



Dakota Baptist

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2011 Dakota Mission Conference

Camp Judson in the beautiful Black Hills served as the setting for the 10th Annual ABC of the Dakotas Mission Conference on Sept. 16 and 17. Attendees had the privilege of hearing how we as a region are serving God as 'His Hands and Feet' and also "His Voice" around the world.

Conference goers enjoyed a wonderful weekend of fellowship and beautiful music led by Rowena Cowles and accompanied by Connie Feekes. Special music was provided by the Rapid City trio of Jerry Stordahl, Chan Foresman and Eric Peterson; soloist Melissa Gibson of Bismarck; trumpet player Darrell Omanson of Sioux Falls and vocalists Marilyn Kallander and Jerry Stordahl, who sang a duet.

Debbie Mulneix, a development worker in India, kicked off Friday evening by sharing the work that is going on in India. Since she is not native to India, Debbie can only stay in the country for six months at a time. Visa restrictions demand she then she leave for two months. Missionaries such as Debbie are referred to as "developmental workers" because the Indian government will not allow them to enter the country as missionaries.

During the first session on Saturday, Rev. Taku Longkumer, another development worker in India, shared what the first missionaries to Northeast India envisioned when they arrived in the 1800s. He explained how things are changing so those first missionaries' vision becomes reality. Taku is from India so he is able to stay in the country indefinitely.

Victoria Goff, National Coordinator of Volunteer and Disaster Response Ministries, gave an update on her work. Since Minot flooded this year, she's headed there in October to help organize more volunteers. She also presented Rev. Truman Sproles with two national awards. (See article).

Saturday speakers included Kristin Murrie, who is returning to Haiti next year on a medical mission trip; Rev. Susan Omanson with "Be Free" ministries; Rev. Michele Bradley with the Church of Hope in Pierre; and Rev. Marc Anderson, who spoke about the Karen people in the Huron church. Dr. Riley Walker reported on the Micro Loans in Ukhrul, Manipur, India, and Ruth Skar talked about the rubber trees and church planters in Assam, India.

The ABC of Dakotas' fact-finding mission trip group reported on their trip last January. Darrell Omanson, Ruth Skar and Cheryl Wiebers showed a Power Point from their visit.

Katie Longkumer, a developmental worker in India and Taku's wife, spoke Sunday. She and Taku will be working the next four years in northeast India, where they will train church leaders and assist volunteer groups. Katie will additionally work with churches on worship. Katie's Visa is good for 15 years, since she is married to Taku. At the close of the conference, a dedication and prayer service was held for the Longkumers, as they are leaving for India in October.

Cheryl Wiebers

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The proper care and feeding of ministers

If your congregation is blessed with a minister you wish to keep, below are several practices your church should consider adopting. You might just encourage your pastor to stick around longer!

1. Assistance with education and training.

Minister agrees to stay for a specific period of time upon completion of degree.

2. Annual raises — provided your pastor agrees not to search for another position.

Keep up with cost of living and make actual increases in salary beyond inflation.

3. Vacation time.

Insist the minister take days off and use all vacation time each year. Create a “use it or lose it” vacation policy. Time is the cheapest thing you can give your pastor. But for a minister and his or her family to stay healthy, they must use it.

4. If the church has a parsonage, create an equity agreement. *This allows the minister and his or her family to stay in a parsonage and build equity at the same time. This joint savings account requires two signatures. The minister and the church contribute an agreed-upon amount, and the minister manages the investment. Upon resignation, the minister’s money is released to him or her for a down payment on a home or as savings for such a purchase in their future. A copy of this agreement is posted online at www.abc-dakotas.org.*

5. Increase a minister and his or her family’s quality of life.

Provide access to a vacation home. Consider giving the family \$500 for back-to-school purchases in the fall.

Choosing to endow

Our assets are most liquid at the time of our death. Consider using this opportunity to distribute some of your assets to ministries you care deeply about. One financial advisor suggests titling your estate by creating a legal instrument that reflects your priorities and desires.

If you have chosen to allocate 10 percent of your estate, you might use the following pattern:

3 percent to your local church. A gift to your local church might fund a specific project or endow one of its ministries. A gift of \$4,000 would send a child to camp each summer. A gift of \$10,000 might cover the cost of Sunday school liturgy every year.

