



The Impression

“Equip the People of God to Impact the World for Christ”

Better Together

table of contents

- Note from Executive Minister - 1
- Northwest Area Update - 2
- Northeast Area Update - 3
- Southwest Area Update - 4
- Southeast Area Update - 5
- Annual Gathering - 6
- Education Update - 7
- Contact Information - 8

“A Radical Reorientation”

“For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when God, who set me apart from my mother’s womb and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was not to consult any human being” (Galatians 1:13-16).

The new year always brings a chance for change and to engage new opportunities. The apostle Paul writes about how his life radically changed course on the road to Damascus. He’d been zealous in his pursuit and persecution of Christians, believing that he was doing God’s work. His personal encounter with the risen Jesus Christ stopped him and in tracks and opened his eyes to a new perspective and understanding.

The turning point is found in the phrase in verse 15, “but when God.” God made the difference, both in his encounter with Jesus Christ on the Damascus Road and before he’d even left his mother’s womb. God had a plan for his life. God has a plan for your life and my life. However, sometimes we have to have a radical reorientation to discover God’s plan.

These words of Paul echo the ancient words of the Prophet Jeremiah: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations” (Jeremiah 1:5). What change is needed in your life and church?

May each of us in 2025, embrace God’s calling and purpose for our lives and that of His church. The American Baptist Churches of Ohio: **We Are Better Together!**

Rev. Mark Click
Executive Minister

Northwest Area

Jesus says that our Christ like love will show that we are His disciples. Love is more than simply warm feelings; it is an attitude that reveals itself in action. Our theme this year has demonstrated the fact that love is being shown. "United in Christ Rooted in Love"...We are better together, John 13:34-35.

The Ministry in the Northwest Region has continued to go forward with all of the Churches working together within their Associations. Since our last publication of the Impression, there has been a lot of work put forward in demonstrating God's love.

The Northcentral Association now has a new pastor at the First Baptist Church of Attica, Rev. James Hoffman. Rev. Bob Adelesperger retired from First Baptist in July. The Association plans to meet on Thursday, November 21, 2024. Rev. Jeff Smith from the Calvary Baptist Church of Elyria was one of the New Pastors recognized this year at our 198th Annual gathering.

The Marion Association held its Fall Rally at the First Baptist Church in Richwood, Ohio where Rev. Vincent Harris of the Racetrack Ministry was the keynote speaker. Being recognized as the Mission Person of the year was Marilyn Perkins. Mission is very special to the Marion Association. Rev. David Rush is the Association president.

The Mohican Association held their pastors meeting in October at the Southside Diner in Mt. Vernon and also met on Thursday November 07, at the 1st Baptist Church in Mt. Vernon. Rev. Greg Smith was one of the new Pastors recognized at the 198th Annual Gathering from the Fredonia Baptist Church. First Baptist of Loudonville is forming a pulpit committee to begin search for a new Pastor, since Rev. Frank Taylor retired at the end of October, 2024. We are sadden at the fact that Rev. David Sedziol's health has declined and he can no longer serve as the ARM for the Mohican Association, Rev. Marvin Haught will serve as the ARM for the Association beginning in 2025. We are asking for continued prayers for Sharron and David.

The Northwestern Association continues to meet on a monthly basis and we are still proud of the fact the Stephanie Shields, the wife of Rev. Andrew Shields. Rev. Shields is a Region Board Member as well as the ARM for the Association. Rev. Todd Tenaglia from the Waynesfield Baptist church was also recognized at the 198th Annual Gathering as a New Pastor.

The Toledo Area American Baptist Association was pleased to honor Rev. Benjamin Green of the Church of the New Covenant on September 15th, 2024 for 30 years of Ministry. Rev. Green has a double lung transplant and God is truly blessing him and his Ministry. Pictured is he and his wife Gladys on the day of the celebration. Rev. Odell Brown from Third Baptist Church was another New Pastor that was honored at the 198th Annual gathering.

We ask for your prayers for the Northwest Region as we continue doing the will of God as a part of the American Baptist Churches of Ohio. Happy Holiday Season to All.

