

WomenWord

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES USA

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A NEW LANDSCAPE OF LEADERSHIP

During the time I was conducting my DMin project exploring the practices that contribute to women fulfilling their calls to ministry, one practice that came up again and again was the practice of having a mentor who shared the journey, strengthened one's sense of call and showed the way, someone who shared their knowledge, expertise and insight, who listened, laughed and lightened the journey.

With women increasingly being called to a variety of professional ministerial positions throughout American Baptist life, the landscape of leadership is changing. But challenges remain. It is because of those challenges that mentoring relationships are all the more important.

Recognizing the crucial role that mentors play, ABWIM is launching its first ever Annual Appeal. As part of that appeal, we have been collecting stories of mentors. What follows are stories from key leaders in our denomination, leaders who have helped shape the landscape of leadership, leaders who acknowledge that without the pivotal role of mentors, they would not be where they are today. Your story too is part of this changing landscape. Your voice is important in shaping the future. Consider adding your story by going to the ABWIM website, www.abwim.org and following the instructions.



When we listen to and read the stories of women—women like yourself—who have broken through barriers into new positions, we gain a new model of what leadership looks like. New models give us new ways of envisioning leadership and transforming the future so that all God's gifts in all God's people can be fully accessed, embraced and utilized for the good of all and the glory of God!

Read the following stories and then add your own!

Your partner in ministry,

Pat

Rev. Dr. Patricia Hernandez, National Director
American Baptist Women in Ministry

IMPASSIONED AND CALLED TO JUSTICE: HOW REV. DR. RALPH DAVID ABERNATHY SR. INFLUENCED MY LIFE

By Rev. Dr. Trinetta V. McCray - Honorary Chair, American Baptist Women in Ministry Annual Appeal

I was working for United Way of Greater Milwaukee in 1979, focusing on community development and community affairs and services. My background was in urban affairs and urban planning.

It was then that I sensed God's call to come into ministry. God said in my heart, "I want you to do this kind of community planning for me. But for me your purpose is to help build my Kingdom, my community here on earth through the Gospel of Jesus Christ." I understood then that God wanted me to come into full-time service with him. That's what ministry is - service to God and God's people. As a young adult, I was deeply involved in leading many ministries at my church, Calvary Baptist Church in Milwaukee. I experienced God's presence and call through those ministries.



REV. DR. TRINETTA V. MCCRAY
WITH REV. DR. RALPH ABERNATHY SR.

Upon accepting God's call, I attended seminary at Morehouse School of Religion in Atlanta, Ga. While there, I became a watch care member of the West Hunter Street Baptist Church where **Rev. Dr. Ralph David Abernathy Sr.**, a former civil rights colleague of Dr. Martin Luther King, was the pastor.

Dr. Abernathy took me in and gave me wonderful pastoral care. He influenced me in a way that was transforming and affirming. I would sit and hear him preach about justice, mercy, righteousness, and God's plan for God's people, and for the world. I would listen to him preaching a social gospel. I could hear him share with all of us his witness and work he had engaged in with Dr. King in the Civil Rights Movement, or "The Movement" as he would reference it.

I was so moved, impressed and influenced by that. It fit together with my previous experience of having had pastors who were social justice-minded, coming from a Milwaukee church that was deeply engaged in my community's justice and civil rights movement.



REV. DR. RALPH ABERNATHY SR.

I remember one time on a trip with Dr. Abernathy when I sat literally on the floor at his feet in the lobby of a hotel and I listened to him share with me, very closely and personally, what being called to that kind of ministry meant for him. He described the kinds of ways in which he and Dr. King had worked together as partners. It was then that I became so aware of the humanity of Dr. Abernathy and the impassioned ways in which those leaders had given their lives in service and ministry to civil rights movements and social justice. It became evident to me that they were not only impassioned, but also called and strengthened by God to do the work they were called to do. With that kind of influence, I persisted in seminary and was ordained by Dr. Abernathy in 1981, by the grace of God.

