

the ESSENGER

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska



Dec 2004 -
Jan 2005

ABC/NE Date Data

ABC/NE Annual Meeting Planning
Committee, Dec. 6, FBC, Grand
Island

CHRISTMAS ! Dec. 25

ABC/NE Prayer Vigil Jan. 2

Please note:

The Messenger is not
published in January and
July. The next issue will
be the February issue.

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"Lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy." Matt. 2:9b-10

May your celebration of Christ's birth be filled
with wonder and joy and love.

The

From the Executive Minister Susan Gillies

Getting "Worked Up" Over Christmas

When I was very young I was often carsick. My sisters didn't want me next to them in the car when we went on a trip. I realize now that it didn't have anything to do with motion sickness. What got my stomach upset was excitement and anticipation. I know this because of another reality of those early years -- Christmas. Our tradition was that we had to remain in our beds on Christmas morning until my parents began singing "Joy To The World." This was our cue to run to their room, jump in bed with them and sing every Christmas carol my mother could think of. Once that was done we got up, joined hands at the top of the stairs and sang "Happy Birthday" to Jesus. Then we took time out for me to turn green and get sick. After that was nicely taken care of, we could proceed to the Christmas tree and the wonderful gifts. I had an amazing amount of joyful anticipation that simply went beyond my body's capacity. I am still a person of joyful anticipation. Fortunately it doesn't make me sick anymore.

The celebration of Christmas deserves our anticipation. What could be better than the arrival of the Messiah? Advent is a time of waiting and hoping, knowing the outcome. It's a time of preparation -- preparing ourselves as well as preparing for all the activities of the season.

I'm sorry that our celebration of the birth of our Lord has to happen in the context of our society's compulsive materialism. But I have decided to enjoy the celebration fully and I simply won't

allow the crass commercialism to ruin it for me. I love the decorations, music, worship, shopping for those I love, baking, pageants, parties, giving, programs. It's the way I say a resounding "YES!" to the astonishing love God shows us in Jesus' birth.

There have been times in my life when my work schedule and surrounding pressures have caused me to get to Christmas without that sense of expectancy. All of a sudden it was Christmas and I wasn't ready in my soul. Those have been disappointing Christmases to me. I try not to let that happen. I try not to get so busy with the trappings of the season that I miss the reason for the season.



Whether your personal preparation for Christmas takes place in quiet meditation or in quick moments in the midst of chaos, I encourage you to open yourself to Christ's coming. Prepare. Get ready. Anticipate the joy, hope, love and peace that are coming in the awesome birth of our Savior.

From the Minister of Mission Support Steve Bils



Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering

When the Rev. William Webb of Columbus, New Jersey, received a Thank You check last fall, he wrote:

"Thank you to American Baptists for contributing to the Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering every year. Martha and I are always grateful for the check and for being remembered. It feels good to know that we're still part of the ABC family."

William's words of appreciation express what over 3,000 retired American Baptist ministers and missionaries, or their widowed spouses, feel each fall when their Thank You checks arrive. Many recipients report that their check came "just when it was needed most," a sign of God's providence and care.

The theme of this year's offering is ***For Your Labors in the Lord's Harvest, We Thank You***. Through the RMMO we have a chance to express

our gratitude to those "laborers," now retired, who gave freely of themselves so that thousands of people might come to the Lord's table and partake of the Bread of Life.

Fifty-seven percent of the offering is distributed in the form of Thank You checks, which acknowledges those with 15 or more years of ABC service. The remaining forty-three percent is available to meet emergency and other financial needs. I encourage you to give generously to this important offering. It is a tangible way to say, "*For Your Labors in the Lord's Harvest, We Thank You.*"

Since 1935, American Baptists have contributed to special offerings received in their churches for retired ABC ministers and missionaries, or their widowed spouses. In 1977 The Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (RMMO) was established and is administered by the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board (MMBB).

