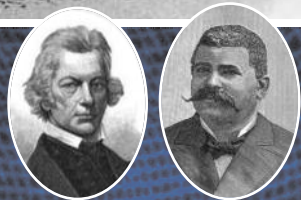
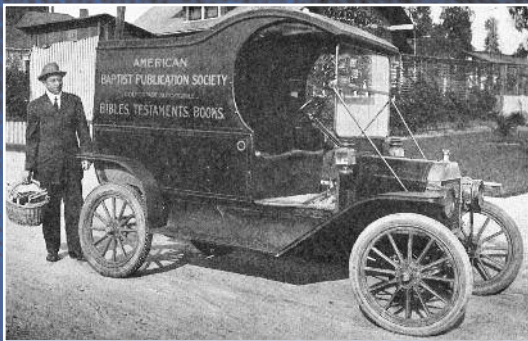
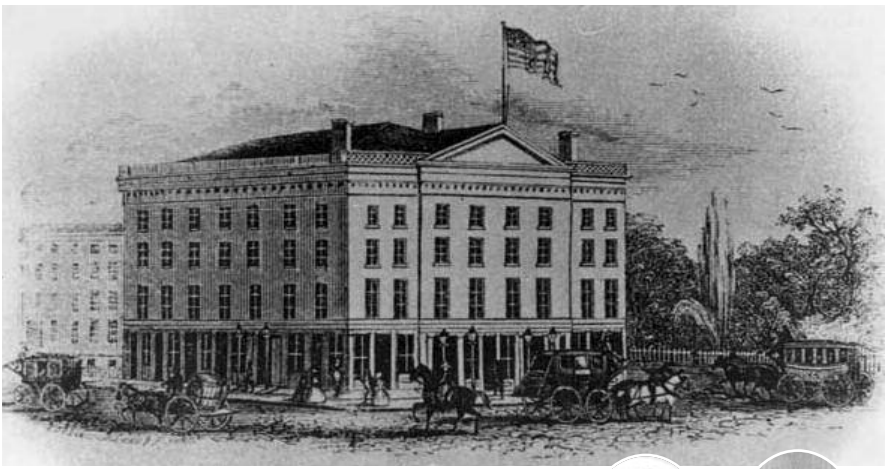


# AMERICAN BAPTIST HOME MISSION ROOTS 1824-2010



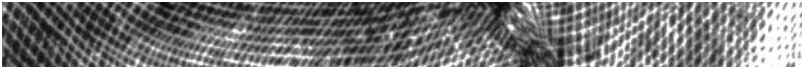
A journey back to the earliest beginnings of home mission with a special focus on New York City, early leaders and movements, and missiology past and present

DAVID CHARLES LAUBACH

**COVER** (Clockwise)

1. Clinton Hall, New York City. Used by permission of New York University Archives.
2. Spencer H. Cone, pastor of Oliver Street Baptist Church. Image from Thomas Armitage, "A History of the Baptists; Traced by their Vital Principles and Practices, from the Time of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to the Year 1886" (New York: Bryan, Taylor, & Co., 1887).
3. William J. Simmons, born of slave parents in South Carolina, district secretary for the Southern States for the ABHMS, president of the Normal and Theological Institution of Louisville, Ky. (now Simmons College) and a founder of the National Baptist Convention. Image from William J. Simmons, "Men of Mark: Eminent, Progressive and Rising" (Cleveland: George M. Rewell, 1887).
4. Lucius Aitsan and Isabel Crawford. Aitsan was a Kiowa Christian and Crawford a missionary of the WABHMS at Saddleback Mountain, Okla. Courtesy of the Photographic Archives of the American Baptist Historical Society.
5. The first colportage automobile equipment. Colporteur D.B. Ward. Image from Lemuel C. Barnes, Mary Clark Barnes, and Edward M. Stephenson, "Pioneers of Light: The First Century of the American Baptist Publication Society 1824-1924" (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1924).

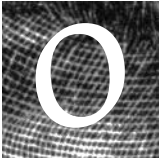
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D A V I D   C H A R L E S   L A U B A C H

## PREFACE



On April 27, 2010, National Ministries (American Baptist Churches USA) staff, mission partners, and friends met in New York City at the historic Mariner's Temple Baptist Church, Interchurch Center, and Riverside Church to "go back to the future." At the place where The American Baptist Home Mission Society was founded in 1832, National Ministries announced that, in 2010, it will reclaim its identity as the American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) and that the 1972 identity as National Ministries will be set aside. Among those present in 1832 was Thomas Ward Merrill from Michigan Territory, who secured commitments of \$10 each from seven delegates and the first home missionary commission, dated May 11, from the newly formed society and returned to Michigan to found the Michigan and Huron Institute (later Kalamazoo College) and continue his work as pastor and evangelist. This booklet, "American Baptist Home Mission ROOTS," is a journey back to the earliest beginnings of home mission with a special focus on New York City, early leaders and movements, and missiology.

The deepest root of ABHMS is the Baptist General Tract Society founded in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 25, 1824, "to disseminate evangelical truth, and to inculcate sound morals, by the distribution of tracts." In 1826 the Tract Society relocated to Philadelphia, where it was renamed the American Baptist Publication Society. The 1824 Tract Society became the American Baptist Publication and Sunday School Society in 1840, the Bible and Publication Society in 1870, the Board of Publication and Education in 1944, and Educational Ministries in 1972. Home Mission pioneer John Mason Peck was the general secretary, 1843-1845. It was Dr. Henry Lyman Morehouse, corresponding secretary of the ABHMS, who took the lead in forming the American Baptist Education Society (ABES) in May 1888 to promote "Christian education under Baptist auspices in North America." Again it was Morehouse who succeeded in interesting John D. Rockefeller in major support for Bacone College, Spelman College, and black education in general. The major project of the ABES was the founding of the University of Chicago.<sup>1</sup> Responsibility for schools founded for freed men and women after the Civil War remained with the ABHMS until the Great Depression, when this work



**Colportage wagon No. 1 in 1897, Jackson, Mich.  
E.M. Stephenson, Sunday-school missionary, in charge.**

was transferred to the Education Society.<sup>2</sup> After 1935, the only schools administered by the ABHMS were Bacone College in Muskogee, Okla., International Baptist Seminary in East Orange, N.J., and the Spanish-American Baptist Seminary (SABS) in Los Angeles.<sup>3</sup> The publishing (Judson Press), educational, and discipleship ministries as well as stories of Educational Ministries were transferred to National Ministries in 2003 with the dissolution of the Board of Publication and Education (Educational Ministries).

Other significant roots that were grafted into the work of National Ministries were the Women's Baptist Home Mission Society (WBHMS), founded in Chicago on Feb. 1, 1877, and the Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society (WABHMS), founded in Boston on Nov. 14, 1877. These two societies merged in 1909 and moved their offices to New York City. In 1955, the WABHMS integrated its work with the ABHMS.

Soon after the founding of the ABHMS, the Free Will Baptist Home Mission Society was formed in Dover, N.H., on July 31, 1834, with David Marks as the first corresponding secretary. In 1842, Marks moved to Oberlin, Ohio, where he befriended evangelist Charles G. Finney and was active in the Underground Railroad in Ohio. The Free Will Society and related Free Baptist Women's Missionary Society of Boston merged with the American Baptist Societies in 1911.

## THE SEEDS OF THE HOME MISSION SOCIETY

When The American Baptist Home Mission Society was founded in 1832, it was patterned after the older American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) (1814) and the even older Massachusetts Domestic Missionary Society (1802), which was organized to “furnish occasional preaching, and to promote the knowledge of evangelic truth in the new settlements of these United States, or further, if circumstances should render it proper” and to “evangelize the Indians and western frontiersmen.”<sup>4</sup> The imprint of these early missionary societies, leaders, and missionaries has been determinative for the world view and work of ABHMS (National Ministries, 1972-2010). The germ of today’s home mission theology and practice was present in our forebears’ home mission theology and practice.

For most of its history, ABHMS enabled American Baptist congregations to support missionaries serving on its behalf in North America, including Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central America. In the beginning, before telegraphs and railroads, reaching these new frontiers on the vast North American continent for Christ required the cooperative efforts of many Baptists and great hardship on the part of missionaries. As mission fields grew stronger and became self-supporting, these newly formed associations, societies, and conventions began planting churches, founding schools, and sending and supporting their own missionaries. It is the ancient biblical model that the one evangelized and disciplined becomes the evangelist and disciple-maker so that faith passes from neighbor to neighbor and generation to generation. A good example is the Kiowa Baptists at Saddleback Mountain in Oklahoma, who wanted “other Indians to hear about the Jesus Road” and filled red Jesus barrels with money to send a missionary to the Hopi Indians in Arizona and established the Sunlight Mission on Second Mesa.<sup>5</sup> In the late 20th century, a corrective missiological shift occurred that continues to gain momentum. Local congregations saw home mission as not only what they paid others to do on their behalf on distant frontier mission fields on the Crow Reservation in Montana or Kodiak, Alaska, but also what they were called to do on the mission field at their own doorstep. Historically, African-American churches have practiced “mission on your doorstep,” yet a radical missional-church approach also challenges African-Americans. This shift can be seen in the examples of African-American churches in Phoenix sponsoring Navajo ministry and those in Los Angeles adding Latino staff and offering Spanish language classes.

Dr. William Staughton was present with William Carey at the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society (Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Amongst the Heathen) at Kettering, England, in 1792. His zeal for foreign missions was transplanted to America when he emigrated in 1793. He wrote “The Baptist Mission in India” in 1811. At First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, on May 18, 1814, the first General Missionary

Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions (i.e. Triennial Convention) elected Staughton—an ardent supporter of Christian missionary work—as its first corresponding secretary for the newly formed Baptist Board of Foreign Missions. The purpose of the Triennial Convention was to support Adoniram and Ann Judson’s mission in Burmah. The Judsons and Rev. Luther Rice embraced Baptist sentiments aboard ship as they sailed to Calcutta. In India, they met British Baptist missionary Carey and were baptized by immersion. Evicted by the East India Co., Rice returned to America while the Judsons traveled to Burmah. The fruit of Judson’s long labor in Burmah has in the 21st century come to the shores of North America, and ABHMS is currently working with 93 Burmese congregations.<sup>6</sup>

John Mason Peck, a pastor in central New York, met Rice in June 1815 and spent several months traveling throughout central New York promoting a missionary spirit, encouraging missionary societies, and taking up collections for foreign missions. Influenced by the stories of Judson and Carey and stirred by the missionary vision of Rice, Peck sought support from the Triennial Convention to be appointed a missionary to the Missouri Territory. From May 1816 until May 1817, Peck studied under Staughton in Philadelphia, when he and James Welch were commissioned for the “domestic mission” in the Missouri Territory. Rice was present. Peck and Welch arrived in St. Louis with their families in December 1817.

