



November 1, 2015

# The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

## Rev. Don Ng Preaches at Solomon Temple Missionary Baptist Church

Awesome, blessed, and Christ-centered are three words that describe the worship service on Sunday, September 27, 2015 at Solomon Temple Missionary Baptist Church in Denver, CO. The president of the American Baptist Churches USA, Rev. Don Ng shared a profound and prolific message titled "I am baptized."



Rev. Jim Peters, Pastor Emeritus of New Hope Baptist Church in Denver and Rev. Rodney Perry, Region Intern at American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains were among the esteemed guests who celebrated with Solomon Temple. Pastor John Tellis stated, "Rev. Ng's message was an awesome reminder that the children of God are called to love each other and to be a light that permeates the darkness in the world."

*Rev. Mary Tellis  
Solomon Temple MBC*



*Revs. James Peters, John Tellis, Mary Tellis,  
Don Ng, and Rodney Perry*

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## Dangerous Faith

We learn very early in life to recognize a “Danger” sign. It’s usually red and has some figure in a high-risk situation. Sometimes we see “skull and bones” to scare us from trying to do something stupid. We learn to stay far away from such dangerous situations.

The church today as in its history faces controversial issues that have become dangerous to discuss. They are often divisive and polarizing causing people to take opposing sides often ending up in dividing the Body of Christ. We have learned to see these “Danger” signs to avoid being hurt. In time, these issues seem to take on more significance than they really deserve and we as people of faith are left stunted without the vocabulary and reasoning to engage in constructive and productive conversations.

At the ABC of the Rocky Mountains’ Annual Gathering in September, Rev. Dr. Steve Van Ostran and regional leadership led participants to engage in “Dangerous Conversations.” They decided that unless regional leaders take the lead to bring up discussions on racism, police brutality, homosexuality and other controversial topics, there’s a good chance that local churches won’t address these issues as well. Furthermore, until local churches in their respective communities become “mediating communities” that bring healing and understanding in a fractured culture, we would not be Christ’s servants in the making of a beloved community.

There were a Black pastor and a White pastor who mutually committed to spend time together for the purpose of breaking down stereotypes and uncovering personal prejudices toward becoming brothers in Christ. These congregations will undoubtedly learn from their pastors’ transformation. The big topic in our time, homosexuality was introduced with a respectful climate for personal study, biblical understanding as well as a call for human compassion. It is okay and Baptist to disagree but not okay to avoid dangerous issues when we are brothers and sisters in the Lord.

My experience as ABC President at this year’s ABC of the Rocky Mountains’ Annual Gathering gave me a strong example of a healthy region, growing in faith and holding one another’s hands as they with deep humility engaged in “Dangerous Conversations” believing that the heart of Christ will lead them in becoming the beloved community as the Body of Christ.



*Don Ng  
ABC-USA President*

## ABC Missionaries at the Annual Gathering

At the 2015 Gathering, we were blessed to have two missionary families come and share what is going on in their ministry. J.D. and Rhonda Reed and their three children, Grace, Abigail, and Nathanael, and Vital and Ketly Pierre worshipped with us, learned with us, and led workshops on their mission work.

The Reeds work in two cities in Bolivia, Santa Cruz, the



largest city in Bolivia, just east of the Andes Mountains, and Cochabamba in a high valley in the Andes. In Santa Cruz, J.D. works with the Baptist Seminary and runs a school for leaders, which provides basic pastoral education for pastors who cannot

go to seminary and for their lay leaders. Classes are provided on tablet computers and the students get together with J.D. occasionally for review. In Cochabamba they provide more of an urban ministry, working with House of Hope, assisting families, at-risk women, and children.

The Pierres have been long time missionaries to Nicaragua, planting churches and training leaders, and worked themselves out of the job by helping the churches and leaders become self-sufficient to move forward. Vital and Ketly are moving



to the Dominican Republic where they will strengthen local churches and encourage them to plant new churches. They will hold workshops to help pastors and local leaders understand how to strengthen outreach ministries in their communities. They also link churches with volunteer groups, allowing them to be more effective.

