

HIGHLIGHTS

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Jimmy Martin

A Call to IBC Reformation

ACM

Celebrating Our Heritage, Pursuing Our Mission

Men, Women, MLC

Conferences Planned



A Call to IBC Reformation

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance. (1 Peter 1:1-2)



by Jimmy Martin
General Secretary

Germany, and much of Europe and the world, has celebrated 2017 as the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's famous nailing of his Ninety-five Theses on the door of the Castle Church (*Schlosskirche*) in Wittenberg, Germany. This act by Luther on 31 October 1517 is often viewed as the start of the Protestant Reformation, which changed much of European society and left a lasting theological and ecclesiological legacy around the world. During our Annual Convention Meeting in October we looked at some of the ways the reforms of the 16th and 17th centuries continue to shape 21st century evangelical Christianity. Roland Eskinazi, pastor of IBC Brussels, Belgium, brought a Gospel-centered challenge based on the "Five Solas" of the Reformation:

1. *Sola Scriptura* ("Scripture alone"): The Bible alone is our highest authority.
2. *Sola Fide* ("faith alone"): We are saved through faith alone in Jesus Christ.
3. *Sola Gratia* ("grace alone"): We are saved by the grace of God alone.
4. *Solus Christus* ("Christ alone"): Jesus Christ alone is our Lord, Savior, and King.
5. *Soli Deo Gloria* ("to the glory of God alone"): We live for the glory of God alone.

Carsten Lotz, pastor of ICF Oberursel, Germany, spoke from 1 Peter 2:4-10 about one of the most important Anabaptist emphases – "the priesthood of all believers." Carsten said that many other Baptist distinctives – believer's baptism by immersion, religious liberty for all – stem from the truth that all Christians are called to serve as priests for one an-

other rather than having an exclusive priesthood or clergy. He quoted theologian Timothy George who wrote, "Every Christian is someone's priest. We are all priests to one another."

Reformation and Radical Reformation truths helped to bring God's people back to the Bible and its importance in our lives. They challenge us today to return to the Gospel and to God to live as New Testament Christians. Karl Barth, prominent theologian of the 20th century, famously said, "The church is always in need of reform (*Ecclesia semper reformanda est*). I agree.

A question for the IBC family: "Are WE in need of reform?" If so, what is the nature of the reforms that are needed? I do not presume to try to improve or replace the "Fives Solas" or the biblical teaching on the priesthood of all believers, but I want to suggest several ways that our international family of churches needs to see reform. These reforms, like our core values (fellowship, partnership, church planting,



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Cover photo: Martin Luther statue in Worms by Judith Lynn Maxwell

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healthy churches, diversity, and unity), can provide a compass for our journey together toward the future. I take my points from the introductory greeting above, 1 Peter 1:1-2, where Peter brings God in His fullness into focus – Father, Son, and Spirit. It is a Trinitarian greeting.

The unique understanding we have is that God is a Tri-unity. He is not like the God of Islam, which sharply distinguishes Allah from the God described by Jesus. The Quran says, “Say not ‘Trinity.’ Desist; it will be better for you: For God is one God. Glory be to Him: (far exalted is He) above having a son.” And in another place: “Say: ‘He, Allah is One’. Allah is He on Whom all depend. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And none is like Him” (Surrah 4:171 and 112).

In contrast, we believe that God’s very being from eternity has been as Father, Son, and Spirit. The Father is who He is by virtue of His relationship with the Son, whom He loves through the Spirit. And the Son would not be the Son without the Father. He is who He is because of the Father. We come to know the truth about God best in Jesus, who speaks of Himself as the Son of God, and He constantly speaks of the love He has for His Father, and of the love the Father has for Him. Like a fountain, the Father pours out His love through His Son. While distinct in their persons, they are inseparable from each other. They are who they are TOGETHER.

The IBC Summary of Basic Beliefs refers to one application of this truth when it says, “just as the Trinity is the model of eternal co-operation so we as IBC churches are to cooperate together in mission with God...”

Toward the end of his life Peter writes, with the assistance of Silas (Silvanus), to a group of churches scattered throughout Asia Minor, modern-day Turkey. It seems Peter sent the letter intending that all churches in these five Roman provinces would read them. Perhaps Silvanus was the carrier of the letter (5:12). If so he probably started in the north in Pontus, went south and east to Galatia, then to Cappadocia further south. He then would have gone west in the province of Asia and back north and east to Bithynia. All in all, he made a large circle, bringing a message of hope and warning and instruction to God’s people who faced similar challenges but in different locations. Peter was probably in Rome, in prison, during the time of Nero, perhaps about AD 63 or 64. Official and widespread persecution of Christians had not started, but it was near.

Peter writes to a family of churches we can also identify with. He calls them the “elect,” or “chosen ones.” They were “chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.” God knew, had always known, who they were and where they were, even if they wondered at times. They were precious to Him.

They are also, “strangers in the world, scattered...” They were sojourners, a part of the so-called “diaspora.” (We might say today they were living outside



their passport country. They were expats.) This description is a biblical one, often referring to Old Testament Israel during times of exile, but Peter’s readers were largely Gentile. The country he is referring to is not an earthly fatherland but rather a heavenly one. They were citizens of heaven, living on earth.

We can identify with these scattered churches. Most IBCers live outside their passport country. We know the hassles of expat life – standing in the longer lines at airports, going through mountains of paperwork to register, obtaining visas, opening bank accounts, getting driver’s licenses, learning a new language, adapting to cultural differences, on and on the list goes. Most of these things are non-issues for nationals. Beyond these kinds of issues are the spiritual and heart issues – the loneliness of being “away from home,” the fear of being misunderstood, or of being understood and rejected or ignored. Many in our churches face more serious issues, especially if they are refugees and other displaced minorities.

