

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska
Nebraska Region Annual Meeting
Saturday, January 7, 2023
ZOOM Meeting

Meeting called to order at 10:04 by Greg Mamula

Attendees: Greg Mamula, Bev Pacas, Lorlea Mees, Craig Erickson, Brad Pope, Orin Clinger, Jane Gangwish, Clint Walker Taylor Shippy, Joy Martinez Marshall, Becky Clinger, Rick Wheatley, Linda Wheatley, Steve Wisthoff, Bob Fairchild, Traci Gilmer, Steve Wisthoff, Clarence Reiss, Dale Pracht, Susan Howell, LaVonna Cline, Traci Gilmer, Aaron Sprock, Zausam Lahtaw, Karen , Joy Martinez Marshall, Caleb Lind, Cindy Combs, Brian Jenkins, Nolan Hayes, Patrick Jill Blaylock, Patrick Fleeman, Bob Howell, Tammy Freitag, Sandra Goodwater

Welcome: Lavonna Cline opened the meeting with a greeting and turned the opening of the meeting devotional and prayer to Steve Wisthoff.

Review of Minutes: **Bob Fairchild** made the motion to accept the minutes as corrected. Craig Erickson seconded and motion passed.

Election of 2023 Leadership Team: Greg Mamula presented the slate of nominated officers via screenshare. The slate of officers was seconded by Rick Wheatley. Slate of officers elected by

Finance: Bob Fairchild reviewed the 2022 financial report. The region ended the year with a \$5500.00 surplus at the end of the year. The camp budget ended the year with a \$20,000 net deficit, attributed to reduced revenue. The region budget for 2023 has been reduced by approximately \$4000.00 and expecting a positive balance at the end of the year. Camp budget has been created with reduced revenue and has reduced expenses, and will conduct a special appeal, and is expected to break even at end of year.

Craig Erickson opened the floor to any questions. Susan Howell questioned the line item 4600-Laten fund. Greg Mamula explained the Laten Gift and how it is being split into the budget for the region and for camp.

Moses Merrill Camp and Conference Center:

Bev Pacas expressed her appreciation for all the groups that support the camp. Bev invited each person attending the meeting to come out and spend a day when summer camp is in session.

2022 Summer camper season had 250 campers, largest increase was in family camp with 45 campers. Moses Merrill had 9 paid summer staff, with volunteer camp pastors and volunteer cabin leaders.

Keira Carlson, member of Benson Baptist Church— program coordinator – part time position, will be at camp full time in summer – outside of that time she will be assisting with summer camp, youth retreats and LIT.

Registrations are open now for 2023 summer camp, kickoff is next week. Churches will receive promotional information for 20-23 summer camp.

Bev attended the Christian camp and conference association conference in the fall and has been inspired for the upcoming summer season.

LIT is in its 7th-8th year and is a way we develop potential summer staff, scheduled for Feb 11 & 12, open to H.S. freshman and older, opportunity to develop leadership skills that will carry on in churches and community.

Bev challenged attendees to look “outside the box” for summer campers. There may not be youth in our church but there may be children in your neighborhood or grandchildren that would enjoy and benefit from camp.

The Nebraska 2023 youth retreat is scheduled for March 10-12.

Facilities: Building Bridges to Next Generation- Renovation of Cabins for the Next Generation. Cabin 7 is nearing completion, cabin two is in demo stage and both will be done by summer camp 2023. We have 7 of ten cabins complete and we are funded at 80% for the last three cabins. Fundraising will be necessary to complete the last three cabins and camp will need to raise approximately \$30,000 to finish the last three cabins.

We are in the early stages of doing a Weaver Hall remodel. Building has not been updated since its creation in 1976 and we are getting bids for plumbing electrical and construction at this time. Will be hiring out for this project due to requirements of city codes. Weaver Hall has been impacted by sewer issues and the clay tiles that are deteriorating at camp and that will be added into the cost.

The well has high nitrate levels with the most recent reading at 11 and have had 3 high test in previous three quarters and are under admin order to resolve the issue. Working with a company out of Falls City to resolve issues most likely will need to drill new well

ABMEN have installed new garage doors and have stained the shop as well as raised funds for a replacement of the Gator.

ABMEN:

Brad Pope has been providing support for camp via the garage doors and funds for pool skimmer. air compressor and air stapler. Recently launched a fund raiser to replace the Gator that has been successful.

ABMEN has also provided camp scholarships for the youth attending camp.

Awarded the pastor of the year award to Joy Martinez Marshall.

ABWM:

Susan Howell reported that there was a disconnect between the election in May in ABWM a Fall retreat was successful with a few more people

2023 Summer conference is June 2-4 and planning is in process at this time.

Theme is Domestic violence and how to recognize and address in your community.

Susan Howell will be sending out a survey/questionnaire to see what women in the churches desire for ABWM.

In 2022 ABWM offered 10 - \$50 scholarships to camp and had three people take advantage of the scholarship.

Susan is working on creating a video for the churches that are on the western side of the state. Contributions are used to support the two women's retreats held each year but many women who live on the western side of the state do not attend. Susan is looking at different ideas to encourage more women to participate. Susan advised she was open to any new ideas that attendees would be willing to share.

