

Replanting with Purpose: Refuge Church's Mission-Focused Transformation

By Stephanie Heading, managing editor

Pastor Steve Looker and The Refuge Church, a two and a half year old church replant, are on a mission to reach 55,000 lost souls in Zanesville which is located in the Appalachian region of eastern Ohio.

However, the story of The Refuge began seven years ago when Looker became pastor at Southside Baptist Church, Zanesville. Southside was a declining church in the challenging southside of Zanesville where incomes are approximately \$20,000 a year.

After four and a half years of working to reach the community through Southside, Looker reached a crossroad. "I was going to leave and plant a church," he said.

He shared his plans with the Southside congregation. "Eighty percent of the people said if I left they were leaving too."

Looker told the church that he had four non-negotiable changes that had to occur if he were to stay. First, the church must change its name. Second, the leadership of the church would become elder-led instead of deacon run.



Spectrum recently awarded a grant of \$2500 to The Refuge Church.

Third, the women of the church would play a more active role. "I'm not a woman pastor guy, but women weren't even allowed to pray in the church," said Looker. Fourth, the church would become more missional.

Two-thirds of the church voted to approve the changes, and The Refuge replant was born. "I was going to do what God was telling me to do," said Looker. "It was just a matter of the address."

During the past two and a half years, the replant has made multiple in-roads to reach people in its community with the gospel.

One ministry is a food pantry for the community. "We are unique," said Looker. "We take the food to the people. What you get, we give away." The church also works with Christ's Table, a local hot meal site that serves meals every Monday-Saturday as well as two Sundays each month.

Zane Gray Elementary/Intermediate School in the church's neighborhood has also become a ministry site. "We feel we should give back," said Looker. The



The Refuge Church - Zanesville

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The Ohio Baptist Messenger Staff

Dr. Jeremy Westbrook, editor-in-chief

Seth Wicker, digital communication assistant

Stephanie Heading, managing editor

AJ Frasure, digital communication assistant

Dan Stupakewicz, director of information technology

-- Tell us your story --

The Ohio Baptist Messenger is a monthly publication highlighting what the Lord is doing in SCBO churches or ministries, and we need your help! Tell us your story and we could feature it in an upcoming issue of *The Messenger*.

Please submit your stories to messenger@scbo.org.

For more information, please contact Stephanie Heading at messenger@scbo.org.

Every Day Miracles

Miracles happen every day. Growing up in church, this phrase was often quoted in sermons that were preached, songs that were sung and articles that were written in Sunday School quarterlies. However, while it is indeed a biblical and factual phrase, I often fail to recognize it daily on the practical side of life and ministry.

Recently, I had the joy of attending the Good News Baptist Church in Cincinnati, where Jerome Byrd currently serves as the Lead Pastor. In addition to his role at the church, Pastor Byrd also serves on the SCBO Mission Council. He recently shared at the October meeting that the Lord had worked a miracle in providing a new building for the church to grow into. The only caveat was that it had a price tag of \$650,000 and he did not know where the money would come from.

Then it happened...a miracle moment. A gentleman called Pastor Byrd and shared that he was going to purchase the building for the church and then lease it to them on an annual basis for only \$1. To make it even better, over the Christmas break, that individual called Pastor Byrd

and said that he was not going to lease it to the church anymore but was going to transfer the deed to Good News free and clear!

As I witnessed this story in person and worshiped with the congregation of the Good News Baptist Church on the first Sunday of the new year, I could not think of a better way to begin 2024. My prayer for all our SCBO churches, pastors, and leaders is that we would be aware of the miracles that surround us daily.

We must remember the miracles that we often take for granted like the breath in our lungs and the beats of our heart. Salvation itself is indeed miraculous and there is no greater joy than seeing a lost sinner repent and receive Christ as Savior. Let's stay on mission and pray that we never get over the miraculous. Why? Because miracles happen every day.



