

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Virginia



The First 25 Years
1992 – 2017

History of the First Twenty-Five Years of Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Virginia

Formation of CBF

Following a decade of frustrating denominational politics in the Southern Baptist Convention, a gathering of moderate Baptists in Atlanta, Georgia, led to the formation of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) in 1991. Seeking to uphold historic Baptist values and freedoms, this purpose statement was approved:

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is a fellowship of Baptist Christians and churches who share a passion for the Great Commission of Jesus Christ and a commitment to Baptist principles of faith and practice. Our mission is to serve Christians and churches as they discover and fulfill their God-given mission.

CBFVA – The Early Years

We tell the story of CBFVA's early years from the perspective of Eddie Freeman, pastor at Monument Heights Baptist Church in Richmond and Broadus Memorial Baptist Church in Charlottesville and Moderator of CBFVA from 1994-1995. Eddie thought it important to capture the first three years of CBFVA's story. Here are his words.

May 10, 1991

During the first General Assembly of CBF, meeting in Atlanta, the Virginia participants in open forum elected the first members of the national CBF Coordinating Council from Virginia. Robert Rainwater was subsequently chosen by the Virginia Council members as their spokesperson.

May 1, 1992

At the second General Assembly meeting in Fort Worth, a Virginia CBF organization was authorized by vote of the Virginia participants in the state caucus meeting. In order to keep the structure simple, the Virginia participants elected the six national council members from Virginia to serve concurrently as the first organizing committee for Virginia CBF. They were Mike Allen, Edna Frances Dawkins, Pam Gordon, Frank Mancuso, Robert Rainwater, and Jim Slatton. They subsequently elected Mike Allen as chairman and spokesperson.

November 10, 1992

Following the Tuesday evening session of the BGAV, Virginia CBF supporters met at First Baptist, Virginia Beach, for a rally. Cecil Sherman spoke on behalf of the national CBF body. On a motion by Robert Rainwater, Mike Allen was elected first Moderator of Virginia CBF. An offering was taken to fund the beginning of a newsletter.

May 14, 1993

The CBF of Virginia met in conjunction with the national CBF meeting in Birmingham. Moderator Mike Allen announced the appointment of Mark Olson to chair the Program Committee for the first Virginia CBF General Assembly to be held in early 1994.

November 9, 1993

Virginia CBF held a rally at the Marriott Hotel in Richmond following the Tuesday evening session of the BGAV, with Mike Allen presiding. David Wilkinson spoke, representing the national CBF staff. On the recommendation of Robert Rainwater, chairman of the Nominating Committee, the body elected the following officers for Virginia CBF: Eddie Freeman, moderator; Edna Frances Dawkins, secretary; Elmer West, treasurer; Barbara Jackson, newsletter editor. Mike Allen announced the appointment of Michael Catlett to chair a committee to draft a proposed constitution for Virginia CBF.

February 25-26, 1994

The first General Assembly of Virginia CBF was held at Second Baptist Church, Richmond, with 459 registered participants. Keith Parks and Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler represented the national CBF organization. In the business sessions, the body adopted a constitution and elected Tom Moak to the position of treasurer.

May 6, 1994

More than 500 Virginia participants in the Greensboro CBF General Assembly participated in the state meeting. The officers requested and received approval for a three-stage process of implementation of the new Virginia CBF constitution. Terms of service for officers were set to expire at the General Assembly meeting each spring. Minor amendments to the constitution were made. The first five at-large members of the state Coordinating Council were elected. They are Jim Baucom, Jr., Sharon James, Jan Levy, Mary Pentecost, and Troy Petty. Bill Slater was elected to the national Coordinating Council. Jackie Haney was elected Virginia CBF Moderator-Elect. The body voted to assist national Coordinating Council members with expenses incurred in attending the meetings.

It has only been three years, but much has transpired. Interest is high. Participation by laity and ministers is encouraging. Churches are dealing with tough decisions about doing missions with integrity. There is a lot of history yet to be written!

CBFVA Coordinators

History of organizations is typically reported in terms of accomplishments made during the tenure of its leaders. Rick Clore and Rob Fox have written reflections on their time at the helm of CBF Virginia. Their words are recorded here.

Rick Clore (2001-2006)

Rick came onto the CBFV Coordinating Council in 1997. His intimate knowledge of the inner working of CBFV allows him to pick up the history where Eddie Freeman left off.

Early Leaders: Elmer West, Barbara and Lloyd Jackson, Ernie Boyd, Bill Adkins, Tom Moak, Kitty Johnson, Stan and Cindy Johnson, Margarete Gillette, David Adkins, Gary Dalton, Greg Barr, Robert Rainwater, Jim Baucom, Jr., Mark Olson, Bill Wilson, Gene Brymer, Roy Ford, Tom McCann

Prior to Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Virginia constituting there were a couple of years of impromptu meetings during the Annual Meetings of the BGAV. The meetings after evening BGAV sessions were electrifying as we talked about issues in Baptist life, about the birth of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in Atlanta, and about ways we as Virginia Baptists could support the national movement.

Eventually we settled on a volunteer Coordinating Council to begin giving some organization to our ideas. In 1993 we identified ourselves as the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Virginia. One idea that met with success was to plan regional gatherings around Virginia to encourage CBF-minded Baptists and provide information on recent developments. Each region in our state had a representative on the Coordinating Council. Regional representatives were responsible for initiating the gathering for their region. Frequently, Cecil Sherman, CBF Coordinator, or some other CBF staff member would travel to the regional meetings. They were stars! Cecil almost always included an encouraging word to pastors who were leading their congregations in the midst of all the controversy and misunderstandings. I was one of those pastors benefiting from his encouragement.

