

Baptist World Alliance Reports Uptick in Contributions for 2018

The [Baptist World Alliance](#) (BWA)

stopped a six-year slide in contributions with a 10 percent growth in gifts during 2018.

However, General

Secretary Elijah Brown cautioned executive committee members gathered March 4-6

in Falls Church, Virginia, that one year's growth does not constitute a trend.

Donations from

member bodies were down slightly, but contributions from churches and individuals

showed healthy gains.

Brown

encouraged executive committee members to set an example for others by contributing generously to the work and encouraging others to do so.

Brown also

announced that, in addition to the regular budget, \$1.7 million had been raised toward a \$2.5 million "Together 2020" campaign that was announced at the Annual

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Gathering in Zurich last July.

The BWA

currently has 239 member-bodies in 125 countries, representing 47 million Baptists.

Executive committee

members dedicated a new “Heritage and Mission Welcome Center” designed to introduce visitors to the organization’s 113-year history as well as its current five-prong focus on strengthening churches; leading in mission and evangelism; responding to needs through aid, relief and community development; defending religious freedom, human rights and justice; and advancing theological reflection and transformational leadership.

The project was

funded by contributions from a dozen member bodies that were part of the BWA’s founding in 1905.

Brown

highlighted a number of activities during the year, including speaking engagements and visits to encourage Baptists in troubled areas, such as parts of Ukraine currently occupied by Russia.

BWA has also

been active in supporting human rights and religious freedom in Venezuela, Bulgaria, Bolivia and other places, he said.

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During 2018, the organization's relief arm known as [BWAid](#) contributed more than \$300,000 to support 25 projects in 16 countries, offering assistance to more than 14,000 people, Brown said.

Membership in Baptist churches has declined slightly in North America and Europe over the past several years, Brown reported, but has grown significantly in Latin America and especially in Africa.

Leaders of the BWA Men's, Women's and Youth Departments presented reports, and representatives from each of the BWA's global regions reported on activities in their areas during the past year.

BWA holds an Annual Gathering in a different part of the world each year. The 2019 meeting will be held July 8-12 in Nassau, the Bahamas.

The meeting will be preceded July 5-7 by the Baptist International Conference on Theological Education, held once each five years.

The conference will focus on the role of women in Baptist life, under the theme "[Together: Re-Reading, Re-Imagining](#)"

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[Herstory in the Church.](#)”

Persons

interested in attending either of the meetings can find further information and registration information on the BWA website [here](#).

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