



American Baptist News Service

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ABHMS Announces Ministry Award Recipients

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 2/14/13)—American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) announces American Baptist clergy and lay leaders who will receive awards for significant faith-based work. Recipients were selected by the ABHMS board of directors from nominations submitted by clergy and laypersons across the United States and Puerto Rico. While some awards will be presented at the American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA) Mission Summit/Biennial to be held June 21-23, 2013, in Overland Park, Kan., others will be presented at regional locations.

The Reverends Steve and Mary Hammond, co-pastors of Peace Community Church, Oberlin, Ohio, will receive the **Edwin T. Dahlberg Peace Award** for significant efforts toward peace over a period of time. Their ministry has been instrumental in establishing Ecumenical Christians of Oberlin at Oberlin College. Through their ministry, faculty, students and community members were inspired to create a Peace and Conflict Studies concentration at the college, which earned them the Distinguished Service to the Community Award in 2009.

The Rev. James Hopkins, pastor of Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church, Oakland, Calif., will receive the **American Baptist Religious Freedom Award** for leadership in defending God-given religious liberty for all. Throughout his ministry, Hopkins has been committed to the historic Baptist principles of “Bible Freedom, Soul Freedom, Church Freedom and Religious Freedom,” resulting in a “healing presence” and his embracing leaders from Jewish and Islamic faith groups.

The Rev. Debbie Bennett Reynolds, associate pastor of Lake Avenue Baptist Church, Rochester, N.Y., will receive the **Richard Hoiland Local Christian Education Award** for educational programs in local church or wider community. She leads an after-school group for neighborhood girls; oversees leadership training for youth and adults; offers education for mission and service; provides educational resources for a continuing education program that has grown to include 175 individuals under age 20; developed a program to help young people and parents navigate the local school systems; and started classes for immigrants from Burma.

Dr. Kevin Eichner, president of Ottawa (Kan.) University, will receive the **Luther Wesley Smith Education Award** for educational programs in college or seminary. He launched the Frederickson Center

for Faith and Church Vitality; served as facilitator of a series of programs to enrich servant leadership in the local community; developed a pastoral training program, offered at no cost to American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA) pastors throughout the Midwest; and formed a Cadre of Champions, a group of past, present and future educators who share best practices for education in the current challenging age.

The Rev. H. Mark Tuttle, pastor of the Burke-Lucas Baptist Parish in South Dakota, will receive the **Rosa O. Hall Rural and Small Town Award** for a pastor in rural or small town ministry. Under Tuttle's leadership, the multi-generational church has grown in stewardship, mission and ministry to young people as well as in community service. The congregation has engaged in ministries on the Pine Ridge Native American Reservation and provided micro-loans to mission partners in India. Known as a pillar in the community, Tuttle is a founder of the Burke Community Foundation, which promotes the social and economic well-being of the Burke community.

The Rev. Ashlee Wiest-Laird, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jamaica Plain, Mass., will receive the **Edward H. Rhoades Urban Ministry Award** for a pastor in urban ministry. Helping to rebuild the church after a fire, she has transformed a 20-person Anglo congregation into a vibrant 80-person multicultural one whose mission statement is "Many Cultures, One Faith." She works with the Jamaica Plain Business and Professionals Association, campus ministries at Andover-Newton Theological School as well as on ABCUSA's associational, regional, national and international levels. She shepherds two student pastors yearly; leads candlelight vigils to protest violence; blesses bicycles for riders of Boston's busy streets; and spearheaded creation of and funding for a position to minister to neighborhood youth.

Cathie Carpenter, lay co-pastor with her husband, Jim, of West Waynesburg Jesus Distributors (WWJD) in Pennsylvania, will receive the **Jitsuo Morikawa Evangelism Award** for a layperson for leadership in holistic evangelism. To be close to the community they serve, the couple sold their home and moved into a modest house across from the church in a neighborhood of beer distributors and bars. Cathie has been instrumental in a variety of programs that have made a difference, including summer breakfast programs; a food-distribution program that serves more than 200 individuals; tutoring; a women's shelter; Habitat for Humanity; recovery ministries; a clothing drive that allowed children to start the school year with new clothes; and converting a bar for use with youth programs.

Chaplain Paul N. Rumery will receive the **Merit Award for Military Chaplaincy**. A member of the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps, an ABC-endorsed military chaplain and an ABCUSA-endorsed institutional chaplain, Rumery is a combat veteran, having completed deployment as chaplain for the 3rd Battalion 6th Marines to Helmand Province, Afghanistan. He has also served as chaplain for the 2nd Marine Regiment. At Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune, Rumery's assignments include primary duties for the Multi-Service Ward and intensive care unit, as well as back-up responsibilities for inpatient psychiatric groups. He serves as deputy to the command chaplain and assists in the daily operation of the department, the supervision of two pastoral counselors and two enlisted personnel. He authored "The High Cost of Caring Too Much," a research paper on compassion fatigue and burnout.

The Rev. Dr. E. Harry Simmons, institutional chaplain at Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center, Richmond, Va., will receive the **Merit Award for Institutional Chaplaincy**. Known for interfaith leadership, Simmons not only was instrumental in recruiting and hiring the first full-time Roman Catholic chaplain at the polytrauma center since 1996 but also co-celebrated mass at the medical center with a bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Richmond—a first for the VA. In addition

to providing pastoral care and counseling at the medical center, Simmons is a professor at the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology, Virginia Union University. He has served on numerous local, regional and national commissions, boards and committees. He twice held a three-year term as chair of the Racial, Ethnic and Multicultural Network, where he worked with the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education for the inclusion of people of color on national leadership commissions and committees.

The Rev. Dr. Ruth Rosell, associate pastor of Care and Counseling at Prairie Baptist Church and an assistant professor of Pastoral Theology at Central Baptist Theological Seminary, will receive the **Merit Award for Pastoral Counseling**. As associate pastor, Rosell provides pastoral care and counseling at no cost to church members and the community at large, and led the church to join the Interfaith Hospitality Network, which provides housing, meals and transportation to county homeless. She was recently awarded the rank of Fellow by the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. She holds a bachelor's degree in Nursing, a Masters of Divinity and a doctorate in Religion and Personality. A task force member for "Sabbaths of Hope"—a depression-education effort of mental health associations and the Center for Practical Bioethics—Rosell has been invited by dozens of organizations to conduct depression-related workshops. She has served ABCUSA as chaplain for Orientation to American Baptist Life and as a board member of ABC of the Central Region.

ABHMS extends warm congratulations to these award recipients, along with prayer that God will continue to bless their ministries.

The window for 2015 award nominations will open in late summer 2014. Many women and men are worthy of consideration for these honors, and American Baptists are strongly encouraged to identify and promote nominees.

For more information about the awards, contact Susan Bogle at sbogle@abhms.org or 1-800-222-3872, x2028.

ABHMS—the domestic mission arm of American Baptist Churches USA—ministers as the caring heart and serving hands of Jesus Christ across the United States and Puerto Rico through a multitude of initiatives that focus on discipleship, community and justice.

American Baptist Churches is one of the most diverse Christian denominations today, with over 5,200 local congregations comprised of 1.3 million members, across the United States and Puerto Rico, all engaged in God's mission around the world.