

# ILLINOIS BAPTIST



PREVIEW

## 2017 IBSA Annual Meeting

SBC President  
Steve Gaines leads  
slate of speakers

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## The road ahead

A tough but exciting  
journey awaits us

BY NATE ADAMS

If we were to drive west from Illinois, whether along Interstate 70 from St. Louis, 72 from Springfield, or 80 from Chicago, the experience would be largely the same. We would continue in a long, straight line for a very long time, rolling over a few hills and rivers in Missouri or Iowa before settling into the even longer, even straighter, seemingly eternal plains of Kansas or Nebraska and eastern Colorado. Then we would see the mountains.

Imagine what early pioneers must have thought when the amazing barrier of the Rocky Mountains first appeared on the horizon. No doubt many of them turned south or north for a while, hoping to find a way around. They knew the experience, equipment, and skills that had carried them across the slowly elevating plains would not take them over those mountains. They would need to find a pass, a way through. And even that journey would be like none they had faced before.

As we Southern Baptists in Illinois now approach our state's bicentennial year, our journey is much the same. We have been on a long, flat path for years—in number of churches, in baptisms, in church plants, in giving, and in most measures of church involvement and growth. That's not a criticism. It's just a description of our recent journey.

Along the way, hardly noticeable until just recently, the altitude has gradually increased and the climb has grown steeper. So many cultural dynamics have grown counter to Christian faith, and perhaps especially to Baptist faith. We too can turn to the left or to the right for a while. But to truly advance from the plains of our status quo up into the mountains our mission now faces, I believe we must dig deep and find a new, pioneering spirit.

### Go to new places

In Illinois Baptist mission life, going new places means taking the gospel to the counties and cities and communities where Baptist or even evangelical churches don't yet exist or have a strong presence. It means church planting.

IBSA churches have numbered right around 1,000 for decades, even while planting around 20 new churches a year. With those one thousand churches baptizing between four and five new believers

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## Where the adventure begins

# Pioneering SPIRIT

IBSA Annual Meeting  
November 8-9, 2017  
Tabernacle Baptist Church, Decatur

Sign up for meals and find more meeting info at [IBSAannualmeeting.org](http://IBSAannualmeeting.org)

## How's your health?

Pastors' Conference aims to assess  
spiritual well-being

Decatur | The 2017 IBSA Pastors' Conference will kick off Nov. 7 at Tabernacle Baptist Church in Decatur with a focus on the spiritual health of leaders, their families, and their churches. The conference, held prior to the IBSA Annual Meeting, is based on the qualities the Apostle Paul set out for church leadership in Titus 1:5-9.

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2017 IBSA Pastors' Conference

November 7-8  
Tabernacle Baptist Church  
in Decatur, Illinois



### MINISTERS' WIVES

The gift of togetherness

Plus, other meetings in Decatur

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### WORSHIP LEADERS

'This Hope' returns  
to lead worship

P. B-3

Stop by the exhibit hall in the Family Life Center to visit the advertisers in this preview section.

each, we reach about 4,000 to 5,000 people per year. Yet Illinois has 13 million people, and at least 8 million of them don't claim to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. And most of them do not live near our existing churches. To leave the flatland of our status quo and reach the lost people of Illinois, we must increase and accelerate the number of new churches being started. We must place a gospel witness near them.

**Pioneering Spirit Challenge #1:** Will your church adopt at least one of the 200 places where a new church is needed? Your commitment can be to pray, or to partner with others to get that church started, or to be the primary planting church. Will you pray, partner, or plant?

# Pioneering SPIRIT

## Engage new people

Establishing healthy, new churches in the places where they are needed is one important commitment of a pioneering spirit. The first Baptists arrived in Illinois during a time when it was extremely difficult and even dangerous just to survive and eke out a living. Yet they considered it a priority to share the gospel and to start new Baptist churches. Four of those churches that were in existence when Illinois became a state in 1818 are still serving their communities today!

But being blessed—and burdened—with a pioneering spirit also leads churches, both new and established, to intentionally and consistently engage new people with the gospel message. With a sense of urgency, they will evangelize.

Sadly, it's possible even for a well-intentioned church to lose its passion for evangelism, and become more of a church of settlers than a church of pioneers. They worship, and study, and fellowship, and even serve one another and the community. But very little energy goes into seeking and saving the lost.

