



MINISTERS COUNCIL NEWS YOU CAN USE – PLEASE SHARE WITH YOUR NETWORKS

Joe Kutter, Acting Executive Director

June 2009

Click here to view this message as a webpage: <http://www.ministerscouncil.com/Periodicals/Publications.aspx>

~MUSINGS ON THE “LONE RANGER”

The evidence is clear. Clergy folk who are intentionally engaged in networks of friendship with other clergy folk are more likely to have effective ministries and less likely to get into serious trouble. The question that I have heard in recent weeks is, so why then do American Baptist clergy seem to revert to the "Lone Ranger" style of ministry?

I don't know but I have some guesses.

The percentage of bivocational ministers among us is growing. Those who both work in secular occupations and lead churches find it hard to make meetings especially when the meeting interfere with their money making job or when the meeting produces less than significant value for their ministry.

Baptist individualism has undermined our sense of community. This distorted individualism has sometimes reduced our "Call to Ministry" to a "you-and-me-Jesus" transaction that ignores the Christian community.

Baptist conflict has caused some of us to say, "if our meetings are for fighting or for demonizing those who disagree, then I'm not going." Some of us stay home and do it alone rather than risk the pain of the conflict.

Our incredibly complex diversity causes us to wonder if the wisdom of others who are different will actually fit me. And more, diversity is not always comfortable.

Those are my best guesses. Even so, the evidence is still clear. Meaningful relationships with others who share our vocation are essential to our health and the well-being of our ministries. JK

~AMERICAN BAPTIST QUARTERLY ON STRUCTURE

The American Baptist Quarterly Special Issue on ABC Structure, edited by Dr. Larry Greenfield, is now available!

In addition to comments and analyses of the proposed structural change, there are also articles that touch on Baptist identity, including (my favorite) a humorous and learned approach to the subject by Dr. Ed Gaustad.

ABQ Subscribers will receive their copies soon, in our regular mailing.

If you need extra copies or don't normally get the ABQ, you can order copies from Kay Eland. E-mail her at Kay.Eland@abc-usa.org. Or call and leave your order information at 610/768-2269.* You will also be able to purchase copies at the Biennial.

~ABCUSA CREATES FORUM FOR SHARING RESOURCES ON ECONOMIC DISTRESS

Recognizing that American Baptists and their congregations are feeling extraordinary economic challenges, an ad hoc group of national and regional executives of the denomination are creating an electronic forum for sharing ideas, strategies, and resources on how to cope creatively.

The new website can be accessed by any and all American Baptists at www.abc-responds-economy.ning.com.

“The “ning” part of the website has interactive features that allow not only searches and submissions but also conversations, questions and responses, and evaluative feedbacks,” explained C. Jeff Woods, Associate General Secretary of ABC-USA and the main developer of this new web instrument.

“The idea is as old as the New Testament, when the Apostle Paul encouraged the early Christians and the early Christian churches to help each other, especially when in distress and tribulation,” suggested General Secretary A. Roy Medley. “Only the technology has been updated!”

The interactive website is expected to grow as more participants draw on their own experience and share it with others in such diverse areas as worship, educational, and pastoral resources, cost saving and income generating practices, employment and unemployment assistance, social service referrals and advocacy opportunities.

“This useful instrument presents important practical ways in which we can be the ‘Hands and Feet of Christ’ for each other and for those Jesus call us to serve and care for in this time of challenge in our own country and across the globe,” Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III, Executive Director of National Ministries, affirmed.

The ad hoc working group on “ABC Connections in the Context of Economic Distress” is composed of C. Jeff Woods, Aidsand F. Wright Riggins III, Michael Birdsall, Treasurer of National Ministries, Perry Hopper, Associate Executive Director of MMBB, Joseph Kutter, Acting Executive Director of the Ministers Council, Liliana Da Valle, Executive Minister of the ABC of Rhode Island, and Larry Greenfield, Executive Minister of the ABC of Metro Chicago.

~ONLINE COMMUNITY FOR YOUTH MINISTRY WORKERS INTRODUCED

We are pleased to announce the Grand Opening of StudentPastors.com, an online community for Youth Ministry Workers. Whatever you call yourself, Youth Pastor, Student Pastor, Youth Director, Volunteer, whatever it is, you have a place to connect to others, Grow in your ministry and be energized to go out and serve the students you love so much. <http://studentpastors.com>

~BOOK REVIEW – Ross Peterson, Executive Director, Midwest Ministry Development

As pastors seek models for effective leadership, many are discovering fruitful insights in the realm of Emotional Intelligence. “EI” seeks to identify the emotional and interpersonal resources that help people, especially leaders, have a positive impact. In their book ***Practicing Right Relationship: Skills for Deepening Purpose, Finding Fulfillment and Increasing Effectiveness in Your Congregation***, Mary Sellon and Daniel Smith apply basic EI concepts to church leadership. They offer practical insights into the key areas of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, healthy love, and group covenants. EI researchers are finding that Emotional Intelligence can grow through intentional practice and the authors give a number of specific exercises that can enhance a pastor’s EI. Pastors who want to reach their best and avoid the “crash-and-burn” scenarios that end many pastorates are well-advised to read and practice the principles from this book.

