

the ESSENGER

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska



August 2008

Sturgis Aid Station Mission
The Black Hills, South Dakota
August 2-10

ABMen's Conference
Moses Merrill C&C Center
August 8, 9

Clergy Ethics Training
Moses Merrill C&C Center
August 18-20

**ABC/NE Board of Directors/
Executive Committee/
Departments**
FBC, Grand Island
August 23

ABC/NE Region Convention
Kearney Convention Center
September 19-21

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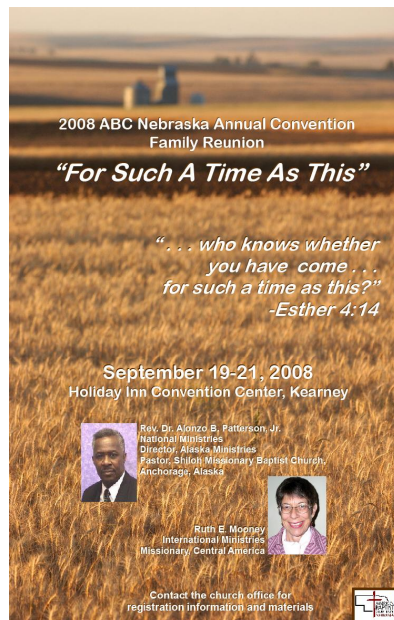
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2008 Family Reunion Theme "For Such A Time As This"



When Queen Esther expressed her concerns to Mordecai about her role in securing Israel's deliverance from imminent threat, his response to her was simple. God could provide deliverance from wherever he chose — but quite possibly his preference was to do so through her. His now-famous question still resonates with every believer who seeks his or her role in the out-working of God's purpose, "Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Nebraska Baptists will gather this September with this same question on their minds. "Has God brought us together here, in this time and at this place, to accomplish something very special for His glory?"

Helping us think through this question will be Rev. Dr. Alonzo Patterson, Director of Alaskan Ministries for ABC National Ministries and Ruth E. Mooney, one of our premier missionaries to Central America through ABC International Ministries.

This year's convention schedule will include ministry partner reports from Central Seminary, University of Sioux Falls, Ottawa University, Roger Williams Fellowship, American Baptist Assembly in Green Lake, Maple Crest, and Rainbow Acres. Workshops and plenary sessions will feature lay and pastoral leaders from across the region.

The Youth Convention will be held concurrently at Camp Comeca in Cozad with the youth coming to Kearney on Sunday morning to share in the closing worship service. A Children's program and nursery will be provided to make this a true "Family Reunion."

Complete and return the enclosed registration forms and make your lodging reservations today. *Who knows whether we have been called together for such a time as this?*

Norfolk FBC Celebrates New Facility

First Baptist Church will celebrate the opening of their new facility with two days of events. On Saturday, August 9, the church will host an open house from 1 pm to 4 pm. Tours of the new building will be available. There will be children's activities and a mission fair. That evening the church will host mini-concerts of area artists featuring a variety of music styles from 7-10 pm. Saturday's activities will also include a flag raising ceremony with local veterans.

The dedication of the new building will be Sunday, August 10 at 3 pm. Everyone is welcome to participate in this celebration; a reception in the new Family Life Center will follow the dedication. Sunday morning worship services will include Sunday school for all ages at 9 am and Sunday worship at 10:30 am.

FBC has been meeting in rented facilities since November of 2006 when the building housing First Baptist Church was a total loss after a fire. The new facility was constructed at the site of the original building, 404 W. Benjamin Avenue.

From the Executive Minister..... Susan Gillies

What Is God Up To Now?

[This month's guest columnist for the "From the Executive Minister" is Rev. Paul Marine, our Executive Minister's pastor and a member of the Region's Personnel Committee. Susan will return from her sabbatical in time for our next issue.]

"Do you think it's the end of the world?", queried my brother during a recent phone conversation. We had been discussing the numerous wildfires burning in California and the recent frequency of Midwestern storms. When we consider the fires, cyclones, tsunamis, earthquakes, tornadoes and floods currently in the news it causes one to wonder, *is it the end of the world?*

Our conversation wandered to the global scene where we thought a new group of displaced or persecuted people seemed to be identified every day. From Sudan and Somalia all the way to Myanmar and Indonesia people are targeted for elimination based on their race or faith. *Is it the end of the world?*

Having lost thousands on his recent home purchase and stock investments, it didn't take long for us to begin to bemoan the current state of the US economy. Now it seems the troubles are spreading abroad. With worry in his voice he asked again, "*Is it the end of the world?*"

The end of the world is a very difficult thing to predict. People have been doing it for centuries without any success. Even biblical scholars examine the scriptures in an effort to predict the end, but most of their efforts have fallen short.

