



He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; Acts 1:7
But it is perfectly okay to know what's coming up in the Association!

- ◆ **January 8th -**
 - ◆ *Seminary Extension Registration*
 - ◆ *Missions Team Meeting*
- ◆ **January 10th -**
 - ◆ *Camp Team Meeting*
- ◆ **January 14th -**
 - ◆ *Executive Board Meeting*

2019 Week of Prayer for Baptist Associations
"Equipping Churches to Make Disciples, Who Make Disciples"
 October 20-26, 2019



Plan Your Calendar For Early 2019!



Camp Committee Meeting
January, 10th
6:30
Association Office
Soup Supper Included!

Believe it or not, it is time to begin planning for this year's Associational Church Camp!

Every year, in the first month of the year, dedicated leaders from our member churches come together to seek God's guidance and make corresponding plans for our annual trek to Spring Lake Baptist Camp and Retreat Center. During this first meeting, we will identify the overall Camp theme, discuss possible speakers and worship leaders for the three age-graded camps, and make a list of prospective bible study teachers for the year.

Those are the most important items on the agenda but they are, by no means, the only work your Camp Committee does each year. They enlist volunteers for every position from lifeguard, to paddle boat supervisor; from recreation team to fishing coordinator. Camp 'tournaments' have to be planned, swimming, boating, and waterslide schedules tweaked, and rules and guidelines reviewed. Bible study material has to be ordered/written and the new T-shirt design nailed down.

Please pray for your team as they diligently prepare for the best Church Camp ever!

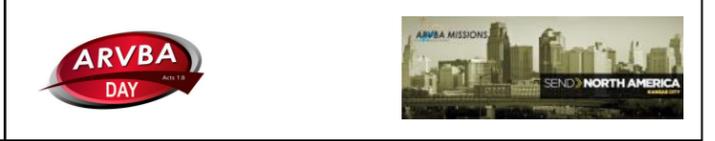


Missions Team Meeting
January 8th
6 p.m.

Your ARVBA Missions Team will hold our first meeting on January 8th to begin planning for the 2019 Missions season. We know there is no greater privilege than partnering as 'The Association' with our churches as they live up to the Lord's command to "Go into all the world and make disciples".

ARVBA Day will be the first item on the agenda as it is the first Associational Mission event on the calendar. April 6th is the official date and 'region 4' is the official target area. More information is included elsewhere in this news letter as well as online.

The second topic involves the **ARVBA/Kansas City Mission Trip 2019** which is set for June 23rd-29th and could involve projects on both sides of the Kansas/Missouri state line. First Baptist Kearney MO. has graciously offered to house us at 'The Falls' again and church planters are already in touch about possible missions opportunities. Check out the article on the next page or look online for more info.



"Churches Doing More Together!"



The Arkansas River Valley Baptist Association
 801 East 16th Street
 Russellville, AR 72801
 www.thearvba.com

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Missionary's Heart

Tim Yarbrough
APR Editor/Executive Director
Arkansas Baptist News

When it comes to the eternal impact of the Church, we all should want to be a part of a legacy ministry that continues to reflect the redemptive message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Where legacy gets a bad rap is when it is attached to a ministry that appears – at least on the surface – to no longer be effective in furthering the cause of Christ in today's world.

For example, I have been appalled over the years that the work of Baptist associations – which pre-date the establishment of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) – is often labeled as something that is no longer needed.

To be certain, as with anything, there are strong associations and weak associations. But in my experience in working with associations across the U.S. for nearly 30 years, more often than not the association is seen as a key partner of the local church – especially among smaller churches – in fulfilling the Great Commission.

It's interesting to me that the work of state Baptist newspapers often falls into the category of legacy ministry as well, when most still reach more Southern Baptists than practically any other denominational medium of communication.

Perhaps it is by nature that Baptist newspapers are holistic in reporting and documenting the activities of Baptists that they get a bad name. After all, their focus is broader than, say, a Baptist college or children's home. But at the same time, their work is important in providing Baptists with information about things such as the governance of their denomination, pertaining to providing information like how their missions dollars are spent.

The fact is that we are a denomination in decline.

While Southern Baptists reported an increase of more than 270 churches in 2017, membership fell for the 11th consecutive year, to 15 million. Since 2006, SBC congregations have lost about 1.3 million

members, according to Annual Church Profile (ACP) reporting.

