

# Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist

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## MWBC holds virtual annual meeting

ROCHESTER, Minn. — The Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention met virtually Oct. 23 for its 2020 annual meeting in what was a two-hour event rather than the convention's normal two-day gathering.

The decision to go virtual was made by the convention's executive board during their Sept. 18-19 meeting at Emmanuel Baptist Church in Rochester, Minn. Recognizing the risks of gathering due to the COVID-19 virus, board members considered various possibilities: continuing with plans for an in-person meeting, shortening the meeting, meeting in two or more satellite locations, or canceling the

event altogether.

In deciding to have only a virtual one-evening meeting with no business items, the executive board then took care of necessary annual business before adjourning.

As a result, the actual annual meeting was limited to video reports from SBC entities, Leo Endel's executive director's report, and the convention sermon delivered by MWBC President Chris Heng, pastor of Twin City Hmong Baptist Church in St. Paul, Minn.

The theme for the Friday evening online event was, "Where do we go from here?" and Endel answered that question in the



*"How's your church holding up?" asks Chris Heng as he begins the convention sermon during the virtual annual meeting of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention. Pastor of Twin City Hmong Baptist Church in St. Paul, Minn., Heng said his church is "holding up, doing all right, pretty well, all things considered, making it work." But there have been challenges, he said. "We rent space and have not been able to get back into our space so it has been a summer of backyard church," he said, "and because of snow, we're back online." On the positive side, the church still has a sense of community and a new family has even joined during this time. His message focused on churches dealing with disunity as current events and cultural changes cause differences of opinions among members of a congregation. He encouraged Christians to be peacemakers and set boundaries around their thinking. He also offered a practical checklist for keeping conversations civil and Christlike.*

## M-W WMU holds online meeting

ROCHESTER, Minn. — Meeting online because of coronavirus pandemic concerns, the Minnesota-Wisconsin Woman's Missionary Union elected officers and heard reports and words of encouragement.

Hebrews 10:39 was the theme of the Oct. 17 morning event, challenging the women with these words: "But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved" (NIV).

Re-elected were

President, Gwendolyn Sutton, Monumental Missionary Baptist Church, Milwaukee; and Vice President, Tia Underbakke, First Hmong Baptist Church, Coon Rapids, Minn. Elected as secretary was Ramona Griffith, Brown Deer (Wis) Baptist Church. Re-elected as members at large were Xee Yang, Good News Hmong Baptist Church, St. Louis Park, Minn., and Ann Kirchner, Hope Community Church, Racine, Wis.

Our vision is  
*more attainable than ever.*

2020 GOAL

**\$175**  
million

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## MEETING

*continued from page one*

final statement of his report: “We follow Jesus’ plan. We take the gospel to the ends of the earth.”

“God showed up,” Endel said. He was referring to a recent missions activity as well as what has gone on in MWBC churches in a year stifled by a pandemic and massive riots in two of its cities.

The missions activity was an unexpected truckload of food from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Farmers to Families program by way of the North American Mission Board. The food arrived in Rochester, Minn., in early October with just a few days’ notice. M-W Baptists rallied and, with the help of social media and local media, more than 1,200 boxes of food and 1,200 gallons of milk were distributed in six hours to area residents, including about 50 Somali refugee families.

In other activity this year across the two north-central states, Endel said, church planting is a year ahead of its ambitious projections, to 41 from a hopeful goal of 30; income is down just 9 percent from last year’s highest-ever offerings, helping to offset a \$118,700 loss from NAMB and LifeWay; disaster relief chaplains mobilized to comfort those affected by the riots, and more.

“There’s been ten-

sion in the churches over COVID, in how to meet and when to meet,” Endel told Baptist Press, acknowledging the assistance of LifeWay, which helped churches add online giving capability to their websites. “But as a rule, churches under 150 are

pretty nimble. These churches can turn on a dime and are highly relational. They find new ways to connect and adjust their ministries. Most will come through COVID stronger and more effective than ever before.”

The state convention’s executive board

2021 BUDGET	
ITEM	2021
<b>WORLD MISSIONS</b>	
COOP. PROGRAM (36%)	162,891
<b>WORLD MISSIONS TOTAL</b>	<b>162,891</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	
<i>Salaries and Benefits</i>	
EX DIR SALARY	58,900
EX DIR HOUSING	30,000
EX DIR TRAVEL	15,400
ADMIN SUPPORT SALARIES	31,300
ANNUITY PASTOR/STAFF	46,000
FICA/WORKERS COMP/INS	80,000
<i>Strategic Support</i>	
CONVENTION OPERATIONS	25,000
EXECUTIVE BOARD	6,500
OFFICE FACILITIES	30,000
COMPUTER RESOURCES	2,500
AUDIT/FINANCIAL SERVICES	5,500
STEWARDSHIP PROMO	1,000
FOUNDATION	3,000
<i>State Paper</i>	
EDITOR STIPEND	6,000
EDITOR TRAVEL	4,500
STATE PAPER	3,000
<i>Development</i>	
PASTORS & WIVES RETREAT	20,000
NEW PASTOR ORIENTATION	3,000
MIDWEST LEADERSHIP SUMMIT	2,500
PASTORS CONFERENCE	2,500
STATE OFFERING PROMO	2,000
<i>Student Work</i>	
STUDENT DIRECTOR, HOUSING	6,000
STUDENT WORK TRAVEL/PROGRAM	2,000
<i>Disaster Relief</i>	
DISASTER RELIEF, HOUSING	13,000*
<i>Multicultural Missions</i>	
INTERCULTURAL CATALYST, SAL	29,050
INTERCULTURAL CATALYST, HOUSING	18,600
INTERCULTURAL PROGRAM/TRAVEL	6,000
<b>ADMINISTRATION TOTAL</b>	<b>453,250</b>
<b>CHURCH LEADERSHIP</b>	
DIR SALARY	28,725
DIR HOUSING	50,000
DIR TRAVEL	12,500
LEADERSHIP PROGRAM	13,000
<b>CHURCH LEADERSHIP TOTAL</b>	<b>104,225</b>
<b>TOTAL MWBC BUDGET ITEMS</b>	<b>720,366</b>

