

An aerial photograph of a small town in Scottsville, Virginia. The town features a mix of brick and wooden buildings, mostly two or three stories high. There are several parking lots with cars. The town is surrounded by dense, wooded hills. In the far distance, a range of mountains is visible under a cloudy sky. The overall tone is somewhat muted, with a dark overlay.

Faith Coordination for Health in Scottsville, VA

Health Equity & Access in Rural Regions (HEARR)

Emily Thomas, Erin Herock, Logan Ende, Nancy Etro, and Sophie Delzell

PLAC 5240 Collaborative Planning for Sustainability | Fall 2022

Project Presentation Overview

- Project Proposal and Goals + Objectives
- Background on Faith-Based Organizations and Public Health
- Situation Assessment: Process, Key Issues, and Stakeholders
- Interview: Protocol and Findings
- Recommendations and Process Map
- Evaluation Protocol
- Limitations
- Project Group Covenant and Analysis

Project Proposal

Interview pastors and congregants to learn more about public health needs they see in the HEARR service area as part of developing an equitable collaboration process that can help guide future collaboration between faith organizations, the Town of Scottsville, and the HEARR region to achieve health equity.



Credit: Scottsville United Methodist Church



Credit: Scottsville Museum



Credit: Scottsville Presbyterian Church



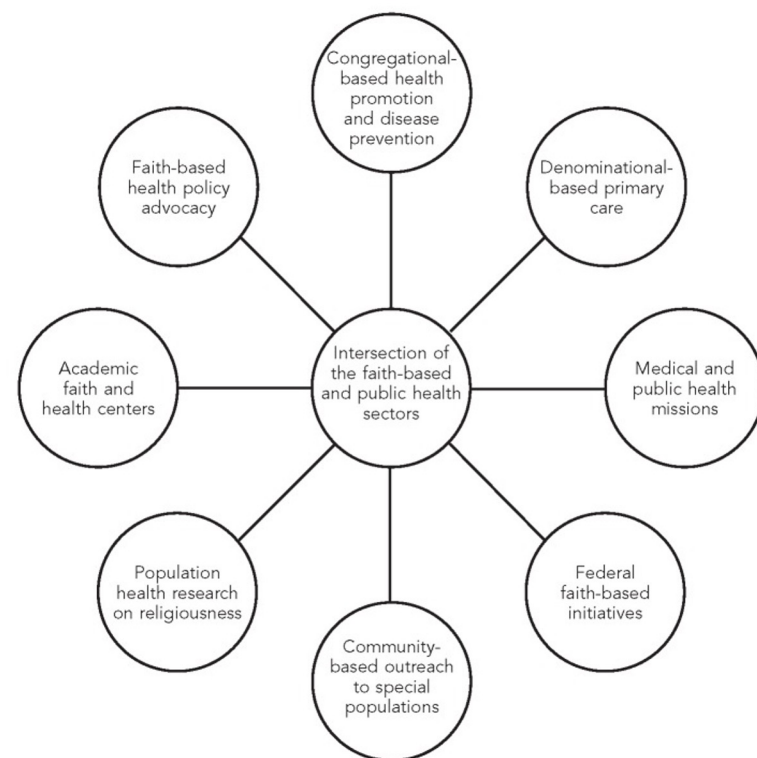
Credit: Find a Grave

Project Goals + Objectives

- Contextualize current health and equity needs.
- Identify what faith and faith groups are in the Scottsville.
- Form a relationship with faith leaders.
- Analyze the relationship between the town of Scottsville and faith communities.
- Assess community health needs.
- Understand the role that faith organizations play in the Scottsville community.
- Understand current practices for health access.
- Develop a useful deliverable to help guide future collaboration between faith organizations

Faith-Based Organizations and Public Health

- Collaboration between faith-based and public health sectors in the U.S. date back to the 19th century (Levin, 2014).
- Faith-based organizations can “represent powerful agents for health and justice” (Morabia, 2019).
- By provide leadership and capacity to service, faith-based organizations are social assets in communities where social and economic resources are in short supply (Idler et al., 2018).



Points of intersection between the faith-based and public health sectors (Levin, 2014).

