



The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

Welcome to 2018!

As we look at the coming New Year, we tend to evaluate our life. To that end many of us have made “resolutions” to improve ourselves and our lives in the coming year. Some of us have rushed out to buy new fitness equipment, gym memberships or started a new diet. We are determined that we will become new in the New Year!

While “resolutions” are popular, I think the greatest value of all this comes from the reflection on what is, was and the potential for the future that happens in this process... not so much the resolutions. The value is in seeing the preferred possibilities and then making intentional plans to see those become a reality in our lives, rather than trying to find the quick fix. In some sense then, ABCRM staff has been engaged in that type of process during the past year.

Last year I proposed to the ABC Board that the staff begin a process of “re-visioning”... of looking at our ministry intentionally with the hope of discovering what it is that God wants us to be and do in the current context and reality. We still have some work to do on that process, but the journey so far has been enlightening.

We have discovered that ABCRM and its “parent” organizations, the Colorado Baptist Convention and the Wyoming Baptist Convention, have been strong mission organizations that sought to plant and support churches primarily in Colorado and Wyoming, create and support common ministries that met significant needs in our communities and to provide opportunities for members and leaders of these churches and communities for growth in Christian knowledge and spirituality.

We have discovered that in the life cycle of an organization we are plateaued or are on the decline side of that life cycle. Another way of saying this is that our ministry is being driven more by our past than by a compelling vision for the future... by what we have done than by what we could be. This type of ministry is comfortable, because it focuses on doing what we know. It is easier because it focuses on the people who have already been a part of our group and does not need to go out and discover the needs of those who might become a part if we were to make appropriate adjustments. It is neater because the rules and regulations of who is in and who is out have already been established, codified and are clear. But this type of ministry is not generative or life-giving.

In other words, our Region goes like too many of our churches are going... the way of the dinosaur. In a few years, there will be fossils of our existence dotting the landscape, but no living organization walking through the mountains, valleys, deserts and plains of



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Colorado and Wyoming.

That's why a new vision and mission is so important to us... not to sustain the organization, but to allow the organization to be what Christ wants it to be – a living, breathing presence for Him in our world (picture the valley of the dry bones). We want to discover the breath of God that will allow our organization to reclaim our original purpose – to plant and support strong local churches, to help discover, disciple and deploy Christian leaders into ministry not only in the local church but in the world, and to be engaged in ministry (local church/local community) and mission (extension of our living out the Gospel into other cultures and communities by the sending of gifted leaders to become part of those communities) not only here, but around the world. And we need to do this in a way that is distinct to who we are as an expression of God's people – in other words "Baptist".



To that end, my desk is covered with a lot of diagrams and drawings these days trying to get a clearer picture of who God wants us to be as a unique "association of American Baptist Churches" and how we can make that happen. I ask myself the questions like:

- What are the things we need to continue to do?
- What do we need to let go of?
- What's new that we need to start doing?

And then there's the big question I keep wrestling with; "How can we do that?"

Obviously, I don't have all the answers yet. Even what answers I feel like I have, I haven't found consensus with the staff or Board, which for me is the confirmation of God's leading in that direction. But there are some things I think I can share with you about where I believe God is leading. I'll state these without much elaboration at this point, but simply to ask for your prayers as staff and I wrestle with the ideas and prepare them to present to the board this spring. Some the key points about the vision that I believe God is calling us to:

- We are to be proficient in discovering, developing and deploying leaders for the future.
- We must learn how to become "fishers of men" in this modern age – helping our churches and church members to invite others into relationship with Christ and to be a part of His Body
- While the local church is the primary place of mission, we must discover the missional purpose of ABCRM—what is the societal or cultural need that we are being called to address together?
- We must reclaim and understand the value and uniqueness of the American Baptist "tribal" culture for churches and our culture today

While I'm sure there is more to come—and this is a long way from being clear in my mind let alone being shared by others, this is the direction I think God is leading. I covet your prayers and comments, knowing together God will lead us through this wilderness and into the promised land.

*In Christ,
Steve Van O*

Prayer for the New Year

Almighty God, I pray for your blessing on the churches of the ABCRM as we begin this new year. Here in our churches, may the faithful find salvation, and the careless be awakened. May the doubting find faith, and the anxious be encouraged. May the tempted find help and the sorrowful find comfort. May the weary find rest, and the strong be renewed. May the aged find consolation and the young be inspired through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

2018 is the year you that you have made.

