

# the **ESSENGER**

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska



Dec. 2008—Jan. 2009

#### ABC/NE Date Data

Christmas Services  
At Friendship Chapel  
Moses Merrill Camp & Conf. Center  
Nov 30, Dec. 7-14-21 at 4:00 pm  
Dec. 24 at 5:00 pm

Women In Ministry Retreat  
Dayton Oaks, Iowa  
Jan. 22-24, 2009

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## *Spread the Word . . .*



## **Christ is born in Bethlehem**

*May the re-telling of the old, old story bring blessings anew for you, your family and your congregation.*

—The staff of ABC/Nebraska and  
Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center

## **2009 ABC/NE Prayer Emphasis**

ABC/NE President-elect Ted Hartung will begin his tenure with an emphasis on prayer. He said, "American Baptists in Nebraska are a community of faith and we are people of prayer. Let's begin 2009 very intentionally praying for each other."

Each year the ABC of Nebraska engages in some kind of special prayer emphasis. Some years it has involved a list of prayer concerns in each issue of *The Messenger*. In other years, the staff has begun the year with a prayer retreat.

In 2008, each church was invited to send a delegation from its church to an assigned church to pray for that church's ministry. Response was high and positive. Those who took part told stories of how much it meant to them. In some cases, the visitors just circled the church building praying earnestly for the people who walk through the doors of that building. In other cases, the visitors laid hands on the pastor and prayed for him/her. Many encouraged the region to repeat this emphasis.

The 2009 Prayer Emphasis will be similar to the 2008 Emphasis. Each church will be assigned one other church for focused prayer. Full details will be shared in mailing to churches.



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

### THERE'S A SONG IN THE AIR

Have you seen the bumper sticker: "Chicken Little Was Right!" There are those around us who believe "the sky is falling."

As we approach Christmas and the beginning of a new year, some of us are facing some tough uncertainties. These uncertainties may be, for you, primarily about the stock market. For others, they may be about personal health or the health of a loved one. For others, there are concerns about jobs. Some churches are concerned about pastoral searches. Other churches are anxious about church finance or church growth. Those who love Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center are concerned about the status of the Building Bridges Project. Those who serve on the Board and staff of ABC/NE are concerned about the financial stability of our region. All kinds of tough questions surround us.

The days leading to Christmas are all about waiting and watching and wondering.

Why in the world did God send the announcement of his son's birth to shepherds? Why was Jesus born in a stable? Why the humble setting? It's fairly easy for us to understand why Jesus was not born to royalty. We know that his message was for all



people. But couldn't it have been a notch up from a barn? We speculate that Mary and Joseph could not have been more tired and dejected when they arrived in Bethlehem. Joseph may have even thought, "I don't think it can get worse. Mary is pregnant and uncomfortable. We are far from friends and family. And I can't even find a decent place for us to stay." Their situation seems much worse than our anxieties. But by morning, Mary and Joseph were filled with unsurpassed joy. Sometimes life is like that.

Do you hear the song in the air? It's there. The assurance of Immanuel, "God with Us." We are reminded over and over again that we cannot be separated from God's love.

Midst whatever dark night we are enduring, no matter what concerns weigh heavily on our hearts, God is with us. The song in the air is for us. The song from afar will sweep over us again this Christmas season if we will just let it. This is really, really, really good news that needs to be shared.

"There is a song in the air! There's a star in the sky!" Let's "greet in His cradle our Saviour and King!"



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

### Wilma Upchurch Honored for a Lifetime of Service to "Her Children"

Wilma Upchurch, long-time member of Calvary Baptist Church in Omaha, was recently honored by the Millard Schools when they dedicated the Wilma Upchurch Elementary School. Wilma Upchurch Elementary School is the first school named in honor of a former teacher in Millard history.

Miss Upchurch, who passed away at age 94 back in 2003, taught for 49 years, 30 of them in Millard, before retiring in 1977. She came to the Millard School District in 1948 after teaching for 19 years in the now-defunct East Omaha District. In Millard she was one of seven teachers in a school so small that she taught several grades together in one classroom.

Whenever she was asked if she had any children, her stock answer was "About 2,000." One of those students, now the president of the local lumber company, was in her classroom for four grades and was among those who suggested that the new school be named for his former teacher.

Wilma is best remembered in Nebraska Baptist circles for her commitment to the Calvary choir and for her service as the choir librarian. She was active in evening women's circles until her retirement and morning circles afterward.

