

**CMBA WMU Spring Meeting Mar. 14 at Belmont Baptist**

The CMBA WMU Spring Meeting will be held Monday, March 14, 6 p.m., at Belmont Baptist. According to CMBA WMU Director Rev. Ralphetta Davis, of Concord Fellowship Baptist, the evening will include time for WMU business, ministry dreaming and relationship building.

“This is a great opportunity for us to get out and share with each other what we have been doing these last two years. We have new and exciting challenges,” she says of the next chapter in WMU’s growth across the association.

CMBA WMU looks to continue fostering the partnership among established WMU and Sisters Who Care church groups across the Midlands. Individual groups have continued missions and ministry during the pandemic and are encouraged to share about these efforts during the meeting. Davis says sharing these ministry concepts and strategies are vitally important because “we all have been working independently but it’s time to see how we can work together.”

Scheduled speaker for the event is Dr. Valerie Carter Smith, executive director-treasurer of the WMU of Virginia of the Baptist General Association of Virginia, and the first African American to hold that position.

A natural public speaker, attendees will enjoy her engaging personality and ability to inspire women to pursue where God is calling them to serve individually and as a church ministry together under her message to become “Ordinary Jesus Followers.”

“I love getting people excited about missions, and the opportunities for women to become involved in missions are countless. We can look at the pandemic and other issues around the world as deterrents if we choose, but for the faithful it’s an opportunity to engage the world with the Good News of the gospel,” Smith says.

In her local context, Smith is seeing churches move beyond their buildings and into their communities in greater ways because of the pandemic. This is something she imagines may be happening across the Midlands as well, where women’s groups can “feed the hungry, offer school supplies for children, encourage single mothers” and begin to engage socially and politically when a Christian response is needed.

“In response to Black Lives Matter, for example, WMU Virginia designed a curriculum called “SPA,” which represents concepts to Share, Pray, Act with regards to Missions and Racial Reconciliation. This curriculum addresses other tensions we’re seeing in society as well,” she says, adding that a commitment for women to pray for one another and develop action plans to be witnesses on mission with God are critical components to ministry success. “We can say, ‘God, how can we be light in darkness? How can we be a witness for You in new ways?’ We will be relevant at all costs.”

For her part, Davis looks forward to how God will work among local women as a result of WMU partnerships. The spring meetings provides a time where women “can see what resources are available through our churches for ministry at every level and in ways that are beneficial to our communities. If we aren’t missional, we aren’t doing what the Lord has called us to do.”

Why should women across the Midlands of South Carolina attend the March 14 meeting? Because, as Smith says, there is nothing like a movement of women coming together to make things happen.

“Even in the midst of social turmoil and a pandemic – leave it to the women! You are better together, so join a movement of women to be on mission for God. I plan to inspire you to organize, to work with others and not grow weary. God really uses plain ‘Ordinary Jesus People.’”

For more information about CMBA WMU contact Davis directly at [ralphettadavis@gmail.com](mailto:ralphettadavis@gmail.com) or visit the Impacting Communities page of the CMBA website at [www.ColumbiaMetro.org](https://columbiametro.org/one-priority-resources/impacting-communities/).