*A few years of loose organization worked fairly well. Newsletters, bookkeeping, communication, all were handled by committed volunteers. Tom Moak served as our first Treasurer. Barbara Jackson produced our newsletters. Eventually, the Coordinating Council came to the realization that a full-time more intentional CBF face in Virginia was needed. There were two reasons for this: First, it was increasingly difficult to get national CBF staff to Virginia due to their launching of movements in other states and regions, coupled with the expense of their travel. Also, considerable misinformation about CBF was pouring forth from Baptist Press and General T. C. Pinckney's publication, *The Banner*. "Misinformation" is an understatement. Someone needed to tell the CBF story truthfully and consistently in Virginia.*

How to fund the position of a state coordinator was a major part of the work of the Coordinating Council in 1999-2000. A good ole' Baptist controversy broke out in CBF of Virginia (CBFVA) over the issue. By this time Cecil Sherman had stepped down as CBF Coordinator and Daniel Vestal was in place. Daniel and Gary Skeen came to our 2000 state meeting held at Vinton Baptist Church. CBFVA desired to have 15% of national CBF funds sent from Virginia churches returned to CBFVA. National CBF strongly argued for the amount to be 10%. After much discussion, the desire of the CBFVA Coordinating Council was accepted. The 15% provided the necessary funds to hire a state coordinator and an administrative assistant. Mark Olson (Immediate Past Moderator), Kitty Johnson (Moderator), and Bruce Hunter (Moderator Elect) traveled to CBF headquarters in Decatur to work out the details of the agreement with Daniel Vestal.

Bruce Hunter was Moderator during the year CBFVA transitioned from volunteers to hiring some paid staff. This turned into a major task for him while serving as a full-time pastor. Bruce provided stable and wise leadership in the transition.

Arlene Perry, Office Administrator, was the first person hired in January 2000. Her organizational and bookkeeping skills were a welcome contribution to a volunteer organization that had exceeded its ability to meet the needs of our growing presence in Virginia. In a short time she took care of the legal matters required for setting up a non-profit organization in Virginia, had set up with the help of Ruth Clowater an accounting system, and was attending to the daily needs of the office. To this day I am awestruck by and deeply appreciative of her attention to the minutiae involved in planning a state assembly meeting.

I was the next to be employed in March 2001. My role initially was to be the CBF face in Virginia. A lot of my time was spent introducing CBF to like-minded Baptist pastors and churches. Not a few Virginia Baptists thought a CBF state organization was a direct challenge to their support of the BGAV. In many of the churches there was organized resistance to CBF. Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia and Baptist Press provided packets of misinformation, half-truths, and all out attacks. It is a mystery to me why Baptist churches yield so much power to vocal minorities.

During my tenure there are four volunteers who merit special recognition for their service. Ruth Clowater, David Phillips, Don Campbell and Dennis Sacrey served us well as Treasurers. The amount of time they invested preparing reports, interpreting financial data, presenting budgets, and much more speaks of their passion for the mission of CBFVA.

Our first office was located in the lower level of Graves Hall at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond. The monthly "rent" was \$100. The partnership was natural, vital, and invigorating for both BTSR and CBFVA. What a gift to CBFVA to be located at BTSR! Tom Graves, President, and all the faculty and staff were gracious and eagerly welcomed CBFVA. I particularly enjoyed getting to know many of the students. It is a great joy following them in their places of ministry around the globe.

In 2002 BTSR and CBFVA began co-sponsoring our auxiliary luncheons at the BGAV annual meetings. It remains a well-attended event characterized by wonderful fellowship and energy. We are the same people, and we love our reunions!

In September 2003 Hurricane Isabel barreled through Richmond and wielded much destruction. It hit at the end of the workday. BTSR served as a rescue point for victims of the flash flooding. BTSR professors, faculty, students, and CBFVA staff helped stranded motorists from their stalled cars on flooded streets covered with downed trees and power lines.

We stayed into the late evening with those who were holed up at BTSR until they could safely leave. One of the rescued persons was a diabetic. We were able to provide him with his dietary needs. It helped him get by until he could get home to take his medications.

In those early years a significant issue facing CBF centered around how the states/regions and national CBF were to relate to each other. We were organized and functioning like Baptists, quite independently. Early in Daniel Vestal's tenure and during my first year we formed the Movement Leadership Team. State and regional coordinators met three times yearly with CBF staff and the moderator to talk about strategies to tighten the cohesion between us and advance the mission and ministries of CBF. One of the concerns we often discussed was the possibility of CBF being a one-generation movement. Out of those discussions and prayer we discerned that it was essential to involve younger Baptists in leadership positions. It is refreshing to see the second generation well established and the third on its way.

Another recurring issue was how to increase giving to the Global Missions Offering. CBF has through the years tried several methods for funding field personnel. Being the presence of Christ on a global scale is the single best reason we unite around the values we hold as a Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. CBF's early rally cry "Keep the Promise" was our response to the Southern Baptist Convention's decision to defund the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland because it was considered theologically liberal. The seminary was funded through SBC's Foreign Mission Board. Conversely, CBF has from our beginning been committed to missions through trusting relationships and theological education free of indoctrination. Well, I digress, so back to how to increase funding for Global Missions. That remains an issue for us. I commend CBF's recent decision to fully fund the salaries and living expenses of all of our field personnel. I am quite concerned our CBF field personnel must raise every dollar of their ministry budget needs. May we each increase our personal giving and call on our churches to increase giving to sustain the presence of Christ through our field personnel around the world.

In the October 2000 CBF General Assembly we debated and voted on the controversial hiring and funding policy related to homosexual persons. One of the main reasons we dealt with the contentious matter was because churches wanted CBF to voice its position. Pressure was coming from our friends and our enemies. The policy below was adopted by the majority of those attending.

