

HIGHLIGHTS

Volume 54, Issue 2

Published by the International Baptist Convention

August 2016



Core Values

**Why We Do
What We Do**

3-6 August 2017

**Connect Conference
to Launch**

The Well

**Euroventure 2016
Challenges Youth**

Core Values – Why We Do What

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They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47)

■ **Can you remember** when people still used maps? For the benefit of those who were born in this century, a map is defined as “a diagrammatic representation of an area of land or sea showing physical features, cities, roads, etc.” Maps helped people go from point A to point B. I have never been great at following maps. Today, we don't use maps; we use GPS (Global Positioning System), referred to in Germany as a “navi.” For those of you still living in the last century, a GPS is “a space-based navigation system that provides location and time information in all weather conditions, anywhere on or near the Earth where there is an unobstructed line of sight to four or more GPS satellites.” Laurie and I have a navi. Her (its) name is Gretchen. Gretchen tells us how to get from point A to point B and warns us if there are problems like heavy traffic on the way. She corrects us when we make a wrong turn. We are usually lost without Gretchen. She keeps us on track.

The IBC's core values help us to stay on track. They drive our decisions and ministries. With the Bible as the authoritative guide for all we believe and practice, there are certain values that enable us to live and serve together in the most effective, God-honoring way. They are the soul of our family of churches. If a church is considering whether or not to join us, our values should be compatible and embraced because incompatible values will eventually invite conflict and/or inaction. Our values keep us together. They guide us. They correct us. What are the IBC's Core Values?

We value Fellowship. *We believe that community among Christ-followers facilitates encouragement, prayer, edification, and accountability. We believe that Christian friendships develop when we take the time and effort to share our joys, sorrows, and challenges. (1 Thess. 5:14, Gal. 6:2)*

We are not independent churches but rather self-governing churches that are utterly dependent on God and interdependent on one another. This is our choice. We choose to carry one another's burdens, encourage one another, warn one another, and help one another

because we care about one another. This does not happen accidentally but only when we choose to get to know one another personally.

Not long ago a member in one of our churches died suddenly. The church informed us, and we informed other IBC churches. We stepped in to help because it is what family does. *Koinonia* is the Greek word for *fellowship*. At its root is what we have “in common.” Every church is unique but there is more that unites us than divides us as followers of Christ, and we can celebrate what we hold in common.

We value Church Planting. *We believe that every church should be involved in some way in helping to start new congregations. We desire to expand our reach to strategic places around the world where the Gospel is needed. (Acts 1:8, Matt. 28:18-20)*

The IBC started as a church-planting movement in the late 1950s. We believe that the local church is God's most strategic weapon in the battle for good and against evil. It is key to world evangelism. Every IBC church, whatever its size or location, can be involved in efforts to multiply disciple-making congregations.

Whenever the IBC family comes together, we discuss how we can start new churches. Through the planting of English-speaking churches around the world, we are seeing people reached who were not reached before. Not long ago Laurie and I visited one of our newest churches – Frontline City Church in Kaiserslautern, Germany. This daughter church to Frontline Community Church in Ramstein, Germany, is reaching out to the Kaiserslautern military community in a fresh way. Recently our church planting teams (we call them LEAD teams) conducted feasibility studies in Frankfurt, Munich, and Mannheim, Germany; and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. We hope to match God-called planters to these and other strategic places in the near future.

We value Diversity. *Since Jesus commanded us to make disciples of all nations, we celebrate that people from many nations and cultures come together in our churches. We believe that our diver-*

HIGHLIGHTS

Published by the International Baptist Convention
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We Do



sity expresses the creativity and eternal plan of God. (Gen. 1:2-3, Rev. 7:9-10)

I regularly hear churches describe their fellowship as unique. They then usually tell me about the mosaic of people from around the world who make up their fellowship. They describe their worship as “a foretaste of heaven.” Our churches ARE different, and we celebrate that diversity as a gift from God. Recently I counted five nationalities on the worship team at ICF Oberursel, Germany, on a particular Sunday. That is not unusual in our IBC family. Many of our churches have more than 40 or 50 nationalities among their members. Diversity brings it challenges, but boredom is not one of them.

