

North Carolina Baptist Report

Missions Giving

- In 2022, CP was \$28.2 million, down year-over-year \$380,000, or -1.3%, and over budget by \$150,000, or 0.6%.
- For 2022, NCMO was \$2.3 million, up year-over-year \$150,000, or 7.1%, and exceeded budget by \$200,000, or 10%.
- NCMO actively promoted by sending partner churches materials and video stories of God's work through Disaster Relief, church planting and medical camps.
- Hiring of Dayna Cook as a part-time Ministry Assistant to support Missions Giving.
- From July 2022 to June 2023, two churches became partners with N.C. Baptists, and six additional churches had consultations about partnership.
- Explored how to offer training to churches to cultivate generosity among members.
- Sent informational letter in March 2023 to 1,722 partner churches, who had not given through CP in 2021 or 2022; letter explained that churches remain in friendly cooperation by giving once in a three-year rolling period.
- Served about 30 churches who directly contacted Convention Relations to clarify how to retain partnership status.
- In 2023, we will continue re-engaging church partners by invitations to meet, participate and give.
- In 2023, we plan to increase cooperation with regional N.C. Baptist staff, associational leaders and Baptists on Mission to learn what churches need to engage in missions and to increase their generosity toward missions giving.
- In 2023, we will increase promotion of NCMO in ethnic churches, including Korean and Hispanic congregations.

Biblical Recorder

- A management agreement between the Baptist State Convention and the *Biblical Recorder* began July 1, 2022. The *Recorder* remains functioning as a news source for North Carolina Baptists, while workflow has been integrated between *Recorder* and BSCNC staff.

NC Baptist Podcast

- In November 2022, the group relaunched the N.C. Baptist podcast on a regular publication schedule that covers topics from all N.C. Baptist ministries. Episodes involve video and social media elements, contributing to a growing multimedia approach to content distribution.

Praying for the Nations Initiative



- In January 2023, N.C. Baptists launched a year-long prayer initiative for missionaries, church planters and people groups in North Carolina. The group coordinated weekly emails, social media posts, push notifications, print resources, articles and podcast episodes to support the ongoing initiative. Analytics show that N.C. Baptists continue to regularly engage with and sign up for year-long distribution of these resources.

Fill the Tank Campaign

- In the months leading up to the statewide baptism emphasis on April 16, 2023, the group promoted Fill the Tank and then celebrated churches' stories through social media and articles on the day of and in the weeks following.

New Online Giving Form

- In partnership with the Operations group, the group released a new online giving form, making it easier and more efficient for churches to give to missions and keep track of their contributions.

Children's Ministry

- Churches continue to become aware of the need for safety and security procedures in their children's and youth ministries. In response to this need Childhood Ministries and BOM Children's partnered to offer safety and security training across the state at four locations.
- There was a significant increase in the number of Individual churches and organizations requesting training for safety and security.
- As churches continue to struggle to restart discipleship training after COVID, requests for consultations for facility evaluations and leadership training are increasing.
- Bible Drill saw a 50% growth this past year.
- Regional drills/speakers tournaments were held at: Flint Hill Baptist, Shelby; Elizabeth Missionary, Roseboro; Lilesville Baptist, Lilesville. State Finals were held at Burkemont Baptist, Morganton. Nationals were held at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Fort Worth, Texas. Our State Winners who attended Nationals represented North Carolina very well.
 - Youth state winner: Peyton Woodell, Mt. Airy Baptist, Pembroke: Came in 1st place at Nationals and had a perfect score.
 - High state winner: Annabelle Hamrick, Mt. Sinai, Shelby: Came in 2nd place at Nationals and had a perfect score.
 - Speakers state winner: Liliana Locklear, Reedy Branch, Fairmont: Came in 2nd place at Nationals
 - All three state winners are the recipients of the \$2,500 college scholarship from the Baptist Convention



- The National Invitational Bible Drill/Speakers Tournament will be hosted by North Carolina for 2024.