Help us rejoice in it and be glad!

Remind us of the privileges we enjoy as your people:

To come to you in these moments,

To confess our sins

To receive forgiveness and to give it,

To pray and sing and listen,

To renew our fainting spirits,

To rest in all your promises.

Open our eyes this year to see you, Lord.

Open our ears to hear your Word.

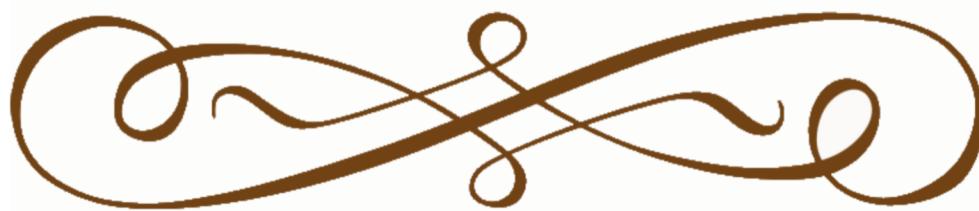
Visit us through your Holy Spirit, and help us to celebrate our faith and your faithfulness with each passing breath of our lives!

To you be the glory, honor, and dominion forever and ever.

Amen.

Adopted from the Worship Sourcebook, 2013.

*Submitted by Matt Mann
Region Board Vice President
Crossroads Church*



Camp Wyoba 2018 Calendar



WyobaFest

Friday, January 19th at FBC of Laramie. Great opportunity to connect with friends, have lots of fun, enjoy a great dinner, and we will award the prize to the church that supported Wyoba the most in 2017. We will have a silent auction that anyone can contribute to.

Youth Camps

Senior High	June 24 – 30	For students who are in, or graduated from, high school.
Junior High	July 8 – 14	For students who have graduated from 7th & 8th grade.
Junior	July 15 – 21	For students who have graduated from 5th & 6th grade.
Primary	July 22 – 25	For students who have graduated from 3rd & 4th grade.
Mini-Camp	July 1 – 3	For students who have graduated from 1st & 2nd grade accompanied by an adult they trust.

Camps for Families and Adults

Family Camp	July 26 – 30	A fun time away for the whole family. Enjoy the nature and rustic atmosphere of Wyoba while affirming, and growing, your faith and love for one another.
Women's Retreat	August 10 – 12	A chance to deepen your faith and relax your body, mind, and soul. Led by Rev. Mary Fabin.
Men's Retreat	September 7 – 9	A chance for the guys to get away and nurture their souls. Led by Rev. Bryan Roberts.
Taize Saturday	July 7	Come worship like they do in Taize, France. The day will begin at 10 am and you can be home that night.

Wyoba Board Meetings

January 20th in Laramie	September 15th at Camp
April 14th in Glenrock	October 27th in Glenrock
June TBD	

Thank You from Camp Wyoba

Karen Chitwood of First Baptist Church in Gillette, WY and her daughter Ladena submitted a wreath on behalf of Camp Wyoba to a contest at the Complex (Campbell County Fairground). Attendees at the Complex events, e.g., Powder River Symphony, can bid on these wreaths from various nonprofits as part of a silent auction.

Proceeds will then go to Camp Wyoba through First Baptist Church. Karen said that she and Ladena went to Hobby Lobby in Rapid City to gather all the pieces for the wreath and designed it as they shopped. An angel at the top and the word "Believe" at the bottom are very much part of what Camp Wyoba is. Thank you, Karen, for listening to the call earlier this fall to help Camp Wyoba.



Submitted by
Brenda Schladweiler
FBC, Gillette

2018 WyobaFest

'Trust In...'