Dr. Jeremy Westbrook
Executive Director-Treasurer, SCBO



OHIO DISASTER RELIEF TRAINING

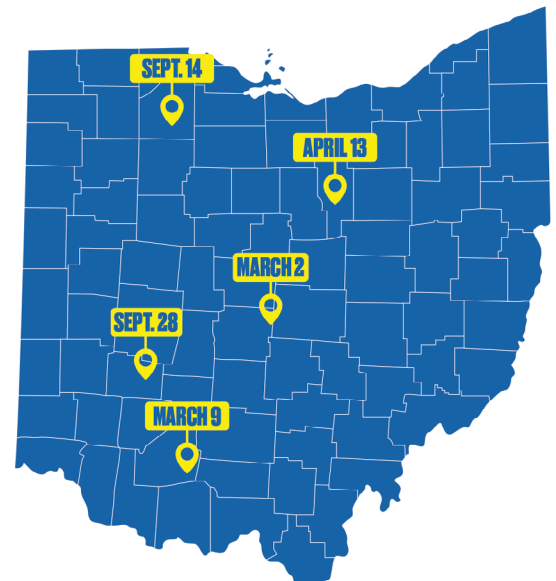
MARCH 2
Jersey Baptist Church, New Albany
QRU, FR, CSR 🇺🇸 🇺🇸 🇺🇸
13260 Morse Rd SW, New Albany, Ohio 43054

SEPT. 14
H2O Church, Bowling Green
QRU, FR, CSR 🇺🇸 🇺🇸 🇺🇸
252 S Main St., Bowling Green, Ohio 43402

MARCH 9
Northview Baptist Church, Hillsboro
QRU, FR, CSR 🇺🇸 🇺🇸 🇺🇸
1139 Northview Dr., Hillsboro, Ohio 45133

SEPT. 28
First Baptist Kettering, Kettering
QRU, FR, CSR 🇺🇸 🇺🇸 🇺🇸
3939 Swigart Rd., Beavercreek, Ohio 45440

APRIL 13
Trinity Baptist Church, Ashland
QRU, FR, CSR 🇺🇸 🇺🇸 🇺🇸
891 State Route 511, Ashland, Ohio 44805



Types of trainings:

🇺🇸 QRU - Quick Response Feeding Unit 🇺🇸 FR - Flood Recovery 🇺🇸 CSR - Chainsaw Recovery

President's Pen

Confidence and Commitment

On a scale from 1-10, how would you rate your current confidence that God intends to use your church to impact your community?

On a scale from 1-10, how would you rate your current commitment to effective evangelism in your community?

I don't know what you would say, but I do know some things. I know that God is glorified when Bible-believing, Christ-centered churches impact their communities. I know that God is glorified when believers in Jesus Christ proclaim the gospel. I know that God is glorified when souls are saved. I know that I want to see our churches glorifying God in these ways this year...and I'm confident you do too.

So, how do we get there? What should my church do this year to glorify God in the ways mentioned above? Are there things we should stop doing? Are there things we should begin doing?

One of the great things about being an Ohio Baptist is the support. If you want help for yourself or your church, it's just an email or phone call away. There are amazing SCBO pastors and SCBO staff who love to help churches grow in their confidence and commitment! You can always reach me at president@scbo.org.



Grace and Peace,

Adam Pursel
SCBO President

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Replanting with Purpose *Continued...*



Distributing food in the community and local schools is an important outreach at The Refuge Church.

church has provided hats, gloves, and clothing as well as “Blessing Bags,” which contain meals for the weekend.

“Teachers pick students who aren’t going to get meals to receive the bags.” The church packs 100 “Blessing Bags” every week—50 for elementary students and 50 for intermediate students.

One of the exciting things about the “Blessing Bags” is that the church can add extra items to the bags, such as fliers for church events, Bible items, and holiday trinkets. “We also partnered with Colgate in Cambridge to give items for Hygiene Day,” he noted.

In 2023, Looker was one of nine missionaries selected to participate in WMU’s Christmas in August event. The missionaries give WMU a list of items they need for ministry and outreach. The lists are posted online, and individual, churches, and WMU groups purchase the items and send them to a missionary or missionaries on the list.

To expand the ministry to the teachers at Zane Gray, Looker requested items that students and families have a difficult time providing--pencils, 24-count crayons, colored pencils, kid’s scissors, glue sticks, construction paper, loose-leaf paper, staplers, staples, and clear tape. The response to Christmas in August was great. “We are trickling in school supplies to teachers.”

Another way The Refuge is reaching the community is through “A Place of Refuge Addiction Ministry,” which is in its infancy, according to Looker. “We are trying to figure out how to do more with that.” Currently 15-18 people are meeting in the group to study “Experiencing God.” The church also gives food to a sober living home.

As the church became more missional, it saw the Lord bless in new ways. Looker received a call from Jonathan Paugh, the pastor who preceded him at Southview BC. Paugh felt led to return to the church to help Looker with the replant of Southside. “He called me and asked me to pray for him,” said Looker. “God is calling me to come and help you.”

After his arrival, Paugh took a job at Spectrum which has a program to give grants to places where their employees volunteer. Recently The Refuge received a \$2500 grant from Spectrum. “We are using it for our food pantry.”

