

**68TH ANNUAL MEETING**

**2023 Book of Reports**

# COVENANT CHURCHES

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*I can testify that, according to their ability and even beyond their ability, of their own accord, they begged us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in the ministry to the saints, and not just as we had hoped. Instead, they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us by God's will. 2 Corinthians 8:3-5*

**SALT LAKE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION  
First Baptist Church of Provo  
November 9, 2023**



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**Salt Lake Baptist Association  
67<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting  
November 10, 2022**

**Welcome:** The meeting was opened with worship led by the Canyons Worship Team. Acting Moderator Mike Pless called the meeting to order with prayer. Canyons' Associate Pastor Justin Cordery welcomed everyone to the 67<sup>th</sup> Salt Lake Baptist Association Meeting and introduced this year's theme of *Scattered into the Harvest as Partners*, Acts 8. Mike Pless made a motion to seat the messengers and adopt the meeting program. Debbie Chidester seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**Nominating Committee Report:** Rafael Gutierrez gave a report on the nominations of the new members of the Salt Lake Baptist Association. They are as follows:

**Officers:** Moderator, Timothy O'Day; Vice-Moderator, Justin Cordery; Treasurer, Will Sutton; Clerk, open position

**Constitution Rev/Credentials Committee**

Chair: Mike Pless

**Serves one year**

Judy Barking

**Serves two years**

Ed Romaine

**Serves three years**

**Personnel Committee**

Tim Peery

**Serves one year**

Chair: James Gomez

**Serves two years**

Myra Buchanan

**Serves three years**

**Nominating Committee**

Chair: Rafael Gutierrez

**Serves one year**

Zach Thompson

**Serves two years**

Brendon Scoggin

**Serves three years**

**Stewardship/Properties Committee & Trustees**

Chair: Scott Price

**Serves one year**

Andrew Thompson

**Serves two years**

Laura Werling

**Serves three years**

Ex officio: SLBA Treasurer

Nominations were taken from the floor for clerk. Zach Thompson nominated Laurie Pless. The motion was seconded by Debbie Chidester. All nominees were approved.

**Finance Committee Report:** Will Sutton presented the report with correction to page 9. The correct numbers should read as top, \$143,000 and bottom \$153,000. There was discussion on the budget shortfall as well potential earned interest. Report was approved.

**Properties Report:** Mike Hall gave report that the Concern Center property has many repairs to be done but not enough hands. He expressed great thanks for all the volunteers that serve. We still have need for more volunteers. Report was approved.

**Personnel Report:** Timothy O'Day gave report that the staff has not received a cost-of-living adjustment in several years. It is the committee's desire to raise the salary and housing allowance of the Executive Director, the salary of the Concern Center Director, and the hourly rate of the Ministry Assistant. Unfortunately, after reviewing the current levels of giving and the budget deficit we could not in good conscience recommend these increases unless the budget is balanced with the amount of income from associating churches. The Personnel Committee recommends, then, that SLBA staff receive the proposed salary increases only if the budget is restructured to not use the Trust or Endowment funds. The giving from the SLBA churches will need to cover the planned expenses of the SLBA so that the Trust and Endowment accounts can be used for strategic purposes rather than basic budget purposes. To act otherwise would go against the concept of stewardship and long-term care, not to mention employment, of our staff. Report was approved.

**Baptist Mission Southeast Haiti Report:** Tim Perry gave report that the Christian school in Haiti is closed due to violence. The country is unstable and unsafe. 40% of the country is being controlled by gangs and is estimated that that percentage is actually underestimated. At this time, we don't have the money to cover monthly costs for school and housing. It is a dire situation. Please pray for the children, the school, and for what we might do next. Report was approved.

**2023 Budget:** Will Sutton brought the report. There was considerable discussion and questions regarding the budget as it is in deficit. Moderator Mike Pless, in consultation with executive Director Ron Clement, proposed that we call for a special Executive Board meeting for November 29, 2022, to specifically discuss the proposed budget and deficit. This discussion will include the current investable assets held by the Association. Proposed budget and special called Executive Board meeting were approved.

**2023 Calendar:** The proposed 2023 Association calendar on page 24 of the Book of Reports was presented and approved.

#### **Ministry Reports:**

- **Disaster Relief Report:** Don Dana gave report. January the National Disaster Relief Round Table Meeting was in Albuquerque, NM, with the 2021 reports of activities, accomplishments, and training. February, we went to Boulder, CO, where a fire had destroyed over 1000 homes. Disaster relief teams from Montana, Arizona, Ohio, Virginia, Alabama, Colorado, Utah/Idaho, and Florida sifted through 430 homes sites and recovered over \$100,000 of gold, 2000 pounds of coins, 100 diamond rings and other jewelry and other family treasures and keepsakes. We even saved a moose (it was a statue). In March we cleared brush and non-native trees along the river in Moab UT to reduce fire danger. Also, in March we removed dangerous broken limbs from trees and did clean-up at Touch of

Paradise Camp, Paradise, UT. In June we went to Red Lodge, MT, to help with flood recovery from the Yellowstone flood that month. We helped 25 households with cleanup, drywall removal, and mold remediation. Also in June, Don Dana and Chuck Jones lead our summer missionaries in cutting down dead trees for our Redwood property neighbors, helping to build a good neighbor relationship. October, Chuck Jones helped with chainsaw training in Burley, ID. This month we are planning to go to Florida to help with cleanup from Hurricane Ian. Don shared why he does Disaster Relief.

- **Concern Center Report:** Rafael Gutierrez gave report on the Concern Center for Sonia Gutierrez. We are serving over 2,500 people per month. We have 4 trucks that come on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday. We need all the help we can get to unload the trucks. We also need a person to volunteer to pick up the Chick-Fil-A donations. We cannot do this without the help of the churches. In July we started a Spanish speaking Bible study. We currently teach ESL during these Bible studies as we incorporate it within the study. As of today, nine people have come to Christ. Last Saturday we served 80 families in 3 hours. Dora shared her story of life change and accepting Christ on November 4<sup>th</sup>.

**New Business:** Mike Pless, in consultation with Executive Director Ron Clement, proposed a Special Called Executive Board Meeting on November 29, 2022, 9 a.m. at First Baptist Church West Valley City to specifically discuss the proposed budget and deficit. This discussion will include the current investable assets held by the Association. Special called Executive Board meeting was approved.

**Executive Directors Report:**

- Into the Harvest Story – Brendon Scoggins of First Baptist Provo shared about the opportunity of short-term mission program and sharing the gospel.
- Journey of Grace – Shane and Dixie Wise shared a video of coming out of Mormonism. Shane explained the reason for the video series and the hope of release of the series on January 1, 2023, for use in churches everywhere. You can go to [www.journeyofgrace.com](http://www.journeyofgrace.com) for free material.
- Director Ron Clement gave an abbreviated report due to the lateness of the hour.

Canyons Worship Team led in worship.

Meeting adjourned in prayer.

Respectfully submitted by,

Cynthia Young  
Salt Lake Baptist Association Clerk





**Special Called Executive Board Meeting**  
**Salt Lake Baptist Association**  
**February 9, 2023**

Attendees: Ron Clement, Diane Clement, Mike Pless, Laurie Pless, Russ Robinson, Timothy O’Day, Zach Thompson, James Gomez, Ed Romine, Dan Mamatela, Scott Price, Laura Werling, Justin Cordery, Brendon Scoggin, Will Sutton, Andrew Thompson

Timothy O’Day called the meeting to order.

The meeting was opened in prayer by Ron Clement.

The minutes of November 29, 2022 were reviewed. A correction was made under “Assignments for follow-up” by adding 7. Strategic Initiative Committee to report back on values and purpose of SLBA. Ed Romine then motioned for approval of minutes were approved and seconded by Zach Thompson. Minutes approved.

**Trustee:**

Report by Scott Price, Laura Werling, and Andrew Thompson

- Moved CDs for a better rate
  - US Bank
  - Mountain America
  - Money Market will continue to be available without penalties.
- We will continue our relationship with Church Finance Corporation in New Mexico.

**Stewardship and Properties:**

John Kauer and Mike Pless were tasked with bringing suggestions to the trustees to balance the 2023 budget and work on recommendations for the 2024 budget.

Andrew Thompson shared that the budget can’t be changed since it was voted on and approved during the November 10, 2022, Annual Meeting.

During a review of the budget, Diane Clement found an error due to a double line deduction resulting in an **11K** addition to the budget – Praise the Lord! It was shared that the projected income will be higher due to the reinvestment of the CDs and money market.

We discussed ways we could reduce expenses if the time came and ways to increase income.

- What ministries would be cut?
- How would we prioritize?
- Other income options
  - Partnering with other States
  - Grants (see notes below)
  - Engaging other church associations
  - Work with churches to give on a regular basis

**Strategic Initiative Committee:**

The report was provided by Ron Clement, Timothy O'Day, Justin Cordery, and Zach Thompson. The committee provided a written First Step Solution to the team outlining the importance of prayer.

After much discussion, the strategic/initiative committee is suggesting a monthly in-person time of prayer. Zach shared that most pastors in the Salt Lake Association don't know each other so there is little or no trust among them. Following much discussion, a decision was made they would meet monthly around the valley starting Tuesday, February 28, 9 AM at Canyons Church. Zach encouraged each Pastor to take the initiative to call and personally invite someone to the monthly prayer time. Laura suggested this would be a great opportunity to mentor another pastor.

The initiative committee was tasked to develop a one-pager on our initiatives and the benefits of partnering with us. Draft to be presented during Executive Board Meeting Thursday, May 25, 2023.

**Grant Discussion:**

Laurie Pless shared how the Association could use grants for additional funding, especially the Concern Center. Concern was shared regarding whether we should request money from the government for God's work. Concern was validated and will be taken into consideration when applying for a grant. The Strategic Initiative committee was assigned to develop a one-pager on our initiatives and the benefits of partnering with us. Laurie has a co-worker Desari Read that is a grant writer who has volunteered to assist us with grants when we are ready to move forward. Ms. Read suggested we put together an Executive Summary which should be clear, concise, and persuasive and include the following:

- Who we are
- What we do
- A description of our problem
- Key descriptors of our program/project
- What makes our program/project extraordinary
- How our organization/project/program is uniquely positioned

Laurie will email Executive summaries to the Strategic committee.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 25, 2023, at West Valley Baptist Church at 9:00 A.M.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned and closed in prayer led by Mike Pless.

Submitted by,

Laurie Pless, Associational Clerk

**Salt Lake Baptist Association  
Executive Board Meeting  
May 23, 2023**

Location: Cornerstone Church

Time: 9:00 am

**Attendees:** Mike Pless, Canyons; Will Sutton, Cornerstone; Andrew Thompson, Christ Fellowship; Justin Cordery, Canyons; Ron Clement, Hope Valley; Zach Thompson, Christ Fellowship; Dustin Stottmann, Hope Valley; Mike Hall, Canyons; James Gomez, Cornerstone; Maximo Cruz, Iglesia Bautista Roca de los Siglos; Daniel Mamatela, Millcreek; Tim Peery, Alta Canyon; Russ Robinson, First Baptist Provo; Diane Clement, Hope Valley; Laurie Pless, Canyons

Meeting moderator: Justin Cordery

Opening prayer: Justin Cordery

**Budget Overview:** Diane Clement reviewed the budget and CDs. Ms. Clement shared budget is on track and gave a summary of the profit loss. Ron Clement shared the need for more churches to participate in giving because the money from the interest on the CDs is not enough to cover upcoming expenses. Received \$20K from the ERC Act but this money really needs to be put aside for a new roof at the Concern Center. (Financial report, profit loss, and budget actuals are attached.)

Zach Thompson had questions regarding designated funds, UISBC funds, and restricted funds. Diane explained how they can be used.

**Concern Center:** Mike Hall reported on a workday held at the Concern Center on May 5. Not a great turnout but they were able to complete a few projects. Mike shared his concern regarding the much-needed repair/replacement of the roof. He received a bid (see attached document) for approximately \$23k to replace the roof. He also shared concerns about water retention in the parking lot. Mike recommended the lawn be removed to extend the parking lot but until we have the funds it's on hold as well.

The Concern Center has several time-sensitive issues as well as some general maintenance. See the attached document for additional information. Mike Hall expressed his concern with the lack of volunteers to help unload trucks during the week. Monday is usually the largest delivery and volunteers are lacking.

**Strategic Initiative Committee:** Zach Thompson shared initiatives he and his team have been working on. Lots of conversation on how these initiatives can move the Association forward. A copy of these initiatives is attached.

