



January 1, 2017

# The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

## The New Year in Christ...

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come. -- 2 Corinthians 5:17

The old year is passed. It was not the best of years on the national front: mass shootings and terrorism world-wide, a growing crisis of refugees fleeing the wars in the Middle East, multiple incidents of police brutality coming to light, civil unrest, and the dawn of a presidential election cycle that speaks not so much of hope for the future but the fear in which many of us currently live. Oh, there have been some good things too: gas costing less than \$2 a gallon, low unemployment numbers and the release of a new "Star Wars" movie to name a few. But by and large—the thing that strikes me is that 2016 overall was a year to survive...not a year to celebrate on the "national" or "world-wide" front.

But now comes the New Year: a time of hope, of promise, of new life. Can it be a year unlike this one that has passed? Can it be a year in which lives are transformed, a year in which we take real strides to curb gun violence in our country, a year in which our leaders talk about our promise and our possibility as a nation and not just about protecting us from our fears, a year in which we begin to take hold of our responsibility for the planet and make real differences in how we live? Can this be a year lived in Christ?

The answer of course is "Yes it can, if..." It can be that kind of year if we turn from our in-grained values and actions and begin to walk in the light of Christ. It can be if we will walk by faith... faith first in Christ, faith also in the good will of others, faith in the possibility of the future and faith in ourselves. It can be if we seek to love others as ourselves. It can be if we seek first Christ's kingdom—a kingdom where all are welcomed at the table, a kingdom in which the value of a poor man is the same as the value of a billionaire, a kingdom in which the needs of the other are always foremost in our thought. Yes, this year can be lived in Christ if God's people will simply humble themselves and pray, if we will seek God's face and turn from our wicked ways (2 Chronicles 7:14)... then new life will spring forth. But...

Can we allow the old to pass away? Can we admit that the paths we are walking and the fears that are guiding us are leading us in the wrong direction? Or is our cultural attraction to the "undead" so deep, that we will keep bringing up the old again, and again, and again? Will we continue to do what we have always done and get what we have always gotten?

My prayer for you, the church leaders and churches of ABC of the Rocky Mountains is that 2017 will be a year lived "in Christ"... that the old will pass away and the new will come. For it is only in this way, that the world will also be able to claim this promise, this hope...this Great Salvation.

*In the Name of Christ who Saves Us,  
Steve Van O  
Executive Minister*



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## Western Slope Christmas Party

WOW! What a festive atmosphere and the Spirit of Christian faith, hope, and love is alive and well among the American Baptist leaders of the Western Slope. On December 12, we sat down to sup, to share, and to sing together at Pantuso's Italian Restaurant in Grand Junction. We were treated to an evening of laughter, joy, encouragement, renewal, and new relationships by our hosts Executive Minister Steve Van Ostran and his lovely wife, Debbie. We even sang Happy Birthday to her (early) as her birthday is December 14.

We met our newest pastor on the Western Slope, Aline (Ah-lee-nee) Silva-Schreiner from Koinonia Church in Grand Junction. She is a wonderful leader and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. We look forward to God's working through her and the people of God gathered in this community of faith. She even has her own website: [alinesilvaschreiner.com](http://alinesilvaschreiner.com) (kids these days), look her up and get to know her, you can even subscribe to follow her blog entries. Her husband, Andy, will be joining her in Grand Junction after the first of the year.

The "highlight" of the evening for all, including the other patrons of Pantuso's, was Kathrine Ann's teaching and leading everyone with a part in the "17 Days of Christmas." It was a takeoff of the 12 Days of Christmas. Mark Johnson's friend was the hit of the party as she engaged everyone in the entertainment. It was so good to share this evening with Bob Watts, the Witt's times two, the Newman's, the DeMott's, Van Ostran's, the Conley's and a special appearance was made by Thom and Dina Jones who are in process of starting a church in Rifle, Colorado in 2017.

You were missed . . . our brothers and sisters from Moab, Molina, New Castle, Olathe, and Rangeley. Yet, may you sense the presence of the Spirit of Christmas by this encouraging word! Bless you, your families, and your ministry during these last days of 2016. Bring the message home in new and creative ways and may the Lord be praised by bringing the lowly, the troubled, the ostracized, the arrogant, the prideful, the pious, into an encounter with Life Eternal.