Receipts from the 2003 RMMO totaled \$1,744,801, a 3.8% decrease from the 2002 receipts of \$1,814,019. Of this amount, \$729,687 was made available to meet immediate emergency and special financial needs. The balance of the receipts was distributed by MMBB on behalf of American Baptists in the form of Thank You checks: 3,266 checks were distributed in 2003, ranging from \$54.50 to \$436; the average check was \$310.81.










Take the Challenge . . . Vow the VOW!

In Psalm 1, the psalmist says, "*Blessed is the man [whose] delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.*" Fruitfulness, endurance and prosperity are all consequences of delighting in and meditating in the Word of God. Desiring this for its members and churches, the ABC of Nebraska offers **Vow the VOW!**

Vow the VOW! is our *Verse of the Week* memory challenge, in which individual American Baptists are encouraged to find an accountability partner and covenant together to memorize one verse a week in 2005. Selected for a variety of reasons and drawn from a number of different English translations, the fifty-two verses will be published and distributed in *The Messenger* and perhaps other media as well.

Snip or copy this form and check each verse once you have memorized it and have quoted it aloud to your accountability partner. Once each verse has been memorized (you should aim to quote it by the date indicated in order to stay on schedule for the year) sign the form and send it in to the Region Office. Your church may be willing to collect them from you and other participating members and send them in together. We will be looking for ways to recognize the folks who **Vow the VOW!** and complete the challenge.

Vow the VOW! January—February 2005

-  **Jan 2 Psalm 34:3***
Oh, magnify the LORD with me,
And let us exalt His name together.
-  **Jan 9 Psalm 29:2***
Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name;
Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.
-  **Jan 16 Psalm 40:1***
I waited patiently for the LORD;
And He inclined to me,
And heard my cry.
-  **Jan 23 Psalm 27:1***
The LORD is my light and my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the strength of my life;
Of whom shall I be afraid?
-  **Jan 30 Micah 6:8***
He has shown you, O man, what is good;
And what does the LORD require of you
But to do justly,
To love mercy,
And to walk humbly with your God?
-  **Feb 6 2 Corinthians 5:20†**
So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us;
we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.
-  **Feb 13 2 Corinthians 5:21†**
For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin,
so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
-  **Feb 20 John 3:17§**
For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its savior.
-  **Feb 27 Romans 5:8§**
But God has shown us how much he loves us—
it was while we were still sinners that Christ died for us!
- *New King James Version †New Revised Standard Version §Today's English Version

Signature _____

Church _____ Accountability Partner _____

"Your word have I hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." Psalm 119:11*

When completed, return to:

On Open Letter of Encouragement to the Men of Nebraska from the Men of Fairbury

Jim Musick, our ABMN state president, came to Fairbury, at Camp Jefferson, on September 18th, to speak to our men and boys. The occasion was 1st Baptist Church of Fairbury's annual weekend retreat for men and boys. Jim suggested the blessing we are receiving at 1st Baptist, because of our Men's Fellowship, should be shared with our fellow American Baptist Churches.

For at least the past forty years our fellowship has met every Friday morning at 7:00 a.m. for breakfast, devotions and Christian fellowship. Over the years we have met at our church, or numerous restaurants in Fairbury. Most of the restaurants are no longer in existence, but our fellowship continues to flourish with ten to twenty men meeting every Friday morning. At the present time we meet at a restaurant that is a part of the Fairbury Livestock Pavilion. After we order from the menu and have a breakfast of our choice, we go to the livestock pavilion where once a week cattle are sold. This gives us private place for devotions, sharing time, and prayer. Each session is opened and closed with prayer. At the beginning of each year, two sign up sheets are passed around. One is for individuals to take responsibility for the devotions for one month at a time and the other is to mow the church lawn once a week for a whole month. In order to have money for mission projects, each man contributes \$1 each week to our fellowship fund. Because of the number of men involved, this gives us \$700 to \$800 to work with for the year.

