



• The Communicator •

Published by Mid-American Baptist Churches
Dr. Marshall Peters, Executive Minister
Issue 4, 2017

MID-AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES GATHER AT MID-ABWOMEN-SPONSORED EVENTS



Matt Lundgren with M-ABC President Coleen Remick.

Matt Lundgren, Executive Director of Friendship House in Billings, MT, was invited by the Mid-American Baptist Women's Ministries to come to speak in our Region, to tell about the work American Baptists support through their designations and through gifts to United Mission. Through his presentations and leading of sessions where participants tried to figure out how to live on meager incomes, Matt painted a clear picture of the problems faced by those living in poverty.

Sixty years ago in Billings, a small group of women were studying Matthew 25. They looked outside to see throngs of children in the nearby park, unsupervised, hungry, and impoverished. The women took their refreshments out to the children and knew by the response that there was a real need that the churches should try to meet.

Friendship House was born in 1957 as an outreach of four downtown churches, and is now supported by more than 40 local churches, 25 community partners, 15 service clubs, and American Baptist Churches USA through American Baptist Home Mission Societies' Neighborhood Action Programs. Since its inception, Friendship House has enabled thousands of youth and families to move from poverty to prosperity, helping to end generational poverty in Billings' south side neighborhood.

Many thanks to First Baptist Church of Indianola, IA, and the Bridge Community Church in Albert Lea, MN, who hosted these events, and to those who contributed to the M-ABWM Region Project last year which helped bring Matt here for the gatherings which took place in mid-October.



Some of the participants who attended the gathering in Albert Lea.



Above: Praise team at Bridge Community Church in Albert Lea, MN.



Above: Mid-ABWomen President Susan Price, center, with her husband Dwane Price (left), and Matt Lundgren (right).



Left and above: Participants enjoy lunch at First Baptist Church of Indianola, IA.



Serving the evening meal at Bridge Community Church in Albert Lea, MN.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE MINISTER . . .



Dear Friends,

Back in the year 2002 I was called to serve as Executive Minister of the Mid-American Baptist Churches. I have always appreciated the opportunity that was given to me to serve and the trust that was placed in me as we ministered together. As a team we have been able to further the cause of Christ in Iowa and Minnesota over these years.

At the 2015 ABC Mission Summit, the Rev. Dr. Aidsand Wright-Riggins said that it would be necessary for long time leaders to stand to the side in order to allow new gifted leadership to arise to lead us into the future. I feel that time has come for me.



Therefore, I would like to give you notice of my intention to retire at the end of the month of May, 2018. Giving you notice now provides for several paths forward for the Region as you seek a new Executive Minister. My support and prayers are with you as you enter into this process.

Both June and I have come to love Iowa and Minnesota and all of the good friends we have made here over these past years. As we move on to a new location, we will remember all of you and will look forward to what God will do through the churches of the Mid-American Baptist Churches in the future.

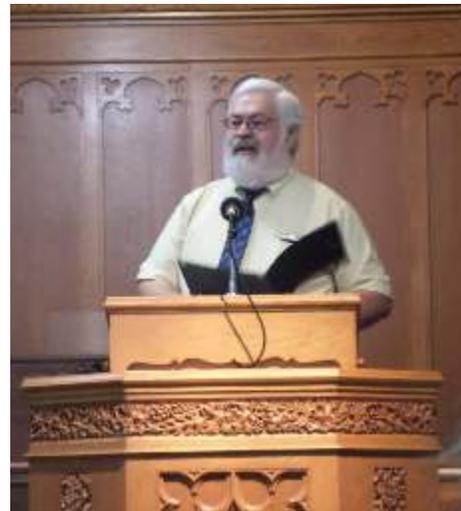
In Christ's Peace,
Marshall Peters

Executive Minister Search Committee Named

The Board of Region Ministries has named an Executive Minister Search Committee consisting of seven members. They are:

- Ryan Allen, lay person, Grace-Trinity Community Church, Minneapolis, MN
- Kara Krohg, clergy, First Baptist Church of Pella, IA
- Lyla Maynard, lay person, First Baptist Church of Greater Des Moines, IA
- Coleen Remick, lay person, President, Board of Region Ministries
- Mary Robinson, clergy, All Nations Community Church, Waterloo, IA
- David Russell, clergy, First Baptist Church, Ames, IA
- Jim Wilson, clergy, Glendale Baptist Church, Sioux City, IA

Coleen Remick has been chosen by the committee as chairperson. Please be in prayer for this group as they begin their work.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

The Search Committee to recommend a candidate for the position of Executive Minister to the Mid-American Region Board seeks your input regarding this position. Your input will be used to shape the profile of the type of person sought after as part of our discernment process.

