



# the MESSENGER

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska



June-July 2008

**ABC/NE Date Data**

Women's Conference  
Moses Merrill  
June 6-8

GOOD SOIL  
June 21  
Grand Island

The-4th-on-the-5th Event  
Independence Day!  
Moses Merrill  
July 5, 2008

Men's Conference  
August 8-9

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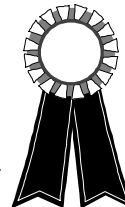


Incorporated as  
The Nebraska Baptist State Convention

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*You have an Extraordinary Opportunity to make a difference in the lives of boys & girls, men & women, for years to come. Please prayerfully consider helping Match the Match! See the insert in this Messenger.*

## Local Church Recognitions at This Year's Family Reunion



The churches that make up the ABC of Nebraska do wonderful ministry all year long. At this year's ABC/NE Family Reunion (annual convention) each church will be recognized for its unique contribution to the ministry of Jesus Christ.

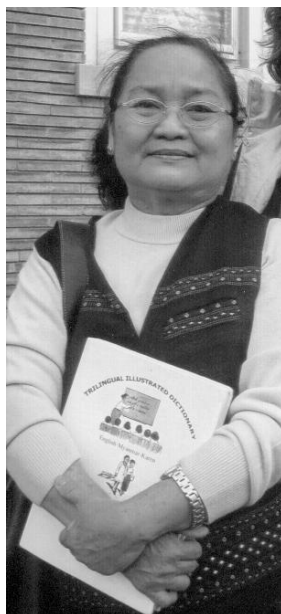
**What makes your church's ministry unique?** What is it that is special about your congregation? There are probably many answers to these questions. But at least one answer will be shared with everyone at the Family Reunion about each and every church in the ABC/NE.

Each church is encouraged to have a delegation present to accept the award.

PLENTY MORE . . . There are many other reasons to attend the convention, as well: Keynote speaker Alonzo Patterson who leads our work in Alaska, creative worship experiences, excellent workshops, great music and fellowship.

Plan now to attend. Full registration information will be in the August MESSENGER. Hotel reservations can be made earlier by calling the Kearney Holiday Inn and indicating you are with the American Baptist convention, September 19-21.

## Karen Leader Begins Work With ABC/NE



**Htoo May**, a Karen refugee living in Omaha, has begun a unique transition ministry to help people adjust to life in this country. Working as an ABC/NE adjunct staff person, Htoo May will serve as Director of the National Karen Christian Women's Organization. She will travel throughout the country, establishing women's groups and teaching. Financial support for this ministry is coming through the ABC Burmese Task Force, which includes National Ministries, International Ministries and the Office of the General Secretary. Funding will also come from individual contributors in the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

**Virginia Holmstrom**, National Executive Director of American Baptist Women's Ministries, has been encouraging this action. She stated, "I am delighted that the ABC of Nebraska is coming alongside Htoo May in this exciting ministry partnership."

ABC/NE Executive Minister **Susan Gillies** said, "Htoo May is a blessing. Through her work, we can all have a part in assisting Karen women to make a healthy and spiritually sound transition to life in the United States."

ABC of Nebraska women will have the opportunity to meet Htoo May at their conference at Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center, June 6-8.

*From the Executive Minister . . . . . Susan Gillies*

## The Hands & Feet of Jesus

A number of years ago, I directed a program at ABC called Ministry of the Laity in the Workplace. At that time, a retired oil company executive gave me an advertisement he found in a magazine. [He actually had the ad beautifully framed for me. It hangs today in my office at home.] That ad was a tribute from a company to its workers. The company was deeply grateful for the workers and formed its "thanks" into a tribute to the hands of the workers.

Hands are a powerful symbol of work. You may remember the old verse that included . . . "Christ has no hands but our hands to do his work today. He has no feet but our feet to lead men in his way."

ABC General Secretary Roy Medley has called American Baptists to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

ABC-USA President Mary Armacost Hulst writes: American Baptists "are seeking to serve the world as Christ's hands and feet. We are seeking to make God's love tangible, concrete and transformative. We are at a new time and place in our denominational history. We are in a time when we dare not turn inward in self-preservation, but we must have

a vision outward for transformation. Even in a time in history when denominations no longer have the authority and financial power that they once did, the world needs what American Baptists stand for and bring. The world needs our example of mission, diversity, freedom, and inclusive love. If we are to be the hands and feet of Christ then we must have strong ligaments. I was interested in the recent discovery that the words ligament and religion have the same root word. The root word carries the meaning of being bound together. Religion should bind people together in their quest for God. It is my prayer that . . . we will indeed be bound together by Christ and that we will have strong ligaments of love which will be limber enough to stretch and unite us so that we might get on with loving the world."

