

Southeast and Western Slope Clusters Report

Rev. Mike Oldham, Ministry and Mission Coach

I am encouraged as our churches continue to seek ways to connect with the community in 2009. Each year, FBC Olathe reaches out to the Olathe community through the NightVision festival. Highland Park has collaborated with two local elementary schools in an effort to be the hands and feet of Christ in their community. At this writing, FBC Pueblo will spend 11 days at the Colorado State Fair to reach out to the people who attend the state fair. First Baptist Fowler is planning their Backyard Mission Project. First Grand Junction has begun a new worship service on Sunday evenings to reach college students at Mesa State University. These are but a few examples of the ways in which our churches are ministering to the world beyond their walls.

Many churches have also gone global in the past year in support of American Baptist Missions. Audubon Heights had not supported ABC missions in a number of years. Through the leadership of their new pastor, Earl Delph, they donated \$2000 which received receive matching funds from the Luther Rice Mission Fund. First Baptist Church of Grand Junction continues to be one of ABCRM's leading mission support churches. Rev. Dr. Dave DeMott challenged the church to take his dollars and multiply these dollars. In the end, FBG Grand Junction gave over \$15000 to missions through a special emphasis in May and June. Bethany Baptist (Colorado Springs) allowed visitors to park in their parking lot for Pioneer Days, a community event in Old Colorado City, and donated the proceeds to American Baptist missions. Lake Avenue Baptist Church and First Baptist Church Colorado Springs hosted a mission night that explored ways to respond to the need for increased funding for American Baptist missionaries. Kristie Engel, missionary to the Dominican Republic, visited Lake Avenue, Highland Park, First Colorado Springs, First Delta, First Grand Junction, and Flagler Baptist Church. These churches truly reveal how American Baptists have a heart for missions.

The Southeast Cluster welcomed three new pastors. Rev. Dave Davis was called as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Lamar. He comes to us from the ABC of the Central Region. Rev. Nick Butto retired at the end of 2008 and Audubon Heights (Colorado Springs) called Pastor Earl Delph to serve as their pastor. Pastor Delph has been instrumental in reconnecting Audubon Heights with American Baptists and ABC missionaries. Finally, Lake Avenue Baptist Church of Pueblo called Rev. Tim Reed to serve as their pastor.

Flagler Baptist Church and Rev. Alvin Wilkerson are to be commended for their support of camping. Rev. Wilkerson so believes in the impact of camping that he put an advertisement in the local paper stating that if the family covered the \$50 deposit, the church would help any child from Flagler attend camp. A church that averages less than 60 in worship sent 19 kids to camp. WOW!

On a sad note, Pastor Joe Williams from King Solomon Baptist Church in Colorado Springs passed away. He was diagnosed with a brain tumor and died a short time later.