

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](http://www.abc-indiana.org)

BECKY SEPTOSKI & JEFF TRYON, EDITORS VOL. 17 NO. 3 - JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2017

## Two ABC-IN/KY Churches Connecting with Single Mothers-to-Be in Need

Brazil FBC and Madison FBC are working in two different areas of the state, focusing on education; making it possible to continue traditional education and training parents-to-be in skills they will need.

The Brazil FBC "Cradles" program supports young parents in obtaining enough education to become self-sufficient by providing quality childcare, along with mentoring programs and parenting workshops.

Madison FBC helps support "Second Stories", a program which assists under-resourced pregnant women with pre-natal classes and parenting training, as well as, physical needs such as diapers, cribs, car seats and clothing.

The "Cradles" program is a family learning ministry that helps approximately 22 children and 15 to 16 parents with childcare so they can finish high school, get a high school equivalency degree, or attend adult education. Some even attend college or job

training. Cradles provides developmentally appropriate quality childcare for children six weeks to five years and also pre-natal, parenting and life skills classes and mentoring for parents.

Brazil FBC provides space for the program plus financial and spiritual support. Lack of education is a major barrier to moving out of poverty, and childcare for low income working parents can be a barrier to improved education. The goal of the program is to cultivate responsible adults by developing education for self-sufficiency so that student parents can take their place in their local communities as healthy citizens within healthy family units.

Madison FBC assists "Second Stories" by providing space in a building they own, and also financial and spiritual support. The program assists under-resourced pregnant women with parenting training, as well as, getting needed supplies. Approximately 20 babies have been born since they first started seeing clients

in August of 2015. They are serving women from all walks of life, from the ages of 15 to 42.

They meet with the ladies outside of a church setting. Executive director Kim Taylor said, "We really felt like we needed to be outside of the church walls in order to get single moms in our community to feel comfortable about coming in. It is still our focus to be Christ-centered, sharing the gospel. We start by developing relationships with them. We have seen that work well." Taylor said volunteers act as mentors sharing how God has worked in their lives; in a neutral setting they can share that information in a much different, non-threatening way.

In a community where there's a "ridiculously high" rate of teen pregnancy, "Second Stories" is reaching out, including going into the local high school to teach a class. They talk to the students about their goals, about how they were raised and how they want their child

to be raised, Taylor said.

The program has expanded and is looking at partnering with the local hospital after learning that fully 60 percent of babies there are born affected by drugs.

God is truly at work in these two important ministries with the same common goal! To learn more about either of these vital ministries call Brazil BC at: (812)-448-8112 or Madison FBC at (812) 265-2331.

The deadline for  
submission  
of articles  
for the  
October/November/  
December  
issue of  
The Baptist Observer  
is:  
Friday, Sept 1, 2017



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

◆ I made my faith commitment to Jesus Christ during summer camp in northern Indiana 45 years ago this year, on July 28, 1972. I remain eternally grateful for my Indiana-bred youth leaders (now in their 80s!) who decided that year to bring my suburban Kansas City youth group to Epworth Forest (near Camp Tippy) where they had gone to camp. That was my very first time ever to be in Indiana! The beginning of my call to ministry happened a few years later as a student camp volunteer.

God has used American Baptist church camps in amazing ways in my life, and the lives of my husband, daughters, and my son-in-law.

Camping ministry is important and deserves your support as the Spirit works in the lives of children, youth, and staff amidst the beauty of creation. Our IN/KY camping ministry is in full swing at Indian Creek and Camp Tippy, along with our friends at Southeastern Baptist Camp. Your prayers for managers, summer staff, leaders and volunteers are especially cherished during these summer months. Gifts of your time, skills, expertise and financial resources are also deeply appreciated.

◆ As a reminder, your IN/KY staff uses social media to communicate in a variety of ways to various audiences. Many of us have Facebook pages, and a few use Twitter and Instagram as well. If you have not done so, consider “liking” the region Facebook page, “American Baptist Churches of Indiana and Kentucky,” as well as the pages for our camps. We often post links to thoughtful articles, photos from our travels and ministry with churches, and interesting tidbits of Baptist lore and history, in addition to news that we hope will be helpful to you.

