American Baptist Churches of IN & KY **FOGETHER** on God's Abundant **lourney** equipping leaders empowering churches expanding mission

THE BAPTIST OBSERVER MAGAZINE

HIGHLIGHTING THE MINISTRIES OF AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN INDIANA & KENTUCKY

WENDY SHULER, EDITOR - VOL. 22 NO. 2 - APRIL/MAY/JUNE 2022



Rev. Mark Thompson Executive Minister markthompson@abc-indiana.org

Greetings friends,

My first three months as Executive Minister have been exciting and encouraging. Many of you have sent a kind word of support, and I sense prayers daily. I work with and among some amazing pastors, and the Region ministers and staff are top-notch in every way. I would say the transition has been seamless.

When beginning a new role such as this, one step near the top of the priority list is the evaluation of ministry life from every perspective. What I find is strong morale and a desire to connect among many of our pastors. Our churches

GOD IS RISING UP NEW LEADERS!

are seeing numbers return to pre-COVID levels. One critical item that remains the same is the decline of those answering the call of ministry. In this decline though, we find great opportunity and the work of God.

I believe we serve a God who loves all people and will continue to bless the local church. I believe God is changing lives through His church and that He is rising up new leaders. We see a progression in Acts of a man named Stephen who was a lay leader and full of the Holy Spirit, chosen to be a deacon, who not long after becomes a proclaimer of the Gospel. I believe God is doing this today in the lives of men and women who need an inspired word from other believers, who recognize the work of God in their lives. If you see what God is doing in an emerging leader's life, please tell them, encourage them and support them in any

way you can.

You will find in this issue of The Observer (p. 4) a listing of open positions that are not fully funded. We call these positions "bi-vocational" because those who serve in these pastorates also hold other employment roles. This model of pastoring is very Biblical as we read that the Apostle Paul was also a tentmaker.

Training is available through the Region to support the development of lay leaders. We call this training Church Leadership Institute. We have additional training available that is targeted to help bi-vocational pastors, Nehemiah Leadership. Many churches have called a bi-vocational pastor and

some are moving in that direction. This movement is not a step backward for the church but often a way to add resources for new ministry. If you see what God is doing in someone else's life and you believe in their ministry, it is a Holy thing to encourage that person. If God is calling you deeper in your service to Him, we want to encourage that call. Please reach out to me or your Region Minister, and we will find great joy in having a conversation with you. Please remember that you do not walk alone. We serve TOGETHER on God's Abundant Journey.

Rev. Mark Thompson

Executive Minister

TOGETHER AGAIN - finally! ABC-IN/KY REGION BIENNIAL GATHERING Friday & Saturday, October 7-8, 2022 **Hosted by Terre Haute First Baptist Church**

SEARCH BEGINS FOR REGION MINISTER - CENTRAL AREA

The American Baptist Churches of Indiana & Kentucky is seeking a qualified candidate for the position of Region Minister to cover the associations approximately between I-70 down to US Hwy 50. The successful candidate should possess the gifts, skills and experiences necessary to serve effectively and creatively alongside an energetic staff team, and among churches and leaders navigating increased cultural and ministry challenges. The Region Minister is directly accountable to the Executive Minister.

QUALIFICATIONS and EXPERIENCE:

The successful candidate will give evidence of the following qualifications and experience:

- The ability to articulate a deep and abiding relationship with Jesus Christ and a sense of calling to regional ministry;
- Model a personal lifestyle and professional presence consistent with the values of ABC Indiana/Kentucky;
- Possess strong interpersonal skills, i.e. self-awareness; communication (verbal, written, and online);
 ability to self-differentiate in the presence of conflict or difficult situations; a sense of humor; and an ability to interact with others from a foundation of theological and Biblical integrity;
- Possess a Master of Divinity degree (preferred) or equivalent from an ATS accredited institution;
- A preference of at least seven years of pastoral (or equivalent ministry) experience, with demonstrated commitment to ABC ministry, including support of ABC mission (regional/national/international);
- · Hold a recognized ABC ordination, or the qualifications necessary to obtain such an ordination; and
- The ability to articulate commitment to the ABC Code of Ethics for professional church leaders.