My ordination itself was a justice move because in Atlanta at that time African American ministers had voted not to ordain or license any woman in ministry. But Dr. Abernathy persisted and assembled the faithful few pastor supporters who would hear my call, examine my theological foundation and, thus, say "yes" to this woman for the ministry of the Gospel. Among those supportive men was Rev. Dr. William Holmes Borders, Sr., pastor of Wheat Street Baptist Church.

So what do I have to share with you as advice? I would say to follow your heart, your spirit, your call wherever and to whomever God leads you to be of help to you, and for you to be of help to those you are led to. I would say to follow that call to all of the various ways in which we all are called to ministry, for ministry is life. And ministry is service. It is our way of giving God our life of service. Then, persist in Jesus' Name to the glory of God.

Go to www.abwim.org to view the video story

A STRONG LIFE INFLUENCE: WHAT REV. ELIZABETH MILLER MEANT TO ME

By Dr. Susan E. Gillies - Honorary Chair American Baptist Women in Ministry Annual Appeal



DR. SUSAN E. GILLIES

One of the women in ministry who had a great influence on my life was **Rev. Elizabeth “Betty” Miller**. Betty was ordained in the late 1940s and served as a pastor in New England. She was a white clergywoman active in the civil rights movement. Her stories were amazing.

While part of demonstrations in one southern community, she slept on a living room sleeper sofa in the parsonage of an African American pastor. One night, guns were fired at the parsonage, and Betty said she flattened herself into the mattress as bullets went over her head.

Betty helped to integrate an all-white beach in Florida. Some of the white people on the beach were so enraged by Betty’s participation, they began to beat her. The African American demonstrators with her formed a human shield over her as she was on her knees at the water’s edge.



REV. BETTY MILLER

I didn’t meet Betty until near the end of her career. She was then the manager of the Individual and Corporate Responsibility Unit of American Baptist Churches National Ministries (now American Baptist Home Mission Societies). She brought great wisdom and healthy humor to her work. I joined the staff of that unit directing the Ministry of the Laity in the Workplace program.

My meetings with Betty helped me so much in adjusting to professional life in ABC. She was a strong advocate for the ministry of the laity as part of her commitment to helping Christians find their unique ministry whether as laity or clergy.

Go to www.abwim.org to view the video story

A MENTOR FOR BREAKING BARRIERS: DR. LARUE A. LOUGHHEAD

By Rev. Dr. Mary Armacost Hulst - Pastor Emerita Calvary Baptist Church of Denver



REV. DR. MARY ARMACOST HULST

It was Spring, 1959. Reluctantly I attended the Guild House Party in Redlands, California. Given that reluctance, imagine my surprise in responding to an invitation to commit my life to full time Christian service. The memory of urgency to go forward feels as real today as then. That decision was long postponed. College, marriage, career, and two children, happened. Throughout those life events, there was engagement with the local church wherever we lived. The idea of being a pastor, however, was inconceivable.

My journey to ordination and eventually a pastorate had no female mentor. There simply were none in those early years. Fortunate are the women, now, who have such models and mentors, yet fortunate for me to have a man who was committed to breaking barriers. **Larry Loughhead**, Senior Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church of

Denver asked me in 1978, to come on staff at Calvary as a part time children’s worker. Larry was my pastor, my boss, my friend, my mentor. This respected, well loved and very successful pastor, by the roles he gave me and the affirmations that he made, helped our congregation see me as one of the ministers of the church. Larry saw gifts in me that I had not recognized nor claimed. Not only did he nurture them, he encouraged the congregation to support me. Before I even thought about being a pastor, he helped me discover my pastor’s and preacher’s heart. It was he who suggested seminary. He championed my ordination. He taught me how to pastor and he helped the congregation to the wider understanding of who could be a pastor. He opened doors of ministry at a time I could not open them for myself. It is a gift and blessing to a reluctant congregation to have a trusted man willing to lower the walls of opposition.

