

February 2026



NEUSE NEWS

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NEUSE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

 **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9**  **6:00 PM**  **NBA OFFICE**



Ault Scholarship

of Neuse Baptist Association

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED FEBRUARY 1 - APRIL 1

Students may request a link to the application by emailing wendy@nbachurches.com

Current High School Seniors, College Students & Graduate students. | Applicants should be in good standing with an NBA Church.

From Keith

Real Love. Real Results.

It's February. You know what that means, right?

Store shelves are full of pink cards. People are buying tons of chocolate. Everyone is talking about "the month of love."

But let's be honest. **The truth is**, most of the world has no idea what real love looks like.

They think love is a feeling that comes and goes. They think it's about a fancy dinner or a box of candy. But you and I know better.

We know that the greatest example of love ever seen didn't come in a box. It came in a person. It came through **JESUS CHRIST**.

If we want to lead healthy churches, we have to start there. We have to look at the cross. Everything you want for your church—every bit of growth and health—exists on the other side of understanding this kind of love.

What Does Real Love Look Like?

When we talk about love in the church, we aren't just being "nice." We are following a command.

Think about the most famous verse in the world:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (**John 3:16, ESV**)

God didn't just *say* He loved us. He **PROVED** it. He gave. He sacrificed. He acted.

As leaders, that's our model. Love is an action. It's a choice we make every single day.

And the best part? This love is unbreakable.

The Bible tells us in **Romans 8:35-39** that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Not trouble. Not hard times. Not even death! We are more than conquerors because He loves us.

When your church is rooted in that kind of love, you become **UNSTOPPABLE**.

The Mark of a Healthy Church

I talk a lot about organizational health. I talk about **The Clarity Bridge**.

But do you know what holds that bridge together? Love.

In **Matthew 22:37-40**, Jesus gives us the "Great Commandment." He says we must love the Lord with all our heart, soul, and mind. And then He says we must love our neighbor as ourselves.

He says that **EVERYTHING** else hangs on these two things.

If you aren't loving God and loving people, your church isn't healthy. It doesn't matter how many people are in the seats or how big your budget is. Without love, it's just noise.

First Corinthians 13 tells us that even if we speak with the tongues of angels but don't have love, we are just a "noisy gong."

Is your church a noisy gong? Or is it a place where people feel valued and heard?

A healthy believer is a loving believer. A healthy church is a loving church. It's the primary mark of a follower of Jesus.

As it says in **1 John 3:23**, His command is that we believe in Jesus and love one another. It's that simple.

Understanding the Fullness

I want your heart to be full this month.

I love the prayer in **Ephesians 3:19**. It asks that you would "know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

Imagine that! Being so full of God's love that it spills over onto everyone you meet.

That is my prayer for the Neuse Baptist Association. I want our churches to be so full of love that our communities can't help but notice.

The Bible also says in **2 Thessalonians 3:5**, "May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ."

We need that "steadfastness." We need to keep going, even when it's hard. Because love doesn't quit.

Love stays. Love serves. **Love goes the extra mile.** —

Loving Our Neighbors Through Data

Now, you might be wondering: "*Keith, what does love have to do with paperwork?*"

The truth is... **A LOT**.

Part of loving our people is knowing who they are. Part of loving our mission is knowing if we are actually making a difference.

This brings me to the **Annual Church Profile (ACP)**.

I know, I know. Filling out forms isn't as exciting as preaching a sermon. But the ACP is a vital tool for the health of our association.

The ACP is a survey we use to track ministry data. It helps us see where we are winning and where we need to help. It's a way for us to **SEE** the fruit of our labor from January 1 to December 31, 2025.

Think of it like a check-up at the doctor. You go because you want to stay healthy. You look at the numbers because you care about the results.

When we collect this data, we are saying: "*Our people matter. Our progress matters. Our future matters.*"

(Continued)

(From Keith, pg 2)

How You Can Help Right Now

I need every church in the Neuse Baptist Association to participate.

The best part? It's easier than ever to do.

