

# Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist

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## Pastors and wives retreat rescheduled

ROCHESTER, Minn. — The Pastors and Wives Retreat has been rescheduled and a special gift is making the event free for all pastoral staff.

Originally set in February with lodging and meals provided for only one pastor from each church, the retreat is

now scheduled Thursday, Mar. 31 through Saturday, Apr. 2, and all pastoral staff can attend without cost. The location remains Green Lake (Wis.) Conference Center. The event begins with Thursday dinner and ends with Saturday breakfast.

The retreat date was moved “out of an abundance of caution” related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is projected to peak around the first of February and then have a steep decline, said Julie Sundeen, executive/financial assistant of the Minne-

sota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.

Although earlier emails had indicated only one pastor per church could attend free and others would need to pay a reduced rate, by the time the date was changed, Sundeen said, “MWBC received an unexpected donation that will allow us to open March’s retreat free to all pastoral staff.”

Updated registration information will be emailed in mid-February. Those who have already paid for a reservation need to get a refund through Eventbrite and re-register when the new information is received.

“Our desire is that this retreat would be a time of relaxation, renew-

See **RETREAT** page 2



Four pastors from Wisconsin graduated with their doctor of ministry degrees Dec. 10 from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. The Wisconsin Pastors Cohort resulted from the initiative of Dr. Charles Harvey, then director of SEBTS's DMin program, and Dr. Tate Cockrell, the current director of SEBTS's DMin program. Harvey and Cockrell proposed and supported a partnership with the MWBC that started in 2018 and continued to 2021 to provide ministry training in Wisconsin to benefit MWBC pastors. Graduates included Aaron Ramquist, pastor of Rock of Hope Church, Wisconsin Dells, Wis.; Aaron Sturgill, pastor of Cornerstone Church, Waterloo, Wis.; Lenard Tavernelli, pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church, Kenosha, Wis.; and Joe Thomas, teacher and pulpit supply at Cornerstone Church in Waterloo.

## Handmade ornaments support missions

COON RAPIDS, Minn. (BP) — No price tag seemed appropriate. Should First Hmong Baptist Church sell its colorful handmade Christmas ornaments to support international missions?

“It felt like it was made to be given away, like Jesus,” First Hmong Woman’s Mission Union co-leader Cindy Vang told Baptist Press.

“Jesus was [begotten] to be given away.”

Tia Underbakke, who works alongside Cindy and is also First Minnesota-Wisconsin WMU vice president, agrees.

“We were saying this many for this much, and it just didn’t feel right,” Underbakke said. “They were meant to be given away.”

See **ORNAMENTS** page 11



Members of the Woman’s Missionary Union of First Hmong Baptist Church in Coon Rapids, Minn., include, from left, Tia Underbakke, Angel Vang, Elee Vang, Dee Thao and Cindy Vang.



# MWBC speakers featured at Bethlehem conference

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — Two leaders in the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention will be among speakers at this year's pastors conference conducted by Bethlehem College and Seminary.

Breakout sessions on preaching will be led by both Jonathan Parnell, pastor at Cities Church in St. Paul, Minn., and SEND City missionary for the Twin Cities, and by Jonathon Woodyard, a member of Northfield (Minn.) Community Church and current first vice-president of MWBC.

"Serious Joy: Gravity and Gladness in a Groaning World" will be the theme of the 34th annual pastors conference offered by

the school located adjacent to Bethlehem Baptist Church where John Piper is pastor emeritus after serving as pastor from 1980 to 2013. The Feb. 7-9 event will take place at the Hilton Minneapolis, focuses on pastors, is limited to 1,200 attendees and will not be livestreamed but in person only.

Featured plenary speakers include Piper, who is now chancellor of the college and seminary as well as founder and lead teacher of Desiring God ministry; Mark Dever, senior pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C.; Steven Lee, pastor of preaching and vision of Bethlehem Baptist



"See, Savor Say: Preparing Sermons as a Christian Hedonist," is Jonathon Woodyard's topic at Bethlehem College and Seminary's pastors conference. Woodyard is the school's dean of admissions and assistant professor of theology and history. A member of Northfield (Minn.) Community Church, he serves as first vice president of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.



Pastor of Cities Church in St. Paul, Minn., and SEND Cities missionary for the Twin Cities, Jonathan Parnell will lead a breakout session on "Preaching as Worship and Preaching in Worship" at Bethlehem College and Seminary's 34th annual pastors conference. Theme of the event is "Serious Joy: Gravity and Gladness in a Groaning World." The Feb. 7-9 event will take place at the Hilton Minneapolis.

Church's north campus; Joe Rigney, president of the seminary; and Kenny Stokes, who oversees the church planting concentration at the seminary in addition to serving as pastor

of church planting for Bethlehem Baptist Church.

For more information and to register, click this link: <https://bcsmn.edu/conference-2022/>

## RETREAT

*continued from page one*

al, and fellowship for many," Sundeen said. "MWBC and Green Lake have prayed and planned for this to be our focus and we believe these new dates will add depth to that commitment."

The retreat is designed for fellowship, renewal and growth. The schedule is light. Dress is casual. Childcare is not provided. Infants less than six months or still nursing are welcome. However, since this is a 'get-away' weekend for all, attendees need to find alternative care for other children.

Friday afternoon is free time for exploring the conference center grounds (bring skis, snowshoes, hiking boots), shopping in one of the many small towns in the area, fellowship with other couples around a game board, or taking a nap.

**Back to the beginning**

# EMPOWER

**March 11-12, 2022**  
**Southtown Baptist Church**  
**Bloomington, MN**

Register at [www.mwbc.org/empower/](http://www.mwbc.org/empower/)

## Let Your Light Shine



**Mark Clifton**  
**Sr. Director Replanting and Rural Strategy NAMB**



## EQUIP

### KIDS MINISTRY CONFERENCE

**March 11-12, 2022**  
 Southtown Baptist Church - Bloomington, MN

Keynote Speaker  
 Chuck Peters  
 Director of Lifeway Kids



This conference is designed for those who lead, teach and work in all areas of ministry to children. It is based on Ephesians 4:12 "Equipping the saints for the work of ministry to build up the body of Christ." It will be a time for encouragement, equipping, community and fun. Make your plans to bring your children's ministry team.

This will be held in conjunction with the MWBC Empower Conference and is free.  
 Let us know you are planning to attend on our Facebook page - MWBC KidMin Community

Register at [www.mwbc.org/equip/](http://www.mwbc.org/equip/)

# What if Southern Baptists ceased to exist?

More and more, I'm hearing people talk about the slow death of the Southern Baptist Convention. Some are even saying last year's presidential election shows a three-way separation between Traditional Baptists, Reformed Baptists, and so-called Moderate



## Perspectives

Leo Endel

Baptists.

I pray these folks are wrong. Without any

inkling of pride, God has used Southern Baptists to touch the world with the gospel. Two months ago, we were told that South-

ern Baptists have given over \$5 billion to the cause of international missions! That's amazing! I often run into people from all over the world who say they came to Christ through the efforts of Southern Baptist missionaries. Somehow, God has

been honored to use a simple and sinful people called Southern Baptists.

But God doesn't need Southern Baptists; He has used us because we have consistently prioritized a commitment to the gospel and the Great Commission. As independent and autonomous churches, we have often set aside our lessor priorities to together proclaim the gospel here in North America and to the world.

Today the cooperative nature of the SBC is threatened every day by real and exaggerated issues. We must always "contend for the faith"

but we must also be careful not to "give the devil a foothold" and "bite and devour one another" and thus be "consumed by one another" (Galatians 5:15). There are always differences in a denominational family as large as ours. Issues do arise that must be worked through. Errors can arise that must be corrected. But unscrupulous blogs can exaggerate and mislead many. The ferocity of their charges draws attention that increases their power. Some of these voices seek not to correct and reconcile but instead, seek to demonize and destroy.

