

the ESSENGER

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska



April 2006

ABC/NE Date Data

March 31-April 2
Western AB Men's Retreat,
Chadron

April 17-20
Wait on the Lord Conference for
Clergy, Orlando, FL

April 23
York Association, Norfolk

April 29
NW Association, Scottsbluff

April 28-30
Young Adult Retreat
Camp Moses Merrill

E-Mail Addresses:

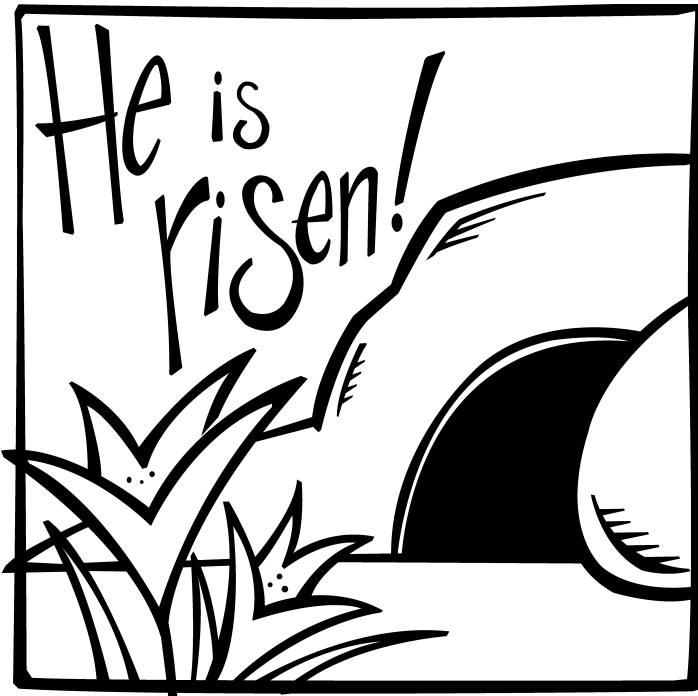
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May the Joy of Easter Fill Your Home and Church!



ABC/NE Youth Are Amazing!!

The youth in the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska are amazing! Our youth are making a difference in the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

One e-mail went out saying a church in a small town needed help with Vacation Bible School. Within days three youth groups had volunteered. The ABC/NE staff is working to match all three with opportunities.

Bridgeport youth have already planned a second trip to Greater St. John in Omaha to lead Bible School this summer.

The youth at Lincoln First responded to an unusual challenge. Have a youth group take on primary responsibility for staffing one of the Junior Camps at Camp Merrill. Youth Leader Sandy Denton is working with her team to make the camp a special example of excellence!

Youth at Benson in Omaha wanted to do something to assist victims of Hurricane Katrina. Assistant Pastor Jason Workman persisted until the

continued on page three



From the Executive Minister Susan Gillies

Why did we get a miracle?

At the most recent ABC/NE Camp Department meeting, we walked through the "under construction" Calvary Lodge at Camp Moses Merrill. The drywall was in, the heating units were working. The plumbing fixtures were yet to be installed, painting and carpet laying remained to be done. But we saw that it was nearing completion. A couple of folks talked about the miracle of the whole complex -- Friendship Chapel and Ward Conference Center and Calvary Lodge. As I drove home after the meeting, I thought, "Why did it happen to us?"

God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform.

Most of us can think of times we wish God had intervened. We wonder, "Why didn't God save a good person from dying?" "Why didn't God save a good church from closing?" "Why didn't God stop a good family from breaking up?" And "why didn't God stop the fire that recently destroyed Forest Lake (ABC-Iowa) Camp's dining hall and lodge?"

We simply are not able to know all the answers -- and there are times when that fact frustrates us.

But in the case of Camp Moses Merrill, at this time in its history, for reasons far beyond our understanding, what seemed beyond possibility became reality.

What does that mean for us? We've been given an extraordinary gift. We are stewards of a summer youth camp and, now, a lovely Christian retreat center. **What do we do now?**

This much I know. We are called to be faithful in good times and bad. We are to rejoice in Christ our Saviour under all circumstances. And on those occasions when you are the recipient of an extraordinary gift, I think it calls for extraordinary responses. Jesus taught that gifts should be put to work. If we let this gift sit idle, we are mocking a gift from Almighty God. So we don't "bury" the gift or keep it hidden to protect it. No, we are to use the gift and share the gift.

