

## Youth Ministries: Pursuing Spiritual Growth, Fellowship and Service

Through the work of National Ministries, American Baptists have helped their Generations X and Y and beyond embrace transformational opportunities for spiritual growth, fellowship and service.

Long an American Baptist emphasis, ministry with youth was focused nationally, regionally and locally through the Youth Leader Core program, introduced in 1975, and national youth gatherings that were launched in the 1970s and continue today.

At the national gatherings, the times of fellowship, worship and study with other young people and adult leaders from across the United States have proven to be life-changing events for many.



The next national gathering of American Baptist Youth, “MtW,” is expected to draw 2,000, both youth and adults, to the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colo. in July 2008. Its mediated-age theme—“MtW” (the text message-like abbreviation for “More Than One Week”)—promises the mountaintop

experience will help mold in participants an ongoing Christ-centered character and commitment.

That call to personal spiritual growth and service reflects a long-standing American Baptist priority that encourages youth to continually deepen their relationships with Christ, while constantly seeking renewal and opportunities to impact a needy world.

Indeed, the role of youth as catalysts for change is a necessary and dynamic one, according to the Rev. Reginald T. Fletcher, National Ministries’ national coordinator for Youth and Campus Ministries. “Now more than ever,” he maintains, “we must raise a generation of freedom fighters and social activists who are conscious of the injustices of the world and willing to connect their faith with social transformation in order to make a difference in our communities.”

**National Ministries, through a variety of resources, continues to focus on the vital work of supporting and encouraging American Baptist youth in their growth as disciples and witnesses. For additional information on American Baptist Youth Ministries or to schedule youth ministry speakers, e-mail Reginald.Fletcher@abc-usa.org or call 800-ABC-3USA, ext. 2419.**

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2 CORINTHIANS 5:14-15

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