



• The Communicator •

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Dr. Marshall Peters, Executive Minister
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JR. HIGH WINTER BLAST



Youth from First Baptist Churches of Boone, Pella, and Waterloo descended on Dayton Oaks Camp in January for Jr. High Winter Blast. They took to the trails, past and present, learning about the ‘ancient paths’ God’s people have walked for millennia (Deuteronomy 6:5) and had a great time studying, hiking, playing, learning, movie-going, and sharing a meal together.

The theme for the weekend was the Shema, a passage in the Old Testament that the older generation taught the younger generation to say when they woke up, when they lay down, and along the road. They were taught to remember that God is one and to love God with all their heart, soul, and strength.

Two graduates of the Region Youth iLead series, Hannah Searcy (Urbandale) and Luke Duenwald (Pella), provided their leadership abilities along with adult leaders Kara and Christian Krohg, Joe Greemore, and Britney Bouk.

The Region Youth Team hopes to rotate between iLead and Winter Blast each year with a high school event one year and a junior high event the next.



AMERICAN BAPTISTS TO GATHER IN PORTLAND

The Biennial Mission Summit Planning Team is excited to announce the speakers for the 2017 Biennial Mission Summit, June 30-July 2, 2017, in Portland, OR. The Rev. Sharon T. Koh, executive director/CEO of American Baptist International Ministries, will bring the message during the Friday evening worship service. Dr. Jeffrey Haggray, executive director of American Baptist Home Mission Societies, will preach during the Saturday evening worship service. On Sunday morning, the service will feature an address by the incoming General Secretary of American Baptist Churches USA as he or she enters this new leadership role. The theme of the Biennial Mission Summit is "Connect!" For more information about the Biennial Mission Summit, visit www.americanbaptists2017.com.

American Baptist churches are invited to register as Church Sponsors for the Biennial Mission Summit. Once an ABC church has registered as a Sponsor, an unlimited number of members from that church may register as individuals at a reduced individual registration rate, with up to \$100 in savings for each individual. For individual registration, go to <http://tinyurl.com/gwl3h5p>.

Mid-American Baptist Women’s Ministries and ABGirls Annual Conference
Saturday April 22, 2017
Dayton Oaks Camp
More info on page 7

AMERICA FOR CHRIST OFFERING 2017



Your America for Christ offering makes a life-changing impact through ministries and resources that vitalize our congregations and communities with the hope of Jesus Christ, in this region and across the nation.



FROM THE EXECUTIVE MINISTER . . .



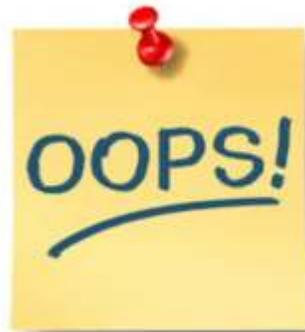
When my wife and I were appointed to serve as American Baptist missionaries in the country of Thailand, one of the first things we had to do was move to Bangkok in order to learn the Thai language. On our first day of classes we were told that the first Thai phrase we would learn was one of the most important ones – ‘Pit ben Kruu’ –

which roughly translates to ‘Mistake is our teacher’. The teachers emphasized that the only way that we would ever learn a new language was if we were willing to apply what we were learning, be willing to make mistakes and maybe even be laughed at as we attempted to speak. They pointed out that children are better at learning languages because they have not yet learned that fear of failure. This is something we learn as we grow older and we become much more cautious because our own decision-making process, self-worth and ability can be questioned if we fail.

In the book of Matthew we read that Jesus said that we are to become like little children. I believe that one of the things that we are to do is to reclaim that ability to try new things, to make mistakes and even to fail at something on occasion. Too often in our churches we choose the safe route and do not try new ways of ministering in the name of Christ. We are afraid of failure and what others might think or say. Sometimes

this fear is well founded, as some are ready to pounce on failures and devalue people because something did not work.

However, the way we learn and move into a new future is by trying new things – sometimes succeeding and sometimes failing. We need to allow our churches and leadership to try out new ideas and learn from mistakes along the way. When Thomas Edison was working on the lightbulb, he was asked how it felt to have failed so many times. His reply was that he had not failed but had rather uncovered thousands of ways that would not work that helped him to come up with the way that would work.



