



SEPTEMBER

Vol. 74 No.2

Central Connection

Connecting with American Baptist Women's Ministries of the Central Region

Mona Huggins

I asked the Lord to comfort me...He said to me, I will comfort you.

I've been a traveling woman! My husband and I took off for a two-week vacation to Colorado about three weeks ago, but first we stopped at Camp Christy near Scott City to visit with people from the Western Region who were attending their area meeting. What a wonderful group of women I met!

They were able to appoint Danica Kitch as their area contact and join together in knowing there are others in the Western area participating in AB Women's Ministries. They had a few questions about the 2023-24 project, and I think I was able to help them understand the importance of supporting the National AB Women's Ministries need to update their website as well as support to Young Adult Women's Ministries as their leadership team has "..... a commitment to building relationships across the generations, providing opportunities for women and girls to learn and grow with one another, and also recognize the need for women and girls to build relationships in their own peer groups as well."

It was my delight to meet so many wonderful women who are dedicated to the Lord, doing good works for Him, and treating me like a friend! The hugs were genuine and truly set the tone for a wonderful start to a Colorado vacation. This past weekend, I traveled to McPherson for the Ark Valley/Judson Rally. I was the guest speaker, and I presented the same workshop on Racial Justice as I did at the 2023 Summer Conference. There were many women who I have served with on committees and boards, and I had a most enjoyable visit. The food was good, too!



Mona Huggins

Giving us the latest tea in AB Women's Ministries

After leaving McPherson, I journeyed to Topeka so I could attend the Northeast Area meeting in Horton on Sunday. I was able to attend worship at FBC Topeka, seeing more ABWM members, getting more hugs of warm welcome before riding the church bus to Horton for the area meeting. I was so happy when Rita Adams asked me to attend the area meeting to give an update of the 2022-23 project. There is an AB woman who lives in Horton, Theola Carter, whom I first met at a Summer Conference about ten years ago. Theola became a "fast" friend, and I have always enjoyed her prayers, devotions, and strong hugs!

Getting off the bus and entering the church took a few minutes, as there were so many friends that I hadn't seen for awhile. But, finally, I entered the sanctuary, and there was Theola with Patty Hodge! Her smile went from ear to ear and so did mine! We hugged tightly and long! I have missed seeing her at Summer Conferences. We sat together for the meeting and every once in a while, she would put her head on my shoulder! What God moments those were for me! I will treasure the time God gave us together and keep the memories in my heart! I also had the privilege of speaking with two of our former scholarship students! The first was Laura DeWare Jones who became a nurse practitioner with the help of our scholarship funding, and Jessa Greuter who has completed her studies at Ottawa University and has graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Education. She is currently attending OU working on a Master's Degree. Jessa had the privilege of traveling to Liberia last January and gave a presentation on her mission trip.

I am so thankful to be your President! Times were difficult this summer when the national Bylaws were up for vote, but the initiative has failed, and I have put all the stress behind me. Thank you for your prayers and concern during those difficult days. You are an amazing group of women! My next stop is Annual Gathering in Lawrence, and I hope to see many of you in attendance! I've heard registrations are up; hope you are one of them!



American Baptist
Women's
MINISTRIES

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National News

Fall Webinar Series Be Strong, Be Courageous & Seasons of Transition Webinar adds

Be Strong! Be Courageous! Follow Examples God Gave Us!

Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 8:30 PM EDT

Speaker: Joyce Camp, a registered nurse

Leadership: Enjoying the Journey

Thursday, October 26, 2023, at 8:30 PM EDT

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Patricia Murphy, Ecclesiastical Endorser for Chaplaincy, American Baptist Home Mission Societies

The Power of Persistent Prayer

Thursday, November 9, 2023, at 8:30 PM EST

Speaker: Lisa Murray, Vice President of Prayer, Baptist Women of North America (BWNA)

Finding Strength to Lead Using God's Gifts

Thursday, November 30, 2023, at 8:30 PM EST

- Speaker: Jessie Bandaru, Director of Dietary in the healthcare and hospitality industry

Seasons of Transition Webinar Recordings

The Young Adult Women's Ministry of ABWM hosted a two-part webinar series entitled Seasons of Transition. Women gathered to hear two wonderful young adult women speak on how they have dealt with transition in their own lives.

