



THE **Spirit** OF
STRAWBERRY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Most of the New Testament is comprised of letters written to people or churches. Ephesians is one of those letters and it includes the following prayer: ¹⁴ *For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,* ¹⁵ *from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,* ¹⁶ *that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,* ¹⁷ *so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love,* ¹⁸ *may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,* ¹⁹ *and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.* ²⁰ *Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,* ²¹ *to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.* ¹

Keep in mind, this was written from prison! Paul, while in bondage, was interceding on behalf of other churches praying that they would know the love of Christ. Often in our need, our first thought is of ourselves; very naturally we want to get help and want to know what others can do for us!

In Associations of Churches it seems that a similar spirit sometimes persists. The Church's first thought is **what do we get out of it?** Ought we not

instead think, **what are we contributing?** And I don't think a budget line item is the place to start. I think presence and prayer is where we start AND spend most of our time! Paul's example is one of love for the church, and he sees the deep need in the church that they know God's love.

It is natural to struggle with the question of God's love when suffering, but Paul's example and prayer indicate that while it is Paul who is imprisoned, it is the church he intercedes for. Don't we often get that backwards!!!?? When we suffer, our response is often 'pray for me', not let me pray for you! What if instead of living our prayer life seeking to get out of our circumstances, we instead prayed for each other to find the love of Christ? Especially since Paul's conviction was that God can and does answer in ways greater than we can imagine.

I'd like to encourage pastors and churches to not think of the Association in terms of what is it doing for me, but in terms of how we can build each other up. We have a God that is powerful enough to do anything – more abundantly than we ask or think. Let's treat our Association like an opportunity to edify and see what God can do as we pray for each other, that we would truly know the love of God and that we would be filled with His fullness.

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2025), Eph 3:14–21.

Church News

Mentow - Even though the winter days and months were extremely cold and icy, we managed to have good attendance and are starting off spring in the same manner. We continue our WMU and Brotherhood ministries, meeting monthly and supporting local missions and needs. One of our most rewarding ministries is the hot breakfast offered each Sunday, with a large attendance. It allows the community to come together, have a hot meal, and enjoy a time of fellowship. We encourage other churches to do the same. Mentow pays for the food purchases and volunteers prepare on a rotating basis. On Palm Sunday, we had an Easter BBQ lunch which was a great time of good food and again fellowship. One of our outreaches is the music/pizza evenings, and another is planned for June, with a date to be announced. All is well on the home front.

Timber Ridge - We recently had Dr. Steven Levinson from the Genesis Seminars join us to share his message of "Foundations Under Fire." His ministry focuses on revealing how evolution undermines the Gospel message and how it is affecting our current culture.

Our WMU led in the Baby Bottle Ministry. Our people filled bottles with monies that will be used to minister to women at the Bedford Pregnancy Center. We also gave to the Annie Armstrong offering.

Our Youth Pastor, Nathan, is currently leading our Men's Wednesday Night Bible Study through a series called, "Who Will Tell?" It focuses on the importance of soul winning, and how believers can boldly and unashamedly share their faith with those they encounter every day.

Our choir celebrated "Grace Aloud: The Gospel in Song." The focus was on the hymns, their origins and the message behind those who penned them.

Timber Ridge is praising Jesus for 31 years of AWANA Ministry! Our Clubbers successfully completed another year of learning and growing in Jesus. We are thankful for our Clubbers, their families, our directors and our leaders. Their support, love and prayers have been an awesome blessing to each of us.

Our AWANA children made cards for many of our shut-ins. They enjoy this ministry, and it is such a blessing to so many who are homebound.

Our church Easter festivities included an Easter egg hunt for our AWANA children, an Easter party for our Children's Church and Preschool, and a church wide breakfast on Easter Sunday.

Under the leadership of our Choir Director, Mandy Feagan, our choir presented the Easter musical entitled, "The Blessing: An Easter Worship Experience." It focused on the love of Christ and the sacrifice He willingly made for us all at the cross.

Our Children's Church, young people, and preschoolers, are continuing their journey of studying through the Bible.

Pastor Phil recently began a new sermon series in the book of Hebrews during the Morning Worship time on Sundays. This series is entitled, "The Supremacy of Christ."

We will be recognizing the scholastic achievements of our high school and college graduates on Sunday, May 3, during our morning Worship Service.

Sunday, May 17th is "Missions Day". Speakers from several missions that we support will be sharing about how the Lord is working in their lives and in the lives of those they are ministering to.

Pecks - Great attendance and time had for our Good Friday Service, and our Easter Sunrise Service, and Worship Service. Thank you to everyone that came to the annual SBA meeting. We had a wonderful time, and are looking forward to another great year cooperating together to advance the Gospel throughout Bedford.

May 3 - we will be having our Senior Recognition Sunday during the morning service, recognizing at least 3 graduating seniors, and will have our AWANA Awards Ceremony that Sunday evening.

May 10 - for Mother's Day, we will have a Child Dedication Service during our Sunday morning service, and we have at least 9 children signed up to be dedicated.

We are looking forward to our church's VBS, Emerald Crossing, An Irish Adventure, through Psalm 23, from May 31-June 4.

Shady Grove - Pastor Ben began his 10th year of ministry at Shady Grove Easter Sunday. We resumed our study of Matthew's Gospel Sunday, April 12 with Pastor Jason preaching a great message from Matthew 5:27-30 entitled Lustful Living. Pastor Ben will be preaching from Matthew 5:31 & 32 this week a sermon entitled THE LETTER AND NOT THE SPIRIT.

Church Council met on the 12th and set the church calendar for the remainder of the year.

We had 8 people serve at the Rescue Mission on April 12 and served meals for over 200 people.

We distributed 20 blessing boxes to families in our community this month.

One of our team members will be traveling to Spruce Pine NC this month to be part of a construction team. Spruce Pine was devastated by the hurricane last year.

We collected \$1175 for our mission in Haiti for our 5th Sunday offering. Please continue to pray for the Rev Home. Contact Jonathan Grooms at Global Partners for Peace and Development for more information.

Diamond Hill - We had a Wonderful Sunrise Service, we were so blessed the rain held off and we had it outside as planned!

Upcoming Events: May 8th for our 2nd BBQ & Bluegrass Fundraiser for our Columbia Team. Come on out and join us fellowship, food, and music. All Proceeds Benefit our Missions Trip.

Looking Ahead for June: Our Team will be leaving for their Mission Trip June 5th - 14th.

VBS Time! Save the Date June 21-25! More to come.

Visit us on our Website at dhbcomoneta.com for more events and dates and times on the above Upcoming Events!

Bedford Baptist - We are busy taking pictures getting ready for an updated pictorial Church Directory.

Strawberry Baptist Association
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Jason Grisso
Shady Grove Baptist Church
1185 Old Indian Trail
Moneta, VA 24121

May

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| 5 | Pastors' Prayer Meeting |
| 7 | National Day of Prayer |
| 10 | Mother's Day |
| 14 | Ascension Day |
| 24 | Pentacost |
| 25 | Memorial Day/Whit Monday |
| 31 | Trinity Sunday |