

Appalachee Baptist Association
"A Family of Churches"
The Vision

"Where there is no vision, the people will perish" ~ Proverbs 29:18

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Dr. J.B. Graham
Associational Missionary

P. O. Box 1064
Monroe, Ga. 30655

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THE GREATEST GIFT

My sixth Christmas is indelibly stamped in my memory. We lived in New Mexico where Dad was the bivocational pastor of a small rural church. He called himself a "part-time preacher" because the term "bivocational" had not been used as we use it today. His other job was farming. We had a few cows and chickens and one pig that was destined for the smokehouse. Christmas was going to be pretty skimpy, present-wise. We traveled to Grandpa's house and arrived there by Christmas Eve in the morning. That night momma took one of Grandpa's heavy wool work socks and clothes pinned it on the back of a cane bottomed chair. She explained, "In the morning you might find something in this stocking."



Sure enough the next morning there was the sock bulging with an apple, an orange, and a few walnuts and hard candy. I was thrilled. Then I discovered in the very bottom of that work sock was the greatest gift I had ever received. It was a three bladed pocket knife with a bone handle. That was my pride and joy and I managed to keep it for years!

By the next May I received a greater gift—the greatest gift ever given. It was the gift of eternal life through the forgiveness of my sin. I have since lost the pocket knife, in fact I have owned and lost several, but I've never lost the gift of eternal life. What's more, I never will!

Two weeks ago on a mission trip I gave a brief devotional to a group of folks who were to receive the gift of food at a mission center. I told the story of my Christmas gift and of my excitement. Then I quoted John 3:16 and talked about the greatest gift ever given. Three persons received that gift that afternoon.

This Christmas there will be a lot of gifts exchanged and I suspect there will be great excitement and joy. But in all the celebrations none will even come close to the greatest gift, given by God and offered to anyone who will receive it.

**THE APPALACHEE BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION OFFICERS AND STAFF
WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS!**



**ASSOCIATIONAL WMU SPONSORS
MISSION TRIP TO APPALACHIA**

Thirteen people from five churches within two associations packed three vehicles chock full of clothes, tools, diapers and books departed from Bethabara Church Sunday, November 1st at 2 p.m. for a three day mission to Owsley County Kentucky.



Members from First Baptist Winder, Eastside Baptist, Bethabara Baptist, Social Circle Baptist in Appalachian Association, and four persons representing two other associations joined the caravan.



Our ministry on this trip consisted of providing and sorting clothing, preparing boxes with staple food supplies for food distribution, providing baby diapers, Bible studies, construction and repair work.

Here, two volunteers reposition a wood burning stove for safety reasons in a home where members were critically ill.



Owsley County is the most economically burdened county in Kentucky and the second poorest in the entire United States.

Southern Baptists have one ministry center in the town of Boonville which is managed by a mission service corps missionary.

BOLD SPRING CHURCH HOST ASSOCIATIONAL MEN'S MINISTRY

Despite drizzling rain and fog on Tuesday, November 17th men's ministry groups met from several churches to hear Harry White, Palmetto Campus Program Coordinator for the Baptist Children's Home located in Palmetto Georgia. Harry briefly explained the programs and services at the children's home including residential care, group homes, emergency shelters, a drug and alcohol abuse treatment center, community child and adolescent services, maternity care ministry, as well as two short term camping opportunities. The newest program is called the Good Shepherd Center which provides both short and long-term care and offers an outpatient therapeutic riding program.

Ken Jennings, Associational Men's Ministry Director hopes to engage our men in some meaningful projects at the children's home.

The Bold Springs men prepared and served their famous Brunswick stew. Rev. James Bolton is pastor.

OCONEE-GAINESVILLE BAPTIST COLLEGE MINISTRY ADVISORY GROUP MEETS, GETS ORGANIZED



Pictured left to right are Chip Wheeler, Jane Reese, Vaughn Colquitt, Nathan Byrd, Aaron Arledge, and Joe Graham. This was the first meeting of the newly formed Appalachian Baptist Association's Baptist College Ministry Advisory Council. The council was formed at our recent annual meeting by unanimous vote of the messengers.

