

Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist

Volume 37, Number 3

May 2022

Table of Contents

- 1 Empower/Equip Conference
- 1 Good Friday Drama
- 1 Executive board responds to inflation
- 2 Ebenezer baptism
- 2 Asia-Pacific Rim One Day
- 3 Leo Endel: Perspectives
- 3 Bill Tinsley: Reflections
- 4 Intercultural: Na Herr
- 4 Clint Calvert: Leadership
- 5 Serving in Ukraine
- 6 Good news from the associations
- 7 Calendar of events
- 7 Hands of Hope
- 7 Cogburn retires
- 8 Empower/Equip Photos
- 9 Pastors and Wives Retreat
- 10 Mission Gifts from the Churches
- 11 Mission Gifts from the Churches
- 11 Vang retires
- 12 Autonomy makes cooperation stronger
- 12 Milwaukee Kingdom Growth Conference

Hundreds gather to be Empowered and Equipped

Bloomington, Minn. – Nearly 400 registered and more than 300 attended the simultaneous Empower and Equip conferences at Southtown Baptist Church and Embassy Suites Hotel in Bloomington, Minn., Mar. 11-12.

Clint Calvert, church leadership catalyst for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention, said registration numbers continued to climb throughout the week leading up to the event

and final numbers showed 356 registered for Empower and 42 for Equip.

“Let Your Light Shine” was the theme as Empower included three simultaneous events: the Equip Kid’s Ministry Conference, the Youth and Young Adult program, and meetings and training for all other adults. The event also provided a children’s program for about 70 kids

See **EMPOWER** page 2



Chuck Peters, director of LifeWay Kids, shares the “Ten Attributes of an Unshakable Kids Ministry” during a plenary session of the Equip Kids Ministry Conference, held in conjunction with Empower in March.

Northwest marks 50 years of Good Friday outdoor drama

Wauwatosa, Wis. – Northwest Baptist Church in Wauwatosa, Wis., hit a major milestone in April when they presented the 50th annual performance of their Good Friday Outdoor Crucifixion Drama.

Those driving past the church facilities in the 4300 block of N. 92nd Street in the Milwaukee suburb saw Roman soldiers and robed figures walking about, three tall crosses, and a tomb cut out of a hillside. The backdrop had just been repaired that day after high winds had severely damaged it the day before. The scene was a constant presence throughout the week-

end, with church members serving three-hour shifts as soldiers. Temperatures that weekend ranged from 27 to 43 degrees with wind gusts of up to 20 mph.

Many passersby pulled over and parked at 6 p.m. Friday evening as the live presentation began, depicting the events of the first Good Friday – the arrest of Jesus, His trial, the crucifixion, and the placing of His dead body into the tomb.

The church’s Holy Week tradition began in 1972 when Paul Becker, pastor, decided to take advantage of the church’s highly visible location adjacent to a



Passersby stop to watch the live performance of Good Friday events at Northwest Baptist Church in Wauwatosa, Wis. The church has offered the public outdoor ministry for 50 years.

Executive board responds to inflation challenges

Rochester, Minn. – The Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention executive board approved financial adjustments during their April meeting so grants from churches can continue

to be made despite the impact of inflation on the convention’s Burress-Littleford Memorial Fund.

Guidelines for the fund require that

See **INFLATION** page 6

EMPOWER

continued from page one

through age 11.

Calvert said 60 volunteers, including Southtown staff, supported Empower.

Featured speakers included Tate Cockrell, associate professor of counseling and director of the doctor of ministry studies at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Bob Bickford associate director of replanting at the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Large group sessions were at the church while breakout sessions were in the near-

by hotel. The hotel experienced flooding just days before the event but was able to make repairs and provide the space for breakout sessions as planned.

Breakout sessions included “The Next Steps for New Believers,” “Elevating the Good News of Jesus Christ through Relationships,” “Refreshed to Serve,” and “Emotionally Healthy Leadership.” The M-W disaster relief ministry provided basic orientation training as well as specialized training in chaplaincy, chain saw, and flood recovery.

Back to the beginning



Asia-Pacific Rim One Day

Hear from IMB missionaries serving in the Asia-Pacific Rim region of the world. Learn how your church can partner to reach the lost peoples and cities of the Asia-Pacific Rim.

Saturday, May 14

Emmanuel Baptist Church
2911 18th Ave NW
Rochester, MN 55901

TIME: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

COST: FREE and lunch provided

WORKSHOP TOPICS:

How to Pray for your Missionaries on the Mission Field
Overview of the Asia-Pacific Rim Region (Deep Dive!)
Student Ministry
The Spiritual Beliefs

What is an Unreached People Group (UPG)?

What is an Unengaged Unreached People Group (UUPG)?
Helping your Church to do Missions (Pray, Give, Go, and Send)

Ways to Partner with the IMB in the Asia-Pacific Rim Region

Evangelism and Discipleship Tools to use on the Mission Field and in the USA
The Dos and Don'ts of Doing Ministry in Certain Security Sensitive Countries

Register Online at: www.mwbc.org

Got Questions? Contact us at: 507.282.3636 or contact@mwbc.org
More information can be found on the website: www.mwbc.org



mwbc.org



Pastor Francis Tabla, right rear, and his wife, Christine Tabla, left rear, stand with 14 new believers who were baptized on Good Friday, Apr. 15, at Ebenezer Community Church in Brooklyn Park, Minn.

NORTHWEST

continued from page one

main thoroughfare.

