



Tower Topics

The monthly Newsletter of First Baptist Church of Mansfield, PA

September 2011 - Vol. XXXVIII #8

Rev. Steven C Case

<http://www.firstbaptistchurchmansfield.com>

From June 22 through June 30, I was privileged to have been a participant at the 2011 Biennial Meeting followed by the General Board Meeting of ABC/USA. The focus of these meetings was worship, celebration and work. The meetings were held in San Juan, Puerto Rico in their convention center. The most I saw of the island was when we flew into and out of the island. I could see the tropical rain forest from our hotel window which seemed to be breathtaking. Part of my responsibility at the biennial meeting was to not only attend all the business sessions—which I did—but also, as a board member of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, to staff our display booth in the “Mission Hall.” It was exciting to meet so many people who were either a supporter of the BJC or who became inquisitive about our Mission and Ministry.

The main focal point of the biennial meeting was, of course, the proposed restructuring of ABC/USA. When the proposal failed at the 2009 Biennial it was reviewed and resubmitted at this biennial. This time the proposed amendments passed with a 92% approval. The actual vote was: 518—yes, 44—no. A total of 562 delegates voted overall. These adopted By-law changes will take effect as of January, 2012. Some of the noteworthy changes include: Board of General Ministries, Mission Summit, and Mission Table. Let me share with you what each one will be responsible for. (Most of these comments are taken directly from the adopted By-laws of ABC/USA).

BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES: shall manage the affairs of the ABC/USA and, as part thereof, shall:

Seek the welfare of the whole Denomination (cooperating churches, regional boards, national boards, American Baptist Historical Society, Associated Ministry Organizations and other covenanting organizations through vision, leadership, and cooperation, and give general oversight and direction to the life and mission of the denomination, and give general oversight and direction to the life and mission of the denomination, including the promotion and celebration of American Baptist identity, the presentation of an overall picture of American Baptist Life, the interpretation of Baptist distinctives and American Baptist core values, as well as American Baptist Mission, and the dissemination and support of broad denominational priorities as articulated by the Biennial Meeting through the Mission Summit; and be responsible for legal matters for ABC/USA and serve as the legislative body of the ABC/USA. Set policy for ABC/USA in the areas of program functions, planning, coordination and evaluation and, with the National and Regional Boards and Mission Table, adopt common goals and objectives for the Denomination. These are but some of the responsibilities of this board. Representatives to the Board of General Ministries will be made up of staff, program board staff persons along with a representative from each of our denominational regions. I will be representing our region—ABCOPAD. I will also be chairing the Standing Rules Committee.

MISSION SUMMIT: The Mission Summit experiences are woven throughout the Biennial Meeting and are intended to capture the input of the Biennial, the largest number of American Baptists gathered in one place, as it provides a venue for examining the world landscape for those issues and concerns calling for a mission response from American Baptists as they seek to be healthy missional churches that nurture devoted disciples of Jesus Christ who live their lives in mission and ministry for the healing of the world through the love of God. The Mission Summit is the place and the time when American Baptists with diverse backgrounds, contexts and characteristics sit together, reflecting and discussing what this people of God can do in Christ's name in our world. The goal of the Mission Summit is to discern and articulate broad priorities for American Baptists for the upcoming biennium and beyond. In the Mission Summit, Biennial participants learn of critical trends impacting the mission and ministry of the church within and without the United States; participate in mission reflection and workshops based on the best practices of congregations, regions and boards; and experience opportunities to network with people and congregations sharing similar mission contexts and emphases. Essential to the success of both the Mission Summit and the Mission Table is the sharing of information among all units of the denomination. Thus, in preparation for any Mission Summits, churches, regions, program boards, and related institutions are encouraged and expected to share their concerns, hopes and mission priorities. The Mission Summit has at its very heart, the mission of the local church and strengthening healthy congregations who can join with other local churches, as well as Regions and National bodies, to impact the global American Baptist mission. The Mission Summit will seek to surface a large number of ideas and programs, in order to bring to light a wide breadth of mission efforts being worked upon by the American Baptist family, and give focus to American Baptist-wide mission for years to come. The deliberations of the Mission Summit shall include a consideration of implications for the ministry of the local church. The Mission Table shall receive the reports and recommendations of the Mission Summit. A formal report of the Mission Summit proceedings, and in particular communication of any broad denominational priorities articulated at the Mission Summit, shall be communicated to the Mission table in advance of its next meeting and shall be published in the official American Baptist Denominational publication in use at that time.

