



THE WISCONSIN BAPTIST

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EAGER FOR EASTER?

By Marie Onwubuariri, Regional Executive Minister

I have come to truly appreciate the annual movement through Holy Week—the celebration and irony of Palm Sunday, the journey through the events of Jesus’ last days of life, the commemoration of the Last Supper, the gravity of Good Friday, the stillness of Holy Saturday, and the multiple expressions of Easter victory and joy. In my desire to dwell in the significance of each day, I often cringed when eager preachers would hurry through Mount Calvary to the morning glory in the garden, especially **on** Good Friday. At times, it would feel to me like cheating the cross—resurrection without sacrifice.

This year, amidst the chaos of the development of the coronavirus, it is understandable if congregations might feel eager for Easter, perhaps even anxious for Easter: *What will it look like? What will it*

feel like without our precious traditions? Perhaps even, when will it be?

Well...it will not look like what we are accustomed to, which means that emotions will be stretched. And as to when? Easter need not be confined to April 12, 2020. We are called to live the cycle of gospel living (cross and the empty tomb) throughout our entire discipleship journey.

How might you open yourself up to experience the remainder of Lent and Holy Week anew this year, not only through April 12, but beyond that as well? In fact, how might you **embrace the significance of each day**, not just in times of crisis but even beyond this? Many things may feel out of our control, but it is still up to us to choose to never be the same again. *Easter is a daily invitation to a new life in Christ.*

CAMP TAMARACK GETAWAY

As we all observe social distancing restrictions given by our governmental authorities, we promote the need for intentional self-care. **Your region camp is a beautiful place to go for fresh air, open spaces, and peaceful connection with our God**, who is caring for all of creation during these uncertain times.

We will try our best to accommodate individual and household overnight retreats or day visits, while also adhering carefully to health guidelines and mandates.

For more info, contact Rev. Kim Drost at kim.drost@abcofwi.org or 715-281-7816.



MINISTRY IN TIMES OF COVID-19...

...our ABC/WI mission remains:

*"...a fellowship of persons, churches and organizations **drawn together** in the love of God as known **in Jesus Christ**. We affirm our **diversity** of culture, gender, and theological perspectives as **gifts for ministry**. We **covenant to share** the gospel of Christ, **encourage each other** in our faith, and share our **resources in witness and mission**."*

Join the **ABCUSA 21 Day Call to Prayer** and stay up-to-date on how we are being the Church together at abcofwi.org. Look for the COVID-19 resource page.

With a look to the future, a word from the ABC/WI Region President

by Fred Oaks, President, Board of Managers | fredrick.oaks@gmail.com

"Without counsel, plans go wrong, but with many advisers they succeed." – Proverbs 15:22

You're invited to become one of the *many advisers* who will thoughtfully and prayerfully shape plans for the next chapter of regional ministry.

- What needs and opportunities should ABC/WI prioritize?
- With whom might we partner for effective service?
- What has this current COVID-19 crisis revealed to you regarding how we can be together as a region-wide association?

During last October's 175th Annual Meeting, a new governance structure was approved. It was approved UNANIMOUSLY, which is enough to make this Baptist believe in miracles! There's a lot of excitement about the new structure because it allows us to focus resources on our highest priorities. **That's why we want to hear from you.** Help us identify the set of priorities into which we will live in the future, "side by side and face to face," as Dr. Onwubuariri likes to put it.

We cannot do everything, but God has not called us to do everything. God has called us to play our unique role as a sign and agent of the reign of God in Wisconsin and beyond, as only we can. The inaugural Board of Managers is committed to working together to promote the health and vitality of the region's churches, enhance their community impact, and connect them to American Baptist and other resources locally, regionally, and nationally. We value collaboration and affirm diversity of culture, gender, and theological perspectives as gifts for ministry. Our plan won't be perfect, but with your thoughtful input it is more likely to succeed. To God be the glory.

To share your perspective, please contact any member or officer of the ABC/WI Board of Managers [abcofwi.org/mission-vision/region-officers/].

PEOPLE NEWS

- Our condolences to **Steve Carlson**, Pastor of West Allis, Tabernacle, at the passing of his mother, Patty Mae Carlson, on March 14.
- Our condolences to **Con Slaviero**, retired ABC/WI Pastor, at the passing of his wife, Ellie Slaviero, on March 3.
- Congratulations to **Carmen Porco**, on being recognized on Feb. 20 as the Hometown Hero from the 48th Assembly District, by Rep. Melissa Sargent in the Wisconsin State Assembly.

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF WISCONSIN

www.abcofwi.org & www.camptamarack.org

15330 Watertown Plank Road, Elm Grove, WI 53122-2340

Phone: 262-782-3140 or Toll Free: 1-800-311-3140; Fax: 262-782-7573

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