

THE VIEWPOINT

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SCBA

Mobilizing churches to strategically engage our community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ

In This Issue

- BAPTIST PRESS ARTICLE
- RESOURCES FOR YOU!
- A MESSAGE FROM YOUR WMU
- MISSION TO CHINA
- MEN'S MINISTRY UPDATE
- PRAYING FOR OUR PASTORS



SBC News

Avatar skins flashed across the screen like a late-night meme scroll, each one more absurd than the last. Choosing a character to represent you in the virtual world is hard enough — choosing one that helps start a Gospel conversation on a virtual reality mission trip? That's a whole new level.

Giggles rippled through the short-term mission team when someone clicked on a giant fish perched atop a man in a three-piece suit. Ridiculous? Yes. But also a ready-made segue into Jesus feeding the 5,000 or why a fish is a universal symbol of Christianity.

Read more at <https://bit.ly/46Goneu>

Scan me



Author: Sue Sprenkle | Baptist Press

Open Church Positions

Churches without a pastor:

Knob Creek Baptist Church
Providence Baptist Church

Please join me in praying for our brothers & sisters in Christ as they seek a pastor to lead them.

From Our Churches to the Front Lines

Please join us in praying for these members of our churches who are currently deployed.

The Bingham Family (Valley View)

The Morrow Family (Valley View)

The Johnson Family (Shiloh)

The Carter Family (Shiloh)

Did you know the SCBA can provide resources for your church?



Click [here](#) for a list of things your Association can do for you!

“A Word from Your WMU”

Written by Michele Bryan | SCBA WMU Director

Hello, ladies! I'm Michele Bryan, and it's a true joy to serve as your interim Sevier County WMU Director. I have big footsteps to fill, following our previous WMDirectors we have had. I count it an honor and privilege to hold this position. Before I share this month's encouragement, here's a little about me so you'll know the heart behind the mission.

I've been a member of Valley Baptist Church in Wears Valley since 1994, and I currently have the privilege of serving as our WMU Director there as well. I'm a wife to Willie Bryan, a mother to Colton, Nichole, Jessica, and Brittany, and a grandmother to six precious grand-babies who keep my heart full and my life lively. As Sevier County WMU Director, my prayer is to increase mission awareness among our 61 associational churches and to unite our ladies in missional love and fellowship—encouraging one another to obey the Great Commission. Jesus' commission was His final, clear instruction to His followers to take the Gospel to all peoples and make disciples...I firmly believe this applies to us as well. We are here to serve, not be served! We each have a divine calling on our life. We were created with purpose for such a time as this.

Have you ever tried to squeeze into shoes that weren't made for you? Maybe they looked right. Maybe someone else made them sound right. Maybe you thought, "If I can just make this work, I'll finally feel settled." But eventually, the truth shows up—pressure, fatigue, a loss of peace, and a walk that just doesn't feel steady. That picture isn't only relatable... it's spiritual. Many women carry expectations God never assigned. We try to fit into roles that aren't ours. We compare our calling to someone else's and end up walking with unnecessary strain—doing good things, but not necessarily God's thing for us. That's why our **2026 Spring Ladies Prayer Conference theme is "If the Shoe Fits"**.

(continued on next page)

Join a Team, Make a Difference

Our mission at the Association is to mobilize churches to strategically engage our community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We strive to do that by encouraging pastors, equipping churches, and engaging the community. This doesn't happen alone, that's why our Associational Teams are a vital part of our ministry in Sevier County.

The teams are:

Administrative Team, Discipleship Team, Ministry/Missions Team, Vision Team, & Campus Ministry Team.

These teams help guide, support, and resource our churches so we can make a greater impact together!

Please reach out to Justin to learn more & sign up to serve on one of these teams ... your voice matters!

“A Word from Your WMU”

...continued

And that message reminds us of a powerful truth: *Purpose is not something you force.* It’s something you discover. And when you find it (*when the shoe finally fits*) your walk becomes steady, your steps become confident, and you begin to walk the path God prepared just for you.

