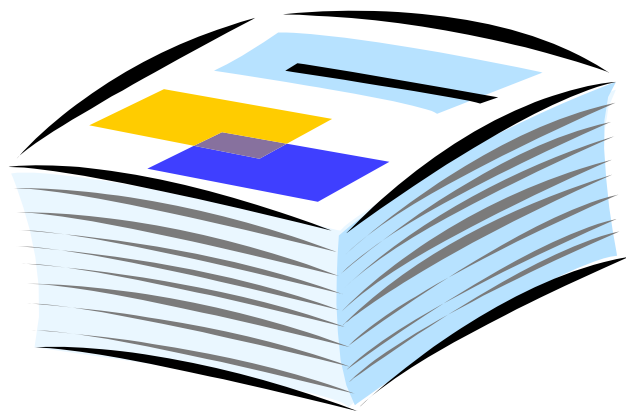


Annual Reports

**The 44th Annual Assembly of the
American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region**



**Doubletree by Hilton Hotel & Conference Center St. Louis
Chesterfield, MO**

September 30 – October 1, 2011

Adopted & Corrected by the Regional Ministry Board

Executive Overview and Summary 2011

Dwight Stinnett

Compared to previous years, 2011 was fairly calm from my perspective. That may seem a strange assessment given the natural disasters we have faced, the persistent world-wide economic uncertainty, and the political theater we have witnessed. But compared to the turmoil that has challenged the Region year after year since 2005, this was a good year. That does not mean we can breathe easy or that our work is all done. It means we are no longer operating in crisis mode as we adapt to a rapidly changing reality. For the first time in a long time I am not reporting, explaining, and interpreting a crisis.

Last year in this report I said “the Region is in the best financial position it has been in five years.” That did not mean that we no longer need the faithful financial support of churches and friends. It meant that we had finally balanced expenses with income (our budget is now 24% less than it was 10 years ago). That balance is entirely dependent on continued financial support.

I have reported for several years now the changing pattern in financial support that is emerging. In 2011, United Mission fell to less than 50% of total regional income. That is a dramatic change in less than a decade. In previous years UM was 70% of our income. While it remains the largest single category of income, UM is steadily declining. Taking its place are designated gifts, grants and investments, which together account for about 35% of regional income. Designated gifts have grown 100-fold in the last ten years as churches choose to support the Region through the category of “Specifics.” The special offerings of GRRreat Friends and GRRreat Churches continue to be essential to the financial health of the Region. This is especially true for us to actually hire a Regional Associate Minister for Congregational Effectiveness as intended by the Board.

Financial support makes regional mission and ministry possible. That is really what this report is all about. So let’s focus on that.

At their meeting this time last year the Regional Ministry Board reaffirmed the purpose and vision of the Great Rivers Region. The Board also gave broad directional priorities to regional ministry with four strategic themes (or overarching goals).

Strategic theme one: *Cultivate passion for mission both locally and globally.*

Strategic theme two: *Create a learning and resource network of GRR churches and pastors.*

Strategic theme three: *Recruit and retain competent, qualified pastoral leadership for GRR churches.*

Strategic theme four: *Deliver core services with partnership, quality, innovation, communication, and accountability.*

These broad goals guide us as we provide programs and services. I have said before that I am excited that the Board has established goals that are appropriate for this organization, in this time, in this place. I am especially pleased that these goals acknowledge what has been an unspoken goal for decades, a goal that consumes most of our time and energy: *recruiting and retaining competent, qualified pastoral leadership for GRR churches.*

As you read through the following reports from 2011, you will discover that:

1. As we have pursued our annual theme of **my Face GOD's Book**, we had a great Mission Conference with Stan Slade. We rejoiced in the endorsement of Katie & Taku Longkumer as missionaries to Northern India. We had workshops by Betty Martin (Murrow Indian Children's Home), Wayne Rogers (GRR Volunteers in Ministry), John Rollet (GRR Men in Haiti), Leroy Thompson (Bacone College), Fela Barrueto (ABHMS), and Jim Weigner (ABIM). We also enjoyed the Bacone College Gospel Choir.
2. Dr. Eddie Hammett was with us again to lead a conference entitled: **Bible Study for Adults in the 21st Century**. Eddie also graciously led a follow-up webinar.
3. GRR churches were challenged with matching grants to experiment with new approaches to Bible study and discipleship.
4. Seven GRR churches received matching "Intern Grants" for new and expanded ministries designed as education/training opportunities for persons considering ministry.
5. Our covenant partnership with the Federation of Baptists in Costa Rica remains strong. Revs. Johnny Saborio and Gary Baits will be with us during our annual meeting as we celebrate the dedication of the church building in Alajuelita. In November, I will be in Costa Rica with a delegation from GRR as we do the same there.
6. Special workshops and consultations have been offered on Clergy Boundaries, church finances, church organization/administration, church leadership training, and technical tools.

7. Church renewal efforts through both intensive consultations and Natural Church Development are a growing area of staff work. We are especially encouraged by the progress that Creekwood in Rockford has been making. But many churches are fragile. Renewed passion for mission and ministry is essential to vitality.
8. Scholarships awarded by the Region helped persons pursue higher education. 44 persons received Gernenz-Shurtleff-Wilcoxon scholarships. Four received assistance for seminary training. In addition, four individuals received Harold O. Long Scholarships for seminary work.
9. Our Alternative Ministerial Education program (AME) continues to provide basic pastoral training for those serving small churches. It is a critical part of our strategy to ensure competent, qualified pastoral leadership for GRR churches.
10. GRR was the target of floods and tornados this year. GRR ABMen were there! \$11,000 from One Great Hour of Sharing supported their disaster relief efforts, as well as other things.
11. There are 12 churches that are presently open for full-time pastors. Another very low number. Regional staff successfully coached six churches through the search process. Also, a very low number. We believe that the economy is continuing to have an effect on ministerial mobility. COMSAO endorsed two candidates for ordination and recognized the ordination of one other person.
12. Since October 2010, one church withdrew from the Great Rivers Region (Manchester Baptist Church, Manchester IL). I believe that leaves us with 239 churches (including 6 mission churches).
13. GRR continues to be a leader in its use of technology and in the resources it makes available online.

I continue to be grateful for the privilege of ministry in the Great Rivers Region. I am humbled by the extraordinary generosity of certain churches and leaders. I rejoice in your elected representatives who have, time and again, risen to the challenge of difficulty. God is at work here and now. It is always good to be working in the same place!

Regional Ministry Board Report

Annual Report for 2011 (October 2010 through September 2011)

Dwight Stinnett, Secretary

The Regional Ministry Board consists of elected representatives and holds legal and fiduciary responsibility for the Great Rivers Region. The Regional Ministry Board planned three meetings during this reporting period: October 1 (during the 2010 Annual Gathering), February 7 and May 6. The February meeting was cancelled due to weather. The Board will also meet during the 2011 Annual Gathering, primarily to consider the Budget for 2012, but for obvious reasons that meeting cannot be included in this written report. The Regional Ministry Board reviewed and/or acted upon the following items since October 2010.

1. Received the final 2010 audit of all GRR accounts by Estes, Bridgewater & Ogden, CPA (letter and summary included in this report). Full copies of the report may be inspected at the Regional Office.

The general operating account of the Region ended 2010 with a \$128,188 increase in unrestricted net assets. General operating expenses were \$913,028, compared with \$1,182,029 in 2009. Our net total assets (cash, property, investments, and loans outstanding) were \$4,887,986 at the end of 2010 (a decrease of \$647,470 from 2009, most of which was due to camp transfers).

Investments of the Region are divided among three professional investment managers (under the supervision of the Ministry of Financial Stewardship). Other investments (usually fixed or short-term) are managed by the Ministry of Financial Stewardship. All funds are invested in accordance with socially and ethically responsible guidelines in a conservative manner. For 2010, regional investments were valued at \$3,974,782, an increase of 11.2% over 2009. \$1,159,809 of regional investments (about 30%) is restricted as to use.

All camp indebtedness was resolved at the close of 2010. Lake Springfield Baptist Camp Inc. and Blackhawk Baptist Camp Inc. assumed full legal, financial, and programming responsibility as ABCUSA-related institutions.

