



March 31, 2007

The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

Metro Denver Cluster to Host Worship Conference

The Heart of Worship: Igniting the Congregational Flame

On Saturday, April 28, the Metro Denver Cluster will host an ABCRM Worship Conference. The one-day conference will be held in the chapel at Regis University from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This event is open to all ABCRM churches. The cost is \$30 per person and includes a box lunch. You may download a conference brochure and registration form from the ABCRM website at <http://www.abcrm.org/Brochure4-AprilWorship.pdf>.

The purpose of this worship conference is

- **to ignite a passion for the act of worship** by offering pastors, worship leaders, church musicians and congregations inspiration, participation, application, and collaboration for these key aspects of worship.
- **to open the heart** by bringing together a diverse range of worshipers who want to explore the gifts of multi-cultural approaches to worship as demonstrated by the leadership team.

The conference will be a multi-cultural experience as attendees explore a rich variety of ways Christians approach the act of worship. That variety will include

the praise band from *Palabra de Fé* in Aurora. Other leaders from the Denver area include Brad Berglund, Pastor of *The Threshold* congregation meeting at First Baptist Church; Benita Edwards, Minister of Music at True Light Baptist Church; Daryl Walker, Minister of Music and Arts at New Hope Baptist Church; and Mary Tellis, ABCRM Ministry and Mission Coach for the Metro Denver Cluster and Associate Pastor at Solomon Temple Baptist Church in Denver.

Three life-changing, practical workshops will be offered:

- **Session I: The congregation as the choir: lifting our hearts in praise.**

With humor and grace, Daryl Walker will suggest ways to motivate the congregation to become involved in the act of praise. In addition to sharing inspiring ideas, Daryl will demonstrate ways to turn the congregation into the choir by leading us in praise.

- **Session II: Creating meaningful congregational participation.**

With insight and passion, Brad Berglund will teach participants ways for the congregation to become more involved in worship through the art of group ritual. Brad will provide creative and practical tools and will demonstrate ways to lead others in acts of transformation.

- **Session III: Opening the heart in worship**

Benita Edwards will help learners understand how the congregation, beginning with the lead worshiper, can become more vulnerable to the Spirit's presence and enter more fully into the Glory of God. With integrity and openness, Benita demonstrates how this might look in Sunday morning worship.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. at The Chapel at Regis located at 3333 Regis Boulevard in Denver. This new chapel on the campus of Regis University provides a beautiful and unique setting for this worship conference. Complimented by a view of Longs Peak, the sacredness of the worship space is immediately apparent to all who visit.

If you have questions, please call the ABCRM Region office: 303-988-3900 or e-mail office@abcrm.org.

First Baptist Church of Pueblo Calls Frank Proffer as Pastor

The members of First Baptist Church of Pueblo, CO have called Frank Proffer to be their next pastor. He will begin his ministry there on Easter Sunday. He and his wife, Patricia, are coming to Colorado from Southwest Community Church in Horizon City, Texas.

Frank's philosophy of ministry is that the 21st century Church needs to return to first century teachings. He also believes that ministry should be returned to all God's people, rather than placed in the hands of hired staff persons in the church. Empowering and equipping laity to minister according to their spiritual gifts is a high priority for him.

According to Pastor Proffer, there are three words which best describe his ministry:

- **REACH** out to those who are unchurched, or who have been wounded by the Church,
- **BUILD** up passionate followers of Jesus Christ who will
- **SERVE** in the local community.

The local Search Committee, chaired by Delbert Steffan, worked with Mike Oldham, Ministry and Mission Coach for the Southeast Colorado Cluster to secure a new pastor. Chuck Shipman has been serving the congregation as Interim Minister.

We join the Pueblo congregation in welcoming Pastor Frank Proffer to this new ministry.



Colorado ABW Ministries Will Hold 2007 Conference in Alamosa June 8-10

This year American Baptist women of Colorado will gather in the center of the beautiful San Luis Valley for their annual conference. The venue is The Inn of the Rio Grande in Alamosa; the dates are June 8-10. If you are a dyed-in-the-wool ABW Ministries conferee, that may be all you need to know. But if you're a first-timer or are trying to decide whether to return this year, here are some more details.

National Conference Coordinator, Joyce Camp, will be the speaker and Bible study leader. Joyce comes from Cortland, NY and is a dynamic, inspirational speaker. President Jackie Arnold notes that Joyce has "a great sense of humor."

Chris Marziale of International Ministries in Valley Forge, PA will also be a special guest this year. Chris coordinates White Cross Requests from overseas missionaries and is IM's liaison to the national ABW Ministries Board. Rumor has it that she, too, has a great sense of humor.