It was good to hear from these missionary families about how their work and the support of American Baptists is building the Kingdom of God in far off places. If you wish to support either of these missions or other ABC missionaries, you can send your support through your church mission remittance or directly to International Ministries, earmarked for the particular missionary.

*Bill Mankin  
ABCRM Mission and Ministry Coach*



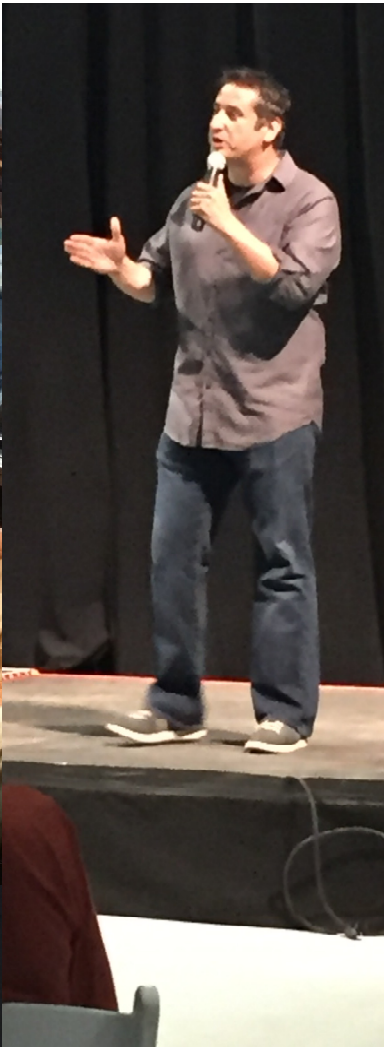
# Gathering Pictures



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



# Wing Over the Rockies





## Gathering Workshop Understanding Islam

Brother Jeff Fard, a practicing Muslim, led the workshop on Understanding Islam. He was a good choice, as he has had a personal working relationship with a number of our African American pastors in the Denver area for many years, through the Center for African American Health. He considers these pastors to be mentors for him, and he regularly attends Sunday worship services in one or another of their churches. Brother Jeff has a long list of community service involvements, and he has been called a "Legendary Leader of Colorado's Nonprofit Sector." He shared a bit of his personal involvement in the Denver African American community.

We spent some time sharing in small groups what we already know about Islam. Brother Jeff gave us a little history. He reminded us that Abraham is the father of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, through Isaac and Ishmael. Hebrew and Arabic are closely related languages. The Koran (*Qur'an*), Islam's sacred book in Arabic, has only one version. In English, the Koran is a transliteration. The root word for Islam (the religion) and Muslim (a follower of Islam), is 'slm,' ... also found in *Salaam* (peace), which is a correlate of *Shalom* in Hebrew. Muslims believe that the Quran was verbally revealed by God to the prophet Muhammad. Brother Jeff noted that Muslims also recognize Jesus as a prophet.

The Five Pillars of Islam, which are derived from the Quran, are basic acts in Islam, considered mandatory by believers and are the foundation of Muslim life.

- 1) Faith/Testimony – a declaration that professes that there is only one God, Allah (the Arabic name for God) and that Muhammad is God's messenger
- 2) Ritual Prayers – five daily prayers, each at a different time of day
- 3) Almsgiving – charitable giving, based on accumulation of wealth
- 4) Fasting – to deepen one's relationship with God; required during Ramadan
- 5) Pilgrimage to Mecca – for those who are physically able

Brother Jeff recommended that we not judge a faith by the people, but judge it by its pillars. He said, "Your life is a journey; what kind of journey do you want?" He also challenged us to think about how we welcome strangers. I came away wanting to get to know Muslim neighbors and wanting to discover what we have in common.

*Mary Beth Mankin  
Gathering Attendee  
Pine Street Church*

## Reflections for the Annual Gathering

Dear Cynthia (Cynthia Rigsby, Region Board Past President)

I enjoyed meeting with you and all the wonderful people at Macedonia Baptist Church in Denver.

