

American Baptist Churches of IN & KY

TOGETHER

on God's Abundant
Journey

equipping leaders
empowering churches
expanding mission

The Baptist Observer Magazine

HIGHLIGHTING THE MINISTRIES
OF AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES
IN INDIANA & KENTUCKY

www.abc-indiana.org

BECKY SEPTOSKI, EDITOR • VOL. 13 NO. 5 • SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2014

SIGN UP TODAY!

2014 Region Biennial Gathering September 26-27 Plainfield FBC

THEME: Together On God's Abundant Journey

At this Biennial, we are going to focus on ministry being accomplished in our very own region. Churches will be sharing God's abundant journey in their own communities and how refreshing ministry can be when we work together to accomplish what is on God's heart.

**There is still time
to register!**

**REMEMBER: Registration fee increases
if postmarked after September 5!!**

Brochure and registration information are available on the region website:
www.abc-indiana.org - located on the front page.
Brochures have also been mailed to all churches.

Missional Church Learning Experience (MCLE)

Missional Church Learning Experience is a cluster of churches that form a Learning Community to explore what God is saying to the church today.

Each church forms a Mission Team that receives training in basic missional church principles, and practices those principles by designing and implementing a small community project.

The Learning Community will meet during the process to share what they are learning and receive further training.

2014-2015 Sessions

Saturdays from 10:00 - 3:00

October 11, 2014

January 31, 2014

April 18, 2015

Locations - TBD

Complete information is available on the region website at:
www.abc-indiana.org.

Simply click on the **For Churches**
drop down box and then click on **MCLE**.



Rev. Sooz Whitten Ford
Executive Minister
sooziford@abc-indiana.org

Along with over 100 other Hoosiers, it was a privilege to attend the World Mission Conference at Green Lake as American Baptists gathered together to celebrate 200 years of mission around the world. I was humbled to hear amazing stories by our missionaries and their colleagues serving in partner organizations, and the ways in which God is allowing them to literally be the presence of Christ in war-torn, strife-filled, disease-ridden places.

Please pray for your missionaries and those with whom they serve as they share the love, peace and healing power of Christ in very practical and often very difficult circumstances. Include in your prayers the Witmer family, departing Indiana on August 29th for Thailand to begin their missionary service there.



And, although I know it happens "all the time," it seems as though this summer has been full of screaming news stories. The most recent include the Ebola virus, threatening to bust away from all efforts to contain and eradicate it. The war-sick areas of our world, including Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East, continue in violent turmoil with frequent announcements of new atrocities committed against civilians and people groups. A

community within 250 miles of many of us erupts in violence, seeking justice in the shooting death by police of one of its own teens.

The media does not report on, and may not even be able to discern, the ways in which God is acting in these situations. Almost six months before news of the Ebola outbreak gained the attention of the media, it was already a problem for the people of West Africa. Thanks to your generous gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing, American Baptists through International Ministries provided \$20,000 for relief and prevention initiatives through partner organizations.

My colleague, Dr. Dwight Stinnett, executive minister for the Great Rivers region, shared these words yesterday concerning Ferguson, Missouri: "...At its best, the Church always speaks to the ambiguous reality of human existence with all its consequences. Great Rivers Region pastors and churches in Metro-St. Louis have been quietly and faithfully speaking and living the Gospel in the midst of this turmoil. They are walking

alongside their congregations in the relentless pursuit of justice, while convening tables for peaceful dialogue. They have turned their backs on the opportunity for five minutes of fame, choosing instead to engage the doggedly hard work of real peace and justice by promoting dialogue, seeking clarity and teaching peace. We are proud of our pastors and churches. Please join us in prayer for them as they walk this fiery furnace like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Please join us in prayers of confession as we acknowledge our own complicity and uncertain motives. Finally, join us in prayer for all the families that are experiencing loss as a result of this tragedy, and similar circumstances across the globe."

God is acting in ways we often cannot see to bring the reconciling love of Christ to bear on amazingly difficult situations. God is using normal people, gifted and empowered by the Holy Spirit and bearing the name of the Son, to do incredible ministry around the world and in our own cities and towns. You are already being called and used by God as we are Together On God's Abundant Journey.

Mary Kassel Retires From Region Staff



At a recent staff meeting, colleagues shared their appreciation for Mary Kassel in anticipation of her retirement at the end of August. Mary has served as administrative

assistant for 21 years. During most of her tenure, Mary has served as the administrative assistant for finance and mission. She has also given assistance in many other aspects of the Region's work as well.

