

# ABC+CPC



# The Central Pacific Coast Baptist

American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast . . .  
resourcing, empowering and equipping congregations to discover and fulfill  
their unique mission in their neighborhood . . . and around the world.

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## 2017 ABC-USA Biennial Mission Summit and ABCCPC Regional Annual Gathering Combined

**T**he 2017 ABCUSA Biennial Mission Summit is set to begin in Portland at the Portland Convention Center on the last Friday in June. On the Wednesday evening and Thursday immediately preceding the Biennial, the American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast will gather for their Annual Gathering at the First Baptist Church of Portland. These two events have been combined to minimize the travel demands on our churches and to encourage greater participation in both events.

Because of the truncated Annual Gathering schedule, registration has been streamlined and costs minimized. Participants are asked to simply call or email the Region office to help us get an accurate count for the two meals. FBC Portland will be providing the Wednesday evening meal at a cost of \$6 per person, payable at the door. The Drop-In Center, FBC's ministry to homeless and low-income residents downtown, has invited us to join their staff for lunch on Thursday. Donations will be welcomed!

- **Wednesday evening's schedule (June 28)** consists of dinner at 6:30 and the program at 7:30. The meal will be in the church dining hall and the program will be in the church's community center across the street from the sanctuary. Our guests for the evening program include ABC International Ministries mission partners serving around the world. Signage will direct you to the appropriate places. Parking is available in the church's lot next door at 12th and Salmon Streets.
- **Thursday's schedule (June 29)** begins at 9:30 a.m. with opening worship. Immediately following worship we will hear our State of the Region report from our Executive Minister and reports from our partners across the region. At the business meeting portion of our time together we will receive the report from the Nominating Committee and elect members to serve on the 2018 Board of Ministry.
- **Following lunch** with the Drop-In Center staff we will reconvene to wrap up any unfinished work and should be done by 2 p.m. Anyone who is interested in the work of the Drop-In Center is invited to return following our afternoon session to volunteer to help them as they serve the afternoon meal from 2-4 p.m.
- **To "register" for the Annual Gathering**, please simply call the office at (503) 228-8394 or email us at [register@abccpc.org](mailto:register@abccpc.org) and let us know that we should include you in the meal count(s).
- **To register for the ABC-USA Biennial Mission Summit** go to [www.americanbaptists2017.org](http://www.americanbaptists2017.org).
- **Public transportation** is available from the Biennial hotels to First Baptist Church. Details will be sent by email when your register.



## Jesus' Bucket List

Rev. Katie Choy-Wong

During Jesus' last week of his life...

Jesus really had to step up what he wanted to teach, tell, and show his followers.

What did he want the disciples to know before he left this earth?

What did he want the people to know? What did he want to do before he left? What about us? What if God wrote our bucket list?

That was our theme for Lent and Easter at New Life Christian Fellowship in Castro Valley, CA. It was an intriguing theme, and one that we asked ourselves for Lent. Week 1 was "*Be, Eat and Remember Together*" centered around Jesus Last Supper; week 2 was "*Avoid Being Corrupted*" focused on Jesus and the moneychangers at the Temple; week 3 "*Be Consistent in Your Actions*" with Jesus pointing at the hypocrisy of the Jewish religious leaders; week 4 was "*Give All You Have From Your Heart*" when a widow caught Jesus' eye; week 5 was "*Be Servants of One Another*" as Jesus washed the disciples' feet; and week 6 was "*Look to Jesus for Strength and Fruit*" centered around Jesus teaching from *John 15:5-8*.



Having different themes each year for Lent/Easter and Advent/Christmas each year has helped us see Easter and Christmas with fresh eyes, especially for us pastors, who have to come up with something new and refreshing in sermons where church members know the stories so well. It helps bring new insights to the most amazing demonstration of God's love.

It is the same way for our region and our churches. We all need to be refreshed, renewed, reenergized for the calling each of us have in Christ. How can our region help our churches find new life and new purpose for the challenges of today? How can our region reinvigorate and resource our tired ministers? How can our region help our churches with tools and resources for tomorrow? How can our region inspire a new generation of leaders, clergy and pastors? How can our region support our front line chaplains, missionaries, counselors, all those called by God to devote themselves to ministry?

We are invited to look at God's calling in fresh ways, gain new insights, and risk stepping out in faith. It may mean letting go of some things, or it may mean doing the things we do better. This June 28-29 (ABCCPC Annual Gathering) at First Baptist Church of Portland's Community Center, and June 30-July 2 (ABCUSA Biennial Mission Summit) at Oregon Convention Center, we have an opportunity to meet new people, be inspired with new ideas, learn and hear new things, find new resources, try out new experiences. I hope you take advantage of this to be refresh, renewed, reenergized.