MY BELOVED MENTOR AND FRIEND REV. DR. HAZEL ROPER

By Rev. Dr. Atula Jamir - American Baptist Women in Ministry Advisory Team

As a mother hen protects her young ones, **Rev. Dr. Hazel Ann Roper** protected me fiercely, and guided me wisely. One day, Hazel took me to the Liturgical Center in Boston to custom order my alb, then to the Parker House, telling me about its history and treating me to my favorite baked salmon. She enjoyed a Lobster Roll.



DR. REV. ATULA JAMIR WITH
REV. DR. HAZEL ROPER

That day had a lasting effect on my life. Over the years our bond flourished beyond a mentor-mentee relationship.

Our deep respect and trust of each other was mutual. She opened her heart and soul to allow me to shepherd her. She would often say, "I am so glad that you are my pastor." Oh, what a blessing for me!

My parents in Nagaland were deeply touched when they received a letter from her thanking them for sharing me with Calvary Baptist Church in Lowell, Mass., where I serve as pastor.

Hazel's compassionate heart always remained an abode of hope for the underprivileged and vulnerable. She devoted herself to rediscovering a community life – a life of justice, love, inclusion and gratitude – among people of all cultures and backgrounds. She engaged herself in that way until the time of her death. She courageously led the way to explore ministry possibilities with scarce resources.

Hazel was a lifelong learner, an unpretentious disciple of Jesus. She was like a blazing torch that shone into the distant darkness. She lived an honest, compassionate, conscientious and generous life – a lasting fruit, fresh and unspoiled. She will live in my heart always.

A POWERFUL PRESENCE: REV. DR. CHERYL WADE HELPED ME DISCERN MY CALL

By Rev. Dr. Heather Entrekin - American Baptist Women in Ministry Annual Appeal Steering Committee



REV. DR. CHERYL WADE

I believe that God calls us through all the experiences of our lives, but it wasn't until I saw **Rev. Dr. Cheryl Wade** in the pulpit at LaSalle Street Church in Chicago one summer, where she was substituting for our vacationing pastor, that I started to recognize my own call.

Her sermon was excellent, but it was her presence that spoke to me most profoundly. Almost 30 years of age and seeing for the first time a woman preach, I felt a deep sense of belonging and worth as Cheryl preached that, until then, I had not realized was missing in my faith experience.

When I tried to describe this epiphany to a male friend after the service, he dismissed it with a few choice Pauline texts. I could not articulate a theology to counter his contempt, but I knew that my experience of God's inviting presence through a woman in the pulpit was genuine. A few weeks later, I encountered Cheryl again at a church where the non-profit I worked for had offices. She was there for a clergy meeting. We had never actually met but when we bumped into each other in the rest room, she greeted me with delight, thinking I might be a clergy woman too. For the first time I realized that I looked like someone who could be a preacher.



REV. DR. HEATHER ENTREKIN

Cheryl Wade's excellence in the pulpit and her inviting, affirming spirit, as well as a few jarring proof texts, helped to propel me to seminary where a call to ministry grew clearer and stronger. I am thankful for women like Cheryl Wade who have refused to constrain the breadth and imagination of God along gender lines and opened doors for God to use people even like me.

Go to www.abwim.org to view the video story

RECALLING MENTOR ELLA PEARSON MITCHELL: “SHE TAUGHT ME HOW TO HAVE MY OWN VOICE”

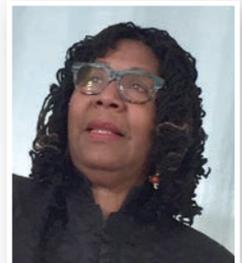
By Rev. Betty Wright Riggins - Founder/Principal of TrustOne , Spiritual Direction and Leadership Coaching.



REV. DR. ELLA P. MITCHELL

Rev. Dr. Ella Pearson Mitchell was pivotal in my life at a time when I wasn't really sure where God was calling me. Ella was a Christian educator, bright and smart. She worked tirelessly with pastors who had not yet gained all of their theological education and worked with them individually on how to write and express themselves. She taught me to stand firm and to be Betty and that your advocacy for women comes out in your preparation, how you affirm God's call in your life and in letting the spirit move through you. I can still hear her voice in my ear when I am quiet. She had a very distinctive way of speaking and approaching scripture. She taught me how to have my own voice, how to bring who I am to the preaching moment, and to bring all that God has given me to that moment.

