

1842



TOWER TOPICS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

First Baptist Church

NIAGARA FALLS, NEW YORK

2015



IN THE JANUARY ISSUE:

- ➔ p. 6 — Kristy Engel & “The Ebola Fighters”
- ➔ p. 7 — Women in Ministry: Action Learning Team
- ➔ p. 8 — Bible Crossword: James
- ➔ p. 9 — Family Night: *Josh and the Big Wall*
- ➔ p. 10 — Bible Study with Survey
- ➔ p. 11 — IM Missions – Go Global!
- ➔ p. 12 — Network of Spiritual Directors

VOLUME 67

NUMBER 1

2015

First Baptist Church

554 Main Street

Corner of Main and Fourth

Niagara Falls, New York 14301

January 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On the Third Sunday this month at 12:15 we have our Annual Budget Meeting. We keep the meetings <u>very</u> short. We need you there to vote. On Sunday, January 11 th , the budget packet will be on the table in the Friendship Room. Please take home a copy & look it over. The Finance & Stewardship Committee has worked hard on it and it is worthy of your time and attention. The colorful graphs are particularly interesting and show where your dollars have gone and are going.				1 OFFICE CLOSED 	2 OFFICE CLOSED	3
4 EPIPHANY (Observed) 10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship with Holy Communion 5:00 L.I.F.E. "Celebrate January"	5	6 EPIPHANY 	7 12:15 Inasmuch Luncheon	8	9 10:00 AM Men's Coffee Time 	10
11 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD 10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship 12:15 Second Sunday Lunch	12	13	14 OFFICE HOURS 2 PM – 5:00 PM 7:00 Trustees/ Diaconate Meeting	15	16 10:00 AM Men's Coffee Time 	17
18 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY 10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship <i>Third /Sunday Food Collection</i> 12:15 Annual Budget Meeting 12:45 White Cross Meeting	19 OFFICE CLOSED 	20	21	22 OFFICE HOURS 2 PM – 5:00 PM 6:00 Family Night: <i>Josh and the Big Wall</i>	23 10:00 AM Men's Coffee Time 	24
25 THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY 10:00 Pre-service Fellowship 11:00 Divine Worship	26	27	28	29	30 10:00 AM Men's Coffee Time 	31



TOWER TOPICS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

First Baptist Church

NIAGARA FALLS, NEW YORK



January Birthdays

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



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

We have received a lovely Thank-you note from Meg Bourdette, thanking First Baptist Church for the fine Memorial Service for Wes and the reception that followed.



January 4 – 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. “Celebrate January”

January 6 — Tuesday

EPIPHANY

Our Epiphany Service was observed on Sunday, January 4th. January 6th is actually Epiphany, the time when the Magi came to the Stable. Read Matthew, Chapter 2.

January 7 – Wednesday

12:15 PM	Inasmuch Luncheon
----------	-------------------

January 11 – Sunday

BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

10:00 AM	Pre-service Fellowship
11:00 AM	Divine Worship Rev. Dr. Brian A. Brown, preaching
12:15 PM	Second Sunday Lunch

January 14 – Wednesday

7:00 PM	Diaconate/Trustees Meeting
---------	----------------------------

January 18 — Sunday

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

10:00 AM	Pre-service Fellowship
11:00 AM	Divine Worship Mrs. Kathleen A. Ordiway, preaching <i>Third Sunday Food Collection</i>
12:15 PM	Annual Budget Meeting
12:45 PM	White Cross Meeting

January 22 - Thursday - Family Night

6:00 PM	VeggieTale Movie: <i>Josh and the Big Wall</i>
---------	--

January 25 - Sunday

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

10:00 AM	Pre-service Fellowship
11:00 AM	Divine Worship

Church Office Hours: 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Monday — Friday

716-282-4666 — nfb@niagarafallsbaptist.org — www.niagarafallsbaptist.org

L. I. F. E.

Lively Interesting Fellowship for Everyone

Sunday, January 4, 2015**5:00 PM****“Celebrate January”**

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.

