



June 2026 Newsletter



Love Humanity

Rev. Dr. Julio Gonzalez-Paniagua

May I stress the need for courageous, intelligent, and dedicated leadership... Leaders of sound integrity. Leaders not in love with publicity, but in love with justice. Leaders not in love with money, but in love with humanity. Leaders who can subject their particular egos to the greatness of the cause.

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Human beings are the product of our upbringing. The environment in which we grow and develop has a permanent effect on the way we think and act; we are not alien to it, nor can we escape from it. Now, the environment includes the home, school, and church; therefore, the examples, education, and values instilled from birth will make a difference in the product. A home that values truth and honesty will create a shield against poor behavior in the child. Thus, even when the schoolmates urge him or her to copy exam answers, the kid tends to act correctly. The benefit of getting a good grade will not easily change an individual's value of honesty.



Rev. Martin Luther King, in his fight for the equality of every human being, faced the selfishness, hatred, and greed of many people in positions of power, and this resistance affected them. Large economic interests prevailed over demands for rights because equality would mean lower profits. Equality meant wage justice, because the work many non-white persons did was paid less than the work whites did; vacation and sick time benefits were also major operational costs they would have to incur. Justice would cost them money.

Many politicians, including some pastors and community and union leaders, reached their privileged positions through the endorsements of influential people. Of course, we are talking about influence derived from power, money, and White privilege. Those leaders would frame their public agenda to cater to the needs of the people who keep

them in power, not the interests of their constituents and their communities; they would not do anything that would affect their image in the eyes of those who bought their conscience. Protecting from harm to the poor, oppressed, discriminated, and marginalized would not be a major part of their agenda. Those politicians will even go out to campaign, give interviews, and take pictures with the latter to sell the idea of impartiality to a few, when in reality, they do not even love those who support them, but love themselves.

Rev. King's words resounded in his time. We still hear its echo to this day. Will we listen to them? Their silent marches, peaceful protests, and eloquent, accurate speeches changed the way many think. Those of us who were born during the second half of the 60s grew up in a world that seemed different: reaching the moon, less segregation (at least less openly), with better rights and privileges for almost everyone. Precisely, here lies the problem that we have not been able to solve: for "almost everyone." Humanity is one, and we are all of it. Love is one. Therefore, we either love humanity or not.



After Pentecost

Pentecost is not just a day we celebrate; it is a reality we live.

The Spirit continues to breathe life into our ministries, strengthen our communities, and call us beyond fear into faithful service. Long after the banners are put away and the readings are finished, the work of Pentecost continues.

As we enter the time after Pentecost, may we remember that the Spirit is present not only in extraordinary moments, but also in the daily practices of ministry: listening, caring, preaching, serving, and leading.

The fire of Pentecost was never meant to stay in the upper room. It was meant to be carried into the world.

Worship and Educational Resources for Juneteenth

Juneteenth commemorates the day in 1865 when the last enslaved African Americans in Texas learned of their freedom. As followers of Christ, we celebrate God's gift of freedom while recommitting ourselves to the ongoing work of justice, reconciliation, and beloved community.

[READ MORE](#)

National Updates

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

You Were Never Meant to Do Ministry Alone

The demands of ministry are real.

Congregations are navigating change. Communities are carrying deep needs. Clergy are asked to lead, care, inspire, and adapt—often all at the same time.

That is why the Ministers Council exists.

For nearly 100 years, we have been connecting clergy and ministry leaders with colleagues who understand the joys and challenges of ministry. Through local chapters, affinity groups, educational opportunities, grants, and national gatherings, the Ministers Council offers meaningful support for every season of leadership.

Membership is more than a subscription. It is a commitment to mutual encouragement, lifelong learning, and a community that walks alongside you when ministry is challenging and celebrates with you when ministry is thriving.

As we look toward 2026, we invite you to strengthen both your ministry and the wider Ministers Council community by joining or renewing your membership today.

