

the ESSENGER

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska



February 2007

ABC/NE Date Data

- Feb. 2-4 NEW LIFE Caravan in Omaha
- Feb. 3 ABMen's Board
- Feb. 10 GOOD SOIL churches meet in Grand Island
- Feb. 17 — Grand Island
10 a.m. Finance Dept
Mission Dept
Church Vitality Dept
1:15 p.m. ABC/NE Board
- Feb. 19 — Grand Island
10 a.m. Prof. Min. Dept
- Feb. 22 — Omaha
1:00 p.m. ABC/NE Foundation

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Ice Storm Effects Continue to Impact Families . . . Many ABC Churches Reach Out to Help

The New Year's Eve ice storm continues to impact Nebraskans. ABC-USA and ABC/NE churches continue to respond in many ways. Immediate response was provided by Gibbon Baptist and First Baptist of Holbrook as they provided shelter for families needing heat. ABC's National Ministries sent \$5,000 of One Great Hour of Sharing funds to be distributed to those in need. Camp Moses Merrill and ABMen of Nebraska loaned generators. ABC work teams have been to Holdrege to assist in tree clearing. First Baptist of Bridgeport sent money to help families in need.

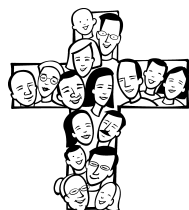


First line response was provided by churches on the scene, they were in turn supported by churches across the region and the region by ABC-USA.

Holdrege Pastor Gary Winget took on heavy responsibilities with the Red Cross Emergency Shelter. He reported that when businesses were closed, employees couldn't work. Families were without income. It will take some time to recover. Pastor Stan Murdoch of Kearney and his staff have mobilized response in their area. ABC/NE's Christian Ed Consultant Nola Oberhelman reported from Chapman that in the weeks following the storm, "School is functioning, people are sharing particularly for bathing/showering, and folks are using crockpots, griddles, etc to take as little power as possible from generators."

ABC/NE also works through Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska which distributes funds in crisis situations. They also manage the Rural Response Hotline.

"CHURCHES HELPING CHURCHES" CHARACTERISTIC OF ABC/NE



In a recent report ABC/NE Executive Minister Susan Gillies provided to leaders at ABC-USA, the idea of churches helping churches has become a characteristic of Nebraska Baptists. Gillies reported, "What began as a 'program' to ask a specific church to provide help to another church, it rapidly becoming a way of life. It's not that it didn't happen in the past, it's just that it is becoming the norm. The increase we have seen in instances of training & sharing of expertise, emergency relief, celebrations, cooperative initiatives, etc., has been inspiring."

One example of "churches helping churches" is **The Good Soil Project**. Each enrolled church is engaged in a process to prepare its own congregation for transformation but in the process, the members serve as coaches, trainers, and encouragers for the other enrolled churches.

Another example is the way churches have stepped up to assist churches caught in emergency situations, such as the fire at First Baptist in Norfolk, and churches in the area of the recent ice storm.

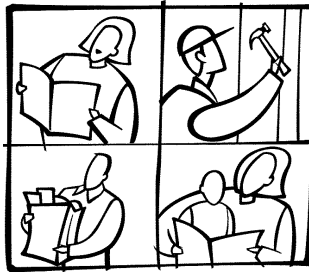
FIRST KACHIN PRESENTS PAINTING TO CAMP MERRILL

First Kachin Baptist made a formal presentation to the ABC/NE staff on Jan. 14 of an original portrait of Ola Hanson. Hanson was the ABC missionary who served the Kachins in Burma for 30 years. The large painting will hang in Calvary Lodge at the camp.

From the Executive Minister Susan Gillies

Thanks

I heard a brief report on the program "All Things Considered" on public radio recently. Storyteller Kevin Kling explained how his prayers have changed during his life. When he was young he prayed to God to tell Jesus to tell Santa what he wanted. He was trying to cover all bases. As he got older he often used prayer to try to get himself out of the trouble he found himself in – always promising God that if God would bail him out this one time, he wouldn't do stupid things in the future. Then he was in a motorcycle accident and had to spend months in physical therapy. He began to see things differently and his prayers changed to prayers of thanks. Thanks for small things and small moments of care and of beauty. And the more he thanked God, the more he found to give thanks for. When he was thankful, blessings just seemed to flow.



