

Rev. Dr. Debora Jackson, Executive Director

October 2015

From the Desk of the Executive Director

How many times will we experience the trauma of mass shootings? How many people will have to die? How many times will presidents have to stand before grieving communities to express condolences? How long will it be until we do something about it?

Once again, we are reeling from one more mass shooting that has happened in our midst. This time it was Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, OR. According to [Mass Shooting Tracker](#), a project that tracks how many people have been shot in an incident, there have been 296 mass shootings in 2015 thus far. This number differs from the FBI definition of mass shooting which tracks how many people are killed. A more detailed number can be found through the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which tracks the number of people who have died by firearms. From 2001 to 2013 (the most recent year available for CDC data), 406,496 people have been killed by firearms on U.S. soil. Isn't that enough?

I was reduced to tears as I heard the story of [Lacey Scroggins](#). Her father, Pastor Randy Scroggins, shared her story through a sermon at New Beginnings Church of God in Roseburg on Sunday, October 4. Lacey Scroggins was one of the students in the writing class that was attacked. From a prone position, being told to get on the floor, Scroggins realized that the boy next to her, Treven Anspach, had been shot. Yet Anspach rolled toward her, covering her body with his. As Anspach's blood ran over her, the shooter believed that Scroggins was dead. Anspach's blood saved Lacey Scroggins' life.

As followers of Jesus Christ, it is impossible to hear that story and not be reminded of our own salvation. Christ's shed blood ran over us and saved our lives. But we are not saved to sit idly by in our salvation. We should be emboldened in our salvation and actively involved in the discussion to break the cycle of violence.

Now gun advocates would say that guns don't kill people; people kill people, asserting the right to possess guns. Gun control advocates say that because people are killing people with guns, we need to control access to guns so that such violence does not continue. In so many instances, this argument becomes a stalemate, with neither side budging. But our polarized stances are not helping. We are avoiding the problem. There has to be another way.

Pundits say that there is bipartisan support for increased mental health resources. Too many of these mass shooting incidences have as the common denominator shooters with histories of mental or behavioral challenges. Could that possibly be a starting point? Can we not mandate background checks through all channels prior to purchase to ensure that people with mental health challenges and histories cannot buy weapons? Is it unreasonable for federal law enforcement agencies to notify local and state authorities when someone fails a background check because he or



she is a felon or a convicted domestic abuser? Can we not identify some steps that could be taken to try to break this cycle? Two hundred and ninety six mass shoots this year and counting. When will enough be enough?

Now I know that there are those who will read this and believe that I am either overstepping my bounds or not going far enough. Let me make it easy for you to voice your opinions. My email address is Debra.Jackson@abc-usa.org and my phone number is (800) 222-3872 x 2333. Yours will not be the first emails or calls that I have received. But understand that I am like that tree planted by the waters. And in that regard, understanding that Jesus sought a third way, I am discerning for a third way. Therefore, come; let us reason together because too many people are dying.

Upcoming Webinars for Ministerial Leaders

The Ministers Council exists to resource clergy to help increase effectiveness in ministry. And to help, the Ministers Council is offering webinars to support you.

The first is for Interim / Transition Ministries. We recognize the uniqueness of this specialized ministry. This is why we want to encourage the coming together of interim ministers to gain support, share strategies for learning, and be affirmed in the work.

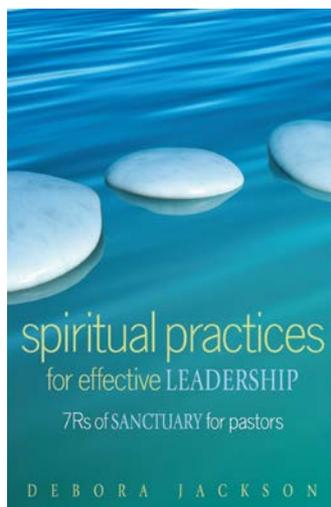
The Ministers Council and the Office of Transition Ministries

ABCUSA, invites you to be a part of a conversation about Interim Ministry. Our webinar will be led by Rev. Arlen Vernava, Professional Transition Specialist, Strategic Interim Minister, Coach, and Senior Consultant, who will facilitate our conversation and help define next steps for those interested in coming together regularly.

Join us on **October 15, 2015 at 1:00 PM Eastern**. You can join with others, learn, and be enriched in your ministry by clicking: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/635664925>. You can also dial in using your phone. United States: +1 (571) 317-3122; Access Code: 635-664-925.

