

The Gathering of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina



Living Together in **Unity**



cbfnc

cbfnc.org



Cooperative Baptist
Fellowship North Carolina

The Gathering is a seasonal publication
of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina,
2640 Reynolda Road, Winston-Salem, NC, 27106.

The Gathering

of the Cooperative
Baptist Fellowship
of North Carolina

in this issue:

Larry Hovis
Executive Coordinator

Jamie Rorrer
The Gathering, Editor
Director of Communications

Amy Cook
The Gathering, Graphic Designer
Communications Specialist

Subscribe to *The Gathering* and our weekly eNews
on our website at cbfnc.org. Fill out a subscription
form by clicking the SUBSCRIBE button.

STAY IN THE
KNOW
ABOUT CBFNC!

cbfnc.org | jrorrer@cbfnc.org | 336.759.3456

- 3 Conformity, Cooperation and Christian Unity
- 4 CBFNC Plays 'Pivotal' Role in Project Ruth's Response to War
- 6 Sharing Their Experience:
Hear from the Romania Mission Immersion Team
- 7 Nowell Completes Pastor-in-Residence at Duke Divinity School
- 8 CBFNC Annual Gathering Poster
- 10 CBFNC Annual Gathering
- 12 All Night Long
- 14 The Growing Need for Trauma Care in the Congregation
- 15 Gifts and Ministers on the Move

On the Cover: Romania Mission Immersion team members load food boxes for delivery to Ukrainian war refugees.

CBFNC JACK & MARY LIB CAUSEY FUND

Scholarships & Grants for Clergy and Laity

Did you know that CBFNC offers scholarships and grants for both clergy and lay leaders who are continuing their education and training to enhance service to local churches?



SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

For Graduate Programs

Applications for the 2023–2024 academic year are now being accepted.
The maximum scholarship for degree students is \$3,000.

GRANTS AVAILABLE (to clergy & laity)

For Continuing Education & for Special Programs

Grant applications accepted throughout the year. Amount will vary based on scope & cost of each program.

GET MORE DETAILS & APPLY ONLINE: cbfnc.org
Click Engage > Theological Education & Scholarships

For more information on Causey Fund Scholarships & Grants,
contact CBFNC at (336) 759-3456 or e-mail Scott Hudgins: shudgins@cbfnc.org.



Conformity, Cooperation and Christian Unity

By Larry Hovis
CBFNC Executive Coordinator



The 17th chapter of the Gospel of John contains what is sometimes called Jesus' "high priestly prayer," given the night he was betrayed, knowing that crucifixion awaited him. In this prayer, he not only prayed for himself, but for his followers; not only those with him in the Garden of Gethsemane that night but all who would follow him in the years to come. His prayer included this petition in vv. 20-21:

I ask not only on behalf of these but also on behalf of those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

Jesus prays that his followers would be one. The purpose for such unity is so that the world will believe in him. In other words, the witness of the followers of Jesus is based on their unity.

Has this come to pass? Looking at two millennia of Christian history, at every level from the multiplicity of denominations to the splitting of local churches, sadly, it would seem that the answer is a resounding "No."

What about us Baptists? With our emphases on the individual believer and congregational autonomy, we may have less success exhibiting unity than many Christians.

That doesn't mean we haven't tried. Through the four centuries of the Baptist movement, our efforts at Christian unity have usually fallen along one of two paths: confessional conformity and missional cooperation.

Some Baptists have focused on confessional conformity. They have developed confessions of faith and sought to base membership or inclusion on assent to certain theological beliefs.

Some Baptists have focused on missional cooperation. They have asserted that Baptists who champion soul competency and congregational freedom will never agree on a particular list of theological or social issues, but instead can find their unity by working together on shared missional goals.

The Southern Baptist Convention was founded in 1845 when Baptists in the South separated from Baptists in the North over the issue of slavery. For 80 years, Southern Baptists were only loosely connected, with no written confession of faith and no clear plan for cooperation. The SBC annual meeting in 1925 was a turning point on both counts. At that meeting, messengers adopted both paths toward Christian unity, with the adoption of the *Baptist Faith and Message* (BFM) and the Cooperative Program (CP).

In the years ahead, some Southern Baptists focused on one path, the BFM, while other Southern Baptists focused on the other path, the CP. As the decades passed, those who focused on the BFM sought to narrow its boundaries and exclude those who seemed to fall outside of it. New versions were adopted in 1963 and 2000. Efforts at narrowing and excluding continue into the present. For them, the path to Christian unity creates a very small, exclusive club.

In response to these narrowing efforts, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship was formed in the late 20th century. Those of us who founded CBF believed that Christian unity comes not through confessional conformity but through missional cooperation. We believed that diversity of thought and practice is not a weakness but is a strength. We believed that working together on things we hold in common, while respecting one another where our beliefs differ, can actually be a positive witness to an unbelieving world.

