

# Ministers Council

## Chapter News

### Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors

CELEBRATING OUR 31ST YEAR OF  
PROVIDING A PROFESSIONAL  
COMMUNITY FOR CHAPLAINS AND  
PASTORAL COUNSELORS OF THE  
AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES, USA



## The President's Word– Sarah Fogg

Happy New Year!! May 2022 be much happier for all than the dreary years of 2021 and 2020. Covid fears filled us with lockdowns, social isolation, and the traumatic shift from shared spaces of church, school and work to small spaces of isolation! Thanks be to God for the technology of zoom for making it possible to see one another's faces and hear each other's voices across the country and different time zones. We discovered we can continue to use Zoom to connect and grow our chapter fellowship. That blessing was crucial for our chapter. We will continue to use zoom to connect and grow our chapter fellowship.

Our plans for 2022 include deepening our knowledge of and connection with one another. We've all heard how diverse we are as chap-

lains and pastoral counselors in our areas of ministry. Not only do we work in very different environments, but we minister to very varied individuals and groups. But could most of us explain what that actually means? To help us begin to say "yes" to that question, we will be bringing you samples of who we are, where we work, and whom we serve throughout 2022.

First off is pastoral counselor, Rev. Bruce Chaplin. He shares a religious and educational background, ongoing training, and work experiences with many of us and yet, has ended up ministering to a population about which most know very little. You'll be able to connect with him at our first webinar on Monday, February 28. Learn more about the webinar on page 3.



You should have already received our annual invitation to join our chapter again for this new year. If not, we've attached the application on page 9. Please fill it out, send in your dues, and help us get started on what we hope and pray will be a joyous year of surprises and ongoing connection and support. Feel free to invite other colleagues to join with you. May God bless and guide us all as we go forth to minister.

Sarah

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*"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life."*

Proverbs 4:23 NIV



## News of the Chapter Members

Joy Shared is Joy Doubled &

Shared is Sorrow Halved

Let us celebrate with you and stand by you in times of need. Send your celebrations, transitions and prayer concerns.....

Contact:

kpickler11234@gmail.com

### Celebrating

**Rev. Dr. Jeffery T. Garland** DMin EdS BCC-PCHAC

President - Association of Professional Chaplains

**Rev. John Simon** MDiv  
MTS BCC  
President-Elect -  
Association of Professional Chaplains

### New Positions

**Lee Axtell** A CAPT US-SOCOM MARSOC (USA)  
—transferred to Hawaii

**Rev. Jeffrey Hammer**  
to Avalon Hospice in  
Johnson City, TN

**Rev. Karen Pickler**—  
Per Diem Chaplain for  
Cone Health in Greensboro, NC



It begins at our feet  
This journey  
Of a thousand heartbeats  
Walked in ceremony  
Amidst the sound  
Of heaven's symphony  
As a soul  
Is rekindled  
And reawakened  
From its dormancy  
Back to this ancient of paths  
Where the world  
Becomes hushed in silence  
As a soul is reshaped  
And redrawn  
By the exhaled  
Breath of the Almighty

Jeremiah 6:16

This is what the LORD says:  
"Stand at the crossroads and  
look; ask for the ancient paths,  
ask where the good way is, and  
walk in it, and you will find rest  
for your souls

Songs of the Beloved poetry, art &  
insightful thoughts by Maria Egilsson

<https://www.facebook.com/songsoftheBeloved>

## News from the Executive Committee

\*Pastoral Counselor Brochure: Nat Milton and Sarah Fogg have been creating an informational brochure to highlight the important ministry of Pastoral Counselors. Pastoral Counselors have maintained a strong ministry to individuals and churches. Imagine having the support of a counselor that is clinically and

theologically trained.

\*A series of webinars will focus on the ministry of endorsees. The first webinar will feature The Rev. Bruce Chaplin. Details on the following page.

\*Lee Axtell represents the Chapter on the denomination's Professional Ministries Team. Their current project is ministry

credentialling.

\*Nat Milton and Karen Pickler provided a bereavement resource called *Grieving through the Holidays* to the Ministers Council and to the members of the Chapter last December.

