

Illinois Baptist




Missions and evangelism

How can we fulfill our Baptist calling?

Please share this planning guide for the 2017 focus on state missions with your church leadership team.



People in *Illinois* need the gospel **NOW** more than ever

Offering & Week of Prayer for state missions

mission illinois

SEPTEMBER 10-17 • missionillinois.org

Imagine a place in **America** where people **have never heard the gospel.**

That place is **ILLINOIS.**

- ▶ In fact, of our state's **13 million** residents, at least **8 million** do not know Jesus Christ as their personal savior.
- ▶ **Illinois needs the gospel.** Our friends and neighbors need the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.
- ▶ That's why the **2017 Mission Illinois Offering** focuses on evangelism.

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Illinois Baptist State Association
AUGUST 14, 2017

Your church's partnership is vital.

The MIO kits were mailed to churches in late July. Please check your church office to see that it arrived and was delivered to the right leader. If not, we will gladly send another. Or if you need additional materials, let us know right away. MIO@IBSA.org

What's inside

- ▶ **Lost in Illinois**
What this map shows us about the need for the gospel
- ▶ **Prayer Guide**
8 daily devotions and for the Week of Prayer (plus videos!)
- ▶ **How you can help**
Anyone can lead the Week of Prayer and Mission Illinois study

NOW more than ever

Why evangelism is needed now

The 'blue map' tells our story

This map is becoming familiar around the Illinois Baptist State Association. We call it 'the blue map.' With just a few brush strokes, it clearly illustrates the need for evangelism in Illinois.

The map shows the percentage of people in each county who self-identify as Southern Baptist.

Our strength as a denomination is in the southern half of the state, where in most counties at least 5% of the population is SBC. In some places, the percentage is higher than that, but with so little of this map shaded dark blue, it's easy to understand why Southern Baptists—and evangelicals overall—are in the minority in Illinois.

The farther north we travel, the less 'Baptist' the state is, even as the population explodes. The gray circles show our most populous places. And in stark contrast, the white and lightest blue-shaded counties show places where there are few or no SBC churches.

The need is great all across Illinois, but especially in the cities and Northwest Illinois.

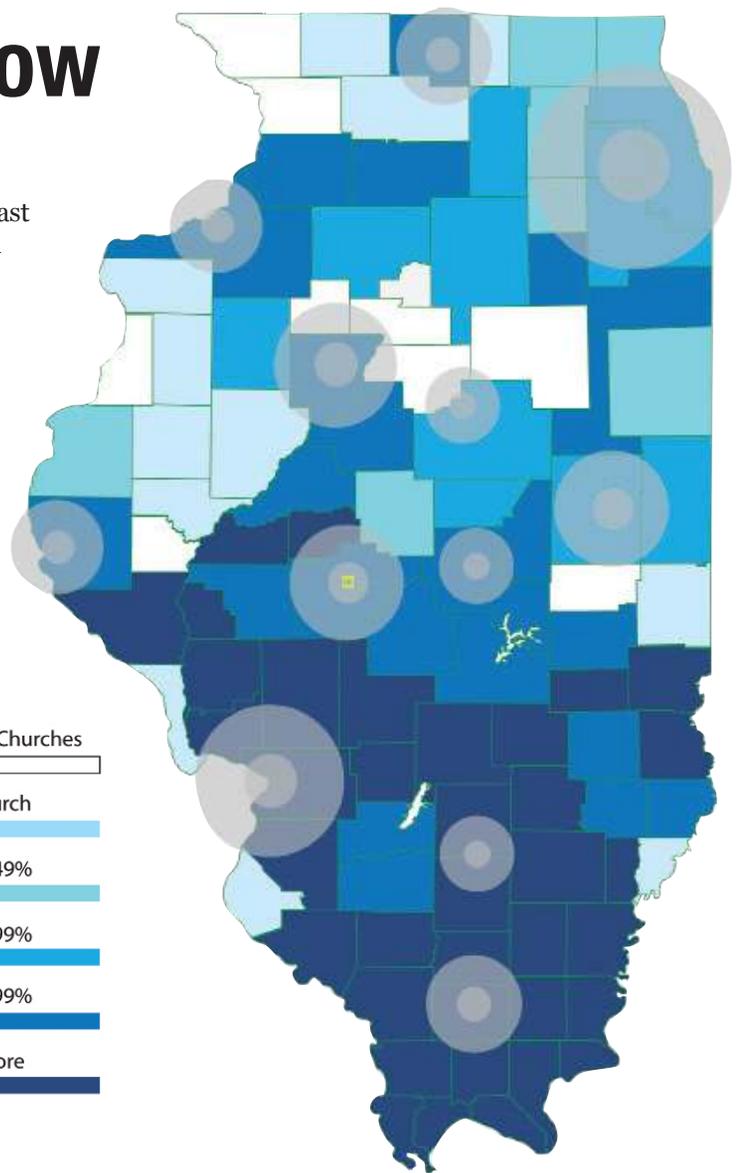
"In many parts of Illinois, Baptists are outnumbered by Muslims, Mormons, eastern religions, and people with no faith at all," Nate Adams, executive director of the Illinois Baptist State Association said. "In fact, at least 8-million of our 13-million neighbors in Illinois do not know Jesus Christ."