This gathering is designed to help women slow down, pray honestly, and ask the kinds of questions that lead to clarity and freedom:

- Am I walking in God’s calling... or someone else’s expectations?
- Have I been striving to “fit” into something God never asked of me?
- What would change if I stopped forcing and started following?
- Where is God calling me to stand firm... and where is He calling me to step forward?

We’ll spend time in Scripture and prayer—creating room for the Lord to confirm, correct, restore, and strengthen our steps. Some women will leave with fresh courage. Others will leave with renewed peace. And many will leave with something deeply comforting: the permission to lay down what never fit in the first place.

If you’re ready to explore how to determine whether you’re wearing the correct shoes for your God-given purpose, I would love for you to join us!

[Register online at LPC.ValleyViewBaptist.online](https://lpc.valleyviewbaptist.online)

Come expecting encouragement. Come ready for prayer. Come willing to let God show you what truly fits—so you can walk forward with steadiness, confidence, and joy. Because when the shoe fits... you don’t have to force the walk, you simply follow the path God already prepared.



“Sending Hope to China”

Written by Meng Johnson | President of Hope 3:16

My name is Meng (pronounced “Mong”), and I am from Sichuan Province, China. I was born into a very poor family. My grandmother believed girls were worthless and was angry that I was not a boy. When my mother gave birth to me, she forced us out of the house. Because my father had to work far away in another province to provide for us, my mother and I endured many years of hardship and mistreatment from relatives. Life became even more difficult when my mother died of cancer when I was 18. I was preparing for my university entrance exam, and she hid her illness so I would not worry about her. After she passed away, I felt hopeless and alone, as if my life had no meaning.

Before coming to the United States, I knew nothing about God. In the summer of 2011, I met a Christian woman from Thailand whose love deeply impacted me. Through her and other believers, I began reading the Bible and experienced a peace I had never known. On Christmas Day 2011, I accepted Jesus Christ and began a new life. In 2012 God brought me back to the United States, where I continued to grow in my faith. Although my family had no money for college after paying my mother’s medical bills, God provided through generous people who helped with transportation, tuition, and housing.

One of my greatest prayers was that my father could come see me graduate. By God’s grace he received a visa, experienced the love of the Christian community, and accepted Christ. He was baptized the day before returning to China. Later God blessed me with a wonderful husband, Justin, and our two sons, Jayden (5) and Micah (3). As I remembered how others helped me when I felt alone, God gave me a heart to serve international J1 students who often face the same loneliness. In 2017 my husband and I started a ministry called Hope 3:16 to share the Gospel & minister to these students, especially those from China.

Over the past 14 years, with many faithful volunteers, we have connected with more than 350 Chinese students. Nearly 60 have accepted Christ and been baptized before returning to China. Through friendships, hospitality, and Bible studies, we have distributed more than 250 Bibles & devotionals and shared the Gospel with many who had never heard about Jesus before. In the summer of 2024, I returned to China for a mission trip, visiting 73 students in 9 cities and meeting nearly 500 of their family members and friends. During that trip we distributed 138 Bibles, and three people accepted Christ.

This coming summer I am planning another three-week mission trip to China to reconnect with former students and their families. I hope to visit four cities, encourage believers, share the Gospel, and help provide 100 Bibles for local underground churches. I would greatly appreciate your prayers for safe travels, open doors to share the Gospel, and receptive hearts. [If you feel led to support this ministry financially, you may send a check to:](#)

**Hope 3:16 or Meng Johnson
1418 Mesquite Dr.
Sevierville, TN 37876**

Thank you for taking the time to read how God rescued me from a life of despair and is now using my story to bring hope to others. It amazes me that God brought me from China to the United States so I could hear the Gospel, and now He is sending me back to share the hope of Jesus in my native tongue with my own people.

Sincerely,


Men's Ministry Update

Written by Herb Caughron | Men's Ministry Director

It has been a while since I've written an article for the Viewpoint. It is getting that time of year to prepare for the Annual Mission Trip. We have been doing this for over thirty years now. The donations from churches and individuals throughout the years have allowed us to go serve in many different communities throughout the past. Because of many selfless volunteers and generous contributions we have had opportunities to be a blessing and be blessed while serving our Lord and representing Sevier County Baptists.

