

# *American Baptist Women's Ministries*

## *Great Rivers Region*

### *Spring 2023, Ripples*

#### **Sharon Farral, GRR ABWM president**

We are slowly coming out of a worldwide pandemic, we see war in Ukraine, shootings in our stores, on campus, and on our streets and horrifying earthquakes. Where can we go but to the LORD? Ladies, as we see horror around us let's not forget to look up to JESUS. He is our strength, our fortress, our ever present help at all times. ***'Rejoice in the LORD always! I will say it again, rejoice...'*** Philippians 4:4.

I urge you to make use of our national ABWM website [abwomensministries.org](http://abwomensministries.org). On the left side scroll down to 'webinars' and 'events.' The winter series is almost ended. March 16 is 'Sisters In Prayer.' Recordings of all past webinars are at the bottom of the event page. Enjoy alone, with a couple friends over coffee or use them for your group meetings. Watch for the announcement of the coming fall series.

Special...Many of us know Jasmine Turner, a young women we watched grow up. April 20, at 7 pm, under 'Seasons of Transition' Jasmine will be doing a webinar 'Faith and Yoga.' We may no longer have flexible bodies but we can enjoy watching Jasmine.

Please check out our Great Rivers Region ABWM website for current information. [www.grr-abwm.org](http://www.grr-abwm.org)

Look for a new opportunity to participate this fall. I am in the process of writing discussions on **Women of the Bible**. These will include the cultural background of the woman, Biblical text about this Bible woman, and three or four discussion questions relating to relevance today. My intention is that this be used for small groups in your local area and/or joining ladies across our region by zoom or other social media. I have not learned the technologies, but we have women on our GRR ABWM board who are 'tech' orientated. The goal is to study and fellowship together as Sisters in Christ.

My closing prayer for each of you is to share the familiar blessing of Numbers 6:24-26, ***“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn His face towards you and give you peace.”*** Amen.

### **Pat Reed, Coordinator of Missions and Service**

Have you read it?

Recently my church women's bible study read a book entitled "Sensible Shoes" by Sharon Garlough Brown, a story about the spiritual journey. It is about four women who meet and become friends through a prayer group. I won't go into the story now but part of it took place in a labyrinth. Do you know what that is? Labyrinths have been used by people of faith for centuries as a contemplative, embodied prayer practice. Well, if you want to see what it looks like, you need to go to International Ministries website and click on "Journals". Go to Mylinda Baits' story dated October 26, 2022, entitled "An Act of Hope". Read her story to find what she is doing.

While you're at it, do read some of the other journals from our Global Servants. Here is another you should read from our former Executive Minister of ABCGRR, Rev. Paul Gibson, dated September 15, 2022. It is a story of persistence and excitement. He finally says "One of the great honors during my six years with ABCGRR was to get to know many more of our global servants. I want to encourage those who read this to, somewhere along the way, spend time with some of our global servants through a short-term mission trip. It will change your life for the better."

## **Judith DeRolf, President Area 1**

Because of the GRR ABC Biennial meeting in October of 2022, Area 1 ABWM was not able to have the Fall Festival that is usually held the last Saturday of October. Some of us traveled to Springfield for the Women's breakfast and some of the meetings and heard a couple of the missionaries attending the meeting speak. As always, they shared several of their stories and what is happening in the countries where they serve.

We are now planning for the Spring Spiritual Feast which will be held on Saturday, April 29th at the Sterling First Baptist church with Carol Carver, patchwork artist and Pianists Hyoungyoung (Joy) Kim and Mingyeong (Ming). Kim will have a concert after lunch.

The host church will provide drinks and a light brunch from 9:30 and each church should bring a salad or dessert to share for lunch.

I plan to have an updated directory to pass out that day and each church should bring their offerings to be given to Pat Reed, Area 1 Treasurer.

I am excited to announce the Moline First Baptist ABWM will host our Fall Festival on Saturday, October 28th, 2023. It is our western most church in Area 1, so we are happy to be able to have our fall program there. I realize it is quite far from most of our churches but hopefully several of you will be able to attend.

Many ABWM groups in Area 1 are dealing with an aging population and are having fewer regular monthly meetings since Covid shut everything down, but they are doing ministry in their local communities and serving Christ where they can. May God bless everyone as each group of women continue to serve God as they can and may they each be blessed from their service to the Lord.

We're hoping to see as many as possible at the Spring Fest at the First Baptist Church of Sterling, Illinois.

## **Marcia Wimmer, President Area II**

We did not have a Fall Rally in October, because Marcia was out of town.

Our Spring Board Meeting will be via Zoom on March 14th at 10 am.

Our Spring Rally will be at Jerseyville Bethel on Tuesday, April 11th. Coffee hour will begin at 9:30 am, with meeting and program beginning at 10 am.

Our program will be presented by Restore Network - Changing the Culture of Foster Care.

Our existence is getting smaller and smaller.

Hope all is well with each of you, take care.

Blessings,  
Marcia

## **Joan Leitzen, President Area 3**

### **THE BOAST OF FAITH**

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.”

Ephesians 2:8

We may sometimes boast of our own works and accomplishments. Having a good record of achievements is helpful when it comes to finding work or having credit or being trusted by others. But such “success” where it exists, can also lead us down the path and take us to a false sense of pride. It can even portray a false image of who we are, covering truth of our the deep failings.