Our hands and feet will tell the story. How we live our daily lives, how we do our work, how we play, how we interact with others, how we handle conflict, all of these will bear witness to our faith.

Be gentle with yourself. Think of your hands and feet and how they represent Christ's presence in your world.



*From the Associate Executive Minister . . . . . Steve Bills*

## Attending to the Greats among us

Recently I have had the opportunity in my capacity as the national evangelism associate for Nebraska to provide training in several of our region's churches. The "Got Style?" material that emphasizes a natural and relational approach to evangelism taking personality styles into account was recently highlighted in the America For Christ offering literature. While it is primarily viewed as an evangelism program, it acknowledges the holistic ministry of the church and the ways that evangelism can be done effectively in the context of caring ministries.

One of the components of that material is a chart that allows a congregation to identify the tasks and programs that it sponsors and to assign each of them to one of the three ministry foci that we refer to as "the greats." A good (great?) summary of what we mean by "the greats" is provided by Dr. Jeff Johnson, ABC-USA's National Ministries' NET Strategist/Evangelism Specialist, who uses this statement in his email signature, "*Striving to be found faithful to the Great Commission (Matthew 28), the Great Commandment (John 13), and the Great Community (1 Peter 4), in accordance with the Great Criteria (Matthew 25) of the least, the last, and the lost.*"

The Great Commission is primarily understood at dealing with evangelism; preaching the gospel, baptizing, making disciples.

The Great Commandment tells us to love God and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

The Great Community refers to the body of Christ and to the use of our gifts in ministering to one another.

Each of these three "greats" is understood to be carried out unconditionally and without prejudice according to the Great Criteria, which is seen in Jesus' blessing on those who minister to the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger, the sick, and the prisoner.

In addition to those programs and tasks in which our local churches are involved, our four seasonal offerings allow us to further target each of these "greats" in direct and concrete ways. I received a call this morning from one of our members who wanted to know how she could participate in our ABC efforts to aid those affected by the recent storms in Myanmar and the earthquakes in China. She wanted to love her neighbors on the other side of the globe and knew from experience that the men and women that we have ministering in those areas on our behalf as the hands and feet of Jesus would use her contributions wisely and effectively. For her, the *One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)* offering could not have come at a more opportune time. Although some of the monies received in the *America for Christ* and *World Mission Offering* collections are used by National Ministries and International Ministries for disaster relief, it is the primary purpose of the *OGHS* to alleviate the sufferings caused by natural and man-made catastrophes.

When we attend to the greats, we are the hands and feet of Jesus.



## Nola's Take Five . . .

Ideas from Nola Oberhelman  
ABC/NE Christian Education Consultant

Take five ideas for promoting Bible reading:

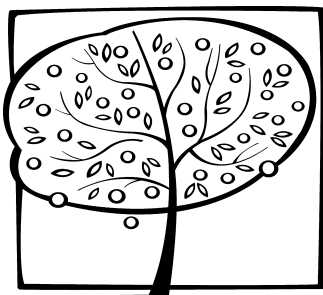
1. Use from standardized lists--see *Journeys* or *The Secret Place*.
2. Memorize key verses from the readings and recite together in SS classes or small groups.
3. Give a scripture reference in a specific version and ask readers to compare it in with other versions.
4. Devise a Bible-reading marathon.
5. Post references only for congregants' favorites so others can look them up and read.

## Men's Conference Features Challenge And Renewal



The annual Men's Conference is a time of challenge and renewal. The event will be August 8-9, 2008 at Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center. The event begins with dinner on Friday evening and will conclude following dinner on Saturday. You don't have to be active in ABMen to attend. If you'd enjoy a terrific conference with great Christian men in a beautiful forest setting, this event is for you. Contact: Camp Merrill 402-666-5639

## Good Soil Project Winds Up Two-Year Process With Success



**Good soil bears much fruit**  
Matthew 13:23

Several years ago, Associate Executive Minister Dave Lundholm applied for and received a Clark Grant from ABC's National Ministries. The grants were designed to help small churches in small communities. Ten churches were invited to participate. Teams from each church met with the other teams three times each year for two years. National and regional leaders led the sessions on a variety of topics helpful in church vitality. Different styles of worship were experienced under the leadership of Kip Mickelson of Omaha First. The model for the process came from earlier experimental projects.

