



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Ministers Council of ABCUSA
www.ministerscouncil.com

Ministers Council of American Baptist Churches, USA

2022 Annual Report



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Randolph Miller

Dear Friends and Colleagues in Ministry,

On behalf of the Leadership Team of the Ministers Council of the American Baptist Churches, USA, I bring you greetings in the wonderful and life-giving name of Jesus. I welcome you to the Ministers Council Chapter Representatives Biennial Business Meeting held today, Tuesday, November 1, 2022, at 3:30 pm (Central Time).

On this day, when the Saints of the Church are remembered and honored, we pause for a moment to remember those dear servants who went before us, some of whom laid hands upon us in the sacred entrustment of ordination, licensing, or commissioning. We are reminded that we are a small part of the ongoing parade of the church traveling through time towards the eschaton. Together, we say, "Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus."

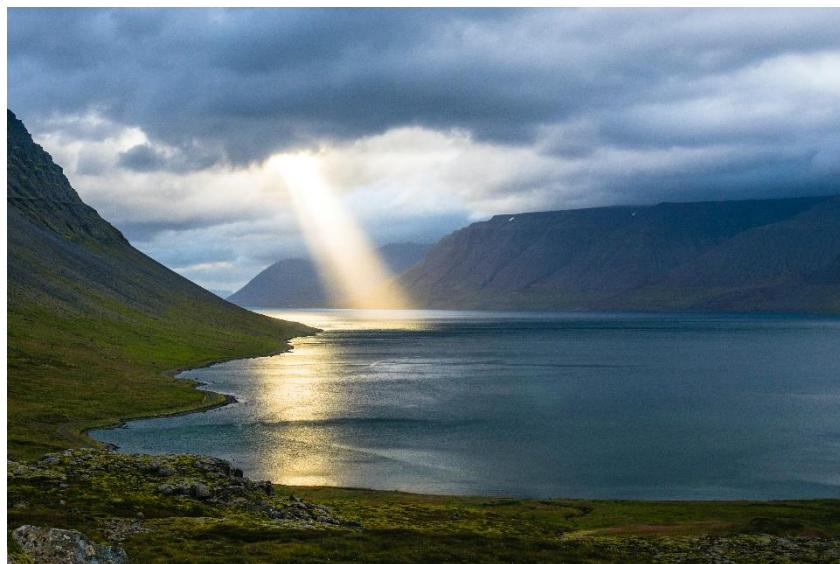
Dedicated solely to the well-being of American Baptist clergy, the goal of the Ministers Council is to "equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."

This is accomplished through the network of Local and Specialized Ministry Chapters focused upon our core values of "Collegiality, Competence, and Centeredness." This report seeks to describe the activities of these chapters and the Leadership Team since last we met in November of 2020.

May you find encouragement in your ministry, joy in your journey, hope for the living of these days.

In All Peace and Goodness,

Rev. Dr. Randolph T. Miller, President
Ministers Council ABCUSA



MINUTES OF 2020 BUSINESS MEETING

Zoom Biennial Gathering

Date of Meeting: November 19, 2020 at 7:00 pm

Date Submitted: December 9, 2020

Opening: Jacki Belile greeted and delivered opening prayer. Randy Miller welcomed guests and provided an overview for the evening. This is worshipful work, not legalistic bureaucracy. When necessary we will resort to Roberts Rules. Dee Dee Turlington will serve as Parliamentarian. Guests were asked to identify selves and indicate if they were a voting representative.

Quorum was confirmed:

Of the 26 active chapters, 24 chapters each have one representative and two chapters with over 300 members each have 4 eligible representatives each. Total chapter representatives, 32. In addition, there were 7 eligible representatives from the Leadership Team. The grand total was 39 eligible voting representatives. 60% of 39 is 23.4. The Quorum was determined at 23. There were 39 guests in attendance of the meeting.

The following is a list of the voting representatives present at the Biennial Meeting:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Rick Barnes | 13. Dan Hopkins |
| 2. Jacki Belile | 14. Atula Jamir |
| 3. Jerry Bertelson | 15. Shane Kinnison |
| 4. Mark Brandel | 16. Florence Li |
| 5. David Braneky | 17. Ivan Marable |
| 6. Delois Brown-Daniels | 18. RT Miller |
| 7. Luis Collazo | 19. Rick Mixon |
| 8. Chris Davis | 20. Steve Neal |
| 9. Rebecca Driscoll | 21. Cynthia Smothers |
| 10. Jacqueline Dyer | 22. Brenda Summerset |
| 11. Cheryl Harris | 23. Mindi Welton-Mitchell |
| 12. Pat Hernandez | |

Business Meeting:

Members were presented with three proposals for consideration and a vote: (1) Code of Ethics, (2) two-year Budget, and (3) Nominations for Ministers Council Leadership Team.

(1) Code of Ethics (COE)

Jacki described content of COE and process undertaken to receive input and adjust language over the last year and a half. She explained the upcoming vote process and some of the comments received included a request to explain collegiality and praise for the work done by MC. Additionally some members expressed interest in extending the COE to churches and church members. There was a minority view to leave the COE in original state.

