



NORTH
AMERICAN
BAPTISTS, INC.

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INTERCESSOR

A PRAYER NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST CONFERENCE

With a Little Help from My Friends



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Before nearly every professional sporting event in the United States, as well as many non-professional games, “The Star-Spangled Banner” rings out loudly, often sung from center court, home plate, or some other prominent place. For the coaches and players, it’s often the perfect time to get focused on the game ahead.

Yet when 13-year-old Natalie Gilbert began singing before the third playoff game between the Portland Trailblazers and the Dallas Mavericks at the end of the 2002–03 NBA season, things did not go as planned.

She started strong, but quickly began to lose her way, forgetting the lyrics two lines in. Just as quickly, Maurice Cheeks, the head coach for the Trailblazers, ran over to the teenager, who was silently freaking out, and began singing right alongside her.

Continued on inside >

This was still Gilbert's moment. Cheeks did not steal the microphone away from her or attempt to usher her off the court so someone else could fill in. He simply put his arm around her and prompted the words to sing. Soon, during a moment when most audiences are respectfully silent, the entire stadium joined the pair. After Gilbert nailed the difficult high note at the end of the song, Cheeks gave her a quick hug as she quietly thanked him and the crowd around them erupted in cheers.

Maurice Cheeks gave of himself by singing alongside a stranger, giving her the courage to find her voice again. This was an act of compassion. In the Book of Exodus, Aaron and another man, Hur, gave of themselves to allow Moses the support he needed as he prayed for Israel's victory.

After the warriors of Amalek attacked the Israelites, the nation of Israel responded in kind. The battle plan involved Joshua taking his men to fight while Moses stood at the top of a hill and held his staff up in the air, a position of prayer. "As long as Moses held up the staff in his hand, the Israelites had the advantage. But whenever he dropped his hand, the Amalekites gained the advantage. Moses' arms soon became so tired he could no longer hold them up. So Aaron and Hur found a stone for him to sit on. Then they stood on each side of Moses, holding up his hands. So his hands held steady until sunset. As a result, Joshua overwhelmed the army of Amalek in battle" (Exodus 17:11-13 NLT).

That Aaron and Hur supported Moses as he prayed over the army of Israel reflects a deep truth: even the so-called spiritual greats can't do it all on their own; we all need help sometimes.

There are times when we are Natalie Gilbert or Moses, trying to make our way on our own and failing, and there are situations when we are Maurice Cheeks or Aaron, seeing someone in need and stepping in to support them the best way we know how.

"Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions" (1 John 3:18). To provide comfort for a friend who is suffering or stand alongside a companion walking a dark road is to show compassion, to act out of deep love. We often think that deeds such as these are difficult to perform, yet the hardest part of showing love through our actions isn't the act itself, it's seeing the need in the first place and recognizing how God is prompting us to respond.

May this be a year of eyes opened by the Holy Spirit to the needs of our friends, our family, and even the strangers around us; may we love like Jesus through supporting those who need a friend to lean on; may God grant us strength for the weak and use us to be light for those in darkness. ■

CHURCH UPDATES

Ashley Baptist Church, Ashley, ND

Home Goings: Ruth Jenner, age 89

Pastoral Staff Update: Interim Pastor Al Foote began ministry 2017.

Bethany Baptist Church, Richmond, BC

Baptisms: 3

New Members: 10

Pastoral Staff Updates: Executive pastor, Jerry Ritskes, began ministry November 14, 2017.

Bethel Baptist Church, Anaheim, CA

Baptisms: 6

Decisions for Christ: 9

New Members: 10

Home Goings: 4

Calmar Community Baptist Church, Calmar, AB

Baptisms: 5

Decisions for Christ: 1

Calvary Baptist Church, Easton, PA

Baptisms: 3

Colonial Baptist Church, Lansing, MI

New Members: 2

Home Goings: Larry Hettinger, age 93

Elm Creek Baptist Church, La Vernia, TX

New Members: 9



Triennial 2018

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

JULY 26-29, 2018

Early Bird Registration Ends January 31, 2018

CHURCH UPDATES cont.

Faith Baptist Church, Regina, SK

Baptisms: 11

Decisions for Christ: 8

New Members: 14

Home Goings: Sheri Mann, age 48; Esther Schmuland, age 87; Norma Deimert, age 89

First Baptist Church, Elgin, IA

Home Goings: Gladys Hackmann, age 100

First Baptist Church, Emery, SD

Home Goings: Harvey Jucht, age 89

Pastoral Staff Updates: Youth pastor, Colton Watkins, began ministry.

