

April 2026 Newsletter



*Just as Christ was raised from the dead... so we too might walk
in newness of life. -Romans 6:4*

May the risen Christ fill you with deep and abiding hope,
renewing your spirit after the long journey to the cross.
May the power of the resurrection strengthen you for the work ahead,
and the joy of Easter remind you that God is always bringing new life.
And may you go forth with courage and peace,
bearing witness to the love that has overcome the world.
Amen.

Equipping the Saints: Becoming the Resource We Seek

by The Rev. Dr. Naomi Mitchell

“The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity.” -Ephesians 4:11–13



In ministry, we often find ourselves searching for resources; curriculum, strategies, and tools to help us lead effectively. While these are valuable, Ephesians 4:11–13 offers a deeper truth: God has already given the church its greatest resource, people.

At our recent Ministers Council Annual Leadership Team Retreat, themed “Equipping the Saints,” we were reminded that equipping is not just about what we provide, but who we are. We are called not only to use resources, but to become them.

Equipping is transformational work. It happens through presence, relationship, and example. In a time when our congregations face cultural shifts, grief, and spiritual fatigue, the most powerful resource we offer is not simply information, it is embodied

leadership. Our integrity, compassion, courage, and consistency become the curriculum.

The early church did not rely on programs, it thrived through people who lived the gospel visibly. Likewise, we are called to move from producing consumers to cultivating disciples; raising up others who are equipped to lead, serve, and grow.

To my colleagues across the American Baptist Churches throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, be encouraged: your wisdom, your witness, and your presence are vital resources for the Body of Christ.

As we move forward, from this season of gathering, and reflection, let us continue to commit to mentoring, modeling, and multiplying leaders. For the strength of the church is not found in its programs alone, but in its people.

You are not just equipped, you are a resource God is using to equip the saints.

After Easter: A Holy Invitation to Rest

For many clergy and church leaders, the journey from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday is both sacred and demanding. Sermons are prepared, services are planned, pastoral needs increase, and the pace rarely slows. Then, almost overnight, Easter arrives—and just as quickly, it passes.

What often follows is something we don't always name: exhaustion.

Yet the resurrection story itself reminds us that God's work is not sustained by human striving alone. Even Jesus, after moments of intense ministry, withdrew to quiet places to pray and rest. If the Son of God honored the rhythm of rest, how much more do we need it?

This season after Easter is not simply a return to "normal." It is an invitation.

[READ MORE](#)

Events and Webinars



Earth Day

Rev. Rebecca Driscoll Mygatt

April 16, 2026

5pm Pacific/ 7pm Central/ 8pm Eastern

Connect to MC LIVE

MC LIVE is held monthly on the third Thursday at **8 PM Eastern/7 PM Central/6PM Mountain/5 PM Pacific**

All Ministers Council members are invited to join the conversation.

[Join the Zoom Meeting](#)

Passcode: 896413

Add to Your Calendar:

[Download the calendar file and import it into your calendar system](#)

National Updates

Visit the Ministers Council at Space for Grace

As we gather for Space for Grace, we invite you to begin your experience with us at **Booth #1**—a place to pause, connect, and be encouraged.



The Ministers Council is a community rooted in supporting clergy and church leaders through every season of ministry. Whether you are seeking connection, resources, or simply a moment of conversation, we would love to meet you.

Stop by to:

- Connect with colleagues from across the denomination
- Learn about Ministers Council opportunities, including chapters, affinity groups, and grants
- Discover resources to support your ministry and well-being
- Share your story and what's shaping your call in this season

Whether you're a longtime member or just getting to know the Ministers Council, there's a place for you here.

We look forward to welcoming you at **Booth #1**.

Join or Renew NOW!

Stay Connected. Stay Grounded.

In the wake of Lent and Easter, when ministry has stretched and poured you out, the Ministers Council remains a place to be renewed, supported, and strengthened.

Since 1935, the Ministers Council has walked alongside clergy—fostering faithful, grounded ministry through collegiality, competence, and centeredness. Through chapters, affinity groups, webinars, and grants, this community continues to equip and encourage leaders across the denomination.

Your participation makes this work possible.

Renew your 2026 Annual Dues—an investment in your ministry and in the shared life of this community.

Join or renew today on the Ministers Council website.

