

the ESSENGER

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska



December 2007
January 2008

ABC/NE Date Data

Christmas Vesper Services
Friendship Chapel
Moses Merrill
Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23
4:00 pm

NOTE: Important update on the
Building Bridges Project, inside on
page 5.

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Incorporated as
The Nebraska Baptist State Convention

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***HAVE A BLESSED
CHRISTMAS SEASON***

—The ABC/NE and Moses Merrill Staff

2008 ABC/NE Prayer Emphasis Touches All Churches

Continuing the Churches Helping Churches Initiative, all ABC/NE churches will be invited to participate in the 2008 Prayer Emphasis. Each church will be asked to send two or three members (or more) to one other church to pray for that congregation. This will be done early in the year. Prayer time should be about half an hour. Prayer can be done walking around the building outside or inside or both. Or, it can be done in the sanctuary or another room in the church building.

Churches may request their assignment by calling the region office 1-877-244-7339, or they may have an assignment made by region staff.

Be part of a great, connected, prayer meeting for the ABC churches across Nebraska!

From the Executive Minister Susan Gillies

Hope, Peace, Joy, Love

Dave's column in this issue of The Messenger is about preparing for Christmas. It got me to thinking about Advent, a time in the church calendar for preparation for Christmas. Some churches have Advent Wreaths & Candles. Other churches don't celebrate Advent as such, but December is still a time of expectancy as the days lead to Christmas.

There is no hard rule about what to call the Advent candles. I like the tradition that has the Sundays of Advent in order focusing on Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. But other traditions name the candles Prophet, Bethlehem, Shepherds, and Angels. And there are many other candle name traditions as well.

My prayer for you this season is for:

Hope -- In the words of the prophets, we find hope and expectancy. Hope is deep and powerful. I heard William Sloan Coffin once say, "Hope is what's born when optimism dies." I've never forgotten his words. Even when there seems no chance at all that everything will work out, we are called to be people of hope. And that very act of hope can change things.

Peace -- This is a beautiful word. In our preparation for Christmas, it means the peace that passes understanding.



It is not just the absence of conflict, it is the presence of the Spirit. Seek hope and peace. They will lead you not only to Christmas, but along the way, you will find reduced stress and increased wellness.

Joy -- Another beautiful and powerful word. Joy is deep undergirding strength and affirmation. "Happy" on the other hand, is a word suggesting surface or temporary pleasantness. It's a good thing but it doesn't come close to "joy." Experiencing true joy, and sharing it with others, can heal relationships.

Love -- You may have used the expression, "Let's keep the main thing the main thing." Well, this is the main thing! This is what it's all about. This is the one-word book report on the Bible. Jesus birth is so amazing because it is actually the Lord of all the universe stepping into our lives to show us how to live. Love is the ultimate strategy for transformation.

May you be a blessing this Christmas and as the New Year begins. May your practice and expression of hope, peace, joy and love spread out and infect your family, your church and your community.



From the Associate Executive Minister Steve Bils

"Dear brothers and sisters, pray for us." 1 Thessalonians 5:25

Thus concludes the first epistle to those in Thessalonica, with a general request for prayer for Paul and his traveling companions. No specific prayer requests are mentioned, just a simple "pray for us."

I can't help but notice how frequently Paul mentions that he is praying for those to whom he is writing. He tells them he is praying for them, and then tells them what he is praying for concerning them. One of my favorite of these "I am praying for you" passages is in the first chapter of Colossians (vv.9-12).

"For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light."

He prayed for the knowledge of His will, for wisdom and spiritual understanding, for a walk worthy of the Lord and for fruitfulness, strength, patience and longsuffering, concluding with a prayer of thanksgiving. This makes my intercessory prayers for God to "be with them" and "bless so-and-so" pale.

When Jesus, in John 17, prayed for his disciples, the original twelve as well as for those of us who have followed through the ages, he used phrases like "keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be as one as we are one", "keep them from the evil one", "sanctify them by Your

truth", "I pray that they all may be one . . . that the world may believe that you sent me" and "that the love with which You loved Me may be in them."

