



May 2021

Vol. 119 No. 5

First Baptist Church of Hays Implements a Year of Intentional Prayer

First Baptist Church in Hays, Kansas has dedicated 2021 as a Year of Prayer. Their Prayer Initiative came from a member of the congregation as a response to a sermon Pastor Chris Prater gave toward the end of last year. They started locally in January and then each month progressed outward. Each week of the month has a specific theme that they pray for that week. Hays is sending letters out to each person and institution that they are praying for as a reminder that they are being prayed for.

In January prayer was geared toward First Baptist Hays with the weekly focuses being families that make up the church, leadership, youth, call/purpose of the church, and the Great Commission.

February’s prayer focus was Hays, Kansas. The weekly focus’ were community leadership, community churches, educators of all levels; from elementary through college, and first responders.

In March, the prayer focus was for Ellis County. The weekly focus points were for county leadership, churches throughout the county, serving organizations, care givers, hospitals, and nursing homes.

The entire state of Kansas was the focus for April. They prayed for the state leadership; the governor received a letter along with both the state Speaker of the House and President of the State Senate. Churches in the state, especially those in the Central Region, the unsaved throughout the state, orphans, and widows were also primary prayer focuses for April.

The United States of America will be the focus for May. Our country’s leadership, all churches, especially those a part of ABCUSA, graduates on every level, indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and our military will be things they will specifically be praying for.

June’s primary focus will be the world. Everything they had previously prayed for will be included. Specific focuses will be on churches around the world. Missionaries, refugees, the out-workings of the Great Commandment, and the unsaved around the world.

The Prayer Bench was installed on April 1st. They hosted a “Ribbon Cutting” for the bench on April 5th through the Hays Chamber of Commerce. They have also made prayer cards to hand out.

The local radio station, KPRD asked pastor Chris to visit and record 4-6 short recordings dealing with prayer and its significance in the life of followers of Jesus. It is not only connected to their initiative, but to the National Day of Prayer and will play on the radio leading up to that event. On National Day of Prayer their objective is to have 18 hours of continuous prayer taking place. National Day of Prayer is on May 6th.

They used Acts 1:8 as their example in choosing the overarching theme. Jesus started at home (Jerusalem) and then progressively worked outward from there. Since it worked out nicely that the themes came to 6, the plan is to start all over in July, but to possibly choose different weekly focuses the second time around.

We should all be in prayer for First Baptist Church, Hays as they practice this initiative but also join them in times of intentional prayer.



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Is Your Church Leadership Sharing Keys?

By: Associate Executive Minister, Rev. Jennifer Schneider

American Baptist Home Mission Society is partnering with Fuller Youth Institute on a new initiative. American Baptist churches from around the country, including two from our region, are participating in the Growing Young program. Each church has formed a core group of individuals who are reading the book, Growing Young, watching videos, taking an assessment, and doing a listening project. Each month, the church groups meet together and participate in zoom meetings with other church leaders and mentors.



The first chapter in the book, Growing Young, by Kara Powell, Jake Mulder, and Brad Griffin, talks about keychain leadership. They suggest four key leadership styles: key-less leaders, key-hoarding leaders, key-loaning leaders, and keychain leaders.

Key-less leaders are people who are doing the work but aren't being trusted with the keys. They have gifts to share and are expected to be leaders but aren't given authority or access to resources.

Key-hoarding leaders are leaders who hold onto keys and aren't willing to share them. Sometimes they don't share because they are afraid to lose power or because they believe nobody will lead the "right way."

Key-loaning leaders are willing to share the keys but still want to control how the keys are used. They let others borrow the keys but only for the short-term.

The last kind of key leader is **keychain leaders**. These are leaders who understand the importance of keys and are looking for others who are gifted for ministry. Keychain leaders are willing to train new leaders, giving them access to keys when they are ready. Keychain leaders look to develop new leaders, especially young leaders.

Are your church leaders keychain leaders, or do they hold onto keys? The authors of Growing Young found in their research churches that encourage young leaders to keep keys are more likely to attract young people. The pandemic has forced churches to do ministry in new ways. Maybe it is an excellent time to look for young, gifted leaders in your church community and give them keys.

