

## **The Covenant**

Your church is invited to participate in an experience designed to help congregations whose weekly worship attendance is 110 or less work on church health in order to become more effective in ministry in their local communities.

Your church will receive 7 training sessions with a group of churches from ABC/IN-KY. This covenant represents mutual commitments of your local church and the American Baptist Churches of Indiana and Kentucky toward the pursuit of your church's health and vitality.

### **The ABC/IN-KY Staff agrees to:**

1. Facilitate Awakening over a 18-24-month period of time with covenanting congregations.
2. Arrange for your church's ongoing participation in Awakening with reminder notices and helpful resources where appropriate.
3. Organize and provide leadership for seven (7) Saturday sessions with time for fellowship, worship, and learning.
4. Provide resources to congregations during and beyond the 24-month commitment time in the area of church vitality.
5. Provide individual coaching and support to your team through this 24-month period and work intentionally with your congregation as the need arises.



### **Covenanting Congregations agree to:**

1. Through formal action of the church, provide a signed commitment of your willingness (Pastor, and lay leaders) to participate with the Region in a process of working on church vitality and transformation. The Leadership Team will consist of the Pastor and 3-4 key leaders.
2. Commit to a level of financial participation that demonstrates a willingness to invest in the program.
  - A. A registration fee will be required of all participating congregations: \$300 in 2012 and \$400 in 2013. The fee will be due by the first session each year.
  - B. In addition, if your church is not already supporting the American Baptist Churches of Indiana and Kentucky through your United Mission giving, Region Offering, or specific giving, that you would provide an agreed upon financial investment to the region: \$5.00 X average worship attendance for each calendar year.
3. Name a leadership team consisting of the pastor and 3-4 lay leaders.
4. Provide a signed commitment by the pastor and team members of their willingness to commit to Awakening. (This includes full participation in each of the Saturday training sessions and completion of outside assignments.)
5. Share what your church has learned with the wider ABC/IN-KY family.

#### **Session Dates:**

<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
March 10	March 2
August 25	June 15
October 27	August 24
	October 26



# **Awakening**

**Health**  
**Transformation**  
**Vision/Mission**  
**Structure**  
**Discipleship**  
**Worship**  
**Stewardship**

## **Health**

All “awakenings” begin from health—healthy pastors, healthy congregations. Not just physical health, but also spiritual health. What are the practices that help maintain congregational health? What are the ministry practices that support clergy health? How can we work together to insure health and strengthen ministry? The Apostle Paul often refers to the church as the “body of Christ”. The body must be healthy to grow, to re-produce, and to begin new ministries. We will begin our Awakening with a focus upon congregational health and vitality.

## **Transformation**

Awakenings require change—“...if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17a). Dealing with change is not easy for any of us. We are creatures of habit. We feel comfortable with the familiar. How can we learn to live with change? What needs to change and what needs to stay the same? Where is God in all the changes? Understanding change and leading change will be the focus of this phase of Awakening.

## **Vision/Mission**

Vision prevents an awakening from becoming simply self-indulgent. Discerning the vision that God has for your church directs you to follow where God is leading your community and your congregation. What are the steps for discerning God’s vision for your church? What is the “mission field” that God is calling your church to engage? Learn how to discern God’s vision and learn about your mission field in this phase of Awakening

## **Structure**

Every organization needs some structure to help it carry out its mission. What structures support ministry? How can working as a team actually allow you to do more? When do structures get in the way of the mission? In this phase of the Awakening you will discover new ways of working together to carry out the mission and vision that God has given your church.

## **Discipleship**

Every personal Awakening begins with a relationship with Jesus Christ and enabling persons to grow in that relationship. Helping disciples learn their gifts and how to use those gifts for ministry and mission encourages growth. Growing disciples engage in mission, share their faith experience and invite new disciples. How can we encourage Christian discipleship through our church community? What does a growing disciple look like? This phase of the Awakening will focus upon what you can do to be a disciple-making church.

## **Worship**

Worship is the heart of the Awakening. Worship is where persons express their love for God and experience the presence of God in their lives. True worship is acknowledging our total dependence upon God. As we open our hearts to God, our hearts are also opened to the needs of others. Love of God and love of neighbor become our focus for life. Learn how to engage in true worship as a congregation and as individuals so that God can mold your hearts.

## **Stewardship**

All that we have and all that we are comes from God. We are only stewards of this life. Stewardship—our handling and managing of God’s great gifts to us supports and empowers our mission for God. What does stewardship look like for the individual? How can we be good stewards as a congregation? This phase of Awakening will support and make possible our ministry and mission for God.

## **The Format of the Series**

Because we learn best in a community of believers, the format for Awakening will be in community with other congregations. The seven phases of the Awakening will be covered on seven all-day Saturday gatherings with other congregations. Each congregation will select a leadership team to attend all seven days over a period of 18-24 months. These gatherings will be at a local church near you.

Each session in Awakening will include new knowledge and input on the topic of the day as well as time for sharing and discussing with persons from other congregations. Each day will also have a focus upon practices that you can put into place in your own congregation.

In addition to the learnings at the gatherings, resources for Bible Study, sermon preparation and further study will be provided to each participating congregation. Coaching and consultation will also be available to these churches.

Make no mistake. Awakening will take time and effort for your church. A focused response to the challenges facing your congregation will provide new life in your congregation and in the lives of persons in your community.

We ask that your congregation prayerfully consider becoming a covenanting participant in Awakening.