

Central Region Life

APRIL 2026

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF WINFIELD MAKES A BIG IMPACT WITH FREE LITTLE LIBRARY

On March 8 members of Winfield First Baptist Church blessed their new Little Free Library after worship. The library, located in front of the church, was made possible by a grant from the Kansas State Convention Foundation through the ABCCR. The library is now registered with the Little Free Library national network (littlefreelibrary.org).

For some time, the members of FBC had dreamed of providing a Little Free Library on its church grounds as a simple but powerful way to engage the community as an expression of its mission to Reach Up, Reach In and Reach Out. The church is centrally located, just a block from downtown where the majority of shops and restaurants are: a prime location to be a daily presence in the lives of neighbors, families, and children who walk past the church.

This project has allowed all ages of our church to participate in this ministry. A committee designed the library. On the committee were Marilyn Buffum, Nancy Conrod, Marcia Evans, Jody Popplewell, Lela Stein, Chance Young and LeRoy Young. LeRoy, a member of the Baptist Men, then built the library. Our Youth Group, including Lela, painted the library. One of our children, Chance, painted the stained-glass window on the library. Jody stenciled the FBC logo onto the library and created a label identifying the Kansas Baptist Convention Foundation and ABCCR's role in the library. Many of our Baptist Women are providing books, ensuring that shelves remain stocked and inviting.

The grant also allowed the church to purchase bilingual and home-language books to better serve Dual Language Learners (DLL) in the community. They purchased bilingual titles in Spanish, Chuukese, and Lao—the three most common non-English languages spoken in Winfield public schools.

The church understands that having access to books in both English and their home language makes literacy experiences more inclusive, allowing children to see themselves reflected on the page and to develop stronger connections between home and school. Research consistently shows that literacy in a child's home language supports overall academic achievement.

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ABW Summer Conference

Brown v. Board 75th

MPYC 2026

Camping 2026



Bilingual books also create opportunities for families to read together across generations, and studies demonstrate that parents' own English proficiency improves when they share bilingual texts with their children. The library is intended not only to promote reading for pleasure but to become a practical tool for strengthening family bonds, encouraging school success, and supporting the cultural diversity of Winfield.

Ultimately, the church believes this project will build bridges, encourage imagination, and create a safe and welcoming space in the heart of our community. It will be a small structure with a big impact, a ministry of kindness that reflects God's love in action.

Rev. Janet Pace



2026 ANNUAL BETHEL NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER LIGHT & HOPE GALA FUNDRAISER

10 APRIL, 2026

DOORS OPEN AT 5:30PM

REGISTRATION FEE
\$125 PER TICKET

GOLD SPONSOR \$5,000
SILVER SPONSOR \$3,000
BRONZE SPONSOR \$1,000



SCAN THE
QR CODE
TO
REGISTER



VENUE

KCK COMMUNITY COLLEGE TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTER
6565 STATE AVE KCKS 66102

CONTACT: SHERI HARDING AT SHARDING@BETHELCENTER.ORG

Bethel has been serving families in Wyandotte County for more than 100 years and today provides a range of important programs including youth development, refugee support, family services, and community programming that help strengthen neighborhoods and support families.

Our gala is a wonderful evening that helps sustain these programs, and there are several ways to get involved:

- Attend the gala by purchasing a ticket
- Become an event sponsor
- Donate an item or experience for the silent auction

You can learn more about Bethel's work here:

<https://www.bethelcenter.org/>

JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

REV. JENNIFER SCHNEIDER, ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE MINISTER

Over the past few weeks, we have been on a journey toward the cross. We started on Ash Wednesday, and now we are in the middle of Holy Week. During this Lenten season, some of us chose to give up something or to add something to our daily or weekly routines. Over the years, I have given up Starbucks or sugar. Some years, I add a Lenten reading to my devotional time. This year, I have been reading Rachel Billups' book, *An Unlikely Lent*. In each of her six chapters, Billups considers one of the people we meet in the Easter story.

In chapter 4, she discusses Simon of Cyrene, the man who carried the cross for Jesus. Simon was unexpectedly pulled into a situation he had no connection to. He was literally at the wrong place at the wrong time. The author suggests in this chapter that each of us has found ourselves in situations we didn't willingly enter—such as financial or health crises, family issues, or job conflicts. The reality is that we will all face some kind of personal crisis during our lives. To be human is to suffer.

