



November 15, 2005

The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

Independence in Community



It happened a long time ago when people were challenged to “Go west!” The Homestead Act seemed the best way to pry families loose and encourage them to travel by covered wagon to the untamed western lands.

And so they came, exchanging the crowded conditions of eastern cities for the open spaces of the plains. Settlers claimed their initial 160 acres and built cabins or sod huts right in the middle of their new property. Pride of ownership was marked by fences along property lines. Words like “independence” and “private property” became the buzz words of these early settlers.

It wasn’t easy. Winters were bitter. Summers were hot and dusty. Diseases struck. Storms came. Making it “on their own” was hard—indeed, sometimes, impossible.

The population pattern began to change. More and more settlers recognized that they had a better chance of survival if they built their houses near to each other. Houses began to appear on adjoining corners of property instead of the middle. They began to lose their grip on independence, built gates in the fence lines, and relinquished some of their privacy. The hot summer, the lengthy winter, or the threatening illness wasn’t as menac-

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ing if people had neighbors within walking/riding distance. In fact, they found it was actually enjoyable to get together. Harvesting, slaughtering, and building became group projects. Weddings and worship, births and deaths were shared activities. Mere existence was exchanged for real living.

Those early settlers learned something what we seem to have forgotten today—pulling closer together is better than trying to exist apart. When was the last time you had a

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Independence in Community

significant open-hearted, fences-down interaction with people from a sister church?

That's what ministry and mission clusters are all about. We need each other—not only to survive, but to thrive.

The churches of East and West Wyoming met Saturday, November 12 at First Baptist Church in Casper to talk about engaging in ministry and mission together. FBC moderator, Bill Mitchell, and Dores Mitchell, the church secretary, were the host couple. Wayne Dvirnak, Ministry and Mission Coach for the two clusters, opened the gathering by sharing some thoughts from Psalm 42. Desmond Hoffmeister, Transition Executive Minister, and Mike Oldham, Ministry and Mission Coach for SE Colorado/NM and Western Colorado/UT completed the leadership team for this event.

Small group conversations revealed many of the same concerns that were highlighted at earlier cluster meetings. (See archived 10/15 issue of the ABCRM newsletter.) Participants expressed their desires to be together for reasons other than to transact business. Worship, renewal, and educational events were suggested.

One participant noted, "Wyoming is one city with really long streets. There are various neighborhoods and suburbs, but we are one city here in Wyoming. We need each other." Even though many Wyoming churches are separated by many miles, a community attitude remains. The hope is that cluster activity will help churches pull closer together in ministry and mission once again.

Center and Monte Vista Churches Welcome Betty Weaver

On Sunday, September 18, 2005, Betty Weaver from Roseville, IL, preached/candidated at First Baptist, Center, and First Baptist, Monte Vista, CO. Both churches voted to call Betty as their pastor. After returning to Illinois and praying about the opportunity, Betty accepted the call. Betty moved to Colorado and started her new ministry on November 1, 2005.

Prior to coming to Colorado, Betty served as pastor at the First Baptist Church of Roseville, IL, for over four years. While in Roseville, Betty also was president of the Roseville Ministers Assoc., hospital chaplain, and moderator of the Salem Baptist Assoc. in Illinois. Prior to being in Illinois, Betty served as child care pastor at First Baptist Church, Salt Lake City, UT. While in Utah, Betty served as supply pastor/preacher for churches throughout Utah and as the moderator and vice-moderator of the Utah Baptist Association. While in school, Betty was a teaching assistant, associate minister, pastoral intern, and was involved in lay ministry at some nearby churches.

Betty has published several works including *Devotions for Youth*, *Bible Book Study for Youth*, and miscellaneous magazine articles.

Before God called Betty into pastoral ministry, she worked as an accountant for nearly 20 years.

Betty received her Master of Divinity degree from George W. Truett Theological Seminary, Baylor University, Waco, TX, in May, 1997, graduating Magna Cum Laude. She received her Bachelor



of Arts from Baylor in May, 1994, and was selected Phi Beta Kappa. Betty became an ordained minister on June 7, 1998, by the First Baptist Church of Salt Lake City, UT, through the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A.

