



## Understanding the Southern Baptist Convention, Georgia Baptist Convention and the Smyrna Baptist Association and how they Relate

With the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting coming up in Orlando this June, it's a good moment to reflect on what the SBC, GBC and the SBA actually is and why it matters. Even lifelong Southern Baptists sometimes carry questions they've never quite had answered, so let's walk through it together.

### **The SBC: a gathering of churches**

The SBC is exactly what the name says – a convention. Once a year, representatives from roughly 47,000 affiliated churches choose to gather for two or three days to make decisions about committee nominations, agency trustees, and how cooperative mission funds are distributed to the agencies doing the work. An executive officer and committee keep things moving the rest of the year, but no one at the SBC level directs your church. The convention exists to serve the mission, not manage the congregations who make it possible.

### **How Cooperative Program Dollars Travel**

Cooperative Program giving doesn't go straight to the national convention. Your church's mission dollars first flow to the Georgia Baptist Convention, where messengers at their annual meeting decide what percentage stays in Georgia and what gets forwarded to the SBC. From there, the convention budget – approved by the churches – distributes those funds to agencies like the International Mission Board, the North American Mission Board, and the six SBC seminaries. It's a remarkable chain of cooperation, from a local congregation all the way to missionaries on the other side of the world.

### **Smyrna Baptist Association: the layer closest to home**

The Smyrna Baptist Association operates completely outside the Cooperative Program pipeline. We receive no portion of CP funds – the SBA is funded entirely by the direct, voluntary gifts of our member churches. When a church designates a gift to the SBA, those dollars come straight to us and go directly toward pastor encouragement, church strengthening, a great commission focus, and the work of connecting our congregations with one another.

The Cooperative Program supports both state and global missions – and that is a glorious thing. Associational giving serves the pastor and congregation just a few miles away. Both streams reflect the heart of what it means to cooperate for the gospel, and both begin with a local church making a willing, generous choice.

Every affiliated church is fully autonomous – making its own decisions about leadership, worship, budget, and ministry. The SBC and your local association exist to serve churches, not supervise them. What holds the SBC, GBC, and the SBA together isn't authority or obligation – it's a common calling. These are churches who have looked at the Great Commission and decided that going together is better than going alone.

# Thank You!

**We are thankful for these churches that gave to the mission of our Association in April.**

Alma First, Big Creek, College Avenue, Douglas Eastside, Douglas First, New Harmony Grove, Mt. Pleasant, New Hope, Nicholls, Northside, Providence, Reedy Branch, Unity, West Green, Westwood, GracePointe, New City Church Alma, Lumber City

*Thank you to our churches who have given above their regular giving to help bring back our general account following the truck purchase.*

## SBA Team Meetings



Church Strengthening  
June 18<sup>th</sup> @ 2:00 PM



Great Commission  
June 4<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 PM



Stewardship  
June 23<sup>rd</sup> @ 5:00 PM

# WELCOME

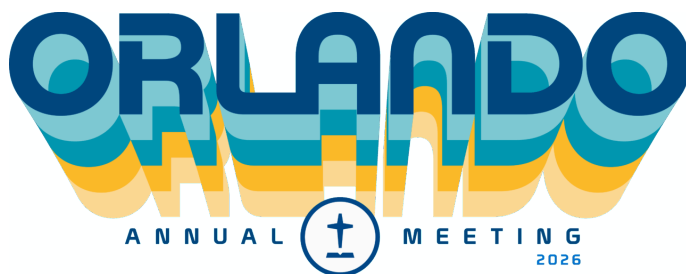
Welcome to Jonathan Lang  
the new Student Pastor at  
Carver Baptist

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## Pray for these Churches Without Pastors

Providence, New Hope (McRae),  
Rockwell, Pridgen, Reedy Branch,  
Westwood, La Primera Iglesia,  
Bethel

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Pray for our Southern  
Baptist Convention Meeting  
June 7-10

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# VBS

School is out and a most strategic season for gospel ministry is here! VBS, camps, and summer outreach place the message of Jesus before children and families who may never walk through your doors. This summer the Columbus Baptist Association is partnering with our churches, sending student and adult mission teams to support VBS, block parties, and outreach. Pray for every child and family that will come to know Jesus this summer across our association.

**Pray for Summer Ministry!**

## Shower Trailer and Truck Update

When wildfires swept through Brantley County, the SBA and Georgia Baptist Disaster Relief showed up first. Our shower trailer was the FIRST Georgia Baptist Disaster Relief unit on the scene, operating nightly at Lulaton Baptist Church – providing showers and laundering clothes for up to 60 firefighters each night. The association's F-650 truck proved a critical asset – hauling fuel, water, sifting screens, and moving a feeding unit from Warner Robins to get the right resources to the right places at the right time. The truck and shower trailer are now being readied for their next assignment.

### Upcoming Deployment Schedule:

- June 7–12 – Lumber City Baptist (Mission Team Support)
- June 22–26 – Lumber City Baptist (Mission Team Support)
- July 12–18 – FBC Douglas Connect Camp (Camp Staff)



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