



September 15, 2006

# The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

A Newsletter of the American Baptist Churches in the Rocky Mountain Region

## ABCRM and True Light Baptist Church Teamed Up for a Weekend of Worship Without Walls – So...What Was It Like?

I asked a group of about 50 volunteers who were debriefing the recent Weekend of Worship Without Walls, “If you could describe the event as an animal, what would it be? If it were a fruit, what would it taste like? If it were a style of music, what would it sound like?” Seventeen year-old Keera Dailey replied, “For me, it was like watching a lion eating a strawberry while listening to World Music.” Wow! She continued, “The event definitely got the attention of the community, was sweet in its fragrance and taste, and embraced people from different races.”

The event, held on the grounds of True Light Baptist Church August 17- 19 was the first of its kind for the church. Organized as an evangelism tool, the weekend presented many opportunities to reach youth, families, and the community.

ABCRM played a vital role in helping to present the weekend, which kicked-off with a *Christian 'Light' Club* targeting high school and college age kids from the community. More than 300 attendees flooded the church sanctuary late Friday evening and celebrated the multi-cultural offerings of their peers who presented gifts of song,

dance, poetry, and rap. Now, I'm not sure what words kids of this generation are currently using to describe something that is *acceptable* or *cool*. However, I'm going to step out and assume that comments I received from a number of the kids that night—*hot*, *slammin'* and *tight* are the equivalent.

Saturday's clouds served no purpose other than to keep the eyes of the event organizers looking to the Lord and to provide a cool breeze for the folks attending *Gospel on the Green*. Thirty-seven vendors with everything from world juices to the best hot sauce you can find on this side of the mountain pitched their tents. There was lots of laughter from children climbing the inflatable slide, flaunting their face paintings, playing games, and enjoying free pony rides.

The CSI Tent took center stage in the layout of the grounds. This was the Christ Scene Investigation location—the place where we looked for evidence of Jesus in the lives of our church and community members.

A 32-foot stage served as a dynamic backdrop for the event, as well as a platform to provide

visibility for the newest ABCRM church. Pastor Oscar Lopez and the worship team from *Ministerio Internacional Palabra de Fe* (Word of Faith International Mission) brought a South American flare to our event that day. After such a long weekend, you might have thought people would have been sluggish in the Sunday worship service. But we experienced quite the opposite. The atmosphere was charged with shouts of praise and hearts united in great gratitude to God for what we had witnessed.

As we wrapped up our debriefing session and reflected on all that we had witnessed over the course of those three days, we sensed that God is calling our church to have a greater impact on not only the Montbello community, but on this Region as well. God's faithfulness, the generous support of ABCRM, along with that of more than 50 area businesses, have given us new courage and a greater sense of boldness needed to do our part in spreading the Gospel through non-traditional forms of evangelism.

*Submitted by Benita Edwards, the minister of music at True Light Baptist Church who cast the vision for the Weekend of Worship Without Walls.*

# Ministerio Internacional Palabra de Fe Uses G12 Model to Grow Disciples

In five months' time, *Ministerio Internacional Palabra de Fe* (Word of Faith International Mission), our new church plant in Aurora, CO, has 35 members, with Sunday evening attendance reaching 80 in July. The church expects to baptize 10 more people soon.

Still in its seedling stage, the church was begun on April 7, 2006. "I was moved by God to start the new church plant, because I felt he sent me for a ministry such as this. Whereas other ministries' works are built upon foundations laid by others, I work where no one has built before," church planter Oscar Lopez said. And work, he does!

Lopez preaches on a local radio station four mornings a week. Two church services are held each week on Sunday and Wednesday nights. Between 60 and 70 people came on Wednesday nights in July. On Tuesday nights, English classes are held and taught by Vianey Lopez. Before the evening service on Wednesdays, a children's dance class meets. On Monday and Friday evenings, the music team practices for the Wednesday and Sunday services. The church also has started a food bank that reaches out to about 25 people. On Thursday and Friday evenings, home cell groups gather, as part of the church planter's G12 strategy.

Maximizing the G12 (Government 12) model, the church planter ideally gathers 12 people, and disciples and leads them for one year. After this time, group members go out and begin their own groups of 12 people each. By the second year, poten-

tially more than 144 people or couples will be gathered in cell groups. In addition to small group meetings, groups schedule a regular meeting time for the entire cell church to get together.