NAMB COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT GRANT FUNDS	
CHURCH PLANTING EVANGELISM	10,000
(Hands of Hope)	
EXISTING CHURCH EVANGELISM	80,000
(Empower, grants, materials, etc.)	
CHURCH PLANTING DEVELOPMENT	10,000
(Leadership Development)	
<b>TOTAL NAMB GRANT FUNDS</b>	<b>100,000</b>
<b>STATE MISSIONS OFFERING CATEGORIES</b>	
DISASTER RELIEF	25%
URBAN MINISTRY	20%
CROSS-CULTURAL MISSIONS	15%
HANDS OF HOPE	10%
INTERNSHIPS	10%
CHILDREN’S EVANGELISM	5%
CALLED OUT YOUTH CAMP	5%
WMU	5%
PASTORAL EMERGENCIES	5%
<b>STATE MISSIONS OFFERING GOAL</b>	<b>74,000</b>
<b>COMBINED GRAND TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>894,366</b>
<b>SOURCES FOR 2021 BUDGET</b>	
MWBC CP	615,366
STATE MISSION OFFERING	74,000
NAMB	150,000
\$90,000 Evangelism Grants	
\$10,000 Church Planting Development	
\$50,000 Administrative Support	
INTEREST	40,000
MHD	15,000
<b>TOTAL BUDGET INCOME</b>	<b>894,366</b>

\*An additional \$27,000 (\$40K total) to be designated to housing allowance from support raised, if applicable.

NOTE: NAMB continues to fund church planting efforts in our convention, but those funds are no longer included in our Cooperative Budget Agreement. However, MWBC continues to be a part of the church planting process and administers funding to planters.

had authorized funds from reserves to assist churches with financial needs, but only \$22,500 was requested out of a possible \$100,000.

“Churches here are making it, responding to the needs around them and finding ways to stay connected,”

Endel continued. “They have gained social media expertise in leading small groups and Sunday morning services.”

The first-ever virtual annual meeting was a case in point, the executive director



# God is at work among us

So much has happened and changed in these last eight months! Our world and our ministries have been turned upside down, but the church is adjusting and continuing to maximize our effectiveness in fulfilling Jesus's vision for us. To be sure, there are challenges among our churches,



## Perspectives

Leo Endel

but I am encouraged by what I hear. God is at work among us!

As a convention we are waiting to see our State Missions Offering receipts to determine the final phases of our 2021 funding.

It's not too late to consider making a sacrificial gift to the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention State Missions Offering.

During our virtual annual meeting, which can still be viewed at [www.mwbc.org](http://www.mwbc.org), I gave an overview of our basic strategies and goals as a convention. You can see these in the accompanying graphic.

First, the MWBC will continue to serve our role in the Southern Baptist Convention. Along with our associations, we serve as the closest



link to the SBC churches in Minnesota and Wisconsin. We receive the churches' offerings, fund state missions, and forward offerings to the SBC Executive Committee for funding the national and international ministries of the SBC. We serve as your network connection and representative among the national entities. Currently, we have approximately 20,000 members in our 204 churches. It is our goal to see 25,000 members in 275 churches

by the year 2025.

Second, we serve alongside you to develop leaders within our two states. We offer few programs but extensive guidance in resource coaching, leadership development, peer learning groups, coaching, pastoral support, lay leadership training, stewardship, and interims and interns. Additionally, we help teach and facilitate classes for M-W leaders through Midwestern and Southeastern seminars. Our goal is to see at

least 750 M-W leaders per year involved in our leadership development processes.

Third, we serve alongside the North American Mission Board and our churches to plant churches through developing church planting pastors, sponsoring churches and church planting partners. Our goal to see 275 M-W churches by the year 2025 represents a growth of 5 percent each year,

See **WORK** page 6

## COVID fatigue

They call it COVID Fatigue. I think I have it.

I am tired of wearing a mask to enter a store. I like to see the smiles on people's faces. Or, are they smiling? Maybe they are frowning, or smirking. It's hard to read



## Reflections

Bill Tinsley

what people might be thinking behind those masks.

I am tired of distancing. I want to host friends and family in our home. I want to have all our kids home for Thanksgiving and Christmas. I want to attend church, to greet fellow believ-

ers with handshakes and hugs, to sing without restraint or restriction. Gathering is one of the important elements of our Christian faith.

I started a Bible study this summer with several men in our neighborhood, meeting outside on our back deck. They are all much younger than me. One is 27 and another is 31. We greet one another with fist-bumps. But with

snow this weekend and darkness settling in at 5 p.m. when we "fall back," I proposed that we take a winter break. As a diabetic in my 70s, I explained I was not comfortable meeting with a group of guys inside. They fully understood my concerns but suggested we continue meeting outside in the cold and dark. "We can bundle up,"

See **FATIGUE** page 7

### The Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist:

- The state paper and official publication of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.

- A Christian newsjournal with a focus on Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptists – their interests, churches, and partners.

- A digital only publication, the PDF emailed free to all who subscribe and posted on MWBC's website and Facebook page.

- Formatted for letter size paper for those who want to print a copy.

Leo Endel

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## Could CPE B 4 U?

The most impactful educational experience of my life is Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). CPE helps me understand myself and how I function as a pastor. CPE creates “aha” moments where I realize how I am gifted in a particular way and when my limitations call for collaboration with other ministry partners.

