Introducing
OUR MISSIONARY CLASS OF 2018
In this copy of Advance, you will be introduced to the newest members of the Baptist Mid-Missions Family. On July 20, the Class of 2018 completed Candidate Seminar and were welcomed to the family to begin their prefield/deputation ministry in anticipation of full-time ministry in diverse locations around the world. This was a wonderful class that came to us with great diversity in training, nationality, age, and ministry destination, and I thank God for each one of them.

After all the activity of Seminar, I sat in my office the following week, relaxing and reflecting while looking at a black and white picture of Ferd Rosenau, my missionary grandfather, holding me as an infant of less than one year of age. I have been thinking of the generational divide between my grandfather and myself and, now, the divide between myself and the newest members of the BMM Family who are another generation after me.

Baptist Mid-Missions will be 100 years old in 2020, and truly there have been massive changes in the world in terms of economics, technology, and politics. What are the constants between Ferd, who was in the first BMM candidate class of 1920, and the candidates of 2018? What connects them? I believe it is that common thread of sacrifice. At some time in all of their lives—Ferd in the early 1900s and those today—all heard and responded to God’s call for ownership of their lives.

This understanding of a “living sacrifice” from Romans 12:1 is what for 100 years has continued to bring class after class of candidates to Baptist Mid-Missions for service around the globe. The God of 1920 is the God of 2018, and His call is ever calling people to service. Welcome, Candidate Class of 2018.

Truly by grace alone,

Ferd and Vernon Rosenau
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We cover every member of the Baptist Mid-Missions Missionary Family in prayer. This was especially true for the Class of 2018. We know we can do nothing without His power, and we know He blesses prayer to raise up workers for His harvest.

We are so pleased at the excellent new missionaries He’s brought to us, and we will continue to cover the Class of 2018 in prayer as they go forward. Their job is dependent on the Lord’s strength and provision—only He can rescue lives and shape them into the image of Christ.

Will you pray with us?

Pray for:

1. Partners to embrace God’s call to their fields of ministry.

2. Removal of obstacles to starting and continuing deputation ministry.

3. Their passion to only grow as they enter this important phase in their process.

4. God to meet their deputation needs, including housing, contacts, and start-up costs.

5. Their commissioning churches to be blessed through passionate involvement in sending these servants.
Every day from age nine until 14, and often afterward, Mary prayed a heartfelt prayer: “Lord, I am nothing special. I have so little to give you, but Lord if you want me, I am yours. Lord, please take my life, my hopes and dreams, failures and weaknesses and few strengths ... Lord, make me a woman in whom you alone will be honored and glorified in and through. I am yours.”

Mary learned at an early age to live by faith. Her mother, a godly single mom, followed God’s leading to homeschool her five children as she trusted the Lord for financial provision. Mary’s faith sustained her through struggles with reading that were so difficult she nearly lost hope of going to Bible college. But Mary’s mother taught her to memorize Scripture and learn about great men and women of the faith whose lives showed that with God all things are possible. Her maternal grandparents, BMM missionaries Bill and Lucille Patterson, and her paternal grandparents (a pastor and wife) were godly, up-close examples in Mary’s life.

At 16, Mary opened her heart to serve in full-time ministry. In college, she assumed it would be in home missions, like her Patterson grandparents. She wanted to use her biblical counseling major, but she felt no peace about the US missions internships that were available. Then the Lord impressed England on her heart. That summer, she served near Portsmouth alongside BMM missionaries Glen and Tammy Galbraith.

Each day as she served in children’s ministries, outreaches, and Bible studies, Mary prayed, “Lord is this where you want me to be?” The entire four months were filled with overwhelming joy and peace that more than answered her prayer.

For the past two years, Mary has taught at her church’s Christian school, gaining further experience with children. Mary plans to return to England, where she will work with women’s and children’s ministries. Wherever God leads Mary, her life is the Lord’s, to be used for his honor and glory.
The plan was to study mechanical engineering. Given Russ’s attention to detail and desire to serve others, it made sense as a career path. While he was studying this major at a Christian college, the mission prayer group caught his attention, and he joined. Through this connection, Russ participated in a mission trip to Mexico. On the long van ride home, as Russ thought about the VBS his group conducted, the Lord clearly impressed on him a call to missions. Changing his major, Russ pursued this path wholeheartedly, praying God would show him which field.

