



February

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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

Greetings for the New Year!

Yes, I know that it is February that you will read this, but I haven't written anything to you for a few weeks. Since I've last written, we have held our family/friends/church Christmas events and then celebrated the beginning of a new year. So many things have happened in our lives that perhaps we haven't taken time out of our busy schedules to think about the blessings and love we received. Let's each plan to spend time thanking God for the wonderful family & friends we have and the churches we attend. What a blessing God has given to us!

February – the month we think more often about Love is here. Love comes in many different varieties. There is love for God, love of our spouse and family, love for each other, love for an item we can't possibly live without. Love is a mysterious force given to us by God and shared by all his creatures in various degrees and beyond our understanding. In Matthew 22:36-39, it says, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

There are many opportunities this coming month to be part of the American Baptist Women's Ministries events that are planned. Perhaps your local church is planning to celebrate a night for your girls and women. I know of a few churches that will be celebrating "Galentine's" Day instead of the traditional Valentine's Day. Other churches are celebrating by having an evening meal inviting couples to attend and having "The Dating Game" as entertainment. Whatever you might be doing in your local church, do it with love for one another. Remember, there are some in your church that have lost a loved one, perhaps never married or didn't/don't feel loved. "Share a little love" wherever you go or whatever you do.

There are opportunities to join other sisters across the country every 4th Tuesday of the month in a National Prayer Call. Check at abwomensministries.org to sign up. There are also webinars that you can attend. Each Monday in February, the "Embracing the Chapters of our Lives" series will be given and then in March beginning on the 9th and continue through the month, the "Purple Table Series: It's All About the Table!" will celebrate Women's History Month. You can sign up to attend through the national website abwomensministries.org.

If I can be of help to you, please let me know. I will do my best to do so! May you rest deeply in God's unconditional love, allowing His perfect love to cast out every fear and overflow through you to others.

Blessings,

Lois Chiles, President, ABWomen's Ministries CR

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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

Fear of Uselessness

What are you fearful of? What have you been worrying about lately?

In the second Lord of the Rings movies, when the people of Rohan are preparing to flee to the fortress of Helms Deep, Aragorn (a main character, kingly good guy) confronts Eowyn (of royal lineage of Rohan, a Shieldmaiden), as she has just shown Aragorn that she is well-versed in the use of the sword and states she does not fear the sword or death. He then asks her what IS she afraid of. She replies, "A cage...To stay behind bars until use and old age accept them, and all chance of doing great deeds is gone beyond recall or desire." (Google it). My interpretation: she fears uselessness, following societal expectations of women of royal lineage of that time period, which is NOT her hearts' desire.

The movie may be fictional, but the application is appropriate for reality.

In a recent devotion, the reader is encouraged to ask the Lord to reveal any fears or worries which may be hindering trust and growth in the Lord. Since something was nagging me that I had not yet verbalized, I asked. An inaudible voice replied, "the fear of not being useful." With all the changes in my life since retirement over two years ago, and more changes coming in the new year, I find myself not afraid of these, nor of death, but fearful of uselessness. To sit at home, reading, working puzzles, watching game shows, napping, abandoned by family..... I don't think so!

I, too, am of royal lineage, a child of God, and His promises are true. Psalm 138:8 reminds me He will work out his plans for my life, and will not abandon me. He delights in the details of my life (Psalm 37:23-24). He will continue to teach me, as long as He has my whole heart (Psalms 86:11-12). Seeking Him first, with prayer and a willing heart, he frees me from my fears, restores my joy in living, and sustains me (Psalms 34:4-6; Psalm 51:12). So many, many more promises in His word! As Aragorn tells Eowyn that her fear is not her fate, so these promises remind me of the same. My hearts' desire is to be as active as possible, for as long as possible, for family, for ministry.....and maybe one day I WILL be homebound, and then family and ministry will come to me when I cannot go to them.

Proverbs 31:25-27 – She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs without fear of the future (my emphasis). When she speaks, her words are wise, and she gives instructions with kindness. She carefully watches everything in her household and suffers nothing from laziness. (uselessness-my words) (also note, age is not mentioned as a hindrance).

May your new year be blessed.
Connie Northup, President, Missouri River

P.S. – my word for the year is JOY, rediscovering it and its relationship with hope and peace.

What's your word for 2026?

