

Notes & News, Thoughts & Views



For ABCOPAD Churches from Rev. Mark Mahserjian-Smith
Acting Regional Executive Pastor; Regional Pastor for Mission and
Communication — 570-435-2001 — msmsmail@abcopad.com

Volume 33, Number 11

November, 2023

All of us can name famous partnerships. If I gave you the first half of a partnership you could likely name the other half. Dean Martin and _____. (Jerry Lewis.) Sunny and _____ (Cher) Lucy Ricardo and _____ (Ethel Mertz). The Lone Ranger and _____ (Tonto) Batman and _____ (Robin). Patrick Mahomes and _____. (Travis Kelce).

The right partner can make a world of difference... if I said the Apostle Paul and _____. You could name several partners: Paul and Silas, Paul and Barnabus, Paul and Timothy, Paul and The Church at Philippi. The fact is, Paul had many partners who all contributed and made possible his ministry.

I am grateful for Paul's words to the Philippian Church, "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. (Philippians 1:3-5) Paul had found a partner in the Church at Philippi who remained faithful amid challenges and adversity. Paul was writing his letter to the Philippians from a jail cell, but even while experiencing hardship, he had joy in his heart as he remembered the partnership he had shared with the church.

Sadly, as a culture, we often celebrate rugged individuals who seem to succeed with no partnerships or assistance. We value people who appear to be independent and do not need help from anyone. Yet the Bible lifts the *importance* of partnership. Ecclesiastes 4:9-13 "Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the

other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

Reflecting on the blessings I've experienced this year, I am thankful for our many partnerships in our Region. Only through these partnerships can ABCOPAD be able to do meaningful ministry in 2024.

Our Region has dedicated and talented support staff partners who keep ABCOPAD running. Treasurer Caryl Casey and Administrator Denise Veselicky are often the voices on the other end of the phone line when you seek assistance. Warm, friendly, and engaging, these gifted ladies have over a combined half-century of experience in Regional Ministry and almost always have the answers you are looking for when you call. Also included in our support staff partners are RMA Bud Russell, who oversees our website ministry and social media presence, and Donna Schneff, who publishes Notes and News. Despite all the changes taking place in our Region, these partners in ministry continue to be the glue that holds ABCOPAD together.

A new group of field staff you have come to know over the past two years is our Geographic Pastoral Servants (GPS), who have been on the front line of ministry to pastors and congregations across ABCOPAD. GPS Randy Powell, Felicia Brock, Cristy Wise, Kelly Legg, Rob Rice, Tim Schwartz, David Hardin, and Dan McDowell have done an incredible

job with a ministry of presence. Their ministries have included pastoral searches, conflict mediation, credentialing, installations, vision coaching, and much more. Along with our GPS, this year we called Apryl Crownover-Glunt to become our Regional Ministry Associate for Women In Ministry (WIM). Apryl has been connecting with ladies across ABCOPAD and coordinated our first WIM Continuing Education Event.

We have also had a team of Student Ministry RMA's (Mandi Restanio, Brently Pustelak, Andy Reich and recently called John Spatig) who have been working with youth and Student Ministry Leaders in ABCOPAD. This team of ministry leaders and great partners in Regional Ministry is a joy to work with.

Another group of partners that have been indispensable is our Regional Executive Committee, including President Bryon Luke, Vice President Lori Jennings, and Secretary Eleanor Siegrist. Bryon and Lori held a monthly coaching meeting to help me

remain focused and debrief the previous month's events. Our Executive Committee has been excellent, encouraging and supporting of our Regional Staff.

Add to this group of partners our Regional Ambassadors, Mark McCallion, Bryon Luke, and Apryl Crownover-Glunt, who have provided a ministry of presence for anniversary celebrations and installations, making it possible for ABCOPAD to be present during milestone events.

