

# The Vision

## From the Pastor's Desk

Prentis McGoldrick  
Senior Pastor



The Elder-Led committee has learned quite a bit in doing research on Elders in the church. Seven Baptist churches that have Elders in their leadership were questioned about how they functioned and the process of becoming Elder led. Most of the churches said they became Elder led because it is biblical. Most of the churches had men only in this role. Only one of the churches is still in the process of becoming Elder led. All of them support having Elders in the church. One of them appears to be Elder ruled.

[An Elder ruled church does not bring any decisions to the church for a vote. Elder led churches decide what decisions need to be brought to the church for a vote.]

The number of Elders varies from church to church. Some have a fixed number. Some allow for the number they have to either grow or shrink depending on the need. Most have a term for Elders to serve though at least one has Elders for life.

Each church has a process by which one may become an Elder. The qualifications are listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Timothy 5:17-18, 1 Timothy 5:19 and Titus 1:5-9. Their function according to scripture is:

- To teach sound (biblical) doctrine and refute false beliefs which threaten the faith of the church (Titus 1:9)
- To set a Christ-like example for believers to follow (1 Peter 5:3)
- To rebuke and address sinful conduct of fellow believers within the church (Galatians 6:1; 1 Timothy 5:20)
- To implement church discipline (1 Corinthians 5:5-11)
- To lead the church (1 Timothy 5:17)

Each church we have contacted takes the vetting of the Elders seriously. It is not a popularity contest. Many of the prospective Elders remove themselves from consideration because they believe they are not qualified.

*If you would like to follow up on the biblical basis for having Elders, a good resource is:*  
**Elders and Leaders-God's Plan for Leading the Church by Gene A. Getz.**



# Knights of the 21st Century

These are extraordinary times. Extraordinary times require extraordinary men. Answer the call to be the man god designed you to be.

Get plugged into our Men's Discipleship Group and join us on the path toward spiritual maturity.

**Tuesdays at 6:30 in the Fellowship Hall**



## SPIRITUAL FORMATIONS

WEDNESDAYS @ 6PM



THE BRIDGE NETWORK OF CHURCHES  
**WOMEN'S CONFERENCE**

# Ignite Hope Be the Spark!



**SATURDAY  
MARCH 11, 2023  
9 A.M. - NOON**

**Thalia Lynn Baptist Church**

Registration with coffee bar opens at 8 a.m.



Speaker: **SHARON GLASGOW**  
Proverbs 31 Speaker, Author & Pastor's Wife



Register here!

Thalia Lynn Baptist Church  
4392 Virginia Beach Blvd., Va. Beach, VA 23462

### REGISTRATION:

**\$25** early bird through February 14

**\$30** February 15 - March 10

**\$35** March 11, at the door

Special group rate offer for 10 or more, call 757-938-9793

or email [admin@thebridgenet.org](mailto:admin@thebridgenet.org) for group special pricing information.

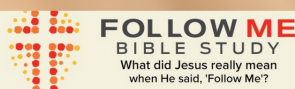
**CONFERENCE HOTEL**  
Hyatt Place Town Center  
335 Independence Blvd.  
Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Call 757-431-7000 for conference pricing.

### TBN Women's Conference

We need sponsors!!! If anyone knows of a business that would like to advertise in a booklet at our conference, please email the church office for a copy of the sponsor form and application.

[office@mytowncenterchurch.com](mailto:office@mytowncenterchurch.com)



This session just started on Jan. 22nd

Sundays at 4:00 pm at the church

# Food Pantry



Invite those in need to come out on Tuesdays at 11:00AM

Learn more how you can help:

[office@mytowncenterchurch.com](mailto:office@mytowncenterchurch.com)

# The XP Corner

David Doyle  
Executive Pastor

Embracing Pruning in 2023. If you continue to add more and more and never prune, you are going to get unhealthy. Stuck churches have more ministries. Stuck churches have more events. Stuck churches have more staff. Stuck churches have more people in meetings rather than engaging the mission. If we always add but never prune, we will get out of shape and our ministry will not be healthy. When we don't practice pruning, eventually the briars and the thorns take over (Isaiah 5:6). So, what's the difference between pruning and unhealthy decline? Biblical pruning (John 15:2) has these three characteristics:

1. The pruning is intentional. If you're experiencing decline as a church that is not the result of intentional action you've taken, that's not pruning, that's decline.
2. Pruning involves both cutting back what's unhealthy and what's healthy. Churches are rarely willing to cut back good ministries that are producing some fruit, even though they could be preventing the church from maximizing its potential health and impact.

3. Pruning eventually produces more fruit. If your church is plateaued or declining, and that extends from months to years without new fruit and new health—you haven't experienced pruning, you're probably just stuck.

Why don't churches prune? Even if the pruning will ultimately help the church produce more fruit in the long-run, in many cases, leaders are unwilling to do it because of the fear of how people will respond. They fear that people will leave the church and that giving will decline.

It's true that having a clear vision will both attract and repel people. However, it's also true that it's not possible to grow a healthy church and ignore core Biblical principles, including the practice of pruning. Healthy, thriving churches have learned that periodically you have to prune. And if pastors and church leaders prune using the model we see in Scripture, your ministry will bear more fruit. Your church will get healthy again.

This article was extracted from the [theunstuckgroup.com](http://theunstuckgroup.com).



