



American Baptist Churches
of the **Rocky Mountains**

Empowered Churches.

...Deliver Us from Evil...

Every Sunday, American Baptists throughout the Rocky Mountain Region and across the USA pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us to say. In this prayer we repeat the phrase, *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*; a reminder that it is indeed God who will ultimately deliver us from the evil that we encounter in this world. Jesus also taught us to pray this prayer as a reminder that we are to participate with Him in being instruments of that deliverance from evil; just as He called Peter to follow Him to become a “fisher of men.” We pray for deliverance from evil as a reminder of our responsibility to do what we can to project Christ’s love into the world where we so often experience pain and despair through social and other injustices. Our hope is to usher in Christ’s Kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven, all the while knowing that the best we can achieve in this world is a mere reflection of our future reality.

In recent weeks, evil has been especially rampant here in the US for our African American community. The global pandemic has disproportionately impacted the Black Community for a number of reasons that include the realities of “institutionalized racism” in our country that limits their access to adequate health care and that the shut-down has also disproportionately impacted this community. Even more blatantly, during the last several weeks, this community and our nation have experienced a number of incidents of social injustice as a result of this racism, culminating in the untimely and horrific death of George Floyd in Minneapolis at the hands of police officers.

The angst and anger of this has boiled over and renewed the justified protests of many in our communities that change must happen. As these protests have happened, others have used these protests to further their own evil interests by inciting violence, looting and creating destruction, rather than merely protesting the injustices that have been experienced.

As followers of Christ, we are called to be instruments of peace and to prophetically proclaim and come alongside the victims of evil and injustice wherever it is found. As followers of Christ we are called to love one another as Christ has loved us. As followers of Christ, we are taught that when one of our brothers or sisters is suffering that we too are suffering, that we are to bear one another’s burdens. What impacts one part of our body, impacts the whole body, so no matter whether we are a rural church or downtown church, whether most of the faces in our congregation are black or white, we have to own this as OUR problem. We confess that too often and for too many years, our white congregations have been deaf to this plea from our black congregations.

Therefore...

Steve Van Ostran
Executive Minister/Secretary

Estelle Torpy
Past President

Matt Manning
President

Jackie Clark
Treasurer

Eugene Downing
Vice-President

- **I am calling for the leaders and members of American Baptist Churches in the Rocky Mountains to join me in responding to the evil that is among us;** to not only pray for the deliverance from evil, but to actively work to drive it from our midst and to create a stronghold for Christ's kingdom by signing a public statement of our mutual commitment to become educated about and active in Christ's work of loving others as ourselves.
- **I am calling on the ABCRM Board to make the work of actively eliminating institutional and socialized racism as one of its core functions** by the appointing of a task force that will work collaboratively with other like-minded organizations to educate our constituents about these issues, to create programs and ministries that actively seek to tear down the walls of isolation that prevent us from seeing these injustices, and to encourage our congregations and people to create relationships that cross the lines of our race, age, social status, professions and ethnicities.
- **I am calling for ABCRM Congregations whose are predominately European in ethnicity to commit to seeking out partner congregations** of different majority ethnicities or race for the purpose of building relationships that will help us to understand both the reality of "white privilege" and the effects of institutionalized racism.
- **I am calling on ABCRM pastors to speak out** through their preaching and teaching opportunities on the Christian responsibility to walk alongside our brothers and sisters who experience injustice.

In Christ,



Rev. Steven C. Van Ostran, D. Min.
Executive Minister

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