

Together in Ministry



October 2020 Newsletter

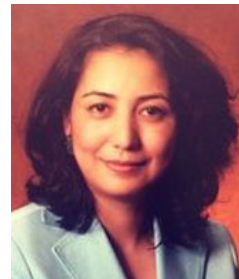


JOIN US IN JUBILEE

Reflections from the national Leadership Team of Ministers Council ABC-USA.

Jubilee: Children in Poverty and Prosperity

The image of a little boy resting on the side of the road with a bundle of his stuff (everything he owns) as his makeshift pillow, fleeing the city he knew due to COVID-19 pandemic, burned through my eyes into my heart, as I sat in front of my computer with a bowl of fresh fruits in the comfort of my study. I wondered, “How long is he going to walk until he reached his destination?” Where is he going to get food for the day, and all the days he will be walking?” “Will he survive?” “What is going on in his mind?” Poverty continues to destroy the holistic life of children. Besides physical deficiency, they suffer socially, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. They are consistently being wounded even as they continue to trust the people in their lives and the world. I recalled the song “Jesus loves the little children” and tried to make sense of it.



[Read More](#)

National Update

Esther 4:14

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS



"For Such a Time as This" --

Naming the Burden, Receiving the Blessing
Thursdays, October 29 & November 5
4pm Pacific/6pm Central/7pm Eastern

We all long to be faithful to the roles God would have us take on in the demanding Day in which we live. We hunger for clarity about our distinct duties, and often need encouragement - even bold blessing - to take on God's appointed task. As clergy, we find ourselves often with the opportunity to support others in claiming their work.

For all this, we need the Spirit's tending -- in stillness and good company -- to rightly discern our actions.

What do you need to tend in this time? Who do you need? Who does God need you to be "for such a time as this"?

Join your ABC ministry colleagues in these two sessions, *time set aside* for renewing reflection, music and prayer. Each 1-hour session will be followed by optional small group fellowship. These sessions precede the November business meeting at same time on November 19 (open to all) and the optional "Q and A" business prep session on November 12th.

Registration opens October 5.



A Word From Our President

"Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS." Esther 4:14

As we prepare for our Bi-Annual Meeting on November 19 let us consider this moment in time for us through the eyes of Esther.

Esther has been invited into *Kairos* time. Accepting the invitation, she declared a three-day fast (a time of prayer) and yielded to God's will, *"If I die, I die."* (4:16)

In 2020, Ministers Council issued a *Kairos* invitation to enter the Jubilee Year. Throughout the year, we have reflected together on God's time...

*... to proclaim good news to the poor,
... to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind,
... to let the oppressed go free*

... to proclaim the year of **trusting** God's kindness

As we enter the latter days of 2020, the *Kairos* invitation is expanded to consider Mordecai's words *FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS*. What do we learn from Queen Esther's response, as she undertakes

... a time of prayer and fasting
... a time of yielding my will
... a time of entering into God's will.

We are preparing for the series of encounters on this text, and for the conducting of business. We pray that we will perceive God's kairos invitation as an organization, and that we will plan well the ways to support you in doing likewise.

We hope you will join us for our Bi-Annual meeting on November 19, 2020 at 7:00 pm (eastern time). All are welcome. Chapter representatives and national leadership team members will vote on three business items on the agenda:

- Proposed Revision to the Covenant and Code of Ethics
- Proposed Budget for 2021
- Elections (Nominating Committee report posted after approved by Leadership Team 10/8/20)

Peace and all good,
Randy "RT" Miller
President, National Leadership Team

Covenant & Code of Ethics Revisions

Slated for November 19 Vote & Subsequent Ratification if Approved

The document provided [here](#) outlines present revisions proposed to our national Ministers Council Covenant and Code of Ethics. We've also provided a background to the timeline and scope of input into these text changes.

Changes in yellow are those originally proposed by subcommittee, and reflect consensus language after national input in 2019-2020. Changes in blue represent our responses to changes suggested in the Winter 2020 survey or input given by a number of Executive Ministers this summer.

The document as emailed to chapter officers on October 15, 2020 will be presented for an "up or down" vote by representatives on November 19, 2020. For more information contact subcommittee via office email at [**info@ministerscouncil.com**](mailto:info@ministerscouncil.com).