## A Moral Obligation to Make the Internet Better

The digital revolution has fundamentally disrupted human life - and there is no going back. As I wrote in an op-ed today, religious people have a moral obligation to make the internet better. (See the article at, <https://ifyc.org/.../religious-communities-have-moral->)

So today, it is with great hope that I am launching #Interfaith: Engaging Religious Diversity Online - an interactive learning op-

portunity for religious, spiritual and ethical people to train up on how to leverage the internet for good - for more understanding, more appreciation, more cooperation. I've worked on it for the last year and a half with a team at Interfaith Youth Core, along with experts in the field of religion and tech. I hope you will take a look and consider any way you might help in getting the word out

there to others. We need each other - online and off. Thanks for being part of this personal celebration.

<https://www.learn.religionandpubliclife.org/cou.../rel-2130/>  
Paul Raushenbush



# Celebrating the Ministries of Endorsees

## Chapter Meetings to Tell the Story

### Rev. Bruce Chaplin to begin Series

On February 28th, you will have an opportunity to hear how one segment of our population, shunned by almost everyone, is offered hope and practical help from one of our very own. Rev. Bruce Chaplin, a certified sex offender treatment provider, will guide us through his world of correctional

counseling as a probation case manager and counselor. Bruce works at Correctional Counseling, a private firm that four Mississippi counties contract with for skills development in relapse prevention. What exactly does he do? What support, if any, does he receive from chaplains and pastoral counselors working in prisons and mental health or from local churches and pastors? Bruce's ex-

periences as a retired Air Force Chaplain, hospital chaplain, pastor, educator, and addictions counselor have given him a perspective we need to hear. Don't miss what promises to be a lively discussion and access to information and training you may find helpful in your own work environment.



### *An Evening with Rev. Bruce Chaplin*

**February 28, 2022  
7:30 pm EST.**

### **Zoom Information**

#### **Join Zoom Meeting**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88030651575?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88030651575?pwd=dG5iVmR0UWVzMGdDMC9qeTJlMzZiUT09)  
pwd=dG5iVmR0UWVzMGdDMC9  
qeTJlMzZiUT09

Meeting ID: 880 3065 1575  
Passcode: 679536

One tap mobile  
+16465588656,,88030651575#,,,\*,  
679536# US (New York)  
+13126266799,,88030651575#,,,\*,  
679536# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location  
+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)  
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)  
+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington  
DC)  
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)  
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)  
+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88030651575>

### **An Evening with Bruce Chaplin—The Agenda**

Brief general introduction--

How Bruce's spiritual and professional training led him to becoming a certified sex offender treatment provider and his current ministry in Jackson, MS.

What all addictions have in common.  
What is different about sexual addiction?  
The challenges facing sex offenders.  
Who are they?

What is the treatment offered? (What must they learn/unlearn?)  
What support do they get from their families, friends, and co-workers?  
From society and help groups?  
From church people and professional ministry types (chaplains, pastoral counselors, etc.)?

#### **Brief listing of recommended resources:**

##### **Movies**

28 Days (Sandra Bullock)  
The Lost Weekend (Ray Milland)  
The Man with the Golden Arm (Frank Sinatra)  
When Love is Not Enough (How Al Anon started)

**Videos—** My Name is Bill W.

##### **Books**

Mark Laaser. Healing the wounds of sexual addiction (chapter 11)  
Patrick Cravens—any of his books  
Material from American Association of Christian Counselors





*Rev. Petra van de Water is endorsed by ABHMS and serves on the Executive Committee of the Chapter. She is a chaplain at Lucile Packard Stanford Children's Hospital. Petra is pursuing a D.Min. in Spiritual Direction at Fuller Theological Seminary.*

## Shalom in the Midst of Suffering

My name is Petra. Today I was present with tearful parents feeling helpless and powerless in the face of their child's unexpected life-threatening condition. We shared a sacred space being, feeling, and praying together. I touched the mom's shoulder and said, "I feel you. I've been there." It's all I needed to say. The mom let her tears flow as she shared her fears and doubts. I was the same way when our teen-age son, now a grown man, had cancer. Years later, I still remember how helpless, powerless, and devastated my husband and I felt.

