



THE ARK

Volume 16, No. 4 News from the Akron Area Association of American Baptist Churches Winter 2017

MODERATOR'S CORNER



GOD BLESS US ALL IN 2017!

Happy New Year from my home to yours. I trust that your Christmas and New Year's celebrations were filled with family and good food.

It is an honor to begin serving as Moderator for the Akron Area Association of ABC Churches. I ask for your prayers and your ideas as we head into a new year. Please join me as we consider the direction the Association should take in 2017. We are a collection of churches and people who choose to follow Christ. We are not forced to follow Him. We want to do His will. Together we will find a common cause and goal. For this to happen - I will need your ideas and input.

The Association's support of Camp Koinonia will continue as we see young lives changed for the Lord. We will always try to support the camp with our physical labor and our financial resources.

I believe there are other areas of ministry where the Association could find itself helping others and promoting the Good News. A few of these ideas are:

Supporting specific missionaries.

Mission trips which would include volunteers from all Association churches.

Children's ministry in Canton, Akron, or Cleveland.

Sr. Citizen ministry to help people navigate through the process of Medicare - Medicaid - income taxes and other paperwork facing those who are over the age of sixty-five.

We have the people. We have the wisdom. We have the resources. Now we just need the ideas and the vision to see God's direction. I ask for your ideas and comments. Please e-mail them to me at: loboszoo@yahoo.com.

May God bless us as we remain proactive for ministry in 2017.

In Christ,

Jon Lobos, Moderator

COMING TOGETHER
IS A BEGINNING;
KEEPING TOGETHER IS
PROGRESS; WORKING
TOGETHER IS SUCCESS.

- Henry Ford

<http://theortlandolawgroup.com>

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ABC/Ohio REGIONAL MINISTER



Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. There are some upcoming events on the American Baptist Churches of Ohio calendar that you will want to know about ...

ABC/Ohio Church Leadership Conference

SAVE THE DATE for this year's Leadership Conference April 28th and 29th at the First Baptist Church Newark (1000 Granville Road, Newark, OH 43055). Our speaker for the conference will be Dr. Karl Slaikeu, Ph.D. I met Dr. Slaikeu at a conference Dr. Jones and I attended last Summer. He is an engaging speaker with lots of good information to apply to relationships in the church and in other settings as well.

Dr. Slaikeu is an internationally recognized psychologist, mediator and negotiation expert based in Austin, Texas. He is a graduate of the State University of New York at Buffalo (MA, PhD), Princeton Theological Seminary (MDiv) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (BA).

Dr. Slaikeu holds a patent for a business model that integrates cost savings methods of conflict resolution into organizational procedures. He has mediated a wide range of commercial, employment and organizational disputes, and trained numerous attorneys, business leaders, mental health professionals and faith based leaders in conflict and crisis resolution methods.

Dr. Slaikeu is the author of *When Push Comes to Shove: A Practical Guide for Mediating Disputes* and five other books and numerous professional publications on negotiation, mediation, crisis intervention and conflict resolution. His model for psychological first aid has been translated into thirty-two languages for use by the American Red Cross with earthquake

and tsunami survivors in Central America and Asia. Watch your church mail for registration information, cost, etc.

American Baptist Youth Activities

Because of a change in the *Dare to Share* ministry format, they are no longer doing a conference in Ohio. So we are no longer able to partner with them in Youth Ministry. In the summer, youth ministers and leaders from around the region met to generate ideas for a new way of providing a high quality youth event in ABC/Ohio. Instead of one event, it appears that there will be three events in 2017. Churches may choose one or more than one in 2017. They will include a two-day conference, a one-day Christian music festival hosted by one of our ABC/Ohio congregations, and a mission trip led by an ABC/Ohio pastor. Plans are now being finalized. Please watch your church mail for a letter and brochure describing the 2017 youth ministry opportunities.

