The Wisconsin Baptist

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Rev. Dr. John A. Jones IV, Associate Regional Minister – Education

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it." - Hebrews 13:2

More than 20 years ago, Lutheran Social Services and other agencies began helping settle Burmese refugees immigrating to SE Wisconsin. Many individuals and churches from ABC of Wisconsin began partnering with these agencies to assist these brothers and sisters in Christ because of the long history and deep roots of relationship between Baptists and the Burmese people, especially the Chin people. They helped with furniture, moving, language, learning to drive, and so many other areas of adjustment.

Soon there were Chin and Karen congregations meeting and needing space for worship. A number of ABC Wisconsin churches served as host to those congregations for their afternoon worship. Those people and congregations stepped forward to "show hospitality to strangers." Through the years, many positive relationships have developed. Several congregations have emerged and become a part of ABC Wisconsin. We've seen children grow into young adults and leaders become elders. Those congregations have matured into thriving faith communities.

On October 9 & 10, one of those congregations – Emmanuel Chin Baptist Church (ECBC) – served as host for the 182nd Annual Gathering of the American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin. This congregation was most hospitable to an excellent Annual Gathering. We enjoyed a variety of great foods for our meals, including some traditional Burmese dishes.

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Important Dates	**Office Hours**	**Important Dates**
ABCWI Board of Managers Fall Meeting November 7, 2026 9:30-12:30 On Zoom	Regional Office Tuesdays & Thursdays 10-4 Other times call 262-782-3140	Camp Tamarack Fall Fantasy Nov. 13-14 Creators Camp Dec. 3-5 Bring your crafts! Book Camp Jan 7-9

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The meals were served by a legion of friendly young people, eager to describe and/or explain the offerings.

It was a beautiful, inspirational Annual Gathering for many reasons, including the preaching, workshops and conversations. But one reason worthy of note (that just happens to be consistent with the theme of the gathering – "Radical Hospitality in a Hostile World") is that the "hosted" became the "hosts." In the amazing and unpredictable life of the communities of faith, God continues to teach us what the gospel means in new ways. So when we are faithful, when we show hospitality to strangers, we may or may not "entertain angels" - whether we know it or not. But we do know that we might also be entertaining future friends, brothers and sisters in Christ who might also soon be showing hospitality to us.

View photos and more from the Annual Gathering here: https://www.abcofwi.org/2026/10/13/annual-gathering-2026/

Camp Tamarack Retreats This Fall! www.camptamarack.org

United Mission is how we fund American Baptist Churches, USA. In your Mission giving, 2/3 stays here in the region and 1/3 goes out to fund ABCUSA. We invite you and your church to give through United Mission. Read more on our website: https://www.abcofwi.org/abc-giving/

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