No one person influenced Baptist work more in the mid-West over the coming years than Peck. A pioneer of new methods, he founded the first Sunday schools, women’s societies, and missionary societies in the territory. Peck organized the first Baptist churches west of the Mississippi, ordained the first African-American clergy in St. Louis, and helped found Alton Seminary, which later became Shurtleff College. Peck also served two terms in the Illinois State Legislature and was a vocal opponent of slavery. He faced harsh criticism from anti-mission, or “old school,” Baptists, who believed neither in Sunday schools, colleges, or theological seminaries nor missionary, tract, or Bible societies. They held that salvation does not depend on human instrumentalities, but upon divine grace only. They declared themselves as opposed to all of these “contrivances which seem to make the salvation of men depend on human effort.”<sup>7</sup>

Peck’s appointment from the Triennial Convention was short-lived and not renewed in 1820. Opposition to the missionaries sprang from the fact that they had settled in St. Louis, where they established a church and a school, instead of “plunging into the wilderness and converting the Indians.” The convention directed Peck to travel to Fort Wayne, Ind., to join Isaac McCoy in his work with the Indians. With calls to send missionaries to Russia, India, and the Sandwich Islands, and the financial demands of the new Columbia College in Washington, D.C., there were no resources to support home

mission except with the Native Americans. Austen Kennedy De Blois and Lemuel Call Barnes would comment a century later, "St. Louis was not far enough away from Philadelphia to appeal to the imagination, as India and Burma did. It was not near enough to be made the subject of personal investigation on the part of members of the Board, as was done in the case of destitute sections in Maine and Virginia."<sup>8</sup> Peck did not join McCoy and continued his support with help from Massachusetts and later from ABHMS.



**Rev. John Berry Meachum**

Rev. John Berry Meachum (1789-1854), a former slave and skilled carpenter who bought freedom for himself and his family, assisted American Baptist Home Mission pioneer Peck with the church and Sunday school Peck founded in St. Louis in 1817.<sup>9</sup> Black and white, bond and free worshipped together at First Baptist until 1822, when African-American worshippers formed a separate branch. That Peck and Meachum were both "messengers" from the church to the all-white Baptist Association was remarkable. Peck ordained Pastor Meachum in 1825, when he founded the First African Baptist Church, the first Protestant congregation established for African-Americans west of the Mississippi

River. Shortly after a brick church building was erected, Meachum and Peck opened a day school called the "Candle Tallow School" because classes were conducted in a secret room with no windows to avoid being discovered by the sheriff. According to the laws of Missouri, it was forbidden to teach free or slave blacks to read and write. Even more restrictive laws were enacted by the General Assembly of Missouri in 1847.

- 1. No person shall keep or teach any school for the instruction of negroes or mulattoes, in reading or writing, in this State.*
- 2. No meeting or assemblage of negroes or mulattoes, for the purpose of religious worship, or preaching, shall be held or permitted where the services are performed or conducted by negroes or mulattoes, unless some sheriff, constable, marshal, police officer, or justice of the peace shall be present during all the time of such meeting or assemblage, in order to prevent all seditious speeches, and disorderly and unlawful conduct of every kind.*

But Meachum would not be denied. With the help of some of his friends—black and white—he bought a steamboat, fitted it with a library and classrooms, and, in 1847, christened his ship "Freedom School." The Mississippi River was federal territory, and the federal government did not recognize slavery. Dennis Durst, professor of Theology at the Sack School of Bible and Ministry at Kentucky Christian College, writes, "Thus Meachum's Floating Freedom School's education of Black children into the 1850s not only



improved the lot of those children, but stood as a prophetic rebuke to the unjust social conditions that made such measures necessary.”

Meachum frequently used a popular Ethiopian motif in his preaching, drawing from Psalm 68:31, κλν. This text proved particularly evocative for antebellum African-Americans, with its promising words: “Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God.” In Meachum’s “Address to all the Colored Citizens of the United States” in Philadelphia in 1846, he proclaimed:

*“PROVIDENCE has placed us all on the shores of America—and God has said ‘Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands To God.’ This being true, is it not necessary that some exertion should be made? Ought we not to use our influence and the means placed in our power for the consummation of this end? All will admit that we are capable of elevating ourselves, for we have once been distinguished as one of the greatest nations, and it is reasonable to suppose that what has once been can be again. Sin has degraded us, but righteousness will exalt us.”*

When the missionary work of The American Baptist Home Mission Society has been at its best, those who are changed by this mission, like Meachum, continue to be change agents and continue Christ’s mission to the next generation.

De Blois and Lemuel Barnes wrote about Peck’s methods and policies, “In all his efforts to evangelize the communities which he visited, ‘The Pioneer,’ as he came to be called, used four chief agencies; these were sermons, Bibles, Sunday-schools and personal conversations.”<sup>10</sup> This biblical, relational, and disciple-making approach is still reflected in recent National Ministries’ initiatives in evangelism and education. Peck founded the Missouri Bible Society in 1818, the Green County Sunday School Association in 1824, female mite societies in towns and villages, the American Baptist Historical Society, and Baptist Associations in Missouri and Illinois. His ability to connect persons and resources around a common vision and mission continues in the ABHMS’ strategic ministry purpose: “Actively develop and network Christ-centered leadership for the transformation of persons, congregations, communities and cultures.” Peck became an agent of the American Colonization Society, which founded Liberia and returned freed blacks to Africa, a mighty advocate of temperance, a student of the intricate problems of immigration, and a stout opponent of the effort to make Illinois a slave state. This social conscience has been conspicuous in the history of the ABHMS. The American Baptist Antislavery Convention held in New York City in 1840 called for the immediate emancipation of slaves. At the annual meeting of the society in 1844, Dr. Bartholomew Welch of New York City answered the question of what he would do about slavery: “Do? Do? Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, to all the inhabitants thereof. That is what I would do.”<sup>11</sup> When

Congress passed the restrictive legislation in 1881-82 against Chinese immigration, ABHMS passed resolutions that this law was “contrary to the fundamental principles of our free government, and opposed to the spirit of the Christian religion.”<sup>12</sup> In the 20th century, ABHMS assisted the Japanese in internment camps during World War II, was a frontline advocate during the Civil Rights Movement with Jitsuo Morikawa organizing marches in 1963, worked for the empowerment of women in church and society, strove for ecological responsibility in its eco-justice emphasis, supported the Sullivan Principles during apartheid in South Africa, and continues to play an activist role in Social and Ethical Responsibility in Investing. Recently, National Ministries partnered with the Proctor Institute in hearings following Hurricane Katrina, facilitated racial reconciliation, and advocated for children in poverty.

One subject for Peck, however, underlay all others and tended to shape and determine those other efforts. It was that of education, better education, higher education. National Ministries’ core mission statement is “Transforming Leadership, Transforming Lives!” Equipping leaders for more effective home mission is central. With the incorporation of the work of Educational Ministries in 2003, including networks of college and seminary administrators, campus ministers, ministries of publishing, discipleship ministries with children and youth, and the Journeys adult Sunday school curriculum, education continues to be a high missional value.

## THE FRUIT OF HOME MISSION

Leaders and missionaries of ABHMS were involved in the founding of New York University, Vassar College, Denison University, Kalamazoo College, Bacone College, Franklin College, and other schools. After the Civil War, ABHMS directed considerable financial and human resources to the establishment of schools for freed men. The first of more than a dozen was Wayland Seminary in Washington, D.C., in 1865, where Booker T. Washington studied, 1878-79. Wayland merged with the Richmond Institute in 1899 to form Virginia Union University. Shaw University, Morehouse College, Benedict College, and Florida Memorial University all trace their beginnings to the work of ABHMS. During the Great Depression, ABHMS turned over administration of the historically black colleges to the American Baptist Board of Education. Responsibility for Bacone College, International Baptist Seminary, and SABS (see photo on page 29) remained with the Home Mission Society.<sup>13</sup>

The first home missionary appointed after the founding of The American Baptist Home Mission Society in 1832 (mentioned in the preface) was Merrill, who, in 1829, went to the Michigan Territory. While a student at Waterville College in Maine, Merrill was influenced by the conversion of Professor George Dana Boardman and his offer of himself to serve as a missionary in India. To earn money for his trip from Maine to Michigan, he sold Mrs.

Judson's "Memoirs" and the American Baptist Magazine. In Grand Rapids, he baptized Native Americans, was a founder of the LaGrange Association, was a pastor and church planter, and, later in life, was a fundraiser for the American Bible Union.<sup>14</sup> When the churches of Michigan were numerous enough to be self-sufficient, ABHMS shifted resources to missionary work with the foreign population, the Detroit Baptist City Mission Society, and loans and gifts for the building of church edifices.

In 1833, 91 missionaries were appointed by the Home Mission Society. Many of the appointments in the early years were only for a few months "being exploring missionaries to ascertain and report on the conditions in the fields."<sup>15</sup> Among the 91 was Allen B. Freeman, sent to Chicago to found the First Baptist Church, the first church and school in this small frontier village. Lake Michigan was the baptistery. He planted five other churches in the prairie. Returning from one of these outposts 50 miles south of Chicago in December 1834, he died of exhaustion and exposure. This is the second missionary death; Spencer Clack died of cholera in 1833 in Palmyra, Mo. Early missionaries forded rivers, rode horseback, and slept on beds of pine needles to spread the gospel. The historical record of The American Baptist Home Mission Society and predecessor societies trace an evolving home missiology that even today contains the original genetic material of the founders and pioneer missionaries.

The ministries of Peck, Jonathan Going, Rev. Dr. Archibald Maclay, Merrill and Freeman, and other early missionaries and leaders shaped home mission for more than a century. Missionaries followed the expanding boundaries of the United States and ventured into Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central America. "North America for Christ" was a missional manifest destiny. When the Louisiana Purchase, Lewis and Clark Expedition and cessation of Indian hostilities during and following the War of 1812 opened the way for settlement in the Mississippi Valley, American Baptists were among the pioneers. Similarly, when opportunities opened in the Northwest Territory (modern states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, as well as the north-eastern part of Minnesota), in the Southwest following the Mexican-American War, in California during the 1849 Gold Rush, in the Republic of Texas, post-Russian Alaska, and in Cuba and Puerto Rico after the Spanish-American War, home missionaries moved to these new frontiers. As missions and churches were planted, missionaries created associations and Bible and tract societies and encouraged the formation of state conventions and, later, city mission societies. Printed materials were always essential to home mission activity. It is notable that, for the first 63 years, the offices of The American Baptist Home Mission Society were always near printing houses in Lower Manhattan. Tracts and Bibles, publications such as the Baptist Home Mission Monthly, Tidings, Home Mission Echoes, and Hope were essential mission tools. The American Baptist Home Mission Society worked jointly with the American Baptist Publication Society to dispatch colporteur wagons, railroad

chapel cars, and gospel cruisers in the waters of Oregon and Washington to carry the printed and spoken word to the West, Puerto Rico, and Mexico. In 1931, 46 colporteur and chapel car missionaries were under appointment by The American Baptist Home Mission Society.<sup>16</sup>



**Almon C. Bacone**

The Home Mission Society sent missionaries to America's frontier, including some work with "Indians and Negroes," but it was not until after 1865 that the trust for Indian work in the United States, which had almost been extinguished during the Civil War, was transferred by the Missionary Union (later the ABFMS and International Ministries) to the Home Mission Society. By 1877, 13 home missionaries were at work among the Creek, Seminole, Delaware, Shwano, Kickapoo, Sac, and Fox in Indian Territory (modern Oklahoma). The WABHMS commissioned in its early years Mrs. E.A. Shaw, M.D., and Mrs. C. Bond (a Choctaw Christian) to serve with the Choctaws and Chickasaws in Indian Territory (Oklahoma). Almon C.

