



One of the core values of our 30 MTBA churches is praying. Every week our churches receive requests for prayer. Prayers for churches, prayers for individuals, prayers for our schools, and prayers for our country. We believe in prayer, and we believe that praying for one another is a Biblical mandate.

Each year Baptists all across the USA set aside a week in May to pray for and give to their local association. As a Director of Missions for our association of churches, I am thankful that our 30 MTBA churches don't just pray for the MTBA and give to the MTBA during the week of prayer for missions. But it is nice to have a timely reminder that the work of the local association plays an important role in Advancing the Kingdom of God on this earth. I want to take this opportunity to highlight why this week is so important.

- Your prayers will sustain and encourage our staff, volunteers, and projects all year long.
- Your prayers for the MTBA will strengthen your relationship to the MTBA.
- 100% of the monies given to the Week of Prayer will go to fund our mission projects (RAMP- IT UP and Hope for Appalachia). The total dollars required for these two mission projects is usually \$30,000. No one or two churches or individuals could meet such a lofty goal. But thanks to the generosity of many individuals and our MTBA churches, we have been able to meet this lofty goal for the last 3 years.
- Even though May 19-26 is the Week of Prayer for Associational Missions, it is not unusual for us to receive monies from our churches and individuals every month of the year.

I want to take this opportunity to say thank you for your generosity. I want to thank God that He has given you a heart for missions. And I want to thank the hundreds of volunteers that give of their time and energy to carry out this important mission work that God has called us to. You are the best, and it is an honor to be called to serve as your Director of Missions.

Eddie

Reflections On The MTBA Spring Meeting



The Program Committee for the MTBA spent many months working on and praying about the 2024 MTBA Spring meeting. Committees like this one work hard planning and creating something that is both inspirational and interesting. That is much easier said than done. Meeting just two or three times to plan such a meeting just won't get the job done. The MTBA is fortunate to have such a good Program Committee that enjoys working on the task set before them and they are good at what they do.

No matter how hard that a program committee works, they can only accomplish so much. What the committee hopes for ...no, prays for, is that the Holy Spirit will add to their efforts. They pray that something will happen when the association gathers that can only be described as "God was there with us." And whenever we are in the presence of our God we are better for that.

If you were there, then you know exactly what I am writing about. It was a very special afternoon at Gwynn's Island. Even if you were not at the meeting, you probably have heard about the Spring Meeting and how special it was. But no matter how someone describes the meeting, nothing can substitute for being there. It was simply inspirational. The choir could not have been better as they honored the Lord God with their praise and songs.

There are so many people I want to thank:

- Our MTBA Program Committee for their labor of love for the Lord and our Association.
- A special thanks for Dale Saunders, Nancy Saunders, and Sue Smith for giving so much of their time and leadership to pulling this event together.
- To the 50 voice Associational Choir. They spent weeks meeting and practicing for this event. And when it came time to sing, the Spirit of God anointed them in such way that the sanctuary was filled with the presence of the Holy Spirit. I thought we were going to SHOUT!
- A special thanks to the children's choir from Corrottoman. They were a blessing, and are our future.
- Thank you to Gwynn's Island BC for hosting our Spring Meeting, as well as providing a full meal with fried chicken to all the people in attendance. What a great way to end such a great worship time. When you run into someone from Gwynn's Island, please make sure to express your appreciation. Thank you Pastor Ed for coordinating the work between the Program Committee and GIBC. You were so helpful.
- I hope hearing our Associational Choir will remind us how important music is to our worship services. Maybe many of our churches will begin thinking about how can we get our choir singing again. Maybe the Spring Meeting will inspire a lot of people to sing in the church choirs again. Believe me it will make a difference in your worship experience.
- I want to say thank you to the Lord above all. For hearing our prayers and being with us in a most inspiring way at our Spring Meeting. As one pastor shared with me, "Eddie, it was just what I needed."

"I will sing the Lord's praise, for He has been good to me."

Psalm 13:6

MTBA HISTORIAN REPORT

“ANCHORED TO THE PAST, SOARING INTO THE FUTURE!”