CPE is a structured learning experience that includes a clinical setting, weekly peer group meetings, meetings with a supervisor, and assignments to integrate reading and reflection into ministry practice. CPE is deliv-

ered in units of 400 hours that include 300 hours in a clinical setting and 100 hours in peer group meetings and preparation. Each unit has goals that expose the participant to a variety of experiences and build on learning from previous units.

CPE is also an expectation of employers hiring chaplains for hospitals, hospices, prisons, or corporate settings. Pastors looking for opportunities to support bivocational ministry will find ways to serve their communities that are consistent with their gifts and calling. Ministry in community settings give pastors fresh

perspective on challenges facing people outside and inside their ministry context.

Most larger hospitals and some seminaries offer CPE programs. CPE programs vary in their reputation, philosophy, theology, and perspective. Pastors need to carefully research various programs before making a commitment to participate to avoid potential misalignment with a program.

If you are a pastor who is looking for ways to grow personally and professionally, CPE may be for you. Feel free to contact Clint Calvert at [calvert@mwbc.org](mailto:calvert@mwbc.org) or (507) 254-0237 if you would like to have a conversation about CPE.

*Clint Calvert is church leadership catalyst for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.*



**Leadership**  
*Clint Calvert*

## Partnering with Missouri

I recently had the privilege of representing the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention at the Oct. 26-27 annual meeting of our partner, the Missouri Baptist Convention. We had a booth in the exhibit area at the St. Louis, Mo., Convention Center.



**Partnership and Prayer**  
*Steve Melvin*

As I handed out Minnesota apples and Wisconsin cheese to Missouri Baptists, here are some things I learned:

1. Many Missouri Baptists are interested in what is happening in the churches of our two states, what God is doing, how prayers are being answered, and how communities are being impacted with the gospel message.

2. Many Missouri Baptists have already been involved in mission trips in our area and are partnering with churches and individuals in prayer support.

3. Many Missouri Baptists are praying for our work, our churches, our pastors, our Christian witness in our settings, and the impact our churches are making.

4. Many Missouri Baptists are already asking about how to partner with a church in 2021. Some are looking to assist in Vacation Bible School; some are interested to work in building/remodeling/updating construction work; some are eager to help to build the church through community activities like block parties or community service.

5. Most Missouri Baptists like Regent apples and Colby Longhorn cheese.

As we look toward 2021, how can your church be connected in a mission partnership with our Missouri Baptist partners? How can a mission team from Missouri help supplement ministry in your setting? How can people in Minnesota and Wisconsin be touched with the gospel message with support from a Missouri church?

If your church is interested in partnering with a Missouri church, please contact me and I will help make a connection. It can be life changing for your congregation and your community.

This year has been challenging for all of us. Plans that were made were changed or did not materialize. Even in the uncertainty of our times, planning should be done for ongoing ministry.

*Steve Melvin is partnership and prayer catalyst for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.*

## Let's go to Thailand

The Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention is mobilizing a mission team to Thailand to serve alongside national partners and missionaries on the field July 9-23, 2021.

Some planned activities are Bible school for kids, community service projects, sports and music camps, and leadership training for pastors and church leaders.

This mission trip is

open to all individuals over the age of 17 and mature in faith. Language skills are not required.

The team will meet multiple times in person and online before the trip for training and team building, including interactions with our partners in Thailand.

Thailand is a country in Southeast Asia that is about the size of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa combined.



**Intercultural**  
*Na Herr*



It has a population of 69.43 million people, which is almost five times that of those three states combined. We will be serving in Nan, a remote agricultural province in the north.

The application deadline for the mission trip is Jan. 31, 2021 with a \$250 deposit. The total trip cost is \$2,500 including airfare, local travel, lodging, and

See **THAILAND** page 11



## Taking risks

Life is a series of risks taken . . . or not taken.

Recently a pastor who has done some



### Church Planting

**Joshua Whetstine**

pretty amazing things by taking some pretty big risks said to me, “I don’t understand why people don’t just say yes.” He was referring to a great opportunity for planters to really serve their community through free food distribution. We both spent a few moments recounting

the times we had just said “yes” and figured out the details later.

We recently had just that type of moment when I called our executive director about a wonderful outreach opportunity. This opportunity required a “yes” and lots of hard work, networking and prayer to make it happen.

At the end of that “yes” there were 1,200 boxes of food given away to families in need, a church and its members encouraged, collaboration with other churches in the area, a segment on the local news, and a great big story of how God uses our risk-taking to bring people to Himself.

Risk requires faith and courage, the faith and courage to believe God can do big things through hard work and faithfulness.

*Joshua Whetstine is church planting field director for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.*

## MEETING

*continued from page two*

said. Annual meetings usually draw about 150 participants but this year’s simulcast attracted around 350.

Necessary business usually handled during the annual meeting had been conducted earlier by the executive board in their September meeting. They approved an \$894,366 budget, down 14 percent from last year. Of the total, \$615,366 is coming from the convention’s

204 churches, and 36 percent of that is allocated for global SBC missions through the Cooperative Program – the same percentage as last year, pausing the convention’s efforts to rapidly move toward 50 percent. The percentage passed on to the SBC was 36 percent in 2020, 35 percent in 2019, 32 percent in 2018, 22 percent in 2017, 20 percent in 2016, and 17 percent in 2015.

Also at the earlier meeting all current officers were asked

to continue serving since, according to MWBC bylaws, only messengers to the annual meeting can elect new officers. They are: President, Christ Heng, pastor, Twin City Hmong Baptist Church, St. Paul, Minn.; First Vice President, Bob Stine, pastor, Midvale Baptist Church, Madison, Wis.; Second Vice President, Jonathon Woodyard, pastor, Northfield (Minn.) Community Church; Recording Secretary,

everyone and it especially benefits the Kingdom. Seminary education is one of those tools that

## Sharpening our tools

provides a lasting impact with a ripple effect beyond the student.



