

ALL THINGS NEW

American
Baptist
Churches



Vermont
and
New Hampshire

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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"

December 2015 Newsletter



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Food for Thought

If college makes it plausible to believe "God is dead," the Church should make it hard to believe anything other than "God is alive."

The reason some kids abandon their faith is not because they go to college, but because they stop going to church. They immerse themselves in a culture with naturalistic assumptions, rituals, and beliefs. The church becomes something for the holidays.

Christians today should make use of the various tools at their disposal in order to equip people to make a case for faith, but unlike *God's Not Dead*, we must not leave out the world where God's Good News comes alive—the people of God who corporately witness to a kingdom that has no end.

The best apologetic for a secular age is a people who are in this world but not of it, who counter the Enlightenment's eschatology with the true story of a new world which began on a Sunday morning outside Jerusalem.

- by Trevin Wax in an online article titled: "Why 'God's Not Dead' Resonated, and what it missed". For the full article, go to <http://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/trevinwax/2015/10/29/why-gods-not-dead-resonated-and-what-it-missed/>.



The Region office will be closed from noon on
November 25 – 27 for Thanksgiving and
December 24 – January 3 for the Christmas Holiday.

2016 ABC/VNH ANNUAL GATHERING
MAY 20-21 AT CENTERPOINT COMMUNITY CHURCH IN SALEM, NH.
Main Speaker: Dr. Jim Singleton, Associate Professor of Pastoral Leadership
and Evangelism, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

New Region Directory Now Available

The new ABC/VNH Region Directory is now available in 2 formats: online and physical. To download the various sections of the directory (Region Leadership; Church Listings; Ministerial Leaders Directory, and ABC/VNH Constitution, By-laws and Rules of Procedure), go to abcvnh.org, hover your cursor over "Who We Are" and click on Region Directory. That will take you to the various sections that you can then download or open. (Note: the new directory will be online on Friday, November 20.) If you don't have access to the internet, you can call the office at 603-643-4201 to ask for a physical copy and we will mail one to you. The online version will be periodically updated and posted. If you have any corrections or updates please let the office know at 603-643-4201 or office@abcvnh.org.

Prayer Concerns

Condolences to the family of **Rev. Richard Hardy** who passed into glory on November 9th. Rev. Hardy pastored six churches in New England and Ohio and served as interim pastor in several churches in the southwestern part of New Hampshire in his retirement. He was a member of the First Baptist Church of Keene. A memorial service was held on November 14 at the Nelson Congregational Church.

Condolences to the family of **Rev. Raeburn Cameron** who passed into glory on October 30th. Rev. Cameron pastored a number of churches in the Northeast and upon retiring moved to Moultonborough where he did interim ministry work for a number of years. He began his ministry by doing missionary work in Canada where he flew a small bush plane into remote villages to share the word of the Lord. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, November 28 at 1 p.m. at the Moultonborough United Methodist Church.



Institute for Learning News & Courses

The Institute for Learning is offering two dynamic courses for the Spring Term 2016. Both courses are required for individuals to complete the Certified Lay Minister's Program.

IFL 301 Ethics and Moral Character, taught by Rev. Dr. Lillian Buckley in an online format; dates to be announced.

IFL 302 Pastoral Leadership and Administration, taught by Rev. Dr. Ken Lawrence.
Class schedule: Saturdays, February 13 & 20, from 9:00 – 2:45, First Baptist Church, Hampton Falls, NH,
and Saturdays, March 12 & 19, from 9:00 – 2:45, First Baptist Church, Manchester, NH.

Please go to www.instituteforlearningvtnh.org for more information and if you have questions, please send an email to iflvtnh@gmail.com.



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.**

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.



News for Pastors from the Ministers Council

Peer Power: Cultivating Clergy Communities of Practice & Training for Peer Group Facilitators

January 27-28, 2016, Canterbury Retreat Center, near Orlando, FL

What are the foundational practices and distinctive approaches for designing and sustaining clergy groups as communities of practice? Why are pastors who are members of peer learning groups more effective leaders? Peer Power will offer presentations and workshops drawing on a broad mix of perspectives, foundational practices, and direct experiences of clergy peer learning approaches as we explore these questions. This event is designed for potential facilitators, group members who rotate facilitative roles, and those who train and provide support to facilitators (national denominational offices, middle judicatories, seminaries, and other organizations).