Friday, January 19, 2018

6:00 pm

Cost: \$15.00

**First Baptist Church Laramie
1517 E. Canby St.
Laramie, WY 82072
Dinner begins at 6:00 pm.**

***Jeremiah and Katana will be leading worship
Steve Van Ostran will give a Biblical message***

**Worship, Dinner, Silent Auction
and lots of fun!!**

**For additional information, contact
Jenita Calton at mjmjpack@vcn.com.**

IRS Year-End Giving Guidelines	Report for 2017	Report for 2018
Checks written in December 2017 and deposited in church offering in December 2017	X	
Checks written in December 2017 and deposited in church offering in January 2018		X
Checks written and deposited in church offering in January 2018 but "backdated" to December 2017		X
Checks written and deposited in church offering in December 2017 but "postdated" to January 2018		X
Checks written in December 2017 and deposited in the mail and postmarked in December 2017, but not received by the church until January 2018	X	
Checks written in December 2017 and deposited in the mail in December 2017 but not postmarked until January 2018, and not received by the church until January 2018		X

ABC-USA Mission Giving Guidelines		
	Report for 2017	Report for 2018
Monthly cut off is the 8th of each month (except for weekends, holidays, and December year-end). Checks received prior to the 8th of each month are posted to the prior month. For example; checks received October 9 through November 8 are posted to October.		
Checks received in Region office through January 10, 2018, but dated 2017	X	

10 Facts You Should Know About American Baptists

The 1.3-million members and 5,500 congregations of American Baptist Churches USA share with more than 42 million Baptists around the world a common tradition begun in the early 17th century. That tradition has emphasized the Lordship and atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, believers' baptism, the competency of all believers to be in direct relationship with God and to interpret Scripture, the importance of the local church, the assurance of freedom in worship and opinion, and the need to be Christ's witnesses within society.



The following facts are representative of the tradition and practice of American Baptists.

- American Baptists believe that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior, and that the Bible is the divinely inspired word of God that serves as the final written authority for living out the Christian faith.*

American Baptists celebrate the fact that belief in Jesus Christ assures salvation and eternal fellowship with a loving God. The events of the first Easter week are the cornerstones of our faith: the death of Christ, in which He took upon Himself the sin of the world, and the Resurrection, which gave proof of His triumph over sin and death. Holy Scripture always has been for American Baptists the authoritative and trustworthy guide for knowing and serving the God who is revealed as Creator, Savior and Advocate.

- For American Baptists the local church is the fundamental unit of mission in denominational life.*

Baptist roots date back four centuries to a people seeking the opportunity to worship God as individual members of freely organized and freely functioning local churches. Baptists always have maintained the need for autonomous congregations, responsible for articulating their own doctrine, style of worship and mission.

- American Baptists partake of two ordinances: believers' baptism and The Lord's Supper.*

Baptism, an act of full immersion following Christ's example, is undertaken by those spiritually mature enough to understand its profound, symbolic significance: resurrection to new life in Christ. Through The Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion, the bread and cup that symbolize the broken body and shed blood offered by Christ recall God's great love for us—just as they did for the disciples on the eve of Christ's crucifixion.



- American Baptists believe that the committed individual Christian can and should approach God directly, and that individual gifts of ministry should be shared.*



American Baptists hold that all who truly seek God are both competent and called to develop in that relationship. They have rejected creeds or other statements that might compromise each believer's obligation to interpret Scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and within the community of faith. American Baptists also celebrate the special gifts of all believers, testifying that God can use each of us in ministry.

- American Baptists take seriously the call to evangelism and missionary work.*

American Baptist worldwide mission work is a response to Christ's call to "make disciples of all nations." Through the efforts of our missionaries in partnership with others, ministries of evangelism, healing, education and development have made Christ's love known in the U.S. and around the world.

- American Baptists support religious freedom and respect the expressions of faith of others.*

As a people whose forbears came together in response to intolerance, American Baptists have cherished freedom and pursued it for millions around the world. Manifestations of that ideal include supporting separation of church and state, advocating for people everywhere to be guaranteed the right to worship free from discrimination, and lifting up respectful dialog as a healthy means to understanding.

- American Baptists acknowledge that God's family extends beyond our local churches, and that God calls us to cooperative ministries.*

Early Baptists saw that the effectiveness of their ministries would be greater through cooperation with other believers. Today within our American Baptist regions, churches work with each other and with denominational staff and in local and regional ecumenical arenas to increase the vitality and scope of their ministries. That outreach extends worldwide through our relationships with the Baptist World Alliance, the National Council of the Churches of Christ, the World Council of Churches and other groups.