**Redwood Road Property:** Ron Clement shared information regarding the Redwood property. The property is in fairly good shape, but there are a few items that are a concern: basement stairs and back porch overhang. Disaster Relief continues to use the property for equipment. Due to not having a house parent over the summer, it may not be used as planned. Ron is working to use the house as a training facility for missionaries.

Submitted by,  
Laurie Pless, Associational Clerk

Concern Center  
Repair Status Report  
May 23, 2023

On Friday, May 5, 2023, we held a workday at the center to address some of the repair needs. While the turn out for this event was light, we were able to make some progress on the needs at the center. The following covers both results for that workday as well as actions since.

Completed Work:

1. Missing roof shingles have been replaced and suspected point of other leaks sealed.
2. The old playground equipment has been removed.
3. The digging of the sump for parking lot drainage is completed. The barrel and rock for the sump has been installed.
4. Some of the major ruts in the parking lot have been filled with dirt.
5. The snowplow has been removed from the truck to allow other uses of the truck throughout the summer months.
6. The lawn was mowed and some pruning accomplished on the workday.
7. Parking lot light at southeast corner of the property has been repaired.

Unfinished Work:

1. We still need to install the drain to the sump for parking lot drainage. There is a high spot in the parking lot between where the water ponds and where the sump has been installed. We are considering several options to work through this issue. What appears to be the best option is to have a little of the asphalt surface ground away between these two locations. We are current in contact with someone who may be able to do this for us.
2. Scott is checking with the city about replacing some of our grass with Xeriscape to save on water and for any possible rebates.
3. The recently repaired parking lot light needs a photocell installed. Currently the light stays on all of the time.

Remaining Needs:

1. The HVAC system for the East side of the building needs to be replaced. A quote for the replacement has been requested.
2. We have been using a swamp cooler for the East side of the build the past 2 summers as a "Get By" measure until the HVAC is replaced. The swamp cooler was removed from the window last fall and now needs to be re-installed.
3. The graveled lot on the East side of the property need to be sprayed for weeds.
4. The gutter on the shed leaks and needs to be caulked.
5. Replace damaged / rotted fascia lumber around building as needed.
6. Install gutters and downspouts on the North side of building. The sidewalk leading up to this side of the building heaves in the winter due to water getting underneath the concrete and freezing. The heaving prevents us for being able to open the door at times. Also, the edge of that sidewalk needs to be ground down at the door opening to help with the problem.

7. Outside lights on the north and east side of the building need repaired or replaced as required.
8. Fix leaky water spicket near shrubs on Vietnamese church building.
9. Repair Concern Center signage on main building as needed.
10. Replace asphalt parking lot. (waiting on SLBA strategic team path forward report before obtaining a quote)
11. We need to identify someone to do the lawn work throughout the summer. (the Vietnamese church paid for lawn mowing last summer)

Additional Information:

A claim was filled for roof damages with our insurance carrier. Their estimated cost for replacement of the roof is \$22, 709.96. After deductible and depreciation, the net payment should be \$13,973.27.

## Salt Lake Baptist Association (SLBA) Mission and Values Statements

### Mission Statement

To facilitate the collaboration of churches in order to strengthen churches and advance the gospel.

### Values

- We value praying together
- We value servicing together
- We value healthy churches
- We value proclaiming the gospel together
- We value knowing and caring for one another

### Explanation and Application of Values

- We value **praying** together

#### What is it?

The Bible clearly gives an imperative that God's people pray. Just as individual prayer is a necessity; collective prayer is also a necessity. We aim for every church in our association to be a house of prayer. We, as an Association of churches, pray together for the good of each church, pastor, and ministry. In addition, we unite together in asking for God's will, God's power, and God's guidance in our collaborative efforts as partners in the kingdom of God. We pray that His kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. We believe prayer opens hearts to the gospel.

#### What does it look like?

We prioritize:

1. Gathering for the sake of praying together.
  2. Praying at every associational gathering.
  3. As churches, pray for other partner churches.
  4. As individual pastors, pray together on a regular basis.
  5. Praying for revival and spiritual awakening in our cities, state, and country.
- We value **servicing** together

#### What is it?

A key component of our collaboration is serving together on both physical and spiritual projects. Collaboration is the action of working together to *produce or create something*. If pooling our financial resources for kingdom work is an illustration of our cooperation, laboring together physically and spiritually, side-by-side, is an illustration of our collaboration through service. While a large component of our cooperation is financial, we must equally strive to physically and spiritually labor together in order to strengthen churches and impact our local communities with the gospel.

### **What does it look like?**

We prioritize:

1. Gathering together in gospel-infused service projects.
2. Sending and sharing volunteers to work in our community outreach efforts.
3. Sharing physical and spiritual needs with one another so that we can partner in service.
4. Utilizing the strengths of our own churches for the benefit of other churches.

- We value **healthy churches**

### **What is it?**

The Lord Jesus Christ has charged the church with the task of the Great Commission and given her the honor of showing the glory of God on earth. The Baptist Faith and Message 2000 (BF&M 2000) states, "A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by his laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth." Churches are healthy when they meet this definition that is derived from Scripture. The ministry of the SLBA is driven by the active participation of partner churches so that each church might fulfill their God-given task to glorify Him by making disciples.

### **What does it look like?**

We prioritize:

1. Fostering consistent fellowship between pastors so that those who care for the flock of God may be encouraged and equipped for more fruitful ministry.
2. Developing relationships between churches so that churches with means are connected to churches with needs.
3. Help and encourage participating churches to grow in the biblical understanding and practice of what it means to be a church through resources, training, education, and opportunities.
4. Operating by the active participation of healthy and autonomous churches.

- We value **proclaiming** the gospel together

### **What is it?**

As churches united in the gospel, we prioritize the gospel in any and all of our cooperation and collaboration efforts. The gospel is the good news that Jesus Christ came to save sinners through his perfect life, substitutionary death, and resurrection. This is the most important personal saving message for this life and the life to come. When people trust the Lord Jesus for salvation, submit themselves to His authority, and receive the Holy Spirit, they are transformed. This transformation should have a deep impact on both the personal and societal levels. The end of all that we do is to see this gospel proclaimed, people saved, and Christ honored as Lord through making disciples. Faithful gospel proclamation includes connecting new believers to churches that will faithfully disciple them to follow Jesus Christ.



### **What does it look like?**

We prioritize:

1. Trusting that salvation belongs to the Lord by praying that people will be saved.
2. Strategizing together toward the end that people will be saved by identifying areas of need and receptivity.
3. Learning from one another.
4. Celebrating what God is doing throughout our region and in each local context/church.
5. Training and resourcing participating churches in methods of gospel proclamation.

- We value **knowing and caring** for one another

### **What is it?**

Meaningfully associating together requires trust, and we build trust by knowing and caring for one another. As an association, we do this in two ways. First, we do this by entry to the association, which requires baseline agreement on values, priorities, and beliefs. Second, we do this by spending meaningful time together toward the end of further encouragement, partnership, and building relationships. Truly knowing each other will require time, forethought, and intentionality.

### **What does it look like?**

We prioritize:

1. Humbly sharing and seeking to understand each other's needs and priorities with transparency and mutual concern.
2. Being clear and unapologetic about the BF&M 2000 as the standard for cooperation.
3. Taking measures to care for and support associated churches, pastors, and pastors' families toward the end of physical and spiritual health.
4. Actively pursuing these values together and uniting around the mission of the association.
5. Crafting events to cater to the various needs of pastors in the association.

**Salt Lake Baptist Association  
Executive Board Meeting  
September 26, 2023**

Location: Alta Canyon Baptist Church

Time: 9:00 am

**Attendees:** Timothy O’Day, Christ Fellowship; Russ Robinson, FBC Provo; Ed Romine, FBC Provo; Bingham Scantling, FBC Provo (guest); Dustin Stottmann, Hope Valley; Will Sutton, Cornerstone; Tim Peery, Alta Canyon; Zach Thompson, Christ Fellowship; James Gomez, Cornerstone; Scott Price, Canyons; Mike Pless, Canyons; Dan Mamatela, Millcreek; Ken Hawker, FBC Grantsville; Ron Clement, Hope Valley; Diane Clement, Hope Valley

Called to order by Moderator, Timothy O’Day

Minutes from the February 9, 2023, and May 23, 2023, were reviewed. Corrections were made (spelling of names) and Russ Robinson moved to approve, Tim Peery seconded. Approved.

Timothy led in prayer.

Scott Price and Diane Clement presented the Financial Summary Report as of September 20, 2023. The increase in interest earning was pointed out. Most of the designated funds will be disbursed to the budget to cover their respective expenses. It was noted that amount is exceptionally high due to a special gift as well as the money received from the ERC program.

Zach Thompson reviewed the Strategic Initiative Team’s report from the May meeting and then reviewed the “Preparing for the Annual Meeting” handout. It encompasses five possible options to have a balanced 2024 budget. The handout is attached. Much discussion ensued on those options. It was unanimous to eliminate Option 3. Russ Robinson spoke on behalf of FBC Provo in support of Option 5. James Gomez shared that Cornerstone has had some discussion regarding finding other churches that would join them in cooperation to keep the Concern Center operating. He emphasized that no decision or commitment has even been discussed. Ron Clement shared his thoughts regarding the Concern Center and property. He would like for the building to be used for church planting – both an English and Hispanic congregation that would be very intentional about reaching the Glendale community. He envisions the pastor would need a heart to reach the needy. He suggested that perhaps a “low-cost” childcare could be offered at that site. Ron also shared that he has spoken with the Utah Food Bank (UFB) about a “decentralization” option for the food pantry. This option would mean several churches take on the food distribution responsibilities out of there facility. The UFB indicated they would be able to provide in this option. The Board came to a consensus that a version of Option 5 is needed in order to truly achieve and be in alignment with our strategies and values. The desire is to find a church or churches that would invest in the Glendale community to take over the property. The decision about how to handle the food pantry side of the ministry would be made once at that time, whether to completely close or decentralize the distribution. January 1, 2025, was set as the timeline for the association to relinquish the financial responsibility for the Concern Center.

This discussion led into discussing the proposed 2024 budget. The Stewardship Committee presented two versions of the proposed budget. One included the possibility of receiving a grant

and the other uses money from the money market account. After much discussion the Executive Board approved Version 2 which includes the money market distribution. We will continue to pursue grant options, but that money cannot be budgeted until we know we will receive it.

Dan Mamatela recommended that we make sure we have scripture to back up initiatives and values. He also shared it would be helpful to know why churches are disengaging with the association so perhaps individual pastors could reach out to the pastors leaving to understand their position and hope to help them want to stay connected. Ed Romine suggested tightening up a church covenant relationship to SLBA. In addition to having a process for joining we should have a process for separation.

Directives from the Moderator and approved by the Board:

- As of January 1, 2024, Ron is to limit his time with the Concern Center to supervisory duties. Before the Annual Meeting he needs to make a list of what he currently does to present to the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee will give instruction as to what he is to eliminate. (Acts 6)
- 2024 will be a year of transition for the Concern Center. Our goal is to discover if there a church/churches to take over that ministry. If the property is given to a church/plant a couple of terms are needed. The property cannot be sold within the first 10 years and the church must remain Southern Baptist. If either term is violated the property reverts to SLBA. (Matthew 28)

Action items:

- Continue researching grants, possibly hire a grant researcher/writer.
- Ultimatum: if we are at the same place as of January 1, 2025, then we close and sell the Concern Center property. (Acts 16)
- Timothy and Ron will appoint a Concern Center Ad Hoc Committee to work on this directive. Rafael Gutierrez and Russ Robinson will be named to the committee. Timothy and Ron will seek to find someone from Risen Life and Cornerstone to complete the committee.
- Some of the things Ron will be able to do as a result of freeing up his time:
  - Monthly prayer gatherings
  - Monthly pastor investment time – training, mentoring
  - Connecting pastors more frequently

The Personnel Committee recommended a 4% increase across the board for employees. Discussion occurred. Russ Robinson motioned to change Version 2 Budget to include this increase. Ken Hawker seconded. Approved. (copy of budget attached)

Ron brought up that several people had talked to him about changing the annual meeting from evening to morning perhaps even moving to Saturday morning. It seems best not to change the date this year, but the Board decided to change the time to 9 am-noon. A lunch will follow the meeting.