Consider this: The almost 1,000 IBSA churches baptized about 4,000 people last year, four per church on average. But over 300 churches reported no baptisms at all. The remaining churches that reported baptisms averaged seven each. If non-baptizing churches simply reached the same number of people with the gospel that baptizing churches did, 7,000 people would come to know

Christ next year. And just imagine what would happen if the churches already baptizing seven or more started baptizing monthly!

By intentionally shifting their focus toward evangelism, churches that have settled can become pioneering churches again.

**Pioneering Spirit Challenge #2:** Will your church commit to turning itself inside out into your community, training its members to intentionally have gospel conversations and evangelistic events, and asking God to increase the number of baptisms you see each year? Will you do whatever it takes to become a more frequently baptizing church?

## Make new sacrifices

Going to new places and engaging new people is costly. It's one reason so many stay where they are—and settle. Many early pioneers packed literally everything they owned into a wagon, and some sacrificed it all to get to their destination. A pioneering spirit sees the value of moving toward those new places and new people, and is willing to give sacrificially to make it happen.

Going to a new place of mission effectiveness here in Illinois will be costly too, especially if God inspires more churches and raises up more leaders, planters, and missionaries to go to new places and engage many new people. Fortunately, we as Illinois Baptists have a wonderful, reliable, tested vehicle in which to entrust our sacrifices. The Cooperative Program (some call it CP Missions) prioritizes missions in Illinois by investing 56.5% of its gifts here, while also sending 43.5% to be combined with others' gifts and take the gospel throughout North America and the world.

Today the average IBSA church gives about 7% of its undesignated offerings to local and worldwide missions through the Cooperative Program. As with baptisms, that average is the result of some churches sacrificing far more, and some sacrificing far less. At one time, 10% was the accepted norm for Cooperative Program missions, and at one time IBSA churches averaged giving 11% rather than 7%. Simply stated, a return to that 10% standard could result in over \$3 million more to missions next year.

**Pioneering Spirit Challenge #3:** Will your church commit to a new level of sacrificial missions giving through the Cooperative Program? Will you challenge your members to faithful tithing and life stewardship, so that generous giving transforms their own lives, as well as others'?

## Develop new leaders

A pioneering spirit must be multi-generational. Very few destinations that require true, pioneering effort can be fully attained in one lifetime. Our

parents' generation brought us this far into our Baptist missionary journey in Illinois, and now we lead and will go a little farther before entrusting the journey to our children. That's why a pioneering spirit must invest in the development of new leaders, even as it sacrifices and gives its all now.

It seems that churches used to have more systematic ways of developing new leaders. Sunday nights were invested in church leadership training programs. Wednesday nights were often invested in missions education programs that developed boys and girls, and young men and women, for tomorrow's missionary and church leadership roles.

We should be grateful for churches that still develop tomorrow's leaders in this way, while not necessarily wishing the same programs or methods on others. But today, more than ever, we must ask ourselves with a new seriousness, "How are we systematically and intentionally developing leaders for tomorrow's churches?"

**Pioneering Spirit Challenge #4:** Will your church commit to the intentional developing of younger leaders who will be tomorrow's pastors, and church planters, and missionaries? Will you join with other Baptist partners like IBSA who can help you develop these young leaders for tomorrow's church?

## Facing our mountains

Last summer I traveled to Loveland, Colorado, in part to scout out Long's Peak, a 14,259-foot mountain that will hopefully, next year, be the thirty-first and most difficult "fourteener" I climb. As I headed west from the Interstate and flatlands of Loveland, I could not immediately see the pass up into the mountains. But soon I noticed that the road was following a stream, and then a mighty, rushing river. There was barely room for a road in some places, but the water had cut enough of a path through the rock that we could now follow it up to previously impossible heights. We eagerly forged ahead.

To leave the flat trends of our recent journey as Illinois Baptists may seem impossible at first. Our 200-year-old mission field is more lost now than ever. And developing new leaders while making new sacrifices to engage new people in new places with the gospel—well, that's no easy path. But I believe the living water of God's own Spirit has already made a way for us. If we are filled with his Pioneering Spirit and will follow him forward by faith, even into difficult places, I believe God has new heights planned for us here in Illinois.

*Nate Adams is executive director of the Illinois Baptist State Association. The challenges outlined here will be presented in the Annual Meeting.*

## At the podium

The three featured speakers who will address attendees of the IBSA Annual Meeting in Decatur include two Illinois leaders and the current president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

IBSA President Kevin Carrothers and Pastor Sammy Simmons will preach during the Wednesday and Thursday sessions, and SBC President Steve Gaines will help interpret the meeting's "Pioneering Spirit" theme during the Wednesday evening worship celebration.