Please go to <http://tinyurl.com/ybpqq6h> and take a few moments to complete this survey. Responses to the survey are due December 1, 2017.

Thank you.
Coleen Remick
Chair, Executive Minister Search Committee

BEHAVIOR YOU CAN EXPECT FROM YOUR PASTORAL LEADER

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,

This is the fourth article describing “The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches”. Following the two introductory paragraphs, there are 14 bullet points that describe key provisions of the ethical code by which your pastor has agreed to live and serve. Today, we start with the third bullet point.

I will advocate adequate compensation for my profession. I will help lay persons and colleagues understand that ministerial leaders should not expect or require fees for pastoral services from constituents they serve, when these constituents are helping pay their salaries.

Scripture declares that the worker is worthy of his hire! Ethically, advocacy for “adequate compensation” is grounded in both the human value of the individual and worthiness of the pastor’s work. As a human being, she or he needs and deserves to be able to provide the necessities of life for herself or himself and the family that God has entrusted into their care. Food, clothing, shelter, education and safety for children, the essentials for participating in the broader community within which they serve; it is simply the right thing to do to both advocate for “adequate compensation” and for the church or agency to provide it.

Secondly, the work offered in service to Christ and Church is of enormous value within the economy of God’s Kingdom. To short-change the compensation, because the pastor is called by God and willing to “work cheap”, is to declare that the work of the ministry is of little value. We assert the value of both the worker and the work.

The second part of this statement declares those who pay the pastor through their tithes and offerings ought to expect that the pastor will provide the full range of pastoral services without expectation of an additional “tip”. Extra fees for weddings and funerals are not acceptable conditions for providing normal pastoral services.

That said, many, perhaps most, folks are eager to express their gratitude for special services rendered. Pastors may accept these expressions of gratitude, but they are never to be an expectation or condition of service.

An observation: In the changing landscape of today’s culture and given the realities of church life, the hard fact is that more and more clergy are engaging the work of the Church and Kingdom with weaker guarantees for meeting the financial necessities of life. There is an emerging missionary spirit which I applaud. It is a good thing except when others, especially those within the church, see this spirit and attempt to take advantage of it.

I will not seek personal favors or discounts on the basis of my ministerial status.

In the spirit of the “Servant Leadership” model of Jesus, neither ordination nor the title of “Reverend” is ever to be used as a ticket for self-service or personal privilege. Asking for the “clergy discount” is simply contrary to the spirit of service that the ministerial community of American Baptist leaders choose to embrace.

Are some folks generous to their pastors? Absolutely! But, from your pastor’s point of view, that generosity must spring from the heart and initiative of the other person and never from a pastor who wants to use his position for personal advantage.

MINISTERS COUNCIL RETREAT

Priscilla Eppinger, Executive Director of the American Baptist Historical Society, was the featured speaker at a Mid-American Baptist Ministers Council retreat held at Dayton Oaks Camp in early November.

The American Baptist Historical Society (ABHS) is the archive and historical interpreter of the American Baptist Churches USA. The Society also serves as the Baptist historical society of America, collecting documents from many different Baptist denominations in North America and around the world. As the oldest Baptist historical organization (founded in 1853) with the largest and most diverse collection of Baptist historical material, the Society’s holdings are of irreplaceable value to church, national, and global history.

ABHS serves as keeper of the record of the modern missionary movement. Its shelves hold unparalleled resources documenting African-American church associations, women’s work, local church and association minutes and the social gospel movement. The Society publishes the oldest Baptist journal, the American Baptist Quarterly, interpreting for modern readers the lives and issues of the past that shape who we are today. For more info, go to <http://abhsarchives.org/>.



REBUILDING PUERTO RICO

In response to the devastating one-two punch leveled at Puerto Rico first by Hurricane Irma and most recently by Hurricane Maria, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS), in partnership with American Baptist Churches USA, has launched a multi-year initiative, "Rebuilding, Restoring, Renewing Puerto Rico," ABHMS Executive Director Dr. Jeffrey Haggray announced recently.

"Rebuilding, Restoring, Renewing Puerto Rico" seeks to raise \$1 million within the next three to six months through One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) to support rebuilding the homes, churches and lives of our brothers and sisters in Christ. ABHMS has pledged \$25,000 to launch this major renewal effort, matching OGHS funds already earmarked for Puerto Rico recovery.

