



Ministers Council Newsletter

Rev. Dr. Debora Jackson, Executive Director

May 2015



From the Desk of the Executive Director

I had the privilege of participating in the “Ask Me about Hope” Convening for Walker, an organization and school that supports children and teens with emotional, behavioral, and learning disabilities. One of

the primary objectives of the day was to connect the concept of hope to an understanding of resilience, focusing on self-awareness as a means of strengthening our relationships with those with whom we work and support. As we started our day, we were greeted by quotes that spoke of hope. One that jogged my memory was a quote by Stephen King: *Hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things. And remember no good thing ever dies.* You might remember that from the movie *Shawshank Redemption*. A quote that stayed with me for the day came from the French novelist Collette who said, *Hope costs nothing.* What a powerful motivator to remember. I heard one clinician speak passionately about the hope that she drew from Isaiah 9:7 “His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.” It is encouraging to know that there are people in secular industry who do not check their faith at the door when they arrive at work.

As we examined our own capacity to be hopeful, we were led to connect that hope to resilience. The International Resilience Project defined resilience as “a universal capacity which allows a person, group, or community to prevent, minimize or overcome the damaging effects of adversity.” Many of the children and youth at Walker have undergone heartbreaking and traumatic tragedy in their lives. We reviewed the case of a little girl who at age 8 had been removed from her home because of issues of abuse and neglect. Because she had witnessed domestic violence and substance abuse in the home, she was now acting out in aggressive ways. We heard of an 11-year-old boy who’s self-destructive and self-injurious behaviors made it impossible for him to remain at home. We heard of a 5-year-old girl with worsening aggression to the point that she threatened to kill her 9-year-old foster sister. How do you instill hope and resiliency in these children? It has to begin with self.

While I was fully present and participating in the convening, I could not help but think of clergy colleagues. We have a tremendous need for hope and resiliency. Sometimes ministry is like a dull, steady, wearing away. Can you remember how hopeful you were when you first started ministry? I don’t know about you, but I was certain that I was going to save the church, as it were. We would launch new ministries, do new things, and reconnect in the community. And given our efforts, I just knew that the church would experience resurgence. We would grow, we would flourish, and all would celebrate the Lord together. Well... That’s not exactly what happened. Oh sure we did these things, or at least attempted to. But I had the naysayers who complained that “We did that before and it didn’t work.” There was a similar

chorus of those who said, “We’ve never done it that way before.” There were those who came for the initial novelty – a movie night, a special supper, a new class. But then after the novelty wore off they dwindled away. There was the leadership, some of whom complained of fatigue, expecting that others would step up and shoulder the load. As result of these complaints, there were too few hands responding to too many demands. At times ministry was like dragging the Queen Mary over dry land. Anybody know what I’m talking about?

But it is resilience that keeps us coming back. There is a divine unction that drives us and reminds us that we have to keep going. Even when people don’t respond we keep going. When ministry is hard, we keep going. When congregations and colleagues are not supportive, we keep going. Behaviorists would say that it’s an adaptive response that gives us the capacity to cope with adversity. For me, it’s more than that.

We were asked in the convening to develop a six-word definition of resilience. We were shown a cartoon picture of two bees flying. One bee had a smile on its face, the other had a frown. The smiling bee was focusing on “yummy flowers” in the distance. The frowning bee was focused on the rain that was coming their way. The storms of life will rage. How we deal with them makes all the difference.

What was my six-word definition? *Weathering Rain, courageously, continually, with capacity.* That for me is the definition of resilience and it is rooted in my faith. My favorite passage of hope comes from Jeremiah 29:11: *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, plans to give you a future with hope.* We can be resilient because we have hope in the Lord. The latter is greater and better than the former, so we can keep going. We can keep doing. We can weather the rain continually with courage and capacity. We can be resilient because we have more than hope. We have the promise of God that says the best is yet to come. Continue in ministry, my dear colleague. Continue with hope and resilience.



Save the Date!

Mark Your Calendars

**Ministers Council
Giving Day**

Coming May 20, 2015

ABCUSA Joins in Calls for Justice, End to Violence in Baltimore

American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA) joins with the National Council of Churches (NCC), the churches of Baltimore and many others in calling for justice and an end to violence.

ABCUSA again highlights a statement made on March 13, 2015, from the Executive Committee of the Board of General Ministries of American Baptist Churches USA, which celebrates the role of American Baptists in the Civil Rights Movement and affirms that all lives matter. Learn more here: <http://www.abc-usa.org/2015/04/29/abcusa-joins-in-calls-for-justice-end-to-violence-in-baltimore/>

2015 Hampton University Ministers Conference

All ABC persons planning to attend the 2015 Hampton University Ministers Conference in Hampton, Virginia, should consider attending the annual ABCUSA Reception on the evening of Wednesday, June 10! Learn more here: <http://www.abc-usa.org/2015/04/13/two-months-remain-until-hampton-university-ministers-conference-abc-reception/>

Biennial Mission Summit – Register Today!