If you are willing to entrust your keys to young people, they will trust you with their hearts, their energy, their creativity, and even their friends... if you give them your access, you have the opportunity to touch a whole generation." (Growing Young, p. 55)

Blessings,
Jennifer Schneider
Associate Executive Minister

Prayer Emphasis

Tim Schwartz

Let us pray for the country of Myanmar, formerly known as Burma, that peace would return to this beloved country, where Adoniram and Ann Judson proclaimed the gospel 200 years ago.

Let us pray for all the followers of Jesus there, who are not only continuing to live out their faith daily, but also doing their best to stand firm and resist this evil, militaristic rule.

Let us pray for all those who mourn, especially the parents and families of children who are being shot down that God would bring them comfort in this time of sadness and pain.

May we pray that the people there would regain control of their government and return it to their form of democracy.

As we continue to pray, might we also advocate, work for and live out peace in our daily lives wherever we are in our world. As the scripture says, "Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual edification." Romans 14:19 (NRSV)

Sharing God's Love

The American Baptist Women's Ministries of Meridian Avenue Baptist Church in Wichita delivered 45 bags with blankets/lap robes to Homestead Health Center on St.

Patrick's Day for all their residents. The picture below shows staff with some of the bags that have been made. Residents can enjoy the colorful bags as well as the blan-



Valley of Shadows!

When we started into this COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, everyone thought and hoped it would only last a few months! But, as we know, it's been over a year and still not under control, as we continue to have new variants.

Our granddaughter and her husband have now had it twice – the second time was a new variant – and they are in their early twenties. Fortunately, it was not extremely severe, but with a not-quite three year old, it was definitely a bad time – both times!

We all have valleys of shadows of one sort or another. It may be illness, loss of work, financial, deaths, etc. But when we find ourselves in a valley filled with shadows, remember there cannot be a shadow without light. And that points us to God's presence because God is light. (1 John 1:5) We are not alone! God is with us in life's valleys.

Yet, when we're in a valley, it's easy to concentrate only on our difficulties. We forget that adversity has the potential to make us stronger. Take note of Paul's words to the Romans: "...suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope..." (Romans 5:3b-4a) This chain reaction results in the outpouring of God's love "through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us" (Rom 5:5b)

So, what is our response to this great outpouring of God's love? Do we just soak it in, or do we respond by sharing that love with others? There are a multitude of ways to share God's love – a phone call, a card, helping with yard work or repairs or carrying in groceries for our more senior friends, financial assistance for those out of work, etc. We can also share God's love by financial gifts to ministries (including your church) who do what you cannot!

I'd love to come discuss your plans for sharing God's love financially. I can give suggestions for tax benefits, etc. and then you can decide. A Charitable Gift Annuity for a child or grandchild would give them a birthday gift every year of his/her life, even after you've gone to your reward! It's a guarantee that you will never be forgotten! It can be as little as \$1,000 or as much as you want.

Please contact me as there is no charge for my service and information. Nor is there any pressure – you make your own decision!

Rev. Wilma E. Engle,
Director of Planned Giving
cell: 316-644-2069

6745 Interurban, Wichita, KS 67204-1323
e-mail: wilmaengle@juno.com

Rev. Timothy Schwartz,
Assistant Director of Planned Giving
cell: 913-424-9939
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Central Region Life 117 Years

of Continuous Publication

CENTRAL REGION LIFE

News of the American Baptist Churches of the Central Region

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Walnut Valley Association

American Baptist Women Update

The women of Roger Williams/Walnut Valley Association are regaining our footing after a year of uncertainty due to the global pandemic. While we were mostly unable to meet as an association, smaller church circles continued as situations allowed. We welcomed approximately 40 women (and a few men) to our Spring Association General Meeting at Faith Renewal Church. Rev. Lyndon Perry led the group in praise songs. Moise Joseph brought special music at the keyboard.

The IM missionary Team, Rev. Deliris Carrion-Joseph and Moise Joseph shared about the mission at Deborah's House in Tijuana, Mexico. Deborah's House is a shelter for women and children when domestic violence disrupts their lives. Moise speaks four languages and God has used his talent to help refugees who come to the border at Tijuana needing help with the immigration process. They also offer many other services such as getting housing, jobs, food, and medical care. Our association held a Mini-Project Offering to help the missionary team, as they are currently raising funds to return to Tijuana.

