

# THE YOKE

The newsletter of the Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors Chapter  
of the Ministers Council, ABCUSA

February 2023

## IN THIS EDITION

CELEBRATING  
JOY FREEMAN

THE LAST THINGS WE  
TALK ABOUT

BEHIND THE WIRE

SEE YOU IN SAN JUAN

WHY PURPLE?

A POSTCARD FROM  
NEBRASKA

A LENTEN RESOURCE

A REMINDER LETTER

## CELEBRATING JOY FREEMAN

by Sarah Fogg, President of the C&PC Chapter and  
retired chaplain and spiritual care department head

**Joy M. Freeman, BCC,  
winner of the 2022  
American Baptist  
National Network  
Chaplaincy Merit award  
for commitment to  
effective service as a  
specialized minister.**



Getting an award requires at least two things: being worthy of receiving it and someone knowing about the award and doing the work of nominating you for it. Joy Freeman is the first winner of the American Baptist National Network Chaplaincy Merit award because she had both. Her boss at North Kansas City Hospital in Kansas City was proud of the work she did during Covid, and Joy's mother, unbeknownst to Joy, let him know about ABC awards.

When Covid hit, Joy's boss encouraged his spiritual care staff to be on all the units, especially for ministry to staff. At Joy's request he facilitated having zoom installed on the staff iPads. While chaplains didn't go into Covid patient rooms, the hospital's architecture and telecommunications made it possible to communicate pretty well with patients who could talk. All patient rooms had windows facing out



onto unit floors, so chaplains could stand at the windows, talk with patients by telephone, and assess through visual cues when a patient was tiring.

Clinical staff were especially important for identifying and coordinating those patients most in need of spiritual care. To keep in close contact with staff, Joy made sure she visited each of the 14 units she “covered” every day to check in with staff to see how they were doing. It was exhausting even for a four-day, 24-hour work week. Joy credits her then middle-school daughter with stepping up to take more responsibility at home and her supportive husband.

To help stay grounded, informed, and cared for, Joy reached out to other chaplains on Facebook, and organizations like Chaplaincy Innovation Labs and Transforming Chaplaincy. Now, Joy is her department’s primary chaplain for staff care.

In 2016, Joy edited the book, Still A Mother, with Tabitha Johnson, and shared her own story of pregnancy loss. She and her husband are parents of one daughter and a precious child in heaven. These days, most of Joy’s free time is spent supporting the many band activities of her now teen-age daughter as a band-booster parent.

### THE LAST THINGS WE TALK ABOUT



*As shared by Petra Van de Water, C&PC Member-at-Large and chaplain at Stanford Children’s Hospital.*

*A life-altering medical diagnosis allows us to come alongside our clients and offer opportunities to start conversations with their families about end-of-life matters and “put their house in order.” During our recent webinar, Rev. Dr. Elizabeth (Libby) Boatwright--chaplain, pastor, and certified financial planner--spoke about ten things our clients and patients need to consider before they die. She gave us excellent tools and insights into where to start as pastors, pastoral counselors, and chaplains. If you missed the Podcast, please read Dr. Boatwright’s reflection below and consider buying her book.*

In the last few years, with over a million deaths due to COVID-19, many of our parishioners and patients are aware of their mortality for the first time. In some cultures, it may be considered a self-fulfilling prophecy to plan for one’s death. And yet to make those plans is a gift both to their family and inheritors.

One of the greatest gifts we can give our patients and parishioners is to take away their fear of end-of-life planning. We need to encourage people to tell their life stories and self-advocate for their care, to make inventories of their earthly possessions so they are not subject to unnecessary legal or tax problems, and to have confidence in God’s ultimate plan for their life.

*(continued on page 4)*



*Courtesy Donald Tong/ Pexels*

**MARCH 21 4:30 PM PST/7:30 PM EST**

## **BEHIND THE WIRE: A LOOK AT CORRECTIONS CHAPLAINCY**

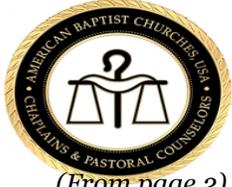
### **Learning Objectives:**

To give a brief glimpse into the world of chaplaincy in a corrections setting, including a description of the environment and the compelling reasons we serve there; and what limitations and restrictions may be unique to the corrections settings.

To describe what the responsibilities of a corrections chaplain are and what that might look like on a daily basis.

To explain what toll this type of chaplaincy can take, and some self-care strategies we can employ to be able to stay effective.

