

Mission Advocates in ABCOM Churches
Produced by ABCOM Mission Support Committee 2025

Preface

In 1995, The American Baptist Churches USA approved the following statement: *“The local congregation is the fundamental unit of mission.”* In order to help facilitate effective local church mission, a program was initiated entitled “Mission Advocates in Partnership”. The key component of this initiative was to have Mission Advocates in every local church. These individuals would be charged with the task of keeping missions front and center in their churches. Their original mandate included the following:

- *help develop substantial American Baptist mission-supporting congregations.
- *serve as links to relay denominational and regional American Baptist news and policies, and local missions stories and news.
- *encourage regular and increased support of United Mission.
- *share in promoting the annual offerings.
- *communicate needs, results, and stories about American Baptist mission.
- *challenge children, youth, and adults with God’s call to mission.
- *Educate church members about American Baptist missiology.
- *Encourage the church mission board to give priority to American Baptist mission giving.

A training manual was produced, and training events were held. A number of ABCOM churches participated in the program. Over time, however, the Mission Advocate program faded, and was somewhat forgotten and left behind.

As members of the ABCOM Committee on Mission Support, we feel that the concept of mission advocacy should be revisited, resurrected, updated, and tailored to the current needs of Maine Baptist Churches. We offer this document in the prayerful hope that it might be used to help invigorate mission emphasis in our churches, and spur us on to greater mission involvement locally, regionally, nationally, and world-wide.

A Call for Mission Advocates

The Mission Support Committee of the American Baptist Churches of Maine is looking for Mission Advocates. A Mission Advocate is a person in your church that is passionate about sharing God's love and grace, willing to share the stories of mission, and able to inspire your church to participate in mission endeavors.

1. A Mission Advocate must be centered in Christ. Without Jesus, there is no mission to accomplish or promote. He alone made a way for human beings to be right with God. His death and resurrection removed the offense, sin; that which separated God from His creation. In Christ, God is recreating the world in Christ's image and likeness. A Mission Advocate loves to tell the story of God's redeeming love. It is a story that is told locally and globally.

2. A Mission Advocate tells mission stories. A Mission Advocate is aware of how your local church shares the love of God in Christ in your community. A Mission Advocate is aware of how your local church provides leadership and resources to help local American Baptist churches in Maine carry out their mission. A Mission Advocate is aware of how our Go Global Servants participate in sharing God's love and grace in their field of mission.

3. A Mission Advocate knows the members of their congregation and knows how to inspire their love for Christ by participating in mission endeavors. Some of the simplest local church mission endeavors is through disciplined financial support of mission activities supported by your local church. A Mission Advocate is able to tell their congregation how their financial support is being used to transform the world for Christ and His Kingdom. A Mission Advocate shares opportunities for their members to become involved in mission service, in mission training, and in mission advocacy.

Who comes to mind when you think about the description of A Mission Advocate? Are you willing to encourage them to become part of a Mission Advocacy group? Our Mission Support Committee is looking to equip, support, and train Mission Advocates. Please let our office know who you called as a Mission Advocate. We are looking for folks who are passionate about mission and what God is doing in the world through local churches.

What Is a Mission Advocate?

Mission: A simple, but profound way of understanding mission is to focus on two words: “come” and “go.” Both words are used often throughout the Biblical record, and specifically by Jesus.

“Come” means invitation. Jesus’ call to His disciples was “Come, follow Me.” We are invited by Him to “come...all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” The promise of the gospel is that if we come just as we are to Jesus, as needy sinful people, repent and believe in the efficacy of His death and resurrection, we receive by grace the salvation He offers. The first step is to simply “come.”

Having come, we then hear our Savior say “go.” The angel at the empty tomb told the women “Come and see...now go and tell.” Jesus tells His followers “As the Father has sent me, so send I you.” It is clear that Jesus expects us to be involved in the task of spreading His gospel, representing Him in this world, and being salt and light in a world that needs both.