### Student Ministries

**Bob Smith**

In an effort to encourage development in this area, the Minnesota-Wisconsin

Baptist Convention makes seminary scholarship assistance available. Within the South-

ern Baptist family there are six seminaries, each one providing a wide range of options for study. If you know those who would benefit from this type of assistance, email Bob Smith at [BSmithMWBC@msn.com](mailto:BSmithMWBC@msn.com) or text him at (612) 940-3701 with questions concerning guidelines and application information.

*Bob Smith is student ministries catalyst for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.*

## God showed up!

On Friday, Oct. 16, I preached the memorial service for an old pastor friend, Quentin Grosshart. Quentin loved the early contemporary Christian music and had introduced me to Carmen’s song, “Lazarus,” so I



### First Person

**Leo Endel**

chose John 11 for the message, concentrating on the hope of the resurrection.

The title was, “God Showed Up!”

Since that day, I have been noticing that God keeps showing up. For example, God showed up the next week as Em-

manuel Baptist Church distributed 1,200 boxes of food to people in the community. Let me share how God showed up and made that happen.

Friday afternoon, as I left the memorial service in Springfield, Mo., I received a text from our North American Mission Board (NAMB) missionary, Joshua Whetstine asking me if I could receive a truckload of

See **SHOWED** page 9

Wes Shemwell, member, Midvale Baptist Church, Madison, Wis.; Assistant Recording Secretary, Jim Gress, member, Southtown Baptist Church, Bloomington, Minn. In other business at the earlier meeting, the executive board:

\* Approved the 2021 MWBC calendar.

\* Approved the nominating committee report.

\* Approved a Burress-Littleford Memorial Fund grant of \$7,500 to Richfield

(Minn.) Bible Church for renovation of their existing building.

\* Approved arrangements for the 2021 annual meeting, asking Ebenezer Baptist Church of Brooklyn Park, Minn., to host the event on Oct. 23-23, 2021. That church had been scheduled to host the 2020 event that was canceled because of the pandemic.

*Karen Willoughby of Baptist Press contributed to this report.*

**Back to the beginning**

# Good news from the associations

## BAY LAKES

In September Wilkie Richmond, pastor of Eagle Wings Fellowship, baptized Rick Spencer, a Native American leader from the Bad River Reservation.

## NORTHWOODS

Cornerstone Baptist Church, a five-year-old church plant in Thief River Falls, Minn., has recently seen God answer prayers for new families. As a result, they are starting a new Sunday School class for middle school students. They also have two new babies in the congregation and a third mother is expecting.

Restoration Church in Crookston, Minn., had their first public service Sept. 13. Pastor Steve Phillips says God has answered prayer by providing a meeting place on Sunday afternoons in another church's building, and by providing a schedule change in the pastor's job that allows more time for planning and preparation for the services.

Cross Pointe Church in Cambridge, Minn., is experiencing growth in their children's ministry and members are now praying for wisdom and God's guidance in providing more space.

## TWIN CITIES

Jacob Hatfield, pastor of Grace Bible Church in Monticello, Minn., reports that the church has had a



*Vertical Church plans to close in November on the purchase of this new meeting location, SteppingStone Theatre, 55 Victoria St. N, St. Paul, Minn. The church currently meets at Concordia University in St. Paul but hopes to move into their new location in December. Church Planter Christopher Asmus says, "We needed the asking price to be lowered by \$590,000, and God did it. Then we needed to raise \$200,000 dollars, and God did it. Then we needed to get loans and pass inspections and, to make a long story very short, God did it all."*

good start since its Aug. 16 launch, with attendance averaging 80-100. Three were baptized Sept. 6, four families have signed up for membership class, and small groups started in September. Northwest Bible Church in St. Michael, Minn., is the partnering church.

Ebenezer Community Church of Brooklyn Park, Minn., celebrated its 20th anniversary in September. They had hoped to dedicate their new building as part of the celebration, but complications due to the loan process and the coronavirus pandemic have delayed completion. The church is excited, however, that the loan was approved in May and construction began in August, raising hopes that the \$5.2 million project will be completed in 2021. Francis Tabla is pastor.

## LAKELAND

Don and Katherine Bennett are being sent from Ephesians Missionary Baptist Church to plant a new church in Racine, Wis.

Matt Jacobsen was installed at Immanuel Baptist Church in Racine, Wis., and has begun his ministry there as pastor.

Pastor Issa Safadi of Arabic Church of Milwaukee has been averaging more than 4,000 people watching their worship sermons on Facebook Live.

## WORK

*continued from page three*

a rate we are exceeding already, almost one year ahead of schedule!

Finally, we seek to have 1,750 MWBC church members participate in evangelism and missions efforts like disaster relief, Builders for Christ, Hands of Hope, Southeast Asia

## SOUTHERN WISCONSIN

Rock of Hope Church in Wisconsin Dells, Wis., celebrated three baptisms Aug. 30 in the Wisconsin River. Aaron Ramquist is pastor.

Rolling Hills Church in Platteville has broken ground on their first building and construction has begun. They plan to move in the first half of 2021.

Volunteers from various churches are signing up to help Rolling Hills

with construction of their new building in November. Projects and dates are roofing (Nov. 4-10), soffit and fascia (Nov. 13-19), and siding (Nov. 20-Dec. 4). To sign up or for more information, contact Pastor Matt Wunderlin at

[Wunderlins@gmail.com](mailto:Wunderlins@gmail.com) or (608) 331-7169.

