



November 30, 2006

The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

...for all people interested in their Baptist family tree!

ABCRM Training Academy Offers AB History and Polity Course

On January 12-14, 2007, an American Baptist History and Polity Course will be offered. The primary instructor is Slayden Yarbrough, retired Professor Emeritus of Religion, Oklahoma Baptist University. Slayden also served as Executive Director of the Historical Commission (SBC), and Executive Director of the Southern Baptist Historical Society. Slayden is a prolific writer of both books and articles. He is a gifted lecturer and a well-rounded educator who brings his contagious energy and sense of humor with him into the classroom. He is a member of First Baptist Church in Denver. Slayden will be assisted by ABCRM staffpersons, Wayne and Ingrid Dvirnak, who will lead a session devoted specifically to American Baptist polity.

The course will commence at noon on Friday, January 12. The cost is \$200.00 which includes housing and meals. If housing is not needed, the cost is \$100.00. Sessions will be held at the Region Office, 6855 S. Havana Street, Ste. 220, Centennial, CO. Housing will be available at Candlewood Suites, located directly across from the Region Office. Each participant will be provided with a private room with kitchenette. Check-in on Friday will be following the first class (not before lunch). Lunches will be served at the course site with the exception of dinner on Saturday which will be on your own. Registration deadline is January 3, 2007.

In order to take this course, you must have read the book, *Down by the Riverside* by Everett Goodwin. Since its publication in 2002, *Down by the Riverside* has gained respect as the perfect resource for those who are new to Baptist church life; yet even lifelong Baptists have found the book's content and analysis to be both fresh and significant. You may order the text online at <http://www.judsonpress.com>.

This course is sponsored by the ABCRM Ministerial Leadership Committee (formerly the Department of Ministry). Information has been mailed to your church. General questions may be addressed to Thai in the Region Office: tsmith@abcrm.org or call (303) 988-3900.

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REMEMBER with LOVE GIVE with GRATITUDE

When Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast in August 2005, Pastor Thom Black, age 80, and his wife Doris, 75, lost their home in Slidell, Louisiana. All that remained were the few things—documents, medications, photographs, a few clothes and Thom’s motorized scooter and walker—they had packed in their station wagon before escaping to their son’s home in Foxworth, MS.

“When we left, we thought we would be back in a few days, little realizing we would not see our home again,” the couple wrote in their Christmas letter to family and friends. “Katrina was very unkind to us.”

Thom, along with more than 3,000 retired American Baptist ministers, missionaries, and widowed spouses, received a Thank You check in the fall of 2005. His check went to a new address in Ohio, where the Blacks had relocated to be near their three daughters. Thom and Doris sent the following note to American Baptist congregations:

“We received our Thank You check with gratitude following our great loss. Any gift we received was a blessing to us. We appreciate everyone who gives to this offering every year—it helps and blesses in many different ways.”

Thank You checks, as well as emergency financial assistance, are made possible by the contributions of American Baptist congregations to the annual Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (RMMO).

Last year the following ABCRM churches gave \$600 or more to the RMMO:

- Calvary Baptist Church, Denver, CO
- First Baptist Church, Grand Junction, CO
- Highland Park Baptist Church, Co. Spr, CO
- Harvey Park Baptist Church, Denver, CO
- First Baptist Church, Cortez, CO
- First Baptist Church, Lamar, CO
- First Baptist Church, Pueblo, CO
- First Baptist Church, Boulder, CO
- American Baptist Church, Fort Collins, CO
- Lake Avenue Baptist Church, Pueblo, CO
- First Baptist Church, Colorado Springs, CO
- First Baptist Church, Denver, CO
- First Baptist Church, Longmont, CO
- First Baptist Church, Sterling, CO
- First Baptist Church, Lusk, WY
- First Baptist Church, Lander, WY
- Aurora Hills Baptist Church, Aurora, CO
- First Baptist Church, Greybull, WY
- Berkeley Baptist Church, Denver, CO

If your church is not listed above, it can be next year.

Please give generously.

