

HIGHLIGHTS

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION



Volume 56 | Issue 2
AUGUST 2018

Jimmy Martin

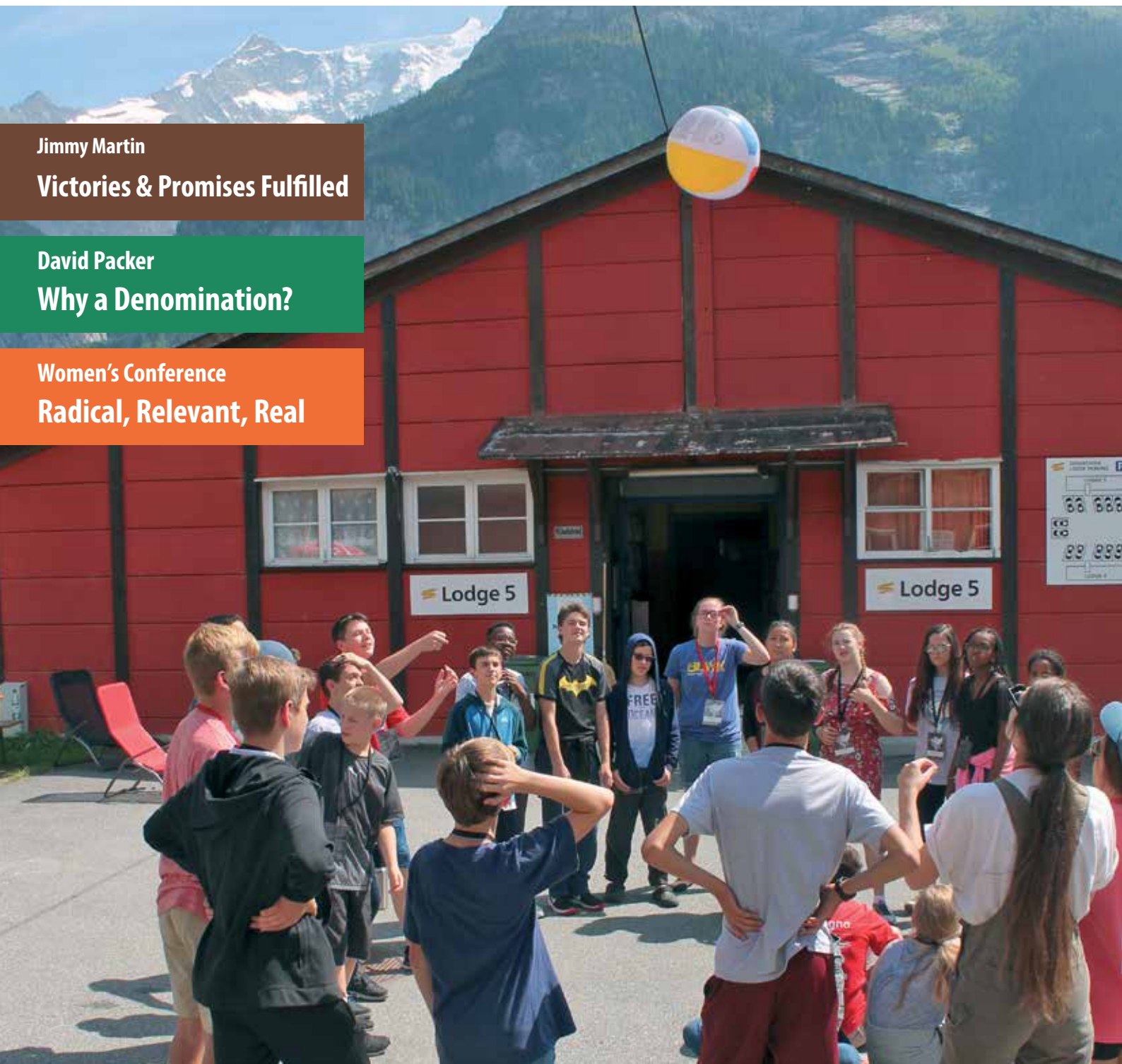
Victories & Promises Fulfilled

David Packer

Why a Denomination?

