

# BAPTIST BEACON

Newsjournal of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan

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## An urgent message to Michigan Baptists

by Tony Lynn

### Urgent Mission

With nearly 10,000,000 people in the state, Michigan ranks 10<sup>th</sup> among all of the United States in population. In terms of landmass, Michigan ranks 11<sup>th</sup>. The Great Lake State has the longest freshwater shoreline in the entire world. If we mathematically divided the state's population by the number of Southern Baptist churches, each church would be responsible for reaching out to, engaging, witnessing, and disciplining an estimated 31,250 people. That is per church!

### Crunch the Numbers

Can you imagine your church and you bridging relationships with 31,250 people this next year? How many new people entered and remained at your church this past year? What would each church have to do to reach radically more people for Christ? If each church, by the numbers, did their part next year that would mean each church would have to engage 86 new people every single day for 365 days.

*Each church would have to engage 86 new people every single day for 365 days.*

This summer, I was in Dallas, Texas speaking to a retired policeman at one of the large, well-know congregations. He was directing security for the church. The man's face was wrinkled and tanned. I

could hear voices coming from the earbud in his left ear even though he tried to conceal it with his gray hair. His eyes had a gleam as he scanned the congregation of thousands gathering for worship. After learning I was from Michigan, he said to me, "I lived and worked in Michigan all my life; but only after retiring and moving to Texas did someone tell me about Jesus Christ. I am so glad my wife and I found Him and we love our church."

*"I lived and worked in Michigan all my life; but only after retiring and moving to Texas did someone tell me about Jesus Christ."*

### Keeping it Brief

In the shadow of the overwhelming numbers and in light of the urgency to reach more people for Jesus Christ as described above, I want to share a vision, a mission, and 5 values for church starting. We want to see healthy churches starting new churches in places and among people groups in the Great Lakes region, so that everyone is extended an invitation to follow Jesus Christ. In fewer words, our mission is starting new churches everywhere for everyone.

### Five Core Values

**1. Reliance upon God** – We rely upon God for His leadership through the study and application of the Bible. By means of private and corporate prayers,

we pursue obedience and boldness through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Through corporate and private worship, we treasure God above all things and we display that dedication by starting new churches.

### 2. Collaboration with others

This network is a mosaic of cultures, colors, communities, and languages with one mission, which is starting new churches. Working together we

are powerful. Working together, under the Lord's leadership, we are unstoppable.

**3. Sacrificial Focus** – We come together to do one thing with excellence. We dedicate ourselves to starting new churches within population segments and among people groups in the Great Lakes region. We sacrifice other worthy endeavors knowing that this intense focus changes eternity for people in the region.

**4. Leadership Development** – We gather and engage leaders for the purpose of starting new churches. We develop leaders, so they anticipate, prepare for, and overcome challenges. We offer leaders the tools and the processes by which they can multiply and empower others, so that new generations will produce new leaders.

**5. Urgency** – Though God is eternal, our involvement to achieve His desires in each of our lifetimes is limited; therefore, we take the responsibility to do as much as we can in the time each of us is allocated in our respective lives. We do not wait on something to change or someone else to

lead. We take the initiative to do as much as we can with the resources God provides in each season of our lives.

There are waves, from the Great Lakes, that shape the shoreline of the state, night and day. What if there was an ever-increasing wave of churches that saturated every population segment and every people group within the Great Lakes region with the Gospel? Can you imagine what God could accomplish, during the coming years, if we would strive to increase the number of Southern Baptist churches in

Michigan?

*What part will you take-on in this endeavor?*



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tony Lynn is the State Director of Missions for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. Before coming on staff at the BSCM, Tony served as lead pastor for more than six years at Crosspoint Church in Monroe, Michigan. He and his wife, Jamie, also served with the International Mission Board in Africa and in Europe.



## Why do people want to hear preaching today?

by Nathan J. Norman

**KINGSLEY** – "Why do people want to hear preaching today?" I've asked this question a number of times. I've discussed it over the years with colleagues and students, and at a recent Send Network Church Planter Assessment it was asked of a candidate.

Think about it. Preaching in the 21st century is utterly absurd. With YouTube, Netflix, and multi-million dollar blockbuster movies, who wants to sit and listen to a guy talk for thirty minutes? I've seen church budgets, and I've never seen a line-item for "preaching" approaching anywhere near a small independent film budget, let alone a blockbuster.

People don't just tolerate preaching – it is the primary reason they come to church in the first place. A Gallup poll conducted in 2017 found that 75% of churchgoers cited the preaching

as the biggest reason to attend church. Think about it. People choose to watch one guy talk, rather than staying home and binge-watching Netflix dramas. It is absolute insanity.

So why do people still gather, and still want to hear preaching today? I think Martin Luther came to a good answer which the reformers summed up as: The preaching of the Word of God is the Word of God. It is a very provocative statement. But it doesn't mean that everything that we call preaching is actually preaching. No, the quote is referring to correctly communicating the biblical text. I think Luther and the reformers were right, though. And I think this is why people – millions of people – gather every Sunday in a physical place. I think this is why Christians around the world want to sit and listen. People want to hear the audible voice of God, and preaching offers them the opportunity.

(Continued on page 3)



Family and Friends,

Thank you for taking the time to read this special edition of the Baptist Beacon. It is our desire to keep you informed, and to communicate with you all of the great things that God is doing in our midst here in Michigan. Please be sure to visit our website [www.bscm.org](http://www.bscm.org) on a regular basis, and stay up to date on the latest happenings and upcoming events.

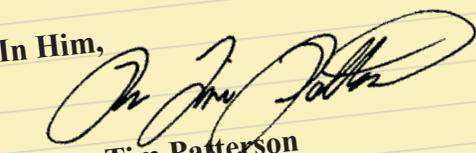
Also, make sure that we have your most current contact information, including your mailing address and email so we can keep in touch with you.

It has been my privilege to serve you as your Executive Director/Treasurer for the past three years. In that period of time we have learned much, and have seen some wonderful and necessary changes. Your convention is in a very healthy condition and moving forward in Starting, Strengthening and Sending.

At this year's convention in Jackson, Michigan we will be giving several very encouraging reports and addressing some pivotal issues. Please make every effort to be there in person along with every available delegate from your church. It is going to be a wonderful time of celebration and positioning for the future.

It is my prayer that God will continue to bless and prosper you as you seek to advance His Kingdom. Thank you for making a difference, and for helping us "Punch Holes In The Darkness".

In Him,



Pastor Tim Patterson  
Executive Director/Treasurer  
Baptist State Convention of Michigan



## Michigan Disaster Relief making a difference

by Bob Kiger

**FENTON** – In 2019, Michigan Disaster Relief will continue to meet the needs of communities that are affected by disasters whether this is in our state or in other states across the country. One way those needs can be met is with increased attendance at Disaster Relief training events.

There will be one scheduled training event in May at Bambi Lake Baptist Retreat and Conference Center, which will be in combination with a week-long chainsaw mission to help Bambi Lake remove unwanted trees and brush.

Additional training will be conducted at the request of churches or associations. We have found when training is requested and scheduled by a church or association, it is better attended and the resulting trained volunteers tend to step up, and respond sooner to a disaster callout.

