

PUBLICATION OF THE STATE CONVENTION OF BAPTISTS IN OHIO

OHIO BAPTIST MESSENGER

APRIL 2021 | VOLUME 69 NO. 2



Two Days of Inspiration and Training

April 18 & 19, 2021

Jersey Church Columbus, Ohio

Sunday, April 18, 6:00 p.m.

Who's Your One Rally

You desire your church's kingdom impact to be exponential, and we want to help. The Who's Your One Rally is a time for you and your members to be inspired and challenged from the Word of God in personal evangelism.

Join Johnny Hunt for a time of teaching, worship and prayer as we ignite you and your church's passion for evangelism.

Monday, April 19, 8:00 a.m.

Who's Your One Evangelism Workshop

The Who's Your One Evangelism Workshop consists of practical training sessions designed to equip and mobilize your local church in evangelism. Your, staff, and church members will be instructed, inspired and encouraged in evangelism through workshop topics, such as::

- Cultivating Your Heart for Evangelism
- Practical Ways to Start Gospel Conversations
- Creating a Culture of Evangelism in Your Church
- And more ...

events.whosyourone.com



Keynote Speaker
Pastor Johnny Hunt

Workshop Speakers



Catherine Renfro
Evangelism Director, North American Mission Board



Danny Forshee
Great Hills Baptist Church, Austin, Texas



Jordan Easley
First Baptist Church, Cleveland, Tenn.



Dean Fulks
Send City Missionary, Columbus



TOUR



**North American
Mission Board**

Making Disciples Of Jesus Who Live On Mission 2021!

By Teresa Bailey, Ohio WMU Mission Friends Consultant



What do popsicle sticks, Play-Doh, and sticky fingers all have in common? Does the word "preschooler" come to mind? It should...these are things that are associated with infants to 5-year-olds. This age child is the group for MISSION FRIENDS! Yes, young ones

can learn about missions, how to pray, give and go as they quickly grow. They can learn God loves me, God loves all people and some people do not know about God.

These important lessons can be reinforced in homes and at church.

National WMU® is continuing with the current Mission Friends curriculum, but now there are videos on the

Mission Friends Facebook page that give short lessons which preschoolers can enjoy viewing. My granddaughter, who is 6, is mesmerized by a screen; so what a great way to teach her about missions and then discuss what the video was about! This can be accomplished in your home with your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews or at church in a Sunday School setting or Mission Friends group.



Preschoolers are full of life, smiles and excitement, so why not grasp that energy and teach them about the

love of God and how to share it!

On the National WMU® website, www.wmu.com, there is a link to sign-up for a 'starter' pack for each age level group (babies through adults). Let's all do our best to "Make Disciples of Jesus Who Live on Mission!" God's

word teaches in John 3:16 "For God so loved the world..." so let's get going by showing that love to preschoolers so they in turn can share with the world. Please feel free to contact me, Teresa Bailey, Ohio WMU State Mission Friends Consultant at tlb31@amplex.net or 419-308-3477.

WMU® God's mission. Our passion.

November 15-16, 2021
Violet Baptist Church, Pickerington

ANNUAL CELEBRATION STATE CONVENTION OF BAPTISTS IN OHIO 2021

SOMETHING YOU MUST DO

Imperative [im-PER-uh-tiv]

1. absolutely necessary or required; unavoidable.
2. of the nature of or expressing a command; commanding. (dictionary.com)

In my daily devotions this year, I have spent most of the time reading and re-reading the Gospels. Among the themes that repeat in the first four books of the New Testament, "harvest" has been echoing in my mind. Most of the references to harvest are in parables, but two references in the Gospels are in context of commands that Jesus gives his disciples.

Jesus gave explicit orders in Luke 10 and John 4 regarding the harvest. In Luke 10:2 as he sends those he appointed to go into the villages where Jesus was going, he commanded them to pray for workers in the harvest: He told them "the harvest is abundant, but the workers are few therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2 CSV)

In John 4:35 Jesus commands his disciples to listen to him and look at the harvest: Jesus told them, "Don't you say, 'There are still four more months, and then comes the harvest?' Listen to what I'm telling you. Open your eyes

and look at the fields, because they are ready for harvest." And Jesus stayed in Sychar a day for the spiritual harvest.