Women's Conference

Radical, Relevant, Real



Victories and Promises Fulfilled but not without Struggles

“Now then, just as the LORD promised, he has kept me alive... So here I am today, eighty-five years old! ... I am still as strong today as the day Moses sent me out; I’m just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then. Now give me this hilly country that the LORD promised me that day ... the LORD helping me, I will drive them out just as he said.” (Joshua 14:10-12)



by Jimmy Martin
General Secretary

Caleb is one of my biblical heroes, especially as I get older in life. He recognized that God was faithful to fulfill all His promises. He was also willing and eager to claim those promises even when he knew there was struggles ahead of him. He built on a solid foundation of experiencing God’s faithfulness in the past. He did not let age keep him from pursuing new ventures. He would trust in the Lord as he pursued God’s future for him with all its challenges and opportunities.

I am reflecting on some of the ministry opportunities and challenges I have been involved with these past months and those coming up in the next few weeks. IBC churches, like churches everywhere, experience times of celebration and victory but never without significant struggles. Someone once told me about trials, “Every person has either just come out of a trial or is in the midst of a trial or will soon be going through one.” It is true for each of us, and it is true in our churches, both young and old. Knowing the ultimate end as a believer brings us hope and confidence that “our labor is not in vain.” Knowing that God is with us and for us and in us brings us comfort and strength and even joy in the midst of trials. We have every reason to be realistically positive.

Early in July my home church, *ICF Oberursel, Germany*, hosted for the second year “Champions in Life,” a soccer camp aimed at ministering to refugee children and youth, as well as Germans and other internationals. Many in our church helped with the

camp. Afterward, we hosted a celebration meal at the church, giving us an opportunity to show love to the families of those who participated. A week later, we showed a movie about the life of Jesus in several languages. I was not able to participate during the week but was very proud of how our church demonstrated love to the community. I was part of the prayer team and know that a lot of people put in a lot of effort to make the ministry effective.

At the same time the camp was starting, I was privileged to visit *IBC Zürich, Switzerland*, as it welcomed its new pastor and wife, Bob and Daniela Weniger. The Wenigers have served a number of international churches around the world, most recently in Malaysia. The church is poised to move ahead, having been helped tremendously by the excellent leadership of an interim couple, Jim and Anne McVicar.

Immediately after our visit to Zürich, Laurie and I took part in *EuroVenture*, the IBC Youth Camp in Grindelwald, Switzerland. More than 200 youth and sponsors were challenged to live holy lives as followers of Christ. The Gospel was presented clearly. Breakout sessions spoke to the needs of youth. As a result, many of the youth made first-time commitments to Christ; others made significant spiritual decisions. The team of leaders and sponsors put in many hours before, during, and after the camp praying, planning, organizing, implementing, ministering, and evaluating. Victory followed struggles.

IMPRINT

Published by the International Baptist Convention
Am Dachsberg 98, 60435 Frankfurt/Main, Germany
Phone: +49 (0) 69 9540 8505
Email: admin@ibc-churches.org
www.ibc-churches.org
Jimmy Martin, General Secretary
Judith Lynn Maxwell, Editor
Cover photo: Team Building at EuroVenture 2018 by Judith Lynn Maxwell

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The next Sunday I visited *Waypoint Christian Church, Kaiserslautern, Germany*, a church planted several years ago by *Frontline Community Church, Ramstein, Germany*. Waypoint, led by Mike and Jen Walk, has grown to the point of being eager to move out of the movie theatre where they worship to find a place where they can do weekday ministry more effectively. Their focus of ministry mirrors the IBC's mission of making disciples – to “encourage and lead families and the community to pursue an authentic relationship with Jesus.”

The following Sunday, I celebrated with Pastor David and Lana Packer and *IBC Stuttgart, Germany*, as they broke ground on their new church building that will allow them to improve the quality of their programming and reach more people for the glory of God. It was a day of joy. The church knows that the days ahead will be challenging and will demand church-wide sacrifice to see the vision fulfilled. I believe they are up to the challenge because they are looking to the Lord to complete what He has started.

The next Sunday we visited *IBC Cologne, Germany*, and its new church plant, *IBC Bonn*. Pastor David and Kristin Martin are leading the church to move beyond itself. They are a beautiful example of the IBC vision of seeing a “movement of global-minded churches that are reproducing healthy disciples, leaders, and congregations.” The new church, which plans to launch publicly on 16 September, has a vision to reach internationals in this strategic city of Germany. They already have a strong core team. IBC Cologne has gone through significant struggles to get to the point where they are now. Like Caleb, they are depending on the Lord's help.

