

TECUMSEH FBC: AWANA began its 13th year at FBC on Sept 14. A Men's Overnight Trip to Minnesota was held on Sept 23-24, with rappelling down a rock face enjoyed (?) by all.

TEKAMAH FBC: A church roller skating party was held on Sept 18 at Skate City in Fremont. FBC delivered Meals on Wheels the week of Sept 12-16. Good News Club, which meets at the City Auditorium, began on Sept 15, with FBC friends helping as leaders. A "Tasty Luncheon" was held at the church on Sept 16, with the theme "SON" FLOWERS, which is sponsored by the Fellowship Committee, and the entire area being invited.

NEW MEMBERS:

ALLIANCE FBC: Janet Chester, Rusty Heckman, Shawn Heckman, Eva Roebuck

BEATRICE FBC: Taylor Hancock, Karina and Kimberly Moreno

COLUMBUS FBC: Ryan Asay

LINCOLN FBC: Juki and MaryAnn Ng, Maryellen McGreer, Bill and Sheryl Kruse, Karissa and Kaitlin

ABC of Nebraska Staff

Executive Minister.....Susan Gillies
Area Minister.....Dave Lundholm
Minister of Mission Support.....Steve Bills
Director of Camps & Conferences..... Clarence Reiss
Camp Staff Jerry Buss, Elizabeth Dietrich, Lou Grotelueschen, Joe Huss, Beverly Pacas, Richard & Dolores Prather, Trudy Reiss, Adam Robley, Linda Wilmot
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Office Assistant..... Pat Galloway
Accounting Services.....Jerry Buss
Volunteer Mission Secretary.....Judie Heller
Christian Education Consultant Nola Oberhelman
Church Life Consultant..... A. J. Wagstaff
Pastor to Pastors (W)..... Paul Kondy
Pastor to Pastors (E)..... Dick Peterson
Youth Ministry Adjunct.....Jason Workman

THANKS!

Thanks to all of you who shared cards, letters and other greetings with me on my fifth anniversary as Executive Minister of ABC/NE. I was surprised by the wonderful box of good wishes presented to me at convention. It is a joy to serve with you. Susan Gillies



October is Pastor Appreciation Month

Remember to show your appreciation!



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American Baptist Churches of Nebraska



October 2005

ABC/NE Date Data

Adult Ministries Conference
Camp Moses Merrill
October 3-6, 2005

Women's Retreats
Camp Merrill Oct 7-9
Camp Norwesca Oct 14-16

Fall Clergy Seminar
Camp Moses Merrill
October 17-19

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Nebraskans Open Hearts In Response to Gulf Coast Disaster

From the first days following Hurricane Katrina, Nebraska Baptists were asking what they could do to help. The first team left on Sept 4, followed by five others on Sept 12. Efforts were coordinated with the entire ABC family. American Baptist Men's Trailers rolled from various regions around the country. American Baptist Women's Ministries put together wallets of pre-paid cards for grocery, drug and discount stores to give to displaced persons. ABC clergy provided pastoral care for those affected by the disaster. AB youth engaged in fund-raisers and helped assemble emergency supplies. Churches across Nebraska and the nation gave to One Great Hour of Sharing. Additional gifts in Nebraska paid for gas for the response teams. And everyone prayed.

ABC-USA Commends Nebraska Efforts

The Executive Committee of the ABC-USA General Board, meeting in Atlanta Sept. 15-16, issued a commendation to the ABC of Nebraska and the ABC of West Virginia for their prompt responses to the gulf coast disaster.

The ABC/NE "Churches Helping Churches" Initiative
By Bob Phares, Chairman, CHC Taskforce

In May of 2005 the Region board adopted the Churches Helping Churches Initiative in response to our ABC/NE Mission Statement and the vision of New Life 2010. Our stated purpose was to "encourage local ABC churches in Nebraska to connect with each other in ministries of teaching, nurturing, evangelism and fellowship".

We set several strategies for achieving that purpose and we felt that it was appropriate to report progress. We wanted to first meet with key leaders to brainstorm the possibilities and methods of achieving the purpose. We have done that.