As a participant in CBF since its founding, I believe that approach has worked well throughout most of our 30-year history. In recent years, our unity has become more fragile. Issues have arisen for which some in our fellowship are seeking uniformity of belief and practice. Though we exclude no one from our shared life, some individuals and congregations are choosing to leave because of a small list of issues where we hold differing perspectives.

This current state of affairs is not only frustrating to me, but it also makes me very sad. To paraphrase Tom Graves, long-time president of Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, when he was pastor of St. John's Baptist Church in Charlotte, at the height of the SBC controversy, "I'm willing to work with all Cooperative Baptists who are willing to work with all Cooperative Baptists."

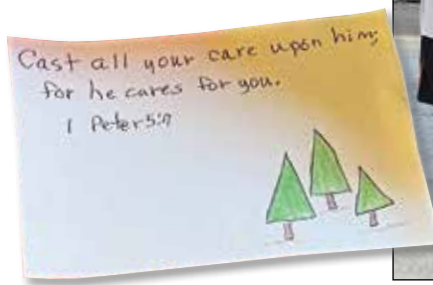
I hope we can recover our focus on unity through cooperation. It will require that all of us learn to maintain our strong convictions while relinquishing the desire to impose those convictions on others. It will require that we work even more closely together (not less) on areas of missional agreement, but keeping fellowship, on areas of disagreement.

If we can learn to follow this path again, we will help fulfill Jesus' prayer that his followers "may all be one." If we fail to follow this path, we will be a very small club indeed. ✝

CBFNC Plays 'Pivotal' Role in Project Ruth's Response to War



By Marv Knox
Contributing Writer and
Founder of Fellowship
Southwest



Thousands of displaced Ukrainians are feeling Christ's love, thanks to a resilient Romanian ministry, as well as grace flowing from CBFNC.

When Russia attacked Ukraine last February, Project Ruth — a Romanian Baptist ministry and the original CBF Legacy Partner — pivoted to provide relief to Ukrainian war refugees.

As hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians fled the Russian barrage, Romania received the second-largest number of refugees, trailing only Poland.

Project Ruth, launched in 1992 by Providenta Baptist Church in Bucharest, stepped up to help its neighbors. That move reflected its heritage. For 30 years, the multi-faceted ministry has taught and served Romani people, often derogatorily called Gypsies and despised by the world. This year, the ministry turned to besieged Ukrainians.

Its facilities include a kitchen, cafeteria, classrooms, offices and even bunk rooms, which housed hundreds of CBF volunteers across the years. Because COVID curbed the flow of volunteers and transitioned many of Project Ruth's students to hybrid classes, the facilities were under-used.

Project Ruth Director Mihai Ciopasiu and Providenta Pastor Oti Bunaciu recognized an opportunity for ministry. They renovated facilities to house up to 70 refugees.

They offered shelter, meals, lodging, laundry services and even transportation to medical and legal aid. Project Ruth became a transitional hub — a safe haven as refugees fled Ukraine, preparing to relocate across Europe and even to North America.

As needs mounted with winter inevitably coming on, Project Ruth pivoted yet again. Bunaciu and Ciopasiu set up two emergency endeavors:

- 4:7 Care Boxes provide enough calories and protein to feed a family of four for seven days. Each box weighs 35 pounds and contains nonperishable staples.
- Winter Kits supply such essentials as coats and gloves, blankets, flashlights and other items to ward off the cold and dark.



Team members pack 4:7 care boxes for Ukrainians.



Through its International Disaster Response program, CBF sent an initial gift of \$25,000 to help fund renovation of the facilities and provide immediate assistance, which transitioned into getting the 4:7 Care Boxes started. CBF churches and individuals supplemented that contribution to expand the ministry beyond initial dreams. Then, when Project Ruth sent a grant proposal for the Winter Kits, CBF funded the entire \$46,000 endeavor.

Beyond that, an eight-member team from CBF North Carolina served in Bucharest in late October and early November.

"This trip came about because people in our Fellowship came to us when Project Ruth announced they were planning to deliver the food boxes," explained Mary Kaylor, associate coordinator of CBFNC.



Packing and delivering food boxes and winter kits to the Romania/Ukraine border.

"We started with what we called the 360 Partnership," Kaylor added. "Our commitment was to raise \$44 per box and cover 360 boxes. The team said, 'We're going to raise this money.' They found it was so easy to go way above and beyond what we needed. They could say, 'I know where this money is going — to help a Ukrainian family in need.'"

"Our entire Fellowship was excited about the impact they could make. It truly was a grassroots endeavor."

By the time they arrived, Project Ruth had relocated 4:7 Care Boxes production into a warehouse, which multiplied the effectiveness of the team, Kaylor noted.