See the full announcement/position description on the ABC-IN/KY Region website, www.abc-indiana.org.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Interested persons should submit a cover letter, in the form of an email, along with the following as attachments (Word or PDF format) no later than **April 15**, **2022**, to abcinkyscom@abc-indiana.org:

- A brief statement of faith, including sense of calling to this position;
- A current American Baptist Personnel Services (ABPS) profile and/or a resume'; and
- Signed ABCUSA Code of Ethics.

A signed authorization form for a background check will be required of final candidates. Please do not include audio-visual materials. The Search Team will request additional supporting items as the process moves forward.

Questions about the position may be directed to either:

Rev. Mark Thompson, Executive Minister (markthompson@abc-indiana.org), 317.635.3552, x224 Rev. Shelly A. Zook, Personnel Committee Chairperson (shelly.zook@gmail.com), 317.489.2988



REGION MINISTER SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Rev. Shelly Zook, Chair, ABC-IN/KY Search Committee

Rev. Nathan Brooks

Mr. Jeff Caldwell

Rev. Mitch Harrell

Rev. Kim Jarrett

Rev. Daisok Panmei

Rev. Mark Thompson, Executive Minister

REGION MINISTERIAL STAFF

Rev. Mark Thompson
Executive Minister
markthompson@abc-indiana.org

Region Ministers

Rev. Steve Allen
Interim - portions of East Central
steveallen@abc-indiana.org

Rev. Dr. Bruce Cochran North brucecochran@abc-indiana.org

Rev. Dan Chadwick
South
danchadwick@abc-indiana.org

Rev. Dr. Jim Walter
Interim - portions of West Central
jimwalter@abc-indiana.org

Rev. Jaime Flores Latino Ministries Strategist jaimeflores@abc-indiana.org

2022 OBSERVER ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINES

SUMMER ISSUE (July, August, September 2022) - Friday, June 3 FALL ISSUE (October, November, December 2022) - Friday, September 9

If you would like more information about churches or events described in this issue, contact Wendy Shuler at wendyshuler@abc-indiana.org or (317) 635-3552 x222.

EMPOWERING CHURCHES

MT. MORIAH ENCOURAGES PEOPLE TO BE IN CHURCH

In 2021, Mt. Moriah BC joined a "Back to Church Sunday" effort, sponsored by a national organization, emphasizing (annually) the need for folks to do just that--get back to church. And, of course, as Covid constraints become lifted, a deliberate invitation such as this encourages the togetherness many are now seeking!

The theme "Hope Is Here," urged churches to focus on four types of people who need Christ's hope. Over four weeks, sub-themes were emphasized and challenges were extended encouraging the churches to better understand and minister to: 1) the weary, 2) the broken, 3) the underdog, and 4) the doubters.

Opportunities for follow up were suggested, and Mt. Moriah has seen new families become active as a result of joining this effort!

Mt. Moriah is also trying to figure out ways to help with some healing of past hurts in their community and to stay consistent in introducing people to Christ. The immediate area around the church is mostly made up of people already involved with Mt. Moriah or other churches, or of folks who show limited to no interest; therefore, it remains a challenge. Fortunately, Mt. Moriah BC has had some recent successes by becoming involved in their area's fall festival where they served food, offered face painting for kids and organized

games with prizes.

While many who attended the event were not from the local area and were often related to people already in the church, at least smiles were exchanged and spirits lifted! The church also continued their involvement in an annual Trunk or Treat; but, instead of simply handing out the usual candy, this year (while following Covidguidelines and masking up), they purposefully brought kids inside the church building to receive free pairs of mittens or gloves and scarves, a simple act of kindness that seemed appreciated by the children's parents, and it was a nice way to show what it means to "be" the church!



Above: Several ages represented at Mt. Moriah BC Fall events.