As I look across Ohio and recognize the vast need for a spiritual harvest, I pray that God will increasingly call out and develop leaders from our churches. I pray for current leaders to effectively disciple new leaders for existing churches and for church plants. I also pray that we, Jesus' disciples, will listen to his Word and look around with compassion. Besides people who look similar to ourselves, around us here in Ohio are some of the unreached people groups of the world, and for some of us, they live next door. Even in a COVID world, I can find opportunities to build relationships and share the love, hope, joy and peace of Jesus Christ in a broken world that needs to know the One who saves me. I can use blesseveryhome.com to pray for my neighbors by name. I can use my snow shovel or my rake to show my neighbor I care for them and let them know of the One who died and rose again for them.



Bruce Smith
Interim Executive Director-Treasurer
State Convention of Baptists in Ohio

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OHIO BAPTIST FOUNDATION + **LOUISIANA BAPTIST FOUNDATION**

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 **1.35%** (as of 2/28/2021). Based upon our information, *this is one of the highest cash-type rates offered in Ohio to churches and other ministries at this time.*

If this would be helpful for your ministry, I would be honored to partner with your church or ministry to advance God's Kingdom here on earth. I can be reached by replying to jackhelton@scbo.org or 614-309-9738.

Jack Helton, Executive Director
The Ohio Baptist Foundation

The Most Critical Event on Your Church's Calendar This Year

By Sam Luce

Originally Published March 15, 2021
and used with permission from LifeWay Research.

<https://lifewayresearch.com/2021/03/15/the-most-critical-event-on-your-churchs-calendar-this-year/>

This past year has been one of the more difficult of our lifetimes. There has been much loss and much difficulty, but there have been some unexpected blessings as well. One of those blessings in disguise is the killing of church-as-usual and programs-as-tradition. It has caused us to think about *why* we do what we do.

This was a fruitful exercise because it can lay the groundwork for starting something new or evaluating something old and create a plan to start again. Twenty years ago, I led VBS because I thought that's what I was supposed to do as a new kids pastor. I did it for about five years but didn't get the buy-in or the traction that the effort required of me, my team, and our volunteers.

I'm also ashamed to admit that I fell into the school of thought that VBS was outdated; I was wrong! After a 12-year break, we started to do VBS again. Regardless of our opinions, most Americans are quite pro-VBS. Findings from Lifeway Research show that most (95%) American parents—regardless of how often they attend church—say their kids had a favorable experience at VBS.

**95% of American parents—
regardless of how often they
attend church—say their kids had
a favorable experience at VBS.**

What's more, a similar number (94%) said VBS helped their child better understand the Bible, and 95% agreed VBS was one of the most meaningful church experiences for their child.

Here are a few reasons we started again and why it could be the most important item on your church calendar.

Your unchurched neighbors are open to it.

We live in a very pluralistic society that doesn't value church but values traditions. Many parents have young kids who either don't go to church or infrequently attend church but have great VBS memories. They want their kids to have those memories and put their kids in VBS before taking them to a church service on the weekend.

It's an effective way to partner with parents.

Having 15 hours in the VBS week to speak new truths or reinforce what is being taught at home is invaluable. The new "regular attendees" standard is now 12 to 24 Sundays a year. VBS gives you a nice chunk of time to drill down into core truths kids need in the world we now live in.

Having 15 hours in the VBS week to speak new truths or reinforce what is being taught at home is invaluable.

Partnering with parents starts with equipping parents. Doing VBS with this in mind makes VBS more valuable than a simple stand-alone program.



Eric Rothermel photo | Unsplash

It brings the church together.

VBS has to be a whole-church focus. It can't be something only your department does, or an execution of the same handful of volunteers who do everything else in the church. I did a kids department-focused VBS years ago and just finished a church-driven VBS. The difference is night and day.

It's a discipleship tool for the families in your church.

Reaching new families has to be a focus but not the whole focus. We want to reach new families, but we also need to build foundations for our families. Picking the right curriculum is essential. VBS is more than an outreach tool; it's a gospel-shaping delivery device for the whole family.

*VBS is more than an outreach tool;
it's a gospel-shaping delivery device
for the whole family. — @samluce*

Our church has changed. We still care about the weekend service, but we care more about intentional ways to help with spiritual formation and discipleship. The stats back this up. According to Lifeway's research, a staggering 88% of respondents said VBS positively affected their spiritual

Lifeway research

growth as a child, and 96% feel it has positively affected their child's spiritual growth.