The degree of success each church had was directly related to how much the team was able to engage the congregation in participating in the home work. Last month's Messenger had the story of the dramatic growth at FBC Albion in terms of numbers of baptisms, attendance, mission giving and general vitality of the congregation.

The official finale of Good Soil will be June 21 at Grand Island. There is the possibility participating churches may want to continue in some way and recruit additional churches.

## Volunteers Continue to be Needed on Gulf Coast Recovery Still In Process



One of the vehicles on the scene shows off the partnership between Habitat for Humanity and the ABC Baptist Blitz Build.

American Baptists from all parts of the country continue to respond to on-going needs on the Gulf coast. Recovery efforts are still underway two years following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

More than 200 volunteers signed on to help build 11 houses for 11 deserving families on the Gulf Coast in the 2008 Blitz Build in Baton Rouge, La., April 28 – May 17. The Blitz Build involved the combined forces of ABC and other Baptist groups along with Habitat for Humanity.

Dr. Aidsand Wright-Riggins, Executive Director of ABC's National Ministries, speaking in Nebraska the day after the wrap-up of the Blitz Build, urged volunteers to continue to respond. He also expressed his hope that work can be done on rebuilding some of the destroyed churches.

**Check [www.nationalministries.org](http://www.nationalministries.org) to read stories and personal testimonies from the Blitz Build — and to follow further progress with rebuilding.**

**NEBRASKA CONNECTION:** Jim McLennan of Benson Baptist, Omaha, has served three times in construction projects in the Pas Christian, Mississippi area. Jim points out there is still great need for volunteers, "Even this long after the storms, people are just getting started at permanent rebuilding." He adds that some people have just gotten insurance or grant money to rebuild. "I've felt the joy of being able to help" he said and he is encouraging others to participate.

For information on how to volunteer as an individual or as part of a group, contact National Ministries ([www.nationalministries.org](http://www.nationalministries.org)). Jim McLennan worked with the ABC of Indiana & Kentucky: **Project Reclaim** ([www.ProjectReclaim.com](http://www.ProjectReclaim.com)). Both groups work together along with other ABC regions and local churches.

Those willing to respond to Nebraska calls for clean-up response and assistance following tornadoes, floods, or fires, contact ABMen of Nebraska or region consultant Jason Workman 1-877-244-7339 (in Omaha 556-4730).

## Relief Efforts in Response to Natural Disasters in Myanmar & China

Response to the recent cyclone in Myanmar and the earthquake in China will continue for many months to come. ABC-USA and its partner Church World Service have both been active in sending aid.

Thousands of people have been killed or are missing in Myanmar (Burma) in the wake of Cyclone Nargis, which pushed ashore on May 3. Villages in the Irrawaddy Delta have been completely flattened. Overall one million people may be homeless.

"Myanmar has tremendous historical and current importance to American Baptists," said Rev. Stan Murray, ABC's International Ministries area director for Southeast Asia. "Formerly known as Burma, our mission agency began with the work of the Judsons in that country. Today, we are still partners with the Myanmar Baptist Convention, and work with many ethnic groups from Burma who are refugees seeking to make a new life in the United States," Murray said.

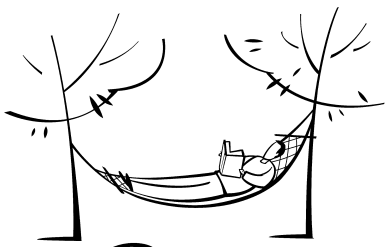
The initial funds from ABC will be used by partners to provide immediate relief of clean drinking water, non-perishable food, blankets and medical kits to those who are victims of the devastating storm.

Responding to the earthquake in China, both ABC and Church World Service are partnering with The Amity Foundation for major relief efforts. One of the strongest earthquakes to strike China in decades happened Monday, May 12, leaving thousands dead and more missing.