In addition to outreach, the church now has two worship services—one on Saturday night and one on Sunday morning. Attendance is 60-80 total, up from 20 before the replant.

The future is looking bright for The Refuge as Looker has the goal of planting five churches in Muskingum County. “When we get to 75 people regularly, we will start praying and when we reach 125, we will send 50 people out to start a church plant,” said Looker. “I don’t want to grow a big church. I want to be a church that plants churches.”

As he looks back at the last two and a half years, the change is evident. “I am one hundred percent sure we are called to Zanesville. Two and a half years ago, I was dragging people along,” he recalled. “Today people are pushing me. That’s the change.”

UPDATES REGIONAL SCBO REGIONAL REGIONAL UPDATES



Matt Pardi - Northwest

Hello from the Northwest Ohio Region. I hope your year is off to a great start. Mark your calendar now for two exciting events coming to our region.

The first event is Man Maker: "Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another," Proverbs 27:17. We will gather as men and sharpen each other at the 2024 Man Maker Retreat, February 16-17, at Camp Berry in Findlay. Both older and younger men will share meals, worship, fellowship, and great teachings from Kirk Kirkland, pastor, Revive City Church, Cincinnati. Register today at scbo.org/event/man-maker-2024 or h2omanmaker2024.pushpayevents.com

The second event is the Women's Retreat. "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble," Psalm 46:1. Join the women of our region on April 20 for The Women's Retreat - Strength for the Journey at Good Shepherd Baptist Church in Amherst. Jennifer Westbrook, wife of SCBO Executive Director Jeremy Westbrook, will be the featured speaker at this event which will also feature times of worship and fellowship.

We value being together, and God is doing great things in our region and in our churches. As God blesses us in great ways, let's be faithful to gather in community at these retreats and celebrate the goodness of God. If you have questions about either retreat, or if there is anything we can do for you, don't hesitate to reach out to me at 419-494-9640. Blessings!



Chad Keck - West

I hope you are thriving in this cold weather. I have loved having the opportunity to connect with you at associational meetings and during lunches. At the church that I pastor, I am preaching through 1 Thessalonians. In chapter 1 we see the partnership that Paul feels with Silas and Timothy as they minister to the church. I want you to know that I feel that same partnership with all of you. I have yet to have lunch or coffee with a West Region pastor without leaving highly encouraged and simultaneously challenged to be even stronger in my calling and work. Thank you!

Through our relationship with Florida Baptist Convention's (FBC) West Region, we will have the opportunity to develop even more partnerships as we seek to expand the kingdom. The first opportunity for us to begin that discussion will be March 7-9. Lewis Miller, FBC's West Region catalyst, will be bringing key pastors to our region to connect with us. If you would like to be a part of those strategy meetings please let me know (ckeck@scbo.org) so I can make sure you get all the details. I am super excited about what God is going to do as we plan together.



Reagan Wagoner - Southwest

This month, I am so excited about what God is doing on the west side at Revive City Church! Revive is remodeling its gym to become its worship space as the church is currently outgrowing its current worship center. My wife Heather and I got to meet and collaborate with Pastor Kirk Kirkland and his team to hear about everything they are doing to get the new space ready. Please be praying for them this month as they get ready! I'm also excited about what God is doing at Good News Baptist Church and Pastor Jerome Byrd. They celebrated their first service in their

new location in Colerain on January 7. To read more about this move of God read Dr. Jeremy Westbrook's article [Every Day Miracles on page 3](#)

I am praying for these two churches as they reach families, but also for all of us as we keep getting better at reaching new families in the new year! Join us at Grace Point for our 2nd Annual Next Gen Training on Feb 22 from 10 am-2 pm. Our special guest will be our brand new SCBO President, Adam Pursel, and members of his Next Gen Staff at Life Point Mt. Vernon as well as Keith Hurt and Corey Flynn. We hope you will plan to attend with your next gen volunteers. Cost is just \$10 if you register beforehand, at <https://swohioleaders.com/next-gen-training/>. Please save the date for lunch on April 23 with Dr. Jeremy Westbrook at Lakota Hills BC. We want to encourage you to come as we talk about how we are better together.



Revive City Church, Cincinnati

MINISTRIES HUB

UPDATES

REGIONAL U

REGIONAL UPDATES



Stephen Owens - Northeast

Hey, Northeast Region family. I pray you are doing well. During January, I had the privilege of spending time with pastors of the Summit Baptist Association at their post-Christmas party. It was good to catch up with the pastors and their wives and to hear how their ministries were doing. The fellowship was a refreshing time of food, fun, and prayer.