Security. Holiness. Unity. Love. Grand themes that ought to be the petitions we bring before the throne on behalf of the people and churches in our region.

What would you like your family and friends to be praying for on your behalf? In the epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, the Apostle Paul asked for prayer on his behalf with some specificity. In Colossians (4:3,4) Paul asked, "pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ." One group refers to these "open doors" of opportunity as "divine appointments." He goes on to further request, "Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should." In a parallel passage in Ephesians (6:19) he further asks, "pray for me . . . that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel."

Opportunity. Clarity. Boldness. Even after years as an ambassador for Christ, Paul is keenly aware that he needs his fellow believers to be praying for him and his ministry. He knows not to take anything for granted. He wants to go only and everywhere God is opening doors. He wants to be intentionally clear as he proclaims spiritual truth to those who don't have a theological vocabulary. He still finds the boldness he needs to be elusive at times. They prayed and God answered.

Brothers and sisters, pray for us. And pray for each other.

Amen.



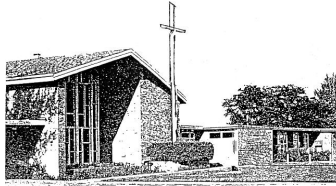
“Churches Helping Churches” Comes to Life at Scottsbluff

Pastor Jim Green and the congregation of First Baptist in Scottsbluff have taken to heart the challenge of the “Churches Helping Churches” Initiative. Pastor Jim explains what happened, “At the ABC/NE Family Reunion, it became apparent that there are needy churches in our region.

Some are without pastors. Some are very small and find it difficult to reach out. Some have had difficulties in the past and have never moved beyond those difficult times. There is something we can do. WE CAN PRAY!! “

Every couple of weeks the church is highlighting for prayer one of the churches in the region.

The first recipient of the prayer emphasis is First Baptist, Broken Bow. The church in Scottsbluff is asking God to



provide for the pastoral needs of the congregation in Broken Bow during the interim period and to meet their financial needs as well. The second focus of prayer is the church in Holbrook. The congregation is using bulletin inserts to keep the idea before the people. They are writing to each church letting them know prayers are coming their way. The church has a bulletin board featuring the churches being prayed for each month.

Pastor Jim says, “I believe that the faithfulness of these churches over the years should be honored and that we must be an encouragement to them, even in their struggles, so that the Glory of God can become known in them once again.”

NEW CHILDREN’S MINISTRY MAGAZINE

ABC’s National Ministries has published the first issue of *The Children’s Corner*, a new children’s ministry magazine. This new publication provides in-depth seasonal articles and activities designed to help those involved in children’s ministry in the church.

This new resource—an expanded and improved version of *The Pebble* newsletter—was developed out of feedback from *Pebble* readers along with insights from National Ministries’ children’s ministry staff. *The Pebble* will no longer be published.

Rev. Dorian Mendez-Vaz, National Ministries’ national coordinator for Children’s and Intergenerational Ministries, says *The Children’s Corner* is “an open invitation to all who care for children to see them with your heart... to see them in the fullness of the glory in which God intended them to be seen... holy and worthy to be cared for and about.”

The Children’s Corner, scheduled for publication three times a year, is available for download at National Ministries’ Web site, www.nationalministries.org. (go to Children & Youth on the left side of the screen and click on Children’s Ministry. The Children’s Corner link will be on the left of the screen. To subscribe to a print version, contact [Loretta Harper@abc-usa.org](mailto:Loretta.Harper@abc-usa.org) or 800.ABC.3USA, ext. 2462).

Vital Church Leaders Conference



Linda & Dave Lundholm enjoying the presentation at the Vital Church Leaders Conference.



Dr. Onnie Drain, King Solomon-Omaha, working on an assignment at the conference.



Elaine Pope and Kathy Krogh from Second-Lincoln, visit with Pastor Dave Byrd from Illinois.

Nola’s Take Five . . . Ideas for Advent

Ideas from Nola Oberhelman
ABC/NE Christian Education Consultant

Take five alternative advent calendar ideas for your family.

