

Fact Sheet/Profile for Prospective Regional Executive Minister

Purpose

This organization shall be called American Baptist Churches of the Dakotas (hereafter referred to as ABCD). The Region includes the American Baptist congregations of North and South Dakota, and such other congregations as may apply and be accepted.

The American Baptist Churches of the Dakotas, confessing the Saviorhood and Lordship of Christ, and functioning as an affiliating unit of the American Baptist Churches USA (hereafter referred to as ABC/USA), seek to assist member churches of the ABCD, affiliated organizations, and related ecumenical agencies to engage with increasing effectiveness in the mission of Christ through:

- 1. Identity:** Recognizing the importance of identity as people of God, recognizing who we are as American Baptists and the relationship of our churches to the ABC/USA. Providing affirmation to the unique nature of each individual church, to relate their needs to the larger church family, to foster fellowship among local churches and provide support and encouragement for ministry. Maintaining good pastoral relationships within the Region by providing opportunities for pastors and the staff to fellowship and support one another, and also encourage fellowship among pastors within their Area. Providing affirmation to the laity, recognizing that they are called by Christ to minister in His name wherever they are, offering training to strengthen their skills and develop leadership, and providing opportunities for ministry in their local church, Area, and in the Region.
- 2. Mission:** Understanding that mission has no boundaries—it is both within and beyond the Dakotas—each church and member needs to fully demonstrate the gospel of Jesus Christ and the full meaning of Lordship by supporting, interpreting, praying for, extending, and financially undergirding the mission of Jesus Christ as expressed by ABC/USA and ABCD as part of the Christian community.
- 3. Christian Education:** Assisting in educating ABCD members to the gospel of Jesus Christ and the biblical foundations for ministry by providing opportunities for leadership development, resource information, and an active camping ministry so they are equipped to minister in their home; in their church, both locally and regionally; in their vocation; in their community; and in the world.
- 4. Evangelism:** Knowing that we are called by God to be witnesses of the gospel based on Christ's "Great Commission" as stated in Matthew 28:18-20, we are to assist the ABCD in their evangelistic outreach by providing opportunities for enrichment of skills in the areas of personal witness, becoming an "inviting church," and encouraging their participation in the evangelism efforts of the larger church family.

The Region is the coordinating agency for its member congregations and Areas with the ABC/USA.

Geography

The **American Baptist Churches of the Dakotas** is comprised of Churches located in 2 states. We are divided into four areas—Northern Lights, Heartland, Cornerstone, and Prairie Hills. (www.abc-dakotas.org)

- North Dakota—13 churches (70,700 sq. mi.)
 - South Dakota—34 churches (77,353 sq. mi.)
- *Note—It is 634 miles from our farthest northwestern ND church (Powers Lake) to our southeastern SD church (Vermillion)

Churches/Pastors

The ABCD churches are theologically widespread and also have distinct cultures, partially due to the East/West and Urban/Rural divide.

1. Ethnic diversity of churches:

Caucasian: (41)
African American (3) – Deeper Wells, New Birth, and Peniel Ethiopian
Hispanic (1)
Church in a prison (1)
Karen - Aberdeen (1) plus one (Huron) that is affiliated but not a member church

2. Pastors:

The ABCD has pastors who are
Ordained
Licensed
Lay
Full time/Part time
Bi-Vocational
and gender diverse with 38 Male (senior) pastors and 4 Women (senior) pastors.

3. **Ethiopian Ministry**— The Peniel Ethiopian Fellowship is an ABC Dakotas church plant serving the Ethiopian/African community in Sioux Falls, SD. Pastor Zerhun Dejane has been the spiritual leader of this church family for several years. Pastor Dejane is a Sioux Falls Seminary graduate, and he is also employed as a part-time Chaplain at Smithfield Foods in Sioux Falls. In the past, this church has met at Emmanuel Baptist Church and The Point, but they are currently meeting at the First Baptist Church in Sioux Falls. The region is committed to one more year of financial support (\$6,000) to Peniel Ethiopian Fellowship.

Lay Involvement

Strong lay involvement is a hallmark of the ABCD:

1. **American Baptist Women's Ministries** (each state has its own groups) provide opportunities for women and girls:
 - Summer conferences
 - Love Gift
 - Annual Mission Projects
 - White Cross
 - College Scholarship

2. **American Baptist Men** (each state has its own groups) provide opportunities for men and boys:
 - Summer conferences
 - Work crews that assist local, churches and camps
 - College/Seminary Scholarship
 - 1000 Club (supports camp, seminary students, prison ministry)
 - Key Contributors

3. **American Baptist Youth** Opportunities (each state has its own groups):
 - ABY (Junior High/Senior High)
 - Winter Camps/Fall Conferences
 - Junior (4-6th grades), Junior High, and High School Camps

Camp/Conferences

Dakota Region each state operates their camp. These two camps have been in the black for years and have the funds to do upkeep and new buildings. They **Do Not** receive any monetary assist from the Region. But both camps do receive significant hours in administrative support from region staff.

- Camp Bentley provides summer programs for youth and adults. It is located near Drake, ND. It is a prairie land camp located by a lake. (www.abc-dakotas.org/camp-bentley)
- Camp Judson is a year round camp providing programs for both youth and adults. It is located in the Black Hills of SD behind Mt. Rushmore. (www.campjudson.org)
- The region holds its Biennial in the fall on even years and is rotated between the states (2 times in SD and once in ND during a six year period based on the church ratio).
- The region has a Mission Conference in the fall on odd years. This is rotated between camps.

