

RESOURCES

The following publications and resources are available to any member of the NAB family. To learn more about these resources, visit us online at nabconference.org/resources.

EXPLORE NAB EMAILS

Explore NAB emails provide the NAB family with updates, videos, stories, resources, and other important information.

EXPLORE NAB PODCASTS

Explore NAB podcasts feature conversations with NAB pastors and ministry leaders on a variety of topics.

MISSIONAL/FORMATIONAL COHORTS

A number of leadership formation resources and gatherings are available to the NAB family—Blue Ocean, Ethos, Discovery Project, and Pastor/Board Development.

ONWARD

Onward is a magazine for news, stories, and updates from the members of the NAB family. It is published two times a year in print and is also available digitally on the NAB website.

MISSION MULTIPLY NEWS

Mission Multiply News is a monthly update that includes events, resources, and stories around the NAB family all focused on church multiplication.

Sign up to receive NAB publications and resources at nabconference.org/newsletter-signup



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NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST CONFERENCE



serve them. Let's build relationships and learn from those different than us. Let's seek God's justice and righteousness in our world. Let's send missionaries and partner with Christians in faraway places and in places nearby.

Included in this booklet is information about a number of NAB ministries that we believe will continue to help equip God's people for service. Consider this an invitation for you to join us in this work.

Harry Kelm
NAB Executive Director

The North American Baptist Conference has a long commitment to ministry and to missional engagement. By missional engagement, I mean a biblical understanding of who God is and who we are in God. It is joining the work that God is doing in us and through us in our neighborhoods and communities and world. As the executive director of the NAB, I can affirm that we are seeking to be very intentional when it comes to what we do and why we do it as a conference of churches. We want to equip people to listen to God and sense where God is at work. We want people to seek God's will. We are told in 1 Peter 3:10-12 to turn from evil and do good, to pursue peace, to be righteous as people of God from every tongue and tribe and nation.

God uses us to bring a message of hope and peace and life in Jesus through sharing it and living it out. Peter goes on to say in verse 15 that we are to live with Christ as Lord and to be prepared, with gentleness and respect, to give the reason for the hope we have in Jesus. As a conference of churches, God calls us to carry out this ministry together. God brings us together into the body of Jesus Christ with various gifts, abilities, and skills so that together we can listen to each other, learn from one another, and partner in ministry with each other. This partnership is person to person and church to church. This partnership seeks out emerging leaders and leaders from different ethnicities. It seeks to celebrate the diversity of the body of Jesus Christ.

There has been a great desire expressed by many to go back to a "normal" that we are missing. I suggest instead that the future is not behind us but ahead of us. Let us learn from the past, but let us look forward to what God is doing and join in that. Let's plant churches and multiply ministries in our churches. Let's consider the needs of our neighbors and seek to

THE MINISTRY RESOURCE FUND

The Ministry Resource Fund is the broadest and most flexible way to support NAB ministries. It is like the electrical supply line for your house; it is vital and can flow in many different directions and power many different and important things. It supports the training that pastors, missionaries, and leaders receive in missional and formational principles. This fund provides for pastoral enrichment and care. It allows for resources such as Intercessor and Onward to exist. It also funds teleconferences and webinars, which foster discussions on God's working in and through us as His people. It opens the doors for the planting of new churches in Canada and the United States and in identifying church planters. The Ministry Resource Fund resources the identifying, elevating, and equipping of emerging leaders. It is used to encourage biblical justice and righteousness. Many of the NAB ministries around the globe and in our own communities would not be able to stand on their own without the Ministry Resource Fund.



WAYS TO GIVE

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LEGACY GIVING

From the beginning years of the NAB, legacy giving through estates, wills, trusts, and memorial gifts have been transformational in establishing new fields, launching new ministries, and planting new churches. Your legacy giving provides the next generation with essential resources for where God will direct them to expand the Gospel's reach in North America and around the world.

If interested in leaving a legacy gift to NAB ministries by committing a portion of your end-of-life assets, contact us at 916.797.6231.

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MISSION MULTIPLY

NAB CHURCH PLANTING



JOE & SARAH CAPLES

The church planting movement within the NAB is persistently growing in new and exciting ways. We continue to partner with couples who are passionate about experimenting with new forms of church and are called to establish new communities of faith that proclaim the Kingdom of God in ways that invite people both near and far from God into the beautiful way of Jesus.