January 11, 2015 – 12:15 PM

Second Sunday LUNCH

It is with sadness we report the passing of Ronald “RJ” Jackson, Dorothy Jackson’s son, on November 19th, 2014. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Dorothy and the whole family.

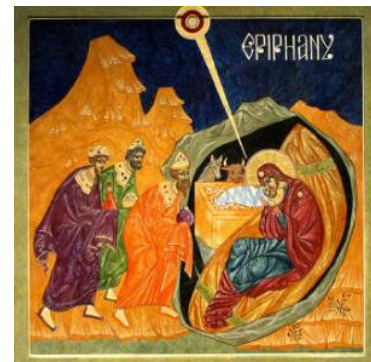
Kath's Notes**School Adventures**

Last I wrote, I was nervously starting school. Now I'm an old pro and loving it! Reading books and writing papers has been time-consuming, challenging, stressful, but exciting and REWARDING! We've studied Paul, the Reformation (you may remember that Sunday), the Prophets and the Liturgy – we wrote unison prayers for worship and learned the importance of movement, music and silence. I've already used my new-found knowledge.

My classmates are wonderful. Everyone is very encouraging. While talking about the concerns of driving to Rochester in January and February (think snow), one woman gave me her contact info, inviting me to stay at her house Friday nights so I could arrive after work, rather than leaving home at 6 a.m.

Ready for anything, I recently packed an emergency bag with: water, protein bars, 2 ponchos, a cookpot, candles, a lighter, a drinking water pouch, an emergency blanket, hand warmers, a light stick, an N95 particulate face mask, vinyl gloves, germicidal wipes, a whistle, bandages, antiseptics; then another blanket, Poptarts, peanut butter sandwiches, phone, two phone chargers, tablet and charger, earpiece and charger, GPS, and a Bible.

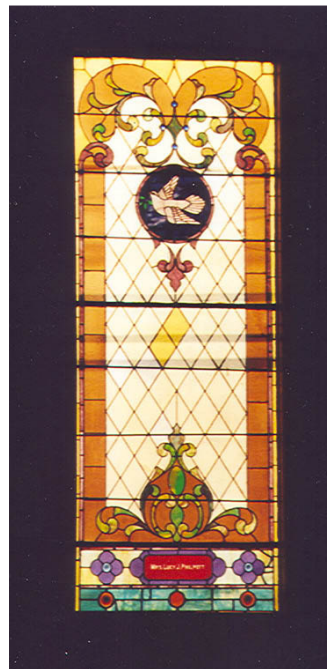
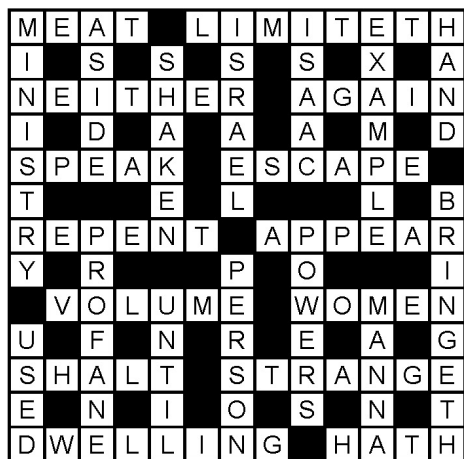
This has been a long-held dream and I'm thrilled that it's now a reality.

