former health and physical education high school teacher, is also a pastor's wife, married to Matt Pilla, pastor of Keystone Fellowship, South Jersey. Together, they have five children.

## From Sacrificial Giving to Sacrificial Living

Embrace bold stewardship in all aspects of life! Explore what it means to steward God's resources, gifts, and opportunities with courage, faithfulness, and sacrifice. Examine how biblical stewardship encompasses not only financial resources but also time, talents, and relationships. Learn strategies for aligning choices with God's purposes and reflecting on personal and corporate stewardship practices. Leave with renewed vision and practical tools to steward resources faithfully, enabling lasting impact and transformation.

*2 Corinthians 9:6-7, "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

# Breakout Session Presenters



**Dr. Johnathan Gray**

***President of the  
Georgia Baptist  
Foundation/Ministry  
Trust***

DR. JOHNATHAN GRAY began serving as the president of the Georgia Baptist Foundation in April of 2014, after serving at the Southern Baptists of Texas Foundation for over five years as its founding executive director. While serving as president/CEO in Georgia, he has led the Foundation to create two subsidiary organizations in addition to implementing several strategic ministry initiatives. Christian Timber Reserve, LLC was created to encourage, facilitate, and manage gifts of timber. Ministry Trust, LLC was created to provide institutional quality biblically screened investment management solutions to other Baptist and non-Baptist evangelical ministries. By the end 2021, the Foundation's assets under management had increased over \$185 million dollars since Dr. Gray began his service with the Foundation. In addition to his role at the Foundation, Dr. Gray has enjoyed the privilege of serving as the national stewardship catalyst for the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee and the president of the Stewardship Development Association. Dr. Gray has a passion to help Baptists make an eternal impact for God's kingdom through the life, influence, and blessings given by God to each believer. He often shares his passion for stewardship and generosity through preaching and teaching. He has earned business administration degrees from Truett McConnell College and Samford University, and a master of divinity degree in biblical languages from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. In 2007, he earned a doctor of ministry degree from the Billy Graham School of Missions, Church Growth and Evangelism at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. Prior to serving the Lord in foundation ministry, he served as a pastor in Georgia and Texas. He is married to Andrea Folsom Gray, and they have four children, Myra Ashley Woodard, Emily, Ellie, and Landon.



**Dr. Ryan Day**

***Pastor, Wrightsdales  
Baptist Church,  
Peach Bottom, Pa.***

DR. RYAN DAY, a native of Westminster, Maryland, came to Wrightsdales Baptist Church as lead pastor in 2020. Prior to Wrightsdales, he served at Grace Baptist Church in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, for twenty years. Ryan, who currently serves on the Baptist Resource Network's Executive Board, is a 1998 graduate of Baptist Bible College (now Clarks Summit University) and 2005 graduate of Baptist Bible Seminary. In 2024, he earned a doctor of ministry degree from Baptist Bible Seminary. When he's not ministering at the church, enjoying time with his family, or making plans for the next trip to Ocean City, Maryland, Ryan enjoys presidential biographies, the Baltimore Ravens, and playing guitar in praise and worship settings. He loves Lancaster County and is excited about "Accelerating Kingdom Movement" within the BRN. Ryan is married to Heather, and they have five sons and one daughter.

## Ensuring Success through Succession

Navigate the crucial but often challenging process of succession planning and leadership development in churches. Succession planning is not merely about transition; it's about ensuring continuity, preserving vision, and empowering the next generation of leaders to carry the mantle forward with boldness and clarity. Explore the critical role of vision alignment, identifying, nurturing, and empowering emerging leaders within your church, and assessing readiness. Leave knowing how to honor the contributions of past leaders while empowering the next generation to lead with boldness and creativity.

*2 Timothy 1:3-5, "I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. 4 As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. 5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well."*

*2 Timothy 2:2, "... and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."*



# Breakout Session Presenter



**REV. DR. TOM  
DAWSON**

***Senior Pastor, SOAR  
Church, Woodbine, N.J.***

REVEREND DR. THOMAS DAWSON JR. has served as the senior pastor of the SOAR Church since 1998. For the prior 13 years, Dr. Dawson held a data control analyst title at the Philadelphia Stock Market and various management titles in the Automatic Data Processing Brokerage Division, providing client support to major brokerage firms such as Merrill Lynch, Smith Barney, and Prudential. He successfully managed an entire department with a \$1.5 million budget. Under the leadership of Dr. Dawson, the SOAR Church has become multicultural and has grown from a membership of 50 to over 500 and serves residents in three counties. His vision has enabled the SOAR Church to impact its community, assisting in Autism Awareness, providing coats, school supplies and food, sponsored school trips for local schools and provided financial support to families in need.

Dr. Dawson is a current member of the FBI Citizens Organization, Coalition for a Safe Community, Cape May Regional Health Alliance, Cape May County Mental Health Alcohol & Drug Abuse Board, Cape May County Healthy Community Coalition, and Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage Diversity Inclusion, and Community Engagement Committee. Dr. Dawson has received numerous awards and honors for his industry, leadership, support of philanthropic activities, and community service. His greatest value is spending time strengthening his bond with the Lord, his family, and his community.

## **CAMPERS ON MISSION HAS A NEW CHAPTER IN PENNSYLVANIA**

Campers on Mission is a fellowship of evangelical Christian campers with a shared mission: to share our faith and the love of Jesus Christ while camping and participating in various mission activities. We travel in our RVs to spread the Good News, living out the motto of "Sharing Christ As We Go."

*Visit our booth to learn more!*  
**[www.brnunitied.org/campers](http://www.brnunitied.org/campers)**



# Breakout Session Topics

FOR INDIVIDUALS & CHURCH LEADERS

## BOLD MISSIONS

### Fearlessly and Faithfully Willing to Go

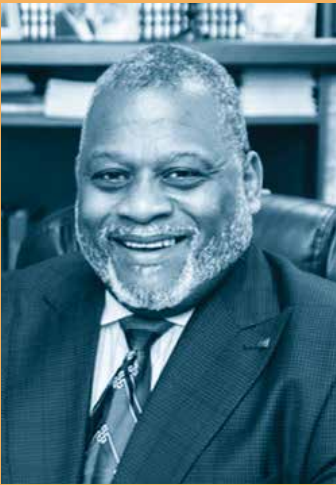
Respond courageously to God's call on your life to be on mission for Him! Explore the concept of courage in the context of answering God's call, whether across the world or right here in your own backyard. Explore biblical narratives and contemporary examples of individuals who displayed bravery in the face of adversity and discovered the transformative power of courage in fulfilling God's purposes. Reflect on past hesitations and discover practical steps to overcome fear and uncertainty. Leave inspired to step out of your comfort zone and embrace new challenges with confidence and determination.

John 20:21, *"Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.'"*

Luke 10:3, *"Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves."*



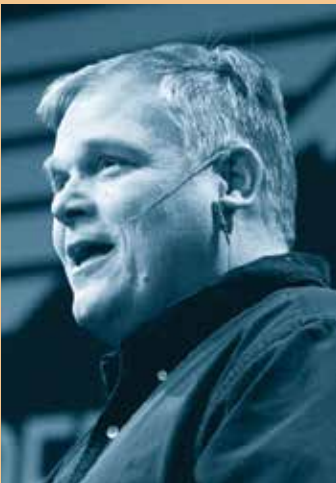
# Breakout Session Presenters



## **RICKY WILSON**

***Senior Pastor,  
Christian Faith  
Fellowship,  
Downingtown, Pa.***

PASTOR RICKY WILSON, a native of Coatesville, Pennsylvania, holds a master of theology degree in pastoral leadership from Dallas Theological Seminary in Dallas, Texas, and a bachelor of science degree in business administration from Cheyney State University. His ministry experiences includes being Christian Education Director and Director of Follow-up and Discipleship for new converts (New Life in Christ Fellowship Coatesville, Pa.) and executive pastor of business and finance, church elder and instructor at Institute on Church Growth, and Concord Center of Biblical Studies (Concord Missionary Baptist Church Dallas, Texas under the leadership of the late Dr. E.K. Bailey). Ricky Wilson has also served as a guest instructor at various churches, workshops and conferences on the subjects of church planting, biblical leadership and discipleship. In 1995, Pastor Wilson, along with his wife and children and a small group of committed believers, planted a church, Christian Faith Fellowship. God continues to add to the church. In July of 2004, Pastor Wilson was privileged to travel to Zambia, Africa, to participate in the Zambian Pastors Conference, teaching on the subject of small group ministry. He has returned to Zambia yearly since then. He has established a partnership with three churches in Zambia with three churches in USA in order to impact three communities, (Ndola, Lusaka, Livingstone) with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. On January 6, 2013, Pastor Wilson began broadcasting "Progressing Faith" over WFIL 560 AM and WYYC 1250 AM.



## **DAN NOLD**

***Senior Pastor,  
Calvary Church,  
Harvest Fields,  
State College, Pa.***

PASTOR DAN NOLD has been married to Lynn for over 30 years. As much as he loves the church, his most significant and enjoyable achievement has been partnering with Lynn to love and develop their four kids and now one kid-in-law: Sarah, Katy (and her husband, Josiah), Jake and Josh. Dan and Lynn came to State College, Pennsylvania, and Calvary in 1994.

Dan earned a bachelor of science in speech communication from Bethel University and a master of divinity from Bethel Seminary. Currently, Dan is working on his doctor of ministry in organic leadership development. Dan loves to preach, develop leaders and strategize about the future of the church in the Centre region. Years ago, Dan read a prayer by A.W. Tozer that he still prays consistently, "Lord make me a man to whom you can entrust Your glory." That's Dan's greatest purpose. "I long to become a man to whom God can entrust His glory—a living display of the gospel of grace—to inflame a passion for Christ in others."

# BOLD OBEDIENCE

## The Cost of Following Christ

Examine the call of every day common people to rise up to bold disciple making as both a personal journey and a church endeavor. Discover the characteristics of bold discipleship, including radical obedience, sacrificial love, and unwavering faith, and draw inspiration from biblical examples of bold disciples who courageously followed Jesus, even in the face of opposition or persecution. Leave with practical strategies for cultivating a lifestyle of courageous disciple making in everyday life, including practices of prayer, worship, evangelism, Bible study, service, and more.

John 14:15, 21, *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments... Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”*

2 Corinthians 3:12, *“Since we have such a hope, we are very bold...”*

Matthew 28:19-20, *“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, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

# Breakout Session Presenter



TIM WALKER is the lead pastor of Restored Church in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, an urban church that he planted with a team of friends in 2012. Tim has led Restored to be actively involved and known as a church “In the City, For the City.” Since launching, Restored has never had a Sunday without new people, they have now celebrated 175 baptisms, and they are pursuing a disciple-making movement that saturates their city and region with the gospel. Tim also serves on the USA National Leadership Team for The Timothy Initiative, a global disciple-making, church-planting movement focused on multiplying disciple makers, leaders, and churches to the 4th generation. Tim met and married his wife Heather at Restored. They’ve been married for nine years, have two girls, Lucy and Emily, and they love living on mission together as a family in Wilkes-Barre.

**TIM WALKER**

***Pastor, Restored  
Church, Wilkes-  
Barre, Pa.***

**Thank you for giving to the  
#LovePASJ Offering for  
Missions in Pennsylvania/  
South Jersey!**

**[www.brnunited.org/offering](http://www.brnunited.org/offering)**

## Addressing Tough Issues through Preaching

Explore the transformational impact of bold preaching on both the preacher and the congregation when addressing contemporary issues and societal challenges with the truth of the gospel. Topics could include Christians and mental health, denominations, end times, God's view of marriage, heaven and hell, life and death, politics and idols, racism, suffering, gender issues, God and sexuality, homosexuality, money, social media, war, why suffering, gifts of the Holy Spirit, and generational issues. Hear testimonies of how addressing difficult issues straight on led to several poignant, transformative moments. Considering the spiritual and psychological dynamics of bold preaching, you will examine how authenticity, passion, and courage contribute to effective communication of God's Word. Leave knowing how to overcome common barriers to boldness, such as fear of rejection or criticism, and cultivate confidence in your preaching ministry.

