



1 Oak Ridge Road, Bldg. 3, #4A,  
West Lebanon, NH 03784  
\*603-643-4201 888-262-3223

Rev. Dale Edwards  
Region Minister

Christ says, "Behold, I make all things new." *Rev. 21:5*

**THE AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF VERMONT AND NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**"Mission at our Doorstep:  
Renewal, Restoration, and New Beginnings"**



**July 2015 Newsletter**

**Table of Contents**

**Page 2** From Our Region Minister; Missionary Available to Speak; Prayer Concerns  
**Pages 3-7** News from AB Women's Ministries, Ministers Council, and Camp Sentinel  
**Page 7** Church Loans Available; ABCUSA News; Upcoming Conference  
**Page 8** American Baptist Mission Support Report for May 2015

**Food for Thought**

**What language are we Christians speaking?**

I believe the old historic denominations, like ABC/VNH, will need to learn a new language to engage a new secular culture. *We simply cannot take for granted that others know the language we speak when we talk about "church"*. Sometimes it seems like church culture gets frustrated that others do not speak our language or understand what our common culture in a general and common way once understood. With the Christian and secular language barrier becoming more pronounced, our mission will need to learn a new language to speak of Jesus Christ.

- Dale Edwards, from his article on the next page

While many members were not as progressive as their congregation's image, *they were themselves part of an overly churched culture and could not speak the language of the unchurched nor connect with them. Their efforts to connect the Good News with the unchurched and dechurched were ineffective.* (This congregation eventually died.)

- George Bullard, Baptistnews.com, June 15, 2015; from an article titled, "Are you really as progressive a Christian as your congregation?"

## [From Our Region Minister: “Learning a New Language”](#)

(Note: The following is the report Dale prepared for the June 20 meeting of the Board of Trustees.)

During my lifetime I have attempted to learn three languages: Spanish, New Testament Greek, and Old Testament Hebrew. I remember that learning a new language was building on past grammatical knowledge while getting my head around a new alphabet and syntax. Sometimes learning the language was deductive and sometimes inductive, but the more I was immersed in the language and the culture, the more I learned. One of the great challenges for our mission and ministry is to learn a new language so as to be able to communicate the Gospel in VT and NH. Recently I had the opportunity to share my faith with a secular young person. I was struck how we struggled for a common language. What started out with questions about “church” turned into questions about Jesus. I think my answers about Jesus were understandable, but my answers about “church” remained a difficult language. By the end of the conversation, I was arriving at a rather worn but still true conclusion, that Jesus was attractive, even understandable, but this “church” concept was to be treated with caution wrapped in the misunderstood. The conversation led me to believe that when a 50 something talks about Jesus with a secular 20 something, it is a little like inductively learning a new language.



I believe the old historic denominations, like ABC/VNH, will need to learn a new language to engage a new secular culture. We simply cannot take for granted that others know the language we speak when we talk about “church”. Sometimes it seems like church culture gets frustrated that others do not speak our language or understand what our common culture in a general and common way once understood. With the Christian and secular language barrier becoming more pronounced, our mission will need to learn a new language to speak of Jesus Christ.

I believe new directions, new initiatives, new thinking, stem from an inductive process of engaging the culture, while resting assured in the timeless Gospel. The steps ABC/VNH takes into the future are the steps of learning a new language of mission and ministry. The journey can be filled with Holy surprises and unseen and intimidating challenges, but the future will require of us a new engagement with the surrounding secular culture. If ABC/VNH can further become a mission infrastructure to support and encourage the local church and pastor upon this journey, then we are laboring for Christ’s Kingdom. But if we only gather to speak our old language, then we run the risk of only seeking comfort and predictability for ourselves.

Sometimes these steps seem like small steps, but I also believe the Holy Spirit often works in the details of Christian community and shared purpose, like learning a new vocabulary, one word at a time helps build the skills for a new language. I pray together we can learn a language to better speak the truth of Jesus Christ into a new culture which honestly often doesn’t know what we are talking about. I think old denominations can have a gracious confidence in God’s grace and mercy. We will stumble a bit, make mistakes, have some questions, but we are not alone in learning this new mission.