"... the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship does not allow for the expenditure of funds for organizations or causes that condone, advocate, or affirm homosexual practice. Neither does this CBF organizational value allow for the purposeful hiring of a staff person or the sending of a missionary who is a practicing homosexual."

The hiring and funding policy gave all of us who were introducing CBF to interested congregations and pastors some clarity on the matter. Most were satisfied with CBF's policy. However, others disliked the policy because they wanted CBF to be intentionally more inclusive. Another group was dissatisfied with the policy because they felt it was not strong enough in its opposition to homosexual practice. This contentious issue is yet to be resolved.

CBFVA hired Harvey Skinner part-time in May 2002 to help me with Search Assistance Service which required a considerable amount of coordination between ministerial candidates and congregations. Harvey brought a wealth of experience to the position from serving in various

capacities in Virginia Baptist life for several decades. We both had opportunities to speak with churches about the issues confronting them as they searched for their next pastors. Several Virginia Baptist churches were "picked off" by pastoral candidates who were leading the churches to leave the BGAV and join the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia. Many of the churches were unaware of the organized attempt to syphon churches and funds away from the BGAV, and of course poison the air concerning CBF. Harvey and I found great satisfaction helping churches understand the issues as they sought pastors and other ministerial leaders.

Harvey was a delightful character. He died in April 2014. Then CBFVA Coordinator, Rob Fox, and I had the honor of officiating his funeral. One of the things I said with conviction and enthusiasm was, "Harvey brought fun to ministry."

In 2002 CBFVA received a \$500,000 grant from Fredericksburg Baptist Church. The money was granted with the stipulation that we raise another \$500,000. The funds were intended to give CBF of Virginia the means to be creative in ministry. The grant afforded us the luxury of dreaming about unique ways of being the presence of Christ in Virginia. After several meetings and conversations with leaders within and beyond CBFVA, a subcommittee of the Coordinating Council prayerfully discerned that ministry among Latinos in Virginia was for the most part non-existent. Greg and Sue Smith were called to serve CBFVA to develop ministry with and among Latinos. CBF performed the Smiths' application and evaluation processes for CBFVA. Tom Prevost was a key CBF leader guiding me and others in CBFVA's preparation to commission Greg and Sue as missionaries among and with Latinos. Beyond their sincere love for our Latino neighbors, another hallmark of the Smiths' ministry has been their ability to work well with multiple denominational and non-profit organizations. They were and are intentional about building trusted relationships.

We were not having much success raising the additional \$500,000. I had the undesirable responsibility of stating our failure to Larry Haun, pastor of Fredericksburg Baptist Church. He was quite gracious. I credit him with calling together the leadership of CBF and the BGAV in coming up with a funding and ministry plan to sustain the Smiths' ministry among Latinos. The partners funding their ministry have shifted several times through the years, yet Greg and Sue remain faithful and effective as ministers among our Latino neighbors. They are a tremendous resource to our congregations.

In 2002-2003 CBF took a more proactive approach to introducing CBF to the secular media. Ben McDade and Lance Wallace, CBF's communications staff, traveled with state and regional coordinators to visit local newspapers. They were outstanding communicators known for lively conversation.

Their visit to Virginia was in the winter of 2003. We started in Richmond then traveled to the Hampton Roads area. The next day we went on to Danville and Martinsville. The third day was scheduled to be spent in Roanoke and Bristol. While we were in the Star City it began to snow; the weather report was calling for 3-4 inches. Those two fellows were from the Deep South and were convinced they were going to get snowbound for days, so there was no other choice but to cancel the other stops and call their assistant to get them on a flight from Dulles

Airport back to Atlanta. Ben and Lance, deep southerners gifted with gab, didn't talk much as I drove us with some skill (I must say) up snow-covered Highway 29. They caught the last flight out of Dulles that afternoon just before the airport closed.

The early years of CBFVA were about identifying who we were, our values, how to relate to each other, supporting the ministry of the Smiths, and assisting churches in understanding the climate in which they were seeking ministerial leadership.

The next phase of CBFVA was a time of figuring out what more we were to be once we had an established presence. In 2004-2005 a re-visioning was recommended by moderator Nancy Stanton McDaniel and me. We contracted with the Center for Congregational Health to have their consultants, Dave Odom and Melissa Clodfelter, guide us through the process that involved a representative group of leaders in CBF life from around Virginia.

New possibilities that emerged from the re-visioning required a different set of skills than I possessed. It was the right time for me to exit and open the way for the next state coordinator. I prayerfully resigned as state coordinator in September 2006. To have served in that capacity is something that I shall always cherish. CBFVA and CBF provided a way forward during a time of considerable institutional uncertainty as we figured out how to preserve Baptist ideals and how to cooperate with like-minded Christ followers in global missions and theological education when the Southern Baptist Convention was no longer a viable partner.

Following my tenure, CBFVA functioned almost two and a half years without a state coordinator. Arlene Perry and Harvey Skinner competently continued their work under the direction of the Moderators and Coordinating Council during that period of time. In February 2009 CBFVA wisely extended a call to Rob Fox to be our next state coordinator. In December 2009 Arlene Perry left after nine years of dedicated service. Jenny Clore, my daughter-in-law, was called to serve as part time Mission and Communications Associate. Rob's and Jenny's employment was clear evidence that the future of CBFVA was in the capable hands of the next generation.

