



Middle District Baptist Association

Starting and Strengthening
Churches...

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SOCIAL MEDIA



BLOGS



[Ministry Assistants](#)

CALENDAR FYI...

- 2 Leadership Comm.
- 4 Nat'l Day of Prayer
- 14 Mother's Day
- 14-21 Offering Emphasis



COMMUNICATOR

May 2023

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MDBA

2023 Associational Local Missions Offering Theme: **GO...AND DO!**

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged...

Joshua 1:9

A Place of Miracles Café: A local ministry created to feed the homeless and motel families in the Jefferson Davis Corridor. They provide hot meals, free food and clothes to anyone needing help and are working on creating a clothes cottage as well.

Bridging RVA: Connecting individuals, groups and causes to advance common good in our community. Beds for Kids initiative and a community-wide Christmas dinner are just two of the ministries this local non-profit coordinates.

Cases of Hope: As a part of Mercy Mall, this ministry partners with local correctional facilities and programs to provide a fresh start to those entering back into society, focusing on packing the most needed items as well as providing things that would uplift, encourage, personalize, and entertain on their ride to their next destination.

MENO: A local residential recovery community for those affected by drug and alcohol addiction.

M4o Automotive: Rebuilding Cars - Changing Lives: A local ministry whose primary mission is offering a hand-up to those facing difficulties with their vehicle, helping with repairs, and when circumstances and resources allow, give a car away to an individual or family in need.

Missions Scholarship: Middle District will provide a scholarship to help with mission trip expenses. This is a new ministry and taking the place of our Education Scholarship and details are on our website.

This annual Associational Offering helps support ministries throughout our community and the world as we start new ministries and partner with others so that all may experience the love of Jesus.

A FEW WORDS FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As followers of Jesus, many of us are familiar with The Great Commission. In fact, most of us have heard, preached or done studies on these instructive words of Jesus given to his followers. When I think about the mission of any church, my mind always goes to the Great Commission. **If we're not making disciples, what are we doing?**

In mid-career, I transitioned from a job in corporate America to working with a local church. After being on staff for four months, I was sent out with a group of 50 adults and their children to plant a second campus of the church at a local high school. It was a really exciting time in the life of our church. From a numbers standpoint, we were having a lot of success. People were making professions of faith, getting baptized and our numbers in Sunday attendance grew to 300 in just a few years.

From the outside, it appeared as though we were experiencing great success. However, we were dealing with some serious discipleship challenges on the inside. While people were growing in their faith and love for God, their desire and capacity to love and trust one another remained unchanged. I could go on and on about the ways this was apparent, but the reality was we were stuck in a culture of **"shallow discipleship"** that could severely undermine the impact of our ministry.

As I stood on the edge of what felt like a **ministry crisis**, I became acquainted with Peter Scazzero, a pastor who had done a lot of work in the area of emotionally healthy discipleship. After a few emails and a phone call, Peter invited me to attend a discipleship conference he was hosting in NYC. So, I gathered a few key leaders and off we went to the Big Apple (NYC).

Over the next few years, we began introducing Scazzero's Emotionally Healthy Discipleship courses to our congregation. In no time, we began to see people **growing** in their capacity to love God and others. Over time, we discovered these courses were leading us into a deeper relationship with Jesus and **transforming** our relationships within His family (the church.)

Over the past decade, I've had the opportunity to work alongside Scazzero as he developed the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Leader Course. This is an eight-week course for pastors and leaders. During COVID and thanks to Zoom, the leadership course has been taught around the globe. I recently finished an eight-week journey with 10 pastors from Africa. Although we were from different cultures and live thousands of miles apart, we came to realize our discipleship challenges were very similar.

Over the past few months, I've spoken with a number of Middle District pastors who are also familiar with Peter Scazzero's work and the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship courses. **Coming this Fall**, I'd love to pull together an Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Leader Course for our pastors and leaders in the Middle District. We will provide **more information** soon.

As you begin making plans for Fall discipleship opportunities at your church, I'd love to know **what you're planning and how we can be helpful**. There are a lot of great discipleship resources available for churches. It's not always a one size fits all scenario, but what is important is that we're being intentional about discipleship. After all, **what are we doing as churches if we're not making disciples?** When you have a few minutes, click [here](#) to learn more about Emotionally Healthy Discipleship.

In addition to the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Leader Course, we're also working to create monthly gathering opportunities this fall for staff members involved with **children, students** and **worship ministries**. Our goal is to create a safe place where we can learn from and encourage one another.

With you on the journey!

John - Jsawyer@mdba.org



SPRING MEETING & INSTALLATION SERVICE



Quote from the service - *"The time is now for us to double down and join our hands and hearts together as the Middle District!"*

VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR MORE PICS OF THE SERVICE!



A BAPTIST FUTURE:

CLASSIC TRADITIONS, NEW PATHS?



VBHS ANNUAL MEETING
MAY 9, 2023, 7:15 PM



Second Baptist Church
9614 River Road, Richmond, VA

BILL J. LEONARD

REGISTER FOR DINNER (6 pm) @ baptistheritage.org

SCHOLARSHIP

Middle District, through our Local Missions Offering, will provide a **scholarship** to help with mission trip expenses. In so doing, it is our hope that the Association will demonstrate it is living out its mission by impacting the **community** with God's love in a tangible way. This is a new ministry and taking the place of our Education Scholarship. The application is available on our website, mdba.org.

Please register at: <https://baptistheritage.org/meeting/>

SPRING RACEWAY MINISTRY



Church Staff Birthdays

(Includes church staff current and retired as well as spouses)

- 1 Jeannette Pendleton, Retired
- 4 Teresa Mc Connell, Chester
- 4 Jill Carroll, Tomahawk
- 16 Beth Stoddard, PCC
- 20 Erik Davidson, Lyndalde
- 22 Jennifer Ripley, Winfree
- 25 Paul Myers, PCC
- 26 Ben Dillenback, PCC



Ministry Anniversary

Hannah Roberts, Winfree - 5 yrs.

Brenda Green, MDBA - 20 yrs!

