



# The Mainstream

## News of Ministry and Mission

American Baptist Churches of the  
Great Rivers Region



**God's New Thing**

May 2017

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Online edition now interactive

### 2017 Calendar

### Rev. Dr. Lee Spitzer Elected General Secretary of ABCUSA

#### May:

20: **Cleanup Day at Lake  
Springfield Baptist Camp**

#### June:

2 - 4: **GRR ABWM Conference**  
Effingham, IL

23 - 24: **American Baptist Men's  
Annual Gathering**  
DeKalb, IL

28 - **ABCUSA Biennial**

July 2: Portland, Oregon

#### July:

27: **Senior Day - Lake  
Springfield Baptist Camp**

#### August:

18 - 19: **Baptist History and  
Polity Course**  
ABC-GRR Resource  
Center, Springfield, IL

#### September:

28: **Minister's Conference**  
Chesterfield, MO

29 - 30: **GRR Annual Assembly**  
Chesterfield, MO

#### October:

14: **Professional Boundaries  
Course**  
ABC-GRR Resource

On Monday, May 8, the Board of General Ministries met to elect **Reverend Dr. Lee B. Spitzer** to the position of **General Secretary of American Baptist Churches USA**.



Currently Dr. Spitzer serves as Executive Minister for the American Baptist Churches in New Jersey (ABCNJ). He has served congregations in New Jersey, Nebraska, and Rhode Island. Dr. Spitzer brings a wide range of experience and expertise to his new role as General Secretary.

His goal as General Secretary is "to lead ABCUSA into a future of spiritual renewal, creative service, and church growth, in joyful cooperation with all partners of the American Baptist Family." His efforts as General Secretary will be directed toward strengthening connections with ABC regions, affirming and enhancing our diversity, reaching out to the next generation of leaders, growing trust and collaboration, strengthening our American Baptist identity and providing administrative leadership in areas of stewardship, funding, and fiduciary concerns.

## A Word From Paul Gibson, ABCGRR Executive Minister



Wow, there is so much happening as we head into the summer that I will only say a little bit about each thing. Lots is happening.

1. These next two months will be transition months for us. Our part time area ministers end their time with us, and beginning July 1, **Patty Bilyeu** and **Rex Rogers** will begin their service as our two new area ministers. They are great people, and we are blessed to have them with us. Muriel Johnson will still be with area 5 and taking on additional responsibilities region wide.
2. Our denomination has chosen a new General Secretary who will begin June 1. After over a two-year process, Rev. Lee Spitzer, Executive Minister of New Jersey, was chosen to be our new General Secretary. I have known Lee for some time and I am excited about this choice. We will include a bio on **our web site** if you want to find out more about him.
3. We decided to not charge for our **ministers' conference** that happens on Sept 28 at Chesterfield. Not only that, but we will be paying for the meal following the event. Our presenter is an expert in helping pastors and churches deal with conflict. His name is Karl Slaikeu. Plan on attending.
4. Plan to attend **our regional gathering in Chesterfield** on Sept 29 - 30. Our special guest will be Dr. Marvin McMickle. We will also throw

in some special things to mark our 50th anniversary of being the Great Rivers Region. Put it on your calendar now, and plan to join us.

5. **Our Biennial gathering** of ABCUSA happens at the end of June in Portland this summer. I am hoping that a number of us will be attending. If you are going, will you let me know. It would be nice if we could have a gathering sometime during the event of the people from ABCGRR.

6. Check out our latest mission spotlight telling about our planting efforts in Kinshasa, Republic of Congo.

I know this summer will be busy for all of you. It is a time to get away and spend time with family and friends, but it is also a great time for our camps. Be praying for them as they prepare and plan for the summer.

Remember, be rightly related to God and find your joy there, and out of you will flow rivers of living water. Be a vessel that God can pour His love through.