ACUÉRDENSE con AMOR DEN con GRATITUD

Devotional Writers Sought for 2007

We have been pleased to provide a weekly devotional on the ABCRM website throughout 2006. You may recall that this project began last year during Advent when we sent out a blanket invitation to Region pastors to share their Advent devotionals with us. We received a sufficient number of responses to enable us to provide a weekly devotional through-

out Advent in 2005. Early in 2006, we again invited all pastors to consider sending us their inspirational ideas. Later, we widened the invitation to include retired pastors as well. Eventually, the project was opened to the entire ABCRM family. You have enjoyed the contributions of both lay and clergy writers. If you have not been contacted but are

willing to submit a devotional for this purpose, please contact idvirnak@abcr.org. We'll follow up with guidelines and a schedule.

We are now receiving contributions for January. Give your sisters and brothers a glimpse into your spiritual journey as you discover your passion and realize your mission.

Laramie Church Observes Bible Sunday

November 19 was designated as Bible Sunday on the American Baptist calendar. It was also Thanksgiving Sunday. How do you squeeze everything into one worship service?

Mary Beth Mankin, pastor of FBC/Laramie chose to focus the children's conversation on the Bible as God's word. When children of this congregation enter third grade, they are given a Bible from their church family. It seems the same thing was done in Mary Beth's church when she was a child. She told the children in Laramie that when she got her Bible, she thought it was so special, she was hesitant to open it. She encouraged the children receiving their Bibles to use them and mark verses that are meaningful to them.

Those receiving their Bibles this year were: Ashlee Morehouse, Cody Rose, and Karina Kelson, a fourth grader who was unable to receive her Bible in 2005. All were joined by their parents and members of the Board of Christian Education during the presentation.



Ashlee Morehouse

**Use Bible Sunday
to celebrate the Bible's
impact on people's lives.**

**Bible Sunday
may be
observed on any Sunday
during the year.**

**Visit
<http://www.biblesunday.org>
for information
and resources.**

***"God's Word is a lamp to my
feet and a light to my path."***



Cody Rose



Karina Kelson

Aurora Hills Baptist Church Impacts Community

The youth of the Aurora Hills Baptist Church recently showed their respect and gave encouragement to 15 households by delivering fruit baskets. In addition, people of the church delivered eight full Thanksgiving boxes to people "in the church" and "outside the church."

The congregation is also planning to help several families have a better Christmas through their "Adopt a Family" program. They will collect gifts to be given to families who have needs.

Jim Simon, pastor, says, "I am sure many of our sister churches are doing similar projects to make this year a memorable one for those who are less fortunate. It might be interesting to see the number of families helped by ABCRM churches during Thanksgiving and Christmas."

A Challenge for You!

So here's your challenge! If you will notify Ingrid Dvirnak, ABCRM Newsletter Editor by e-mail (idvirnak@abcrm.org) of the total number of families your church touches in this way during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons, we'll print your church's name, a brief description of the outreach activity, and the total number of families reached in the next issue of *RMAB*.

The due date for the data is
December 10.

Christmas Events Around Our Region

At our invitation, pastors shared information about upcoming events in their place of ministry during this Christmas season. You are invited to visit a church near you to experience the joy of Christmas with your ABCRM sisters and brothers.

Ecumenical Church Annual Christmas Pageant

Thursday - Saturday, December 21-23 at 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
Tickets are Free! Call 719-547-3088
434 S. Conquistador Dr.
Pueblo West, CO 81007
Jay Shannon, Pastor

Calvary Baptist Church Festival of Lights

Sunday, December 17 at 7:00 p.m.
What could be better than fine choral and instrumental music performed with a backdrop of candlelight? Bring a guest and stay for refreshments in fellowship hall, with the brass ensemble playing.
6500 E. Girard Avenue
Denver, CO 80224
Bruce Greer, Pastor

First Baptist Church of Cañon City Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sunday, December 24 at 7:00 p.m.
Also, a Special Outreach Christmas Worship Service will be held on December 17 at 10:00 a.m.
107 North 7th
Cañon City, CO 81212
Scott Simpson, Pastor



Aurora Hills Baptist Church Dinner/Drama: "A Beastly Christmas"

December 15, 2006 at 6:30 pm.
The catered meal features table hosts who decorate and set the tables with their own china, crystal, and flat ware. The drama includes a children's choir in simple costumes singing the song "The Friendly Beasts."
12800 E. Alameda Avenue,
Aurora, CO 80112
Jim Simon, Pastor