When Jesus began his earthly ministry, one of the first things that he did was to call his twelve disciples to “Come, follow me”. Why did Jesus call these disciples, a group of uneducated men of no rank or status to assist him? One thought is that the gospel could be spread more quickly with the assistance of these disciples. Another is that Jesus sought the friendship and fellowship with others, that the companionship of these twelve men would provide.

Baptist churches in our area have chosen to associate together through the Mid-Tidewater Baptist Association for similar reasons. In association with other Baptist churches, the gospel can be spread more efficiently and effectively throughout the Mid-Tidewater area and beyond. In addition, the Mid-Tidewater Association provides a source of fellowship and friendship with fellow believers in our area, not only through mission projects but also through association meetings and gatherings.

As the disciples were sent out by Jesus to proclaim the gospel, the 30 churches of the Mid-Tidewater Baptist Association go forth in their respective communities spreading the gospel and seeking to bring people to Christ. Through our mission projects and associational meetings, we are blessed with the fellowship and companionship of those who are, as the apostle Paul writes, “of a like mind”.

The Mid-Tidewater Association enjoyed another strong year during 2023.

On February 18, 2023, over 200 volunteers gathered at Hermitage Baptist Church to pack 1,200 Sterlite boxes with school supplies, hygiene items, and fun items to be delivered to school age children in grades PK-12th grade. These boxes are delivered to schools in the Appalachian regions of Kentucky by Rev. Mike Dodson through his Hope For Appalachia ministry. I challenge anyone who claims they have never seen a miracle to come to this packing event and watch the packing of 1,200 boxes, in what appears to be absolute chaos, over a period of about two hours. And, as always, the host, Hermitage Baptist Church, provides the best hamburger and hotdog cook-out you will ever enjoy. I believe that the Mid-Tidewater Association is blessed as much by packing and giving these boxes as the children are in receiving them.

The Ramp-up ministry continues to bless many who need assistance in getting in and out of their home when no longer able to climb stairs. During 2023 the faithful servants who work this mission project, both men and women, constructed 14 ramps for houses in several counties in the Mid-Tidewater region. We thank the Community Ministries Action Group and their dedicated servants for utilizing their talents to construct these ramps. If you have never attended one of these ramp builds, you should go and see these folks in action. They build a first-class ramp. I’ve seen a homeowner drive his golf cart up a ramp built for his home, and it was just as sturdy as the highway.

The Mid-Tidewater Association held its Spring and Fall semi-annual meetings during 2023 with Mattaponi Baptist Church hosting the Spring Meeting and Beale Memorial Baptist Church hosting the Fall Meeting. The Association was blessed by the petition of Claybrook BC, located in Weems, VA requesting admission as a member of the Mid-Tidewater Association. At the Fall Meeting, Claybrook BC was formally admitted as our 30th member church. We welcome Rev. Dr. Dennis Martin and his congregation to Mid-Tidewater!

MTBA HISTORIAN REPORT
“ANCHORED TO THE PAST, SOARING INTO THE FUTURE!”
(CONTINUED)

The MTBA WMU annual meeting was held at Saluda BC on April 29, 2023, with Marissa Sanchez, a WMUV Ministry Assistant, serving on the Eastern Shore as the guest speaker.

Newington BC celebrated their 150th anniversary on October 1, 2023, with a special day of services featuring former BGAV Executive Director, Dr. John Upton, speaking at the morning service, and Dr. Nathan Taylor, Director of the VA Baptist Historical Society, speaking at the afternoon session.

Olivet BC began a new chapter in their history as they welcomed Pastor Shane Gallagher as their new pastor on July 1, 2023.

The Mid-Tidewater Association WMU Fall meeting was held at Newington BC on September 17th with Diane Garrison, who serves the local Native American tribes at the Mattaponi Healing Eagle Clinic.

It should never cease to amaze us that God can turn tragedy into triumph. The Bible is full of evidence of this. During the year of 2021, both Lower King & Queen (Wares) BC and New Hope Memorial Baptist Church lost their church buildings to fire. Through prayer and the determination of the church members to rebuild, plans for rebuilding were made and funds were provided. As of this report, both buildings are under roof and will be ready for occupancy very soon. Although many memories of the old structures will always remain, God has us looking to the future. Because the churches have chosen to do the hard work of rebuilding, people will one day walk down the aisles of these new buildings, giving their lives to Christ. We give thanks for the faithfulness of Wares and New Hope Memorial Churches.

