

# Notes & News, Thoughts & Views



For ABCOPAD Churches from Rev. Mark Mahserjian-Smith  
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**Joshua 4:1-3** When the whole nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the Lord said to Joshua, “Choose twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe, and tell them to take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, from right where the priests are standing, and carry them over with you and put them down at the place where you stay tonight.”

**Joshua 4:19-24** On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho. And Joshua set up at Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken out of the Jordan. He said to the Israelites, “In the future when your descendants ask their parents, ‘What do these stones mean?’”<sup>22</sup> tell them, ‘Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.’ For the Lord your God dried up the Jordan before you until you had crossed over. The Lord your God did to the Jordan what he had done to the Red Sea[a] when he dried it up before us until we had crossed over. He did this so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the Lord is powerful and so that you might always fear the Lord your God.”

Recently, I had the great joy of participating in the Installation service of Rev. Dr. Kevin Roberts at the Jefferson Church in Southwest ABCOPAD. Rev. Cristy Wise (Southwest GPS) did an excellent job delivering the morning message and charging Pastor Kevin and the Congregation to be faithful in this new relationship. I was privileged to officially welcome Pastor Kevin and lead the “Laying on of Hands” as Pastor Cristy, the church leaders, and I prayed a blessing on Pastor Kevin and his wife, Debbie. The installation service is a milestone moment for the Jefferson Baptist Church as the church begins a new chapter of ministry.

The installation service at Jefferson is the first of four installation services that will take place in the Southwest corner of our Region, with 9 or 10 installation services taking place across ABCOPAD over the next four months. Each of these installation services marks a milestone moment for each congregation, officially welcoming their new pastor and a new partnership in ministry.

But installations are not the only milestone moments being marked in our Region. Recently, Rev. Charles (Chuck) Fox (FBC, Pittsburgh since 2017) and in October Rev. Howard Irwin (Woodlawn, Aliquippa since 2008) are both celebrating 40 years of ordained ministry. Over the last few weeks, ABCOPAD has received letters of invitation from Baptist Tabernacle, Wilkes Barre, celebrating 100 years in their sanctuary, and FBC, Greensburg and Mount Zion, Altoona, each celebrating 150 years of ministry. Pastoral Leaders and Congregations are marking milestones in their ministries throughout the Region.

God calls us to celebrate milestone moments. In Joshua 4, God commanded Joshua to have a leader from each tribe of Israel select a stone from the Jordan River; where, the nation crossed on dry ground. These twelve stones would become a monument, a milestone commemorating God’s miraculous provision as Israel crossed the Jordan and entered the Promised Land. Future generations would hear the story of God’s faithfulness and love, bringing His people out of bondage and into a land of abundance.

When a church performs an installation service, it is an opportunity to celebrate God’s provision of a pastor. In our current culture, finding a pastor can be challenging. Ask any Search Committee member in ABCOPAD, and they will tell you that finding a pastor is no simple task. With fewer and fewer people going into ministry and many pastoral leaders deciding to retire or leave local church ministry, pastoral searches can take 12 to 18 months. Often, a search committee must look outside the ABC Family for its next pastoral leader using online job sites such as Indeed or ChurchStaff.com. As a result, Search Committees need to be far more discerning and do much more vetting before a call is made. While the Search Committee may feel exhausted once a pastor is called and tempted to simply skip an installation service, it is important to celebrate this milestone in the church’s history. God’s provision is a reason to celebrate.

Years after the initial ordination/certification and installation, some pastors can celebrate long and fruitful ordained

or certified ministry at a local church. This, too, is a reason to rejoice and be thankful. All pastors encounter challenges and difficulties in ministry. It is often tempting to quit or leave a church hoping to find “greener pastures” in the next congregation. When pastoral leaders have remained faithful to their calling and committed to a local church, God needs to be praised, and the pastor should receive words of appreciation from their congregation.