Expressions of the church that proclaim the robust Gospel, focus on a missional/formational orientation to ministry, and partner in the planting of additional churches are key distinctives that run through all NAB plants receiving funding and resources through the Connie Salios Church Planting Fund.

A new resource as of October 2021 is available to church planters through the first-ever Church Planter's Summit. We firmly believe that the people we are becoming – as church planters, as couples, and as followers of Jesus – is vastly more important than the type of church program we put together, so this gathering is designed to bring together all NAB planting couples from across North America for a few days of rest and time specifically to invest in their souls.

All of this is made possible through generous giving by the NAB family to the Connie Salios Church Planting Fund and the Ministry Resource Fund.

CHURCH MULTIPLICATION HIGHLIGHT

When Joe and Sarah landed in Roseville, California, to establish a new community of young families and singles, they were immediately faced with many challenges. Roseville is building thousands of new homes each year, and people are moving in from all over the world to make a life in this growing suburb of Sacramento. Houses are going up so quickly that businesses like restaurants and service stations are not being built fast enough. Couple that with the effects of the pandemic, and the Caples found hundreds of new neighbors living in a depth of isolation none had ever encountered. So the Caples got to work and brought in a food truck to their street so people new to the neighborhood could meet one another safely outdoors amidst a pandemic that had closed down restaurants and community gatherings.



This is just one of many stories around the NAB where planting couples are thinking differently of how to establish community and mission in their neighborhoods, all for the sake of the spread of the Gospel.

LEARN MORE

The first step for anyone ready to move toward multiplication is to reach out to your regional minister. To learn more about church planting in the NAB, contact Stu Streeter, VP of Church Multiplication and Ministry Advancement.



Stu Streeter

[sstreeter@nabconf.org](mailto:ssstreeter@nabconf.org) | 916.783.1529

MINISTRY RESOURCE FUND

THE PROCESS OF PLANTING



Engage

Discussion with regional minister



Explore

Assessment and planning with International Office



Evoke

Partnership agreement



Equip

Training and residency



Establish

Ongoing support and coaching

MINISTRY RESOURCE FUND

MISSIONAL INITIATIVES



For those who are in Christ, there is a need to become like Christ (formation) in order that we might join with Christ on mission as he is about the Father's business of redeeming all things. As disciples of Christ, we are learning that our vocation is as missionaries (local and global), and therefore we are to bear witness to Christ in all that we do. Because of this, the NAB seeks to provide training and resources to equip our leaders and churches to participate with Christ. We do this through Blue Ocean, Ethos, the Discovery Project, and our work with Pastors and Boards. All of this culminates in creating a missional movement through Bonfire.

BLUE OCEAN

Blue Ocean is a one-year training experience with pastors and leaders throughout North America that traditionally gathers three times in three different locations. With the guidance of presenters who are experts and practitioners in missional and formational theology, attendees will reflect deeply on missional theology, spiritual formation, and what it means to be the church in a post-Christendom world. During this past year of COVID, we took several of our equipping efforts online. Over thirty people engaged in Light Blue Ocean, which was an attempt to capture some of the material from Blue Ocean whilst being restricted to Zoom. In the year ahead, we will be holding both in-person and online versions of Blue Ocean. As well, we initiated a series of monthly equipping sessions with some of the top leaders and scholars from North America. Each month, we had up to a hundred NAB leaders join us for 150-minute webinars as we explored various aspects of what it means to join Christ on mission. This was called The Year of Bonfire.

BLUE OCEAN HIGHLIGHT

The best part of Bonfire was the monthly encouragement to keep going from fellow Christ followers across the NAB. Our time spent with Matt Canlis was the most profound for me because it helped me reimagine the Scriptures. His thoughts on Genesis brought to life the story for me and helped me see God in a different way, and more importantly in a way that draws me to continue being missional in my own community regardless of my "job" as a pastor.

*Joe Broesamle
Pastor, Calvary Baptist Church
Parkersburg, Iowa*



The Year of Bonfire was a deep dive with some of the best cutting-edge leaders, thinkers, and writers in the missional movement, alongside a cohort of like-minded (but diverse) fellow strugglers, dreamers, and pilgrims. It was stretching, intense, and totally worth it.

