

Karen Dainty, President

"It looks the same; same year I made this quilt for Caroline..." Those were the beginning lines of a wonderful Christmas play our youth group did 44 years ago. I still remember the cold, December Sunday night we performed it during Sunday night service. The play was a grandmother looking back on Christmas' past as she was raising her children. Remembering lines from that play, I thought of all the wonderful Christmas memories I have.

Christmas was always a special time of year at our house. It was both my parent's favorite holiday. We would get a tree from the local garden shop, decorate it with the ornaments, tinsel, and popcorn strings. Santa would come on Christmas Eve, after we went to bed. When I was 6 years old, Santa came to our neighborhood but I had been sick and couldn't go see him. Mom arranged for Santa and Mrs. Clause to specifically visit our house so that I would not make the other kids sick.

Even after Cindy (my sister) and I were adults, the Santa gift tradition continued. The first Christmas after Jon and I moved to Louisville, KY for Jon to attend seminary, we flew home for Christmas. Our flight was delayed many hours and we arrived (but not our luggage) after midnight on Christmas Eve. Jon and I had gone to bed and I hear paper rustling and the Christmas tree lights were turned on. My first thought was "Santa is here." Every Christmas, morning there were presents from Santa, as well as family members. After we unwrapped all our presents, Dad took a picture of the Christmas wrappings pile from the unwrapped presents. This tradition was kept until Dad became ill in December 2019.

Yet the best Christmas memories are of going to Christmas Eve Service at 11pm. It was wonderful getting dressed up, sometimes in skirts Mom had made, and hear the Christmas carols and Christmas story retold. One year, our youth group did a live nativity scene on the church lawn. Even though my feet were frozen, I felt like I was truly in the stable where Jesus, our Lord and Savior was born.

"Please come in and sit. I am so glad you came to visit. Let me tell you about my oldest Son... his name is Jesus." Such is the opening from Teri Peacock's "Mary's Story". If you have seen "Mary's Story", then you feel like you are in Mary's home as she is telling you of Jesus birth, life, death, and resurrection. I have seen "Mary's Story" several times and learn something new each time I see it. As we look toward this Christmas season, National ABW Ministries is hosting an Advent Worship Series: Starting December 5, 2024, and continuing every Thursday through January 9, 2025, For more information and to register, please go to page .Merry Christmas!



Mission

AB Women's Ministries is a Christ-centered ministry with a commitment to encourage and empower women and girls to serve God.

Vision

Every American Baptist church shall have a vital women's ministry program that empowers women and girls to become and develop as God's person, build God's faith community and serve God's world.

Purpose

As servant leaders, we serve American Baptist churches by encouraging existing vital ministries with women and girls and empowering churches to build such ministries.

THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER



A true Christmas classic, we have read the book, we have seen a production in our own church or in our local community. I have been in the background when our church put on the production many years ago and I have been a part of many children's Christmas productions, from making costumes, to keeping the sheep corralled until it was their time to go on stage, and making the sure the crowns fit the wisemen. So busy making sure everything was going as it should that I missed the wonderful message that was there for all to hear. UNTIL this year - I went with family (son/daughter-in-love, grandson, 13) and a very dear friend

to see the newest production of *"The Best Christmas Pageant Ever"* by Dallas Jenkins and my heart was opened.

The Herdman children (6) hear that if they go to the after school children's program at the church, they could get snacks. Come they did, with all their unruly behavior, unkept clothes, hair, and hungry tummies, but oh GOD had plans to feed not only their tummies but to fill their Hearts with an unknown and unfamiliar LOVE.

Not only were the lives of the Herdman children changed but GOD worked an under cover miracle in the heart of the church. Rules were broken, minds were changed, and new persons stepped up and let God work through them to present the miracle of "Christmas Love". So many times we think we can do it better or that it has to be done like it has always been done, but by thinking this way are we then the stumbling block for letting God do it HIS way?

I encourage each of you to go see the movie, with your loved ones or a special friend, just go see it! Your heart will be blessed, you may even shed a tear, but most of all "Be still and listen..." (Psalm 46:10) and let this classic allow the door to your heart to be opened to experience the best Gift Ever - Baby Jesus. May God Bless your Christmas with the Love, Joy, and Peace that He has given s through His son Jesus.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

Marcia Wimmer

ABWM-GRR Secretary

THANKSGIVING DAY (OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS)

By Lydia Maria Child

(I always think of this poem as a Christmas sonnet too!)