By the time you read this, I will also have visited *Il Faro IBC in Naples, Italy* and *IBC Berlin, Germany*. Both churches reflect the IBC mission of “mobilizing and multiplying disciple-making churches.” Tim and Jacki Faulkner have served in Naples for a number of years. Tim is not only training disciples and elders but is currently working with Danilo Bozza with the hope of passing the baton of leadership to him in a few years. Scott and Laurie Corwin in Berlin have been faithful to expand the church's mission vision. The church is involved locally and around the world.

Bethel IBC, Frankfurt, Germany, is celebrating its 60th anniversary as a church. At the same time, they are re-launching as *Multination Church*. The church has seen wonderful days of effective ministry and challenging days of struggles, particularly as they transitioned from being a mostly U.S.-military congregation for many years to becoming an international church in the 1990s. The

church changed its meeting place and is currently meeting in the heart of Frankfurt. The ministry of the church is growing in the city, around the country, in Europe, and beyond. I appreciate Pastor Rodrigo Assis da Silva's visionary leadership and their passion to reach out beyond themselves to others. The new name reflects their mission and vision as a church.

We are currently working with several struggling churches in the IBC. These churches are seeking to move ahead after significant decline in recent years. They are being helped by interim pastors who are working with them to move forward toward growth and health. We are praying and working with them as they pursue God's future.

Such is life in the IBC. Caleb's faith and faithfulness set a good course of life for each of us and each of our churches. A few applications to consider:

1. God is most glorified when we give him our WHOLE lives THROUGHOUT our lives. What a testimony when we start and finish well. God knows the transitions and other challenges we are facing and will face. Being faithful is a “plodding” experience of living one day at a time, day after day.

2. Dependence on the Lord is the only way to live. It is key to meeting present challenges and opportunities. It is key to facing past failures and successes. It is key to facing the future, which He alone knows fully. As our dear friend Bob Marsh pointed out in a recent *Highlights* article, we cannot keep from getting older but we never have to get old. People and churches that are depending on the Lord for vision and effectiveness in ministry have a bright future.

3. God is our Helper. He never calls us to do anything or go anywhere but that He also promises to be with us, to enable us. He promises His grace to help in our time of need. As the hymn says, our faithful God offers “strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow.”

4. There is no victory without struggle. This world is no friend to God's work or God's people. Our struggle is not only against “flesh and blood.” We have an enemy who is always seeking to “steal, kill, and destroy.” BUT God is on our side. Our battles are His battles. We may find ourselves in situations far beyond what we are capable of handling, but He will enable us to endure... and to come out as “more than conquerors” in the end. And HE is our end!

5. We are not alone. Joshua blessed Caleb in his decision to take Hebron. The “men of Judah” were with Caleb in his venture for the future. Two of our core values are fellowship and partnership. I love the way many of our pastors and churches have committed to “being there” for others. Churches planting churches; pastors mentoring and coaching other pastors; believers encouraging one another. “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable from him” was a wonderful decision of God for Adam. It is also a truth for each and all of us.

God has been faithful to our family of churches for 60 years! I am convinced He has a bright future for the IBC and its churches. With Him as our Helper and with each other as fellow-strugglers and pilgrims on the path, we will “drive out” whatever hinders God's future for us.

Why Be a Member of a Denomination?

“I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now” (Philippians 1:3-5)



by David Packer
Pastor, International
Baptist Church,
Stuttgart, Germany,
and IBC President

We are members of the *International Baptist Convention* and also of the *German Baptist Union*. We value these relationships and appreciate the privilege of serving the Lord together with them. Baptists are called the “non-denominational denomination” because we believe in the autonomy of the local church. Our church is free to do what we believe the Spirit of God is leading us to do. Yet this does not mean that these relationships are unimportant.

The International Baptist Convention is an association of English-language international churches, originally founded by Southern Baptists from the United States. Our church property in Stuttgart was originally enabled to be purchased by a financial gift from the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

Some have asked why we in Stuttgart aren't members of the Southern Baptist Convention. The answer is simple: we do not qualify. For a church to send delegates to the annual Southern Baptist Convention meeting, that church must exist in the United States or its territories. However, I consider myself a Southern Baptist; I was saved and baptized in a Southern Baptist church and was educated at Southern Baptist schools and seminaries. I was discipled by Southern Baptist literature on the Christian faith and wrote adult Sunday School material for Southern Baptists regularly for more than 20 years.