Next we wanted to gather data from churches about needs they had and gifts they thought they could share. We chose the Region Staff Caravan as the vehicle to accomplish this and we are currently part way through those visits. Let me share with you some of the things we have learned.



The NEW LIFE CARAVAN continues its visits to ABC/NE churches. The Caravan recently stopped at Fairhaven Baptist near Lexington.

(Continued on page 4)

From the Executive Minister Susan Gillies

Responding to Need

Over the last few weeks we have had the experience of responding to the devastating tragedy of Hurricane Katrina.

One military person on the scene said that when he saw the pictures on the TV, it was like looking through a straw. When he got there, and saw it 360, it was more than he could believe. But even for us who "looked through a straw" watching it on TV, it became more than we could handle. Trying to imagine ourselves trying to cope with the crisis made us sick.

Most people who saw the images, wanted to help in some way. Rich people, poor people, Americans, folks from friendly and unfriendly nations – most of us wanted to do something. We couldn't stand to watch the pain. Not unlike the feeling we had just after Christmas when we saw the horror of the tsunami. Whether close or half a world away, we are connected.

Some of us exhausted ourselves being mad. Mad at people who didn't design a reasonable evacuation plan for a vulnerable city, mad that help couldn't get there sooner, mad that a loving God didn't stop the storm. Others of us tried to escape it. One person told me, "I can handle it in the newspaper but not on TV."

Nebraska Baptists were given a unique role we didn't seek. I've been asked to share our disaster response strategic plan. We didn't have one. It was simply that the pictures were too much. On that first Friday, we just put the word out that we would gather together anyone who wanted to do something. In two hours we had a dozen folks around a table deciding what to do. I looked around that table and saw folks from churches that were predominately European American, African American, Kachin and Sudanese. And I thought, "this is what Nebraska Baptists

look like now." I thanked God for the courage and determination of that group. And from that meeting, our response was born.

Prayer services were held, money was raised, people donated supplies and volunteered their time and vehicles.

For that moment, we kept our eyes on Jesus. And this relatively small region of the ABC, seemingly without adequate financial resources, got out of the boat and did what needed to be done. I can't express how grateful I am to serve with you.

The ABC-USA General Secretary sent his thanks. And Rev. Dr. Cheryl F. Dudley at Valley Forge wrote a prayer dedicated to those first efforts:

Prayer in Celebration of God's Work through God's People

(In honor of the first caravan from ABC of Nebraska)
We thank you, oh God, for the response of your people; your people who said, "we cannot wait, we must do something now" and did. They went without a clear plan but with willing hearts and supplies given and gathered compassionate souls. They went, having been sent with assurance that you would meet them there. You did. Your Spirit guides us through the darkness of our lives. Darkness is the same as light to you. Thank you for seeing ahead when we cannot. We are grateful, O God that your hand guides, as the faithful go. In Christ's name, Amen.



From the Minister of Mission Support..... Steve Bils



Surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses . . .

After recounting in chapter eleven the testimonies of the women and men who, by faith, "subdued kingdoms . . . worked righteousness . . . out of weakness were made strong . . . became valiant in battle," the author of Hebrews begins chapter twelve with an exhortation to us to run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking ultimately to Jesus, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross. Often we sacrifice the rewards of incomparable eternal value to avoid enduring anything.

I don't believe Hebrews 11 is an exhaustive list of all we those we should look to for examples of faith and faithfulness. The ABMen of Nebraska identified a sterling example when they recognized Rev. Palmer Swenson for a lifetime of achievement by naming him their 2005 *Clergy Person of the Year*.

Palmer grew up one of ten children on a Minnesota farm. After surviving what should have been a fatal illness at the age of 2, he went on to letter in football all four years in high school. He received a call to ministry at the age of 15 and was licensed to preach at 19. He attended Northern Seminary, graduating with a ThB in 1944, two years after marrying Helen Bates. He was ordained the same year at Foster Park Baptist Church in Chicago. Palmer and Helen had three children.