GIVING TO UKRAINE

Persons wishing to support Ukraine may do so through their American Baptist church, by giving online at www.internationalministries. org (click "Donate" at top right, then choose "Disaster Relief"), or by sending checks directly to International Ministries. Please designate your contribution to "OGHS Ukraine Relief" in the memo line of your gift (and, treasurers, if using the ABC-IN/KY Region Mission Support Form, please write under the line "G. One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)" that you wish the money to go to "Ukraine Relief"). Checks sent directly to

International Ministries should be payable to "International Ministries" (noting "OGHS Ukraine Relief") and mailed to:
International Ministries Attn. Gifts Processing 1003 W 9th Avenue, Ste A King of Prussia, PA 19406.

WESTPORT BC STARTS "SIDE DOOR" MINISTRIES



Above: Westport BC puts on a Live Nativity as another way to reach out to the community.

Westport BC started small, special interest groups that are open to the community and designed to be what they call, "side door" ministries to help their surrounding community get to know people from their congregation. Examples of what they have offered recently have been a book club, cooking class, aeronautical club (aka rocket building) and a mom's brunch group.

Westport shared that since they are just getting started, it's difficult to measure what impact the activities are having. They seem to primarily draw people already involved in the church, but the increased fellowship among members has proven valuable. The church is proud that people are trying new things while receiving increased joy from treasured times together.



VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 3/16/22)—American Baptist Churches USA has called the Rev. Soozi Whitten Ford to serve as part-time interim associate general secretary for Regional Ministries beginning May 15, 2022. In 2021, Ford retired from ABC-IN/KY, where she served as executive minister for more than nine years. Dr. C. Jeff Woods, General Secretary of American Baptist Churches USA, said, "I am delighted that Rev. Ford has agreed to fulfill this interim assignment. Her knowledge of regional ministry, her character and competencies, and her deep love for the American Baptist family will be a tremendous asset to our regions, our staff, and our denomination." For the complete story and to read more about Soozi's background and experience, go to: https://www.abc-usa.org/.

EMPOWERING CHURCHES (CONTINUED)

THE PRESENCE DRIVEN CHURCH ABIDING IN CHRIST

Approximately 50 pastors and church leaders gathered at Camp Tippy for a spiritual renewal weekend on Friday and Saturday, February 25-26. The event was organized by a group of pastors in Northeast Indiana out of a sincere desire to connect with one another and to seek a renewed sense of the presence of God.

Dr. John Piippo and other members of Holy Spirit Renewal Ministries (HSRM) led the plenary worship and teaching sessions, and provided breakout sessions. The theme of the weekend came from Dr. Piippo's book, Leading the Presence Driven Church.

Piippo, who is pastor of Redeemer Church (an American Baptist congregation in Monroe, MI), emphasizes the imperative of abiding in Christ as the basis not only for personal spirituality but for leadership. For example, the role of church leaders is to learn to discern The Shepherd's voice, which is found by seeking the presence of God. "...direction comes



Above: Dr. John Piippo and Holy Spirit Ministries (HSRM) lead singing for the recent retreat at Camp Tippy.

At right: Church leaders and spouses converse and share a meal together.

from God, and is discerned by accessing God's presence."*

HSRM members provided Sunday morning messages at Garrett FBC, Denver FBC and Warren FBC following the retreat. Liberty Center BC joined the Warren congregation for worship that day.

Many thanks to Camp Tippy staff for hosting the event. Thanks also to the retreat leadership team, Pastors Rusty Strickler, Aaron Westfall and David Mix, as well as the office staff and members of Warren FBC for administrative assistance. Region Minister Bruce Cochran served as liaison to the Region for the team.

Future events or retreats are being considered. Until then, pastors and church leaders are encouraged to attend the HSRM conference, June 26-30, 2022, at Green Lake Conference Center (Green Lake, WI). More information can be found at https://hsrm.org/.

* Piippo, John. Leading the Presence-Driven Church, WestBow Press, 2016. Kindle Edition Location 676.



BI-VOCATIONAL OPENINGS

Again, review Rev. Mark Thompson's column (p.1) if you have questions about what these are.

