**ABHMS Announces Ministry Award Recipients**

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 4/21/15)**—Selected by American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) board of directors from nominations submitted by clergy and laypersons across the United States and Puerto Rico, a number of American Baptist clergy and lay leaders will receive awards for significant faith-based work. Presentation times and dates will be announced as they become available.

“American Baptist Home Mission Societies is so proud to announce these ministry awards, which are testimony to the incarnation of God’s love and presence among us through these faithful and committed American Baptist disciples and servants,” says ABHMS Executive Director Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III. “Together, we American Baptists continue to touch communities and individuals across the United States and Puerto Rico with the peace and power of Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God.”

* **Rep. Barbara Lee** of California’s 13th Congressional District will receive the **Edwin T. Dahlberg Peace and Justice Award** for her outstanding work for peace and justice. Lee has provided courageous national leadership in the U.S. Congress as well as compassionate Christian witness with and for individuals marginalized in the nation and around the world. She has been outspoken regarding a host of issues, including preventing gun violence, protecting jobs, improving the economy, reforming the criminal justice system, protecting the environment, investing in renewable energy and providing ample funding to public schools. In addition, she supports access to affordable, quality health care; comprehensive immigration reform that preserves families; equality for same-sex families; and global cooperation toward peace.
* **Herb Tsuchiya**, past president of what is now known as the Asian American Baptist Alliance, will receive the **Jitsuo Morikawa Evangelism Award** for outstanding leadership in holistic evangelism. After retiring as a pharmacist, Tsuchiya spoke about forgiveness while visiting the U.S. camp where he, his family and many other Japanese-Americans were unjustly imprisoned during World War II. His parents were rice farmers in Hiroshima before relocating to the United States. Born in Seattle, Tsuchiya has six siblings, five children and 12 grandchildren. He is an actor and community volunteer.  A member of Seattle Chinese Baptist Church, Tsuchiya lives the Word, generously donating his time and resources, serving God and loving people unconditionally. Many call him “Uncle Herb.”
* **Sandra Spaulding**, pastor of both Lakeville Baptist Church, Argyle, N.Y., and Bottskill Baptist Church, Greenwich, N.Y., will receive the **Rosa O. Hall Rural and Small Town Award** for exceptional effectiveness in rural or small town ministry. She not only successfully balances two congregations in an economically challenged region but has also inspired the congregations to expand their ministries and engage their communities. An exemplary certified lay pastor, she illustrates to lay individuals that they can transition into professional ministry, and she shows congregations that pastors can be successfully shared. A rural ministry advocate sensitive to the needs of rural congregations, she serves on the Regional Board of Mission and the regional team that serves churches in pastoral transition.
* **The Rev. Dr. Leslie D. Callahan**, first female pastor of the 119-year-old St. Paul’s Baptist Church, Philadelphia, will receive the **Edward H. Rhoades Urban Ministry Award** for exceptional effectiveness in urban ministry. Callahan was an assistant professor of Religious Studies at University of Pennsylvania as well as assistant professor of Modern Church History and African-American Studies at New York Theological Seminary. Her research interests include independent African-American Christianity. Her writings include a contribution to “The Audacity of Faith: Christian Leaders Reflect on the Election of Barack Obama” (Judson Press, 2009). In 2005, The African American Pulpit named her one of 20 African-American ministers aged 40 or under shaping the future of the African American church.
* **The Rev. Dr. Loida Martell-Otero**, professor of Constructive Theology at Eastern University’s Palmer Theological Seminary, King of Prussia, Pa., will receive the **Richard Hoiland Local Christian Education Award** for faithful, effective leadership in Christian education. An ordained ABCUSA minister and doctor of veterinary medicine, she has served as both an interim and associate pastor for churches in New York. She is a past president of American Baptist Churches of Metro New York and a founding member of the Association for Hispanic Theological Education. Her writings include “Mujeres Hispanas/Latinas Teologizando: Una Perspectiva Evangelica” in Mas Voces: Reflexiones Teologicas de la Iglesia Hispana (Abingdon Press, 2001).
* **The Rev. Dr. Denise Janssen**, assistant professor of Christian Education at Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University, Richmond, will receive the **Luther Wesley Smith Education Award** for faithful, effective leadership in strengthening Christian education at an American Baptist-related college or seminary. An ordained ABCUSA minister, Janssen has served as pastor of several American Baptist churches and one United Methodist congregation. She has contributed to Judson Bible Journeys for Adults curriculum, wrote the recently published “Reclaimed: Faith in an Emerging Generation” (Judson Press, 2015) and co-authored “Fostering Faith: Teaching and Learning in the Christian Church” (Judson Press, 2014).
* **The Rev. Dr. Marcia Patton**, first executive minister of Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches, will receive the **Kenneth L. Cober Regional Discipleship Award** for faithful, effective leadership in discipleship education in an American Baptist region. Associate executive minister of American Baptist Churches of the Northwest for 13 years, Patton was instrumental in Evergreen’s formation, helping it to build relationships among its ethnically diverse churches and the ABCUSA family. She is a trustee of American Baptist Seminary of the West, Berkeley, Calif., and serves on the board of directors of American Baptist Homes of the West, Pleasanton, Calif. She was associate pastor of churches in Hatboro, Pa.; Salt Lake City; and Somerville, N.J.