The meeting was mostly informal and directed toward a general discussion on how to enhance the ministry to commuting college students. Vaughn Colquitt, BCM Intern who is assigned to the campus reported there were 1200 students enrolled. She emphasized that we need to establish some consistency in ministry so that the person who worked with students "wouldn't have to re-invent the wheel" every semester. Jane Reese, member at Bethabara Baptist Church and long time volunteer with the students commented that the monthly meal ministry is important because by the end of the month some students were running low on cash. Chip Wheeler spoke of two important issues in the matter of college ministry. "One," he said, "is that we need more church involvement, and second we need more students to become involved." The group agreed that we should provide ways for students to speak to the churches about college ministry when offered the opportunity. This would

help churches to know more about their ministry opportunities toward students.

The group was honored to have Nathan Byrd, Associate Student Minister at UGA and Joe Graham, Specialist in College Ministries for Georgia Baptists.

Aaron Arledge, Pastor of Bethel Baptist Church was elected as Chairman of the advisory council.

FIRST BAPTIST SOCIAL CIRCLE NAMES MIKE HARDY AS PASTOR

Reverend Mike is a graduate of Anderson College, Mercer University and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has also done Doctoral studies at Erskine Theological Seminary. Mike has served churches in North Carolina and Georgia and most recently as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Greensboro, Georgia. Other staff positions include administrator of the Palmetto Campus of the Georgia Baptist Children's homes and associate pastor of the First Baptist Church Blairsville, Georgia.

Jackie is a graduate of Tift College and has attended Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. She has served churches in South Carolina, and Georgia in various staff positions and taught in both public and private schools.

Both Mike and Jackie have been very involved in denominational work through their local Baptist Associations and the Georgia Baptist Convention. Jackie serves Georgia WMU as endowment consultant and sings with the state convention's *Jubalheirs*

Mike and Jackie have two children, Michael 19, and Kara Lyn 17, who is a senior at Nathanael Greene Academy. Both are involved in sports as well as church activities.

Brother Mike will be installed as pastor and assume his duties on December 6th.

Appalachee Baptist Association family of churches extends to the Hardy family our warmest welcome!!!

The Vision is published monthly except for **July & August**. The Vision's purpose is to inform, encourage and share the story of the Appalachian Baptist Association of churches. Please share your Church's noteworthy activities and news items. Information should be received by the 21st of each month. You can send information by e-mail at administration@appalachee.org or mail to Appalachian Baptist Association, P.O. Box 1064, Monroe, Ga. 30655. The Vision is mailed free by request. If you wish to receive it, simply contact us and give us your name, church and mailing address.

The Vision

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The Apostle Paul put it simply in
I Thessalonians 5:25,
“Brethren, pray for us.”

~First Baptist of Bogart
Pastor Ted Tedder
~First Baptist Loganville
Pastor Ronald Kendall
~First Baptist Monroe
Pastor Glen Money
~First Baptist Social Circle
Pastor Mike Hardy
~First Baptist Statham
Pastor Gordon Thornton

DECEMBER 2009

1st Minister's Meeting – 12:00 p.m.
15th Budget & Finance Committee Meeting – 10:00 a.m.
15th Associational Council Meeting – 11:00 a.m.
22nd No Continuing Education
24.1.3 Christmas Holiday – Office Closed
29th No Continuing Education
Continuing Education -7:00p.m.-9:00 p.m.-every
Tuesday

JANUARY 2010

5th Minister's Meeting – 12:00 p.m.
5th WMU Associational Leadership Team Meeting –
ABA Mission Center
11TH VBS Director's Preview, Beech Haven Baptist
Church, Athens, Ga.
14th Executive Committee Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
15-17th Young Women's Retreat (Georgia WMU) – Camp
Pinnacle
16th Prayer Walk in ABA Association – TBA
21-23rd Selah – Women's Ministry Directors – Camp
Pinnacle, Clayton, Ga.
30th Leaderlife Training – Norman Park Conference
Center
Continuing Education-7:00p.m-9:00p.m.-every
Tuesday