



The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

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

Servant Offering

Regional Ministry in an Age of Disconnection (Pt 2): Reconnecting With What Drew Us Together!

During the 2019 Annual Gathering, I gave an address that suggested three things we must do in order to be effective. Last month I re-shared the first point of this address... this month, point 2.

In addition to reclaiming the distinctives of our Baptist faith... a faith that elevates Jesus as the Christ, allows Scripture to define who Christ is and that seeks to understand Scripture in a "regenerate" community of faith... we as American Baptists also need to reclaim and reconnect with that which brought us together in the first place: the desire to do and support common mission and ministry that is bigger than the individual local church.

Remembering our history, independent Baptist congregations were drawn together in several places to do mission and ministry together. Luther Rice drew a group of churches together to support the missionary work of "Baptist" missionaries who were already on the field due to the work of God and our "Congregationalist" brothers and sisters. Bible study by Rice and the Judsons on their trip to the mission field convinced them that God truly was asking for us to profess faith in him through Believer's Baptism and that the church should consist of those who have truly believed. And so, these very ethical missionaries resigned their commission by the Congregationalists and sought to form a Baptist Mission Society. Besides this initial "Foreign Mission Society", other mission and ministry societies were formed...missions to reach those settling in the West as well as the native American people that already resided there... missions to publish tracts and Bible and Sunday School material for the discipling of these new believers... missions to start Sunday Schools and later churches.

Around the same time, a group of local churches were concerned about the ordination of their pastors and their training along with other common concerns shared by the churches. To that end the Philadelphia and other Baptist "associations" began to form. These local associations later began to join together to form conventions who shared not only these missions but others that



What's in this RMAB?

Ministering With an Open Gate [Page 3](#)

Approaching Kingdom Work With a Servant Heart [page 4](#)

Bike Shop Church [page 5](#)

Retired Pastors, ABCRM Clergy & Spouse Thank You Luncheons [page 7](#)

Pueblo Grant Funds Community Picnic [Page 7](#)

Jane Loring Jones Scholarship Recipients [Page 8](#)

Right Now Media [Page 9](#)

Calendar [Page 9](#)

Holiday Office Hours [Page 10](#)



included the meeting of needs that were unmet in society by starting hospitals, orphanages and homes for those who were no longer able to care for themselves. And eventually as the churches became more and more successful at bringing new members into the faith, there was the need for places to do discipleship ministries and so these groups began to start and to build camp and conference centers.

And then, in the early 1900's, Baptists became known for the work of one of their own who saw the physical needs of people in "Hell's Kitchen" and began to meet that need, not as a means to salvation – although many did come to faith as a result of his work – but to love these people as Christ loved the people during His years of ministry.

All of this to say that American Baptists were drawn together not by a common theology... a common doctrinal statement... but instead by common mission and ministry. Yes, there were those things that most Baptist churches shared, the deity of Christ and general Christian and Baptist Principles, but there were many things where no agreement was found! But despite this, they found that they were called to work together in common ministries and missions... ministries and missions here in the US and around the world.

In the growth age of American Baptists as a denomination, convention – which later became our 33 Regional Ministries in ABC-USA today – were not just entities that supported the local church and the mission societies, they were actually mission organizations themselves. Often the heads of the staff of these conventions as well as many whom served on the staff were called "missionaries" and held commissions either from their local organization or from one of the mission societies.

And these mission organizations were effective. Our own predecessors in ABCRM not only planted numerous churches, but also ministries in Downtown Denver and to indigent farm workers in the San Louis valley, we established several nursing homes and built and ran several camps. We did it with the cooperation of the churches working together, sending money and volunteers to make these dreams a reality and supporting the mission-

aries who were charged with making this happen.

Unfortunately, over the years, many of these ministries – schools and hospitals, homes and care centers – have closed or have grown to the point that they no longer needed the churches or associations to continue to do their work... they have become self-sustaining 501c3s and in some cases very successful para-church organizations. Some, maybe even most, still retain a distant connection to the original founding organization through Board leadership, but often the relationship is so distant as to not be known in the pastor's office, let alone the pew.

Still, despite the successful creation of mission and ministry organizations in the past, the Region cannot rest on its laurels and simply do mission support! We are called to not just support the work of others but to be missionary and ministry organizations... to work together to build the Kingdom of God. And to do this, we need to move outside our churches to connect with our communities. We need to identify that which needs to be done there that we cannot do alone, and we need to ask our sister churches to join with us in creating ministries that meet the common needs we face.