In Christ, Dale

## [IM Missionary Mercy Gonzales-Barnes Available to Speak at Churches this Fall](#)

United Baptist Church of Concord is hoping to have International Ministries Missionary Mercy Gonzales-Barnes come and speak at their church sometime this fall. Mercy would be better able to travel to New England if there are other churches that would like to have her come and speak as well. If your church would like to have Mercy come and speak, please call United Baptist Church at 603-224-7755.

Mercy works with the Dios Con Nosotros Baptist Convention of Baja California, Mexico. Her ministry in Baja includes leadership development for new church planting, teaching at the Seminary, and work with short term mission groups from the United States. Her ministry area includes Mexicali, Tecate, Ensenada, San Luis and Tijuana. She is married to Rick Barnes, a former IM missionary. For more information on Mercy and her work, go to <http://internationalministries.org/teams/46-barnes>.

## [Prayer Concerns](#)

Prayers of condolence and healing for Rev. Patricia Marsden (Newmarket Community Church). Patty’s mother passed away on May 25<sup>th</sup>, and shortly after that Patty had surgery from which she is now recovering.



## American Baptist Women's Ministries VNH

**American Baptist Women's Ministries is a Christ-centered ministry with a commitment to encourage and empower women and girls to serve God.**

### ABW Retreat

July is cracking to get started. Let's start the month together with a "lead-up" at the Women's Retreat beginning Tuesday, June 30<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. at Hotel Coolidge in White River Junction, VT, overnight, ending at 3 p.m. on Wednesday. Worship, Fellowship, Music, Bible Study with the Lord, and with silver and gold friends. What is the "calling card"? We women gathering together in the Name of our Lord for revitalizing.

**DEADLINE: June 20.** Registration form is in the July Calendars of Events accompanying this newsletter and online at [abcvnh.org](http://abcvnh.org) on the Events/Event Registration page.

In Jesus' Love and Service, Marsha

### SAVE, SAVE, SAVE For Missions

ABWM VNH is continuing to collect the following items for missions:

Campbell Soup labels, General Mills BoxTops for Education, beverage can flip tops, fronts of greeting cards, eye glasses, hearing aids, cancelled stamps, S&H Green Stamp books or other stamp books. For more information or to mail your items, please contact Mrs. Josephine Clark at 938 Shelburne Rd, Apt. 2, South Burlington, VT 05403 or 802-735-3455 or Mrs. Alys Martinson at 1 Luneau Court, Northfield, NH 03276.



### Ministers Council of ABCVNH

Greetings, from your new Ministers Council President. I am so glad to have gotten this position before I, or anyone else, knew what we were doing. Because, now that the word is out, there are names in the news every day announcing their intention to run for President. ... Why just today (the day of my writing this) Donald Trump put his hat in the ring for the next election. ;)

I would also like to thank Malcolm Hamblett for ghost writing the June newsletter entry of information I would have otherwise neglected.

To introduce myself just a little bit here. I am 61 years old and have been pastor at First Baptist Church in Newport, NH, for about twelve years. I have also pastored in Salt Point, NY, Putnam, CT, and was an associate pastor in Bangor, ME. I am originally from Maine. I grew up and went to school there through college. I



became a Christian at age 17 and was baptized at age 18 in 1973. I graduated from seminary at Gordon-Conwell in 1984. In telling about my family, I am a bit of an odd ball in that I've never been married. And yes, I am not even a Catholic priest. Along with the church, my family still consists of 2 older sisters, 2 younger brothers, my 89 year old mother and a father who passed away in 2009, and lots of nieces, nephews and grand-such kids, mostly back in Maine. However, in all the confusions of our world regarding marriage, family, and all things sexual, I have no complaints that God has given me a life of single-mindedness toward Himself and toward his people. I look forward to expanding my sense of family with you in Vermont and New Hampshire.