Looking back over 2023, we have been blessed by these excellent partners who made ministry a joy. Like the Apostle Paul, I Thank God for these staff members, each a significant and influential partner in ministry. Most of all, I Thank God for our pastoral leaders and congregations who make ABCOPAD who we are. Thank You, Lord, for all these blessings. Thank you, Lord, for your grace, love, and mercy, as you allow us to be partners in your mission and ministry.

Blessings and Happy Thanksgiving. M





Rev. Randy Powell
Northwest Geographic
Pastoral Servant
pastorpowell@hotmail.com

The rise in antisemitism around the globe is accelerating, we must not ignore it as our ancestors did 100 years ago.

100 years ago, antisemitism was commonplace in Europe, America, and many other parts of the world. It was also nothing new, having been present and poisoning the heart and soul of Christendom since, at least, the first mass violence against Jews by Christians during the run-up to the Crusades. It was a spiritual cancer growing there within the Church that successive generations failed to eradicate. Spasms of violence, mass confiscations of property, and expulsions from various kingdoms and nations had sporadically occurred, but few could envision that the generation growing up in the gruesome shadow of WWI, who would soon begin enduring the Great Depression, would also be the generation to witness history's greatest effort at ethnic genocide. When Hitler rose to power in Germany, the warning signs began to sound, but they were not heeded, not by enough people and not by people who could have done something about it, until it was far too late. Jewish refugees were not welcome anywhere, including in America. {You can read a well-documented example: "Voyage of the St. Louis" available online at the Holocaust Encyclopedia.} They may have proven themselves to be the Greatest Generation in many ways, but in their response to antisemitism, they soundly and profoundly failed. As the horrors of the Holocaust were revealed to the world in the rubble of WWII, the rallying cry was, "Never Again!" Shame at having done too little too late had broken the fever of antisemitism, seemingly, it was hoped.

I fear that we're living in the generation that will begin to answer the question of whether or not "Never Again!" can last more than 100 years before it expires. The Anti-Defamation League records a dramatic increase in the US on antisemitic incidents following the Oct. 7 Hamas Massacre.

As I have written and said many times in the past, the failure of the Church to not only protect the Jews of Europe and America from violence and discrimination, but also the failure to fully purge that evil from the hearts and minds of those who claim to follow Jesus (Himself, purposefully and proudly Jewish), is the greatest failure

in Church history. It is our darkest stain and our greatest shame.

God demands more of us. Our generation will have the opportunity to demonstrate through word and deed that we have learned from our ancestors' mistakes.

** It is entirely possible, and at times even morally responsible, to be critical of the policies of the nation-state of Israel AND at the same time condemn and oppose antisemitism in all of its forms. Israel should be no more subject to a "Love it or Leave it" mantra than America. We can love America and be critical of her failure just as we can support Jews wherever they may live without having to agree 100% with what the nation of Israel does. However, the insidious nature of antisemitism compels us to speak with measured wisdom if we feel we must be critical of the nation of Israel, so that criticism of governmental policies and actions does not give encouragement to the racists who are seeking to harm and kill Jews. It is also entirely possible to condemn terrorism in all of its forms, even to agree that a government is justified in taking military action against terrorists, and at the same time feel compassion and pity for the innocent civilians that are left homeless, wounded, and killed in the process.**

Pray for the Peace of Israel, pray for the Holy Land, pray for the Jews and pray for the Palestinians.





Rev. Cristy Wise
Southwest Geographic
Pastoral Servant
wisefour14@gmail.com

Give Thanks

One of my favorite songs to sing this time of the year is *Give Thanks* by: Henry Smith. Since it is one of my favorites, I thought I would check out if there was a back story to why Henry Smith wrote it and based on which scripture. Although many of us know Don Moen singing it, he did not write it. This is what I found.



In 1978, Henry Smith was a young seminary graduate that was struggling to find work at the same time coming to terms with a degenerative eye condition that would eventually leave him legally blind. According to resources, despite the hard situation he was facing, Henry found hope in 2 Corinthians 8:9 and penned "Give Thanks". This has become one of the most beloved songs of our time. And now let the weak say, 'I am strong'; Let the poor say, 'I am rich' because of what the Lord has done. (Praise charts 2012).