In our church in Stuttgart, however, the majority of our worshipers have come from a wide range of denominations. We are honored to have many who are not Baptists join us in our worship and even in many types of service. We love and appreciate them and consider them part of our Christian family. I usually say, “We do not apologize for being Baptists, but we try not to beat everyone over the head with it.” We are more concerned about being Christian than being Baptist.

Yet a denomination is important. I have felt called upon to defend things in these last few years that I never dreamed I would have to defend in my youth. In recent years the anti-denomination mood of Western churches has led me also to have to defend the idea of being a member of a Christian denomination.

WHAT HAPPENED?

When I started my ministry in the 1970s, it was assumed that a church would be associated in a responsible relationship with other churches of simi-

lar faith. A non-denominational church was looked at skeptically, as though they were unpredictable and even a bit proud – seeming to be better than others. A denomination brought responsible doctrine, accountable relationships, and meaningful partners in the Gospel.

But somewhere in the 1990s things began to change for churches in the U.S. From somewhere there arose an anti-denomination way of thinking. Non-denominational churches grew at the expense of denominational churches.

Part of this is due largely to an anti-institutional trend as a whole across the U.S. Americans are suspicious of institutions, having felt betrayed more than once by them. Another factor is that many denominations formed when transportation and communication between nations and states was difficult, and now many of the things that used to separate us are removed. Almost all denominations across the world have some geographic and ethnic issues behind their history, and once these are removed are they still relevant?

Also, the Jesus Movement Revival of the 1960s and 70s led to influential churches and movements that emphasized “just being Christian is enough.” Denominations were viewed as too narrow and divisive. Some denominational leaders were liberal also and took stands that seemed like a betrayal of trust of the common people who were much more conservative.

Yet, when the grass roots rose up in complaint, they were viewed by some as being too negative, too controlling, and even of some unchristian behavior. And toss in a moral failing or two, a doctrinal scandal, or some financial mess and it developed into a perfect storm. So rather than trying to fix things, people felt powerless and denominations seemed increasingly irrelevant.

So let me share with you four reasons why we at International Baptist Church of Stuttgart are members of a denomination.

FIRST, THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A NON-DENOMINATIONAL CHURCH.

What should be the most obvious is that non-denominational churches do not really exist. Roger Olsen, who teaches theology at Baylor University's George W. Truett Theological Seminary, observed that every church that claims to be non-denominational actually belongs to some network of churches.

And if you ask the leaders of those churches,

This article first appeared in the IBC Stuttgart newsletter. It is reprinted here with permission.



“Well, how do you baptize?” or “How do you observe the Lord’s Supper?” or “Who do you work with?” or “What seminaries are training your leaders?” or “What mission organizations do you support?” you will find that they have specific answers to these questions. All responsible churches have statements of faith that identify them as some specific type of Christian church. More often than not the word “non-denominational” actually means “non-old-denominational” because they have associated with another Christian network.

SECOND, CARING ACCOUNTABILITY

All alone a Christian is in a vulnerable position. He needs fellowship, encouragement, accountability, and someone who loves him in the name of Christ. A church is also in a vulnerable position when it is all alone. Paul writes, “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2). This is part of the nature of the new person that Christ creates in us by His Spirit.

Care: When Paul gave his farewell speech to the Ephesian elders he said, “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of God of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). So pastors have not only an obligation to care for the church but also for one another. This is one of the things that should happen between pastors and denominational leaders.

Doctrinal accountability: We also have someone who cares about our doctrinal beliefs. Baptists in particular have a great respect for the individual church, and we have significant freedom in many areas of doctrine, but there is a particular reality to being a member of a Baptist association. We have doctrinal stability because we have doctrinal accountability.

When people come into our church as a member of the International Baptist Convention, they should know that we stand on the Scriptures and will be consistent in our interpretation of them. We

will not be blown this way or that way in what we believe, rather, we will be consistent.

THIRD, CARING COOPERATION

Together we are able to do things that we could not do apart. We do mission work and are able to sponsor meetings and trainings that we would not have otherwise. Here at IBC Stuttgart, our men and women and children and youth all benefit through the conferences we have shared and training we have received through our association with the International Baptist Convention.

We have also received our loan for our building through the help of the German Baptist Union, so we have important partners in them. Together we cooperate for the glory of God, and just as they were there for us, so we will be there for them.

We are stronger because we belong to a denomination. We have someone who cares about us, with whom we can work together to care for other churches as well. We can join hands in mission work and do those things together than we could not do as an independent church. Ecclesiastes says: “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10).

