

News from the YAVAPAI BAPTIST ASSOCIATION



July 2013

ON TARGET



Hello:

A few months ago one of my co-DOEM'S here in Arizona quoted some statistics about his Association and its baptismal rate - frankly, he said they experienced a 40 year low number in baptisms last year. This prompted me to look at where we were in the Yavapai Baptist Association. I only looked at the last 10 years to see how we are doing. Sue did a good deal of digging for me and here is what the study says: in the last 10 years we had our highest attendance in 2006 when our churches had an average weekly worship attendance of 2106. Our highest baptisms came the same year when our churches reported a total of 295 baptisms. Last year we hit a 10 year low; 17 of our churches reported 1272 in average attendance which averages 75 per church per week. The same churches reported 69 total baptisms, which is an average of 4 baptisms per church.

What has happened? Why are we losing ground so dramatically? There may be many reasons why some churches lose ground in attendance and in baptisms, but one is that things have changed in our culture. When I was a younger minister, we saw a lot of unsaved/unchurched people attend our church in search of spiritual answers. We would visit them, share the gospel, and see many come to faith. Today, however, fewer and fewer unsaved/unchurched people are visiting Evangelical churches seeking spiritual answers. People are looking for spiritual answers in all sorts of places, but they are not looking for their answers in Christian churches. Sadly, very few of our churches have any kind of outreach plans. As a result we are not meeting unchurched people or sharing the gospel with them.

What will it take to reverse this negative trend? In my opinion there are two critical steps to turning things around:

- 1) We need a true spiritual revival. Lost people are drawn to the Lord by the Holy Spirit; without his work, we will see even fewer people drawn to the church and the Lord. If we are not walking with the Lord and filled with the Spirit, we will not see people drawn to the Lord.
- 2) We need a plan born in the heart and mind of the Lord to take God's love and caring ministry to the people who need him so desperately. People will not come to the Lord by accident; we must pursue them as the Lord has pursued us. We must care for them as the Lord cares for us.

If we don't make some changes in the way we do ministry, we will see the downward trend continue. We will see many lives changed, however, if we choose to follow God's plan of taking the gospel to the unsaved/unchurched people of our community.

I stand ready to help you and your congregation develop plans to take the gospel to your community. Please call and give me a chance to help.

Your brother,
Rik Danielsen

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Do you have a heart for you and the members of the church you serve to reach out to neighbors, but are racking your brain on how to accomplish it? Would you like to encourage those members by giving them tools to build a gospel-centered relationship with their neighbors (and you for your own neighbors)? Then, come to the Pastors Fellowship on Thursday, July 11 to hear from Steve Valero, lead pastor at Ekklesia Communities Church in Gilbert, AZ (www.ekklesia-communities.com). He will share with us what members of Ekklesia are doing to build Christ-focused relationships with neighbors and their community so as to share the gospel and see people come to Christ.

ASSOCIATIONAL CALENDAR

July 2013

- 4 Independence Day
- 4-6 Zona Yuth Kamp College Staffer Training
- 7-12 Youth Camp
- 11 Pastors' Fellowship Lunch 11:30 at Robert Rd. Baptist
- 11 Administrative Council Meeting 1:30 at Robert Rd. Baptist

CHURCH NEWS

Bagdad Southern Baptist Church

We will be in the Bagdad 4th of July parade with a VBS float, and then be holding VBS from 9 to noon the week of July 8 to 12.



CHECK OUT THE VARIOUS DATES
AND PLACES FOR VBS THIS YEAR
IF YOU HAVE NEIGHBORS OR
FRIENDS WITH KIDS
INVITE THEM!

Bagdad So. Baptist Church

July 8-12th

FSBC Cornville

July 8-12th

FSBC Prescott Valley

July 8-12th

FSBC Mayer

July 15-19th

Beaver Creek Baptist Church

July 15-19th

Camp Verde Baptist Church

July 22-26th

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about our Association please click here to visit our website:

yavbaptists.com

Please forward this newsletter to all your Christian friends and Church members.

Rik Danielsen

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