Most of Betty's family is in Texas including the following: (son) James and Karen, (granddaughters) Katy, and Kristy in the Dallas area; (son) John and Linda, both in the U.S. Air Force in Del Rio; (granddaughters) Alicia and Cheyenne in the Dallas area; and (brother) Billy in Jacksboro. Betty is anxiously awaiting the arrival of her fifth grandchild!

Betty's ministry objectives are to continue to serve God through preaching, teaching, in-depth Bible study, spiritual growth and development, missions, evangelism and outreach, and pastoral care. Betty wants to be involved in holistic ministry with people of all ages, ethnic, social, economic, and educational backgrounds. Betty desires to glorify, honor, and exalt God by using all the different gifts, talents, and abilities God has given her.

First Baptist Churches of Center and Monte Vista welcome her enthusiastically and praise God for Betty's acceptance to the call!

Submitted by Darlene Thompson

The Red Cross is Training New Disaster Response Volunteers Now The American Red Cross Needs You!

When disaster strikes, the American Red Cross cares for victims by meeting immediate emergency needs—providing shelter, food, basic health services, and personal comfort and care items. They also provide assistance and resources that help individuals and families affected by disaster rebuild their lives. But they can't do it without you.

The Red Cross is looking for new volunteers who can travel to the Gulf Coast region and other disaster-affected areas to help victims in desperate need. They also need to strengthen their reserves of trained volunteers who can be ready to respond whenever and wherever help is needed. Can you help?

The Red Cross needs people from diverse backgrounds to:

- spend three weeks (21 days) volunteering in disaster-affected areas, in the Gulf Coast states and other regions, including local communities near your home.
- provide compassion and comfort to those who need it most.
- work in Red Cross shelters.
- prepare and serve meals.
- interview survivors and help match them with resources they need to rebuild their lives.

Things to consider before volunteering:

- Can you accept an out-of-state assignment for 21 days?
- Are you able to tolerate difficult living and working conditions—extreme weather, in areas that may be flooded, without power, with little food or water?
- Will you take one to two days of required training?

Act now!

- Go online to www.denver-redcross.org and click on “Volunteer Today.”
- Review information about volunteer roles and responsibilities, and:
 - download and complete seven forms,
 - schedule an interview, and
 - complete a one-day training course.
- If you are not available to accept an out-of-state assignment, but would like to volunteer locally to help disaster victims in our own area, please contact Connie Dixon at cdixon@denver-redcross.org to request a Volunteer Application. Please let her know that you were referred from the Give Hope Now National Volunteer Recruitment Campaign.

Upon completing their training, volunteers may be deployed at any time. The Red Cross covers all expenses related to travel to and from disaster sites and on-site lodging, and provides a maximum daily allowance for meals and other essentials. Please call 303-607-4761 with any questions.

Thank you! Volunteers have always been the heart of the Red Cross, and never before have the American people needed you more.

“...in grateful giving we become our true selves.”

Thanksgiving

In a chapel prayer, Walter Brueggemann offered these words, “[We recognize] that You in Your generosity give us more than enough, and in grateful giving we become our true selves, breathed in the image of Your Son.”¹ Did we hear him correctly? Did he really say, “More than enough?”

And by the way, how much is enough these days? We live in a world overrun with “stuff,” but we can't seem to get enough of it. Our closets and garages are witnesses to our addiction to collecting “stuff.” We are preoccupied with keeping what we have and getting what we don't. As a result, satisfaction escapes us. Compassion is alien. Thanksgiving is neglected.

In this season of Thanksgiving, take a step back and look in the cluttered corners of your closets and garage and admit, “I have more than enough stuff.” Then stand in quiet awe and thank God for all your stuff. Next take a step forward in becoming your true self by beginning to transfer some of your resources to help people in need. That's thanksgiving!

Ingrid Dvirnak

¹As quoted in *Giving: Growing Joyful Stewards in Your Congregation* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Ecumenical Stewardship Center, 2004), 17.



Small Church Serving the Community and Impacting Mission

Hillcrest Baptist Church and Friends

Hillcrest Baptist Church (HBC) in Arvada, CO, is in some ways typical of older, smaller churches these days. Our membership is small, just 27 members, with many members being retired and living on fixed incomes. It is difficult for us to have at our disposal the financial and human resources needed to keep an aging building functional. Left to our own devices, HBC should have folded long ago. But God has provided us with friends who help us keep going. Our church has eight different organizations that also use our facilities. Let me introduce you to our friends:

1. Jefferson County Election Commission

HBC is a polling place for city, state, and national elections.

