



• The Communicator •

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Dr. Marshall Peters, Executive Minister
Issue 4, 2016



Rev. Dr. Jeff Woods, ABC Associate General Secretary for Regional Ministries, gave the message Friday night.



Rev. Dr. Al Fletcher, ABC Associate General Secretary for Mission Resource Development, spoke on Saturday.



Mid-American Baptist Churches Executive Minister, Rev. Dr. Marshall Peters (above left), presented Region President Rev. Jim Laupp with a plaque and gavel in thanks for his service from 2014-16.

MID-AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES GATHERING 2016

More than 130 people from Mid-American Baptist Churches gathered in Ames, Iowa, the first weekend in October for worship, fellowship, and education. Many thanks to First Baptist Church of Ames, which provided a great venue for the gathering and whose members gave of their time and talents to host this event.

A highlight of this gathering was the offering of workshops for church members with particular roles in their congregations. Photos from some of the workshops can be found on page 4 of this issue of The Communicator.



Above, the Region fellowship choir performs under the direction of Carol Teare.
Photos courtesy of Jim Weigner and Ruth Yeaton





I am writing this editorial before the election has taken place. Because of the lead time it takes to produce 'The Communicator' by the time you read this we will know who is the next president of the United States. At this point, I do not know who that will be, but I am certain that the discord within our country that has become so evident during the course

of this campaign will not have disappeared on November 8th. There will be those who are happy with the result and those who are sad and angry. Even beyond the personalities of the candidates, the divisions that have become evident will remain.

Therefore, my question and the question I think all of us should be asking is 'What is the role of the church in the midst of these divisions?' For me the answer is that we should be a living example of how the love of Christ can enable those of differing backgrounds, viewpoints and politics to peacefully coexist together – and even affirm one another as people created by God. Rather than taking part in fanning the flames of division, we are called to recognize

that we are all part of one body, working together to carry out the mission entrusted to us by God.

I believe that we as American Baptists are uniquely suited to do this. We are part of a denomination that is diverse racially, ethnically, theologically and in many other ways. However, we choose to respect one another and come together to further the work of Christ. This doesn't mean that we are always in agreement on everything or even that we fully understand each other's viewpoints. However, it does show that we are ready to be true to the vision laid out for us in Ephesians 4 – that we are all members of one body and that we need one another in order to be complete.

Our Region vision and mission is based upon this concept. You see in our Region logo the words 'Working Together – Building Up the Body'. This is more than just a tagline. It is our vision of what we have been commanded to do through scripture and through knowing that we are not complete without one another.

What a gift it would be if we could more fully live out this vision and then see it spill out into the world around us. I believe that we are perfectly situated to be the leaven that reaches out into our society to show how we can move forward together. My hope and prayer is that each one of us will do our own small part each day to discover and build on our common ground with others and find ways that we can all work together to accomplish God's purposes.

In Christ's Peace,
Marshall Peters



HURRICANE MATTHEW

Initial grants totaling \$25,000 in One Great Hour of Sharing emergency relief funds were sent to American Baptist International Ministries partners in Haiti, Cuba and the Caribbean after Hurricane Matthew barreled through on October 3rd and 4th, 2016.

Additional relief is urgently needed. You may give through your church, make an online contribution by credit card at <http://abc-oghs.org/donate>, or mail a check to International Ministries, Attn: OGHS-Hurricane Matthew, P.O. Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482. Write "OGHS-Hurricane Matthew" on the memo line if you give by check.

FLOOD RELIEF IOWA

A grant of \$2,000 in One Great Hour of Sharing emergency relief funds was provided to assist those affected by flooding in the area of Plainfield, IA. Thank you for your continued support of the OGHS offering that provides assistance both here close to home and around the world.

ABC GENERAL SECRETARY SEARCH

The General Secretary Search Committee for American Baptist Churches has met face to face and by conference call to prayerfully discern the way forward in the search for our next General Secretary. The committee seeks the best qualified candidate who will serve ABCUSA with a sense of deep faith and love of Christ, engage in collaboration with denominational and ecumenical partners, offer both a pastoral and prophetic presence, and be the harmonizer who calls all American Baptists into unity. The General Secretary position profile is now posted on the ABCUSA website, www.abc-usa.org.



American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) is accepting applications from artists and performers interested in showcasing their artistic expressions at American Baptist Churches USA's Biennial Mission Summit to be held June 30-July 2, 2017, in Portland, OR.

For more information, go to www.abhms.org and click on the related news release.