◆ The 2017 Palmer Grant cycle was announced on June 15th and makes available up to \$25,000 (and possibly \$50,000) for projects and initiatives that address one or more of the ABC Mission Priorities: Discipleship, Violence, Next Generation of Leaders, Poverty, Women in Ministry, Gospel in a Rapidly Changing World, and Innovative Models of Pastoral Leadership.

If you have something in mind, please consider making an application. The grant application process is online only and can be accessed here: <https://abfgrants.communityforce.com/Funds/Search.aspx>. There is a firm deadline of midnight (Eastern) on July 31st.

◆ As I write this, the search team for the Region Minister serving southern Indiana and Kentucky is preparing to interview three final candidates before selecting one to recommend to the Region Board. We expect to be able to announce the new Region Minister soon. I greatly appreciate those working with me to seek God’s wisdom in this process: Dr. Darrell James, Chairperson (Culbertson Baptist, New Albany); Rev. Marsha Bishop (Vincennes); and Rev. Steve Allen (Osgood FBC).

We reviewed application materials from over 25 potential candidates

serving across the U.S., from the state of Washington to West Virginia, including Indiana. Our team has been amazed at the quality of experience evidenced in all of the applicants, and were pleased that so many gifted leaders were interested in serving here. We conducted video interviews with eight, and are now ready to conduct final face to face interviews with three.

The title for this position has undergone numerous changes through the years – Area Minister, Resource Minister, Region Resource Minister, and now, most recently, Region Minister. In the current iteration, the understanding is that the persons serving in this position *serve geographically* in the area near where they live and may also be deployed throughout the region. In other words, they serve those churches in the general proximity to where they reside and, as particular needs arise, they may be asked to serve in another part of the region.

No matter the title of the position for your IN/KY staff, the goal is to serve God by serving our churches, leaders and pastors as they minister in their various settings. We all look forward to serving with you as we are Together on God’s Abundant Journey.

## ABCUSA Calls Reverend Dr. Lee B. Spitzer as General Secretary

On May 8, the ABCUSA Board of General Ministries met in Chicago to elect Reverend Dr. Lee B. Spitzer to the position of General Secretary of American Baptist Churches USA. Previously, Dr. Spitzer served as Executive Minister for the American Baptist Churches in New Jersey (ABCNJ), and congregations in New Jersey, Nebraska, and Rhode Island. Dr. Spitzer brings a wide range of experience and expertise to his new role as General Secretary. In ABCNJ he guided a strategic planning and renewal process, provided pastoral leadership, launched new ministries and collaborative efforts, created networks and new partnerships, promoted church growth, fostered a united community, and managed financial growth. He continues to speak prophetically into current issues and concerns.



His goal as General Secretary is “to lead ABCUSA into a future of spiritual renewal, creative service, and church growth, in joyful cooperation with all partners of the American Baptist Family.” His efforts as General Secretary will be directed toward strengthening connections with ABC regions, affirming and enhancing our diversity, reaching out to the next generation of leaders, growing trust and collaboration, strengthening our American Baptist identity and providing administrative leadership in areas of stewardship, funding, and fiduciary concerns.

## Sympathy Extended at the Loss of Two Former ABC-IN/KY Staff Members

### Rev. Richard O. Goins

Rev. Richard O. Goins passed away on June 13, 2017 in Vernal, Utah. During his ministry he served five churches in Indiana and Wisconsin. He was on the ABC-IN/KY staff serving as Area Minister and Minister of Camping. He also served on the staff of the American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountain Region as an Area Minister and World Mission Support. His Celebration of Life service will be held on Saturday, July 29 at the First Presbyterian Church, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. His wife, Eila Ruth Taylor Goins resides in Eau Claire.



**Bob Hammond** passed away on May 20, 2017. He served with ABC-IN/KY as Minister of Christian Ed and Camping beginning in 1953. He later served as Area Minister to churches in the northern portion of Indiana. He was a part of the region staff for 35 years.