American Baptists wishing to support ongoing relief efforts can do so through their church's monthly report of mission support, designating contributions "OGHS-Myanmar Cyclone" or "OGHS-China Earthquake."

## Summertime Reading Ideas . . .

1. Have you ever read the story of Baptist Pioneer Adoniram Judson? It is an amazing story. One Judson biography is *Bless God and Take Courage: The Judson History and Legacy* by Rosalie Hall Hunt. [An earlier biography of Judson is *To a Golden Shore*. It can be found in many church libraries or from Judson Press.]



2. It's not new but a good book for those who are always "too busy" is *Addicted to Hurry: Spiritual Strategies for Slowing Down* by Kirk Byron Jones.

3. *The Gospel According to Dr. Seuss: Snitches, Sneetches and Other Creachas* by James W. Kemp

4. *Steal Away: Devotions for Baseball Fans* By Hugh Poland

5. *Before the Thunder Rolls: Devotions for NASCAR Fans* by Dale Beaver

**And, for sports fans:**

4. *Steal Away: Devotions for Baseball Fans* By Hugh Poland

5. *Before the Thunder Rolls: Devotions for NASCAR Fans* by Dale Beaver

ALL these books can be obtained from [www.JudsonPress.com](http://www.JudsonPress.com)

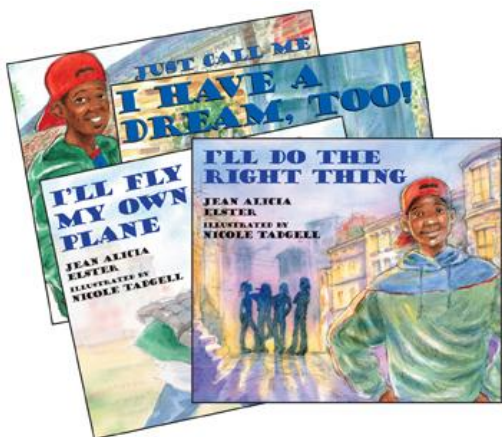
**And, for children:**

### 6. Joe Joe in the City Series

This remarkable series combines black history and Christian themes with issues of self-awareness for children ages, 6-10 years. There are four books in the series.

"Books touch on Christian themes without being preachy. Extremely realistic and highly recommended." —CBA Marketplace

"This series enlightens adults and children to the benefits of making sound choices. The situations that Joe Joe faces are real and his choices have consequences...With the aid of very colorful illustrations by Nicole Tadgeell, Elster's stories use mentors, family, and historical characters to provide fertile ground to raise and nurture Joe Joe through tough times." —Port of Harlem, Feb-April 2007



## Pastors Encouraged To Attend Ethics Seminar

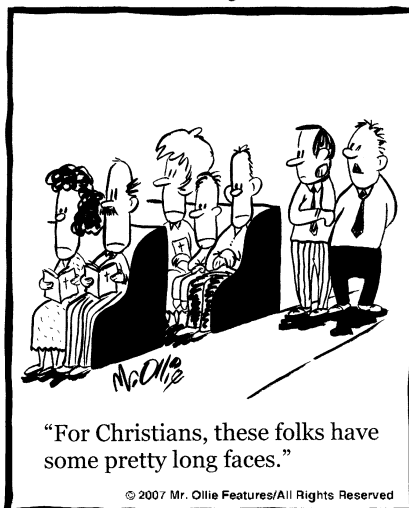
All ABC pastors in Nebraska, Mid-America and the Dakotas are encouraged to attend the Ethics Seminar being held at Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center August 18-20.

The ABC/NE Department of Professional Ministry urges pastors to take the training at least every five years.

The seminar will use newly developed curriculum this year. Focus will be given to boundaries, friendships, transference, the pulpit, power and authority. Attention will also be given to personal needs and self care.

Pastors may register by calling the region office 1—877-244-7339 (in Omaha 556-4730).

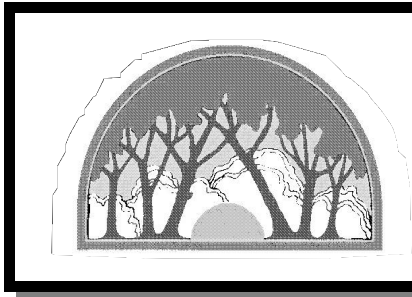
## Book of Timothy



"For Christians, these folks have some pretty long faces."