8. American Baptists have been called to be Christ's witnesses for justice and wholeness within a broken society.

American Baptists have been led by the Gospel mandates to promote holistic change within society, as witnessed by their advocacy of freed African Americans following the Civil War, the Civil Rights Movement, women in church and societal leadership, ecological responsibility, and many other issues. While not all of one mind as to how to deal with challenges, American Baptists do affirm the need to follow Christ's example by being actively involved in changing society.

9. American Baptist Churches USA celebrates the racial, cultural and theological diversity witnessed within its membership.

American Baptist Churches USA today is the most racially inclusive Protestant body. Represented in our churches are equally diverse worship styles, cultural mores and approaches to Scriptural interpretation. The resulting challenges and opportunities have made us stronger — through fellowship, respect, mutual support and dialog, all based on a belief that unity in Christ involves growth and understanding.

10. American Baptists heed the biblical call to renewal and the need for a vital witness in a new millennium.

As people of faith, American Baptists seek renewal and revitalization. Informed by their history and tradition, motivated by contemporary needs and challenges, and strengthened by God's leading and the example and sacrifice of their Savior, American Baptists seek to bring a transforming witness to an uncharted future.

Additional information on American Baptist Churches USA resources, tradition and mission is available on the American Baptist Churches USA Website — www.abc-usa.org — or by calling the American Baptist Churches Mission Center at 1-800-ABC-3USA.

The brochure, produced by the Office of Communication/General Ministries, is made possible through United Mission

The 10 Facts You Should Know About American Baptists brochure can be found at the following link:

<http://www.abc-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/ABC10FactsBrochure2.pdf>



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Leaders: Emily Ferrin, IM Assistant Director of Short-Term Missions
Ruth Mooney, IM Missionary to Costa Rica

Partners: Latin American Biblical University
The Federation of Baptist Associations of Costa Rica
Association of Development through Education



DESIGNED FOR AGES 19-29

JUNE 19 – JULY 8, 2018
COSTA RICA & WISCONSIN

\$2,000 TOTAL INCLUDES:
AIRFARE*, ROOM & BOARD,
GROUND TRANSPORTATION,
INSURANCE, LEADERSHIP

*HOUSTON, TX – SAN JOSÉ, CR –
APPLETON, WI

OTHER EXPENSES INCLUDE:
PASSPORT, TRAVEL TO
HOUSTON, TX AND TRAVEL
FROM APPLETON, WI

LIMITED, 6 PERSON TEAM

CONTACT EMILY FERRIN
EFERRIN@INTERNATIONAL
MINISTRIES.ORG
OR 610-768-2245

NON-REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT
\$200, DUE WITH
APPLICATION

FINAL PAYMENTS DUE
MAY 1, 2018

AMERICAN BAPTIST
INTERNATIONAL
MINISTRIES
610-768-2245

volunteers@internationalministries.org
www.internationalministries.org

Mon-Fri, 8am-4pm (EST)

ATTENTION!!

2018

Region Directories

We will begin printing 2018 directories later this month. We need your help in keeping this information current. Request forms to update church information were mailed to the churches in November. If you have church or clergy information to be updated, please email your information to Alyce at akeys@abcrm.org by January 12.



If you would like to receive our monthly newsletter, please call Alyce at 303.988.3900 to find out how.

Or you can email your request to her at akeys@abcrm.org

Please include:

- Your name
- Home church
- How you would like to receive the newsletter (by email or snail mail). Please include your email or mailing address.



Calendar

January

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 | New Year's Day (<i>Region office is closed</i>) |
| 11 | Mission Committee Meeting |
| 15 | MLK Holiday (<i>Region office is closed</i>) |
| 19 | WyobaFest, FBC Laramie |
| 20 | Wyoba Board Meeting, FBC Laramie |

February

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 17 | MLC Meeting |
| 19 | President's Day (<i>Region office is closed</i>) |

March

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| | America For Christ Offering Month |
| 8-20 | Zambia Mission Trip |
| 11 | Daylight Savings Time begins |
| 22-23 | Region Board Meeting |
| 25 | Palm Sunday |
| 30 | Good Friday (<i>Region office is closed</i>) |



"Pastor, can you give me God's e-mail address?"

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Steve Van Ostrand
Executive Minister
svanostrian@abcrm.org

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Send submissions to
akeys@abcrm.org*

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Fax (303) 988-0620
Phone (303) 988-3900

American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains
9085 E. Mineral Circle Suite 170
Centennial, CO 80112