MISSION TABLE:

(1) Participation and Composition. ABC/USA shall participate in the Mission Table. The Mission Table is a focused group of American Baptist clergy, laity and staff persons charged with receiving the input from the Mission Summit as they work as a substantive missional think tank on behalf of the Denomination. The Mission Table will be comprised of people representing the broad spectrum of American Baptist Mission partners. The Mission Table shall include: one local church participant from each Region; the President of the ABC/USA, who shall chair the Mission Table; the Vice President of ABC/USA; the General Secretary and three others from the Office of the General Secretary; the Presidents, the Executive Directors plus two additional staff members each from ABHMS and ABFMS; the President, the Executive Director plus one additional staff member from MMBB; the Executive Ministers from each Region; one representative from each of the recognized caucuses of the American Baptist caucus network; one each from American Baptist Assembly, American Baptist Foundation, American Baptist Homes and Caring Ministries, and American Baptist Men; the President and Executive Director of American Baptist Historical Society, American Baptist Women's Ministries and the Ministers Council of ABC/USA; the President of the American Baptist Extension Corporation; three representatives from American Baptist Seminaries; and three from American Baptist Colleges.

(2) Nominations. The Region local church representatives shall come from nominations by each of the Regions. Each region will suggest five (5) people to the ABC/USA (National) Nominating Committee which shall, in turn, select one person from the five provided by the Region in order to provide a group which is representative of the Denomination. As the church, American Baptists are called to mirror God's intent to the world. Accordingly, Regions will be encouraged to submit diverse nominees based on the following: urban, suburban, rural, large, small, mega church; ethnicity; race; gender; age; geographical; language; culture; clergy/lay; physical

ability; and economic class. The Nominating Committee is mandated to ensure that the diversity of the Mission Table accurately reflects or mirrors the diversity of the American Baptist Denomination. The Nominating Committee will review the names sent by the Regions to ensure diversity and will report back to each Region and the National Leadership Council if names submitted to not meet the level of diversity needed to enable mutual accountability.

(3) Mission. At the Mission Table the key mission partners of the Denomination, together with the representative pastors and laity, will endeavor to further refine and pursue areas of common mission emphases articulated by their respective constituencies and the Mission Summit, making recommendations for, and committing to, areas of action. The Mission Table's sole focus will be the furtherance of God's mission through American Baptists, not for the institutional life of the Denomination, so that staff of the mission partners and congregations can effectively network around shared responsibilities and priorities.

Again it was a pleasure to have been at the Biennial Meeting and then the General Board Meeting last June. Should you have any questions for me just ask and I'll try to answer them. If I can't then I'll find someone who can. This article is indeed lengthy but I believe that it is important for you to know what is happening within our ABC/USA family.

Shalom,
Pastor Steve

*Included in the print version of Tower Topics is a copy of
“Transformed by the Spirit: A Journey of Discernment and Discovery
into God's Future—July 2011—June 2013.”*

This was adopted by the General Board at our June meeting in San Juan. It'll run during this new biennial period and will conclude at the Biennial Meeting in 2013 at Overland Park, Kansas. That biennial will feature a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the arrival of the Judson's to Burma now known as Myanmar.

*A copy of this article can be obtained by contacting the office at
570-662-7862.*

Prayer List

Richard Smith (Mary Webster's son-in-law),
Rieita Boyden, Rev. Charles Mercer,
Jasmine Williams (4 year old with Cancer),
oil, gas and windmill personnel,
shut-ins, those in our Armed Forces and many unspoken requests.

