

# TOWER TOPICS

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## First Baptist Church

Niagara Falls, New York



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## First Baptist Church

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### **IN THE JANUARY ISSUE:**

- ➔ p. 4 — Moderator's Notes
- ➔ p. 5 — A Little Godly Humor
- ➔ p. 6 — Mission Summit 2015
- ➔ p. 7 — Bible Crossword: Judges
  - ➔ p. 8 — Symbolism
- ➔ p. 9 & 10 — Roy Stanton Aids Syrian Refugees
  - ➔ p. 11 — Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley Retires
- ➔ p. 12 — Susan Gillies Elected Interim General Secretary

# January 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>☞ This is the start of another New Year. Just think of all the opportunities that await you in the new year! It all starts on Ash Wednesday, which is very early this year: February 10. There will be a special Lenten series on Wednesday nights with Mrs. Kathleen Ordiway preaching. During Sunday services in Lent Rev. Dr. Brian Brown will be preaching a series of sermons. There is the Maundy Thursday service and the special Good Friday three-hour service with seven different speakers. Plan to attend now!</p>					<p>1</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>Happy New Year!</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>3 <b>EPIPHANY (Observed)</b></p> <p>10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship with Holy Communion Mrs. Kathleen A. Ordiway, preaching 5:00 L.I.F.E.</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6 <b>EPIPHANY</b></p> <p>12:15 Inasmuch luncheon</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8 10:00 Men's Coffee Time</p> 	<p>9</p>
<p>10 <b>BAPTISM OF THE LORD</b></p> <p>10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship Rev. Dr. Charles F. Lamb, preaching 12:15 Second Sunday Lunch <b>Pick up your financial informational packet.</b></p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7:00 Diaconate/ Trustees Meeting</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15 10:00 Men's Coffee Time</p> 	<p>16</p>
<p>17 <b>SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY</b></p> <p>10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship Rev. Dr. Charles F. Lamb, preaching Third Sunday Food Collection 12:15 <b>Annual Budget Meeting</b></p>	<p>18</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>  <p>Martin Luther King</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22 10:00 Men's Coffee Time</p> 	<p>23</p>
<p>24 <b>THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY</b></p> <p>10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship Mrs. Kathleen A. Ordiway, preaching</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29 10:00 Men's Coffee Time</p> 	<p>30</p>
<p>31 <b>FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY</b></p> <p>10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship Pastor Alison Miculan, preaching</p>	<p>☞ Note that after Church on the third Sunday of January – the 17<sup>th</sup> – we will hold our annual Budget Meeting. This is not only a meeting to authorize the budget so we can pay our bills, it's a good opportunity to see how the Church operates financially. Pick up your informational packet from the table in the Friendship Room on Sunday, January 10 and <u>vote</u> on Sunday, January 17<sup>th</sup>.</p>					



## January Birthdays

5	Ken Bowser
13	Sara Gromniak
14	James Flood
14	Joseph Heasley
14	Benedict Arnold
14	Albert Schweitzer
22	Betty Richardson
22	Gisela Scott



**PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY** for Sara Gromniak, Margaret Payne, Mark Clark, Mark Williams, Jr., Patricia Smeal, 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.



### January 3 — Sunday

#### EPIPHANY (Observed)

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.

### January 6 – Wednesday

12:15 PM	Inasmuch luncheon
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### January 10 — Sunday

#### BAPTISM OF THE LORD

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

### January 13 — Wednesday

7:00 PM	Diaconate/Trustees Meeting
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### January 17 — Sunday

#### SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

10:00 AM	Pre-service Fellowship
11:00 AM	Divine Worship <i>Third Sunday Food Collection</i> Rev. Dr. Charles F. Lamb, preaching

#### 12:15 PM Annual Budget Meeting

### January 24 — SUNDAY

#### THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

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

### January 31 — Sunday

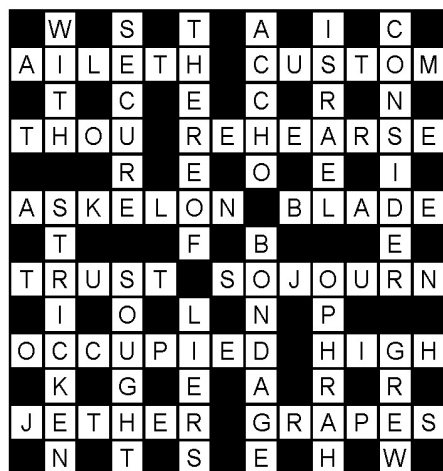
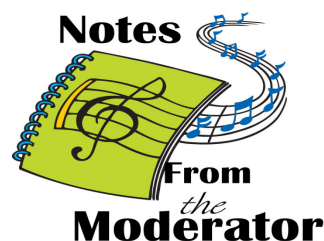
#### FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

