



## 137th Annual Meeting

April 5, 2025

First Baptist Church, Dickson

### Executive Director's Report

**"BECAUSE WE LOVED YOU SO MUCH,  
WE WERE DELIGHTED TO SHARE  
WITH YOU NOT ONLY THE GOSPEL OF  
GOD BUT OUR LIVES AS WELL."  
*1 THESSALONIANS 2:8***

Dear Friends:

Tennessee WMU encourages and equips Tennessee Baptists to engage in missions discipleship and involvement, which enables them to fulfill the Great Commission. This report highlights the vibrant state events, impactful ministries, and inspiring initiatives from this past year - each a reflection of lives touched and transformed through missions discipleship and faithful service.

It fills me with joy and deep gratitude to witness the difference you're making - through missions discipleship groups, churchwide missions efforts, mission trips, ministry projects, events, and more. Each act of service helps lead others to Jesus and inspires a life lived on mission.

Let's continue, with joyful hearts, to teach, learn, pray, give, do and tell - all for His glory!

Vickie Anderson, Tennessee WMU Executive Director-Treasurer



# 2024 Events

## MISSIONS GET-TOGETHER

The 2024 Missions Get-Together was held at Brentwood Baptist Church on April 11-13, with a total attendance of 548 people representing over 125 churches. The event featured four general sessions, six breakout session times with over 20 choices, and missions & ministry displays with over 30 exhibitors. Participants donated over 27,000 items, \$473 in cash and \$2,025 in gift cards for Baptist Collegiate Ministries across the state through the event's ministry project. An additional \$14,727 was given through the event's missions offering, benefiting the GOTM (90%) and the TN WMU Missions for Life Fund (10%).



## TENNESSEE WMU ANNUAL MEETING

The 2024 TN WMU Annual Meeting occurred on April 12 during the Friday morning general session of Missions Get-Together. The meeting included highlights of the work of TN WMU and the election of 2024-2025 state officers and new Executive Board Members.

- **State Officers:** President, Ramona Hicks; Recording Secretary, Linda Rader; Vice President East, Anna Huggins; Vice President Middle, Kim Griffin; Vice President West, Sandy Loudon
- **Executive Board Members:** Jenice Pearson, Cathy Huggins, Heather McAfee



## OFF THE GRID WOMEN'S HIKING TRIP

In an effort to attract some new leaders and to build unity with WMU and women's ministry leaders in an informal, organic setting, we partnered with Carson Springs Conference Center to plan two retreat-style hiking trips. The May 17-18 trip was a great weekend with six participants including a missionary from Laos. We hiked, shared God stories, had a devotional, prayed for the missionary, played games, and had S'mores around the fire. The October 4-5 trip was canceled due to flooding in Newport and no water at Carson Springs.



## PROJECT HELP: MENTAL HEALTH

Tennessee WMU offered regional Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) as part of our Project HELP: Mental Health critical issue. Each MHFA training has a minimum of five and a maximum of 30 spots available. The Tennessee Department of Health provided instructors through community partners who have been trained to lead youth and adult MHFA.

### Youth MHFA

April 6 at Wallace Baptist Church in Knoxville - 12 participated

August 24 at Brook Hollow Baptist Church in Nashville - 8 participated

### Adult MHFA

July 20 at The Church at Sugar Creek in Humboldt - 18 participated

August 10 at Knox County Association of Baptists office in Knoxville - 8 participated

September 22 at TBMB Church Support Center in Franklin - 12 participated

Tennessee WMU assisted Hamilton Co Association Sisters Who Care and Nolachucky Association WMU in providing a Mental Health & the Church Conference that featured general sessions, breakout conference, and a resource fair. Each event had over 100 in attendance.



## CONNECTION



The 2024 Connection was held in Cookeville at TN Tech University BCM on September 13-15 and had 132 youth girls and leaders representing 15 churches in attendance. The girls and leaders experienced Bible study led by Leslie Hudson, a Latvia experience led by missionary Angela Stoda, worship, breakout sessions, games, food, laughter and friendship.

## RA CAMP-O-REE

RA Camp-O-Ree took place on October 18-20, 2024, at Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center with over 400 boys, leaders and personnel in attendance. Boys participated in a multitude of activities, challenges, and crafts while enjoying the great outdoors, meeting missionaries and enjoying two action packed worship services. Bible drill, prayer walking, a mission hall with missionaries and ministry representatives, campcraft competition, and RA Racecars are just a few of the exciting things that happen.



## WMU GATHERING AT SUMMIT

Over 60 people attended the WMU Gathering at Summit on Sunday, November 10, at Northside Baptist Church, Murfreesboro. Tennessee WMU, Concord Baptist Association WMU, and Northside Baptist hosted this time of fellowship and inspiration. This was our second year of the WMU Gathering at Summit, and plans are to do it again during the 2025 Summit in Jackson.