You can give through your local congregation by marking your gift OGHS - Puerto Rico or give online.

One hundred percent of donations will go to relief efforts; donations will be used for immediate needs, such as water and food, as well as long-term recovery and rebuilding efforts. No dollars are retained for administrative costs.

AMERICAN BAPTIST BULLETIN INSERTS AVAILABLE

In response to requests for bulletin inserts aligned with American Baptist values, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) will debut in January 2018 its new "Discipleship Matters" fee-free monthly inserts for inclusion in church bulletins. Based on a theme - such as nature's seasons or highlights from the church calendar - each insert features brief, easily digestible articles, related scripture and other famous quotables, all presented in an interculturally sensitive manner. Topics include stewardship, meaningful rituals, the development of conscience, Christian family as Christian community, child-friendly faith formation, the inclusion of children and teens in church life, and the introduction of spiritual disciplines to children.

The first insert will be available for download in December 2017 for inclusion in January 2018 church bulletins. Go to the American Baptist Home Mission Societies webpage for more information - <http://abhms.org/resources/>.

SHARING TIME AND TALENTS

People in churches across our region share their talents and time as they work together to make lovely handmade items to give away. At **United Protestant Church in Silver Bay, MN**, a group meets twice a month to knit and crochet prayer shawls. The shawls are given to people experiencing changes, health difficulties, and sorrows. Seventeen shawls were dedicated at a church service this summer.



Liz Oliphant of **First Baptist Church-Church of the Brethren** in Cedar Rapids, IA leads Dorcas Circle, a group which has been making quilts for years. The quilts are given to new babies of the congregation, hospital patients, and local mission organizations. Liz is pictured at left with some of the quilts that were dedicated in morning worship one Sunday in October.

In the photo at right new (refugee) mothers-to-be at **First Baptist of St. Paul, MN**, receive gift bags that include baby quilts made and donated by the Johnston Piecemakers, a group that meets at **First Baptist of Greater Des Moines, IA**.



The fall **Mid-American Baptist Quilters' Retreat** was held at Dayton Oaks Camp in November. Participants (at left) worked on their own projects, but also combined efforts to make a Project Linus quilt that will be given to a child in need of comfort and care.

The next Mid-ABC Quilters' Retreat will be held in Oelwein May 4-6, 2018. Mark your calendars now!

DAYTON OAKS WORK WEEK A SUCCESS



One way to serve the region is by volunteering on the work weeks at our camps. A number of people had the opportunity to do just that in October at Dayton Oaks. Projects were coordinated by camp manager Matt Siebert and a number of inside and outside jobs were completed.

Leaf removal is a huge task, as is getting an adequate supply of wood for the wood burning stove. This year wood was loaded into wire cages which will make moving the wood a much simpler project. Dani Siebert provided meals and workers were housed in the newly remodeled rooms in the lodge. Devotions and game playing added to the enjoyment.

Rev. Ruth Yeaton
Photos and article



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



Benjamin Sang Bawi, in tie and sunglasses, above, is pictured with church leaders and Ordination Commission B outside the Region office on the day of his recognition of ordination. Rev. Benjamin is the pastor of the **Carson Chin Baptist Church in Columbus Junction, IA.**

Robert White, pictured (right) with his wife, Cindy, was installed as pastor on Sunday, September 10, 2017, at **First Baptist Church of Davenport, IA.**



Rev. Nancy Wheeler has been called as pastor of **First Baptist Church of Atlantic, IA.**

First Baptist Church, Davenport, IA, is the recipient of one of this year's Matthew 25 Grants. The \$500 Grant will be used specifically to purchase seeds for Green House Gardening project. American Baptist Churches USA's Matthew 25 Grant is designed to channel gifts to help meet the needs of "housing, feeding, education and health with regard to the less fortunate."

In Sympathy

We are sad to announce that Susan Elmore passed away September 23, 2017, at Hays Medical Center, Hays, Kansas. Susan and her husband, Eldon, were managers at Forest Lake Camp and later served with Rainbow Acres in Arizona.

We have also received word that Rev. Marion McCoy passed away on September 26, 2017. He served as Pastor of the Mineral Ridge Baptist Church in Boone, IA, First Baptist of Corwith, IA, Renwick Baptist Church, First Baptist of Anamosa, IA and Freemont Baptist Church.

