



August 2, 2004  
Special Web Only Retreat Edition

# PENN-DEL TIPS

The official newsletter of the American Baptist Men of Pennsylvania and Delaware

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## Great to be on Retreat, but Great to Be Home

What a wonderful weekend! The weather was warm and wonderful, even with the Saturday afternoon rain. We hope that everyone arrived home safely and is ready to answer the call to ministry that God has issued to all of us.

Our Sunday got off to a great start with devotions, led by Mike Metzger. Mike spoke from Romans 8:12-25 and compared our parent/child relationships with the relationship that God has with us. God is our dad and we must honor him by putting off the things of the world and living as people filled with his spirit. Talk to our "Dad" today.

At our morning worship service, we were challenged by Mike to take something away with us from the retreat. He hoped that it would be knowledge, information, experience worthy of sharing and enthusiasm to build your men's fellowship – especially with your young men and boys. He prayed that this weekend has changed you, whether by music, testimony or through our keynote speaker's message.

We were blessed once again musically, with our men's choir singing a medley of "Breath on Me, Breath of God" and "Spirit of the Living God" and our Orchestra playing "Great is Thy Faithfulness" and "How Great Thou Art", followed by Tim Munson singing of the amazing love our father has for us and how we must offer ourselves as a living sacrifice. Special thanks to Derq Howlett for playing the piano again this year.

Rev. James Quinn's testimony was just superb. He told us of how he had never been to Sunday School until the age of 19 and only attended church on Christmas and Easter holidays. Then, in December of 1968, on a snowy Sunday morning, Jim got inspired to go to church. He couldn't wait for better weather – he had to answer that call. Once Jim found a church that was open, he attended the service that morning and came forward to accept Christ as his savior. God put a chain of events into motion that day and now Jim is the Pastor for Immanuel Baptist Church.

After two spectacular messages on Friday and again on Saturday, Dr. Trulear did not disappoint us for Sunday morning. He spoke from Nehemiah, chapter 1, about how Nehemiah had a good, steady government job working for the king. When Nehemiah came across some of the escapees from Jerusalem in exile and learned about the condition of the temple, his heart was broken. Dr. Trulear points out that a broken heart can be the start of ministry. Let God break your heart! He wants to show you all the bad stuff in the world, break your heart and get you fired up for ministry – just like he did with Nehemiah.

Nehemiah knew that there was no **Protection** in Jerusalem – because the walls were down and the gates were burned. He also knew that there was no **Provision** because the agriculture was in shambles. Nehemiah knew there was no **"Peoplehood"** – no sense of community because the walls that defined the once great city of Jerusalem were no longer in place. Finally, he knew that the **Politics** were corrupt.

All of this broke Nehemiah's heart – but at the same time, God gave him a vision. He saw the king, who granted him permission to go to Jerusalem and fix his community. He took the position God gave him and used it for God's glory. God strategically locates us in order to do his service. Wherever you are, God has put you there in order to do ministry.

Nehemiah organized the men, rather than trying to do it all by himself. If you're in ministry alone, you'll burn out. It is not good for man to be alone – everybody has something to offer.

When faced with multiple adversities in the rebuilding, Nehemiah fought back, by keeping on at the job at hand. When ordered to come down and "discuss" the issue, Nehemiah offers that the work he is doing is so great, that he cannot come down.

Dr. Trulear reminded us that Jesus did the same thing. When he was nailed to that cross, beaten and scorned, they dared him to come down. But the work he was doing was so great, he could not come down.

## 51<sup>st</sup> Retreat Planning is Underway!

The 51<sup>st</sup> annual retreat of ABMOPAD is scheduled for the first full weekend in August, 2005. That's on August 5, 6 and 7. The board of manager's wants to take this opportunity to invite each and every one of you to come to the 51<sup>st</sup> retreat and to bring a friend. God is calling us for such a time as this.

### Retreat Speakers for 2005 Retreat

Next year, we will be privileged to have two excellent speakers for our keynote addresses. We will have Rev. Dr. Z. Allen Abbot, who has served the American Baptist Churches of VT & NH since January 2003 as Executive Minister. He had previously been Executive Director of the American Baptist Men's Ministries at the ABC mission center in Valley Forge.

Dr. Abbot's ministry is one of leadership, prayer and interfacing faith with life in our contemporary context. He is motivated by Micah 6:8 and Romans 1:16. His favorite Bible character is Job and cites the ministry of Harry Emerson Fosdick as an inspiration. Dr. Abbot holds Ph.D. and M.Div degrees from Southern Seminary in Louisville with emphases on homiletics, counseling and practical theology. His bachelor's degree is from Northern Kentucky University.

Also with us will be Richard S. McPhee, Chaplain, LTC, USAF (Ret). Richard McPhee is currently Vice-President of Jason & Nordic Publishers, based in Hollidaysburg, PA. Jason & Nordic publishes the Turtle Book series for children with disabilities and their friends. The series is used in public, private and parochial schools, Head Start programs and by therapists and parents in the USA, Canada and throughout the world.

Mr. McPhee served as National executive Director of American Baptist Men USA between 1985 and 1994. His responsibilities included leader development, program planning and implementation and the development and production of a wide variety of video and print resources for the local church as well as regional and national Men's groups.

We look forward to hearing what these two fine men have to say to us from God's word!

### Upcoming events

Don't forget the ABCOPAD Biennial – October 15 – 17 in Erie, PA. For more information visit [www.abcopad.org](http://www.abcopad.org).

ABM Layman's Sunday – October 10, 2004. Have your men's group take a significant part in the Sunday services for this day.

## From the Editor

This newsletter is dated August 2, but to be honest, it's taken me a few weeks to get back to it. When I returned to work, there was so much to do and I hit the ground running with not much time to breathe for myself. There were family responsibilities and it was also the first of the month – the mortgage was due, along with other bills.

Full of excuses, aren't I? That seems to be a recurring theme. The demands of 21<sup>st</sup> century life in America are many. It seems as if we always have to be on the move. We could be working overtime to get a big project completed, taking kids to practices and rehearsals, going on family vacations or taking part in any other number of activities that demand our time. Are we too busy to do the Lord's work?

We are in a time of spiritual warfare. Satan attacks us on a daily basis with his temptations. He tempts us to take the easy route and avoid the Lord's work. There is always something else to do, whether it's more enjoyable or seemingly more important. I admit that it's always very tempting to turn off the alarm clock on a Sunday morning and sleep in (and I have done this on occasion).

Throughout the scriptures, the strongest warriors are the ones who would fall on their faces and empty their souls before God. They would ask for His help in defeating the enemy that is at hand. And do you know what? God always came through for them. There is a popular saying that goes, "God helps those who help themselves" but you won't find that in the scriptures. In truth, God helps those who know that they are helpless and yet they trust in God to deliver them through the trials. Being about the work of the Lord requires great conviction, even if it's just the conviction to "let go and let God".

I encourage each and every one of us to keep fighting the good fight against the evil one. I'm reminded of the verses about "putting on the whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:10-17) which is a very powerful passage. Do not forget verse 18 though, which reads "Do all this in prayer, asking for God's help. Pray on every occasion, as the Spirit leads. For this reason keep alert and never give up; pray always for all God's people."

We are called to be warriors - warriors doing the work of the Lord. No matter what Satan throws at us, we will prevail, because we are not in this alone. We have each other to assist us, but above all, we have the Lord Jesus Christ, who put his mark on us and said to Satan, "Hands off, these belong to me." Praise the name of Jesus!