

# Ohio Baptist MESSENGER

22  
June

THE STATE CONVENTION OF BAPTISTS IN OHIO

VOLUME 70 NO. 5

## *The Sale of Seneca:*



Jeremy Westbrook

The Mission Council of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio (SCBO) gathered on Thursday, April 28th, 2022 at Briggs Road Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio. The purpose of this quarterly meeting was the consideration of several recommendations from both the Executive and Finance committees.

One major item of business was the consideration of a unanimous joint recommendation from both the Executive and Finance committees to accept an offer on the Seneca Lake property. For several years, records reveal a steady decline in both attendance and financial revenue towards the operation of Seneca Lake. Our convention can no longer sustain this decline. With many churches choosing to attend camp elsewhere and the SCBO possessing less than one month's operating expenses in reserves, this problem had to be confronted.

Over the past several months, we have received several offers for the purchase of Seneca Lake and have

been considering the right one to accept. This has not been an easy decision and not one we have arrived at without several months of prayer. Also, this has been a collaborative effort among our SCBO officers and Executive Committee. Recently, the EC voted to secure Sam Koon and the Koon Property Management Group to both appraise and represent the SCBO in the selling of the Seneca Lake campground.

The 203-acre property appraised for approximately \$2 million, and I am happy to share that the Mission Council voted unanimously to accept



SCBO Mission Council met on April 28, 2022

an offer of \$2.1 million from a private buyer. In addition, we negotiated to keep the mineral rights in our legal possession. The time frame to close on the property is planned for the month of June.

Not only did the Mission Council unanimously vote to accept this offer, but they also voted unanimously to

allocate the proceeds from the sale in the following manner. After real estate and legal fees are distributed, a portion of the money will be put into the SCBO reserves to cover at least three months operating expenses. Also, up to \$90,000 will be redistributed to FBC Grove City for the building of a cabin that was not yet completed.

The remaining \$1.0 - \$1.1 million will be donated through the Cooperative Program. In Ohio, all Cooperative Program giving is split 50/50 resulting in between \$500,000-\$550,000 leaving Ohio and being

forwarded onto our national mission partners such as the IMB, NAMB, and our six seminaries. \$500,000-\$550,000 will stay in Ohio to further our mission here at home. We want to send a message that as Ohio Baptists we believe in and support the Cooperative Program.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5...

SAVE THE DATE:  
NOVEMBER 14-15, 2022

**SCBO ANNUAL CELEBRATION!**

Cuyahoga Valley Community Church | Cleveland, Ohio

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## President's Pen

by Ray Umphrey

A common sentiment I hear repeated lately in evangelical circles is a longing for the voice of great heroes of the past to speak into our generation. I regularly hear among Southern Baptists, "I wish Adrian Rogers were alive today" or "We need another W.A. Criswell." Often such sentiments are expressed in the context of current issue debates or controversies of which we seem to have an endless supply. As much as I fondly remember these great men, I find this sort of thinking troubling.

First, we resign ourselves to thinking that courageous and convicting leadership uniquely belonged to a bygone era. Second, we relegate the gifts and callings of our current

generation to an inferior position. Third, we reveal a felt inadequacy within ourselves to rise to the challenge of courageous leadership. The truth is that our sovereign and wise God has given us exactly who and what we need to be faithful in our time.

After leading Israel to enter Canaan and to begin the conquest of the land, Joshua died at 110 years of age. For a time, the elders who outlived Joshua continued to influence the people toward success, but then a new generation arose who "did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel." While an entire nation forsakes God for idols and abdicates their duty to lead and conquer courageously, one man was courageous and rose to the challenge of leadership.

When we think of the judges, Othniel ben Kenaz isn't usually the first name which comes to mind. He is briefly mentioned in the first chapter of Judges almost as an intrusion in the story. However, in chapter three, he is

revealed as the first and prototypical judge. "The Spirit of the Lord was upon him" and the subsequent and more well-known judges follow the pattern first established with Othniel the obscure. This generation of Israel did not need Joshua. God had given them Othniel.