If how and why we do VBS changes, it can be an effective tool to reinforce your entire church's framework. I hope you pray about how you should do VBS.

Some ideas on how to rethink VBS in our current COVID world:

Backyard Bible School

This is a great option because it allows you to reach neighborhoods and kids you wouldn't normally reach. It also allows you to be more flexible and keep groups smaller, which may be important depending on your state's rules or the rate of infections in your area.

Regional Bible School

This is again a way to have a smaller setting in the communities that may attend your church but would be able

to invite more neighbors. One of the things we have to look at in regard to our VBS being an outreach is how far people who don't attend our church are willing to drive.

VBS Tent Edition

Rent tents and use them for more spacing or for complete outdoor VBS if indoor meeting is shut down again this year.

My encouragement for you is to do VBS this year. The kids in your church and community need connection, discipleship, and hope more than ever. Do VBS even if you don't usually do it. Our world post-COVID has changed because people have changed.

We're going to have to think smaller, be more intentional, and demonstrate more flexibility, not just now, but on the other side of the COVID crisis.

The kids in your church and community need connection, discipleship, and hope more than ever.
— @samluce



Sam Luce

@samluce

Sam lives in upstate New York with his wife and four children. He has served as the pastor of families at Redeemer Church for the past 23 years. Read more at his blog SamLuce.com.

International Women's Day March 7, 2021

By: Marisol Fernández, Ohio WMU Hispanic Consultant



Marisol and Bienvenida
Wonder Women

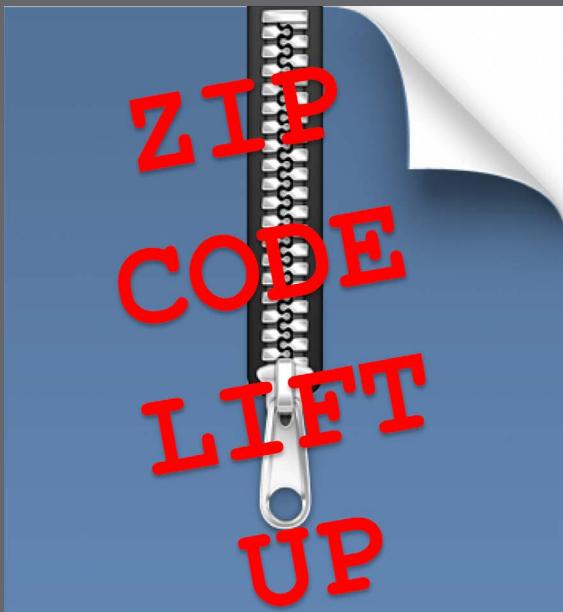
Red de Vida Church celebrates international women's day with a power-filled service, both literally and spiritually.

The service started with a dramatization of lead women in the Bible and their role in God's plan in history.

Marisol Fernández and Bienvenida Miranda then led the service dressed as film favorite, Wonder Woman. They spoke of a woman's spirit-led strength and God's plan for your life in fruition.

They continue to support women through their community outreach and focus on education for first time mothers.





We praise God that the number of churches in Ohio is increasing; but we know that the number of people in Ohio who are not in any church remains significant. To help identify some strategic locations within the state, an Opportunity Scan from MissionInsite brings to the forefront multiple zip codes with substantial populations where a church could be planted. With each issue of the Ohio Messenger, we plan to highlight four of those zip codes in Ohio with no Southern Baptist church.

Would you join us in prayer to begin to impact those areas with the gospel of Jesus Christ? Ask God to direct you to a specific zip code for which you will pray or pray for all four. Perhaps you can involve your whole church in adopting one or more of these zip codes and began to pray specifically for that area.

Watch for more zip codes and information in the next issue of the Messenger!

CHOOSE ONE OR MORE TO PRAY FOR:

• ZIP CODE 44142 – BROOK PARK

Brook Park is in Cuyahoga County. The nearest city of 50,000+ is Parma. It has a population of over 18,000 With No SBC CHURCH – 19% Protestant, 29% Catholic, 47% claim no church affiliation. The most common industries in Brook Park are Accommodations & Food Service, then Metal Products followed by Healthcare. FUN FACT: Historical earthquake activity is significantly above the Ohio state average.

• ZIP CODE 44278 – TALLMADGE

Tallmadge is in Summit County. The nearest city of 50,000+ is Akron. It has a population of over 17,000 With No SBC CHURCH – 24% Protestant, 22% Catholic, 53% claim no church affiliation. The most common industries in Tallmadge include Educational Services, Healthcare, and Construction. FUN FACT: The percentage of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher is significantly above the state average.