A church that claims to be a non-denominational church, even though there actually is no such thing, I would like to ask: “Who cares for you?” And also, “Who do you care for?” To say we do not have anyone who cares for us seems proud, as though we do not need anyone or are too good for anyone else. And to say we do not care for anyone is uncaring, as though we are all that matters. We need one another, and we should build those relationships that are mutual and helpful.

FOURTH, MEANINGFUL CHRISTIAN UNITY

Christ prayed to the Father, “I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one – I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” (John 17:22-23).

Notice that the unity Christ prayed for is not mere unity in name, but unity as a sent people who work together, love together, and worship together. Christian unity is not only an ideal that all Christians and churches should recognize and value, it must also be experienced in a meaningful way. We are members of a denomination because in this way we are able to meaningfully fulfill this command and desire of Christ, that His followers would be united.

FINAL THOUGHTS

As an international church I have found it happens quite often that we find we have more in common with some Christians who are not Baptists than with those who are. In Christ all of our relationships with Christians are eternal ones. Our church is actually blessed to be a place where so many people of different denominations can come together and praise and serve the Lord together!

EuroVenture 2018 Favorite Moments



HOLY SET APART
EUROVENTURE 2018
Interdenominational Switzerland
JULY 7-12



»I loved seeing
how happy everyone was.«

»The music: The only time I've ever experienced
that kind of energy has been at EuroVenture.«



photos by Judith Lynn Maxwell



Radical, Relevant, Real:

Living a Life that Outlives You

Europe has a significantly longer recorded history than my home country. One thing living here has impressed upon me is how many people have lived and died before my time...and have been completely forgotten! Of course, there are exceptional people who are remembered to this day. Some we remember for the good they have done, and some we remember for the great harm they have caused.

I am not seeking to be famous and remembered hundreds of years from now, but I do want my life to be used by God for His kingdom and His glory. I think everyone who loves the Lord wants their life to make a difference for Him. As His followers, we long to hear the words, "Well done, my good and faithful servant."



photos by Nuria Boghini

Music Team from ICF, Oberursel

Lana Packer, our key speaker at the IBC Women's Conference, 4-6 May, challenged us to live a life in which we are alert and sensitive to the Lord's leading. We were reminded that God loves to work through ordinary people and through simple ordinary actions.

Even before the conference began, God was orchestrating a living illustration of this very principle. When Lana's flight arrived, there was an unusual series of events that prevented Lana from connecting with the IBC team member who was meeting her at the airport to escort her to the conference hotel. Due to this, Lana was left alone with the driver and instead of spending the drive to the hotel chatting with the team member, she instead found herself in a deep conversation with the driver about the Gospel. What had appeared to be a mistake turned out to be a "Divine Interruption." Furthermore, when the conference was over, she was able to return to the airport with the same driver and continue their conversation. She left him with her own Bible so he could continue to learn more about God.

Over the course of our weekend together, Lana shared from the Scriptures and her own personal testimony many examples of how God uses regular people to touch this world for His glory. Through the seminar sessions and also one-on-one with any woman who sought her out individually, she encouraged us to be actively involved in God's Kingdom work wherever we are.

As I looked back over the notes that I took, these are some of the truths and challenges Lana shared:

- The fact is God is working and He wants us to see Him in our lives. He also wants us to truly see those around us. We need to be intentional about making eye contact and connecting with the many people in need we encounter each day.
- Prayer is key, and quality time in prayer requires us to be quiet and expect God to speak to our hearts. We have to spend time with Him in prayer not only making our requests known but allowing Him the quiet needed to speak to us. We need to be praying for this entire world not just our immediate situations.
- Lana challenged everyone present to read through the Bible in its entirety. One of the clearest ways God speaks to us is through His Word!
- We have to be willing to act when we sense God's leading. Sometimes that will mean stepping out of our comfort zones and serving Him in new ways. Our hearts need to be gripped with what God has for us. If we will keep our eyes on Jesus, no matter what we face, He will keep us refreshed, renewed, and ready to serve Him.

At this year's women's conference, four additional seminars were available to all attendees. They covered a wide range of topic including Stephanie Blake's session on Prayer, Lydia Whitley's session on Purity, Andrea Schmitz's session on Marriage, and Tabitha Redmond's session on Expressive Worship. All of them were excellent!

The worship was led by the ICF Worship Team from Oberursel. They did a beautiful job helping us raise our voices in praise and focus our attention and hearts on our Lord.