Michigan Disaster Relief will continue to be represented at the Michigan Homeland Security Conference and the Michigan Emergency Managers Conference to demonstrate the areas that Disaster Relief can assist in and how to request assistance. Michigan Disaster Relief will also attend regional and national Disaster Relief roundtables to share best practices and resources.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bob Kiger serves as the Michigan Disaster Relief Director for the BSCM. He has been involved in Disaster Relief since 2008. His first major call out was in 2012 when he went to New York to help prepare meals for displaced residents after Hurricane Sandy.



# BAPTIST BEACON

The Baptist Beacon is the official newsjournal of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan (BSCM), in association with the Southern Baptist Convention. The mission of the Baptist Beacon is to communicate with Michigan Baptists in our shared mission of punching holes in the darkness through starting, strengthening, and sending churches.

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For more information  
visit [www.BaptistBeacon.net](http://www.BaptistBeacon.net)

# Disaster Relief: Not all hammers and food

by Jean Meinka

**CLARKLAKE** – I have watched and prayed for my husband, Terry, as he served on Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Teams, while waiting for the time when I would be able to retire and join the Michigan team, too. Little did I know, one month later, God would be sending me to Galveston, Texas where Hurricane Harvey flooded Southern Texas. My husband and team members tried to prepare me for the destruction that I would personally see, but nothing could prepare me for the thousands of people I would be serving with hurt and broken hearts.

Many times, Omega would be praying in Spanish with some people, holding hands and her sweet voice filled the room with words. Some of us did not understand, but we knew she was sharing Jesus or praising Him for keeping that family safe and providing for their needs. God changed my heart that week and filled me with His love as I have never experienced before. Prayer after prayer was answered, and my faith in God grew in leaps and bounds. My heart felt as it would explode at God's goodness. The Almighty God was there in the midst of that storm.

One man in particular will always be in my heart and mind. He was about 60 years old, very tall and strong. He walked in and stood in one place not moving. A sad, tired look covered his entire face, he looked lost. I thought maybe he was in the wrong place.



Residents of Rockport return to their destroyed home on August 27. (Photo courtesy of CNN)

A feeding team was needed in Galveston, but my husband was not trained in this area and he didn't feel led to go at that time. I had just spent time that month asking God what I would be doing for the next part of my life. Retired and an empty nest left me wondering. Little did I know that when Harvey hit, I would feel the spirit say go! Just go! I left with a couple from our church who would be leading our feeding team. As we entered Texas we were rerouted to Houston. We had a couple on our bus who spoke Spanish. They were needed to help with the Spanish-speaking community that was near the supply warehouse.

The next 10 days would change my heart and grow my faith in God. I was asked to serve in the warehouse with Omega Sosa. I did not know how to speak Spanish, but we had people from all walks of life who needed help. The loss and destruction of their homes was the first thing we heard from each person we encountered at the warehouse. Their hearts were broken and hurting; they needed help. People came to the warehouse to get water and supplies, and needed to dry out their homes. Sometimes it was tools, and other times food and water. With each person that entered and needed help, we listened as they shared their traumatic stories of flooding with us. Their lives were shattered in a matter of minutes because most of them never expected flood waters to reach Houston like it did.

We were able to help many with supplies and information to assist them in the cleanup, and give them the paperwork to help them get started. We also were able to pray with 80% of the hurting and struggling men and women who walked in. Many people stopped what they were doing to bow their heads as we prayed with them. God opened doors and hearts plus several times we prayed for things needed and God supplied them within minutes of praying. A truck would drop off what was needed, or a person would walk in delivering exactly what we prayed for. Our God is good and faithful. He is in the miracle business.

He looked like an executive of some kind, and I asked if I could help him with something. He looked at me with tears in his eyes, and said he had lost everything. He had just built his retirement house on the lake; an eight hundred-thousand-dollar home, but had only lived in it for a month. He had no flood insurance, which was not needed in Houston, so the insurance people had told him. "Then it was all gone!" Now what would he do?

He looked like he was still in shock, so I asked God for wisdom and the right words before I spoke. I asked him if he still had his wife? He said, "yes." I asked him if he had children? He said, "yes." I asked him if he believed in God? He responded, "yes." I asked if he read his Bible or prayed or talked to Jesus. Then the tears ran down his face. I asked if he remembered the story of Job and how Job lost everything, but Job loved God and God loved Job. I reminded this man that he had his family and God blessed Job again with a new home and family. That same God is our hope in dark times, our only hope, and with Him we have everything. This man's eyes brightened. We prayed together, and then we set him up with the supplies he needed.

I pray the Holy Spirit spoke to him at that moment. I saw God working every day in the people's hearts, and in the team's hearts who were serving them, but especially in mine. I am so very thankful for our Disaster Relief teams in Michigan, and encourage others to get trained, step out in faith and go watch God at work. It will change your life.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jeannie Meinka is from Clarklake, MI and serves as a Michigan SBC Disaster Relief volunteer.



## Why do people want to hear preaching today?

(Continued from page 1)

I suspect this is why congregations often place their pastor on a pedestal. Even if he constantly communicates his absolute need for Christ, he is still speaking the words of God. This is why a pastor who is not a particularly skilled communicator is still the best preacher in the eyes of his congregation – because he is speaking the Living Word in their physical presence. Luther's idea is simultaneously horrifying and encouraging to me. It is horrifying because as James said, "Not many should become teachers, my brothers, because you know that we will receive a stricter judgment." But it is encouraging because I have come to realize that something always happens when the Word of God is faithfully preached. God speaks through his Word, through his servant, and to his people.

Whether people are conscious of this reality or not, this is why millions gather every week to hear preaching. This is why a multi-billion dollar film industry cannot compete with preaching. No, we don't have a special-effect budget or large marketing firms, but we do have something that no one else can ever offer: The opportunity to hear God's voice in person every week.

Trembling confidence.

Bold humility.

God speaks every week at your local church.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nathan J. Norman is the senior pastor of The Orchard Church in Kingsley, MI, and the moderator of the North West Baptist Association. He teaches preaching in Vietnam through CrossTalk Global – a multiplying teaching organization. And he produced the Untold Podcast – a storytelling program.

1. Lydia Saad. "Sermon Content Is What Appeals Most to Churchgoers." Gallup, April 14, 2017.

2. Lit. "Praedicatio verbi Dei est verbum Dei." The Second Helvetic Confession, 1564.



For more info about  
Michigan Disaster  
Relief, visit  
[bscm.org/dr](http://bscm.org/dr)



# STRENGTHENING

## Strengthening Churches: Never give up

by Jim Nelson

**SWARTZ CREEK** – I would like to encourage every church planter, pastor or church member who reads this article to understand that God has already given us everything we need to grow and mature our churches. There is no BIG secret... only FAITHFULNESS to His Word and OBEDIENCE to His call.

I know that sounds simplistic, but I've found it to be true in the life of the church that I have been blessed to pastor for 25 years. Don't get me wrong, there have been challenges along the way. Challenges that no doubt you are all too familiar with. I hear you, but I want to encourage you!

*There is no BIG secret...only FAITHFULNESS to His Word and OBEDIENCE to His call.*

When God called us to pastor 1ST Baptist Church of Swartz Creek, it was after some hurt and pain endured by this church community. I knew it well, because I was here. Many folks had left and just sort of drifted away. Not far, just away. Attendance went down, down, down. Workers were hard to come by. The budget suffered incredibly, as you can imagine. Who would want to come to a church like that? After all, there was no pastor and no staff—only a few dedicated people trying their hardest to plug the holes of a leaking ship.

