



Church Revitalization Initiative (CRI)

With great excitement we introduce to the Great Rivers Region churches the **Church Revitalization Initiative (CRI)**. The Church Revitalization Initiative is designed to help committed pastors and church leaders who are willing to do what it takes to revitalize their churches. The Initiative is comprised of pastors and church leaders who have helped lead their churches to healthy revitalized congregations.

If you are feeling stagnant and/or undecided how to move forward, please email me; (wallyholt63@gmail.com) and we can discuss your situation and determine if the team can be of service to you. We know that we are living in difficult times and that is why we want to be of assistance to you. In Proverbs 20:18, we read the following: "plans succeed through good counsel;...". Since we are all one family (of God), the Great Rivers Region has put together this initiative so that all will know we are here for each other. If you think you may be interested in some counsel concerning the health/vitality of your church, please contact me.

Wally Holt, Coordinator

2018 Annual Gathering Church Highlight Pages

It was so GREAT to see last years' highlights sent by churches to be included in the Annual Gathering Program Book. Last year we asked for churches' highlights of the 50 years we celebrated as a Region. Your great response has led us to request this again this year.

If your church would like to be involved, please submit one paragraph describing a particular highlight(s) that took place along with a photo/photos depicting that highlight, keeping it to one page giving each church in the GRR the opportunity to share a specific highlight to be published in our Program Book this year.

Please submit your paragraph/photo(s) **NO LATER THAN August 6th** .

Send to debbie@abcgrr.org

GRR Website

GRR Webmaster: Richard Ricks:

Email: revrick4@comcast.net

Mainstream Contact Information

Send your stories of mission and ministry. Please also send the names of new members to:

Linda Ricks
232 Devron Circle
East Peoria, IL 61611



The Mainstream

News of Ministry and Mission

*Be a vessel that God can pour his love through.
Let It Flow*

June 2018

Email: debbie@abcgrr.org
Online edition interactive

web: www.abcgrr.org

2018 Calendar

July

4 - 7: **World Mission Conference, Green Lake, WI**

August:

4 - 12 **Sturgis Mission**

24 - 25: **American Baptist History & Polity Course**
GRR Resource Center

September:

27: **GRR Ministers Conference,**
First Baptist Church
Bloomington, IL

28 - 29: **GRR Annual Assembly**
First Baptist Church
2502 East College Avenue
Bloomington, IL and'
The Chateau Hotel
1521 Jumer /Drive
Bloomington, IL - Breakfast meetings, Saturday.

October:

20: **American Baptist Professional Boundaries Course**
GRR Resource Center

November:

14 - 16: **Space For Grace: Thy Will Be Done**
Philadelphia, PA

51st Great Rivers Region Annual Assembly

September 28 - 29, 2018

The Area I and III Churches of the Great Rivers Region invite our Church Family (all churches of the region) to the Great Rivers Region's 2018 Annual Assembly on September 28 - 29, 2018. The Annual Assembly will be held at the **First Baptist Church of Bloomington** located at 2502 East College Avenue Bloomington IL. There, as one body, we will worship and fellowship together as a family. We are planning a great meeting and invite you to celebrate with us

Please note that this is a change from previous years **All meetings and meals except Saturday morning breakfast meetings will be held at the church.** The breakfast meetings will be held at the hotel.

We will be staying at **The Chateau Hotel** located at 1621 Jumer Dr, Bloomington, IL. The hotel is a short distance from the church.

The Ministers Conference will be held on **Thursday, September 27** at First Baptist Church of Bloomington.

Speakers for the events will be **David Fitch, Shane Claiborne, Tony Campolo, and Sharon Koh.**

Please make plans to attend this very important meeting of our region. More information and registration materials will be coming soon.



A Word From Paul Gibson, ABCGRR Executive Minister

I was sitting in a meeting a couple of weeks ago and we were discussing the immigration fiasco that was happening at the border. There were many viewpoints shared, mostly with respect and an attitude of listening to others, even when we disagreed. **But one person really got our attention.** She got up to talk about how important immigration was to her because it completely changed life for her and her people. She was a Native American, and she was just reminding us that this illegal immigration wasn't new to her and her people. Taking an honest look at history helps us to keep perspective. Maybe we are afraid that the immigrants that are coming in will do to us what we did to the Native Americans. Hopefully they, and us, will work things out as we love and understand each other, and as we continue to love and understand the words of Jesus. **Take a moment to read Matthew 25:34-45,** it always helps me.

Bloomington, Sept 27:

Ministers Conference with Dave Fitch.

Bloomington, Sept 28-29:

Dave Fitch, Tony Campolo, Shane Claiborne, Sharon Koh, WHAT A LINEUP! I have already had some people tell me that some of our speakers are quite controversial. I

agree. You can't take the words of Jesus seriously and not be somewhat controversial.

We will schedule some conversation time to share concerns on Saturday morning. I would encourage you to be in prayer for our gathering. Please come.

I will be at two **gatherings in Green Lake**, the Holy Spirit Conference, and the Missions conference. The **Dieselbergs, the Stantons, Paul Rollet and others are home for these gatherings.** It will be good to see them. Continue to pray for them and others. Also continue to pray for the people of **Puerto Rico** in their rebuilding effort. **Check out the sister church program** and pray about your involvement. There is still much to be done.

And....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.

Happy Summering.



Note About Mainstream:

There will be only one issue of the Mainstream each month in June and July.

GRR Mission Discovery Trip To Costa Rica

Plans are in place for Great Rivers Region Mission Discovery to Costa Rica October 29 - November 6, 2018. The group will be limited to 20 persons.

- Meet IM missionaries Ruth Mooney, Sue Hagerty, Peter and Sarah McCurdy and Ingrid Roldan-Roman.
- Visit churches that have hosted recent GRR partnership groups as well as visit churches that may host groups in the future.
- Meet with FABCR church pastor and leaders.
- Visit places of historical and cultural interest in Costa Rica including 2 days of tourist activity.

GRR groups have joined in Partnership Projects in Costa Rica each year since 1985.

For information contact **Dr. John Grisham. john@abcgrr.org. Cell/ Text:217-553-1560**

Bacone College Needs Our Help

Bacone College began in 1880 by Almon Bacone, a missionary teacher with the American Baptist Home Mission Society. The college was started to teach Native Americans and has done so for the past 138 years. That long, rich history of educating American Indians could end if Bacone does not receive financial assistance.

(continued in next column)

Our small church, which averages 50 on a Sunday morning, saw the need at Bacone. Three of our members went there last year with a group of American Baptists, on a work project. We discovered that significant storm damage had occurred to one of their dormitories. This happened at a time of a dramatic increase in enrollment, which resulted in students sleeping in their cars due to the dormitory damage. Last year's team of American Baptists restored 5 dorm rooms.

Another trip had been planned to continue the restoration the week of June 11-15 of this year, but the work trip was cancelled due to the financial crisis at Bacone. Our church board felt that, even though we are a small church with limited resources, that we need to help them financially. We are sending a check for \$2,000.

I would challenge the other churches of our region to help Bacone meet their financial needs by sending immediate funds and putting Bacone College in your annual church budget so that they can continue to provide a Christ-centered education to Native Americans and others.

Thank you and God bless you for your support.

Brian Romanowski
First Baptist Church of Mahomet