10:00 AM	Pre-service Fellowship
11:00 AM	Divine Worship Pastor Alison Miculan, preaching



**L. I. F. E.**

Lively Interesting Fellowship for Everyone

**Sunday, January 3, 2016  
5:00 PM**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****Judges****Notes**

Christmas has come and gone and the New Year is upon us. A Happy New Year to all with good health and best wishes for good times with family and friends. We continue to pray for those in political trouble around the world. It's not easy to be on the "wrong side" of religious and political fights with no economic, educational or financial prospects. Equally difficult is being on the receiving side of refugees and cultures foreign to our own. With God's grace maybe this year will be better in those regards.

Our holiday decorations are down and Lent comes early this year, mid-February and in the weather zone of mid-winter. If our church needs to close for worship or meetings, a phone tree will be used or tune into Channel 2 TV.

Our mission for January is the Retired Minister and Missionary offering, "The Grace of Giving". The donations we give help our retirees pay medical bills and increased costs of living. They served us well and deserve our help.

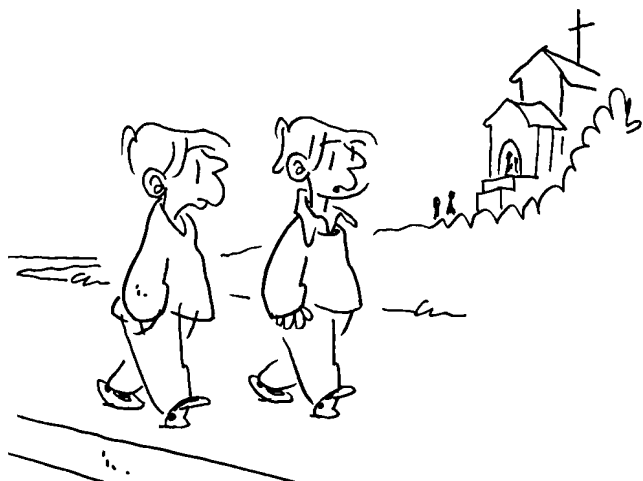
Our Mitten/Mission Tree offerings have been delivered to Community Missions. Thank you to all who donated items or funds to the collection effort. Being homeless this time of year is about as difficult as it gets. We pray these folks have a better year in 2016.

The Christmas Tea was well attended and we enjoyed Carmella Jones' talk about being our Missionary to Hungary. International Ministries is working on our behalf with refugees from Greece and Syria who've fled to Hungary and are looking to leave the area. The political/religious fight has caused millions to migrate north and west.

Bible Study will start up in the spring after Easter and will probably be during the day. We really enjoyed James Moore's "Finding Bethlehem in the Midst of Bedlam" and may explore other works by him. If you have a favorite study subject or author you'd like to suggest, see Donna.

*Donna Flood*



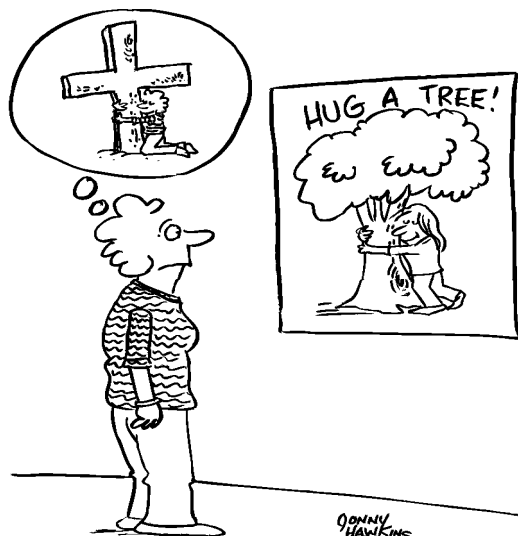


Campbell.