## CHRISTIAN JOB CORPS

Christian Job Corps (CJC) is a ministry of WMU that seeks to help men and women break the cycle of poverty through job and life skill classes, Bible study and mentoring. There are 15 Tennessee CJC sites in 13 locations. In their 2024 annual ministry reports, these sites reported 849 participants in their various programs, 115 graduates, seven decisions for Christ and 402 volunteers serving 14,901 volunteer hours.

Tennessee CJC Sites	Serving	Location	Site Coordinator
Begin Anew - Madison, CJC	Men & Women	Madison	Andrea Waters
Begin Anew - Nashville, CWJC	Women	Nashville	Tonya LaDeau
Begin Anew - Franklin, CJC	Men & Women	Franklin	Landon Stratton
Begin Anew - Woodbine, CJC	Men & Women	Woodbine	Christopher Hodgen
Begin Anew - Online, CJC	Men & Women	Online	Shane Hitchcock
Champion Recovery Community, CWJC	Women	Jasper	Alyson Riley
Down Home Missions, CWJC/CMJC	Men & Women	Beech Grove	Buck & Annie Barton
Gibson County CWJC	Women	Trenton	Christy Skelton
Greater KY Lake, CWJC/CMJC	Men & Women	Paris	Kenny & Sandy Loudon
Empowered to Hope, CWJC	Women	Collierville	Julia Binford
Moving Forward with CWJC	Women	Chattanooga	Beth Ray
SWC Transformation Place, CWJC	Women	Chattanooga	Cynthia Brown
WEBS CWJC	Women	Memphis	Pat Culp



# MISSIONARY CARE

Tennessee WMU missionary care ministries are supported through funds from the Missions for Life Fund & the Golden Offering for Tennessee Missions.

- **MK Re-Entry Retreat:** Seven missionary kids from Tennessee received travel assistance funds to attend the MK Re-Entry Retreat, hosted by Missouri WMU and the IMB, from August 6-10, 2024
- **Missionary Parents Fellowship:** On September 28, 2024, 13 parents of International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries gathered via Zoom for a time of fellowship, information, prayer and encouragement. TN WMU supports the Tennessee MPF by maintaining its database, distributing communication/promotion materials, and helping to coordinate and host the annual state retreat. The 2024 retreat was canceled due to flooding across Tennessee and switched to a Zoom meeting.
- **Former Missionary Fellowships:** Former missionaries in west, middle, and east TN gather several times throughout the year for fellowship, connection and encouragement. Tennessee WMU provides funds for meals during these gatherings.
- **Christmas Gifts:** In December 2024, Tennessee WMU sent Christmas gifts to missionary kids and retired missionaries. A \$150 gift was sent to 13 missionary kids whose parents serve with IMB and are from Tennessee. A \$50 gift was sent to 69 retired IMB missionaries who were born in Tennessee.
- **Missionary Homes in Mt. Juliet:** The Tennessee Baptist Mission Board has two missionary homes in Mt. Juliet that continue to provide much-needed rest for missionaries on stateside assignment: the Tennessee WMU Missionary House (Mary's House) and the Missions Mobilization Center (MMC) Missions House. Tennessee WMU takes care of reservations and hosts the missionary families for both houses. Donated gift cards are used to stock pantry staples and other household items.
- **Encourage Collegiate MKs:** Each year Tennessee WMU assigns a Missionary Kid attending college in Tennessee to every association so churches can encourage them. Thirteen MKs were assigned to associations for the 2024-2025 school year.

## DENVER PRAYER ADVOCACY PARTNERSHIP

Tennessee WMU sent a mission team of six women to Denver from October 3-7, 2024, as part of the prayer advocacy partnership with Denver. The team met with nine church planters and NAMB/Send Relief personnel and prayed for them, their ministry and family, and the community around the church. TN WMU has sent ten teams to serve in Denver in the past eight years, meeting with over 30 church planters to pray and serve their communities.



## Additional Areas of Emphasis

### THE LINK

The Tennessee WMU e-newsletter, *The LINK*, is emailed to church and association WMU/missions leaders at the beginning of every month.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

TN WMU awarded \$38,000 in scholarships to 37 students attending graduate school, seminary, and undergraduate schools in Tennessee for the 2024-2025 school year. These scholarships are funded through endowments, invested funds, and the GOTM.