Kath

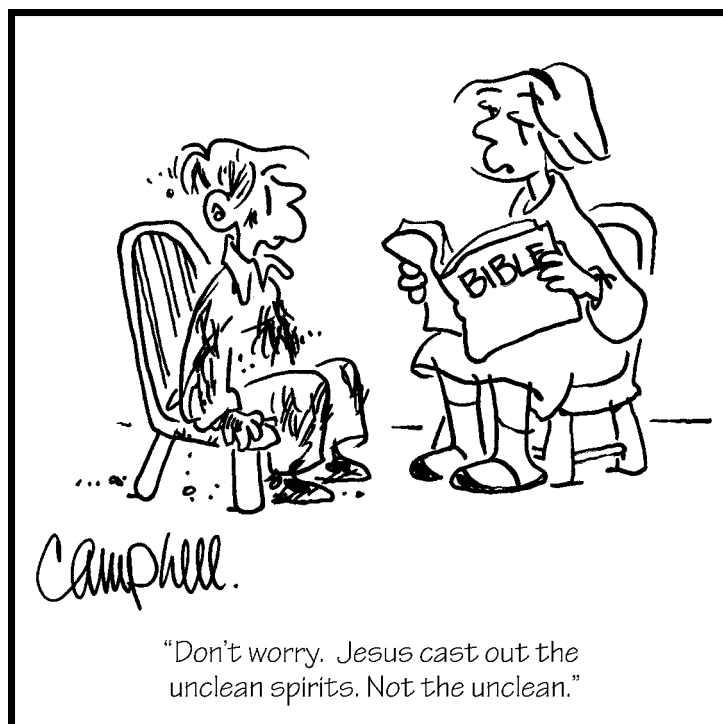
Beginning on January 11: In early 2015 Dr. Brown will preach a series on the Canadian hymn *What a Friend we Have in Jesus*; the Canadian Coutts Hallmark poem *Footprints*; and Canadian legends of northern survival based on knowledge of the Bible. Don't miss one thrilling episode!

last month's answers

Hebrews



WE ARE INDEED FORTUNATE to have many beautiful stained glass windows in our church, especially the two very large triple lancet windows in the sanctuary. The Jerome Durr Studio, LLC, in Syracuse, NY, was chosen to do the restoration work. The Studio has just returned our stained glass – all fixed up. The new glue chip glass in the folding doors is especially attractive.



December 16, 2014



IM missionary Kristy Engel (center) and some of the trainers on their way to work in the clinics

On December 10, *Time* magazine announced that its "Person of the Year" recognition for 2014 would go to "the Ebola Fighters." For the last three weeks, that group has included Kristy Engel, a nurse practitioner serving with American Baptist International Ministries.

After a dozen years in the Dominican Republic, Engel's current assignment is to serve as IM's Healthcare Relief Resource Regional Missionary for Iberoamerica and the Caribbean.

But, Engel says that as she watched the Ebola crisis unfolding in West Africa, "Like many all over the world, my heart began breaking...[and] God made a way for me to help."

That way was to partner with one of the leading agencies in the Ebola response effort within Liberia, Medical Teams International (MTI). Engel explains that she became part of an MTI team dedicated "to help clinics learn and practice infection prevention and control standards, set up a triage point, and manage waste in the clinic." This piece of the overall Ebola effort seeks to enable local health care workers to respond to Ebola patients while minimizing the risks to themselves and others in the community.

Engel will finish her service in Liberia before Christmas, and carefully follow the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) protocol for self-monitoring and limited activity thereafter, to guarantee that her service does not put others at risk.

MTI's Liberia team celebrated Engel's contribution in its December 12 blog post, and her Liberian co-workers gave her the name "Keebah," a term of great honor that means, "the powerful one." At the same time, Engel is enthusiastic as she describes the personnel and the quality of MTI's work in Liberia. And, deeply impressed by the faith and dedication of the Liberians with whom she has had the privilege of serving, Engel says, "To me, they are the Persons of the Year."



BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT 2015

An American Baptist Gathering
Overland Park/Kansas City
June 26–28, 2015

Contribute to a vision for the future for ABCUSA through Mission Summit Conversations

Greet long-time friends and make new friends from across the country and around the world

Hear nationally recognized preachers and speakers

Worship and celebrate with musicians, talented choirs and American Baptists from across the country

Learn how God has been transforming us by the Spirit since the last Mission Summit and the Mission Table

Register your church online today!
Church registration closes February 6, 2015,
when individual registration opens.