In Christ,

Pastor Paul

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### Spotlight 4: Project Kinshasa Republic of Congo

There has been a need for an English-speaking congregation in the city of Kinshasa, with a population of over 10 million people. While there are many churches in Congo in local languages, there was felt need for a place of worship for English speaking families.

Today there are approximately 5000 -10,000 English speakers from over 100 organizations from English speaking countries around the world. In the International Protestant church, there are approximately 35 countries represented from around the world.

The building project is under way under the direction of our missionaries **Michael and Jill Lowery**. The land was given to the church and the project was begun in 2014. It is hoped that the building can be completed in the next year. Our gift to them will help them to go ahead and finish the final phase of the project. Be praying for them as they help to meet the needs of people who are involved in projects and ministries of all kinds in the city of Kinshasa. Especially keep Michael and Jill in your prayers.

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## Church News

**Women on a Mission of First Baptist Church, Sullivan, IL** hosted a Ladies Night Beach Party, " on May 6, 2017. After enjoying a meal with a beach theme, the ladies enjoyed a musical praise led by the trio, **State of Grace** (pictured below).



## **.American Baptist Men's Gathering**

**"Embracing Your Purpose and Mission"**

**Baptist Campus Ministry @ Northern Illinois University**  
449 Normal Road, DeKalb, IL

**5:00 p.m. Friday, June 23- Noon, Saturday, June 24, 2017**

Join us for a weekend of worship, spiritual growth, fellowship, food, and activities

**Rev. Jon Self, Sr.**, First Baptist Church DeKalb, IL

**Rev. Dr. Joseph Mitchell**, New Hope Baptist Church, DeKalb, IL

Worship Leader: **Dan Theobald**

**Registration:** (includes dinner, breakfast & lunch & snacks)

Adults: \$40 (\$30 if mailed before May 25th)

Youth: \$25 for the 1st, additional youth from the same family Free!

Register 3 men from your church by May 25th and bring your pastor for free.

**Register on-line at: <https://goo.gl/forms/mzzELugst9T2Z04Z2>**

**Lodging:** Holmes Student Center Hotel @ NIU \$65 + tax  
340 Carroll Ave. Dekalb, IL

For Reservations call: (815) 753-1444 (ask for ABM rate and tell them how many beds you need)

Website: <http://www.hsc.niu.edu/hsc/hotel/index.shtml>

Mail Reservation to Earl Troyer,  
P.O. Box 211, Goodfield, IL 61742

# American Baptist Women's Ministries - Great Rivers Region Annual Conference

Keller Convention Center  
Effingham, IL

June 2 - 4, 2017

Registration begins at 4:00 p.m on  
Friday.

- Friday Night Hymn Sing
- Missionary: **Sharon Buttry**
- Bible Study Leader: **Sarah Becker**
- Saturday Night Concert: **Praise  
Band from Newton**
- Workshops
- Silent Auction

## 2016 - 2017 Special Project:

### Deborah's House, Tijuana, Mexico

Deborah's House is a recovery  
residence for abused women and  
children. The special project will be  
designated toward providing fur  
niture for the classroom in the new  
building.

### Cost for Conference:

**Full Time:** \$170.00 - \$275.00 (De-  
pending on how many people to a  
room)

**Saturday only:** \$65.00 (Begins at  
8:30 a.m.)

**Checks payable to** ABW Ministries-  
GRR. Mail registration and checks to  
Doris Kaisner, P.O. Box 233, Fair-  
bury, IL 61739

# 2017 Senior Adult Day Lake Springfield Baptist Camp

Thursday, July 27

9:30 am – 3 pm

Q & A with Camp Managers:  
**John & Kelsey Parrish**

Worship: **Melissa Gibson**

Devotion: **Paul Gibson**

Elvis Concert: **Scott Parks**

**Cost: \$15.00**

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## GRR Website & Mainstream

For more news of mission and min-  
istry, **go online** and click on the links  
(brown lettering) in these columns.

E-mail GRR Webmaster, **Richard  
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## Mainstream Contact Information

Send your stories of mission and  
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