The IBC currently has pastors that come from 10 different countries and many more denominational backgrounds. Our pastors differ in age, experience, gifts, leadership styles, and personalities. In humility, we learn from each other as we bring together our diverse family.

We value Unity. *The unity of the Spirit among our churches exhibits the oneness of all believers in Christ. We will seek to work out differences that may arise because we believe the power of the Gospel to unite us is stronger than the power of our enemy to divide us. (John 17:20-23, Eph. 2:19-22)*

A.W. Tozer in *The Pursuit of God* writes, “Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned, not to each other, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow.” Christ unites us. He is the barrier breaker. To be united to Him is to be united to each other.

Our mission of “mobilizing and multiplying disciple-making churches” and our vision of becoming “a movement of global-minded churches that are reproducing healthy disciples, leaders, and congregations” also unite us. It is a mission and vision larger than any single church, requiring a common commitment and a common dependence on the Holy Spirit’s leadership in each of us and among all of us.

We value Healthy Churches. *Because we believe that the local church is God’s primary means of presenting the Gospel and establishing His kingdom, we will seek to help churches achieve their unique, disciple-making mission in relevant and effective ways. (Acts 2:42-47, 1 Thess. 1:2-10)*

In the same way that a healthy body is desirable for productivity, quality of life, and happiness, so God desires for every church to be healthy. Church health is not a matter of size or wealth or





→ education or age or giftedness; it is a matter of genuine love and commitment to people and to the mission of God.

A healthy church is a mobilized church. A mobilized church may be defined as a church “that has a shared vision and effective strategies for impacting its community and the world by reproducing healthy disciples, leaders, and congregations.” Healthy, mobilized churches will make an impact where they are and beyond.

Every church has problems, struggles, and conflict at some point, but a healthy church is able to confront its challenges together. It is able to put Christ and His mission above all other agendas and preferences. A healthy church is characterized by joy and belief that God is at work in and through its members.

We value helping churches that are unhealthy to become healthy and also encouraging and assisting healthy churches to remain healthy. I recently visited

an IBC church that in the past had been very unhealthy – members accusing one another, lack of a common vision or strategy, and a spirit of competition and divisiveness. Today the church, through effective leadership, is healthy and growing and happy. Its members support each other. The church has a common vision to impact its community. And people hang around after worship services to encourage and enjoy one another’s company. Needs are being met. People are coming to Christ. Others are joining. They are making a difference.

We value Partnership. *We believe that working together with other churches to reach common goals enriches churches. Every church has something to offer. We also believe in connecting with other Christ-following groups. We can achieve more in this way than working independently of one another. We believe that cooperation is a gift of God. (Phil. 1:3-11, Eccl. 4:9)*

Our type of cooperation has been described as a “rope of sand with the strength of steel.” True partnership in the Gospel cannot be forced or mandated. It can only be encouraged and bought into because of common beliefs and aspirations. Partnership does not diminish the autonomy of any local church but rather it expands every church’s effectiveness through voluntary commitment. Partnership is a bond with strength that is not easily broken.

Partnership is more than nominally belonging; it is active, meaningful participation with others for a greater cause. We believe that every church in the IBC should see itself as a partner in the Gospel with other churches in the IBC. Together with fellowship, partnership links us in both friendship and mission.

This year we ended a four-year partnership with the Baptist Union of Moldova. I believe we are a stronger family of churches because of this partnership. We gave a lot and received a lot. IBC churches worked together with Moldovan churches to minister to hurting people and reach them with the Gospel. One of our IBC strategies is “building connections.”