Our largest mission project is our annual men and boy's retreat, held at Camp Jefferson. Camp Jefferson is a campground located about four miles south of Fairbury. Our retreat is held in September. Since it is off-season time, it only costs us \$5 per person for a 24-hour period. We begin with Saturday noon lunch, have recreation period in the afternoon, with a big fish fry dinner Saturday evening. A couple avid fishermen in

our group furnish the fish. Saturday evening at dusk, we have a campfire, with singing, devotions and sharing time. It is a very special part of our retreat. Anyone who wants to stay overnight in the cabins is welcome to or if they prefer, they may go back to Fairbury and sleep in their own bed. Sunday breakfast is at 8 a.m., followed by recreation and worship service at 10:00 a.m. Noon meal is steak and hamburger, furnished by one of our cattlemen. Watermelon is also a part of our menu; furnished by one of our members who raises watermelon. After our noon meal we have a men and boys blue rock shoot. Ages range

from 10 to 77. We had 28 participate in our blue rock shoot this year. The winner was presented an embroidered cap. It read, *1st Place Baptist Men's Blue Rock Shoot 2004*. This year we had 27 men and 15 boys, ages 6 through 91 attend our retreat. We charged \$10 registration fee for the entire weekend, with all boys up through high school free. Any expense, which our fees do not cover, we pay out of our fellowship fund, which we have collected over the year at our Friday morning breakfasts. At the time our men reg-

ister, they are asked if they would pay \$5 for one-half of their ABMN membership. If they do we match it from our fellowship fund. This year we had 22 for whom we forwarded ABMN 2005 membership dues. We do all or our own planning, cooking, and clean up. Our recreation consists of a 22-caliber rifle range, croquet, horseshoes, volleyball, football, miniature golf, and of course the blue rock shoot. A special addition to our campfire devotions was having Jim Musick, our State President of ABMN share about the work of ABMN.

The Holy Spirit has blessed our fellowship and it will bless yours as well. All it takes is a couple men to start meeting and praying and the Lord will take care of the rest.

(Gail M. Southwick, President of the Men and Boys Fellowship at First Baptist Church in Fairbury, submitted this article.)



Ideas for Christian Families:

The Family Conference

Most families have some kind of equivalent of The Family Conference. When an important decision is to be made, a vacation is to be planned, an opportunity is considered or other matters of general concern come up, a Family Conference is called.

All members of the family participate. Everyone is heard. There is never any confusion about the fact that the parents can out-vote any number of children but the purpose of the conference is to share ideas, hear all points of view, and engage everyone in planning. Begin and end the Family Conference with prayer.

There are many decisions parents don't have to make alone. A group decision is often a better decision. Children learn to weigh options and consider the ideas of others. Children learn how parents apply spiritual values to decision making. Children learn that financial resources and time are factors to be considered.

Trivia

(Find the Answers on Page 8)

- Which ABC/NE church building has contemporary stained glass art at the back of their baptistry?
a. Bridgeport, b. Parkside, c. Ansley, d. Broken Bow
- Which ABC/NE church has a pastor who promised to dress up like a rock star and lip synch a song if the church increased the WMO offering by 36%?
a. Benson, b. Holdrege, c. Juniata, d. Lincoln First
- Which ABC/NE church has a pastor who has a school named after him in Africa?
a. Chadron, b. Prairie Union, c. Fairhaven, d. Wayne
- Which of these ABC/NE church buildings is **not** built in a triangle style with peaked roof?
a. Lincoln Second, b. Alliance, c. Hastings, d. Gibbon
- Which of the following ABC/NE churches is **not** part of a partnered or federated fellowship with another denomination?
a. York, b. Valley, c. Guide Rock, d. Wilsonville



Camp Moses Merrill News

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2004

The year of 2004 has been a good year and a busy one. By the end of the year we will have hosted at least 47 different groups or organizations, in addition to the twelve regular program camps. Our trails are well used, some weekends we would have as many as 20 horse riders on the grounds. And, the RV Loop has had some occupants almost every weekend. It is a blessing to be able to share this special place with others and also to experience the joy that they have while here. One of the horse riders e-mailed, "You are truly a friend to horse trail riders and provide a beautiful place to ride". We appreciate her comments. Also, we appreciate it that most of our visitors are considerate about leaving their spot clean.

