



April 1, 2017

# The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

## Update From the Region Board



**American Baptist Churches**  
of the Rocky Mountains  
*Empowered Churches.*

Hello from the ABCRM Board of Directors 2017. We, as your representatives met on March 9-10 to oversee the Region's operations and activities. Updates from the wider church family, ABC-USA. We take time for Board training and learn about Board Structures and Board Responsibilities.

We are excited to hear about plans for the 2017 Gathering to be held September 29-30. There are several Initiatives underway around the Region. "Empower the Small Church" was held in Cheyenne, Wyoming in February. A Double Digit Pastors Retreat is coming up the week after Easter. Mission trips taken and new ones in the planning stages were reported on.

Our camping programs and facilities were reviewed and we had the opportunity to meet the new Camp Administrator for Wyoba. Check out their website for more information on their activities that you can be a part of at [www.wyoba.org](http://www.wyoba.org).

We are in prayer for all of our church family, some are in transition and searching for a new pastor. We encourage each church to send articles of your events and news to share in our Region newsletter. Send photos of how you are working for God's glory in your own neighborhoods. Send that information to Alyce in the office at [akeys@abcrm.org](mailto:akeys@abcrm.org).

We discussed finances and property updates. We heard from the Ministers Council, AB Women's Ministries of Colorado, Ministerial Leadership Committee and the Mission Committee.

This Region is blessed with a thoughtful, caring and creative staff who cover a lot of miles in service to our churches. As the current president, I wish to thank the staff and each member giving their time and energy to be present on the 2017 Board. Together we are doing our best to serve God with all of you in the Region.

Peace and Blessings,

*Estelle Torpy*  
Board President

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## ABCRM Board Welcomes Three New Members

The Board of Directors of the American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains held their spring meeting on March 9th and 10th at the ABCRM office. The Board has the primary responsibility for the business and affairs of the Region, and members of the Board are either elected by the church delegates at the Annual Gathering or serve by the virtue of their position.

Here are the current members of the Board that were voted on at the September Gathering:

President	Estelle Torpy *	Pine Street Church
Vice President	Matt Manning *	Crossroads American Baptist
Treasurer	Andy Wyatt *	FBC Lamar
Denver Cluster	Eugene Downing	New Hope Baptist
Western Slope	James Conley *	FBC Delta
Wyoming	Brenda Schladweiler	FBC Gillette
Southeast	Kecia Hodges	Highland Park
Northern Front Range	Jeff Lundblad *	FBC Laramie

The following Board members serve on the Board by virtue of their position:

Executive Minister/Secretary	Steve Van Ostran *	Staff
Region Administrator	Karen Van *	Staff
Immediate Past President	Bill Warren *	Calvary Baptist
Ministerial Leadership Com	Scott Engelhart	FBC Lander
Camp Wyoba	Jenita Calton	Chapel Car Bible Church
Grand Mesa Camp	Betty Schanz	FBC Grand Junction
AB Women Ministries	Sharon Murphy	Calvary Baptist
At Large Member	Gloria Montgomery	Macedonia Baptist Church
Board of General Ministries	Kay Farley *	Faith Community Baptist
International Ministries	Rich Schweissing	Crossroads American Baptist

The Board members whose name is followed by an \* indicates that they are also members of the Executive Committee. This committee has the responsibility for acting for the Board between Board meetings, and they also serve as the personnel committee for ABCRM.

The term for Board positions is two years and Board members may serve two consecutive terms. Bob Witt (Western slope representative), Fred Dyer (Wyoming representative) and Lynnette Thayer (Northern Front Range representative) served the Board faithfully from October 2012 through September 2016. ABCRM would like to thank them for their service.

Cynthia Rigsby served as Past President of the ABCRM Board from November 2014 through September 2016. Kathy Bird-DeYoung, the former President, moved to Michigan and Cynthia agreed to step in to the Past President role for another term. We love having Cynthia on the Board and it was a pleasure having her serve again.

*continued on page 6*

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## 2016 Annual Reports

Thank you to the churches listed below who completed their 2016 Annual Reports. ***If you have not turned in your report, it's not too late.*** If you have questions, need help, or another copy of your report, please contact our office at [akeys@abcrim.org](mailto:akeys@abcrim.org) or 303-988-3900.

