



American Baptist Women in Ministry

Women Word

Biennial Issue 2009

Rev. Karen Pickler, BCC

American Baptist Women in Ministry Events

Thursday Afternoon: June 25th 2:00 –5:00 pm

The Minister's Council in partnership with Interim Ministries, ABWIM and the Area Ministers Group will host Dr. Leonard Sweet at 2 Pre-Biennial Events. All members of the Ministers Council, Interim Ministers, Area Ministers and ABWIM are invited to participate.

***Women in Ministry Luncheon: June 25th 12:30-2:00 pm**

(*Women in Ministry will meet for lunch prior to the Lecture.

Lunch is \$28.00 and the Lecture is \$30.00 = \$58.00)

Program: Leonard Sweet 2:00—5:00 pm

"What's a Gutenberg Groupie in a Google World Going to Do?"

Friday Morning: June 26th: 9:00 am—Noon

"The Metaphors of the 21st Century: Seven Metaphors that Can transform the World" by Dr. Leonard Sweet
(An offering will be received to offset the costs.)

Friday Evening: June 26th: 5:00—6:45 pm

ABWIM FELLOWSHIP DINNER

Pasadena Convention Center, Ballroom Section G.

Speaker: Dody Matthias

"What are You Gonna Say When You Meet Jesus?"

Honors to Dr. Ella Mitchell and Dr. David Scholer

Music by Joyce Sinclair Lake (ABWIM Admin Assistant)

Cost: \$41.00

(Register for all Biennial events online! The Biennial Program is available online. Call 1800-ABC-3USA for additional information)





"At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." Albert Schweitzer.

Dr. David Scholer and Dr. Ella Mitchell to be Honored at ABWIM Fellowship Dinner

Friday Evening: June 26th: 5:00—6:45 pm



Women in Ministry will celebrate the lives of two remarkable people who have taught, preached and practiced the full inclusion of women in all phases of ministry. The Rev. Dr. A Roy Medley will recognize the contributions of Dr. Ella Mitchell and Dr. David Scholer at the ABWIM Fellowship Dinner on June 26th. Dr. Henry Mitchell will accept the honor on behalf of his wife and Mrs. Jeannette Scholer will accept the honor on behalf of her husband.

According to the Press Release from American Baptist News Service, "Ella Mitchell was a pioneer in African American preaching and religious education and her reputation as a promoter and encourager of women in ministry, especially in the area of homiletics, earned her the title, "Dean of African American Women Preachers." Outspoken on the subject, she once declared, "I am convinced that women were ordained to be in ministry from the very beginning of time."

Dr. David Scholer was a New Testament Professor at Fuller Theological Seminary. His course, "Women, The Bible and the Church" was a popular elective. Through this course and his practice of the faith, "He delivered a message of tolerance and egalitarianism, encouraging skeptics to listen to the stories of women who felt the calling." (Elaine Woo)

Join us for this evening of celebration. Music will be provided by Joyce Sinclair Lake, Administrative Assistant for ABWIM. The Speaker for the Evening will be Dody Matthias.

The Program for the evening will give you the opportunity to express appreciation to those who have supported your ministry. For a small donation, the name of your mentor will be included in the program. Contact Joyce Lake at 1-800-ABC-3USA ext 2070 for more information.

We are Children of a God with a Sense of Humor

By: Rev. Susan Sparks

www.mabcnyc.org

We are children of a God with a sense of humor. What—you doubt?

Well, I can understand. God is not always portrayed as the most jovial of characters. The Book of Exodus, for instance, introduces us to a God who kills the first-born of his enemies and buries their armies in a raging sea. (Not exactly someone you want to pass an afternoon with in Starbucks.)

My all-time favorite is found in Psalm 58: "O God, break the teeth in their mouths ... like grass, let them be trodden down and wither; Let them be like the snail which dissolves into slime ... consume them in wrath, consume them till they are no more." Now there's a friendly greeting card for ya.

