



February 1, 2017

The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

The Legacy of First Baptist Church Pueblo

And the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." —Matthew 25:40

In December 2015, Frank Proffer retired after serving as pastor of FBC Pueblo for 10 years. As the few leaders who were left assessed their challenges, they could not see a future for the church. They contacted ABCRM about how to go about "closing." April 3, 2016, the Sunday after Easter, members of the First Baptist Church in Pueblo held their last worship service. This is not the whole story.



As every church and pastor knows, ministry takes a lot of work and energy, especially when the church is in decline. The prospect of organizing a search team, maintaining the large church building and all the members working to keep the ministry going seemed overwhelming. First Baptist was still providing much needed assistance to people in Pueblo and specifically the homeless.

Once the decision was made, the members then had to decide what to do next. They contacted ABCRM. Over the next three months, Mike Oldham, the Ministry and Mission Coach for the church, met with the church leadership team to listen to the heart and to help the realistically assess their options for the future. In the end, the church, with great sadness, decided to close. Through these discussions, they expressed a desire to leave a legacy that reflected their years of ministry. With this in mind, the church voted to turn the property over to the Region.

The story doesn't end there. ABCRM took over the building, listed the property, found a buyer, and new homes for the building contents. Here are some of the highlights:

- The church building and surrounding property was sold to the County of Pueblo. The building will house the child and family services for the County. God's work will still happen on the corner of ninth and Grand near downtown Pueblo.
- The Church Scholarship fund was transferred to ABCRM to establish a scholarship fund for ABCRM pastors.
- Many churches and schools in the area received furniture, kitchen equipment, pianos, sheet music, supplies, books, hymnals, Bibles and 20 boxes of children's books.
- Ecumenical Church in Pueblo West and Faith Community in Denver will benefit from the two baby grand pianos.
- Crossroads Northglenn campus received the stain glass cross that was at the front of the sanctuary at First Baptist Church.
- Ebenezer Baptist Church in Colorado Springs is now serving communion from

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the one of the communion tables from the church.

There is more! First Baptist also wanted to bless the Pueblo community and three organizations they partnered with over the years. After ABCRM sold the property, the following organizations each were granted \$200,000 for their ministries:

- Pueblo Cooperative Care Center
- Pueblo Rescue Mission
- Salvation Army of Pueblo

On December 15, 2016, a Legacy Luncheon was held to celebrate the impact First Baptist Church has made since 1872 in Pueblo. Many members of the church attended along with Randy & Pam Thurston (amazing realtors for the property), Mike Oldham, Karen Van and Steve Van Ostran from ABCRM, and leadership from the three organizations who were receiving a gift from the proceeds. Before lunch was served, Doris Houser, Martha Bewley and Shirley Abram (members of the church's leadership team) each presented a check for \$200,000 to each organization. What a Christmas gift! Doris Houser remarked that it was a wonderful day for Pueblo – a total of \$600,000 being donated to help the Pueblo community.

KOAA, the local NBC station, was at the Legacy Luncheon. To view their coverage of the event, click on the link below: <http://www.koaa.com//Clip/12970636/sale-of-church-benefits-non-profits#.WHa8JqHSPe5.email>

Steve Van Ostran, Executive Minister for ABCRM, was quoted in the Pueblo Chieftain, "Churches nationwide are closing



their doors every day, but for something like the Pueblo effort, well that doesn't happen every day."

<http://www.chieftain.com/news/pueblo/5448481-120/pueblo-baptists-church-baptist>

The balance of the proceeds from the sale of the building has been set up as a separate Board designated fund to support other ABCRM churches, new church opportunities and American Baptist missions. ABCRM thanks all the members of First Baptist Church in Pueblo for their 144 years of ministry in their community. What an example of being the hands and feet of Christ in your community.

A Retirement Plan for You

I am a member of a special retirement plan of which I have been a member since 1960. I retired ten years ago, at the end of 2006. Which means I have been retired and am now planning how to spend my final check. When I retired, the pension board tabulated the number of points in my personal account. They then, with my permission, divided these into ten-year plans which determined the amount of my monthly retirement check. This, of course, was based on the stock market and the investment volatility.



Therefore, I am not just spending my final check; but deciding how I will survive without the monthly checks which dictates how I live every day. They have informed me that the payout value for 2017 for a MMBB annuity unit will be \$71.33. But, what does that mean to me as I contemplate 2017? Well, let me evaluate what that means.