Submitted by,  
Diane Clement (clerk sub)

## Preparing for the Annual Meeting

As the strategic initiatives committee began to work through how we should apply our values to a long term vision, we saw that we must address current constraints of time, energy, and money. Pertaining to these, the concern center seems to be the greatest center of gravity. In order to develop a balanced budget and a detailed plan that executes the values of the churches, we need direction from the executive board.

Here are 5 options we see that we believe could begin to address this.

### **1. Continue as we have.**

We would continue to use the interest from the trust fund to operate as we have done for more than a decade. Financially, we could survive doing this for some time to come. This would formalize approval for what we have already been doing. Our current financial and time constraints would continue as they have.

### **2. Get Grants to cover the deficit by funding the Concern Center**

We would fund the budgetary deficit by grants. The money is out there, but this option will require individuals who vote for it to commit to getting a full grant (or a tangible plan for one) to cover the deficit by the annual meeting. This addresses financial constraints, but personnel constraints would remain the same unless the grant is large enough to allow for more personnel to be hired.

### **3. Redo Ron's Job description to oversee the Concern Center**

We would rewrite Ron's job description to include the responsibilities of director over the concern center. This would eliminate the concern center director position and require more of Ron's time. This alleviates some of the financial constraint (~\$20k/year), but it increases the time burden for Ron.

### **4. Keep the Concern Center but commit to higher giving**

We would make no substantial changes to the budget, but the churches would commit to give more. Assuming that all of the churches are on board, this would be an average of \$73 per church per month. This alleviates the financial deficit, and the time cost would remain the same.

### **5. Close the Concern Center**

We would offboard the Concern center and (likely) sell the property. This would reduce annual budget costs by about \$35,000 and give Ron more time to work for the churches in other ways.

#### **General Notes on the Concern Center:**

- The property will soon need a new parking lot that will be at least \$45k
- We need more volunteers—not simply to hand out food, but so that we can do more than just hand out food.
- We need someone more hands on to manage the property to relieve Ron of doing so.



**Salt Lake Baptist Association  
Credentials Committee Report**

The 2023 Credentials Committee of the Salt Lake Baptist Association is composed of: Mike Pless of Canyons Church, Cottonwood Heights; Judy Barking of First Baptist Church, West Valley City; and Ed Romine of First Baptist Church, Provo.

The committee reviewed and evaluated the requests for membership in the Salt Lake Baptist Association for Mosaic Church, Provo, and Hope Valley Church, West Jordan. It is the committee's understanding that both churches meet the expected requirements for membership and therefore, recommend acceptance of both churches into membership of the Salt Lake Baptist Association.

Respectfully submitted: Mike Pless, Judy Barking, and Ed Romine

**Salt Lake Baptist Association  
Personnel Committee Report**

We, the Personnel Committee, have worked and met with additional committees, including the Executive Board, throughout the year of 2022-2023 to pursue a balanced budget that we so desire for the future of the SLBA. We understand that this process may take major redirection on many fronts. The Personnel Committee moved to recommend at the September 2023 Executive Board meeting to implement a minimal cost of living increase of 4% for all SLBA personnel beginning 2024 budget year. The Executive Board approved our recommendation.

SLBA Personnel Committee

Chair: James Gomez

Member: Tim Peery

Member: Myra Buchanan

**Salt Lake Baptist Association  
Financial Summary Report  
As of October 31, 2023**

**Profit & Loss**

**Income**

Churches Tithes/Offerings	\$ 80,106.06	
ERC Payroll	\$ 22,740.88	
Designated Gifts	\$ 43,963.81	
Checking Interest	\$ 1.69	
Trust Interest	\$ 18,875.23	
Savings Interest	\$ 11,283.49	
Utah State Tax Refund	\$ 601.88	
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 173.39	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 177,746.43</b>	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ (141,447.88)</b>	
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 36,298.55</b>	

**Balance Sheet**

**Assests**

Checking	\$ 37,241.06	
Trust	\$ 564,140.77	matures 2/2030
Distributable Trust Interest	\$ 16,363.04	accessible
MM/Savings	\$ 76,249.42	accessible
CDs	\$ 359,955.27	not accessible/different rates of maturity
Property	\$ 903,490.88	
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,957,440.44</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 17,563.35</b>	
<b>Equity</b>	<b>\$ 1,939,877.09</b>	
<b>Total Liabilities/Equity</b>	<b>\$ 1,957,440.44</b>	

# Salt Lake Baptist Association

## Balance Sheet

As of October 31, 2023

	TOTAL
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Checking	0.00
1020 - US Bank Checking	37,241.06
<b>Total Checking</b>	<b>37,241.06</b>
Savings	0.00
1104 - CFC Trust 5087	564,140.77
1105 - CFC Dist Trust Int 2770	16,363.04
1107 - MACU Savings Acct	10.00
1108 - MACU MM	76,239.42
1109 - MACU 12-mth CD	41,114.73
1110 - MACU 24-mth CD(1)	56,711.55
1111 - MACU 24-mth CD(2)	56,711.55
1112 - USB 11-mth CD	51,268.86
1113 - USB 17-mth CD	77,025.75
1114 - USB 25-mth CD	77,122.83
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>1,016,708.50</b>
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$1,053,949.56</b>
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable (A/R)	0.00
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
Other Current Assets	
Receivables	0.00
Uncategorized Asset	0.00
Undeposited Funds	0.00
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$1,053,949.56</b>
Other Assets	
Property	
1500 - Real Estate	932,390.00
1510 - Furnishings & Equip{212}	3,000.00
1550 - Sprinter Van	47,794.66
1599 - Accumulated Depreci{214}	-79,693.78
<b>Total Property</b>	<b>903,490.88</b>
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	<b>\$903,490.88</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$1,957,440.44</b>



	TOTAL
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Accounts Payable (A/P)	0.00
<b>Total Accounts Payable</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
Credit Cards	
AMEX	3,818.44
<b>Total Credit Cards</b>	<b>\$3,818.44</b>
Other Current Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
2201 - FICA Payable	0.00
2202 - Employee Annuity	0.00
2203 - Medicare Payable	0.00
2205 - Federal Income Tax WH	0.00
2206 - State Taxes	0.00
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Direct Deposit Payable	1,743.14
Out Of Scope Agency Payable	0.00
Payroll Liabilities	
Federal Taxes (941/944)	366.73
UT Income Tax	-105.50
UT Unemployment Tax	-451.55
<b>Total Payroll Liabilities</b>	<b>-190.32</b>
Restricted Funds	
Temporarily Restricted	0.00
Administration - Designated Fun	
8020 - Gospel Advance Training Ctr	5,639.87
8021 - Redwood remodel	0.00
8050 - Holding Account	0.00
8055 - Event Trailer	-17.21
8060 - Sprinter Van	-792.63
8090 - SLBA Discretionary Funds	178.88
8200 - Collegiate Outreach Desi	0.00
<b>Total Administration - Designated Fun</b>	<b>5,008.91</b>
Concern Center - Designated Fu	
8400 - Con Ctr - Designated Funds	0.00
8401 - Con Ctr - Hunger Funds	2,510.40
<b>Total Concern Center - Designated Fu</b>	<b>2,510.40</b>
Disaster Relief Designated Fund	
8010 - DR - Designated Funds	1,581.28
<b>Total Disaster Relief Designated Fund</b>	<b>1,581.28</b>
Mission Partnership - Designated Funds	
8100 - Mission Partnership	3,091.50
<b>Total Mission Partnership - Designated Funds</b>	<b>3,091.50</b>
<b>Total Temporarily Restricted</b>	<b>12,192.09</b>

	TOTAL
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>12,192.09</b>
Utah State Tax Commission Payable	0.00
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$13,744.91</b>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$17,563.35</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$17,563.35</b>
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	0.00
Opening Balance Equity-1	-1,030,085.23
Retained Earnings	2,933,663.77
Net Income	36,298.55
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$1,939,877.09</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$1,957,440.44</b>

# Salt Lake Baptist Association

## Profit and Loss

January - October, 2023

	TOTAL
Income	
4000 - Tithes & Offerings	80,106.06
Revenues	
4090 - ERC Payroll	22,740.88
Collegiate Outreach	
4110 - Collegiate Assis from UISBC	2,500.00
<b>Total Collegiate Outreach</b>	<b>2,500.00</b>
Concern Center	
4200 - Con Ctr - Assist Churches/Ind	38,943.81
4208 - Building Use - 1st Vietnamese	2,520.00
<b>Total Concern Center</b>	<b>41,463.81</b>
Interest Income	
4010 - Checking Interest	1.69
4030 - Trust Earned Interest	18,875.23
4031 - Savings/CD/MM Interest	11,283.49
<b>Total Interest Income</b>	<b>30,160.41</b>
Miscellaneous Income	
1050 - Utah State Sales Tax Refund	601.88
4005 - Miscellaneous Income	173.39
<b>Total Miscellaneous Income</b>	<b>775.27</b>
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>97,640.37</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$177,746.43</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>\$177,746.43</b>
Expenses	
Expenses	
Administration	
Executive Director	
5102 - Annuity	4,954.20
5103 - Travel	3,703.37
5104 - Conferences/Conventions	996.51
<b>Total Executive Director</b>	<b>9,654.08</b>
Operations	
Equipment	
5520 - Computer Support/Mainten	39.80
5525 - Computer Software	420.91
5530 - Copier	748.75
5540 - Diesel Truck/Plow	346.30

	TOTAL
<b>Total Equipment</b>	<b>1,555.76</b>
Office Expense	
5710 - Office Supplies	249.35
5715 - Postage/PO Box	227.98
5720 - Membership/Admin Fees	672.06
5730 - Online processing fees	81.07
<b>Total Office Expense</b>	<b>1,230.46</b>
Utilities	
5610 - Cell Service/CC Phone	1,378.30
<b>Total Utilities</b>	<b>1,378.30</b>
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>4,164.52</b>
Payroll Expenses	
5415 - Worker's Comp Insurance	320.80
<b>Total Payroll Expenses</b>	<b>320.80</b>
Properties	
5405 - Umbrella Insurance	1,094.80
5420 - SLBA Auto Insurance	2,711.46
5430 - SLBA Storage	258.25
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>4,064.51</b>
<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>18,203.91</b>
Cooperation & Fellowship	
Collegiate Outreach	
7500 - Director's Stipend	3,000.00
<b>Total Collegiate Outreach</b>	<b>3,000.00</b>
Concern Center	
Operations	
7425 - Bldg & Office Supplies	738.49
7486 - Trash/Terminix	2,090.15
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>2,828.64</b>
Properties	
5025 - Building Insurance	1,916.95
7485 - Building Maintenance	2,175.19
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>4,092.14</b>
Utilities	
7440 - Internet	776.90
7470 - Water/Sewer	2,540.00
7480 - Gas	3,556.00
7490 - Electric	3,255.05
<b>Total Utilities</b>	<b>10,127.95</b>
Volunteers	
7475 - Volunteer Appreciation	6.48
<b>Total Volunteers</b>	<b>6.48</b>

	TOTAL
<b>Total Concern Center</b>	<b>17,055.21</b>
Disaster Relief	
7800 - Operations	813.57
7810 - Equipment	875.40
7815 - Director's Stipend	3,500.00
7820 - Auto Insurance	1,396.63
<b>Total Disaster Relief</b>	<b>6,585.60</b>
Redwood Property	
Properties	
5050 - Building Insurance	945.63
7900 - Repair & Maintenance	942.81
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>1,888.44</b>
Utilities	
7910 - Electric	1,239.95
7920 - Gas	552.31
7930 - Internet	540.00
7940 - Sewer	250.00
7950 - Water/Trash	599.51
<b>Total Utilities</b>	<b>3,181.77</b>
<b>Total Redwood Property</b>	<b>5,070.21</b>
<b>Total Cooperation &amp; Fellowship</b>	<b>31,711.02</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>49,914.93</b>
Payroll Expenses	
Taxes	2,092.42
Wages	85,230.62
<b>Total Payroll Expenses</b>	<b>87,323.04</b>
Reimbursements	0.00
Strengthening Churches	
5815 - Directors Professional E	683.22
5825 - Executive Board Meetings	32.01
5835 - Pastor/Staff Family Fellowships	182.04
5875 - Staff Wives Ministry	31.85
5900 - Partnerships	1,257.22
7127 - Church Plant Resourcing	23.57
7132 - BMSEH/Haiti Ministry	2,000.00
<b>Total Strengthening Churches</b>	<b>4,209.91</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$141,447.88</b>
<b>NET OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>\$36,298.55</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$36,298.55</b>