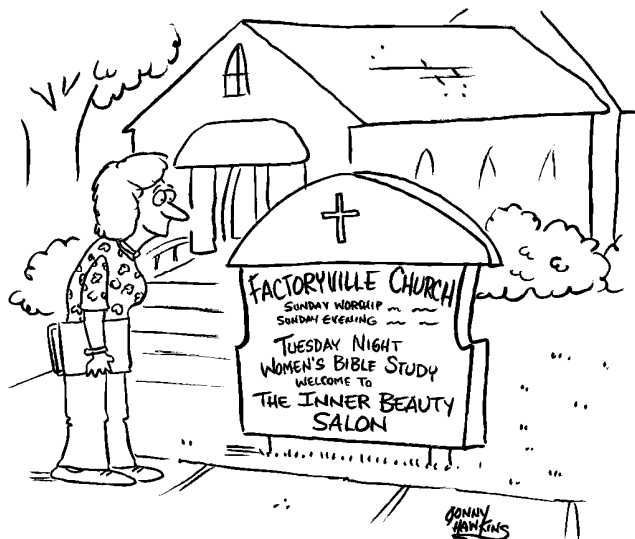
"The church sure has changed since I was a kid."



"I dyed your scrambled eggs for Easter."



"This year I'm prepared with my egg-hunting app."



Jesus — the original child advocate





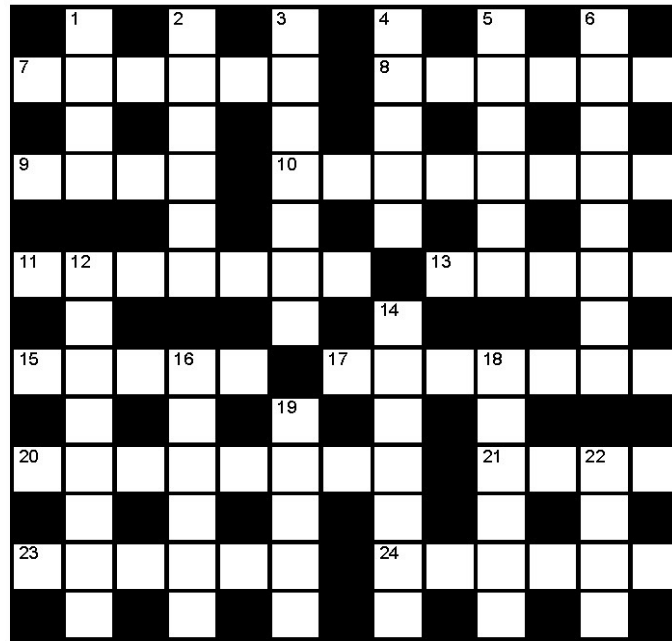
American Baptists attending the Biennial Mission Summit in June had a great time in fellowship with one another, learning from each other through conversations and worshipping together, experiencing our rich diverse family. This event is made possible in part by your gifts to United Mission.





## Bible Crossword Puzzles (King James Version)

### Judges



#### Across

- 7 "What \_\_\_\_\_ thee, that thou comest with such a company?" Judg 18:23 (6)
- 8 It was a \_\_\_\_\_ that the women of Israel lamented the daughter of Jephthah yearly. Judg 11:39-40 (6)
- 9 "And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, \_\_\_\_\_ mighty man of valour." Judg 6:12 (4)
- 10 "there shall they \_\_\_\_\_ the righteous acts of the LORD." Judg 5:11 (8)
- 11 One of the areas, along with Gaza and Ekron, which Judah took. Judg 1:18 (7)
- 13 This was thrust into the fat belly of the king of Moab. Judg 3:22 (5)
- 15 "But Sihon \_\_\_\_\_ed not Israel to pass through his coast." Judg 11:20 (5)
- 17 Means to stay somewhere temporarily. Judg 17:9 (7)
- 20 Samson said that he would be weak if he was bound with ropes that never were this. Judg 16:11 (8)

- 21 "Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death in the \_\_\_\_\_ places of the field." Judg 5:18 (4)
- 23 The firstborn of Gideon. Judg 8:20 (6)
- 24 "And they went out into the fields, and gathered their vineyards, and trode the \_\_\_\_\_." Judg 9:27 (6)

#### Down

- 1 "And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go \_\_\_\_\_ me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go \_\_\_\_\_ me, then I will not go." Judg 4:8 (4)
- 2 "When ye go, ye shall come unto a people \_\_\_\_\_, and to a large land." Judg 18:10 (6)
- 3 Gideon "made an ephod \_\_\_\_\_, and put it in his city," causing Israel to stray. Judg 8:27 (7)
- 4 Asher did not drive out these inhabitants. Judg 1:31 (5)

5 God's holy nation. (6)

6 After a horrible murder, all the people of Israel said, "\_\_\_\_\_ of it, take advice, and speak your minds." Judg 19:30 (8)