As a former hospice chaplain, I ministered to many adults at the end of their lives. Their suffering, deaths, and family's grief were heartbreaking. But a child's suffering seems so wrong, so senseless. When parents try to make sense of the senseless and ask, "Why, God?" I cannot give an answer. But I can be with them in the flood of emotion and help find solid ground, remembering God's promise in Isaiah 43:2: When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the river, they shall not overwhelm you.

A chronically ill teenage patient once said to me, "The doctor explained my illness and its prognosis. I have talked long and often with God about missing out on life and why I have such immense pain. God is with

me. I am not afraid anymore."

The teenager had found God's shalom, that inner peace and sense of wholeness coming from God in the midst of trouble and suffering. Jesus says in John 14:27, "Shalom I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Don't let your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Shalom is the fulness of God's presence in our life circumstances. When we turn to God in our pain and suffering, God draws near. We can pour out our laments before God. It engages God in our pain and trouble. Therefore, I encourage parents to honestly share in prayer with God their grief, fears, doubts, anger, guilt, and shame. I practice honesty when I say I don't have an answer to, "Why does an all-powerful, all-knowing God let my child suffer or die?" I invite them to acknowledge and express their questions and doubts to God through lament. Sometimes it brings relief.

We have access to God who loves, listens, and walks with us. God is with grieving parents, with a teenager silently suffering from an eating disorder, and with a toddler with a tumor. God is also present with and through amazing, dedicated healthcare workers, caring 24/7 for these chil-

dren. God is present with and through me as I pray with parents, listen at a teenager's bedside, or bless a preemie with heart failure.

During my son's hospitalization years ago, a chaplain was instrumental in bringing God's presence and peace when we needed it. Her words didn't change our situation, but God's enveloping shalom gave us peace and comfort beyond words. It even inspired me to become a chaplain.

How Jesus was with children, bringing healing, wholeness, and even laughter, guides my work with children and their families. Like he did, I show up and do all I can to connect them with God's peace and presence, the essence of Shalom.

"Now, may the Lord of shalom himself give you shalom and in all ways. The Lord be with all of you." (1 Thessalonians 3:16)





## Elsewhere.....within the ABCUSA

### From American Baptist Women Ministries

Shine the Light Award  
Nominate an American Baptist woman or group who is an outstanding light-bearer.

Through the "Shine the Light" award, American Baptist Women's Ministries is recognizing American Baptist women who are finding creative ways to spread the light of Christ through their congregation, their community, or the world.

The Shine the Light Award celebrates those women who develop new partnerships (collaboration), find new and different ways to be Christ's hands and feet (creativity), develop new means of outreach and spreading God's word (communication), and serve God's people (commission).

Submit your nomination for the 2022 Shine the Light Award by January 31, 2022. For criteria, a downloadable PDF brochure, and nomination forms (downloadable or online submission), visit [www.abwomensministries.org/shinethelight](http://www.abwomensministries.org/shinethelight).



Save the Date Radical.  
Redeemed. Ready.  
June 15-18, 2022

From the pioneering women of long ago to the trail-blazing leaders of today and all women who have re-

sponded to the call of God along the way, the movement of women into ministry has involved the whole family of faith from all across American Baptist Churches USA. With women serving in a multitude of ways and a variety of roles throughout the United States and around the world, American Baptist Women in Ministry (ABWIM) is hosting a unique conference: Radical. Redeemed. Ready. The conference will feature a number of unique workshop opportunities, inspiring conference leaders, creative worship, and multiple ways to connect while experiencing innovative approaches to ministry.

We continue to monitor the situation regarding Covid-19, but as of now are moving forward with plans for an in-person event with registration opening in February.

Visit [www.radicalredeemedready.com](http://www.radicalredeemedready.com) for more information.



SPACE FOR GRACE  
2022

Join American Baptist Home Mission Societies at Space for Grace

The 2022 Space for Grace theme—Testify!—speaks to the need in these times for diverse voices sharing genuine, honest dialogue about issues of Christian leadership, discipleship and justice.