# Salt Lake Baptist Association

2023 Budget vs. Actuals as of October 31, 2023

January - December 2023

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
<b>Income</b>				
4000 - Tithes & Offerings	80,106.06	103,000.00	-22,893.94	77.77 %
<b>Revenues</b>				
4090 - ERC Payroll	22,740.88		22,740.88	
<b>Collegiate Outreach</b>				
4110 - Collegiate Assis from UISBC	2,500.00	3,000.00	-500.00	83.33 %
<b>Total Collegiate Outreach</b>	<b>2,500.00</b>	<b>3,000.00</b>	<b>-500.00</b>	<b>83.33 %</b>
<b>Concern Center</b>				
4200 - Con Ctr - Assist Churches/Ind	38,943.81	8,600.00	30,343.81	452.84 %
4208 - Building Use - 1st Vietnamese	2,520.00	2,880.00	-360.00	87.50 %
<b>Total Concern Center</b>	<b>41,463.81</b>	<b>11,480.00</b>	<b>29,983.81</b>	<b>361.18 %</b>
<b>Interest Income</b>				
4010 - Checking Interest	1.69		1.69	
4030 - Trust Earned Interest	18,875.23	24,229.00	-5,353.77	77.90 %
4031 - Savings/CD/MM Interest	11,283.49	200.00	11,083.49	5,641.75 %
<b>Total Interest Income</b>	<b>30,160.41</b>	<b>24,429.00</b>	<b>5,731.41</b>	<b>123.46 %</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Income</b>				
1050 - Utah State Sales Tax Refund	601.88	1,200.00	-598.12	50.16 %
4005 - Miscellaneous Income	173.39	150.00	23.39	115.59 %
<b>Total Miscellaneous Income</b>	<b>775.27</b>	<b>1,350.00</b>	<b>-574.73</b>	<b>57.43 %</b>
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>97,640.37</b>	<b>40,259.00</b>	<b>57,381.37</b>	<b>242.53 %</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$177,746.43</b>	<b>\$143,259.00</b>	<b>\$34,487.43</b>	<b>124.07 %</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>\$177,746.43</b>	<b>\$143,259.00</b>	<b>\$34,487.43</b>	<b>124.07 %</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
<b>Expenses</b>				
<b>Administration</b>				
<b>Executive Director</b>				
5102 - Annuity	4,954.20	5,945.00	-990.80	83.33 %
5103 - Travel	3,703.37	4,000.00	-296.63	92.58 %
5104 - Conferences/Conventions	996.51	1,000.00	-3.49	99.65 %
<b>Total Executive Director</b>	<b>9,654.08</b>	<b>10,945.00</b>	<b>-1,290.92</b>	<b>88.21 %</b>
<b>Operations</b>				
<b>Equipment</b>				
5520 - Computer Support/Mainten	39.80	320.00	-280.20	12.44 %
5525 - Computer Software	420.91	1,600.00	-1,179.09	26.31 %
5530 - Copier	828.50	1,000.00	-171.50	82.85 %
5540 - Diesel Truck/Plow	346.30	200.00	146.30	173.15 %
<b>Total Equipment</b>	<b>1,635.51</b>	<b>3,120.00</b>	<b>-1,484.49</b>	<b>52.42 %</b>
<b>Office Expense</b>				
5710 - Office Supplies	249.35	300.00	-50.65	83.12 %
5715 - Postage/PO Box	227.98	550.00	-322.02	41.45 %
5720 - Membership/Admin Fees	672.06	600.00	72.06	112.01 %

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
5730 - Online processing fees	81.07	150.00	-68.93	54.05 %
<b>Total Office Expense</b>	<b>1,230.46</b>	<b>1,600.00</b>	<b>-369.54</b>	<b>76.90 %</b>
Utilities				
5610 - Cell Service/CC Phone	1,378.30	1,620.00	-241.70	85.08 %
<b>Total Utilities</b>	<b>1,378.30</b>	<b>1,620.00</b>	<b>-241.70</b>	<b>85.08 %</b>
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>4,244.27</b>	<b>6,340.00</b>	<b>-2,095.73</b>	<b>66.94 %</b>
Payroll Expenses				
5415 - Worker's Comp Insurance	356.90	500.00	-143.10	71.38 %
<b>Total Payroll Expenses</b>	<b>356.90</b>	<b>500.00</b>	<b>-143.10</b>	<b>71.38 %</b>
Properties				
5405 - Umbrella Insurance	1,094.80	1,350.00	-255.20	81.10 %
5420 - SLBA Auto Insurance	2,711.46	1,778.00	933.46	152.50 %
5430 - SLBA Storage	258.25	260.00	-1.75	99.33 %
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>4,064.51</b>	<b>3,388.00</b>	<b>676.51</b>	<b>119.97 %</b>
<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>18,319.76</b>	<b>21,173.00</b>	<b>-2,853.24</b>	<b>86.52 %</b>
Cooperation & Fellowship				
Collegiate Outreach				
7500 - Director's Stipend	3,000.00	3,600.00	-600.00	83.33 %
<b>Total Collegiate Outreach</b>	<b>3,000.00</b>	<b>3,600.00</b>	<b>-600.00</b>	<b>83.33 %</b>
Concern Center				
5401 - Director Travel Reimbursement		200.00	-200.00	
Operations				
7425 - Bldg & Office Supplies	738.49	1,000.00	-261.51	73.85 %
7486 - Trash/Terminix	2,270.20	2,200.00	70.20	103.19 %
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>3,008.69</b>	<b>3,200.00</b>	<b>-191.31</b>	<b>94.02 %</b>
Properties				
5025 - Building Insurance	1,916.95	1,330.00	586.95	144.13 %
7485 - Building Maintenance	2,175.19	2,500.00	-324.81	87.01 %
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>4,092.14</b>	<b>3,830.00</b>	<b>262.14</b>	<b>106.84 %</b>
Utilities				
7440 - Internet	776.90	970.00	-193.10	80.09 %
7470 - Water/Sewer	2,540.00	3,300.00	-760.00	76.97 %
7480 - Gas	3,556.00	2,600.00	956.00	136.77 %
7490 - Electric	3,601.06	3,700.00	-98.94	97.33 %
<b>Total Utilities</b>	<b>10,473.96</b>	<b>10,570.00</b>	<b>-96.04</b>	<b>99.09 %</b>
Volunteers				
7475 - Volunteer Appreciation	6.48	400.00	-393.52	1.62 %
<b>Total Volunteers</b>	<b>6.48</b>	<b>400.00</b>	<b>-393.52</b>	<b>1.62 %</b>
<b>Total Concern Center</b>	<b>17,581.27</b>	<b>18,200.00</b>	<b>-618.73</b>	<b>96.60 %</b>
Disaster Relief				
7800 - Operations	813.57	2,400.00	-1,586.43	33.90 %
7810 - Equipment	875.40	2,500.00	-1,624.60	35.02 %
7815 - Director's Stipend	3,500.00	4,200.00	-700.00	83.33 %
7820 - Auto Insurance	1,396.63	1,900.00	-503.37	73.51 %
<b>Total Disaster Relief</b>	<b>6,585.60</b>	<b>11,000.00</b>	<b>-4,414.40</b>	<b>59.87 %</b>
Redwood Property				
Properties				

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
5050 - Building Insurance	945.63	1,300.00	-354.37	72.74 %
7900 - Repair & Maintenance	942.81	1,500.00	-557.19	62.85 %
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>1,888.44</b>	<b>2,800.00</b>	<b>-911.56</b>	<b>67.44 %</b>
Utilities				
7910 - Electric	1,366.94	1,500.00	-133.06	91.13 %
7920 - Gas	552.31	1,150.00	-597.69	48.03 %
7930 - Internet	540.00	700.00	-160.00	77.14 %
7940 - Sewer	250.00	300.00	-50.00	83.33 %
7950 - Water/Trash	599.51	800.00	-200.49	74.94 %
<b>Total Utilities</b>	<b>3,308.76</b>	<b>4,450.00</b>	<b>-1,141.24</b>	<b>74.35 %</b>
<b>Total Redwood Property</b>	<b>5,197.20</b>	<b>7,250.00</b>	<b>-2,052.80</b>	<b>71.69 %</b>
<b>Total Cooperation &amp; Fellowship</b>	<b>32,364.07</b>	<b>40,050.00</b>	<b>-7,685.93</b>	<b>80.81 %</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>50,683.83</b>	<b>61,223.00</b>	<b>-10,539.17</b>	<b>82.79 %</b>
Payroll Expenses				
Taxes	2,092.42	2,800.00	-707.58	74.73 %
Wages	85,230.62	104,452.00	-19,221.38	81.60 %
<b>Total Payroll Expenses</b>	<b>87,323.04</b>	<b>107,252.00</b>	<b>-19,928.96</b>	<b>81.42 %</b>
Reimbursements	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Strengthening Churches				
5815 - Directors Professional E	693.19	1,000.00	-306.81	69.32 %
5820 - Annual Meeting		1,000.00	-1,000.00	
5825 - Executive Board Meetings	32.01	200.00	-167.99	16.01 %
5830 - Recharge		400.00	-400.00	
5835 - Pastor/Staff Family Fellowships	182.04	200.00	-17.96	91.02 %
5840 - Pastor/Staff Fellowship Dinner		1,000.00	-1,000.00	
5845 - Church Equipping		1,500.00	-1,500.00	
5875 - Staff Wives Ministry	31.85	400.00	-368.15	7.96 %
5900 - Partnerships	1,257.22	1,500.00	-242.78	83.81 %
7127 - Church Plant Resourcing	23.57	1,000.00	-976.43	2.36 %
7129 - Church Resourcing		600.00	-600.00	
7131 - Ethnic Ministry		800.00	-800.00	
7132 - BMSEH/Haiti Ministry	2,000.00	2,400.00	-400.00	83.33 %
<b>Total Strengthening Churches</b>	<b>4,219.88</b>	<b>12,000.00</b>	<b>-7,780.12</b>	<b>35.17 %</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$142,226.75</b>	<b>\$180,475.00</b>	<b>\$ -38,248.25</b>	<b>78.81 %</b>
NET OPERATING INCOME	<b>\$35,519.68</b>	<b>\$ -37,216.00</b>	<b>\$72,735.68</b>	<b>-95.44 %</b>
NET INCOME	<b>\$35,519.68</b>	<b>\$ -37,216.00</b>	<b>\$72,735.68</b>	<b>-95.44 %</b>



**Salt Lake Baptist Association**  
**Church Giving**  
As of October 31, 2023

	Revenue	Designated	Total
Alta Canyon Baptist Church	\$ 2,359.03		\$ 2,359.03
Awaken City Church	\$ 950.00		\$ 950.00
Bible Church of Salt Lake	\$ 200.00		\$ 200.00
Canyons Church	\$ 25,845.00	\$ 3,800.00	\$ 29,645.00
Christ Fellowship Church	\$ 1,200.00		\$ 1,200.00
Cornerstone Church	\$ 1,930.95	\$ 5,365.30	\$ 7,296.25
Crossroads Church	\$ 1,300.00		\$ 1,300.00
Divine Grace Urdu Church	\$ -		\$ -
First Baptist Church Grantsville	\$ 1,062.62		\$ 1,062.62
First Baptist Church Pleasant Grove	\$ 750.00		\$ 750.00
First Baptist Church Provo	\$ 1,000.00		\$ 1,000.00
First Baptist Church Tooele	\$ -		\$ -
First Baptist Church WVC	\$ 2,264.19	\$ 1,103.64	\$ 3,367.83
First Vietnamese Baptist Church	\$ 840.00		\$ 840.00
Heber Valley Baptist Church	\$ 1,449.24		\$ 1,449.24
Hope Church	\$ -		\$ -
Hope Valley Church	\$ 113.49		\$ 113.49
Iglesia Bautista Gracia Eterna	\$ 517.22		\$ 517.22
Iglesia Bautista Gracia Sobre Garcia	\$ 210.21		\$ 210.21
Iglesia Bautista Maranatha	\$ 1,841.00		\$ 1,841.00
Iglesia Bautista Renuevo	\$ -		\$ -
Iglesia Bautista Roca De Los Siglos	\$ 728.00		\$ 728.00
Iglesia Bautista Sola Gracia	\$ 930.00		\$ 930.00
Lifestone Church	\$ -		\$ -
Millcreek Baptist Church	\$ 1,101.00		\$ 1,101.00
Ministerios Nueva Vida	\$ -		\$ -
Mision Bautista Esperanza Vida, SLC	\$ -		\$ -
Oquirrh Mountain Country Church	\$ 212.70	\$ 12,610.07	\$ 12,822.77
Redeeming Life	\$ 420.00		\$ 420.00
Risen Life Church	\$ 28,952.01		\$ 28,952.01
Salt Lake Chinese Baptist Church	\$ 1,163.60	\$ 550.00	\$ 1,713.60
Southern Chin Christian Church	\$ 195.50		\$ 195.50
The Point Church	\$ -		\$ -
Unity Baptist Church	\$ 350.00		\$ 350.00
Utah Christian Fellowship	\$ 1,420.22		\$ 1,420.22
Utah Evangelical Church	\$ 200.08		\$ 200.08
Utah Unity Church	\$ -		\$ -
Vietnamese Fellowship of Christ	\$ 600.00		\$ 600.00
	<b>\$ 80,106.06</b>	<b>\$ 23,429.01</b>	<b>\$ 103,535.07</b>