Make sure to submit your Individual Registration forms for Mission Summit 2015! Individuals may visit www.americanbaptists2015.com for additional details, a schedule at a glance, or to register online or to download a PDF registration form. Make your plans today to attend the event this June 26-28, 2015, in Overland Park, Kansas.

In this 10th anniversary year of hurricanes Katrina and Rita's destruction of the Gulf Coast, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) presents "[Passionaries Serving in New Orleans](#)," a series about the volunteers and residents who have been faithfully rebuilding New Orleans' Lower 9th Ward through "Home Mission: 'Til the Work is Done."
Passionaries Serving in New Orleans: Shiloh Baptist Church, Wilmington, Del.

Mission outreach to New Orleans' Lower 9th Ward is an intergenerational effort at Shiloh Baptist Church, Wilmington, Del. For the past two years, parishioners ranging in age from 12 to 65 have served during American Baptist Home Mission Societies' "Home Mission: 'Til the Work is Done." And they'll do it all again this August.

Junior usher Jordan Duckett, 14, feels strongly about returning to the Gulf Coast to help with restoration of all kinds—from buildings to human beings.

"I feel it's important," she says, "because I can help others get their lives and houses back together." Stressing that Jesus should be honored not only in word but also in deed, 65-year-old Zakiya Minkah says that she has served by cutting grass, painting home exteriors, weeding gardens and performing clerical duties.

"We are to help take care of God's people. So, it's my desire to serve where there's a need," she says. "I can see the progress in New Orleans, and I want to continue for as long as there is a need."

Indeed, the need remains, 10 years after the hurricanes wrought havoc in New Orleans. And American Baptists, like those at Shiloh, will continue to return to the Lower 9th Ward for as long as it takes to achieve full restoration.

"The needs in New Orleans were still great, although the cameras and news agencies were gone," says Percival ("Percy") McNeil, deacon and leader of Shiloh's Missions Outreach Ministry. "God has blessed us to be a blessing whenever and wherever we are made aware of a need. We were made aware of the needs of the people in New Orleans and decided to be a blessing to the people there."

Additional information about and registration for “Home Mission: [’Til the Work is Done](#)” and [other volunteer mission opportunities](#) are available online or by contacting Victoria Goff, ABHMS national coordinator, Volunteer Ministries, at victoria.goff@abhms.org, 1-800-222-3872, x2449, or 610-768-2449.

American Baptist Women’s Ministries Invites Women to 2015 Women’s Day

American Baptist Women’s Ministries invites all women to attend the 2015 Women’s Day, “See . . .,” on Friday, June 26th, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at the Overland Park Convention Center in Overland Park, Kansas, immediately preceding the Mission Summit of American Baptist Churches USA. Women’s Day features interactive Bible study led by Rev. Tamara R. Davis, “Sacred Safe Spaces” Special Project Coordinator for the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey, an initiative to aid congregations in serving as safe spaces for those who have suffered physical, sexual, and other forms of abuse. Special guest speakers are Emilie Rodriguez, convenor of the national leadership team of AB GIRLS and member of the First Mexican Baptist Church of San Diego, and Jennifer Leneus, coordinator of Young Adult Women’s Ministries with AB Women’s Ministries, and member of the Haitian Baptist Church at the Crossroads in Newark, New Jersey. Worship leader is Hornrette Washington, Minister of Music Emeritus at the Antioch Baptist Church of Corona, New York.

Highlights of Women’s Day will include a celebration of the 100th anniversary of American Baptist ministry with girls and the launch of the 65th anniversary celebration of American Baptist Women’s Ministries, to be concluded at the national women’s conference in 2016. Members of the G.I.R.L.S. Leadership Academy, sponsored by American Baptist Women’s Ministries, will also participate in Women’s Day. For more information about Women’s Day, visit www.abwministries.org.

Registration is \$50, including program and hot luncheon. Tickets for Women’s Day may be purchased American Baptist Churches USA Mission Summit registration at www.americanbaptists2015.org. The last day to register online is June 12, 2015.