That's why at IBSA, we often say, "Evangelism is the point of the plow." As a ministry-support and missions-sending organization, IBSA's missionaries and staff are engaged in many activities that assist local Baptist churches in Illinois.

The partnership we share with almost 1,000 churches, mission congregations, and church plants is vital to strengthening Baptist work in Illinois. But whatever the ministry activity, the reason behind it is equipping IBSA churches, leaders, and members to share the gospel with people who do not yet know Jesus as their personal savior.

The need is great all across Illinois, but especially in the cities and Northwest Illinois.

► Continued on page 3



Day 1: Sunday, Sept. 10

Northwest quadrant

John and Jacki Mattingly have served around the Quad Cities for almost three decades. He has served as pastor, director of missions, and now heads church planting in the quadrant of our state that has captured his heart. This region is a mix of cities, small towns, and rural crossroads, including Quincy, Peoria, and Rockford, with a higher percentage of lostness than any other region in Illinois. Many counties have no Southern Baptist church and little evangelical witness. John continues seeking God's direction in identifying the next location to plant a new church. And he is looking for people who will move here and commit their lives to church planting and pastoral ministry in the Northwest.

Pray for John as he helps plant new churches, plus **John Sedgwick, Brian McWethy, and Joe Gardner** who serve here, and IBSA's Church Planting leader **Van Kicklighter**.

Day 2: Monday, Sept. 11

Next generation

Reaching the next generation with the gospel is not easy. Those born in 2000 or after are teenagers now. The Millennials, who started coming of age after 2000, are giving way to the "Centennials," or Generation-Z. They have grown up in a very different world, one where the number of people who claim no religious affiliation at all is about 20% and growing. **Jack Lucas** joined IBSA as leader of next-gen ministry. IBSA aids churches in reaching children with the gospel, and equipping students as tomorrow's leaders through VBS, missions events, Youth Encounter in three locations, AWSOM for teen girls, Summer Worship University, and a full summer schedule of camps at Lake Sallateeska and Streator Baptist Camps.

Pray for next-gen director **Jack Lucas**, worship director **Steve Hamrick**, camp managers **Philip Hall** and **Mike Young** and their ministry teams.

Day 3: Tuesday, Sept. 12

Chicago

Bryan and Marci Coble relocated far from their downstate home. Their new neighborhood in Chicago, Irving Park, is seven times larger than Marci's hometown, with 77,000 people. The variety of people and languages there is amazing. They are engaged in church planting activities to meet the neighbors and form a core group for a new church. First they will start a Bible study at the community center in the park, followed within a few months by weekly worship services. With the partnership of their home church, IBSA, and national missions partners, the Cobles are committed to sharing Christ in our state's largest mission field. Acts 1:8 missions strategy starts at home, and moves on to the big cities nearby, such as Chicago.

Pray for the **Cobles**, for more church planters in Chicagoland with its 10 million residents, and for **Dennis Conner, Tim Bailey, John Yi, and Jorge Melendez** who lead IBSA's church planting strategy there.



BRIAN
MCWETHY



JOE
GARDNER



VAN
KICKLIGHTER



JACK
LUCAS



STEVE
HAMRICK



PHILIP
HALL



MIKE
YOUNG



DENNIS
CONNER



TIM
BAILEY



JOHN
YI



JORGE
MELENDEZ

► **Evangelism continued**

The missionaries whose photos appear in this prayer guide each have different specialties. Church planting, age-graded discipleship, and missions mobilization are just a few. But their work has the same chief purpose: advancing the gospel.