Just as He gave Israel men such as Othniel, our wise God has called, gifted, and positioned individuals in our generation to rise to the challenge of leadership – to lead with conviction, clarity, charity and cooperation. Let us not ask for the leaders of yesterday, for it is not from wisdom that we ask this. Instead, let us resolve to rise to the challenge and opportunity of leadership.

I am here to serve you, Ohio Baptists. Please reach out to me anytime at [president@scbo.org](mailto:president@scbo.org). I would love to hear from you and learn how we can work together.

Your partner in the gospel,  
Ray Umphrey, SCBO President

## REGIONAL UPDATES



**Matt Pardi**

The Men's May Prayer Retreat was a special opportunity for leaders and pastors to get away and be with the Lord. This time involved fellowship and discussion on fasting and prayer. We spent 20 hours in solitude and fasting away from work in the quietness of the woods to seek Jesus. Men from six different churches spent time alone fasting, praying, reading, and resting in the Lord. It was an amazing time. We broke the fast together over a great meal and shared what the Lord had done in our hearts. Topics discussed included being refreshed, recharged, convicted, and encouraged. We are grateful to SCBO for the funds and opportunity to enjoy the

Lord together. "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you," James 4:8

Matt Pardi | [mpardi@scbo.org](mailto:mpardi@scbo.org) | 419-494-9640



**Art Fulks**

This month kicked off with the IMPACT Missions Weekend and engaging with some of our mission leaders and region pastors at the Lancaster Golf Club. You can read more about Impact 2022 and Ohio Disaster Relief on page Four (4.)

Several pastors and associational leaders participated in the final L.I.F.T. gathering of the spring on May 10, in Cambridge - learning about effective prayer engagement in our churches. It was a joy to encourage churches and leaders in taking their next steps by providing technology and outreach resources, training and pulpit supply. The SCBO Women's Spring Retreat was hosted in the region on May 14. Read more about the Women's Spring Retreat on page Six (6.)

In preparing for summer, we are looking forward to resourcing churches in outreach and mission endeavors. Final plans are being made for the AMPLIFY Preaching Conference on September 26th. Registration is now open: <https://www.scbo.org/event/amplify-preaching-conference>.





### Reagan Wagoner

It was good to see many of you at the sold-out Timothy+Barnabas Conference in Cincinnati. Each of the speakers did a great job challenging us as leaders. Chuck Lawless shared a good word through multiple stories of David's life. "The Lord sometimes leads us into impossible situations so that He might be our warrior, and the nations might know His name... when the story is about us, He doesn't get the glory." Lawless reminded us that we need to remember what it is like to be fully dependent on our God to fight for us.

I recently spoke with Jeff Bridgeford, pastor at Bridgepoint Community Church in Somerville. The church was down to fifteen people during COVID, but just a few weeks ago they baptized ten in one day! God wants to do this repeatedly in our churches. He will get the glory for bringing things back to life if we will keep our focus on knowing Him and making Him known! I am thankful also for the incredible stories coming out of Grace Church in Harrison as church planter Austin Mathis baptized three on Easter Sunday!

Keep Thursday, September 8 reserved on your calendar for the SW Ohio Leadership Conference at Springboro Baptist Church featuring Vance Pitman, Shane Pruitt, and Hershael York. Bring your developing leaders with you! I would love to catch up with you over breakfast or lunch to hear about what God is doing in your church. Let me know how I can be praying for you in 2022. Email me at [rwagoner@scbo.org](mailto:rwagoner@scbo.org).



### Rick Williams

I am so encouraged by all that God is doing in the lives of SCBO pastors. I have had the opportunity to connect with many pastors over the past few weeks. At the Timothy Barnabas retreat, I had many conversations with pastors regarding next steps in their ministry. It's been such a joy to see the diversity, variety, and quality of leaders in our state.