Aubrey Malphurs, in his book *Advanced Strategic Planning*, defines core values as “the constant, passionate, biblical core beliefs that go deep and really, truly empower and guide the ministry.” Read the biblical text printed above. You will find some of the core beliefs of the early church. The IBC core values are beliefs that empower and guide our work together. I pray that these values will not only be aspirational but actual values for us as we work together to “mobilize and multiply disciple-making churches.” ■

Serving with you,

Jimmy Martin
IBC General Secretary

Connect Conference to Launch in 2017



■ **The first newly** designed Connect Family Conference will be held 3-6 August 2017 at the Lachen Gästerhäuser in Neustadt an der Weinstrasse, Germany. The theme verse for the weekend conference is Ephesians 4:16: "From whom the whole body, joined and held together, so that it builds itself up in love."

The conference will begin on Thursday at 17:00 and will continue through Sunday afternoon. The schedule will feature a worship service each day, some seminars for spiritual growth, and a children's program. Teens will have some events as well. There is something for everyone. Afternoons will be free for recreational activities or sightseeing. Evenings will feature a relaxed program geared towards families.

The campus is a former French air base, located in a beautiful area of western Germany. It's a Christian retreat center now with wonderful accommodations. We have reserved rooms in two buildings on the grounds that include single, double, and multiple bed rooms, either with or without private showers and toilets. There is room on the grounds for campers and tents, or you may choose to stay at one of the nearby local hotels.

There is a beautiful, recently remodeled chapel that will more than meet our needs, as well as conference rooms, children's ministry area, and an arts and craft area – complete with a kiln for pottery making. The grounds include many amenities, including a free pool for all guests, volleyball, football, basketball, and bicycling. There's a children's area, spots for bonfires, and plenty of room for private or small group getaways.

Conference rates are still being determined but they will include packages with accommodation and meals.

Neustadt an der Weinstrasse is located near the French border, within easy driving distance from Frankfurt, Kaiserslautern, Heidelberg, and Stuttgart. Local attractions include a nearby amusement park, historic cities of Worms and Heidelberg, the Rhine River valley, several historic castles, and the museum in Speyer.

Space will be limited the first year – so mark your calendars now and plan to attend. Go to www.lachen-diakonissen.de/index/lachener-gaestehaeuser/ for information and photos of the grounds. ■

IBCM to Hold Reunion and Annual Meeting

■ **The International Baptist Church Ministries (IBCM)** is sponsoring its annual reunion for friends and former members of the churches of the IBC along with its Annual Membership Meeting. The meetings will be held 3-4 February 2017 at Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth, Texas (USA). Lodging is available on campus at the Riley Center, where both meetings occur. The Reunion Dinner begins at 6 p.m. on Friday. The Annual Meeting convenes the next morning at 9 a.m. The Annual Board of Directors Meeting takes place Saturday afternoon while other members enjoy fellowship. An authentic German meal awaits those who go to the Edelweiss Restaurant on Saturday evening. The week-end events conclude with an early morning worship service on Sunday.

To register for the events, contact Karen Runyan at karen@ibcworld.org. To make lodging reservations, call the Riley Center directly at 1-817-921-8800.

IBCM supports the churches of the IBC by providing grants for both the churches and the convention. IBCM facilitates IRS-recognized tax-deductible charitable contributions for expatriates of the U.S. IBCM also provides a means for the IBC and churches of the IBC to benefit from contributions of estates, properties, stocks, bonds, and other tangible assets. IBCM provides a consistent means for former members to maintain contact and enhance fellowship with each other.

The current president is Dennis Jackson of Phoenix, Arizona. The current executive secretary is Larry Jones, former pastor of IBC Stuttgart.

For more information about IBCM, go to www.ibcmworld.com. ■

Larry Jones



Southwestern Seminary, Ft. Worth, Texas

Euroventure 2016



■ **More than 200** youth and adult sponsors gathered in Grindelwald, Switzerland, for Euroventure 2016, 2-7 July. The theme for the week was “the Well” based on “...a well of water springing up to eternal life” (John 4:14).

Euroventure is a week-long experience filled with a balance of spiritual growth, physical activity, fun and games, fellowship, and worship.