### Kevin Carrothers

President's Message, Wednesday afternoon

Carrothers is concluding his second one-year term as IBSA president, and also serves as director of missions for Salem South Baptist Association. He has his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Missouri Baptist University, and his *Juris Doctor* from Southern Illinois University School of Law.

### Steve Gaines

Wednesday evening

Gaines is pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., and president of the Southern Baptist Convention. He has served in four churches as senior pastor over the past 30 years and holds a Ph.D. in preaching from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He recently appointed an evangelism task force to address declining baptisms and to help renew evangelistic fervor in the SBC.



CARROTHERS



GAINES



SIMMONS

### Sammy Simmons

Annual Sermon, Thursday morning

A native Georgian, Simmons is the pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Benton. He has an engineering degree from Georgia Tech, a Master of Divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and a Doctorate of Ministry degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

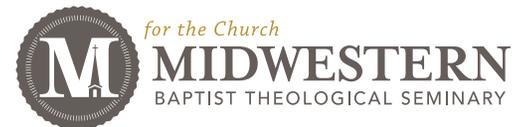
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- ▶ Satan and His Fallen Angels
- ▶ Activities of Demons
- ▶ Ministry of Holy Angels
- ▶ How Demons Affect the Believer
- ▶ The Authority of the Believer
- ▶ Generational Sins
- ▶ Removing Demonic Strongholds

"My friend Bruce Kugler has prepared perhaps the best presentation of Spiritual Warfare I have seen in many years. It is not only theologically accurate but is very practical. I am enlisting Bruce to teach these truths to our pastors in India. I strongly encourage every pastor to invite Bruce to share this teaching in your church. We have a host of our people struggling with the world, the flesh, and the devil, and they urgently need help. These truths will set them free."

— Dr. Ron Herrod, President R.H.E.M.A. International, Former First Vice President, Southern Baptist Convention

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## 'This Hope' returns to lead worship at state meeting

Alaska may not seem the likeliest place for a gospel group to get its start—at least to those of us who grew up in the lower 48 states. But that's where the members of This Hope met and started singing together.



The quintet, now based in the Atlanta area, will be at the IBSA Annual Meeting in Decatur Nov. 8-9 to lead in worship and present mini-concerts prior to the Wednesday afternoon and evening sessions. This Hope is "back by popular demand" after leading worship at a previous IBSA Annual Meeting, said **Steve Hamrick**, IBSA's director of worship and technology.

"This Hope is a contemporary, multi-style group of worship leaders known for their complex a cappella harmony," Hamrick said. "They will lead our worship time singing various hymn and contemporary arrangements, as well as several featured songs."

The group is rooted in Soldotna, Alaska, where brothers David and Tim Inabnit moved after their dad took a pastorate at a local church. The brothers met future fellow group members Daniel Johnston

and Mikah Boudreaux at that church. Jeane Bope, This Hope's fifth member, was in their high school choir.

They sang in churches in Alaska, eventually settling on the name "This Hope" from Hebrews 6:19: "We have **this hope** as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure..." In 1996, they sensed God leading them into full-time ministry and relocated to Georgia soon after.

Over two decades of ministry, This Hope has produced multiple albums, including two Christmas releases. They also recorded a song for "Champion," a feature film released this year.

For more information about This Hope and to listen to their music, go to [thishope.org](http://thishope.org).

# GC Challenge

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► Continued from page B-1

The theme for the conference, “Time for a Check-Up,” is something pastors are familiar with when it comes to their congregations, said **Brian Smith**, pastor of Second Baptist Church in Granite City and president of this year’s Pastors’ Conference. Pastors provide spiritual check-ups for their people every week through preaching and teaching, but who’s doing the same for the pastor?

“That is what this conference is for, to provide pastors and staff with a spiritual health check-up and scriptural prescriptions for better spiritual health for them and ultimately their families and churches,” Smith said.

Southern Baptist Convention President **Steve Gaines** is among the preachers who will fill the pulpit at Tabernacle Nov. 7-8. Joining him are **Ed Stetzer**, who holds the Billy Graham Chair of Church, Mission, and Evangelism at Wheaton College and serves as executive director of the Billy Graham Center for Evangelism; **Curtis Gilbert**, lead pastor of the Belleville campus of The Journey; and **Joe Valenti**, associate pastor of youth and missions at Cuyahoga Valley Church in Broadview Heights, Ohio.

The Pastors’ Conference also will include breakout sessions led by the speakers and other Illinois leaders:

► Valenti will lead a session on healthy churches reaching UPG’s (unreached people groups), and also a breakout on healthy youth ministry.