A memorial service was held for Bob on June 17, 2017 at First Baptist Church of Greenwood.

# American Baptist Women's MINISTRIES

## Summer Conference 2017

During the first weekend of June, the Franklin College campus was colorful with hanging baskets of petunias, and swarms of ladies wearing purple! A total of 142 attended the weekend event. As an encouragement for younger women to attend, free registration was provided to anyone under the age of 40. As a result, 13 young women attended!

Twenty-eight AB Girls attended the AB Girls Gathering. Combined with the young women, 29% of the

attendees were under the age of 40! Many wonderful workshops took place, including those led by Amanda Good on behalf of her family who will soon be going to Hungary. The Congolese Choir of Grace Tabernacle Ministries in Indianapolis led worship on Saturday night. They shared amazing testimonies that were inspiring to all. Plan now to attend next year's conference the first weekend of June.



Summer Conference Moments



## ABW Church & Community

Submitted by: Janie Barnett

As church and community leaders, our goal should be to look for ways to connect our church with our community.

At times, women's circles think that they have to do all the work within their own group, but most have circles that are either too small or hampered by age, illness, or lack of funds to do all the work on their own. So, what can be done? Circles can improvise.

In March I went to a retreat where a group of AB GIRLS made gripper socks for all of the women attending. The girls used puff paint to decorate the bottom of ankle socks. The puff paint works as non-skid tread for the socks and the decorations were very nice.

The following month, two other women and I were looking for a project, but we weren't sure what

the three of us could accomplish. Then, I remembered the socks! One of the women in our group is a youth leader. We purchased 80 pairs of socks and puff paint. We chose a night and the children from her youth group decorated the socks. Once the socks were dry, they were rolled and tied with a ribbon. On a Sunday afternoon we took ten of the youth to the local nursing home and they gave the socks to each of the residents. Everyone at the nursing home was blessed by the young people, and they in turn, were provided an opportunity to serve and see how much their work was appreciated.

You can bring in other groups like the youth, etc. to help meet your goals. Get creative with your thoughts!!

## ABW Mission & Service

Submitted by: Linda Hardin

The method of giving to International Missionaries has changed. Those who are giving, can now decide who they are going to support. No matter the size of the church, all donations make a difference. On a monthly basis my church supports Kuhomi and Nzunga, who are working in Haiti.

There are many ways to raise support money for missionaries. Some churches send ten percent of the monthly offering. Individuals also send gifts to help support the missionaries. My church had a craft show and we served food for

donations. The craft show brought in \$350.00 in donations, as well as, providing a fun time of fellowship, a chance to meet new people and the opportunity to invite individuals to worship. Think about how your church or group can raise money for Missionaries.

I praise the Lord for all that pray for our Missionaries, give support to enable mission work. The cards, letters and notes that are sent to our Missionaries are greatly appreciated.

May God be with you as we "See..." where we are needed in His glory.

## SAVE THE DATE

ABWomen's Day - October 14, 2017

9:00 am - 2:30 pm

Columbus First Baptist Church

A registration form and more information is available on the region website located on the ABW page

If you would like more information about churches or events described in this issue, contact Becky Septoski at [Beckyseptoski@abc-indiana.org](mailto:Beckyseptoski@abc-indiana.org) or (317) 635 3552 X222.

## Expanding Mission Huse Returns From India



Joseph Huse, special assistant to Dr. Ben Chan, IM Area Director for India, recently spent three weeks with an IM team visiting the leadership of all the mission partners in India. The trip included meetings with the leadership of the Council of Baptist Churches of North East India, the Baptist Council of Churches of East India, Abundant Life Ministries Association, Baptist Convention of Telugu Churches and the Banjara Development Trust. The purpose of the individual meetings was to listen to concerns and share the new strategies of the "Responding To The Call" program of International Ministries.