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## Moses Merrill News

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 E-mail: [campmerrill@nntc.net](mailto:campmerrill@nntc.net) Web site: [www.campmerrill.com](http://www.campmerrill.com)

### Celebrate the 4th on the 5th . . . Independence Day At Moses Merrill

Celebrating Independence Day will be the high point of Family Week at Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center. **EVERYONE IS INVITED.** The small but fun fireworks display will be Friday evening. From the Visitors Center, we'll count the number of different fireworks displays we see across the Platte Valley. On **Saturday the 5th**, the morning will be spent building floats, decorating wagons, etc. for the **BIG PARADE** (relatively speaking . . . compared to other recent parades at Moses Merrill). The picnic lunch will be at noon (bring your own or buy hot dogs & chips from our friendly vendor). **The parade is at 1:00 pm.** Swimming 2:00—4:00.



### It's Not Too Late . . . Register Now

There's room for more at Moses Merrill this summer. Any child or young person wanting to attend camp is encouraged to sign up for a great experience. The camping experience includes worship, learning, swimming, horseback riding, hiking, music, and special awesome events.

Nearly all the camps have room. Check with your church office for a copy of the camp schedule, or check [www.campmerrill.com](http://www.campmerrill.com), or call 877-244-7339 (in Omaha 556-4730).

Friendship Chapel  
 Summer Worship  
 Sundays through 8/31  
 10:00am

Dear Friends,

*I haven't written in a couple of months. Spring is a busy time for me. I have to inspect the grounds after the winter. It takes some time for one cat to check out 568 acres!*

*I do need to talk to you about the last big "hurrah" of the Building Bridges Campaign. The last phase is an activity building. I know, I know, some of you aren't excited about it. The last time you tried to play basketball, it took you two minutes to get from one end of the court to the other. But let me explain . . .*

- *This building will make a HUGE difference in camps for children and youth*
- *This building is actually a multi-ministry building. It will give us space for crafts, small, medium and big groups, BIG dinners, all kinds of ministry events, games, concerts, drama, speakers, rallies, etc.*

*PLEASE help make this dream a reality. We need your help! Thanks!*

—Camp Cat



### New Horse Program At Moses Merrill

This year begins a new chapter at Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center. Instead of renting horses for the children and youth camps, horses have been purchased. The goal is to rescue horses that are no longer wanted by their owners.

At the end of the season, the horses will go for the winter to farms of ABC/NE farmers and ranchers. They will return to camp in the spring.

Riding horses has been a special feature of the Moses Merrill experience for years and now will continue into the future.



*From the Associate Executive Minister ..... Dave Lundholm*

**Long-Term Pastorates**

This fall I will finish my 17<sup>th</sup> year of service to ABC-NE. That is a long time but there are others serving or having served as senior pastors that have longer tenure than that. Pastor Al Wagstaff has been at King Solomon Missionary Baptist Church for 23 years, Pastor Jim Rowe served Scottsbluff for about 26 years, and Pastor Stan Murdoch has led First Baptist of Kearney for about 21 years. I asked them to help me out as I thought about long pastorates.

Stan shares an advantage of enhanced trust. "Trust is built over time and the sharing of experiences of life and faith ... It perhaps could be compared to a long term marriage, where you help each other walk through new chapters of life."

One of the advantages that I have noticed is that a long tenure gives a baseline to enable me to better interpret things that come up. For example, if a given church has a particular kind of crisis every few years, the first time I experience it, it is remarkable and I may over-react. But if I know that this kind of thing happens in that church every 3 to 5 years and this is the 5<sup>th</sup> time I've seen it, my tendency is to respond more calmly and with greater wisdom.

From the responses of Al, Jim and Stan, I can see some clear attitudes and wisdom that have enabled their long ministries.

Al: "...It has been a joy to lead the Lord's people...it's only through the enabling power of Jesus Christ that I have been able to carry on.." "Walk ahead of the people, and take some of the elders with you." "...seek the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and

place the burden of leading God's people on Him," and "We, as a people (ABC) will get to the Promised land."

Jim: "When we accept a call to a church, we should plan as if we would be staying forever;" "Our #1 goal during the first years was to build a close concerned fellowship and at the same time develop lay leadership;" and "Unless the ministry continues to be open, vibrant and fresh, the work can become mundane and stale."