A new partnership has started with Livingstone Baptist Church of Madison and Texas Baptists with the help of Fellowship Baptist Church in Morgan's Point Resort, Texas.



*Ben Seamans (left), co-director of Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention disaster relief, planned to bring this 55-gallon drum of hand sanitizer to SWBA's annual meeting Nov. 7 at the new building of Doxa Church in Madison. He promised to fill churches' one- or two-gallon containers on a first-come first-served basis. Seamans was also scheduled to speak at the meeting, sharing reports of the team's work in Louisiana and other places.*

Project (SEA), and missions work through our Woman's Missionary Union. Even now, many missions activities are being planned for 2021.

Be encouraged. Jesus said, "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have

overcome the world" (John 16:33). Indeed, the gospel prospers in the day of difficulty.

*Leo Endel is executive director of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.*

**Back to the beginning**

## FATIGUE

*continued from page three*

they said. So, we plan to continue gathering around the fire pit on my back deck for Bible study.

Our response to COVID has created some positives. The American Family Survey recently discovered that most marriages have actually strengthened under the stresses of the pandemic. 58% of those 18-55 reported they have grown to appreciate their spouse more. Men have become more involved with housework and childcare. Husbands and wives have spent more time together walking and talking. Those who reported their marriages were in trouble fell from 40% in 2019 to 29% in 2020.

Social distancing has forced us to strengthen our on-line connections for extended learning, work and family. Last Saturday my wife and I attended the wedding of my cousin's daughter online in Shreveport, La., while sitting in our home in Colorado.

But we are far from out of the woods with this disease. On Oct. 30 the U.S. reported the highest single day of new cases since the pandemic started – more than 99,000.

For now, we must remain perseverant and patient. For the sake of our friends, family and others we must continue to wear

masks and practice social distancing while encouraging and praying for one another.

As Paul wrote, "We celebrate in hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also celebrate

in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has

been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Rom. 5:2-4).

*Bill Tinsley is a former executive director of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention. Appear-*

*ing in various local newspapers around the country, his column "reflects" on current events and life experiences from a faith perspective.*

**Back to the beginning**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MWBC events are in bold print.

BLBA: Bay Lakes Baptist Association

SWBA: Southern Wisconsin Baptist Association

LBA: Lakeland Baptist Association

NBA: Northwoods Baptist Association

SMBA: Southern Minnesota Baptist Association

TCMBA: Twin Cities Metro Baptist Association

To have your events included, email them to [davidwilliams@compuserve.com](mailto:davidwilliams@compuserve.com).

### NOVEMBER

26-27 Thanksgiving Holiday - **MWBC Office Closed**

29-12/6 Week of Prayer and Mission Study for International Missions/Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

### DECEMBER

24-1/1 Christmas/New Year's Holiday - **MWBC Office Closed**

### JANUARY

1 New Year's Holiday – **MWBC Office Closed**

### FEBRUARY

4-6 Pastors and Wives Retreat, TBD

### MARCH

7-14 Week of Prayer and Mission Study for North American Missions/Annie Armstrong Easter Offering

12-13 Empower Conference – TBD

### APRIL

2 Good Friday – **MWBC Office Closed**

16-17 MWBC Executive Board Meeting, Rochester, Minn.

30 MWBC Lottie Moon Offering Cutoff

### MAY

21 New Pastor Orientation – Rochester, Minn.

22 IMB SE Asia Summit

31 Memorial Day Observed – **MWBC Office Closed**

### JUNE

13-16 Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tenn.

? Hands of Hope - TBD

30 MWBC Annie Armstrong Offering Cutoff

### JULY

5 Independence Day Holiday Observance – **MWBC Office Closed**

9-23 SEA Harvest Mission Trip

### AUGUST

### SEPTEMBER

1-30 Season of Prayer for State Missions

6 Labor Day – **MWBC Office Closed**

17-18 MWBC Executive Board, Rochester, Minn.

### OCTOBER

15-17 Called Out Youth Conference, Baraboo Wis.

21 Annual Church Planter Forum – TBD

22 Pastors Conference – TBD

22-23 MWBC Annual Meeting, Ebenezer Baptist Church, Brooklyn Park, Minn.

### NOVEMBER

25/26 Thanksgiving Holiday – **MWBC Office Closed**

28-12/4 Week of Prayer and Mission Study for International Missions/Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

### DECEMBER

24-1/1 Christmas/New Year's Holiday - **MWBC Office Closed**



# Serving others

Serving others in their time of need during a crisis is one of the greatest ministries we can participate in.

Our yellow hats are off to our

Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention disaster relief teams that served in DeRidder, La., following Hurricanes Laura and Delta. Ed Olson once again led a team in this mission. CJ and Barabara Langton pulled a triple duty serving with the shower/laundry unit, then subbing in for feeding and then coming back for a second tour with the shower/laundry



**Disaster Relief**  
**Ben Seamans**

unit. What a blessing it is to have such as these as the backbone of our

leaders.

Please be in prayer for these and other areas that have a long road of recovery ahead.

Disaster relief

volunteers in Louisiana saw close to 300 professions of faith and numerous people returning to faith.

During this callout, we received 55 gallon drums of hand sanitizer to distribute to those in need. Half of these went to our churches and the other went to food pantries and clinics all over the state. We are waiting to receive more, easier

to distribute containers in the near future. This is a great opportunity for churches to appropriate this needed product and distribute to their members and communities.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief is stretching beyond the normal services to minister in new ways during this COVID crisis. Please keep us in prayer for these journeys.

