



THE WISCONSIN BAPTIST

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Is "just fine" good enough? *Marie Onwubuariri, Regional Executive Minister*

I have consciously considered, intellectually and practically, the question that titles this article—often! It comes to mind again in this new year as the region's theme of *transformation* is deep in my soul. As someone who was explicitly raised by hardworking parents to not settle for average or "just getting by" when it came to things with lasting import, as one who was formed in the possibilities of "the Big Apple (i.e New York City)," as someone inspired by prophetic preachers and seasoned leaders, and as someone who embraces the complexity of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I have and continue to pose various forms of this question to fellow believers: *is 'just fine' good enough?*

In this question there is a tension between the theology of 'saved by grace, not by works' and 'Be still and know that I am God' in the one hand, and in the other hand a belief that the status quo is not God's perfect will and the posture of *just getting by* denies the power of our faith.

Placing this question in the

context of the *stewardship of mission of the Church*, and with Romans 12:1-2 still a guiding scripture¹ my answer is "No!" Emphatically! Furthermore, it is not grace *OR* change; not stillness *OR* power. Transformation takes creative tension and expectant dissonance, deep understandings of God, and redefined acts of "being" the Church. We need each other for rootedness, collaboration, growth, and yes—transformation.

Some things I have heard among others in our region:

"[Nothing] anymore without including the next generation;"
"Lead a revolution;" *"Listen...;"*
"Be co-collaborators with God;"
"We are building toward something not yet known..."

Yes, transformation is still at times elusive, slow, painful. Many have been at this work for some time; you may be weary. Yet, we have just celebrated this truth: *The coming of Christ is transformation personified!* So, take rest. Refresh. And let us continue in the Holy Spirit's new winds...

¹ Reference to the 2019 ABC/WI State of the Region Report

Attention: Opportunity for Your Young Adults; deadline soon...

American Baptist International Ministries is offering an opportunity for young adults from ABC Regions and Churches to travel overseas! For up to 6-12 weeks, they will be immersed in cross-cultural settings, serving in programs and projects designated by the hosts, where they will utilize their skills and have opportunities to grow. Service sites include: Brazil, Lebanon, Philippines, and others. **Don't delay! Applications MUST be received by January 14, 2020.** Call Short Term Missions at 610-768-2245 for more information.



Camp Tamarack

Winter Youth Retreat

Fri-Sat: Jan 24—26, 2020

"Vision"—is yours 20/20 on God?

Youth in grades 7th-12th are invited to join together to explore "God's Vision for You and Keeping Your Vision on God" with worship, activities and games using Jeremiah 29:13—"...if you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me."



Early bird registration closes Jan 10th. Go to camptamarack.org for full details.

PEOPLE NEWS

- ◇ Congratulations to **Bonnie Bell** who retired on 12/22 as Pastor of Immanuel United Methodist Church (UMC), Kenosha. Bonnie is a member at Wauwatosa, Underwood Memorial and former President of WI Ministers Council. We also honor her for 30 years of faithful ordained ministry (40+ yrs in total) in the ABC and UMC.
- ◇ ABC Wisconsin Staff Transitions:
We thank **Patrick Roberts** for his work in student services/recruitment for CENTRAL Wisconsin since 2017; he completed his service in December.
We thank **Carolyn Dugan**, Associate Regional Minister—Camping for seven years of service with Camp Tamarack and ABC/WI. She completes her service at the end of January.
- ◇ Congratulations to **Ronald Nunuk**, Pastor of Greenfield, Carson Chin, and his wife, Monica, on the birth of their first child on 11/21, son Bawithawng Nunuk.

Annual BUCKS Fellowship Event Tuesday, January 14, 2020 7 PM.
Limited tickets available—\$30 each.
Email abcwi.office@abcofwi.org by 1/6.



Vs.



Transportation, food, & beverage on your own.

SAVE THE DATES:
Celebrating Ministering Women
Tues-Fri., June 16-19, Green Lake, WI
radicalredeemedready.com

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF WISCONSIN

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