Situation Assessment

Issue Assessment

1

- Learn about Scottsville's history, faith community, and health stakeholders
- Identify resources and information needed for project
- Research faith-based health examples
- Identify faith leaders and key stakeholders

Develop Structure & Process

2

- Create group covenant & internal expectations
- Establish project goals
- Identify necessary actions to achieve project goals
- Write & confirm project proposal with Professor Dukes & Matt Lawless
- Create interview protocol

Outreach & Stakeholder Interviews

3

- Contact identified faith leaders & key stakeholders
- Write interview questions based on assessment findings & project goal
- Conduct interview
- Transcribe & code interview
- Review interview transcription & codes

Outcomes & Recommendation

4

- Summarize stakeholder interviews & interview codes
- Establish recommendation using issue assessment & interviews
- Create collaboration process map
- Create project presentation for stakeholders in collaboration process
- Recieve feedback & make corrections by December 8
- Finalize report & distribute to stakeholders

Situation Assessment: Key Issues

- Food insecurity
- Transportation – must drive to Charlottesville for doctor's appointments and pharmacy
- Lack of health services, including mental health services
- Affordable housing
- Economic challenges
- The older community relies on social security checks, higher prices cause challenges
- People are quick to judge each other/people will call others out in a small community
- Change is challenging, hard to go against the norm
- Isolation for seniors
- Lack of wi-fi



Credit: Visit Charlottesville

Situation Assessment: Stakeholders

- Churches and other faith organizations
 - Congregants
 - Faith leaders
- Community members
- Vulnerable populations
 - Elderly, low-income, minority populations
- Health organizations
 - HEARR



Credit: Scottsville Virginia



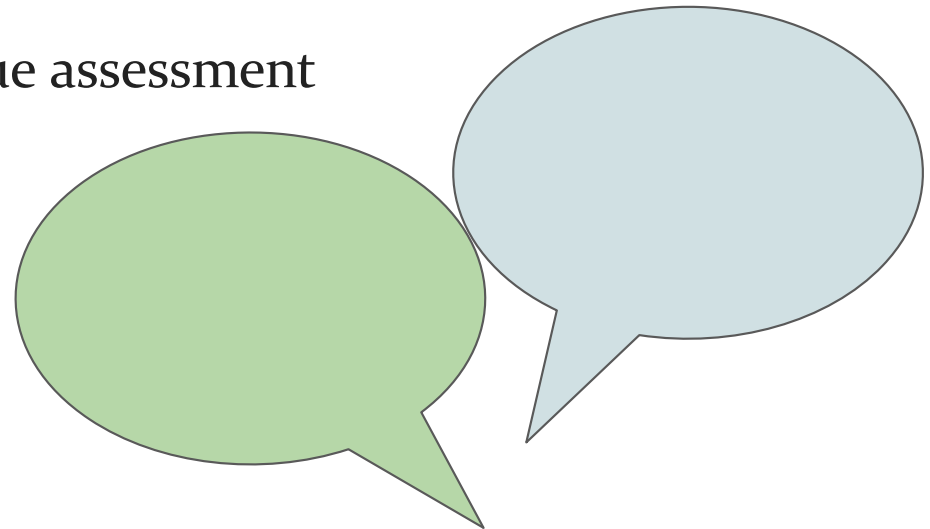
Credit: ?

Situation Assessment: Process

- Create group covenant & internal expectations
- Establish project goals
- Identify necessary actions to achieve goals
- Write and confirm project proposal
- Create interview protocol

Interview Protocol

- Contact identified faith leaders & stakeholders
 - Email
- Write interview questions based on issue assessment
- Record Interview with permission
- Conduct interview
 - Zoom
 - In-Person
- Transcribe and code interview



Contacted & Interviewed Participants

Interviewed

- **Laura Stratton:** Scottsville Methodist Church
- **Kody Stewart:** Scottsville Baptist Church
- **Stephanie Johnson:** Atlee Church Scottsville
- **Karen Mann:** United Church of Christ



Credit: Food Pantries

Recommended & Contacted

- Mary Carey: Mt. Amos Baptist Church, Free Union Baptist Church
- Gene Woodson: Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church
- Tim Karr: Scottsville Fire Department
- Greg Jenkins: Scottsville Police Chief



Credit: Scottsville Museum

Interview Protocol

Interview Questions:

1. Please share a bit about yourself and your role in the community. What populations do you serve?
2. What strengths and assets have you observed in your community?
3. Given your work in Scottsville, what people, neighborhoods, and/or populations are identified as historically excluded and underserved?
4. How does your organization serve these populations? How do you learn about their strengths, needs and challenges?
5. Do you or your organization have ways of capturing people outside of the congregation? Example: open community events, programs, groups?
6. What public health needs have been exposed – and for whom – by COVID that might impact access to health services?
7. How does your organization work with others in the region?
8. How should we measure successful interventions in public health? In one year? In five years? In 10 years?
9. Do you have suggestions for others in the community who should be included in an interview or focus group?