In our recent study of the Gospel of John, the folks at Benson

Baptist have discovered Jesus' ministry to be one of creation and new beginnings. When I look around at what is happening in the world, I could get discouraged. Instead I wonder, *what is God up to now?*

With the economy in a slump, a young couple I know have been able to start their married life with the purchase of their own home; what an opportunity! Following recent weather disasters in our area, I have seen neighbors helping neighbors in a way you don't get to witness too much in today's world of isolation. Refugees keep coming to America (Canada, Australia, etc.) finding new opportunities they would never have realized in their country of origin: new beginnings, new freedoms, new opportunities to help those left behind.

We can't predict the end of the world, but we can look for where God is at work...and join him there! As I look around at our Nebraska ABC family I see many reasons to rejoice and get involved. Our churches are busy with; the AB Men's Trailer, building a church in Sudan, sponsoring refugees in our communities, feeding the hungry, teaching children about God, and expanding the ministries of Moses Merrill Camps and Conference Center. And this is just the short list of what we're doing!

Look around you at all that is going on. Is it the end of the world? I don't think so. In a way...it's creation...it's new beginnings.

"Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."

Jesus, John 7:38



From the Associate Executive Minister..... Steve Bils

Disasters Bring Opportunities For Service

What an exit from Spring and an entrance of the summer season! The American Baptist Men's Disaster Relief Trailer has been very busy in the last couple of months.

What is the American Baptist Men's disaster trailer?

The trailer is a ministry of the ABMen. It carries equipment and tools to help in times of disasters. When called upon, the trailer and manpower is sent into an affected area to assist in meeting the immediate needs. The manpower is all volunteers. The trailer is funded by donations. The items in the trailer are: chain saws, water pumps, pressure washer, halogen lighting, generators, hand tools, clean-up buckets for homes, and safety equipment.

Where, what, when, and how has it been used lately?

This year the trailer started it's storm season in the Kearney, Lexington, and Cozad communities when a tornado came into the area. The disaster trailer was called upon to assist for a short while in this local disaster.

The trailer was moved a few days later to the Omaha area to respond to flooding issues in Douglas County. While parked at Sunset Hills Baptist Church, Omaha was struck by what many have called a "mid-west hurricane". The following morning we had chainsaw crews and generators dispatched.

The following day it was called upon yet again, by the Douglas County Emergency Management Agency, to assist with the devastation in the King's Lake area. A crew of six men helped free trees from downed power lines and make clear paths for the power companies to come and reestablish power.

The next day ABMen moved the trailer into the Valley area to lend assistance and to make available water pumps, power

washer, and cleaning supplies.

What can I do to help?

The ABMen want all of the ABC brothers and sisters in the faith to know they need **your** assistance. We never know when or where a disaster will strike. The ABMen Disaster Trailer can be called to assist anywhere in Nebraska during local or state-wide disasters. The region office receives calls from pastors asking for assistance in times of need for churches, or when families are in need. Agencies are aware of our ministry as well and will at times call upon us for assistance when city, county, or state governments need assistance from outside sources.

The ABMen need to be ready with all volunteer contact information collected into a data base so we can reach those willing to help when the need arises. Will you help?

ALL volunteers can be men or women that are able and willing to serve, short term, in their area (western, central, eastern parts of the state). Needs can be met by all types of volunteers.

Tasks may include: cleaning flood damage, pumping/vacuuming water, chainsaw crews, labor, putting together cleaning buckets for flood victims, power washing, relocating equipment (generators, pumps, etc.), team assistant (a humble servant), drivers that have a truck (must have 7,000 lb capacity)

If you are able and willing to assist in times of disaster please contact the region office and give your information and an ABMen Disaster Relief representative will contact you.

THANK YOU to the small band of faithful volunteers that put all their efforts into this last round of disastrous storms. You have helped and brought hope to many!



Forgiven to Lead-Off Royals Game with National Anthem

American Baptist Churches and the Omaha Royals are teaming up for a special night of fun, food and fellowship at Rosenblatt Stadium. On Tuesday, August 26, the Royals have reserved a block of field level box seats at a discounted price: \$6 per ticket or \$10 per ticket with a hot dog-soda voucher.