Years later, a young worship leader named Don Moen would record Henry's song, helping to carry it around the world. Today, you can hum "Give Thanks" at almost any church in the world, no matter the country or the language, and someone will recognize this simple song of thanksgiving and trust. (Praise

Charts 2012)

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich." (2 Corinthians 8:9, NIV) "That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor 12:10, NIV).

When you read the lyrics of this incredible song, knowing what Henry was going through and the scriptures he used, the words become more meaningful and powerful. Recognizing the sacrifice of Jesus to leave His Kingdom so we could have a Savior through the Cross we are rich.

This Thanksgiving, who in your life needs to experience the love of Jesus? What will it require in sacrifice for you? Someone else at your table? Maybe food delivered to them? A call? A visit? A surprise gift? Prayer? The list is endless. This Thanksgiving, can God count on you to help others in your life know that when we are weak, He is strong? Read these lyrics and may they not just be sung, but may you ponder on what is God challenging you to be thankful for.

Ask yourself what are YOU thankful for? You may be feeling weak and not very thankful, may you read these scriptures and realize how God desires to be YOUR strength through your weakness. I know that I am thankful for churches, pastors, and people that desire to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Know I appreciate each of you in my Southwest corner...but also within the region. We are a family for which I am thankful!

Give Thanks

Give thanks with a grateful heart
 Give thanks to the Holy One
 Give thanks because He's given
 Jesus Christ His Son

And now let the weak say I am strong
 Let the poor say I am rich
 Because of what the Lord has done for us
 Give Thanks.

****Worship Leaders...Is God calling you to sing this during this season?***



W The whole earth is filled with awe at YOUR **WONDERS**; where morning dawns, where evening fades, YOU call forth songs of joy.

O May the Lord make your love increase and **OVERFLOW** for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.

R In Christ Jesus we have **REDEMPTION** through HIS blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that HE lavishes on us.

S **SHARE** with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

H Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, **HOLY** and pleasing to God – that is your true and proper worship.

I **I am** the Door, **I am** the Good Shepherd, **I am** the Resurrection and Life, **I am** the Way, the Truth and the Life.

P Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of **PRAISE** – the fruit of lips that openly **PROFESS** His Name. And do not forget to do good and share with others, for with such sacrifices God is **PLEASED**.

In the midst of a large sanctuary full of ladies with uplifted hands and voices, the praise band fully engaged with instruments, microphones and motion, I felt ‘left out’ of worship. At another time with a much smaller group, with simple instruments, I felt fully ‘in’ the activity of worship. Yet another time sitting alone in the darkness looking at a starlit sky, it was a deep time of praising God.

It was about then I penned these words in my notebook – **‘What is worship?’** A good question that needed a good answer. So, my search began. Here is some of what I discovered.

*Merriam-Webster defines WORSHIP as to honor or show reverence for as a divine being or supernatural power. WORSHIP can be a noun or a verb.

* Reading an online article John Piper was quoted as saying, *‘All true worship is in essence a matter of the heart. It is more, but it is not less.’* (Do you know

what kept the Grinch from being in relationship with the Whos in Whoville? – the size of his heart...)

** Yet another online article talked about the two acts of worship: 1) praise and repentance in a group setting 2) acts of love with our body, hands, feet – willing to sacrifice for the good of others.*

When desiring a deeper, more rounded understanding of a word, one of my activities is to take each letter of that word and assign it an attribute that seems fitting to help describe the original word. The old Who, What, Why, When, Where, How questions help us develop a full story – or fuller understanding of something. You see this in the ← activity on WORSHIP and scriptures, assigned attribute bolded.

We WORSHIP quietly, without open displays – like our personal devotion and prayer time when our hearts are transformed by God’s Living Word, producing a growing personal relationship with Him.

