

2025 MONDAY MEETING SUMMARY

Messengers began arriving towards the end of the second week of June in Springfield, Missouri to attend the 99th Annual Messenger Meeting of the American Baptist Association. The University Plaza Hotel and Convention Center served as the headquarters hotel with the Oasis Hotel and Convention center serving as an alternative option. With both hotels sold out prior to the meeting, many messengers found alternative places to stay.

On Monday, June 16, 2025, the messengers enjoyed the Welcome Reception in the Georgia-Arizona meeting rooms sponsored by Missionary Baptist Seminary of Little Rock, Arkansas. Approximately 400 were served evening refreshments along with beverages.

The Missionary Share Time started in the Nebraska-Iowa meeting rooms at 7:00 p.m. with an estimated crowd of 600 in attendance and seventy-four missionaries and ministry leaders from twenty states and twelve foreign countries shared their burdens. Given two minutes each, each missionary and minister were able to share the highlights of their field of labor along with their needs.

At 7:30 p.m., the ABA Theological Schools meeting convened in the Oklahoma meeting room. With an attendance of twenty-four, seminaries sponsored by churches fellowshipping the American Baptist Association were represented. Each school was offered an opportunity to report on their work.

Throughout Monday, messengers explored the amenities of the hotels, surrounding restaurants, and enjoyed nearby attractions. They enjoyed renewed fellowship and encouragement from each other.

2025 TUESDAY MEETING SUMMARY

The 99th Annual Messenger Meeting of the churches of the American Baptist Association convened Tuesday afternoon, June 17, 2025, in the Springfield Expo Center in Springfield, Missouri. Following an instrumental prelude, the ABA Worship Choir led by Bro. Brad Rountree sang "Glory to His Name." Bro. D.J. Kyle of Missouri opened the assembly with scripture reading and prayer.

President Bryan Sellers called the meeting to order and recognized Heather Hardinger, Mayor Pro Tem of Springfield to welcome the messengers with Vice President Micah Carter giving the response. Bro. Neal Sutton, Director of Meeting Arrangements presented the proposed agenda. Bro. Wayne Hunter led in the posing of the colors, and, after the pledge of allegiance, the congregation sang the National Anthem.

The congregation continued in worship singing, "I Stand Amazed" and "I Could Sing of Your Love Forever." Brianna, Austin, and Dawson Sellers of Arkansas introduced their father, President Sellers to deliver the President's Address and sang, "Come Jesus Come." President Sellers delivered his address titled, "Ye Shall Be Witnesses unto Me" from Acts 1:8.

President Sellers recognized Bro. Neal Sutton to present the invitations to host the 2028 Messenger Meeting. President Sellers appointed the following committees: Enrollment and Finance, Resolution, Memorials, and Tellers. After necessary business, Bro. John Tarter of Missouri led the congregation in Scripture reading and prayer and the afternoon session was dismissed.

At 7:00 p.m., the messengers gathered once again for the evening session. Bro. Kevin Amburgy of Missouri opened the assembly with Scripture and prayer followed by special music by the ABA Worship Team and Choir. Bro. John McClung, Jr. of California introduced his brother, Bro. Andrew McClung of California to preach the annual message titled, "Will You Be Found Fishing or Finishing?" from John 21:1-18.

President Sellers called for nominations for Editor in Chief. The messengers nominated Brethren Nathan Luellen, Ray Meigs, and Scott Pevehouse to be voted on during the Thursday morning session. Bro. R.L. Clark of Oklahoma closed the meeting with Scripture and prayer. The ABA Worship Choir lead the congregation in singing "Goodness of God" as the messengers departed.

2025 WEDNESDAY MEETING SUMMARY

The messengers of the churches of the American Baptist Association gathered on Wednesday morning, June 18, 2025, at the Springfield Expo Center to consider the recommendations of missionaries and mission helpers and ministers for the next associational year. Bro. Jack Slay of Missouri opened the assembly with Scripture reading and prayer followed by a congregational hymn of “To God Be the Glory.”

Vice-President Caleb Wood recognized Standing Missionary Committee Chairman Ed Button of Florida to begin the business of the mission portion of the meeting. Bro. Justin Coburn, Secretary/Treasurer of Missions, brought the annual report of his office. Bro. Coburn reported 5,384 professions of faith from the missionaries and approximately \$2.4 million being given through the office for the past year. Following the Missionary Committee report read by Bro. John Mix, 146 missionaries and mission helpers and ministry leaders were approved by the messengers for the upcoming year.

Bro. Bobby Ball of Washington brought a mission policy change on behalf of Sunbreak MBC of Olympia, Washington. This change permits recommended missionaries to be members of the work where they serve. The messengers voted to make this change to the mission policy.

The messengers elected Bro. Justin Coburn as Secretary-Treasurer of Missions. Members of the Standing Missionary Committee were reelected with Bro. Jason Hebert of Louisiana voted to serve in Bro. Chet Johnson’s place. Vice-President Wood called for Bro. Mike Maxwell of Georgia to come forward and pray for Bro. Coburn, his family, and the missionaries sent by the churches of the American Baptist Association.

President Sellers opened the floor for nominations for the speakers for the annual sermon and mission sermon for 2026. These nominations will be considered for a vote Thursday morning.

Vice President Micah Carter called for the report of the Camp Trustees and the Chaplaincy Committee report. Both reports were adopted. Bro. Brad Rountree led the congregation in singing “God Bless America” accompanied by the ABA Worship Team and Choir. VP Carter next called on Bro. Peyton Hebert of Louisiana for the National Youth Fellowship report. The report was approved.

