

A Publication of the
Baptist General
Convention of
Virginia

Baptist Herald

BGCVA Chrismon Tree: A Brief History

Chrismon Ornaments were originated and first made for use on the Christmas tree of Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia, in 1957 by Mrs. Frances Kipps Spencer, a church member. The designs were monograms of and symbols for our Lord Jesus Christ. Because these designs have been used by his followers since biblical times, they are the heritage of all Christians and serve to remind each of us regardless of denomination of the One we follow. All Chrismon Ornaments are made in a combination of white and gold to symbolize the purity and majesty of the Son of God and the Son of Man.

Chrismon Ornaments' Symbols:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| ⇒ The Cross | ⇒ Lamb of God |
| ⇒ Chalice | ⇒ Butterfly |
| ⇒ Crown | ⇒ Celtic Cross |
| ⇒ Angel | ⇒ Trefoil |
| ⇒ Alpha and Omega | ⇒ 5 Pointed Star |
| ⇒ Descending Dove | ⇒ Natal Star Cross |
| ⇒ Anchor | ⇒ Lights |
| ⇒ Chi Rho | ⇒ Earth |
| ⇒ Peace Dove | ⇒ Clam |
| ⇒ Triumphant Church Cross | ⇒ Fish or IΧTHUS |
| ⇒ Jerusalem Cross | ⇒ Lamp |
| ⇒ Round Cross | ⇒ Heart |
| ⇒ IHS--Iota, Eta, Sigma | ⇒ Symbol of Love |
| ⇒ Trinity | ⇒ Star of David |
| ⇒ Babe in a manger | ⇒ 8 pointed |
| | ⇒ Armenian Star |
| | ⇒ Grapes |
| | ⇒ Wheat |

¹⁵The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. Colossians 1:15-18 NIV

In This Issue

BGCVA Advent 2021—P.2

Homegoing Celebrations—P.5

Executive Minister's Around the State—P.9

Litany for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—P.10

BGCVA 2022 Calendar—P.15



Baptist Herald

Executive Editor:

The Reverend Dr. Leo Whitaker

Editor:

Mrs. Sheryl Blowe-McDowney

State Officers

The Reverend Dr. James E. Victor, Jr.
President

The Reverend Milton P. Bunting
1st Vice-President

The Reverend Dr. James E. Coleman, Jr.
2nd Vice President

The Reverend Dr. Griselda A. Bayton
3rd Vice President

The Reverend Dr. Glenn E. Porter, Sr.
Secretary

The Reverend Dr. William J. Reid
Assistant Secretary

The Reverend Willis A. Funn
Treasurer

The Reverend Dr. Robert L. Pettis, Sr.
Parliamentarian

The Reverend Dr. Raymond L. Palmer, Esq.

BGC Foundation

The Reverend Dr. Robert G. Murray
Chairperson,

Ministry Presidents

The Reverend Dr. Gregory L. Beechaum, Sr.
Clergy Ministry

Mr. Larry Pinchback
Men's Ministry

Mrs. Polly Jones Mason
Women's Ministry

Administration

The Reverend Dr. Leo Whitaker
Executive Minister

The Reverend Janet L. Wynn
Accounting Consultant

Program Ministries

The Reverend Dr. William H. Whitaker, II
Director of Clergy Ministry and Leadership
Development

The Reverend Dr. J. Elisha Burke
Director of Sacred Spaces, Health, Wellness,
Men, and Social Justice Ministries

Mrs. Sheryl B. McDowney
Director of Christian Faith Formation

Mrs. Keshia H. Butler
Program Secretary

Mr. Bruce J. Martin
Maintenance Technician

BGCVA Advent 2021

Introduction

The Arrival of Hope for All

Advent 2021 Wreath Candle Lighting Readings
for 2021

*(Compiled by Sheryl Blowe McDowney, BGCVA
Director of Christian Faith Formation)*

Advent begins 5 Sundays prior to Christmas Day. Twinkling lights and candles everywhere remind us that Jesus is the light of the world who came to dispel the darkness. The theme of light is what originally gave birth to the Advent Wreath hundreds of years ago in Germany. Since then, the Advent Candle lighting has become a beloved tradition in many churches and homes. The Advent Wreath is typically an evergreen wreath containing five candles (two purple candles side by side; followed by a pink candle; and, another purple candle. A large white candle is in the center of the wreath.

As is practiced in numerous church services, the Advent wreath is usually lit at the beginning of the weekly service with its accompanying Advent reading from the Bible. However, many families choose to create an Advent wreath and set it on the dinner table or mantel, lighting the candles and using that family time to remind themselves and their children that the Christmas season is first and foremost about Jesus. Other families place the Advent wreath on their mantel. Again, the beauty of this tradition is that you can make it you own, as it suits you and your family.

The Advent readings, as you have probably realized by now, also vary among church denomination and traditions, depending on their weekly themes. Some churches, especially in Catholic traditions, read exclusively from the book of Isaiah, while other churches choose passages that correspond to the weekly theme, from either the Old Testament, New Testament or the Psalms.

The 2021 BGCVA Advent Themes are related to highs and lows of waiting. They are as follows:

1st Sunday (November 28, 2021)

The Pain of Waiting!

2nd Sunday (December 5, 2021)

The Patience to Wait!

3rd Sunday (December 12, 2021)

The Joy of Waiting!