2 Timothy 4:2, *"... preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching."*

Ephesians 6:19, *"... and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, ..."*

# Breakout Session Presenters



**DR. BRENNAN  
COUGHLIN**

***Pastor, Fellowship  
CrossPoint Church,  
Chesterfield, New  
Jersey***

DR. BRENNAN COUGHLIN is a church planter and preaching pastor at Fellowship CrossPoint Church in Chesterfield, New Jersey. After eleven years teaching history in New Jersey public schools, Brennan felt called to full-time ministry. He earned a master of divinity degree from Biblical Seminary in 2011, and in 2014, he and his wife, Kathleen, moved with their four children to Trenton to start a church in the capital city. The church began with a team of twenty sent out from Fellowship Community Church in Mount Laurel, New Jersey, and they met weekly in the Coughlins' home for Bible study. In the spring of 2015, worship services began in a living room, and eight months later, the church outgrew the space to worship at the Trenton War Memorial. Brennan longs to honor the Lord with his life by bringing glory to God through the proclamation of the gospel in his home, in Chesterfield, and in the surrounding communities. He recently received his doctor of ministry degree in expository preaching from The Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Brennan deeply loves his family. Brennan and Kathleen met while supervising seventh period study hall and have been married 12 joyful years. They are blessed with six beautiful children.



**GREG DRAYER**

***Pastor, Rolling Hills  
Baptist Church,  
Verona, Pa.***

GREG DRAYER's passion is taking the Word of God and finding its intersection with meaning, context, and application. Growing up in inner-city Erie, Pennsylvania, he has many experiences that led him into a life of ministry and serving his community. His desire for learning brought him to seminary where he earned a master of divinity degree and in the next few years, he will begin working towards his doctor of ministry degree. Greg has served as a volunteer in para-church youth organizations, as a youth director and pastor, and now pastors at Rolling Hills Church where for the past nine years he has had the pleasure of leading the congregation through multiple changes to its governance, through a capital campaign, and developed many new ministries and opportunities for reaching out to their community. In addition to serving in the local church, Greg has also had a hand in training new church planters in Pennsylvania and New Jersey and also serves with the Baptist Resource Network, where he is a church health consultant.



# BOLD PRAYER

## From Words to Conversation

Pray with boldness and confidence with your full heart! Explore biblical examples of prayer and the transformative power of bold, fearless prayer. Discover how prayer is not only a means of communication with God but also a catalyst for spiritual breakthrough and Kingdom advancement. Learn practical strategies for overcoming obstacles and engaging in different forms of prayer. Leave with renewed passion and practical tools for cultivating a bold and fearless prayer life, confident in God's ability to answer according to His will.

Hebrews 4:16, *"Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need."*

Psalms 63:1, *"O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water."*

Psalms 51:17, *"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise."*

# Breakout Session Presenters



**DR. BRIAN KING**

***Senior Pastor,  
Ezekiel Baptist  
Church,  
Philadelphia, Pa.***

DR. BRIAN KING, currently serving as the president of the Baptist Resource Network's Executive Board, has served as the senior pastor of Ezekiel Baptist Church in Philadelphia for over 30 years. Dr. King and his wife, Cynthia, have six children, Taryn, Tamira, Brian II, Christopher, Aaron, and Faith, and 11 grandchildren. Their son Chris went home to be with the Lord in 1998. As a student at Lincoln University (near Oxford, Pa.), Dr. King studied Mandarin Chinese in Taiwan, Republic of China, for eight months. It was while studying in Taiwan that he received his call to the ministry. Dr. King used his Chinese skills as an interpreter and translator for the Social Security Administration. Upon returning to the United States, Dr. King enrolled at the Philadelphia College of the Bible (now Philadelphia Biblical University). He later transferred to Westminster Theological Seminary, then to Tyndale Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, where he earned a master of business studies degree. In December 2020, Dr. King earned his doctor of educational ministry degree, with a concentration in leadership, from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. Pastor King began his ministry under the Rev. J.N. Lavendar at the Friendly Baptist Church in Philadelphia, who licensed him to preach the gospel in August 1982. Pastor King was ordained into the ministry by the late Rev. Paul McCoy in February 1988, serving faithfully under Rev. McCoy until his death in March of 1993. Rev. King was called to be the pastor of The Ezekiel Baptist Church on June 4, 1993. King is a conference preacher and teacher. He is certified instructor for Building Powerful Ministry Teams and a trained Transformational Church consultant. Pastor King has taught classes on church leadership, deacon's ministry, and discipleship.



**DEBBIE KNOWLES**

***Pastor's Wife,  
Christian House  
Baptist Chapel;  
BRN Woven Women  
Assistant***

DEBBIE KNOWLES, BRN Woven Women assistant, is passionate about the Lord, and is blessed to be a pastor's wife, mom and "Mimi." She and her husband, Tom, have served at Christian House Baptist Chapel since 2008. They've been engaged in Kingdom work for nearly three decades, including a beloved eight years of youth and drama ministry. Debbie has a heart for broken women who struggle with low self-esteem and the destructive choices born of it, which is a large part of her personal testimony. She loves to see the Lord's transformational work as women receive Christ and recognize themselves as His beautiful masterpieces. Debbie focuses her free time on personal Bible study, family, home, painting/sketching and perennial gardening.

# BOLD VISION

## Unleashing the Power of Bold Goals

Unlock the full potential of your ministry and lead your congregation to new heights of spiritual growth and impact by clarifying your vision, overcoming obstacles, and charting a course toward greater success and fulfillment in ministry. The BRN seeks to help churches accelerate Kingdom movement. To do that, we are committed to helping you take your next step in ministry, whatever that step may be, and to, ultimately, help you achieve your Next Level in ministry. Leave ready to be stretched beyond your comfort zones and daring to dream big toward new heights of faith, service, and personal fulfillment.

*Habakkuk 2:2-3, "And the Lord answered me: 'Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. 3 For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.'"*

*Proverbs 16:3, "Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established."*

*Proverbs 29:18, "Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law."*



# Breakout Session Presenters



**DAVID LUDWIG**

***BRN Director  
of Discipleship  
and Leadership  
Development***

DAVID LUDWIG is the BRN director of discipleship and leadership development. He has served on the staff of small, medium, and large churches in Virginia, Kentucky, and Pennsylvania, and has served as an intentional interim pastor (transitional pastor) and now trains other men to serve in this role. He holds a master of arts degree from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, and a bachelor of science degree in religion from Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia. David has been providing training and has been consulting churches for nearly twenty years. He is also a coach and has received coach training from the North American Mission Board, certified as a Leadership Development Coach by Leader Breakthru, and certified as a Spiritual Leadership Coach by Blackaby Ministries International. He is recognized and credentialed as a Certified Professional Christian Life Coach by the International Christian Coaching Institute (ICCI). David is a member of the leadership team for the SBC National Revitalization Network and locally assists pastors and churches in taking their next steps toward revitalization by walking them through the steps of BRN's Transformation Pathway. David is passionate about disciple-making and leadership development and intentionally seeks opportunities to equip pastors and leaders to develop healthy, disciple-making churches.



**DR. LARRY  
ANDERSON**

***BRN Director of Church  
Advancement &  
Evangelism***

DR. LARRY ANDERSON, BRN director of church advancement and evangelism, graduated from Philadelphia Biblical University (Cairn Univ.) with a bachelor of science degree in Bible with an emphasis in Christian leadership. He has received his master of divinity and his doctor in ministry degrees from Biblical Theological Seminary (Missio Seminary). Dr. Anderson became the senior pastor of Great Commission Church in September 2004. In his time as pastor, he has been blessed to see the congregation grow spiritually and numerically. One of his noted achievements, to date, has been his ability to follow the voice of God in 2008 by leading GCC from the suburbs of Montgomery County into the city of Philadelphia to impact their new community with a holistic gospel. Dr. Anderson joined the staff of the Baptist Resource Network in April 2013. He is director of church health and evangelism, overseeing 350 churches throughout Pennsylvania and South Jersey. Dr. Anderson is the co-author of the book, "Ask Me Why I'm Not In Church," released in June 2019 on Westbow Press, "The Pastors' Diaries," released in July 2022, and the recently released, "The Pastors' Wives' Diaries: A Visible Journal of The Invisible Journey." Dr. L.A. is the founder and host of "Athens Avenue the Podcast" birthed in spring 2023.



**DR. BARRY  
WHITWORTH**

***BRN Executive Director***

DR. BARRY WHITWORTH has been in ministry for over 30 years, serving as a mission pastor, associate pastor, church planter, pastor, interim pastor, transitional pastor and planter, church planting strategist, lead church planting catalyst, church planting director, and now executive director. Before his calling as Executive Director of the Baptist Resource Network in February 2017, he was a church planting missionary and served the Multiplying Churches Team Leader for the BRN. Barry, who has planted churches and served on church staffs in Pennsylvania, New York and Maryland, says his passion is the local church — to assist and encourage the churches in "reaching the lost [and] discipling the saved." In May 2017, Barry received an honorary doctorate degree from Davis College. The Doctor of Divinity degree is conferred on individuals who have distinguished themselves in Christian ministry and leadership. Barry's life and service in ministry exemplifies the college's mission of impacting the world for Jesus Christ. Barry was specifically chosen because of his dedication and leadership with the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania/South Jersey, resulting in many churches planted. Prior to ministry, he was employed by the USPS for 12 years, working as a maintenance mechanic and supervisor. He and his wife Beth have two daughters and six grandchildren.

# Breakout Session Topics

FOR INDIVIDUALS AND CHURCH LEADERS

## BOLD WITNESSES

### Risk-Taking Faith

Discover practical strategies and inspiring stories to embolden your evangelism efforts. Whether you're a seasoned evangelist or new to sharing your faith, this session will equip you to boldly proclaim the Good News with confidence and conviction. Leave with a renewed passion for evangelism and making an eternal impact in your community!

Romans 1:16, *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."*

Acts 1:8 *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

# Breakout Session Presenter



**RON LARSON**

***Pastor, First Baptist  
Church of Delaware***

RON LARSON, who has a career in planting and growing new congregations in the mid-Atlantic, stepped back into a lead pastor role helping First Baptist Church, Delaware, once the largest Baptist church in the state, revitalize, after many years of severe decline. This revitalization started just before Covid struck but the church is experiencing renewed growth and unity post-Covid.

Ron's first plant located in a small-town of 1,200 residents grew to nearly 1,300 attendees while helping to plant seven churches during that season of his ministry. He has served as president of the West Virginia State Convention and served as a member of the SBC Executive Committee as well as many other SBC organizations. Ron has also worked with the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware developing a Parent Church Network across those two states. Ron served as executive director of One Hope Ministries International, a weekend feeding ministry for school-age children. He has written for several publications and is a speaker on Kingdom expansion, church growth, personal renewal, and disciple-making reproduction across the U.S. His morning spiritual devotional called "Daily Jolt" is read by several thousand people daily. Ron also leads "Raw Reality," a leadership development and deployment think tank.

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# Breakout Session Topics

FOR INDIVIDUALS & CHURCH LEADERS

## BOLD WORSHIP

### From Lyrics to Lifestyle

There is a transforming power that comes from worship that extends beyond mere lyrics to permeate every aspect of our lives. Explore how authentic worship isn't confined to an hour on Sunday but is a vibrant lifestyle that flows into all aspects of our lives. We believe that the leadership of the local church under the power of the Holy Spirit is the thermostat of corporate worship experiences. How can we turn the heat up? How do we spend time with Jesus well, activating the download of God's heart into our own, and how does this ignite passion in the next generation of worshippers with the effect of fulfilling the mission to which God has called us? Join us to explore these questions together.