Imagine the situations these churches felt as they received Peter’s letter. All of them experienced challenges – “though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials” (1:6) or “do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you” (4:12). It is into these kinds of situations that Peter writes to a family of churches to encourage and to challenge.

The IBC is a scattered family – dispersed in 25 countries on five continents. In some cases, yours may be the only evangelical church in the city where you live. Yours might be the only international church. Your struggles and issues seem unique. Your members are facing challenges of living in an unfamiliar place. Multiple cultures and backgrounds are a blessing and a preview of heaven, but they also bring challenges to the church – in decision-making, time issues, worship styles, denominational differences, varying views of social issues, politics, and theology.



Roland Eskinazi

Scattered churches, we need to hear this message of how God views us in relationship to Himself, to one another, and to the world we are called to live in and bear witness to. Let's consider this Trinitarian greeting, and let it instruct, encourage, and challenge us as a family of churches. Peter reminds these churches: We are chosen by the Father, sanctified by the Spirit, and redeemed by the Son.

I want to make some particular applications to us as the IBC family:

1. WE ARE A PEOPLE OF HOPE WHO BELONG TO GOD THE FATHER.

God is the Creator of the world and the Author of the salvation of His people. He raised Christ from the dead and gave Him glory. We are His elect and chosen people. He foreknew us.

When Peter says that we "have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," he says it to express and to emphasize the greatness of His goodness. The goodness of God the Father draws us to love and serve Him with all our hearts and to place our trust and hope in Him. He is a kind and loving Father. Martin Luther learned that knowing God as Father makes all the difference in our understanding of salvation and all our thoughts about God. As an Augustinian monk in Erfurt, his mind was filled with the knowledge of the righteousness of God, the sin-hating God.

As a result, Luther came to hate the righteous God who punishes sinners. "I was angry at God," Luther said. Not knowing God as a kind and willing Father, he found he could not love God. So he turned his affection, with other monks, to Mary and other saints with their love and their prayers. When Luther came to see God as the Father who shares, who gives to us His righteousness, glory, and wisdom, his life changed. He found that coming to know and love God as Father not only gave him assurance and joy – it also won his heart to God, and he came to love the God he once hated.

This truth that we belong to God the Father inspires us with HOPE. We can be confident that God who foreknew us and chose us also knows us now and will know us tomorrow. We too easily fall into anxiety about the future or into defeatism because of a lack of resources—people, training, or finances. When progress and growth are not obvious or when we see another church that seems to have resources we don't have or lacks some of the challenges we face, it can be disheartening.

Knowing that we belong to God the Father lifts us beyond ourselves and to a greater kingdom purpose and hope. We are part of the IBC family, and we are part of a global family whose address is heaven. We belong to one another because we are family. Harmony in our relationships reflects the perfect harmony of our Triune God. As Carsten Lotz's father, Denton Lotz, who served for many years as the General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, loved to say, "We belong to one another because we belong to Christ." And we belong to Christ because we have a Father who chose us.

An IBC core value is fellowship. Another is partnership. We have a tendency to go it alone. It is easy to forget our sister churches and pastors and leaders. Some pastors do not invest in the lives of other pastors and fail to let others invest in their lives. And the result can be burnout or unnecessary frustration or a short-term pastorate. When crisis comes they can suffer needlessly because they have not built into their lives accountability and friendships with others. And others suffer because we are not there for them.

We identify with one another in ways that others cannot. We share the challenges and blessings of ministering in very diverse churches. We share the challenges of "pastoring a parade," "ministering in a revolving door" as people constantly come and go. Our churches, if they are growing, are also always shrinking. We never come to a point where our leadership is in place, and we can move on to other issues of concern because our leaders are also constantly leaving and new leaders must be developed. We watch our best people, people in whom we have invested, as they leave us.

Find hope today in knowing that we belong to God the Father. We were known and are known by Him. He chose us to salvation, and He chose us to service. We belong to His global, forever family. There will be times when you are discouraged. Find hope in the successes of your sister churches. There will be times when you are seeing the fruits of God's work in your midst. Take time to pray for and encourage those who are struggling.

Hope is found when we see ourselves as pilgrims/sojourners/aliens who belong to God and whose real home and citizenship is in heaven. We have a living hope that goes beyond our next success or failure and beyond our next challenge and hardship.



Carsten Lotz



Photos by Judith Lynn Maxwell

Larry Jones prays for the new leadership team.

Hope enables us to be faithful. Hope enables us to endure hardships, even suffering – all kinds of trials. So we commit ourselves to His faithfulness as the Creator and Father, just as Christ did when He suffered unjustly.

2. WE ARE A PEOPLE UNITED BY GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT, OUR SANCTIFIER.

It is God's Spirit who placed us together in God's family and who is making us fit for our heavenly calling. He is always at work in us and through us. Our conversion as individuals and our existence as churches and as a family of churches are the result of the work of God's Spirit moving to bring life. He is like the water of a fountain pouring from the source of the Father's love and life to us and through us.

The Spirit is active in every aspect of the life of our churches and our family of churches, for He is the Spirit of Life. He brings us into what the Father has made possible – a living hope through a new birth. He unites us not only in name but also in spirit. He moves us toward obedience to follow the Father's plan. He illuminates us to see the mission of God more clearly and draws us to move in accord with the Father's wishes. He enables us to do together what we cannot accomplish by ourselves. He corrects and convicts us when we need it, drawing us always toward the Father's plan. That same Spirit empowers us for evangelism and for the teaching and preaching of Christ. It is the Spirit who enables us to the obedience that brings pleasure to God.