When God called, I wanted to say “No thanks, God,” but I knew I would never be happy outside of His will. So, “Here I am Lord, send me.” God showed me that it was His church, and He would do the multiplying. I just needed to be faithful. Our responsibility is to Him, and I promise you He wants nothing more than for His church to be obedient to the ministry that He has for it. He desires for His church to be...dare I say, “successful”?

That success may look different from one church to another, but it will have some common foundational truths that guide it. What we've learned is to PRAY, PRAY, PRAY. With a very small congregation and few workers, we prayed earnestly for God to send people, but not just anyone—servants to jump right in and get to work. Incredibly, God answered and two families who had served as deacons and teachers and song leaders showed up and asked, “What can we do?” Let me tell you, when you see God answer like that it brings an excitement to the whole body. It's a fresh wind in the sails.

We also learned to LOVE, LOVE, LOVE. Those folks who had left were hurting, and felt as though God had abandoned them. So, we reached out to them, loved them, and shared with them that God had

not left them. Again, faithfulness to God's Word brought many of them back, and they are still serving today.

One more lesson we needed to learn was to always be true to the WORD, WORD, WORD. We live in a time when many church leaders feel as though we have to somehow water down the Word to make it palatable to the unchurched. Not so! I find what our culture is longing for is the truth. Church planter, pastor, church member, be true to the Word, and you will find there are many in your community who just want the truth.

Pray, Love and Teach the Word of God. There are many things that can be difficult about church, but we've learned that if you “Love one another as Christ has loved you,” your church will be a magnet to a lost and searching world needing a place of refuge.

Let me encourage you. Never give up and never give in. Our God is mighty to save and that's the TRUTH.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Nelson is Pastor of First Baptist Church of Swartz Creek.



## Remembering Billy Graham - 100 Years of faithful ministry

by Jim Glidewell

**PORTAGE** – God called Billy Graham home on February 21, 2018. He was 99 years old (8 1/2 months before his 100th birthday). He was born 4 days before the end of World War I. He was born again during a Mordecai Ham revival at age 15. That was the day that changed his life.

From his first Chicagoland Youth For Christ (YFC) effort to reach WW II servicemen and young people in 1944 through his 95th birthday evangelistic presentation, The Cross, Billy Graham proclaimed the Gospel. His words in The Cross video express his lifelong purpose: “With all my heart, I want to leave you with the truth that He loves you and wants to forgive you of your sins.” Considering Billy Graham's 74-year ministry is both challenging and encouraging. It challenges us to keep our focus where it really needs to be. Through all the distractions, difficulties, and opposition Billy main-

tained and even sharpened his focus on sharing Jesus in every setting and through every available means.

Billy's ministry challenges us to remember the real power is God's power, and He is reliable. Prayer must surround all we attempt as we place the opportunity and need in God's hand. Billy Graham considered himself an ordinary preacher who presented the simple message of the Gospel with the words of the Bible trusting God to use His Word by placing it supernaturally into the human heart.

Billy's ministry should encourage us as well. Through all the economic, political, and theological turmoil the Gospel message provides hope and direction. In all the turmoil of our day that remains true. So, the motto of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) is: Always Good News!

As this 100th year comes to end let Billy's testimony lead you and your church in a prayerful consideration of your stewardship of the Gospel. The My Hope video “Heaven” might be a particularly appropriate resource. You can get a copy from the BSCM, BGEA, or online at [myhopewithbillygraham.org/programs](http://myhopewithbillygraham.org/programs).

The task remains the same: share Jesus and encourage others to share Jesus.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Glidewell is the pastor of Amazing Grace Baptist Fellowship and serves as Associational Missionary for South Central Baptist Association.



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# Send Detroit: Seasons of opportunity



by Wayne Parker

**DETROIT** – As we move from summer to fall, we are celebrating a great season of growing partnerships, and the exciting potential of advance in the Kingdom of God. We have experienced an amazing summer of partner investment and participation with church plants in Detroit. Early in the summer, a team from several churches in Arkansas came to work with 3 of our planters. They brought with them a new Block Party trailer, fully equipped for our church plants to use in outreach efforts in their communities. Our planters and mission teams have kept that trailer busy all summer.

I had the opportunity to help with an event that Reaching Out Church sponsored at the Yemen American Cultural Center in Dearborn. The Hope Church of Las Vegas sent a team to help the new church plant share the love of Christ with hundreds of Muslims from the area. It was such a blessing to be able to be part of that effort. But, I am so thankful for partners who help to make these efforts truly reflect the Good News we have in Christ. We should all be thrilled with the fruit that efforts like these produce for the Kingdom. Reaching Out Church officially launched last month with 7 house discipleship groups and a public worship service among the Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist peoples of Hamtramck.

Many other teams served with us this summer, some from Michigan churches and others from around the country. We try to track these connections, but this year it has been hard to keep up. We did record 45 unique partner connections with both teams and support. This marks a significant increase for Detroit plants and is a great encouragement to our planters. Even small teams can make a large impact. Several teams numbered only five or six. Yet, they were able to help pass out flyers for church launches, clean up and paint buildings, assist church plant core-teams, host block parties that, in turn, helped them to serve their community and share Christ.



This fall has been a season of advance. I previously mentioned Reaching Out Church's launch on September 2nd, New Found Hope Community Church under the leadership of Pastor Ray Ruffin Jr., launched public worship services. Their sending church is Faith Fellowship Baptist Church in Lansing, and is also supported by Forrest Park Baptist Church, who is assisting them with a place to worship. Pray for Pastor Ray as they are seeking to reach people for discipleship in Christ in the community of Redford.

We are also asking you to pray with the Middlebelt Baptist Church as they help to launch Pastor Antonio Wimberly and the One Mission Church on November 4th. The new church has targeted a strategic location at the crossroads of Inkster, Romulus, and Westland. They have been working all summer to get the word out, and get things ready for a Christ-honoring launch of a new Church.

This is what Send Detroit is all about. Praying, supporting, and encouraging new churches to establish Gospel-preaching, disciple-making churches for the 7.4 million people of Metro Detroit. Thank you, Michigan Baptists, for your partnership in what God is doing in the city.

**UNDIVIDED**  
YOUR CHURCH AND RACIAL RECONCILIATION

**J.D. GREEAR & DHARTI LEWIS**

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IT'S THAT OUR NATION IS DIVIDED.**

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For more information and resources related to racial reconciliation, visit **undivided.net**

**North American Mission Board**



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Wayne Parker grew up in metro Detroit. He graduated from Eastern Michigan University with a degree in education and received his Master of Divinity degree from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Parker now serves as the senior pastor for Merriman Road Baptist Church in Garden City, an inner-ring suburb of Detroit. Wayne and his wife Cindy have five children.



For more information, visit **bscm.org/detroit**



## From Keeping People to Reaching People

by Dave Whitaker

**HOUGHTON** – We’re in a season of great adversity and trials because we have caught the eye of the enemy. We have seen 16 come to Christ and 63 baptized in the last two years. Our church is full of unchurched or de-churched people. The lost are coming. Broken and battered families are coming. Even the homeless are coming to our church. So, why I am sharing this? Why do I want you to know these things are happening? Are possible?