*Acts 4:13, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus."*

# Breakout Session Presenter



**WES  
WINEBARGER**

***Pastor, Travelers  
Church, Pittsburgh,  
Pennsylvania***

PASTOR WES WINEBARGER grew up in North Carolina and at a young age received a call to live out Romans 15:20-21 by devoting his family to sowing Jesus into communities worldwide that have never seen the gospel dwelling among them.

He has been married to Lexi for over 10 years, and they have been blessed with three children, Silas, Ella, and Eden. After working as a worship arts pastor for over a decade, God called the Winebarger family to Pittsburgh to plant Travelers Church.

Wes holds a bachelor of science degree in worship and music studies with a concentration in leadership, a master of arts in religion degree in biblical studies, and a master of arts degree in ethnomusicology. He completed his thesis on how to share the gospel through the arts in Pakistan under a pseudonym. He enjoys fire pits, woodworking, fly fishing, hiking, soccer, and cooking.

“

Since it is so likely that they will meet cruel enemies,  
let them at least have heard of brave knights and heroic courage.  
Otherwise you are making their destiny not brighter but darker.

C.S. Lewis



# Breakout Session Locations

## SESSION 1:

- **Grande I:** *Bold Prayer: From Words to Conversation*
- **Grande II:** *Bold Vision: Unleashing the Power of Bold Goals*
- **Grande III/IV:** *Bold Witness: Risk-Taking Faith*
- **Congressional:** *Bold Missions: Fearlessly and Faithfully Willing to Go*
- **Royal I/II:** *Bold Generosity: From Sacrificial Giving to Sacrificial Living*
- **Royal III:** *Bold Legacy: Ensuring Success through Succession*

## SESSION 2:

- **Grande I:** *Bold Obedience: The Cost of Following Christ*
- **Grande II:** *Bold Compassion: Serving Others with Courageous Love*
- **Grande III/IV:** *Bold Proclamation: Addressing Tough Issues through Preaching*
- **Congressional:** *Bold Worship: From Lyrics to Lifestyle*
- **Royal I/II:** *Bold Acceleration: From Moments to Movement*
- **Royal III:** *Bold Apologetics: Defending Your Faith in a Skeptical World*





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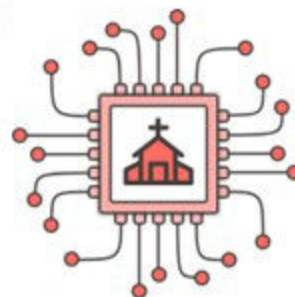
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**DR. BARRY WHITWORTH**  
*Executive Director*



**DR. LARRY  
ANDERSON**

*Director of Church  
Advancement  
& Evangelism*



**SHANNON BAKER**

*Director of  
Communications  
and Editor,  
BRN United*



**ELIZABETH BENGE**

*Executive Assistant  
to Dr.  
Barry Whitworth*



**NOELSON CHERY**

*Ethnic Church  
Advancement  
Consultant,  
Philadelphia*



**JOSH COLDREN**

*Church Advancement  
Consultant,  
Northern Central  
Region*



**JOHN  
COPE**

*Send Network  
Director PA/SJ*





GREG DRAYER

*Church  
Advancement Consultant,  
West Region*



ROBERT FONTELL

*Church  
Advancement Consultant,  
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LAUREL GRIMES

*Hub Support &  
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*Director of  
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*Legacy Coach*



MARY LANDIS

*Women's Ministry  
Consultant*



DAVID LUDWIG

*Director of  
Discipleship and  
Leadership  
Development*



MACALA MAYS

*Associate Editor,  
BRN United, and  
Podcast Producer*



BUFF MCNICKLE

*Director of  
Compassion Ministry  
& Partnership  
Development*



ERIC REIBER

*Associate  
Next Gen  
Director*



STEVE SHELDON

*Church Advancement  
Consultant,  
Southern  
Central Region*



DEBBIE TOONE

*Hub Support  
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*BRN Send Network  
PA/SJ  
Recruitment Leader*



ANDY WEBER

*Director of Finance  
and Operations*



STANLEY WILLIAMS

*Next Gen Director*



BETH WHITWORTH

*Ministry Wives  
Consultant*



R. DAVIS YOUNTS

*Legal Counsel*



LORI ZEPPUHAR

*Help Desk &  
Hub Support*

The BRN team seeks to exhibit character that is a reflection of that of Jesus Christ. We strive to serve our churches through humility and integrity. We will be diligent and faithful stewards to the resources entrusted to our care and oversight.





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# MISSION STRATEGY



The BRN exists to resource and service churches all over Pennsylvania and South Jersey. It is our desire to take care of pastors and to come alongside churches and help them take the next step God is calling them to take. We do this through a four-step mission strategy:

**ASSESS:** *Discover Your Current Reality*

An honest and detailed look at your overall ministry, defining where you've been, determining where you are, and discovering where you can go.

**ASSIST:** *Determine Your Next Step*

Interpreting what you have discovered, prioritizing a next step, and developing fresh strategies to meet the needs and vision of that next step.

**ACTIVATE:** *Implement Your Next Step*

Encouraging individuals, ministries, and churches to implement strategies and goals developed by the assistance of the BRN and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**ADVANCE:** *Help Others with Their Current Reality*

Enabling churches who exhibit dynamic biblical behavior and movement (moving and leading out) to contribute to the growth and advancement of the Kingdom within the BRN and beyond.

## ACCELERATING KINGDOM MOVEMENT



# BAPTIST RESOURCE NETWORK

## MINISTRY REPORTS

Everything we do at the Baptist Resource Network (BRN) centers on four key parts of our strategy to help churches *accelerate Kingdom movement*.

Our team of missionaries offers customized training and resources because we know churches are in different stages of growth. We believe the gospel of Jesus Christ is the main accelerant of the work that churches do across the BRN, because it is the only way to see a multiplication movement of new disciples, new leaders, new ministries, and new churches across our two-state region.

At the BRN, we have a clear vision of wanting to see every church within our Pennsylvania/South Jersey geography become a healthy, multiplying church.



**The BRN helps churches  
at every stage of their lifecycle.**

*And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ..." (Ephesians 4:11-13)*

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# 20 YEARS

## OF 'GOD-SIZED ASSIGNMENTS' AND THE TWO FAITHFUL WORKERS BEHIND THE PLOW

By Macala Mays



*Dr. Barry Whitworth, executive director of the Baptist Resource Network, and his wife, Beth, reflect on 20 years of ministry in Pennsylvania/South Jersey and all they have witnessed the Lord do in their lives and in our region.*

The circumstances were divine in nature. The church they started in western New York, close to Buffalo, was thriving. Baptisms were happening one after another, the church was growing, and the community was vibrant. Surely, for Dr. Barry Whitworth and his wife, Beth, this northern nook would be where their legacy would last.

But others were not convinced.

"It seemed to be there was one situation after another where people were asking me to consider doing something else," recalled Barry Whitworth.

Ignoring these well-intentioned suggestions, Whitworth carried on with his ministry in the Buffalo area. That is, until he received a phone call from Dr. Stan Smith, who was, at the time, acting state missions director and associate executive director for the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania/South Jersey (now known as the Baptist Resource Network of Pennsylvania/South Jersey).

On the other end of the line was, yet again, another optimistic suggestion to shift ministry roles – but this time in a different state.

Smith eagerly relayed to Whitworth his proposal: Come and lead a region in Pennsylvania as a church planting strategist.

Feeling prompted by the Lord to no longer ignore this call to something new, paired with Smith's undeniable persistence, led Barry and Beth to pack up their lives

in New York and head south to Pennsylvania.

### **Putting down roots in a familiar state**

Twenty years and several "God-sized assignments" later, the Whitworths continue their ministry to the Pennsylvania/South Jersey

children during that time," said Beth Whitworth.

The small church grew from an average of 18 people to a full congregation of 70-75. The Whitworths' first church assignment was proving to be fruitful.

Struck by change, the original 18 members grew increasingly territorial, posing some "hard" obstacles for the Whitworths. The



region, Barry now serving as the executive director/treasure of the Baptist Resource Network (BRN) and Beth caring for the hearts of pastors' wives as a ministry wives' consultant.

When the Whitworths arrived in Pennsylvania in 2004, it was not their first time doing ministry in the east-central state.

Fresh out of seminary and prior to their days in New York, Barry and Beth traveled to the northwestern most corner of Pennsylvania to help a dying church in Erie.

"We poured out a lot of blood, sweat and tears with our two

Lord eventually led Barry and Beth away from that ministry and, later, closed the doors of that little Erie church.

Upon their return to Pennsylvania in March 2004, Beth recalls visiting Erie, but this time under much different circumstances. There at the little church building that was marred with the pain of their first ministry "failure" was something shiny and new.

There stood a thriving church, Millcreek Community Church.

"I was overcome with joy and tears. God brought alive that

scripture that he would restore what the locusts had eaten and healed so much in my heart,” expressed Beth.

She continued: “For God to just lay his hand over my heart and to tell me all of that had a plan and purpose, all of that had a reason, and we have been able to live long enough and serve long enough to see it, not just hear about it...that was a beautiful time.”

The theme of redemption has continued to thread its way through the Whitworths’ story in Pennsylvania.

Five short years after Dr. Smith offered Barry the regional church

need more across North America and even around the world,” said Whitworth.

## On the shoulders of giants

Entering 2009, Whitworth was equipped with passion and excited for a new season of leadership. However, 10 days into this new role, he and Beth found themselves entering an entirely different, and completely unpredictable, season.

A season of cancer.

Prompted by not feeling well,

“[I] literally went on to the floor before our Lord and just poured out my heart. I went through all the emotions of grief, every one of them, and within that two-hour period, but God put his arm and his hand over me...that shelter of His wings,” said Beth.

From that day forward, Beth knew the Lord would carry her and Barry through this difficult season.

With every step of the journey, they witnessed God’s faithfulness, from the treatment center in North Carolina located near their daughter’s church to the power of precious prayer warriors.

“I walked through cancer on the shoulders of giants,” said Beth, recalling the prayers of even a missionary in England, who she had never met, that would stop and pray for her every time she would see a Whitworth product in the grocery store.

A season of excitement, turned sorrow, ultimately became a season of strength and trust for the Whitworths. Two qualities they would need for their next “God-sized assignment.”

## The executive assignment

At the end of 2016, Barry was, again, faced with a familiar question: Would you consider doing something else? This time, the nostalgic question was followed by the words “executive director.”

“To be honest, I wasn’t looking to do that. We loved church planting, we were enjoying church planting, [but] God said, ‘No, for such a time I want you,’” shared Barry.

Since February 2017, Barry has served, and continues to serve, as the executive director of the Baptist Resource Network.

Over his 20 years of ministry in Pennsylvania/South Jersey, he has



planting position, he returned with another offer, this time a state-wide responsibility.

Whitworth had been called up to lead the convention’s church planting team, previously known as the Multiplying Church Team. Being an opportunity aligned with his heart for church planting, Whitworth couldn’t say no to the chance to champion church planting from the state level.

“My journey is and has always been to have a heart for church planting...we need more churches. We need more churches in Pennsylvania/South Jersey. We

Beth scheduled an appointment with her doctor. Several tests later, her diagnosis was clear and confirmed as the far too well-known disease.

“We were hit hard by a tough situation, where we didn’t know whether or not she would even make it,” said Barry.

The early stages of the cancer often prevented Beth from traveling with Barry when he had speaking engagements.

One particular afternoon, when she was home alone, Beth recalls meeting “Jesus on the living room floor.”

seen more churches planted than those that were already established when he first came to the BRN, noting that nearly 150 churches have been started in the PA/SJ region.