Update on Dr. Jones

As you probably know, Dr. Ernest Jones, ABC/Ohio Executive Minister, had surgery for colon cancer at the beginning of November. He has expressed great appreciation for the prayers, notes, cards and words of encouragement from ABC/Ohio churches. He says that he and Denise can feel your prayers. His recovery from surgery has gone well. I was pleased to see him just before Christmas and to learn that he is beginning to feel better and is in good spirits. He has announced that further treatment will be needed. Please pray for Dr. Jones and Denise as he begins the next steps in the recovery process. Cards and notes are welcome. Please send them to the region office: Dr. Ernest Jones, ABC/Ohio 136 North Galway Drive Granville, OH 43023 Leslie has assured us that all mail sent to the office will be forwarded to Dr. Jones.

Reverend Jane Gibbons
Regional Minister



CHURCHES IN THE NEWS

Winter 2017



By Joyce Crislip

NEWS FROM 2016:

Newman Baptist in Massillon had a LIVE NATIVITY at their church On December 10th from 3 – 5 pm. There was also a petting zoo, ornament decorating, caroling, cookies and hot chocolate.

An "Angel Breakfast" was held at **Springfield** on December 3rd. Each child brought one adult guest. Cost was one non-perishable canned food item for the Christmas Basket. Children made a craft, got a picture and had breakfast with angels who shared the story of Jesus' birth.

"Ladies Day Trip" for ladies at **Canton First** was held on December 3rd. The trip included a stop at P. Graham Dunn in Dalton for shopping and touring, then to Dutch Kitchen for dinner.

On December 3rd, members of **Newman** became bell ringers for the Salvation Army at Fisher's on Lincolnway in Massillon. They rang bells from 10am to 7pm.

Canton First provided mailboxes for members and friends to leave Christmas card greetings to other members and friends. Participants were asked to pick up cards as soon as possible.

ABWM at **Seville First** packed and sent boxes of homemade cookies to college students and military who are part of the membership and friends of the church.

Springfield had a very special Christmas tree. There were tags on it with requests. Members took the tags and purchased gifts for those in need.

Trinity youth were busy wrapping Christmas gifts on December 14th. They asked people to bring the gifts, with wrapping paper and tags and they would be wrapped for a donation to the youth group activities.

Seville First provided mailboxes for Christmas cards to members and friends. This is an annual tradition at the church. Participants are asked to place the amount of money they would have used for postage into the ABWM donation box.

Hearty individuals at **Trinity** went Christmas caroling on Dec. 10. They carpooled and visited shut-ins and nursing homes. The event ended with a light supper at the church.

NEWS FROM 2017:

Members at **Springfield** can participate in several available Bible Study Groups. Adult Sunday Morning Study meets at 9:30am on Sundays. Faith Builders also meets on Sundays at 9:30. There's a Wednesday night prayer and Bible study on Wednesdays at 6:30pm. And the Men's dinner and Fellowship was held on January 10th at 6:15pm.

The "Men's Breakfast" at **Canton First** is held each month at 8 am at the church. Pastors Kevin & P-Bob prepared last month's breakfast at the church.

First Baptist, Seville will be hosting the band called "Remedy Drive" in concert January 22, 7:00 pm. Everyone is cordially invited to attend this concert.

Carriage House Ministries at **Massillon First** holds family fun nights monthly. For January, the activity is a family movie. In February there will be Bingo and ice cream. For the March activity, the group will host a rock band.

School supplies are being replenished for area children in need by members at **Springfield**. Items requested include crayons, glue sticks, pencils, scissors, notebook paper, markers, tissues, and hand sanitizer.

Massillon First will hold a Marriage Retreat on **March 3-4** at Berlin Hotel and Suites. There are also Marriage Enrichment Classes – Building Stronger Marriages beginning February 12. Call the church office to register.

Trinity held a "Trivia Night "on January 21st. There was a pot luck dinner and good fun and fellowship.

(Please see Church News Pg. 6)

Koinonia Camp



As I prepared to sit down to write this article, the smell of smoke filled my nostrils. The pungent smell had permeated everything that I was wearing. From my sweatshirt all the way down to the leather work boots on my feet, the odor of pine, oak and cherry smoke filled the entire room.