Mornings began with a worship time, looking at the theme story of Jesus’ encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well. Tom Hufty, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Mayville, Illinois (USA), and 20+-years speaker at Euroventure, led the morning Bible studies. Team times followed the worship service each morning, allowing the students to explore the Scripture passage more and to build team spirit and camaraderie. Team times were led by volunteers from IBC churches as well as college students from Hannibal-LaGrange University (Missouri) and Oklahoma Baptist University.

In his Sunday morning message, Hufty said that we live in the land of labels. The Samaritan woman (John 4) also carried labels – loser in relationships, lonely, poor decision-maker, outcast. Her encounter with Jesus though changed her. Like the Samaritan women, Hufty said, we need to put on the label that God gives us.

During his Monday message, Hufty said that initially the woman at the well was playing the question game with Jesus. For each question Jesus asked, she answered with another question. Jesus,

though, turned this casual conversation into a critical one. When we drink from the well of living water – from the well of Jesus’ love – our sin is confronted but we taste His forgiveness; our fakeness was revealed but we trusted His faithfulness; and our fear was relieved when we tasted of His friendship.

When we drink living water, Hufty said in his Tuesday message, it affects us in four different ways – our attitude, our beliefs, our control, and our decisions. You are your best, he said, when you are you.

On Wednesday morning, Hufty reminded the group, that they were the salt of the earth. While salt preserves and enhances flavor, it also makes you thirsty. Your life, Hufty said, should make people thirsty for the living water. How do you share your faith with friends?, Hufty asked. Be authentic; be aware, and be alert, he replied.

Brandon Barnard, teaching pastor at Fellowship Baptist Church in Little Rock, Arkansas (USA), and former youth pastor at Faith Baptist Church, Kaiserslautern, Germany, was the evening speaker for the week. In his opening message on Saturday night, Barnard challenged the teens, asking “How does your Bible time compare with your social media times?” Words matter, he said. Nobody has more powerful words than God. Often we are so concerned with what is going on around us, that we do not take the time to listen to God. With a word, God spoke the world into being; with a word, He calmed the storm; with a word, He healed the leper;

with a word, He cast out demons; with a word, He fed 5000 people.

Barnard then focused on two encounters people had with Jesus. In Mark 10:17-22, the rich, young ruler met Jesus and yet he went away sad. In Luke 18:35-43, the blind man, healed by Jesus, went away praising God. “Jesus wants to speak to us this week,” Barnard said. “This week I pray you will have another encounter with Jesus.”

In his Sunday evening message, Barnard reminded the group that they never graduate from the Gospel. The more you understand of the Gospel, he said, the more the fire is alight in you.

That theme continued in Barnard’s message on Monday evening. Healthy relationships grow, he said. They get stronger and stronger over time. He challenged the group – Do you love Jesus more than you did six months ago? How do you grow in Christ?, Barnard asked. One way is to spend time with Christ in the Word.

In Tuesday’s and Wednesday’s messages, Barnard said that our goal in life should be to follow Jesus with all that we are. It is important to know what the goal is because it determines how you train for it. We need to be in training for godliness. When an athlete trains, he or she must eat right, exercise, and rest. We, too, must eat right – having an appetite for the Scripture and hiding God’s Word in our hearts. We must exercise our faith – not just learning what the Bible says but living it out in our daily lives. And we must rest – fasting from something that we value, putting it aside to spend time with Christ. ■



Hufty

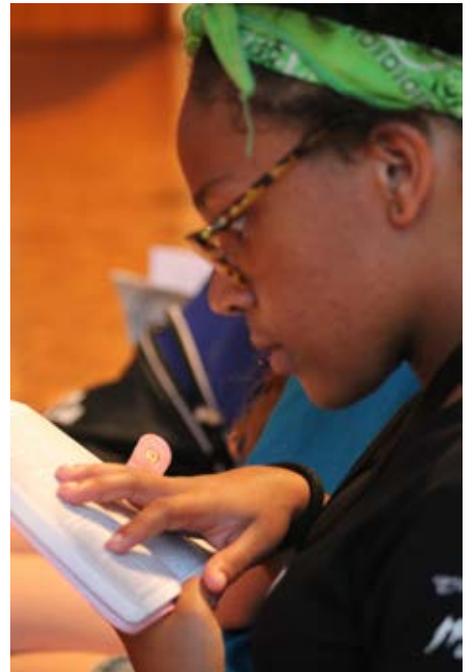


Barnard

Photos by Judith Lynn Maxwell



EUROVENTURE FEATURES
BIBLE STUDY, WORSHIP,
TEAM BUILDING, RECREATION,
AND LASTING FRIENDSHIPS.