4th Sunday (December 19, 2021)

Our Hope is Near!

Christmas Day

Our Hope is Here!

HELPFUL HINTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL ADVENT VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE

ESSENTIAL: PLEASE HAVE EVERYONE TO MUTE THEIR MICS BEFORE BEGINNING AND, CUT OFF ALL OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN THE BACKGROUND!

Please have only 1 person reading or speaking at a time.

Never have people to respond in unison.

This does not go well with virtual platforms and comes out muffled and noisy.

HAVE ONE PERSON (from the family) RESPONSIBLE FOR LIGHTING THE CANDLES EACH WEEK AND ONE PERSON ON STAND BY.

Example:

- **Week one** Family – One family member lights one purple candle
- **Week two** Family – One family member re-lights first purple and lights the purple candle it (side by side)
- **Week three** Family – One family member re-lights the two purple candles and light the pink candle
- **Week four** Family – One family member re-lights three purple candles, the pink candle and lights the last purple candle
- **Christmas Day** – One family member re-lights the 2 purple candles, the pink candle, 1 purple candle; and then, light the center white candle – the Christ Candle.

Instructions For Lighting The Candles On The Virtual Advent Wreath

Virtual Advent Wreath

May The Blessed Season Of Advent Light Your Way To A Merry Christmas

Click [HERE for a Virtual Advent Wreath](#) with wicks that light when clicked,

Click [HERE for a brief history](#) of Advent and the wreath. Let persons know that the messages read change each year. You can even be creative and write your own!



ADVENT: FIRST SUNDAY - November 28, 2021

The Pain of Waiting!

First Reader Today, is the first Sunday in Advent. We light the first purple candle as we await the arrival of the coming Christ Child afresh in each believer's heart. Come! Let us join together in commemorating this time of Advent waiting.

Solo Come Thy Long Expected Jesus
<https://youtu.be/xIOY0dXQh9w>
<https://youtu.be/WWj9sDXIT0A>

Prayer Deacon or Deaconess (*Prayer to Endure the pain of waiting for the birth of the Christ Child afresh in our heart*)
Side 1 (of Sanctua

Intergenerational Expression Wait On God ©2019 by Elizabeth Vecchione – SEE ATTACHED!
Light 1st PURPLE Candle Trustee

Say: Today, we light the First Purple Candle to remind us that although waiting can be dreadful, we wait for the Christ Child to come afresh into our hearts.

An Intergenerational Reading – “Wait on God” (At the End

Second Reader Have you ever waited; and, waited; and, waited for something!? Perhaps you start off being excited and filled with great anticipation of what is to come. Then, you become disillusioned and tired of waiting. Most of the time, waiting for something is not easy to do! The waiting becomes dreadful and sometimes painful. We just get tired of waiting!

If we are to experience a dynamic quality of life, then our personality must be tempered with the patience to wait. We need to be patient with ourselves; we need to be patient with others, and we need to be patient with God (*as He is patient with us*). We need to have the patience to wait on Him with hope – a hope for that day when Jesus,...will reveal the greatest mystery to us, the true kingdom of God.

Congregational Song/Solo

Unison Congregational Prayer Almighty God, the Creator and Giver of life

and patience, we thank you for creating within us the spirit of fortitude. We confess that there are times when our waiting is not without complaints. Help us to continue to be active in Your will as we lean totally on You for the patience to wait for the Christ Child to come afresh in each of our lives – not just one day but, EVERYDAY! In Your Name WE PRAY! AMEN, AMEN, AMEN!

An Intergenerational Expression

Wait On God

©2019 by Elizabeth Vecchione

Teenager

During your wait, all kinds of good things Are being prepared in and for you.
Waiting on God builds your faith and your trust
Don't worry, God's timing gives us that Blessed Assurance!

ALL

Lord, help us to grow in our faith and endure the pain of waiting!

Young Child

Don't go by the clock or the calendar
God exists outside of time.
So wait on Him, wait on Him, wait on Him; and, still wait!
When He's done, you will be in your prime!

ALL

Lord, help us to grow in our faith and endure the pain of waiting!

Older Adult

No matter what age you become on the way
God knows what He's doing for sure!
Believe in His ways and ask His timing for you
It's possible, you will endure!

ALL

Lord, help us to grow in our faith and endure the pain of waiting!

Young Adult

Remember Joseph and Moses and David as well
Each of them went through a test
Our part is to wait, hope, trust and obey
Jesus takes care of the rest!

ALL

Thank you Lord for helping us to grow in our faith while enduring the pain of waiting!

ADVENT: SECOND SUNDAY - December 5, 2021

The Patience to Wait!

Today, is the second Sunday in Advent. We re-light the first purple candle to commemorate the pain of waiting for the arrival of the Christ Child. We light the second purple candle to remind us, though the wait may seem long and painful, we wait with patience, for the Christ Child to come refresh in each person's heart.

Prayer for Patience to Wait
Young Adult

Following Prayer Say...And, together we say:
Thank you Lord for the patience to wait on You!

Unison **AMEN!**

Scripture Micah 5:2-5a

Congregational or Ensemble Song
Wait, On The Lord! <https://youtu.be/WcnIRfNJ3eE>

Meditation

In her book, *The Patience To Wait*, Reverend Dr. Nan M. Brown, former BGCVA pastor of the New Hope Baptist Church, Dinwiddie, Virginia; and, the New Hope Baptist Church in Esmont, Virginia, asked the question: “Do you have patience today to wait on the Lord?... Patience is the bearing of suffering, provocation, delay, tediousness with calmness and self control. It is courage to endure a life of happiness and successful living amid turmoil.