2. R-HOM

R-HOM is an organization of families who homeschool their children. Meetings are held at HBC to share ideas, problems, and teaching resources.

3. Faith Christian Academy

Across the street from HBC is the main campus of Faith Bible Chapel (FBC) where they run a high school. The undeveloped lot that HBC owns next to our building is used as an athletic field by the school. Last year FBC paid for the lot to be leveled and planted with drought resistant grass. For more information about FBC visit their website at <http://www.fbc.org>.



4. The Journey Project

The Journey Project is a group of Christians, not representing any particular denomination, who work to help the community. The mission of The Journey Project is to challenge people to enter a passionate relationship with Jesus Christ and equip them for the adventurous journey. Monthly meetings of The Journey Project are held at HBC. Over the years HBC and the Journey Project have shared the joys of projects such as filling shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child and caroling at local nursing homes. For additional information about The Journey Project, visit their website at: <http://www.journeyproject.com>.

5. Congregation Lion of Judah

The Congregation Lion of Judah (CLJ) is a group of Messianic Jews and Gentile Christians who try to recreate the practices of the early Church when many members were observant Jews. For more information about Messianic Judaism, go to a website run by one of CLJ's members: <http://www.heartofisrael.org>.

6. Calvary Christian Slavic Church of Denver

Composed of immigrants from Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus, Calvary Christian Slavic Church (CCSC) conducts worship services in Russian on Sunday afternoon at HBC. Along with a sister church in Colorado Springs, the CCSC tries to meet the needs of the Slavic immigrant community. Many of the members of CCSC deserve the "martyr's crown" for what they had to suffer for keeping their faith under the Soviet Communist regime.

7. Youth with a Mission



Youth With a Mission (YWAM) is an international group of Christians working to help make a difference in a needy world. Founded in 1960, it is now one of the largest interdenominational and international Christian ministries, with about 12,000 volunteer staff (and thousands more affiliated workers) based in over 700 locations in over 135 countries. Mercy ministries meet some of the practical and physical needs of over 400,000 people annually. Caring for street children in South America; aiding in the recovery of drug addicts in North America and Western

Europe; feeding and housing refugees and women in need in Africa and Asia, operating ocean-traversing ships demonstrating and declaring the Good News are just some of the ways helping hands are extended. YWAM also engages in church planting, in coordination with churches and denominations, or on its own, among people who don't yet have churches. The Denver branch of YWAM is located two blocks away from HBC. When YWAM mission groups return from their overseas assignments, they use HBC as a place to sleep and hold debriefings. You can get more information about YWAM at <http://www.ywamdenver.org>.

8. Love Russia



Love Russia is a British, Christian humanitarian aid charity, which has its headquarters on the Isle of Wight. The aim of the charity is to promote any charitable purpose in the territories of the former Soviet Union. They work to relieve poverty, suffering, and distress by demonstrating practical Christian compassion and, where appropriate, sharing the Christian faith. Current projects include supporting orphanages, baby homes, and rescue shelters for homeless children. Through Genesis, a bursary-type funding program, Love Russia supports a number of at-risk teens through further education. Provision

of children's dental services, support for several hospitals, and the establishment of a pioneering workshop for disabled young adults are other areas in which the charity is involved. During the last few months, HBC has been helping Love Russia set up an office and support network in the United States. For information on Love Russia visit their website: <http://www.loverussia.org>.

So you see, small churches can have a big impact on mission efforts if they are willing to share the greatest resource they have—a building that is empty most of the week. The secret of the success HBC has had is that we have been very careful in the selection of ministry partners. By finding groups that are doctrinally compatible, we have been able to gain not just renters, but friends with whom we share worship and fellowship opportunities. This has created a larger community where all members are concerned with the well-being of the other groups and practice a focused stewardship of the property. It has been a challenge to balance the needs of all of the groups and to make sure the property is respected and protected. But it has been well worth the effort. I hope other small churches will look at what we are doing and find ideas of how they can help their own churches thrive.