Interview Findings

- Community strengths and assets
- How churches learn about health needs
- How churches capture people outside of their organization
- Public health needs exposed by COVID
- Why collaboration is important
- Collaboration in the region
- Measuring success



Credit: Visit Charlottesville

Community Strengths and Assets

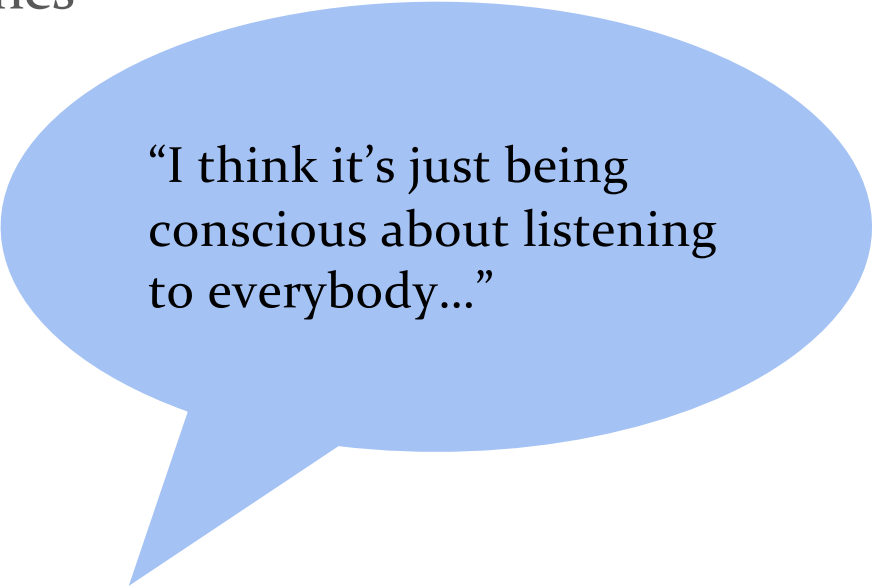


Credit: Scottsville Virginia

- Tight-knit community
- People rally around each other
- Pride in community
- Community leaders are working to make a difference


How do churches learn about health needs?

- Word of mouth
- Meetings within and outside of churches
- Active resident Facebook group
- Love Inc.



“I think it’s just being conscious about listening to everybody...”

How do you capture people outside of the organization?

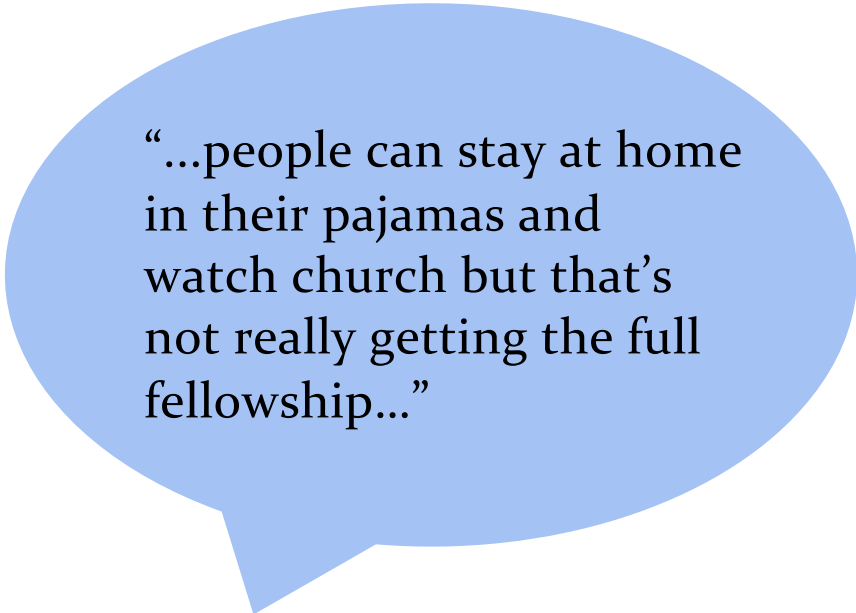


“We want people to have friendly relations with us so that if there are issues or concerns they know they can come to us.”

