



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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!

- ◆ **October 23rd - 25th** - Arkansas Baptist State Convention In Jonesboro
- ◆ **November 22nd-24th** - Thanksgiving Holiday - Office Closed
- ◆ **December 8th** - Pastor's Christmas Fellowship

ARVBA 2023 video link:

<https://vimeo.com/872783544?share=copy>

"Churches Doing More Together!"

PASTOR SEARCH

Please pray for the following churches as they seek their next Pastor

- First Baptist, Hector*
- First Baptist, Centerville*
- First Baptist, Ola*
- Flat Rock Baptist*
- First Baptist, Knoxville*
- First Baptist, Havana*
- Hopewell, Baptist*



The Year In Review Edition!



Vacation Bible School

We returned to Fair Park Baptist Church this year for another excellent VBS Clinic. This year, we sent the team to Nashville for additional training and Mrs. Wendy, Mrs. Leona, and the rest of the group were at the top of their game (get it?) in putting everything together. The extra breakout sessions proved to be a huge success and will be incorporated in future clinics.

The majority of ARVBA churches went with Lifeway's 'Twist and Turn' curriculum and our VBS props were used extensively throughout the Association.



Church Camp 2023!

334 Campers!

19 Churches!

74 Professions of Faith!

This year, we determined to "Chase The Unchurched" and God honored that labor of love. Instead of being content to get just 'our kids' back to Camp, ARVBA congregations committed to reaching out to children and youth who were not actively, or consistently involved in church. As a result, our records revealed that Seventy-eight of the students enrolled this year had never attended a Church Camp before! How about That!!!

As the results show, an awesome number of professions of faith were recorded and many other life-changing decisions were made. Four churches from outside our Association joined us this year and Camp was much stronger because of their participation.

We Partnered Again!

On May 6th, the ARVBA partnered with Conway-Perry and North Central Associations to host the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's Smaller Membership Church pastors conference. Our Bi-vocational pastors were able gather with their peers for fellowship and to receive training and encouragement designed to strengthen the work in their unique ministry circumstances.



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Missionary's Heart

It has been another good year for the ARVBA and her member churches. Most churches have continued to see a 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 Year-In-Review. The Recreation Ministry was heavily invested in helping 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 in 2023. Vacation Bible School was even bigger in the River Valley this year and many souls were added to the Kingdom through that effort.

Following is a brief recap of ARVBA activities which will, hopefully, help get everyone up to speed on all the good things your contributions to Associational Missions made possible.

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 Lifeway's National Training. The information they brought back enabled 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 this year and we expect even greater things in 2024. 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 hope you will read the brief recap on page 3 and watch the video online.

Disaster Relief was 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 read the synopsis on page 3 AND invite Bro. Steve to your church for a full report. (You might 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 24th at First Baptist, Pottsville. This time we have invited **three** neighboring Associations to join us!

ARVBA DAY is back! Historically, more ARVBA'ers participate in ARVBA Day than almost any other Association sponsored event. 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 of 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.

The Year In Review Continued...

The Mission Trip!



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'. Bro. Danny wrote, "I have never been more proud to be a part of Associational work as I was that week". Thirty-one participants from eight ARVBA churches completed seven Mission projects in five days!

The Team provided our first full-scale VBS for one church while we were there and one young lady was saved!. Bro. Ron Rambo was able to join us again this year which meant we had really great meals. We enjoyed 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.



Disaster Relief activities started early this year!

2023 offered extraordinary opportunities to share the gospel by either picking up a chainsaw, a shovel or other ministry tool. In January, the Team deployed to the DeWitt/Gould, area to provide flood relief. February found the unit responding to a wind event in Fordyce where they helped with Incident Management, damage assessments, and chainsaw work.

In March our folks traveled to Mississippi to lend a hand with chainsaw recovery work. Before that task could be completed, the Team was re-called to Arkansas (early April) to deal with tornado damage in Little Rock, Wynne, and areas in between.

In June, the unit was busy in our own area responding to wind damage reports in Pottsville, Russellville, London, Dover, Knoxville, and Hector. After that, it was off to Faulkner County for more chainsaw work followed by deployments to Georgia and Florida installing temporary roofs and providing chainsaw work.

As you can imagine, the ARVBA Disaster Relief Team is always looking for volunteers. Bro. Steve Overton would love the chance to speak with your church about all the service opportunities available through the D.R. Ministry. Just give him a call to schedule a presentation anytime!

Returning to The ARVBA In 2024!



It's Been Way Too Long!

Tentatively Scheduled for April or May



February 24th & 25th