Faith and Wellbeing - with Rachel Legg, Mental Health Therapist

Faith and Yoga - with Jasmine Turner, Yoga Instructor

You can find the links at abwomensministries.org under events



Missouri River

Missouri River ABWM Association News

Hello Ladies,

Greetings from Missouri River!

Our board met Thursday, Sept 19, and reviewed the new year's regional project, discussed white cross assignments, and other pertinent ABWM and American Baptist events and news. Due to unexpected extenuating circumstances, we will not have a Fall rally. We will pray for one another, our churches, and our community, and gather again in the spring.

On a personal note.....God is Good, ALL the time. I listen to the radio while driving the two hours between KC and Fort Scott, where my mom is in assisted living. Coming home mid-week, I was feeling overwhelmed, alone, and weary, because of several things occurring simultaneously: health issues, soccer games, moving my mom (yes, closer to me), church activities – things I cannot or only have limited control over. God caught my attention when three songs aired, one after the other. First, Casting Crowns "Oh My Soul", reminding me I am not alone, God is greater than any fears I have, and I can lay my burdens down. Second, Tasha Layton's "Never", reminding me that I am never forgotten, He is never not working, and He has never let me down. And third, TobyMac's "Cornerstone", reminding me my foundation in Christ keeps me grounded during all the changes, daily and future.

I will close with two quotes of encouragement. Lauren McAfee in her Proverbs 31 devo on Wednesday, Sept 5, shared, "My efforts to be in control are an effort to replace reliance on God. But I CAN control whether or not I put my self in a place to be near God...to be involved in my church community...to prioritize Bible study, reflection and prayer." Then she added this, "I don't always feel like having faith, but as Charles Spurgeon says, 'God is too good to be unkind, and He is too wise to be mistaken. And when we cannot trace His hand, we must trust His heart'. May we trust His heart as our firm foundation today and every day." Have a fabulous fall, ladies, and allow God to call you deeper into His love and faith.



Connie Northup, President



Roger Williams/Walnut Valley

ABWM Summer News

Hello Ladies,

The Roger Williams/Walnut Valley Summer General Meeting was held at Bethany Baptist Church, Bentley, KS. Pastor Ron Jones welcomed a group of approximately 40 women.

Kay Pearson led us in singing praises to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The songs we sang were "The Lord Reigns", "What He has Done" and "Holy Ground Medley".

Brooke Pickerill, daughter of Kathy Considine, sang a beautiful solo, "My Alabaster Box". We were blessed by the words of that song and thought of Mary's sacrifice as she anointed Jesus.

Jo Templin introduced our guests, Andrea Dixon and Judy Clark. Andrea Dixon is the founder and executive director of Faith Builders, Wichita, KS. Andrea shared her life story and her pathway to finding Christ when she worked for Good Samaritan health providers in Wichita. She felt led to help those less fortunate and for the past 20 years her ministry has been helping marginalized persons by sharing her faith, giving food, providing household needs, clothing, mentoring, and her time and talents in caring for children. Through her work Faith Builders is established as a non-profit with a board of directors, a treasurer, and goal to be the "hands and feet of Jesus" and to give him the glory. Faith Builders answers many needs in the lower income areas of Wichita. Faith Builders has a warehouse filled with needed items, a transitional living home for 5 women, and 28 respite care homes who care for children when parents need assistance with child rearing. Andrea also teaches parenting classes which include how to deal with the court system. Andrea left us with the thought "one small thing can make a huge difference in someone's life".

Jo Templin and 3 cast members shared a skit about how each of us have God given gifts and some of us may not even be aware that we have such gifts. We were encouraged to use our gifts. Gifts we need to share with others.

Sincerely,

Barbara Sharp, President



Tri-River Fall Rally

Hello Ladies,

Tri-River is looking forward to their Fall Rally on the morning of October 2nd at First Baptist Church Lebo with registration beginning at 9:30 and the rally starting at 10:00!