Over the years, I've

seen Southern Baptists make mistakes. In every case, when the facts came in and things were sorted through, Southern Baptists acknowledged their error and got back on the right track. It's often a slow process due to the complications of our polity, but there is a commitment to ultimately getting it right.

However, in this day of digital blogs and media, disingenuous or exaggerated attacks can prove to be devastating and destructive. Such innuendo can undermine the trust necessary for a voluntary association of

See **SBC** 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**  
Executive Director  
endel@mwbc.org  
519 16th St. SE  
Rochester, MN  
55904

**David Williams**  
Editor  
davidwilliams@compuserve.com  
P.O. Box 628  
Liberty, TX 77575

## Believe it or not

“Believe” is an interesting word. Sometimes we use it

to indicate doubt. If we are not entirely certain of something, we will say, “I believe so.” For instance, if someone asks, “Are your friends joining us for dinner?” We will say, “I believe so.” Meaning, I think they are, but I am not quite sure.

Sometimes we use “believe” to indicate our agreement. If you point to an airplane and ask, “Do you believe this is an airplane?”

I might say, “Yes, I believe that is an airplane.”



## Reflections

Bill Tinsley

At other times we use the word “believe” to indicate our confidence in someone. We could also use this term with respect to

the pilot of the airplane. We could believe in him, meaning we have confidence he can fly the airplane.

The word translated “believe” in the Bible actually means “faith.” We don't have a verb form of “faith” in our language. We cannot say, “I faith you.” We

are left with our word “believe.” In this case, if we believe in the airplane and the pilot in the Bible's sense of having faith, we must climb aboard the airplane, follow instructions and actually fly away. We trust both the airplane and the pilot to take us aloft thousands of feet in the air.

The “faith” meaning of the word changes how we understand key passages in the Bible. For instance, when Jesus says, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me shall never die,” He is actually saying, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who puts his trust and absolute faith in me shall never die.”

There are many who “believe” in Christ and “believe” they are Christians. They use the term like the first example. They are not quite sure, but they think it might be true, or hope it is.

Then there are others who “believe” according to the second definition. They give mental assent believing that Jesus is the Son of God, but it doesn't make much difference in their lives.

Still others fall into the third category. They believe in Jesus in the sense that they have confidence in who he claims to be. They think He is a good per-

See **BELIEVE** page 4



# SBC Executive Committee Update

*Guy Fredrick – who serves as bi-vocational pastor of Mapledale Baptist Church in Sheboygan, Wis., and associational mission strategist for Bay Lakes Baptist Association – is a member of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention. He offers the following as an update of EC's progress on their assignment to look into sexual improprieties.*



## Guest Column Guy Fredrick

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention is currently in a holding pattern with lawyers sifting through documents, conversations, emails, and other related materials in the Guidepost Review of EC practices due to the Gaines Motion (to investigate sexual improprieties and actions) made on the floor of the convention in Nashville

last June.

The EC has retained another law firm to help with efficient processing of required documents and communications.

The EC as a convention committee stands in a gray area of legal coverage at present due to the insistence that the EC set aside lawyer-client privilege. Of the several effects of removal of lawyer-client privilege, the largest to date is the resignation of multiple EC members and staff, mostly due to conflict of interest with the professional careers of certain EC members and staff who cannot ask for legal advice.

The total number of EC members is now 68 (of 86). New members will not be added until SBC 2022, Anaheim.

The report of Guidepost to the Convention is due May 2022 and will be presented to the convention in June 2022.

The next in-person meeting of the EC is February 2022. The EC continues to fulfill all the mandated tasks given by the convention including processing and disbursement of Cooperative Program funds to the appropriate entities. We of the EC covet the prayers of God's people.

## BELIEVE

*continued from page three*

son, that he spoke the truth, that he would get their vote among the other religious leaders in history.

But moving into a faith relationship with Jesus Christ requires the New Testament kind of "believing." We must trust Him with our lives. In this case we don't have to understand or know everything, just like we don't have to understand or know everything about flight and airplanes in order to fly.

When the Bible says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved," it means more than wishful thinking, mental assent or even having confidence in Christ. It means we must place our complete faith and trust in Jesus Christ. Like flying, we must follow His instructions and trust Him. If we do this, He will save us.

We demonstrate this "faith" kind of believing by doing what He says (Matt. 7:24-27; John 14:15). We live according to His Kingdom that is ruled by kindness, gentleness, thoughtfulness, humility, hope and love (Col. 3:5-17).

*Bill Tinsley is a former executive director of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention. Appearing in various local newspapers around the country, his column "reflects" on current events and life experiences from a faith perspective.*

**Back to the beginning**

## SEA mission trip update

We are still planning to go to Thailand for the SEA Mission Trip July 26 to Aug. 9. This trip is being coordinated with our partners at the International Mission Board, Thailand Baptist Convention, and Hmong Baptist National Association. The deadline to apply has been extended to June 1 due to the unpredictable nature of the pandemic. If, by that time, there is a quarantine requirement to enter the country, the trip will be canceled.

Our mission remains

the same: to support missionaries and national church leaders in their efforts to plant churches, train new pastors, and serve the community. This is a multi-year com-

mitment to connect MWBC churches with churches in Southeast Asia. I believe that this cooperation will lead to greater fulfillment of the Great Commission.

The trip fee is \$500, not including airfare, insurance, and vaccine requirements. Local travel, lodging, and meals in the host country are cov-

ered by the trip fee. Scholarships of up to \$250.00 are available for participants with financial need. For more information and to apply, go to

[www.mwbc.org/sea](http://www.mwbc.org/sea).

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



## Intercultural Na Herr

### SEA Mission Trip 2022 July 26 - August 9



# Empower, Equip at Southtown Baptist this year

**E**mpower will be held at Southtown Baptist Church in Bloomington, Minn., Mar. 11-12, 2022. The conference will start at 1 p.m. Friday and conclude at 12 noon Saturday.



**Leadership**  
*Clint Calvert*

Baptist church planting projects west of the Mississippi. Mark has been planting, replanting, and providing strategic mission leadership since 1978. Mark and his wife Jill live in Kansas

City, Mo., and have two sons, two daughters-in-law and three grandsons.

Cockrell is the associate professor of counseling and director of the doctor of ministry studies at SEBTS. Born and raised in Laurel, Miss., he lived in Aberdeen, Scotland as a child because of his father's job in the oil industry. Prior to SEBTS he was pastor for member care at The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala. He has been in ministry for almost 25 years, serving the local church and several para-church ministries. He has also taught adjunctively at five different graduate schools. He travels throughout the United States and internationally speaking in conferences on marriage, family, grief, parenting, divorce, recovery, and men's issues. He has been married to his wife Wendy since 1993. They have one daughter, Tatum, and twin sons, Preston and Spencer.

This year's Empow-

er will feature ministry to students and children and multiple breakout conferences. A limited number of hotel rooms have been secured at the nearby Embassy Suites for \$109 a night. For more information visit [mwbc.org/EMPOWER/](http://mwbc.org/EMPOWER/).

Equip, a training conference for children's ministry leaders, will be offered

at Southtown Baptist Church on the same dates and times as Empower. Equip will be led by Chuck Peters, director of Lifeway Kids.

Before his role at Lifeway, Peters had a prolific career in television and video production. He is a three-time Emmy Award winning producer, director, writer and tal-

ent. A graduate of Columbia Bible College, His and his wife Cris have served in student and children's ministry for many years. For more information visit [mwbc.org/EQUIP/](http://mwbc.org/EQUIP/).

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

## 2021 ended with opportunities to minister

**T**he year 2021 closed out with even more opportunities to serve hope and help in Jesus' name.

On Dec. 10 and 11, tornadoes made a 25-mile trek across Kentucky, bringing destruction during the holiday season. Local Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers were on site only an hour afterwards offering help to victims in the wake of the funnels. Services provided included emergency shelter, showers, food and clothing.