Because across our state and nation churches are dying. Churches have plateaued or are in decline. It’s heartbreaking. Churches are shutting their doors never to be opened again. I know, because we faced this just five years ago. Our numbers were dwindling, and it was a scary time for us. But then we started to change the culture at Houghton Baptist Church (HBC). We started to make cuts where they were needed. We began to realize a new day.



As a church we shifted our focus from keeping people to reaching people. We poured ourselves into the community instead of the church building. We moved people from rows to places of service. We stopped making it so difficult for new people or less mature people to serve and be apart. We made our church a place where lost people and unchurched people felt they could come and grow at their own pace. And, it’s worked. It’s grown the kingdom. It’s grown the church numerically. It’s grown our hearts for the lost and unchurched, and it’s completely changed our church and our community. If we make the mission number one, God promises to do great things. If we love the lost more than ourselves and our church routines, God begins to shake things up.



It’s not easy. In fact, it’s quite painful at times. Church people typically don’t like or enjoy change, but it’s necessary and it’s worth it. We’re headed into this next year be-



God is doing. And all of these things, we give God the glory for. He changed us. He shifted our focus. He changed and adjusted the culture to cultivate the harvest we are reaping. It’s all Him and all His doing. We’re thankful we didn’t choose to go down with a sinking ship, but let our great God do great things through us at Houghton Baptist Church.

Matthew 19:26 “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible,” and our church is just one example of what God can do.



lieving God for more of the same, bigger and better things. We’re hoping to launch a new Saturday night service that will only further increase growth and extend our reach. We’re in a season where we’re praying that God would send us additional help, additional mature believers to help us build up these new concerts. We need more staff to help manage and run the day to day as we grow. We’re believing God for the resources we need to keep ministering to some of the most poverty-stricken people in our area. Moving forward, we don’t plan to change a thing, but keep believing this act of God will continue.

We’re grateful we’re seeing things that many don’t experience in a lifetime of ministry. We count it all joy, the trials and difficulty that we have faced because it has produced such kingdom fruit. Our struggles are minor compared to what

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Whitaker is Pastor of Houghton Baptist Church in Houghton, MI. He and his wife have been married 12 years and in ministry for 10 of them. They have three amazing kids who keep them super busy and of course Pastor one of the larger Churches in our area along with our Executive Directors position with Love Inc of the Copper Country. You could say, We’re all in for Jesus!!!



Currently 65-75% of SBC churches can be considered plateaued. They are in need of assistance and coaching to become vital missional centers reaching people for Christ and impacting their communities.



### Become a Healthy Church

The North American Mission Board has partnered with Thom Rainer’s Revitalize Network to focus on helping churches gain health and vitality through an intentional and focused revitalization process. Through this strategic partnership, SBC churches in non-South states are able to join the Network at a significantly reduced rate of \$100 (a \$400 savings).

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- Access to exclusive online content

To join the Revitalize Network and receive the Revitalize Bundle, complete the application below. Once your submission is received, the Revitalize Network team will contact you and walk you through the next steps.

[NAMB.net/revitalize](http://NAMB.net/revitalize)

# Where are the Deborahs and the Ruths?

by Heather Windeler

**CLARKSTON** – When my husband and I were in youth ministry together we noticed quickly, this ministry needed both men and women mentors. So, we made sure to encourage healthy numbers of both to be youth workers for our teens. All of us, male and female, have a common need of people who can understand and mentor us through our struggles.

I had not thought about this need for years until this past January when God prompted me, for the first time, to publicly share my private horror of experiencing sexual assault. It was the last thing I wanted to do, but God had His reasons which became apparent at the close of each and every event. One woman after another came forward with hands shaking and tears in their eyes bravely sharing their traumatic experiences. The sheer number of women who whispered, “I have never heard this addressed in church before” was both crushing and convicting. It brought me right back to our years in youth ministry, and the unique needs of women of all ages.

We need Women’s Ministry because women really do need each other. Healing from trauma and addiction, trying to fit society’s mold of female perfection, infertility, miscarriages, surviving abuse, being single in ministry, and many more struggles are rarely, if ever, mentioned in polite church circles. If God’s healing is to come, we need to change the narrative, open up, and begin to embrace our imperfections, struggles, and failures.

We need our obedient and brave Deborahs to speak truth boldly into the dark places of our lives.

We need the loyal companionship of the Ruths who stick with us through our worst pain.

We need the Esthers who will stand up with us and for us against injustice.

We need the loving wise mentorship of Eunice.

We need the hope given from the Sarahs who tell us miracles can still happen, even when we least expect them.

## WOMEN'S MINISTRY

BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION OF MICHIGAN



This last year I needed my dear friend Carolyn Minot, who’s never wavered in praying for my healing or Ebony Robinson, who directed me to place my burdens back on our heavenly Father. I find the courage to continue because of Kelly Yang, whose diligence in helping persecuted Christians reminds me to never give up or Melanie, Angela, and Lindsey whose gift for words and encouragement keep me moving forward in faith. There is the beautiful Joyya Pettus who reminds me what it looks like to unabashedly love everyone without fear, and Allison Hix whose passion for God’s word contagiously pushes me to read my Bible more. There are so many amazing women I still haven’t mentioned, but I would not have met any of them, if it had not been for WMU and Women’s ministry. If Robin, Shar, Karen, Marta, Sharon, and Sue had not invited, mentored, and encouraged me to join the Women’s ministry here in Michigan I would not have found the deep encouragement and wisdom I had been longing for.

We all need women of God in our lives, and Women’s Ministry is an amazing way to meet that need. For more information on how to impact the women in your life, contact us at the Baptist State Convention of Michigan (BSCM).



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Heather Windeler is a Mercy & Justice Ministries Coach with Michigan WMU who serves with Women Without Walls and Be the Bridge racial reconciliation ministries. She is a speaker, artist, wife, and mother of 3 who loves being a Cross Waves Church Hotspot leader with her husband Josh.

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For more information about BSCM Women’s Ministry contact [wmu@bscm.org](mailto:wmu@bscm.org)

I once was **LOST**  
But now I'm **FOUND**

## Lost, but now I'm found

by Mike Durbin

**FENTON** – Everything stopped. Instantly. It was the first day of school and a six-year-old girl in our extended family was missing. Our daughter-in-law called my wife in tears. Her twin sister's daughter didn't get off the bus after school. She called the school to let them know. Surveillance cameras showed her daughter leaving the building after school, but not getting on her bus. School officials started calling the bus drivers, obviously thinking she got on the wrong bus. They searched the school, but she was nowhere to be found.

The family was getting more and more concerned as time passed. Every moment seemed like an eternity. A lot of time had already passed and no one knew where she was.

Immediately, I began to process the information my wife was sharing and the questions began to fly; Have the police been notified? Have the buses been checked? Have they called any friends she might have gone home with? Have they searched the school? The playground? The neighborhood? Nearby businesses? Is the family mobilizing to search? How can I help?

My wife couldn't answer any of my questions. She had given me all the information she had. I asked her to call our daughter-in-law back, and find out any other information that she could. It was already late afternoon. I didn't say anything, but I knew that the window to find a missing child grows smaller as time passes. There was a growing urgency in me to mobilize family and friends to start searching quickly if she wasn't found. I continued praying as I waited for my wife to call back. I also started writing a note to ask for people to join us in prayer. A little girl, a six-year-old, was lost on the first day of school.

