



January 15, 2007

The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

Discover Your Passion and Realize Your Mission This Year

I want to wish all the member churches and ministers of ABCRM a Happy New Year. This year we will be focused on following our new strategic direction under the rubric “*Discover your Passion and Realize your Mission.*” I hope that we will all invest our time, money, and energy in discerning God’s unique purpose for our existence, salvation, and call. As a Region, we will continue to answer the question, “*What has God called us uniquely to do?*”

This week we celebrate the life of a remarkable Baptist preacher who made a phenomenal difference in our world. Martin Luther King undoubtedly discovered his passion and realized his mission. This courageous leader challenged wrongdoing, inspired us to a higher vision of becoming a “Beloved Community,” and gave his life for the benefit of the little people, the voiceless, and those left behind by a system of indifference.

Martin Luther King acknowledged that he was committed to the Church. In a 1965 *Ebony* interview, in an article entitled, “The Unchristian Christian,” he said, “I am the son of a Baptist preacher, the grandson of a Baptist preacher, and the great grandson a Baptist preacher. The Church is my life and I have given my life to the Church.”

Mervyn Warren, in his book *King Came Preaching*, makes the point that his contribution to society was shaped by his formation in the Church. Warren says, “Later influences on King are understood to have provided form, nomenclature, and refinement to lifelong concepts derived initially from the Black Church.”

I believe that Martin Luther King’s discovery of his purpose and realization of his mission were nurtured in the Church. They were refined by his educational experiences and shaped by his pastoral ministry. Our deepest passion is unleashed when we connect with God.

It is my prayer that our member churches will not just exist or survive this year. I pray that our pastors and spiritual leaders will not just fulfill their responsibilities out of duty but rather, out of passion. Passion assumes purpose. Passion is conviction on fire. Passion assumes our uniqueness in the sight of God. Our passion is fueled by the belief that God has given to us a giftedness and responsibility.

May we all discover our passion and realize our mission in 2007.

Desmond Hoffmeister
Transitional Executive Minister

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Jim Peters Wins 2007 MLK Humanitarian Award

Congratulations to Jim Peters on being nominated and winning the Martin Luther King Humanitarian Award at Metropolitan State College of Denver. The theme this year is "Nurturing the Dream."

Peters, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Denver, was also named as keynote speaker for the Martin Luther King Breakfast held on January 12 at MSCD. Mary Tellis, Ministry and Mission Coach for the Denver Cluster, gave the invocation at the event attended by over 350 members of the faculty, staff, and students.

According to Debra Clark, Region Treasurer and Student Services Director of Budget and Personnel at MSCD, there were many nominations made during the award process. A special awards committee met together for many hours in order to agree on a winner. You may add your congratulations by e-mailing Jim Peters at jpeters5263@aol.com.



We would like to publish the names of people who are being baptized in ABCRM churches. Send names of those who have been baptized since January 1, 2007 to the ABCRM newsletter editor, jdvirnak@abcrm.org for publication in a following newsletter. As people are baptized in future months, remember to send us their names too. We know God is working among us. Let's celebrate and share the news!



Ashley Seaman and Brad Berglund invite you to experience worship. . .

*new,
evocative,
authentic,
intimate,
transparent,
progressive.*

The Threshold: A Place for Transformation and Hope

Meeting at First Baptist Church of Denver
14th and Grand (*across from the Capitol*)

January 21, 2007 (*and every third Sunday*)
5:30 p.m.

Food and celebration after worship.

*The Threshold is a gathering centered in the global worship of God.
We will journey into God's presence as pilgrims
who unbind each other to become who we've been created to be.*

It Was a White (Cross) Christmas in Bulgaria!

White Cross funds collected by American Baptist women all over the United States helped to make Christmas merrier for a lot of folks in Bulgaria this year. We were privileged to be able to help provide food, clothing and health supplies for children and senior citizens in Sofia, Guliantsi, and in several orphanages around Bulgaria. The generous White Cross grant we receive yearly made it all possible. Thank you, American Baptist women!