The first thing which I face is my mortgage. Yes, I do have a mortgage. Yes, it is small, and not nearly what it was when I lived in my big house and a large mortgage. It means that I need to find the money to pay the mortgage and the monthly HOA bills.

Then there are my medicines. Yes, even though I am in reasonably good health, I do take prescription drugs (quite a few to be exact). I think one of them is "Colcrys" which is for gout. I remember talking to my primary care physician about how to cut some of the cost. I pointed out that I have been taking this pill for 25 years and have no recurrence. She responded: "No, I won't change this pill. That may be the reason you have not had a recurrence of the Tendonitis." At 83 years of age, I need these medicines to keep going.

Then there are simple things like food. I eat every day. Carefully, yes. Healthy, yes. Therefore, food is important and everyone needs it to survive.

I share season tickets to the Rockies Baseball teams for recreation. I spend 3 or 4 days a month from April

through September at the ball games.

Then, without being specific, when I glance at my checkbook and see all the things which I pay with my paycheck, it never ends. My tithes, offerings, and gifts to good causes, my cleaning bills, my credit card payments, and my utility bills. It is frightening to think about it. All that I am and all that I do goes back to my faith in God and to my retirement check.

It all goes back to my faith and my and my retirement check. As a retired pastor, I think about things like this. I can't work. I can't beg. I may preach every now and then; but this is not an answer. I never realized that in my life I would have to think about these things. I lived like my retirement checks would last forever. Is this a bad dream, as I imagine spending my last check as Christmas comes as it always does? If this is a dream for me, it is a reality for many ministers and for many churches? Churches who know their pastor (and church staffs) who serve them, and God; work for the church and do not have adequate benefits.

I mention this exercise which expresses a missing link in the benefits many churches do not offer to their ministers. I happen to know that many Baptist churches do not offer these pension benefits for their clergy. Many COGIC churches do not offer these benefits. Many other Protestant churches offer these benefits and many do not. My denomination, American Baptist, National Baptist and many others are now eligible to partake of these benefits without regard to their Christian Domination.

I have been redeemed from my seemingly impossible dilemma of having to spend my final retirement check. I have been redeemed by people I never knew. It goes back to 1910 and 1911, long before I was born. A dedicated group of American Denominational leaders. There were other religious leaders who took up the push for some relief for ministers growing old and missionaries coming back to America without funds for survival. United, they were moving to a plan to form a pension for the ministers and missionaries. It came down to a deadline of Christmas day for the deadline of pledges which would say that the dream could be realized. The leaders hold their breath as the days ran down. Then, on Christmas

day one final major pledge came through from the Rockefeller family which meant that the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board (MMBB) could uphold this major promise as it came into fruition.

In 2016 this program rescued me from acknowledging December 2016 as the day of my final check. Why, because from this fund, MMBB is providing the finances to support my rescue. I know that I am covered with my same basic check for the rest of my life. And, not only for me, but for all ministers and missionaries who live through their earned money in the retirement fund. They will be protected for the remainder of their lives by MMBB.

I pray that this prayerful dream will urge other churches to enter their pastors into such a program as this. The door is still open and there is no deadline date for application. This information is for churches who wish to provide benefits for their ministers or church staff members only.

If you or your church is interested in this pension plan, you may get in touch with the National office of MMBB in New York at service@mmbb.org or 800.986.6222. You may also contact the MMBB regional officer Rev. Clifton Morgan at Clifton.morgan@mmbb.org or 303.955.6093.

*Rev. Dr. James D. Peters, Jr.
ABC Retired Pastor*

Save the Date WyobaFest

Saturday, April 1, 2017

**First Baptist Church
514 S. Beech St
Casper, WY 82601**

**The party will start at 1:00 p.m.
Don't miss it.**

**For more information, please contact
Jenita at mjmjpack@vcn.com.**

2017 Camp Dates



**Front Range Camp at Quaker Ridge
July 23-29**

Camp Wyoba

**Senior High Camp, July 9-15
Junior High Camp, July 16-22
Junior Camp, July 23-29
Primary Camp, July 30-August 2**

Grand Mesa

**Family Camp, June 16-18
High School Camp, June 18-24
Middle School Camp, June 24-29
Elementary Camp, June 29-July 2**



Attention All Baptist Women and Friends

A special event just for YOU on
Thursday, February 2
at

Calvary Baptist Church

6500 E. Girard Ave., Denver, CO 80224

The program introduces us to the
Love Story of Ann and Bob and
their gift to America. 20 years of presentations
in all 50 states of project

"Hands and Words Are Not For Hurting"

Why come?
Because this project saves lives!