You can use this link to fill it out online: <https://form.jotform.com/252114138154145>

We are looking for information from the year 2025. If you don't have every single number, don't worry!

ANY INFORMATION IS BETTER THAN NO INFORMATION. Here is what we are looking for:

- **MEMBERSHIP:** Total members and new members.
- **BAPTISMS:** How many people followed Jesus in the water?
- **ATTENDANCE:** Weekly worship and Sunday School/Small Groups.
- **MISSIONS:** Your local, state, national, and international projects.
- **GIVING:** Undesignated, Designated, and Cooperative giving.
- **OFFERINGS:** NC Missions, Annie Armstrong, and Lottie Moon.
- **LEADERSHIP:** Contact info for your Pastor, Deacon Chair, Admin, Clerk, and Treasurer.

When you give us this info, you are helping us build a better bridge for the future. You are helping us foster those partnerships we talked about in October. Shhhh... don't tell Wendy, but if you send what information you can to us, we will input the information for you. Why would we do this? One, this information is that important and two, we want to make it easy for you because this information is that important.

Remember our theme: **Serving Side by Side.** We can't serve you well if we don't know your story!

A Heart of Gratitude

Before I go, I have to say this: **I am so thankful for YOU.** I am thankful for every single church in the Neuse Baptist Association. You are the reason I do what I do.

Watching you serve side by side is the highlight of my work. Our meeting in October was a beautiful picture of what happens when we prioritize ministry partnerships.

You are doing the hard work. You are loving the "unlovable." You are standing firm on the gospel.

My goal is to be your strategic partner. I want to help you cut through the noise. I want to help you move from mission drift into **ACTION.**

So, let's make this "month of love" about more than just feelings.

Let's make it about the steadfast love of Christ. Let's make it about loving our neighbors so much that we care about the details.

Let's lead healthy. Let's love well.

Everything you want for your community exists on the other side of a church that truly loves like Jesus.

💡 Time to Reflect

Take a second to think about these three questions:

1. **Is "Love for God" the main fuel** for your daily tasks, or are you just running on habit?
2. **Does your church data** (like baptisms or small groups) show that you are reaching new people with love?
3. **Who is one leader** in your church you can reach out to today just to say, "How can I help?"

Let's get those ACP forms in and keep the momentum moving!

I'm in your corner.

In partnership,

Keith



The CHURCH NEWS Page

As Submitted by the Churches

Deep Run First (Bert Potter) WMU sponsored an Angel Tree to collect Christmas gifts for two families in the community who were in need. New weekly Bible Study "The Situation Room" began in January. Friends in Faith met on January 22nd and had a special guest speaker, Rev. Sam Harris who shared his testimony and special music. The group also enjoyed a meal and fellowship at Meadow Restaurant in December. Church's Food Bank served 69 households in December; of those households, 203 total individuals were served consisting of 71 children and 45 Senior Adults. Thirteen turkey dinners were donated to families in need at Thanksgiving. Lottie Moon Offering goal was met. Christmas worship events included Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Cantata and Children's Christmas Play.

Falling Creek (Robert Ellis) World Hunger Offering is collected monthly on the 1st Sunday. Items are routinely contributed to the Blessing Box on the exterior of the church facility, to meet needs in the community. The church supports Grantham Middle School, Kennedy Home, Wayne Pregnancy Center and Meals on Wheels through donations and volunteerism. In December, Falling Creek participated in the Community Christmas Cantata along with 5 local churches. Children presented a Christmas play, followed by the annual Lottie Moon offering collection and Candlelight Service.

Gateway (Thayer Stamper) Ladies ages 14+ will enjoy "Ladies Craft Night" on Friday, February 6 from 7-9PM at the church. "Mission Monday" to raise funds for ministry partner Harvester's International was held at Chuck E. Cheese on January 19.

Jordan's Chapel — The church has called Chris Britt to serve as Interim Pastor. A Women's Conference, with Guest Speaker Dr. Anecia Lee, will be held at the church on Saturday February 7. Doors will open at 9:30 AM with breakfast served until 10:15 AM. Worship will begin at 10:15 and the Conference will conclude by 11:30 AM. All area women are invited to attend. The church is located at 5663 US Hwy 13 South in Mt. Olive.

