



# • The Communicator •

Published by Mid-American Baptist Churches  
Dr. Marshall Peters, Executive Minister  
Issue 2, 2018

## AMERICAN BAPTISTS UNITED IN MISSION



As American Baptists, we serve as the hands and feet of Christ. We're doing what we can to heal a hurting world. This means feeding the hungry; empowering pastors, lay leaders & youth to spread Christ's love; protecting the environment; promoting Christian unity and more.

United Mission is the vehicle that makes this happen. United Mission is the simple, efficient way American Baptists pool financial resources to maximize the amount of good we can do. We celebrate the fact that six Mid-American Baptist Churches rank in the top 100 churches nationwide in their support of United Mission. They are:

- #16 First Baptist Church of Greater Des Moines in Johnston, IA
- #56 First Baptist Church in Ames, IA
- #70 First Baptist Church in Fairfield, IA
- #87 (tie) First Baptist Church in Boone, IA
- #87 (tie) Westover Baptist Church in Des Moines, IA
- #91 First Baptist Church in Pella, IA

We thank **all** the churches that support United Mission.

Marshall Peters  
Executive Minister

**You're Invited to the  
Retirement Reception for Becky Wallace  
Mid-American Baptist Churches Office Manager**

Saturday, June 2, 2018 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.  
Westover Baptist Church  
2330 62nd St.  
Des Moines, IA 50322

## ABC/USA SISTER CHURCHES INITIATIVE - PUERTO RICO

Iglesias Bautistas de Puerto Rico Executive Minister Rev. Edgardo M. Caraballo Marín and American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA) General Secretary Rev. Dr. Lee B. Spitzer are pleased to invite churches throughout our country to sign up to participate in the Iglesias Bautistas de Puerto Rico - ABCUSA Sister Churches Initiative. The Sister Churches Initiative offers U.S. mainland churches the opportunity to befriend and express solidarity with Puerto Rican American Baptist congregations.

The churches will be invited to join in friendship-building through prayer support, moral support and encouragement through written communications among pastoral leaders, church members and children, leading up to opportunities for common worship experiences during the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit in Puerto Rico.

Up to three sister congregations from U.S. mainland churches-ideally hailing from different ABC regions-will be secured via an online registration form for each participating Puerto Rican congregation. Congregations will be matched primarily by congregation size (up to 100, between 101-200, and over 200). Go to [www.surveymonkey.com/r/ABCPRSisterChurch](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ABCPRSisterChurch) to express your church's interest in entering into a sister church relationship with a church in Puerto Rico.

The Sister Churches covenant begins: "Guided by the Holy Spirit and moved by the love of Christ, we journey in covenant with one another as American Baptist brothers and sisters. Given the needs and challenges experienced by our churches in Puerto Rico due to recent hurricanes, and the incredible strength they have expressed through faith in Christ, we endeavor to encourage each other as a denominational family." Go to <http://tinyurl.com/y9c6z52f> to read the entire covenant.

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE MINISTER . . .



Over the last year, I've had the opportunity to reflect on the past 16 years as I have served as the Executive Minister of the Mid-American Baptist Churches. We've had our ups and downs in the Region along the way, but I believe that God has walked with us through it all.

I want to thank you for your part in this common ministry we have had together. I have appreciated the sense of call and purpose that churches and individuals in the Region exhibit each day. I know that you will offer the same vision, support and assistance as a new Executive Minister begins her or his ministry in the coming months.

I also want to thank you for the generous retirement gift, but even more for the many notes and cards that you have sent over the recent months. It has been a humbling experience to read your supportive words.

I find it hard to say goodbye to good friends. So for now, until we meet again:

The Lord bless you and keep you;  
the Lord make his face to shine upon you,  
and be gracious to you;  
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you,  
and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24 – 26, NRSV)

In Christ's Peace,  
Marshall Peters



*Region President Coleen Remick presented a plaque of appreciation to Marshall Peters at the retirement celebration in April, and ministers from around the region participated in a prayer of blessing for Marshall and June.*

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH AS LEADERS

### Women in Ministry Summer Retreat

June 21 & 22: Fort Dodge, IA

Theme: "Bridges to the Future"

with Rev. Soozie Ford

All clergywomen of Minnesota and Iowa are invited to gather for fresh inspiration, fellowship, and study together.