Finally, when a church reaches a milestone of 50, 75, 100, 125, 150, or more years of ministry, this is a reason to celebrate. Before the pandemic, many congregations were struggling, but now, after the pandemic, ABCOPAD is having numerous conversations with congregations considering closure. Some statisticians have reported as much as 40 percent of worshippers

have not returned to church following the pandemic. As a result, churches have experienced a significant decline in contributions and people willing to accept leadership roles in local church ministry. For those who have remained committed to their congregation, there can be an overwhelming sense of fatigue and frustration trying to keep the doors of the church open and ministry continuing. When a significant anniversary avails itself, that is a reason to celebrate and give God thanks.

ABCOPAD staff, when available, love to participate in these celebrations. Being with our ministry partners is a joy as they thank God for his faithfulness, love, and provision. Our God is fantastic and is always worthy of our praise and thanksgiving. Thank you for being a partner in ministry. God Bless, and know how much we appreciate you.

## 12 Stones at Gilgal







**Rev. Cristy Wise**  
**Southwest Geographic**  
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**A New Thing!**



Schools have geared up for the fall and the students of all ages are back in classes by the time you read this newsletter. Emails started coming in “Goodbye Summer”, advertising their sales to get parents to purchase just one more thing their child might

need for fall. Saying Goodbye sometimes brings up an emotion of sadness and wishing things like summer could last forever! I get it...life changes for families in the fall and for the life of the church. Things get back into full swing! Calendars start to fill up!

Maybe we should reverse our mindset. Instead of goodbye summer or goodbye whatever it is, look at it as, “I can’t wait to see what is going to be fresh and new in my life!” Does this fall under do you see the glass ½ full or ½ empty? Haha



With Jesus, change will and does happen and yet it is a fresh start! That is how we came to be Believers in Jesus! A fresh start...a change...new beginning.

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” 2 Corinthians 5:17 (Emphasis mine)*

*Letting go of the past isn’t always easy. I hear you but it is something God calls us to do. Maybe school days are long past in your life, but you still have seasons, changes, and things you need to let go and begin fresh. Life is a series of learning how to change and to let go.*

Many things take us through journeys of change...learning to let go and say “goodbye” to whatever it is. Some examples other than school might be: retirement, our health, jobs, divorce, death, church pastoral changes, church closures, church searches, children going to college, or getting married, Associations and churches the way we “use” to do things, and I’m sure you could come up with a lot more things! You aren’t alone in learning how to face “goodbyes” and in some situations you are forced to begin a fresh start in a new season.

Change can be difficult...be sure to talk to someone you trust and let them know how difficult the change is for you. Talk it out several times as you are trusting God through the journey. Never apologize if you need professional help to work through a change in your life.

Let me encourage you. It is a journey. Journeys take time. Allow God’s grace to work through you. Look up Isaiah 43:18-19 and just park on it for a while. Read it and re-read it. Listen to what God is saying to you in this new season.



*“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.” (Emphasis mine)*

He knows what is going on in your life personally, spiritually, in your church, in the world, and every part of who you are. He loves you. I love that God is telling us “**I AM...doing a new thing!**” The God of creation is holding you in the palm of His hand and doing a **new thing**. You might not understand or see it right now but keep trusting Him. He’s got YOU and He’s got this **NEW** season you are going through.

It is encouraging to visit churches within our ABCOPAD region and hear all about the **new thing** that God is doing in their midst! We generally must let go so God can do a new thing. Men’s Prayer breakfasts in the SW are encouraging, events in all Associations, WIM retreat, women’s conference generated women’s groups to start back



up in their churches, Men’s retreats, Pastor Retreats, Pastor Installations, CEU event, ACTS growing and changing, Future Church event and so many more I haven’t listed, but exciting... God is doing a **NEW THING** in our midst!

We need to be ready to embrace the **New Thing**. How? Focus on Jesus...He is waiting to walk you through the journey, hand in hand with Him. Never hesitate to reach out to others here on earth that can be Jesus with skin on for you during the journey. We need each other. Your GPS (Geographical Pastoral Servant) in your area is just a phone call away!

What change is there for you this Fall? Hand it over to Jesus and allow Him to create something **NEW** within the change. Give us a call...can’t wait to hear how God is at work in your midst!

Blessings my friends.