While in India, Huse also conducted a two-day training session with leaders of the India Mission Coordinating Committee to

share the process of posting fundable projects on the IM website. The committee has four major emphases: human trafficking, religious liberty, youth and women. They are also planning for an all-India mission summit in 2019.

Huse was also charged with conducting a site visit and evaluation of the development of a new university in Nagaland, called the North East Christian University. This ambitious project was launched by the Council of Baptist Churches of North East India two years ago to create a liberal arts program from the ground up, based on a charter granted by the Nagaland government. A city center has been acquired in Dimapur, Nagaland where the program is scheduled to begin in 2018 with the development of a new campus to accommodate 3000 students, faculty and staff about 10 miles north of the city. Scores of volunteers have cleared the jungle property to begin construction. What is desperately needed now are the funds to build the classrooms and hire the faculty to launch the program. If you are interested in more information or helping with the project, contact Joseph Huse: josephhuse0118@gmail.com.

## Short Term Mission Opportunities Available Around the Globe

Rev. Sandra Dorsainvil is the Director of Short Term Mission for American Baptist International Ministries.

Short Term Mission invites volunteers to actively participate in cross cultural engagements and faith formation through international service opportunities. The opportunities are diverse and support young adult experiences, explorations trips and short term missions lasting from 10 days up to four years.

Teams are generated by individual churches, regions expressing an interest

in specific ministries, as well as, being facilitated by STM based upon requests received from global partners and missionaries.

Rev. Sandra can come to your region, churches, association meetings, or women's and men's groups via Skype or in person to share and help facilitate continued interests, trainings and conversations about short term volunteer opportunities available. She can be reached at: sdorsainvil@internationalministries.org or (610)-768-2164.

## Equipping Leaders Kevin Sills Called to Serve at Scottsburg FBC

On February 25, 2017, Scottsburg FBC unanimously called Kevin Sills to be their next pastor. Sills had been the interim pastor at Scottsburg FBC since October of 2016. He was first called by God to become a pastor 17 years ago. Sills was assigned to his first church in 2005 and spent his first 8 years as a pastor in the United Methodist Church. In 2013 he began attending Underwood BC where he was baptized in February of 2014 and granted membership to Underwood BC. During this time he was in the process of becoming ordained in the American Baptist Church. That culminated in his ordination in August of 2015. Sills and his wife, Robin, are thankful and blessed for all God has done.



## New Hope BC Calls Rev Harting to the Pulpit



New Hope BC is excited to announce that Rev. Robert Harting and his wife Debbie began their pastorate on Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup>.

Rev. Harting graduated from Oakland City University with a degree in Religious Studies, and

also received his Master of Divinity from Oakland City. He has pastored churches in southern Indiana and Illinois for 37 years.

Rev. Harting has three married daughters, and three grandchildren.

Robert and Debbie, who is a retired school teacher, are looking forward to serving in the Clay City community and

to meeting everyone in the area.

New Hope BC is located four miles south of Clay City on SR 59. You are invited to attend services at New Hope. Sunday School begins at 9:30 and Morning Worship at 10:30.

## Empowering Churches

### Easter at Columbus FBC

Columbus FBC began their Easter celebration with their annual Easter Egg hunt. Saturday morning saw approximately fifty children and at least that many parents, grandparents and helpers gathering at the church. The children were given the choice between doing crafts or having snacks. They moved on to a story of new life using bulbs as an object lesson. After the story, children were divided into age groups to find the eggs. It wasn't long before most had bags and/or baskets full of eggs. Several parents remarked that Columbus FBC always hosts a great Easter egg hunt!

Following the Sunrise service on Easter Sunday, the congregation gathered for breakfast, then returned to the sanctuary for Easter worship and celebration of the resurrection of Christ.



### Columbus FBC Donates Equipment to "New Song"

Columbus FBC is part of the Ecumenical Assembly that supports New Song Ministries. They recently made donations of games and sports equipment to celebrate the completion of a second home. New Song offers residential houses staffed by loving couples for children who need a loving home. The children are usually placed by the courts. Some may return home, but some will remain in these homes until they are old enough to live on their own. Currently, New Song is building its third home with volunteer labor from the various churches. Each home is built debt free. New Song is located in Brown County on 100 acres.