Tickets may be purchased at the stadium or, with a credit card, by phone (402-738-5109), fax (402) 734-7166 or mail (Lesley Crutcher, Omaha Royals, 1202 Bert Murphy, Omaha, NE 68107). Orders must go through Lesley Crutcher in the Royals' office and must be completed by Friday, August 22. If time permits, tickets can be mailed for a \$1 shipping charge. Otherwise, they will be ready at the will-call window on game day.

Your church can organize its own group ticket effort or members can purchase their own. Just make sure to ask for Lesley Crutcher and the ABC block of tickets to get the discounted price.

The Royal's opponent on this night is the New Orleans Zephyrs, the AAA affiliate of the New York Mets. Game time is 7:05 p.m., but arrive early to hear *Forgiven*, from Sunset Hills Baptist Church, sing *The Star-Spangled Banner*.

Karen Burmese Girls Attend ABWM/ABGirls Conference



Htoo May (sixth from left), the Karen women's leader profiled in our last issue of *The Messenger*, brought ten Karen girls to the ABWomen's/Girls' Conference at Moses Merrill June 6-8. After overcoming some initial shyness and language difficulties, the girls seemed right at home and began to connect with the others in attendance and with the material being presented by Dave Lundholm, the Bible study leader for their conference.

Seven Nebraska Pastors Featured in United Mission Promotional Video

Responding to a need voiced by her colleagues in the Region Executive Ministers Council, Susan Gillies worked with the ABCNE Region staff to produce a two-minute promotional video featuring region pastors.

Kevin Walden (Miracle Hills), **Paul Marine** (Benson), **Al Wagstaff** (King Solomon), **Enrique Contreras** (Primera Iglesia), **Onnie Drain** (Parkside), **Gam Lahpai** (First Kachin), and **Theodora Boolin** (Beatrice) each shared briefly why they and their congregations supported United Mission.

The video is being used in churches throughout the country. It is posted on our region web site at www.abcnebraska.com.



King Solomon Church Clerk Maxine Turner helps Pastor Al Wagstaff during filming of the video.

Nola's Take Five . . .

Ideas from Nola Oberhelmen
ABC/NE Christian Education Consultant

Take Five suggestions for establishing classroom rules.

1. State the rules or regulations.
2. Make rules simple so that they are understood.
3. Keep rules reasonable!
4. Enforce them.
5. And most of all, don't make too many.

These suggestions work in discussion groups and at home also.

Minister in the Black Hills Aug 2-10

With over a 500,000 bikers expected to descend on the Black Hills of South Dakota, the opportunities for ministry will be greater than they ever have been since ABC of Nebraska and ABC of the Dakotas teamed up eight years ago to run the ABC Emergency Services Center in Deadwood during the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

It's not too late to decide to come up for all or part of the week to volunteer. For information about the ministry and what it looks like to volunteer, visit www.sturgisaid.com/sturgis2008.pdf.

Fuel costs will be a bigger challenge than in years past. To help defray these costs, designate your gift to "Sturgis ESC".



ABC of the Rocky Mountain Region Installs Steve VanOstran as Executive Minister

ABC of the Rocky Mountains, which includes Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico and part of Utah, installed Steve VanOstran as its new Executive Minister at a festive service in Thornton, Colorado on July 13.

Representing Nebraska were Susan Gillies (pictured at left between Steve and Jeff Woods, ABC-USA Associate General Secretary) and Kathy Brown, who served on the ABC Central Region staff with Steve when he was the Associate Executive Minister in Kansas.



National VP is guest speaker at Men's Conference

David Edwards, national vice president of American Baptist Men, will address this year's Nebraska ABMen's Conference, August 8-9 at Moses Merrill Camp and Conference Center.



Edwards will speak about the national organization and disaster relief ministries around the country.

The conference will begin Friday afternoon with golf in Schuyler, a change of day from previous conferences. Registration for the conference will begin at 5:00 pm, prior to dinner and the evening program.

Saturday starts with prayer time and devotions, before breakfast, registration, program, awards and recreation, which includes swimming,

horseshoes and archery. The conference will peak with a mid-afternoon praise-worship-communion service, followed by dinner and then dismissal at about 5:30 p.m.

Lodging will be available in Calvary Lodge and in cabins. Registration fees will be \$75 in lodge rooms and \$70 in the cabins. Fees for Saturday only will be \$48.

Edwards will join the Nebraska men from his lifelong home in Leavenworth, Kansas. He and his wife Marilyn have been married for almost 48 years. They have two sons, five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

"I believe that the Holy Bible is the divine word of our God Almighty and try to live my life according to His word," Edwards said. "I am a sinner saved by the Grace of God and try to go where He leads me. That is how I have reached this position in ABMen U.S.A."