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)*

*Pastor James Conley  
First Baptist Church, Delta*





## ***A New Year's Prayer***

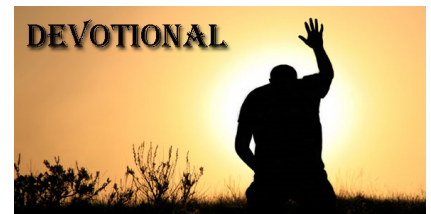
***"Heavenly Father, for this coming year  
Just one request I bring.  
I do not pray for happiness or any earthly thing.  
I do not ask to understand the way you lead me;  
But this I ask—teach me to do the thing that pleases You.  
I want to know Your guiding voice,  
To walk with you each day.***

***Heavenly Father,  
Make me swift to hear and ready to obey;  
And thus, the year I now begin  
A happy year will be,  
If I am seeking just to do  
The thing that pleases You."***

***.Anonymous***

## **Devotionals**

Each week, ABCRM sends an email devotional to people from ABCRM churches and beyond. We try to have these devotionals be current to the season of year (Advent, Easter, Camping, Gathering, etc.), but you are welcome to submit a devotion on any topic of your choice. These devotionals are also posted on our ABCRM website. If you think you would like to write a devotional(s) for us, the guidelines are below. We welcome your input.



### **Guidelines for Writing a Devotional for ABCRM**

The devotional should be around 500 words; though this is not a hard number, we do want you to be aware that if they are too long people won't read them.

Start with a Scripture verse or two.

End with a sentence or two of prayer.

Include your picture. (Sometimes people will recognize you by your picture if not your name.)

Include a sentence or two about you and what church you are from.

If you would like to include a picture to illustrate your devotional, we will do our best to include it.

Don't engage in politics or be overly "preachy."

The devotionals can be a reflection on the teaching of Scripture, self-reflective, reflective of the times, etc.

Visit <http://abcrm.org/category/devotional/> to get a sense of the kinds of devotionals that have been written before you.

**Your devotional should be submitted to your Ministry and Mission Coach. The coach will review your devotional and submit it to the office to be sent out. Your devotional may or may not go out immediately after submission.**

Denver Cluster Coach – Larron Jackson ([ljackson@abcrm.org](mailto:ljackson@abcrm.org))

Southeast New/Mexico – Mike Oldham ([moldham@abcrm.org](mailto:moldham@abcrm.org))

Wyoming – Bill Mankin ([bmankin@abcrm.org](mailto:bmankin@abcrm.org))

Western Slope – Steve Van Ostran ([svanostran@abcrm.org](mailto:svanostran@abcrm.org))

If you are not sure who your area coach is, please call our office at 303.988.3900.

Thank you in advance for writing a devotional. We look forward to hearing from you as to how you see God at work in our lives and our world.

## MLK Holiday — January 16, 2016

As we celebrate this year's MLK holiday on January 16, let us not forget the woman behind the man. Let us celebrate peace this day remembering both the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mrs. Coretta Scott King.

### Mrs. Coretta Scott King

Coretta Scott King was one of the most influential women leaders in our world. Prepared by her family, education, and personality for a life committed to social justice and peace, she entered the world stage in 1955 as wife of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and as a leading participant in the American Civil Rights Movement. Her remarkable partnership with Dr. King resulted not only in four children, who became dedicated to carrying forward their parent's work, but also in a life devoted to the highest values of human dignity in service to social change. Mrs. King traveled throughout the world speaking out on behalf of many things including racial and economic justice, women's and children's rights, and religious freedom.

Born and raised in Marion, AL, Coretta Scott graduated valedictorian from Lincoln High School. She received a B.A. in music and education from Antioch College in Yellow Springs, OH, and then went on to study concert singing at Boston's New England Conservatory of Music, where she earned a degree in voice and violin. While in Boston she met Martin Luther King, Jr. who was then studying for his doctorate in systematic theology at Boston University. They were married on June 18, 1953, and in September 1954 took up residence in Montgomery, AL, with Coretta Scott King assuming the many responsibilities of pastor's wife at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church.

During Dr. King's career, Mrs. King devoted most of her time to raising their four children: Yolanda, Martin III, Dexter, and Bernice. From the earliest days, however, she balanced mothering and Movement work, speaking before church, civic, college, fraternal and peace groups.

After her husband's assassination in 1968, Mrs. King founded and devoted great energy and commitment to building and developing programs for the Atlanta-based Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change as a living memorial to her husband's life and dream.

During her lifetime, Mrs. King dialogued with heads of state, including prime ministers and presidents, as well as participating in protests alongside rank and file working people of all races. She met with many great spiritual leaders. A woman of wisdom, compassion and vision, Coretta Scott King tried to make ours a better world and, in the process, made history.

Mrs. King died in 2006. A few days after her death, thousands of Atlantans stood in line in the pouring sleet to pay their respects to her at a viewing in Ebenezer Baptist Church. She is today interred alongside her husband in a memorial crypt in the reflecting pool of The King Center's Freedom Hall Complex, visited by hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world year-round. The inscription on the crypt memorializing her life of service is from I Corinthians 13:13 – *"And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."*

For more information on the King's, visit [www.thekingcenter.org](http://www.thekingcenter.org).