"We've gotten just as many new churches as we have existing churches. It's been a big part of my journey here to be a part of, and [I am] thrilled by God that He allowed us to do this, to see a lot of the nursery work," said Barry, who, because of his experience with starting projects from the ground up, has earned the nickname "the plow boy."

While serving the PA/SJ area, the plow boy has also witnessed answers to numerous prayers, effective changes to the state convention and the addition of like-minded team members.

"Probably the biggest prayer that I think is being answered is happening right now," said Whitworth.

He continued: "When I first started, I said we are going to filter through two things: We're going to filter through the Kingdom and through prayer. I think there's a move happening more and more now, and younger pastors and planters are coming in and their mindset is on Jesus as King, they're not looking to build their own little castle. They're looking to be a part of Kingdom work."

By name, Whitworth mentioned Hal Hopkins, Tim Bailey, John Cope and Joe Velarde as just a few Kingdom-minded pastors and church planters that he's had the pleasure of toiling alongside.

"There's just a lot of young guys now that are helping me become even better at what I'm doing today," complimented Whitworth.

As a source of encouragement, Barry lovingly credits his wife, Beth, as his number one supporter, followed by his family, Dr. Stan

Smith, and ministry giants Jeff Christopherson and Kevin Marsico, just to name a few.

"You don't get 20 years down the road unless you have those type of people," said Whitworth.

He continued: "So, when God sends them to you, don't be annoyed by them or put them aside. Listen to them, respect them [and] love them, because God brought them in your path for a reason, and that reason, mainly, is to make you into everything that God wants you to be moving forward."

Part of Whitworth's current crew of supporters includes his BRN team, a team that he describes as having the "same heartbeat."

"I think we are most successful when our hearts and minds are tuned into everything that Jesus is desiring for what he's wanting to do through us and for our churches... God has blessed me as a leader of the BRN right now to have a team that has that heartbeat," said Whitworth.

Beth echoed Barry's warm thoughts towards the BRN team, recalling a recent meeting where she gazed across the room at all the Pennsylvania/South Jersey pastors who serve as part-time consultants, the BRN staff members, and dear volunteers who serve just because they can.

Through honest tears she shared, "They are getting paid probably a penance of what they deserve, and even less than what our society pays, but they give of their hearts for the Lord, and the rewards have been so great. We have a unity amongst us. All of us are one, one team, around that mission and that heart."

## **A future worth longing for**

The heart of the Baptist  
Resource Network is to

"accelerate Kingdom movement" in Pennsylvania/South Jersey, a goal that one could suggest as the Whitworth's next "God-sized assignment."

For 20 years, the Whitworths have been embarking on these God-given opportunities one after another in their beloved two-state region, even when those assignments led to new responsibilities and unforeseen battles.

Now, as they look ahead to the years to come, they long for nothing



more than to continue the task of making Jesus known across the PA/SJ region.

"I'm looking forward to seeing that movement that we've all longed for, more people getting saved, disciples making disciples [and] churches raising up more leaders who will start new ministries and new churches," shared Barry.

"I'm excited about the fact that it's starting to happen, and I think we're going to see a whole lot more...and I'm looking forward to it and seeing that happen in the years to come." ■



# CHURCH ADVANCEMENT

## BRN's Church Health leaders share 2024 highlights

The Church Health team, soon to be known as the Church Advancement team, consists of Dr. Larry Anderson, BRN's director of church advancement and evangelism; David Ludwig, BRN's director of discipleship and leadership development, and six consultants spread across the BRN to serve the pastors and churches. They are Pastor Noelson Chery (Ethnic Consultant), Pastor Josh Coldren (North Central region), Pastor Greg Drayer (West region), Dr. Robert Fontell (Philadelphia region), Pastor Buff McNickle (South Jersey region) and former pastor, Steve Sheldon (Southern Central region).

There were some great successes this year. One of those successes is the number of grants for church evangelism projects that have been awarded. As of early September, 113 churches have received a grant. Another huge success was the Advance Conference, featuring Dr. Mark Croston and Dr. David Wheeler. The BRN also hosted 12 Pastor Blessing events simply to encourage 60 pastors and their families.

Anderson assisted several churches in implementing the *Next Level Blueprint*, facilitated an open discussion on women in ministry, led the Culture Ethics and

Justice Coalition to reconvene to strategize and facilitate unity within our diversity as we approach the upcoming election, and as the Chair of Mansion Hope, he and other BRN pastors were instrumental in seeing Mansion Hope bless the impoverished children within Strawberry Mansion with gifts over the holidays as well as honor and acknowledge the William Dick Elementary School principal and faculty for their service to the children of Strawberry Mansion.

Anderson partnered with the North American Mission Board to bring the ReFresh Conference to Philadelphia to edify and encourage our BRN pastors. He also spoke at several BRN churches to help them celebrate pastoral and church anniversaries and served as a keynote speaker at the FUEL Conference in Philadelphia and as a lecturer for Lifeway at their annual Leadership Conference.

Additionally, David Ludwig provided discipleship training (D-Life Boot Camps) for five churches across the BRN, equipping over 170 people to be disciple-makers. David has also been working with pastors to develop discipleship pathways in their church and helping them to be intentional about leadership development and creating leadership pipelines. David

has coached church planters, pastors, and leaders across the BRN network.

Each of the church health leaders helped churches through transitions, helped churches affiliate with the BRN, and provided pastoral care for struggling pastors. They met with pastors individually and in groups, helped with pulpit supply, and so much more.

Coldren gathered a group of 14 pastors and their wives together to visit Sight & Sound and enjoy a meal together. He helped churches in his region locate an interim pastor and provided support to the congregation through the time of transition. He was able to assist a new pastor with his ordination council and provide counsel to the church through the process. Josh also helped another congregation with an interim during a difficult time.

In the Greater Philadelphia region, our team blessed a group of pastors with a Phillies game at Citizens Bank Park. Also, Fontell preached for churches, provided evangelism training, facilitated a Spiritual Health Assessment, assisted churches in taking their Next Steps, and saw an increase in baptisms because of the large number of evangelism grants distributed for evangelistic outreach events. The Philadelphia region also

*Photos (top to bottom): Dr. Mark Croston, National Director of Black Church Ministries at Lifeway Christian Resources, gave a dynamic keynote address at the Advance Conference held March 18 at Calvary Church in State College, Pa.*

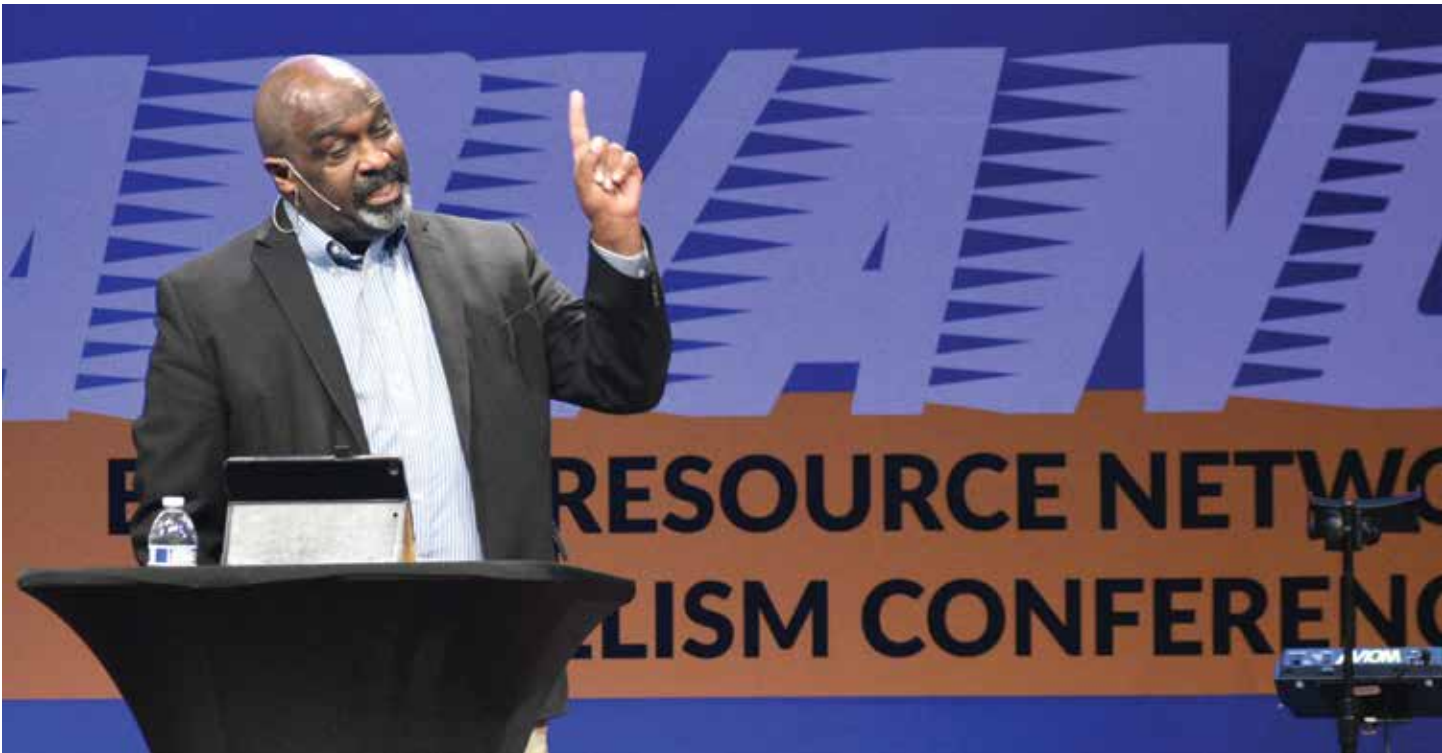
*Ethnic pastors in the Greater Philadelphia area - Rev. Roger Manao, Rev. Ernst Petit-Frere, and Rev. Philip Draper - enjoyed an afternoon of fellowship on the Spirit of Philadelphia Dinner Cruise as part of a BRN pastoral blessing led by Noelson Chery.*

*BRN's Dr. Larry Anderson and Alonzo Johnson, lead pastor of Believers Bible Fellowship, Philadelphia, speak at an Advance breakout about the beauty of collaboration between churches.*

*Bill Farris and a D-Life group at Memorial Baptist Church, Gettysburg, are excited about the impact discipleship is making in their lives after attending a D-Life workshop.*

*David Ludwig tells the Executive Board about D-Life's impact on churches.*





saw a successful Send Relief Tour with individuals and churches from across the BRN participating.

Chery held a Pastors Blessings event for ethnic pastors, gathering them together for fellowship and prayer. He encouraged the pastors and prayed with them to see their churches move to the next level. There were discussions with Send Network and visions to start a new church plant in the Southwest Philadelphia area. Chery was also able to assist a church in conflict, resulting in a peaceful outcome.

Sheldon was able to serve as the interim pastor at Fellowship Baptist Church from September 2023-March 2024. He also helped the church secure a new pastor, had lunch with pastors, visited churches, and provided gifts for the pastor's wives.

Drayer participated in gatherings of church planters and pastors in the west, who came together to learn, discuss, and encourage one another, showing the strength of the partnership between the BRN and SEND Network. He also worked with McNickle and pastors across the west to prepare for Serve Erie.

Pastors and wives were blessed with a meal and a time on a Riverboat on the three rivers in Pittsburgh. Also, several pastors gathered together to discuss vision planning and discipleship methods. Through the summer, we have seen about ten churches take a next step by reaching their community through different outreaches and reports of great success and lives being changed through those efforts. One church even had 13 baptisms while having a block party!

