

A
BBFI
CENTRAL OFFICE
CONFERENCE

HEALTHY CHURCH CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE WORKBOOK



2023

HOSTED BY
BBFI STATE FELLOWSHIPS

HEALTHY CHURCH CONFERENCE

thank you



Welcome to the first edition of the BBFI's Healthy Church Conference. I want to first say thank you to the State Fellowships and the host pastors that have partnered with the Central Office to facilitate this event. It would not have happened without you.

Second, I would like to say thank you to Kevin Carson and Terry Thompson. These men did an exceptional job of preparing and delivering timely messages that will be both an encouragement and a challenge. Third, I would like to thank the BBFI Executive Committee for trusting me and allowing the Central Office to prepare and provide this event.

This "hybrid-style" conference is the evolution of the virtual conference (all online) the Communication Office hosted the previous two years. This event helps fill in the gaps from not having an in-person BBFI Mid-Winter Meeting in February. This year, rather than hosting another online event, the Executive Committee, and the Central Office decided to equip State Fellowships with a resource to help strengthen the pastors and churches in their states. There are a few states that are having their first in-person meeting since the COVID pandemic this week. There are also a few pastors utilizing this resource to serve the pastors in their local community, which in turn promotes the BBFI brand to new pastors.

I just completed my doctoral degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, TX. My doctoral project and dissertation were on "The Revitalization of a Network of Churches." Specifically, it focused on "A Strategic Plan for Future Effectiveness of the BBFI." As part of my research, I conducted a survey that compared the BBFI and the churches that identify with the BBFI today with thirty years ago. A few things stood out that emphasized the great need for revitalization in many of our BBFI churches. For example, almost half (44%) of BBFI churches baptized fewer than ten people over a two-year period. Granted, that is not the only indication of a church in need of revitalization, but there was a strong indication that churches have transitioned from an emphasis on evangelism to an emphasis on discipleship.

Depression. Loneliness. Anxiety. These are becoming recurring health issues in our culture – even among pastors. Lifeway Research found that 23% of pastors say they've had personal struggles with mental health and that 49% said they rarely or never speak on the topic to their congregation. Pastors need others that can help them in their time of need.

This conference, the BBFI's Healthy Church Conference, has, as a primary goal, the desire to help pastors and churches take steps toward becoming healthy. One of the statements I love about the BBFI is that we are a network of pastors where no one stands alone. If you are reading this, if you feel like you aren't as healthy or that your ministry is not as healthy as it should be, please let somebody know. That person could possibly be your State Rep. It could possibly be another pastor in your state. If it is not one of those, please let me know. I will do my best to serve you and help in any way I possibly can.

I am praying that God would use this one-day conference to be a help and an encouragement and that He would receive much glory for all that is accomplished.

Randy Harp
BBFI Central Office, Director

HEALTHY PASTOR



Kevin Carson

Kevin Carson is the Pastor and church planter of the Sonrise Baptist Church in Ozark, Missouri. In addition to his pastoral ministry, he serves as the 2nd Vice-President of the BBFI. He also serves as the department chair of biblical counseling at the Baptist Bible College and Theological Seminary in Springfield, Missouri. Kevin writes regularly at kevincarson.com. He also serves as a counselor at Sonrise Biblical Counseling Ministry, is ACBC Certified, IABC Certified, a council member of the Biblical Counseling Coalition, author, and is a frequent speaker at conferences, retreats and seminars. He and his wife, Kelly, have four children.



Discussion Questions

Lifeway Research found 54% of pastors say their ministry is *frequently* overwhelming and 48% often feel the demands of ministry are more than they can handle.

1. Have you ever felt this way? If so, what were the circumstances surrounding the time? How did you find relief?
2. Lifeway Research reports that 84% of pastors say they are on call 24/7. Do you feel this way? Do you think this is good theology and good ecclesiology? What are some practical ways to respond to this?

The Cosmos Speaks

3. Do you think it is important to spend time in God's creation? If yes, how can you do this on a consistent basis?

The Lord Speaks

4. Do you think it is acceptable to use your quiet time as your study time or should they be two separate disciplines? Why?
5. What does your personal discipline of spending time with God and His Word look like? (Morning or evening, devotionals, reading plans, journaling, etc.)

The Psalmist Speaks

6. What can you do to make sure you are intentionally aware of the sin in your life?
7. Is the glory of God the ultimate goal in your life? In what areas is this the greatest challenge?
8. What is the best book or resource you have read on pastoral health?

Four Questions to Ask Yourself

- What sin can I see in my own life?
- What is the motivation of my heart?
- What do I want in life, in this situation, in this moment?
- How do I see and interact with others as a result?



HEALTHY CHURCH

Terry Thompson



Terry is a 1985 graduate of Faith Baptist Bible College in Ankeny, Iowa. Terry was the lead pastor of Rock Point Church in Crawfordsville, Indiana, for 24 years. Under his leadership, Rock Point was transformed from an unhealthy, struggling church revitalization project of 20 people to a thriving church of over 1,000 in Sunday morning worship. In 2022 Terry successfully transitioned the church to a next-generation pastor. He and his wife, Kelly, are the founders of Small Church USA. They now lead this ministry that partners with organizations and churches from across the country that are in need of revitalization assistance. Terry is also a certified leadership coach and has personally worked with hundreds of pastors and ministry leaders.