Request to explain collegiality: Jacki explained, "We encourage collegiality and respect for incoming pastors. When outgoing pastors do not distance themselves, it can inhibit bonding of congregation to new pastor."

Comment from Rick and Chaplains: "We applaud work of the MC and team in listening carefully and appreciating input." There is an issue of accountability and two suggestions were offered.

1. Make COE part of business as council. Make part of congregation and ministers. Add box in Personnel profile - "I have signed COE." (Rick Mixon, N. Cal)
2. On MC website add hotline so that anyone can raise concerns and have it addressed and handled appropriately.

In addition to gaining buy-in from general membership, seek buy-in from Regional Executives. "Be intentional about teaching congregations and illustrate implications of following COE." (Rick, Chaplains)

VOTE to proceed with distributing the COE to chapters: 20 YES; 3 ABSTAIN. Motion carries.

(2) Budget 2021-2022

Due to change in standing rules, we now meet every two years, making our next meeting 2022, therefore, we will seek a vote for a two-year budget.

Shane presented budget offering a favorable financial picture. Despite the Year of Jubilee membership fee waiver, our structure is working well and we are reaping the benefits of changes. Given the inability to physically gather, our meeting costs are marginal and there are no lodging or transportation costs.

The budget shows a deficit that will be covered by savings enjoyed over transition. Additionally, MC is authorized to draw up to 5% (or \$32,500) from its endowment. The MC voted to withdraw \$10,000 to cover deficit.

We plan to host biennial gathering on off years of ABC Biennial.

Grant Recipient: MC received \$40,000 grant for pastoral education and requested to redefine grant, which we now call ***Excellence in Ministry***. It is available at \$1,000 per year to local chapters for conferences- seminars and to develop clergy in regions.

TIM Grants are available at \$300-500 per grant. This is not to local chapters, but to any MC member seeking to build collegiality among clergy and help colleagues in ministry take care of themselves. We also offer grants for Zoom account annual subscription at \$150.

Vote to approved budget for 2021 and 2022: 23-Yes; 1 Abstention. Motion carries.

(3) Nominating Committee Recommendations

Vice President	Jacki Belile
Treasurer	Sara Day
TIM Grants Coordinator	Lin Story-Bunce
Member & Chapter Development	Jerry Bertelsen

Vote to accept nominees for above positions: 20 Yes; 3 Abstentions. Motion carries.

FINANCIALS

2021- 2022 Financial Report to Date

Sara Day

	Category	2021 Actual	2021 Provisional	2022 Provisional
REVENUE				
1	Individual/Church Contributions	6,000	5,000	5,000
2	Transfer from Annual Fund to checking			
3	Membership Dues	24,377	30,000	30,000
4	ABCUSA Reimbursement for phone buyout			
5	Transfer from TIM Draw Account			
6	Misc. Income	588		
6	Draw on Endowment (5%)	20000	35,000	35,000
7	Transfer from savings to checking	0		
8	Transfer from ABF # 1272-Ministers Confer.			
	Interest	70		
	TOTAL REVENUE	51,035	70,000	70,000
EXPENSES				
9	Salaries and benefits	9,831	15,000	16,000
10	Payroll taxes	873	3,300	3,400
11	Accounting contract services	1,906	700	750
12	Contractual services			
13	Rent		2,500	2,600
14	Insurance	3209	3,000	3,000
15	Office supplies	3048	1,500	1,500
16	Office equipment		500	500
17	Computer Center Fees	161	2,000	2,000
18	Telephone		0	0
19	Conferencing services	32	400	400
20	Postage and shipping	326	750	750
21	Printing and duplicating	69	1,000	1,000
22	Communications (website, Constant Contact, newsletter)	1378	3,000	3,000
23	Representation at ABC events	510	1,000	1,500
24	Annual/Biennial Meeting Expenses (LT and Reps)	295	9,000	18,000

25	Board/Leadership Team Meeting	500	5,500	6,000
26	Other Travel (staff and Board/Leadership Team)	0	1,750	1,750
27	Prof. Fee - accounting		0	0
28	Prof. Fee – audit		2,500	2,500
29	Prof. Fee - legal			
30	Grants: TIM	3400	As approved	
31	Grants: Other Grant to Women's Conference		As approved	
32	Misc.	619		
33	Prof. Fee – HR			
34	Prof Fee – PR			
35	Prof Feel – contribution			
36	Local Chapter Membership Reimbursement	5010		
TOTAL EXPENSES		31,167	53,400	64,650

American Baptist Foundation Accounts 2021

Sara Day



The following is the value as of September 30, 2022:

Ministers Council Endowment Fund, Ministers Council and Office of the General Secretary

