



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)

WENDY SHULER, EDITOR - VOL. 23 NO. 2 - APR/MAY/JUN 2023

## JUNE 21-24 MISSION TRIP TO HAZARD, KY

If you, a small group from your church or ABC-related organization is interested in joining the June 2023 Mission Trip (organized by the Coffee Creek Association) or if you have additional questions for KY Relief Coordinator Patty Short about ongoing efforts to assist KY survivors of the 2021 storm (in the Bremen area) or the 2022 storm (in the Hazard area), please email [ppshort@frontier.com](mailto:ppshort@frontier.com) or phone her at 812-595-1082. Registration information will be made available in future issues of ABC-IN/KY *Observations*, the Region's semi-monthly e-news.

### MONETARY SUPPORT STILL NEEDED

Donations are still being sought so that a trade professional or two might be hired and additional building supplies purchased in support of the summer trip. **Monetary donations may be mailed to:** Grace Flynn, 139 N. Sharon Dr., Scottsburg, IN 47170. **Please make checks payable to:** "CCA ABWM" and specify that your donation is a "Hazard Relief" donation.

### WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR MORE?

Patty Short also would love to speak or display at upcoming ABC-IN/KY meetings (e.g. at associations', men's, women's or pastors' meetings) about ongoing efforts to assist KY residents. If interested, contact Patty by email or phone (per above).



### ATTENTION ALL ABC WOMEN

Summer Conference will be July 7 & 8 at St. Joseph Retreat and Conference Center (Tipton, IN). Your missionaries, Kristy Engel, global consultant, and Corenne Smith, missionary to Brazil, will share on the topic, "Be Brave, Be Courageous." A wonderful conference has been planned for you! The registration form will be sent to association presidents in May. Feel free to email Jean Langdon, ABWM IN/KY President, [jangdon3231@comcast.net](mailto:jangdon3231@comcast.net), if you have questions.



## IN CARE AND SUPPORT OF CHURCHES AND LEADERS



**Rev. Mark Thompson**  
Executive Minister

[markthompson@abc-indiana.org](mailto:markthompson@abc-indiana.org)

Over the many miles that I regularly drive, I am often in observation of the change in the fields during the different times of year. Also, fields of corn one year are replaced by winter wheat and beans the next. In hope of a plentiful harvest, there must be care for the soil. As many of you know, the healthy harvest begins well before the seed is sown. The field must be cared for properly including proper drainage and cultivation. Establishing proper drainage is costly and a lot of work. The cultivation is not fun and if you have to use hand tools, God bless you.

Jesus often used the analogy of farm life and shepherding to illustrate the work of the Kingdom. The Region and our local churches are in a season of cultivation. This work is frustrating, difficult, and often underappreciated. The more hands that help, the lighter the work load. I am grateful for the many volunteers who have offered to help. I am grateful to work among staff who love the Church and our local church pastors. I know I do not labor alone.

As your church finds itself in this season of cultivation, please be assured that you are not the only church in this labor. You will not see just one tractor trying to cover the whole state. The work is too great. We are called to work together because the

harvest will be great. Know that the Lord is near and He sees this work. He is the Lord of the Harvest, and you do not labor in vain. Pastor, please do not hesitate to ask for help. By asking for help, you invite others to join the labor. Whether they join early or late, the reward is the same. I think I read that somewhere.

Churches, offer a word of encouragement and be generous to your pastor and other leaders. During the season of cultivation, we are not meant to live in scarcity which shows a lack of faith that the harvest is coming. I join the Region Staff in prayer for your church and community. We pray for your strength and for the support needed to accomplish this great and Holy work. Take a break when needed and know that you are not meant to be the only tractor in the field. We enter the field "TOGETHER on God's Abundant Journey,"

Rev. Mark Thompson  
Executive Minister

### HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

**Healthy Boundaries Fundamentals** is an introduction to the concepts of boundaries in pastoral and teaching relationships. This course is required for CLI graduates and ordination candidates. Pastoral leaders should repeat the course every five years. Also recommended for lay leaders—deacons, Sunday school teachers, small group leaders and visitation teams.

**A two-session seminar (via Zoom), participants are to join BOTH sessions!**  
CEUs available upon request. - Taught by Bruce Cochran & Phyllis Goodyear.

**Tuesdays, May 2 & 9, 2023**  
**7:00 - 9:00 pm EST**  
**Cost: \$25.00 per person**

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE:** Thursday, April 20, 2023.

Sign up and pay online by lining up your phone's photo taking screen with the QR code at right and click on the link [or](#) contact the Region Office for a paper form.