~HIGHLIGHTS OF BURMESE REFUGEES – Alan Newton, Executive Minister ROC/GEN

For websites highlighting the Burmese refugees in our midst, please click on the links below –

www.karenkonnection.org is the website produced by the Binkley's and www.chro.org/ is a website specifically about the Chin Tribes

~HELPFUL WORSHIP TIP - Alan Newton, Executive Minister ROC/GEN

If you are looking for a resource for worship skits which are on video, check out this link - www.skitguys.com

~LITANY OF DEPARTURE

Leaving a congregation in a health-giving way is an art that requires careful attention. The following link provides a litany used the last Sunday of a Pastorate. It will stimulate your imagination.

<http://www.ministerscouncil.com/PastoralEvents/LitanyBruceSandyDepart09.aspx>

~NATIONAL MINISTRIES PROJECT TO REBUILD NEW ORLEANS HOMES

American Baptists are returning to New Orleans with Habitat for Humanity. Plan now to take a group.

http://www.nationalministries.org/front_center_cws_build_2009.cfm

~GIVING IN DIFFICULT TIMES – Beth Fogg, Mission Resource Development

Albert Einstein once said, “We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.”

Paul voiced a similar thought almost two thousand years earlier in his letter to the Romans: *Adapt yourselves no longer to the pattern of this present world, but let your minds be remade and your whole nature thus transformed. Then you will be able to discern the will of God, and to know what is good, acceptable, and perfect. Romans 12:2(NEB)*

In today's difficult economic times, it is easy for us to think of our gifts to our churches as one place where we could cut back on expenses. Yet this is applying yesterday's thinking to today's problem. We need to cut back on our wants, not our gifts. Most of us have enough income to meet our needs, but not enough to meet all of our desires. The solution is not to shortchange our offerings but to modify those desires.

Allow your mind to be remade through Christ, and then measure how your budget reflects the will of God in your life.

~MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY CONFERENCE EVENT

TOGETHER IN THE LORD
Ministry Renewal Conference
Come to Orlando January 4-7, 2010!

Presented by American Baptist Churches, USA - To be held at the Wyndham Resort and Conference Center

Preachers include:

Miroslov Volf (Yale Divinity School)
Shane Claibourne (The Simple Way)
Trinette McCray
Marvin McMickle

Workshop Leaders include:

Alan Bearman	Shane Clairbourne	Mayra Castañeda
Sara Day	Lisa Harris	Glynis LaBarre
Florence Li	Trinette McCray	Marvin McMickle
Don Ng	Lee Spitzer	Reid Trulson
Aidsand Wright Riggins III		

For registration and conference schedule visit this link -
<http://www.ministerscouncil.org/Together%20in%20the%20Lord/TITLinfopage.aspx>

~REMEMBER US!

When planning your estate, please remember The Ministers Council.

~HELP US KEEP YOU INFORMED

The hard reality about this newsletter is this: Our email mailing list is not as complete as we would wish. But you can help and your help we ask. Please forward this to your constituencies and friends. Most months, there is something helpful and when there is not, the delete button is only about an inch away and there will be little imposition impressed upon your friends. We appreciate your help. *Joe Kutter*

THE MINISTERS COUNCIL OWNS THE DOMAINS www.ministerscouncil.org AND www.ministerscouncil.com. IF YOUR BROWSER ENCOUNTERS DIFFICULTY IN OPENING ANY OF THE LINKS IN THIS NEWSLETTER, GO DIRECTLY TO THE WEBSITE AND/OR FEEL FREE TO CALL THE OFFICE FOR SPECIFIC NAVIGATION DIRECTIONS TO LOCATE THAT LANDING PAGE ON THE SITE.

~SIGN UP FOR FUTURE ISSUES OF NEWS YOU CAN USE FROM THE MINISTERS COUNCIL

Sign up for future issues of the monthly Ministers Council newsletter by replying to this message from the

email address to which you wish issues to be sent. Add the newsletter email address to your address book so that future newsletters will not go into your spam filter.

If you have news, ideas, events or websites from your Ministers Council to share with colleagues, please email to joe.kutter@abc-usa.org. The more we share with one another what works, the stronger we will all be.

~MINISTERS COUNCIL CONTACT INFORMATION

Web: www.ministerscouncil.org
Mail: The Ministers Council
PO Box 851
Valley Forge PA 19482-0851
Phone: 1-800-222-3872, extension 2333, 2334
FAX: 610/768-2066

Join the Ministers Council through your local constituent council. Contact information is posted on www.ministerscouncil.org under the WHO WE ARE link.