So many new things are happening within Baptist Mid-Missions. This Advance speaks of not only God’s great workings over the last 100 years but also of the new things in our midst, such as our logo (see p. 4). I’m pleased to tell you another piece of exciting news that will be covered more fully in our next issue:

“On March 8, 2020, the Elected Council of Baptist Mid-Missions announced its unanimous choice of Patrick Odle as the next president of Baptist Mid-Missions. He will succeed current president Vernon Rosenau this summer following Dr. Rosenau’s retirement. Patrick Odle has 26 years of pastoral experience and also has extensive connections to BMM through his pastorates, ministry on five of our mission fields, and eight years of service on our governing board.”

The above paragraph was part of BMM’s announcement introducing our new president. However, I want to personally introduce him to you also. It has been my privilege to know this man, who has been my pastor for the last nine years. When the Elected Council made their final decision and Patrick Odle accepted their invitation to be the next president, I could not have been more pleased. I expressed to BMM’s Presidential Search Committee, “My soul was satisfied and I was at peace.”

Patrick Odle is a man with a deep and growing passion for missions. As he has ministered to our Mission Family through the years, I have watched his passion grow for global outreach. Many of us in missions know that visiting and ministering on a mission field is often the spark God uses to kindle a fire in our hearts for the world.

This article will be my last Advance communication to you. I want you to know that it has been my delight to serve you and to personally get to know many of you in the last several years. Rest assured, the Mission will be in good hands as we enter our second century of ministry. Patrick Odle’s fidelity to the Word of God and his passion for the lost will keep us centered on the values we have embraced for the past 100 years. I praise the Lord for leading Patrick Odle to the leadership of BMM.
Contents

Volume 17, Issue 2 > Summer 2020

Features

4 A new look for BMM
Our new look and 2020 events

6 100 years of making God known
Stories from four eras of missions showing how prayers and support made a difference

8 Awakened to the power of God
God’s surprising work in Central African Republic

10 “I was blind, but now I can see!”
Persecution gives way to salvation in Brazil

12 A fire was kindled
The prayer that led to 111 new lives in Australia

14 Blanketing Peru with the gospel
A radio station that covers Peru with God’s Word

Departments

President’s View | 2
Great is Our God | 16
Stewardship Impact | 18

Advance is published quarterly, free of charge, to inform and equip those who support Baptist Mid-Missions’ worldwide ministries.

Editor: Lonnie Richards
Managing Editor: Nancy Freund
Graphic Designer: Nancy Freund
Proofreaders: Jeannie Ferguson, Margaret Richards

Contact Us
R.O. Box 308011
Cleveland, OH 44130-8011
440-826-3930
info@bmm.org | www.bmm.org

In Canada: 1170 Sand Cove Road
Saint John, NB E2M 0G3
506-644-8011 | office@bmmcanada.org

© 2020 Baptist Mid-Missions. All rights reserved.
For permissions to reprint portions of this magazine, contact us at info@bmm.org.

Scripture taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
A new look for Baptist Mid-Missions

After 100 years, we still stand strong on the same biblical foundation and passion for the Great Commission that our founders established in 1920. Our name, Baptist Mid-Missions, reflects our founders’ heart to reach the interior (or middle) of countries where the Good News of Christ had not yet gone. Our desire to reach further and farther with the gospel has never changed.

That’s why, in our 100th year, we sought a new logo that reflected both our biblical foundation and our forward-thinking mindset of finding new ways to advance the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

Find the cross fixed centrally in both new logo variations on page 5. The arrows represent supporting churches and individuals, missionaries, and Baptist Mid-Missions united in our focus of sharing what Christ did on the cross. Light appears to emanate from the center—the light of the gospel—as it goes out into the world, symbolized by the logo’s globe shape. The eight notches within the arrows remind us of our eight core values (see www.bmm.org/partner/about-us). The new logo’s shape also connects to our 1920 logo, tying it into our 100 years of ministry.
1920 → 2020: One hundred years. Celebrate our new look!

Starting this year, you’ll find Baptist Mid-Missions’ new look on all our materials and on our redesigned website (www.bmm.org), scheduled to debut in the coming months. The most important things about us haven’t changed, and one of the most important is that we remain ready to advance the gospel worldwide now and into the future.

100th Anniversary Events

Due to logistical difficulties created by the COVID-19 crisis, Baptist Mid-Missions canceled its 2020 missionary Family Conference, which had been scheduled for July.