EBM: At Work Around the World

The International Baptist Convention is a member of the European Baptist Mission International and supports EBMI through the Global Missions Offering in December. IBC General Secretary Jimmy Martin recently received an email from EBMI General Secretary Christoph Haus with the following message: "My sincere greetings in His name from Elstal. Back from Cameroon, I found your kind letter. And at the same time my bookkeeper confirmed that on 12 April the amount of 2,785.30 Euro has been credited to our account as contribution/donation from IBC to our ministry. I want to personally thank you that you don't stop keeping the awareness of the EBMI-world missions alive within the IBC churches. Please give our thanks and gratitude to your churches in your next circular. May God bless you and the IBC."



Diadema Social Center, a Baptist hospital, and a preschool class are ways EBMI is at work around the world.



The following reports come from EBMI reports:

In Brazil

The new school year has begun in Brazil and with it have the activities at the Diadema Social Center. Each day, 290 children – all who come from difficult or desperate living conditions – visit the center. The workers at the center work hard to ensure that the children are doing well and that they have the opportunity to learn about Jesus.

Suellen is 15 years old and has been coming to the center for six years. Her family has many financial problems. The quiet girl enjoys all of the activities at the center, knows Jesus as her Savior, is involved in the local church, and in May was baptized.

From India

In Serango, in southern India, there is a Baptist hospital providing medical care for the needy, regardless of their social class. Christians, Hindus, and the "Untouchables" (outside of the caste system) – all receive the same treatment.

Killkrishna Sabara is a two-year-old who has been battling cancer in his eye. Through the hospital, he was able to have surgery to remove his left eye, followed by chemotherapy. His parents are unendingly grateful for the care and hope he received.

In Argentina

"I cannot read," said Liliana, as she received a Bible for Mother's Day. Liliana, the mother of seven children, came to faith through the PEPE preschool project in Alem, Argentina, where she brought her youngest daughter each week. She wanted to learn to read so that she can study the Bible herself. So workers at PEPE began a literacy program for adults. Liliana not only learned to read and write; she became the best student in the group. Now, she leads a beginner's course herself. At the end of this year she will complete her elementary school education. And her young daughter completed the preschool program and is off to a good start in the school.

Liliane and her children and her grandchildren regularly attend the worship services held in the PEPE center, while the children also attend the children's time on Saturday.

A short video trailer in English is available on the EBMI website: www.ebm-international.org. A video with highlights of the work in 2016 is also available on the website in German and Portuguese. ■



photos by EBMI photographers

IBC Helps EBF's Indigenous Church Planters

Editor's Note: The International Baptist Convention has been supporting two indigenous church planters in Moldova through the European Baptist Federation's Mission Partnerships (formerly Indigenous Missions Partnerships). 2016 completes our commitment to Gheorge Mikhailov. We are in the middle of the five-year plan of support for Ghenadie Curbet.

■ **Five years ago** when Gheorge Mikhailov began being supported by the European Baptist Federation's Missions Partnerships, the church at Rascani was in the process of becoming a church. Through the result of redefining the purpose of the church, he said, the idea of planting churches in Ghetlova and Criuleni came up. Today the church in Rascani has 50-60 attending worship while in Criuleni and Ghetlova there are eight people attending each of these church plant's weekly meetings. And, during that five year period, 20 people have been baptized.