All clergy and their spouses are invited.
COME and bring a carload to welcome this
truly Christian couple.

To RSVP and for additional information,
contact Calvary Baptist Church
at 303-757-8421

Beth Kieft, Gloria Montgomery Carol Weale

Evangelist Rick Barton Returns to Delta First Baptist

The Rev. Dr. Rick Barton is re-
turning to Delta First Baptist
Church for the Winter Revival
February 5-12. Pastor James
Conley and the church family
would like to invite you to this
week of revival. With services
starting at 10:30 a.m. on Sun-
day and 7:00 p.m. nightly at
the church located at 1250
Pioneer Road Delta, CO 81416.



Rick and Melva Barton

Rick Barton accepted Jesus
Christ as his Lord and Savior in
the winter of 1969 while a sophomore in college. Shortly
afterward he began a Christian coffee house for college
students. The coffee house became a Bible Study which
eventually became a church with Rick as the reluctant
pastor. Rick served the church for 40 years first as a tri-
vocational pastor and then as "minister at large."

Rick's ministry has included itinerant evangelistic preach-
ing, helping start churches in nearby communities, Cow-
boy church, campground chapels, college ministry, and
sharing God's word internationally.

For more information contact the church office at
970-874-3847 or see the website at
deltafirstbaptistchurch.com.

*Pastor James Conley
First Baptist Church*

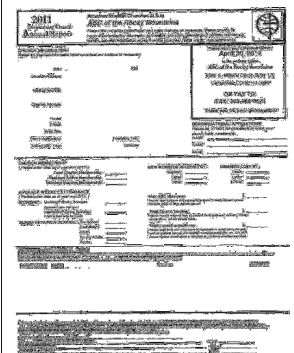
2016 Annual Reports

**We
Need
Your
Help
Please**

It is that time of year again to collect your church data to
update our Region office data and National registry. We know
that this process takes some time to complete, but the infor-
mation is useful to assess the health of our denomination. It
helps us plan for future mission and ministry, so your reports are
important!

2016 Annual Report's were mailed to our churches in
January. Please take the time to complete your report and
send it in early.

We thank all of you for your support to our Region.



Six Unique Activity Ideas for Single Parents and Their Kids on Valentine's Day

Whether you've been on your own for a few months or a few years, it's hard not to feel a twinge of frustration as a single parent on Valentine's Day. Fortunately, there are plenty of ways to make the holiday work to your favor — after all, it's a day dedicated to love! Here are a few ways to spend Valentine's Day celebrating the love you have for your child, and having way too much fun to worry about being single.

Go on a scavenger hunt

Encourage your child to play detective and send them on a [scavenger hunt](#). Young kids can simultaneously work on recognizing words, colors, or numbers, and older ones can work their brain muscles to figure out riddles. If you've recently moved into a new home, you can use the task as a way to show everyone where things are in the new place in a fun, engaging way. Just make sure you have some sort of small prize at the end so their hard work doesn't go unrewarded!



Photo via [Pixabay](#)

Get crafty with Fido

Don't just resort to the same old Valentine's crafts — let your furry companions in on the fun! Create fun, unique works of [art with your dog](#) for a night you'll never forget. You can make it for your kids to keep and hang in their rooms, or make valentines for your dog walker, mail person, or veterinarian.

Make a book

Writing and illustrating a story together can be an especially meaningful way to spend Valentine's Day if your child has been having a difficult time coping with a recent divorce or shift in family structure. You can ask him or her to write a story about love, or about what family means to them. You could also suggest they write a story about a child their own age: What kinds of challenges might the character run into? What do they do when they're feeling sad or frustrated about a problem? It can be excellent insight into what's going on with your child even if they don't appear to be struggling. If you're both having trouble coming up with ideas, try a [writing prompt](#).

Make valentines to donate

It's important to teach your kids the importance of kindness, especially on a day that's all about love. Create and sign some [homemade valentines](#) to deliver to a local children's hospital, nursing home, or homeless shelter. You could also give them to your neighborhood's fire or police station as a way to say thank you and show appreciation for their hard work all year.

Play charades

[Charades](#) can teach younger kids important communication skills, and is a great way to bring together even kids with significant age gaps. Plan ahead to come up with some love-themed topics like famous movies, songs, or couples. With some cocoa on-hand, it's the perfect way to spend Valentine's Day.