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

We thank the following churches for already submitting their reports.



American Baptist Church  
 Audubon Heights Baptist Church  
 Aurora Hills Church  
 Bethel Baptist Church  
 Central Baptist Church  
 Community Baptist Church, Glenrock  
 Community Calvary Church, Holly  
 Community Church of Moab  
 Crossroads Church  
 Ebenezer Baptist Church, Colorado Springs  
 Ebenezer Ethnic Baptist Church, Aurora  
 Ecumenical Church  
 Emmanuel Missionary Baptist Church  
 Evanston Baptist Church  
 Faith Community Baptist Church  
 First Baptist Church, Center  
 First Baptist Church, Cheyenne  
 First Baptist Church, Colorado Springs  
 First Baptist Church, Delta  
 First Baptist Church, Fort Morgan  
 First Baptist Church, Fowler  
 First Baptist Church, Grand Junction  
 First Baptist Church, Greybull  
 First Baptist Church, Lamar  
 First Baptist Church, Lander  
 First Baptist Church, Laramie  
 First Baptist Church, Longmont  
 First Baptist Church, Loveland  
 First Baptist Church, Lusk  
 First Baptist Church, Palisade  
 First Baptist Church, Simla

First Baptist Church, Torrington  
 Flagler Baptist Church  
 Forefront Church at Harvey Park  
 Gardens of Divine Hope  
 Grace River Church  
 Highland Park Baptist Church  
 Koinonia Church  
 Lake Avenue Baptist Church  
 Macedonia Baptist Church  
 Pine Street Church  
 Rising Star Baptist Church  
 Smoky Hill Baptist Church  
 Solomon Temple Missionary Baptist Church  
 Sombra De Monte Christian Church  
 Trinity Baptist Church  
 True Light Baptist Church  
 United Church of Los Alamos  
 West Alameda Baptist Church  
 Wind River Indian Baptist Church



# 2017 Camps

**Front Range Camp at Quaker Ridge  
July 16-22, 2017**

**Online registration begins April 1**

**[www.frontrangecamping.org](http://www.frontrangecamping.org)**

**Early Registration Deadline is May 31**

**Theme: Bread and Water, Prisoner of Christ**

**Camp packets were mailed to campers and churches last month.**

## Camp Fees:

### EARLY REGISTRATION FEES

**Through May 31, 2017**

Camp	Grade Completed	AB Rate*	Non AB Rate
Elementary	2-5	\$265	\$290
Middle School	6-8	\$280	\$305
Sr. High	9-12	\$280	\$305

**Full Payment must be made by May 31, 2017 to receive the Early Registration Rate.**

**Rates go up after May 31**



## Youth Camps at Wyoba Summer 2017

Senior High Camp	July 9 - 15	Cost \$250
Junior High Camp	July 16 - 22	Cost \$250
Junior Camp	July 23 - 29	Cost \$250
Primary Camp	July 30 - August 2	Cost \$140

**Register by May 30 for these prices.**

**For more information, and registration materials, go to [wyoba.org](http://wyoba.org).**

**Wyoba Camp information was mailed to our churches last month.**



## Grand Mesa Church Camp Needs Camp Caretaker

The Trustees of Camp Mesa Church Camp are in the process of looking for someone to be camp caretaker for the next summer. The period of employment will basically begin the mid part of June, all of July through mid-August, and several weekends the latter part of August and September. If interested or know someone who might be interested, please contact Max Stites at 970-256-7797 or [maxdstites@gmail.com](mailto:maxdstites@gmail.com) for a detailed job description, duties, an application, and salary information. We would like to get this important position filled sooner rather than later and look forward to visiting with those interested.

### 2017 Camp Schedule

June 16-18 Family Camp  
 June 18-24 The Alpine (High School)  
 June 24-29 The Ascent (Middle School)  
 June 29-July 2 The Trailhead (Elementary)

Registration forms available on the website [grandmesabaptistcamp.org](http://grandmesabaptistcamp.org)

Mark your calendars for celebrating **100 YEARS OF CAMPING** with an open house on Saturday, July 8 at Grand Mesa Camp.