### YOUTH VENTURE TEAM

Six high school students were chosen to serve on the 2024-2025 Tennessee Youth Venture Team: Karalyn Sieber from New Vision in Murfreesboro, Isaiah Tuckey and Joshua Roberts from The Church at Sterchi Hills in Knoxville, and three students from Primera Iglesia Bautista in Nashville - Gabriel Solano, Adrian Solano and Jesse Castellanos. The students participated in a team retreat and bi-monthly virtual meetings for discipleship, mentoring and missional study.





# TO THE RESCUE MISSIONS EVENT KIT

Tennessee WMU produced the *Kids Missions eXperience (KMX): To the Rescue*, a free, downloadable missions event kit for children in grades 1-6 with plans, ideas, tips and instructions to help churches host a missions event for the children in their church or community. The event kit included a Bible lesson, missions lesson highlighting Disaster Relief ministries, and suggestions for crafts, games and mission projects.



## TENNESSEE MISSIONS EMPHASIS

The Week of Prayer for State Missions and the Golden Offering for Tennessee Missions exist to call Tennessee Baptists to focus on making Christ known among the residents and visitors to Tennessee and responding to ministry needs and opportunities through prayer, personal involvement and financial support. Tennessee Baptists have heard the message that any way you slice it, Tennessee is a mission field, and they continue to give generously through the Golden Offering.

The Golden Offering is a cooperative effort of Tennessee WMU and Tennessee Baptist Mission Board. The Week of Prayer for State Missions and promotion for the Golden Offering for Tennessee Missions are coordinated by Tennessee WMU.

- 2023-24 Golden Offering (collected September 1, 2023-August 31, 2024)
  - \$2,451,737.21 was given by 1,203 TBC churches/donors, the highest amount ever given in the offering's history. An additional \$676,481.82 was given in designated gifts to Golden Opportunity Projects, making the grand total received \$3,128,219.03.
- 2024-25 Golden Offering (collected September 1, 2024-August 31, 2025)
  - The offering goal is \$2,700,000, with an additional goal of \$300,000 for Golden Opportunity Projects making the Challenge Goal \$3 million.
  - 1,290 churches ordered promotion materials for the September Tennessee Missions Emphasis.
  - GOTM promotional materials included eight videos, digital graphics and print files - Planning & Promotion Guide, Highlights & Talking Points, Any Way You Slice It, Tennessee Is A Mission Field flyers, One Annual Church Missions Offering, and Worship Tools - reading, skit, monologue.



# *A Lasting Legacy*

## WITH THANKS & REMEMBRANCE

### CAROL PHARRIS

Former Tennessee WMU president (1987-1992) passed away on, January 30, 2025, on her 83rd birthday. Carol will be remembered for her walk with the Lord, her devotion to family, her cherished friendships, and her heart for missions and ministry. It is difficult to grasp the impact that her well-lived life has left. Carol's lifelong involvement in WMU began at First Baptist Covington in Girls Auxiliary. She served in WMU in every church she and her pastor husband, Don, served. She was an associational WMU leader in four different associations and held various state and national WMU roles. During Carol's tenure as state president, she helped to lead the WMU Centennial Celebration in 1988, appointed Doris June Large to lead in fundraising for the WMU Second Century Fund, represented Tennessee WMU at a national meeting in Venezuela, and led numerous conferences to train other missions leaders. Carol served on the first TN WMU Endowment Promotion Team and was serving on the team again when she passed away. Carol spoke often about following "God's nudges," encouraging everyone when they felt prompted to do something or sensed a need to be met, to follow the nudge from God and do it.



### JOY PHILLIPS FENNER

Former Interim Executive Director of Tennessee WMU (2001-2003) passed away on November 29, 2024. Joy also served as Executive Director-Treasurer for WMU of Texas (1981-2000) and President of WMU of TX (2009-2010). She and her husband, Charlie, served as missionaries to Japan before leading WMU of TX, and then moved to Tennessee temporarily to lead TN WMU during a time of transition. During Joy's tenure relationships were strengthened and financial matters were secured. Endowments were initiated and promoted due to her strong influence. The staff was reorganized and the state office was redecorated.



### CREELY WILSON

Tennessee WMU's first state coordinator for Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC), passed away on July 18, 2024. Creely had a passion for women and meeting the needs of women through CWJC. She attended site coordinator training, found a location for the first Tennessee site in Nashville (now called Begin Anew), met with local and state government leaders, found teachers and volunteers, led Bible Study, mentored, developed a computer lab, promoted CWJC across Tennessee, and taught others to have a CWJC site. What began as one site in Tennessee for women in 1997 today has grown to 15 Christian Job Corps sites in 13 locations, providing a Christian environment in which women and men are equipped and encouraged for new life in Jesus and where they gain job and life skills to enhance their lives and the lives of their families.





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