

ABW Maine

THE POTENTIAL

Message from our President –Doris Sherman

The Coronavirus, along with all the political unrest has been overwhelming. But we know who holds tomorrow, and we know who holds our hand, and so we have hope. Hope that the vaccine will prevail against this insidious disease and hope that the hearts of our leaders will turn to God for direction. We have to hope so. As Christian women of faith, we know our hope rests in God and not only rests but is anchored... Heb 6:19 "which hope we have as an anchor".

I read an article recently in the Epoch Times newspaper which reads, and I quote; "Hopeful people don't wish, they imagine and act", they establish clear achievable goals, and make a clear plan". Again, evidence suggests that the belief that one is capable of achieving one's goals may be more important than knowing how to achieve one's goals." Our ABWM needs to have the goals and the hope that we will not only survive all the above obstacles but flourish while doing so. I have the confidence we can and will, with His help.

The inability to meet face to face has dampened our fellowship and the devil tempts us just to throw up our hands and say, "what's the use". To that I say, "get thee behind me Satan".

Let us examine the positives. Thanks to Wandah Clark and her expertise, our Zoom meetings have been welcome and helpful. It's not ideal but I feel God is using it to keep us together and it's wonderful to see all your faces.

Our mask project while off to a slow start, is doing well with Judy Ledger at the helm. Please, any sewers out there, if you can help, get in touch with Judy-746-3765. The goal is to have masks to sell at the Summer Conference, all proceeds to go to the state project for Ann Clemmer. These masks will have the ABW logo on them and a great keepsake for the future as well.

So, I am not only optimistic for the future of ABWM but hopeful that God will continue to use us, as ABW to be lights, to show forth His love to our needy world, to draw others to Him, and to tell others of our great big, wonderful God who loves them, died for them and is coming back again. Ps 39:7 "my hope is in Thee".

Hopefully, we can get together in Oakland for our March Board meeting. Till then, peace.

White Cross-Dina Richards

I have more information on "Operation Planting Hope", OPH for short. OPH is a continuation of White Cross Overland. This will provide more opportunities for "ABHMS mission partners to benefit from financial and hands-on support. OPH is an innovated mode extending outreach to a wide range of related partners focused on healing and transformation, while streamlining the connection among American Baptist churches and vulnerable communities." "It offers a fresh approach for groups to serve ABHMS Community Outreach Ministries partners."

There are 46 partners in this program and at this time we are looking to support Columbia Street Project out of Bangor Maine. It is a program that provides faith-based service to individuals who have experienced incarceration, intending to empower said individuals to rise above their circumstances toward productive lives in society. I will be sending out what the associations will need to do and also the board will be looking at what else we may be supporting this year; please stay tuned. If you want to check out a video on OPH go to YouTube and search Operation Planting Hope or <https://youtu.be/CU7NBZIPbKI>

Isaiah 26:3-4 Those of steadfast mind keep in peace-because they trust in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for in the Lord God you have an everlasting rock.

Board Meeting & Zoom's - Secretary Martha Walker

"Searching for ways to involve more ladies, it was decided for a 6-month trial period, to present Zoom meetings, which would be available to all Baptist women. This service is free if limited to 40 minutes. Wandah is in charge of making this a reality. Every lady has to contact Wandah to get link/password, etc. to join in the meeting.

The first Zoom meeting was scheduled for November 2, 2020 at 7:00PM. This first meeting included information and announcements on future meetings. Emphasis was on the Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer. Every continent was prayed for, with an emphasis on the special issues in that area.

The second Zoom meeting was Tuesday, December 1, 2020, at 7:00 P.M. This night we all enjoyed the presentation by Missionary Ann Clemmer. She talked about Heal Africa, the mission she works with in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo. We learned about the children in and around Goma. Their lack of basic needs: food, clothing (especially shoes) and shelter. This is our current state project, food and shoes for the children of Goma and surrounding area. Questions were asked and answered.

The third Zoom meeting was Tuesday, January 5, 2021. Two discussions were featured. The first led by Marg Muise, centered around plans for summer conference 2021. Guest speaker, Susan Call of New Hampshire, will be speaking on forgiveness and acceptance. Missionary speaker will be Jeni Pedzinski whose ministry is with the New Life Center in Chiang Mai, Thailand, with girls who are survivors or at risk of forced labor, sex abuse and sex trafficking. Other suggested activities were: spa night, bonfire and sing-a-long, Heal Africa, new ABW theme banners. A piano player is needed.