As you can see from Rick's reflections, much was accomplished by CBF Virginia during his tenure. Highlights of forward momentum include:

- Building relationships with individuals and congregations across Virginia
- Explaining who CBF is to counter misinformation
- Bringing structure to the organization—constitution, personnel policies
- Securing CBFV staff (administration & reference and referral)
- Nurturing a relationship with BTSR (office space, BGAV luncheon, Samuel Project)
- Launching the Latino partnership with Greg and Sue Smith in Fredericksburg
- Engaging The Center for Congregational Health to guide a re-visioning process for CBFVA

Interim, 2006-2009

The re-visioning process yielded a brief mission statement in 2008 to be printed on CBFVA letterhead:

Our mission is to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, propagate Baptist principles of freedom and promote the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

In addition, a new identity statement was crafted:

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Virginia is a network of churches and individuals being the presence of Christ as we advance CBF, advocate volunteer missions, facilitate placement of ministers in churches, and cultivate fellowship.

In September 2008, the CBFVA Coordinating Council approved an agreement with CBF for a field coordinator in Virginia. The field coordinator serves both CBF Global and CBF Virginia. Daniel Vestal, CBF Executive Coordinator, shared his vision for the field coordinator role: 1) to strengthen churches in Virginia, 2) to enhance mission opportunities in Virginia, and 3) to grow—financially and with missions. Rob Fox was approved as the candidate for the field coordinator role.

Rob Fox (2009-2015)

Rob wrote the following parable about CBFVA. This contribution to CBFVA's history reveals his creativity and bent toward innovation.

A Parable of CBF Virginia: The Little Engine that Could

Once upon a time, there was a little engine that could. Emblazoned on the engine was her name, "CBF Virginia." Birthed from heat of controversy, the little engine was forged shiny and new. She took her first puffs of steam, and made her way down the winding tracks. The passenger cars were full of Baptist sojourners. They longed for a new home and an exciting journey ahead.

The little engine made her rounds throughout the Commonwealth. She crossed the majestic Blue Ridge mountains, cruised through the farmlands of the Shenandoah Valley and Piedmont, chugged through urban terrain of Northern Virginia and Richmond, and made her rounds through the sun-drenched villages of Tidewater and the Northern Neck. Her passengers established eight depots across Virginia. These eight depots became key areas for folks to gather and celebrate the journey.

Over time, the journey became more compelling and complex. The sojourners decided they needed a professional conductor. Rick Clore was his name. He boarded the engine and guided CBF Virginia to new and interesting places. The journey was exciting, and the fellowship was sweet.

After many years, the faithful conductor was called to a new journey. But the CBF Virginia engine kept chugging along. Volunteer conductors took their turns at the wheel, and the good journey continued. However, somewhere along the way the navigation system got jammed. Professional mechanics were called in, they took a good look at the engine, and they made recommendations.

"This engine has been faithful and true," the mechanics said, "but this engine needs a tune up." With that, the passengers called a new conductor. His name was Rob Fox. Fox had admired this engine for a long, long time. He even dreamed about what it would be like to take the wheel. So, when Fox stepped into the engine room – he knew what to do. He invited the passengers to chart a new course, and to invite young people to make the journey. "It was madness," some said, "mission madness" they called it! It was a new day, and those young people did the unthinkable. They attached wings to that engine, and she took flight! As the engine left her rails, the passengers gained a whole new perspective. They envisioned a new journey on mission in Virginia and beyond. The passengers took flight and connected with new sojourners across the United States – and in far of places like China, Slovakia, Haiti, and even Canada, eh?

As the little engine continued her global journey, six years later Fox stepped aside to welcome a new conductor. His name is Terry Maples, and he's an engineer extraordinaire! The new conductor began an in-depth study of the past and present engine models. He invited the sojourners to chart a new course, and form together. A new journey begins, and we give thanks to God for this little engine that could, can, and will!

Early in his tenure, Rob offered his "Top 10 for CBF in Virginia." These were embraced by CBFVA and set the stage for Rob's ministry as Field Coordinator:

- 1) **Becoming Younger.** Increase the leadership and overall population of CBF in Virginia folks who are 40 years and younger by 2019. We will do this while continuing to honor and seek wisdom from the generation that built and strengthened this movement.
- 2) **Increasing Diversity.** Increase the diversity of leadership and overall population of CBF in Virginia family by 2019.
- 3) **Becoming Greener.** From the Blue Ridge Mountains to Chesapeake Bay, we in Virginia have been entrusted with beautiful "green spaces." By 2019, let's become known as the Baptists who champion stewardship of the earth.
- 4) **Promoting Women Pastors.** Not only will CBF in Virginia distribute the resumes of female ministers, we will promote and exhort church search committees to consider a woman as their next pastor. By 2019, let's encourage women pastors as an active part of our Fellowship movement in Virginia.
- 5) **Supporting BTSR.** By 2019, let's increase the overall number of churches who give annually to BTSR. Encourage leadership and participation from BTSR students in CBF in Virginia.
- 6) **Embracing Technology.** By 2019, CBF in Virginia becomes recognized nationally for our increased connection and service to churches, missionaries, and theological education via technology.
- 7) **Encouraging Intergenerational Involvement in Mission.** In partnership with PASSPORT, Inc., and other hands-on mission partners, CBF in Virginia will encourage and promote new initiatives for children, youth, and adults to connect with missions and missionaries in Virginia and around the globe.
- 8) **Connecting Big & Small Churches.** By 2019, CBF in Virginia will foster new partnerships and resource sharing between "big and small steeple" churches. Both groups will find their Baptist home and identity within this Fellowship.

- 9) **Fostering Leadership in Congregations.** In partnership with BTSR, CBF in Virginia will increase the overall number of students who consider the call to ministry and enter a CBF-related seminary. CBF in Virginia will actively partner with BTSR to encourage greater training of laity within Virginia congregations.
- 10) **Voicing the Progressive and Prophetic.** By 2019, CBF in Virginia will be known as a progressive and prophetic voice for Baptists in Virginia who balance historic Baptist principles with new, creative partnerships for the promotion of the gospel and the establishment of God's kingdom in Virginia and beyond.