Our mini project for the rally is the Lebo Food Pantry who have needs for flour, breakfast cereals, pancake mixes, laundry soaps, dryer softener sheets, and all types of sugar including granulated, powdered, and brown. We are looking forward to having Melissa Newberry as our guest speaker!

Our Tri-River women are eager and ready to start our new year! First Baptist Church Topeka held their ABWM kickoff on Saturday, September 16 where we began with a brunch followed by the installation of officers for our new year. Our outgoing president, Patty Hodge, was thanked for her years of service in office. We then had the opportunity to connect with our Faith Friends—groups of three women who will pray and uplift each other throughout the year! There were around 50 women that signed up to participate!

Sincerely,
Gayle Smith, President



Church Spotlight

The Hospitality of Jesus

Hello Ladies,

The Fall of 2022 the Outreach Committee at First Baptist Church of Ottawa, Kansas started exploring ways we could reach out to the entire community of Ottawa and meet needs. One way we explored was possibly starting a community meal to be served one time a month. We gathered information about the need and whether it was being met any other way in Ottawa. After compiling that information, the Outreach Committee decided to proceed forward and made plans to start serving meals the 4th Thursday of each month beginning in March. The planning for these meals was coordinated with the Fellowship Committee as they helped plan and prepare the meals.

We wanted to provide a welcoming atmosphere for people to enter each time the meal was served. Since this was a new ministry for our church, we applied for a grant from the American Baptist Churches of the Central Region. With the help of a \$1,000 grant dinnerware was purchased on which food would be served. The grant also helped purchase food for the meals during 2023. Place settings were put on each table with paper placemats and silverware for each person. A basket of crayons was placed in the middle of each table. A sign was placed with them telling all who came to feel free to leave a message on the placemat and draw any pictures they would like. The food was served by members of our church and desserts and drinks were provided on a separate table.

We had 25 friends come to share a meal with our members in March of 2023. We had between 15 and 20 of our members come and sit with our friends to share a meal and conversation. We also sent meals to go with some people who didn't want to stay or came and needed additional food. The program has grown each month with 41 coming to share a meal or get food to go in the month of August. We have also had several pictures and messages left on the placemats. Those are now being displayed on one of the walls in Elliott Hall at First Baptist Church. Since starting this program we have also been able to help some of our friends secure bicycles for transportation and get utility bills paid so they can have utilities to their residences.

Our goal for the future is to continue serving the meal and growing the number of people who attend. It has been a blessing for our church and hopefully the entire community. As a result of this program and many other things taking place in our church, the local newspaper selected First Baptist Church as the "Best Place to Worship" in Franklin County for 2023. Matthew 25:40 tells us the "whatever you have done for the least of these, my brother, you have done to me." First Baptist Church of Ottawa is seeking to do that through our Thankful Thursday meal.

Church Spotlight

Prayer Evening

Hello Ladies,

"As Christians, we are commanded through scripture to follow the example of Jesus Christ," Pastor Randy Moravec, Gypsum First Baptist Church, said. "One of the most important things we can do is pray." To facilitate corporate prayer, a Gypsum Community Prayer Evening is scheduled for 7p.m. Tuesday, September 26th at the Gypsum Community Room. According to Moravec, the event is supported specifically by scripture, quoting 2 Chronicles 7:14, which says, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." The event will start with a greeting and ground rules of confidentiality. Time will then be open prayer time. "Anybody who wants to stand and pray or sit in a chair and pray, they are more than welcome to pray," Moravec said, "we will have a time of silent prayer, and you can pray in your seat while I'm standing up praying also." "Christians have been timid too long," Moravec said. "It is time to put your faith out there."

Our jobs as fellow Christians is to spread the good news. The First Baptist Church of Gypsum is one of many churches that have shared or are sharing the good news right. I encourage other churches to get involved in your community and host a time of prayer or a community meal. If you would like to share what your church has done this summer or what your church is planning this Fall. Please contact Cindy Fritz. She is the new Church and Community Coordinator or you can contact Jordan Fritz who is Newsletter Editor. If you don't have any idea's on how to get church member's involved or get the community involved, there are some ideas from Shirley Fair for White Cross and a Fall bucket list at the end of the newsletter to help inspire you! Please share your church involvement in community. We would love to hear!