I returned to the Baptist church when I moved to Delta, CO. I was living in Lake City, CO prior to moving to Delta. I am a former Presbyterian that served on the International and National Committee for One Great Hour of Sharing's Self Development of People [SDOP] (2001-2014). I am still in touch with SDOP and help when I can.

I became a member of First Baptist Church of Delta when I was searching for a home church that made me feel the love and comfort of Jesus Christ with open arms. Now I am a Deacon and help in the church as much as I can. Pastor James Conley shared about the Gathering coming up, the 2015 Gathering of ABCRM with the theme of "Dangerous Dream's." I wanted to go to learn how the church worked and share in all the workshops.

What a blessing it was to be a part of the gathering. The Macedonia Baptist Church, Pastor Victor Lane and his congregation were so wonderful to all of us. They fed us with knowledge, grace, and food. Breaking bread together was such a blessing. The church is lovely. We were all comfortable with the arranging of the groups and workshops. I learned so much. We played games I call ice breakers with each other as strangers and became family in CHRIST. I loved the speakers we had. Each one shared a good message. I was happy to hear about One Great Hour of Sharing in the Baptist church. I enjoyed hearing from ABC-USA President Don Ng, Pastor Kim Skattum, Adrian Miller from the Colorado Council of Churches and the comedians Bone Hampton and Rich Praytor did make me laugh.

Having the Mayor of Denver, Michael Hancock, come was so special. He shared so much about the church with us and he shined with the Lord's presence. Just being in the church knowing Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks spoke there made me feel blessed to be in such a place.

Being hungry to do mission work I was excited to meet Ketly and Vital Pierre. Their ministry and what they do in the American Baptist Churches is wonderful. I was ready to get involved. I have been to the Dominican Republic and have seen the need in that country. I will keep an eye out for the chance to see them in the future.

J.D. and Rhonda Reed had a good presentation on ABC Missionaries to Bolivia. It is wonderful to learn what



they are doing. What a blessing they are to many.

Setting in that beautiful church and sharing with so many people of color and backgrounds I feel right at home with the Baptist church. I thank God for you and all I met at the Gathering.

*Thank you,  
Lori Winblood  
Gathering Attendee  
FBC, Delta*

## Macedonia Hosting the 2015 Gathering

Macedonia welcomed the opportunity to host the 2015 ABCRM Annual Gathering! Macedonia has a rich history of hosting many great leaders and many historical events. Our church felt very proud to be asked to host the Gathering. They also felt immense humility that God used our congregation to host the annual ABCRM Gathering for such a time as this.

The response to the challenge was outstanding at all levels. Preparation for the Gathering actually started a year ago with the Trustee Board moving forward to make renovations to our facility. The core committee was formed and we began having planning meetings with the ABCRM Regional staff and committee members from other churches where we shared thoughts and ideas about the theme, the topics and the speakers. We also had many internal planning meetings to plan how to organize our space and how to provide everything that was needed for the Gathering. Our pastor and the various church boards provided everything that was needed without hesitation and our ABCRM Regional office worked with us to help us problem solve and find solutions and they provided resources.

Our congregation rose to the occasion and worked together tirelessly as a family to prepare for our guests. Macedonia members volunteered to sing in the choir, to be greeters, to be bus drivers, to help with the food, to help with set up and clean up and to do whatever was needed to make our hosting of the Gathering a success. Some members made presentations at the Gathering and the dialogue and fellowship Macedonia members had with members from other churches was priceless. Many members expressed that they would enjoy participating in future meetings that present opportunities for diversity, dialogue and fellowship with other ABCRM churches.

