

AMERICAN BAPTIST UNITED MISSION
“United Mission: A Symphony”

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**When we are united in God’s mission,
our United Mission will grow.**

Among the most familiar of Jesus’ teachings are the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount. One of the best descriptions I have read portrays the beatitudes as the “heavenly octave.” This musical imagery tells us immediately that one note is not enough and that each note is integrally related to the others. Read the words once again:

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

*‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
‘Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
‘Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
‘Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
‘Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*‘Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.’
(Matthew 5:1-12, NRSV)*

Charles James Cook wrote: “Living daily into the spirit of the Beatitudes involves looking at them as a collection of the whole, rather than looking at each one individually.” Each beatitude relates to the others and they build on one another. The words are clear and are spoken to us. The words are not in the imperative mood. They are in the indicative. They describe life in the present and in God’s kingdom to come. They are not calls to action; they are promises. To be blessed is not simply to be happy. It is to know that one is included in God’s coming realm. They are a symphony, not a one-note orchestra or instrument.

As we participate in God’s mission, for American Baptists, I believe, the best choice is the symphony of United Mission. The chords have many notes. Each is important, but

each is insufficient without the rest. United Mission is our “American Baptist Symphony.”

- Your church’s United Mission giving supports your local region, which makes it possible for the region to provide more effective support for your church and others. In fact, most of the income for each of our regions comes from **gifts to United Mission**. Our giving to UM pays the major parts of the salaries of our region’s staff who provide:
 - staff service for search committees;
 - assistance resolving church conflicts;
 - area ministers to maintain contact with individual pastors and with associations and small groups of churches;
 - camping ministry;
 - resources to assist your church in growth and spiritual health; and
 - education and training of pastors, youth, and lay leaders in congregational empowerment.
- UM giving also supports:
 - The Office of the General Secretary
 - American Baptist Men
 - American Baptist Women’s Ministries (through the Love Gift)
 - ABC Information Services
 - American Baptist Home Mission Societies
 - International Ministries
 - Colleges, Seminaries, Homes Hospitals, etc.
 - Career Centers
 - Mission Resource Development
 - American Baptist Historical Society
 - American Baptist Personnel Services
 - Orientation to ABC LifeReminder: If you need a remittance form with your church’s name, address, and PIN number, please contact your regional office.

THANK YOU for your support of American Baptist United Mission!

Ron