Patience is a quality of the spirit. It is a virtue for which one should seek.” And, again today, the same question is asked, “Do you have the patience to wait on the Lord?”

During this Advent Season you are encouraged to seriously think about this question. And, to follow up with these questions, “What does waiting look like? What does waiting feel like? What am I doing while I'm waiting?

Song

Wait, On The Lord! (Donnie McClurkin & Karen Clark-Sheard) https://youtu.be/a8j1B58E_Ew

ADVENT: THIRD SUNDAY - December 12, 2021

The Joy of Waiting!

The Growing Excitement and JOY (That Fills the Air!)...And, Still We Wait!

Today, is the third Sunday in Advent. We re-light the first purple candle to commemorate the pain of waiting for the arrival of the Christ Child. We re-light the second purple candle to remind us that though the wait may seem long and painful, however, we must wait with patience, for the Christ Child to come refresh in each believer's heart. Today, we light the PINK candle – which represents the JOY in the heart of each of us as we patiently await the arrival of the Christ Child!

<https://youtu.be/USidekyui1o>

Psalm 80:1-7 (Responsively)

Side 1 (of Sanctuary) 80:1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth

Side 2 (of Sanctuary) 80:2 before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might, and come to save us!

Side 1 (of Sanctuary) 80:3 Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Side 2 (of Sanctuary) 80:4 O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

Side 1 (of Sanctuary) 80:5 You have fed them with the bread of tears, and given them tears to drink in full measure.

Side 2 (of Sanctuary) 80:6 You make us the scorn of our neighbors; our enemies laugh among themselves.

Side 1 (of Sanctuary) 80:7 Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Hymn Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee
(Congregation) <https://youtu.be/WkXjCoUOWyA> or from Hymnal

Together AMEN!

FOURTH SUNDAY - December 19, 2021
Our Hope is Near!

ADVENT: FOURTH SUNDAY

Can't You Feel It!? Our Hope is Near!...And, Still We Wait!

Welcome to the fourth Sunday in Advent – 2021! Today, we re-light the first purple candle to remind us of the sense of dread and long painful WAIT for the arrival of the Christ Child. We re-light the second purple candle to remind us that though the wait may seem long and painful, we wait with PATIENCE, for the Christ Child to come afresh in each believer's heart. We re-light the pink candle – the candle of JOY – to remind us of the joy the Christ Child brings into the heart of all who seek it. And, today, we light the final purple candle to remind us of the HOPE that the Christ Child brings to each of us today and, thusly, the world.

Hebrews 10:5-10 (Responsively)

Side 1 (Left Side) 10:5 Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifice and offering you have not desire, but a body you have prepared for me;

Side 2 (Right Side) 10:6 with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased.

Side 1 (Left Side) 10:7 Then I said, 'Here I am – it is written about me in the scroll –, I have come to do your will, my God.'"

Side 2 (Right Side) 10:8 First he said, "Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings. You did not desire sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law),

Side 1 (Left Side) 10:9 then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second.

Side 2 (Right Side) 10:10 And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Congregational or Send the Light <https://youtu.be/IAEWRUH1ang>

Ensemble Song

CHRISTMAS DAY (or Christmas Eve)
Our Hope is Here!

FINALLY, this day has arrived! It is Christmas Day! Today, we re-light the first purple candle to commemorate the sense of dread and pain of waiting for the arrival of the Christ Child. We re-light the second purple candle to remind us that though the wait may seem long and painful, we wait with patience, for the Christ Child to come refresh in each believer's heart. We re-light the PINK candle – the candle of JOY that represents the JOY in the hearts of each of us. And, today, this is the day that we all have been anxiously awaiting. Today, we light the last PURPLE candle to remind us of the – the first pink candle reminds us of we re-light the first purple candle to commemorate the pain of waiting for the arrival of the Christ Child. We re-light the second purple candle to remind us that though the wait may seem long and painful, we wait with patience, for the Christ Child to come refresh in each believer's heart. We re-light the pink candle to remind us of the joy the Christ-Child brings. And, today, we light the large Center white Candle – The Christ Candle. For our hearts which were once filled with dread are now filled with Joy! The Birth of the Christ-Child reminds us that our deliverer has come to give all of us a chance to live triumphantly with Him forever more! We lift our hands in Holy Praise to our God who sent His Only Begotten Son into this wretched world to relieve us of the pain of the thorn of death, and, has filled our hearts with renewed hope. **PRAISE BE TO GOD FOR HIS MIGHTY WORKS!!!!**

Song **Send the Light** (Advent Harmony Choir University of Nairobi)
<https://youtu.be/IAEWRUH1ang>

Luke 1:39-45, (46-55) (Responsively)

L – 1:39 In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country,

C – 1:40 where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

L – 1:41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And, Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit

C – 1:42 and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

L – 1:43 And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?

C – 1:44 For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy.

L – 1:45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

C – 1:46 And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,

L – 1:47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

C – 1:48 for God has looked with favor on the lowliness of God's servants. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

L – 1:49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is God's name.

C – 1:50 God's mercy is for those who fear God from generation to generation.