Over the river and through the wood,
To grandfather's house we go;
The horse knows the way
To carry the sleigh
Through the white and drifted snow.

Over the river and through the wood--
Oh, how the wind does blow!
It stings the toes,
And bites the nose,
As over the ground we go.

Over the river and through the wood,
To have first-rate play.
Hear the bells ring,
"Ting-a-ling-ding!"
Hurrah for Thanksgiving Day!

Over the river and through the wood,
And straight through the barn-yard gate.
We seem to go
Extremely slow—
It is so hard to wait!

Over the river and through the wood—
Now grandmother's cap I spy!
Hurrah for the fun!
Is the pudding done?
Hurrah for the pumpkin-pie!

Wishing all of the women of ABWM/GRR
a joyous and safe holiday season.

Becky Jones, Treasurer



On behalf of the ABWM-GRR Board, we wish you a Christmas season full of joy, peace, stillness, and love that only comes through Jesus Christ . Amen

JESUS BIRTHDAY COOKIES

This is a special cookie, shaped just like a Christmas bell
That we should ring loud and clear, for there's a story to tell.
The angel cookie reminds us 'bout the message they did bring
'Twas for our new born Savior, the angels came to sing.
The star cookie reminds us that a star shone very bright,
To lead the wise men to the babe, that was born on Christmas night.
The gingerbread cookie shows us it was for man He came
He was born to save everyone that calls on Jesus name.
The snowman here reminds us, that He cleans us white as snow
He washes all our sins away, I'm glad He loves us so.
The Christmas tree is beautiful, it's lights for all to see.
They twinkle brightly in the night, like Jesus' light in me.
Let's celebrate Christ's birthday with each cookie that we share
And wish a Merry Christmas to people everywhere!

Merry Christmas
Pat Reed
ABWM-GRR Missions Coordinator



SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE ON

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:13

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

“And the angel said to them, ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.’” Luke 2:10-11

Christmas Word Search

T	H	Y	G	O	L	D	R	E	P	T	M	A	N	G	E	R	S
L	O	B	M	T	O	A	F	T	Y	L	O	H	J	M	O	P	T
P	D	E	O	P	T	G	O	L	D	O	Y	R	A	M	T	O	A
E	R	T	N	S	R	Y	T	E	J	L	K	G	V	E	C	Y	B
A	I	H	E	T	H	O	L	Y	O	G	I	F	T	S	E	D	L
C	S	L	M	B	J	E	S	U	S	X	K	I	G	K	O	I	E
E	L	E	E	K	L	E	W	R	E	B	L	Q	N	W	J	O	Y
T	E	H	S	M	Y	R	R	H	P	L	P	O	M	I	U	R	D
S	G	E	I	U	K	J	M	T	H	G	D	S	A	V	I	O	R
R	N	M	W	F	R	A	N	K	I	N	C	E	N	S	E	T	N
M	A	S	I	L	E	N	T	N	I	G	H	T	K	L	I	M	T

GOLD
MANGER
SILENT NIGHT
BETHLEHEM
WISEMEN
FRANKINCENSE
ANGELS

JESUS
JOSEPH
MARY
GIFTS
DONKEY
SAVIOR

STABLE
MARY
HOLY
PEACE
MYRRH
JOY

Communications Coordinator
Lori Hill

The Ripples newsletter is published quarterly with 2 additional special editions throughout the year. If you would like to receive the newsletter electronically or prefer to receive by mail, please contact me at 816-455-0364 or lori.hill234@gmail.com.

Ripple publish dates are:

Christmas Edition—December 1, 2024
 Winter Edition (Jan.-March) - January 1, 2025
 Women’s History Month Special Edition—March 1, 2025
 Spring Edition (April-June) - April 1, 2025
 Summer Edition (July-Sept.) - July 1, 2025

ABWM National News

Join Our Weekly Advent Worship Series: Words for the Beginning

Advent marks both endings and beginnings—a time of reflection and renewal. At American Baptist Women's Ministries, we invite you to join our Advent Worship Series created by Sanctified Art, where we celebrate the birth of Christ and explore new ways of living and loving.

Starting December 5, 2024, and continuing every Thursday through January 9, 2025, including special services on Christmas Eve, December 24, 26, 2024 and January 2, 2025 (pre-recorded and sent via email). Join us live on Zoom at 7 PM ET / 4 PM PT for a season filled with blessings and reflections.