The words “come” and “go” provide the essential foundation of evangelism and mission. One without the other produces a skewed understanding of the gospel.

“Missions”, as it relates to the local church, refers to how a church carries out this mandate. Though it includes everything a church does, in our context it refers to the specific ways in which the church seeks to accomplish its purpose to spread the Kingdom of God in this world. This would include individual ministries of the local church, as well as support and involvement in broader ministries in which we partner and cooperate with others.

Advocate: The dictionary defines advocacy as, “support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.” An advocate’s role is to make an issue or cause known, understood, and to encourage others to embrace and participate in that issue or cause. An effective advocate, therefore, is passionate about that which is being advocated.

Why Is Mission Advocacy Important in a Local Church? It is vital that missions be front and center in a church’s life. Missions sometimes ends up as a peripheral aspect of church life in favor of other aspects which are deemed as more important or urgent. It is easy to get so focused on our own current needs and desires that missions is downplayed. Mission advocacy is needed, therefore, to keep missions from being relegated to the sidelines. A church that is focused on mission has it’s focus where it need to be, on the task that our Savior has given us to do.

The Role of the Mission Advocate

Understand:

- Missiology of American Baptist churches
- Basic history of American Baptist mission
- Current missions/global servants
- American Baptist Mission Support Procedures
- American Baptist structure and terminology

Encourage:

- Act as ambassador for American Baptist mission
- Be a resource for those seeking information

Communicate:

- Receive, read, and share information about American Baptist Mission/Missionaries
- Tell American Baptist mission stories – historical and current
- Interpret United Mission
- Encourage participation in the offerings
- Be in contact with the missionaries/missions the church supports

Ask:

- Seek prayer for American Baptist mission
- Seek faithful and increased support of American Baptist Mission endeavors

Serve:

- Commit to serving for a period of time
- Mentor others to serve with you

Note: Every church is unique; every Advocate is unique. There is no “one size fits all” for Mission Advocates and their ministries. The above are basic categories that provide a framework for practical application.

Sources of Current Mission Information

American Baptist Churches of Maine

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 617
Augusta, ME 04332-0617
Website: abcom.org
Phone: (207) 622-6291

American Baptist Churches USA

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 851,
Valley Forge, PA 19482
Website: ABC-USA.org
Phone: (800) ABC3-USA

American Baptist Home Mission Societies

Mailing Address: 1075 First Avenue,
King of Prussia, PA 19406
Website: abhms.org
Phone: (888) 792-2467

International Ministries

Mailing Address: 1003 West 9th Avenue, Suite A
King of Prussia, PA 19401
Website: internationalministries.org
Phone: (610) 768-2168

Individual Communication

e.g. personal letters/emails, social media posts, on-line posts, personal visits

Suggestions for Ways to Promote Mission in Your Church

The many ways that one may promote missions in one's church is limited only by one's desire and creativity. The following are some ways that churches have done this. This is not an exhaustive list:

Church newsletter and/or email list

Bulletin Board (keep current)

Mission Moments in Worship Service

Bulletin inserts

Special programs (e.g. mission supper, Bible study series, etc.)

Hosting your missionaries

Live video chats (ZOOM, FaceTime, etc.)

Short-term mission experience

In addition, one might consult [How to Be a World-Class Christian](#) by Paul Borthwick (2009, InterVarsity Press) which contains a myriad of ideas.

Stewardship Information

How ABCOM is funded:

The American Baptist Churches of Maine is supported through United Mission Giving (65 percent stays in Maine), America For Christ Offering (33 percent stays in Maine), The Maine Offering (Our Regional Offering -100 percent stays in Maine), and through on-line giving and specific designated gifts (100 percent stays in Maine).