Go to www.abwim.org to view the video story



REV. BETTY WRIGHT RIGGINS

RECALLING MENTOR REV. DR. ROBERT HARVEY: A BIG PROBLEM

By Rev. Dr. Darla Dee Turlington -
American Baptist Women in Ministry Advisory Team

Dr. Robert Harvey told me he had a big problem with women in ministry. There are too few of them especially at the top of the ladder. He was a real advocate. I needed to perform a funeral for a well-loved pillar of First Baptist Church in Westfield, N.J., while my mentor Dr. Robert Harvey was on vacation. He had prepared me, even in the short time we had worked together, by asking me to accompany him as he prepared for a funeral, explaining

how he did things from interviewing the family to remaining with the casket as it was transported. Even though doing the funeral was a first time experience for me I was not nervous because he had prepared me so well. He always told me to do things my way, but because of him I always knew what was expected of me. He



REV. DR. DARLA DEE TURLINGTON

coached me on issues and how to deal with them, and if he heard complaints that seemed valid, he used them as opportunities to help me improve.

Go to www.abwim.org to view the video story

NOT BEYOND GOD'S REACH: REV. DR. DIANE HOOGE

By Rev. Dr. Zina Jacque - Pastor of Community Church of Barrington, Illinois



REV. DR. DIANE HOOGE

I had run afoul of my field education site pastor, and it was not a pretty sight. Somehow our relationship had fallen off the tracks, and I was too arrogant and prideful to do my part in righting what had gone wrong. One sad day, after, according to my recollection, I had again been silenced and not allowed to share my gifts (yes, I hear the one-sided nature of this statement, but it is part of the story) I was so angry. I began to plot the demise of this pastor.

However, some part of my heart knew I was part of the problem and my schemes would fail. I have always been a lousy villain. Ashamed of my part in the derailment, ashamed of my anger and evil thoughts, I decided I was not ministerial material. Devastated by this "realization" I called my area minister to confess. My area minister was **Rev. Dr. Diane Hooge**. Thank you, God!

Diane listened to my tearful story, my shame and my heartbreak and, with gentle wisdom and guidance, she offered me three pieces of advice: (1) If God is a God of forgiveness, why did I believe I was beyond God's reach? (2) If I wanted to help right what had gone wrong, I could do that, and she would help. (3) Gifts once given are rarely rescinded unless we refuse to use them. Diane's gentle voice and wise counsel talked me down and gave me the courage to return and begin a dialogue with my pastor. The story ended well, in time, but only because God loved me enough to put Rev. Dr. Diane Hooge in my life. How blessed I am.



REV. DR. ZINA JACQUE

THE URGENT CHALLENGE OF AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN IN MINISTRY

Despite clear scriptural support for women in ministry and gifted women leaders throughout church history, the church falls short of its call to access, embrace and utilize the gifts of all God's people, risking the health of the church and our effectiveness in furthering God's work in the world. When women's gifts are denied and access blocked, churches are deprived of rich resources. Recognizing this, the 2015 Mission Table declared Women in Ministry a top denominational priority, stating: *The affirmation of women as full partners with men in ordained ministry and the full acceptance of the gifts women bring to ministry is needed for the Body of Christ to thrive and our churches to flourish. The health of our churches and the future of our denomination depend on fully accessing, embracing and utilizing all God's gifts in all God's people for all God's good.*

VISION: ABWIM seeks the full participation and full partnership of men and women in ministry in which both women and men are able to fully utilize their God-given gifts and fully live out their God-given calls.

