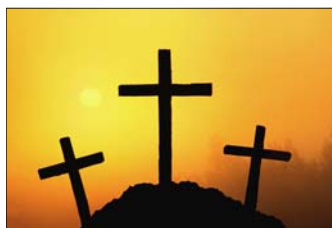


# The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

## Reflections on Easter....

A new pastor recently asked me about how to handle Easter being the first Sunday of the month. In that church, the first Sunday is when they observe The Lord's Supper. Because the church was planning to hold a Maundy Thursday service, the pastor felt this was redundant. For me it just felt awkward to hold communion (a somewhat somber and pensive service) on Easter Sunday – a service that is traditionally focused on joy, celebration, and hope.



Well I advised this pastor to talk with the church board to recognize the Maundy Thursday Communion as the monthly communion, but then I suggested that if that wasn't possible to open the service with communion and move quickly then to the celebration. While I think the original advice is probably best, this suggestion set me to thinking. It has some possibilities.

You see, Easter Sunday is about the contrasts in our life, our faith and our being. It is about life and death, hope and disappointment, dreams and failures. While the pastel's have won out in recent years for one's Easter attire, there was a time when white, with some contrasting color was the order of the day (I can't see me wearing an all white suit with a black shirt and white tie – but for some that would be styling!). Easter is about the contrast.

So maybe, starting an Easter service by remembering the death of Jesus does make sense. Maybe this would help us experience that contrast. That's kind of what composer Robert Lowry was led to utilize when he wrote the much loved hymn "Christ Arose". It starts with the slow, dirge like verses – "Lo in the grave He lay, Jesus my Savior". You feel the drudgery and sadness as you sing, and then suddenly, we get to the refrain. There as the music quickens to a carnival like feel and beat, we proclaim "Up from the grave He arose... with a mighty triumph over his foes!" I know there are other Easter hymns, but for me personally, I don't feel like it is Easter if I haven't sung "Up From the Grave". Maybe a worship service that begins with solemnity of communion but ends with the joy of... I don't know... Baptisms, Baby Dedications, and other celebrations – maybe a worship service like that would be okay.

After all, one goal of worship is to experience again the presence of God in our lives. It does seem we are best prepared to experience that in times of stark contrast. "I was weak, but now am strong, I was blind but now I see."

As you and your congregation worship Christ this Easter morning, some of you may share communion, others won't. My prayer for all of our congregations though is that they experience again the contrast of Christ's great victory over the grave in whatever way you worship.

**CHRIST IS RISEN!**

*Blessings in Him Who Died for Us*  
Steve Van O

*Rev. Dr. Steve Van Ostran*  
Executive Minister, ABCRM

## What's in this RMAB?

### How Many Miracles?

[Page 2](#)

### Earthquake I, Earthquake II

[Page 2](#)

### Schweissings Join Rocky Mountain Staff

[Page 3](#)

### True Light Celebrates 22nd Anniversary

[Page 4](#)

### Colorado Council of Churches Report

[Page 5](#)

### Thailand Mission Trip

[Page 5](#)

### In Memory of Kathy Shirley

[Page 6](#)

### Camp Wyoba Needs Your Help!

[Page 6](#)

### FBC, Loveland Needs Your Help

[Page 7](#)

### Calendar

[Page 7](#)

### Rocky Mountain Prayer Guide

[Page 7](#)

## How Many Miracles?

Many persons, Jews and Romans alike, just could not cope with the person and the message of Jesus. In Jerusalem He stood accused, tried, tortured and as the old spiritual tells us “He never said a mumblin’ word.” He gave them no spoken grounds for confrontation, so they took the easy way out. They demanded crucifixion and they got it. Little did they know that, not realizing it, they were fitting into Jesus’ and His Father’s plan.