According to Lopez and other church planters, the G12 model provides a better opportunity for people to find new life in Christ, to be disciplined, and for families to be cared for spiritually. Lopez believes that rather than simply being a method, G12 is a God-given vision: "It has given me the tools I need to win people for Christ," said Lopez. "I have witnessed many brothers and sisters moved from being believers whose faith did not bear fruit to faith that is characterized by an abundance of fruit. Pray for us as we grow leaders."

During their birth month of April, the church averaged 15 people. In May the number rose to 30. June saw an average of 50 attendees, with 60 being the norm in July. Their goal is to average 80 people. On August 23-25, they held a special crusade, hoping to average at least 200 people every night.



They reached their goal with 93 on the first night, 206 the second, and 310 on the final night.

Their weekly offering have risen from \$97 in mid-May to \$663 at the end of July. They have averaged \$332 a week during that period.

Aurora Community Baptist Church partners with and provides the facility for the church plant, under the leadership from interim pastor, Anne Dondapati Allen, and the church moderator, Bill Warren. According to John Pipe, chair of the Support Committee working with Oscar and Vianey, "The enthusiasm for this new ministry by the remaining members of Aurora Community Baptist Church is exciting. Leaders of both churches are working on a new constitution that will blend both congregations and move toward eventual take over of the property and ministry of the church."



*(This article was written with information supplied by John Pipe and includes excerpts from the National Ministries website.)*

## The Christian Leader's Role in Building an Enduring Moral Order

During a conversation with my Muslim doctor some 10 years ago, he remarked that the West will not be defeated by external forces but will start to decay from within because of its declining morals. I did not take his remarks seriously at that time. Now I am beginning to agree with him. The weakening of our central convictions and principles as far as family and morality are concerned is very evident in our society. The teachings of the Church on the family are also being discredited by our society. We hear constantly from voices within this society that the biblical view of morality is primitive and thus out-dated.

Now, more than ever before, the Christian leader is called to re-discover the foundation for an enduring moral order. I want to suggest that the ancient wisdom found in the Ten Commandments be re-examined, preached, and taught in our congregations. Each of the commandments can be greatly expanded; each can—and should be—stated in positive rather than negative form. When this is done, what we have is not an outworn set of specific prohibitions, but positive principles of such a nature that a good society cannot be constructed or reconstructed without reference to them.

As Christian leaders seeking to build an enduring moral order, we must start the process in our own homes. More specifically, we need to build a strong husband/wife relationship. How we live serves as a testimony to our extended family, our church, our colleagues and to the society in which we live. Sometimes the

position, power, and prestige that come with being a leader can make one highly vulnerable to the way of the world. Every effort should be put into cultivating a consistent relationship with one's spouse. This is an area where Christian leaders are constantly attacked. May I suggest that one's love for one's spouse must be a covenant love. Covenant love is not just interpersonal affection. It is, rather, loyalty, service, and obedience. The Letter to the Ephesians specifies that it is that kind of love that is required in a Christian marriage.

The Christian leader is in a position of great influence. He/she must turn the tide toward a more moral society. The truth is that in our task of rebuilding a shattered civilization, the ancient moral laws, as well as the New Testament teachings, come to us again with startling relevance. While they do not provide the superstructure, they do provide the foundation, and it is the foundation which we must build first if an enduring moral order is to exist. A leader must give greater meaning and precise application to the biblical texts on morality. May God grant us the strength and the conviction to do this.



*Rodney Ragwan,  
Global Mission Partnership  
Specialist and Doctoral Student  
at Palmer Theological Seminary  
in Philadelphia*

## Pastors Want to Know... Where Are Your College Students?

Where are your college students? If you have a student from your church attending a college or university in a town/city where there is another American Baptist church, did you communicate with the local pastor to let him/her know?

Please help your sister churches support your students who are away from home by giving local pastors the name and contact information of your student(s). The address of each church and pastor may be found on the ABCRM website at [http://www.abcrm.org/pastors/senior\\_pastors.htm](http://www.abcrm.org/pastors/senior_pastors.htm).