And we can do this, even if we don't see eye to eye with our sister congregation on every aspect of our theology. I don't have to agree with you about the role of women in the church to work alongside you in building a home for the homeless. I don't have to impose my understanding of "holiness" and how I believe I should conduct myself in order to work together in a food pantry for the poor. And I don't have to agree with you on the specifics of what it takes to be saved in order to work together to staff a suicide prevention hot-line. All we need to do is agree with one another that God's love is greater than our differences and is calling us to act to share that love in the lives of others.

If Regional Ministry is going to be relevant in this age of disconnection, we have to reconnect with that which drew us together in the first place... to be a mission agency...not just a missionary support organization.

*In Christ,
Steve Van O*

Ministering With an Open Gate



Larry Weaver is the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Cañon City. Everything about that sentence makes Larry groan a little inside. He laughingly says, "In thirty years of youth

ministry, the two groups of people who I always made fun of were Baptists and senior pastors." His wife JoAnn jokingly tells him that "Baptist karma" finally caught up to him.

Larry was never a youth leader who saw youth ministry as a steppingstone to the pastorate. He has a deep love for youth. He is ageless in working with kids. He worked with youth groups in Presbyterian and Evangelical Free churches. Larry tells a story of one youth retreat. They invited a young college student to lead the retreat. This young leader was named . . . Chris Tomlin. Over the years, Larry touched hundreds of lives through retreats, mission trips, worship services, and ordinary times.

More than a job, loving kids was a lifestyle for Larry and JoAnn. They have had five "significant" foster kids or exchange students and a bunch of other kids that lived with them from a few days to weeks on a more or less formal/official basis. They adopted a son out of the foster care system. Larry and JoAnn just returned from Germany where Larry officiated the wedding of one of their exchange students. When asked about this how they connect with so many young people over the years, he replied simply, "We just left the gate open."

When asked about the focus of the church, he says, "We are called to love the wounded people in Cañon City." (A common theme for Larry.) He explains that they work on fostering deep hospitality. Their goal, according to Larry, is not to impress people with their music or worship or even his sermon, but to have people experience community the first time they walk through the doors. "We see people who come through our doors who are just tired. They are exhausted by life and sometimes by church. We want them to just know they are loved by the people in this place."

When asked about what he would say to a young person who thinks they are called to youth ministry. Larry turned serious and thoughtful. Larry responded, "I would say to them, 'If you are doing this because you are craving attention don't do it. If you need to be the center of everything, I don't want work with you. You cannot make up for the status you did not have as a student in high school.'" He said that in all the years that he attended youth leadership conferences; he knew that so many at those gathering were trying to impress everyone in the room. Many of these had all the charisma in the world, but they were doing youth ministry for the wrong reason. He concluded, "The single most important thing I look for in a youth leader is humility."

Larry brings a gentle spirit, a joyful spirit, and a ready laugh. No wonder people who have been wounded by life are drawn to him.

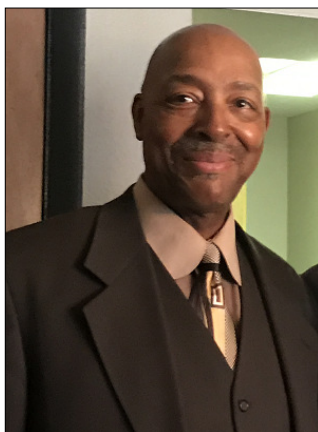
*Mike Oldham
Mission and Ministry Coach
Southeast/New Mexico and
Northern Front Range Clusters*



Approaching Kingdom Work With a Servant Heart

“Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God; Your Spirit is good, Lead me in the land of uprightness.” Ps. 143:10 (NKJV)

Rev. Dr. Terence E. Hendricks, Senior Pastor, King Baptist Church in Denver was recently elected to the position of “President of the Western States Baptist Convention”. (The Western States Baptist Convention is a branch of The National Baptist Convention, USA. The largest African-American Baptist Convention in America.) Upon learning of this turn of events my heart was filled with great joy. I have known Pastor Hendricks for a number of years. I have known him to be an outstanding pastor and servant of God. He is a man on a mission when it comes to matters regarding kingdom service. I am confident that God has called him to lead the Western State Baptist Convention for a time such as this.



