



The Mainstream News of Ministry and Mission

*Be a vessel that God can pour his love through.
Let It Flow*

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Rivers Growth Conference

September 28 - 29, 2018

The Rivers Growth Conference (Formerly, Annual Assembly) will be held at the **First Baptist Church of Bloomington** located at 2502 East College Avenue, Bloomington IL. Please note that this is a change from previous years. **All meetings and meals except Saturday morning breakfast meetings will be held at the church.** The breakfast meetings will be held at the hotel.

We will be staying at **The Chateau Hotel** located at 1621 Jumer Dr, Bloomington, IL. The hotel is a short distance from the church. **Use the Block Code ABCGRR to receive the discounted rate of \$99.00 + tax per night (available until Aug. 24th) Call the hotel at (309) 662- 2020.**

The Ministers Conference will be held on **Thursday, September 27** at First Baptist Church of Bloomington.

Speakers:



Shane Claiborne is a prominent speaker, activist, and bestselling author. Shane worked with Mother Teresa in Calcutta, and founded The Simple Way in Philadelphia. He heads up Red Letter Christians, a movement of folks who are committed to living "as if Jesus meant the things he said." Shane is a champion for grace which has led him to jail advocating for the homeless, and to places like Iraq and Afghanistan to stand against war.

David Fitch is B. R. Lindner Chair of Evangelical Theology at Northern Seminary Chicago, IL. He's married to Rae Ann and they have one child, a son Max. He's pastored and participated in many church plants including Life on the Vine Christian Community a missional church in the Northwest Suburbs of Chicago of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Most recently he and his family have joined Peace of Christ Church, Westmont, a church planted from Life on the Vine. He writes on the issues the local church must face in Mission including cultural engagement, leadership and theology.



(continued on page 2)

Rivers Growth Conference (continued)



Tony Campolo is an alumnus and professor emeritus of sociology at Eastern University in St. David's, Pennsylvania. He is

an ordained Baptist minister and evangelist, presently serving as an associate pastor of the Mount Carmel Baptist Church in West Philadelphia, which is affiliated with both the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. and the American Baptist Churches USA



Sharon Koh is an ordained American Baptist minister and the **Executive Director of International Ministries.**

Missionaries: Laura Parajon and Philip and Corenne Smith

If your church has taken a mission trip this past year or if you are a part of the sister church program, please contact the office and let us know. We want to highlight your church at The Rivers Growth Conference.

Please make plans to attend this very important meeting of our region.

Registration Information: Rivers Growth Conference: \$20.00
Ministers Conference: \$15.00

Download form or register online @
www.abcgr.org/#growth



A Word From Paul Gibson, ABCGRR Executive Minister

Why is the church growing in so many places overseas but seems to be declining in America? One answer I heard seemed to make sense because in many of those countries the government and the economy were not the best. It is happening because the Gospel is not tied to the economy or nationalism. In many cases the church is growing despite a government that opposes it. Their hope is in Jesus Christ and not in the leadership of their country nor their economy.

Another question for each to consider. Do you love Jesus? Does He know that? How would He know? He knows we love Him if we are living out His teachings. He makes it simple by giving us two commandments and then He says the two are one in the same. Love God and love your neighbor. Mt 22:37-40.

I have had a great time this summer visiting several of our churches to worship and to celebrate anniversaries. I worshipped with the people at FBC in Oak Park and FBC in Jerseyville and then celebrated a 150th anniversary with the folks at Deer Creek Baptist Church led by Pastor Steve Evans.

As the summer comes to an end there are two big events that are on my mind. First, and most important, is a wedding taking place in Nashville on Sept 1st for our daughter, Emily, and her fiancé, Adam Hendren. Melissa and I are very excited that God

brought these two together and are looking forward to a week of celebrating with friends and family.

The second big event is our Annual Assembly that will be in Bloomington on the last weekend in September. This year we are calling it "The Rivers Growth Conference". We have the **Ministers' Conference on Thursday, September 27**, with **Dave Fitch** as our speaker, and then **The Rivers Growth Conference takes place on Friday and Saturday, September 28 - 29**. We have wonderful speakers and presenters including, **Shane Claiborne**, as our main speaker for the Growth Conference, **Tony Campolo**, **Sharon Koh**, and missionaries **Laura Parajon and Philip and Corene Smith**. Plan on attending—you will be challenged and encouraged in your walk with Jesus. I hope to see you there!

One more thing...***Be rightly related to God and find your joy there, and out of you will flow rivers of living water. Be a vessel that God can pour His love through. Let it flow!***



GRR Mission Trip to the Philippines and Thailand

Paul and Melissa Gibson and John and Laura Rollet will be leading a mission trip to the Philippines and Thailand **Feb 12-26, 2019**. For more information contact **melissa@abcgrr.org**.

GRR Mission Discovery Trip To Costa Rica

Plans are in place for **Great Rivers Region Mission Discovery** to Costa Rica October 29 - November 6, 2018. The group will be limited to 20 persons.

- Meet IM missionaries Ruth Mooney, Sue Hagerty, Peter and Sarah McCurdy and Ingrid Roldan-Roman.
- Visit churches that have hosted recent GRR partnership groups as well as visit churches that may host groups in the future.
- Meet with FABCR church pastor and leaders.
- Visit places of historical and cultural interest in Costa Rica

GRR groups have joined in Partnership Projects in Costa Rica each year since 1985.

For information contact **Dr. John Grisham**. **john@abcgrr.org**. Cell/ Text: 217 - 553 - 1560

The Church Revitalization Initiative is designed to help committed pastors and church leaders who are willing to do what it takes to revitalize their church. The Initiative is comprised of pastors and church leaders who have helped lead their churches to healthy revitalized congregations.

If you are feeling stagnant and/or undecided how to move forward, please email me (**wallyholt63@gmail.com**) and we can discuss your situation and determine if the team can be of service to you.

Rev. Wally Holt

2018 Calendar

August:

24 - 25: **American Baptist History & Polity Course**
GRR Resource Center

September:

27: **GRR Ministers Conference**,
First Baptist Church
Bloomington, IL

28 - 29: **Rivers Growth Conference**
First Baptist Church
2502 East College Avenue
Bloomington, IL and'
The Chateau Hotel
1521 Jumer /Drive
Bloomington, IL - Break-
fast meetings, Saturday.

October:

20: **American Baptist Professional Boundaries Course**
GRR Resource Center

November:

14 - 16: **Space For Grace: Thy Will Be Done**
Philadelphia, PA

GRR Website

GRR Webmaster: Richard Ricks:
Email: revrick4@comcast.net

Baptist History and Polity Course

Are you interested in becoming a Baptist minister, and wonder where to start? Are you ordained from another church background and want to be recognized as an American Baptist minister? This course is required for transfer of credentials, or for graduation from the Alternative Ministerial Education program of the ABCGRR.

Dr. Adrian Lamkin, an expert in Baptist history and a retired history professor, who is now serving an Area III church, will lead this class in an exciting tour through our past, at the ABCGRR Resource Center in Springfield on August 24-25. The cost is \$50, plus a book. You will need to provide your own meals and over-night lodging, if needed.

For more information and an enrollment form, contact Debbie Naugle at the GRR office. For questions about the class or about Alternative Ministerial Education, contact Paul Maitland at pmait@att.net or 309.691.3387.

Mainstream Contact Information

Send your stories of mission and ministry. Please also send the names of new members to:

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