The truth is, however, that God is beyond any labels. And while there may well be a part of God that dissolves snails into slime, that same God has a heart that aches over one lost sheep and **laughs** with joy when we return home.

Let's consider some other scriptures that paint a different picture of the holy. How about Genesis 17 where God tells Sarah (at ninety) she will have a baby? Sarah and her ancient husband Abraham both fall to the ground laughing. But, guess who has the last laugh? God. For Sarah has the baby and names it Isaac, the Hebrew word for laughter. (As an aside, I always thought this was a mean trick by God -- who ever heard of obstetrics being covered by Medicare?)

If you still aren't convinced then I'll pull out the big guns. 1 Samuel 5:9 (King James Version). There the Philistines had stolen the Ark of the Covenant from the Israelites and God was understandably upset. And I quote:

"And it was so, that, after [the Philistines] had carried [the Ark] about, the hand of the LORD was against the city with a very great destruction: and he smote the men of the city, both small and great, and they had hemorrhoids in their secret parts."

I say again, we are children of a God with a sense of humor. In truth, I think it is us who have lost our ability to laugh? Perhaps, Voltaire was right when he said, "God is a comedian playing to an audience who is afraid to laugh."

(See her online video series called "Faith and Humor" at...

communities.faithstreams.com/Author/SusanSparks/tabid/26966/default.aspx)



Rev. Susan Sparks

Senior Pastor

Madison Avenue
Baptist Church

New York City.

*"that same God
has a heart that
aches over one
lost sheep and
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when we return
home."*



**Volunteers Needed to Staff
ABWIM BOOTH!**

Please volunteer to staff the ABWIM Booth . If you are planning on attending the Biennial, AB Women in Ministry is looking for volunteers to help staff the display booth at the Mission Fair in the Pasadena Convention Center. Please sign up TODAY by phone 1-800-222-3872 ext 2070

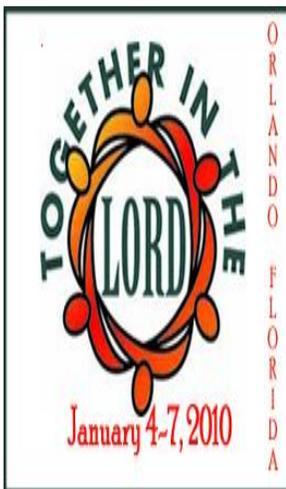


**Scholarship Money
Available
For Pre Biennial Events**

The Financial Aid office in National Ministries is offering \$300 in Continuing Education money for those persons who will be attending on of the PRE—BIENNIAL events in Pasadena. Again, the money is only available if you are planning to attend a pre-biennial event. For information on eligibility and how to apply, please click on the link—http://www.nationalministries.org/education/financial_aid/index.cfm. Use the request form ...Cultivating New Life.



**Mark the Date! Ministry Renewal Conference
January 4-7-2010**



American Baptist Churches USA will present the 2010 Together in the Lord renewal conference at the Wyndham Resort and Conference Center. Featured Speakers and Preachers include.....

Miroslov Volf—Yale Divinity School

Shane Claibourne—The Simple Way

Trinette McCray

Marvin McMickle -



Leadership for the Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors at Pre-Biennial Training Event

Dr. Jan McCormack
Rev. Marilyn P. Turner
Rev. Carolyn Piper



American Baptist Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors live out a more private than public ministry in response to God who calls us to serve those whose needs lie outside the traditional boundaries of congregational ministries. Their most significant work happens in the ‘confessional,’ where confidentiality shields wounded hearts and creates a safe place for healing and God’s transforming work.” Rev. Elizabeth Ritzman

The Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors will meet at a special pre-biennial event for continuing education, worship and fellowship. Dr. Jan McCormack will present “The Role of Religion and Spirituality in Crises and Disasters.” Dr. McCormack is the Assistant Professor of Chaplaincy and Pastoral Counseling and Mentoring Director at Denver Seminary. Recently she co-authored a book with Naomi Paget Called “The Work of The Chaplain.”