The work has not been easy, Mikhailov said. The attitude of the people in the villages was very closed at the beginning. Yet, they persevered – not changing their vision but changing their methods. Social projects within the villages have built relationships there – enabling the people from the church in Rascani to become a part of the villagers' lives.

The financial situation in Moldova are forcing some people to leave the country and go to work abroad. This affect the churches as well, Mikhailov said. "I realize that I can't stop this phenomenon. Therefore, through personal example, we have just been trying to encourage the people to trust in God and find a way to survive in our country."

Mikhailov is grateful for the support he has received. "I do not know how we would have progressed, but I am sure that without the support, the ministry would not have had the results we have today. May God continue to bless [you] to be useful in church planting, both in our country and in the whole world!"

"We thank God that things are going well in the church of Bardar at the moment," Ghenadie Curbet said. "We do not have big changes, but we rejoice to see the faithfulness of our church members. The people of the village still seem quite reserved, but we are happy that believers realize that all are called to proclaim the Gospel message."

The church in Bardar continues to use taekwondo as a means of reaching the children in the village. The group which meets for training and Bible study has grown from three to 15 children.

Last year, the church also sponsored day camps for the children in Bardar and in the villages and towns of Vasieni, Pojoreni, Calarasi, and Seliste. More than 300 children came to these. A week-long overnight camp had more than 100 children come – most of these from the day camps.

The church has also started monthly fellowships in members' homes, aiming at reaching unbelievers. Pray that all the ministries of the church would grow. ■



Children's day camps reach 300 children in the Bardar, Moldova, area.



Diana Curbet leads the youth Bible study in Bardar, Moldova.



Mikhailov

'Pura Vida!'

**Annual Convention Meeting
San José, Costa Rica
24 – 27 October 2015**

24 October: Missions Day and Evening Meeting

25 October: Business Session morning and afternoon, worship service in the evening

26 October: sightseeing tour (volcano & La Paz waterfall gardens), worship service in the evening

27 October: Multiply (church planting) Conference

A Race of a Different Kind – Brazil’s 6400 meters

■ **The world turned** its eyes to Brazil and the 2016 Olympic Games. Athletes from around the globe gathered to unleash amazing feats of human speed, strength, and stamina. Medals dangled from the necks of those who are able to cover 100, 800, 5,000 or 10,000 meters the fastest.

In Brazil’s capital city of Brasilia, another group of global participants have gathered to join a race of a different kind – this one oddly enough covering a distance of 6,400 meters. Here, Christians from around the world come to Bridges International Church, hoping to preserve its meeting place of the last 40 years, by purchasing an 80 x 80 square meter property. At a current cost of roughly \$2.5 million and having only until the end of the year to raise the funds, this race will be a sprint to the finish.

The genesis for Bridges was birthed 40 years ago out of the vision of a few international Christians who saw a need for an English-speaking church in Brazil’s new capital. Diplomats, company executives, international students, and their families began streaming into Brazil’s new capital from all over the world. Foreign embassies and international schools were established throughout the city, and yet today, while Brasilia is home to more than 140 embassies and a large international community, Bridges remains the only dedicated English-speaking church in Brasilia.



Teens from Tanzania, Brazil, America, Costa Rica, and Namibia enjoy dinner at the current church site.

Anyone who visits Bridges Church is quickly taken by the multi-cultural make-up of its worshippers. Comprised of many different cultures, colors, and countries, those attending Bridges today come from nearly 40 different nations. It is amazing to see how people are so vastly different and yet so completely one. Pastor Dave Bollenbacher attributes this to the shared needs that all people have regardless of their background. “We are created to know God, and so we share a common desire to love God and love people. We are also created for community, and being in a different country, away from one’s family,



More than 40 different nationalities gather for worship at Bridges International Church.

language, and friends, Bridges provides a place where people can share life.”

