

The Encourager

Volume 11 Issue 10
October 2026

Until the whole World hears. Matthew 24:14

Those entering the ministry do so because they feel called to serve, and they are there during the most stressful and difficult times of our lives. They serve in this role 24/7 365 days a year.

In addition, they study the Scriptures, prepare messages, and engage with other pastors so that they remain vital and relevant to answer God's call on their lives.

October is Pastor Appreciation month. Below are some ways that you and your church family can celebrate your Pastor(s).

How can we celebrate our Pastors?



1. **A special note** - It's important for everyone to know they matter. Pastors are no different. Let him or her know how much they have ministered to you or your family, and how much it has meant to you.
2. **Organize a meal train.** Meal trains aren't just for new parents, or people going through difficult times! Your pastor and his family would be great recipients for a meal train - especially during seasons with many special church events. <https://www.mealtrain.com>
3. **A grocery or gasoline gift card.** This type of gift is always welcome! Add a card with a special note to make it even more special!!
4. **A date night.** If your pastor has a spouse, provide concert tickets and/or a gift card to a nice restaurant. Plan for childcare, if necessary. Your pastor and his or her spouse will love the special time together, especially if church members know not to call during this time.
5. **A mini-vacation.** This is perfect for taking gift #4 to the next level. Throw in a place to stay, a gas card or two, and some spending money (and/or childcare), and you've got a fantastic and memorable gift sure to recharge your pastor for more great ministry.
 - Caraway has the Powell House for Pastors with a minimal cost per night for up to 5 nights. If the conference center is serving meals, they can eat for free. <https://caraway.org/powell-warren-mountain-house-for-ministers/>
 - Ridgecrest also offers a discounted rate for full time pastors. ridgecrestconferencecenter.com
6. **Signature item.** Does your pastor have a fun item they love? Some pastors love ties, some pastors love cool socks or certain teats. If you know your pastors signature item, then surprise them with something they will love!
7. **Audible.com membership.** Many pastors are readers, and even if they're not, they're probably listeners. Especially if your pastor has a multi-church district or a long commute, an Audible membership is a great gift to help him or her multitask by "reading" between visitations, on the way to the office, or even while exercising.
8. **Yard work.** Older children or youth could offer their services to mow lawns, rake leaves, or shovel snow at the pastor's home. This will save the pastoral family some effort and will add some precious family time back into their schedule!

PASTOR LAB: Personal Leadership Development



Monday, October 12th
10 - 11:30am with lunch to follow

Altamahaw Baptist Church
3445 Altamahaw Church Street, Elon

Lab Facilitators

Aaron Wallace, Director Missions Catalysts Group, NC Baptists
Jonathan Davis, Great Commission Catalyst, Regions 3 & 4, NC Baptists
Mike Dodson, Great Commission Catalyst, Regions 4 & 3, NC Baptists

We need a headcount by Friday, October 9th for lunch preparations. Contact Garry at ggates@mtzionassociation.com
Suggested donation for lunch \$5.

save the date!

Mt. Zion Association Minister's & Wives Christmas Dinner

Thursday Evening, December 3rd at
6:00pm

Location TBD

*Check your emails often!
Information will be sent through
emails in the days to come!*



KOURY CONVENTION CENTER

3121 W Gate City Blvd, Greensboro, NC 27407
November 16th -17th, 2026

Registration open!

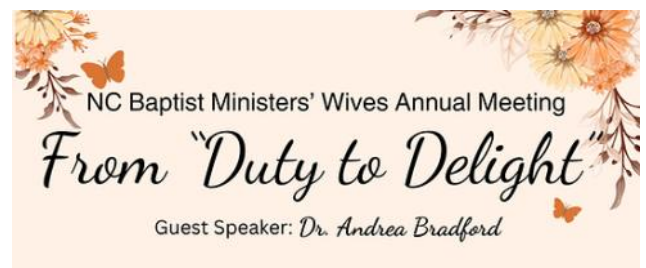
Join in celebrating the different ways God is using N.C. Baptists to draw people to Himself from every nation, tribe, people and tongue. Don't miss times of worship, teaching, ministry reports, breakout sessions and more.

