

### Last Minute Giving Ideas . . .

*For SS classes, youth groups, women's and men's groups.*

#### Christmas Stockings or Bags

Fill stockings with small notebook, pen, pencil, small toy, colors, coloring books, storybooks, etc. Deliver to ABC/NE office for distribution to churches serving children in need—or give to a local agency serving children in need in your community.

#### Mini-Library

Send a box of new children's books to an ABC Christian Center such as Bethel Neighborhood Center, 14 S. 7th St., Kansas City, KS 913-371-8218

#### Food

Check a local food pantry to see what is in greatest need. The Food Pantry at Benson Baptist in Omaha requests small cans of tuna, cans of spaghetti sauce, peanut butter and toilet tissue.

#### Gifts of Yourselves — Share the JOY

**CAROLING!** Great fun and a wonderful gift. *Visit shut-ins.* Share Christmas scripture and poems. *Do some baking* as a group and deliver the goodies to anyone at all! *Christmas Campfire* Invite friends to a time of sharing and worship around a snowy campfire.

#### ABC of Nebraska Staff

|                                                         |                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Executive Minister.....                                 | Robin Stoops          |
| Associate Executive Minister.....                       | Dave Lundholm         |
| Director, Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center.....   | MaryBeth Robertson    |
| Facility Manager, MMCCC.....                            | Eric Byrd             |
| Camp Staff.....                                         | Kim Byrd, Barb Fisher |
| Dan Hermsen, Bob Schuelke, Denise Harris, Beverly Pacas |                       |
| Office Manager.....                                     | Sue Gammel            |
| Office Assistant.....                                   | Margaret Brown-Moore  |
| Church Life Consultant.....                             | A. J. Wagstaff        |
| Pastor to Pastors (E).....                              | Dick Peterson         |
| Emergency Services Consultant.....                      | Jason Workman         |



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# the ESSENGER

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska

 **December 2011**

#### ABC/NE Date Data

Christmas Services  
Moses Merrill—Friendship Chapel  
Dec 4, 11, 18 4pm  
Dec. 24 5pm  
  
ABC Pastors' Conference  
Orlando, Florida  
Jan. 23-26, 2012



*Oh, Come  
Let Us  
Adore  
Him,  
Christ  
the Lord*

*May your celebration of Jesus' birth be filled with hope, joy, peace, and love.  
The ABC of Nebraska Board and Staff*

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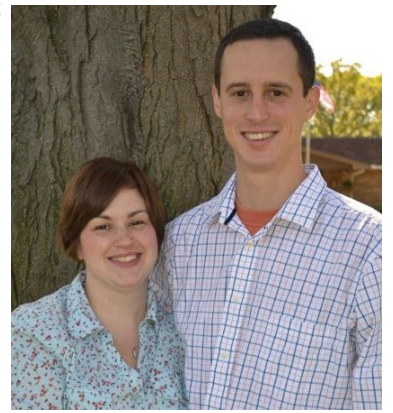
## Rev. Greg Mamula Named ABC/NE Associate Executive Minister

Rev. Greg Mamula, currently Associate Pastor of First Baptist Church of North Platte, will become the new Associate Executive Minister of ABC/NE on January 1. Executive Minister Rev. Robin Stoops announced the selection at a meeting of the ABC/NE Executive Committee on Nov. 19 in Grand Island.

Robin commended Greg's education and experience as well as his gifts for the unique needs of today. He said, "Greg . . . has insight into what is happening in our culture and our churches through the perspective of a young person. He will help us adjust to using technology and social media. He will come alongside as we learn new ways to share our faith." (see more on p. 2)

Greg responded, "I am very excited to serve the many wonderful Nebraska churches through our ABC region. I look forward to our joint ministry together."

Greg received a B.A. in Christian Education from Williams Baptist College in Arkansas and received his M.Div. Degree from George W. Truett Baptist Theological Seminary at Baylor University in Waco, TX. Greg and his wife Lisa have two children, Sophie, 3, and Joel, 1.



Lisa and Greg Mamula

# From the Executive Minister . . . . . Robin Stoops Times they are a changing.....

"There is an appointed time for everything....." Ecclesiastes 3:1  
Everyone knows change is difficult. It is only easy when it is happening to someone else. Transition might be an easier word to deal with because with it comes a picture of the process of change. If we walk through a transition it seems at least we have an opportunity to think through what is changing and why.

ABC/NE has gone through some major transitions in the last year. We have had several (count them, four!) people retire and have welcomed three new staff members to the team. Things are changing and we're experiencing new understandings of how and why things have been done and new challenges.

I'm excited to announce that Greg Mamula is joining our staff as Associate Executive Minister. Greg has served as Associate Pastor of First Baptist Church in North Platte and has served our churches and region well. He is well trained and has the heart of a servant. Greg also has some insight to what is hap-

pening in our culture and our churches through the perspective of a young person. He will help us adjust to using technology and social media. He will come alongside as we learn new ways to share our faith and I am betting he can even help me get the time to stop flashing on my VCR, I mean DVD player, or is it Blu-Ray?