## ABCOPAD Re-Opens Executive Search

American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware (ABCOPAD) has re-opened their search for applicants for the position of Executive Minister. The Region is particularly interested in someone with skills in communication, interpreting the faith, mission promotion, and personnel supervision. The Region is comprised of 322 churches in 21 associations with approximately 48,500 members.

For a more detailed job description, please consult the Region's website at <http://www.abcopad.org>.

If interested, please send a letter of intent and current ABPS profile by October 16, 2006, to Jenn Smith at 2001 Paxton St., Harrisburg, PA 17111-1093.

## Harvey Park Mission Team Ministers in Cambodia

During the past four years, mission teams from Harvey Park Baptist Church in Denver, CO have gone on three short-term mission trips to Cambodia. The 2006 team numbered 17 people.

Their focus this year was to minister to 30 children in Phnom Penh who live at the Asian Hope Orphanage. In addition, some members of the team went on to the village of Mesang, to work alongside AB missionaries, John, Debbie, Micah, and Jesse Coats.

The Asian Hope ministry was started about eight years ago by Steve and Jill Fisk. They had a heart to minister to the many children they met in the streets of Phnom Penh. As a result, 30 Cambodian children, ranging from age eight to 23, now live under one roof.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Fisks had to leave Cambodia. Their departure was very hard on the children. It was the hope of Harvey Park's Mission Team that their visit would encourage the children and reassure them of God's love.



Village children who attended the children's ministry program.

Team members spent individual time with each of the children in the orphanage. They also went on some outings together. In the evenings they shared together in a time of devotion and prayer. Pastor Kevin Lowe remarks, "It was especially gratifying for me to see my own four children have fun and develop relationships with these Cambodian children. These relationships now continue by e-mail."

Pastor Lowe further reflects,

"These children have experienced real heartbreak in their lives. Their stories are unbelievable. We don't always realize how difficult life is in a war torn country. I am so thankful and blessed that God

would allow us to come alongside them in this recent time of pain to love them in the name of Jesus and share our lives with them. I am pleased to see the goodness of God and to witness God's protection over these young lives. They are special children, and they desire to share the love of Jesus throughout Cambodia." In a country where less than three percent of the population has accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior, these 30 children are on fire for the Lord.

Part of the mission team then took a trip to visit the Coats in the village of Mesang located 40 miles from the Vietnam border. Kevin and Martha Lee Lowe have been in contact with John and Debbie Coats for over nine years. This was their third on-site visit.

The Coats asked the Lowes to present biblical teachings on the Christian life and on marriage to the local church leaders. It was to be the first time anything of this nature



Stefan Lowe with children from Asian Hope Orphanage



**Mesang team, three interpreters, and the Coats family.**

occurred in that area of Cambodia. The local government authorities waited until just days before the team's arrival to approve the meetings.

The team first spoke in the village of Taibang where just over 100 people attended the seminars. Kevin recalls, "One of the church leaders was a little aloof at first, but by the end of the day he was very excited and even invited us to his home to visit. When we visited, he asked if we would return again next year to teach. Praise the Lord! God is so faithful."

Another unexpected result was that all the male leaders went to the second village to help prepare the food for the group so their wives could rest. This is very unusual in their culture, of course. However, having been exposed to the biblical teaching of serving one another, they were convicted by the Holy Spirit to act on what they had heard and respond by serving.

The second teaching location was in the village of Serot where over 150 people attended. Among the attendees was the regional government

official who is a Buddhist. Of the nearly 100 women in the audience, 75 had never been to a church meeting and were hearing the gospel and biblical teaching for the first time.



**Women who attended the seminars.**

In summary, Kevin states, "We experienced God's grace and enjoyed meeting brother's and sisters in the family of our God and encouraging them to grow in faith."

If you would like to hear more about this trip, contact Pastor Lowe at (303) 936-1001, or by e-mail at [kmlowe@juno.com](mailto:kmlowe@juno.com).

## **A Call to Prayer . . . from Sarah and Dan Chetti AB missionaries in Lebanon**

The war between Hezbollah and Israel is over, and there is an uneasy peace. **Please pray** that peace as the only true option will take root in the minds of Israeli and Hezbollah leadership. With God, nothing is impossible!

**Pray** for the thousands of refugees returning to their homes, some damaged and many totally destroyed. **Pray** for those who lost loved ones in the war and those who are maimed.