There were a number of opportunities for Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention disaster relief to serve which were called off for one reason or another until the week following Christmas when a team performed recovery work and min-

istry to eight residences in Princeton, Ky. Our crew provided chain-

saw, grapple skid and debris removal of those sites.

I am grateful that these leaders gave a most selfless

gift during Christmas —

themselves. Shout out to H Quinn, Ed Olson, Todd Peterson and new member, Kris Schwensen.

Look to the next few months for a reboot of training and readiness preparation opportunities to be publicized.

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



**Disaster Relief**  
*Ben Seamans*



Disaster relief volunteers pose with a homeowner in Kentucky. Left to right, back row: Todd Peterson, the homeowner, and Kris Schwensen. Middle row: H. Quinn, and a volunteer from Kentucky. Front: Ed Olson, Calvary, New Prague, Minn. Peterson, Schwensen and Quinn are from Jacob's Well in Eau Claire, Wis.

# Good news from the associations

## SOUTHERN WISCONSIN

City on a Hill in Madison, Wis., partnered with Christ Church Madison and Leopold Elementary to host a Christmas Toy Shop on Dec. 16. Four local Madison businesses donated supplies, more than 70 volunteers served during a four-hour period, more than 250 toys and games were available for families to purchase, and more than 50 families and 120 students and siblings were served. Pastor Dave Jacobson said the church is already looking forward to and planning for next year's event.

Pastor Peter Ko of Livingstone Baptist church in Madison shares that the church celebrated their second anniversary in September. On that day two people were baptized who had been in isolation during the past two years. Both of these people are now thriving and living in fellowship with fellow believers at Livingstone Baptist.

SWBA has begun a partnership with Rio Grande Bible Institute in Edinburg, Texas. The school will send a number of summer missionaries to Wisconsin this year.

## TWIN CITIES

Brett Toney, pastor of Westview Church in Crystal, Minn., last fall reported some good things happening in their church: (1) We received 4 new members, bringing total membership to 39; (2) Our financial position continues to be encouraging as expenses have been covered by giving, and we have a healthy amount in reserves that could be used for getting into a more long-term facility; (3) We approved a deacon with the responsibilities of leading the set-up logistics for Sundays as well as leading a team to find options for a more permanent space for us to meet; (4) We heard from two women who plan to travel to Guatemala to serve with ministry caring for teen girls and their babies; (5) We heard from a man upon his return from training pastors in Ethiopia through Training Leaders International.

## SOUTHERN MINNESOTA

After a Sept. 12 launch, Northbridge Church in Rochester, Minn. began having two worship services on Nov. 28, less than three months later. The church is led by elders Kevin Binkley, Rocky Coleman and Dennis Prothero.

## LAKELAND

A new church start in Salem Lakes, Wis., is being prayed for and led by Grayson and Rebecca Gilbert. Evangelistic efforts are underway, and some people from that area are beginning to attend the Sending Church (Missio Dei Fellowship in Kenosha, Wis.).

For Westlake Church in Mequon, Wis., opportunities for connecting with people are happening through sports and scouting. Pastor Tom Stark has been asked to be the troop master for a pack in Mequon. Also, as the new church does cleaning in the church building where they meet, an opportunity for additional space is opening up.

## NORTHWOODS

Grace Connection in Wadena, Minn., is enjoying their new church building which was completed and occupied in December.

Eagles Nest Baptist Church is starting an evangelistic outreach event, distributing DVDs about the gospel and brochures about the church.

## Changing the truth of God for a lie

Cultural engagement's demand on ministry creates a great number of unexpected complexities across a variety of different cultures.



### Church Planting

*Joshua Whetstine*

We could discuss how to understand and appreciate another's context, how to understand your own, how not to be swallowed up by the culture and a myriad of other topics. I want us to think simply about

the overarching exchange of the truth that happens naturally and has happened consistently over the span of human history.

Take the Norse god Odin for example. Odin is said to have hung himself on the world tree in order to gain power. This sounds strikingly familiar to Jesus "hanging on a tree" as the cross in order to gain power over the whole world so that the Spirit would come and the gospel would fill the entire world.

The preeminent Egyptian god, Amun-Ra the sun god, was said to not only give life, but descended into the abyss every day only to rise again in a show of his power.

Even in Roman times, Julius Caesar was deified in 42 BC and his adopted son Octavian was often referred to as "the son of God."

If we are thinking strictly "contemporary timeline" it would be easy to make a case that Christianity borrowed from all these ancient realities, but we don't; we think across all of time. We believe that our God created Adam and Eve, not Asher and Elm as Norse mythology suggests.

So how do we engage this in real time in our cultures across the world? There is a small section in the first chapter of Romans that God so graciously gave us to explain these realities (Rom. 1:18-23). It essentially explains that God created the reality of all that was and would be, and since the beginning of time cultures have seen dimly on the outside of God's covenant love and have made up their own similar reality. This is the beauty of the Gospel: it avails itself to the entire world and corrects the exchange in a call to repentance.

This is why missionaries created the seed

See **TRUTH** page 9



# SBC

continued from page three

churches to exist. Such could ultimately undermine a denomination.

If we were to the lose the Southern Baptist Convention, God's work would go on; people would continue to be saved, and Jesus would still return. But something significant would be lost...

- 4,500 missionaries would have to raise their own support to do international missions costing them as much as half of their support and time to simply raise their support. Their mission impact would be cut in half.

- There wouldn't be six theologically sound seminaries training 16,000 pastors, teachers, missionaries. These leaders would have to pay double to go to seminary elsewhere and would be saddled with extra debt that might prevent them from serving in mission areas.

- 4,000 church planters would be scrambling to find church planting resources, guidance, and support and there would likely be many fewer churches planted.

- 50,000 churches would be left to secure theologically sound Bible Study materials for all ages.

- 125,000 pastors, missionaries, and leaders wouldn't have the financial guidance to prepare for their retirement years through GuideStone Financial Services.

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).

## JANUARY

18-20 Midwest Leadership Summit, Springfield, Ill.

## FEBRUARY

## MARCH

6-12 Week of Prayer and mission Study for North American Missions/Annie Armstrong Easter Offering

**11-12 Empower Conference, Southtown, Bloomington, Minn.**

**11-12 Equip Kids Ministry Conference, Southtown, Bloomington, Minn.**

**31-Apr. 2 Pastors and Wives Retreat, Green Lake, Wis.**

## APRIL

15 Good Friday – **MWBC Office Closed**

**22-23 MWBC Executive Board Meeting, Rochester, Minn.**

**30 MWBC Lottie Moon Offering Cutoff**

## MAY

**20 New Pastor Orientation, Rochester, Minn.**

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

## JUNE

12-13 Southern Baptist Convention, Anaheim, Cal.

**TBD Hands of Hope**

**30 MWBC Annie Armstrong Offering Cutoff**

- The United States would have to find additional volunteers to replace the third largest body of Disaster Relief volunteers in the United States.

- 50,000 churches would be disconnected from fellowship and support, without assistance to face ministry challenges, and without coordination and cooperation to assist them in

engaging the Great Commission.

- Churches would lose the rich ethnic and cultural diversity of being in fellowship with believers from every tribe and nation of the world.

- We would lose the opportunity to pass on to the next generation of believers our relationships, our knowledge, and our tools for reaching the nations.

## JULY

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

**26-Aug. 9 Mission Trip to Thailand**

## AUGUST

## SEPTEMBER

**1-30 Season of Prayer for State Missions**

5 Labor Day – **MWBC Office Closed**

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

## OCTOBER

**TBD Called Out Youth Conference, Baraboo, Wis.**

**20 SEND Network Planters Gathering, Northwest Baptist Church, Wauwatosa, Wis.**

**21 Pastors Conference, Northwest Baptist Church, Wauwatosa, Wis.**

**21-22 MWBC Annual Meeting, Northwest Baptist Church, Wauwatosa, Wis.**

24-25 Missouri Baptist Annual Meeting, St. Charles, Mo.