The annual trip is always Father's Day week. We leave from the **Baptist Center at 2 pm on Sunday and return on Friday evening**. There is no cost for the volunteers. The transportation, food, and materials are provided through the Men's Ministry account. We usually stay in a church or wherever.

This **June 21-26** we are returning to Grey, Kentucky. It is about 4 miles from Corbin. We will be working with Knox County Kentucky Baptist Association again. The Director of Missions is Mark Keith. He is such a great guy and he has a heart for God's work in that area. He has several projects in mind at different places. We will probably be staying at the Baptist Center, they have showers and a kitchen. They have hosted us before and it has worked well.

My wife Pam and I are going for a pre visit probably in April or early May. After that I will be able to tell more about the projects that we will be doing.

If you or someone from your church would be interested in going this year, we need to know by the end of May. If you have questions just give me a call at 865-654-1937. Please Pray for the team that God puts together for this trip. Thank You!

Rick Gering is a bi-vocational lead pastor at Bethel Church in Sevierville, TN. In addition to pastoring, he is a church consultant through Thom Rainer's Church Answers. He assists churches in discovery of purpose, vision, values, and strategic initiatives. He can also provide leadership and staff development. He is currently available to come alongside you to help your church through a refocusing process. Please reach out to Rick at 479.561.7179 or pr@bethelinthesmokies.com.



Easter Follow-Up

A thoughtful follow-up can turn a single visit into a lasting connection.

3 Simple Steps:

- Say Thank You – Send a quick text, email, or note within 24 hours.
- Make a Connection – A short phone call or personal note during the week goes a long way.
- Extend an Invitation – Invite them back to a small group or upcoming event.

Small acts of intentional care can make a lasting difference!

Download a simple 7-Day Easter Follow-Up Guide:

<https://bit.ly/3MMwzDd>

Praying for our Pastors

Mar. 29th - Apr. 4th

Seth Gibson | Mountain View
Wayne Smith | New Center

April 5th - 11th

Dwayne White | New Era
Jerry Lowe | New Salem

April 12th - 18th

Greg Rains | Northview
Chris Kendall | Oak City

April 19th - 25th

Andrew Wilson | Oldham's Creek
Ronnie White | Paw Paw Hollow

Apr. 26th - May 2nd

Terry Kirby | FBC Pigeon Forge
Bobby Owens | Red Bank First

scan the code to
sign up for text reminders



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

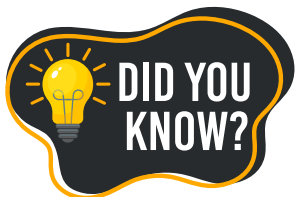
-Calendar-

- **March 30th** - Associational Gathering
6:30pm | SCBA Office
- **April 5th** - Easter Sunday
- **April 12th** - Baptism Sunday (SBC)
- **April 19th** - Baptist & Reflector Day
- **April 21st** - Campus Ministry Team Meeting
6:00pm | SCBA Office
- **April 27th** - Associational Gathering
6:30pm | SCBA Office

-In Other News-

- *Spring Break* for Sevier County begins March 30th!
- Baptist & Reflector Day is April 19th - Your church is invited to request free copies of the TBC's award-winning newspaper for a special B&R Day celebration! It's the perfect time to discover how B&R informs, connects, & equips Tennessee Baptists. Visit unigo.de/BRDay to request your free papers today!

Baptist AND Reflector
TELLING THE STORY OF TENNESSEE BAPTISTS SINCE 1835



The heliopause – the region of space in which solar wind isn't hot enough to push back the wind of particles coming from distant stars – is often considered the "boundary wall" of the Solar System and interstellar space.



PO Box 4099
Sevierville, TN 37864

Return Service Requested

**Associational Mission
Strategist**

Justin Johnson
p. 865-453-0124
e. justin@sevbaptist.org

Stay Connected!

sevbaptist.org | campsmoky.us



APRIL 2026

VOLUME 43, ISSUE 4

THANKS FOR BEING A SUBSCRIBER!