

Rev. Dr. Debora Jackson, Executive Director

March 2015

From the Desk of the Executive Director

Many are living the secular life. Back in the 1950s less than 5% claimed that they had no religion. By 2000 it was considered news breaking that 14% of people said that they had no religious affiliation. Presently in the U.S., 23% of people say they are non-religious. That number is nearly 30% for teens and young adults. What is happening in society that there is such a falling away? And does this falling away mean that people are similarly falling away from moral values?



Phil Zuckerman, professor of sociology and secular studies at Pitzer College, is the author of the new book, *Living the Secular Life: New Answers to Old Questions*. In his book, he cites three primary causes for this rising wave of secularism. First Zuckerman notes the presence of the religious right and the backlash that it has engendered. He suggests that the conservative Christian agenda and religious right has served to alienate those who are left-leaning or politically moderate.¹ Even noted sociologists suggest that the growth of the “nones” in America is largely attributable to the reaction against this increased, overt mixing of Christianity with conservative politics.

The second factor is blamed on the Catholic Church’s pedophile priest scandal. As the extent of the crimes became widely publicized, many Americans, and many Catholics specifically, were disgusted. As a result of the scandal many Catholics became ex-Catholics. According to an “American Values” survey in 2012, nearly 1/3 of Americans reported as being raised Catholics. Three years later only 22% currently identify as such.

The third factor has more to do with the sociological reality that as more women worked outside the home, their religious involvement, as well as that of their families, diminished. Woman historically kept their children and husbands interested in and involved with religion. But as women worked outside of the home in increasing number, religious involvement declined.

These factors help to explain why so many have fallen away. But what happens to those who have? Does being secular mean that these people are adrift morally? Zuckerman would say “no” because

¹ Zuckerman cites the Conservative Christian and Religious Right agenda as ending abortion; fighting gay rights and gay marriage; supporting prayer in schools; advocating an abstinence only sex education; opposing stem cell research; curtailing welfare spending; supporting Israel; opposing gun control; and celebrating the war on terrorism.

morality, he claims, is the foundation for secularism. Secularists base morality on “treating people the way that they would like to be treated.” Their guiding moral principle is on empathy. Secularists would also attribute their morality to the ability to rationally solve problems. Rather than relying on prayer or some outside force, they are pragmatic in dealing with things that come their way. Secular people almost have a credo of deciding for themselves how they want to live. They manifest these traits for themselves and pass them on to their children, so that their children will be able to make up their own mind and come to their own conclusions.

Zuckerman goes on to suggest that there are a number of positive values of secular life. Being secular means loving family and friends rather than a deity or savior. Being secular means seeking to do good and treating other people right simply because it makes the world a better place for all. Secularism, says Zuckerman, is this ability to recognize beauty in every day ordinary life – a baby’s cry, a peach, or the rain. And by being secular, folks are far more universal in their thinking about humanity, seeing humanity as one as opposed to divided.

So why am I sharing this? I think it is important. I would maintain that we as ministerial leaders and members of the faith community need to know what we are up against. People are falling away and if we hope to realize a life of vibrancy and growth in our faith communities, we need to be able to respond in ways that staunch the trend so that we might win souls for Christ. How do we do this? I think we need to take a page out of the Apostle Paul’s book in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. Paul says, “I have become all things to all people that I might by all means save some.”

For me this first means that we need to understand what people are seeking. Zuckerman noted that there is a persistent pursuit of transcendence in life for which people hunger. We are all seeking that which is beyond us to help bring coherence to everyday life. This, for me, is the pursuit of the spiritual life, and I would argue that this pursuit is universal to all. People find meaning and purpose in life through spirituality and see it as a reflection of their own individuality and uniqueness. Thus, for many, spirituality is not something solely relegated to a religious realm. As such, we need the ability to meet people where they are and minister from there. While I believe that “Jesus has a plan for your life,” that wouldn’t be the first sentence out of my mouth in trying to reach someone who is seeking. How might we hear these folks, listen to their story and then share our experiences in ways that open rather than close them to faith?

