

Calvary Baptist Church Weekly Newsletter

June 25, 2017 Issue 98

A Pastoral Letter from newly appointed ABC-USA General Secretary Rev. Dr. Lee B. Spitzer

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American Baptist News Service

American Baptist Churches USA / Mission Resource Development P.O. Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851 Phone: (610)768-2159 / Fax: (610)768-2320 Bridget Lipin, Assistant Director of Communications/Web Manager Questions/sign-up, Contact: abns@abc-usa.org

(the following letter was written on June 16 and has been slightly edited for brevity)

Dear ABCUSA Family,

The recent terrorist attacks in England, the apparently politically motivated shooting that took place in Virginia, ongoing debates over how to treat immigrants and visitors to our country, and the struggles of another Baptist denomination to take a clear stand on issues related to white supremacy remind us all that we are living in a violent and divided world that desperately needs to overcome every form of social and political discrimination and search for more just ways to live in harmony. In 2017, American Baptists gladly and forthrightly reassert our fundamental Baptist convictions regarding individual liberty, dignity and respect for all people, regardless of their racial or ethnic heritage, political or religious beliefs, or any other factor. In 1976, the General Board affirmed a policy statement on human rights, which said:

"Baptist history is rooted in concern for conscience and for freedom of individual beliefs, for choice, and for unregimented living whether by religious dogma and institution or by social and political structures. John Bunyan in prison and Roger Williams driven from Massachusetts, reflect commitment to these ideas, as did Martin Luther King, in his witness to human dignity and the rights of minority groups. Resolutions by the American Baptist Churches over the years have particularly sought to reflect the denomination's basic principles of freedom of thought and belief, the right of dissent, the responsibility to speak prophetically to church and society and support for human dignity and social justice."

In the past, American Baptists have expressed these convictions in resolutions and statements, which make clear we have consistently opposed every form of racism and discrimination. For example, in 1983, the ABC General Board declared,

"We, as American Baptists, believe that all people are made in the image of God and that the right to human dignity, to be respected and treated as a person without regard to race, is foundational to our faith... Racism, whether individual or corporate, is a sin against God... We affirm the diversity of races and cultures as distinctive aspects of our denomination. We accept each person as a full participant and each race and each culture as valid expressions within the life and witness of the ABC family."

We also have clearly stated that American Baptists reject violence as a means of achieving one's social, religious or political goals. In a resolution opposing racial segregation adopted in 1964 and reaffirmed in 1985, we urged our members to engage in "programs of nonviolent direct action" and made clear that only "Christian means must be used to obtain these desired ends."

With such a rich and diverse set of resolutions and statements, how should we as American Baptists respond to the challenges we face in today's troubled and fractured society? I suggest we not only re-affirm the statements of the past, but resolve to live them out in practical and consistent ways in our individual and congregational spiritual journeys. Martin Luther King Jr. stated, "One of the great tragedies of life is that men seldom bridge the gulf between practice and profession, between doing and saying" (*Strength to Love*, 37). To bring our thoughts and actions in line with our expressed convictions, we must re-engage Scripture and let its message take control of our beliefs, attitudes, emotions and actions. Please consider these:

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for a person's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.... (James 1:19-20)

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (1 Corinthians 13:3-7)

As I reflect on these Scriptures, I glean the following challenges to help us all hold fast to our Baptist convictions while also contributing to a more harmonious American civic life:

- 1. Commit to listen more graciously and with an open mind, especially when we are in conversation with people who hold different views than we do.
- 2. Reject anger, rudeness, hatred, arrogance, and egotism in our dealings with others. Being prophetic is not compatible with being obsessive, abusive or insensitive.
- 3. Do not forget that people we disagree with are still human beings, and desire respect, grace and acceptance. The Golden Rule still applies to human relationships.
- 4. Be patient before responding to situations and people; oftentimes, first reports of an event do not convey the whole truth. Knee-jerk reactions are seldom helpful.
- 5. Do not assume that one's own position on an issue is the only Christian response to which all others must subscribe. We know only "in part," as Paul says.

