

the MESSENGER

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska



August 2007

ABC/NE Date Data

Ministry at the
Black Hills Bike Rally
www.SturgisAid.com
Aug 4-12

ABMen's Conference
August 10-11 Moses Merrill

ABC/NE Board
Aug. 25 Grand Island

ABC/NE Family Reunion
[annual convention]
Sept. 21-23
North Platte

E-Mail Addresses:

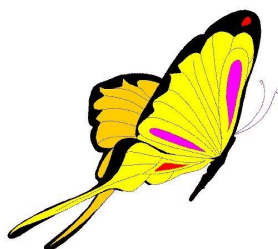
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The Nebraska Baptist State Convention

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ABC/NE FAMILY REUNION: Beyond What You Can Imagine!



It's time to make plans to attend the ABC/NE Family Reunion (annual convention)! Every church is invited to have representation.

WHERE & WHEN: Sandhills Convention Center in North Platte, Sept. 21-23.

SPEAKERS: Home missionary Rev. Dr. David Laubach, and overseas missionary Rev. Dr. Eleazar O. Ziherambere. Laubach is a noted author and teacher, specializing in church vitality. Ziherambere is a specialist in African mission work. Both are gifted Christian leaders who bring energy and joy to their ministry.

WORKSHOPS: Research on healthy churches, Getting Close to God, Making Your Missions Board a Bridge to Church Renewal, Men's Ministries, The Difference between a Right Rev. and a Coach, What every kid needs to know by graduation and curriculum to get him/her there, Opportunities in Hispanic ministry, and Opportunities in Senior Adult ministry.

SPECIAL EVENT: There will be a **BIRTHDAY PARTY** on Friday evening to celebrate the 140 years of ministry of the Nebraska Baptist State Convention.

DELEGATES: All Nebraska Baptists are encouraged to attend the Family Reunion. Each church may send delegates for the official business meeting. See page 8.

Registration materials are included in this issue of *The Messenger*.

National Speaker to Address Youth Convention Sept. 21-23

The speaker for this year's Youth Convention is Reginald Fletcher. As ABC's National Coordinator for Youth and Campus Ministries, Rev. Fletcher is intensely interested in bringing young people to Christ. "I feel that I am part of a new generation of freedom fighters that will help divinely stimulate, spiritually irritate and creatively motivate young leaders to be torch carriers for truth and beacons of hope for those in despair."

Fletcher believes that relationship building is the most important job of the youth worker. By making a place for young people to be heard and to hear, Rev. Fletcher says young lives can be changed and refocused. He searches for new and innovative ways to close the gap that often exists between the church and youth. "My emphasis is on empowering others to help transform our youth and campus ministries so that we can experience the richness of our collective voices."

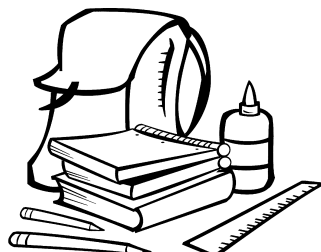
The Youth Convention will be held Sept. 21-22 at Camp Maranatha and move on Sunday the 23rd to North Platte.



From the Executive Minister Susan Gillies

New Beginnings

August is a great time to prepare for new beginnings. For the first 20 years of my career, I taught. For teachers, August is always a time of preparation. The college & university campuses where I taught were peaceful in late summer but the feeling of expectancy was everywhere. The calendar year may



begin in January but what we think of as the program year begins Sept. 1 or thereabouts.

There are two things to remember about planning for a new program year in a church: 1. Planning is good. 2. Rigid implementation is bad. Let me explain.

Planning is critically important. Knowing where we are going and why is a pretty basic need. "Where there is no vision the people perish." Those churches that are stuck and stagnant probably don't have a positive shared vision of the future. In Habakkuk 2:2, we read, "Write the vision; make it plain upon tablets, so he may run who reads it." Build energy around the vision. Then each small group within the congregation whether it's a class or a board, can set some goals for the year that will help them move toward the shared vision.