Cindy Fritz Coordinator Scholarship
Associate/ Church & Community
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SAVE THE DATE!!!

2024 ABWCR Summer Conference
Location- First Baptist Church, Topeka, KS
Date- June 7-8, 2024
Keynote Speaker- Mary Shannon

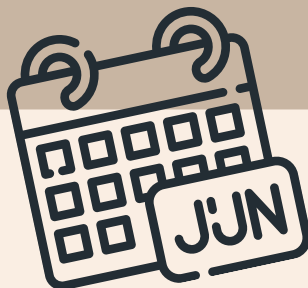
Summer Conference 2024 is in the planning stage. The Conference Committee has met to begin setting things in place. The theme of "Crazy Courageous Fearless Faith" the keynote speaker, Mary Shannon and the location at First Baptist Church Topeka have all been confirmed.

The Committee will meet again this Fall to work on other details for this fun and uplifting time together. Please mark your calendars for June 7-8, 2024 now so that you won't miss out on all the "crazy" fun, fellowship and strengthening of your faith activities!

Watch our website

www.abwmc.org and the Central Connection for future information.

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Are You Helping to Make Our History?

History is simply recording what is happening now for future generations to know. So how are you participating in what is happening now in Central Region American Baptist Women's Ministries?

Far too often we focus on the leadership, but without followers there is no one to lead. Not everyone is a leader, but all leaders need active, knowledgeable and artful followers. Far too often there are "too many chiefs, and not enough Indians".

Active followership consists of open and positive participation in activities and active listening. Active followership is NOT silent attendance, gossip and rumor mongering, sitting quietly in the corner, or acquiescence. Active, effective followers provide structure, energy and stability to the organization.

Effective leaders are taught by being active followers, not born. Effective followers learn to lead by good examples, and not lead by not-so-good examples. Great leaders emerge from effective followers because true leadership is a mindset that results in collective successful actions.

Leadership does NOT rely on an official title or office. Often the most effective leaders "lead from below".

Thank you for helping to make our History one that hopefully inspire future generations—whether in 'leadership' or 'followership'. You are vitally important to the work of God's kingdom!

Sincerely,

Wilma Engle, Historian



Wilma Engle
Email:
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2022–23 Annual Report

Global Servant Special/ Special Interest Missionaries

It was encouraged through the Associations that all Global Servants Specials and Special Interest Missionaries be assigned to at least one local organization.

The Global Servant Specials:

- Juan Aragon– Mexico
- Rev. Dr. Dan Chetti & Mrs. Sarah Chetti– Lebanon
- Jon & Amanda Good– Hungary
- Dr. Richard Gutierrez & Dr. Anita Gutierrez– South Africa
- Gordon & Lee Ann Hwang– Japan
- Eric & Yuree Lembke– Thailand
- Rev. Keith Myers & Mrs. Debbie Myers– Mexico
- Paul Rollet– Philippines
- Larry & Rebecca Stanton– Hungary
- Jae Stockton– Mexico

Special Interest Missionaries:

- Betty Martin– Murrow Indian Children's Home
- Mang Sonna & Nem– Bethel Neighborhood Center

All women were encouraged to contact the Global Servant and Special Interest Missionaries.

CONTACT INFORMATION:
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2022–23 Annual Report

Mission & Service Ministries & White Cross

The four denominational offerings were advertised in the Central Connection and encouraged women to share in their own churches.

- America for Christ
- One Great Hour of Sharing
- World Mission Offering
- Retired Ministers & Missionaries Offering

News from Global Servants was shared in the Central Connection along with special celebrations. Churches were encouraged to invite our Global Servants when they were in the U.S. and Missionaries to visit and become acquainted with that local church.

The women did very well in some areas and not so well in others. There were many other donations, etc. to local areas that are not reported. Some are really busy ladies. As far as I could tell, the international goal of \$12,000 for the Gutierrez received about half—\$6,170. Women and their churches were very generous with money and items purchased. Each one must be commended for their efforts to help others!