The 100th anniversary celebration we planned for our missionaries will now be held during the July 2021 Family Conference.
100 years of Making God Known
As you have read the “Great Is Our God” features in our last nine issues, you’ve taken in some incredible stories of God’s mighty work through BMM missionaries in the last 100 years.

We had many more stories than we had space. In this issue, we share longer stories so that you know how your prayers and support—and those of the generations before you—have made a difference. They helped make God’s name known around the world.

Amid the difficulties of our world, your prayers and support continue to change lives at a time when people hunger for the gospel’s hope more than ever. Thank you for your continued partnership!
As one of our original six missionaries, Rowena Becker witnessed remarkable barriers being broken down by God to establish the gospel in French Equatorial Africa (in what is today Central African Republic). Her early years, especially, proved that the gates of hell shall not prevail over Christ’s church.
Deeply burdened for the Nzakara tribe, Rowena settled in Ouango, the western part of their territory, in 1921. Immediately, great opposition sprang up. African soldiers obeyed orders and tore down her house, confining her to one room in a government building. Although the Africans were forbidden to speak with her on penalty of stoning or whipping, young boys began appearing in the tall grass surrounding her room. As Rowena’s provisions dwindled, they secretly sold her eggs, chickens, and other foods. Rowena occupied herself by memorizing Ephesians until the situation could be straightened out.

After a trip to the US, Rowena returned to Africa in 1922. This time, she settled on a tall hill in the heart of Nzakara territory: Bangassou. Opposition continued in this new location, but in all her troubles, Rowena held onto a verse given shortly before she first sailed to Africa, “Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it” (Rev. 3:8).

One day, Rowena was heartily surprised when crowds of people came with smiles and extended hands of welcome. One group hardly finished shaking her hands when a new group arrived. For three days, they came from villages across the region. The cause of the visits brought even greater surprise.

Unbeknown to her, she had built her house on what was considered the resting place of the spirit of the Nzakaras’ great sultan, Bangassou himself. In the eyes of the Nzakara, no white person would be able to remain on that hill. Every chief far and wide called upon his witch doctors to use their powers to drive out Rowena. They started with minor blood sacrifices. When these failed, they moved on to stronger and stronger incantations. For months this continued. Finally, word was sent throughout the territory, “Truly, only one sent of God could have withstood such powerful medicine.”

There was nothing to do but to accept such a person. From that day on, only friendly relations existed with the Nzakara, and God’s work steadily moved forward. Other missionaries joined Rowena in reaching Bangassou and, for many years, attendance at the church services exceeded that of other mission stations—reaching as high as four or five thousand. Today, Christ’s church remains strong, self-sustaining, and steadfast in Bangassou.
If we compiled a list of fields most responsive to the gospel, Brazil might easily rank highest. But that wasn’t always the case. Our pioneering missionaries surmounted incredible barriers to create openings for the gospel.

In the early years, BMM missionaries across Brazil faced persecution from those who saw their message as a threat to their religions. In some places, missionaries were slandered and threatened, and meetings were disrupted by angry crowds armed with stones. One missionary was beaten by mobs on at least two occasions. One of the most dramatic stories came from Barbalha in northeast Brazil. The city is located near Juazeiro do Norte, one of Brazil’s most religiously fanatical cities. To this day, many of its people worship Padre Cicero, a deceased Catholic priest they believe to be the Messiah.

In 1940, our early missionaries were intent on entering Barbalha, but a mob disrupted their services and they couldn’t establish a church. In 1950, Harold and Ruth Reiner, Mary Mills, Charles and Martha Hocking, and Tom and Evelyn Willson tried again. One evening, a mob disrupted the meeting they were holding in a house. After two hours of bombardment, the crowd broke down the gate and entered the house. The mob threw rocks and smashed furniture. Everyone at the service received injuries, but miraculously no one was killed or even seriously injured. In the months that followed, many in Barbalha waged a fierce war against the missionaries’ efforts. Men painted a slogan on a building near the city’s entrance: “Halt, Messrs. Protestants! Barbalha of St. Anthony is already evangelized!” More missionaries met the challenge, and the gospel prevailed. In the 1960s, a church was organized in Barbalha that has become a solid testimony for Christ.

In 1997, Tim Reiner, son of Harold Reiner, was serving in Fortaleza, a city about 300 miles from Barbalha. Tim was involved in constructing a large ministry complex that would house BMM’s Brazil headquarters, Fortaleza Academy MK.
school, and other facilities. Out of four construction firms, the one chosen was owned by Dr. Ricardo, who was discovered to be the son of the man who chose the slogan painted in Barbalha.