*Rob McLaren
Transitional Pastor, Century Meadows Baptist Church
Camrose, Alberta*

I thank God for the opportunity to attend Light Blue Ocean (and Bonfire). It was wonderfully encouraging to hear leaders and participants share about learning to wait and listen for God's invitations to be involved in their communities. I had been learning about spiritual formation in the previous months, but I am realizing the importance of testimonies. Hearing testimonies from others and discussing invitations with others helps give me courage and ideas. After one testimony, we began asking God to lead us to people in our community who need to know his love. And he did. One day, a neighbour woman we'd never met before arrived at our door just when supper was ready and abundant. We recognized her visit as an answer to our prayer and have begun getting to know her and her struggles. I am praying for God's guidance and my willingness to keep growing this new friendship and to help her return to Jesus.

*Pat Tennant
Thornhill Baptist Church
Calgary, Alberta*

ETHOS

Ethos is a two-year journey designed to help churches understand why and how to make a paradigm shift to a more missional/formational ministry approach. This six-module journey leads the participants through a missional/formational understanding of who God is and how he invites his people to join him on mission, locally and internationally. Ethos is offered on a voluntary basis to pastors and church leaders within a region or association. Each cohort of pastors (typically 8–15) meets regularly. Training and coaching are provided.

ETHOS HIGHLIGHT

When Kent, our senior pastor, approached me three years ago about being part of Ethos, I had no idea what I was signing up for. As a person new to ministry, fresh out of college, and new to the NAB, I had never heard of Ethos, Blue Ocean, or anything else related. Accepting the invitation to Ethos ended up being one of the most incredible blessings I have experienced. At first I was hesitant being only 24, with the next youngest person in the cohort almost double that age. I wasn't sure how I would fit, much less what I could contribute. However, as we met in-person at retreats and then later completely online due to COVID-19, what had started off as something unknown became the highlight of my month. Not only did we get to learn about being pastors and churches steeped in what it means to be missional, I also gained new friends. Ethos poured into me in ways that few other things could, and for that I am incredibly grateful.

Nathan Solak, Director of Youth and Children, Ridgewood Church
Brookfield, Wisconsin

DISCOVERY PROJECT

The Discovery Project is a training for local churches and their leaders and attendees to better understand missional theology and practices. Emphasis is placed on understanding that the task as followers of Jesus is to bear witness to him in every area of life. God's people are to be a sign, servant, and foretaste of the Kingdom of God. This weekend seminar is aimed at helping the people of the church see God through a missional lens and begin to have an imagination for how they might join him in the neighborhood.

DISCOVERY PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

The Discovery Project is a great introduction to missional ministry and an excellent refresher and motivator for those of us who are familiar with it. It is so important to be reminded of the biblical and theological underpinnings of living missionally and to be challenged to live it out in daily practice. We can talk all we want, but talk is cheap. We need to be motivated by the love of God to know our neighbours, whether they are next door or a quarter mile down the road on a neighbouring farm. Having a heart and a passion for people is vital as we seek to share his great love with them. It reminded me once again of my calling to love God first and best – with my heart, soul, mind, and strength – and to love my neighbor – the one who is most in need of my help – both inside and outside the family of God, as an outpouring of my love for the Lord.

Doug Armbruster
Pastor, Raymore Baptist Church
Raymore, Saskatchewan

PASTOR & BOARD DEVELOPMENT



The Pastor and Board Development initiative is a year-long engagement with trainings and retreats that help boards and pastors to operate as a community of spiritual leaders. It focuses not on governance but on spiritual depth and mutual discernment for the spiritual and missional growth of a body of believers. Ideally, it is done in conjunction with year one of Ethos.

PASTOR & BOARD HIGHLIGHT

Over the past several years, Kent Carlson has been meeting with our pastor and elder board, counseling and guiding us to a deeper understanding of what role our elders play in the spiritual growth of our church and what a church on mission looks like. We have had challenges along the way and are very grateful for the support and the blessed time together with Kent and the wise counsel he has provided for our elder board. We were challenged to step out in faith and experimentation in new directions as we worked together for God's Kingdom. We were encouraged to put an elder covenant together that we would use as our guide when we meet to help ensure unity and keep us moving forward. We also were encouraged to spend time together reading God's Word, reading books on what it means to be missional, and seeking God's guidance in prayer about where to guide his church. Our vision for our church is a place where the body of believers is healthy spiritually, living daily lives as the hands and feet of Jesus. The church is a hub of activity where people are gathering together to grow and celebrate what God is doing in our lives and in the community around us pointing people to Jesus. We still have a long way to go in this journey and know that with God all things are possible. We are looking forward to our continued journey with Kent as our mentor and counselor.