\$253,241.96

Together in Ministry Endowment Fund

\$179,399.31

Ministers Council Endowment Fund

\$614,294.25

BUSINESS MEETING ITEMS

Budget for 2023-24

	CATEGORY	2022 Actual as of Sept.	2023		2024
INCOME					
1	Individual/Church Contributions	3000	5000		6000
2	Membership Dues	28000	30000		32000
3	Transfer from TIM Draw Account		7000		7000
4	Transfer from EIM Draw Account		10000		10000
5	Misc. Income	210	300		300
6	Draw on Endowment (4%)	26000	28000		30000
7	Transfer from ABF # 1272-Ministers Confer.	9000	7000		7000
8	Interest	43	57		57
TOTAL		66253	87357		92357
EXPENSES					
	LOCAL CHAPTER				
9	Grants: TIM	1000	7000		7000
10	Grants: EIM	2676	10000		10000
11	Promotional Expense	3200	2500		2500
12	Local Chapter Membership Reimbursement	4887	5000		5000
SUB TOTAL				24500	
	NATIONAL PROGRAMING				
13	Communications (Website, Newsletter, etc.)	1728	3000		3000
14	Representation at ABC events	2912	1500		1500
15	Business Meeting Expenses (LT and Reps)	2133			20000
16	ABC Biennial Expense		10000		
17	Board/Leadership Team Meeting	4524	6000		6000
18	Other Conference	5530	4000		4000
19	Other Travel (Staff and Leadership Team)	2974	1500		1500
SUB TOTAL				26000	
	ADMINISTRATION				
20	Salaries and Benefits	11906	16000		17000
21	Payroll Taxes	1380	3400		3400
22	Contractual Services	116	750		750
23	Rent	1800	2400		1000
24	Insurance	3869	3900		4000
25	Office Supplies	1946	1500		1500
26	Office Equipment	1352	500		500

27	Computer Center Fees		1980		1980
28	Postage and Shipping	609	750	750	
29	Printing and Copying	1487	1300	1300	
30	Misc.	860			
31	Prof. Fee – audit		2400		
SUB TOTAL				34880	
TOTAL		56889	85380		92680

Ministers Council Leadership Team Nominees for 2023-2024

PRESIDENT | Matthew Sturtevant

Rev. Dr. Matthew Sturtevant has been the senior pastor at the First Baptist Church of Lawrence, Kansas for nearly 13 years, and he has been a member of the Ministers Council of the Central Region for 20. He has served as the President of that local council 2020-2022, including a role on the Board of the ABCCR.

VICE PRESIDENT | Rebecca Driscoll

Rev. Rebecca Driscoll, Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church, Attleboro, Massachusetts (July 2021 – present), TABCOM Minister for Creation Care (April 2021 – present). She is a member of the National Ministers Council and the Conference of Baptist Ministers in Massachusetts (2019 – present). She served as intern for AB Women in Ministry on the MC Leadership Team (2019-2021) and as Discernmentarian for the MC Leadership Team (2021-present).

SECRETARY | Charlotte Myers

Rev. Dr. Charlotte Myers is an ordained (c. 2002) American Baptist minister and certified clinical pastoral counselor (c. 2015). She has expertise in governance of missions ministries, and church administrative management. In addition, she is a newsletter editor for ABC Ministers Council of Northern California “*Items of Interest*” and Church Women United’s National “Church Woman News.” She has a compassionate heart for pastoral ministry serving as Associate Minister at Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church (c. 1997) and currently serving as a hospice chaplain for “By the Bay Health and Hospice” (c. 2015). She also serves on the leadership team for ABC American Baptist Women’s Ministries and ABC Women in Ministry.

COORDINATOR OF CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVES | Sarah Strosahl-Kagi

Rev. Sarah Strosahl-Kagi is the pastor of Royersford Baptist Church in Royersford, PA where she has served since September of 2020. Prior to that she worked at American Baptist Home Mission Societies and International Ministries. Sarah is a member of the Valley Forge chapter of Ministers Council, having served on the steering committee in 2015-2016.

COORDINATOR OF MEMBERSHIP AND CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT | Jacki Belile

Rev. Jacki Belile is the founder of Living Well Ministries (2007- present), and pastor at Eden UCC, Chicago, IL (2014 – present), the fourth congregation she has served. She has been a member of the Ministers Council since 1994, serving as the Metro Chicago President (2013-2017) and Secretary/Treasurer (2017 – 2021), and on the MC Leadership Team from 2016 to present.

LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORTS

President's Report

Randolph Miller



It has been a privilege to serve on the Leadership Team of the Ministers Council over the last five (plus) years. This was a transformational time of cost-containment during which the Council shifted from a 'policy board' with an executive and support staff to a 'working board' with part time support staff. Another aspect of our cost-containment effort was to relocate our office from the institutional center of ABC in Valley Forge (2018) to West Chester, Pennsylvania and then again to a remote office platform in Fresno, California (2022).

Additionally, we underwent a revision and update of our constitution and by-laws (2019). Navigating these realities were challenging enough, but they became daunting and faith building with the onset of the pandemic of 2020-2021.

