

TOWER TOPICS

The News Magazine of

First Baptist Church

Niagara Falls, New York



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First Baptist Church

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December 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>★ Be sure to save time on Christmas Eve for our beautiful service of Lessons, Carols, and Candlelight.</p> 		1	2 12:15 Inasmuch lunch	3	4 10:00 Men's Coffee Time 	5
<p>6 ADVENT II</p> <p>10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship with Holy Communion 5:00 L.I.F.E. "Merry Christmas"</p>  Hanukkah	<p>7</p> <p>10:00 AM Finance Committee Meeting</p>	8	<p>9</p> <p>OFFICE HOURS: 2:00 – 5:00</p> <p>7:00 Trustees/ Diaconate Meeting</p>	10	<p>11</p> <p>10:00 Men's Coffee Time </p>	<p>12</p> <p>10:00 – 3:00 NATIVITY FESTIVAL</p>
<p>13 ADVENT III</p> <p>10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship Rev. Dr. Charles F. Lamb, preaching 12:15 Second Sunday lunch 2:00 Christmas Organ Concert, James Flood</p>	<p>14</p> <p>10:00 AM "Finding Bethlehem in the Midst of Bedlam"</p>	15	16	17	<p>18</p> <p>10:00 Men's Coffee Time </p>	19
<p>20 ADVENT IV</p> <p>10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship Rev. Carmella Jones, preaching 3:00 Christmas ABW Tea Rev. Carmella Jones, speaking</p>	21	<p>22</p>  Winter Begins	23	<p>24</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED 5:30 Musical Program 6:00 Service of Lessons, Carols and Candlelight</p>	<p>25</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> 	<p>26</p> 
<p>27 FIRST SUN. AFTER CHRISTMAS</p> <p>10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship Mrs. Kathleen A. Ordiway, preaching</p>	<p>28</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>29</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>30</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>31</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> 	<p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> 	



Birthdays

2	Gladys Lewis
9	Jeanette Heasley
10	Kathleen Buckley
17	Donna Flood
21	Mark Clark Jr.
21	Mark Clark Sr.
27	Jason Clark
28	Donnie Cooke



PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY for Sara Gromniak, Margaret Payne, Mark Clark, Mark Williams, Jr., Patricia Smeal, Margaret Saul, Janet Keebler, Celia Krasinski, Neal Jacobs, Gladys Lewis, Dawn (Schutz) Lynn, Bertha and Harold Bissell, our Church family, our missionaries, our Country and all those who serve our Country.



December 2 – Wednesday

12:15 PM Inasmuch luncheon

December 6 — Sunday

ADVENT II

10:00 AM Pre-service Fellowship
 11:00 AM Divine Worship with Holy Communion
 Mrs. Kathleen A. Ordiway, preaching
 5:00 PM L. I. F. E. “Merry Christmas”

December 7 — Monday

10:00 AM Finance Committee Meeting

December 9 — Wednesday

7:00 PM Diaconate/Trustees Meeting

December 12 — Saturday

11:00 AM-3:00 PM NATIVITY FESTIVAL

December 13 — Sunday

ADVENT III

10:00 AM Pre-service Fellowship
 11:00 AM Divine Worship
 Rev. Dr. Charles F. Lamb, preaching
 12:15 PM Second Sunday Lunch
 2:00 PM Annual Christmas Organ Concert

December 14 — Monday

10:00 AM “Bethlehem in the Midst of Bedlam”

December 20 — Sunday

ADVENT IV

10:00 AM Pre-service Fellowship
 11:00 AM Divine Worship
Third Sunday Food Collection
 Rev. Carmella Jones, preaching
 3:00 AM ABW Christmas Tea
 Rev. Carmella Jones, speaking

December 24 – Thursday – Christmas Eve

5:30 PM Pre-service Christmas music program
 6:00 PM Lessons, Carols, and Candlelight

December 27 — Sunday

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

10:00 AM Pre-service Fellowship
 11:00 AM Divine Worship
 Mrs. Kathleen A. Ordiway, preaching

