



ELK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

November - December 2019

From the Pastor's Study...

Recently I had the opportunity to hear a presentation at the Goshen Ministry Center from Elijah Brown, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, based in Fairfax. The BWA's mission is defined by its title: allying Baptists around the world in the service of the Kingdom of God.

It's a lofty aim. Millions of Baptists on every habitable continent serve with an ever-expanding fellowship of churches that work far beyond our borders. I attended their celebration of a century of existence in 2005 in Birmingham, England. I was struck on that trip by the number of people that had traveled from Asia to be in England: Koreans, Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Vietnamese, and more were striking in their numbers and the smiles on their faces at being far, far away from the governments that routinely oppressed some of them at home.

Now, they are busy in Africa, where the numbers of people that consider themselves Baptists has grown over the past five years **by 161%**! You read that number right: 44,000 churches now numbering nearly 20 million strong. As we in many churches wonder about the future of our faith here, in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and places in between, we are experiencing staggering growth.

I had a taste of that last year, in Romania, serving in churches in the middle of a country that—in a formula our Chinese friends would find familiar—are hounded by a corrupt government with the hovering presence of Russia smothering everything like a sultry summer's day.

Elijah drew our attention to the book of Acts where the early church's story is told. It's a story only God could devise: As they were persecuted, the church, motivated by the ever-present Holy Spirit, did not close in on itself. Instead, it was open to the Spirit's message, that this was the time to open itself to the surrounding world. We all know the

story: The church grew under a threat of impending doom and brought the message that still thrives in (most) of our world still now, 2000 years later.

The Romans, observing all this, had to come up with a new name for a people that in their eyes seemed so crazy. They came up with a name that corresponded to the one that seemed to inspire such nonsense: "Christian."

When we next bemoan the fact that so many live in such forbidding circumstances, and feel powerless to do anything about it, remember that we serve a God who brings about miracles in Venezuela, and Kurdistan, and Syria, some of the most horrific circumstances we can imagine. Remember that only God could dream up such answers to human peril.

The location of the next general meeting of the BWA? In July in...Rio de Janeiro.

Mickey

DATES TO REMEMBER

November

18th - 25th National Collection Week
Samaritan Shoe Boxes - (Total Collected - see below)

December

1st Advent Begins
5th Tree Trimming at Louisa Healthcare Center - 9:30 a.m.
6th Church Decorating - 9:30 a.m.
15th Gifts for Christmas families due
22nd Special Christmas Services (times to be determined)
23rd Delivery of Christmas Gifts - 9:30 a.m.
29th Deacon's Meeting - 12:00 p.m.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

November

Ballis, James	1
Bane, Lisa	3
Korman, Jody	5
Pittman, Mark	5
Webb, Joan	5
Weekely, Erin Robertson	11
Hale, Scott	13
Pitcher, Tom	15

Hayes, Susan	16
Canova, Jay	19
Jones, Anna	22
Chisholm, Claudia	25
Jenkins, Woody	25
Mason, Linda	28
Sharp, Sissie & Keith	28
Webb, Wayne & Joan	30

December

Faccone, Mary	4
Wilson, Tony & Sandra	4
Pittman, Karilyn	6
Rose, Jim	9
DiFranco, Michael	10
Weaver, Butch	11
Keene, Bobby	13
Mason, Phillip	18
Brown, Catherine	19
Brown, Phillip	19
Brown, Kim	21
Grecco, Grace	22
Hoffman, Grayson	23

SPECIAL NOTES FROM LARRY EDMONDS, CHAIR OF DEACONS

Samaritan's Purse Shoe Boxes

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Shoe Box effort. We delivered 67 shoe boxes to the Collection Facility. This is the first time we went over 50. What a great showing! We'll be putting smiles on a lot of little faces around the world in the name of Jesus.

Santa Council Christmas Families

We have received information on our Christmas families for this year: three families with a total of eleven children. The boards with the gift tags will be available starting this Sunday. We will also be collecting non-perishable food for the families. We will have more information for you this Sunday.

Restoration of Church Exterior

Restoration of the church exterior is coming along nicely and should be completed soon. Thanks to Richie Hurst and his crew for all the great work.