In his book, “From a Small Stream: A Forty Year History of Minnesota-Wisconsin Southern Baptists 1953-1993,” Otha Winningham describes that first year’s set as a tomb replica made of plywood, paper mache and canvas as well as a small campfire officially sanctioned by city leaders as a “barbecue pit.” In addition to being an integral part of the set, the fire provided warmth for the chilly temperatures.

“The observance of Holy Week prior to Easter is particularly significant in Milwaukee, where liturgical churches predominate,” wrote Winningham, who was executive director of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.

The experiment worked well and the church decided to repeat it . . . year after year.

When current pastor, Paul Springer Jr., arrived 45 years later he found the event firmly embedded in the church’s traditions.

“It was the only sacred cow I was told the church had when I came here,” he said. He has not tried to change it during his five years as pastor, but his reason has nothing to do with keeping feathers unruffled.

“We’re known for it in the community,” he said. “I met folks last year who brought their grandkids to it and told me how they had attended when they were children.”

During the weekend the church also hosts an Eggstravaganza for children, where members in biblical dress tell the Easter account and children can visit the tomb. Another outdoor drama Sunday morning depicting the Resurrection serves as the completion of the one that began on Good Friday. Afterward, a community pancake breakfast is held in the fellowship hall followed by another Easter service, this one indoors.

Serving in the dramatization has become as much of a tradition as observing it. Northwest deacon Garry Garrison first suited up as a Roman guard when he

was 15 – 45 years ago. In a video last month, he encouraged others to join him.

Garrison joins others who have contributed to interesting conversations in the role. Over the years patrons at area bars have pulled over late into the night, their attention snagged by the guards posted beside the large circular rock marking Jesus’ tomb.

“The Gospel has been shared during those times, with at least one person making a decision for Christ,” said Springer, a Minnesota native who previously lived in Chicago with his wife, Melissa, herself a missionary kid who grew up in Japan.

“Every year, the message of Good Friday and the entire Easter weekend remains relevant and helpful for people trying to make sense of their lives and the world around them,” Springer said. “Together, we ask the question, ‘Who is Jesus?’”

With reporting by
Baptist Press.

Back to the beginning

Don't miss out on the joy of giving

When I was a kid, our family struggled financially. As a result, I rarely got an allowance. But when I did, I was taught to give some of it back to the Lord.



Perspectives

Leo Endel

20%! When I started babysitting, I tithed. When I got an adult job, I tithed. I still remember the first time, as a college student, when I gave over \$100. That was over 40 years ago, yet I fear half

the people in church today have never given a check that large. I feel sorry for them. They'll likely never know the joy of giving.

I'll never forget when a businessman joined the church I pastored. We'd been friends and even worked together on projects in our city. He made an appointment with me and stunned me with these words. "I tithe on my income and will give it faithfully to the church every time I pay myself." Then he went on, "I also tithe off the earnings of my three businesses. As my pastor, I'll bring my income statements to you quarterly, and I want you to help me find out where God



wants the money to go." He knows the joy of giving!

I'll never forget when I had a breakfast meeting with a man who was selling his life-long business of over 40 years. He said,

"Pastor, my wife and I have never really made much money all these years, but this is our one opportunity to give a great deal to the Lord. How much would it

See **GIVING** page 11

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

What's in a name?

When my phone rings and someone asks for "William," I know they don't know me.

William is my birth name. It appears on my passport and driver's license. Usually those who ask for

"William" turn out to be telemarketers.

But when the caller asks for "Billy," I know they are from my past. I was known as "Billy" in my childhood, youth and early adult years. My wife still calls me Billy. If they ask for "Bill," they probably met me during my mid-life and later career when I opted for the shorter version.

I guess I would have been the same person

regardless of my name. Since my middle name is Charles, I could have

been called "Charlie" or "Chuck." My father called me "Butch." He was the only one.

Names are important. When someone calls us by

our name it opens doors of relationship. But even more important than our name is the voice of the one who calls us. The effect of hearing our name spoken by those who love us is different than when it is spoken by others.

God knows us by our name and calls us by name. It is a measure of the intimacy by which we are known and loved. When Moses

wandered off the beaten path with shattered dreams and settled for shepherding his father-in-law's sheep, God called his name: "When the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am' (Ex. 3:4).

When the boy Samuel was growing up in the Temple, God called his name: "Then the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening' (1 Sam. 3:10). In the fullness of time, the angel Gabriel called to a young woman in Nazareth: "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God" (Luke 1:30). Those moments changed history.

Sometimes God

changed a name in order to reflect His plan and purpose for a person's life. Jacob's name, which means "deceiver" or "supplanter," was changed to Israel, meaning "you have struggled with God" or "prince of God." When Jesus met the fisherman, Simon, "Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas' (which is translated Peter)" (John 1:42).

Jesus said, "But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his

See **NAME** page 7

Conference and mission trip update

The Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist convention is partnering with the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention to host a missions conference this month.

This conference was canceled last year due to COVID.

Originally, the focus of the conference was on just Southeast Asia, but in the past year, the Southeast Asia Affinity and the Far East Asia Affinity have merged to form the new Asia-Pa-

cific Rim Affinity. This affinity is now the largest in the IMB.



Intercultural
Na Herr

According to the IMB, “the Asia-Pacific Rim is home to 2.3 billion people, living in 16 countries and representing nearly 30%

of the world’s total population. Of those only 4.2% are followers of Jesus, and 43,454 men, women and children are dying every day without Christ” (www.imb.org/asia-pacific-rim).