**Please pray** for their daughter, Rachel, who is separated from them and living with her aunt in Oregon. She is distraught at having her best friends scattered all over the world and the prospect that she may not be able to study with them again. Support the Chettis as they make tough decisions about Rachel's final year of high school—the United States or Lebanon?

## **Free Organ**



Harvey Park Baptist Church in Denver, CO has a Conn organ which they no longer need. They are wanting to give the organ to an ABCRM church in need of such an instrument. The only requirement is that the recipients make arrangements to pick up the organ at Harvey Park. For more information or to make arrangements for pick-up, please contact Vernon Selby, member of the Board of Trustees. He may be reached at [vbmaselby@comcast.net](mailto:vbmaselby@comcast.net) or by calling (303) 933-0474.

## Address Change for Dan and Estela Schweissing

When using the U.S. Postal Service to communicate with the Schweissings, please use the address which appears below. Note that this is a new address. They are now utilizing a courier service that forwards their mail from Fort Lauderdale to Nassau, allowing them to receive things faster than by using the international postal service. Please send letters only—no packages.

Rev. and Mrs. Daniel M. Schweissing  
1811 NW 51st St. PMB 2905  
Hanger 42-D  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309

### Hard Copy Newsletter Now Available

Gary Thompson, the communications coordinator for the Schweissing's MPT, will be sending out hard copy versions of their newsletter to those who do not have regular or reliable e-mail access. Anyone needing a hard copy version of the Schweissing's newsletter should submit the mailing address to [gary@haitianministries.net](mailto:gary@haitianministries.net) or call Gary at (720) 872-1839. In order to minimize the costs of printing and postage, Dan and Estela ask that interested persons sign up for the snail mail version of the newsletter *only* if they are not able to receive it electronically.

## From Brazil to Casper in One Giant Step

John and Luann Marshall along with their teenage children, Joanne, Philip, and Seth took a giant step from 10 years of mission service in São Paulo, Brazil, to pastoral ministry at First Baptist Church in Casper, WY. John began his work as pastor on July 15.

As a career missionary, John recruited, trained, and mobilized core leadership for a new Purpose Driven Church that grew from a strategic vision to a functioning body. He worked with university students, having started over 60 evangelistic Bible study groups on campuses in Brazil. In his work with students, he also developed and implemented conferences in the areas of evangelism and discipleship in which 1500 students participated. In addition, he coordinated over 45 volunteer mission teams from the United States, involving 1000+ individuals.

In choosing to leave the Brazilian mission to assume a local church pastorate, John said he was seeking a contemporary church where he could fulfill his passion to connect others to Christ. He also has a passion for learning which he combines with a strong sense of creativity.

He holds a Master of Divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY, with an emphasis on pastoral care, counseling, and theology. He is a candidate for a Doctorate of Religious Studies from Trinity Theological Seminary in Evansville, IN, in which he is focusing on conflict management.

The congregation at First Baptist Church in Casper is pleased to have the Marshall family among them. We are pleased to welcome them to the ABCRM family as well.

## Wyoming Association of Churches Annual Symposium Will Focus on Peace Making

The Wyoming Association of Churches will hold its annual symposium on October 27-28 in Laramie, WY. The theme is *Roots of Violence/Seeds of Peace*.

Speakers include the following:

- **Garth Massey**, Director of International Studies, University of Wyoming (UW) speaking on "Growing Democracy: A Double-Edged Plowshare."
- **Paul Quang Duongtran**, Assistant Professor Social Work, UW. His topic is "In War, the Innocents Don't Have a Vote."
- **Rodger McDaniel**, Director of the Wyoming Department of Family

Service, will present "Maslow, Micah, and Ministry."

• **Jennifer Watrin**, Executive Director of the Wyoming Coalition against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will also make a presentation.

Peace Making Workshops will also be offered on Saturday morning.

The event begins at 5:00 p.m. on Friday with dinner/banquet and closes with worship at noon on Saturday.

Watch for additional information and registration materials.

