

*The Vision*  
Of  
*The Appalachian Baptist Association*

*A family of churches on mission*  
P.O. Box 1064, 124 W. Spring St., Monroe, GA 30655  
770-267-8278 - [www.appalachee.org](http://www.appalachee.org)

*Dr. J.B. Graham, Missionary-Rev. Eric Buffington, Associate Missionary*  
*Virginia Mason, Administrative Assistant*

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*October & November 2011*

On the afternoon and evening of October 11<sup>th</sup> Faith Baptist of Monroe hosted our 176<sup>th</sup> Associational Annual Meeting. Both sessions of the meeting, as well as the Executive Committee Meeting which proceeded, were well attended and uplifting. The theme for the 176<sup>th</sup> meeting of our Association was 'The Value of One!' drawn from Luke 15:4. As the sessions progressed our Theme Interpretations were presented by Dr. James (Buster) Brown, Pastor of Annie Mary Baptist and vice-moderator of the Association and by Rev. Don Malcom, Pastor of Ebenezer Baptist and clerk of the Association. Music for the afternoon session was provided by Junior Morrow, Music Minister at Annie Mary Baptist. The music for the evening session was lead by Rev. Jon Graham, Music Minister at Faith Baptist and by the choir of Faith. The keynote speaker for the night was Rev. Butch Butcher, former pastor of Summit Baptist, who currently serves as a Georgia Baptist State Missionary for church planting. One of the highlights of the evening was voting to welcome Lighthouse Baptist Church and their pastor, Rev. Tom Harris, into full Associational membership. Other business included the election of officers and the presentation of reports from our various ministry teams and committees. Dr. Jimmy Wilson, Pastor of Ministries, at Loganville Baptist was elected to a second term as our Moderator and Dr. Buster Brown was

elected to serve a second term as Vice-Moderator. With the retirement of Dr. J.B. Graham, an Associational Missionary search committee has been formed. The committee reported that they have narrowed the list of potential candidates to six names. Please be in prayer for this search committee as they continue their work. In the interim, Rev. Eric Buffington, Pastor of Bishop Baptist and current Assistant Associational Missionary and Virginia Mason, Association Administrative Assistant will be available to work with our churches.



**Georgia Baptist  
Convention Annual  
Meeting**

November 14-15  
North Metro First Baptist Church -  
[www.northmetro.net](http://www.northmetro.net)  
1026 Old Peachtree Road Northeast,  
Lawrenceville, GA 30043-2530

*Happy Thanksgiving !!*

*“He just needed a new battery for his watch.”*

Appalachee Associational Missionary  
Dr. J.B. Graham retires

By Eric Buffington

The past summer, my wife and I had the opportunity to spend a few days in Hilton Head, S.C. at the invitation of Dr. J.B. and Areta Graham. The trip was relaxing and fun filled, especially the time my family was able to spend with the Graham's. On the drive back home my always social 7 year old son, Trevor, spoke up from the back seat. “Dad,” he said, “You know that J.B. guy?” I replied, “Yes” wondering what would follow. Trevor then exclaimed, with the enthusiasm of a child, “I like him!”

As the day of Dr. Graham's official retirement approached, I struggled to find the right words to express the appreciation that I, my fellow pastors and layman of the Appalachee Association felt for our retiring Associational Missionary. Dr. Graham, or ‘the Boss’, as I liked to call him at the office, came to us in a moment of great need and opportunity. As an Association we needed a fresh start. That is just what God provided for us through the steady hand and seasoned heart of Dr. J.B. Graham. Over his 5 years with us our pastors and leaders came to trust the wisdom and vision that he offered. Soon we came to realize that we all ‘liked’ him. Dr. Graham's clear vision for reaching the unsaved with the Gospel and his passion for seeing the churches and ministries of our Associational Family develop into all they could be for Christ and His Kingdom was evident in both word and deed. His impact will be lasting.

However, a little thing like retirement can't slow J.B. Graham down! He recently

accepted the call to be co-pastor of Center Hill Baptist in Loganville. Dr. Graham's son, Jon, said jokingly at the annual session that his dad retired every time he needed a new battery for his watch. If that is true, I personally hope he does not need another new battery any time soon. We are going to miss seeing ‘the Boss’ at the office, but I'll be looking for him at our various meetings. If I don't see him there I'm going to go looking for his beloved 68' Triumph Spitfire because I know that he will be somewhere near by!