Our challenge as Nebraska Baptists is to put this gift to use.



Will you accept these four extraordinary challenges?

Challenge ONE -- What if each church sent at least two more children and youth to camp this summer? If your church is without children, send scholarship money so children who wouldn't be able to attend camp will be funded to go. By increasing our "occupancy" at our regular camps, we will be fulfilling our basic mission and we will be helping the camp achieve financial stability.

Challenge Two -- What if each church sent at least two adults to camp who have not ever been there before? Women's Conference, Men's Conference, Women's Fall Retreat, Adult Ministries Conference, Family Bible Conference, Family Camp on Memorial Day Weekend. Again, this would help fulfill our mission and provide financial stability.

Challenge Three -- What if each church encouraged its pastor to attend at least one seminar or personal retreat at camp each year? Pastor Seminars are funded by The Carpenter Fund so the individual pastor only bears the cost of getting to camp (and for those most distant, Carpenter can provide some travel support.)

Challenge Four -- Will you encourage someone from another church or non-profit group to use Camp Merrill? Your church can get more copies of the full color brochure. Hand it to someone and tell them how great a place this is for retreats, meetings, as well as RV camping. Encourage them to bring a group to camp or to participate in the events we have planned.

You may be able to come up with more great ideas. Please talk about these challenges in your church and with your friends. Clip out this list of challenges and let it be a reminder for prayer and action. Whether your church is large or small, near camp or far away, you are part of this ministry. The gift is yours. Put it to use.

From the Minister of Mission Support Steve Bils

Short-Term Mission Projects Reenergize and Empower



Six years ago the Department of Evangelism was looking for short-term mission opportunities for our church members that wouldn't cost a lot of money, require passports or inoculations, or have language barriers. Any cross-cultural component that might be available would be a plus.

In cooperation with the Department of Evangelism of the American Baptist Churches of the Dakotas, they created the **ABC Emergency Services Center** to serve the needs of the hundreds of thousands of motorcyclists who come to the Black Hills every summer for the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. Over the last five years volunteers from dozens of churches from both regions have served for a couple of days to over a week each August, gaining valuable experience and discovering that they could minister in ways they might have previously thought impossible.

We are looking for volunteers to serve on our staff again this summer. If you would like more details about being a part of this exciting ministry, call the Region Office or access the www.SturgisAid.com web site for more information. (Motorcycle not required!)



Amazing Youth . . . Continued from Page One



Mission Trip

Other youth groups around the state have been creative in investing themselves in a wide variety of mission experiences.

The combined Junior/Senior High Youth Retreat maxed-out the facilities at Camp Merrill this March. By merging both groups into a single retreat, the youth leaders were able to focus their efforts. "The Chosen One" was the theme.

Holdrege is taking a group of 20 to Matamoros, Mexico from June 16-24 for a "Listening Prayer" mission trip. They will help with a VBS, get involved in construction projects, and focus on "listening prayer." Each kid will prepare a testimony in advance and seek an opportunity to share their faith one-on-one during the trip.

About 15 youth from Fairbury will be going back to Mission, SD again this summer (July 14-22) to participate in a Habitat for Humanity house building project. Thirty-nine youth participated in a World Vision 30-hour Planned Famine and then went door-to-door collecting canned goods and sharing the gospel using their Dare2Share training.

Other groups around the state are also reaching out and also deepening their own study and worship. First North Platte has initiated a youth-led format for their youth group meetings that emphasizes worship, prayer, and testimonies.

JAMAICAN BAPTISTS AND ABC REACH MISSION AGREEMENT

ABC's International Ministries (IM) recently announced a 20-year mission covenant with the Jamaican Baptist Union (JBU).

The partnership agreement focuses on five mission priorities: equipping leaders, Christ-like mission, urban mission, evangelism and discipleship, and mission education. The mission covenant calls for the two Baptist agencies to collaborate on evangelism and discipleship beyond Jamaica to other parts of the Caribbean.

Area Director Rev. Raul Ruiz said, "I found this visit to have been very productive, not only because of what I envision IM and JBU doing together in Jamaica, but also because of the possibility of extending our partnerships into other territories of the Caribbean." Ruiz overseas partner relationships and missionaries in the Caribbean, Mexico, Spain and Portugal.