It is wonderful when an individual can be recognized for the impact they had on another individual or on a generation. As I mentioned earlier, the Millard School Board of Education has never before memorialized a teacher by naming a school for them. They noted that they were honoring Miss Upchurch "both as an individual and as a representative of all Millard teachers who give their very best for our students every day!"



*Wilma Upchurch with her students in front of the school in 1948.*

Wilma Upchurch Elementary School has about 300 students and is located at South 165th Street near Giles Road.

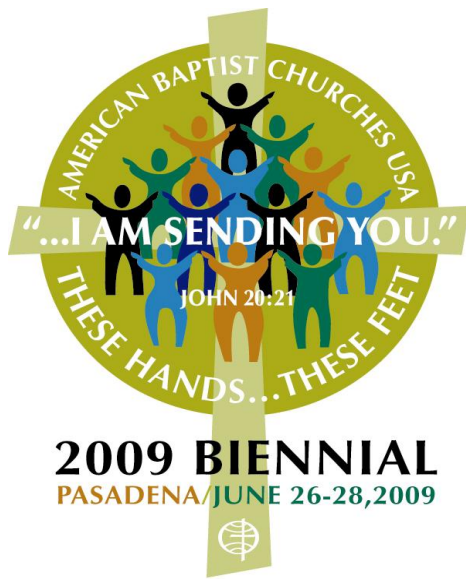
As many of you know, my mother recently passed away after an extended illness. She, like Wilma, had devoted her life to teaching. Many times when I was with her at the mall or about town, former students would stop her and introduce her to their children saying, "this is the teacher I told you about." Many of her students went into education as a result of the impact that she had on their lives.

Most of us can think back over our lives and identify those who had a significant impact on who we are today. Educators are commonly remembered thusly, but my list includes not only teachers but employers, pastors, parents, siblings and roommates.

Recently I was privileged to lead the closing worship at our Adult Ministries Conference at Moses Merrill. The theme of the conference was "Making a Difference", mirroring the theme that had been used throughout the camping season. I asked those present to reflect on their lives and share a memory of some one person who influenced them greatly. After a slow start the stories emerged and not without an occasional tear. It is good to remember these people and more important to resolve to be one. We closed with this hymn —

*O may all who come behind us find us faithful;  
May the fire of our devotion light their way.  
May the footprints that we leave lead them to believe,  
And the lives we live inspire them to obey.  
O may all who come behind us find us faithful.*





### Great Celebration, Worship, Learning and Family Fun

Plan now to attend the ABC-USA Biennial Convention in Pasadena, CA, June 26-28, 2009.

For more information and to follow the planning and preparation, check the ABC-USA website:

[www.abc-usa.org](http://www.abc-usa.org)

## Karen Worship Begins in Omaha

A group of people of the Karen tribe of Myanmar (Burma) gathered for worship in their native language at First Baptist of Omaha on Nov. 2.

Large numbers of Karen people are locating in Nebraska. Some have been worshipping at Benson in Omaha and at First in Lincoln. About 50 Karens have been attending worship at First Omaha for about six weeks. They requested space to hold worship in the Karen language and that began on the 2nd.

Rev. Gam Lahpai, pastor of First Kachin Baptist Church, has been assisting the Karens to make the adjustment to life in America. The Kachins and Karens do not understand each other's language but can communicate in Burmese or English.

## Kearney Mission Team to Thailand

Challenged by a Sunday with ABC Missionary, Mike Mann, FBC-Kearney member Waylon Woods so sensed a call to travel to Thailand and help install a water system for a hillside tribal village that he simply decided he had to go. Not really expecting much of a response, he printed up a flyer announcing his trip and handed them out at a men's breakfast, inviting anyone who felt similarly called to join him.

Eventually four others felt a call to participate, and together they traveled to Thailand on November 13, where they met up with Mike Mann and traveled to Huey Ngu, a Red Lahu Village in the Chiang Doh District, 3-4 hours northwest of Chiang Mai. The water system project involved laying several miles of pipe from the source to the village, building a filtration unit and reservoir, and installing plumbing taps throughout the village.

In addition to the water and sanitation project, the team did a VBS and a soccer tournament with the village children.



*Tom Gillming, Waylon Woods, Angela Jones, Dale Abood, and Sam Miller* (pictured above) were commissioned by First Baptist Church of Kearney as short-term missionaries at both morning worship services on Sunday, November 9. Pastor Stan Murdoch interviewed the team and Associate Executive Ministers Dave Lundholm and Steve Bils represented the region and prayed for the team.