Linda Deane, Potential Editor was, the second presenter. She asked, "Do we want a website? If yes, things to be included are board members, associations, contact info, special interest missionaries, Potential, Summer conference information.

Also at this the meeting was Joanne Strauss, Coordinator of the Eastern Section of American Baptist Women. She was a valuable asset, answering questions and presenting information,

Lorna gave an update on the Clemmers. They have returned to Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo. It took only ten minutes to go through Covid and Immigration check points. Both inspectors know them! Bill is being sent to Somalia. Bill will be working a few months there to address the problem of women dying during childbirth. He works with the local population to provide clean, safe birthing centers. At Christmas, 1000 pair of shoes were given out in Goma.

Beirut, Lebanon, where the Chetti's live, is on a strict, 10 day lock down, due to COVID-19 and violence stemming from the explosions in Beirut. Our missionaries there are all safe and healthy.

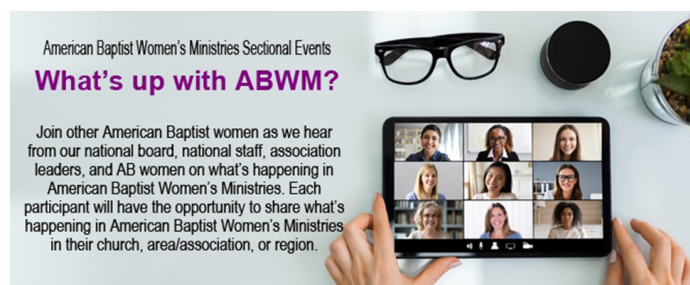
The next Zoom Meeting Thursday March 4 at 7:00 PM. Any woman can join in. All you need is a computer with a camera connected to the internet. Perhaps all you need is a child or grandchild who will help you join in. Contact Wandah at wandahclark@gmail.com and she will email you the link/password and answer any of your questions. Hoping to see you at the next meeting.

Educational Gifts – Deb Kiker

Summer may seem far away today, but it will be here before we know it. Please take the next several months to promote the Educational Gifts of Love Award. We have not received any applications as of now and the deadline is June 1st. So If you know of a woman who is a member of an American Baptist Church of Maine; is enrolled in a Christian college, seminary, or AIM (American Institute of Ministry) and plans to enter Christian service, please have them contact me Deb Kiker debkiker@gmail.com . 207-406-2265.

ABWM Eastern Coordinator's Zoom Meeting

All American Baptist Women of Maine have been invited to attend the Eastern Coordinator Zoom meeting Saturday February 20, from 10-11:30 PM. Register at abwomensministries.org



Church and Community – Wandah Clark

Dear Ladies, we've made it through 2020 and have learned new ways to "do church." Some churches did not close, some did and re-opened, and some are still only providing virtual services.

Not knowing where your church is in the process, I decided to provide the following two articles for your consideration. The first one, provides a process, presuming churches will be opening up again. <https://get.tithe.ly/blog/church-outreach-ideas>. The second one, makes suggestions for what we can do in spite of "social distancing". <https://jasonalowe.com/2020/04/01/30-outreach-ideas-for-your-church-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

Whether we "open" or "close" we can still reach out into our communities. I particularly like the section in the Tithe.ly Blog: *Stop church outreach until you've done this 3-point asset analysis*. Perhaps now is the time to be discussing which programs will be most effective in YOUR church.

Yes, these articles are written to include women and men. But I would encourage you and/or your women's group to be the "movers and shakers" in 2021. Let's reach our communities for Christ.

No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. Philippians 3:13-15 NLT

Personal Development – Marge Muise

Deuteronomy 31:8 The Lord Himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.

As I was thinking about something to share with you – to encourage you – I found myself being tested. I was facing another obstacle with my husband's health. He was again admitted to the hospital. It would be very easy to become discouraged and in my human body, I was. However, just as God promised to Joshua, I was reminded that not only is God with us, but he goes before us! What a blessing and a wonderful promise to rest in when we are facing difficult times. When one of my friends asked me how I was doing, I told her that I had recently read a devotional that talked about how God goes before us. I told her I believed that promise and it took the fear away. My friend, Jan Bunford-Ryder loves to write poetry, and this is what she sent back to me:

God has gone before us
He sprinkled the stars up in the sky.
God has gone before us
And gave the eagles wings to fly.
God has gone before us
He understands the sorrows of earth.
God has gone before us –
He rejoices in each rebirth!
God has gone before us
He's forever loving – just and fair.
God has gone before us
He understands joy and despair.
God has gone before us
And speaks to us each day
God has gone before us
He is the truth, the life – the way.
God has gone before us
And we will walk by His side one day.