Additional events happen before and after
the official Mission Summit dates.

Address Update:

Mr. Jesse McGee
Northgate
7264 Nash Road, Room 78
No. Tonawanda, New York 14120



Women in Ministry across the country

Women In Ministry

Over the past year and a half, the Women In Ministry Action Learning Team (WIMALT) has prayerfully considered adaptive challenges for ABC churches concerning calling women senior/solo pastors.

The team settled upon the following:

Focus: To break down barriers that hinder clergy women from gaining access to paid senior/solo/lead pastorates.

Adaptive Challenge: How can we change the hearts and minds of barrier keepers? How can we change or influence structures that maintain barriers?

In order to address the above, the WIM ALT developed and launched three experiments:

- A "Mentor/Mentee" database for prospective female pastors and "veteran" female pastors, connecting mentors and mentees for encouragement, guidance, development and opportunity.

- Create and nurture opportunities for American Baptist women and American Baptist Women In Ministry (lay and clergy women) to have small group discussions regarding the barriers that exist between clergy and lay women, how those barriers may play a role in the "call" process for women to serve as senior/solo pastors and what strategies might we put in place to reduce and ultimately tear down those barriers.

- Identify senior/solo pastors retiring within the next 3-5 years who would be willing to adopt some specific strategies (recommendations provided by WIM ALT as well as ABWIM/Ministers Council) to intentionally prepare congregations to be open and willing to call the best candidate, irrespective of gender, to serve as their next

Action Learning Team Leads the Way

senior/solo pastor.

All three of these experiments are currently up and running:

Team member Rev. April Van Ness, with support from Rev. Pat Hernandez, recently led a dialogue with clergy and laywomen, continuing to cultivate open dialogue and support for one another.

In the second experiment, team member Rev. Dr. A. Paulette Birchett, supported by Rev. Pat Hernandez, developed and launched a "MentorMentee" National Survey to identify female clergy who would be interested in participating in a mentor/mentee relationship, beginning with this experiment. Approximately 33 female clergy from across the USA responded, "yes."

Team members Rev. Dr. Jim Kent, Rev. Susan Crane and Rev. Chris Smith, developed and launched a 3 phase, "Retiring Pastors Initiative." Phase 1 entailed a national survey to identify senior/solo pastors retiring from their current pastoral position in the next 3-5 years, who would be willing to engage in specific activities

(small group bible studies, guest speakers, panel discussions, lecturers, greater female leadership involvement, etc.) and use materials from a specific resource list to prepare their congregations to be open to calling God's best for them, irrespective of gender. Approximately 85 senior/solo pastors from across the nation took the survey, and approximately half of that number agreed to participate in the experiment. Phase 2 (currently underway), is a series of follow-up surveys with questions about how pastors are using the resource list and changes they may or may not have observed within their congregation. Phase 3 (long term goal) will happen over the next several years, with the National Ministers Council Office keeping track of congregations whose pastors participated in the experiment, looking to see how many of those congregations seriously considered and actually called a woman to serve as senior/solo pastor.