These ten initiatives were assigned to three new councils: Mission Ministry Council, Formation Ministry Council, and Innovation Ministry Council. Members of the Coordinating Council were assigned to specific councils to guide the work.

Here are highlights of some of the major accomplishments during Rob Fox's tenure as Field Coordinator:

- Updating CBFVA's visual identity (new logo and website)
- Initiating major mission initiatives like Mission Box, Mission Madness, Mission Immersion, Mission Exchange, Mission on the Move, and Mission Trailer
- Securing additional staff
- Enhancing development efforts
- Introducing Virginians to CBF field personnel across the globe
- Engaging young adults in the movement
- Offering Sabbath Days for clergy at Union Seminary's library
- Initiating the Ministry Planner
- Offering Bible studies in the Ministry Planner
- Negotiating new funding arrangement with CBF Global (moving from a rebate to a flat sum of \$250,000 per year)

David Roberts, Interim Coordinator (2015-2016)

Dave Roberts, a member of the CBFVA Coordinating Council and intentional interim pastor, was selected to serve as the interim coordinator. Dave represented Virginia on the CBF Movement Leadership Team and guided the work of CBFVA while a search team was elected to secure the next field coordinator.

Terry Maples (2016-present)

Terry Maples served as Field Coordinator for Tennessee CBF prior to assuming the same role in Virginia on February 1, 2016. Here are his reflections from his first year as Field Coordinator:

Having ministered in two Virginia congregations for 25 years, I was excited to come back to the Commonwealth to guide the work of CBFVA. Almost six years in Tennessee gave me opportunity to learn well the work of CBF Global. Most important to me upon my return to Virginia was getting reacquainted with folks and learning about the history of the Fellowship movement in the state. Studying the minutes of past Coordinating Council meetings was very helpful and instructive.

I assumed my coordinator role with no specific agenda in mind other than to strengthen the work of CBF in Virginia. One of my first assignments was to secure a new office administrator. Carrie Jacobs Cheatham was hired and began her work on April 18, 2016.

My early interactions with the Coordinating Council were listening sessions so I could hear the members' understanding of CBFVA's identity. We engaged in meaningful dialogue about who we are, what is important to us, who our partners are, and what our priorities are. Clarity about CBFVA priorities began to emerge during the Coordinating Council Retreat in June 2016. In light of CBF Global's branding work in 2015, CBFVA established new identity statements and four priorities to guide our ministry into the future during the Coordinating Council Retreat in 2017:

CBFVA Identity Statement

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Virginia is a Christian network of churches and individuals motivated by Jesus Christ; inspired by our unique Baptist heritage; invested in forming healthy congregations; committed to mission engagement at home and abroad; and sustained by partnership and collaboration.

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Virginia is called to cultivate healthy congregations and engage individuals and churches in life transforming ministries. We are passionate about nurturing and forming faith in Jesus Christ, connecting Christ-followers to one another and to CBF's global mission and ministry, engaging students and adults in mission experiences, and renewing God's world through partnership and collaboration.

CBFVA's vision is evident in these four priorities:

Connect

CBFVA is a network of congregations and individuals. Connections are essential to building our Fellowship. We bring like-minded Baptists together, link people in our network to helpful resources, introduce folks in Virginia to the broader CBF family, and encourage experiences that build relationship and beloved community.

Form

CBFVA is committed to shaping and forming faith in Jesus Christ for the sake of the world. We believe congregational health and vitality are tied to intentional efforts to help people embody the values and convictions of Jesus. We create experiences that awaken consciousness about best practices for cultivating vital faith expressed in love, grace, compassion, and mercy.

Engage

CBFVA is committed to cultivating holistic mission efforts in Virginia and around the globe. Our passion is to serve "the least of these," transform lives and communities, and influence how we view others and the world.

Renew

Like CBF Global, CBFVA is committed to “partnering to renew God’s world.” Our broken world needs repair and renewal. We join hands with other like-minded people of faith to bring healing and wholeness through peace, justice, and advocacy efforts.

Initiatives during 2016-2017 include:

- Signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Baptist General Association of Virginia, Woman’s Missionary Union of Virginia, and Bluefield College to explore the establishment of a *Together for Hope* ministry in Southwest Virginia
- Adopting CBF field personnel with connections to Virginia (Hearnes in Danville, Smiths in Fredericksburg, and Jenny Jenkins in Haiti)
- Establishing congregational mission grants
- Helping six congregations secure summer interns through Student.Church
- Sponsored the Pastors’ School at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond
- Updated data on congregations and clergy
- Started a new narrative newsletter called *The Vine*
- Crafted a new logo under the CBF house brand
- Launched a new website designed by FaithLab
- Crafted a new covenant with CBF Global
- Contributed \$10,000 toward CBF’s 25th Anniversary Campaign and gave a plaque highlighting Virginia’s role in securing religious liberty for all
- Planned CBFVA’s 25th Anniversary Celebration on September 8, 2017 at Second Baptist Church in Richmond
- Compiled this 25 year history for CBFVA

To help unpack CBF Global’s branding campaign in 2015, Terry Maples co-authored a book with Gene Wilder, *Reclaiming and Re-Forming Baptist Identity: Cooperative Baptist Fellowship*. The book published by Nurturing Faith was released at the 2017 CBF General Assembly in Atlanta. In addition to telling CBF’s story, this resource is designed to flesh out what it means to form together and partner to renew God’s world. The main purpose of the book is to educate folks about our Baptist heritage and CBF’s future.

