

Together in Ministry



Collegiality * Competence * Centeredness

March 2023 Newsletter



*God is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit
-Psalm 34:18*

From our friends at ABCUSA



Let's Talk about Mental Health - Center for Continuous Learning | ABHMS

Grief. Anxiety. Depression. Death by suicide. Acts of self-harm. Burnout. Fatigue. Join ministry colleagues on Thursdays during the Lenten season for a series of 5 webinars on topics related to mental health. Thursdays, 12:00-1:00 pm ET | 9:00-10:00 am PT We will hear from licensed mental health professionals and

Planning began in February for offerings of additional resources to and on behalf of Ministers Council. Watch for more sessions on Mental Health and Spiritual Health First Aid, as well as a workshop entitled "Moving from Crisis to Competent Community" with member Joe Gratzel (NJ). Additional ideas and volunteers have stepped forward and we will continue to make such resources a priority in tools like this newsletter and our website.

Mental Health Resources

- *ABHMS Applauds New Resources on Mental Health for Faith Leaders*, American Baptist Churches USA. <https://www.abc-usa.org/2015/07/abhms-applauds-new-resources-on-mental-health-for-faith-leaders/>
- *Making SPACE at the Well: Mental Health and the Church*, by Jessica Young Brown, Judson Press. <https://www.judsonpress.com/AdvancedSearch/DefaultWFilter.aspx?SearchTerm=Making+SPACE+at+the+Well>
- "Disability Ministries," American Baptist Home Mission Societies. <https://abhms.org/ministries/healing-communities/disability-ministry/>
- *Resources on Mental Health – Baptist Press*. <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/topic-index/mental-health/>
- "Facts & Trends: Mental Health and the Church," The Baptist Press. <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/mental-illness-headlines-stir-pastors-to-help/>
- "Clergy mental health is a choice between life and death," *Baptist News Global*. <https://baptistnews.com/article/clergy-mental-health-may-be-a-choice-between-life-and-death/>

[MORE](#)

A Pastoral Reflection from the President

Our congregation in Kansas observes the church calendar, so each year we celebrate several different seasons. There's the season of "Oh Shoot, How Did Advent Get Here So Soon?" in mid-November, the season of "Is Anyone Going to Show Up This Morning?" in the summer, and the season of "Schedule All the Church Meetings Around March Madness." We just finished

observing “The Great Inhale,” the 48 hours or so of downtime between the season of “Let’s Get Together After the First of the Year Obligatories” in January and early February and the “Forty Day Sprint of Lent.” As we run back and forth between the liturgical, civic, local, and personal calendars of our lives, the question that comes to mind is what does *centeredness* look like?



Psalm 46 tells us to “Be still and know that I am God.” A noble invitation, but I’ll admit that sometimes it feels like yet another thing to *do*. Several years ago, I read that the better translation of the Hebrew might be “cease striving and know that I am God,” and I found a new peace in the Scripture. Perhaps instead of the busyness and harried schedule that we often observe, even in this time of contemplative Lent, there is wisdom in the *ceasing of our striving*. My prayer for you, between the Lenten Bible study and the community Holy Week planning meeting, between your own personal Lenten devotionals and figuring out what to do with the leftover ashes from last week’s service, you might find a moment to cease striving. To inhale. To participate in a centering moment or two. To receive the peace of Christ with open hands.

Grace and peace,
Matt Sturtevant
President
Ministers Council ABCUSA

Events and Webinars

3rd thursdays 
WEBINAR SERIES

MARCH MC LIVE EVENT

Ministers Council Grant opportunities
for Chapters and Small Groups
with Lin Story-Bunce



3rd THURSDAY
MARCH 16th
at 8pm via Zoom

Lin Story-Bunce is the National Coordinator for TIM
Grants with the Ministers Council, ABCUSA.

Read Lin's article on these grants in [February Issue](#)

[Zoom Info Here](#)

How to Heal Our Divides

Dismantling walls, one brick at a time

Save the Date
April 20, 2023 MC Live



How to Heal Our Divides

Learn more about this organization and resources [HERE](#).

Join us for conversation with Brian Allain, editor of *How to Heal our Divides*, Vol. 1 and 2.

[Zoom Info Here](#)