Bacone opened the Indian Normal and Theological School at Tahlequah in 1880. In 1881, the Creek Nation House of Warriors and House of Kings passed a bill to grant 160 acres to The American Baptist Home Mission Society to build a campus at Muskogee. At Bacone's death, the school was renamed Bacone College. In 1914, the Oklahoma Baptist Convention voted to singly align with the Southern Baptist Convention. Home Mission Society work with the "civilized tribes" ended, work with the "blanket tribes" expanded in western Oklahoma, and new opportunities opened in Arizona, Montana, and California.

Ministry with freed men, women, and children began while the Civil War still raged. Joanna P. Moore learned of the needs of the freed women and children on Island No. 10, north of Memphis on the Mississippi River. In November 1863, she found herself on Island No. 10 among "1,100 colored women and children in distress" and a Union Army encampment. She had \$4 from her Baptist Sabbath School in Belvidere, Ill., a promise of another \$4 each month, a commission from The American Baptist Home Mission Society (without salary); she was the first missionary appointment made to the South. Thus she began a ministry that would span 40 years and earn her the moniker "Swamp Angel of the South." In 1864, she ministered to a group of people at Helena, Ark. In 1868 she went to Lauderdale, Miss., to help the Friends in an orphan asylum. While she was at one time left temporarily in charge of the institution, cholera broke out, and 11 children died within one week; but she remained at her post until the fury of the plague was abated. She spent nine years in the vicinity of New Orleans, reading the Bible to those who could not read, writing letters in search of lost ones, and especially caring for the helpless old women that she met. She began the Fireside

Schools in 1884 with “a prepared Bible lesson for all the family to read together daily; supplying the home with other appropriate books for parent and child to read together.” She prepared a leaflet with Bible lessons each month called HOPE.<sup>17</sup> Moore was the first missionary appointed by the newly formed WBHMS in 1877 and in the first graduating class of its Baptist Missionary Training School in Chicago in 1888. The themes of innovation, evangelism, education, ecumenism, networking, and social engagement are transparent in the life of Moore who labored “in Christ’s stead.”

The WBHMS was founded in Chicago in 1877 to “promote the Christianization of homes by means of missions and mission schools, with special reference to the freed people, the Indians and immigrant heathen populations.” In five years there were 22 workers in seven southern states. Moore was the first commissioned missionary.<sup>18</sup> The WBHMS would later found the Baptist Missionary Training School in Chicago, send teachers to the Missionary Training Department of Shaw in Raleigh, N.C., and begin new work with the Piute Indians in Nevada and Mono Indians in California. The WBHMS founded the orphanage at Kodiak, Alaska, in 1893.

In 1877, working with a group of Baptist women in the Boston area, Sophia Packard and Harriet Giles organized the WABHMS for the purpose of supporting women missionaries and the four-fold object of “evangelization of women among the freed people, the Indians, the heathen immigrants and the new settlements of the West.” This was the second women’s mission society, and the two would merge in 1909. Packard was first elected treasurer, then first corresponding secretary of the new society. In 1880, the society sent Packard on a trip to assess the living conditions of black people in the South. She visited homes, schools, and churches in Richmond, Nashville, and New Orleans.



Giles and Packard  
Baptist missionaries and teachers

She returned to Boston to report the bleak findings of her Southern pilgrimage and proposed a school for women and girls. The society was unwilling to support the idea of a new school, reasoning that the South was too hostile, they did not have the funds, and that Packard (age 56) and Giles (age 48) were too old. Packard and sold personal possessions to raise money and planned a school in Atlanta near Morehouse College, supported by The American Baptist Home Mission Society. The Woman’s Society reversed its original decision and, in March 1881, commissioned Packard and Giles as missionaries and teachers to begin a school in Atlanta.

On April 11, 1881, in the basement of Friendship Baptist Church in Atlanta, the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary opened with 11 students. Within three months, enrollment had grown to 80 and additional teachers were sent by the Woman's Society. The ABHMS provided a down payment for a new campus, but pressure was exerted by the ABHMS to merge the men's school with the women's school to create a co-education seminary. The women resisted and, in 1882, had an opportunity to meet with John D. Rockefeller at the Wilson Avenue Baptist Church in Cleveland. Laura Spelman Rockefeller and her sister Lucy had been students at Oread, 1858-59, and had met Packard and Giles on a visit in 1864. Packard's vision for the future of the school, financial astuteness, and missionary piety secured assistance from Rockefeller. Mr. and Mrs. Rockefeller visited the school in 1884 on the school's third anniversary. The debt on a new campus with five frame buildings, formerly used as a barracks for the Union Army occupying Atlanta, was discharged, and the school was renamed Spelman Seminary for Women and Girls in honor of Laura Rockefeller's parents. Packard was treasurer and president of Spelman Seminary from its charter in 1888 until her death in 1891. There were 464 students and 34 faculty at the time of her death.

Even before the geographical frontiers had closed, The American Baptist Home Mission Society found new frontiers in the work with freed men and women in the post-Civil War South and with new immigrants in large urban areas and in rural America. The first immigrant American Baptist church was The German Church of the Lord that Meets on Poplar Street in Philadelphia, organized in 1843 by Konrad Fleischmann. He became the first American Baptist home missionary to German immigrants and was soon joined by John Eschmann, who was appointed in 1845 as a missionary to the Germans in New York City and Newark, N.J. The American Baptist Home Mission Society board declared, "Thus is the Home Mission Society performing Foreign Mission work in our own land, and already has that work been owned and blessed of God."<sup>19</sup> In 1858, August Rauschenbusch, father of Walter, was appointed professor of the new German Department at Rochester Theological Seminary and three times employed by the American Baptist Home Mission Society "to make a tour of inspection and exploration for the benefit of our missions among the German."<sup>20</sup> In 1947, the German seminary moved to Sioux Falls and is now the Sioux Falls Seminary. The churches organized a conference in 1851 in Philadelphia, named the "Conference of Ministers and Helpers of German Churches of Baptized Christians, usually called Baptists." The German Baptist Publication Society was organized in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1881. Also in 1881, the WBHMS appointed Mrs. A. Johanning to work among the Germans in St. Louis. By 1882, 137 German Baptist congregations existed. The missionary spirit of the German churches resulted in new ministries with Bohemians, Poles, Slavonians, and Hungarians.

Missionary work with Scandinavians soon followed. Captain G.W. Schroeder, a Swedish sea captain, was converted at Mariner's Temple in New York and returned to Sweden to birth the Baptist church there. He also married the daughter of the pastor of Mariner's Temple, Mary Steward. From the Baptist church in Sweden, Gustaf Palmquist came to the United States and founded the first Swedish Baptist Church at Rock Island, Ill., in 1852, and was appointed by The American Baptist Home Mission Society to serve in Illinois, Ohio, and New York. F.O. Nelson formed the second Swedish Baptist church in America in Houston, Minn. The WABHMS commissioned Miss Elizabeth Johnson to serve with Swedes in Chicago. In a similar pattern, the Swedish Baptists founded a Swedish language publication, formed the Swedish Baptist General Conference, and began a theological and missionary training school at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Chicago. The school moved to St. Paul, Minn., in 1914 and became Bethel College and Seminary. Swedish Baptists participated in the work of the ABFMS until 1944, but separated its home mission work in 1921.

The American Baptist Home Mission Society began home mission work with Norwegians in 1848. The Norwegian Baptist Training School at Morgan Park, Ill., was connected to the University of Chicago until 1921, when it affiliated with Northern Baptist Theological Seminary. Other home mission efforts with Scandinavians included Danish Baptists in 1856 and Finnish Baptists in 1890. The WBHMS appointed Miss S.B. Rasmussen to work with Danes and Norwegians in Chicago in 1882.

The American Baptist Home Mission Society worked with French Canadian immigrants and Mexicans beginning in 1849. Newton Theological Institute had a French Department. The American Baptist Home Mission Society began work in Santa Fe, N.M., in 1849, sending the first Protestant missionary to territory ceded by Mexico to the United States following the Mexican-American War. Assistants who spoke Spanish were employed for many years to labor among the old Mexican population. Chinese immigrant work started in California in 1869 with Mr. Fung Seung Nam as the first Chinese worker.

## PLANTED IN NEW YORK CITY

The founding meeting of The American Baptist Home Mission Society on April 27, 1832, took place in the Lower East Side of New York City, at the southern end of Bowery Lane, at the Mulberry Street Baptist Church. Baptist delegates to the Triennial Convention, the common name for the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions, founded in 1814, met in 1832 at the Oliver Street Baptist Church, "a stone's throw away" from Mulberry Street. During an adjourned session, delegates walked or took horse and carriage through Chatham Square past Mott Street to Mulberry Street Baptist Church to found The American Baptist Home Mission Society. The Mulberry Street church was

founded in 1809 as the James Street Church and was the sixth Baptist church in New York City.<sup>21</sup>

Maclay (1776-1860) was another early 19th-century leader whose DNA continues to live in The American Baptist Home Mission Society. He was a native of Scotland and pastor of Mulberry Street Baptist Church from the beginning in 1809 until 1838, when he became general agent for the American and Foreign Bible Society (A&FBS), which he helped found. He was chairman of the Provisional Committee appointed in 1831 to consider the formation of The American Baptist Home Mission Society and a member of its first executive committee. The first meetings of the new society were held at Maclay's parsonage at 56 Harman St. (later renamed East Broadway).



Rev. Archibald Maclay

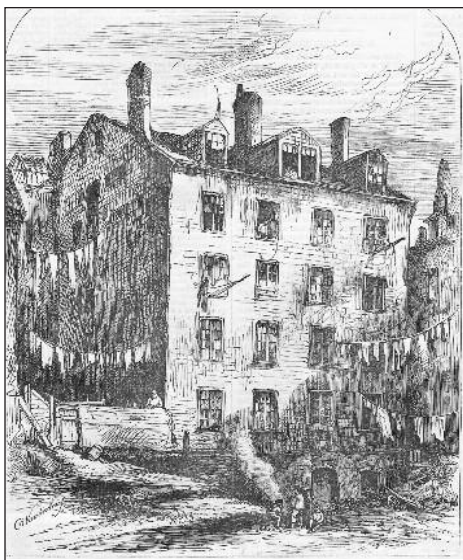
Maclay had been accepted as a missionary to India, when he learned in 1804 that the British government would likely detain him at Calcutta and return him to Glasgow. Disappointed, he resolved to enter the mission fields of America. Maclay had an Adoniram Judson-like conversion from Presbyterian Congregationalism to the Baptist denomination shortly after his arrival in New York. He was baptized in the East River in 1808 by Rev. John Williams, pastor of the Fayette Street Baptist Church (later named Oliver Street). His zeal as a Baptist missionary in New York City would never falter. Maclay was a member of the board of managers of the American Bible Society, when it was founded in 1816; professor of ecclesiastical history and biblical literature at New York Baptist Theological Seminary, when it was founded in 1822; member of the board of directors of the Baptist Missionary Convention of New York in 1824; and member of the publishing committee and recording secretary of the American Tract Society, when it was founded in 1825. He was a founder and member of the Council of New York University in 1831; president of the New York City Baptist Education Society in 1835; first vice president of the A&FBS, when it was formed by Baptists in 1836 because of disagreements with the American Bible Society about translation of *baptizo* as "immerse"; and first vice president of the American Bible Union, when it was formed at Mulberry Street Baptist Church in 1850 over disagreements with A&FBS about revisions to the authorized version of the English Bible. He was an advocate of free public education and minister to hundreds during several cholera epidemics. Maclay wrote that he was orphaned at the age of 7 and that he and his wife, Mary Brown, raised 12 children of their own, plus seven orphan children.