Rigidity in program implementation is destructive. Having a plan is wonderful, important and desired. Not being able to adapt or change is crippling. In the corporate world there was a huge push a number of years ago for everyone to do strategic planning. We all studied it, moved through elaborate processes and came up with plans for at least the next five years. The problem was, the world is constantly changing and our

strategies weren't effective in three or four years. So, the corporate gurus had us switch to strategic management. That also had its limitations. More recently the move was made to strategic leadership. And, I believe, we are now beyond that. It is not just one leader, it is the dynamic interaction of leaders and stakeholders sharing a vision, having input on the strategies to implement the vision in a continuing synergy. Everyone, or nearly everyone is engaged.

Well, enough of corporate-speak!

The year ahead and our churches will be blessed if we take on an attitude of cooperation and shared decision making, and a vigorous spirit of expectancy.



ABC/NE Trivia

(see page 8 for the answers)

1. What is the relationship of ABC/NE to the Nebraska Baptist State Convention? A. Successor, B. same thing, C. no relation, D. competitors
2. What is the current "special emphasis" department (as opposed to "standing departments") of the ABC/NE Board?
A. Church Vitality, B. Professional Ministry, C. Finance, D. Camps & Conferences
3. Who is the current President of the ABC/NE? A. Ted Hartung, B. Beryl Hornberger, C. Bob Phares, D. Darren Stroh
4. What is the primary source of income for the ABC/NE? A. United Mission, B. World Mission Offering, C. One Great Hour of Sharing, D. Special gifts.
5. What is the relationship of Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center to ABC/NE? A. MMCCC is owned & operated by ABC/NE, B. MMCCC is a subsidiary corporation of ABC/NE, C. MMCCC is a separate corporation, D. MMCCC is a cooperative ministry of several denominations.

From the Associate Executive Minister Steve Bills

Answering the Call

Scripture records the responses of many individuals to the call of God.

"Who, me?"

When God called Moses to confront Pharaoh and to lead the children of Israel from captivity, Moses responded with "Who, me?" (Exodus 3:9-11)

"Why me?"

When the Lord reminded Jeremiah that, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I set you apart and ordained you to be a prophet to the nations", Jeremiah questioned God's choice. "Why me? I'm just a kid. I can't speak."

"Not me!"

When the word of the Lord came to His prophet, Jonah, and said, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city and cry against it . . ." Jonah's response was a clear "not me!" as he "arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord."

"Send me!"

When Isaiah heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" his immediate response was, "Here am I! Send me!"

In the case of Moses and Jeremiah their responses reflected a concern that they were inadequate for the task and calling that they were receiving. God was able to assure them that He would give them the words to speak and the courage to confront whatever power or circumstance that they might encounter.

Isaiah had already learned that "God does not call the qualified; He qualifies the called."

In the case of Jonah he both feared and hated the Ninevites and frankly, didn't want them to heed God and avoid the consequences of their brutal and barbarous behavior. I hope that none of us are avoiding ministering to people we have judged to be unworthy of God's grace. In spite of his prejudice, Jonah responded to God's second call to preach the warning and miraculously, the Ninevites responded appropriately.

I find that most believers today who struggle with the call to discipleship or with the call to a specific task or ministry are reluctant to respond with an affirmative Isaiah-ish enthusiasm because they share the concerns of Moses and Jeremiah. We know who we are and what our weaknesses are and fear failure. Surely, we think, God can do better than to rely on me. This is healthy; at least it is better than being so cocky and self-confident that we don't realize that we are being called to something that we are, in and of ourselves, incapable of doing.

Hanani reminded King Asa in Second Chronicles 16 that when he relied on his strength or his human allies he was defeated, but when he relied on the Lord he was victorious. The principle he shared with Asa of is a valuable reminder to us, "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." We don't have to be strong — because He is strong on our behalf.



Albion Renews Its Strength With the Good Soil Project



First Baptist Church of Albion has taken the lessons learned in The Good Soil Project to heart. During the spring, "First Baptist had an exciting time in mission giving and mission awareness" according to pastor Blaine Pritchett.

One member, Jennifer Choat, completed a short-term mission experience in Chicago. The congregation increased its America for Christ Offering by 30%. The members also completed a walk-for-mission which raised \$1200 to engage in mission locally, nationally or overseas.

The Good Soil Project is also bearing fruit in small group experiences developing attitudes of sharing, caring and love for one another for who they are and where they are.

Pastor Blaine writes, "Glory to God; and we praise Jesus for all the riches of his grace!"