American Baptist churches around the country have been experimenting with new ways of sharing the Good News. Some of what they have tried has been a success, some things a failure. However, even if the outcomes were not what they expected they learned new lessons along the way.

I would encourage you to let your Region staff know about some of the experiments you have attempted in your local congregations, whether successful or not. I’m always grateful when I can connect congregations who are trying new things, so they can learn from each other -- and even from each other’s mistakes. Let us give each other permission to make mistakes along the way as we seek to communicate the love of Christ to a needy and ever-changing world.

In Christ’s Peace,
Marshall Peters

JOIN THE MINISTERS COUNCIL

It’s time to join or renew your membership in the Ministers Council. Membership is a bargain and the benefits are great. A wealth of resources, collegial relationships, training events and connections with the National Ministers Council are a few of the benefits you’ll receive.

As an added bonus all members will receive a \$40 travel expense stipend to attend The Prairie Pastors Conference on April 24-26, 2017.

Annual membership dues range from \$10-125 (depending on income level).

Go to <http://tinyurl.com/hcsqbeb> for a downloadable form to register.

2017 Prairie Pastors Conference
“By My Spirit: Aligning With God’s Will”
April 24 - 26, 2017
Speaker: Timothy Geoffrion



A special grant covers the cost for our Region.

To register, call the Region Office at 515-278-1411 or email office@mid-abc.org.
Do NOT register online.

BEHAVIOR YOU CAN EXPECT FROM YOUR PASTORAL LEADERS

A series by the Reverend Dr. Joe Kutter

Joe Kutter has served American Baptist churches in Michigan and Kansas. He is a past Executive Director of the American Baptist Ministers Council.

Dear American Baptists:

I am writing primarily to those among us who are not ordained, to the “Lay Folk” who sustain our churches and our ministries. But I want to talk about “The Ordained,” those frequently called “Ministers.” I want to talk about your pastor and the others who serve Christ and you through the agencies of the church.

Ministers, you are more than welcome to read these short letters because I will be talking about you, and you may want to improve or correct the things that I say. Please feel free. (joe.kutter@abccr.org) Actually, as you may know, I’ll be talking about us since I am a member of the cohort of the ordained.

About what will we be talking? I want to introduce you, the Lay Folks, to a short document called, “The Covenant

and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches.” (With that title, it should be a best seller!)

Now some lay person is asking, “Why? Isn’t that a boring paper for ministers? What does it have to do with me? The short answer is, “Yes, it is for ministers, and it has everything to do with you!” It describes the behavior that you can expect from your pastoral leader as she or he relates to you, to your church, and to your community. It describes the standards to which we aspire. It describes your minister at his or her very best.

(Spoiler Alert: You may be surprised to learn that our ethical standards are a bit at variance from what you may expect.)

This is a “Code of Ethics,” not a statement of faith. We will talk more about behavior and less about belief, though the two are intimately connected. We will talk about ethics rather than theology.

Why write this series? I have served Christ and Church as an ordained minister since 1971, 39 years as a pastor and four years as the Executive Director of the American Baptist Ministers Council. I am proud of my colleagues in ministry. I am proud of the standards to which we aspire. When one of us slips up, the rumor mills run wild. In some cases, the headlines scream in deafening decibels, and they probably should. In recent decades, a number of tragic scandals have caused immeasurable harm to thousands of people, and the reputation of all clergy persons has been stained. Too many of you wonder if the ordained among us can be trusted.

My first response is this. The overwhelming majority of our ordained colleagues are women and men of irreproachable integrity. They seek to do the right things in the right ways at the right times.

It is true, we have been disappointed from time to time to learn of a leader who violated our trust and the standards of behavior to which we hold ourselves accountable. That tragic reality acknowledged, most of our ordained leaders engage ministry with honor and integrity, and I want you to know the basic standards that form the foundation of our ethical lives.

So, with the next letter, I’ll begin to walk you through our code of ethics. I want you to share my pride and trust in our ordained leaders.

