

“Dear Friends,

January 22, 2019

I want to share with you some of the great things happening in our region that your 2018 giving has made possible.

- We have over 20 churches who have begun the Church Revitalization Initiative.
- We have 20 people involved in the Alternative Ministry Education program (AME).
- We provided 12 mission grants.
- We provided 9 scholarships for continuing education.
- We helped 5 of our pastor cluster groups plan growth experiences.
- We helped 7 churches in crisis situations work through the crisis and move forward.
- We helped with expenses for ABMen Disaster Relief 3 times this past year.

The total giving to American Baptist Mission Support (ABMS) from our Region has increased for the first time in 10 years! Each year for the past 10 years our mission giving has declined, but for 2018 we gave a little over \$26,000 more than 2017. **This is wonderful!**

BUT—yes, there is a “but”:

- **The total giving went up, but the total dollars that come to the region went down.** This is because some churches have decided to no longer give to United Missions (UM) and that is where the region receives most of our dollars to operate on--65% of all dollars given to UM comes back to the region for us to operate on.
- Many churches are targeting their gifts, which means very little of the actual giving comes back to the region.
- Some churches are giving to the **GRReat Offering**, but, unfortunately only 13 thus far.
- We have over 50 churches that give nothing to ABMS so we are asking those churches to at least consider taking the **GRReat Offering** sometime during the year.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- **Give generously to the United Missions offering** (Line 1 on the mission giving form). Remember, 65% of that offering comes back to the region for us to operate on.
- Give to the **GRReat Offering**, our regional offering. 100% of those dollars stay in the region to help us do ministry in the region.
- **Pray** for our churches, our region, and our denomination. Some churches are making very difficult decisions because of smaller/declining membership and increasing costs. Pray for them as they seek to serve God.

Thank you for listening. And, remember, **be rightly related to God** and find your joy there, then out of you will flow rivers of living water. **Be a vessel that God can pour his love through.**



Let It Flow!

Paul

***Join us at the Resource Leadership Conference in Bloomington, IL, May 9th-11th, 2019!
Details at abcgrr.org.***