The Spirit is God's gift of grace to us. When God gives us His Spirit, He is giving us Himself. God gives us His Spirit so that we can know and enjoy fellowship with the Father and the Son.

One aspect of the Spirit's sanctifying work is unity. We are in fact united in Christ, but often we do not see it and do not strive to keep the unity of the Spirit. We can allow our diversity to divide us inside our churches and even between one another. An independent, uncooperative spirit will always cripple us.

We are a family of churches bound by voluntary cooperation. No one stands above anyone else to say, "You must do this or that in this or that way." When we work together in voluntary cooperation, we form, as one leader put it years ago, "a rope of sand with the strength of steel."

Our IBC vision is to see "a movement of global-minded churches reproducing healthy disciples, leaders, and congregations." I believe it is a vision that honors the Lord and should drive us forward in unity. Achieving our vision does not depend on the size of our churches nor the amount of our budgets but it DOES depend on our moving forward together.

If each of us would take seriously and personally his or her role and responsibility to the wider family of churches in the IBC, I believe the Spirit would move in a powerful way to point us all outward. We would see pastors and leaders and congregations

becoming healthy, and we would see a greater number of healthy churches being planted. We would see a movement that would amaze us all and that would glorify God.

Our vision calls us to a direction and destination worthy of the Lord, a vision that makes a difference in our churches and in the lives of many people who need the Lord. But we need each other. May the Spirit of God sanctify and reform us by uniting us toward the vision God has given us. May He be the very oxygen of the new life that we breathe together.

3. WE ARE A PEOPLE CLEANSED BY JESUS CHRIST, GOD THE SON, OUR REDEEMER, AND PUT ON REDEMPTIVE MISSION.

From the outset Peter reminds his readers and us that it is the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ that brings us into covenant with God. We are who we are only because of the work of Christ, which God the Father foreknew and God the Spirit initiated in us. Peter speaks of Christ as the Son of God and Lord of the Church. The Father determined before the foundation of the world to redeem His people by the sacrifice of the Son. The Spirit, whose role is to speak of Him, bore witness through the prophets the sufferings which Christ would endure AND the glories which would come as a result. Peter, having walked with the Lord and having seen His suffering first-hand, was a witness. He also had a glimpse of the future glory of Christ seated at the right hand of the Father. He was a confident witness of both His death and His heavenly glory.

In Jesus, Peter came to see and know God as Father, Son, and Spirit. The Son was loved by the Father and anointed with the Spirit. Peter saw in Jesus that God is so generous and kind that He gives Himself to us and comes to be with us. And this is not because of who we are but in spite of who we are. We are in need of God's redemption.

Martin Luther defined a sinner as "the person curved in on himself." We can even behave morally or religiously but out of a love for ourselves. And so we are in need of redemption; redemption prompted God's love for the sinner.

The mission of God the Son was redemption and to that mission He calls us. His mission is our mission. We cannot do what He did in providing a sacrifice for sins. There is no need for that because, as Peter will tell us, "Christ died for sins once for all, the



Frontline City joins the IBC.



Photos by Judith Lynn Maxwell

David Fresch highlights the work of the Developing Leaders strategy.

righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.” He alone is Redeemer, but we are called to His mission of redemptive sacrifice – taking up our crosses daily to follow Him. Without the cross, we could never know the depth of God’s love. Out of love, Christ laid down His life. Self-giving, generous love is our example to follow.

The IBC exists for the glory of God to help churches accomplish their God-given mission of “making disciples.” The local church is God’s appointed method of reaching the world. Like these churches scattered throughout Asia Minor, we are called together to the redemptive mission of making disciples through living out the Good News, telling the Good News, and planting churches that teach and preach that Good News so that disciples are made and grown in local families of believers. And we do it in challenging times in challenging places with challenging people.



Jimmy Martin

REFORMING OUR METRICS OF EFFECTIVENESS:

How should we measure our effectiveness as a family of churches? God is calling us, the IBC family, to measure its effectiveness with Trinitarian metrics.

- The metric of hope. Are we moving ahead in hope because we embrace together the calling to be God the Father’s chosen people? We must pursue that calling as strangers and aliens in the world, living as citizens of heaven.
- The metric of unity. Are we together being sanctified by the Spirit, including His work of uniting

us to live as His people in a world that is hostile and resistant to the Gospel, refusing the temptation to go it alone? We must pursue the unity that God the Spirit has already placed within us, making every effort to “maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

- The metric of mission. Are we focused on living out the redemptive mission of God the Son, Jesus Christ, whose death brought us out of darkness and into the light, and doing it together? We must never lose our wonder of what Christ has done for us. And that wonder drives us in gratitude to pursue the mission of making Him known TOGETHER.

Hope, unity, and mission – let these blessings, which come from our 3-in-1 God, encourage and challenge us to be faithful and productive in our common work. May God reform us and empower us to live as reformers that reflect who we are and who we belong to, and may we do it together for His glory.

Soli Del Gloria (To God alone be the glory),

Jimmy Martin
IBC General Secretary

Celebrating Our Heritage, Pursuing Our Mission

The International Baptist Convention, in its 54th Annual Convention Meeting, held 23-25 October in Oberursel, Germany, featured the 500th anniversary of the Reformation through the theme “Celebrating Our Heritage, Pursuing Our Mission.”