Yet, if we are honest, we try to avoid pain and discomfort whenever possible. Billups suggests that people use various tools to escape the reality that life is hard, in hopes of protecting themselves. One quote from her book struck me. She said, "I want to numb my mind and heart and am determined to step out of the discomfort of my reality for a moment."

Maybe that's why we need this time of Lent. Maybe we need to face the discomfort so that we can truly live in our reality and the reality of those around us. This week, as we walk with Jesus to the cross, remembering his sacrifice, may we embrace the discomfort. May we seek to see the pain and suffering around us and not turn away.

As we endure discomfort and suffering, we can be assured of God's presence. We are not alone. Easter is coming! Jesus defeated death so that we might have life—and have it abundantly!



SPONSORED BY THE ABCCR IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
THE ANTIOCH CENTER AT CENTRAL SEMINARY

ETHICS TRAINING

MINISTRY ETHICS
ISSUES CHALLENGING
PASTORS IN 2026

April 30, 2026

9:00am-12:00pm

Zoom

\$50 Registration Fee



To register, please scan the QR code
or visit www.abccr.org



INSTRUCTOR: REV. DR. TARRIS ROSELL

Rev. Dr. Tarris (Terry) Rosell, PhD, DMin is, since 1999, a Professor of Pastoral Theology at Central Seminary. He is a Christian ethicist and bioethicist with degrees from Vanderbilt University, Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, and Gordon-Conwell Seminary. Terry was director of clinical ethics consultation at the University of Kansas Hospital for many years, and remains a Professor Emeritus at the School of Medicine. He is an ordained American Baptist minister since 1983. In semi-retirement, Terry enjoys camping with his life partner, Rev. Dr. Ruth Rosell, and being “Baba” to their two young grandchildren. He also spends time in his clay studio at home in rural Kansas.

This training is open to all pastors, lay leaders, and students. This training fulfills the ethical requirement in the ABCCR ordination process. Check with your judicatory in other regions or denominations.



ANTIOCH CENTER AT CENTRAL SEMINARY

WHAT DO WE DO?

▶▶ 3 - PART SERIES ◀◀

- 1** **"We Don't Have Any Children in Our Church: What Do We Do?"**
March 12, 2026 | 7:00–8:30 p.m. (CST)
- 2** **"Our Church Building Is Too Big and Too Empty: What Do We Do?"**
April 14, 2026 | 7:00–8:30 p.m. (CST)
- 3** **"Mental Health Struggles in Congregational Life: What Do We Do?"**
May 21, 2026 | 7:00–8:30 p.m. (CST)

Session 1
Register Here



Session 2
Register Here



Session 3
Register Here



✔ No-cost ✔ Live on Zoom ✔ Tools for Congregations

PLANNED GIVING

HELPING YOU TO GIVE GENEROUSLY,
REV. TIM SCHWARTZ
KBCF DIRECTOR OF PLANNED GIVING
913-424-9939 / 785-272-7622
TIMMANS39@GMAIL.COM
TIM.SCHWARTZ@ABCCR.ORG

One hundred years ago, a real estate ad appeared in the Chicago Tribune that shared a famous slogan, "location, location location." The message the business was trying to convey was that the value of a property was not just in the land and the building on it, but also in the surroundings and the neighborhood. In my work with planned giving and charitable gift annuities, the value of the gift annuity depends on what you as a donor wish to give to fund it. Still, the idea of location is important as well and that is why we ask for it on your gift annuity application.

You probably know by now if you have read any of my articles over the past 5 years that when you fund a gift annuity, a portion of that gift comes back as income to you for the rest of your life. So in order for us to send you that gift check, we need the address of where you are living, so we can send that to you annually, quarterly, or another option that you choose. Besides that we also have to send you a yearly income tax form for the money that you received during the year. We always strive to do our best to keep up with those addresses, but sometimes people move and forget to update their address with us. Also, some of our generous and wonderful annuitants have funded gift annuities for many or all of their children and grandchildren and if they move, which young people tend to do, then that complicates things even more. Please hear me out and understand that I am not complaining about this, I am just making you aware of how important a location or address is. So please update me or another staff person at the foundation, with your most current address after you have made a move, and we will be very grateful.