The special 2007 White Cross Project will be Tu Casa, a battered women's shelter in Alamosa. You are asked to bring new women's sized sweat sets (purchase the size you would wear) and smaller fleece

blanket throws to be given to the shelter. The throws may be hand-made or purchased, but no more than five per church, please.

Throughout the weekend, women will be celebrating 75 years of Love Gift. Why not bring quarters to put 75¢ in the Love Gift box at every meal? A special party will be held on Saturday night as well as the usual talent show. Plan to perform a skit, a musical number, a reading, or simply tell your sisters what God has done in your life this past year.

In addition to the Love Gift offering, a general offering will be received to help cover the annual budget expenses. So bring your checkbook.

And bring your swimsuit and a sweater. Conference planners want you to have fun and be comfortable.

Registration is \$25 if mailed before May 15. Room rates vary. Please consult the printed information that has been sent to your local ABW Ministries group or look for the registration form on the ABW Ministries page of the ABCRM website at <http://www.abcrm.org/ministries/women.htm>.

The Chapel Car Door Remains Open



As I visited First Baptist Church in Rawlins recently, I walked up the steps, opened the door, and joined a hearty group of people who were beginning to gather for worship just as Sunday School classes were dismissing. Worship would begin in about fifteen minutes, but already music was filling the sanctuary. And people couldn't help but sing along. I heard some humming and a few familiar words being sung as the organist and guest pianist played a number of favorite hymns during the gathering time. Later when the instruments played the offertory and communion hymns, congregants broke into song yet again. Music permeated every corner of the worship space. I wonder if it's in their DNA? I've never been in a church quite like it.

But then, neither had I been in a church built around a chapel car until I visited FBC/Rawlins. Chapel Car "Evangel" is incorporated into the current physical structure.

As the American West was being settled, missionaries traveled by buggy, cart, and horseback to bring the Good News to communities that were without church facilities. As the railroads moved west, three faith groups (Episcopalians,

Catholics, and Baptists) caught the dream of building churches-on-rails. The first Baptist chapel car, named Evangel, was dedicated at Grand Central Depot in Cincinnati, OH, on May 23, 1891. Underwritten by a syndicate of wealthy Baptist businessmen, Evangel was built by the Barney & Smith Car Company located in Dayton, OH.

After 34 years of service in many places, Evangel came to Rawlins on the Union Pacific Railroad in November, 1924. Baptist colporter missionary, Herbert Richmond came with the chapel car to hold a series of meetings. However, he became ill, and the meetings were not held. In the spring of 1925, Carl Fischer came to Rawlins to form a Sunday School in the chapel car. With the assistance of C. C. Harwood, missionary in Jackson Hole, a revival was begun which eventually led to the forming of the Baptist congregation. On June 7, 1925, the First Baptist Church of Rawlins was organized with 29 members.

Chapel car Evangel had been condemned for further travel, so the American Baptist Publication Society gave the car to the Wyoming Baptist Convention. In November 1925 the church purchased three lots from the Rawlins Townsite Company and the chapel car Evangel was moved to its current location.

Evangel was described as a church, parsonage, and educational building on wheels. It housed an organ, pews to seat up to 125 people, a kitchen, and sleeping quarters. Beneath the car hung compartments for storing coal, wood, ice, and even a tent for summer use.

Today it is at the very heart of the Rawlins church building. A church sanctuary was added to the east. Evangel became a part of the educational wing with its long row of windows facing west. Today, a newer educational wing extends farther west, so Evangel is truly at the center of the



facility. If you visit the church, you will be able to see the windows of the car as well as visit the "Evangel Room" which houses historical documents and memorabilia. If you leave the church through the south door, you will be using one of the original chapel car doors. It is functional, well-preserved, and serves as a treasured sample of the beauty found in the historic chapel cars.



The spirit of the colporter missionaries lives on at First Baptist Church in Rawlins. Children's voices can be heard in the building throughout the week because a Christian school is now housed in the church facility. Pastor Harvey Hansen says, "It used to be quiet in here when I came to my office, but now I hear voices everywhere, and that's the way it should be!"

I think there must have been a gifted musician among those early worshipers who skillfully played that chapel car organ and inspired the early congregation to sing. And American Baptists in Rawlins continue to faithfully sing God's praises today.

Ingrid Dvirnak

Photographs by Jenita Calton

RMA 3/31/07

2007 Special Interest Missionaries

For 55 years, American Baptists have supported the Special Interest Missionary (SIM) Program. The SIM Program helps personalize American Baptist mission, acquaints congregations with missionaries and their ministries, and cultivates prayer and financial support for our mission in the United States and other countries.