L – 1:51 The Lord has shown strength with his arm; The Lord has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

C – 1:52 The Lord has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

L – 1:53 The Lord has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

C – 1:54 The Lord has helped Thy servant Israel, in remembrance of the Lord's mercy,

ALL According to the promise God made to Abraham and to Abraham's descendants forever."

**ALL PRAISE BE TO GOD, FOREVER! AMEN!
AMEN! AMEN!**

CONGREGATIONAL SONG – Let's Lift Our Voices and sing with much JOY, Joy to the World, not because of what we've done but because of what God has done and what God continues to give evidence of the He Joy HIS Son Brings Into The World!

Executive Minister Greetings



With a grateful and humble heart, I thank you for your overwhelming support and participation in the mission and ministries of the Baptist General Convention of Virginia for 2021. Together, your spiritual and financial contributions will continue to enhance greatly our theme of Bringing People Together, Growing Churches, & Changing Communities!

GOD is blessings us right now. Please join me in praising GOD for the pastors and people and the Moderators and Associations of the BGCVA for making BGC The Place To BE!

Our HERALD has the calendar of events and flyers for the 2022.

We are delighted to announce the return of our MEGA Retreat for Women, Men, Clergy and Children in February as well as the BGCVA Youth Retreat in March 2022. Both events will be held at the Marriott Norfolk Waterside Hotel. You are encouraged to place these dates on your church and associational calendars. When you encourage your members and leaders to attend – you strengthen the BODY OF CHRIST!

I praise GOD that I was able to share my 30th Birthday Celebration at BGCVA in 1991. It was a surprise planned with grace and love by my bride, Sister Cathy Whitaker. This year I am here at BGCVA sharing sacred salutations on my 60th Birthday. The LORD is blessing me Right NOW!



At Thanksgiving, may your table be adorned with love and joy. When you celebrate Advent, shout everywhere you go - JESUS is the reason for the season!

Executive Minister Leo Whitaker

Homegoing Celebrations

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word. 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

On behalf of President Victor, Executive Minister Whitaker, staff, and officers of the Baptist General Convention, our thoughts and prayers continue to be with the families of the following pastors, who have transitioned into eternal rest in 2021.

◇ Sister Lenora Gibson Hicks



◇ Sister Martha A. Taylor



◇ Reverend Robert Pearson



◇ Dr. Herbert Ralph Plummer, Sr.



◇ Reverend E. Walter Anderson, Jr.



◇ Sister Lucinda Gormes



President's Greetings



One of the lessons learned at my grandmother's knee was, "Say Thank You when people are nice to you." During this Thanksgiving Holiday, we all have much for which to be thankful. Although this pandemic has taken an exacting toll on all of us, we can still adopt a spirit of gratitude and worship. I am reminded of the prophet Habakkuk who when faced with the spiritual crisis of a slowly moving God and the problematic predicament of injustices within his community remarked, Though the fig tree does not blossom, and no fruit is on the vines, though the produce of the olive fails, and the fields yield no food, though the flock is cut off from the fold and there is no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will exult in the God of my salvation (Habakkuk 3:17-18- NRSV).

Although my grandmother's curriculum was directed toward human generosity, the prophet helps us to discern that my grandmother's teaching is transferable to the Divine. Thus, saying, "Thank You Lord" is always appropriate regardless of life's circumstances and challenges. In the spirit of an ethos of gratitude, won't you make a special offering to BGC to tell God, 'Thank You, Lord!' Let your gift be proportional to your praise for a great God deserves a great praise and a great gift.



Happy Thanksgiving All!
James E. Victor, Jr., President

Celebrating Years of Service

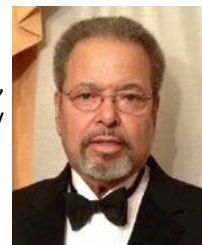
◆ Dr. Jerry L. Bryant, Jr., 20th Pastoral Anniversary



◆ Reverend John E. Blackmon, Sr., 30th Pastoral Anniversary



◆ Dr. Burrell A. Smith, Jr., 30th Pastoral Anniversary



◆ Dr. Earl L. Bledsoe, 50th Pastoral Anniversary

Pastoral Installations

◆ Reverend Jeffrey W. Jones—World Victory Church and Life Center
Newport News, VA



Pastoral Mentorship & Training Program

1. **Baptist Church Doctrine & Polity**
(Sept. 25, 2021 @ 1pm)



4. **Baptist Church Politics & Power Struggles**
(Dec. 11, 2021 @ 10am)

2. **Pastoral Ministry Development & Formation**
(Oct. 23, 2021 @ 10am)

5. **Pastoral Candidacy Interviewing, Contracts, Compensation, & Benefit Negotiating**
(Jan. 22, 2021 @ 10am)

3. **Ministry Ethics & Etiquette of Pastoral Leadership**
(Nov. 13, 2021 @ 10am)

6. **Juniper Tree Care & Support for Pastors & 1st Families in Crisis**
(Feb. 26, 2022 @ 10am)

Register at <https://www.bgcva.org/training.html>

BAPTIST GENERAL CONVENTION OF VIRGINIA &
REBUILDING TOGETHER RICHMOND PRESENT

THE WEATHERIZATION & ENERGY EFFICIENCY WORKSHOP



DECEMBER 11, 2021

10 AM – 12 NOON VIA ZOOM

Engaging persons in community
services for weatherization &
energy efficiency, preserving
sacred spaces and the BGC food
network.