679

**JESUS, HOLD MY HAND**

*For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand...  
I will help thee.*

Isaiah 41:13

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**Rev. Rob Rice**  
**North Central Geographic**  
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**“It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year”**

I always know when summer is drawing to a close, because you start to see school supplies popping up in stores, and a familiar commercial comes on the TV. The commercial uses the song, “It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year” but rather than Christmas decor, you see parents gleefully preparing their children to go back to school. As a parent, I know that feeling. While I love having my kids home for the summer, once we get into August, I am definitely ready for them to have some more structure, and to embrace the peace and quiet that comes from an empty house!

This back-to-school season is a little different for our family because I sent my oldest daughter, Alexa eleven hours away to Clemson University. It’s a big transition for our family, but something that’s making it a little easier is knowing that Alexa has already made some connections with other students and adults in the Clemson community. I feel better as a parent knowing that there are many other people who are there for my daughter even when I can’t be. I give thanks to God that He has already provided and will continue to provide for Alexa by surrounding her with those who will pray for her and support her in real and tangible ways.

As I’ve pondered how I’ve seen God’s hand at work and continued to hear that song playing in my mind as I prepare my other kids for a new school, I realized that there’s another reason this is a wonderful time of the year. As followers of Jesus,

we have great and unique opportunities to do ministry and share the love of Jesus Christ in real and tangible ways with children and teachers.

I don’t have space to share all the great ministries that are happening across our Region, and you may already have some thriving ministries that you take part in this time of year. But I did want to share just a few things that I’ve recently been a part of, that might spur you to think about some new and different ways you can share the love of Jesus with your community.

In Muncy, our local ministerium organized a prayer walk for our schools. We spent time on Sunday afternoon walking and praying outside each of our school buildings. We prayed for teachers, students, faculty and administrators. We shared this event with the school, not to ask them for permission, but to let them know that we were going to spend time praying that God would bless them this year. God blessed us with good weather, a great group of people, and we even got a chance to encourage some teachers and administrators who were present at the walk.

Another smaller way people in our church encourage students is by simply attending their sporting events and performances. Often in the church, we can lament how much time sports and activities take up. It’s easy to complain about this, and wish that we could get kids and teens to spend as much time in church as they do on the fields. But what if instead of complaining, we went to where the kids were? One of the most encouraging things for my kids is to see faces they know from our church in the stands cheering them on. Not only does it mean a lot to the kids, but it also provides an opportunity to share our faith with others.

It’s the most wonderful time of the year. School is starting, fall sports are in full swing, and God is giving us opportunities to share the love of Christ with teachers and students. I pray you and I will see His blessings and participate in the work of the Kingdom in meaningful ways this season!





**Rev. Dan McDowell**  
**Southeast Geographic**  
**Pastoral Servant**  
**bigbaldpastor1@gmail.com**

Recently, the infrastructure of the AB Men of Pennsylvania and Delaware (aka ABMOPAD) has deteriorated and needs to be rebuilt from the ground up. As a first step, we are organizing a series of gatherings to prayerfully seek God’s will for the future. I am passionate about this.

When I was 5 years old, my dad was killed in an industrial accident. My mom (who hadn’t finished high school because her own father died when she was young and she needed to get a job) raised us by herself for several years by living on SS income. I found myself seeking good male role models as I came of age; my church (Emporium, First) provided me with that guidance. Over the years, the church became my extended family and it seemed natural to me when God called me into the ministry as a pastor.

Since then, I have seen how a strong men’s ministry shapes lives and strengthens the backbone of the body of Christ. I have seen men involved in the Promise Keepers movement transform congregational life. Men who had little interest in the church suddenly caught fire!

For many years, ABMOPAD has actively supported disaster relief projects and held retreats and conferences to encourage men and boys to follow and serve Christ. However today, the relief trailers are sitting idle and the leadership is in disarray. With your help, we can change that.

Last month, a retreat attended by 25 men was held at Camp Ichthus. We discussed and prayed about the situation and plan to hold a follow-up event on November 10-11 at Camp Ichthus in Palmerton, PA.

On Saturday, Dec. 9, 9 a.m., we are inviting the men to a FREE breakfast at Camp Judson (398 Holliday Rd, N. Springfield, PA 16430). We will worship and pray together afterwards. Contact 1-888-687-0883 / [dveselicky@abcopad.com](mailto:dveselicky@abcopad.com) to register.

