



ABCOM Report 2025

If we were going to summarize our 93rd year of ministry at Baptist Park with just one word, that word would be BLESSED! Blessed with 110 campers! Blessed with dedicated volunteers and staff! Blessed with generous donors and friends!! Blessings have abounded throughout the year!

Baptist Park hosted a very well-attended Snowshoe Sunday in February. There were beans cooked over the fire, children and adults went sliding for hours, others cross country skied around the property, and others just mingled around the campfire. What a fun time in the off-season!! In April we held our spring banquet at the South Aroostook Agricultural Museum in Littleton with supporters gathering for a wonderful meal with lots of fellowship.

Our Vice-President Scott Ashby served as our summer program director for the second year. We had another year with limited staff numbers, but God provided extra volunteers on those days when there were 30+ Puddle Jumpers and Growing Up Adventure campers!

Baptist Park Staff had a float in the Mapleton Daze parade, the town's annual community festival. The Staff set up a Gaga Pit for the festival. Where's there's a Gaga Pit, there are kids!

Pastor Ray continued to maintain our bike fleet for our activity program. Through used bike donations, the Park partnered again with ACAP (The Aroostook County Action Program) to gift many quality used bikes to families in the County.

There was a 4th of July celebration with activities throughout the afternoon, a barbecue provided by our talented cooks, and a spectacular display of fireworks!

Sunday evening services were held weekly during July with an average of 78 people each week. Our ministers shared from the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit worked among all in attendance. Thanks to Ken Phelps, Jim Ackerson, Mike Ireland, and Ruth Ladner for their dedication and commitment to providing uplifting worship services for our community. Along with Shelli Good, these individuals also planned an uplifting Christian Life Conference on the topic of Influence with Todd Tillapaugh speaking.

We had three weeks of overnight camps--Maxed Out, Mountain Climbers, with Flight Camp and Outdoor Adventures. Many Mountain Climbers returned for a second session of camp by attending Maxed Out Adventure week! The Lord was working in their hearts, and to see their growth was heartwarming!

Baptist Park's Flight Camp returned again under the leadership of Pastor Jim Ackerson and pilot, Todd Sprague, with six campers in attendance. This year they took a plane ride into Red Pine in western Maine and landed in the "bush" like a mission aviation pilot might experience. Todd and Jim direct a first-class Flight Camp, as they find new aviation experiences each year to share with the campers, while focusing on serving the Lord through aviation.

Scott and Josh led Outdoor Adventure Week campers, as they learned fire building, outdoor cooking, whittling, tool box construction, etc. Jeff Robertson hosted the campers at his camp on Long Lake for a day of fishing, tubing, boating, swimming, and of course, a barbecue. Pastor Steve Straubel was the camp preacher, and he challenged each camper nightly. The campers were thirsty each night for the Word of God, and through Steve and the Holy Spirit, these campers' thirst for more knowledge was quenched with a desire for more!!!

Maxed Out and Mountain Climbers weeks were full of excitable and challenging campers with many having their first-time overnight camp experiences. They zipped, crafted, sang, swam, worshipped, and they loved their Bingo game nights! Martin Heald and Adrian Hagerstrom served as camp preachers.

Some of our favorite days are The Puddle Jumpers and Growing Up Adventure day camps. These children come wide-eyed and ready for fun!!! Day campers were taught by Melanie Duncan and Adrian Hagerstrom in the mornings, and their afternoons were jam packed full of activities, including the zip line, swimming, mini golf, games, and crafts. Erla Duncan and Sue Hagerstrom led the craft times. The Growing Up Adventure campers had one overnight at the end of season, and were they excited! We are so grateful to the families and church members, who faithfully transported the kids to camp.

Many pictures were uploaded to our Facebook pages depicting the many highlights of our summer. Looking through the pictures will remind you of how exciting Christian camping can be! You are encouraged to use our Facebook pages, Baptist Park of Mapleton, Maine or Baptist Park Flight Camp, to encourage families and churches to send their youth to camp next summer for a life changing now and forever experience!!

For a second year, Sue Hagerstrom led two paint and sip evenings with a devotional and snacks! The creativity and talent abounded in their works of art!

Thank you to Dr. Morningstar for being our camp physician, and huge kudos to our camp nurses: Doris Sherman, Sue Tardiff, Rebekah Littlefield, and EllaMae Blackmore. They keep our campers healthy medically speaking, but they chip in wherever needed and they guide our campers spiritually too!!!

It cannot go without sharing! My 11-year-old nephew let me how fortunate we are to have such great cooks in Mary and Kathy! It was a priceless conversation that I will cherish forever!!