When the address changes and we have not been made aware of it, then I put on my "Sherlock Holmes" hat and begin the process of searching online or making phone calls or sending emails to try to find out the updated address. Sometimes those addresses are easy to track down and other times they are not. In the case of one of our beneficiaries, it took me a year to find out his new address and phone number, and that was because I enlisted the help of one of his family members, who directed me to another family member, who had the correct information. I try my best to be a thankful person everyday, but believe me I was supremely grateful to find out this new and correct address so that we could send his gift checks to him!

Of course there is another important address that many or most of us use or have used since the mid 1990s, and that is an email address. In 1971, Ray Tomlinson sent the first email using the ARPANET system and introducing the "@" symbol to do just that. In the 1980s, email was primarily used in academic, government and military circles, but in the 1990s when commercial internet access became available, email was adopted into the mainstream and everyone began using it. I'm sure you remember dial up and that interesting sound that it made to connect to the internet as well.

Over the past 5 years, I have had two email addresses available for you to use to contact me. The first was my personal email: timmans39@gmail.com and the second was my work email: tim.schwartz@abccr.org. I figured that would give me the most amount of access to any and all of you who would need to contact me as the Director of Planned Giving for the Kansas Baptist Convention Foundation. Probably most of the time, people contact me by phone if they need something related to the foundation, but my personal email account has become so clogged up with emails, etc, that I am making this public service announcement to you in the ABCCR and KBCF community that going forward I would just like to use my work email: tim.schwartz@abccr.org as my primary email address. It's not that I wouldn't respond to an email using the other email address, I am always available to you as much as I possibly can be. I would just like to move forward with this request in my continued service as the director of planned giving. Thank you in advance for this.

This goes without saying, but I do want to mention it anyway. When it comes to your address, email address or any other personal information, please know that we would not give out, sell or share any of your personal information whatsoever! As we continue our mission during this 67th year of the Kansas Baptist Convention Foundation, we want you to know that all of your information is safe and secure with us.

If you are interested in funding a charitable gift annuity, please reach out to me by phone, voicemail, text or email, and I will respond to you as quickly as I can to help you start this process that will provide a stream of income to you and your spouse, for the rest of your life. Or if you choose another family member or friend as a beneficiary, then that person will receive the financial gift and blessing from you for the rest of their life. Because this is a charitable gift annuity, then the remainder portion that is left over will go to the church, offering, ministry, missionary or mission partner of your choosing to provide for that ministry in the future. No matter what location they are at here in Kansas, Oklahoma or in the USA or around the globe, you can leave them with a financial blessing from above that can help to strengthen and sustain their ministries in the years ahead!!

I hope you have a very memorable and meaningful Holy Week and a joyous and glorious Resurrection and Easter Sunday as we celebrate Jesus Christ, our risen lord!



Let us pray for the Senior Adult Retreat that will be held at the First Baptist Church of Milton, Kansas, this year that everything would run smoothly and go well during this annual time of fellowship, fun and growth in Christ.

Let us pray for Pastor Mike Justice and the congregation there as they extend a warm welcome and hospitality to all who will attend. Let us also pray for our speaker, Rev. Soozie Whitten Ford, that the Holy Spirit would inspire her and use her as she speaks to the gathered group.

Let us say a prayer of thanksgiving for the retreat planning committee as they do such a wonderful job of preparation throughout the year and as they continue to serve during the retreat as well.

Let us pray for safety for all who will travel for this event. Let us pray that we would be reminded of other church family members and new friends to invite to this retreat.

Finally, let us pray that Jesus would guide and direct every aspect of this retreat as we share in the fun, festivity, fine food, worship, prayer and fellowship of this joyous time together!! As the scripture says: "not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near." Hebrews 10: 25 (NASB)



**You are invited
to the
EAST CENTRAL AREA
ANNUAL MEETING**
Our Theme – *“The People of God”*
I Peter 2:4-10

DATE: Sunday, April 26th, 2026
TIME: 3 pm (registration begins at 2:30)
LOCATION: First Baptist Church Overland Park
8200 W 96th St, Overland Park KS

Learn about our proposed New Connection Grants and ideas for Creative Resourcing!
Here about ECA Churches Ministry Highlights
Guest Speaker – Rev. Barbara WHITESIDE

A TIME OF WORSHIP and FELLOWSHIP!
Bring a covered dish for Potluck Dinner to follow.



