

## Great Rivers Regional Scholarship Programs

Scholarship programs exist in the Great Rivers Region to assist young people who are **members of Great Rivers Region American Baptist Churches** to secure a college and/or seminary education. Scholarships for any college student (regardless of major) or seminary student from the **Gernenz-Shurtleff/Wilcoxon Scholarship** are available. Ministerial students attending ABC-related schools and seminaries in preparation for ministry can also apply for the **Harold O. Long Scholarship**. All applications must be received in the GRR office by April 1, 2018.

To receive an application for these scholarships, write to:

### Scholarship Committee Attention Debbie Naugle

PO Box 13457  
Springfield IL 62791

Phone 217-726-7366  
Email: [debbie@abcgrr.org](mailto:debbie@abcgrr.org)

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## Mainstream Contact Information

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

Linda Ricks  
232 Devron Circle  
East Peoria, IL 61611

[Ricks4LR@comcast.net](mailto:Ricks4LR@comcast.net)

The Mainstream is a twice-monthly publication of the American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region, 3940 Pintail Drive, Springfield IL 62711 Phone: (217) 726-7366 Email: [debbie@abcgrr.org](mailto:debbie@abcgrr.org) Web: [www.abcgrr.org](http://www.abcgrr.org) To subscribe or unsubscribe to The Mainstream or to change contact information, please send an e-mail to Debbie Naugle with your request: [debbie@abcgrr.org](mailto:debbie@abcgrr.org).

## New Members of the Churches of the Great Rivers Region

### First Baptist Church, Newton, IL

**Welcomes:** Grace Lewis, Ashlin Baker, Tyler Ghist, Jacy Ghist, Kailyn Sparling, Jaidyn Sparling, Chloe Martinez, Donna Williams, Ed Worthey and Karen Kerner

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## GRR Website

A new feature of [abcgrr.org](http://abcgrr.org) is "mission notes." These will be postings forwarded by the Executive Minister and Ministerial Staff.

The note on the homecoming of Elizabeth Luella (Betty Lue) Johnson, missionary to the Chin, was posted as an extended obituary earlier this month.

Readers may find this at [abcgrr.org/mission](http://abcgrr.org/mission)

Please note that the [abcgrr2.org](http://abcgrr2.org) site includes some courses that were originally composed as FLASH based interactive experiences. Because of Adobe's decision to drop support AND most recent editions of web browsers no longer displaying these, these courses are being recomposed in a more acceptable (HTML5 for "techies") format.

E-mail GRR Webmaster, Richard Ricks: [revrick4@comcast.net](mailto:revrick4@comcast.net)



# The Mainstream

## News of Ministry and Mission

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

December 2017

Email: [debbie@abcgrr.org](mailto:debbie@abcgrr.org)  
Online edition interactive

web: [www.abcgrr.org](http://www.abcgrr.org)

## 2018 Calendar

### March:

2 - 3: **ABWM Regional Board**

10: **Area V Annual Gathering**  
Grace Baptist Church  
Kansas City, MO

11: **Area II Annual Meeting**  
FBC Moweaqua, IL

### April:

14: **Area III Annual Meeting**

15: **Area IV Annual Meeting**  
FBC Murphysboro, IL

20 - 21: **Face To Face**

27 - 28: **Clergy Spouse Retreat**  
Lake Springfield Camp

28: **Area I Annual Meeting**  
Blackhawk Baptist Camp

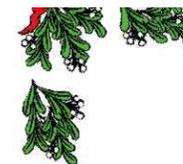
### June:

8 - 10: **ABWM GRR Annual Conference**, Northfield Inn & Suites and Conference Center, Springfield, IL

### September:

27: **GRR Ministers Conference**

28 - 29: **GRR Annual Assembly**  
The Chateau  
Bloomington, IL



*Merry  
Christmas*

*From the*

*Great Rivers  
Region Staff*

*Paul Gibson*

*Muriel Johnson*

*Rex Rogers*

*Patti Bilyeu*

*Nancy Fromme*

*Debbie Naugle*

*Melissa Gibson*

*Richard Ricks*

*Linda Ricks*

*Paul Maitland*

*John Grisham*

## A Word From Paul Gibson, ABCGRR Executive Minister



IT'S ALL ABOUT JESUS. At least it should be the main emphasis during this time of year, but we all know it is about other things too. It's about shopping, Santa, decorating, food, family and many other things, but, the main thing is Jesus.

