



September 1, 2015

The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

2015 GATHERING OF ABCRM

There are those moments and events in the life of an organization which are seminal... they lead to change, to new life and to a new reality. Usually those moments involve a dangerous dream... a compelling vision, creative thinking, new ideas and the desire to do what it takes to make that happen. What if this year's Gathering of ABCRM is one of those times? What if we really are able to capture that *DANGEROUS DREAM* that only God can give and you aren't there?

So... be there. We will be discussing some critical topics in the life of our Baptist Family – Racial Relations, The Future of the Church and Human Sexuality. After discussing these we will be dreaming about what we might do to make God's vision for these issues come to fruition in our life together. We need the ideas, the energy and the leadership that only you can bring to the table.

And, as an added bonus, our consideration of these challenging topics will be interspersed with celebration and fellowship, good food and powerful worship. So register today and don't miss being a part of this Dream Team!

Steve Van O
Executive Minister



September 25 & 26, 2015
Macedonia Baptist Church
3240 Adams Street
Denver, CO 80205



American Baptist Churches
of the Rocky Mountains

Empowered Churches.

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WHAT WILL WE DO?

The Gathering promises to be an exciting time where we can dream together about our communities being safe places for all, dream about our churches being more effective servants of Christ in those communities and dream over our common love of Christ trumps over differing views of Scripture.

We hope you will come and be part of this special time together.

WHY SHOULD I ATTEND?

- * Visit with friends from around ABCRM
- * Meet new friends
- * Learn new things
- * Listen to others
- * Hear inspiring speakers
- * Tour Wings over the Rockies at the Clergy Appreciation Dinner
- * Laugh as you learn during the Thursday Training event
- * Discuss things that matter to your church & community

HOW MUCH?

Thru September 14

Go with the Flow Workshop (includes lunch) \$60

Clergy Appreciation Dinner

ABCRM Clergy & Spouse

free with paid Gathering registration \$0

Non-clergy individuals \$40

and persons not registered for the Gathering

Gathering Registration:

Church Delegate (voting member) \$80*

Church Member (non-voting member) \$80*

Registration forms are available from our office.

Call (303) 988-3900 for more information.

Pastors, Lay-Leaders, Youth Leaders, and anyone wanting to learn more about the Region are welcome to attend this Annual Gathering of churches and people from around the

American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains.

*Cancellations must be received by **September 18, 2015**, and are subject to a \$10 non-refundable processing fee. Cancellations after **September 19** are non-refundable.*

- * Cost includes snacks and refreshments, Gathering materials, and two meals — Friday lunch & dinner

The Gathering Training Day

Thursday, September 24, 2015

11:00 a.m.—4 p.m.

Macedonia Baptist Church

\$60

Improv Training: Go with the Flow

What words would you use to describe your last continuing education event?

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| * Exciting | * Engaging | * New insights |
| * Laughter | * Practical | * Valuable |
| * Stretching | * Entertaining | * Fun |

In today's quick paced world, organizations that can't (or won't) change swiftly, find themselves irrelevant. An improvisational mind-set is all about change, flexibility and adaptation. Using the training techniques developed in improvisation, this workshop will give you the tools to embody and, hopefully, learn to embrace change in a positive light.

Would that help your church and ministry? What would happen if people in your church started saying "YES / AND" instead of "NO / BUT". A small but transforming change. This workshop is a great value, so get a group from your church to participate in an exciting, informative, valuable, engaging and fun day!



Comments from past participants:

"WOW! I left feeling good ... I can learn while having fun or as one American Baptist professor told us 'Holy Play'! Now I know what that feels like." Pastor Kay Farley

"I learned how to respond on the fly and how to handle tough situations." Pastor Jason King

Pastor Jason King

Lunch Keynote Speakers:

Comedians: Bone Hampton & Rich Praytor will provide insights into **Humor & Hard Topics**



The Power of “Yes, and”

In life, it is important to be able to think on your feet. That is why some business schools and large companies are using improvisation classes to teach skills such as creativity and embracing change. Improvisation isn't about being funny; it is about reacting—being focused and present in the moment then being able to adapt quickly to unexpected events.

On Thursday, September 24, 2015, ABCRM is sponsoring a workshop titled “Go with the Flow”. Participants will start at 11 am with a delicious lunch and insights from two Christian comedians providing insights on “Humor and Hard Topics”. After lunch we will split into small groups to learn and practice the skill of improvisation. Improv experts will lead us through a bunch of games, ask us what the game taught us, then how that insight can be applied to what we do. It is fast paced, interactive and practical.

