



The Mainstream News of Ministry and Mission

*Be a vessel that God can pour his love through.
Let It Flow*

January 2019 No. 1

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2019 Calendar

American Baptist Men Disaster Relief

March:

10: **Area II Annual Meeting**

29 - 30: **Face To Face**
First Baptist Church
Indianapolis, IN

April:

13: **Area III Annual Meeting**
FBC Champaign at
Savoy, IL

26 - 27: **GRR Clergy Spouse
Retreat - LSBC**

May:

4: **Area I Annual Meeting**
Blackhawk Baptist Camp
Oregon, IL

9 - 11: **RESOURCE Leadership
Conference**
The Chateau Hotel &
Conference Center
Bloomington, IL

June:

21 - 23: **ABCUSA Biennial
Mission Summit**
Virginia Beach, VA

July:

20: **Area V Annual Meeting**
Bethel Baptist Church
Columbia, MO

2018 was another year of service for American Baptist Disaster Relief team members. The personal encounters with those whose lives have been forever affected by circumstances beyond their control, touch our lives much more than we can express.

In 2018, 49 team member volunteers worked 966 hours over a period of 40 days in 5 different communities.

1. **Puerto Rico:** Feb. 5 - 24 - Site Team Leaders: Brian Romanowski and Bill Humenczuk
2. **Watseka, IL:** March 8 - 10 - Site Team Leader: Brian Romanowski
3. **Beaumont, TX:** April 8 - 14 - Site Team Leader: Brian Romanowski
4. **Beaumont TX:** Oct. 22 - 26 - Site Team Leader: **Van Peters**
5. **Taylorville, IL:** Dec. 7 - 12 - Site Team Leaders: Terry Maurizio, Paul Stivers

Since **Mac Shotwell** revitalized the ABM Disaster Relief program in 2004, we have had 16,401 volunteer work hours which has saved those affected by disaster an estimated \$369,011.00.

"Because Christ Came, We Come" has been our commitment, and we are truly blessed to be able to service those who need to feel his love.

Thank you churches of the GRR and Rev. Paul Gibson for your support and prayers. Van Peters



**A Word From
Paul Gibson,
ABCGRR
Executive
Minister**

**RESOURCE LEADERSHIP
CONFERENCE - MAY 9-11**

Plan now to attend the **Resource Leadership Conference**: Small Church Pastors' & Leaders' Conference, May 9-11, 2019 at the Chateau Hotel and Conference Center in Bloomington. This conference will focus on equipping small church pastors and ministry leaders and is hosted by Northern Seminary, Judson University and ABCGRR. I encourage you to attend and invite others to join you. The conference starts at Noon, May 9th and ends at Noon, May 11th. **COME JOIN US FOR A GREAT CONFERENCE!** For more info go to our website at abcgrr.org.

Sometimes I find myself thinking more "Old Testament" than I do the words of Jesus. It feels good to think of us as being a chosen people and to see how God takes care of our enemies or those who oppose us.

It is much harder to listen to the words of Jesus when He tells us we are to be servants and to consider being last instead of first. It even complicates things more when He tells us to love our enemies. There is also that section where He tells us we should be willing to give up things to follow Him. And it doesn't end there. He tells us that we need to be willing to be friends to the neglected and rejected, and not try to be

noticed when we do good things. I could say more, but you get the picture. Why would a person even want to do these things? You only do these things if you are in love with Jesus and you fully appreciate and understand what He did for you. Once you understand that, it is easier to think more of others than yourself. It is more exciting to give than to receive. I hope you understand His great love for you and what He did for you and me on Calvary.

He is our source and **RESOURCE** and he wants to move in and through us to touch the world around us. **Be rightly related to God and find your joy there, then out of you will flow rivers of living water. Be a vessel that God can pour His love through.**

We just came through a great and joyous time of year but for some it wasn't that joyous. Jim Harper had to say "see you later" to his wife, Lucy, as she passed away from her fight with cancer just a few days before Christmas. Both Jim and Lucy served in many ways throughout our region. Would you remember Jim and his family, and others who might have also lost loved ones during the holiday season. Our prayers will give added comfort and strength.

