

The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

ABCRM Wants to Know What the Region Can Do For Your Church and You

A Gathering! What does that bring to mind as you think about that phrase? Are you excited when ideas begin to form in your mind about what may happen?

This year our Region is holding the Annual Gathering at First Baptist Church of Cheyenne on October 17th and 18th. Are you planning to attend? I am because I am excited to see my family of Christian brothers and sisters from around the region. Many of these people I have known for years and we have experienced many joyous times together. Knowing I can count on them in times of distress to pray for me is also a tremendous source of support. I can't tell you what their friendships have meant to me. I want **you** to also experience that sense of family and share your church happenings with the rest of the ABCRM.



During the Gathering we will have many workshops that focus on what is happening in the American Baptist Churches around the United States, the mission fields and also our own Region. The last workshop is a time of feedback from the churches. We, as a board



and Region staff, want to know what is important to your church and congregation. Our Executive Minister for the Region, Rev. Dr. Steve Van Ostran,

has submitted two questions for you to ponder for the workshop. We would like you to come prepared to discuss these questions and any others that you may also have. The questions are:



Best Experience: Reflect on your entire experience with your congregation. Recall a time when you felt most alive, most involved, spiritually touched, or most excited about your involvement. Tell me about this memorable experience that you have had with your church. Describe the event in detail. What made it an exciting experience? Who was involved? Describe how you felt? Describe what you did as a result of the experience?

Three Wishes: If you had three wishes for your church, what would they be?

Thank you for taking time to discuss these questions with your brothers and sisters in Christ in your individual churches. Please take time to attend the Gathering so we can work together to make this Region a region that God uses to reach the world.

*Cynthia Rigsby
ABCRM
Vice-President*

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ABCRM Core Values

Members of the ABCRM Board and Staff have written a series of articles on each of the “core values” that were developed during the August 1 Board meeting.

These core values help define who ABCRM is and what ABCRM believes. Each article will explain why the core value is important, the Biblical basis for the value, what the value looks like in ABCRM, and key actions that may result from that core value. The first of the articles is Steve Van Ostran’s article below.

Each of these core values have contributed to the development of the new ABCRM Mission Statement. Which is **“Christ-centered congregations connected by grace-filled relationships to reach all nations as the hands and feet of Jesus. We Are: Committed to the Gospel! Learn It, Live It, Share It, Be It!”**

Being the Body of Christ “The Incarnational Church”

We are to be instruments of grace, healing, redemption, and justice in our communities and around the world. We want our churches to make a tangible difference in their communities as Christ’s physical presence in the world today.

Paul tells us something rather amazing in his letters to the Corinthians and the Ephesians—he tells us that we, the church, are the body of Christ. Now, please understand that Paul is talking to individual, local congregations, not about the “universal” church. Though I’ve heard that expression for years, as I studied the expression—as I meditated upon it—I became convinced that there is more to this than we think. So often when we speak of being the body of Christ, we think simply of the organization of the church. We think that “Body” is a convenient metaphor for how the church should work, how the church should utilize the many gifts of their people, how the church should be organized. But I think there is more to it than that.

You see, every Christmas we celebrate the fact that Jesus was the Incarnation of God—that “God became flesh and dwelt among us!” Jesus was the essence of God in human flesh. So if you ask the question “What would God be like as a human?” the answer is Jesus. Just as

Jesus embodied who God is, we, the church, are to embody who Christ is in the world today. It is more than just “What Would Jesus Do?”—a noble sentiment by the way—it is “Who Would Jesus Be?” The church is called to literally do and be here on earth today who Jesus was and is.

Now, that is of course an impossible task. But we live by faith and not by works. So we must strive to do our best to be Christ to the world, to be the hands and feet—and heart and soul for that matter—of Jesus to our hurting world. To me, that is the essence of the Great Commission, the Great Commandment, and any other “Great” you’ve ever come up with. But the question is how do we do that?