- Community events
 - Trunk or Treat, Eggstravaganza, Holiday Happenings
- In-person and online services
- Try to cultivate relationships in community so that people know they can rely on churches

Public health needs exposed by COVID

- Church attendance dropped
 - Online services were inaccessible to some because of lack of internet access
- Hard to get medical service because of lack of transportation/medical infrastructure
- Political divisions came up during COVID



“...people can stay at home in their pajamas and watch church but that’s not really getting the full fellowship...”

Why interfaith collaboration is important



Credit: Just Serve (2021)

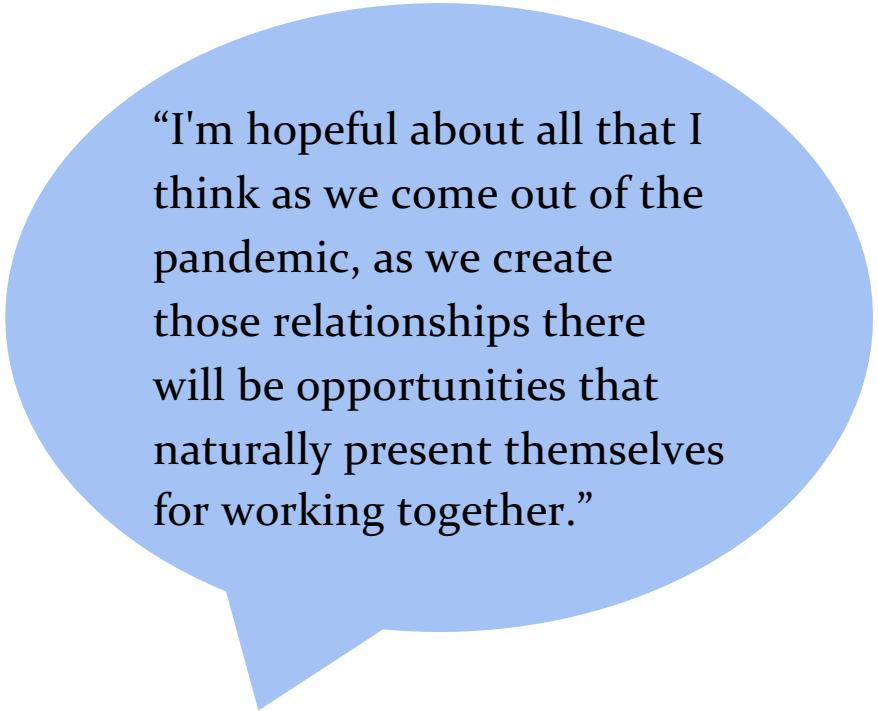
- Partnership facilitates discussion around new ideas as it enables congregations and leadership to meet
- Shows the community that churches are collaborators and not in competition with each other
- By working together, there is increased capacity for addressing a wider range of ages and races

Collaboration in the Region

- Clergy group in place
 - Collaboration tends to be around events and not resources, support services
- **Would be helpful to know what community services each congregation provides (food bank, clothes, etc.)... knowledge sharing is important**
- Leveraging current faith leader collaboration/clergy group to expand network to wider Scottsville region
 - Pastors are all relatively new

Measuring Success

- HEARR seeking nonprofit status
- Training for pastors around mental health
- Building connections between churches
- Evaluative criteria could include # of trips someone has to make to Charlottesville for medical reasons



“I'm hopeful about all that I think as we come out of the pandemic, as we create those relationships there will be opportunities that naturally present themselves for working together.”

Recommendations

- Establish stakeholder group of faith leaders and health organizations across churches and denominations.
- Determine goals, values, and metrics.
- Develop a resource directory for pastors and congregants to increase access to services.
- Explore regional partnerships to expand network.