*Submitted by Betty Schanz*

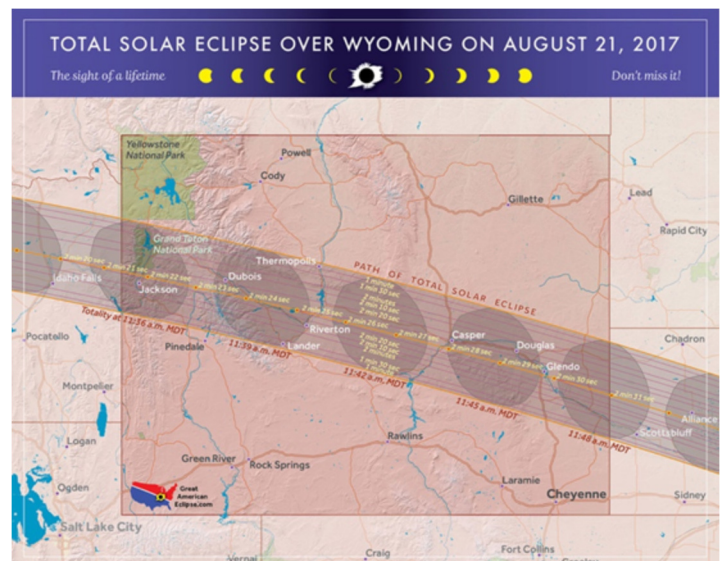


## Total Solar Eclipse in Casper August 21, 2017

Less than 40 beds are available at Camp Wyoba for the solar eclipse on Monday, August 21st. In addition to seeing the wonders of God's creation there will be:

- 2 teams of scientists from the High Altitude Observatory National Center for Atmospheric Research on hand doing experiments.
- Another scientist will be available who likes to talk to folks.
- A retired scientist, Bill Mankin, will be doing a talk on solar eclipses Sunday night.
- PBS crew on location filming the scientists.
- Worship service Monday morning led by Mary Cab-in.
- Access to the fun stuff at Wyoba to help pass the time.

If you would like more information, visit [wyoba.org](http://wyoba.org) and go to the 'church friends' tab.



Brenda Schladweiler, Jeff Lundblad, and James Conley are the new ABCRM Board members. At the March meeting, they participated by asking questions and represented their clusters/areas well. Welcome to the Board!

If you would like to learn more about the structure, roles and responsibility of the Board, Executive Committee and staff members, click on the link here <http://abcrim.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Bylaws-Final-2016.pdf> to see a copy of the ABCRM Bylaws.

Karen Van  
Region Administrator



## 2017 Retirement Planning Seminar

### When:

May 9, 2017  
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Lunch at 1:00 p.m.

### Where:

Crossroads Church  
Northglenn Campus  
10451 Huron St.  
Northglenn, CO 8024

Join our CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER professionals and get the tools you need to:

- Set your retirement goals
- Define your income sources
- Determine how to distribute and diversify retirement assets
- Make sure you are on the right financial path for retirement

Remember, it's never too late—  
or too early—to get started.

To register, please visit

[www.mmbb.org/retirementplanning](http://www.mmbb.org/retirementplanning)





## Save the Date August 10-11, 2017

### Region Sites:

- Casper, WY (Highland Park Community Church)
- Cheyenne, WY (Cheyenne Hills Church)
- Colorado Springs, CO (Woodman Chapel)
- Denver [East], CO (Elevation Christian)
- Denver [North], CO (Crossroads Church)
- Denver [South], CO (Cherry Hills Community Church)
- Grand Junction, CO (Vineyard Church)
- Loveland, CO (Crossroads Church)
- Albuquerque, NM (Fellowship Miss. Baptist Church)

Join 380,000+ of your peers for two days of **fresh, actionable and inspiring leadership training** from a world-class faculty at a location near you.

### ABCRM REGISTRATION COSTS

**\$100.00 per person**  
**(Early Bird) thru May 15, 2017**  
*(registration and payment must be received by May 15)*

**\$120.00 per person**  
**(Regular) May 16-June 16, 2017**  
*(registration and payment must be received by June 16)*

**\$140.00 per person**  
**(Late/if available) after June 16, 2017**

If you are a member of an ABCRM church and purchase your ticket through ABCRM your price is greatly reduced.

Registration forms are available on our website at [www.abcrm.org](http://www.abcrm.org) (under resources/forms), by calling our office at 303.988.3900 or click [here](#).