Previously, in the Gethsemane Garden quiet, He prayed for this missional cup to pass, but then He said to His Father “If this cannot pass away unless I drink it, thy will be done.” So He “drank” of the cup of public humiliation, the pains of the scourge and of the driven nails, the jeer of a criminal hanging beside Him, His sacrificial suffering until mid-afternoon. Jesus “cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up His spirit.” We must always remember that word “yielded.” His life was not taken from Him. All this on the Friday now called “good.”

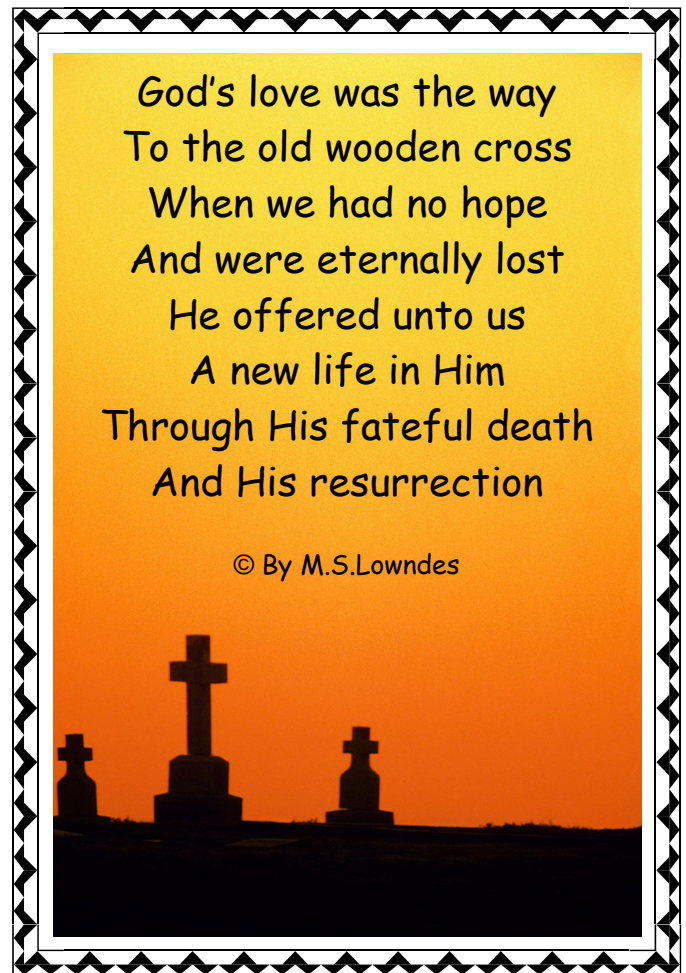
Years ago one pastor (of many) preached this appalling account but ended joyfully “But Sunday’s comin’!” After the Sabbath, many concerned women found the empty tomb and heard the angelic news “He is risen.” Mary Magdalene thought the risen Jesus to be the gardener. When addressed by Him, she greeted Him as “Rabboni” meaning “Beloved Teacher.” Again, again, and again He appeared to many, including His disciples – one time on the beach, inviting them to breakfast! He charged them to carry on His mission, since His part, as He said on the cross, was “finished.” He went to His Father.

George Beverly Shea, a member of the Billy Graham Crusade Team thrilled listeners with his wonderful bass voice. The chorus of one of his familiar songs goes like this:

“It took a miracle to put the stars in place  
It took a miracle to hang the world in space  
But when He saved my soul, cleansed and made me whole  
It took a miracle of love and grace.”

How many miracles? How many do you want? With our Lord’s great saving sufficiency, you need only one. Its explanation is as ordinary as A-B-C. Admit that you need this miracle of salvation. Believe that this miracle will shape your new life. Commit yourself to living this miracle, because, friend, **THIS ONE’S FOR YOU!**

*Patricia Roberts  
FBC, Sterling*



## EARTHQUAKE I EARTHQUAKE II

When Earthquake I (Haiti) struck the world rushed to provide assistance, American Baptist among them, but in relatively short time news of Haiti was relegated to the back pages of the newspapers. When Earthquake II (Chile) struck Haiti disappeared from the news completely and Chile did not seem to keep our attention even as long as Haiti. In both places the devastation has been overwhelming, the work of rebuilding will go on for years, and it won’t happen without our help.