I am excited to have Greg join our team as we seek to become churches that honor God and share the Gospel to our communities and around the world. He brings new energy to our work and I am convinced that, together with our MMCCC staff, pastors and churches, we will see growth in our region spiritually, numerically and in our understanding of God's purpose for His church.

Please join me in welcoming Greg to our staff and celebrating God's great timing and grace.

Blessings, Robin



## ABC/NE Delegation Travels to Myanmar

Executive Minister Robin Stoops and four ABC/NE Pastors, Brad Daniels, Chadron; Ron French, Sunset Hills; Gam Lahpai, First Kachin; and Harry Riggs, First Lincoln; traveled to Myanmar (Burma) in early November. The group engaged in study before making the trip to prepare them to better understand the history and current situation of Baptists in that country. The church of each of the pastors in the group serve Burmese tribal groups.



Brad Daniels is ready to harvest the crop under the watchful eye of ABC's International Ministries Director Reid Trulson.



Harry Riggs sharing the word.



Robin Stoops preaching at the Karen Seminary at Yangon



Ron French making friends at an orphanage

In November, ABC-USA General Secretary Roy Medley issued a call to prayer for the people of Myanmar (Burma). He has asked all American Baptists to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ who live in that troubled country. Find more at [www.abc-usa.org](http://www.abc-usa.org)

Right: Harry and Robin with the General Secretary of the Karen Baptist Convention.



## RMMO Offering Received at Year's End

American Baptists pause to express appreciation for retired ministers and missionaries at year's end. While the Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering can be received at any time of year, the majority of churches promote it in November and December.

Through this annual offering, American Baptist congregations say thank you in a tangible way to the denomination's retired ministers and missionaries or their widowed spouses. The offering provides them with emergency and other financial assistance, based on financial need; and "Thank You" checks, based on 15 or more years of ABC service.

More information is available at [www.abc-usa.org](http://www.abc-usa.org)

### LOOKING AHEAD . . .

## Go to a New Land: Journeying toward God

January 23-26, 2012 Orlando, Florida

A national conference for ABC pastors will take place in Florida in January. The Ministers Council and ABCUSA are hosting "Go to a New Land: Journeying toward God," a conference for American Baptist ministers January 23-26 in Orlando, FL.

The conference will help pastors journey from: Depending on what is known to discovering what God is up to; Fearing the future to trusting the Spirit; Feeling unprepared to finding new ways to live in hope.

More information at [www.a-new-land.com](http://www.a-new-land.com)

## IMMERSE

Youth from Baptist churches across the country will gather in Washington, DC, next July for a week long gathering that is: Spiritual . . .

- Missional . . .
- Reflective . . .
- Connective . . .
- Experiential . . .
- and Fun.

The event is IMMERSE. It will feature hands-on mission opportunities, daily small groups, creative and powerful worship experiences, exciting recreation time, and the opportunity to meet youth from across the country.

For more information about IMMERSE,



## Moses Merrill News

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(402) 666-5639

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

## CHRISTMAS AT CAMP

Everyone is invited to include camp in their celebration of Christmas.



### FRIENDSHIP CHAPEL

Advent Services 4:00 pm Dec. 4, 11, 18  
Christmas Eve Service 5:00 pm on Dec. 24

### FAMILY GET-AWAY

Imagine not shopping on one weekend and spending a couple of nights with the family at camp, hiking in the woods, sledding, enjoying a winter camp fire. Building wonderful memories!

### SPIRITUAL RETREAT

What about one or two days of personal retreat? Come and experience the special quiet of winter in the forest.

### SLEDDING

Enjoy sledding on winter weekends. Palmyra Building is open with rest-rooms and something warm to drink. Call first to check on snow conditions.

## There's Room for You on the 2300 TEAM

The 2300 Team is a group of folks committed to the ongoing support of Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center. Lives are changed every year at MMCCC. Children make their first decision to be followers of Jesus. Youth make decisions to put their earlier faith commitments into concrete action. Some decide to become pastors or missionaries. Adults strengthen their walk of faith. Pastors find renewal.

Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center is referred to as MMCCC and in Roman numerals, that's 2300. Members of the 2300 Team give \$23 per month. Most of the members have the money automatically transferred from their bank accounts on the 23rd of each month.

Sign up now for 2300 Team membership. Call camp 402-666-5639 or go to [www.campmerrill.com](http://www.campmerrill.com)



### From Camp Cat . . .

*The forest is settling down for winter . . . A very special time of year at Moses Merrill. The squirrels have been running around like rodents with their heads cut off trying to store up enough food. I don't worry so much. As long as Eric, Ron, Bob and Dan don't forget me, I'll have enough food. [I eat at the*

*Maintenance Building now—that's where I find these guys.]*

*We had a GREAT time at "Holidays With the Merrills." If you didn't make it this year, plan to come next year.*

*I'm proud to announce we've begun a Camp Cat Network. There are now two camp cats at ABC camps in Indiana who also write in their region newsletter. Of course I'm chaircat of the board.*

*Come visit during the Christmas season. Your friend,*

*Camp Cat*