Even more disturbing is that baptisms also declined, as they have for eight of the past 10 years. Congregations reported baptizing 254,122 people – 26.5 percent fewer than in 2007. The ratio was one baptism for every 59 church members.

But ACP statistics don't tell the entire story.

Despite the best efforts of associations and state conventions across the country, 26 percent of churches did not participate in the survey, according to LifeWay Research. Seventy-four percent of churches participated in the 2017 ACP survey by reporting at least one item. That's down from 80 percent in 2013 and 77 percent in the past three years.

Is there apathy related to participation in the SBC, due to our denominational bureaucracy and politics? I pray not, because even on our worst day, I count it as an honor and a privilege to be part of the Southern Baptist legacy of faith.

(Article first appeared in the November 29th issue of the Arkansas Baptist News Magazine. Reprinted by Permission)

It has been an honor to serve as your Associational Missionary (Now known as the Associational Missions Strategist!) for the past year. We have come through some difficult times together and my family thanks you for your prayers and support.

As Tim Yarbrough points out, there are strong and weak Associations. I can confidently say ours is one of the strongest anywhere. That strength comes through the support of our member churches which is unwavering and increasing!

It is your support that enables us to provide training opportunities for our churches, present the annual VBS clinic, engage in local, state, and national missions, and help congregations that are between pastors. In 2019, we will continue to be a group of churches who are "Doing Even More Together"!

Bro. Doug



ARVBA Day Is On The Calendar

(And It's Coming Sooner Than You Think!)

Due to unforeseeable circumstances, we were forced to cancel the third annual ARVBA Day mission event. Those circumstances have been resolved and, with a new Regional Missions Coordinator in place, we are pleased to announce the date and area for ARVBA Day 2019!

On April 6th, Bro. Johnathan Whitlock and team will lead our 'Region 4' member churches to engage in practical one-day missions projects in their respective areas. Baker's Creek, Darby Lane, Dover 1st, Fair Park, Mercy Tree, Russellville 1st, and Russellville 2nd will be the lead churches in this labor of love and the remainder of your Association's sister churches can't wait to 'do missions' with you on this special Saturday.

In many ways **ARVBA Day** is patterned after the **Acts 1:8 One-Day Mission Trip** sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. Teams are formed from all of our participants to work/engage in whatever ministry opportunities the area churches have discovered. Projects could include Block Parties, yardwork, prayer-walking, door-to-door canvassing/evangelism, light building projects and more so there will be opportunities for every skill set.

We want ARVBA Day to be a family friendly event where everyone can experience the joy of doing ministry together. To that end, we encourage parents/guardians to bring their children and teens with them when they come. (Please use your best judgment when considering very small children!) Churches are also encouraged to sign up as many groups as they would like.

The cost to participate is \$10.00 and the proceeds will help cover the cost of lunch (provided for all our volunteers!) and whatever materials we may need to purchase to complete various projects. More information can be found on the ARVBA Day page of the Associations website (www.thearvba.com)

What a great pre-Easter Outreach event for the congregations in 'Region 4'!



Seminary Extension Returns To The River Valley!

January 15, 2019

Seminary Extension is once again available in the ARVBA area. Crow Mountain Baptist Church will be our licensed Extension Center and the official ministry name is **"Built on the Rock Seminary Extension"**.

All classes will be held in the Gaines White Fellowship Hall with the first class starting at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 15th, 2019. This first course, a study of the book of Mark, will conclude on March 12th.

The cost is \$165.00 per person and includes all books and materials. **PLUS!.. a \$40.00 ARVBA scholarship is available for the first 10 participants to register!**

Registration is January 8th at the Assoc. Office or you can call Bro. Howard Kisor at 479-967-6352 or 479-747-3976 for information.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL CLINIC 2019

**MARCH 4TH
FAIR PARK BAPTIST CHURCH
6:30-8:00**

Each year we host one of the few Associational Vacation Bible School Clinics in the state. By the time the clinic rolls around, our team has already been to the annual 'sneak-peek' hosted by Lifeway Christian Resources. They have studied the material, noted any changes to style and/format, pre-ordered samples of the current year's resources and constructed VBS 'props' for our churches to share. Clinic attendees will be treated to a hands-on experience with all the material, actually see decoration ideas and suggestions, take part in a scaled down version of the VBS Worship Rally and enjoy a dinner provided by the Association.