If you were unable to attend this year, please planning on joining us for next year's conference, 5-7 April, 2019 at Rehe Retreat Center in Rehe, Germany, with Kim Blackaby as our speaker.

*Trace Odom, Metterich, Germany
IBC Women's Ministry Team*



Lana Packer

Missions Opportunities Available

Looking for a way to get involved with hands-on missions with an IBC connection? Here are two ways we know about.

SOUTH AFRICA

Bruce and Shirley Davies (formerly of IBC Zürich) have requested, through Missions Europa network, a missions team to help them with outreach through their ministries. They are looking for

- Team of 6-8 for pilot project
- Duration: 5 to 7 days arriving on a Saturday.
 - Possible arrival dates: 13, 20, or 27 October
- Activities
 - Meet the sponsoring churches on Sunday
 - Visiting and ministering in homes with the pastors during the week
 - Visiting School assemblies, old age homes, prisons

For more information contact Scott Corwin at connections@ibc-churches.org

LESBOS, GREECE

Rodrigo Assis da Silva (Multination Church, Frankfurt, Germany) and All4Aid are looking for volunteers to serve in a refugee camp in Lesbos, Greece. The refugee camp in Lesbos is a crisis area where more than 7,000 refugees live in a space planned for 2,000 people.

Working with an on-the-ground Greek Christian NGO, the volunteers will help to support the camp management, assisting refugees from the time they arrive in the camp and throughout their stay.

Some of the tasks include:

- Welcome newly arrived refugees, serving them food and water and providing them with a hygiene kit, blanket, and a set of clothes;
- Help with the puzzling task of housing refugees in tents and ISO boxes according to their nationalities in a place which is already overcrowded;
- Help with the camp maintenance in any necessary way, such as setting up tents, cleaning toilets, and picking up rubbish from the ground;
- Help with sorting out clothes and other goods at the warehouse;
- Support any special event as scheduled such as concerts or craft sessions for women
- Stand at the info point to answer questions and give out rope, tools, diapers, and other items;
- Secure the gates giving access to where the most vulnerable people are housed (minor boys, single women, disabled).

Cost is 450€ per person which includes 12 nights accommodation in a studio apartment in Lesbos, shared by two volunteers; transportation to/from the airport; and registration fee for camp access ID. Transportation to and from Lesbos is not included. You are responsible for your own flight. Meals will be at your own expense as well.

Trips are planned for 21 October – 2 November, 4-16 November, and 18-30 November.

For more information, please see www.all4aid.org. To apply to go as a volunteer, please email info@all4aid.org.



Lesbos



Hosted by
Bruce and Shirley Davies
Port Elizabeth, South Africa



What is an IBC LEAD team?

No one should plant a church alone! The challenges, struggles, ups and downs, the need for input and feedback, and the joys, all make networking with others that are doing similar ministry vital and necessary.

One of the essential elements for equipping church planters and seeing successful church plants is LEAD teams. A LEAD team is a gathering of relationally and missionally committed leaders from a geographical region. Teams typically consist of 6 to 12 pastors and other leaders from our churches (male and female). Teams meet together regularly to build meaningful relationships, focus on spiritual growth, and work together to see mission accomplished through multiplying (planting) new churches. “LEAD” refers to the four key elements of the meetings:

- **Learning:** Team members are committed to learning new things related to ministry enhancement. For example, the team might agree to read a certain book and be prepared to discuss it when they gather together. Or they might study church planting principles and strategies together.
- **Encouraging:** Team members are personally encouraged in a number of ways. There are also times of fun, mutual coaching, and intercessory prayer, so each member should go away feeling the encouragement of the body of Christ.
- **Achieving:** The team is about doing mission. Each team endeavors to plant new churches together... identifying feasible locations (cities), recruiting church planters, and matching the right planter to the right location. Meetings involve team members reporting on assignments they’ve had, relative to their corporate mission.
- **Dreaming:** We’re about seeing God’s Kingdom advance, so time is allotted at each meeting to dream with God about the future: WHO might God be raising up to participate? WHERE might He be leading us to make a difference together? HOW might God be leading us to make a difference together?

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Participating pastors/leaders challenge each other, learn together, and resource one another in a caring environment to stimulate the mobilization, health, and impact of each church involved in the team as they work to multiply churches in their region. Typically, teams meet about five times each year. Some meetings are corporate, with other LEAD teams at

IBC events. Other meetings can be in person or via videoconferencing or other means.