Love Memorial (Richard Toler) Warm clothing was collected in January for 2026 OCC. Love Ladies enjoyed a brunch on January 10. PASSION weekend for Connect Group was held January 16-19. Sanctity of Life Sunday was observed January 18, with an Ingathering for Wayne Pregnancy Center. Baptist Men enjoyed a Fellowship Dinner on January 24 and Baptist Men's Day was observed Sunday, January 25. A Sweetheart Dinner is planned for February 14. Baptist Men's Breakfast will be served on February 15, and Sonshiners will have their luncheon and planning meeting on February 19.

Mount Nelson (Jimmy Dale) 64 Shoeboxes were packed for OCC and several members volunteered in the OCC Packing/Processing area in Charlotte. The church hosted a Community Thanksgiving Service in November. Christmas events and worship included a Youth Play, Choir Cantata, Fellowship Dinner, Caroling and a Candlelight Christmas Eve service. Youth traveled to Boone for a Ski Retreat, January 16-18. Baptist Men's Day was observed Sunday, January 25th and included a 7AM Brotherhood Breakfast and Baptism during morning worship. Men filled the choir, taught Sunday School and shared testimonies on this special day as well. Coming on March 1st, WMU Day will be observed. To the ladies reading this newsletter, if you have a missionary journey that you would like to share with our congregation, contact Tonya Watkins or reach out to Wendy at the NBA Office and she'll put you in contact.

Pinkney (Steven Gay) A candle was lit each Sunday during Advent Season. Christmas worship events included a Christmas Play on December 21st with snacks afterward, and Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. Donations to Kitty Askins continue with volunteers from the church donating. Services are currently being held in the Fellowship Hall while pews are being repainted. A Valentine Banquet is planned for February 7.

Rivermont (John Morton) Revival with Rev. Fred Crank was held, January 18-20. Cross Trainers (Youth) are raising funds to purchase a digital sign for the church.

Rosewood (Tim Lipp) Youth will be sponsoring a Valentine's Banquet on February 14 at 5:30PM.

Seven Springs (Phillip James) A Valentine Banquet is planned for February 7. Once a month, members of the church gather to visit within their community to extend an invitation to attend worship, to pray and to witness.


Snow Hill First (Brick Crowder) "Starting Point", a new 2-week class for those interested in church Membership, was held January 11 & 18. Baptism was celebrated January 11 with several candidates baptized.

The Way (Carlos Peralta) A Valentine's Banquet will be held Friday, February 13 at 6PM at the church to raise funds for the Youth as they attend camp this summer. The cost is \$20/couple or \$40/family and the banquet will include a spaghetti dinner and bingo. A church-wide Yard Sale is planned for April, also to raise funds for Youth, and items to sell can be donated to the church near the end of March.

Continued

CHURCH NEWS, Cont.

Trinity (Dave Fishman) A sincere “Thank You” is extended to all who supported the Pancake Supper on December 1st; all proceeds from the supper go back into the community through the Hands & Feet Ministry. Church partnered with Tommy’s Foundation in January, feeding the unhoused within the local community. Wednesday Evening Bible study through the book of Romans resumed in January, and Youth Meetings have begun on Sunday and Wednesday evenings. Baptist Women’s Day is planned for February 15th with one of the ladies in the church sharing her testimony of recovery and redemption and the announcing of a new ministry within the church, Renewed Grace.