First Baptist Church, Eureka, SD

Home Goings: Robert Lutz, age 74

First Baptist Church, Minitonas, MB

Home Goings: Henry Natyna, age 68

First Baptist Church, Smoky Lake, AB

Baptisms: 3

Grace Baptist Church, Kelowna, BC

New Members: 5

Home Goings: Gunther Schmidtke, age 82; Harold Schultz, age 93; Erwin Giersch, age 90; Christine Schroth, age 97

Greenfield Community Baptist Church, Edmonton, AB

Baptisms: 2

New Members: 4

Home Goings: Bill Rentz, age 91; Roswitha Pohl, age 79; Wes Kruger, 93

Heartland Community Church, Medina, OH

Baptisms: 10

New Members: 21

Hope Fellowship Baptist Church, Kansas City, MO

New Members: 3

McDermot Avenue Baptist Church, Winnipeg, MB

Baptisms: 1

Home Goings: Adam Bettcher, age 98

Metropolitan Baptist Church, Fargo, ND

Baptisms: 9

New Members: 6

Northgate Baptist Church, Edmonton, AB

Baptisms: 2

New Members: 2

Home Goings: Edith Littman, age 89

Oakbank Baptist Church, Oakbank, MB

Baptisms: 1

Pastoral Staff Updates: Pastor Randy Radke concluded

ministry December 31, 2017.

Pittsford Community Church, Pittsford, New York

Baptisms: 3

Redeemer Baptist Church, Oakdale, MN

New Members: 7

Home Goings: Carolyn (Rudel) Paul, age 95; James Kolasch, age 95; Susanne (Nordgren) DeCorsey, age 101; Michael Weist, age 63

Pastoral Staff Updates: Family Life minister Jon Osburn, began ministry 2017.

Steamboat Rock Baptist Church, Steamboat, IA

Pastoral Staff Update: Children's ministry director, Crystal Carroll, began ministry June 2017.

Steel Heights Baptist Church, Edmonton, AB

New Members: 8

Pastoral Staff Updates: Youth and young adult pastor, Ben Kroeker, began ministry April 2017.

Terwillegar Community Church, Edmonton, AB

Baptisms: 4

Pastoral Staff Updates: Associate pastor, Adam Buyer, began ministry June 2017.

Community Life director, Marni Marazik, began ministry June 2017.

Youth pastor, Quinn Pereverseff, began ministry September 2017.

Trinity Baptist Church, Sioux Falls, SD

New Members: 4

Home Goings: Les Carson, age 84; Verla Heeren, age 79

Trochu Baptist Church, Trochu, AB

New Members: 1

Whiteshell Baptist Church, Seven Sisters Falls, MB

New Members: 2

Whyte Ridge Baptist Church, Winnipeg, MB

Home Goings: Jennifer Nikkel-Walls, age 32; Janet Giesbrecht, age 79

Zion Baptist Community Church, Edmonton, AB

Baptisms: 1

SUNDAY

M

*Missional
Engagement*

I

*International
Missions*

L

*Leadership
Development*

E

*Ethnic
Partnership*

MONDAY

1

Happy New Year! As we enter 2018, pray that God's name would be heard in all the world. Pray for every nation, tribe, and tongue to have the opportunity to know the one true God and join Him on mission in their neighborhood and beyond.

8

Pray for the NAB work and our missionary team in Cameroon. Pray for the Cameroon Baptist Convention leadership and our partnerships there.

15

Pray for the Upper Mississippi Region's Pastor's Prayer Retreat this week at Village Creek Bible Camp, especially for a great time of prayer, reflection, and meditation as these pastors gather together.

22

Pray for pastors who serve in multi-ethnic churches, that God would give them a special sensitivity and encouragement as they serve people of different languages and cultures in their city.

29

Pray for the Strategy Team as they meet this week in Roseville, California; pray for the Spirit's leading for continued unity and collaboration among all of our partners in the NAB family as they continue discussions on the shaping of NAB strategies.

TUESDAY

2

Our conference vision is accomplished through missional engagement, international missions, leadership development and formation, and ethnic partnerships. Pray that God would bless these ends with fruit.

9

Begin praying about how you, your family, and your church can participate with NAB's global missions fund this year as it supports NAB missionaries serving worldwide.

16

Pray for the NorCal pastors attending an Ethos retreat this week as they continue their two-year journey to become missional in their leadership, structure, and discipling process to produce local missionaries, transform neighborhoods, and move toward multiplication on every level.

23

Pray that the Lord will continue to bless and protect the children at Chain of Love. Pray also for new partner missionaries, the Uebelhoers, who are partnering in Brazil with Chain of Love.

30

Pray for those who are planting NAB churches in Canada and the United States. Ask God to give church planters joy today as they reach out to individuals and communities who are far from God and His church.

7

Pray for the regional ministers and search committees who are in the process of searching for new pastors for NAB churches. Pray for God's wisdom and guidance as they seek to fill these open positions.