Cheryl Markland, Children's Ministry Strategist

College Ministry

- N.C. Baptists hosted The Call Conference March 24-26, 2023, in Black Mountain. We saw approximately 200 students and church staff in attendance.
- Pastor Ricky Harris Jr. from Hope Church, Las Vegas, Nev., challenged students to see the grace of God in their lives and count the cost of following Jesus. In breakout sessions, students were presented with opportunities to learn about discernment, stewardship, unmet expectations, mental health, the character of God, discipleship tools, international missions from IMB missionaries, SendNC church planting, and ministry residencies.
 - Faith Baptist Church in Youngsville reported, "One of our students took away from the conference that he is called to do hard things for Jesus. He literally changed his college decision to go to a place with more lostness that will push him to be a light for Jesus in a dark place." Brackston Rhyne of Hope Community Church (Gardner-Webb University '23) committed to a ministry residency after her time at The Call Conference. MaKinley Neill of Hope Community Church (Gardner-Webb University '23), committed to follow Jesus through baptism after her time attending The Call Conference.
 - *"Attending the Call Conference was very timely for me, as I attended about two months before I graduated college. This time was vital to refreshing my faith and shifting my career focus from myself, to how I can honor God in the vocational world. I am now applying the many lessons I learned by knowing how to keep the gospel at the center as I navigate a career in Finance."* Jordan Barnett, Wingate University '23
- We hosted a Leaders' Cohort gathering Jan. 9-10, 2023, in Burlington and another June 19-20, 2023, in Boone. The purpose of the cohorts is to facilitate community among those in similar ministry positions and contexts, provide opportunity to problem solve and improve ministries, and allow us to hear the challenges churches are facing on college campuses. The outcome of each event has been an increase in year-round collaboration and cooperation, sharing of resources like curriculum and events, and opportunity to invite more leaders into our network.
 - *"The N.C. Baptist College Cohort has been an incredible space for both collaboration and encouragement. Meeting with other college ministry leaders to share best practices, ask questions and encourage one another has proven helpful for our college ministry!"* Spencer Martin, College and Missions Pastor, Two Cities Church



- *“The N.C. Baptist College Cohort was an absolute game-changer for our college ministry. It was a priceless opportunity to learn from other leaders and receive encouragement and prayer.” Chandler Donegan, College Minister, Faith Baptist Church*
- *“I personally have found the College Ministry cohorts super helpful. Not only have they provided an opportunity to network with other churches in N.C., but they have also provided a space to strategize and sympathize with others in similar situations. Ministry can sometimes feel isolating, so it has been incredibly fruitful and validating to connect with others on issues and experiences.” Katy Weaver, Director of College Discipleship, Membership and Growth Groups, Imago Dei Church*

Alex Hugo, College Ministry Strategist

Ethan Nunn, Ministry Assistant

Church Health and Revitalization

Pastoral Wellness:

- We hosted two Replenish Retreats in September 2022 and May 2023 at Fort Caswell. Between the two retreats, over 50 couples attended and spent a few days focusing on replenishing their marriage, ministry and mission through times of worship, main sessions on various topics, small groups and a designated date night.
- This year, six Pastoral Wellness cohorts were established across the state with the purpose of connecting pastors and working through a personal Pastoral Vision frame.
- This year we partnered with five churches to provide sabbaticals for their pastors.
- We worked with two associations to provide events to encourage their pastors: one weekend retreat and a one-day Refresh Conference.
- Allan Blume hosted eight Transitional Interim Trainings across the state, training around 117 pastors.

Church Revitalization:

- Our N.C. Baptist partners have conducted 600 church health assessments over the last year. We have driven many of these assessments online for a shared database.
- We currently have over 210 churches in our revitalization process with 29 completing the process this year. Of those 29, over 80% are showing significant growth on our Missional Health Assessment.
- This year, we equipped 71 in our revitalization tools and processes. This effort has led to 21 church revitalization cohorts in 9 of 10 regions across the state, with 13 being new. These cohorts engage pastors to develop and deliver our Revitalization Process to their church.