Mike Bridges - New Treasurer



On October 1, Mike Bridges officially became the treasurer of our church. He took over from the retiring Lee Stahl after her many years of good and faithful service. Mike and his wife Linda live in the Aspen Hill subdivision just around the corner from the church. He and Linda began coming to the lake in 1975 and bought in Aspen Hill in 1987. They added an addition to their home in the mid-90s, which Mike built himself. In 1999, they sold their home in Richmond and moved full time to the lake.

The third son of a Baptist Minister, Mike was born in Texas and moved to Colorado at the age of 13. He entered the Navy in 1969 and served for 6 years. While in the Navy, Mike received extensive training in telecommunications and cryptography. He served on several land and shipboard assignments in North Africa, the North Atlantic and Mediterranean. Following his discharge from the Navy in 1975, he joined the Virginia Army National Guard retiring in 1996 as a chief warrant officer. In the Guard, Mike was head of a software development team assigned to the state Adjutant General working with logistics teams from the department of the Army in DC.

Living in Charlottesville, Mike married Linda, an elementary school teacher, in 1974 and went on to receive an AS degree in Business Administration from Piedmont Virginia Community College. He later earned his bachelor's degree in business from Averett

University concentrating in accounting and finance. Mike and Linda have one child, Brandon age 39 who is married to Rachel and living in Chesterfield. They are blessed with 2 grandchildren Olivia age 9 and Easton age 6. Mike enjoys music, computers, antique cars, camping, the beach, and boating on the lake. His power boating pinnacle was owning his own jet boat from a number of years. His favorite sport is college basketball.

With his business, telecommunications, and software development experience, Mike's career was concentrated in the development of software in the education, banking, and telecom industries producing accounting, financial, manufacturing and other logistical system related software. He also managed numerous large-scale systems integration projects. While working in Bell Laboratories, Mike and his research team members patented a telecommunications solution that was heavily used in the banking industry worldwide. He later became involved in Internet based software development working for Cisco Systems, and successor companies, developing large scale voice messaging systems and related smart phone applications. Mike early retired in 2014, but returned to work full time as the Administrator of Medworks, a company owned by a friend. At Medworks, Mike handled all the administrative, accounting and financial aspects of the company along with IT infrastructure support as they expanded operation into 4 states. He developed HIPPA compliant business practices for the heavily regulated operations of Medworks along with contracts and procurement. Mike retired (for good) from Medworks in May of this year. Mike was treasurer of his previous church in Montpelier for several years. He also handled the accounting functions for his HOA for 8 years.

Being a PK (preacher's kid), Mike was raised to fear God. His "faith walk" came into "a fuller maturity" in 2010 and he was baptized in 2012. Mike was deeply involved in his previous church where he taught adult classes, worked the tech table, handled IT support, and was a member of the spiritual leadership team.

As treasurer, Mike recognizes that the treasurer represents the church in an official capacity within and outside the church body. Mike will work to maintain the business integrity of the church within our community. He will stay abreast of federal, state, and local laws that affect the church with regard to taxes, reporting and filing requirements, and other legal issues. His goal is to manage the church's finances in a biblically responsible manner. He will use computer-based accounting software to facilitate transaction management and financial reporting. Mike believes the credibility of the church treasurer is vital to the integrity of Elk Creek's financial processes. Thus, he feels it is critical to protect the treasurer's credibility by implementing additional checks and balances as he builds upon the work done by previous treasurers. Additionally, he plans to work with the leadership team to develop comprehensive short, middle, and long-term financial goals. He also plans to document the treasurer processes as part of successor planning. Mike wants everyone to feel comfortable with him in this role and encourages members to contact him with any questions or suggestions they have.

After 11 years of service as Treasurer, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Lee Stahl.



Visiting pastors from Panama, Felix Caballero (left) and Teodoro Arias Lopez. David Pristas (grandson of Frazier's) interpreted while they were guests at the Frazier's.



Church renovations in work!!



Some folks know how to dress for the weather!!



Hope everyone has a blessed Thanksgiving and Christmas!!

Together in Christ.

Alana Frazier