

Together in Ministry



Collegiality * Competence * Centeredness

Fall 2025 Newsletter



*The steadfast love of the God never ceases,
God's mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
-Lamentations 3:22-23*

From the Leadership Team



Fall Prayer: God's Perfect Will

Rev. Dr. Dianthia Y. Gilmore

I love the changing seasons of Northeast Ohio, especially the fall season. It is in this short season that I hear God's voice clearly, feel God's strong presence, and see the works of His hands everywhere. In the vibrant foliage, my heart feels as if it will burst with joy.

This morning, I took a long walk in my beautiful, gated community. It has been exactly one year since God answered our prayers with a new home and community.

National Updates

Did you miss our good news?” We welcomed Rev. Lachelle Dixon-Harris to our team as Program Administrator earlier this month. Please reach out to congratulate her, introduce yourself and plan for a meaningful season of shared ministry.

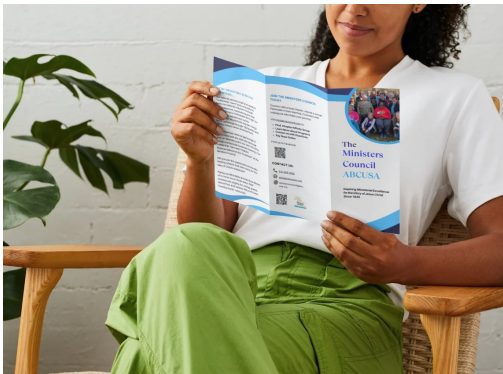
Read more [HERE](#)

Contact Lachelle at ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org or 215-469-1859 to welcome her.



Office Hours Monday 9-12, Tuesday 9-12, Wednesday 2-7 p.m., Thursday 2-7 p.m., Friday 9-12 as needed

Explore the Ministers Council 2025 Brochure!



Our newly released Ministers Council 2025 Brochure is here—and it’s more than a brochure; it’s an invitation into a supportive, spiritually grounded community of American Baptist ministry leaders.

Whether you are exploring membership or looking for a resource to share with colleagues, this concise two-page piece clearly highlights how the Ministers Council strengthens ministers through Centeredness, Collegiality, and Competence.

Inside, you’ll discover:

- A welcoming introduction to our national fellowship of ministers, active since 1935
- Opportunities for peer connection, retreats, leadership development, and local chapter engagement
- A vision for ministry that is rooted in community and sustained by mutual support



Download the brochure today and help spread the word about how the Ministers Council equips, encourages, and connects those called to serve.

[READ MORE](#) | [DOWNLOAD BROCHURE](#)



Explore the Ministers Council Well-Being Hub for tools and inspiration to support your spiritual, emotional, and physical wellness. Check it out today—and if you know of additional resources that would benefit our colleagues, we invite you to recommend them!

[Read more about it on our website.](#)

COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBERSHIP TASK FORCE

We Seek Volunteer(s) to Serve through March 1

Over the past year, we’ve been hard at work in order to improve our communications in the areas of mission, strategy and contact management. We sought both internal and external feedback. We enlisted Ms. Jan Rizzo, a communications professional with many years of experience serving the ELCA denomination and our longtime newsletter editor, to guide and aid us. Last Fall, she met with our Communications/Membership Task Force, our Facebook Admin, and members of the Leadership Team. Since then, she and Rev. Jacki Belile, have worked toward implementation of numerous improvements, as well as significant product development for our Biennial booth and July 3rd gathering in Omaha.

The Communications/Membership Task Force will seek to close out its current imagined short-term tenure by March 1, 2026. In the coming months, we seek additional input from committed members, as well as volunteers for various contact management related projects that will help us greatly improve our contact lists and plans for the future.

If you care about our relevance *and reach*, and can invest a little or a modest amount of time, please email Jacki at livingwelljacki@gmail.com.

One specific recruitment need will be new members for our Facebook Admin Team, a faithful group who have served with Baptist distinction for many years. If you’re interested in learning more about this contact our Rev. Dr. Corey Fields at corey.fields@gmail.com.