Secondly, I cannot help but recognize Jesus even in the so called rejection of the faith. Did you notice that the core value of secularism is “do unto others as you would have them do unto you?” Come on you Sunday school aficionados and Bible scholars; who spoke these words? Well we know full well that this is the Golden Rule, which was recorded in Matthew 7:12. And none other than Jesus Christ spoke these words. Secularists are espousing our beliefs without crediting our Savior, but rather than take offense, I again look to Paul. In Philippians 1, Paul speaks about the various factions that are preaching Christ and whether their motives are right in the preaching. Paul comes to the conclusion that it doesn’t matter. Regardless of the motive of the preaching, Christ is proclaimed and in this he can rejoice. Well guess what, when the secularists declare their core value as “do to others as you would have them do to you,” I rejoice because these are the words of my Lord and Savior. It was Jesus who said, “If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to me” (John 12:32). The end result is that Christ is proclaimed and the Spirit is at work.

Finally, I cannot help but wonder what lessons lay in this falling away for us as believers. It is true that numerous atrocities have been carried out in the name of Christianity. We have to accept that. Then consider the events cited as the rationale for the recent apostasy. Perhaps we should be confronting the question of whether our “agenda” engenders hate as many claim. Jesus welcomed all and maybe we need to do the same. And how do we respond to the issue of sexual predators in the church? This is not simply an issue for the Catholic Church. If we do not protect the most vulnerable, we all fail. Then, it is not news that women have been less involved in the church. Since World War II, women have been increasingly entering the workforce. If we are only now noticing how that has affected the church, then shame on us. We must be more receptive and responsive if we are to survive.

Really that is my point. My congregation used to blame the decline of church attendance to the advent of Sunday soccer and baseball leagues. We never acknowledged that maybe we had lost our ability to attract people and give them reasons to cross the threshold of our church. This increase in secularism is not a reason to fear. It is an opportunity to recognize that people are still looking for spiritual sustenance. Our task is to figure out how to feed them.

Announcing the Ministers Council Retreat - June 29 – July 1, 2015



Join your colleagues as we depart the Mission Summit for the Ministers Council Retreat on June 29th – July 1st, 2015. Our retreat will be led by [Rev. Dr. Heather Entrekin](#), Des Peres Associate Professor of Congregational Health at Central Baptist Theological Seminary. The retreat will be held at the beautiful [Unity Village Conference and Retreat Center](#). Our theme for this year's retreat is "Let Go, Behold and Sing." The retreat will give you the spacious opportunity to fellowship with colleagues during a time of Sabbath. Then the retreat will engage us to discuss our ministry challenges and how we might "Let Go" and "Behold" the wonder of God in the midst of those challenges in ways that enable us to "Sing" with a sense of renewal.

Our agenda for our retreat is as follows:

June 29th

- Morning shuttle will depart from Overland Park to Unity Village.
- Sabbath day experience taking advantage of Unity Village amenities or enjoy a trip nearby shopping and restaurant destinations.
- 6:00 PM – Dinner at Unity Village
- 7:00 PM – Ice Breaker activities; Overview of Ministry Challenges.
- 8:30 PM - Compline Service followed by fellowship of Song and Silence.

June 30th

- 8:30 - Breakfast
- 9:30 – Part 1 – Let Go
- 11:00 – Prayer Circles
- 12:00 – Lunch
- 2:00 – Part 2 – Behold
- 4:00 – Part 3 – Sing
- 5:30 – Prayer Circles
- 6:00 – Dinner
- 7:00 – Leading a Sabbath-keeping Church
- 8:30 – Compline Service followed by fellowship of Song and Silence.