L. I. F. E.

Lively Interesting Fellowship for Everyone

Sunday, December 6, 2015**5:00 PM****"Merry Christmas"**

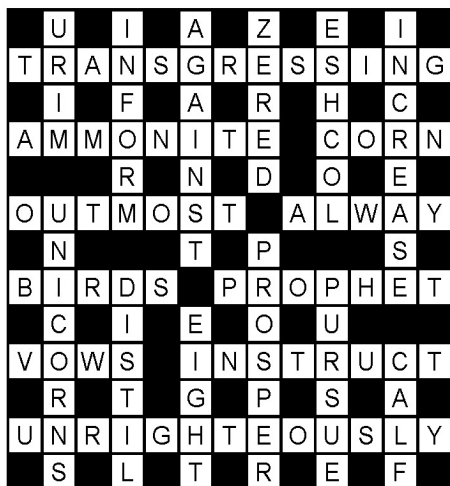
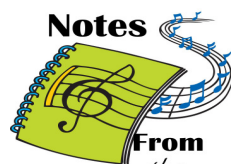
Pot Luck.

Bring a dish to pass.

Sign up in the Friendship Room

Do we have Your Birthday?

If your birthday doesn't appear on our list, **please** call the office (716-282-4666) to let us know your special date so we can include it.

Last Month's Crossword Answers**Deuteronomy****Notes****From
the
Moderator**

Have you smelled it yet? The scent of delicious **butter walnut crunch candy** made by our own candy makers fills the church with the taste of the season. Whether you are a candy eater or not, the one pound box is a nice gift to those who do appreciate the hand made efforts. Many thanks go to the crew of Hazel Baxter, Michael Baxter, Connie Davis, Sally Denny, Marge Bozigar, Kay Buckley, Ron Bowser, Dave and Michelle Martin and Donna Flood. If you wish to order candy, write an order found in your bulletin and several other places and return it to the church office. Writing it down assures you of getting a timely order. The price has remained the same, \$10.

The **ABW Christmas Tea** will be an interesting afternoon spent with you, your friends and relatives at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday December 20th. Rev. Carmella Jones from International Ministries will be speaking on her upcoming mission to Hungary. She will also preach at the morning service. She has degrees in nursing and is an ordained minister. Both her talents will be utilized as she moves into her mission career.

The **Nativity Festival and Bake Sale** is Saturday December 12 from 11:00-3:00 in our Friendship Room. Kath Ordiway will be arranging crèches from around the world. Music and treats will be available for purchase at the Bake Sale. This is our third festival. We'll sing carols and hear Christmas music to get in the mood for the **Gift of Music concert** on Sunday December 13th. Jim Flood's Christmas organ concert and following reception at 2:00 p.m. are an opportunity to hear some of the longer holiday concert repertoire. Those Christmas Marches are really fun to hear and show off our historic Hall organ. The free concerts on Second Sundays will resume in February.

Christmas Eve starts with special music at 5:30 with the candle lit service at 6:00. The beauty of the sanctuary in candle light, the Christmas story, and special music are what make the night the most wondrous night of the year. Lessons, carols and candlelight service is one of the most unique services at First Baptist Church. See you there and bring friends.



Campbell.

"Even though the last meeting was an eternity, Sam, we'll continue to call this report the minutes."

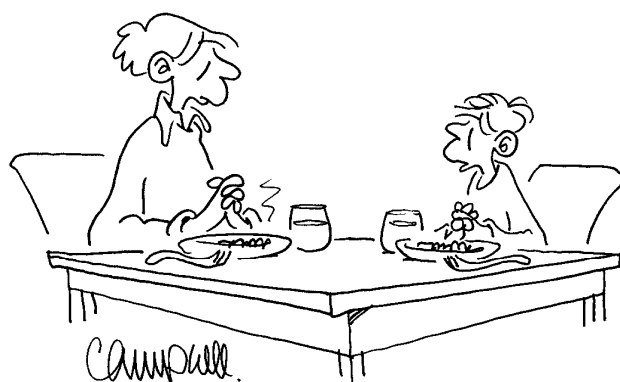


Campbell.



Campbell

"What do you want? Quaker or interdenominational?"

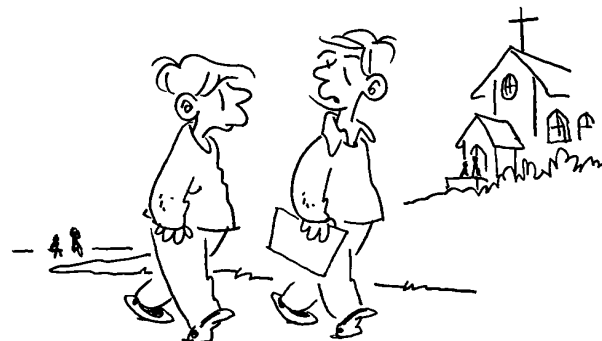


Campbell.