February Birthdays

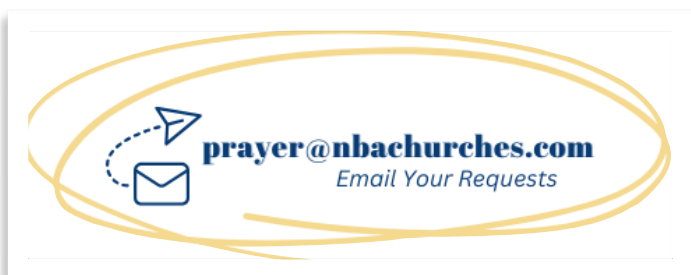
Khayyam Shepherd, Restoration – 2/6
Lorrie Ellis, Davis Grove Pastor’s Wife – 2/6
Brittani Gardner, Gateway Assoc. Pastor’s Wife – 2/12
Scott Wright, New Hope – 2/18
Tim Lipp, Rosewood – 2/28

February Ministry Anniversaries

Dr. Berk Tinsley, Anointed Vision – 25 years



This image is hyperlinked for digital readers.
Hard-copy readers should visit baptistsonmission.org for more information about the Missions Rallies. The closest rally to our area will be held at Oakdale Baptist Church, Rocky Mount, February 19.



prayer@nbachurches.com
Email Your Requests

Latest Update From the NBA Prayer Ministry Team:

January begins another year and opportunity to pray for God’s people in our Association and beyond. Again, we will be visiting each of our 43 churches, praying specifically for their families and ministries. In the meantime, please remember prayer is to occupy a foundational place in our spiritual growth towards discipline and transformation. In our Bibles, we see prayer revealed as far more than just an occasional petition. Rather, it’s meant to characterize our existence...being more like Jesus!

As Paul wrote, “Continue earnestly in prayer; being vigilant in it with thanksgiving.” (Colossians 4:2).

Your Prayer Ministry Team



HICKORY GROVE
mallard creek campus

FEB. 24, 2026

**DISCIPLE-
MAKING**

CONFERENCE

speakers

LONDON DOWDEN

MARK MATLOCK

DISCIPLEMAKINGCONFERENCE.ORG

Keeping the Flock Safe: More Than Just a Plan

Have you ever thought about what you would do if the unthinkable happened during your Sunday morning service?

I'm not talking about a flat tire in the parking lot. I'm talking about a real, heart-pounding crisis.

The truth is, many of us were shaken this week by the reports coming out of **Cities Church** in St. Paul, Minnesota. Protesters didn't just stand outside; they entered the sanctuary. They created a scene of intimidation right in the middle of worship.

It was disturbing. It was loud. And it left a lot of people feeling vulnerable.

First, We Pray

Before we talk about strategy, we have to talk about the family.

Please join me in lifting up **Pastor Jonathan Parnell**, their leadership team, and the entire congregation. They are navigating some very tough days right now. They need wisdom. They need peace. They need to feel the support of the larger body of Christ.

Everything you want for your church—peace, growth, and health—starts with a foundation of prayer.

Is Your House in Order?

While that incident happened in Minnesota, we can't just look the other way. We have to be honest with ourselves.

The truth is... "it won't happen here" is not a strategy. It's a gamble.

As a strategic partner, I want to challenge you. How would your team handle a similar disruption? Do you have a plan, or are you just hoping for the best?

Everything you want for your church exists on the other side of **PREPARATION**.

What is a "Safety Team", Really?

A lot of leaders hear "Safety Team" and only think about active shooter scenarios. But a healthy, well-rounded team is about so much more than that.

True organizational health means being prepared for the *entire* spectrum of life. A great safety team is ready for:

- **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:** What happens if someone has a heart attack during the invitation?

- **NATURAL DISASTERS:** Do your greeters know where to take people if a tornado siren goes off?
- **DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR:** How do you handle someone who is intentionally trying to stop your service?
- **GENERAL CRISIS:** Who is the "point person" when things go sideways?

The best part? When you have a plan, your people feel **VALUED**. They feel safe. And when they feel safe, they can truly focus on worship.

Resources to Get You Started

I don't want to just give you a "heads up" and leave you hanging. I want to give you the tools to take action.

Here are the best resources I've found to help you evaluate your readiness right now. I've hand-picked these to help you cut through the noise and get to work.

Deep Dives & Articles

- [A Ministry of Defense \(Founders\)](#) – A great look at the biblical side of protection.
- [Getting Started with Church Safety \(Lifeway\)](#) – A simple "how-to" for the early stages.
- [When Protests Come to Church \(NC Baptist\)](#) – Direct advice for the exact situation we saw in Minnesota.