Join us; if possible, bring a man or two with you who might catch the vision for where men’s ministry is heading in ABCOPAD.

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## Town Hall Listening Sessions for the ABCOPAD Regional Executive Pastor Search Committee

A series of Listening Sessions have been scheduled for the ABCOPAD Regional Executive Pastor Search Committee. You may choose to attend online or in person. The sessions are expected to last about an hour.

### Thursday, Sept. 14 @ 10 a.m. / In-person & Zoom

First Baptist Church of Bethlehem, Pastor David Hardin  
 3235 Linden St, Bethlehem, PA 18017

Muncy Baptist Church, Pastor Rob Rice  
 11 W Penn St, Muncy, PA 17756

First Baptist Church of Tarentum, Pastor Felicia Brock  
 410 E. Third Avenue, Tarentum PA 15084

Christ Memorial Baptist Church, Pastor Jeff Collins  
 1160 E. Lebanon Rd, Dover, DE 19901

### Sunday, Sept. 17 @ 2 p.m. / In-person & Zoom

First Baptist Church of Franklin, Pastor Randy Powell  
 1041 Liberty St. Franklin PA 16323

West Shore Baptist Church, Pastor Kelly Legg  
 2025 Market Street, Camp Hill, PA 17011

First Baptist Church of Norristown, Pastor CG Coats  
 445 Burnside Avenue, Norristown, PA 19403

Wayne Park Baptist Church, Pastor Dennis Horne  
 923 E Sixth St, Erie, PA 16507

### Wednesday, Sept. 20 @ 7 p.m. / Zoom Only



For the link to attend any of the meetings online,  
 call 1-888-687-0883 or email [dveselicky@abcopad.com](mailto:dveselicky@abcopad.com).





**Rev. Dr. Felicia Brock**  
**Pittsburgh Geographic**  
**Pastoral Servant**  
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## The Spirit of a Church Leader

Numbers 11:16-17, 24-25

<sup>16</sup>So the Lord said to Moses, “Gather for me seventy of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tent of meeting, and have them take their place there with you. <sup>17</sup>I will come down and talk with you there; and I will take some of the spirit that is on you and put it on them; and they shall bear the burden of the people along with you so that you will not bear it all by yourself. . . . <sup>24</sup>So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord; and he gathered seventy elders of the people, and placed them all around the tent. <sup>25</sup>Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders; and when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do so again.

Let’s start with the obvious. A leader’s spirit matters. And this is the case no matter the leadership position we hold—from Pastor to Board Member to Director of Music. It is impossible to be a good leader if we don’t have God’s spirit. Meaning we are caring, compassionate, patient, understanding and filled with love for others. An unfortunate result of being a leader with God’s Spirit is that we often overdo “it.” Important, many of these “its” differ from one leader to the next. For some, we don’t

want to delegate because we want it done the way we think it should be done. For some, we take on many, if not all, of the responsibilities of the financial committee, Deacons, Trustees, Christian Education Board, and the Administrative Board. In addition, we prepare and deliver sermons and Bible lessons; as well as casting the vision for our various ministries. Told you. Often, we overdo “it.”

For us to be effective leaders, we must trust God to guide others to accomplish the many ministry tasks that we are currently endeavoring to complete alone. Here’s where the spirit of the leader is even more important. As God told Moses, He has blessed us with people in our ministries to help us manage the leadership load. I know that we think we don’t have anyone to help do whatever we are trying to do. But God’s word is true. And, He has blessed us with some who will help us; we just must look for them. And once identified, we need to “have them to take their place there with [us]”. Once we do our part, God will do His. He will **“take some of the spirit that [is on us] and put it on them”**.

Now, they will help shoulder our ministry loads. They will bear the burden of the people along with us. We will no longer be relegated to doing it all alone. No, they won’t do things in the exact same manner that we do them. But indeed, God will guide them just as He guides us.

But let’s not overlook that the spirits of these people will be our spirits. Please take a moment and consider this fact. The spirits of these people will be our spirits. So, let’s look at our own spirits first. Determine our spiritual strengths and weaknesses. And then, make it a priority to work towards truly having God-like spirits. Our ministries depend on it.