## NOVEMBER

13-15 Baptist General Convention of Texas Annual Meeting, Waco, Texas

24-25 Thanksgiving Holiday – **MWBC Office Closed**

**29-Dec. 8 Pastors' Holy Land Tour**

## DECEMBER

4-10 Week of Prayer and Mission Study for International Missions/Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

26-30 Christmas/New Year's Holiday – **MWBC Office Closed**

We'd lose the power and efficiency of the Cooperative Program system of missions funding.

- The world would have one less missionary denomination taking the gospel to the world!

Brothers and sisters, our predecessors passed on to us a heart for God, a commitment to the Scriptures and a passion to share

Jesus with the world. I pray we don't drop the ball.

And as the song says, "You don't know what you've got till it's gone; they paved paradise and put up a parking lot."

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

**Back to the beginning**

# M-W WMU uses grant to help Afghan refugees

ROCHESTER, Minn. — Minnesota-Wisconsin Woman's Missionary Union has been awarded a HEART Fund grant from the WMU Foundation to help Afghan refugees being resettled in the Milwaukee area.

The HEART Fund was established after 9/11 to help WMU leaders deal with emergency needs in their communities. HEART stands for Humanitarian Emergency Aid for Rebuilding Tomorrow.

When U.S. forces withdrew from Afghanistan last fall, about 150,000 refugees were brought to 8 military bases which became the temporary home for 13,000 of them. One of those bases was Fort McCoy, Wisconsin's only active military installation, located

on about 60,000 acres between Tomah and Sparta. From that base, the refugees are being resettled in various places across the U.S., including designated resettlement communities in both Wisconsin and Minnesota.

M-W WMU will use their HEART Fund grant to partner with the Hanan Refugee Relief Group's Milwaukee chapter.

Gwendolyn Sutton, M-W WMU president, said members of their organization will build relationships with the refugees and find ways to help them.

"Partnering is our first step towards our goal to have an ongoing relationship with the Afghan families," she said. "We will be volunteering in areas of need and helping



*These are some of the volunteers who helped assemble welcome kits from Afghan refugees being resettled from Ft. McCoy to the Milwaukee area.*

refugees with task-oriented activities."

M-W WMU sees this as more than just a short-term project.

"The relationship between M-W WMU

and Hanan will go far beyond the life of the grant as we walk with our new neighbors helping them to feel at home," Sutton said. "The resettlement

process will continue through the spring of 2022, and we will have many opportunities for the refugees to experience the love of Jesus."

Already work has begun as community volunteers joined M-W WMU and Hanan volunteers for a hands-on experience to pack welcome kits for the arriving refugees.

"It was an amazing effort," Sutton said. "The presence of the Holy Spirit was undeniable. We prayed that something good would happen through us, that God would use our hands to be a blessing to those who would receive the welcome kits."

Money from the grant will be used to



You are cordially invited to the  
Sixty—Second Annual

## Pastors and Wives Retreat

Rescheduled for  
March 31—April 2, 2022

Green Lake Conference Center  
Green Lake, Wisconsin

Information and registration  
Coming in February

Free to all MWBC-affiliated  
Pastors and Wives



# Wisconsin church launches new school with ancient values

KENOSHA, Wis. — Missio Dei Fellowship of Kenosha, Wis., has started a new school with an ancient approach in an effort to spread the gospel to children and families in their communities.

Adopting the Christian classical school model, Imago Dei focuses its curriculum on Christian piety, gymnastics, music, and the liberal arts of language and mathematics with a biblical worldview permeating every class and daily liturgy.

Imago Dei Classical School began Sept. 1 and offers classes for kindergarten through third grade. Nicholas Dellis, headmaster, said they plan to add a grade each year until they cover all grades through high school.

For the current year the school has accepted only members of the church. When they open to those outside the church they will accept only students from families that “fit well into our school culture, affirm our statements of faith, are members in good standing at a like-minded church, and submit a pastoral recommendation,” Dellis said.

The name of the school, which means “image of God,” points to the ultimate goal of the school.

“We believe that we are helping form image-bearers of God,” Dellis said. “Our desire is for graduates to effectively serve God and thoughtfully engage the world with a distinct Christian worldview.”

Matt Henry, pastor of Missio Dei Fellowship, said the church seeks to raise up a people whose love of God affects all of life. That priority impacted the church’s decision about what kind of school the church should have.

“We determined that instead of trying to replicate the broken methods of education borne out of a fallen worldview, that we would invest in the old paths found in classical education,” Henry said. “We want to raise up young men and women who are fearless about Christ, the gospel and truth and who are ready to stand firm in every part of life. This requires a full-bodied approach to education which is exactly what the Christian classical model provides.”

Dellis said that “nearly a century of secular progressive education” has missed the mark when it comes to educating children.

“Education is human formation and if our children spend Monday through Friday for at least 13 of their most formative years denying their true nature and never acknowledging the Creator and Sustainer of everything which they are learning, then they have not been educated as a human being should,” he said.

In addition to Dellis, school staff includes a teacher for each class (kindergarten, first, second, and third), a choir and music teacher, a strings instructor, and two archery coaches.



*These are some of the students at the new Imago Dei Classical School started last fall by Missio Dei Fellowship of Kenosha, Wis.*

## TRUTH

*continued from page six*

of civilized culture in Nordic regions, in Celtic lands, in the west and beyond. This is the progress of the gospel, but we must engage our cultures to make that progress a reality and see

churches planted. We must be present in our culture and not simply among Christians. We must develop relationships that allow us to engage, as the Psalmist says, with truth and kindness, and we must plod in our cultures for years, or we could sum it all up by sug-

gesting a permanent presence in the care of the world is how we set out to engage ourselves in it.

Hear more on our podcast each week at: [Our Northern Kingdom on Podbean](#), check it out!

**Back to the beginning**

# Mission Gifts from the Churches

## MINNESOTA WISCONSIN BAPTIST CONVENTION COOPERATIVE PROGRAM GIVING

January 1 - December 31, 2021

CP Budget 2021 \$613,366.00  
CP Receipts 2021 \$726,675.52  
OVER Budget 2021 \$111,309.52

NAME CP

### BAY LAKES BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Amherst, Amherst Bible Church	\$500.00
Appleton, Fox Valley Hmong	\$540.00
Appleton, Valley	\$52,254.74
Black Creek, Community Bible	\$5,532.00
Clintonville, First Baptist Church	\$2,331.45
Green Bay, Bethel	\$833.30
Green Bay, Graceway Fellowship	\$7,455.18
Green Bay, Highland Crest	\$82,000.42
Manitowoc, New Beginnings	\$809.23
Neenah, Living Vine Church	\$600.00
Sheboygan, Mapledale Baptist	\$3,677.97
Stevens Point, Tapestry	\$700.00
Tilleda, Bethany Baptist Church	\$2,283.10
Waupaca, Fellowship Baptist	\$2,650.81
<b>BLBA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$162,168.20</b>