I also had a chance to connect with our regional partners in the Southeast Region of Florida. As I visited the region, the AMSs and the pastors I spoke with were encouraged by our partnership and are interested in seeing it develop. You will be hearing more information about our partnership soon and learn how you and your church can engage in it.

If there is a way I can be of assistance, please feel free to reach out to me. I would love to help in any way I can. My email address is sowens@scbo.org. God bless.



Rick Williams - Central

Greetings! I am honored to serve in the Central Ohio Region and witness firsthand the incredible work that God is doing in our churches and among our leaders. On January 1, Dr. Dave Earley, pastor of First Baptist Church, Grove City, launched a global event called "21 Days of Prayer" with 650 churches from 37 different nations. This event was focused on Pastor Dave's book, "The 21 Most Effective Prayers in the Bible," and has been a source of great inspiration and growth for many of our central Ohio churches. I am grateful for Pastor Dave's passion for prayer and his desire for all churches to experience the power and effectiveness of prayer.

Are you eager to reach the next generation for Jesus, but discouraged by the lack of resources to hire a youth pastor? If so, I invite you to join us on Thursday, February 29 at Pizza Cottage in Pickerington, 1000 Old Diley Rd from 11 am to 1 pm for our Next Gen Roundtable event. SCBO Director of Next Gen Keith Hurt will be our special guest and we will provide lunch as we hear from pastors who are finding creative ways to reach the next generation for Christ without a large budget. No registration is necessary.

I am excited to continue connecting with pastors and leaders in Central Ohio this year. If you would like to schedule a breakfast or lunch meeting, please reach out to me at rwilliams@scbo.org. We are better together!



Josh Remy - Southeast

As part of the SCBO partnership with the Florida Baptist Convention (FBC) the Southeast Region is partnering with the FBC's North Region. Their region is much like ours--made up of small towns and rural ministries. I have been talking with Phillip Herrington, FBC north catalyst, and we are excited about the potential of our partnership. We have discussed the possibilities of prayer partners, church planting, shared mission trips, construction projects, disaster relief, next gen ministries and more. There are so many ways we can help each other grow the kingdom! Herrington already has churches looking forward to coming to Ohio for a visit to learn ways they can help us. They plan to visit on April 11-12. If you'd like to be a part of the visit or have ideas on how you want to partner, let me know!

As you begin planning your summer events, keep the following in mind. If you need assistance in a program, I would love to connect you with another church that may be able to help. If you're trying something new, let us know how it goes so you can help another church succeed in the future. If you need help with funding a gospel opportunity, we can help with an evangelism grant. If you have a community or church project, perhaps it would be a great mission trip for a church from Florida.



Ohio and Florida Baptists Unite to Set the Stage for ‘Something Bigger’

By Teodosia Rivera, Florida Baptist Convention

As Florida Baptists’ partnership with Ohio Baptists begins to take shape, leaders from both state conventions are realizing the opportunities for God to do “something bigger” in and through both state conventions.

Recently several Florida Baptist leaders traveled to Cleveland, Ohio, to speak and serve at the 2023 Ohio African American Fellowship.

Florida Baptist leaders included Jeffery Singletary, Florida Baptists’ Central region catalyst; Patrick Coats, Florida Baptists’ East region catalyst; Erik Cummings, Florida Baptists’ Black multicultural catalyst; and Zelvis Applin, pastor, South Hills Church, Wimauma.

“The experience was incredible. I felt like the Lord was able to use my journey as a pastor who has served in various roles, the most recent being a church planter, to equip and bless those in attendance,” Applin said.

Reginald Hayes, convention relations-community leader for the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, agreed, saying that the gathering “helped in sharing and understanding techniques used in Florida that are most effective in urban areas.” The collaboration

and ideas, he said, “galvanized best practices for planning, revitalizing and strengthening pastors and churches in urban communities.”

Cummings welcomed the opportunity to share with Ohio Baptist pastors. He said, “We can encourage each other to go beyond traditional practices as it relates to reaching and engaging diverse communities with the gospel of Jesus Christ.” Floridians, he said, have long been familiar with diversity, and Ohioans are now seeing demographic shifts in their population. “These partnerships provide dialogue and strategy to be proactive in preparing to minister in changing times.”

Applin recalls a testimony from Ohio pastor Darryl Baker, who, though not knowing what to expect from the fellowship meeting, “felt encouraged as he realized that he and I were both ministering in suburban/rural contexts with diverse congregations.”

