

Join Mission New Mexico!

By Joseph Bunce



Dr. Joseph Bunce BNM Photo: Brian White

Can you imagine what New Mexico would look like if just 10 percent of New Mexicans had a vibrant walk with Jesus and were a part of a local Southern Baptist Church?

Can you imagine what New Mexico would look like if our churches were filled with children and teenagers?

Can you imagine what New Mexico would be if hungry people had food, if deaf people could have the Gospel presented to them, if Muslims were experiencing an awakening by the Holy Spirit of God and coming to faith in Jesus, or if New Mexico Native Americans and Hispanics had 500 churches rather than 90?

All of these things can be more than a dream, they can be a reality! Such possibilities fuel the Baptist Convention of New Mexico's 2016 Mission New Mexico State Missions Offering.

The Mission New Mexico State Missions Offering critically impacts taking the Gospel to places that you and I have just imagined. The theme for this year's mission offering is, "Thy Kingdom Come." We recognize this is a portion of the prayer taught in Matthew 6 that is known as the "Model Prayer."

Consider the Mission New Mexico offering using the following ideas arranged with acrostic "MISSION."

M - Consider **ministry**. Every adopted allocation of the 2016 Mission New Mexico State Missions Offering is about ministry. Each allocation represents a ministry that would never happen without New Mexico Baptist's generosity. The way money follows ministry constantly amazes me. When mission and ministry take place, God always provides the resources. Thank you, in advance, for your generosity and for allowing God to use you to fund these vital ministries.

I - Think **involvement**. Mission New Mexico represents more than giving money. It represents people and churches participating in the various ministries the offering supports: Disaster Relief, distributing

food to the hungry or serving beside children and students at one of the BCNM's Baptist camps. Before we can ever give something to the Lord financially, we must give ourselves. Mission New Mexico is involvement.

S– Listen for a **story**. Each ministry that the Mission New Mexico State Missions Offering supports is, actually, a story or testimony of God's work in someone's life. For example, when I think of Disaster Relief for example, I think of the 80-plus-year-old man who came to know Christ through the Dog Head Fire recovery as our New Mexico Disaster Relief team worked on his place that had been totally destroyed. He came to realize that he needed a Savior. Mission New Mexico is also the story of the 39 students who discovered a new-found faith in Christ this summer through our BCNM camps.

S - Celebrate **sending**. Think about your church personally sending students to the nations from our university-campus-based New Mexico BSU Christian Challenge ministries. In 2015 and 2016, combined, New Mexico Baptists have sent over 100 of their university students into international mission partnerships working beside career International Mission Board IMB missionaries. A significant amount of the Mission New Mexico offering supports their journeys and ministries.

I - Make an **investment**. More than money flows into the ministries that receive Mission New Mexico allocations. Because New Mexico Baptists are a spiritual people, they invest prayer, personal participation and financial giving toward this mission's offering. They do more than write checks. They are truly kingdom investors.

O – Seize the **opportunity**. Momentary opportunities amaze me. Sometimes New Mexico Baptists face an opportunity that offers no assurance that it will stay open and available. Right now, we face such a situation in the opportunity to assist and help start deaf churches across New Mexico. Right now, we have an opportunity to reach out to the one million Hispanics in New Mexico. We also have a wonderful opportunity to reach the 200,000 Native Americans which are comprised of 19 Pueblos and three tribes that literally blanket New Mexico. Opportunities can pass. The Mission New Mexico offering provides resources to act while opportunities remain open.

N – Consider the **need**. I cannot sufficiently express my hope and prayer that New Mexico Baptists will sense the urgent need to rise up - greater than ever before - and support the 2016 Mission New Mexico State Missions Offering. In 2014, we exceeded \$300,000 in generous gifts. But, this year, in order to effectively fund New Mexico's mission needs, I am praying for God to help New Mexico Baptists gather together \$400,000. Together we can!

I encourage you to contemplate Jesus' model prayer during these next few weeks. And, as you pray and ask for God's personal guidance, also ask Him what amount you should give to Mission New Mexico this year. Please do not redirect your tithes from your local church to this offering. The Mission New Mexico State Missions Offering should represent our sacrifice as we seek to reach 1.75 million people in New Mexico that do not know Jesus personally. Pray, plant the Gospel and participate in financially in Mission New Mexico.