"Do I have to give thanks for all the spinach or just the bite I'm going to eat?"



"Are you sure you don't want to have a big finish?"



Campbell.

"He Googles you ... that's how God knows all about you."

Medley Calls for Pastoral Compassion at Synod of Bishops

The story below was originally released by the [Baptist World Alliance](#) on October 28.

Roy Medley, ABCUSA General Secretary and fraternal delegate of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) at the recent Synod of Bishops on the Family in Rome, urged the gathering “to emphasize the pastoral nature of the ministry which is entrusted to the whole church.”

Medley, who is chair of the BWA Commission on Interfaith Relations and the Membership Committee, as well as a member of the BWA General Council and Executive Committee, emphasized that “there is no perfect family and no perfect marriage.”

Rather, “in our broken world, families are not only a source of great blessing, they can also be a source of great harm as when a father molests his daughters, or brothers and sisters fight over inheritance. This is the pastoral reality: Families have their blessings and their dysfunctions.”

Medley said the world longs for, but rarely expects, the presence of Christ. “Instead they see us abandoning them in the midst of their greatest personal struggles because of their irregular situations.”

The BWA representative, who is also chair of the National Council of Churches USA, had joined other fraternal delegates to address the synod. These included representatives from the Orthodox, Methodist, Disciples of Christ and other Christian traditions.

The gathering, which convened from October 4-25, was in continuity with a similar synod in October 2014. It included Roman Catholic bishops from around the globe to discuss important issues facing families today.

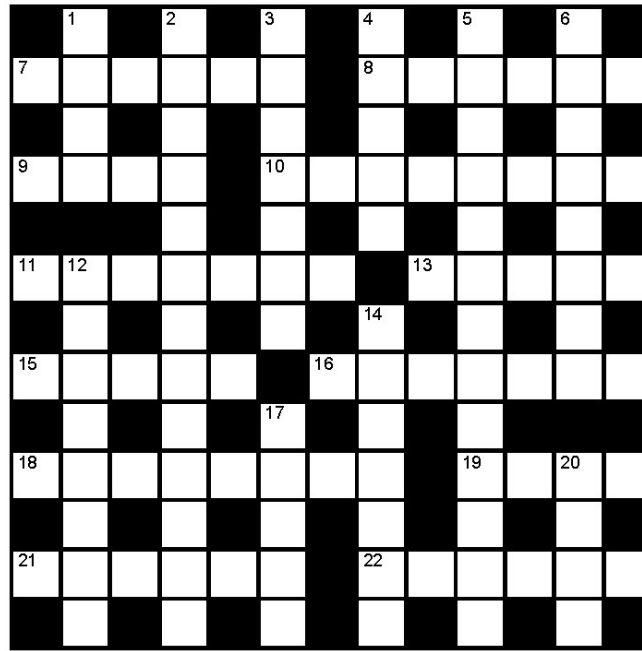


Roy Medley, BWA fraternal delegate at synod in Rome, being greeted by Pope Francis I

American Baptist Churches USA is a member organization of the Baptist World Alliance. The Baptist World Alliance, founded in 1905, is a fellowship of 232 conventions and unions in 121 countries and territories comprising 40 million members in 177,000 churches. Its priorities are nurturing the passion for mission and evangelism; promoting worship, fellowship and unity; responding to people in need; defending human rights and justice; and advancing relevant theological reflection.

Bible Crossword Puzzles (King James Version)

Joshua



Across

- 7 The leader of Israel after Moses died. Josh 1:1 (6)
- 8 Caleb's daughter. Josh 15:16 (6)
- 9 "And from thence passeth on along on the east to Gittahhepher, to Ittahkazin, and goeth out to Remmonmethoar to ____." Josh 19:13 (4)
- 10 "And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the ____ day." Josh 5:11 (8)
- 11 "And goeth out from Bethel to Luz, and passeth along unto the borders of Archi to ____." Josh 16:2 (7)
- 13 "From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river ... and unto the great sea toward the ____ down of the sun, shall be your coast." Josh 1:4 (5)
- 15 The LORD told Joshua to circumcise the children of Israel _____. Josh 5:2 (5)