• ZIP CODE 45804 – LIMA

Lima is in Allen County. The nearest city of 50,000+ is Ft. Wayne, Indiana. It has a population of over 17,000 With No SBC CHURCH – 34% Protestant, 17% Catholic, 48% claim no church affiliation. The most common industries in Lima are Accommodations & Food Service followed by Healthcare. FUN FACT: The median age is below the state average median age.

• ZIP CODE 45662 – PORTSMOUTH

Portsmouth is in Scioto County. The nearest city of 50,000+ is Huntington, WV. It has a population of over 20,000 With No SBC CHURCH – 20% Protestant, 4% Catholic, 75% claim no church affiliation. The most common industry in Portsmouth is Healthcare followed by Educational Services. FUN FACT: Portsmouth is #100 on the list of "Top 100 Cities with Oldest Houses."

ADOPT A ZIP CODE:

PRAY

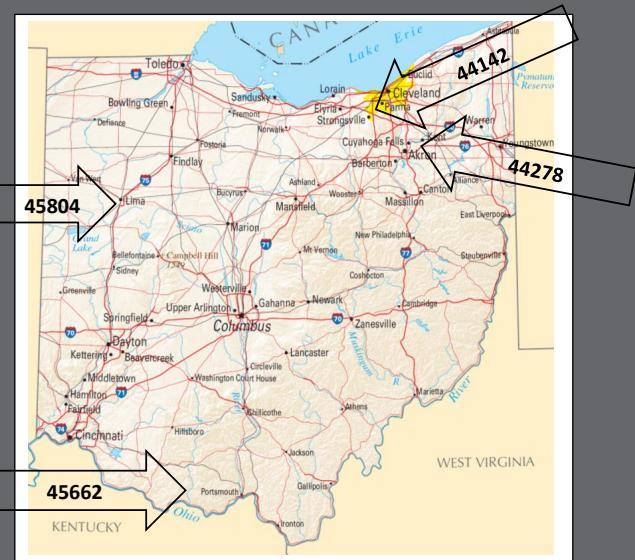
For lost in the area
For planters to be called
For new churches

ENGAGE

In prayer walking/driving
In exploratory events
By meeting area leaders

PLANT

As a supporting church
As a sponsoring church



NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER | MAY 6TH, 2021

LORD POUR OUT YOUR
LOVE, LIFE, AND
Liberty

2 CORINTHIANS 3:17



70
Years of Prayer
for America
1922-2021



 2.0

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2021 SPEAKER

Jon Wood

VP of Student Life and
Christian Ministries at
Cedarville University

REGISTRATION DEADLINES AND FEES:

Early Bird Registration Deadline -

April 7 \$230 per person (\$100 deposit)

Registration Deadline -

May 20 \$275 per person (\$145 deposit)

Balance \$130 due June 3

No Registrations accepted after May 20, 2021

Please note: For all non-SBC churches there will be an additional \$60.00 fee per student.



Growing in Love

Amish Country Women's Retreat

Saturday, May 15, 2021, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Community Baptist Church - 420 E 3rd St., Dover Ohio

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:5-6

Register at

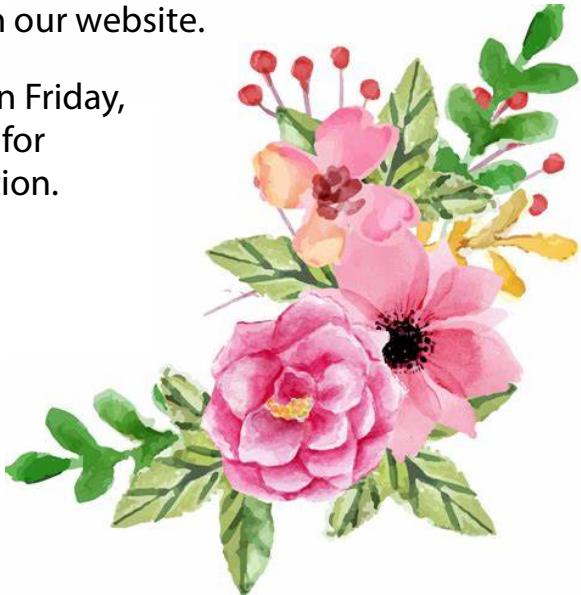
<http://www.scbo.org/event/amish-country-womens-spring-retreat>

Registration Deadline -- Saturday, May 8

We've designed this retreat so the amount of time and money you spend is up to you. The cost of the retreat at Community Baptist Church is \$25.00 which includes a light breakfast and lunch.