Recently, Pastor Hendricks and I sat down to “break bread” together, both in the body and in the spirit. During our time together I wanted to hear his “heart” as he communed with God regarding his new responsibilities in kingdom service. As I expected, he had his heart turned toward heaven seeking God’s face for guidance. As we went forward during our time together, Pastor Hendricks began to share with me some of the things that God had placed on his heart. I noted the following regarding our conversation:

I. Serving Pastors With a Servant’s Heart: Pastor Hendricks has a heart for the work of the Lord and for the shepherds that God has called to join with him in advancing “the cause and kingdom” of Jesus Christ. He will strive intentionally to listen to the pastors that he shepherds as their president. He wants to know their needs and their desires, both personal and in the life of their ministry. After gathering the desired

information from pastors throughout the Western States Convention, Pastor Hendricks plan to pull together persons with the gifts and skills to meet the respective needs of those he has called to serve. After pausing for a moment, Pastor Hendricks said, “Not only do I want to serve pastors, but I want to serve every soul in every Western States church that seeks to serve the Lord.” I told Pastor Hendricks that I would join him in prayer to that end. I also reminded Pastor Hendricks to be sure to use the resources that are available through both the Region and MMBB.

II. The Focus of the Church of Jesus Christ: To Make Disciples:

Pastor Hendricks said to me, “The first work of the Church is to make disciples.” To which I responded, “Amen”. Pastor Hendricks said he wants to make “discipleship development” a high priority for his administration. He views “discipleship and sound doctrine” as two inseparable pillars on which the Gospel rest. Pastor Hendricks is currently developing plans and curriculum to share with churches that share his views on this matter. Once again, I reminded Pastor Hendricks that the Region and the national body of ABC could be very helpful in this area of his ministry.

III. Looking at Ministry in the Light of “The Word, the Culture and the Context”:

Pastor Hendricks understands that advancing the cause and kingdom of God begins with “The Word of God”. He also understands that the word of God must be spoken and lived into in the light of “the culture and context” in which Believers are called to serve Him. To that end, Pastor Hendricks plans to help churches to develop and implement ministerial strategies grounded on the word of God and implemented in the light of the culture and context they are called to serve, both in “The Body and beyond the walls”. I reassured Pastor Hendricks that the Region is his partner in this effort.

IV. Going Forward and Listening for the Voice of

God: As our time together neared its end, Pastor Hendricks reminded me that he welcomes the challenges that come with being the President of

the Western States Baptist Convention. He believes that God called him to this new position and he is ready to serve the Lord in this season of his life and ministerial journey. Pastor Hendricks closed our time together with these words, “My heart’s desire is to walk in lock step with the Lord

and to listen for His voice”. To which I replied, Amen.

*Rev. Larron D. Jackson, DMin
Ministry and Mission Coach, Denver Cluster*

Bike Shop Church

I never planned to open and operate a Bike Shop. I’d been a fairly dedicated cyclist for well over a decade when I decided to finally learn how to repair a bike. Four years ago I found a bike mechanic at a local bike shop who really looked like he knew what he was doing and asked him if he’d teach me how to fix bikes. I wanted to learn it all. He agreed to teach me and for the next two years I worked with Shawn three afternoons a week learning everything about bicycle repair.

Feeling fairly competent, I started to acquire my own bicycle repair equipment and began repairing bikes in my garage. I’d offer to help a friend or a church member or a neighbor fix their bike and even began taking in donations of bikes to fix up and give to someone who needed a bike.

I’d go home after a long day of church work and spend an hour or two wrenching on bikes. It felt really good. Working all day as a pastor shepherding people, counseling people, listening to people, praying for people, I found the skill of fixing a bike very cathartic. I can’t ‘fix’ people but I can fix a bike and that was very gratifying.

It wasn’t long before the bike repair needs started to pile up. I wasn’t able to get repairs done quickly and efficiently for people. About that time, November of 2017, I met a 15 year old student from Northglenn High School just down the street who



happened to know bike repair. Saul, pronounced with two syllables, expressed an interest in helping me with bike repairs. I told him I’d pay him if he’d commit to helping me a couple days a week. So, for \$11 an hour, un-churched Saul and I started a friendship that would become a ministry.