Each week, we will gather to listen to themes inspired by the words Mary might have shared with her newborn son. These are lessons not only for children but for all of us—reminders of the faith we strive to embody daily. Our selected scriptures resonate with the messages often heard in weddings, ordinations, and baptisms, guiding us as we enter this sacred new chapter. Just as Mary embraced hope in a God renewing all things, this series invites you to discover the transformative power of beginning. Join us and be renewed in the spirit of Advent.

Thursday, December 5, 2024, 7 PM ET / 4 PM PT, Live on Zoom

You Are A Blessing: Luke 1:26-38 (The angel Gabriel comes to Mary). Isaiah 43:1-7 (“I have called you by name”)

Thursday, December 12, 2024, 7 PM ET / 4 PM PT, Live on Zoom

We Can't Go Alone: Ruth 1 (Ruth says to Naomi, “Where you go, I will go”) Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (“A threefold cord is not easily broken”)

Thursday, December 19, 2024, 7 PM ET / 4 PM PT, Live on Zoom

Do The Good That Is Yours To Do: Luke 3:7-16 (John the Baptist proclaims how to bear good fruit) Isaiah 58:9b-12 (“You shall be called the repairer of the breach”)

Tuesday, December 24, 2024, (pre-recorded sent via email)

Hope Is Worth The Risk: Matthew 1:18-25 (The angel visits Joseph in a dream) Luke 1:46 – 55 (Mary's song)

Thursday, December 26, 2024, (pre-recorded sent via email)

Love Knows Your Name: Luke 2:1-20 (The nativity story) Isaiah 9:6 (“Wonderful Counselor; Prince of Peace”).

Thursday, January 2, 2025, (pre-recorded sent via email)

Don't Forget To Laugh: Luke 2:10, Matthew 2:10, Isaiah 9:2-3, Psalm 148, Psalm 126:1-3, Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, Isaiah 55:12-13 (Selections on joy)

Thursday, January 9, 2025, 7 PM ET / 4 PM PT, Live on Zoom

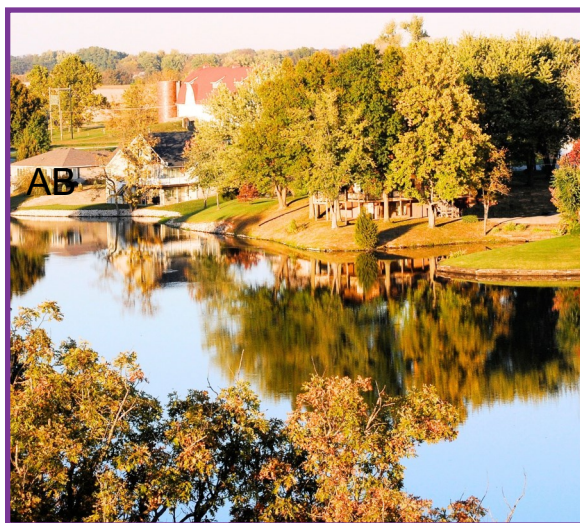
The Road Isn't Straight: Matthew 2:1-12 (Magi come from the East) Isaiah 43:16-21 (“I am doing a new thing, now it springs forth”) from the East)

REGISTER AT WWW.ABWOMENSMINISTRIES.ORG

Dates to Remember

Saturday, March 1, 2025	Virtual Missionaries—Zoom (10am)
Friday/Saturday, March 28-29, 2025	ABWM GRR Spring Board Meeting
Thurs./Saturday, July 3-6, 2025	ABCUSA 2025 Biennial Mission Summit Fri
Friday, July 4, 2025	Women & Girls Day, Omaha, NE (9am-2pm)
Friday/Sunday, July 25-27, 2025	ABWM GRR Annual Conference, Carlinville, IL
Friday/Saturday, August 22-23, 2025	ABWM GRR Fall Board Meeting

SAVE THE DATE



American Baptist Women's
Ministries, ABYW &
G.I.R.L.S. Conference
Fri, Sat, Sun, July 25-27, 2025
Lake Williamson Christian Center
17280 Lakeside Drive
Carlinville, IL 62626
Start planning now for us all to
"RECONNECT"

Next Publication: January 1, 2025

If you have any questions regarding this publication or would like to be on our mailing list, please contact Lori Hill at 816-455-0364 or lori.hill234@gmail.com.