Together, we are stronger. Together, we are better equipped for the work God is calling us to do.

[Join or Renew Today](#)

Questions?

Rev. Lachelle Dixon-Harris

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Events and Webinars



The logo features a blue Wi-Fi symbol above the text. "3rd thursdays" is in blue, "mc live" is in teal and black, and "WEBINAR SERIES" is in black.

8 PM EASTERN / 7 PM CENTRAL / 6 PM MOUNTAIN / 5 PM PACIFIC

MC Live Update

Please note that there will be no MC Live gathering during the summer months. We look forward to being together again in September!

Prayers and Milestones

Spirit of God,

The fire of Pentecost still burns, and your breath still moves among your people. As we enter the ordinary days of ministry, remind us that your presence is not limited to mountaintop moments or extraordinary events. Amen.

God of mercy,

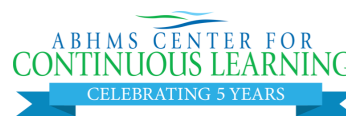
We pray for all who carry burdens that cannot be seen: those living with grief, trauma, anxiety, loneliness, or despair. Open our eyes to the pain around us and deepen our capacity to listen, accompany, and care.

God of liberation,

As we remember Juneteenth and celebrate the gift of freedom, we give thanks for those who persevered in faith through generations of oppression and struggle.

ABC Announcements

Creating Congregations Where Healing Can Happen



Many people who enter our churches carry invisible wounds. Trauma affects how people experience relationships, worship, leadership, and community. How can congregations become places of healing rather than unintentionally reinforcing pain?

The Trauma-Informed Church, a new six-week certificate course from the American Baptist Home Mission Societies' Center for Continuous Learning, invites faith leaders to explore trauma through a biblical and theological lens while developing practical skills for cultivating compassionate, inclusive, and healing-centered congregations. Participants will learn to evaluate their ministry settings through a trauma-informed perspective and create environments that foster safety, belonging, and spiritual growth.

The course meets Tuesdays, June 2 through July 7, from 6:30–7:30 p.m. Eastern, and is led by Rev. Dr. Brian Ellis-Gibbs, national coordinator for Healing and Transforming Communities at ABHMS. Participants can earn continuing education credit upon completion.

As congregations seek to embody Christ's healing presence in a wounded world, this timely learning opportunity offers practical tools and theological grounding for ministry today.

Learn more and register: [The Trauma-Informed Church Course](#)

AN HOUR OF *Soul Care*

July 10th
12-1pm EST
Via Zoom

Calling clergy to a Noon time to pause and be invited into a guided meditation and contemplative practice of breath. Give yourself an hour to step away from divisive conversations, polarizing statements, stirring newsfeeds and intentionally pause and receive gentle nourishment from the Holy Spirit. Make this hour a choice to sit, breathe and feed your soul. Rev. Sandra Dorsainvil will lead a guided meditation and time of silence.



To Register:

Email Erin at
admin@ccdmin.org
by July 7th



MISSION IMPACT REPORT

2025

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES USA



ABCUSA Releases 2025 Mission Impact Report

The American Baptist Churches USA Office of the General Secretary has released its 2025 Mission Impact Report, highlighting the ministries, partnerships, and transformative work made possible through the support of American Baptists across the country.

The report features inspiring stories, measurable outcomes, and examples of how churches, regions, and ministry partners are working together to advance God's mission. It offers a meaningful snapshot of the impact being made through collective faithfulness and shared commitment.

[View and download the 2025 Mission Impact Report](#) to learn more about the ways American Baptists are making a difference in communities near and far.

Growing in Faith During Ordinary Time

This June, ABHMS offers opportunities to nurture your calling and engage your community.