The purpose of the conference is to bring churches and missionaries together in partner-

ship to reach the people of the Asia-Pacific Rim. Conference attendees will learn about opportunities to pray, give, and go on mission.

The conference will be May 14 at Emmanuel Baptist Church in Rochester, Minn. Registration for the conference is online at www.mwbc.org. The cost is free and lunch is provided.

Planning for the SEA mission trip to Thailand is going well. I have been in regular communication with IMB missionaries and national partners on the field. One missionary couple came to our Empower conference, where they led a break-out session on missions in Southeast Asia.

Right now, we have

Mission Trip Scholarship

For students only. Write an essay on Luke 10:1-12. What does this passage of Scripture teach us about missions and evangelism?

First place winner
\$1500.00

Second place winner
\$1000.00

Additional awards
\$250.00 as funds are available

Trip application deadline: June 1st

Apply at www.mwbc.org/sea

S.E.A.
Mission Trip
to
Thailand

July 26 -
August 9

eight people signed up for the trip from our churches. With a vision to reach the next generation for Christ, we are offering trip scholarships to students with awards up to \$1500. Students who go on a short-term mission trip are more likely to consider full-time ministry or serve as a career missionary.

Please pray for our team that we may be

able to serve and encourage pastors, leaders, and students in Southeast Asia with the hope of the gospel.

For more information and to sign up for our prayer newsletter, you can go to www.mwbc.org/sea.

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

Trust in the Lord during decision fatigue

One side effect of the Coronavirus pandemic has been

“decision fatigue.”

When people find themselves overwhelmed by the constant demand for decision-making in the

face of changing situations and circumstances, they sometimes lose the desire and the ability to make good decisions, or any decisions at all.

Pastors, as a group, have been hit hard by this phenomenon. One

reason is the widespread sense of crisis among church members.



Leadership
Clint Calvert

“Before the pandemic, a fair estimate of church attendees in some type of crisis would be 10-15%,”

said Tate Cockrell, associate professor of counseling and director of the doctor of ministry studies at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

During the pandemic, however, 100% of church attendees were affected by crisis, he

said, because everyone knew someone who had died, gotten sick, lost a job, or struggled with a consequence of the pandemic.

Another factor contributing to decision fatigue is the fact that every decision a church faced in the pandemic was a controversial decision. Usually 80% of church attendees are generally supportive of church leadership with 20% at varying degrees of resistance to church leadership. During the pandemic, the numbers shifted to 50-50 in many churches as members divided on issues such as whether to mask or not mask

and whether to act on the side of caution or freedom.

These two factors combined make the task of church leadership more challenging. Many pastors could identify with the words of Casey Stengel, baseball Hall of Fame manager of the 1950’s New York Yankees: “The secret to successful managing is to keep the five guys who hate you away from the four guys who haven’t made up their mind.” Leading a church in these conditions with this mindset is exhausting.

The alternative to anxiously managing people in crisis and

striving to maintain consensus is to trust in the Lord. Isaiah 40:31 reminds us to trust in the Lord to renew our strength: “But those who trust in the Lord will renew their strength; they will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not become weary, they will walk and not faint.”

The Sunday before Empower this year, a storm caused tremendous water damage at the hotel where the breakout sessions would be held. I walked into the hotel to see all of the carpet in the foyer pulled up with

Serving in war zone, Ukrainian Baptist ministers bear double burden

LVIV, Ukraine (BP) – Baptist ministers in Ukraine express a double burden, helping others survive the war while struggling to survive themselves.

“They not only carry the burdens of those people they minister to,” Ukrainian Baptist Theological Seminary President Yarsolav “Slavik” Pyzh, told Baptist Press, “they’re carrying the same burdens themselves, because you’re living in the midst of war. So you’re kind of getting a double portion of what is happening, and it impacts big-time – physically, psychologically, spiritually.”

Since Russia attacked Ukraine, UBTS has served as a refugee shelter and humanitarian aid center, helping thousands flee the war and sending food and supplies to several eastern communities that are the most embattled. Mass graves with bodies of civilians have been discovered in Kyiv and Bucha, with evidence of many being executed or shot at close range.

“I would say the people, during wartime, they read the Bible more often, but I don’t think so,” Pyzh said. “My observation, that I’ve heard from a lot of people, is they don’t have desire or strength to read Bible as they did before regularly.”

The more than 100 ministers, staff and volunteers on site need care themselves, Pyzh said.

Carmel Baptist Church in Matthews, N.C., will help provide that care. Three coun-

selors from the church traveled to Poland April 27 for a one-week stay.

“They’re coming ... specifically to minister to our team,” Pyzh said. “We have a whole list of people that would like to talk to them, both male and female. I was surprised we have so many male members of our team wanting to talk to counselors. ... They will be ministering to our team and they will be ministering to Ukrainians in Poland.”

Carmel Baptist Church has supported UBTS for nearly 13 years, Executive Pastor David Bass said, and has donated \$140,000 in humanitarian aid since the start of the war. Bass understands the need for trauma counseling, witnessed firsthand by a Carmel Baptist administrator who spent a month at UBTS soon after the war began.

Bass told the story of a man who evacuated his wife from a besieged area in Ukraine, stayed behind to help others and planned to take a subsequent bus out of the area, but has not been heard from since.

“They have not heard from him in weeks. Complete radio silence. There’s something very unsettling,” Bass said. “What happened to him? Was he captured? Is he alive? Is he dead? There’s just a lot of that going on. It’s more than just the inconvenience of we’ve lost a house, we don’t have a car anymore, we don’t have a job. It’s literally everything lost and we don’t know what’s

happened to our loved ones and to our friends, and we don’t know how to get in touch with them.”