Along with our pastor friends Ivan and Tedi, missionary colleague Susan Linderman, and Chris Marziale (Valley Forge staff liaison between International Ministries and American Baptist Women's Ministries and the White Cross program), we visited an orphanage in the town of Pleven in November. Sixty-five children were given bags containing food items, toothpaste, toothbrush, and a teddy bear. The teddy bears were courtesy of the American Baptist Women's Ministries of Colorado. The kids loved the chocolate and the teddy bears! White Cross funds also purchased cleaning supplies and medicines, as well as a much-needed lawnmower for this orphanage.

Senior citizens throughout Bulgaria often gather in clubs during the day for a light lunch and fellowship. It gives them a chance to get out for

awhile and meet with friends. Pastor Ivan goes once a week to one such club in Sofia where he shares about Jesus through the reading of scripture and a devotional. White Cross funds bought food bags for 60 seniors, which included sweets, cheese, meat and fruit. The seniors, mostly women, who live on an average pension of \$50 a month, were very grateful for the gifts. Pastor Ivan emphasized that the contents of the bags were for *them*, not their children, grandchildren or neighbor's children!

December 17 was a big day in the town of Guliantsi where 70 children whose families are on social assistance received Christmas bags filled with food items and warm socks. The children and their parents crowded into the church meeting hall in time to hear a Christmas sermon and Christmas songs played on the guitar. Most of these folks had never been in church before, and God used the young man who was speaking that morning to present the Gospel to these people in a most appropriate and understandable way. White Cross funds allowed the church in Guliantsi to reach beyond their doors to those in need in their community. What a witness of love during the Christmas season!

excerpted from Tom and Terry Myers' January 2007 newsletter

Paul Martin to Retire in March



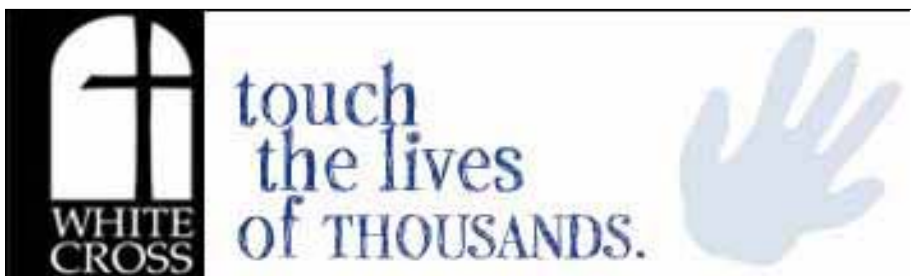
Paul M. Martin, Senior Pastor of Macedonia Baptist Church of Denver has announced that he will retire from Macedonia as the Senior Pastor effective March 1, 2007. He has served Macedonia as Senior Pastor since August 1, 1990. He plans to relocate to Los Angeles, his native home, where he will be engaged in writing, lecturing, teaching, and serving as a consultant in Church Management and Administration.

He has been an integral part of the Denver community, serving on many boards and committees where he has used his gifts of administration to help others. His motto is, "Standing on the Cutting Edge of History, Redeeming the Community."

His wife, Agnes Lott Martin, plans to continue her work in conjunction with other ministers' spouses as well as radio and television.

Macedonia will establish a Pastoral Search Committee to begin the national search for another pastor. They will use the process established by the American Baptist Churches USA.

May God be a great blessing in the lives of Pastor and Sister Martin as they leave the Denver community.



Calvary Travelers Tour Incredible India



Mary Hulst wearing shawl given to her by Ukhrlu Baptist Church.

Mary Hulst, recently retired pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Denver, led 12 hardy Calvary travelers on a mission trip to India from October 15-November 1, 2006. It was an amazing learning adventure that touched our lives in a dramatic way.

The highlight was our time in the Northeast India State of Nagaland. While in Nagaland, we traveled in a convoy of three four-wheel drive vehicles. There we enjoyed fellowship and participated in worship with new Naga Christian friends in many Baptist churches, hospitals, and schools.

We flew into Jorhat, where Ahao Vashum met us. It was great to reconnect with Ahao again. He is now a respected faculty member at Eastern Theology College (ETC). It



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was good to see what a dynamic speaker and leader he is with his people. Ahao hosted a dinner for us in his "palace" in faculty housing. His students put on a cultural program in honor of our visit. We met with college faculty and toured the chapel, classrooms and library. There are 236

students at ETC, but the library has seating space for only 80 students. Due to the lack of adequate space and library's weak roof, there is an urgent need to build a new library.