12 When Deborah killed Sisera, "she smote off his head, when she had pierced and \_\_\_\_\_ through his temples." Judg 5:26 (8)

14 The LORD brought the children of Israel out of this. Judg 6:8 (7)

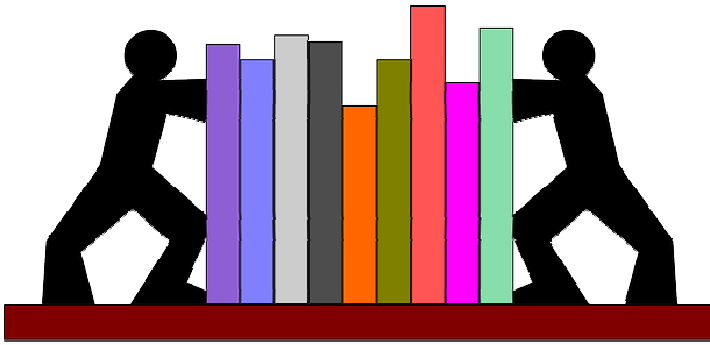
16 "But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the LORD, that he \_\_\_\_\_ an occasion against the Philistines." Judg 14:4 (6)

18 The angel of the LORD sat under a tree in this place. Judg 6:11 (6)

19 Delilah bound Samson while there were men hiding, or "\_\_\_\_\_ in wait," to try and catch him. Judg 16:12 (5)

22 "And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson: and the child \_\_\_\_\_, and the LORD blessed him." Judg 13:24 (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.

This month the focus is on “*75 Masterpieces Every Christian Should Know*.” This intriguing book by Terry Glaspey is subtitled “The fascinating stories behind great works of art, literature, music and film”.

Glaspey writes in his introduction, “Whether you are looking to expose yourself to some of the greatest masterpieces ever created by people of faith or are an artist looking for inspiration and motivation, I hope you’ll enjoy seeing your faith and the world around you, and maybe even your own self, a bit differently than before.”

From paintings in the Catacombs of Rome, to Handel’s *Messiah*, to William Hunt’s “The Light of the World,” (we have a copy in the narthex), to contemporary film, this volume is not to be missed.

Also, 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.



## SYMBOLISM

A sanctuary lamp, chancel lamp, altar lamp, everlasting light, or eternal flame is a light that shines before the altar of sanctuaries in many denominations of Jewish and Christian places of worship.

Christian churches often have a lamp continually burning before the altar, not only as an ornament of the altar, but for the purpose of worship. "In accordance with traditional custom, near the altar, a special lamp, fueled by oil or wax, should be kept alight to indicate and honor the presence of Christ." The sanctuary lamp, also called a chancel lamp, is placed before the altar. It is also found in the chancel of Lutheran, Methodist, or American Baptist churches to indicate the presence of Christ in the sanctuary. The sanctuary lamp may also be seen in Eastern Orthodox Churches. Christian denominations often burn the lamp to show that the light of Christ always burns in a sin-darkened world. With influence from Judaism in the Old Testament, God told Moses that a lamp filled with the pure oil should perpetually burn in the Tabernacle (Ex 27:20-21). This is the precedent for the Church's custom of burning a candle (at all times) before the altar. In Jewish practice, this altar lamp is known for its Hebrew name, **ner tamid** (Hebrew: נֵר תָּמִיד)

Such sanctuary or tabernacle lamps are often colored red, though this is not prescribed. This serves to distinguish this light from other lights within the church. The use of multiple lights, always in odd numbers, i.e., three, five, seven, or more, in place of a single lamp has now become rarer. The lamp may be suspended by a rope or chain over the altar or near the entry of the sanctuary, or it may be affixed to a wall. Oil lamps or candles may be used.



## Larry Stanton Teams Up with Fellow Baptists to Aid Syrian Refugees



*Two refugees and Larry Stanton (right)*

As the Syrian civil war enters its fifth year, many of the millions of internally displaced persons (IDPs) within Syria are streaming into neighboring nations and far beyond. As the refugees trek along the difficult route, seeking a better life in Germany and the handful of other European countries that are accepting refugees, many are in dire need of food, warm clothing, compassion and hope.

### **And Baptists are on the scene, ready to offer it.**

In September, while frustrations erupted as multiple European borders were closed, Hungary-based International Ministries missionary Larry Stanton was helping to meet physical and emotional needs with the love of Jesus.