McNickle reports that in South Jersey, God has been good and gracious. He had the opportunity to bless many of our pastors with date nights this past year and just hosted an end-of-summer regional cookout for pastors and their families. He has seen the churches impact their communities with the gospel in several ways. They have done community events and outreaches. They have hosted prayer breakfasts, "Hunger Stops Here" events, neighborhood BBQ's and many more events designed to impact their communities. The BRN has been excited to help provide

resources such as grants, materials, programming, and partnering together.

The BRN was also able to resource Delaware Valley East with funding to help start the region's first compassion ministry center. Buff shares that the BRN was able to help celebrate and honor the selfless work and ministry of one of the longest tenured pastors of our region, Pastor Fernando Downs. Downs was one of the pioneers of ministry in South Jersey and helped start and pastor Southside Baptist Church for 39 years. It was the BRN's great honor to attend and celebrate the Downs family at his retirement celebration in December 2023. It was men like Fernando Downs that paved the way for the work here in South Jersey, and we are grateful to continue it.

As you can see, there were many things happening in our churches across the BRN, and as a Church Health Team we are thankful that we could be a part of what God is doing, helping churches be healthy, multiply, and accelerate Kingdom movement.



**PASTORAL**  
**WELLNESS**



## RECREATION

*Pastor Blessing events/gatherings*

## RESPIRE

*Use of BRN's Guest House and access to other respite locations*

## RESTRENGTHENING

*Wellbeing resources and events*

## REASSURANCE

*GuideStone benefits and Legacy and Estate Planning*







# COMMUNICATIONS

By Shannon Baker and Macala Mays

The communications team at the Baptist Resource Network (BRN) is comprised of Shannon Baker, director of communications and editor of *BRN United*, and Macala Mays, associate editor of *BRN United* and podcast producer, with assistance from Laurel Grimes of BRN's Hub Support.

In addition to producing weekly e-newsletters chock full of the latest news, testimonials, resources and events available to BRN churches, the team has completed several large communications projects this year.

## ***BRN United* Weekly E-newsletter**

As of October 3, 2024, the BRN has successfully published 40 editions of *BRN United*, including six special editions covering the Annie Armstrong Week of Prayer and Offering, the 2024 SBC annual meeting, 2024 seminary graduates from PA/SJ, the annual #LovePASJ State Missions Offering, a focus on prayer for college campuses, and Serve Erie.

As of July 2024, 83 of our churches have been featured in *BRN United* through articles, feature videos, and the "This Week in the BRN Family" section. We want more churches to send us their news!

Additionally, 165 baptisms have been reported as well as at least a dozen ministry milestones and several stories from six of our campus ministries across PA/SJ.

During this time period, *BRN United* has reached the inboxes of an average of 1,777 readers per week, but we want more subscribers!

Invite your church members to subscribe, too, at [brnunited.org/news](http://brnunited.org/news).

New to *BRN United* this year is a monthly column called "Missions Minded," in which Jack Elliot, missions mobilizer for Nehemiah Teams, reflects on the different aspects of missions and encourages churches in their missional efforts.

New sections were also added to the "This Week in the BRN Family" portion of the newsletter, including: "Collegiate Corner" and "Ministry Milestones."

Articles from the newly produced Woven Women newsletter and #TransformPASJ newsletter have also contributed new content to *BRN United* this year.

The communications team worked with BRN's Mary Landis and David Ludwig to produce these two monthly e-newsletters, full of resources and tips for women's ministry, discipleship, leadership development, church revitalization and strengthening, and more.

## **Podcasts**

On the podcasting front, Mays concluded the final episode of the BRN's *Celebrating Cooperative Missions Podcast* on March 28, 2024. This podcast was created at the request of the BRN Executive Board to inform BRN churches and church members of what the Cooperative Program (CP) is and their role in giving to global and local missions.

In April 2024, the *Celebrating Cooperative Missions Podcast* was awarded second place in the audio-visual communications division for overall broadcast/

podcast show at the Baptist Communicators Association's (BCA) 60th Annual Wilmer C. Fields Award Competition. This competition features creative works of all kinds with nearly 250 BCA members eligible to enter. *Celebrating Cooperative Missions* is the BRN's first award-winning podcast.

## **Communications Projects**

Notably, we introduced the new "Your Next Level" conversation starter, which is designed to help churches take their next step in ministry, whatever that step may be, and, ultimately, to help them achieve their next level in ministry. This resource, unveiled at the 2024 Accelerate Conference, focuses on taking God-sized dreams and breaking them into small actionable steps that lead to fulfillment and growth to the next level.

In honor of the centennial anniversary of the Cooperative Program, we also produced a Cooperative Program package with an animated explainer video as well as an explainer booklet and poster. All can be downloaded at [brnunited.org/cp](http://brnunited.org/cp).

The team also worked hard to support the #ServePASJ project in Erie, Pa., by designing a full website ([servepasj.com](http://servepasj.com)) displaying projects, volunteer registration, and other information necessary for participants.

We also produced printed materials and videos for this year's #LovePASJ Week of Prayer and Offering for Missions in Pennsylvania/South Jersey, highlighting collegiate ministry,





*Macala Mays earns second place in the audio-visual communications division for overall broadcast/podcast show at the Baptist Communicators Association's (BCA) 60th Annual Wilmer C. Fields Award Competition for the podcast, "Celebrating Cooperative Missions."*

*Credit: BCA Photo*

compassion ministry, disaster and crisis response, and emergency care for pastors, all areas supported by the offering.

The communications team also designed an online affiliation process that enables interested churches to apply for affiliation to the Baptist Resource Network using an online portal.

We've also produced all the media for our conferences, the Advance Conference, the Amplify Conference, and the Accelerate Conference, as well as the weekly video highlights from Executive Director Barry Whitworth.

And finally, to meet the growing needs of Disaster Relief in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, the communication team developed campaign resources to build a new storage warehouse and ministry center in Winfield, Pennsylvania. The storage warehouse would provide protection from the

environment, as well as provide another space for training and mission team stays, and allow for the continued growth and gospel influence of the disaster relief work in and across our region.

Our team also does all the promotion and registration design for many of the 2024 events and keeps the network's website up-to-date. Bottom Line: we strive to make it as easy as possible for you to find what you need right away!

### **Other Ministries**

The communications team also has been involved in several activities on a national level. In January, Baker and Mays led media workshops at the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Roundtable in Ogetown, Del.

Baker continues to serve as a reporter for Baptist Press during their annual meetings. This year, she

provided coverage for several of the larger events at the Indianapolis gathering.

She and Mays remain members of BCA, where Macala now is serving as vice president of communications. They both have served on a panel of judges who reviewed entries for BCA's student award competition this year.

Baker continues to serve on an independent group of SBC Cooperative Program advocacy leaders from across various state conventions to prepare prayer resources in commemoration of the Cooperative Program's 100th anniversary in 2025.

Our most exciting efforts have been capturing the stories of our churches all across our BRN family. We are so pleased to share and celebrate with you about what God is doing in your ministries. Please keep sharing!

# COMPASSION MINISTRY

By Buff McNickle

Compassion ministry is a key component for any healthy church that is seeking to plant the gospel in the heart of its community. It happens best when you are looking for needs that exist in your context and move you to action. The churches of the Baptist Resource Network have this heart, and it's been an exciting year witnessing our churches getting out and stepping into their communities through compassion ministry. Here are just a few snapshots:

- **FELLOWSHIP CROSSPOINT IN SOUTH JERSEY:** Fellowship CrossPoint hosted a community event called "Hunger Stops" with the aim to end hunger by packing meals to give to those in need. They did this community-wide event that saw people from all walks of life come together to help meet the need. The church not only packed thousands of meals that night but they had intentional gospel conversations and connections with their community.
- **BEDROCK CHURCH FISHTOWN IN PHILADELPHIA:** Bedrock set out to serve and display the love of God to some of the most neglected in the city. They fed, clothed, prayed, and served people all week. The impact of those events saw people give their lives to Christ, get off the streets and into a program, and be reminded they are loved.
- **RESTORED CHURCH IN WILKES-BARRE:** Restored Church invested in their youth by training them over several days and then sending them out to go and engage with the overwhelming poverty that exists in their city. They spent a week serving the city through street evangelism, running a VBS at a local hotel that the county is using to house previously homeless families, and helping another church in the region.
- **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF CLARION:** First Baptist Church of Clarion planned a stay-at-home mission trip this past summer during which their whole church stepped up and stepped out to serve the city. They went to several areas in the city feeding and inviting families to come to a community event each night in a local park. They capped the week off with a community block party that saw families come from all over the city to enjoy a night of food and fun. The church worked with one of our Network's partners, the Saluda Association in South Carolina, who came and helped build showers in their church for future mission teams to come and help impact the city and the region for years to come.

These are just a few examples of what our churches are doing but there are so many more. BRN churches did creative events, such as "BBQ on the Block," "Unity in the Community," and "Until They All Know." They also handed out coats, food, backpacks, and even fresh produce from a traveling produce truck.

Much emphasis also has been placed on our first #ServePASJ project in Erie, Pa. Stay tuned to learn how God moved in this exciting adventure!

Also, the #LovePASJ initiative exists to help our churches have the resources, ideas, and best practices they need to assist them in reaching their communities. Take the time to look at our website, [www.lovepasj.com](http://www.lovepasj.com), and don't hesitate to reach out to us to help you formulate a BOLD strategy to reach your community in 2025.

*Photos (top to bottom): Bedrock members care for members of the Kensington community of Philadelphia; Fellowship CrossPoint prepares boxes of meals to share with the hungry; Restored Church Discipleship Pastor Tim Morris is pictured with one of the men who accepted Jesus as Savior during their church's week-long mission trip; Bedrock uses a Mobile Grill to feed guests at one of their summer outreaches; Restored Church's Morris with another man who accepted Christ! Praise God!*







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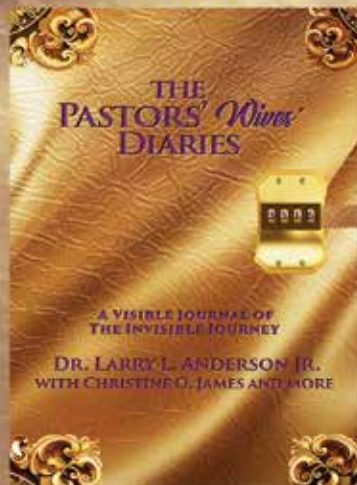


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Dr. L. A. is back with his second entry in the highly acclaimed Pastors' Diaries Series. This time he is being joined by First Lady Christine O. James as the two of them embark on a journey into the lives of the Pastors' Wives. Each heartfelt contribution from the pastors' wives takes you deeper and deeper below the surface into a world often seen from a distance. The transparency in the writings is unparalleled, and the vulnerability being displayed is downright heroic. You are guaranteed to never look at the First Family in your church the same way again.

**YOU CAN PURCHASE THIS BOOK QUICKLY BY SCANNING THE QR CODE BELOW, OR GOING ON AMAZON, BARNES AND NOBLE OR WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD.**



Scan to pay

# DISASTER & CRISIS RELIEF

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (DR) is one of the top disaster response organizations in the world because we are able to quickly deploy well trained and experienced volunteers to the point of need and provide logistical support for them. Many disaster relief organizations serve only a humanitarian purpose, but that is not us. We are compelled by Christ's love for all mankind AND his desire that no one should perish. We keep our focus by nurturing our individual relationship with Jesus Christ in the context of a local body of believers who recognize and call out our giftedness in service to God and our neighbors.