**Salt Lake Baptist Association**  
**Church Giving**  
 January-December, 2022

	Revenue	Designated	Total
Alpha Omega Urdu Church International	\$ -		\$ -
Alta Canyon Baptist Church	\$ 7,024.23		\$ 7,024.23
Awaken City Church	\$ 2,179.31		\$ 2,179.31
Bible Church of Salt Lake	\$ 150.00		\$ 150.00
Canyons Church	\$ 31,072.00	\$ 1,575.00	\$ 32,647.00
Christ Fellowship Church	\$ 1,200.00		\$ 1,200.00
Cornerstone Church	\$ 3,214.25	\$ 5,975.30	\$ 9,189.55
Crossroads Church	\$ 1,300.00		\$ 1,300.00
First Baptist Church Grantsville	\$ 1,658.36		\$ 1,658.36
First Baptist Church Pleasant Grove	\$ 600.00		\$ 600.00
First Baptist Church Provo	\$ 2,132.79		\$ 2,132.79
First Baptist Church Tooele	gave \$450 in 2021 for 2022		
First Baptist Church WVC	\$ 2,627.47	\$ 985.29	\$ 3,612.76
First Vietnamese Baptist Church	\$ 960.00		\$ 960.00
Heber Valley Baptist Church	\$ -		\$ -
Hope Church	\$ 1,000.00		\$ 1,000.00
Iglesia Bautista Gracia Eterna	\$ 680.01		\$ 680.01
Iglesia Bautista Gracia Sobre Garcia	\$ 185.97		\$ 185.97
Iglesia Bautista Maranatha	\$ 2,558.90		\$ 2,558.90
Iglesia Bautista Renuevo	\$ -		\$ -
Iglesia Bautista Roca De Los Siglos	\$ 985.00		\$ 985.00
Iglesia Bautista Sola Gracia	\$ 1,080.00		\$ 1,080.00
Lifestone Church	\$ -		\$ -
Millcreek Baptist Church	\$ 1,611.00		\$ 1,611.00
Ministerios Nueva Vida	\$ -		\$ -
Mision Bautista Esperanza Vida, SLC	\$ -		\$ -
Oquirrh Mountain Country Church	\$ 1,011.66		\$ 1,011.66
Redeeming Life	\$ 2,465.38		\$ 2,465.38
Risen Life Church	\$ 32,238.65		\$ 32,238.65
Salt Lake Chinese Baptist Church	\$ 1,199.78	\$ 170.00	\$ 1,369.78
Southern Chin Christian Church	\$ 233.19		\$ 233.19
The Point Church	\$ -		\$ -
Unity Baptist Church	\$ 650.00		\$ 650.00
Utah Christian Fellowship	\$ 1,651.03		\$ 1,651.03
Utah Evangelical Church	\$ 500.00		\$ 500.00
Utah Unity Church	\$ -		\$ -
Vietnamese Fellowship of Christ	\$ 600.00		\$ 600.00
	<b>\$ 102,768.98</b>	<b>\$ 8,705.59</b>	<b>\$ 111,474.57</b>



**Salt Lake Baptist Association (SLBA)**  
**Strategic Initiative Team Report**  
**Mission and Values Statements**

**Mission Statement**

To facilitate the collaboration of churches in order to strengthen churches and advance the gospel.

**Values**

- We value **praying together**
- We value **servng together**
- We value **healthy churches**
- We value **proclaiming the gospel together**
- We value **knowing and caring for one another**

**Explanation and Application of Values**

- We value **praying together**

**What is it?**

The Bible clearly gives an imperative that God's people pray. Just as individual prayer is a necessity; collective prayer is also a necessity. We aim for every church in our association to be a house of prayer. We, as an Association of churches, pray together for the good of each church, pastor, and ministry. In addition, we unite together in asking for God's will, God's power, and God's guidance in our collaborative efforts as partners in the kingdom of God. We pray that His kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. We believe prayer opens hearts to the gospel.

**What does it look like?**

We prioritize:

1. Gathering for the sake of praying together.
2. Praying at every associational gathering.
3. As churches, pray for other partner churches.
4. As individual pastors, pray together on a regular basis.
5. Praying for revival and spiritual awakening in our cities, state, and country.

- We value **servng together**

**What is it?**

A key component of our collaboration is serving together on both physical and spiritual projects. Collaboration is the action of working together to *produce or create something*. If pooling our financial resources for kingdom work is an illustration of our cooperation, laboring together physically and spiritually, side-by-side, is an illustration of our collaboration through service. While a large component of our cooperation is financial, we must equally strive to physically and spiritually labor together in order to strengthen churches and impact our local communities with the gospel.

### **What does it look like?**

We prioritize:

1. Gathering together in gospel-infused service projects.
2. Sending and sharing volunteers to work in our community outreach efforts.
3. Sharing physical and spiritual needs with one another so that we can partner in service.
4. Utilizing the strengths of our own churches for the benefit of other churches.

- We value **healthy churches**

### **What is it?**

The Lord Jesus Christ has charged the church with the task of the Great Commission and given her the honor of showing the glory of God on earth. The Baptist Faith and Message 2000 (BF&M 2000) states, “A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by his laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.” Churches are healthy when they meet this definition that is derived from Scripture. The ministry of the SLBA is driven by the active participation of partner churches so that each church might fulfill their God-given task to glorify Him by making disciples.

### **What does it look like?**

We prioritize:

1. Fostering consistent fellowship between pastors so that those who care for the flock of God may be encouraged and equipped for more fruitful ministry.
2. Developing relationships between churches so that churches with means are connected to churches with needs.
3. Help and encourage participating churches to grow in the biblical understanding and practice of what it means to be a church through resources, training, education, and opportunities.
4. Operating by the active participation of healthy and autonomous churches.

- We value **proclaiming** the gospel together

### **What is it?**

As churches united in the gospel, we prioritize the gospel in any and all of our cooperation and collaboration efforts. The gospel is the good news that Jesus Christ came to save sinners through his perfect life, substitutionary death, and resurrection. This is the most important personal saving message for this life and the life to come. When people trust the Lord Jesus for salvation, submit themselves to His authority, and receive the Holy Spirit, they are transformed. This transformation should have a deep impact on both the personal and societal levels. The end of all that we do is to see this gospel proclaimed, people saved, and Christ honored as Lord through making disciples. Faithful gospel proclamation includes connecting new believers to churches that will faithfully disciple them to follow Jesus Christ.

### **What does it look like?**

We prioritize:

1. Trusting that salvation belongs to the Lord by praying that people will be saved.
2. Strategizing together toward the end that people will be saved by identifying areas of need and receptivity.
3. Learning from one another.
4. Celebrating what God is doing throughout our region and in each local context/church.
5. Training and resourcing participating churches in methods of gospel proclamation.

- We value **knowing and caring** for one another

### **What is it?**

Meaningfully associating together requires trust, and we build trust by knowing and caring for one another. As an association, we do this in two ways. First, we do this by entry to the association, which requires baseline agreement on values, priorities, and beliefs. Second, we do this by spending meaningful time together toward the end of further encouragement, partnership, and building relationships. Truly knowing each other will require time, forethought, and intentionality.

### **What does it look like?**

We prioritize:

1. Humbly sharing and seeking to understand each other's needs and priorities with transparency and mutual concern.
2. Being clear and unapologetic about the BF&M 2000 as the standard for cooperation.
3. Taking measures to care for and support associated churches, pastors, and pastors' families toward the end of physical and spiritual health.
4. Actively pursuing these values together and uniting around the mission of the association.
5. Crafting events to cater to the various needs of pastors in the association.



**Salt Lake Baptist Association  
2024 Proposed Budget**

	<b>2024 Projection</b>
<b>Income</b>	
4000 - Tithes & Offerings	\$ <b>113,000.00</b>
Revenues	
Collegiate Outreach	
4110 - Collegiate Assis from UISBC	\$ 3,000.00
Total Collegiate Outreach	\$ <b>3,000.00</b>
Concern Center	
4200 - CC Assist Churches/Ind	\$ 10,000.00
4208 - CC Building Utilities - FVBC, Burmese, Esperanza	\$ 5,880.00
Total Concern Center	\$ <b>15,880.00</b>
Interest Income	
4010 - Checking Interest	
4030 - Trust Earned Interest	\$ 18,000.00
4031 - Savings/CD/MM Interest	\$ 16,000.00
Total Interest Income	\$ <b>34,000.00</b>
4108 - Money Market Disbursement	\$ <b>12,802.55</b>
Miscellaneous Income	
1050 - Utah State Sales Tax Refund	\$ 1,200.00
4005 - Miscellaneous Income	\$ 150.00
Total Miscellaneous Income	\$ <b>1,350.00</b>
Total Revenues	\$ <b>67,032.55</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 180,032.55</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Administration	
Executive Director	
5102 - Annuity	\$ 5,945.00
5103 - Travel	\$ 4,000.00
5104 - Conferences/Conventions	\$ 1,000.00
Total Executive Director	\$ <b>10,945.00</b>
Operations	
Equipment	
5520 - Computer Support/Mainten	\$ 400.00
5525 - Computer Software	\$ 800.00
5530 - Copier	\$ 1,000.00
5540 - Diesel Truck/Plow	\$ 500.00
5550 - Diesel Truck Insurance	\$ 1,483.00
Total Equipment	\$ <b>4,183.00</b>
Office Expense	
5710 - Office Supplies	\$ 150.00
5715 - Postage/PO Box	\$ 400.00
5720 - Membership/Admin Fees	\$ 600.00
5730 - Online processing fees	\$ 100.00
Total Office Expense	\$ <b>1,250.00</b>



**Salt Lake Baptist Association  
2024 Proposed Budget**

	<b>2024 Projection</b>
Utilities	
5610 - Cell Service/CC Phone	\$ 1,666.00
<b>Total Utilities</b>	<b>\$ 1,666.00</b>
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>\$ 7,099.00</b>
Payroll Expenses	
5415 - Worker's Comp Insurance	\$ 435.00
<b>Total Payroll Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 435.00</b>
Properties	
5405 - Umbrella Insurance	\$ 1,000.00
5420 - SLBA Auto Insurance	\$ 2,309.15
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>\$ 3,309.15</b>
<b>Total Administration Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 21,788.15</b>
Cooperation & Fellowship	
Collegiate Outreach	
7500 - Director's Stipend	\$ 2,500.00
<b>Total Collegiate Outreach</b>	<b>\$ 2,500.00</b>
Concern Center	
Operations	
7425 - Bldg & Office Supplies	\$ 1,000.00
7486 - Trash/Terminix	\$ 3,313.00
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>\$ 4,313.00</b>
Properties	
5025 - Building Insurance	\$ 2,413.17
7485 - Building Maintenance	\$ 2,500.00
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>\$ 4,913.17</b>
Utilities	
7440 - Internet	\$ 970.00
7470 - Water/Sewer	\$ 2,300.00
7480 - Gas	\$ 3,500.00
7490 - Electric	\$ 4,000.00
<b>Total Utilities</b>	<b>\$ 10,770.00</b>
Volunteers	
7475 - Volunteer Appreciation	\$ 400.00
<b>Total Volunteers</b>	<b>\$ 400.00</b>
<b>Total Concern Center</b>	<b>\$ 20,396.17</b>
Disaster Relief	
7800 - Operations	\$ 1,200.00
7810 - Equipment	\$ 1,200.00
7815 - Director's Stipend	\$ 4,200.00
7820 - Auto Insurance	\$ 2,196.00
<b>Total Disaster Relief</b>	<b>\$ 8,796.00</b>
Redwood Property	
Properties	
5050 - Building Insurance	\$ 842.23