It was exciting to have two weddings this summer in the beautiful setting of the new Smith Amphitheatre.

If it has been a long time since you were here, or, maybe you have never come to visit, we invite you to make plans to come out and experience for yourself the beauty of God's creation. You can come for just a day or stay longer and enjoy our fabulous sunset scenes and the glorious sun rises.

Come and see us.

Dolores Prather

OCTOBER GIFTS

Our thanks go to:

Dave Black-for making and donating a new road sign, the amphitheatre sign and posts.

Brian Goff-for donating corn stalks for decorating.

Pastor Larry Adams and Kristina-donating a swing set.

Frank and Judie Heller-donating a mattress cover.

Bobby and Teena Smith-donating a bale fork.

Tekamah Auxiliary-donating an American Flag.

Kearney Work Group-clearing roads and wood chipping.

Miracle Hills Church-monetary donation.

Curly and Betty Geer-monetary donation.

Nebraska Wesleyan University-donating a computer and monitor.

Bob Molby, Bob Slechta, Ken Hightower, Bob Kenney and Steve Bils-cutting down, trimming and chipping trees.

First Baptist, Holdrege-monetary donation to be used for sign posts.



*AS WE CELEBRATE THE
VERY SPECIAL GIFT OF
JESUS CHRIST
TO THE WORLD, WE HERE
AT CAMP MOSES MERRILL
WANT TO WISH YOU A
JOYOUS HOLIDAY SEASON.*

CONFERENCE CENTER

As I write this article the basement is dug and footing forms are in place. (I just saw the first load of cement go by!) We thank God for the beautiful weather allowing work to proceed. Hopefully by the time you read this the cement work will be done and the building will be pretty well framed in. The goal is to get it enclosed before winter, then finish it next spring.

NEEDS LIST

We need a self contained portable public address system and 2 hand held wireless microphones for the Smith Amphitheatre.

From the Area Minister Dave Lundholm

Sabbatical—Phase One

The Region Personnel committee granted me a sabbatical that would be broken into short periods of time, a few weeks each, over three years. I recently returned from the first of these mini-sabbaticals (sabbatic-ettes?) and want to share some of that experience with you.

The time began with three days of prayer, light study and meditation. This gave me a chance to drop out of the frantic busyness of the life of region staff and to do some evaluating and some dreaming.

I then traveled to Colorado Springs to attend a workshop on leading congregational change led by Gil Rendal. The conference was held at Mt. St. Francis retreat center, which is a wooded, deer filled campus in the Northwest suburbs of the Springs. I learned more new content than in any continuing educational event I ever attended. However one of the most memorable times was when a deer appeared in the window behind the presenter and tilted its head as if to say 'what are you guys doing in there?'

I then traveled to San Antonio to attend a conference on leading multi-ethnic congregations and returned to Grand Island, where I spent a week organizing my learnings and planning how to put them to use for the region.

I returned from the experience with a higher energy level and some new tools to use in situations where they are needed. It was a very valuable experience. (Personnel committee had a hard time getting me to break free to do this first one...they won't have trouble at all with the next one.)

Churches ought to consider offering sabbaticals to their pastors and other long-term staff. Some ideas and resources can be found at www.ministerscouncil.org.

LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

by Darlene Rimpley

February Deadlines
January 10, 2005 - Print Copy
January 14, 2005 - E-Mail

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ALLIANCE FBC: Ella Shaw observed her 80th birthday with an open house on Nov 3. Pastor Rowe participated in the installation service for Pastor Jim Green in Scottsbluff on Oct 10. A baptismal service was held on Oct 17, with a soup and dessert dinner following. The ABY celebrated a Christian Halloween party on Oct 24.

ARNOLD FBC: The annual Harvest Supper was held on Nov 7. Items for the local food pantry were donated at this time. A soup supper was held on Nov 28, followed by the "Hanging of the greens". The Community Thanksgiving Service was held at FBC on Nov 21.

BEATRICE FBC: The Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer was held on Nov 1 with a former missionary to Jamaica as the speaker. The 10th anniversary of Pastor Dan's ordination was celebrated on Nov 7 with a potluck dinner. FBC received a special offering for the Community Food Pantry was received on Nov 21.

BROKEN BOW FBC: The ABW observed the World Day of Prayer with a morning service. The annual church Thanksgiving Dinner was held on Nov 21, with the program being the dedication of the White

Cross items. The "Hanging of the Greens" was held on Nov 28, followed by a fellowship time. A string quartet from California and the Custer County Youth Orchestra presented a concert at FBC on Nov 11.

CHADRON FBC: The "Hanging of the greens" was done on Nov 21, and the beginning of the lighting of the Advent Candles was held on Nov 28.

COLUMBUS FBC: Plans are being made to observe the 125th Anniversary of FBC during 2005. The Harvest Home dinner was held on Nov 21. FBC sponsored a table at the Columbus Rescue Mission Outreach Banquet. FBC participated in the World Day of Prayer held at Shell Creek Baptist Church on Nov 1. The 3rd and 4th grade Sunday School Class sponsored a Food Pantry drive for FBC. The AB girls collected filled shoeboxes for the Samaritan's Purse project.

FAIRBURY FBC: Joe and Gertie Jelinek celebrated their 50th anniversary recently. Those celebrating anniversaries in Nov included Sam and Doris Hackbarth - 58; and Charles and Mary Campbell - 50. The annual Thanksgiving Dinner was held on Nov 21, with the proceeds used to meet

the White Cross quota. Yarn, material, and knitting or crocheting supplies are being collected for the "Blankets of Love", which makes blankets and then give them to the Blue Valley Crisis Intervention Center for victims of abuse

FREMONT FBC: Larry and Beverly Clausen celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. FBC gave a 1991 van to the Sudanese congregation in Omaha. The Celebration/Stewardship Supper was held on Nov 17, and Pledge Sunday was Nov 21. Jessica Howard is a delegate to the AB Girls National Gathering in California. The Day Care program is having cookie dough, pizzas, and Christmas items selling spree to raise funds.

GIBBON BC: Items were collected to send to the FBC service personnel. A Discovery Toy Party was held to get new items for the nursery and quiet cart. FBC participated in the Community Thanksgiving Service at the Faith United Church.

GRAND ISLAND FBC: A craft/bake sale was held on Nov 21 to help cover the White Cross expenses. Baptist Women's Day of Prayer was observed on Nov 1 with a time of prayer and fellowship.

HASTINGS FBC: The youth-sponsored Solid Rock Cafe was held Nov 7 immediately following worship. Speaker was Brian Young, founder and director of Creation Instruction Assoc.

HOLDREGE FBC: The ABWM Thank-Offering Luncheon was held on Nov 11, followed by a program by Sue Winget and dedication of the Thank-Offering, which goes for the support of missions, and the church and community ministry. Jan Fowler donated a spiral binding machine and binding combs to the church.

LAVISTA JUDSON BC: On Oct 31 a cake and coffee reception was held to express appreciation Pastor Williamson and retired Pastor Williston for all their time, effort and hard work in doing the Lord's work. Judson has been blessed with a great gift -- a library, given by Calvary Baptist. Lap robes and little prizes were given to Maple Crest Home for their use. A bell choir has been formed. Judson will also be joining other LaVista area churches for a combined Thanksgiving Eve service. Beginning in November, Wednesday evenings will be Youth Social night. The youth will be planning their programs for grades 6-12. The younger kids are rehearsing for a program entitled "Live From Bethlehem."