First Baptist Church of Longmont Christmas Cantata and Service of Worship

Sunday, December 24 at 10:30 a.m.
The cantata to be presented is titled, "He is the Light of the World."
Also a Christmas Eve Candlelight and Drama Service will be held at 5:00 p.m..
701 Kimbark Street,
Longmont, CO 80501
Tod Shook, Pastor

True Light Baptist Church "A Not So Silent Night"

Buckle up for "A Not So Silent Night" on Sunday, December 10, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. "A Not So Silent Night" will feature the True Light Baptist Church choirs along with Yeshua's Dance Ministry and an array of guest vocalists and musicians from area churches. Come and bring a friend to this worship experience that is sure to lift your spirits.
14333 Bolling Drive
Denver, CO 80239
William Golson, Pastor

First Baptist Church of Delta Cantata, Children's Program, and Candlelight Service

On Sunday, December 3 at 6:00 p.m., the Chapel of Hope singers will perform their Christmas Cantata. This is the men's choir and volunteer chaplains from the local prison facility. On Sunday, December 10 at 6:00 p.m. the children will present their Christmas program, "Jingle Bells." A Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 24.
1250 Pioneer Road
Delta, CO
James Conley, Pastor

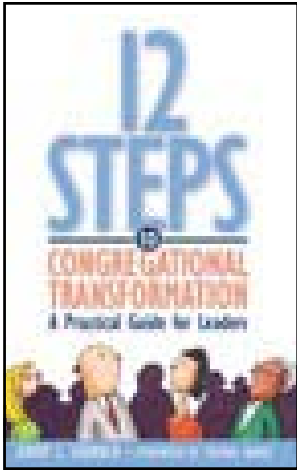


Aurora Community Baptist Church and Palabra de Fé Bilingual Christmas Eve Service

Looking for a cross-cultural experience on Christmas Eve? The English-speaking congregation of Aurora Community Baptist Church and the Spanish-speaking congregation of Palabra de Fé (meeting at A.C.B.C.) will hold a combined bilingual Christmas Eve Service at 11:00 p.m. on December 24.
11430 East 19th Avenue
Aurora, CO 80010
Anne Dondapati, Pastor
A.C.B.C.
Oscar López, Pastor
Palabra de Fé

New Resource on Congregational Transformation Available from Judson Press

David Laubach, associate executive director for Program Ministries, National Ministries, ABCUSA, recently released his first book, *12 Steps to Congregational Transformation: A Practical Guide for Leaders*. Having devoted much of his life's work to evangelism, renewal, and transformation, Laubach's resource is a practical handbook that walks church leaders through the process of transformation.



In *12 Steps to Congregational Transformation*, Laubach identifies primary principles and top priorities for churches seeking not only the right answers, but the right questions to ask as they begin the journey. He offers 12 direct and clear steps, each of which includes a biblical reference and commentary that illuminate the topic.

Chapters include light-hearted cartoons, inspiring anecdotes, and personal illustrations, making the book accessible, while questions for reflection and recommended action steps provide clear direction.

In addition to his work with National Ministries, Laubach serves as chair of the Church Renewal Workgroup of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) and as a member of its Evangelism and Education executive committee. He holds a D.Min. from Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, an M.Th. from Princeton Theological Seminary, and an M.Div. from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

12 Steps to Congregational Transformation, which retails for \$12.00, may be ordered from Judson Press at 800-458-3766 or online at <http://www.judsonpress.com>.

Save 30% on Books for Christmas!

It's not too early to start your Christmas shopping and Judson Press has the perfect books for gift-giving! Now through December 15, save 30% on some of their most popular titles. There's something for everyone on your list! Visit <http://www.judsonpress.com/specials.cfm> today to make your selections.

It's the way Judson Press says "thank you" for your continued support.



Now Available! *One in Christ: Curriculum on Christian Unity*

Based on the theological statement on Christian unity created by the Unity Commission of the Colorado Council of Churches, this newly released six-session curriculum features Desmond Hoffmeister, Interim Executive Minister of ABCRM as one of the speakers. He is joined by John Petty (ELCA clergy), Jerry Lang (Disciple clergy), Margaret Rush-Hankins (UMC clergy), Youngsook Kang (UMS District Superintendent), Catharyn Baird (Episcopal laywoman), Tom Sheffield (Presbyterian pastor), and Jim Ryan (council executive, Colorado Council of Churches).

