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

June, 2024

IN THIS EDITION

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THE BORING STUFF THAT
KEEPS US STRUCTURED.

ELECTION TIME

Soon it will be time for the elections to elect our leaders for the next term. No, we don't mean *those* elections, important as they are. We mean for our chapter. Our chapter continues because dedicated people are willing to help keep it moving. You will see the report of the nominating committee below, followed by biographical information for each candidate. You will also see an invitation to attend a Zoom "Meet the Candidates" session. We covet your prayers through this process as we seek the will of God in this and all our endeavors.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

-by Bruce Chaplin and Larry Cusick

Report from the 2024 Nominating Committee
Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors Chapter
Ministers Council, ABUSA

During the months of April and May 2024, we canvassed, assessed, and contacted Chapter members under consideration for elected service to the Chapter.

We are pleased to announce the following slate of officers for four-year terms beginning September 2024. Each candidate is listed below with their picture, bio, and contact information.

1. President-Rick Barnes
2. Immediate Past President-Sarah Fogg
3. Treasurer-Jennifer Casstevens-Lopez
4. Member-at-Large-Lee Axtell



Tap here to add a caption

You should receive a voting ballot during the month of July. We ask that you prayerfully consider each candidate, and vote.

Yours in Christ's service,

Rev. Bruce Chaplin
Rev. Larry Cusick
Rev. Sarah Fogg, Liaison
Chapter Executive Committee

OUR NOMINATING COMMITTEE



Rev. Bruce Chaplin

Rev. Bruce Chaplin works at Correctional Counseling, a private firm contracted by four Mississippi counties to provide skills development in relapse prevention. He is a certified sex offender treatment provider and has a diverse background, having served as a retired Air Force Chaplain, hospital chaplain, pastor, educator, and addiction counselor.

Rev. Larry Cusick

Larence Ray Cusick (Larry) was born and raised in Michigan near Detroit. His wife, Deloris Carrow Cusick, deceased, was born in Chocowinity NC. She retired from the DOD as a GS-11 contract negotiator. They have two children, Caroline A. Crawford, an assistant district attorney in Halifax County and William R. Cusick, a retired pilot, Colonel Louisiana Air National Guard who instructs Jr ROTC in an inner city school. They have three grandchildren Noel, Benjamin and Philip.

Larry retired from the USAF in 1996 at the rank of Lt. Colonel, pastored two churches in Florida, taught Bible and ethics at two colleges as an adjunct instructor. He presently lives in Red Oak NC.. where he is an interim pastor



MEET THE CANDIDATES



Nominee for President- Rev. Richard Barnes, MDiv, BCC
Chaplainrickbarnes@gmail.com

Growing up as pastor's kid, Rick Barnes swore up and down that he would never have anything to do with ministry. Faith in Jesus, sure, but definitely not ministry. But Rick experienced a time of a broken heart, and when that happened, people from the local InterVarsity chapter simply reached out in love. Soon, he became the student leader of the chapter and began to sense the call for, you guessed it, ministry. Rick graduated from the University of Maine at Presque Isle with a BS from the College of Education (Secondary Ed) with emphases in History and Political Science. Rick graduated from Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, KS (Now Shawnee, KS). It was there he met fellow student Mercy Gonzalez.

They were married, and both graduated from Central. Just prior to their departure, their daughter Aida was born. Rick served as a pastor in Lake City, IA, where their second child, Richie, was born, and later in Agawam, MA, where their third child, Joshua, was born.

Rick and Mercy (now Rev. Mercy Gonzalez-Barnes) served as commissioned overseas missionaries of International Ministries (ABFMS) together in the area surrounding Mexicali, Mexico, for 11 years. Mercy continues as a Global Servant in theological education. Rick felt the call for chaplaincy and completed a year of residency at Yuma Regional Medical Center, AZ. He served with Church World Service as a chaplain at an ICE detention center until it closed in 2014, and has since worked as the chaplain at Imperial Regional Detention Facility, CA for nearly 10 years, ministering with detained non-citizens.



Nominee for Immediate Past President-Rev. Sarah L. Fogg, Ph.D., MDiv., BCC sarahfogg4@gmail.com

A graduate of Union Theological Seminary, Sarah Fogg founded and, for 25 years, directed two hospital Departments of Pastoral Care in the New York Metro area of Westchester County. Ethics, family emotional process, and perinatal bereavement were her areas of expertise.