Randy Gunther
Elder Board Chairman, Antelope Springs Church
Roseville, California

LEARN MORE

For more information about either Blue Ocean or Ethos, please contact Cam Roxburgh or Sara-May Cardy.



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Sara-May Cardy
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INTERNATIONAL missions

“...so that our joy may be complete.”
1 John 1:4

The Christian journey is a joy-filled one, and we are called to make our joy complete by sharing it with others. For some, this journey takes them right down the street; for others, this journey will take them around the world. The NAB began as a community of churches in the belief that our joy could never be complete without sharing the Gospel with others. It is our firm conviction that this is best done through ongoing partnerships with God’s presence and work in his global church.

The ongoing conviction behind the theology of missions for the NAB is the firm biblical belief that God’s mission to humanity in Jesus Christ was not to come, save, and leave but rather to come, save, and remain through the power of his Spirit! What this means is that when we engage in a mission field or an international missional movement with a global partner, we do so with the firm conviction that God is calling us there for the “long haul;” not to come, proclaim, and leave but to come, proclaim, and partner. But the Gospel is also moving and growing, so the following stories include one project coming to completion as well as new and exciting opportunities into which God is leading us as a conference of churches! Thank you for your ongoing support and prayer for NAB intentional missions!

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT: CAMEROON

Though the partnership between the NAB and Mbingo Baptist Hospital goes back decades, the NAB has been supporting the vision of developing Mbingo into a referral teaching hospital for the past twelve years. The ongoing separatist conflict in the area around the hospital since the end of 2016 has disrupted many of the plans in motion, including the largest project – the hydroelectric plant.

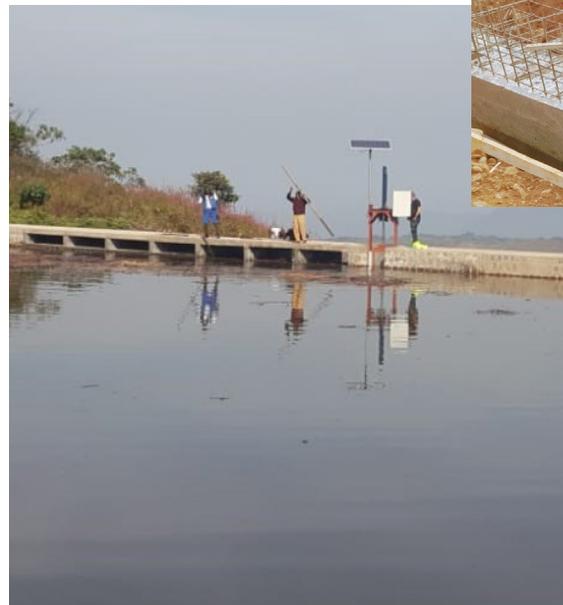
With great excitement, however, we can announce that the funding for the hydroelectric project is completed and the construction of the dam will be finished later this year. We rejoice with all of you who have given toward and prayed for this project!



This project and others, like the central oxygen system and the radiotherapy project, are important in improving the quality of care offered at Mbingo. A high-quality hospital is the critical foundation for the training and discipling programs we offer and others we are in the process of developing. By supporting NAB missionaries at Mbingo, providing financial resources to develop the infrastructure, and offering encouragement and prayer support, the NAB family has played an essential role in the development of this ministry.

We believe that God has called us to Mbingo to work to see a bit of his Kingdom revealed. Truly, here “the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached” (Luke 7:22 KJV). By working together, all of these things are advanced.

Dennis Palmer
NAB Missionary in Cameroon



MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT: BRAZIL

For decades the NAB has partnered with the Baptist seminary here in Brazil by providing career missionaries as professors, as well as many NAB pastors who serve as short-term professors for a week or more. This past year, however, we were pleased to announce that our seminary's partnership has expanded by offering masters and doctoral degrees through the Kairos Project, a program of our NAB seminaries, Sioux Falls Seminary and Taylor Seminary.

Kairos focuses on each student's unique journey of discipleship. Students work with a team of mentors, who guide them on what to know, how to do what God has called them to do, and who to be in Christ. Think of these elements as content, craft, and character. Everyone is unique, so Kairos tailors a path of learning to every student's context.