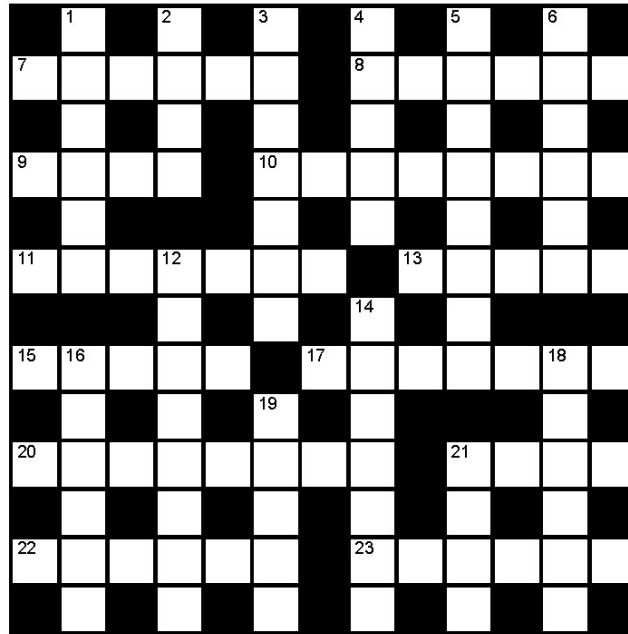
The WIM ALT worked together to ask hard questions, enhance surveys, offer suggestions, etc. to make our efforts fruitful. Additional team members include Rev. Steve Bils and Rev. Allison Tanner, along with coach Rosey Oaks-Lee, and staff members Rev. Dr. Debora Jackson, executive director of the ABC Ministers Council and Rev. Patricia Hernandez, national director of American Baptist Women In Ministry.

Although the WIM ALT will end its official work at the close of the 2015 Biennial, it is understood that the experiments will continue, with the help of the national offices (Ministers Council and ABWIM) and others. ■

by Rev. Chris Smith, WIM ALT Facilitator

Bible Crossword Puzzles (King James Version)

James



Across

- 7 Hannah's son who later became a priest. (6)
- 8 "And the Lord struck the child that _____ wife bare unto David, and it was very sick." 2 Sam 12:15 (6)
- 9 "Holding _____ the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Titus 1:9 (4)
- 10 "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and _____ of the mysteries of God." 1 Cor 4:1 (8)
- 11 James says that God is not able to be _____ by evil. James 1:13 (7)
- 13 "Shall a trumpet be _____ in the city, and the people not be afraid?" Amos 3:6 (5)
- 15 "But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment _____?" James 2:6 (5)
- 17 "Now thanks be unto God, which always _____ us to

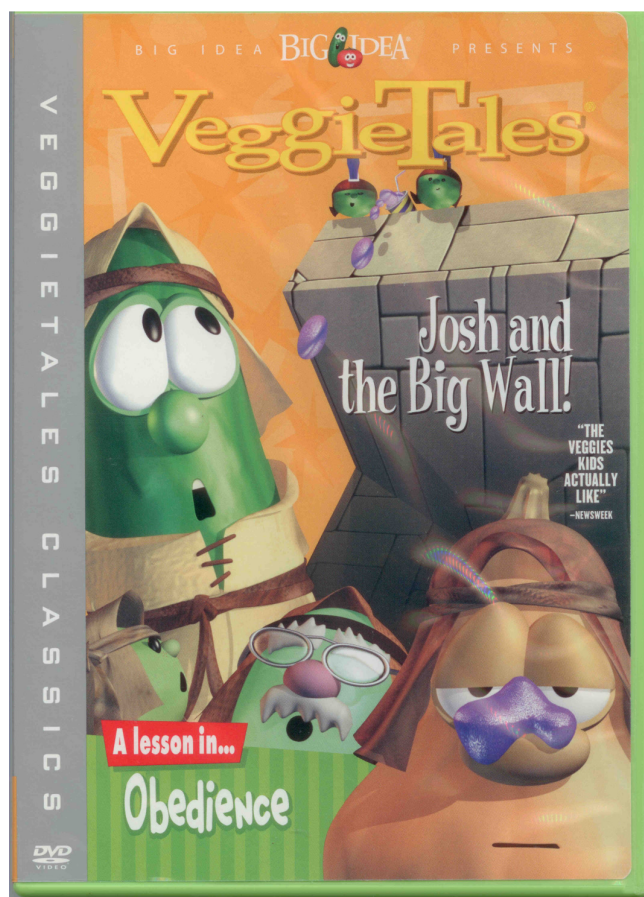
triumph in Christ," 2 Cor 2:14 (7)