Have a fancy night in

Valentine's Day is traditionally about going out for a fancy dinner, so bring that idea home. Let your kids get dressed up for dinner (don't worry, you can insist they wear napkin bibs at the table) and have yourselves an elegant meal. You can set up some flameless candles and dim the lights, and maybe even let younger kids eat with adult utensils. After dinner, everyone can get into their coziest jammies and enjoy a movie or some reading time together.

Don't be afraid to take these ideas and make them your own, and if you're not sure what your child will enjoy, just ask! Together you can make Valentine's Day your new favorite holiday — one you happily share together.

Submitted by
Michelle Peterson
RecoveryPride.org
michelle@recoverypride.org

Get Your Taxes Done for FREE



**If you make less than about \$54,000 a year,
get free tax help from IRS-certified tax preparers.**

**Don't miss out on the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC),
plus other tax credits to help working families.**

FIND A FREE TAX SITE NEAR YOU:

Dial 2-1-1 (a free call) or
visit www.piton.org/tax-help.

FREE ONLINE FILING:

If you make less than \$64,000 and have access
to the Internet, you can file your taxes for
free online at myfreetaxes.com.



**THE PITON
FOUNDATION**
at Gary Community
Investments

For more than 25 years, The Piton Foundation has conducted the Tax Credits for Working Families Public Information Campaign and the Tax Help Colorado program to help increase the number of low-income families receiving the EITC and free tax help. Learn more at www.piton.org/eitc.



www.facebook.com/taxhelpcolorado

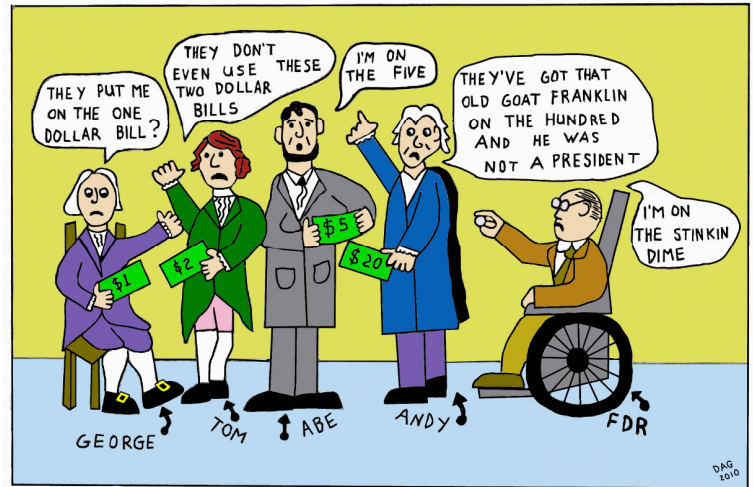


@taxhelpCO

Presidents' Day February 20th

Presidents' Day Facts

Presidents' Day falls on the third Monday in February in the United States. It is also known as Washington's Birthday, after George Washington, the first president of the United States. The day is meant to celebrate George Washington and all the presidents of the U.S. It became a federal holiday in 1879. Although there was an attempt in 1968 to officially call the third Monday in February Presidents' Day, it failed. It eventually came to pass that in 1971. Still many states choose to call this day Presidents' Day instead of Washington's Birthday. Some states also celebrate Abraham Lincoln's birthday at this time as well.



Interesting Presidents' Day Facts:

- Presidents' Day/Washington's Birthday is a federal holiday in the United States. Even though George's birthday was February 22nd, the day is officially celebrated on the third Monday in February.
- In the 1700s, George Washington's birthday was celebrated while he was still alive, and many in the U.S. took part in the festivities. He was born in 1732 and died in 1799.
- George Washington was president for two terms, from 1789 to 1793, and 1793 to 1797.
- George Washington had important military roles prior to becoming president. Under his leadership, the American Continental Army defeated the British in 1783. Many believe he is the most important politician in American history.
- In 1879, approximately one century later, President Rutherford B. Hayes signed the bill making February 22nd a federal holiday.
- Abraham Lincoln's birthday falls closely to George Washington but his is not a federal holiday. Many states still celebrate his birthday along with George Washington's.
- There are three universities and the capital of the United States, Washington DC named after George Washington, as is Washington State.
- George Washington is featured on the quarter dollar coin and the one dollar bill.
- Cherries are very popular when making desserts for celebrating George Washington's birthday. The reason for the popularity of cherries relates directly to a story about George Washington. When asked if he'd cut down a cherry tree, George Washington said he could not tell a lie.
- It became common in the late 1980s for retailers to use Presidents' Day as a day to sell off old stock.
- Since 1888, George Washington's Farewell Address has been read in the senate on February 22nd of most years.
- Schools often organize lessons and other activities for their students in the days leading up to the holiday. Some occur weeks ahead as the holiday sometimes falls during the week that school is closed for mid-winter recess.
- Some spell it President's Day and some spell it Presidents' Day. Presidents' Day refers to more than one president while President's Day refers to one President. The difference in spelling may be because some celebrate George Washington alone on this day and others celebrate George and Abraham Lincoln, while some may be celebrating all presidents.
- Even though it is a federal holiday, each state is free to call it what they choose and how to celebrate.
- There were four presidents born in February including George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, William Harrison and Ronald Reagan. Most celebrate Presidents' Day in honor of the first two.