*Bart Torbert
Financial Secretary and Trustee*

Curtis Park Community Center Fall Update

In Memoriam

Wayne G. Christian, a lifetime member of the Curtis Park Community Center Board died September 24, 2005. As president of the Rocky Mountain Baptist Association (later subsumed into the American Baptist churches of the Rocky Mountains), he was instrumental in bringing together the people and the resources for the founding of the Community Center.

Wayne Christian served on the boards of many and various community agencies including, Franklin Park and Mt. Vista Nursing Homes and the Denver Botanical Gardens. He was co-founder of the Plains Conservation Center and Chatfield Arboretum.

In June of 2004 the original building of the Curtis Park Community Center was named the Wayne G. Christian Community Center in honor of his more than 50 years of service to the Center.

He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Kara Lorraine Christian, and his daughter, Kara. He was preceded in death by his son, Karl.

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is fast approaching. Each year the Center gives food baskets to hundreds of deserving families. Supplies are needed now so that the baskets can be prepared. Items needed include:

- stuffing mix
- canned pumpkin

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www.ministerscouncil.org

Looking for resources for the Pastoral Relations Committee in your church?

Need a copy of the Ministers Code of Ethics?

Curious about Clergy Wellness Grants?

It's all there. . .and more!

Visit the Ministers Council website.

Curtis Park Update

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- canned pie filling
- pie crust mix
- canned vegetables
- gravy packets
- salad dressings
- canned fruit
- cranberries
- box pudding and Jello

Christmas

Christmas season continues to focus on food needs, but adds a Christmas Shop where parents can come to purchase gifts for their children at a greatly reduced cost. The availability, of course, depends upon the contributions of persons like you. Items which are especially needed include:

- packages of socks and underwear (men, women, children)
- new toys
- items for teen boys
- items for teen girls
- sports equipment (balls, gloves, etc.)

Food Bank

The Center maintains a year-round food bank. Contributions are always needed. Please include such items as

- non-perishable items
- grocery bags
- travel size shampoos and soaps

Volunteers Needed

Thanksgiving Baskets,
November 19th (2 shifts)

- 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
- 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Christmas Shop,
December 17th (2 shifts)

- 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
- 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Position Opening: Board of International Ministries/ABCUSA

Title: Director of Missionary Kids (MK) Care and Concern

Location: Valley Forge, PA

Start Date: Immediate

Responsibilities:

Support missionary families in their role as primary caregiver for the MKs by;

- Serving as a member of the missionary candidate screening panel; interview and evaluate children of potential candidates;
- Serve on the New Missionary Orientation (NMO) planning team and develop appropriate MK curriculum for the New MK Orientation; train the leadership team;
- Serve on the Conference for Missionaries (CFM) Planning Committee and develop appropriate MK curriculum for CFM; train the leadership team;
- Develop and maintain personal relationships with the MKs by communicating with them on a regular basis (i.e., e-mails, phone calls, birthday cards, personal visits);
- Assist families with educational concerns on the field and in the US providing resources as needed;
- Assist MKs in cross-cultural transitions: pre-field, on the field and during re-entry;
- Write, edit and produce appropriate print materials regarding MKs;
- Provide confidential counseling for MKs regarding personal and spiritual development, relationships and cultural adjustments; and
- Educate churches by building awareness of MK needs.

Minimum Qualifications:

- BA in education, counseling, youth ministry or related field required; MA in education, Christian education, youth ministry or counseling preferred;
- Minimum of four years overseas cross-cultural experience (parent of MK or previous MK preferred);
- Minimum of five years experience working with young people from infancy through college;
- Excellent communication skills, both written and oral;
- Experience in curriculum development and administration of finances and people;
- Knowledge of ABC and IM required;
- Ability to work effectively in a team in a multi-cultural environment; and
- Sensitivity to culture and its effects upon the individual's sense of values and worldview.

Application:

Send letter of application, resume and names/addresses/phone numbers of three professional references to: Wendy Rothenberger, HRD, P. O. Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482; Fax 610/768-2150; wendy.rothenberger@abc-usa.org. Please visit www.abc-usa.org to complete a job application.

Application Deadline: December 2, 2005

Minimum Salary:

Salary commensurate with experience. Comprehensive benefits package includes healthcare, retirement plan, vacation time, etc.