1. Make a collection of stories, poems, and songs to read aloud daily.
2. Build a Bethlehem scene of “window clings,” adding a piece each day. (Stars and sheep on the hillside make extra pieces if needed.)
3. Select scripture references and put in a gift bag. Draw one daily to locate and read.
4. Send a card to “a Recovering American Soldier” (c/o Walter Reed Medical Center, 6900 Georgia Ave., NW, Washington DC 20307) each day with your prayers.
5. Take a small gift, card, or run an errand each day for a shut-in or a care-home resident.



Glory to God in the Highest



ABC/NE Prayer Focus for Dec. & Jan.:

- For the deacons (& other spiritual leaders) in each congregation.
- For the Vesper services at Moses Merrill.
- For those who have the means to make year-end gifts for the growth of the kingdom.
- For 2008 to be a year of great joy and growth in ABC/NE.
- Pray that through the various holiday services and celebrations in our churches, there will be new followers brought into Jesus' family.

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 has featured a prayer focus list each month.

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



History Headlines

- From the Minutes of the June 1918 North Platte Association meeting: "After a ball game by the Preachers vs. the Sand Hillers, in which the Preachers won by six scores, a house full gathered for the evening service."
- In the minutes of the Nebraska State Convention annual session in 1922: There was a description of the growth of "Church Vacation Schools" (now called Vacation Bible Schools). "This year we had six schools in Omaha, one in Valley, one in Wahoo, one in Grand Island, one in Stromsburg, one in Holdrege, one in Gibbon, one in Loup City and community schools in Lincoln and Hastings. This phase of work is growing very rapidly in the state. Once the Church Vacation School was thought to be adapted only to slum districts and to strictly foreign populations; now we know it to be adapted to any community and to be a mighty agency of religious education anywhere."
- From the Jan. 1959 MESSENGER: Members of the Palestine Church gathered in Nov. at the church grounds to shell corn that had been given from this year's harvest. \$1,043.21 was realized from the sale and from cash gifts. A consecration service was held as the money was dedicated to the Lord.
- From the same issue: At Bridgeport in Nov., 100 people attended the Thanksgiving Fellowship Dinner and as a result of the Lord's Acres Program a check for \$2,211 was presented.
- From the Dec. 1952 MESSENGER: "North Platte laymen held a very successful Waffle Supper in Nov. and are looking forward to a Pheasant Supper soon. There is speculation that a few "barnyard pheasants" may have to be added to the menu to supply the crowd."

Judson Press Program Rewards ABC Nebraska

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska is pleased to announce a new partnership with Judson Press, National Ministries' publishing ministry for the denomination. "**Judson Press Regional Rewards**" is an affiliate bookstore program that provides an easy way to generate funds for our region's ministries.

Here's how it works:

- Purchase books, curricula, church supplies and more online at www.judsonpress.com.
- At checkout, **enter code 16** in the Region Code box.
- On a quarterly basis, Judson Press will run a report of total sales that include use of that code.
- ABC/NE will then receive a check worth a **generous 10% of the total sales** based on our region's code

If you're already a Judson Press customer, terrific! Simply start using the code when making your purchases and our region will benefit from the sale. If you haven't ordered from Judson Press in the past, now is the perfect time to shop its impressive inventory. Visit www.judsonpress.com and check out new releases, best sellers, curriculum samples, clearance items, church supplies, and more. It's the perfect place to find a Christmas gift for everyone on your list!

You can access Judson's site through the above logo on our region website www.abcnebraska.com, or type www.judsonpress.com into your browser. Regardless of how you get to the site, be certain to enter **code 16** into the Region Code box at checkout. That is the only way to ensure our region receives a commission on these sales.



ABC/NE TRIVIA [Choose from these possible answers:

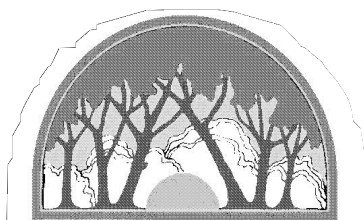
S. Bils, S. Gillies, D. Lundholm, C. Reiss, M. Robertson]

1. Which ABC/NE Staff person has the most children?
2. Which ABC/NE Staff person has the most grandchildren?
3. Which ABC/NE Staff person has the most grandchildren nearby?
4. Which ABC/NE Staff person wears ties with his grandchildren's pictures?
5. Which ABC/NE Staff person particularly needs your prayers?