Board of General Ministries:

Orin Clinger reported that he had two in person meetings for the board in 2022. Dr. Jeff Woods who is the current interim general secretary for the denomination and a search is in place for the next secretary.

Orin attended the conference to honor the Latens at Fremont FBC on October 9, 2022 and mentioned that the IM, ABHMS, and Rainbow Acres were represented at the conference.

Orin mentioned that he serves on the financial committee for ABC USA and that as a denomination, we have had more than a 5% decrease in giving to United Missions each year over the past five years.

Biennial Mission Summit for 2023 is June 23-25 in Puerto Rico.

Delegate process for Biennial is being updated and Greg Mamula displayed the current web page for the mission summit. Registration is not currently available but should go live in the

next 10-14 days. If you are a delegate for your local church the registrant will need the PIN number specific to their church. There are also 4-6 delegates who are region specific.

Executive Minister Search Team Report:

Rick Wheatley reported the committee had their first meeting in early December with another scheduled next week. All meetings have been on Zoom at this time but the intention is to meet in person in the next few months. Rick Wheatley reviewed the names of the members of the search committee. Susi has been assisting with the search committee formation and work of the committee. Surveys will be sent to the local churches in the near future to assess what the perceived needs are for the next executive minister.

Transitional Executive Minister's report:

Greg Mamula reported that the region office has been attempting to provide a multitude of resources and workshops for the local churches over the past year. He reviewed the mission statement for the region and how they calibrate an event to decide if it is valuable to the region.

Spring training event was held with Todd Bollsinger with the cooperation of other local regions.

Spring Prairie Pastors conference was held with multiple speakers and held in conjunction with the adjoining regions. The next one will be held in March of 2023 with three IM global servants.

Received a grant for training pastors and giving them relief after the COVID experience. One retreat was held in Ogallala for the western pastors and another will be held in January for the Eastern pastors at Moses Merrill with Jason Workman as leader.

Greg mentioned the work that Robin Stoops had done with the Burmese churches that are part of our region and for the people of Burma. This culminated in recent legislation that was passed for the rights of the Burmese people.

Greg Mamula and Robin Stoops attended an NT Wright conference in Waco, Texas that was hosted by Truett Seminary. Truett Seminary is the alma mater of Greg Mamula.

Greg Mamula attended the Radical, Redeemed and Restored retreat held in Green lake Wisconsin for the work of women pastors was held in June in Green Lake, Wisconsin.

Table Life retreats have been held over the course of the year. Greg Mamula has traveled to Idaho/Western Washington, FBC Norfolk, FBC Lincoln, and ABC Indianapolis/ABC Indiana/Kentucky to provide workshops for Table Life.

Greg Mamula and Taylor Shippy preached at Senior High Camp during the summer of 2022.

Mission in Five podcast completed nine episodes produced by Greg Mamula.

The region completed grant work that allowed a group of pastors with Greg Mamula, to travel to Chicago for a retreat with a Ruth Haley Barton. She is a scholar in spiritual formation who has written several books. This resulted in the writing of the Advent devotions in December of 2022 with devotions from across the region. The intention is that the region will complete another devotional book during Lent in 2023.

Pastor's conference at Moses Merrill in the Fall, the speaker was J. R. Briggs from Philadelphia. He shared the idea of being a wounded healer with the pastors.

The Region Expo was held in October at Moses Merrill. It was the opportunity to say good bye to Robin Stoops. Greg felt it was well done and appreciated the sharing of everyone in the region.

Leadership team meetings held in November at camp and dates were set for 2023. Meeting dates for 2023 are January 7, April 22, August 26 and November 10-11, 2023

The region office is completing spring cleaning around the office and in a month or two it may look different. Using art we are going to present who we are as a region in the office. We are also trying to clean up the website and create some better resources on the website.

The region signed up to participate in "Tithe.ly" It is an online giving platform as opposed to using paypal. The region will create a button on the website for churches and individuals to give directly to the region.

Greg Mamula has been asked to be part of AB Homes of the Midwest board. AB Homes of the Midwest are a collection of care centers that are ABC in the Midwest.

The region continues to work with partner churches to assist in finding new pastors for churches. Scottsbluff, Fairbury, Benson, Norfolk and Sunset Hills churches are in search of pastors. Valley has identified and called a new pastor, Scott Jones, formerly of Benson Baptist Church.

The region has received a grant, in conjunction with Rocky Mountain region, Central Region, and Mid-American Churches to create and host a youth event in 2024.

Greg Mamula has visited churches around the region and continues to visit churches in the state.

Greg Mamula will be attending mission summit as presenter and to represent our region.

Greg Mamula looks forward to strengthening relationships with ABC. Will be traveling to Philadelphia in April to meet with partners in ABHMS, IM, and ABC USA.

Rick Wheatley offered his thanks to Greg Mamula as filing in as transitional exec minister

Closing business:

Craig Erickson advised that he can be reached by his email

Steve Wisthoff closed the meeting in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Nola Crooks
ABCNE Secretary

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