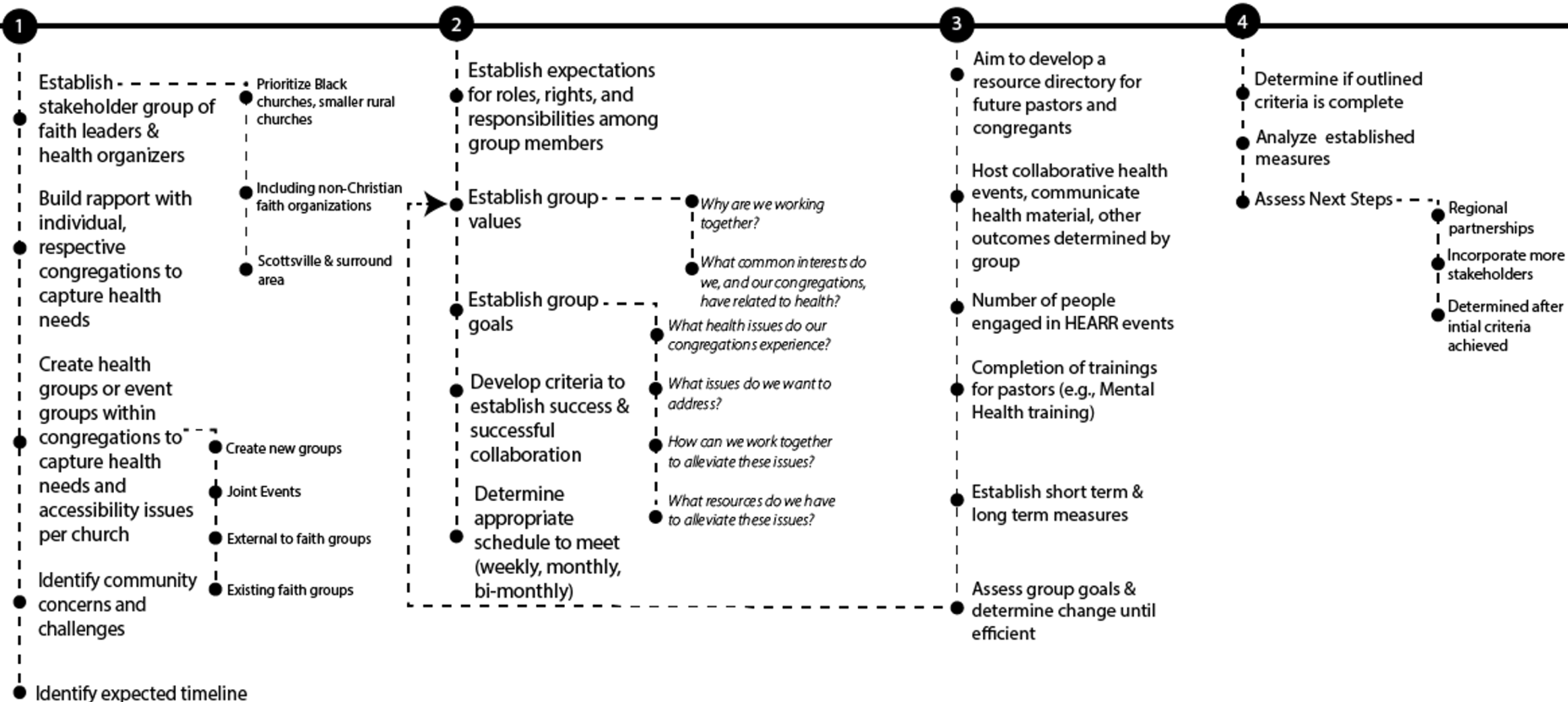
Recommendations: Process Map

Structure

Process

Outcomes & Measures

Assessment



Evaluation Protocol

- Create a clear interview and outreach protocol
- Conduct an appropriate number of completed interviews
- Develop clear and actionable recommendations for stakeholders
- Achieve all goals and objectives
- Provide deliverables that address HEARR's goals and objectives
- Create a professional-level final document/presentation that clearly demonstrates the above criteria for a complete project
- Hold a final self-evaluation on the ability to uphold group covenant
- Form a committee of faith-based organizations which conduct outreach and stewards resources to improve health care access in the community
- Faith organizations have built sustainable relationships
 - Contact list disseminated, frequently updated, and made accessible to constituents