UBTS is ministering to evacuees at its shelter and equipping ministers in countries where evacuees have fled. UBTS has scheduled three online roundtable events to help train leaders in Ukraine, Poland and about 10 other European countries housing refugees.

More than 1,500 leaders registered for the first roundtable training April 30, including nearly 50 locations in Ukraine, Pyzh said. Spiritual and emotional health, restarting life while displaced and dealing with personal pain are among roundtable topics.

Additional training sessions will be held May 10 in Poland and May 25, tentatively, in other European countries.

Concurrently, UBTS is working with Bap-

tists in Europe and from the United States to provide trauma counseling to refugees in Poland for at least a year, Pyzh said.

Pyzh is committed to the work, but continues to pray for strength, surviving a state of emergency that he has described as “the new normal.”

“You never know what you can do until you try,” he said. “Things that used to be natural are not natural anymore and things that used to be not natural, are natural. That’s probably the most difficult thing.”

“It’s not natural to expect bombing to happen, but now it is more natural to expect it to happen, than to enjoy a peaceful life.”

The war has displaced more than 12 million Ukrainians, including 5 million who’ve fled the country and more than 7 million who are displaced internally, the United

Nations said April 28, using numbers from the International Organization for Migration.

Pyzh, a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, continues to express gratitude for the financial and spiritual support from Southern Baptist churches and Send Relief.

He continues to ask for prayer for a miracle, and has seen miracles unfolding daily, he said, especially with the world rallying around Ukraine and sending military, monetary and humanitarian aid.

“This is God’s miracle unfolding,” he said. “Sixty-five days and we’re still standing. We do pray for that miracle. Personally, for myself, I ask people to pray for strength.”

“You’re running on very low fuel and I don’t understand how people in World War II could survive for four years. That’s just unbelievable.”



First Ukrainian Evangelical Baptist Church Pastor Igor Melnichuk poses with two young ladies from the congregation during the church’s Apr. 24 fundraiser for Ukraine.

Good news from the associations

SOUTHERN WISCONSIN

On Mar. 17, a ten-person assessment team approved Paul and Sheng Yang as planters for Reborn In Christ Hmong Baptist church in Sun Prairie. Transformation Church in Sun Prairie, pastored by Brian Schoffstall, is the sending church and will provide space for the new congregation on Sunday afternoons.



Schoffstall family

Schoffstall himself is a new pastor in the area, having been called to Transformation in January. He and his wife Tarese have three children. They are natives of Missouri and he served as family life pastor at Waymark Church in Monett, Mo.

SWBA accepted three churches as new members during their May 5 executive team meeting at Transformation Church in Sun Prairie. New churches are Bethel Baptist Church of Janesville, Pastor Drew Super; Amistad Cristiana of Kenosha, Pastor Rafael Escobedo; and Memorial Baptist church of Verona, Pastor Jeremy Scott.

SWBA's partnership with Rio Grande Bible Institute in Edinburg, Texas, is proving fruitful with five church planting couples already in Minnesota-Wisconsin and five students committed to spend this summer in the area helping start new Hispanic ministries. "We are thankful for how God is at work in many and powerful ways to see this partnership develop to bring new Spanish speaking laborers to our area," said Mark Millman, SWBA director of missions/church planting catalyst.

Apr. 6 three leaders from Thousand Hills Baptist Association in Missouri toured mission opportunities in Milwaukee. They plan to bring a team in July to do construction and ministry projects.

NORTHWOODS

On Apr. 10 Immanuel Baptist Church in Roseau had a baptism service for a young girl following the morning worship service. The family provided a meal and there was sweet fellowship afterwards. The church celebrated its seventh anniversary this year.

NBA had "a good meeting, delicious meal and sweet fellowship" at their Apr. 9 semi-annual meeting at Calvary Pines Baptist Church in Cohasset, said Bob Stockland, director of Northland Missions.

BAY LAKES

BLBA's newest church start, Eglise Source D'Eau Vive (Church of Living Water), celebrated its first baptismal service with seven persons baptized Feb. 21. Maxo Macena is pastor of the

French Creole-speaking Haitian ethnic congregation which meets at Valley Baptist Church in Appleton.

BLBA has entered a partnership agreement with Holston Baptist Association of the Tri-Cities area of northeastern Tennessee (Kingsport, Johnson City, and Bristol). Troy Rust, HBA's associational missions strategist, brought a vision team to BLBA's Apr. 9 spring meeting, then led his association to ratify the partnership at their spring meeting on Apr. 21. The partnership will include "praying, giving, and going." Guy Fredrick, BLBA associational missions strategist, said, "We are all excited to see what God will do as He brings one of the nation's oldest Baptist associations alongside one of the most recent."

INFLATION

continued from page one

the corpus (the total amount invested, currently \$404,575.18) never be used, but only the earnings (currently \$41,259.81) be used for making church grants. In addition, the corpus must be increased each year to cover inflation. This year's inflation of 8.6% would require \$34,793 which is all of the earnings except \$6,466.35, not leaving enough to fund either of two current grant applications.

To address the issue, the executive board voted to withdraw \$100,000 from convention operation reserves, with \$50,000 going into the corpus and \$50,000 going into a designated fund from which grants to churches can be made.