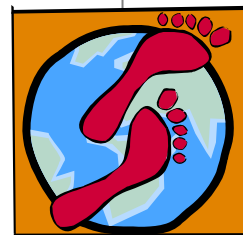
This is where Holy Scripture comes in. The church has been called to study the life of Jesus and then to do what Jesus did. We see that Jesus came to be in relationship with the world He created and we are to enter into these caring relationships with the poor, the outcast, the hurting. As we discover Jesus doing acts of grace and mercy for people, we are called to do acts of grace and mercy. As we find Him teaching about God’s love and God’s expectations for us to seek after righteousness, we are called

to teach about God’s love and God’s expectations for our lives. And when we see Him inviting the “lost,” the outcast, the hopeless and others to New Life, we are to offer this same invitation to the people we minister to as His Body.

This is really nothing new. The church has always known this truth about who and what we are called to be. We just haven’t quite got it down yet. And the real sign of this is how people respond to the Church today. You see, as I read the Gospels, when people were in trouble, when they were hopeless, or hungry or hurting and they knew Jesus was in town, they went to Him for help. But today, the first place people look to for help is... well, suffice it to say it is not the church.

So we are only able to manifest a vague image of Christ in the world today. But it is our hope, it is our intention, that the people we serve will see a far clearer image of Christ through the ministry of our churches than they ever have before. It is our hope that the churches of the ABCRM will truly become the hands and feet of Christ in our world today.

*Rev. Steven Van Ostran, D. Min.
Executive Minister, ABCRM*



Learn and Experience at the Gathering with Special Workshops

The Annual ABCRM Gathering held October 17-18 quickly approaches! One of the most helpful resources of this family gathering will be the opportunity to participate in the workshops.

The workshops provide a unique time to learn valuable tools for your congregations, as well as finding ways to enrich your Christian journey. This year, we have some incredible workshops rich with information about missions, prayer, outreach and so much more.

Go to the ABCRM website at <http://www.abcrm.org/2008gathering.htm#workshops> to find more information about each workshop and who is leading each one.

You will be blessed by the gifts and talents of the workshop leaders and will leave well-equipped with innovative ideas to "Be the Body of Christ from Here to the Ends of the Earth!"

*Brenda J. Goodman
Member
2008 Gathering Committee*

Best Value Around

Register before September 13th, and save \$20 off the registration fee for this year's ABCRM Gathering in Cheyenne, Wyoming. You will pay only \$40 for two days of fellowship, bible study, quality workshops and a chance to express your needs and opinions to the Region Board and Staff.

PLUS, this year the fee **includes** your meals, snacks and beverages throughout the Gathering.

PLUS, if you are one of the first 175 people to register, you will receive a handmade Akha tote bag (worth over \$15).

PLUS, If you register by September 12th for the awesome Pre-Gathering workshop presented by Rev. Harry Riggs, you only pay \$25 – a savings of \$15.



Colors may vary.

**The Most Fun, Fellowship, Food and Gospel for the
\$\$\$
Register TODAY!!!**

Christian Comedian to Highlight Clergy Appreciation Dinner



This year's Gathering is set to be one of the best ever. If you are deciding whether or not to come, please just come. The Clergy Appreciation Dinner is going to be so cool. Not only do we get to enjoy great fellowship with a great meal, we will laugh together.

Set aside October 16th through 18th and come to Cheyenne Wyoming.

We are bringing in Bob Smiley, a Christian comedian and we are guaranteed to have a great time. The evening is a gift from the Rocky Mountain Region to the pastors in our Region. Come and let us give you an evening out that will be worth the drive. Everybody needs to laugh now and again. The Bible says, "A merry heart

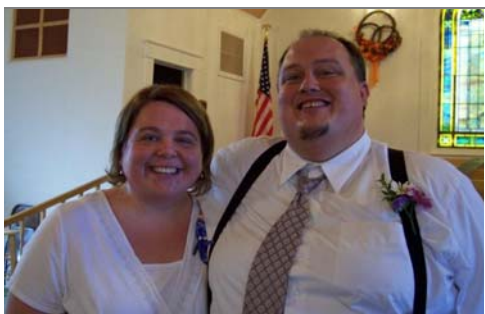
doeth good like a medicine." And, "A happy heart makes the face cheerful."