Discussion Questions

Crisis Heightens Urgency

“The church of Jesus Christ in North America is in a free fall with no bottom in sight.”
Aubrey Malphurs

1. Organizational leaders and data experts are sounding the alarm that churches are in trouble. Do you agree or disagree and why?
2. If yes, how do you see church leadership responding? How do you see the people in the pew responding?
3. What could we be doing to heighten the urgency?

Urgency Seeks Hope

“We have seen again and again in our anatomy of revitalized churches that every sustained church revitalization is undergirded by a powerful movement of prayer. Every. Single. One.” Thom Rainer

4. Prayer is the lifeline to hope. How can we better emphasize and utilize prayer in our churches.

Hope Drives Strategy

“Leadership is about disappointing your people at a rate they can absorb.”
Marty Linsky

5. Paul was a strategic change agent. What are one or two areas that your church needs to change to be healthier? What are the challenges associated with addressing these areas?

Strategy Reveals Leadership

6. If you decided to make strategic changes in your church, what are some fears you would have in leading through the changes?
7. What are some practical ways to overcome the fears?
8. What is the best book or resource you have read on Church Health?



Baptist Bible Fellowship International

Jon Haley, BBFI President



notes

BBFI Missions

Jon Konnerup, BBFI Mission Director



notes

Baptist Bible College
Mark Milioni, BBC President



notes

Boston Baptist College
David Melton, Boston Baptist President



notes

BBFI CENTRAL OFFICE

Central Office

After more than two years of strategic planning by the BBFI Executive Committee and the Fellowship entity leaders, the Central Office of the BBFI was officially launched during the September 2022 National Fellowship Meeting. One of the most common questions asked about this new office is, "Why does the Fellowship need a Central Office?" This is a great question and one that should be answered clearly.

The BBFI has always been led by volunteers, meaning the work of the BBFI has always been secondary to the work in the local churches where the volunteer leaders served. This is a good thing. The Fellowship has always been led by practitioners, men serving in the trenches. This is one of the historical strengths of the Fellowship. But it has also been one of the historical weaknesses. The challenge is in the follow-through. There is no lack of visionary leaders in the Fellowship. Unfortunately, there has been a lack of executing vision in the Fellowship.

Most people agree that the greatest strength of the BBFI is missions. This is true today as it has been over the previous 70-plus years. One of the reasons that missions has remained a strength is that we have a dedicated mission office with a large staff devoted to our missionary efforts. The Fellowship also needs a Central Office that is devoted to helping pastors and staff and strengthening local churches.

I would love to take some time and talk with you about WHAT the Central Office will be doing and HOW it intends to do it, but the most important question is always WHY. As stated earlier, why does the Fellowship need a Central Office? What is the motivation behind it? What is the heart behind it? Over the past few years, during the strategic planning process, the Executive Committee has clearly articulated the mission of the BBFI, which states ...

The BBFI exists to serve Baptist pastors and their churches as they fulfill the Great Commission.

The BBFI Central Office has the exact same mission statement. Our purpose is to serve YOU and to serve your CHURCH as you are working hard to fulfill the Great Commission. We believe that if we can help you to become a healthy pastor that you will more likely lead a healthy church. And the healthier churches we have, the healthier the Fellowship is going to be.

BBFI CENTRAL OFFICE

- Continued -

Central Office

There are five key areas where the Central Office will focus:

- *Working with State Fellowships and the Executive Committee*
- *Coordinating regional and national conference and Fellowship Meetings*
- *Developing both the church planting and church development areas of our Fellowship*
- *Continuing the work of communication within the Fellowship*
- *Networking both within and outside the BBFI*

One final thought in regard to the Central Office. Would you consider financially partnering with the Central Office? If you have been supporting the Tribune/Communication Office, you can continue to send your support to the same location. Would you consider increasing your monthly support to a minimum of \$100 per month? The month of March is also going to be set aside for an Annual Offering for the Central Office. Would you consider a one-time gift? Currently, the Central Office is operating on approximately 65% of the needed budget. Will you help us get to 100%?

As a THANK YOU to each pastor/church that supports the Central Office, you will be gifted with a FREE annual subscription to RightNow Media. RightNow Media has been described at the Netflix for Bible Studies with over 20,000 options. Again, this is a way for us to say "thank you."

You can give through your normal support through the BBFI Mission Office. Simply write "Central Office" on your support. You can also mail your support directly to the Central Office at 720 E Kearney, Springfield, MO, 65803. Finally, you can provide support immediately by going to www.bbfi.org/give.

*Randy Harp
BBFI Central Office, Director*

upcoming meetings

bbfi.org

WE PREACH



CHRIST
CRUCIFIED.

FELLOWSHIP WEEK
MAY 2-5, 2023




Sonrise Church

National Meeting

We would love to see you in Clovis, California
September 18-20, 2023