July 1st

- Breakfast
- Departures



Make your plans now to join us for this post-Mission Summit Retreat hosted by the Ministers Council. **Registration is now open. All are welcome. The retreat is designed for ages 12 and over. Click [here](#) to register. For a registration tutorial, click the [Registration Guide](#).**

Ideas for the Snowbound

This is the March edition of the Ministers Council newsletter, and as we would like to hope that spring really is around the corner. However, if you live in the Boston area as I do, images such as the one depicted on the right are still quite common. Boston received a record setting 100 inches of snow in February. The city was reduced to a standstill and our neighborhood churches have faced a winter of cancelled services and smaller than normal congregations. Lest our people become too comfortable worshipping at “Bedside Baptist” or “St. Mattress,” being buttressed by Rev. Pillow, several churches have come up with clever means to keep the connection and serve the flock. I thought I would share some of the ideas that we might reserve them hopefully for 2016...



- One pastor made phone calls to all of her members. She wanted to reach out and “touched” all of her members to make sure that everyone was managing and safe in the snow.
- Is your church too large for that kind of “personal” contact? One pastor used an automated calling service to record and send a 90 second message to all of his 8500 members. Members appreciated hearing from the pastor in this way.
- One church sponsored a conference call worship service. They used the 30 minute time slot for a hymn, scripture, prayer and sermonette.
- Another church divided the membership among the leadership to ensure that every member was called by a church leader. If there were any special needs, these needs were communicated to the pastor.
- Several churches actually opted to worship on a different day. One particular blizzard-forecasted Sunday caused some Boston churches to have worship on Saturday.
- And then because we hate to write sermons that we do not use, one pastor turned her sermon into a reflection piece and emailed it to her members.

These are just some of the creative things that you might do if you find worship services threatened or cancelled due to bad weather. My hope and prayer is that perhaps you won’t need these ideas, but for my colleagues in New England; I suggest you keep this list handy.

Save the Date!

June 26 – 28, 2015

2015 American Baptist Biennial Mission Summit

ABCUSA is partnering with the Academy of Preachers, a national, ecumenical initiative energized by the conviction that gospel preaching is a vocation of public and social significance, a calling worthy of the very best and brightest of our young people.

Preaching theme: “Tell me a Story.”
Nominate a young preacher (14-28) from your church to participate.

To learn more about the Festival of Young preachers, visit www.americanbaptists2015.com. For more information contact: Heather Enrekin – hentrekin@cbs.edu.

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PREACHERS
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Festival of Young Preachers

coming to

**the American Baptist
Biennial Mission Summit**

Overland Park, KS
June 26 – 28, 2015





A Productive Partnership: The Pastoral Relations Committee Now an Online Resource

In 2000, the Ministers Council, in collaboration with the Ministerial Leadership Commission, regional staff, pastors and churches to develop the video, "A Productive Partnership." This video was designed to help churches understand the role and work of the Pastoral Relations Committee. Specifically, the video can help your church become more effective by showing your Pastoral Relations Committee how to:

- Advocate for both the congregation and the pastor (or ministerial staff)
- Encourage open communications about the church's and the pastor's goals
- Address issues before they become problems
- Create opportunities to show the church cares for the pastor
- Help the church be sensitive to the pastor.

The original video was distributed via VHS tape, which of course is an obsolete technology. As the Ministers Council exists to equip ministerial leaders to be more effective in their ministry, enabling them to provide better support and service to their churches and communities, we are making this resource available to you through our website. Go to <http://ministerscouncil.com/resources/productive-partnership/> to access the video for yourselves and for your Pastoral Relations Committees. At that link, you will also find a presentation that can assist your education/training efforts.

Join the Ministers Council

Are you a Member of the Ministers Council? Dues for the Ministers Council are due by April 30th. Don't be left out. You can join today by going to www.ministerscouncil.com and clicking the Subscribe button or renew directly with your local council. Either way, you will be a part of a network of ministerial leaders who covenant together to strengthen clergy relationship, deepen spiritual, and increase professional competency through our gatherings and events. Membership fees at the National level are based on a personal income sliding scale as follows:

\$55,000+	\$100
\$25,000 - \$54,999	\$50
\$10,000 - \$24,999	\$25
< \$10,000	\$10

Become a member or renewing your membership in the Ministers Council. Contact your local council or go to www.ministerscouncil.com for more information.