The Good Soil Project is a two year process of renewal. Eight ABC/NE churches are involved. The project is funded by a Clark Grant from ABC's National Ministries.



GREAT AUTUMN GET-AWAY FOR OLDER ADULTS

Fall is a beautiful season at Moses Merrill Camp and Conference Center and ABC/NE retirees have a great opportunity to enjoy it.

The Adult Ministries Conference will be held October 1-4. The theme for the event is "Road Trip," the same theme used by the summer children and youth camps.

Dr. Paul Welter, Kearney, will be the Bible study leader. Missionaries Newton & Amelia Old Crow from Lodgegrass, Montana will share stories of their work. [See story on ABC Indian Ministries below.] ABC/NE Executive Minister Susan Gillies will lead the digging deeper sessions.

The Adult Ministries Conference is open to anyone of any age. For a copy of the conference brochure & registration form, check your church office or contact the ABC/NE office.

"Lord, Make My Life a Miracle!" AB Men's Conference August 10-11 at Moses Merrill

This conference is a compact 24-hour experience of spiritual renewal that can be shared at home and with congregations. All men are invited to attend. Speakers are Pastors Ron French of Sunset Hills, Omaha, and Derek Varney of First Baptist Church, Olathe, Kan. The music group "Forgiven" will provide the music. Planners have focused on providing a conference that is relevant, one that recognizes that busyness of men's lives.

The Men's Conference schedule has been adjusted a bit this year. Instead of ending with a big meal Saturday evening, a light dinner will be served immediately before a rousing Worship and Praise Service in Friendship Chapel. The service should end about 5:15 p.m. giving travelers an earlier start as they return home.

Free for current ABC/NE Senior Pastors (with advance registration).

To register, call the Region Office right away! 1-877-244-7339 (In Omaha 556-4730)

American Baptist Native American Churches Have Clear Goals For Transformation

Mission to Native American Indians in the USA has been an integral part of the home mission of American Baptists for over 150 years. Today, Native American Indian Christians have developed a vision and goals for their work as individual churches and as a fellowship within ABC-USA. They have written:

Native American Christians, empowered by the Holy Spirit, commit themselves in unity to the common goals of sharing the plan of salvation in Jesus Christ with indigenous peoples and respecting the diversity of native cultural traditions. Indigenous people of the Americas are committed to lead Indian people to wholeness through our Creator in Christ; to strengthen our faith in the Word of God; and to strengthen and enhance the vision of American Baptist Churches USA. Native American Christians in partnership with National Ministries and through American Baptist Indian churches and institutions have envisioned a future which moves congregations:

- *From Maintaining to Growth*
- *From Dependent Mentality to Self-Motivated, Self-Directed, and Self-Supporting*
- *From Being Missions to Doing Missions*
- *From a Top-down (paternalistic) System to a Decentralized (empowering) System*
- *From Being Isolated to Being Interactive*
- *From Limited Leadership Development to Effective Leadership Development*
- *From Self-Serving to Community-Serving Indian Ministries in the East, Southern Plains, Southwest, and Northwest*

to develop strategic plans based on the work of the American Baptist Indian Caucus to address the critical areas of organization, spirituality, family ministries, unity, outreach, discipleship and communication.

ABC/NE Prayer Focus for August:



- For the Board of Directors of ABC/NE & their meeting Aug. 25.
- Prayers of thanks and blessings for all who worked with children and youth at Moses Merrill this summer.
- For many to decide to attend the ABC/NE Family Reunion Sept. 21-23
- For each of us to express love and concern for someone who is struggling.
- For each pastoral search committee at work in Nebraska.

Prayer is a vital part of our life together as American Baptists in Nebraska. Each year we have a special prayer emphasis. In 2007, The Messenger is featuring a prayer focus list each month.

CLIP OUT AND PLACE ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR OR IN YOUR BIBLE & PRAY. THANKS!

Nola's Take Five . . .

Ideas from Nola Oberhelman
ABC/NE Christian Education Consultant

Take five scripture references to confirm and support teaching:

1. Proverbs 6:20-23
2. Titus 2:7-8
3. John 8:31-32
4. II Timothy 3:16-17
5. I Timothy 1:5

Read and be uplifted in your preparation and work.