We WORSHIP standing with brothers and sisters in Christ, with loud voices and raised hands.

We WORSHIP while serving soup, delivering groceries, visiting the sick, or sharing the gospel message.

It’s all WORSHIP! And our hearts will let us know!

HILLSONG WORSHIP songwriters Tim Hughes & Darlene Zschech gave us these words:

Light of the world, You stepped down into darkness, opened by eyes, let me see; Beauty that made this heart adore You, hope of a life spent with You.



King of all days, oh, so highly exalted, glorious in heaven above; Humbly You came to the earth You created, all for love’s sake, became poor.

Here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, Here I am to say that You’re my God. You’re altogether lovely, altogether worthy, altogether wonderful to me. I’ll never know how much it cost, to see my sin upon that cross...



Spiritual Enrichment Coordinator, Jodie Vasbinder



News From our Associations (www.abcopad.org)

Central Union

The fall **Central Union Association** meeting was hosted by GraceCrossing Community Church, Phoenixville. International Ministries Global Servant Rev. David Reed spoke on the soul care ministry he and his wife Joyce provide for missionaries around the globe. Reports were also given by FBC, Lansdale on the mission work being sponsored in LaPaz, Mexico and by GraceCrossing on the medical clinic being built in Mpigi, Uganda. Forty-five representatives were present and enjoyed a great meal together.

Centre

Liberty, Blanchard recently constructed a ramp for a member of the community. What's special about this ramp is that it was paid for in part by an ABCOPAD grant that the church received this spring. Through this grant, and gifts from their congregation, the church has been able to fund several projects like this one to reach out to their community and be the hands and feet of Jesus.

Harrisburg

Members and past clergy of the **Colonial Park Community** gathered to celebrate CPCBC's 70th anniversary! Over a wonderful meal, organizers shared highlights from the church's history of mission and ministry, and then everyone shared their favorite memories and hopes for the future. It was especially wonderful to have Rev. Bud Russell, Rev. Tim Munson, and Rev. Gary Firster, all previous pastors, together with their wives join the fun! CPCBC is presently in a search process as they await the call of their next seated Pastor.

A mission team from **West Shore** travelled to Galveston, TX to partner with Galveston Urban Ministries. GUM is making a significant impact in alleviating poverty in their neighborhood as they engage in the slow work of seeking the Kingdom in one person, one family, one block at a time.

Laurel

The ladies at First Baptist Church of Greensburg are making 15 different Chrismons for our 2023 Christmas tree in celebration of our 150th Anniversary. Each pattern has its own symbolic meaning. "Chrismons" are handmade ornaments that remind us of the true meaning of the Christmas season and point us to the Christ child. Chrismon means "monogram of Christ" and represents Jesus Christ - His life, ministry, nature, and teaching. They are placed on an Evergreen tree. This tree at Christmas represents God's consistency. The Evergreen tree remains the same color year-round symbolizing eternal life. Chrismons are white and gold symbolizing Christ's purity

and His sovereignty. We thank the Lord for providing special gifts to the ladies who made the Chrismons. *10 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10*

Northumberland

Picture Rocks celebrated their 175 years of ministry. Mark Mahserjian-Smith was on hand to present Certificates of Appreciation from both the American Baptist Historical Society and ABCOPAD. Lead Pastor Jerry Uppling provided a Devotional message and Special Music filled the sanctuary from a Hand Bell Choir.

Pittsburgh

Have you seen the baptismal pool at **FBC, Monroeville**? It's located in the church lobby, so everyone can surround the baptistry and see baptisms taking place.

Riverside

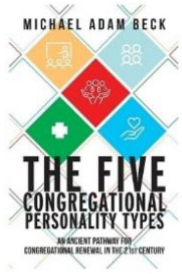
New Hope Christian Church in Broomall had their fall celebration with a church luncheon on Sunday, Oct. 8. The celebration included the dedication of their new additions to their facility since the merger. This included the dedication of their "Welcome Center" and the 'Multi-Ministry Center/Gym. We have been blessed! We have done the million-dollar expansion without taking on any debt. Praise the Lord!