Returning home from the Ohio visit, Applin said he realized he was “part of something bigger than what’s happening in Wimauma, Florida. I am committed to assisting my Ohio brothers and churches in any way I can as we continue to build upon the established

partnership between our two state conventions. We are truly better together.”

Collaboration Between Regional Catalysts

Regional catalysts in Ohio recently have been matched with regional catalysts in Florida “to communicate better and collaborate for a more effective partnership,” said Jeremy Westbrook, Ohio Baptists’ executive director/treasurer.

“Now that our regional catalysts have been connected in both state conventions, we will begin to see momentum between the churches and catalysts as they partner for missions and revitalization efforts,” he said.

Hayes is optimistic about the partnership’s potential. Such a partnership, he said, provides “opportunities to strengthen communities by growing healthy churches,” and he commended Florida Baptist catalysts as “wonderful advisors with a wealth of information about how to organize, develop and build lasting evangelism models in communities.”

Cummings said he prays “that we will continue to have fruitful conversations and even possibly collaborate on combining our efforts to encourage like-minded church leaders across the country in the ever-changing landscape in which we all minister.”

Ohio Deaf Missions Conference Set for March 16

Members of Ohio Deaf Missions are gathering March 16 for the Ohio Deaf Missions Conference at Miami Valley Baptist Church of the Deaf, 1642 Bartley Road, Dayton.

“Be Strong and Courageous” is the theme of the one-day event which will feature Conference Speaker Brother Todd Stinson, full-time deaf pastor at Northeast Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky.

Registration is now open, and the cost is \$40 per person aged 19 and over. The fee includes two meals and a T-shirt. Participants must register by February 17 to receive the T-shirt. For children aged 5-18 the cost is \$20 per person and includes two meals. An optional T-shirt is available for \$15. Children aged four and under are free.

To register for the Ohio Deaf Missions Conference, email ehtanner1234@gmail.com for a registration form.



MIAMI VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH OF THE DEAF

1642 Bartley Road, Dayton, OH 45414

Ohio Deaf Missions 2024

BE STRONG and
Courageous

Joshua 1:9

Saturday, March 16, 2024

9:00am – 9:00pm



CONFERENCE SPEAKER

Bro. Todd Stinson

Registration Fee – \$40.00 Age 19 and Over \$20.00 Age 5-18 Age 0-5 FREE

Good News BC Celebrates Dedication of Donated \$650,000 Facility

By Stephanie Heading, managing editor

The Good News Baptist Church, Cincinnati, gathered to celebrate the miraculous provision of God as they dedicated a newer 13,000 square foot building. The \$650,000 facility was originally out of the financial grasp of the church, but then Pastor Jerome Byrd received a call from a local Christian businessman who had purchased the property.

The gentleman offered the building to Good News BC for a lifetime lease of one dollar. However, in December, he offered the Good News BC ownership of the facility. The church received the building deed, fully paid off, during the dedication service.

With such an amazing move of God, Good News BC had much to celebrate, and both the morning and afternoon services were full. In addition to the congregation, leaders from Cincinnati and across Ohio were in attendance. Dr. Jeremy Westbrook, SCBO executive director, told the congregation, “It is a great testimony and encouragement for pastors to see a fellow pastor being extraordinarily blessed by God.”

Powerful worship and fellowship dominated the event. Pastor Reginald Hayes, SCBO senior staff, told the packed church, “When God’s word is obeyed there should not be any amazement when He does something big. For God is a big God and everything is possible with Him.”



Mark Snowden, AMS CABA, Pastor Jerome Byrd, Good News BC, and Dr. Jeremy Westbrook, SCBO executive director, celebrated the dedication of the new home of Good News BC.

During an emotional moment, Pastor Byrd expressed his appreciation to God, the donor, and the 400 attendees. “From where Good News Baptist Church began in 1987 in the gymnasium at the Rex Ralph Elementary School in Mt. Healthy, to where we were since 1997 in a 4,000 sq. ft. building at 3473 Niagara Street in Cincinnati, to where we are today continuing our journey at 3551 Poole Rd, God is good, God is good, all the time, all the time,” said Byrd. “He may not come when you want Him to, but He’ll be there right on time. God is good, all the time.”

Ohio ESL Training 2024

Ohio has eight newly trained English as a Second Language teachers! The eight completed 12 hours of training through NAMB and Send Relief at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, Cincinnati, in early January. Participants praised the teaching during the training.



Donna Banks and Duane Burris practice repetition drills.