- 20 A promise between Noah and God. Gen 9:11 (8)
- 21 "I have neither _____ on usury, nor men have _____ to me on usury;" Jer 15:10 (4)
- 22 "It is he that sitteth upon the _____ of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers;" Isa 40:22 (6)
- 23 What a tree does if cut down. Job 14:7 (6)

Down

- 1 Where Peter sat when a damsel approached him about Jesus of Galilee. Matt 26:69 (6)
- 2 "And Esau went to the field to _____ for venison, and to bring it." Gen 27:5 (4)
- 3 Those who endure temptation are _____. James 1:12 (7)
- 4 The province in Ezra 5:8. (5)

- 5 Jesus performed these during his ministry. John 2:11 (8)
- 6 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither _____ of turning." James 1:17 (6)
- 12 Faith works this. James 1:3 (8)
- 14 "One Lord, one faith, one _____," Eph 4:5 (7)
- 16 Hebrew name for God in Genesis 1:1. (6)
- 18 According to James, man cannot tame this. James 3:8 (6)
- 19 A servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. (5)
- 21 "And they lay wait for their own blood; they _____ privily for their own lives." Pro 1:18 (4)



FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY! Oh, boy! After forty years of wandering in the desert, the children of Israel finally get to go to the Promised Land! Only one little thing they overlooked... Jericho! Yep. Surrounded by huge walls and bristling with really annoying peas, no one gets to the Promised Land without going through Jericho first!

But how? Joshua has God's directions, but they sound kind of, well, weird. To make matters worse, some of the veggies are cooking up a plan of their own. In the end they have to decide whether it's better to do things their way or God's way. Kids of all ages will learn a lesson about obedience in this hilarious retelling of the classic Bible story – *Josh and the Big Wall!*

Presented Thursday, January 22, at 6:00 PM, this is a lesson for all ages, with engaging songs, veggie action, and terrible jokes and puns. Come for the free popcorn and soda, stay for the movie, and perhaps meet some of our neighbors of all ages who come and receive a Christian message – another outreach of your church.



The Family Night is turning out to be a big hit. This month's Family Night on January 22 (note the time: 6:00 PM) will be the hilarious tale of Joshua and his problem with the big wall.

Our new large screen 60" TV with extra "sound bar" audio equipment provides a big, engaging picture with superior sound to captivate the audience, young and old(er).

We need a few people from our congregation to volunteer to be at the Family Nights to speak to the people who come in. It's not enough to pass out free popcorn and a brochure on the church; the personal touch is what's needed. This is a real opportunity for outreach and service. Can you be there some nights?

*But when
the fullness
of time
had come,*



*God sent his
Son....*

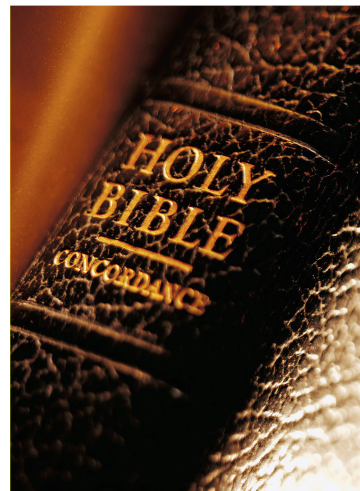
Galatians 4:4

Bible Study

As you are undoubtedly aware **Rev. Dr. Charles Lamb** has graciously agreed to lead our Bible Study classes.

The first sessions were absolutely wonderful! The wealth of knowledge that was passed around from almost all participants was nothing short of astounding

What would you like to attend in the way of Bible Study? Fill out the questionnaire below, clip it out and send it to the Church office, so that we can take your ideas into account when planning for the spring. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn and grow in Biblical knowledge under the guidance of a gifted teacher.



YES! I would like to see (and attend) the following in Bible study:

I would prefer ☐ morning ☐ afternoon ☐ evening classes.

[Optional] Signed: _____





Mission Explosion

Recognizing the gifts of the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:7-16) worldwide, IM has supported mission service by American Baptist congregations and regions as they have joined what God is doing through churches and partner organizations in other countries.