*Liz Lipson, mission team leader, shown here by one of the tables of donations for "New Song"*

### Congregation Works Together After Flooding

Submitted by: Jared Hardin

"Then the flood would have swept us away, the torrent would have gone over us; then over us would have gone the raging waters." Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." - Psalms 124:4-5, 8. On Friday, May 19, historic flooding struck Washington County. Many homes and businesses in and around Salem were hit hard. One of the places affected was Mill Creek BC, where about 4-6 inches of water filled the interior." The morning after the flooding, nearly 30 volunteers came to begin the cleanup process.



Everything on the floor was completely saturated and covered with a layer of mud. After 9 hours of work, an unbelievable amount of progress had been made. The next day, thanks to the grace of God and the dedication of hardworking people, Mill Creek was able to hold morning services in the building.

The outpouring of love from churches both inside and outside of our association was incredible. They offered support in any way they could." Mill Creek BC has been through many trials over its 195 years of history and has always continued in service to the kingdom and its desire to bring glory to God in all things."



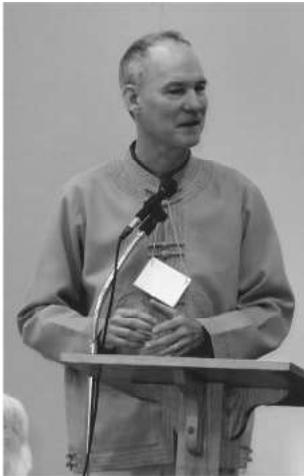
### Versailles BC Hosts Scholarship Celebration

In June, Versailles BC hosted the 2017 Scholarship Celebration for the Laughery Association Men's Brotherhood, where four scholarships of \$500 each were awarded to area students. Those receiving scholarships this year included: Elijah Gannaway - Shiloh Baptist Church; Dylan Casebolt - Aurora

Baptist Church; Madelyn Smith - Bear Creek Baptist Church and Hayden Lampert - Sparta Baptist Church.

The scholarship program began in 1993 with a donation from the Jess Todd family. In the intervening 24 years, 104 scholarships totaling \$50,500 have been awarded.

## Spring Senior Adult Day



Members from 21 churches made their way to the new Cedars Community Activity Center of Lebanon FBC in April for the Spring Senior Adult Day. The 134 attendees enjoyed great programming at the recently dedicated center which has been completely paid for.

Scott Coats, IMM to Thailand, was present to speak. Another of the morning guests was Lebanon native, Julia Moffitt, television news anchor an Indianapolis television station. She shared her journey in TV journalism from her days in Lebanon to Channel 13.



The afternoon program consisted of a presentation by Indiana Canine Assistant Network, "ICAN," the only service dog training program in the state. There are approximately 50 canines receiving their two-year basic training by 49 handlers in three Correction Facilities. Twenty

teams then further train for specific needs and over 100 canines for those needing a service dog have been placed. Demonstrations were provided by two of their dogs. The afternoon closed with "The Fiddlesticks", a string musical group from the Family Music Studio.

Everyone enjoyed the wonderful day made possible by the ministry teams of First Baptist in Lebanon. The Fall Senior Adult Day will be held on October 12, 2017, sponsored by the Lebanon BC, located just south of Jasonville, Indiana, on IN 59. As the "Lebanon's" have stepped forward to host the gatherings for 2017, please consider if your church or a group of churches might host gatherings in the future. Interest and questions can be directed to Terry Harke, 765-284-5852.

### HEALTHY BOUNDARIES 1 Saturday August 12 Franklin College

COST: \$25.00 - includes lunch  
Time: 9:00 am - 2:30 pm

Download a registration form at the region website!

Here is the link:

<http://abc-indiana.org/healthy-boundaries/>

This link will take you to the Healthy Boundaries page which contains information on registration.