[answers on p. 8]



Some clip art in The Messenger comes from Kaboose.



Moses Merrill News

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CHRISTMAS VESPERS FRIENDSHIP CHAPEL



*You are invited to join in
The celebration of Christmas
At Friendship Chapel
Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center*

*4:00 pm Sundays—Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23
Followed by cookies & cider & hot chocolate*

Thinking of A Career in Christian Camping Or Youth Ministry?

It's not just sitting around the campfire singing! A summer internship at Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center is a great way to "test the water" if you have an interest in youth ministry or Christian camping. Learn more than you can imagine! Contact MaryBeth Robertson for more information.

Thinking Summer?

Plans are underway for a great 2008 Summer Camping Program for Children and Youth. Older teens and adults are needed as cabin leaders, activity & craft leaders, and in other volunteer roles. Contact: MaryBeth Robertson (see contact information at top of page).

Important Update on BUILDING BRIDGES . . .

The last phase of the Building Bridges Campaign is the construction of a multi-purpose building. Moving ahead with the project has been slowed for three reasons: 1. The state is requiring an expanded sewer system at camp. There has been much planning, discussion, engineering study, analysis, etc. We are waiting final approval of the design and scope of the system. It will be expensive. 2. We are trying to obtain estimates for three very different types of multi-purpose buildings: wood, metal, and the kind that looks like a large inflated marshmallow. Prices are frightening. 3. We need some major gifts before we open a fund-raising campaign to the general constituency. And, major donors need to know the financial scope of the project before they make their decisions . . . And staff continues to work to get accurate numbers for them.

WHAT CAN YOU AND YOUR CHURCH DO NOW! We need focused prayer. Director of Camping Clarence Reiss is working very hard to get all the data required by the state and the engineers regarding the sewer system. He is also working to get building contractors to give accurate estimates of costs of various kinds of buildings. **WE NEED PRAYER FOR CLARENCE, CONTRACTORS AND STATE SYSTEMS.** Several donors are considering major gifts. **WE NEED PRAYER FOR DONORS.** The ABC/NE Board and the Department of Camps & Conferences, working with Clarence and with Executive Minister Susan Gillies are trying to bring this vision to reality. **WE NEED PRAYER FOR EVERYONE AT WORK ON THIS PROJECT.** And with confidence and joy, please pray for everyone who will be blessed by the ministry that will take place in this building! Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

From the Associate Executive Minister Dave Lundholm

Making Ready for the Holidays

*O Son of God, change my heart.
Your spirit composes the songs of the birds
and the buzz of the bees.
I ask of you only one more miracle:
Beautify my soul. — A Celtic Primer*

I remember when I was a child, and the extended family was coming to our house for the Christmas celebration it was a time of frenzied preparation. The decorations had to be just so (My mom, though not religious, loved all things Christmas). The presents had to be purchased and prepared.

Ours was a small two-bedroom bungalow (with no dining room and room for only 4 in the kitchen) and the nine people in our family celebrations put a strain on the infrastructure. So there was a lot of planning revolving around how we were going to fit the food, the table, the kid's table, the people, the tree and the presents into the limited space we had.



And of course there was the cleaning. The furniture had to be dusted and polished. The silver made ready. The time between Thanksgiving and Christmas was one of frenzied activity and no little anxiety.

Today, for many, getting ready for the family Christmas celebration is probably quite similar except that today people tend to be much more over committed than they were in "the day."

But it seems to me like we got the wrong things ready for Christmas. We focused on the things much more than the people and on the people more than on Christ, the reason for the celebration.

This Christmas lets get things ready in a better order. Lets prepare ourselves for Christ, prepare for being present with the important people in our lives, and get around to the things if there is time.

