

September 2023 Newsletter



The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. -Isaiah 40:8

We bless you,
God of Seed and Harvest
And we bless each other
That the beauty of this world
And the love that created it
Might be expressed through our lives
And be a blessing to others
Now and always

- Author Unknown

National Updates

Officers Elected for 2024-2025 Biennium

During the 2023 American Baptist Churches Biennial Mission Summit in San Juan, Puerto Rico, the following officers were elected to serve for the term running from January 1, 2024-December 31, 2025. The Rev. Nikita McCalister will serve as ABCUSA President; Thomas C. Ross., Jr. will serve as ABCUSA Vice President; and Paul Higgins will serve as ABCUSA Budget Review Officer.

President

Rev. Nikita G. McCalister was licensed and ordained into the Gospel ministry under the leadership of Rev. Dr. James C.



Perkins, pastor of the Greater Christ Baptist Church in Detroit, Mich. She received her bachelor of science degree from Central Michigan University (Mount Pleasant, Mich.), Master of Business Administration from the University of Detroit Mercy (Detroit, Mich.), and Master of Divinity from Boston University School of Theology (Boston, Mass.).

Vice President

Thomas C. Ross, Jr., is a member of Solid Rock Baptist Church in Brooklyn, N.Y. He is currently serving in his second term as a Board of General Ministries Director for American Baptist Churches USA, and serves on the ABCUSA Finance Committee and the Board of General Ministries Finance Committee and Action Group. He previously served on the ABCUSA Nominating Committee.



Budget Review Officer

Paul Higgins currently serves as ABCUSA Budget Review Officer. Paul is chief financial officer for Rainbow Acres, a residential ranch-style community for the developmentally disabled in Camp Verde, Ariz. Prior to joining Rainbow Acres in 2010 as vice president of Finance, he served as the vice president of Finance at the American Baptist Assembly/Green Lake Conference Center for thirteen years, where he also served as vice president of The Golf Courses of Lawsonia, Camp Grow Ministries, and Worldwide Gifts of Green Lake.

[Read Complete Officers' Bios](#)

Events and Webinars



SoulCare: integrating what we are, do, and experience.