"Previously, the Project Ruth staff was packing boxes in small rooms — about the size of a typical living room," she explained. "Having our group in the warehouse, we were able to do so much more. We so enjoyed going to the warehouse and packing boxes. It was like a dance; we all had items we were responsible for packing."

The CBFNC team stayed in Romania 10 days and packed not just 360, but 1,605 boxes. The team also exceeded their fundraising goal of \$15,840, raising and sending a total of \$28,652.

One day, they traveled about 600 kilometers round-trip — almost 375 miles — to deliver food and Winter Kits to Ukrainian pastors on the border. "It was an emotional experience to see the faces of these people whose country had been invaded, to listen to them, to see the impact we were making," Kaylor recalled.

"I was so impressed by the Project Ruth staff," she added. "The moment Russia invaded, they pivoted. Each person changed what they were doing to respond to the immediate need. And ... their school continued to run while they turned their church into a refugee center, no questions asked. 'Impressed' is not enough. They are awe-inspiring." ❀



SHARING THEIR EXPERIENCE:

Hear from the Romania Mission Immersion Team



LIBBY BARNES | First Baptist, Raleigh

"This trip started out with a sense of responsibility, which evolved into a sense of privilege to be able to do this. Then, it turned to gratitude. Gratitude to Project Ruth for what they're doing. Gratitude to CBFNC for partnering with them. Gratitude to all the people who contributed to make these boxes possible. And gratitude to the team that worked so well together and made this trip a great success."



ANN LONG-JONES
Providence Baptist,
Charlotte

"My heart is full. One of my very favorite Bible verses is 'God is love.' (1 John 4:8) That is the Gospel message in three words. It's the heart of my beliefs. I felt privileged and honored to be able to work with the CBFNC team that worked hard, tirelessly and cooperatively in every way to make sure that we were showing God's love to people who need food and clothing."

SHEILA JORDAN

First Baptist, Raleigh

"One of the most memorable experiences was when we took the boxes to the border and we were there with the Ukrainian group. We got together and there was a prayer in English, Romanian and Ukrainian. That was such a meaningful and powerful experience for me."



NANCY PHILLIPS
First Baptist, Raleigh

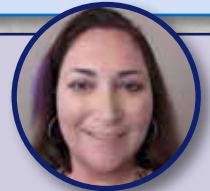
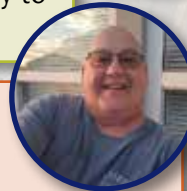
"My family loves me and tried their best to talk me out of going. But I listened to my heart instead. I wish they could have been there too, as well as those that gave money for the supplies, to see the work that we did and especially to see the needs first-hand."



CHARLES WALKER

College Park Baptist,
Winston-Salem

"In 2001, I was involved in a mission immersion in Eastern Ukraine, where I met an interpreter with whom I really connected on a spiritual level. He is now president of a seminary in Livi and is working to assist refugees moving toward the borders. I felt like this immersion allowed me to somehow work alongside him even though we might not be physically working in the same place."



KRISTEN MUSE

Hayes Barton
Baptist, Raleigh

"Signing up to be part of this team was a little uncomfortable. Usually, I'm the leader of a team and I come with my 'tribe;' my people from Hayes Barton. But this opportunity presented itself as our church responded by giving throughout the year when we learned about these boxes and the way that they can contribute to Project Ruth. So I just felt like I needed to come and represent our church. I got to serve with people I had never met except via Zoom and we were able to make a real difference."

JILL KNIGHT

First Baptist on Fifth, Winston-Salem

"When we went to the town at the Ukrainian border to deliver the food boxes and Winter Kits, after loading the items into vans, we joined hands and prayed together. Someone from our team prayed in English, someone from Project Ruth prayed in Romanian, and one of the guys prayed in Ukrainian. It was truly a surreal and sacred moment. To be joined together in prayer, thinking about all the hands that had donated, the hands that put the boxes together, all the ministers and believers across towns, nations and continents just helping to get help where it was needed. It was a beautiful thing."



MARY KAYLOR

CBFNC & First Baptist on Fifth, Winston-Salem

"At CBFNC, we work to bring Baptists of North Carolina together for Christ-centered ministry. That is what we did with the Romania mission trip. Thank you to these leaders from churches in Raleigh, Winston-Salem and Charlotte who served on our team, to those who gave to make the trip possible, and those that covered us with prayer. CBFNC is grateful to each one of you and to Project Ruth for allowing us the opportunity to be part of the work they are doing to help Ukrainians."



Nowell Completes Pastor-in-Residence at Duke Divinity School



By Jamie Rorrer
CBFNC Director
of Communications

Rev. Stacy Nowell, senior pastor at First Baptist, Huntersville, is the most recent pastor to take advantage of the Helping Pastors Thrive “Pastor-in-Residence” study-leave opportunity. During her four-week leave from January 17–February 13, Stacy was in residence at Duke Divinity School in Durham. While on leave, she worked

on her thesis for her Doctor of Ministry degree. “This time was a great blessing to me because my coursework for my D. Min. was disrupted by COVID early in my studies. It was also be a gift to spend some time on campus, which is something I missed when classes went fully remote,” she said.