I had the opportunity to host a Lunch & Learn event for the Buckeye Central Erie Baptist Association at Der Dutchman in Bellville. Dwayne Lee did a great job of sharing practical insights and resources regarding church revitalization. I am grateful for Cliff Hartley leading this association. In the last few months, he has led the association in a two-step strategy of prayer and revitalization. I am looking forward to how God will use this in the coming days!

It is a privilege to come alongside pastors to encourage and resource them regarding next steps. I am looking forward to connecting with many more Central Ohio pastors in the coming days. Please reach out to me if you are interested in connecting over breakfast or lunch. You can reach me at [rwilliams@scbo.org](mailto:rwilliams@scbo.org).



### Chad Keck

Last month I had the privilege of attending the Midwest SEND Network gathering in St. Louis, MO. It was amazing to hear the stories of how God is working across the Midwest through church planting. The best part of that experience was having the opportunity to connect with planters from across Ohio and from the west region. I am grateful for those in our state who have a vision for multiplication. With almost twelve million people in our state (And less than eight hundred SBC churches) we have a lot of work ahead of us. I was challenged to think about how the church I pastor can become even more involved in planting, replanting, and revitalizing in the days to come. We need a multiplication movement of God, and I am committed to praying and working toward it in our region.



### Stephen Owens

God is on the move in the northeast. This month I would like to highlight what the Lord is doing through his Church in the Steel Valley Baptist Association. Multiple local churches in the association have planned events to reach men during Father's Day weekend. These events will feature the movie, "Show Me the Father" by the Kendrick Brothers. Churches will also offer small groups Bible studies for men as a follow-up for those who attend the events. It is encouraging to see God moving through the local church to reach men for Jesus in the Steel Valley area.



Steel Valley Association

# Impact 2022 Focuses on Missions; DR Sets Training Record

By Stephanie Heading

First Baptist Church, Lancaster and SCBO Disaster Relief teamed as part of a weekend focused on mission involvement that resulted in an historic day of training for SCBO Disaster Relief members.

Impact 2022 is an annual two-day celebration of missions, connecting the church with missionary partners, locally and globally. It has been an annual event since Pastor Art Fulks arrived at FBC in 2017 and in recent years has included mission training sponsored by SCBO as part of the weekend. "It's hard to get any church to commit to a whole week of anything," said Fulks. But he believed that his church would commit to a weekend event to celebrate and learn about missions.



Chainsaw training

Training was offered in multiple areas on Sunday afternoon and included Disaster Relief, Mission Team Leaders, Mission Preparation, Pastor Equipping, and Gospel/Evangelism. Over seventy-five people participated in the training with a recent record number forty-two of those doing DR unit training in one of three areas – Chainsaw, Mud Out and Food Service. "Of those who trained, twenty-three were from FBC Lancaster and eleven were from First Baptist Waverly," said John Heading, SCBO DR director. "When churches have a heart for missions and drive recruitment for Disaster Relief, more people get involved."



Ohio Disaster Relief volunteers receive training as part of a 'chainsaw team' in Lancaster, Ohio.

This training also marked the first time in SCBO history that DR training was on a Sunday. "Unit training is usually on a Saturday," said Heading. "However, FBC Lancaster invited us to participate in Impact 2022 on a Sunday afternoon. We are looking for new ways to train and Impact was a great way to do it."

In addition to a record DR training, Impact 2022 also featured outreach to the local Lancaster community. Events included working at an event for people with disabilities and providing one hundred meals to families in need. The church also sponsored a golf tournament that raised \$3000 for students going on mission trips.

The weekend also included a Sunday morning Celebration and Commitment service which featured a message



Impact 2022 banquet

from Dr. Kevin Ezell, president of the North American Mission Board (NAMB). Ezell challenged attendees

to live on mission. "Everyone is called, and everyone is being sent," said Ezell. "God placed you where he placed you for a purpose. Every day



Food Service training

of your life, God put you to here to do more than draw a breath and draw a paycheck."

Following the weekend of mission training, community involvement and celebration, Fulks felt blessed. "The engagement of the missionaries was incredible. Philemon said to Paul, 'I am encouraged because I see the souls of the saints refreshed by you.' To watch that happen was encouraging to me. It was certainly worth the time."