## **THE FOLLOWING ARE BRN DISASTER RELIEF HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2023-2024:**

- 24 volunteers received basic DR training in Feeding, Chain Saw, Flood Recovery, and Shower/Laundry
- 72 volunteers have been deployed to 2 in-state responses and 4 out-of-state responses.
- 7 trailers and vehicles have been deployed to the same responses.
- 4 churches have earned Ready Church certificates, and 5 churches have entered the Ready Church certification process.
- 20 Disaster Relief feeding volunteers participated in support of Serve Philly.
- All 3 Shower/Laundry units, the Rapid Response Kitchen, a Western Shelter, and a generator have been utilized to support various ministry efforts of 10 different churches.
- Jeff Slagle donated an F-350 pickup truck, along with a snow plow and a dump bed, to BRN Disaster Relief.
- Three of our Recovery Units have been re-outfitted.

Disaster responses include the winter flooding in Mexico, Maine, a tornado response in Ohio, flooding in West Virginia, the June tornado in Washington County, Pennsylvania, the July 10 flooding in Barre, Vermont, and the August flooding in Potter and Tioga Counties, Pennsylvania.

The BRN Executive Board approved a historic and monumental 3-year campaign to raise \$1.5 million to build and maintain a Disaster Relief Ministry Center on property generously provided by Winfield Baptist Church. Groundbreaking is scheduled for Spring 2025. At the time of writing this report, \$110,000 has been received. *(Scan QR Code on the next page to learn more!)*

The PA/SJ fleet currently includes 2 Mobile Kitchens, 8 Recovery Units (Flood, Chainsaw, Temporary Roofing), 3 Shower/Laundry Units, 1 Command/Communication Unit, 1 Pressure Wash Trailer, 1 Fuel Trailer, 1 Water Purification Unit, 2 Western Shelters, 2 support trailers, a 12-passenger van and a pickup truck. Ownership of these assets belongs to churches, associations, as well as the BRN.

As a result of all of these disasters, the gospel has been presented in each situation to the people who were served. We rejoice that we were able to see God save people through our witness and work. In nearly all cases, we were able to work alongside a local church or church planter to do follow-up and engage local government, residents, and other faith-based and community responders. We praise the Lord for such opportunities to further the Kingdom of God!

Please keep Disaster Relief efforts in your prayers. It is a powerful ministry that brings light into darkness, order into chaos, and Good News into hopeless situations.

By Kenton Hunt, Disaster Relief Director, Baptist Resource Network of PA/South Jersey



PENNSYLVANIA/SOUTH JERSEY

*And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds.*

Hebrews 10:24



# BUILDING OUR FUTURE

## DISASTER RELIEF MINISTRY FACILITY BUILDING CAMPAIGN



Baptist Resource Network  
Pennsylvania/South Jersey



ACCELERATING KINGDOM MOVEMENT



# FINANCE & OPERATIONS

*By Andy Weber, BRN Director of Finance and Operations*

We have been busy over the past year working on several behind-the-scenes activities that are designed to help enhance the BRN's servicing and resourcing of churches in PA and S. Jersey. Though this is not an exhaustive list, we are happy to share the following.

## **ABUSE AWARENESS & CLEARANCES TO SERVE**

The BRN has been working hard over the past several years to elevate the importance of abuse awareness, training, and clearances/background checks within BRN churches. In Pennsylvania, it is the law for all clergy, staff overseeing the welfare of minors, and volunteers serving with minors to have gone through a clearance process with the state. This clearance process requires a state clearance, PA State Police criminal check, and for some, FBI fingerprinting. Additionally, these PA individuals are required to have Mandatory Reporter Training as they are considered mandated reporters with the state of PA.

In New Jersey, every resident is considered a mandated reporter. The BRN encourages NJ churches to understand what it means to be a mandated reporter and to have at least a state and nationwide criminal check on all clergy, staff, and volunteers working with minors.

When the 2023 Annual Church Profiles were compiled by Lifeway in May 2024, BRN churches scored the highest out of all state conventions related to background checks and child abuse reporting. We are so excited that your church is taking the care and wellbeing of minors seriously!

## **NEW STATE ANNUAL FILING REQUIREMENT FOR CHURCHES IN PA**

Beginning in the calendar year of 2025, annual reports will be required by Pennsylvania. This applies to for-profits and nonprofits. This will apply to all churches and failure to comply could result in an automatic dissolution/termination/cancellation of the organization and loss of the protection of the organization's name, meaning a new organization can come in and take the name previously used by the church.

The annual filing will be free for churches and the deadline will be June 30 each year. The Department of State will mail notice to the registered office address of each church at least two months prior to the respective deadline, reminding it of the need to make an annual report. Please make sure your church's address is up to date with the state. To learn more about this filing requirement, please visit the state's website at, <https://www.pa.gov/en/agencies/dos/programs/business/types-of-filings-and-registrations/annual-reports.html>.

## **MINISTRY IMPACT FUNDS**

At the end of 2023, the BRN executive board began having discussions about creating opportunities for individuals to give directly to the BRN. As a result, we are excited to launch the Ministry Impact Funds of PA/SJ. These funds are designed to strategically increase the Kingdom Impact that BRN churches can have in our region and around the world. This is not a replacement for cooperative missions giving through Cooperative Program, rather it is a way to solicit funds that will assist with servicing and resourcing related to pastoral wellness and care, church health, compassion ministries, the next generation of leaders, church planting, outreach, and administrative support. To learn more about this exciting opportunity, please visit, [www.brunited.org/impact-funds](http://www.brunited.org/impact-funds). Even a small gift can have a huge impact!

## **PASTORAL WELLNESS AND COUNSELING**

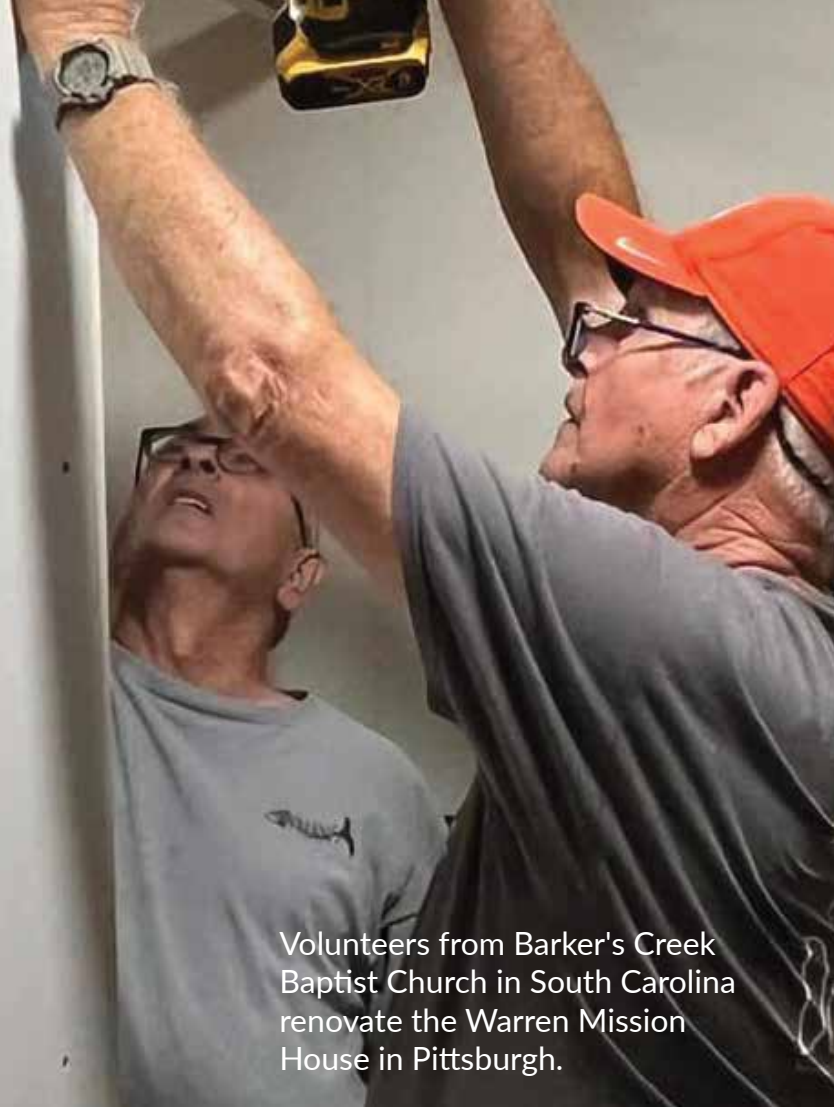
We were saddened with the news in 2024 that Full Strength Network was closing its doors and would no longer be able to service pastors with counseling and coaching. While the BRN was so excited to provide this resource to pastors for a time, it is time now to find a new solution to help our pastors. We are working hard to find a solution for pastoral wellness related mostly to pastoral counseling. Please join us in prayer that we will be able to find a solution to assist our pastors and families. In the meantime, please be on the look out for pastoral blessing events in your region and don't hesitate to reach out to use the BRN Guest House for a pastor or pastor and wife respite time.



## PITTSBURGH MISSION HOUSE

Through a partnership with the South Carolina Baptist Convention and South Carolina churches, we are currently working on renovating the Warren Mission House in Pittsburgh, PA. Under the leadership of Pam and Randy Creamer, teams from churches are working to add additional bathrooms, opening the first floor to be more open concept, updating the paint, flooring, and modernizing the house to the current time. Our hope is that the house will be an even better location for teams to utilize in order to do mission work in the Pittsburgh area. Please help express our appreciation to the Creamers and the SC Baptist Convention. We are so grateful for their sacrifice and willingness!

The BRN is so thankful for you and your generous and gospel minded heart! May we continue to work together to push against the darkness and advance the gospel in PA, S. Jersey, and beyond!



Volunteers from Barker's Creek Baptist Church in South Carolina renovate the Warren Mission House in Pittsburgh.



# To help make our churches safe from abuse, we must be proactive.

There are five essential actions your church can take now to help prevent abuse and prepare to respond well to those who are affected by abuse.

Learn more at  
[sbcabuseprevention.com/ministry-toolkit](https://sbcabuseprevention.com/ministry-toolkit)



# LEGACY PLANNING

Hi, my name is Chuck Knox, and I am the Legacy Coach at BRN. I retired from fulltime ministry in December of 2018. During the last decade of full-time ministry, I traveled nationally presenting Legacy workshops in local churches for a large, national church lending organization. During that time, we helped individuals establish almost \$20 million in legacy gifts to benefit their local churches as well as the ministry that sent me out.

After I retired, I thought my time would be spent with my wife and grandchildren traveling and enjoying what was left of my time on earth. However, God had other plans. Because I had been traveling extensively for almost a decade, we had lost touch with our home church and decided to visit other churches in our area. One of the churches we visited was Harvest Community Church in Kittanning, Pa. It was different than the churches we had attended before but in a good way. They were interested in growing locally but their overall goal was to increase the health and size of God's church everywhere. We identified with that concept and quickly connected and began the process of joining them in their efforts. When the leadership found out my work background, they asked if I would be willing to become a part of the staff and make the Legacy Workshops available in the local church. Harvest is one church in four locations so they wanted to offer the Legacy Workshop to the local congregations as well as other churches in the area. During the four years working part time for Harvest, we provided 13 workshops attended by almost 300 individuals and identified just over \$750,000 in legacy gifts that will benefit Harvest in the coming years.

As a member of BRN, Harvest offered this Legacy Workshop to other members of BRN and at the beginning of 2023, I left Harvest and joined the BRN team on a part-time basis. In the past year and a half, we have presented eight workshops throughout Pennsylvania and South Jersey that were attended by over 150 individuals. Those individuals have indicated that they will be leaving over \$125,000 in Legacy gifts to some of those local churches.



This Legacy Workshop is being offered to all members of the BRN. It is a 90-minute workshop that can be hosted by one church or a group of churches in the same community. Many churches have also found that the

Legacy Workshop can be a great outreach tool to encourage those from outside the church to attend. Included with the workshop is a workbook and a study guide to help answer questions and guide individuals or couples through the process of establishing a godly plan to care for the assets that God has entrusted them with. The workshop is being offered free of charge to all members of BRN. The only expenses that the church is responsible for is the cost of the

materials (\$25/set) and all travel expenses.