Foster-Replant:

- We have directly coordinated over 20 Fosters, Replant, Mergers and Adoptions. Additionally, we have played a supporting role to numerous others.



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- We have launched 11 Foster/Replant Teams over 7 regions across the state.
- We launched the Reconstruct Conference in January 2023 with 208 registered from numerous healthy and struggling churches across the state.

*Sandy Marks, Pastoral Wellness Strategist; Terry Long, Church Health & Revitalization Strategist
Gabby Seel, Pastoral and Church Health & Revitalization Ministry Assistant*

SendNC

- On Sept. 27 Todd Unzicker announced to our Board of Directors that N.C. Baptists had entered a new church planting partnership with the North American Mission Board. This co-branded partnership was named SendNC and would combine the work of the state conventions church planting team with the systems, structures and planter benefits that NAMB's Send Network provides.
- The SendNC worked in conjunction with the Send Network Assessment team to implement Send Network Assessment in North Carolina. Candidates, their spouses and their Sending Churches gather for the two-day assessment where our assessors observe, interview and determine the couples' readiness to plant. During this calendar year our assessment teams have assessed 19 candidates with 81% of candidates receiving a "Ready" recommendation.
- From July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, we saw 48 new churches partner with SendNC and N.C. Baptists as a new church plant. All of these planters have an official N.C. Baptist Sending Church.
- The Lord continues to bring the nation as well as the nations to North Carolina, giving rise to the need for new "On Mission Together" churches across the state. Throughout the year, SendNC's multiple training pathways have trained 79 planters including English language (29), International (26), Korean (7), and Spanish speaking planters (17).
- The SendNC Team hosted 4 Sending Church Labs across the state (Winston Salem, Rocky Mount, New Bern, and Greensboro) serving and onboarding 106 churches as potential sending churches. The purpose of the Sending Church Labs is to help engaged N.C. Baptists understand what it means to be a sending church and how they might become a church that plants and sends.

Mike Pittman, SendNC Director

Amy Torcasso, Ministry Assistant

Student Ministry

- The Momentum Tours began with the goal of assisting churches in equipping and training students to reach their generation with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We had stops in Morganton, Mars Hill, Brunswick, Rutherfordton, Murphy and Whiteville.

- Local churches and associations are continuing to see the need for revival in their student ministries. There was a significant increase in churches reaching out and wanting the Momentum Tour and more consultations for youth pastor training.
- Fall retreats were held in Black Mountain and Fort Caswell where 70 churches attended with 1336 in attendance. There were 65 first-time decisions, 84 rededications, and 30 called to ministry. The students learned what it meant to be a disciple maker and how to “act justly, to love faithfully, and to walk humbly with your God.”
- During 2022, students at Summer Youth Weeks studied “I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me — the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.” We looked at Is Jesus worth it? Am I worth it? Is living the Christian life worth it? Is the church worth it? There were 5570 in attendance, with 228 churches represented. There were 412 first-time decisions, 1548 recommitments and 585 calls to ministry.

Merrie Johnson, Student Ministry Strategist, Daniel Rose, Student Ministry Strategist

Katie Pegram, Ministry Assistant

Worship Ministry

- The RenewingWorshipNC.org blog continues to get weekly updates with relevant resources to help our churches in all areas of worship.
- A continuing partnership with Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and Fruitland Baptist Bible College offers training for worship leaders across our state, including options for undergraduate and graduate certification.
- A worship choir and orchestra of 135 members, made up of musicians from across our state, sings for the annual meeting and worship concerts in churches throughout North Carolina –The NC Baptist Singers & Orchestra.
- A new resource was created to help worship leaders transform the worship of their churches – *The Worship Ministry Guidebook: Engaging Your Congregation in Transformational Worship*. The 282-page book is based on the curriculum of the worship leader training program mentioned above.
- Plans were made for the return of the Renewing Worship EXPO to be held in September 2023 to provide encouragement, resourcing and fellowship opportunities for all serving in the worship ministry in their churches.