Nebraska Baptists Attend ABC-USA BIENNIAL in Washington, DC

Nineteen American Baptists from Nebraska attended the ABC-USA Biennial convention in Washington, DC, June 29-July 1.

Delegates were urged to follow the Biennial's theme of "Arise and Shine." General Secretary A. Roy Medley, taking the words "It is morning" as his topic, addressed Monday's concluding business session with a call for "a radical new form of ministry and mission."

Noting that the denomination has come through a time of conflict and division, he used computer imagery to call for "a righteous reboot."

"It is morning in our midst, American Baptists," he said. "The dawning of our new century is bringing with it power and light."

ABC's International Ministries and National Ministries reported together at the Biennial meetings, highlighting ministry and mission work across the USA and around the world. The mission organizations highlighted work in tsunami and hurricane relief, cross-cultural evangelism, leadership development, children in poverty, human trafficking and volunteer mission.

Dr. Reid Trulson, executive director of IM, told the 2,500 persons in attendance, "National Ministries and International Ministries will report on the amazing light of Christ as seen through the collective ministry of American Baptists. We have been on the front lines of wars and natural disasters, [and] bringing the word of God in new and engaging ways."

The Biennial was preceded by meetings of the Regional Executive Ministers Council (REMC) and the ABC-USA General Board. The REMC honored ABC/NE Executive Minister Susan Gillies as she concluded her extended term as President of the group.

Greensburg, KS, Relief

Tornadoes, hurricanes, tsunamis and devastating fires may be short-lived, but their effects on human life and property last, most likely, many years. Out of love for Christ and all people, American Baptists minister to those who struggle to rebuild lives after a disaster.

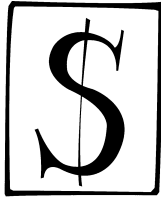
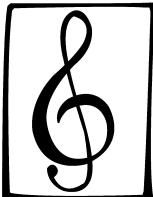
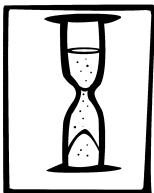
ABC folks have been active in relief to Greensburg, KS, since shortly after a tornado, on May 4. At least nine people died in the wave of storms that swept southwest Kansas.

In the weeks after the tornado, an AB Men's disaster team brought in 300 people, who compiled more than 6,000 hours of assistance to the battered community, where 90 percent of all houses had been destroyed, along with the business district, high school, and hospital.

More than \$70,000 was contributed to relief efforts through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering of ABCUSA.

Volunteers and donors contributed in such areas as providing temporary housing, relocation assistance, job support, and providing aid for losses not covered by insurance.

At the meeting of the ABC-USA General Board in June, an offering of an additional \$1,336 was dedicated for Greensburg relief.



Time Talent Treasure

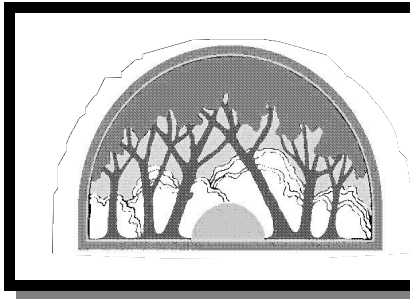
Ground-Breaking At Norfolk

First Baptist Church of Norfolk broke ground for its new building on July 15. The previous building was destroyed by fire in November.

Assoc. Exec. Minister Dave Lundholm said, "This was a great day for a wonderful congregation. Praise God!"

Pontius' Puddle





Moses Merrill News

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

SUMMER FUN AT MOSES MERRILL



Mid-Hi I campers enjoy the pool.



Girls at Horse Care Camp give their horses a water break.

Friends,

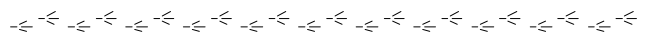
It's been a great summer at Moses Merrill! Wow! The camps have been great. We have the best camp coordinators, the best cabin leaders, the best campers and the best staff in the world!

Thanks to everyone who has been a part of this summer's programming. And that includes those who have provided scholarship help for campers.

We're busy now getting ready for Men's Conference Aug. 10-11. This is a special year. Ask the men in your church to join us. ABMen will pay the way of any ABC/NE Senior Pastor who wishes to attend (and registers early!).