2. Adopted the regional operating budget for 2011 at \$951,841 (\$91,203 or 8.7% less than in 2010).

3. Acknowledged the withdrawal of churches:

Manchester Baptist Church, Manchester IL

4. Adopted a social media policy for inclusion in the **GRR Personnel and Policies** handbook as recommended by the Ministry of Staff Relations.
5. Approved a “template” for a new ministry position as recommended by the Ministry of Planning and Review. The tentative title is Regional Associate Minister for Congregational Effectiveness. The Ministry of Staff Relations was assigned the task to prepare a final job description for consideration by the Board.
6. Received the resignation of P.J. Patterson as Vice-President for Finance and elected Henrietta Brown (a current member of the Ministry of Financial Stewardship) to fill the term of office.
7. The Board received regular reports from the Executive Minister, various councils, and national representatives. Board members received regular training on their roles and how governance functions.

Ministry of Planning and Review

Annual Report for 2011 (October 2010 through September 2011)

Wally Holt, Vice-President for Planning/Review

Planning and Review (P&R) is one of the three administrative divisions of the GRR Regional Ministry Board. The Executive Minister serves as the recording secretary (without vote).

The purpose of P & R is:

1. Review all board policies for consistency in form and language
2. Compose and propose regional goals in the board
3. Ensure regular board training
4. Evaluate the board process

Its members are elected at area meetings and the Vice-President is elected at the GRR Annual Meeting and the members include: Harry Parker, Elaine Bolen, Vicki Edwards, Vicki Roth, Elmer Voudrie (ex officio), and Judi Poppe, Vice President: Rev. Wally Holt.

The following Regional Goals were unanimously adopted at the October 1, 2010 Regional Ministry Board Meeting. These goals will prioritize our future direction and guide us through staffing, programming, and budgeting. They are as follows:

- Cultivate passion for mission, both locally and globally
- Create a learning and resource network of GRR churches and pastors
- Recruit and retain competent, qualified pastoral leadership for GRR churches
- Deliver core services with partnership, quality innovation, communication, and accountability

The Ministry of Planning and Review met three times in 2011. During those meetings we:

1. We voted unanimously to present a “template” for a Regional Associate Minister for congregational effectiveness to the Regional Ministry Board.
2. We reviewed program plans in preparing the Budget for 2012.
3. We functioned as the Nominating Committee for the Region.
4. We started discussions on how we would put together a five person leadership pool for ABCUSA.
5. We began discussion of how we would develop a team that would be a part of a national initiative **Transformed by the Spirit**.

I want to thank each member of this board for their hard work and ask for your continued prayers as the P & R Board continues to work toward fulfilling the goals that were adopted for the GRR.

Ministry of Staff Relations

Annual Report for 2011 (October 2010 through September 2011)

Jerry Phillips, Vice-President for Personnel

Staff Relations is one of the three administrative divisions of the GRR Regional Ministry Board. The Executive Minister serves as the recording secretary (without vote). The Great Rivers Region Ministry of Staff Relations is responsible for initiating policy statements regarding staff functions, establishing expectations for and evaluating the work of the executive minister, giving advice and consent to the executive minister in matters relating to the hiring, maintaining, or dismissing of staff, and serving as a final court of appeals for grievances by fulltime staff people other than the executive minister.

Members of the Ministry of Staff Relations during this period have been Merredith Peterson, Al Heger, Sharon Brown, Quinton Runyon, Jerry Phillips, chair. Sharon Brown's term ended mid-year, and Randy Gauger was elected to the position from Area III. The Ministry of Staff Relations meets periodically to receive reports from, and provide counsel to, the executive minister. The committee also acts as a search committee when the need arises.

Staff relations met three times during the report period (January 31, April 25, and August 26).

1. We reviewed and approved the sabbatical proposal for Muriel Johnson.
2. We received the retirement notice of Sharon Downs.
3. We prepared a "social media policy" to be included in the GRR staff handbook. This was sent to the Regional Ministry Board for approval.
4. We experimented with the use of SKYPE during our meetings.
5. We reviewed the medical leave of Roland Sundberg and advised the Executive Minister regarding this.
6. In view of the increased workload on other administrative staff during Roland's absence, we requested that the Ministry of Financial Stewardship authorize a bonus to administrative staff calculated as 10% of 8 weeks base salary.
7. We reviewed staff compensation and made a proposal to the Ministry of Financial Stewardship for the 2012 Budget.
8. We completed the job description for the Regional Associate Minister for Congregational Effectiveness as directed by the Board.
9. Consistent with regional policy, we extended an invitation to John Grisham to complete the full calendar year of his anticipated retirement in 2013.
10. We attended to appropriate recognitions of staff anniversaries.

Ministry of Financial Stewardship

Annual Report for 2011 (October 2010 through September 2011)

Rev. Henrietta Brown, Vice-President for Finance

The Ministry of Financial Stewardship ministers on behalf of American Baptists in the Great Rivers Region by managing finances, investments and property. We accomplish this by: (1) monitoring receipts and expenditures, whereby, in dialogue with our Executive Minister and Minister of Stewardship and Mission, we are faithful to directives mandated in our budget; (2) designating resources for special ministry projects, realizing the importance of these ministries over against the rate of interest we may be able to secure from other investments; (3) approving the work and recommendations of our Investment Managers and dealing with regional Real Estate concerns; and (4) projecting the region's budgets and forwarding them to the Regional Ministry Board for their review and approval.

The members of the Ministry of Financial Stewardship are elected at Area meetings. The Vice-President for Finance is elected at the Annual Assembly of the Region. Members are: Bud Pruett, Keith Ingold, David Johanpeter, Deborah Harkness (ex officio), and Henrietta Brown.

During the past year we:

1. Worked with Richard Grafton of Estes, Bridgewater and Ogden, in preparation of the annual audit report.
2. Reviewed investment returns with our investment managers and assured their compliance with the region's investment policy guidelines.
3. Set the budget for the upcoming year for the regional operating fund and monitored budget and cash flow needs on an ongoing basis. The budget for 2012 reflects the current unstable economic situation and uses conservative estimates for budgeted income.
4. Continued to monitor a plan to help the region adapt to a new financial reality while positioning GRR for a stronger future, as church giving to United Mission and America for Christ continues to decrease following the recession.
5. Made additional designations of funds received from the Legacy of Des Peres Baptist Church.
6. Received estate gifts through American Baptist Foundation and applied these gifts toward ministries needing funding. Reserves for office automation were used this year to purchase a DVD/CD Copier for the region office.
7. Approved the sale of the former East Side Baptist Church of Mattoon, and the one-acre lot next to the former Lake Benton Baptist Camp.

8. Incorporated both Lake Springfield Baptist Camp and Blackhawk Baptist Camp, and gave each camp a \$15,000 grant to get them started as fully recognized Institutions of American Baptist Churches USA, as authorized by the Regional Ministry Board.

9. Negotiated the lease terms to lease the land in Ogle County to Blackhawk Baptist Camp, Inc.

10. Authorized a special one-time bonus for all staff members for their faithfulness during rough financial times, as requested by the Ministry of Staff Relations.

Thanks to all the members of this committee for their faithful ministry: Deborah Harkness, Keith Ingold, David Johanpeter, Bud Pruett and Henrietta Brown, Vice President and Chair.

Estes, Bridgewater & Ogden

RICHARD L. GRAFTON, C.P.A.
MICHAEL A. FAFOGLIA, C.P.A.
LORI K. MILOSEVICH, C.P.A., C.F.E.

RICHARD W. OGDEN, C.P.A.
ROY A. BALLINGER, C.P.A., M.B.A.

TERRI L. PHELPS, C.P.A.
VALERIE R. AUSMUS, C.P.A.
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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Officers and Board of Managers
American Baptist Churches
of the Great Rivers Region and
Illinois Baptist State Convention

We have audited the accompanying statements of financial position of the American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region, the Illinois Baptist State Convention, and the Illinois Baptist State Convention Camps as of December 31, 2010 and 2009, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses and cash flows for the years then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the organizations' management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

Our audit of the revenue received for the American Baptist Mission Support was limited to verifying the transfers from the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. account.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region, the Illinois Baptist State Convention, and the Illinois Baptist State Convention Camps as of December 31, 2010 and 2009, and the changes in net assets and cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Our audit was made for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements included in the first paragraph. The supplemental information included in Schedules 1 and 2 is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and, in our opinion, is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements taken as a whole.