*Ben Seamans is co-director of disaster relief for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.*



*C. J. (below) and Barbara Langton (above) handle the shower and laundry unit at the disaster relief command center set up at First Baptist, DeRidder, La., during September and October. They were among the volunteers from Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention who traveled south to help those in an area that was battered by half a dozen hurricanes this season. Volunteers also included a chain saw team.*



*Disaster relief volunteers clear a fallen tree in DeRidder, La., hard hit by hurricanes this year.*

## Knitting the World

Meet Cindy Yang, a Hmong refugee who became president of Minnesota/Wisconsin WMU.

Cindy Yang would tell you that God moves in ways we would never expect to deliver us to the chosen place of service. When she was a very young child, Cindy and her family escaped from Vietnam by crossing the Mekong River to Thailand after the war. They eventually made it to Pennsylvania when she was four. Two years later, her family went to join the rest of the Yang clan in Minnesota. It was there God used a van to bring her family to a small Baptist church, where she heard the gospel and many in her family were saved. But it took years for Cindy's personal faith to become real. She grew up, married a nonbeliever, and lived for herself, raising children and doing what she wanted. Her mother, along with others, kept inviting her to church activities, and she kept saying no. She knew she needed to be serious about her faith, but she wanted her husband to make the first move. That kept her fossilized in her inactive, baby faith.

**No More "No"**  
But over time, Cindy grew tired of saying no. The emptiness of her life gnawed at her. Finally, she accepted an invitation to attend a WMU retreat, and that's when God pulled

back the curtains and showed her what she had been missing and what she could be. She couldn't escape this thought—"No more waiting for your husband. Do what you know you are supposed to do." So she recommitted her life to the Lord at that retreat and has never looked back. On the day after that retreat—Mother's Day—Cindy's husband



*Cindy Yang (center) with her husband and three of their four children. The couple also have another son, who is married and has two children.*

*Cindy Yang, past president of Minnesota-Wisconsin Woman's Missionary Union, is featured in a four-page article in the September issue of Missions Mosaic, published by the national Woman's Missionary Union.*



# New books released by local leaders

Rochester, Minn. – Two Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist leaders – the state convention executive director and a pastor – have recently released new books on topics of interest.

Both books are available through Amazon.com.

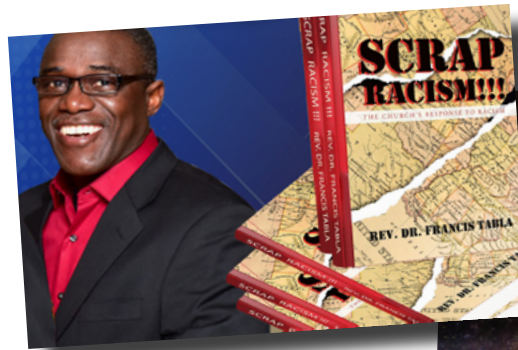
Leo Endel, executive director of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention, has released a new book that he says took him his whole life to write: “Life Is All About Relationships.”

“I am now old enough to look back on much of my life and discover that the lessons of life come gradually,” Endel says.

“Here is what I have learned. Our greatest longing is for physical, emotional, and spiritual intimacy. From creation we were wired for relationships; relationships are in our DNA. We can find this in God, we find this in our family, we can find this in God’s family, and we find this in humanity, all of life is really about relationships.”

Endel says that Scripture teaches that the things we desperately want – peace, joy and fulfillment – are found through right relationships with God and with each other.

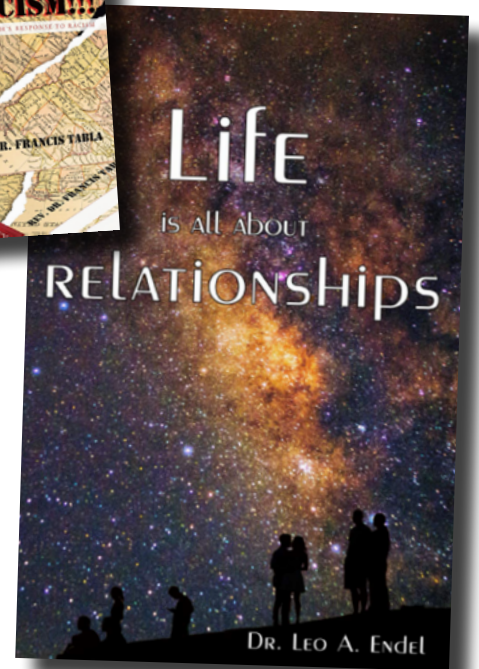
“Jesus summarized



our purpose by telling us to love God and love people,” Endel said. “Simply put, life is all about relationships! God has hardwired us to find life’s greatest joy and peace in relationships.”

Chapter titles show

See **BOOKS** page 10



## SHOWED

*continued from page five*

food the next Tuesday and give it away in Rochester, Minn. Rusty Gunn, NAMB missionary in Oklahoma, had contacted Joshua looking a place to distribute the food, provided through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Farmers to Families program. Joshua said God put Emmanuel Baptist Church in his mind and he couldn’t even think of another place at the time. So he texted me.

When I received his text, I was exhausted, having just completed a series of meetings where I had spoken six times in six days. I was ready to pick up my wife in St. Louis, drive home to Rochester, preach Sunday and then collapse. Everything in me wanted to pass the opportunity

on to someone else, but there was too little time to expect one of our churches to pick up the load.

Wrestling with the challenge and the opportunity, I sensed God was putting this together, but I was already worried that we couldn’t pull it off this quickly. Honestly, I was right; we couldn’t, but God could, and He showed up.

I shared the plan that Sunday morning with the people of Emmanuel and told them I believed God had given us this seemingly impossible, last-minute opportunity to “Love Rochester well.” The congregation was excited and supportive. That gave me the encouragement I needed. The people of Emmanuel were ready to go.

