



Visit ABHMS Prison Cell at ABCUSA Mission Summit

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 6/3/13)—At American Baptist Churches USA’s Mission Summit/Biennial, June 21-23, 2013, in Overland Park/Kansas City, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) will offer participants the unique experience of visiting a prison cell.

This model cell—part of ABHMS’ Mission Summit exhibit—is intended as a prayer site. Built by former inmate José Ramón Alicea, the “prayer cell” expresses Alicea’s gratitude to God and reminds fellow followers of Christ to keep prisoners in their thoughts and prayers.

During Alicea’s incarceration, he and his family received care and inspiration through prayer support generated by ABHMS’s Prisoner Re-entry and Aftercare Ministry. After his release, Alicea witnessed God’s unfailing love through the encouragement of First Hispanic Baptist Church, Lancaster, Pa., which participated in the ABHMS ministry. He turned to Christ and was baptized March 24, 2013—a result of the ministry’s continued compassion and prayer.

Along with prayer support, ABHMS’ Prisoner Re-entry and Aftercare Ministry provides education about individual and family issues related to incarceration as well as resources and networking for churches that minister to released inmates, referred to as “returning citizens.” Churches can participate in many ways, from gathering essentials needed to re-enter society after incarceration—such as clothing and toiletries—to providing emotional counseling and job training.

ABHMS’ Prisoner Re-entry and Aftercare Ministry seeks to transform churches into “Stations of Hope,” where returning citizens can come for unconditional acceptance and hope. Stations of Hope congregations seek to walk alongside returning citizens to offer them a second chance and guide them in their new freedom.

ABHMS invites Mission Summit participants to visit Alicea’s prayer cell for contemplation and prayer.

For more information, visit www.abhms.org > Ministries & Programs > Justice Ministries > [Prisoner Re-entry and Aftercare Ministry](#), or contact the Rev. Fela Barrueto, national coordinator, at fela.barrueto@abhms.org or 1-800-222-3872, x2493.

To register for the Mission Summit/Biennial, visit www.abc-usa.org and click the “Mission Summit” logo.

American Baptist Home Mission Societies—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.