Estes, Bridgewater + Ogden
Certified Public Accountants

March 18, 2011

The full audit is available for inspection
at the GRR Regional Resource Center,
3940 Pintail Drive, Springfield IL.
Please contact Roland Sundberg at
217.726.7366 or roland@abcgrr.org

Regional Executive Minister – Dwight Stinnett

Annual Report for 2011 (October 2010 through September 2011)

Oct 8-11	ABC of the Dakotas	Apr 17	FBC Peoria
Oct 20-21	GRR Staff	Apr 20	Pastoral Counseling
Oct 24-27	Bacone College	Apr 22	Preach Good Friday Service
Oct 28	Pastoral Counseling	Apr 25	GRR Staff Relations
Oct 31	Teach SS Class Cherry Hills	Apr 26	GRR Financial Stewardship
Nov 4	Pastoral Counseling	May 1	Delmar BC StL
Nov 7	FBC Mattoon	May 6	GRR Planning & Review
Nov 14	Central BC, Springfield	May 6	GRR Regional Ministry Board
Nov 15	Congregational Coaching	May 14	Eddie Hammett Event
Nov 17-22	ABCUSA meetings	May 16	Church futures committee
Dec 1-2	GRR Staff	May 22	Church renewal FBC Belleville
Dec 5	Pastoral Counseling	May 25-26	GRR Staff
Dec 13	COMSAO	May 29	Creekwood, Rockford
Dec 16	Congregational Coaching	Jun 5	Central, Quincy
27-31	Vacation	Jun 11	Local Arrangements Committee
Jan 7	Pastoral Counseling	Jun 12	Church renewal, FBC Belleville
Jan 11-13	GRR Staff Retreat	Jun 13	COMSAO
Jan 15	Leadership Training Antioch BC StL	Jun 13	FBC Girard
Jan 19-22	Bacone College	Jun 14	GRR staff SKYPE
Jan 23	FBC Columbia MO	Jun 21 to 30	ABCUSA meetings
Jan 26	FBC Belleville	Jul 17	FBC Farmington
Jan 27	Pastoral Counseling	Jul 22	GRR Financial Stewardship
Jan 29-30	Leadership Training FBC Macomb	Jul 26	GRR staff SKYPE
Jan 31	GRR Staff Relations	Jul 29	Pastoral counseling
Feb 3	Pastoral Counseling	Aug 1	Hammett webinar
Feb 5	Area IV Cont Ed event	Aug 3	Pastoral counseling
Feb 13	FBC Carthage Ordination	Aug 4	Pastoral counseling
Feb 18	Congregational Coaching	Aug 11	FBC Murphysboro
Feb 22-23	GRR Staff	Aug 12	Pastoral counseling
Feb 28 – Mar 1	REMC Officers	Aug 15	Insurance review
Mar 5	Area III	Aug 17	GRR staff
Mar 12	Area V	Aug 18	Senior Adult Day LSBC
Mar 13	Area II	Aug 21	Central, Springfield
Mar 14	Pastoral Counseling	Aug 21	Jim Weigner BIM
Mar 16	Sloman Funeral	Aug 26	GRR Planning & Review
Mar 16-17	ABCUSA meetings	Aug 26	GRR Staff Relations
Mar 20	Area IV	Aug 29	Pastoral counseling
Mar 27	FBC Belleville	Sep 6	GRR staff SKYPE
Mar 31	Pastoral Counseling	Sep 9	GRR Financial Stewardship
Apr 4-8	GEC/REMC meetings	Sep 16-17	ABCUSA meetings
Apr 9	GRR Mission Conference	Sep 18	FBC Hartford
Apr 10	FBC Belleville	Sep 19	Shurtleff Board
Apr 12	MMBB Luncheon	Sep 24-25	FBC Peoria
Apr 12	FBC Waverly	Sep 29 to Oct 1	GRR Meeting
Apr 13-14	GRR Staff Meeting		

Some of my key activities since my last report (October 2010) include:

1. Continuing to meet and communicate with pastors, churches, and church leaders regarding issues in our denomination.
2. Coaching and counseling with GRR pastors (total of 18 sessions)
3. Conducting leadership training weekends at Antioch Baptist Church in St. Louis and the First Baptist Church of Macomb.
4. Leading a renewal effort at the First Baptist Church of Belleville. This is a year-long emphasis which involved 4 training visits and telephone consultations.
5. Representing the Region at 15 different churches. It was my privilege to preach during the traditional "Seven Last Words" Good Friday Service at Central Baptist Church in St. Louis.
6. Participating in 4 of the 5 Area meetings (there was a calendar conflict with one). I led workshops on the biblical basis for missions in Areas II, IV and V.
7. Teaching a class on the Multicultural Challenge of the Church at Bacone College.
8. Attending to an increased administrative load resulting from Roland's medical leave.
9. Preaching and teaching at the Annual Meeting of the American Baptist Churches of the Dakotas.
10. Nationally, I serve as the President of the Regional Executive Ministers Council (REMC); on the planning committee for the 2012 National Pastors Gathering in Orlando; on the Steering Committee for the national initiative for missional churches in ABCUSA; and editor of the Judson Press Living Church Series. I attended the ABCUSA Biennial as well as meetings before and after the Biennial.
11. Working with REMC colleagues to produce an online college course for American Baptist History and Polity.
12. Released \$11,000 in One Great Hour of Sharing funds for disaster relief of flooding in Southern Illinois and following the tornado in Joplin MO. Portions of this went to support GRR ABMen work in these areas.
13. Working with GRR staff to implement the goals adopted by the Regional Ministry Board and to maintain accountability through our reports.

Regional Associate Minister – Richard Ricks

Annual Report for 2011 (October 2010 through September 2011)

October 2010:

- 4 Congregational Visits (Savoy, Oak Park Ave, Fairbury, East Peoria)
- 2 Search Committee Consults
- 2 Natural Church Development Congregation Consultations
- 6 Consultations with pastors
- 1 Credentialing Conversation with clergy
- 1 Conflict Consultation with Church and Pastor
- 4 Pastors' Cluster Gatherings
- 1 Area Youth Planning Meeting
- Annual Assembly 2010
- Staff Meeting
- ABC USA Information Tech Conference Call

November 2010:

- 4 Congregational Visits (East Moline, Ridgeview, Second Peoria, First Peoria)
- 2 Search Committee Consults
- 2 Celebrate Church Ministries Tapings (Aledo, Rev. Dunn; Marley Community, Rev. Holder)
- 1 Natural Church Development Consultation with Pastor
- 2 Clergy Recruitment Consultations
- 1 Licensure Worship Service (Graymont for Casey Frizell)
- 3 Consultations with Pastors (Exit Interview, Ministry Consultations)
- 5 Pastors' Cluster Gatherings
- 2 Area Planning Meetings

December 2010:

- 1 Congregational Visit (Bloomington)
- 1 Bd/Search Committee Consultation
- 2 Consultations with Pastors
- 1 MMBB Consultation, re: Pastors announcing retirement
- 3 Pastors' Cluster gatherings (2 Christmas Dinners)
- Staff Meeting
- Trained web master

January 2011:

- 5 Congregational Greetings (East Peoria, Creekwood, Bloomington, Ridgeview, Peoria)
- 1 Congregational Open House for Retiring Pastor (Bloomington's Spencer Gillespie)

- 1 Installation Service (Darren Loeppky: Creekwood of Rockford)
- 1 Congregational Board Meeting (re: ordination of staff member)
- 1 NCD Health Team Extended Session
- 4 Consultations with Pastors (Ministry; Credentialing)
- 1 Tech Consultation with Pastor
- 4 Pastors' Cluster Gatherings
- 1 Recruitment Consultation with Prospective Interim Pastor
- 1 Area Planning Meeting
- Staff Retreat

February 2011:

- 4 Congregational Greetings (Canton, Fairbury, Dixon, Peoria)
- 1 Installation of Associate Pastor (Jack Smith, Dixon FBC)
- 4 Congregational Consultations
- 1 NCD Consultation
- 4 Consultations with Pastors
- 4 Pastors' Cluster Gatherings
- 2 Area Planning Meetings
- 1 Area Fellowship: A1 Men's Prayer Breakfast at Belvidere FBC
- Staff Meeting
- Face to Face (multiple region consultation)
- Trained web master

March 2011:

- 3 Congregational Greetings (Macomb, Pontiac FBC, Peoria Second)
- 1 Ordination Anniversary Celebration (Pontiac FBC for Jim Wolfe)
- 4 Search Committee Consultations
- 1 NCD Health Team Consult
- 6 Consults with Pastors
- 3 Pastors' Cluster Gatherings
- 2 Annual Meetings/Summits
- 1 Area Planning Meeting
- 1 Staff Consultation
- 1 Staff Skype Session

April 2011:

- 5 Congregational Visits/Greetings (Galesburg, Orion, Moline, Ridgeview's Easter Combined)

Easter; Quad Cities Chin Baptist at East Moline FBC)

- 1 GRR Representative at Pug Sparland's Funeral
- 2 NCD Coaching Sessions (Pastor; Health Team)
- 3 Consultations with Pastors
- 3 Pastors' Cluster Gatherings
- 1 Area Planning Meeting
- Missions Conference
- Staff Meeting
- Processing of Staff Video for Search Resource CD

May 2011:

- 4 Congregational Visits/Greetings (Cordova, Peoria FBC, Rantoul, Plano)
- 5 Search Committee Consultations
- 1 Pastoral Relations Committee Consultation
- 3 Consultations with Pastors
- 6 Pastors' Cluster Gatherings
- 1 Area Planning Meeting
- Eddie Hammett Seminar, Mattoon
- GRR Staff (retired and current) Picnic-Lake Springfield Baptist Camp
- Dedication of Managers' House, Lake Springfield Baptist Camp
- Staff Skye Conference
- Staff Meeting

June 2011:

- 3 Congregational Greetings/Visits (Oak Park FBC, Minonk, Mt Carroll)
- 5 Search Committee Consults
- Memorial Service for Rev. Dr. Bob Grizzard
- 4 Consultations with Pastors
- 1 Alternative Ministerial Education Candidate Lunch
- 1 Pre-COMSAO consultation with pastor
- 1 Campus Ministry Board Meeting
- 1 Week Continuing Education: DevConf 2011 (web developers)

July 2011:

- 4 Congregational Greetings/Visits (Farmington, Nueva Vida Rockford, DeKalb FBC, Immanuel of Rockford)

- 1 Congregational Anniversary and Installation of Pastor (Elgin Immanuel)
- 2 Natural Church Development Health Team Consultations
- 2 Search Committee Consultation
- 3 Consultations with Pastors
- 1 Pastors' Cluster Gathering
- Staff Meeting
- Annual re-design of abcgrr.org

August 2011:

- 3 Congregational Visits/Greetings (Peoria (for guest preacher), Aurora FBC, Rock Island FBC)
- 2 Search Committee Consultations
- 1 Church Dinner for Retiring Pastor, Rev. Kathy Remley of Cordova
- 1 NCD Coaching session via Skype
- 1 Ordination Examination Council
- 4 Consultations with Pastors
- 2 Consultations with clergy interested in serving in the GRR
- 1 Area Planning Meeting
- 3 Tech Consult for Annual Assembly 2011 (admin staff; conference center tech; volunteers)
- Lunch conversation with 2012 Area III Presenter
- Senior Day: A II and A III
- Staff Meeting
- Annual re-design of abcgrr.org

September 2011: (projected; this report due 9/2)

- 5 Congregational Visits (Ottawa, Savoy, Peoria's 175th, Plano 135th, Alpha)
- 1 Search Committee
- 1 Communications Seminar (Kankakee FBC)
- 1 Natural Church Development Coaching
- 1 Celebrate Church Ministries Taping (Coffee House at FBC Carthage)
- Consultations with Pastors
- 7 Pastors' Cluster Gatherings
- Area I Seminar led by Walter Holt and Jim Richardson at Dixon FBC
- Ministers' Conference
- First Day of Annual Assembly 2011
- 1 Staff Skype Conference

SUMMARY of Key Activities and Products

Strategic theme one: Cultivate passion for mission both locally and globally

- Encouraged churches of Areas I and III to participate in spring GRR Mission Conference
- Provided online registration option for Missions Conference
- Continued taping “Celebrate Church Ministries” videos for posting on the web
- Provide technical support and first-proofer of each issue of Mainstream
- Added capacity to make Mainstream searchable by topic/persons mentioned
- Participated in Hole in the Gospel Study in Aurora Cluster
- Maintain the Bait’s web site with connections to International Ministries and Federacion Bautista Costa Rica

Strategic theme two: Create a Learning and resource network of GRR churches and pastors

- Helped re-start a fourth clergy cluster gathering – Dixon – in Area I
- Encouraged non-participating pastors to participate in clusters
- Provided new pastors, interims, and interns invitation and information to cluster groups
- Participate in each cluster, each month (or request Assistant, Harry Sanders, to do so when I cannot)
- Supported revamping the structure and format of the Area I and III annual meetings into learning opportunities
more appropriate for next generation of pastors and church leaders
- Provide learning seminars and videos on GRR web sites
- Use church leaders and pastors to lead workshops at area functions
- Provide churches with NCD insights from sister church NCD initiatives
- Discipleship Summit (Area III)

Strategic theme three: Recruit and retain competent qualified pastoral leadership for GRR churches

- Working with 12 search committees
- Leadership Summit (Area I)
- Interview students from Lincoln Christian College interested in serving GRR church(es)
- Follow up on non-ABC pastors taking interest in serving GRR churches
- Provide scholarships or information about scholarships for interns and serving pastors for growth
- Lead Pastoral Relations Committees in training
- Face to Face encouragement, participation, support
- Church Positions online authoring, advocating, and enrollment
- Take lead in Search Committee consultations and interview prospective pastors not “in the system”
- “Open door” by email/telephone/LinkedIn providing counsel and arrangement of face to face conversations in addition to making initiative to maintain contact

Strategic theme four: Deliver core services with partnership, quality, innovation, communication and accountability

- Natural Church Development (7 churches at the present) coaching and resourcing
- Interviews of pastors and church leaders about useability and resources needed per region web site
- GRR written (Stinnett's Current Thoughts) and distributed (Parish Paper and Growth Points) posted on web promptly and providing both RSS feed and "Key term" searchable.
- Led in the technical details of producing the GRR Pastor Search Resource DVD that includes a host of materials for church search committees.

Face to Face (multiple region: MI, IN, Greater Indianapolis, OH, and GRR) planning team and Tech (web) developer: Spent time collaborating in significant revision of registration forms for mail and online.

GRR web sites: Parish Paper, Growth Points, Mainstream, and Stinnett's Current Thoughts articles are now searchable by keyword on the web. They also each have their own RSS feed with subscription address available. These sites also have their own mobile "handset" editions. Collaborated with new Camp Boards to transition GRR web site sections that were covering camping to the respective Camps new web masters. Set up new web-based calendar and trained Candy Stivers to maintain it.

Videography: Produced Master – menu driven – DVD of "Haiti – One Year Later" for copying and distribution at Missions Conference; producing Search Committee Resource CD that will include each Ministerial Staff person's video emphasis on a particular task of pastoral searches; Sam Slade's Friday evening sermon from the Mission Conference will soon be available. Added 2 "Celebrate Church Ministry Videos": Allan Holder of Marley Community, Sermons using the Animals of the Bible; Luke Dunn on preparing Growth Group questions as part of sermon preparation.