## FBC of Fort Morgan to Celebrate 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

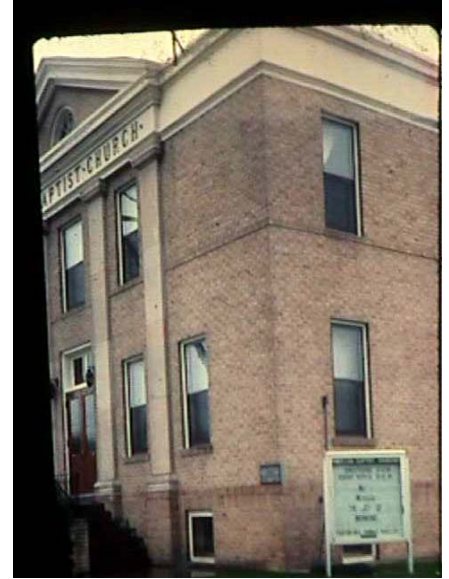
First Baptist Church of Fort Morgan, CO and Pastor Tom Wheeler invite you to their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, "A Taste of Heaven: 100 Years of Sharing." Special events will be held throughout the weekend of October 6-8, 2006.

Friday evening has been dubbed "Movie Nite" with presentations of interest to both children and adults. Memories and light refreshments will be shared.

On Saturday, October 7, participants will have the opportunity to join in an

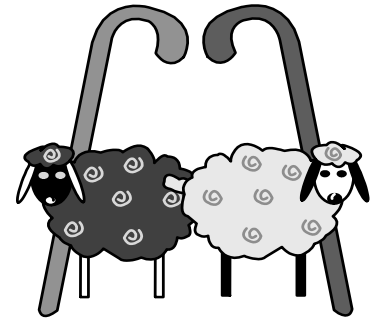
"Old Time Car Tour" of local historic places at 1:00 p.m. The Cornerstone Ceremony will take place at 3:00 p.m. followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Chili Cook-Off and Soup Supper. There will also be games from the past and present. The "Hearts of Worship" trio will close the evening with a concert.

Sunday's church school activities begin at 9:00 a.m. The 10:15 service of worship will feature guest speakers. "A Taste of Heaven" will be evident during the potluck lunch following worship.



## First Baptist of Rock Springs Installs Shepherd

On Sunday, September 10, Lori Dvirnak Lundblad was installed as the pastor of First Baptist Church in Rock Springs, WY. Wayne Dvirnak, Ministry and Mission Coach for Wyoming and Northern Front Range Cluster, brought the installation message. He challenged the pastor and people to move forward in bold decisive ways as they discern the direction of their ministry together.



After the installation, Pastor Lori served communion. While this was the second Sunday of the month, the church board had decided that they wanted to celebrate communion together under Lori's leadership, making it her first official act upon installation.

Deb Adkinson delivered the children's story in which she spoke of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. She explained that Jesus had asked Lori to help "shepherd" their church. Each child was given a shepherd's staff as a reminder of the lesson.

During the service, Lori and her husband, Marty also dedicated their two sons, Micah and Benjamin. The church family committed themselves to help raise Micah and Benjamin in the ways of God. Lori is a bi-vocational pastor; her additional vocation is "shepherding" their two young sons.

At the close of the service, Pastor Lori was presented with a new Bible from the congregation. A dinner in her honor followed.



## Visit the ABCRM 2006 Gathering Webpage!

[http://www.abcrm.org/annual\\_gathering.htm](http://www.abcrm.org/annual_gathering.htm)

**The 2006 Gathering is next month — October 19-21!**

You can access information about the Gathering on the ABCRM website. On the Gathering page, you'll find links to the following topics:

- New Hope Baptist Church of Denver to Host 2006 ABCRM Gathering
- "Got Water?" Is the 2006 Theme for the ABCRM Gathering
- J. Alfred Smith, Sr. Will Be Keynoter at 2006 Annual Gathering and Clergy/Spouses Event
- 2006 ABCRM Gathering Schedule 2006
- Discovery Session Information
- Clergy and Spouses Pre-Gathering Event
- Online Registration Form for 2006 Annual Gathering and Clergy/Spouses Pre-Gathering Event
- Download documents in preparation for the Business Sessions

Remember, registration is now available online!



### *The Rocky Mountain American Baptist*

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**Our mission is to partner with congregations and leaders to discover their passion and realize their mission to reach the world with the love of Jesus Christ.**

Discover your **PASSION**  
Realize your **MISSION**

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