Deliris shared how she cherishes the cards of encouragement from American Baptist Women. Sometimes the message comes on the right day when the encouragement is most needed. This reaffirms the importance of AB Women's efforts in prayer and encouragement for all of our special interest missionaries. The morning was a truly special time of worship and hope.

We plan to move forward with the Summer Association meeting in August and another meeting in the fall. Praise be to God for His goodness and His plan for the women of RW/WV as we seek to serve and follow Him in rejoicing, prayer, and much thanksgiving.

Betty Witters
President, Roger Williams/Walnut Valley Association

Smoke Signals (Church Board(s)) What Signals is Your Board Sending?

By: Director of Interim Ministry, Dr. William Hendricks

This is the second of a three-part article based on the recognizable signals, both positive and negative, a church sends during times of transition. These signals help an Interim Minister develop a meaningful engagement approach to working with a church during pastoral turnover.

The demographics of your church board shout loudly about your church and it's future. In this series of articles, we share observations that stem from serving churches during pastoral transition. These observations come from years of looking with 'Fresh eyes' into many Churches, from very small rural churches and larger community churches. In every case, each church board emits certain signals; some suggest a treacherous future. Interim Ministers look to three types of signals:



- #1 – The Demographic signals
- #2 – The Culture signals
- #3 – The Thought signals

The Demographic Signals. As one might guess, the makeup of a Board says a lot about the church. The age of Board members, the male/female composition, and Board tenure to be specific. The diversity of age, gender, and in some churches, ethnicity shouts volumes to the world.

-Are the members who will inherit the next generation at the table?

-Has the church established a continuity plan that ensures the values and principles the church was founded upon will be brought forward for the next generation?

The Culture Signals. Perception may not reflect intent, but

- When new member classes are held, are Board positions explained and valued?

-Does the Church use the Board as a foundation for building leadership skills?

The Thought Signals.

- Do Board members see their role as a Christian calling, an expression of their Spiritual gifts?

-What percentage of the Board members hold positions because no one else would take the job?

-How many Board members serve their term and then rotate to a different role, never actually leaving the Board?

The Interim Minister looks at a church's leadership through these three lenses with eyes wide open, not to judge but to bring Interim activities that also help the Search Team better identify the right fit for the new pastor.

How do these Board Signals reflect the life of a church?

1st Some people have too much authority and power, others not enough. The Interim asks the church if the Board accurately reflects what they want the church to be.

2nd Board development is spiritual development. Some of the best and worst Christian behavior is seen when sitting in Board meetings. The Interim Minister helps the church grow in their life and faith in Christ, making Board leadership a God calling

3rd Church constitutions generally specify the number of elected Board members. These requirements may no longer be realistic. An Interim can bring guidance as you reshape your constitution. Please give me call to chat about the ideas mentioned. The Interim Program offers fresh eyes.

Rev. Dr. Bill Hendricks
Director of Interim Ministries, Central Region





2021 Opportunities

Positions

- Assistant Program Manager
- Paid Cabin Leaders
- Support Cooks
- Rockwall Facilitators
- Lifeguards

Full Descriptions at <https://www.campchristy.net/now-hiring>

Weekly Volunteer and Possible Internships also available.

For details call **Danielle** at 620-872-3025 or email campchristy365@gmail.com



One Great Hour of Sharing: Let Love Flow



Photo by Craig Thompson

How far are you willing to let your love flow?

When you give to One Great Hour of Sharing, you deploy resources to people in need all around the world. Through sustainable development projects, our partners provide life-giving water and other critical resources that help communities reinvent and reimagine what is possible. When water comes to a village, people are safer, healthier, and more free to pursue learning and growth opportunities. Let love flow, and share more than just water

*Nobody hungry, nobody thirsty,
shade from the sun, shelter from the wind,
For the Compassionate One guides them,
takes them to the best springs.*

— Isaiah 49:10



Give safely online at abc-oghs.org



imagine

American Baptist Churches USA

BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT

An Online Experience | June 24-26, 2021

Thursday June 24, 2021

4:00pm Welcome Session- Learn more about the online platform, schedule, and special events.

5:00pm American Baptist Caucus Sessions

7:00pm Worship- Imagine Unity
Join with other members of the American Baptist family for this Communion service.

(Times listed are Eastern Daylight Time)

Friday June 25, 2021

3:00pm An Address to MMBB Members

4:00pm A selection of workshops

5:00pm Business Session- Churches, please select delegates to represent your church at this session.