In the past, the SIM program was administered solely through American Baptist Women's Ministries. However, not every church has an active AB Women's Ministries group. To reach every American Baptist church, National and International Ministries have expanded the SIM program in recent years so that all American Baptist churches will receive information. This was done at the request of pastors who want their congregations to learn more about American Baptist mission and to build stronger partnerships with our missionaries. Following are the names and contact information for the SIMs assigned to ABCRM. Because our ABW Ministries groups remain organized according to state boundaries, you will note different names have been assigned to churches in Wyoming and Colorado/New Mexico.

For suggested ways to support your Special Interest Missionaries, go to http://www.abcrm.org/mission/missionaries_special.htm then scroll down toward the bottom of the page.

Names assigned to Colorado and New Mexico:

Rev. Mercedes Gonzalez-Barnes and Rev. Richard Barnes (United States)
2310 West Elm, El Centro, CA 92243
E-mail: mercyrickmx@hotmail.com

Rev. Lauran Bethell (Global Service Missionary)
International Baptist Theological, Nad Habrovkou 3, Jeneralka, CZ 164 00
Prague 6, Czech Republic.
(Lauran is a Global Service Missionary working with women and children at risk (prostitution, human trafficking, etc.) For her protection, email and phone numbers are not available. Please contact her Area Director, Charles Jones, for current information. Call 800-222-3872 ext. 2227 or e-mail cjones@abc-usa.org.)

Mr. John and Debra Coats (Cambodia)
c/o Christian Care for Cambodia, P.O. Box 830, Phnom Penh, Cambodia
E-mail: djcoatsusa@online.com.kh

Mr. Tom and Terry Myers (Bulgaria)
Simeonova, 53 Bosilek Street, #4, Sofia 1434, Bulgaria
E-mail: myersbulgaria@msn.com and website: www.myersbulgaria.org

Rev. David Reed and Rev. Joyce Anderson-Reed (Mexico)
c/o Casabuena, 3065 Belisario Dominguez, E/Sonora Y Sinaloa, Col. Pueblo Nuevo, LaPaz, BCS 23060, Mexico.
E-mail: mexicoreeds@gmail.com

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Website: www.haitianministries.net/

Dr. Paul K. Chapman (Ecumenical Ministries in US)
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917-400-4303
E-mail: p.chapman@mindspring.com

Rev. Vincent Harris (Race Track Chaplain)
Thistledown Race Track, 21501 Emery Road, Cleveland, OH 44128
216-662-8600, x. 215
E-mail: harrisrtca@aol.com

Mr. Trevor Jones (Alaska Ministries)
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907-486-4126
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Website: www.kodiakbaptistmission.org

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Special Interest Missionaries (continued from page 4)

Ms. Diane Mourning (Neighborhood Action/Christian Center)
Curtis Park Community Center, 929 29th Street, Denver, CO 80205
303-295-2399, x. 201

E-mail: diane@curtispark.org and website: www.curtispark.org

Names assigned to Wyoming:

Rev. Lauran Bethell (Global Service Missionary)
International Baptist Theological, Nad Habrovkou 3, Jeneralka, CZ 164 00
Prague 6, Czech Republic.

(Lauran is a Global Service Missionary working with women and children at risk (prostitution, human trafficking, etc.) For her protection, email and phone numbers are not available. Please contact her Area Director, Charles Jones, for current information. Call 800-222-3872, x 2227 or e-mail cjones@abc-usa.org)

Rev. Debra and Rev. Dr. Flint Miller (Philippines)
Asian Baptist Theological Seminary, 19 Tacay Road, Guisad,
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Rev. David Reed and Rev. Joyce Anderson-Reed (Mexico)
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Mr. Alvin Lewis (Neighborhood Action/Christian Center)
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E-mail: alvinlewis@yahoo.com

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Edna Martin Christian Center, 1970 North Caroline Avenue,
Indianapolis, IN 46218
317-637-3776
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Mr. David Sheldon (Neighborhood Action/Christian Center)
Executive Director, The Place, 20 E. Main Street, Norwich, NY 13815
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Ms. Diane Mourning (Neighborhood Action/Christian Center)
Curtis Park Community Center, 929 29th Street, Denver, CO 80205
303-295-2399, x. 201
E-mail: diane@curtispark.org and website: www.curtispark.org

First Baptist Church in Fort Morgan Hosts Lenten Lunches

The Fort Morgan First Baptist church family meets after worship on the Sundays during Lent to share a meal and remember the Lord in various ways. The menu is soup and sandwiches with other miscellaneous foods to round out the meal. Three or four people volunteer to bring the soup, and the rest provide side dishes.