Paul



2019 Biennial Mission Summit

Plan now to attend the **American Baptist Churches USA 2019 Biennial Mission Summit** event, **June 21-23** at the **Virginia Beach Convention Center in Virginia Beach, Virginia!** The theme is **“Summit by the Sea.”** Registration will be available in January 2019 – Don’t miss it!

Speakers have been announced for the event: **Dr. Howard Stevenson**, clinical psychologist and researcher, will speak during the Friday evening worship service. **Elijah Brown**, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA), will speak during the Saturday evening **worship service.**

Dr. Jolene Erlacher, founder, trainer and consultant at Leading Tomorrow, will provide Sunday Morning Word and Witness. **Ngwedla Paul Msiza**, BWA president, will bring the message during Sunday morning worship.

In addition to hearing from significant speakers, American Baptists and friends will have an opportunity to take part in an all-new **Biennial Academy**, with tracks offering continuing education and spiritual growth opportunities for both clergy and lay leaders alike. Academy Tracks will include Social Media, Technology and Ministry; 21st Century Options for Church Planting and Renewal; Transition Ministries Training; Bible Studies; and more.

The 2019 event will also offer opportunities for all ages featuring new events for youth and children, with a new 3-day youth conference for middle and high school students, and separate VBS-style classes available for elementary ages. Day care will also be offered.

GRR Intern Grant Program

Many churches have discovered that part-time internship programs provide an effective means for churches to enhance their existing ministries or to explore new ministries during the summer months. These internships not only expand the ministry of the church, they also provide a significant opportunity for people to explore ministry vocations and to receive meaningful coaching in ministry.

The GRR Intern Grant Program is designed to challenge GRR churches to use interns to enhance existing ministries or to explore new ministries. Funding of this program is made possible by the Des Peres Legacy. This is how it works:

The church designs a ministry that would benefit from a Summer Intern. The design includes the ministry to be done, the time frame for the ministry, and a plan for ongoing training, coaching and evaluation. The church will prepare a job description for the internship, and commit funds in its regular church budget. Based on the merit of the proposal and the availability of funds, GRR will award a matching grant (up to a maximum of \$3,000) to the church for enhancing the financial support of the Intern.

Any GRR church in good standing with the Region can apply. **Applications are due April 30, 2019.** Check the GRR website (www.abcgrr.org) for more information and an application

New Address

International Ministries
1009A W 9th Ave
King Of Prussia PA 19406
(This is also the mailing address)

Great Rivers Regional Scholarship Programs

Scholarship programs exist in the Great Rivers Region to assist young people **who are members of Great Rivers Region American Baptist Churches** to secure a college and/or seminary education. Scholarships for any college student (regardless of major) or seminary student from the Gernenz-Shurtleff/Wilcoxon Scholarship are available. Ministerial students attending ABC-related schools and seminaries in preparation for ministry can also apply for the Harold O. Long Scholarship. **All applications must be received in the GRR office by April 1, 2019.**

To receive an application for these scholarships, write to:

Scholarship Committee
Attention Debbie Naugle
PO Box 13457
Springfield IL 62791

Phone 217-726-7366
Email: debbie@abcgrr.org

Mainstream Contact Information

Send your stories of mission and ministry. Please also send the names of new members to:

Linda Ricks
232 Devron Circle
East Peoria, IL 61611
Ricks4LR@comcast.net



The Church Revitalization Initiative CRI

The Church Revitalization Initiative (CRI) is designed to help committed pastors and church leaders who are willing to do what it takes to revitalize their church. The Initiative is comprised of pastors and church leaders who have helped lead their churches

to healthy revitalized congregations. If you are feeling stagnant and/or undecided how to move forward, please email me (wallyholt63@gmail.com) and we can discuss your situation and determine if the team can be of service to you.

GRR Website

GRR Webmaster: Richard Ricks
Email: revrick4@comcast.net

Videos of Growth Conference Speakers Now Available

Rivers Growth Conference (2018 Annual Gathering) are now available in streaming (**from this site**) and dvd formats. (Contact the office of the GRR for dvd ordering information.)

Experience again - or for the first time - witness of God's work presented by David Fitch, Shane Claiborne, Tony Campolo, Sharon Koh, and Wally Holt (GRR church revitalization).