About 35 churches reported and no new churches came on line. The persons working on the requests included 337 women, 58 men, five youth, and 16 reported their entire church helped. For the Region projects, Bethel Neighborhood Center, and Murrow Indian Children's Home, 55.4 pounds were mailed at a cost of \$207.96. The estimated value of the items was \$6,378.48.

The \$6,170 was sent to International Ministries. Four churches reported holding a dedication. Included are projects from Matthew 25:35–36. Most appeared to be what was already happening and next year they will be encouraged to have new projects.



2022–23 Annual Report

White Cross Ideas

Something to Eat:

- Provided protein snacks for children attending King's Kids
- Prepared and packed meals for Summer Café
- Donated \$100 to the "Welcome Table" provided by Christ Cathedral Church to feed lunch to anyone who needs.
- Volunteered at the Food Bank for October
- Have a "Blessing Box" located on church property where folks can "give what you can, take what you need" with food most
- Hosted Lenten Luncheon, sent leftovers to Oxford House
- Hosted a Super Bowl party to collect cans of soup for the Food Bank
- Helped with the Orphan Grain Train packaging rice and nutrients for around the World
- Contributed to the Food Bank
- Assisted another church in serving a meal for those in need
- Provided snacks to 2 public schools
- Provided fruit for after school programs
- Made treat trays to area police, firemen, foster care workers, etc.
- Commodities pick up and distribution
- Donated a refrigerator to Patsy's Pantry along with donation
- Thanksgiving Bags
- Manna Ministries

Clothed Me:

- Donated to Christmas Fund at Bethel
- Donated clothing to Bethel, Dream Center, and St. Francis for kids
- Purchased tennis shoes for a needy junior higher
- Collected coats, blankets, socks, hats, and gloves for homeless
- Collected coats for needy
- Collected clothing for children in an Elementary school
- Gave to Help House
- Knitted hats for Bethel
- Collected winter clothing for Afghan refugee
- Donated to Fit Closet
- Supported Baby Closet
- Started Shoe Closet Ministry and underwear at 2 grade schools



2022-23 Annual Report

White Cross Idea's

Looked after Me:

- Packed 50 boxes for Samaritan's Purse plus postage
- Prepared and delivered meals to those recovering from illness or surgery
- Packed backpacks for Children in Community
- Provided transportation to those who need
- Held a Back to School Bash to provide free haircuts, shoes, and school supplies for children

Visited Me:

- Visited church members in the hospital
- Delivered approximately 100 paperback books to county jail's library
- Prepared "Christmas Goodie" plates for local shut ins and in need
- Visited 24 shut ins regularly
- Held a Valentines Bingo party at nursing home
- Invited ladies to fellowship event
- Visited Children's home and shut ins

Something to Drink:

- Held Thursday morning coffees open to public to attend
- Weekly fellowship
- Gave to Willow domestic
- Provided drinks to Alpha Christian Children's Home
- Invited me in:
- Held an Easter Sunrise breakfast
- Invited guests to rallies
- VBS



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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

RESOLVING CONFLICT IN A CHRISTLIKE MANNER

Conflict is a part of life that we all encounter. Whether it's within our families, communities, churches, it's inevitable. However, as followers of Christ, we are called to approach conflict in a way that reflects His teachings and character. How many times have we tried to ignore conflict or worse, seen conflict ignite with no clear plan on how to resolve it, especially in a Christlike manner?

Scripture: Matthew 5:9 (NIV) "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called Children of God."

Understanding the Source of Conflict: Conflicts often arise from differences in opinions, misunderstandings, or unmet expectations. It's essential to identify the source of the conflict to address it effectively. Remember that our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces. (Ephesians 6:12).

Seek Peace: In the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches that peacemakers are blessed. As Christ's followers, we should actively seek peace and reconciliation in our relationships. This means going the extra mile to resolve conflicts, even if we believe we are not entirely at fault. (Matthew 5:23-24)

Practice Active Listening: Christlike conflict resolution involves active listening. James 1:19 advises us to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. When we truly listen to others we gain a better understanding of their perspective and feelings, which can lead to resolving conflict.