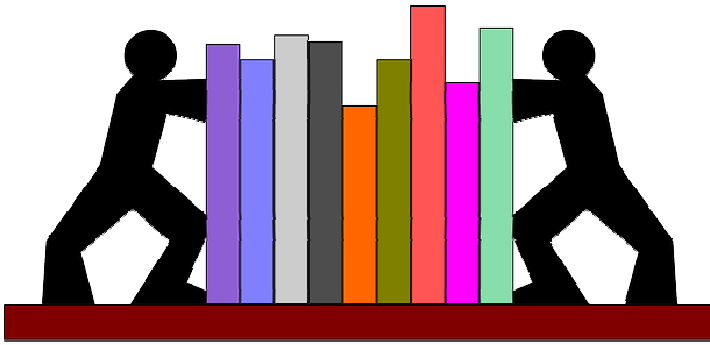
- 16 One of the five Amorite kings, Japhia, was king of this city. Josh 10:3 (7)
- 18 "The place whereon thou ____ is holy." Josh 5:15 (8)
- 19 One of the cities mentioned that the tribe of Simeon inherited. Josh 19:3 (4)
- 21 The hearts of the kings of the Canaanites did this when they hear about what the LORD did. Josh 5:1 (6)
- 22 "for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, ____ they have iron chariots, and ____ they be strong." Josh 17:18 (6)

Down

- 1 "And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to ____, saying, What mean these stones?" Josh 4:21 (4)
- 2 "And Alammelech, and Amad, and Misheal; and reacheth to

Carmel westward, and to ____." Josh 19:26 (13)

- 3 "Behold, the ark of the covenant of the LORD of all the earth ____ over before you into Jordan." Josh 3:11 (7)
- 4 When Joshua arose in the morning. Josh 3:1 (5)
- 5 "And turned from Sarid eastward toward the sunrising unto the border of ____." Josh 19:12 (13)
- 6 Joshua made peace with the kings of the land who wore old ____ to trick him. Josh 9:5 (8)
- 12 "That they gathered themselves ____, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, with one accord." Josh 9:2 (8)
- 14 One of the cities that Zebulun inherited. Josh 19:15 (7)
- 17 Joshua and the elders put dust on this. Josh 7:6 (5)
- 20 "Smote it with the ____ of the sword." Josh 10:28 (4)



Books, Books, Books

As the library at First Baptist continues to grow, there is always something new on the table or the shelves in the Friendship Room, highlighting what is new and interesting. There are copies of James Moore's "Finding Bethlehem in the Midst of Bedlam" on the coffee table by the sofa. These copies are *free* to you, even if you could not make the sessions. Please take one and read through it; it's very worthwhile and a great addition to your book collection.

Also, speaking of FREE, were you aware that we have in the library Bibles that the Church has purchased to *give away* to persons who need and want a Bible. If you know someone, or you yourself, who would benefit from such a gift, please take one and present it with our blessings. They are located second shelf from the bottom, on the left as you enter the library.

Pledging

If you did not have the opportunity to turn in your Pledge Card, it's not too late! Just put it in the offering plate or mail it in to the Church office.

The Finance Committee meets on Monday, December 7, at 10:00 AM. It is an open meeting and anyone who wishes to may attend. As financial plans are laid out for 2016, the Committee is receptive to requests for any particular items. Financial gifts for specific items can be approved, also. Feel free to speak to any member of the Committee who will be glad to assist you.

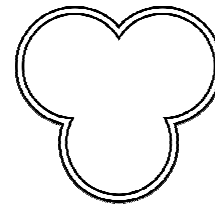
Your Committee on Finance



SYMBOLISM

Symbols are all around us and help to guide us in our everyday living. This month we're going to look at some of the not so obvious symbols built into the structure of First Baptist Church.

Have you ever wondered why certain motives keep reoccurring throughout the church, especially in the sanctuary? The trefoil motif is a good example. In looking over the doors and other places, the trefoil (threefold) design signifies "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," (the Trinity).

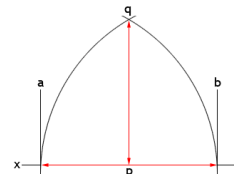


This is known in Christian architecture – and elsewhere – as the Trinitarian symbol.

Many times we pass right by items that fit perfectly into the architectural structure of the church that we don't even realize they are there.

One of the best examples is the woodwork below the balusters of the balcony. Arches in the wood are applied over the woodwork that is the same as the wainscoting. Care to guess the number of arches before you actually count them? Is this pure coincidence? Hardly!