In Christ, Rev. Stephen Hammond  
President, Ministers Council of the ABC/VNH ([sjhammond@gwi.net](mailto:sjhammond@gwi.net))

### SIGN UP NOW - Fall Cruise on Lake Winnepesaukee

Come join your colleagues, spouses and families on Saturday, September 12 aboard the Mt. Washington for a buffet lunch cruise on Lake Winnepesaukee. The cruise will feature music and plenty of time for fellowship

while enjoying the beauty of the lake. We will leave the dock at Weirs Beach at 12:30 sharp and return about 3:00. (It's a 2½ hour cruise, so we don't have to worry about getting stranded on some unknown island!)

This cruise is free for Ministers Council members, their spouses and their minor children. Non-members can attend for \$38. Widowed spouses of pastors are invited to attend for free. Sign up before August 15<sup>th</sup> by contacting Peter Bolster at [bolster@tds.net](mailto:bolster@tds.net) or 603-776-1622.

If you have not yet joined the Ministers Council, you must join before August 15 in order to cruise for free. Lifetime members of the National Ministers Council must still pay local council dues of \$25.

### **Pastors – Give Yourself a One Day Soul Sabbath This Summer**

Summer is an excellent time for clergy to take a deep breath, revisit personal goals and reflect upon ministry. The Center for Career Development and Ministry (CCDM) is offering a special discount for one day programs now through Labor Day. For just \$99, you can spend the day with one of our counselors in the Boston area or stay where you are and let us offer a Skype session with you. Do something good for yourself and start the new church year renewed and refreshed! Call CCDM today at 781.329.2100 to book an appointment.

### **Fall Workshops**

Mark your calendars for two workshops coming your way:

#### **“Help Your Church and You Face Conflict”**

Thursday, October 8 from 9:00-4:30 p.m. at Singing Hills Christian Fellowship, Plainfield, NH.

Workshop Leader: Rev. Margaret Marcuson

Most pastors experience conflict when they want to introduce change to their congregation. This workshop will deal with how to handle church conflicts and the process of change. It is sponsored by the Region, the Ministers Council and the Center for Career Development and Ministry. Registration information and cost will be available in July.

Rev. Margaret Marcuson helps clergy make their lives easier. She speaks and writes on leadership and works with church leaders nationally as a consultant and coach. Margaret is the author of *Leaders who Last: Sustaining Yourself and Your Ministry* and *Money and Your Ministry: Balance the Books While Keeping Your Balance*. An American Baptist minister, Margaret was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Gardner, MA, for 15 years. She now lives in Portland, Oregon. Find out more at [www.margaretmarcuson.com](http://www.margaretmarcuson.com) and read her two latest blogs on church conflict.

#### **Boundaries and Ethics Workshop**

Saturday, October 31 from 9:00-4:00 p.m. at Singing Hill Christian Fellowship, Plainfield, NH.

Workshop Leader: Rev. Linda Lea Snyder.

Details, registration information and cost will be available in July.

Sponsored by the Region and the Center for Career Development and Ministry.

### **Emmaus Spiritual Leadership Communities Forming**

If you're looking for...

- A more contemplative lifestyle in the midst of the growing demands of leadership;
- A caring, listening, and discerning community of sacred companions;
- And resources to help you care for the souls of others in your ministry context...

Then, Leadership Transformations Inc.'s Emmaus — a retreat-based leadership community — is for you!

Come and journey with others who hunger for rest, renewal, encouragement, and deeper spiritual companionship. Some Emmaus participants join for one year, while others stay on for several years. It's up to you! Commit to just one year at a time (fall to spring). Three years of rotating curriculum keeps the content and dialogue fresh.

Emmaus Spiritual Leadership Communities are unique groups of leaders who desire ever-deepening attentiveness to the presence and movement of God within their lives and among one another. Each community gathers together for 4 topical retreats over a period of 9 months. Each retreat is designed to provide a spiritually enriching environment for ongoing encouragement and growth, whereby spiritual formation, discernment, and renewal are significantly enlarged in the hearts of leaders. It is our hope that by coming alongside of and engaging with one another in unhurried, reflective/contemplative retreat settings we will develop a

lifestyle of spiritual formation that will impact our personal walk of intimacy with Christ and ultimately infiltrate our daily ministry context.