In addition to working at Camp Moses Merrill (see the photo from 1952) and Sioux Falls College, Palmer faithfully served pastorates in Illinois, Minnesota, South Dakota, Nebraska (Sunset Hills) and Wyoming before "retiring" in 1984. Since then he served interim pastorates at Tekamah, Mason City, Ansley, First Lincoln, Second Lincoln, First Omaha, Mead Emanuel, Omaha Immanuel, and Sunset Hills. Sunset Hills Baptist Church named Rev. Swenson *Pastor Emeritus* in June, 2004.

We all need heroes and role models. In Nebraska, we need look no farther than the men and women of faith like Palmer Swenson who, by faith, have "obtained a good testimony."



work in Tutwiler, Mississippi. They worked with the Tallahatchie Development League to install plumbing in the concrete floor of the building they are renovating for new use by the League. Three young men from Tutwiler: Dwight, Marcus, and John, assisted every day making it possible to complete that portion of the project. Portia Reeves celebrated her 100th birthday with an open house hosted by her family on Aug 20. Portia has been a life long member of the church and very much a part of so many church families lives. She was also a church organist/pianist for over 40 years. Portia will be 100 years old on Sept 26. The church had their annual outdoor worship service on Sept 4.

COLUMBUS FBC: A church cookout was held on Sept 17. Sunday School promotion was held in the morning of Aug 28, with perfect attendance pins and promotion certificates being awarded, and an ice cream social was held on that evening to kick off the "New Year of Education." Perfect attendance pins went to Lisa Wielgus and Samantha Wielgus for one year; Karen Effa - two years; Patrice Wielgus - three years; Cristina Adams, Pastor Adams, Rebecca Adams - four years; Bill Evans Jr. - 23 years; and Bill Evans III - 25 years. (Congratulations to all of them - well done!)

FAIRBURY FBC: Family Adventure Nights began on Sept 21, with a \$1.00 supper, fellowship and group activities, and will continue through Nov 16. Shoeboxes, wrapping paper and items, are being collected for the Christmas Shoebox Ministry. Dean & Marge Terrill, LeRoy & Bobby Welch, and Gail & LaDonna Southwick all celebrated 58th wedding anniversaries in September; and Joe and Gertrude Jelinek celebrated their 51st. The annual Men and Boys' Retreat was held at Camp Jefferson Sept 17-18. FBC is planning a Community Outreach Ministry where they will help the elderly with special needs winterize their homes.

FREMONT FBC: The Sunday School teaching staff has been enjoying the fact that the summer attendance has been one of the highest on record. Kids Klub began on Sept 7.

GIBBON FBC: The church hosted a Firefighters Appreciation BBQ for the Gibbon and Shelton Firefighters and their families on Sept 25 to show their appreciation for their dedicated service. FBC held the annual Sunset Social on Sept 26 for the area senior citizens, with Mel Berg, a Nashville gospel singer, entertaining.

GRAND ISLAND FBC: The Faith, Hope & Charity Circle wrapped shoe boxes at their September meeting in preparation for the Shoebox Ministry. Vivian Bernert-Banos celebrated her 80th birthday at an open house held at the church on Sept 10. G.L. & Ann Wood celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at an open house on Sept 17 at the church.

HOLDREGE FBC: The ABC/NE NEW LIFE CARAVAN was at FBC on Aug 25, where they enjoyed a potluck supper with the congregation. The ALL STARS FOR JESUS midweek program begins on Oct 5.

JUNIATA COMMUNITY CHURCH: The Women's Fellowship Group had Jeri Hausstlet,

Dean of Women at Hastings College, as their speaker on Sept 7.

LAVISTA JUDSON: Pastor Glenn traveled with the first Nebraska response team to Louisiana to minister to those in need. Health kits were assembled and sent to the stricken areas. In early September the youth met for pizza and a fun scavenger hunt. Many of them participated in "See You at the Pole" in mid-September. Our monthly Fellowship Luncheon was held in honor of Grandparents. The biggest event of the month was our Silent Auction. All proceeds from the auction go our expansion program. The AWANA program is up and running at full speed. The JOY Club (Just Older Youth) went on an outing to The Holy Family Shrine near Gretna. Last month the JOY Club had the privilege of hearing the Heartland Country Singers perform. We recognized Patriot's Day on Sept 11th and prayed for our country and remembered the terror that occurred on American soil. Next month includes a visit from Missionary Charles DeRolf, and our annual hayride and Wiener roast.

