

SPECIAL EDUCATION SUMMIT 25

SESSION CONTRIBUTORS

CHERYL BOEHME

Cheryl Boehme has been happily married to her husband for thirty-four years. They reside in Clayton, North Carolina. They have three grown daughters, a beloved son-in-law, and three precious grandchildren. Cheryl has been in education for over 40 years, holding a BS in Elementary Education and an M.Ed. in Special Education. She recently completed her twenty-fifth year at Friendship Christian School in Raleigh, and for the past nine years, she has worked with students whose cognitive abilities prevent them from being in the mainstream classroom. With God's help, it is her pleasure to work with these students and their families, helping them develop into young adults who can confidently recognize the specific abilities God has given them for life.

CHARITY CAMPBELL

Charity Campbell is a non-practicing physical therapist assistant with a background in school setting pediatrics. This experience ignited her passion for children living with disabilities. In her previous work, she was privileged to improve these children's access to education through exercise, and this has come full circle as she now aids in a classroom setting, contributing to the very education she worked for years to help students access. Charity has spent the last three years as a paraprofessional in the Hope Allen Center for Exceptional Children at Tabernacle Christian School, and she considers it a blessing to be part of this ministry. She has been married to her wonderful husband for 11 years, and they share two children, aged 10 and 9, who attend Tabernacle. She looks forward to seeing how the Lord works in their lives in the years to come.

RUSS DUNCAN

Russ Duncan is the Ministry Relations Manager for Joni and Friends NC. He is a native of North Carolina and now lives in Rock Hill, SC with his wife and 5 children. Before coming to Joni and Friends, Russ taught high school math for 24 years, as well as serving as an elder at his church for 15 years. In his role, Russ provides churches with resources and training so they can fulfill their mission, including people living with disability. He also connects churches and like-minded disability ministries to each other through disability networks so they can collaborate with, encourage, and assist one another.

DAVID & RENEE GAMBLE

David and Renee Gamble have served in ministry for 33 years. They currently serve at the Shenandoah Baptist Church in Cleveland, Tennessee, where David is the pastor. They have three children, Michael, Mitchell, and Bethany.

AMY HARRILL

Amy Harrill is a homeschooling mother, consultant, and speaker with deep roots in the special needs community. Inspired by her daughter with Down syndrome and her sister with a severe brain injury, she brings both personal empathy and professional expertise to her work. As the founder of a global consulting firm, she helps organizations integrate complex technologies to achieve meaningful outcomes. She's honored to be part of the team bringing *Shepherd's College* to individuals with IDD across the U.S. and beyond.

DWAYNE HICKMAN

Dwayne has served in Christian education and church ministry for 38 years. He currently serves as the Administrative Pastor at Tabernacle Baptist Church and the administrator at Tabernacle Christian School in Hickory, NC. Dwayne and his wife, Chelle, have four adult children and five grandchildren.

LAUREN HICKMAN

Lauren Hickman is the Director and Founder of Wonderfully Made Ministry, a church ministry dedicated to serving individuals with disabilities and equipping churches to welcome and support these families. She is also a lead special education teacher in the Hope Allen Center for Exceptional Children. Lauren is passionate about helping churches recognize the God-given worth of every individual and support them with tools to make everyone feel welcome in the body of Christ.

MEAGAN HILDEBRAN

Meagan Hildebran was born and raised here in Hickory, North Carolina, and graduated from Tabernacle Christian School. After earning a bachelor's degree in History Education, she returned to TCS and recently completed her sixteenth year of teaching. She and her husband, Josh, have been married for thirteen years and have been blessed with four children. The Hildebran's seven-year-old son was diagnosed with SPD and autism a few years ago, and their two-year-old son is currently undergoing evaluations for autism. Mrs. Hildebran says, "Although raising children with special needs is the most difficult thing we have ever experienced, the Lord has given more love, grace, and joy through this journey than we ever could have imagined!"