IM is a Baptist mission agency, established in 1814, which serves the more than 5,800 churches of the American Baptist Churches USA.

final "OK" came through. The youth will participate in an organized building project in Gulfport, MS, with other ABC volunteers.

Take Five . . .

Ideas from Nola Oberhelman
ABC/NE Christian Ed Consultant

Take Five -- ideas for **Sunday School parties**

1. A church or class birthday party
2. A party styled in the era of your church's founding
3. A tacky or mismatched party
4. A red-carpet award night
5. *A track and field day

*This and 25 more ideas from Crisei's CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES, Judson Press

ABC/NE Trivia (See page 8 for answers)

Contemporary life in ABC/NE

1. How many churches currently participate in ABC/NE?
a-47 b-57 c-67 d-77
2. Which ABC/NE church had the highest total giving in 2005 to United Mission/AFC/Love Gift?
3. Which ABC/NE church had the highest per capita giving to United Mission/AFC/Love Gift?
4. Which ABC/NE church had the highest total giving to all reported mission giving?
a-New Life, Bellevue b-Benson, Omaha
c-First, North Platte d-First, Holdrege e-First, Kearney
5. Which ABC/NE church had the highest per capita giving to all reported mission giving?
a-St. Edward, Palestine b-Gibbon c-New Life, Bellevue
d-Arthur e-Miracle Hills, Omaha

RECOGNIZE VOLUNTEERS APRIL 23

National Volunteer Week is April 23-29, 2006, and Volunteer Sunday is April 23.

Volunteers are the heart of work done in and through the church. Healthy churches have great teamwork with clergy and lay leaders. And all members can be involved in the wider mission! Whether at home or away, volunteers are an important part of ministry.

ABC-USA Volunteers In Mission program facilitates individual volunteer missionary appointments, summer service opportunities, group mission experiences, specialized service projects, and disaster response. The VIM program provides support for the two Pastor-to-Pastors who serve in ABC/NE as well as for our Youth Adjunct.

Through the Volunteers in Mission program, caring people can give freely of their valuable time and talents to respond to a call to ministry in the United States and Puerto Rico. Appointed volunteer missionary candidates must be at least 18 to serve for several weeks, several months, or a year, with option for reappointment.

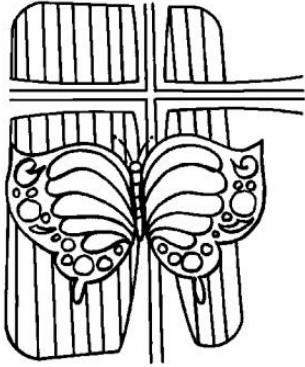
There are over 100 mission settings available where people can serve through Volunteers In Mission.

National Ministries produces a packet that gives ideas to thank, support and recognize volunteers, especially on Volunteer Sunday, April 23 this year. Order the packet online at VolunteersInMission@abc-usa.org or by calling 800-ABC-3USA, ext. 2413 or 2449. The packet includes Bible verses related to volunteerism and a sample Certificate of Recognition.



APRIL PRAYER:

a part of the ABC/NE 2006 Prayer Emphasis



Join Baptists across Nebraska in prayer in April for:

- FBC, Fairbury, Pastor Robin Stoops
- FBC, Fremont, Pastor Leland Foreman
- Gibbon Baptist, Pastor Gordon Paulsen
- FBC, Grand Island, Pastor Charlie Gregory
- FBC, Guide Rock, Pastor Les Warner

Pray that these churches will be:

- Blessed by a very special Easter experience.
- Renewed in their commitment to their communities.
- Focused on encouraging one another.

Pray that these churches will discover:

- New life in their ministry.
- New ideas for outreach and caring ministries.
- Renewal in their spiritual disciplines.

JUDSON PRESS SWINGS FOR THE FENCES WITH NEW BASEBALL BOOK

In what it expects will be a home run for the historic publisher, Judson Press announces the release of **Steal Away: Devotions for Baseball Fans** by Hugh Poland. With a foreword by NY Yankees closer Mariano Rivera and endorsements from former players and broadcasters, the book is already a hit.