Regional Associate Minister –John Wm Grisham

Annual Report for 2011 (October 2010 - September 2011)

October 2010:

7 Congregational Worship/ Visit/Greet (West Frankfort, Johnston City, Kane, Carrollton, Mattoon, Charleston & Preach at Greenfield)
3 Committee Consultations : Search
1 Congregational Anniversary Event
GRR Staff Meeting
Meet / Consult with New Interim Pastor
Five Day Partnership Visit to Costa Rica
Area II Ordination Council : Ryan Donoho
Congregational Consultation – Mission Support
1 Pastors Cluster Gathering
2 Consultations with Pastors
GRR Annual Meeting: Mt Vernon

November 2010:

10 Consultations with Pastors
3 Congregational Worship/Visit/Greeting (Carthage, Marion & Preach at Boskydell)
3 Pastors Cluster Gatherings
1 Committee Consultation: Search
Area II and Area IV Board Meetings
Mortgage Burning: SIU-C Campus Ministry
Anniversary Celebration : One Hope United
Congregational Consultation - Stewardship
Congregational Consultation - Future
Week of Vacation

December 2010:

GRR Staff
2 Committee Consultations : Search
3 Consultations with Pastors
Ordination Service: Quincy – Ryan Donoho
Congregational Worship/ Visit/ Greet (Moweaqua)
Week of Vacation

January 2011:

Congregational Worship/ Visit/Greet (Paris, Waverly, Girard)
Congregational License of Staff Member- Decatur
4 Committee Consultations : Search
3 Pastor Cluster Gatherings
4 Consultation with Pastors
GRR Staff Retreat
Area II SKWIM : Green Lake
Area II Ordination Council: Don Winters

Congregational Mission Conference: St Louis, Third

February 2011:

3 Committee Consultation: Search
5 Consultations with Pastors
2 Pastors Cluster Gatherings
GRR Staff
Area IV Church Ministries Conference: Mt Vernon
Ordination Service: Carthage - Don Winters
Planning Meeting for GRR Mission Conference
Face To Face: New Castle, Indiana
Congregational License of Staff Members : Mattoon
Congregational Mission Event; Facilitator
4 Congregational Worship/ Visit/Greet (Mt Vernon, Greenville, Springfield -Cherry Hills & Preach at Mattoon)

March 2011:

4 Pastor Cluster Gatherings
Area II Annual Meeting : Winchester
Area IV Annual Meeting; Flora
3 Congregational Worship/ Visit/ Greet (Crainville, Springfield-Harvard Park, Springfield –Cherry Hills)
NCD Introduction to Congregational Leaders
GRR Mission Conference Planning Session
1 Committee Consultation: Search
3 Consultations with Pastors
Congregational Consultation I : Denom. Affiliation
Congregational Consultation - Future

April 2011:

Interview 14 Students at Northern Seminary
Region Mission Conference –Springfield, Cherry Hills
GRR Staff
2 Committee Consultations: Search
NCD Consultation : Program Overview
1 Pastors Cluster Gathering
Fund Development Consultation: LSBC Board
S. Illinois Men's Brotherhood : Speaker
License and Install Joe Sanders: OSBC Stonington
3 Congregational Worship/ Visit/Greet (Carthage, Nokomis, Carterville-Grand Ave,)

May 2011:

7 Committee Consultations; Search
4 Pastor Cluster Gatherings

GRR Staff
GRR Staff Picnic
Consultation with student entering seminary
6 Consultation: Pastors or Church Staff
2 consultations: Possible Pastoral Candidates
SKYPE consultation with Missionary Gary Baits
5 Congregational Worship/ Visit/ Greet (Flora, Jacksonville, Olney and Pastor Anniversary Recognitions at Decatur and Boskydell)

June 2011:

Week of vacation
ABCUSA Biennial: San Juan Puerto Rico
2 Congregational Worship/Visits/Greet (Jerseyville, Bethel & Preach at Greenfield)
2 Pastor Cluster Gatherings
NCD Health Team Training.
4 Consultations; Pastors or Staff
Consultation: License of church staff member

July 2011:

Week of vacation
GRR Staff
4 Congregational Worship/ Visit/Greet (Eldred, Cutler, Ava & Preach at Charleston)
4 Consultations: Pastors
Area IV Planning for 2012 Annual Meeting
1 Pastors Cluster Gathering
Committee Consultation: Search

Meeting with 3 Non ABC pastors about Interim Ministry
NCD Survey results to a Pastor
Congregational Consultation : Pastor Relations Committee

August 2011:

Planning for Area IV 2012 Annual Meeting
2 Pastors Cluster Gatherings
Attend Commissioning of Taku & Kate Longkumer
Planning Sessions for Area II & Area IV Boards
2 Congregational Consultations: Pastor Relations
Area II & Area III Senior Day LSBC
Congregational Consultation : Mission Support
Congregational Consultation: Interim Selection
Congregational Reception for Pastor
4 Congregational Worship/ Visits /Greet . (Murphysboro, New Burnside, Carrollton, Kane .)

September 2011:

4 Pastors Cluster Gathering
Staff Meeting
1 Committee Consultation: Search
2 Congregational Worship/ Visits/Greet (Centralia, Roodhouse)
Stewardship Sunday Speaker- Springfield, Central
1 Congregational Anniversary Event.
NCD Health Team Consultation: Survey Review
2 Cong Consultation : Pastor Relations Committee
Installation Service: FBC Greenfield-John Pattison

Summary of Key Activities -2011

Strategic Theme One: Cultivate passion for Mission both locally and globally.

- Encourage leaders and pastors to participate in the Annual Great Rivers Region Mission Conference.
- Promote and Coordinate Costa Rica Partnership included three 2011 partnership work groups, a Discovery visit to Costa Rica, and plans for dedication of the Alajuelita Church Building in 2010-11.
- Assist those individuals and churches that are seeking American Baptist Mission information and updates, by helping them make a direct contact with appropriate networks and ministries.
- Encourage pastors and churches to network and to share experiences with Community Ministry at Area and Regional gatherings such as the Area Meetings, the Church Ministry Conference, and at Pastors Cluster Gatherings. These Ministries might include Summer Vacation or Week end Brown Bag, Trunk or Treat, Back to School shoes and haircuts. Also included might be ministries such as block parties, after school programs and opening the church building as a safe place during weather alerts.

Strategic theme two: Create a learning and resource network of GRR pastors and churches

- Recruit encourage pastors to participate in Cluster gatherings as opportunity for study, relationship and support of each other in ministry.
- Facilitate the meetings of the 6 pastors cluster group in Area II and Area IV.
- Promote participation in Continuing Education events such as 2012 go to a New Land in Orlando, Fl.

Strategic theme three: Recruit and retain competent qualified pastoral leadership for GRR churches

- Trained and resourced 9 active pastoral search committees in 2011 and also maintained contact those churches without pastors not currently seeking a pastor.
- In the pastoral search process helped to identify those who could serve as Interim as well as potential pastoral candidates.
- Interviewed 14 students at NBTS in 2012.
- Promote Face To Face to both pastors and to Pastoral search Committees.
- Meet with and interview non- ABC pastors expressing interest in serving GRR Churches.
- Encourage enrollment in ABPS and updates in ABPS.
- Affirm and recognize pastors in time of anniversary and celebration as well installation and closure.

Strategic Theme Four: deliver core services with partnership, innovation, communication and accountability

- Meet, greet, and report in worship, and also preach when invited, in the churches of the GRR.
- Annual Area IV Church Ministries Conference.
- Area II and Area II Annual Meetings.
- SKWIM 2011.
- Natural Church Development.
- Stewardship Resources.
- Congregational Preparation of Mission Budget.