Working through IM partner Hungarian Baptist Aid (HBAid), Larry connected with Pastor Zoltán Nyúl of the Baptist Mission Center in Stara Moravica, Serbia. For four emotional days, Larry and Zoltán ministered to the needs of those whose lives have been turned upside-down by the horrors of the civil war in their native Syria.

Along the railroad tracks in the Serbian town of Horgos, Larry and Zoltán distributed bags of bread, sardines, fruit, water, milk and other basic food items. They worked with Baptist volunteers from Serbia and Romania and with members of Operation Mobilization, a U.S.-based disciple-making organization.

Many of the refugees that Larry saw were in their 20s and 30s. Some men had left their families behind in refugee camps in Lebanon and Turkey, hoping to reunite with them once they were settled. Others were making the journey with their families, some with infant children, carrying their belongings in backpacks and shopping bags.

“When I talked to the men, some said they had been in refugee camps in Turkey or settlements in Lebanon for three years,” Larry said. Their life savings were gone, but they didn’t want to be back in another refugee camp. They wanted a better way of life for their families.”

*Continued page 10 ➔*

**“We have an opportunity to tell them about the love of Jesus.”**

“You can’t go to Syria to share the gospel. But God, who can redeem even the darkest situation, is using this tragedy as an opportunity to bring Syrians to us. And we have an opportunity to tell them about the love of Jesus.”

Larry is keenly aware of the fact that he and his companions have only a short time to minister to these refugees. “I hope the church in Germany is being prepared,” he said. “They have an incredible assignment. But we can plant seeds here and demonstrate that love as the refugees move through. We don’t get a lot of time with them.

**The day the Hungary-Serbia border was closed.**

Larry and Zoltán were about a mile from the Hungary-Serbia border on September 15, when Hungary first closed its borders. “We could see military helicopters circling overhead,” Larry said. “I could see water cannons spraying people. I saw the black smoke from burning tires ... the tear gas. People were running from it. There was a lot of crying and screaming.”

Walking toward the border, Larry saw men and women sitting on the ground, sobbing into their hands. Some anguished men wondered aloud, “What have I done to my family?”

As the Hungarian police and military came armed with riot weapons, a few of the migrants began to fight back. These protesters were a small minority, however.

“They didn’t come here to fight—they left a war, you know?” Larry said. “A small group of men protested out of frustration. It was their action that the world saw, not the actions of the men and women who were just trying to get to Germany.”

**More woes at the Serbia-Croatia border**

With the Hungarian border closed, the refugees looked for alternate routes to Germany. One popular border crossing was about four miles west of the Serbian town of Sid, near the Croatian border.

“Every five minutes, a bus would unload—and this would go on for hours and hours,” Larry said. “The people getting off were happy. They thought they were going to cross the border. But when they walked down the hill, Croatian military forces told them to sit down. There were thousands of them sitting in the middle of the field with no shade, no toilets, no facilities and only enough food for a meal or two.” The closest refugee camp, more than 10 miles away, was full.

Larry and Zoltán ministered to these refugees for two days, giving out all the blankets, winter clothes and food they had with them. But with the temperatures forecasted to dip into the 30s, Larry was concerned for the health and safety of the young families.

“I think the church in the U.S. needs to develop a way to respond,” Larry said, clearly touched by his experience. Since 2011, One Great Hour of Sharing has distributed over \$130,000 in grants for the Syria crisis, including \$10,000 for IM partners this September. But as Larry noted, the need is both urgent and ongoing. He said, “We were buying \$700–\$1,000 worth of supplies every couple of days.”

Larry hopes to make a return trip to Serbia in the near future to continue his ministry of mercy. His wife, Becky, is an IM missionary teaching conversational English in Hungary.





*The Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley will retire as ABC general secretary this December after 14 years of service. In the United States and in numerous countries across six continents he has worshipped, fellowshipped and connected with countless believers committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the fulfillment of His Great Commission. As he leaves this role of leadership—and after more than 40 years of involvement in local, regional and national ministry—he reflects on the denomination he loves and the opportunities that await it.*



# Don Ng:



*Introducing our ABC Officers for the 2016-2017 Biennium, taking office on January 1, 2016:*



## **ABCUSA President**

**Rev. Judy Fackenthal** comes from the American Baptist Churches of Greater Indianapolis, and has served as solo pastor of Garfield Park Baptist Church since 1999.



## **ABCUSA Vice President**

**Dr. Josué D. Gómez, Esq.,** currently serves as President of the ABC Hispanic Caucus. He is a member of the First Baptist Church of Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, and served as President of the Iglesias Bautistas de Puerto Rico, the ABC of Puerto Rico regional organization.