Get a group from your church and sign up for this fun and valuable class. It is a bargain for only \$60 per person. This is the perfect way to prepare for the 2015 Gathering dealing with “Dangerous Dreams.”

Thursday, September 24 from 11 a.m.—4 p.m.

Macedonia Baptist Church

Cost \$60 per person includes lunch, lunch speakers & Improv Training



Clergy Appreciation Dinner

Thursday, September 24th @ Wings over the Rockies

5:30 pm Informal tours of the Air & Space Museum

6:30 Dinner & Entertainment

ABCRM Clergy & spouse—Free with paid Gathering registration
Non-Clergy individuals and persons not registered for the Gathering is \$40.

*Due to this year's location, we are unable to accept late registrations for the Clergy Dinner. If you plan to attend, you **MUST** register by September 8.*



Entertainment



Bone Hampton

comedian, actor, keynote

www.bonehampton.com



Rich Praytor

comedian, speaker, church outreach

www.richpraytor.com

American Baptists Respond to Devastation in Myanmar with \$10,000 OGHS Emergency Grant... ADDITIONAL RELIEF URGENTLY NEEDED

News from International Ministries
August 7, 2015

Massive floods and strong winds in Myanmar (formerly Burma) have impacted more than 259,000 people across 12 of Myanmar's 14 states, according to an August 5th report of the [United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs](#).

In recent days, the death toll has climbed to 69. The massive flooding occurred in the aftermath of Cyclone Komen which made landfall on July 30th. According to the UN report, priority needs include food, water and sanitation, access to health care and shelter.

In response, an initial \$10,000 in One Great Hour of Sharing emergency relief funds is being sent to American Baptist International Ministries (IM) partner, the Myanmar Baptist Convention (MBC) to help with the relief efforts.

In recent days, IM received the following status update from Dr. Yam Kho Pau, general secretary of MBC:

"People from Chin State, Rakhine State, Kachin State, Magwe Region and Sagaing Region have been suffering from Komen Cyclone that left thousands of people homeless and food shortage. Due to landslides and flood, it is difficult to access the said affected places by roads. Therefore, relief goods are transported by government and private airlines."

The General Secretary continued, "As of Thursday, August 6, the delta areas of Myanmar such as Ayeyarwaddy Region, Pegu Region and Yangon Region have been affected by the flood as the impacts of the Komen Cyclone. Therefore, we are expecting more victims and affected families in the regions. The MBC Disaster Management Committee has been sourcing funds and donations not only from our local churches but also from our Global Mission partners abroad. The committee is sending a survey team to affected areas to collect data to be used for rehabilitation projects."

U.S. and Puerto Rico churches are asked to keep the victims, their families, their churches and IM's partners in Myanmar in prayer.

Additional financial relief is urgently needed. Tax-deductible contributions may be made through the churches, or donors may give by credit card by going to the [IM website](#), or mailing a check to International Ministries, Attn: Myanmar Cyclone Relief, P.O. Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482. Write "OGHS-Myanmar Cyclone Relief" on the memo line.

One Great Hour of Sharing is administered by the World Relief Committee of the Board of General Ministries of American Baptist Churches USA. The Committee facilitates American Baptist emergency relief, disaster rehabilitation, refugee work and the development of assistance by establishing policy guidelines and overseeing distribution of the annual One Great Hour of Sharing offering received by churches. Learn more: <http://www.abc-oghs.org/>



Schweissings' Ministry with Karen Refugees

Following five years of service as region missionaries to the Karen refugee community in Aurora, Colorado, Daniel and Estela Schweissing have stepped down to pursue other endeavors. (Please see their article in last month's newsletter for more information.) Below are just a few of the things that your support has enabled them to do during this time.



Homework Tutoring: Carol Willard (left) and Beth Kieft (right) of Calvary Baptist Church in Denver were two of our most faithful tutors .



Scholarship funds provided by Crossroads Baptist Church and the Curtis Park Matching Grant Fund have allowed numerous refugee youth to participate in the region's Front Range Camping program.

VBS Over the Years





The Rev. Debora Di, pastor of Ebenezer Ethnic Baptist Church, was ordained in June 2014.



Baptism at Aurora Hills Baptist Church (2011). Prior to Pastor Debora's ordination, the Schweissings provided pastoral and administrative support to Ebenezer Ethnic Baptist Church.



Estela Schweissing and Su Baw, a leader in the refugee community, discuss the challenges of refugee resettlement with women at the Colorado ABW's summer retreat (2013).



This workshop on refugee resettlement at First Baptist Delta is one of many that the Schweissings facilitated around the region.