**DON'T WAIT!  
REGISTER TODAY!**

### YOUNG ADULT CALL RETREAT JULY 28-30, 2017 INDIAN CREEK BAPTIST CAMP

Ever wondered what God wants you to do with your life?  
Have you thought about how God might be able to use you to  
make a difference in this world?

Would you like to explore how God may be calling you into  
some form of Christian ministry?

Through worship, prayer, Bible reflection, stories, small group  
activities, conversation, solitude and recreation you can pursue  
answers to the questions above.

More information and an application form are available on the  
region website at:

<http://abc-indiana.org/young-adult-call-retreat/>

**DON'T WAIT - REGISTER TODAY!!**

## Short Term Mission Opportunity in the Black Hills of South Dakota August 5-13, 2017

The Departments of Evangelism of the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska and the Dakotas have teamed up in each of the last sixteen years to minister at the annual gathering of over 400,000 people in Sturgis, South Dakota for Bike Week.

### Interested in Sturgis Rally Ministry 2017? Here are more Details...

- ◆ The ABC Emergency Services Center will be open August 5-13. Volunteers wishing to help set up can plan on arriving as early as August 4.
- ◆ Housing is provided. Most volunteers bring an air mattress or cot.
- ◆ RVers will be provided with space to set up camp.
- ◆ This mission project is designed for adults. High school students will be permitted when accompanied by a parent.
- ◆ Routes to Sturgis will be planned for bikers who wish to ride to the event in a group.
- ◆ Follow-up on those ministered to will be coordinated by contacts in ABC regions around the country.
- ◆ Each participant is asked to contribute \$100 toward the cost of this project. Local churches are encouraged to assist their participating members in raising this amount.

For more information contact:

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska

6404 Maple Street Omaha, NE 68104 (887) 244-7339 - (402) 556-4730  
LCline@ameritas.com

## American Baptists Invited to Participate in 50 States of Joy - A Preaching Series

The Yale Center for Faith and Culture (YCFC) invites American Baptist Clergy to participate in *50 States of Joy - A Preaching Series*. The project encourages pastors to preach about joy, that state of right relationship that comes from knowing and serving God. The project officially began in April; however, pastors may join the movement by preaching about joy anytime during 2017-2018.

To invigorate that foundational spirit of joy found in our faith and encourage participation, YCFC has provided a listing of biblical passages and lectionary readings that focus on the theme of joy. These resources can be found at:

<http://faith.yale.edu/joy/50-states-joy-preaching-series>.

As added incentive, pastors are invited to enter their joy sermons series in one of YCFC's two sermon series competitions: *The Theology of Joy and the Good Life Sermon Series Competition* or *Joy and Adolescent Faith and Flourishing Sermon Series Competition*.

First prize in each competition is \$2000.00, with three runner-up prizes of \$500.00 also being awarded.

Share your sermons through social media with the hashtag #50statesofjoy; share your preaching plans with Dr. Jackson at [deborajackson@yale.edu](mailto:deborajackson@yale.edu).

### Current ABC-IN/KY Staff

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Lianne Wright, Manager of Mission and Finance  
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## SAVE THE DATE

### Annual Retired Ministers and Spouses Reunion September 7 Hoosier Village

Be sure to check the Observations e-newsletter for more details that will be coming in the near future.

## COMING EVENTS

### JULY

- June 30 - July 2 - ABC Biennial Mission Summit
- 11 - Region Staff Mtg.
- 13 - Personnel Committee Mtg.
- 15 - CLI at Franklin, Vevay
- 22 - CLI at Franklin
- 28-30 - Call Retreat at Indian Creek Baptist Camp
- 29 - CLI at Vevay

### AUGUST

- 5 - CLI at Franklin
- 8 - Region Staff Mtg.
- 12 - Healthy Boundaries 1 - Franklin College
- 12 - CLI at Vevay
- 14 - Finance Committee Mtg.
- 19 - CLI at Franklin
- 28 - CORMS

### SEPTEMBER

- 7 - Retired Ministers & Spouses Reunion at Hoosier Village
- 9 - CLI at Vevay
- 12 - Region Staff Mtg.