

**Church Generosity Within Our Family of Congregations**

By

George W. Bullard Jr., Director

Columbia Metro Baptist Association

***GeorgeBullard@ColumbiaMetro.org***

[***www.ColumbiaMetro.org***](http://www.ColumbiaMetro.org)

In a family of congregations in the Midlands of South Carolina known as the Columbia Metro Baptist Association, it is important to engage in acts of generosity toward our sister and brother congregations. This is one characteristic of what it means to be churches-in-association with one another who are *starting and strengthening congregations to serve as vital and vibrant missional communities*. (This statement in italics is better known as Our One Priority.)

As your associational director I have listened carefully for signs of generosity by one congregation for another during the past several weeks, and here is a sample of what I have heard:

* A congregation has built a new worship center and has pews from its old worship center it would like to offer to any congregation who would come pick them up.
* One or more congregations have a small amount or even significant space in their facilities they want to offer to another congregation or Christian ministry for use.
* One or more congregations have unused choir robes, instruments, published music, or other musical resources they no longer need they want to share with another congregation.
* A congregation is engaging in a local, national, or global missions project or ongoing ministry that they would like to offer for other congregations who may not be able to sponsor their own projects to participate with them as family members.
* A community concert is sponsored by multiple congregations to benefit a pastor and spouse impacted by a long illness.
* A congregation has women and men who love fix and repair projects and they offer to help congregations without the resources to fix things in their own buildings and on their property.
* A congregation who has some music ensembles who need practice leading music for worship and desire to sing for free in congregations who might benefit from their presence.
* Some congregations who are offering specialized training and equipping conferences that other congregations might need but cannot afford to attend or conduct and invite sister and brother congregations to attend at little or no cost.
* Congregations who regularly pray for sister and brother congregations among our churches-in-association that God might help them prosper as their seek God’s vision for their ministry.
* A congregation with several acres of land they would offer for a community garden for the hunger ministry of other congregations, or as a recreation places that other congregations could use.

It is important to point out that not all congregations—even in our family of congregations—are this generous. Some who on their best days seek to be Christ-centered, faith-based, Christian communities also have modulated from a focus on their congregation being part of God’s Church, to a focus on the church as their church, their buildings, their programs, their ministries, etc. Not many, but a few. They did not set out to become this way. It simply snuck up on them when they were not looking. For some it has become a survival stance.

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)