**Salt Lake Baptist Association  
2024 Proposed Budget**

	<b>2024 Projection</b>
7900 - Repair & Maintenance	\$ 1,000.00
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>\$ 1,842.23</b>
<b>Utilities</b>	
7910 - Electric	\$ 1,560.00
7920 - Gas	\$ 1,320.00
7930 - Internet	\$ 720.00
7940 - Sewer	\$ 300.00
7950 - Water/Trash	\$ 780.00
<b>Total Utilities</b>	<b>\$ 4,680.00</b>
<b>Total Redwood Property</b>	<b>\$ 6,522.23</b>
<b>Total Cooperation &amp; Fellowship</b>	<b>\$ 38,214.40</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 60,002.55</b>
<b>Payroll Expenses</b>	
Taxes	\$ 3,000.00
Wages*	\$ 108,630.00
<b>Total Payroll Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 111,630.00</b>
<b>Strengthening Churches</b>	
5815 - Directors Professional E	\$ 800.00
5820 - Annual Meeting	\$ 1,000.00
5835 - Pastor/Staff Family Fellowships	\$ 200.00
5840 - Pastor/Staff Fellowship Dinner	\$ 1,000.00
5845 - Church Health	\$ 2,500.00
5875 - Staff Wives Ministry	\$ 400.00
5900 - Partnerships	\$ 1,500.00
7127 - Church Plant Resourcing	\$ 1,000.00
7132 - BMSEH/Haiti Ministry	\$ -
<b>Total Strengthening Churches</b>	<b>\$ 8,400.00</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 180,032.55</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 180,032.55</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
*ED-\$38,070 salary/\$30,160 housing/\$4,000 insurance// CCD-\$20,800 // MA-\$15,600	

## Salt Lake Baptist Association Concern Center Report

Blessings to every one of you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a privilege and a great blessing for us to minister to people at the Concern Center. As you all know, the Concern Center is the Benevolence Ministry of the churches of our Salt Lake Baptist Association. Through this ministry, we fulfill the Lord's command to help those in need in His glorious Name.

Here are the highlights of our report:

1. The Concern Center has had an incredible increase in the number of clients in the last year. What is truly incredible is that, for God's glory, we can provide food for so many needy people through the help of the contributions from churches and individuals. At the same time, this gives us the awesome opportunity to present Christ to so many in our area. Just to give you an idea of the numbers, last year, the numbers on Monday nights were 25-30 clients families. Now, the average is 60. During the week last year we averaged 25 to 30 clients per day, now is about 50. On Saturday mornings last year we had 45-50 clients, now the average is 95.
2. Because of this increase in numbers and by our request, the Utah Food Bank increased the volume and number of truck deliveries. We get three trucks from grocery rescue stores, and one truck from the Utah Food Bank warehouse: for a total of four trucks per week.
3. May the Lord be praised because we have also had an increase in the number of regular local volunteers, including two out-of-state missionary youth groups. We can always use you and your church volunteers since there is so much work to be done!
4. Last year, we started a Bible study in Spanish with English Classes that lasted eight months but stopped due to lack of attendance because people prefer to attend a regular church. The final goal, however, is still to establish a church work in the area.
5. Again, we could not do all this work without the help of our wonderful and faithful volunteers at the Concern Center!

We ask for your prayers and your continuous support of the Concern Center.

God bless you always,  
Yours in Christ,

Sonia Gutierrez, Director  
Rafael Gutierrez, Co-Director

## Salt Lake Baptist Association Disaster Relief Report

December 2022 took a SLBA DR (Disaster Relief) Team with several UISBC Volunteers to Daytona Beach, Florida, to mud out houses after Hurricane Ian. Several houses and a trailer house were cleaned. But one job stands out and made the deployment a success. As the team was removing two feet of sheetrock and insulation that had gotten wet from flood water in one home, one team member asked the housewife if the family had a church they attended. The housewife responded, "I haven't set foot in a church in 15 years." When queried she explained that 15 years before her father passed away he had given a pastor/minister power of attorney over his estate. The minister took everything, and the housewife didn't get anything. At this point she broke into tears because she didn't have anything of her father to give to her young daughters. Soon after this the team member told the chaplain on the team what the housewife had said. The chaplain had studied Jeremiah a short time before the deployment and when he talked to the housewife, he was able to explain to her that if a shepherd leads a sheep away, he must answer to God for his action. The chaplain also explained that God's love for her had never faltered during the time she was away from church and that He still loved her and had not left her. Again, tears fill the housewife's eyes and she wept and stated that nobody had told her that God loved her. After Christmas the team received news that she had attended church.

The Mountain West VOAD Conference was held in Salt Lake City during April and the SLBA DR and UISBC DR volunteers prepared a meal for the conference attendees. One-hundred meals were served. Our kitchen and UISBC DR shower trailer were there and open for display.

During the summer SLBA DR volunteers were put on alert for disasters in Guam and Washington State but were eventually told to stand down. However, in August a large fire in Lahaina, Maui Island, Hawaii, burned over 2000 homes. In September UISBC sent a DR Team with a SLBA DR volunteer to help homeowners who lost their homes to do PPR (Personal Property Recover) which is looking for things such as jewelry, coins, watches or other memorabilia or keepsakes that might have survived the fire. In October an SLBA DR team was deployed for two weeks and in November two teams from UISBC and SLBA DR are being deployed again to Maui, and another is scheduled to deploy in December if enough volunteers sign up.

Almost everything is destroyed in these fires. Even paper in a fire safe is burned to ash. A \$100 dollar bill or a wedding license turns black and the words readable, but the moment it is touched it turns to dust. However, in disasters like this God is there.

This picture was taken after the first raindrop in a very light and short rain fell on Lahaina for the first time in more than two months after the fire. God showed His love.



## **Salt Lake Baptist Association Collegiate Ministry Report**

### **Discipleship and Equipping**

The spring semester begins the mission team season in Utah county with primarily college-age groups that come out to do mission engagement on the campuses. With that comes new prospects and seekers that funnel into our local churches. We are seeing a culture of discipleship and equipping happening in Utah county in particular. Young people are desiring mentorship more than ever. From this year's evangelism efforts we have seen dozens of new college students connect with local churches that are now being discipled and growing in their faith.

### **Evangelism and Outreach**

The spring and summer were crazy busy with mission teams to equip and pour into the areas of evangelism, missions contextualization, and prayer. All in all, Ben had the privilege of training over 300 short-term missionaries to engage in gospel conversations with locals in Utah. They took that training and engaged in well over 2000 gospel conversations over the summer, connecting a handful of people to local churches. We have seen 5 salvations happening at BYU and UVU as a direct result of evangelistic efforts.

Also, this fall there was a significant outreach event that took place at BYU.

### **How Do You Pray? Interfaith Panel at BYU**

BYU CrossSeekers in collaboration with the interfaith council hosted an interfaith panel discussing the topic "How Do You Pray?". The panel featured four religious leaders, a Catholic Priest, a Muslim Imam, a Jewish Rabbi, and a Christian Pastor. The pastor this year was David Gaskins of Mosaic Church. Throughout the discussion, he shared the gospel through the lenses of Jesus being the sole mediator that allows us access to God through prayer. There were over 800 attendees, who were mostly LDS, that heard the truth that evening. After the event, we had good conversations with several BYU students. David has even had several follow ups with LDS BYU students since then.

### **Salvation Story**

P and B are BYU students that are professing faith in Christ! They reached out to Mosaic Church via email. They had been listening to their sermons online for weeks. Both of them shared their stories of coming to faith in Christ through reading the Bible on their own. Then they began looking up local Christian churches and listening to sermons. In God's goodness, He made a way for them to be roommates. When they became roommates, neither one of them knew that the other one was ready to leave the LDS faith for Biblical Christianity. Such an incredible of the Lord to put them together! They are both starving for true Biblical Christian community and are getting plugged into the life of Mosaic. When asked how we could pray for them they replied, "Pray for us and our witness for Christ on campus." WOW! Praise the Lord!

### **Recruiting and Raising up Laborers**

Ben continued the summer partnership with the NAMB GenSend program that brought college students out to Utah for an 8-week life on mission experience. 17 students served in that capacity within the SLBA area. Partnerships with Texas BSM and Alabama BCM has produced 4 long-term missionaries that are engaging the UVU and BYU campuses on a regular basis.

**Salt Lake Baptist Association  
Haiti Partnership Report**

Baptist Mission Southeast Haiti continues to staff and support the Isaiah Children's Home. The Isaiah Children's Home supports 16 orphans providing for their physical needs and cost for education. Funds have been tight month to month, but God continues to provide. The political and economic situation in Haiti has gotten worse over the last year. The security risks for mission teams have increased due to mob violence. Continue to pray for Haiti and the mission of Baptist Mission Southeast Haiti. Pray also for the board. Matt Emadi has recently rotated off the board but continues to support the ministry and is looking for others who might be interested in serving on the board.

**Utah-Idaho SBC**  
**Rob Lee, Executive Director/Treasurer**

**Staff**

Jason McNair assists churches with Church Strengthening, VBS, groups, technology, and Church Revitalization. Gary McKean has handed over more legal consultant work to Brian Davis our new contract legal consultant, to devoting more time to our partnership with Northwest Region of the Georgia Baptist Mission Board. Russ Hohmann, contract State Disaster Relief Director; Mary McFarling, Coordinator of the Women's Missions and Ministries Network; Ben Neiser, Coordinator of the Collegiate Ministry Network. Debbie Chidester and Sally Teny have ensured that office work continues efficiently.

**Pastor and Wives Retreat**

July 18 – 20 was our first ReCharge Retreat for Pastors and Wives since before COVID. It was a three-way partnership (Guidestone, North American Mission Board, & UISBC) to put the retreat together at the New Park Resort in Park City. Mark Dance, Director of Pastor Wellness at Guidestone was the featured speaker. The theme was "Winning at home and the church." The focus was giving couples more retreat time with NAMB gifted each couple with gift cards to use for a date night the second evening of the retreat.

**Abuse Reform Implementation Committee**

ARIC started meeting via Zoom in May. We have met seven times to discuss how our state convention can respond to accusations, assist victims, state law requirements in both states, convention policy for response, and resources to assist churches and victims of abuse. ARIC reached out to two other state conventions on their response and training they are providing their churches. There are a lot of resources to assist victims and churches, reviewed how we will provide these to our churches to make them safe places of worship. Brian Davis and intern William Galkin have been extremely helpful.

**SEND Utah-Idaho and Church Planter Catalyst**

We have had five new church plants. Mike Palmer and Bobby Wood lead our Send Utah-Idaho Church Plant network allowing our assessed church planters to have access to NAMB resources regardless of the region of their plant. Michael Cooper serves all of Utah as our Church Plant Catalysts and Bobby Wood SEND Salt Lake Missionary assists in northern Utah. Richard Dugger serves all of Idaho as our Church Planter Catalysts and Clint Henry assists in Treasure Valley.

**Partnership**

Our partnership with Georgia Baptist's Northwest Region continues to host Vision tours from Northwest Georgia with a focus on northern Idaho. The thrust of the partnership is to link churches to churches. Many of our church plants host mission teams throughout the year with many coming in for spring break trips and the summer.

**Budget**

We ended the 2022 year below budget for first time the seven years by \$29,110.83 (-3.64%). This year 2023 has been impacted by the rate of inflation, cost of fuel and national SBC concerns. Since SBC in New Orleans we have had a dozen churches restart giving to the Cooperative Program.

**Sharing Christ**

The NAMB continues to assist with Evangelism grants to help our churches train in evangelism and to provide additional support for outreach events. The state mission offering continues to be a resource to assist in outreach events as well as church strengthening efforts. NAMB has developed a new Evangelism kit to assist churches in developing a culture of evangelism in their churches. This summer we heard reports of Vacation Bible School attendance going up. The Director has been sharing baptism pictures and video from our churches on Facebook this year as a focus on what the Lord is doing through our churches sharing Christ and discipling believers.

## **Salt Lake Baptist Association Executive Director's Report**

### **Greetings fellow saints and churches,**

This year's "report" is a bit unusual. You will see that it is not like a normal report of what has happened in the SLBA. You will see that it is lengthy but, I believe, biblically-based. I believe it is what an association of churches should be and practice. I have attempted to show the need for interdependence of churches as part of the larger body of the Church based on our position as those saved by the blood of Christ. I ask that you look at this report with Bible in hand and with a prayerful heart. I ask that you read this, do your own study on the subject matter and then come to conclusions about how you might or should interact with interdependence on sister churches of our association as well as other Bible-believing Christian churches.