Shut-Ins

Iris Berguson, Evelyn Henninger, Omer & Betty Sumner

September 2011 - Tentative Preaching Schedule



September 4th

“Operating in the Red”

* *Romans 13:8-14, Exodus 12:1-14, Matthew 18:15-20*

September 11th

“Bridge Burners and Builders”

* *Matthew 18:21-35, Exodus 14:19-31, Romans 14:1-12*

September 18th

“Food for Thought”

* *Exodus 16:2-15, Philippians 1:21-30, Matthew 20:1-16*

September 25th

“Masterstroke”

* *Exodus 17:1-7, Philippians 2:1-13, Matthew 21:23-32*

* **Sermon Text**

NEWS FROM THE TRUSTEES

In the past several months, the Trustees have been busy working on a couple of reasonably big, long term improvements in our Church.

First, if you were not aware of this before, the furnace that heats the bathrooms, nursery and kitchen areas on the first floor of Griffith's Annex failed to work in April and during the repair, a crack was observed in the heat exchanger which could allow carbon monoxide to enter into the Annex. It was voted upon at the May board meeting that the best, long term decision was to replace this furnace prior to the 2011—2012 heating season. Phil Graham's Plumbing and Heating completed the replacement in June. If you are "keeping score," we have replaced two of the four furnaces located in the basement in the past year (one in the Annex and one in the Sanctuary.) The second Sanctuary furnace is less than 10 years old and the second Annex furnace is approximately 20 years old.

The other improvement is that we explored options to lower the interest rate on the loan taken out for our Renovation Project in 2008. First Citizen's Bank reviewed our loan and decided to offer us a 1% reduction in our interest rate from 6.99% to 5.99% and we will not have to pay any fees to the bank or attorneys to accomplish this change. At the time of this writing, we have not received figures on actual savings but we plan to report that information at the business meeting in November. However, the board voted to continue to pay our current bi-weekly payment of \$1,400 towards the loan. With this action and assuming we make no additional principle payments our loan would be paid in full by June, 2019. This would be four years ahead of our original final payment of December 2023. Since the inception of the Renovation Project 2008 Loan the FBC Family has, on many occasions given monies exclusively for the principle payment. These gifts will still be welcomed and celebrated. We give glory and honor to our Lord Jesus Christ for the outpouring of gifts to this loan.

Thanks,

Jim Cummings on behalf of our Board of Trustees

Tower Topics will have a new feature starting with this issue. Sue Wilber will be interviewing members and friends of our congregation so that you know more about our church family. We are starting out with our Pastor's wife.



Meet Diane Case

We all know about our pastor but what do we know about Diane Case. Hopefully you will learn a little bit about her from this article.

Diane was born in Annapolis Maryland, as her father was stationed at the now

Naval Academy. Being in the military her family moved from Maryland to the Panama Canal Zone when she was 2 years old. From there they moved to Norfolk Virginia, then New Jersey and then back to the Panama Canal zone. Diane celebrated her 10th birthday onboard ship returning to New Jersey from the canal zone where she lived until 2005 when she and Pastor Steve moved to Mansfield.

Diane's faith journey began like a lot of us with being taken to church by her Mother and Father. Upon the return from Panama, the family settled in Westmont NJ and joined Grace Baptist Church. Like a lot of us, Diane attended youth groups and church school and accepted Christ at 14. Diane was baptized soon thereafter. Diane was active in the church there serving on the Board of Christian Education, Board of Deacons and was on the pulpit committee that called Steve to Westmont.

Diane graduated from Haddon Heights HS and worked in Philadelphia most of her working career. She worked at Philadelphia Savings Fund Society, a bank, and at M Burr Keim, a company that incorporated new businesses. Her favorite positive was being an Employment Recruiter for PSFS. . She traveled to various branches and interviewed the applicants on site.

Steve and Diane were married on November 18, 1995 and moved to Mansfield in 2005. Diane is currently the Coordinator of the Board of Christian Education, the Love Gift Coordinator for the American Baptist Women and she sings in the choir. Diane started the "Boot Ministry" and hosts the lovely Christmas Tea's for the ladies of our church every December. This year the tea will be held on December 17th, 2011.

Fall Mini Retreat
For men, woman and teens
Saturday September 10, 2011
Troy Baptist Church
10:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

Lunch Provided
Keynote Speaker:
Lois Olmstead
“Holy Humor”

Since 1969, Lois Olmstead has traveled throughout the United States and Canada speaking at retreats, clubs, camps, hospitals, and other functions. Lois is an encourager, and author, a believer and a survivor. Lois’s faith in God is pivotal to her outlook in life. Her testimony and faith fills all of her presentations with love and salvation that has been her blessing.