In Maclay, we see the same example of activism and innovation in evangelism, education, ecumenism, networking, and social engagement as we did in Peck; likewise, we see the same influence of missions in foreign lands. The



mission field, however, wasn't only in India or the Mississippi Valley, but was on his doorstep in Lower Manhattan. The life of this forgotten pioneer missionary from the shores of Loch Lomond is a reminder of the difference one person of faith can make and of the mission opportunities we each find in our own communities.<sup>22</sup>

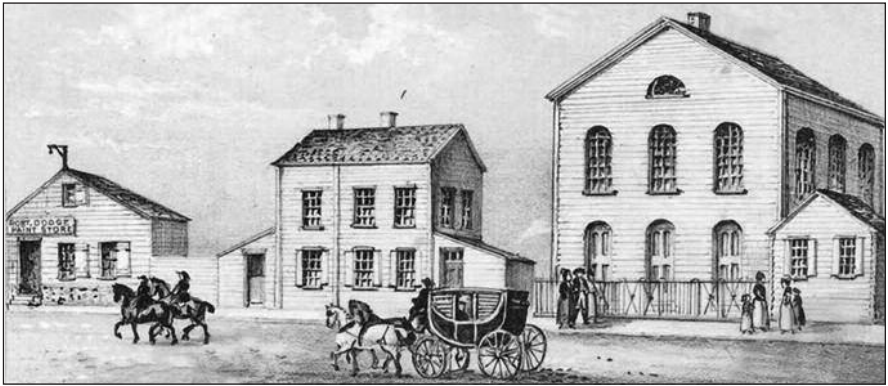
In 1850, the Mulberry Street church, renamed Tabernacle Baptist Church in 1839, relocated uptown on Second Avenue between Tenth and Eleventh streets. By 1853, the old meeting house became a tenement house (Mulberry Hall) along the infamous Mulberry Bend. The airy interior of the church was divided into five stories of living space and was soon filled to overflowing with famine immigrants from County Cork. By the late 1860s, conditions in Mulberry Hall had become "scandalously wretched." Harper's Weekly described the dilapidated building and "foul stench" in 1873. The sanitary inspector for New York City described it as the worst tenement in the city with 21 families and more than 80 persons living



**Old Baptist Church Tenement,  
Harper's Weekly, 1873**

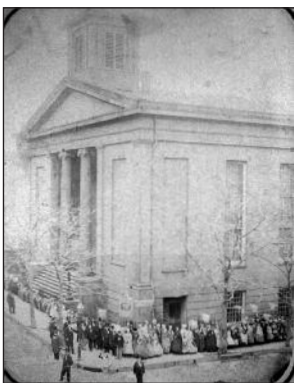
there; it was ordered to be vacated and razed by the board of health, which reported 9.2 deaths per 100 inhabitants in 1873. The church neighborhood was jammed with other filthy tenement houses, garbage-covered streets, prostitution, gambling, violence, drunkenness, and abject poverty. A saloon was then built by Tom ("Fatty") Walsh, a political rival of Tammany Hall's Boss Tweed. Slums were torn down and replaced in 1897 by Mulberry Bend Park, which became one of the first urban parks in the city. It was later renamed Columbus Park, reflecting the large Italian population at the time.

This sad story explains the reason that no historical marker commemorating The American Baptist Home Mission Society founding exists near the present-day Chatham Towers apartments, which occupy the site of the Mulberry Street Church. But the story is a touchstone that encourages us to embrace our rich history of ministry with new immigrants, advocacy for the poor, and care for children in poverty; it points us to the nearby Oliver Street Baptist Church. When the Oliver Street Baptist Church consolidated with the Madison Avenue Baptist Church in 1863, it sold its meeting house to the Baptist Seaman's Bethel, founded in 1843. Mariner's Temple Baptist Church



**The Greek Revival Meeting House at Oliver and Henry streets in New York City built in 1845 was formerly called the Oliver Street Baptist Church and is now Mariner's Temple Baptist Church (see below). Two previous Baptist meetinghouses were on the same site, including the meetinghouses on the right in this 1808 drawing.**

and the ministry to seaman who docked at the nearby East River were now located at the corner of Henry and Oliver streets, where Baptists have been meeting since 1795. Rev. Ira Steward, a commissioned home missionary, served this church, 1844-1865. The property was deeded to The American Baptist Home Mission Society to hold in trust for Mariner's Temple in 1867, and, in 1884, the church became a mission of the New York City Mission Society and The American Baptist Home Mission Society. The Home Mission Society appointed missionaries to serve from 1846 until the 1970s. Among the home missionaries serving at Mariner's Temple were George D. Younger, Robert W. Tiller, and Carl Flemister. Mariner's Temple became self-supporting in 1980, and, in 1992, the title to the church property was transferred back to the congregation.



When maritime activity shifted west with the coming of steam power, necessitating that bigger ships utilize the deeper waters of the Hudson, ministry to the mariners was phased out, giving rise to an expanded ministry with new immigrants. From the Mariner's Temple Baptist Church sprang the First Swedish Baptist Church in 1867 (now Trinity Baptist Church), The First Italian Church (1897), The First Norwegian Church (1903), The First Latvian Church (1905), The First Russian Church (1916), and The First Chinese Church (1926).

Annual meetings of the American Baptist Publication Society, American Baptist Missionary Union (predecessor to the ABFMS), and The American Baptist Home Mission Society convened frequently at the Oliver Street

Church. In 1813, Rice, newly returned from India, introduced the Burmese mission of Adoniram Judson to American Baptists.

## TRACT SOCIETY ROOTS

In the preface, I noted that the Baptist General Tract Society, founded in 1824 by a young pastor from Norfolk, Va., named Noah Davis, is the oldest root of ABHMS. We reviewed that, over the years, the Tract Society became the American Baptist Publication and Sunday School Society in 1840, the Bible and Publication Society in 1870, the Board of Publication and Education in 1944, and Educational Ministries in 1972. The publishing, educational, and discipleship ministries as well as stories of Educational Ministries were transferred to National Ministries in 2003.

The object of the Publication Society in 1855 was “to promote the interests of evangelical religion by means of the Printing Press, Colportage and the Sunday School.” The printing business grew in Philadelphia and then Valley Forge. By 1874, the society was publishing 382 tracts, with 58 of them in six foreign languages. Along with tracts were hymnals, biographies, commentaries, magazines for young and old, and Bibles in 16 languages in 1884. At one time, bookstores existed in Boston, Kansas City, Chicago, Seattle, Los Angeles, and Toronto. Beginning in 1891, seven railroad chapel cars, outfitted with pews, organs, and stained glass and adjoined by miniature parsonages, were deployed to plant Sunday schools and churches in the West. In 1919, the Publication Society and Home Mission Society agreed to do chapel car ministry jointly with expenses paid by the Publication Society and salaries by the Home Mission Society. The publishing ministry continues today as Judson Press and produces books, the Secret Place devotional, Journeys curriculum, and multimedia resources. To celebrate the 185th anniversary of the publishing ministry, Friends of Judson contributed money to purchase a Baptist library for graduating seminary seniors.

The word *colporteur* first appears in an 1841 report. Colporteurs at first worked for commission as they visited families, attended protracted meetings, association meetings, and Sabbath schools, “supplying people with suitable publications and cultivating habits of reading.” Early colporteurs traveled on horseback and by foot. In 1887, the first colporteur wagon was dedicat-



Rev. C.J. Hill, left, and Rev. B.H. Thorlakson, colporteur missionary, North Dakota.

ed at Jackson, Mich. Approximately 100 horse-drawn wagons were eventually built. Seven railroad chapel cars were built between 1891 and 1915 and were a key to planting many new churches. The “Messenger of Peace” chapel car at the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair was the most popular attraction at the transportation building. Colporteur automobiles were first introduced in 1913 for use in the southern counties of California. Gospel cruisers followed automobiles for use on the inland waters of the Pacific, and auto chapel cars for work with Mexicans in California and Arizona. The Crawford Car displayed the names of the Publication Society and Home Mission Society and scripture verses in Spanish and English. The Publication Society, forecasting the future in 1924, imagined mission work using airplanes and radio.

Sunday school work began in 1841. Two early publications were of special note: The Sabbath School Treasury, published monthly at 50 cents per year, and The Sunday School Gleaner, a monthly magazine for Sunday school children at 25 cents yearly. For years, the chief Sunday school work was providing books and libraries to schools at a time when public libraries were almost unknown and private libraries extremely scarce. From 1843 to 1845, Peck, the co-founder of the Home Mission Society, served as general secretary of the Publication Society. Southern Baptists continued to use American Baptist Sunday school material almost to the end of the 19th century. The Publication Society worked closely with the Home Mission Society after the Civil War to provide printed material for freed men, such as “First Reader for Freedmen” and “The Freedman’s Book of Christian Doctrine.”

Many of the stories and storied leaders associated with the American Baptist Publication Society—such as founder Noah Davis; Boston Smith, the general manager of the chapel car work; philanthropist and Sunday school advocate William Bucknell; benefactors from several generations of the Crozer family; and Executive Director William McKee, the first African-American to lead an American Baptist national board—have yet to be woven into the National Ministries story. And, as we enlarge the home mission narrative, we need to continue writing the story of publishing, education, and discipleship with a new generation continuing this mission.<sup>23</sup>

## ROOMS OF THE SOCIETY

When Morehouse wrote the Jubilee history of The American Baptist Home Mission Society, he included a description of 11 locations of the society during its first 50 years. He titled this chapter “Rooms of the Society” and noted a controversy over rented space in 1855 that nearly split the society. Only in the 20th century did The American Baptist Home Mission Society purchase an office building at 164 Fifth Ave. For more than 50 years, offices in Lower Manhattan were near printing presses. The first rented offices of The American Baptist Home Mission Societies in November 1832 were at Clinton Hall, at the southwest corner of Beekman and Nassau streets in New York

City, near the American Bible Society. It was here that the first corresponding secretary, Jonathan Going, had his offices and where the executive committee met monthly. This building was erected about



1830 by the Clinton Hall Association for the purpose of housing the New York Mercantile Library. The first classes of New York University were held there in 1831. Since both Maclay and Spencer H. Cone, D.D. (1785-1855), pastor of the Oliver Street Baptist Church, were founders and members of the University Council, it is no accident that The American Baptist Home Mission Society was located there. In 1854 the Mercantile Library relocated to the former Astor Place Opera House and re-christened it Clinton Hall.



**First Baptist Church,  
New York City - 1849**

For one year, during the brief administration of Corresponding Secretary Luther Crawford, the Home Mission Society moved around the corner to 118 Nassau St. From approximately 1840 until the 1920s, Nassau Street and Park Row were at the center of New York City publishing for 19 New York City newspapers. The New York Times was founded at 118 Nassau St. in 1851. At the intersection of Nassau, Park Row, and Spruce stands a statue of Pennsylvania Gazette publisher Benjamin Franklin as a tribute to the newspaper industry. In the 1920s this was the "stamp district" with dozens of stamp and coin shops. The first floor of 118 Nassau now is the Nassau Bar.