6:30pm Highlighting International Ministries

7:00pm Worship- Imagine Healing
Featuring Keynote Speaker Rev. Dr. Winterbourne LaPucelle Harrison Jones

8:15pm Comedy (half) Hour

Saturday June 26, 2021

4:00pm A selection of workshops

5:00pm Mission Summit Conversations

6:30pm Highlighting American Baptist Home Mission Societies

7:00pm Worship- Imagine Hope
Featuring Keynote Speaker Rev. Dr. Brianna Parker

- Visit with American Baptist Partners and related organizations in the Virtual Exhibit Hall
- View the On-Demand Library of resources and recordings at your leisure before, during, and after the event
- Connect with other attendees around areas of interest to you

Registration for Church Delegates and Participants is open.
Visit www.americanbaptists2021.com to view the entire schedule and to register!

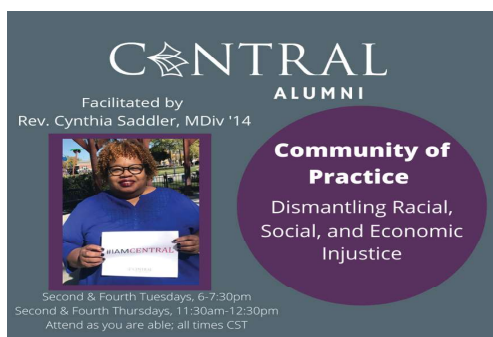
CENTRAL SEMINARY



Central Baptist Theological Seminary will celebrate its 119th Commencement on Saturday May 15 at 10:00am. Diana Butler Bass, award-winning author, popular speaker, and inspiring preacher, will deliver the commencement address to celebrate the accomplishments of 72 graduates, including the first graduating class of the new Master of Arts in Counseling program. The class of 2021 includes graduates from Myanmar, Korea, Ethiopia, and Nigeria. Central's Board of Trustees will also honor Rev. Dr. Gregory Hunt, Supplemental Assistant Professor of Theology, with the Distinguished Service Award. Join in the celebration through Facebook Live.

Alumni Learning Groups

The Learning Circle will be facilitated by Lee Jost, MDiv '12 and will focus on reading and discussion of books of interest. The first book selected is Culture Care by Makoto Fujimura. Culture Care is written for artists to entrepreneurs, for pastors to business professionals. Makoto Fijimura connects his faith to his art and to his desire to see culture transformed from a barren environment to a fruitful and life-giving space for all to flourish. This learning circle will meet over zoom on the following Wednesdays from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (CST): May 5, May 19, June 2, June 16.



Cynthia Saddler, MDiv '14 will facilitate the Community of Practice: Dismantling Racial, Social, & Economic Injustice. This community will share perspectives and discuss differences and ways to dismantle systemic racism, poverty, brutality, and exclusion, and participate in honest dialogue about these issues within our ministry settings. Invited guests will share professional and personal experiences. Starting Tuesday April 27th, you can join these conversations on the second and fourth Tuesdays from 6:00-7:30pm (CST) and the second and fourth Thursdays from 11:00am-12:30pm (CST). Come to one or all meetings. We're offering multiple times to accommodate various schedules.



Our application to become a recipient and distribution center of food boxes under the USDA Farmers to Families food box program was approved recently, and we are now distributing 240-250 food boxes and a gallon of milk on Tuesdays to help our community members. Many people have taken advantage of the food boxes we distribute and they expressed their appreciation of what we do. One of the ladies who picked up the food box said, "I am so thankful for your free food distribution. I have a big family to feed and we are really in need of food now. You have no idea what it means to me to receive these food boxes today."

We are very happy to see our twelve sewing students working hard, learning new skills, and are graduating at their own pace. The last piece they have to make to graduate is a refugee quilt. The refugee quilts our students made will be donated to the Lutheran World Relief for refugees' use. The quilts will be sent to refugee camps in different parts of the world. Since many of our students experienced living in refugee camps for several years before they were resettled in America, making a refugee quilt brings back many memories to them.

While Jeremina was working on her refugee quilt, she said, "I used to receive refugee blankets (we called them blankets, not quilts) every year in a refugee camp in Thailand for twelve years. My five children and I loved them and we used them all the time in the camp. When the blankets got old and were torn, we did not throw them but mend them. If they were too torn to be mended, we cut them into small pieces and still use them until the pieces were too small to use. I am so happy making a refugee blanket to help some families who are in a refugee camp."