For more information go to: <https://ncbaptist.org/annual-meeting/>



Pastor's Conference - Register Here!

<https://form.jotform.com/261234099989170>



Pastor Wives Conference - Register Here!

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe1u-8ZraDC4b-Cl-MmEf_i9uy1cMf0fxaOgmKZhXOPa7quvA/viewform



FOCUS ON MISSIONS October 2026

Remember to thank God for his beautiful sunrises and sunsets!

We welcome the WMU ladies from Holly Hill Baptist and City Lake Baptist!

Upcoming events:

I have mailed the Mission Projects signup sheets to the WMU leaders in your churches. They are due back to me by October 1, 2026, so I can get the calendars out by mid-December.

On Thursday, October 15, 2026, Dinner for Ralph Scott Residents will be provided by Antioch and Mt Zion Baptist Churches. Holly Hill Baptist Church at 6 pm.

Red Box Ministry for 2026 – the Mt. Zion Associational WMU has signed up for 500 pairs of women's gloves (Specifications: one size fits all; Please remove the tag, paper, etc. and fold together as a pair.) Each WMU group/ Church is asked to contribute 50 pairs. Due by Thursday, 10/22/2026, to me or the Associational Office.

World Day of Prayer Monday, November 2, 2026, at Mars Hill Church in Hillsborough. Our speakers will be Mitch and Jennifer Mann of "The Source Food Bank"

Appalachian Backpacks are due to First Baptist Burlington, Saturday, November 7, 2026.

Operation Christmas Child – shoeboxes - Collection week, November 16, 2026, thru November 23, 2026.

Past Events:

Our dinner for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing was held Tuesday September 15, 2026, at Riverside Baptist. We had 38 in attendance.

NOTICE: 2026-2027 WMU Dues notices will be sent out in early October as payment is due 1/1/2027. The dues are \$3 per member (more details in notices).

Pat Parks - Associational WMU Director (cell: 336-684-6255)
(email: jwpai@att.net)

2026 Mount Zion Association Calendar

Senior Adult Lunch and Learn events w/meal included

11:00 am – 1:00pm October 1st
Trip to Siloam Homes

Pastors Gatherings

2nd Monday of each month
October 12th Altamahaw Baptist Church
Pastor Lab: Personal Leadership Development

NC Baptists Annual Meeting

November 16th - 17th - Koury Convention Center, Greensboro

Minister's & Wives Christmas Banquet

6:00 December 3rd
More details coming soon!!

Please Note. The dates and times of the 2026 proposed calendar are subject to change based on future availabilities of venues and speakers. MZBA reserves the right to cancel or reschedule any event due to low enrollment.



Mt. Zion Baptist Association
P.O. Box 1005
Burlington, NC 27216



Garry Gates
Associational Missions Strategist

Sandi King
Office Administrator

OFFICE HOURS
M - TH
9AM - 2PM
336.226.0249

Physical Location
2744 Ramada Road
Burlington, NC 27215

Visit Us On the Web and on Facebook!



www.mtzionassociation.com

<https://www.facebook.com/MtZionAssociation/>

Thank you for the important ways you serve churches in NC! Our churches help to strengthen our shared mission of reaching people with the gospel.

The digital ACP form opens each year on Jan. 1 and collects data from the previous calendar year. To help you prepare, we have provided a [pre-recorded tutorial video](#) that walks through the process and answers common questions. You can also find answers to FAQ at ncbaptist.org/acp_faq.



ACP data helps us celebrate what God is doing through our churches and better serve N.C. Baptists across the state. We encourage churches to utilize the digital form as it streamlines reporting, reduces errors and lowers costs.

If you have questions, or need assistance we are here to help! Please call (800) 395-5102 or email communications@ncbaptist.org.