In 1839 The American Baptist Home Mission Societies moved around the corner to 9 Spruce St., on the north side of the street, near the present Pace University, founded in 1909 in the former New York Tribune Building. The university building built in 1960 at One Pace Place now stands on the Tribune site. Benjamin Hill, who was corresponding secretary of the Home Mission Society, 1840-1862, during the contentious years that divided this country and Baptists over slavery, relocated The American Baptist Home Mission Society offices to the newly built First Baptist Church at Elizabeth and Broome

streets. Cone, formerly pastor of the Oliver Street Church and the person who offered the motion to form the home mission society in 1832 and a member of the first executive committee, was now at First Baptist as pastor. Also located here were the Foreign Mission Board offices.



**Spencer H. Cone, D.D.**

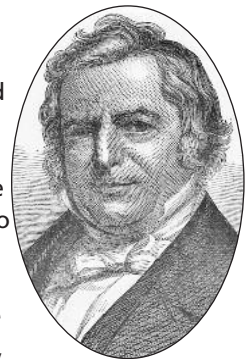
A word should be mentioned about Cone, whose obituary in *The New York Times* said that he had “a checkered life.” Indeed, he was a college drop-out, teacher in New Jersey, professional actor in Philadelphia for seven years, bookkeeper in Baltimore, colonel during the War of 1812, clerk in the U.S. Treasury in Washington, chaplain to Congress, for 18 years pastor of the Oliver Street Baptist Church in New York City, and pastor of First Baptist Church of New York City from 1841 until his death. For nine years he was president of the Triennial Convention, 13 years president of the A&FBS, and the first president of the American Bible Union. He was an advocate of a new version of the

Bible, believing that the King James Version was full of errors. An “immersionist” New Testament was released in 1851, edited by Cone and William Wyckoff, and a complete revision of the New Testament in 1864.

## BAPTIST BIBLE SOCIETIES ROOTS

When I wrote “To Think that it Happened on Mulberry Street” in 2007 and drew a family tree of all of the predecessor organizations that became part of National Ministries, I omitted the two bible societies described above: the A&FBS (1837) and the American Bible Union (1850). Both of these American Baptist organizations were born out of protest but eventually were folded into the American Baptist Publication Society and, with the dissolution of the American Baptist Board of Education and Publication (Educational Ministries) in 2003, are now part of the ABHMS story.

Our Bible Society story begins with William Colgate, the first treasurer of The American Baptist Home Mission Society, when he was a young Englishman, who cherished a Bible that had been presented to him by his father, which was kept in his pew in the First Baptist meeting house. But it was stolen and, thinking that Bibles must be scarce or they would not be taken by theft, he resolved to form a local Bible Society. The Constitution stated, “The object of this Society is to distribute the Bible only—and that without notes—amongst such persons as may not be able to purchase it; and also, as far as may be practicable, to translate or assist in causing it to be translated into



**William Colgate**

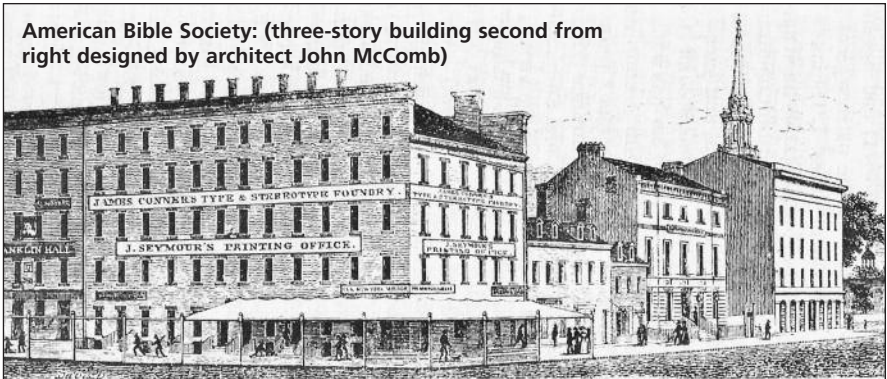
other languages." On May 11, 1816, 35 local societies in different parts of the country sent delegates to a Bible convention which assembled in New York and organized the American Bible Society (ABS) for "The dissemination of the Scriptures in the received versions where they exist, and in the most faithful where they may be required." The Baptists became at once its earnest and liberal supporters.

As early as 1830, the ABS made an appropriation of \$1,200 for Judson's Burman Bible, through the Baptist Triennial Convention, with the full knowledge that he had translated the family of words relating to *baptism* by words which meant "immerse" and "immersion," and down to 1835 the society had appropriated \$18,500 for the same purpose.

Trouble began in 1835 when the ABS rejected any foreign version inconsistent with the King James Version, such as the Bengali New Testament. Baptists, including Colgate, resigned in protest from the board of the ABS and formed a new Bible Society in 1837, the A&FBS. Asian translations would now reflect "immerse" or "dip" instead of *baptize*. Cone of New York is the first president. Colgate, the prominent soap manufacturer and the first treasurer of The American Baptist Home Mission Society, is the first treasurer of the A&FBS. Dr. Charles G. Sommers is the first corresponding secretary. Sommers co-founded the first Baptist Sunday School in New York City in 1810, when he was a member of Maclay's Bible class at Mulberry Street Baptist. Disagreements quickly surfaced among A&FBS leaders over a new English translation that would also translate *baptize* as "immerse." So, in 1850, a group of Baptists broke with the A&FBS and formed the American Bible Union at a meeting at the Mulberry Street Baptist Church in New York City, where the ABHMS was born 18 years earlier. A Baptist New Testament was published in 1865.

Finally, in 1883, it was agreed that the two Bible societies would transfer Bible work to the Publication Society, acknowledging that it is "the right of every Baptist to use that version which best commends its faithfulness to his conscience in the sight of God." Also that "the Publication Society should maintain such intimate and close relations with The American Baptist Home Mission Society in the prosecution of Bible work, that the very large missionary force of the Home Mission Society among people of many languages and on the frontiers of our country may be effectively employed in the practical work of Bible distribution." In 1912 the ABPS printed both the Old and New Testaments based on the Bible Union revisions. It was published as "The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testament: An Improved Version [based in part on the Bible Union Version]" and copies are rare and valuable. Today, Judson Press sells an American Baptist edition of the New Revised Standard Version with *baptize* rather than *immerse*.

The early leaders of the Home Mission Society were concerned about biblical literacy and making scripture available to missionaries. Bible publication eventually passed to the American Baptist Publication Society, founded in 1824. The Publication Society became Educational Ministries and has been part of National Ministries since 2003. It is clear that Baptist identity was also important in the early decades of The American Baptist Home Mission Society but led to three Bible society splits before Baptists found a way to work together again. The three themes of biblical competency, cooperative Christianity, and core Baptist values continue to be important 176 years after we committed to reach North America for Christ.<sup>24</sup>



In 1853 The American Baptist Home Mission Society moved to 115 Nassau Street. This is the building erected by the ABS in 1822 and used by the group until 1852 when it built Bible House at Astor Place. Purchased by the A&FBS, rooms were provided rent free to the ABHMS, who reasoned that they should not have to pay rent since the building was paid for by Baptists. This building was across the street from ABHMS offices in 1838. This site is now an empty lot. The move happened amidst controversy between the A&FBS and the American Bible Union described above, which split from the A&FBS in 1850 over the issue of a revision of the English Bible, threats to form a new Home Mission Society, and debate about purchasing a \$40,000 building for The American Baptist Home Mission Society. The A&FBS building would later be the publishing house for Currier and Ives prints in 1877.

Jay Backus was elected as corresponding secretary of the Home Mission Society in 1862 and served through the Civil War and Reconstruction. In 1862 the A&FBS building enterprise collapsed, and The American Baptist Home Mission Society found new offices across the street at 132 Nassau St. This is now a commercial office building that houses a Dunkin' Donuts on the first floor. The Home Mission Society moved again in 1866 to 39 Park Row at Chatham Square, just a few blocks from Nassau Street. Park Row was the newspaper row described previously. One reason for this concentration of newspaper buildings was proximity to City Hall. Many of these newspaper buildings were demolished when the Brooklyn Bridge was built in the years



1870-1883. Other buildings on Park Row are now part of Pace University, also described previously.

Next in 1871 the Home Mission Society moves its offices across City Hall Park to 239 Broadway. William Hall and Son, Publishers, flute makers, were in this building. The following year, in 1872, the ABHMS moved to the American Tract Society's Tract House at 150 Nassau St., at the corner of Spruce Street. American Tract was founded on May 11, 1825, "To make Jesus Christ known in His redeeming grace and to promote the interests of vital godliness and sound morality, by the circulation of Religious Tracts, calculated to receive the approbation of all Evangelical Christians" (American Tract Society Statement of Purpose). The American Tract's first home in 1825 was a four-story building at 87 Nassau St. in New York City. In 1894-95 this building was razed, and the Tract Society erected a 23-story building. This landmark Romanesque building on the southeast corner of Nassau and Spruce has been converted to condominiums (Park Place Tower) that sell for \$1.8 million. It was the tallest skyscraper in New York City when built and also the location of the A&FBS.



The Tract Society Building built in 1825

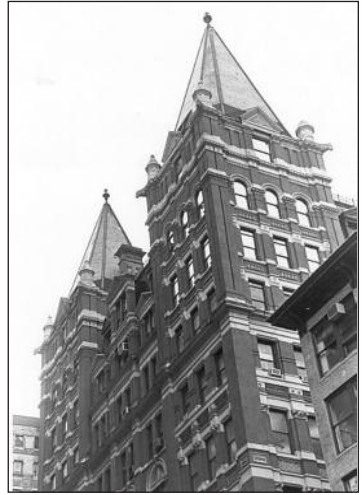


Astor House

The Astor House, built by John Jacob Astor as a hotel in 1836 and demolished in 1926, was the next home of the Home Mission Society in 1879. It is between Vesey and Barclay streets on Broadway, and is now the site of a Staples and sports club. It was near St. Paul's Chapel (*on left in photo above*). Wikipedia reports that, by the 1870s, it was considered old fashioned and unappealing and was mostly used by businessmen.

In 1852, exactly 50 years after the founding of The American Baptist Home Mission Society, it returns to the corner of Nassau and Beekman streets.

Temple Court, 5 Beekman, was built on the site of the old Clinton Hall and is 10 stories taller. This is also the year the reunited American Bible Union and A&FBS transfers its work to the American Baptist Publication Society in Philadelphia.



Temple Court

After 63 years in Lower Manhattan, the Home Mission Society in 1895 moved to Midtown Manhattan (Flatiron District) and offices at the Arnold Constable Building, 111 Fifth Ave. Arnold Constable was the oldest department store in New York City and catered to the “carriage trade.”

In 1904, The American Baptist Home Mission Society moved across Union Square to the Metropolitan Building at 312 Fourth Ave. (now Park Avenue) at the northeast corner of 23rd and Madison. This is the old 11-story white marble Metropolitan Life Insurance building.

## WOMAN’S HOME MISSION ROOTS



Holland House circa 1910

The WABHMS (founded in 1877 in Chicago and Boston) provided vision, resources, and missionaries to plant the gospel among the Crow and Hopi Indians, with immigrants on Ellis Island and Angel Island, among orphans at Kodiak in Alaska, and Murrow Children’s Home in Oklahoma, in urban cities, and with the Spanish-speaking in Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Central America. The women, led by Mrs. Rumah Crouse, established the Baptist Missionary Training School (BMTS) at 2338 Michigan Ave. in Chicago and opened for classes Sept. 5, 1881. Here, women prepared to be missionary teachers, nurses, and evangelists. They took courses in domestic science and industrial arts as well as in Bible and missions.