No matter what you are facing today remember this...God has gone before you.

Treasurer-Sherry Cates

” He’s got the whole world in his hands.” Our state project, to assist with feeding school children for a year at the school Ann Clemmer ministers at and provide shoes, has gotten off to a great start with a contribution of over \$1000 from the Oakfield Baptist Church. Auburn Baptist has a special collection plate out working toward our goal of \$3000. We have donations from Lamoine Baptist church ladies for state and national support as well as the women and girl's ministries. Wandah Clark has filled her Love Gift box to overflowing. We have 26 weeks before summer conference, 9-11 weeks till spring Rallies, if 20 women were able to save \$2 a day, we would have another \$1000 by conference. Wow!

This may be a time in our lives when we have to live as in our parent’s times, with limited availability to see our families and friends in person. It reminds us how precious our time together is and not to take for granted the time we share. I'm sure the disciples felt the same when Jesus was crucified, and they were left alone with their foundation centered on Jesus shaken and they thought crumbled. I have found that like then, Jesus is challenging me to grow as a Christian. He has opened my mind not only on ways to stay healthy physically with nourishment and hydration, but mentally by planning how to keep my congregation safe while making sure the doors of our church are open to those in spiritual need. Spiritually, He has challenged me to speak in church and read His word more thoroughly. He has made sure He has sent fellow Christians to motivate me to make jam, and to share His bounty throughout the Christmas holiday with 5 families, 6 shut-ins, 2 food banks, and 2 school systems. Through reading His word, I feel that my prayers are more with the Holy Spirit instead of just words. Being in the medical profession, I'm not afraid of COVID-19, it is just another life-threatening illness I have to deal with in my work. I do respect that I will not live forever on this earth and not to take for granted the precious gifts and friends God has sent my way. I know I am not ever alone, He is with me, Isa. 49:16 tells me my name is written on His hands, and He watches over me and you. Trusting God and His promises daily.

Mission and Service-Lorna Hansen

God is in control and evidence supports this despite how the pandemic has changed our church-related schedules and ministries. God is still at work!

Most of our missionaries are still working in the countries to where they are called. Ann and Bill Clemmer were in Maine for Christmas, but returned to DRC on January 8. Weren't we who zoomed with her blessed as she shared her ministries with us in early December! Ann continues her ministries with the children at Tuungane School and with the women in Goma. In late January Bill plans to take on a temporary assignment in Somalia where there is a high death rate among women during childbirth. His work will be similar to what he helped set up in South Sudan last fall.

Dan and Sarah Chetti have been in the U.S., but plan to return to Lebanon the first week of February. Dan is looking at retirement in a couple years. In the meantime, he is leading Enduring Love, which offers support to Christians living in difficult situations in Middle East countries. Sarah continues to minister with Insaaf, a ministry with foreign maids lured to work in Lebanon.