In their sharing, colleagues mentioned appreciation for Mary as a person, as well as the quality of her work. Nearly everyone stated that she has always approached her work as ministry and has shown great care and support to people and congregations throughout her time on staff.

Mary's husband, Rick, who was also in attendance, will be retiring as well from his position as chaplain for the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department. Colleagues expressed their appreciation for Rick and his work as well.

Mary's gifts and ministry will be missed and we wish her well as she discovers God's new thing for her in retirement.

Even as we say good-bye to Mary, we welcome Beth Fee, who joined us last week as Assistant for Mission and Finance. Beth comes to us with a degree in business from Purdue University in Indianapolis, with a major in Organizational Leadership & Supervision, along with extensive experience in bookkeeping/accounting functions and office management with several companies. Throughout the course of her career, she has also offered her skills on a volunteer basis with several non-profit organizations. Beth will be training with Mary through

the end of August and is looking forward to becoming acquainted with pastors and leaders in our region. Beth's e-mail address is bethfee@abc-indiana.org. Please join us in welcoming Beth to our ministry team.





Women's Day - Oct. 11

Come one! Come all! Come to American Baptist Women's Day on Saturday October 11th, 2014 at Crooked Creek Baptist Church, 5540 Michigan Road, Indianapolis. Come hear Barbara Bolick, missionary in Chile, speak in the morning and afternoon sessions. Come for the workshops. Come learn about the Witmers in Thailand; the fruit of the Judson's in Burma; lessons on acceptance from a homeless man; riding against traffic or a craft workshop. Come meet the new state officers and hear the latest updates. Come meet new friends. Come see old friends.

Come for fun, fellowship and food (both spiritual & nutritional). Just be sure to come!! Registration forms are available online from ABC-IN/KY or registrar Myrtle Bryant, brynt6@att.net or chair, Janice Mott, raymott@sbcglobal.net. The registration deadline is September 26th. ABGIRLS will meet Saturday only. Contact Tracy Karnes for information at 812-793-3033 or musicijk@gmail.com.

A registration form is available on the ABC-IN/KY website at: <http://abc-indiana.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/AB-Girls-Day-2014.pdf>.



ABY YOUTH RETREAT NOVEMBER 7-9 CAMP CAMBY

As we return to Camp Camby for the 2014 Youth Retreat, it promises to be an awesome weekend filled with lots of activities, great music and much, much more!!

Registration information and a brochure are available on the region website (abc-indiana.org) located on the main page as you scroll down.

Registrations received prior to October 13 will receive a \$10 discount per person.

Don't Wait! Register today!!

25th Annual Gathering Retired AB Ministers & Spouses Reunion Thursday, September 11 9:00 am - 2:30 pm Hoosier Village

Cost: \$12 per person

Registration is due before/by September 3

The morning speaker is Clare Luz, PhD, Assistant Professor, Michigan State University, College of Medicine, Geriatric Educational Center of Michigan. The morning musical program will be brought by Steve Jeffris, guitarist, vocalist, and entertainer from Indianapolis.

The afternoon presentation will be presented by IM Executive Director, Rev. Dr. Reid Trulson.

**Mark your calendars and register today!
Registration forms are available on the region
website at: www.abc-indiana.org**

Contact Phyllis Hawkins, event coordinator, for questions regarding registration or updates for the reunion directory.
812-378-3034 - phawkins@fourseasonsretirement.com

Senior Adult Day

**Thursday, October 9
Anderson FBC
Registrations due by
Thursday, October 2**

**Program Highlights:
Devotions, Musical Entertainment,
Inspiring Speakers, Food & Fellowship**

Registration Information can be found on the region website at:
www.abc-indiana.org.

Registration deadline is October 2

DON'T WAIT!! REGISTER TODAY!

CONGREGATIONS

Jeffersonville FBC Celebrates 175 Anniversary

Can you say septaquinquecentennial? It is a term Jeffersonville FBC is learning to use in 2014. On June 22nd of this year, First Baptist celebrated its 175th anniversary. Although the entire congregation is in total agreement on the spelling for this unusual word, there seems to be no clear consensus as to its proper pronunciation!