GAINES



GILBERT



STETZER



VALENTI

► Gilbert will lead pastors in developing healthy church elders and building a healthy multi-site ministry.



► **Rayden Hollis**, pastor of Red Hill Church in Edwardsville, will lead a session on healing from an unhealthy ministry, and also will facilitate a church planting round table discussion.

► A trio of IBSA staff members will also lead breakout sessions, which will be offered at both breakout times on Tuesday. **Pat Pajak**, associate executive director of evangelism, will encourage pastors with ways to make their churches more evangelistic; **Mark Emerson**, associate executive director of the Church Resources Team, will speak on healthy small groups and Sunday school; and **Steve Hamrick**, director of worship ministries, will lead a session on developing and leading healthy worship teams.

► On Wednesday morning at 8:30, Gaines will speak to Pastors’ Conference attendees and participate in a Q&A session.

A pizza dinner will be offered onsite Tuesday evening for \$10 per person. To purchase dinner tickets and for more Pastors’ Conference info, go to [IBSAannualmeeting.org](http://IBSAannualmeeting.org).

2017 IBSA Pastors’ Conference

**Tuesday, November 7**

- 1:30 p.m. Worship
- 1:40 Welcome and Opening Prayer
- 1:50 Challenge #1 – **Curtis Gilbert**
- 2:35 Challenge #2 – **Joe Valenti**
- 3:35 Election of 2018 Pastors’ Conference President
- 3:40 Closing Prayer
- 3:55 Breakout Session #1
- 4:30 Dinner Break
- 5:55 Breakout Session #2
- 6:45 Pre-Session Music
- 7:00 Opening Prayer
- 7:15 Challenge #3 – **Curtis Gilbert**
- 8:00 Election of 2018 Pastors’ Conference Vice President
- 8:05 Challenge #4 – **Steve Gaines**
- 8:55 Closing Prayer

**Wednesday, November 8**

- 8:30 a.m. Breakout Session #3
- 9:30 Worship
- 9:45 Welcome and Opening Prayer
- 9:50 Challenge #5 – **Ed Stetzer**
- 10:45 Election of 2018 Pastors’ Conference Treasurer
- 10:50 IBSA Bivocational Pastor of the Year Award
- 11:00 Challenge #6 – **Ed Stetzer**
- 11:50 Closing Prayer

