Advance
Baptist Mid-Missions

IN REVIEW 2018

A look back at God's work around the world
On November 23, 1920, six individuals left the US shores for the heart of Africa under the banner of a little-known mission board founded a few weeks earlier on October 15. The board’s original name was The General Council of Cooperating Baptist Missions of North America Inc. Little could those six imagine that on October 15, 2018, we would celebrate that organization’s 98th birthday with a World Day of Prayer that would see the Baptist Mid-Missions Family praying literally around the clock, around the globe, for God’s continued blessing on that which began 98 years ago. All who have come behind that initial group of six have fallen under the same banner—all committed to the making of disciples, through the teaching of the Word, to the end of the age.

They dreamed of souls being saved and disciples trained, but could they see beyond their lifetime to decades of gospel ministry and discipleship that have resulted in nationally led church-planting movements and ministry training centers around the globe? Or what would they think of the advancements in technology from 1920 to 2018. Television outreach touching thousands of lives in one day was not even imagined in 1920, nor was the ability to travel and utilize gifted people in multiple locations around the globe. I believe they would be thrilled with the outcomes and with the changes. My grandfather, one of that party of six, used to say, “Our theology is sacred, our methodology is never sacred.” He would have reveled in the digital age and its application to Bible translation.

In this Advance you will see three keys to Baptist Mid-Missions’ 98 years of continuing, expanding ministry around the globe: making disciples, training leadership, and updating methodologies.

Consider what God did with six lives that were yielded to His calling and committed to His leading for a lifetime. That could be you. Enjoy the Advance and give us a call if He is calling you.
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Sharing the Living Word

As a Quebec missionary, Simon Ouellette never dreamed he would impact hundreds of thousands of lives each week. That’s just what he’s doing through the Living Word TV program broadcast on a secular station in Quebec City.

Simon and his wife, Elise, serve at Eglise Baptiste de Charlesbourg (Baptist Church of Charlesbourg). Three years ago, through a contact in their church, Simon was asked to be a guest on Living Word. For the past year and a half, Simon has been the show’s host, leading discussions as broad-ranging as forgiveness, the Bible’s importance, and evolution vs. Creationism. Simon picks the majority of topics, all with the goal of sharing the gospel.

The show reaches 300,000 weekly viewers in Quebec, but it doesn’t stop there. Through 80,000 downloads per month, the show is being watched across the French-speaking world. Once, a viewer recognized one of Simon’s guests in an African hotel. And in Mauritania, a Muslim viewer called the show’s answer line to say, “I know what the cost will be, but I need to give my life to Christ.” Before the conversation ended, he became a believer.

A program like Living Word is highly unusual in Quebec, where Catholicism was once the majority religion. Quebec City’s current secular climate has created an open door for the gospel. The Ouellettes see at least 50 Living Word viewers visit their church yearly.

The church holds a monthly Hope Breakfast in a local restaurant as a bridge for viewers hesitant to attend a church service. Guests hear testimonies and often come back two to four times before visiting the church. Between 12 and 15 visitors have received Christ, and a few have rededicated their lives to the Lord. Some 20–25 people have become regular church attenders.
Hungry to Learn

“This is an answer to our prayers!” In many areas of Chad, Africa, pastors want to teach their congregations sound doctrine, but they are undertrained or have no formal training at all. When a team of BMM missionaries dedicated to teaching nationals offered them a 12-course program of essential theology and practical topics, the overjoyed Chadian leaders thanked God for this answer to prayer.

Now in its second year, the program is training 161 pastors, deacons, and women’s ministry leaders. The teaching team travels to Chad each January and October to teach two courses—60 hours of training. The Chadian pastors tell the teaching team that the material goes deeper than what they learned in Bible school. The students are so hungry for the learning that they don’t want to miss a single bit of information. One student, an older deacon from Chad’s capital, N’Djamena, had just lost his wife, and his relatives and friends were still at his house for the customary extended grieving process. After a few days, he told them, “You can stay here, but I have some classes that I just can’t miss!”