The convention welcomed Frontline City Church, Kaiserslautern, Germany, as an associate member. Frontline City is a church plant of Frontline Community Church in Ramstein, Germany. The church plant is two years old.

The convention approved a 382,829.82€ budget for 2018. This budget is a 9.5% increase over the 2017 budget. The budget is in line with the projected giving for this year.

The convention also approved the awarding of the Missions Endowment Fund for 2017 to Bridges International Church, Brasilia, Brazil. The church will use the funds to develop property that they just received which will increase their useable space by 800%.

The convention also heard presentations from each of the strategy directors concerning their strategy and plans for the coming year. Darryl Evetts (multiplying churches), Gary Preston (strengthening churches), David Fresch (empowering leaders), Scott Corwin (building connections), and Judith Lynn Maxwell (developing resources) shared their vision for 2018. General Secretary Jimmy Martin reported on his work during the past year and challenged everyone to find a place where they could serve. “We need everyone in order to reach our vision,” he said. “We all need to do a part.”

During the final business session, David Packer, pastor of the International Baptist Church, Stuttgart, Germany, was elected president. Richmond Ofori, pastor of Hope International Baptist Church, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, was elected 1st vice-president. Tim Faulkner, pastor of Il Faro International Baptist Church was elected 2nd vice-president. Each will serve a one-year term.

During his presidential challenge to the convention, Packer described various types of pastor. A fellowship of churches will mirror those pastor types, he said. We need pastors with a passion for the glory of God. We need those with the right spirit instead of right answers.

The evening sessions were worship services celebrating the convention’s heritage with a focus on the Reformation and its impact. Special “guests” for the services were Balthasar Hubmaier’s wife Elizabeth, Menno Simons, and a new believer from John Smyth

and Thomas Helwys’ church. Roland Eskinazi, pastor of the International Baptist Church, Brussels, Belgium, spoke on the 5 Solas of the Reformation and asked if they were as relevant as they were 500 years ago. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, revealed in the Word alone, for God’s glory alone. Carston Lotz, IBC president and pastor of host church International Christian Fellowship, Oberursel, Germany, spoke on some of the Baptist distinctives that came from the Reformation, especially the priesthood of the believer. Jimmy Martin spoke on “Is the IBC in Need of a Reformation?” The text of Martin’s message and highlights from Eskinazi’s and Lotz’s messages are found on pages 2-6. Videos of the message are available at <http://ibc-churches.org/acm-2017-sermon-videos>.

Each of the business and worship services featured “Stories of What God is Doing.” The convention heard from Taylor Whitley (Stuttgart), David Stevens (Jurbise), Dave Bollenbacher (Brasilia), Parker Windle (Paris), and David Martin (Cologne). Music during the morning sessions were led by Dave Sims of Jurbise, Belgium. Music during the evening sessions were led by teams from ICF, Oberursel.

Sixty-six messengers representing 35 churches, along with 19 guests, were part of the business sessions. Messengers also enjoyed tours to Mainz to visit the Gutenberg Museum and to Worms to visit the site of Martin Luther’s diet.

Next year’s ACM will be held in Madrid, Spain. 🌐



Elizabeth Hubmaier



Menno Simons



A new believer from John Smyth & Thomas Helwys’ church.

IBC Conducts Successful Church Planter Assessment Center

The International Baptist Convention conducted a successful church planter assessment center on 26-27 October at the International Christian Fellowship, Oberursel, Germany.

Forty people gathered to provide assessment on three church planter candidate couples. The candidates spent two intense days making presentations, examining personality types, preaching, working on church planting projects, and participating in numerous interviews.

Church planter assessment is an essential element of the IBC's core strategy to multiply churches. The purpose of assessment is to reduce risk and increase church planting success. The assessment center provides an opportunity for a formal assessment of a potential church planter to help discern if they have the skills, competencies, and aptitudes best suited for successful church planting.

The assessors evaluated for 12 specific character and competency building blocks. These building blocks were developed at the IBC MULTIPLY Conference in October 2016 in San Jose, Costa Rica. These building blocks were identified specifically for the English-language international church planter:

1. Disciple-Maker, Missionary Heart, Relational, Evangelist
2. Prayer Warrior, Faith-Filled
3. Healthy, Supportive Family/Marriage
4. Theologically Sound yet Spiritually Gracious
5. Good Communicator, Preacher, Strong Public Ministry Skills
6. Leader, Strategic, Visionary, Team Builder
7. Energy, Perseverance, and Resilience
8. Culturally Sensitive and Competent
9. Generalist, "Jack of all Trades"
10. Spiritually, Emotionally, and Physically Healthy
11. Entrepreneur, Pioneer, Self-Starter
12. Humble, Teachable, Learner

Candidates were given a specific recommendation as to their aptitude and readiness to serve as a church planter, a list of identified strengths, and suggested areas for growth during an exit interview at the end of the assessment center.

We look forward to holding more frequent church planter assessment centers in Europe and Central and South America as we intentionally pursue international candidates and candidates already serving in our IBC churches.

Darryl Evetts

Multiplying Churches Director



Interviews are part of the church planter assessment.

“Leading Out of the Overflow” is theme of MLC in Cyprus

One of the International Baptist Convention’s core strategies is to Empower Leaders, and we want to do this at every level of the church! To that end, we are excited that this year we are able to offer scholarships to both a staff member/couple as well as a lay leader/couple to our Ministry Leadership Conference in Cyprus, 9-13 March.