Please register with Carol Teare at [carol@mid-abc.org](mailto:carol@mid-abc.org) by June 10 and she will send a schedule and followup details. Feel free to call her at 515-329-6433 if you have questions.

Registrations are required, but Friday lunch, books and materials are covered by a generous Palmer grant. A \$100 travel and hotel stipend will be sent to each woman attending, following the event.

Make hotel reservations at The Cobblestone Inn, 3751 5th Ave., Fort Dodge. (515) 302-8788. A block of rooms has been reserved under the name of Carol Teare until June 12.

Plan to stay for the Mid-American Baptist Women's Conference following on June 22-23!



### Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders

October 1-5, 2018

Minnetonka United Methodist Church  
Minnetonka, MN

Clergy and all persons in positions of church leadership are invited to this event. The focus will be learning skills that will equip participants to deal effectively with interpersonal, congregational, and other forms of church conflict.

NOTE: The deadline to register with a \$200 tuition discount is August 31, 2018.

For more information and to register, go to <http://tinyurl.com/ycg8ezuy> or to [www.Lmpeacecenter.org](http://www.Lmpeacecenter.org).

# BEHAVIOR YOU CAN EXPECT FROM YOUR PASTORAL LEADERS

*A series by the Reverend Dr. Joe Kutter, Interim Executive Minister of the Central Region.*

*Joe Kutter has served American Baptist churches in Michigan and Kansas. He is a past Executive Director of the American Baptist Ministers Council.*

Dear American Baptist Friend,

One of your pastor's primary roles is to provide a place within which all people can safely explore the deepest and most difficult realities of life. Whether it be the most sensitive relationships or the deep struggles of the solitary soul, the pastor is the one who promises to treat all conversation with honor and respect. The Code of Ethics says:

**I will hold in confidence and treat as confidential communication any information provided to me with the expectation of privacy. I will not disclose such information in private or public except when, in my practice of ministry, I am convinced that the sanctity of confidentiality is outweighed by my well-founded belief that life-threatening or substantial harm will be caused.**

This is where our Code of Ethics differs from the traditional confessional. There is one value that outweighs the sanctity of confidentiality, and that is the value of life itself. When life is at risk, then the pastor is obligated to protect the life.

This sometimes puts your pastor in difficult positions. When a person is talking about suicide or spousal abuse or a need for lethal revenge, your pastor is required to make a choice, weigh the content, and make a judgement about the seriousness of any threat to life that may be present. It can be a tough call, but it can sometimes, thank God not often, be a part of the pastoral vocation.

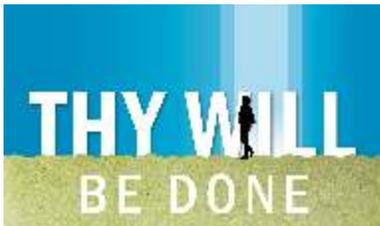
Other than in those extreme moments, which fortunately happen rarely, your pastor has promised to treat conversations with you as precious and sacred treasures that are to be protected at all costs.

The next item in our Code of Ethics reinforces your pastor's commitment to provide a safe place.

**I will not use my ministerial status, position, or authority knowingly to abuse, misjudge, negatively influence, manipulate, or take advantage of anyone, especially children.**

This should be a "No-Brainer" but too often it is not! The headlines of clergy abuse still burn our eyes and the stories cause our stomachs to roll. We know that status and authority can too often be misused in the service of self-aggrandizement, and sometimes worse than that, even by ordained ministers.

Here are some assumptions that undergird this ethical affirmation. For the pastor, as indeed for every Christian, the call to ministry is a call to serve rather than a mandate to rule or control. At the same time, there is genuine power in the role that ministers play in the life of the church and the lives of the people. To be invited to interpret the "Word of God" is an invitation to give voice to the power of scripture and the reality of God's power. To be the one who frequently prays for the ill and dedicates the children and speaks the final words over the dead is to be one who has been entrusted with enormous spiritual and emotional power. The power is real! And it is necessary. Your pastor has made a solemn promise to channel the power that has been entrusted into his or her care in ways that serve and empower others rather than seeking to use that power to manipulate others in the service of himself or herself.