O Son of God, change my heart...Beautify my soul.
Amen



LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

by Darlene Rimpley

February Deadlines

Jan. 4, 2008 - Print Copy

Jan. 9, 2008 - E-Mail

Home Town Editor (Note New Address)

Darlene RIMPLEY

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E-Editor

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Subject: Messenger

ALLIANCE FBC: The ladies of the ABW met and completed their goal for the white cross project. The young people held a Christian Halloween party with games, food, and devotional challenge.

ARNOLD FBC: The annual Harvest Supper was held on November 4, with donations to the local food pantry being given. FBC joined with other area churches to hold a Thanksgiving soup supper and "Gaither Style" worship service on November 18. The reorganized BYF has held a bowling party and a "Wild Goose Chase", and they served and cleaned up after the Harvest Supper.

ARTHUR BAPTIST CHURCH: The Arthur church held their Harvest Festival celebration, sponsored by the Challenger Sunday School Class, on November 4th with about 80 people enjoying a Thanksgiving meal and holding a short dedication service for the 64 Samaritans Purse Christmas Shoe Boxes that had already been turned in. We finished our month of World Mission Offering with a total of \$8257.91, assuming there will be a few "straggling gifts". Plans have been made for showing the "Facing the Giants" film on November 18th.

BEATRICE FBC: Kids Time resumed on Sept. 12 with a pizza party, and a class for two year olds through five year olds has been added. An offering is collected each week to go to Heifer

International, which has already received a heifer, a hive of bees and a trio of rabbits for Rwanda. A special offering was taken for the Community Food Pantry on November 18. The youth group attended a Lincoln Stars Hockey game on Nov. 9.

BELLEVUE, NEW LIFE: The choir did a presentation and hymn sing at Maple Crest Home, and expects to make this a habit. A number of discipling covenant groups are being assembled. The book "Discipleship Essentials" is the guide for these groups, that will meet for about a year. The aim is to produce a culture of accountable disciples who will, in turn, make disciples. Currently a drive for "Operation Christmas Child" is on. There will be a presentation of the Christmas and gospel message in a Dinner Theatre on Friday December 21. The Council of Ministries continues to monitor the church's vitality. A Worship Ministry Development (WMD) Team meets weekly to plan and "design" worship. This team rotates members so that worship reflects the congregation as widely as possible.

BELLEVUE, STRANGERS REST: The pastor's anniversary was celebrated in November.

CHADRON FBC: Pastor Rich and Linda Wheatley have announced that they will be taking early retirement as of Dec. 31, 2007, with

Dec. 23 being his last official Sunday. They will stay in Chadron for a time, and their plans following that are indefinite. The Hanging of the greens was held on November 25.

COLUMBUS FBC: John Larrington passed away October 21. On November 5 the church hosted the Baptist Women's Day of Prayer. The church held a Harvest Home Dinner on November 18 and Decked the Halls on November 25th. Co-pastor Jesse Brown is leading a Bible study on Mark.

FAIRBURY FBC: Rev. Richard Seefried began ministry as Interim Pastor on November 4. Pastor Seefried and his wife, Andrea, are from Ft. Collins, Colorado. FBC held a marriage retreat at Camp Merrill on Nov. 16-17. A 24 Hours of Prayer event was held on Nov. 17-18. The annual Thanksgiving Dinner was held on November 18. Sam and Doris Hackbarth celebrated 61 years of marriage on Nov. 9. Commitment Sunday was held on Nov. 4, where members signed up for the various ministry teams they felt God has called them to.

FREMONT FBC: A combined Thanksgiving worship service was held on November 21 at FBC. The Day Care held a Parent Appreciation Supper recently. The annual Stewardship Dinner was held on November 18.

GIBBON FBC: A new church directory is in the



process of being readied, and pictures of the FBC families were taken on November 16-17. The youth group combined with the youth from Faith United Church for a pizza party on

Oct. 21. A gift certificate to a YMCA membership was presented to Pastor Gordon and Laura for Pastor Appreciation.

GRAND ISLAND FBC: The annual "Thanks For Giving" dinner was held on November 11, which was also Tithing Sunday. Clyde Masten celebrated his 80th birthday recently. The ABWM Grand Island Association meeting was held at FBC on Oct. 29.