My mind went to the quote: The only thing worse than being lost is to be lost and no one is looking for you. Shar called back. The police had been called. She wasn't found playing in the school or playground. Bus drivers were returning

calls but so far she wasn't on any of the buses. I was scheduled to leave town later that day for a four-day training. I cancelled the trip in my mind knowing that the family would need me if they didn't find her.

We waited. We prayed. We tried to remain calm, but anxiety grew as time passed. Another call. Every bus driver had checked in or finished the route, but one. They tried repeatedly to contact that one bus driver, but he didn't respond. Hope was alive, but I could tell by the way Shar spoke that anxiety was rapidly growing in our daughter-in-law and the family. I was about to send out the emergency prayer request when the phone rang again. The little girl was on that last bus! I was immediately relieved and grateful to God that she was safe. Though I did not see it, that must have been a particularly sweet embrace between momma and daughter that afternoon. I suspect time and again that mom would hold her daughter close as tears filled her eyes. I suspect that dad did likewise, and the family prayed a prayer of thanksgiving.

As I recall the events of that day, I wonder if that is a picture of what God feels when a lost child comes home spiritually. Jesus punctuates the stories of the Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son with the words, "But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found" (Luke 15:32). It's an incredible picture of Heaven celebrating and rejoicing that the lost are found!



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mike Durbin is the State Evangelism Director for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. Before joining the state convention staff, Mike served as Church Planting Catalyst and Director of Missions in Metro Detroit since 2007. He also has served as a pastor and bi-vocational pastor in Michigan, as well as International Missionary to Brazil.



# Walking together; CP and Evangelism Grants

by Ed Emmerling

**FLUSHING** – Westside Baptist Church is continually trying to do new things in and around our community to help spread the Gospel of Christ more effectively. We have tried many different evangelism events, but a couple years ago we wanted to try something new. We called it Harvest Days, and leading up to it we had three different evangelists come once-a-month for three months.

But there was a problem. To make this new evangelism event a success was going to be expensive. I shared this idea with a staff member with the Baptist State Convention of Michigan (BSCM), and he said I should apply for an "Evangelism Grant." I never knew the BSCM even had such a thing. They pointed me to the application on our website, I filled out the grant, and they quickly answered my request with a "Yes."



It was such a simple process, and BSCM State Director of Evangelism, Mike Durbin, even helped us make sure we invited great quality evangelists. I would encourage you to look into requesting the BSCM Evangelism Grant the next time God gives you a dream of evangelizing your community, and it seems a little too big for you and your church to handle financially. As Southern Baptists we cooperate together and this is a great way to experience that cooperation. Evangelism is at the very core of who we are so working in partnership seems only natural.

So here's how the Cooperative Program investment in our Harvest Days worked out. We had more people saved on those 3 Sundays than the rest of the year combined. There were 22 salvation decisions, and we were able to baptize the majority of those new believers in the next few months. If you are sensing God challenging you to take a step of



faith in your ministry to do something creative in evangelism, you do not have to walk it alone. Our cooperating churches and the BSCM staff are ready to walk with you. So be sure and make an application soon. Hurry, because I have already received another grant and will soon be apply for a third.

Partnership is great especially when it is for His Kingdom work.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ed Emmerling is pastor of Westside Baptist Church, Flushing, Michigan. Ed and his wife Renee together have 4 children and 4 grandchildren. Pastor Ed has been privileged to be Pastor of Westside Church since 2002.



# Ministry Grid offer

by Mike Durbin

**FENTON** – When I read, “Ministry Grid makes it simple to train every volunteer and leader in your church,” I had to know more. As a pastor, my assignment was to “... equip the saints for the work of the ministry....” so why wouldn’t I be eager to learn of innovative ways to raise up trained leaders in our congregation.

Speaking directly to every pastor in Michigan, take these words seriously. Ministry Grid equips people through preaching, teaching, modeling, books and workshops. Church leaders and volunteers earnestly desire to serve Christ as effectively as possible. They long for training, growth opportunities and to learn lucid ways of serving better.

## The Challenge

Let’s be honest, one reality every church faces is that it’s never been harder to get church leaders and ministry volunteers together for training. Life is busy. Schedules are full. People are balancing jobs, school schedules, community activities, family time, church and more. As a result, LifeWay Research tells us that only 1 in 4 churches has a plan in place to train and develop leaders today. If we aren’t training then how are we growing? Can we grow?

## The Solution

What if your church could make first rate, trusted training, available 24 hours a day to your ministry leaders and volunteers? Would you be interested? Would the flexibility encourage growth opportunities for your volunteers? Well, that’s what Ministry Grid is doing. It provides every person in your church access to training anytime of the day or night. That means training to fit everyone’s schedule and to allow them to move at their individual pace. LifeWay is making Ministry Grid available, for

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**Train Every Leader:** Every leader in every ministry area deserves training, and Ministry Grid helps you make it happen.

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**Coaching Dashboard:** Track progress, take notes, and walk alongside your leaders as they train.

**Intuitive Workflow:** Training appears as a simple “to-do list,” guiding leaders click by click through the process.

**Mobile-First Design:** Because your people are busy, Ministry Grid is optimized for training on the go via any mobile or tablet device or computer”

“Ministry Grid makes it simple to train every volunteer

and leader in your church.”

It catches your attention, doesn’t it. Interested? Go to [ministrygrid.com](http://ministrygrid.com) and sign up for a free trial and check it out. If Ministry Grid is a tool you can use, subscribe your church through the special Michigan Baptist link: [ministrygrid.com/bscm](http://ministrygrid.com/bscm). The BSCM will reimburse cooperating churches \$199 dollars toward the cost. That’s a full year of training for every person in your church for \$200! Just send a copy of the receipt to [mike@bscm.org](mailto:mike@bscm.org) and we will send your church a \$200 check. Please note that checks will only be written to churches.

Give the leaders and volunteers that serve Christ the versatile and trusted training that Ministry Grid provides. Michigan Baptists - Redeemed, Equipped, and On Mission.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mike Durbin is the State Evangelism Director for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. Before joining the state convention staff, Mike served as Church Planting Catalyst and Director of Missions in Metro Detroit since 2007. He also has served as a pastor and bi-vocational pastor in Michigan, as well as International Missionary to Brazil.



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But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,  
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Dr. Tim McGrew is the Director for the Library of Historical Apologetics, the premier online resource connecting contemporary apologists to the apologetic resources of the past.

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by Mick Schatz

**ROSCOMMON** – “Bambi Lake Life” is more than a catchy tagline, it’s an attitude, a mindset. It describes the spiritual impact encountered at Bambi Retreat and Conference Center. “Bambi Lake Life” is about God-Life and transformed hearts. It’s about experiencing God for the first time. It’s about deepening our relationship with Him and refreshing our souls. It’s about drinking from the Fountain of Life and overflowing into the world surrounding us everyday!