Fortunately, our Leadership Team has been collaborative and remarkably adaptive in their response to challenges and changes with which we were presented. They are to be commended for their faithfulness and competence in navigating this "undiscovered country." They include:

Vice President	Rev. Jacki Belile from Chicago, Illinois
Secretary	Rev. Cheryl Harris of Attleboro, Massachusetts
Treasurer	Rev. Dr. Sara Day from Flagstaff, Arizona
Coordinator – Chapter Representatives	Rev. Dr. Atula Jamir, Lowell, Massachusetts
Coordinator – Membership/Chapters Dev	Rev. Jerry Bertelsen, Canistota, South Dakota
Coordinator – TIM and EIM Grants	Pastor Lin Story Bunce, Greenville, North Carolina
AB Women in Ministry	Rev. Dr. Patricia Hernandez (ex officio), ABCUSA
Discernmentarian	Rev. Rebecca Driscoll, Attleboro, Massachusetts
President	Rev. Dr. Randolph Miller, Medford, Oregon

In May 2021, our Coordinator of Member Services, Mrs. Lisa Simpson, resigned after three years of conscientious service to relocate with her family. Following a nine-month interim period of redefining and clarifying our organizational needs, in February of 2022, the Leadership Team employed Rev. Michele Turek of Fresno, California to serve as our Program Administrator on a part-time basis. She is a gifted administrator immediately immersing herself into the Council's work by supporting member services and working with the Leadership Team and local chapters. In June, Michele demonstrated creativity, collaboration, and attention to details at the Women in Ministry conference at Green Lake. Curiously, Michele's sense of "Call" (Centeredness) and her unique blend of administrative (Competence) and social skills (Collegiality) embody the core values of the Council. We are thankful for the gift she is!

Code of Ethics Revision

In 2019 a team gathered to review the current Code of Ethics and consider revisions to the document. After soliciting input from local chapters, Executive Ministers and other denominational leaders a revised Code of Ethics was developed, approved by the local chapter representatives and referred to the

local chapters for ratification. You can read more about the status of the ratification process in this biennial report. Kudos to Jacki Belile who has guided this process.

Hidden Treasures

Often in the spiritual and ordinary life, we discover hidden treasures along the way. Here are a few ‘hidden treasures’ offered through Ministers Council:

Together in Ministry | Ministers Council continues to encourage the formation and maintenance of collegial networks known as TIM groups. These funds are available directly to Council members for a wide variety of gatherings. Lin Story Bunce coordinates this program.

Excellence in Ministry | With a grant from the Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, MC established a fund to support and encourage the work of local chapters. Grants of up to \$ 1,000 per year are available for chapter sponsored gatherings like retreats, conferences, seminars. Lin coordinates this program too.

MC Live | On a monthly basis, the Council sponsors a webinar known as MC Live covering a variety of topics from book reviews with authors, mental health issues for clergy, code of ethics review, local chapter development, spiritual formation and direction. These groups were moderated by Jacki Belile in 2021 and Cheryl Harris in 2022. Many of the programs can be retrieved from the archives on our website.

Book Distributions | In early 2021, 50 copies of Dennis Johnson’s book, “To Live in God: Daily Reflections with Walter Rauschenbusch” was distributed to those who attended the 2020 Ministers Council Business Meeting. An additional 50 copies were made available to local chapters and small groups of spiritual formation totaling over 40 people began meeting on a monthly basis. Some of those groups continue to meet even now – two years later.

As a membership incentive in 2022, three books were offered to membership:

- 1) *Freedom Faith: The Womanist Vision of Prathia Hall*, by Courtney Pace.
- 2) *How to Heal our Divides: A Practical Guide*, edited by Brian Alain & Adam Thomas
- 3) *Martin Luther King Jr. Resistencia y Lucha*, by Rev. Juan Ángel Gutiérrez

Throughout my years of ministry life, much of my spiritual formation has been shaped by Ministers Council relationships. Nurtured and encouraged by those relationships, I have also been challenged to develop better theological and pastoral skills. I have been companioned along the way (especially during difficult times) and have made life-long friendships. In short, I have become of a better minister of the Gospel because of those Council relationships.

In these latter years, I have found joy and purpose in serving the Council on the Leadership Team. I am grateful for the wonderful presence of the Spirit and pray for the Leadership Team as you take form in 2023. There will always be much to do, but there is also great joy to be found in those hidden treasures of life together.

It seems appropriate to conclude this reflection with the words of Francis of Assisi in his latter years:

“I have done what was mine to do. You go now, discover, and do what is yours to do.”

Vice President's Report

Jacki Belile

CONTINUITY AND CONNECTIONS

It has been a great privilege to serve in this capacity for the past three years. Core commitments I shared in the February 2020 planning retreat shaped my convictions, recommendations and activities:

- a) Living into our “new paradigm” of 2017/2018 visioning (bringing/building on institutional memory)*
- b) Supporting fellow Leadership Team members in project execution as a working board
- c) Ensuring regular communications, website maintenance and developing/redeveloping constituency
- d) Looking for ways to nurture our “ecosystem” of ministers serving ministers

ACTIVITIES



Code of Ethics Revisions | Following the drafting process of proposed revisions with Steve Neal, Dan Hopkins, Jerry Bertelson and myself (2018-2020), the national meeting approved the document for ratification in November 2020. See complete report on 2021-2022 ratification process elsewhere.

Learning Guide for the Code of Ethics | I convened and led a diverse Editorial Team which has worked throughout 2022 to update the Learning Guide written in 2006. It's been a joy to work with this Editorial Team: Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Dyer, Rev.