Regional Associate Minister – Muriel Johnson

Annual Report for 2011 (October 2010 through September 2011)

October 2010

Regional Convention
Staff Meeting
Planning Meetings:
Choose Life –Church Renewal Planning
1 Sunday Church Planting Congregational Visit
Journey Church, Sedalia, MO (Presentation & Preaching)
2 Leadership Seminars Presented (By-Laws and Trustee Training)
2 Sunday Congregational Visits (2 preaching) – FBC-KCMO, 2ND KCMO ,
9 Pastoral Contacts
4 Congregational Resourcing Activity

NOVEMBER 2010

Staff Meeting
Planning Meetings:
Area V Program Board
Sabbatical Planning
2 Sunday Congregational Visits - St. Matthew & Antioch
2 Congregational Conflict Consultations
10 Pastoral Contacts
2 Search Committee Consultation FBC-Columbia &

December 2010

Staff Meeting
Search Committee Training & Consultation-Columbia FBC
2 Sunday congregational Visits – Shalom - New Journey
6 Pastoral Contacts
Leadership training: intergenerational Ministries

January 2011

Staff Retreat
2 Sunday Congregational Visits – Central STL – Columbia FBC
Planning Meetings:
Staff Relations, Area V Annual Meeting
1 Leadership Training Seminar with JDS
10 Pastoral Contacts
2 Congregational Conflict Consultations

February 2011

Staff Meeting
Discipleship Workshop – Terre Haute

2 Sunday Congregational Visits - Pleasant Grove – Potential Church Plant
1 Staff & Leadership Training – ‘Ministry Now’
12 Pastoral Contacts
Planning Meetings:
Host church for Area Meeting
Tentative Discipleship Event for Spring 2012

March 2011

Area III Annual Meeting
Area V Annual Meeting
4 Sunday Congregational Visits – (3 Preaching)
Grace-Southern Union- Temple of Truth
FBC-Wood River
10 Pastoral Contacts
1 Congregational Conflict Consultation

April 2011

Staff Meeting
Mission Conference
3 Sunday Congregational Visits (1 Preaching)
FBC-Belleville – FBC-Columbia – Bethel
Choose Life: Renewal Session
Choose Life: Process Consultation
Good Friday Services – Central JDS Preaching
11 Pastoral Contacts

May 2011

Staff Meeting
4 congregational visits (1 installation)
(FBC-Edwardsville – 2nd STL - Shalom CCP-STL - Delmar)
Choose Life: Renewal Consultation- Belleville, IL
7 Pastoral contacts
By-laws Training Session – East STL
Evangelism Consultation - Edwardsville
Search Committee Consultation – FBC-Columbia

June 2011

3 Congregational Visits (2 Preaching)
Choose Life: Renewal Consultation- Belleville, IL
8 Pastoral contacts
Area-V Host Committee for GRR Convention
SIU-E Campus Ministry Consultation
ABC Women In Ministry
ABC-USA Biennial

July – August – September 2011

SABBATICAL

SUMMARY of Key Products and Activities for May thru June 2011

On Sabbatical July thru September 2011

Strategic Theme one: Cultivate passion for mission both locally and globally

- Attended the ABC-USA Biennial
- Continued conversations with two Area V churches about planning a youth mission trip to Bacone College.
- Began Discussion about a “Youth Educational Component” for the Area V Meeting in March 2012

Strategic Theme two: Create a Learning and resource network of GRR churches and pastors

- Hosted the first women clergy cluster in Area V
- Consulted with the SIU-E Board about future ministry options and appropriate process details
- Identified a “pool of associate ministers” (from neighboring Area V congregations) to provide supply preaching.
- Presented 4 leadership training workshops (2 of these with the executive minister)

Strategic Theme three: Recruit and retain competent qualified pastoral leadership for GRR churches

- During this summary period I continued to work with 4 active search committees as they continue working through the call process.
- Provided Max K with all the Area – V search committee contact information as well as up-to-date reports on each committee and their process.

Strategic theme four: Deliver core services with partnership, quality, innovation, communication and accountability

- Recruited and resourced the Area-V Regional Convention Host Committee
- 15 “intentional” pastoral contacts (face to face, phone and video conferencing)
- 6 Sunday Congregational Visits

Church Planting:

The Quad City Chin Baptist Church is seeking Church Planting status and I have continued to focus on identifying all of the “unique” administrative challenges as well as trying to resolve the complex language and cultural issues. I have established contact with Florence Li National Coordinator for Intercultural Ministries. She is the Asian Churches Strategist as well as a member of the Burma Refugees Task Force. The Chin Baptist Church has completed most of the documentation needed to move forward with mission status this fall. Their by-laws have been established and translated.

Volunteers in Ministry
A Program of the American Baptist Churches
Of the Great Rivers Region
209 W. Royal Drive, De Kalb, Illinois 60115-1817

Telephone: 815-756-6222

e-mail: revwrogers@frontier.com

Fax: 815-756-6222 *9

J. Dwight Stinnett, Ph. D
[Executive Minister](#)

Rev. L Wayne Rogers
[Program Coordinator](#)

VOLUNTEERS IN MINISTRY

2011 ANNUAL REPORT

By Wayne Rogers, Coordinator

Again this year, I want to begin my annual report by saying, "THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!"

THANK YOU... to each one of you who volunteered to accept leadership roles or agreed to do any of the tasks that were needed in your local church this past year. You have heard it said many times, many ways: "The ministry of our churches to their own members and to their communities would be 'zero' without willing volunteers."

THANK YOU...to those of you who brought your own gloves and tools in to help at clean up days or at repainting or repairing work-days at one of our two American Baptist Camps, or at one of our five American Baptist Campus ministries, or at one of the three colleges/universities at Bacone, Judson, and William Jewell.

THANK YOU...to the churches who recruited work teams to arrange "mission work weeks" or "mission workdays and weekends" to travel to other communities (or even other states) to "do ministry" with youth or adults while also doing physical work around the property there.

Again, I want to strongly encourage pastors, men's group leaders, women's group leaders, youth leaders, Missions Committees to go back to your churches and help plan at least one Mission Work trip for some of your members in 2012. Contact me, and let me help you with idea, planning and possible locations for this always rewarding effort.

OUR KEY VERSE

"God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God's many kinds of blessings."

I Peter 4:10 (The Living Bible)

Alternative Ministerial Education Program (AME)

Annual Report for 2011

Carl D. Cottingham, Dean

The AME program is now completing its seventh year. It continues to assist in the preparation of men and women for pastoral ministry. It is an alternative training program for those who for various reasons cannot attend seminary and complete a seminary degree. It is aimed primarily at those who serve smaller churches, associate pastoral positions, part-time or bi-vocational positions.

The program requires the completion of ten (10) courses, providing a basic entry-level preparation of pastoral ministry. Enrollees may take courses at approved colleges, universities or seminaries.

At this date twelve (12) have completed the program and are serving in the ministry. Several more are actively taking coursework at this time and will complete the requirements for regional ordination soon.

This has been a good year for new people enrolling in the program. Please pray that men and women will continue to respond to God's call to the ministry. The need is still great for strong pastoral leadership for our churches. You may have someone in your congregation who is sensing a call to pastoral ministry. If so, please encourage them and let me know. I will be most pleased to meet with them and give them information about the program. My email is *carl.cottingham@gmail.com*.

Blessings and Peace to All,

Carl D. Cottingham,
Dean of the Alternative Ministerial Education Program
8/25/11

Council on Ministerial Standing and Ordination (COMSAO)

Annual Report for 2011 (October 2010 through September 2011)

COMSAO reports directly to the Regional Ministry Board. The Executive Minister serves as the recording secretary (without vote).

The purpose of COMSAO is: To apply ordination and ministerial discipline policies and procedures as adopted by the Regional Ministry Board.

Its members are appointed by the GRR President, and include:

- Rev. EthelMae Champ (retired; serves as Chair)
- Rev. Carl Cottingham (Dean of AME)
- Rev. James Harper (FBC, Jacksonville IL)
- Rev. Cheri Grizzard (FBC, Peoria IL)
- Rev. Bunyan Cocar (FBC, Dixon IL)

COMSAO has met twice since the GRR Annual Assembly in October 2010. The meeting dates were: 13 December 2010 and 13 June 2011.

1. We reviewed the application materials and interviewed candidates for the purpose of credentialing in the process of ordination or recognition.

The Council endorsed the following candidates for further examination and possible ordination in their respective areas:

Don Winters, Senior Pastor at First Baptist Church, Carthage IL
Quintin Mullinix, Senior Pastor at First Baptist Church, Marseilles IL

2. We recognized the ordination of the following candidates:

Katie Longkumer, ABUSA Missionary to India

3. We concluded the ecclesiastical review process regarding one charge of clergy misconduct and withdrew recognition of ordination.
4. We continued giving advice to the Executive Minister and the Dean regarding the Alternative Ministerial Education (AME) program.
5. We received reports on clergy discipline across the denomination.