—Camp Cat 

A retreat center on the West Coast describes itself with these words, "Wandering these trails, we find release from the stress of outer lives, and come to the stillness and quiet necessary to awaken our inner life to the Living Presence of God." This description also fits Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center. This special place for Nebraska Baptists can be a place for the renewal of your spirit. Come for a day or two or a week!



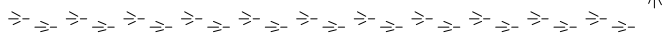
Fall Faith Builders . . .

Fall is a great season of the year to have a "faith-building" experience at Moses Merrill Camp and Conference Center. Here are some of the opportunities:

- Adult Ministries Conference . . . Oct. 1-4
Featuring Bible Study Leader Paul Welter
- AB Women's Fall Retreat Oct. 5-7
A spiritual retreat for all women.
- Fall Pastors' Seminar Oct. 15-17
"Missional Leadership"
ABC's Assoc. General Secretary Jeff Woods will be the leader.
- Individual Retreats
Schedule a personal retreat — time to listen, pray, read and reflect. Self-guided outlines are available.
- Church leadership retreats
Weekends are filling rapidly but having a church leader retreat at camp is a great idea.

And come for fun, too:

HOLIDAYS WITH THE MERRILLS
Music, crafts, activities, food, and more!
November 17



From the Associate Executive Minister Dave Lundholm

Salt of the Earth

(Mat 5:13) "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

Salt in the ancient world was used for many things. It was used as a seasoning as it still is today (even though our doctors warn against its overuse.) It was used as a preservative. People discovered that meat packed in salt did not turn bad as quickly as untreated meat. Salts were used by the Egyptians to preserve bodies in the embalming process thus assuring (in their eyes) immortality for those so embalmed. Salt was also used as an abrasive cleanser much like our Comet or Ajax.

So salt at the time of Jesus was a substance to: spice things up, to keep things fresh, to ensure immortality, and to provide cleansing.

And Jesus said his church was to be salt: spicy, refreshing, offering the possibility of eternal life and new cleansed life.

Unfortunately today, the church has lost its distinctiveness, it's spiciness. Instead, in American culture, in study after study there is no difference between church and unchurched people. Divorce rate is similar, attitudes are similar and lifestyle is similar. There is no difference. We've lost our taste.

It's time to remember who we are and to reclaim our lost flavor. So go and be spicy, go and be fresh, offer eternal life, and be a source for cleansing and new life.



LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

by Darlene Rimpley

May Deadlines

April 8, 2007 - Print Copy

April 13, 2007 - E-Mail

Home Town Editor (Note New Address)

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E-Editor

area.minister.ne@charter.net

Subject: Messenger

NOTICE: Church secretaries - you need to change the address of Darlene Rimpley to 912 N Carroll - the post office to leaving me many small notices.

ARNOLD FBC: "Avalanche Ranch," the community Vacation Bible School was held June 3-7 with FBC being the host church. Over 100 children and youth who were helpers participated, along with many adult leaders. Ruth Circle is sponsoring a 12-year-old girl in India through the Dalit International organization. FBC had a float in the 4th of July blowout parade.

BEATRICE FBC: The Board of Christian Education honored the high school and college graduates at a potluck dinner on May 6. Ralph and Donna Buss celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on May 20, with 56 family members joining them for morning worship, who also sang "Jesus Loves Me" in honor of the Busses. The preschool through 5th grade children will be having a combined Sunday school class during the summer. FBC served the meal for the Warren's Community Dinner Table on June 12. Items for the church nursery have been donated or purchased recently.

CHADRON FBC: A combined VBS of FBC, Ridgeview Bible, and Berean Churches was held June 4-8 at Wilson Park. Vacation Bible School for adults was held July 22-26, studying the topic of "The Measure of Spiritual Maturity", with Dr. Gene Getz as the presenter.

FAIRBURY FBC: Wayne and Joan Johnson

celebrated their 53rd wedding anniversary on June 1, and John and Mary Dennert their 51st on June 9. An all-church picnic was held on June 10 at the City Park. Tyler Weishahn showed slides and told of his mission trip to Thailand on June 24. Vacation Bible School began on July 30, and will continue through Aug 3. Brother Ricky Henson lead a series of Revival meetings at FBC July 1-3. Pastor Gale Mack (interim pastor at FBC) and Rev. Dennis Matthews of Holton, KS gave a concert on July 15, which included music and magic tricks.