Valentines Day Stuffed Strawberries

Adapted from a recipe found on allrecepies.com



Ingredients

- 20 fresh strawberries
- 1 (3 ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons chopped walnuts or pecans
- 1 1/2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar
- melted chocolate chips or mini chips (optional)

Directions

1. Dice two strawberries and set aside. Cut the stems off each of the remaining strawberries, forming a base for strawberries to stand on. Starting at the pointed ends and cutting most of the way, but not completely through the stem end, slice each strawberry into four wedges.
2. Beat the cream cheese until fluffy; stir in the diced strawberries, walnuts, and powdered sugar. Spoon or pipe about a teaspoon of mix into each strawberry.
3. If you like chocolate, melt chocolate and drizzle over the top or sprinkle mini chocolate chips on top.



Calendar

February

- 4** Front Range Camp Meeting
- 17-19** Empower the Small Church Conference
Cheyenne, WY
- 20** Presidents' Day (Region office closed)
- 24** Mission Committee Meeting
- 24-25** MLC Committee Meeting

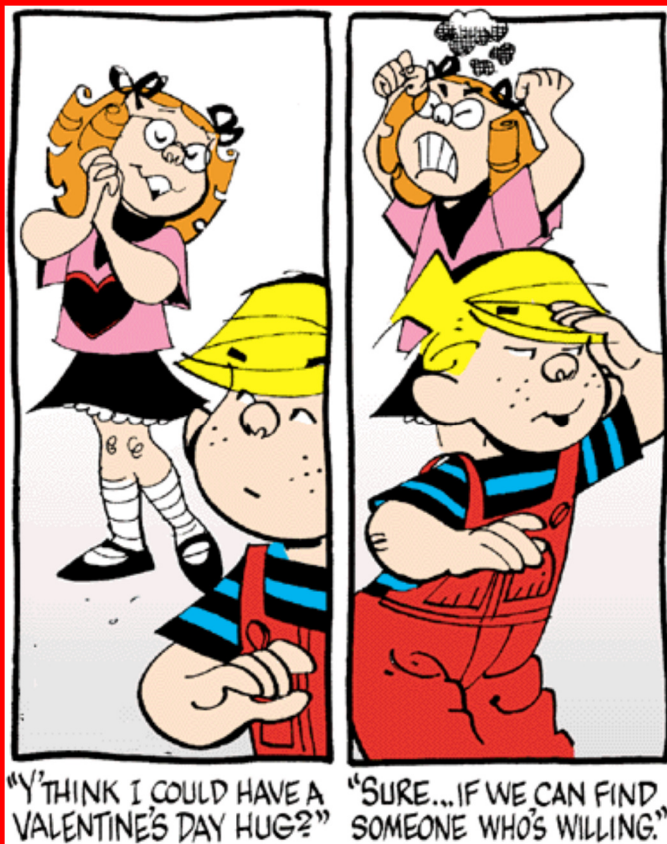
March

- America For Christ Offering Month
- 9-10** Region Board Meeting
- 10** Rev. William Golson Jr., True Light BC
Retirement Banquet
- 12** Daylight Savings Time begins

March is America For Christ Offering Month

Your America for Christ offering is making life-changing impact through ministries and resources that vitalize our congregations and communities across the United States and Puerto Rico with the hope of Jesus Christ.

www.abhms.org



**The Rocky Mountain
American Baptist**
is published by the
American Baptist Churches
of the Rocky Mountains
www.abcrm.org

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*This newsletter is published
on the 1st of each month.*

*The deadline for submissions
is the 20th of each month.
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*Reprint permission is granted
to ABCRM churches.*



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