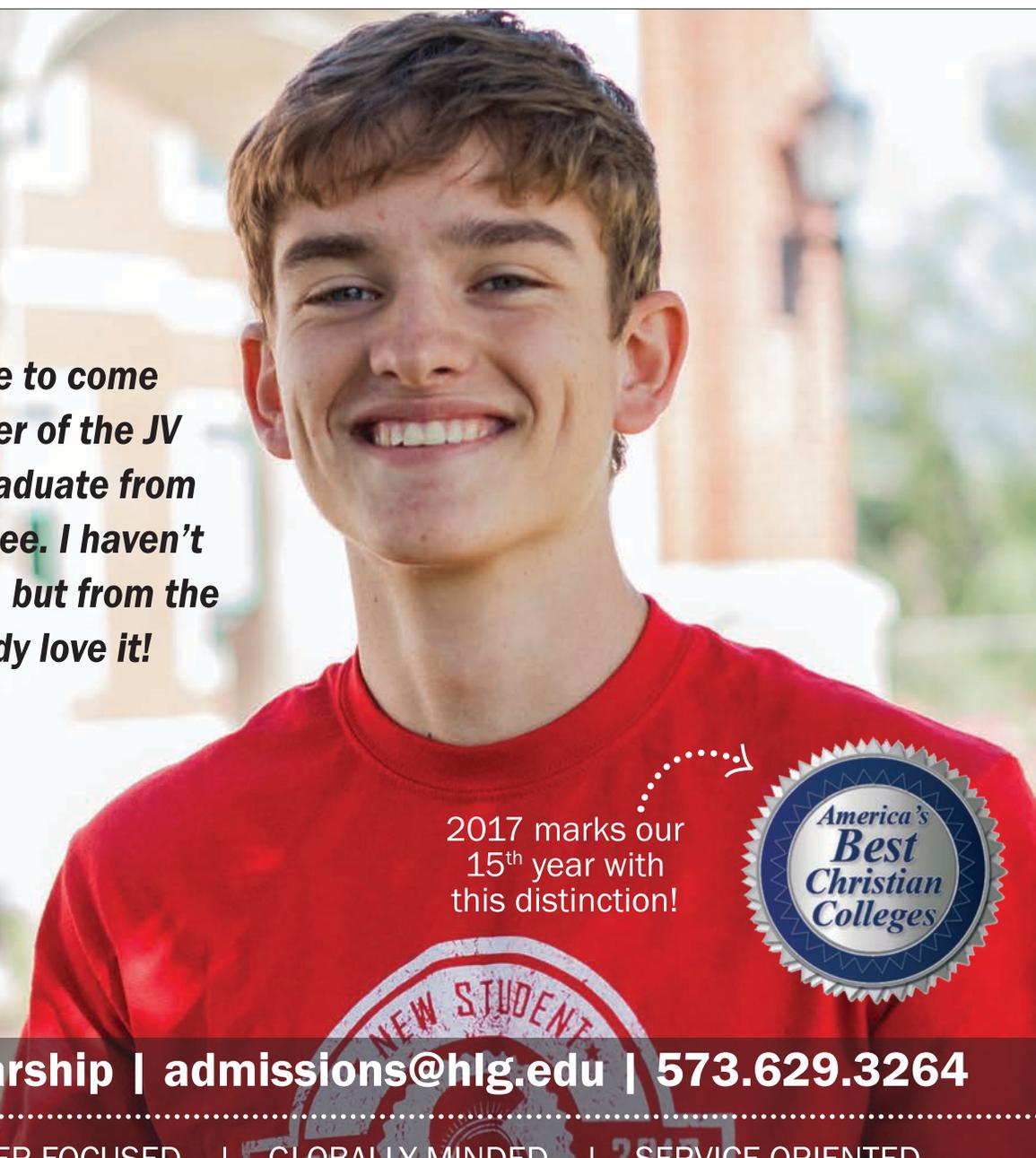


**HLGU has been such a nice place to come to school every day. I’m a member of the JV basketball team and I plan to graduate from here in 2021 with a biology degree. I haven’t been at this school for very long, but from the short time I’ve been here I already love it!**

Carter McDowell  
Jacksonville, IL

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# The ties that bind

## Ministers' wives celebrate 'gift of togetherness'

IBSA ministers' wives will meet for their annual conference and luncheon Nov. 8 at Tabernacle Baptist Church in Decatur. The theme, "The Gift of Togetherness," is based on Hebrews 10:24: "Let us be concerned about one another in order to promote love and good works."

"The role of a pastor's wife is a unique blessing," said **Gail Faulkner**, a pastor's wife from First Baptist Church in Bethalto and president of this year's luncheon. "It can also be extremely lonely."

"The friendships with other ministers' wives here in Illinois have truly been my greatest gift. I treasure the friendships I have made, and their gift of pouring into my life during the joyful times of celebration and the difficult times of sorrow."

The featured speaker for this year's meeting is **Jennifer Mathewson Speer**, a conference speaker, Bible teacher, and writer who founded Word of Joy ministry. Her first book, "Women of Grace," looks at how eight women in the lineage of Jesus were redeemed by God's grace.

Speer also has an Illinois connection: Her husband, Allen Speer,



served on the IBSA Board of Directors and pastored churches in Golconda and Cobden before moving with his family to Florida to head up a Christian aviation ministry.

The IBSA Ministers' Wives' Luncheon in Decatur is 8:30-noon; tickets are \$20. RSVP is not required but strongly encouraged by Monday, Oct. 25. Make checks payable to IBSA Ministers' Wives and mail to: Terry Kenney, 212 W. 10th St., Beardstown, IL 62618.

"I pray that we can reconnect with long-time friends and make some new ones," Faulkner said. "I long for each individual lady to walk in feeling welcomed and leave having been encouraged and loved—knowing our bond as ministers' wives is truly a gift."



SPEER

## Also meeting in Decatur

### ► Young Leaders Network

**Tuesday, Nov. 7, following the Pastors' Conference**

Tabernacle Baptist Church

Join IBSA pastors, planters, and leaders for a conversation on following a legacy leader. Plus, wings.

### ► Church Planters Breakfast

**Thursday, Nov. 9, 7:00 a.m.**

Tabernacle Baptist Church

For planters, spouses, and leaders from partnering churches. There is no cost, but pre-registration is appreciated. RSVP to [RachelCarter@IBSA.org](mailto:RachelCarter@IBSA.org) or (217) 391-3101.