FREMONT FBC: Pastor Leland and Jean Foreman were honored on June 3 following worship. It was their 40th wedding anniversary, and the 25th anniversary of their service at FBC. Clyde and Dolores Hansen and Pastor Walt and Mildred Hickman were honored at a coffee following worship on June 17, for both couples' 60th wedding anniversary. Others celebrating June anniversaries were: Chuck and Mary Ann Paulger - 57, Don and Laura Cook - 55, and Hank and Vivian Meyer - 60. Mildred Charleston recently celebrated her 90th birthday. The Young Women of Hope held a car wash on June 9. The ABW held a bake sale on July 14 during John C. Fremont Days, with proceeds going to missions. The Hands For Christ Circle had a hotdog and cold drink stand, and the Young Women of Hope a snow cone booth. Pastor Walt Hickman returned to the church his 7th great grandfather had established in 1788 near Frankfort, KY, to deliver a message and lay a wreath at the grave of his ancestor on June 24. VBS was held July 29-Aug 2, with "Take the Plunge" the theme. The Young Women of Hope

group attended the National Girls Gathering at Green Lake July 21-23.

GIBBON BC: Chuck and Janice Carman donated a new American flag to fly in front of the church. FBC donated a variety of crosses for the rooms in Calvary Lodge at Camp Moses Merrill, and a dedication service for them was held on May 20. A Kick-Off party for Summer Sunday School was held on June 3. FBC served ice cream cones and ice cold water before and after the July 4 parade. A picnic supper was held on July 19, with a Texas Youth Group as supper and overnight guests.

GRAND ISLAND FBC: A fellowship coffee time is held every Sunday just preceding the Sunday school hour. Boy scouts and a Spanish Bible Study both meet at the church on Tuesday evenings. An "Old Fashioned Ice cream Social" was held on July 8, with free will offering taken to go to the furnace fund. A fifth Sunday sing fest, followed by ice cream, was held on July 29.

HASTINGS: FBC: has welcomed a new pastor. Larry Harvey began preaching in May. He and his wife Connie came to us from McCook. There is a feeling of energy and of unity and real hope for the future as we move into this new time in our church life. Two men were baptized and received into membership in June. We have had three youth concerts this summer with attendance ranging up to 80.

HOLDREGE FBC: The youth group went on a mission trip to Perlington, Mississippi June 8-15, to help repair homes damaged in Hurricane

Katrina. Rashelle, Shirley, and Nikki Smith and Morgan Cox are on the Nebraska Choir Tour to Europe. FBC had a float in the Swedish days parade on June 16. FBC participated in the Ministerial Association free ice cream social on the court house lawn on June 17, and the free movie shown at the United Methodist Church following. Vacation Bible school was held June 4-8, with the theme "SonForce Kids". FBC had a float in the Swedish Days celebration parade, and also took the float to Loomis for their parade.

JUNIATA COMMUNITY CHURCH: An installation service for Herb Scott was held on June 10 at JCC. Pastor Scott has accepted the call as co-pastor at JCC. The women held a banquet for the churchmen on June 9, featuring "Tools for Life" theme.

LAVISTA, JUDSON BC: The older members of Judson held a field day and played games they had played in their youth. They also took a trip to Lincoln for a tour and lunch at the Governor's Mansion. The youth went to Worlds of Fun for a great day of food, fellowship, fun, and water! Eleven Judson women attended the Women's Conference and came back with stories of a truly wonderful couple of days. Our thanks to Dave Lundholm for his great French Accent used when our purse was auctioned off to the highest bidder. The ABW program had speaker Miles Skulelly, a Master Gardener, giving tips and showing slides. An Open House celebrated the completion of Phase 1 of our expansion program. Judson will be an outreach program on Saturday evenings called "The Gathering" led by John Longbrake. This year's VBS was Avalanche Ranch.