Photographs and other materials from the ten-day trip are available on the web. Links to their site can be found on the region web site at [www.abcnebraska.com](http://www.abcnebraska.com).

## WHITE CROSS CONVOY MAKES A DIFFERENCE

For the third year in a row, Nebraska Baptists have taken White Cross materials to designated mission sites. The White Cross program is a project of AB Women's Ministries and often includes the efforts of everyone in a congregation. This year, the region team packed the goods in vans and cars and traveled to Muskogee, OK, to The Murrow Indian Children's Home.

Materials transported included clothing, toys, school supplies, and personal items.

The Murrow Indian Children's Home was founded in 1902 by an enterprising missionary and educator who began taking in orphan and homeless Native American children soon after the Civil War. Two Indian tribes later donated land for an orphanage, and concerned Baptists in the local community also gave land and buildings. The American Baptist Home Mission Society [National Ministries] assumed full responsibility for the school in the early 1900s, and the orphanage was moved to the campus of Bacone College in 1910. Over the years, the Murrow Home has provided loving care for hundreds of abused, neglected or abandoned children.

Currently serving 22 children and youth, the home offers residential and crisis care as well as daycare for children of teen mothers. Children, many from the Creek Tribe, live in family-like cottage settings and attend local public schools or day treatment programs. The home often accepts children and youth whom state agencies have given up on, says Director Joan Brown, a commissioned American Baptist missionary who serves through National Ministries.

## Nola's Take Five . . .

Ideas from Nola Oberhelmen  
ABC/NE Christian Education Consultant

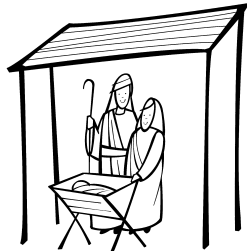
Take five---items a Sunday School teacher really wants.

1. *Child's Garden of Prayer* (published by Concordia)
2. Packages of *Faith That Sticks* stickers
3. Bible index tabs
4. Bible bar magnifier
5. *52 Games That Teach the Bible* (published by Rainbow)

Enjoy the **Blessings** of the  
Christmas Program  
at your church.

Special programs by choirs  
and

Sunday School children are  
a special gift to us all  
at this time of the year.



**Christmas Program**

## What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?

For some Americans, New Year's Eve is the occasion for a church service. According to Interpreter magazine, "Methodism founder John Wesley originated Watch Night services in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, sometimes calling them Covenant Renewal services. The original services were spontaneous prayer services designed to deepen the spiritual life of Methodists."



In African-American churches the services have special significance. During the days of slavery, the owners totaled up their accounts at the end of each year. They often would sell slaves to pay debts. New Year's Eve was often the last night a family of slaves would be together. On New Year's Eve in 1862, slaves sat up waiting for the Emancipation Proclamation to take effect on Jan. 1, 1863.

Today, Watch Night Services take place in all kinds of churches. The services feature testimony, prayer and music. It has become a time for recommitment of individuals and of congregations. The new year starts with thanks to God.

## Our Church Feels So Alive!

From a report by ABC Missionary Bruce Borquist

What an amazing worship we recently had at our church here in Belo Horizonte, Brazil! It included baptisms, a marriage proposal, the collection of goods for a mission trip to a poor community, an appeal for teachers for the after-school tutoring program, announcements about an upcoming youth retreat and the church's first mission conference, prayer for our missionaries in Albania and Guinea-Bissau, and more. During the sharing time, one brother exclaimed, "Our church feels so alive!"

After the worship service, the church held a short meeting to formally recognize a new ministry called the Mission Mobilizers' Team. The team has been working quietly for five months, and all of the new mission initiatives we heard about on this special Sunday (the mission trip, contact with the church's cross-cultural missionaries, the mission conference, and the homework help) have been birthed through this committee.

The broad range of mission activities now getting under way at our church is a direct response to a time of concentrated prayer that began about two years ago. At that time the church and its leadership was searching for its unique purpose and calling. The feeling that the church was dormant and directionless drove us to our knees. Soon after, the young adult group started engaging in local mission outreach activities with our encouragement, and it even took a short-term mission trip to a remote community in central Brazil. The church started to see and feel a new life through mission activities.