Sponsor & Partner:



If I Can Help Somebody

– Mahalia Jackson

Everybody can be great if everyone serves.

– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

For more information contact by
Phone: 804-228-2421
Email: youth@bgcva.org

REGISTRATION IS FREE <<< REGISTER TODAY >>> www.bgcva.org/events.html



BAPTIST GENERAL CONVENTION OF VIRGINIA

WWW.BGCVA.ORG | INFO@BGCVA.ORG | 804.228.2421

GRIEF MINISTRY

“God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.” Psalm 46:1-2 KJV

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11 @ 9 AM

Dr. Micah Jackson, Pastor/Chaplain, Facilitator



Registration is \$15 a Session or \$50 for All Five—Register at www.bgcva.org



Baptist General Convention of Virginia



Hybrid Church Finance and Tax Compliance Conference

ENGAGE 2022

This exciting, one-day conference is designed for Pastors, Trustees, Deacons, Treasurers, Finance Ministry, Finance Committee, etc.

January 8, 2022 8:30 AM—1:00 PM

Inclement Weather Date: January 15, 2022

Registration: \$30 Per Person, \$100 Per Church

First Baptist Church Centralia and Via —>
2920 Kingsdale Road
Chesterfield, VA 23237



Masks Required. In-person space is limited.

"But let all be done properly and in an orderly manner." (1 Cor. 14:40 NASB)

REGISTER ON-LINE AT: www.bgcva.org

For more information call 804.228.2421

Email: info@bgcva.org

We are BGC...Bringing People Together, Growing Churches, and Changing Communities! ~ Act 1:8; Matthew 9:35-38; Mark 10:13-16



We are BGC...

Bringing People Together,
Growing Churches, and
Changing Communities!

(Act 1:8; Matthew 9:35-38; Mark 10:13-16)



We will be introducing BGCVA's FIRST VBS Curriculum during the Conference!!! Newly Released!

Sacred Spaces: Generations Together – Preserving the Gift of Our Heritage

A Curriculum Inspired by the BGCVA Sacred Spaces Grant.

Written and produced by BGCVA Churches ACROSS Virginia.



Ellison Jones Convocation Highlights

- BGCVA Clergy Ministry Assistant Secretary Dr. Tracey D. Holley



- BGCVA 39th President, Dr. Darrell K. White; Executive Minister Leo Whitaker; and Reverend Derek Arnold



- Dr. Barbara Brehon, Moderator, Southside Rappahannock Baptist Association; BGCVA 3rd Vice President, Dr. Griselda A. Bayton; and Dr. Carla Lightfoot Pastor Angel Visit Baptist Church



- Dr. John W. Kinney and Dean John E. Guns

- Dean John E. Guns and BGCVA 35th President Dr. Patricia Gould Champ



- BGCVA 2nd Vice President, Dr. James E. Coleman; Executive Minister Leo Whitaker; Dr. Boykin Sanders; BGCVA President, James E. Victor, Jr.; and Col. Chaplain James Palmer



- BGCVA President James E. Victor, Jr., Col. Chaplain James Palmer.

BGCVA Executive Minister Whitaker's Around The State

- At Virginia State University (VSU), Dominion Energy presents the university with a check for \$2,750,000 for HBCU Promise. Pictured from left to right: Executive Minister Whitaker; Dominion Energy staff members; Children's Home Board Member, Mr. Ernest Green; and Dominion Energy's Senior Vice President, Dr. William Murray



- At VSU with Children's Home Board Member, Mr. Ernest Green; Dr. Ahkinyala Cobb-Abdullah, Ph.D.; and VSU President, Dr. Makola M. Abdullah, Ph.D.

- Attending the Elevation and Consecration to Bishop Services for our 38th President, Dr. Dwight Riddick. Pictured from left to right: Executive Minister Whitaker; Leading Lady Vera Riddick; Bishop Dwight Riddick; and Mrs. Cathy W. Whitaker



- At Pastoral Installation for Reverend Jeffrey Jones and Leading Lady Sheila Diggs Jones, The World Victory Church and Life Center in Newport News

- Happy 70th Birthdays to Dr. Kirkland Walton and Leading Lady Brenda Walton of Saint Peter's Baptist Church in Glen Allen



- And Happy 60th Birthday to our Executive Minister, Dr. Leo Whitaker! To view his birthday greetings, [CLICK HERE](#).

Litany for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Quotations from Letter from the Birmingham City Jail by Martin Luther King Jr.; Litany by W. B. McClain and L. H. Stookey, U.S.A., 20th Cent. From The United Methodist Book of Worship (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1992.) Used by permission. For information about reproducing this material, please contact the United Methodist Publishing House. Letter from the Birmingham City Jail © 1963 by Martin Luther King Jr.; © renewed 1991 by Coretta Scott King.

We remember the conviction of Martin Luther King Jr. that "freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed."

Therefore, let us pray for courage and determination by those who are oppressed. . . .

We remember Martin's warning that "a negative peace which is the absence of tension" is less than "a positive peace which is the presence of justice."

Therefore, let us pray that those who work for peace on our world may cry out first for justice. . . .

We remember Martin's insight that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly."

Therefore, let us pray that we may see nothing in isolation, but may know ourselves bound to one another and to all people under heaven. . . .