**The Board of International Ministries is an Affirmative
Action/Equal Opportunity Employer**

The Myers Family: Missionaries to Bulgaria on Home Assignment



What a busy summer and fall it has been for the Myers family! During the four months since they left Bulgaria, they have been maintaining a full travel and speaking schedule. Tom has been in Kansas and Massachusetts while Terry has stayed closer home speaking in churches in Wyoming, Nebraska, and Colorado.

Family News

A.J. and Nathan are adjusting well to life and school in the United States, although they still occasionally ask, "How long until we go back home?" They do miss Bulgaria and their friends and school there, but are discovering new things to like about the United States all the time. Nathan especially likes the fact that he can watch American football on television all weekend, and sometimes on week nights, too! They are keeping up well with their school-work, enjoying their teachers, and taking guitar, piano, flag football, and rock climbing lessons after school.

Bulgarian Baptist Youth Organization Celebrates 15th Anniversary

Some exciting things happened in Bulgaria this past summer. Two summer camps were organized—one for teenagers and young adults, and one for children. It was decided to combine the young adults and youth into one camp to celebrate the 15th anniversary of youth work in Bulgaria since the governmental changes back in 1990. In communist times they were prohibited from doing any Christian activity among young people, so the history of the youth organization is traced back to a national conference which was held in the city of Varna in 1990. It was there that the foundation of the Bulgarian Baptist Youth Organization (BBYO) was laid. That event was the official birth of the BBYO, even though youth ministry had existed in Bulgaria for more than a century before that.

This special camp was held at a former communist pioneer camp in central Bulgaria, and 115 young people, ranging in age from 14-30, were in attendance. Based on the theme "Adequate Christianity in an Inadequate World," the campers participated in age-appropriate worship and seminars. English lessons, music, and video clips of the happenings of each day were vital parts of the camp program.

The most exciting part of the camp was the end when 13 youth volunteered to take part in three, four-day mission trips after the camp. They joined with teens from the U.S. who

had come to take leadership roles in the camp, and were sent to three different cities around the country where they did work projects and helped with the local church's summer mission activities. This was quite an experience for Bulgarian youth, who rarely volunteer outside of their own church. And the U.S. youth were definitely blessed by the experience as well.

The BBYO also sponsored a camp for children, ages 8-13, at the end of August. Thirty-five children and nine youth helpers (who had volunteered to do this previously at the youth camp) spent a week delving into the "Final Week of Jesus' Ministry." The children memorized scripture, played games, sang, and had an unforgettable experience at a mountain youth hostel in Yundola, on one of the tallest mountains in Bulgaria. Two girls, aged 11 and 12, decided to accept Christ as a result of their camp experience. Praise God for Sara and Alexandra, and for the dedicated leaders of this camp who opened the doors for these girls to become His precious daughters!

The BBYO is planning a winter camp, and then three separate camps in the summer of 2006. Pray for the BBYO leadership as they are in the process of developing a new vision for youth ministries in Bulgaria. And remember to pray for Sara and Alexandra as well.

Tom, Terry, A.J. and Nathan Myers
AB Missionaries in Bulgaria
 (on home assignment)
 Email: myersbulgaria@msn.com
 U.S. address (7/05-7/06):
 2817 Wakonda Drive
 Fort Collins, CO 80521
 970-221-0233

Prayer life on hold? Is it time to reconnect?

Come to Orlando in 2006!



**WAIT ON THE LORD
Spiritual Formation
Confence**

Presented by ABCUSA

April 17-20, 2006

*Psalm 27:14: Wait for the LORD; be strong,
and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord.*

More information: [http://www.ministerscouncil.com/
WaitontheLordInformation.aspx](http://www.ministerscouncil.com/WaitontheLordInformation.aspx)

Register now: [http://www.ministerscouncil.com/Wait%20on%20the%20Lord/
WOTLRegistrationInfo.aspx](http://www.ministerscouncil.com/Wait%20on%20the%20Lord/WOTLRegistrationInfo.aspx)

Questions? Call: Brad Berglund at 720.489.8073
www.reinventingsunday.com

**The Rocky Mountain
American Baptist**

is published by the
American Baptist Churches
of the Rocky Mountains

Desmond Hoffmeister:
Transition Executive Minister

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Newsletter Editor

*Publication dates are the
15th and 30th/31st of each month.*

*Deadlines for submissions are
the 10th and 25th of each month.*

**HAPPY
THANKSGIVING**

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