The content covers the following topics:

- There is One Body,
- The Authority of Scripture,
- Scripture Speaks of Unity
- Are We Related?
- Confession is Good for the Soul,
- Entering the Covenant.

Discussion questions are provided for each class session. The curriculum is available on DVD or on VHS format for \$25. Included with the video presentations is a master copy of the theological statement on which the material is based.

This curriculum is appropriate for adult Sunday church school classes and small groups meeting in other settings. It is also recommended as a Lenten study.

To order *One in Christ*, please contact the CCC at <http://www.coloradocouncilofchurches.org> or call (303)825-4910.

Curtis Park Provides Holiday Hope

The holiday season is a time for sharing and caring. At Curtis Park Community Center, it's also a time for counting our blessings as we restore our faith for 2007.

Many exciting changes have occurred over the past year, including hiring a permanent leader and visionary. Our ongoing services continue to have an impact on families, children, seniors, and individuals seeking to move toward self-sufficiency. The look of our neighborhood is ever-changing as more and more people from all walks of life combat the daily struggle to survive.

Last year, Curtis Park Community Center served nearly 5,400 individuals in need of clothing, food, childcare, and advocacy services—things most of us take for granted. We anticipate the 2006 holiday season to be the greatest year of need yet. We are slated to give over 2100 holiday gifts to 700 children and have surpassed our capacity to give food baskets to 5,000 hungry families.

We need your holiday spirit and commitment to help our families through this difficult time. We also need you to provide the critical financial support necessary to keep our services flowing throughout the neighborhood and beyond. We ask for your financial donation to help provide holiday hope to our families. Together, we can make this holiday a special one for families in need.

Make checks payable to Curtis Park Community Center and mail them to 929 29th Street, Denver, CO 80205.

Diane Mourning
CPCC Executive Director

RMA B 11/30/06

Ministers Council Unveils New Ethics Resource

The Ministers Council presents a new resource for collegial discussion on the Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders. The Learning Guide may be downloaded from <http://www.ministerscouncil.com/WhoWeAre/CodeofEthicsLearningGuide.aspx>.

The Ministers Council first developed the Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders in 1937 and has revised it periodically to maintain a high standard for professional ministers. The new *Learning Guide* provides a way for those concerned with ministerial ethics to wrestle with the specific application of standards to real-life situations. The *Learning Guide* invites individuals, alone or with a group of pastoral colleagues or lay leaders, to study the biblical foundation for each ethical statement and consider how he or she might apply the standard. The hope is that ministers using the *Learning Guide* will internalize the code and recognize areas in which they need to “raise the bar.” Those hiring, firing, and evaluating ministers will benefit from the *Learning Guide*, as well, by having a clear understanding of expectations of ministers in areas such as self-care, counseling procedures, confidentiality, and transition behaviors.

Writers are members of the Professional Effectiveness Committee of the Ministers Council. Michael Harvey, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Conference Ministers, and Dee Dee Turlington, Senior Minister of the First Baptist Church of Westfield, New Jersey, have served as editors..

Michael Harvey described the development of the resource by saying, “The structure of this *Learning Guide* is simple: A statement on each section of the Code of Ethics from one of the members of the Professional Effectiveness Committee is followed by questions to stimulate thinking together by colleagues. The statements are to give you some of the thinking of the people who have been deliberating about the Code of Ethics at the national Ministers Council Senate for several years. These writers are about as diverse as could be gathered in a committee of American Baptist pastors. Though they had disagreements, they were of the same mind in regard to the final revision of the Code of Ethics. You can see their differences in the statements.”

Dee Dee Turlington added, “Simply editing this material was a learning experience for me. I realized there are situations where my simple ‘one size fits all’ understanding of an ethical principle didn’t fit after all, as when rural folks offer products to their pastor because that’s the only way they can say ‘thank you.’ And many of the pieces reminded me of things I know but ignore, like the importance of keeping Sabbath. I am glad this resource is available to me and my colleagues.”