So what was the take away for Macedonia? The answer is hosting the best ABCRM Gathering ever! That was the goal for our congregation and by all accounts, it was

achieved. The Holy Spirit was in the house! Macedonians were blessed over and above what they expected. I know that I speak for our pastor and our entire congregation that we have numerous uplifting spiritual memories about the Gathering. It was a blessing to see so many different churches that are a part of the ABCRM family. We received many, many compliments about our wonderful hospitality, the beautiful singing from the choir and the excellent service displayed to our guests throughout the entire Gathering. Most of all, Macedonians who had not attended an ABCRM Gathering previously, expressed that they enjoyed the sessions they attended and they have a better understanding of what ABCRM is all about. As a result, many members are planning to attend the next ABCRM Gathering! All Praises to Jehovah Jireh our Provider!

*Gloria Montgomery  
Macedonia Baptist Church  
ABCRM Board Secretary*

## Reflections for the Annual Gathering

I received a phone call asking if I would write an article about the ABCRM Gathering that took place last month in Denver, CO.

I agreed to write one wholeheartedly, because I think this Gathering was probably the best, yet most difficult, of all the Gatherings I have been to (I have attended seven of them). But, where to begin? A Gathering with the theme of "Dangerous Dreams" where we had "Dangerous Conversations" calls for some epiphanies, or very in-depth comments...

### Day 1:

I dealt mainly with Racial Tensions, with an amazing dialogue between two people of different races and cultures. I hesitate to use the word "race" as I think we are all one in the Human Race, and THAT would be the "race" we should all be. Pro racial, celebrating our cultures, laying down our "divides".

### Day2:

I went to the *Understanding Islam* workshop. After the 'class' I posted on my Face Book page that I thought that was the best class of that day. I received many negative comments for that post. I worked hard to let people know that I wasn't becoming a Muslim, because though the Islamic people believe in Jesus, they believe him to be a prophet. Whereas I believe that Jesus is the Son of God that died for our sins (and HE WILL RETURN). I did learn a lot about Islam, and I'm not nervous of them as a whole. Yes, there are Muslim terrorists, but look throughout history at Christians... Not always positive.



**Day 3:**

*Human Sexuality.* Hardest day for me, I cried many, many tears.

There is a struggle in churches today about same sex marriage. I am the mother of a gay son, I am a pastor's wife. I love God, I am a Christian and I have watched my son struggle all his life, I have watched him date girls and seen them become the best of friends. I have cried with him and I have cried for him. I love him with a love so deep there are no words for it. I want him to be accepted because he is Gregory and for his heart and his creativity and because he is a Christian and loved by God. I don't want him labeled or judged because of any other tags society would put on him I cried hard tears from the depths of my soul ... And because of that part of the Gathering, I have hope that we can learn to love one another. The day began with a talk by Steve Van Ostran. I was nervous, because I know firsthand how many Baptists feel about someone that is gay. Steve brought up points:

- 1) Put away the Sword:  
Jesus told Peter to "put away the sword", the sword is an offensive weapon and scripture compares the tongue to a sword. We must be careful with our words.
- 2) Understand the Situation:  
Jesus is the rock upon which the Church is built.  
The Bible is a book that points to the Rock.
- 3) Moving Ahead:  
We are all followers of Christ.  
We are all created and loved by God.  
There is a moral code by which we are all called to live.  
We are all called to serve one another.

Perhaps the best statement I heard throughout the Gathering was: "Let it go; the main issue is serving the Father and serving others".

My hope is that because these were dangerous conversations, there will be follow up with churches and Gathering attendees, in the months to come. A lot of issues were discussed, a lot of difficult subjects were opened. There may be those individuals or churches that need to continue these dialogues with people that could help them to understand how to better serve God through serving others, no matter the color, race, religion or sexual preference.

*Kelly Cederholm  
Gathering Attendee  
FBC, Torrington*

## Thank You to all the Wonderful Volunteers from Macedonia Baptist Church!



A special thank you to the members of the 2015 Gathering Committee: Cynthia Rigsby (Chair), Steve Van Ostran, Kim Skattum, Victor Lane, Betty Booker, Maxine Gatewood, Virdell Miller, and Gloria Montgomery. I have never worked with a more competent and fun group. The efforts of all the volunteers from the greeters, ushers, hospitality crew, choir, and janitorial staff made this year's Gathering special.