Latin American Administrators Appointed

On April 1, retired BMM Latin America Field Administrator VW Peters was replaced by two on-field administrators, Graham Foran and Jonathan Stilwell. Foran comes with 30 years experience as a Brazil missionary with his wife, Rene. Stilwell grew up as a BMM MK in Peru and has served there with his wife, Julie, for 22 years.

Both will continue their field ministries as they serve in a pastoral/consulting role for our missionaries in Brazil (Foran) and Spanish-speaking Latin America (Stilwell). Half of BMM’s field administrators are now field-based, a change that places them in closer proximity to missionaries they serve and keeps them more familiar with on-field needs.

New BI Director

On August 1, Tim Fink assumed the directorship of Bibles International (BI), BMM’s Bible translation, publishing, and literacy ministry. Tim replaced interim director Gary Walton, a gifted servant who led BI for the last two years.

After serving in several pastores, Tim and his wife, Sandy, had joined Baptist Mid-Missions in 1999 to serve among the Roma people of Romania. That experience, along with an itinerant teaching ministry gave Tim an extensive background in church planting, evangelism, discipleship, biblical counseling, and the equipping of national pastors. Tim saw firsthand that none of these ministries would have been possible without readable copies of the Scriptures.

Tim and Sandy look forward to their role in helping place God’s Word into the hands of those who don’t already have it—and seeing its power transform lives.
**Venezuelan crisis**

In 2017, the majority of Venezuelans lost an average of 24 pounds due to the country’s severe food shortages. The country’s economic crisis has created not only hunger but also rising unemployment, medicine shortages, and soaring crime. As a result, Venezuelan pastors are fleeing the country to find food for their starving families.

When Brazil missionaries Jim (at center in photo) and Julie Leonard heard of the situation through Brazilian missionaries serving in Venezuela, the Leonards asked their supporters to pray. Some desired to help, which sparked a project to sponsor pastors so they and their families could safely remain with their congregations. Through generous gifts, the Leonards are helping put food on the table for 23 pastors in this ongoing project.

In Peru, the number of Venezuelan refugees leaped from 100,000 in December 2017 to 400,000 by August 2018. David and Kandie Stilwell’s church plant in Trujillo, Peru, has donated mattresses, clothing, and food to help their fellow South Americans. Church people have shared the gospel with them many times, including at an August 26 event, “A Night in Venezuela.” Twenty refugees attended, and two Venezuelan Christians gave their testimonies. The Stilwells continue to pray for spiritual fruit in the lives of these contacts.

**Honduras Music Academy**


The academy formally began in 2016, but it traces its origin to 2002. That year, Lois led a choir of 20 who sang melody at the top of their voices. Lois spent a year teaching them four-part harmony, culminating in a successful cantata in 2003. Over time, more trained musicians began attending the Howells’ church, giving a pool of teachers to pursue the academy. With Lois as director, the academy offers piano, violin, guitar, and cello instruction for 20-25 students from area churches. Most are young people, but one student is in her 60s.

The Lord has provided through donated instruments, and a Christian man in the Howells’ church pays the teachers’ salaries. The academy’s goal is to strengthen local churches by offering quality music through well-trained musicians. Many students are now serving through weekly worship music at their churches.

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**Equipping Germans**

They’re the product of 60 years of BMM ministry in Germany: numerous churches and daughter churches. For the last 25 years, a unifying factor for the growing number of Bavarian congregations has been their annual cookout and fellowship time held each May. Over 250 people participated in 2018.

This year, a professional soccer player who attends Jeff and Linda Brown’s church in Nürnberg spoke about receiving Christ a few months before he started his career and how he determined to live for Christ before he ever got to training camp. It was a strong challenge and encouragement for all who attended.

In January, German pastor Oliver Meyer and two missionaries in northern Bavaria determined to pass on their practical experience and heart for church planting to future pastors in a special way. Four times a year, veteran pastors and missionaries gather with younger men studying to become pastors. One meeting’s theme was “Learning from Mistakes in the Ministry,” with a discussion on how the men can humbly learn from others’ missteps. The younger men are allowed to ask any question about the ministry they desire. In addition, two German men have moved to Nürnberg to be trained in church planting at the BMM Bible Institute (a first for BMM Germany). The missionaries and German pastors have been greatly pleased to pass along their vision for gospel ministry and church planting to the next generation.

