

# THREE REACH FOR TRAIN 30 GIVE

NAFWB.ORG/3FOR30

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES REPORT\* DECEMBER 4, 2023

**PROBLEM:** Downward trend in membership and baptisms.

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**REACH GOAL:** Free Will Baptists will develop a Great Commission mindset, regularly engaging their communities and sharing the gospel.

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### REACH OBJECTIVES:

1. By the end of 2023, 10% of Free Will Baptist churches will have participated in Know Your Community.

**Progress:** 13% of all Free Will Baptist churches have participated in KYC. A survey of Free Will Baptist participants indicated 69% can identify an action they have taken to reach their community as a result.

2. By the end of 2023, 24 Free Will Baptist churches will have participated in The Hope Initiative.

**Progress:** 31 Free Will Baptist churches are currently participating in The Hope Initiative with a total of 39 groups and 270 congregants.

3. By the end of 2023, 12 Free Will Baptist churches will have participated in Child Evangelism Fellowship activities.

**Progress:** We are aware of ten churches currently utilizing CEF resources. Contact Jeff Nichols if you would like to learn more about working with CEF ([jeff@ceftennessee.com](mailto:jeff@ceftennessee.com)).

4. By the end of 2023, ten Free Will Baptist associations will have participated in IM's Go Global training.

**Progress:** IM conducted 10 Go Globals in 2022 and has conducted nine in 2023. Contact Jerry Gibbs to learn more about Go Global ([jgibbs@iminc.org](mailto:jgibbs@iminc.org)).

5. Increase the number of churches that develop outreach activities to area colleges and universities.

**Progress:** On the 3 for 30 Survey, 32 churches indicated a residential college was within a ten-minute drive of their church (five Christian, five private, 20 public). Six churches indicated they are engaged in outreach activities. We currently have seven churches reporting outreach activities to local colleges. We have convened a Reaching College Students Task Force to assist churches in reaching international students. If you are interested, contact Curt Holland ([curt@iminc.org](mailto:curt@iminc.org)).

6. Increase the number of churches and associations using Refresh resources.

**Progress:** Rekindle engagement is at the highest rate ever. We currently have 12 coaches working with 15 churches. Other Refresh resources include the online pastor hangout with Dr. Tim York, pastor's wife hangouts with Mrs. Carolyn Dwyer, and online sessions hosted in partnership with WNAC. Also, WNAC has events scheduled through September 2024. Dr. Tim York has worked with 34 churches and 33 pastors with the Pastor Placement Program. Our counselors, of which Tom Jones is the primary, have conducted over 452 sessions with pastors and their families. To learn more about these resources, visit [nafwb.org/grow](http://nafwb.org/grow).

7. Increase the number of pastors participating in NAM boot camps.

**Progress:** In addition to conducting two bootcamps this year in Nashville, four bootcamps were held regionally. A bootcamp in California was also conducted in Spanish. Below are scheduled boot camps. To schedule a boot camp, contact Dr. Brad Ransom ([brad@nafwb.org](mailto:brad@nafwb.org)).

## Scheduled Boot Camps

- West Virginia, March 15-16, 2024
- Kansas, April 12-13, 2024
- **Nashville, May 6-7, 2024 (Full Boot Camp)**
- Blue Ridge Association, North Carolina, August 2-3, 2024
- Michigan, August 23-24, 2024
- **Nashville, October 7-8, 2024 (Full Boot Camp)**
- Florida, January 20-23, 2025 (Bilingual)

**PROBLEM:** Downward trend in discipleship activities like Sunday School and small groups, along with a shortage of pastors, deacons, and volunteers.

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**TRAIN GOAL:** Free Will Baptists will develop a training and discipleship mindset.

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## TRAIN OBJECTIVES:

1. Add new Sunday School, Life Group, and Connect classes.

**Progress:** On the 3 for 30 survey, 30 churches indicated they have started a new class in the last 12 months, and 30 indicated a plan to start a class in the next 12 months.

2. Increase the percentage of churches using D6 Family Ministry curriculum.

**Progress:** Using the 3 for 30 Survey conducted in June as a benchmark, 79% of participants reported using D6 Family curriculum. Contact Katie Greenwood if you are interested in learning more about the new curriculum ([katie.greenwood@d6family.com](mailto:katie.greenwood@d6family.com)).

**3. Increase D-Groups.**

**Progress:** Using the 3 for 30 Survey conducted in June as a benchmark, 36% of participants reported having 78 D-Groups, and 48% of respondents reported plans to start a D-Group in the next 12 months.

**4. Increase the number of students who attend Free Will Baptist colleges.**

**Progress:** In fall 2022, 753 students enrolled at Free Will Baptist colleges. Fifteen of those students were from California Christian College, which has since closed. We had 763 students enrolled at Free Will Baptist colleges in the fall of 2023.