The fragrance, while not overpowering, is enough to jolt my mind back to evenings spent sitting and singing around the campfire. My mind wanders off past the busyness of meetings, maintenance projects and paperwork deadlines, to times of praise and worship. My thoughts jump to campers, whose lives have been touched and changed by the Holy Spirit, while they sat around the fire.

Then this scripture pops into my head: 2 Corinthians 2:14–16 (NLT) ... 14 "But thank God! He has made us his captives and continues to lead us along in Christ's triumphal procession. Now he uses us, like a sweet perfume, to spread the knowledge of Christ everywhere. 15 Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God. But this fragrance is perceived differently by those who are being saved and by those who are perishing. 16 To those who are perishing, we are a dreadful smell of death and doom. But to those who are being saved, we are a life-giving perfume. And who is adequate for such a task as this?"

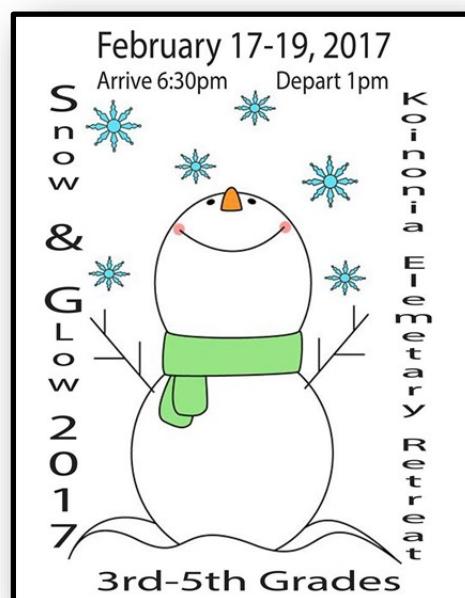
As I contemplate this scripture and the impact my life - your life has on others, I smile. I smile not at the deep theological truth of this scripture and our role as captives and fragrance bearers but that this thinking started from a memory of campfires. And I smile because those memories of campfire worship started with the smell of smoke. Smoke not from a campfire but from a big ugly wood burner that I load twice daily to heat the Ebenezer building.

Then I smile even bigger as my mind wanders off to all the previous Koinonia campers who God has called back to Himself through crazy smells and wonderful memories of camp. The campers who have lost all hope but are reminded of God's love by the smell of oatmeal bake. Those campers whose lives have been devastated by poor choices or life situations, but remember being loved and cared for when they smell a pine tree. Let me not forget those campers who have become fully surrendered followers that are encouraged in their faith as the smell of mud, horses or blue slushies penetrates their noses.

I smile thinking of how great God is and how wonderful his love for us that He would use our noses to remind us of our meeting Him at camp. I invite you to help us make smells and make memories at Koinonia Camp. Come out and volunteer. Maybe the grass you cut, the flowers you plant, or the horse manure you pitch will create the smell God will choose to use to create Changed Lives.

**Randy Brookes, Executive Director
6810 Cork Cold Springs Rd.
Geneva, OH 44041
Phone: 440-466-1278
christiancampohio.org**

UPCOMING KOINONIA EVENT



Bondage Breakers, Inc.



Praise the Lord

We praise the Lord for another year and another season. As we were blessed to come out of 2016 and see the dawning of this New Year, we cannot help but to give God praise, adoration and tremendous thanksgiving. The Psalmist resonates with acclamation: "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever Ps. 136:1." And God has been just that!

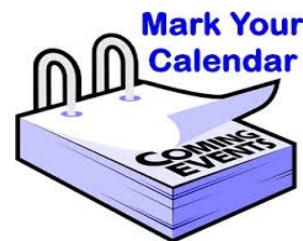
We are looking forward to continuing our "client-based" programming which provides assistance to those re-entering community after incarceration. Through the winter, believe it or not, we were as busy as ever. Since we had to give up the physical office, when you see me again, *I may have put on a few pounds (smile)!* We meet at coffee shops, McDonald's, Burger King and other "mom and pop" cafes. It has been an interesting and revealing journey.