Sunday afternoon and Monday morning, I contacted potential partners to see if they

were able and willing to help. Almost all of them fell through because of such short notice, but the couple that could respond quickly were all we needed. An old friend, Wendell Amstutz, whom I had met 25 years ago, was leading the final days of “Spirit Days” here in Rochester and already had great connections with Rochester churches and the media. He got on the phone and made some calls. Within hours the word was getting out. God showed up.

On Tuesday, the day of the event, I woke up at 4:30 a.m. concerned about the truck arriving in the snow and our ability to give all the food away. I did my best to pray through the anxiety. At 7:26 a.m. I received a text message from one of our church members, Xenia LaBaw, “Leo, I was moved about 4:30

a.m. this morning to go into strong intercessory prayer for you today. It was such a powerful move of the Spirit, I can only assume there was a need. I pray that you are well and that the Lord will cover you today as you distribute food to those in need.” In my mind I heard, “God showed up.”

The truck arrived early because the driver was concerned about the snowstorm. God showed up.

Our volunteers started arriving three hours early to prepare for the distribution. God showed up.

Earlier than announced, people started flooding into the parking lot. God showed up.

Donny Mickow secured the equipment necessary to move the massive pallets of food. Steve Melvin designed the logistics for traffic

and loading. Jonathan Lemaster went to work on social media getting the word out. Sarah Lemaster, Sarah Mickow and Na Herr took over guiding the traffic. Sarah Endel started connecting with organizations and schools that might be able to connect us with families that could use the food. At least 30 of us loaded boxes into cars and carted away the trash. Emmanuel kids and youth served by holding signs and loading boxes. God was showing up through His people.

In the cold and in the snow we shared warm greetings and boxes of fresh food to people created in the image of God. God showed up!

God often calls us to do the seemingly impossible. When He does, He shows up.

**Back to the beginning**

# Mission Gifts from the Churches

## MINNESOTA WISCONSIN BAPTIST CONVENTION COOPERATIVE PROGRAM GIVING

January - October 2020

2020 CP Budget	\$491,666.67
2020 CP Receipts	\$530,694.43
OVER Budget YTD	\$39,027.74

### NAME

### CP

#### BAY LAKES BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Amherst, Amherst Bible	\$500.00
Appleton, Fox Valley Hmong Baptist	\$180.00
Appleton, Hmong Baptist Mission	\$338.45
Appleton, Valley	\$46,112.47
Black Creek, Community Bible	\$6,354.00
Clintonville, First Baptist	\$1,796.40
Green Bay, Bethel	\$583.32
Green Bay, Graceway Fellowship	\$6,477.64
Green Bay, Highland Crest Baptist	\$48,230.06
Manitowoc, New Beginnings	\$387.73
Neenah, Living Vine	\$425.57
Sheboygan, Mapledale Baptist	\$2,989.51
Stevens Point, Tapestry	\$500.00
Tilleda, Bethany Baptist	\$1,755.50
Waupaca, Fellowship Baptist	\$2,338.96
<b>BLBA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$118,969.61</b>

#### SOUTHERN WI BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Boscobel, Blue River Valley	\$1,094.60
Ft. Atkinson, Casa de Oracion	\$45.00
Janesville, Resonate	\$2,713.72
La Crosse, New Hope	\$100.00
Madison, Campus Community	\$1,650.00
Madison, City on a Hill	\$3,500.00
Madison, Doxa	\$24,033.84
Madison, East Madison Baptist	\$6,529.00
Madison, Hope In Christ Assembly	\$2,122.14
Madison, Livingstone Baptist	\$1,932.73
Madison, Midvale Baptist	\$12,037.21
Madison, Red Village	\$10,000.00
Madison, Sovereign Joy Baptist	\$3,505.08
Platteville, Rolling Hills	\$3,337.18
Portage, River of Life	\$2,139.87
Reedsburg, Trinity Baptist	\$14,375.00
Sparta, Gospel Baptist	\$3,997.33
Sun Prairie, United Hmong	\$3,289.68
Waterloo, Centro Biblico La Roca	\$180.00
Waterloo, Cornerstone	\$600.00
WI Dells, Rock of Hope	\$2,000.00
WI Rapids, Church at Wazeecha	\$2,972.50
WI Rapids, First Baptist	\$500.00
<b>SWBA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$102,654.88</b>

## BOOKS

*continued from page nine*

Endel's intention to demonstrate how relationships cover the whole spectrum of life, including marriage, family, friendships, education, leadership, personal

growth, the church, heaven, and many other topics.

"Stop Racism" by Francis Tabla, pastor of Ebenezer Community Church in Brooklyn Park, Minn., discusses the pivotal role of the church in resolving the

#### LAKELAND BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Bassett, Westosha Baptist	\$1,682.00
Brown Deer, Brown Deer Baptist	\$600.00
Kenosha, Fellowship Baptist	\$16,519.21
Kenosha, Missio Dei Fellowship	\$8,301.00
Kenosha, Parkside Baptist	\$5,909.35
Mequon, Westlake	\$550.00
Milwaukee, Ephesians Baptist	\$3,300.00
Milwaukee, Grace Point Community	\$432.34
Milwaukee, Hmong First Baptist	\$150.00
Milwaukee, Korean Baptist	\$900.00
Milwaukee, Layton Avenue Baptist	\$14,550.36
Milwaukee, Mercy Memorial	\$900.00
Milwaukee, Milwaukee Arabic	\$278.81
Milwaukee, Monumental Baptist	\$824.00
Milwaukee, Mt Horeb Baptist	\$250.00
Milwaukee, Mt Pilgrim	\$900.00
Mount Pleasant, Immanuel	\$8,777.41
Pewaukee, Crossroads	\$3,220.94
Pleasant Prairie, Pleasant Prairie	\$7,942.00
Racine, Hope Community	\$3,714.37
Wauwatosa, Redemption	\$2,000.00
<b>LBA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$81,701.79</b>

