

Together in Ministry



Collegiality \* Competence \* Centeredness

## November 2019 Newsletter



*Give thanks with a grateful heart - 1 Thessalonians 5:18*

### Preparing the Way

*“Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near.  
Let every hill and valley a level way appear.”*  
— Frans M. Franzèn, 1812



Advent begins Sunday, December 1! Don't wait until it's crunch time to plan for the season. Here is a checklist to help you prepare the way for Christmas:

- Schedule special services, such as mid-week Advent worship and the Children's Christmas program.
- Choose music for services and recruit musicians.
- Send out a “save the date” postcard or email for people to highlight this year's Advent and Christmas events at your church. Remember to include worship times, Christmas program dates, and service project events.
- Design or place your order for special bulletin covers.
- Schedule a “clean up day” with volunteers to help clean up the church building and property before holiday services.
- Set hard deadlines for the receipt of bulletin material well before production day.
- Recruit volunteers of all ages to decorate the worship space.
- Arrange to visit members of the congregation who are hospitalized or

homebound.

- Make sure that your website, voice mail and signage all have current information (e.g., service times). Remember to provide details for special services, Christmas program, Out-of-office dates, and emergency contact information.
- Thank your volunteers!

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## Advent Devotional Volunteers Wanted

We'll repeat the wonderful experience of sharing in colleague-authored devotionals this Advent season. Do you feel led to write one? We hope you will! We are working to arrange a Spanish translation for each week. (Please contact us if you can help translate into any other languages!)



WORKING THEME: "Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!" (from Isaiah 2:5)

GUIDELINE: Please tailor with ministers as primary audience, and various settings of ministry in mind. What words of challenge or encouragement might be appropriate as we anchor ourselves in the truths of this season?

TEXTS: Follow the Spirit, with acknowledgement that many but not all follow the lectionary; we will post citation of scripture and brief excerpt of passage or link to entire w/ your text (The scripture won't count against your length:))

LENGTH: approximately 700 words, concluding with a 3-4 sentence prayer

DEADLINE: November 26, 2018

SUBMIT: Please submit to [\*\*info@ministerscouncil.com\*\*](mailto:info@ministerscouncil.com)

SCHEDULE:

Upon timely receipt, we'll post all as a set on website at [\*\*www.ministerscouncil.com\*\*](http://www.ministerscouncil.com).

Week 1 Will be distributed in Dec. Newsletter on 12/1

Week 2 -- distributed 12/7

Week 3 - distributed 12/14

Week 4 - distributed 12/21

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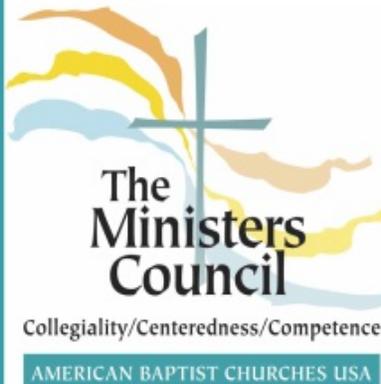
## National Update

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# THE MINISTERS COUNCIL HAS DECLARED 2020 A YEAR OF JUBILEE!

ALL QUALIFIED ABC  
MINISTERIAL LEADERS  
ARE INVITED TO ENROLL  
FOR A ONE YEAR  
FREE MEMBERSHIP  
WITH THE NATIONAL  
MINISTERS COUNCIL  
FOR 2020.



Contact your Local MC Chapter  
or go to  
[www.ministerscouncil.com](http://www.ministerscouncil.com)  
to register for your  
complimentary  
national membership.

## WHY JOIN?

*We rejoice in the trustworthy God who's guiding us in new ways of serving you.  
We know many will want to connect or reconnect on our journey of supporting 3C's in new ways...*

### Join us for the Jubilee!

Complimentary national enrollment available from 11/1/2019 and valid through 12/31/2020  
enroll today at [www.ministerscouncil.com](http://www.ministerscouncil.com). Visit site for more info including your local chapter  
contacts and local chapter dues information.

Contact Mrs. Lisa K. Simpson, Member Services Coordinator, at  
[info@ministerscouncil.com](mailto:info@ministerscouncil.com)

### Our Current Projects:

Monthly Newsletter  
MC Live Monthly Webinar  
Together in Ministry Colleague Groups  
Clergy Gatherings  
(Pre-Mission Summit & Local Events)  
Support and Resource Sharing via Facebook  
Code of Ethics Revisions for 2020

*Come and see us now!*  
[www.ministerscouncil.com](http://www.ministerscouncil.com)

[Read more here](#)

## Take the Code of Ethics Online Survey Today! Simply click the button below to access.

Read current doc [here](#). Please respond by November 30.

**We Want Your Feedback!**

## Together in Ministry Testimonies

We're delighted at the growing number of local "TIM" groups as we have renewed our focus on clergy colleague groups. Rev. Dan Hopkins is the national coordinator and can be reached at [missionsdan@hotmail.com](mailto:missionsdan@hotmail.com). Be sure to check out the application forms for small grants for existing or new groups at our website at [www.ministerscouncil.com](http://www.ministerscouncil.com). Here are a couple testimonies from a group in Oregon. Please reach out to share YOURS with Dan.

I have been a part of this TIM group since its inception. Over the years it has been a source of comfort in times of sorrow, strength in times of conflict and encouragement in times of doubt. I think all would agree that it is a true Prov. 11:25 group. As we come together as a group to encourage one another we in turn are encouraged.

The prayers that have been offered by the group on my behalf have been a tremendous help to my ministry and the relationships developed are priceless.