Kenny Lamm, Worship Ministry Strategist

Ethan, Nunn, Ministry Assistant

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School continues to be many churches’ largest evangelistic ministry event each year. VBS offers opportunities to minister to children/families while discipleship and growth occur in their church as well as create outreach and open doors to share the gospel to children/families in surrounding communities.



- Our N.C. VBS Consultant & Training Team (total of 8 individuals) **attended Lifeway's VBS Preview event** in January 2023 where they were trained in sharing effective & exciting ways to lead Twists & Turns, a Lifeway curriculum that focused on "Following Jesus Changes the Game."
- Our VBS Consultant & Training Team wrote & recorded **11 Make It Matter VBS 2023 Training Videos** to provide curriculum training options to churches/VBS Volunteers. These are located on the N.C. Baptist Children's Ministry Vimeo Channel and will be archived there so churches can reference them should they use past year's curriculum in the future.
- We offered **five VBS Lunch Bunch Zoom Training opportunities** where leaders/volunteers could gain insight and direction. Attendees experienced round table discussion on topics that included leading a child to Christ, Volunteer recruitment and appreciation, Budget VBS Decorating, VBS Curriculum Selection and VBS Follow-Up and Discipleship. These were taped & offered to individuals on a request basis should they be unable to attend.
- The **Go & Tell Mission Trip VBS** (transportable VBS) was trained & shared with several mission trip teams, so they were prepared to share the good news with kids/families.
- The **NCVBS Facebook Community Page** continues to thrive and has grown substantially to over 450 members this year. The goal and purpose of this Facebook group is to provide the best possible Vacation Bible School communication, connection and support to the large base of North Carolina VBS volunteers, leaders, church staff and N.C. associations. It stands as our strongest communication format.
- We were thrilled to **offer five Associational VBS Training Clinics**, with a variety of churches attending across the state, providing resources and training to VBS leaders, teachers and volunteers to aid them with the implementation of Vacation Bible School. In addition, for the first time we were able to offer a stand-alone Spanish/Bilingual inclusive VBS Training Clinic.

Compensation and Benefits Services (CABS)

The Compensation and Benefits Services (CABS) office exists to assist churches with financial and tax issues. We provide workshops and one-on-one meetings to help answer general questions regarding accounting, tax, compensation, retirement and insurance matters that impact our churches. Our goal is to keep our N.C. Baptist association offices and churches up-to-date on financial and tax changes that impact them. The following information is a summary of those efforts:

Retirement

- Educate and encourage church staff to understand the importance of being prepared for retirement. This process includes urging lay leaders to be responsible employers by providing retirement contributions for their staff members in a Christ-honoring manner.

- Present specific workshops to educate attendees how to prepare for retirement including financial and tax related timelines and options to maximize their resources in the future, and to protect their estates through planning.

Convention Protection Benefits

- Continue to offer disability survivor protection benefits to all eligible staff members of N.C. Baptist churches participating in the Church Retirement Plan through GuideStone.
- North Carolina continues to lead all state conventions in the number of participants, but we still fall far short of the goal of having every church providing protection benefits for their staff members through participating in a GuideStone Retirement Plan.

Tax and Health Insurance Laws

- GuideStone remains a leader in providing detailed information regarding the impact that new tax and health care laws have on our churches and their staff. Timely and thorough updates of changes in the tax law are available on the GuideStone website.

Church Staff Compensation

- We work with churches to present a flexible and robust compensation and benefits package to existing and prospective staff. CABS helps churches to see the disadvantages of providing their ministerial staff with the typical “lump sum pay packages.” Such pay packages can cause a minister to be assessed more in taxes than originally intended.
- 2022 Southern Baptist Compensation Study results are available online by visiting the Lifeway website (www.compstudy.lifeway.com).