14

Pray for the international church today. Pray for those countries where religious freedoms do not exist and Christians are persecuted. Ask God to protect those who have followed His call to spread His word in these areas of the world.

21

Pray for regional ministers Dr. Randy Jaspers (Northern Plains Region) and Rev. Rick Weber (Northern California Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

28

Pray for those attending the Ministry Workers' Family Retreat at Camp Caroline this week from the Alberta Baptist Association. Pray that this would be a good time of connection and fellowship for ABA families. Pray for Sam and Bonnie Nikkel as they speak.

WEDNESDAY

3

Pray for the children's ministry pastors and leaders at your church. Pray that God would encourage them and guide them through ministry opportunities this year. Take time to show them your appreciation.

10

Pray for our NAB missionaries who are on home assignment right now: Nick and Iris, Elsie Lewandowski, and Shan Reed. Pray that they would have great connections with their supporters as well as encouraging times of rest and spending time with friends and family.

17

Pray for regional ministers Dr. James Renke (Upper Mississippi Region), Pastor Larry Burd (Atlantic Association), and Dr. David Ewing (Eastern Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

24

Pray for the White Cross ministry as they provide for direct and tangible participation in the Compassionate Care ministry of the North American Baptist Conference in Cameroon.

31

Pray for the staff of the NAB International Office as they serve the NAB missionaries and churches around the world.

THURSDAY

4

Pray for younger leaders in the NAB family whom God is developing for spiritual impact today in their ministries. Pray that the Lord surrounds them with Godly mentors who invest in them deeply as spiritual leaders.

11

Pray for the Jones family, NAB missionaries currently raising support to go to Brazil. Pray for good bonding time with churches, family, and friends during their travels to raise funds. Pray for continued support, as they are eager to get to the field.

18

Pray for regional ministers Pastor Ken Solberg (Saskatchewan Baptist Association) and Rev. Bob Klein (Southern California Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

25

Pray for Village Creek Bible Camp in Lansing, Iowa, as they have their board meetings this week. Pray for continued wisdom and unity as they meet.

FRIDAY

5

Pray for your community—those in your town or city whom you consider to be your neighbors. Ask God how you can best serve them.

12

Pray for the NAB work going on in Romania. Pray that God continues to bring in the resources necessary for progress at Camp Falcon Rock. Pray for missionaries Paul and Tanya Gericke and Vern and Gloria Wagner, and national missionaries Tamas and Tunde Modi.

19

Pray for regional ministers Rev. Dan Heringer (Central Plains Region), Rev. Terry Holley (Great Lakes Association), and Dr. Bob Krahm (British Columbia Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

26

Pray for marriages today. Ask that God's Spirit would bring love, kindness, and gentleness into relationships that are struggling or hurting. Pray for pastors who are counseling couples in their churches.

SATURDAY

6

Praise God for the blessing of a new vehicle for the Bicol Center for Christian Leadership so that Tony and Mayette can drive guest teachers to where they need to be to serve in Legazpi City, Philippines. Pray for their continued ministry.

13

Pray for the Southwestern Association Pastors and Wives Retreat this weekend in Hutchinson, Kansas, that it would be an encouraging and uplifting to these couples' souls.

20

Pray for regional ministers Dr. Jim Leverette and associate Dr. Terry Fossen (Alberta Baptist Association) and regional minister Rev. Chris Gorman (Northwest Region). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

27

Pray for the students from Taylor and Sioux Falls Seminary, as well as international seminaries in Brazil and Russia. Pray for the Lord to direct their steps.

JANUARY 2018

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY



M

*Missional
Engagement*

4

Pray for our Elevate leaders, a collection of millennial leaders within the NAB family, who recently met for a couple days in Northern California; pray that their discussions continue to bear missional fruit in their local church context.

5

Pray for NAB missionaries Ron and Jeannie Seck, for their work with CHE (Community Health Evangelism), for their reach among the Roma people, and for the need for short-term teams this year.

6

Pray for the youth pastor and youth workers at your church. Pray that God would encourage them and guide them through this school year as they plan new ministry opportunities. Take time to show them your appreciation.

I

*International
Missions*

11

Praise God for what He is doing at Mbingo Baptist Hospital and Bango Baptist Hospital in Cameroon. Continue praying for the different roles they seek to fill.

12

Pray for the NAB ministries in Japan. Pray for the Ewing family, Shan Reed, and Yuri Nakano as they continue to build connections in the community and with the local churches.

13

Pray for the missionaries that your home church supports. Find a way to send them encouragement this week.