### TWIN CITIES METRO BAPTIST ASSN.

Amery, Journey Church	\$10,000.00
Bloomington, Ebenezer Community	\$200.00
Bloomington, MN Kangnam Korean	\$1,300.00
Bloomington, Southtown Baptist	\$22,119.20
Bloomington, True Light Chinese	\$400.00
Brooklyn Park, Ebenezer Community	\$2,800.00
Brooklyn Park, N Center Lao	\$200.00
Brooklyn Park, North Center	\$6,099.76
Burnsville, Berean Baptist	\$2,000.00
Burnsville, Resurrection Church	\$4,000.00
Coon Rapids, First Hmong Baptist	\$1,750.00
Fridley, Good News Hmong	\$500.00
Maple Grove, Northwood Community	\$2,000.04
Maple Grove, Unlock Church	\$1,200.00
Minneapolis, All Peoples Church	\$6,480.00
Minneapolis, Gracepoint Minneapolis	\$1,000.00
Minneapolis, Hope of Nations	\$620.58
Minneapolis, Jubilee	\$2,500.00
Minneapolis, New Hope Baptist	\$250.00
Minneapolis, Shalom Community	\$1,257.62
Minnetonka, Slavic Baptist Church	\$600.00
Monticello, First Baptist Church	\$313.46
Monticello, Grace Bible Church	\$3,300.00
New Hope, Westview Church	\$7,416.00
New Prague, Calvary Church	\$23,458.51
Oakdale, Eternal Life Hmong	\$2,016.00
Ramsey, Bethlehem Worship Center	\$400.00
Richfield, Richfield Bible Church	\$600.00
Roseville, Redeemer Church	\$8,000.00
Roseville, Roseville Baptist Church	\$11,400.00
Spring Lake Park, Hmong Hope	\$400.00
St. Louis Park, First Ukrainian	\$250.00
St. Michael, Northwest Bible	\$4,000.00
St. Paul, Cities Church	\$15,000.00
St. Paul, Followers Of Christ Hmong	\$8,278.15

St. Paul, Iglesia Hispana Betel	\$1,500.00
St. Paul, Salt City Church	\$39,700.00
St. Paul, Twin City Hmong	\$2,004.00
St. Paul, Vertical Church	\$6,000.00
Sunfish Lake, Bethel Baptist	\$7,200.00
Sunfish Lake, Vietnamese Baptist	\$660.00
White Bear Lake, Emmaus	\$3,400.00
<b>TCMBA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$212,573.32</b>

### LAKELAND BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Bassett, Westosha Baptist Church	\$1,685.00
Franklin, Emmaus Fellowship	\$600.00
Kenosha, Fellowship Baptist	\$18,596.89
Kenosha, Missio Dei Fellowship	\$12,531.00
Kenosha, Parkside Baptist	\$5,612.58
Mequon, Westlake Church	\$200.00
Milwaukee, Ephesians Baptist	\$3,600.00
Milwaukee, Family of Christ	\$550.00
Milwaukee, Hmong First Baptist	\$300.00
Milwaukee, Iglesia Bautista Nueva	\$140.20
Milwaukee, Korean Baptist	\$900.00
Milwaukee, Layton Avenue	\$13,434.50
Milwaukee, Mercy Memorial	\$1,550.00
Milwaukee, Milwaukee Arabic	\$359.95
Milwaukee, Monumental Baptist	\$495.00
Milwaukee, Mt Horeb Baptist	\$450.00
Milwaukee, Mt Pilgrim Miss.	\$1,200.00
Milwaukee, Northwest Baptist	\$12,000.00
Milwaukee, UFlourish Church	\$4,012.08
Mount Pleasant, I.C.A.R.E. Ministry	\$313.93
Mount Pleasant, Immanuel	\$13,760.23
Pewaukee, Crossroads Church	\$3,661.37
Pleasant Prairie, Pleasant Prairie	\$10,034.00
Racine, Hope Community Church	\$2,290.63
Wauwatosa, Redemption Church	\$3,750.00
<b>LBA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$112,027.36</b>

### SOUTHERN WI BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Boscobel, Blue River Valley	\$1,170.93
Janesville, Casa de Oracion	\$55.00
Janesville, Resonate Church	\$4,228.50
Madison, Campus Community	\$1,800.00
Madison, City on a Hill	\$7,500.00
Madison, Doxa Church	\$50,691.24
Madison, East Madison Baptist	\$7,026.00
Madison, Hope In Christ Assembly	\$2,663.07
Madison, Livingstone Baptist Ch	\$2,745.00
Madison, Midvale Baptist Church	\$8,955.42
Madison, Red Village	\$7,500.00
Madison, Shalom Christian Asse	\$50.00
Madison, Sovereign Joy Baptist	\$3,553.90
Monroe, Redemption Church	\$1,600.00
Platteville, Rolling Hills	\$5,841.93
Reedsburg, Trinity Baptist Church	\$17,250.00
Sparta, Gospel Baptist Church	\$4,066.93
Sun Prairie, Christ Fellowship C	\$50.00
Sun Prairie, Reborn in Christ Ba	\$423.30
Sun Prairie, United Hmong	\$900.00
Waterloo, Centro Biblico La Roc	\$100.00
Waterloo, Cornerstone Church	\$600.00
WI Dells, Rock of Hope	\$2,400.00
WI Rapids, Church at Wazeecha	\$2,069.00
WI Rapids, First Baptist Church	\$570.00
<b>SWBA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$133,810.22</b>



# Mission Gifts from the Churches

## NORTHWOODS BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Bemidji, Ridgewood Baptist	\$1,239.00
Cambridge, Cross Pointe Church	\$3,250.00
Crookston, Prairie Community	\$5,587.27
Ely, Berean Baptist	\$1,180.00
Grand Rapids, Calvary Pines	\$2,759.00
Hill City, Hill City Baptist Church	\$1,100.00
Int'l Falls, Pleasant Hill	\$200.00
Pequot Lakes, Eagles Nest	\$583.94
Rice Lake, Hope Baptist Church	\$5,310.00
Roseau, Immanuel Baptist	\$4,588.28
Thief River Falls, Cornerstone	\$1,746.82
Wadena, Grace Connection	\$300.00
Warroad, Westside Baptist	\$4,680.21
<b>NWBA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$32,524.52</b>

## SOUTHERN MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION

Austin, Austin Baptist Church	\$4,461.70
Austin, Primera Iglesia Bautista	\$557.90
Chester, Chester Woods Community	\$1,491.50
Eyota, Hmong Baptist Church	\$2,115.00
Mankato, Hope Baptist Church	\$1,857.32

Marshall, Radiant Life Church	\$2,602.32
Red Wing, Hiawatha Valley Baptist	\$6,318.85
Rochester, Emmanuel Baptist	\$19,068.51
Rochester, Redemption City	\$12,012.97
Sartell, Park Fellowship	\$4,485.48
Viola, Viola Bible Church	\$3,555.03
Willmar, Grace Baptist Church	\$100.00
Winona, Cornerstone Community	\$3,866.12
<b>SMBA TOTAL</b>	<b>\$62,492.70</b>

## OTHER

Eau Claire, Jacob's Well	\$9,550.00
Eau Claire, One in Christ	\$1,529.20
<b>MWBC AFFILIATED TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,079.20</b>

## MWBC TOTAL RECEIVED

**\$726,675.52**

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

## ORNAMENTS

*continued from page one*

First Hmong Baptist Church Pastor Tonger Vang said the distribution of the church's handmade ornaments is patterned after God's gift of Jesus to the world.

"Christmas is a reminder of how much God loves us," Tonger said. "In John 3:16 it talks about how much He loves the world that He sent His only Son to die on the cross for us. That is His gift to us, His sacrifice to us, and that is His ultimate gift, and that is what Christmas is about, His ultimate gift."

First Hmong Baptist made more than 500 ornaments this Christmas and is still giving them away. The church gave 300 ornaments to WMU ministry partner First Baptist Church in Jackson, Miss., and 200 to the Martha Franks Retirement Community

in Laurens, S.C., with others on the list.

"It's not all just beautiful, but it also has a meaning," Cindy said. "We want people to remember about Jesus and what He did."

Members of First Hmong Baptist Church used traditional Hmong fabrics and jewelry craft supplies to make free Christmas ornaments for others this year.

With ornamentation on one side and a Scripture on the other, the ornaments are useful tools for spreading the Gospel and fulfilling the Great Commission, Underbakke said.

"As they're looking at the ornament, they have a story to share," she said. "They're also passing on the love of Christ through sharing that story."

"Free people" is the very meaning of "Hmong," a people group who began immigrating to the U.S. from the violence in

Southeast Asia after the Vietnam War. The U.S. Census numbered the Hmong here at more than 300,000 in 2020.