MISSION:

- Advocate for women in ministry***
- Celebrate their gifts***
- Cultivate their calls***
- Educate about the biblical basis***
- Share their history***
- Spotlight women in ministry***

LOOKING AHEAD

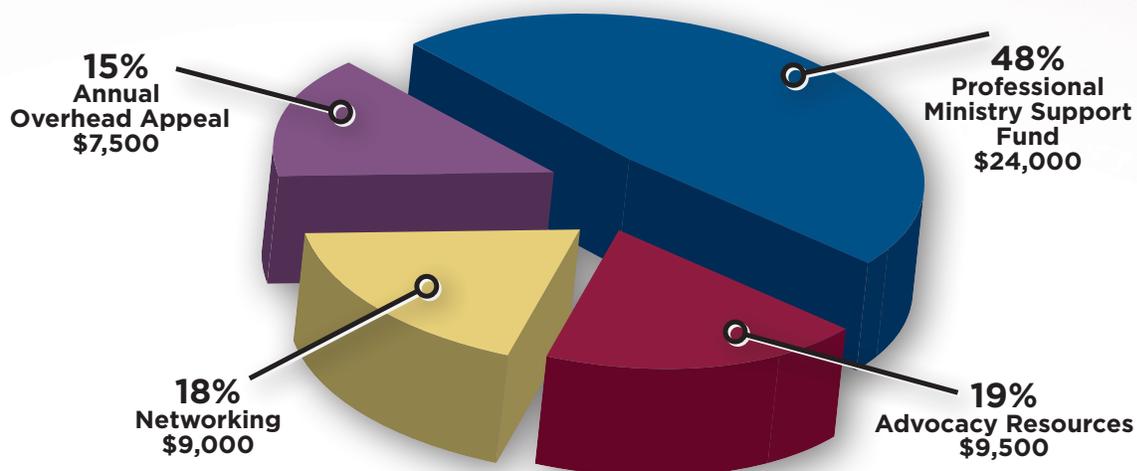
We are nearing the 40th anniversary of the birth of the Women in Ministry Project. As we move into the future, we know this is not just about women; it is about the full partnership of men and women in ministry. To be on mission with God is to embrace, embody, and fully access all God's gifts in all God's people. American Baptist churches need the gifts of both women and men to thrive. The health of our churches and the future of our denomination depend on fully accessing, embracing and utilizing all God's gifts in all God's people for the good of all and the glory of God! Will you join us?



THE 2016-17 ADVISORY TEAM: Rev. Dr. Atula Jamir, Rev. Dr. Michelle Holmes, Rev. Dr. Heather Entrekin, Appeal Chair, Rev. Soozie Ford, Rev. Dr. Tom Wiles, Rev. Miriam Mendez, Rev. Dr. Patricia Hernandez, Rev. Nikita McCalister, Rev. Betty Wright-Riggins, Rev. Laura Ayala, Convener and Rev. Dr. Darla Dee Turlington.
Front row: Dr. Jeremy Fackenthal and Rev. John Polite III.

OUR ABWIM 2016-2017 ANNUAL APPEAL Minimum Goal: \$50,000

American Baptist Women in Ministry's vitality depends upon strategic investments in three primary areas: Professional Ministry Support, Advocacy Resources, and Networking. Our minimum \$50,000 goal represents an opportunity for the ABCUSA family to make a difference in the lives of current and future women in ministry.



OUR ADDED CHALLENGE GOAL - \$50,000

Upon prayerfully reaching the above minimum \$50,000 goal for current capacity building and ABWIM enhancements, the added \$50,000 in funding of our Challenge Goal would accomplish the following supplemental initiatives:

Reserves for 2020 ABWIM 40th Anniversary Celebratory Event:	\$25,000	50%
Increase our ABWIM Endowment Fund:	\$12,500	25%
Added Support for Advocacy, Networking, and Overhead:	\$12,500	25%

HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE?