# CHURCH REVITALIZATION

By Dwayne Lee

In church revitalization, leadership must be in the forefront of the process. The quality of leadership is determined by having concrete skills in place, such as management skills, casting vision skills, and delegation skills. However, there are five other paramount leadership skills needed.

The first skill is Listening. You have heard the old saying, “people do not care how much you know, until they know how much you care.” People tend to follow people well when they feel they are being heard.

Leaders in church revitalization need to practice listening far more than talking, especially in the early days. Leaders should not assume that they have all the answers or that nothing good has happened in the church before they arrived. Listen to your people. Celebrate the good times and listen to the not-so good times. The best results may come from listening.

Skill two is understanding. People want to be understood. More than likely there are several reasons why the church needs to be revitalized. Taking time to listen and understand will open the door to discovering those reasons. In addition, it is vital to realize that the stories can reveal the emotions involved, whether they are real or not.

Even with possible hurts, most people love the church and want what is best for her. Most members will know that things could be better,

but before they will accept change, they want to make sure their feelings are understood. Emotional change is often as important as the actual change.

The third skill is humility. There is a huge difference between confidence and pride. People want a leader to be competent, courageous, and visionary – all products of confidence. However, they will reject a leader who thinks he knows everything or tries to convince them he does. God rejects that kind of leader too.

Skill four is healing. People need time to heal. There is a fine line between initiating needed change and giving people time to heal. There is not a perfect way to discern which needs have priority, but leaders must recognize the pain people are processing.

The fifth skill is challenging. There may be people who have used their power in the past and there are others who simply are not kind. Some people stir up trouble with gossip and passive-aggressive behavior. Although a leader needs to love everyone, he must not be afraid to wisely and gracefully challenge those who are simply disruptors in the church.

These leadership skills are just the beginning when it comes to church revitalization, but do not neglect any of them. They will not only help in the church revitalization, but they are important for daily life too.

## *The Sale of Seneca*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

What better legacy can we have, and investment can we make than students who may have come through Seneca Lake are now being trained as missionaries, church planters or attend one of our six seminaries. Through investing in the Cooperative Program, we can continue to invest in their education and help send them to the mission field.



SCBO President Ray Umphrey acknowledged the tough decision saying “I know this is an exciting day of looking forward to the future, but it is also a bittersweet day for some who think back on memories and past ministry at Seneca Lake. We want to honor and respect that, but I now believe moving in this way positions us for Gospel ministry in Ohio for years to come.”



Jeremy Westbrook

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## Summer 2022: Investing in God's Kingdom

In Partnership with the Ohio Baptist Foundation

By Jack Helton

For Christians, the Gospel is part of the legacy left to individual families and the world. The Ohio Baptist Foundation (OBF) helps people recognize additional ways to further their legacy while advancing the Gospel. This summer OBF is focusing on three ways believers can help advance the cause of Christ as they develop their investment plans.

The June focus is "The Gospel, Our Legacy: *Special Gifts Now*." There are

many great types of non-cash assets that can be invested in the Kingdom now to spread the Gospel. Examples of these non-cash type assets include stocks, bonds, mutual funds, real estate, mineral interests, as well as other types of assets.

"The Gospel, Our Legacy: *Tithing Your Estate*" will be the focus for July. Consider leaving an impact for your family, as well as to the Kingdom with at least a tithe, 10%, through your Last Will and Testament to impact your church in spreading the Gospel.

In August, the focus will be "The Gospel, Our Legacy: *Endowment for Missions*." An Endowment can have a

tremendous impact on mission efforts through your church or other ministry organizations that can be funded now with a special gift and later through an estate gift.



For more information about "The Gospel, Our Legacy," please contact Jack Helton at 614-309-9738 or email him at [jackhelton@scbo.org](mailto:jackhelton@scbo.org)

## The Lord "Shows Up and Shows Out" at Women's Spring Retreat

By Cathy Pound

"Thank you, Lord. You showed up and You showed out," said Cathy Pound, SCBO Executive Director of WMU, rejoicing after the recent 2022 Women's Spring Retreat hosted by First Baptist Church, Lancaster.