HASTINGS FBC: "Pilot for Kite" presented a concert at FBC in October.

HOLDREGE FBC: The AB women held a Thanksgiving luncheon on November 1, with the offering going towards the ABW ministries. A "Hunt for the Great Pumpkin" was held on October 31 for the 7-12 graders. Vivian Tillotson presented an Assimilation Seminar on Oct. 28, and also spoke at the Chow 'n Chatter group. The regional staff were guests at FBC on Nov. 11, and enjoyed a pot luck dinner with them.

JUNIATA CC: Due to cost of mailing, it has been decided that the monthly newsletters will be available at the church for pick-up. JCC joined with the community for a Thanksgiving service at the Methodist Church on Nov. 21, with Pastor Herb giving the message.

LAVISTA, JUDSON: Money earned at the Judson Garage Sale is going to help buy supplies and equipment for the new addition. The J.O.Y. Club visited the Religious Arts Museum in Iowa and saw a huge collection of Nativity Scenes. Judson served a meal to the Habitat for Humanity workers in Bellevue. Pastor Glenn Williamson, and Pastors Norm Williston, Steve Bils and Trudi Bils were given cards, poems, notes, letters, gifts, testimonials and special music during Pastor Appreciation Month. Lap robes were made and given to Maple Crest residents. At the Omaha

Ministries Quarterly, Revs. Amelia and Newton Old Crow of Lodge Grass, MT., spoke. What a blessing! The Judson women had Pat Tourek from Uta Halee and Church Women United as their speaker. On the last Sunday of every month the children bring pennies, nickels and dimes they have saved all month and give them to the A Child Shall Lead Them Program. The money goes to help pay for our new addition and makes the kids feel a big part of the project.

LINCOLN FBC: A Thanksgiving Dinner was held on Nov. 18. FBC joined with community churches to provide Thanksgiving dinners for those who might be in need by providing 200 cans of sweet potatoes. Winter coats are being gathered to give to the Burmese families who attend FBC. The high school and college age members are making plans to take a mission trip to Jamaica in June 2008. Several fund raising events are planned where the consumer will receive full dollar value for whatever they have purchased. They are also collecting older, still in working order, computers to take on the trip. An interesting fact: **seven members of FBC are 90 years of age and older!** They are Lillian Melson (96), Mildred Fry (95), Marguerite Duffek (95), Cora Hollingsworth (90), Garl Moore (90), Kay Peters (90), and Fern Jost (90).

LINCOLN, SECOND: The Youth Group celebrated fall with a trip to Roca Berry Farm on Oct. 28. The youth also did a fundraiser at the Star City Parade on December 1, by providing a concession stand and selling jars filled with ingredients to make cookies. The Deaconate is sponsoring on the first Sunday of each month a birthday party to celebrate the birthdays of the month. This is a good time of celebration and fellowship. November 11, we honored those who are currently serving our country and those who have served their country. Nov. 16 & 17, the music and drama dept entertained us with a comedy dinner theater entitled "Mission: Possible. Nov. 18, our annual all church Thanksgiving Dinner was held. November 25, we prepared our church for the advent season by the Hanging of the Greens and luncheon sponsored the Christian Ed. Board.

MCCOOK FBC: A Family Fellowship Thanksgiving Dinner was held on Nov. 18. FBC hosted the annual Community Thanksgiving Service on Nov 21, with a choir made up from all of the churches, and the ABW serving pie following the service.

NORFOLK FBC: FBC had a presentation of their "Past, Present, and Future" at the Elkhorn Valley Museum on Nov. 18. The blocks and roof are up on the fellowship area of the new church building, with footings being run in other areas.

OMAHA BENSON: An enchilada dinner was held on November 4, with the "ticket" being a donation (money or non-perishable item) for the Benson Baptist Food Pantry. Bingo was played following the meal. Benson hosted the Omaha area Thanksgiving service on Nov. 21, with items collected for the Food Pantry. Rev. A.J. Wagstaff of the King Solomon Missionary Baptist Church was the speaker. Pastor Jason tendered his resignation in early October and a farewell, thank you dinner was held for him on Oct. 14. Pastor Paul and Anne held a "Decadent

Dessert" for their son, Bryan, who works with Youth For Christ in the Lincoln area on November 11.