Ten Mile

There was a great gathering at the Men's Breakfast at **Bethlehem**, with 22 in attendance and 3 of the 4 Associations of the SW represented!! Amen! *Ten Mile, Monongahela, and Pittsburgh!!!* GPS Dan McDowell, the men's ministry coordinator for ABCOPAD, was in attendance and shared his testimony of the value of men's ministry. He then introduced Rev. David Reed, IM missionary and Global coordinator for spirit care. Pastor David shared and challenged us to identify our emotions and where we are in our relationship with Christ.

Tioga

A hearty ABCOPAD welcome to Brandon Deas and his wife, Shasta and their two kids, Liam and Leyla. Pastor Brandon is the new pastor at **Middlebury** near Wellsboro. Prior to entering full-time ministry Pastor Brandon served in the U.S. Army for three years as an Infantryman and as a Police Officer in Kingsport, TN for five years.



ABCOPAD BIENNIAL

OCT. 17-19, 2024, ALTOONA, PA

Five Congregational Personality Types: An Ancient Pathway for Congregational Renewal in the 21st Century Can churches in the 21st century stop, reverse, or prevent decline – and even become healthy, thriving congregations? Leading scholar and

practitioner of congregational renewal, Michael Adam Beck, says they can. But the old cookie cutter ways of doing church won't cut it in today's world. If churches are going to stop the shocking rates of pastoral burnout and exodus from the pews, they must learn to be the church with new people, in new places, and in new ways. Get a copy of this book and prepare to look into your church's future! **Save the Date!**

NW AB Men's Breakfast — December 9, 9 a.m. — Free
Camp Judson; 398 Holliday Rd; North Springfield, PA 16430
After breakfast, we will worship and pray together. In addition, Global Servant David Reed will be there to share some insights. Call 1-888-687-0883 or email dveselicky@abcopad.com to register.

ABCOPAD invites Pittsburgh Clergy to join us for a Pre-Advent Fellowship Dinner:

As Pastors, we are heading into our busy Advent/Christmas seasons. Before embarking on this season, let's take a moment to share a meal and have fellowship with like-minded Ministerial Leaders. Attend the dinner that best fits your schedule; or attend both!

Thursday, Nov. 30, 2023 @ 6 p.m.

Olive Garden, 260 Mall Plaza Blvd,
Monroeville, PA 15146

Friday, Dec. 1, 2023 @ 6 p.m.

Walnut Grill, 911 Freeport Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238

Let's get together and rekindle the fire of the Pittsburgh Baptist Association Ministry. Please **RSVP** no later than **Monday, Nov. 27, 2023** via email to fbrock@abcopad.com or via text or message to (734) 351-0205.

The Essentials of Suicide Prevention for Busy Pastors

Led by Dr. Karen Mason

Online Jan. 9, 16, and 23 of 2024 — Cost: \$30

Book Not Included — Up to 1 CEU



Dr. Karen Mason is the Director of the Masters in Counseling program and a Professor of Counseling and Psychology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

Suicide is a growing tragedy in the US and in the church. We can stop the climbing numbers of suicide deaths, but it is going to take everyone working together, including the church. Without the church, suicidal people may not hear the life-affirming messages they need to hear. Without an informed church, people who have lost loved ones to suicide may leave the church. Too often, the church watches from the sidelines not knowing what to do. Why is it that the wider (secular) culture is more engaged in suicide prevention than God's people, especially given that Christians care deeply about the sanctity of life? The apostle Paul modeled suicide prevention for the church when he stopped the suicide of the Philippian jailer. But pastors and congregants may not know how to follow his example. The result is that people who struggle with suicide or who have lost loved ones to suicide wonder if the Bible or their church have anything relevant to say about suicide. This book will provide the resources needed to help prevent suicide in a church, even when a church does not want to start one more program.