JUNIATA COMMUNITY CHURCH: The choir presented a Thanksgiving cantata, "We Raise Our Grateful Praise" on Nov 21. JCC hosted the annual Thanksgiving service for the Methodist church and other friends. The LOVE SQUAD, a group that is committed to showing God's love but remain anonymous, is helping in various needs around the community.

LINCOLN FBC: Two homebound members are being featured each month, and congregants are sending cards and notes, making calls, etc. to remind the people they are being remembered and prayed for. The "Annual Birthday Party for the Whole (church) Family" was held on Nov 14. A teen lock-in was held on Nov 5 at the church.

LINCOLN SBC: Nov 7th was Veterans Sunday to recognize and thank current military personnel for their commitment and service and to honor all Veterans for all they had given in Service for their country; Nov 12-14 a "Marriage Encounter" event occurred with Joe and Mila Wilcox as the leaders and organizers; Nov 17, the Wednesday Night Bible Study had as guest speaker, Rhonda Saunders of Cedars Home for Children; Volunteers served at Matt Talbot Kitchen Nov 19. The Monday morning Bible Study Group

is now studying "The Purpose Driven Life"; Nov, 21, was THANKS TO GOD Sunday, with a special Individual year Pledge giving time at morning worship and a Thanksgiving Dinner at 5 PM with the program being the Youth PRAISE TEAM; To celebrate the beginning of Advent a musical/Drama presentation, "A Christmas Carol in Bethlehem" based on a story of Charles Dickens was presented during Nov 28 worship, followed by a lunch and the "Hanging of the Greens."

MCCOOK FBC: The annual Thanksgiving dinner was held on Nov 21. World Day of Prayer was observed on Nov 1.

NORFOLK FBC: A Health Fair was held on Nov 13, which offered first aid training, CPR training, and a blood pressure check, among other things. Shoeboxes were filled for Operation Christmas Child on Nov 2, with a Shoe Box Dedication service on Nov 14. The Thanksgiving service was held on Nov 24. FBC supported the Norfolk Rescue Mission's annual Thanksgiving Banquet. The ABW sent in a packet of soup labels to Edna Martin Christian Center in Indianapolis.

NORTH PLATTE FBC: A dedication service for the land on which the new offices, conference room, and youth center will be built was held recently. A Family hayrack ride was held on Oct 30. The Sr. High youth group sponsored the 2nd annual Fun Night on Nov 20th. The Judsons held a covered dish dinner on Nov 19. The North Platte Assoc. ABW Fall Luncheon was held at FBC on Nov 18.

OMAHA BENSON BC: Benson was an area collection center for Samaritan's Purse shoeboxes. Larissa Marine left for Kodiak Baptist Mission in Alaska on Oct 15 for a two-month mission trip.

OMAHA FBC: Instead of the usual Thanksgiving dinner food baskets were delivered to families in the community on Nov 20. The Roca de Salvacion Iglesia (Rock of Salvation church) used FBC's sanctuary for four nights for a Spanish speaking revival. The Lutheran Social Services is using the kitchen and dining room at FBC to prepare lunches for the hungry in the area. The "Hanging of the Greens" was done on Nov 27, followed by Christmas caroling and fellowship.

OMAHA MIRACLE HILLS CBC: Outreach efforts are beginning to reach the nearly 3500 households within a mile of the church. Many local children are being adopted for our annual MHC Angel Tree Christmas gift program. We are excited about the future and what 2005 will bring.