The Lord has also cared for us individually. On April 18, 2023, Eddie Heath, our Director of Missions, had heart bypass surgery from which he has had a complete recovery and is continuing to serve our Association. Not long after Eddie's surgery, his wife, Kathy, was hospitalized for about two weeks with her own health issues from which she has now recovered and is back at home.

The last instruction that Jesus gave his disciples is that recorded in Matthew 28:18—20 which reads “and Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Jesus has instructed his disciples to continue to spread the gospel. **May we, together as members of the Mid-Tidewater Association, strive to always remember and to do what Jesus has asked of us as his disciples.**

By: John M. Bareford, Jr.

MTBA Historian

(Saluda BC)

April 2024

Spring Gathering, April 28, at 4 pm at Gwynn's Island BC



Associational Choir (l). Corrottoman BC Children's Choir (r)



Gwynn's Island BC volunteers at registration (l). Dale Saunders, Sue Smith, Lori Kerby, Mark Harrison (r)



Melissa Blake (l), Rev. David Medlen (center), Rev. Eddie Heath (r). **Above photos courtesy by Roxy Gwynn.**



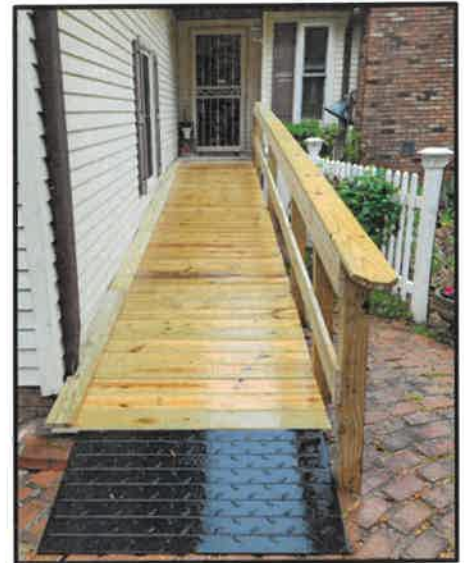
Ramp-It Up Mission project is still an on-going need in our communities. Since January 1, **five ramps have been built**, and additional ramp requests continue to be received. Below are three recent ramps built by our faithful servants. Thank you servant workers and thank you, MTBA, for giving monies to Week of Prayer Missions' Offering.



Connection with Beulah BC



Connection with Beulah BC & Mathews BC



Connection with Mathews BC

On April 23 MTBA honored our churches' **Administrative Professionals** by hosting a luncheon at Olivia's In The Village, Gloucester. Rev. Nell Robinson (Urbanna BC Secretary) gave us words of wisdom as we serve: "we are a Beacon of Light and are servants of God".

Pictured l to r: Eddie Heath (MTBA & Urbanna), Anna Jenkins (Gwynn's Island), Charlie Weis (Saluda), Ann Revere (White Stone), Barbara Bareford (MTBA & Saluda), Rev. Nell Robinson (Urbanna & Philippi), Juanita Glascock (Zoar), and Dale Mitchell (Beale).

MTBA gave a gift and potted flower to plant and watch as God births beautiful blooms as He places us to bloom where we are.



STAY CONNECTED

Mid-Tidewater Baptist Association

P. O. Box 302

884 Gloucester Road

Saluda, VA 23149

MTBA is comprised of 30 churches located in Essex, Gloucester, King and Queen, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, and Richmond Counties on the Middle Peninsula and Northern Neck, VA.

1. Visit us: 884 Gloucester Road, (behind Saluda post office), 2nd floor, Monday-Wednesday 8:30 am-3:00 pm.

2. Call us: 804-758-4385

3. Communicate with us: e-mail:

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4. Share our Stories: On Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/MidTidewaterBaptists/>

5. Stay Informed: Webpage www.midtidewaterbaptist.org

6. Read The Tidings: your MTBA Newsletter