3 percent to ABC of the Dakotas. You could add to our Endowment Fund, which loans money to churches at lower than commercial rates for adding on to or remodeling an existing facility. A gift of \$10,000 would provide \$500 annually for maintenance and operation at one of our summer camps. You could identify a need and pay for it: roofing a cabin, a pastor’s retreat or training.

4 percent to ministries close to your heart. If there’s a ministry that’s tugged at your heart, this would be the time to respond to that need in a significant manner. A gift to one of the elementary schools operated by the Karbi Analog Baptist Association could educate a generation of children. An endowment might provide income for specific missionaries like Taku and Katie Longkumer or theological training for pastors serving overseas. Your gift can affect the desire of your heart. And be a blessing in God’s work.

ABC of the Dakotas core values

For the next season of ministry, ABC of the Dakotas has adopted the following core values. We will seek to address these in ministry to individual congregations and clusters of congregations.

1. Spiritual leadership
2. Strengthen relationship with God
3. Do faith

In your local church, if you want things to change, we will help you address the following issues:

1. Expansion of ministry capacity. If you want more ministry done get more hands. Don't expect the same number of folks to continually increase the amount of ministry they are doing.

2. Empowering leadership. Train folks to do their job and let them do it without having to come back to the congregation or a board for renewed permission. A ministry's budget is the permission it needs to conduct that ministry. Ministry members report back to the congregation on their activities a couple of times a year.

3. Emerging leadership. Identify, train and call folks in whom you see God growing the ability and capacity to serve. Make a place for them. Someone may have to step away from doing multiple jobs to create a need. People won't respond unless there is a need.

4. Gift-oriented ministry. Match the ministry to the skill base. If multiple persons have the same skills, share the ministry. No one "owns" a ministry; it is a service to Christ and His church. Let others share in the joy of serving.

5. Passionate spirituality. Ministry needs to be driven by spiritual desires, not personal needs. When we match a person's spiritual passion to a ministry that can utilize him or her, ministries are more effective and people are spiritually fulfilled.

6. Need-oriented evangelism. Evangelism is much like fishing. We have to wait for the moment and then act. We plant seeds of expectation. You may see God working in someone's life. When the time is right, invite that person to begin the journey of following Christ.

One of our congregations has a series of training sessions every other year for people who have been identified as potential leaders. The nominating committee then has a pool of identified trained — and likely willing — persons to call on. Offer leadership training, training in how the leadership system works in your congregation and an explanation of the workings of a congregational system.

Riley Walker
Executive Minister

Church Histories Needed

If your congregation has completed a church history, we encourage you to send it to the American Baptist Historical Society. The society can receive your history in any form. Mail two copies to the region office. The region will keep one and forward the other to Atlanta, where it will be preserved by the historical society.

The same can be done with old church records. The American Baptist Historical Society has a temperature- and humidity-controlled archive that not only preserves documents, but is also available for research. The American Baptist Historical Society appreciates any gift to help defray the cost of cataloging and archiving your documents.

When you share your church's historical record with the society, those documents become part of the largest collection of Baptist documents in the world. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Deborah Van Broekhoven at dbvanbroekhoven@abhsarchives.org or (678) 547-6680.

Ship packages to: ABHS, 2930 Flowers Road S., No. 150, Atlanta, GA 30341

Mail letters to: ABHS, 3001 Mercer University Drive, Atlanta, GA 30341

ABC of the Dakotas Considers Return Trip to India

ABC of the Dakotas is tentatively planning another mission trip to Karbi Anglong, Assam, in Northeast India in January 2013.

Five representatives from the region traveled in January 2011 to India's northeastern state of Assam, where they met with leaders and lay persons from the Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention. The convention operates three elementary schools supported by the region through its "Rubber Trees for Education" project. The project provides rubber trees and workers to tend those trees, which will provide income to sustain the schools.

The Karbi Anglong people have requested the region send school superintendents and teachers to help them strengthen their school staff and learn educational methods.

The first step will be a conference call with Darrell Omanson, who will make travel arrangements and lead the trip, and Associate Executive Minister Ruth Skar. We'll discuss the trip's date, cost and itinerary. Anyone who is interested and would like to be a part of this conference call should contact Ruth Skar at (701) 453-3568 or ruthskar@abc-dakotas.org.