Can you see why that worship service last month was so exciting? The church really is coming alive and starting to express what it means to truly be the Body of Christ. New disciples testifying to their new life in Christ through baptism. Youth seeking to be the music of the Good News of the Kingdom. Local, national, and international expressions of the church in mission. And a mission conference coming up to excite, encourage, and educate the church even more. God is bringing great and wonderful changes to our local church, and we as your missionaries are honored to be used by God to be a part of it all!

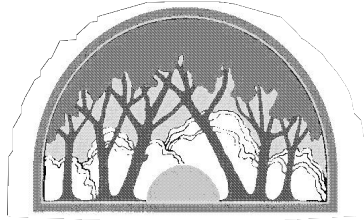
### Book of Timothy



### ABC/NE Trivia

[answers on p. 8]

1. Which of the following ABC/NE churches is a "store-front" church?  
a. Guide Rock, b. Strangers Rest in Bellevue, c. Parkside in Omaha, d. King Solomon
2. Which of the following ABC/NE church buildings has the newest addition?  
a. Alliance, b. Judson in LaVista, c. New Life in Bellevue, d. Beatrice
3. Which of the following ABC/NE church buildings does not have a balcony?  
a. FBC Lincoln, b. FBC McCook, c. Mt. Nebo in Omaha, d. FBC Hastings
4. Which of the following ABC/NE church buildings does not have a stained glass dome over the sanctuary?  
a. FBC Omaha b. York, c. Chapman d. Broken Bow
5. Which of the following ABC/NE churches is not considered an "open country" church?  
a. Riverside, b. Prairie Union, c. Palestine, d. Juniata



## Moses Merrill News

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

### Enjoy Winter Wonders at Moses Merrill



Winter at Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center is full of wonders! This is a great time to experience the forest hills — whether hiking or just looking at the beauty from warm windows.

**CHRISTMAS** — Christmas Services will be held on Nov. 30 and Dec. 7, 14, and 21 at 4:00 pm. On Christmas Eve there will be a special service at 5:00 pm. Everyone is welcome.

**NEW YEAR'S WEEKEND** — Come out late in the day on New Year's Day and spend the weekend. There are still Lodge rooms available. Make reservations by calling 1-402-666-5639. Enjoy hiking, movies, storytelling, photography, sledding (if it snows!), and a winter campfire.

**PERSONAL AND FAMILY RETREATS** — Schedule a day or two alone or with family for a quiet retreat.



### Building Bridges Update

Following set-backs from the withdrawal of the major donor and the stock market uncertainty, the ABC of Nebraska Executive Committee and Camp Department have affirmed commitments to Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center. These commitments include updating the waste water management system and the construction of a multi-ministry facility.

During this winter, efforts will be made to reduce projected costs of the sewer system by working with engineers and the state of Nebraska.

Also during the winter, estimates will be obtained for a phased development of the multi-ministry facility. The Board will continue to seek funding from donors. It is hoped that by spring or summer, ground can be broken.

The Executive Committee and the Camp Department are grateful for the tremendous support of Nebraska Baptists. Camp Department Chair Orin Clinger said, "This facility could not function and provide its great ministry without Nebraska Baptists. We are tremendously grateful for gifts from individuals and churches as well for all the volunteer service given."

The Multi-Ministry Building and the sewer project will be the final projects in the Building Bridges Campaign. The Campaign has made possible construction of Friendship Chapel, Ward Conference Center, Calvary Lodge, Smith Amphitheatre and the Prayer Walk.

*Dear Friends,*

*We all really miss our grounds man, Joe, who passed away in November. When Clarence and Bob went looking for Christmas trees for Friendship Chapel, I tagged along to keep them company. Joe always picked them out before. MaryBeth wanted a big one to put in front of the big window and two smaller ones to put in front of the bridge. Even though we missed Joe, we had fun — at least I did. All that trudging through the forest stirred up a sleepy mouse. Yum!*

*Whether we get snow or not doesn't make much difference to me. I like to take naps on the porch of the Visitor's Center. If the weather gets too bad, I have a couple of pretty comfortable hiding places. Unfortunately Clarence & Trudy worked hard one day to patch a hollowed out place under their driveway. They thought a varmint had done it. I had to chuckle. They didn't know it was one of my new retreats. I guess it's better to build them away from the house!*

*Come see me soon! Your friend,*

*Camp Cat*



**Moses Merrill Sunday  
January 25, 2009**

**Watch for materials coming to your church!**

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

## What If... We Acted as God's Secret Agents?

One of the things that I have been playing with over the last several holiday seasons is the practice of trying to inject a little bit of love, caring and sanity into the hectic holiday environment that I find when I leave my house.