Jerrod Hugenot, Rev. Florence Li, Rev. Dr. Mary Day Miller, Rev. Randle “Rick” Mixon, Rev. Alan Ragland, D. Min., Rev. Juan Ángel Gutiérrez. See separate report.

MC Live (Our Monthly Webinar) | Throughout 2021, I planned, publicized and hosted or co-hosted these gatherings on the 3rd Thursdays. We conducted a survey of members for feedback on content. I assisted in transition planning with Rev. Cheryl Harris who took over in 2022. See archives at www.ministerscouncil.com

Newsletter | Our monthly newsletter is distributed by email on or near the 1st of each month to approximately 2400 subscriber. Regular columns highlight greetings from national leadership team, national projects such as grants for chapters and covenant groups, our event announcements and ABC announcements, and various ministry resources. From 2021 into mid-2022 I generated or compiled all content, with our contracted producer Jan Rizzo editing and distributing each issue. Our Program Administrator Michele Turek has assumed shared responsibility for curating and soliciting content.

Search Process | Following the departure of Lisa Simpson, Member Services Coordinator, in May 2021, I chaired the Search Committee (Jerry Bertelson, Sara Day, Randy Miller) which wrote an updated job description with new title (Program Administrator) and conducted the search process. Initially focused on the Philadelphia area for commuting capacity, we extended the search to a nationwide search with a readiness to staff the position remotely. From May 2021-December 2021, we received 21 applicants, interviewed five and hired our delightful, graceful, capable committed Rev. Michele R.C. Turek.

*Empowering Chapters | Networking | Transparent Communications | Mutuality

Chapter Representatives Coordinator Report

Atula Jamir

Greetings in Jesus' name!



God has led us this far and we are thankful. At such a time as this when so much is going on in the world, and we are faced with challenges individually and as a community, meeting with colleagues and friends is a source of strength and hope. At the chapter representatives' meetings, we shared joys and concerns, extended love and support, and prayed together. It was gratifying to connect with a team of leaders who have a heart for the growth and wellbeing of their constituents, and worked hard toward attaining it, which showed in their willingness to share and learn from one another. They planned various inspiring programs that were holistically beneficial for the clergy. We met bimonthly via zoom. The attendance was not always encouraging, and we had our share of technology glitches, but the content of the meeting was at full capacity. Each time we met we were gifted with something beautiful about one another and what each of us brought to our circle.

In assessing the usefulness of our bimonthly regular meetings, we posed a question: "What do we want to see happening at our meetings that are exciting and meaningful?" We had a robust brainstorming session, and came up with a plan to have a two-part meeting: The first part of the meeting would comprise of devotion and chapter reports, and the second part would be dedicated to having healthy/difficult conversations, presentation and discussion of a relevant subject, book, movie, documentary, etc. The first presentation made following this decision was on mental health with Q & A, which was well received.

We also set aside a time for a meaningful practice called "Blessing for One Another" through our sharing and prayer. At such a time, some had experienced sickness and death in the family and community, and some much joy. Out of our sharing emerged words and scriptures that gave us the opportunity to feed on and to take home with us to reflect and ponder. Some of the scriptures included Deut. 31:8; Eccl. 9:7,10; Heb. 12:1-2, and words such as gladness, *do not fear*, perseverance, comfort, prayer, celebration, healing, replenishment, fellowship, fun, grace, peace, remembrance, eat, give thanks, slowing down, rest, enjoy God's blessings, grateful. These scriptures and words were a source of encouragement, healing, and hope making sense in our lives.

What was clearly seen among us was the spirit of appreciation and the eagerness to connect and to serve. I hope this fire that the chapter representatives carry ever remain alive.

It has truly been an honor and blessing to serve as the Coordinator of Chapter Representatives.

Together in Ministry Grants & Excellence in Ministry Grants

Lin Story-Bunce

Together in Ministry Grants



The Together in Ministry Grant is available to small groups who are needing funding to help support the work they do together. Grant awards range up to \$500. These funds are drawn from the Together in Ministry Capital Campaign of 2013 (via The Ministers Council). At least half of the participating group members must be affiliated with the ABC and be current members of The Ministers Council. In February 2021 and January 2022, we held MC Live events that focused on TIM grant with the hopes of making our MC ministers aware of this great resource!

Number of Grants Awarded in 2021-2022: 5 total grants

Together in Ministry Grant Recipients:

- Evergreen Clergywomen Group
- Refueling Station Small Group
- Haberuth Small Group
- Beta Project Small Group
- Aleimma Small Group

Total Amount Awarded: \$2,400.00

Feedback from Post Evaluation Forms:

- “The Evergreen Younger-ish Clergywomen Group (we say younger-ish because we are currently ages 29-45) went on retreat to Pacific Beach, WA July 20-23. The first night we went out to eat, the rest of the time we cooked for each other and our grant was used to pay our food costs. Others donated from their churches and personal funds. We spent time on the beach, we went hiking in the Quinault Rainforest of the Olympic National Forest (and visited the world's largest spruce tree), we painted mugs, and we played epic games of Phase 10. We talked, we prayed, we had a great time and we encouraged and built up each other.”