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

## 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](http://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](http://myfreetaxes.com).



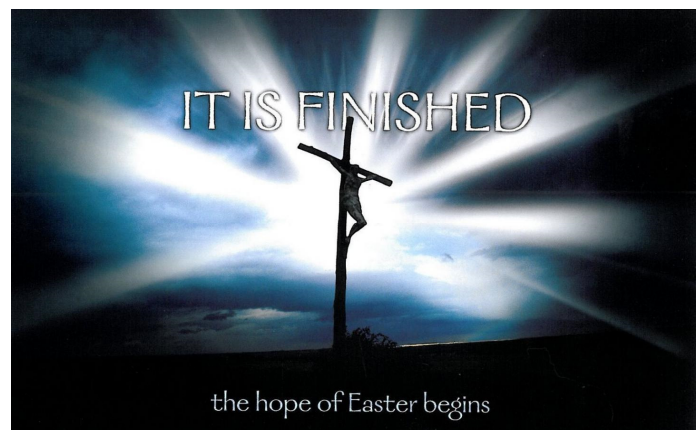
For more than 25 years, The Piton Foundation has conducted the Tax Credits for Working Families Public Information Campaign and the Tax Help Colorado program to help increase the number of low-income families receiving the EITC and free tax help. Learn more at [www.piton.org/eitc](http://www.piton.org/eitc).



[www.facebook.com/taxhelpcolorado](https://www.facebook.com/taxhelpcolorado)



[@taxhelpCO](https://twitter.com/taxhelpCO)



## Angels Among Us—Great African American Women Mary McLeod Bethune and Bennie L. Williams

Last year, Bennie Williams was one of several speakers in an ABW regional event on African American women held at Calvary Baptist Church— “Angels Among Us.”

Miss Bennie portrayed Mary McLeod Bethune, who once said “I was loved before I came into being, and I have treasured this heritage of love and have made it the foundation of my life.”

The same was true for Bennie Lucille Stephens, born in Marshall, Texas, the daughter of Willie Girlena Sisco and Grover Cleveland Stephens. Bill (as Willie was known) was well into her 40s by the time Bennie came along (“I was practically a miracle,” she says), and Bill had a well-established career, teaching at Marshall’s Pemberton High School.

Education was a high priority for the family. Bennie’s parents enrolled her at four in a well-regarded elementary school “with the best teachers,” but it required a commute involving foot, bus and car. It was worth it, for Bennie thrived in the challenging academic environment.

Her growing-up years introduced her to diverse people, giving her a welcoming and gracious spirit and an insatiable curiosity. “There were several generous white people in my childhood who are probably responsible for the fact that I still have several trusted white friends,” Bennie says.

And always, there was music. She would practice piano faithfully—even when her parents weren’t home to supervise—and she started lessons at age six. Her teacher, Mrs. Montgomery, struggled with Bennie’s will (she once told Bill she wouldn’t teach Bennie because she was so stubborn), but Mrs. Montgomery remained Bennie’s beloved teacher until college beckoned—and they remained friends. She also instilled in Bennie a deep love of literature and the arts, which continues to this day, evidenced by her voracious reading and love for lively discussion.

Bennie followed in her mother’s footsteps at Bishop College in Marshall (Bill a 1915 alumna), graduating in 1951 with a bachelor of arts in piano. Later, Bennie went to Indiana University to earn the master of music in choral conducting and piano.

After college, Bennie taught several years in Dallas, before moving to Colorado in 1970 to teach at Hamilton Junior High School for five years and then Merrill Middle School, until 1980.

She met and married Luke Williams in 1952, and they had one son, Melvin. When they got to Denver, she and Melvin visited Calvary Baptist Church, appreciated its warmth and welcome and began a relationship that continues to this day.

She ended her career in 1996 after teaching 15 years at George Washington High School.

She has studied with outstanding choral conductors and trained choirs to sing major choral works. But her passion remains the Negro spiritual.

She was a powerful force in creating an awareness of spirituals in the metropolitan Denver community through leadership in the Spirituals Project and, in more recent years, the Bennie L. Williams Spiritual Voices. The choir has a dedicated and enthusiastic following, and under Bennie’s leadership and guidance of up-and-coming directors, the group always delivers a rich, meaningful experience.

