

Together in Ministry



The
Ministers
Council

Collegiality * Competence * Centeredness

October 2018 Newsletter



HAPPY CLERGY APPRECIATION MONTH!

"The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching" (1 Timothy 5:17).

The blessings of ministry are many but pastoring can at times be a thankless job that leaves you feeling unappreciated. The Rev. Dr. Ken Fong, senior pastor, Evergreen Baptist Church, Rosemead, California puts it this way: "You work for an invisible, perfect Boss, and you're supposed to lead a gaggle of volunteers towards God's coming future. It's like herding cats, but harder."

It is hard work and it is not surprising that Forbes magazine ranks pastor/minister at #5 of the top 9 toughest leadership roles. This is why Focus on the Family established Clergy Appreciation month back in 1992. It is a special time to honor pastors and their families for the hard work, sacrificial dedication and multiple blessings provided by those called to ministry.

But what can you do if your congregation misses the Hallmark moment? How do you take control when feeling unappreciated? Communication is key. Sometimes people are not aware of how you're feeling, especially if you hide it well. Take that bold step and communicate your feelings in a kind and thoughtful way.

We celebrate, uplift and encourage all who are in ministry -- pastors, missionaries, counselors, educators, chaplains, and other religious workers. Thank you for all that you do for Christ's church.

President's Update



The Ministers Council was formed more than 80 years ago by ministers, for ministers. This year, ABC ministers are re-forming the Council in response to changing times and resources. As we do so, we rightly ask, "What are the basic purposes to which we are still committed?" "What are the means available to us to meet these purposes?" and "What is the most effective structure for actualizing those means and meeting those purposes?"

Structure is about turning good intentions into actual experiences, and doing so with clear lines of responsibility, accountability, efficiency and transparency. Help us design a workable structure that you can applaud and trust. Join me and other committed members in Zoom webinars this week and next (info below) to hear background and current ideas on the drawing board; share your insights and inspirations.

Inspiration is what we need as we finalize a structure for a Ministers Council that will be viable in 2019 and assured for the future (sustainable). Therefore, the Local Chapter Representatives and members of the national Board of Governors are meeting November 12-14 in Philadelphia, PA, around the theme of, "Not by power, nor by might, but by my Spirit," says the LORD of Hosts." Zechariah 4:6b

If you are not going to be there in person, please pray for those present to have ears to hear the Spirit of God.

In Christ,
President Darla "Dee Dee" Turlington

Board Updates



"MC LIVE" WEBINAR IN OCTOBER FEATURES BOARD PRESIDENT-- TWO SESSIONS, RECORDED

"WHAT'S STRUCTURE GOT TO DO WITH IT...?"
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11th @ 11am Central
Time (our new regular monthly slot) or TUESDAY,
OCTOBER 16th, 7pm Central Time.

Join Ministers Council President Rev. Dr. Darla "Dee Dee" Turlington for a time of nourishing fellowship regarding our common cares for a thriving Ministers Council in a day of great change. Dee Dee will ground the conversation in a remembrance of our call to the mission of sustainability, so that the Ministers Council can continue inspiring ministerial excellence for the glory of Jesus Christ. She'll provide updates and answer questions on current organizational visioning and votes at the upcoming Annual Meeting on

this webinar called "What's Structure Got to Do with It? A conversation on Ministers Council organization and effectiveness."

This conversation opportunity will be offered again on Tuesday, Oct. 16 at 7pm Central/8pm Eastern.

Join the Oct 11 11a zoom webinar [here](#).

Join the October 16 conference call at:
712-770-4060
access code 834458#

"MC Live" is the new series of monthly webinars held on the second Thursday of each month at 11am Central Time, with recordings made available and attempt to schedule evening sessions as well.

OUR WEBSITE FACELIFT - OUR "DUE DATE" IS OCTOBER 15

We've been tweaking away on minor things, integrating <http://www.ministerscouncil.com/> with wider ABC life and announcements, AND massively overhauling the structure to make membership dues transactions and donations as easy as possible. We've taken away all of the "members only" functions of the previous website's content. (We do anticipate continuing to have some "member only" perks such as discounts with ministry related vendors and discounts on pricing at future events.)