Out of the fire at FBC, Norfolk, in November, and the devastating effects of the Dec. 31 ice storm, we have found many things for which we give thanks. Thanks for the way churches show love and compassion for other churches in

need. Thanks for the way a church family is drawn together to work for a common goal. Thanks to all American Baptists for the way they support One Great Hour of Sharing so that funds are available when people are in need. Thanks to folks who volunteer to work in shelters or clear downed trees, to those who cook and do laundry for others without power, to churches that open their doors to provide safe havens, to churches and individuals who send money to provide relief, for ABMen for purchasing generators for emergencies they knew would come, and for all who prayed earnestly for victims and for relief workers.

Each small act makes a difference. We are invited to notice each act of kindness, each moment of beauty. And we are once again reminded that it is not in how much we have but rather in the fact that we are children of God with the opportunity to hear, see, touch, smell, taste, think and love.

Storyteller Kling says, "Nobody looks better than when they're helping someone." I agree. It's why the people our churches look so good! Thank you!



From the Associate Executive Minister Steve Bils

America For Christ FAQs

What is the America for Christ Offering (AFC Offering)?

This is the annual offering that supports ministry at the local, regional and national levels to meet people's physical, emotional, financial and spiritual needs. America for Christ gifts enable American Baptists to fund home mission in the world's third largest mission field - the United States, including Puerto Rico. Your gifts extend the witness of American Baptist congregations for Jesus Christ and positively impact diverse cultures in our society.

When you give to the AFC Offering what does your money support?

AFC Offering gifts support spreading the Good News across America through evangelism training, disciple-making resources, intercultural ministry, caring ministry, congregational transformation, publishing and a host of other services

How are contributions to the AFC Offering distributed?

Two-thirds of an America for Christ gift is distributed to support the work of National Ministries (NM), the home mission board of the American Baptist Churches, USA; one-third is distributed to support the ministry of regional offices serving the area from which the gift comes.

How can your church learn more about the program ministries supported by the AFC Offering?

Invite a home missionary, NM staff member or regional office staff member to speak at a worship service, conference or dinner. For programs administered by your regional office, or available resources, contact Mission Support staff there.

When should your church, group or organization receive the AFC Offering?

February and March are the months NM promotes the AFC Offering, and many churches will receive it in that time frame. Recent trends show that some churches opt to collect the offering at other times of the year and some may do so for at least two consecutive months. You may receive the offering in the time period that best suits your church, group or organization.

How can you promote the AFC Offering?

Use the bulletin inserts to share mission stories. Involve your Christian education, mission outreach, children ministries and diaconate boards in planning AFC activities, workshops, discussion groups and other promotions. The AFC leader's guide suggests creative ways to post results. Whatever you do, make sure everyone has fun participating in your campaign drive.

Should we contribute to the AFC Offering if we support United Missions and other mission giving programs?

Most institutions generate revenues from multiple sources. For-profit companies sell a variety of products and services; nonprofits may hold telethons and banquets; and churches collect tithes and offerings, or establish a building fund to meet their financial needs. The AFC Offering, United Missions and other giving appeals represent a full complement of giving opportunities for American Baptists. Support mission and ministry objectives of the denomination as a whole by giving generously to all ABC-USA mission support programs.



From the Associate Executive Minister Dave Lundholm

Ice Storm

Fortunately, since I live in Grand Island, the December double ice storms had very little direct impact on my family and me. We lost power just briefly (but enough to fry my wife's computer).

We did however witness the almost complete destruction of an ornamental tree in our backyard. This tree had about 16 trunks, all about 10 to 12 inches in diameter. The leaves on this particular tree were small and supported on stems that were about a foot long and only about 1/16th of an inch in diameter.

As the first ice storm began these stems began to be covered with a thin beautiful layer of ice. It was just a surface glazing at first. But the ice continued to accumulate. The twigs were first coated with a quarter of an inch of ice. Then when the ice reached half an inch the first limb gave way with a crack. Ultimately the ice on each of those 1/16th of an inch stems was more than an inch thick and most of the tree came down.

There was just too much accumulation of beautiful stuff and the life of much of the tree was destroyed.

It occurs to me that our lives are sometimes like what happened to that tree. We accumulate, and we accumulate, and we accumulate beautiful things. We accumulate so many things that our life is broken. Maybe there is a lesson in the loss of that tree.

We accumulate event, upon event, upon important event. We accumulate commitment, upon commitment, upon vital commitment. And of course we accumulate thing, upon thing, upon beautiful thing. And we wonder why sometimes it feels like our life is breaking or had already broken.

(Luke 12:15 NIV) Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."



LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

by Darlene Rimpley

March Deadlines

February 5, 2007 - Print Copy
February 9, 2007 - E-Mail

Home Town Editor

Darlene RIMPLEY
Rt. 1 Box 74 A

E-Editor

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Subject: Messenger

ALLIANCE, FBC: The ABY conducted the Hanging of the Greens worship on Dec 3. The Board of Education had a reception following. The St. Johns Brass Choir provided special music during worship Dec 10. Pastor was guest speaker at the MOPS annual brunch and worship. The church celebrated the baptism of Carol Cole during morning worship Dec 17. The ABY caroling party was Sunday evening Dec 17. Thirteen fruit baskets were given to shut-ins and others. Eleven Christmas food boxes were delivered to needy families Dec 23. Treat sacks were given out following the Christmas Eve morning service. There was a full house for the Christmas Eve candle light worship.

ARNOLD FBC: Christmas events: "Hanging the Greens" was done on Dec 3, following a fellowship dinner. Ruth Circle held their Christmas salad luncheon. The annual Christmas program, "Around the Christmas Tree", was held on Dec 17, with people of all ages taking part in music, skits, and mini-sermons. Communion was held on Christmas Eve, and a "Final Faith Fling" was held on New Years Eve. The annual "paper shower" for the church kitchen is being held. The church is collecting items for service personnel serving in Iraq, which will be a monthly project. A mission team from Fir Road Community Church at Joplin, MO spent the weekend of Jan 8-9 in Arnold, dry walling the new church.

BEATRICE FBC: Harlan and Leah Minscer are serving as Interim Pastors at FBC. Christmas events: The Sunday School Christmas program, "The Twelve Days of Christmas", was held on Dec 17. FBC rang bells for the Salvation Army on Dec 9, a caroling party was held on Dec 10, followed by a fellowship time, and a candlelight communion time was held on Christmas Eve. An installation service for 2007 church officers was held on Jan 21.

BROKEN BOW FBC: There were Christmas events throughout December. The Custer Association of ABW met at FBC on Jan 26.

CHADRON FBC: Christmas events: The Live and Learn Circle and the MRS Circle both held Christmas parties on Dec 14, with each having a cookie exchange & the MRS Circle making wreaths. A caroling party was held on Dec 17, and a Christmas Eve service was held. FBC collected 160 shoeboxes and \$227 for the Operation Christmas Child. A service to begin the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was held at the United Methodist Church on Jan 21, with Pastor Rick as the speaker. A Youth Lock-In was held on Jan 6.

COLUMBUS FBC: Christmas events: The AB held a catered steak Christmas Dinner on the evening of Dec 5 with the entire church being guests, and the entertainment being by

"Ye Old Gospel Singers". The Christmas program was held on Dec 10 during the morning worship service, and a Christmas Eve service was held. FBC collected 49 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child, and was a relay station for 408 shoeboxes.

FAIRBURY FBC: Christmas events: An all-church open house was held in a private home and hosted by the Monday night small group, on Dec 3. The Christmas program was held on Dec 17, with a "Pennies for Jesus Offering" taken, which was sent to Habitat For Humanity in South Dakota. The ABW held a Christmas cookie sale on Dec 17, with proceeds going to the youth program. A Christmas Eve service was held. FBC collected 507 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. Lowell and Lois Thrasher celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary on Jan 14. FBC continues to collect items for Samaritan's Purse. A four-week study on Just Walk Across the Room, a book by Bill Hybel, was begun on Jan 21.

FREMONT FBC: Christmas events: The Day Care Christmas program was held on Dec 1, and the Sunday School Christmas program was held on Dec. 10. The cantata, "There's Something about That Name", was presented on Dec 17, and a Christmas Eve service was held. The Young Women of Hope collected 44 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child.

ABC of Nebraska Board of Directors 2007

Officers

- President: Rev. Darren Stroh, Bridgeport 1 (2007)
- Vice-President: Ted Hartung, Lincoln Second 1 (2007)
- Secretary: Roberta Williston, LaVista Judson 3 (2007)
- Treasurer: Bob Fairchild, Lincoln First 4 (2007)

Board of Directors Members

Association Representatives to the Board of Directors:

- Capitol Kathy Stoops, Fairbury 1 (2008)
- Custer Rev. Betty Johnson, Broken Bow 1 (2009)
- First Nebraska Rev. Art Chapin, Prairie Union 1 (2007)
- Grand Island Treva Gangwish, Gibbon 2 (2009)
- North Platte Woody Falkena, North Platte 1 (2009)
- Northwest Barb Hoxworth, Bridgeport 1 (2008)
- Omahaland Ken Sciford, Omaha First 2 (2009)
- Southern Union Keith Hartman, Guide Rock 2 (2007)
- York Karleen Swanholm, Norfolk 2 (2009)