Lisbeth Lundstedt runs practice drills for asking and answering questions.

One participant appreciated the pacing of the course, and another praised the examples and explanations during the class. If your church, association, or region is interested in having this training come to your area, contact Cathy Pound, cpound@scbo.org.

Two Churches Serve a Community in Need with Food and Clothing

By Stephanie Heading, managing editor



Grace Nepali BC, Cincinnati, packed food boxes and collected and organized clothing for a "Gospel Mission" project at sister church Liberty Missionary BC, Cincinnati.

Two Cincinnati-area churches recently partnered to impact a local community in a tangible way.

Raj Ghimire, pastor, Grace Nepali Baptist Church, was looking for a church and community his youth group could serve. He called the Cincinnati Area Baptist Association (CABA) office and spoke to Mark Snowden, CABA AMS. "His church's youth group wanted to sponsor a food and clothing giveaway during the Christmas season," he said.

Grace Nepali began as a NAMB church plant 13 years ago. Its members are all from a Hindu-based background as refugees of Nepali heritage from Bhutan.

"Pastor Raj and the church's members have been faithfully leading dozens of their kinsmen to faith in Christ," Snowden noted. "Their children are forming a strong youth group and were eager to do what they called a 'Gospel Mission' project where it was needed."

Snowden connected Pastor Ghimire with Craig Ball, pastor of Lib-

erty Missionary Baptist Church, which is in one of the most troubled communities in CABA.

The December giveaway became a cooperative project, bringing churches and the association together to serve. Pastor Ball developed a voucher system to coordinate the giveaway. Members of Liberty Missionary served as greeters, and members from Grace Nepali prepared food boxes. CABA used funds donated for hunger relief to purchase bags of rice and beans for the food boxes.

During the event, people who received a voucher checked in and received a box of food prepared for their family. They also had the opportunity to choose clean clothes that Grace Nepali collected during a clothing drive before the giveaway.

"As Southern Baptists, we often talk about cooperating as an ideal," said Snowden. "Watching it happen as people were prayed for and a gospel witness was present was truly a blessing."



Recruiting Volunteers to Help Churches in Need

- 1**
NOW

NORTH LINDEN BAPTIST CHURCH COLUMBUS, OHIO
20x24 plaster ceiling fell. Cleanup and install new drywall.
- 2**
NOW

CORNERSTONE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH SANDUSKY, OHIO
Flood damage. Replace drywall
- 3**
S/S

HANG ON IN THERE MINISTRIES CLEVELAND, OHIO
Paint outside of concrete block church
- 4**
S/S

ONE LOVE COMMUNITY CHURCH CLEVELAND, OHIO
Replace flashing around chimney
- 5**
S/S

UNITED FAITH INTERNATIONAL COLUMBUS, OHIO
Large roofing replacement



CONTACT

John Heading, Ohio Disaster Relief
Director for details
jheading@scbo.org

S/S (Spring or Summer)

A Prayer for Pastors and Churches By Mark Jones, revitalization consultant

This past month, I took a team to Atlanta to learn the process of assessing a church to make the best recommendations for its future. I have also been assessing the Steel Valley Baptist Association and the Summit Baptist Association with their desire for a new, refreshed direction. However, just as a church's health is usually no greater than their pastor's health; an association's health is only as great as the health of its collaborative congregations.

That is why I simply want to pray for you and your congregation.

"Father God, I come to you about the individual reading this article. I pray that we would seek your kingdom first as we lead our congregations to live for you. I pray that we would pastor and oversee the flock you have entrusted us and not simply preach and operate without passion. Give us a fresh vision, drive, and strategy to accomplish what only you can do. Restore our faith and trust solely in you. Father, let your kingdom come and your will be done on earth, in our community, and our congregations as it is in heaven. Thank you, Jesus, for your sacrifice. May we live and lead like we believe you really are the only way, the only truth, and the only life. It is in your name we pray, amen."

REVITALIZE

assisting declining churches back to health

You are not alone. Help is available. Please contact me at mjones@scbo.org. Check out the revitalization page – <https://www.scbo.org/revitalize>.

On March 22 - 23, Dr. Richard Blackaby will be coming to the Renaissance Family Center located at 9005 Wil Verne Drive in Windham, for "Hearing God's Voice." On Friday evening, March 22, the evening session will be focused on pastors and senior leadership. The Saturday, March 23, session is open to all. The event is free, but please RSVP. Text Dr. David Gray at 330-606-3997 for more information.