Stan shares the joy of performing a wedding today for a girl that was two years old when he came to serve the church. One of the greatest "landmines" is being hurt. The temptation is to leave when the hurt begins but "if you don't work through the hurts, you never experience the miracles and joys that come over time...we need to remember the importance of ... forgiveness and forbearing with one another. Another landmine is becoming stagnant."

So to achieve a long tenure the necessary attributes are: joy, being a leader, seeking God, placing the burdens on God, being committed to a long pastorate, building fellowship and lay leadership, working through (not escaping from) hurts, and importantly keeping fresh through life long learning.

Al, Jim and Stan each wrote an excellent essay on long term pastorates. Check them out in their entirety at [www.abcnebraska.com](http://www.abcnebraska.com) and click on the link to Long Term Pastorates. I am very grateful to each of these fathers of the faith.



**LOCAL CHURCH NEWS**

by Darlene Rimpley

**August Deadlines**  
**July 7, 2008 - Print Copy**  
**July 11, 2008 - E-Mail**

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**ALLIANCE FBC:** The annual Teachers and Christian Education workers banquet was celebrated on Saturday evening Apr 12. The church furnished a fine catered dinner. Carol and Keli VanMeter presented an evening of music and song. The WMS sponsored an April Shower to collect needed items for the Family Rescue Services of Alliance. Several hundred items were collected and delivered to the Rescue Services. The ABY will hold its final meeting for the season on May 4. A family cookout will be held at the church.

**ARNOLD FBC:** Four seniors and four eighth grade graduates were honored during the worship service on May 4, when they were presented with gift certificates. The ABW held their annual May Breakfast on May 1, with the theme, "Birds, Bees, and Butterflies." Senior Baccalaureate was held at FBC on May 4.

**BEATRICE FBC:** An installation service was held for Rev. Theodora Boolin on May 4. Rev. Boolin is bringing special blessings to the ministry of taking communion to the nursing homes and shut-ins. The graduates and their families were guests at a potluck recognition dinner.

**BELLEVUE NEW LIFE:** Family Movie Night is scheduled for May 30. Plans are underway for VBS June 23-27. The theme will be "Jerusalem Marketplace."

**BRIDGEPORT FBC:** A delegation from the church went to North Platte on May 4 to pray for the ministry of that congregation. The Christian Education Board is surveying the church to see what everyone thinks is important for children and youth to learn at church. The church received help from One Great Hour of Sharing and ABC/NE to assist a family affected by the tornado. As the home church of ABC/NE President Darren Stroh, we strongly supported his call to a Day of Prayer on May 25.

**CHADRON FBC:** Pastor Brad, Susan and Lauren have moved to Chadron, and Pastor Brad officially began his ministry at FBC. Baccalaureate was held on May 11 at the high school auditorium. Ann Young from the local food pantry was the guest speaker at ABW on May 19. The women brought a non-perishable food item for the pantry, and a green plant to exchange. Emory and Phyllis Scherbarth celebrated their 50th anniversary on May 24.

**COLUMBUS FBC:** Our church hosted a Garage Sale, May 2, to help provide for our "Sidewalks" fund. VBS will start May 19 at 6:30 pm . . . we are trying something new with having it only one time per month. This is for children and adults both. The Youth Group will wrap up for the summer with a Pizza Party and movie on May 18 .

**FAIRBURY FBC:** Buck and Lois Welch celebrated their 53rd anniversary on May 7, and Virgil and Betty Richardson their 62nd on May 21. We will purchase a minivan for church use. A reception for the graduates was May 4, and Baccalaureate was May 7.

**FREMONT FBC:** A Graduation Breakfast was held on May 18. The ABW held a salad luncheon on May 1, followed by installation of officers and a memorial service. A garage sale was held on May 3, which also featured services information about the immunizations clinic, early childhood information, free blood pressure checks, and free Bibles and prayer support. Dr. Aid-sand Wright-Riggins, Executive Director of ABC's National Ministries, was the preacher at worship on May 18.

**GIBBON BC:** The graduates were honored on May 4 during the morning worship service, and the mothers were honored during the morning worship service on May 11. The ABW hosted the Church Women United May Friendship Day on May 2. The Mission Board will be collecting used eyeglasses for the next three months to be sent to Haiti.