In college, he met Bianca, a new Christian who hadn’t known what missions was prior to her studies there. Growing up in a German Catholic family, she received the Lord during high school after a teenage neighbor invited her to revival meetings. One summer at camp, Bianca dedicated her life to full-time Christian service. She learned more about missions from Russ and from a professor who used the book *Operation World* to lead his students to see and pray for the world’s spiritual needs.

After their marriage, Russ and Bianca visited her extended family in Germany. Bianca had always loved other cultures, especially Germany’s. The trip caused Russ especially to love the German people. The McCrocklins later led a mission team to Germany, which confirmed God wanted them there full-time.

During seminary and afterward, both Russ and Bianca taught in Christian schools. The experience showed them the value of teamwork as each teacher used his or her gifts and skills in training disciples for Christ. The McCrocklins look forward to joining the BMM Germany Team as church planters and teachers.

Russ and Bianca define success not in planting a church but in training their disciples well enough to start churches of their own. After decades of hard work by the BMM team, the field is now seeing Germans plant daughter churches. By God’s grace, the McCrocklins want to help that momentum keep moving forward.
On a college ministry trip to Argentina, Luke heard a missionary say, “If you want to be a missionary, be faithful to God today.” Luke thought, I can do that; I don’t know what my next step will be, but I will faithfully prepare today.

Faithful preparation has marked the Tanises’ lives. Anna grew up wanting to be a missionary, and she served regularly at camps. One summer there, she met Luke, a fellow counselor. As the son of the camp director, Luke developed extensive experience working with youth and other counselors. It was at camp he dedicated his life to full-time ministry.

After they married, Luke and Anna sought God’s specific direction for serving together. A 2016 trip to Zambia and Kenya refined their focus: missions was just real people serving God in another place; it was something they could do. Luke kept asking himself, “Am I willing?” Over the next two years, God worked little by little to affirm the Tanises’ call to missions. They began to feel that there was nothing else they should do.

When Malta missionaries Josh and Erica Burrill described the needs and great ministry potential of this small, island nation, Luke and Anna recognized a place where their gifts and experience could be put to full use. University students from 92 nationalities study in Malta, an unlimited mission field that senior missionaries Joe and Jenny Mifsud have long wanted to reach more fully.

The Mifsuds also need help with theological education at their church plant. Luke and Anna each have teaching experience to plug into this need.

Malta’s location near the African coast holds great potential to reach the 10/40 Window and potential for the missionary team to offer weekend training seminars. The Tanises can also help in a Bible study on the neighboring island of Gozo, where the Malta team hopes to organize a second church plant.

The Tanises find joy in serving Christ and joy in seeing Him transform lives. Just as He’s done through their camp and church ministries, they eagerly look forward to seeing His work as they faithfully serve in Malta.
After Ron and Joy Hemsworth spoke about Missionary Acres (BMM’s retirement village) at the Tanners’ church, Bryan was conflicted, even as Lisa tapped him on the shoulder, saying “We should pray about this.” Everything about the ministry fit their background ... but could they be missionaries? For a long time, the Tanners had felt called to ministry, but they never saw missions as part of the puzzle. Yet here was a missions ministry that could use their backgrounds. Since his childhood, Bryan has always lived in houses that needed repair or remodeling. Working with plumbing, electrical repair, and framework comes second nature to him. His time in the military added further experience in administration and maintenance. Missionary Acres also has needs that fit Lisa’s experience in education, freelance writing, and home care.

With every “What if?” Bryan brought before the Lord—their son Owen’s physical handicaps, the number of their children, and other concerns—the Lord answered with assurance that He would enable them. Bryan now says, “We think things are too big for God, and God reminds us He created the whole universe.”