American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) is sensitive to the uncertainties in the world at this time. That is why, as we continue

to plan for our flagship national event, Space for Grace, we do so prayerfully and with you in mind. When planning began, we could not have foreseen what would transpire with COVID-19's Omicron variant.

We remain optimistic, however, that uncertainty will turn to certainty and that the 2022 Space for Grace: "Testify!" will be held in person Sept. 21-23 at the beautiful Westin Kansas City (Mo.) at Crown Center. The event will be preceded by the Spiritual Caregivers Conference for chaplains, pastoral counselors, spiritual directors and specialized ministers, Sept. 19-20.

With our assurance that your personal health and well-being are of utmost importance, and that we will uphold public health and safety protocols for in-person gatherings, we ask you to make plans to join us for this exciting event. Testify! will offer:

A place and space for you to both speak and hear God's good news;

Enriching learning experiences that focus on Leadership Empowerment, Discipleship, and Healing and Transforming Communities;

Inspiring speakers that include the Rev. Amy Butler, Dr. Eddie Glaude, Dr. Neichelle Guidry, Kathy Khang, Dr. Miguel De La Torre and Dr. Judy Fentress Williams. (The Spiritual Caregivers event will feature Dr. Trace Haythorn and Lt. Col. Ruth Segres.)

To learn more and to register for updates that will keep you apprised of the gathering's progress, visit: [abhms.org/spaceforgrace2022](http://abhms.org/spaceforgrace2022)



## Installing Love = A Humorous Reflection

Tech Support REP : How can I help you today?

CUSTOMER: Well, after much consideration, I've decided to install love. Can you guide me through the process?

REP: Yes, I can help you. Are you ready to proceed?

CUSTOMER: Well, I'm, not very technical, but I think I'm ready to install now. What do I do first?

REP: The first step is to open your HEART. Have you located your HEART?

CUSTOMER: Yes, I have, but there are several other programs running right now. Is it ok to install while they are running?

REP: What programs are running?

CUSTOMER: Let's see I have PAST -HURT.EXE, LOW -ESTEEM.EXE, GRUDGE.EXE and RESENTMENT.COM running right now.

REP: No problem, Love will gradually erase PAST-HURT.EXE from your current operating system. It may remain in your permanent memory, but it will no longer disrupt other programs. LOVE will eventually overwrite LOW-ESTEEM.EXE with a module of its own called HIGH ESTEEM.EXE. However, you have to completely

turn off GRUDGE .EXE and RESENTMENT .COM. Those programs prevent love from being properly installed. Can you turn them off?

CUSTOMER: I don't know how to turn them off, Can you tell me how?

REP: My pleasure. GO to your START MENU and invoke FORGIVENESS.EXE. Do this as many times as necessary until GRUDGE.EXE and RESENTMENT .COM have become completely erased.

CUSTOMER: Okay, done. LOVE Has started installing itself automatically. Is that normal?

REP: Yes. You should receive a message that says it will reinstall for the life of your HEART. Do you see that message?

CUSTOMER: Yes I do, Is it completely installed?

REP: Yes, but remember that you have only the base program. You need to begin connecting to other HEARTS in order to get the upgrades.

CUSTOMER: Ooops. I have an error message already. What should I do?

REP: What does it say?

CUSTOMER: It says ERROR 412- PROGRAM NOT RUN ON INTERNAL COMPONENTS".

What does that mean?

REP Don't worry, that's a common problem. It means that the LOVE program is set up to run on external HEARTS but has not yet been run on your HEART. It is one of those complicated programming things, but in non-technical terms, it means you to LOVE your own HEART before it can LOVE others.

CUSTOMER: So what should I do?

REP: Can you pull down the directory called SELF-ACCEPTANCE?

CUSTOMER: Thank you!

REP: You're welcome. Click on the following files and then copy them to the MYHEART directory. FORGIVE SELF.Doc, REALZEWORTH.TXT and ACKNOWLEDGELIMITATIONS.DOC. The system will overwrite any conflicting files and begin patching any faulty program. Also, you need to delete VERBOSE -SELF CRITIC.EXE from all directories, and then empty your recycle bin afterward to make sure it is completely gone and never comes back,

CUSTOMER: Got it. Hey! MY HEART is filling up with new files. SMILE.MPG is playing on my monitor right now and it shows that PEACE.EXE and CONTENTMENT.COM are copying themselves all over my HEART. Is this normal?

