



ColumbiaMetro.org

Columbia Metro Baptist Association

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Monday, May 24, 2021

One Priority Briefing for Congregational Leaders from George Bullard

A Family of Congregations in the Midlands of South Carolina

One Priority

Starting and Strengthening Congregations to Serve as Vital and Vibrant Missional Communities.

What Does the New Open Carry of Guns Law Mean for Your Church?

CMBA is doing some research and talking to various government officials on the meaning of the new open carry of guns law for churches. [*This new law goes into effect in the middle of August.*](#) We want to be sure all congregations have accurate information so they can prepare accordingly. It appears churches will have some choices about the implementation of the law in and around their facilities and events they sponsor.

We will let you know when we are ready to report on this, and we will likely conduct one or more recorded videoconferences and/or release podcasts on this topic. We will provide an avenue for you to ask questions directly to knowledgeable people about this new law. Look for forthcoming announcements.

CMBA Moving to an All Virtual Office

CMBA is giving up its office location at North Trenholm Baptist Church to go all virtual. North Trenholm became the office when CMBA sold its building in December 2019. During the pandemic, the staff realized that it functioned as well – if not better – without traveling to the office. By the end of June, the offices will be closed, and staff will work from home. This affects George Bullard, Executive Director, and Cathy Locklear, Impacting Communities Mobilizer.

Meetings and other gatherings will be held throughout the association in various church facilities so our Visionary Leadership Community (VLC), CMBA Team Huddle, Thriving Congregations Team, and other ministry groups can get to know our churches, pastors, and staff much better. Our larger churches will host bigger gatherings where there is more space and hospitality services.

This intentional move is to get the ministry of the association closer to the churches-in-association. The June VLC will gather at Belmont Baptist Church, where our hunger ministry storage is located. Many VLC members have never seen our hunger ministry location.

Funding New Congregational Expressions

CMBA's Visionary Leadership Community last week approved guidelines for financial grants to new congregational expressions in our association. CMBA will supply grants of up to \$2,400 per year for up to seven years from the date of the first grant and require VLC initial and renewed approval annually.

Two congregations were immediately approved for grants – City of Refuge with lead sponsor Temple Zion Baptist Church and First Haitian which is meeting at St. Andrews Baptist Church. This funding is possible because of the sale of the CMBA office building. (Another newly launched congregation is Beth Shiloh Messianic Jewish Congregation meeting at Spring Valley Baptist Church. It does not currently require funding.)

Our One Priority Briefing and the Our One Priority Briefing Online Gathering are made possible by the financial gifts of the member and network connection congregations of the Columbia Metro Baptist Association at www.ColumbiaMetro.org, CMBA@ColumbiaMetro.org, or 803.619.7110. To donate to CMBA go to <https://www.columbiametro.org/donate/>. Congregations can make their general contributions through this link. Congregations, missions groups and individuals can designate gifts to the Congregational Grant Fund, hunger ministry, disaster response, and Baptist Collegiate Ministry.