This new program that will benefit our students and strengthen the church in Brazil is a result of the continuing faithfulness of our NAB churches supporting the work here in Brazil. Thank you for your ongoing support of the development of Christian leaders in Brazil.

Brandon Jones,
NAB Missionary in Brazil



MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT: MISSIONARY CHILDREN - ROMANIA

Through the years, the NAB missionary family has included many children. Many of us seldom consider the role of our missionary children, but their very presence on the field is a testimony to the faithfulness of these families and a reminder that ministry is communal in nature. Your support of our NAB missionary families and the Global Missions Fund provides resources to care for our missionary children as they live and minister alongside their parents.

In recent years, the number of NAB missionary children grew with the addition of Brandon and Marci Jones and their three children in Brazil. More recently, with the Bergman family and their four children moving to Romania to minister at Camp Falcon Rock, that number has grown once again. With this move came questions about their children's education:

As the Bergmans considered moving to Romania, a big question was the kids' education. Their hope was to have their children in the local schools for community and cultural integration. At the same time, the Bergmans will supplement their kids' local education with Canadian curriculum so that they can get their Canadian diplomas. This is a huge task with a lot of variables and unknowns.



While I was in a meeting with the other NAB field directors, I mentioned this challenge. It was during this meeting that Calvin Hohn, the NAB field director in Cameroon, suggested we talk with Elsie Lewandowski, as her time in Cameroon was coming to an end in June 2021. Elsie has spent twenty-five years in Cameroon assisting missionary families in educating their children.

As this option was explored, Elsie revealed that she has always had a heart for Eastern European missions. After some prayer and discussions, Elsie agreed to a term in Romania to assist with the Bergman kids' education. We are beyond excited to have her join the team and see God's hand clearly in orchestrating this connection. Please pray for Elsie, who finished her time in Cameroon, spent the summer in Canada, and is transitioning to Romania.

Tanya Gericke
NAB Missionary in Romania

The NAB has missionaries in Japan, Europe, South America, Africa, and elsewhere in Asia serving as doctors, nurses, accountants, teachers, professors, pastors, and more. If you believe that God may be calling you to support international missions or if you believe God may be calling you to be a missionary, please contact the NAB International Missions Department.

LEARN MORE

For more information about NAB international missions, please contact Kerry Bender or Caryn Young.



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Gateway Cross-Cultural Ministries exists to equip churches to partner together and identify with the multiethnic body of Christ and to reach out to people of different ethnic backgrounds, especially those different from their own. Both Randy Schmor, Gateway director, and Bud Fuchs, cross-cultural equipper, serve in varied contexts in these ways themselves and equip churches and groups out of their firsthand experience. The resources they've specifically designed reflect this experience and serve to help build bridges across different cultures, beginning with a training event at your location or online. Gateway is focused on mobilizing local churches for cross-cultural ministry, both at home and abroad.

GATEWAY GLOBAL

Randy Schmor personally networks, supports, and coaches both NAB churches and churches/ministries overseas as they begin to explore long-term sister-church partnerships with one another. By providing networking, resourcing, and training, including short-term mission leadership and training, Gateway Global enables churches on both sides to enter into, develop, and maintain these long-term relationships with excellence and in accordance with the values of sound missiology and missional/formational theology.

GATEWAY GLOBAL HIGHLIGHT



At the 2021 Triennial, we had the joy of announcing a new partnership between NAB Gateway and Horizons International, headquartered in Beirut, Lebanon. This strategic partnership opens up the Middle East as a mission field for the NAB through sister-church partnerships, internships, and potentially even career missionaries.

God is moving in Beirut, and throughout the Middle East, and he is using the refugee crisis in Lebanon to spread the Gospel in a new and exciting way that's never been seen before, according to Pierre Housney, the director of

Horizons International. "We have seen thousands of Syrian refugees come to Christ . . . We are seeing whole families come to Christ. We saw one sister lead her sister to Christ, and those two ladies led

their families to Christ and their extended families. We've had fifty or sixty people from that family who are converts to Christianity."

Thank you for supporting the Global Mission Fund, which makes the exploration of these new, exciting opportunities possible!exciting opportunities possible!

