



MARSHALL BAPTIST NEWS

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HEART OF THE ASSOCIATION IS COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION

We Are Truly Better Together

While our culture prizes independence and self-sufficiency, the church must remember a countercultural truth: we are better together. I would go even further—we are at our best when we cooperate and collaborate. Scripture consistently points God’s people toward shared mission, shared burdens, and shared strength.

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 reminds us that “two are better than one... a cord of three strands is not quickly broken.” The early church modeled this reality in Acts 2:42–47 as believers devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, prayer, and generosity—together. Paul reinforces the same picture in 1 Corinthians 12, describing the church as one body with many parts, each necessary and interconnected. These passages clearly demonstrate the value of being part of our Marshall Baptist Family of Churches.

How Can We Live This Out in Our Churches?

First, we must never settle for doing ministry alone. There’s a story about a group of Native American children who attended school for the first time. During a test, they began helping one another and sharing answers. The teacher quickly reprimanded them, saying, “This is individual work.” The children replied, “It doesn’t matter what one of us can do alone; it only matters what we can do together.” That approach may not work in a classroom, but it beautifully captures a biblical truth about the church. God did not design pastors or congregations to carry the weight of ministry by themselves. We need one another—for encouragement, wisdom, prayer, and shared strength—especially in seasons of challenge.

Second, associations are not bureaucracy; they are relationships. Some churches mistakenly believe the association exists to tell them what to do. That simply isn’t true. Baptist churches are autonomous by nature. As an Associational Mission Strategist, I have no authority over any church. I issue no mandates. Instead, I offer assistance, coaching, resources, and perspective—and every bit of that can be accepted or ignored.

But what if churches opened themselves to encouragement, coaching, and collaboration—not out of obligation, but out of a shared desire to reach people and

make disciples? What if we went further together than we ever could alone, not for recognition, but for the glory of God?

Third, collaboration multiplies impact—it does not create control. Working together does not diminish a church’s identity or autonomy; it amplifies effectiveness. When churches collaborate, resources go further, leaders grow stronger, and the gospel expands beyond what any single church could accomplish alone.

So What Can We Do About It?

• **Pray for our churches by name.** Consider highlighting a “church of the week” during worship and praying specifically for that congregation and pastor. It builds unity and reminds us we are family.

• **Participate in associational gatherings and training.** We are committed to offering opportunities that add real value—Third Thursday Ministers Conferences, Pastor Huddles, leadership cohorts, training events, and practical resources designed to strengthen churches. Ignoring these opportunities is like receiving a gift that never gets unwrapped.

• **Share needs before a crisis hits.** Just as people prepare before a storm arrives, we want to walk with churches before challenges become emergencies. Whether it’s declining attendance, leadership fatigue, aging systems, unresolved conflict, or the threat of division, the Marshall Baptist Association is honored to come alongside you early.

Closing Challenge

The church has the opportunity to model something better. Let’s choose connection over competition, partnership over pride, and faithfully walk together—reaching people, making disciples, and expanding the Kingdom of God.

For the Glory of God and the Good of His Church,

Dr. Eric Taylor, AMS
Marshall Baptist Association

ANNOUNCEMENTS



MINISTERS LUNCHEON

Mark your calendars on the **THIRD THURSDAY** of EVERY MONTH for **Pastor Leadership Luncheons!** This is a time of prayer, worship, equipping and encouragement from high capacity leaders... **FOR THIS MONTH ONLY** (February), we’re hosting the luncheon event on the **Third TUESDAY, Feb. 17**, at Local Joe’s in Albertville! To learn more, please email eric@marshallba.com.

DISASTER RELIEF TRAINING FEB. 19-21 IN ARAB

Would you like to get involved with Disaster Relief but don’t know where to start? Look no further! Sponsored by the Marshall Baptist Association, there will be a Disaster Relief Training hosted by Gilliam Springs Baptist Church on Feb. 19-21, 2026. Areas of training will include Administration, Chaplaincy, Chainsaw, Clean-up and Recovery, Mass Feeding, and Showers and Laundry. The church is located at 1351 N. Brindlee Mountain Pkwy. in Arab. To learn more, log onto sldr.org

SCHEDULE YOUR 2026 EVENTS AT MBRC

As spring and summer nears, make plans for your church to enjoy a picnic or camping retreat at the Marshall Baptist Retreat Center. Learn more online at: www.marshallbaptistretreat.com

Check out our MBA website for more information on upcoming events and opportunities, as well as open church positions!
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