**5. Increase the churches that send students to ETEAM and Truth & Peace.**

**Progress:** See the research from participants in the Leadership Conference Program (page 14, *Keeping Our College Students*). For all programs combined, 6.3% of Free Will Baptist churches had students participate. Truth & Peace had students from 3.9% of churches, ETEAM 2.9%, and College Missions Program 1.5%.

**6. Recruit students who attend other Christian colleges to Free Will Baptist churches.**

**Progress:** Free Will Baptist students who do not attend a Free Will Baptist college attend Liberty University more than any other Christian college. We have been encouraging those students to attend New London Church in Forest, Virginia, where Brandon and Mandy Baber are located (**434-515-1575; baberb19@gmail.com**). Pastor Baber reports 40 college students attending New London Church this semester, three of whom are from Free Will Baptist churches.

**7. Recruit students who attend non-Christian colleges to attend Free Will Baptist churches near the college they attend.**

**Progress:** Based on a recent survey of ETEAM, Truth and Peace, National Youth Evangelistic Team, Church Training Service, and College Missions Program alumni, we are doing well on this goal, especially among these students. Eighty-five percent of respondents reported attending a Free Will Baptist church. Eighty-seven percent of respondents reported involvement in ministry at the church they attended.

8. Increase the number of students who participate in Church Training Services (CTS Ministry Expo).

**Progress:** Based on the results of the 3 for 30 Survey, 33% of churches indicated they had youth participating in CTS.

9. Encourage local and state associations to host training sessions for church workers on the Bible and Free Will Baptist doctrine.

**Progress:** We do not have data yet to indicate progress in this objective.

10. Encourage associations and presbyteries to emphasize Free Will Baptist doctrine and practice and theological knowledge in the ordination process.

**Progress:** We do not have data yet to indicate progress in this objective.

**PROBLEM: Free Will Baptists are underutilizing their resources.**

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**GIVE GOAL: Free Will Baptists will give themselves wholly to the work of the Lord by giving their talents, gifts, and resources.**

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### **GIVE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Increase the number of churches and associations assisting other churches.

**Progress:** Based on the results of the 3 for 30 Survey, 48% of churches reported engaging in activities to assist other churches.

2. Increase the number of Disaster Response Teams (DRT) to 15 by 2030.

**Progress:** There are currently eight DRTs throughout the U.S.

3. Increase the number of pastors who serve as chaplains to 100.

**Progress:** We are currently aware of 16 pastors serving as chaplains across North America.

4. Increase the number of Free Will Baptists who participate in Disaster Response Teams, The Hanna Project, and College Missions Program.

**Progress:** Based on the 3 for 30 Survey, 17 churches had participants.

5. Increase the number of Free Will Baptist pastors who participate in the Board of Retirement and increase contributions.

**Progress:** Currently, 33% of all Free Will Baptist pastors are participants in the BOR program.

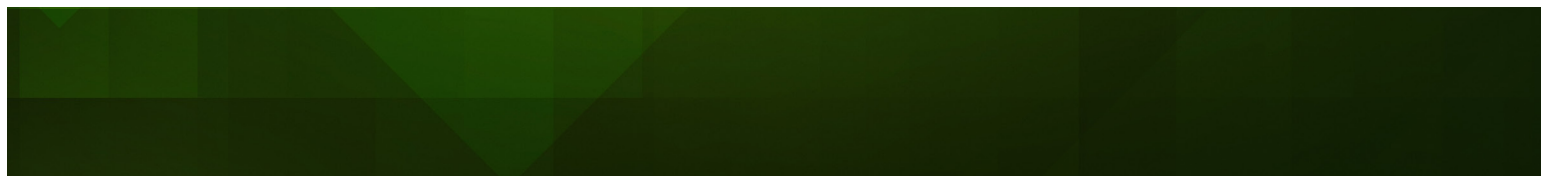
6. Increase Free Will Baptist endowments from \$15 million to \$30 million by 2030.

**Progress:** We currently have \$15 million in endowments, including \$1.1 million in The Together Way Trust.

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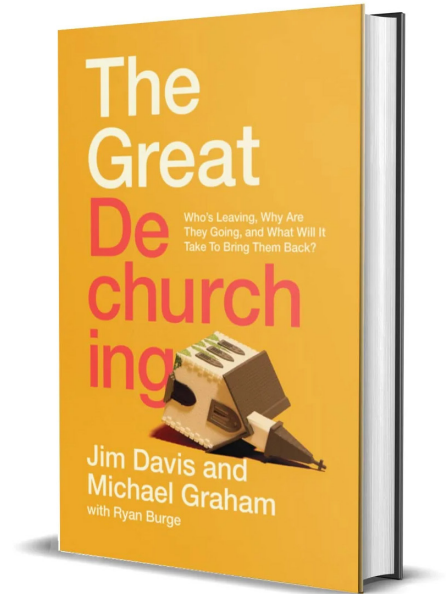
Email [questions@nafwb.org](mailto:questions@nafwb.org) to  
learn more about any of these initiatives.