Cindy believes God dispersed the Hmong people all over the world to position them for missions. She served as Minnesota-Wisconsin WMU president from 2015-2020.

"I think the biggest thing that I realized is that during the Vietnam War, during all the tragedy, everything that went on and we thought that it would never be done with, through all of that, God had a big plan for us," Cindy said. "Through that, He dispersed us all over the world."

The Christmas ornaments First Hmong Baptist Church made this year are representative of Hmong culture.

"The American people have shared with us who God is, and then now that we know, it is our time to partner with

them. And that's why we wanted to make the ornament, in order to share about how much God loves us. That tiny little ornament is able to share just how much God loves us and also loves them."

Making the ornaments also gave First Hmong a new opportunity to fellowship in person after being somewhat isolated during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It just really brought us back together, and I think that a lot of churches are needing that right now. It's for the givers, but also the receivers," she said. "Next year we would like to share with other churches how to make the ornaments. We would like it nationwide, and people can put their own twist to it."

**Back to the beginning**

Minnesota-Wisconsin  
**Baptist**

# First Person: Stop stealing from my mother-in-law

**By Jeff Iorg**  
President, Gateway  
Seminary

ONTARIO, Calif. (BP) – My mother-in-law is an 88-year old loyal Southern Baptist who lives on a fixed income in a modest retirement center. She loves the Lord, her church and Southern Baptists. She has been a lifelong advocate of the Cooperative Program and understands that, as a contributing member of a Southern Baptist church, she is a primary funder of Gateway Seminary. She reflects that understanding when she often asks, “How is my seminary doing?”

My mother-in-law is not a wealthy person. Her monthly gift to her church is a generous percentage of her income, but she would not be on anyone’s major donor list. Yet, her kind of giving is the backbone of the Cooperative Program. This ingenious funding mechanism does not depend on a few fat cats to bankroll our work. It depends on millions of people giving small amounts, that when added together, make a huge difference. Tens of millions flow to missions, ministry, education, and other causes because loyal Southern Baptist make thousands of small gifts consistently.

At every new student orientation at

Gateway, I make a presentation about the Cooperative Program and its impact on our students. As part of that presentation, I tell my mother-in-law’s story and then say something like this.

“If you are receiving discounted tuition at Gateway because of the Cooperative Program, you have an obligation to promote the Cooperative Program and pay it forward for the next generation. As you gain influence as a church leader, it is your responsibility to contribute to the next generation the way a previous generation has invested in you.

“If you think differently, listen carefully. If you think, ‘The Cooperative Program is an old-fashioned bureaucracy and I don’t plan to promote it in the future,’ then have the integrity to stop receiving the benefit of the Cooperative Program now. Forego the Cooperative Program tuition rate for Southern Baptist students and pay the full price.

“You see, my mother-in-law, and millions of loyal Southern Baptists like her, are counting on you as their future church leaders. They are investing in you, keeping the price of your education as low as possible, so you can become a minister or missionary. They are also counting on you

to carry the blessing forward to future generations.

“If you don’t plan to do this, show some integrity. Stop stealing from my mother-in-law! Quit taking from the Cooperative Program and pay the full tuition rate, unless you are committed to promoting it as a primary missions giving mechanism in the future.”

This speech often startles a group of new students. They are not accustomed to straight talk about denominational funding. It might concern you that this direct approach discourages interest in and loyalty to the Cooperative Program. The opposite actually happens. At almost every new student orientation, students approach me in the break after my speech and thank me for being up front with them. They often ask the best way to approach their church leaders about increasing their Cooperative

Program giving. And, this is the most interesting response: non-SBC students ask for guidance on how their church can start giving through such an amazing missions-funding mechanism.

While you may not be a new student at Gateway, you have likely benefited from the Cooperative Program. If you have paid discounted tuition at an SBC seminary, attended a CP-funded Baptist university, been part of a CP-supported NAMB church plant, participated in a mission trip to help a CP-dependent IMB missionary, gained new insight from a CP-financed state convention training event, sent your children to a Southern Baptist camp, trusted your young adults to the Baptist Collegiate Ministry at a college, or otherwise enjoyed the benefits of any of these as a member of a Southern Baptist church, you have been a direct recipient of the Cooperative Program. Hence, you have an obligation to pay it forward by making sure the same opportunities exist for the next generation. If you take from the Cooperative Program, you have an obligation to give to it as well – even more generously than what you have received.

We have a waning generation who built and sustained the Cooperative Program. We have a rising generation who has been blessed by the previous generation’s generosity. If you are an emerging leader, now it’s your turn to use this amazing funding tool to assure the financial strength of Southern Baptist missions, ministry, and education around the world. The previous generation wants you to enjoy their generous support, but also to extend that blessing to future generations as well.

## WMU

*continued from page eight*

provide warm meals and groceries when the Afghans arrive from Fort McCoy and settle into their apartments.

“Soon we plan to provide wellness sessions for the women hosted by M-W WMU and Hanan,” she said. “We will address their physical, emotional,

and spiritual needs in a safe, friendly, and caring environment.”

The influx of refugees is reminiscent of the arrival of Hmong refugees who fled their homeland 40 years ago when U.S. troops departed after the Vietnam War. MWBC churches and members were very involved in welcoming the Hmong people to Minnesota

and Wisconsin at the time. Many Hmong churches were planted and are still part of the MWBC today.

“We are looking forward to this mission opportunity, and thankful that God has chosen us to show his love,” Sutton said.

For more information, email Sutton at [mn.wi.wmu@gmail.com](mailto:mn.wi.wmu@gmail.com).

**Back to the beginning**





For further information, please contact:

Na Herr

507-282-3636

herr@mwbc.org

# EXPERIENCE THE HOLY LAND

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*\*SECOND PASTOR FROM SAME CHURCH MAY TRAVEL AT THIS PRICE,  
BUT ONLY TWO PASTORS PER CHURCH*

Register Online: **RegisterNow.ittworld.com**

Tour Code: **Endel22**

**Limited Space - 30 spots available!**

### **Day 1 – Tuesday, November 29: Depart U.S.A.**

People from all over the United States will be joining this pilgrimage to the Holy Land. We will meet at our gateway airport for our overseas flight. Our fellowship will begin early as we board our overnight flight to Israel.

### **Day 2 – Wednesday, November 30: Arrive in Tel Aviv**

In Tel Aviv, we are met by our agent who assists us through customs and security. We transfer to our luxury motor coach for a short drive to our hotel in Netanya in time for dinner. You will want to rise early! We are on the Mediterranean Sea, where the views are stunning!

### **Day 3 – Thursday, December 1: Caesarea Maritima, Megiddo, Mt. Carmel, Nazareth, Mt. of Precipice, Cana, Galilee**

Today we depart for the Galilee, visiting Biblical sites. First is Caesarea, where Peter proclaimed the Good News to the Roman Centurion and later where Paul made his appeal to Rome, and we visit Herod's Aqueduct. Next, we drive up Mt. Carmel to see where Elijah brought down the fire of God. From there, we look over the Valley of Armageddon. We will stop at Tel Megiddo to see an ancient site from Old Testament times. Then we go on to Nazareth to visit a remarkable newly authenticated site, the boyhood home of Jesus! We will also stop at the Mt. of Precipice. Then we make our way to Cana. Those who are traveling with their spouses will have an opportunity to renew their vows at this beautiful church. We will arrive in Tiberias for dinner and overnight at our hotel right on the Sea of Galilee.



### **Day 4 – Friday, December 2: Galilee, Tabgha, Mt. of Beatitudes, Capernaum, Jesus Boat, Boat Ride, Magdala, and More**

This morning you will see the sun rise over the Sea of Galilee. It is a spectacular site. Most of today will be exploring the ministry locations of our Lord around the Sea of Galilee. Places you have heard and read about will come to light: Mt. of Beatitudes, Capernaum, Magdala (discovered only a few years ago), Mt. of Transfiguration, the site of the First Breakfast (John 21), and the Sea of Galilee itself. Then we visit the Jesus Boat at Ginosar, before getting on a boat that day...on the Sea...reading, studying, and reflecting on the ministry of Jesus where He did his ministry. Then we visit Magdala, and, if we have time, we will go to city of Sepphoris, where it is likely Joseph and Jesus worked during his early years! His

humanity and His divinity will be brought into our focus in an unforgettable way. We end our day with a dinner and overnight at our hotel in Tiberias.