Ahao took us to his village, Maren Khullen, where we met his parents and sisters. The Tangkhul tribe treated us like royalty, showering us with their love, food, and gifts. They also put on a cultural song and dance program for us. Mary Hulst laid a foundation stone for their new church building, and each traveler planted a pine tree at the site.



We also toured the Jorhat Mission Hospital. The hospital was founded in 1924 and has grown to a be 132-bed hospital. American missionaries have served in this hospital.

In Dimapur we met Narola, who directs a women's counseling center called the Miqlat Ministry for women entrapped in prostitution. We smiled at seeing the red refrigerator that Lauran Bethel had provided.

In Imphal we connected with Luithak and Kuinao Zimik at the Manipur Baptist Convention offices. They escorted us through military checkpoints to Ukhrlu where they hosted us in their family home. We visited Leishiphung Hospital, which was founded by the Zimiks in 1999. The hospital can handle up to 125 patients.

While in India we also toured the Taj Mahal, Mahatma Gandhi Memorial, and Mother Teresa's Sisters of Charity Hospital.

India travelers were Mike Boggess and Kellun Turner, Roger Dickinson, John Edwards and Maggi Susman, Dorothy Fine, Mary Hulst, Fred and Anne Michel, Ken and Karen Pinkham, Gwen Ward, Susan Wirt.

Article and pictures submitted by Ken and Karen Pinkham

To view additional pictures go to http://www.abcrm.org/mission/churches_mission.htm

First Baptist Church of Torrington Installs Rick Cederholm as Pastor

“Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, Rejoice” (Philippians 4:4).

With joy and anticipation, the First Baptist Church of Torrington, WY, installed Rick Cederholm as their pastor on Sunday, January 7, 2007. Rick began his ministry in Torrington in September.

Torrington’s mayor, Leroy Shafer, participated in the service by giving the official welcome to the city. Ora Dailey, senior pastor of the United Methodist Church welcomed the Cederholms to the ministerial community. Choir members of her church joined the choir of First Baptist Church to sing one of Pastor Rick’s favorite songs, “On Eagles Wings.”

Lay leaders from First Baptist Church who participated in the service were Dick Glandt, chair of the Search Committee and of the Trustees; Jack Pugsley, Moderator; Mel Gabel, and Harry Howell.



The installing pastor was Wayne Dvirnak, Ministry and Mission Coach for Wyoming and the Northern Front Range. Ingrid Dvirnak gave the prayer of installation.

Also attending the installation were Michael and Brenda Byrne from American Baptist Church in Fort Collins. Brenda is Rick’s daughter. Michael built the FBC

website and was busy taking pictures to upload to the site.

Rick and Kelly Cederholm and son, Gregory have come to the west from Vermont. Although there aren’t many trees in the Torrington area, there are plenty of warm hearts and welcoming people. The Cederholms have come to appreciate the wide open vistas, the beautiful sunsets, and even the prairie dogs.

We welcome Pastor Rick and his family to the Rocky Mountain Region and look forward to years of ministry together.



Left to right: Michael and Brenda Byrne, Rick and Kelly Cederholm, and son Gregory.

Order Now for Lent!

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 lay-woman), Tom Sheffield (Presbytery pastor), and Jim Ryan (Council Executive, Colorado Council of Churches).

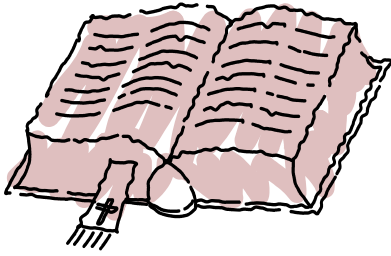
The content covers the following topics:

- 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 in 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.

Free Bibles



20 free NIV hardcover Bibles are available through the ABCRM office. If your church can use them, please make arrangements to pick them up at the office by contacting Beverley at bhoffmeister@abcrm.org.