LINCOLN FBC: A reception to welcome Rev. Dr. Harry Riggs II and his family was held during the morning on Sept 11. During the next ten weeks the Wednesday night studies will be on the book, Welcome, Pastor. An "Honor Our Heroes" day was held on Sept 11, with Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy as special speaker with Rev. Riggs giving a meditation. A can show was held for the Riggs during the last part of August. A brochure telling the story of the 22 stained glass windows in the church has been printed with funds provided by Mrs. Dorothy Shaffer in memory of her husband, Dr. Harry Shaffer. Food for the Journey dinners began on Sept 18. The Children's Wednesday night programs began on Sept 14, with *Noah's Park* being the new theme.

LINCOLN SBC: Aug 28 was Rally Day celebration for 2005-2006 Sunday School. During the morning worship service Bibles were presented to all third graders; Pastor Jim Cummings traveled with the second team of ABC/NE responders; Safety Awareness Training workshops were held Sept 17 in the morning and afternoon Sept 18; Sept 18 was American Baptist Women Sunday; The evenings of Sept 23 & 24 a Dinner Theater production presented by the Music & Drama Committee and others, titled "Murder, Mayhem, and Marshmallow Salad" was enjoyed.

MASON CITY FBC: The ABW hosted the Custer Association of Baptist Women on Sept 30. The speaker was ABW state president Marge Daugherty, with the special project going to OGHs to go to held Katrina victims.

MCCOOK FBC: The ABW met on Sept 6 with Marge Daugherty as the speaker. The Wood Circle cleaned the church kitchen during their Sept meeting.

NORFOLK FBC: The ABW went to the Orphan Grain Train on Sept 8, where they had a tour and saw a film. Items for the Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Project are being collected, with the Crafters Group in charge of the FBC project. AWANA began its new year on Sept 14, with a "Christian Carnival".

OMAHA FIRST KACHIN BAPTIST CHURCH: FKBC is raising funds for a room in the new Calvary Lodge in Camp Merrill, which will be named for Dr. Ola Hansen, the Baptist missionary from Oakland, NE who translated the Bible into Kachin and brought the Gospel to the Kachin people.

OMAHA PARKSIDE BC: We had a picnic with the Kachin Church where we had great fellowship, and enjoyed the ethnic dishes, which the Kachin people tamed down a little for the PBC people.

OMAHA SUNSET HILLS BC: Cal & Lila Anson returned from their mission trip to Green Lake. Offerings and a large amount of supplies were collected for hurricane relief. Sunset Hills presented a check at the Family Reunion to fund upkeep of Calvary Baptist's Cabin 9 at Camp Merrill. A church Labor Day breakfast was enjoyed. Forgiveness led the worship service on Sept 11 with Mark Caughey providing the message. The youth conducted the Sept 18 service. The new Sunday school year began with new programs: Kids Club and Adult Connection, including a new young adult class led by Todd Ray. The ABM "Women and Men Working Together" will host a time on Oct 2 with special speakers: Rev. Charles DeRolf, missionary to Japan; Rev. Charlene Quarells, Church Plant graduate; Stephen Foreman, a VIM (Volunteer in Mission) worker at Kodiak Baptist Mission, and Rev. Steve Bils, Sturgis Rally Emergency Services Center. The youth participated in the "See Your at the Pole Rally" on Sept 20, and at "See You at the Pole" on Sept 21.

OXFORD FBC: Our church family hosted a surprise birthday party for Pastor Dave Hunt on Sunday, Aug 14. The family of Freda Balliet hosted a "birthday reception" for Freda's 90th birthday on Aug 27. Freda has been an active member of First Baptist Church since 1926. Promotion Sunday was on Sunday, Aug 28 and was followed by a picnic. The Southern Union Association met at FBC on Sept 18, and included men's and women's meetings, supper, and a communion service.