The Rev. Marilyn P. Turner is the Associate Executive Director for Program Ministries. She will be the keynote preacher at the awards luncheon. Honorees for this year are:

- Rev. George Burn
- Institution Chaplain Merit Award
- Col. David H Forden
- Military Chaplain Merit Award
- Col. Michael Hoyt
- Military Chaplain Merit Award
- Rev. Gordon Kief
- Pastoral Counselor Merit Award

The Rev Carolyn Piper, President of the Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors Minister’s Council will conduct a business meeting following the luncheon.

Recognitions

Dr. Molly T. Marshal will receive the Luther Wesley Smith Education Award at the First Baptist Church of Junction City Kansas.

Rev. Marsha McDaniel will receive the Richard Hoiland Local Christian Education Award at the First Baptist Church of Indianapolis

Works

The Alban Institute has released the book "Learning the Way: Reclaiming Wisdom from the Earliest Christ Communities." **Cassandra Carkuff Williams, National Ministries' National Coordinator For Discipleship Resource Development** this resource.

Margaret J. Marcuson has just launched the promotion of her new book..."**Leaders Who Last: Sustaining Yourself and Your Ministry.**" Margaret also provides resources for leadership development on her website called The Marcuson Leadership Circle. (www.margaretmarcuson.com)

Rev Lisa Harris, acting coordinator of Children's Ministries/Children in Poverty Initiative is receiving applications for the 2009 Children in Poverty Grants. The initiative is to encourage and equip American Baptist to respond to the needs of Children in poverty through ministries of caring, to recognize and reward existing ministry projects that address children in poverty issues. For more information contact her at lisa.harris@abc-usa.org or 1800-ABC-3USA ext 2158

AB Women's Ministries in partnership with National Ministries is raising monies for scholarships to assist refugee women from Burma to attend the National Women's Conference in July 2009. Also, they are raising monies to assist refugee girls from Burma to attend the National Gathering for Girls in 2009.

Transitions

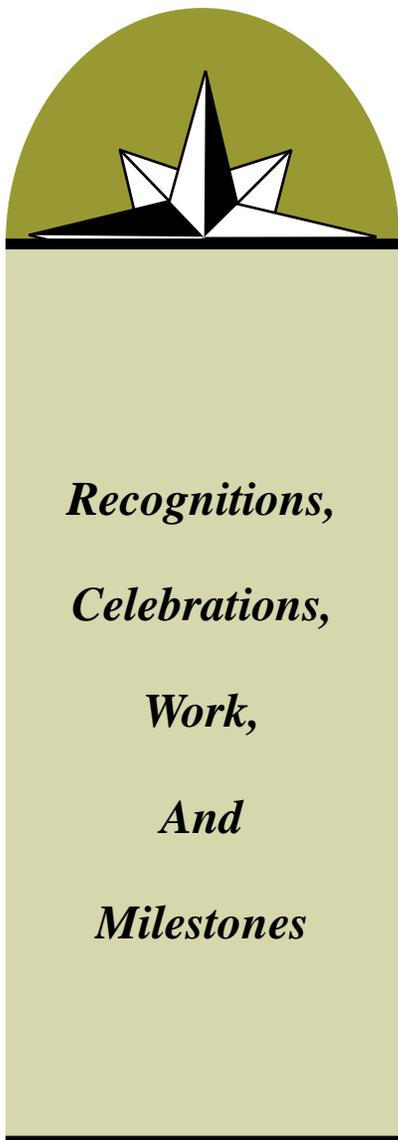
Rev. Valentine Royal Thomas is currently on leave at her request. During her leave OGS is covering phone calls, emails, and correspondence related to Women in Ministry through her assistant, Ms. Joyce Lake. Dr. Medley as her supervisor is making provisions for continuing program commitments until her return to the office.



In Memoriam

Rachel Lee, American Baptist Pastor and Long time denominational Leader died December 2008

Virginia Palmer. American Baptist died March 2009.



