



Presidents Message –Cindy Richendollar (cindyrich04766@gmail.com)

To God be the Glory! The beautiful foliage colors are a sight to behold. Our eyes can see God's Love in His handiwork no matter the season.

As we look forward to our mission call for the coming months, the ABW Board is 'doing a new thing'. We realize that it is not always convenient for ladies to travel to state gatherings, for many reasons. Our focus is to provide opportunities to become & develop as God's person, build God's faith community, and serve God's world. There will be regional gatherings throughout the state to meet you where you are and support your local mission needs.

On April 18, there will be a gathering in the Sanford area, for anyone who wishes to attend. There will be details for that location, as well as future locations, in the next Potential.

If your church would like to host a ladies gathering in your area, please reach out to a board member. We would love to meet you where you are and will assist in planning if you wish.

It was good to meet some new faces at our display table at the ABCOM Annual Meeting in Yarmouth and introduce more ladies to this newsletter.

There is an historic ABW quilt which we display wherever we go. It has become an adventure trying to find places to hang it. If you know someone so inclined, it would be great to have a freestanding frame that could travel with the quilt. Measurements are 64" wide by 78" long, with a dowel pocket across the top. There are also two separate panels that measure 13" wide by 64" long, with string & dowels to hang.

There are opportunities to serve on the state level. Please let us know if you are interested.

Educational Gift of Love—Lorna Hansen (lbhansen42@gmail.com)

Do you know someone who is planning to attend college or seminary this year?

If so, they may be eligible for an **Educational Gift of Love** — a special fund offered through the American Baptist Women of Maine to support those pursuing Christian education and service.

To qualify, applicants must:

- Be a member of an American Baptist Church of Maine.
- Be enrolled in a Christian college, AIM classes, or seminary.
- Believe it is God's will that they enter some form of Christian service.

If someone you know meets these qualifications, please encourage them to request an application by contacting:

Lorna Hansen
376 Lake Street
Auburn, Maine 04210
lbhansen42@gmail.com
207-783-1510

American Baptist Women of Maine Summer Conference

August 7–9, 2025 – “Beside Still Waters” (Psalm 23)

Coordinator: Barbara Anderson | **Speaker:** Joyce Goldthwaite | **Musicians:** Kevin & Pam Rhein, Sidney

The 2025 Summer Conference opened with registration in Sukeforth Lobby and a lovely Welcome Tea hosted by the Free Will Baptist Church of Scarborough, complete with china teacups and delicious sweets. Coordinator **Barbara Anderson** greeted attendees, introduced guests, and led in prayer. **Kevin and Pam Rhein** inspired everyone with *Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord* and led singing throughout the weekend. Guest speaker **Joyce Goldthwaite** presented a five-part series, *In the Word*, based on Psalm 23.

Session 1 – Be Ready: “The Lord is my shepherd.” Joyce reminded us that only God can fill the empty space in our hearts. She encouraged taking time for quiet retreats to rest and listen to His voice (Zephaniah 3:17).

Session 2 – Be Resolute: Like sheep, we depend fully on our Shepherd. We must slow down, listen, and let God renew us. “Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me.”

Session 3 – Be Receptive: God leads us on right paths (Psalm 23:3). We mirror His goodness by renewing our minds (Romans 12:2) and following the Spirit’s quiet guidance—our “staff and comfort” (Psalm 23:4).

Annual Business Meeting:

President **Cynthia Richendollar** opened with prayer. Twenty-seven women attended, representing 10 associations, with two first-timers. Reports were read and approved. Lorna Hansen reminded us that *Gifts of Love* are open to both men and women preparing for ministry. Linda Deane, Administrative Assistant, reported on *The Potential* newsletter—please re-enroll each year for mailed copies (\$5) and send email updates for digital delivery. Linda also requested help maintaining the ABW website.

Officers elected: President-elect – Sherry Cates; Personal & Spiritual Development – Lena Kanda; Secretary – Carolyn Eames. Barbara Anderson conducted the installation. Cindy Richendollar reported improvements at China Lake funded by the Bea Violette bequest, including ramps and lighting. The Spa Basket Auction raised \$272 for Deborah’s House.

