

THE NAVIGATOR

TAR RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

ISSUE 5

MAY 2024

A RECAP OF THE 194th ANNUAL SPRING MEETING

The 194th Annual Spring Meeting of the Tar River Baptist Association (TRBA) was held on April 22nd, 2024, at Holly Grove Baptist Church in Spring Hope, NC. The meeting was attended by 19 churches, 20 pastors, 22 messengers, and 8 guests.

Nathaniel Williams, association moderator, outlined the new vision for the association, highlighting the three priorities of Church Health, Outreach, and Pastoral Investment and noting that work has already begun in these three areas. He identified the major structural changes the ALT will propose at the 2024 Fall Meeting: clarified requirements and expectations of member churches; an updated organizational chart for the Board of Directors, Associational Missions Strategist (AMS), and standing committees; an updated Board structure and nominating process. In the 2024 Fall Meeting, the ALT will present for vote the new structure of the association, including updated bylaws, an updated TRBA Statement of Faith, the first members of the new Board, and a 2025 Budget.



Caleb Gibson delivered the Acting Associational Missions Strategist Report. He celebrated the progress that the ALT have made in restructuring and thanked the churches for their support in this process. He pointed out several encouraging financial trends, and explained the current approach to responsibly expending donor-restricted money. Caleb detailed the progress made in each of the association's priorities of Church Health, Outreach, and Pastoral Investment, and noted upcoming events and opportunities in each of these areas.

The association welcomed Ronjour Locke, lead pastor of Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Raleigh and professor of preaching at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, to deliver the annual sermon. Ronjour preached from Philippians 4 on the priority of fighting together for peace. After the message, the meeting was adjourned and concluded with a benediction, prayer, and song.

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PUERTO RICO VISION TRIP AUGUST 17-23

A team from TRBA will travel to San Juan, Puerto Rico this Summer, to serve at the NAMB Send Relief Ministry Center. This trip will hopefully be the first of many for TRBA churches, as we work to establish cross-cultural partnerships. The team will mainly help to repair and rebuild homes and churches, and may also help to prepare for hurricane season. Team members may also aid in outreach through prayer-walking and food distribution.

There are a limited number of team member slots still available. The total cost of the trip, with airfare, lodging, and food, is \$1000/person. TRBA will offer 50% (\$500) off the cost of up to two members of any TRBA church, as space allows. \$250 is due at reservation, and the remaining \$250 is due by June 1. For more information or to begin the reservation process, contact Caleb Gibson at 252-382-4393 or by email at caleb@tarriverbaptist.com.



804 CHURCHES SIGNED UP TO SERVE NC SO FAR

Whether it's painting a school, cleaning up a yard, serving meals to those in need or building a wheelchair ramp, ServeNC is an opportunity for every NC Baptist church to love its community in Jesus' name through service projects. NC Baptists and Baptists on Mission are challenging every church to commit to one week of being on mission together and displaying the gospel to those in need, August 3-10, 2024. Pick a day and a project in your community, and let's ServeNC together!

To register, download resources, and order ServeNC tee shirts, visit <https://ncbaptist.org/servenc> today. If you need help finding projects in your community, contact Caleb by phone at 252-382-4393 or by email at caleb@tarriverbaptist.com. If you need help securing tools and transport for ServeNC, Rebuilding Hope may be able to help. If you need help offsetting the cost of ServeNC, Provision Financial (Formerly NC Baptist Foundation) may be able to provide a ministry grant.

BAPTISMS UP 41% IN NC BAPTIST CHURCHES FROM 2022 TO 2023

NC Baptists published some incredibly encouraging statistics last month, announcing that baptism numbers are up 41% across the state – in spite of a 2% drop in completed Annual Church Profiles! In 2022, NC Baptist churches reported 11,409 baptisms. In 2023, that number rose to 16,060!

If your church has not completed an Annual Church Profile report for 2023, there is still time to do so! Visit <https://form.jotform.com/231786044876164> or contact Caleb for assistance.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, May 7th
9:30 AM

The NC Baptists Reconstruct Conference is for healthy churches and denominational partners looking for strategic ways to help support struggling churches in their area. This year, Reconstruct Conference is being hosted by Faith Youngsville. To learn more and register, visit <https://ncbaptist.org/events/reconstruct-conference>. If you are the pastor of a healthy church and would like to help other churches in Tar River get healthier, call, text, or email Caleb for more.

Saturday, May 25
5:00 PM

We are excited to announce that TRBA will be hosting a Pastor/Staff and Spouse dinner on Saturday, May 25th, from 5-7 PM! The event will be hosted at Almost Home Wee Care, located at 583 Flat Rock Church Road in Louisburg. Volunteers from Flat Rock Baptist Church will be preparing the meal, and it's sure to be delicious! Childcare will be provided. There is no cost to attend, but registration is required. To register, visit <https://forms.gle/mJ4qkq5zRCrarL9CA>.

A NOTE FROM CALEB GIBSON, ACTING MISSIONS STRATEGIST

If I can be of assistance to your church in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me! You can reach me by email at caleb@tarriverbaptist.com or by call or text at 252-382-4393. I would love to meet with you and/or your church to talk about ways that Tar River Baptist Association can assist in community demographics studies, church revitalization, and creating gospel partnerships.

If you would like to contribute a story or article for next month's The Navigator, please let me know. We want to celebrate what God is doing among the Tar River Baptist Association of Churches!