CBFVA Missions History By Mark Snipes

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Virginia called Rob Fox to be its Field Coordinator in February of 2009. Rob began a new chapter of our organization by traveling around the state asking ministers and laity what they wanted most from CBFVA. The same message emerged over and over again: “Mission, mission, mission.” While processing these conversations, Rob received a call from Mark Snipes, Youth Minister at Central Baptist in Chesterfield, wondering if CBFVA would be interested in collaborating on a youth mission weekend for students in Virginia. Timing could not have been better! Mission Madness was born in our state.

The weekend of April 9-11, 2010, CBFVA hosted its first Mission Madness weekend at Central Baptist Church in Richmond. This first edition Mission Madness drew 325 participants from 21 churches. Scott Ford, Passport Camps employee and seasoned Mission Madness leader, provided logistical and administrative support. Marnie Ingram, also from Passport, preached around the theme “Whatever” and declared, “Whatever you do, do it to the glory of God.”

Mission Madness also encouraged CBFVA churches to invest in several mission initiatives including an effort called “Mission Box.” Mission Box offered churches a creative way to collect items for a partner organization while congregations learned about that organization and its context. After eight months of collecting, CBFVA churches shipped over 250 boxes of school supplies to the Lott Cary School in Liberia!

In 2011, CBFVA began adopting an annual theme that informed the organization’s mission work. The first theme was “Beautiful Witness.” CBFVA pondered the concept of witness during General Assembly, staff visits to churches on Sundays and Wednesdays, and at Mission Madness.

Also in 2011, CBFVA decided to expand its well-received Mission Madness endeavor by hosting two weekends – one in Danville and one in Fredericksburg. Between the two locations, more than 360 students from 27 churches participated. Alice Cates, CBFVA’s 2016-2017 Moderator and Youth Minister in Chester, preached and encouraged us to see that “We are, they are, and ain’t that beautiful!” The weekends culminated with students planting seeds in soil that represented their active responses to God’s call to minister to the world.

CBFVA’s 2012 Mission Madness weekends held in Waynesboro and in Richmond involved more than 420 students from 32 churches. Jennifer McClung, Pastor of Pendleton Baptist Church in Pendleton, South Carolina, preached on “Familia” and highlighted the work of Greg and Sue Smith of LUCHA Ministries in Fredericksburg. As an MK in Ecuador, Jennifer could explain aspects of the culture of our Latino brothers and sisters and taught participants ways to be family together. The Mission Madness season ended on Palm Sunday with students and their leaders marching down the aisles of Winfree Memorial to drop rocks in a small pool of water to symbolize the ripple effect of our collective action.

CBFVA’s shared effort with the Smiths continued when our 2012 Mission Box collected school supplies for students connected to LUCHA. More than 40 churches donated over 250 boxes of supplies to folks in the Fredericksburg area.

Also in 2012, CBFVA began “Mission on the Move.” CBFVA staff traveled around the state in order to unpack the annual theme and tell CBF field personnel stories to local congregations. If CBFVA staff members were invited for Wednesday evening gatherings, thematic meal suggestions were offered in order to make the entire experience contextual.

“Ni Hao” (Chinese for “hello”) was CBFVA’s theme for 2013. All mission efforts that year lifted up the work of Larry and Sarah Ballew in Macau, China. Larry and Sarah minister to people who work in Macau’s helping industry by offering English Classes and, more importantly, friendship in the name of Christ. Mission Box churches were encouraged to

write pen-pal letters to the Ballew's English students who gather in Macau Baptist Church. The Macau students were overjoyed with their correspondence. In fact, so many letters were sent by Virginians that the Macau students couldn't keep up with their thank-you notes!

In 2013, CBFVA took a leap of faith and expanded to three Mission Madness sites. More than 550 participants from 36 churches were hosted by Madison Heights Baptist, Louisa Baptist, and Churchland Baptist in Chesapeake. Mark Boswell, current Together for Hope director in Louisiana, shared how to say "Hello!" to your neighborhoods. A special treat was the presence of Larry and Sarah Ballew's son Joshua, then a student at George Mason. Joshua spoke at all three locations about his experiences growing up in Macau.

Twelve people from Virginia traveled to Macau in May 2013 to personally experience the work of the Ballews. They met with the Ballew's English class, ate meals with many of the students, and enjoyed the hospitality of Macau. Stories about the work in China encouraged a closer relationship between Virginia congregations and the Ballews. This meaningful trip to Macau was CBFVA's inaugural Mission Immersion.

In 2014, CBFVA hosted Mission Madness at Talbot Park Baptist, Blacksburg Baptist, and Orange Baptist. Preacher Megan Stollo, student at Union Seminary, challenged participants to journey "step by step" with neighbors to learn what it's like to walk a mile in another's shoes. The theme was inspired by CBF field personnel Jon and Tanya Parks who had recently moved their family to Kovice, Slovakia. In their newsletter, the Parks wrote their family was adjusting to a new culture "step by step." CBFVA's 2014 theme was adopted.

In October 2014, CBFVA called Mark Snipes to a new full-time Missions Coordinator role, taking CBFVA's dedication to missions to the next level. CBFVA then underscored its commitment by sending a group of eight Virginians to Slovakia to work with CBF Field Personnel Jon and Tanya Parks. Participants visited with their Roma brothers and sisters and learned what life is like for them. They danced with school children, spent the night in a Roma camp, and immersed themselves in Roma culture.

In 2014, CBFVA celebrated its most successful Mission Box effort to date. Through a partnership with *Soles 4 Souls*, CBFVA collected second-hand shoes for people in Haiti. The goal was to collect 15,000 pairs of shoes. In the end, the 2014 Mission Box shoe tally was over 20,000 pairs of shoes!