SCOTT HOOKS

Scott Hooks has served as a Pastor at Tabernacle Baptist Church and President of Tabernacle Christian School in Hickory, North Carolina since 2008. Before coming to Tabernacle, he was privileged to serve on the staff of the Temple Baptist Church and Crown College in Powell, Tennessee. Pastor Hooks earned a Masters of Biblical Studies degree from The Crown College and is nearing the completion of a Masters of Divinity degree. He completed his undergraduate degree in Business Administration from the University of Tennessee. He and his wife, Melanie, have five children and four grandchildren.

LISA JOYNER

Lisa Joyner is the Education Chair and Ed.D. Program Director at Veritas Baptist College, a fully online Bible college dedicated to equipping Christians for ministry in churches, schools, and the mission field. In 2017, she played a key role in developing both graduate and undergraduate degree programs in special education, aimed at helping Christian schools expand their ministries to include children with special needs. Additionally, Dr. Joyner contributed to the creation of the college's Ed.D. program. She teaches several general education and special education courses from her home in North Carolina. Before joining Veritas, Dr. Joyner taught middle and high school English and history in a Christian school, where she felt a deep calling to support children with special needs. In 2007, she founded the Specialized Learning Center as part of a Christian school in Raleigh to address the needs of students with learning disabilities. Dr. Joyner remains passionate about helping Christian schools across the country deepen their understanding of special education, enabling them to provide high-quality Christian education for

students who learn differently. She has been married to Oscar Joyner for 37 years, and they have two grown children: Brennen (and his wife, Claire) and Kayla (and her husband, Lewis).

MINDY JONES

Mindy is a pastor's wife and a mother of five. While teaching at her church's school, she saw many hardworking students struggling with learning disorders and growing frustrated. Determined to help, she explored different options, including the Brain Balance Center, but realized its cost was out of reach for most families. This led her to study the Melillo Method of hemispheric integration, which she now uses to help individuals of all ages, both in her home and online.

MOLLY KINCHELOE

Molly Kincheloe graduated from Milligan College in 2013 with a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy. Her practice focus has been pediatrics, with experience in outpatient, home health, and currently a school-based setting. She also teaches the pediatric course for the Walter State Community College OT assistant program. Molly's passions in pediatrics include sensory processing disorder and feeding difficulties. She has been married to her husband, Mark, for 11 years, and they share two beautiful children, Maddox and Maelyn. The family enjoys spending their time together outdoors and on their little farm. Molly truly feels that God called her to be an occupational therapist, and each day, she has the opportunity to live out her calling by making a small difference in each child's life she works with, while they continue to bless her every day.

SUNSHINE MEISTER

Sunshine Meister is a wife, mother of seven, mother of a son with traumatic brain injury, an English teacher, a friend, a laundry expert, a sister, a daughter, and a reader. Each of these titles have their significance only as they are overshadowed and encompassed by the truth that she is a child of God, a lover, disciple, and follower of Jesus Christ, and an image-bearer of the eternal, living God. Through the challenges, sorrows, and joys of life, God reveals Himself to her as her all-sufficient, all-satisfying, faithful, and kind Good Shepherd. Because Jesus has captured her heart, she is a pursuer of Christ and want her life to be a platform upon which God can show His sufficiency, His glory, and His magnificence . . . “that in all things he might have the preeminence.” Colossians 1:18

TIM MISSEY

Tim Missey is the Principal of Tabernacle Christian School in Hickory, North Carolina. He received his Bachelors of Animal Science from The University of Arkansas and Masters of Ministry and Masters of Christian Education from Crown College of the Bible. Mr. Missey served as teacher and then assistant principal for many years at Temple Baptist Academy of Powell, Tennessee. His professional experience also includes extensive employee management, training, and administration. He, his wife Jessica, and their three beautiful daughters relocated to Hickory in 2020, where they are actively involved in the ministries of Tabernacle Baptist Church. Mr. Missey provides key support to teachers and staff engaged in all grade levels at Tabernacle Christian School and in the newly established Hope Allen Center for Exceptional Children.