#### SOUTHERN MN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Austin, Austin Baptist	\$1,910.00
Austin, Primera Iglesia Bautista	\$2,096.72
Chester, Chester Woods	\$1,967.20
Eyota, Hmong Baptist	\$1,319.62
Mankato, Hope Baptist	\$1,459.20
Marshall, Radiant Life	\$2,574.31
Red Wing, Hiawatha Valley Baptist	\$1,500.00
Rochester, Emmanuel Baptist	\$13,914.91
Rochester, Joyful Hope Baptist	\$120.00
Rochester, Redemption City	\$16,661.46
Sartell, Park Fellowship	\$4,225.64
Viola, Viola Bible	\$3,174.06
Willmar, Grace Baptist	\$75.00
Winona, Cornerstone Community	\$3,303.89
<b>SMNBA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$54,302.01</b>

racial divide in the U.S.

"My book is about the racial tension in America," Tabla says, noting that the issue is a hot topic in the news today "and has escalated to ignominious proportions that threaten the civility of the nation."

Tabla points out that he brings a unique perspective to the situation as both "an outsider (African immigrant) and an insider (an African immigrant who has lived in America for over two

decades)." He planted Ebenezer Community Church 20 years ago to reach Liberian immigrants for Christ.

The book demonstrates evidence of racism in various areas of American life including "church, banking, court, education, justice, medical, police, work places, etc., just to name a few," but offers hope and a clear direction forward as the church takes responsibility for leading the nation in finding a

positive resolution.

The title summarizes the solution offered by the book: scrap racism. To "scrap" something is to abandon or get rid of it because it isn't worth keeping, and that is what Tabla says we need to do with racism, which he defines as "prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism" against anyone on the basis of his or her ethnic background.

**Back to the beginning**



# Mission Gifts from the Churches

## TWIN CITIES METRO BAPTIST ASSN.

Amery, Journey	\$8,750.00
Bloomington, MN Kangnam Korea	\$1,100.00
Bloomington, Southtown Baptist	\$24,265.29
Bloomington, True Light Chinese	\$200.00
Brooklyn Park, Ebenezer Community	\$1,800.00
Brooklyn Park, North Center Baptist	\$6,849.03
Burnsville, Berean Baptist	\$2,000.00
Coon Rapids, First Hmong Baptist	\$1,250.00
Maple Grove, Northwood Community	\$1,666.70
Maple Grove, Unlock	\$4,278.62
Minneapolis, All Peoples	\$5,400.00
Minneapolis, Gracepoint Minneapolis	\$1,000.00
Minneapolis, Hope of Nations Fellowship	\$548.46
Minneapolis, Hope of Nations Gospel	\$207.54
Minneapolis, New Hope Baptist	\$200.00
Minneapolis, Shalom Community	\$1,097.21
Minnetonka, Zion House of Prayer	\$250.00
Monticello, First Baptist	\$500.06
Monticello, Grace Bible Church	\$1,800.00
New Prague, Calvary	\$21,151.51
Oakdale, Eternal Life Hmong	\$1,680.00
Ramsey, Bethlehem Worship	\$325.00
Richfield, Richfield Bible	\$600.00
Roseville, Roseville Baptist	\$9,000.00
St. Louis Park, First Ukrainian	\$250.00
St. Paul, Cities Church	\$5,000.00
St. Paul, Followers Of Christ Hmong	\$5,290.52
St. Paul, Iglesia Hispana Betel	\$1,050.00
St. Paul, Living Water Baptist	\$54.00
St. Paul, Salt City Church	\$16,950.00
St. Paul, Twin City Hmong	\$1,925.00
St. Paul, Vertical Church	\$5,000.00
Sunfish Lake, Bethel Baptist	\$5,400.00
Sunfish Lake, Vietnamese Baptist	\$480.00
<b>TCMBA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$137,318.94</b>

## NORTHWOODS BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Bemidji, Ridgewood Baptist	\$794.20
Cambridge, Cross Pointe	\$2,500.00
Crookston, Prairie Community	\$5,047.86
Ely, Berean Baptist	\$420.00
Grand Rapids, Calvary Pines	\$2,388.36
Hill City, Hill City Baptist	\$650.00
Pequot Lakes, Eagles Nest	\$5,109.23
Rice Lake, Hope Baptist	\$3,820.00
Roseau, Immanuel Baptist	\$2,130.12
Thief River Falls, Cornerstone	\$1,438.98
Wadena, Grace Connection	\$520.00
<b>NWBA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$24,818.75</b>

## OTHER

Eau Claire, Jacob's Well	\$8,500.00
Eau Claire, One in Christ	\$2,428.45
<b>OTHER TOTAL</b>	<b>\$10,928.45</b>

## MWBC TOTAL RECEIVED

**\$530,694.43**

NOTE: No giving received by MWBC-affiliated churches not listed above during stated giving periods

## THAILAND

*continued from page four*

meals. To apply, go to [www.mwbc.org/sea-harvest](http://www.mwbc.org/sea-harvest).

If you are unable to go on this mission trip but would still like to explore missions opportunities in Southeast

Asia, please mark your calendars for May 22, 2021. The International Mission Board will be hosting the Southeast Asia Summit at Southtown Baptist Church in Bloomington, Minn. The event was originally scheduled for this year

but postponed due to COVID-19. Registration information will be posted later.

*Na Herr is intercultural catalyst/team facilitator for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.*

**Back to the beginning**

A Great *Multitude* + You  
Rev 7:9

2020 GOAL

**\$175**  
million

[imb.org/lmco](http://imb.org/lmco)

**imb**

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*million*

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