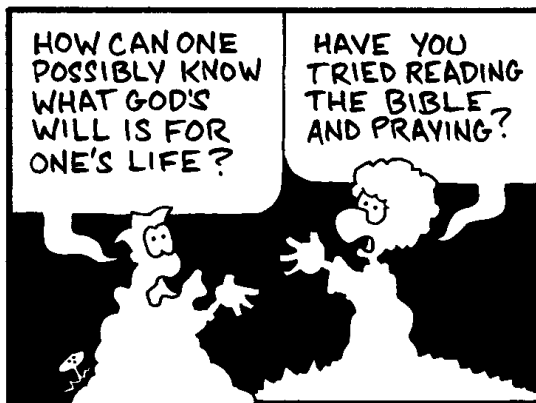
Rivera wrote, "I sense in *Steal Away* a familiar passion both for baseball and for following Christ." Former major league pitcher Kent Bottenfield offered his praise as well: "You will be spiritually challenged, greatly encouraged, and wonderfully entertained." And Hall of Fame broadcaster Ernie Harwell said "Poland has hit a grand slam."

Steal Away features Scripture combined with memorable stories about players including Don Zimmer, Orel Hershiser, John Smoltz, Jackie Robinson, Mickey Mantle, Joe DiMaggio, Roy Campanella and dozens of others.

The book can be purchased from Judson Press at 1-800-458-3766, or online at www.judsonpress.com.



Pontius' Puddle



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© Joel Kaufmann

Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska

The ABC/NE increases its ministry and mission through cooperative work with Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska (IMN). IMN is a statewide group that provides planning and program support to cooperating denominations in Nebraska, including ABC/NE.

IMN was designed for Christian communions in Nebraska, in order that churches might come together for worship, teaching, service, and common witness to the faith. IMN is both ecumenical and evangelical in its vision. As it calls the churches to work together in service to the world, so it also calls the churches to their common mission of proclaiming the good news of God in Jesus Christ.

IMN began its ministries in 1971 as the realization of the churches' longing to live out the vision of Christ's prayer "that they may all be one" (John 17:22).

IMN's purpose is to be an instrument of the churches, individually and together, as they carry out their programs of ministry and mission.

Among the many programs of IMN are:

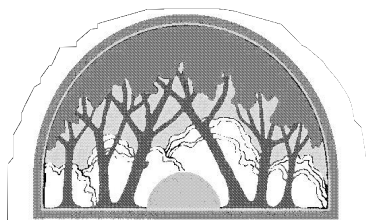
THE NEBRASKA HEALTH MINISTRY NETWORK- has a two-fold mission: to assist congregations in developing a parish nurse or health ministry program within their own church, and to coordinate and strengthen the efforts of existing health ministry programs throughout the state. A statewide health ministry conference is held annually.

THE FARM CRISIS RESPONSE COUNCIL- coordinates planning among church bodies and farm groups to oversee the Rural Response Hotline. With the support of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Rural Health, the Council facilitates the distribution of no-cost vouchers for confidential mental health services to those affected by the rural crisis.

For more information, check out the IMN website: www.interchurchministries.org

ABC Daily Devotional

ABCUSA invites you to reflect upon daily devotionals written by other American Baptists, focusing on discipleship. These devotionals will be made available on www.abc-usa.org for periods of one week at a time. Staff from American Baptist regions, national boards, agencies, and institutions will develop daily devotionals to coincide with weekly themes. We hope that, as you download each week's devotionals, they will be a blessing to you.



Camp Moses Merrill News

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Great opportunities for FAMILIES, Singles, YOU!!

2006 is a very special year for Nebraska Baptists. The Camp Moses Merrill Friendship Chapel / Ward Conference Center / Calvary Lodge Complex will be completed. This is the most significant transformation of the camp since original construction. Camp Merrill continues to provide quality summer children's camps but it also is emerging as a very unique and special Christian Retreat Center.

Be part of this historic year!

Bring your family, attend on your own, or both!

- Memorial Day Weekend Family Camp May 26-29
- Project camp - May 29-June 2 Come one or more days & help get camp ready for the summer season.
- Women's Conference— June 2-4 Great speakers, fellowship, music.
- FAMILY BIBLE CONFERENCE - June 30-July 3 This is new!! Try it out!!
- All Camp Reunion—June 30-July 3 For everyone who has worked &/or enjoyed Camp Merrill!
- Men's Conference - Aug 11-12 Dr. Harry Riggs & Rev. Kip Mickelson are featured.
- Women's Retreat - Sept 29-Oct 1 Edna Pincham of Youngstown, OH, and Susan Gillies are leaders.
- Adult Ministries Conference - Oct 2-5 Dr. Roger Fredrikson is guest speaker.