LINCOLN FBC: Mary Keelan was honored on June 10 at a luncheon upon her "switch" from being on staff at FBC to another ministry, and Calvin Rife was honored at a reception on June 24 upon his retirement after 37 years of teaching. The youth went on a "mission outreach" to the ethnic festival in downtown Lincoln, where they were in charge of the inflatables. Following this they returned to the church for a lock-in. On June 30 the youth went to Timberlake Ranch Camp for a day of team building. Glen and Rebecca Parks and family, who are home on six weeks leave from an India mission field, spoke at the church on several occasions. Team Toolbox Workshops were held on several different dates, with every leader, and team, committee, and board member required to attend one of the sessions. The "Carnival Cruisin' B.L.O.C.K. (Building Links of Christian Kindness) Party" was held On July 14, as a bridge to building community faith.

MASON CITY FBC: The youth went on a mission trip in June to help in hurricane-devastated areas. John Lewis has accepted the call as head pastor of FBC. The ABW had a Spring Tea on May 17, with a good crowd from the area attending. Personal historical events in the lives of those attending were shared, which included a terrible fire south of the village. All enjoyed sherbet and sandwiches, and each guest received a flower to take home to plant. The women of the church were treated royally on Mother's Day, when the men of the church prepared and served breakfast for them.

MCCOOK FBC: The ABW held a picnic on June 5. The ABW held their annual ice cream social at Hillcrest Nursing Home on June 14. To celebrate Rev. Allan Jackson's installation a neighborhood pig roast was held on July 21, a community potluck dinner on July 22, and an evening dinner on July 23, followed by the installation service, with Mr. Robert Angerer as the guest speaker.

NORFOLK FBC: "Something Fishy Going On Here" was the theme of VBS, which was held June 4-8. The conclusion of the "Building For Life" campaign was celebrated on June 24 following morning worship. Visitation teams from FBC are going out into the homes of church family to become "better acquainted." Outreach Oasis, a program where baskets are taken to those who might need some support and encouragement has gotten underway. Communion is being taken to members who live in nursing homes or assisted care. A baptism service was held at Sarah's Lake on July 18.

NORTH PLATTE FBC: Our associate pastor Greg Mamula and wife Lisa have arrived safe and sound from Texas and are settled in the parsonage. It is a joy to have them with us. They will be going on a mission trip to New Orleans with the youth in July to assist in the ongoing clean-up from Hurricane Katrina. The Mission Committee and Pastor Tom were on hand at Family Night as part of NEBRASKAland Days and gave out 250 bottles of cold water, brochures about our church and trinkets for the children advertising VBS which begins next Sunday, July 8. Pastor Tom attended the ABC Biennial in Washington, D.C.

OMAHA BENSON: A team from Benson spent June 2-9 in Pearlinton, Mississippi helping in the rebuilding of the community following Hurricane Katrina destruction. The team consisted of seven sponsors and 15 student missionaries. Pastor Jason Workman has become a volunteer police chaplain.

OMAHA FBC: First Baptist held a Carnival to "kickoff" our week of VBS, on July 8. VBS was held July 9-13, with a great turn out at all age levels. A Quarterly Business Meeting and Potluck Dinner was held on July 22. Several of our young kids attended camp at Moses Merrill this summer. Plans are underway for an All Church Picnic on Aug 5. Everyone is encouraged to invite a friend(s) to church that day and then attend the picnic following the worship service at 11:00 a.m.

OMAHA FIRST KACHIN: The congregation celebrated their fifth anniversary as a church June 9-10, with other churches invited to share in their joy.

OMAHA, MIRACLE HILLS: The church honored Leone Clay (89) for her devoted service to the congregation. Most of her family were able to attend and help with the surprise celebration. VBS was held in June. We started classes on becoming a Contagious Christian. The classes are offered on Sunday mornings and mid-week. We continue to pray for our 4 soldiers serving in Iraq - Jeff, John, Ryan, and Blake. We were pleased to have Diane Jorgensen, Chaplain at Maple Crest preach in pastor's absence.

OMAHA PARKSIDE: Hunger Awareness Day was celebrated on June 5 with Kids 'n Cans Carnival, "One big Table" at Kountze Memorial Church, and a convocation at Kountze. A large jar to collect change has been placed in the foyer, with a coins contributed to go to a new water cooler.

