

HELP FOR THE JOURNEY

Fall/Winter 2021

The Newsletter for North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry

More Than a Ramp

By Carol Layton



The end game at North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) is always "more than." More than a friendly visit, more than a grab bar installed, more than a ramp built. For thousands of North Carolina

Baptists who help the frail aging in their communities, **the end game is sharing God's love with people** who find themselves in hard places.

Retired pastor, Daniel Wing, found himself in need of a ramp after an infection left him paralyzed from the waist down. **He needed a wheelchair ramp to leave his home and called NCBAM.** Call Center Specialist Shirley Carlson worked with Regional Director Robert Leonard to locate volunteers and funding for the ramp.

Leonard reached out to the Stanly-Montgomery Baptist Association to see if the ramp could be built **as one of the 20 projects planned for their "One Great Day"** mission event held May 2, 2021.

Rev. Brandon King and a crew from First Baptist Church of New London responded, **"Yep, we can do that!"** Funding for the ramp was provided jointly by the Association, the church, and a matching grant from NCBAM.

Rev. King says that he was blessed more than Daniel Wing. King remembers, **"The day before we built the ramp, Daniel and I prayed together and the Holy Spirit was so sweet on us.** I knew instantly that we weren't there just to build a ramp. Daniel is a pastor who hasn't preached in a long time. **Here was a man the church had forgotten about.** Getting to know Daniel was an awakening to me. The Holy Spirit reminded me to slow down and remember the saints of the past."

Mr. Wing also feels blessed and very grateful for the ramp—and the extra blessing that came with it. **"I got more than a ramp.**



Retired pastor Daniel Wing (right) with Rev. Brandon King (and Leo) on his ramp built during "One Great Day."

The most important part was the fellowship with Brandon King and the others who built it. I'll tell you this, **Pastor King is a great man and he don't mind praying with you.** They put the ramp in, brought gravel, and fixed it up real nice. And they brought us boxes of groceries for several weeks. I've only visited his church a few times, **but they treated us like we went there every day.** That's how nice they were to us."

Jennifer Snellings, administrative assistant at the Stanly-Montgomery

Baptist Association, says the ramp project ticked every box for their **"One Great Day" event.** "We don't want it to be just about the project. **We want people to see the love of Jesus in action.** Brandon and his crew are super missionaries in our community."

Carol Layton serves as director of communications and administration for NCBAM. Contact Carol at clayton@bchfamily.org.

"The ramp was built for me, and I've gotten better, but now my wife is completely bedridden. She had no way to get to the doctor and now my daughter can take her down the ramp. Oh Lord, it's been a blessing." – Daniel Wing

NCBAM Care Village Making a Difference

By Charity Johnson



The NCBAM Care Village has provided **Help for the Journey** during the past year by partnering with 42 local churches in Lenoir and Wayne County, the Neuse Baptist Association, and other community partners. Care Village members **receive geriatric management services allowing them to age in place** in their own homes as well as be part of a caring and supportive community of seniors.

Mary, 87, is one of our home-bound members. **She noticed that a neighbor moved in without any furniture.** She called me to see if we, "as a village," could share the love of Christ with her neighbor. I connected with the local InJoy Thrift Store who **blessed this aging neighbor with furniture** so that she didn't have to sleep on the floor anymore. **Whether Village members are frail- or well-aging, they are impacting our community and sharing the love of Christ!**

The NCBAM team, Village members, friends and community partners **have also been busy remodeling** the Annex of the Church at the Kennedy Home in Kinston. We are painting, adding baseboards, light fixtures, and making other upgrades so that **Village members will soon have a place to gather for relaxation, community involvement, and spiritual connection!**

We are also **looking forward to hosting Camp BAM on June 23-27, 2022.** (See page 5 for more information.)

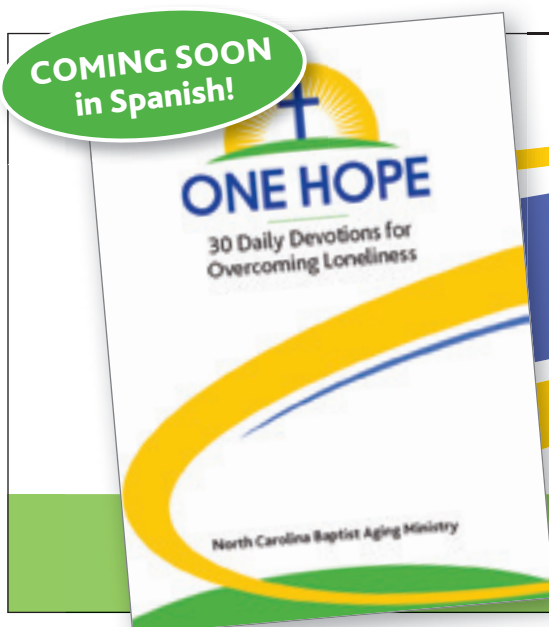
A note of appreciation from the son of two of our newest members who had been experiencing isolation and loneliness during the pandemic.