Watch the ABCOPAD Website to register and for more information.

Sponsored by

Women in Ministry

For more information on this event or WIM, contact Pastor Apryl Crowover-Glunt, Regional Ministry Associate – Women in Ministry (aglunt@abcopad.com / 814-259-3083)



Rev. David Hardin
North East – Reading
Geographic Pastoral Servant
dhardin@abcpad.com

Embracing Change in Changing Times

American Baptist Churches are navigating a period of transition and change. The recent report "Back to Normal? The Mixed Messages of Congregational Recovery Coming Out of the Pandemic" highlights that while churches have rebounded in some ways, they are less willing to embrace change compared to early in the pandemic.

As American Baptists, we know change can be difficult but is often necessary for growth. Our Pennsylvania and Delaware churches have weathered many changes over the years, and we continue to adapt to new realities and opportunities.

One significant transition is the search for a new Executive Minister to lead our region - which is nearing its end. I don't know who will be called to fill the position, but I know many who would in their own unique ways do a wonderful job.

One thing I do know is the next Executive needs our prayers, and needs us to put feet to our prayers. They will have to lead us through significant change if we are to fulfill our mission moving forward in a changed culture. They will also have to navigate this change while remaining true to the core principles that make us ABCOPAD.

While transitions like these can create uncertainty, they also open new possibilities. We know change is rarely easy, but with God's help, we can meet each season with open minds and hopeful hearts. Our calling remains the same: ***"To cultivate Christ-centered leaders, equip disciples, nurture communities of faith, and share God's love and justice with all."***

May we embrace this time of change, trusting in God's guidance and providence. Though the path ahead is unclear, we walk together as the body of Christ. Our churches have overcome obstacles before, and will continue to shine God's light, in a new way for new times.



	2022	2023
United Mission Basics	\$30,039	\$28,346
Love Gift	\$1,562	\$893
Partners in Ministry	\$26,933	\$25,461
Annual Offerings		
AFC	\$2,229	\$181
WMO	\$21,841	\$25,347
RMMO	\$1,148	\$674
OGHS	\$9,646	\$5,951

The cumulative comparison figures

The decrease in **United Missions** (includes UMB & Love Gift) amounts to (\$17,299) less in actual dollars, that ABCOPAD received thru Oct.

AFC is ahead by \$4,749 thru Oct. This increase amounts to \$1,393 more in actual dollars, that ABCOPAD received thru Oct.

Partners in Ministry is ahead by \$14,018. through Oct.

In actual dollars, from UM, AFC and PIM, ABCOPAD has received (\$1,889) less thru Oct. 2023.



Giving thanks always for all things,
 unto God the Father in the name of our
 Lord Jesus Christ, AMEN
 Ephesians 5:20

December, 2023 Deadline:

Items to be included in the December issue of Notes & News need to arrive by 5 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 7.

Please send all material to Denise Veselicky via one of the following:

Mail: ABCOPAD • 159 N. Bellefield Ave. • Pittsburgh, PA 15213-2609 • **Email:** dveselicky@abcopad.com

Phone: 888-687-0883 • **Fax:** 412-687-3941

Thank you! Donna L. Schneff, designer • deeschneff@gmail.com

GROWTH POINTS

With Gary L. McIntosh, D.Min., Ph.D.

What is Your Limfac?

The military is fond of abbreviations. They have a term for a situation, element, or factor that is holding a person or organization back — *limfac* — i.e., limiting factor.

People and organizations have *limfacs*. What *limfacs* are holding your church back from growth?

The following are some of the major *limfacs* found in non-growing churches (listed in no particular order).

Which ones can you see in your own church?

Limfac #1: Ingrown Perspective

Some churches think only about themselves. Their rationale is that the church is for believers, therefore, it shouldn't be expected that unchurched people would attend. All of the programs, plans, and goals are based on what the people already in church desire. Little to no thought is given to how to prepared for, welcome, and keep new people.