Stacy adds, “Following the completion of my coursework, the world (and my church) was still neck-deep in dealing with COVID and the other social pressures of the past two years. I found myself unable to toggle toward my thesis, so this leave allowed me to re-engage and re-invigorate that work.”

FBC Huntersville has been very supportive of Stacy in this opportunity. The church made it possible for her to use Continuing Education time and personal vacation to cover the four weeks. “The church has been gracious to allow me to “stack” these weeks together to create a continuous four weeks,” she says. “Additionally, multiple members of our congregation offered support to my husband as he provided solo-care for our children. I’m grateful for the way they supported me by supporting my family.”

That support was also shown by



DUKE
DIVINITY
SCHOOL

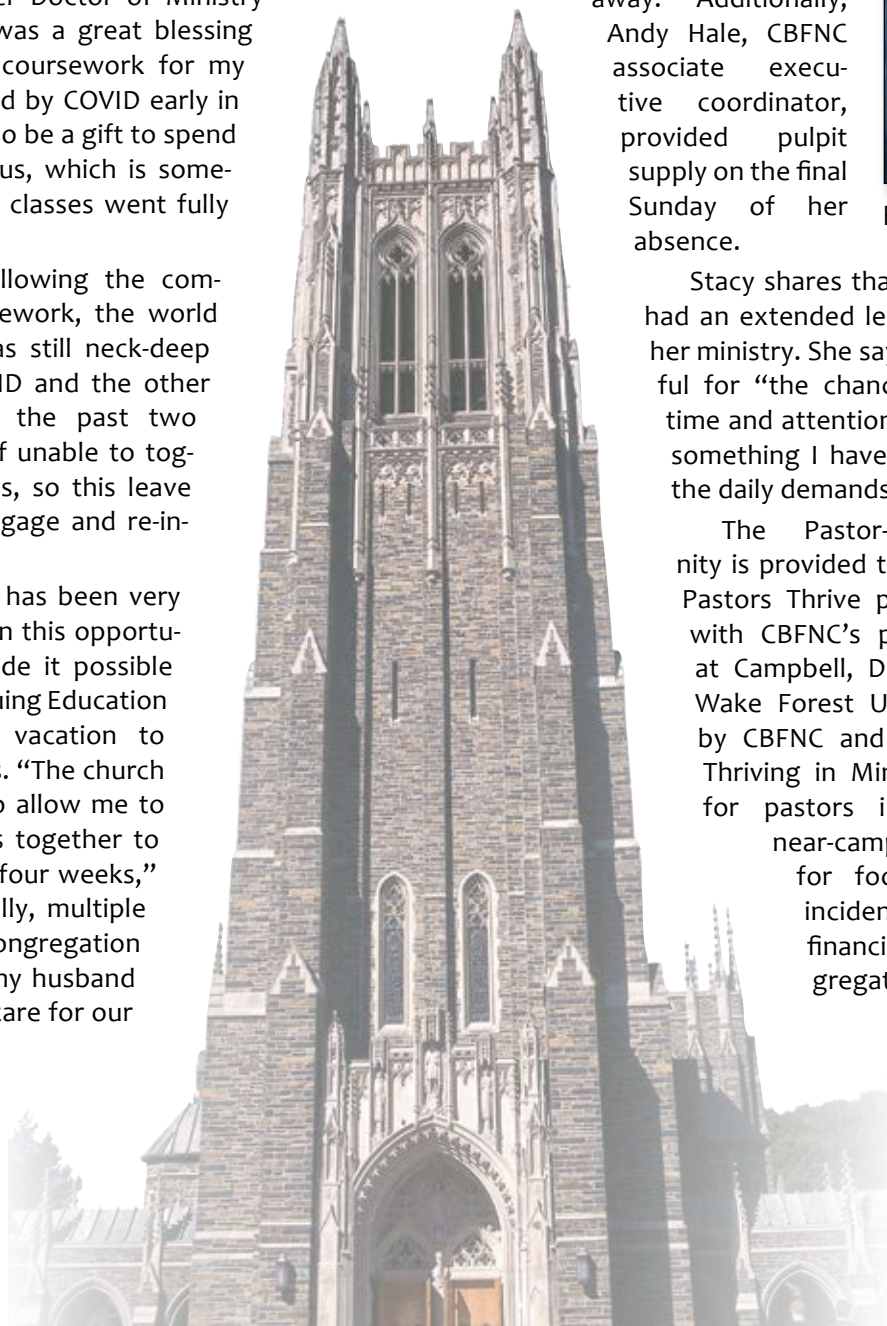
the rest of the church staff who Stacy says, kept up the good work while she was away. Additionally, Andy Hale, CBFNC associate executive coordinator, provided pulpit supply on the final Sunday of her absence.