## Joint Congregational Conversation and Panel Discussion on Race Relations

Joint Congregational Conversation and Panel Discussion on Race Relations at New Hope Baptist Church a wonderful beginning.

WOW! Thank you so much to all who came to the joint congregational meal and conversation at New Hope Baptist Church. Over 150 people attended! Rev. Downing and I thank each of you for your support of this relationship between our congregations, and we look forward to sharing in future conversations and ministry together.

*Anne Scalfaro  
Pastor, Calvary Baptist Church*



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

## Poverty DVDs

Are you being called to do something about poverty in your own community or the world? The Region office has a set of DVDs from [povertycure.org](http://povertycure.org) titled 'Rethink Missions'. While it is primarily aimed at short term mission trips, the ideas that are discussed can make a difference anywhere.

The stories, and explanations, will change how you view poverty, and how you can help.

If you would like to borrow these DVDs, please contact our office at 303.988.3900 to make arrangements for you to do so.

## Wanted: A Dynamic Woman

Wanted: A dynamic woman who holds the Word of God in high esteem to lead the Wyoming Women's Retreat. We enjoy thorough teaching with a Reformed base. The retreat will be held August 11-13, 2017 at Camp Wyoba.



If you are interested, or have suggestions, please email Jenita at [mjmjpack@vcn.com](mailto:mjmjpack@vcn.com).

## 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](mailto:mjmjpack@vcn.com).

## 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.

1. *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.

2. *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.

3. *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.

baptism

4. *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.



5. *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.

6. *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.

7. *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.*

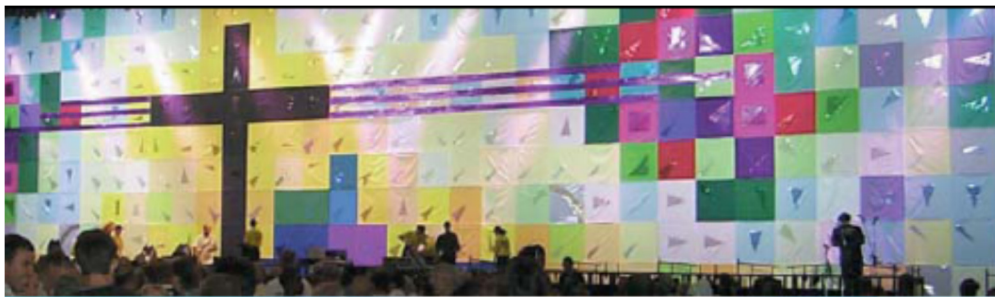
As people of faith, American Baptists seek renewal and revitalization. Informed by their history and tradition, motivated by contemporary needs and challenges, and strengthened by God's leading and the example and sacrifice of their Savior, American Baptists seek to bring a transforming witness to an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



PO Box 851  
Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851



# SISTERS 2017 on the SEA

## Relax • Relate • Renew

Venture on a **3-Night Cruise to the Bahamas** with American Baptist Women's Ministries and American Baptist Women in Ministry, **September 15-18, 2017**.

- Relax together with Christian sisters in friendship and fun.
- Relate to one another and to Jesus Christ through guided conversation, prayer experiences, worship, and Scripture.
- Renew yourself for the ministry to which God has called you.

Disembark from Port Canaveral (Orlando), Florida.

Visit **Grand Bahama Island** and **CocoCay**.

Join with your Christian sisters for a welcome reception, morning devotionals, evening worship and conversations, Sunday worship, and dinner together each evening. Enjoy what the cruise has to offer on your own or with your new friends!

*An uplifting, spiritual weekend in the warmth of God's sun sailing smoothly along with uplifting, spiritual, beautiful, friendly, fun-loving women.*

*—Sandie, Philadelphia, PA  
participant on 2014 cruise*

Information and registration is on [www.abwministries.org/cruise](http://www.abwministries.org/cruise).  
Make your plans today!

***\$125 program fee to AB Women's Ministries is due by January 22, 2017. Later registrations, subject to availability, pay a \$150 program fee. Program fee does not include cruise rates.***

American Baptist Women's Ministries • [www.abwministries.org](http://www.abwministries.org)





## 7 Crucial Church Communication New Year Preparation Tips

We're down to a few weeks! The New Year is around the corner and, unfortunately, Thanksgiving, Black Friday, and [Christmas](#) distract us. After the flurry of work, or even during it, you need to focus on 2017.