**MINISTERS COUNCIL
GATHERING &
LUNCHEON**

AT THE
**BIENNIAL MISSION
SUMMIT**

**JUNE
22
2023**

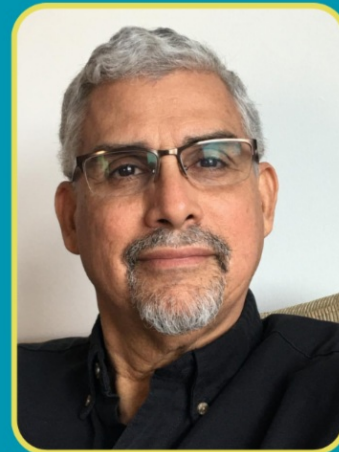
9:30 AM - 1:30 PM

\$35 includes
Program & Lunch



**COLLEGIALITY FOR
SUCH A TIME AS THIS**

Baptist Covenants for
Following Jesus and
Resisting Evil



**Feat. Rev. Juan Ángel
Gutiérrez Rodríguez**

American Baptist Minister and Author

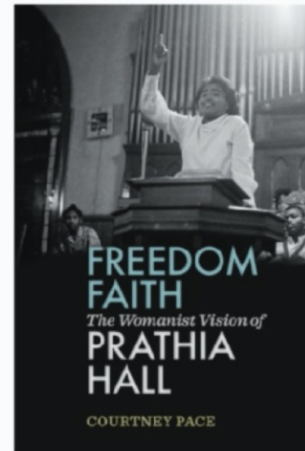
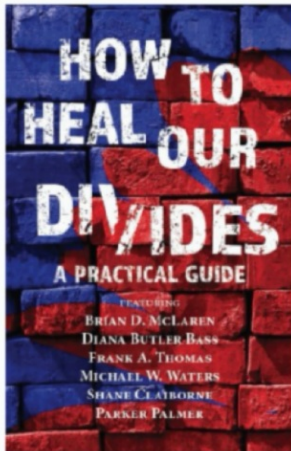
Worship | Reflections | Round Table Talk | Luncheon



REGISTER NOW!

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER

National Updates



EXTENDED FOR ONE WEEK ONLY!

The Ministers Council Leadership Team would like to announce a special gift for all who sign-up as members of the Ministers Council for 2023. For all who have already joined, and all new members who **join by March 10, 2023**, a book will be sent to you as a gift of appreciation. Click on book picture above to learn more. Just email a note to us at ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org to choose which of these timely titles you'd like. Note: *Freedom Faith: The Womanist Vision of Prathia Hall* was the focus of MC Live on Feb. 16th with author Dr. Courtney Pace; Brian Allain, editor of *Healing Our Divides*, will be with us on April 20th. Visit video archive at www.ministerscouncil.com to listen to previous sessions held on *Martin Luther King: Struggle and Resistance* by Rev. Dr. Juan Ángel Gutiérrez Rodríguez and Dr. Pace's book on Rev. Dr. Prathia Hall.

Office Hours: Linda Miller, our Interim Program Administrator, is on vacation in coming days, and there may be a slight delay in processing dues and other correspondence.

Search Process for Program Administrator: Watch for March updates on this process, and continue to support the transition in prayer!

Code of Ethics/Learning Guide (2023): Please review the new Covenant and Code of Ethics, effective 2/2/23 [HERE](#). Ensure your chapters and local ABCUSA regions are using this updated edition in all education and ordination processes. (Upon review of our Learning Guide by various focus groups, it will be released in the second quarter.)

Retreat Planning for Leadership Team: Your national Leadership Team will be on a visioning retreat May 1-3, 2023 in the Philadelphia area. We continue our tradition of recent years of seeking an affordable, ecumenical and renewing retreat center for this work. Contact us at ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org to share your prayers or feedback for our time together.

Biennial Mission Summit: We're planning for an incredible renewing and meaty time together on the morning of June 22, 2023. Please join us! Also, visit us at our booth in the exhibit hall. Want to volunteer to be a face of collegiality for the booth for a brief time? Contact us at ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org.

Prayers and Milestones

We continue to grieve with loved ones and honor the lives of these colleagues who have died recently: **Stacey Simpson Duke, Karen Sundland, David Van Brakle**. Karen and David's memorial services are today, March 4; Stacy's is tomorrow, March 5.

We share our condolences with all loved ones and colleagues upon the passing of [Dr. Margaret Zipse Kornfield](#) this winter. Celebration services were held in February.

For all our ministers as we journey during Lent and toward Easter celebrations. May the Gospel truly ground our presence in the wilderness with clients, patients, congregants, students and colleagues.

For all those affected in the short-term and long-term by the East Palestine, OH disaster, and for wise remediation and accountability efforts by faith leaders.

We hold Catherine Miller in prayer in her transition time, having left Hill Memorial Baptist in February, experiencing a sabbatical and then beginning at FBC Westwood in mid-April.

ABC Announcements

American Baptist Home Mission Societies

Continuing Education (CE) Applications -- Next Deadline: March 15th!

We encourage you to consider applying for funds for equipping and renewing gatherings, *INCLUDING THE BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT!* More info [HERE](#).



[Click here for more information](#)

Register



During Women's History month, ABWM curates a gathering every Monday during March. We hope you'll join us in celebrating Women's History Month!

[Click here for more information and to register.](#)

Camino de Santiago Pilgrimage | American Baptist Women in Ministry and Illuminated Journeys invite you to "The Way," a Walk/Ride Pilgrimage across the Camino de Santiago in Spain, April 9-19, 2024. [Read](#)

[more here.](#)

Reminders

We are committed to an exchange of chapter news, as well as announcements of personal and communal milestones and prayer requests. For inclusion in the April issue, send these to ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org by March 27.



How to reach us:

- Phone: (610) 314-7837
- Office Hours: Monday from 9:00 - 2:00 (EST) and Thursday from 1:00 - 5:00 (EST).



Stay connected

- Visit us at our **website**.
- Join us on **Facebook**

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