Faithfully,

Rev. Dr. James H. Willis, Sr.
Northwest Regional Minister
ABC/ Ohio



Rev. Green, Gladys, Rev. Dr. Willis



Johnstown Baptist Church



Mohican Association



Marion Association Fall Rally



Northwestern Association



First Baptist Church of Loudonville



Toledo Area American Baptist Association



Northeast Area

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon November 3rd, at 3:00 PM, a service of installation was held for Rev. Dr. David M. Anderson, Jr. at the First Baptist Church of Massillon, Ohio. It was a momentous day in the life of the church as David's family, friends and the congregation gathered to support him. Massillon's very own minister of communication Eric Stucki led worship. A good friend and pastoral colleague Rev. Burl Jernigan of the FBC Girard read I Peter 5:1-11 and shared his thoughts regarding David's ministry. ABC-Ohio Northeast Regional Minister Rev. Kevin K. Thomas gave the charge to the new minister. Ohio Leadership Graduate John Lamielle provided the words of Installation while the Associate Regional Minister of the Akron Association Rev. Kevin Slyh prayed for David during the laying on of hands. A reception with light refreshments was held after the service in the church fellowship hall. May God use Pastor David in a might way for the Kingdom.



2022 Ohio Leadership Academy Graduate Jeff Kilgore has been selected as the new pastor of Newman Baptist Church in Massillon, Ohio

Southwest Area

Dr. Ken Atchison, a longtime pastor at Mt. Washington Baptist Church and profound presence within the MBA and ABC Ohio, passed away.



The Fall Gathering was held Sunday evening, November 3, at First Baptist Church, Pastor Joshua Ward from Omega Baptist Church will be preaching, and there was great music as well as updates from our churches and denominational leaders.

Pastor Chuck Samson, Kings Creek Baptist Church passed away on Monday, October 3, 2024



In October Columbus Baptist Association celebrated it's annual Multi Cultural Service at First Baptist Newark, Dr. Victor Davis of Trinity Baptist Church Columbus served as the speaker.



Southeast Area

The Southeast Region of ABC Ohio is comprised of thirty three active American Baptist Churches. Five in the Cambridge Association, twelve in the Marietta Association, five in the Rio Grande Association, eight in the Zanesville Association and three in the Lawrence Association. Since most of Southeast Ohio is rural, some churches average under 25 in attendance each Sunday, others average between 50 to 100 in attendance, while a few others average between 100 to 200, with one averaging 500 each Sunday. Some have pastors who serve part time in retirement or bi-vocationally, while others are able to have full time pastors with paid staff.

As I have travelled throughout Southeast Ohio this year to worship with each congregation and assist the churches and pastors in their ministry, there are two main things I have witnessed and experienced that we have in common. Those two things are, as they should be, our love for Christ Jesus and our partnership in The Gospel. The apostle Paul highlights this in his letter to the church at Philippi. He writes in Philippians 1:3-6 (NIV) "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

As we approach the end of another year, another election cycle, and all the changes that come in life, there is one thing that remains the same as followers of Jesus Christ. And that is our continuing partnership/fellowship in The Gospel of Jesus Christ. If we stay focused on participating together in carrying out the Great "Co-mission" He has given us, we will be honoring Him, and seeing more join us in our partnership/fellowship of The Gospel. As the apostle Paul writes, we can be confident that Christ will complete the good work He has begun in and through us.



Southeast Ohio Pastors in attendance at the Annual Gathering in Columbus.

Pictured from left to right:

Seth Fallon (FBC Jackson), Joe Sanders (FBC Coshocton), Noah Barr (FBC South Zanesville), Kent Hall (Newport Baptist Church), Ryan Brooks (FBC Marietta), Paul May (FBC Cambridge), Bryan Owens (Market Street Baptist Church), and Mark Eaton (Southeast Ohio Region Minister)



THANK YOU FOR A WONDERFUL ANNUAL GATHERING

We celebrated our 198th annual gathering. A great time was had by all, please enjoy these pictures. You can also watch the different events on our YouTube page at:

www.youtube.com/@abcchio



Education Updates:



The Ohio Leadership Academy began the Fall semester November 9th at The Bridge Church in Sunbury. Students participated in Baptist History and Polity as well as New Testament. The Spring semester will begin March 8th online. Classes for the Spring semester include Missions and Theology I. Applications for the Spring Semester are due February 7th. Applications can be found on the regional website.

See our website for more information!
www.abc-ohio.org

Church Leadership Conference

Featuring 4 one-day workshops coming to your area!

The first workshop is scheduled for Northeast Ohio at Full Devotion FBC Canton on Saturday, March 15 from 10-3:00.

Two Workshop Tracks:

1. Leadership Succession Planning – taught by Regional Ministers Dr. Kevin Hairston (SW Ohio) and Rev. Mark Eaton (SE Ohio). This will focus on how to effectively plan for future changes in lay and pastoral leadership.
2. American Baptist History & Polity – taught by Pastor and Baptist Historian Rev. Tim Mohon. This is a great opportunity to learn more about our American Baptist history and why we do things that way we do (polity).

Watch for additional promotional and registration information. This year additional one-day workshops are planned for Northwestern, Southeastern, and Southwestern Ohio. Contact your Regional Minister for more information.



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