Edwards said he enjoys working with the ABMen's Disaster Relief Team of the Central Region. His hobbies include woodworking, RVing and helping those in need. He has served his home church on boards and committees, and was ordained as a deacon in 2005.

The conference also will include updates on Nebraska's Disaster Relief Trailer and how it has been used this year after weather events in the Kearney and Omaha areas.

Registration is encouraged by July 31 and should be sent with fees to: ABC of Nebraska, 6404 Maple St, Omaha NE 68104.

Moses Merrill is in northwest Saunders County, accessed via an unpaved road between Linwood and Morse Bluff. For a map, visit the web site at www.campmerrill.com.

ABWM Luncheon Program

CALLING ALL WOMEN ... to the WOMEN'S LUNCHEON which will take place at noon on Saturday, September 20, during our ABC/NE Family Reunion in Kearney. A special program entitled "Judson Portraits" will be presented by 1 man and 4 ladies from the Juniata Community Church. The inspiring story of the first American Baptist foreign missionary, Adoniram Judson, and his three wives, Ann, Sarah, and Emily, will be presented in a reader's theater skit. He and his three wives will be in costumes. Although we will learn about Adoniram, the program focuses mostly on the wives and the many ways in which these three remarkable women contributed to the missionary work in Burma (now known as Myanmar) in the early 1800s.

The skit script was written by Rose Christensen, a member of the Judson American Baptist Church in Bella Vista, Arkansas. The story is based on the book Bless God and Take Courage: The Judson History and Legacy written by Rosalie Hall Hunt (a Judson relative).

The program will be entertaining and informative, and also will cause us to be more aware of the many hardships our missionary families faced in the early years as they spread the Gospel around the world.

As Ann Judson said, "Bless God and take courage."

Moses Merrill Summer Staff Program Provides Opportunities for Ministry

Summer Staff

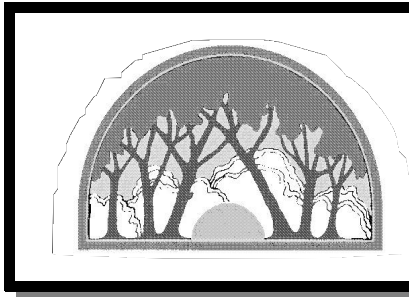
Four resident and two commuting summer staff persons are contributing their skills to camp life at MMCCC this summer. Returning staff members Baylien Brown and Josh Robbins shared their experience from 2007 this summers as they assisted in the kitchen or on the grounds and with trail rides. New resident staff included Heidi Urbanovsky, using her photography talent taking pictures to record campers' activities, and Ty Borer, certified lifeguard. Ty did double duty, serving as a group leader for Mid Hi II toward the end of July. Tiffany Klinzing, another certified lifeguard, and Angie Brickel commuted from their homes. Each of these summer staff persons joined MMCCC's year-round staff in making campers' days at camp fun and memorable. A big "Thank you" to each staff person!

Summer Staff 2009

Begin thinking NOW about opportunities for ministry in 2009 summer staff positions. In addition to traditional positions such as lifeguard, wrangler, grounds crew, we are redesigning summer staff positions as needs continue to change. Additional positions being considered include recreation/activities coordinator and arts/crafts coordinator. It isn't too early to apply for a 2009 summer staff position!!

Book of Timothy





Moses Merrill News

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E-mail: campmerrill@nntc.net Web site: www.campmerrill.com

Messages from Camp Cat - Lots of Animals


Summer definitely arrived at camp this month: hot and humid. Just the kind of weather to lie in the shade and try to find a breeze. Then the thunderstorms come and my havens of rest get too wet to be comfortable!



Campers seem to really enjoy the new horses here. Camp was given, or purchased, five horses. Three more are leased from people connected with camp. From my bench outside the visitor center, I can watch horses and riders pass by as they start off from the corral. Some afternoons they're gone for a couple of hours—and when the horses return, they usually are carrying different campers. I'll have to follow them one afternoon to find out what happens to the first group of campers....

Did you know horses seem to form groups? Then one or two of the horses acts like they're in charge, when they aren't! I've noticed humans do that too.... And when one of the horses is left in the corral, she whinnies and calls for the other horses until they get back. I don't understand horses! Why aren't they content being alone?

The fawns still have spots but have more than doubled in size this month. I've seen several does with twin fawns. Camp has a lot of deer! The turkey chicks are too big for me to catch now :(It seems as though the turkeys (and deer) are everywhere I look. At night, I've seen raccoons waddling around. And you wouldn't believe how the rabbits and squirrels sit in the middle of the gravel roads. Whatever they're eating, I think it's disgusting, not to mention truly dangerous!