Women from twenty-three churches attended the one-day event and heard Dr. Kay Bennett, Send Relief NAMB missionary and director of Friendship House in New Orleans, speak in context with the theme scripture, Isaiah 61:1-3. Bennett shared examples of God's redemptive power meeting physical, emotional, and most importantly spiritual needs for the homeless and those who are victims of human trafficking.

Kay's precious gems of wisdom and sense of humor, plus the quick wit of Marisol Fernandez who translated for Hispanic attendees, permeated the darkness and the



Kay Bennett speaking at Women's Spring Retreat.

heaviness to prove Kay's declaration that "God will show up and show out today," said Pound. "Over and over the stories began with ashes that the Spirit transformed into beauty as God worked through Friendship House."

Bennett also shared that her own personal frustration in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina was also a transformation from ashes to beauty. "Overwhelmed with massive needs, Kay faced a temptation to give up," said Pound. "God revealed His simple plan that is now Kay's go-to mission plan." Bennett heard the Lord tell her to start with Friendship House and rebuild one life at a time. "I AM in control," the Lord told her.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE --->



Pictured left to right: Joanne Hopkins and Debbie Williams; Jennifer Westbrook, Jean DiFilippo, Jody Jones, and Tara Lawler; Ohio women praying; Nita Kline, Mary Ann Sablan, Anna Andes, and Ginny Howell.





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\*Rates subject to change. \*\*Based upon internal data. Please let us know if you hear of a higher rate.

The Ohio Baptist Foundation and the Louisiana Baptist Foundation offer a Short-Term Fund to help churches and other ministries maximize their income on cash reserves and designated funds. The annualized payout rate is 1.40% as of 4/30/2022.

If this would be helpful to your church or ministry to advance God's Kingdom here on earth, please contact Jack Helton at [jackhelton@scbo.org](mailto:jackhelton@scbo.org) or 614-309-9738.



Debbie Tennant, Sharon Hammond, and Mary Winks of Frankfort Baptist Church

"God showed up and showed out with his redemptive power in action," said Pound. Ladies from Frankfort Baptist Church had been sharing and praying for Sharon Hammond for a long time. "Sharon experienced God's love and she was transformed from ashes to beauty when she surrendered her life to Christ."



Jennifer Westbrook praying Scripture over thirteen Ohio minister's wives while Marisol Fernandez, Iglesia Red de Vida, translates.

The Women's Fall Retreat and Mission Celebration is set for September 9-10 in Cincinnati. More information will be available later.

## Tales of Transformation

### OHIO WMU®

## Appalachian Christmas Backpack Ministry brings Gospel to Cleveland

By Barbara DeLorme

The hymn "Go Tell It on the Mountain" has taken on new meaning for Barbara DeLorme since she became the Ohio Coordinator for The Appalachian Christmas Backpack Ministry in 2017.

The Appalachian Christmas Backpack Ministry collects backpacks filled with items such as clothing, hygiene products, bedding, proper shoes, and food to distribute to the 1.4 million children and teens living in poverty in the Appalachian region of the United States

"We have gone into the Mountains of Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and Ohio sharing the saving grace of Jesus Christ," said DeLorme. "Thousands of young people and their families have come to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior because of our love and concern for those who have never heard the gospel."

The impact of Backpack Ministry has been felt in Cleveland Hope Association where Pastor Don Sallow, lead pastor of Refuge Community Church, and his wife Dawn spearheaded the distribution of backpacks.

"We really saw God at work in December 2021," said DeLorme. "We not only received extra backpacks from Alabama to meet the needs in Cleveland, but an Alabama Ministry Team also came to Cleveland and provided more manpower and helped spread the Gospel to a larger number of people."