A hot afternoon on the 4th Sunday in June of 1839, seven individuals came together and established First Baptist Church of Jeffersonville. It is doubtful that these seven pioneers of faith knew the correct pronunciation for septaquinquecentennial

either, nor could they have envisioned what would take place in the one hundred and seventy-five years to follow. What they did foresee was God's sovereign plan to plant a fellowship of like believers in the Jeffersonville community, and they understood themselves to be the firstfruits of that ministry. They went on to lay the foundation of a church that has stood the test of time.

To commemorate God's continuous grace, and the faithfulness of those who came before them, the church has planned monthly celebratory activities throughout the remainder of the year.

Evansville FBC to Host RiverCity Faithfest

RIVERCITY FAITHFEST
EVANSVILLE INDIANA
09.27.2014

RiverCity Faithfest will be held on Saturday, September 27th from 2p.m. - 8p.m. (CST) at Evansville FBC. This is the sixth year for this FREE Outdoor Christian music festival. A small group from Evansville FBC created this event back in 2009 to provide an affordable festival where youth groups could join together in worship and fellowship. The event has grown

from 100 participants in its first year to over 1200 participants in 2013! This year's headline artist is Dove Award Winner, Jamie Grace, with a variety of other artists playing throughout the day including: Lights of Day, Building Nations, Charis, Danen Kane and One Day.

Various vendors and exhibitors, a special Kids Zone, as well as food vendors, round out the event to make it appealing to all ages. Groups are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, blankets, coolers and whatever else will make it a successful event for their group. More information can be found at rivercityfaithfest.com.

Columbus FBC Youth Lead Worship



Youth express Worship theme through Liturgical dance

On July 20, the youth of Columbus FBC led the worship service. The theme for the service was "Lost and Found". Through music, drama, liturgical dance, as well as three speakers, those in attendance experienced what it means to feel lost and then found.

As the congregation entered, they were given a rock. At the end of the

service, they were asked to write on that rock some way they feel lost. The congregation was asked to come forward and lay their rock at the foot of the cross, giving it to God.

The service was very moving and the youth did an excellent job under the leadership of Pastor Dave Doles.



Columbus FBC Youth lead those in attendance in music during the service



CONGREGATIONS

S.E.E.D.S. Ministry Continues to Flourish



The Columbus FBC S.E.E.D.S. Ministry garden

The S.E.E.D.S. Ministry continues to flourish at Columbus FBC by producing fresh vegetables for the local food bank at Love Chapel. To date this summer, approximately 3 or 4 bushels of tomatoes and beans along with several large bags of peppers and beets have been

delivered to the Love Chapel. There are plans to plant kale and turnips for fall crops.

In the meantime, planning and preparation continues for the third annual 5K race to be held on September 20th. The proceeds from this race go to the various ministries of Love Chapel.

Lebanon BC Takes Big Strides This Summer

For many churches, summer is not always the busiest time of year. For Lebanon BC, this past summer has been a whirlwind of ministry. *Ian Cattanach, Youth Pastor*



In addition to its annual Vacation Bible School, Lebanon BC sent a team of teens and a few adults (led by Youth Pastor Garren Holt) to Honduras for a one week mission

trip. As Pastor Holt concluded his ministry with the church this summer, Ian Cattanach joined the congregation as the new youth pastor in July.

The congregation is on the verge of completing a major building project. A new Christian Life Center will house Sunday School classes, a Food Pantry ministry and will feature a Fellowship Hall that will seat two hundred people. The project is expected to be completed by the end of September.

"We are grateful that God has blessed us with a very productive season in the life of our congregation", says Senior Pastor Mike Rotman, who began his second year with the church in July.

Unity BC Participates in Brown County Vesper Service



Unity BC recently participated in the 2014 Brown County Fair Vesper Service. The annual event was organized by Unity BC Choir Director, Lyn Alexander. This year, Pastor Lee Snider served as the Master of Ceremony. Twelve churches from Brown County participated with various genres of music designed to share their respective traditions of music.

Unity BC closed the individual church selections with "A Big Mighty God". In the tradition of the Fair's Vesper Service, the congregation, led by the individual church performers, closed the meeting with Victory in Jesus and Amazing Grace. We look forward to an even greater Vesper Service in 2015.

The "Penny Project" at Terre Haute FBC

Three years ago, Terre Haute FBC youth began collecting loose change to fight against hunger in the community. Participating in the ABHMS "Penny Project", the money was used to stock local food pantries. More than 1.5 tons of food was dispersed over a year's time.