BRN has also subscribed to an online will drafting program that is offered to everyone that attends the Legacy Workshop free of charge. This way, anyone that attends can create a basic will without cost. All that needs to be done is to input your personal date, print out the documents, sign the documents and have them notarized. It only takes most folks 20 minutes after they have attended to workshop, read through the book, and completed the workbook. They then have a valid will and Power of Attorney to address their concerns and put their plan, rather than that of the state, in place.

Government statistics tell us that only about 30% of those who attend your church actually have any valid end of life documents. That means that 70% of those who attend your services each week are depending on the government to determine how their assets are distributed and who will raise their minor children. No reasonable person can think that is a good idea of plan.

Don't you think it's time to at least offer your congregation the opportunity to change that??? There are still a few dates available for the fall of 2024 and many available after the first of the year. Review your church calendar and call Chuck Knox at 724-991-5303 today to discuss when this valuable workshop can be presented in your church and community.



# ***LET'S JOIN HANDS TO MAKE AN IMPACT THROUGH LEGACY GIVING***

*Everyone wants to have a life with meaning. Part of that meaningful life is to live on in the memory of family and friends. Generous giving with eternal impact can indeed create a legacy for family and Kingdom ministry that gives added meaning to your life.*

*We urge you to pray and ask the Lord for guidance about financially giving through your resources and estate to benefit the ministry of the Baptist Resource Network and its churches.*

**INTERESTED?**

**CONTACT CHUCK KNOX, STEWARDSHIP COACH AT (724) 991-5303  
OR STOP BY THE LEGACY GIVING EXHIBIT TODAY!**



# NEXT GEN MINISTRY



Photo (left to right): Stanley Williams, Robbie Mays, Jennifer and Brian Musser, Eric Reiber, Brady Rennix, and Austin Burton.

## Grace & Peace, Fellow CoLaborers!

The Lord Jesus Christ opened doors NO ONE could close in a variety of ways to not only encourage those currently serving, but also inspire even more congregations and pastors to explore this mission field.

Highlights of this past year of cooperative ministry include the following experiences and outcomes:

- Over\* 2,116 collegians were evangelistically engaged through the collective work of the seven collegiate/Next Gen missionaries and interns serving with them reaching collegians

across our region. (*\*This reported number reflects only annual data submitted by MSC self-funded BRN missionaries. The balance of activity for this metric represented by church-based and collegiate church plants in particular are not reflected in that number.*)

- 53 collegians went on short-term missions opportunities for either their spring break, summer recess, or other short-term missional engagement initiative to engage in evangelistic and community- focused ministry across our state and in foreign countries. A specific highlight of this number are the students who participated in Serve Philly. A commensurate

effort of cooperative ministry reflecting the combined efforts of students from PSU State College, Penn West-Clarion, Penn West California University, Delaware Valley University, and Montgomery County Community College, which targeted Pittsburgh, is also reflected in this number.

- After a pandemic induced short hiatus from in person conferences and retreats, we held our Fall Collegiate Conference at Camp Hebron. Nearly 60 students and their campus ministry directors and missionary leaders shared this weekend of discipleship, fellowship and recreation. Going forward, this event, which targets



collegians and young adults (age 18–29) will be rebranded the *Fall Amplify Conference*. This year, it is scheduled for November 1–3 at Camp Hebron in Halifax, Pa.

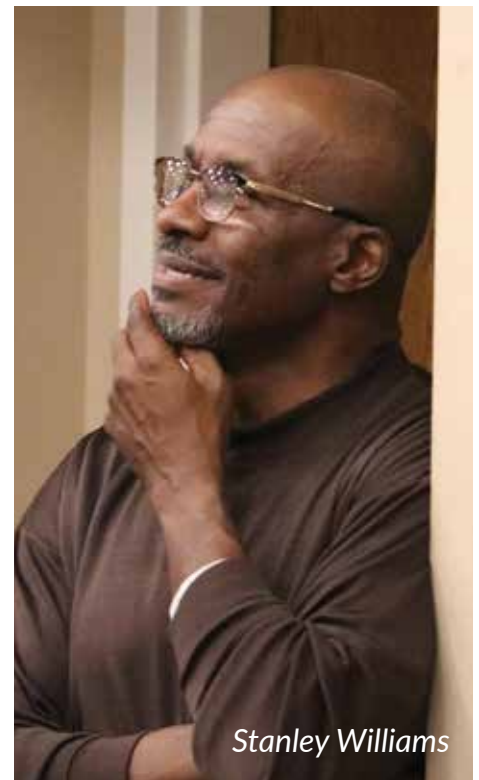
- The Lord has added interns who will be serving with Eric Reiber (MSC missionary at PSU State College) as well as with Brady Rennix (MSC collegiate missionary) at Delaware Valley University.

- Our own Brian Musser (MSC missionary serving Drexel University) worked together with other collegiate missionaries from across the BCNET galaxy to complete a resource which will help all kingdom focused congregations be best prepared to complete the as yet UNFINISHED TASK of taking the Gospel to EVERY CAMPUS in North America. He serves as one of, if not the SOLE voice of SBC-related collegiate missionaries, ministers, chaplains, college pastors, etc. known as EVERY CAMPUS. His work on that team has helped us to surface and visualize for our region the graphic you will find showcased at the Next Gen table display which underscores all of the places in our region where there is still NO GOSPEL witness evidencing the ADVANCE of the Gospel or the ACCELERATION of Kingdom movement on that campus. Perhaps your church is the missing link to that equation of impacting lostness.

If your church has already engaged the Church Health consultants, I welcome the opportunity to explore with you what we believe will be the most significant contribution we

can make to how our churches FINISH the task of reaching every campus in PA and NJ: **The Future Church Pathway**. We believe that this pathway will help all of our churches to be most accurately in touch with the Next Generation in their setting and know best how to take the next steps towards engaging them with the Gospel.

The most significant undertaking we will continue to establish is the Next Gen Missional Engagement Quotient of our network of partnering churches. Shane Pruitt's words from Accelerate 2022 continue to remind us that over 95% of those who trust Christ do so



Stanley Williams

95% of those who trust Christ do so BEFORE they reach the age of 30.

BEFORE they reach the age of 30.

Let's partner together to prioritize our resources of time, talent and treasure to speak the hope of life and light of truth from the Gospel into the most significant window of openness and opportune witness while it is our privilege and charge to do so.

**By His Grace ALONE,  
I Remain,**

Stanley Williams,  
BRN Collegiate Ministry -  
Next Gen Director



Scott Underhill

# WOVEN WOMEN

By Mary Landis

This has been a year of delving deeper for Woven Women: going deeper into the heart of God and deeper into the hearts of the women we serve. From its inception our team has been eager to hear the struggles that women's ministry leaders face in our BRN churches and prayerfully address those needs.

At Accelerate 2023 we gifted women with copies of Julia Higgins book, *Empowered and Equipped*. We offered an introductory training based on Higgins book in late fall at Plaid Community Church. This laid the groundwork for our theme for the seminar, *Empowered: How to Read and Teach Scripture*. We are

in the process of developing an on demand online course on this topic for our BRN women.

In early winter through spring 2024, we rolled out our online *Leadership Development Collectives*. We offered three topical units, "The Skill of Communication," "Time Management and Idea Implementation," and "The Spiritual Disciplines" to women leaders. This was our first experience with developing materials internally, and we learned a lot from this process. Our three Woven Women team leaders facilitated these sessions, which allowed three different scheduling options for participants. Special thanks to Beth Whitworth for conceiving the idea, developing the "Communication" material, and laying out the groundwork for these sessions.

At March's Advance Evangelism Conference, Kimberly Houston and Keith Groves of Macedonia Baptist Church led our breakout session on personal evangelism. They taught real life evangelism strategies they employ in the Norristown, Pa., area when they go out weekly to win the city for Christ.

We have continued to produce our monthly newsletter. We offer this tool to develop and disciple women's ministry leaders, to provide them with resources to use in their own churches, and to invite the unique and inspired perspective



Ladies from Plaid Community Church in Pittston, Pa., gather to discuss the equipping and empowering of women. This laid the groundwork for our theme for the seminar, *"Empowered: How to Read and Teach Scripture,"* which will soon be available as a online course.

**BRN Woven Women**  
invites you!

**LEARN MORE:** [brnunited.org/women](http://brnunited.org/women)

**Sign up for the  
Woven Women  
newsletter:**



*Woven  
Women*

*Woven Women is a Baptist  
Resource Network community  
designed to provide intentional  
discipleship and leadership  
development for women's ministry  
leaders as well as women in any  
leadership role in their local  
churches.*

of writers from within our BRN churches. This newsletter belongs to the women who serve tirelessly in the trenches, and we want all their voices to be heard.

We would like to remind you that the BRN Lending Library is up and running for anyone in the BRN to use. We have many books and resources available that are targeted to a wide variety of audiences. This is not a resource for women only.

At Accelerate 2024 we are co-leading a breakout session entitled, "Bold Prayer: From Words to Conversation" with Rev. Paul James. In addition, please remember to visit the Woven Women table to say hello and collect your gift.

New next year we plan to

roll out our bi-monthly volunteer training to further develop our team. We are praying and seeking additional volunteers to connect and build relationships with BRN women in several regions, as well as to assist in writing for our newsletter.

We have continued to build and maintain connections with women throughout PA/SJ. This continues to be a slow but steady process of discovering and getting to know all the women engaging in Kingdom work across the BRN. Engaging our women remains the most fulfilling part of this position.

We thank God for all of you. We want to once again thank our wonderful regional volunteers: Crystal Brandon in the Western

region, Cindy Fetty in the Central region, Kimberly Houston in Philadelphia, and Donna Hull in South Jersey. We are grateful to all who have volunteered their time and gifts to Woven Women. To all the women who have taken part in what we offer, and offered us encouragement, we are grateful for you as well. Above all else, we praise God for His vision and leading as we move forward year by year.

P.S. - Once again, I want to offer a very special thanks to Debbie Knowles for her very significant contributions to Woven Women. Debbie, you always have your heart aligned with where God is leading us.



# SEND NETWORK PA/SJ

## Is Multiplication Optional?

In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus emphatically declared that discipleship/multiplication is not optional. No BRN/SEND church would disagree with Christ's statement. Yet, why is this such a struggle for many churches?

We believe that every church can multiply. We also believe that when a church, regardless of size, sows the seeds of discipleship/multiplication, they will reap a harvest of Kingdom-minded leaders, and some of those God may call to plant churches.

We believe church planting is the most effective strategy for reaching the lost.

- Research indicates that new churches reach more lost people than older more established churches. It shows that a church plant three years old or younger will baptize 10 new believers for every 100 attendees. But a church that is 15 years old or older baptizes fewer than two new believers for every 100 attendees.
- Across 10 denominations, 3,500 churches close their doors every year, while only 4,000 churches are started each year.

Send Network PA/SJ, in partnership with BRN, desires to come alongside church leadership - providing training, leadership development, coaching, and resources in which to assist churches in the multiplication process.

For more information, contact John Cope, Director of Send Network PA/SJ, at [jcope@namb.net](mailto:jcope@namb.net).

By John Cope,  
Director,  
Send Network PA/SJ

*Planting churches everywhere for everyone*



# The North Carolina / Pennsylvania-South Jersey Partnership

## BAPTISTS ON MISSION

### What's This?:

An avenue through which North Carolina Baptist churches, associations, and individuals have opportunity to partner with Pennsylvania/South Jersey Baptist congregations, church plants, and ministries in fulfilling the task of reaching the lost for Christ.