Mission:Dignity

- GuideStone Financial Resources continues to provide financial assistance to elderly ministers, church workers and their widows/widowers who live under financial duress and need ongoing and/or one-time assistance through Mission:Dignity.
- In 2023, the convention made an extra gift to Mission:Dignity so the 160+ N.C. recipients would receive a 13th check. The extra check was distributed in the spring of 2023.
- SBC ministers and church staff are now able to complete an application online at GuideStone.org/Mission-Dignity.
- For assistance, call Mission:Dignity at (877) 888-9409

Davis Blount, CABS Ministry Consultant



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Global Hunger Relief

This year, through our joint efforts with more than 100 churches and associations, the Hunger Office distributed more than \$225,000 to feed hungry men, women and children in North Carolina. Ministries include Backpack Buddies, Kids Café, food pantries, crisis centers and lunch buddies. We have also helped maintain community gardens with many North Carolina Baptist churches through our hunger grants.

We challenge our churches to join us on mission together to our communities and our world by supporting the Global Hunger Relief Offering.

John Butler, Director of Operations / CFO

Caraway Conference Center and Camps

Caraway is centrally located in N.C. near Asheboro. It sits on 1,100 beautiful acres in the Uwharrie Mountains. Through Christian hospitality, the Caraway staff strive to have an impact for the kingdom of God. Caraway is a ministry tool that assists N.C. Baptist churches in their efforts to be on mission together through camps, retreats, meetings and training events. Caraway facilities accommodate adults, children and youth.

In 2023 Caraway has:

- Served 21,000 guests and campers
- Led 8 weeks of summer camp
- Planned 6 weekend retreats for children and parent/child experiences
- Hosted Fall Festival of Fellowship for senior adults
- Provided environmental education for 3000 public school students

Caraway also has operational responsibility for Camp Mundo Vista under contract with Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina. Mundo Vista is a great resource for N.C. Baptist churches for retreats and training events. In cooperation with WMUNC, Caraway conducts girls and mother/daughter camp experiences, and also hosts many WMUNC events.

Caraway is owned and operated by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and is a vital resource for a movement of churches on mission together in North Carolina.

Jimmy Huffman, Director

Truett Conference Center and Camp



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Truett Conference Center & Camp is blessed with 95 acres located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina. Since 1953 Truett Conference Center & Camp has served the Churches of western N.C. through summer camp programming as well as hosting groups. Since 2018 Truett has expanded greatly in facilities, outreach and ministry opportunities through God's providence and blessings. Truett continues to seek ways that allow those in attendance to experience God like they never have before as they Revive (Isaiah 57:15), Refresh (Philemon 1:7) and Renew (Isaiah 40:30-31).

- Truett desires to provide a facility, for our churches of the BSCNC, in the beautiful mountains that allows for a refreshed perspective on how to connect deeper with our Heavenly Father.
- Truett now offers year-round programming for both the young and “young at heart.”
- Truett continues to experience growth in the number of attendees from 2022 to 2023.
- The biggest area of increase happened with our Youth Group Camp. 2021 was our first year operating this camp with two churches attending. In 2023 we finished up three co-ed youth weeks along with our five other summer camp weeks.
- We've seen a great response in the hearts of those who come, with a reported 65 salvations, 14 rededications, and 14 called to full-time ministry.

Kenny Adcock, Director

Fort Caswell – Coastal Retreat and Conference Center

In 2023, Fort Caswell had a busy Season of Ministry and campus upgrades. We continue to work to provide a facility that pulls together both the natural beauty and history of our campus as well as provide a fresh updated approach to many of our meeting and lodging spaces. Our team is focused on serving N.C. Baptist congregations while inviting our guests to come and be a part of our mission: To provide experiences that amplify the voice of God in a unique, Christian environment.