American Baptist Foundation Seeks Executive Vice President

The American Baptist Foundation is conducting a search for an Executive Vice President responsible for managing the Foundation's field staff, overseeing all marketing and public relations, serving as the primary contact for donors and their advisors as well as internal and external organizations, and overseeing the Foundation's grant award program. Qualifications include an advanced degree in business, demonstrated marketing experience, management experience, proven entrepreneurial skills, and knowledge of ABC denominational polity and structure.

For more information about this position, please contact John Jacobs, President, American Baptist Foundation at (800) 222-3872 extension 2035.

SoulJourners Retreat Planning Underway

(Formerly known as the Senior Adult Conference)

Save this date: September 25-27, 2007

For many years Rocky Mountain American Baptist seniors have gathered annually to sing, pray, laugh, and learn. The September 2006 gathering was one of the best. On November 27th the 2007 committee met to begin the process of discernment and planning for next year's spiritual retreat.

In response to requests, the Senior Adult Conference has been re-named **The SoulJourners Retreat, a Gathering for Folks 55 & Older**. This name change addresses three goals; (1) illustrate the purpose, (2) appeal to a broader age range, (3) indicate a relaxed, interpersonal setting and program. This annual retreat always celebrates both our individual spiritual journeys, as well as the journey we share as children of God.

On September 25-27, 2007 folks 55+ will gather at the Mt. St. Frances Retreat Center in Colorado Springs.

The low elevation (6500 feet), moderate costs, comfortable accommodations, and easy accessibility are quite favorable for people of various abilities. Taking last year's evaluations into account, Co-Chairs John Pipe and Carol Willard did a thorough job of researching and scouting out several facilities. The planning committee unanimously chose Mt. St. Frances.

The 2007 theme is *"What in the World Are We Doing Here? (Creating a Meaningful Legacy)"* The program will focus on each person's current involvement for his or her future legacy.

The committee members are excited about and look forward to this special time together and invite you to attend. **Please mark September 25-27 on your calendar.** We will keep you informed about our planning and the details as they come together.

As previously mentioned Carol Willard and John Pipe co-chair the committee. Other committee members include: Mason Brown, Bill Mankin, Kathy Bird



De-Young, Ken and Karen Pinkham, Evert and Margot Keur, Bill and Betty Moseley, Tom and Betty Shoaf, Larry and Tam VanSpriell, Maggie Susman Edwards, Larry and Lois Oswalt, Jim Witt, and Region staff, Mike Oldham and Desmond Hoffmeister.

View the Mt. St. Frances facilities at www.Franciscanretreatcenter.org.

An immersion faith/spiritual experience into the life of poverty

Spring Break: South Padré Island or Inner City Denver?

Purpose:

Provide a personal theological experience of learning about the intricacies of poverty. The experience will include developing a personal relationship with a person who is living in poverty. It will also include writing a three to five-page reflection paper on the theological aspect of poverty, personal experience, and suggested approaches to address poverty.

Who:

Limited to 30 college sophomores and juniors who are members of Council of Churches denominations. The experiences is not limited to students of Colorado colleges and universities.

When:

- Four days, three nights during spring break of 2007 or 2008.
- Two and one half months during the summer.
- One meeting the first part of August.

Spring Break Event:

The 30 students with at least four adult coordinators will gather in downtown Denver at a church that is active in addressing poverty issues and the needs of people caught in poverty.

Each day will involve a four-part process:

- Hands-on service providing.
- Theological/scriptural reflections on what they have experienced.
- Education on poverty issues provided by community experts.
- The sharing of personal stories by people living in poverty.

Each student will identify a “poverty” bill in the Colorado legislature, follow its progress, and contact his/her legislator to advocate for the bill.

Summer Responsibility:

Each student will arrange in his/her hometown an opportunity (employed, internship, or volunteer) to work at an agency that deals with poverty issues. Whatever the student does at the agency, it must include the opportunity to have an ongoing contact with a person living in poverty. The student will meet with his/her pastor once a week for reflection.

Third Week of July:

Each student will write a three to five page paper which reflects on his/her experience both personally and theologically. It will also include any suggestions about how issues of poverty might be addressed.