Training & Libraries

- [Safety Team Academy \(Sheepdog\)](#) – High-level training for your team members.
- [Security and Risk Management \(GuideStone\)](#) – Essential info for protecting your church's future.
- [Volunteer Security Library \(Brotherhood Mutual\)](#) – A massive collection of safety documents and tips.

How Can I Help?

Don't let time scarcity stop you from doing this. You don't have to build a 100-page manual overnight. You just need to take the **NEXT STEP**. Pick one resource. Call one meeting. Ask one question: "*Are we ready?*"

My core philosophy is to ensure you and your people feel heard and valued. Being prepared is one of the most loving things you can do for your congregation.

Preparation brings peace.

In partnership,
Keith

ANNUAL PROJECT



PERSONAL CARE GIFT BAGS FOR SEASONAL FARM WORKERS

Each year, NBA Churches work together to provide personal care items for seasonal farm workers in Kinston arriving from outside the USA. The items get sorted into reusable shopping bags and distributed to the workers at the beginning of their farm season in June. **This year we are providing 75 bags** to meet the need.

WHAT WE NEED:

- Churches willing to contribute items.
- (See reverse side for list of specific items).
- **75** of each item is needed.
- *Men's items only; there are no women in the farm camps.*
- To ensure that all items get provided we ask churches to select the item they're able to contribute and contact Wendy at the NBA Office. This will prevent duplicates and excess.



ITEMS DUE TO NBA OFFICE ON OR BEFORE

MAY 22, 2026

Please see reverse
for complete list and
more information.

Call or email Wendy with your item . 252-566-9478

wendy@nbachurches.com

ANNUAL PROJECT

ITEMS NEEDED

PERSONAL CARE GIFT BAGS FOR SEASONAL FARM WORKERS



ALL ITEMS ARE FOR MEN ONLY

75 of each of the following:

(commitments have been made for the items marked through)

- Bath Towel
- Bath Cloth
- Bath Soap/Body Wash
- Shampoo
- Men's Deodorant
- Toothbrush *individually packaged*
- Toothpaste
- Razors (75 pkgs of 3-4 razors each)
- Shaving Cream
- Chap Stick/Lip Balm
- Individual Bags of Candy *other than chocolate*
- Writing Tablets
- Ink Pens
- Reusable Shopping Bags (see reverse for image of bags)

Items need to be
full-sized, and
please remember
to buy for MEN.
Thank you!

Plus, we are also collecting any number of:

- **Gently-used, clean, button down long-sleeved work shirts**
in sizes Small, Medium, Large and XL only
- **Ball caps / sun hats / sun visors**

Items need to be dropped off at the NBA Office on or before May 22, 2026

*Special thanks to the Pedro & Gabriela Trejo Family and
Iglesia Bautista Nuevo Amanecer of Kinston for their tremendous help with this project!*

**Contributions from Churches,
4th Quarter 2025**

Churches	4th Qtr 2025	YTD 2025
Abide	300.00	1,000.00
Adamsville		950.00
Anointed Vision	2,000.00	4,000.00
Bethel	1,353.81	4,656.56
Cabin	1,136.68	3,585.04
Calvary	200.00	600.00
Casa del Dios	300.00	1,255.00
Community LaGr		
Community Sauls.		
Davis Grove		
Deep Run First	5,940.00	5,940.00
Emmaus	772.96	4,248.98
Falling Creek	1,210.50	4,791.58
Fremont		1,000.00
Gateway	3,600.00	14,400.00
Goldsboro First	2,000.00	3,215.00
Grainger		500.00
Horeb		
Immanuel	327.00	1,400.50
Jordan's Chapel		900.00
Kinston First		1,750.71
La Grange First	1,054.00	2,635.00
Love Memorial	1,570.85	5,862.07
Madison Avenue	1,589.75	6,346.65
Mount Nelson	12,361.28	43,879.14
Neuse	3,982.18	17,172.77
New Beginning		
New Hope	1,000.00	2,000.00
New Life		644.43
Northview		
Nueva Amanecer		800.00
Pikeville First		
Pineview		
Pinkney	965.15	3,979.74
Restoration		
Rivermont	1,924.43	7,599.74
Rosewood First		387.36
Sandy Bottom	1,828.00	4,026.45
Seven Springs	700.00	3,250.00
Snow Hill First	4,120.74	15,922.65
Spilman Memorial		350.00
The Way	1,000.00	1,250.00
Trinity		1,200.00
Union	400.00	1,600.00
Total CHURCHES	51637.33	173,099.37