Then save the date - **October 23, 2015 at 1:00 PM Eastern** – for a webinar presented by Judson Press featuring Debora Jackson to speak about her new book *Spiritual Practices for Effective Leadership: The 7Rs of Sanctuary for Pastors*. During the webinar, participants will understand how leaders who take time apart from their leadership become more effective in their leadership.

Join us for these great offerings from the Ministers Council.



Oh no! Your Membership is about to Expire!

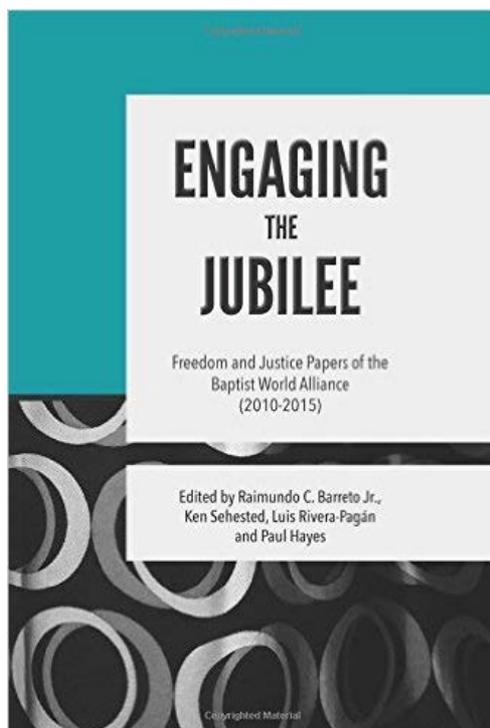
Can you believe it? 2015 has entered the third quarter. That means it's time to start thinking about renewing your member for 2016 or becoming a member. Your Ministers Council membership expires on December 31, 2015. Horrors, right? Don't let that happen to you! You can do something about it today.

What, you say? You can renew your membership with the Ministers Council. Don't miss out on the benefits and the opportunities for connection. And if you are not a member, join today so that you can be a part of the Ministers Council. Dues paid now covers the fourth quarter of 2015 and all of 2016.

Get ready for 2016 by becoming a member or renewing your membership in the Ministers Council. Contact your local council or go to <http://ministerscouncil.com/subscriptions/> to subscribe.



From the Baptist World Alliance



The Baptist World Alliance (BWA) has published *Engaging the Jubilee: Freedom and Justice Papers of the Baptist World Alliance (2010-2015)*. The papers were compiled by editors from BWA's Division on Freedom and Justice from the years 2010-2015. And one of the authors is none other than Ministers Council Board of Governors member, Rev. Dr. Liliana Da Valle. Her chapter is entitled "Living with the Horror: Psychological Trauma of Domestic Violence." The book also features chapters authored by Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley, and Rev. Dr. Amy Butler.

The Freedom and Justice editorial team organized papers around the biblical idea of the jubilee, based on Luke 4:18-19, which were the thematic verses of the Baptist World Alliance's ministry plan. The reference to jubilee reminds us of how freedom and justice was so central to Jesus' ministry. In declaring the "Day of the Lord's favor" the theological theme of liberation is evoked even as we are called to action. Each Baptist should be able to say that the "Spirit of the Lord is upon me." The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to: "bring good news to the poor," (Part 1); to "proclaim release to the captives," (Part 2); to "recover the sight of the blind," (Part 3); to "let the oppressed go free," (Part 4); and to "proclaim the year of the Lord's favor," (Part 5).

Get your copy today by clicking [Engaging the Jubilee](#) and support our Baptist World Alliance leaders.



Thank you

Thank you for the hours that you've labored in the vineyard.
Thank you for time you've spent communing with God inward.
Thank you for the way that you have broken the Bread of Life.
Thank you so much for carrying us, amidst the stress and strife.
Whether pastor, chaplain, counselor, director, minister or friend,
You've been someone we've relied on and faithful to the end.
And we're grateful to God for your service and all that you have done,
For in you we have seen the precious love of God's own Son.
So may God grant you favor and blessings this October.
This appreciation comes once a year, so we'll say it till it's over.
We appreciate you and we shower you with love.
And we lift you to the Throne of Grace for God's blessings from above.