SCOTTSBUFF FBC: Sept 18 was "Welcome Home Sunday". Sunday School Promotion was held during the SS hour, with children entering the third grade receiving a Bible and certificates of promotion given, the "Welcome Home" theme was used during the worship service, a carry-in dinner was held at noon, sponsored by the Gethsemane Troupers Spanish Class, and then an open house was held at the Annex, which has been refurbished, painted, and new furnishings added to make it an appealing atmosphere for the BYF. A special Sunday evening service was held with singing, special music, the sharing of God's Word, and fellowship. A "Week of Revival, Renewal, and Refreshment" was held Sept 25-28, with Dr. Patrick Pang, who is a product of the American Baptist Missions in Singapore, and is now a VP at Rainbow Acres, was the speaker. The Soup Suppers began on Sept 7. A group of deacons and other men are studying "Breakout Churches", looking for ways that FBC can be positioned for God's blessings.

From the Area Minister Dave Lundholm

An Opportunity for Laity to Take a Look at the Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches (part 6)

Affirmation 6 reads as follows:

"I will maintain a disciplined ministry in such ways as keeping hours of prayer and devotion, endeavoring to maintain wholesome family relationships, sexual integrity, financial responsibility, regularly engaging in educational and recreational activities for professional and personal development. I will seek to maintain good health habits."

It would be very easy to extend the commentary on this affirmation over the course of six or seven monthly columns. This affirmation is hugely important but I will just comment on the high points.

... keeping hours of prayer and devotion... We aren't talking about 5 minutes a day with the Secret Place, rather significant chunks of time for prayer and devotional activities that feed the pastor's soul. One of the key indicators that a pastor is about to leave ministry is that times of prayer and devotion drop off his or her schedule. We are rediscovering in Nebraska that time in prayer results in miraculous opportunities and resources for ministry. It's ok to hold your pastor accountable in the area of keeping intentional times of prayer and devotion.

... wholesome family relationships... Often the most neglected parishioners are the pastor's family. I recently charged a Nebraska pastor to "...give a juicy slice of your time to your family... and not merely let them have the crumbs that fall from your time table." Most pastors whose family has left the nest regret that they didn't spend more time with their family. Hold your pastor accountable in this area. (And give them the uninterrupted time and space to pursue wholesome family relationships.)

... sexual integrity... This means fidelity in marriage and

celibacy if not married.

... financial responsibility... Many churches have stories of pastors that came, ran up debts and then left without paying them. Some pastors (like many others) have gotten over their heads in consumer debt. Neither of these practices is acceptable. Pastors are called to live within their means, provide for their future, and fulfill their responsibilities.

... educational and recreational activities.... In order to stay fresh, pastors need to be constantly challenged by new ideas and approaches. They also need to review some of the learnings they had in their education in light of the experiences they have had in the practice of ministry. In addition there is the saying, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull (preacher)."

... good health habits ... (In light of my recent health issues this one is particularly meaningful to me). Many pastors work in excess of 60 hours a week. For many, exercise is moving from the platform chair to the pulpit. Many pastors are over their ideal weight, and don't care what they eat. Some haven't seen a doctor in years. You can expect your pastor to be an example to you in pursuing good health.

Your pastor has covenanted to maintain a disciplined ministry. It is appropriate for the congregation to hold them accountable to this covenant.



LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

by Darlene Rimpley

November Deadlines
October 11, 2005 - Print Copy
October 14, 2005 - E-Mail

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ALLIANCE FBC: China Missionary Evangelist Jim Moffett and family were guests of the church on Sunday Aug 21. Four attended the ordination service for Darren Stroh on Sunday Aug 28. The Church celebrated the wedding of Derrick Warfield and Monica Buskirk on Aug 5. This year's Bible School Aug 1-5 had an enrollment of 39.

News Club, and Fifth Quarter Parties are held in the church basement, with FBC personnel helping in each group.

BEATRICE FBC: Promotion Sunday was held Aug 28 during the Sunday School hour. Wednesday Night Kid's Club began on Sept 14 with a pizza party. The Kid's Club offerings will go to Heifer Project International.