3rd thursday of the month

PASTORS' LUNCH

& LEARN

noon @ nba office

February Topic: Creating a Leadership Pipeline

The 'Share the Gospel' App

A low-stakes way to practice engaging with people from totally different backgrounds, made possible by the North American Mission Board.

HOW TO USE THE TOOL

Pick Your Challenge:

- **Easy** – Beginner Practice
- **Medium** – Thought-provoking scenarios
- **Hard** – Deep apologetics practice

Choose a Conversation Partner:

Practice navigating different worldviews so you are ready for the real thing. Feeling brave? Select "Surprise Me".

Get Real-Time Coaching

The best part. After about 6 exchanges, type "YES" or "Feedback, please" to get immediate tips on how to make your responses more effective.

EVERYTHING YOU WANT
— MORE CONFIDENCE AND MORE IMPACT —
EXISTS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF PRACTICE

Start practicing today:
<https://www.namb.net/resource/share-the-gospel/>

EVERY Child

FOSTER CARE TRAININGS

E A S T E R N N C

Starting in

February 2026

Three class locations offered:

Winterville, Kinston, and Southport Areas

Fill out the interest form at
forms.bchfamily.org/easternfc or scan the QR code - we'll be in touch.

Baptist Children's Homes

every-child.org | bchfamily.org

Coming Up on the Calendar

All events will take place at the NBA Office unless stated otherwise.

February

- 01 – Ault Scholarship Application Opens
- 09 – NBA Executive Board Mtg., 6:00 PM
- 15 – Submissions due for March newsletter
- 19 – Pastors' Lunch & Learn, Noon
Topic: Creating a Leadership Pipeline
- 19 – Region 2 Region Rally, Oakdale Baptist Church Rocky Mount – 5:45 - 8:30 PM
(Register at baptistsonmission.org)
- 24 – Disciple-Making Conference, 8AM-3PM, Hickory Grove Baptist Church, Charlotte

March

- 01-08 – Week of Prayer for North American Missions/AAEO
- 08– Daylight Saving Time Begins
- 15 – Items Due for APRIL Newsletter
- 16 – NBA Leadership Team Mtg., 9:30 AM
- 19 – Pastors' Lunch & Learn, Noon
Topic: Preaching – Creating a Compelling Illustration that Connects
- 29 – Palm Sunday

April

- 01– Ault Scholarship Application Closes
- 03 – Good Friday, NBA Office CLOSED
- 05 – Easter Sunday
- 10-11 – NC Baptist Missions Conference, Hickory Grove Baptist Church, Charlotte
- 12 – Statewide “Fill the Tank” Sunday
- 13 – NBA Executive Board Meeting, 6PM
- 15 – Items Due for MAY Newsletter
- 16 – Pastors' Lunch & Learn, Noon
Topic: Leading Through a Change Process

May

- 07 – National Day of Prayer
- 10 – Happy Mother's Day!
- 15 – Items Due for JUNE & JULY combo Newsletter
- 18 – NBA Leadership Team Mtg., 9:30 AM
- 21 – NABS Luncheon, Noon; Location TBA
- 21 – Pastor's Lunch, Noon
Topic: Reaching Your Community
- 22 – Deadline to drop off items for Annual Project: Personal Care Gift Bags for Seasonal Farm Workers
- 25 – Memorial Day, NBA Office CLOSED

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