Thursday, September 21

5pm Pacific/7pm Central/8pm Eastern

Led by Rev. Charley Scandlyn

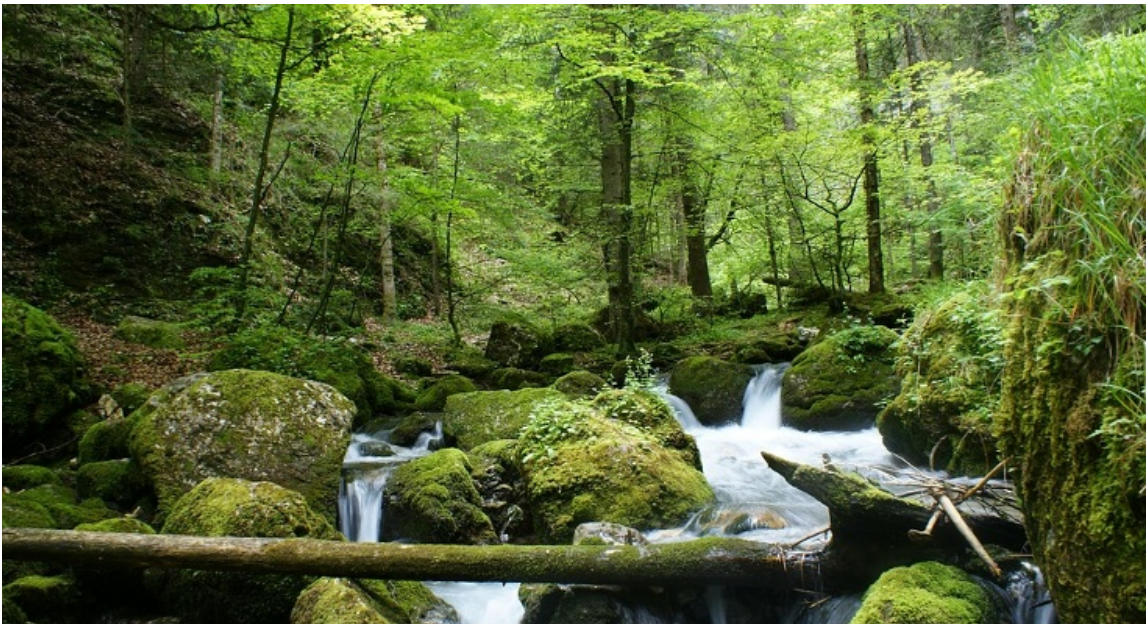


Pastor Charley Scandlyn has served in leadership at large and small churches and in non-profit organizations. He has launched two thriving organizations, the Ravenswood Education Foundation and New Community Church, Menlo Park, and has recently launched [New Again](#) ministry, which helps churches achieve sustainability by focusing on the soul of the leader, a discipleship culture, strategic planning, and sustainable systems.

Charley has a master’s degree in theology from Fuller Seminary and completed the LEAD innovation program at Stanford's Graduate School of Business. His bachelor's degree is in Business Administration from San Diego State University.

[ZOOM INFORMATION HERE](#)

Staff Reflection



**A REFLECTION ON
JEREMIAH 17:7-8**

Blessed are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.



During these hot summer months, transition seems to be the season for many of my colleagues, family, and friends. In most instances, these inflamed changes occurred without warnings, explanations, or valid reasoning.

Still further, the ability to trust the LORD has not been too easy. Some have indicated trust has been a challenge, particularly for those who have prayed consistently, because it appeared as if God had not spoken (or is not speaking). Have you ever found yourself in a situation as complex as this?

Perhaps you are entering transition, are in the midst of transitioning, or are coming out of transition. What do you do? The Prophet Jeremiah reminds us to place our trust in the LORD because we can trust the LORD in the seasons of

change. Like a planted tree thriving by the water, so too can we thrive by consuming God’s Holy Word! And while change may not always be comfortable, we can rest assured that when the temperatures of change arise, we know that 1) God is with us, and 2) the LORD will see to it that we are NOT devoured, but rather, we will continue to flourish!

Thought for the day: When we spend time feasting on the Word of God, we will blossom!

Reverend Dr. Valerie Andrews

Chapter News

Northern California Chapter

After conversations with many in our Chapter and guidance from our Minister’s Councils, we are launching a ***SoulCare™cohort to pilot a spiritual guide experience through our partnership with Forte***, an organization dedicated to well-being in the workplace through authentic human connections and Christ-centered practices. We plan to launch our cohort on October 1.

Blessings,
Charley Scandlyn

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 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:)

Prayers and Milestones

Prayers of Intercession

For areas threatened by tropical storms and hurricanes, and especially for recovery efforts following Hurricane Idalia and Typhoon Haikui.

For victims of gun violence, especially in Kansas City, MO; Memphis, TN; Birmingham, AL; McKeesport, PA; Silver Spring, MD

For areas of the United States facing extreme weather conditions: droughts, high temperatures, and flooding.



Happy
BIRTHDAY



To everyone born in
September!



ABC Announcements

Upcoming ABHMS Courses

[Practical Steps to Achieve Public Service Forgiveness](#)

Concerned about student loan payments? Join us for this LIVE webinar on the topic of student loan forgiveness. Hear from Kim Miller, a certified financial counselor and coach, about the latest related to eligibility and action steps for securing Public Service Loan Forgiveness.

Fri, Sept 15

12:00-1:15 pm ET / 9:00-10:15 am PT

Price: \$25 (*with a portion of proceeds to go toward the Scholarship Fund*)

ABNS: Call to Response for Those Affected by Hurricane Idalia

VALLEY FORGE, PA (8/31/23)—The American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) continues to pray for strength and protection for those affected by Hurricane Idalia, which made landfall August 30 along the Big

Bend area of Florida’s Gulf Coast as a high-end Category 3 storm driving record-breaking storm surge.

[READ MORE](#)

American Baptist
Women's
MINISTRIES

Shalom Retreat

October 6-8, 2023 Euclid, Ohio

Join us for fellowship, faith and well-being.


Register at www.abwomensministries.org/events
or call 610-768-2288 for more information

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

Ecumenical Resources

Yale
DIVINITY SCHOOL

Youth Ministry
Institute



Handing Down the Faith: Parents,
Congregations, and Religious
Socialization
with Dr. Amy Adamczyk, Ph.D.

Zoom | October 4th | 12 - 1:30 pm Eastern

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](#)

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 October issue, send these to ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org by September 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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