My prayer is that we will be made completely one as churches bent on advancing God's kingdom, helping each other to be vibrant, healthy, Christ-honoring churches who love each other deeply.

In Christ with you by His blood,  
Ron Clement

### **Covenant Churches**

It's not so uncommon for settings such as National Conventions, State Conventions, Baptist Associations and varying networks and or church to church relationships to state, "We are better together than alone" or "We can do more together than we could do alone" or similar phrases that say we need to unite together in our gospel cause.

Although, I don't disagree with this I do feel this falls short of what we see in the Bible about how churches are interdependent with each other. I think, after rather thorough study of the Word of God that our relationship to one another goes deeper than just doing more and accomplishing more together. I see that the Bible shows clear evidence of churches being in a covenant relationship with one another based on the covenant relationship we attain solely through the blood of Christ. In a nutshell, the blood of Christ is what unites us together in mission and ministry. What Christ did on the cross and prayed for before His death is the undeniable glue that seals us together in partnership. Let's look at what the Bible says about our relationship as believers and relationships to other churches as true believers in Christ.

### **The Church Universal in Covenant Relationship**

First of all, we should all agree that there is such a thing as the total body of all believers of all time known as the Church. This is larger than any local churches and is inclusive of many denominations. Although the Bible makes multitudes of references to local churches, it also addresses the larger Church of all saved saints. Thus, all believers are members of the universal



church based on them being purchased by the blood of Christ. Thus, we are, first of all, members of the universal body of Christ and in reality, are members of that body before being a member of a local body.

However, let me quickly say that all members of the universal body of believers should also and expectedly be united with a local body of believers. That local body of believers will have the greater impact on your personal discipleship and will assist in finding the appropriate use of your spiritual gifting that has been given for the edification of the body, usually more in the local church although it can have a God-given purpose in addition to the local church to advance the kingdom of God further.

We have this picture of the members of the universal body of Christ in the book of Revelation chapters 5 and 7. Chapter 5:6-10 reads, *“Then I saw one like a slaughtered lamb standing in the midst of the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent into all the earth. He went and took the scroll out of the right hand of the one seated on the throne.*

*When he took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and golden bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song:*

*You are worthy to take the scroll  
and to open its seals,  
because you were slaughtered,  
and you purchased people  
for God by your blood  
from every tribe and language  
and people and nation.  
You made them a kingdom  
and priests to our God,  
and they will reign on the earth.”*

Note that these are people who are part of the universal church who were made a kingdom (singular) of priests. In heaven, we all are equal before God, seen as one, based on what Christ has done for us.

Furthermore, we see this further shown in Revelation chapter 7:9-17. It reads, *“After this I looked, and there was a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language, which no one could number, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice:*

*Salvation belongs to our God,  
who is seated on the throne,  
and to the Lamb!*

*All the angels stood around the throne, and along with the elders and the four living creatures they fell facedown before the throne and worshiped God, saying,*

*Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom  
and thanksgiving and honor  
and power and strength  
be to our God forever and ever. Amen.*

*Then one of the elders asked me, "Who are these people in white robes, and where did they come from?" I said to him, "Sir, you know." Then he told me: These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

*For this reason they are before the throne of God,  
and they serve him day and night in his temple.  
The one seated on the throne will shelter them:  
They will no longer hunger;  
they will no longer thirst;  
the sun will no longer strike them,  
nor will any scorching heat.  
For the Lamb who is at the center of the throne  
will shepherd them;  
he will guide them to springs of the waters of life,  
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

All believers are, through His blood, in a covenant relationship together with Him and thus, with one another. We, all, as those saved by the blood of the Lamb are given the right to be children of God.

Yes, it was for the local church that Christ gave his life but also it is the Church universal that He gave Himself for to make her (the total worldwide body of believers) holy (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Christ is the Head of His body that gathers in local churches but also is Head of His body known as the Church. His headship is not an either/or proposition but a both/and position of authority.

This larger Church is to be a witness to those rulers in heavenly realms of the multi-faceted wisdom of God (Ephesians 3:10). Of course, this is true for each local church, but the manifest wisdom of God, the greater beauty and glory to God is found in the fact that people from every tribe, tongue, and nation who had nothing to reconcile themselves with God are now redeemed and presented and gathered holy before God almighty as the bride of Christ. It is this Church universal as well as local expressions that bring glory to God in all generations (Ephesians 3:21).

My point is this. We are together in a covenant relationship not only individually in Christ, but to one another in the local church, and even further, in relationship as individuals to one

another and churches to one another. Churches are in a non-negotiable, forever sealed relationship to one another because of the blood of Christ that tore down dividing walls.

The importance of this fact to us should be grasped in Jesus' prayer to the Father that we (all believers) might be one as He and the Father are one and that we might be made completely one (John 17:20-23). "Made completely" is a perfect passive participle. This is an ever-present state of being one, staying one. Jesus prays that our oneness as believers and churches to churches might be a current and permanent reality.

Is it not true that Christ brings the divided and makes them one in Christ? The beauty of the church is that it brings those who once hated, once were threatened by others, once were jealous of one another now are made part of one body under His one Lordship.

This matter of unity is a huge factor in our witness to the world. *"That the world may know (present active subjunctive) you have sent me and have loved them as you have loved me"* (John 17:23).

This collaborative work of God that churches are in covenant relationship is seen in some of the apostle Paul's letters are to regions of churches and not to churches in a particular city. For instance, the letter to the Galatians was to a region containing churches found in cities of Lystra, Pisidian Antioch, and Derbe. Likewise, even in both letters to the church at Corinth Paul's greetings refer additionally to *"those sanctified as saints with all those in **every place** who call on the name of Jesus Christ—**both their Lord and ours**"* (1 Corinthians 1:1-2) and *"To the church of God at Corinth with all the saints who are **throughout Achaia**"* (2 Corinthians 1:1). This shows us that this letter to a church in a city was just as important to others, meaning other members of other churches not in that particular city. Achaia was the region in which Corinth existed but also included the cities of Delphi, Olympia, Cenchreae, Sparta, and Athens.

In the sight of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, they were constantly reminded that they all were together in covenant relationship as churches.

### **Characteristics of Covenant Churches**

So, what does such a covenant relationship look like? What are the characteristics of Covenant churches?

- 1. They allow doctrinal accountability.**

One example is with the Jerusalem council in Acts 15. The doctrinal question: Is it necessary for a believer to follow circumcision to be found right with God? Leaders from different areas contributed to the decision (Antioch initiates the need, sends leaders to Jerusalem). They collectively sought God's will and then churches across the region were brought up to speed on the decision and expected to follow the directives.

Interestingly, this wasn't just the mother church at work, but it was a shared process. Paul, from Tarsus, and somewhat an outsider, and others from Antioch are sent by the church at Antioch to meet together with the mother church and resolve this doctrinal turmoil that would destroy the redemptive work of Christ.

From here, they took this news to Phoenicia and Samaria. What? They even expected the "Samaritans" to accept this new directive (Acts 16:4).

Speaking of the Samaritans, in Acts 8 the church at Jerusalem sends Peter and John to Samaria to complete their salvation to insure they have received the Holy Spirit and not merely a baptism of repentance. And this was a catalyst for preaching the gospel in many Samaritan towns as Peter and John returned to Jerusalem (Acts 8:25).

Another example, Jerusalem sends Barnabas down to Antioch to verify the salvation of Gentiles (Acts 11:22). They wanted to ensure that their salvation was legitimate.

Paul tells Timothy that the church of the living God is the pillar and foundation of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). It is our duty to hold to truth and hold one another to truth.

We tend to do the same to challenge churches that move away from biblical beliefs. We tend to do this through such things as a Credentials Committee who looks at a church's theology to see that it aligns with our biblical convictions. We use the Baptist Faith and Message as our agreed upon statement of like faith and belief.

## **2. They allow a level of moral accountability to one another and to the Lord.**

A good instance of this is in the letters to the seven churches in the book of Revelation. Each of these churches were in cities, thus, we can agree that the letters were addressing believers in a city. However, the application moves from addressing the local church to a call to churches beyond that one city. Notice how virtually the mandate to each church ends with this mandate for other churches. The repeated mandate to other churches, *"Let anyone who had ears to hear listen to what the Spirit says to the churches."*

Another instance is to the letter addressed to the church in Thyatira. We see God's hand of discipline will come against this church strongly and the larger Church is drawn into the need to learn. Revelation 2:23 reads, *"I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am the one who examines the minds and hearts, and I will give to each of you according to your works."*

Can we not see this same level of accountability when God addresses His people in 2 Chronicles 7:14? There the Lord is calling His people to seek His face, turn from their wicked ways before the land could and would experience healing.

Could it be when churches refuse to unite that God withholds His hand of favor? Could it be when churches unite while allowing sin to reign without addressing it that God withholds His hand of favor?

Although we, as Southern Baptists, believe in the autonomy of the local church this should not be applied when we see a church or churches blatantly rejecting the biblical guidelines to living a life pleasing to God and feel we must ignore it.

If Christ died to present the church as a holy and radiant bride (Ephesians 5) then we should allow and/or take the initiative to lovingly confront and, if needed, break fellowship with a church allowing immorality to reign.

We see that letters to one church also had instructions and similar accountability in other churches. In Corinthians Paul writes,

*“This is why I have sent Timothy to you. He is my dearly loved and faithful child in the Lord. He will remind you about my ways in Christ Jesus, just as I teach everywhere in every church”* (1 Corinthians 4:17).

*And “Let each one lives his life in the situation the Lord assigned when God called him. This is what I command in all the churches”* (1 Corinthians 7:17).

*And, “If anyone wants to argue about this, we have no other custom, nor do the churches of God”* (1 Corinthians 11:16).

*Also “since God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints,”* (1 Corinthians 14:33).

### **3. They collaborate together in gospel proclamation and mission for the sake of the gospel.**

Why do they collaborate? Because of the vastness of the Great Commission. Acts 1:8 says “To the ends of the earth.” In addition, to the diversity of peoples. All Christians in every church are to have the mindset and commitment that the gospel should be taken to every place and every people.

All churches ought to have the mindset that every person within the Salt Lake region/Wasatch Front/Tooele Valley/ Summit County should have the opportunity to hear and respond to the good news of Jesus.

I remind you that the New Testament church and its apostles were focused on reaching entire cities and regions, and thus, entire cities and regions were impacted. Whether it was complaints that proclaiming believers were disrupting their cities (Acts 5:28, 16:20, 17:6) or joy because the cities were given the hope found in Christ (Acts 8:8) cities were impacted. The early church was focused on more than individual conversions. They were convinced that cities were better off when transformed by the precious blood of

Christ. This ought to be our aim as well that our churches need each other to see such a level of impact where we're seen as those who have turned the world upside down and filled our cities with our teaching about the good news of Jesus.

This being so, we must know the diverse demographics of our region. Such as that 50% plus of the West Valley City population is Hispanic/Latino. Or, that West Valley City has the greatest number of Vietnamese people in the valley. Or the numbers of Chinese who speak either Mandarin or Cantonese. Or the growing number of people from Malaysia or Burma or Ethiopians, Korean, Japanese, Ukrainians, Russians, and on and on.

As this is our reality, then how do we partner in the gospel to see these people hear and respond to the Good News? We can pray for laborers as Jesus tells us in Luke 10 and Matthew 9. However, we must also consider how to assist the believers in local ethnic congregations who already are in covenant relationship to Jesus and consider how we come alongside them in covenant relationship as local churches.

#### **How do we see such collaboration in the New Testament?**

In the dispersion through persecution in Acts 8 we see the church forced from their comfort and home church to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. "Saul agreed with putting him to death. On that day a severe persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered ***throughout the land of Judea and Samaria***" (Acts 8:1). It is without a doubt, God pushed them into greater expansion and compassion as gospel messengers.

Churches should also partner in sending out top-class missionaries. The church at Antioch sends our Barnabas and Paul (Acts 13:1). It is amazing to look at the extent of this selfless action in order to spread the gospel.

They went to Seleucia, Cyprus, Salamis, traveled the whole island as far as Paphos, to Perga in Pamphylia, to Pisidian Antioch where almost the whole town came to hear the gospel (Acts 13:44) and turned more to preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. The effect: The word of the Lord spread through the whole region. (Acts 13:49). From there they went to Iconium (Acts 13:51) where a great number of Jews and Greeks believed (Acts 14:1).

