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Coming Alongside **February, 2026**

CHURCHES PLANTING CHURCHES



One of my favorite Bible books is the Book of Acts. It contains teaching and doctrine, but it is primarily a historical account of the incredible work of God through the apostles and other local church leaders to spread the gospel message throughout the world. The book emphasizes the preaching of the gospel by the apostles, the sharing of the gospel by believers, the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit, the proclamation of the Word of God, the supremacy of prayer, the unity of the believers, and much more. But Acts includes other wonderful themes that are central to the spread of the gospel and those are the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul and the planting of churches throughout the Roman Empire. Paul and Barnabas did not solely evangelize but they also started churches for the new believers to grow in and minister from. Often Paul and his missionary companions went back to the churches they had planted to strengthen and encourage them. According to Acts 14:23, Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in each church and in Acts 15:36, Paul suggested to Barnabas that they go back and visit the believers in all the towns where they had previously preached the word of the Lord. Evangelism, disciple-making, and church planting all should work together

I am excited that in our association and in the Suncoast Baptist Association there are a number of pastors and churches that are committed to starting new churches or replanting struggling or dying churches. And the number is growing. Palabra de Vida has sent out many families to launch two new church plants in the past three

years. Covenant Life Church has started a church in Pinellas county. Calvary Church in Clearwater planted Channelside Church in downtown Tampa. FBC Tampa sent their student pastor and his family, and other families to Knoxville, TN to plant a church. A number of churches have replanted churches such as Mission Hill at Lake Carroll, Bell Shoals at Riverview, Idlewild at Sulphur Springs, Christ Fellowship at Manhattan, and many more.

Church planting is hard work because it involves starting everything from scratch. So many wise decisions need to be made at the right time. Which book(s) of the Bible should the pastor initially preach through? How can the pastor build an evangelistic culture in the hearts of the members? When should a church plant start a children's ministry or a student ministry or when should a plant ordain deacons or elders? The list goes on and on.

Fortunately there are men who are knowledgeable about the ins and outs of church planting. Pastor Justin Perry of Covenant Life Church is one of them. He graduated from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary about 15 years ago and during his seminary days he was mentored by pastors at a church that stressed the necessity of church planting. He has continued to grow in his call to pastor a church and to plant churches and to help other churches plant churches. He is offering an incredible training for the third year in a row that he calls The Church Planting Weekender. I attended last year and I am registered to attend again this year. You cannot find a more biblical, thorough, and practical church planting training than what will be offered at this Weekender. It is designed for those who are being called to plant a church, for those who are praying about doing it, and for those who want to learn more about what church planting involves. In other words, it is for everybody who desires to see our region reached with the gospel message and then have every believer plugged into a great church.

Please read the below information about the Weekender and register soon to participate. I hope to see you there.

Coming alongside,
Mike

MARCH EVENTS



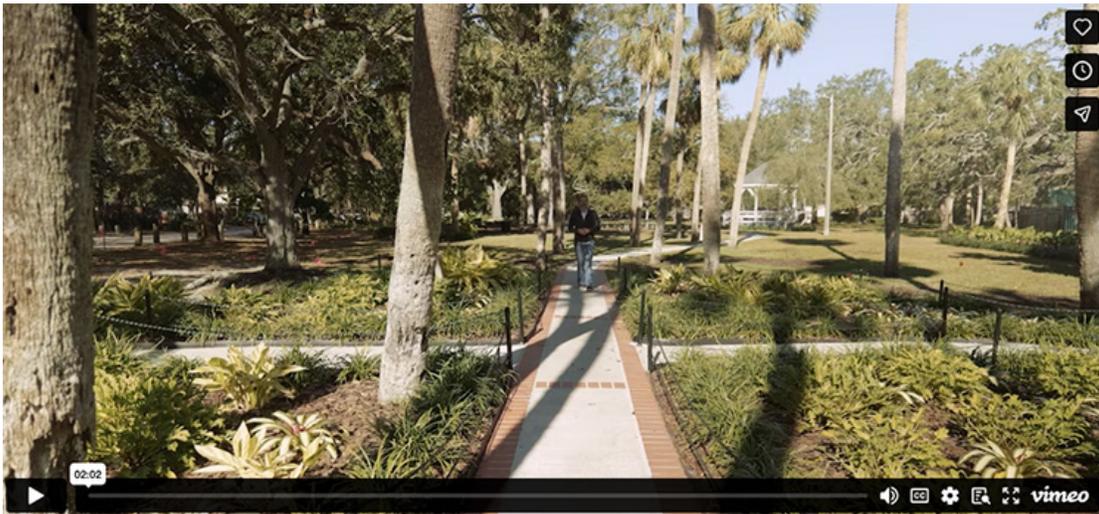
Church Planting Conference

March 6-8, 2026

**Treasuring Christ in Church Planting:
Conference at Covenant Life (South Tampa)**

3511 W Bay to Bay Blvd
Tampa, FL 33629

Do you desire to be equipped for church planting? We invite you to join us and learn from the wisdom of experienced pastors and former planters in the setting of a church rooted in a legacy of church planting. This Weekender provides a practical and immersive look into the vision and purpose of church planting. Gain hands-on experience that emphasizes the beauty of the local church, the calling of pastoral ministry, and the collective pursuit of knowing and delighting in Christ as a family of blood-bought believers.



Keynote speakers include...

