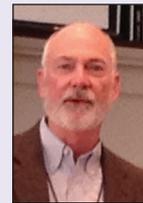


Moderator's Address to CBFNC

First Baptist Church, Greensboro

by Doug Murray
CBFNC Moderator



These past 12 months have been as eventful as any time in the 25 years of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina! We have continued to redirect our resources, our staff, and our structure to accomplish the key themes of our vision:

Embracing our Neighbors through Missions
Engaging Students and Young Adults
Equipping Ministers and Churches
Enhancing our Fellowship

All of these priorities work toward nurturing healthy churches and leaders to share the transforming love of the Lord Jesus with neighbors of all ages.

To inspire us toward this vision, **Rick Jordan** has been leading our efforts to assess and retool all our channels of communication so that stories of people touching others for Christ's sake can reach our eyes and ears and move our hearts and minds.

To undergird this vision, later this hour we will recommend to you a unified Mission and Ministry Funding Plan as a successor to the previous annual budget and the previous Mission Resource Plan. We thank **Greg Rogers** and **David Elks** and their committee for the work they have done.

To provide administrative support for this vision, last year we called **Mary Kaylor** from Memphis to join us as Program/Administration Manager, and we called **Andy Jung** from Albemarle to become our Associate Executive Coordinator.

EMBRACING OUR NEIGHBORS THROUGH MISSIONS

Our neighbors in eastern North Carolina continue to rebuild after a second catastrophic hurricane and flood in two years. Leading a response of hundreds of volunteers and tens of thousands in cash gifts have been **Daynette Snead**, **Todd Padgett**, **Larry Hovis**, and from CBF Global, **Rick Burnette**.

There are other neighbors in need across our state. And among us are some real catalysts in ministry who show us how to embrace them: **Cecelia Beck** in literacy ministries, **LaCount and Anna Anderson** in hunger ministries. And, as the world continues to come to North Carolina, **Kim and Marc Wyatt** continue to plant Welcome Houses across the state, where refugees begin a new life and hear about new life in Christ.

Also, our network of Hispanic churches continues to embrace our Spanish-speaking neighbors. We are grateful to **Javier Benitez** for years of nurturing that network, which is now reorganized as "Red Latina" and led by **Santiago Reales**. **Linda Jones** has been a faithful shepherd and support of this ministry.

Speaking of Linda, she will be retiring this year after 13 years as our Missions Coordinator. We will be making special recognition of her later in this Gathering.

ENGAGING STUDENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS

In addition to his new communication responsibilities, Rick Jordan continues to guide teams of volunteers who plan and make

possible the special events we offer in children's ministry, choir festivals, and youth retreats. For example, the youth ski retreat this year included four hundred young people.

Andy Jung has been traveling the state to draw together more than 20 churches to participate in the "Growing Young" process. Earlier this year, he hosted a team from Fuller Seminary who offered hope and guidance to a hundred leaders from more than 20 churches who are determined to renew their engagement of young adults. Those hundred leaders departed excited, energized, and equipped.

Throughout the year, our College Ministry Coordinator **Wanda Kidd** has been leading our expanding outreach on college campuses. Most recently we have called Dr. **Charity Roberson** as part-time campus minister to East Carolina. Charity is also the new pastor of Mosaic Church in Clayton.

EQUIPPING MINISTERS AND CHURCHES

To equip ministers and churches, **Seth Hix** continues to strengthen our network for matching churches who are looking for ministers with ministers who are looking for churches. Seth leads a gifted group of Ministry Transition Coordinators who give their time to help churches in transition.

And to equip pastors further, last fall we received a million dollar grant from the Lilly Foundation. With the support of this five year grant, we will be "Helping Pastors Thrive" at three key points in their calling. And just yesterday, we released the news that the administrator of that program will be **Scott Hudgins**, member of First Baptist in Winston-Salem and recently Assistant Dean of the Graduate School at UNC-G.

ANNUAL REVIEWS

One more thing, back to the budget: our staff has not had a raise in over three years. Many of them have had reductions in pay and in hours. The Coordinating Council felt it was time to make some prudent pay increases, pending adoption of the budget before you. So it was my privilege to sit in on staff reviews. I say "my privilege" because during those reviews I heard the stories about the sacrifices they have been making for the work they've been called to do.

For example, with so many changes in staffing, in funding, and in moving to a new office location, our Business Administration Coordinator, **Jim Hylton**, has been busier than ever, even though he is part-time.

Another example: our Executive Coordinator Larry Hovis has been engaged in every dimension of our endeavor to redirect our people and funding and organizing toward the priorities of our vision. Larry has been a guiding presence through all of this, and still somehow has made time to visit over fifty churches this past year. He is truly a person of high capacity, creativity, and courage, as is the team he leads.

Together, with all of them, let us keep on Embracing our Neighbors, Engaging Students and Young Adults, Equipping Ministers and Churches, and Enhancing Our Fellowship. 🌈