Faith, however, is an act of humility. We come empty-handed, for we have nothing of ourselves to claim as worthy except that we are gifted by God’s grace. Faith is trusting that our Lord makes us worthy. Faith is bold enough to boast in that promise, and faith will be put to good use for this world. Through faith, we dedicate our own lives for the care and redemption of all that God has

made. We share the love and mercy that we ourselves have received through Christ.

Lord, trusting in your saving grace, lead us to humble acts of love and compassion for all. Amen

Amazing Grace Devotion by M. Hoy

## **Linda Watson, President Area IV**

Minutes by Linda Jent, Area IV Secretary

The Area IV Fall Rally was held at the First Baptist Church of Highland in Highland, IL. There were nineteen attending. The Rally began with registration and a wonderful breakfast of fruit, bagels, rolls, and breakfast casseroles from 9-10 a.m.

The Rally program started with the playing of "Mighty To Save" by the Hungarian Prayer Team of Faith Church, Hungary. The Welcome and Opening Prayer were delivered by Linda Driesner. The praise songs: "Mighty to Save" in English and Sweet, Sweet Spirit accompanied by Gloria Brown on the piano, were sung by those present.

The devotional entitled Bloom Where You Are Planted was presented by Veronica Ross. The Bible verse Philippians 4:14 was featured: I can do all things through God who strengthens me. Veronica asked us to always do the best we can do and give to others along the way. God will do the rest.

Another song was sung: "Take My Life and Let It Be." Linda Driesner then presented the Guest speaker, Patty Bilyeu, the Acting Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region, from First Baptist Church of Greenville. Patty spoke about her mission trips to Hungary. She said they partnered with the Baptist Churches of Hungary, the Schools and are thinking about partnering with the Orphanages. If a church adopts a school, then they get more funding. The biggest need in a mission trip is for people resources. All Hungarians want to learn fluent English; the best way for them to do that is to speak with Americans. Patty informed us that Hungary has been free since 1990, but the people are worried because the Hungarian Prime Minister is friendly with Putin. Hungarians are afraid of being taken over by Russia. It is more of a worry for all European nations because they are so close. The Hungarian Baptist Aid works with Ukraine and Serbian refugees. Larry Stanton was given \$10,000 to help the refugees, the Goods were given funds and rented an apartment for refugees. Some refugees have come to the U.S.; New York, Illinois, and California have the

most refugees; however, 50% of the refugees arrive without any luggage. El Paso, Texas make quilts to give to the Ukrainian refugees. The Goods distributed them to the refugees in Hungary. The Stanton's are providing church services in Hungarian.

There are things you can do: 1) Pray. 2) Support One Great Hour of Sharing-(No administration costs taken from the amount given. 3) Encourage and Organize a Mission Trip to Hungary. It will promote local missions.

Patty also spoke about a GRR Trip to Israel on Oct. 31-Nov. 11, 2023. She will be the leader of this trip.

Linda Driesner presented a PowerPoint Presentation with script on the Special Project. This PowerPoint and script has been shared with other Areas in GRR. Karen Dainty, GRR Coordinator of Special Project also presented a report and table display on the Special Project.

The Area IV Board will have a ZOOM meeting on March 25, 2023.

## **Lori Hill, Representing Area 5**

Calling all women in Area V!!

Area V is looking to rebuild its board!!!. Our priority in 2023 is to install officers and organize a rally to activate our ministry.

IF .....

\* you have a passion for women's ministry and are interested in serving on the board, please contact me.

\* you know someone in your church that you think would be interested, please have them reach out to me.

\* you know of a church that is interested in starting a women's ministry, please have them reach out to me.

I would love to discuss board positions and responsibilities.

Lori Hill

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**The 2023 American Baptist Women's Ministries and AB  
G.I.R.L.S. Conference will be held in  
Decatur, Illinois on July 28, 29, & 30.  
The event will take place at the**

**The Decatur Conference Center and Hotel  
4191 US Highway 36 West  
Decatur, Illinois 62526**

Friday, July 28 Hotel check in starts at 4 pm

Conference Doors at the Hotel open at 5:45pm

And Program begins at 6:30pm

**Friday Evening Special Event  
Special Speaker and Music will be announced soon  
Make your Own Ice Cream Sundae**

**Speakers and other information will be coming soon!**

Please see registration forms for ABWM and AB G.I.R.L.S. for more information. Your Registration forms are available in printed form from your Area Presidents. You may also access them from the ABW Ministries of the Great Rivers Region.

To all those who have Women from your Church this last year who have gone to their final Home, we would like to recognize them in the ROSE Ceremony at Conference.

Please send **Barbara McKean** ([mckean\\_b@msn.com](mailto:mckean_b@msn.com)) a note listing these wonderful women. Please include:

Name, Date of Birth and Date of Death, Picture if available, Church & Town, along with Activities in ABW and Church.

**Our goal for 2023 is 100 Attendees.**

Please pray and put these dates on your Calendar.

Remember **“100 Attendees in 2023”**

With Great Love & Blessing, Nancy Johnson & Marilyn Koch