Excellence in Ministry Grants

In an effort to encourage better ministerial practices, the Ministers Council ABCUSA has developed the Excellence in Ministry Fund through a generous grant from Christian Theological Seminary. Grants of up to \$1,000 may be awarded to local chapters who apply and are in good standing with the Ministers Council, ABCUSA. The Ministers Council believes deeply that ministerial excellence is to be found and nurtured at the intersections of our 3C's: Competence, Centeredness and Collegiality.

The goals of this grant Program are to:

- Strengthen the well-being of ministers within the ABC family;
- Encourage the development of active chapters of the Ministers Council;
- Strengthen the relationship between local ABC regions, local Ministers Council chapters, and the Ministers Council of ABCUSA.
- Develop local Ministers Council chapter regions where they do not currently exist.

In February 2022, we held an MC Live event that focused on EIM grant with the hopes of making our MC chapters more aware of this great resource!

Number of Grants Awarded in 2021-2022: 4 total grants

Excellence in Ministry Grant Recipients:

- ABC Metro Chicago Ministers Council
- Ministers Council of Cleveland Baptist Association
- Ministers Council of Northern California
- Puerto Rico Ministers Council

Total Amount Awarded: \$3,176.40

Feedback from Post Evaluation Forms:

- "[T]he workshop was well-done, and provided welcomed insights into the minds of those going through leadership transition. What was so insightful to me about the process, when I thought about it afterwards, is that a well thought out process is relevant, and necessary, for any and all organizations, especially the church.
"We rarely get such insight into the minds and feelings of those leaving a leadership role, or of the one who is beginning a new one; especially when people have held leadership roles with significant longevity. The workshop was time well spent!"
- "The session was very good hearing how pastor transitions can go well. Having the unique opportunity to have a past and present pastor was really helpful. The format was concise and straightforward. The time went quickly and the willingness of the presenters to continue engagement was great."





3rd thursdays mc live WEBINAR SERIES



The number of attendees varied throughout the year, with most months remaining in the single digits. On two occasions, there were 15 attendees as noted in the chart below. At each session, attendees were fully engaged and always lingered at the close of the session. The fluctuating attendance seems to raise the question: how does MC consistently provide content that will inspire ministers to invest an hour of their valuable time?

For the purpose of continuity, listed below is logistical information and the roster of guest presenters for 2022.

General Format of an MC Live Webinar:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 7:50 | Guest arrives – mic check and last minute details |
| 7:55-8:02 | Musical prelude |
| 7:57 | Admits attendees |
| 8:02 | Host welcomes guests, gives a brief overview of how the hour will be spent |
| 8:03 | Host invites prayer requests – then offers prayer |
| 8:05 | Begin recording for session |
| 8:05 | Introduces guest and begins |
| 8:50 | Thanks guest, shares announcements, thanks attendees
Reminds attendees of next MC LIVE and closes session |

2022 Guest Presenter Roster

MONTH	GUEST	TOPIC	# of attendees
<u>January</u>	Lin Story Bunce	Small group grants	7
<u>February</u>	Lin Story Bunce	Larger group grants	5
<u>March</u>	Sandra Dorsainvil	Beacons of Hope 12-Day devotional which brings light to 15 women lighthouse keepers of the 19th and 20th century.	1
<u>April</u>	Cheryl Harris, facilitated by Rev. Dr. Kirk Byron Jones	Divinity, Diversity, Dialogue: Listening and Learning Our Way To the Beloved Community Book and workbook written to help others facilitate transformative dialogues across race.	15
<u>May</u>	Dan Hopkins and Lorraine Anderson	How to plan a sabbatical and How to experience Sabbath	15
June	No MC Live Session	In support of women in ministry, attended <i>Radical. Redeemed. Ready.</i> Conference	
July	No MC Live Session		
<u>August</u>	Jacki Belile & Corey Fields	Code of Ethics	4
<u>September</u>	Jonathan A. Malone	A Peculiar Church: Practicing Baptist Theology Book is divided into three parts: 1) challenges and methodology associated with creating a Baptist Theology; 2) worship and ordinances; 3) other aspects of church life and ministry	7
October	Ashlee Wiest-Laird	Process to engage congregation in applying for pastor sabbatical grant Reflections on trip to South Africa and Jerusalem	3
November	Lauren Ng	Poetry and Identity	
December	Sarah McCloy	Youth and ministry in Japan	

Program Administrator's Report

Michele Turek



Since starting as the Ministers Council Program Administrator in February 2022, I have had the distinct pleasure of serving the Leadership Team and our Constituency for a variety of projects, initiatives, and tasks. One of the greatest joys of Administrative Ministry is to help resource and make easier the lives of those I serve to better enable them to use their gifts and live into their callings. The mission and heartbeat of the Ministers Council is the care of ministers on the ground level of ministry; a mission I wholeheartedly believe in and am delighted to pour into.