Every CATALYST church planter is connected with other planters and leaders through LEAD teams. This means *no one planter plants a church alone*. The benefits of this include:

- meaningful relationships are built,
- spiritual health is enhanced,
- disciple-making churches are started!



LEAD teams pray for each other.

The IBC currently has four LEAD teams: Northern Europe, Central Europe, Southern Europe, and Latin America. We want, and need, more members on each team. We want, and need, to form more LEAD teams. We want, and need, every IBC church engaged in planting more disciple-making churches in strategic locations around the world.

For more information about our LEAD teams, contact Darryl Evetts at churchplanting@ibc-churches.org. Learn more about IBC Church Multiplication at our website: www.internationalchurchplanting.com. Follow IBC Church Multiplication on Facebook at www.facebook.com/catalystinternationalchurchplanting or on Instagram at www.instagram.com/internationalchurchplanting



Darryl Evetts
Church Multiplication Director

Sedge Fen, England

SUNDAY, 6 MAY, was a day that saw historic change at Sedge Fen Baptist Church in the beautiful countryside of Suffolk, England. Pastor John Heiserman and wife Denise, who had led the church since November 2000, departed for the United States and the next chapter of their lives as servants of the Lord Jesus.

In a brief ceremony during the morning worship service the Heisermans were awarded the honorary status of Pastor Emeritus in recognition of their nearly 18 years of sacrificial service to the Lord at Sedge Fen. A photo of the pastoral couple and a plaque commemorating their years of service and sacrifice will be affixed on the wall near the entrance to the church so that future generations of members and attendees will recall their faithfulness to the Lord during their years at the church.

During the presentation interim pastor Sam Owens quoted from a poem called *First Fig* by Edna St. Vincent Millay: “My candle burns at both ends; it will not last the night; But oh, my foes, and ah, my friends, it gives a lovely light.”

John Heiserman has burned the candle at both ends while serving the Lord as pastor of Sedge Fen, holding for years a full-time job as a truck driver while having a full-time job as pastor. Thankfully, his candle lasted through the night, and it continues to shine brightly today. Many pastors would have turned off the



John and Denise Heiserman

lights, locked the door, and closed the history book on this church, but John, supported by Denise, stayed the course. The church gathered here today is a living testimony to God’s blessing of John’s faithful service through both the good times and the bad. It is our desire that for as long as Sedge Fen Baptist Church continues to be the body of Christ in this place, he will be remembered and appreciated for the years of selfless service he gave that allowed this church to continue to minister and to bless others as it has done throughout its past.

“To that end and as a well-deserved re-

ward for your patient perseverance, the members of Sedge Fen Baptist Church have chosen to bestow upon John and Denise the honorary title of Pastor Emeritus,” Owens said. The title of Pastor Emeritus is only honorary in nature, signifying that the members of this church recognize and appreciate the sacrificial service the Heisermans gave over a period of almost 18 years. The candle of their lives and service will continue to glow here for as long as the Lord undergirds this church with His grace and goodness.

The Heisermans have temporarily relocated to Crossville, Tennessee, where they will take some much-deserved rest while awaiting the Lord’s next instruction as to where and how they are to continue their lives of faithful obedience unto Him. The members of Sedge Fen along with the entire body of the International Baptist Convention pray for John and Denise Heiserman God’s richest blessings, His most generous provisions, and His all-sufficient empowerment as they continue in His service.

Sam Owens

“You Can Change Your World”
ANNUAL CONVENTION
MEETING

Immanuel Baptist Church
Madrid, Spain

NEW DATES!
29-31 October



Darmstadt, Germany

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL FAITH AND SCIENCE FORUM dealt with the question “Is God acting in the world in conflict with the laws of nature?” The H+ Hotel in Darmstadt, Germany, again provided a pleasant setting for this 23 June event, organized by Converge International Fellowship. The guest speaker was Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Ralf Bergmann, Bremen. Bergmann is a physicist and has wide experience of presenting on the interdisciplinary topic of Christian faith and natural science.

Bergmann spoke in English for almost an hour and touched on fundamental questions of how we do natural science and how laws of nature operate and what that means for the understanding of divine action. At the conclusion of his talk,

there was a question-and-answer session, and Bergmann fielded a wide range of questions from the audience. The forum did not only strengthen the Christian world view as compared to atheism, but also gave Christians a substantial encouragement with respect to the foundations of the Christian belief. The meeting was followed by an informal gathering with light refreshments and continued discussions of many related topics.