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- Rev. Gam Lahpai, Omaha First Kachin 1 (2007)
- Ernie Deniston, Omaha Benson 1 (2008)
- Bill Method, Riverside 1 (2008)
- Susan Pudwill, Lincoln Second 1 (2008)
- Janis Berry, Omaha Miracle Hills 1 (2007)
- Dale Whitson, Holbrook 1 to fill out term (2007)
- Rev. Tony Sanders, Bellevue Koinonia 1 (2009)
- Rev. Jim Green, Scottsbluff 1 (2009)

Department Members

Camps and Conferences:

- Cora Redwine, Lincoln Belmont 1 (2009)
- Rev. Paul Marine, Omaha Benson 2 (2009)
- Rev. Hugh Giesbrecht, Tecumseh 2 (2007)
- Orin Clinger, Kearney 1 (2008)
- Rev. Carl Ratcliff, Valley 2 (2009)
- Greg Sizer, Arthur 2 (2007)
- Gina Slechta, Omaha Sunset Hills 2 (2008)
- Rev. Robin Stoops, Fairbury 1 (2007)
- Karen Westerfield, Omaha Benson 2 (2008)

Church Vitality:

- Trudi Bils, Omaha Underground 1
- Sandy Denton, Lincoln First 1
- Dick Gee, Grand Island 1
- Shelley Knott, Arthur 1
- Charlene Morris-Quarells, Omaha King Solomon 1
- Glenn Williamson, Omaha Judson 1

Finance and Investment

- LaVonna Cline Lincoln First 1 (2009)
- Rod Gangwish, Gibbon 2 (2007)
- Stan Jensen, York 2 (2009)
- Charlene Meyen, Omaha First 2 (2008)
- Rev. Richard Peterson, Omaha Benson 2 (2009)
- Rev. Gary Winget, Holdrege 2 (2008)

Mission

- Rev. Larry Adams, Columbus 2 (2008)
- Monica Andrews, Bellevue New Life 1 (2008)
- Vera Mae Duncan, Superior 2 (2007)
- Denise Nutter, North Platte 2 (2007)
- Johnny Nelson, Holdrege 2 (2009)

Professional Ministry

- Rev. Stan Murdoch, Kearney 2 (2009)
- Karen Denton, Beatrice 2 (2007)
- Rev. Lee Foreman, Fremont 2 (2009)
- Rev. Kevin Walden VP Ministers Council
- Rev. Tom Wiles, North Platte 1 (2008)
- Joanne Kondy, North Platte 1 (2009)
- Sandy Goodwater, Ansley 1 (2009)

Prayer Focus for February:

- Ice storm victims & all who work to assist them.
- For people to hear the call of Jesus to work at Camp this year.
- For all who work with our youth.
- For our new ABC/NE President, Darren Stroh.
- For the resources to carry out our ABC/NE ministry as churches working together.

Prayer is a vital part of our life together as American Baptists in Nebraska. Each year we have a special prayer emphasis. In 2006 Messenger readers prayed for each individual church and pastor. For 2007, The Messenger will feature a prayer focus each month.



Kathy Brown sets up the nativity display at Friendship Chapel.



A trio sings for Christmas Vespers at Camp Merrill.

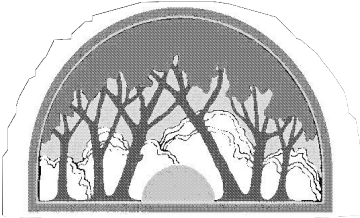


Nice Idea:
Some churches pin a paper heart on each person entering worship on the Sunday before Valentine's Day. It's a way to say "You are Loved!".

ABC/NE Trivia (answers on page 8)
This month's trivia will help you get better acquainted with the region staff — although this may be more than you wanted to know!
Answer choices: a. Susan Gillies, b. Dave Lundholm, c. Clarence Reiss, d. Steve Bils, e. MaryBeth Robertson

1. Who once worked for a turkey farmer?
2. Who once worked in an emergency room?
3. Who once worked at a mall bookstore?
4. Who served in the Air Force?
5. Who once worked for Honeywell Corporation?