One of the biggest challenges facing Bridges is the transitional nature of its members, as people rarely stay at the church more than two or three years before moving. Yet this is also one of its greatest blessings. Bollenbacher, who himself has lived and served around the world for more than 20 years, loves that the church, aptly called Bridges, is becoming a center for sending “missionaries” to people and places around the world. “In the past I have been dedicated to going to the nations to share the good news of Jesus Christ. At Bridges the nations are coming to us. We invest in these people for the season that they are here, and when their countries, companies, or careers say ‘go’, we send them to the next step in their journey, empowering them to live and love for Christ.”

Bridges has grown significantly in the last few years. Tents have been erected to accommodate people having to sit outside the simple brick building each Sunday, and an additional worship service has been added to accommodate the people. As the church body has grown, however, its church building has not. This is in part due to the church’s focus on investing in people not property and to build up the Body not buildings. In April of this year, however, the church was notified by its longtime partner, the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, that they would be selling the church property for \$2.4 million. If the church wanted to purchase it, they would need to do so by year’s end. Though raising such a large sum in a short time might

seem impossible, Bridges felt they needed to trust God and at least try to secure this place of worship for generations to come.

For a transitional church of just a few hundred, the challenge can seem daunting, but Bollenbacher likes to simplify the task: “The fact is we need to purchase 6,400 square meters of property at a cost of approximately \$400 per square meter. The challenge that we are presenting to Bridges Church and friends of Bridges is: How many meters can you “buy” in order to invest in the people and praise of God?” Bridges is trusting, that through the generous gifts of those inside and outside the church, that there will continue to be a place in Brasilia to invite English-speaking worshippers of Jesus Christ from all around the world.

“We must run the race that lies ahead of us and never give up. We must focus on Jesus, the source and goal of our faith.” (Hebrews 12:1 GW) If you would like to partner with Bridges International Church in their “6,400 meter race”, tax-deductible gifts can be sent to International Baptist Church Ministries (IBCM) (designate Bridges International Church). Visit IBCMWorld.com for giving options. Contributions can also be sent through the IBC Office.

If the current church site cannot be secured, all gifts will be used toward the establishment and expansion of a suitable church site in Brasilia.

Thank you in advance for the generosity of your prayers and gifts. Bridges Church is encouraged to be running this race with you! ■

Dave Bollenbacher

San Jose, Costa Rica

■ **Camp La Cumbre** is an annual church camp that the International Baptist Church, San Jose, Costa Rica, hosts every year. It is open to any camper as long as you're between the ages 9-18 – English speakers or Spanish speakers. Our main purpose at camp is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

This year our guest speaker was Wade Hopkins, an ex-NFL player, from Hous-

ton, Texas (USA). The Spanish speaker was IBC's Associate Pastor Joe Sanchez. Camp was kicked off to an amazing start! The first night a young Spanish camper accepted Christ in his heart. The week continued with great lessons from our pastors, amazing worship sessions, and great outdoor activities. During the day, campers went on hikes to see waterfalls; participated in team-building games; fear-

lessly completed the ropes course; played volleyball, basketball, and Ga-Ga ball; climbed the rock wall; and some were crazy enough to jump in the freezing cold river that runs through La Cumbre.

All-in-all we had an amazing time worshipping, serving, and spreading the message of our great Lord. ■

Angela Hardin



Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ is the purpose of youth camp in Costa Rica.



Hiking to the waterfalls is one of the activities.

Madrid, Spain

■ **Summer is a busy time** at IBC, Madrid! Approximately 150 multi-cultural international children and close to 100 volunteers were delighted to learn about "Following Jesus, the Light of the World" in our recent Vacation Bible School, 27 June-1 July at the International Baptist Church, Madrid, Spain. (Called Cave Quest, published by *Group*). With creative skits and exciting worship music, kids started and ended the morning all together in their crews. Then the crews rotated through four learning stations with snack time in the middle: active outdoor games, videos about real kids who are following Jesus, interactive Bible stories, and creative crafts. It was a great

week for the kids and for all the youth and adults who participated as well. It was also a wonderful way to train children's workers and to get newcomers involved.

Our Spanish mission in the Madrid suburb of Torrejón was also hosting a basketball camp that week, so Pastor Lucas and Betzabé Colmenares visited the local mayor to get his support for the project and the use of public basketball courts, to which he was very amenable.