You gotta hear this guy!

*See ya in October
Pastor Lyn King*

PS– This dinner is not just for Clergy this year! **Everyone can come!** Even if you are not a clergy person, you may still come to the Clergy Appreciation Dinner. Look online at <http://www.abcrm.org/2008gathering.htm#Cost> for information about the cost of the dinner. Come and support the clergy from around ABCRM and see the comedy of Bob Smiley.

Rev. Clint Walker Installed as Pastor at First Baptist of Fowler



The First Baptist Church of Fowler, CO installed Rev. Clint Walker as their new pastor Sunday, August 24. Rev. Walker had previously served as the Associate Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Colorado Springs. He is also a member of ABCRM Board and served on the Region Youth Team.

On a warm afternoon in the Arkansas Valley, over 100 people joined to celebrate this great event. The choir

from FBC of Colorado Springs joined the choir from Fowler for special music. Mike Oldham gave the installation sermon Rich Schweissing and Steve Van Ostran led the charge to the pastor and the charge to the church. Five pastors from the Fowler Ministerial Association also participated in the worship service. Several members of the congregation shared stories of how Rev. Walker had impacted their lives and the lives of the youth at FBC Colorado Springs.

Rev. Walker and his wife, Jennifer, began their ministry in Fowler in



May. Jennifer works as a social worker in La Junta. Clint and Jenn were married December 31, 2007. Needless to say, they have seen many changes in their lives in the past twelve months.

Following the installation service, the church held a "pie social" in the basement. A good time was had by all.

*Rev. Mike Oldham
Ministry and Mission Coach
Western Slope
SE Colorado & New Mexico*

International Ministries Missionaries To Help Recruit others to Serve Around the World

Missionaries Iris and Mario Morales, who have served in Bolivia for the past seven years, now will also work with American Baptist International Ministries in the recruitment of new missionaries. Starting Sept. 1, Iris and Mario will serve on part-time special assignment as recruitment associates while continuing their mission work related to Bolivia.

"We believe God is calling us to expand our efforts in global mission with the appointment of new missionaries," said Reid Trulson, executive director of International Ministries. "The ministry that Iris and Mario enter as recruitment associates will greatly expand our capacity to help missionary candidates discern God's call upon their lives." International Ministries currently serves missionaries and partners in 76 countries.

Iris and Mario currently reside in Arizona for medical reasons and will base their recruitment efforts from this U.S. location. They also continue to work with the Bolivian Baptist Union and the House of Hope and make periodic visits to Bolivia. The House of Hope is a multi-faceted ministry in Cochabamba serving needs of women, children, pastors and families. Cochabamba is a major city in the central Western area of Bolivia, which also is in the central Western part of the continent of South America.

"Our partners deeply respect education and would embrace additional missionaries serving as resources for theological education and various forms of training and leader development," commented Iris and Mario. "The needs in Bolivia can also be found in many other parts of the world. We are eager as recruitment associates to help potential missionary candidates to discern their call to missionary vocations and to match their skills with the needs identified by our partners throughout Latin America, Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East."

Individuals wishing to explore the possibility of long-term international missionary service are invited to contact Iris and Mario Morales by e-mail imrecruitment@abc-usa.org or by calling the International Ministries at 1-800-222-3872 ext. 2304. Learn more about mission opportunities with International Ministries at www.internationalministries.org/read/3831.

American Baptist International Ministries, organized in 1814, is the oldest Baptist mission agency formed in North America. We serve more than 2,500 short-term and long-term missionaries annually, bringing U.S. and Puerto Rico churches together with partners in 76 countries in cutting-edge ministries that tell the good news of Jesus Christ while meeting human needs.