In 2015, CBFVA took three Mission Immersion trips to Haiti. The first trip extended CBFVA's partnership with *Soles 4 Souls* by sending Mark Snipes and Mary Jane Richardson, a member of Purdy Baptist, with a team that delivered over 500 pairs of shoes to children in Haiti. In December 2015, a CBFVA team of energetic youth ministers led by Mark Snipes, taught VBS on Jenny Jenkins' compound in Grand Guave. The group led 60 children in a four-day Vacation Bible School. Students participated in four stations: music, sports, arts and crafts, and Bible study. Interpreters assisted each group; each station included a second interpreter. In addition to providing a VBS experience, the team delivered more than 200 baby care kits (a portion of the 500 kits collected as part of CBFVA's 2015 Mission Box effort) to help with Jenny's prenatal education program. The fruitful Haiti experience

birthed the idea of Mission Exchange, resulting in more than a dozen teams assisting Jenny with her work in Haiti.

In May 2015, CBFVA sent a team of seven people to help with Jenny's medical clinics. The daily routine included retrieving medicine from Jenny's storage closet at the local school then driving to a church or community center up the mountain to set up a medical clinic. Each day the team treated 30-40 people with a wide variety of ailments. Each patient's vital signs were taken before s/he saw a doctor to discuss the diagnosis. Though the work was difficult, the team was enthusiastic and glad to serve.

CBFVA's 2015 Mission Madness was hosted by University Baptist in Charlottesville, Bethlehem Christian in Suffolk, and Chester Baptist. That year, Glenn Maddox, Mission Mobilizer for the BGAV, spoke to students about "Hope." Glenn challenged participants to "be beacons of hope in their communities."

The Mission Box project for the year was collecting "hope kits" to be sent to students at Camp Alkulana, a camp for inner city kids in the mountains of western Virginia. Camp Alkulana's desire is that inner city students see the stars and experience the love of Christ. Camper kits included needed supplies like flashlights and ponchos.

In June 2015, CBFVA's Coordinating Council traveled by bus to Toronto to learn about the work of Canadian Baptists and to prepare for CBFVA's 2016 theme "Neighbor." While in Toronto, the council visited the Matthew House, several Canadian churches, and attended worship at former Virginia pastor Justin Joplin's church south of Toronto.

In November 2015, CBFVA and CBF Global co-sponsored an event called "Mission Collective" in Orange, Virginia. Churches from Central Virginia gathered at Orange Baptist to hear Stephen Porter speak to "Reclaiming Evangelism." Breakout sessions featured Ryan Clark, Stephanie Vance, and Gerry Hutchinson.

Terry Maples began his tenure as Field Coordinator of CBFVA February 1, 2016. Office manager Carrie Jacobs Cheatham was soon hired to assist Terry and Mark in the work of CBFVA.

In 2016, CBFVA hosted Mission Madness at West Main in Danville, Walnut Grove in Mechanicsville, and with LUCHA ministries in Fredericksburg. Judith Myers, BTSR student, challenged students to be good "neighbors." Judith asked participants who their neighbors are and how to become good neighbors to others wherever they go.

In May 2016, 18 CBFVA people embarked on a ten-day Holy Land pilgrimage. The team walked the paths Jesus traveled, learning the history and context of scripture. The group's guide Nadar assured participants "visiting the Holy Land will help you read scripture in color."

In 2017, CBFVA adopted the Offering for Global Mission's theme as its own: "Bearing Witness to Jesus Christ." Mission Madness was held at Hampton Baptist, Huguenot Road in Richmond, and Madison Heights Baptist. Summer Hyche, Master of Divinity student at Duke

Divinity, shared what it means to “bear witness” to a world that doesn’t always see being Christian as a good thing.

In May 2017, an eight-person team traveled to Kiev, Ukraine, to experience the work of CBF Field Personnel Mina and Gennady Podgaisky at the Village of Hope. Team members immersed themselves in Ukrainian culture and assisted in upgrading the Village of Hope grounds.

The story of mission awareness and mission engagement through CBFVA continues to be written. We invite individuals and congregations to journey with us.

Funding CBFVA

Assuring adequate funding for CBFVA has been a challenging assignment during the first 25 years. Early the focus was on securing allocations through different plans at the Baptist General Association of Virginia. Later, the focus was on receiving a percentage of CBF Global offerings from Virginia congregations. Some financial pressures were relieved when CBF offered to partner around funding a field coordinator for Virginia.

Efforts to stabilize income/ministries for CBFVA finally occurred when CBF Global entered into a financial covenant to provide \$250,000 per year toward CBFVA’s budget. The goal of this financial partnership was to strengthen the work of CBF in Virginia. CBF Global’s commitment to our work has empowered CBFVA to become more creative and strengthen our mission and ministry endeavors.

Partnerships

Growing Relationship with CBF

All state and regional CBF organizations are considered primary partners with CBF Global. In fact, the stated goal is to “create symbiosis” between states/regions and CBF, i.e. if states and regions do well so does CBF Global and if CBF Global does well so do states and regions.

Being birthed out of the crisis within the Southern Baptist Convention (where the denomination exerted greater control and authority), most states and regions formed as quasi-independent organizations. This is true for Virginia. Intentional efforts were made to create a Virginia version of CBF to address the unique context.