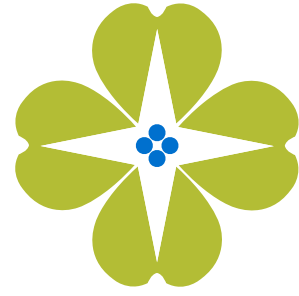
Rev. Stacy Nowell

Stacy shares that until now, she has not had an extended leave or sabbatical during her ministry. She says she is especially grateful for “the chance to spend designated time and attention on my studies, which is something I have struggled to do amidst the daily demands of pastoring.”

The Pastor-in-Residence opportunity is provided through CBFNC’s Helping Pastors Thrive program, in cooperation with CBFNC’s partner Divinity Schools at Campbell, Duke, Gardner-Webb and Wake Forest Universities. It is funded by CBFNC and the Lilly Endowment’s Thriving in Ministry initiative. Support for pastors includes on-campus or near-campus housing, funding for food, transportation and incidental expenses as well as financial support for the congregation during the pastor’s absence to meet supply expenses. More information on the program and application instructions can be found at: helpingpastorsthrive.org. ✦



Join
US!



cbf
North Carolina

**Annual
Gathering**

March 23 – March 24, 2023

Ardmore Baptist Church, Winston-Salem
(In-Person & Livestreamed)

REGISTRATION

OPEN!

cbfnc.org/annualgathering



Living Together

*How very good and
pleasant it is when kindred live
together in unity! — Psalm 133:1*



Scan here to learn more!

Living Together

How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity! – Psalm 133:1

CBFNC Annual Gathering 2023

Join US!

WHAT DOES COOPERATION MEAN TO YOU? Perhaps you think it's an essential part of who we are as CBF Baptists in NC. Maybe the word draws to mind images of a big tent with room for many or a dining table with a special spot for everyone or maybe even your grandmother's well-worn and well-loved rug whose fibers are woven together in such a way that they hold strong together even after years of use. This idea, this theology of cooperation is what guides our Annual Gathering in 2023 as we explore together in a variety of ways our theme of Living Together.

The psalmist writes in our theme verse, "How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity" (Psalm 133:1). Admittedly, we do not always get along with our sisters and brothers. We can easily give in to taking sides and endless arguing but we continue to do the work of cooperation and kingdom building.

In this light we hope you will join us at Ardmore Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, March 23-24, 2023, as we worship, learn and fellowship with one another!



LEADERSHIP FORUM

Thursday, March 23 | 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

(In-person only)

North American congregations have not escaped the polarizing effects of the social and political environment of recent decades. At their best, churches can provide models of community where differences are embraced in light of shared values and beliefs. At their worst, churches can reflect the larger culture, contributing to conflict and division.

How do our political and social commitments shape our understanding of Jesus? How does our conception of Jesus challenge or reinforce our beliefs? Which Jesus do we follow? Join others who seek to navigate this polarization by exploring these questions at the 2023 CBFNC Leadership Forum that kicks off our Annual Gathering.

This is a professional/spiritual development event for clergy and laity that coincides with the Annual Gathering each year. This year, the Leadership Forum features Kristin Kobes Du Mez, historian, writer and speaker. She is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation*. She will be the keynote speaker at this session, which will include breakouts led by the Helping Pastors Thrive Ministry Team.

With Keynote Speaker
KRISTIN KOBES DU MEZ
Author of *Jesus and John Wayne*



Register for the Leadership Forum at cbfnc.org/AnnualGathering.

Annual Gathering Speakers



REV. PAUL BAXLEY

CBF Global Executive Coordinator

The Rev. Dr. Paul Baxley was unanimously elected as the fourth executive coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in January 2019. He

frequently preaches and teaches across the 30-year-old Fellowship as he leads this diverse community that includes nearly 1,400 congregations, thousands of individuals, 19 state and regional organizations, 800-plus chaplains and pastoral counselors, dozens of theological education and ministry partners, and 60-plus field personnel serving in 20 countries.

Paul will be speaking in General Session 1 on Thursday, March 23, from 3:30 to 4:45 p.m.



REV. JAYNE DAVIS

Associate Pastor Discipleship, First Baptist, Wilmington

Before joining the FBC Wilmington staff in 2001, Jayne was the executive director for the New Hanover County Partnership for Children (Smart Start), Good Shepherd House administrative director and Coalition for the Homeless (NYC) assistant director.

Jayne will be speaking in General Session 2 on Friday, March 24, from 2:45 to 4:00 p.m.

SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, MARCH 23

**10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. | LEADERSHIP FORUM:
*Which Jesus Do We Follow?***

(There is a separate registration for this part of Annual Gathering and \$30 registration includes a boxed lunch.)

3:00 p.m. | REGISTRATION OPENS

3:30–4:45 p.m. | GENERAL SESSION 1*

5:00–6:30 p.m. | AFFINITY GROUP FELLOWSHIP

(Groups are encouraged to dine together around Winston-Salem at the conclusion of this session.)

FRIDAY, MARCH 24

8:30 a.m. | REGISTRATION & EXHIBIT HALL OPEN

8:30–9:30 a.m. | COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

9:30–10:00 a.m. | MORNING GATHERING*

10:15–11:30 a.m. | WORKSHOP SESSION 1

11:45 a.m.–1:00 p.m. | LUNCH

1:15–2:30 p.m. | WORKSHOP SESSION 2

**2:45–4:00 p.m. | ANNUAL BUSINESS
MEETING* & GENERAL SESSION 2***

**These sessions are available both in-person & livestreamed.*

WORKSHOPS

- Fellow Pilgrims on the Road
- Church Benefits Board – Your Benefits are our Ministry!
- Beyond Recycling: How Churches Can Truly Care for Creation
- Children's Ministry After A Global Pandemic: Where Do We Go From Here?
- Future of Youth Ministry Think Tank
- Making Christians: Instruction in the Basic Teaching of Christ
- Re-Imagining Your Church Facility As An Asset & Source of Revenue
- Trauma Care in the Church/Atención al trauma en la iglesia
- Translations of the Bible into Spanish: Process, Confusion or Blessing?
- Let's Talk Housing and Hospitality
- Collaboration for Clergy and Lay Leaders in a New Era of Ministry
- Why Is Our Mission Work and Charity STILL Needed?
- Together for Hope: Transforming Rural America
- Everything You Want to Know about Disaster Response
- Why Investing in Healthy Congregational Relationships = Flourishing
- Understanding and Responding to Christian Nationalism
- Reclaiming Religious Freedom

Get more details and register by March 15 at cbfnc.org/AnnualGathering.



All Night Long



By Paul Burgess
Senior Pastor of
University Baptist
in Chapel Hill

That was the mantra of the 72 participants in the inaugural Franklin All Nighter, an all-night run/walk last November sponsored by University Baptist Church in Chapel Hill to raise money for mental health services at UNC and in the Orange County Community.

The motivation for the event was simple: “Churches don’t talk about mental health. Many still view the topic as taboo and fear the fallout that might result if they concede that conditions like anxiety and depression are more complex than just ‘not having enough faith’ or ‘lacking the joy of the Lord.’”

And while churches remain silent, millions suffer.

According to the CDC, one person dies by suicide every

11 minutes in the United States, and for every one of those deaths, there are 25 suicide attempts.

One of the places these tragic figures can be most plainly seen is on college campuses. Just last semester, in the Fall of 2022, NC State University suffered the loss of four students who died by their own hand. A year before that, at UNC-Chapel Hill, the university grieved five similar student deaths.

I believe those statistics represent a cry for help the Church must answer.

So many people are out there suffering in silence. “They need to know there’s a place that will love them through their struggles. Not a place that will offer them flimsy, pollyannish ‘solutions,’ because mental illness is more complex than a simple prayer or Bible study can fix, but a place that will hold their hand as they journey, connect them with resources, and give them the comfort of community by authentically sharing that we all wrestle with mental health, and they are not alone.”



At University Baptist Church, that message took the form of a run—a long run, from sundown on Saturday to sunup on Sunday, following a roughly one-mile loop route that started and ended at the church, which is situated on the corner of Franklin and Columbia Streets in the heart of downtown Chapel Hill. After the event, in lieu of regular worship, a sunrise breakfast and service of celebration was planned for all participants to acknowledge together what they had achieved.

The all-night format was chosen as a metaphor. The journey through mental illness can often feel like a long, hard trudging through the darkness. But, if we have community that will journey with us, and if we just keep putting one foot in front of the other, we can make it to the dawn.

I know because I've struggled with mental illness myself.

I'll be honest, a big impetus for this event is my own story. I first started therapy and learned of my own depression and anxiety diagnoses when I was a student here at UNC. It was a really difficult season of my life, and now I wonder how it might have been different if I knew there was a

Members from University Baptist Church joined with other runners and walkers in the Chapel Hill community to raise money and awareness for students seeking mental health assistance on college campuses.



It was a really difficult season of my life, and now I wonder how it might have been different if I knew there was a community of faith that wasn't scared to name what I was dealing with, let me know I was ok, and normalized my struggles.



community of faith that wasn't scared to name what I was dealing with, let me know I was ok, and normalized my struggles.