REP Sometimes. For others it takes awhile but eventually everything gets downloaded at the proper times. So

LOVE is installed and running. You should be able to handle it from here. One more thing before I go.

CUSTOMER: Yes?

REP: LOVE is freeware. Be sure to give it and its various modules to everybody you meet. They will in turn share it with other people and they will return some similarly cool modules back to you.

CUSTOMER: Thanks! What is your Name?

REP: You can call me the Divine Cardiologist.

*One of the deepest longings in the human heart is the desire to be loved for yourself alone. This longing awakens you completely. When you are touched by love, it reaches down into your deepest fiber. John O'Donohue*



*The roots of love sink down and deep and strike out far and they are arteries that feed our lives, we must see that they get the water and sun they need so they can nourish us. Marie Shain.*





## A Blessing for the New Year



May your inner vision be transformed so that you can see more clearly your own journey with all humankind as a journey of peace, hope and bondedness.

May your Holy One be someone you can lean on in your weak or painful moments.

May you know the Holy One as your rock, your shelter, your strength, your wing of comfort and support.

May you be aware of all the places your feet carry you in the New Year.  
May you know, "How

beautiful are the feet of the messenger of Good news."

May you not be afraid of the questions that press upon your mind and heart. May you welcome the questions and wait patiently for the day when they will have their answers.

May you be the one with welcome in your smile and hello etched upon your hand, the hand you extend to everyone who blesses you with presence.

May the wellsprings of compassion flow deep within you until you can taste the tears of your brothers and sisters.

May you awake each

morning with thank you on your lips and in your heart, recognizing that all is gift, that all is blessing.

May your friendship with the Holy One be strong and healthy. May that love be both a comfort and a challenge as you struggle to find your way in the new year.

May your spirit be open and perceptive in discovering the will of the Holy One for you. May your prayer be that of wisdom, guidance and a deeper understanding of God's way for you.

May your life this new year be a living legacy to the Holy One.

Joyce Rupp

*"Not for my safe return,  
that wouldn't be fair. Just  
pray that I shall do my  
duty...never be a coward...  
and have the strength,  
courage and  
understanding of men.  
Just pray that I shall be  
adequate."*

*Prayer of Chaplain Poling  
The Four Chaplains  
USS Dorchester  
February 3, 1943*

## Look Upon Them as Wounded

After vaccinating a young boy with an injection in the arm, a doctor wanted to stick on a bandage. "Please put it on the other arm," the boy pleaded.

"Why do that?" the doctor asked. "This will let everyone know you have been vaccinated and they won't hit your sore arm."

"Please put it on my other arm! Please!" the boy begged. "You don't know the kids at my school." The boy did and wasn't about to let them

at his arm.

Adults, too, are pretty good at hiding pain. Not usually physical pain, but the kind of pain that's

harder to see. They like to appear as if they are in control; they can handle whatever life throws them; they're on top of it. And, too often, they end up going it alone. No one understands. No one

is there to help.

Susan Muto, in her book *Blessings That Make Us*



Be, tells a story of a great ruler who needed a second-in-command to help manage his kingdom. When he finally selected the right person, he took him outside onto a balcony of the palace where they could gaze over all the lands under his jurisdiction. His assistant asked the king, "Master, what must I remember most of all if I am to carry out your wishes?"

"My son," the king replied, "there is only one directive to follow – and that is to look upon the

people as wounded."

The wise king knew that everyone is in pain in some way. Wounds may not show, but they are there.

Discover where people hurt and you can reach them. Learn where the invisible bandages are and you'll know how to help them. How to heal them.

Look upon them as wounded – and you'll know what to do.