2018 has been a fantastic year at Bambi Lake, full of new ideas and new faces. It has been a year of new building and renovation for the future. We celebrate an amazing year of life-changing retreats and camps resulting in dozens of salvations and commitments to follow Christ. We were excited to host many first-time Bambi Lake guests who enjoyed the amenities and refreshing atmosphere of the property. This year witnessed the building of church group and family friendly cabins in the campground along with a renovated and updated bath-house for the convenience of our campers. The lakefront swimming area became home to the Bambi Booyah!, a 140 foot high water thrill slide.



With the help of many servant teams from churches all over Michigan, and even out-of-state we were able to accomplish many Bambi Lake enhancement projects. From fresh coats of paint, to cleaning, roofing, log splitting, brush clean-up, tree cutting, mulching and many other tasks, servant teams made a visible impact on the beauty of Bambi Lake. A beautiful impact enjoyed by every guest who enters our property. With the addition of new full-time volunteers, Bambi Lake will be able to properly maintain the beautifications and upgrades. Bambi Lake is a resource every church in the Baptist State Convention of Michigan (BSCM) can be proud to use and promote. Nevertheless, although 2018 was a great year for Bambi Lake, we are just getting started!

BSCM churches - Bambi Lake Retreat and Conference Center is your camp. It’s “Your Camp, Your Legacy!” Looking ahead to 2019 Bambi Lake is poised to have its best year yet with the addition of events such as Couples Retreats, a Pastor/Spouse Retreat, Tween Retreat, Parent/Teen Weekend, Sportsman’s’ Retreat, Worship and Youth Leader Retreat, exciting Summer Camps and numerous other events for all ages. Bambi Lake is offering a cornucopia of resources and equipping experiences to the churches of Michigan. No matter the size there is an event to enrich the body of Christ in Michigan.

Over the last five years only 10-12% of the approximately 300 churches in the BSCM have actually participated in an event at Bambi Lake. Our goal in 2019 is to move that number to 20%. This 10% increase would greatly assist Bambi Lake and its future impact for the Kingdom. We are actively striving to be a “Tool” in the ministry tool box of every church in the BSCM. At Bambi Lake we will continue to manage and upgrade our

facilities and grounds for the benefit of our guests. We will continue to provide the best guest experience by serving with humble hearts gracious hospitality. We will continue to host quality, focused camps and retreats to equip, encourage and empower the local church.

Michigan, it’s “Your Camp, Your Legacy!” Let’s make it magnificent! Bambi Lake is excited to serve the churches of the BSCM as together we “Punch Holes in the Darkness” for the Kingdom of Heaven!



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Mick Schatz serves on the staff of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. He is the State Director of Spiritual Enrichment and Retreats and lives at Bambi Lake.



 For more info about Bambi Lake, visit [BSCM.org/bambi](http://BSCM.org/bambi)

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# Bambi Lake: a mission field

By Brett Luker

**ROSCOMMON** – There are many places in Michigan that one can view the creativity of our Almighty God. One, in particular, is Bambi Lake Baptist Conference Center and Campground. When my wife and I first visited five years ago, we were struck with the beauty of the lake, the trees, and the night sky. It allows you to grasp the awesomeness of our Creator and marvel at His glory. However, the glory of God does not end at the tree line and I would like to share with you how Bambi Lake ministers to Michigan and to the nations.

A large part of the ministry at Bambi is providing an opportunity for groups and individuals to come and experience God in a way that is meaningful and unique. This summer we were able to experience God's spirit moving through the lives of adults and teenagers alike. We had the opportunity to put on two weeks of summer camps for Michigan teens that we called Wild Week. During these two weeks, youth groups from all over the state came together to worship God and to hear His word. We had many that made decisions to follow Christ and dedicate their lives to live for the Lord. Although we only see some of these students once a year, we can praise God for allowing us to be a part of their spiritual journey.



Along with weeklong camps, Bambi Lake also hosts and produces weekend retreats. Throughout the year, you will find retreats for women, men, married couples, worship leaders, and youth. Themes can vary from being a simple getaway to a time of training and growing in your walk with Christ. A lot of times adults don't have the luxury to take a week off of work for

a retreat, and that is why weekend retreats are a wonderful opportunity for believers to come and be refreshed and rejuvenated in their walk with Christ. Our hope is that Bambi will not only be a place to experience God, but a place for believers to create long lasting friendships that extend beyond their time at Bambi Lake.

Finally, Bambi Lake is a mission field. Not only are their few churches in the

area, but also many people who don't know Christ. Bambi Lake has a 25-site campground that is open to the public year-round. Many of our campers are here for our events, but we do get some that are not, and that can produce an opportunity to share Christ. A unique situation happened this summer where our camp director Michael Schatz had the opportunity to share Christ with a young couple. This

young couple was from Israel and on their honeymoon, traveling America. They happened to see our sign and decided to stop for lunch.

Although Bambi Lake is a private camp, an unexpected visitor is not uncommon, and we were curious who was visiting the camp. Michael approached them and asked who they were and where they were

from, and in the midst of their conversation they asked what the cross that looks over the lake meant. This gave Michael an



opportunity to share the gospel. Although they didn't respond to the invitation to follow Christ, it showed us how Bambi Lake is a ministry that has kingdom impact, not only on churches in Michigan, but to people from all over the world.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brett Luker is a collegiate church planter at Michigan State University in East Lansing, MI where he works with students to reach the lost for Christ. He serves as campus pastor for Jacob's Well on Campus Church.



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**James Peoples**  
James serves as NAMB's Send City Missionary for South Florida. Previously, he was Senior Pastor of Trinity Baptist in Keystone Heights, FL and served two terms as President of the FBSC.

**Mark Dance**  
Mark has been the Director of LifeWay Pastors since 2014. He currently speaks to 5,000 pastors, seminarians, and ministry spouses every year.

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## God friended me

By Sue Hodnett

**FENTON** – We often refer to God as our friend because we know that He wants what is best for us. We confide in Him because we trust Him. In return God wants us to become friends to others. Friendship can be defined as “knowing the heart of another and sharing one’s heart with another.” We share our hearts with those we trust, and trust those who care about us. We confide in our friends because we have confidence that they will use the information to help us, not harm us. They in turn confide in us for the same reason.



Good friendship involves walking with one another down some hard roads, losses, a bad diagnosis, financial problems and much more. We need friends to help us remember what God has done for us and that He will be faithful. In similar fashion, the vision for Women’s Ministry is to develop a caring network of women devoted to Christ, through significant and deepening relationships with one another. Building friendships is key to the success of this ministry.

A Christ-centered focus on spiritual encouragement and growth is also an essential component to women’s ministry. The framework is currently being laid to begin a high impact mentoring program statewide to provide training for any woman who is interested in developing their leadership skills. Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU) continues to help create a wide spread mission concentration on meeting the needs of each other in all seasons of our lives, and of those in our community and around the world. Look for further information to be forthcoming.

Any programs or events in which we offer will most certainly change, grow or re-focus as God leads, and gives passion and mission to individuals & leaders. The event programs, retreats and trainings that we offer are basically about women playing their part in making a difference, by responding to the brokenness in our communities around the state. They’re about celebrating together a good, loving and faithful God who has a plan and a purpose for each of us in bringing transformation to the settings that he positions us in. So along with great worship, teaching and ministry in the power of the

Holy Spirit, we will reflect on lives that are being changed in very powerful ways.