Our Ministry Leadership Conference is a highlight of the year for many of us, and this year we are excited that Richard Blackaby is coming to speak on “Leading Out of the Overflow.” We have chosen this topic because it is specifically relevant to staff and lay leaders alike.

Blackaby has worked with thousands of leaders and has realized how many of us experience dry periods in our Christian walk. Sometimes we strive to keep on leading, even though we feel “out of gas.” Blackaby will look at the leadership of Moses and Elijah and how they learned to lead out of the overflow of their walk with God and how our leadership should follow their model.

In addition to this, we are putting together a number of great seminars that will appeal to staff and lay leaders alike, providing a tour of Paphos where the Apostle Paul was on Cyprus, staying at a fantastic 5-star hotel, having a counselor available to meet with free of charge, and having a number of other surprises to minister to your souls and give plenty of time for rest for your bodies.

Please be sure to sign up as soon as possible, as space is limited. We look forward to seeing you there!

*David Fresch
Empowering Leaders Director*



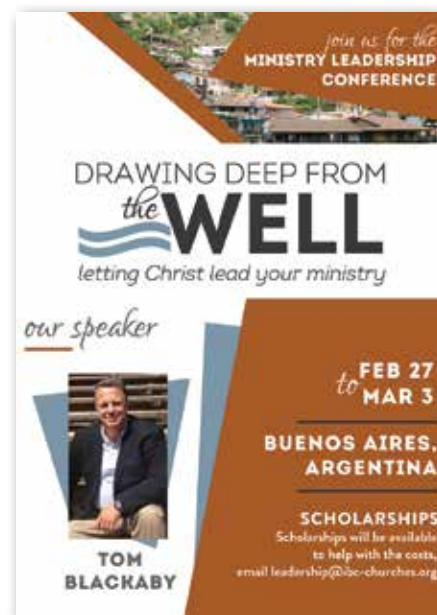
First Latin American MLC to be Held

God has blessed IBC with new churches in new places over the years, and it was exciting to hold our Annual Convention Meeting in Costa Rica last year. As we see a need to support our sister churches in Latin America, we are excited that we are holding a Ministry Leadership Conference in Latin America for the first time! The conference will be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 27 February – 3 March and is open to all leaders and spouses, not only in our churches in Latin America but also to any other international churches in the area or IBC churches in other parts of the world.

Our key speaker is former IBC pastor Tom Blackaby, who is now busy pastoring a growing church in British Columbia. He looks forward to joining us and speaking on “Drawing Deep from the Well: Letting Christ Lead Your Ministry.” Some of you remember the wonderful job Blackaby did ministering to us at the last Interlaken conference, and we are so happy that he will be returning to his IBC family.

In addition to Blackaby, we are excited to have a counselor on hand who will be available to meet for free, some exciting seminars on leadership, organized tours of Buenos Aires, and more! If you are interested in attending, please email leadership@ibc-churches.org for more information.

*David Fresch
Empowering Leaders Director*



2018 IBC Women's Conference Set for May



We are excited to announce the upcoming IBC 2018 Women's Conference. The IBC's Women's Team met this fall to prayerfully prepare the details and plans for our time in Bratislava, Slovakia, 4-6 May. Registration details are listed on the brochure, and additional details are included on the registration website.

Conference attendees are responsible for completing the online registration and coordinating their own transportation to and from the conference. Once you arrive at the conference, everything has been thoughtfully planned out for you, and all you need to do is relax, lay your burdens at the feet of Jesus, and open your heart to how the Lord may speak to you during this special time. The schedule has been carefully laid out to include worship, hearing God speak through His Word and through His servants, time for fellowship with other believers, and free time that you may spend as you choose.

For those of you who will be joining us this year, registration is open now, and we look forward to seeing you soon! Whether you have attended before or if this would be your very first time attending, please prayerfully consider being a part of this wonderful opportunity this coming May.

Trace Odom

Women's Ministry Creates Facebook Group

One of the challenges we face as an international group of Christian women is finding a way to stay connected even though we are separated by great distances. During our planning session, the IBC's Women's Team looked at how we could help IBC Women stay connected. In an effort to stay in communication across these great distances, we have created a closed Facebook group entitled "IBC - Doing Women's Ministry Together."

Our hope is that this group will be a place for us to stay in touch. It will also serve as a venue for women to post ministry questions or ask advice from others in the group as they encounter concerns and challenges in their work within the women's ministries of their local churches. Group members may also post and share ideas and approaches that have been fruitful within their ministries. We will periodically post articles and videos related to women's ministry to inspire and encourage you.



To join this closed group, please search for the group by its name and submit a "request to join." The picture here is the opening picture on the group page and has the name written exactly as it is listed. You will be prompted to answer a question. When your request is approved, we would love for you to introduce yourself to the group and let us know what church you call home!

Trace Odom

Recommended Resources Page Now Online

The Recommended Resources web page is now online. This web page, developed by the Developing Resources core strategy, lists resources that have been recommended by International Baptist Convention

churches for IBC Churches. Each resource has a brief description and a link to the resource. Comments and reviews from IBCers are also available for some resources.

The page is password protected. Please contact your pastor, IBC liaison, or the IBC Office to find out the password. For more information, email resources@ibc-churches.org.