The next week we hosted a basketball camp sponsored by our Spanish church plant (which meets on our campus Sunday evenings). It was a real answer to prayer to have children from our neigh-

borhood participating as they learned basketball skills, practiced English, and heard the Gospel in music and Bible teaching. Volunteers from First Baptist Houston, Texas (USA), joined local members to work with the 65 kids who attended daily. We praise God for all the good seed of His Word sowed in young hearts and for all the young workers trained in the process!

Our youth came back for a work day on 4 July to help paint and clean up, though we "rewarded" them with a hamburger cookout – what a blessing! ■

David & Susie Dixon



Youth are rewarded after helping paint and clean up the church and grounds.



Interactive Bible stories teach children about following Jesus.

Hoensbroek, The Netherlands

■ **Emmanuel Baptist Church**, Hoensbroek, The Netherlands, celebrated a memorable service 14 May, with an installation service of our new pastor David Harsdorf and thank you service for Wim van Reijn.

A potluck dinner followed after the service with EBC family and church guests from various churches. IBC General Secretary Jimmy Martin and family and IBC Regional Coordinator Richmond Ofori and his wife Esther also came to be part of this special day.

Additional good news: Our church will be celebrating its 40th Church Anniversary on 20 November (20 June was the exact date of the anniversary)! Praise God for all His blessings and providence in all areas of our church. ■



photos by Manchie Bolffrom

Jimmy Martin, Richmond Ofori, and members of the church pray for David Harsdorf.

Lubbock, Texas, USA



■ **A Bible study** on Saturday evenings at International Christian Fellowship, Lubbock, Texas, is mainly attended by Chinese visiting scholars. These are university professors who are staying one year in Lubbock. This group invites others, so there are often new people attending on Saturday evenings and worship on Sunday. Chris, a member of our leader-



ship team, leads the Saturday study. He is shown in the picture (left photo) in the blue shirt on the left. Chris was born in Bolivia to a Bolivian father and an American mother and moved to the U.S. as a child. He grew up atheist but married Angie, who was a Christian, and later himself accepted Christ. He is devoted to the study of Scripture, and he and Angie have two children. They are one of our many young families; approximately 20 children ages 10 and under attend the ICF.

Lubbock ICF's diversity is seen (right photo) in our worship team: Guitar and vocal: Lap (Vietnam Jarai) and Paul (American expatriate who lived in Korea and Thailand); Vocal: Ni Wang (China); Bass: Aldo (Brazil); Drums: Prince (Dubai); and Aaron (American Hispanic). ■

Al Gary

Great Gidding, England

■ *Editor's Note: Several years ago, the Baptist church in Great Gidding, England, approached Grace Fellowship, Stukeley, England, with a proposal. Great Gidding would deed the church building, parsonage, and property to Stukeley if Stukeley would hold a worship service there at least once a month. Grace Fellowship agreed. Since then, members of Grace have done considerable renovation on the parsonage and the property and have gone from having monthly services to having weekly services. Eric and Karyn Gren began helping Grace Fellowship with the church in Great Gidding and on 30 July were inducted as the pastor at the church. They write:*

Karyn and I are delighted to begin our ministry here at Great Gidding Baptist Church. Great Gidding is a wonderful, small village set in the English countryside. The Baptist chapel was built in 1790, but we have been told that worship has been taking place here for 100 years prior. We first felt God calling us to this place about three years ago, shortly after being introduced to the pastor of Grace Fellowship by our pastor at Sedge Fen Baptist

Church, both International Baptist Convention churches. The induction service on 30 July 2016 brought together people from three special organizations – the IBC, Village Hope, and the Eastern Baptist Association, all who have played an important part in supporting this ministry. It was wonderful to see so many people attend the service from across England, Europe, and the village and from the church's past. We are excited to see what God has in



Martin and Gren

store for the future. Please pray that God moves through the village, England, and the rest of the world. ■

Eric Gren