We extend our sympathy to the family of Donna Liscum who passed away on Sunday, October 29, 2017. A memorial reception was held on Sunday, November 5th at the Church on Northland in Cedar Rapids, IA. The funeral will be held at Renwick Baptist Church on Saturday, December 2nd. Donna was very involved in the Region-wide work of the American Baptist Women's Ministries, most recently as treasurer.

Our sympathy goes out to the family of Pastor Ted DeHass who passed away on October 26, 2017 peacefully at home. A funeral service was held on November 5 in Bedford. Pastor DeHass pastored churches in Bedford and Maquoketa, IA.

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 MINISTRIES

National Project for Baptist Women's Ministries in Puerto Rico

American Baptist Women's Ministries is raising funds through its Women and Girls Mission Fund to provide 2018 budget funding to Ministerios de Mujeres Bautistas de Puerto Rico (Baptist Women's Ministries of Puerto Rico). Our goal is for American Baptist women stateside to collectively give \$10,000 to help fund the region Baptist women's organization and empower its board to continue its vital ministries with women and girls in 2018. You can help these vital ABWM and AB GIRLS ministries in Puerto Rico thrive in 2018, with your gift to the Women and Girls Mission Fund. Send your contribution to American Baptist Women's Ministries, PO Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482. Checks should be payable to "Women and Girls Mission Fund" with "ABWM Puerto Rico" in the memo line. Muchas gracias! Dios le bendiga (God bless you).

A Brand New (FREE!) Resource on the ABWM's Website

AB Women's Ministries has launched on its website a brand new section called "Becoming Beloved Community" to provide tools to ABWM groups in churches, areas/associations, and regions. "Becoming Beloved Community" acknowledges God's creativity, design, and purpose in connecting together American Baptist women and girls of differing ages, races, ethnicities, languages, locales, worship traditions, and Baptist theologies. God's intentional desire is for AB women and girls to be beloved community. In this new section of the website, you'll find information, ideas, tools, and inspiration for how to be beloved community in your women's and girls' ministries. Go to www.abwministries.org for more information.



AB Women's Ministries Seeks Nominations for the "Shine the Light" Award

Do you have a woman, or a group of women, in your church who shows God's love in all they do? Then nominate her/them for the 2018 Shine the Light award! We are looking for women who excel in showing the light of Christ in their churches, families, and in their communities. The award honors

exemplary women from local American Baptist churches for how they shine for Christ in the world. It can be given to an individual American Baptist woman or to a group of women from an American Baptist church. The award highlights women that exemplify the four criteria of creativity, commission (following the "Great Commission" of Matthew 28), collaboration, and communication. For more information, including a downloadable e-brochure, nomination form, and press release you may use in your own publications, visit www.abwministries.org/shinethelight. Check this out soon, as the deadline for applications is January 31, 2018.

SAVE THE DATE! Women's Conference June 22-23, 2018

Mark your calendars and save the date for our summer event to be held at FBC Fort Dodge, IA June 22-23, 2018. We are planning fun and exciting opportunities for young girls and women of all ages to learn new things, have fun, and worship together. Our guest speaker is Soozie Whitten Ford, who was our former Associate Region Minister. Look for more details in early 2018.

Susan Price
Mid-America ABWM President

2017-18 REGION PROJECT GOAL: \$3,500.00

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the top five countries in an unpleasant statistic: maternal death rate. Statistically, one out of every 23 expectant mothers will die during childbirth. Lack of access to competent surgical care is a factor in this serious problem.

The Vanga Hospital provides care for patients regardless of their ability to pay. This project will reduce the number of deaths during childbirth, reduce the number of fistulas from obstructed labor that cause women to become outcasts, and prevent families from being saddled with large hospital bills for surgical care. The project will be managed by medical missionary Dr. Tim Rice.

RACHEL PRICE JOINS NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM FOR ABGIRLS



The National Leadership Team (NLT) for ABGIRLS is continuing the historic American Baptist ministry with girls that began in 1915 as World Wide Guild. One member of the NLT is from the Mid-America Region. **Rachel Price**, from the First Baptist Church of Waterloo, IA, is beginning the first year of her 2017-2019 term. Rachel is an active member of her church, bell choir, and AB GIRLS group, and has participated in many AB GIRLS region and national events. As a high school junior, Rachel is the staff manager of her high school's band and active in an anti-bullying organization. If you would like Rachel to come to your church and share about AB GIRLS, please email

7 Susan Price at waterloofbc@yahoo.com.

The COMMUNICATOR

SCENES FROM THE REGION YOUTH EVENT



THE COMMUNICATOR
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
We encourage you to use this master copy of The Communicator to duplicate and distribute to your congregation.