Institutions

1. **University of Sioux Falls** is an ABC university located in Sioux Falls, SD (our region office is located on its campus). USF is an accredited undergraduate and graduate school with a current enrollment of 1,505 students. (www.usiouxfalls.edu)
2. **Trailridge** is located in Sioux Falls and is an ABC related retirement community. It also has assisted living apartments.

Other Ministries

1. **Church of Hope** is an ABC mission church inside the Women's Prison in Pierre, SD, and is the only ABC church in a USA prison. An ABC ordained pastor and home missionary, Sharon Ball-Robertson serves this ministry. Currently, she provides counseling, leads Bible Studies, and leads a worship service at the main prison on Saturday nights and one at the Pierre Community Work Center on Sunday nights. Both locations are on the prison property but are separate buildings. The prison church depends on region churches to help with its support. **Church of Hope** has the most baptisms annually of all the ABCD churches. The first worship service for Church of Hope was on July 26, 1997, with trustee-level inmates who were being temporarily housed at the National Guard Armory in Pierre. The first Pastor was Rev. Michele Bradley who served there for several years. The **Church of Hope** will not be self-supporting. This ministry is supported through our regional budget and **America for Christ** offering.
2. **Native American Ministries:** We have several churches working with the Native Americans on two different reservations.
 - **Camp Judson** In the past, Camp Judson has fully sponsored and staffed a "Warrior Camp" for Native American youth. This camp has been a collaboration between ABC Dakotas staff and lay people, and Native American Christian leaders from different Tribes in the state. Warrior Camp primarily served Native American youth from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The camp provided all the funds for this camp, including busing attendees from Pine Ridge. Of the 70 youth and 26 adults attending, 35 accepted Christ and 15 were baptized in the lake. The camp would like to continue with this ministry, yet much more work is needed to develop stronger partnerships with Native American Christian leaders to strengthen the programming of the camp.
 - **Cannonball Ministries Cannon Ball Ministries** is a mission/ministry located in the small town of Cannon Ball, ND, on the north end of the Standing Rock Indian Reservation. This ministry is led full-time by on-site volunteer retirees Boots and Jackie Marsh along with two younger retired couples. Additional long-term volunteers include both a retired couple and a young couple from Mandan. The ministry's official name has been changed to Tipi Wakan Baptist

Church in recent years. This ministry is supported in ecumenical fashion by several churches in Bismarck, including First Baptist Church.

At the present time, First Baptist of Bismarck sends one of its two teams to provide an afternoon Sunday School lesson and a meal for approximately 25-45 children at Tipi Wakan the first Sunday of every month. The teams serve alternate months. Approximately 7-9 members of FBC are involved. Tipi Wakan (House of God) currently offers a food pantry ministry to the Cannon Ball community. All summer long, Tipi Wakan hosts church teams from Virginia and West Virginia that arrive to provide week-long Vacation Bible School programs for the children of the community. Adult programming is offered during some weeks as well. An Equine Ministry program is offered to children on a limited basis in the summer as well. Tipi Wakan conducts Sunday morning worship services for adults every week. The ministry also provides some on-going weekly programming for children and adults.

3. **Karen Ministries:** 200 years ago, Adoniram Judson landed in Burma. Judson and his wife, Ann, would minister among the people of Burma for years, making converts in almost every single ethnic group, particularly the Karen. Now, the Karen are coming to the United States and bearing fruit in churches from Oakland, California to Utica, New York. Already in the Dakotas there are two Karen communities, one in Aberdeen and another in Huron.

Unique Mission Partnerships in Northeast India

Through the years we have partnered with the Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention to support many different ministries. We have enjoyed growing with these brothers and sisters in Christ and look forward to continuing to partner with them in the future. Ways we have supported this mission include:

- Assisted Karbi church planters with funds, training, and supplies. Our youth camp offerings are designated for the church planters.
- Developed a fully functioning Rubber Tree Plantation to assist Baptist Elementary Schools and Students
- Provided funds to support the Rubber Tree Plantation caretakers
- Provided Baptist Elementary School students with scholarships
- Provided Baptist Elementary School teachers with training and supplies
- Provided financial support for the Oriental Theological Seminary
- Provide financial and website support for Miqlat Ministry - a recovery ministry for trafficked women
- Held trainings for the Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention Leadership, Evangelists, and Church Planters

Financial Basis:

The ABCD Region receives its financial support through United Missions and Dakota Missions. See below.

Present Staff Configuration:

The Regional Staff as follows:

- Rev. Randy Rasmussen, Executive Minister (he is the one leaving but will stay until 9/30/2022)
- Rev. Ruth Skar, Associate Executive Minister
- Rev. Dwayne Williams, Pastor to Pastor
- Tracy Koskan, Baptist Camp Judson Director
- David and Tam Wisthoff, Camp Bentley Managers (resigned but mentoring new manager)
- Kim Aalberg, Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper (Support Staff for the region)

Annual Operations Budget

\$268,357 - Region Annual Budget for 2022

\$95,000 - Camp Bentley Annual Budget 2022

\$617,014 - Camp Judson Annual Budget 2022

Financial Assets

\$972,582 - Region

\$655,913 - Camp Bentley

\$2,497,863 - Camp Judson

Physical Plant Assets

Region – lease agreement for office space/University of Sioux Falls through 2038

\$1,788,000 - Camp Bentley, ND

\$7,974,050 - Camp Judson, SD