Having to share space with all these animals is a challenge. However, as long as they as they keep their distance,  I enjoy the entertainment they provide!

Summer Events Through The Eyes of Camp Cat

You should have been here the last holiday weekend—you know, the 4th of July. Friday night there were fireworks—LOUD fireworks. From the parking lot I could see all kinds of fireworks from surrounding towns and farms, too. It was more color than I've seen since Christmas.

Saturday's parade was AWESOME: horses, a "princess" or two... If you weren't here, you missed CEDARMAN. The parade—apparently there once were annual parades before my time at camp—will be even bigger next year; maybe there will be a band. The grilled hamburgers sure smelled good... "Celebrate the 4th on the 5th" - what a holiday!



My tail is intact even though cars—and trucks, and RVs—keep coming and going. Fortunately there have been no close calls—yet. Sundays and Fridays are especially busy afternoons as campers arrive and then leave. (Some people need to be reminded the camp speed limit is 15 mph!) Friday evenings and Saturdays I have to be alert for pickups pulling horse trailers—more of those horses around camp!—or RVs coming in to camp for the weekend. Actually, I'm curious where all those people are coming from I know they'll all have  a great time at my beautiful camp.

It's Never Too Early!

Now is the time to schedule your fall or winter retreat. Moses Merrill Camp and Conference Center is a year-round facility. We can accommodate retreats and conferences for your church group or a special interest group. If you're looking for a quiet place for your personal retreat, MMCCC offers a comfortable setting, places for walking or hiking, and lots of birds and animals to enjoy as you walk. Weekends are filling up so contact MMCCC to schedule your event/group.

From the Associate Executive Minister Dave Lundholm

Raw Materials

For blacksmiths, the raw material is iron. For tailors, the raw material is cloth. For bakers the raw material is flour.

One of the key learnings in order to master any craft is the ability to pick the finest raw materials. The best iron, the finest cloth, the purest flour.

As preachers our raw materials are words. We use words to craft sermons in order to share truths about God and to motivate our listeners to practice the Christian life. We use words to guide the ministry of the church through newsletters, through participation in meetings, and through one on one interaction with church leaders and members.

The best words that we can use in these contexts are ones that are positive, that encourage and that give hope. The worst words we can use are words of complaint, words of criticism, and words of despair.

This is what some of the scriptures say about words and the thoughts that produce them:

(Philippians 4:8) Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things.

(Luke 6:45) The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.

Lets resolve as true wordsmiths to use only the finest raw materials.

(Psalms 19:14) May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.



LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

by Darlene Rimpley

September Deadlines

August 8, 2008 - Print Copy

August 12, 2008 - E-Mail

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ARNOLD FBC: A Family Church Camp was held June 12-15 at a farm near town. Heart-to-Heart and worship was held at the campsite on the June 15. Marjorie Weinman celebrated her 88th birthday on June 29, and long-time member Ester Pearson celebrated her 102nd on July 31. The church had a team and wagon float in the July 4th Blowout parade. They also hosted the community picnic and Church in the park on July 6. Ruth Circle is collecting items for Murrow Indian Children's Home.

ARTHUR BC: Four members of the Arthur church attended and enjoyed the last planned meeting of Good Soil at Grand Island on June 21. Most of the program consisted of reports on happenings in the past and ideas as to where to go with the program in the future since this was the last planned meeting. Bible School at the Arthur church was attended by an average of 48 students and lots of "helpers". The Arthur church sent three campers to Moses Merrill July 6-11 and three July 13-18.

BEATRICE FBC: The children's OGHS were dedicated on June 29. A fund has been started towards the purchase of new baptismal robes. "Cosmic City VBS" was held July 21-25 in evening sessions.

CHADRON FBC: Installation services for Pastor Brad were held June 29. The MRS Circle made baskets available to gather food for the hungry through the Sunrise Community Services.

FAIRBURY FBC: An all-church picnic was held on June 1 in the City Park, with VBS registration held at the event. Virgil and Phyllis Wasserman celebrated their 50th anniversary at an open house in the fellowship hall of FBC, where they were also married. Others celebrating anniversaries include Wayne and Joan Johnson, 54 years. The Youth Group held their annual Hawaiian Dinner on June 15, followed by a labor and dessert auction, with the funds going towards their summer mission trip. Vacation Bible School Power Lab, "Discovering Jesus' Miraculous Power", was held July 21-25 in afternoon sessions. The VBS then held a pool party at the swimming pool on the 25 to finish VBS, with a picnic lunch.