In Haiti American Baptist doctors and nurses, largely under the leadership of Kristy Engel, missionary nurse stationed in the Dominican Republic, have been providing continuing support for the Haitian people. Herb Rogers has been working with our partners, the Haitian Baptist Convention, to plan for long range recovery efforts.

In Chile planning has already begun. However, our missionaries on the ground, Dwight and Barbara Bolick were in the United States on home assignment when the earthquake struck. They were scheduled to return the Tuesday after the earthquake and couldn’t get in. May 15<sup>th</sup> was their latest target date for returning as of the writ-

ing of this article.

**American Baptists have always responded to such crises around the world. Now is the time for American Baptists of the Rocky Mountains to step up!**

What can you do?

First and foremost, **Pray**. Pray for the people who are hurting and struggling for their very survival. Pray that they will know the presence of God in the midst of this chaos. Pray that God will raise up those who can give financially to support the recovery. Pray that God will raise up those to go and help with the recovery. Pray for those who are and will be going that they will serve in the Spirit of God.

Second, **Give**. You can give a number of ways. First, go to [www.internationalministries.org](http://www.internationalministries.org), click on the "give" button and you can choose to give to either Haiti or Chile earthquake relief. Second, you can mail your check to: One Great Hour of Sharing, International Ministries, ABC-USA, PO Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482. Finally, your church can send money through their regular monthly mission giving by designating money for either Haiti or Chile under the One Great Hour of Sharing line.

Third, **Go**. The Haitian Baptist Convention has put together an initial recovery plan that includes education, feeding programs, and rebuilding. International Ministries, longtime partners with the Haitian Baptist Convention, is working alongside the Haitians to implement this plan. We need medical people and construction people who will be willing to go for a week at a time to help the community of Grand Goave rebuild their lives. ABCRM will provide organizing and training support for teams from churches or clusters of churches who wish to go and help coordinate dates with International Ministries for optimum times to go. (Obviously we don't want to go when 30 other teams from across the country will be there and we are climbing over each other!) If you as an individual would like to go or if your church would like to go contact Rich Schweissing at [RSchweissing@msn.com](mailto:RSchweissing@msn.com) and you will be put on a list to be kept informed and put on a list to be grouped with others of your area who want to go. Send your name, address (snail mail and email), phone number, times of the year that are best (list months, not specific dates), and whether you would be a medical or construction person.

Once Dwight and Barb Bolick are back in Chile and have time to assess the situation where they work, there may be further calls for support in Chile. Let Rich know if you want to be informed about that as well.

*Rich Schweissing  
ABCRM Region Board, Past President*

## Schweissing's Join Rocky Mountain Staff as Regional Missionaries to Political Refugees

Dan and Estela Schweissing, formerly missionaries with International Ministries, joined the Rocky Mountain Region staff as Regional Missionaries on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

The couple was called by the Region to serve political refugees who have been resettled in the Region and to help with future resettlement efforts. They formerly served with International Ministries and were on home assignment following their service in the Bahamas.



Dan and Estela are no strangers to us here in the Rocky Mountain Region. Dan grew up in the Crossroads American Baptist Church and is a graduate of Denver Seminary. As missionaries for IM, Dan and Estela have visited most of our churches in the Region, even laying claim to the title of having had the most missionary deputation visits to Wyoming congregations than any other missionary team!

In their role as Regional Missionaries the Schweissing's will serve as a liaison between the Region, local congregations and local resettlement agencies, work with English as a Second Language programs, assist in secondary migration issues and assist local congregations to be more effective in reaching out to political refugees, especially those being resettled from Burma. During their recent home assignment, Dan and Estela enjoyed volunteering in this role and saw the need for an expanded ministry. Crossroads American Baptist Church, located in Northglenn, CO, will be a significant partner with the Region in this expanded work.