Each retreat begins 9 a.m. Tuesday and concludes at 1 p.m. Thursday and will include large and small group sharing, worship, fellowship, teaching and prayer, as well as spacious and restful times in silence and solitude. The retreats are held at the Wonderland Conference Center in Sharon, MA.

For more information, go to [leadershiptransformations.org/emmas.htm](http://leadershiptransformations.org/emmas.htm). [Click here](#) for a brochure.

### Time Away for Pastors

**CAMP SENTINEL:** Sentinel has dedicated a place of rest for Pastors, Missionaries and ministry leaders and their families. As you nourish others for God's purpose and glory, it is important to take time and "be still". There is no charge for this experience. Contact Pastor Kevin at [kevin@campsentinel.org](mailto:kevin@campsentinel.org) to schedule your time of rest and renewal.

**ALTON BAY CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE CENTER:** Pastors are invited to spend up to two nights at the Conference Center on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday free of charge (subject to availability). There are no meals included, just a comfortable room, quiet time for study and reflection, and the natural beauty of the Lakes Region of New Hampshire.

**FOREST HAVEN:** A place of healing hospitality and spiritual refreshment for pastors and other Christian workers. 29 Hogg Hill Road, Bradford NH; 603-938-2964; [Revrandy3795@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Revrandy3795@sbcglobal.net). Looking for a get-away place? Forest Haven is an apartment attached to the home of Randy & Jill Thompson, who have answered God's call to provide this place for you. It is a faith-based ministry so there is no charge. Randy is Pastor at Immanuel Community Church in Concord. Visit their website at <http://foresthavennh.org>.

Check out the Ministers Council's website for online resources, information about forming a "Together in Ministry" small group, a monthly newsletter, Women in Ministry information, ministry stories and more. Go to [www.ministerscouncil.com](http://www.ministerscouncil.com). Also check out the Ministers Council's Facebook page: [click here](#).



---

*The purpose of Sentinel is to create a welcoming environment for Christian relationship building and spiritual renewal. Within the stillness of God's creation and through the guidance of the staff, people are moved from discovery into authentic relationships with others and with Jesus Christ.*

I didn't realize physical projects would be raised up at Camp Sentinel when the 2015 theme was chosen a year ago: Homebuilding 101 (Matt. 7:24-29). The Sentinel Lodge building is over 100 years old and between age (weather worn walls) and recent camper growth, the Sentinel board decided to add a 1,200 square foot addition to the front of the Lodge. This addition will allow our dining space to meet our lodging capacity. The addition is expected to be open by the first week of camp.



I was most touched by a recent donation to the \$120,000 project of 4 crumpled dollar bills in an envelope. It was a gift from the heart. Sentinel leads with mission and God provides through the generosity of friends and churches who partner in ministry and invest in Sentinel's future. Thank you those who pray and support the mission of Sentinel.

When I was interviewed for my position years ago, I remember an important question: "How do you move an outdoor ministry forward keeping long standing traditions?" (That is a great question, as sometimes I put my

memories into holding onto physical items.) “Mission” I said. “If we keep the mission at the forefront, God takes care of the details”

Ten years later we have seen that “mission first” works and God receives all the glory. We need to be careful not to allow the work we do for God to replace our relationship (time) with God. I like that nugget of truth and most importantly it keeps me humble.

So next time you come home to Sentinel, remember the important line in the Sentinel story. “New buildings have been built, new programs added, but our reason for being remains the same.” The reason is taking in the stillness of these 629 acres and lifting our eyes to the hills to grow in our relationship with God.