Questions? Contact Rev. Lachelle Dixon-Harris at ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org.

Prayers and Milestones

Lord, as we continue walking toward the cross, steady our hearts and keep us faithful in the work you have called us to do. Give us wisdom and courage as we lead your people, even in the shadow of what is to come.

Maundy Thursday

Jesus, you knelt to serve and commanded us to love, shape our leadership by your humility and grace. As we remember your table and your sacrifice, make us servants who reflect your love to all.

Good Friday

God of mercy, as we stand at the foot of the cross, remind us of the depth of your love poured out for the world. Strengthen us to proclaim Christ crucified with truth, compassion, and hope.

Holy Saturday

God of the silence, teach us to trust you in the waiting and the unknown. When the work feels unfinished and the world feels uncertain, anchor us in your promises.

Easter

Risen Christ, fill us with the power of your resurrection and the joy of new life. Send us out as bold witnesses, proclaiming hope, renewal, and the victory of your love.

Chapter News



STRENGTHENING COMMUNICATION ACROSS OUR CHAPTERS

Even if you are not serving in a formal leadership role, your connection to a chapter is still important to us. Hearing from members across our chapters helps us maintain stronger relationships and ensures that communication flows effectively throughout the Ministers Council community.

One of the greatest strengths of the Ministers Council is the vibrant network of local chapters that serve ministers and leaders across the country. These chapters are vital to the life, connection, and support that the Council seeks to cultivate among its members.

As the Ministers Council continues to grow and strengthen its work, we are placing renewed focus on improving communication between the Leadership Team and each local chapter. Clear and consistent communication helps ensure that chapters receive important updates, resources, opportunities for engagement, and information about national initiatives and events.

To support this effort, we are asking for help from our chapters in confirming and updating leadership and contact information. If you are currently serving as a Chapter President, chapter officer, representative, or active member, we invite you to connect with the Ministers Council Program Administrator, Rev. Lachelle Dixon-Harris, so that we can ensure our records are accurate and our lines of communication remain strong.

Our shared ministry is strengthened when we remain connected to one another. By keeping our chapter information current and our communication lines open, we can continue to support, encourage, and equip one another in the important work of ministry.

Thank you for helping us strengthen the connection across our chapters.

MINISTERS SERVING MINISTERS

Help Us Stay Connected

We are updating our chapter contact information. If you are a chapter officer, representative, or member, please reach out so we can keep our records current.

Contact:

Rev. Lachelle Dixon-Harris

Program Administrator

Ministers Council, ABCUSA

Email: ministerscouncil1935@gmail.com

Phone: (215) 469-1859

Thank you for helping us keep our Ministers Council community connected.

WWW.MINISTERSCOUNCIL.COM

ABC Announcements

Easter Message from ABCUSA General Secretary Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain

In this Easter message, Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain invites American Baptists to celebrate the hope and assurance of the risen Christ, even amid the challenges of today's world. Drawing on the joy of Resurrection faith, she calls the Church to embody Christ's love through acts of compassion, justice, and presence—sharing the Good News in both word and action.

[Read more](#)

American Baptist Home Mission Societies
presents



SPACE FOR GRACE & SPIRITUAL CAREGIVERS CONFERENCE

STORYTELLING:

*Discovering Its Power
for Faith Leaders Today*

April 21-23, 2026

Cleveland, Ohio



Registration Fee: \$395

abhms.org/s4g2026

Sign up For Space for Grace & Spiritual Caregivers 2026

Updates!

[More Information](#)

REGISTER

Ecumenical Resources

Ecumenical Webinars, Workshops & Classes

World Council of Churches – Earth Healing Interfaith
Webinar Series (April 20, 2026)



This global online webinar brings together Christian and interfaith voices to explore climate justice, creation care, and faithful action. Open to participants worldwide, the series offers practical insights for congregations engaging environmental ministry.

[Register for the webinar](#)



Council of Bishops
The United Methodist Church

**United Methodist Council of
Bishops – Ecumenical &
Interreligious Training (Ongoing
Online)**

Interactive Zoom-based trainings and on-demand courses designed to equip church leaders for ecumenical and interfaith engagement, including dialogue skills and relationship-building across traditions.

[Explore trainings and courses](#)

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 May issue, send these to ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org by April 26.



How to reach us:

- Phone: 215-469-1859



Stay connected

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

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