Randy Schmor,
Gateway Director

GATEWAY LOCAL

God has brought the nations into our communities by way of international students, immigrants, and refugees. Bud Fuchs offers seminars that provide coaching and training to help churches reach out to internationals in your own community. Bud can lead a seminar to help your church cast a vision for reaching internationals and to train you to host events to help them with conversational English or international welcoming parties. He can guide you in ways to find and connect with your international community.

GATEWAY GLOBAL LOCAL HIGHLIGHT

You never know who will walk into your English as a Second Language (ESL) Conversation Corner. One Saturday morning, a well-dressed, handsome man arrived, obviously in need of help with his English conversation skills. But by his questions, he was wanting help with knowing about and understanding our culture and growing in his walk with Jesus. We agreed to meet weekly beyond our regular ESL event. He soon revealed his past experiences of political success in his home country. He was a rock star in status.

The year went by quickly, and then he accepted his current position in Washington, D.C., as the director of a watchdog organization for his home region of the world. From this position, he influences political leaders on moral issues like human trafficking, sex slavery, child labor, abortion, and the list goes on. He entertains and influences world leaders weekly.

I am thankful that the Lord used me to speak into his life as he influences countless others. The Lord wants to use any of us who are willing to practice hospitality to strangers. Thank you for supporting me and the Global Missions Fund to influence people here at home in cross-cultural settings who have the opportunity to influence others around the world!

Bud Fuchs,
Gateway Cross-Cultural Equipper

LEARN MORE

For more information about Gateway, please contact Randy Schmor or Bud Fuchs.



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Racial Righteousness



As the body of Christ, we represent the purposes of God in a world that is broken in so many ways and over the past couple of years, we have seen just how broken the world is regarding racial and ethnic division. But the body of Christ, what should be a shining example, is composed of people with the same kinds of tensions and disunity we see outside of the body. As an initiative of the NAB, racial righteousness seeks to create bridges of understanding and unity in the church, led by the Spirit of God and his very Word.

When we speak of racial righteousness, we seek not to divide but illuminate, to give voice to those whose voices historically have not been heard or received among the majority church, to create space for conversation and understanding. The goal is the love that exists among people who love and serve the triune God. As we as a church grow in this area, we become even more credible witnesses to the love that God the Father has for those who don't yet know him and to the power of his Son to transform lives and even communities. But we must live it.

MINISTRY RESOURCE FUND

The initiative of racial righteousness seeks to help the church be faithful to the biblical ethic of loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and loving our neighbor as ourselves. It is not ours to question who our neighbor is; we should recognize our neighbor as the one who has come near. Racial righteousness does not hold that people have permanent biases and prejudices that cannot be changed but that as we submit to the Holy Spirit we will grow in love for those who we used to perceive as "other." Racial righteousness looks honestly not just at what is happening today but also at the past that has led us here, recognizing, out of neighbor-love, people's experienced pain related to racial un-righteousness. Racial righteousness seeks to bring healing to the body.

Christ's heart for us who trust him as Lord and Savior is clearly established in the gospel of John, not merely in his teaching ministry but also when we get documentation of his passionate prayer to the Father.

"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me." (John 17:20-23 ESV)

There are those in the NAB context who are living this oneness. It is not easy, but it is incredibly valuable. Based on many conversations and experiences this year, it is clear that so many in the NAB seek to honor well Christ's desire for unity.

RACIAL RIGHTEOUSNESS HIGHLIGHTS

In a 2020 Zoom call with NAB leaders titled "An Invitation to Listen," Aaron Brockmeier, pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, shared from his experiences with bridging racial divisions. He also helped co-lead a Breakout during the 2021 Triennial, giving an update on his ministry. Aaron discussed his work with predominantly African American churches in his city, which has been especially significant given the recent racial tension. After George Floyd's murder, Aaron took the initiative to sit and grieve with an African American pastor, and a growing friendship developed from that encounter. Fellowship across racial boundaries soon followed for the churches they lead. Faith Baptist Church, Zion Baptist Church, and Wayzata Free Church have gathered, holding joint services together, praying and worshiping God as one. They have been listening to one another, learning, and deepening in friendship. Testimonies are being shared, and mutual respect is being earned and developed.