By June of 2018 we’d grown in our repairs and donations of bikes we would rebuild and give to people who needed them to the point that we acquired more repair equipment and required more space in the garage. We came up with a clever name, More Better Bikes with the sub theme “We Have A Mission”. Saul designed a logo and we had shirts printed.

It was fall of 2018 when my wife finally said out loud what I’d already known: she’d like her garage back. A few months later I received an unsolicited check in the mail for \$5,000 to buy a shed to use as my bike shop. I had the space on the side of my house, built a shed and moved the shop into the shed. By this time word of our ‘mission’ was



spreading and we were doing repairs for a few dozen people and taking in bike donations to refurbish and give away or sell at low cost. We were getting bikes to homeless people, students, people with suspended licenses, old people, young people, rich people, recovering people and those of low income.

We got so busy I had to hire three more bike-techs to keep up with the demand. Today, me, Saul, Nick, Will and



Josh are operating More Better Bikes from 3-6 Monday-Friday doing our mission.

Ok, here's why I told you that long story. I have sensed for many years that if the church of Jesus is going to have any impact in the lives of unchurched people in this growingly non-churched culture, we're going to have to change the way we think about church.

Here's my prediction: only churches that begin to see their greatest impact in culture happening outside the walls of the church building are going to survive the next decade of ministry. If we keep thinking that ministry to unchurched people needs to happen inside the walls of the church building, we'll continue to decline, struggle and eventually dry up.

Followers of Jesus are going to listen to both the great command (love) and the great commission (go) and get serious about incarnational ministry, being the hands and feet and heart of Jesus in each of our daily contexts, or we are going to become increasingly irrelevant.

For those bike shop boys, the closest thing they have in life to church is the bike shop, (except Will, he's churched). It's a place operated by a Christian (me) who uses that space to not only get people bikes who need them, but who uses every opportunity to talk about values, ethics, and faith and then naturally tether them to Jesus in whom they all converge. Like during our weekly team meetings, we always go deep in our conversations and end in prayer.

As a pastor during the 80's, 90's and early 2000's I've done the attractional church thing, making



church attractive to the unchurched so they'd come in. That doesn't work anymore. In today's culture the church MUST go to the people where new forms and settings and environments for the

gospel can connect with the culture. Every Christian must take on the challenge to love people and make disciples in the places we spend most of our daily lives: work, school, neighborhoods, clubs and gyms.

Bike Shop Church. Kitchen Church. Lunch-Break Church. Gym Church. Starbucks Church. Cubicle Church. Garage Church. Skate Church. Front-Porch Church. Golf-Cart Church. Runners Church. Library Church. Bridge-Club Church. The list is endless. Like God's love.

The impact we're having outside the bike shop is fairly big...but inside...oh wow, it's huge.

It's a new day for the church of Jesus. And it's super exciting. God help us steward this new day well.

BTW: we're on Facebook and Instagram @MoreBetterBikes



Dr. Kim Skattum



Save the Date

Thank You Luncheons

for

Retired Pastors, ABCRM Clergy and/or Spouse

*This year we will hold two luncheons.
We invite you to join us for either one.*

November 12 2019 ~ 11:30 am to 1:00 pm

- *The Margarita at Pine Creek*
 - *7350 Pine Creek Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80919*

OR

November 14, 2019 ~ 11:30 am to 1:00 pm

- *Denver Chop House & Brewery*
 - *1735 19th Street, Denver, CO 80202*

*RSVP by November 5 to 303.988.3900 or office@abcrm.org.
Your personal invitation was mailed on October 16.
Be sure the Region office has your current mailing address.
Contact us at the phone or email above.*

Pueblo Grant Funds Community Picnic

Austin First Baptist Church had dwindled down to five people in 2016. The church was out of money and nearing closure. Delta First Baptist Church came alongside to parent a restart of the ministry in October of 2016. Last summer, Austin FBC applied and received a Pueblo grant (ABCRM resources left from the sale of FBC-Pueblo) to hold a Community Fellowship Barbeque on Saturday, September 14, 2019. Members floated the idea of a community barbeque to five other local Orchard City churches.

They joined forces to host this community event at the Orchard City Town Park.

Drawings were held every 30 minutes and attendees were encouraged to sign up to win prizes and services provided by church members. 125 people



Pastor Paul Rosin, All Saints Lutheran, seated, visits with event organizer Laura Gartner, Austin Baptist, at the Community Fellowship Barbecue while his nephew Jesse and local citizens enjoy the day.

attended this outreach which included 68 church members and 57 guests indicating no church affiliation. Dinner included pulled pork sandwiches and the fixings with homemade dessert from the

churches. Live music came from the local talent pool and a couple blow up jump stations were a hit with the kids.