In this day and age when a few cement blocks are piled up one on top of the other and a little paint is splashed on and it is called a "church," we should be extra thankful for the beauty and meaningfulness of our own building.





The Rev. Carmella Jones to speak at Christmas Tea.

The Reverend Carmella Jones, a resident of Seabrook, Maryland, has been endorsed to serve as an American Baptist International Ministries (IM) missionary. She is planning to serve in Hungary as a school chaplain through IM partner Hungarian Baptist Aid.

Rev. Jones, a registered nurse and ordained ABCUSA pastor, is experienced in Faith Community Nursing, a specialty nursing practice that focuses on care of the spirit. The ministry promotes healing and health of mind, body and spirit through prevention and wellness education. It integrates faith and health, so care is provided in the context of the patient's values, beliefs and faith practices.

As an IM global worker, Jones' ministry will provide a listening presence and pastoral care to individual students, families and the school community. She brings to this position theological and nursing education that will uniquely equip her to teach and promote hope for the spirit and physical well-being.

"I am looking forward to working in the school environment," stated Jones. "Education is very important and I think when you minister to children you have an opportunity to change a person, a family and a community. I look forward to opportunities that will allow teaching that focuses on health and wellness in the context of faith and what it means to be a faithful steward of our faith." Jones is a member of University Baptist Church in College Park, Maryland. IM Area Director for Europe, the Middle East and Liberia, the Rev. Charles Jones writes, "I am so excited that we have endorsed Carmella for ministry with our partners in Hungary! She will have the opportunity to develop a pioneering ministry of outreach, counseling and health care in a context that both needs and welcomes the sharing of the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ in creative, authentic and refreshing ways! We pray God's blessings in her life and ministry."

Rev. Jones earned her Masters of Divinity degree from Wesley Theological Seminary in 2012 and a Master of Art in Community Health Education and Wellness Promotion from Trinity Washington University in 1997. In 2015, Carmella was honored with the Crystal M. Lange College of Health and Human Services Distinguished Alumna award from Saginaw Valley State University from which she earned a B.S. in Nursing in 1981.

"I believe that when Christ is lifted up, people are drawn to God," commented Jones. "'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.'" (Matthew 5:14-15). "These verses are most meaningful to me as I enter mission service," she said.

Jones first heard about IM through her home church and her pastor, the Rev. John Burns. She attended the 2012 IM Call Retreat, an annual three-day event to introduce people interested in missionary service to IM.

"Rev. Jones is wonderful minister who loves God and people," said Burns. "She engages everyone she meets with the joy, compassion and encouragement of Christ. I have seen her ministry skills grow through her time with our church and I am excited for Rev. Jones and the people she will minister to in Hungary because I know she will make a positive difference in their lives."

First Baptist Church

554 Main Street, Niagara Falls, New York 14301-1584 (716) 282-4666

Candy Order Form

Absolutely delicious Butter Crunch candy is available in one (1) lb. boxes for a donation of \$10.00 each. Make checks payable to First Baptist Church. We also accept



Number of 1 lb. boxes _____ x \$10.00 = _____ total.

(We can ship, too. Add \$4.00 for the first box and \$2.50 for each additional box.)

Pickup Date _____

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

✂-----

First Baptist Church

554 Main Street, Niagara Falls, New York 14301-1584 (716) 282-4666

2015 Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

Orders for poinsettias for Christmas along with payment must be in the Church office no later than Monday, December 7, 2015. You may put this form in the offering plate or mail or call it in to the Church office. Make checks payable to First Baptist Church. We also accept



Number of poinsettias _____ @ \$7.00 ea. _____ 6" pot

Total of order: \$ _____

In Honor of _____

In Memory of _____

☐ I shall pick them up. **OR** ☐ Please deliver to Shut Ins

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

With New Leadership, ABHMS Presses On, Sharing God's Reconciling Love Across the Home Mission Field

LOS ANGELES, CA (ABNS 11/5/15)—"We are here today looking back at where we come from, realizing we are still on a journey because our work is not finished," said the Rev. Dr. Laura Sinclair when she opened the Nov. 3-4 board meeting of American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) with worship.

Relating the ongoing work of ABHMS with the meeting's Philippians 3:14 theme — "I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (NIV) — Sinclair reminded the board of the need to continue pressing on. "That pressing on," she said, "needs to be continued relentlessly."

