



THE REVEREND LEO S. THORNE, Ph.D.

**Associate General Secretary for Mission Resource Development
American Baptist Churches USA**

As associate general secretary for American Baptist Churches USA, the Reverend Dr. Leo Thorne provides leadership for the department of Mission Resource Development within ABCUSA. He is chiefly responsible for communicating the vision and mission story of the denomination, developing stewardship resources for local congregations, and assisting the program boards and regions in raising mission support.

A full schedule of speaking and preaching engagements enables Rev. Thorne to raise awareness of the opportunities that local American Baptist congregations have for mission. His international preaching engagements and lectures spanning three decades have taken him to South Korea, Germany, England, South Africa, Mexico, Malaysia, the Caribbean, Canada and India. Rev. Thorne has also served for many years in community building in intercultural and ecumenical settings and has advocated for justice and fair treatment for all people on state and local levels. He has initiated and participated in ministries and social initiatives of healing, hope and reconciliation. His personal style is to be proactive—to build bridges and bring people together.

Rev. Thorne has served as a pastor in culturally diverse settings for over 15 years in Trinidad, West Indies (his birthplace); Brooklyn, N.Y.; Oakland, N.J.; and Kansas City, Mo. As a member of the Riverside Church in New York City for several years, he led the liturgy, preached, and served on numerous committees focused on spiritual nurture and worship. He served as a member of the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey's Conflict and Reconciliation Team, and, at the Baptist World Alliance, he serves on the Executive Committee of the Communications Committee and as a member of the Commission on Doctrine and Christian Unity. Rev. Thorne's current ministry within ABCUSA draws from his wide experience in networking and using print and broadcast media outlets. He has made several radio and television appearances, written bylines for several newspapers and for ten years hosted "The Poet's Corner," a monthly radio poetry broadcast he created. His book, *Prayers from Riverside* (Pilgrim Press), was updated and re-issued in November 2012. He currently serves on the Working Group of International Religious Freedom, an initiative of the U.S. Department of State.

Rev. Thorne has also distinguished himself over the years as a scholar and educator on the university level and has received several awards for teaching, scholarship, and outstanding service to society. He was the member of a team whose grant proposal won a New Jersey State Challenge Grant to Higher Education of \$2.5 million. In 1997, he received an award for his support of New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman's "Many Faces, One Family" initiative. He has also served on a number of boards, and was a panelist for the National Endowment of the Humanities. Rev. Thorne holds a doctorate in American Literature from Columbia Pacific University and two Masters degrees, including the Master of Divinity degree from Drew University. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by the American Baptist Seminary of the West in May 2013. He is married to the Reverend Dr. Yvonne Martinez Thorne, an ordained American Baptist clergy and a licensed counseling psychologist.