### REGION MINISTERIAL STAFF

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### 2023 OBSERVER SUBMISSION DEADLINES

**SUMMER ISSUE** (July, August, September 2023) - Friday, June 2

**FALL ISSUE** (October, November, December 2023) - Friday, September 8

Send submissions to Wendy at the below email address!

If you would like more information about churches or events described in this issue, contact Wendy Shuler at [wendyshuler@abc-indiana.org](mailto:wendyshuler@abc-indiana.org) or (317) 635-3552, press 3.



## EMPOWERING CHURCHES

### Conference for Smaller Churches

**FREE REGISTRATION for  
ABC-IN/KY Pastors & Their Spouses!  
May 18-19, 2023**

**First Baptist Church at Savoy  
1602 S. Prospect Ave., Savoy, IL**



Spend time with other pastors and leaders from smaller churches and be inspired by teaching from gifted Christian leaders and teachers. Choose from workshops highlighting innovative ministry strategies on topics such as essentials and redefining success in ministry, capitalizing with online possibilities in smaller churches, leading the presence-driven church and communication improvement.

**ABC of IN/KY pastors and their spouses who wish to register for the conference**, please email Conference Registrar Nancy of the American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region (where the conference will take place), [nancy@abcgr.org](mailto:nancy@abcgr.org), or phone her at 217.726.7366.

**IMPORTANT:** Nancy needs to enter your registration manually in order for you to receive the FREE registration that our Region is offering you! Any travel or hotel costs, however, will need to be covered by you or your local church. Visit [ResourceLC.org](http://ResourceLC.org) to learn more about the conference schedule and how to book discounted hotel accommodations.

This event is co-sponsored by the ABC-IN/KY Region, ABC of Great Rivers Region and other ABC organizations. **Churches, please help encourage your pastor/s to attend!**

## COLUMBUS FBC HELPS OTHER CHURCHES HOST AND SERVE

In 2021, Columbus FBC was given a large donation to be used mostly for missions. At the church council's direction, a letter was sent to other member churches of the Flat Rock Association asking if they had a need Columbus FBC might help to fulfill. They received several replies. Early on, the Columbus church helped Amity BC make two restrooms into one and now unisex/accessible. They generously donated to the Region's Indian Creek Baptist Camp (Bedford, IN) and to Southeastern Baptist Youth Camp (Greensburg, IN), an independently run, association-supported camp. Waldron BC, a hot meal site in partnership with Shelby County Salvation Army, sought help to renovate their kitchen for better service to their community and congregation. They host meals for area youth before a weekly Bible study, occasional athletic banquets --and, of course, ongoing fellowship events for their own congregation. Again, Columbus FBC responded.

Jeff Caldwell contacted Frank Eldridge asking him to meet with a group from Waldron. Frank made drawings and with a planning committee agreed on a plan. Frank served as project manager with volunteer help from the committee and others, and the group also worked with professional contractors. Waldron BC now serves meals in a larger space with much more comfort and efficiency. --Good examples of how being in mission together can help expand our Christian witness and impact!





## EXPANDING MISSION

### PLAINFIELD FBC GOES CHRISTMAS CAROLING

After a two-year COVID hiatus, about 30 people from Plainfield FBC went caroling to their shut-ins and homebound members on Sunday evening, December 11, 2022. With sixteen stops to make, they split into four teams, gathered their gifts of goodie bags and poinsettias, said a prayer of blessing and -donned with Santa hats, reindeer antlers, sleigh bells and smiles on their faces- they headed out to bring Christmas cheer. They returned to church to share their caroling stories over a light supper of soups and desserts.

Pastor John Marshall said about the event, "Going to those homes, seeing the responses of the people and how much they lit up, it was so cool to watch and be a part. Next year we need to make caroling a priority! There is a need out there for people to come up and say hello, let alone sing, and we can meet that need. What a gift it was to them and to us."



### COFFEE CREEK ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS EDNA MARTIN CHRISTIAN CENTER



Thirty-one people from the Coffee Creek Assn. (CCA) met at Aldi's on Saturday, February 4, to buy and load food, then delivered it to Edna Martin Christian Center. Our gift to EMCC was valued at \$10,628.16! We blessed them, but I think all who participated felt blessed as well. This was a joint effort between AB Men and AB Women's Ministries of CCA. Linda Layman Napier also took part and continues her parents' legacy in support of Edna Martin. Thank you to everyone who participated. --Patty Short, CCA ABWM

### SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST YOUTH CAMP WELCOMES NEW STAFF

We have added some new faces at SBYCamp! Meet everyone at our Homecoming Open House on Sunday, May 21, from 1:00-5:00 pm.

Help us kick off our summer the right way! Bring your family, a picnic lunch, invite your friends and enjoy the grounds, putt-putt, fishing & more! There is no entrance fee.