From the start, the missionaries and Brazilian believers prayed for Dr. Ricardo’s salvation. They offered the workers free Bibles and held special meetings on the construction site. Dr. Ricardo allowed his men to stop an hour early to attend an evangelistic meeting where up to 140 crew members listened attentively to God’s Word.

In 1999, the inauguration ceremony was held. Tim honored several key people with gifts of appreciation. After receiving his gift, Dr. Ricardo nervously asked if he could say a few words. Before an audience of 300, he said, “This is not the largest construction project we’ve built, but it is the most important. Pastor Mauro and Pastor Timoteo [Tim Reiner] have spent much time in the Bible with me. Through them, my wife and I heard about Christ and salvation. Almost two months ago, my wife came to know Christ as Savior. I am here before you tonight to tell you that I was blind but now I can see. I was dead, but now I am alive!”

Surrounded by the beautiful, newly constructed buildings, Tim felt as if none of it was as significant as the salvation of the man in front of him. Missionary Russ Gordon closed the ceremony with the song “To God Be the Glory.” Spontaneously, the crowd stood to sing—giving God a standing ovation that night.
In the late 1960s, BMM leaders saw a double-edged opportunity in Australia. Spirituality had tumbled into dead orthodoxy while record numbers of immigrants were flocking to Australia to stake out a new life. The need was urgent to reach Australians.

Bill and Glenna Grant answered the call and established Rose City Baptist Church in Benalla in 1969. Others joined the BMM Australia team in 1971: Doug and Sallie Couch, Roly and Luella Smith, and Carl and Selma Barton. The Couches and Smiths staked their spiritual claims in Melbourne, while the Bartons settled in Benalla, taking over the church from the Grants, who moved on to open BMM’s New Zealand field.

When Carl offered a gospel tract to a car dealership owner, the dealer politely declined but told him that his new parts manager, Carl James, might be interested. The two Carls quickly formed an easy friendship as they enjoyed meals and hunting trips together. A devout Catholic, Carl James often stopped by Pastor Carl’s office to say, “This is what the priest taught yesterday. What do you think about it?” The more Pastor Carl taught him from the Bible, the more Carl sensed errors in what he heard at Mass.

Pastor Carl became so burdened for Carl and for Graham Lewis (the husband of a church member) that he and a fellow missionary, Buddy Smith, set out for BMM’s Camp Marundindy. Building a fire at a cave overlooking Benalla, the two stayed up all night fasting and praying for God to break through in the lives of these men, both of whom sensed no need for salvation.

Right afterward, Graham Lewis was saved. Two weeks later, Carl and his wife, Mary, began attending Rose City Baptist Church and shortly afterward proclaimed their faith in Christ. Carl James told his mother, who immediately drove three hours from Melbourne to set her son straight. She arrived at 1:00 am, and after three or four hours of Carl’s witnessing to her, she too gave her life to Christ. From then on, it was as though a spiritual fire had been kindled, headed straight for Carl’s large extended family.

While going door to door as an encyclopedia salesperson, Carl’s sister Donna happened to stop at Buddy Smith’s door. Buddy gave her a tract, and the words penetrated her heart. Donna had lived a wild lifestyle, but she turned to follow Christ. Carl’s mother turned away from her own gambling habit. She took the gospel back to Melbourne, where she shared it with Carl’s alcoholic father, who received Christ and gave up drinking. Carl’s parents began attending the Melbourne church that Doug Couch pastored. Other relatives joined them or attended the church Roly Smith pastored. In just the first year after Carl James was saved, 54 of his relatives gave their lives to Christ. After a number of years, the missionaries tallied 111 relatives saved.

Within two or three years after Carl James’ salvation, Rose City Baptist Church installed him as their pastor. Carl’s brother Glenn also became a pastor, and both of them were some of the earliest students of BMM’s Victoria Baptist Bible College. In 2019, Rose City Baptist Church celebrated its 50th anniversary of bringing the light of Christ to Benalla. More generations of BMM Australia missionaries continue to establish churches just like Rose City Baptist.

The Lord honored the earnest fasting of two missionaries praying before a campfire in 1972. God kindled a fire that night that spread the knowledge of Himself across southeastern Australia.
1970s–2010s

Top right: Carl James.

Top left: Carl James, Carl Barton, and Carl’s brother Tony James.

Middle right: Carl and Mary James’ family, 1976-1977.