## Other Items of Interest



### Pastoral Care

**Rev. Carol Ross Irwin**

**Offered on Saturdays, Oct. 21 — Dec. 9**  
**8 a.m. — 10 a.m.**

An introduction to the role of the pastor in caring and counseling covering: The effect of the role of pastor on the person under care; the influence of the personality of the pastor in care and counseling; the need to refer to others; introductions to listening skills, home visiting, hospital visitation and visiting in special settings; helping parishioners deal with marriage, death and other major events in life. Resources, services and problems in conducting marriages and funerals will be presented. Counseling techniques and resources will be discussed.

### Baptist History and Polity

**Rev. Randy Powell and Rev. Dr. David Laubach**

**Offered Three Thursday Evenings @ 7 p.m., Oct. 19, 26 & Nov. 2**

This course is an introduction to the origin of the Baptists and the resulting church organization. After a brief introduction to early church history and the Reformation, this course will focus on the history of Baptists, both in England and America. The course will discuss the organization of a Baptist church with an emphasis on pastoral leadership. For more information, visit <https://www.actsministryschool.com/contact.html>



## RETREAT 2023 RECAP

When your Leadership Team met at Camp Hebron in the fall of 2022, we felt compelled to gather our ladies together in

the beautiful setting nestled in the mountains near Halifax, PA, for not a 'conference', but a 'retreat'. Our vision was that everyone would enjoy a time of relaxation, refreshment and rejuvenation. It was evident throughout the weekend that the vision was in fact becoming reality.

**Speakers** Kristi Young, Valerie Black, Christy Meneely and Cristy Wise each brought messages of encouragement, testimony and challenge. All these women are in fact women in ministry in ABCOPAD. Sharing in relaxed circles over a meal or in moments just visiting with each other, we have heard the ladies felt very connected to one another through hearing from our very own women.

**84 registered** for the retreat.

The **'23 Region Project – 'FRESH START IN COSTA RICO'** – was completed August 31, 2023, including the final offering on Friday of the retreat, with the goal of \$15,000 being met and surpassed! Praise God! **\$15,255.00!**

The **Retreat Project** was to bring items to leave for Camp Hebron to use in their camp programs. Our generous ladies donated:

- \*296 Tee Shirts – sizes child S thru adult XL
- \*75 Bottles Liquid Rit Dye, 1 Tie Dye Kit, 2 powders
- \*64 Rolls Duct Tape

**Retreat Sewing Project** – We had the opportunity to contribute goods and services to construct washable, reusable sanitary pads to be taken to Uganda by Team Member Lori Jennings, through Shoebox Ministry and several sewing circles around ABCOPAD. A VERY GENEROUS supply of flannels and terry cloth, sewing threads and comfort battings were donated. If you were familiar with the process, you could jump right in at cutting or sewing. If you were not familiar, you had the opportunity to see firsthand this **hands-on ministry** that is so needed and appreciated by sisters around the globe. Thank you, Pam Hughes, for all your hard work!

- \*60 sanitary pads completed
- \*45 bars of soap
- \*282 pair of panties
- \*14 burp cloths
- \*1,200 safety pins

**Worship** was led by Ryan and Emily Jeffries and what sweet worship it was. It was amazing to see the Holy Spirit work through the selections of songs and the topics of the messages – without group planning!

**Firepit, Smores, Singing, Testimonies** - The beautiful weather permitted us to gather around the firepit on swing sets or bag chairs and just enjoy the night sky, the music and singing, the time of testimony and of course smores! on both Friday and Saturday evenings.

**Walking with Lydia** – Lori Jennings set up a walking path with scripture and information about the life of Lydia for ladies to enjoy. Individuals and small groups walked, talked, read aloud or silently and really soaked in both the beautiful story of this woman and the beautiful surroundings of the staked path.

**WHO WANTS TO GO TO THE SUMMIT?** 8 brave ladies led by Kristi Young set out on the 1 ½ mile hike/climb that included downed trees, rock face climbing and a lot of team building! If you are in your 70's, you can still do this thing! Their faces after this accomplishment were priceless! The photos they shared, breathtaking! To enjoy the summit, you don't have to climb, you can drive to the lookout – but hooray for these 8!