Volunteers from Crossroads American Baptist Church have provided much needed assistance in making repairs to the property of the old Aurora Community Baptist Church which currently houses the ministries of Ebenezer Ethnic Baptist Church (Karen) and *Iglesia Palabra de Fe* (Hispanic).

Short Term Mission Trip to Chiapas Mexico January 2016

Participating in a Short Term Mission trips will change your life.

Is that overstating the value of a STM? I don't think so. When you leave your comfort zone, your routine, you learn to trust God in new ways. Often, a first Short Term Mission trip is a lot like Peter walking on water. No matter how ready you think you are, before you know it, your head is under water. The food doesn't agree with you. You are exhausted. You get car sick. Through it all, however, you draw on resources you didn't know you had and you trust God in new ways.

STM trips also touch lives of people where you go. It is rarely the work that you do that is the most important part of the trip. The true impact is in the relationships you build. Somehow during meals you share, worship services you barely understand, and hours of work, you get to build relationships with people. It is life changing.

ABCRM is planning a mission trip to Chiapas, Mexico the second week of January (tentatively January 9-17, 2016). We chose these dates in the hopes that some college students will be able to join those of us who are a little older in the mission trip before their Spring semester begins. As with all mission trips, these dates are still fluid until the tickets are purchased. We hope to purchase tickets the first week of November, so any who decide to join the group after that date will do so based on availability of adding you to the trip.

We will be working in the village of La Ceiba near Simojovel, Chiapas. Our work will focus in two areas. We will be helping them construct their new church building. We will also plan to have a children's program each afternoon.

This is not a trip for the faint of heart or frail of body. We will be working hard each day and sleep on mats on the floor. We will have running water, but the "shower" is a cold garden hose. It is awesome!

In addition to the work, we will spend a couple days in the colonial city of San Cristóbal de Las Casas and take a tour either of the Mayan temple at Toniná or take a cruise down the Canon del Sumidero. (Group choice)

This trip is open to all who are physically able and who are 16 and older. Get a group from your church, recruit a friend, or just come by yourself. Because of transportation, this trip is limited to 10 people. Currently, we have three committed and two more who have expressed strong interest.

The cost will be approximately \$1500 depending on final air fare. (\$1500 is based on air fare of about \$750.) We will most likely fly out of Colorado Springs.

For more information on the trip, contact Mike Oldham at moldham@abcrm.org





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Calendar

September

- 7** Labor Day
- 15-17** SoulJourners Retreat
- 24** Pre Gathering Training
- 24** Clergy Appreciation Dinner
- 25-26** Annual Gathering

October

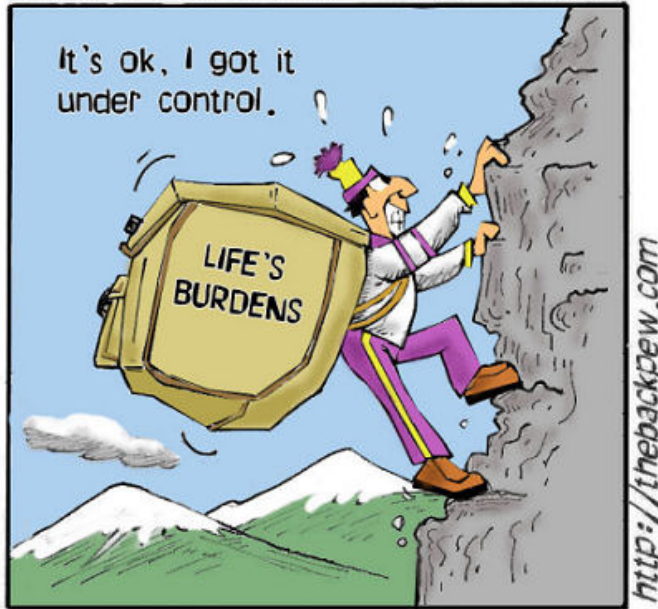
- 1** Crosswalking Pastor's Luncheon
- 4** World Mission Offering Sunday
- 6-16** Pastor's Mission Trip to Amsterdam and Hungary
- 22** Calvary Baptist Church Mental Health Workshop at Bethany Lutheran
- 23-24** MLC Meeting
- 26-Nov. 6** Pastor Mission Trip to Bolivia
- 31** Halloween

November

- 1** Daylight Savings Time ends
- 11** Veterans Day
- 13-14** MLC Practice of Ministry Class
- 25-27** Thanksgiving Holiday Weekend (Region office will close at noon on Wednesday)
- 26** Thanksgiving Day



The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



TRAVELING LIGHT - *Release those burdens
you were never intended to bear.*
The Promise of Psalms 23 - **Max Lucado**

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