In the future, ABC of the Dakotas hopes to send a group of pastors to help train the pastors, evangelists and church planters of Karbi Anglong. The region also aims to send a medical missions team to provide medical and dental care and educate the people on basic health care and hygiene.

The region, however, feels education is the most pressing need, so education will remain its focus for the time being.

Veteran Pastor Honored For Service to Region

On Saturday, Sept. 17, at the Dakota Mission Conference at Camp Judson, Rapid City's Pastor Emeritus Rev. Truman Sproles was presented with two very prestigious awards. Victoria J. Goff, National Coordinator of Volunteer and Disaster Response Ministries, presented the awards.

Below is an edited script read by Victoria as she handed Truman a plaque and a pin in recognition of being a Christian passionary. A pin of this type has been bestowed on fewer than 25 pastors. Congratulations, Truman, for your outstanding service to not only those churches blessed to have you as their pastor, but also those pastors whose lives have been touched by you and Pat.

What do you say about a man who, during his distinguished career, was selected as the Outstanding American Baptist pastor by the South Dakota Baptist Convention? In 1973 and in 1981 he was honored by the city of Chadron, NE with the Outstanding Citizen Award and then in 1982, he was selected by Central Baptist Seminary as Alumnus of the Year.

Truman Sproles truly has the "heart and soul" of a pastor. Truman is the hands and feet of Jesus. On June 1, 2000, soon after his retirement, he began serving as an appointed home mission volunteer as the Pastor to Pastors for the ABC of the Dakotas. To be a Pastor to Pastor, one should be a good listener, be trusted by other pastors and families and able to hold the confidence of those whom he serves. Truman and Pat traveled throughout the Dakotas, including the Prairie Hills and Cornerstone Areas of the Dakotas and Northern Lights and Heartland Areas. In addition to serving as an appointed volunteer, Truman also served on the General Board and National Ministries Board for six years. As Victoria reviewed the file, she found that people had a great deal of respect and admiration for Truman. Riley Walker wrote, "Truman is a great asset to the Pastor to Pastor program."



***Rapid City Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Truman Sproles was
recently recognized for
passionately serving as
Christ's hands and feet.***

Truman, as National Coordinator of Volunteer and Disaster Response Ministries, I have the privilege of working with many volunteers. But, it is when I get the chance to work directly with volunteers such as you that I truly love my job. Thank you for making my job easier. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to the Volunteer in Mission program. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to the American Baptist Home Mission Societies. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to the American Baptist Churches of the Dakotas, and most of all, thank you for your dedication and commitment to the pastors here in the Dakotas. For I truly believe that they are better and the churches here in the Dakotas are better as a result of your service."

It is with honor and joy that I am able to present to you this certificate of appreciation for your outstanding volunteer service. In addition to the certificate, on behalf of our Executive Director, Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III, I would like to present you with this Passionary Pin. For almost two centuries, ABHMS has commissioned missionaries to serve in specialized settings to proclaim the gospel, establish and maintain churches, and minister to people with special needs. In addition to commissioning missionaries, we want now to deploy passionaries who are committed to serving as the caring heart, serving hands, going feet and prophetic voice of Jesus Christ across the United States and Puerto Rico.

A contemporary meaning of a Christian passionary suggests a person who is inspired passionately, through vision and compassion, to change his or her world for Christ.

Again, Truman, thank you for your many years of service and dedication as a passionary – transforming our nation for Christ by volunteering as an appointed American Baptist home mission volunteer. And Truman, thank you for showing us how to be the hands and feet of Jesus. "

*Pat Parks
Rapid City*

Rubber Trees Yield Hope For Indian Schoolchildren

The "Rubber Trees for Education" project has far exceeded our expectations! We asked India Development Worker Debbie Mulneix if there was something we could do before leaving in January 2011 for the Karbi Anglong district in the northeastern Indian state of Assam. Debbie suggested financially helping out the schools. Now thanks to the purchase of rubber trees through the project, Karbi Anglong schools will be able to harvest the rubber in a few years and sell it to support themselves.

