**ABHMS Marks Pastoral/Spiritual Care Week by Offering Variety of Resources**

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 10/12/15)—**Oct. 25-31 is Pastoral/Spiritual Care Week, and American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) encourages American Baptists to pray for [American Baptist-endorsed chaplains and pastoral/spiritual caregivers](http://www.abhms.org/chaplains_list.cfm) and to celebrate their gifts, service and contributions. This is an occasion to set aside time to express gratitude to God for those called to provide pastoral and spiritual care to individuals, families, communities and institutions.

ABHMS is pleased to honor chaplains, pastoral care counselors, educators and pastoral and spiritual care providers who promote the well-being of the whole person and serve the spiritual needs of our communities as they minister in such specialized settings as hospitals, prisons, businesses, industries, long-term care facilities, pastoral counseling centers, hospices, military settings, nursing homes, corporations, congregations, schools and universities throughout the world.

“Chaplains and pastoral counselors meet individuals wherever they are. They are present with people in innumerable places and in countless ways,” says Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III, ABHMS executive director and ecclesiastical endorsing agent. “They are the buttresses of support to those in need, providing empathetic ears, encouraging voices and compassionate hearts.”

The 2015 theme—“Spiritual Care Together”—recognizes the role of the various disciplines—in particular, chaplaincy and pastoral counseling—that offer trained spiritual care and compassionate support to provide for the optimal healing experience of the whole person. As part of the broader team, chaplains and pastoral counselors deliver care that integrates mind, body and spirit. They minister to individuals of various spiritual, theological and faith backgrounds.

To assist American Baptists in celebrating pastoral and spiritual caregivers, ABHMS offers a variety of resources:

* [video greeting](http://www.abhms.org/caring_ministries/chaplaincy/CelebratingChaplainsAndPastoralCounselors2015.cfm) from Laura Miraz, Ph.D., SPHR, ABHMS director of Chaplaincy and Pastoral Counseling Ministries, in the slideshow at <http://www.abhms.org/>;
* two [bulletin inserts](http://www.abhms.org/caring_ministries/chaplaincy/CelebratingChaplainsAndPastoralCounselors2015.cfm)—one featuring a litany by the Rev. Diana Meehan, retired U.S. Navy chaplain, and another featuring a poem by the Rev. Susan Caswell, U.S. Army chaplain;
* discounted pastoral care resources from Judson Press at [judsonpress.com/clergyappreciation.cfm](http://www.judsonpress.com/clergyappreciation.cfm);
* “Faces and Places of Hope” podcasts featuring American Baptist chaplains in various specialized ministry settings, at [www.abhms.org](http://www.abhms.org/) > [Faces and Places of Hope](http://www.abhms.org/podcasts.cfm); and
* complimentary screening of the new documentary “[CHAPLAINS](http://www.cvent.com/events/space-for-grace/custom-19-cd3a7bd9ae9e4ce395ad9232ca6fae6c.aspx)” Nov. 7 at the national [Space for Grace](https://www.cvent.com/events/space-for-grace/registration-cd3a7bd9ae9e4ce395ad9232ca6fae6c.aspx) conference. For information, visit www.abhms.org > Space for Grace > Learning Experiences.

For more information about American Baptist endorsement, contact endorsement@abhms.org, or visit [www.abhms.org](http://www.abhms.org/) > [Chaplains & Pastoral Counselors](http://www.abhms.org/caring_ministries/chaplaincy/index.cfm).

*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.*

*ABCUSA 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.*