If you would like to enjoy a little more of Amish Country, you can extend your stay by making reservations for Friday night at one of the motels listed on our website.

Optional dinner and fellowship with other ladies will be on Friday, May 14th at the Ramada Strasburg/Dover Hotel. The cost for dinner is \$12.00 and MUST BE PAID at the time of registration.



VBS State Team is Trained and Ready for You!

By: Wendy Hammock

VBS state team training has typically taken place at Ridgecrest, North Carolina. And while that was great for people who live within driving distance of those cities, many people have expressed disappointment that it's too far and too expensive for them to ever attend.

So for the first time ever, LifeWay VBSI was virtual! We didn't have to take off work to attend, no travel expenses, and

we brought even more of our team!

Rather than a two-day event and a full day of travel, VBSI was condensed into a single day. We began the morning with an energizing main session that overviews the theme, Bible content, and choreography for Destination Dig as well as a pick from over 20 breakouts to train, equip, and prepare you for VBS 2021.

We were able interact with everyone attending from around the country

live and in real time. We were able to participate in live discussions with the LifeWay VBS team and with VBS leaders just like you! The Ohio team had a Zoom meeting over lunch to plan and discuss VBS Express 2021. It is our hope and desire to meet with you in person in April and bring this experience to life for you and your whole team. Make plans now to attend. April 17, 2021 9am-12noon.

Core Classes Provided:

Pastors & Directors

Preschool & Kindergarten

Children's Bible Study

Pre-teen/VBX

Students 7-12th

Decorations

Crafts

Missions

Music

Recreation & Snack

Spanish

**Register by
April 9th!**



*Can't make it to
VBS Express?*

Greater Dayton Baptist
Association VBS Clinic
**April 10, 2021
9AM-NOON**

DESTINATION
DIG

VBS
EXPRESS
APRIL 17, 2021

UNEARTHING THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS
JEREMIAH 29:13

Family Camp



By: Maude von Ehrenkrook

As with nearly everything else in 2020, the week of Family Camp at Seneca Lake Baptist Assembly was canceled. My kids were bummed about the other things they enjoyed being canceled, but Family Camp's cancellation was, by far, the worst thing to not happen the entire year. I understood. I was disappointed too. But, even more, I remember what Family Camp meant to me as a kid – I was fortunate to attend nearly every year of my childhood! – and my siblings and I would have been inconsolable if it had been canceled when we were young.

So last year, on what would have been the first day of camp, my mom, my kids and I drove the two and a half hours to Seneca Lake and had a picnic on Vesper's Hill. We only stayed for the duration of our lunch but staring out over the lake was so peaceful and rejuvenating it helped to shore us up for the 12 long months until the next Family Camp. It must seem crazy to drive young kids

five hours to spend an hour sitting on a hill but, if you come to camp and sit on Vesper's Hill, you'll understand. We were all so glad we had taken the time to make the trip, even if we were especially sad to leave so quickly when we should have been spending the rest of the week there.

It's difficult to explain to someone who has never attended, but Family Camp is special. For me, it holds a million memories from my childhood, teenaged, young adult and motherhood years. It encompasses times of special fellowship with God, with my family and with dear friends. I have sat on Vesper's Hill in the misty sunrise and read the Bible and prayed, I have watched fireworks on the fourth of July and sledded down that hill (during youth camp!). I have taken long walks alone, with friends and with the Lord. I have heard hundreds of sermons there over the years, some inspiring and some convicting. I have grown in my faith, my maturity, and my relationships

during my time at Family Camp.

We are already counting down the days to Family Camp in my house and I urge each person reading this to consider attending Family Camp this year. It is a relaxed, inexpensive vacation that the entire family can enjoy. It is a time of rejuvenation and re-connection, both with your family and with the Lord. I will definitely be there and hope to see you at Family Camp!

