



# Missionary's Heart

*Acts 15:<sup>36</sup> After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are."*

*<sup>41</sup> And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.*

*Acts 16:<sup>5</sup> So the churches were being strengthened in the faith and were increasing in number daily.*

It has been another good year for the ARVBA and her member churches. Most have churches continued to see a slow (and sometimes not so slow!) steady increase in Sunday School and Worship Service attendance and mission/ministry events have reflected an increase in participation as well.

A lot of meaningful ministry occurred through the efforts of the ARVBA and her member churches since our last Annual Meeting. Your Association's Recreation Ministry was heavily invested in helping the churches reach their communities. Over twenty-six times, you guys brought the Rec Trailers to Block Parties, Church Festivals, Easter Events, and Mission Trips. Church Camp and the Delta Mission Trip were both extraordinary this year. Vacation Bible School was even bigger in the River Valley and many souls were added to the Kingdom through that effort.

As is always the case, your Association added some new stuff, strengthened some old stuff, and is considering some more stuff! Following is a brief recap of ARVBA 2023 activities. Hopefully, this will help get everyone up to speed on all the good things your contributions to Associational Missions made possible.

As you know by now, Camp Committee meetings are the first activity on the Associational calendar. The passion and single-minded focus of your Camp Committee members is the primary reason the **Association Church Camp** is so effective AND runs so smoothly. Each year, our all-volunteer Camp team is determined to make the current year's Camp better than the last. They first met in January and came together many more times before everyone was satisfied Camp was ready to go.

**Camp** was awesome again this year with 19 churches bringing 334 participants to enjoy a week at Spring Lake Baptist Camp and Retreat Center. Of those 334 campers, 58 were preschool to 4th grade, 87 were Middle School Campers, and 87 were grades 8-12. AND, 78 of those Campers had never been to a church camp before! 100 Staffers kept everything running smoothly and everyone safe.

This year's focused attempt to bring more unchurched students to Camp resulted in more campers being born again than at any time in ARVBA Church Camp history! 74 Campers received Christ's salvation that week and many other lives were positively impacted as more than 20 students recommitted their lives to Christ's leadership and at least one expressing a possible call to ministry/missions service.

**Vacation Bible School** was as big as ever in the ARVBA and that was due, in no small part, to the efforts your VBS Team put into providing our annual VBS Clinic. We sent the Team to Nashville this year to take advantage of the Lifeway's National Training. The information they brought back allowed us to expand our own training to include even more break-out topics and learning opportunities. We built props again for our churches to use and one set even traveled around the state to be used in their regional training events!

Many souls were added to the Kingdom through Vacation Bible School in 2023 and we expect even greater things next year. Our goal is to re-imagine the annual VBS Clinic in hopes of making it more relevant to whichever curriculum your church decides to use.

The annual **ARVBA Mission Trip** took a different turn this year. Instead of returning to the Kansas City area, we headed to the vast, mosquito laden wilderness known as ‘The Arkansas Delta’. I have never been more proud to be a part of Associational work as I was that week. 31 Participants from 8 churches completed 7 Mission projects in 5 days!

We provided our first full-scale VBS for one church while we were there (one young lady was saved!). Bro. Ron Rambo was able to join us again this year which meant we had great meals, awesome morning devotionals, and not a lot of sleep. Five days of hard work and loud laughter in five different locations made this an adventure to remember and the mission team is already praying about possibilities in 2024.

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, the ARVBA was honored to co-host a three-association training event for those involved in Bi-vocational ministry. **EQUIP:SMC23** is a ministry of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and is designed specifically with smaller membership church (SMC) leaders in mind. This was an awesome event for our pastors and we plan to do more conferences like this in the future.

**Disaster Relief and WMU** were as busy as ever doing Kingdom stuff! As you know, both D.R. units have deployed multiple times and each time have shared the gospel with numerous people. I hope you will study the report provided in your booklet and even consider joining the ARVBA Disaster Relief Team.

**2024 will see the return of two of your ‘favorites!’**

**Teach 28:20** Teacher Training conference will be held on February 24<sup>th</sup> at First Baptist, Pottsville. This year's event will be a four-association partnership with churches from North Central (Clinton area), Conway-Perry (Morrilton area), and Clear Creek (Alma-Clarksville area) Baptist Associations joining in.

**ARVBA DAY is back!** Historically, more ARVBA'ers participate in ARVBA Day than almost any other Association sponsored event. Based on the One Day Mission Trip model used by our State Convention, ARVBA Day provides an opportunity for all our churches to join forces and resources to engage in real mission work right here at home. One ‘region’ will be chosen as the primary focus for the work. Mission projects will be discovered, volunteers will volunteer (I know, right?) stuff will get done, and lives will be forever changed. Plans right now are to incorporate ARVBA Day into the Oneday:Serve Local mission emphasis but that may change. Keep reading the Newsletter, checking the Website, or sign up for Associational text messaging for more information.

It has been a blessing to preach in or visit **almost** all our churches this year. I was somewhat surprised to discover I had preached, visited, or taught in 57 ARVBA Church ‘services’ since last October. I guess that's not too bad if we add the occasional hospital visit to the mix. 😊 I do hope to get caught up with the remaining congregations very soon.

As always, thank you very much for the privilege of serving as your Associational Missionary.

**Bro. Danny**

## *Overview Of Activities 2023*

- December 6<sup>th</sup> – Pastor’s Christmas Party
- January
  - January 1- Feb 26 – SmartStart at 1<sup>st</sup> Ola
  - January 5<sup>th</sup> – FIRST CAP MEETNG
- February
  - February 20 & 21 – New Grandbaby & Hospital stay
- March
  - March 3 – Man Church Conference
  - March 11<sup>th</sup> – VBS Clinic at Fair Park
  - March 13-14 – Delta Vision Tour
- April
  - April 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> – Revival at Plainview
- May
  - 6<sup>th</sup> Equip Conference
  - 13<sup>th</sup> – Hosted Lunch with Bill Langly of the IMB & A.M.’s from NCBA. Conway-Perry, Clear Creek
  - 20<sup>th</sup> BIG CAMP MEETING!
- June
  - 12 – 16 CHURCH CAMP
    - 74 POF
    - 31 OTHER DECISIONS
- July
  - ARVBA Mission Trip to the delta (see report)
- August
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Teach 28:20 Meeting with AM’s
- September
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> - SmartStart Presentation to 1<sup>st</sup>, Knoxville
  - 11<sup>th</sup> Met with Nominating and Finance Committees
  - 22<sup>nd</sup> – State WMU Leaders met at the Office