This training will be facilitated by Lawrence Peers, Director of Learning, Pastoral Excellence Network.

The following workshops will be offered by these leaders:

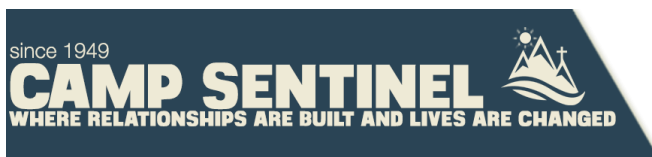
- Debora Jackson, Executive Director, Ministers Council, ABCUSA: *Spiritual Practices for Leadership Effectiveness: The 7Rs of Sanctuary*
- Kelli Walker-Jones, Center Director, Triangle Pastoral Counseling: *Introduction to Narrative Clergy Peer Groups*
- Larry Peers, Director of Learning, Pastoral Excellence Network: *Intentionally Practicing the Art of Innovation in Clergy Groups*
- Cathy Wille, Pastoral Counselor: *How Change Affects the Church System*
- Craig Gilliam, Director, Center for Pastoral Excellence, LA Conference, UMC: *A Model for Clergy Peer Groups that Offer Space for Support, Growth, Learning and Challenge*
- Israel Galindo, Associate Dean for Lifelong Learning, Columbia Theological Seminary: *How Clergy Actually Learn and Lead: Practices for Deepening the Profession of Ministry*

For more information: [click here](#).

Time Away for Pastors

Information about time away for pastors at Camp Sentinel, Alton Bay Christian Conference Center, and Forest Haven can be found on the Region website (abcvnh.org) on the Ministers Council page.

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. 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.

While we still have a month to go in 2015, Camp Sentinel has already been busy preparing for the 2016 camping season. Information will be coming out soon and early bird registration information and drawings are posted below.

Sentinel 2016: CONNECT

What does it mean to connect, walk, remain and abide with God? This coming summer we will explore Jesus's charge in John 15:1-11 and His encouragement for us in our personal faith journey. We will unpack the importance of walking with God, what a life which produces fruit looks like, and how our words and actions build-up or tear-down ourselves and others. We are given a mandate to love others, and this begins with connecting to God, and staying in sync with God by abiding in Him.

Summer brochures will be mailed early December to campers and churches. Sign up by January 31st and save 10% off.

Early Registration Discounts: Register by January 31st and save 10%

The early bird gets the worm...and a discount!

Register by January 31st with a \$100 deposit at www.campsentinel.org and save 10% off your 2016 camp fees. Churches may email or mail roster of children with payment of \$100 per camper to the camp office.

Early registration drawings!

- ❖ Register online by Friday, January 8th - Enter to win a \$50 gift credit to the camp store AND a **GOD > I** t-shirt (up to a \$60 value).
- ❖ Register online by Friday, January 15th - Enter to win a \$50 gift credit to the camp store AND a Sentinel sweatshirt (up to a \$70 value).
- ❖ Register online by Friday, January 22nd - Enter to win a free weekend stay (2 overnights – water and electric site) in the Sentinel Pines camping area for your family (up to a \$60 value).
- ❖ Register online by Friday, January 29th - Enter to win the rest of your 2016 camp fee paid – only pay the \$100 registration fee (good for one camper, one program week; up to a \$380 value).

Simply sign up online at www.campsentinel.org. Those who register before the drawing will be entered in all subsequent drawings. Early 10% discount good for those who register online by January 31, 2016.

Missions Support

Sentinel is a Christ-centered, Bible-based summer camp experience for children. We welcome all regardless of financial status. This past summer, with your help, Sentinel lovingly gave \$23,210 in scholarship assistance. We are able to do this because we are a mission before money ministry. Thank you to those who pray and stand with us. Please consider supporting Sentinel as your local church mission so we may reach more children for Christ's Glory!

Rev. Kevin Van Brunt "Pk", Executive Director, Sentinel

Year Round Retreats Rest. Renew. Reenergize.