Persecution moved them to the Lycaonian towns of Lystra and Derbe and the surrounding countryside (Acts 14:6). Then they went back to Derbe after being stoned (Acts 14:19-20). In Derbe they preached the gospel and saw a great number become disciples (Acts 14:21). They then went back to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch to strengthen them and appoint elders (Acts 14:22-23).

Then they went through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia and on to Perga and Attalia and back to Antioch "*where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work they*

*had now completed"* (Acts 14:27). At Antioch, they gathered the church together and shared with the church all that God had done and they stayed there a considerable time with the disciples. Impacting whole region with the gospel (Acts 13:48-49).

In Acts 20:1-6; 21:14-19 men from other cities joined in; men from other churches came with Paul's team to report of God's work among the Gentiles. Team members were from Macedonia (Berea and Thessalonica) Galatia (Derbe), and Asia. They, many from regions throughout the New Testament world, assembled on Sunday to break bread and that's where Eutychus fell out of the window (Acts 20:7-12).

We see Paul speaking openly about how he is working in Macedonia but hopes the Corinthians from Achaia will help him to do his work in Judea. 2 Corinthians 1:15-16 reads, *"Because of this confidence, I planned to come to you first, so that you could have a second benefit, and to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and then come to you again from Macedonia and be helped by you on my journey to Judea."*

Paul asks the Romans to give his greetings to Priscilla and Aquila who risked their lives for Paul's commitment to spread the gospel. Thus, Paul says he thanks them for that *"but so do all the Gentile churches"* (Romans 16:3-4). Churches had a mutual love and appreciation for any and all who were faithful and sacrificial in spreading the gospel.

3 John 5-8 encourages believers to continue to act faithfully toward brothers and sisters. He adds, *"you do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God, since they set out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from pagans. Therefore, we ought to support such people so that we can be coworkers with the truth."* John tells us that when we support people, which can include missionaries, pastors, church planters, and other churches, we are coworkers with the truth. We advance the truth and the gospel by such support.

#### **4. They serve as examples to other churches of faithful living based on hope.**

Such was the case with the church in Thessalonica. The Bible says in 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10, *"We always thank God for all of you, making mention of you constantly in our prayers. We recall, in the presence of our God and Father, your work produced by faith, your labor motivated by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, in the Holy Spirit, and with full assurance. You know how we lived among you for your benefit, and you yourselves became imitators of us and of the Lord when, in spite of severe persecution, you welcomed the message with joy from the Holy Spirit. As a result, you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. For the word of the Lord rang out from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place that your faith in God has gone out. Therefore, we don't need to say anything, for they themselves report what kind of reception we had from you: how you turned to God from idols to serve the living*

*and true God and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead— Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.”*

*“We ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, since your faith is flourishing and the love each one of you has for one another is increasing. Therefore, we ourselves **boast about you among God’s churches**—about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and afflictions that you are enduring” (2 Thessalonians 1:3-4).*

Churches need churches who model total surrender to God in difficult and dangerous circumstances. We live in a region where a false gospel is prevalent and evangelism is, perhaps, as difficult as any place in the United States. Churches who covenant together stand alongside one another cheering each other to stand firm in the faith and keep acting and living in faith.

##### **5. They have a mutual love and concern for one another.**

One particular way this is shown in the **common greetings** expressed to fellow churches existing in different cities throughout the New Testament world. Here are a few examples:

*“Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ send you greetings” (Romans 16:16).*

*1 Corinthians 16:19-20, “The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla send you greetings warmly in the Lord, along with the church that meets in their home (in Ephesus). All the brothers and sisters send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.”*

Peter writes to six regions of churches and challenges them to love brothers and sisters in Christ. The Word of God says, *“To those chosen, living as exiles, dispersed abroad in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, chosen....sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:1-2).* To these he writes *“since you have purified yourselves by obedience to the truth, so that you show sincere brotherly love for each other, from a pure heart love one another constantly, because you have been born again” (1 Peter 1:22-23).*

*“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his possession, so that you may proclaim praises of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy” (1 Peter 2:9-10).*

He follows this up with many instructions about holy living and reiterates this, *“honor everyone. Love the brothers and sisters. Fear God” (1 Peter 2:17).*



Churches were affirmed for the ever-increasing love they had among themselves and extended toward others outside their particular church. Paul affirms the Thessalonians and boasts about them to other churches. He uses their faithfulness and love as encouragement to other churches to do the same. He writes, *“We ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, since your faith is flourishing and the love each one of you has for one another is increasing. Therefore, we ourselves boast **about you among God’s churches**—about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and afflictions that you are enduring”* (2 Thessalonians 1:3-4).

They displayed generosity through **sharing their economic burdens. What was the need.** Jerusalem was under a severe famine. Many believers had been cut off from means of financial income. Paul was challenged and inspired to take on this cause. He made it his mission to encourage churches throughout the New Testament world to give generously to fellow believers. Acts 11 explains what started this concern. When some prophets from Jerusalem came to Antioch and told them of the Spirit of God forewarning of a severe famine throughout the Roman world the disciples determined to help meet the need by collecting funds. (Acts 11:27-30).

The churches of Macedonia which would include churches in Thessalonica, Berea, Apollonia, Amphipolis, and Philippi gave as they were able, gave generously out of their poverty, and even begged for the opportunity to participate in this offering that they saw was an act of God’s grace to them.

This is how Paul expresses this opportunity to give even out of extreme poverty. *“We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about **the grace of God that was given** to the churches of Macedonia: During a severe trial brought about by affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. I can testify that, according to their ability and even beyond their ability, of their own accord, they begged us earnestly **for the privilege of sharing** in the ministry to the saints, and not just as we had hoped. Instead, they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us by God’s will. So, we urged Titus that just as he had begun, so he should also complete among you this act of grace”* (2 Corinthians 8:1-6).

These churches saw contribution to the need as not only being a gift from God but also that it was an expression of *koinonia*. The word “sharing” in verse 4 is a form of the word *koinonia* and indicates churches that were in deep relationship with each other and partners due to the blood of Christ.

This sacrificial example of the Macedonian churches was an example to the church at Corinth from the region of Achaia. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 8:23-24, *“As for Titus, he is my partner and coworker for you; as for our brothers, they are the messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ. Therefore, **show them proof before the churches of your love and of our boasting about you.**”*

This church at Corinth was also affirmed by Paul as an example back to the Macedonians and challenged them to carry out what Paul had said about their eagerness and readiness to share. 2 Corinthians 9:1-5 tells of this. It says, *“Now concerning the ministry to the saints, it is unnecessary for me to write to you. For I know your eagerness, and I boast about you to the Macedonians, ‘Achaia has been ready since last year,’ and your zeal has stirred up most of them. But I am sending the brothers so that our boasting about you in this matter would not prove empty, and so that you would be ready just as I said. Otherwise, if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we, not to mention you, would be put to shame in that situation. Therefore, I considered it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance the generous gift you promised, so that it will be ready as a gift and not as an extortion.”*

Paul refers to this compassionate giving of the Macedonians and Achaia to the church at Rome. Romans 15:25-29 says, *“Right now I am traveling to Jerusalem to serve the saints, because Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. Yes, they were pleased, and indeed are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual benefits, then they are obligated to minister to them in material needs. So, when I have finished this and safely delivered the funds to them, I will visit you on the way to Spain. I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.”*

And then in 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 we have a picture of the Galatian churches also engaging in giving to the need. *“Now about the collection for the saints: Do the same as I instructed the Galatian churches. On the first day of the week, each of you is to set something aside and save in keeping with how he is prospering, so that no collections will need to be made when I come. When I arrive, I will send with letters those you recommend to carry your gift to Jerusalem. If it is suitable for me to go as well, they will travel with me.”*

Galatian churches (Lystra and Derbe) were encouraged to contribute to the famine need in Jerusalem. But also, the church at Corinth (in the region of Achaia which would include Athens) were being told to give also as the Galatian churches were to give to Jerusalem.

**It shouldn't be missed that new churches, Gentile churches, were meeting the needs of the most established church. It shouldn't be missed that regions of churches were joining together in this privileged ministry opportunity to bring relief to fellow believers far away from home.**

**6. They engage in intercession for and with one another.**

Paul asks the church at Rome (Romans 15:30-32) to pray for His work in Judea. *“Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in prayers to God on my behalf. Pray that I may be*

*rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, that my ministry to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, and that, by God's will, I may come to you with joy and be refreshed together with you."*

This was a huge distance from Rome to Jerusalem. Yet he is asking them to invest their prayers in what was taking place in Jerusalem.

**7. They have a concern about the health and faithfulness of sister churches.**

Barnabas, a key leader and encourager was sent by the Jerusalem church to confirm conversions also put much emphasis on them *"to remain true to the Lord with a firm resolve of heart"* (Acts 11:24). Barnabas then traveled to Tarsus and fetched Saul to return with him to Antioch, and the two of them *"met with the church and taught large numbers"* for a year.

*Acts 14:21-28 says, "After they had preached the gospel in that town and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch, strengthening the disciples by encouraging them to continue in the faith and by telling them, 'It is necessary to go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.' When they had appointed elders for them in every church and prayed with fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. They passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. After they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. From there they sailed back to Antioch where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work they had now completed. After they arrived and gathered the church together, they reported everything God had done with them and that he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. And they spent a considerable time with the disciples."*

He traveled through Syria and Cilicia, *strengthening the churches* (Acts 15:41). So the *churches were strengthened* in the faith and grew daily in numbers (Acts 16:5).

Barnabas was sent by the Jerusalem church to see about the Gentiles in Antioch coming to faith and he encouraged these new believers to remain true to the Lord with devoted hearts. Barnabas went to bring Saul (Paul) back with him to Antioch and they met with the church for a whole year, taught them in the faith. Their heart was to help them be solid and faithful. They spend some time in Phrygia and Galatia strengthening the disciples (Acts 18:23).

**8. They rejoice in what God is doing elsewhere.**

Peter shares what God had done among the Gentiles, and they glorify God and rejoice that *"God has given repentance resulting in life even to the Gentiles"* (Acts 11:18).

It is implied in Acts 14 when Paul and Barnabas are share about *"everything God had done with them and that he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles"* that there was great rejoicing that took place (Acts 14:27-28).

## Biblical Guidance for Covenant Churches

1. Churches belong to each other based on the shed blood of Christ on the cross.
2. Your church is autonomous and independent but also is shown the expectation and need for interdependence in the Scriptural text.
3. There is a level of mutual accountability in doctrine and Christ-honoring living.
4. Unity and love for one another is not a choice. Jesus prayed for complete unity as our state of being. Jesus and the letters to the churches frequently mandate us to love one another as Christ has loved us. These churches knew about each other and knew each other on a more personal level.
5. Partnerships in the Bible have little to do with what one gets out of a partnership. These partnerships are ones seen as the grace of God for the opportunity to participate, are often driven first by commitment to God and then to fellow churches, are about blessing another by believing it is more blessed to give than to receive.
6. Partnerships in the Bible are not half-hearted. When any church is half-hearted when they had promised partnership, they are challenged to step up and demonstrate their commitment and love to other churches.
7. The early churches had a commitment to take the gospel to all nations and to see the transformation of cities. This meant they needed each other. They shared personnel, they gave training, they prayed for gospel advance, they sent out the best of the best as missionaries, and they helped fund gospel advance and church planting.
8. Some churches set the pace as an example to other churches and their influence spread far and wide. We see some New Testament churches were champion covenant churches like the churches of Macedonia, the church at Thessalonica, Antioch, and Jerusalem. Yet, none of these were perfect but they were surrendered to the greater cause of God's kingdom through collaboration.
9. Churches are not in competition with each other. They pray for success and the expansion of God's kingdom. They are not jealous; they are not threatened by loss of members to one another. Their focus is on the glory of God and that His name would be famous in all the world. Thus, they rejoice in the progress of the gospel to the ends of the earth.
10. Churches are engaged in contributing to the health of churches. Repeatedly, in scripture, we see churches sending leaders who would strengthen churches in disciple making, in leadership needs, in resources needed. They would send leaders to be part of planting and strengthening teams where churches were needed, and churches had been planted. They followed the mandate of the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations even when that meant helping a sister church to do so.

My prayer, hope, and reasoning for sharing this biblical lesson? May we be one, be covenant churches who are in partnership not for what it does for us but how it honors the purpose of Christ shed blood, advances the kingdom of God, and blesses sister churches known as the Salt Lake Baptist Association, and extends to Bible-believing true believers throughout our region and the world. May our collaborative faith ring out to the world!