When it comes to the sewing class, Jeremina has fun learning new skills. But when it comes to making a refugee quilt, she is overjoyed and is filled with emotions. She added, "Thank God, my family and I are no longer refugees but we live in a free country." Due to the pandemic we cannot have a graduation party but we acknowledged their achievements by giving them a graduation certificate, the sewing machine they learned on, a new iron and ironing board, fabric, notions, and other materials they need to continue to sew. We welcome material and financial donations for our sewing class.

Mang Sonna
Executive Director
Bethel Neighborhood Center
913-371-8218 (Work)
913-548-8831 (Cell)
www.bethelcenter.org





Prairie Homestead Celebrates Accomplishments



Recently, Prairie Homestead Senior Living in Wichita was recognized and celebrated two accomplishments that sets their Assisted Living apart from most in the state. First, they were able to announce their residents have been COVID FREE for the entire past year! With many care providers struggling to keep residents safe and healthy, Prairie Homestead has set the bar high. Yvonne Loftis, Director of Sales and Marketing, credits the actions taken by staff members with keeping coronavirus out of the community.

“A big part of what kept/ keeps us safe is not only what our staff is doing while at the facility, but also what they are doing once they go home,” she said. “The staff have been very responsible with what they are choosing to do outside of work to not bring anything back to our residents.”

Very near the same time as celebrating a COVID free year, the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services conducted their regulatory survey of the Assisted Living community. This survey is typically done every 12-18 months and is an intensive review of policies and processes to ensure that all are being followed. Prairie Homestead was identified as being deficiency free which signifies no infractions were occurring. Prairie Homestead has been recognized as deficiency free since 2011!

“We have a terrific team who are passionate and committed to the care of those who call Prairie Homestead home,” shared Brenda Janda, Executive Director. “These two accomplishments reflect their great work this past year!”

1605 West May Street | Wichita | KS 67213

P: 316.263.8264 | F: 316.265.9904

www.prairiehomestead.org

Central Region Life

American Baptist Churches of the Central Region
5833 S. W. 29th St. Ste. A, Topeka, KS 66614-5505

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AB Women’s Minsitries
Central Region
Summer Conference

June 4 - 5 FBC-Topeka

Things to think about...
Registration will be paper only
Lodging is on your own
100th year banquet attire
Offerings will be taken
Mini-project: Sunset Home
horticulture therapy supplies

Ottawa First Baptist Church
Mundy Thursday Service 2021

Jesus knew he was going to die the next day. He wanted to let his disciples know they would have to go on without him. He wanted to show them how much they meant to him. This is the setting for the Last Supper for Jesus and the disciples on the day before Jesus would die by crucifixion.

First Baptist Church of Ottawa brought the Last Supper to life on Maundy Thursday this year. The table was in the shape of the cross and was set for Jesus and his 12 disciples. Fruit and bread were on the table in preparation for the meal. Candles were lit and the stage was set for the Last Supper for Jesus and the disciples. Everyone was ready to remember the importance of this night.

Pastor James Callaway led the service. Retired pastors Warren Smith and Cliff Burke helped the congregation understand what happened during the Last Supper on the night before Jesus died. The evening started out with the preparation for Passover and readings from the Bible by members of the congregation. That led into Bible readings on the Upper Room. The Pastors prayed for strength and guidance in the garden and prayed for understanding of Christ’s sacrifice. There was also a time for the children to ask questions about why we celebrate Maundy Thursday and about the Easter season. Hymns were sung. Communion and sharing of the bread and the cup were given the congregation by the pastors. The hymn, How Deep the Father’s Love for Us, was sung with the sound of hammering in the distance to give the effect of nailing Christ to the cross. The congregation left the service in silence because Jesus will be arrested and his trial will take place in Jerusalem the next day.

The following pictures show what our congregation experienced during this wonderful service





FOR IN PERSON CAMPING, SAFETY PERCAUTIONS WILL BE IN PLACE SUCH AS TEMPERATURE TAKING, HEALTH QUESTIONAIRES, CLEANING PROTOCOLS, AND DAILY HEALTH ASSESMENTS. ANY STUDENT OR STAFF THAT SHOWS SIGNS OF ILLNESS WILL BE ISOLATED FROM OTHER CAMPERS. ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO WAY GUARANTEE NO ONE WILL BECOME SICK, WE HAVE PLANS AND PROCEDURES IN PLACE TO KEEP EVERYONE AS SAFE AS POSSIBLE.