In 1927, it was reported that more than 1,000 graduates had gone out to serve. After moving to their new building at 510 Wellington Ave. in Chicago, they reported that one out of every 10 missionaries serving in the American Baptist Convention was a graduate of the BMTS. In 1961, the BMTS merged with Colgate-Rochester Divinity School.

The WABHMS also had “rooms” in New York City. When the Chicago and Boston societies merged in 1909, they moved their offices to New York City, where the newly formed Northern Baptist Convention had offices and with which the WABHMS was a cooperating organization. It seems that all of the denominational offices (General Board of Promotions, Foreign Mission Societies, Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board, and Board of Education)—except The American Baptist Home Mission Societies—were at 276 Fifth Ave. in the 11-story Holland House. The Home Mission Society offices were at the Neptune Building, 23 E. 26th St., just five blocks from the Holland House, 1910-1940. Just a few blocks north, Baptists would watch the demolition of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in 1929 and erection of the Empire State Building in 1930. It appears that the WABHMS had relocated to 164 Fifth Ave. by 1953, prior to its integration with The American Baptist Home Mission Society on May 19, 1955. In 1955 the Home Mission Society also moved to 164 Fifth Ave. The American Baptist Convention and ABFMS offices were at 152 Madison Avenue at 32nd St.

Cooperative work between the WABHMS and The American Baptist Home Mission Society began as early as 1946, when work in Latin America was administered for both societies by one department secretary. Also in 1946, the Associated Home Mission Agencies voted to appoint one personnel secretary to serve both agencies. In 1952, William H. Rhoades was elected to be treasurer of both societies. Active negotiations to integrate the two boards of managers began in 1953, and the proposed plan of integration was voted at the American Baptist Convention in Atlantic City, N.J., in May 1955. A new department was established—that of Alaska, Indian Work and Schools—reflecting the historic mission work of the WABHMS. Miss Dorothy O. Bucklin, formerly of the WABHMS, was made secretary of this department. Margaret Norflinger Wenger, executive secretary of the WABHMS, 1946-1955, became secretary of a new department of Special Services.

The WABHMS’ purpose was “to proclaim the Christian faith and to minister to people of special need” and continues to be a core purpose of ABHMS.<sup>25</sup>

When the Chicago and Boston women’s societies merged in 1909, a hallmark of the new mission focus was the establishing of Christian centers. Attention was directed to the needs of congested city populations and to the rapid concentration of workers in industrial areas. In 1929, the WABHMS was represented in 29 Christian centers: “nine are in cosmopolitan fields, two among Chinese, nine among Italians, one among Japanese, two among Negroes, two among Mexicans, two among Slavic peoples, one among the Hopi Indians, and one in Porto Rico.”<sup>26</sup> These “houses of friendship” were concrete expressions of what the women called “adventures in friendship.” The WABHMS noted the “peaceful but overwhelming invasion of our country by strangers from foreign lands” at the close of the 19th century and, in response, organized a Department of Christian Americanization in 1919. They appealed for

volunteers to interpret the gospel of peace and goodwill to the people of their own neighborhoods, and they appealed to churches to be "mission stations in their own communities; to root out the weeds of race prejudice and class feeling that cumbered the ground between them" and "to make the attitude of indifference give way to interest; hostility to hospitality; aversion to affection; repugnance to regard; that transformation be achieved by cultivating the fine art of Christian Service from the motive of Christian love."<sup>27</sup> The Department of Christian Friendliness of the WABHMS (successor to the Americanization department) in 1938 had volunteers working with immigrants from 35 countries. The WABHMS defined *Christian friendliness* as "active goodwill motivated by the Spirit of Jesus; that it gives generous recognition to the values of others and shares with them the values possessed by us."

When the WABHMS and The American Baptist Home Mission Society integrated their work in 1955, Wenger was serving as executive secretary for the WABHMS. Under her leadership, mission programs included juvenile protection, racial tolerance, Christian friendliness, and resettlement of displaced service following World War II. She continued with The American Baptist Home Mission Society as special services secretary for two years and then assisted with the relocation of the BMTS from Chicago to Rochester, N.Y.



Margaret M. Wenger

## MOREHOUSE ROOTS



Henry L. Morehouse  
in 1907

The years at 23 E. 26th St. (1910-1940), further uptown at Madison Square Park between Fifth and Madison avenues, were the closing years of Morehouse's leadership. Morehouse died in office at age 83 after nearly 40 years of service to the Home Mission Society. Among the many significant contributions of Morehouse are his efforts to found the University of Chicago in 1891 and raising support for Bacone College and Spelman College. Morehouse was well aware of the hardships and self-sacrifices of ministers, particularly the elderly. As early as 1882, Morehouse began agitating for the improvement of those conditions, but it wasn't until the first meeting of the Northern Baptist Convention in 1908 that progress began. At that time, a commission was

appointed "to make inquiry concerning the methods and extent of aid to aged and disabled Baptist ministers and the dependent widows and children of ministers." When the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board was established in 1911, Morehouse was the first president. Morehouse learned

Spanish and spent 53 days in Cuba and Puerto Rico in 1904. He helped draft the plan for the formation of the Federal Council of Churches in 1905 (the National Council of Churches of Christ after 1950). He was present for the first meeting of the Baptist World Alliance in London (1905) and helped draft the constitution and bylaws. Following the devastating earthquake in San Francisco in 1907, Morehouse was in the forefront, raising funds to help rebuild stricken churches. He was a key player in the formation of the Northern Baptist Convention (1909) and again helped draft the original constitution and bylaws in spite of Baptist concerns that we were “heading straight for Rome.”<sup>28</sup>

## FREE WILL BAPTIST ROOTS

During the Morehouse years, the Freewill Baptist Home Mission Society merged with The American Baptist Home Mission Society. We sometimes forget that Baptists were once divided over the issue of predestination. The first Baptists, who originated with the ministry of Thomas Helwys near London in 1611, were General Baptists. That is, they believed that the atonement of Jesus Christ was “general” (for all), rather than “particular” (for the elect only). Thus, they were Arminian in doctrine, as opposed to the Calvinistic Particular Baptists. The Philadelphia Baptist Association was “particular.” Two distinct branches of “general” or Freewill Baptists developed in America. The first and earliest was the Palmer movement in North Carolina, from which the vast majority of modern-day Freewill Baptists originate. The later movement was the Randall movement, which arose in the late 18th century in New Hampshire.

This northern line, or “Randall Line,” of Freewill Baptists grew quickly. But, in 1911, the majority of the churches (and all the denominational property) merged with the Northern Baptist Convention. The Freewill Baptist Home Mission Society, founded in 1834 through the efforts of David Marks, merged with the ABHMS. This resolution was adopted by the General Conference of Freewill Baptists in 1911.

*That the Home Mission work of the Free Baptists, when taken over by the American Baptist Home Mission Society, shall be put on an equal footing with their other work, to be continued and developed as integral parts thereof...*

On Oct. 11, 1911, transfers were made by the Free Baptists of all their “missionary funds, properties, enterprises, opportunities and obligations” to The American Baptist Home Mission Societies, and Free Baptists as individuals, churches, and organization became a part of the constituency and fellowship of the Home Mission Society. Rivington D. Lord, president of the General Conference of Free Baptists, 1898-1904, was elected to the board of managers of the Home Mission Society and served as president for many years.

Alfred Williams Anthony, professor at the Freewill Bates College in Maine, was appointed a special joint secretary with ABHMS.

Anthony was also president of the board of trustees of the historically black Storer College in Harpers Ferry, W.Va., founded by Freewill Baptists in 1865. In 1881, Frederick Douglass delivered his famous speech on abolitionist John Brown at Storer Normal School. In August 1906, Storer Normal School hosted the second conference of the Niagara Movement. Formed by a group of leading African-American intellectuals, the Niagara Movement struggled to eliminate discrimination based on color. The movement's leader, Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, rejected the prevalent theory of "accommodation" espoused by Booker T. Washington, who advocated conciliation rather than agitation as a means of gaining social equality. The American Baptist Home Mission Society continued support of Storer after the merger until it closed in 1955. In 1964, the movable physical assets of the college were transferred to the historically white Alderson-Broaddus College, and the college's endowment was transferred to Virginia Union University, a historically black institution. Records of the college are maintained by Virginia Union.

The merger with Free Baptists strengthened The American Baptist Home Mission Society commitment to social justice and is part of the proud tradition on which ABHMS stands today.<sup>29</sup>

## IMMIGRANT MINISTRY ROOTS

For all of Charles Lincoln White's tenure as corresponding secretary from World War I in 1917 to the Great Depression in 1929, offices remained at 23 E. 26th St. White served as associate corresponding secretary under Morehouse beginning in 1908, coming from the presidency of Colby College



**Corresponding Secretary Charles Lincoln White in his office on East 26th Street**

in Waterville, Maine. Morehouse had written a history of The American Baptist Home Mission Society on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the society, and White wrote a second history on the 100th anniversary in 1932. The great contribution of the Home Mission Society in this period is the ministry with new immigrants through the Department of City and

Foreign-Speaking Missions. After World War I, Northern Baptists had organized schools for Hungarians, Slovaks, Poles, Russians, and Italians. These schools were scattered between Chicago and New York. A “polyglot school,” the International Baptist Seminary (IBS) in East Orange, N.J., was founded in 1920 with a \$309,226 grant from The American Baptist Home Mission Society and united the Hungarian school in Cleveland, the Slavic Baptist Training School in Chicago, and Russians in New York. The next year, the Italian Department at the Theological School at Colgate University joined IBS, and a Mexican Department was opened in Los Angeles. IBS trained leaders from Romania, Italy, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Russia. President Frank Anderson wrote in 1923, “The seminary is an expression of the vision the Baptist denomination has of the unique call to give the gospel through trained leaders to those of other languages. Our ideas of soul liberty, of the independence of the local church, appeal to the nations that have been accustomed to compulsion from above.”<sup>30</sup>

The following letter from 10 recently converted Russian soldiers was read at the annual meeting of the ABHMS in 1921.

*We are all in German detention camps since 1914, and were suffering from hunger and want and were compelled to work very hard. Since May 1, 1920, we are in France, removing the barbed wires. We work ten hours daily, and we get ten francs (sixty cents per hour). Food costs six francs daily.*

*We all desire to devote our lives to the service of our Lord Jesus and trust that it will be his will to receive us as students of the institute so as to enable us to work for him and all those who prepare for such work to receive us in their midst into the flock of the heavenly Shepherd.*

By 1922, all 10 were at IBS in East Orange, and it was reported that they were “making decided progress in the learning of the English language. The singing of their native songs is interesting to many churches and their Christian spirit is delightful.”



Spanish American Baptist Seminary, Los Angeles

IBS closed in 1941 after two decades of educating Baptists from Hungary, Poland, Russia, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Italy, and its assets were

divided between a permanent ABHMS scholarship fund and support of a branch in Los Angeles.

An IBS branch in Los Angeles, the SABS, was founded in 1922 “to train young men and women for Christian Service among the three million Mexicans living in America.” John F. Detwiler was the first president, and Dr. José Arreguín the last president. In addition to a residential campus, there were correspondence courses for students in Cuba, Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Panama, and South America. The seminary closed in 1964. Remaining assets formed a scholarship fund for Spanish-speaking students.

