



PENN-DEL TIPS

The official newsletter of the American Baptist Men of Pennsylvania and Delaware Winter, 2003 Issue

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President's Report

The American Baptist Men of Pennsylvania and Delaware held their 48th Annual Retreat on August 2-4, 2002, at Shippensburg University. We had nearly 300 men and boys at the retreat, representing 75 region churches. This included 72 first-time attendees and 22 pastors. The featured speaker was a pastor from our region, Rev. Cliff Johnson from Shiloh Baptist Church in Wilmington, Delaware.

Pastor Johnson inspired all those in attendance. He taught through the experiences of the prophet Jeremiah. While Jeremiah was a servant of the Lord, his prophecies often displeased the king. As a result, he was cast into a pit of mud and mire, where he could only stand, for if he fell asleep, he would fall into the mud and suffocate. Although the Lord allows us to suffer letdowns to teach us, He also provides uplifting experiences. In Jeremiah's case, that was literal, as an Ethiopian eunuch was allowed to lift him out of the mire. Pastor Johnson reminded us to never abuse others, for we may need them as Jeremiah needed the eunuch; we need to serve God by loving others and treating them well. No matter how severe the storm, he provides us a solid rock to stand on in Christ Jesus. This lesson is particularly timely when we look back upon all that has been lost since September 11, 2001. No matter the situation, our solid rock of Jesus will bring us through.

Things are never as dark as they seem. The God that has carried us through every struggle in our lives up to now will also carry us through all present and future struggles, if only we let Him. We need to engage in positive Biblical thinking, to be authentic, to laugh, to cry, and most of all, to give it all to Him in prayer.

In addition to Pastor Johnson, we were uplifted by powerful testimonies of men like Bob Sterling, Dr. J.K. Folmar and Tony Colari, special music provided by Jim and Wendy Allshouse, and the energy of Sean Tyneson and his praise and worship team. Special congratulations to our attendance award winners. Hatboro Baptist Church brought the most men and boys, Greater Zion of Harrisburg the most first-timers and Olive Branch won the small church award.

We encourage all men and boys of the region to make plans to attend next year's retreat. It will again be held at Shippensburg University on August 1-3, 2003. Our featured speaker should provide energy, excitement and a true spiritual experience. The speaker will be Tim Schwartz, who is the National Coordinator for American Baptist Boys and Young Men. We intend this as an outreach to our youth, and

an effort to make up for some of the problems we have had in recent years with scheduled youth leaders not attending the retreat. It should be a mountaintop experience.

Finally, as each of us goes forward in our daily lives, we should remember the many lessons of September 11, 2001. Heroes are not entertainers or athletes, they are the men and women next door who risk their lives for us and serve us every day in positions like police officers, firefighters and teachers. Safety comes not from arms of war, but from being in the arms of God. Security comes from placing our all on His solid rock, Jesus Christ, our Lord. May each of us dedicate our lives to Him, and in humble service, work to make the lives of others a little better.

Mark your calendars!

Don't miss the 2003 Men's Retreat to be held at Shippensburg University on August 1 – 3, 2003. We will have many exciting workshops as well as great music and speakers. Come for the fellowship! Come for the workshops! Come for the recreation! Most of all just come!

Register right away and bring a friend, son, father or brother.

Layman Of The Year Nominations

The nominations for Layman Of The Year will be closing April 15, 2003. You still have time to submit a nominee. If you do not have the form from the annual retreat program book, call Bob Swan at (215) 674-1935 or email him at swantown@aol.com for a copy of the application.

In Memorial

It is with deep regret that we have to report the passing of a devoted brother in Christ. Leon E. Langford went home to the Lord on January 2, 2003. "The life of those who are faithful to thee, Lord, is but changed, not ended." Leon was a past regional president of ABMOPAD 1978 - 1980. He was Layman of the year in 1982. Leon held many positions of leadership in his church, association and regional work.