This will be an interactive session



(From page 2)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85222705643?pwd=VDFkeDlGazFBRHNWU Ud oVGFYbVBzUT o9>

Meeting ID: 852 2270 5643

Passcode: 988483

After nearly 35 years of planning memorials, guiding people through palliative care and hospice settings and advocating for patients, crafting estate plans for clients, I decided to reflect on all the things I'd learned. Entitled The Last Things, We Talk About: Your Guide to End of Life Transitions, my book gives readers and their loved ones the opportunity, as death approaches, to affirm, celebrate and remember the people and experiences they cherish in life. It guides the reader step-by-step through the process of making aging and death-related decisions, defining personal values and wishes, and planning for practical, medical, financial, and legal considerations.

I pray that everyone who reads this book will be able to finish the inventories and documents and then live the rest of their life in the joyful hope of the future.

*Jeremiah 29:11-13 reminds us, "for I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*

*-Rev. Dr. Elizabeth T. Boatwright, BCC-PCHAC, CFP(c)*

## SEE YOU IN SAN JUAN

*by Sarah Fogg, President of the C&PC Chapter*



Warm greetings to you during this cold part of the New Year! May 2023 be a personal blessing for you and for the work that you do in our Master's service. Even now, our spirits are warmed as we plan for our time together at the **American Baptist Biennial in San Juan, Puerto Rico, June 23-25.**

Please mark your calendars for the Biennial and plan to arrive a day early, in time to share **Thursday, June 22**, with your Ministers Council colleagues. Our national group will meet on Thursday morning from 9:30-1:30 PM, program and lunch included for \$35 registration. Our chapter of chaplains and pastoral counselors will meet in the early evening from 5:00-7:30 PM, program and dinner included for \$40 registration. Registration for all events is now open. Be sure to register early for a discounted rate.

Financial grants up to \$300 are available to those who send in their application *no later than March 15*. Go to [abhms.org](http://abhms.org), ministries, education and scholarships for more details and an application form.

Zoom technology has done a wonderful job of keeping us together online, letting us see and hear each other, but there's nothing like the fellowship of coming together in person to worship, learn, and celebrate.

See you in San Juan in June!

## WHY PURPLE?

-Rick Barnes

You may have noticed the contents block at the beginning of the newsletter and the article headers are in purple. Years ago, I would have either not noticed or questioned why purple. As my understanding of the liturgical year has increased, I know the time for both Advent and Lent are both celebrated with the color purple. I know many of you already knew that, but just in case... Lent begins on February 22 with Ash Wednesday and ends on April 9 with Easter.

## A POSTCARD FROM NEBRASKA

*by Rick Barnes, C&PC Member-at- Large and chaplain at  
Imperial Regional Detention Facility, Calexico, CA.*



I remember Roger Welsch's "Postcards from Nebraska" on CBS Sunday Morning years ago, and here is my scribed "Postcard from Nebraska" describing the Ministers Council's Biennial business meeting and retreat that took place at Schuyler, Nebraska late last October and early November.

Almost immediately after the retreat, the Ministers Council presented the elected officers, as well as their place of ministry, in their November newsletter. I don't feel a need to repeat what you've already been given. I do, however, continue to marvel at the faithfulness, dedication, and quality of our leaders, both outgoing and incoming. There is a continued determination to make the Ministers Council more significant to the ministries represented with such things as Together in Ministry grants and a renewal of our covenant relationships through the updating of the Code of Conduct.

Speaking of which, one piece of news that has happened since the retreat is that the new Code of Conduct passed the necessary threshold of chapters adopting and is now adopted. Of course, we know the Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors Chapter was the first chapter to adopt the updated covenant.

Ahem, back to the retreat. We were treated to the St. John's Illuminated Bible, with absolutely gorgeous graphics. This was shown in a Catholic retreat center, commissioned by Catholic universities, and had as one of its contributors David Crawford, a member of an American Baptist church in the Omaha area. The November 2022 Ministers Council newsletter (which can be found in the online archives) has an article and a link for more information.

For me, the main event was the storytelling by Rev. Donald Davis, a Methodist minister and professional storyteller. Our ABC colleagues Revs. Cheryl Harris and Lin Story-Bunce provided accompanying sessions. It was amazing how listening to Donald put the listener right in the story, where we could see and smell and hear and feel the story. A couple of the techniques he shared were to write down events as they happened, and then categorize them so they would come to memory at appropriate times. He also had us identify a sense and tell about a time in which we remembered that sense (such as smell or taste). It is amazing how much information can come out of a discussion surrounding that seemingly small piece of information. This can make about anyone a more effective storyteller. For chaplains and pastoral counselors, I could see how this would help our clients to tell their stories more effectively, giving voice to the hurt or struggle they may have. Check out **Donald Davis Storyteller** on YouTube for some delightful storytelling!

As your representative, I was glad to be there. For the richness I experienced, I wish you could have been as well.

### A LENTEN RESOURCE



*Lee Axtell*  
*Secretary/Treasurer*  
*Navy Chaplain serving the Marine Corps*

Aloha and happy new year from Hawaii!