On May 21 - 22, Mark Clifton and Dr. Richard Blackaby along with others will be with us for a NAMB Revive Summit in Pickerington, Ohio. For more information and to register, go to <https://www.namb.net/church-replanting/events/revive-summit-pickerington-oh/>.

2023 Christmas Backpack Drop Off



Number of schools where the gospel was presented:

12



Backpacks handed out:

2877



Professions of Faith:

441,

including two teachers



**CHRISTMAS
BACKPACKS**
FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS



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STUDENT MINISTRY ROUNDTABLE
MARCH 14, 2024

CEDARVILLE, OHIO | 8 A.M.–2 P.M.

**Join us and be encouraged, equipped, and
exhorted as a student ministry leader.**

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER:

[CEDARVILLE.EDU/ROUNDTABLE](https://cedarville.edu/roundtable)

Crestview BC Sponsors Ride-Through Nativity Outreach

By Stephanie Heading, managing editor

A Dayton-area church seized the opportunity to connect with its community at Christmas while sharing the hope found in Jesus through the nativity story.

Crestview Baptist Church, Clayton, launched its first-ever ride-through nativity as an outreach project in December after church member Ed Henderson shared his burden for the project with Pastor Tim Cain.

Henderson supervised “See the Light” an outdoor nativity experience with multiple scenes and live animals—camels, donkeys, sheep, goats, and chickens—at another area church for ten years before coming to Crestview. He saw the event grow from 50 people in the first year to 1500 people in its tenth year. “It became a staple with the community,” said Henderson. “People looked forward to it.”

After joining Crestview, Henderson continued to feel a burden to start a “See the Light” outreach there. “I’ve always liked the building at Crestview and the property,” he said. “When God called Lori and me there I told her, ‘They have the perfect site for ‘See the Light’ here.’”

Last summer, Henderson approached Pastor Cain about doing a small version of the nativity story. He thought one scene would be a good start, but Cain felt the church could do more. “I wasn’t expecting that,” said Henderson.

After discussion, the men decided to plan for four scenes and in September 2023, they began work, excavating in the woods behind the church. A team of six from Stanberry, Missouri, volunteered to bring heavy equipment to clear the areas.

In addition to the Missouri team, approximately 70 members of the church labored to make the outreach a reality. “The congregation at Crestview is motivated to serve for the gospel and for the kingdom,” said Henderson.

After months of hard work, “See the Light” premiered on Friday, December 7 to an unexpectedly large response. Three-hundred and seventy-seven people attended and heard Pastor Cain share the hope of the gospel before boarding trailers that carried them through the experience.

Attendees heard the gospel again at the last scene of the evening, a lighted cross. “The purpose of Jesus coming was the cross,” said Cain.



Attendees rode in trailers to participate in “See the Light.”

Families, especially children, enjoyed the live animals and special effects such as the appearance of the angel to Mary.

On the second night torrential downpours hampered the turnout, but 70 people braved the weather to enjoy the presentation.

The community response was overwhelming according to Cain and Henderson. “We got a lot of positive reactions,” said Cain. “People wanted to know if we’re going to do this again next year. People said ‘This is amazing. I’m going to invite my friends.’”

One family went beyond praise. “A family saw the sign and came,” said Henderson. Afterward they told the workers that they loved the presentation. The family left, but the father soon returned.

“He brought an envelope for the pastor. It contained a check for \$800.” Included with the check was a note that read “This was wonderful. Keep doing what you are doing for God’s glory and the kingdom.”

Crestview also received mission money from SCBO for evangelism outreach. “At the State Convention meeting in November, I heard that SCBO had money available to help with evangelism. This was definitely evangelism,” Cain said. He is grateful for the financial help. “I really appreciate the state convention,” he said. “They really care for the local church.”

He is also excited about what God will do at Crestview through the outreach and plans to do it again in 2024. “The people you invite may not be the people who come to your church, but God will send other people,” said Cain. “That’s the Lord’s increase and God is bringing people to our church.”

MAN MAKER

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Job Postings

GUEST AND INTERIM WORSHIP LEADERS NEEDED

Do you know of anyone who could serve another church as a guest or interim worship leader? If you know of someone with potential in this area, email SCBO Worship Consultant Zac James at zjames@scbo.org. Developing and sending worship leaders is a critical part of our missional cooperation as Southern Baptists who fulfill the Great Commission. There is a significant need for worship leaders who are willing to be sent, and we want to help connect them with churches in need.