BRIDGEPORT FBC: Bridgeport has purchased land for the building of a new church. We've started a new program entitled "Tables Of Eight" which is a way to get acquainted with other members of our church family. The Worship Team took part in a "Country Cowboy Church Service" during the fair. Eight of our youth went to "Godstock". We co-sponsored a weekend series of concerts by Christa Shore and her group "Beyond The Veil". Mark and Todd Kesterson were baptized. We held a Sunday

School Brunch and Service in the City Park. Pastor Darren was ordained on Aug 28, and his pastor that dedicated him as an infant was able to be there.

BROKEN BOW FBC: Interim Pastor Frank Gillett and his wife, Delores, have resigned the interim ministry, citing his age of 84 as the reason. FBC held a rummage sale during the Junk Jaunt.

CAPITOL ASSOCIATION: The Men's Golf Tournament was held on Sept 17 at Mahoney Golf Course.

CHADRON FBC: Rally Day was held on Sept 18, beginning with juice, coffee, and donuts, followed by quizzes, and a potluck dinner.

CHAPMAN FBC: Pastor Pat Moore and his wife, Julie, spent Aug 12 - 19 doing volunteer

ARNOLD FBC: Sunday School Promotion was held Sept 4, with the students going into third grade receiving a Bible. FBC took part in the Arnold Festival by helping with the annual Ministerial Breakfast, having a float in the parade, and taking part in the Church in the Park Singpiration, followed by a prayer time for the victims of Katrina. The cement has been run and construction of the new church building is underway. The church had a garage sale on the "Junk Jaunt" Sept 23-24, with the proceeds going to the new church kitchen. FCA, Good



(Clockwise from upper left): Wyatt Spurgin, incoming VP of ABMen of NE, honors Susan Gillies on the occasion of her 5th Anniversary as Executive Minister; Dr. Jeff Johnson helps pack Hurricane Katrina relief supplies; the Convention Choir rehearses under Pastor Paul Marine. It blessed the gathering on Saturday night and Sunday morning; Mike Kidder, Pastor Glenn Williamson and Trudi Bils help MaryBeth Robertson explain the value of Central Seminary's Omaha extension.



**Vow the VOW!
October 2005**

- ✂ **Oct 2 Psalm 24:1***
The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.
- ✂ **Oct 9 Mark 10:14***
[Jesus said to them,] "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."
- ✂ **Oct 16 Hebrews 4:16†**
Let us, then, feel free to come before God's throne. Here there is grace. And we can receive mercy and grace to help us when we need it.
- ✂ **Oct 23 Psalm 104:24†**
Lord, you have made many things. With your wisdom you made them all. The earth is full of your riches.
- ✂ **Oct 30 Hebrews 7:25†**
[Jesus] is always able to save those who come to God through him. He can do this, because he always lives, ready to help those who come before God.

*New International Version †New Century Version

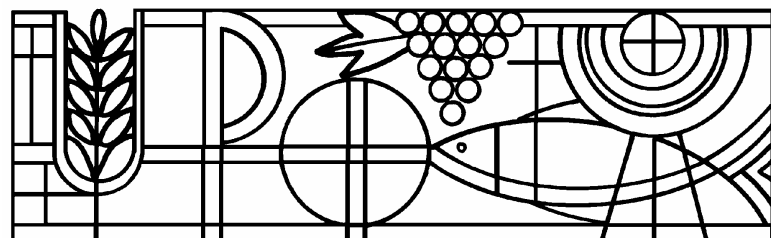
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Church _____ Accountability Partner _____

*"Your word have I hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You."
Psalm 119:11**

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Churches Helping Churches

(Continued from page 1)

Gifts to share: 22 Choir robes, expertise of hospital ministry, expertise of senior adult ministry, youth group, youth group leader training, pulpit exchange, artists willing to paint, sign maker, worship team and how to create one, how to create fellowship and hospitality experiences, ranch camp, quilters.

Needs: building maintenance and minor repairs, evangelism and ways to attract youth, Bible school help, ministry ideas for widows, learn Spanish, children's ministry help, how to integrate contemporary worship into Sunday morning, new teaching skills, men's group organization and motivation.

So what do we need now and where are we headed?