I would like to thank you for all of your support over the years. May God richly bless you.

Blessings

Darryl Elledge

Our Together in Ministry group has been a great blessing to me and I am so grateful my ministry friends in this group. There is much care, support, listening, encouragement and prayer in our group. This fellowship of support and encouragement helps us all to "keep on keeping on" serving our Lord. I thank the Lord for His blessings in our TIM group.

John Aman

## Events and Webinars



NOVEMBER 14  
11am-12pm Central Time  
Via Zoom: [Click for Instructions](#)

Join us for our monthly "MC Live" Webinar. On November 14th, Rev. Dan Hopkins and Lisa Simpson will host co-authors Rev. Dan Cash and Rev. Bill Griffith who collaborated on "**The Changing Church: Finding Your Way to God's New Thing.**" The session will be recorded.

In their book *The Changing Church: Finding Your Way to God's New Thing* (Judson Press, 2019), authors Dan Cash and Bill Griffith share a resource designed to help congregational leaders better understand God's approach to change, while presenting a healthy way forward for thinking about and reacting to change both in churches and life in our fast-paced world.

[Read More](#)



### All Saints' Appeal

What could be a more appropriate Thanksgiving act than giving in thanks and honor of those who've given to us? This year, in lieu of a Giving Day year-end appeal, we invite you to give generously to the Ministers Council in honor of the saints who have given to you and formed you. No doubt a minister or two is among them. Gifts given by November 15th will be recorded for this appeal. [\*\*Read more here.\*\*](#)

## Chapter News

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**EVERGREEN:** Will be holding a retreat in 2020.

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**METRO CHICAGO:** A few Cabinet members are planning ahead for transitions in leadership, and leaders are actively planning for a strong smooth transition. The Chapter is reworking its by-laws, last done in the 1980s to be in sync with the national by-laws.

Revs. Jacki Belile and Francine White will co-lead a "self care" retreat on January 5-6.

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**MASSACHUSETTS:** Its Annual Meeting will be held on November 9th in partnership with MA Baptist Multicultural Ministries on the theme "Entertaining Angels." An Advent retreat will be led by Rev. Dr. Holly Benzenhafer. A Lent retreat will be led by Rev. Cynthia Maybeck.

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**MID-AMERICA:** The Annual Ministers Council Dinner will be held December 6th. The theme will be Rhythms of the Spirit, led by Brad Berglund. Also, a retreat will be held in 2020.

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## Staff Reflection

### On Gratefulness... A Word from Lisa



As we stand on the threshold of another holiday season it forces us to reflect on the year thus far. For some it has been a year filled with joy and celebration. For others it may have included pain and sorrow. For some a mix of both. I am certain that many will agree that this has been an unusual sort of year; a year of uncertainties.

Being cloaked with human frailties, we tend to focus far less on the positive aspects of life than we do the negative ones. However; the splendor surrounding this time of year forces us to flip the script and take inventory of all the amazing experiences that God has rained on our lives. It reminds us of God's grace!

The song "Grateful" by Hezekiah Walker is one of my all-time favorites. Personally, when I sing this song, I profess my faith and dependency on God for ALL things, and in humility declare gratitude for God's unmerited favor! I am showing my age by saying that this song is "my jam"! I would recommend that you check it out!

In one of my previous reflections I had mentioned that for me and my family going "home" means going to Connecticut where most of our family resides. Like most families we especially look forward to this time of year when we get the opportunity to reconnect and spend quality time with each other. I pray that you will take some time this season to reflect on the goodness of God and ALL that he has done!

#### ***For Reflection:***

*Just like the song writer of "Gratefulness", are you grateful for the victories that God has ALLOWED you to win this year?*

*Are you grateful for ALL the things that God have done for you thus far?*

*Are there lessons in your ministry context for which you are grateful? Have they come easily or with challenge?*

*How do you encourage gratitude in this season – for your congregants,*

## ABC Announcements

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 10/7/19)**—The American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA) Office of the General Secretary, along with the American Baptist Historical Society (financial secretary's office), will transfer into their new offices located at 1015 West Ninth Avenue, in King of Prussia, October 17-18. Offices at 1015 West Ninth Avenue are planned to re-open by October 23. **(Click to read more)**

## Milestones & Prayer Requests

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 10/9/19)**—American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) celebrates the ministry of Diane Sypherd, who will retire at the end of December after 43 years of dedicated service. **(Click to read more)**

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 10/4/19)**—On October 1, 2019, the ABCUSA Office of the General Secretary welcomed Rev. Rebecca Driscoll into the newly created position of Minister for Creation Justice. **(Click to read more)**

We celebrate the installation of **Rev. Jabulani McCalister** as Senior Pastor at Covenant Baptist Church in West Bloomfield, MI.

We hold in prayer all those devastated by California fires and other environmental disasters.

We hold in prayer the clergy facing discouragement or exhaustion in this time.

*Please share prayer requests and milestones for future issues by emailing **info@ministerscouncil.com**.*

## Reminders



### How to reach us:

- By phone: (610)314-7837
- By email: [info@ministerscouncil.com](mailto:info@ministerscouncil.com)
- Address: 221 S. High Street, West Chester, PA 19382
- We can generally be reached in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays



### Stay connected

- Visit us at **[www.ministerscouncil.com](http://www.ministerscouncil.com)**
- Join us on **Facebook**
- Consider signing up for our monthly newsletter by selecting "subscribe" on the home page of the website

(emails and voicemails will  
be responded to during this  
time)

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