I might stop and chat with the Wal-Mart greeter for a minute or two. Perhaps I'll volunteer to take a shopping cart to the cart corral for a busy mom or a senior (or a more senior.) Sometimes I'll start a cheerful conversation when standing in a line. Sometimes I just whistle a Christmas carol in the parking lot. None of these actions are pre-meditated. I don't say "I'm going to the mall to spread joy." I just hold the idea in my mind and respond when moments where some kind act is appropriate. Usually the response is one of surprise. Often I see a flicker of joy and a momentary relaxation of the tension in a face and I know that I have made a bit of a difference.

I am not perfect in my practice. Sometimes I am just as grumpy, hectic and focused as everybody else.

So what if, when it's possible, and we think about it... What if we thought of ourselves as secret agents for God when we were out and about? Imagine the difference for good that all of the members of all of our churches could make in the atmosphere around them this holiday season if we all played with being loving, caring and joyful.

We are living in a nation at war, in a time of leadership change, in the midst of economic distress and uncertainty. If ever there was a time when the people of God need to echo the angels with their "Lo, I bring you good tidings of great joy" it's now.

Will you join me as you can in taking love, caring and joy to a stressed out and worried world?



## 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

**ARNOLD FBC:** The annual Harvest Supper was held on Nov 9. Donations for the local Food Pantry were collected. FBC participated in the community Thanksgiving service at the United Methodist Church on Nov 23. Shoeboxes for Samaritan Purse were delivered to Denver.. 23.

**BEATRICE FBC:** The youth held a fundraiser dinner on Nov 9. A planning retreat for FBC was held at Camp Merrill Nov 14-16. FBC joined in community Thanksgiving Eve service at the Presbyterian Church, with Rev. Theodora giving the message. A 5th Sunday celebration potluck was held, followed by the Hanging of the Greens on Nov 30. An offering for the Food Pantry was received on Nov 23. A wrapping party for Operation Christmas child shoeboxes was held on

Nov 16. Ladies Night out held a salad supper, and then delivered quick bread loaves to shut-ins and single ladies of the church.

**BRIDGEPORT FBC:** The kids of the Kid's Club have been memorizing Psalm 23. They showcased their progress at a pizza party in late October. The Thursday evening Bible Study has begun a study of I Corinthians. The church's annual Thanksgiving Dinner was held on the 19th.

**CHADRON FBC:** Operation Christmas Child collection week was held Nov 11-17, with 150 boxes the goal. Hanging of the Greens was held on Nov 23.

### COLUMBUS FBC:

The installation service for Pastor Glenn Williamson was held Oct 12. AB Girls helped fill and wrap shoeboxes for Operation Christmas

Child. We sponsored a Nativity Display for the community on Nov 22. Our Harvest Home Dinner was on Nov 23.

**FAIRBURY FBC:** The Ministry Fair "Commitment Sunday" was held on Nov 9. The ABW Ministries hosted the Thanksgiving dinner on Nov 23, with proceeds going to the White Cross work.

**FREMONT FBC:** Wes and Kathy Howe celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary recently. FBC participated in the community Thanksgiving Eve service at the Presbyterian Church. Jason and Linda Indra and their children, Cameron, Colton, and Conner were dedicated in a parent/child dedication service on Oct 19. The ABW observed the Baptist Women's Day of Prayer on Nov 6. Members of the church attended the Gaither Lovin' Life tour in Omaha on Nov 13. A Thanksgiving dinner was held on Nov 16. Berniece DeForest was honored on her 90th birthday at a coffee hour at the church on Nov 16.

**GIBBON FBC:** A Parent/Child Dedication was held for Matt and Abby Elsbury and Lily Jo. FBC hosted the annual community Thanksgiving service on Nov 23, with dessert following the service. The ABW hosted the Senior Citizens Sunset Dinner on Oct 29.

**GRAND ISLAND FBC:** The "Thanks For Giving" dinner was held on Nov 16. The church continues to provide hospitality to the Board, Executive Committee and Departments of ABC/NE, for meetings.