It became clear to one of the church members who was active in the food pantries, there was a major need for fresh, cold milk. The food banks simply cannot afford it. So as a result, she challenged her small group to begin collecting change to buy milk. The youth heard of the group's efforts and soon, the Penny Project funds found a new home. To date, Terre Haute FBC has collected over 675,000 pennies, supplied over 4,000 pounds of food to the community, and contributed



more than 4,000 half gallons of milk. It has been a powerful reminder of the goodness of God who is able to provide and multiply even the simple things, like a couple of fish or a few pennies, so His Kingdom can be revealed.

MISSIONS

June - An Exciting Month for Missions in Region Churches

Vincennes FBC - Month of Missions

Vincennes FBC had a great experience in mission during the month of June. Duke Hampsch, Associate Pastor, along with his family travelled to Honduras for the time period of June 15 through July 15. They lived in a house in a village outside El Progreso and hosted mission teams in relationship with Promise Home. Duke, his wife, Holly, and their children hosted a total of four teams.



Medical Mission Team in Honduras

On June 22-27, Vincennes FBC led a medical mission which included doctors, nurses, optometrists, pharmacists, dentists and support team totaling 35 people. The Vincennes FBC team joined a team of Hondurans including a doctor, a dentist plus a team of translators, as well as, local church hosts. Together, they conducted 4 days of medical care at 3 different villages. Every person's experience at the clinic began with a worship service. The team had the privilege of seeing 68 persons pray for salvation in Jesus. The mission saw a total of 1,295 patients with 267 teeth extracted, 223 prescription glasses fitted and 333 pairs of sun-glasses or reading-glasses distributed. Doctors and nurses examined persons with a variety of ailments. A wide variety of medications were distributed. Hygiene packages, a bag of beans and rice, a family picture, and a Spanish Bible were provided for each family who visited the clinic. All of the children left with smiles on their faces after spending the day singing, playing and learning in the VBS area.

On June 29-July 3, the high school students, under the leadership of Drew Alexander (Harvest Ministry) and a great team of lay-leaders, participated in a local mission experience in Vincennes. They painted at Higher Bound, an interdenominational ministry which serves at-risk middle school students. They did construction at Helping His Hands, another local ministry which focuses on the poor and disaster relief. They participated in the rehab of a house for a needy family, working with Three Nails Ministry.

On July 4 and 5, the middle school students prepared and served a meal with the Loaves and Fishes Ministry at the Salvation Army.



Murrow Indian Children's Home participate in Pow-Wow fund-raiser

Another team of FBC Vincennes members/ministers, under the leadership of Sharon Woolwine, went to Murrow Indian Children's Home in Muskogee, OK on June 25-30 to serve with the annual Pow Wow fund-raiser, and to assist with construction on expanding the facilities.

Vincennes FBC feels privileged to be joining God where God is working. Vincennes FBC is living *in the life changing love of God!*

Memorial BC Participates in Clean-Up Columbus

Submitted by: Crystal Miller, Youth Leader

During the month of June, eight youth and seven adults from Memorial BC partnered with other local church groups to participate in Clean-Up Columbus. Together, the groups were able to help homeowners with tasks that they were unable to complete themselves. The group from Memorial helped five

homeowners over the weekend. They assisted with painting rooms, scraping and painting a porch and the outside of a home, building a custom storage bench, assembling storage cabinets, and helping with yardwork. Time was spent talking with each of the individuals and listening to their stories. Those who received assistance were very thankful and were amazed at the time that was given to help them.

Clean-Up Columbus has been such a blessing in the community, and even more so to those who have been given the opportunity to serve and share the love of Jesus. This outreach has also been a great way for the church to come together as one to be the hands and feet of Christ.



LEADERSHIP

1st Missionary BC Elwood Installs Pastor

By: Phyllis Goodyear

At their regular worship service on Sunday, June 29, First Missionary BC in Elwood installed Bob Hendrix as their new pastor. The installation was led by Ruth Gillman, chair of the search committee. The installation



Bob Hendrix is intalled as new pastor.

sermon was preached by Phyllis Goodyear (Resource Minister.)

Bob came to the church from FBC Mt. Vernon, Ohio, where he served as pastor. He had previously served the Elwood church as associate pastor from 1986-88. Bob and his wife, Sheryl, have two children.