Then they approved both pending grant requests, \$7,000 to Nueva Vida en Cristo and \$7,500 to Uflouish, both churches in Milwaukee.

The executive board also placed the \$31,311.85 budget overage from 2020 into a designated account for new strategic initiatives focused on reaching "Next Generation" leaders. The money will be used for leadership training, church internships, and related materials.

In other action, the board approved a May 1 to July 25 sabbatical for Clint Calvert, MWBC leadership catalyst.



TCMBA has brought in some great speakers to train and encourage their pastors by using Zoom technology the past few months. Pastors and church planters from the Twin Cities gathered at Southtown Baptist Church for a catered lunch while they listened and interacted with these leaders: Ronnie Floyd, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention and former president of the SBC's executive committee (Jan. 20); Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (Mar. 24); Willie McLaurin, interim president of the SBC executive committee (Apr. 21). On May 19 the group will Zoom with Johnny Hunt, senior vice president of evangelism and leadership for the North American Mission Board.

Back to the beginning

FATIGUE

continued from page four

fans drying the floor beneath the carpet. My first reaction was panic, as there would only be four days for the hotel to restore the facility. But then it occurred to me, this is the Lord's work, I can trust the Lord that either the facility will be fixed in time or we would discover another way to accommodate the breakout sessions. The peace that enveloped me on my drive back to Rochester was real and nourishing to my soul. In the face of decision fatigue, trusting in the Lord truly renews our strength.

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

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

To have your events included, email them to davidwilliams@compuserve.com.

MAY

14 IMB APAC1Day Missions Conference, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Rochester, Minn.
20 New Pastor Orientation, Rochester, Minn.
30 Memorial Day Observed – **MWBC Office Closed**

JUNE

12-13 Southern Baptist Convention, Anaheim, Cal.
30 MWBC Annie Armstrong Offering Cutoff

JULY

4 Independence Day Holiday Observance – **MWBC Office Closed**
9-16 Hands of Hope, Rochester, Minn.
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.

NBA: Northwoods Baptist Association
SMBA: Southern Minnesota Baptist Association
TCMBA: Twin Cities Metro Baptist Association

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**



Hands of Hope is a MWBC mission project designed to help churches and church plants serve their communities by providing volunteers to take the gospel outside the walls of the church and into the community. This year's event will be held in Rochester, MN helping a new church plant with two Block Parties, service projects, and community evangelism and outreach. This year's event is \$70 per participant and includes housing/showers at Emmanuel Church, meals and snacks, plus a T-shirt. Adult sponsors, parents, youth and children's leaders are free. The event has the feel of being half mission trip and half family camp. Register by going to mwbc.org or by calling 507-282-3636 or emailing contact@mwbc.org.



Keith Cogburn is honored with a Mar. 25 retirement celebration by Layton Avenue Baptist Church after 44 years of ministry. With him are his wife Laura and two grandchildren.

NAME

continued from page three

voice" (John 10:2-4).

To God, no one is a number or a statistic. He knows you better than you know yourself. God knows you and calls you by name.

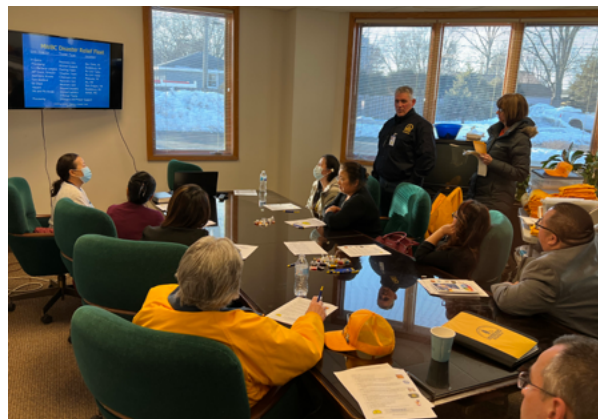
Bill Tinsley is a former executive director of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention. Appearing in various local newspapers around the country, his column "reflects" on current events and life experiences from a faith perspective.

Back to the beginning

Empower/Equip Conference



Leaders at Empower this year include (left to right): Tate Cockrell, associate professor from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary; Tony Lynn, church planting leader for the North American Mission Board in Michigan; and Wade Utterback, member of Trinity Baptist Church in Reedsburg, Wis., and founder of Welcoming Touch Ministries.



The Minnesota-Wisconsin disaster relief ministry offers basic and specialized training during Empower.



Equip keynote speaker Chuck Peters (right) takes a group shot with members of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention's Kids Ministry Team, left to right: Naomi Andrs, Rebekah Phillips, and Penny Reedy.



Leo Endel, executive director of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention, addresses the crowd at Empower, where more than 300 attended.



Foua Young of First Hmong Baptist Church in St Paul, Minn., leads worship at Empower. She also was worship leader for the Pastors and Wives Retreat. At left is Ben Wagner, worship leader at Southtown Baptist Church, playing keyboard.



All age groups are involved at Empower and Equip, including children, youth and adults.

Pastors and wives refreshed and challenged

GREEN LAKE, Wis. — A total of 118 took advantage of the free gift the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention offers to its pastors and wives each year — a weekend retreat at Green Lake (Wis.) Conference Center.

The annual event is made possible through MWBC funding and a gift from Texas Baptists' Mary Hill Davis State Missions Offering. This year a generous individual donation extended the gift to open the invitation to all pastoral staff instead of just senior pastors.

COVID concerns had moved the date from its normal time in February to Mar. 31-Apr. 2.

Even with the later date, attendees were greeted with snowfall the first and last day of the event.