Limfac #2: Non-growth Excuses

Commonly heard in churches lacking growth are statements like, “No one’s interested in attending church anymore.” Or, “People don’t want to listen to the Word of God any longer.” Or, “We may not be growing, but we’re faithful.” There are lots of excuses for non-growth, but no good ones.

Limfac #3: Inadequate Location

A church’s physical location has a great deal to do with its growth potential. While some churches in a poor location grow, a good location provides more opportunity for growth. The old statement among real estate sales people is true: It’s all about Location, Location, Location.

Limfac #4: Limited Space

Lack of space is a key *limfac* for many churches. The three main areas of concern are parking, seating, and childcare.

Parking — A growing church needs a minimum of 1 parking space per 2 people of all ages.

Seating — A growing church needs a worship space that is 30-40% larger than it thinks it needs. On normal Sundays worship seating fills up to only 70% capacity. Thus, a church of 150 worshipers needs a seating capacity of 215 seats.

Childcare — A growing church needs childcare space adequate for 25% to 50% of adult attendance. This, of course, depends on the age makeup of the congregation. But, a church of 250 adults will need childcare space for 60-125 children birth through high school.

Essential Key: The three areas of parking, seating, and childcare must be in balance. They work together for growth or against growth. People must be able to park or they can't come into the building. But once in the building they must be able to sit and children must have a place to reside. Anyone of these three factors can be a *limfac*.

Limfac #5: Acreage

As a general rule, churches grow to match the acreage on which their church sits. Most churches grow to a ratio of 100 people to each acre of

land the church facilities occupy. Thus, a church with 1.5 acres of land grows to 150 people and a church with five acres of land grows to 500 people, etc.

Limfac #6: Paucity of Prayer

Churches grow that pray for growth. A church may teach about prayer, preach about prayer, and talk about prayer. But, how many people are praying? The minimum rule is a growing church needs 10% of it's people praying for growth, praying for newcomers, praying for salvations. Thus a church of 100 needs at least 10 people interceding for growth.

Limfac #7: Absence of Evangelism

A growing church focuses 10% of its total financial budget toward outreach and evangelism in it's own community. The money goes to training, advertising, and events to draw non-believers to hear the gospel of salvation.

Which of these do you see in your church? Pick one or two and begin to eliminate the *limfacs* this year.



Growth Points is published twelve times a year. Subscription price is \$29 (US Funds) per year. Permission is granted for use in a local church. For other reprint usage, advance permission must be obtained.

Copyrighted 2023 ISSN 1520-5096

**American Baptist Churches of
Pennsylvania and Delaware**

Pittsburgh Baptist Association
159 N Bellefield Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Pittsburgh, PA
Permit No. 379

Address Service Requested



BEYOND THE BULLETIN - Intentional Worship

Led by Heidi Clark

Online January 22 & February 3

with Synchronous Meet-Ups on
Saturday, 1/27, and 2/3 from 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Mission & Vision of Beyond the Bulletin

**Our God is intentional;
therefore, our worship should be intentional.**

Beyond the Bulletin is a **free** two-week online course that addresses the need to educate and empower ABCOPAD servant leaders in planning intentional worship that glorifies God and is relevant to their community.

At a Glance: Beyond the Bulletin

- Discover planning intentional worship that glorifies God and is relevant to your community.
- Dive deep into the biblical, theological, and historical pillars of intentional worship.
- Be a part of action research.
- Earn CEUs.
- Connect with other Christian servant leaders.



Heidi Clark

Heidi has served in ministry for almost 30 years as a musician, servant leader, and educator.

She has a B.S. in Music Education from Duquesne University and a Master's in Music from the University of Connecticut, and is currently completing doctorate work in worship studies with the Institute for Worship Studies in Jacksonville, Florida. She has been the Director of Worship and Art for the past two decades at the North Hills Community Baptist Church (Pittsburgh). Her passion is to educate and empower others in worship leadership.



To Register, www.beyondthebulletin.com