IA & MN YOUTH! SAVE THE DATE

RYE 2017

Nov. 3-5

**JOIN US FOR
THE MID-ABC
REGION YOUTH EVENT!**

*This is an opportunity for youth from
across Iowa and Minnesota to come
together for a WEEKEND OF
WORSHIP, PRAYER, GAMES
WORKSHOPS, PRAYER AND
FUN!*

**In Cedar Rapids, IA
at The Church on
Northland**

(FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH -
CHURCH OF THE
BRETHREN)

**Don't miss
this unique
opportunity
to connect!**

f FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK FOR UPDATES!
<https://www.facebook.com/RegionYouthEvent>

MID-AMERICAN BAPTISTS HAVE A HEART FOR MISSIONS

First Baptist Church of Ames, IA, will be sending a team to Muskogee, Oklahoma over spring break to work at the Murrow Indian Children's Home. Established in 1887, Murrow currently provides a home for around 25 Native American children. These are children that are in State or Tribal custody and in the current foster care and adoption system. Murrow is a ministry affiliated with American Baptist Churches USA and the campus is adjacent to Bacone College, an ABC-related school that is a historically Native American college.

Our work will include maintenance and work projects on grounds and residential cottages at Murrow as well as opportunities to interact with the residents. We will also tour Bacone College and worship at the Bacone College Church.

We had a great evening at our annual Cook-Off, sampling lots of wonderful and creative dishes. Phyllis Schrag took first place with her Sadie's Rhubarb Delight. We raised \$467.19 for our spring break mission trip to Oklahoma.



Cook-Off winners pose with their awards.



A team of Mid-American Baptists, pictured above, went to Tijuana, Mexico in late February to work at Deborah's House. They made good progress in the sewing room, painting the walls and shelving and getting the light fixtures installed.

Women and children who are victims of domestic violence have found a refuge at Deborah's House. There are counseling services for families in crisis, as well as a shelter for women and children. The mission team, from FBC in Johnston, IA, and FBC Waterloo, IA, was impressed and uplifted by the stories they heard.

2018 MISSION OPPORTUNITY

Would you like to be part of a Mission 'Excursion' Team to serve our American Baptist International missionaries, Drs. David and Laura Parajon, with AMOS Health and Hope in Nicaragua?

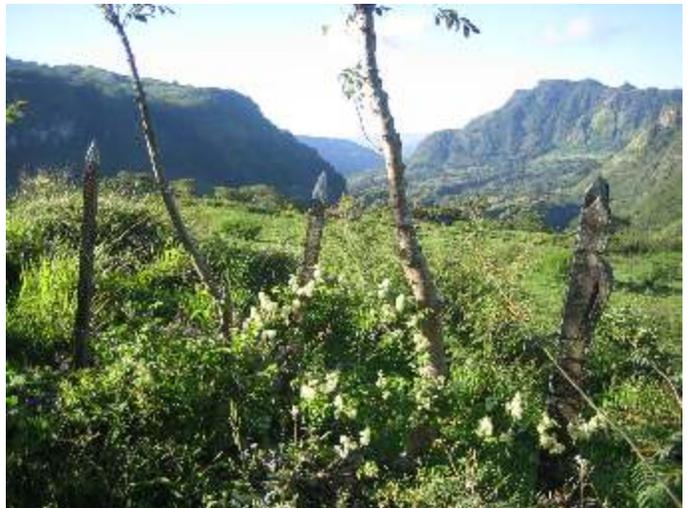
Bruce Van Der Beek from First Baptist in Johnston, IA, is forming a mission team to travel to Nicaragua, February 17-25, 2018. This will be Bruce's 9th trip serving AMOS Health and Hope.

An 'Excursion' trip is different than a work mission trip, as it is less demanding than the normal physical project trip. Maybe you or other church members have been looking for this type of international mission trip. ***This is it!***

The focus of the trip will be 'Educational/Relationship-building'. The team will lodge in a town near a rural area, with real beds and running water (toilets and showers). You don't need to know Spanish, but you might want to have a few phrases ready to greet those you meet. The trip is fully escorted by the AMOS staff, including drivers, coordinators, and interpreters.

The trip costs include money for a community project. Time in the rural area will be spent learning about the work AMOS is doing, what the project money supports, and an opportunity to interact with community members and children with activities such as singing, Bible stories, crafts, and sharing.

Approximate cost per trip member is \$1100, which does not include the flight costs. A **\$100 deposit** is due for each member by **June 15, 2017**. Bruce is available to speak to individuals or your church group about the trip, and will provide guidance to help you plan, pack and prepare to get the most out of your time in Nicaragua. You may contact him at 515-274-0512 or email bvanderbeek@hotmail.com. Read more about AMOS Health and Hope at www.amoshealth.org. This is going to be a great trip!