That concern for students led UBC to designate the university's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) as the primary beneficiaries of the fundraising for the Franklin All Nighter. CAPS exists to provide UNC students with mental health services, and the money raised will help clients afford and access the care they receive. Additional monies were raised to help homeless individuals in Orange County pay for their mental health prescriptions, and to establish grants for student organizations focused on promoting mental health.

Initially, UBC set a goal of raising \$20,000 for these causes, primarily through encouraging event participants to reach out to friends and family who might support them. By the end of the event, they had raised over \$34,000.

I would definitely call it a success. We logged 934 laps, 840 miles, and raised a ton of money. More than anything, though, we let people know that we're here. My hope is that students and members of this community can see UBC as a church that cares about what's going on in their minds just as much as we care about what's going on in their hearts. The Franklin All Nighter was a big step in that direction. ✚



The Growing Need for Trauma Care in the Congregation

According to the National PTSD Center, it is not uncommon to experience trauma. Statistics show that people in the United States have been through a traumatic event at least once in their lives.

Latinx are no exception because according to a study, more than 75% of immigrants from Latin America to the U.S. report a history of trauma related to war, terrorism, cultural change, discrimination, domestic violence, etc. There is no doubt that each immigrant brings a unique story, which in most cases includes trauma because of being exposed to stressful daily events.

Recently there has also been talk about the “First-generation trauma” which describes the emotional struggle that many Latinx youth of migrant parents experience because of poverty, limited opportunities, cultural adjustments and social exclusion.

Trauma is not a new topic. Old Testament stories about the Israelites offer a good example of collective trauma. They tell about the suffering, siege, enslavement, surviving and deportation of the Israelites. Similarly, in the New Testament, the Gospels describe the traumatic experiences of early Christians as eyewitnesses to the crucifixion of Jesus, the persecutions and the struggle for survival as a new community of faith. These stories are told by survivors and witnesses of the trauma. David Carr points out that the Bible is saturated with trauma and survival. If the Bible was a person, it would be a person bearing the scars, plated broken bones, muscle tears, and other wounds of prolonged suffering.

Over the past few decades, the biblical hermeneutics of trauma has evolved in dialogue with various disciplines and academic frameworks. Elizabeth Boase notes that while trauma may refer to severe physical injury, it is psychological and social trauma that has drawn the attention of Biblical interpreters who acknowledge multiple aspects of trauma, including not only the immediate effects of events or situations in progress, but also ways that facilitate survival, recovery and resilience.

What can the Church do?

Traumatic life events are not only personal, but they are also cultural and historical as well. Traumatic events of church members alter the dynamics of the congregation. Therefore, training and educating congregations and their leaders in trauma is vital to accompany, heal and sustain the bereaved. There is no question that the church can contribute to trauma healing.

During the pandemic, many individuals, families and friends have been overwhelmed by traumatic grief. Because Latinx culture is relational, there is a focus on attachment rather than letting go, which complicates grieving and closure.

Red Latina, as a ministry of CBFNC, has taken an initiative to equip leaders of our Latinx congregations. In 2022, two pastors were trained and the first healing group

was provided through the program “Healing the Wounds of Trauma: How the Church Can Help” of the Trauma Healing Institute (THI). This multilingual resource is the result of many years of hard work and effort and it is designed to help people recover from loss and trauma.

In particular, the program is focused on helping the local congregation to respond to people in a way that is healthy and helpful. It helped

at least one congregation to create self-awareness of the importance of addressing this need in partnership with other Christians. German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer said that “the physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength for the believer,” especially in moments of crisis. For this reason, helping communities to educate themselves and equip themselves in trauma will help to respond to the pain that the Latinx community has experienced.

The next step is to facilitate healing groups that educate and support congregants through life in the church. Programs offered by THI are necessary to raise awareness in religious communities, to reduce stress levels and help in self-healing from trauma in community. In that regard, Richard F. Mollica, in his work with traumatized refugees, says that the force, called self-healing, is one of the natural responses of the human body to psychological illness and injury. Healing from emotional wounds inflicted on the mind and spirit by severe violence is also a natural process. Mollica emphasizes that there is evidence of self-healing at the biological or physical level in individuals after all forms of violence.

The church can help the process of self-healing by creating safe spaces for individuals suffering from traumas. It is my hope and prayer that Red Latina will continue to conduct advanced training to equip congregations as a healing community. ✝



By Santiago Reales
CBFNC Director of
Red Latina

...the physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength for the believer...