Bennie was inducted into the George Washington High School Hall of Fame in January this year. Alumni praised her on Facebook, saying such things as “I appreciated her challenging me to get out of my comfort zone to learn different types of music. Her passion for music was contagious and I loved learning from her and growing my love and appreciation for all types of music. And that love and appreciation is still with me to today.”



*Best friend Augusta Hardy (left) and longtime singing friend and “my daughter” Luann Dodge, (right) celebrate Bennie Williams for her influence on generations of high school students and thousands who have been inspired by her musical leadership.*



In her ABW presentation, Bennie introduced Mary Jane McLeod Bethune, an American educator, states-woman, philanthropist, humanitarian and civil rights activist best known for starting a private school for African-American women in Daytona Beach, Florida (now Bethune-Cookman College).

Mary McLeod was born in 1875, one of 17 children of former slaves in deep poverty. She was the one child chosen to attend a school opened by a missionary for African-American children. It was a journey that would take her to seminary in North Carolina and the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago.



She became one of the nation's leading educators and activists, dying in 1955 in Florida. Her legacy was summed up in her last will and testament, words that resonate today:

"I leave you love. Love builds. Our aim must be to create a world of fellowship and justice where no man's color or religion is held against him.

"I leave you hope. Yesterday, our ancestors endured the degradation of slavery, yet they retained their dignity.

"I leave you the challenge of developing confidence in one another.

"I leave you a thirst for education. Knowledge is the prime need of the hour.

"I leave you a respect for the uses of power. We live in a world which respects power above all things."

Mary McLeod Bethune and Bennie L. Williams—angels among us, living a century apart. Each has influenced generations of students and leaves a legacy of love, hope, confidence, knowledge and strength.

*Charlotte Million  
Calvary Baptist Church*

## Calendar

### April

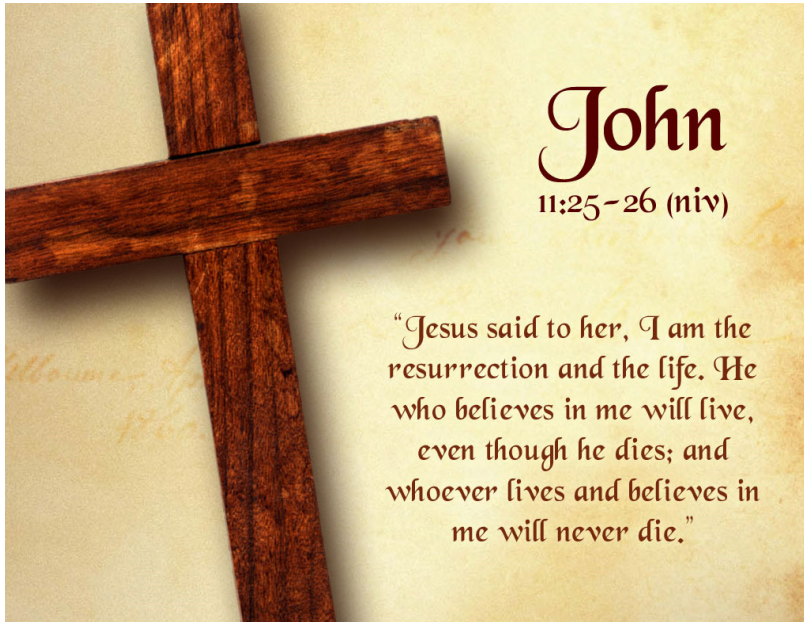
- 1** WyobaFest at FBC, Casper
- 8** North East ABW Association Meeting
- 9** Palm Sunday
- 14** Good Friday (office closed)
- 16** Easter Sunday
- 17-25** Amsterdam Mission Trip
- 18-20** Double Digit Pastors Retreat

### May

- 2** Mission Committee Meeting
- 9** MMBB Retirement Planning Seminar  
Crossroads Church Northglenn Campus
- 12** Executive Committee Meeting
- 14** Mother's Day
- 20** Wyoba Board Meeting
- 29** Memorial Day (Region office closed)



Christ sacrifice life rejoice joy Jesus hope crucifixion  
He is SAVIOR  
RISEN  
REDEEMER amazing grace LOVE mercy  
StudioIRU



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

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