Camp Christy

HIGH SCHOOL GRADES 9-12 JUNE 7-11 STEVEN & DANIELLE MASSAGLIA.....	\$180
MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADES 6-7 JUNE 14-18 STEVEN & DANIELLE MASSAGLIA.....	\$180
JUNIOR GRADES 4-6 JUNE 21-25 JAMES BLAKE.....	\$180
PRIMARY GRADES 2-4 JUNE 28-30 VALERIE TERRAZAS.....	\$125
DAY GRADES K-2 JULY 1-2 TONYA KOEHN.....	\$70

Cross Wind

DAY GRADES K-2 JUNE 2-4 JOEL GRIZZLE.....	\$130
PRIMARY GRADES 2-4 JUNE 18-20 VALERIE TERRAZAS.....	\$180
JUNIOR GRADES 4-6 JULY 26-30 KAMI MINOR.....	\$280

Ottawa University

MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL GRADES 6-12 JULY 12-16 MORGAN BANDY.....	\$280
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IF DUE TO COVID WE ARE UNABLE TO HAVE OVERNIGHT CAMP WE WILL HAVE ONE DAY OF CAMP IN PERSON AND SEND HOME A BOX FOR THE OTHER FOUR DAYS. EACH AGE GROUP WILL MEET A DIFFERENT DAY. THAT WEEK WOULD BE JUNE 7-11 AT CAMP CHRISTY AND JULY 26-30 AT CROSS WINDS



4TEN IS CUTTING EDGE LEADERSHIP SKILLS TRAINING FOR YOUTH ENTERING 10-12TH GRADES DURING THE FALL. 4TEN WAS FORMED BY THE SCRIPTURE 1 PETER 4:10. IT EXISTS TO EMPOWER OUR YOUTH TO EMPLOY THEIR GIFTS TO SERVE JESUS AND SET AN EXAMPLE.

YOUTH ARE THE LEADERS OF THE FUTURE; WE NEED THEM TO STEP UP NOW IN THEIR LOCAL CHURCHES!

Students who are chosen for this program are young people who love Jesus and are willing to grow in their relationship with Christ.

Students do not need to feel a call to full-time ministry but do have the gifts and desire to be leaders in their own churches.



DO YOU KNOW YOUTH WITH A LOT OF LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL?

YOU MAY NOMINATE THEM BY SENDING THEIR NAME, CHURCH, AND PHONE NUMBER TO REV. JENNIFER SCHNEIDER AT

jennifer.schneider@abccr.org



This year’s Annual Gathering will be held on October 1-2 at First Baptist Church in Salina, Kansas. We will kickoff Annual Gathering with the Minister’s Council business meeting and dinner on Thursday evening. Registration will begin at 10am on Friday. AB Women and AB Men’s meetings and lunch will be held at 11am on Friday. The first session will begin on Friday at 1:00pm. There are some wonderful workshops being offered as well. Annual Gathering will conclude at 11:30am on Saturday. The keynote speaker for the 2021 Annual Gathering is international motivational speaker, Lois Olmstead. Raised on a ranch in Montana, Lois shares how to live with joy and courage. Inspiring others is part of her everyday life. More information on workshops and registration to come.

Lodging Suggestions for ABW Summer Conference

Even though lodging is on your own, I wanted to give you a few motels near the church that are rated average or above in their amenities and cleanliness. The sooner you can reserve your room, the less costly it will be. Ask a friend to stay with you and share the cost!

- Motels in Topeka within 4-5 miles of FBC:
(All have elevators, room WiFi, free parking, and breakfast)
- Quality Inn
 - Comfort Suites Topeka
 - Sleep Inn & Suites Topeka
 - Holiday Inn Express & Suites West Topeka
 - Country Inn & Suites by Radisson Topeka
 - Mona Huggins

Welcome to the ABCCR, Amanda Snedecker!

The region has hired an intern for the summer. Amanda Snedecker will serve in the region office this summer. Amanda will be a junior at Ottawa University in the fall. She is also a 4TEN alumnus. We are thrilled to have her serve alongside us!

