



IM Announces 2013 Theme and a Variety of Experiences to Celebrate 200 Years

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 2/6/13)—In 2013 American Baptist International Ministries (IM) will honor what God has done internationally through American Baptists over the last 200 years by renewing its commitment to Christ's mission in the future. Under the theme, "EMBRACE THE CAUSE," IM will both celebrate 200 years of God's blessing and guidance, and also seek God's renewal and guidance for a third century in mission service.

IM's educational materials, events, trips and activities throughout the year will be grounded in the mission contained in God's promise to Abraham, "All the families on earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:3 NLT).

"We hear God's invitation to new life in Christ as a gift," comments Stan Slade, IM's associate executive director for program. "We hear it also as a calling: to glorify God in all the earth by crossing cultural boundaries to make disciples of Jesus Christ. IM joins with churches and partners throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico, and with partners around the globe to embrace this cause. We re-affirm our desire to be used by God to bless all the families of the earth."

American Baptists -- with Baptists everywhere -- are currently celebrating the bicentennial of Ann and Adoniram Judson's entry into mission service. After 200 years, they are still outstanding examples of what it means to embrace the cause. The Judsons sailed from Salem, MA in 1812 and began their work in Burma in 1813. These courageous servants of God endured great hardships to bring Christ to the peoples of Burma. God used them not only to produce great fruit in Burma, but to inspire many Americans to pray, give and go, as they embraced the cause to which the Judsons dedicated their lives.

The cause to which the Judsons so sacrificially gave themselves continues today. As American Baptists celebrate our rich heritage in mission, we are called to embrace that cause in new ways in our own time. Throughout 2013, IM will be seeking in a variety of ways to help American Baptists embrace the cause:

May, 2013

“*Adoniram Judson: The Man and the Mission*” This six-video collection on DVD will tell the story of Adoniram and Ann Judson and the beginning of the American mission movement. Researched and narrated by Dr. Jerry Cain, former president and current chancellor of Judson University, the collection provides an inspirational and educational overview of the amazing lives of Adoniram and Ann Judson, the first American Baptist missionaries. More information to come.

May 1 – June 30, 2013

Matching Gift Opportunity:

Individuals will be invited to embrace the cause by providing support for those who go: both new missionaries and missionaries who are already serving. New or increased individual contributions to support this effort will be matched at 100%. God has called IM to enter its third century of mission with an expanding missionary force, and this Matching Campaign is dedicated to pursuing that vision. More information to come.

June 21-23, 2013

The American Baptist Mission Summit, in Overland Park/Kansas City provides an opportunity for American Baptists to experience the power of God’s call to global mission and to embrace the cause. The IM **luncheon on Saturday, June 22 will feature** Dr. Allen Yeh, associate professor of Intercultural Studies and Missiology at Biola University, the Chin Youth Choir and an engaging interactive exhibit. Mission Summit speakers will include Dr. Yam Kho Pau, leader of Baptists in Myanmar (Burma), plus other inspirational speakers, global music, informal discussion, worship and prayer. For tickets: www.americanbaptists2013.org

August 9 – 11, 2013

Embrace the Cause: Stepping into Global Mission

At the Green Lake Conference Center

This is a special opportunity for those exploring a call to international cross-cultural mission service. The weekend will combine elements of spiritual retreat, discernment and training. Participants will meet with IM missionaries and staff to pray, worship, learn and reflect upon God's call on their lives. For more information, contact Jim Bell: jim.bell@abc-usa.org.

July 2013

The 2013 **Mission Study Guide** will focus on Myanmar and provide devotionals, Bible studies and stories from IM missionaries Joel Hoefle and Trish Magal, Duane and Marcia Binkley, as well as women in leadership in Myanmar.

August– September, 2013

World Mission Offering promotional materials will be received in churches in July and will feature Myanmar and the amazing work of church building and discipleship happening today through the Myanmar Baptist Convention. This work began in 1813 with American Baptist missionaries Adoniram and Ann Judson and continues to the present day.

www.worldmissionoffering.org(materials will be available in July)

For more information, contact Catherine Nold: catherine.nold@abc-usa.org

American Baptist International Ministries was organized in 1814 as the first Baptist international mission agency in America. It began its pioneer mission work in Burma and today works in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and the Americas serving more than 1,800 long-term and short-term missionaries. Its central mission is to help people come to faith in Jesus, grow in their relationship with God, and change their worlds through the power of the Spirit. It works with respected partners in over 70 countries in ministries that meet human need.

American Baptist Churches is one of the most diverse Christian denominations today, with over 5,200 local congregations comprised of 1.3 million members, across the United States and Puerto Rico, all engaged in God's mission around the world.