American Baptist Women’s Ministries Announces G.I.R.L.S. Leadership Academy June 25-29

American Baptist Women’s Ministries announces the first G.I.R.L.S. Leadership Academy, for girls who have completed 6th grade through seniors in high school. G.I.R.L.S. Leadership Academy will be held at the Chase Suites Hotel in Overland Park, Kansas, June 25-29, 2015, concurrent with the Mission Summit of American Baptist Churches USA.

The G.I.R.L.S. Leadership Academy offers girls and young women the opportunity to discover and develop their giftedness by God to leadership. Through Bible study, seminars, and workshops, they will explore issues of multiculturalism; expand their skills in the practice of prayer as well as writing and public speaking for advocacy; and explore ministerial vocations. Attendees of the G.I.R.L.S. Leadership Academy will also participate in Women’s Day (American Baptist Women’s Ministries) and portions of the ABCUSA Mission Summit.

Keynote speakers are Jasmine Turner, senior broadcast journalism major at Elon University in Elon, North Carolina, and former convenor of the national leadership team of AB GIRLS; and Mary Burnett, a freshman at Kalamazoo College in Kalamazoo, Michigan, as an Arcus Center for Social Justice Leadership Scholar, and also a former convenor of the national leadership team of AB GIRLS. Music will be led by Hornrette Washington, Minister of Music Emeritus at the Antioch Baptist Church of Corona, New York.

For more information, including a schedule overview, information about housing and meals, and registration, visit www.abwministries.org/gathering. Register by May 15 for the best rates; final registration deadline is June 8.

Time is Winding Down. Sign Up for the Ministers Council Retreat!



Registration for Mission Summit and Ministers Council events will be closing soon. Hotel space is filling up. Have you registered for the The Ministers Council Let Go, Behold, Sing Retreat? If not, what are you waiting for?

Join clergy colleagues as we are treated to a time of restoration and renewal. [Rev. Dr. Heather Entrekin](#), Des Peres Associate Professor of Congregational Health at Central Baptist Theological Seminary, will lead us in a time of Sabbath keeping. These rule-of-life practices will be transformative for you in ministry and for those you serve.

The retreat will be held at the [Unity Village Conference and Retreat Center](#). Shuttles will transport participants from the Overland Park Convention Center on Monday, June 29. Shuttles will also transport participants to the Kansas City International Airport on

Wednesday, July 1 at the conclusion of the retreat.

The Retreat Schedule and Costs are as follows:

June 29th

- Morning shuttle will depart from Overland Park to Unity Village.
- Sabbath day experience
- 6:00 PM – Dinner at Unity Village
- 7:00 PM – Ice Breaker activities; Overview of Ministry Challenges.
- 8:30 PM - Compline Service followed by fellowship of Song and Silence.

June 30th

- 8:30 - Breakfast
- 9:30 – Part 1 – Let Go
- 11:00 – Prayer Circles
- 12:00 – Lunch
- 2:00 – Part 2 – Behold
- 4:00 – Part 3 – Sing
- 5:30 – Prayer Circles
- 6:00 – Dinner
- 7:00 – Leading a Sabbath-keeping Church
- 8:30 – Compline Service followed by fellowship of Song and Silence.

July 1st

- Breakfast
- Departures

Retreat Cost

Retreat Registration	\$35.00
Meals on 6/29	\$48.00
Meals on 6/30	\$54.00
Transportation	\$60.00
Unity Village Lodging (\$104.49/per room cost)	
	<u>\$208.98</u>
Total Cost	\$405.98

Make your plans now to join us for this post-Mission Summit Retreat hosted by the Ministers Council. **Registration is now open. All are welcome. The retreat is designed for ages 12 and over.** Click [here](#) to register. For a registration tutorial, click the [Registration Guide](#).



They Doubled My Dues!

As you renewed your Ministers Council membership through your local chapter, did you find that your national dues were doubled? Some did and the reverberations are still being felt. Ah, but before you stamp away in indignation, allow me to explain.

According to MMBB, the national average compensation (Salary + Housing Allowance + Utilities) for ABC ministers is \$54,603. If you make that average as clergy, your national Ministers Council dues did not change. However, if you make more than \$55,000 as clergy, your dues increased to \$100 annually.

However, the increase makes it possible to support clergy colleagues who make less. We have heard feedback from across the country from colleagues whose compensation is nowhere near the national average – some making virtually nothing in ministry. For these colleagues, \$50 in annual dues was a hardship. Therefore, we wanted to make it possible for all who desired to be a part of this, our professional ministry organization, to join. That’s why we voted to implement a sliding scale for national dues. For clergy receiving the average compensation in ministry, your dues are unchanged. For those making less, your dues have decreased. And for those of us who have been blessed to receive more than the average, well, “to whom much is given...”