As American Baptists, may we, through our words and actions, "let our light shine before others, so that they may see our good deeds" (Matthew 5:16) and be drawn to Jesus Christ, our Lord!

Yours in Christ,

In B. A.

Rev. Dr. Lee B. Spitzer, General Secretary

American Baptist Churches USA

Church Members

Members and Friends at Home

Each week a member or friend of the church at home will be highlighted. Greeting cards are always appreciated



June Hare 109 Edjil Drive Newark, DE 19713 302-368-8094

June and her husband, Norman, have been members of Calvary for many years. June was always very active in earlier years serving as head of the Clothes Closet, working on the Fellowship Committee, and a big part of the Women's Group. These past few years have been a decline in her health and she hasn't been able to attend services for several months. She enjoys visits and cards and appreciates still being part of the Calvary family.

June Birthdays!!



- Darlene Battle
- 3 Joy Hickman
- 3 Nathan Hickman
- 6 Lillian Jarry
- 6 Krystal Smith (Koeller)
- 7 Denise Dowell
- 8 Carolyn Inciardi
- 9 Hannalee Houtz
- 9 Morgan Kline-Hill
- 11 Jason West
- 11 Bernard B. Foster, Sr
- 12 James Alley
- 14 David Hopkins
- 20 Courtney Widdoes
- 21 Jennifer Cahill
- 22 Marcia Williamson
- 23 Mark Wells
- 23 Fran Wilson
- 24 Alanna Williamson
- 25 Samantha Elliott
- 26 Sharon Pemberton

July 4th Picnic on the Lawn

We are inviting the community and Newark Empowerment Center clients to Calvary's annual 4th of July Picnic noon - 2PM at Calvary Baptist Church. This is a fun time for our honored guest, the needy and homeless of Newark. Please feel free to join us, or provide sides, snacks, drinks, or desserts. Contact Tom Parkins.



VBS needs volunteers!

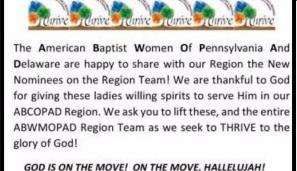
VBS needs adult & teen volunteers! The program will run from July 30 to Aug 3rd. Hours are 5:30pm-8:15pm.
Volunteers will help with the following areas: Bible Discovery, Game Makers, Snack Factory, Imagination Stations (crafts), and Group Leaders. If you are interested, please email Amber at amberhickman33@hotmail.com

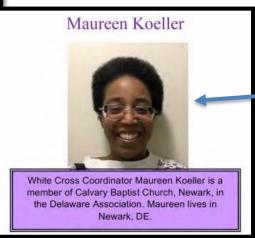


High School Summer Sunday School Program

After taking a break in June the High School students will be meeting each week from July 9th through August 27th from 9:15am to 10:15am. We will meet a local coffee shop (exact location to be determined) for a light breakfast, fellowship, and sharing of praises and prayer requests. Your breakfast will be paid for so all you need to do is show up! Let Kyle know if have any questions or would like to join us.







LOOK WHO
SHOWED UP
IN THE MOST
RECENT
ABCOPAD
NEWSLETTER

Calendar

JuneNo Sunday School during the month of June for K through 12th		
27- 7/2 29-7/2		Creation Fest ABC-USA Biennial
July		
4	12pm-2pm	Community Picnic Independence Day (office closed)
6	7:00pm	Band Practice
9	12:00pm	Christian Ed. Board Diaconate
11	6:30pm	Finance Committee
14		Office closed
14-16		ABWM conference in Shippensburg, PA
16	12:00pm	Mission Board Trustee Board
17-21		High Point Camp (Jr. week)
20	9:00am	Hope Dining
24-29		High Point Camp (Teen week)
25		Vision Team
27	=	Band practice
30	5:30pm	VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL BEGINS! (daily until Aug 3)
August		
4	40.00	Calvary to a Blue Rocks game
13	12:00pm	Christian Ed. Board Diaconate
17	9:00am	Hope Dining
20	12:00pm	Trustee Board Mission Board
21	7:00pm	Worship Team