We remember Martin's lament that "the contemporary church is often a weak, ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. It is so often the arch-supporter of the status quo. Far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church's silent and often vocal sanction of things as they are."

Therefore, let us pray that neither this congregation nor any congregation of Christ's people may be silent in the face of wrong, but that we may be disturbers of the status quo when that is God's call to us. . . .

We remember Martin's hope that "dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fear-drenched communities and in some not-too-distant tomorrow the radiant stars of love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all their scintillating beauty."

Therefore, in faith, let us commend ourselves and our work for justice to the goodness of almighty God.

A Litany for Martin Luther King, Jr., Day (From University of South Carolina – Dr. Harris Pastides, President; Office of the Provost; Department of Athletics, Eric Hyman, Director of Athletics; Division of Business and Finance, Dr. William T. Moore, Vice President for Finance and Planning.)

LEADER: In a sermon delivered on August 11, 1957, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stated "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'what are you doing for others?'"

AUDIENCE: In remembrance of Martin, "What are you doing for others?"

LEADER: King stated that "An individual has not begun to live until he can rise above the narrow horizons of his particular individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity."

AUDIENCE: In the name of service, "What are you doing for others?"

LEADER: King also said that "Every person must decide, at some point, whether they will walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness."

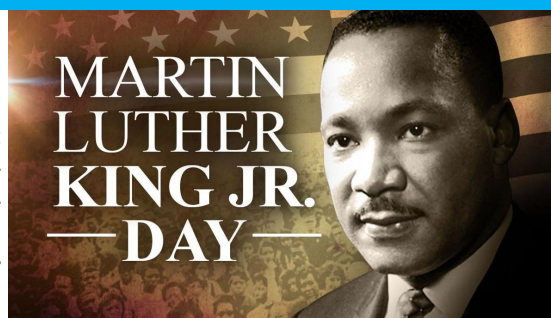
AUDIENCE: In the name of community, "What are you doing for others?"

LEADER: We are all the benefactors of the deeds, contributions and sacrifices of those who have gone before us. They left their mark; we enjoy the fruit of their labor. It is incumbent upon us, therefore, to leave our mark and to make greater contributions to the betterment of society.

AUDIENCE: In the name of those who have gone before us, "What are you doing for others?"

LEADER: To whom much is given, much is required. The freedoms and privileges of our citizenship along with the right to pursue our dreams are gifts of immeasurable proportion. What legacy will we leave those who will come after us?

AUDIENCE: In the name of generations yet to



come, "What are you doing for others?"

LEADER: In remembrance of Martin, what will be our response to life's most persistent and urgent question?

AUDIENCE: In response to the question, we endeavor

or to rise above the narrow confines of individualistic concerns and commit ourselves to making a difference for the betterment of society at large and within the communities in which live.

Facts & Faith Fridays

Facts & Faith Fridays began in March 2020 as a weekly call led by Robert Winn, M.D., director of VCU Massey Cancer Center, with African American clergy in

Virginia to address the disproportionate impact the pandemic has had on the Black community. The call has evolved to address higher rates of cancer and other health issues in diverse communities and continues to address COVID-19. The group invited Virginians of all faiths and races to participate in this webinar.

This Zoom Webinar was co-sponsored by The Governor's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; the Office of Health Equity at the Virginia Department of Health; VCU Massey Cancer Center and faith leaders from Massey's Facts & Faith Fridays group.

Please join us!

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/96061021775?pwd=Vmx2cFUxOGZ3QmpOODkwWXM0dWdMUT09>

Meeting ID: 960 6102 1775
Passcode: 074279
One tap mobile
+16468769923,,96061021775#,,,,*074279#

Dial by your location
+1 646 876 9923
or
+1 301 715 8592





123rd Annual Session & Congress of Christian Faith Formation June 26 – 29, 2022

Theme
We are BGCVA Bringing People Together,
Growing Churches, and Changing Communities!
(Act 1:8; Matthew 9:35-38; Mark 10:13-16)

@ The Richmond Marriott Downtown

500 East Broad Street, Richmond, VA, 23219
(804) 643-3400

\$137.09 per night (Single/Double).
occupancy & sales tax included.

A one night non-refundable deposit may be required with each room reservation.

PLEASE NOTE: Name changes may be made to room reservations prior to arrival at the established group rate at no charge, if there is no change to arrival and departure dates. In the event a guest who has requested a room within Group's block checks out prior to guest's reserved checkout date, the Hotel will add an early checkout fee to that guest's individual account. Guests wishing to avoid an early checkout fee should advise the Hotel at or before check-in of any change in planned length of stay. The Hotel will inform members of your Group of this potential charge and requests that you (BGCVA) also inform your attendees of this obligation.

Deadline to reserve is June 10, 2022, by 5:00 PM.



1214 West Graham Road
Suite 1
Richmond VA 23220

Phone: 804.228.2421
info@bgcva.org

**Baptist General
Convention of VA**



BAPTIST GENERAL CONVENTION OF VIRGINIA
PRESENTS

AT THE
MARRIOTT
NORFOLK WATERSIDE
235 E Main St, Norfolk, VA 23510
P: (757) 627-4200

MEGA MID-WINTER RETREAT 2022

Registration
is
\$50 Per Adult
\$15 Per Child

*Women's Ministry ~ Men's Ministry ~ Clergy Ministry
~ Special Featuring Children's Ministry (Grades 1-5) ~*

SAVE THE DATE

FEBRUARY 18 – 19, 2022

Hotel Reservations
are
\$149.05 Per
Room Night
(Single/Double)
Taxes and fees included

** For more information contact the BGCVA Office 804.228.2421 or info@bgcva.org **

www.bgcva.org



YOUTH RETREAT 2022

LOVING WHO I AM!

