



Vol. 76 No.6

Central Connection

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

Lois Chiles,

ABWomen's Ministries President Giving us the latest information in
ABWomen's Ministries Central Region

As I am writing this article to you, I have begun to watch some of the Winter Olympics. It is that once every four years' time when you watch the athletes show off their skills, dedication, determination, and true grit in winter sports. Some of the events are ones that you never hear of until the Olympics but each performance in an event is captivating to watch. You watch the athletes do the best they can on that day. At the end of their event, some athletes are extremely happy and some extremely sad. But each participant used their skills to the best of their ability.

I looked up the definition of "grit." Grit is a positive, non-cognitive trait defined as passion and perseverance for long-term meaningful goals. It involves maintaining effort and interest over years despite failure, adversity, or plateaus in progress. Gritty individuals possess stamina and view their work as a marathon rather than a sprint. The skills, dedication, determination, and true grit shine loudly as you watch these athletes.

Watching the athletes made me wonder whether as Christians we show our skills, dedication, determination, and true grit in our church, ABWomen's Ministries roles and our service to God. Do we have a passion for serving? Do we persevere when things don't go the way we think they should?

Do we even maintain an effort strong enough to account for the times that we are weak? Do we have the stamina that we need to continue through our entire life? These are questions we must ask ourselves. These are questions that we need to talk to God about. I know that I must.

The ABWomen's Ministries Board will be meeting March 6-7 at First Baptist Topeka. I would ask that you pray for the Board as we work through the agenda and that we work together to make our organization stronger in order to provide the resources that each local ABWomen's group would need. I would ask you to pray that we show "true grit" in serving as your Central Region ABWomen's Ministries Board.

I want to encourage you to fully participate in your local church, whether it is in ABW or other activities of the church. It is important to use your skills, dedication, determination, and true grit in service to God. I also want to encourage you to put June 5-6 on your calendar to attend the Summer Conference of ABW. It will be held at FBC Topeka. Janet Crawl, Conference Associate, and her committee are working hard to make this a special event. The registration form will be out as soon as it is completed. Watch for it in upcoming Central Connections, through Region publications, and on our ABWomen's Ministries website abwmcr.org. You will have fun, be encouraged, uplifted by the Word and join other women of the Central Region in experiencing the event. You will not want to miss it!

I want to share some sad news - The ABWomen's Ministries Board lost one of our officers on February 16. Rita Adams, our Corresponding Secretary, left this world for the next after fighting a health battle. Please remember her family and friends in your prayers.

Romans 12:11 (The Passion Translation) says "Be enthusiastic to serve the Lord, keeping your passion toward Him boiling hot! Radiate with the glow of the Holy Spirit and let Him fill you with excitement as you serve Him." Blessings to each of you!



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ABWM OF THE CENTRAL REGION SUMMER CONFERENCE

Save the date



Summer Conference Date: June 5-6, 2026

Location: First Baptist Church, Topeka

Theme: Making a Difference Together

based on national theme "Building God's Community"

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Kathy Maxwell, Central Seminary

Good Stuff to Read

As I looked at the books on my desktop a couple weeks ago, I discovered I had accomplished reading four books in 2025. Each author encouraged me in an area of my life at the time I needed, all dealing with a different aspect of transitions and changes in life. As I take time now to journal some insights from each book, I thought I would share the titles so someone else might find encouragement.

Shift; Changing Our Focus to See the Presence of God, by Abby McDonald.

With Fresh Eyes; 60 Insights into the Miraculously Ordinary from a Woman Born Blind, by Karen Wingate.

Don't Look Back; Getting Unstuck and Moving Forward with Passion and Purpose, by Christine Caine.

Surrendering Certainty; Hearing God Today by Letting Go of Tomorrow, by Abby McDonald. (I think this one is my favorite).

The next book waiting on my reading list is With Open Ears; 60 Reflections on the Wonder of Sound from a Woman Born Blind. And I am on day 46 of The Inspiring Grandmother; 90 Days of Devotions, Prayer & Encouragement, published by Our Daily Bread. There are contributions from Ruth Graham, Karen Kingsbury, and many more.

In summary: don't take your relationship with God for granted! Surrendering + Trust = Joy!

Connie Northup, President
Missouri River Association

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Love Gift Giving



We are grateful for every individual, AB Women's Ministries group, and church who supported Love Gift giving in 2025. Our 2025 goal for giving was \$30,000. The Central Region ABCCR Financial Administrator reports that our total giving was \$20,197.79. We will distribute Love Gift giving certificates for all churches and AB Women's Ministries groups to our Association Presidents at the March Board meeting. Total giving in 2024 was \$26,647.33 and in 2023 was \$29,390.85. We look forward in 2026 to continued participation in Love Gift giving!



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Bible Book of the Month

Daniel

The Book of Daniel is a mix of historical narrative and apocalyptic (prophetic) literature. It tells the story of Daniel and other Jewish exiles living in Babylon after Jerusalem was conquered around 586 B.C. The book emphasizes faithfulness to God during difficult times, God's sovereignty over earthly kingdoms, and hope for future deliverance.

The book has 12 chapters and is usually divided into two main parts:

Part 1: Stories of Faith in Exile (Chapters 1–6)

These chapters focus on Daniel and his friends living in Babylon under foreign kings.

Chapter 1 – Daniel's Training in Babylon

Daniel and his friends (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) are taken captive to Babylon. They refuse to eat the king's food because it violates Jewish dietary laws. God blesses them with health and wisdom, and they rise in favor with the king.

