

Giving Children a Hope and a Future

by Hilary Canipe, member, Murfreesboro Baptist Church, Murfreesboro

Riverview Elementary School in Murfreesboro was struggling. There were multiple reasons for this, most related to the overwhelming poverty so pervasive in northeastern North Carolina. End-of-grade testing scores were poor and morale was low.

For those in the community, the issues at Riverview seemed so large that most did not even try to help. The inclination was to do nothing because the problems seemed insurmountable. As a result, the school became gradually more and more isolated from community.

Murfreesboro Baptist Church began to look for ways to engage with the Riverview Elementary community. Afterschool tutoring, school supply drives, a yearly back-to-school luncheon for teachers during teacher workdays, and apples for teachers during the school year were some of the tools used to express caring concern. Other churches, including First Baptist of Murfreesboro and Murfreesboro United Methodist, were also working independently to support the school.

Eventually the three churches began working together with others in Hertford

County in an effort to form a local affiliate of Communities in Schools (CIS), a national non-profit that seeks "to surround students with a community of support empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life."

As part of the development of CIS in Hertford County, Susan Pennock, a consultant with CIS of North Carolina (CISNC), led a poverty workshop at Murfreesboro Baptist Church in January of 2012. More than 70 people from four counties representing various churches, agencies, and schools gathered for training in understanding generational poverty, and beginning to consider where we might become involved to make a difference.

Susan's work with CISNC has now led her to focus more of her attention on forming church-school partnerships. She challenges Christians to realize they can be the presence of Christ to those who are struggling with poverty by working through the local school.

For those who are a part of the developing church-school partnership in Murfreesboro, this new opportunity has been a blessing as God uses us to help give these children a hope and a future.

church school PARTNERSHIP

"Riverview Elementary School is hopeless – I would never send my child there."

"I don't know any of the kids there – those folks can manage their own affairs."

"They got so many problems at that school, it's hard to know what difference I could make."

"Maybe the state will take it over and then we'll get somewhere."



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MONDAY

1 P.M. Pre-Assembly Prayer Retreat*
4 P.M. Greensboro Sessions for College Students*

WEDNESDAY

1:30 – 4:30 P.M. Leadership Institute on Dawnings*
7:00 P.M. Baptist Women in Ministry's 30th anniversary worship and celebration

THURSDAY

9 – 11:00 A.M. Business Session I
1:30 – 2:30 P.M. Workshops, Mission Communities and Business breakout sessions
2:45 – 3:45 P.M. Workshops and Mission Communities
4:15 – 5:15 P.M. State and regional meetings
7:30 P.M. Commissioning Service for new field personnel and church starters

FRIDAY

9:30 – 11:00 A.M. Business session II
1:30 – 4:30 P.M. Workshops
7:30 P.M. Worship and Communion featuring Kyle Matthews
9:00 P.M. Welcome reception for Suzii Payter, CBF's new executive coordinator

*Denotes events that may require additional registration