Honoring the Ministry

The Reverend Rollin I. Tingley served as one of the first Baptist Youth Fellowship Discipleship Interns and completed 45 years of ABC ministry and Interfaith Leadership. Given such a distinguished ministry of service, Mrs. Patricia W. Tingley wanted to honor and remember her late husband. Because of his faithful service, she gave a donation to the Ministers Council Together in Ministry Equipping Ministries Fund. Through her donation, her husband's ministry will live on as ministers are strengthened by her generous support. Thank you so much Mrs. Tingley and may God continue to bless you.

Would you like to honor or member a loved one, pastor, or a mentor minister in your life? You can do so by contributing to the Ministers Council. Click the [Donor Contribution Form](#) and give to the Equipping Ministries Endowment Fund, the Together in Ministry Endowment Fund, General Fund, or other (donor designated). Help us to ensure ministerial effectiveness as we support leaders across the country and thank you!

Mission LaRomana @ 30

The year 2016 marks a significant milestone in the ongoing ministry in LaRomana. In 1986, a group of people from the First Baptist Church of Abington (MA) traveled to the Dominican Republic for (what they thought would be a one time) Mission Trip. Under the leadership of Rodney Henrikson the group from Abington (soon to be joined by many other groups) has labored over the last 30 years to share the love of God, and improve the quality of life for countless residents in and around LaRomana.

This years trip will include Batey medical clinics, a special construction project, a bus tour highlighting some past accomplishments and newer ministry projects, and a worship service celebrating the blessing of the last three decades. We are hoping Rod & Phyllis will be able to join us.

2016 MISSION WORK TOURS

FIRST TOUR LEAVES:

Saturday, February 13, 2016
Cost: \$750 + Airfare

FIRST TOUR RETURNS:

Saturday, February 20, 2016

SECOND TOUR LEAVES:

Saturday, February 20, 2016
Cost: \$750 + Airfare

SECOND TOUR RETURNS:

Saturday, February 27, 2016

If you wish to be part of this Mission Work Tour, please send the form on the next page and \$250 deposit as soon as possible. The balance of \$500 is due by December 31, 2015. Please fill in all the blanks on the reservation form!

If you wish to go for both weeks contact Bruce Bardon for price.

Return this [Reservation Form](#) and the \$250.00 Deposit made payable to:

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
c/o: REV. BRUCE BARDON
32 Bates Pond Rd.
CARVER, MA 02330



THE WOMEN OF COLOR IN MINISTRY PROJECT National Project for ALL Women of Color in Ministry

Dear Friend and Colleague,

Dr. Serene Jones, president of Union Seminary, Dr. Lisa Rhodes, Dean of Sisters Chapel at Spelman College, and Dr. Martha Simmons, president of The African American Pulpit, Inc. launched the Women of color in Ministry Project last year. I write to once again solicit your support and assistance in spreading the word to all of your women of color students about the Women of Color in Ministry Project and its upcoming Annual Conference. The \$1000 early bird participant deadline has been extended until September 28th.

The WOCIM Project Annual Conference is October 15, 16 and 17, 2015 at The Crowne Plaza Atlanta-Airport Hotel, 1325 Virginia Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30344, (404) 768-6660.

The Women of Color in Ministry Project (WOCIM), an effort designed by Reverend Martha Simmons (creator of The African American Lectionary, head of the African American Pulpit Journal, and co-author of "Preaching with Sacred Fire" which is the African American Anthology of Preaching), is led by The African American Pulpit, Inc., along with collaborative partners Union Seminary of New York, and Sisters Chapel of Spelman College. The over-arching aims of the project are to provide women of color clergy around the country educational assistance, mentorship, advocacy, and employment assistance. The Ford Foundation is a project sponsor.

Please contact Reverend Nikita McCalister at nikitagiselle@yahoo.com or the project via email at WomenofColorinMinistry@gmail.com if you will join us in this unique effort. Our website is www.WomenofColorinMinistry.org. You can also find the project through its Facebook page or on twitter #WOCIMIN. Remember, you can obtain a table by simply going to the website and registering through our PayPal portal.

American Baptist Women's Ministries 2015-2016 Mission Focus "See...the Beloved Community: Transformative Relationships"

American Baptist Women's Ministries' mission focus theme for 2015-2016 is "See...the Beloved Community: Transformative Relationships." In response to current events, the mission focus provides American Baptist women and girls the opportunity to explore how we are drawn into reconciliation with God through the cross; how we are co-creators of the Beloved Community through authentic relationships with one another; and how our ministries and congregations can lead our neighborhoods, towns, and cities in becoming the Beloved Community. The one-year mission focus also builds on the organization's 2015-2017 open-ended ministry theme, "See . . .".

