



Illinois Baptist State Association PARTNERSHIP REPORT • Fall 2021

Our network works, especially during times of need, because that's when churches across Illinois come together to do what would be impossible for any single church to do alone. Thank you for your church's faithfulness and resilience throughout these challenging times. Together, we can continue to bring Illinois the hope of the Gospel and help to those who need it most.

Nate Adams

IBSA Executive Director



Watch the video at

► [IBSA.org/partnershipreport](https://ibsa.org/partnershipreport)

IBSA's annual partnership report usually summarizes ministry results from almost one-thousand churches, church plants, and mission congregations here in Illinois. There's always lots to celebrate. And then there was 2020.

Like most areas of life, the Covid-19 pandemic hit churches hard. Comparing Annual Church Profile reports in 2019 to the new numbers in 2020:

- Baptisms recorded by IBSA churches were down 42% from 3,553 to 2,047.
- Missions projects participation dropped 22%, from 19,824 to 15,475.
- While Sunday school attendance held steady during the times churches were able to meet, worship attendance declined 9%.
- Missions giving through the Cooperative Program dropped 12.3%, from \$6,205,953 to \$5,443,104.

• Giving to the Mission Illinois Offering declined 15.2%, from \$386,057 to \$327,416. 2021 has shown some encouraging recovery, but the return to pre-Covid levels is still ongoing. Cooperative Program giving has averaged 2-4% below 2019 levels, down by about \$84,000

overall by August. The Mission Illinois Offering is underway.

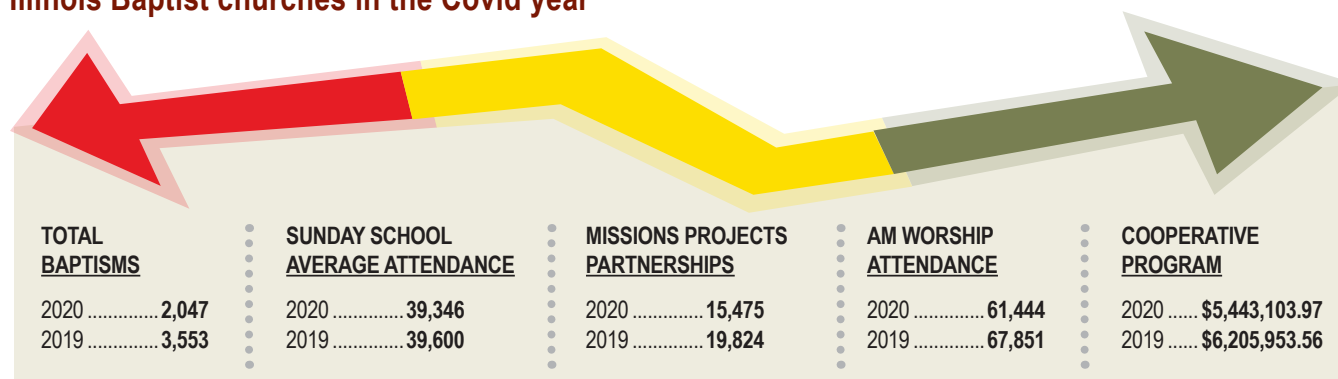
Our annual survey of church needs in November 2020 showed pastors and church leaders placed "spiritual support and inspiration" at the top of their list, followed closely by "ideas and examples for ministry during the pandemic." At least 6-in-10 leaders turned to IBSA for valuable information and personal support, as the state association turned to pandemic-related ministry assistance and content delivered online.

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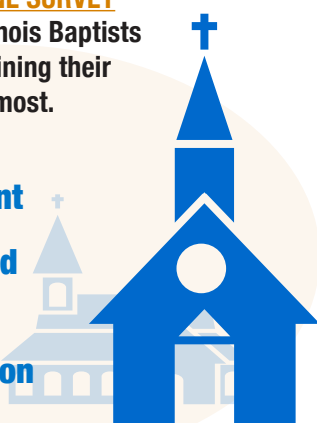
From 2020 Annual Church Profiles

Illinois Baptist churches in the Covid year

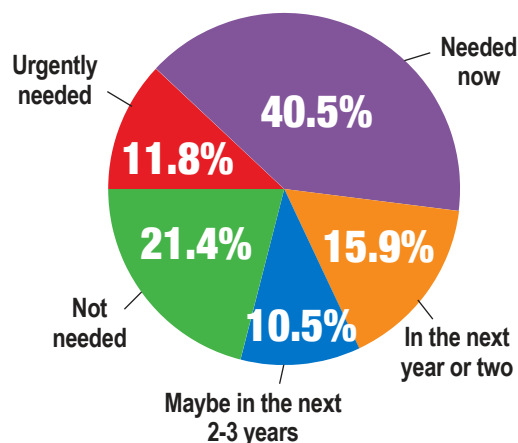


IBSA'S ANNUAL ONLINE SURVEY
collected input from Illinois Baptists
on resources and training their
churches need most.

- #1 **Leadership development**
- #2 **Worship and technology**
- #3 **Revitalization**



How would you rate your
church's need for revitalization?



Continued ► Entering 2021, pastors identified leader development as their churches' number one need, followed by help with technology, and revitalization. In fact, 8-in-10 leaders say church revitalization is needed now—either urgently, or in the next couple of years. IBSA draws on its staff and the network of churches to meet these needs, and to mobilize for missions.

During weeks of quarantine and limited resources, Illinois Baptist Disaster Relief quickly developed a food distribution ministry, delivering much needed supplies all over the state.

IBSA churches opened food banks, and shared

Christ's love with hurting people. A network of ministry partners, including D-R volunteers and national missions partners made it work.

By the fall of 2021, pastors in churches that started food ministries were reporting salvations and baptisms resulting from those personal contacts with people in need.

The best sign of recovery so far? The return of summer camps. In cooperation with local associations and churches, IBSA once again offered a full summer of discipleship and activity at Streator and Lake Sallateeska Baptist Camps. In all, 112 young people were saved.



The Network works, because of you