

“Re-evaluate, Restructure and Resurrect”

Amos 4:24

GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF BAPTISTS IN KENTUCKY

CELEBRATING THE 82nd ANNUAL PASTORS & LEADERS CONFERENCE



February 16 - 18, 2026

**MARRIOTT EAST HOTEL LOUISVILLE,
KENTUCKY**

Dr. Michael Rice, Moderator

The A. C. R. (Awkard, Cockerham, Reid) Lecture Series

Rev. Dr. Robert Smith, Guest Lecturer

Rev. Dr. Phillip Pointer, Dr. Guest Preacher

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Moderator Rev. Dr. Michel Rice

Greetings Pastors and Leaders, My Sisters and Brothers in Christ!

I am truly excited to convene at the 82nd Pastors and Leaders Conference at this historic moment. There are so many things to acknowledge as we gather to learn, share, and grow this week. We celebrate the long-standing work of the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky and commemorate the 250th anniversary of the social experiment known as the United States of America. We also have witnessed the theme of my tenure, "Understanding the Times," become powerfully relevant.



We recognize the unusual and challenging times we live in, and we are all striving to understand them. The times may not look promising, yet I am excited to know that GABKY's leadership team has put together a Leadership Conference designed to help us understand, prepare, and work to be more impactful in these times.

Our Classes are crafted to empower you, as pastors and leaders, to strengthen your church and to advocate more effectively for your communities. Our distinguished conference lecturer, Rev. Dr. Robert Smith, Jr., and our gifted conference preacher, Rev. Dr. Phillip Pointer, Sr., will provide Holy Spirit-filled instruction and inspiration for all conference attendees.

As your moderator, I am grateful to you and your churches for your continued support of the work of the General Association, its Objectives, and its Auxiliaries. This week will be great with your patience and your commitment to learning, growing, and loving with the people alongside you. My hope is that you will meet and greet everyone as a representative of Our Christ and The Association. God Bless You and Grow You, today!

Dr. Phillip L. Pointer, Sr., D.Min.



The Rev. Dr. Phillip L. Pointer, Sr. is the Senior Pastor of Saint Mark Baptist Church, one of the largest Baptist churches in the state of Arkansas. Raised in the Greater Washington D.C. area, Pastor Pointer would become a fourth-generation Baptist pastor, coming from a dual line of Baptist pastors that runs on both sides of his family.

Having now served as a Senior Pastor for 20 years, Pastor Pointer's journey as a pastor began in October 2002 with an assignment at St. John Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia. In conjunction with fostering the spiritual growth and advancement of St. John, Pastor Pointer earned a Master of Divinity Degree with honors from The Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia.

After ten rewarding years of leadership at St. John, Pastor Pointer received his next call from God that brought him to his current assignment at Saint Mark Baptist Church. Shortly after uniting with Saint Mark, Pastor Pointer completed his Doctor of Ministry Degree from the United Theological Seminary in Dayton, OH. He currently leads a Doctoral Cohort at United

As senior pastor at Saint Mark, Dr. Pointer has led the ministry in its growth by leaps and bounds, including major initiatives in community outreach offerings such as job fairs, financial stewardship classes, record expungement seminars, and food drives. Dr. Pointer led the formation of the Tendaji Community Development Corporation in 2016, which provides outreach programs and initiatives that support the entire Little Rock community such as Program IMPACT, an after-school program for elementary students, and Reclaiming Scholars, an alternative suspension program for middle and high school students.

Dr. Pointer served as Chair and Associate Professor of the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Philander Smith College in Little Rock, Arkansas, from August 2019 to December 2022. Dr. Pointer believes in solid, biblical, and practical teaching of God's Word in a way that helps the hearer with introspective growth in their relationship with Jesus Christ. His sincere desire to remain true to the explanation and exhortation of the Bible is a product of his earnest seeking of wisdom, clarity and study.

Rev. Dr. Robert Smith, Jr.

Robert Smith Jr. served as professor of Christian preaching at Beeson for more than 25 years and held the Charles T. Carter Baptist Chair of Divinity. Previously, he served as the Carl E. Bates Associate Professor of Christian Preaching at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. Smith is the 2017 E. K. Bailey Expository Preaching Conference Living Legend. A popular teacher and preacher, he received Southern's 1996 Findley B. Edge Award for Teaching Excellence. An ordained Baptist minister, he served as pastor of the New Mission Missionary Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio for twenty years.



He earned his PhD while serving as a pastor. He is a contributing editor for a study of Christian ministry in the African American church, *Preparing for Christian Ministry*, and is co-editor of *A Mighty Long Journey*. Additionally, he has served as an editor of *Our Sufficiency Is of God: Essays on Preaching in Honor of Gardner C. Taylor* (Mercer University Press, Macon, Georgia: 2010) and *Worship, Tradition, and Engagement: Essays in Honor of Timothy George* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2018).