Pastor Tom Wheeler prepares a scripture and a group of questions for discussion. The church family gathered at their individual tables shares in discussion. Discussion lasts about 15 minutes. In closing, the table groups are encouraged to lead a song, offer a prayer, or share a scripture verse to summarize their table discussion.



Photos and article by Tom Wheeler
RMAB 3/31/07

Training Academy's OT Course Enrollment Remains Open

ABCRM's Training Academy will offer an Old Testament Course on May 4-6. See related article in a past issue of *RMA*B at http://www.abcrm.org/news_archives/2007/abcrmn10228.pdf. To receive additional information about this course, contact any office staff person at 303-988-3900, e-mail office@abcrm.org, or contact Wayne Dvirnak at 307-638-8247 or wdvirnak@abcrm.org. To register online, go to http://www.abcrm.org/course_reg.htm

Denver Seminary to Offer Summer American Baptist Polity Course

Plans are underway for an American Baptist Polity Course to be offered at Denver Seminary July 9-20. Class hours will be from 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Louise Barger, former Executive Minister of ABCRM, will be the instructor.

If you are interested in taking advantage of this educational opportunity, please call the ABCRM office at 303-988-3900 or e-mail office@abcrm.org. After a list of interested students has been compiled, Jan McCormack of Denver Seminary and Mary Tellis of ABCRM will meet with the group to see if the proposed course schedule needs to be revised in order to allow the widest possible participation.

Denver Seminary integrates content, character, and competency into all of their degree programs. Learn more about the school at <http://www.denverseminary.edu/>.

RMA B 3/31/07

What Are You Taking On for Lent?



When I was a boy, and yes, even when I was a younger man, most Protestant Christians did not give the Lenten Season any particular emphasis. The Roman Catholic Church, on the other hand, traditionally focused upon the 40-day pre-Easter period as a time of preparation and self-denial.

In those earlier years, it was not uncommon, as the season approached, to hear our Catholic friends inquiring of one another, "What are you giving up for Lent this year?" And on the basis of many of the responses that were forthcoming, one could almost conclude that Lent, in actuality, provided people with a "second shot" at fulfilling broken New Year's resolutions! I know that in my youthful ignorance, I sometimes thought that I was glad that I was a Protestant, particularly when it came to the matter of giving up such things as sweets and personal pleasures.

While I am an advocate of necessary acts of self-denial in many of the important aspects of our lives before God, I have come to look upon the pre-Easter season as an opportunity to refocus on the things that are lacking in one's faith life, with an eye to revitalizing one's commitment to Jesus Christ—things such as neglected prayer, devotional time, Bible study, and acts of Christian service. In other words, perhaps the classic question, "What are you *giving up* for Lent," should be re-phrased to ask, "What are you *taking on* for Lent?"

My friends, I want to challenge you to take advantage of these days leading up to the celebration of Jesus' resurrection for a deepening of your spiritual life. Surely there is room in each one of us for a closer walk with, and commitment to, Him who is our living, loving Lord and Savior. Perhaps your devotional life has suffered of late, and it is time to get it back on track. Maybe your participation in Sunday School and worship opportunities needs to be improved and revitalized. Possibly you have been putting off witnessing to a neighbor, a friend, a business associate, or even a family member. Or it may be that your financial stewardship is not commensurate with your ability to give back to God the portion of your income which God rightfully expects and requires of us all. Lent, I believe, is our opportunity to tackle unfinished business with God.

Rightly understood, I submit, Lent is a time for Christians to draw nearer to God, both through sacrificial acts of self-denial, and the taking on of disciplines that are essential to the maintenance of our scripturally-mandated growth "*in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ*" (2 Peter 3:18).

*Jim Watson, Transitional Pastor,
First Baptist Church, Cheyenne, WY
First printed in the March 2007 issue of The Call
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Ordination of Mary Rhodes-Tellis



The ordination of Mary Rhodes-Tellis (*left*) symbolized the true nature of the call to ministry in the Kingdom of God. Technically, Mary's ordination by Solomon Temple Missionary Baptist Church was done so under the auspices of the National Baptist Convention and the American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains. However, the participants in the service represented a much broader part of the family of God. Participants included Jim Ryan, executive director of the Colorado Council of Churches, Jan McCormack, past president of ABCRM, Nancy

Darnell, chair of the ABCRM Ministerial Leadership Committee (*right*), and Andrew Simpson, presiding elder of the Rocky Mountain District of the AME Church and many others.