Many have been mentioned throughout this report, but the camp counselors and CITs that give up their summer to minister at Baptist Park are the heart and soul! Aza, Elizabeth, Aurora, Emily, Joe, Ben, Dues, James, Elijah, and Seven!

We appreciate everyone who has served this summer in any capacity at camp from our cook staff, health supervisors, volunteers, board members and their spouses, counselors, directors, preachers, and the list goes on and on. God has BLESSED us with very talented, compassionate, and God-honoring individuals!

Buildings and Grounds –

Those individuals never sat idle under the leadership of Vice-President, Scott Ashby! As Scott plans for improvements and repairs to the facility, he's always seeking ways to make it easier to maintain! Even though Steve returned to full-time employment, he still dedicated his Mondays throughout the summer and fall to Baptist Park. Scott hired a young James McLean, and he was eager to please! He was willing and able to assist with grounds, activities, and cleaning...whatever was needed. Pastor Ken Phelps continued with mowing, while others came along to assist Scott with the many other facility needs.

The Raise the Roof Campaign throughout the winter and spring provided the funding to put metal roofs on the remaining buildings: Prayer Chapel, the Recycling Garage, the Window Storage Shed, the Candy Shack, and Bee Inn, along with installing metal siding to the Stage portion of the Tabernacle.

The Tabernacle stage had a stage facelift, inside and out. We took out down the old beige and black cloth walls and replaced them with pine board walls! What an updated backdrop for the Goupille wedding held in May! Those old tree stumps were removed and the ground leveled due to the blessing of the use of a backhoe!

This year we had one SOWER (Servants On Wheels Ever Ready) couple, and they were tasked with renovating a well-aged gazebo that had been donated to the Park. The gazebo arrived early in the summer, and we wondered all summer if it was worth the energy exerted in transporting it to the Park and then restoring it. The transformation by the SOWERS was incredible! It will be a blessing for much needed shade at Baptist Park.

After last year's pool renovation, opening and maintaining the pool was more joyful than it has ever been! The furnace provided some headaches, but nothing that Dan Ferris couldn't fix. Pool vacuuming was a breeze for Kelly, Columbia Forest Products donated wood, the Boys brigade split it, and life was good at the pool!

The Park now has a "Green Monster" score board, complete with the gospel message, for our ball field thanks to the efforts of our baseball loving Duncan fans with some encouragement from those Ireland and Beaulieu baseball players! We hope that church groups will utilize the field for some good Christian competition games of softball, baseball, or whiffle ball. They'll be welcomed by the new entrance signs, too!

It has been a goal to renovate the girls' bathroom lodge for some time, but other needs kept taking priority. The Maine Department of Health and Human Services updated the Rules and Regulations for youth camps this year, and they now require provide private shower changing areas. Scott, Steve, Kevin, Stacy, and other volunteers have been working hard this fall. Much work will need completion in the spring, but the female campers will be some excited next summer when they see the changes! They've been a little jealous of the boys' area for the past few years!

Finances – As camp costs and needs were quickly draining the bank account and our program had just begun, we were praying that God would meet our needs, so our staff and vendors would be paid. Our Treasurer, Mike Ireland, remained calm, but was praying to God for answers! There was a donation to supplement payroll for our camp counselors! A donor suggested that a Red Alert campaign be held, and did God ever meet our needs! Remember that word BLESSED! We had a matching campaign of \$10,000, which was met...which then triggered another matching campaign to raise the funds for a new zero turn mower. That campaign was funded! We received multiple generous donations to fund our girls shower area renovation. Then we had a recently retired businessman that educated us on the need to set up a brokerage account, so we can accept gifts of stock as a tax-deductible donation. Should God lay on your heart to donate stock, donors should contact our Treasurer, Mike Ireland, for information to complete that type of transaction. Then we have received another donation that will provide funding for our new siding of the girls' dorm and lodge. So needless to say, God has provided abundantly for our ministry this year through his faithful servants. Baptist Park has paid all of its bills for this year's camping season. Tuition and scholarship donations have also allowed us to share the gospel, disciple our staff and campers, and provide much fun fellowship! Thank you, thank you!

Memorial Honor – God welcomed our faithful servant, Gilbert Hitchcock, into his loving arms on September 23, 2025. Gilbert served at the Park for well over 40 years! His service and dedication was all for the glory of God! He loved sharing his testimony and "communicating" with his brothers and sisters in Christ! We are sure that he heard the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

Prayer Requests – Pray for our leadership as we work on expanding our program; Pray for our staffing needs—teachers, preachers, maintenance, kitchen staff, and health supervisors. Pray for our campers—new and old. Pray for solid, Christ-centered counselors!

In His Service,
Annette "Pokey" Bartlett
Baptist Park President