ASSOCIATIONAL DIRECTION OF MISSIONS

Southwestern Baptist Association, Ohio

The Southwestern Baptist Association (SWBA) is seeking a full-time Director of Missions (DOM). This is a full-time position with total compensation of \$75,000 annually. This compensation will be evaluated annually, and adjustments will be determined by the SWBA leadership team with the approval of the Executive Board. The SWBA DOM is responsible for assisting churches in planning, conducting, and evaluating church growth strategies, church revitalization strategies, and church planting/replanting strategies. This person will also serve as a pastor to the pastors and church staff. For more information, including a complete job description, or to submit a resume for this position, please email swba2024dom@gmail.com.

SENIOR PASTOR

First Baptist Church, Woodsfield

We are a conservative Southern Baptist Church with a blended style of worship, located in the small southeastern Ohio community of Woodsfield. Our church has the desire to grow and we seek a pastor who has the same desire, as well as the ability to work with compassion and love with all types of people.

A man called to be a Southern Baptist pastor who agrees with the Baptist Faith and Message. He should also meet the biblical requirements listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 1 Peter 5:1-4. Pastoral experience and pastoral education are preferred.

Send resume to Pastor Church Committee Chairperson, First Baptist Church, Woodsfield, P.O. Box 604, Woodsfield, OH 43793 or Email to: fbccwoodsfield@gmail.com.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Jersey Church, New Albany

Jersey Church is seeking a full-time Communications Director. The Communications Director is responsible for and focused on leadership and team development, oversight, and execution of all aspects of Communications and Marketing. Additional responsibilities include promotion, digital communications and social media, design and brand management, and team development. A degree in communications, media, or related field, or at least 2-4 years' experience in communications is required. For the full job description and application contact, please visit <https://jerseychurch.org/resources/employment/>.

YOUTH MINISTER

Lakeview Baptist Church, Vermillion

Lakeview Baptist Church, Vermillion, is seeking a youth minister. Responsibilities involve oversight of youth programs and events including worship, spiritual development, education, fellowship, discipleship, evangelism, and leadership training. Qualifications include personal relationship with Jesus Christ and baptism; consistent Bible study and prayer time; sound base of biblical knowledge according to the Southern Baptist beliefs; strong ability to relate to youth; Christian role model for the youth; able to train, encourage, and support adult volunteers; have good communication skills; experience or education in youth ministry preferred. Salary/benefits package: \$35-\$55,000 based on experience. For a complete job description or to apply send resume and cover letter to: Lakeviewbaptistchurch591@gmail.com or Lakeview Baptist Church Search committee, 591 Ferndale Avenue, Vermillion, Ohio 44089

FULL-TIME CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH PASTOR

Chroma Church, Dublin

Chroma Church, Dublin, is seeking a full-time Children's and Youth Pastor. The church is a new multiethnic, multigenerational church plant in Dublin, affiliated with SEND Network, NAMB, and the SBC with a passion for diversity, justice, and the gospel.

The Children's and Youth Pastor oversees Sunday school classes and teachers, provides training, selects, or builds curriculum, and disciples the next generation. The Children's & Youth Pastor may also assist with preaching and teaching duties, administration, training, planning, and outreach as needed. Applicants must be in full agreement with Chroma Church's Statement of Faith, which can be found at <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/>.

Salary for the position is \$42,000/year with a one-time sign-on bonus after one year of service of \$10,000

For job responsibilities and/or to apply email Jihye.barrowman@chromacolumbus.org with the cover letter and resume noting work authorization status in the US.

SENIOR/LEAD PASTOR

Urbancrest Baptist Church, Lebanon

Urbancrest Baptist Church in Lebanon, OH is searching for a Senior/Lead Pastor. The church family at Urbancrest is excited about this next chapter in its history. Urbancrest is a highly missional church with a biblical worldview in sharing the gospel. The church has a solid staff team that includes over 15 full and part-time employees. Urbancrest has 70 acres of beautiful property that includes a 900-seat worship center and classrooms, full high school sized gym, separate student worship area, outdoor pavilion, fishing pond, and two missionary homes. Urbancrest also has an on-site ministry that provides food and furniture to the community. The church is debt free.

Urbancrest is praying for a pastor that will lead them in continuing to impact its community and the world for the Lord Jesus. To apply or to request more information, candidates may contact the church at jobs@urbancrest.org.

Let the Ohio Baptist Messenger help your church find a new pastor or staff member!

The Messenger is offering classified ads free of charge for Ohio churches searching for new pastors and staff members. The Messenger is read by churches and individuals in Ohio and across the country.

To submit a classified ad, please send brief information about the position along with a return phone number or email:

classifieds@scbo.org