SARA REID

Sara Reid is privileged to serve as the Elementary & Exceptional Children's Department Principal at Tabernacle Christian School in Hickory, North Carolina. She also works as an adjunct professor of education at Veritas Baptist College. Ms. Reid received her Bachelors of Biblical Studies in Elementary Education and her Masters of Christian Education, with a concentration in Educational Administration, from Crown College of the Bible in Powell, Tennessee. She has taught and served in the ministries of Tabernacle Baptist Church and Christian School for the last fourteen years and is thankful to have had the opportunity to be a part of the inaugural years of special education provision and instruction at TCS. She also loves to pour that experience into students at the college level through her early childhood

education courses at Veritas Baptist College. She is thrilled to be marrying Mark Bookout just ONE WEEK after this year's Special Education Summit!

DAN RILEY

Dr. Dan Riley was born in Miami, FL, and has lived both in South Florida and Central Florida. He is married to his wife of 30 years, Brenda Riley, who has taught alongside him each and every year. He has four children – Kendall, Katie, Jandy, and Brooklyn. As an adult with cognitive disabilities, Kendall is enjoying life at home and is a blessing to his mom and dad. Katie is studying graphic design and photography at Liberty University, and Jandy and Brooklyn are juniors in high school, praying about what God has in store for them. Three out of the four children are adopted, and the Rileys have experience in foster care, dealing with the courts in difficult cases, etc.

Dr. Riley has been school administrator of Faith Christian School in Margate, FL for 10 years, and has been the Head of School of Inverness Christian Academy in West-Central Florida for the last 19 years. The 2025-2026 school year will be the 30th year that the Rileys have taught together in Christian education. Dr. Riley also leads the music program at their church, Fort Cooper Baptist Church. In 2021 he joined the online graduate education faculty of Maranatha Baptist University, and most recently in 2023 joined the online graduate faculty of Veritas Baptist College. He enjoys teaching graduate-level and doctoral students, and looks forward to transitioning from K-12 to higher education in the next couple of years, as well as assisting Christian schools wishing to start programs for students with disabilities. This is a huge passion of the Rileys.

Dr. Riley earned a Bachelor of Arts in Bible and Music from Bob Jones University, a Master's in Educational Leadership from BJU, and earned a doctorate in Educational Leadership from Liberty University in 2020 with a dissertation in special education. He also serves on accreditation teams for FACCS (Florida Association of Christian Colleges and Schools) and MSA-CESS (Middle States Association Commission on Elementary and Secondary Schools). His hobbies include everything aviation, trains, cheering on all Miami sports teams, and most of all hanging out with his wife and kids. He is very honored to be speaking to such a special group of educators this week!

BRENDA RILEY

As an educator of 30 years and an ESE specialist, Brenda brings a unique perspective to the classroom. It has been said that her classrooms yield a comfortable environment that facilitates a confidence and willingness to learn. She approaches teaching from the perspective of being mom to Kendall, a now 21-year-old differently gifted guy who has transformed her way of looking at life and loving unconditionally. Brenda is a ministry wife and the founder of the special education department at Inverness Christian Academy which now serves over fifty students with specialized plans. She's a mom of four, a church pianist, and her happy place is beside the ocean drinking a good cup of simple breakfast coffee next to her husband of thirty years, Dr. Daniel Riley.

LARAH ROBERTS

Larah Roberts is a Bible teacher, author, podcaster, and Instagram content creator at Raising Autistic Disciples. She is passionate about encouraging and equipping others to grow in personal discipleship—and having fun while doing it. Raised in Louisiana and now calling North Carolina home, Larah shares life's adventures with her college sweetheart, Collin. Together, they co-authored *How to Advocate & Stay Christian*, a practical resource on navigating advocacy with a gospel lens. Beyond ministry and writing, Larah's greatest joy is being a mom to three fun and energetic kids who keep life exciting. She loves road trips, fun earrings, cheering for every team in the WNBA, reading, naps, and interesting conversations over coffee.