I always joke with my wife, Paula, that when the Halloween candy is in the local drug store for sale, it must be 4<sup>th</sup> of July; when the Christmas candy is available, it must be Halloween; and when the Easter candy is available, it must be Christmas time... We made it through the New Year holidays, which are in our rear view mirror now, and we look toward Eastertide.

I have the Judson Press website [www.judsonpress.com](http://www.judsonpress.com) saved on my favorites and I am using their “Word and prayer of the day” in support of my daily quiet time alone with Jesus. I see a couple of great resources for the Lenten Season on their website which I plan on using. 1) [More Litanies for All Occasions](#) 2) [Let Us Pray-Lent-Easter DIY](#) and 3) [The Bible Live](#) (Children’s resource). At \$4.00 each for the PDF version, one can’t beat Judson Press’s value and support of our own ABC-USA bookstore.

Blessings to all our Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors. I leave you with a prayer from the Chaplains Prayer Book for Easter: “*We thank Thee, O God, for the day in which life and immortality were brought to light through the resurrection of our blessed Lord from the dead. Evermore in heart and mind, we shall sing praises of joy to Him and we shall show our love for Him by our thoughts, words, and deeds, our helpful service to others, and faithful performance of all our obligations. We earnestly ask Thee to bless and preserve all*

*whom we love, to comfort and aid all in trouble and distress. We offer our thanksgiving for all graces and favors we have received from You.” Amen*

## A REMINDER LETTER



January 2023

Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

We cordially invite you to join the Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors Chapter of the ABCUSA Ministers Council for the year 2023. Our ongoing purpose is to “build up the Church of Jesus Christ by sustaining and improving the professional church leadership of the American Baptist Churches USA in general, and chaplains and pastoral counselors in particular.” Recently, we have been focused on member support and raising our profile within the wider denomination.

Since our formation in 1991 at the ABC Biennial in Charleston, West Virginia, all endorsed American Baptist chaplains and pastoral counselors have been invited to join our chapter of the ABC Ministers Council. This larger, national body gives us many opportunities to connect with and find support from fellow ABC clergy, something many of us, working in non-congregational settings, often find difficult to do. We also recognize that our training, plus our experiences in varied secular environments, gifts us with much to offer back to our denomination and colleagues.

2022 began with the serious loss of our former president, Karen Pickler, in February. We miss her sense of humor and knowledge of ABC history as we carry her strong memory with us. Rick Barnes, our representative to National Ministers Council, stepped up to publish our newsletters. Petra van de Water sourced and led a webinar on “The Last Things We Say,” while Nat Milton and Sarah Fogg produced our new brochure on pastoral counseling. Lee Axtell continued to represent the chapter at two Professional Ministries team meetings and made sure your membership applications were handled and all our bills paid. We trust you read the chapter’s four newsletters with interest and thank those of you who attended any of our three webinars.

You may pay your dues in either of two ways 1) to us, by completing the attached application form and enclosing a check for both the National Ministers Council and our chapter of the Ministers Council, or 2) through the National Ministers Council website, which allows you to pay them and us. Either way, please fill out and return the attached membership application, including your areas of expertise, so that we may know you better and be more aware of the depth of talent and gifts otherwise hidden in

our chapter membership. Don't forget to note the sliding scale for national membership dues. We would like to have all our members paid up and onboard no later than June 30, and much earlier, if possible.

We hope to see many of you this summer in Puerto Rico at the ABC Biennial. Our chapter is hosting a dinner meeting the evening of Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 5-7:30 PM, so please save the date! Meanwhile, we encourage you to join us on the Ministers Council Facebook page. Participants are finding both helpful ways to connect, voice concerns, and stay abreast on what is going on in the denomination that affects us.

May God continue to bless you in your ministries.

Your Executive Committee,

President: Rev. Dr. Sarah L. Fogg  
Member-at-Large, Rev. Richard Barnes  
Member-at-Large, Rev. Petra van de Water

Secretary/Treasurer: Rev. Lee Axtell  
Member-at-Large, Rev. Nathaniel Milton

The application is on the next page. Feel free to print it as necessary.



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

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

Submitted my 2022 or plan to submit my annual report to our Ecclesiastical Endorser. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1) Ministers Council Dues (choose one from below)

Annual Income of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00

\$60,000 or more: \$100.00

\$25,000-59,999: 50.00

\$10,000-24,999: 25.00

Under \$10,000: 10.00

2) C & PC chapter Dues \$ 25.00

3) Total Dues Submitted: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00

Mail your check and this completed form to:

(Check payable to **Ministers Council**)

Rev. Lee Axtell, Secretary/Treasurer  
C & PC Ministers Council  
1248 Onioni Street  
Kailua, Hawaii 96734

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