The Region wants to be a match maker and a clearing house. **If you see a gift your church could use we want to know about it, if you see a need your church could respond to we want to know about it.** There are already churches helping churches in ways we don't know about and we want you to tell us when those events occur so we can celebrate them with you. If the caravan hasn't been to your church yet, get to thinking. We need to know needs that you have and gifts you want to share with others.

Finally, in our strategies we are working with the ABC/NE board and its committees to do self-reviews to see how we can incorporate this initiative into all that we do.

Stay tuned as we look forward to celebrating what we are doing together in ministry.

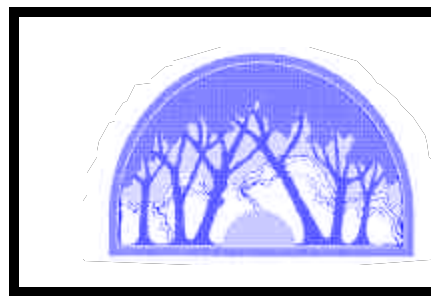


**Groundbreaking for
Calvary Lodge**

Ground breaking looked a little different than it usually does but the job still got done. This ground breaking was for Calvary Lodge at Camp Merrill but the ground breaking took place in the hotel meeting room at the Family Reunion.

ABC/NE leadership, surprised by the speed of fundraising results, gave the "go ahead" for a convention ground breaking. Actual construction will begin in early October.

The major donor for Calvary Lodge was Calvary Baptist in Omaha which gave a large gift to the project when the church ended its ministry last winter. Helping to turn over the first shovels of dirt were former Calvary member Ken Hightower and Camp Director Clarence Reiss.



Camp Moses Merrill News

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PRAISE THE LORD FOR CAMPERS

The program camping season is over, and I must admit that along about the end of July we are wondering if it would ever end. But, after it quiets down and we look back we remember how great it was and very glad we had this opportunity to serve. This summer we had 386 exuberant campers and 121 wonderful volunteer program staff. Now it is my job to tabulate the evaluations, and I love to see the remarks like, "camp was awesome", and "I'll be back next year", from the campers. But what really makes me feel good are comments like, "She was really shy and closed up in the beginning but as the week progressed she opened up and we really saw a difference" or "She seemed to really grow this week, at the beginning of the week, she seemed weak in faith" or "He has a desire to follow the Lord". These comments were written by Group or Cabin Leaders as they observed the youth in their particular group. The goal of Camp Moses Merrill is to provide an environment that encourages campers to make steps of faith and spiritual growth. Evaluations revealed that: **19 made a first time decision for Christ, 89 made a recommitment decision for Christ, 90 prayed a prayer of assurance and 7 felt a call to full-time ministry.** Isn't that fabulous! We would really like it if every child made one of the above decisions, but, even though all did not we can feel sure the Holy Spirit was present and that seeds were planted—Maybe next year! And now it is up to us; Pastor, Parent, Church Congregation, and Friends to set an example, to listen, and encourage continued Christian growth.



Dolores Prather

**OCTOBER CAMP CALENDAR
AMERICAN BAPTIST EVENTS**

- 3-6 Adult Ministries
- 7-9 AB Women's Retreat
- 17-19 Pastor's Conference

AUGUST GIFTS

Our thanks go to:

- Mr & Mrs. Ralph Buss-Monetary donation.
- Octavia Community Church-Monetary donation
- Larry Stiverson-wood chipper.
- Charles & Mary Davison-bed, bedding & hand-made quilt.
- Wendell Verhage-tomatoes & constructing a water pressure tank enclosure.

TREASURE?

You bet!! We hosted a group of Nazarene Ladies from Omaha last weekend. They were given a tour of our facilities via the hay wagon and were very impressed with what they saw, as most visitors are. One lady commented, "You sure have a treasure here". So many churches are unable to have their own camp. This particular church has camps for their kids but they go to a motel or some other commercial building and do not have the benefits of a wonderful outdoors facility. Let us never take CMM for granted. In fact, October is a beautiful time to visit, the Cottonwood Trees are vibrant! Why not bring your Sunday School Class out for a picnic?



DP