Listings are as of early March:

Pastor in Bethel Association
Pastor in Brownstown Association
Pastor in Coffee Creek Association
Pastor in Evansville Association
Pastor in Madison Association
Pastor in Orleans Association

Please reach out to Rev. Dan Chadwick for details, danchadwick@abc-indiana.org.

Pastor in Freedom Association
Pastor in Harmony Association
Pastoral Intern in Logansport Association
Pastor in Northeastern Association
Pastor in Northwestern Association

Please reach out to Rev. Bruce Cochran for details, brucecochran@abc-indiana.org.

Youth Minister in Decatur County
Pastor in Laughery Association
Children's Pastor in Sand Creek Association
Pastor in Sand Creek Association
Worship Director in White Lick Association

Please reach out to Rev. Mark Thompson for details, markthompson@abc-indiana.org.

Pastor in Bedford Association Pastor in Curry's Prairie Association Pastor in Friendship Association Pastor in Mt. Zion Association

Please reach out to Rev. Jim Walter for details, jimwalter@abc-indiana.org.

REMINDER - SR ADULT DAY

Thursday, April 7, 2022 Hosted by: Bedford FBC 1515 20th St Bedford, IN 47421

Registration: 9:30 AM; Program: 10:00 AM- 2:15 PM (ET)

If you would like more information about churches or events described in this issue, contact Wendy Shuler at wendyshuler@abc-indiana.org or (317) 635-3552 x222.

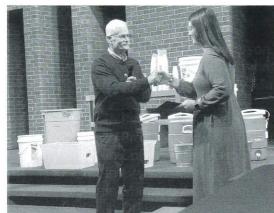
Rainbow Acres

Rainbow Acres Board of Directors seeks a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to provide leadership, direction and management of programs and services while achieving the goals for the organization. Rainbow Acres (Camp Verde, AZ) has a reputation of excellence in serving adults with developmental disabilities.

To review position qualifications, search online for "Rainbow Acres Announces Search for Chief Executive Officer" (www. abc-usa.org), and, within the story, click on "View the position announcement."

Candidates may email cover letter and resume to MHS Consulting at mhssearches@mhsonline.org. All inquiries will be held in confidence.

EQUIPPING LEADERS



Above: Jim Reid, president of the Columbus First Baptist Church council presenting the certificate of license to Reilly.



Church Leadership Institute

TCI STUDENT REILLY JONES LICENSED BY COLUMBUS FBC

Reilly Jones was licensed for ministry by Columbus FBC on Sunday January 9, 2022. She feels called to ministry and is taking classes online at Northern Seminary toward a Master's of Divinity through the Teaching Church Initiative (TCI), a partnership between ABC-IN/KY and Northern. Reilly earned her bachelor's degree from Franklin College. She grew up at First Baptist where she has been involved in many ministries.

As Community Pastor of Columbus FBC currently, Reilly assists each ministry team as needed and preaches occasionally. Her main focus while being on staff these past few months has been in evangelism, outreach and mission. She has worked closely with the church's Afghan resettlement, Richards Elementary School and Love Chapel outreach efforts. On the day of her licensing, Reilly brought the message from John 2 about Jesus changing water into wine. Containers shown in the background of the photo above illustrated how much water was transformed into wine. Columbus FBC is very happy to have Pastor Reilly on staff as she grows in her call to ministry!

TRAINING FOR LAY LEADERS OFFERED THIS SUMMER

This theology class will enable you to define what you mean by "theology." You will engage with classmates in discussing doctrines of Christian belief, ways we communicate our faith and respond to challenges of faith in the 21st Century. We also will explore some contemporary issues of life and how we approach them in the light of what we believe— how we "do faith."

C104 Introduction to Theology

Taught by Rev. Rodney Lynch

Divided into four Saturday classes: Jul 16, Jul 30, Aug 13 & Aug 27

Early Registration deadline is Monday, June 20th!

Contact Jennifer Greene for additional information: jennifergreene@abc-indiana.org or 317.635.3552 x221.

INTERESTED IN EXPLORING THE CALL TO JOIN GOD IN GLOBAL MISSION?