The Ministers Council website provides numerous resources free of charge for pastoral and congregational leaders at <http://www.ministerscouncil.com>.

Epiphany Day Apart at Iliff

On January 6, 2007 from 8:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. take advantage of the opportunity to "Listen to Your Life." Iliff School of Theology in Denver is hosting an "Epiphany Day Apart." Brad and Rita Berglund will serve as facilitators.

Interwoven into our personal histories as well as the day-to-day experiences of life are invitations to find meaning and to explore our own depths. This quiet day will focus on practical ways to pray, listen, and reflect on the events of life in order to become more aware of God's presence and invitations. The format of the day will include group ritual, time for personal reflection and corporate worship, art and photography as listening tools, open labyrinth experiences, Taize-style chant, and prayer.

The schedule for the day is as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 8:45 a.m. | Registration |
| 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon | Two morning sessions and break |
| 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. | Box lunch provided |
| 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. | Two afternoon sessions and break |



Brad and Rita Berglund direct *Illuminated Journeys*, an ecumenical ministry devoted to deepening the spiritual life of individuals and churches. Both have authored books. They lead workshops, retreats, and pilgrimage tours around the world. Rita's work includes serving as a psychotherapist, spiritual director, as well as teaching on the adjunct faculties of Naropa University and

Iliff School of Theology. Brad serves on the adjunct faculty at Iliff School of Theology and teaches online classes for the Andover Newton Theological School in Boston. Learn more at their websites: www.illuminatedjourneys.com and www.reinventingsunday.com.



The cost is \$45.00 per person and includes lunch and all materials. Please register by January 2, 2007.

**For more information,
please contact Dave Lavinder
at dlavinder@iliff.edu or call (303) 765-3115,
or Cathie Kelsey at ckelsey@iliff.edu or call (303) 765-3103.**

**To register for the program, please contact Dave Lavinder
at dlavinder@iliff.edu or call (303) 765-3115**

*Take time to listen
to the presence of God within you.*

Camp WYOBA Board Sets March 11 as WYOBA Sunday

The Camp WYOBA Board met at First Baptist Church in Casper, WY on November 18. Under the leadership of Deanna Dyer, chair, the Board continued to move toward autonomy. The meeting was energizing and productive.

The Board set March 11 as WYOBA Sunday. Board members will visit Wyoming churches on that day (or another mutually chosen Sunday) to present the Board's vision and strengthen the partnership between each church and the camping entity. A DVD and a worship resource will be developed for use on that day.

The group listed the projects that need to be begun and/or completed in 2007. This list included repairing the chimney on the dining hall, enhancing the entrance to the property, updating the electrical service in cabins and bathrooms, recruiting counselors, directors, and summer volunteers, and the thinning of trees and slash to safeguard against fire.

Board member Bob Riedel of Casper has researched the availability of grants for programming and facility upgrades. He intends to pursue grants from five major sources.

In order to build ownership and promote better communication, the WYOBA Board would like to have a representative from each Wyoming AB church serving with them on the Board. They believe this will also bring new ideas and creativity to the organization.

The Board also spent time talking about the mission and purpose of Camp WYOBA. At the next meeting on January 13, the group will write a mission statement based on their discussion and further reflections.



An Advent Litany: The Gift of Light

- One: Jesus walked among people who were living in darkness.
- All: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.
- One: Jesus saw a hidden light in Peter and Andrew, in James and John, in Mary and Martha, and they saw the light in Him.
- All: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light. On those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.
- One: Jesus sees that light in us and says, "Come, follow Me!"
- All: We are people who have seen the light. God's light shines on us. We have accepted the light of Christ and, in accepting, have been given the right to be called children of God.

Scriptural allusions and quotes are from Isaiah 9:2.

**The Rocky Mountain
American Baptist**
is published by the
American Baptist Churches
of the Rocky Mountains
www.abcrm.org

Desmond Hoffmeister:
Transitional Executive Minister
Ingrid Dvirnak:
Newsletter Editor

*Publication dates are the
15th and 30th/31st of each month.*

*Deadlines for submissions are the
10th and 25th of each month.*

*Reprint permission is granted to
ABCRM churches.*

*Discover your
PASSION!*

*Realize your
MISSION!*

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