Need Funding for Your Ministry or Project? We’re Here to Help!

The Ministers Council is excited to remind you that we now offer access to GrantStation Inc., a premier resource designed to help ministries, churches, and nonprofit leaders identify grant opportunities to support their mission and programs.



Whether you’re launching a new initiative or expanding an existing ministry,

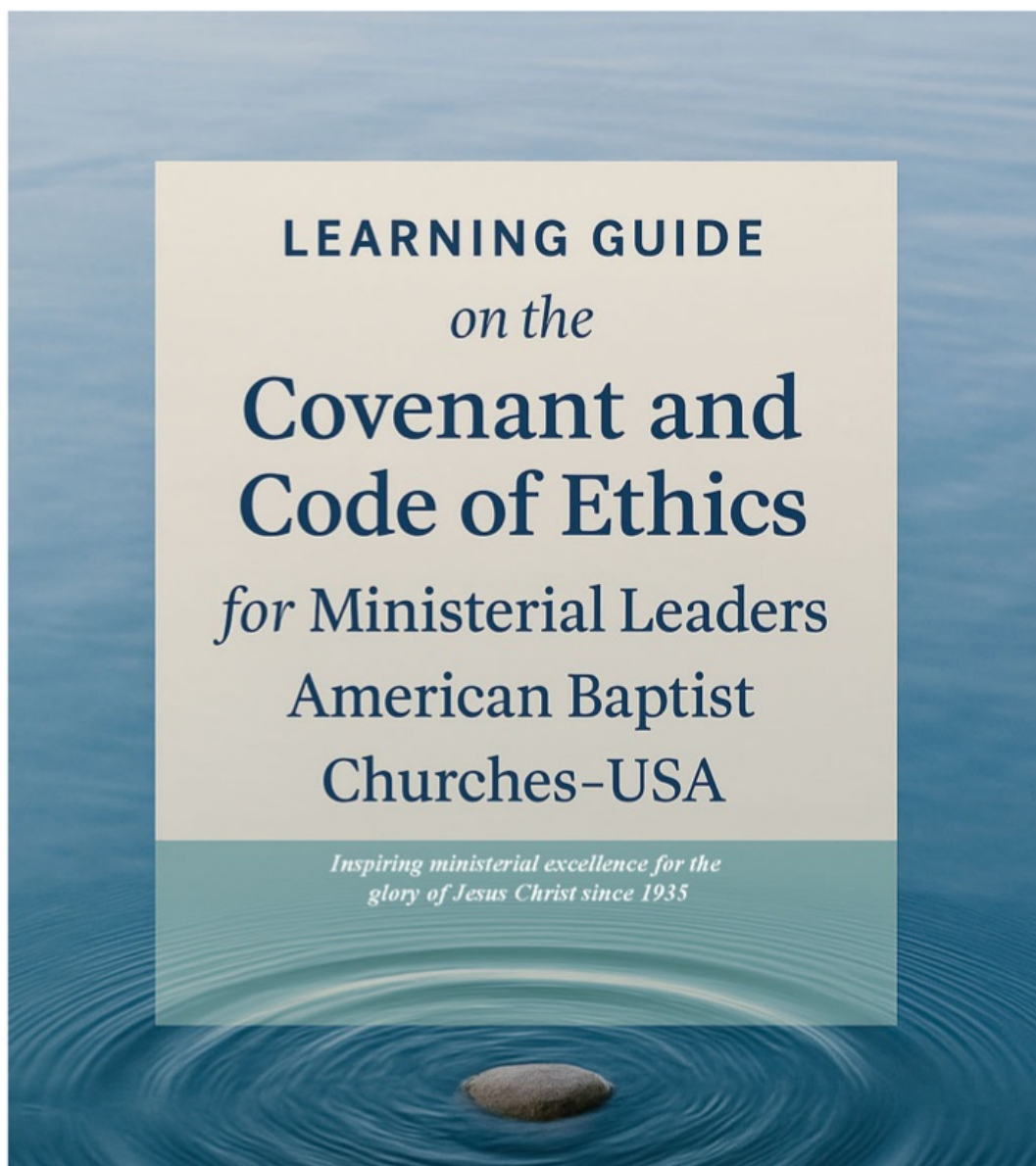
we can help you discover potential funding sources tailored to your needs.