2017 CAMP SCHEDULES

DAYTON OAKS

- Camp on the Rock Jr.** Entering 5th-6th grades
June 11-16 \$265 before May 13; \$290 after
- 9-12 Cabin Camp** Entering 9th-12th grades
June 11-16 \$265 before May 13; \$290 after
- Paintball** Age 11 and up
June 18-23 \$345 before May 13; \$370 after
- 1-2 Cabin Camp** Entering 1st-2nd grades
June 25-27 \$135 before May 13; \$160 after
- 3-4 Cabin Camp** Entering 3rd-4th grades
June 27-30 \$160 before May 13; \$185 after
- Fishing Camp** Entering 6th-12th grades
July 9-14 \$270 before May 13; \$295 after
- Horse Camp** Entering 4th-12th grades
July 9-14 \$335 before May 13; \$360 after
- Mission Work Camp** Entering 7th-12th grades
July 9-14 \$160 before May 13; \$185 after
- Camp on the Rock** Entering 7th-12th grades
July 23-28 \$265 before May 13; \$290 after

For more information or to register online
www.daytonoaks.org

To Do **LOVE**
 SERVE
 REPEAT

John 15:12-15

FOREST LAKE

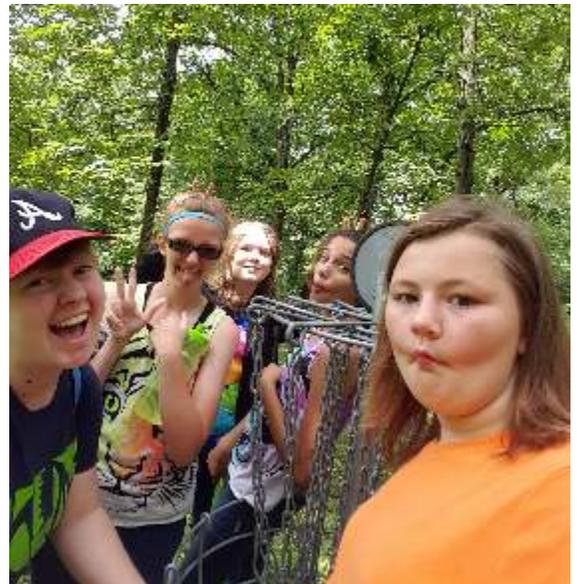
- It's All New to Me** Entering K-3 with at least 1 adult
June 14-17 \$110/person (1 adult free)
- Deep and Wide** Entering 1st-3rd grades
June 28-July 1 \$110
- Encounter** Entering 4th-5th grades
July 10-15 \$250 before May 4; \$275 after
- Impact** Entering 6th-8th grades
July 17-22 \$250 before May 4; \$275 after
- Collide** Entering 9th-12th grades
July 24-29 \$250 before May 4; \$275 after
- Contact** Entering 7th-12th grades
July 31- Aug. 5 \$250 before May 4; \$275 after

For more information or to register online
www.forestlakecamp.org

Sink In Or Stand out

Isaiah 43:2

CAMP!



CHURCH NEWS

CHURCH NEWS

CHURCH NEWS



The American Baptist Women of First Baptist Church of Waterloo sponsored a snack sale on Super Bowl Sunday to raise money for the White Cross offering. Over \$400 was raised!



We are pleased to welcome a new church into membership in our Region. The **K'Nyaw Baptist Church** has over 200 Karen people (formerly from Burma and Thailand) in worship and meets in a recreation center in St. Paul, MN.

AREA III RALLY



The Area III Spring Rally will be held at Forest Lake Camp on Saturday, April 1. **NO APRIL fools joke!!!!** Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. and the day will conclude at 2:30 p.m. Cost is \$10 for the day which includes lunch. The theme for the day, "To Go, Love, Share"; with guest speaker Marcia Street. Marcia will be sharing her recent mission trips and we will hear stories from the women she met.

<p>Forest Lake Work Week April 29 - May 6, 2017 Contact Gary Morrison for more information campstardad@juno.com</p>



Our sincere Christian sympathy is extended to the family of Gundar Lamberts, pastor of Westover Baptist Church in Des Moines, IA, at the passing of his mother late last year.