To begin 2019, we are excited to be offering the following women’s events:

- January 5th** – *Mosaic: Broken & Beautiful* at Warren Woods Baptist Church
- February 15th-17th** – *ARISE: Women’s Missions Retreat* at Bambi Lake, Roscommon
- April 6th** – *Women: Servants of God* at Central Bible Church, Clinton Township
- April 13th** – *Women’s Conference with Courtney Veasey* at Faith Baptist Church, Battle Creek
- April 26th-27th** – *Titus 2: Multi Generational Retreat* at Bambi Lake, Roscommon
- May 17th-18th** – *The Gathering: DREAM* at Legacy Church, Novi

Who does God want you to Friend request? Who can you invite to some of these events? Who will you walk beside in the next year to love and share Christ’s love with? Find a new Friend, you will be glad you did, because you will love harder, laugh louder, live richer and become more than you could ever be without them. It’s putting your heart and your name in the hands of another person and saying, “I trust you with all of this,” as they do the same. Follow His lead.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sue Hodnett is the Women’s Ministries/WMU Director for the BSCM. She attends Lakepointe Church in Macomb, MI.





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# STARTING

## Reaching Generations

By Bob Wood

**MONROE** – Every church has strengths and weaknesses. It helps us to be encouraged when we focus on what God is doing in our church and to be diligent daily.

For the first eight years of Heritage Baptist Church’s existence, the congregation met in a school, and then we rented space in another church’s building. Two years ago we moved into our first permanent facility. The building’s location just west of town has allowed us to reach people from throughout Monroe County. The location on a main highway, M50, has given the church visibility and resulted in first-time, walk-in guests almost every Sunday morning.



God has blessed the church financially through the faithful giving of our members. In spite of payments for the new building, the church has also continued to give generously to the Cooperative Program. For many years the church gave 15% to CP. Two years ago, 1% was set apart to help church members participate directly in missions and the church continues to give 14% to CP.

One thing God is doing in our church is that we are “getting younger.” Even though the church began with a diversity of ages, the church reached the point where it was made up mostly of older adults. That did not bode well for the long-term survival of the church; every church must reach the next generation. God has been blessing the church with more younger adults. We just restarted a group of young, single adults and the attendance of that group is better than we have ever had. One positive change in ministry that has helped the church “become younger” is a transition to more contemporary worship. Initially, the church used video-driven contemporary music and piano



accompanied traditional hymns. God has since provided the musicians needed to have live music with a single team leading all of our music, contemporary and more traditional. As the music quality has improved, more musicians are joining us.

Even though the church is getting younger and transitioning to more contemporary music, God is still using the church to reach older generations, too. We have senior adults attending and joining the church. In fact, over the last two years, two adults over 70 years old have made public professions of faith and been baptized. God is still working among senior adults. So we are seeing God’s handiwork, regardless of age.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bob Wood is pastor of Heritage Baptist Church in Monroe. Previously he served as a state missionary with the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. He has been in vocational Christian ministry since 1983. Sharon, his wife, and he have five grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.



## Keep it simple

by Garth Leno

**WINDSOR, CANADA** – When “The Gathering” began, we were a ragtag collection of people who gathered on Saturday nights for Bible study, prayer, and fellowship over coffee and baked goods. In the beginning, it was super casual. But when we organized and launched our small, but enthusiastic, church plant with Send Detroit, we knew we needed to implement some structure.

Since then The Gathering has taken on much more organization and ministry diversity, and lately the lanes are feeling a bit crowded with so many “good things” for us to do.

Jesus is adamantly opposed to anything that gets in the way of people encountering Him. So we need to ensure that our church plants do not become *cluttered*. Clutter makes it difficult for people to encounter the simple, powerful, life-changing message of the gospel. We don’t want our plants to get so weighed down with programs that people get busy *doing* church instead of *being* the church.

So we are convinced we must cling to a simple process that pulls everything together; a compelling process that moves people toward spiritual maturity (Col. 1:28).

### What are we here for?

*The Gathering exists to bring glory to God through lives changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.* Our mission statement succinctly describes our heart. We exist to bring glory to God. This is the chief aim and purpose of humanity and of all creation. The glory of God is ultimate (1 Cor. 10:31).

### Why gospel-centered?

The gospel is the historical narrative of the triune God orchestrating the reconciliation and redemption of a broken creation and fallen creatures through the life, death, resurrection, and second coming of Jesus. In short, the gospel is the good news that the everlasting and ever-increasing joy of the never-boring, ever-satisfying Christ is ours freely and eternally by faith in the sin-forgiving death and hope-giving resurrection of Jesus Christ (John Piper).

We are unashamedly gospel-centered at The Gathering, as every church plant ought to be, because the gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, and in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed (Rom. 1:16-17). We intentionally emphasize the centrality of the gospel in our preaching and teaching, in worship, in calling people into community with one another, in service that

seeks to extend his grace and mercy to others, and in making disciples who make disciples and planting churches (Matt. 28:16-20).

### How can we avoid “drift?”

The expanding ministries of our church must keep the vision and mission dead center at all times. We must remove congestion from our church by courageously saying “no” to *good* opportunities so we can say “yes” to the *best* opportunities (Mary, in Luke 10:42). We cannot allow the vision to leak or the mission to drift off course. We must be tenacious and bold in order to maximize the energy of everyone in our church by creating alignment. If ministries or events do not align with our vision and purpose, we must firmly say no.

At our church we seek to make gospel-centered disciples by following a simple plan:

1. Create significant, meaningful, Christ-centered Sunday morning worship experiences that are full of simple worship, passionate prayer, and strong teaching.
2. Expand the scope and influence of small groups so everyone has an opportunity to join a gospel-centered fellowship where they can get connected, grow in faith, and serve God and others. Life-change happens best in small groups!

3. Offer courses, seminars, workshops or conferences (on topics like marriage, parenting, dealing with addictions, etc.) that supplement the teaching and life-change ministry of our church.

4. Say “no” to everything else.

Let’s keep it simple, focused, directed, gospel-centered ministry. It’s the better way to make disciples.

*Courtesy NAMB: Originally published in the Send Network Blog by the North American Mission Board on August 28, 2018*



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Garth Leno is a church planter working with SEND Detroit in Windsor, Ontario. His church is called The Gathering.





# Baptist State Convention of Michigan Staff

The staff here at the BSCM wants you to know that we count it a privilege to serve you. Please feel free to contact us at any time to be of assistance to you or your church family. Your spiritual health, growth, and ministries are a top priority to us.



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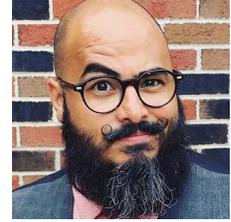
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# Where did Thanksgiving go?

By Tim Patterson

**FENTON** – The question I have is, where did it go? You know, Thanksgiving. Back to school sales were displayed in every store beginning in July, and then came the adornments for Halloween. The next thing I saw were Christmas decorations and those came up at the same time the jack-o-lanterns found a place on store shelves. What happened to Thanksgiving?

And the fact is, that when I did find some “Thanksgiving” decorations or advertisements for this great national celebration, most of it had nothing to do with giving thanks. It seems as though it is not politically correct to give thanks to God. Most stores just say “happy holidays” or some other “fall greetings” that is as generic as it can be.