FREMONT FBC: The Board of Christian Education has planned a summer reading program, with prizes being offered. Eric and Lisa Purcell spent from May 27 to June 10 at the Kodiak Baptist Mission. Eric Purcell has resigned his position as Youth Director at FBC effective July 5. The ABW held a bake sale and Hands for Christ Hot Dog Stand at Midland on the greens July 12. Vacation Bible school was held July 27-31 in evening sessions. Eight youth and leaders attended the ABC National Youth Gathering in Estes Park July 5-12. FBC hosted the Omahaland Praise Service and Sandwich Supper on July 20. Eight men went to Muskogee, OK June 20-23 to volunteer at Bacone College.

GIBBON BC: "I'll Be There Sunday" was held on June 22. Marilyn Smyth was honored by a program of musical memories in honor of her 60+ years of musical involvement in the Gibbon community. A wonderful time of Faith, Family, and Friends was held July 20 as FBC celebrated the 120th Anniversary Celebration. Events included a time for coffee and rolls, morning worship, catered luncheon, tour of the old church (which is now the Gibbon Heritage Center), and a hymn sing in the old church. Free ice cream cones and cups of cold water were passed out at the July 4th parade

GRAND ISLAND FBC: An auction fundraiser was held on June 28 with proceeds going to the church. Rev. Charles Gregory spent the week of June 23-28 at Valley Forge. Edith Pinkston celebrated her 95th birthday in June. The Rebecca Circle and their husbands ate lunch at the Saddle Club on July 13. Dave Lundholm spoke at the July 6 worship service.

HOLDREGE FBC: The Southern Union Father's Supper was held at FBC on June 22. The Youth Group spent from June 5 through the 8th at Christ's Body Mission in Denver. The ABW hosted the Juniata Women's group on July 10. Son World Adventure Park VBS was held July 14-15 at Camp Joy, with the group spending overnight there. An anonymous gift of \$10,200 was recently received by FBC to be applied to the church's furnace fund.

JUNIATA CC: The ladies from JCC went to Holdrege FBC on July 10 to join with the ABW for a program and lunch. The JCC ladies presented the program, "Judson Portraits". A new schedule is being tested for the quarterly business meeting. Immediately following the 9:00 - 10:00 worship service, a fellowship time will be held until 10:30 am, then the business meeting, and then a pot luck dinner. Vacation Bible School, with the theme "Amazon Adventures" was held July 21-25, with the program held on final evening.

LAVISTA JUDSON BC: We've had a busy couple of months. The JOY Club toured Joslyn Castle and then ate at a very interesting cafe - Leavenworth Cafe. They also took a tram tour of Lauritzen Gardens and ate at the Bohemian Cafe. AWANA is over for the summer and an awards/fun night and graduation ceremony were held. Mothers and Fathers were recognized on their special days. Money was given on Mother's Day for Blanket Sunday. The ABW viewed a very wonderful DVD and also held their installation of new officers. They also discussed bio sketches of women leaders of by-gone years from the book, "*To Think it Happened on Mulberry Street.*" Then they had a good time at a "surprise" lunch. In honor of our graduates we held a pancake breakfast. The Christian Motorcycle Association held a Patch Class at Judson. The CMA went to Norfolk for the Christian Cross Festival. Loved ones and our Military were honored on Memorial Day. During La Vista Days many Judson members participated in a prayer walk through the city of La Vista. The youth took a fun trip to Kansas City and went to Worlds of Fun. Several members have already attended camp and all have come back with wonderful experiences and stories to share. Planning is in full gear for VBS that will be held the end of July.

LINCOLN FBC: The men and boys enjoyed a "fish till you drop" day of fishing at Morse Bluff. Allan and Allena Lewis and Larry and Carol Surber celebrated 50th wedding anniversaries on June 21 at open houses at different locations. Charlie and Bettie Bucy celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on June 22. The women have started a once a month Craft Night, with each person bringing their own craft to work on while they share the fellowship. A Summer Reading Club is going on, where the participants read a chapter or two and have a discussion on a weekly basis. All church leaning days were held July 11 and 12. The We-Kare Mission Trip youth and leaders shared about their work trip to Jamaica in June on July 13. A Good News Club (formerly known as Sidwalk Sunday School) will be held four times in Cooper Park beginning July 28.