Summary Paper:

A theologian will take the 30 papers and seek to summarize the reflections into a 10-15 page publication.

First Week of August:

The students will gather back together for two days to debrief with each other and to meet with representatives of the faith, business, government, and service providers community.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Jim Ryan at Colorado Council of Churches: staff@coloradocouncilofchurches.org.

Baptist Heritage Tour to the Bahamas: May 14-23, 2007

Dan and Estela Schweissing offer the following information about an upcoming tour to the Bahamas and invite you to participate:

This heritage tour will explore the dynamic heritage of Baptist witness in the Bahamas amidst the historical experience of slavery and colonialism as well as the contemporary challenges of globalization. Participants will visit significant historical and cultural sites, churches, and museums. They will also have opportunities to dialogue with missionaries, national partners, and local historians.

Exact costs for the tour are still being determined, but final figures will be determined very soon.

If you're interested in participating, contact Jonathan Hilsher or Angela Suderman at 1-800-ABC-3USA or e-mail Jonathan.Hilsher@abc-usa.org to have your name placed on the mailing list for prospective participants. You will be notified when the actual cost is determined.

To register for the tour go to <http://www.discoveryteams.org> and click the 'registration' icon to download the appropriate forms.

For questions about the tour itinerary, contact Dan at dan@haitianministries.net

To learn about other centennial celebration tours, go to <http://www.internationalministries.org/opportunities/Volunteers/documents/centennialcelebrationtrips122206.pdf>

Mark Jervis: AKA Angel1

In the December 15, 2006 issue of RMAB (http://www.abcrm.org/news_archives/2006/1215NL.pdf), Tom Wheeler, pastor of FBC in Fort Morgan, CO, told his police chaplaincy story. In this issue, Mark Jervis, pastor of FBC in Gillette, WY, shares his experiences as a police chaplain.



I moved to Lander, WY, in April of 1985 to accept the pastoral call to First Baptist Church. Before the summer was over, I was approached by two or three individuals from other communities who had decided that Wyoming needed chaplains for all areas of law enforcement. They asked if I would be interested in helping to set up a chaplaincy program.

For me that was a “no brainer.” I had served as an officer on the Lander Police Department back in 1972-73 and knew many of the people in both the Lander PD and Fremont County Sheriff’s Department. As it turned out the local sheriff at that time, Tim McKinney, was very interested in helping form such a group to serve with his department. So, from the fall of 1985 until 1999 when I left Lander to accept the call as pastor in Gillette, I was the chaplain to Fremont County Sheriff’s Office. At several points I served the city PD in that capacity as well. We had as many as six or seven chaplains in the FCSO at one time. However, there is a high turn over among pastors, so when I left in 1999, we were down to “Angel 1”—myself.

Also in the fall of 1985, at the invitation of the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy Director, Ernie Johnson, several of us gathered to officially organize the Wyoming Law Enforcement Chaplains Association. We had 24 hours of training at the academy in a three-day period. After the initial training, we set our standards to be in compliance with, and have reciprocity with, the International Conference of Police Chaplains, which has the most credibility of any law chaplaincy organization. So, today, we require and offer 48 hours of training under the ICPC guidelines for certification as a Certified Wyoming Law Enforcement Chaplain.

In 1999, after moving to Gillette, I approached both the Chief of Police and County Sheriff about setting up a police chaplaincy program, but made little headway. The sheriff at the time allowed me to ride with the officers, but he wanted any move to organize a chaplaincy program to come from the “desire of the officers.” (We have found that this just does not work! And it proved true in this case too.) That sheriff was defeated in the next election and the new sheriff, William Pownall, was enthusiastic about the idea of having a chaplaincy program. Since his election and reelection, I have been a chaplain in Campbell County. My call number is still “Angel 1.”

For the past six years I have also served as Wyoming Law Enforcement Chaplain Association President/Training Officer. This position

holds with it the honor of serving as Chaplain to the Law Enforcement Academy, located at Douglas, WY. As training officer, it is my responsibility to organize, in conjunction with the Academy, dates and training for each year. We invite various resource persons to serve as adjunct instructors. We also train chaplains to the inmates and the various Wyoming prison facilities as well. So our training attempts to meet the needs for all three distinct groups. We have anywhere from 15 to 35 at our training seminars.