Link to reservation form -
<https://forms.gle/bcwXmNVGH32yB8XR6>

SCBO Events Page -
<https://www.scbo.org/event/family-camp-seneca-lake>

Phone and email Bob Williams -
937-212-3175 (leave a voice mail)
familycampabc@gmail.com



REVIVE

Explore Pathways for Reviving Churches

A Closer Look at Ohio Churches

In a recent article published by Dr. Tom Rainer of Church Answers entitled, "Six Types of Churches that have Died during the Pandemic," he states;

"Death is a delicate topic, especially the death of churches. My purpose is to send a warning so changes can be made quickly and urgently. My greater purpose, ironic as it may seem, is to send a message of hope." He goes on to say, "These six types of churches are described categorically, but the categories are not mutually exclusive. Many of these deceased churches fit most, if not all, of the categories. We have spoken with the leadership of these churches. The conversations were sad but enlightening. All of the churches noted in these categories have either closed or announced their intentions to close..."

The six types of churches Dr. Rainer mentions in his article are the following:

1. The aged church.
2. The fighting church.
3. The deferred maintenance church.
4. The run-the-pastor-off church.
5. The neighborhood-looks-different church.
6. The infant church.

To view the article in its entirety, please follow this link.

<https://churchanswers.com/blog/six-types-of-churches-that-have-died-during-the-pandemic/>

Ohio churches need to take a serious look at their current condition and their ability to move forward. We need to be asking ourselves, are we one of these churches Dr. Rainer mentioned? Are we in the midst of one of these categories, or is there something else hindering us

from moving forward from being a healthy church?

Our church revitalization team from SCBO recently met with Lifeway research and received a report specifically about Ohio churches. The information was based on a five-year study, 2015-2019. These are not COVID numbers, which makes these figures even more telling.

1. Baptisms in 2019 – 3,331. Although we were down in total baptisms, we were above the national average percentage of new members from baptisms. Another encouraging stat, Ohio Baptists baptized 1 for every 23 members, which is better than the national ratio. (1:62)
2. The back door from 2019 vs. 2018 Worship Attendance – we lost 1,510 people.

Total Membership – we lost 7,146 members.

3. The state of our churches. (See graphic)

Remember, these statistics are based upon 2019 numbers.

While we see some growth, there is about the same number of churches plateaued, but the greater concern is for the 45% of our churches in decline. If that statistic is true from 2019, what are those numbers now?

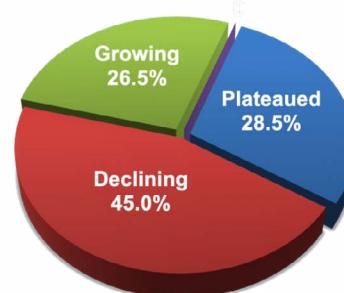
Yes, 2020 has certainly thrown us a curveball, but God has allowed us to move forward in

2021. Yet, it is not without its difficulties, concerns, challenges, and hope. We know that nothing is impossible with God, but we are caretakers, stewards, leaders in the Lord's church. Therefore, we cannot sit idly by and watch the Lord's church crumble in the dust. As a convention, we urge you to take a self-assessment of where you are currently. You can do that by starting in 2015 and go through 2019 and use your ACP data to look at your average worship attendance, baptisms, giving, groups and see how you are trending. We know that there may not be churches that will make it through this COVID era. Yet, the entire staff at the State Convention wants to ensure that we provide for you every opportunity to go from declining to thriving for the Kingdom's sake. We have resources and personnel to help you with questions you have about church revitalization, assessments, prayer guides, etc. Contact us, and we can schedule an appointment with one of our coaches from across the state or one of our staff at the convention office.

We look forward to working with you soon. May God receive all the glory and honor that is rightfully his through the work we do together for Mission Ohio.

In His Service,
Dwayne Lee
Associate Team Leader
Bible Teaching/Leadership
Resource Group

Growth Status of SCBO Churches—2019



Growing = 10% or more increase in Total Membership over 5-year period;
Declining = 10% or more decline in Total Membership over 5-year period;
Plateaued is between Growing and Declining.



Challenge '21: AWAKEN 21-Days of Prayer

Pastor Reginald Hayes, 2021 SCBO President, called Ohio Baptists to "Pray Until God Does Great Exploits Through Us!" in 2021. The challenge comes from **Daniel 11:32** "...the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits." In January, we invited Ohio Baptists to sign up and say, "Count me in!"

March 1-21 Baptists all over Ohio joined in prayer using **AWAKEN: 21-Day Prayer Guide** by Claude King. In addition to those who downloaded the book, we sent over one hundred daily emails to those registered. Our social media campaign engaged 89 new account followers; most of those new followers came from Instagram.