Theme: Staying faithful to God in a foreign culture.

Chapter 2 – Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

King Nebuchadnezzar dreams of a large statue made of different materials. Daniel interprets the dream:

- The statue represents four successive kingdoms.
- A stone destroys the statue, symbolizing God's eternal kingdom.

Theme: God controls history and kingdoms rise and fall according to His plan.

Chapter 3 – The Fiery Furnace

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse to worship a golden statue. They are thrown into a fiery furnace but miraculously survive because God protects them.

Theme: Courage and faith under persecution.

Chapter 4 – Nebuchadnezzar's Humbling

The king has another dream predicting his downfall due to pride. He becomes insane for a period of time until he acknowledges God's authority.

Theme: God humbles the proud.

Chapter 5 – The Writing on the Wall

King Belshazzar sees mysterious writing on the wall during a feast. Daniel interprets it as God’s judgment. That night, Babylon falls to the Medes and Persians.

Theme: God judges sinful leadership.

Chapter 6 – Daniel in the Lions’ Den

Daniel continues praying to God despite a royal decree forbidding it. He is thrown into a lions’ den but is miraculously protected.

Theme: Faithfulness and trust in God.

Part 2: Visions and Prophecies (Chapters 7–12)

These chapters contain symbolic visions about future kingdoms and God’s ultimate victory.

Chapter 7 – Four Beasts

Daniel sees four beasts representing kingdoms. The “Ancient of Days” (God) and the “Son of Man” appear, symbolizing God’s final authority and eternal kingdom.

Chapter 8 – The Ram and the Goat

A vision symbolizing future empires (commonly understood as Medo-Persia and Greece). It includes a ruler who persecutes God’s people.

Chapters 9–12 – Future Deliverance

Daniel prays for his people. He receives prophecies about:

- A period called the “Seventy Weeks”
- Coming conflict and suffering
- Final resurrection and judgment

The book ends with hope that God will ultimately defeat evil and reward the faithful.

Major Themes in Daniel

1. **God’s Sovereignty** – God rules over all nations and leaders.
2. **Faith Under Pressure** – Believers must remain faithful even in hostile cultures.
3. **Judgment and Justice** – God holds rulers accountable.
4. **Hope and Restoration** – Evil will not win; God’s kingdom is eternal.
5. **Apocalyptic Vision** – Symbolic language reveals God’s long-term plan for history.

Special Project 2025–2026

GREETINGS TO ALL! Spring is just around the corner, and I couldn't be more excited. Every year we are greeted with the tender shoots of crocus, daffodils and tulips emerging from the ground. Often, we don't notice them until they are up and blooming. I think it reminds us to look past the dried leaves and know that God is always at work, even when we don't see Him. He's constantly proving to us that there is beauty all around us! We just need to be available with open eyes.

Thinking about new things, I received an update from Danielle at **Camp Christy**. They are one half of our Special Project this year, if you haven't heard. As you know they are in the process of building a new cottage, the Rozelle Cottage, that will be used for campers and volunteers. This additional cottage is needed and will increase its camper capacity. Our funds will help them with the furnishings of this new cottage. This is what Danielle wrote:

"We just had spray foam put in, and we have a private donor setting up our HVAC system. Once the HVAC system is in, we should be able to work on the interior.

We received a grant for 5K from the FBC Scott Global Mission Fund and another 10K from a private donor."

This is so exciting for them! Please continue to keep Danielle and **Camp Christy** in your prayers. I have a new flyer from them that I will attach to my article if space allows. Otherwise, let me know and I can provide one to you for your group. Danielle has also offered to come and present to churches if time allows. She teaches part-time so she is busy Monday through Thursday, 8-noon. Maybe some of our central/west area churches would be interested in this.

As a reminder, our second half of Special Project is the **Kodiak Baptist Mission**, please keep them in your prayers as well. They continue their outreach and ministry to that community. The latest has been a whiffle ball tournament. Sounds like a fun way to spend a snowy day there in Alaska. You can follow them on social media or sign up for the weekly newsletters to keep you up to date with their activities. There's always something going on there! It's a busy place.

Lastly, I want to give you an update on our goal's progress and I'm here to say, you all are amazing! As of **February 20**, we have received **\$11,417.89** of our \$30,000 goal! Keep up the good work and continue sending in those funds to:

**ABWM-CR,
c/o Vonda Breicheisen, 2504 Idaho Rd,
Ottawa, Ks. 66067-9007**

Thank you and
May the joy of Spring bring blessings to all,

Paula Rhodes, Project Associate

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Mission & Service

Did you have a lion or a lamb at your place as March arrived? No matter which, spring is on its way and with it is the end of another White Cross year. Now is an appeal for HELP. This is a reminder for all local groups to send your end of year report to your Association White Cross person. I would like to have the final reports by the end of April so I can work on new requests for next year and take the packets to Conference in June. These requests are different in that each group is responsible for sending in their own funds and no final tally is made so I have no way of knowing if what was requested was a feasible amount.

Plans are being made for Summer Conference and I urge you to attend if possible. We have good speakers, wonderful workshops and an opportunity to meet other mission minded ladies (always a few men too!). I can try to answer any White Cross questions you might have. After muddling through my first year as Mission and Service Associate, I feel more comfortable in knowing what to do and can hopefully help you understand it too.

Dianna Cook

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