L

*Leadership
Development*

18

Pray for regional ministers Rev. Dan Heringer (Central Plains Region), Rev. Terry Holley (Great Lakes Association), and Dr. Bob Krahn (British Columbia Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

19

Pray for regional ministers Dr. James Renke (Upper Mississippi Region), Pastor Larry Burd (Atlantic Association), and Dr. David Ewing (Eastern Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

20

Pray for regional ministers Pastor Ken Solberg (Saskatchewan Baptist Association) and Rev. Bob Klein (Southern California Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

E

*Ethnic
Partnership*

25

Pray for Cam Roxburgh, NAB VP of Missional Initiatives, as he works with various pastors and regional ministers on restructuring churches for mission.

26

Pray for the national missionaries we are privileged to partner with in the Philippines, Romania, Serbia, and Hungary.

27

Pray for Gateway Director Randy Schmor and the important work he does training churches and missions teams for missional engagement through long-term partnerships with mission fields around the world.

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

1 Pray for a greater depth of understanding and love today in your own life for the call of God to join Him on mission in your neighborhood and city.

2 Continue to pray for the preparations and details as Triennial 2018 plans are underway. Pray that many would attend and be inspired by gathering.

3 Pray for your pastors today as they spend the weekend serving, preaching, and giving to others. Ask the Lord to grant them precious time to rest in Him and with their families.

7 Pray for your regional minister today. Pray he is encouraged and challenged as he talks today with all of the other RMs on their monthly conference call. Thank God for the unity God has created among our regional minister team.

8 Pray for the Eastern Association Pastors and Wives Retreat in Niagara Falls this week. Pray for VP of Leadership Formation Kent Carlson as he shares with this group.

9 Thank God for Geoff Hartt and his work leading Hispanics for Christ. Pray that God continues to use this ministry to encourage Hispanic pastors and establish ministry hubs in underserved areas.

10 Pray that God would expand and multiply the ministry efforts of the NAB family through the NAB on Mission Together (REACH) campaign.

14 Pray for Craig and Maureen Moody as they work with Life Abundant Primary Health-care, training village health workers. Because they are lacking enough trained staff, pray for those in remote areas who are struggling to care for all the patients.

15 Pray for the generation of young leaders in Russia; pray they would understand the role of discipleship and leadership development in the church context. Pray for protection for the believers in Russia.

16 Pray for regional ministers Dr. Randy Jaspers (Northern Plains Region) and Rev. Rick Weber (Northern California Association). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

17 Pray for small group leaders and/or Sunday school teachers who serve your church. Pray that God would use them in powerful ways to teach His word with accuracy and integrity as they seek to transform lives.

21 Pray for regional ministers Dr. Jim Leverette and associate Dr. Terry Fossen (Alberta Baptist Association) and regional minister Rev. Chris Gorman (Northwest Region). Ask God to continue to give them wisdom as they serve the pastors and churches in their area.

22 Blue Ocean is a yearly cohort that meets three times to help our leaders explore what it means to have a renewed theological vision of the church on mission. Pray for Blue Ocean in Sacramento, CA, over the next couple days.

23 Pray for the NAB Women's Ministry Leadership Team as they desire to engage with women of the NAB and help them fulfill their calling.

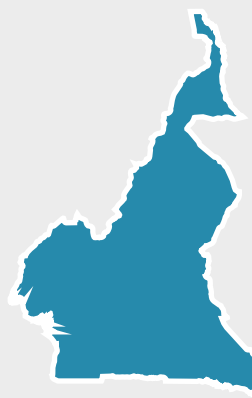
24 Ask God to give wisdom and insight to those who direct various leadership boards affiliated with the North American Baptists. Pray for men and women who sit on the boards of the NAB, CIF, Heritage Commission, Sioux Falls Seminary, and Taylor Seminary.

28 Pray for Bud Fuchs as he partners with churches and campus ministries in Utah to reach international students for Christ. Pray for him as he also resources our NAB churches in reaching internationals in their own communities.

FEBRUARY 2018



Elsie



LEWANDOWSKI

NAB Missionary in Cameroon

Elsie Lewandowski has been serving as an NAB missionary for over twenty-nine years! God has given her a desire to serve families in education. For the last twenty-two years, she has been overseeing a homeschooling program for missionary children all over Cameroon under the Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC). The CBC works with many mission organizations throughout the country, so Elsie's primary role has been to travel to those locations to meet with the homeschooling families, as well as lead two large group sessions every year. As the homeschooling situation has transitioned and there are more national opportunities to facilitate this, Elsie is in the process of transitioning her role and seeking how to serve education in a new way. There is a new opportunity to actually train Cameroonian teachers so they can be more impactful in the classroom.

Pray for Elsie:

- As she is on home assignment, meeting with churches, supporters, friends, family, and sharing how God is working in Cameroon and in her life.
- As she transitions her educational role in Cameroon.
- For the homeschooling families she has been blessed to be a part of.



Learn more about Elsie: <https://nabonmission.org/missionaries/elsie-lewandowski/>



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