



NORTH
AMERICAN
BAPTIST
CONFERENCE

1219 Pleasant Grove Blvd.
Roseville, CA 95678

Return Service Requested

Light of the World



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NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST CHRISTMAS OFFERING 2020



Friends of NAB,

A few years back, Timothy began hanging around Aplington Baptist Church in Aplington, Iowa. The son of a single mom, this middle school student could often be found at the church after school got out. He soon began going to events and services, even inviting his friends to come along. Like the star that guided the magi, Timothy became a small light that illuminated the way to Jesus for many.

Timothy was able to impact the lives of his friends by introducing them to Jesus, but he also impacted the people of Aplington Baptist by helping to awaken them to some of the realities of their small town. Through Timothy, God began opening the eyes of pastor Elton LaBree and the members of Aplington Baptist to the students and families in their community lacking friendship, a safe space, food, or a myriad of other needs.

As believers, we are called to be lights in the darkness through our words and our actions. Jesus said,

“You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden” (Matthew 5:14).

One tangible way you can serve as a light to others is by giving to the Ministry Resource Fund to support Kingdom pursuits around the world. Your gift to this fund will help sustain ongoing missional endeavors such as Blue Ocean, The Bonfire, and Ethos, in addition to many other ministry efforts.

Though God used Timothy to open Elton’s eyes to a wider world in need, Elton’s experience at Blue Ocean and The Bonfire helped him grow in his understanding of God’s heart for those found outside the walls of the church. On the last night of the 2018 Blue Ocean in Vancouver, British Columbia, everyone walked one and a half kilometers past a slew of shops and restaurants on tourist-friendly streets to get to the venue for the evening’s meeting. At the end of the night, the group was directed to take different streets back, which took them through an entirely different world only a few blocks away from the first one, a world full of abuse, poverty, and pain.

“Our churches, and myself, so often live in the one world and forget or don’t want to see the other street,” Elton said. “We want to turn a blind eye.” Because of his experience in Blue Ocean and through The Bonfire, “I’m much more in tune with looking at our congregation and in the community.”

He said, “We have to represent the weak and we have to represent them better.”

One of the simplest ways Aplington Baptist does this is through their weekly Free Snack Friday. As Elton and Katie saw needs, Katie came up with an idea, where snacks and other food items, such as soup mixes and boxes of macaroni and cheese, are set out by Elton’s family for anyone to take. This food, donated by members of Aplington Baptist and St. Peter’s Country Church, has become a fun way for some students to end their school week; for other families, it has become a small food pantry to help get them through the weekend. Elton has been able to connect with a number of people he otherwise would never have interacted with. With a few of them, he has even become their pastor even though they do not go to church.



Pastor Elton H. LaBree

Through interactions with their own Timothys, through Blue Ocean or Discovery Project, or through webinars on racial righteousness, all across the NAB, people like Elton LaBree are having their eyes opened to where God is already at work outside the four walls of the church and they are stepping out in faith to serve where He is leading. Whether it’s through ongoing support or a one-time gift of \$50, \$100, or more, your donation to the Ministry Resource Fund will help supply resources, training, and support to leaders across the NAB, helping them to be lights within their communities.

Ways to Give

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| Online | www.nabconference.org/give/christmas |
| Text to Give | Text gift amount followed by “CHRISTMAS” to (204) 400-2238 for Canadian giving or to (916) 249-0534 for US giving. |
| Credit Card by Phone | Contact Lisa Meinschock (916) 783-1520 |
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