

*Together in Ministry*



## August 2023 Newsletter



### **For Such a Time at This**

We hold you in prayer in these weeks of late summer. We care about each and every one of you, whether we have met or not! We know you face a wide variety of seasons, landscapes and contexts of ministry. We know you have uniquely shaped and fitted gifts, and may be changing and evolving in expression of these or emerging new ones. We know you face unique hurdles and roadblocks, external and internal. We know you carry your unique regrets, guilt and temptations to fall short in your discipleship and ministry.

Still, God has called you FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS. Called us. The video shared below is a reprise of a touching video collage of our diverse ABC ministerial family. Jan Rizzo (our newsletter editor) and I created it in the Fall of 2020, with submissions shared by many colleagues and soundtrack by Ted Perlman. Take it in. Breathe. Sit back. Take it in again as you join a big nationwide prayer circle blessing one another. May the reality of our companionship and our commitment to serve faithfully rise like incense to the heavens and bless all the days ahead.

In Christ's Peace,  
Rev. Jacki Belile  
Coordinator, Membership and Chapter Development

[Video link](#)





## REFLECTION SERIES ON JEREMIAH 17 & RESILIENCE CONTINUES



*Let us remember that our roots “reach down to the water” and not “be stressed in time of drought” (Jer. 17:8).*

### Devotion from Rev. Sarah Strosahl-Kagi

#### Reflections on Jeremiah 17: 7-8

Just prior to sitting down to write this, I collected wet towels from around the church that had been strategically placed to catch the rain coming in from a storm yesterday. I am sure I am not the only minister who will be drying towels tonight, as heavy rains have recently hit many parts of our country. So as I reflect on Jeremiah’s words about trees remaining rooted through drought, I’m left to wonder what that means for the floods.



Too often in ministry, we operate out of a mindset of scarcity. The budget is in the red, our congregations are shrinking, we have to “compete” with other Sunday activities, etc. I get it- it is easy to fall into a scarcity mindset in our current reality.

What if, instead of seeing the drought around us, we felt the water soaking up into our roots? What if we didn’t see deficiencies, but focused on new opportunities for growth? What if the sparse foliage helped us witness the beauty between the branches?

Let us remember that our roots “reach down to the water” and not “be stressed in time of drought” (Jer. 17:8). Let us feel the water rising and nourishing us, putting on a mindset not of scarcity but of abundance, not of drought but of sufficiency.

God has provided for us; do we have the bravery to see that, or will we default to a worldview of scarcity?

# Events and Webinars



## 3rd thursdays **me live**

WEBINAR SERIES

**Bible Study on Jer. 17**  
**Thursday August 17**  
**5pm Pacific/7pm Central/8pm Eastern**

Join Rev. Dr. Charlotte Myers and others for a deep dive on trust, resilience, and flourishing.  
5pm Pacific/8pm Eastern

[ZOOM INFORMATION HERE](#)



## Staff Reflection

August is here, and many of the pastors, here in Philadelphia, typically take the month off for vacation. As a pastor myself, I understand the need to get away, so that we can return to our congregations revived, rejuvenated, and restored! Ironically, this morning, in an email I received from the Center for Continuing Education at Yale Divinity School, I learned August is National Wellness Month. I encourage you to take time out of your busy schedule this month, to take care of you, because you matter!

Know that the Ministers Council Leadership Team is praying for you, your families and congregations, with the blessed hope that God will take care of every need. Join me in reflecting on [The Romero Prayer](#) as you venture off this month to care for yourself!

Blessings!  
Reverend Dr. Valerie Andrews



**If you paid your 2023 Ministers Council dues** and did not receive a membership card and/or 2023 sticker, kindly email Valerie (MC Program Administrator) at: [ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org](mailto:ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org) with the following information:

Your full name  
Preferred mailing address  
City, state, and zip code  
Region  
Scanned/emailed copy of paid receipt  
Preferred contact number  
Your email address



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## Have you missed the opportunity to join for 2023?

**It's not too late!** We receive dues for the current calendar year through October 31, thereafter assigning to the next year (unless directed otherwise). Join our 3C's work today! You can conveniently pay online [HERE](#) or mail dues to your chapter treasurer. If there is not an active local chapter near you, please mark dues "National Only." Contact Valerie at [ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org](mailto:ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org) for more info.

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## Chapter News

### UPCOMING MEMBER/CHAPTER ORIENTATION SESSIONS

These small group "drop-in" sessions continue to bear good companionship and planning fruit! Are you new to the Ministers Council? Or, have you been disconnected for some time and want to reconnect? Do you serve in an area currently without an organized chapter? Are you trying to restart or revitalize one? We're here to help!