I have been doing this for 21 years in one form or another, and I find it very interesting and rewarding. I believe it is a greatly needed field of ministry. In my chaplaincy role, I have officiated at both funerals and weddings, held many hours of “informal” counseling sessions, delivered death notices, and dealt with domestic violence issues.

In order to be a chaplain in Wyoming, one must have the approval of his/her local church, and the regional or national judicatory they serve. Background checks are done on all chaplains. Our 2007 Seminar will be held at the WLEA in Douglas from 6 p.m. Sunday, March 4th through noon Wednesday, March 7th. If you are interested in exploring this type of chaplaincy ministry in Wyoming, please contact me.

Mark Jervis
Senior Pastor
FBC/Gillette, WY
angel1@vcn.com

A letter from your biennial coordinator...

Arise and shine, for your light has come!

Dear Friends:

I wish I could fully convey to you my excitement and anticipation for the 2007 Biennial of the American Baptist Churches USA. This event will be unique and special in some wonderful ways, and I am most delighted to be associated with it.

And what better place to host this wonderful event than in the capital city of our nation, at the Washington Convention Center! ABCUSA is returning to the historic location where our denomination began 100 years ago. How fitting a place to hold a birthday party! This occasion will also provide a terrific experience of the coming together in worship with other members of our Baptist family, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Progressive National Baptist Convention. You will want to be part of this joyous gathering as we bring together great speakers, soulful music, moving worship, great drama and beautiful pageantry.

Our Biennial theme of *"Arise and Shine"* (based on Isaiah 60:1) lends itself to light and motion. Two very gifted committees, the Biennial Program Committee and the Centennial Committee, are working with artful synchronism to develop a program that will leave lasting memories as we celebrate our glorious past and confidently move to God's exciting future for us. It is my hope that all who participate in this event will be spiritually drawn closer to God's light which shines among all peoples.

You will find Annie Marcucci and her dedicated team always ready to provide you with the highest quality service. I will be looking for you in Washington, DC, June 29 – July 2, 2007. Thank you.

Leo S. Thorne

*Associate General Secretary/Mission Resource Development
2007 Biennial Coordinator*



Information has been mailed to your church office and is also available online at <http://www.abcusa.org>.

A Call to Prayer



Scott Phelan, 26, of FBC/Cheyenne, WY, was diagnosed with osteosarcoma in his sinus in September 2006. He is at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX.

He underwent surgery on January 9 to remove the tumor. Complete reconstruction of the right side of his face with either bone from his hip or his skull followed. He will be on a feeding tube for about a month after surgery. This will be followed by speech therapy. The post-surgery pathology report will determine whether he will need more chemotherapy or not.

During all of this, Scott has been inspired to go back to school and become a registered nurse. It seems God is preparing Scott to be able to be used daily to comfort others in their need. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 says, *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God."*

The Phelan family members *know* God is working all things together for good. They see God's hand in so many things that just couldn't have happened without it being within the divine plan.

Recently his mother, Kay, was reading Daniel 6, where Daniel was put in the lion's den. She thought, "If Daniel's mom had been there, she would have been so afraid for her son. But she has been strengthened by verse 23, which says, *"And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God."*

Jay, Kay, and Scott attend First Baptist Church in Cheyenne, WY, and are trusting God and giving God all the glory as God guides them through "the den." Please pray for Scott and family.

First Christmas Program of 2007 Presented in Cheyenne

The Kingdom Kids of First Baptist Church in Cheyenne presented what was likely the Region's first Christmas program of 2007 on Wednesday, January 3. Well, yes, they intended to present it earlier, but the blizzard preempted the preferred schedule.

Under the leadership of Gina Gibson, Dawn McCarty, and Briana Cramer, the Kingdom Kids presented a musical titled, "Miracle on Main Street." The drama and songs brought the story of the birth of Christ to Main Street in a town where the Christian message had been banned from public places.

Making a joyful noise for Jesus, the King, the ministry group also presented the musical at COMEA Shelter and Sierra Hills Assisted Living during December. (Pictures below were taken at Sierra Hills.)



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