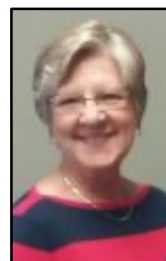
**Tea Time Scriptures** – Jodie Vasbinder led a group in an activity of looking at 'tea' words we find in the Bible. With HOSPITALITY being the theme of the retreat, it was a fun way to let some of the other 'tea' words steep in our hearts. Integrity, Beauty, Honesty, Availability and more.

All retreat attendees received a copy of **'REACH OUT GATHER IN'** by **Karen Ehman**. We are encouraging each lady to use it in some fashion – personal or small group study – and be watching for an opportunity coming soon to join an online/zoom group using this book as our resource. If you would like to purchase copies of this book, contact Jodie Vasbinder.



**The sweetest thing** all weekend was just seeing ladies visit, share their stories, be in activity **TOGETHER** and laughter – It was a 'light' weekend that we all seemed to just need – and God showed up to be with us!

*The full retreat booklet can be viewed online.*  
[Thrive2023.pdf \(abcopad.org\)](https://www.abcopad.org/Thrive2023.pdf)



Your **THRIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM** will meet Sept 29-30, 2023 to begin planning for the 2024 THRIVE Retreat to be held again at Camp Hebron. **Mark your calendars now! August 16-18, 2024 and plan to be with us.** Please be in prayer for the TEAM. We are praying about doing an event in the western area of ABCOPAD. Let us know of your interest.

Blessings, President Sue MacDonald

## News From our Associations ([www.abcopad.org](http://www.abcopad.org))

### Abington

Leaders from the **Abington Association** gathered over lunch to plan events for the coming year. There was also discussion about officers for the association for the coming year. Also at the table was young Mario, BJ Richards' (UBC Taylor) grandson, going into kindergarten this year. He volunteered to be the moderator of the association if needed. Thank you, Mario!!!

Berean, Carbondale, celebrated its 175th anniversary service. Pastor Debbie Loessy officiated the celebration that included a word from Carbondale's mayor-elect Michelle Bannon, the opening of a time capsule from 1998, special music from members of the former Trinity Baptist church in Scranton, and a time of communion. Following the service, a large group of members retreated to a local restaurant for lunch together. It was a great celebration of a faithful ministry in the town of Carbondale!

### Central Union

ABCOPAD Southeast GPS Dan McDowell not only serves as a local pastor at GraceCrossing Community Church, Phoenixville, he is also privileged to serve as the Phoenixville Police Department Chaplain.

### Harrisburg

The Search Committee at **Colonial Park** is ready to dive into pastoral profiles and begin the search in earnest for their next bi-vocational or part-time pastoral leader. It was wonderful hearing them talk about their hope to continue working for the Kingdom to come in their community. Please join in praying with them for the Father to raise up their next pastor.

**West Shore** has called its new Associate Pastor — Rev. Dr. Bulus Galadima. Originally from Nigeria, Pastor Bulus has a strong background in theological education. He has expressed a strong commitment to helping people grow in their relationship to Jesus and do outreach ministry to the community. Welcome to ABCOPAD!

**FBC, York** has full-sized decorations for Twists and Turns Vacation Bible School. The theme is Following Jesus Changes the Game. If your church would like to use them next year, they are available free of charge but must be picked up at the church. Call 717-600-0077 or [vistfbcoy\\_office@comcast.net](mailto:vistfbcoy_office@comcast.net)

### Laurel

**FBC, Jeannette** is making a difference in their community. Living Hope Outreach serves 300 meals each week in their Fellowship Hall. Their Community Clothes Closet serves over 100 people every week. Fighting blight, they purchased adjacent properties behind the church. Areas inside their building have been restored for targeted growth. This year, they will launch two major projects: They are partnering with Morgan Johnson, their new Principal, to introduce Preschool and After-School programs in the heart of Jeannette. The new school will minister to young

families in the community. They are also hiring Michael Mays, as the new Intern Pastor, for a 3-year educational and training program to prepare him for ordained ministry. Michael is a gifted musician who has received God's call to ministry.