While in the Bahamas, Dan served the Mission Baptist Consortium of Churches in the area of theological education at Atlantic College and Theological Seminary in Nassau. Estela served in the area of general ministry with the seven Haitian congregations of the 13-member Mission Baptist Consortium of churches in Nassau, Bahamas with particular emphasis on the needs of women and children. Like many other immigrant communities throughout the world, Haitians in the Bahamas faced severe discrimination and were often forced to do menial labor for substandard wages. Dan and Estela's experience in the Bahamas has uniquely prepared them to serve in this ministry.

Individuals and congregations who wish to support Dan and Estela in their new role can do so by sending gifts to ABCRM and designating it for Schweissing's Regional Missionaries Support. Individuals and congregations who have been supporting Dan and Estela's work in the Baha-

mas will be contacted about how they would like future gifts to be directed.

The Schweissing's can be contacted at [dan@haitianministries.net](mailto:dan@haitianministries.net).

## True Light Celebrates 22nd Anniversary by Breaking Ground for Addition

Sunday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, True Light Baptist Church celebrated its 22 years of ministry by breaking ground on a new addition to their existing building.

The 6,500 square foot addition is projected to cost around \$1.65 million dollars and will include some remodeling to the existing facility.



The new addition will house a new lobby and reception area for the current sanctuary, a larger youth room to accommodate a growing youth program, a new larger kitchen, expanded restroom facilities, a media room and a new pastoral office suite. This addition is also designed to serve as the foyer for a new sanctuary to be constructed at a later date.

Due to the current economic climate, the church decided to finance the project themselves by issuing church bonds. The church had raised \$873,000 through their capital stewardship program "Ministry Without Limits" to complete the design phase of the project and to pay off their existing ABEC mortgage. Since releasing the bonds to the church, the congregation has purchased over a \$1.04 million of the bonds. Potential purchases by the congregation prior to them being sold on the open market are as high as \$1.2 million.

Rev. Bill Golson Jr., (pictured below) Founding



Pastor and Pastor, stated that this "is a very real example of how obstacles can be overcome when people grasp a pastoral vision, believe that God is able, and have a mind to attempt great things for God. Our foundational passage has been Ephesians 3:20, "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine,

according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."

In marking the celebration, Pastor Golson shared that even as he had been led to this vision, he "has some concerns". He then went on to explain his concerns were not about God's ability to provide for the building, but his concerns were for the congregation to maintain its focus on being God's people – concerns about folks who only showed up on Sunday and not for Bible study, concerns for choir members who only showed up when they were scheduled to perform, concerns about people who would distance themselves from the church but failed to leave the church. Pastor Golson also praised the church saying that it would have not been able to come this far if it were not a tithing church and he encouraged that this spirit and practice continue to be a part of who they are as a congregation. Pastor's words were received as a challenge to move ahead with what God is doing there.

Following the worship service, the Groundbreaking service was held. Special guests were invited to bring greetings prior to the site dedication and the actual groundbreaking activities. Special guests included Michael Hancock, Denver City Councilman; Anthony Miller, Construction Manager; Bennie Milliner, representative for Senator Michael Bennett; Ben Richards, Share Financial Services, Rev. Dr. Steve Van Ostran, ABC of the Rocky Mountains; and Keith Zahler, Lee Architects.

Steve Van Ostran  
ABCRCM Executive Minister



Pastor Golson, True Light member, and Steve Van Ostran

## COLORADO COUNCIL OF CHURCHES REPORT TO ABCRM March 4, 2010

Mission: Living in Unity, Working for Justice  
Christian Unity Commission

- Easter Sunrise Service at Red Rocks: Plans are in progress.
- Christian and Interfaith dialogues, CCC/ Jewish & Muslim.
- Council continues to sponsor Denominational Executive breakfasts to provide a forum for the Executives to discuss issues of common interest.
- Unity Commission encourages ecumenical greetings presented at regional denominational assemblies.
- The Inclusivity document, intended to meet grant request requirements passed with the addition of “while respecting and upholding the faith traditions of the individual member churches.”