With the dissolution of Educational Ministries (Board of Education and Publication) in 2003, denominational connection to 16 covenanting colleges and 10 seminaries was once again located in National Ministries. Equipping leaders for ministry is still a core value for National Ministries and continues through scholarship programs, conferences, the American Baptist Association of Colleges and Universities, the American Baptist Association of Seminary Administrators, and the American Baptist Association of Campus Ministers.<sup>31</sup>

## MISSIONAL ROOTS



**164 Fifth Avenue**

Through World War II and during the years G. Pitt Beers served as executive secretary, the Home Mission Society was at 212 Fifth Ave., around the corner from the Neptune Building. At this time, the Department of Christian Ministry to Service Personnel, the Edifice Funds Department, and the Rural Church Program were developed. During the Beers era, Northern Baptists purchased the Assembly at Green Lake, and the Department of Evangelism sponsored one of the first conferences in 1944. The first America for Christ offering was received in 1951. Beers began the discussions about unification with the WABHMS that led to integration in 1955. World War II was a different frontier for the Home Mission Society with 976 Northern Baptist chaplains in the armed services, 150 conscientious objectors in work camps, and 112,000 Japanese-Americans in relocation centers. Seven Nisei pastors were appointed by the Home Mission Society

and stationed at relocation centers. Following the war, the Home Mission Society found a new frontier in the emerging suburbs. The “Churches for a New Frontier” campaign raised funds to build 119 new churches. The Department of Church Extension and Church Edifice Fund worked at full throttle after the war. Beers wrote the 125th anniversary history of The American Baptist Home Mission Society, “Ministry to Turbulent America.” There will always be new frontiers for home mission, whether it is rebuilding



the lives and property of victims of Hurricane Katrina or assisting tribal Karen refugees from Burma and the Thai refugee camps. The great reversal is that every congregation is now located in a mission field. One of the nine qualities of a disciple-making church identified by American Baptists is a focus on mission. "Disciple-making congregations see themselves as mission stations. Decisions about ministry, finances, staff, buildings, lay involvement, and all aspects of church life emerge from what best serves God's mission to make known the kingdom and invite others into it," writes Cassandra Carkuff Williams in National Ministries' 2009 Discipleship Planning Guide.<sup>32</sup> Missiologist David J. Bosch, who teaches that mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God, also helps us recover our recently recessive Baptist DNA. God is a missionary God. Mission is understood as being derived from the very nature of God. Bosch says, "Our mission has not life of its own: only in the hands of the sending God can it truly be called mission. Not least since the missionary initiative comes from God alone ... Mission is thereby seen as a movement from God to the world; the church is viewed as an instrument for that mission. There is church because there is mission, not vice versa. To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people, since God is a fountain of sending love."<sup>33</sup> A corollary of the church as mission station is that every member of that church is a missionary. Baptism is an ordination that sends every believer into his or her own home mission field. The rhythm of gathering for worship, discipleship, and encouragement and being scattered into the world equipped with unique spiritual gifts and a unique call is the picture of a biblical and missional church.

Ronald Carlson, missional church strategist for National Ministries, helps us to see how similar yesterday's foreign and remote mission fields are to the places where we are called to do mission in the 21st century. He notes six mission-field characteristics that formerly described the contexts where we sent missionaries but are apt descriptors of post-modern America and the "envelope" where local churches are called to turn their ministry focus outward. Those characteristics are as follows:

1. A substantial presence of beliefs and religion other than Christianity.
2. Languages other than "our language" are spoken.
3. Cultural worldviews differing from historic European or American Christianity's world views prevail.
4. High levels of social need and justice exist among large population groups and need to be addressed by both church and society.
5. There is a presence of overlooked or marginalized people groups with little or no Christian representation.
6. There are inadequate numbers of indigenous churches in contact with the dominant population's cultural groups.<sup>34</sup>

It is not difficult to overlay these characteristics on our local communities, to name our mission-field realities, and to creatively and prayerfully construct a

response that turns the church inside-out. The role of The American Baptist Home Mission Society (National Ministries) that did so much formative work in the last two centuries is now that of re-forming the self-conceptualization of congregations, transforming and equipping leadership, and partnering with churches, regions, institutions, and communities to realize the charter goal of reaching North America for Christ.

In the Jubilee history of The American Baptist Home Mission Society published in 1883, Morehouse notes that 2,878 missionaries and education workers were appointed by the society in its first 50 years.<sup>35</sup> At the 100th anniversary of the society in 1932, White restates, "evangelism and education have always been the outstanding phases of the work, always the two foci of the home mission ellipse."<sup>36</sup> American Baptist home missionaries were at first sent great distances and to culturally foreign lands, later to Mexico and Central America, and Alaska. As westward expansion closed frontiers and state conventions grew stronger, new opportunities opened with immigrants, Christian centers, and the training of leaders. The same kind of multidisciplinary and cross-cultural skills and knowledge needed for the 19th century were needed for these new 20th century frontiers. The 21st century and beginning of the fifth century of Baptist witness will continue to open new frontiers and opportunities for God's co-missionaries to serve in partnership with American Baptist churches and allies to fulfill the Great Commission, Great Commandment, and Great Compassion,<sup>37</sup> and for National Ministries to equip and network Christ-centered leaders for the transformation of communities, congregations, and persons. These are the characteristics of those who sacrificially began the work of The American Baptist Home Mission Society: biblical, relational, disciple-making, evangelistic, socially engaged, ecumenical, networkers, innovators, visionaries, teachers, and acutely aware of the confluence of domestic and foreign mission. These same attributes will serve the local church well, as they discover the truth of Acts 1:8, that mission is in our community. Mission is with the Samaritans, and mission is still in far-away places. There are unreached people in all of these mission fields.

## FROM THE CITY TO THE FARM (in Valley Forge)

After more than 130 years as a tenant in New York City, The American Baptist Home Mission Society purchased a building in 1955 at 164 Fifth Ave. and became a landlord for the first time. The building was sold when we relocated to Valley Forge, Pa., and is now owned by the American Institute of Graphic Arts. While the Home Mission Society was on Fifth Avenue, the offices of the American Baptist Convention and the ABFMS were at 152 Madison Ave. Serious discussions about relocating offices began in 1957, as the denomination decided to relocate all of the agencies of the American Baptist family under one roof. Financial leaders had favored a move to the new Interchurch Center under construction in Morningside Heights in New York City (dedicated May 29, 1960). When The American Baptist Home

Mission Society loaned the Interchurch Center \$500,000 in 1957, it stipulated that this did not commit the society to occupancy. Another proposal was to relocate to Chicago near the University of Chicago. The winning proposal, voted at the American Baptist Churches Convention in Cincinnati in 1958, was to build in rural Valley Forge. Here, the American Baptist Board of Education and Publication, which was then located in three buildings in Philadelphia, had purchased acreage from the A.D. Irwin dairy farm in 1957. At first, the Home Mission Society legal counsel was concerned that a move out of New York would jeopardize our New York corporate charter. But soon the conversation shifted to what to keep and what to discard in the move to Pennsylvania.

On June 23, 1961, The American Baptist Home Mission Society sold its New York headquarters to the Pythian Corp.



**Interchurch Center**



**Edwin T. Dahlberg**

When the Home Mission Society moved from New York City to Valley Forge, there was a year interval when offices on Fifth Avenue needed to be vacated and when offices were ready in Valley Forge. Temporary quarters were found in 1962 at the new Interchurch Center at 475 Riverside. John D. Rockefeller Jr. donated the land for the Interchurch Center. Ground was broken in 1957, and President Eisenhower laid the cornerstone of the Interchurch Center in 1958. The \$20 million building was completed and dedicated in 1960. Prominent American Baptist pastor Edwin T. Dahlberg was president of the National Council of Churches, a principal occupant of the Interchurch Center, during the construction, 1957-1960. The Treasure Room at the Interchurch Center is a tribute to the life and service of Dahlberg, who had served as secretary to Walter Rauschenbusch in his seminary days at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School and later stirred controversy among Baptists as a pacifist during World War II. American Baptists named their highest award after him; Martin Luther King Jr. was recipient of the first Dahlberg Peace Award. Dahlberg, who had been president of the Northern Baptist Convention, 1946-48, would be president of the Home Mission Society, 1954-55. A denominational presence would continue at the Interchurch Center with the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board and the



American Baptist Churches of Metropolitan New York. Partners in mission, in addition to the NCC are located at 475 Riverside Drive: Church World Service, New York Theological Seminary, Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, and Church Women United.

Rhoades was executive secretary of The American Baptist Home Mission Society during the move to Valley Forge, after 131 years in New York City. Architect Vincent Kling designed the building for 700 employees on 55½ acres near the Valley Forge interchange of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Kling noted that the building itself would be a witness to our Baptist faith, forever visible from the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Edwin Tuller, then general secretary, declared, "The purpose is not to build a monument, but to send the Gospel of Jesus Christ through missionary representatives and the printed word." The American Baptist Home Mission Society became National Ministries in 1972 and, in 2010, marks its 47th year in the building dubbed the "Baptist Coliseum" in 1963.

Some things never change. The decision to relocate to Valley Forge was like so many previous moves. It was intended to save dollars for mission and to be near our mission partners. Other things are always changing: The Publication

Society founded in 1824, which became the Board of Educational Ministries in 1972, was dissolved in 2003 and its ministries assumed by National Ministries; the Prudential buildings (now Brandywine Realty), constructed 1985-1991, now block the view of the Christian flag and Mission Center building from the turnpike; the number of employees has decreased to 200; the American Baptist Historical Society has relocated to Atlanta; and mainline denominations struggle financially in a post-denominational culture. What is unchangeable is the mandate for Christians to be witnesses. Change was threatening in the first century when Jesus and Stephen taught that the Temple would be destroyed and the customs of Moses changed (cf. Acts 6:14) and is a constant 2000 years later.

Baptists have always had mixed feelings about “sacred space,” preferring to call their church buildings “meeting houses” and to separate what happens when the church is gathered or when mission work is planned and prayed for from the spaces where that occurs. Other than Mariner’s Temple, which stands on the site of the Oliver Street Baptist Church and marks a place in New York City where many key events happened in the life of National Ministries, almost all traces of the early The American Baptist Home Mission Society offices have been erased. The site of the Mulberry Street Baptist Church, where the Home Mission Society was founded, is now the Chatham Green Apartments; the parsonage, where the first society meetings were held, is now a Chinese market; the Nassau Bar and a Dunkin’ Donuts occupy commercial space on Nassau Street, where the Bible Society and the Home Mission Society once had offices; the American Tract Society building has been converted into condominiums; Pace University’s bookstore replaces another office site; the venerable Astor House was long ago demolished and is now a transportation center; and the American Institute of Graphic Arts now owns the building on Fifth Avenue, where we labored for the decade before coming to Valley Forge. First Baptist Church of New York City, where we had offices during the difficult decade when northern and southern Baptists split, sold their building to a Lutheran congregation in 1868. (First Baptist is now at 79th and Broadway.)

The American Baptist Home Mission Society was rooted in New York City from the time of its founding on April 27, 1832, until the move to Valley Forge in 1963. The Home Mission Society rented rooms in 17 different locations during those first 131 years. There were no steam railroads, no telegraph, and no photography in 1832. A Baptist biographer boasted a few years later that “now we travel by steam, do our correspondence by lightning and take life portraits by sun beams.” In the early years of the society, this meant that there was a small New York City staff with the corresponding secretary, modest offices at headquarters, and many agents and missionaries deployed in the mission field. In 1853, 176 missionaries were reported. Most of the early office locations were in buildings erected before the invention of the elevator, and have since been replaced by high-rise buildings.