Come experience the excitement as we continue to update and refresh the Fort Caswell you love:

- Updated first floor of the Smith Conference Center
- Updated and enlarged Cafeteria, with a refreshed color scheme
- Numerous updates to Hatch Auditorium to include seating, flooring, color scheme, house lights, stage front and sound/speaker system
- New gym floor with refreshed paint throughout
- Many new recreational opportunities across campus: new volleyball court, tether ball, resurfaced tennis court, corn-hole competition court, and bazooka ball
- Many more updates to come!



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Brian Hemphill, Director

Baptists on Mission

● **State/National/International Mission Projects**

Mission trips sponsored by Baptists on Mission are getting churches involved in serving those in our state, across our nation and around the world.

- **State:** At our Rebuild Centers and Mission Camps, lives are being changed as volunteers are serving those in need. Across North Carolina, homes are being rebuilt after a disaster, ramps are being built to provide accessibility, and volunteers are sharing the love of Christ.
- **National:** Many opportunities are available for churches to serve across our nation. Pennsylvania, Hawaii, New England, Rocky Mountain Region, Appalachian Coalfields and Alaska are all places teams are being sent.
- **International:** In Guatemala, Kenya, Armenia, Romania, Hungary, Ukraine, Cuba, Moldova, South Africa and other places, God is on the move. Teams are still serving in Ukraine and Moldova to bring relief and hope to refugees of the war.

● **Dental/Health Screening Ministries**

Both the medical and dental units are used by churches and service organizations within North Carolina to serve those in need of health and dental care. The hope of these units is to meet physical needs which can open the door to share the love and message of Jesus.

- Approximately 4,000 people are seen on the two units each year.
- Patients treated through these ministries include those who are facing poverty, people from various ethnic groups, farm workers, fair workers, the homeless, the elderly and more.

● **Children/Student Mobilization**

- Deep Impact Kids Missions Weeks, Mini-weeks, Weekends, One Day events are pre-packaged mission experiences. They provide elementary-age students and their leaders/parents with the opportunity to share the love of God with people in N.C.
- Deep Impact helps N.C. Baptist churches develop a comprehensive, co-ed youth missions strategy to produce committed followers of Christ. This strategy includes pre-packaged mission weeks, free online mission studies, weekend mission retreats, hands-on mission training and much more.
- Each of these ministries allow students/children to enjoy a great camp experience with a mission focus. The goal is to have participants develop a love for missions.

● **Disaster Relief and Recovery**



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This past year, N.C. Baptist Disaster Relief responded to nine events, five of which impacted North Carolina. Volunteers responded to Hurricane Fiona in Puerto Rico, Hurricane Ian in Florida, flooding in Kentucky and Vermont, tornadoes in Cherryville and Rocky Mount, N.C., power outages in Moore county, search and rescue efforts in Scotland county, and storms in Thomasville.

- N.C. Baptists have six large disaster feeding units. The two largest units are capable of preparing and serving 30,000+ meals per day.
- Disaster Relief now has more than 250 disaster recovery trailers (owned by local churches and associations) across the state. These are used for clean up and repair work after a disaster.
- God has provided six large shower units, three laundry units, a childcare unit, several large recovery units, large generator units and lots of other disaster relief equipment.
- **Baptists on Mission Events**
 - The annual Missions Conference, sponsored by Baptists on Mission, includes music, testimonies, speakers, breakout sessions, mission fair exhibits, a volunteer supper and much more. We desire for participants to be spiritually renewed and inspired to become involved in missions locally and worldwide. We want to encourage and equip every Christian to live as a missionary.
 - Regional Rallies take place in all 10 regions of our state. They are offered annually in February and August. These rallies are open for all men, women and youth interested in missions locally, nationally and internationally. Regional Rallies are designed to celebrate and challenge N.C. Baptists across the state to greater mission involvement and promote the North Carolina Missions Offering.