Session 4 – Be Restored: “Come to me... and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Renewal comes through forgiveness and stillness with God. The Silent Auction added \$354 for Deborah’s House.

Missionpalooza: Six tables represented our mission countries—Congo, Lebanon, Mexico, Thailand, Ukraine, and the USA—each with themed displays and prayer activities. Participants enjoyed international snacks and inspiring Zoom conversations with missionaries Deliris Carrión (Deborah’s House) and Kristy Engel (Ukraine).

Saturday Morning – Be Ready Again: Chairs formed a circle for final worship. Kevin and Pam led *The Blessing Song*, and Joyce urged us to “Celebrate missions, renew friendships, and rest in God’s presence.” Communion closed the weekend as we returned to our home churches—our mission fields. Joyce left us with Tommy Walker’s *Speak the Word*: “Let it calm my soul, shape and make me whole.”

Kristi Engel



Deliris Carrion “Deborahs House “



Missionary Zoom

Secretary—Carolyn Eames (ceames1@live.com)

ABWM Fall Board Meeting First Baptist Church, Yarmouth – September 18, 2025 (condensed)

President Cindy Richendollar opened with prayer. Lorna Hansen moved to accept Martha Walker’s report; Sherry Cates seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer Barbara Anderson presented three financial reports. The checkbook balance at year-end (August 31) was nearly \$16,000, above the \$12,000 budget. Funds received included \$339 to National, \$117 for Love Gift, \$590 for Educational Gifts, \$750 for State funds, and \$3,830 toward the State Project (Deborah’s House). Barbara confirmed funds are held at the American Baptist Extension Corporation and that she, Lorna, and Cindy must sign a verification letter.

Cindy led discussion on engaging more women in ABW. Attendance at Summer Conference was below 40. Members suggested regional meetings to strengthen participation. Carolyn Sweeney offered to host one; Caribou and Houlton groups are already collaborating.

Reports from Associations: Kennebec: Sherry hosted a 20-person meeting featuring a young preacher from China Lake. She suggested inviting younger women to participate through active roles; Lorna: Due to flood damage, their church holds a Ladies Brunch/Lunch every other month with 20 attendees.

Cumberland: Recent mixed meeting with strong turnout; the Clemmer’s were the main attraction.

Cindy noted that some Associations are inactive. Barbara added that churches are crossing Association lines and shared plans for a Valentine’s Brunch with nearby churches. She suggested changes to structure: make the Annual Meeting a one-day event, separate from Summer Conference, and rotate Conference locations yearly (north, central, south) to improve access.

Cindy and Barbara discussed combining or rotating Spring Rally and Annual Meeting. Possible venues include Baptist Youth Camp, Ocean Park, or Oceanwood. Sherry proposed a bus trip to Sight and Sound with devotions. Members agreed that the purpose of ABW is to encourage women in faith and mission work.

Future Planning: Cindy will contact Carolyn Sweeney and Andrea Dresser about hosting a Spring Mission-Orama (Rally) on April 18 at United Baptist Church of Saco. Martha will check with Deborah’s House for specific needs. Barbara will prepare a “Care & Comfort” basket list with note cards for encouragement. Members will explore a one-day mid-state hotel event for the Annual Meeting and a northern fall gathering with a dynamic speaker.

Kris Lutton joined and shared that PA and Delaware have thriving ABW programs led by Sue MacDonald, featuring regional one-day church events and the CoLab program, which attract younger women. They no longer do White Cross but ask missionaries directly about needs. She also noted that IM is launching a new campaign to better support missionaries.

Additional items included notifying the three camps about college seminary funds. Zoom meetings will resume; Cindy and Barbara will coordinate. Sherry suggested inviting Sheila Henise to write a devotional for *The Potential*. Orono’s UMaine Conference Center may be a cost-effective venue option.

The next Board Meeting will be March 12, 2026, at 10 a.m., United Baptist Church of Oakland, 47 Church Street, Oakland, Maine.

Thanks were given to Barbara for organizing supper and to Kris for her input. Carolyn closed in prayer.