The bottom line: We hope you will find it serves us all better and, in particular, CONNECTS us. Thanks to new webmaster the Rev. Stu Smith of Bismarck, IL for his generous work.

Chapter News

Metro Chicago – It's Clergy Health and Wholeness Initiative is taking shape, as well as a new seminarians engagement project. The local chapter has a new website going live this month at www.ministerscouncilchicago.com. (NOTE: The new national website has a section for links to local chapters' sites.)

Washington DC – A small group of local ministers recently met regarding reactivating this chapter. Watch for updates.

Massachusetts – In our largest chapter, leaders in Massachusetts frequently report a great commitment to COLLABORATION with ABC and Ecumenical entities. Watch for an upcoming testimonial article.

Do you have chapter news to submit? Contact info@ministerscouncil.com to share yours for November issue before 10/31.

DON'T DO IT ALONE! TOGETHER IN MINISTRY GROUPS DELIVER THE "3Cs"

Rev. Dan Hopkins of the national Board is the contact person for our renewal of Together in Ministry Covenant Groups. He recently convened a conversation of testimonies and exploration for next steps. Did you miss the September webinar (just a first step)? Watch the recording [here](#).

Note: Existing Together in Ministry groups are eligible for small grants of support beginning October 1, 2018. These funds are drawn from the Together in Ministry Capital Campaign undertaken a few years ago. Contact our Member Services Coordinator, Lisa K. Simpson, at info@ministerscouncil.com for an application form. Priorities and criteria for the renewed and expanded funding for 2019 will be determined at the 2018 Annual Meeting.

We're praying that these groups will continue to bless our ministers' excellence through the impact of collegiality, centeredness and competence. Dan can be contacted at missionsdan@hotmail.com.



CHAPTER REPS' MONTHLY MEETINGS OCTOBER 25 (Two alternatives): 11am Central or 6:30pm Central

The network of local chapter representatives is called our "Ministries Team" and meets monthly. [Here](#) are our dial-in instructions as we transition to use Zoom webinars.

HEALTH CARE ADVOCACY PROJECT -- NEXT INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR SESSIONS OCTOBER 10 & 25

Fellow colleagues continue to meet to cast a vision for the realistic impact the Ministers Council can have, in partnership with our denominational family and other entities, on affordable and accessible health care coverage for ministers and families. Over the last two months, we've conducted preliminary research on other denominations' approaches to clergy health care support, and begun conversations with national ABC staff to collaborate in our visioning. Learn more in any of these ways:

- Contact Rev. David Van Brakle at davidvanbrakle@gmail.com to be added to our project email list.
- Join Rev. Jacki Belile and other project volunteers at informative webinar updates on Wednesday, October 10th (7pm Central Time). Zoom Link info [here](#). Next session: Thursday, October 25th at 1pm Central Time.

- Watch for details, including a “Position Paper,” in our November newsletter
- Connect with us at our booth at Space for Grace for a Project Summary, and watch for details about other conversations onsite.

CHAPTER REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Learn more about the “State of the Union” for chapters which have been struggling or inactive for some time. Share your dilemmas or embryonic ideas. Reach out for help to explore and imagine how you and colleagues can take the next *and context-appropriate* step where you are to benefit from committed connections. Join Rev. Joyce Peebles, Rev. Jacki Belile and others on will be at 1pm Central Time on Thursday, October 25. Join the meeting [here](#).

ABC Announcements

COMMEMORATION OF HOPEVALE MARTYRS

75 years ago, 11 American Baptist missionaries stationed in the Philippines were martyred at the hands of Japanese Troops during the Japanese Invasion of the Philippines. Learn more about an International Ministries commemoration and mission exploration trip this December [here](#).



We rejoice in early testimonies from the **Chaplaincy and Specialized Ministries** Summit hosted by ABHMS and McCormick Theological Seminary this past weekend. Watch for a full report in our November newsletter.



BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Baptist Joint Committee Fellows Program offers young professionals the opportunity to deepen their historical, theological and legal understanding of religious liberty and develop skills to advocate for the cause throughout their careers. Applications open in December 2018 for the 2019 Seminar in Colonial Williamsburg. Visit <https://bjconline.org/fellows> website to learn more.

Space for *grace* 2018

THY WILL BE DONE

November 14-16, 2018
Loews Hotel, Philadelphia

At this national conference in an urban retreat setting, Christian leaders from across the United States and Puerto Rico will consider critical issues around mission engagement, discipleship and church transformation to seek God's leading for bringing healing to a broken world.

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION IS \$229 AND ENDS AUGUST 15
For more information, visit abhms.org or call 800.222.3872, x2452



Hear these inspiring speakers!

Dr. Amy Butler, pastor of The Riverside Church

Dr. Raphael Warnock, author, activist, and senior pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church

The Rev. Dr. Corey D.B. Walker, vice president of Virginia Union University; and dean of Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology

Dr. Molly T. Marshall, author and president of Central Baptist Theological Seminary

Milestones & Prayer Requests

We celebrate the ordination of Rev. Paul Schneider by First Baptist Church of Berkeley, CA.

We celebrate the installation of Rev. Jacki Belile at Eden United Church of Christ in Chicago, IL.



We lift all our clergy facing the challenges to live in health and wholeness, and pray for wise and just solutions to health, health care and health care access.

We pray for local churches in our regions facing discouragement or conflict.

We continue to pray for those in our ABC family who are grieving recent losses of family members.

We celebrate the recent call of Rev. Jacqueline Saxon to become Executive Minister of Mid-American Baptist Churches.

We ask for ripple effects of collegiality and impact from the October 6th Chaplaincy Summit.

We hold our country in fervent prayer. May the servanthood of Jesus' disciples bring the power of God's healing and reconciliation to all the spaces for which our American Baptist ministers are accountable.

May we be convicted by recent Supreme Court hearings to submit our understanding and will to Christ's compassion. May we deepen our understanding of the lifelong traumas of sexual violence and social pressures to silence victims. May we courageously expect and protect the American virtues of "innocent until proven guilty." May we release our fears and agendas into God's hands, even as we work diligently to become the "beloved community" God intends.



GRACE: A REMINDER FOR MINISTRY

In reference to our Christian belief, what is “grace”? Grace is defined as, the free and unmerited favor of God. Grace is something that is granted; however as humans we often times find reasons to justify the receipt of it.

What have we done to deserve God’s favor? What makes us worthy to accept His grace? Sure we can examine our selves with pride because we have been in church all our lives. We pray everyday (multiple times). We are kind to others. We tithe 10% of all that we earn. We follow the Ten Commandments. And the list goes on and on. However do we truly know? Is there something in our body of work that sets us aside for God’s grace “aka favor”? This maybe one of life’s greatest mysteries. However of one thing we are certain, we are thankful for God’s saving “grace”.

The Bible says in Ephesian 2: 8-9, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast”. So you see my brothers and sisters, God has evened the playing field. Because of grace through faith, we can ALL (not some) can inherit eternal life!

Let us continue to be followers of Christ and live by his example. Let us show unmerited favor to all those whom we pass along life’s journey and let us be thankful for God’s saving grace!

In Christ,

Lisa Simpson
Member Services Coordinator

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. How are you doing in trusting grace as a minister? Where/ when do you find this hard?
2. Consider positive examples of grace-filled ministry. What does it look like?
3. To whom do you find it difficult to show “unmerited favor”?

Reminders



Membership Renewals:

It is not too late to submit your 2018 Minister Council Membership renewal. 2019 Membership renewal begins in November. You can submit your renewal by accessing ministerscouncil.com and selecting the “join here” option.

Chapter Updates:

Please remember to **inform** the national office of all updates/changes to Chapter officers and addresses.



How to reach us:

- By phone: (610)314-7837
- By email:
info@ministerscouncil.com
- Address: 221 S. High Street,
West Chester, PA 19382
- We can generally be reached in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays (emails and voicemails will be responded to during this time)



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