Rather than having an outside speaker as is typical, this year leaders had decided to use "local talent," giving the honor to Jef Skinner, pastor of Gospel Baptist Church in Sparta, Wis., who held everyone's attention as he spoke about finishing well in ministry.

"I want to do more that just finish the race," he said. "I want to finish well."

He compared ministry to his hobby of woodworking, recalling the joy and satisfaction that comes when he puts the finished product on

his workbench, steps back, and says, "That is good," adding, "I want to finish ministry like that."

Skinner said one of the greatest things ministers can devote their lives to is raising up John Marks, referring to the young man who joined Paul and Barnabas on their first mission trip, disappointed Paul by deserting them early, but later became a close and trusted ministry colleague of the apostle. Skinner offered five things to remember when raising up John Marks:

1. Look for what can be, not so much what you see.
2. It's a messy process.



Jef Skinner encourages and challenges pastors and wives during their annual retreat. Pastor at Gospel Baptist Church in Sparta, Wis., Skinner has also spent 20 years in law enforcement chaplaincy.

3. It takes a village to raise up John Marks.
4. "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God." (William Carey)
5. "Let others be great; you be faithful." (Tom Eliff)

The schedule was

relaxed with plenty of free time for pastors and wives to be by themselves or with other couples. Friday evening featured a screening of the new movie "American Underdog" on the life of football great Kurt Warner.



Nearly 60 pastor/wife couples from across Minnesota and Wisconsin gather for worship during the annual Pastors and Wives Retreat provided each year by the state convention.



Leo Endel, left, executive director of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention, encourages prayer and giving for the nation of Ukraine, being invaded by Russia. "One of the fastest, most direct ways you can help with all the needs in Ukraine is through SEND Relief," he said. Igor Melnichuk, center, pastor of First Ukrainian Evangelical in Minneapolis since 2000, said, "We are really thankful for each of you, every church, every person who is praying because we really believe God can stop this war." Victor Soro, right, a new pastor ordained by that church just two weeks ago, led in prayer: "We pray that You would stop this war in Ukraine and bring peace so that healing and rebuilding can begin. . . . We also pray for all the lost souls in Ukraine . . . that they will find the true source of peace."



A panel of three couples answer questions and offer insights from spending their lives as couples in ministry. On the panel were, from left, Donna Kay and David (not pictured) Williams, editor of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist; Cheryl and Paul Fries, retired director of missions and now members of Trinity Baptist Church in Reedsburg, Wis.; Hmong Baptist National Association Executive Director Tra and Mee Her Xiong; and, serving as translator, Na Herr, intercultural catalyst and team facilitator for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.



Meals are an important part of the retreat experience, allowing pastors and wives to spend time with other couples they seldom get to see during the rest of the year.



Some couples stay up after the sessions to play games and fellowship.

Mission Gifts from the Churches

MINNESOTA WISCONSIN BAPTIST CONVENTION COOPERATIVE PROGRAM RECEIPTS YTD through April 30, 2022

Cooperative Program Budget 2022 Year to Date	\$223,937.67
Cooperative Program Receipts 2022 Year to Date	\$218,842.27
Under Budget 2022 Year to Date	\$5,095.40

NAME	CP YTD
------	--------

BAY LAKES BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Amherst, Amherst Bible Church	\$250.00
Appleton, Valley	\$23,631.61
Clintonville, First Baptist Church	\$562.20
Green Bay, Bethel	\$651.54
Green Bay, Graceway Fellowship	\$2,234.47
Green Bay, Highland Crest Baptist	\$24,102.81
Manitowoc, New Beginnings	\$223.00
Neenah, Living Vine Church	\$150.00
Sheboygan, Mapledale Baptist	\$1,334.90
Stevens Point, Tapestry	\$200.00
Tilleda, Bethany Baptist Church	\$736.00
Waupaca, Fellowship Baptist	\$852.12
BLBA TOTAL	\$54,928.65

TWIN CITIES METRO BAPTIST ASSN.

Amery, Journey Church	\$5,000.00
Bloomington, MN Kangnam Korean	\$200.00
Bloomington, Southtown Baptist	\$6,066.60
Brooklyn Park, Ebenezer Comm	\$1,200.00
Brooklyn Park, N Center Lao	\$300.00
Burnsville, Resurrection Church	\$500.00
Coon Rapids, First Hmong	\$1,250.00
Maple Grove, Northwood Comm	\$666.68
Maple Grove, Unlock Church	\$500.00
Minneapolis, All Peoples Church	\$2,160.00
Minneapolis, Gracepoint	\$400.00
Minneapolis, Shalom Communit	\$195.00
Minnetonka, Redeemer Bible	\$300.00
Monticello, Grace Bible Church	\$600.00
New Hope, Westview Church	\$750.00
New Prague, Calvary Church	\$7,013.16
North St. Paul - Eternal Life Hmong	\$504.00
Roseville, Gospel Hmong	\$803.82
Roseville, Roseville Baptist Church	\$2,400.00
St. Paul, Followers Of Christ Hmong	\$3,255.73
St. Paul, Iglesia Hispana Betel	\$500.00
St. Paul, Salt City Church	\$12,000.00
St. Paul, Twin City Hmong	\$720.00
Sunfish Lake, Bethel Baptist	\$2,400.00
Sunfish Lake, Vietnamese Baptist	\$240.00
TCMBA Total	\$49,924.99