LINCOLN SECOND: On June 1, the Diaconate Board revealed the Garden of Love. The Narthex, as you come into the church, has a variety of plants and a small fountain. Also, several pots are filled with paper flowers with prayer requests attached to the back with a refrigerator magnet, to remind people to pray for the request that they have selected. The church held a very large garage sale during the month of June to raise funds for the Diaconate Fund, to help families and friends of the church during a time of need. Items left over went to the City Mission.

The Youth held a car wash raising funds for their activities. Several activities carry on during the summer months. Each Wednesday evening several get together for a potluck dinner and devotions. Family Ministries held their annual Independence Day celebration on July 3 with plenty of food, activities and of course fireworks. We hosted a youth group from Battle Creek, MI the evening of July 4th who were on their way to the ABC National Youth Gathering in Estes Park. They also picked one of our youth, Hannah Boltz, so she could attend the event. VBS was held July 20-24, with VBS wrap-party on July 27. This year's theme was "Jerusalem Marketplace, Where Jesus Walked to the Cross". Leaders dressed in costumes, children prepared Bible times crafts and tasted Middle-Eastern snacks. S.A.M. sponsored a summer bus trip to Louisville for dinner and to enjoy the musical "The Sound of Music" in Manley, NE.

MCCOOK FBC: The church received a bequest in the sum of \$105,970 from the estate of Helen Wolfe. The movie, "The Voice of the Martyrs" was shown on June 8. Family Patriotic Day was held June 25, followed by lunch. Patriotic Sunday was held June 29 with several from the area taking part, followed by a Family Picnic dinner. The church has updated their audio-visual program, and is considering a special music training program that will enhance the worship.

NORFOLK FBC: Teacher Recognition and Sunday School Promotion was held on June 1, with Bibles being given to three students. A church garage sale was held on June 27-28, with all proceeds going to the "Building for Life" Fund. Bob Peterson celebrated his 90th birthday on June 23. Vacation Bible School was held June 9-13, with the theme "Leap of Faith" F.R. O.G. A Hispanic Revival Service was held on June 21, with Rev. Abraham Montalvo speaking. Graduates were honored on June 18. The Heart Sisters held a church shower on July 17. The ABW served at the Rescue Mission on July 24. Mel and Helen Long celebrated their 60th anniversary on July 23. **MOVING DAY HAS COME AND GONE!** Beginning with work times on June 28, 29, and 30th, the boxes were packed and moved into the new church building, and proceeded on through July. [See story on page 1.] A Prayer Walk was held through the new building on July 2.

NORTH PLATTE FBC: Most recently we have seen the birth of our Partners in Prayer Ministry. At this time we have completed 3 weeks of this exciting new ministry initiative. In the first 3 weeks we have had 30 participants spend 80 hours in prayer. During our prayer times we have had our intercessory prayers focused by praying for 322 families, individuals, and situations. During these weeks we have communicated with those for whom we have praying by sending 350 cards of prayer, appreciation and concern. Although this is only the beginning of the Partners in Prayer Ministry (and there are many other avenues for all of us to share in prayer), we are excited about how this very open and visible ministry may shape us and our community in the months and years ahead.

OMAHA BENSON BC: Worship Service was held at Cooper Farm Picnic Grounds on June 22, followed by a picnic lunch. The children will be presenting the musical, "No More Walls" on June 14 at Sunset Hills BC, followed by lunch. The regular Communion Fellowship Offering was given to Daniel Gatkuoth to assist him in going to Africa to bring his wife back to Omaha. Melba Westerfield celebrated her 80th birthday on June 7. Colene Moreno, a member of Benson since 1945, passed away in May.

OMAHA FBC: On June 17 the Rebecca-Ruth Circle had their final meeting before fall, at Piccolo Pete's Restaurant. Our youth sponsored a Christian Rap concert featuring "Verbal Contact", a group from the Kansas City area, on June 21. Several youth from churches in the area enjoyed the concert. Our annual carnival/science fair, which kicks off a week of VBS, was held on Sunday, June 22. A full week of VBS started on June 23 to June 27. This year's theme was "Power Lab". The kids learned of Jesus' miraculous powers through songs, drama presentations, and Bible verses. On July 6 numerous folk met at Cooper Farm for a time of fun, fellowship and food. This was one of several events planned this year in celebration of our 150 years as a church. The next big anniversary event will be an organ concert presented by Dr. Marilyn Musick, sister of our own organist Jim Musick, on September 7 at 2:30 pm. Everyone is invited to attend this concert.