Don't let financial barriers hold back your ministry. Let us partner with you in opening new doors!

For more information and assistance, contact Rev. Linda Bergeon at lbergeon@abccpc.org

SEEKING THE SAGES!

ARE YOU RETIRED? QUASI-RETIRED? We know this season has its blessings and gifts, as well as its burdens. We're seeking more conversation and connection on how we can serve one another in renewed and deeper ways this Fall and in 2026. A few seed conversations have happened, and we seek more. Share your input with our Leadership Team member Rick Mixon at rrmixon47@gmail.com to stay in conversation. (Note: We're working on some administrative improvements on tracking those "Lifetime Members" who were grandfathered in for that membership category in 2015).



Have you seen our Public Release 1.0 of this important tool? While our team is proceeding with some modest improvements and translations beyond Spanish, we welcome your use of it and feedback about it. Let's make it a living document and opportunity for sharpening conversation! For more information, contact our office at ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org.

Come Seek Living Water

MINISTERS SERVING MINISTERS... JOIN US!

We continue to pray for you all, that you may find the “living water” you need to serve faithfully and with sustained joy in these difficult days. You can see from this newsletter, our archive and other website resources that we are devoted to serving a diverse ministerial family with grants, on-line gatherings and resources for study. Whether or not you minister in a setting where you feel connected to a local chapter, we want to help you CONNECT with what and who you need.

If you’ve missed a chance to sign on to this work for 2025, you can still pay those dues [HERE](#) (even though we’re on a calendar year cycle). Unless noted otherwise, dues paid after November 1 are assumed to be intended for 2026. If you intend them for 2025, please make a note of that.

EVENTS AND WEBINARS



HOPE BEYOND HOPE --

*A Pre-Advent Conversation with
Rev. Jabulani McCalister*

November 20, 2025
5pm Pacific/ 7pm Central/ 8pm Eastern

Learn more about - and order - our guest's
timely devotional [HERE](#).

Learn more about Rev. McCalister [HERE](#)

Join 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



Chapter News - Send it On!

What are your local priorities for chapter life this Fall? How are you creating space for Centeredness, Collegiality and Competence? What help do you need? We're praying for you and would love to hear from you. Remember, we have chapter grants (called "[Excellence in Ministry Grants](#)") --up to \$1000/year for eligible chapters.

We need your help to stay current! Have there been changes in your officers recently? The amount of dues you charge? Anything else? Please pass on this info to ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org.

Prayers and Milestones

We celebrate with the **Rev. James Williams**, Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church of Philadelphia, on his appointment as the new Kerygma Initiative and Campolo Center Research Fellow at Palmer Theological Seminary. A Palmer M.Div. graduate and current PhD student, Rev. Williams brings both pastoral depth and a passion for justice to this important role.



We celebrate with **Rev. Joan Friesen** the beginning of her work as Interim Executive Minister serving the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island. Read more [HERE](#).



We celebrate with the American Baptist Churches of New York State and **Rev. Jerrod Huguenot** as he is installed as their new Executive Minister. The final service in this three-part installation series will take place on **November 15**, offering one more opportunity to gather in support and prayer—both in person and via Zoom.

Let us join together in blessing Rev. Huguenot and the ministry ahead!

[READ MORE](#)

We pray for the leadership of **Revs. Doug Harris and Carol McVetty** who recently began serving as co- Interim Executive Ministers of American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago. We continue to hold ABCMC in our prayers as they grieve the passing of Rev. Dr. David Gregg earlier this year. [READ MORE HERE](#)

God of mercy and justice,

We grieve the fear and division in our nation, and we lift before You all who are separated from family, detained, or living in uncertainty. Shelter the vulnerable, comfort the weary, and move the hearts of those in power toward

compassion and wisdom.