**Melbourne Church Growth**

In the last year, the Lord has brought nearly 20 new people to Grace Baptist Church, the Melbourne, Australia, congregation served by Mark and Sara Pitts. Of this number, three have been saved and 10 were baptized.

Mark explains that the growth is by God’s grace as they stay faithful in teaching, preaching, and cultivating a loving atmosphere in their church. Several visitors have commented how refreshing it is to hear a message from the Bible, compared to area churches that have shifted doctrinal positions. Mark holds a Foundations Class for potential members, which not only teaches what the church believes but also gives new members ready-made connections to others.

Much of the growth has come from internationals, reflecting Melbourne’s melting-pot nature. One way Mark and Sara encourage a loving spirit within their diverse church family is their annual church camp held in February. As the 38 attendees interacted through rock climbing, archery, and other activities, the bond among church people increased.

In October, the church called an Australian assistant pastor, and as Mark and Sara train more people for ministry, they hope to strengthen the congregation to produce a daughter church in the coming years.
On June 2, between 160 and 200 attended the 2018 graduation ceremony for the Institut Biblique Pastoral Baptiste (IBPB—French Baptist Pastoral Bible Institute) in Algrange, France. This year’s ceremony was linked to a special event: IBPB’s 40th anniversary.

In 1978, missionaries from BMM and other agencies joined forces with French nationals to launch an institute that would supply pastors for French church plants. Through the years, IBPB’s mission expanded to train anyone serving in full-time ministry or as a layperson.

At the anniversary celebration, retired IBPB president Roger Reisacher spoke about the institute’s history, followed by current president Joël Meyer, who gave a vision for IBPB’s future. The school is thankful for the Loescher family, a missionary couple who will replace retiring BMM missionaries Rich and Karyn Visser, who have served for 35 years at the Institute as faculty members and 12 years with Rich as director.

**PAUSE 2018**

On February 5–9, missionaries from three continents converged on Malaga, Spain, for the 2018 Pause conference. This triennial event is a place where missionaries can hit the pause button to step away from the unrelenting demands of ministry and spend five days being renewed spiritually and physically.

Formerly called the European Enrichment Conference, Pause expanded this year to include missionaries from Africa and a Creative Access Nation. Approximately 80 missionaries heard messages by Rev. Mark Cizauskas (First Baptist Church of Rochester, Michigan). Mark’s wife, Marsha, and a team from their church conducted a program for the 40 MKs present.

Several of the missionary families are the only BMM workers on their fields, which made fellowship all the sweeter. For some, it was the first time in a year they had sung in English with a group of people.

**ADVANCE WEEKEND**

About 20 college students and other interested guests attended our first-ever Advance Weekend, a missions seminar held September 7–8 at the BMM Home Office. Using illustrations from his ministry in Cameroon, keynote speaker Dan Seely discussed “Examining Cultural Vantage Points,” how most of the world views life from a non-Western perspective.

Also, Dr. Vernon Rosenau and BMM administrators presented missions opportunities along with the American church’s challenge to stay focused on the Great Commission. Participants engaged with the speakers during a panel discussion/question time, and many students took part in an optional visit to a BMM ministry in inner-city Cleveland.

Advance Weekend 2019 is being planned for late September.
New college publication

In January, Baptist Mid-Missions rolled out a monthly digital publication for young adults: Serve. Replacing our former Vision newsletter, Serve continues to scripturally address missions questions and concerns weighing on young people’s minds while being delivered in a more appealing form for college students.

Serve editor Travis Gravley (Administrator for Church Relations and Enlistment) described the publications’ goals: “For those considering this calling, we want to remove the fear factor of missions, to show that missionaries are just real people with ordinary weaknesses who are willing to trust and obey God’s call. Serving is all about selflessness. Serve aims to challenge young people to view their missions obligation beyond just a summer trip and toward thinking about full-time service.”