OMAHA MIRACLE HILLS CBC: The youth mission trip to Bethel Neighborhood Center in Kansas City was presented to the congregation in July on Youth Sunday. Miracle Hills is joining other Omaha churches for the annual Omaha STEP OUT AND SERVE Outreach event on August 24. This is sponsored by over 30 churches. We are also excited to be re-starting Sunday school in the Fall, which we haven't offered for over five years.

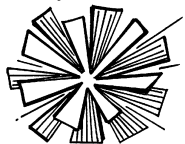
OMAHA PARKSIDE BC: A clean-up-the-parking-lot day was held on June 14. Linger Longer was held after worship on June 15. A Bounty Table has been set up for people to share their extra garden produce on a donation basis, with proceeds going to the foyer roof fund. A church yard cleanup was done on July 12 by volunteers.

OMAHA SUNSET HILLS BC: Berneda Skrivanek Woodlee, the last founding member with continuous membership, died during Sunset Hills' 50th anniversary year. The one-day, all-day Vacation Bible School on Saturday, June, 28, attracted increased attendance compared to recent years. The church grounds received very little damage when the hurricane-force winds came through Omaha on June 27; several members had tree damage and power outages and received assistance with chain saws and generators from the ABMen's Disaster Relief Trailer. Several youth and adult sponsors attended the ABC National Youth Gathering at Estes Park, Colo. Forgiveness performance schedule includes the Men's Conference at Camp Merrill, Aug. 8-9; national anthem at ABC Night at Rosenblatt Stadium, Tuesday, Aug. 26; 10th anniversary program, outdoors at Sunset Hills, Sunday, Sept. 7.

SCOTTSBLUFF FBC: The Youth Group hosted the "Cutting Edge" youth program on KCMI on May 31 and June 7. On June 7 the youth Group delivered bags of ready-to-eat food items and gospel material to low income families in the community. On June 21 the Youth Group held a barbeque/fun night for the church families. The Youth Group is also assisting with the worship services at Golden Living Center during the summer months, and will also be taking care of a courtyard spot at the Center. The All-Church talent night was held June 8. Recognition of graduates was held on June 8 following the morning worship service. A kickoff, "Christmas in July", for VBS was held on July 27, with VBS held July 28-August 1 in evening sessions. The kickoff involved collecting items for "Operation Christmas Child". Children and youth "cleaned up" at KCMI during the month. A 90th birthday celebration was held for Byrle Gross on July 5. The Sanctuary Choir presented a patriotic musical, "One Nation Under God" on July 6.

TEKAMAH FBC: Five graduates were honored, and presented Bibles, on May 4. Summer hours of 8:30 am for Sunday school, and 9:30 am

for Worship began on June 1. A church picture directory is being planned. Vacation Bible School was held June 2-6, with the program being presented on June 6 with two performances. Food Pantry Sunday was June 22. The church had a float in the 4th of July parade. The FBC bloggers also had a float, passed out candy, and collected food items for the Community Church Council Food Pantry. A time of fellowship is being held in the narthex following worship service during the summer. A weekly prayer breakfast has been launched. "Old-Fashioned Sunday" was held on July 27, with the attendees wearing old fashioned attire, and a potluck dinner following the worship service. FBC delivered Meals on Wheels the week of July 21-26.



Welcome new members

FREMONT FBC: Steve Jones
 NORFOLK FBC: Page Gazaway
 TEKAMAH FBC: Matt Hopkins and son, Cody

ABC of Nebraska Staff

- Executive Minister.....Susan Gillies
- Associate Executive Minister..... Dave Lundholm
- Associate Executive Minister Steve Bils
- Director of Camping..... Clarence Reiss
- Manager, Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center
 MaryBeth Robertson
- Camp Staff Joe Huss, Jerry Buss, Trudy Reiss, Barb Fisher
 Christina Pershing, Bob Schuelke, Denise Harris, Beverly Pacas
- Office ManagerSue Gammel
- Office Assistant Margaret Brown-Moore
- Accounting ServicesJerry Buss
- Christian Education Consultant..... Nola Oberhelman
- Church Life Consultant A. J. Wagstaff
- Pastor to Pastors (W) Paul Kondy
- Pastor to Pastors (E) Dick Peterson
- Emergency Services ConsultantJason Workman

**ABMen's Disaster Relief Efforts
 Featured in Lincoln Journal -Star Article**

The Lincoln Journal-Star recently ran an article about the faith community's response to weather disasters in Nebraska. Read it at:

<http://www.journalstar.com/articles/2008/07/19/living/religion/doc4880fbff3b8eb107360333.txt>

You can click the link at www.ABCNebraska.com.



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