We are sorry to report the passing of Elaine Anderson of Ames, IA. Elaine and her husband John served as American Baptist missionaries in Manipur and Assam in northeast India from 1945-55. After returning to the states, John pastored churches in Iowa including Plainfield and Forest Avenue Baptist Church in Des Moines. They moved to Ames in 1967 and both John and Elaine served at Northcrest Community, an ABC-related retirement community, until they retired. Elaine was a member of the First Baptist Church of Ames. John preceded her in death in 2006.

Rev. William Brice passed away on December 9th at the age of 91. Bill pastored churches in Mapleton, Edina, and Duluth, MN, as well as ministering to churches in the state of Washington.

We are sorry to report the passing of Rev. David Mallgren on December 13, 2016. David served churches in Ames, Davenport and Ogden, IA. He later served as the Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska. He is survived by his wife, Margo.

Vicki Shepherd, long-time custodian at the Mid-ABC office and daughter of Darlene Shepherd, former Mid-ABC office manager, passed away at home Friday, December 30, from a heart attack.

We extend our sympathy to Robert Connor in the passing of his wife, Rev. Patricia Connor, on January 26, 2017. In the past, Patti served as pastor at First Baptist of Swea City, IA, and more recently as pastor of First Baptist Church of Lake City, IA. A memorial service will be held on March 18, 2017 at Faith United Methodist in Livermore, IA, at 11 a.m.

We extend our sympathy to Rev. Dick Sipe in the death of his mother, Jean Sipe, on February 1st at the age of 94.

Mid-ABWomen's Ministries & ABGIRLS Annual Conference

Love Never Gives Up

I Corinthians 13

Saturday, April 22, 2017

**Dayton Oaks Camp
3717 Taylor Ave., Dayton, Iowa**

9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Our Leadership Team:



**Rev. Janell Bloem, Bible Study Leader
Rev. Carol Teare, Co-Worship Leader
Susan Price, Co-Worship Leader
Shelby Greemore, Children's Day Camp Leader**

NEW THIS YEAR:

Day Camp Opportunity for Children K- 5th grade

Supplies Needed for Dayton Oaks Camp

***Please bring an item from this list to
Conference.***

WalMart gift cards (for printer ink)
US Postage stamps
US postcard stamps
Avery 5160 mailing labels
#10 mailing envelope
Printer paper
White or color cardstock
Hand soap refills
Paper towel rolls
Lysol or Clorox wipes
Swiffer wet pads
Swiffer duster refills
LED light bulbs (comparable to 60w, 75w, or 100w)
Nice hand towels (for lodge & retreat house rooms)
Kitchen dish drying towels
Dish soap
Duct tape
Paint rollers (for any surface)
Good quality paint brushes
Menards gift cards (for supplies or equipment replacement)
Fareway gift cards (for perishable items in off season)
Mouse/insect sticky traps (for cabins)

Cost:

**\$20.00 for Women and ABGIRLS
\$5.00 for Children Grades K-5**

Highlights:

**Bible Study on our theme: Love Never Gives Up
Worship / Singing
DVD Mission Segments
Hands-On Service Projects, including
service project for the camp
Special Music
Annual Business Meeting**

Offerings to be received:

**Love Gift
Women & Girls Fund
General Fund**

**Dress in casual, comfortable clothes if you wish to
participate in service project for the camp.**

The **COMMUNICATOR**



M-ABC Quilters' Retreat

Lou Ann's Quilt Garden
Oelwein, IA
May 5-7, 2017

Limited to 20 participants
Cost: \$130

Two nights' lodging and five meals included

Beginning and experienced quilters alike are welcome! Enjoy working on your own projects and collaborate on a mission project as well.

Registration forms will be available soon to download from the Region website, www.mid-abc.org, or you can register online from the same website. Look under Events for the Quilters' Retreat links.

CHURCHES UNITED IN MINISTRY (CHUM) RECEIVES GRANT

It was announced recently that Churches United in Ministry (CHUM), in Duluth, MN, has received a grant from the Virginia and Gordon Palmer, Jr., Trust. The recent Palmer awards fund special projects and programs that best demonstrate the theme "Alternative Models for Developing Leadership for Mission and Ministry". CHUM is a 501(c)(3) organization whose programs serve more than 8,000 low-income, homeless, hungry, isolated, or otherwise marginalized community members each year. CHUM was founded in 1973 when 10 churches in Duluth's Central Hillside neighborhood pooled their resources to meet the needs of the neighborhood's many low-income residents more effectively.

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