To subscribe, e-mail Travis at info@bmm.org, or view Serve online at www.bmm.org and scroll to Publications.

Family Conference 2018

Take a great thing and make it even better. That was the rationale behind our reforged Family Conference, held July 9–12 at First Baptist Church of Elyria, Ohio. Nearly 275 furloughing BMM missionaries, appointees, and staff enjoyed four days of messages by Rev. Mark Cizauskas (First Baptist Church of Rochester, Michigan) along with workshops and interaction with fellow missionaries.

Since 2006, the conference had been titled simply, “Annual Conference.” This year’s event increased the focus on the BMM Family itself.

Our own missionaries and staff provided music, and President Emeritus Gary Anderson gave plenary talks helping our missionaries better address stress and avoid burnout. Emeritus missionary Hal Miller and his late wife, Patty, were honored with the William C. Haas Lifetime Service Award for the far-reaching impact of the ministry they founded, Campus Bible Fellowship International.
Creating Bridges

Relationship building is an essential component to any missions endeavor but especially for our Mormon Focus Ministry Team. In Herriman, Utah, Paul and Laura Fulks’s community service has created bridges for the gospel in this mostly LDS (Latter-Day Saints) area.

Since last May, seven Herriman high school students have taken their lives. As a police chaplain, Paul assisted one of the families and was later invited to be on a suicide awareness committee. On May 17, the committee hosted a community meeting with 400 in attendance. As Paul sat on the Q&A panel, he answered the question, “How does a relationship with God help those who are depressed and suicidal?”

Paul had an open opportunity to share the hope that is found in a relationship with Jesus Christ alone. Paul had excellent conversations with people who stopped by the information booth set up by the church where Paul and his wife, Laura, serve. Many guests said they appreciated a biblical perspective on the issue.

Paul and Laura’s church also held a police appreciation cookout on July 25. In their third year of the event, they saw a record crowd of 30 officers and their families. Such acts of appreciation speak volumes to the officers, whose sacrifices often go unrecognized. One officer communicated he had recently left the LDS church and is interested in biblical Christianity. An officer from another city’s department has begun attending the church. Paul and Laura, along with their church, are praying about starting a new church in Herriman as they build deeper relationships—a slow but essential process in Utah.

The Creative Gospel

This summer, Graham and Rene Foran hosted a team from Maranatha Baptist University. As part of VBS for the Forans’ church plant in São Paulo, Brazil, the team held an evangelistic drama at a local school.

One PE teacher was so excited about it, he brought in groups for the final day to see the gospel presentation. The school’s principle told the Forans what a great event it had been for their whole school.

A Dual Harvest

Fritz Creek Baptist Fellowship, the church being planted by Danny and Jan Ingram on Alaska’s Kenai Peninsula, reaped a double harvest this year. The congregation built a greenhouse to raise vegetables so they could share the harvest with their community.

The project produced a variety of vegetables for giveaway, along with jellies, syrup, and eggs from other sources. When neighbors offered to pay for items, the Ingrams said they wanted to bless others with how God has blessed them. Danny and Jan are seeing hearts soften, and a few neighbors have said they may visit the church.
MISSIONARIES LAUNCHED

Missionaries who raised their full support and departed for their first term of service this year:

**January**—Caleb and Missy Metzger (Germany)

**April**—Christine Parker (Bibles International)

**May**—Andrew and Janae Gonnerman (Japan)
Javier and Rebekah Chacón (Peru)

**June**—Dario and Talitha Chiesa (Texas)
(The Chiesas moved to Texas in 2017 and completed clearance this year.)

**August**—Jodi Harrison (Spain)

CHURCHES LAUNCHED

**ALTO QOSCO, PERU**
* Iglesia Bautista Roca Fuerte  
(Solid Rock Baptist Church)
* Missionaries: Aaron and Stephenie Cochrell, Isaiah and Rosanna Peterson (Bibles International)
* National coworkers: Alcides and Teresa Peña, Richard and Magdalena Leyva

CHURCHES GRADUATED

**ABBOTSFORD, BRITISH COLUMBIA**
* Aberdeen Baptist Church
  Missionaries: Don and Allison Fisher
  (Don will continue as pastor, no longer in missionary status.)