### Justice Commission

- Immigration: We are working with Immigration Integration Initiative with the Colorado Trust to help integrate immigrants into their communities and promoting immigration reform including a theological rationale.
- Special Needs for Children regarding Education: The CCC has joined with Great Futures Colorado Campaign Partners to promote education on the need for greater funding of public education K – 12 and undergraduate levels. Colorado is 38<sup>th</sup> in the nation for teacher to student ratio and 49<sup>th</sup> in funding higher education.
- We as the Council participate with Housing Justice and Hunger for Justice which have merged to promote low income housing and hunger programs.
- We are engaged in an Immersion Event: Health Care Immersion with Faith Leaders around the State called “Engaging Faith Leaders in Health Care Reform.” We, the Council, have developed four religiously grounded principles for supporting health care for all, particularly lower income people and children as well as more affordable health care for all.
- We are partnering with the Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence to provide additional information and education to prevent domestic violence.
- We are providing input on a number of bills including bills dealing with affordable housing, speeding up food stamp participation process, expansion of health services to underserved areas, pay lending bill, drug sentencing reform, eliminating gender in pricing of insurance policies.
- Heard presentation on ballot proposals: Proposition 101, proposed Amendments 60 and 61, all of which would cripple our state government.

[What's in this RMAB?](#)

I am happy to speak further about any of these issues or the Council in general.

*Gordon J. Kieft*  
*Vice President of the Colorado Council of Churches*

## ABCRM Thailand Mission Trip

From February 3-17, an ABCRM mission team comprised of Arlene Bowie (FBC/Colorado Springs), Beth Kieft and Karen Pinkham (Calvary Baptist /Denver), Sandy Stensland (Autumn Ridge Church/Rochester, MN), and team-leader Kerry Hassler (FBC/Boulder and ABCRM Mission Committee member) traveled to Thailand to meet and learn about the ministries of ABC-IM missionaries and do work-projects with some of them, including:

- Jeff/Annie Dieselberg, whose Bangkok NightLight ministries help women escape from prostitution, and to learn about and accept Christ;
- Mike/Becky Mann, whose Chiang Mai-based Integrated Development Program (IDTP) ministries provide income to hill tribe families by teaching them how to grow coffee, as well as by helping them through medical and education programs;
- Karen Smith and Kit Ripley, whose Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai New Life Center ministries shelter in-need tribal women, and help them to get an education;
- Kim Brown, whose Chiang Mai “House of Love” provides day-care for young children from needy families;
- Chuck/Ruth Fox, whose Chiang Rai Akha Crafts ministry provides family income to Akha villagers, and whose Christian outreach ministries to Akha villagers in northern Thailand;
- Scott Coates, whose Chiang Rai “Mekong Minority Foundation” provides works with many tribal groups to help with community development.

Arlene and Sandy (both nurses) helped the staff of the Mann’s IDTP “Starbucks Clinic” to diagnose and treat people from nearby villages, while Karen, Beth, and Kerry assisted Akha villagers and the Mann’s IDTP Lanna Café Coffee staff to construct a shed for coffee-processing equipment in an Akha village near Chiang Rai. Karen and Beth also did a crafts project coordinated by Kit Ripley with New Life Center women. During the trip, team members learned about the Thai culture and saw many beautiful places in Thailand. You can read more about this mission trip on the ABCRM “Missions Experiences Blog” at <http://abcrmissionexperiences.blogspot.com>.

*Kerry Hassler*  
*ABCRM Mission Committee Member*

## In Memory of Kathy Shirley Dedicated Secretary

Kathy Shirley died March 13, 2010 following a short bout with cancer.

For 23 years Kathy served American Baptist Churches as office secretary, editor of the Rocky Mountain American Baptist magazine and camp registrar for Black Forest. From 1971 to 1994, Kathy was a faithful servant, first for the Colorado Baptist Convention then with The American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains Region. She humbly and generously gave her many skills covering any duty in the office for three Executive Ministers and more than a score of various professional staff members.