American Baptist News Service

Curtis Park Closes Its Doors

If you read our most recent newsletter, you know that the Board of Curtis Park Community Center has made the painful decision that their ministry is no longer sustainable given a variety of factors that were spelled out to the ABCRM Board. I won't repeat the details here about why that happened or how we (ABCRM) hope to pave the way to continue the ministry in that area. I would urge you to read our past newsletter at http://www.abcrm.org/news_archives/2008/abcrmn1081508.pdf. Our Executive Minister, Steve Van Ostran, explained the situation very clearly on page 3 as part of the report on our August Board meeting.

Since that time, we have received word from Chuck Newcom, President of the Curtis Park Board, that the clothing bank has been closed and they expect the food bank to close within the next week. That leaves only the work being done through a grant to provide for victim services. There is hope that will be maintained into the new ministry that is being pursued with Hope Communities.

The legacy of Curtis Park is a long one. Much has been accomplished to serve in a community where Jesus committed us to serve the least of these. Souls have been saved and people have received both spiritual and economic ministry over the years. For these reasons this is a sad close to an important chapter of our history as a Region and as American Baptists. However, even as this door closes, God is opening up other doors. It will be our firm commitment to explore other avenues to continue ministry to those in need not only in the inner city, but across the Region.

Please pray for those who have depended on those services, for those who are picking up the challenge in the Curtis Park area, and for your leadership as we explore alternatives to honor the legacy of Curtis Park.

Victoria Goff, the Overland White Cross Coordinator, will be sending a letter to the individual ABWM groups directing them on where they should be supporting for the year of 2008-2009.

*Blessings,
Richard Schweissing,
ABCRM
President*

Ministers Council Annual Meeting Will be at the Gathering

Greetings! I wanted to extend to the Ministers of this Region a personal invitation to The Ministers Council annual meeting during the ABCRM's "Gathering" in Cheyenne October 16-18. We will be meeting on *Friday, October 17, from 7:00am- 8:45am at First Baptist Church of Cheyenne.*



Breakfast will be provided that morning to all who come. We will have a basket available for donations.

Our time together will be packed with a number of informational items and discussion pieces. We will look at what "Together In Ministry" groups offer to the clergy of our region. We'll talk about having cluster representatives on our Cabinet. We'll hear about some new items that are happening nationally in The Ministers Council. And we'll talk about cyber-connections.

If you have not sent your membership dues in for 2008, please do so. This past year has been a time of "re-beginning" for our Ministers Council. We've had some good things happen, but we need your membership support to keep us moving forward. At the annual meeting we will press to have people make membership commitments for 2009.

Here's where we've come to. The membership of our Region's Ministers Council has been the following in recent years:

2003- 37
2004- 39
2005- 24
2006- 8
2007- 18
2008- 35 (currently)

As you can see we're on the increase. Our goal is 50 this year. If you've sent your dues in already, thank you. If you haven't, become one of the 50!

I look forward to seeing you in Cheyenne!

*Together In Ministry,
Rev. William D. Wolfe
President
ABCRM Ministers Council*

Important Information Regarding a Typo in WMO Materials



You or your church may have recently received the World Mission Offering (WMO) materials for this year. International Ministries (IM) wants to inform you that there has been an unfortunate typographical error in a telephone number in two places in those materials.

The incorrect phone number is one that neither International Ministries nor your church wants to be associated with. IM deeply apologizes for this typographical error and for any inconvenience this may cause you. To help correct the problem, IM asks that you do the following:

1. Use a dark marker to scratch off the number on the inside left front pocket of the folder. The correct number is 1-800-222-3872, ext 2208.
2. Use a dark marker to scratch off the phone number on the pew envelopes. Or you may discard the pew envelopes you received and order new ones by calling 1-800-4JUDSON. They will be sent to you as quickly as possible at no charge.

The remaining phone numbers throughout the material appear to be correct. The phone number to order additional materials from Judson is also correct, 1-800-4JUDSON. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

*Catherine Nold
Communications Director
International Ministries*

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*Committed to the Gospel!
Learn It, Live it,
Share It, Be It!*

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