Petersburg Baptist ASSOCIATION
MISSIONS Pray·Support·Go

The Gleam

Newsletter of The Petersburg Baptist Association

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MINISTERS CONFERENCE

Did you know that threats against pastors are up 17% in recent years? Or that many instances of violence in the church do not meet the Department of Homeland Security criteria of an active shooter situation? Or that in active shooter situations, if the shooter meets resistance, 87% of the time no more people are hurt? If you had attended the November Ministers' Conference, you would know. Ryan Coe from Apex Defense Group in North Carolina gave excellent information to those in attendance. We appreciate Rev. Michael Fields and Newville Baptist Church for hosting the conference and providing a delicious lunch afterward.

On December 2, we will meet at 10:30 AM at the Associational Office. Dr. Mark Hughes will lead a presentation and discussion around the issue of holiday stress and depression that affects some of the people in our pews and maybe even a few of us in ministry. While the holidays are "mostly merry," for some people the holidays represent a time of angst and anxiety. We will explore some of the causes of holiday stress and, more importantly, some of the coping skills we can employ and teach others to help handle the harried holidays.

On January 6, 2020 at 10:30 AM, we will meet at the Association Office. We are still waiting on confirmation of the topic. As topics for the rest of the year become known, we will announce those, and we are already setting up pastors who want to host for next year. If you have an area of particular expertise, or know a presenter who does, please let me know (mike@sappony1773.org). You can also call or text 804-896-2859. I look forward to meeting with you soon!

In Christ,

Mike

PRAYER CONCERNS

5 Churches without Pastors
Associational Ministries
Romania Partnership

MUSIC DIRECTOR POSITION AVAILABLE

Matoaca Baptist Church is seeking a part time Music Director. This person must have a Godly attitude who feels called to minister to the church through music. Must have experience in music and executing music programs of the church. This position shall coordinate with the pastor, plan and lead congregation music for Sunday morning and Sunday evening services including special events. The director shall conduct rehearsals for adult, youth, and children's choirs. For further information, please send resume and cover letter to Bucen@aol.com

The Associational Office will be closed for Christmas December 23 – January 3 and will reopen on January 6th.

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UNSHAKABLE PURSUIT

"My dear friends, stand firm and don't be shaken. Always keep busy working for the Lord. You know that everything you do for Him is worthwhile." *1 Cor 15:58 (CEV)*

Can you believe it? It's the Christmas Season……already!! Time to start the planning and shopping for our celebrations, and meditating on the birth of Jesus; the Christ Child.

Part of your preparing for Christmas might include decorating. My favorite decoration is the Nativity Scene and its sweet image of a baby in a Bethlehem manger. But, Christmas is so much more than that.

Philippians 2:8 says, "*And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross*." Meditate on that with me……Almighty God, clothed in radiant glory from eternity past, came to this earth formed as a human being in the womb of a human mother for one purpose: so that He could one day die a miserable death on a Cross to purchase our salvation!

So, as you prepare to celebrate Christmas this year, be sure to remember the REAL purpose of Christmas. It isn't just a time to reflect on the baby boy who was born in Bethlehem so long ago. That baby was God manifest in the flesh. He was born to die for you and for me.

The **Week of Prayer for International Missions and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering** is **December 1st through 8th**. Please support Global and International missions efforts by attending (or hosting!) a prayer breakfast in your area, as well as through your personal prayers and gifts.

Mark your calendars now for the **Associational Kids Missions Day Camp** scheduled for **Saturday January 11th, 2020** at Camp Kehukee from 10:00 am to Noon. Please invite the children of your church and community – Kindergarten through Grade 6 - to come out for a great day of missions education and activities!

The January **Association Women on Mission meeting** has been scheduled for **January 20th at 10:00am**, at Main Street Church in Emporia. Ms. Abigail Schriner with Hope Tree Services will bring a presentation on Foster Care. Please plan to stay for the **covered dish lunch** to follow meeting.

It's not too soon to begin planning for **WMU Focus Week! Feb 9th – 16th** is the perfect time to highlight the amazing, UNSHAKABLE work of WMU within your church and community.

Boys and girls of your church will discover that they can encourage local residents and help build the kingdom of God when they participate in **Children's Missions Day on February 15, 2020**. The Children's Missions Day 2020 theme is "Reach Out." Participating will give children an opportunity to give everything to God as they reach out to people in their neighborhood and community. On this day, boys and girls from thousands of churches across North America will collectively minister and witness in their communities as they positively impact the lives of others.

Christmas Blessings to you and your families!

Tammie Frazier
Association WMU Director

FROM THE DESK OF... *INTERIM DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS*

Miracle on 34th Street was initially released in 1947 and was a story that takes place between Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. The focus was the effect of a department store Santa Claus who claims to be the real Santa.

Miracle on Manger Street is a story that took place over 2000 years ago and focuses on the effect of a Man who claims to be the Messiah. The difference in these two stories is that one is entirely fictional while the other is 100% true.

The problem we have in our world today is that folks don't really understand which is which. Why did God allow His Son to be born the way He was?

The scene portrayed in Luke 2:7 is so familiar that it has become unmistakable. We call it a creche, a representation of the birth of Christ, either with statuary or in a painting or sometimes with actors portraying Joseph, Mary and Jesus. Usually the setting is quite pastoral, with Mary and Joseph watching as Jesus sleeps in the clean wooden feeding-trough. Sometimes there is a glowing light emanating from baby Jesus. The straw is fresh, overhead the stars twinkle in the sky, nearby the cattle and the sheep rest contentedly and the faithful donkey (there's almost always a donkey) watches the happy parents. And very often the shepherds and the Wise Men bow before the Babe in the manger. As I said, it is a sweet and beautiful scene.

It is also quite dangerous. I know a creche is dangerous because you can't put one on government property (or in almost any public place) these days. If you do, you are likely to get sued. Someone is almost certain to be offended. But the real problem with the creche lies not in any supposed offense, but in the fact that this peaceful scene bears little connection to what really happened that night in Bethlehem. It wasn't very peaceful, it couldn't have been as clean, nothing would have been as beautiful as we make it appear, and there is no reason to believe that the shepherds and the Wise Men ever saw Jesus at the same time.

But the major problem rests in one fact: The Son of God from heaven comes to earth and is born in a stable because there was no room in the inn. Again, I ask the question, "Why did God allow His Son to be born the way He was?"

I am sure that question will be answered in most of our churches this Christmas season for those who will be attending. But what about the folks that don't attend or who don't know the difference between Santa and the Savior?

They are waiting on YOU to tell story; 'Tis pleasant to repeat. What seems each time I tell it, more wonderfully sweet: I love to tell the story, for some have never heard the message of salvation from God's own holy word.

Merry Christmas from Manger Street

Pastor Fred

Missions and Evangelism

From

MERRY CHRISTMAS
&
HAPPY NEW YEAR

PBA ASSOCIATIONAL CALENDAR DECEMBER 2019 – JANUARY 2020

Dec 2	10:30 AM	Ministers' Conference - Associational Office
Dec 1-8		Lottie Moon/Week of Prayer for International Missions
Dec 11	9:30 AM	Budget & Finance Meeting – Associational Office
Dec 23– Jan 3		Christmas - Association Office Closed
Jan 6	10:30AM	Ministers Conference - Associational Office
Jan 7	11:45 AM	Kehukee Team Leaders Meeting - Associational Office
Jan 7	7:00 PM	Missions & Evangelism - Associational Office
Jan 8	9:30 AM	Budget & Finance Meeting - Associational Office
Jan 9	7:00 PM	Kehukee Council Meeting - Second Baptist Church

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