"See...the Beloved Community: Transformative Relationships" will be supported by information and resources listed on the AB Women's Ministries website (www.abwministries.org/missionfocus) and updated throughout the year, and through a virtual mission encounter scheduled for March 7-11, 2016. Additionally, articles related to the theme will be published in AB Women's Ministries' bi-monthly e-newsletter "Leader's Reader," and through AB Women's Ministries' Facebook pages and Twitter feeds.

AB Women’s Ministries Seeks Nominations for Shine the Light Award

Nominations are being accepted now for the 2016 Shine the Light Award. The Shine the Light Award, established by American Baptist Women’s Ministries, ABCUSA, serves to recognize a woman or a women’s ministry group that serves as outstanding light-bearers for Christ. The award highlights a specific ministry project or projects that best demonstrate how the individual or group receiving the award have spread the light of Christ through their congregation, their community, or the world.

The deadline for nominations for the 2016 Shine the Light Award is January 31st, 2016. For more information, criteria, and to submit a nomination, visit the AB Women’s Ministries website at www.abwministries.org, or contact the AB Women’s Ministries office at (610) 768-22288 or info@abwministries.org.

Registration Extended for National Gathering Grappling with Today’s Tough Questions

American Baptist Home Mission Societies announces that registration has been extended until Oct. 30 for its national “Space for Grace” gathering planned for Los Angeles this November.

The event seeks to promote healing conversations about the great divides—race, religion, culture and class—that separate individuals, neighborhoods and communities today, too often resulting in violence and loss of life, as evidenced by the recent spate of racially-motivated violence, including tragedies in Ferguson, Mo., and Charleston, S.C.

The time is ripe for individuals of all faith traditions to take part in dialogue that seeks to bridge gaps of diversity by exploring how faith can be lived in the midst of today’s racial, religious and cultural dynamics. When can God’s grace nurture a teachable moment that leads to transformed hearts, minds and spirits?

Theologian, author, speaker and activist [Brian D. McLaren](#) will lead the Space for Grace gathering’s daily Bible study. McLaren’s dozen-plus books include “A New Kind of Christianity: Ten Questions that Are Transforming the Faith” and “Naked Spirituality: A Life with God in 12 Simple Words.” Profiled in The Christian Century, Christianity Today and The Washington Post, McLaren has been named one of 25 influential Christian leaders in America by Time. He has been featured on CNN’s “Larry King Live” and ABC’s “Nightline” along with FOXNews, PBS and NPR.

The event’s roster of powerful, thought-provoking worship leaders and presenters will include the Rev. Dr. [Raphael Gamaliel Warnock](#), activist and senior pastor of Atlanta’s historic [Ebenezer Baptist Church](#); the Rev. [Susan Sparks](#), professional comedian and pastor of [Madison Avenue Baptist Church](#), New York City; and the Rev. Dr. Eric Law, executive director, [Kaleidoscope Institute](#), Los Angeles. Also featured will be small group discussion and more than a dozen afternoon learning experience offerings, such as “Consensus Building in the Midst of Diversity and Divergence,” “Extending Grace to Others in Tension-filled Moments” and “Ministering to Communities in Crisis.”

The event will be held Nov. 4-7, 2015, at the Hilton Los Angeles Airport hotel. To register, visit www.abhms.org and click the [Space for Grace](#) logo.

Local News Anyone?

As we share the news of what we are doing in our local Ministers Council chapters, others are inspired. We want the light of your good works to shine brightly so that others might be informed. Our readership increases every month. Share your news and spread the word.



Upcoming Events

- Pastoral Excellence Network - Peer Power Retreat, Chicago, IL, October 20-21
- 10th Anniversary Celebration, New Creation Baptist Church, Worcester, MA – October 11
- Professional Ministries Team Meeting, Valley Forge, PA – October 26
- Providence Baptist Church Leadership Retreat, Baltimore, MD – October 30-31
- Space for Grace, Los Angeles, CA, November 4-7
- Mission Table, Valley Forge, PA – November 9-11

Give to the Ministers Council

Support the work of the Ministers Council. Use our [Donor Information Form](#) to contribute to the Equipping Ministries Endowment Fund, Together in Ministry Endowment Fund, General Fund or to a designated ministry effort that you specify. As you support the Ministers Council, you make ministry happen.

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