Our 2011 mission trip to India served as a "fact-

The first American Baptist missionaries to the Karbi Anglong people arrived in the 1850s.

finding trip." ABC of the Dakotas wants to partner with the Karbi Anglong people in ministry. Pastor Allen Lively of Minot, Dawne Kirk of Fargo, Cheryl Wiebers of Rapid City, Darrell Omanson of Sioux Falls, and Ruth Skar of Berthold, left for India on Jan. 10. We were privileged to visit Delhi and Calcutta, but touring Karbi Anglong remained our main objective. We were the first American Baptists to specifically visit the Karbis since the last missionaries left in 1954! The Karbis highly regard American Baptist missionaries. They all know the history of those first missionaries who arrived in the 1850s. The Karbis are so grateful because the testimony of American Baptist missionaries forever changed their way of life. The missionaries evangelized, translated, and taught them hygiene. Many Karbis are now Christians thanks to the work of those early missionaries, but they need to be strengthened in the faith. This is why ABC of the Dakotas seeks to encourage and partner with them in ministry.

Since the summer of 2010, we've collected mission offerings from various groups at Camp Bentley and Camp Judson. Individuals have likewise donated. The region initially planned on sending \$12,000 in June for the purchase of rubber trees. The Karbis

asked us to wait two days as they were checking on a bank routing number. Several more donations arrived over those two days, and we were able to send \$17,100 to the Karbi's! We are grateful to the Lord for your generosity! When we saw the difference in people who were educated by those early missionaries, we fully realized what a worthwhile project this is.

The Foundation for Integrated Community Development (FICOD) is led by Milton Terang and manages and promotes the Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention's (KABC) School Rubber Plantation Project. While KABC remains sole owner of the rubber plantation, FICOD arranges the land and manages and monitors the project. Income generated from this project benefits the development of schools under the KABC.

Initial plans called for planting rubber trees in three areas. But it was later decided to instead consolidate and purchase land in Diphu, a city in the Karbi Anglong district, for one large rubber tree plantation. Profits will then be divided among the schools. We are very pleased with this decision. At last count, 1,175 rubber trees had been planted. "With great enthusiasm we did our best to plant as much rubber plants as possible within this year with the given resources and time and labor force. We were

interrupted time again by rain and bandh (closure/strike). YET we have planted so far 575 plants and we

A rubber plantation is one of the most economically viable projects in the Karbi Anglong district of India.

are going to plant another 600 from tomorrow again," Mission Secretary Anderson Tokbi said. The Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention president and General Secretary, among other leaders, were asked to inspect the grounds and hold an official prayer to bless the grounds and plants.

A rubber plantation is one of the most economically

viable projects in Karbi Anglong, Assam. At an average annual latex yield of 2,200 kilograms per hectare, each tree is estimated to yield 1,000 rupees worth of rubber annually. At the time of our visit, 100 rupees equaled \$2.24, so each tree should annually yield \$22.40 in U.S. dollars. The project proposes to plant 3,000 rubber trees on a land area of 50 bighas — in Assam, India, a bigha is 14,400 square feet — so that's 3,000,000 rupees or \$67,414 per year.



The project will enable the schools to appoint more equipped teachers and provide better classrooms and amenities to more than 1,300 students. In addition to employing about 50 people, the project serves as the source of funding for the School Mission of the KABC churches. The project aims to not only support existing schools, but to also start and support new school missions.

The Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention (KABC) brings together 13 Baptist church associations from more than 300

The project will enable schools to appoint more equipped teachers and provide better classrooms and amenities to more than 1,300 students.

congregations in India's Karbi Anglong district. This federation seeks to build, encourage and

promote cooperation among its member church associations in order to extend the Kingdom of God.

Karbi Anglong, one of the two hill districts of Assam, is labeled one of the poorest districts in India. About 75 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, of which 90 percent are tribal.

Hundreds of villages lack such basic necessities as electricity, safe drinking water, roads and bridges.

Hundreds die each year from diseases such as malaria and other water-borne diseases. Thousands of children must walk 3 to 6 miles to school because so many villages have no school. Most schools have no teacher.

One other project we've decided to support is the Karbi Anglong Church Planters. Young people who become church planters through this program go out to the villages to evangelize, baptize and establish house churches. They strictly head out in faith with no promise of any financial assistance.

Revs. Taku and Katie Longkumer will move to Northeast India on Oct. 18 as development workers. Taku is from Nagaland and has dual citizenship. Katie will not need to renew her Visa for 15 years because she is married to Taku. Rev. Debbie Mulneix is the other ABC development worker in India. Debbie can only be in India for six months at a time, and then travels to Nepal for two months before travelling back to India. A person is only allowed to be in India for six months with a Visa. That's why supporting these church planters is financially wise!