GRR Scholarship Task Force

Annual Report for 2011

The task force is appointed by the Executive minister. Those serving in 2011 were: Bruce Briggs, Stonington; Janie Nelsen, Springfield; Roger Jackson, Springfield; and Marge Wilcoxon, Springfield

Gernenz-Shurtleff-Wilcoxon Scholarships

Named in honor of a former Executive Minister, the Albert J. Gernenz Scholarship recipients are members of American Baptist Churches in the Great Rivers Region. The local pastor nominates the student and confirms the student has potential for Christian service in the world. The student indicates their need of financial aid and provides recommendations from a lay leader as well as the school principal, counselor or teacher.

When Sam Wilcoxon (former member of the Scholarship committee) passed away, his family requested, in lieu of flowers, that memorial gifts be sent to GRR for college student scholarships. This year, his wife Marge Wilcoxon is continuing to give a donation to help students receive financial aid to further their education.

FORTY-Four applicants awarded the Gernenz-Shurtleff-Wilcoxon Memorial Scholarships for the 1011-2012 college/university academic year are: Christopher Albin, Rukiya Anthony, Daniel Baltz, Lisa Anne Boaz, Ryan Bressner, Christina Burden, Jan Byrd, Abigail Cash, Alyssa Chambers, Antione Charlier, James Combs, Kyle Crane, Antonio Danfort, Clint Davis, Ashley Edwards, John Edwards, Nikki Folk, McKenna Haas, Steven Hack, Ryan Hagan, Lyndsay Harwood, Burgandy Henderson, Morgan House, Katherine Jenkins, Jenny Lewis, Derek Maninfiore, Whitney Benefiel Millis, Luke Nelsen, Natalie Nelsen, Daniel Olson, Ian Park, Sabrina Park, Marc Reiter, Kendal Rothschild, Chipu Sakufiwa, Clayton Smith, Joshua Smith, Austin Stephens, Catherine Street, Rebekah Street, Hannah Struck, Elizabeth Surbeck, Austin Walker, Caitlin Wunderlin

FOUR individuals received the Theological/Seminary Gernenz-Shurtleff Scholarships this year: Ivan Greuter, Angela Jackson, Cana Roth, and Janet Waychoff

Harold O. Long Scholarships

The Harold O. Long Scholarships are renewable scholarships awarded to member of American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region who plan on entering a career in professional church leadership and who plan to attend an American Baptist Related school or seminary.

FOUR Seminary/College students this year received the Harold O. Long Memorial Scholarship: Adina Butler, Matthew DeBall, Brenda Donley, and Angela Jackson

Contributions to these awards are always welcome. Send to: Scholarship Committee, ABC/GRR, PO Box 3786, Springfield, IL 62708



Disaster Relief, Work Projects, New Commandment Men's Ministry and Prayer Breakfasts--these are the four major functions of the American Baptist Men of the GRR.

Disaster Relief: Our 25th response was to Haiti in October and November, 2010, with ten men helping missionaries and local Haitians rebuild from the January, 2010 earthquake. The team, under the leadership of Chuck Johnson, spent 168 hours of volunteer labor in two days, completing

construction of four picnic tables, eight sets of bunk beds and partially completing a rubble house for earthquake victims. Tables and bunk beds will be used by future mission team. The trip was cut short because of a threatening hurricane and resulting floods. The mission was the vision of John McConnel, who organized and helped sponsor the trip.

Our 26th response was on May 22-25, 2011 in response to a call to help once more with flood clean up in Southern Illinois. Van Peters led a team of 12, working at 6 sites in 3 communities for 200 hours.

Our 27th response was to Joplin, Missouri in June and July with 5 teams working at 20 sites for over 969 hours, helping to clean up from our nation's deadliest single tornado in more than six decades. Team leaders were Paul Webb, John McConnel, Gary Short, Elmer Voudrie and Dave Harman.

Since this disaster relief ministry was reorganized in 2004 we have had 571 volunteers at 468 sites for 176 days, serving 29 communities and giving 11,317 volunteer hours and saving victims \$254,632.50 of labor costs.

Work Projects: Under the leadership of George Meyer, ABMen (and women) this past year have been to Biloxi, Mississippi; Judson University; University of Illinois at Champaign; Cedar Rapids, Iowa and Girard Baptist Church, IL and are planning to finish the dining room floor at Lake Springfield Baptist Camp.

Bob Haley, a new member of the Cedar Rapids work team, wrote a testimony in our Spring, 2011 edition of UPSTREAM. "There were eight of us. The Christian spirit of the others blessed me. I was never made to feel I was an "outsider"...When Friday came, everyone was tired but still in good spirits. These were good Christian men working together to attempt to please God. I was uplifted to be among them."

New Commandment Men's Ministry is one of the newest focuses of our work. Under the leadership of Terry Mauriizio, this ministry helps churches recruit, organize, and develop teams of men that permanently adopt the widowed, single parents and others with long term needs in

their church and community. First Baptist Church in Decatur implemented this ministry in Jan. 2010 and others are catching this vision.

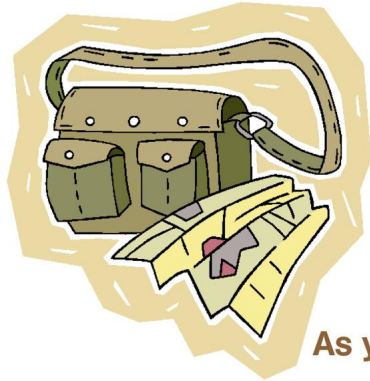
Prayer Breakfasts: Some local churches, clusters and area men's gatherings have been in existence for some time. At our 2011 Gathering we hope to enlarge and strengthen this focus-- as well as the other three listed above.

Leadership: Because of family responsibilities David Comstock resigned as president and Mac Shotwell assumed pro-tem leadership until September 17 when Earl Troyer is to be elected president. A new and returning slate of officers will be presented.

21st Annual Gathering: As this report is being written we are anticipating a record attendance at our Sept. 16-17 Gathering at Lake Springfield Baptist Camp. With the theme "**Because Jesus Came, We Come**" this two day event will include testimonies on our four ministries, plus disaster relief training, Bible study, inspirational messages and music and interest groups.

Visit our ABMen exhibit and see pictures and reports of our ministries.

--*Mac Shotwell*, President



**DISCIPLE
NOW !!!!**

As you go ... make disciples Matthew 28:19

BUDGET FOR 2012

Adopted by the Regional Ministry Board September 2011



American Baptist Churches of the
Great Rivers Region

Budgets are not merely dollars and cents. Budgets empower the priorities of the Regional Ministry Board. Only the Board has the authority to establish priorities, allocate resources, and demand accountability. This is how regional ministry is made a reality. The intent of the services, programs, and events funded through this regional budget is to challenge, assist, represent, and empower GRR churches in the work of the Kingdom.

The Regional Ministry Board has established four over-arching goals that guide regional ministry through the allocation of resources. Those guiding goals are: (1) Cultivate passion for mission both locally and globally, (2) Create a learning and resource network of GRR churches and pastors, (3) Recruit and retain competent, qualified pastoral leadership for GRR churches, and (4) Deliver core services with partnership, quality, innovation, communication, and accountability.

The General Operating Budget consists of INCOME and four EXPENSE sections. The EXPENSE sections are: **General Ministry Expense, Self-Funded Events, Grant-Funded Ministries, and Program Ministries Funded by United Mission.**

General Ministry encompasses all the Region's area ministry services as well as all administrative and office costs. Instead of having seven different line items for one specific type of expense shown repeatedly in each cost center, they have been combined here. Salary, benefits, travel, contractual services, supplies, maintenance, and convention are examples of these types of expenses. This represents 84.8% of Budget expenses.

Self-Funded Events includes expenses related to conferences, events and services for which a fee is charged. In other words, these are intended to be "revenue neutral" activities. The GRR Missions Conference is an example. Some events are subsidized from other unrestricted fund sources. In general, the expense of Funded Events is balanced by the income of Conferencing (line 3019). This represents 2.1% of Budget expenses.