Applications must be submitted online by Dec. 16, 2016.

MID-AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN IN MINISTRY



Pictured above are Mid-ABC clergywomen who attended the Women in Ministry event held September 26, 2016.

FOREST LAKE CAMP STAFF CHANGES

The Forest Lake Ministry Team has named Christian Krohg as the Program Director for the camp. He previously served in this position in an interim capacity. The team has also named new Camp Managers for the camp, Shawn and Teresa Ott. The Otts have moved into the house on site and will be available to answer your questions and make bookings when you call the Forest Lake telephone number. Welcome, Shawn and Teresa!



NEW REGION PASTORS

Pastors new to Region churches since the last Biennial Gathering in attendance in Ames (L to R): Emily Beltrame, Children, Youth, and Family Minister at FBC Des Moines, IA; Rev. Gundar Lamberts, Westover Baptist, Des Moines, IA; Jay Thornton, FBC Pella, IA; Rev. Steve Miller, FBC Camanche, IA; Rev. Steve Swanholm, FBC Eagle Grove, IA; and Devin Wolters, FBC Jefferson, IA.

MATTHEW 25 GRANT RECEIVED

The Woodbury Baptist Church in Woodbury, MN, has received a Matthew 25 Grant in the amount of \$1,625. This grant will be used to provide weekend meals to elementary school children for one year.

The next application period for Matthew 25 grants will begin July 1, 2017. For more information about the grants, go to <http://www.abc-usa.org/matthew25/>.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Each year, the **Religious Liberty Essay Scholarship Contest** engages high school students in church-state issues by directing them to express a point of view on a religious liberty topic. Essays are judged on the depth of their content, the mastery of the topic, and the skill with which they are written. Students should develop a point of view on the issue and demonstrate critical thinking, using appropriate examples, reasons and other evidence to support their position. The annual contest is sponsored by the Religious Liberty Council of the Baptist Joint Committee. The grand prize is \$2,000 and a trip for two to Washington, D.C. Second prize is \$1,000, and third prize is \$500.

Go to <http://bjconline.org/contest/> for more information and to download the necessary form.

Mid-ABWM Scholarship

Is there a student in your church family who will be attending college in 2017-18? Go the Region website, www.mid-abc.org, and click on Ministries: American Baptist Women to download and print a form for the Mid-ABWM Scholarship. The form must be filled out and mailed by March 15, 2017 for consideration by the committee.





BIENNIAL SNAPSHOTS
October 7-8, 2016
Ames, Iowa



DAYTON OAKS CAMP WORK WEEK



Dayton Oaks Camp has greatly benefited from all the volunteers that have helped with time, money, and prayers. This year much was accomplished with a smaller group for the work week than normal. The firewood for the entire year was cut, split, and stacked in a dry



place. This is a huge undertaking and requires a good sized crew working five or six days. The shelter has been filled and corded to a depth of seven or eight feet. Windows were washed in the cafeteria and leaf removal around the Lodge and Guest House was completed.

Camp Director Matt and Dani Siebert along with twelve volunteers provided 45 work days during this work week. We had one "first timer." Thank you all and may God bless each of you in a special way, for your generosity in giving your time, money, and prayers.

Gary Morrison



REGION YOUTH EVENT - RYE 2016

PARTNERS IN REGION MINISTRY

Please consider becoming a Partner in Region Ministry, financially supporting the regional ministry that we hold in common. Now, more than ever before, we need your assistance. Your tax-deductible gift will assist in providing resources for our local churches so that they may become stronger and more effective witnesses in their local communities. Some of the ministries that gifts to the Region have enabled over the past year include:

- Training and preparing individuals for ordained ministry
- Support for Region camping and youth programs
- Conflict intervention in local churches
- Renewal resources and training for local churches
- Assisting congregations in stewardship planning
- Plus many, many other areas of ministry

Fill out the form on the back of this page of the Communicator and mail to:

**Partners in Region Ministry
Mid-American Baptist Churches
2400 NW 86th St., Suite 15
Des Moines, IA 50322**

CHURCH NEWS

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First Baptist Church of Waterloo, IA, took part in the annual free community barbeque. They served about 250 people.



We are saddened to report that **Rev. Thomas E. Wheeler** passed away Nov. 4, 2016 after a long battle with cancer. Memorial services were held at the Indianola First Baptist Church. Tom was deeply involved

in the life of the Region. He had served as the Director of Camping in the past, was one of the leaders of the 'WisdomSeekers' group and participated in many other ways. He served as Pastor or Interim Minister at Knoxville, Fort Madison, Bethany in Ottumwa, Indianola, and Atlantic, all in Iowa.