Our 2011 camp mission offerings are supporting these church planters. ABC of the Dakotas is committed to send \$300 every month. This amount covers such basic needs as food and theological training. These young church planters cook their meals over an open fire. There's no dormitory for them to stay. If you would like to financially or prayerfully support these young people as they tell others about Christ, please contact the region office. Prayer cards are available. Please prayerfully remember our Karbi brothers and sisters in Christ every day.

Visit ficodtrust.org/projects/kabc-rubber-plantation/ for more information on the "Rubber Trees for Education" project.

Ruth Skar

Associate Executive Minister

Camp Judson

Cabin Remodel

One down, more to come.

A newly renovated Cabin No. 1 welcomed guests of Camp Judson this summer.

Union Baptist Church in Burke and First Baptist Church in Lucas raised about \$15,000 to cover the cost of remodeling the cabin. The two south central South Dakota congregations additionally sent eight men in early January to gut and remodel the aging building.

A crew from the Point Is to Serve Church in Sioux Falls arrived in the spring to help the project along.

Work on the cabin wrapped up in June, just in time for the summer camping season.

Cabin No. 1 now features a central living room, kitchenette and enlarged bedroom and bathroom facilities.

The project is the first in a series of planned cabin improvements aimed at enhancing Camp Judson's camping program. Most of Judson's cabins have not seen any improvements since they were built in the 1950s.

Next in line for a facelift are cabins No. 2 and 3. Foundations have already been poured. Now manpower is needed to begin the process of tearing out the old and putting up the new.

Trent Baptist Church plans to send a crew in November to work on Cabin No. 2. A few other churches may also be sending help this fall.

More churches are needed to partner with camp or collaborate with other congregations on the project.

Men and women experienced in construction are sought, but all willing hands are welcome.



We're Debt-Free!

Camp supporters officially paid off Cleveland Commons Dining Hall this summer.

American Baptist Men of the Dakotas chipped in the final \$12,304 to retire the debt on the \$900,000 project.

The men and boys who attended Men's Round-Up at camp in August decided they wanted to pay off the dining hall before heading home.

They initially collected \$8,000. An appeal was made before breakfast on Sunday: Did they want to be the first group to eat in a completely paid off Cleveland Commons? The men responded by pledging another \$2,000 before breakfast was finished.

When it was all said and done, they raised a total of \$12,304 to completely retire the debt on Cleveland Commons. They got 'r done!

Camp Judson launched its "Investment in Youth" campaign nearly a decade ago to support three critical areas of need: upgrading the kitchen and dining hall, renovating Roger Williams Lodge and growing its endowment fund.

Construction on the kitchen and dining hall in the upper level of the 16,000-square-foot Cleveland Commons was completed in 2004. The new 5,000-square-foot dining hall can seat up to 300 campers, more than double the seating capacity of the old dining facility.

The facility's lower level features several rooms for campers and other guests to use for small or large-group activities.

A huge thank you goes out to everyone who helped make this wonderful facility a reality for Camp Judson.





Susan Omanson, Be Free Ministries



Connie Feekes, pianist



Larry Graves, ABEC



Darrell Omanson, special music



Pat & Lloyd Gingery, Bismarck, ND



Riley Walker, Executive Minister



Cassie and Ray Haas, Minot, ND

*Faces from
the 2011
Dakota
Mission
Conference*



Rowena Cowles, special music



Peg Christner, Pak Parks, Pat Sproles
and Truman Sproles



Delcie Schofield-Hall and Nancy Evans



Michele Bradley, Church of Hope

More highlights from the 2011 Dakota Mission Conference



Prayerfully sending Taku and Katie Longkumer to the mission field in India



Chan Foresman, Eric Peterson and Jerry Stordahl, Rapid City, SD



Melissa Gibson, soloist



Luis and Janice Coca, Kief, ND



Mark Patterson, ABCD President



Cheryl Wiebers, Taku Longkumer, Katie Longkumer, Ruth Skar, and Debbie Mulneix



Carrie and Marc Anderson, Huron-Karen people



Marilyn Kallander and Jerry Stordahl



Kristin Murrie, Haiti