I got to see mom and dad yesterday and they are so appreciative of visits and cards from the Village members. Yesterday, my mom's anxiety seemed to be much lower. Just wanted to let you know you are making a difference in their lives. Keep up the good work NCBAM!



Care Village members enjoy going out together—attending educational workshops, local senior fests, or just out for lunch.

Charity Johnson serves as Care Coordinator for the NCBAM Care Village. Contact Charity at cjohnson@bchfamily.org or call 877.506.2226 to learn how you can join the NCBAM Care Village.



COMING SOON in Spanish!



Purchase, download or listen to the English version at onehopeNCBAM.org/resources.

COMING SPRING 2022

Ready to inspire a new generation of ramp builders?

Ramp Camp offers team-building exercises, cross-generational communication tips, and group devotionals to help campers minister with intention and build more than a ramp.



You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. – Matthew 5:14



Let **NCBAM** help your church organize an intergenerational weekend mission camp to serve the aging in your community.

Call **877.506.2226** to plan your mission-focused Ramp Camp experience with NCBAM!

Regional Aging Well Conferences

Be inspired to age well spiritually, emotionally, and physically!

March 10

NORTHEAST

March 17

SOUTHEAST

March 24

NORTH CENTRAL

March 31

SOUTH CENTRAL

April 7

CENTRAL WEST

April 14

FAR WEST

Learn more at ncbam.org/events or call **877.506.2226**.

“IN THEIR OWN WORDS”

My name is Linda Barefoot and my husband, Bob, was a bi-vocational and interim pastor. He died in February 2021 of COVID. We tried to get him an appointment for the shot, but it was so hard. Yvetta Smith, with NCBAM, was always so good to check on us, and to check on me after Bob died. She is always encouraging. She prays with me and asks if there is anything I need. – Linda, an NCBAM Servant Care Participant



Howdy Partner!

By Renee Adkins



What does it mean to partner with NCBAM's Call Center?

It all begins with a phone call to the **Call Center** from an aging adult needing assistance with a safety concern—such as a

wheelchair ramp for a loved one to be able to get in and out of their home safely. **Call Center Specialists begin to reach out to churches in the individual's community.** We have been very blessed to partner with Baptist Associations and **hundreds of churches and volunteers** across **North Carolina that are eager and willing to help** those in need.

“No one agency can do it all, but together, we can meet the needs of aging adults in North Carolina.”

—Dr. Sandy Gregory, NCBAM Ministry Director

Volunteers donate their time and skillset to build wheelchair ramps. **One of the main obstacles is the funding of ramp materials.** Many times, older adults are on fixed incomes and have no means to contribute toward materials. **Sometimes, churches are able to contribute both volunteers and funding.**

What happens when funding is not available? **We seek other community agencies and share an opportunity for service.** Some Senior Resource Centers **receive grant money to purchase materials.** Or, **we may contact local civic groups or Boy Scout troops** that may be looking for a service project.



Share the NCBAM Hope Line number with those experiencing isolation and loneliness in your community.

866.578.4673

Daily, 9am – 9pm

The NCBAM Hope Line also offers outbound calls!

To receive NCBAM's friendly call service for yourself or a loved one, complete the call request form at onehopencbam.org/call or call **877.506.2226**.



SCAN FOR REQUEST FORM



Hearing the hardships of aging adults can certainly pull on one's heartstrings. However, once a ramp has been built, **individuals call us to say how appreciative they are** for the assistance. The joy in their heart comes through in their voice as **they share with us how much of a blessing the ramp is** for them. Volunteers also share their gratitude for the opportunity to minister to others and share God's love through their service. **Thank you, partners, for your labors of love!**

If you, or your group or agency, **would like to partner with NCBAM** to help aging adults in your community, contact us at **877.506.2226**. We'll contact you when there is a need in your community. (There is no commitment; we'll understand if the time is not right.)

Renee Adkins serves as a Call Center Specialist with NCBAM. Contact Renee at radkins@bchfamily.org.