# WHAT'S NEW?

## THE GREAT DECHURCHING BOOK STUDY

Forty million people (15.5%) of the U.S. population stopped attending church over the last 25 years. Many reported they still hold evangelical beliefs and plan to return to church. However, the clock is ticking. If they do not return soon, the generation following them will probably not hold to their view of orthodoxy. In book discussions next year, we will look at actions we can take to reach them.



### Better Together Podcast

January 8, 2024 | Podcast With Jim Davis, Michael Graham, and Ryan P. Burge

### Book Discussions

January 18, February 1, February 29  
11:00 AM CT

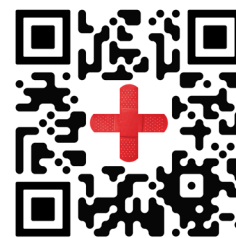
Also, read a **book review** of *The Great Dechurching* coming in the next issue of *ONE Magazine*. Visit **[dechurcing.com](https://dechurcing.com)** and complete the 20-point checklist.

## FIRST AID READY

One of key points learned from *The Great Dechurching* research was the emotional problems experienced by the dechurched. Davis and Graham also point out that addressing these needs can be an entry point for reaching the dechurched. Last May, 17.8% of the U.S. population indicated they were struggling with depression. Around the same time, Barna released a study where nonbelievers indicated they wanted the church to help with those kinds of issues. We believe that addressing the emotional needs of our communities can help us to better reach them.



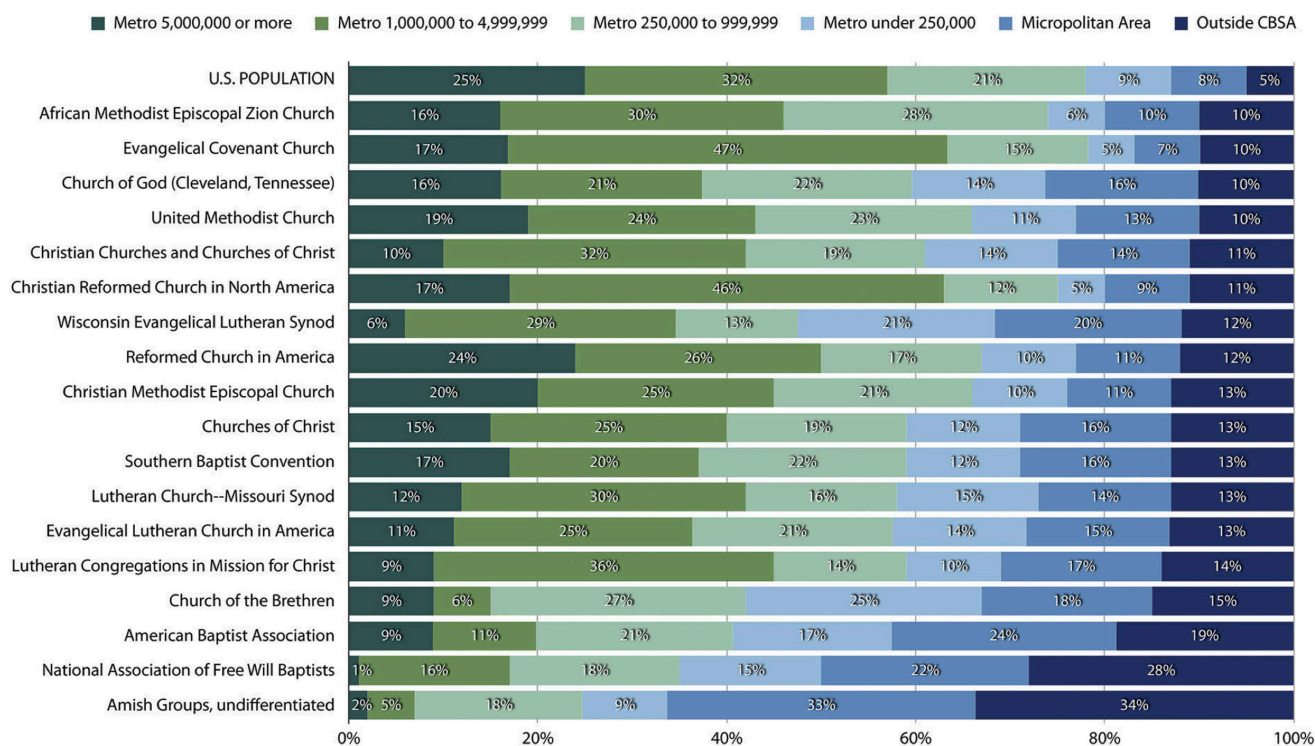
That is the point of **First Aid Ready**. Free Will Baptists currently have eight churches participating in a pilot program to become First Aid Ready. You can learn more at [nafwb.org/firstaid](http://nafwb.org/firstaid).