Lois has hosted a daily talk show in Billings, Montana, she has owned and operated a gift shop an art gallery, and written a weekly column in her local paper. She has published 5 books:” Breast Cancer & Me”, “Enjoying the Journey”, ” Denim and Lace”, “The Dude”, “The Ducks, and other tales”, and newly released “Time to Enjoy the Journey”.

The cost of the retreat is \$10.00 and that includes the registration, welcome snack and catered lunch.

Reservations are needed by September 6th. Make checks payable to Bradford ABW Association. Email for registration to Jean Johnson grammajeanj@yahoo.com or send to Anna Belle Leonard, 6773 Checkerville Road, Gillett, PA 16925

Church Family Picnic

The Church Family Picnic will be held at the home of Pastor Steve and Diane Case on September 11, 2011 at 3:00. Bring your own table service, a lawn chair, a dish to pass and enjoy the games and fellowship with your church family. Hot dogs, hamburgers, rolls and condiments and beverage will be provided. Following the picnic, a Vesper Service will be held. A part of that service will be an acknowledgement of the 10th Anniversary of 9/11. If we have inclement weather the picnic and service will be held in the church annex. A sign-up sheet is available at each entrance to the church. Please sign-up by September 4th.

Upcoming Events

American Baptist Women's Sunday September 18th

For the third year in a row the American Baptist Women of First Baptist will be doing the service. This year the women have chosen to give you a history lesson as well as singing some of your favorite hymns. Come and join us for this special worship service.

Tioga Association meeting October 9th

The Annual meeting of the Tioga association will be held at First Baptist Mansfield on October 9th. An Executive meeting will be held at 2:00, a general meeting at 3:00 and a dinner at 5:00 provided by our church. **We will be serving Lasagna, tossed salad, garlic Italian bread and regular Italian bread, and cake.** Several women have already signed up to bring the lasagna. **Folks will be needed to help set-up and clean-up plus provide the salad, bread and cake. There is a job for anyone who would want to help. Please contact Sue Wilber if you can help out in any way.**

Mark October 16th on your Calendar for the "Mission Blitz" held at FBC Wellsboro

Fellowship List for August 2011

Please check the list below for your name.

If you are unable to serve on your scheduled week, **please find a replacement.** Thank you for your help!

September 4

Main Street Greeter: Prema Junius
Sherwood Street Greeter: David Garrision
Ushers: Mary Ann Walker & John Garrison
Hosts: Fran & David Garrison
Lay Reader: Diane Case

September 11

Main Street Greeter: Dorothy Bogart
Sherwood Street Greeter: Bill Bogart
Ushers: Mary Ann Walker & Jim Cummings
Hosts: Ben & Anne Nevin
Lay Reader: Prema Junius

September 18

Main Street Greeter: Mary Webster
Sherwood Street Greeter: Carol Mortimer
Ushers: Sylvia Sumner & Dorothy Smith
Hosts: Brenda Rumsey & Nancy Dart
Lay Reader: ABW Women

September 25

Main Street Greeter: Bob Smith
Sherwood Street Greeter: Cliff Wiles
Ushers: Mary Ann Walker & Jim Cummings
Hosts: Bruce & Nancy Dart
Lay Reader: Bruce Dart

October 2

Main Street Greeter: MARY Ann Walker
Sherwood Street Greeter: Marilyn Wiles
Ushers: Bob & Dorothy Smith
Hosts: Ben & Sarah Nevin
Lay Reader: David Garrison

4th - Pastor Steve Case

8th - Evelyn Henninger & Sue Wilber

13th - Faye Hotelling

17th - Bruce Dart

19th - Jeremy Wiles

20th - Jessica Lemasters

22nd - Melissa Wiles

27th - David Garrison & Claire Hill

**September
Birthdays**

Please visit our website to see our calendar!

<http://www.firstbaptistchurchmansfield.com/calendar.htm>

First Baptist Church of Mansfield, PA
North Main & Sherwood Streets

Sunday Morning Worship is at 11:00
Holy Communion is observed the first Sunday of the month