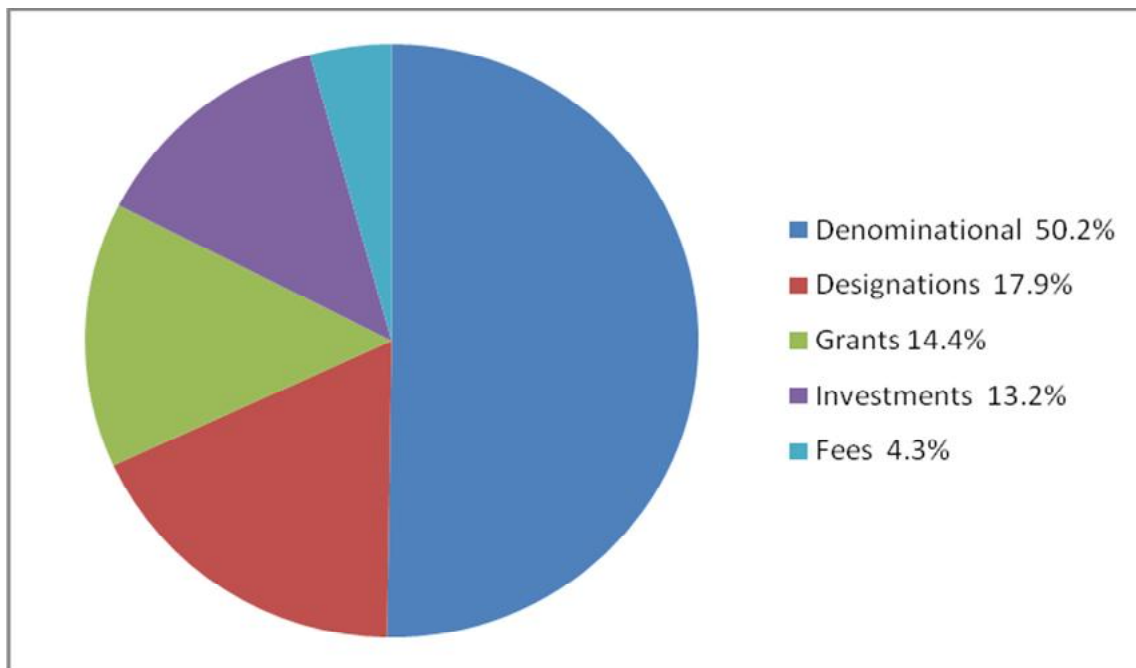
Grant-Funded Ministries shows the distribution for projects funded by designated and/or restricted grants (or other) income. These may not all technically be "grants." Primarily, these consist of Shurtleff Fund grants, Foresee the Future distributions (from restricted regional investments), American Baptist Church Developers donations and restricted endowments like the DesPeres Legacy. These funds cannot be used for any other purpose. Together, these represent about 12.7% Budget expenses. Obviously, grants and restricted use investments are essential to our programs and services.

Program Ministries Funded by United Mission shows the allocation of unrestricted resources to accomplish regional goals. Various subsidies to regional auxiliaries and related ministries are also shown here. All expenses shown in this section are covered by, and totally dependent upon, unrestricted gifts to the Region, primarily United Mission dollars. Together, these items represent less than 1% of Budget expenses. This is markedly different from a decade ago and reflects the continuing decline of United Mission income and our growing reliance on grants and restricted use investments.

Narrative Explanation of Key Elements

Under **Income**, you will note that about 50.2% of our Budget comes from United Mission (line 3000) and America for Christ (line 3003). This has proportion has been falling for 8 years now. Ten years ago this was about 70% of regional our income. The estimate of income through United Mission for 2012 is a conservative estimate. This reflects the continuing change in the income streams for the Region as churches increasingly choose to specify and designate their mission gifts (see lines 3004, 3007, and 3010). At this point in time these gifts represent nearly 18% of regional income. Just six years ago such gifts were negligible.

GRR Income Sources



According to the Common Budget Covenant adopted by all the legal partners who constitute ABCUSA, regions retain 65% of United Mission to support regional ministry and mission. 35% of United Mission goes to the General Board of ABCUSA for distribution to the various national partners. America for Christ (AFC) is a special offering. One-third of AFC stays in the region of origin to support local mission and ministry. Two-thirds of AFC goes to the American Baptist Home Mission Societies (the new name for the Board of National Ministries).

The remaining 17.5% of planned income comes from various non-restricted investments and fees for events (lines 3001, 3002 and 3011).

One particular income stream deserves special explanation. That is the DesPeres Legacy, line 3220. This is a restricted endowment managed by the American Baptist Foundation. The Executive Minister must report to the Foundation annually regarding the use of these funds.

Because this will be a recurring gift, a new income line has been created (line 3220). The things made possible by the DesPeres Legacy are found in lines 5230-5237. While we lament the decision of DesPeres Baptist Church to close, we celebrate them for their faithful stewardship of the gifts with which God blessed them. Their ministry will live on. The DesPeres Legacy, along with other such restricted funds and grants accounts for 14.4% of our income.

Everyone knows this has been an especially difficult economic situation for the last 24 months. Our churches have been affected, and regional income has also been affected. While things seem to have stabilized, the economy is very slow about returning to normal. The technical conditions of “recession” have ended, but, as always, employment lags behind the recovery. Some commentators have been describing this as the “new normal.” In any case, this seems to be what we can all expect for several years now. Your staff will continue to exercise good stewardship when it comes to expenses, and the Ministry of Financial Stewardship will continue to practice close oversight of our financial situation.

Under **General Ministry Expense**, the recommendations of the Ministry of Staff Relations regarding salaries are included. The Ministry of Staff Relations proposed, and the Ministry of Financial Stewardship agreed that full-time ministerial employees of the Region would receive an increase of \$1300 and that full-time administrative employees would receive an increase of \$700. The result is an average increase of 2.0% for all full-time employees. As proposed, the median salary and housing for ministerial staff will be \$66,647 and the median salary of administrative employees will be \$32,828.

The financial position of the Region has continued to improve as we have reduced staff through retirements and resignations. However, that has not been without its downside. Our capacity to deliver services is directly related to our staffing. Last year the Board adopted a ministerial staffing plan suggesting five full-time staff ministers. Based on that plan, the Ministry of Staff Relations has prepared a job description for a new ministerial position. However, there is not adequate funding for that position now, and it has not been included in the 2012 Budget. If our financial position improves, we will be prepared to go forward with that search and hire.

Likewise, Sharon Downs retires at the end of 2011, and there is no plan to replace her. We have budgeted \$25,000 should we determine that extra part-time administrative help is needed.

The Continuing Education (line 4006) for ministerial staff has been sustained thanks to the DesPeres Legacy. One of the suggested uses that came with this gift was training for regional ministerial staff so they could be more effective in working with churches.

Contract Services (line 4010) include the Mainstream editor and area ministry assistants.

Under **Self-Funded Events**, the direct costs of these activities are carried primarily by registration fees (income line 3019) and/or designated funds.

Grant-Funded Ministries includes those items funded exclusively by outside or designated funds. Some are grants from outside the Region that we process, others are restricted gifts managed by the Region. The DesPeres Legacy is included in this section of the Budget (lines 5230 through 5237)), consistent with the restrictions placed upon that gift. The DesPeres Legacy makes possible over half of the planned program ministries of the Region. In 2012 we will continue and expand the matching grants for ministerial interns (line 5231); we will have a special discipleship training event in May (line 5232); we will have targeted church renewal grants (line 5233); we will be having pastor learning-action groups (line 5234); and we will be participating in the national renewal effort called **Transformed by the Spirit** (line 5236). Line 55232 (DesPeres Legacy) also helps underwrite the Missions Conference and the Ministers Conference. One new line is worth noting. That is line 5245 which is the income from the Lake Benton Legacy. This has restricted use and we will be working with leaders from Area IV and V to determine exactly how it will be used for children and youth ministry.

Program Ministries Funded by United Mission are those activities funded predominantly (if not exclusively) through United Mission (line 3000), America for Christ (line 3003), Specifics to the Region (lines 3004, 3007, and 3010), and unrestricted investment income (line 3001).

GRR Non-Funded Subsidies (line 5280) includes grants set aside for GRR auxiliaries (ABY gets \$500 and Clergy Spouses gets \$200). *New PCL Events* (line 6105) is for orientation and welcome events that are planned for ministers new to the Great Rivers Region (we do this twice a year, depending on the number of new pastors). *Convention Subsidy* (line 6201) realizes that convention registration fees (income line 3020) rarely cover 100% of meeting expenses.