She was an extremely capable and quiet servant of God and the American Baptist Churches. Her work is recorded on the thousands of Region historic letters with her initials typed at the bottom, hundreds of pastors' mailings that she prepared and the many bound books of ABCRM magazines; not to mention coffee made, plants watered, filing done, records kept, calls answered, information provided—all with a shy smile and pleasant tones. We owe a great thanks to Kathy.

For many years Kathy was a member of Calvary Baptist Church in Denver. She is survived by Bob, her husband of 54 years, two children, David and Jeanette, and her beloved black cat, Oliver. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Bob Shirley, 4300 Newland, Wheat Ridge, CO, 80033.

*Carol Willard  
SoulJourners Committee*

**Interim Ministries-ABC  
Is happy to be a partner with  
ABC of the Rocky Mountains  
to provide intentional interim  
ministers to assist churches  
in a critical transition time  
to make adjustments in**

- **Governance**
- **Life together**
- **Personnel**
- **Mission and vision**



**Contact your regional office and  
Dr. James Munro  
Interim Ministries-ABC  
(800) 222-3872 ext. 2062**

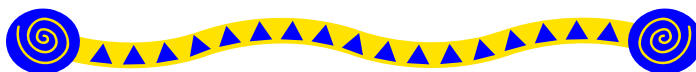
## Camp Wyoba needs your help!

We are building a pole barn/ maintenance building the week of May 22. The camp has been given a tractor with several attachments. A four-wheeler added to the equipment last summer as well. These gifts and the truck already owned have dictated building a place to store and protect them. You are invited to participate in the construction of the maintenance building. Please bring the following tools with you if you plan to attend:



- Hammer
- Level
- Ladder
- Drill
- Circular Saw Professional 24"
- Carpenter String
- Plumb Line

The Board is also soliciting funds to finalize the maintenance building. If you can contribute, send your donation to Camp Wyoba, P. O. Box 442, Casper, WY 82602, or through the Region Office designated Camp Wyoba Facilities.



As you consider your donations for the future, Camp Wyoba could use your help. The Wyoba Board has established a "wish list" of projects and equipment needed. Please prayerfully consider giving any of these items, or contributing to their purchase. The Board thanks you for your consideration of these gifts.



Pole Barn	\$20,000 (\$10,000 already received)
Administrator's Cabin	\$20,000 (approximately)
Road Base	\$ 5,000 (approximately)
Bathhouse Improvements (Toilets and Sinks)	\$10,000 (approximately)

*Deanna Dyer  
Camp Wyoba Board President*

## FBC, Loveland Needs Your Help

**Getting ready to do some Spring Cleaning?** While cleaning in your church base-ments, please see if you have any Story Boards that we used for Sunday School lessons years ago.

First Baptist Church in Loveland is planning a trip to Chiapas, Mexico. Chiapas is the southernmost state in Mexico. Churches in this area are often run in a building poorly constructed by someone with little education or knowledge of how to organize, or with little or no resources.

We would like to take some resources to them. We need approximately four story board sets. If you have only the felt stories that would be ok too. We can make the boards out of felt.

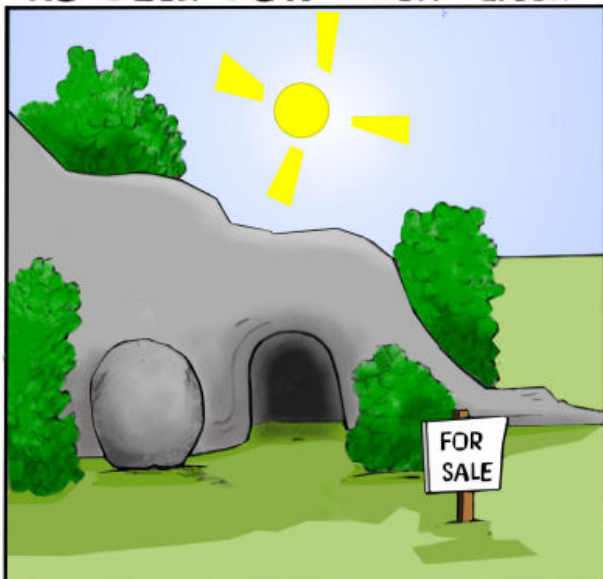
Please let Jackie Arnold know if you are able to send us any. We will need them by May 10 as the trip is planned for May 27. If you don't have any storyboards but would like to contribute to this project please make your check out to First Baptist Church for Chiapas project.