Working with the Leadership Team has been an honor. These people are dedicated to the mission of the Ministers Council and work hard to fulfill their various responsibilities. All while having a deep care for one another and having a good laugh along the way. Here is a summary of the different tasks I have done this past year in partnership with the Leadership Team:

- The compiling on contents and editing of the monthly newsletter, with final compilation and sending done by Jan Rizzo.
- Fliers and publicity for the monthly MC Live sessions on Zoom.
- The general organization and optimization of Ministers Council operations and files.
- Assisting with a variety of financial matters including reporting, issuing payments, and deposits.
- Updated the national Ministers Council brochure and created an easy-to-read pamphlet on how to become a member, which was very useful when the Ministers Council had an exhibit table at the *Radical. Redeemed. Ready.* conference in Green Lake celebrating Women in Ministry.
- Graphics, communications, and logistics for the Retreat and Biennial Business Meeting.
- Preparations for the Biennial Mission Summit in Puerto Rico June 2023.

It has also been a joy to interact with the membership, as well as our Regional offices, with matters as they arise. In our meetings, the Leadership Team has rejoiced seeing the Holy Spirit move, rebuilding bridges and sparking revitalization desires and efforts in a number of regions where local chapters ceased meeting for a variety of reasons. We are thrilled to be journeying with those of you who are seeking the opportunity to meet while promoting collegiality, centeredness, and competency for ministers in your area. Here is a summary of membership-related tasks undergone this year:

- The processing of membership dues from individuals and local chapters.
- Issuing of membership acknowledgement letters, ID cards, and stickers which are then mailed out.
- The 2022 Membership Book Drive for which renewing or new members for the calendar year had the option to receive one of three books for free.
- Answering any inquiries and/or connecting members to the appropriate people for follow-up, whether that be one of our Leadership Team, an ABCUSA Region, or one of our sister American Baptist entities.
- Sending of national Ministers Council materials for regional annual meetings.

May we never tire of doing the Lord's work, relying evermore on the Source of grace, love, joy, strength, and perseverance.

Other Reports

Chapter Reports Summary: Summary of 2021 Reports & 2022 Developments Jacki Belile

We're grateful for the faithful labors of love expressed in spartan detail here. We bless the energy and time commitment it takes to nurture a local volunteer-led chapter entity, with local fellowship and program needs as well as a national engagement dimension. This report shares a glimpse, qualitative and quantitative, at the close of 2022, and expresses our commitment to support chapter life in fresh ways in 2023.

Themes and Observations

As we survey the “state of the chapters,” we see members’ faithfulness and innovation using Zoom and other tools to connect in safety and across the miles. Some have been led to actively trust fallow ground and not strived to meet; others have engaged with weekly virtual fellowship and supportive programming. Some elected leaders are just stuck in inertia. Across many chapters, we see a dynamic of collaboration with, and in some places, reliance on committed regional staff for convening and connecting local clergy. We’re grateful for that and look forward to exploring further intentional collaboration.

Attrition in volunteer capacity is an almost universal theme, and the COVID Era strained us all in new taxing ways. Yet the instinct to gather intentionally for collegiality, competence, and centeredness is clear. Our chapters are sponsoring retreats, peer support groups, forums on timely topics, and ministry awards. As Baptists, we carry the mantle to honor that local and particular need in just the right associational way.

Our national office and Leadership Team continue to live into the new paradigm of a chiefly volunteer-led organization with a committed part-time national Program Administrator. In partnership, Rev. Michele Turek and Leadership Team members are the faces of “ministers serving ministers” in this day.

Our investments in local chapters comes via two current grant streams (for clergy groups and chapter-sponsored events) and two elected positions to coordinate connections with chapters who are stable, struggling, or at early stages of development. The two bylaws revisions of the last eight years have codified a vision of the chapters’ officers and representatives actively networking and collaborating with each other across the nation. This year, we’ve engaged persistently to refresh and expand our contacts with local chapters and to meet to listen and support the reality on the ground-level of ministry.

This updated census will, we hope, serve the leaders of chapters and national team well in 2023. We continue to serve national constituency within and beyond chapters through monthly webinars and newsletters, and we will look for new ways to serve and gather these members in 2023.



Chapter Census (as of 10/29/22):
Annual Reports Received: 24, by email or formal interview

1. Active

Central
 Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors
 Chin Chapter
 Massachusetts
 Metro Chicago
 Mid-America
 New Jersey Latino Chapter
 Northern California
 Oregon
 ABC of Pennsylvania and Delaware
 Philadelphia Baptist Association
 Puerto Rico
 Rhode Island
 Rocky Mountains
 ABC of the South
 Upstate New York
 Valley Forge
 Vermont/New Hampshire

2. Active: Revitalizing (2021-2022)

Connecticut*
 Greater Cleveland, Ohio
 Evergreen

3. Inactive (2021-2022)

Dakotas
 IN/KY/Greater Indianapolis
 Ohio
 Rochester-Genesee
 New Jersey
 Wisconsin

4. Inactive: Restart Pending (2023)

Rochester-Genesee
 New Jersey
 Wisconsin

5. Research/Outreach Ongoing

West Virginia

6. Exploring Start-Up (2023 or beyond)

Spiritual Directors/Coaches
 Great Rivers

7. Officially Disbanded

Michigan
 Nebraska

*A visioning meeting held 11/2 will explore options for new local structures.