Your Ministries Team

The Ministries Team has met for the first time! It seemed an historic moment to me, even though we were only on a conference call and not every Local Chapter Representative was able to join the call. For an hour on February 11, we got acquainted and talked about what is ahead for us.

Here is our list of Local Chapter Representatives at this point:

Kim Baker	Vermont/New Hampshire
Jackie Belile	Metro Chicago
Jerry Bertelson	Mid-America
Phil Betts	Cleveland Baptist Association
Jurdan Counts	Nebraska
Anibal Cruz Baez	Puerto Rico
Daryl Dachtler	Dakotas
Doug Davidson	Greater Bay Area
Michael Ford	Rochester-Genesee
Richard Haley	Conference of Baptist Ministers, Massachusetts
Randall Harris	Pennsylvania-Delaware
Dan Hopkins	Greater Indianapolis, Indiana and Kentucky
Wendy Kiefer-O'Brien	Rhode Island
Florence Li	Valley Forge Ministers Council
Steve Neal	Central Region
Karen Sundland	Wisconsin

As a group, we are still in the beginning stages. We hope that more Local Chapter Representatives will join us! It would be wonderful to welcome a representative from every local chapter.

Even though we are just starting up, I am happy to report that several members of the team have volunteered to prepare the Lenten devotions that you receive through email each Wednesday. Many thanks to those who have ministered to us in this way.

The Ministers Council annual meeting (previously known as "Senate") will be in June this year. The time and place for the annual meeting has been planned to coordinate with the Mission Summit in Overland Park, Kansas. In this way, we hope to enhance both events for the participants and to make travel burdens a little lighter. There will be meeting times specifically for the Ministries Team. In addition, we are looking forward to a retreat led by Rev. Dr. Heather Entrekin. Promising plans are underway for this retreat, which is open to all who wish to attend. Joyce Moon sent out detailed registration information on February 24 for all Ministers Council events around the Mission Summit. If you did not receive it, please let Joyce or me know.

Please don't hesitate to be in touch with any questions about the Ministries Team. And, if you have not yet let me know who your Local Chapter Representative is for this year, I would love to know. Here is my contact information:

The Rev. Holly Vincent Bean - hollyvincentbean@gmail.com



Local News Anyone?

What is going on in your local chapter? Share the word so that others might join in. Did you know that more than 2000 people view this newsletter every month? What better way to share your news.

Northwind Institute

Supporting effective local church ministry in postmodern settings



The Ministers Council helps ministerial leaders become more effective practitioners of the arts, skills, and gifts of professional ministerial leadership by:

- Encouraging opportunities to learn from one another
- Establishing and maintaining professional and ethical standards of Christian ministry
- Sponsoring continuing education programs

Northwind Institute is proud to support the work of The Ministers Council with special offers for Continuing Education and Clergy Coaching.

Continuing Education Courses

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The Ministers Council and Northwind Institute are developing and offering Continuing Education courses designed for Transformational Ministry.

Each course features faculty who hold a Doctoral degree and are experienced pastors

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Member Rate : \$75.00 Per Course
Non-Member Rate: \$100.00 Per Course

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Sessions may be scheduled on a weekly or monthly basis.

A written Action Plan is provided as a blueprint towards your goals for effectiveness.

We offer Board Certified Clergy Coaching for:
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- *Professional Goals*
- *Organizational Goals*
- *Financial Goals*

Member Rate : \$75.00 Per Session
Non-Member Rate: \$100.00 Per Session

Course List - [Enroll Now](#)

Session fees are invoiced via PayPal

Technology & Social Media in Preaching:

This course explores how to use Technology and Social Media in your preaching to develop a before, during and after experience. This is a condensed version of the course offered in the Drew Doctor of Ministry Program.