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Personal Development

We were blessed to attend the Mid-Winter Missions Conference in January. Our gifted speaker, Jill Lowery, felt God's call to be a missionary as a teenager. Jill and her husband, Mike began serving in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1990. She now lives in California and is a Donor Advisor for International Ministries. She also visits and serves alongside the global servants at Deborah's House in Tijuana, Mexico. One take away for me as I listened to Jill, was her comment about her time in the Congo. She mentioned that at one time, there was an intentional initiative for prayer circles to pray for all global servants serving in countries across the globe. She said that many times, especially in difficulty, she felt the prayers of those prayer circles reaching out to them and their ministry. She stated that she feels that prayer moves the hand of God but wondered if those prayer circles are still happening.

Many times I hear from local ABWM groups that they are small and do not have the number of women or financial resources to continue. Jill's words reminded me that there is something that all of our ABWM groups can do, no matter how small or limited, we can PRAY for our global servants. And, how important our prayer circles are to them!!

Here are some prayer points for a prayer circle when praying for International Ministries and our Global Servants.

1. Calling and Obedience – Pray that Global Servants walk daily in God's calling and remain sensitive to the Holy Spirit. Ask for obedience even in difficult or unfamiliar cultures. "Here am I send me." Isaiah 6:8
2. Spiritual Protection – Pray for protection from spiritual opposition, discouragement, and fear. Ask God to strengthen their faith and guard their hearts and minds in Christ. "The Lord is my refuge and my fortress." Psalm 91
3. Physical and Emotional Well-Being – Pray for health, rest, and renewal amid demanding schedules and challenging environments. Lift up families serving alongside them, especially children and spouses.

Personal Development

4. Cultural Wisdom and Unity – Pray for humility, cultural sensitivity, and wisdom as they serve across languages and traditions. Ask for unity with local leaders, churches, and communities.

5. Provision and Resources – Pray for financial provision, safe housing, transportation, and ministry resources. Ask God to open doors that no one can shut. Revelation 3:8.

6. Fruitfulness and Transformation – Pray that lives are transformed, churches are strengthened and communities experience God's love. Ask for lasting discipleship, not just momentary impact.

7. Courage in Hard Places – Pray for boldness where the Gospel is restricted or persecution exists. Ask God to give peace and courage beyond understanding.

8. Endurance and Hope – Pray that Global Servants do not grow weary but are renewed in hope. Ask God to remind them they are not forgotten or alone. Galatians 6:9.

Lord God,
We lift up every Global Servant and International Ministry before You. Cover them with your presence, guide their steps, and strengthen their hearts. May Your name be glorified in every nation, and may Your love flow through them to the end of the earth.
In Jesus name, Amen

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Bible Book of the Month

Job

The Book of Job is found in the Old Testament of the Bible. It tells the story of Job, a wealthy and righteous man who is faithful to God and lives a good life.

At the beginning of the book, Satan challenges God, saying that Job is only faithful because God has blessed him. God allows Satan to test Job, but not to take his life. Suddenly, Job loses his wealth, his children, and his health. Despite his suffering, Job refuses to curse God.

Job's three friends-Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar—come to comfort him. However, they argue that Job must have sinned and that his suffering is a punishment from God. Job insists that he has done nothing wrong and asks God to explain why he is suffering.

Later, a fourth man named Elihu speaks, suggesting that suffering can be a way for God to teach people, not to punish them.

Finally, God speaks to Job from a whirlwind. God does not directly explain Job's suffering but reminds Job of His power, wisdom, and control over creation. Job realizes that he does not need all the answers and humbly trusts God.

In the end, God restores Job's health and gives him more wealth and family than before. God also rebukes Job's friends for speaking wrongly about Him.

Lessons we can learn from the Book of Job:

- 1) Good people can suffer** – Suffering is not always a punishment for wrongdoing. Even faithful people can face hardships.
- 2) We may not understand everything** – God’s plans are greater than human understanding. Not all questions have clear answers.
- 3) Faith during hard times matters** – Job questioned God, but he did not abandon his faith. It is okay to struggle as long as we continue trusting.
- 4) Be careful when judging others** – Job’s friends assumed they knew why he was suffering, but they were wrong. We should show compassion instead of judgment.
- 5) God is in control** – The book reminds us that God is powerful and wise, even when life seems unfair.
- 6) Humility is important** – Job learns that humans are limited and should approach God with humility.

Jo Templin, Personal Development Coordinator

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Special Project 2025–2026

Happy New Year to all!