### **Day 5 – Saturday, December 3: Golan Heights, Caesarea Philippi, Tel Dan, Beit Shean, Jerusalem**

After breakfast, we drive to Caesarea Philippi, where Peter made his faith confession. We will have a short hike/walk to Tel Dan where we will see Abraham's Gate. Afterwards, we visit Beit Shean, one of the best-preserved Decapolis Roman cities. Here, the bodies of King Saul and his sons were hung from the city walls after they were defeated by the Philistines. On the way, we will stop at Jericho and visit the original (and newly opened) baptismal site of our Lord along the Jordan. Each of us will take the occasion to renew our own baptismal vows. It is not to be missed. Next, we stop on the way to the majestic city of Jerusalem and look at the ancient monastery of St. George's at the Wadi Qelt. The quiet, vast expanse of the Judean desert will leave a lasting impression on you. As we enter the Eternal City of Jerusalem, you will notice something. It is quiet. It is the Sabbath. This religious city is observing its Biblical customs. We have dinner and overnight at our hotel near the Jaffa Gate.



### **Day 6 – Sunday, December 4: Masada, Ein Gedi, Qumran, Dead Sea for Swim**

The road from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea region is a descent of 4,000 feet in 13 miles. Our first stop will be at Masada, where we will make our way by cable car to the fortress built by King Herod. Here, we survey the ruins of fortifications, waterworks, synagogue, temples, and palaces. Next, we drive to Ein Gedi where David hid from King Saul. A short drive takes us to Qumran, the location of the Dead Sea Scrolls discovery. Afterwards, we follow the road south along the western shore of the Dead Sea. We will make a special stop at the Dead Sea (the lowest spot on earth) for a short swim. Dinner and overnight are in Jerusalem.

### **Day 7 – Monday, December 5: Mt. of Olives, Palm Sunday Road, Garden of Gethsemane, Zion Gate, Jewish Quarter, Temple Mount, Southern Steps**

We begin this day with a visit to the epicenter of the Christian faith, The Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The church will be mostly ours to explore in these early morning hours. This is the site of the crucifixion, the burial, and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus. Centuries



## 💡 Did you know?

► **The Dead Sea has the lowest elevation on land at 1,388 ft below sea level.**

of faith and belief are covered this church in layers of candle soot, smells, and ornamentation, but it is quite moving to be there. Our pilgrimage will continue along the Palm Sunday Road, beginning at the Mount of Olives and continuing to the Garden of Gethsemane with its ancient olive groves. We will have a special Eucharist this day in a beautiful, private setting near the Garden, next to the Church of the Agony (Church of All Nations). We will enter Jerusalem through the Zion Gate and walk to the holiest site in the entire Jewish world, the Western Wall of Herod's temple (Wailing Wall). From the temple area, we walk to St. Stephen's Gate, St. Anne's Church, and the Pools of Bethesda from John 5. Amazed by this day, we will have dinner and overnight in Jerusalem.

### **Day 8 – Tuesday, December 6: City of David, Hezekiah's Tunnel (Dry Shaft), Pool of Siloam, Israel Museum, Shrine of the Book, Model City, Western Wall, St. Peter Gallicantu**

After breakfast, we drive to the City of David, and then we go on a short walk to Hezekiah's Tunnel (conditions permitting). Be sure to bring a flashlight, and anyone wanting to stay dry can walk through Hezekiah's shaft. Afterwards, we will visit the newly excavated Pool of Siloam. We continue to the Israel Museum where we will see a fascinating scale model of Jerusalem at the time of Jesus. Then we visit the Shrine of the Book, where the Dead Sea Scrolls are displayed. Next, we will go back to the Old City again and spend time in the archaeological excavations along the ancient temple steps. Then we will take a breathtaking tour of the Western Wall through its archeological tunnels. The beauty of the city, the complexity of the site, and the achievements of the ancient builders - this will make for an unforgettable day. We will stop at St. Peter Gallicantu and the ancient Roman steps outside the house of Caiaphas. We are certainly following in the footsteps of Jesus. Dinner and overnight are in Jerusalem.

### **Day 9 – Wednesday, December 7: Garden Tomb, Bethlehem, Herodion, Jaffa, Jerusalem**

This is a day like none other. We will start the day in a worship at the Garden Tomb. Then we will make our way to Bethlehem to visit the oldest church in the world, the

Church of the Holy Nativity. We will be able to get into the grotto cave where Jesus was born. When we read the Christmas story in Luke 2, it is permanently imprinted in our minds. We have been where Jesus was born. Afterwards, we visit the Shepherd's Field and Church. Then we make time to climb up the Herodian, a literal Herod-made Mountain, where he interrogated the Magi. In the afternoon, we leave Jerusalem for a visit in the ancient port of Joppa (Jaffa) near Tel Aviv, before returning to Jerusalem for our farewell dinner and overnight.



### **Day 10 – Thursday, December 8: Depart Tel Aviv, Return Home**

Today we say good-bye to our excellent guide and driver, and we board our flight back to the States. At the close of an unforgettable journey, we will all take home wonderful memories of the Old and New Testament, a renewal of our faith, and a greater understanding of the life of our Lord. Each of us will be already planning to tell our friends.

#### **PRICING, BASED ON CLERGY RATE**

**\$1899 - Ordained Clergy from ORD**

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*(Price includes: US & Int'l. Taxes & Gratuities, etc.)*

When you return with a group of your own within 18 months from this trip, with a minimum group of 20+ participants, we will reimburse back to you the amount of \$1029 -initial Clergy Familiarization tour price **(this excludes taxes & gratuities).**

► Above pricing based on double occupancy, two people sharing a room.

*\*While we do our very best at making sure all items listed in your itinerary are included, there are times when conditions beyond our control affect your program/itinerary, including but not limited to air carrier changes, delays, weather, political climate, time constraints, or changes by your tour leader and tour guide.*

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**INCLUDED IN PRICE:**

1) Round trip airfare per brochure, deluxe motor coaches, First Class / Superior First Class hotels, guided sightseeing, entrance fees to sites visited, breakfast & dinner daily per brochure; 2) Taxes and fuel charges totaling **\$595 USD** comprised of **\$264.60** for fuel charges (subject to increase by airline up to 30 days prior to departure) and **\$330.40** for taxes (including federal inspection fees for the U.S. Customs and Immigrations; international air transportation tax; agricultural tax; other per person taxes imposed by government entities; airport taxes and fees including the September 11th Security fee up to \$10 per person, passenger facility charges up to \$18 per person, federal domestic flight segment fees up to \$3.50 per segment and U.S. and International arrival and departure, and other government imposed fees up to \$300 per person); 3) Gratuities of **\$175** for tour guide or cruise director, local host, driver, local guides, and/or ships' crew; gratuities on ferries, and cruise ships.

**NOT INCLUDED IN PRICE:**

Not included in your package are passports, visas, COVID-19 tests, vaccinations, laundry, lunches, telephone, mini-bar, alcohol, other beverages, and food outside of the contracted tour operator menu as presented at a hotel or restaurant (these extra items will be billed to you before leaving the hotel, or restaurant), airport transfers on non-qualifying flights, portage at airports, travel insurance, excess baggage fees, any fees or fuel surcharges imposed by the airlines after the date you register for your trip, and all other items not specifically mentioned.