Saying Goodbye to Those Who Have Served as Missionaries and also in Leadership Roles

Leon Emmert - July 20

Leon Emmert, aged 90, passed away on July 20. Leon and his wife, Martha, served 35 years with the ABFMS in the Belgian Congo. After retirement, Leon remained active in supprting the church, both locally in Ft. Wayne as well as internationally. The Emmert family held a private memorial service for Martha at the time of her passing. Gifts in memory of Leon may be made to Ft. Wayne FBC, 2323 Fairfield Avenue, Ft. Wayne, IN 46807. They will be applied towards supporting the work of Rev. & Mrs. Naunga who are missionaries in Haiti with IM. Rev. Nzunga was one of Leon's students in Congo.

Patricia Ann Dickson - July 29

Pat Dickson went to her heavenly home on July 29. Pat was a lifelong member of Greensburg FBC. She served as the state president of ABW and also on the ABC-IN/KY region board. Memorials may be given to Greensburg FBC, 209 W Washington St, Greensburg, IN 47240.

Ruby Taylor - August 3

Ruby Taylor, wife of Robert Taylor, passed away on August 3. Ruby served as a Youth and Women's Retreat Leader, Director of Indiana Youth in Camping and President of the ABC-IN/KY Region Board. Memorial contributions may be made to the Music Ministry of Cumberland FBC and/or Edna Martin Christian Center.

Walking With the Called: Witmers Commissioned

By: Phyllis Goodyear



Avoca BC was filled to overflowing as persons came from near and far to the commissioning for Kyle and Debby Witmer. The service was the culmination of a year in which Kyle, Debby and their children discerned their call to be missionaries to Thailand, sold their home, gave away most of their belongings, shared their story and raised support. They leave soon for Siloam Bible Institute in Chiang Mai, Thailand, where they will work in pastoral education and leadership development.

Affirmation and words of celebration came from Bernie Jackson (pastor, FBC Terre Haute), Geoff Orender (deacon, Avoca BC), Don Scott (convener for Witmer MPT) and Ron Hamrick (Avoca BC). Stan Murray and Jim Bell (IM staff)

also shared in the service. Joan Friesen (ABCGI) gave words of greeting and introduced the Karen Youth Choir (Karen Baptist Fellowship, Indpls.)

Debby and Kyle's fathers (both ABC pastors), Whitney West and Russell Witmer, gave emotional testimonies of support and confirmation of God's call. Sooji Whitten Ford (ABC/IN-KY) commissioned the Witmers' MPT.

Reg Mills (IM president) led the ceremony of commissioning which was followed by the laying on of hands. The service was closed with energy and celebration as the Witmers led the congregation in singing "Build Your Kingdom Here."

**November/December Observer
Article Submission Deadline
October 10, 2014**

**\$20,000 of "One Great Hour of Sharing" Gifts
Fighting Ebola Outbreak**

\$20,000 in OGHS funds have been supporting several key initiatives, ranging from relief to prevention. "Only recently has the current Ebola crisis gained significant media attention in the U.S. For the people of West Africa, the problem began in March." says World Relief Officer, Lisa Rothenberger. To read more about IM's response to the outbreak, go to www.abc-usa.org - One Great Hour of Sharing.



Indiana Baptist Convention
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OF INDIANA AND KENTUCKY
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COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

- 2 - CORMS
- 6 - CLI Classes - (New Albany, Peru & Vevay)
- 9 - Region Staff Mtg.
- 11 - AB Ministers & Spouses Reunion
- 12 - Region Board Mtg.
- 20 - CLI Classes (Franklin, New Albany & Peru)
- 20 - CLI Graduation (Franklin College)
- 26-27 - ABC-IN/KY Biennial
- 28 - Freedom Association Mtg.

OCTOBER

- 4 - CLI Classes - (Franklin, New Albany & Peru)
- 9 - Sr. Adult Day
- 11 - ABW Women's Day
- 11 - CLI Classes (Vevay)
- 11 - MCLE
- 14 - Region Staff Mtg.
- 18 - CLI Classes (New Albany, Peru & Vincennes)
- 20-23 - Week 1 ABW Conferences
- 23 - Youth Pastors Gathering
- 25 - CLI Classes (Vevay)
- 27-30 - Week 2 ABW Fall Conferences

NOVEMBER

- 1 - CLI Classes - (Franklin College & Vincennes)
- 8 - CLI Classes - (Franklin & Vevay)
- 15 - CLI Classes (Vincennes)
- 17 - CORMS
- 18 - Region Staff Mtg.
- 22 - CLI Classes - (Vevay)