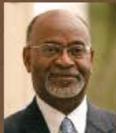
Lead Me to the Rock: Leadership Conference

The Ashland Theological Seminary Cleveland Center proudly presents **Lead Me to the Rock: Leadership Conference** on April 17 and 18, 2015 at Mt. Zion Church of Oakwood Village. We invite you to learn from **Rev. Marvin A. McMickle**, Ph.D., President & Professor of Church Leadership at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School. Experience the power of the Lord to transform faint and weary hearts. Our emcee will be **Rev. Dr. Thomas Gilmore**, Coordinator of Education of ATS Cleveland Center, and our Host is **Dr. Larry Macon**, Sr. Pastor of Mt Zion Church of Oakwood Village. See the flyer below for our inspiring lineup of speakers. Contact Angie Weimer aweimer2@ashland.edu for information.

Lead Me to the Rock

April 17 & 18, 2015

Ashland Theological Seminary's Cleveland Center invites you to attend our two-day equipping and worship event at Mt. Zion Church of Oakwood Village. Experience the power of the Lord to transform faint and weary hearts. For details and registration information, visit LeadMeToTheRock.eventbrite.com.



EMCEE:

Thomas W. Gilmore, DMin
Coordinator of Education,
Cleveland Center



MAIN SESSION SPEAKERS:

Marvin A. McMickle, PhD
President & Professor of Church Leadership
at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School



Rev. Gloria Chaney
Associate Minister and Catechist
at Olivet Baptist Church



GOSPEL INSTRUMENTALISTS:

Obed Shelton
Journalist, Musician, Motivator and Minister



Rev. Denise Cunningham-Dogget
Senior Pastor, Lakeshore Christian Church



BREAK OUT SPEAKERS:

Dana L. Kasper, MA, LPC/CR
The Child & Family Counseling
Center of Columbus, Ltd.



Rev. C. Jay Matthews, DMin
Senior Pastor, Mt. Sinai Ministries



William H. Myers, PhD
Professor of New Testament and
Black Church Studies;
Founder of the McCreary Center



WORSHIP LEADER:

Fred Graves
Pastor of Rock Church



PANEL MODERATOR:

Rev. Mildred C. Brooks
Cleveland Center Advisory
Board Chair



PANELISTS:

JoAnn Ford Watson, PhD
Professor of Christian Theology
and Spiritual Formation, Ashland
Theological Seminary



Rev. Christine A. Smith
Senior Pastor,
Covenant Baptist Church



Rev. Tony Minor, DMin
Senior Pastor, Community of
Faith Assembly; Director,
Advocacy at Lutheran Metro Ministry



Rev. David M. Nelson
Senior Pastor, New Hope
Baptist Church

Contact: Angie Weimer | aweimer2@ashland.edu | 419.289.5926

Local Chapter News



The Ministers Council of Oregon recently hosted the first of three "life-giving" moments for our constituent friends in 2015. Ministers Council members from across the state gathered at Our Lady of Guadalupe Trappist Abbey in Oregon where, for three days and two nights, we received refreshment, encouragement, inspiration and centeredness in the rhythms of silence, rest, worship, reflection and friendship. The Trappist Order that lives at the monastery hosted us with lodging, meals, quiet spaces and opportunities to

participate in community worship. Our friends who gathered prompted one another in group prayer, dialogue, reflective thinking and fellowship together.

As a part of our group reflection, we chose a series of four articles in advance and encouraged each other to read them. As a result, we built into our schedule a rhythm of group reflection regarding the articles we read and what we were experiencing during the retreat. The articles included in our reflective reading were:

"Roger Owens: The Heart of Vocation" from www.faithandleadership.com; "Dark Night of the Church" by L. Roger Owens and Anthony B. Robinson; "Rethinking Service," a sermon preached by Rev. Dr. Samuel Wells, Vicar of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and Visiting Professor at King's College in London, England; and "Live Welcoming to All" by Sue Monk Kidd

The quiet spaces, the contemplative worship, the reflective thinking and the building of friendships were life-giving gifts of grace handed to and received by each of us who journeyed together, responding to that deeper voice that whispers, "Come away with me."