**Back Row (L to R):** Alex Wallace (Facilities & Grounds Assistant), Chris Kallal (Executive Director), Dustin Crawford (Facilities & Grounds Director)

**Front Row (L to R):** Carrie Kallal (Guest Services Director), Hannah Eberts (Assistant Director), Allison Crawford (Housekeeping & Outdoor Education)

### DAY OF SERVICE & PRAYER OPEN HOUSE WEEKEND

SERVE AND FELLOWSHIP  
WITH CAMP FAMILY

APRIL 28TH-30TH



Day of Service and Prayer will be a whole weekend event in 2023. Join us for part or all of the weekend and help us prepare for the camping season ahead, while having a great opportunity to fellowship with Camp Family and friends.

- Friday 6pm - Welcome, Chapel, free time, campfire
- Saturday 9-Noon - Prayer and service projects begin
- 12:00pm-1:00 - Lunch and Camp updates
- 1:00 - 5:00pm Prayer and service project completion
- 6:00pm - Dinner
- 7:00pm Worship and fellowship

More plans being made for Sunday Second and weekend fun. Save the Dates now!

Visit our website to RSVP  
[CAMPINDIANCREEK.COM/SERVE](http://CAMPINDIANCREEK.COM/SERVE)



## EQUIPPING LEADERS

### PASTOR/STAFF ZOOM CALLS



**Tuesday, April 11, 2023**  
Prayer & Preaching with John Piippo

**May 9, 2023**  
David Hinson of  
Ministers & Missionaries Benefit Board (MMBB)

**June 13, 2023**  
Everyday Finances with John Nolan

All sessions @ 10:00 am ET/9:00 am CT  
Zoom connection will be emailed to Pastors  
To subscribe, email [wendyshuler@abc-indiana.org](mailto:wendyshuler@abc-indiana.org)

### MCCURDY FAMILY WELCOMED BY JEFFERSONVILLE FIRST BAPTIST



Jeffersonville FBC installed Rev. Peter McCurdy, as Pastor, Sunday, March 12. Peter and his wife Sarah have served as missionaries with ABCUSA International Ministries in Latin America, most recently at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Mexico City. Sarah will continue to serve as Regional Coordinator for Education in Iberoamerica and the Caribbean. Peter has also taught at Palmer Theological Seminary (St. Davids, PA) and served as pastor in New York and Ohio.

### WARREN FBC SHARES EVENT IDEA

Warren FBC hosted Bruce VanNatta of Sweet Bread Ministries at a community event on February 18 at the Knight Bergman Center and at our local church on February 19. Bruce shared his incredible testimony about having been crushed by a logging truck, what he experienced and witnessed, and the miracles that followed.

We can't recommend him highly enough! Bruce is professional, personable, relatable, down to earth and easy to host. We contacted him, set a date, then took up a free will offering to pay for his appearance. Once the date was set, we started advertising heavily on social media. This paid off drawing multiple people to Warren from out of state! We also stressed the importance to our members of inviting unchurched friends/members of the community.

We hosted two events because we wanted a location where folks who are unchurched would feel comfortable listening to Bruce's testimony. During the community event, he went into great detail about his difficult childhood, how he lived before finding Christ, and how God worked in his life. At the end of the event, eleven people came forward to commit their lives to Christ!

On the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup>, we invited Bruce to speak during our Sunday morning service to a full house, and our congregation was so inspired and touched by his story! Many members came forward for prayers of healing. After our service, we catered a lunch for all in attendance. Bruce joined us and spent a lengthy time fellowshiping with all who stayed to eat.

We were truly inspired and left in awe of what God is doing today! If you are looking for a speaker, Bruce VanNatta's website (including his contact info) is <https://sweetbreadministries.com>.

--Shared by First Baptist Church of Warren, IN  
Ashton Ousley, Administrative Assistant

At right,  
Bruce VanNatta  
speaks to Warren FBC  
and visitors.



If you would like more information about churches or events described in this issue, contact Wendy Shuler at [wendyshuler@abc-indiana.org](mailto:wendyshuler@abc-indiana.org) or (317) 635-3552, press 3.



## EQUIPPING LEADERS (CONTINUED)

### THE JOURNEY CHURCH WELCOMES PASTOR LOWE & FAMILY TO INDIANA



The Journey Church (Westfield, IN) is proud to announce the call of Jason Lowe as senior pastor. Jason has served many teaching roles in ministry, putting two bachelor degrees in Biblical Studies and New Testament Greek and his M.Div. to good use. He has a heart for evangelism--developing relationships and engaging communities. Along with wife Annalisa and daughter Ariel, the family was led to central Indiana, in Aug. 2022 from Portland, OR, knowing God had plans for them here. Jason connected with the church's transition team in January, and the team quickly felt

they had found the right leader for the church.