CBFVA has maintained a strong relationship with CBF Global over the first 25 years. In recent years, however, efforts were made to solidify the relationship between CBF Global and CBF Virginia. During Rob Fox’s tenure, a covenant (in addition to the financial covenant) was formed between the two organizations. A key factor in the relationship between CBF Global and CBFVA is that the field coordinator serves both CBF Global and

CBFVA. At the encouragement of CBF's Governing Board, that relationship was clarified with the formation of a new covenant in 2016. Because of accountables on both sides of the covenant, CBFVA has partnered more fully with CBF Global. Here are some of the ways the two organizations collaborated in 2016-17:

- CBF provides \$250,000 per year for CBFVA's budget
- CBF staff is available to come to Virginia to support our ministry
- Collaboration is facilitated through engagement with the Movement Leadership Team
- CBFVA adopted CBF field personnel with connections to Virginia
- CBFVA partnered with CBF Global to provide college student congregational interns (Student.Church)
- CBFVA contributed \$10,000 toward CBF's 25th Anniversary Campaign to raise funds for global missions, to promote congregational health, and assist the Young Baptist Ecosystem
- CBFVA contributed \$1,000 to the CBF Disaster Response Fund
- CBFVA contributed \$1,000 to the Travel Fund to enable folks to serve within the CBF organizational structure
- CBFVA promoted generosity for CBF's Global Mission Enterprise by encouraging gifts to the Offering for Global Missions
- CBFVA secured an intern through BTSR, a CBF partner school
- CBFVA hosted an Illumination Project workshop at BTSR
- Terry Maples co-wrote a book about and for CBF to strengthen both CBF and CBFVA

CBFVA Partners with CBF Field Personnel

In 2017, the CBFVA Coordinating Council approved a recommendation to adopt CBF field personnel with ties to Virginia. By entering into a covenant relationship, CBFVA agrees to provide financial support, tell the stories of these missionaries, and encourage folks across Virginia to partner with these field personnel. In turn, the field personnel offer opportunities for individuals and congregations to learn about and engage in holistic and incarnational ministries.

Jessica & Josh Hearne, Grace & Main, Danville, VA
Sue & Greg Smith, LUCHA Ministries, Fredericksburg, VA
Jenny Jenkins, Grand Goave, Haiti

Growing Relationship with BTSR

CBFVA enjoys a close relationship with Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (BTSR). After Rick Clore became coordinator, CBFVA's first office was located on the lower level of Graves Hall. The partnership was invigorating for both BTSR and CBFVA. Later, the CBFVA office moved to the second floor of Graves Hall. When BTSR re-located to Villa Park, CBFVA moved there, too. When the CBFVA staff outgrew the space in Villa Park, CBFVA moved to the second floor of the Presbytery on the James (on the corner of Westwood and Chamberlayne). CBFVA stayed at that location for three years until an invitation to return to Villa Park came. CBFVA moved back onto the BTSR campus in May 2017. This move

facilitates collaboration, fosters collegial relationships, and enables building relationships with students.

Inter-connectedness with BTSR has increased in other ways, too. In 2016, CBFVA sponsored the first Pastors' School; Jim Somerville spoke about "Teaching the Church to Swim." The second Pastors' School is set for January 2018. Marjorie Thompson is the keynote speaker.

In 2017, the faculty at BTSR wrote CBFVA's Beloved Community Bible studies. These lessons resource congregations in Virginia and across the Fellowship.

The Story Continues

We close this 25-year history with the words of Eddie Freeman: *There is a lot of history yet to be written!* CBFVA's future is bright as we embrace CBF's call to be Christ-like, innovative, authentic, and global in our reach, while raising the bar on excellence with inspiring partnerships. These qualities compel us into the future as we form together and partner to renew God's world.

25th History Compiled by Terry Maples, September 2017

APPENDIX A

CBFVA Staff Leadership

Coordinators

Elmer West

1996 – 1998 - CBF field representative for Virginia

Richard Clore

March 5, 2001 – September 30, 2006 – CBFVA Coordinator

Rob Fox

February 1, 2009 – August 31, 2015 – CBFVA Field Coordinator

Terry Maples

February 1, 2016 – present – CBFVA Field Coordinator

Staff

Mary Hardee

1999 – 2000 - Administrative Assistant

Arlene Perry

2000 – 2009 - Office Manager

Harvey Skinner

2002 – 2010 - Reference & Referral

Jennifer Clore - Missions & Communications Assistant/Office Administrator

2010 – 2016

Nathan White - Web & Technology Consultant

2010 - 2016

Mark Snipes - Missions Coordinator

September 29, 2013 – present

Mary Beth Foust – Ministry Coordinator

2014 – 2015

Carrie Jacobs Cheatham – Office Administrator

April 18, 2016 - present

APPENDIX B

CBFVA Moderators

A network of individuals and congregations is only as strong as its leaders. Virginia is blessed with gifted and capable leadership. We express gratitude for the investment of these who served as Moderator for CBFVA:

1993 – 1994	Mike Allen
1994 – 1995	Eddie Freeman
1995 – 1996	Jackie Haney
1996 – 1997	Jim Baucom, Jr.
1997 – 1998	Mark Olson
1998 – 1999	Gene Brymer
1999 – 2000	Kitty Johnson
2000 – 2001	Bruce Hunter
2001 – 2002	Bill Adkins
2002 – 2003	Gary Dalton
2003 – 2004	Roy Ford
2004 – 2005	Nancy Stanton McDaniel
2005 – 2006	Jim Heath
2006 – 2007	Tim Madison
2007 – 2008	Walt Cummings
2008 – 2009	Jack Mercer
2009 – 2010	Natalie Kline
2010 – 2011	Bert Browning
2011 – 2012	Dennis Sacrey
2012 – 2013	Jennifer Clatterbuck
2013 – 2014	David Turner
2014 – 2015	Kathy Shereda
2015 – 2016	Scott Spencer
2016 – 2017	Alice Cates Clarke
2017 – 2018	Todd Blake