See you on the mountaintop,  
Rev. Kevin Van Brunt - “Pk”, Executive Director, Sentinel Ministries



### Homebuilding 101 *Matthew 7:24-28*

Summer is just around the corner! Have you signed up for summer camp yet? Summer program weeks are filling up, so sign up today at [www.campsentinel.org](http://www.campsentinel.org). Boys and Girls **overnight camp** for youth 7-15 is offered this summer during the following weeks: June 28, July 5 (almost full), 12, 19, & 26, and August 9. **Day Camp** is also offered each week, but the following weeks are already filled: July 5, 12, and 19. The first three weeks of **Staff in Training** are also filled.

This summer we will learn the importance of what it means to have a firm foundation in Christ, by using the example of building a house. We will “dig in” and explore the purpose for the foundation, windows, walls, electrical, plumbing and roof and understand how each relates to our personal faith journey with God.

Additional programs for teens, adults, and families are offered throughout the summer. Download a summer brochure at [www.campsentinel.org/downloads/campsentinel.pdf](http://www.campsentinel.org/downloads/campsentinel.pdf) or call the office at (603) 539-4839 and we would be happy to send one to you.

Sentinel employs 33 summer staff from 26 area churches. Staff either grow up through our program or come with fresh new ideas to strengthen our program. Staff are background and reference checked and attend staff trainings. Our staff retention rate is high. When staff serve for a summer, they want to come back.

### Summer Camp is for everyone! – Senior Ventures

Adults 50 and over, come enjoy some time in the stillness (and enjoy a good night’s sleep on our NEW Tempurpedic mattresses!); from 3 p.m. Sunday, August 16<sup>th</sup> to 1 p.m. Wednesday, August 19<sup>th</sup>.

Adult camp for the “young at heart”! A relaxed schedule makes for a great three days of rest and renewal. Campers stay in the lodge or in cabins. Great programs, food, and fellowship!

### Year Round Retreats *Rest. Renew. Reenergize.*

Sentinel is open year round and we would love to host your group at Sentinel Lodge. Retreat experiences begin at just \$60 per guest. Weekends are booking up quickly. Contact the camp office for availability. 2015 weekends still open are Oct 30<sup>th</sup>, Nov 20<sup>th</sup>, and December.

Sentinel offers over 600 acres and a mile of water frontage in which to explore God’s Creation through:

- **Summer Camp:** for youth, adults and families
- Year-round **group retreats:** for churches, families, school and community groups
- **Pastor’s Sanctuary:** a place for those in ministry to find rest (Psalm 46:10)
- **Community Programs:** adventure classes, school groups, youth group.
- Pines adult and family **camping:** 33 tent and RV sites

### Amazon Smile. Help send a youth to camp when you shop

Help support Sentinel’s scholarship fund when you make Amazon purchases. Amazon has set up a way for .5% of your purchase to go to Camp Sentinel’s scholarship campaign. There is no cost to you and you still pay the same price for items on Amazon. Amazon makes the donation above and beyond your purchase. Simply click this link, <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/20-3562406>, select Sentinel as the charity and shop as usual. Thank you for your support in helping children have a life changing Christian camp experience!

## Wish List

Without the support of individuals and churches Sentinel would not be able to operate. Thank you for your prayers and support. Here is our current wish list and projects for the upcoming 2015 season. If you would like to partner in ministry with us, our wish list may be found at: [www.campsentinel.org/support.php](http://www.campsentinel.org/support.php).

## Sentinel on Facebook and Instagram

Stay up to date with the most recent pictures, stories and news, join at [www.facebook.com/campsentinel](http://www.facebook.com/campsentinel) and [http://instagram.com/camp\\_sentinel](http://instagram.com/camp_sentinel).

## Does Your Church Need a Loan?

For a limited time, until July 31, the American Baptist Extension Corporation is offering a special Mission Summit Loan Rate of 4.50% for qualifying first-time borrowers. When it's time to build, renovate, repair, upgrade your energy efficiency or improve accessibility, apply for a loan from ABEC, your financial organization with a mission. Let ABEC help you enhance your building to do even greater, more effective ministry with your community. To find out more about ABEC loans, visit [myabec.org](http://myabec.org) or call 800-222-3872, ext. 2232.