Summer Conference Pictures



Updates from Our Special Interest Global Servants

October 2025

Letters and Facebook posts from our missionaries are always inspiring, and it's hard to fit their stories into just a few lines for *The Potential*. If you have access to the Internet or Facebook, it's easy to stay in touch with them directly. Please remember that some missionaries in sensitive areas cannot share much publicly because of safety concerns for themselves and those they serve.

Ann Clemmer (September 27):

"Yesterday was joyful with a tinge of sadness. As security improves, we have sent out teams to locate families of children who have been sheltering in our Sunday School since January. Twenty were reunited this week — the joy and tears of parents and children who had given up hope were overwhelming. Please pray for homes for the remaining children who live with us full-time, and for our continued ministry to the orphaned and abandoned children who come daily for food, health care, counseling, and love."

Dan and Sarah Chetti have retired and returned to Oregon, where they will travel across the U.S. for a year sharing their story. Dan required serious eye surgery soon after returning home. On August 1, he wrote, "My surgery is scheduled for August 6. I feel good and look forward to better vision!" On September 14, he added, "I had successful eye surgery. Praise God."

Brian, Lynette, and Calen Smith returned to the Dominican Republic on August 4 after 13 months in the U.S. "Our community welcomed us warmly," they wrote. "Our apartment had flooded the day before we arrived, but thanks to friends' help, nothing was ruined. We're reminded that our true treasure isn't what fills our apartment but the people who fill our lives. God's face is everywhere, not just where we are." Their son Calen is in 7th grade online, and Ricky is a sophomore at the University of Toledo studying Computer Science and Linguistics. The Smiths ask for continued prayers as they resume their ministry and language work.

Kristy Engel, a pediatric nurse practitioner and Global Consultant for Health, joined our Summer Conference via Zoom. She has served in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Liberia (Ebola response), and Ukraine. In Ukraine, she partners with International Ministries, the Transcarpathian Baptist Charity Foundation, and Hungarian Baptist Aid to serve displaced Ukrainians—mostly mothers and children—along the western border. They provide food, clothing, medical and dental care, and community health training.

Kristy recently underwent major ankle surgery and, after a year of recovery, has returned home to Columbia, Missouri. She also manages chronic migraines with the help of her service dog, **Mia**, who can detect an episode three days in advance and even flew quietly with her from Ukraine to Atlanta.

State Project Update – Deborah's House (Tijuana, Mexico):

This shelter provides refuge for women and children escaping severe abuse. As of September 18, the women of Maine have donated \$3,830. We will continue collecting support through the Summer Conference 2026.

Summer Conference Pictures



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Personal Development—Lena Kanda (ekanda409@gmail.com)

My name is Lena Kanda and I am your new Chairperson of Spiritual Growth and Personal Development. As Christian women I can probably say that you all are very well grounded in the Bible. Most of you grew up in Christian homes and prayer and Bible reading were part of your childhood as it was in my childhood. I remember clearly spending Sunday afternoons after church in our parlor on the farm in NI. We read the Bible one after the other and I enjoyed it very much.

In nursing school at The Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast we had a Nurses Christian Fellowship once a month -- the Student Doctors were also invited to attend so you can guess there was full attendance on those occasions! Needless to say, a lot of my classmates snared a husband among them.

As I grow older and am now in my eighties, I find my interest in the Bible has increased tremendously and I find many programs on You tube explaining and teaching the Bible-- my personal favorite is Alastair Begg. I listen to Three programs every weekday morning as part of my devotions and to anchor my day - Chuck Swindoll, David Jeremiah and Alastair Begg

As I walk daily in my dead-end street, I make it my practice to pray for the people who live there, most of whom have no time for God at all.

I used to have a lovely family with four children living on the street who were devoted Christians, but they moved, and I have a Catholic family who are my near neighbors and wonderful Christians.

I live on Taylor Pond, and I invite my neighbors and the children to come to my Cathedral under the trees to go swimming and just to visit. I have never heard any of those Children or their parents ever using the name of God as a swear word and there is no other bad language. This past summer a friend and her sister came for the afternoon, and the name of God was desecrated time after time and I thought my friend, who is a wonderful Christian, would confront her but alas she did not and I did not either. Now I wish I had.