Camp Merrill is a great place for church leadership retreats, personal retreats, meetings, weddings, etc. Make reservations in advance. Lodging is available in cabins and Calvary Lodge. You may also bring a tent or RV. Call for reservations anytime.



Growing in Grace

THANKS!

Thanks to all who helped this last month with camp through contributions, gifts, and volunteer service, including Marge Daugherty, Darlene Shrader, Ron Hornberger, Dennis Flanagan, Stan & Nola Oberhelman

We continue to thank all who are supporting the Building Bridges Campaign. A special thank you will be found in a future Messenger when Calvary Lodge is completed.

NEEDS REQUESTS:

- Your Prayers
- used household clothes dryer to be used at the Visitor Center by our summer staff when doing their laundry
- tree and shrub trimming crews or individuals needed NOW
- adult volunteers to help on Saturdays in June/July to prep cabins for incoming groups
- applications from young people wanting to work at camp as summer wrangler or summer office aide.

From the Area Minister Dave Lundholm

An Opportunity for Laity to Take a Look at the Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches (part 10)

Affirmation 11 reads as follows:

"I will not proselytize from other Christian churches."

Some denominations are known for actively recruiting talent and leadership from community churches. Ethical American Baptist pastors do not engage in this practice. Instead, American Baptists are called to the more difficult task of inviting people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ (evangelism), then training these people to become fully Christian (discipleship) and finally teaching them to be leaders in the church (leadership development).

The final Affirmation reads as follows:

"I will show my personal love for God as revealed in Jesus Christ in my life and ministry, as I strive together with my colleagues to preserve the dignity, maintain the discipline and promote the integrity of the vocation to which we have been called."

The phrase "preserve the dignity" evokes for some the image of the "stuffed shirt" formal pastoral style that was perhaps characteristic of previous times. That is not what it is talking about. What it says is that a pastor, working hard and carrying on his/her ministry with integrity is worthy of respect (and yes, even honor). Pastors are called to deport themselves in a way that is worthy of such respect.

Pastors are also called to lead a life that maintains the discipline that it takes to be effective in ministry. This includes discipline in all the areas of life. (For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. 2 Tim 1:7 NIV). Failure in one area ultimately negatively effects all areas.

Finally, we are called to hold each other accountable to the affirmations of the Covenant and Code of ethics. We are also called to hold each other to the highest standards of integrity.



LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

by Darlene Rimpley

April Deadlines

March 7, 2006 - Print Copy

March 11, 2006 - E-Mail

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Subject: Messenger

ALLIANCE FBC: The annual Valentine's Dinner was held Sunday evening Feb 12. More than 60 attended. The men of the church paid for the catered meal. The Monument Quartet from provided a program of Gospel music. Members of the Baptist church of Berea were our guests. America For Christ was the program theme for the Feb 21 ABW meeting. LaVeta Cole and Carol Schroeder served as hostesses. There will be a shower for needed items to be given to the women,s shelter.

ARNOLD FBC: A puppet show, P.I.G.S. (Puppets in God's Service), was held at the Rialto Theater as a presentation to the community on Mar 12. A "scrapbooking party" was held at the church on Friday night and Saturday afternoon, Mar 17 & 18.

BEATRICE FBC: The downtown churches, held "Mondays-in-Lent" throughout the Lenten season with a worship time at noon, followed by a light lunch. Pastor Dan Osborn gave the homily on Mar 27. The Monday offerings are going to benefit the chaplain's office at the hospital.

CHADRON FBC: The "Meditation and Meals" services for Lent were held at the UC Church,

and FBC will be the host church Apr 5, where a devotion and lunch are held over the noon hour. Some of the FBC men attended the Western Area Men's Retreat at Camp Norwesca Mar 31-Apr 2, with Truman Sproles as the speaker.