Update on Proposed Revisions to the Covenant and Code of Ethics

Jacki Belile

Project Summary and Status of Ratification Process

Project Timeline

2018: The representatives at the annual meeting charge a team to begin process to revise 2006 document.

2019: Receiving the initial report of three proposed changes, the representatives at the annual meeting charge a committee to establish a more thorough review and an efficient and inclusive process. Committee members: Rev. Jacki Belile (Chicago), Rev. Jerry Bertelson (Dakotas), Rev. Dan Hopkins (IN/KY), Rev. Dr. Steve Neal (Central).

2019-2020: Revision Subcommittee prepares draft for November 2020 vote through the following steps.

The Committee were the principal drafters, with language concerns and specific amendments made in response to the following six feedback mechanisms:

- 1) Annual meeting feedback to 2019 recommendations.
- 2) A survey of membership, distributed in English and Spanish, between October 2019 and January 2020, to which 297 respondents from 36 regions responded to initial three proposals and made additional recommendations. Respondents included Executive and Associate Regional staff.
- 3) Two special topical webinars on social media and “the ethics of health” in Spring & Summer 2020. Attendees included Executive and Associate Regional Staff.
- 4) Correspondence with Regional Executive Ministers in June, to which eight responded with feedback included in text revision and/or preparation notes for a 2021 revision to the Learning Guide.
- 5) Chapter Representatives, who hosted reports from the Subcommittee on their bi-monthly conference calls in August and October 2020.
- 6) Three chapter-specific meetings, two interchapter meetings and three “at large” Zoom meetings held in late summer/early fall.

The proposed revisions were approved at the national Biennial Business Meeting on November 19, 2020. Per bylaws, two thirds of our active nationwide chapters must ratify for the revisions to be fully adopted. The chapters have two years to complete this process.

See [Appendix I](#) for a report on a Learning Guide draft prepared by an Editorial Team.

Spiritual Direction Initiative

Denise Wiley and Randolph Miller, Co-Conveners

For over a year, American Baptist Spiritual Directors have meet bi-monthly over Zoom in the spirit of collegiality and with a desire to network. With a current mailing list of 22 directors, these persons are mostly ordained clergy with diverse training as spiritual directors. Gathering from around the country, their goals included getting better acquainted, sharing resources and opportunities, and to offering insights and experience. Specifically, they are interested in exploring what Spiritual Direction looks like in ABC life as a means of support to clergy in their ministries.

While reluctant to formalize as a specialized chapter of the Ministers Council, they continue to find interest in meeting bi-monthly. Additionally, there has been interest in including those who are certified life coaches. We hope to continue this informal gathering in 2023 offering opportunities for spiritual formation and discerning where God is leading us.

In all peace and goodness,
Denise Wiley and Randolph Miller



Appendix I

LEARNING GUIDE COVENANT AND CODE OF ETHICS MINISTERS COUNCIL ABCUSA

Report of the Editorial Team November 1, 2022

Our vision has been to create an updated Learning Guide for the national Covenant and Code of Ethics. We chose to work in tandem to the chapters' two-year ratification process, with an assumption that our updated content would be of service no matter the outcome of the national votes on the proposed revisions.

Invitations for a diverse Editorial Team were publicized in our national newsletter in 2021, and an initial visioning session was held in September 2021. The team was completely assembled and began work in February 2022, with the most intensive collaboration and individual writing May-October.

We give thanks for this incredible team: Rev. Jacki Belile, Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Dyer, Rev. Jerrod Hugenot, Rev. Florence Li, Rev. Dr. Mary Day Miller, Rev. Dr. Randle "Rick" Mixon, Rev. Alan Ragland, D.Min., Rev. Juan Angel Gutiérrez Rodríguez.

Our goals have included the following:

- a) Building on the good work of the inaugural publication in 2006 – a discussion guide for continuing ministerial growth which enables the Code itself to be a **living document** in our midst
 - b) Writing a main document of use to our **diverse family**, with acknowledgement of varied culture, theology, and forms of ministry – for instance, by not “white-norming” the document or neglecting the diverse needs of our colleagues laboring beyond the local church
 - c) Updating questions to optimize **personal inventory and group discussion**
 - d) To clarify in helpful ways the multi-dimensional nature of our **covenants** – with God, self, ministry settings, wider denominational family, the world in which we live, indeed, with all of creation.
- Above all, we hope to support the collegial **accountability** impact of the Code

Our 1.0 manuscript of approximately 32 pages has been completed, with a round of internal committee commentary to be concluded. Rev. Dr. Rachael Lawrence, Senior Editor at Judson Press, has agreed to review our document when its final form is complete. The national Leadership Team of ABCUSA has endorsed the recommendations of the Editorial Team to budget for translations into 6-7 languages in 2023, a project we hope will be a collaboration with other ABC partners. Those initial conversations have begun. We are collecting estimates from translation vendors and individuals in order to make a report on anticipated costs at the Biennial Business Meeting.

In the 1st Quarter of 2023, we will solicit focus group conversations with diverse audiences, as well as invite colleagues to create case study illustrations and further readings for appendices. We anticipate full release in at least 2-3 languages by the Mission Summit of 2023.