Forgiveness: One of the central teachings of Jesus is forgiveness. He forgave those who crucified Him, setting an example for us all. In conflicts, be willing to forgive and ask for forgiveness if necessary.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

RESOLVING CONFLICT IN A CHRISTLIKE MANNER

Humility: Philippians 2:3-4 reminds us to do nothing out of selfish ambition and to consider others better than ourselves. To be Christlike, one must approach conflicts with a humble heart, willing to admit your own faults and shortcomings. This humility can often ease tense situations and open the door to resolution.

Prayer: In all circumstances, including conflicts, turn to prayer. Seek God's wisdom and guidance in finding a peaceful resolution. Pray for the other person(s) involved, asking God to work in their hearts as well.

Solving conflicts in a Christlike manner is not always easy, but it is a necessary and beneficial to living out our faith. The next time you are involved in a conflict, even when the others involved do not seem to practice any of the above mentioned resolution techniques, you will model a Christlike attitude even in what seems an impossible conflict situation.



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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT & LOVE GIFT

The Book of the Month

The Bible Book of the Month of October is 1 Corinthians. 1 Corinthians was written by the Apostle Paul to the Christian community in Corinth. The letter addresses various issues and concerns within the Corinthian church, and it contains several key takeaways and teachings. Here are some of the main themes and takeaways from 1 Corinthians:

Unity in the Church: Paul emphasizes the importance of unity among believers in the church. He urges them to be of one mind and avoid divisions and quarrels.

Spiritual Gifts: 1 Corinthians contains a detailed discussion of spiritual gifts and their proper use within the church. Paul encourages believers to use their gifts to edify the body of Christ and emphasizes the importance of love as the greatest gift.

Love: Perhaps the most famous chapter in 1 Corinthians is Chapter 13, often referred to as the "Love Chapter." Paul describes the characteristics of love and its supreme importance in the life of a Christian.

Resurrection: Paul addresses questions and doubts about the resurrection of the dead, particularly the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He argues for the resurrection as a central doctrine of the Christian faith.

Sexual Morality: The letter discusses issues related to sexual immorality, marriage, and celibacy. Paul emphasizes the sanctity of marriage and the need for sexual purity.

Christian Freedom: Paul discusses the concept of Christian freedom and the idea that while all things are lawful, not all things are beneficial. He encourages believers to exercise their freedom responsibly for the sake of others.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT & LOVE GIFT

The Book of the Month

The Lord's Supper: 1 Corinthians contains instructions and teachings regarding the celebration of the Lord's Supper, also known as Communion.

Church Discipline: Paul addresses the need for church discipline when there are cases of serious sin or division within the church. He provides guidance on how to handle such situations.

The Resurrection Body: Paul explores the nature of the resurrection body and its differences from the earthly body. He explains that believers will receive transformed, imperishable bodies in the resurrection.

The Wisdom of God: Paul contrasts the wisdom of God with the wisdom of the world, emphasizing that God's wisdom often appears foolish to the world but is actually wiser and more profound.

Evangelism: Paul discusses the importance of presenting the Gospel message clearly and persuasively to both Jews and Greeks, adapting his approach to the audience.

These are some of the key takeaways and themes found in 1 Corinthians. The letter addresses various practical and theological issues faced by the early Christian community in Corinth and provides valuable guidance for contemporary Christians as well.



Things to do this Fall

Fall bucket list for your Church, Community & Family

- Visit a Pumpkin Patch
- Have a Pie bake off
- Bake homemade Bake pumpkin roles with your youth group
- Write down what you're thankful for
- Set up your own bobbing-for-apples at your local Fall Fest
- Have a pumpkin carving contest
- Have a church Football game potluck (watch a game together)
- Have a chili feed as a fundraiser in the community
- Have a back to school picnic and invite the community
- Make fleece tie blankets and give to a local shelter or family who is in need
- Have a church movie night
- Have a corn hole tournament
- Donate canned food to a local food bank
- Do a Trunk or Treat Car theme (Noah's Ark, Candy Land, Veggie Tales)
- Make caramel apples
- Do a fun run/walk
- Create an autumn wreath
- Do a who done it dinner/Mystery party with the youth
- Get lost in a corn maze
- Have a flag football game with your church
- Carve a pumpkin or two
- Host a Thanksgiving meal