Jackie Arnold  
ABW CO State Treasurer  
1307 S. Tyler Ave.  
Loveland, CO 80537

(970) 231-3697, [jaloveland@comcast.net](mailto:jaloveland@comcast.net)

### The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



**FOR SALE** - Single owner tomb. Only used three days, and still has that new tomb smell. Reason for sale.. resident was resurrected.

[What's in this RMAB?](#)

## Calendar

### April

April 2 (Fri)	Good Friday (Region office is closed)
April 4 (Sun)	Easter Sunday
April 9-17 (Fri-Sat)	Chiapas, New Mexico Mission Trip
April 10 (Sat)	Missional Church Learning Community (Tentative) / Northern Front Range
April 10 (Sun)	Missional Church Learning Community (Tentative) /Denver
April 12 (Mon)	2010 Gathering Committee Meeting @ Crossroads Baptist Church
April 17 (Sat)	Tom Myers Mission Day at Douglas, WY
April 24 (Sat)	Region Board Executive Committee Meeting

### May

May 9 (Sun)	Mother's Day
May 22-23 (Sat-Sun)	Wyoba Opening Weekend
May 31 (Mon)	Memorial Day (Region office is closed)



### April

*"Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God."* Hebrews 6:7

#### Prayer Emphasis:

Please pray that the churches and ministries of ABCRM will have hearts prepared to receive the "rain" of the Holy Spirit. May we be a truly blessed people!

#### Please pray for these churches:

- † First Baptist, Jackson
- † First Baptist, Lamar — Pastor David Davis
- † First Baptist, Lander — Pastor Scott Engelhart
- † First Baptist, Laramie — Pastor Mary Beth Mankin
- † First Baptist, Longmont
- † First Baptist, Loveland — Pastor John Turnage
- † First Baptist, Lusk — Pastor Tom Strock
- † First Baptist, Montrose — Pastor Ron Holz



#### Please pray for this leader:

- † Jessica Fischer, Communications Specialist

## 2009 Annual Reports

Annual Reports are due April 30. We hope that you will take the time to complete your report. This information is useful to assess the health of our denomination. It also helps us plan for future mission and ministry, so your reports are important.

Each church who submits their report by April 30 will be entered into a drawing to win a dinner for two at a nice restaurant (\$50.00 value), so be sure to complete your report early!

If you did not receive your report, have questions, or need assistance completing your report, please call Alyce at (303) 988-3900.

### Online Reporting

National gives you the option to complete your report online. In the past years, the Region office has found this process to be a little complicated and not always user friendly. You are welcome to complete the form online. If you choose to do so, we ask that you complete only pages one and two online. Pages three and four for **Professional Status** and **Current Church Officers**, we ask that you complete and mail to our office along with pages one and two, but noting what was completed online.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this report. It is greatly appreciated.



### *The Rocky Mountain American Baptist*

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of the Rocky Mountains  
[www.abcrm.org](http://www.abcrm.org)

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Executive Minister  
[svanostran@abcrm.org](mailto:svanostran@abcrm.org)

**Jessica Fischer**  
Communications Specialist

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Send submissions to  
[akeys@abcrm.org](mailto:akeys@abcrm.org)*

*Reprint permission is granted  
to ABCRM churches.*

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

**Happy  
Easter**

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