Camp Moses Merrill News

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 Clarence Reiss, Director (402) 666-5639
 E-mail: campmerrill@nntc.net
 Website: www.campmerrill.com

It's Time to Plan for Summer Camp ! Don't Miss Out!

This summer it's a **CAMP MERRILL ROAD TRIP!**

Get your gear together! Get your registration in!

The theme for camp this summer is ROAD TRIP. Don't panic — our ROAD TRIP is about the road trip of our lives. We'll also learn about some incredible Bible Road Trips. [Parents, never fear — this road trip will be entirely on the grounds of Camp Moses Merrill.] Everyone is encouraged to bring friends. Invite neighbors and kids at school. Your church has brochures. Look for the words ROAD TRIP. Fill out your application and then get others to



the same. This is going to be an amazing, awesome, astonishing, astounding, awe-inspiring summer!



Early Bird Discounts—Discounts for each camp are available if you send your completed registration form along with the deposit to the ABC Region Office by the dates indicated in the brochure.

Weaver Hall Air Conditioning Completed

The new furnace/air conditioning system has been installed in Weaver Hall. Many folks from across the state contributed to help make this happen. The system will make cooking and consuming much more comfortable!

Vesper Services Successful

The December Vesper Services in Friendship Chapel were well received by friends and neighbors. "Every service was great but I was most surprised by the turn-out on Christmas Eve," said ABC/NE Exec. Minister Susan Gillies. "I had thought there might not be anyone not already involved in other activities but I was wrong. We had neighbors, unchurched folks, and families looking for a special way to experience Christmas Eve. Thanks to MaryBeth Robertson and all the folks who helped make the services happen." [see pictures on page 4.]

GRATITUDE!

That's what everyone at Camp Merrill feels for all the folks who help support camp. **Thanks to ALL the folks who sent year-end gifts.** Thanks to ALL who helped with the furnace/air conditioner project for Weaver Hall. **It's done!!**
MEMORIALS: Thanks to H.R. Thompson for his gift in memory of his wife, Bettie, and to Ruth Giger for her gift in memory of Elmer Giger. You have all invested in the future with your gifts. Men and women, boys and girls will grow in Christ because you cared.

CMM offers . . .
Year round retreat facilities for adults.
Great facilities for family reunions.
Beautiful venues for weddings.

Somebody's knocking at your door . . .

Is this the year you will respond to God's call to serve as a cabin leader, a camp coordinator, a nurse, a craft or music leader? Or is the call for you to help recruit people in your church who would make good leaders at camp? Or maybe this is the year for you to work all summer at camp. Do you know young adults who would like to live and work at camp? Opportunities:

Summer Paid Staff — buildings & grounds, kitchen, house-keeping, maintenance, pool supervision, office, recreation.

Volunteers — camp coordinators, cabin leaders and cabin leaders who can also assist with recreation, crafts, music, etc. Camp grandparents are needed for junior camps. Retirees are need for assorted tasks and time periods.

Call MaryBeth Robertson at Camp for more information, to make suggestions and for applications 1-402-666-5639.

Sometimes you have to stop and listen to hear Jesus knocking at your door.

Knocks like Jesus, can you hear him?

Healthy Families Conference Held At Camp Merrill in January

Clergy and lay leaders gathered at Camp Moses Merrill in January for a conference entitled "Encouraging Healthy Families: Recognizing and Responding to Domestic Violence."

Participants watched and discussed video vignettes. Leaders taught how to respond to victims and how to respond to batterers. Guidance was given on what congregations can do.

Leader/Trainers for the event came from the Nebr. Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition, the Family Violence Council and Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska. ABC/NE Associate Exec. Minister Dave Lundholm coordinated the event. The conference was made possible by a grant from Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska.

Short Term Mission Opportunity Black Hills of South Dakota—August 4-12

The American Baptist Churches of Nebraska and the Dakotas have teamed up in each of the last six years to minister at the annual gathering of over 400,000 people in Sturgis, South Dakota for Bike Week. (Attendance in 2006 was estimated at 456,968.)

The **ABC Emergency Services Center** was created in the basement of FBC of the Northern Hills in Deadwood to help those who became stranded due to injury, abandonment, or mechanical breakdown. The local law enforcement and social services agencies contact our workers when they encounter people in need. The distribution of posters and brochures help others find the ESC on their own.

Volunteers from both regions work to help, feed, transport, and counsel the dozens of individuals who come to the ESC for assistance. Throughout the week calls come in at all hours of the day and night from churches, police and rescue workers, and individuals, wanting us to help men, women and children in need.