Sarah had previously held positions as professor of French and Comparative Literature at four universities, as literary examiner at the Library of Congress, as humanities career counselor at California State University at Long Beach, and as project director for a Manhattan consulting firm.

She lives in Dumfries, Virginia, with her husband and strong support of 44 years, Dr. Robert Highsmith. Both Sarah and Bob serve as Court-Appointed Special Advocates for abused and neglected children.

Active in her Homeowners Association, Sarah chairs the Volunteering Advisory Group and is a leader of a Bible Studies Interest Group. Sarah has served as President of the Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors Ministers Council Chapter from 2020-2024.



Nominee for Treasurer- Rev. Jennifer Casstevens-Lopez, M.Div., BCC and Coaching Student jlcass@hotmail.com

Rev. Jennifer was born and raised in New England. After graduating in 1987 from American International College with her bachelor's in psychology, she entered Andover Newton Theological School, earning her Master of Divinity in 1991. Upon graduation Jennifer was ordained in the American Baptist Churches USA and served as a pulpit minister.

Rev. Jennifer found her true calling at the bedside during visitation and focused her ministry on becoming a professional Chaplain. For nearly thirty years, endorsed by the American Baptist Churches USA and Certified through the Association of Professional Chaplains, she has successfully served as a Chaplain in a variety of settings.

Currently, she periodically leads workshops connected to Spiritual Care and is very interested in the mind-body connection. As a life-long learner she is adding to her toolbox through courses at The Mindfulness Coaching School.

Jennifer serves on the Spiritual Life Committee in her home church and is a member of the Friends of the Library Board in her local city. She is looking forward to serving on the Executive Committee of the American Baptist Chaplains & Pastoral Counselors Ministers Council.

She lives in Massachusetts with her husband, daughter, and their family dog.



Rev. Lee Axtell, DMin, MDiv.- Nominee for Member at Large lee.axtell@gmail.com

Lee Axtell is a native of San Pedro, California. He earned his Master of Divinity from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1989 and a Doctor of Ministry from Andover Newton Theological School in Boston, Massachusetts, in 2017. His D.Min project was on the Navy Chaplaincy's Marriage Enrichment Retreat and Training Program. His civilian church ministry was as Associate Pastor, concentrating on Youth Ministry and Christian Education at First Baptist Church, Claremont, California, from 1989-1993. He was ordained in the Pacific Southwest Region, now known as ABC of Los Angeles, Southwest, and Hawaii. He began active duty as a Navy

Chaplain in 1993, and some of his duty stations included service on aircraft carriers, amphibious ships, and Marine Corps Expeditionary Units. One of his most memorable positions was serving at the Navy Chaplain training ministry called CREDO – in Latin “I believe” – signifying in part that “I believe” I can have a better marriage, be a better parent, and be more successful in my career.

He currently serves on staff with the U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii, and supervises Chaplains and enlisted Religious Program Specialists serving with the Marine Corps in the Pacific Theater. He and Paula attend First Baptist Church, Honolulu, Hawaii. He serves as Church Moderator, and together, they support the Children and Young Adult ministries. He occasionally preaches at the church and also preaches at the Pearl Harbor and Marine Corps Base Chapels. He is currently serving on the Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors Ministers Council Executive Committee as the Secretary and Treasurer. He and Paula have three grown daughters, Kayleigh, Alexandra, and Piper, and three grandchildren.

Those who continue to serve in the midst of their terms.



Rev. Dr. Petra Van der Water, DMin., MDiv.- Member-at-Large
petravandewater@gmail.com

The Rev. Dr. Petra van de Water was born and raised in the Netherlands and moved to California in 2004. In the Netherlands, Petra prioritized caring for her young family. She worked part-time as a human resource consultant for the police force and municipal government and as an independent career coach and trainer.

She has been involved in ministry since she was 15, working with children and youth, providing pastoral care, and facilitating small groups. Shortly after moving to California, Petra's teenage son was diagnosed with cancer. While caring for her son and volunteering in small groups and pastoral care ministry, Petra completed her Master's in Christian Leadership at Fuller Theological Seminary in 2008. After graduating, her family spent four years in India for work. Petra partnered with several local NGOs in counseling, pastoral training, and ministry projects. Within her local church, she ministered to women and small groups.