From **BROKENNESS**
To WHOLENESS
Educate, Heal, Restore

JULY 29-31, 2026
Rosen Plaza | Orlando, FL

REGISTER NOW



international
ministries 
world
mission
conference

CAMP CHRIS-TEE



Golf Tournament Fundraiser 4-Man Scramble

MAY 2ND AT 10 AM
SCOTT COMMUNITY GOLF COURSE

Register your team at
<https://www.campchristy.net/golftournament>



MASTER'S VOICE

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

807 Spring St. Gypsum, KS 67448

FRI, 5/8 - SAT, 5/9 @ 7:00 PM

SUN, MAY 10TH @ 10:30 AM

WWW.MASTERSVOICE.COM

SR. ADULT RETREAT 2026

SAVE THE DATE
April 22-23
Milton Baptist Church

Put this information on your calendar
now. You won't want to miss this
event.

Wholly Holy Hospitality

More details will be shared soon!



The keynote speaker for the 2026 Senior Adult Retreat is Rev. Soozie Witten Ford. She served as Executive Minister with the American Baptist Churches of Indiana and Kentucky for more than nine years, retiring in 2021. Her previous ministry experiences include faculty positions with Sterling College, Sterling, KS and Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Shawnee, KS; pastoral positions with First Baptist Church Casper, WY and Calvary Baptist Church in Cheyenne, WY; regional ministry with Mid-American Baptist Churches (Iowa and Minnesota); and national stewardship ministry with ABCUSA.

In post-retirement, Rev. Soozie Whitten Ford served the Office of the General Secretary ABCUSA as the Interim Associate General Secretary for Regional Ministries. At the same time, she served in a volunteer position as the Special Assistant to the Executive Director of International Ministries, Rev. Dr. Sharon Koh, in the role of Chaplain.

Soozie Whitten Ford shares her life with Rev. Homer Ford and together they have two daughters, a son-in-law, and a granddaughter. Unscheduled time is often filled with connecting with family and dear friends; reading suspense novels; chasing the genealogical clues left by elusive ancestors; coaxing flowers to grow instead of weeds; knitting and planning the next travel adventure.

Registration information can be found on the Central Region website at www.abccr.org and through the weekly emails sent from the region office. The Sr. Adult Retreat will be held at Milton Baptist Church, Milton, KS. Directions and hotel information can also be found at this same site.



Hotel Options:

1. Hampton Inn by Hilton 455 N Crowne Drive Goddard, Ks. 67052 316-453-0444

Rooms here will be \$109 per night plus tax. Please use "Senior Adult Retreat or code 503" when making your reservation. We will use our church bus to shuttle people from the hotel to the church and back. Directions are on the bottom of this page.

2. Cobblestone Inn & Suites 899 Frontage Rd Harper Ks. 67058 620-896-2400

Rooms here will be \$125 per night plus tax



ABCCR SENIOR ADULT RETREAT

April 22-23, 2026

Milton Baptist Church, 1213N Sycamore Rd. Milton, KS 67106

Guest Speaker, Rev. Soozie Whitten-Ford

Theme: "Wholly Holy Hospitality" Scripture: Romans 12:10-13 NIV

Name: _____
(If registering as a couple, please write spouse's name below)

Phone: _____

Spouse: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Home Church: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

& City _____

First Timer to the Retreat? Yes _____ No _____

of Guests _____ Total \$ _____

Full Retreat (includes program and 3 meals) per person _____

@ \$95.00 per person _____

One Day only (Wednesday or Thursday) per person _____

@ \$70.00 per person _____

Discount Applied (February 1, 2026 deadline) _____

Total Amount Due _____

Dietary Requirements:

Sugar Free Gluten Free

Vegetarian

PLEASE NOTE: We will try but cannot assure to meet all dietary requirements

Interest Groups (please mark preference)

2:30 PM Wednesday – Bells or Outreach

Uncomplicated

3:35 PM Choir

10:30 AM Thursday – Craft \$5 or Biblical Hospitality

Online registration is available at www.abccr.org

Bus Transportation – The host church is offering to provide transportation from church/hotel & hotel/church in Goddard, KS. I'm interested: Yes

Hotel Information – Hampton Inn by Hilton, 455 N Crowne Dr., Goddard, KS 316-453-0444. Cost is \$109 plus taxes if you use Code 503. Other hotels are available in the area but with no transportation provided.