CBFNC HONORARY & MEMORIAL GIFTS

November – December 2022

Belle Allen *in honor of* Gwen and Steve Canady
Jennifer and Seth Asbill *in honor of* Wanda Kidd
Margie Cockrell *in honor of* Lisa Rust
Linda Denney *in honor of* Becky Keesler
Janet Ford *in honor of* Dr. Jeff Mathis
Rebecca Keesler *in honor of* CBFNC Staff
Lou and Don Kline *in honor of* Larry and Kim Hovis
Kim Lamb *in honor of* Mickey Strong
Wendy McHenry *in honor of* Sola Charitable Coffees
and Carols
Betty and Carson Pittman *in honor of* Hillus & Peggy Conrad
Charles Recktenwald *in honor of* Lindsay and
Daniel Recktenwald
Miller Sigmon *in honor of* Bill Lennon
Harriet Whiteman *in honor of* Judy LeCroy
Patrick Simpson *in honor of* John Hiott Sunday School Class
Sandra Jarrell *in honor of* Wanda Kidd
Kelly Beck *in memory of* Geraldine Mangum
Ed Beddingfield *in memory of* Sarah Beddingfield
Ka'thy Gore Chappell *in memory of* Russell Chappell
Hamilton Crenshaw *in memory of* Charles and Helen Hovis
Mary Foscett and Scott Hudgins *in memory of*
Daniel Hudgins
Pam Frey *in memory of* Randall Lolley
Patricia Garrett *in memory of* Larry Keesler
Roper Halverson *in memory of* Bruce Halverson
BJ and Richard King *in memory of* Mary Lib Causey
and in honor of Jack Causey
Tiffany Seaford *in memory of* Cindy Vestal
Brad Smith *in memory of* Sarah Beddingfield
John Vestal *in memory of* Cindy Vestal
Carol Wright *in memory of* Randall Lolley

Your gifts to a CBFNC endowment fund

can plant seeds of blessing, hope, & help.

Designate a gift for scholarships, new church
starts, or where it is most needed. Please
remember CBFNC in your will or estate plan.

For more information, contact
Jim Hylton at (336) 759-3456
or finance@cbfnc.org.

Gifts from individual supporters established this endowment fund to supplement the CBFNC annual operating budget. Gifts to this fund assist all areas of CBFNC ministry as we strive to join the work of God in the world.

CONGRATULATIONS to the following...

Doug and Terri Vancil

upon the conclusion their 25-year ministry as
associate pastor, music and worship and assis-
tant pastor, music and worship, respectively, at
First Baptist, Greensboro.

Len Keever

upon retiring after 20 years as pastor at First
Baptist, Dunn.

MINISTERS ON THE MOVE

Our encouragement and support go to the
following ministers who have recently moved:

Amanda Allard to Westwood Baptist, Cary
as Children's Minister

Jeff Allen to First Baptist, Mount Holly
as Senior Pastor

Hanna Castellano to Hayes Barton Baptist, Raleigh
as Assistant Director of Music.

Leigh Curl-Dove to Emerywood Baptist, High Point
as Minister with Students

Dwight Moody to Providence Baptist, Hendersonville
as Pastor

Marcy Mynatt to Providence Baptist, Hendersonville
as Associate Pastor

Chris Richardson to Pritchard Memorial Baptist, Charlotte
as Senior Pastor

John Rosal to First Baptist, Tarboro
as Senior Pastor

Jonathon Shattuck to Grove Park Baptist in Clinton
as Pastor

Jim Wooten to First Baptist, Shelby
as Interim Lead Pastor.

*When you make a move or know someone who has changed places
of ministry, please email ahale@cbfnc.org. For assistance with
transitions, visit cbfnc.org/transitions or call us at 336.759.3456.*



www.cbfnc.org

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship North Carolina

*Bringing Baptists of North Carolina Together
for Christ-Centered Ministry*

2640 Reynolda Road
Winston-Salem, NC 27106

Return Service Requested

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
WINSTON-SALEM
PERMIT NO. 162

MARCH

MINISTER SEARCH CONVERSATIONS

On Zoom, Bi-Weekly

March 13 & 27

2023 CBFNC ANNUAL GATHERING

Ardmore Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, NC

March 23–24

RETIRO DE MUJERES RED LATINA

Camp Caraway, Sophia, NC

March 31–April 1

APRIL

RETIRO DE MUJERES RED LATINA

Camp Caraway, Sophia, NC

March 31–April 1

WELCOME HOUSE/CBFNC HOSPITALITY AND HOUSING SUMMIT

Trinity Baptist, Raleigh

Saturday, April 29

FINANCIAL WELLNESS FOR PASTORS RETREAT-WEST

Lake Junaluska Retreat Center

April 30–May 2

MAY

ENCUENTRO DE COMPAÑERISMO PASTORAL Y LIDERAZGO. ASADO ARGENTINO

Iglesia Cristiana Sin Fronteras en Winston-Salem-

May 6

GROWING YOUNG 2-DAY WORKSHOP

Location TBA

May 11–12

JUNE

CBF GLOBAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Atlanta, GA

June 29–30

OCTOBER

YOUTH BEACH RETREAT

Fort Caswell

October 13–15

*Annual
Gathering*

Learn more on pages 8–11.

A Look Ahead . . .