**It's going to be your best church communication year ever!**

**Here are 7 tips to becoming ready for the new year in your church communication department:**

1. **Seriously assess this year.** This can't be done alone; ask for people in leadership to be open and honest about the last year. You can even ask a few people in the congregation — dare I say it — or people in your community. Are you telling a consistent story that impacts your church and community for Christ? Does the community know you?
2. **Forget about budget and clearly define success.** It's easy to blame "[no money](#)" for your issues. Instead, dream big and consider what "could" happen. Look at other churches and start itemizing everything that could work for you. Think strategy and not just tactics.
3. **Consider what you can eliminate to save money and time.** Printed materials are a good place to start. You need more money and there are things you're doing that can be eliminated if you have proper processes and digital tools in place. The world is turning their attention to digital media. It's cheaper in the long run.
4. **Ask for help.** You can't do everything yourself, so develop a [Team](#). Consider who you need and find them. Hire them. Sign up volunteers. Pay for a consultant. It's worth the effort!
5. **Prioritize your needs but start with your Brand and Website Organization.** You need to simplify all the competing forces in your church. Tear down the [ministry silos](#) by giving them the ability to sing in unison — one brand story. Then consider how your website should be organized in order to share that story easily.
6. **Then move towards Email Campaigns and Social Media.** Once the center of your digital hub (your



website) is complete, use the power of regularly-scheduled, simple emails to direct attention to the web for the details. [Social media](#) does this too. Don't have followers or email addresses? Start there.

**7. Create a weekly communication process that accomplishes your goals.** Now the fun begins.

Take your itemized goals for the year and create a strategy with a process for accomplishing them weekly. Think "worse first" — conquer the hardest things that reach the most people first. The smaller communication things will start to fall in line afterwards.

You'll get to the end of 2017 and look back at the small weekly tasks that led you to great things that were accomplished and communicated. Just start now, do smaller weekly tasks that compound their impact. Happy New Year! Or is it a little too early...



To view this article online, click [here](#).

**Mark MacDonald**

Senior Brand Strategist, Creative Director, Blogger  
[BeKnownForSomething](#) [PinPointCreative](#)

Originally published at [BeKnownForSomething.com](#) (who holds the copyright); an organization dedicated to effective church communications while helping individuals and ministries become known for something influential; so they'll point to Christ. Printed with Permission.

## Black Eyed Peas

Preparation: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Servings: 6

### Ingredients

- 4 cups fresh or frozen black-eyed peas
- 4 -5 slices bacon
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 stalk celery, diced
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 6 cups chicken broth
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon ground black pepper



In a 5-quart Dutch oven, cook bacon until crisp; set aside to drain on paper towels.

Cook onion, celery and garlic in bacon drippings until tender; add broth, salt, pepper and peas. Bring to a boil and skim top if necessary.

Lower heat to simmer; crumble bacon and add to peas.

### Directions

Adjust seasonings to taste, cover and simmer until peas are tender (30 minutes to 1 hour depending on how tender you like them).



IRS Year-End Giving Guidelines	Report for 2016	Report for 2017
Checks written in December 2016 and deposited in church offering in December 2016	X	
Checks written in December 2016 and deposited in church offering in January 2017		X
Checks written and deposited in church offering in January 2017 but "backdated" to December 2016		X
Checks written and deposited in church offering in December 2016 but "postdated" to January 2017		X
Checks written in December 2016 and deposited in the mail and postmarked in December 2016, but not received by the church until January 2017	X	
Checks written in December 2016 and deposited in the mail in December 2016 but not postmarked until January 2017, and not received by the church until January 2017		X

ABC-USA Mission Giving Guidelines		
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.		
	Report for 2016	Report for 2017
Checks received in Region office through January 11, 2017, but dated 2016	X	
Checks received in Region office through January 12, 2017, but dated 2017		X

## ABC-USA

### 2017 Directory/Planning Calendar

Please note that the ABC-USA 2017 ABC Directory/Planning Calendar is available online. The Directory/Planning Calendar helps to connect American Baptist local churches with the larger denominational family, and provides churches with dates important to American Baptist Churches through April 2018.

The calendar is located here: <http://www.abc-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/17-18-ABC-Dir.Calendar.11.17.16.pdf>

### 2017 Biennial Mission Summit

June 30-July 2, 2017

Portland, Oregon.

For additional information, visit

<http://www.abc-usa.org/2016/08/16/save-the-date-2017-biennial-mission-summit/>



## Calendar

### January

- 1 New Year's Day
- 2 Region office closed in observance of New Year's Day
- 16 MLK Holiday (Region office closed)

### February

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



## ATTENTION!!

### 2017 Region Directories

We will begin printing 2017 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](mailto:akeys@abcrm.org) by January 13.





***The Rocky Mountain  
American Baptist***

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[www.abcrm.org](http://www.abcrm.org)

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on the 1st of each month.*

*The deadline for submissions  
is the 20th of each month.  
Send submissions to  
[akeys@abcrm.org](mailto:akeys@abcrm.org)*

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