The other churches were All Saints Lutheran (ELCA), Cowboy at the Cross (Cowboy Church),

Eckert Presbyterian (PC-USA), Mt. Gilead Bethel (Independent), and Surface Creek Community. This event went so well that the churches are discussing this as an annual event. The Pueblo grants are available twice per year (January 31 and July 31) to churches in ABCRM wanting to do ministry in new and creative ways.

*James Conley, Pastor
FBC, Delta*

2019-2020 Jane Loring Jones Scholarship Recipients

Grace and Peace to you in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

This year is an exciting year for one of our recipients. This is her last year and she will graduate in May. This is a new chapter in the lives of our Jane Loring Jones scholarship recipients. As they attend college to complete their programs, let us pray God's favor and blessings upon them. The scholarship committee awarded two Jane Loring Jones scholarships for the 2019-2020 school year totaling \$6,000 (\$3,000 for each recipient). Our 2019-2020 recipients are:



Angela Farley is a member of Faith Community Baptist Church in Denver where Rev. Dr. Kay Farley is pastor. She is attending Savannah State University in Savannah, GA. Angela is majoring in Mass Communication with a

major in Journalism and a minor in Africana Stud-

ies. This is Angela's last year at Savannah State University; she graduates May 2020.

Jessica Burns is a member of Ecumenical Church of Pueblo West where Pastor Bill Johnson is head pastor. She is attending Johnson and Wales University here in Denver. Jessica is majoring in Baking and Pastry Arts in the Culinary School.



Let's pray God's blessing and favor upon these two young women as they continue their education and use their education to further the kingdom of God.

*Dr. Jamie D. Johnson
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Sterling, CO 80751
jljscholarship@gmail.com
720.879.2700*

Daylight Savings Time ends Sunday, November 3. Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour on Saturday night.



rightnow MEDIA

Free Gift for ABCRM Pastors

Pastors—
How would you like to have FREE access to an extensive, new video library called RightNow Media! It's like the "Netflix of Video Bible Studies" and has a HUGE library of faith-based videos that you can access whenever and wherever you want—on your phone, iPad, computer, or at home on your TV.

We are always looking for ways to help our pastors develop and strengthen their faith. We believe that RightNow Media will be a tool to serve you as you live out your faith at home, at work and in your neighborhood. RightNow Media has videos for everyone—kids, youth, parents, married couples, college students, single adults, working professionals—all aimed at helping you grow.

You should have already received an official invitation email to give you FREE access to RightNow Media. If you haven't received it yet, check your mail filter (because it came from RightNow's system, it may have gotten caught there). Steve Van Ostran also sent out an email to our pastors on Sunday, October 20th announcing ABCRM partnership with RightNow Media. Please contact the ABCRM office if you can't locate the emails.

Once you find the email, simply click the link, sign up for an account, and you're all set to explore more than 20,000 videos. We pray that RightNow Media will be a blessing for you and your family!



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

What's Happening

Calendar

November

- 3 Daylight Savings Time Ends
(set clocks back one hour)
- 11 Veterans Day *(Region office closed)*
- 12 Retired Clergy Luncheon
The Margarita at Pine Cross
Colorado Springs
- 14 Retired Clergy Luncheon
Denver Chop House & Brewery
- 16 Wyoba Board Meeting, Rawlins, WY
- 22 Executive Committee Meeting
- 23 Wyoming Pastors Christmas party
- 25 Mission Committee Meeting
- 27-29 Thanksgiving Holiday Break
(Region office will close at noon on Wednesday)

December

- Retired Ministers and Missionaries
Offering Month
- 6 Denver Pastors Christmas Party
- 7 Western Slope Pastors Christmas Party
- 10 NFR Pastors Christmas Party
- 12 SE/New Mexico Pastors Christmas Party
- 24-January 1 Office Closed for Holiday Season



HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

The Region office will be closed November 11 in observance of Veteran's Day.

In observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday, your Region office will close at 12 noon on Wednesday, November 27. We will also be closed Thursday and Friday, November 28-29.



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

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. Send submissions to akeys@abcrm.org

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