For example, when Illinois Baptist Disaster Relief teams are cutting trees felled by storms and digging out mud-packed houses after floods, somewhere nearby a trained DR chaplain is sharing Jesus with a suffering homeowner. And many times, they find Christ in their crisis.

Who trained the chaplains? Who organized the volunteers?

You did.

By giving through the Mission Illinois Offering, you enable state missionaries to do their work in Illinois. You provide supplies for VBS training and children's camps. You send expertise to churches in need of stronger leadership. You recruit and equip church planters to start congregations where they are desperately need. And the list goes on and on.

Your gifts through the Mission Illinois Offering stay here in Illinois: teaching students, equipping leaders, planting churches, and, at all times, advancing the gospel.

Won't you give through the Mission Illinois Offering? Your partnership in advancing the gospel in Illinois is needed now, more than ever.



Featured missions stories

Visit missionillinois.org

Spiritual need in the Northwest

John and Jacki Mattingly have served in northwest Illinois for almost three decades. This area, which has a higher percentage of lostness than any other region in Illinois, has captured their hearts. See why.

A heart for the city

Bryan and Marci Coble have relocated their family to Irving Park in Chicago. It's far from their downstate home. But with the partnership of their home church, IBSA, and others, the Cobles are committed to sharing Christ here.

Sharing Jesus—everywhere

Pat Pajak can share Jesus with anyone anywhere, even the rehab unit where he recovered from heart surgery. He is a terrific example and teacher for us all. Now Pat is leading evangelism training for IBSA, helping churches and pastors grow as witnesses.

Feeding people, loving people

Derrick and Ailee Taylor have a heart for their small town. With their new congregation, they're reaching into the community by meeting community needs. The story of The Net Community Church shows how missions and evangelism are two sides of one coin.

Day 4: Wednesday, Sept. 13

Soul-winning churches

Pat Pajak can share Jesus with anyone anywhere, even the rehab unit where he recovered from heart surgery. He tells how he was able to share Bibles and the gospel with nurses who cared for him during his recovery. Pat is a terrific example. This beloved pastor from central Illinois has served in a several capacities with IBSA. Now Pat is leading evangelism training, helping churches and pastors grow as witnesses. Pat will train more than 200 churches this year, and develop an evangelism network with over 100 pastors.

At least two-thirds of the people in Illinois do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The need for believers to boldly share their faith has never been greater. IBSA has made advancing the gospel the main reason for all we do.

Pray for **Pat, Sylvan Knobloch**, and for IBSA churches to grow in personal evangelism.

Day 5: Thursday, Sept. 14

Stronger churches

If the Christian faith is to grow stronger in Illinois, it will require stronger churches, in particular stronger Southern Baptist churches in cities, towns, and rural areas across the state. IBSA focuses on leader development and coaching ministry by equipping pastors and lay leaders in more than 20,000 sessions annually. And at the church's request, IBSA offers personal consultation from experienced pastors and church leaders in overcoming growth barriers. IBSA is one of just a few state conventions to provide such customized ministry for its member churches, offering insight on site.

At events such as the Illinois Leadership Summit, pastors can learn from practitioners who know the rigors of ministry. They can be refreshed and return home to lead invigorated, effective ministries.

Pray for **Mark Emerson** and the Church Resource Team, and 11 zone consultants including **Joe Oliver** and **Steven Glover** in metro Chicago.

Day 6: Friday, Sept. 15

Compassionate ministry

Derrick and Ailee Taylor have a heart for their small town, reaching into the community by meeting needs. The Net Community Church shows how missions and evangelism work together. Soon after the new church started, they became active with the food bank in Staunton. Participating with the local fire fighters and other congregations, the church help refurbish the facility. Now they help staff the operation, which is open twice weekly. The food bank is filling a great need for people in the community.

Many new churches use this compassion ministry approach. It puts them in contact with people who need Jesus, in the way Jesus would serve them. Every compassion opportunity becomes a faith sharing opportunity.

Pray for the **Taylor** family and their new church, downstate church planters, **Eddie Pullen** and **Ken Wilson** who lead IBSA's church planting strategy there.



SYLVAN
KNOBLOCH



PAT
PAJAK



MARK
EMERSON



JOE
OLIVER



STEVEN
GLOVER



EDDIE
PULLEN



KEN
WILSON



DWAYNE
DOYLE



CARMEN
HALSEY



NATE
ADAMS

NOW more than ever

You can make a difference in Illinois

Just as there are those who speak up for other annual offerings or ministry events, you can become a champion in your church for the cause of state missions. Whether you are a pastor, a deacon or elder, a missions leader, part of a committee, or a preschool teacher—you can be a voice for Mission Illinois. Our call to missions begins here where we live.