United Mission:

United Mission Basics are undesignated contributions from local churches to the vital mission and ministry of American Baptists, providing support for the extensive foundation of American Baptist missions. United Mission is a simple yet intentional way that American Baptists contribute to a shared financial fund that is designed and used for mission and ministry that has an impact across the whole American Baptist family. With a large portion of United Mission funds contributing directly to the mission efforts and ministries of the 33 ABC regional entities, the Office of the General Secretary, and the Board of General Ministries, all of which are accountable to and informed by our member congregations, United Mission funding supports efforts on all levels of our denomination as well on our shared mission fields. Portions of United Mission also directly support services provided by our national ABC partners.

Annual Offerings:

America For Christ (AFC):

Gifts to the America for Christ Offering impact thousands – through ministries with marginalized children, mission trips that transform lives torn asunder by hurricanes, resources that cultivate Christian leaders, chaplains who bring comfort to hospitals and nursing homes, and much more. Two-thirds of received offerings are directed to the American Baptist Home Mission Societies and one-third are directed to the ABC regional office of the giving church. This offering is promoted in February and March.

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS):

This offering supports disaster relief, ministries to displaced persons, and development projects of the American Baptist Churches and its partners. The fund is administered by the World Relief Committee of the Board of General Ministries of American Baptist Churches USA. This offering is promoted in May and June. Throughout the year, there may be special appeals for particular disasters. To designate your OGHS gift, make sure to indicate to which appeal you are responding, for example “OGHS – Ukraine Relief.” The World Relief Committee will disburse the undesignated gifts to domestic and global projects.

World Mission Offering (WMO):

During the World Mission Offering, promoted in September and October, your church has the opportunity to join the transformational work God is doing around the world through International Ministries' 120+ global servants and 250+ global partners. God can use your participation not only to change lives internationally, but also to deepen your own discipleship in Christ. You can take part in what the Holy Spirit is doing to bring God's kingdom "on earth as it is in heaven."

The Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (RMMO):

Administered by the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board (MMBB) this offering continues a long-standing tradition established in 1977 which supports ministers, missionaries and their widowed spouses who have devoted 15 or more years of their lives to service in ABCUSA. This offering is promoted in November and December.

The Regional (ABCOM) Offering

Financial gifts can be sent at any time directly to ABCOM.

Sample Mission Support Form



CHURCH MISSION SUPPORT

Month of: _____

CHURCH NAME/DONOR	ASSOCIATION AREA
CREDIT RECEIVER (NAME)	PHONE NUMBER
REGION / PIN: ABC of Maine	E-MAIL

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES USA	
Please retain a copy of this remittance for your records. An official receipt will be mailed to you once the gift is processed. Upon receipt, please compare the official receipt detail to your original remittance copy and notify your Region office or the Valley Forge office (800-223-3872, ext. 2184) of any discrepancies.	
RECEIPT NUMBER	DATE

Send Receipt To: (Please Print) _____

AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION GIVING

UNITED MISSION	AMOUNT
----------------	--------

A. United Mission Basics (UMB)	_____
B. AB Women's Ministries Love Gift (L.G.)	_____
C. America For Christ (AFC)	_____
D. Retired Ministers & Missionaries Offering (RMMO)	_____
E. Region Giving (Maine Mission Offering)	_____

OFFERINGS WITH POSSIBLE DESIGNATIONS

PURPOSE (Optional)

F. World Mission Offering (WMO)

G. One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)

H. AGADUSA, OFFICE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY
AMERICAN BAPTIST HOME MISSION SOCIETIES
INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

RECIPIENT/PROJECT

PURPOSE (Optional)

I. ALL OTHER GIVING

MAIL TO:
ABC of Maine
PO Box 617
Augusta ME 04332
United States

Grand Totals: _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSIONS

Although every effort is made to comply with donor wishes, no individual contributions are received with the understanding that AGOUSA has complete discretion and control over the use of all donated funds.
PLEASE TEAR OFF LOWER PORTION AND COMPARE WITH YOUR RECORDS. THIS LOWER PORTION IS YOUR OFFICIAL RECEIPT.

•fold

to