It's been 8 years since our Biennial has been on the West Coast. This year our region is hosting. We have an opportunity at our doorstep. Please come and be amazed at what God is doing in and with the American Baptists!

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*Rev. Choy-Wong is the President of the American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast and serves as the Senior Pastor of New Life Christian Fellowship in Castro Valley, CA. She was named the 2017 Alumna of the Year by the American Baptist Seminary of the West.*

## Rev. Dr. Lee B. Spitzer Called as ABCUSA General Secretary

On Monday, May 8, the Board of General Ministries met in Chicago to elect Reverend Dr. Lee B. Spitzer to the position of General Secretary of American Baptist Churches USA. Currently Dr. Spitzer serves as Executive Minister for the American Baptist Churches in New Jersey (ABCNJ). He has served congregations in New Jersey, Nebraska, and Rhode Island.

Dr. Spitzer has written extensively and his newest Judson Press book, *Baptists, Jews, and the Holocaust: The Hand of Sincere Friendship*, is scheduled for release in October 2017.

His goal as General Secretary is “to lead ABCUSA into a future of spiritual renewal, creative service, and church growth, in joyful cooperation with all partners of the American Baptist Family.” His efforts as General Secretary will be directed toward strengthening connections with ABC regions, affirming and enhancing our diversity, reaching out to the next generation of leaders, growing trust and collaboration, strengthening our American Baptist identity and providing administrative leadership in areas of stewardship, funding, and fiduciary concerns.



Dr. Spitzer will begin his service as General Secretary on June 1 and will be preaching on Sunday morning, July 2, at the American Baptist Biennial Mission Summit in Portland.

### August 5-12, 2017

## Take Advantage of this Short Term Mission Opportunity

Since 2001 the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska and of the Dakotas have jointly sponsored the ABC Emergency Services Center, a short-term mission project during the annual motorcycle rally in Sturgis, South Dakota. Each year hundreds of thousands of bikers descend on the Black Hills to enjoy the scenic roads and the camaraderie at races, concerts, and parties.



Unfortunately, the combination of long days, late nights, overindulgence, and overcrowded campgrounds often lead to exhaustion and impaired judgment. Volunteers at the ABCESC respond 24 hours a day to requests for assistance with everything from aiding abandoned women and children to transporting accident victims and their families to providing spiritual care to rally participants and first responders.

The ABCESC project has been designed to provide a short-term cross-cultural mission experience to American Baptists. Many of the volunteer staff do not ride motorcycles. Through the hospitality of Pastor Gregg Hemmen and the congregation at FBC Rapid City, costs for volunteers are kept to a minimum. More information and the volunteer registration form can be found at [www.SturgisAid.com](http://www.SturgisAid.com).

Again this year a number of ABCCPC representatives will be joining the ABCESC team. It is not too late to join them. We can bring a van to Rapid City if there are enough interested volunteers to join us. Contact Executive Minister Steve Bills at [sbils@abccpc.org](mailto:sbils@abccpc.org) immediately if you are interested in participating.

## “Dear brothers and sisters, pray for us.”

Thus concludes the first epistle to those in Thessalonica, with a general request for prayer for Paul and his traveling companions.

No specific prayer requests are mentioned, just a simple “*pray for us.*”



What would you like your family and friends to be praying for on your behalf? In the epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, the Apostle Paul asked for prayer on his behalf with some specificity. In Colossians (4:3,4) Paul asked, “*pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ.*” One group refers to these “open doors” of opportunity as “divine appointments.” He goes on to further request, “*Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.*”

In a parallel passage in Ephesians (6:19) he further asks, “*pray for me . . . that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel.*”

**Opportunity. Clarity. Boldness.** Even after years as an ambassador for Christ, Paul is keenly aware that he needs his fellow believers to be praying for him and his ministry. He knows not to take anything for granted. He wants to go only and everywhere God is opening doors. He wants to be intentionally clear as he proclaims spiritual truth to those who don’t have a theological vocabulary. He still finds the boldness he needs to be elusive at times. They prayed . . . and God answered.

Dear brothers and sisters, pray for us. And pray for each other. Amen.

*Rev. Bills serves as the Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of the Central Pacific Coast.*

**Special Annual Gathering and  
Biennial Mission Summit Edition!**

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