COLUMBUS FBC: Camp Sunday was held Mar 19, with a camp lunch held after worship, and an offering taken to help with camp scholarships. A Women's Sleepover Retreat was held Mar 3-4 at the home of Donna Pearson. FBC hosted the World Day of Prayer on Mar 3. A "Risk Management Training Seminar" was held on Mar 9-10, and all persons working with children were required to attend. FBC participated in the Ash Wednesday service at St. Luke's Congregational Church, and the Ecumenical Lunch Series held at the First United Methodist Church during Lent. The Youth Group observed the 30-hour Famine for World Vision. Five youth and Pastor Adams fasted from Friday night to Sunday morning, watched and discussed videos on hunger issues, played a role-playing game on survival in Africa, watched Africa-based movies, and fun movies, all in raising money for hunger relief efforts. Thanks to Maxine Seefeld, Dien Effa, Sharon Evans, Lou Grotelueschen and Patrice

Wielgus for helping. Over \$300 was raised by the youth. Meals on Wheels were delivered the 2nd week of February. Ten ladies participated in a weekend retreat at Donna Pearson's home. In the midst of much laughter and a few tears, friendships were strengthened; names were drawn for prayer partners, work done on mission quilts, and plans made to do it again soon. ABGirls are selling homemade cookies, candy, quilts and potato bags to raise money for campships. On Mar 19 we wore camp clothes to church and enjoyed a picnic after services with a free will offering also for campships.

FAIRBURY FBC: F.A.N. (Family Adventure Nights) began on Mar 1. A \$1.00 supper is served, followed by activities and fellowship. The youth held a 30-hour lock-in for famine on Mar 12-13. The youth also held their yearly "Copacabana", where their special talents were displayed.

FREMONT FBC: The Young at Heart held a potluck dinner on Mar 9 with a missionary speaker. The Young Women of Hope held a bake sale on Mar 29 to raise funds to help the girls and sponsors attend the Girls Gathering at Green Lake in July.

GIBBON BC: Dr. Herb Rogers, who with his wife, Bernice, were missionaries in Haiti for 28 years, spoke at the worship service on Feb. 26, followed by a potluck dinner. The ABWM served the Roger Williams Fellowship group in Kearney on Mar 20. FBC participated in the Lenten breakfasts, which rotated among the Gibbon churches. The ABC/NE Board of directors held a retreat at FBC on Mar 18. A baked potato bar fundraiser for the Gary Hughes family was held at FBC on Mar 5. FBC participated in the community Lenten breakfasts held every Saturday at 7:30am.

GRAND ISLAND FBC: A soup and pie supper was held on Mar 11, with music by The Red Barn Band, as a fundraiser for the Grand Island room at Camp Merrill. The ABWM sent 50 roller bandages and surgical asks, participated in the World Day of Prayer at First Christian Church on Mar 3, and sent the general offerings in March to Nepal, India.

HASTINGS FBC: Dale & Delores Watley celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on Mar 29. The church is encouraging sending homemade (especially computer generated) cards to homebound and others as a ministry of the church.

HOLDREGE FBC: Some of the church women attended the Faith and Fellowship Women's Retreat at the Minden Opera House on Mar 25. Game night was held at the church on Mar 26.

JUNIATA COMMUNITY CHURCH: Sue Brown from the extension office was the speaker at the WCFM meeting on Mar 1, and the ladies participated in the World Day of Prayer at the United Methodist Church Mar 3.

LAVISTA JUDSON: For the month the AWANA kids brought food and household products each Wednesday evening to donate to the La Vista Food Pantry. Twelve additional lap robes were given to Maple Crest by the Mission Committee. Each Sunday in March a "Mission Moment" was given stressing the importance of contributing to the America for Christ Offering. One of the families in our congregation lost loved ones in the horrific mud slide in the Philippines so we have made this area a mission concern and are collecting bedding and lightweight clothing that will be delivered to the Philippines. The AB Women met and discussed a recording from John Ortberg's book, *If you Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat.* The J.O.Y. (Just Older Youth) Club March Meeting was a mystery musical - lots of fun and lots of laughs. The youth continue to bring in their coins for the expansion program and several adults match their gifts each month. The youth are practicing for an Easter Program. A letter of prayer and support was written to the American Baptist Church in West Virginia that lost members in the devastating coal mining accident. Our monthly Fellowship Meal was held following our Annual Meeting, where we discussed our 2005 Annual Reports and were given an update on the expansion program.