With Bergmann’s permission, the talk was video-recorded, and we hope to make it available to those who were unable to attend in person.

The third international Faith and Science Forum is already scheduled for May 2019.

Adam Williams



Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Ralf Bergmann

Zürich, Switzerland

AFTER THE RETURN of Pastor Will Colledge to South Africa, and with some time before his prospective replacement could begin, the International Baptist Church, Zürich, Switzerland, were in need of an interim pastor. Jim McVicar came very highly recommended. Placing their lives, as always, in God’s hands, Jim and Anne prayed for His direction and in early July 2017 arrived in Zürich, Switzerland. God knew that this dear couple were

needed at IBCZ. Jim became heavily involved, alongside deacon chair Susy Hunziker, in leading the search committee.

As their time here expanded, so did their involvement in all aspects of the church, including a church weekend away, the relaunching of a women’s ministry (which Anne was very involved in), baptisms, pastoral care, and of course wonderful, challenging and uplifting sermons on Sundays.

Anne was the main speaker at the recent IBCZ Women’s Conference which was well organized by the women’s ministry team. It was a blessing to all who attended.

The pastoral search committee received more than 80 applications for the position of pastor, and with much prayer, the PSC and Elders unanimously agreed that Bob Weniger stood out as the pastor that God intended for IBCZ. The church family confirmed this. As Bob and his wife Daniela prepared to move to Switzerland, the church looked forward to welcoming them and prepared, in a variety of ways, to help them settle into their new environment. It continues to be a time of transition for them, moving to a very different culture to the one they have become used to, but God is unchanging and His family is international.

Now nearly a year later, Jim and Anne have returned to the U.S., where they can begin their retirement in earnest. But it’s very difficult to imagine them even now finally putting their feet up. We thank God so much for bringing this couple to our church for a season, and for sending Bob and Daniela to take their place.

Jane Burns



IBCZ’s Women’s Conference with Anne McVicar, speaker.

San Jose, Costa Rica

THE SUMMER MONTHS often mean a downturn in attendance and participation in the life of the International Baptist Church, San Jose, Costa Rica. This has not been the case these last two months. Though we have had a number of people traveling and have said good bye to a few families that are relocating, our attendance and participation has remained very strong. We had our annual pre-teen

and youth camp the first two weeks of July. This was the second year to offer two different camps. In total, 155 campers and leaders attended. Many decisions were made and a lot of young people were encouraged in their faith.

On the last Sunday of July, we hosted Houston's First Baptist Church's orchestra and choir who were touring the country. They led us in worship in our Sun-

day morning services. This was a group of approximately 100 people. Just making sure they fit in our sanctuary and that we would still have room for the many who came to one of our services was a challenge. In the end, we had just enough room for everyone. Both of our services were packed, and it was a really meaningful time of worship.

Paul Dreessen



Teens and youth enjoy camp.



Houston's FBC lead in worship.

Stuttgart, Germany

“THE BEST DAYS of IBC Stuttgart are ahead of us.” These are the words Pastor David Packer repeatedly states as we move closer to the construction of a new building.

Nearly seven years ago, the International Baptist Church of Stuttgart, Germany, began praying for a new building. On Sunday 22 July, God blessed us with a great ‘spatenstich’ or groundbreaking ceremony.

After the second service, we gathered outside to celebrate with snacks and sekt. Pastor David said a few words, and he together with Jimmy Martin, the IBC building committee, and the general contractors symbolically broke the ground of the new building. It was a beautiful celebration of God's goodness and faithfulness in this congregation.

Over the coming weeks and months, our church will be a construction zone. The temporary entrance is now behind the building. We no longer have a parking lot on site. Many of our programs and ministries will adjust during this time. But we do so with joy, trusting that the Lord will

use this investment of a new building to reach future generations for Christ.

Perhaps the Lord is calling your church to take a great step of faith. Maybe it's a new building, the hiring of a new staff member, or a significant change in your structure. Though there will be challenges and difficulties, we must be willing to lead our churches into God's will to reach the nations for Christ.

Therefore, let us submit to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, trusting God to use our efforts for His glory. May it be said of every church in the International Baptist Convention, “The best days of the IBC are ahead of us.”

Taylor Whitley



IBC Stuttgart breaks ground on their new building.