In addition to those listed above, two important pastors in Mary's life participated in key roles in her ordination service. Paul Martin, recently retired pastor of Macedonia Baptist Church, Denver, preached the ordination sermon and served as her mentor and coach through the ABCRM ordination process. W. D. Simmons, pastor of Central Baptist Church, Denver, led the charge and consecration of the candidate. Simmons performed the marriage ceremony for the Tellises almost 30 years ago.

Dallas Burlison (*right*) from Friendship Baptist Church of Christ Jesus presided over the ordination service. Burlison has been a friend, mentor, and fellow traveler with Mary on her spiritual journey. She kept the speakers on task and tried to keep them on time. She also added passion and a sense of humor to the proceedings.



All who attended were blessed and lifted up by the incredible music that played an integral role in the Ordination Service. The praise team from Solomon Temple and the choir from True Light Baptist Church both performed selections.

Mary's journey to the ministry began many years ago. As a child growing up in northern Louisiana, Mary loved to "play church." As the youngest, her siblings encouraged her to "sing, shout, preach and pretend to be touched by the Holy Spirit." Her father, a deacon, and her mother, a missionary, frowned upon her imitation of the adults. A few years later, she is no longer "playing church." Currently, she serves as the ABCRM Ministry and Mission Coach for the Metro Denver Cluster. As the Ministry and Mission Coach for the Denver Cluster, she works with churches in the areas of developing relationships, revitalization, and pastoral placement. In addition, she is the Associate Pastor at the Solomon Temple Missionary Baptist Church, where her husband, John Tellis, is the senior pastor. In her local church she also is the women's ministry leader, jail and prison evangelist, and Christian education director. In the wider community, Mary is an adjunct instructor at the Community College of Aurora, a member of the Curtis Park Community Center Board, an ABCRM representative to the Colorado Council of Churches, and a member of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

With her husband, John, at her side, Mary was also honored by the attendance of her three children and a nephew from California, her church family from Solomon Temple, Central Baptist, many representing the Denver cluster, and the broader family of God from the Denver community. The consensus of those who participated in Mary's ordination service was that they were simply affirming the call that God has on Mary's life which is so evident to everyone who knows her.

Northern Front Range Cluster Highlights Christian Education

On April 28 at 4:00 p.m., ABCRM churches in the Northern Front Range (NFR) Cluster are invited to the American Baptist Church in Fort Collins to share ideas in Christian education. A group of Christian educators from Cluster churches, moderated by Ingrid Dvirnak, will participate in a panel discussion. Following the panel, attendees will self-select a smaller group with which they want to meet for further exploration of the discussion topics.

As has become the custom at the NFR Gatherings, the host church will provide beverages. Those who attend are asked to bring snacks to share.

For publicity purposes, NFR Coordinator, Tom Wheeler, has sent an e-poster to Cluster churches and other interested individuals. The poster is also available on the NFR Cluster page of the ABCRM website at <http://www.abcrm.org/NorthernFrontRange.htm>.

Download it, print it, and post it. And plan to attend this practical program highlighting Christian education in the local church.

Mike Oldham

RMAB 3/31/07

Wyoba Board Works Toward Self-Governance

The Camp Wyoba Board met at First Baptist Church of Casper on Saturday, March 24, to consider proposed bylaws, and mission and purposes statements. It is the desire of the Board to be a constituency-driven group and invites any constituent American Baptist church to provide a representative to serve on the Board. There were representatives from seven churches in attendance at the March 24 meeting: Bethel Baptist and FBC (Casper), Calvary Baptist (Cheyenne), Trinity Baptist (Douglas), and First Baptist churches of Gillette, Laramie, and Torrington.

A work weekend is scheduled for June 1-2 beginning at noon on Friday and concluding at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. Churches will be receiving a letter from Board Chair, Deanna Dyer, listing the projects that need to be completed. Churches are invited to choose the projects for which they wish to be responsible, and communicate their intent to Deanna.

A 75th Anniversary Celebration will be held on August 3rd beginning at 5:00 p.m. and concluding on Saturday, August 4th at 4:00 p.m. A committee is working to collect names of Wyoba alumni encouraging them to share a memory or happening. The committee also wants to locate married couples who met at Camp Wyoba. Of course, there'll be a campfire, s'mores, and favorite camp songs too.

The next Camp Wyoba Board meeting will be on Saturday, April 21st at FBC/Casper beginning at 10:00 a.m. If your church has not been represented on the Board, please appoint someone to be there in April.

Wayne Dvirnak

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

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Newsletter Editor
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*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.*

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