With all of these Mission Illinois Offering resources and materials at your fingertips, you may be thinking, *Where do I begin? How do I get my church excited to give and contribute to kingdom work here in our own state?*

1. Pray for state missions.

As a church leader, pray for your congregation's hearts to be open to giving to the Mission Illinois Offering. Then, distribute the prayer guide and join as one body, committing to praying together for all the requests listed.

- Ask your worship leadership team to allot time for prayer for Illinois during the month of September.

- Consider holding a special prayer gathering at your church where you take turns individually lifting up each ministry and missionary.

- Pray for the millions in our state who don't know Christ, for church leaders and church planters in Illinois, and for local churches to have opportunities to share the love of God with their community.

2. Promote the state missions offering.

Provided in your church's MIO kit are video reports showing the need for Christ across Illinois and some of the missions and ministries IBSA churches together support to meet those needs. During the Sundays leading up to MIO Week, please show them to your congregation.

Put the posters on walls, doors, and bulletin boards one month prior to the Week of Prayer.

3. Organize a state missions study.

Each year the MIO kit includes missions-related studies geared specifically towards children, youth, and adults. Each age-appropriate lesson shows ways to get people involved with Illinois missions.

And rest assured, it is easy to do a missions study! The material is all ready. You simply need to pick a time for people to meet—it could even be during the Sunday school hour—and find someone to facilitate the study and discussion.

4. Commit to give.

Distribute the Week of Prayer guides and offering envelopes on September 10. Announce your church's goal. And keep giving until your church's goal is met!

When you champion missions in Illinois, know that lives will be transformed because of your church's commitment to prayer, generous giving, and missions involvement.

Look for the MIO kit in your church office.

For churches that have not participated in the MIO/Week of Prayer, your help is needed now more than ever. Our shared work of evangelism and missions depends on prayer and faithful giving. Won't you partner with the almost 1,000 IBSA churches in this important work? Order free materials at MIO@IBSA.org.

Day 7: Saturday, Sept. 16

Mobilization

Mission trips are excellent opportunities for evangelism. In fact, sharing Jesus is the primary reason **22,000 Illinois Baptists** personally engage in missions each year.

Supported in part by the Mission Illinois Offering, IBSA's Church Resource Team equips missions leaders in Illinois churches to lead mission trips and to engage their churches in Acts 1:8 mission strategy. From just next door to the other side of the world, IBSA churches share Christ with many people and people groups. **Missions Spectacular, Children's Ministry Day, ChicaGO Week for Students, and GO Weeks** on international mission fields are just a few ways IBSA helps mobilize Christ-followers for missions.

And with 1,600 trained volunteers, Illinois Baptist Disaster Relief brings aid after natural disasters, while chaplains witness to suffering people.

Pray for Dwayne Doyle and Carmen Halsey who lead missions mobilization, and the teams who equip and send thousands of Illinois Baptists each year.

Day 8: Sunday, Sept. 17

Giving

Today churches will collect the **Mission Illinois Offering**, which supports the ministries in this prayer guide and more. It is so important that we reach the **\$475,000** goal. Consider your own gift for state missions.

In worship and prayer today, consider all the things that IBSA churches achieve together. We are grateful for God's blessing on missions and ministry that reach lost people with the gospel of Jesus Christ. But with a little more than **70,000 people** worshipping in Southern Baptist churches in Illinois today, we are far outnumbered. And with at least **8-million lost people** in our state, the task before us is monumental—but not insurmountable.

God can bring a spiritual awakening to Illinois. And Baptists can stand ready to join in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Faithful prayer and missions support make God's work strong and growing.

Pray for all our partner churches to give today, and for Executive Director **Nate Adams** and the missions support staff of IBSA.

What's in the kit

A promotion kit for the **Mission Illinois Offering & Week of Prayer** was mailed to churches in late July. Look for it in your church office.



Planning Guide with DVD



Offering envelopes and bulletin inserts



Posters



Churches that participated last year received the whole kit, including offering envelopes. Churches that did not participate last year can receive additional materials by contacting MIO@IBSA.org.

There's more online!

Visit missionillinois.org

- ▶ Worship service ideas
- ▶ Mission studies for students and adults
- ▶ Bulletin art to cut and paste
- ▶ Illinois mission facts