## ABCUSA News

### Interested in Global Missions and volunteer work?

International Ministries sends out a weekly email about volunteers in global missions. Each email shares a volunteer missionary's experience, volunteer opportunities, and features a snapshot of one of IM's missionaries and how you can pray for him or her and their ministry. To receive the weekly emails, email IM at [volunteers@internationalministries.org](mailto:volunteers@internationalministries.org).



### Check out what's happening throughout the ABCUSA.

Go to [www.abc-usa.org](http://www.abc-usa.org) and check out "The Latest News", "In the Spotlight", Ministries, Resources, etc.

Go to [www.abhms.org](http://www.abhms.org) or "Like" ABHMS on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/ABHomeMission](http://www.facebook.com/ABHomeMission)) to find out what churches across our denomination are doing, to get information on Home missionaries and ministries, and AB Reads.

Go to [www.internationalministries.org](http://www.internationalministries.org) or "Like" IM on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/InternationalMinistries](http://www.facebook.com/InternationalMinistries)) to find out more about our ABC missionaries and their ministries and to get updates.

## New Hampshire Council of Churches and New Hampshire Bible Society

Go to the New Hampshire Council of Churches' website for information about upcoming events: <http://nhchurches.org/>. For information about the New Hampshire Bible Society, go to [www.biblenh.org](http://www.biblenh.org).

The Bible Society invites you to come by their bookstore, at 125 Airport Rd., Concord. They offer a variety of Bibles; study, large print, pew Bibles, in many different translations and languages to meet your needs. The Bibles are available at greatly reduced prices and often they are able to eliminate the cost altogether.

## Upcoming Conference

### Rhythms of the Spirit: Nurturing a Transformed Life

**August 3-7 at Camp Canonicus, Exeter, RI.** Sponsored by ABCUSA and ABC of Rhode Island. Speakers: Rev. Jeff Savage, Rev. Betty Wright-Riggins, Rene Colson Hudson, and Brad Berglund.

Do you struggle for balance between prayer and activity? Do you long for a quieter center; time for silence and reflection? This conference, offered in a retreat style, is a unique opportunity to explore and practice the transformed life together. Download registration from at [www.rhythmsofthespirit.com](http://www.rhythmsofthespirit.com) or call Colleen Tolhurst at 401-294-6318 x110.

## American Baptist Mission Support Update

### VERMONT & NEW HAMPSHIRE MISSION GIVING Year-to-Date thru May 2015

	2015	2014	Incr. (Decr.)	% Incr. (%Decr.)
<b>United Mission Basics</b>	<b>\$ 41,048</b>	<b>\$ 39,996</b>	<b>\$ 1,052</b>	<b>2.6%</b>
ABW Ministries Love Gift	\$ 516	\$ 1,439	\$ (923)	-64.1%
America for Christ Offering	\$ 11,474	\$ 12,836	\$ (1,362)	-10.6%
One Great Hour of Sharing Offering	\$ 6,550	\$ 10,359	\$ (3,809)	-36.8%
World Mission Offering	\$ 3,477	\$ 3,739	\$ (262)	-7.0%
Retired Ministers & Missionaries Offering	\$ 9,488	\$ 12,201	\$ (2,713)	-22.2%
Region Offering	\$ 9,016	\$ 2,260	\$ 6,756	298.9%
Institutional Support	\$ 360	\$ 386	\$ (26)	-6.7%
Specifics	\$ 3,638	\$ 7,412	\$ (3,774)	-50.9%
Targeted Giving	\$ 13,069	\$ 11,638	\$ 1,431	12.3%
Adjustments	-	\$ 875	-	-
<b>Total American Baptist Mission Support</b>	<b>\$ 98,636</b>	<b>\$ 103,141</b>	<b>\$ (4,505)</b>	<b>-4.4%</b>

Publication of ABC/VNH – Edited by Malcolm Hamblett;

Send items for publication to [malcolm.hamblett@abcvnh.org](mailto:malcolm.hamblett@abcvnh.org).

**Deadline for submissions for the August newsletter is Wednesday, July 15.**