**TAMPERE, FINLAND**
* International Baptist Church
  Missionaries: Tom and Linda Ruhkala
  New pastor and wife: Miska and Alison Wilhelmsson

**RIVERTON, UTAH**
* Trinity Baptist Church
  Missionaries: Lloyd and Marty Larkin, Paul and Laura Fulks
  New pastor and wife: Danny and Kristen Brooks
Great is our GOD

The story of Baptist Mid-Missions

Photos, clockwise from top: Gerrit and Margrit Buining; Gertrude Kiefer and Louise Molyneaux; 1950s BMM logo; after a church service in Toulouse, France
Between 1950 and 1955, Baptist Mid-Missions’ personnel grew by 315 missionaries, an increase of nearly 200 percent from our missionary force of 1944. For years, the Great Depression and World War II tied the hands of recruits wanting to serve overseas, but by the 1950s, those restrictions had been cut loose. Soldiers who had their first taste of foreign travel during the war came back burdened for the spiritual needs they saw.

They were men like Newland Pfaff, an ex-military chaplain who became one of hundreds of missionaries to serve in Japan after General MacArthur called for missionaries to reach that country. Or Richard Mosher, who fought in the famed Battle of Anzio off the coast of Italy and later became our first Italy missionary.

God used WWII’s devastation to open the eyes of Europeans themselves. The horrors of war had led Gerrit Buining to faith in Jesus Christ. He and his wife, Margrit, became some of our early missionaries to his home country of the Netherlands. Likewise, Jan Gazdik found Christ in Slovakia while on the run from the German and Russian Armies. He and his wife, Alice, joined BMM in 1950 to serve in France. The Buinings and Gazdiks were among the many missionaries to bring Christ to post-war Europe.

It was an era of expansion and new beginnings. Medical missions took on greater size and scope. Three new doctors went to India to create a general hospital and tuberculosis sanitarium to complement the existing leprosy ministry. Five new doctors joined the ministries in Africa, and the 30-bed Ippy Hospital was dedicated—the first mission hospital in Central African Republic.

Immigration to the US was on the rise following the war, and Baptist Mid-Missions’ missionaries responded to this trend. Louise Molyneaux and Gertrude Kiefer began our migrant ministries, following the farm workers from south to north with the change of seasons. Two couples who had served in Venezuela, James and Darlene Russell and Ed and Mildred Schwartz, began ministries among Spanish speakers along the Texas border and in Philadelphia. Others started works among East Indians, Puerto Ricans, and other ethnic clusters.

More and more, missionaries saw the spiritual needs of those already in the US. Our first church rescue work began in Maine. DeWitt and Florence Prichard united with BMM to open our Native American Ministries among Arizona’s Navajos. Mabel Starr worked among African-American children in Cleveland, opening our first inner-city ministry. Starr, Molyneaux, and Kiefer joined the ranks of nearly 10 women who have opened new BMM fields through their work with women and children and through other areas of giftedness.

With such rapid growth, Baptist Mid-Missions’ home office needed increased staff and larger, more permanent office space. A name change was also in order. Our original title had been The General Council of Cooperating Baptist Missions of North America Inc. In 1953, that cumbersome name was replaced by what had become our nickname, Mid-Missions. It reflected our vision of reaching into the middle of countries where people had yet to hear the gospel. With a new name of Baptist Mid-Missions, our missionaries continued that vision, creatively entering new fields and reaching new people groups for Christ.
Supporters of the ministries of Baptist Mid-Missions are motivated by a desire to see people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and mature through sanctification. To maximize your support, one planned giving strategy is to make tax-advantaged gifts.

- **Give Appreciated Assets**
  Selling appreciated assets (stocks, bonds, or mutual funds) may increase taxable income as capital gains. Gifting those same assets to a qualified charity eliminates the capital gains tax for you and the charity.