Join us for the next **National Members Session** (welcome to all whether or not you have a chapter):

#### **Wednesday, September 13**

11am Central Time OR 7pm Central Time

Join us for the next **Chapter Start/Restart/Revitalization Support Session:**

#### **Thursday, September 14**

11am Central Time OR 7pm Central Time

Join either Zoom Meeting by clicking

here: <https://ministrelife.zoom.us/j/2954166836>

Or call in by dialing: 1-312-626-6799 Meeting ID: 295 416 6836

Are these times not possible for you? Connect anyway!

Contact [ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org](mailto:ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org) to reach Valerie Andrews and Jacki Belile.

(Note: Jacki will be on sabbatical September 18-November 26 and hopes to connect with YOU before then:)

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### Chapter Representatives

As we continue to compile our best practices and share ideas, please complete this information. Any questions can be directed to Coordinator of Chapter Representatives Rev. Sarah Strosahl-Kagi, [mcchapterreps@gmail.com](mailto:mcchapterreps@gmail.com)  
<https://forms.gle/YJt8d7JNtzquvLvYA>

## Prayers and Milestones

**Rev. Dr. Darla "Dee Dee" Turlington.** Memorial service held at Hammock Community Church in Palm Coast, Florida on Saturday, July 29.

[View video of memorial service HERE](#)



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Prayers ascending for the 2023 **Parliament of World Religions**, which convenes in Chicago August 14-18.

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**As the new school year begins**, we offer prayers for teachers, professors, librarians, school administrators, staff, and all who support the education of young people.

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**God of restoration**, bring healing and wholeness to all who cry to you. Where pain is sharp, bring a sense of comfort and relief. Where grief runs deep, bring your tender mercy. Care for those on our hearts.

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#### **Prayers of Intercession**

For relief to all who are suffering from excessive heat and humidity;  
For natural lands and communities affected by wildfires;  
For people experiencing homelessness;  
For peace in Ukraine, Sudan, Haiti, Niger, Pakistan, and Colombia;  
For those near death and for those mourning the loss of a loved one;  
For safety and rest for those traveling for vacations and summer trips;  
Lord, hear our prayers.

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#### **Prayer for Rally Day**

Gracious God, We remember our role as learners and seekers of the faith. We give thanks for all those who support the teaching and learning that takes place through our congregations. Be with all — children, youth, and adults — who will be participating this year in our church school and formation groups. Bless our times of study so that we may grow in faith. Amen.

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## ABC Announcements

### ABHMS Announces Edwin T. Dahlberg Peace and Justice Award

American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) is pleased to announce that the **Rev. Dr. Michael Nabors**, pastor, Second Baptist Church, Evanston, Ill., and the **Rev. Dr. Michael Woolf**, pastor, Lake Street Church, Evanston, Ill., were awarded the Edwin T. Dahlberg Peace and Justice Award for outstanding work for peace and justice.

ABCUSA named the denomination's Peace and Justice Award for Edwin T. Dahlberg to honor his unflagging commitment to Christian discipleship. In 1964, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was the first recipient. The award was presented at the 2023 Biennial Mission Summit in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in June.



**Rev. Dr. Michael Nabors**



**Rev. Dr. Michael Woolf**

"In their pursuit of reparations and the restoration of the relationship of their two congregations, pastors Nabors and Woolf exemplify the pursuit of peace and justice that was the hallmark of the life and ministry of Edwin T. Dahlberg," said the Rev. Dr. Jamie Washam, president of ABHMS' board of directors.





For more information and to register click [HERE](#)

## Ecumenical Resources

### A CALL TO CONSCIENCE: Defending Freedom & Human Rights

AUGUST 14-18, 2023 | MCCORMICK PLACE



The 2023 Parliament of the World's Religions will be hosted in McCormick Place Lakeside Center, Chicago from August 14-18, 2023

Registrants enjoy access to all the plenary sessions, hundreds of breakout sessions, art & cultural exhibits, performances, a film festival, and countless opportunities to connect with individuals and organizations committed to justice, peace, and sustainability.

For more information and the register go to:

<https://parliamentofreligions.org/parliament/2023-chicago/>



This online event features Dr. Amy Adamczyk, Ph.D. the coauthor of *Handing Down the Faith: How Parents Pass Their Religion on to the Next Generation* (Oxford, 2021). Drawing on key findings from the book, she will discuss how parents view the role of congregations and how they feel that their own experiences growing up shaped their perspectives on childrearing and

religious socialization.

[More information](#)

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# 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 September issue, send these to [ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org](mailto:ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org) by August 27.*



**How to reach us:**

- Phone: (610) 314-7837
- Office Hours: Tuesdays from 9am - 1pm (EST), and Thursdays from 2:30pm - 6:30pm (EST).



**Stay connected**

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

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