LINCOLN FBC: "An Hour of Power", a prayer time at 7:00 am on Sunday mornings, are special Lenten services for FBC. Paul Weers,

the AB Foundation representative, was at FBC on Mar 8-9, to give information concerning estate laws, etc. Jessica Erickson is on a mission to South Africa. A St. Patrick's Day party was held for 3½ year olds through 5th graders on Mar 15, and was sponsored by the middle and high school youth groups. Those attending Dare2Share reported that three trucks, holding 10 tons of food each, were filled as part of the mission.

LINCOLN SBC: Lincoln Second celebrated its 116 birthday Jan 29. Feb 11 at the annual Valentine's Day Banquet Tom & JoAnn Boyd were introduced as the 2006 Sweetheart Couple; NE High School senior, Don Siedband, was recognized for completing his Eagle Scout project. He will soon receive his Eagle Scout award. Jacob Anderson participated in the State Swim Meet and North Star students, Ashley and Kristen Hoover were chosen to represent the Ponca Tribe at the National Pow-Wow in Denver the end of March. A new international Women's Bible Study Group has begun meeting Wednesday mornings and an Evening Women's Bible Study Group began a study of "The Patriarchs." Senior Adult Ministry Fellowship Spring Tour visited Boys Town and Mahoney State Park for the Dinner / Theatre, that same night the Family Ministries Group dined together with a St. Patrick's Day Progressive Dinner. Mar 19 the Church showed support for the Youth by attending their Annual Bake Auction/Youth Servant Auction following the Church Worship.

MCCOOK FBC: The ABW officers held a soup supper to raise funds to support the AB Men's Disaster Relief Trailer on Mar 7. The youth held a Saint Patrick's Day corned beef and cabbage supper on Mar 17 to raise funds for camp scholarships.

NORFOLK FBC: Pastor Frank & Mert Armstrong have announced that they will be retiring from the ministry June 1, after being at FBC 12½ years. Their plans are to move to Rochester, MN following retirement. Dry and canned goods are being collected for the Community Food Pantry, and volunteers are helping there.

NORTH PLATTE FBC: FBC recognized Mattie Rumery for her 100th birthday on Feb 26 at morning worship service. Mattie's actual birthday is Mar 2, 1906. Derrell Luther was baptized on Feb 26. He is married to the former Kris Anne Rumery. Wednesday evening Children's Club "Noah's Park" donated \$200 to Bridge of Hope for their mission project. Senior Adult Ministries enjoyed "Ladies Night Out" at the Airport Inn on Feb 17th. The Young and Restless young adult Sunday School class served the Friday evening dinner on Mar 3 at the Salvation Army.

OMAHA BENSON: Pastor Paul & Anne held a "decadent dessert" and ministry update of their son, Bryan, who is with Campus Life, on Mar 5. Plans for Benson's Centennial, which will be Oct 13-15, are being made. A Songfest was held on Mar 18, with old favorites and new hymns, as well, were enjoyed. A representative of the Sudanese community went to Sudan in March to study the possibility of a Benson

mission trip to that country. Friday night at the movies was held at the church on Mar 3. The ABW meeting for March was the "Great Potato Contest", with each woman bringing a decorated egg or potato, and Mona Al Mugoter sharing about growing up in Iraq. Baked potatoes were served for lunch. The Senior caring Ministry went to the Museum of Religious Arts in Logan, Iowa on Mar 9.

OMAHA PARKSIDE: The ABW took part in the Church World Day of Prayer at Augustana Lutheran Church on Mar 3. A quilt made by the women of Hope Circle is being raffled off to raise money for medical supplies in China. Soup suppers were held weekly for Lenten services, titled "Cries of the Passion". Parksiders attended a Friendship Coffee on Mar 5 at Temple Israel, where they gained a better understanding of Jewish holidays and customs.

OMAHA SUNSET HILLS: Pastor Ron French accepted the call from Sunset Hills and will become pastor this summer, after graduating from seminary. He has been associate pastor at First Baptist in Olathe, Kansas. The men's breakfasts have resumed, with plans to meet monthly on the third Saturday. The AB Men held a National Prayer Breakfast on Feb 25, with L. Dean Allen from Central Baptist Theological Seminary as the speaker. The Sunday Night Live youth group went to Bethel Neighborhood in Kansas City on Mar 18. Forgiven performances: Feb 4 at the First Baptist of Omaha breakfast and Mar 4 at the annual senior center function in Louisville. The annual Valentine's dinner was held Feb 12. The Sunday Night Live youth are preparing for the Stations of the Cross, to be held on Maundy Thursday. Longtime member Diana Snyder, daughter of Jean Williams and the late Rev. Robert Williams, died.