**HOLDREGE FBC:** The FBC youth hosted the "Invisible Child World tour" on Nov 13, to promote a program called Schools for Schools. The FBC youth will be partnered with a school in

Northern Uganda to help rebuild and resupply that school. Shoebox Sunday was Nov 16, when the boxes were dedicated before further dropoff. The FBC Women held a Thanksgiving Luncheon. Six College Care packages were packed on Nov 26. Hanging of the Greens was held on Nov 30.

**JUNIATA CC:** JCC hosted the annual combined Thanksgiving service on Nov 26.

**LA VISTA, Judson:** Veterans were recognized and thanked for their service to our country. The ABW Ministries held a Mystery Bible Food luncheon. The November fellowship meal was a true Thanksgiving meal - turkey and all the trimmings. The J.O.Y. Club played dominoes and then feasted on Brats and all the trimmings. We had members who attended the Fall Women's Retreat and the Adult Ministries Conference at Camp. The Covenant Players appeared at Judson. The church welcomed Interim Pastor Rev. Steve Jergensen and his wife, Diane. In lieu of our monthly Fellowship Lunch, Judson held a "Welcome to Fall - You All" cook-out. The Judson family cleaned out garages and attics and brought their treasures to the church for an all-church garage sale. Several members joined together on a Saturday and painted a member's house that was damaged a few months ago in our "hurricane." Judson's book club is going strong and the use of the Judson library is up. Judson's alternative church service/music program, The Gathering, has started up again after taking some time off during the summer. Once again the ABW women and girls prepared and delivered lunch to 20 Habitat for Humanity Volunteers.

**LINCOLN FBC:** The church ladies had a "Painting in Your PJs" party at the Haymarket

on Nov 7. FBC members attended the AB/Men's breakfast at Lincoln Second BC, with the viewing of the Nebraska Disaster Relief Trailer. FBC collected 300 cans of green beans to give to the People's City Mission for the Thanksgiving food baskets they prepare.

**MCCOOK FBC:** FBC held their Halloween party for all children on Nov 1, with fun and sharing, ice cream, and a movie. The ABW Ministries observed the Baptist Women's Day of Prayer on Nov 3. The annual Thanksgiving dinner was held on Nov 16. The church was decorated for Christmas on Nov 29.

**NORFOLK FBC:** The church held a banquet for the Rescue Mission on Nov 6. A "Shoe Box Packing Party" was held on Nov 2. FBC had a table display at the Festival of Trees display at the Lifelong Learning center Nov 14-16. A Thanksgiving meal was held on Nov 23.

**OMAHA BENSON:** The Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes were dedicated on Nov 16. Benson members took part in the community Thanksgiving service at Omaha FBC on Nov 26. A dessert, stories and fellowship time was held on Nov 2, when Bryan Marine told of his ministry with Youth for Christ. Bucky Sydnor and his wife, Carol, ABC missionaries serving in Nepal, told of their work on Nov 9. The Senior Caring Ministry went to hear the Markworth Pipe Organ on Nov 6, followed by dinner out. The Frontlines youth group helped pack boxes and load trucks for Operation Christmas Child on Nov 18 and 22.



**OMAHA FBC:** The church co-hosted a Thanksgiving service with FBC, Tekamah, in honor of the 150th Anniversaries of both churches. The service was at FBC, Omaha, on Nov 26, with other Omaha area ABC churches participating.

**OMAHA PARKSIDE:** The parking lot was cleaned by volunteers of the church on Nov 15. Parkside members rang bells for the Salvation Army on Nov 22. A pot-luck brunch was held on Nov 29, followed by decorating the church for Christmas. Parkside members attended the Thanksgiving service at FBC.

**SCOTTSBLUFF FBC:** The End Zone youth ministry hosted the "Cutting Edge" youth program on the Christian radio station on Nov 9. The all-church Thanksgiving dinner was held on Nov 23. FBC had a Nativity Float in the Ger-ing Christmas parade on Nov 28.

**TEKAMAH FBC:** A bake sale was held on Nov 8 by the youth and Board of Christian Education, with the proceeds going to the Cameron Memorial Camp Fund, which pays 75% of the camp fee for those from the church attending camp at Moses Merrill. A "church vision" day was held on Nov 16. An Angel Tree was displayed with the monetary gifts going to support the ministry to children whose parents are in prison. FBC delivered Meals on Wheels the week of Nov 17-21. The church co-hosted the Thanksgiving Service at FBC, Omaha, on Nov 26 as a culmination of the two churches celebrating their 150th Anniversaries this year.