After returning from India, Petra began her Clinical Pastoral Education at Stanford Healthcare in 2013. She has since worked as a chaplain in hospice and the hospital. Petra earned her Doctor of Ministry in Spiritual Direction from Fuller Theological Seminary in 2024. Her doctoral project is titled "The Touch and Taste of Divine Love: Embodied Contemplative Practices for Spiritual Care Practitioners in Healthcare." Currently, Petra works as a relief chaplain at Stanford Medicine Children's Hospital in Palo Alto, California. She also leads monthly worship services in care homes through SpiritCare Ministry to Seniors. Petra has been a member-at-large of the Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors Ministers Council Executive Committee since 2021. She is married to Cor, and they have two adult children, Aer and Yorick.



Rev. Nathaniel Milton, MDiv.,MA,MS- Member-at Large

nmilton@peninsulapastoral.org

Nat Milton is an ordained Baptist Minister and has served as a Campus Minister, Pastor, and Associate Pastor. He served as a Navy Chaplain for over twenty-four years.

For the past 14 years, he has been a counselor at Peninsula Pastoral Counseling Center in Newport News, VA, with foci in Loss and Bereavement, Anger Management, Stress Management, Pre-marital/Marital Counseling, Mediation, Job/Career Matters, Spiritual Direction, and Grief Counseling.

His education includes Bachelor of Arts, Alcorn State University, Lorman, Mississippi; Master of Divinity, Morehouse School of Religion (ITC), Atlanta, Georgia; Master of Arts, Salve Regina University, Newport, Rhode Island; Master of Science in Pastoral Counseling, Loyola University (Maryland); Spiritual Directors Formation Program, Honolulu, Hawaii; Post Graduate Studies, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland; and Further Studies, The College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia.

He is a certified Grief Counselor and a member of Spiritual Directors International and American Counseling Association.

He states: "We function best when we relate to others rather than function in isolation.

We increase our ability to cope as we become more connected with others."

To illustrate that connectedness, Nat is an integral part of the effort to keep his graduating high school class abreast of the changes that happen as time passes.

Nat is married, has two children, and three grandchildren.

MEET THE CANDIDATES NIGHT- YOU ARE INVITED

On Thursday, July 11, you are invited to a question-and-answer session with the candidates. This will be a time where dialogue about direction and priorities can happen, as well as simply getting to know the candidates better.

Topic: CPC Zoom Meeting

Time: Jul 11, 2024 08:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89002450284?pwd=227baBbyVYsa0N1vooVOrgF9rr6qUk.1>

Meeting ID: 890 0245 0284

Passcode: 830123

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,89002450284#,,,,*830123# US (Washington DC)

+13052241968,,89002450284#,,,,*830123# US

Dial by your location

- +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
- +1 305 224 1968 US
- +1 309 205 3325 US
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
- +1 646 931 3860 US
- +1 253 205 0468 US
- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
- +1 360 209 5623 US
- +1 386 347 5053 US
- +1 507 473 4847 US
- +1 564 217 2000 US
- +1 669 444 9171 US
- +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)
- +1 689 278 1000 US
- +1 719 359 4580 US

Meeting ID: 890 0245 0284

Passcode: 830123

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kdCxIRxglZ>

We will be mailing a ballot out on July 12 via Survey Monkey. We hope for your prayerful participation in the meeting and also in casting your ballot.

THE BORING STUFF THAT KEEPS US STRUCTURED

BYLAWS

The Ministers Council Chapter for Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors

American Baptist Churches USA

April 21, 2020

Article I – Name

The name of this body shall be The Ministers Council Chapter for Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors, American Baptist Churches USA.

Article II – Purpose

Section 1. The purpose of this body 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.

Section 2. To achieve this purpose this body shall:

- a. maintain professional and ethical standards of the Christian ministry,
- b. give support to the members of this body and be an advocate for them in their professional associations and in denominational life,
- c. interpret the appropriate roles of chaplains and pastoral counselors to the constituent parts of our denomination and to the local American Baptist churches,
- d. encourage the recruitment and nurture of candidates for chaplaincy and pastoral counseling,
- e. provide a means for expression and debate by members of this body on issues that affect the professional leadership of the American Baptist Churches USA,
- f. cooperate with the appropriate units of the American Baptist Churches USA in matters of mutual interest and concern including: 1) recruitment, 2) placement, 3) compensation, 4) continuing education, and 5) counseling,
- g. encourage the members of this body to fully participate in the constituent Ministers Council in their Region,
- h. give support to the American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) and the Office of Chaplaincy and Specialized Ministries.

Article III – Relationships

Section 1. The Ministers Council Chapter for Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors cooperates with the American Baptist Churches USA in the purposes and objectives of that body.