***You set a new standard in hospitality!***



***Macedonia Baptist Church Choir***



## Practice of Ministry MLC Course

The Ministerial Leadership Committee of the American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains is sponsoring a course titled

**Practice of Ministry.** This course will be held Friday and Saturday, November 13-14, 2015. This course will be taught by Rev. Dr. Steve Van Ostran, Executive Minister of ABCRM and held at the Region office located at 9085 E. Mineral Circle Suite 170, Centennial, CO 80112.

CLASS!  
YES!

Class will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Friday and end at approximately 9:00 p.m. **Lunch will not be provided on Friday, please eat before you come.** Saturday class will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Course cost is as follows:

- \$225.00 which includes one night housing, Friday dinner and Saturday lunch
- \$150.00 which includes meals only

This course is open to everyone — new preachers, pastors, evangelists, and laity and it will also fulfill requirements for ABCRM Regional Ordination. This will be an exciting and challenging time in the Lord!! Come and join us!!

**Registration deadline is November 6, 2015.**

**To receive a copy of the course requirements and a registration form, please email Alyce at [akeys@abcrim.org](mailto:akeys@abcrim.org).**



## SoulJourners 2015

From Sept. 15-17, almost forty senior adults gathered at the Franciscan Retreat Center in Colorado Springs for a time of fellowship, learning, worship, and relaxation. The principal speaker was Dr. David May, Professor of New Testament at Central Baptist Theological Seminary. He spoke on Understanding Jesus: His Culture and Context. He explained the culture of Palestine in Jesus' day and how understanding that gave new insights into the teachings of Jesus. He talked about the role of family, the power structure, and the concepts of honor and shame. We received new understandings. He also told the story of the Codex Sinaiticus, the oldest extant copy of the Bible, how it was discovered and how it was almost lost. Our times of singing and worship were led by Rev. Andrew Daugherty and Dr. Michael McBride. There was ample time for visiting with old friends and making new ones and for enjoying the beautiful surroundings of the retreat center.

The organizing committee has decided that this will be the final adult retreat in this format. The Region will continue some form of programming for seniors, but the exact nature has not been determined. If you would like to contribute ideas to this process, contact Bill Mankin at [bmankin@abcrim.org](mailto:bmankin@abcrim.org).

*Bill Mankin  
ABCRM Mission and  
Ministry Coach*



*Dr. David May explains the culture in which Jesus taught.*



*Committee members Ken Pinkham, Tam VanSpriell, and Karen Pinkham enjoy visiting during the traditional ice cream social.*

## First Baptist Church, Longmont

### Longmont FBC is pleased to announce...

Dr. David Harpool, currently residing in Boulder County, has been called as pastor of First Baptist Church in Longmont.

Pastor David begins his ministry at Longmont FBC November 1, 2015. David has experience as a pastor, minister of education, music and youth.

Dr. David Harpool was raised in the Ozarks of Missouri with four brothers (two sets of twins), a father who was a commercial artist and a mother who was a school secretary. David grew up in the church serving as president of the state-wide youth organization, being awarded the National Service Achievement Award for his work in the Royal Ambassadors and worked for the area association. In his professional career, David served as a pastor, university president professor and attorney. He is married to Amy, his wife of 25 years and they have three children, Samantha, Zachariah and Caleb.



First Baptist is blessed to have your continued prayers and support. Come join our services November 1, 2015 and be a part of new chapter in the history of FBC.

May God be praised.

*Yvonne Whisenhunt  
FBC, Longmont*

### 125th Anniversary Celebration

Longmont First Baptist Church will celebrate 125 years of ministry in Longmont on November 15, 2015.

Worship will begin at 10:30 a.m. with a look back and a look forward. The morning will include a hymn sing, special music, memorabilia display, memories shares and our annual Harvest Dinner. All former members, former pastors and others who want to share in the celebration are invited to attend. For a further information call 720-494-1358.