*“God's Kingdom has been and will continue to be impacted by him being there for me as a new pastor. He treated me as highly valuable, took time to talk with me, guide me, partner with me and minister to me. I am honored and blessed by God that he has been my associational Missionary”*

*Rev. Clyde Self*

Thoughts on the  
“Young Pastor’s Conference”  
Hosted by the GBC  
by Eric Buffington

On Tuesday, October 25 the GBC hosted a gathering for ‘young’ pastors at the GBC Mission and Ministry Center. For this meeting ‘young’ was defined as ministers under the age of forty-five. Dr. Robert White, Executive Director of the GBC and several other convention leaders were in attendance. The overall tone of the gathering was open and positive and Dr. White answered questions posed by those gathered with an attitude of grace and humility, as well as a healthy dose of humor.

While the entire meeting was profitable, a few points particularly caught my attention. First, the 120 pastors at the meeting actually represented 25% of the total number of pastors in the GBC under 45. Almost 80% of the pastors in our state are over that age. Second, young pastors are deeply concerned over the issue of Cooperative Program spending. A large portion of our time was spent addressing questions about how CP dollars are being used. Third, young pastors are equally concerned about church planting and church revitalization. The need for new churches and how they should be planted was addressed. However, right along with that concern, the question of how to reenergize existing struggling churches was raised. Fourth, there is a clear doctrinal difference, which does not have to be disruptive to unity, between younger and older pastors over the issue of Reformed theology. When the ‘more Reformed’ pastors in the room were asked to raise a hand and identify themselves, well over 55% and perhaps as high as 65% of those in the room lifted up an arm. Lastly, young pastors are very

interested in partnering with older pastors as equals so that they might learn from the wisdom of those who are walking before them. Interested individuals can find out more by following the twitter tag #youngleadersgbc or by joining in the conversation on Facebook at the “Younger Pastor’s Forum.”

Bivocational & Retired Ministers and  
Wives Banquet to be held Nov. 17th

The Appalachian Association will host its annual banquet in honor of our retired and bivocational ministers at the association office on Nov.17<sup>th</sup>. The meal will be free and the fellowship will be joyful. This will be a time to celebrate the continuing efforts of these ministers to advance the message of the gospel. Please make plans to attend and RSVP to the association office by Nov. 10.

GBC Study Task Force Releases  
Their Initial Report

After two years of prayerful research, discussion, and thought the GBC Study Task force has released its initial report on how Georgia Baptist can most effectively reach our state for the Gospel. With an ever increasing unsaved and unchurched population in our area this report has an authentic sense of urgency. Task force members identified ‘Five Smooth Stones’ that, given proper emphasis, will strengthen our Convention. These ‘Smooth Stones’ are spiritual renewal, generosity, church revitalization, church planting and authentic evangelism. Interested individuals can read a preview of the report, which will be presented on November 15<sup>th</sup> at the GBC Annual Session, at [gbcreport.blogspot.com](http://gbcreport.blogspot.com). Information can also be found by following the Twitter feed @GBCtaskforce.

**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 21<sup>st</sup> of each month. You can send information by e-mail at [administration@appalachee.org](mailto: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.”

~ Ebenezer Baptist  
Pastor Don Malcom  
~ Faith Baptist  
Pastor Chris Conner  
~ Fellowship Baptist  
Pastor Wilburn Hill  
~ Freeman Creek  
Pastor Ken Jennings  
~ Grace Baptist  
Pastor Brad Waters  
~ Harmony Baptist  
Pastor Brant Callaway

#### **NOVEMBER 2011**

- 1 Storying in a Day – Ga. Baptist Center, Duluth, GA
- 1 Minister's Meeting – 12:00 p.m.
- 8 Mission Development Meeting–2:00 pm
- 14-15 GBC Annual Meeting
- 17 Retired/Bi-Vocational Minister's & Wives Banquet – 6:30 p.m.
- 24-25 Office Closed – Thanksgiving Continuing Education – every Tuesday 7:00-9:00 p.m.

#### **DECEMBER 2011**

- 4-11 Week of Prayer for International Missions
- 6 Minister's Meeting – 12:00 p.m.
- 13 Budget & Finance Committee – 10:00 a.m.
- 13 Associational Council Meeting – 11:00 a.m.
- Dec. 22-Jan. 2 Office Closed-Christmas Holiday Continuing Education – every Tuesday 7:00-9:00 p.m.