NCBAM Honored by NC's Division of Aging and Adult Services

The George L. Maddox Award recognizes an organization that has excelled in creative programming for older adults and is the most competitive award given by NC's Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS). Rebecca Freeman, Consumer Affairs and Legislative Liaison with the DAAS, presented the coveted award to NCBAM at the September virtual meeting of its Advisory Team.

Nominators included Holly Hight, a Caregiver Specialist with Lee County Senior Services, who wrote: "They are at the top of the game when it comes to creative and unique programming that has benefitted so many seniors around North Carolina. Their programming has helped curb social isolation, create stimulating seminars and workshops, and provide ample opportunity for learning."

Carolyn Edwards, a member of the Aging Committee with the Baptist State Convention, also nominated NCBAM. She wrote: "Their creativity in designing programs has always surpassed our expectations. Their programming remains current as they address issues confronting older adults. The NCBAM Hope Line has been a tremendous help to older adults in our state who are experiencing loneliness during the pandemic."



NCBAM Director Dr. Sandy C. Gregory (center), with team members after receiving the George L. Maddox award from North Carolina's Division of Aging and Adult Services.

Camp BAM – Next at Kennedy Home, and Your Church!

The inaugural Camp BAM took place in June, 2021.

Fifty intergenerational campers spent five days on the Mills Home campus of Baptist

Children's Homes in Thomasville. Groups from FBC Concord and Impact Community Youth in Stanly County completed 19

projects that served 45 individuals. Campers built wheelchair ramps, installed handrails and smoke alarms, and presented digital literacy classes at local senior facilities. Campers were provided team-building activities, group devotionals, pool time, and also socialized with some of the children in care at Mills Home.

Camp BAM's Director, Samantha Allred, was thrilled with the outcomes of the first Camp BAM. "I stood on the lawn of a senior receiving a handrail in awe of what God was doing. All of us found it difficult to put into words how intentionally God was working in the lives of the volunteers."

Group leader, Rev. Martha McDowell, says her prayers were answered for the campers. "I wanted them to see that worship doesn't occur just in a sanctuary."

The next Camp BAM will be held in eastern North Carolina June 23-27, 2022. Based at the Kennedy Home in Kinston, campers will build ramps, install grab bars and smoke alarms, and assist with projects at the NCBAM Care Village. Campers pay a nominal fee; NCBAM provides ministry projects and materials, camp programming, meals, and lodging. Local churches and businesses support the Camp by providing donations for meals.

NCBAM also offers weekend camp experiences at your church. We'll support your mission-minded teams as they serve aging adults in your community!

For more information about Camp BAM, contact Samantha Allred at sallred@bchfamily.org. To learn more about the NCBAM Care Village at Kennedy Home, contact Charity Johnson at cnjohnson@bchfamily.org.





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The mission of North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry is to help aging adults maintain their independence. Sandy C. Gregory, director; Carol Layton, editor; Amy Burns, proofreader; Melanie Beeson, circulation manager; Betsy Huffine, art director. **Free subscriptions** are available by calling **877.506.2226**. NCBAM is a ministry of Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina – Michael C. Blackwell, president/ceo and NCBAM founder.



Letter from the DIRECTOR

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace."

– John 16:33

Peace Like a River

Singing hymns has allowed me to express worship and provided a strong foundation for my faith. One such hymn is, "It Is Well with My Soul." The lyrics speak of God's help in troubling times.

When peace like a river attendeth my way

When sorrows like sea billows roll

Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say

It is well, it is well with my soul.

As I have aged, "peace like a river" has become more important to me. **Some people call it "peace of mind"** which means to have an overall sense of contentment or acceptance in certain situations. **Words like still, calm, and satisfied can be used to describe feelings of peace.** When a river flows, it goes either around or over obstacles. It flows without stopping. **Peace like a river is peace that flows in our lives despite troubles or turmoil.**

Our culture today seems to be one of tribulation. **Unrest causes stress and frustration.** An aging adult recently told me: "The past year was tough. Sometimes I feel like giving up and want to feel and think nothing for a few minutes, to rest a bit." In other words, **"the sea billows roll"** in this person's life. The Bible portrays the sea as the source of storms. Storms in our lives **cause us to feel restless and helpless.**



Having "peace like a river" starts with knowing Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

God's Word is filled with verses that bring peace in the midst of struggles. John 14:27 reads **"My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."**

Peace is a gift from God; all we have to do is accept it. Finding peace like a river allows us to sing the refrain of this hymn over and over: "It is well, it is well with my soul."

Dr. Sandy Gregory has served as director of NCBAM since its inception in 2009. Contact Sandy at scgregory@bchfamily.org.