Sentinel offers a place for school and community groups, churches and individuals to come to the 600+ acres and enjoy the stillness of the grounds. Meals are cooked to meet the individual group needs and the Lodge offers a place for meeting and lodging (with brand new tempurpedic mattresses!) throughout the year. Contact Kevin to book a retreat – kevin@campsentinel.org.

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

We ask for your prayers and support as we embrace the past and invest in the future! To see our most recent wish list click here: www.campsentinel.org/support.php.

Candlesticks and Advent Wreath Available

The Water Village Community Church in Ossipee, NH, has available a set of spring loaded altar candlesticks (see photo at right) and a matching advent wreath with a batch of supplies with it. If your church is in the position to make a donation for them, they would not turn you down. Their little New England church has gone back to old-fashioned tapers. Please contact Pastor Jim Waugh at: waunanza@roadrunner.com or 539-1509.



ABCUSA News

Free Webinars from Judson Press

Judson Press is offering three free webinars in December. Check them out below. For details on the December 8 and 10 webinars, contact Judson Press at 1-800-458-3766.

Creative Ways to Raise Ministry Funds for the New Year – Tuesday, December 1 from 1-2 p.m. You have a great idea for community ministry, but where can you get the funding for it? This two-part webinar will help you learn how to build a case for your ministry and understand how your network could help you raise the funds you need. Also included, tips on grant writing, special events, and raising funds from individual donors. To register, go to <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4534995451653472001>.

Budgeting for the Holidays & Beyond – Tuesday, December 8 from 1-2 p.m. To register, go to <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5871621160470333185>.

Pulpit & Politics – Thursday, December 10 from 1-2 p.m. To register, go to <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8892694284529115393>.

INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES GLOBAL GIFTS

Give a gift this Christmas that brings hope, life and the compassion of Christ to some of the neediest people in the world. International Ministries' 2015 Global Gifts Catalog is now available. To view the items in the catalog, go to www.internationalministries.org and click on "Global Gifts." You can also call International Ministries at 1-800-222-3872 x2207 for a catalog. This year's gifts are:

- India: Bibles for new believers. \$20
- Mexico: Chickens for rural families. \$50
- Thailand: Food for human trafficking survivors. \$50
- Lebanon: School supplies for Syrian refugees. \$100
- Burundi: Chickens for impoverished families. \$110
- Costa Rica: Scholarships for abused women. \$130
- Thailand: Hot meals for hungry children. \$160
- China: Agricultural training for rural farmers. \$250
- Lebanon: Food for a church planter's family. \$250
- Thailand: Supplies and labor to help rebuild a school. \$315
- South Africa: Job skills education for impoverished women. \$500
- D.R. Congo: Land Cruiser for medical transport. \$100-\$500 (total cost of Land Cruiser: \$38,000)

Susan Gillies Named Interim General Secretary of ABCUSA

Susan Gillies was elected to serve as Interim General Secretary by the Board of General Ministries at its meeting on November 12, 2015. Gillies will begin on December 1 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,” said Rev. Dr. Wesley A. Roberts, 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 ABC 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.

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 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 ABHMS, 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.

He continued, “I am confident that Susan Gillies will enable us to forge ahead in our faithfulness to God’s plan for American Baptists, as well as to help prepare the ABC in the calling of a new installed General Secretary in the near future. Join me in welcoming Susan Gillies, God’s servant at such a time as this, to be the head of our communion known as American Baptist Churches USA!”

2015 Mission Table Surfaces Seven Priorities for American Baptist Churches

The second American Baptist Churches Mission Table met November 9-11, 2015, at the Double Tree hotel in King of Prussia, PA. The Mission Table brought together representatives from American Baptist regions, affiliated ministry partners, national staff, executives and officers, to join in conversation with one another and highlight denominational priorities.

The event began with three anticipated outcomes: to narrow the list of 21 Mission Summit Conversations topics to a manageable list of priorities, to build case statements for each of the final priorities encouraging

ABC entities to engage these priorities over the next two years, and for Mission Table participants and ABC-USA as a whole to continue to champion ministries associated with the final priorities.