Middle left: Carl Barton, JW Peavy, JB Buffington, Carl James
[JW Peavy is the grandfather of missionary James Peavy, see p. 17]

Bottom left: Carl and Mary James’ family, 2015.
Peru’s cultural and political climate have been very favorable to church planting in the last decade. Veteran missionaries Stan and Ruth Templeton knew this opportunity could be time-sensitive. After the Templetons moved to Peru’s capital of Lima in 2009, God fixed their minds on a goal: seek maximum spread of the gospel while hearts are open. The vehicle for that acceleration was radio.

Four years earlier, the Lord prompted Stan and Ruth and their Peruvian coworkers Edward and Margarita Zacarias to lay the foundation by searching out radio frequency licenses and properties. The license for the Lima station arrived December 18, 2009, and the next day Radio Integridad, “The Voice that Glorifies God,” began broadcasting on AM 700. The station sits between two very popular Lima stations, giving it excellent exposure. Listeners immediately contacted the station, overjoyed that God’s Word was being proclaimed in their city.
Radio Integridad broadcasts the gospel through messages, songs, and testimonies, and in its announcements and news. The Lord provided a small office in an excellent location. This office has become a distributorship for Editorial Bautista Independiente, BMM’s Spanish publications ministry. Listeners often stop in to buy Christian books, give an offering, or seek counsel. Many in the Lima area are religious but not born again or they’re not attending churches with solid doctrine. The Lord is using the station to fill a hunger for biblical teaching. So many listeners were interested in further teaching that the Templetons and Zacarías planted two churches: one where the radio tower is located and another in a large urban area of Lima. As of spring 2020, both churches are under Peruvian leadership and one is self-supporting.

As the team built up and expanded the station, its potential audience grew to nine million in Lima. But that was just the beginning. The station changed its name to Red Radio Integridad (RRI—Integrity Radio Network) and expanded across Peru. Radio Chaski, an FM and short-wave station begun by BMM missionaries, had fallen onto hard times. In 2015, RRI began overseeing this station, which fills a critical need among the area’s 500,000 Quechua speakers.

During the 2020 COVID-19 quarantine in Peru, RRI was a blessing to those having no internet to watch online church services. Many house-bound listeners tuned into RRI for the first time and learned of Christ’s hope in a time of fear and suffering. Because Edward Zacarias (at right) lives next to the radio studio, he maintained broadcasts seamlessly, including a weekly one-hour live program where he and Stan (through a remote connection) answered listeners’ questions.

Although reduced giving because of the virus crisis may delay their plans, the RRI team envisions blanketing Peru with gospel radio as an instrument for evangelism, discipleship, church planting, and church growth. In 2017, they bought three additional radio station properties. Now that the Lima churches are graduated, the Templetons are devoting themselves to building more stations. Two stations are on the air in Moyobamba and Chachapoyas, and they are working on another in Moquegua. They have purchased another license in Yurimaguas, a jungle city in north-central Peru. They are also applying for a license for an area that would broadcast into Columbia and Brazil. As they walk by faith, Stan and Ruth say, “Our goal is to cover the country with the gospel and help independent Baptist churches in each area. Where none exist, it means starting new ones. Our opportunities are exciting!”
Great is our GOD

The story of Baptist Mid-Missions

Photos: top to bottom—Jouons Basket-Ball; refugee children in Chad; outreach to Venezuelans in Peru; John Dannenberg with CAR seminary leaders; Alaska basketball camp. Background: Ángel Ramón Mateo receiving his MABS diploma.
As we rounded the corner to the 100-year mark, the 2010s saw us modeling the same pioneering spirit of our founders, who pressed into new territory, using ingenuity to open doors for the gospel. Empowered by the Lord, BMM missionaries surmounted modern-day obstacles in Creative Access Nations.

Two missionary couples planted a church in a land where only an estimated 0.00006 percent of the population are born-again Christians. A handful of these believers had prayed for years for a church. Other missionaries developed an underground training program for pastors of a restricted country. One couple creatively taught English to university professors hungry to learn from the Bible. Another family began an elementary school that reaches hundreds of children in an area hostile to Christianity. Still another family developed a local business to make connections and start a house church in a Muslim area.

In an ever-darkening world, creativity became key even in religiously open areas. Sports ministries created major openings. In Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, Steve and Gayle King and Ryan and Joy Owen started basketball clinics. In Alaska, Mike and Jeannette Clark led basketball camps in Russian Orthodox villages where they were not previously allowed to share the gospel. In Jamaica, Cletis and Tammy Titus used the power of creativity to share Christ and teach job skills through “Sew Very Loved,” which has branched into other countries.