**GRAND ISLAND FBC:** The church served the Salvation Army on May 1, and also provided table decorations. The church women attended The Church Women United Spring salad luncheon at Trinity United Methodist Church on May 2, and took paper products for Hope Harbor.

**HASTINGS FBC:** Six people completed the three-session after-worship Membership Class. About ten others, mostly already members, attended parts of it. Then on Sunday, May 11 we received four new members.

**HOLDREGE FBC:** Senior recognition was held during morning worship on May 11, and Baccalaureate was held on May 4. The mothers were also honored during the May 11 service. A Youth Burger Barbeque was held on May 14. The All-Star Club finished their year with a skating party.

**JUNIATA CC:** Several improvements have been made to the church: new blinds over the windows, new bathroom fixtures, trees have been removed; and a projector for the sanctuary has been purchased with memorial money.

**KEARNEY FBC:** The church continues to emphasize Invite-A-Friend the second Sunday of each month. The church hosted the Bloodmobile on May 15. The youth are raising funds for a trip to New Mexico.

**LINCOLN FBC:** At the "Second Wednesday Fellowship Supper" on May 14 all attendees brought a picture of their mother (or mother figure) for a fun part of the program. The We-KARE mission trip to Jamaica presented the VBS program that they will present to the Jamaican children. Graduates were honored during the worship service on May 25, followed by a reception for them. Items are being collected for the People's City Mission.

**LINCOLN SECOND:** The Diaconate is telling us that the "Garden of Love" is coming soon. They tell us to keep watching for clues. The ABMen have plans this month to attend a Husker baseball game. The day has finally arrived; on May 11, in conjunction with Mother's Day, we dedicated the newly renovated lounge. May 18, the ABW women sponsored a Mother-Daughter Tea. Family Ministries sponsored their annual Worlds of Fun weekend over Memorial Day. June 1, we honored our graduates from high school, college, graduate school and seminary. Nate Wilcox, grandson of the late Rev. Bruce Currier, former pastor at Second Baptist, graduated from Central Baptist Seminary. Congratulations, Nate. Also, on June 1, the youth group held an End of School Party.

**MCCOOK FBC:** The ABW held their Spring Salad luncheon on May 1, with Floy Rockwell as the guest speaker. FBC held a citywide revival

May 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, and 9, with several different speakers. Flora Dutcher, 100, and who had been a member at FBC since 1924, passed away on April 22. Baccalaureate was held on May 4 at FBC.

**NORFOLK FBC:** Awards for perfect attendance at Sunday School will be handed out the second Sunday of each month. The graduates were honored on May 18. FBC volunteers helped at "Kids Against Hunger" on May 17, where they filled food bags, as well as donating \$100 to the project. Several fundraising projects to go towards the new church are: donating an item to "Sell a Treasure on eBay", donate The Federal Rebate check, donations to the "Clean Sweep Garage Sale", and a "Labor of Love Pool", where skills are donated. The goal is to raise \$5,000 by July 7. The Women's Spring Banquet was held on May 15.

**NORTH PLATTE FBC:** Graduates were recognized on May 18. The youth group at FBC is called EPICENTER. *"After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:31* The EPICENTER is the point on the Earth's surface that is directly above the focus point where an earthquake or other underground explosion originates. We seek to create an environment where students can grow and mature in their faith. When students are focused upon prayer and a deepening relationship with God then they can become the change they seek in the world. They become the EPICENTER. EPICENTER TOTALLY ROCKS!!!"

**OMAHA BENSON:** The Food Pantry Ministry continues to be an important part of the outreach of the congregation.

**OMAHA MIRACLE HILLS:** The Youth (neotees) are making final plans for their first mission trip to Bethel in KC this summer. The ministry is in its first year, so this is exciting. VBS under way for June 16-19. Pastor has announced the summer focus in preaching and teaching will be Spiritual Awakening.

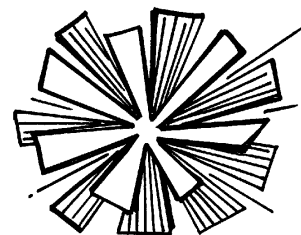
**OMAHA PARKSIDE:** Clean up Day was held on May 3. Cups of cold water, in the name of Christ, were passed out during Florence Days Parade. The ABW Ministries held their spring luncheon on May 17, with installation being part of the program. Donations are being gathered by the ABW to send to Romania so children can go to camps.