We urge chapters to schedule a special info session on this document during October, and are available to provide a presentation to serve those ends.

*We apologize that the September 24th webinar session on the Code of Ethics was cancelled due to a medical emergency and technical issues in hand-off. We are sorry for any inconvenience and are in process of rescheduling this session. Your chapter representatives will receive a report on October 15th at their regular meeting (email [**jamiratula@yahoo.com**](mailto:jamiratula@yahoo.com) for more information).*

Exploring Grant Station

Grant Station's extensive list of foundations and corporations that give grants in specific areas or for specific ministries is open to Grant Station's members year-round. National Ministers Council maintains a membership that can be tapped on your behalf by former President Dee Dee Turlington. If your church or non-profit is looking for grant help, email Dee Dee at [**darla.turlington@gmail.com**](mailto:darla.turlington@gmail.com). She will send you a short form that provides search criteria and then will conduct a search and send you a list of potential donors.

This fall there are deadlines coming up for:

- Organizations serving individuals and families impacted by COVID-19 in southern Arizona
 - Regional grant makers in Arizona, California and Nevada; Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont; and rural communities in Colorado, Hawaii, Minnesota, and Wyoming.
 - Nonprofit organizations in communities served by TD Bank or Santander Bank
 - Grant-makers with a special interest in:
 - o Criminal justice and communities impacted by incarceration
 - o Fellowships for Native Leaders
 - o Collaborative cross-culture exchange
 - o People with Disabilities leading transformational change
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Honoring Excellence in Ministry

As we enter the Autumn of 2020, the Ministers Council invites you to remember an American Baptist minister(s) who has been significant to you in the past or present. On our website, you will find an opportunity to write a brief tribute as you make a gift to honor him or her. Your tribute will be placed among those recognized and honored on our website. All gifts collected will be used to encourage ministry competence, collegiality, and centeredness through the Excellence in Ministry Fund (now available to active local chapters and to ABC regions without active MC chapters). Image from “New Kind of Preacher” © 2016 Northern Seminary. www.seminary.edu.

Updates Made to our "Sliding Scale" Dues Structure

With new statistics recently out on clergy compensation trends, we have updated the suggested dues structure for national dues (waived in their entirety during the 2020 Jubilee Year). Going forward, we will use the following chart for calculating national dues, and ask constituents to use this new information. Edits will be made to our website, and any dues paid after November 1 will be counted for your 2021 membership. (Local chapter dues vary, and you can find that info at www.ministerscouncil.com or from your local officers.)

Annual income of

> \$60,000
 \$25,000-\$59,999
 \$10,000-\$24,999
 <\$10,000

Should pay dues of

\$100
 \$50
 \$25
 \$10

**Changes were made in the 2 top tiers ONLY

Previous Dues Structure:**Member Income**

>\$55,000
 \$25,000-\$54,999
 \$10,000-\$24,999
 <\$10,000

Dues Pay

\$100
 \$50
 \$25
 \$10

Events and Webinars

Have you missed our recent MC Live webinars? Visit the archive [here](#).

Recent MC Live webinars:**Journeys for Justice:****Testimonies from International Ministries**

A Conversation with IM Colleagues

MC Webinar: Constructive use of Social Media

Hosted by Code of Ethics Subcommittee & Facebook Team

Thriving in Retirement

A Conversation with Revs. Douglas Harris and Carol McVetty



A Call to Prayer

Fires - material and spiritual - are ravaging our beloved communities. The weight of grief and loss is weighing upon so many of us. Social divisions may make healing entrenched injustices seem impossible. Adapting to new technologies and practices, however helpful, can also be overwhelming.

We know the burdens of ministry are great right now. A small number of us have begun imaging a regular time of prayer and support via Zoom. If you'd like to participate, or to help shape it, contact Rev. Dan Hopkins at missionsdan@hotmail.com.