Next Meeting of the PBA Ministers Council

The Philadelphia Baptist Association Ministers Council will meet on **Wednesday, March 11th, 9:30am** at the PBA office, 8711 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19128. The schedule is outlined below.

9:30-10:00am	Social Gathering	(Coffee, tea, etc.)
10:00-11:30am	Presentation:	"Our Words and Our Meditations" Psalm 19:14; John 12:20-33
	Facilitator:	Rev. Steven B. Lawrence White Rock Baptist Church
11:30am-12:00pm	Business Meeting	

Lunch will be provided immediately after the business meeting, so please confirm your attendance by contacting Mrs. Rosalyn L. Martin by phone (215-482-8222 x 10), fax (215-482-8232), or email (rlmartin@philadelphiabaptist.org).

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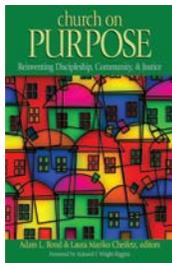
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New ABC Reads Selection Shares “Big Ideas” From Emerging Christian Leaders

The challenges facing today’s church are a topic of discussion at pastoral conferences, deacon and trustee board meetings, and annual congregational gatherings. It’s also on the minds of emerging Christian leaders across the nation. To share this perspective with all American Baptists, Judson Press has named *Church on Purpose: Reinventing Discipleship, Community, & Justice* edited by Adam L. Bond and Laura Mariko Cheifetz the 2015–2016 ABC Reads selection.

In *Church on Purpose*, young emerging leaders share insights from their generational and vocational perspectives to stimulate conversation and prompt adaptive change for more effective ministry. Topics include discipleship issues such as Sunday school, intergenerational worship settings, and evangelism; redefinition of community through strategic planning, ecumenical partnerships, and communication in a larger world; and pursuit of justice through inclusion of the poor and the prisoner.

ABC Reads highlights a book annually that’s appropriate for reading and discussion in small group settings, as well as individually. For more on the program, visit www.judsonpress.com/abcreads.cfm where you can order copies of *Church on Purpose* for 20% off the retail price of \$15.99. A 15% discount for orders of ten or more copies can also be applied to the 20% standard web discount when ordering online.

To order by phone, call 800-458-3766.

Pastor’s Installation Offers Nod to ABHMS History, Growth

The roots of American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) trace to the 1800s, while those of New York City’s Mariners’ Temple Baptist Church extend to the 1700s. Like those of centuries-old oaks, the

roots of both ministries remain firmly implanted in the rich, edifying soil of God's word, thirstily soaking up the deep, life-giving water of Jesus Christ. Yet both ABHMS and Mariners' Temple evolve with the changing needs of the times, like branches that stretch unceasingly toward heaven, and leaves that fall and regrow, renewed with the passing of seasons.

The juxtaposition of ministry tradition and eagerness to truly meet the Lord's people where and as they live today was evident on a recent Saturday in January, when the Rev. Florence Li, ABHMS national coordinator, Intercultural Ministries, and Asian Churches strategist, delivered the "Charge to the Pastor" during the installation of the Rev. Dr. Lai Fan Wong as pastor of Chinese Ministry for New York Chinese Baptist Church (NYCBC), New York City, a role Wong has held since September 2014. The service was held at Mariners' Temple, where NYCBC was founded in 1954.

Currently standing on the oldest site for continuous Baptist worship in Manhattan, Mariners' Temple is known as the "Mother of Churches" because it established and launched a variety of ethnic churches in the 19th and 20th centuries.