OMAHA FBC: Our young children were treated to a fun evening on October 31. In lieu of "trick or treating" a "Harvest Festival" was held at the church with plenty of games, candy, face painting, etc. On November 4, the junior high/senior high young people sponsored a spaghetti dinner and a talent show. Donations were accepted and all monies went toward youth activities. We will be providing a free Thanksgiving meal for our neighbors, also in November. Four new members were received into the church membership in November. Our annual "Hanging of the Greens" was held on November 28th with a dinner and decorating of the church for the Christmas holiday.

OMAHA PARKSIDE: Pastor Joan Stewart began her official retirement on November 1. Church family rang bells for the Salvation Army on Nov. 24. The church family contributed towards the Thanksgiving dinners at Together Inc. by providing food items and money. The Search Committee is at work seeking a new pastor.



OMAHA SUNSET HILLS: The Baptist Women's Day of Prayer was held on November 5 for the Omaha area ABWs at Sunset Hills. A New Members Dinner was held on Nov. 18 to welcome all new members, and was followed by a Thanksgiving service. Twelve church members spent a Saturday morning at Together Inc to bag food items, fold blankets, and prepare fliers for community outreach. The Prime Timers (senior citizens) enjoyed a luncheon together on Nov. 14.

SCOTTSBLUFF FBC: The Family Thanksgiving Dinner was held on Nov. 18. FBC had their "Nativity Float" in the City of Gering Parade on Nov. 23 and the City of Scottsbluff Parade on Nov. 24. A "shoe box wrapping party" was held on Nov. 11. [See an additional story about the church on page 3 of this Messenger.]

NEW MEMBERS:

LINCOLN FBC:
Brandon Coggin, Kody
Coggin, Peggy Yelling
MCCOOK FBC:
Amanda Dane
LAVISTA JUDSON:
Laura Ingals, Kathleen
Owens

LINCOLN, SECOND: Lisa Pope, Katie Meredith,
Lauren Siedband, Steven Halouska & Kristin
Halouska

OMAHA PARKSIDE: Barb Hilburn

OMAHA FIRST: John & Jennifer Cleveland,
Randy & Christina Shelton

TEKAMAH FBC: Gordy Whitcomb





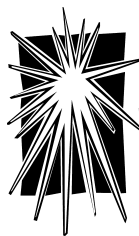
Martin Luther King Day

All Americans, but especially American Baptists, are invited to honor Martin Luther King, Jr. on January 21. Dr. King was an American Baptist pastor.

Many honor the day by making it a day of service.

Dr. King sought to forge common ground on which people from all walks of life could join together to address important community issues. Working alongside individuals of all ages, races and backgrounds, Dr. King encouraged Americans to come together to strengthen communities, alleviate poverty, and acknowledge dignity and respect for all human beings. On January 21st, 2008, Americans across the country will again honor King's legacy of tolerance, peace, and equality by meeting community needs and making the holiday "a day on, not a day off."

For ideas, check www.mlkday.gov



**Jesus is the light
of the world**

ABC/NE Trivia Answers (from p. 4)

1. MaryBeth Robertson has 4 children.
2. Clarence Reiss has 7.5 grandchildren.
3. Steve Bils has 4 grandchildren, all in NE
4. Dave Lundholm wears ties with his grandchildren's pictures. [If you missed this one, you haven't been paying attention!]
5. All of them! They work on our behalf! HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

ABC of Nebraska Staff

Executive Minister	Susan Gillies
Associate Executive Minister	Dave Lundholm
Associate Executive Minister	Steve Bils
Director of Camps & Conferences	Clarence Reiss
Camp Program Director	MaryBeth Robertson
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Youth Ministry Adjunct	Jason Workman

Resolutions?



Do you make New Year's resolutions? They are not known for being very successful. However, taking time alone or with your family to talk and pray about goals for the New Year can be a way to strengthen and encourage your resolve.

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