NAME

CP YTD

LAKELAND BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Bassett, Westosha Baptist Church	\$632.00
Brown Deer, Brown Deer Baptist	\$600.00
Franklin, Emmaus Fellowship	\$600.00
Hartland, Disciples Church	\$100.00
Kenosha, Amistad Cristiana	\$600.00
Kenosha, Fellowship Baptist	\$3,276.25
Kenosha, Missio Dei Fellowship	\$3,231.00
Kenosha, Parkside Baptist Church	\$1,403.80
Mequon, Westlake Church	\$100.00
Milwaukee, Ephesians Baptist	\$900.00
Milwaukee, Family of Christ Baptist	\$100.00
Milwaukee, Korean Baptist Church	\$900.00
Milwaukee, Layton Avenue Baptist	\$3,688.66
Milwaukee, Mercy Memorial	\$450.00
Milwaukee, Milwaukee Arabic	\$176.72
Milwaukee, Monumental Baptist	\$1,110.00
Milwaukee, Mt Horeb Baptist	\$200.00
Milwaukee, Mt Pilgrim Miss.	\$300.00
Milwaukee, UFlourish Church	\$1,404.20
Mount Pleasant, I.C.A.R.E. Ministry	\$431.99
Mount Pleasant, Immanuel	\$4,660.75
Pewaukee, Crossroads Church	\$1,574.39
Pleasant Prairie, Pleasant Prairie	\$2,459.00
Racine, Hope Community Church	\$736.00
S. Milwaukee, The Vine Community	\$1,047.73
LBA TOTAL	\$30,682.49

SOUTHERN WI BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Boscobel, Blue River Valley	\$662.40
Janesville, Resonate Church	\$1,617.35
La Crosse, New Hope	\$600.00
Madison, Campus Community	\$600.00
Madison, Doxa Church	\$16,918.56
Madison, East Madison Baptist	\$2,303.00
Madison, Gracepoint	\$1,000.00
Madison, Hope In Christ Assembly	\$1,671.32
Madison, Livingstone Baptist	\$743.00
Madison, Midvale Baptist Church	\$4,136.00
Madison, Red Village	\$2,500.00
Platteville, Rolling Hills	\$4,319.58
Reedsburg, Trinity Baptist Church	\$5,800.00
Sparta, Gospel Baptist Church	\$1,548.31
Sun Prairie, Christ Fellowship	\$400.00
Sun Prairie, Reborn in Christ	\$185.91
Sun Prairie, Transformation	\$591.74
Sun Prairie, United Hmong	\$300.00
Verona, Memorial Baptist Church	\$250.00
Waterloo, Cornerstone Church	\$1,100.00
Waterloo, Shalom Christian Assembly	\$70.00
WI Dells, Rock of Hope	\$800.00
WI Rapids, First Baptist Church	\$150.00
SWBA TOTAL	\$48,267.17

Mission Gifts from the Churches

NAME CP YTD

SOUTHERN MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION

Austin, Austin Baptist Church	\$1,599.30
Chester, Chester Woods Comm	\$515.50
Mankato, Hope Baptist Church	\$663.80
Marshall, Radiant Life Church	\$1,044.89
Red Wing, Hiawatha Valley	\$1,520.90
Rochester, Emmanuel Baptist	\$6,970.08
Rochester, Northbridge Church	\$4,584.00
Sartell, Park Fellowship	\$1,852.36
St. Cloud, St. Cloud International	\$50.00
Viola, Viola Bible Church	\$1,114.70
Willmar, Grace Baptist Church	\$25.00
Winona, Cornerstone Community	\$1,581.33
SMNBA Total	\$21,521.86

NORTHWOODS BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Bemidji, Ridgewood Baptist	\$357.00
Cambridge, Cross Pointe Church	\$1,000.00
Crookston, Prairie Community	\$2,706.77
Ely, Berean Baptist	\$500.00
Grand Rapids, Calvary Pines	\$1,933.00
Hill City, Hill City Baptist Church	\$400.00
New York Mills, Grace Connectio	\$100.00
Rice Lake, Hope Baptist Church	\$1,650.00
Warroad, Westside Baptist	\$1,849.02
NWBA Total	\$10,495.79

GIVING

continued from page three

cost us to pave that parking lot?" They gave more than \$40,000 to get it done and then more than \$10,000 for outreach projects. That couple knows the joy of giving!

I'll never forget having lunch with a man who was supervising the construction of our new sanctuary. He'd been hired back on to help the company he'd recently retired from. I asked him about the bills for the steel that hadn't come through the office. He looked down at the table, embarrassed, and said, "Pastor, they're paying me a lot of money right now that my wife and I didn't expect." He continued, "I think God gave it to us for this purpose." I estimate he paid more than \$30,000 worth of bills we never saw. That couple

knows the joy of giving!

Just recently I received a Facebook message from old friends who had been a part of the church I pastored 25 years ago. He said, "Pastor, could you use some money to help with the work up there? What could you use?" I sent him back a request for \$1,000 to help two pastors' families during some difficult times. He wrote back, "Pastor, you're thinking too small." Ultimately, he sent us \$11,000 to help fund the Pastors and Wives Retreat and meet the two needs I'd mentioned. That couple knows the joy of giving!