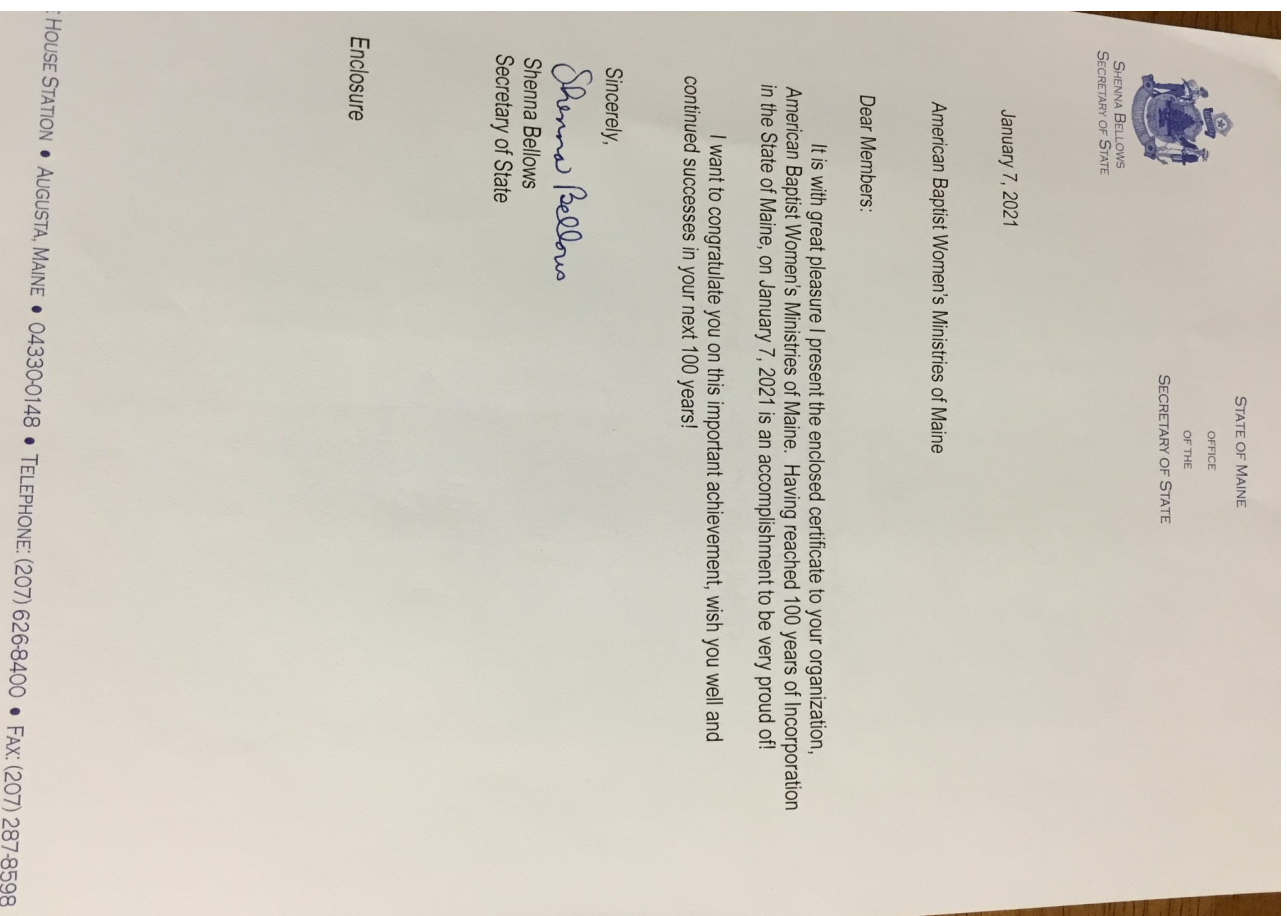
Lynette and Brian Smith are now missionaries in a new location since Brian healed in the U.S. from three viruses he contracted in Haiti. They now work with Haitian immigrants in the Dominican Republic.

What is our responsibility with supporting our missionaries even though we may not be actively meeting in our churches and associations?

1. Pray for them! For example, ...Pray for Kit Ripley's safe journey back to Thailand in February. Pray Jeni Pedzinski can return in June for a one year U.S. assignment.
2. Support our state project to raise \$3000.00 for the 36 children who are victims of trauma at Tuungane School. Part of this money will feed the children daily porridge, peanuts, and bread for a year. The rest of the \$3000.00 will buy 83 dozen shoes for Sunday School kids next Christmas. Oakfield ladies held a yard sale to raise money. A letter went out to Auburn ladies inviting them to give to this project and each Sunday gifts appear in a designated container.
3. Save and bring Christmas card fronts to summer conference or Spring Rally. Ann has a project idea for using them with the children. If we cannot meet, contact me and I will collect them.
4. Promote and support the American For Christ Offering in your churches. About one-third of what you give stays in Maine to support ABCOM ministries.

Yes, God is at work and He is in control. We are invited to work along with Him. God bless you as you continue to bless others.

ABW Maine Receives State Recognition



American Baptist Women Of Maine

The Potential **Winter 2021**

Linda Deane

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Dates to Remember

April 4 - Easter

Spring Rally South - April 17 in Topsham

Spring Rally North - April 24 in Oakfield

May 30 - White Cross Reports due from locals to Association

June 1 - Deadline for Potential Articles

June 15 - Reports for Directory

August 12,13,14, 2021 Summer Conference