Bryan spent several days at Missionary Acres in December 2016 and was sold on the ministry from the first day. The Acres provides a comfortable, affordable community for retirees from BMM and other Christian ministries. The Tanners realized they wouldn’t be Christians if the previous generations hadn’t told them about Christ. Here was a ministry that is taking care of those previous generations—something the Bible commends. Lisa looks forward to recording the residents’ stories before they are lost. The Acres will also be an ideal place for their large family: a community of grandparents for their children, who will bring youthful energy to the residents.

The Tanners found that sometimes we don’t always know how to get from point A to point B in life, but if we take the first step, God will show us. Sometimes it’s not where we thought we were going in the first place, but we can always trust the God who knows us perfectly.

**SENDING CHURCH**
**CHEWELAH BAPTIST CHURCH—CHEWELAH, WASHINGTON**

**CHILDREN**
**JAYME (16), OWEN (12), JEFFREY (9), ELLIE (8), SYDNEY (6), SIMON (5), BRYNNA (3), BRYSON (1), EXPECTING A CHILD IN OCTOBER.**
To Warren and Lara, Brazil is home. God’s call to serve there as career missionaries came as a natural progression from Warren’s growing up as a Brazil MK (the son of BMM missionaries Chris and Darcy Vergiels) and Lara’s growing up in a church started by Brazil missionaries John and Karen Swedberg in São Jose do Rio Preto.

After high school, Lara enrolled for one year at a BMM-founded Bible college to ground herself before entering university. She liked it so much she stayed for a bachelor’s degree. Sharing the gospel with children during her internship, Lara realized she wanted to serve this way her whole life. A missionary conference during her senior year cemented her specific call to missions.

For Warren, growing up on the mission field and seeing the Lord at work deeply impressed on him the gospel’s power to transform lives. When it came time for college in the US, Warren strongly felt God leading him to join His work in Brazil. Every course he took and every opportunity to serve was focused toward Brazil.

Part-way through Warren’s college years, Karen Swedberg told him about a ministry-minded young lady he might want to meet. Warren and Lara developed their relationship long-distance through Facebook and Skype and during Warren’s internship in Brazil. They married in January 2018.

Together, they share a love for the Brazilian people and a burden to see them set free from spiritual idolatry so they can live life to the fullest in Christ. Warren’s internship placed him in a church led by Brazilian pastor Claudinei. Warren’s American missions understanding was broadened through Claudinei’s Brazilian perspective. Warren saw more clearly how relationships are highly important to Brazilians; it’s how Christians love God and love others.

Currently Warren and Lara are building Christ-focused relationships with people in Presidente Prudente, the Brazilian city where Warren’s parents are planting a new church. After raising their support, Warren and Lara plan to be church planters, possibly in the needy interior São Paulo area or wherever God leads them.
As a 16-year-old German exchange student in the US, Volker heard the gospel for the first time and received Christ as his Savior. The Lord gave him a special burden: to go and share that message with his own people.

Back in Germany, Volker did just that. He began attending a missionary church plant and joined them in street witnessing. On these occasions, Volker sensed the Lord using him. He told God, “You just spoke through me. I am yours to use, however you deem fit.”

God was also preparing Becky during those years. As a pastor’s daughter, she loved missionary presentations and became burdened for people to know the Lord. In high school, she met a German exchange student, and she studied German, not realizing God was laying groundwork for her future.

Volker and Becky met in Bible college, where they served together in a student mission group. After Volker graduated from seminary, they married and moved to Germany, sharing a common burden to make the gospel known to the German people.

For 10 years, Volker served as assistant pastor of a small church in Hamburg. Two years ago, the Weises, with a good core group, planted another church in the Hamburg area, which has grown to 80–90 in attendance.

With a missionary heart to start more churches, Volker and Becky will join the BMM Germany Team. They resonate with the BMM missionaries’ vision to plant churches and to provide well-grounded theological education. The BMM team’s training center in Nürnberg not only strengthens lay people but also equips believers in all stages of life for the work of ministry.