Dr. Tony Evans on his WCRF Radio Series several weeks ago spoke about "detours." The move and where we are today is a "welcoming detour." We not only chant the pat saying "God is in charge and all is well," God is in Charge!" Our children are already getting antsy regarding Camp, and I am too. That "*antsyness*" is due, of course, to finding the time to vie for, funding. Camp is healthy, invigorating and provides a sense of stability and most of all, "God moments," for children that has a lifetime effect."

Until next time may each of you be blessed, enjoy the Lord and let Him have His way in your life!

Serving in His Fullness,
Rev. Dr. Alicia J. Malone
Bondage Breakers, Inc.
330-701-0576

Akron Area Association 2017 Calendar



Executive Leadership Team Meetings

**March 13th, June 26th,
August 14th, November 13th**

All **2017** ELT meetings will be held at Trinity North Canton at 5:30 pm ... unless otherwise notified. A light supper will be provided.

Trustees' Meetings

The Spring Trustees Meeting will be held at Trinity Baptist North Canton at **3 pm** on **May 21st**. A light supper will be provided.

The **Fall 2017 Trustees' Meeting** will be held on **October 15th** at **3 pm** ... prior to the Fall Akron Area Association Rally ... Place TBA.

Fall Rally 2017

**October 15th - Trustees' Meeting at 3 pm ...
Dinner at 4:30 pm. The Program begins at 5:30 pm** (Speaker: **Dr. Ernest Jones**, ABC/Ohio Executive Minister)

Reminder: There is only **one** rally (fall) per year for the AAA/ABC but **2** trustees' meetings ... spring & fall.

2017 Ark Articles Deadline

**Winter - January 20; Spring - April 21;
Summer - July 21; Fall - September 22**

WINTER PASTOR'S COLUMN



***"You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'"* John 3:7**

Have you been born again? 'Them's fightin' words in some circles. It once was a sincere and legitimate question, asked out of concern for the eternal destiny of one's soul. Now it seems to cause offense and provoke anger in the questionee.

I think that's because we have misunderstood the question, and misapplied the word "must." We automatically assume it's used in the same way as when we tell a child, "You must finish your dinner before you can have dessert" or "You must finish your homework before you can go out and play." It's something we have to do.

But it can also be used in a different way. Any parent (or grandparent) who has taken a child to a fair or an amusement park has seen the sign at the gate to a scary ride: "You must be 48" tall to enter this ride." No one reads such a sign and feels judged or threatened, because it's not about *doing* – it's about *being*. "You must be 18 years old to vote."

So when Jesus tells Nicodemus (and us) in John 3 "You must be born again," He's not saying this is what we have to do; He's saying this is what we have to be. In the same conversation, Jesus says, "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life (vv. 14-15)." The Son of Man must be lifted up (i.e., on a cross) that we may have eternal life. The cross was something He had to do, so that we could be offered a new way to be.

When I was a child, in church on communion Sunday, the pastor often offered this invitation: "Come to this table not because you must, but be-

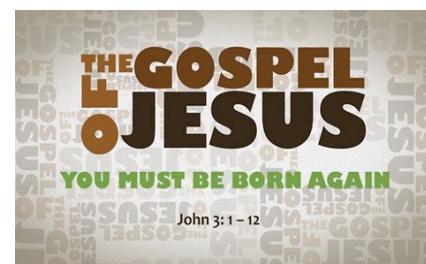
cause you may." That made an impact on me, because as a child, "You must..." or "You must not..." was a regular part the conversation with my parents. It was usually phrased as "You have to..." or "You can't..."

Many people think they "have to" be good to go to heaven. But Galatians 2:16 says, "by observing (or by works of) the law, no one will be justified." Titus 3:5 reads, "But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit." Ephesians 2:9 reminds us, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works..."

In a recent sermon, I noted that car commercial with the background song, "You Don't Own Me," by Leslie Gore. The chorus is "Don't tell me what to say, don't tell me what to do..." It sounds like the spirit of a rebellious or oppositional child. But when Jesus says we must be born again, He's not telling us what we have to do – He's telling us how and what we can be. It really is best described as a new birth – a new beginning, because we don't say we "do" birth – we say we "are" born.

So, have you been born again?

Faithfully,
Pastor Malcolm Hall



(Churches in the News, Cont.)