**PAYMENT:**

A full deposit of \$500 per person is required at time of registration. Final payment must be made in the form of a check (**credit cards are only accepted for initial deposit, any remaining payments must be in check form**) and is due no later than **90-days prior to departure**. Registrations received after 90-days prior to departure **must be accompanied by full payment**. There may be a late fee of **\$195 for all payments or new registrations received 75-60 days prior to departure**. All tour prices are based on a minimum group size of 20 passengers for prices to be valid. The following supplements may apply for smaller groups: 19-15 travelers, a \$150 per person supplement; 14-10 travelers, a \$195 per person supplement. If group size is less than 10 travelers, the tour may be cancelled due to lack of participation. If final (full) payment is not received by **Imagine Tours and Travel, LLC** (hereafter referred to as **Imagine**) 60-days prior to departure, you will be automatically cancelled from the tour and your initial deposit of \$500 will be forfeited and additional fees may apply. **Imagine** reserves the right to add a surcharge if the dollar declines by more than 2% against the shekel or euro based on foreign exchange rates in effect on date (01/06/22) when your tour was booked by your tour leader/church. All payments are required in US Funds.

**ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Price is based on double occupancy (two persons sharing a room). When available, single rooms are often smaller than doubles. While **Imagine** will try to match roommates, we cannot guarantee one will be available. Roommates may be assigned as late as 60 days prior to departure. If one is not available or if you request a single room, there will be a **single room supplement charge: \$595 for basic itinerary**.

**ITINERARY AND CHANGES:**

Because airlines often change flight schedules after brochures are printed, **Imagine** reserves the right to shorten or lengthen the itinerary accordingly. You will be notified in writing when possible. If itinerary changes necessitate extra overnights, you will be charged \$195 per night/per person (single rooms \$225/night). Meals for extra nights are not included. **Any changes and/or deviations from the program and/or departure city listed, by the passenger, must be provided in writing to Imagine no later than 100-days prior to departure and any extra costs incurred will be billed to the passenger.** All deviations are subject to a standard fee of \$150 plus any applicable airline fees.

**All tours are final at 75-days prior to departure. No changes and/or additions may be made to the tour after that time.**

**LAND ONLY:**

Land Only price is \$1349/clergy or \$1549/spouse per person. Price does not include international flights. Land Only passengers may be responsible for transfers and/or additional overnights incurred by booking their own flights. We recommend you purchase a ticket which can be changed without large penalties, as the group's flights may change. Passengers changing from the regular tour to Land Only after 120 days prior to departure will be charged a fee of \$150 per person.

**AIRLINE TICKETS:**

In order to keep prices low, **Imagine does not guarantee you will be on the most direct flights to your final destination. Imagine also does not guarantee the group will be on the same flights, particularly if registering 90 days prior to departure.** Flight routings are chosen by the airlines and not **Imagine**. Airline tickets cannot be changed or refunded once issued. Air transportation to/from your destination will be economy class aboard IATA and ARC carriers utilizing APEX or SUPER APEX non-refundable, non-amendable tickets for groups of 10 or more flying together for entire itinerary. **Imagine** is unable to use individual frequent flyer points to upgrade or accept them as partial payment for air transportation. Deviations by the passenger, from the group's scheduled flights, could result in different routings/air carriers. Airline changes, if allowable, made by the passenger after final payment has been made, may incur additional fees.

**VISAS:**

Applicable visas will be obtained by **Imagine** for U.S. and Canadian Citizens only. All passengers who do not carry U.S. or Canadian Passports will be responsible for obtaining visas to the countries they are visiting. **Imagine** is not responsible for non-U.S. & Canadian Passport holders.

**FLIGHT TIMES:**

**All flight times are subject to change by the airlines without advance notice. Imagine is not responsible for such changes or delays and does not reimburse expenses resulting from such delays.** If making your own flight arrangements to a departure city or any other portion of your trip, we recommend you purchase a ticket which can be changed without large penalties. All passengers are responsible for reconfirming their flights with the airline 24 hours prior to departure.

**CANCELLATION FEES:**

Any passenger cancelling from the day of registration to 100 days prior to departure will be charged a \$300 non-refundable administrative fee per person plus any airline penalties, if applicable. You will also be charged a single room fee if your cancellation forces your roommate into a single room from 59 days prior until the date of departure. The following charges also apply: 99-60 days = **\$500**; 59-45 days = **\$1750**; 44-25 days = **75% of total cost**; 24 days to day of departure = **100% of total cost. All Cancellations must be received in writing.** On or after the day of departure there is no refund for any services not used. **We strongly recommend you purchase travel insurance.** If **Imagine** cancels the tour due to lack of participation, there will be a charge of \$150 deducted from the amount refunded to each passenger for administrative fees plus any airline penalties if applicable.

**TRIP RESCHEDULING:**

**Imagine** and/or Trip leader reserve the right to re-schedule the dates of the Trip to future dates TBD due to governmental action, pandemic, or other circumstances beyond their control. Should that occur, all travelers will be rebooked for the new dates. Travelers unable to travel on the new dates may cancel their participation and will be assessed a cancellation fee of up to \$300 per person, plus any additional penalties/fees imposed by ground operator(s), airlines, or other vendors. Travelers can transfer to another available tour up to one year from their original departure date.

**PASSPORT:**

Each passenger is responsible for making sure that they have a **valid passport that has an expiration date at least six months after the date of return from their trip.**

A copy of your valid passport must be submitted to our office by 90 days prior to departure.

**STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY:**

**Imagine** and its associated companies agree to provide the itinerary described in this brochure. This represents the entire agreement between the passenger and his agent, the travel agent, the tour host, and the tour operator. All prices, itineraries and schedules are subject to regulations and changes by acts of government, international agreement, and airline tariff adjustments, rules, and regulations. **Imagine** reserves the right to refuse or revoke travel to anyone who is, in the sole judgment of **Imagine**, incapable of group travel. Except for the willful negligence of its direct employees, the tour operator assumes no liability or responsibility for any injuries, inconveniences, illness, irregularity, or incidental damages caused by circumstances beyond the control of the tour operator or by any person or reason whatsoever, including but not limited to events such as strikes, revolts, wars, natural disasters, pandemic, closures of airports or hotel, default or omission of any common or private carrier, or the fault, negligence, or omission of and by any third party providing services or facilities related to or included in this tour or any part thereof, or in arranging for the same, or the acts or omissions of the travel agent or the tour host. The conditions become a binding contract when your enrollment and payment are received and accepted by **Imagine**. Florida law will be applicable to any dispute which arises out of or concerns regarding this brochure or your tour.

**RELEASE OF LIABILITY:**

By traveling on this tour you affirm that you are fit to participate in this tour and accept all risks to your safety and health. All travel involves risks, and travel to some countries, including Israel, involves a heightened risk to your health and safety, including risks from terrorism, criminal acts, and illness. You understand and freely accept these risks, and you generally and specifically release and hold harmless **Imagine** and their officers, agents and employees from any liability and any claims for (i) any physical, mental, emotional or other injuries whatsoever that you may sustain related to this tour; (ii) delays, damages, illness, injuries or death, or for the loss of or damage to property, from any cause (including negligence) and however occurring; and (iii) any accident, illness, injury, damage, sickness, loss of personal property, delay, or other injury or claim of any kind related to or arising from strikes, armed conflicts, social or labor unrest or strikes/work stoppages, war or acts of war, terrorism or terrorist acts, acts of God, mechanical or construction failures or difficulties, diseases, local laws or acts of local or government authorities, criminal acts, weather or climatic conditions, volcanic eruption, earthquake, disruption of advertised schedules, refusal of visas, or any other causes beyond their direct control.

**Imagine Tours & Travel, LLC., is registered with the State of Florida as a Seller of Travel. Registration No. ST36635. Valid as of 01/06/22 RPR/AA/ZR**



**We strongly recommend trip insurance through Travel Guard.**

Please contact Travel Guard directly to purchase it at either **1-800-826-1300** and reference agent code **127152** or you may visit our website at **ittworld.com** and click on their direct link on our home page.