- **Make an IRA Charitable Distribution**
  If you are 70 ½, you can make a gift (up to $100,000/year) from your traditional IRA by a direct transfer of a portion of your IRA from your IRA custodian to BMM Foundation. Such gifts can satisfy the Required Minimum Distribution and are not included in your taxable income. If both you and your spouse have IRAs, the limit is doubled.

- **Obtain a Charitable Gift Annuity**
  Both a “gift” and an “annuity,” a charitable gift annuity is structured as an irrevocable gift to BMM Foundation. In exchange, you receive fixed payments for the rest of your life, or for your life and the life of one other person. Pay-out rates are determined by your age at the time of the gift annuity contract.

“To maximize your support, one planned giving strategy is to make tax-advantaged gifts.”

For help with these gifts, or if you have questions, please visit our planned giving website at giftplanning.bmm.org or call our Stewardship Ministries Department.
MEMORIAL GIFTS

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
Charles Borling
Dr. and Mrs. Gary Anderson

Mary Buckholz
Anonymous
Mrs. Florence Gigliotti
Mr. and Mrs. David Hoecke
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Marotta
Mr. and Mrs. William McCourt

Al Casto
Mrs. Sharon Casto

Frank and Lillian Crumb
Kinsman Crumb Charitable Trust

Evan Gough
Dr. and Mrs. Gary Anderson
Cumberland Community Church, Smyrna, GA
Mrs. Wanda Gough
Mrs. Eleanor Johnson
Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Kruger
Mrs. Betty Laderer
Rev. and Mrs. Terry Price
Mr. and Mrs. Chasper Ruhter
Mrs. Ruth Shelpman
Ms. Joyce Walmsley

Robert Houchin
Adacel Technical Services, Inc., Orlando, FL

Joan Nichols
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Boucher
Ms. Julie Burma
Mrs. Lorene Burma
First Baptist Church, Guthrie Center, IA
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Gideon
Mrs. Lynn Hague
Rev. and Mrs. Norman Hoag
Mr. and Mrs. Larry Laird
Rev. and Mrs. David Lind
Mr. and Mrs. Gary McConeghey
Miss Priscilla Miller
Mrs. Ruth Shelpman

Check Out Our Gift Planning Website

In the past, most gifts were made by mailing in a check. Although many ways are available to make a gift of cash, consider other tax-advantaged ways to support Baptist Mid-Missions’s ministries. To discover how and what you can give, visit our planned giving website at giftplanning.bmm.org.

Current Gift Annuity Rates for a Single Life

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

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If deferred, age when payments begin: _______
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Date of birth ________ male/female ________
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Date of birth ________ male/female ________
Amount to be illustrated $ ________

Baptist Mid-Missions Stewardship Ministries
PO Box 308011 • Cleveland, OH 44130-8011
MISSIONARY MILESTONES

At the 2018 Family Conference, the following missionaries and staff members received awards marking years of service:

20 YEARS
Creative Access Missionaries
Jeff and Judy Traver (Brazil)

25 YEARS
Carlene Piper (Ecuador)
Darrel and Lori Jingst (Editorial Bautista Independiente)
Jonathan and Julie Stilwell (Peru, Field Administrator for Spanish-Speaking Latin America)

30 YEARS
Mark and Teresa Jacobsen (North America)
John and Paula Dannenberg (Central African Republic)
Jeff and Kim Abernethy (Campus Bible Fellowship International)
Burdette and Mary Jane Bergen (Germany)
Tom and Nancy Miller (Campus Bible Fellowship International)

40 YEARS
Tom and Linda Ruhkala (Finland)
Paul and Susan Van Loh (Brazil)
Richard and Sheila Meyer (Editorial Bautista Independiente)
Lomax and Linda Skinner (Germany)

45 YEARS
Robert and Jane Kilko (Brazil)
Bill and Dorothy Kettlewell (Brazil)

50 YEARS
Elva Craig (Campus Bible Fellowship International)
Eric and Gayle McLain (Brazil)
Stephen and Evelyn Stilwell (Peru)