ABHMS is historically linked to Mariners' Temple. In 1832, the Sixth Triennial Convention of the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions convention recessed from Mariners' Temple (then known as Oliver Street Baptist Church) to the nearby Mulberry Street Baptist Church to found The American Baptist Home Mission Society. The society held Mariners' Temple's deed in trust and appointed missionaries to serve there. In 2010, ABHMS, which had been doing ministry at National Ministries, reclaimed its historic name at a service at Mariners' Temple.

NYCBC, which grew out of Mariners' Temple to meet immigrants' needs, is, according to NYCBC's own website, "motivated by the great Commandment, obeying the great Commission, empowered by the great Communion, and refreshed by the great Community."

Most NYCBC parishioners are immigrants from Hong Kong and mainland China or descendants of those immigrants. The church holds both Cantonese and English services, and it incorporates ethnic traditions into its activities.

"For example, we joyfully celebrated the Chinese Moon Festival in a Christian context, with Gospel songs in Cantonese opera tunes and lantern puzzles with Bible themes," says Wong, who was ordained by American Baptist Churches USA in 2005 and is an endorsed American Baptist chaplain and pastoral counselor.

Available online is additional information about ABHMS' history and Asian Ministries.

Hampton University Ministers Conference

All ABC persons planning to attend the 2015 Hampton University Ministers Conference in Hampton, Virginia, to be on the look-out for coming details for the annual ABCUSA Reception on the evening of Wednesday, June 10!

Biennial Mission Summit Update

Individual Registration is now available. Individuals may visit www.americanbaptists2015.com for additional details, a schedule at a glance, or to register online or to download a PDF registration form.

Learn About a Recent American Baptist Delegation's Visit to Myanmar, Thailand and Malaysia

delegation of eight American Baptists, led by General Secretary Roy Medley and joined by Jim Winkler, President and General Secretary of the National Council of Churches, embarked on a "Peace and Justice" advocacy and mission trip to Malaysia, Thailand and Myanmar (Burma) from January 27 to February 21, 2015. The delegation also met up with Rev. Joan Friesen and Jay Nordgaard, and a Kachin leader, Maw San Awng (Jum) at Myitkyina, the capital city of the Kachin State, Myanmar. The Kachin State has had a lapse of at least fifty years since American Baptists have visited, due to restrictions imposed by the Burmese government. Today, nearly 98% of the Kachin people are Baptist and trace their Christian heritage to mission work started in the 1850s. [Read more here](#), or [view photos from the trip here](#).

Upcoming Events

- McKee Consultation, Atlanta, GA, March 11-14, 2015.
- Clergy Women United – Calling All Clergy Women – "Self Care: Struggles, Strengths and Strategies for Achieving Balance in our Lives" featuring Rev. Dr. Debora Jackson, Presenter. March 19, 2015. The Historic Peoples Baptist Church, 830 Tremont Street, Boston, MA. RSVP by March 12 to Sis. Annette Campbell – acampbell@bmaboston.org or (617) 445-2737 ext. 130.
- National Leadership Committee, Green Lake, WI, April 7-10, 2015.
- Prairie Pastors Conference, Omaha, NE, April 13-15, 2015. "Life Together: Who Cares?" Speakers: Debora Jackson and Christian Collins Winn, Bethel University, St. Paul, MN. Go to <http://www.prairiepastors.org/> to register or for more information.
- Peer Power Conference, San Francisco, CA at the Mercy Center, May 5-6, 2015. Back by popular demand, Debora Jackson on Leadership Strategies for Effective Leadership. Go to <http://www.cpx.cts.edu/network/events/2014/12/02/peer-power-cultivating-clergy-communities-of-practice-and-training-for-peer-group-facilitators-may-2015> to register or for more information.

Give to the Ministers Council

Support the work and ministry of the Ministers Council through the Ministers Council Endowment. Visit <http://ministerscouncil.com/the-ministers-council-endowment> for more information.

Ministers Council Contact Information

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