OXFORD FBC: Our Men's and Women's Bible studies began on Jan 11. A "carry-in" supper followed by our annual business meeting was held on Jan 24. A community "Singspiration" (with all the area churches) was held on the last Sunday in January. On Feb 4 the ladies of the church sponsored a Ladies Day that was opened to the surrounding communities. Author Stephanie Grace Whitson was the guest speaker and used quilts to share in two sessions, God's redemption - past, present, and future; and God's pattern book - the importance of consulting the Bible. Around 80 ladies attended with 15 communities represented.

SCOTTSBLUFF FBC: The annual "Cookie March" was held on Mar 19, when the children and youth met right after worship for pizza, and then made up plates of cookies that they delivered to those who cannot be with the church family for some reason. A "Children's Church Ministry" began in March, using Team Kid material, with the Middle School and High School youth assisting in the program after sessions of training. Amen's breakfast was held on Mar 4. The Board of Christian Education held a Teacher's Retreat on Mar 25.

TECUMSEH FBC: Lenten breakfasts were held in the community churches, with FBC being the

hosts on Mar 30. The Helping Hands offering from the ABW March meeting went to Murrow Indian Children's Home. A "Talent Auction" was held following the potluck dinner on Mar 5, with the proceeds going to camp scholarships.

TEKAMAH FBC: The men from FBC cooked the first community breakfast on Mar 8. A team from the church spent time in Louisiana doing mission work. Movie night was held on Mar 31, with "Passion of the Christ" being shown. The SUS group, a part of FBC which is a support group for widows is celebrating their 20th anniversary, with a luncheon at the home of Pastor John & Mary. Other than offering support they have sponsored a clothing drive for Open Door Mission, give donations and

work at the food pantry and give birthday parties for ladies that are shut-ins at the rest home.

NEW MEMBERS:

BEATRICE FBC: Catrina Gould, Aleah, Amanda, and Gabriel Bates, Jacob and Julia Samples, Lorie Gould, Leon and Char Herbert

HASTINGS FBC: Shannon Pavelka and Faye Holdeman

FREMONT FBC: Rev. Dick & Bev Holmen, Tom and Lois Elliot, Anna Janssen, Pat Rolf, Jesica Peterson

LAVISTA JUDSON: Richard and Norma Larsen, Lila Kulisek

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	Jerry Buss, Elizabeth Dietrich, Lou Grotelueschen, Joe Huss, Beverly Pacas, Trudy Reiss, Adam Robley, Linda Wilmot
Office Manager	Sue Gammel
Office Assistant	Margaret Brown-Moore
Accounting Services	Jerry Buss
Volunteer Mission Secretary	Judie Heller
Christian Education Consultant	Nola Oberhelman
Church Life Consultant	A. J. Wagstaff
Pastor to Pastors (W)	Paul Kondy
Pastor to Pastors (E)	Dick Peterson
Youth Ministry Adjunct	Jason Workman

ABC/NE Trivia Contemporary life in ABC/NE

1. How many churches currently participate in ABC/NE? (b-57)
2. Which ABC/NE church had the highest total giving in 2005 to United Mission (Benson \$35,502) / AFC (First, Fremont \$4,304) / Love Gift (Palestine, St. Edward \$1,440)
3. Which ABC/NE church had the highest per capita giving to United Mission (Miracle Hills, Omaha \$192.88) / AFC (Arthur \$44.24) / Love Gift (Palestine, St. Edward \$72.00)
4. Which ABC/NE church had the highest total giving to all reported mission giving?
a-New Life, Bellevue (\$50,750) b-Benson, Omaha (\$45,933) c-First, North Platte (\$43,230)
d-First, Holdrege (\$36,736) e-First, Kearney (\$36,416)
5. Which ABC/NE church had the highest per capita giving to all reported mission giving?
a-St. Edward, Palestine (\$338.95) b-Gibbon (\$333.43) c-New Life, Bellevue (\$327.42)
d-Arthur (\$290.34) e-Miracle Hills, Omaha (\$273.68)



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