You are invited to the Hear the Call Retreat before the IM World Mission Conference

July 1-3, 2022 at Green Lake Conference Center (World Mission Conf. runs July 4-9) Theme: Discerning Our Place in God's Story (Matthew 28:18-20)

Cost: \$325 per person - includes registration, housing and meals

For more info, go to: https://www.internationalministries.org/hear-the-call/ Questions? Email Claudia Wong, cwong@internationalministries.org, or Rodney Ragwan, rragwan@internationalministries.org.



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EXPANDING MISSION

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING CENTER RECEIVES RIVERSIDE BC DONATIONS



Each year, Riverside Avenue BC (Muncie, IN) invites members of the congregation to place under a Christmas tree in the sanctuary gifts benefiting an agency which serves people in need. In spite of limitations imposed by COVID this year, members of the church gave generously as they have done in years past. Riverside's 2021 "Christmas Giving Tree" benefited The Children's Clothing Center of Delaware County.

Camp Tippy Work Days Including Lunch!

Saturdays, May 7 & 21

RSVP to Rebecca Scott 574.834.4184 or email tippy@abc-indiana.org.



tounty. 2022 CAMP TIPPY SCHEDULE SESSION DATES GRADE

DAIES	GRADES
June 12 - 16	1st - 2nd
June 12 -18	9 th - 12 th
June 17 - 18	K - 1 st
June 19 - 25	5 th - 6 th
June 26 - July 1	K - 5 th
June 26 - July 1	7 th - 8 th
June 26 – July 1	7 th - 8 th
July 1 -3	All Ages
July 3-9	$9^{th} - 722$
July 10 – 16	$7^{th} - 8^{th}$
July 17 – 23	$2^{nd} - 4^{th}$
	June 12 - 16 June 12 - 18 June 17 - 18 June 19 - 25 June 26 - July 1 June 26 - July 1 June 26 - July 1 July 1 - 3 July 3 - 9 July 10 - 16

STAYING CONNECTED

UPCOMING PASTOR/STAFF ZOOM CALLS

Tuesday, April 12 - Q & A Session regarding

Domestic and Sexual Violence/Human Trafficking

with Dr. Carolyn Knight & Mrs. Irina Sorrels

Tuesday, May 10 - Discussion about Ukraine

with Todd Marshall

June Call - TBD

All sessions @ 10:00 am ET/9:00 am CT.

Zoom connection will be emailed to Pastoral Leaders.

COLUMBUS STORE LENDS & HAND

In January, Columbus FBC receives an offering for items needed by Love Chapel Food Pantry. This year, over \$3,000 was collected. In the past, a group of church members would gather at Aldi and load boxes of



items into vehicles to deliver and then unload them. This usually was done while clients were already present at the pantry.

Under the leadership of Cliff and Sue Putterill this year, the items requested were ordered and then delivered by Aldi. The items arrived on three large pallets. The staff of Love Chapel requested peanut butter, mashed potatoes, and mac and cheese. A group from First Baptist dedicated the items and prayed for the staff and work of Love Chapel. Love Chapel is a ministry supported by The Ecumenical Assembly, a group of various churches in Columbus and Bartholomew County.

2022 INDIAN CREEK SCHEDULE

SESSION	DATES	GRADES
Explorer Discovery Girls Camp Senior High Boys Camp Focus Challenge Edna Martin CC Special Persons	une 5 - 7 une 8 - 11 une 12 - 15 une 19 - 25 une 26 - 29 uly 3 - 9 uly 10 - 16 uly 17 - 20 uly 22 - 25 BD	1st - 2nd 2nd - 3rd 4th - 6th 10th - '22 4th - 6th 7th - 9th 6th - 8th TBD Ages 16+ K - 1st

For more details and camp fees, visit camp websites:

CAMP TIPPY: www.camptippy.org **INDIAN CREEK:** campindiancreek.com

COFFEE CREEK ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS EDNA MARTIN CHRISTIAN CENTER

Coffee Creek Association churches donated \$16,000+ in food, toiletries and cash to Edna Martin Christian Center (EMCC), the faith-based, human services agency and network of neighborhood action programs on the east side of Indianapolis, long supported by American Baptists. On Saturday, Feb. 12, 2022, numerous volunteers and a small convoy of cars and trucks loaded with canned goods converged upon EMCC.