As a new believer in Germany, Volker learned much from his missionary pastor’s family as he watched them live out the Christian life. As a family, the Weises have modeled the Christian life in front of German believers, most of whom are first-generation Christians. The Weises look forward to expanding their ministry further as they raise up more disciples in Germany.
You may have already noticed a new logo appearing in our publications that indicates in just two short years, Baptist Mid-Missions will be celebrating 100 years of helping churches launch their missionaries to the field. Our first five candidates were interviewed on October 15, 1920, and that same process continues through today.

Any organization is only as good as the people who make up that particular entity. Carelessness in the vetting process will only lead to a slow deterioration of the purpose and fabric of the original institution. We thought it would be helpful for you to understand just how someone becomes part of Baptist Mid-Missions. While we desire to add new recruits, we use extreme care in their acceptance to ensure the Mission stays true to its founding purpose and that the missionary DNA of new applicants is the same as those who have gone on before.

Here are the steps making up that process and the information we seek:

- **Initial face-to-face conversation**
- **First Steps Application**—conversion, call to missions, moral qualifications
- **Formal Application**—philosophy of ministry
- **Medical Questionnaire**—suitability for field
- **Doctrinal Questionnaire**—ability to define beliefs with Scriptural backing
- **Doctrinal Exam**—ability to verbalize beliefs with members of BMM’s General Council

It is of utmost importance to note that, because BMM serves churches, the sending church must vote to recommend their member to BMM for full-time service by unreservedly indicating their agreement with the Articles of Faith of Baptist Mid-Missions. This has been true since the inception of this agency. To review these tenets, view our web page: www.bmm.org/about/our-mission.

Also, the church indicates its willingness to have its missionary abide by the guidelines of BMM. Such norms are necessary to ensure that team members coming from different churches have a framework within which to function in harmony.

Only after satisfactory completion of these steps are the candidates invited to Candidate Seminar, where they will receive training for deputation as well as preparation for transition to their field of service.

We share this information with you so that you know we do everything possible to safeguard that the organization conceived on October 15, 1920, stays on course. Has missionary methodology changed over the years? Of course. Times and people change, and the way we reach them must reflect those ever-changing times. It was said of the sons of Issachar that they were men “who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do” (1 Chronicles 12:32). We, too, must be cognizant of the times in which we live so that we may know best how to reach the lost. However, our unswerving commitment to the principles and faith of our founders remains the same! Praise the Lord with us for His care of this organization.

Steve Fulks is BMM’s Second Vice President and Administrator for Operations. He previously served as Administrator for Church Relations and Enlistment and as a missionary to Peru with his wife, Judy.

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Great is our GOD

The story of Baptist Mid-Missions

Photos, clockwise from top: The Shaw family, with friends; Florence Almen; Curtis Cochrane (second from right) holding BMM’s first baptism in Ghana.
Throughout the entire 1940s, World War II shaped missions tragically and triumphantly. Missions was no easy task in this decade. After Germany captured France, banks and post offices were closed in the French colonies where BMM had many workers. **Missionaries faced food and supply scarcities as cargo ships were pressed into wartime service.** Missionaries served by faith, and God provided in unusual ways. In French Equatorial Africa, missionary Delbert Hall planted an early crop of sweet potatoes. When his family’s food ran out, he dug up vines loaded with 18” sweet potatoes—nearly eight bushels. The family survived on peanuts and sweet potatoes that year.

Missionaries who hoped to leave the US for their first term or after furlough found themselves grounded. Governments withheld passports and visas, and passenger ships were scarce. In 1940, Nils and Alta Jacobson and John and Adda Slocum waited two months for a ship that could take them from Africa to the US. **Travel grew riskier as the war progressed.** In March 1941, Florence Almen headed back to Africa on the Zam Zam, an Egyptian ship. A few weeks into the voyage, they were shelled by a Nazi raider. Florence and her companions became German prisoners of war for 33 days until the American ambassador intervened.

**One family faced a much greater sacrifice.** Because of serious health problems, Harvey and Vera Shaw’s family sailed from Africa in 1942. As the ship crossed the Atlantic, a German submarine sank the vessel. Vera and daughter Georgia were below deck and were never seen again. Harvey and children Richard and Carol were thrown off the deck but managed to find life rafts. Harvey died from injuries, and Richard and Carol floated for 21 days before being rescued. Read more about this story at www.bmm.org under Articles.