Some have also made it about doing what they think is the right thing, such as saying "Merry Christmas" instead of "Happy Holidays". Or they make it a big deal when a public place doesn't allow the nativity scene, or get upset when radio (who listens to radio anymore?) and TV only play Christmas music without the religious emphasis. I don't think Jesus would be too concerned about those things.

**The problem is not that the world has taken Jesus out of Christmas, but that we have taken Jesus out of our everyday lives. If we get too upset at those other things it may mean that it is all about appearances for us, not what's real.** We are more concerned about Jesus being in the public realm than we are about Him being alive and well in our hearts and minds. Make special room for Him in your lives this Christmas and then let the world feel His love, hope, and grace as they spend time with you. My mom and dad lived that out and demonstrated it for me. Dad is in heaven but Mom is still here on earth and I will be with her on the 18th to celebrate her 94th birthday.

I met **Dan Chetti**, one of our missionaries in the Middle East, a few weeks ago and he thanked me several times for our region's great support in that part of the world. He and his wife **Sarah** are also one of those couples who are living out the love of Jesus. He wanted us to know how much our support has helped in planting new ministries. Please keep them in your prayers.

I am excited as we get ready to welcome in the new year. We have many new and exciting things happening in our region and will be sharing more about them in our January newsletter. For now, take extra time to enjoy family and friends. Also, look around and see if there are any people who may not be close to family and find a way to reach out to them with God's love.

Keep our missionaries in your prayers this time of year as many of them are away from family. **The Goods just arrived in Hungary** and will celebrate Christmas there. Fortunately, they can celebrate with the **Stantons who are also in Hungary. The Dieselbergs will be coming home for Christmas** so be praying for them. Shortly after Christmas **Paul Rollet will be heading back to the Philippines**, so keep him in your prayers also.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us at the Great Rivers Region office. **May you experience every good gift that Jesus has to give and then let it flow through you to all those around you.**

LET IT FLOW!

Paul



## Face to Face: A Help for Churches and Pastors Searching For God's Call

Face to Face is an opportunity for Search Committees of churches seeking full time pastors (not bivocational) to interview pastors and seminarians seeking to discern God's next step. Each participating church and each pastor will be able to participate in several interviews during the two day event. Look for information in the next few months about this opportunity on the GRR website.

[www.abcgrr.org](http://www.abcgrr.org)

Host Church: **First Baptist Church Anderson, Indiana**

Dates: **April 20 - 21, 2018**

Who's Involved? The American Baptist Regions of Indiana / Kentucky, Greater Indianapolis, Michigan, Ohio, and Great Rivers.

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## Church News

**First Baptist Church of Highland, IL** announces that on January 14, 2018, during the morning worship service, **Art Wolfe** (a current GRR AME student) will be licensed to preach as he serves in the lay ministry of the church.

On January 21, during the morning worship service, the congregation will celebrate God's faithfulness and provision with a mortgage burning ceremony. 2018 marks the 20th anniversary of our building dedication. The current church building was completed in 1998 after a catastrophic fire totally destroyed the congregation's original church building.

## SKWIM 2018

SKWIM will be **Friday, January 12th - Monday, January 15th at Green Lake, WI.** SKWIM is a ski retreat designed to create a shared experience between students and adults. Our hope is that your group will have a great time, experience God in a unique way through worship and teaching, and grow closer to one another through the activities and group time together. Middle school, high school and college students are welcome to attend! Mike Moore, a pastor and church planter in the Chicago area, will be our speaker and we will be led in worship again from a group of musicians from Springfield.

The cost of SKWIM varies depending on activities selected. You can find more details on the registration form and at [www.skwim.org/group-leaders/](http://www.skwim.org/group-leaders/). Also, like us on Facebook at [www.fb.me/SKWIMGRR](http://www.fb.me/SKWIMGRR)

**Important things to remember: December 4th**

SKWIM Registration due  
ABC SKWIM Releases due  
\$50 deposit for each person attending is due.

**January 4th**

Payments are due in full

Students should pay the churches they are attending with and churches should make a check payable to Area II Youth and mail it to:

Laura Rollet  
101 Sandstone  
Chatham, IL 62629

You can find more information at [www.SKWIM.org](http://www.SKWIM.org). There is also a place on the site on the **Contact Us page** that allows you to ask any questions you may have.