JORDAN, KARA, & WESLEY RODGERS

Wesley is young man with non-speaking Autism. God has given him incredible insight and perspective and has worked in his life in an amazing way to give him the ability to communicate. He has a desire to serve the Lord with what He has given him. His parents, Jordan and Kara, have a desire to encourage those who work with and parent children with special needs.

BETHANY SCHON

Bethany Schon is a second-grade teacher and high school volleyball coach at Tabernacle Christian School. She earned a B.S. in Elementary Education with an emphasis on Early Childhood. Her husband, David Schon, is the youth pastor at Tabernacle Baptist Church. They both have served in this ministry for two years. Bethany is the sibling of an individual living with special needs.

KRISTA SMITH

Mrs. Krista Smith is the director of the Specialized Learning Center at Shenandoah Baptist Academy, where she supports learners from preschool to adulthood. She also serves as an adjunct professor of special education at Pensacola Christian College and as the Chair of Christian Education at Veritas Baptist College. Growing up in a home of Christian school educators, she felt called to Christian education from an early age. Recognizing the need for additional training to better support her students, she pursued professional certification in Christian counseling and later served as a school counselor. She has founded two special education programs in Christian schools, equipping educators to meet the diverse needs of their students. In 2020, she earned a master's degree in Special Education from Veritas Baptist College, and she is currently pursuing a Doctor of Education degree. Mrs. Smith lives in Cleveland, Tennessee, with her husband, Matt, and their two children, Kirsten and Elliot.

HANNAH SPEILLER

Hannah joined the Shepherds College team in 2017 as the Lead Instructor and again in 2022 as an Instructional Designer for SC Online. Hannah has extensive experience in creating engaging, accessible, and effective lessons for all learners. Hannah was an integral part of the development and implementation of Shepherds College's remote learning program in 2020, which resulted in the creation of Shepherds College Online.

JESSICA VALENTE

Jessica Valente is a wife and mother of three who has been a Christian for the past 13 years. With a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Human Development, she has gained extensive experience working in public, private, and behavioral therapy settings, specializing in special education. Passionate about behavioral interventions and life skills, she believes in fostering strong, loving relationships with students rather than focusing solely on academics. Currently pursuing her Master's in Christian education with a concentration in special education, she enjoys analyzing data, identifying trends, and using problem-solving strategies to support student growth. As the lead teacher in the cluster classroom at the Hope Allen Center for Exceptional Children, she is committed to creating a nurturing and effective learning environment. Her faith-driven approach to education emphasizes the importance of prayer, observation, and relationship-building to help every child thrive. Jessica was recently named one of the prestigious Herzog Foundation's Teacher of the Year, an honor bestowed upon only 12 teachers across the country.

KENN WINN

Kenn and his wife, Joy, met at Pensacola Christian College and they have been married since June 2003. They have been blessed with three wonderful children and two of them are on the autism spectrum at varying levels. Kenn has been in pastoral ministry for 18 years and has served as the Connections Pastor at Campus Church in Pensacola, Florida since June of 2021. He oversees the hospitality ministry and works to help first-time guests become faithful members.

KELLY WOOD

Kelly Wood was blessed to grow up in a Christian home and attend a Christian school. As a teenager, the Lord planted the seed for Christian Special Education in her heart. When she expressed an interest in Special Education, she was told that Christian schools did not offer such programs. While the seed was planted, it remained dormant as she followed the Lord's leading to study education. In 2006, Kelly graduated with a Bachelor's in Christian Secondary Education, with an emphasis in History and English, from Crown College. For five years, she taught grades 5th-12th, primarily history, with a sprinkling of other subjects. She was then privileged to work for two years in the special education program at Friendship Christian School in Raleigh. After her time of learning and developing there, the Lord led her to Wilson Christian Academy in Wilson, North Carolina. While working on her Master's in Christian Special Education from Veritas Baptist College, she helped launch a Tutorial Support Program at Wilson Christian. This program blossomed into The Specialized Learning Center in the fall of 2023, where they currently serve students with ADHD, Autism, Intellectual Disabilities, Other Health Impairments, Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Tourette's Syndrome, Central Auditory Processing Disorder, and Learning Disabilities.