Springfield has a clothing drop off and recycle paper bin on the property. They accept used clothing, shoes, belts, purses. Please bag items. They also accept all types of paper, books, newspapers, magazines, phone books, catalogs and cardboard. Donations support people in need as well as missions. *Joyce C.*

MISSIONS



"Mission is What God is All About!"

The title is a direct quote from author John Piper in his marvelous book *"Let the Nations Be Glad" The Supremacy of God in Missions*. I share a passion with him, and it is one of Missions. It has been an unintentional practice of mine to somewhat boast on the American Baptist and the blessed Missionary work that we do.

For a certainty, we (American Baptist) are "God-centered, Christ exalting, Spirit powered, Bible saturated, missions mobilizing, soul winning and justice pursuing." Let me add to that quote: "prayer supporting." The McCurdy family, Peter and Sarah, are going through, in their words "a whirlwind" as they enter the New Year. They have experienced as they returned from Costa Rica both sorrow and joy. Peter lost his grandfather and celebrated his son Samuel's 11th birthday. Life has strange, surprising dichotomies! Please continue in prayer as Sarah has also faced some physical challenges and surgery.

They are trusting in the mercies of God and we stand with them in that trust factor. God can and He will prevail on their behalf. Though the gift giving season has past, because of who God is and we are, the opportunity to give, from a global perspective remains a priority for us. Here are a few places where "global gifting" is needed and per chance has already occurred: *Bangladesh \$500.00 (Sponsor a Preschool), Dominican Republic \$500.00 (Provide textbooks for lunches for a classroom); Nicaragua \$50.00 (Train 23 people in Zika Prevention) and Thailand \$250.00 (Send a Minority Student to a University for a Semester.)* These are just a smidgen of needs and opportunities for us to be a blessing to many others. (See: Internationalministries.org for more information)

The American Baptist Home Mission Societies are "cultivating highly developed Christian leaders," and sees this as a crucial need in today's world. Let us not forget about the 2017 America for Christ Offering. It is important for us all to see ourselves as the "hands and feet" of Jesus as we scurry through the Mission field. The Neighborhood Action Program in 2016 made a difference in the United States and Puerto Rico. Let's keep them in prayer.

Let's continue our prayer vigil and join with those all across the USA that are actively participating in One Great Hour of Sharing. These moments provide for the "least of these my brethren...Mt. 25:36ff," and bless our efforts to obey God and enhance His kingdom. Our Missionary Tim Long is an IM Missionary who has worked on the Mexico and U.S. border for over 20 years. In his report, he states that, "since early October 2016, migration into Mexico has accelerated at an astonishing pace." Missionary Long says: "We are witnessing something beautiful today in Tijuana: a church intent on being a blessing to the nations!"

There is so much to "be glad" about! We end where we begin: "Missions is what God is all about," "Let the Nations be glad!"

Rev. Dr. Alicia Malone – AAA/ABC Missions

WATOTO ORPHANS CHOIR



"Come celebrate the joy of salvation this summer!"

"Signs & Wonders"

The 2017 concert production event
Wednesday, June 14th at 7PM

First Baptist Church Massillon
Save the date! More info soon!

Elaine M. Jarvis
The Ark Editor
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Winter 2017



Association Website

(aaa-abc.com)

Facebook

**Akron Area Association of
American Baptist Churches**

Koinonia Website

(christiancampohio.org)

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**“Heaven is full of answers to prayers
for which no one bothered to ask.”**
— Billy Graham

“THE ARK”



Articles and info for the **Spring 2017** AAA/ABC Quarterly newsletter are due **on or before April 21, 2017**. The newsletter will be mailed to churches in the association, trustees, and others. Thanks to everyone who supplies information for “The Ark” and to those of you who have indicated your support of the Akron Area Association and this newsletter.

Please don’t hesitate to contact Joyce Crislip or Elaine Jarvis to publicize upcoming events at your church and/or specific events in the ministries of your church, the association and of the Region. If you would like to receive a copy of The Ark, or know of someone who would like to be added to the mailing list, or if you wish to discontinue receiving this newsletter, please let us know.