Our sympathies to the family of **Rev. Dr. Harold Mincey** of Cedar Rapids, IA, who passed away on Tuesday, October 11th. He was 88 years old. Harold served as an Area Minister for Mid-American Baptist Churches from 1978 until his retirement in 1993. He first served Area IV and then worked with Areas II and III.

First Baptist Church of Boone, IA, recently celebrated their 150th anniversary. The special speaker was Dr. Stan Slade, who is on staff with International Ministries as a global consultant and Associate Executive Director of Program. The pastor is Rev. Janell Bloem.



We celebrate with **Rev. Ashley Whitaker**, pastor of The United Church in Mapleton, MN, her call to Hyde Park Union Church in Chicago, IL. This move means that Ashley will no longer be available to serve on our Region staff.

Daren Barnett was installed as pastor of **First Baptist Church of Winnebago, MN**, on September 25th.

I want to support our Region's ministry and be a:

- Associate of Region Ministry (Gift up to \$100)
- Friend of Region Ministry (Gift of \$100 - \$249)
- Sustaining Partner in Region Ministry (Gift of \$250 - \$499)
- Renewing Partner in Region Ministry (Gift of \$500 - \$999)
- Transforming Partner in Region Ministry (Gift of \$1,000 - \$4,999)
- Visionary Partner in Region Ministry (Gift of \$5,000 or more)

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

- Please do not add my email address to the Region email list
- Please contact me about Planned Giving and/or Estate Planning
- Please keep my gift confidential

MID-AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN'S FALL RALLIES



Mang Sonna, Director of the Bethel Neighborhood Center in Kansas City, KS, was the featured speaker at the **Area IV Rally** held at First Baptist Church of Malvern, IA. Several members of the Bethel staff and volunteers also traveled to Malvern to share their stories.



There were 40 in attendance at the **Area III Fall Rally**, held at First Baptist Church of Fairfield, IA, and \$500 was raised by silent auction for the Women's and Girls Fund.

Carol Teare presented a program on the importance of mentors, guides, and partners on our spiritual journey and gave a brief overview of the ways the Region can resource and assist congregations and pastors.

OWATONNA ABW CUT-UPS

By Barb De Reus, ABW President

Every Monday at **First Baptist Church of Owatonna, MN**, the ABW CUT-UPS meet in the fellowship hall to work on quilts, pillows, rolled bandages, and other mission items. The group started in the late 1970's with three participants who made quilts for Project Hope in Appalachia. When that project was completed, the ladies decided to continue working on quilts and pillows, and roll bandages and gather items for White Cross.

The CUT-UPS have donated quilts, pillows, and afghans for flood and disaster relief, for children and youth in need, for newly released prisoners, and for various mission projects. In 1994, the group gave 40 quilts to Dayton Oaks for their dormitory.

The average number of items made each year by this team since 2001 is astounding:

Adult Quilts - 91	Adult Afghans - 12	Pillows - 82
Baby Quilts - 53	Baby Afghans - 12	Blankets - 44
Rolled Bandages - 4233		



SPECIAL PROJECT

A special project of the American Baptist Women of **Altamont Baptist, Harlan, IA**, was to donate purses to Phoenix House, a shelter for women who have fled domestic abuse. The purses were filled with personal items such as body wash, lipstick, comb, mirror, tissues, and then were used at the shelter as rewards for completion of various classes offered to better the lives of the women.



SAVE THE DATE!
April 22, 2017
M-ABWM Event at Dayton Oaks
All Women and Girls Invited!

Love Gift Totals as of 3rd Quarter 2016
YTD - \$13,739.49
Last YTD - \$11,180.27

Mid-American Baptist Churches
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Des Moines, IA 50322-4306

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The **COMMUNICATOR**

SAVE THE DATE!
Next Quilters' Retreat - Oelwein
May 5-7, 2017



Participants at the Mid-ABC 2016 Fall Quilters' Retreat worked on their own projects but also made kits for Days for Girls, an organization that helps keep girls in under-developed countries in school. More than a dozen kits were completed.



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June Peters, Editor
Mid-American Baptist Churches
2400 86th St, Suite 15
Des Moines IA 50322-4306
515-278-1411 FAX 278-5865
office@mid-abc.org
www.mid-abc.org
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