## **ABCUSA Budget Review Officer**

**Mr. Paul Higgins** currently serves as Vice President of Finance for Rainbow Acres, a residential ranch-style community for the developmentally disabled in Camp Verde, Arizona. Rainbow Acres became an Associated Ministry Organization of ABCUSA in November 2014.



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## ***Susan Gillies Elected as Interim General Secretary***

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**VALLEY FORGE, PA (11/12/15)**—Susan Gillies was elected to serve as Interim General Secretary by the Board of General Ministries at its meeting on Thursday, November 12, 2015. Gillies will begin this new role on December 1, 2015, and will serve in the position until a new General Secretary is named.

“At a time of significant change in American Baptist life, Susan Gillies brings a steady spirit, exceptional experience, and ample administrative skills to the Office of the General Secretary as its Interim,” said ABC President Don Ng. “After 14 years of humble and dedicated leadership by Rev. Dr. A Roy Medley, Susan Gillies will continue the clear direction of the denomination to assist ABC churches to adapt to societal and religious changes in our world through the *Transformed by the Spirit* initiative.”

Rev. Judy Fackenthal, ABC Vice President, said, “As President-elect of ABCUSA, I have been in prayerful discernment as we have sought an Interim General Secretary. In this season of transition we want a leader of wisdom who remains open to God and empowers others with gifted leadership skills. Susan Gillies is such a leader, called as Esther, for “such a time as this.” She is well-known, well-loved, and dearly respected throughout our denominational family. Please join me in praying for Susan as she guides us through this season of transition.”

“I am delighted that Susan Gillies has accepted our invitation to be the Interim General Secretary of the ABCUSA. Gillies has the administrative gifts, experience, character and personality to provide the leadership our denomination needs during this period of leadership transition. Her selection by the Board of General Ministries is another example of our denomination’s affirmation of gender equality in ministerial leadership,” said Rev. Dr. Wesley A. Roberts, Ph.D., Pastor of Peoples Baptist Church of Boston of Member of the Board of General Ministries Executive Committee.

Gillies retired in 2010 after serving ten years as Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska. During that time, she also served a term as President of the Regional Executive Ministers Council.

Prior to that, she served as Deputy Executive Director of the American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS), then National Ministries. She also served the organization as Manager of the Ministry of the Laity in the Workplace Program, working with ABHMS for 13 years in total. She was also commissioned by the organization as a home missionary.

She was a faculty member at the University of North Dakota (UND), Eastern Kentucky University (EKU), and the University of Sioux Falls (USF), and also worked in public radio at each university. She directed the building of the first broadcast station at USF, hosted programs in both radio and television at ECU and served in North Dakota as News Director, then Program Director and General Manager for two NPR stations licensed to UND. She also served as Executive Director of the North Dakota Broadcasters Association. At KFJM, licensed to UND, she produced numerous news and music programs, documentaries, live coverage of political and community events. She contributed to NPR’s “Morning Edition” and “All Things Considered.” She received North Dakota Associated Press awards for agricultural reporting and documentary production.

Gillies has served on a number of Boards including: Central Baptist Theological Seminary, American Baptist Women’s Ministries, Green Lake Conference Center (American Baptist Assembly) and Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska.

She is the co-author of two books: *Renewing God’s People*, published by ABHMS, and *Empowering Laity Engaging Leaders*, part of the Judson Press Living Church series. In addition to other international travel, Susan was part of the first Baptist Peace Fellowship tour of the (then) Soviet Union, traveling to Siberia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

She received a Bachelor’s degree from the University of Sioux Falls and a Master’s degree from the University of Memphis. She holds a certificate in non-profit management from the University of Wisconsin.

In retirement, she has done local church consulting and has recorded 144 audio podcasts for the ABHMS website. She writes a weekly newspaper column for the Bridgeport, NE, *News-Blade*. She expresses her artistic side as a silversmith. She currently lives in her hometown, Omaha, Nebraska, and is a member of Benson Baptist Church.

“As a former regional executive, Susan will be able to network all ABC partners for collaborative efforts. As a former national staff member in ABC National Ministries, now the American Baptist Home Mission Societies, she is well known and familiar with the important role that our national organizations have in the advancement of God’s kingdom. And as a former public radio host, Susan will be able to articulate God’s plan for American Baptists during this transitional time. Susan Gillies served as the chair of the 2015 Biennial Mission Summit in Overland Park, Kansas where many came to know her,” said Ng.