LEARNING WHO I WANT TO BE!

REGISTRATION
IS
\$50 PER PERSON

MARCH 25 – 27, 2022

SAVE THE DATE!

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, [a] we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.
1 John 3:2 (NIV)

We ask that churches have a ratio of 1 male leader: 4-5 male youth and 1 female leader: 4-5 female youth.
Medical forms are required.

Hotel Reservations
are
\$149.05 Per
Room Night
(Single/Double)
Taxes and fees included

AT THE
MARRIOTT
NORFOLK WATERSIDE
235 E Main St, Norfolk, VA 23510
P: (757) 627-4200

** For more information contact the BGCVA Office 804.228.2421 or youth@bgcva.org **

www.bgcva.org

SPONSORS >>>>



**Dominion
Energy**



Rebuilding Together.

Richmond

**BAPTIST GENERAL CONVENTION OF
VIRGINIA PRESENTS**



2022 CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND YOUTH WORKERS' CONFERENCE

MAY 7, 2022

10 AM – 12 NOON

VIA ZOOM

For more information contact by

Phone: 804-228-2421

Email: youth@bgcva.org



REGISTRATION IS \$100 per church <<< REGISTER TODAY >>> www.bgcva.org/events.html

Attention All Youth Pastors, Directors, & Workers

BGCVA inviting you to join the Baptist General Convention of Virginia's Youth Ministry Advisory Team (YMAT). Together, we will plan, implement, evaluate and elevate BGCVA'S Youth Ministry in conjunction with both our 28 associations and 1079 churches. The YMAT will develop and design strategic plans and programs and other events in your area as well as give leadership to statewide engagements.

The virtual meetings and training sessions are each Tuesday at 6:00 PM.

Join Zoom Meeting: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82102131267?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82102131267?pwd=N0lDSk93NFJ0ZnRldXBiWGVL3FLZz09)
[pwd=N0lDSk93NFJ0ZnRldXBiWGVL3FLZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82102131267?pwd=N0lDSk93NFJ0ZnRldXBiWGVL3FLZz09)

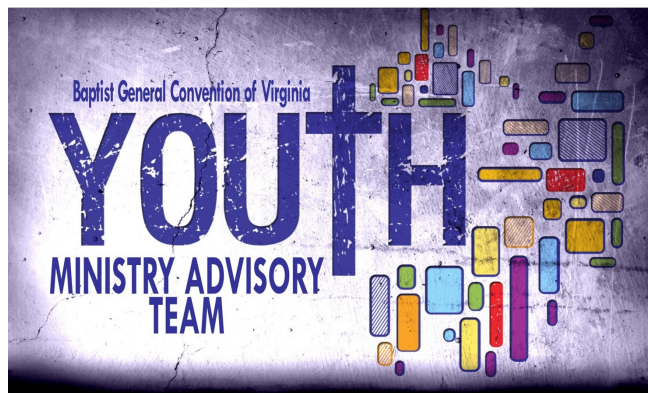
Meeting ID: 821 0213 1267

Passcode: 5yUatT

Dial by phone: +1 301 715 8592

Meeting ID: 821 0213 1267

Passcode: 778991



For questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Executive Minister Whitaker 804-228-2421 (office) or executiveminister@bgcva.org.

We look forward to working with you!

Christmas Greetings

While the idea of tradition has become a concept relegated to the semantic doghouse, there are certain traditions which we maintain, especially around the Christmas season, that defines for us what Christmas really is. Those time-honored practices put us in a Christmas mood and give us a Christmas feeling. Christmas just isn't Christmas without the observance of these rituals. Unquestionably, the focus of Christmas is the coming of the Christ as Savior of the World. This precious precept is the non-negotiable dimension of the holy holiday. Yet, our treasured Christmas conventions add to the ambiance and ardor of the season. What is that element of your customs which if absent makes Christmas incomplete. Maybe, it's Grandma's sweet potato pie, the decorating of a tree, or hearing Nat King Cole's version of the Christmas Song that are the indispensable items to Christmas?

Sadly, many of our routines are being lost to the hustle and bustle of frenetic lifestyles and to a disregard of the sacred. Simply stated, our Christmas traditions are becoming vanishing acts. I want to admonish you to hold fast to what is true and tested. Giving is a sacred act and trust, an act of worship. Giving during this season parallels the greatest gift ever given, the birth of a savior. Therefore, consider a special gift to the Baptist General Convention of Virginia during the Christmas holiday. If you have not established a tradition of giving to the Convention, now is an excellent time to begin a wonderful heritage for the present and for future generations. If you have an established habit of giving to BGC during Christmas, then don't allow that custom to become a disappearing act. Give now!

The generosity of giving is an act of worship done in response to what has been received. Therefore, let us give cheerfully and heartily for unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given (Isaiah 6:9). Please, don't fade on your Convention. We need you because without you, there is no Baptist General Convention of Virginia as we Bring People Together, Grow Churches, and Transform Communities.