Pastor John Parsley, interim pastor for the last two and a half years, helped The Journey Church leadership discover its priorities including how the church can best serve the community around them in the days ahead. John will continue to serve as "interim in transition," mentoring Jason as he takes lead of his first congregation. John shares Jason's approach to reaching those who need Jesus in their lives through compassion and kindness.

The church is excited to enter its next chapter of history and looks forward to what God has in store!



**Intro to Christian Worship** via Zoom - Taught by Karen Hetrick

**Dates (4 sessions total):** April 22, May 6, May 20 & June 3

**Early bird registration deadline:** April 3 (Cost \$125, instead of \$150!)

**RSVP no later than April 17!**

**For a registration form or to find out how to register online,** email [jennifergreene@abc-indiana.org](mailto:jennifergreene@abc-indiana.org), or phone her at 317.635.3552, press 4.

For more timely details about Region events, subscribe for FREE to **Observations**, our **ABC-IN/KY semi-monthly e-newsletter**, by emailing [wendyshuler@abc-indiana.org](mailto:wendyshuler@abc-indiana.org) your email address, the name of your church, and please specify whether you are an ABC pastor or layperson.

If you have an upcoming event open to others in our Region, we can perhaps promote your upcoming event through e-news!

If your ABC-IN/KY Region congregation or related organization has a story and/or a photo or two to submit to **THIS publication, the Baptist Observer (printed quarterly)**, be sure to also send those submissions to: Wendy Shuler, editor, at the above email address.

Our readers enjoy in particular when we hear from churches and groups we haven't heard from in a while and when we hear about some NEW approaches to mission, ministry and how we partner TOGETHER. Please keep that in mind.

THANK YOU!



## EQUIPPING LEADERS (CONTINUED)

### TWO-STEP LEADERSHIP: A 3-PART MINI-CONFERENCE FOR PASTORS AND CHRISTIAN LEADERS

As a pastor and leader, have you ever felt overwhelmed by the amount of literature and conferences on how to lead your church? Perhaps you would like to simplify leadership? Maybe you are interested in what a minimalist strategy for church leadership looks like?

If this is you, please join Dr. John Piippo for three sessions on a biblical way of leading that is exciting, energizing, and emerges out of an abiding life in Christ!

**Attend via 3 Zoom Gatherings**  
**June 3, 10, 17 from 9 – 10 AM**

**Zoom connection information will be shared once you register**  
**c/o Warren First Baptist Church**

**Deadline to register: May 27!**

**If you need a reservation form,** find it in recent issues of the ABC-IN/KY Region *Observations* (e-news) or call the Region general number, (317) 635-3552.

**For more information, please contact:**

Bruce Cochran – Region Minister or Rusty Strickler – Warren First Baptist Church

### ...AND SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE FROM NEW MARKET BAPTIST CHURCH

On June 17, 2023, New Market BC will celebrate 10 years of having The Lord's Closet open every other Saturday, 9 am to noon. The "store" provides free clothes to anyone who comes to the church. Persons may take as many items as they want or need (again, all free)! People also can bring in clothes to donate on those Saturdays during the hours that The Lord's Closet is open.

New Market reports they have never run out of clothes! In fact, two times a year, they also donate a pickup truck load of clothes to Wheeler Mission in Indianapolis, IN. Wheeler Missions serves folks experiencing homelessness, poverty, and having other types of needs in Central and South Central Indiana.

Wallie Nichols from the church succinctly puts it this way, "Surprise, God always has enough for everyone!"



*The Lord's Closet as its inventory changed from winter to spring/summer clothes recently.*

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## **IMPORTANT Notices!**

*ABC-IN/KY Region Church Pastors:*

**Executive Minister Mark Thompson sent you a VERY important email on Thursday, March 9.**

**Each ABC-IN/KY Church was sent the same information on March 10 via US Mail** about our Region's changes of address, new phone system and soon-to-launch [new] website. If you missed that information, please contact your Region Minister right away! (The phone number for the Region remains the same but with different extensions for each Region Staff Member.)

**Part of this information shared needs to reach ALL churches' financial secretaries and treasurers in a timely manner!** Local church financial leaders, if you don't know to what we are referring, either ask your pastor or contact ABC-IN/KY Manager of Mission & Finance John Dunlap (call the Region general number and press 2). Also, be watching for additionally *important* mail to arrive to all churches likely sometime in April.

With additional questions, feel free to contact any Region Staff Member as mentioned in the communication. Thank you!