A Psalm for All who Keep God's Word...

Miriam Therese Winter

**Happy are we who are doers of the word, who
hear God's word and keep it.**

One thing alone does God require and this do we seek to accomplish:

To do justice
To love tenderly
To walk humbly
With our God.

**Happy are we who are doers of the word, who
hear God's word and keep it.**

Who heals the brokenhearted and binds the wounds of the oppressed, feeds the hungry, shelters the homeless, sets the imprisoned free; these are God's disciples, God's family, God's friends.

**Happy are we who are doers of the word, who
hear God's word and keep it.**

The word of God is a two edged sword that cuts through all hypocrisy, prunes the unsuspecting, strikes at the root of evil, pierces to the heart.

**Happy are we who are doers of the word, who
hear God's word and keep it.**

The word of God is a spark of life living among the rubble, igniting a global consciousness to ways we are one world only, a beacon burning deep in the hearts of those who seek justice and peace.

**Happy are we who are doers of the word, who
hear God's word and keep it.**

The word of God is Word made flesh in every generation, in the outcasts of the system, on the margins of prestige and power, on the downside of tradition, in every face and every place where God's own Spirit dwells.

**Happy are we who are doers of the word, who
hear God's word and keep it.**

Happy are all who love God's word and live it to the full, for they are like trees by rippling streams, birds that soar high singing, prophets of a new age bringing the good Good News to all.



Invitation for Book Contribution

Greetings Sisters in Christ,

This letter is to seek your assistance on an exciting research project launching in early 2009. The initiative will examine the experiences of women senior pastors called to churches affiliated with American Baptist Churches, USA. The project will be led by Rev. Kasey Jones and Rev. Christine Smith, two relatively new senior pastors called to Baptist churches in Washington, DC and Wickliffe, Ohio, respectively.

We are launching the project with the dissemination of a survey for women pastors that is designed to:

Explore ministry contexts that have called women as senior pastor

Look at the unique challenges that women face personally and vocationally while pastoring

Collect stories that can give insight, cautions, and encouragement.

If you are currently a senior pastor who has been called by an American Baptist Church congregation, please let us know if you are interested in participating in the survey. You may respond by sending your name and contact information ...along with others you think may be interested in this project to...

shepastor@msn.com

For more information about the survey, please see page 8 of this newsletter...

Survey to Explore the Experiences of Female Pastors

You are invited to share your experiences....



Dear Pastor,

My name is Chris Smith, Pastor of the Covenant Baptist Church in Wickliffe, Ohio. The Rev. Kasey Jones and I (another solo female Baptist pastor – National Baptist Memorial Church, ABC of Washington D.C.) have developed and launched a survey for solo female Baptist pastors in ABC-USA (we are also hoping to involve solo female Baptist pastors from other conventions). The purpose of the survey is to explore the individual and collective experiences (struggles, victories, insights, stories) of female Baptist pastors.

Once at least 250 -300 surveys have been collected we hope to analyze the findings and include them in a book designed to challenge Baptist clergy, laity and denominational leaders to increase dialogue and develop strategies to help female clergy to break thru the proverbial "glass ceiling."

Below is the link to the survey via email (**we are using "surveymonkey.com"**). I am requesting that if you know of any solo female Baptist pastors (called, elected and serving as senior pastor only) in your region or otherwise, that you would forward this link to them and encourage them to participate. The more responses we get, the broader the findings and hopefully the greater the evidence of our need to strategize for change.

We are hoping to get the survey link on a website soon, but in the mean time, here is the link:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=DtVWUwTegjVb5uSx50_2f5_2fg_3d_3d

If for some reason you cannot click on the link, please just copy it and paste it into the web browser and follow the prompts. Please let me know if it works.

There are a few quirks about the survey that we didn't catch:

- When putting in percentages, leave the "%" sign off and just put in the numbers
- There are some questions that should have been, "yes" or "no" questions (particularly in the married or single section) but for the sake of consistency, we just continued with the "strongly agree, moderately agree, strongly disagree..." format.