OMAHA PARKSIDE BC: Rev. Harlan Minscer has accepted the call to be part-time minister at Bethany Baptist Church in Ottumwa, IA. A "Kids' Club" began on Nov 9 and will meet each Tuesday night after school. Miracle Hills, Benson Baptist, and Parkside united for a Thanksgiving service at Benson on Nov 24. The Adults For Action held a church decorating party on Nov 27, which included a potluck brunch.

OMAHA SUNSET HILLS BC: A new members' dinner was held on Nov 21, following the Thanksgiving Praise and Worship Service in the morning.

SCOTTSBLUFF FBC: The church was open to encourage people to come to prayer on Nov 1, the day before the elections. FBC was the regional collection point for Samaritan's Purse shoeboxes. On Nov 7 an all-church "Wrapping Party" was held for the boxes, followed by a carry-in dinner. A Commitment Celebration was held on Nov 14 for the pledges toward the financial program of the church. The Scottsbluff Christmas Parade was held Nov 18, with FBC having a float.

TECUMSEH FBC: The annual Thanksgiving Dinner was held on Nov 21 at noon, followed by the "hanging of the Greens". AWANA collected \$113 for the Project Angel Tree, which is a ministry of Prison Fellowship and provides gifts for the children of prison inmates.

TEKAMAH FBC: Items are being collected for the Community Food Pantry. FBC took part in the Community Thanksgiving Worship Service and Soup and Pie Supper on Nov 21 at the Presbyterian Church. The "hanging of the Greens" was done during the Sunday school hour on Nov 28.

TEKAMAH, RIVERSIDE BC: In Oct Riverside acquired an "acting pastor," Rev. Beverly Melchor-Young. The church family celebrated the harvest with a potluck dinner on Oct 3rd. On Saturday, the 30th, there was a hayride and cookout which was attended by members and friends of all ages. Songs and stories around the fire rounded out the evening.

NEW MEMBERS:

BENSON BAPTIST: Juana Riddle, Doris Langenegger, Robert Langenegger, Bud and Jan Young

MCCOOK FBC: Geneva Cain

ALLIANCE FBC: Chris Schmid, Kathy and Michael Cain, Matthew Graves

OMAHA PARKSIDE: Joe Thode (renewed membership)

LAVISTA JUDSON : Donna Divis

2005 New Year Prayer Vigil

ABC churches in Nebraska are being invited to participate in the 2005 New Year Prayer Vigil. Each church will be asked to pray, on the first Sunday of 2005, for their own congregation's ministries, ABC/NE ministries, and the ministry of one other church in ABC/NE. Each church will receive an invitation with the name of their prayer

partner congregation. If they choose not to participate, they'll return the name of the partner church and it will be re-assigned.



The call for inviting the churches to participate comes from ABC/NE President-elect Beryl Hornberger, "We are people of prayer and it is fitting that we join together as Nebraska Baptists to start the new year right!"

This is the third year for a New Year Prayer Vigil. Two years ago the staff spent the first few days of the year at Camp Merrill praying for each church in the region. Last year the prayer vigil had the staff in different locations praying for the churches.

The idea of a region-wide prayer vigil was affirmed by the ABC/NE Executive Committee at its November meeting.

ABC of Nebraska Staff

Executive Minister	Susan Gillies
Area Minister	Dave Lundholm
Minister of Mission Support	Steve Bils
Director of Camps & Conferences	Clarence Reiss
Camp Staff	Trudy Reiss, Richard & Dolores Prather
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Pastor to Pastors (W)	Paul Kondy
Pastor to Pastors (E)	Dick Peterson
Youth Ministry Adjunct	Jason Workman

Trivia Answers

1. b. Parkside in Omaha.
2. d. Interim pastor Don Gaines made the promise at Lincoln First. The church met the challenge and Don will have to perform as a rock star. [They should sell tickets!]
3. a. Pastor Rick of Chadron has the honor.
4. c. Hastings
5. c. Guide Rock [York is ABC/UCC; Valley is ABC-Presbyterian-Methodist, Wilsonville is ABC-Disciples.]

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