Judith Lynn Maxwell
Developing Resources Director

In Memoriam

Sympathy is extended to the families of:

JACK WALLS

Highlights Editor, 1993-1994

Born: November 27, 1928

Died: October 10, 2015

GEORGIA WALLS

IBC Treasurer and Bookkeeper, 1993-1994

Died: December 22, 2016

ELSIE REVELL

Interim Pastor's Wife in churches in England

Died: May 24, 2016

ALF REVELL

Interim Pastor in churches in England

Died: October 24, 2016

DINY VAN BUEREN

Pastor's Wife, Eindhoven, The Netherlands

Died: November 19, 2016

TOM HILL

Pastor, Frankfurt, Germany, 1990-1995

Interim Pastor, San Jose, Costa Rica, 1997-1999;

Rota, Spain, 2001-2002

Died: December 5, 2016

BILL CLARK THOMAS

Pastor, Paris France, 1985-1995

Died: January 2, 2017

GLEN PINKSTON

IBC Director of Religious Education, late 1980s-early 1990s

Born: May 21, 1926

Died: January 24, 2017

MARADEL PAGE

Pastor's Wife, Pirmasens, Germany,

Active in IBCM in recent years

Born: February 7, 1935

Died: February 19, 2017

JAMES DUKE,

Pastor, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1993-2003

Born: December 28, 1955

Died: April 8, 2017

NEIL THOMPSON

Pastor, Berlin Germany, 1987-1990, and

Schweinfurt, Germany

Born: June 14, 1933

Died: October 3, 2017



GLOBAL MISSIONS OFFERING
Sunday | December 3, 2017

30 percent *ebm* INTERNATIONAL

Your giving will support church planting, church evangelism, and refugee ministry through our EBMI partnership with the Alliance of Baptist Churches in Turkey.
www.ebm-masa.org

40 percent **TOGETHER WE BUILD**

2017 TWB recipient: Trinity Baptist Church, Metterich, Germany
"We are blessed to own our church building, all debt was paid off in July 2017. However, there is a considerable amount of deferred maintenance that needs to be done. We have decided that our greatest priority is to re-model our bathrooms. Working, functional, reliable bathrooms are crucial to the ministries of our church. It has been decades since our bathrooms were last renovated and their current dilapidated condition has reached a level we cannot ignore any longer. We greatly appreciate the financial help we will receive from our sister churches which together with the giving from our own congregation will make this much needed renovation work possible. Thank you!"

30 percent **AID & RELIEF**

Your giving will bring aid when disaster strikes such as flood relief and providing food for the hungry when urgent needs arise.

Please pray about giving to the 2017 IBC Global Missions Offering.
Reaching the nations through giving!
Thank you for your support!

EBMI Expresses Thanks

DEAR SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

Thank you so much for your donation of 5,275.07 EUR for the church work in Turkey. It is a privilege for us that the mission work in Izmir became part of the EBM International family in 2011.

In the beginning of the 20th century there were 3.2 million Christians in Turkey. Today only 120,000 are left. The Christian testimony became weak in this country where our faith entered Europe 2000 years ago. Therefore your support for Ertan and Marlene Cevik is a special sign of encouragement.

The little church in Smyrna has many aspirations for the future: being an inviting church for the people of their surrounding and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is difficult today in Turkey as there is a quite hostile environment.

We support this work with all the project costs, the working budget, and the salaries. Your support is a big help in all this and will be used according to your specifications.

Please continue to pray and support our mission work.

Remain blessed,
Yours,

Christoph Haus
General Secretary, EBM International



Marlene and Ertan Cevik

The Story Continues

Ertan Cevik attended the IBC Annual Convention Meeting in Oberursel, Germany, this year. He shared about the work he and his family are doing in Izmir (biblical Smyrna). Joining Ertan and Marlene are their adult children who have returned home to help with the work.

Like some of our IBC churches, Izmir is a city with lots of students. Many of these students are coming to the church with questions about faith. Some of these students become believers. Nineteen people have been baptized this year.

The church in Izmir is also trying to reach the business community. One way they do that is through business breakfast meetings for Muslim businessmen. In addition to a traditional breakfast, they share a message of hope.

Turkey is home to four million refugees – many from Syria. The church is able to minister to the refugees by providing them with food packets.

Look for more information coming from the IBC Office on ways you and your church can participate in some of the projects in Turkey including a young adult camp in the summer.

PASTOR PROFILE

ERIC GREN – Stukeley, England



WIFE: Karyn

CHILDREN: Amelia (3), Josiah (2)

YEARS AT CURRENT IBC CHURCH:
1

OTHER IBC CHURCHES SERVED:
member of Sedge Fen Baptist Church
(2011-2016)

BRIEF PROFILE OF YOUR CHURCH:
We are a small church comprised of British and Americans who have a heart to serve God. Our motto is “God loves you and so do we.” We are actively seeking how God desires to use us to reach into the community that He has placed us and the rest of the world. In addition

to our church at Grace Fellowship we have been blessed to restore an 18th-century church in a small English village nearby.

OTHER MINISTRY INTERESTS:
Teaching, small groups, reaching those from other faiths

PERSONAL INTERESTS AND HOBBIES:
Finishing up my M.Div. occupies the majority of my time right now, but when I have time I enjoy running, reading, sports, and travelling with my family.

FAVORITE/LIFE BIBLE VERSE:
Psalm 51:10

San Jose, Costa Rica

THESE PAST FEW MONTHS have been quite a busy time for the International Baptist Church, San Jose, Costa Rica. Summer camp has always been an exciting event that kids all over the country look forward to every year. Each year more and more kids attend the camp, many of them outside of our congregation. 2017 was the first year in which we were able to host two different camps, a Pre-teen and a Youth camp. Both camps were a blessing to the children, especially because they had amazing teams and staff to lead them.