With all that has transpired over the past months, the political upheaval, hurricanes, mass shootings and a myriad of catastrophes, we need to give thanks to God now more than ever. We need to be thankful to God for His wonderful provision and protection. Many want to play the part of historical revisionist and deny the intent and purpose of this holiday, but the fact remains it is a call for the people of America to pause and be thankful to a benevolent God.

Thanksgiving Day in the United States is an annual day of thanks for the blessings of the past year. It is observed on the fourth Thursday in November in each of the states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. It has its historical roots as a national, and religious holiday that began with the Pilgrims. After the survival of their first colony through the bitter winter, and the gathering of the harvest, Gov. William Bradford of Plymouth Colony issued a thanksgiving proclamation in the autumn of 1621:

“Inasmuch as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat, peas, beans, squashes and garden vegetables, and has made the forests to abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, and inasmuch as He has protected us from the ravages of the savages, has spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the

dictates of our own conscience. Now I, your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and ye little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, on ye hill, between the hours of 9 and 12 in the day time, on Thursday, November 29th, of the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty three and the third year since ye Pilgrims landed on ye Pilgrim Rock, there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all blessings.”

That first Thanksgiving lasted three days, during which the Pilgrims feasted on wild turkey and venison with their

their knees. Thus, they remained the whole night through. After that long night of terror and agony, millions of eager, tear-streaked faces were turned toward the east. When the sky began to grow red and the sun rose, there was a loud shout of joy. Millions of lips said, “Bless the Lord, O my soul!” because the sun had risen after one day of darkness.

The very consistency of God’s blessings sometimes dulls our gratitude. The wonderful thing about the mercies of God is that they are fresh every morning and new every evening. Let us remember to be constantly thankful to our gracious God.



I believe we must have an attitude of living in Thanksgiving. Twenty four hours a day. The question has been asked and rightly so, “What if we only had what we gave thanks for yesterday?”

There is a story in Luke 17:11-17 that tells of 10 lepers who were healed and the rewards of thankfulness. 11 Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. 12 Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. 13 And they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” 14 So when He saw them, He said to them, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And

Indian guests. Days of thanksgiving were celebrated sporadically until, on Nov. 26, 1789, President Washington issued a proclamation of a nation-wide day of thanksgiving. He made it clear that the day should be one of prayer and giving thanks to God. It was to be celebrated by all religious denominations, a circumstance that helped to promote a spirit of common heritage. The origin, purpose and history of the Thanksgiving holiday is complete and without question. This day was established for the sole purpose of giving thanks back to God for what He has given us.

As with so many of our religious holidays, Thanksgiving seems to have lost its meaning and purpose, or at least the way we celebrate it. As a nation we must return to a humble gratitude toward our Father who is our source and supply. What if He were to cease being our source?

so, it was that as they went, they were cleansed. 15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, 16 and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. 17 So Jesus answered and said, “Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? 18 Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?” 19 And He said to him, “Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.”

May your life be full of thanksgiving today and every day.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tim Patterson is Executive Director/Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. Elected unanimously in May of 2015, Patterson formerly served for 9 years as pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla. He also served as trustee chair and national mobilizer for the North American Mission Board.



# 2018 BSCM Annual meeting schedule

## November 9, 2018

### MORNING

**Session 1 – 9:00 am to 12:00 pm**  
Presiding: Jerome Taylor, BSCM President

**9:00 am Opening Music**  
Dan Dameron & Band, Chief Musicians

**9:10 am Welcome & Prayer**  
James Walling, Grace Church Pastor

**9:15 am Call to Order**  
Jerome Taylor

**9:16 am Seating of Messengers**  
Roy Henry, BSCM Recording Secretary

**9:18 am Approval of Agenda**  
Jason Robinson, BSCM Programming Team Chair

**9:20 am BSCM Executive Director's Report**  
Tim Patterson, BSCM Executive Director

**9:45 am Michigan Baptist Foundation Report**  
David Roberts, MBF Chair

**9:50 am 2018 Proposed Budget & Vote**  
Scott Blanchard, BSCM 1st Vice-President

**10:00 am 1st Introduction of Motions**  
Roy Henry

**10:10 am Committee on Resolutions Report**  
Eric Stewart, OneLife Church

**10:15 am BSCM Executive Board Report**  
Roy Henry

**10:25 am SBC President's Greeting**  
J.D. Greear (Video)

**10:30 am Bambi Lake Mission Report**  
Rick Bowen, Bambi Lake Advisory Team Chair  
Michael Schatz, Director of Bambi Lake Spiritual Renewal & Retreat Ministries

**10:45 am 2nd Introduction of Motions**  
Roy Henry

**10:50 am LifeWay Christian Resources Report**  
Nancy Hefferon

**10:55 am Women's Ministry Report**  
Sue Hodnett, Women's Ministry Director & WMU Director

**11:00 am Congregational Worship**  
Dan Dameron & Band

**11:15 am President's Message**  
Jerome Taylor

**12:00 pm Benediction**

**Luncheon Panel 12:15 – 1:45 pm**

### AFTERNOON

**Session 2 – 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm**  
Presiding: Scott Blanchard, BSCM 1st Vice-President

**2:00 pm Opening Music**  
Dan Dameron & Band

**2:10 pm Time of Prayer**

**2:15 pm Reading of Motions & Vote**  
Roy Henry

**2:30 pm Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission Report**  
Russell Moore, ERLC President

**2:35 pm Election of Officers**  
Nominations & Election for President  
Nominations & Election for 1st Vice-President  
Nominations & Election for 2nd Vice-President  
Nominations & Election for 1st Recording Secretary  
Nominations & Election for 2nd Recording Secretary

**2:45 pm Cooperative Program Report**  
Ashley Clayton

**2:50 pm Seminaries Report**

**2:55 pm Guidestone Financial Resources Report**  
Mirachal Johnson

**3:00 pm Michigan Disaster Relief Report**  
Bob Kiger, Michigan DR Director

**3:10 pm Vote on Submitted Resolutions**  
Eric Stewart

**3:15 pm Vote on Book of Reports**  
Roy Henry

**3:20 pm Congregational Worship**  
Dan Dameron & Band

**3:30 pm Executive Director's Challenge**  
Tim Patterson

**4:00 pm Benediction**

### EVENING

**Session 3 – 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm**  
Presiding: Larry Johnson, BSCM 2nd Vice-President

**6:00 pm Opening Music**  
Dan Dameron & Band

**6:10 pm Time of Prayer**  
Ken Nether, Crossover Church

**6:15 pm BSCM Church Sending**  
Kevin Hester, Church Sending Team Chair  
Mike Durbin, BSCM Director of Evangelism

**6:30 pm International Mission Board Report**  
Danny & Sherry, Central Asian Peoples Affinity

**6:40 pm BSCM Church Strengthening**  
Mike Durbin, BSCM Director of Evangelism

**6:55 pm North American Mission Board Report**  
Wayne Parker

**7:05 pm SEND Detroit**  
Wayne Parker

**7:15 pm BSCM Church Starting**  
Ken Render, Church Starting Team Chair  
Tony Lynn, BSCM Director of Missions

**7:30 pm Recognitions & Speaker Introduction**  
Tim Patterson, Pastors & Staff

**7:40 pm Congregational Music**  
Dan Dameron & Band

**8:05 pm Evening Message**  
Ken Whitten, Idlewild Baptist Church

**9:00 pm Benediction & Adjournment**