He has written the book, *Doctrine That Dances: Bringing Doctrinal Preaching and Teaching to Life* (B&H Publishing Group, Nashville: 2008), which was selected as the winner of the 2008 Preaching Book of the Year Award by Preaching magazine and the 2009 Preaching Book of the Year Award by Christianity Today's preaching.com. In 2010, Preaching magazine named *Doctrine That Dances* one of the 25 most influential books in preaching for the last 25 years. He also has written *The Oasis of God: From Mourning to Morning—Biblical Insights from Psalms 42 and 43*. His latest book is *Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary: Exalting Jesus in Joshua* (B&H Publishing Group, Nashville).

His research interests include the place of passion in preaching, the literary history of African American preaching, Christological preaching and theologies of preaching. Smith has contributed *essays and articles to various books, magazines and commentaries*. He received Beeson Divinity School's "Teacher of the Year Award" in 2005. He and his wife, Wanda Taylor-Smith, PhD, are the parents of four adult children (two in heaven).

Monday, February 16, 2026

BOARD MEETINGS

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

MINISTERS' WIVES

Bluegrass Salon A Room - 2nd Floor

BAPTIST WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL CONVENTION

Steamboat Room - 1st Floor

BAPTIST WOMEN'S MISSIONARY CONVENTION

Bluegrass B - 2nd Floor

STATE USHERS, NURSES, GREETERS AUXILIARY

Bluegrass A - 2nd Floor

LAYMEN

Bluegrass C - 2nd Floor

BAPTIST UNIFIED CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

CONFERENCE

Bluegrass D - 2nd Floor

MINISTERS AND MESSENGERS

Bluegrass Salon B - 2nd Floor

STATE MISSION BOARD

Colonel Salon B Room - 2nd Floor

AMERICAN BAPTIST NEWS PAPER

Bluegrass E - 2nd Floor

JOINT ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

3:00 - 4:30 P.M.

Bluegrass A - 2nd Floor

PASTORS AND LEADERS CONFERENCE BANQUET

6:30 P.M.

First Floor Ball Room

Tuesday November 17, 2026

9:00 A.M. – 11:45 A.M.

***THE A. C. R. LECTURE SERIES
(AWKARD - COCKERHAM - REID)***

1st Vice Moderator Dr. Nathl Moore, Presiding

9:00A.M. - 9:20A.M.

Praise & Worship.....Rev. Brian Hogg

***Scripture
Prayer***

Introduction of Lecturer.....Dr. Nathl Moore

Worship in Song

9:20 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

Lecture

“UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES”

Dr. Robert Smith - Guest Lecturer

11:00 A.M – 11:30 P.M.

Q & A

Offering

Closing Remarks

Tuesday November 17, 2026

Break Out Session #1

Pastor's Conference Afternoon Classes

2026 PLC Classes 1:00-2:30 PM

Breakout Session #1

† **Lifeway Black Church Essentials Part 1** – This breakout session for pastors will address the issues and topics that Black Church Pastors are facing in making disciples in this current paradigm. This training will take AIM (*Analyze, Investigate, Maximize*) at the essential challenges of the post-modern world. – Dr. Mark Croston, Lifeway, Director of Black Church Ministries – **Bluegrass Salon A**

† **From Greeters To Gatekeepers of Grace** – This session is designed for hospitality teams and frontline volunteers who serve as the first—and lasting—point of contact in the life of the church. This session reframes hospitality as more than a friendly welcome; it is a sacred ministry of stewardship, discernment, and grace. – Sis. Edith Turley, Shiloh Baptist Church, Lexington, KY – **Bluegrass Salon B**

† **Faithful Men, Strong Churches** – This strategic session is for men who desire to serve with integrity, consistency, and spiritual maturity. This session explores the vital role faithful men play in strengthening the church's leadership, culture, and witness—both within the sanctuary and beyond its walls. – Rev. Cedric Cheatham, Princeton Street Baptist Church, Crofton, KY – **Bluegrass Salon C**

† **Faithful, Fearless, and Focused** – By looking at the life of Deborah, this dynamic session is designed to empower women to lead fearlessly in male-dominated spaces, remain focused on God's mission amid resistance, and affirm others without diminishing her own calling. – Rev. Dr. Rozalyn Akins, First Baptist Church Bracktown, Lexington, KY – **Commonwealth Ballroom**

Tuesday November 17, 2026

Break Out Session #2

2026 PLC Classes 2:45-4:15 PM

† **Voices of Victory: Empowering Women in the Preaching Ministry 2.0** – God calls women to proclaim His word with strength, wisdom, and conviction, and their voices are vital to the life of the church. This class invites women to step fully into their calling, encouraging them to share their God-given voices to inspire, challenge, lead others to victory in Christ. – Rev. Alyce French Johnson, Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church, Louisville, KY – **Bluegrass Salon A**

† **From Doing It All To Empowering The Call** – This much needed session is designed to help address the challenges of doing ministry in a rural church context. For many rural church pastors and church leaders, the pace of demands often outpaces their capacity for execution. To scale impact without burning out, this session based on Craig Groeschel's Leadership Efficiency Model will help move pastors from being "doers of tasks" to "multipliers of leaders" by mastering the art of delegation and decentralized decision-making. – Rev. Larry Sykes, Clay Street Baptist Church Missionary Baptist Church, Shelbyville, KY – **Bluegrass Salon B**