The rainy season comes every year; unfortunately, this year Costa Rica and our surrounding countries were hit hard. Hurricane Nate brought destruction and loss to many people all over the country. As is the duty of the church, we responded to the needs of our neighbors. Many thanks to all the generous people who helped us collect non-perishable items, water bottles, and kits to meet the urgent needs of many displaced people.

Around this time we started a church-wide series on being merciful. The *Miracle of Mercy* series comes with a booklet that contains lessons and devotionals. It was a great opportunity to encourage our members to find and be part of a life group. At my life group we meet on a Fri-



Being Merciful was the theme for IBC San Jose.

day night and start off by sharing a meal together. We then have an ice breaker and afterwards go into the lesson focused around an aspect of mercy. This is a super safe environment in which we can discuss, have conversations, learn, and mature our faith. I think it's important to have a Christian group that you can turn to for support, and I'm glad the church is encouraging others to find or even create a group of their own.

These upcoming months we are looking

forward to events such as the full-blown concert from *Master Key* that is going to be held in our building. Our Christmas presentation is coming up, and as always we have amazing directors, volunteers, actors, singers, and musicians who help bring everything together. These events help us reach out to unbelievers through invitations, and we look forward to impacting the lives in our communities.

Josue Martinez

PASTOR PROFILE

LOREN HOLLAND – Rome International Church, Italy



WIFE: Alaina

CHILDREN: Zane (5), Roy (3), Paxton (2 months)

YEARS AT CURRENT IBC CHURCH: end of July 2017

OTHER IBC CHURCHES SERVED: Although not an IBC church I was the youth minister at English Fellowship Church in Quito, Ecuador from 2011-2013

BRIEF PROFILE OF YOUR CHURCH: Rome International Church is located on the northern side of Rome. The church body is a welcoming and warm community of individuals and families from all over the world. Our goal is to make growing disciples of Jesus who will go on to make more disciples of Jesus wherever the Lord takes them next.

WAYS YOU ARE INVOLVED IN THE IBC: I was invited to join the IBC as a

church planter, therefore I hope to be involved in seeing new churches planted both in Southern Europe with the Southern Europe LEAD team and wherever else the Lord allows!

OTHER MINISTRY INTERESTS: Other ministry interests include youth, worship, and business as mission.

PERSONAL INTERESTS AND HOBBIES: swimming, biking, mountain climbing, drumming, snowboarding, and playing with my two (now three) boys.

FAVORITE/LIFE BIBLE VERSE: 2 Peter 3:18

Zürich, Switzerland

DURING THE LAST WEEKEND in October, despite all of our concerns about overwhelming workload, looming tests, and declined party invitations, we loaded up our car and headed off to our church (Zürich International Baptist Church, Switzerland) weekend away in Hasliberg.

Organized by a group of dedicated volunteers, every part of the weekend had been meticulously planned. Not an easy task with such a range of ages from babies and toddlers, teenagers, young parents, older parents, and up to the more mature members of the church. We enjoyed “round the world” meals – Hungarian goulash, Canadian French-toast with bacon and maple syrup, Indian curry, Italian pasta, and homemade burgers. We did craft activities, walked in the beautiful surroundings, sang, competed as groups in the “round the circuit” activities, had fun and games, and roasted chestnuts around the fire in the evenings.

Best of all, Jim McVicar, our interim pastor treated us to five talks at intervals throughout the weekend, giving us the opportunity to really ponder how the events involving the prophet Jonah have relevance to us today. Jonah is not just a wonderful children’s story but is full of very topical and thought-provoking messages for the rest of us. I was fascinated to learn that Nineveh was just across the Tigris River from modern day Mosul. For those of us inclined to sneer at Jonah for



IBC Zürich enjoys fellowship around the fire.

running in the opposite direction when told by God to go with His message to the people there, we can ask ourselves what we would have done if asked to go into the middle of ISIS to do the same! The overriding message that I have taken away with me is to ask myself each day, “Am I walking *with* God or *away* from Him? Is He in all of my thoughts and actions, or am I excluding Him from them?”

I began this recount by saying how much of a struggle it was for us as a family to ‘give up’ a weekend to go away on a church camp. The very first words that Jim spoke when he stood up were “God knows your expectations of this weekend away, but are you open to God challeng-

ing your priorities?” It would have been the easier choice to prioritize the pressing things at home, but it would not have been the correct choice, and God knew that, of course. We spent time with people from our church family. We had fun with them, got to know them better, ate alongside them, sang with them, and together studied God’s Word. And in a family, you are comfortable enough with one another to support, encourage, give comfort, bring joy, and share prayer requests. All in all, time very well spent. Book us in for next year!

Jane Burns



SEEK THE LORD
ISAIAH 55:6

12-15 JANUARY

Antwerp, Belgium

CALLED TO BE DISCIPLE-MAKERS
On 22 October, Darryl Evetts taught a workshop on disciple-making for Antwerp Christian Fellowship, Belgium, for members of the church. The workshop focused on being CALLED to be disciple-makers.

C.A.L.L.E.D. is a simple, reproducible, and transformational process for disciple-making. It describes a flow for a disciple-making conversation and emphasizes our role as equippers and disciplers.

There's nothing new about the elements of this process, but the way each element is arranged and how they work together for a transformational experience is quite remarkable. Missions pastor at Crossbridge Community Church in San Antonio, Texas, Shawn Sullivan, gets credit for the CALLED acronym. (Who doesn't love a good acronym!) This process has been distilled from his decades of disciple-making experience both in the U.S. and internationally.

The C.A.L.L. describe the flow of conversation during a regular meeting with the

person or persons you're discipling.

