

Our Stories



*American Baptist Churches of New York State
Region Offering 2017*



American Baptist Churches of New York State
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Our Stories, God's Glory

Stories engage us because they bring to the surface what we already know, or hoped for but is not readily apparent to us because their truth has not yet taken form in our minds. Stories tap into the deeper wisdom of intuition born of experience.

The deepest truths come clothed in stories. Great stories form the core of our faith. "Abram left, as the LORD had told him." "And Moses said, 'Here I am.'" "In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town of Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph." "And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." "I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven." Christians, and the Hebrews before us, have always been great story tellers because we have such fantastic stories to tell. We narrate God's loving work in our world and in our lives.

When we hear what God *has done* in the lives of others and retell what God has done in our lives, we can envision what God *can do*. Our stories plot our future by remembering what God has already done. In the Hebrew Bible, to remember is to believe and to forget is unbelief. Amnesia is a form of atheism in Hebrew thought. Our stories break open to us what is possible under God's grace. So stories, more than facts or argument, move us to action. Therein lies their power.

Our worship services, our Bible study groups, our Sunday School classes, our youth group meetings, and our prayer circles all are places where we tell and retell our faith stories and the stories of others. We do this not because we are mired in the past but because these stories embolden us for the future. Our congregations are story-telling families.

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