Volunteers don't need to be motorcyclists, but ought to have a heart for evangelism and caring ministry. If you can come for all or part of the week, we can find a job for you! Here are more details . . .

- The ABC ESC will be open August 4-12. Those wishing to help set up can plan on arriving as early as August 2.
- Sleeping accommodations are provided.
- RVers will be provided with space to set up camp.
- This mission project is designed primarily for adults.
- Follow-up on those ministered to will be by ABC regions around the country.
- Each participant is asked to contribute \$100 toward the cost of this project. Local churches are encouraged to assist their participating members in raising this amount. Churches and individuals may also make direct contributions to this project through their regional office.
- For more information, contact the region office or visit www.SturgisAid.com.



Web Specials for African American History Month

Through February 28, 2007, it's possible to save 30% on select Judson Press titles for African American History Month. These resources both educate and celebrate the history, heritage, and accomplishments of the African American Christian community.

To check out available titles, go to:
www.judsonpress.com.

Nola's Take Five . . .

Ideas from Nola Oberhelman, ABC/NE Christian Ed Consultant

Take five ways we can support public education:

1. Advocate for adequate funds and equitable distribution.
2. Participate in and support the goals of parent-teacher groups or school/church partnerships.
3. Help establish and staff after-school programs particularly tutorials and academic coaching.
4. Run for or support a candidate of choice for the local school board.
5. Honor and support professional educators.

These and other thoughts about the role of church congregations in the public education of our children are found in *The Christian Citizen*, volume 3/2006. This issue of the magazine (an ABC, National Ministries publication) is devoted to the issue of public education and is a must-read. Find an issue in your church; read it cover to cover; put the information to work.

New Pastor Arrives to Lead First Baptist Church of McCook

Rev. Allan Jackson began his ministry at First Baptist Church of McCook on January 7, 2007. Rev. Jackson and his wife Patty, a registered nurse, are moving to McCook from northern Michigan. Their three sons are in college.

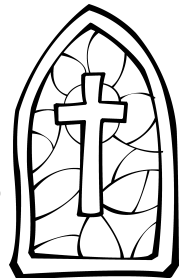
Rev. Jackson has been pastor of five churches. He has also worked as a college counselor and parole officer.

Church Vocations Sunday February 12, 2007

Church Vocations Sunday will be celebrated Feb. 12 this year. Churches are encouraged to:

- Urge children and youth to consider church vocations.
- Have material available for youth to see the possibilities.
- Use young people in worship leadership and in teaching Sunday School and in kids' programs.

In the years ahead the church in America will need dynamic leadership. To have this kind of leadership, churches need to be encouragers, promoting college and seminary education for their youth and young adults.



GIBBON BC: Christmas events: FBC was on the Gibbon Library Tour of Homes on Dec 3, with a display of Nativity sets. The 7th through 12th grades youth went to Kearney to see the "Singing Christmas Tree" on Dec 10. The choir presented the Christmas cantata, "Love Transcending", on Dec 17, both during the morning worship and also in the evening service, followed by a fellowship time. The ABW held a supper on Dec 7, at which time goodie plates for the shut-ins were prepared, and a Christmas Eve candlelight service was held.

GRAND ISLAND FBC: Christmas events: The Hanging of the Greens was done on Dec 3. ABW members attended a Christmas Tea at the Kearney FBC on Dec 3. Ruth Circle sent items for aid in honor of the shut-ins and college students to a Samaritan's Purse project, and 45 boxes were delivered to go to the same project (the latter from the entire church). Rebecca Circle sent gifts to missionaries, servicemen, and shut-ins, and did fruit plates for the shut-ins. A Christmas Cantata was presented on Dec 17, and a Christmas Eve candlelight service was held.

HOLDREGE FBC: Christmas events: A Christmas musical by the children was presented on Dec 17, with the youth soup and pie luncheon fund-raiser held following the program. Mary Jayne Circle held a Christmas luncheon at the Country Club on Dec 7, and on the 14th they prepared cookie plates for nursing home residents and shut-ins. A youth Christmas party was held at the Big Apple on Dec 20, and a Christmas Eve service was held. FBC members rang bells for the Salvation Army. A Youth Winter Retreat was held Dec 31-Jan 1.

JUNIATA COMMUNITY CHURCH: Christmas event: Christmas cheer baskets and plates were put together and delivered on Dec 20, at the same time that the church family was caroling, followed by a soup supper at the church. Christmas eve in the Barn was held on Dec 24. A New Years' Eve party was held.