Limitations + Challenges



Limitations

- Only talked to Christian Churches
- Did not interview congregants
- Did not interview smaller, rural churches
- Did not interview Matt Lawless or any other Scottsville administrator
 - Matt consulted our project proposal
 - Tour of Scottsville



Challenges

- Gathering information on existing inter-faith collaboration efforts
- Coordinating interviews within the semester timeline
- Identifying all faith organizations in the area

Project Group Covenant

- Set agendas for group meetings that outline goals and objectives before each meeting.
- Designate a rotating agenda keeper for each meeting to ensure that the group stays on track.
- Hold space for team building and personal connection during meetings.
- Follow meetings with a brief summary, action items, and timeline.
- Communicate openly in the group message if members are unable to complete tasks or need assistance.
- Respect each other's time by being on time for meetings and communicating, using When2Meet to schedule meetings that work for all.
- Use the identified method of communication (group message).
- Treat each other with respect, and give full consideration to everyone's ideas and opinions.
- Approach every conversation with honesty and bravery.
- Using consensus-building methods to make decisions, using the three, two, one method.
- If disagreements arise, work collaboratively to revise decisions so that all group members agree.
- Identify and utilize everyone's strengths while providing opportunities to develop new skills.
- Review goals, covenants, and criteria throughout the project at the start of every meeting.
- Reiterate project goals and set benchmarks for success!

Assessment of Project Group Covenant



- Hold space for team building and personal connection during meetings.
- Follow meetings with a brief summary, action items, and timeline.
- Communicate openly in the group message if members are unable to complete tasks or need assistance.
- Use the identified method of communication (group message).
- Treat each other with respect, and give full consideration to everyone's ideas and opinions.
- Approach every conversation with honesty and bravery.
- Identify and utilize everyone's strengths while providing opportunities to develop new skills.



- Respect each other's time by being on time for meetings and communicating, using When2Meet to schedule meetings that work for all.
- Set agendas for group meetings that outline goals and objectives before each meeting.
- Designate a rotating agenda keeper for each meeting to ensure that the group stays on track.
 - Reiterate project goals and set benchmarks for success!



- Using consensus-building methods to make decisions, using the three, two, one method.
 - If disagreements arise, work collaboratively to revise decisions so that all group members agree.
- Review goals, covenants, and criteria throughout the project at the start of every meeting.

References

Idler, Ellen; Levin, Jeff; VanderWeele, Tyler J.; Khan, Anwar. Partnerships Between Public Health Agencies and Faith Communities (December 2018). <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/10.2105/AJPH.2018.304941>

Levin, Jeff. Faith-Based Partnerships for Population Health: Challenges, Initiatives, and Prospects (March-April 2014). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3904891/>

Morabia, Alfredo. Faith-Based Organizations and Public Health: Another Facet of the Public Health Dialogue (March 2019). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6366525/>

Image Credits

Find a Grave (n.d.) *Scottsville Baptist Church Cemetery*. Scottsville, VA. <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2136962/scottsville-baptist-church-cemetery>.

Food Pantries (n.d.) *Scottsville United Methodist Church*. Scottsville, VA. <https://www.foodpantries.org/li/scottsville-united-methodist-church-24590>.

Just Serve (2021). *Interfaith Collaboration Leads to a Successful Blood Drive*. Danville, CA. <https://www.justserve.org/stories/28afi953-7bd2-4150-9a32-0d72f80ac5b5>

Scottsville Virginia (n.d.) Scottsville, VA. <https://www.scottsville.org/>.

Scottsville Museum (2018). *Mount Pleasant Baptist Church*. Scottsville, VA. <https://scottvillemuseum.com/esmont/esmontchurches/mtpleasantbaptistchurch.html>.

Scottsville Presbyterian Church (n.d.) *Scottsville Presbyterian Church*. Scottsville, VA. <https://scottvillepcusa.com/>.

Scottsville United Methodist Church. (n.d.) *Scottsville United Methodist Church*. Scottsville, VA. <https://www.umc.org/en/find-a-church/church?id=44918>.

Visit Charlottesville (n.d.) *Town of Scottsville*. Charlottesville, VA. <https://www.visitcharlottesville.org/directory/town-of-scottsville/>.