Remind us that Jesus was once a refugee, and that how we treat vulnerable strangers is how we treat You. As we seek Your wise counsel for demanding times, strengthen us to stand for dignity, peace, and the sacred worth of every person.

In Christ’s name we pray,
Amen.

Do you have milestones or prayer requests to share for December? Send to Ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org by November 24.

Outgoing Staff Reflection

“Outdo One Another in Showing Honor” - Romans 12:10b ESV



I gave a gift to our Excellence in Ministry Fund today, in memory and honor of Rev. Dr. **Darla “Dee Dee” Turlington**. Dee Dee passed on to eternity in 2023. I was honored to work closely with our sister, friend, mentor and president of the Ministers Council during pivotal transition years in 2017-2018. We shared in subsequent labors of love for our colleagues through the Ministers Council during her term and beyond. I sought her counsel as a Leadership Team member and as a trusted friend and prayer partner. I often felt her prayerful presence, and learned so much from her healing ministry.

[READ MORE](#) (Dee Dee is pictured below)

*By the Rev. Jacki Belile, CPC
Living Well Ministries/Eden UCC*



ABC Announcements



Mark Your Calendars! Registration Opens Soon!

We are excited to announce that registration for the 2026 Space for Grace & Spiritual Caregivers Conference is opening Monday, October 27!

This powerful gathering—hosted by American Baptist Home Mission Societies

More Information

November 14th
12-1pm EST
Via Zoom



Email Erin at
admin@ccdmin.org
by November 10th



Bridge Being: A Space for Respite and Refueling

Hosted by the Center for Continuous Learning (ABHMS)
In a season when many ministry leaders are carrying the weight of care, conflict, and constant change, Bridge Being offers a sacred pause. This online course is designed to help you step away from exhaustion and step into spiritual grounding, resilience, and renewal.

[More information](#)

CALMING A CONGREGATION

**November 18th, 2025
10:00am-12:00 pm EST via Zoom**

In an anxious congregation, it is difficult to function well, feel good, and find spiritual support. Ministry that calms the system creates a healthy environment for all. Such calming is analogous to bringing clear air to the environment, letting everyone breathe deep.

This two-hour presentation offers ministers an understanding of systemic anxiety and tools for lowering that anxiety.

**To register, please email Erin Henke, Client Coordinator, at info@ccdmin.org.
There is no charge for this program.**

INFO ON PRESENTER:

Rev. Kenneth (Ken) Reeves, Ph.D., earned a Masters of Divinity and has served congregations in Ohio and Delaware. He also earned a Masters in Pastoral Counseling and a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology. He is currently a clinical psychologist with a therapy practice, and a consulting psychologist with the Center for Career Development and Ministry. He is the author of *The Whole Church: Congregational Leadership Guided by Systems Theory*.

**Brought to you by The Center for Career Development and Ministry
in Partnership with The Conference of Baptist Ministers in
Massachusetts**



Ecumenical Resources



Enneagram, Gratitude & Wellbeing Series – Begins November 4

In the midst of busy seasons of service, it can be easy to lose touch with the practices that ground and sustain us. This November, we invite you to carve out intentional time for reflection and renewal through *Enneagram, Gratitude, and Wellbeing*. This is a four-week virtual series designed specifically for clergy

and those who support clergy wellness. .Dates: November 4, 11, 18, & 25. 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM (ET).

Over the course of four interactive sessions, we'll explore how our Enneagram type shapes our spiritual practices—particularly gratitude—and how we can cultivate habits that foster deeper wellbeing. This series will offer space for self-awareness, spiritual growth, and practical application in both personal and ministry contexts. Whether you are new to the Enneagram or have worked with it for years, this course will give you tools to integrate gratitude practices that align with your unique wiring and ministry realities.

Register Now to reserve your spot. Cost: \$200 per registrant



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 December 2025 issue, send these to ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org by November 26.



How to reach us:

- Phone: 215-469-1859

Office Hours Monday 9-12,
Tuesday 9-12, Wednesday 2-7
p.m., Thursday 2-7 p.m., Friday
9-12 as needed



Stay connected

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



Try email marketing for free today!