Did you miss the emails? No worries, you can go to scbo.org/challenge21 and register to receive the emails for the next 21 days!

What's next? Follow the plan at scbo.org/challenge21 There you will

find a **Praying Up to Pentecost 50-day Prayer Guide** for the days between Easter and Pentecost.

May 6 will be The National Day of Prayer. The 2021 theme will be: Lord Pour Out Your Love, Life, and Liberty based on 2 Corinthians 3:17. Every year, millions of Americans, in tens of thousands of meetings across all 50 states, come together for unified public prayer for America. Resources are available at nationaldayofprayer.org.

You will also find a guide for Pentecost Prayer Meetings with several suggestions for prayer gatherings May 13-22. SCBO President Reginald Hayes is encouraging churches to come together, city-wide, county-wide, association-wide, or regionally, seeking God for revival.

Saturday, May 22, will be a great climax to the Pentecost prayer gatherings as believers worldwide celebrate the Lordship of Jesus Christ and publicly proclaim the Glory, the

Majesty, and the Supremacy of the Savior. ***It's all about Jesus... nothing else.*** Go here for more information: March for Jesus.

In June, we will be praying for those in persecution Sunday, June 6. We will then launch praying for camps at Seneca Lake Baptist Assembly and Super Summer at Cedarville University.

There will be no shortage of prayer opportunities as we **PrayOhio!**

"While we all pray for the fruits of revival, our real commitment must be to grow the roots of revival. There are no fruits without roots. The root system of revival: praying people, supporting praying pastors, who lead praying churches, for supernatural Gospel impact." —Daniel Henderson



MAY 22, 2021

THEMARCHFORJESUSMV.COM
f i #MFJ2021

JOIN US FOR

A CELEBRATION
OF JESUS CHRIST

THE MARCH FOR JESUS
MAY 22, 2021
10 AM (DOORS OPEN AT 8:30 AM)
YOUNGSTOWN FOUNDATION
AMPHITHEATER

MARCH FOR JESUS

ANNIE
ARMSTRONG®
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FOR NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS

North American
Mission Board

The
mission
moves
forward



100% of your gifts support
North American missionaries

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Home Missions at Work in the Appalachian Mountains

We are once again preparing for our Appalachian Christmas Backpack Ministry 2021. We are giving a heads up to everyone who has been a part of this ministry to get an early start purchasing the items needed for the backpacks. We have found that if individuals begin early, they can take advantage of clearance items and sale items. By collecting over 6 to 7 months, it is not as costly as having to fill a backpack in just a small amount of time.

We encourage churches to do this as a family mission project. Each family can have backpacks available at home to fill and when the church has the emphasis, they are already filled. The children can help with the shopping and filling the backpacks. This teaches the children, at an early age, what missions is all about.

Last year the COVID pandemic really hit everyone extremely hard. We had churches not participate because of COVID. We had other churches who were struggling, but stepped out on faith and continued to pack backpacks.

We knew the poverty in the Appalachian areas, including Ohio, was not going away because of the virus. These thousands of children still needed filled backpacks. We did not receive the filled backpacks in 2020 that we needed. We needed at least 6,000 backpacks, but there were only 780 backpacks filled here in Ohio. We were given 600 from Richmond, Virginia. We were only able to provide Ryan

Martin 357 backpacks plus 67 quilts from Ohio, for our partnership with him in the Appalachian Mountains. The rest of the backpacks (423) were divided with 4 Appalachian areas here in the Eastern and North Eastern area of Ohio and Cleveland.

A church planter pastor, from Cincinnati, drove halfway to Richmond and met the person who had driven halfway to meet him with a donation of 600 backpacks. These were used in the Cincinnati church planting ministry.

Please pray about your church being a part of this outreach ministry this year. We are asking churches to step out on faith and double the amount they plan on giving. We will need to divide them with our partnership with Ryan Martin in the Appalachian Mountains of Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia. The other half will be distributed here in the Appalachian area of Eastern Ohio and Cleveland.

"We can do all things through Christ who gives us strength!" Philippians 4:13

Barbara DeLorme
SCBO WMU Consultant for the
Appalachian Christmas Backpacks
937) 609-0231
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How to Become a Christian

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

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 (I 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.

How to submit Church News

Send all church news and information to Amanda Mishne at amishne@scbo.org

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