MINISTRY RESOURCE FUND

Racial Righteousness

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

As a result of an introduction from Pastor Jeff Russell of New Beginnings Christian Fellowship in Kokomo, Indiana, Wayne Stapleton, the VP of Racial Righteousness, was invited to dialogue with eight White pastors on April 22, 2021. They sought a perspective of how to approach “our Black brothers and sisters without offending them.” Kokomo is a city with a very challenging racial history, having hosted what had been in 1923 the largest Ku Klux Klan rally in history. But these pastors sincerely have a heart for racial unity. Wayne and the pastors discussed the impact of history, some of the cultural differences between African Americans and Whites, why being colorblind is not the best approach to racial unity, and ways these faithful brothers and sisters can move the city toward racial unity among its churches.

On February 4, 2021, Kerry Bender, the VP of International Missions, and Wayne Stapleton hosted a Zoom call in which they interviewed Dr. Soong-Chan Rah, professor of Evangelism at Fuller Seminary, and Dr. Allan Yeh, assistant professor of History and Theology at Biola University. The theme of the conversation involved the interplay between attitudes regarding race and international missions. Professors Rah and Yeh shared that the cultural captivity of our theology can have a negative impact on our ability to love our neighbors well, whether those neighbors are down the street or on the other side of the world. We were challenged to consider how well we live our theology, that our theology must be beyond propositional – it must be lived out in humility and love. Giving leadership to underrepresented groups and listening to those who are different than ourselves were two recommended ways for churches to actually live out our theology.



On April 28, 2021, Wayne Stapleton was invited to participate in “Conversation about Justice and Black Life” with members of McKernan Baptist Church in Edmonton, Alberta. Over fifty members dialed in to participate in a conversation led by Dan Schroth, lead team pastor. The goal of the conversation was to hear a candid testimony from an African American and provide the opportunity for dialogue around topics such as the relationship between discipleship and justice and how justice is woven into the Gospel. It was apparent that the members on this call sought true understanding and approached the conversation with openness and humility.

As we work to build bridges of unity, it is important to be open to the hard conversations pertaining to racial righteousness. If you are interested in what this looks like, or want to host a gathering at your church or small group, please contact Wayne Stapleton.

LEARN MORE

For more information about Racial Righteousness, please contact Wayne Stapleton, VP of Racial Righteousness.



Wayne Stapleton

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EYELET

ELEVATING YOUNGER LEADERS TEAM



EYELET (Elevating Younger Leaders Team) is the team that is overseeing one of the NAB's eight initiatives: to elevate younger leaders. The purpose of EYELET is rather simple. This team exists to elevate the voices, ideas, dreams, and presence of younger leaders in our conference. We believe the way forward as a conference must be more fully and intentionally led by younger leaders. Those of us

who are older continue to be desperately needed as our conference moves into the future, but our continued leadership must be more and more oriented around making room and unleashing the creative and Holy Spirit-inspired leadership of our younger leaders. If EYELET does its job well over the next few years, more and more of the leadership, dreaming, planning, and activity of our conference of churches will be heavily influenced by younger leaders. Our future demands it.

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT

I often hear people say that "teenagers are the future generation of the church." For those of us in youth ministry, it grinds on us. It grinds on us because it communicates that this generation is a 'not yet' generation of leaders. Someday they can lead. Someday they can do great things. But 'not yet.'

Today we see teenagers in positions of influence and impact in the church that reveal they are the church, that they are not sitting and waiting on the bench to influence and impact the world with the good news of the Gospel, but that they are on the field, in the game, turning the world upside down in the name of Jesus.

There have been moments in my thirteen years of youth ministry where I have felt like I'm the 'not yet' generation. I've wanted to be on the field, searching for any way to have influence and make an impact, even if it's just being the water girl. Being a part of EYELET has been an opportunity to connect with other young leaders in the NAB family who have a collective desire to see God's Kingdom come here on earth as it is in heaven. The time together has stirred in me a desire to see these connections continue, that meeting together as a team of young leaders isn't the end but only the beginning of more connections being made, specifically in the youth ministries of the NAB, to see more young leaders step into roles on the field they were created for so that the world around them and us can witness God's goodness and faithfulness.

For those who feel as though they are sitting in the 'not yet,' maybe this is the opportunity for you to move to 'why not now?' Maybe it's reaching out to another young leader or another youth worker to connect and grow together. If that's something you're interested in, I'd love to talk to you about creating a connection for youth pastors/workers in the NAB. Whatever role you play matters because it has significance and impact on the life of someone else. That individual's life on earth and that individual's eternity could be impacted because you got off the bench instead of sitting in the 'not yet,' because the time is now.

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LEARN MORE

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