## Space for Grace 2018: Thy Will Be Done

Building on the highly successful Los Angeles Space for Grace national gathering in 2015, American Baptist Home Mission Societies will sponsor Space for Grace 2018: "Thy Will Be Done," Nov. 14-16, 2018, in Philadelphia, featuring author and theologian Walter Brueggemann as keynote presenter.

Faith leaders, community service leaders, social justice advocates and others seeking God's leading for creating social transformation are invited to the national conference, which will span 2½ days at Loews Hotel in the heart of one of the top 10 largest cities in the United States.

In this urban setting, "Thy Will Be Done" will provide opportunities for refreshment and renewal, along with opportunities to connect with passionate speakers, workshop leaders and fellow participants, around critical issues facing Christians today—mission engagement, discipleship, and worship and church transformation—through discussion, sharing and hands-on participation. For updates and more information as it becomes available, visit [abhms.org](http://abhms.org) > Events > Space for Grace or call 800.222.3872, x2394.

# NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES

## In Our Thoughts and Prayers...

The **First Baptist Church of Waterloo, IA**, is planning a mission trip to Puerto Rico through the American Baptist Home Mission Societies on June 8-15, 2019. They invite others from throughout the Region to participate in this trip with them. Registration is \$150 for housing, food and registration for the week. Individuals are responsible for their airfare and ground transportation on the island. For further details and registration, contact Susan Price at [waterloofbc@yahoo.com](mailto:waterloofbc@yahoo.com).

Condolences to Rev. Jay Thorton, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Pella, IA, on the passing of his mother earlier this spring.

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family of Rev. Tyrone Henderson who passed away on March 11, 2018 at New Perspective Senior Living, Silvis, IL. He served churches in Corydon, Oskaloosa, and Burlington, IA.

Christian sympathy is also extended to the family of Rev. George J. Spencer who passed away on April 4, 2018. He served American Baptist Churches for 40 years as a pastor. He served Iowa churches in Mineral Point, Webb, and Audubon. He was also active in the ministry of Dayton Oaks Camp.

Friends and members of **First Baptist Church of Ames, IA**, are invited to join in this summer for a **150th Anniversary Celebration/Homecoming!** The weekend will feature a choir reunion, celebration dinner and program with catered meal, and Sunday morning worship with Rev. Soozie Whitten Ford.

Details are available on our website, [www.fbcames.org](http://www.fbcames.org). You can register online and pay for the meal online if you wish.

Congratulations to **Rev. Cindy Halvorson**, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Owatonna, MN. Cindy recently graduated with a Doctorate in Ministry in Biblical Preaching from Luther Seminary in St. Paul. A reception was held in her honor on May 12th to celebrate the event.



## MID-AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN'S SPRING RALLIES

The Iowa East Area of Mid-American Baptist Women held their spring rally at Forest Lake Camp. The participants, who brought many much-needed items for the summer camp season, enjoyed hearing missionary speakers Katherine and Wayne Niles who minister in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Niles also spoke at the Minnesota Area Rally at Woodbury Baptist Church, Woodbury, MN. Marcia Street and Rev. David Russell gave presentations about their recent mission experiences at the Iowa West Area Rally at Dayton Oaks Camp.



# MID-AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN'S MINISTRIES



AB Women's Ministries in Minnesota and Iowa held three Spring Rallies in April as we welcomed missionaries, Wayne & Katherine Niles from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. IA West held their rally at Dayton Oaks Camp and Forest Lake Camp was the site for the IA East rally with a combined attendance

of nearly 100 women & AB Girls. Both camps were showered with supplies donated by the women as they prepare for summer campers to arrive. Woodbury Baptist in Minnesota hosted the Niles, who were able to speak in the morning worship service and at the rally in the afternoon.

## Region AB Women's Summer Conference June 22-23, 2018 at FBC Fort Dodge, IA

All women and young girls are invited to attend the summer event featuring special guest speaker Rev. Soozie Whitten Ford along with our National Young Adult Women's Ministries Coordinator, Rev. Yana Pagan. There will be activities for AB Girls, Young Adult Women, and AB Women of all ages. Register for the conference at [www.mid-abc.org](http://www.mid-abc.org) or contact Debbie Foust at [foustdr@mchsi.com](mailto:foustdr@mchsi.com). All conference activities will be held at FBC Fort Dodge. There are blocks of rooms in three Ft. Dodge motels that have been reserved for the conference. All conference and motel information can be found on the region website.