If the answer is "yes," just click, "strongly agree." If no, "strongly disagree."

Should you or any respondent have questions or concerns, please feel free to email us at shepastor@msn.com.

Thanks for your support of this effort!

-Pastor Chris Smith

*If you would like
a paper copy of
the survey,
contact
Joyce Lake
1800-ABC-3USA*



The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America gathers, equips and mobilizes Baptists to build a culture of peace rooted in justice. We labour with a wonderful array of peacemakers to change the world.

Baptist Peace Fellowship announces Two Conferences!

****When There Is Justice, Then Peace Will Come**

A Conference for Peacemakers

Sponsored by the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America
July 20-25, 2009 - Weber State University, Ogden, Utah, USA

This summer, peacemakers from around the world will gather on the beautiful campus of Weber State University located in Ogden, Utah in the foothills of the Wasatch Mountains - and we hope you'll be one of them!

We've chosen to be at Weber State because it is easy and affordable to reach, is welcoming of diversity, offers a top-notch facility, is in a gorgeous location, and allows great vacation opportunities before and after conference.

We'll be led by an amazing line-up of speakers, artists, and musicians including:

Ken Sehested, BPFNA's founding director and our keynote speaker, will reflect on the past and future of peacemaking.

Paul Dekar, a long-time peace activist, will offer Prayers for Activists each morning.

Rita Nakashima Brock, noted co-author of the award-winning *Saving Paradise: How Christianity Traded Love of This World for Crucifixion and Empire*, will lead Bible studies on the earthly meaning of Paradise.

Greg Ledbetter, pastor and musician, will lead creative nightly worship services.

Kate Campbell, the celebrated singer-songwriter, will share stories in song.

Angela Yarber, dancer and educator, will lead as artist-in-residence using her talents in dance, painting and theater.

D.E. (Darrell) Adams, special guest singer-songwriter, will lead times of music.

Janet Chisholm, a nationally-known trainer, will offer an optional intensive workshop track focused on Nonviolence Training for Personal and Social Change.

As always, we'll have workshops on a wide variety of topics, programs for children and youth, special gatherings for young adults, fun free-time activities, after-hours events and more! This is a conference for everyone who longs for the spirituality, inspiration, skills, knowledge, and community to support a life of peace rooted in justice.

"When there is justice, then peace will come."

****Creating a Culture of Peace: Nonviolence Training for Personal & Social Change Featuring Janet Chisholm**

Peace and Training Coordinator, Kirkridge Retreat & Study Center

October 9-11, 2009 Charlotte, NC

Presented by the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America

This training is for everyone wishing to acquire the skills necessary to work actively and nonviolently for personal and community change. It provides a holistic, practical, spiritually grounded foundation for active, nonviolent personal empowerment that will help you build peacemaking communities.

*For more
information
Cost, lodging,
travel....*

See the Website

www.bpfna.org



**American Baptist
Women in Ministry**

Rev. Valentine Royal
Executive Director
American Baptist Women in Ministry
PO Box 851
Valley Forge, PA 19464

WOMEN WORD NEWSLETTER
Rev. Karen Pickler



**FACEBOOK and MY FAMILY
Online Communities for ABWIM!**

These are just a few of the faces of American Baptist Women in Ministry. So many more exist than these pages can hold. Their ministries span the globe, reach children, teens and adults, bring peace to troubled hearts., healing to mind, body and soul, preach the Word, Teach the Word, Exhort, and Evangelize. This is our calling and this is what we do.

It may be impossible to meet all our Sisters in person....but you can meet them in your regions and in Cyberspace. It is an opportunity to receive support, guidance, inspiration and celebrate your work.

Contact Mary Mild at
mary_mild@msn.com to receive your invitation to the My Family.com ABWIM "The Well". Go to Facebook to join the American Baptist Women in Ministry network located there.