Section 2. The Ministers Council Chapter for Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors is for those persons in relationship with the endorsing committee of the Office of Chaplaincy and Specialized Ministries, and will work in a cooperative and supportive manner with them.

Article IV – Membership

Section 1. Eligibility for membership in this body shall be for individuals who are approved or endorsed for ministry to persons in special need by the endorsing committee of the Office of Chaplaincy and Specialized Ministries, or who are retired endorsees, and who pay dues to this body.

Section 2. Membership in this body shall be for the calendar year.

Section 3. Dues for this body shall be payable at the beginning of each calendar year.

Section 4. Dues shall be established by the Executive Committee with the approval of this body. The privilege of voting and holding office in this body is reserved for those active members who pay dues.

Section 5. Membership in the Ministers Council Chapter for Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors shall cease when either:

- a. dues are not paid;
- b. An individual is no longer approved or endorsed by the endorsing committee of the Office of Chaplaincy and Specialized Ministries..

Article V – Officers

Section 1. Titles: The Officers of the Ministers Council Chapter for Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors shall be: a President, the immediate Past President, a Secretary/Treasurer, and at least two Members-at-large positions. All officers of this body shall be active members of this body at the time of their election.

Section 2. Representation and Terms of Office:

- a. The President, immediate Past President, and Secretary/Treasurer shall be elected by the body to a four-year term.
- b. At least two members-at-large shall be elected from the following constituencies by the body to four-year terms, and where possible, in two-year staggered terms:
 - 1) Military Chaplain on Extended Active Duty
 - 2) Military Chaplain not on Extended Active Duty
 - 3) Institutional Chaplain/CPE Supervisor
 - 4) Institutional Chaplain Not a CPE Supervisor
 - 5) Pastoral Counselor
 - 6) Retired Endorsee.
- c. Terms of office shall begin on September 1 of the election year.

Section 3. Executive Committee:

- a. All Officers serve as members of the Executive Committee.

Section 4. Duties:

- a. The President shall:
 1. preside at all meetings of the Ministers Council Chapter for Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors and the Executive Committee;
 2. be an ex-officio member of all other committees of this body.
 3. Designate representation for the Ministers Council, Endorsing Committee and other boards or duties.
- b. The Secretary/Treasurer shall:
 1. keep an accurate record of the current proceedings of this body and the Executive Committee
 2. provide for the safekeeping of the records and official documents of this body
 3. assist the President and the Executive Committee in all areas of finance
 4. be authorized to sign checks
 5. submit financial records for an annual audit
- b. The Members-at-large shall:
 1. represent this body's constituents
 2. participate as Officers in the duties of the Executive Committee

Article VI – Executive Committee

Section 1. Executive Committee

- a. There shall be an Executive Committee of this body composed of the President, the immediate past President, the Secretary/Treasurer, and at least two Members-at-large.
- b. The duties of the Executive Committee shall be to:
 1. conduct the affairs of this body between meetings,
 2. appoint the committees needed to perform the work of this body,
 3. determine the size and term of appointed committees, and review annually the work of such committees,
 4. plan for the national meetings and other programs of this body,
 5. name representatives from this body to other organizations upon request,
 6. appoint a Nominating Committee which shall present a slate of officers to the body,
 7. fill all positions vacated between elections.

Article VII – Committees and Task Forces

Section 1. The Nominating Committee will make nominations reflecting geographic balance, the constituency of male/female and ethnic diversity as well as those in specialized areas of ministry of this body.

Section 2. Other committees or task forces may be established as the need arises.

Article VIII – Meetings

Section 1. The body may convene at the time of the Biennial Meeting of the American Baptist Churches USA to determine general policies, formulate recommendations, elect officers, set dues on recommendation of the Executive Committee, and adopt the budget. Persons unable to attend the Biennial Meeting may vote by absentee ballot.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall meet annually and at such other times as it may deem necessary.

Section 3. Those present at the meeting of this body at the Biennial Meeting of the American Baptist Churches USA shall constitute a quorum. Three elected officers present shall constitute a quorum for the Executive Committee.

Article IX – Parliamentary Authority

The current edition of Roberts' Rules of Order shall be the manual to guide this body in all matters of parliamentary practice not prescribed in these Bylaws or special rules which this body may adopt.

Article X – Amendment of Bylaws

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, provided that the amendment has been recommended by the Executive Committee of this body or proposed upon written signature of fifteen (15) members and notice of such an amendment has been submitted in writing to all at least one month prior to being voted upon.