C = Celebrate. Start with celebrating what the Lord has done in you, around you, or through you. "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4).

A = Accountability. The goal of accountability is to encourage the disciple(s) as they strive to be faithful to what they've heard the Lord tell them to obey. "Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24).

L = Learn it. Utilize a Discovery Bible Study together, giving the Holy Spirit room to "teach you all things and... remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26). What a joy this part is, taking time to discover what a passage says and what it means.

L = Live it. This is where the disciple learns to be still and wait, listening to discern the Spirit's leading. This is the most important part of the process, so don't rush it. The disciple will listen to the Lord and write down what his or her faithful



We are CALLED to be disciple-makers.

response to the passage will look like.

The E. and D. emphasize our role in the context of a genuine relationship with those we disciple.

E = Equipper. We want to equip others with experiences, skills, and tools for their journey with Jesus and their journey of discipling others.

D = Disciple. Our role as a disciple is to come alongside the other person(s) in a life-on-life relationship always encouraging them to become more like Jesus.

Darryl Evetts

Paris, France

CREATING A COACHING CULTURE

Pastor Parker Windle understands and appreciates the power of coaching. He says, "I grew up knowing the value of coaching... my dad was a sports coach. I get it." Desiring to create a coaching culture in Emmanuel International Church in Paris, France, he invested in coaching training for the church leadership. EIC leadership gathered for fellowship and learning on 15 October to begin their coaching journey together.

In his book, *The COACH Model for Christian Leaders*, Keith Webb defines coaching as "an on-going intentional conversation that empowers a person or group to fully live out God's calling."

Coaching is all about being an equipper (Ephesians 4:12-13), not a solutions-giver. Coaches want to equip disciples to hear from the Holy Spirit, think through options, and move forward in obedience and service. Coaching facilitates this process in a practical way. Coaching helps disciples discern vision, determine next steps, and find solutions. As they do, they are



EIC Paris is creating a coaching culture.

better equipped for future ministry success.

Coaching helps draw out what the Holy Spirit has put in a person. It's effective because it brings out a person's best – what God has put in them. Coaching is based on the theological understanding that every believer already has an advisor – the Holy Spirit. Jesus explained the Holy Spirit's role in a believer's life in John 14:26: "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and will re-

mind you of everything I have said to you."

Coaching maximizes people's potential. God has uniquely created each person to become someone special and to do something special. This is "calling." Calling is not just for vocational ministers. Every believer has calling in at least three areas of his or her life:

calling to character or personal holiness (Eph. 1:4), calling to relationship with God (Eph. 1:5), and calling to ministry – a unique contribution to God's kingdom (Eph. 2:10). Coaching provides a supportive environment to help a person discover what God has for him or her.

Creating a coaching culture is absolutely essential for effectively multiplying disciples, leaders, and churches. Coaching is a vital ingredient for the healthy and multiplying church.

Darryl Evetts

Ramstein, Germany

A BAPTISM STORY ONLY GOD COULD WRITE

Every time we celebrate baptisms at Frontline Community Church, Ramstein, Germany, we hear stories that only God could write. At our baptism services in October, we heard another one about the connection between two “friends” who had never met.

One of those “friends” is still unknown to us. That person attends Frontline and last Easter picked up an invitation card to our Easter services to give to a friend. Somehow, that invitation never reached the intended recipient. Instead it fell out of the person’s car at the local car wash and ended up being picked up off the ground by another car wash patron. The couple that found the tattered invitation card didn’t go to church anywhere because the husband had no interest in God.

For some reason, the wife of this couple convinced her husband that finding this Easter invitation card at the car wash was a sign that they should attend one of our Easter services. She had been secretly longing to revisit the faith of her childhood and hoping that someday her family might re-engage in church. So, she was

able to drag him to Frontline last Easter along with their two kids who were as reluctant as their father.

But in their 75 minutes of anticipated pain that Easter Sunday, God continued His work of persuasion in their hearts. It turned out to be a much more enjoyable morning than any of them anticipated. On the drive home, the kids couldn’t stop talking about the fun they had at church, and the couple agreed it wasn’t what they were expecting either. So it was decided that maybe they shouldn’t wait until next Easter to attend again. They began to come semi-regularly to what they referred to as the “warehouse church,” so named because our church meets in a former warehouse.

This family happened to be in town this last 4th of July, and they attended our 4th of July party that Sunday evening. It was another opportunity for God to continue His work in their lives as the husband connected with our associate pastor, Josh Ramsay. Josh heard more of the man’s story and learned that he was a long way from faith in Jesus. So Josh began to watch for this man and his family on Sundays and made a point to connect with him.

Well, fast forward to 15 October. Josh was preaching that Sunday, and this family was doing its monthly church thing. But this Sunday would be different. The voice of God speaking through Romans 3 that morning spoke to this man’s heart and persuaded him that it was Jesus he needed in his life to deal with his deep brokenness and pain. He heard that only Jesus can remove the guilt and shame of his sin.

At the end of the service, he sought out Josh and told him, “I want to receive Jesus into my life this morning.” After some conversation and prayer, he did just that. Then, with more follow-up the next week, this new brother asked, “Can I be part of the baptism this coming Sunday?” On Sunday, as he shared with the congregation his story of coming to faith in Jesus, he thanked the mystery “friend” he had never met who began his introduction to Jesus through a lost invitation at a car wash in Ramstein. Some stories are so crazy, only God could write them!

Gary Preston



Josh Ramsay baptizes Dusten Meyer, who first visited the church through the invitation of a “mystery” friend.