Approximately 60 years ago, Elisha Laymen, a Sunday-school teacher from a small Baptist church in Jennings County, IN, started the food drive. He heard about the work Mrs. Edna Martin was doing among the poor in Indianapolis' Martindale-Brightwood neighborhood, filled the trunk of his own sedan with canned goods and drove 80 miles north to see her efforts for himself. When Layman returned home, he inspired his congregation to do more. The next February, they came again with more food...and the February after that...and every year since!

Over the years, Layman won the support of the other Coffee Creek Association churches—a group of congregations that covers 350 square miles in several Southern-Indiana counties. When he passed away in 2012, his daughter Linda Napier picked up where he left off, saying, "I promised that I would not let his dream die." Although she now lives in Southern Kentucky, she still coordinates the collection and makes the annual trek to EMCC.

Since the pandemic started, EMCC's Food Pantry has seen unprecedented need. From March 15-May 15, 2020, demand was up 1,085% over the same period in 2019. Though demand has slowly receded, the organization still serves 4X more families than before COVID. Donations like these are crucial for the organization's success as it reaches residents with programs and services focusing on education, workforce development, and supports community health. EMCC's mission of bridging cultural, racial, and economic differences in order to support and nurture the people in the Indianapolis community (Brightwood neighborhood) provides holistic programs that empower, encourage and engender a vision of hope!

To find out what other items EMCC needs, go online to ednamartincc.org/wish-list. Feel free to also give monetarily through your local church as part of Mission Support (channeled through ABC-IN/KY Region specifics).

Sources: EMCC Press Release, February 12, 2022, and ABC-IN/KY Region Mission and Finance/Communication Offices

CLAYTON FBC ASSISTS THE HOMELESS

A few months ago, God laid on Katie Phillips' heart to help the homeless by providing bags filled with blankets, scarves, hats, personal hygiene items, snacks and more. Due to the generosity of Clayton FBC, friends and family of church members and others in the community, 53 bags had been filled at the time of the below photo. Eventually 20 additional bags of items had been collected! The church wishes to thank all who contributed or helped to distribute the items.

Hearts for the Homeless was one of the recipients of the collection effort. The organization expressed via social media their appreciation for these blessings. God is good!



COFFEE CREEK ASSOCIATION HEADED NEXT TO KENTUCKY THURSDAY - SATURDAY, JUNE 16-18, 2022

Volunteers from other ABC-IN/KY Region churches and associations are invited to join their upcoming mission trip to KY to assist tornado survivors. All abilities needed, ages 14 and above.

Future issues of ABC-IN/KY Observations (e-news) will have additional details or call Patty Short, 812.595.1082, or email her at ppshort@frontier.com, for more info.



Above: Two Coffee Creek Association volunteers at EMCC.

Indiana Baptist Convention AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF INDIANA AND KENTUCKY 65 Airport Pkwy, Suite 120 Greenwood, IN 46143

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APRIL

- 2, 23 CLI via Zoom ABC History & Polity
 - 6 Region Staff Meeting via Zoom
 - 7 Senior Adult Day @ Bedford FBC
 - 12 Pastor/Staff Zoom Call
 - 15 Good Friday Region Office Closed
 - 17 Happy Easter Christ is Risen!

Change of Address?
Please notify
ABC-IN/KY!

MAY

- 4 Region Staff Meeting @ Office
- 7 CLI via Zoom
- 7 Fish Fry & Chicken Dinner Fundraiser @ Camp Tippy
- 7, 21 Camp Tippy Work Days
 - 10 Pastor/Staff Zoom Call
 - 14 Indian Creek Baptist Camp
 Day of Service and Prayer

JUNE

- 1 Region Staff Meeting via Zoom
- **TBD Pastor/Staff Zoom Call**

To update address or be removed from mailing list, email jennifergreene@abc-indiana.org