Chapter News

CHAPLAINS & PASTORAL COUNSELORS

During Spiritual Care Week, the Chapter will host a conversation with Rev. Cheryl Dudley, Executive Minister of Metro New York, on the national week's theme "Collaborative Healthcare: Chaplains Complete the Picture." The session on October 28th at 7:30pm (Eastern) will explore mutual understanding of the roles of specialized ministries and executive ministers in serving collaboratively within and on behalf of the Body of Christ. For more information contact Chapter President Rev. Sarah Fogg, Ph.D. at sarahfogg4@gmail.com. To check out the chapter's latest newsletter,

visit www.ministerscouncil.com and link [here](#).

METRO CHICAGO -

Chapter leaders have nearly completed the revision of by-laws nearly 30 years old, and did so with national by-laws in mind for structure. A copy will be shared with other chapters as template.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA -

Member of this chapter and adjacent chapters (Central Pacific Coast and Evergreen) recently met with Rev. Jacki Belile and Rev. Dr. Shane Kinnison from the national Leadership Team for a two-part discussion on the present draft revisions of our national Code of Ethics. Themes included specific text changes in draft, as well as the overarching themes of Baptist polity and meaningful mechanisms of accountability.

VALLEY FORGE

Valley Forge Area Ministers Council recently hosted Rev. Brenda Moore, Pastor of Second Presbyterian Church of West Chester, PA and Family Resource Coordinator of Good Samaritan Services in Coatesville, who spoke on the topic: "Spiritual Care for Servant-Leaders Who Have Endured the Pandemic".

CODE OF ETHICS PRESENTATIONS

We urge all chapters to hold conversations on the proposed changes between now and November 12th. Members of the Subcommittee are available to review the process and proposed text changes.

Contact info@ministerscouncil.com for more information.

Staff Reflection

Are You Tired Yet?

A Word from Lisa

For all of us, 2020 has provided unique challenges. Many of these challenges have resulted in social, mental, and spiritual anxiety. The days seem to flow into each other, feeling being in a perpetual state of despair. We have been coping as best as we can through prayer (and some crying sprinkled in) and faith in our creator, our sustainer, our provider, our healer, our redeemer, our protector, and our comforter.



The mirages appear more and more real. We want to give up, but we keep holding on. We keep hoping that tomorrow will be a better day, the day that we have been praying for, the calm after the storm.

Just like the children of Israel at the rivers of Babylon, we will find ourselves weeping during the challenging moments, especially when we consider all that we have lost; however, we need to keep our focus on God, who still reigns supreme. Cast your cares and fears on him, lean not onto your own understanding and pray without ceasing. He will carry all those who are sick, tired, weary, and heavy-laden to the finish line so that they can complete the race.

Reflect on this scripture:

Psalm 61 verses 1 & 2: Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth, will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

ABC Announcements

The Executive Committee of the American Baptist Churches USA Board of General Ministries voted to hold a virtual Biennial Mission Summit in 2021 and to seek to hold an in person Biennial Mission Summit in Puerto Rico in 2023. Read a letter from the Executive Committee below.

[\(Click to read more\)](#)

Three American Baptist regions have announced a weekly Multi Region Race and Justice Forum beginning September 8, 2020. The forum will meet in the format of a Bible Study for Pastors and Church Leaders every Tuesday from September 8 through October 6 on Zoom. Each week the forum will begin with a session led by Dr. Derwin Gray, which will be followed by Breakout Room Discussions.

[\(Click to read more\)](#)

American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) is seeking American Baptist pastors to apply to its 2021 "In Support of Excellence" (ISOE) pastors financial-empowerment cohort to begin meeting in January 2021. The application deadline is Oct. 9, 2020.

[\(Click to read more\)](#)

Celebrate Care Week October 25-31

Spiritual Care Week/Pastoral Care Week is October 25-31, 2020. To learn more about this special week and to find resources go to:

<https://www.spiritualcareweek.org>

EVERGREEN -

Our chapter will have a pre-gathering session October 8th at 7pm, in conjunction with the Association's Annual Meeting featuring speakers Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Haggray, Rev. Dr. Doris Garcia-Rivera and Rev. Dr. Aidsand Wright-Riggins. Members of the national Ministers Council Sub-Committee on Code of Ethics Review will be available at the pre-gathering to discuss the Code of Ethics.

Reminders



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)

Stay connected

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