Stewardship was often a factor in the frequent relocation of offices. The American Baptist Home Mission Society accepted the offer of free rent from the A&FMS even when there was significant disagreement about an English Bible revision. When we moved to the 1836 Astor House on Broadway, it was considered “old-fashioned and unappealing and was mostly used by businessmen” and, we assume, had lower rents. Utility seems to be another factor as the Home Mission Society moved to the Constable Building, once New York City’s oldest department store, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Building, and other offices on 26th Street and Fifth Avenue. Annual reports clearly show that home mission and the mission field were much more important than the offices of the society. The Bible often asks us to “remember.” What happened in our offices in New York City was always more important than where it happened. Only as our roots in New York City help us remember God’s mission are these sites sacred.

*David Laubach is associate executive director, Higher Education Ministries, for American Baptist Home Mission Societies, incorporated as The American Baptist Home Mission Society and the Woman’s American Baptist Home Mission Society, American Baptist Churches USA.*

## **APPENDIX A – Locations of the American Baptist Home Mission Societies**

1. 1832-1837 Clinton Hall at the southwest corner of Beekman and Nassau streets in New York City.
2. 1838 118 Nassau St. in New York City.
3. 1839-1842 9 Spruce St. in New York City.
4. 1842-1853 First Baptist Church at Elizabeth and Broome streets in New York City.
5. 1853-1862 A&FBS building at 115 Nassau St. in New York City.
6. 1862-1866 132 Nassau St. in New York City.
7. 1866-1871 39 Park Row at Chatham Square in New York City.
8. 1871 239 Broadway in New York City.
9. 1872-1879 American Tract Society building at 150 Nassau St., corner of Spruce, New York City.
10. 1879-1882 Astor House, between Vesey and Barclay streets, on Broadway in New York City.
11. 1882-1985 Temple Court, 5 Beekman St., corner of Nassau and Beekman streets, on the original site of the first ABHMS offices and Clinton Hall.
12. 1895-1904 Arnold Constable Building at 111 Fifth Ave. in New York City.

13. 1904-1910 Metropolitan Building at 312 Fourth Ave. (now Park Avenue), northeast corner of 23rd Street and Madison Avenue in New York City.
14. 1909-1953 WABHMS consolidates at 276 Fifth Ave. in the 11-story Holland House.
15. 1910-1940 Neptune Building at 23 E. 26th St., between Fifth and Madison avenues in New York City.
16. 1940-1955 212 Fifth Ave. in New York City.
17. 1955-1962 164 Fifth Ave. This is the first office building owned by ABHMS in NYC. All of the previous office space was rented.
18. 1962 475 Riverside Drive. Temporary quarters at the Interchurch Center.
19. 1963-2010 American Baptist Mission Center at 588 North Gulph Road, Valley Forge, Pa.

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<sup>1</sup> A recent paper describing the founding of the American Baptist Education Society and the major funding received from John D. Rockefeller is Kenneth W. Rose, John D. Rockefeller, *The American Baptist Education Society, and the Growth of Baptist Higher Education in the Midwest*, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Schools for freed men and women founded by ABHMS missionary teachers include Wayland Seminary in Washington, D.C. (March 1864); the Richmond (Va.) Institute (April 1865); Shaw University in Raleigh, N.C. (December 1865); Roger Williams University in Nashville, Tenn. (June 1864); Leland University in New Orleans, La. (July 1863); Atlanta (Ga.) Seminary (May 1867); Benedict Institute in Columbia, S.C. (1870); Natchez (Miss.) Seminary (1867); Alabama Baptist Normal and Theological School in Selma (1878); the Florida Institute in Live Oak (1873); the Kentucky Normal and Theological Institute in Louisville (1879); and Bishop Baptist College in Marshall, Texas (1880).

<sup>3</sup> Founded in 1880 as the Indian University at Tahlequah in Indian Territory by Almon C. Bacone, Bacone College is the oldest continuously operated institution of higher education in Oklahoma. Bacone relocated to Muskogee, Okla., in 1885. The International Baptist Seminary (IBS) was in East Orange, N.J., 1921-1941. John D. Essick published "The International Baptist Seminary: A Baptist Attempt at Americanization, Education, and Missions in East Orange, New Jersey: Ethnicity is an Important Part of American and Baptist History" in "Baptist History and Heritage" Jan. 1, 2005. Essick quoted from the "Report of the Department of City and Foreign-Speaking Missions of the ABHMS" that, at the closing of IBS in 1941, "the governing board would continue to exist in order to administer such funds as are available for the education in other institutions of Christian workers for foreign-speaking churches" and noted that "most of these funds went to the Spanish-American Seminary [SABS] in Los Angeles." The ABHMS started the SABS in 1922 in Los Angeles as a branch of the International Baptist Seminary to train young men and women for Christian service among the 3 million Mexicans living in America. In addition to a residential campus at 512 S. Indiana St., there were correspondence courses for students in Cuba, Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Panama, and South America. The seminary closed on May 3, 1964. On Nov. 21, 1964, the board approved transfer of investments from the seminary's investment portfolio to the ABHMS common investment fund. All assets and funds from the liquidation of accounts were added to the principle of the SABS scholarship fund. Likewise, the sale of the property on June 14, 1978, added to the SABS scholarship fund.

<sup>4</sup> Albert Henry Newman, *A History of the Baptist Churches in the United States*, New York: Christian Literature Company, 1894, 385.

<sup>5</sup> Bertha Grimmell Judd, *Fifty Golden Years*, New York: The Woman's American Baptist Home Missionary Society, 1927, 28-30.

<sup>6</sup> These congregations are recent arrivals from the refugee camps on the Thai border with Myanmar and are ethnic Karen, Chin, Burmese, Kachin, and Karenni.

- <sup>7</sup> Henry Clay Vedder, *A Short History of the Baptists*, Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1897, 275-276.
- <sup>8</sup> Austen Kennedy De Blois and Lemuel Call Barnes, *John Mason Peck and One Hundred Years of Home Missions 1817-1917*, New York: American Baptist Home Mission Society, 1917, 44.
- <sup>9</sup> To learn more about John Berry Meachum, cf. Dennis L. Durst, "The Reverend John Berry Meachum (1789-1854) of St. Louis: Prophet and Entrepreneurial Black Educator in Historical Perspective," *The North Star*, Volume 7, Number 2 (Spring 2004).
- <sup>10</sup> De Blois and Barnes, 52.
- <sup>11</sup> David Charles Laubach, *To Think That It Happened on Mulberry Street*, Valley Forge: National Ministries, 2007, 9.
- <sup>12</sup> Henry Morehouse, *Baptist Home Missions in North America*, New York: Baptist Home Mission Rooms, 1883, 489.
- <sup>13</sup> G. Pitt Beers, *Ministry to Turbulent America*, Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1957, 30-31.
- <sup>14</sup> Mary Elizabeth Day Trowbridge, *History of Baptists in Michigan*: Michigan Baptist State Convention, 1909, 82-86.
- <sup>15</sup> Morehouse, 328.
- <sup>16</sup> Charles L. White, *A Century of Faith*, Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1932, 259-262.
- <sup>17</sup> Joanna P. Moore, *In Christ's Stead*, Chicago: Autobiographical Sketches: Women's Baptist Home Mission Society, 1902, 217.
- <sup>18</sup> Laubach, 23-24.
- <sup>19</sup> Henry Morehouse, *Baptist Home Mission in North America* (New York: Baptist Home Mission Rooms, 1883), 473.
- <sup>20</sup> Morehouse, 474.
- <sup>21</sup> A Baptist congregation met on Rose Street prior to moving with Rev. Maclay to begin the James Street Baptist Church, later the Mulberry Street church, in 1809. Deacon William Colgate of this church was the first treasurer of the ABHMS. The Mulberry Street Baptist Church claimed to be founder of the first Sunday school in New York City, begun July 10, 1810, at 88 Division St. An article in *The New York Times* notes the placement of commemorative bronze plaques in 1910 and that 88 Division St. is now the location of a saloon. When the Mulberry Street Church moved uptown, it became the Tabernacle Baptist Church at 166 Second Ave. in 1850.
- <sup>22</sup> To learn more about the life of Archibald Maclay read his biography, *The Life of Rev. Archibald Maclay*, D.D. by Isaac Walker Maclay (Polydore Company Press, 1902). It can be found online at [books.google.com](https://books.google.com).
- <sup>23</sup> The primary source for this article was *Pioneers of Light* by Lemuel C. Barnes, Mary C. Barnes and Edward M. Stephenson, Judson Press, 1924.
- <sup>24</sup> For more information about Bible Societies and the "immersion" translation controversy in the 19th century, read *Spreading the Word: The Bible Business in Nineteenth-Century America* by Peter Wosh (Cornell University Press, 1994).
- <sup>25</sup> To learn more about the Woman's American Baptist Mission Society read *Fifty Golden Years* by Bertha G. Judd (DuBois Press, 1927), *Women Who Carried Good News* by Eleanor Hull (Judson, 1975) and *The American Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. XIV, No. 4, December 1955.
- <sup>26</sup> Judd, 162.
- <sup>27</sup> Judd, 208, 215-216.



- <sup>28</sup> For a complete biography of Morehouse cf. *Henry Lyman Morehouse: A Biography*, Lathan A. Crandall, Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1919.
- <sup>29</sup> For more information about Free Will Baptists, see Frank H. Armstrong and Raymond J. Bean, *The Freewill Baptist Bicentennial Papers: 1780-1980: The American Baptist Churches of New Hampshire*, 1980.
- <sup>30</sup> Frank L. Anderson, "International Baptist Seminary at East Orange, NJ," *Missions*, February 1923, 94.
- <sup>31</sup> For a most comprehensive survey of Baptist schools cf. William H. Brackney, *Congregation and Campus: North American Baptists in Higher Education*, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2008.
- <sup>32</sup> Cassandra Carkuff Williams, General Editor, *2009 Discipleship Planning Guide*, Valley Forge: National Ministries, 2009, inside cover.
- <sup>33</sup> David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1991, 389-390.
- <sup>34</sup> Ronald Carlson, "What is a Missional Church.?" *The Christian Citizen*, Volume 3, 2009, 3.
- <sup>35</sup> Morehouse, 619.
- <sup>36</sup> White, 9-10.
- <sup>37</sup> Matthew 28:19, Matthew 22:37-39, Matthew 25:34-40.

## IMAGES

Colportage Wagon No. 1 from *Pioneers of Light*, 99.

John Berry Meachum courtesy of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri - St. Louis.

Almon C. Bacone image from *Home Mission Monthly*, August 1893, 267.

Giles and Packard courtesy of Spelman College Archives.

Archibald Maclay image from the *Life of Rev. Archibald Maclay 1776-1860* by Isaac Walker Maclay, 1902.

Old Baptist Church Tenement House from *Harpers Weekly*, 1873.

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ALGA Building from Idaho Center for the Book.

Interchurch Center image courtesy of the Interchurch Center.

Edwin T. Dahlberg image courtesy of the National Council of Churches.

American Baptist Convention construction images from *statement in stone* by Kenneth L. Wilson, American Baptist Convention, 1962 and courtesy of the Archives of the American Baptist Historical Society.

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