### ► Associational Leadership Breakfast Fellowship

**Thursday, Nov. 9, 7:30 a.m.**

Kirkland Room, Decatur Conference Center & Hotel

Free breakfast for associational leaders and spouses. If you have received an invitation, please RSVP to [LindaDarden@IBSA.org](mailto:LindaDarden@IBSA.org) or (217) 391-3137.

### Reserve your meal tickets

Dinner will be offered onsite on Tuesday and Wednesday prior to the evening sessions. Tuesday's meal is pizza, salad, and dessert for \$10, and Wednesday will feature a BBQ dinner and dessert for \$12.

Go to [IBSAAnnualmeeting.org/accommodations](http://IBSAAnnualmeeting.org/accommodations) to purchase tickets.

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# Illinois Baptist State Association 2017 Annual Meeting schedule

November 8-9 | Tabernacle Baptist Church, Decatur



## Wednesday, November 8

- 1:15 Pre-Session Concert and Worship – **This Hope**
- 1:30 Opening Prayer
- 1:35 Theme Interpretation: Meet the Pioneers
- 1:50 Call to Order/Announcements
- 2:00 Credentials Committee – **Paul Cooper**
  - Churches seeking affiliation with IBSA
  - Seating of messengers from newly affiliated churches
  - Recommendation concerning non-cooperating churches
- 2:10 Adoption of Program – **Tom Rains**
- 2:15 Overview of IBSA Committee Written Reports – **Kevin Carrothers**
- 2:20 Resolution of Gratitude to Host Church – **Jim Augenstein**
- 2:25 Miscellaneous Business
- 2:35 Partnership Message – SBC Executive Committee
- 2:40 \*Election of President
- 2:45 \*Election of Recording Secretary
- 2:50 Worship through Music
- 3:05 Theme Interpretation: Go to New Places
- 3:20 IBSA “Mission Illinois” Report – **Mark Davis and Nate Adams**
- 3:35 Offering – Ministers’ Relief Fund
- 3:40 Partnership Message – GuideStone Financial Resources
- 3:45 \*Worship through Music
- 4:00 \*President’s Message – **Kevin Carrothers**
- 4:40 Benediction – **Carlton Binkley**



**Steve Gaines**  
president,  
Southern  
Baptist  
Convention,  
pastor of  
Bellevue  
Baptist  
Church,  
Cordova, Tenn.



**Kevin Carrothers**  
IBSA President

## Wednesday Evening Session

- 6:40 Pre-Session Concert – **This Hope**
- 7:00 Call to Order and Announcements
- 7:05 Partnership Message – International Mission Board
- 7:10 Partnership Message – North American Mission Board
- 7:15 Recognition of New IBSA Churches

- 7:25 Theme Interpretation: Engage New People
- 7:40 “200 and Counting” Challenge to Churches – **Nate Adams**
- 7:50 Worship through Music
- 8:00 Keynote Speaker – **Steve Gaines**
- 8:40 Challenge Response
- 8:45 Benediction – **Dale Laningham**

## Thursday, November 9

- 8:15 Worship through Music
- 8:30 Call to Order and Announcements
- 8:35 Theme Interpretation: Make New Sacrifices
- 8:50 Baptist Foundation of Illinois Report – **Ted Zimmerman and Doug Morrow**
- 9:05 Resolutions and Christian Life Committee – **Jim Augenstein**
- 9:15 Constitution Committee – **Andrew Crowther**
- 9:25 Auditor Selections for IBSA Entities
- 9:30 Action on IBSA Committee Written Reports
- 9:40 Miscellaneous Business
- 9:45 Partnership Message – Woman’s Missionary Union
- 9:55 \*Election of Vice President
- 10:00 \*Election of Assistant Recording Secretary
- 10:05 Worship through Music
- 10:15 Theme Interpretation: Develop New Leaders
- 10:30 Baptist Children’s Home and Family Services Report – **Eric Bramlet and Denny Hydrick**
- 10:50 Special Recognitions
- 11:00 \*Worship through Music
- 11:10 \*Annual Sermon – **Sammy Simmons**
- 11:50 Benediction – **Ron Gray**



**Nate Adams**  
IBSA  
Executive  
Director



**Sammy Simmons**  
Pastor of  
Immanuel  
Baptist Church,  
Benton

\*Fixed order of business that cannot occur later than time indicated.

## Stewardship for *Life*

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- ▶ Christian estate planning
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- ▶ Church loans & BFI bonds
- ▶ Educational scholarships
- ▶ Capital stewardship campaigns

## Baptist Children’s Home and Family Services

Celebrating 100 years in 2018.