According to DeLorme, the Lord worked in lives that had not been previously reached with the Gospel. "A 9-year-old girl came to the backpack distribution with her siblings who had been attending Refuge Community Church. The little girl had never wanted to come," said DeLorme. "Since the giveaway of backpacks and school supplies, she has come to the After-School Fun Day, Friday evening services and the church tutoring program."

In addition, a 10-year-old who received a backpack began a small ministry where she provides food and other items that people need from her front porch. She was thrilled to have extra resources to share. Program leaders are praying that she and her mother will begin attending church.

DeLorme rejoices in the old hymn that has become new again for her. "Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born; He died, and He Lives!"

If you are interested in more information about the Appalachian Christmas Backpack Ministry, please visit [www.christmasbackpacks.org](http://www.christmasbackpacks.org).

# Around Ohio

Visit [scbo.org/calendar](https://scbo.org/calendar) for details on all upcoming events.



## MT. CARMEL BAPTIST CHURCH TO CELEBRATE 200<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

Mt. Carmel Baptist Church located at 8645 Kenwood Road in Cincinnati, Ohio would like to invite everyone to its 200th Anniversary Service on Sunday, July 16-17, 2022.

MT CARMEL BAPTIST CHURCH  
1822-2022

SHARING GOD'S LOVE FOR 200 YEARS

The church was organized on July 20, 1822 with twenty-five members. The original building was located at the corner of Kugler Mill and Kenwood Rd. The Sycamore Township Cemetery is the old Mt. Carmel Baptist Church Cemetery that sat next to the original church.

<https://mtcarmelbaptist.org/>

## EVANGELISM TRAINING SUCCESS

International Fellowship Church in Cleveland Hope Association recently held an evangelism training using the Evangecube, a pictorial presentation of the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The SCBO provided the E-Cubes, and the



church provided the people. The attendees enthusiastically participated in the training. Outreach efforts at International Fellowship have proven successful. If your church needs resources to conduct evangelism training or help developing a church evangelism strategy, contact Jack Helton at [jackhelton@scbo.org](mailto:jackhelton@scbo.org).

## JOB OPENINGS

### PASTOR OF MUSIC AND YOUTH

Reynoldsburg Baptist Church is accepting resumes and recommendations for a pastor to provide leadership to our music and youth ministries. Additional details and application instructions are available at <https://rbctoday.com/staffopenings/>

### PASTOR

Indian Lake Baptist Church is seeking a bivocational pastor to serve in Lakeview, Ohio. Those interested may contact:

Don Faulder  
PO Box 322  
Lakeview, OH 43331  
(937) 596-6880

Ad requests may be sent to: [classifeds@scbo.org](mailto:classifeds@scbo.org)

## How to Become a Christian

If you are not a Christian, meaning you have never surrendered your will to the Lord Jesus, let me share briefly how you can make this life changing decision. GOD WANTS TO SAVE YOU.

**FIRST**, you must believe that God loves you and wants you to have peace in your heart and an everlasting life (John 3:16).

**SECOND**, you must recognize that you are a sinner, that you have done things which have displeased God and that you have separated yourself from Him (Romans 3:23; 6:23).

**THIRD**, you must believe that Jesus came to this earth, was actually God in the flesh, lived a perfect life, and yet went to a cruel cross, dying for your sins, paying once and for all the penalty of sin (1 Peter 2:24). However, it's not enough just to

know these three things. Many of us knew them for years before we ever gave Jesus our lives.

**FOURTH**, you must personally ask Jesus to come into your life and forgive you of your sins (Revelation 3:20).

You can pray this prayer now and if you mean it with all of your heart, Jesus will come in just like He said. He cannot lie.

*Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner. I'm really sorry for my sins, Lord. I ask you now, Lord Jesus, to come into my heart, forgive me of my sins, take control of my life, and make me the kind of person You want me to be. I now receive You into my heart. Thank You for coming in. I will follow You all the days of my life. In Your name I pray, Amen.*

# We want to hear your story!

Submit your church news and stories to [messenger@scbo.org](mailto:messenger@scbo.org)

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Jeremy Westbrook | Executive Director-Treasurer, Editor

Ohio Baptist  
MESSENGER