Upcoming Highlights:

- Ecumenical Virtual Course [The Trauma-Informed Church](#) – June 2, 2026 @ 6:30pm ET | 6-week certificate | 1.5 CEUs | \$45
- Ecumenical Virtual Course [Story Work and Its Power for Healing and Freedom](#) – June 8, 2026 @ 12pm ET | \$10
- Baptist Focused/All Welcome Course [Ministry Ethics and Healthy Boundaries](#) – June 12-13, 2026 @ 4pm ET-10am ET | \$99
- Webinar [The Justice Dialogues Decolonial Imagination: Theological Futures](#) - June 3, 2026 @ 12pm ET | Free
- Workshop [You Are Not Alone: A Sanctuary for Clergy Wellness](#) – June 24, 2026 @ 2pm ET | Free

Ecumenical Resources



Bringing Scripture to Life: Network of Biblical Storytellers Conference

How might ministry change if people experienced Scripture not only as something to read, but as something to hear, embody, and tell?

The Network of Biblical Storytellers International (NBSI) invites pastors, chaplains, educators, worship leaders, and lay ministers to gather for its 2026 Annual Conference, Wounded Wholeness: Suffering and Theological Imagination, July 20–22 in Baltimore, Maryland.

Through workshops, worship, storytelling, theological reflection, and community building, participants will explore biblical narratives that speak to suffering, resilience, healing, and hope. The conference will feature keynote presentations by Dr. Amy McLaughlin-Sheasby, along with workshops designed for both beginning and experienced storytellers.

Biblical storytelling offers a powerful tool for preaching, teaching, pastoral care, and spiritual formation. By learning Scripture by heart and sharing it in community, ministry leaders can help congregations engage God's story in fresh and memorable ways.

Learn more and register: <https://nbsint.org/events/2026-annual-conference>



Building Trust Through Cultural Humility

Every helping relationship takes place across cultures. Whether in ministry, healthcare, chaplaincy, or community service, understanding and honoring the experiences of others is essential to building trust and fostering healing.

A free field guide, *Cultivating Cultural Humility in Helping Relationships*, offers practical insights for developing greater self-awareness, listening more deeply, navigating power dynamics, and approaching others as partners rather than projects. Rooted in both evidence-based practices and biblical values, this resource provides tools for creating more compassionate and effective helping relationships.

Cultural humility is not a skill to master once, but a lifelong practice of learning, reflection, and growth.

[Download the free field guide and learn more today.](#)



Fresh Expression Incubator: Outdoors

Looking for new ways to connect with people beyond the walls of your church? Join the Fresh Expression Incubator: Outdoors on June 10, 2026, from 12:00–2:30 p.m. ET. This online workshop explores how outdoor activities and shared experiences can become opportunities for community building, spiritual conversations, and innovative forms of ministry.

Ideal for pastors, lay leaders, and anyone interested in reaching new people in new ways.

Sacred Journeys for Renewal and Spiritual Growth

Spiritual Directors International invites seekers, clergy, and spiritual companions to consider two transformative pilgrimage opportunities: a journey to the sacred island of Iona, Scotland, and an Ignatian Camino pilgrimage in Spain.



Rooted in prayer, reflection, community, and deep listening, these pilgrimages offer participants space to step away from the demands of daily life and reconnect with God's presence through sacred travel, spiritual practice, and shared companionship. Whether drawn to the contemplative rhythms of Celtic spirituality on Iona or the transformative experience of walking the Camino in the spirit of Ignatius of Loyola, each journey offers opportunities for renewal and discernment.

Early bird discounts are available for a limited time, and scholarships and payment plans may be offered to help make participation more accessible.

SDI also announces the release of the newest issue of Listen, featuring Rev. SeiFu's reflection, "We Light the Way, Together," a meditation on companionship, presence, and the sacred work of walking alongside one another.

Learn more about these pilgrimages and SDI offerings at: <https://www.sdiworld.org>

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 July issue, send these to ministerscouncil@abc-usa.org by June 26.



How to reach us:

- Phone: 215-469-1859



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