- Sean Cordell
Executive Director, Treasuring Christ Together Network
Pastor, Treasuring Christ Church, Raleigh, NC
- Justin Perry
Pastor, Covenant Life Church, Tampa, FL
- Joey Craft
Pastor, Restoration Church, Washington, D.C.
- Jordan Thomas
Pastor, Grace Church, Memphis, TN

What will be taught at the conference? The following topics will be discussed, in addition to plenty of Q&A opportunities...

- Treasuring Christ in Church Planting
- What is a Church?
- Developing Foundational Documents (e.g., Statement of Faith, Constitution, Bylaws)
- Church Budgeting Strategies
- Leading Elders' Meetings
- Pastoral Leadership in Church Planting
- Marriage and Ministry Balance
- Effective Preaching
- Evangelism
- Assimilation Processes
- Children's Ministry Development
- Navigating Suffering
- Membership Integration and Members' Meetings
- Planning Worship Services
- Cultivating a Christ-Centered Church Community



BOOKS

Every church planter needs great resources. Plan for a little extra room in your luggage for a selection of free books, thoughtfully provided in partnership with the publishers listed below.



LIMITED ATTENDANCE

This event is limited to 45 participants to create an intimate, conversation driven environment. Reserve your spot today as we pursue the goal of planting churches that treasure Christ and exalt His name together.



LODGING

Attendees can seek accommodations at nearby hotels or AirBNB / VRBO between the airport and the church campus. Covenant Life Church is located 6 miles from the TPA airport in South Tampa.



TRAVEL

Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. Friday. Those traveling by air to Tampa should plan to arrive on Thursday via either the TPA (Tampa) or PIE (St. Petersburg) airports. Please plan to depart after the final session on Sunday, which ends at 3:00 p.m.



MEALS

Included with your registration is a light breakfast and full-service lunch each day. Dinner Friday is also included. Throughout the duration of the conference, we'll have snacks and drinks for you to enjoy.

Tampa, FL | March 6-8, 2026

REGISTER

[REGISTRATION IS OPEN:](#)
[Click here \(or on the image above\)](#)



TAMPA BAY BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION

**Q & A with
Pastor Willy Rice**

March 5, 2026





Q & A With Pastor Willy Rice

March 5, 2026

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Mission Hill Church

10002 N 56th St.

Tampa FL 33617

We are happy to help host this Q & A with Dr. Willy Rice, pastor of Calvary Clearwater and 2026 nominee for President of the Southern Baptist Convention. Lunch provided.

Please RSVP to jjones@tbba.org or call (813) 935-3839



PASTORS' ROOFTOP ENCOUNTER with Dennis Pethers

DON'T MISS THIS INCREDIBLE TIME WITH THE LORD!

March 23, 2026

9:00 a.m. — 12:00 p.m.

First Baptist Church of Tampa

302 W Kennedy Blvd.
Tampa FL 33602

Join us as we go up on the roof together at FBC Tampa to pray over our city. Then come back inside and learn more from missionary, Dennis Pethers of the Rooftop Ministry. This will be our second Rooftop Encounter.

Based in London, Dennis's ministry has reached into over 80 countries with a call to Join Jesus and take his Gospel out of the church and into the mission field.

One of Dennis's primary activities, the Rooftop Encounter is a workshop-based training for churches and associations. Drawing from Acts 10 where Peter went up on the rooftop to pray and God changed Peter and called him to share the gospel with the Gentiles, Dennis will be showing us as leaders and moreover as Christians to see how God is calling us to look at our city differently, to really see and pray about and intersect with lost people where they are.

From this meeting, we will be working with Dennis to launch a twelve-month coaching group of 10 - 12 pastors to help them lead their churches to more intentionally make disciples who make disciples. The Tampa Bay Baptist Foundation will be partnering with churches to underwrite some of the costs of this coaching.

Don't miss this day of encounter on March 23, 2026.

RSVP to Jan Jones at jjones@tbba.org

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS



Thank you to our friend, Charles Grant of the SBC Executive Committee, for coming and sharing at three different gatherings of Tampa Bay Baptist Association pastors from January 20, 2026 through January 22, 2026. Charles shared about the overall state of the SBC; he helped us focus on the Kingdom (from the Lord's prayer); and

emphasized the importance of multicultural leaders.

Charles serves our Executive Committee staff as Associate Vice President for Convention Partnerships. To reach out to him directly, you can call (615) 517-1544 or email cgrant@sbc.net. We are better together.

SAVE THE DATE



The TBBA Preaching Conference

May 18, 2026

We are excited to be hosting our Annual Preaching Conference on May 18, 2026 with Dr. Greg Heisler, pastor, author, and former preaching professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Please, save the date.

Details coming soon.



**JOIN US JUNE 7-10 FOR THE 2026 ANNUAL MEETING
& PASTORS' CONFERENCE**

The SBC Annual Meeting is coming to our back yard this year. We hope you will save the date and look forward to coming to Orlando with us.

[Click here for the SBC Annual Meeting Website](#)

COMMUNITY & MINISTRY

Church of The Way

- Church of The Way has 200 hymnals they would like to donate to a church. They are 1997 Celebration Hymnals by Word/Integrity. If interested, call 813-239-6543.

Tampa Bay Baptist Association | 1060 W. Busch Blvd. | Tampa, FL 33612, FL 33612 US

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