-- Steve Goodier

## Celebrating Awareness, Faith & the Seasons of Our Lives



<b>January 2022</b>	Thyroid Awareness Month National Glaucoma Awareness Month National Birth Defects Prevention Month National Mentoring Month Cervical Health Awareness Month Stalking Awareness Month Radon Awareness Month National Blood Donor Month
1	New Year's Day
6	Feast of the Epiphany
11	Human Trafficking Awareness
17	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
27	Commemoration of Holocaust Victims
<b>February 2022</b>	American Heart Month Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) / Low Vision Awareness Month Black History Month International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month National Cancer Prevention Month National Children's Dental Health Month Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month
1	Chinese New Year—Year of the OX
3	Four Chaplains Day
4	USO Birthday
19	Coast Guard Reserve Birthday
21	President's Day



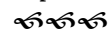
*Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend.*



*A man dies when he refuses to stand up for that which is right. A man dies when he refuses to stand up for justice. A man dies when he refuses to take a stand for that which is true.*



*There can be no deep disappointment where there is not deep love.*



*All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.*

*Martin Luther King Jr.*





## Membership Application for Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors Ministers Council

Please complete the information sheet below to join our chapter or if you paid online at the Ministers Council Website. The information helps us know how we might serve you better.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ ABHMS Endorsement Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Ministry: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Expertise: (lecture, workshop, etc, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### National Ministers Council Dues\*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00

Annual Income of	National Dues
>\$60,000.00	\$100.00
\$25,000 - \$59,999	50.00
\$10,000 - \$24, 999	25.00
<\$10,000.00	10.00

### 2) Chaplains and Pastoral Counselor Chapter Dues

\$ \_\_\_\_ 25.00

### 3) Total Dues to be Submitted: Make Checks Payable to Ministers Council

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00

### Send Dues and Membership Application to:

Rev. Sarah Fogg,  
17301 Four Seasons Dr, Dumfries, VA 22025.

Once your check and information are processed, you will receive a membership card and/or this year's sticker for your permanent membership card from the national office.

Have Questions?  
Contact Sarah Fogg at [sarahfogg4@gmail.com](mailto:sarahfogg4@gmail.com)



CHAPLAINS AND  
PASTORAL  
COUNSELORS  
MINISTERS COUNCIL

Sarah Fogg -President  
Lee Axtell-Sec/Treasurer  
Members at Large  
Rick Barnes  
Nat Milton  
Petra van de Water  
&  
Karen Pickler- Past President,  
Publicity

## Self Care for Such a Time as This

We are chaplains and pastoral counselors trained and committed to serve Jesus Christ through ministry to others in need of healing and hope. And yet, we are too often tempted to take care of others and skimp on self-care. Preaching to others

the need to balance body, mind, and spirit is easy. Practicing it ourselves is hard. Look back over the previous week. How did you minister to others each day? What self-care, done each day, would

have enriched your ministry to others? Likewise, if we as individuals practice self care that includes all facets of our health, we will be better stewards of our gift of life.

## 7 Days of Self-Care

### #SelfcareSunday



Create your **self-care checklist** for the week

### #MindfulMonday



Know your **blood pressure numbers** and other heart stats

### #TastyTuesday



Try a **tasty, heart-healthy recipe**

### #WellnessWednesday



Put your **heart** into your wellness routine

### #TreatYourselfThursday



Treat your heart to some **relaxation and fun**

### #FollowFriday



**Share who inspires you** to show your heart more love

### #SelfieSaturday



Post about your favorite way to take care of **your heart**



**#OurHearts**

### *God is Present -Howard W. Thurman*

God is present with me this day. God is present with me in the midst of my anxieties. I affirm in my own heart and mind the reality of God's presence. God makes immediately available to me the strength of Divine goodness, the reassurance of Divine wisdom and the heartiness of Divine courage. My anxieties are real; they are the result of a wide variety of experiences, some of which I understand, some of which I do not understand. One thing I know concerning my anxieties: they are real to me. Sometimes they seem more real than the presence of God. When this happens, they dominate my mood and possess my thoughts. The presence of God does not always deliver me from anxiety but it always delivers me from anxieties. Little by little, I am beginning to understand that deliverance from anxiety means fundamental growth in spiritual character and awareness. It becomes a quality of being, emerging from deep within, giving to all the dimensions of experience a vast immunity against being anxious. A ground of calm underlines experiences whatever may be the tempestuous character of events. This calm is the manifestation in life of the active, dynamic Presence of God. God is present with me this day.