### Northumberland

Susan and Mark Mahserjian-Smith recently hosted the annual **Love Unlimited Church Picnic** at their home. It was a blessing having a relaxing afternoon enjoying good food and even better fellowship. So grateful for these brothers and sisters in Christ and a chance to share a meal together.

It's an annual tradition for one of our **ABCOPAD LLC groups** to make time in the summer to head to a MLB Ballpark. This year, they headed to Detroit to see the Tigers play at Comerica Park. More than the game, it was a joy spending quality time with these partners in ministry who have been supporting and encouraging one another for over a decade.

### Pittsburgh

Welcome to Pastor Roy Kendelberger! In May 2023, Pastor Roy joined the **North Hills Community** as their Senior Pastor. Pastor Roy brings with him many years of pastoral experience, along with an infusion of the Holy Spirit. Ministry plans are in the works. Oh, and he and his wife are expecting their second bundle of joy any day!

At PNC Park, a number of **ABCOPAD pastoral leaders** enjoyed a game with the Pittsburgh Pirates (although two Michigan transplants were rooting for the Tigers). Arrrrr!

**FBC, Washington** church had a service and dinner of celebration for their retiring pastor Pastor Steve Dunlap for his 19 years of ministry. Rev. Mark McCallion presented him a certificate of recognition from the region. There were over 70 in attendance! *(BTW: Pastor Steve got a great report: his PET scan says cancer free! Amen!)*

**FBC, Pittsburgh**, celebrated the 40th anniversary of Rev. Chuck Fox's ordination. Pastor Chuck's wife, Ruth, surprised him and shared the news. "The celebration of Chuck's 40 years in ministry went so well at First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh today! He was surprised." A letter from Rev. Mark Mahserjian-Smith, representing ABCOPAD, was read in church and a certificate was given to him commemorating the occasion. Congratulations Chuck!

**Woodlawn AB** church is planning to honor Rev. Howard Irwin during worship on Sunday, Oct. 15, 11 a.m. They will celebrate his 15 years as pastor and his 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ordination. Congratulations, Pastor Howard!



## Reading

**Calvary, Allentown**, held a community Food Truck event in their parking lot. There was a great turn out and connections were made with a lot of folk in the community. Members brought their friends, families and neighbors. This was such a great idea for outreach in their neighborhood and plans are already underway to do this event next year with even more vendors.

## Ten Mile

It was a great day as Rev. Dr. Kevin Roberts was installed as pastor of the **Jefferson** church. Pastor Cristy Wise brought the sermon and charge; then Pastor Mark Mahserjian-Smith welcomed him to ABCOPAD, presenting him with a shepherd's staff. It was a special time to be together. Following the service a light lunch was prepared for people to visit on this special occasion. There was a great spirit among those gathered, and God is already on the move under Pastor Kevin's leadership.

The Ten Mile Association Men's Prayer Breakfast is held the first Saturday of each month. Most recently, **Bethlehem** church hosted the event. Pastor Mark Mahserjian-Smith shared a passage out of Joshua 1 for devotions. It's been a great time to lift up prayer request and praises ... and a great opportunity for Christian brothers to catch up and be challenged to be the courageous men for God!

It was Messtival '23 at **FBC, Waynesburg!** And a mess it was at this annual summer event. The youth made their own flags, got to find a gummy bear no hands in flour, go through the hot dog tunnel, have shaving cream with cheese balls stick to you, and so much more by finishing with a slip and slide to wash it all off! So much fun!

## Miscellaneous

The **Men's Envisioning Retreat at Camp Ichthus** not only included time for spiritual growth but also time to simply have fun and connect. There was a Corn Hole Tournament, Skeet Shooting, a work project, and archery. Lots of sharp shooters in this group. Such a fun afternoon hanging out with these brothers in Christ.

Prayers are needed for **Camp Carmel**. Recent storms created a lot of destruction in the camp. Enormous trees pulled out of the ground also damaged plumbing and electrical. Praise God this wasn't during camp weeks. No one was hurt! Prayers moving forward as the Camp Board navigates the next steps.

## Future Church: ReVisioning, ReNewing & ReIgniting Your Church's Ministry

Friday, Oct. 6 – Pastors and Church Staff  
Saturday, Oct. 7 – Pastors AND Lay Leaders

First Baptist Church, Lansdale  
700 N Broad St.  
Lansdale, PA 19446  
215-855-3457

Many churches are struggling to find their place in the world today. Conversations about the future tend to focus on finances, worship attendance and how much the world has changed.