At our church here in Rochester, we've been presented opportunity after opportunity the past two months. We've given people the opportunities to give for Ukraine war relief, help a partner church in Cuba buy cement, help a mission cou-

NAME CP YTD

OTHER

Eau Claire, Jacob's Well	\$2,550.00
Eau Claire, One in Christ Church	\$471.32
OTHER TOTAL	\$3,021.32

MWBC TOTAL RECEIVED \$218,842.27

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



More than 500 attend the Apr. 23 retirement celebration of Chuelia Vang, pastor of Followers of Christ Hmong Baptist Church in St. Paul, Minn., and his wife Mee Moua Vang.

ple get to their mission field with the International Mission Board, give for church planting in North America through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, purchase a new playground for our church, and send our kids on a mission trip to Iowa. Many times I feel like we ask too much of the people at Emmanuel. They give, and give, and give. They know the joy of giving!

R. G. LeTourneau, one of the most successful inventors, engineers, and businessmen of the last century gave 90% of his income back to God. He was purported to have said, "I shovel out the money, and God shovels it back—but God has a bigger shovel." This is the joy of giving!

Sarah and I don't have enough money to give it all at once, so we are shoveling out our gifts as God shovels them in. In the next couple of months, I'll get paid for teaching opportunities that will allow me to give to each of these opportunities. I believe God gave us these extra dollars so we could give most of it away. This is so much fun. This is the joy of giving!

"A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed." Proverbs 11:25

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

Back to the beginning

Local church autonomy makes cooperation stronger, say Southern Baptist leaders

NASHVILLE (BP)

— There is an old, not-so-funny joke Southern Baptist preachers like to tell. It starts with this question: Where is the headquarters of the Southern Baptist Convention?

The unsuspecting joke recipient responds with Nashville, the home of the SBC Executive Committee. No, the old preacher says with a laugh, and he then gives his church's address.

While the joke may not be all that funny, it does shine a light on a key distinctive of Southern Baptists, one that extends back to the early days of Baptists, and echoed by Southern Baptist pastors, seminary professors and denominational leaders today.

"As Baptists, in the very beginning, we've always held to this idea of church autonomy, or another term for it is independency," said Geoff Chang, an assistant professor of church history and historical theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. "Meaning that churches are, at the end of the day, congregationally ruled under the lordship of Christ, meaning that there is no kind of bishop, there's no presbytery, there are not even secular governments outside of the local church that can exercise authority over the church, in the most important things that the church believes, its membership, discipline, worship, and so forth."

Chang notes that local church autonomy has its roots in the New Testament period but got diverted as the state church developed following Constantine's conversion in the fourth century. Autonomous churches didn't re-emerge until the English Reformation. Baptists come from the separatist wing of that reformation, which emphasized the independence of local churches.

The 2000 Baptist Faith and Message, the official doctrinal statement of the Southern Baptist Convention, describes the church as "an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel."

Chang says the Southern Baptist belief in the autonomy of the local church is directly tied to the congregational form of government to which most Baptists subscribe.

"We have this congregational understanding of what the church is, and therefore the ministry of the church," Chang said. "This is sort of ownership by that congregation, so every time we call a pastor, every time we send out missionaries, every time we get to the ministry of the church, every time we get together to pray, every time we engage in discipleship and evangelism in the church, there's a sense in which the church is not looking to out-

source these things, but understand that this ministry belongs to us as a people, as a congregation. I think that's really the heartbeat behind congregationalism. It's an understanding that the church is the people."

Gregory Wills, the dean of the school of theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, says Southern Baptists have historically understood the authority of the local church in connection to its responsibilities to fulfill the commands of Christ given to the church.

"It's not that we have the right to do these things," Wills said. "It's rather that we are responsible to do these things. Each church is a steward of Christ commands, and each church will bear responsibility for how faithfully we obey Christ's commands to the churches."

Bart Barber, pastor of First Baptist Church of Farmersville, Texas, believes not only is church autonomy biblical, but it has aided the Southern Baptist Convention as it has grown.

"In rapidly changing circumstances, like the American Frontier, local church autonomy proved to make churches very nimble to adapt to their circumstances without having to get permission from someone else," said Barber, who holds a Ph.D. in church history from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. "I agree with the historian W.W. Sweet who said this is why Baptists and Methodists dominated the frontier, because a church could spring out of nothing without anybody else's permission."

As a local church pastor, Barber says he has friends in other denominations that must devote a significant

amount of time staying in the "good graces" of their denominational hierarchy.

For most of Southern Baptist history, church autonomy and a commitment to cooperation have run parallel with one another. While Southern Baptists have embraced a belief in the authority of every local church, they've also understood they can more effectively engage in their ministry and mission objectives when they work together with other like-minded churches. A church's gifts to the Cooperative Program and annual missions offerings are voluntary. Churches pay no dues to a national, state or local body. Every church sets its giving commitments, based upon its priorities and missions strategies.

For more information about what Southern Baptists believe, read the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

MILWAUKEE KINGDOM Growth CONFERENCE 2022
 "MANAGING THE PIVOT BY REFLECTING, REIMAGINING, AND RE-ENERGIZING"

THE IN PERSON EXPERIENCE | THE VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE

REGISTER AT: www.mkekgc.org
 and attend sessions in person or online from your desktop, laptop or mobile device.

SAVE THE DATE MAY 11-13

DAY SESSIONS: ● PAID REGISTRANTS ● OPEN TO CLERGY & LAITY ● EVENING LAITY	NIGHTLY WORSHIP: ● FREE ● OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ● 7:45PM/NIGHTLY
---	---

HOST CHURCH: JERICO CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS
 8086 N. 76TH STREET, MILWAUKEE, WI

MILWAUKEE KINGDOM GROWTH | www.mkekgc.org | Text MKEKGC to 54244