Executive Director Dr. Jeffrey Haggray, in his first report to the board, said he is "consumed by the moving forward, monitoring and measuring of mission." Thanking board members for their trust and support as he takes on the Home Mission Societies' mantle following the retirement of Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III, he said, "I am humbled, grateful and encouraged by this opportunity to serve my American Baptist family as we continue responding to God's call to share the Good News of God's reconciling love and grace on the American mission field."

The board unanimously affirmed Lydia Flora Barlow for commissioning as an American Baptist home missionary. Via an Internet connection, Barlow, a member of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Seattle, Wash., gave passionate testimony to her work addressing social and criminal justice issues through restoration of the lives of incarcerated individuals and their families

The Rev. Dr. Eddie Cruz, associate executive director of mission advancement, announced the 2016 America for Christ Offering theme—"Discipleship: Becoming More Like Christ," based on Ephesians 2:10.

In other business, board members shared in strategic conversations aimed at identifying specific discipleship-, community- and justice-related issues and opportunities that could strengthen mission focus and increase ministry impact.

Third Annual Nativity Festival

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12TH FROM 11 A.M. - 3 P.M. will be our Third Annual Nativity Festival. We will be showcasing our nativities, as well as our friend's and families' nativities. Get me your stories by Sunday, November 29th if possible. (How old is the nativity? Where did it come from? Was it a gift? Is it handmade? Did it get passed through generations before you owned it? Where do you display it? Anything you'd like to share about your set!) I will type the stories and put them on stand up cards so that everyone can easily read them.

The sets themselves need only arrive on Friday, December 11th so that they can be beautifully displayed.

Not to worry if yours is made of macaroni or was just bought yesterday! Variety makes the day better!

We will also be having a bake sale, so please let me know what you are able to bake. Having items individually wrapped helps the day go smoothly.

If you or a friend are willing to perform or sing a few Christmas songs during the day, that will make it extra special. Please tell family and friends that we are hoping to fill the 5 hours with live music so we'd love to invite them to donate their time to the day! Solos, groups and sing-alongs are all welcome. Once we know how many people are available, a schedule will be created.

Invite everyone to come out and enjoy the Christmas spirit!

Kathleen Ordiway





Spiritual Renewal Is the New Ministry Focus for IM Missionaries Joyce and David Reed

News from [International Ministries](http://www.internationalministries.org)

October 21, 2015

Joyce and David Reed, American Baptist International Ministries (IM) missionaries, are striking out in a new direction as regional missionaries to Iberoamerica and the Caribbean. After 15 years serving in Baja California Sur, Mexico working with the local Mexican Baptist Convention to start new churches, build a theological school, develop its program and host mission teams, as of August 1, 2015, the Reeds embarked on a related but new ministry of spiritual renewal, spiritual formation and vocational calling.



Joyce and David Reed

In July 2016, the Reeds will return to Mexico to serve in their new role as regional IM missionaries working alongside local Baptist partners throughout Iberoamerica and the Caribbean. Their deepest desire is to draw pastors and lay people into a closer relationship with God through spiritual disciplines such as stillness, listening, prayer, creative worship and spiritual companionship. "Dietrich Bonhoeffer says that people who are no longer listening to each other, will soon no longer be listening to God," shares Joyce. "Therefore, part of our new work will be cultivating an environment of intentional listening."

Joyce and David will offer retreats at which pastors and leaders can find rest, renewal and resources for self-care. They will develop curricula for spiritual formation courses to be taught in theological schools and will mentor young people who sense a call to ministry. This regional ministry is rooted in the concern that Christians around the world have become a very busy people who have lost sight of the movement of the Spirit. The Reeds are excited to discover how their new role can renew and encourage local congregations in the United States, as well as in Latin America. Last fall they were invited to offer a workshop on Spiritual Renewal as part of one church's Monthly Leadership Training initiative.

David was invited to lead a regional retreat for pastors on the theme of rest and renewal. Joyce led a Women's Retreat that focused on the theme of "Standing on the Threshold" and what it means to step into a deeper relationship with God. "People in our local churches are hungry for more of God," says David. "Our desire is not only to be available to our international partners, but also to our American Baptist churches."

In a surprising development, the Reeds were extended an invitation to teach Spiritual Formation as part of an on-line Master's level of study by Palmer Theological Seminary for students in Latin America. When a good Internet connection is not available, the Reeds will be available to travel to Cuba to facilitate Spiritual Discernment with IM's Cuban partners.