**NEW MEMBERS:**

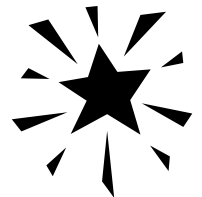
**CHADRON FBC:** Curt and Linda Bowman, Tenika Pile, Lewis and Jean O'Donnell, Eric Sailer, Karley O'Donnell, Lauren Daniels, Charley and Sharon Pile  
**COLUMBUS FBC:** Wayne Colegrove, Pastor Glenn and Julie Williamson, Glenn Jr., Garrick & Trista Williamson, Jared & Jacob Haas. Rhonda Nelson.  
**GRAND ISLAND FBC:** Sally Butterfield, Sandy Rodewald, Kirk Alm  
**OMAHA BENSON:** Emily Young, Marian Vinderslev, Catherine Aulph, Deborah Aulph, Alyssa Gade, Shelby Bramer.  
**SUPERIOR FBC:** Dewayne and Rhoda Aberg, Gale Saer, and Emma McKinney.

## Church Celebrations: Epiphany

The church since its earliest beginning has always loved to celebrate. From the beginning the church gathered to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord each week by worshipping on Sunday in addition to the traditional Jewish Sabbath festivities.

The earliest Christian holiday was Easter, of course, with the joyous celebration of the resurrection. But as early as the second century another significant holiday was being celebrated.

This holiday was Epiphany. It was celebrated on January 6th and commemorated both the birth and the baptism of Jesus. It wasn't until 200 years later that the celebration of the birth of Christ was moved to December 25th and the Christ-mass or Christmas was established.



The word Epiphany means manifestation and it is in this season that we remember that: God manifests himself in Jesus Christ; the Glory of God is seen in Jesus, and that the light of the gospel manifests itself in this world of darkness.

The season of Epiphany consists of from six to nine Sundays when the church traditionally emphasized worship and evangelism.

—Dave Lundholm

## Have You Ever Thought About Volunteering at Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center?

*You are invited to an orientation session to learn more about volunteering.*

**What:** Orientation and training for those wanting to volunteer at MMCCC.

**When:** January 16-17 -- beginning with light supper on Friday evening, ending about 3:00 pm Saturday.

**Where:** stay in beautiful, comfortable Calvary Lodge rooms.

**Types of volunteer activities possible:**

- Caretakers - Camp-sit on weekends or weekdays
- Grounds/maintenance - building upkeep, mowing, tree trimming etc.
- Cooks - substitute or assist MMCCC cooks
- Hosts - help with needs of retreat, conference participants
- Housekeeping - assist with cleaning cabins, Ward Conference Center/ Calvary Lodge after groups leave
- Would consider a session for those wanting to serve as group leaders for summer children and youth camps.

**Contact** MMCCC 402-666-5639 or [mrobertson@campmerrill.com](mailto:mrobertson@campmerrill.com) for questions, additional information or to register.

### Joe Huss, Moses Merrill "Naturalist," Dies at 50

We mourn the death of our friend Joe Huss, grounds man at Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center. After working off and on as needed, Joe began regular work with us in May of 2003 and continued until his death Nov. 9, 2008.



Joe is remembered for his energetic spirit and for his knowledge of the back country at Moses Merrill. He is responsible for finding the rock that became the Ebenezer Rock. He scouted out the best trees for Christmas trees. He was always happy when he was assigned to check the trails because he loved every inch of the property. His work ranged from horse

care and trail rides, to mowing, to general maintenance, to running the dishwasher, to road work. He was the expert at finding morel mushrooms on the grounds.

Joe suffered from lung disease and was 50 at the time of his death.

#### Trivia Answers

(questions on p. 4)

1. b. Strangers Rest Missionary Baptist Church in Bellevue has a nice facility in a store-front in a strip mall.
2. b. Judson Baptist in LaVista has a beautiful new addition with meeting space and offices.
3. b. FBC McCook does not have a balcony.
4. c. Chapman does not have a stained glass dome.
5. d. Juniata is not an open country church. (It's happily in the middle of the town of Juniata.)

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#### THE MESSENGER Publication Schedule

In 2009, THE MESSENGER will be published the first of the month in Feb, April, June, August, Oct, Dec. The reduction in the number of issues from 10 to 6 is made necessary by budget constraints.

THE MESSENGER will remain the best source of news on the ministry and mission of ABC/Nebraska and the wider ABC family.



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