LINCOLN FBC: Christmas events: Hanging of the Greens on Dec 3, Family Christmas Festival on Dec 9, where crafts were made and games were played; Mid-High Youth held a Christmas Party Dinner on Dec 15 and then attended "The Nativity Story"; a cookie exchange at Pastor Riggs' home on Dec 16; Christmas Eve candlelight service, and "un-hanging the greens" on Dec 30. A free coat give-away was held on Dec 16. A drive for the Southeast Lincoln Food Pantry was held. Betty and Marty Procter, who spent a month in India in November helping remodel a house for rescued girls, gave a presentation about the work on Jan 14.

MCCOOK FBC: Rev. Allan C. Jackson II, and his wife, Patty, have been called to FBC to pastor. Their first day was Jan 7. Christmas events: ABW had a Christmas party on Dec 5; and the Christmas program

was held on Dec 10. A Habitat For Humanity soup supper was held on Dec 9. The Southwest Nebraska Reading council has been meeting at the church for several months.

NORFOLK FBC: Pastor Frank and Dolores Gilbert ended their interimship with FBC, with their last day Nov. 19. Christmas events: AWANA held a "Happy Birthday, Jesus" party on Dec 16; Heart Sisters had a Christmas party on Dec 14, where the guest speaker was Cherise Merrick, women's director at the Rescue Mission; The children's Christmas program, "Make Me Wise", was held on Dec 16. 147 boxes were filled for Samaritan's Purse; and gifts were bought for the Rescue Mission tree. FBC continues to work on restoring/rebuilding the church building. Rev. Bob Molby began as the new interim on Jan. 7.

OMAHA BENSON: Christmas events: The ABW met all together for a soup luncheon Dec 9, at which time the Sudanese women shared about their life and work; Senior Caring Ministry had an outing to the Mormon Trail Center to view the Gingerbread display on Dec 12; the musical, "No Other Name", was presented on Dec 17, and caroling and a soup supper was held that same day; a Christmas eve service was held, and a New Year's Eve party was held. BBC was the Operation Christmas Child collection point, and they packed 8,000 boxes from that church alone, and with adding the Lincoln total in, there were 11,559 shoeboxes sent.

OMAHA PARKSIDE: Christmas events: Parkside and the Kachin congregation joined together for a Christmas dinner on Dec 16, with the Trinity Ringers from Trinity Church giving a musical program; eleven Parksiders rang bells for the Salvation Army; caroling the shut-ins was held on Dec 17; a tree decorated with stockings was in the foyer, with gifts gathered for the Nebraska Children's Home as a result; A candlelight service was held on Christmas Eve; and the Adults for Action held a post-Christmas party by getting together for lunch and games, and bringing two cans of soup, one for the pot and one for the food pantry. On Jan. 14, the Kachin congregation presented a picture of Dr. Ola Hansen, a missionary to the Kachins, to Susan Gillies to be hung at Calvary Lodge at Camp Moses Merrill.

TECUMSEH FBC: Christmas events: Christmas caroling took place on Dec 17; the Sunday School program was held on Dec 17; Pastor Hugh and Beth held an open house at the parsonage; AWANA went caroling at Belle Terrace and collected paper products for the Action center.

TEKAMAH FBC: Christmas events: The ABW Ministries held a Christmas salad supper and program on Dec 5; the Christmas program, "A Christmas Song", by the chancel choir and some of the children, was held on Dec 7, with a Christmas dinner and party

following; a Christmas Eve service was held. FBC has some church pews for sale.

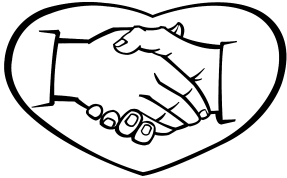
SCOTTSBLUFF FBC: A caroling party was held on Dec 3, followed by a fellowship time at the church; a Living Nativity was held on Dec 8-9; the church Christmas dinner was held on Dec 17, with a sing-along following; a Christmas Eve service was held; a New Year's eve communion service was held. A baptismal service was held on Dec 3. There were 2,336 shoeboxes collected and sent for Operation Christmas Child. Food was collected for the Jeremiah House, a Christian mission for children in southeast Scottsbluff. Youth and Children's Sunday was held on Jan 28, with the young people participating in the morning worship service. A soup dinner was held on Jan 21 as a fundraiser for camp.