Love Gift Totals as of April 2018  
YTD - \$4,115.81  
Last YTD - \$3,187.29

Susan Price  
Mid-America ABWM  
President

## National Women's Conference

July 19-22, 2018 at Judson University, Elgin, IL

**FEEL: Fully Exploring and Engaging in God's Love**

This event is for women of all ages. There will also be gathering opportunities for Young Adult Women (ages 18-30).

## National Gathering for Girls (concurrent with FEEL)

July 19-22, 2018 at Judson University, Elgin, IL

For girls who have completed 6<sup>th</sup> grade through seniors in high school.

Girls and women will join for worship and interactive experiences throughout the weekend as well as time together (just girls!) for fun, Bible study, and worship.

Register for both national events at [www.abwomensministries.org](http://www.abwomensministries.org).

## Region Project Money and Dues

Please send all dues and money collected for the region project to:

Linda Hammar  
5674 Summerland Drive  
Waterloo, IA 50701  
[l.hammar@mchsi.com](mailto:l.hammar@mchsi.com)  
515-408-1491

If you have any questions about AB Women's Ministries, please contact me at 319-215-5433 or email [waterloofbc@yahoo.com](mailto:waterloofbc@yahoo.com).



your generous gifts, many supplies have been replenished.

Your gifts included:

1106 kitchen trash bags, 700 paper plates, 553 gallon size storage bags, 200 wet Swiffer pads, 390 forever postage stamps, 196 AA batteries, 181 9x12 envelopes, 57 rolls of tp, 53 rolls of paper towels, 50 #10 envelopes, 45 foam cups, 40 postcard stamps, 30 sharpies, 10 9V batteries, 4 5-inch 3 ring binders, 4 stick lighters, 3 bars of soap, 2 cans of cleaner, 1 large jug of dish soap, 1 Wal-Mart gift card, and \$50. You helped us save almost \$1000 toward our supply budgets for 2018. We are grateful for your donations. Thank you!

Matt & Dani Siebert

## 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY BIBLE STUDY

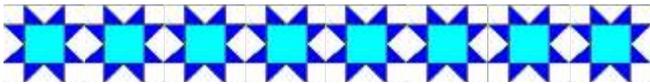
After a long day at work, school, and/or home, you may not want to travel to church for a Bible study. AB Women's Ministries' young adult women's ministries advisory team is hosting a live Bible study on Facebook for young adult women--you can attend this Bible study from the comfort of your sacred space!

You do not need a Facebook account to watch the Bible study. "Like" ABWM Young Adult Women's Facebook page to receive a notification when the Bible study begins.

June 18: 1 Samuel 2:1-11 (The Voice) hosted by Joy Andrews

July 16: Isaiah 11:9 hosted by Jami Robertson  
Go to [www.facebook.com/ABWMYAW](http://www.facebook.com/ABWMYAW).

The **COMMUNICATOR**



## QUILTERS' RETREAT

The twice-yearly Mid-American Baptist Quilters' Retreat is in its 6th year. During retreats, quilters gather to work on their own projects in a fun, relaxed atmosphere, surrounded by friends new and known. A feature of each retreat is a group project, which can be small - like potholders for the M-ABC camps or fidget quilts for Alzheimer patients; medium - quilts for children through Project Linus; or large - Quilts of Valor to honor veterans.

In early May, quilters met in Oelwein and worked on two Project Linus quilts, which featured novelty fabrics in the shape of jars. Once finished, they will be donated to an organization that supports children in health or other crisis situations.

Mark your calendar and plan to experience a quilting getaway November 1-3, 2018, at Dayton Oaks Camp.



## Save the date for the Region Youth Event 2018!

**November 2-4**  
**The Church on Northland,**  
**Cedar Rapids, IA**

**Speaker: American Baptist**  
**Missionary and**  
**Global Consultant,**  
**Kristy Engel**



**Worship band:**  
**Temple Veil**



**Look for**  
**registration**  
**details soon!**

### *THE COMMUNICATOR*

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