### What do Partnership Teams do?:

NC Partnership teams have served all around the world in many different ways:

**Bible School**

**Backyard Bible Clubs**

**Community Surveys**

**Revival Teams**

**Youth and Children's Camps**

**Music ministry**

**New Construction**

**Renovation of existing facilities**

**Painting**

**Landscaping and cement work**

**Sports clinics and camps**

**Leadership Training**

**...And More!**

### What can a Partnership team do for me and my church?

The purpose of a NC Partnership team is to partner with you in reaching your community for Christ. This could include a direct ministry such as a Backyard Bible Club, sports camp, evangelism, and other outreach activities – OR – one that better equips your church *for* ministry – such as leadership training or facility construction or renovation.

### How much will having a Partnership team cost?

NC Partnership teams pay their own way to the field. They are also prepared to pay their own housing, transportation, and meals *if necessary*. If it's possible for them to stay in your church facility and/or for your church to provide one meal a day for them – that helps greatly, but is not required. Also, evangelistic outreach teams are willing to bring ministry supplies if needed. Construction and renovation-type teams usually expect materials to be provided by the requesting church or organization – although on occasion, they may be willing to contribute toward materials if needed.

### How do I go about requesting a team from North Carolina?

Pray about how you might use a volunteer missionary team to assist you in fulfilling your ministry. Fill out one (or more!) of the [electronic request forms](#). It will be automatically sent to Mark Abernathy, Baptists on Mission (BOM). We will be glad to receive requests throughout the year, but most of our churches begin their missions planning 8-10 months in advance, so please submit the request as soon as possible. If you need an electronic form sent to you, please email Mark Abernathy at [mabernathy@ncbaptist.org](mailto:mabernathy@ncbaptist.org)

### What happens then?

Baptists on Mission will work to promote your project among our churches here in North Carolina (and beyond via our website!) and help find a team to fill it. While we cannot guarantee a team to fill your request, we will promote it throughout the year in a variety of ways. When a team shows interest, the team leader will be put in direct contact with you. If you both feel it is a good fit, you both will set the dates of service and work out all the necessary details.

If you have any questions about the North Carolina/Pennsylvania-South Jersey Partnership, please feel free to contact:

**Mark Abernathy**, Baptists on Mission (919-459-5607; [mabernathy@ncbaptist.org](mailto:mabernathy@ncbaptist.org)) or  
**Dewey and Kathie Aiken**, NC/PA-SJ On-Site Coordinators (828-553-7694; [dewey\\_kate@hotmail.com](mailto:dewey_kate@hotmail.com))

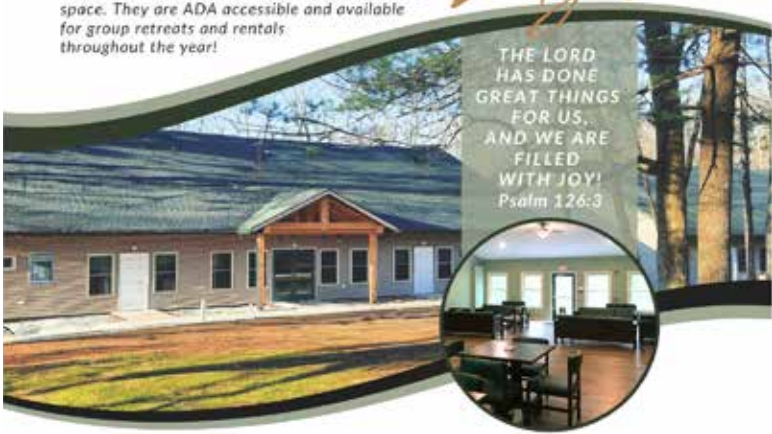
*Baptists on Mission is an auxiliary of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina*

# ENJOY THE NEW FIRESIDE

Our new lodge buildings feature four guest rooms with attached bathrooms and a central meeting space. They are ADA accessible and available for group retreats and rentals throughout the year!

*Lodge!*

THE LORD  
HAS DONE  
GREAT THINGS  
FOR US...  
AND WE ARE  
FILLED  
WITH JOY!  
Psalm 126:3



## 2025 CAMP ORCHARD HILL EVENTS

WINTERBLAST 2025	JANUARY-MARCH, 2025
MEMORIAL DAY FAMILY CAMP	MAY 23-26, 2025
DAY CAMP 2025	JUNE 9-AUGUST 15, 2025
COH MISSION	JULY 6-12, 2025
LEADERSHIP TRAINING	JULY-AUGUST, 2025
OVERNIGHT CAMPS (Thrive, Surge and Roots)	JULY-AUGUST, 2025
LABOR DAY FAMILY CAMP	AUGUST 29-SEPTEMBER 1, 2025
ALIVE! WOMEN'S RETREAT	OCTOBER 3-5, 2025
BAND OF BROTHERS MEN'S RETREAT	OCTOBER 10-12, 2025

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been a great tool for us  
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Julianne.  
I plan on continuing  
this partnership  
into the future!"

Pastor Adam



**Seasonal**



**Sympathy**

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ClubEncourage.com

# STAY CONNECTED!

## BRN UNITED WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Subscribe to the weekly e-newsletter of the Baptist Resource Network of Pennsylvania/South Jersey, which features news, events and resources of interest to Southern Baptists in our region. [brnunited.org/news](http://brnunited.org/news)

## WOVEN WOMEN MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Sign up to receive a monthly update about women's ministry opportunities as well as timely content relevant to women. [brnunited.org/women](http://brnunited.org/women)

## #TRANSFORMPASJ MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Sign up to receive this monthly newsletter, organized by David Ludwig, BRN associate director of church health, with tips for intentional discipleship, leadership development, and church revitalization and strengthening. [brnunited.org/transform](http://brnunited.org/transform)

## BRN HELP DESK

Have questions? Need a resource? Feel free to reach out to the Baptist Resource Network's Help Desk. Email [helpdesk@brnunited.org](mailto:helpdesk@brnunited.org) or call or text (717) 652-5856.



## ARE TECHNICAL CHALLENGES HOLDING BACK YOUR MISSION?

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# A BAPTIST RESOURCE NETWORK GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**ACCELERATE CONFERENCE:** The Baptist Resource Network's annual gathering, held each autumn, provides inspiration, training, and encouragement to churches. The conference also hosts a short business meeting to highlight accomplishments and vision.

**ADVANCE CONFERENCE:** The Baptist Resource Network's annual evangelism conference.

**AMPLIFY CONFERENCE:** This annual conference focuses on evangelizing, engaging, and equipping the next generation.

**ANNIE ARMSTRONG EASTER OFFERING (AAEO):** An offering held around Easter to support the field work of the North American Mission Board.

**ANNUAL CHURCH PROFILE (ACP):** Also known as the annual letter, this is the annual report sent from the local churches to the state convention.

**BAPTIST FAITH & MESSAGE (BF&M):** The list of beliefs held by Southern Baptists.

**COOPERATIVE PROGRAM (CP):** Southern Baptists' unified plan of giving through which cooperating Southern Baptist churches give a percentage of their undesignated receipts to support cooperative missions and ministries in the BRN and the SBC.

**ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION (ERLC):** A national entity who addresses specific moral issues in broader cultural conversations.

**GREAT COMMISSION BAPTISTS:** Great Commission Baptists, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, seek to follow God's command to make disciples of all nations.

**GUIDESTONE:** A SBC entity who provides health insurance, life insurance, retirement accounts, and taxation information as well as wellbeing resources for churches.

**INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD (IMB):** The missionary sending agency of the SBC that deploys outside of North America.

**LEGACYPASJ:** A fund began in 2021 with the assistance of Ministry Trust ([theministryfund.org](http://theministryfund.org)) to support the Baptist Resource Network's long-term viability.

**LIFEWAY CHRISTIAN RESOURCES:** The publishing house of the SBC, Lifeway is one of the world's largest providers of Christian resources.

**LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING (LMCO):** An offering held around Christmas to support the field work of the International Mission Board.

**NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD (NAMB):** The missionary sending agency of the SBC that deploys in North America.

**WOMAN'S MISSIONARY UNION (WMU):** A missions education, prayer support, and involvement organization that also promotes the Annie Armstrong and Lottie Moon offerings.



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## **Parenting Boys and Girls** in a Gender- Confused World

Practical guidance for parents to teach their children about being a boy or girl created in love to bear God's image.

- *What's happening culturally?*
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## **FREE VIDEO PARENTING COURSES** *on gender & sexuality*



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## **Raising Sexually Faithful Kids**

Encouragement and equipping for parents to shepherd their children biblically regarding sex and sexuality.

- *What is God's design for sexuality and why do we struggle with sexual sin?*
- *How can you talk about sex and sexuality in age-appropriate ways?*
- *How can you navigate technology and guide your kids when they're struggling with sinful sexual behavior?*



*You're  
Invited!*



## **PA/SJ WMU Annual Meeting**

**Saturday, November 2nd, 2024**

**10 am – 3:00 pm**

**Red Land Baptist Church • New Cumberland, PA**

**\$10 Registration Fee (Lunch Provided)**

**For 6th–12th grade girls and all Adults interested in missions.**

**WMU**® God's mission.  
Our passion.

Email [Pa.sjwmu@gmail.com](mailto:Pa.sjwmu@gmail.com)  
for more information.



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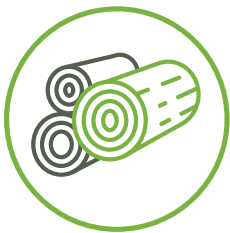
- **ACCELERATE CONFERENCE**, Oct. 7, 2025
- **ADVANCE CONFERENCE**, March 17, 2025 (Country and Town Church, Mechanicsburg, Pa.)
- **AMPLIFY FALL COLLEGIATE CONFERENCE**, Nov. 1-3, 2024 (Camp Hebron, Halifax, Pa.)
- **AMPLIFY CONFERENCE FOR STUDENTS**, February 21-23, 2025 (Camp Hebron, Halifax, Pa.)
- **COLLEGIATE BEACH REACH**, Spring dates: March 1-7, 8-15, 15-22, 22-29, 2025 (Various locations)
- **COMPASSION MINISTRY TRAININGS**, ongoing
- **COOPERATIVE PROGRAM MONTH**, October 2024
- **DISASTER RELIEF ADVANCED TRAININGS**, ongoing
- **D-LIFE BOOTCAMPS**, ongoing
- **FIRST STEPS GATHERING**, Nov. 12, 2024 (BRN Hub)
- **GIVING TUESDAY**, Dec. 3, 2024
- **LEGACY WORKSHOPS**, ongoing
- **NEXT GEN/CAMPUS MINISTER'S RETREAT**, June 6-8, 2025
- **NEXT LEVEL CONVERSATIONS**, ongoing
- **SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION ANNUAL MEETING AND PASTOR'S CONFERENCE**, June 8-11, 2025 (Dallas, Texas)
- **SERVE WILKES-BARRE/SCRANTON**, June 27-28, 2025 (Various locations)
- **WEEK OF PRAYER FOR INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARIES AND LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING**, Dec. 1-8, 2024
- **WINTER COLLEGIATE MINISTRY LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (CMLC)**, Jan. 31 - Feb. 1, 2025

STAY TUNED TO [BRNUNITED.ORG/EVENTS](https://brnunited.org/events) FOR THE EMERGING DETAILS.



# SUPPORT YOUR CHURCH THROUGH TIMBER!

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**CHRISTIAN  
TIMBER  
RESERVE**



**BAPTIST RESOURCE NETWORK OF PA/SJ**

**THANK YOU**

**to the following for making today possible:**

**Best Printing USA, Norwalk, CT**

**BRN Executive Board**

**BRN Team Members**

**Conference Attendees**

**Conference Presenters**

**Conference Volunteers**

**Holiday Inn Harrisburg-Hershey Hotel**

**RCTV Productions**

**Sponsors & Vendors**

**Stray Production Services**

**and finally, our BRN churches and partners!**

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