OMAHA SUNSET HILLS: Vacation Bible School June 3-10 had "Dig Into the Truth" as the theme. The Men have begun a "Food Collection Ministry" at the church. Congregants are asked to bring in non-perishable food items on communion Sundays. Dr. Charles and Dot Hamilton celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on July 22. The youth mission trip to Bethel Neighborhood Center in Kansas City begins July 28. Church projects completed include the installation of a new street sign, carpeting of the basement classrooms, hallway and stairs, and blacktop of the parking lot. A new electric keyboard was delivered. The Senior Music and Drama campers and crew spent the night and presented their program at Sunset Hills. A Music Extravaganza, featuring performers from Omahaland churches, was held July 22 at Sunset Hills. Pastor Ron will help lead the program and Forgiveness will provide the music at the ABC Men's Conference Aug 10-11. Sing Until Sunset, an outdoor music festival, will be on a Sunday evening in September.

OXFORD FBC: Following Oxford's annual "Turkey Days" parade on June 8, our church hosted an ice cream social, serving homemade ice cream and pies at the Legion Hall. On Sunday morning, June 10, community worship service was held at the city park. Pastor David Hunt presented the message. The "Mini-Mansion Builders" (a group of 35 children, ages 4 - 12) presented an evening concert on June 10. Our church family is making plans for a summer long "outreach" program, to reach out to others by invitation and welcoming them into our homes. Our community Vacation Bible School was held on July 9-13.

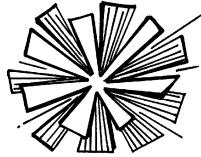
SCOTTSSLUFF FBC: Copies of the Easter Cantata have been put on DVDs. A "Kick Off to Summer" fellowship dinner was held on June 24. The youth will be helping with the Sunday morning worship at Golden Living Center as a summer ministry. An all-church picnic and ranch trip was held on June 16. SONrise presented a program of southern country gospel music at FBC on June 21. VBS began on July 30 and ran through Aug 3, with the theme "GameDay Central - Where Heroes Are Made." The men's Whetston Fellowship group held a fun, food, fellowship, and fireworks day on July 4. The Monument Quartet presented a gospel concert on July 29.

TEKAMAH FBC: A community Vacation Bible school was held June 11-15 at Emmanuel Lutheran Church and FBC. A BBQ Grill Off and program was held on June 16 at the City Park. Fathers were recognized during the morning worship service. Pastor John and Mary Dennert have submitted their resignation as interim pastor at FBC, to take effect Aug 26, unless a full time pastor has been called before that time. The Community VBS project of Heifer International netted funds for one water buffalo and two goats, and they made 250 prayer bears.

ABC/NE Trivia Answers

(see page 2 for questions)

1. B. The ABC/NE is the name we currently use for the Nebr. Baptist State Convention.
2. A. Church Vitality is the current special emphasis department.
3. D. Darren Stroh is ABC/NE President
4. A. A portion of United Mission giving from local churches supports the ABC/NE.
5. A. Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center is owned & operated by ABC/NE.



Welcome new members

FREMONT FBC: Cliff Hammond
HASTINGS FBC: Bill Spooner, Andy Starkey

HOLDREGE FBC: Shannon Watts

LINCOLN FBC: George Drinnin, Marcus Tillman, Darious Tillman, Christopher Tillman, Rebecca Tillman, Stacia Tillman, Trevor Birdzell

NORFOLK FBC: Nikita Rector, Sarah Wolff

Delegate Selection

The Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Baptist State Convention will held on Saturday morning during the Family Reunion in North Platte. To be a voting delegate, a person must be a member in good standing of an ABC church in Nebraska.

The voting delegates are: the pastor and two other members from each church and one additional delegate from each church for each 100 members or major fraction thereof above the first 100 members.

All Nebraska Baptists are encouraged to attend the convention and will be welcome at all sessions of the convention.

ABC of Nebraska Staff

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Pastor to Pastors (E)	Dick Peterson
Youth Ministry Adjunct	Jason Workman

"Sing Until Sunset" is returning to Sunset Hills Baptist Church in Omaha. The outdoor Christian music festival, a mainstay in the late 1990s, is back, beginning at 4 p.m. on a Sunday, in September in the park-like setting at Sunset Hills. Bring a lawn chair or a blanket to sit on. If the weather doesn't cooperate, the program will move indoors.

"Sing Until Sunset" will feature many different styles of music, presented by performers from Sunset Hills and other churches throughout the Omaha region. There also will be activities and food. The event is free. Sunset Hills is at 94th and Pacific Streets. Watch next month's Messenger for actual date.



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