† **Beyond The Pulpit: The Role of the Pastor as Community Prophet** – This challenging and compelling session is for pastors and ministry leaders who understand that today's pastoral calling extends beyond preaching and programming into prophetic engagement with the broader community and advocating for justice. – Rev. Dr. Richard Hughes – New Jerusalem Baptist Church, Cincinnati, OH – **Bluegrass Salon C**

† **Leading With Discernment in the Era of Artificial Intelligence** – This timely and essential session is for ministry *leaders navigating the rapid rise of AI and digital technologies in church, leadership, and community life. This session invites leaders to move beyond fear or fascination and instead cultivate spiritual wisdom, ethical clarity, and faithful discernment in how AI is understood and utilized.* – Rev. Dr. Michael Zachary, Centerville Baptist Church, Paris, KY – **Bluegrass Salon D**

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

6:30P.M.

EVENING WORSHIP SERVICE

Moderator Dr. Michael Rice, Presiding

Call To Worship

Praise & Worship

Pastors & Leaders Conference Choir

ScripturePrayer

Worship in Song.....Pastors And Leaders Conference Choir

GA Objectives Offering

Moderator's Moment.....Moderator Dr. Michael Rice

Introduction of Preacher.....Moderator Dr. Michael Rice

Selection A&B.....Pastors & Leaders Conference Choir

The Preached WordRev. Dr. Phillip Pointer, Sr.

Pastor of Saint Mark Baptist Church

Selection.....Pastors And Leaders Conference Choir

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

9:00A.M. – 11:45 A.M.

THE A. C. R. LECTURE SERIES
(AWKARD - COCKERHAM - REID)

2nd Vice Moderator Dr. Phillip Suber, Presiding

9:00A.M. - 9:20A.M.

Praise & Worshi.....Rev. Brian Hogg

Scripture
..

Prayer
..

Introduction of Guest Lecturer.....Dr. Phillip Suber

Worship in Song
....

9:20A.M. - 10:30A.M.

Lecture

“UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES”

Dr. Robert Smith - Guest Lecturer

10:30 A.M -11:15 A.M.

Q & A

Offering

Closing Remarks

11:30A.M. - 12:45P.M LUNCH

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

1:00 – 2:30 PM Breakout Session #2

- † **Preaching In Times Like These** – In a world marked by constant change, cultural shifts, and challenges that test the faith of congregations and leaders alike, the call to preach remains as urgent and vital as ever. This session will empower pastors and preachers to speak into today's complexities with clarity, relevance, and biblical depth. – Rev. Dr. Robert Smith, Jr., Retired Professor Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, Birmingham, AL – Commonwealth Ballroom
- † **AI: Friend or Foe** – With the rise of artificial intelligence, ministry leaders are faced with new opportunities and challenges as they consider the role of AI in the church. This session is designed to help pastors and leaders understand the potential benefits and ethical concerns of integrating AI into ministry. Class attendees will explore how AI can support and expand ministry efforts while remaining mindful of its limitations and moral implications. – Dr. WandaJean Jones, Web Developer and AI Applications Developer, Louisville, KY – Bluegrass Salon C
- † **Bridging The Gap: Engaging Millennials and Gen X in Ministry** – As the church seeks to grow and stay relevant, understanding how to connect with and engage Millennial and Gen X generations is crucial. This class will explore the unique characteristics, values, and spiritual needs of Millennials and Gen Xers, uncovering practical strategies for creating authentic connections and meaningful involvement in the life of the church. – Rev. Demarcus Hopson, First Baptist Church Bracktown, Lexington, KY – Bluegrass Salon B
- Women, Wealth, and Wisdom: Guiding Women Toward Financial Empowerment** – Empowering women in the realm of financial stewardship is essential for fostering holistic well-being and community impact. In this session, women will be equipped with knowledge and resources that will inspire and support them as they pursue financial stability and meaningful kingdom impact. – Sis. Beverly Bowens, First African Baptist Church, Lexington, KY – Bluegrass Salon A

Wednesday, February 18, 2026
Break Out Session #2, Panel Discussion

2:45-4:15



**Understanding The Times & Faithful Political
Advocacy –**



In a season marked by rapid social change, political polarization, and shifting public policy, pastors and leaders are increasingly called to lead with clarity, courage, and conviction. This panel discussion invites participants into thoughtful and faith-centered conversation on what it means to “understand the times” and respond with wise, ethical, and effective advocacy. Rev. Wanda Mitchell-Smith, First Gethsemane Baptist Church – **Commonwealth Ballroom**

Notes

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

6:30P.M.

EVENING WORSHIP SERVICE

Moderator Dr. Michael Rice, Presiding

Call To Worship

Praise & Worship.....Pastors & Leaders Conference Choir

ScripturePrayer

Worship in Song.....Pastors And Leaders Conference Choir

GA Objectives Offering

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Selection A&B.....Pastors & Leaders Conference Choir

The Preached WordRev. Dr. Phillip Pointer, Sr.

Pastor of Saint Mark Baptist Church

Selection.....Pastors And Leaders Conference Choir

Notes:



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