## Congratulations!!



Dr. Van Ostran,

Earlier this month I was blessed once again to participate in the ABCUSA Matthew 25 Grant discernment team meeting which distributes the gifts of a generous donor to local American Baptist churches. Fall distribution checks were mailed last week and I wanted to be sure that you are aware of the ministries in your Region receiving awards:

### First Baptist Church, Torrington, WY

\$2,000 Grant will be used providing a free meal and various household needs for the folks in the towns of Manderson and Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation

### Ecumenical Church of Pueblo West, Pueblo West, CO

\$3,000 Grant will be used to purchase infant formula and other emergency food supplies for the food pantry

It is a joy to be part of this process along with churches and ministries like these as they serve as the hands and feet of Christ in a tangible way.

Tina M. Turner  
Executive Assistant  
Mission Resource Development  
American Baptist Churches USA  
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*American Baptists serving as the  
hands and feet of Christ*



*FBC, Torrington*



*Ecumenical*



You spoke, we listened. New, improved versions of the products you love are here.



**Northwind Institute**

supporting postmodern ministry



We have exciting news to share . . .

We enjoyed having a booth at the Mission Summit and are eagerly preparing our booth for the Space4Grace Conference at LAX.

We hope to see you there and invite you to stop at our booth!

## ABC Ordination Courses

American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains Academy

**Northwind Institute is now administering the ABCRM Academy.**

Offering 12 online courses for those seeking to meet their educational requirement for ordination in the alternate track. Take any course at anytime.

The following Regions have approved these courses:

Rocky Mountains, Central, Mid-America, Nebraska, Dakotas.

**Tuition: \$150 per course via PayPal**

[Learn More](#)

[Access Courses 24/7 using your computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone](#)



### Spiritual Formation

Michael J. Christensen, Ph.D  
Learn Henri Nouwen's unique approach to spiritual direction, formation and discernment.

[Learn More](#)



### ABC Polity Online

Rev. Dr. Steve Van Ostran  
(ABCRM Region Exec)  
A conversational style  
online course on ABC Polity.

[Learn More](#)



### Advanced Studies

#### Pastoral Ministry

Three research tutorials and a ministry project in a local church setting based on DMin format.

[Learn More](#)

**Northwind Institute**

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**Daylight Savings Time  
ends Sunday, November  
1. Don't forget to set  
your clocks back one  
hour on Saturday night.**



**Happy  
Thanksgiving**



### HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

In observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday, your Region office will close at 12 noon on Wednesday, November 25. We will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 26-27.

Your Region office will also be closed December 24 through January 1 for the Christmas and New Year Holiday Season.



## Calendar

### November

- 1 Daylight Savings Time ends
- 4 Ministers Council Meeting
- 11 Veterans Day
- 13-14 MLC Practice of Ministry Class
- 15 FBC, Longmont 125th Church Anniversary
- 20 Executive Committee Meeting
- 25-27 Thanksgiving Holiday Weekend  
(Region office will close at noon on Wednesday)
- 26 Thanksgiving Day

### December

- 6 Retired Ministers and Missionaries  
Offering Sunday
- 7 Western Slope Senior Pastors  
Christmas Party
- 10 NFR Senior Pastors Christmas Party
- 11 Wyoming Cluster Senior Pastors  
Christmas Party
- 11 Denver Cluster Senior Pastors  
Christmas Party
- 15 SE/NM Senior Pastors  
Christmas Party
- 24-Jan 1 Christmas/New Year's Holiday Break  
Region office will be closed





## The Back Pew – Jeff Larson



WILLIAM WARBLER (aka BRAVEBIRD) fought gallantly against the Turkey Oppression in America, BUT in the 'end' lost his head and was stuffed with bread crumbs.

### *The Rocky Mountain American Baptist*

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**Steve Van Ostran**

Executive Minister

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*The deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month.*

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

*Reprint permission is granted to ABCRM churches.*



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