**Life was tragically taken, but new birth also came.** As young Frenchmen were shipped to what is today Chad, Africa, Paul and Etienne Metzler warmly received them. Inviting them for Saturday game nights, the Metzlers gave them each a Gospel of John. When war reached north Africa, the young men left for battle, and most were killed. However, some had received the gospel message and their lives were secure eternally.

When Gust Pearson tried to take his family home from French Equatorial Africa in spring 1945, the ship was off-loaded in Ghana (then called Gold Coast) for war purposes. Gust witnessed to everyone he found. After several weeks, the Pearsons left with an invitation for BMM to open a work there. Our first Ghana missionaries, Curtis and Grace Cochrane, joined BMM in 1946. **Teams of missionaries have served in Ghana to this day.**

The war officially ended in 1945, but it was months before ships returned to civilian service and years before countries rebuilt from World War II’s devastation. In 1946, our first second-generation missionary, Eugene Rosenau (father of Dr. Vernon Rosenau), left for Africa with his wife, Ernestine. **The Rosenaus were early recruits in a mighty missionary army that would bring life to a war-battered world.**

**Correction:** In the summer 2018 Advance, Rev. Allan Lewis was mistakenly identified as pastor of Hough Avenue Baptist Church in the 1930s. The correct pastor was Rev. A.J. Lewis, father of Rev. Allan Lewis (BMM’s past president).

**Next issue: 1950s**

The post-war missions boom.
Sara and her husband, Jim, saved and invested throughout their working years. Now a widow, Sara treasures her time with friends at church and with her grandchildren. When it comes to giving, she has found her niche: “Our investments multiplied through the years, and while Jim was working, we gave to the Lord’s work by writing checks. Now things have changed, and I give shares of stock. My broker chooses only stocks I have owned for more than one year, so when I give, I don’t have to pay capital gains tax as I would if I sold the shares to write a check.”

**Stocks, Bonds, and Mutual Funds**

Sara’s broker chooses stocks she has owned for more than one year, allowing her to avoid capital gains tax when giving.

**IRA Charitable Rollovers**

(for those 70½ and older)

Earl and Laura lived frugally and saved as a pattern of life, but along the way they never failed to give to the Lord’s work. Missions was their special delight: “To see that the gospel continues to bring light to the dark places of our world ... that’s why we give.” When Earl turned 70½, his tax advisor suggested making tax-free gifts (up to $100,000 per year) from his traditional IRA. Earl contacted his IRA custodian to transfer his gift to BMM Foundation. With the gift, he satisfied his Required Minimum Distribution and avoided the income tax on his withdrawal. “Giving tax-free only makes sense,” says Laura, with a smile.

**Estate Gifts**

Jane placed her newly drafted will in her file with a sense of satisfaction. It was so simple to make charitable gifts of a percentage of her estate to her church and BMM Foundation. She felt a sense of freedom, knowing that if she needed all her assets during her lifetime, she would be unhindered, but if not, then those things that the Lord had provided for her would go right back into ministry for the Lord.

Visit our interactive Planned Giving website (giftplanning.bmm.org) and discover fresh ideas to make a difference for the Lord’s work!
Through BMM Foundation’s Memorial Fund, you can give a lasting legacy by donating in memory of a loved one or in honor of a special occasion. Gifts made to the Memorial Fund are invested and are used to provide services to missionaries, churches, and ministry partners.

**In Memory Of**

**Alan L. Beal**
Mrs. Velva Beal

**Phyllis Berry**
Mr. Aaron Berry
Mr. and Mrs. Marin Berry
Chesnut Ridge Baptist Church, Laurens, SC
Collierville Women’s Club, Collierville, TN
Mr. and Mrs. Grady Cook
Ms. Melissa Richardson
Ms. Norma Sue Thompson
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Wirth

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Mrs. Sharon Casto

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**Frank and Lillian Crumb**
Kinsman Crumb Charitable Trust

**Helen Goehring**
First Baptist Church, Evans City, PA

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Rev. and Mrs. Ward Harris
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