Abbreviated Schedule

Wed. 11:00 AM Registration Begins

11:30 AM Lunch

12:30 PM Session #1

2:30 PM Interest Groups

5:15 PM Dinner

6:30 PM Session #2

Thurs. 8:30 AM Registration

9:00 AM Group Study

10:30 AM Interest Groups

12:00 PM Lunch

1:15 PM Session #3

Please make checks payable to **Senior Adult Retreat** and mail payment and completed registration form to:

Senior Adult Retreat, John Williams, Registrar
C/O 5889 SW 29th Street, Topeka, KS 66614

Registration Deadline - April 8, 2026

**\$10 Late fee assessed if postmarked after April 8, 2026

Cancellation Policy: A full refund will be given if cancelled by April 15, 2026; \$25 non-refundable cancellation fee per individual after April 15, 2026.

Cut here and retain this stub for your records and information

ABCCRSeniorAdultRetreat: Milton Baptist Church, 1213N Sycamore Rd. Milton, KS 67106

Dates: April 22-23, 2026

Registration begins at 11:00 AM

Retreat begins with lunch at 11:30 AM



SAVE THE DATE

Building God's Community Women and Girls Conference



JULY 17 - JULY 18, 2026

Hybrid: Online & in person at Select Locations

"FOR WE ARE CO-WORKERS, WORKING TOGETHER; YOU ARE GOD'S FIELD, GOD'S BUILDING." - 1 CORINTHIANS 3:9



Visit Our Website
WWW.ABWOMENSMINISTRIES.ORG



AB Women's Ministries of the Central Region

**National Theme:
Building God's Community**



Summer Conference Date – June 5-6, 2026

Summer Conference Location – First Baptist Church Topeka, KS

Summer Conference Theme – Making a Difference Together

Keynote Speaker- Dr. Kathy Maxwell, Central Seminary

— Save The Date —
MAY 17TH, 2026. TOPEKA, KS

Presented By



Ben
CRUMP

America's Social
Justice Attorney

J.
IVY

Grammy-Winning
Performance Poet

**ENSURING OUR NATION'S
CONTRACT WITH ITS CONSTITUENCY
SERVES JUSTICE FOR ALL**

www.BrownvBoardAnniversary.org



mpyc-abc.org



2026

CALLLED BY NAME

Mountains & Prairies Youth Conference

Isaiah 43:1

MOUNTAINS & PRAIRIES

Youth Conference

JUNE 14-18, 2026

**YMCA OF THE ROCKIES
SNOW MOUNTAIN RANCH
GRANBY, COLORADO**



Keynote Speaker
REV. DJ
DANGERFIELD

COST:
\$375 BEFORE MARCH 15, 2026
\$400 AFTER MARCH 15, 2026.

ABCCR Camping 2026

CAMP CHRISTY HIGH SCHOOL CAMP

Director: Damion Denison

JUNE 1-5, 2026

9th- 12th grade

\$350 before May 1

\$370 after May 1

CAMP CHRISTY PRIMARY CAMP

Director: Becky Rider

JUNE 22-24, 2026

2nd- 4th grade

\$195 before May 1

\$215 after May 1

WHITE MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL CAMP

Director: Morgan Aspinwall

JULY 13-17, 2026

9th- 12th grade

\$425 before June 1

\$445 after June 1

CAMP CHRISTY MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMP

Director: Erin Isham

JUNE 8-12, 2026

6th- 8th grade

\$350 before May 1

\$370 after May 1

CAMP CHRISTY DAY CAMP

Director: Aleya Rainey

JUNE 25-26, 2026

K- 2nd grade

\$105 before May 1

\$125 after May 1

WHITE MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMP

Director: Wallace Smith

JULY 13-17, 2026

6th- 8th grade

\$425 before June 1

\$445 after June 1

CAMP CHRISTY JUNIOR CAMP

Director: Erin Isham

JUNE 15-19, 2026

4th- 6th grade

\$350 before May 1

\$370 after May 1

WHITE MEMORIAL JUNIOR CAMP

Director: Kami Minor

JULY 20-24, 2026

4th- 6th grade

\$425 before June 1

\$445 after June 1