## RURAL INTERVENTIONS

Results of the 2020 U.S. Religious Census were released a few days ago. There are 372 religious bodies in the United States. The only group that is more rural than the NAFWB is Amish Groups.

**Figure 2: Religious Bodies of at Least 100,000 Adherents that are Concentrated in Rural Areas, 2020**



The locations of Free Will Baptist churches can be broken down as follows: Metro 5,000,000 or more (1%), Metro 1,000,000 to 4,999,999 (16%), Metro 250,000 to 999,999 (18%), Metro under 250,000 (15%), Micropolitan Area (22%), and Outside CBSA (28%). Exactly 50% of all NAFWB churches are located in very rural areas.



The terms *Micropolitan* and *CBSA* are defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). *Micropolitan* areas consist of a county or counties (or equivalent entities) associated with at least one urban cluster of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000, plus adjacent counties having a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured through commuting ties.

For perspective, 8% of the U.S. population lives in a Micropolitan Area, and only 5% of the U.S. population lives in an area Outside *CBSA* (Core Based Statistical Area). Put another way, 50% of NAFWB churches are located where only 13% of the U.S. population lives. See the table below.

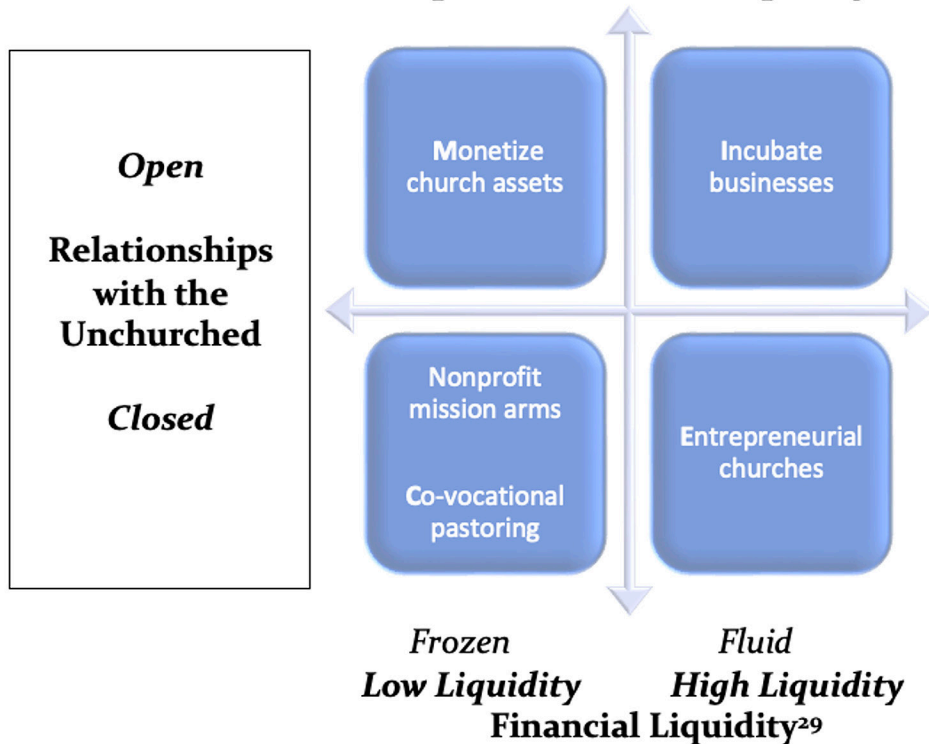
	Percent of Churches	Percent of Population	Cumulative Churches	Cumulative Population
<b>Outside</b>	28	5	28	5
<b>Micropolitan</b>	22	8	50	13
<b>Metro 1</b>	15	9	65	22
<b>Metro 2</b>	18	21	83	43
<b>Metro 3</b>	16	32	99	75

What are the implications? We must look at alternative models for pastors in the especially rural areas: sharing pastors and church mergers. (Find potential creative strategies: [nafwb.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Creative-Strategies.pdf](https://nafwb.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Creative-Strategies.pdf)) We will also need to look at funding models for churches that are unable to support pastors and pastoral ministry.

See the work on MINCE with Jay Moon. It is our hope that, as we look at churches, we will become skilled at assessing their financial liquidity and relationships with the unchurched. (See the chart on the next page.)



**Figure 1**  
**Financial Approaches Available to Churches as a Function of Relationships with**  
**Unchurched People and Financial Liquidity**



We will post a podcast with Dr. Jay Moon February 9 on the Better Together Podcast. Let me know if you have any interest in learning more about this strategy.