Mission Encounters Change Lives

Explosions, like those used to tunnel through a mountain, are earthshaking. The same is true for a "mission explosion."

The Rev. Holley Faulkner (pictured above) shares this testimony: "During the Go Global period, my worldview was transformed because of a program by the West Virginia Baptist Convention (WVBC). For more than a dozen years I've been among West Virginia Baptists who've traveled to Russia, building relationships with our brothers and sisters there, including youngsters at camp. When I was growing up, Russia was my enemy. I had been taught to hate, but through these encounters I've learned to love as I've experienced the power of 1 John 4:18: 'Perfect love casts out fear.'"

This life-changing opportunity for members of WVBC's churches began when the Rev. Greg Creasy was that region's minister of Mission Support. He reports that, in 2000, he received "an impression from the Lord" that WVBC should consider a relationship with some international body of believers. Reid Trulson, who was IM's area director for the Middle East and Europe at the time, recommended that Greg meet with the Rev. Sasha Yuchkovski, director of Russian Missions.

In 2001, Greg (second from the left) led a WVBC discernment group on a trip to explore possible ministries in Moscow and Ryazan, 120 miles southeast of the Russian capital. Over the succeeding 12 years, Russian Baptist leaders have visited West Virginia and nearly 100 people from 25 WVBC congregations have made trips to the Ryazan area.

"Group members have participated in youth camps, coordinated vacation Bible schools, led seminars for pastors and laity, renovated church buildings and residences and created a micro-loan program for small businesses," Greg says, celebrating the great strides they have taken over the years. "But most importantly, they have developed Christ-centered, international relationships that can change lives, lasting a lifetime . . . and beyond!"



IM has created models for prayer networks and financial support and expedited relationships between churches in the U.S. and Puerto Rico and international congregations. These models have expanded the full range of mission activities.

- ▶ Congregations on different parts of the globe have become partners in mission, like the First Baptist Church of Madison, Indiana, and the Shekiná Baptist Church of Santa Ana, El Salvador.
- ▶ American Baptist regions have developed relationships with counterparts and schools in other countries, like the Great Rivers Region with the Baptist Federation of Costa Rica and the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey with Rwandan Baptists and with Central Philippine University.
- ▶ Individuals and congregations have become part of Mission Partnership Teams and Mission Partnership Networks that encourage close relationships, prayer support and financial undergirding for IM mission personnel.
- ▶ U.S. congregations have ministered to refugees from Myanmar (Burma).

American Baptist
Network
of Spiritual
Directors

Growing together to connect, nurture and encourage



Please visit this website: www.abcspiritualformation.com, which has been created to network American Baptists who express their call to ministry as spiritual directors. Spiritual direction, while an ancient practice, is still a relatively new vocation among American Baptists. In response, ABCUSA has launched *Rhythms of the Spirit*, one of whose goals is to identify and create a network of American Baptists like you who have trained or are exploring training as spiritual directors. Brad Berglund, a certified spiritual director, is coordinating *Rhythms*.

I am interested, like you, in encouraging the spiritual practices of our faith that lead to a greater love of God and neighbor through Christ. So, let me encourage you to use this list

1. to network with other American Baptists who are practicing this vocation,
2. to attend a *Rhythms of the Spirit* conference www.rhythmsofthespirit.com and
3. to connect with Brad

I rejoice in the new things the Spirit is doing among us!
In Christ,

A. Roy Medley

A. Roy Medley
General Secretary, ABCUSA



Brad Berglund
Director of Spiritual Formation
720.489.8073
brad@illuminatedjourneys.com

www.abcspiritualformation.com

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.

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

(We can ship, too. Add \$5.00 for first box and \$2.00 for each additional box.)

Pickup Date _____ We also accept    Fill in information below..

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

(Optional) Credit Card Number _____ Expiration _____ CCV # _____