Following announcements, President Sellers called on Bro. Chester Lahmann of Missouri to close the session in scripture and prayer. The meeting was adjourned.

In the afternoon on Wednesday, many messengers returned for the World Mission Focus and the Bogard Press Bible Challenge. The theme of the World Mission Focus was “Come Over and Help Us” with Brethren Gediminas Kapustavicius and Gerardo Carrion speaking concerning indigenous churches supporting themselves and supporting missions. Bogard Press then hosted the National Bible Challenge with Sophia Taylor and Mallory Hayes winning in their categories. Both winners received a \$1,000 scholarship from Northern Hills Baptist Church in Texarkana, Arkansas. Messengers were dismissed for the rest of the afternoon.

2025 WEDNESDAY MEETING SUMMARY

On Wednesday evening, the ABA Worship Team and Choir led by Bro. Brad Rountree opened the evening worship with "Every Praise." Bro. Ryan Miller of Missouri brought the opening scripture reading and prayer. Bro. Mark and Sis. Jenny Clements brought "It Is Well" as for special music.

President Sellers recognized Bro. Ed Button, Chairman of the Standing Mission Committee to bring the evening missions program. All missionaries in attendance filed into the meeting as a slide show sharing their names, places of service, and pictures were projected for the crowd. Interspersed in the slide show were several excerpts of sermons from previous years that spoke about mission work. Bro. Button invited the audience to come forward and pray for the missionaries and an offering of \$10,812.42.

Then, President Sellers recognized Bro. Josh Luellen of Arkansas to introduce Bro. Justin Coburn, Secretary/Treasurer of Missions to bring the mission message. Bro. Coburn's children brought a special, "Living Hope," prior to him preaching. Bro. Coburn shared a message from Romans 1:13-17 titled, "I am Ready." An invitation was offered at the conclusion of the message.

The Memorials Committee gave their report. They shared the list of servants who had passed during the last associational year and led the assembly in prayer. President Sellers called on Bro. Tyler Freeman of Arkansas to close the evening service with scripture reading and prayer. The ABA Worship Team and Choir sang "Jesus Brought Me Out" as a song of celebration.

2025 THURSDAY MEETING SUMMARY

The messengers of the churches of the American Baptist Association returned to the Springfield Expo Center on Thursday, June 19, 2025, to begin deliberations at 9:15 a.m. The ABA Worship Team and choir opened the Thursday morning messenger meeting with leading the congregation in singing a “We Will Remember,” and Bro. Jason Hebert of Louisiana came to the podium for scripture reading and prayer. President Bryan Sellers called for a vote for the 2028 meeting place and the messengers selected Wichita, Kansas with Jacksonville, Florida serving as an alternate.

President Sellers turned the chair over to Vice President Todd Dornan who called on Bro. Mike Yoho, Chairman of the Baptist Sunday School Committee for their report. Bro. Jim Crain gave the Report of the Chief Executive Officer of Bogard Press, and the messengers reelected Bro. Crain as CEO. Bro. Mark Clements gave the Report of the Editor-in-Chief of Bogard Press and expressed his appreciation for being allowed to serve the churches as he was stepping down. Vice President Dornan called for the election of the new Editor-in-Chief and the messengers selected Bro. Nathan Luellen of Louisiana to serve. Chairman Yoho led the assembly in prayer for both men as they serve the churches for another year. All current members of the Baptist Sunday School Committee were reelected to serve this coming year.

Vice President Dornan called for the reports of the History and Archives Committee. Vice President Micah Carter took the podium to call for the reports of the other committees and organizations. Reports were given for Enrollment and Finance, Law Enforcement Chaplains, Security Committee, the newly elected BSSC, Missionary Baptist Student Fellowship, Resolutions Committee, National Women’s Conference, Good Fight Ladies’ Conference, and Choral Music Workshop. All reports were adopted as read.

President Sellers resumed the chair for the election of speakers for 2028 from the nominees in the Wednesday morning session. Bro. Roger Copeland of Arkansas was elected to preach the annual message with Bro. Jim Crain of Arkansas as the alternate. Bro. Gediminas Kapustavicius of Lithuania was elected to preach the mission message and Bro. Wayne Stringer of Texas as the alternate. Being ahead of schedule, the messengers voted to extend the time for business.

Officers elected to serve for the upcoming year are President, Micah Carter of Arkansas; Vice Presidents: Todd Dornan of Arkansas; Caleb Wood of Washington, and Anthony McClung of California; Recording Secretaries, Mike Yoho of Maryland and Roger Taylor of Mississippi; Parliamentarian, David Butimore of California; Assistant Parliamentarian, Terry Parrish of Arkansas; Music Directors, Brad Rountree of Texas, Jackson Heflin of Arkansas, and David Wiersema of Alabama; Director of Meeting Arrangements, Bro. Neal Sutton of Texas.

President Sellers called newly elected President Micah Carter to the podium for the passing of the gavel. All new and reelected officers expressed their appreciation for the privilege to serve the churches of the American Baptist Association. Newly elected President Carter called on Bro. Randy Cloud to close the messenger assembly in prayer and scripture reading. The ABA Worship Team and Choir led in a closing song, “For All That You Have Done for Me” and the 99th messenger assembly dismissed. The 100th messenger assembly will be held on June 22-25, 2026 in Hot Springs, Arkansas.