**OMAHA SUNSET HILLS:** The BIG Event is Saturday, June 7. It starts with the Upscale Yard Sale and bake sale at 10am, and barbecue and Sing Until Sunset at 4pm, all outdoors, weather permitting. The event is part of Sunset Hills' yearlong 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Senior MAD (Music and Drama) Camp will end with its traditional overnight, June 13, and program, June 14, at Sunset Hills. Vacation Bible School will be one day, all day, on Saturday, June 28, with an "Operation Christmas Child" theme. More than a dozen members helped take down the "Can-struction" display at Westroads, a benefit for the Omaha Food Bank. Tuesday, Aug 26, will be American Baptist Churches night at Rosenblatt Stadium, with Forgiven singing

the national anthem at 7pm before the Omaha Royals game. Forgiven's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary concert will be at 4pm, Sunday, Sept 7 at Sunset Hills.

**SCOTTSBLUFF FBC:** SONrise, the gospel singing team of Harlow and Jarene Rudolph, presented a concert on May 21. Ladies Night Out held a "car rally" for their May 20 meeting, ending up for dessert at a secret location. The WORK Circle presented the program, "Styles of the Well Dressed Diva" on May 31. The All-Church Talent Show, "Doin' It For Jesus", was held May 18. Chairs that were decorated with paint during their February Family Festival were recently sold at a charity auction to benefit those who are advocates for kids who are victims of abuse, brought \$500 for four chairs. A State Patrol Trooper presented a meth education program at the church on May 14. The youth group is sponsoring a project called "Shining Lights", where they are gathering ready-to-eat items such as granola bars and fruit snacks to deliver to low income families.

**TEKAMAH FBC:** May 4 was Graduation Sunday at FBC.



*Welcome new members*

**GIBBON FBC:** Tom and Barbara Christy

**HASTINGS:** Jim and Jane Thompson by transfer, and Pat Mortensen and Michelle Stone by baptism.

**ABC/NE Trivia (answers on p.8)**

1. Where do most meetings of the ABC/NE Board and Exec. Comm. take place?  
a. Omaha, b. Lincoln, c. Grand Island, d. Kearney
2. What is printed on the gateway sign at Moses Merrill?  
a. Moses Merrill, b. Camp Moses Merrill, c. Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center, d. Welcome
3. What makes it possible for ABC/NE to offer more continuing education to pastors than most regions?  
a. local church gifts, b. many donor gifts, c. The Shepherd Fund, d. The Carpenter Fund
4. The ABC/NE Office is located in sight of which ABC/NE church  
a. Parkside, b. Sunset Hills, c. Mt. Nebo, d. Benson
5. Which of the following churches have construction projects underway?  
a. Norfolk, b. Arnold, c. Bridgeport, d. All of the above.

# New Signs for Moses Merrill

After serving well for many years, the wooden sign over the gateway to Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center had to be replaced. The wood sign had suffered the effect of rain, wind, hail, snow and ice — as well as sunshine. It welcomed generations of campers.

A new sign has been constructed by Dean and Brian Thompson of Arthur Baptist Church. The welders went to work and the result is a metal sign that should last for years. The stone supports on either side of the sign will stay in place.

The original sign was given over 30 years ago by Terry & Lois Ronne, Benson Baptist in Omaha, in memory of their daughter Michelle Ronne. The new sign will continue to honor her memory.



The old sign came down . . . "thud."



Martha Sorenson, FBC Lincoln, renews the sign visitors see after entering the Moses Merrill grounds



The new sign ready for installation.

## 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 Persing, Bob Schuelke, Denise Harris, Beverly Pacas
Office Manager .....	Sue Gammel
Office Assistant.....	Margaret Brown-Moore
Accounting Services .....	Jerry 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 Consultant .....	Jason Workman

## ABC/NE Trivia Answers

1. C. Most meetings of the Board are at FBC, Grand Island
2. A. Moses Merrill. This sign has been in place since late May. The earlier sign read Camp Moses Merrill.
3. D. The Carpenter Fund helps ABC/NE provide continuing education to pastors.
4. D. Benson
5. D. All of the above are building new facilities.



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