Pervasive world turmoil sent more and more people into refugee status. Our Europe missionaries embraced Middle Easterners seeking safe haven in their countries. The missionaries and their church members taught them English and the Bible, and some have been saved and baptized. In Chad, Les and Carol Carew offered children’s Bible clubs in refugee camps. They were astounded when 700 children showed up at their first club. Venezuelans fleeing their country’s economic devastation were welcomed by our missionaries in Brazil and Peru, while those staying in their home country were ministered to by our Venezuelan missionaries.

By the 2010s, missionary-national partnerships grew as an exciting, team-driven missions frontier. John and Paula Dannenberg partnered with Central African Republic churches in creating the first graduate-level seminary among BMM-affiliated churches in Africa. In the Dominican Republic, Jérémie and Amy Roy and James and Lauren Peavy worked hand-in-hand with Dominican leaders to greatly expand their existing seminary through live-streamed classes offered at satellite locations. To meet the need for in-country graduate-level training in Latin America, Editorial Bautista Independiente (EBI—our Spanish publications ministry) teamed with Piedmont International University to create an online Spanish Master of Arts in Biblical Studies degree program.

Halfway through the decade, Baptist Mid-Missions saw its first presidential transition in 26 years as Dr. Gary Anderson retired. Vernon Rosenau, then our Field Administrator for Africa and Europe, was inaugurated as BMM’s eighth president in 2016. Dr. Rosenau’s three-generation roots in BMM made him the ideal president to carry us toward our 100th anniversary in 2020.
In an environment and time period of great uncertainty, it is good to note the advantages of a charitable gift annuity. The advantages are multifaceted.

**First, there is the advantage of making a charitable gift to the Lord’s work.** Our gift annuitants are aware that they give to the Great Commission when they make arrangements for a charitable gift annuity. They know that their gift will promote the gospel of Jesus Christ!

**Second, there can be tax advantages with your gift.** A portion of the amount given for a gift annuity is deemed a charitable gift to Baptist Mid-Missions Foundation. Our gift annuitants can take advantage of a charitable gift deduction to the extent allowed under the current tax laws. Another tax advantage is that a portion of each payment received may be excluded from taxable income.

**Third, there is the advantage of a reliable stream of income for your lifetime, or for your lifetime and that of a loved one.** In a time of historic gyrations in the stock market, the stability of an annuity payment is reassuring.

Call, e-mail, or send us a request for an illustration of a gift annuity specifically for you. The coupon on the next page can be mailed, or you can confidentially illustrate a gift annuity through our website at [https://giftplanning.bmm.org](https://giftplanning.bmm.org) and follow the link to Gift Annuities.

---

If you have questions about this type of gift, or other ways to give, please contact our Stewardship Ministries Department at 440-826-3930. You can e-mail us at stewardship.ministries@bmm.org.
Giving is only “one side of the coin.” You can also reduce BMM’s expenses by changing how you give: switching to automatic funds transfers rather than giving with a paper check or via a credit/debit card. Known as “ACH,” automatic funds transfers reduce fees and resources spent on processing donations made by other methods.

Please contact us at 440-826-3930 to switch to ACH giving and help us save!

Check Out Our Gift Planning Website

Many ways are available to make a gift of cash. Discover a variety of tax-advantaged ways to support Baptist Mid-Missions’ ministries at https://giftplanning.bmm.org.

Memorial Gifts

As we look back over our first 100 years, we also look forward to the work that remains undone. This would be a good year in which to remember a loved one by making a gift in his or her honor to BMM Foundation’s Memorial Fund. The Memorial Fund helps provide for the ongoing work of the Great Commission.

In Memory Of

Kenneth Armstrong, Sr.
Ms. Nancy Clark
Mr. and Mrs. Roland Schurdell
Ms. Nancy Van Gieson
Ms. Evelyn Sue Watson
Ms. Adeline Wormald

Al Casto
Mrs. Sharon Casto

Claiborne Harness
Ms. Christine Dedrick
Ms. Cathy Duncan
Mr. and Mrs. Sorin Frangulea
Mr. Michael Gregg
Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Nechvatal

Ruth Martin
Mrs. Anita Ackerman

Valerie Grace Shepherd
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Young

Current Gift Annuity Rates for a Single Life

For a brochure or a specific illustration, call, write, or complete the Gift Annuity Coupon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90+</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gift annuities are available to residents of most US states.
For anyone interested in serving in missions, join us at the BMM Home Office in Cleveland, Ohio, for this free, informative two-day seminar that will equip you with tools for missions involvement. Contact us at 440-826-3930 or info@bmm.org to learn more.