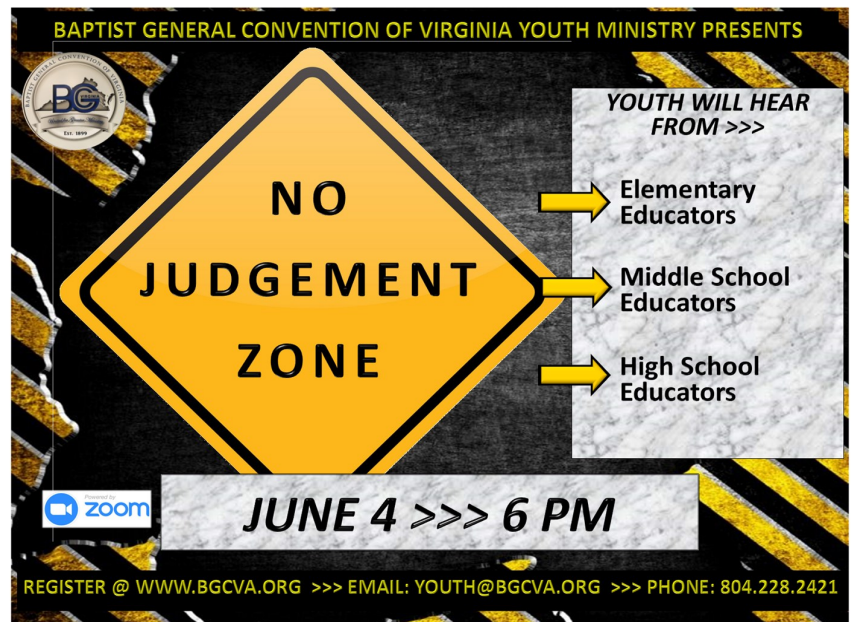
With Warm Wishes for Christmas,
James E. Victor, Jr., President
Leo Whitaker, Executive Minister

Thank You for Your Support!



Blessings and Peace This Holiday Season!!!

 VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY | SAMUEL DEWITT PROCTOR SCHOOL of THEOLOGY



** For more information contact the BGCVA Office 804.228.2421 or info@bgcva.org **

www.bgcva.org

BAPTIST GENERAL CONVENTION OF VA

2022 EVENT CALENDAR

EST. 1899

January

- 8 Virtual Church Finance and Tax Compliance Conference
17-18 MLK Celebration and Day of Ministry Service
23 Statewide BGCVA Day

February

- 4 Virtual VUU Founders' Day
18-19 Mega Mid-Winter Ministries Retreat, Norfolk Waterside Marriott Hotel

March

- 5 Virtual VBS Conference
25-27 Youth Retreat I, Norfolk Waterside Marriott Hotel

April

- 14 Virtual Spring General Board Meeting
23 VUU Church Leadership Conference

May (First Responders Month)

- 7 Children and Youth Workers' Conference

June

- 4 Virtual Children & Youth Empowerment - No Judgement Zone!
26-29 123rd Annual Session and Congress of Christian Faith Formation, Richmond Marriott Downtown

Weekly

- Every Tuesday @ 6:00 PM –
Youth Ministry Advisory Team: Meeting & Training

July

- 9 BGC Day @ Kings Dominion
9 Virtual Children's Home Founders' Day
15-16 Virtual Youth Retreat II

August

- 26-27 Virtual Back 2 School Weekend

September (Christian Faith Formation Month)

- 8 Virtual General Board Strategic Planning Meeting
17 Virtual Faith Formation Conference

October (Clergy Appreciation Month)

- 9 Clergy Appreciation Day
9-15 BGCVA Week of Prayer
13 Virtual Fall General Board Meeting

November

- 1 Day of Social Action
4-5 Virtual Fall Session
14-17 VUU Ellison Jones Convocation

December

- 17 Virtual Youth Ministry Lock-In

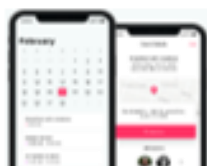
Monthly

- Every 1st Thursday @ 12PM –
Clergy Conversations
Every 3rd Monday @ 12 PM –
Ministry Training Track
Every 4th Thursday @ 10 AM –
Moderators' Meeting
Every 4th Thursday @ 6 PM –
Sacred Spaces Webinar
Every 4th Saturday @ 10 AM –
Pastoral Mentorship & Training Program

**** Some Events are Virtual During the Pandemic. ****

*** Dates and Locations are Subject to Change. ***

Phone: 804-228-2421 Email: info@bgcva.org



We are BGC...
Bringing People Together, Growing Churches, and Changing Communities!
(Act 1:8; Matthew 9:35-38; Mark 10:13-16)

REV. 11/24/2021

BGC Easy Giving Methods



Mail-In Gifts:
BGCVA

**1214 West Graham Road
Richmond, VA 23220**



Cash App:
Download App
Enter Amount
Pay To: \$BGCVA



GIVELIFY:

Download App

Find: Baptist General Convention

Tap Amount

Give



PayPal:

BGCVA Website: BGCVA.ORG

Click on Donate



Baptist General Convention of Virginia

1214 West Graham Road

Richmond, Virginia 23220

Address Service Requested

**Non-Profit Org.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Richmond, Virginia
Permit No. 954**

**Baptist General Convention of Virginia
Thanks You for Your Support!**