OMAHA, SUNSET HILLS: Christmas events: The church was decorated for the season on Dec 2; the Lightbearers had a Christmas dinner on Dec 4; and a candlelight service was held on Christmas Eve. Fellowship meals are being held several times a month on Wednesday nights. A new "structure" for the organization of the church was presented to the congregation on Jan 14. Pastor French and Donna Ray participated in a mission trip to Mexico in early January. An informational meeting Jan 14 explained a proposed reorganization of church operations, changing from six boards to seven ministries. The annual business meeting was Jan 28. Pastor French and Forgiveness presented the vesper service Jan 21 at the Arboretum, an independent living community. The Omahaland day of prayer breakfast will be here on Feb. 24.

LAVISTA JUDSON: Warm clothing was collected for the homeless. We received 16 children for our Angel Tree project. Two gifts were purchased for each child. Our Thanksgiving offering was sent to Restored Hope. The young people sold Christian calendars for the new year. A "Deck the Halls" party was held to decorate the church for Christmas. The Senior High's went on an outing to the Papio Fun Center. The ABW went out in groups to visit each shut-in and share "A Cup of Christmas Tea". Christmas baskets were also delivered just before Christmas to each shut-in. The children put on "The Very Important Christmas Pageant." The J.O.Y. Club played take away bingo with the "take-aways" being non-perishable food. Following the fun, the food was then taken to the LaVista food bank. In December they went to Union Pacific for a tour, lunch and were treated to a concert by the U. P. Christmas Choral. Christmas Eve members participated in a candlelight service. Our Christmas offering was sent to our brothers and sisters in Christ at First Baptist Church in Norfolk to help rebuild their church after a devastating fire. Our building construction continues!

“We hear a lot about evangelism today and how the church must pay more attention to evangelism. But mostly evangelism is not what we tell people, unless what we tell is totally consistent with who we are. It is who we are that is going to make the difference. . . . If we do not have love in our hearts, our words of love will have little meaning. If we do not truly enjoy our faith, nobody is going to catch the fire of enjoyment from us. If our lives are not totally centered on Christ, we will not be Christ-bearers for others, no matter how pious our words.” from: *Glimpses of Grace: Daily Thoughts and Reflections* by Madeleine L’Engle

Welcome New Members



NEW MEMBERS:

BEATRICE FBC: Trish McNamara
 HOLDREGE FBC: Joshua Amen,
 Ann Watts, Erin Brehm
 CHADRON FBC: Angel Marie
 Davis, Keith D. Land
 FREMONT FBC: Matt, Kim,

Brianna, and Logan Sacco, and
 Bryan and Kelly Regier
 LINCOLN FBC: Raychelle Burks,
 Dee Riggs, Jeff and Kay Coggin,
 Kody and Brandon
 SCOTTSBLUFF FBC: Aubrey
 Smith, Laylyn Long, Morgan Stott,
 Ashle Stott, Patrick Green, Michael
 Huddleston, Branden Hessler,
 Nathaniel and Trenton Applegate
 TEKEMAH FBC: Scot Anderson
 SUNSET HILLS: Brad Stephan,
 Doug, Pam and Noah Hamlin,
 Joseph Vanourney
 JUDSON: Lynette Diesen

ABC of Nebraska Staff

Executive Minister Susan Gillies
 Associate Executive MinisterDave Lundholm
 Associate Executive MinisterSteve Bills
 Director of Camps & Conferences.....Clarence Reiss
 Camp Program Director MaryBeth Robertson
 Camp Staff..... Jerry Buss, Trudy Reiss, Lou Grotelueschen
 Elizabeth Dietrich, Denise Harris, Joe Huss, Beverly Pacas
 Office Manager.....Sue Gammel
 Office Assistant.....Margaret Brown-Moore
 Accounting Services.....Jerry Buss
 Volunteer Mission SecretaryJudie Heller
 Christian Education Consultant.....Nola Oberhelman
 Church Life ConsultantA. J. Wagstaff
 Pastor to Pastors (W)..... Paul Kondy
 Pastor to Pastors (E).....Dick Peterson
 Youth Ministry Adjunct Jason Workman

Trivia Answers (from page 4)

1. d. Steve Bills worked for a turkey farmer in CO.
2. e. MaryBeth Robertson was a clerk in a hospital.
3. a. Susan Gillies worked in a mall bookstore.
4. b. Dave Lundholm served in the Air Force.
5. c. Clarence Reiss was a teamster at Honeywell.

Check with your pastor to see if he or she had interesting or surprising jobs in the past. Send them in and we'll have a trivia quiz on ABC/NE pastors' previous jobs.



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