For more information on ways to give, including naming opportunities, contact the ABWIM office or a member of the Annual Appeal Steering Committee:

Contact:	Rev. Dr. Patricia Hernandez
Address:	American Baptist Women in Ministry P.O. Box 851 Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851
Phone:	ABWIM Office - 800-222-3872, ext. 2070
ABWIM email:	Patricia.Hernandez@abc-usa.org Joyce.Lake@abc-usa.org
ABWIM website:	www.abwim.org

ANNUAL APPEAL STEERING COMMITTEE: *Honorary Chairs* - Dr. Susan Gillies, Rev. Dr. Mary Hulst, and Rev. Dr. Trinetta McCray; *Appeal Chair* - Rev. Dr. Heather Entrekin; *Leaders* - Rev. Laura Ayala, Rev. Holly Bean, Rev. Elizabeth Congdon, Rev. Dr. Joyce Duerr, Rev. Dr. Alice Greene, Rev. Dr. Larry Greenfield, Rev. Dr. Zina Jacque, Rev. Dr. Joe Kutter, Rev. Mary Beth Mankin, Rev. Nikita McCalister, Rev. Carol McVetty, Rev. Dr. Bruce Morgan, Rev. Jackie Saxon, Rev. Dr. Laura Sinclair, Rev. Dr. James Wolfe III; **STAFF:** ABWIM National Director and Associate Rev. Dr. Patricia Hernandez and Ms. Joyce Lake; Director of Development and Associate Mr. Kenneth Marsenburg and Ms. Evon Moody.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Pledges over a period of up to 12 months are encouraged to generate the substantial financial resources that are necessary for the \$100,000 goal to be achieved, and for all the intended benefits to be realized during 2017. Gifts to the ABWIM Annual Appeal, including outright gifts and payments on pledges can be made in the form of cash, credit cards (MasterCard or Visa), stocks, bonds, annuities or paid up whole-life policies. Gifts should be made payable to ABCUSA with ABWIM printed on the memo line.

In the case of securities, donors are cautioned to contribute the stock, and not the proceeds from the sale of stock, to garner the maximum tax advantages and to avoid or minimize capital gains. All donors will be recognized in an appropriate, meaningful way. Special donor recognition opportunities are fitting tributes to loved ones, friends, and mentors. The ABCUSA Development Office can furnish further details.

Below are suggested faith-pledge or one-time gift options to consider towards our outlined urgent needs:

\$ ABWIM Pledge or One-Time Gift Amount	Suggested Initial 10% Payment	2 Semi-Annual Payments	4 Quarterly Payments	12 Monthly Payments
\$ 10,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 4,500	\$ 2,250	\$ 750
\$ 5,000	\$ 500	\$ 2,250	\$ 1,125	\$ 375
\$ 2,500	\$ 250	\$ 1,125	\$ 563	\$ 188
\$ 1,500	\$ 150	\$ 675	\$ 338	\$ 113
\$ 1,000	\$ 100	\$ 450	\$ 225	\$ 75
\$ 500	\$ 50	\$ 225	\$ 113	\$ 38
\$ 250	\$ 25	\$ 113	\$ 56	\$ 19
\$ 100	\$ 10	\$ 45	\$ 23	\$ 8

***Giving online to ABWIM is easy at: www.abc-usa.org
Click on "Give Online" and specify ABWIM***

Name (please print) _____ Okay to publish my name Do not publish
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip code _____
 Email _____ Phone _____

In support of ABCUSA, I/we pledge \$ _____ to American Baptist Women in Ministry

This gift of \$250 or more is given in memory of _____
 or in honor of _____

[All memorial and recognition opportunities will be published annually upon completion of the above pledge intention]

This sum is payable over a period of up to 12-months in 2016-2017 beginning _____.

Payments to be: Semi-Annual Quarterly Monthly One-time Gift
Method of Payment: Check Credit Card Stocks, Bonds, IRA

Donors may make their gift intention by completing the pledge form and mailing to the address below.
 You may also make your ABWIM Gift Intention online at www.abc-usa.org

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please make gifts payable to ABCUSA, memo line ABWIM and mail to:

**ABCUSA, Attn: Evon Moody, Assistant to Director of Development
 PO Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851**

For an up to date listing of ABWIM Appeal Donors go to www.abwim.org