Imagine what might happen if your church was clear on its purpose, was willing to experiment and could see the potential and opportunity that surrounds them.

Future Church is designed for pastors and church leaders with the goal to help you revision, renew and reignite the ministry God has called you to.



	2022	2023
United Mission Basics	\$22,183	\$15,927
Love Gift	\$958	\$584
Partners in Ministry	\$17,382	\$13,562
Annual Offerings		
AFC	\$433	\$1,740
WMO	\$721	\$2,813
RMMO	\$348	\$1,790
OGHS	\$8,644	\$10,076

*The cumulative comparison figures*

The decrease in United Missions (includes UMB & Love Gift) amounts to (\$8,964) less in actual dollars that ABCOPAD received thru August.

AFC is ahead by \$4,937 thru August. This increase amounts to \$1,448 more in actual dollars that ABCOPAD received thru August.

Partners in Ministry is ahead by \$18,001 thru Aug.

In actual dollars, from UM, AFC and PIM, ABCOPAD has received \$13,974 more thru Aug. 2023.



*Goodbye Summer,  
Welcome Autumn!*

**October, 2023 Deadline:**

**Items to be included in the June issue of Notes & News need to arrive by 5 p.m., Thursday, October 5, 2023.**

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

## Partners in Ministry Fulfilling Christ's Mission in the World



**Rev. Randy Powell**  
**Northwest GPS**  
**rpowell@abcopad.com**

I grew up in an independent Baptist church, accustomed to facing challenges and solving problems, or not, on our own. My first five years as a pastor were at an American Baptist church in Michigan; but in that time, I never met with anyone from the Association or Region; we functioned as an independent church, as I know a number of ABCOPAD churches do also. When I moved to Franklin, PA in 2012 all that changed. Not because I envisioned myself as someone who would work with, and eventually for, ABCOPAD, but because our local Association and this particular Region offered something I, to modify a line from a Disney princess song, "never knew I never knew." Here I found fellowship, support, encouragement, educational opportunities, sympathy, mentorship and in good time, friendship. Can a pastor function in ministry on his/her own without these denominational supports? Yes, they can, I know because I have, but now knowing there is a better way, I'd rather not have to try. We're better together.

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## Partners in Ministry Fulfilling Christ's Mission in the World

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### You can give to Partners in Ministry...

1. Through your local congregation's weekly offering by designating your gift to ABCOPAD - **Partners in Ministry**.
2. Through ABCOPAD's Online Giving option, available on the Regional website ([www.abcopad.org](http://www.abcopad.org)). Your church can receive mission-giving credit for your online gift.
3. By giving through your mobile device ([www.abcopad.mobile](http://www.abcopad.mobile)).
4. By sending your check (made payable to ABCOPAD WMS) to: ABCOPAD; P.O. Box 421; Hatboro, PA 19040

Thank you for your giving to **Partners in Ministry**  
and for your partnership as we minister together  
in Pennsylvania and Delaware.



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# Private Public Pulpit LIVES

## Private, Public & Pulpit Lives!

This event will be helpful to both **MALE** and **FEMALE** clergy.

**October 3, 17 and 24, 2023, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.**

The Deadline for Registration is September 30, 2023

(A test run with the technology will be held prior to the first session.)



### Led by Dr. Patricia Batten

Assistant Professor of Preaching, Associate  
Director of the Haddon W. Robinson Center  
for Preaching, Gordon Conwell Theological  
Seminary

### Online CE Event - Up to 1 CEU

To receive full CEU credits, participants need to attend all 3 sessions; do the required reading and write a 2-page Reflection Paper.



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

### Cost \$30 / Book Not Included

Participants will also need the book "Emboldened" by Tara Beth Leach, available in paperback, Kindle, CD and audiobook.

Amazon offers "**Emboldened**" on Audible. With a Trial Membership, you can get the audio version for free. The trial membership lasts for 30 days. During that time, you would have unlimited access to books and podcasts. As long as you cancel before the trial period expires, there is no charge.