I encourage you all to read the Bible and pray each day and put into practice the words of Jesus - loving your neighbors and speaking about Christ as you have opportunity.

We also need to boost our membership with younger women so when you get a chance invite someone younger to join us so we all don't just fade into the woodwork!

Administrative Assistant —Linda Deane (sterlin@roadrunner.com)

Could You Help Keep ABW Connected?

My name is Linda Deane, and while I don't usually write articles for *The Potential*—because I'm the one who produces it—I wanted to share this request. The Administrative Assistant role for American Baptist Women of Maine has grown beyond its original purpose of publishing the newsletter. It now includes updating our ABW webpage each month, assisting the President with communications, and setting up Zoom meetings for board and committee gatherings, and producing a yearly directory for Summer Conference.

As our communication needs expand, I would love to find someone to help strengthen our media presence, especially by keeping the webpage current and sharing updates from ABW groups around the state. Right now, our only social media is Facebook, but we hope to make the most of it and continue improving how we connect.

If you enjoy writing, editing, or working with computers, and have webpage experience, your help would be a real blessing! Please contact Cindy Richendollar, ABW President, if you'd like to learn more or lend a hand, so that the Executive Board can review



Closing Worship & Communion



Coffee That Changes Lives: ABC Missions and Starbucks Partner for Hope in Thailand

Mike Mann, a Global Consultant, grew up tagging along with his father, Dick Mann, an ABC missionary who helped tribal people in northern Thailand stop growing opium and begin cultivating coffee in the 1960s and 70s.

Confident he would follow in his father's footsteps, Mike earned degrees in agronomy and international agriculture. For seven years, churches responded to his call to serve with the same words: *"We don't have the money."* Then came an unexpected offer from the Dole Corporation—an invitation to work as a plant pathologist on the southern coast of Thailand, complete with corporate luxuries by the beach.

The next morning, however, a call from the Swedish Baptists changed everything. They offered to support Mike if he would develop clean water projects in Thailand's hill country. *"That's how you start coffee,"* Mike says, *"with water!"*

Mike began installing gravity-fed water systems. Soon the village leaders asked for help with education, so he built schools. Then they asked for healthcare, and he helped establish clinics. Each time a new need arose, Mike said, *"We don't have the funding, but if people give, we'll do it."* And by faith, each project moved from vision to reality.

With clean water, education, and healthcare in place, the next step was income. Could coffee be the answer? Thai coffee had no global market. Mike and mission partners at the Integrated Tribal Development Foundation (ITDF) created Lanna Coffee, a retail company that buys coffee from hill tribe farmers at a fair price and delivers it straight to homes in the U.S. and Canada.

It was an ambitious project, but God had even bigger plans. When Starbucks opened its first store in Thailand, Mike sent ten samples of Thai coffee to the company—three were approved. Later, he invited the Starbucks Thailand Managing Director to visit one of their farms. The journey was grueling: dirt roads, pouring rain, and finally getting stuck in the mud. Mike watched in disbelief as the executive of one of the world's largest coffee companies climbed out to drag a winch up the hill.

Once they reached the village, clean and dry, the manager turned to Mike and said, *"This has been the best trip of my life. We're going to buy your coffee."*

Two years later, Starbucks customers were drinking Thai coffee called Muan Jai, meaning *"wholehearted happiness"* in the northern Thai dialect. Starbucks also began donating part of the profits to ITDF, supporting the construction of Christian schools and family farms that provide stable incomes and keep young tribal people from falling prey to human trafficking.

When asked how to solve global poverty in an innovative, sustainable way, Mike's answer is simple: *"Real sustainability comes from knowing Jesus Christ and having faith in Him — and good coffee."*

Providing hope to the hill Tribes of Northern Thailand.



American Baptist Women of Maine

THE POTENTIAL

abwmaine.org

Fall 2025

Linda Deane

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2025 Dates to Remember

- November 3 Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer
- December Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering
- December 25 Christmas

2026 Dates to Remember

- February 1 Potential Articles Due
- March 12 ABW Maine Board Meeting
- April 18 Spring Gathering time and place TBA
- June 1 Potential Articles Due

Check out: <https://abwmaine.org/#events>