My hope is that you will see this not as robbery, but rather as your opportunity to support others in their desire to be connected, equipped, and strengthened in ministry. The self-reporting sliding scale for Ministers Council national dues is as follows:

\$55,000+	\$100
\$25,000 - \$54,999	\$50
\$10,000 - \$24,999	\$25
< \$10,000	\$10

Become a member or renew your membership in the Ministers Council. Contact your local council or go to www.ministerscouncil.com and pay your dues today.

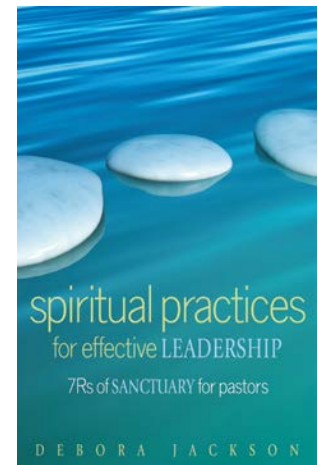
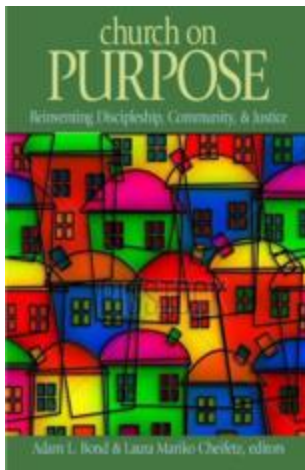
New Release from Judson Press

Judson Press announces the nationwide release of *Church on Purpose: Reinventing Discipleship, Community & Justice*, edited by Adam L. Bond and Mariko Cheifetz

This book recognizes the generational shift within churches and arms us with possibilities and strategies that can reform congregational life. Specific areas of focus include discipleship, the redefinition of community, and the pursuit of justice through inclusion of the poor and the prisoner.

Order your copy today and enjoy free shipping with your Ministers Council Membership.

And available this month, look for the new Judson Press book *Spiritual Practices for Effective Leadership: The 7Rs of Sanctuary for Pastors*, by Debora Jackson.





*American Baptist Churches and International Ministries
Partner with Baptists and Others in Nepal
to Bring Vital Relief in the Aftermath of the Earthquake*

On Saturday, April 25, 2015, a 7.9 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal. The official death toll is currently exceeding 5,500, with estimates expected to exceed 10,000 as remote villages are reached. Nearly 500,000 have been displaced by the quake and over a quarter of the people of Nepal have been affected.

We as ABCUSA are responding to this disaster. \$25,000 in emergency relief funds from One Great Hour of Sharing have been released to International Ministries in Nepal. A downloadable PDF has been made available to share in your ministries. [Click here](#) for access.

Christian Community Credit Union (CCCU), partner to both International Ministries and the Ministers Council, has offered a \$15,000 matching fund for gifts to Nepal Earthquake Relief through OGHS, to raise a total of \$30,000 for the survivors of the earthquake. This opportunity will be available through June 30, 2015. Those who wish to take advantage of this offer should mark their donations with "OGHS - Nepal Earthquake Relief - CCCU." To give online, [click here](#).

Please know that CCCU also makes donations to International Ministries through its Visa Signature Rewards Card. To learn more about the card and to support both International Ministries and the Ministers Council, go to www.myCCCU.com/tmc

Use Promo Code 9001 or call (800) 347-CCCU (2228) ext. 4125.

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Local News Anyone?

What is going on in your local chapter? Share the word so that others might join in. Did you know that more than 2000 people view this newsletter every month? What better way to share your news.

Upcoming Events

- Peer Power Conference, San Francisco, CA at the Mercy Center, May 5-6, 2015. Back by popular demand, Debora Jackson on Leadership Strategies for Effective Leadership. Go to <http://www.cpx.cts.edu/network/events/2014/12/02/peer-power-cultivating-clergy-communities-of-practice-and-training-for-peer-group-facilitators-may-2015> to register or for more information.
- Professional Ministries Team Meeting, Valley Forge, PA, May 18, 2015.
- Ministers Council Board of Governors Meeting, Overland Park, KS, June 23-24, 2015
- Ministers Council Ministries Team Meeting, Overland Park, KS, June 24-25, 2015
- Mission Summit, Overland Park, KS, June 26-28, 2015
- Ministers Council "Let Go, Behold, Sing!" Retreat, June 29 – July 1, 2015
- Christian Leadership Institute, Jerusalem, July 14-24,

Give to the Ministers Council

Support the work and ministry of the Ministers Council through the Ministers Council Endowment. Visit <http://ministerscouncil.com/the-ministers-council-endowment> for more information.

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