As I sit here writing this update on our special project, the snowflakes are falling. It certainly means that winter is upon us and staying inside where it's warm is the best place to be. I'm certainly thankful for a furnace that heats our home and a wood burning stove that keeps the cold away from my old achy bones. You may also be thinking that too. What a powerful God we serve! He knows exactly what we need and provides for ALL those daily needs! Hallelujah! (Matthew 6:32-34)

Thinking of the cold that's upon us now, I'm mindful of our Special Projects – Camp Christy and the Kodiak Baptist Mission. Camp Christy being here in Kansas, is experiencing the same type of weather we currently have. But Kodiak Baptist Mission on the other hand is much different than ours! I just thought for grins I'd check their forecast – it's 40 degrees there now! It's a heat wave compared to Kansas weather today. Haha! However, their snow averages 60 inches per year! No Thank you. I'll just bundle up and stay inside for a few days.

Speaking of our projects, I had hoped to have an update on the Rozell Cottage at Camp Christy but have not heard from their director. Maybe next month I can let everyone know how progress is coming along. I'm sure with the holidays and our cold burst, the contractors are waiting for a warmup. As for Kodiak Baptist Mission, there's always something happening. Kelli, the director, has initiated the Heritage Farm & Ranch Dairy. They currently are Alaska's only Grade A Certified Goat Dairy in the state! What a blessing this organization is to their community and state. Not only do they minister to youth but have a visible outreach ministry within their community. Once again, evidence of the powerful God we serve! Amen!

In closing, I'm sure you're wondering just how we're doing with our goal's progress and I'm here to say, amazing! As of January 19, 2026, we have received \$7,522.00 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**

Until next month, please stay warm and continue praying for our Special Project that includes Camp Christy and the Kodiak Baptist Mission.
Blessings and do stay warm.

Paula Rhodes, Project Associate
Email: Pjrhodesx4@gmail.com
Phone #:(913-208-5317)

Mary Gates Atkinson Scholarship

Student update

Tyra Ann Bogle made straight A's last semester!! She attends Pittsburg State University. She is taking 14 credit hours for the Spring of 2026 (Full time) **Her home address: 1118 W 1st St., Pittsburg, Ks. 66762 Her school email: tyra.bogle@gus.pittstate.edu. Her personal phone #620-432-3934.**

Prayer Request: "Thank you for all the prayers! I actually found out some exciting news on New year's Day. My husband and I found out we are pregnant and I could use some prayers about the health of the baby and that the pregnancy goes well. Other than that, just prayers that Jesus continues to provide for us in all aspects of our lives."

Amy Marie Marcoux, made straight A's last semester!! She attends Pittsburg State University. She is taking 12 credit hours for the Spring of 2026 (Full time) **Her school email: amarcoux@gus.pittstate.edu. Home address: 1024 S. Gretchen Ave. Chanute, Ks. 66720.**

Prayer Request: "Please pray for me as classes begin on Tuesday! (Jan. 20th) I have 4 classes and a 16-hour-a-week practicum this semester. I started the practicum this Monday, and it is heavy. I'm so thankful I have a chance to start practicing counseling, but I am also aware that I need a lot of prayer, because the people I see all day long at this community counseling center have a lot of big issues and spiritual issues as well. Please pray for God's protection over me and my family, and for blessings for those I meet each day! Also, please pray that I can balance my school and workload well and have intentional time with my husband and 3 daughters. We have found a good balance to this point, but this semester will be even more full! I know God will give us the strength and provide in this time! I'm so thankful for you. Even my daughters love to look at the "ABW LADY CARDS" as they call them, that come in the mail! Thanks again!

Mary Gates Atkinson Scholarship

Student update

Paige E. Campbell made a 3.54 GPA last semester! She attends Northwest Missouri State University. She is taking 12 credit hours for the Spring of 2026 (Full time). **Her personal email is: paigywaggie@gmail.com.**

Prayer Request: Health concerns.

Alicia Ann Stinnett is carrying at 3.259 overall GPA! She is taking 13 credit hours for the Spring of 2026 (Full time). **Her personal email is: angelinheaven2005@hotmail.com. Her home address is 120 E. Walnut St., Herrington, Ks. 67449. Phone: 661-343-8627.**

Prayer Request: She requests that we pray for her dad who has esophageal varices and fatty liver disease.

I am incredibly impressed by the outstanding academic achievements of these dedicated ladies!

I have been contacted about questions about the requirements of next years scholarship. From their questions, I can tell that there is old scholarship information out there. Please go to the website <https://www.abwmcr.org>

And click on the Scholarships tab and the MGA Student App to get the most current application. Or just email or text me and I will email you one.

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