JOIN OUR TEAM FOR

# Winter Shelter

STARTS **MAR 15**

ENDS **MAR 22**

The poster features a QR code in the top left corner. The background is a dark, grainy image of a homeless shelter with a blue tarp and a sign that says 'LED LIGHTS/TAP'. In the foreground, a large, stylized orange hand is holding a woman and a child. The woman is wearing a green shirt and a black shawl, and the child is wearing a yellow shirt. The text 'Winter Shelter' is written in a large, white, cursive font across the middle. The dates 'STARTS MAR 15' and 'ENDS MAR 22' are written in white, bold, sans-serif font at the bottom left and right respectively.



**CHURCH 101**  
Sunday, February 12, 2022  
9:45 am - 10:45 am

The poster is a green chalkboard with a white border. The text is written in white and orange. 'CHURCH 101' is in large, bold, white letters. 'Sunday, February 12, 2022' is in smaller white letters below it. '9:45 am - 10:45 am' is in even smaller white letters at the bottom. The background of the chalkboard is a dark green with some faint white lines.

# Kids

Birth - 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

## CORNER

# Music & Me

Wednesdays at  
10:00am

For ages Birth-Pre-K  
FREE/No registration required  
Have fun with your little one  
through music & movement.

January 11, 18, 25  
February 1, 8, 15

Happy  
Valentine's  
Day

# KIDS ON MISSION

"Royal Ambassadors" and "Girls in Action"  
for Grades 1-6

3rd Friday of each month from 6:30-8:00

**NEXT MEETING ON  
FEBRUARY 17TH**

Kids learn to make missions an important  
part of their daily lives by participating in  
Bible study, games, and missions projects.

# KIDS PRAISE

SINGING, GAMES, AND INSTRUMENTS  
for Ages 3 Years through 6th Grade  
Wednesdays 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Childcare for 2 & under for  
parents attending Bible Study





~Sharon Walpole

It matters not which season we are experiencing; I claim the current one my favorite. How could it be otherwise when there is much to see and learn from each? Of course, spring is an easy pick as a favorite, with the earth awakening and bringing forth new life. Summer rivals spring with varied shades of green accompanied by physical growth and blooms. Fall then rivals both with amazing displays of gorgeous colors. Winter tends to be almost forgotten—mainly because I stay inside where it’s warm and do not take the opportunity to observe. However, Arch and I had occasion to witness winter away from our usual Tidewater environs as we drove to Orange, on December 23rd. We frequently travel 460, partly to avoid the tunnel traffic, but more to see Virginia’s farmland. We had driven that highway in May as we went camping for a weekend. At that time several crops were in different stages of growth: green corn plants beginning to tassel, cotton almost ready to bloom, peanut and soybean plants coming up . . .

Contrast the summer panorama to the views on that cold, misty December day. We noted marsh grasses had changed to a beautiful tan color and undulated in the brisk breeze. Leaves swirled from a few trees that had held onto their leaves despite the remnants of a recent hurricane. Each tree “skeleton”, sapling or mature, told its own story of growth, as well as of storms and winds in the past. There were broken limbs, split trunks, a permanent bend in the direction of the prevailing wind, or even felled trees that somehow had survived, sending branches straight up from the horizontal trunk.

As we drove up and down hills and around curves, the fields gave hints of the previous summer months. Shocks of brown cornstalks stood, some as straight as soldiers; others had blown over. Giant machines had denuded the cotton plants of their foliage and white bolls, leaving scraps of cotton fluttering in the breeze. Huge plastic bales lay in the fields, ready for processing. Further down the road several plots had been plowed, removing traces of their former fruit. All seemed drab brown or gray—until brilliant green fields came into view! In contrast to patches of freshly cultivated brown soil, the bright “spring green” of the six-inch winter wheat lent cheer—even brilliance—to the landscape.

I had once again been “surprised by joy”. My heart rejoiced in the beauty of God’s creation. The unfolding scenery reminded me of His plan for growth and renewal even in some of the more challenging seasons of life. Along our journeys we experience joy and sorrow, loss and pain, boredom and busy-ness, trials and change . . . But most of all we know God’s love and faithfulness as He preserves and blesses us in all seasons.

## Low-Impact Aerobic Exercise Classes

Choose seated or standing exercises according to your need. Enjoy exercise and fellowship with friends!



**MONDAYS AT 1:00 P.M.**

*Women IN THE Word*

The Wednesday afternoon ladies' Disciple Group continues our study of "Daniel & Esther" on Wednesdays at 1:30 in the Fellowship Hall. It is not too late to join us! Books are available at \$10 each. Those who wish are encouraged to bring a lunch at 12:45 for fellowship before the study begins.

**JOY SINGERS**

**FEBRUARY 2023**

**REHEARSALS - Tuesdays at 9:30:**  
Feb. 7  
Feb. 21  
Feb. 28

**OUTREACH**  
Feb. 14 - 11:00 - Bayside Healthcare  
Feb. 16 - 11:00 - Commonwealth

JOY Ministry - Thalia Lynn Baptist Church

*Valentine Luncheon*  
featuring  
**The Elderly Brothers**

*February 9th at 12:00*

Menu: Pot Roast, Potatoes & Carrots, Green Beans, Salad, Cheesecake  
Cost: \$10 per person | Reservations by Feb. 6  
Please turn in to the office in the blue envelope.

Thalia Lynn Baptist Church  
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Virginia Beach, Virginia 23462  
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www.thalia Lynn.com

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**Special Needs Valentine's Dance**  
FELLOWSHIP HALL 2/18 AT 1:30PM

Thalia Lynn it is time again for our Special Needs Ministry to host another dance. If you are a member of this ministry or have someone you know would like to come dance, make plans to join us for a great time!

***For more information, email the office at [office@mytowncenterchurch.com](mailto:office@mytowncenterchurch.com)***