* **The Rev. Dr. John Holzhüter**, chaplain at Ottawa (Kan.) University, will receive the **Newton C. Fetter Higher Education and Campus Ministry Award** for significant innovation in campus ministry. A long-time advocate for the needs of disadvantaged youth and a strong proponent of restorative-justice approaches to juvenile crime, his “Kindling Faith through a Culture of Servant Leadership” program connected young adults, aged 18-29, to church families for servant leadership and group participation, based on actions of faith. Of the 167 participants, 81 percent had established a regular connection (at least three consecutive months) with a home church by program end. The program included home-support services to the elderly, children and the frail; first aid; self-defense and American Sign Language.
* **Chin Baptist Churches USA** and **Karen Baptist Churches USA** will receive the **Suzan Johnson Cook Religious Freedom Award** for leadership in defending God-given religious liberty for all. Both entities unceasingly support and aid the Chin and Karen peoples—both of which have been oppressed in their homeland. Both organizations remain steadfastly committed both to undergirding and uplifting not only those who travel to the United States seeking refuge but also those who continue to struggle under human rights violations and religious persecution overseas. In addition, both organizations actively participate in the Burma Refugees Task Force, a cooperative effort of ABHMS and other ABCUSA entities that provides diaspora communities in the United States with information, resources, training, conferences and grants. This award is named in recognition of the ministry and leadership of Cook, first female pastor of American Baptist Churches USA and first woman president of Hampton University Ministers’ Conference. Cook served as ambassador-at-large for International Religious Freedom under President Barack Obama.
* **The Rev. Dr. John “Jack” Gleason**, editor of the Pastoral Caregiver’s Casebook, volumes 1-4 (Judson Press, 2015), will receive the **Paul W. Strickland** **Institutional Chaplaincy Merit Award** for faithful and effective pastoral and spiritual care in an institutional setting (e.g., hospital, hospice or other organization). A retired ordained ABCUSA minister, Gleason has pastored two Georgia churches. He has served as a clinical chaplain in four U.S. states, a clinical pastoral educator in four Association for Clinical Pastoral Education regions and as an ABHMS-commissioned missionary. In addition, he was the denomination’s director of Chaplaincy Services, vice president of the Congress on Ministry in Specialized Settings and chair of the Endorsers Council for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy. This award is named in recognition of the ministry and leadership of Strickland, American Baptist chaplain and ecclesiastical endorser.
* **U.S. Air Force** **Chaplain Maj. Ronnelle Armstrong**, who was recently named deputy chaplain for the White House Military Office (WHMO), will receive the **Lorraine K. Potter** **Military Chaplaincy Merit Award** for faithful and effective pastoral and spiritual care in the United States military. In his role at WHMO, Armstrong is responsible for providing pastoral care to the many active-duty military members assigned to Presidential Support Duty. His goal, he says, is to support the office of the president by “taking care of those who take care of the president.” WHMO provides direct support to the president and vice president in myriad ways, including directing, coordinating and overseeing Department of Defense resources supporting the president and the executive office and integrating efforts with other support entities. This award is named in recognition of the ministry and leadership of Potter, an American Baptist who achieved many “firsts,” including as first woman chaplain in the United Stated Air Force and first woman major general and chief of chaplains.
* **The Rev. Dr. Eloise “Scotti” Scott**, a self-described “pastoral psychotherapist” in private practice in Philadelphia, will receive the **Carolyn M. Piper** **Pastoral Counseling Merit Award** for faithful and effective pastoral counseling. She works with individuals, couples and small groups focused on spiritual and personal growth and leadership. She is a small group and workshop facilitator at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, where she had previously served as director of both student services and assessment. An ordained ABCUSA pastor, she is an associate minister at Second Baptist Church of Germantown, Pa. She was employed for more than 25 years in the ethical pharmaceutical industry, where she served as a research veterinary pathologist and director of Regulatory Affairs. This award is named in recognition of the life, ministry and leadership of Piper. A pastoral caregiver with more than two decades of experience, Piper was a pastor to all whom she encountered.
* **The Rev.** **Dr. Marvin A. McMickle**, president of Colgate Rochester (N.Y.) Crozer Divinity School, will receive the **Judson Press Ministry Award** for his commitment to excellence in publishing ministry. Over the years, McMickle has energetically supported Judson Press via his many publications and public appearances. His prolific writing—including substantive resources on preaching, ministry and African-American history—advances the Baptist heritage and faith perspective, while providing voice to Christian audiences. One of the most respected preachers in the nation, McMickle served as pastor of Antioch Baptist Church, Cleveland, Ohio, for nearly 25 years. His teaching resume includes Ashland (Ohio) Theological Seminary and Princeton (N.J.) University.

For more information about the awards, contact ABHMS’ Laura Miraz, Ph.D., at LMiraz@abhms.org.

*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.*