The topics focused on at the Mission Table were originally a part of the Mission Summit Conversations held at the 2015 Biennial Mission Summit in Overland Park, KS this past June. From these 21 topics, Mission Table participants spent time in small groups discussing priorities for ABCUSA, looking at what topics should be championed by ABC in the next 20 months before the Biennial Mission Summit in Portland, Oregon, June 29-July 1, 2017.

The 2015 Mission Table surfaced seven priority topics for American Baptist Churches USA:

1. Next Generation of Leaders
2. Violence
3. Discipleship
4. Poverty
5. Women in Ministry
6. Gospel in a Rapidly Changing Society
7. Alternative Models for Pastoral Ministry

“One of the great surprises of *Transformed by the Spirit* has been the value of conversations across our churches about priorities and challenges,” said outgoing ABC General Secretary Roy Medley. “The fruit of those conversations has been the meat of our conversations at the Mission Table, leading to seven priorities for our life together. We praise God for the transformative work of the Spirit.”

After the seven priorities were recognized, Mission Table participants then divided into groups based on their interest, and together worked to produce case statements based on each of the seven priorities. These case statements and more information about the Mission Table will be available online at www.abc-usa.org in the near future.

All topics discussed at the 2015 Biennial Mission Summit continue to be important ministry areas to address and lift up, but these seven topics will be focused on as denominational priorities by ABCUSA as a whole.

“The Mission Table reveals how our denomination is fully alive! The room of almost 100 people holds a vibrancy of creative thinking that can only be described as Holy Energy springing forth from God’s Spirit. Jeff Woods (Associate General Secretary for Regional Ministries and Conversations Coordinator), and the Planning Team have led us through a discernment process that will guide our focus for the next two years. We have much to celebrate with deep gratitude,” said Rev. Judy Fackenthal, Vice President/President-Elect of ABCUSA and Pastor of Garfield Park Baptist Church, Indianapolis, IN.

Interested in Global Missions & 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.



Check out what’s happening throughout the ABCUSA.

Go to www.abc-usa.org and check out “The Latest News”, “In the Spotlight”, Ministries, Resources, etc.

Go to www.abhms.org or “Like” ABHMS on Facebook (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 or “Like” IM on Facebook (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.

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.

Background Checks Available

In this day and age of litigation, many churches are beginning to put into place safe child procedures. This includes doing background checks on those interested in working with children. The Region office doesn't often promote organizations not affiliated with us, but *Group* offers a background check service that appears to be reliable. It is called "shepherd's watch™ background checks." For more information go to <http://www.group.com/shepherds-watch/>.



American Baptist Mission Support Update

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

	2015	2014	Incr. (Decr.)	% Incr. (%Decr.)
United Mission Basics	\$ 94,833	\$ 98,825	\$ (3,992)	-4.0%
ABW Ministries Love Gift	\$ 1,184	\$ 2,392	\$ (1,208)	-50.5%
America for Christ Offering	\$ 17,108	\$ 19,425	\$ (2,317)	-11.9%
One Great Hour of Sharing Offering	\$ 31,366	\$ 30,846	\$ 520	1.7%
World Mission Offering	\$ 14,057	\$ 11,375	\$ 2,682	23.6%
Retired Ministers & Missionaries Offering	\$ 12,621	\$ 16,430	\$ (3,809)	-23.2%
Region Offering	\$ 17,182	\$ 16,226	\$ 956	5.9%
Institutional Support	\$ 1,022	\$ 1,122	\$ (100)	-8.9%
Specifics	\$ 8,104	\$ 14,158	\$ (6,054)	-42.8%
Targeted Giving	\$ 22,489	\$ 20,281	\$ 2,208	10.9%
Adjustments	-	-	-	-
Total American Baptist Mission Support	\$ 219,966	\$ 231,080	\$ (11,114)	-4.8%

Attention Church Treasurers: Tuesday, January 12, 2016, is the closing date for December missions. Monies received after that date will be credited to January 2016.

A publication of ABC/VNH – Edited by Malcolm Hamblett
Send items for publication to malcolm.hamblett@abcvnh.org.

Deadline for submissions for the January newsletter is Monday, December 14.