

# AMERICA FOR CHRIST OFFERING 2026

LEADER'S GUIDE  
Bulletin inserts and litany inside!



## The Wisdom and Power of tortelling



"JESUS TOLD THE CROWDS ALL THESE THINGS IN PARABLES; WITHOUT A PARABLE HE TOLD THEM NOTHING. THIS WAS TO FULFILL WHAT HAD BEEN SPOKEN THROUGH THE PROPHET

"I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH TO SPEAK IN PARABLES;  
I WILL PROCLAIM WHAT HAS BEEN HIDDEN SINCE THE FOUNDATION."

MATTHEW 13:34-35



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# AMERICA FOR CHRIST OFFERING 2026



# The Wisdom and Power of storytelling

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American Baptist Home Mission Societies

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Beloved Partners in Christ,

Each year, as we gather around the sacred work of the America for Christ Offering, we reaffirm our shared commitment to bringing the Gospel to life in tangible, transformative ways across our communities. For 2026, our theme—"The Wisdom and Power of Storytelling"—calls us to honor one of the most enduring practices of our faith: the telling and passing on of God's stories across generations.

In Matthew 13:34–35, we encounter Jesus—our Teacher and Storyteller—speaking in parables to reveal eternal truth. His use of storytelling reflects the divine pattern of revelation: stories that transmit wisdom, preserve identity, and invite new generations to encounter and experience the goodness of God. As Jesus shared what had been “hidden from the foundation of the world,” so too must we steward the sacred stories entrusted to us, ensuring their continuity across generations.

In this season, we are reminded that wisdom is not the possession of one age group alone. It is a divine gift meant to be shared. Elders pass down faith, youth bring fresh insights, and communities weave their voices into a greater narrative. Together, we learn to tell a more profound and uplifting story of hope, grace, and renewal in the Spirit of Christ.

American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) continues to carry that living story forward through a wide range of initiatives sustained by the America for Christ Offering. From faith-based innovation and community development to education and training for emerging and established ministry leaders, we empower ministries that foster dialogue, cultivate leaders, encourage mentors, and deepen spiritual formation.

I invite you and your congregation to join us once again as generous partners in the 2026 America for Christ Offering. Your gifts proclaim and embody the Gospel in life-giving ways by helping us to strengthen the bonds between generations, empower faithful storytellers, nurture hope, and build bridges that carry God's truth into the future.

Together, let us continue the story.

With gratitude and grace,



A large, elegant, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey Haggray".

Dr. Jeffrey Haggray, Executive Director  
American Baptist Home Mission Societies

“JESUS TOLD THE CROWDS ALL THESE THINGS IN PARABLES; WITHOUT A PARABLE HE TOLD THEM NOTHING. THIS WAS TO FULFILL WHAT HAD BEEN SPOKEN THROUGH THE PROPHET

“I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH TO SPEAK IN PARABLES;  
I WILL PROCLAIM WHAT HAS BEEN HIDDEN SINCE  
THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD.”

MATTHEW 13:34–35 NRSV

# BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS from our American Baptist ministers

In the Baptist church of my youth, one of the traditions that shaped our congregation was sharing testimonies. Before the sermon, congregants were invited to share stories of God's work in their lives and community. This practice was eventually discontinued due to oversharing, lack of control over what was said, and a preference for shorter Sunday services. Still, I often wonder what was lost when we stopped sharing intergenerational stories of God actively moving within our community.

Throughout Scripture, one of the most repeated commands is to remember. To remember the God of our ancestors, the God of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs, and the God who delivered the Hebrews from slavery. Remembering was so essential that stories were told and ebenezers were established so that future generations would not forget the Lord. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus carries the tradition of storytelling to remind people who God is, what God has done, and

why God remains trustworthy.

If stories anchor us in our faith tradition while also fueling our anticipation of what God might do, I wonder, "Where might this be nurtured within congregational life and our communities?" Sharing testimonies provides one of the few contexts where intergenerational learning and reciprocity can flourish. In a time when our stories and histories are being rewritten, as Baptists we must tell honest stories of how God has guided us through the beauty and messiness of life.



**Benji Suprice**  
Master of Divinity Student  
Yale Divinity School

Puritan minister and pastor John Bunyan had an epiphany experience—a life-affirming moment that would crystallize in his classic book "Grace Abounding" during the time he was imprisoned for allegedly preaching the Gospel without a license. For Bunyan, preaching was not just a matter of words, but a matter of conscience; his witness was not simply about resistance, but also an act of grace and storytelling.

This grace was, in fact, a test of Bunyan's faith made visible in a fractured world that called him to live faithfully, even if it cost him his liberty. Today, we find ourselves tested in an America we thought we knew, which requires us to call on our reservoir of biblical faith, drawing on moral principles, wisdom, and ethical insight. These truths not only guide us but also strengthen us to act with courage in meeting the needs of our siblings of every background.

The America for Christ Offering provides a unique opportunity for each of us—individually, through our churches, and through our institutions—to participate in this story of grace. The seeds we sow through this offering will ensure a great harvest of what the late Dr. Howard Thurman called "perpetual acts of special graces." This is our moment. Let us, like Bunyan, embody grace through faith and action. Let us give generously, share compassion boldly, and weave new stories of hope, healing, and justice.



**Rev. Dr. Conley Hughes,**  
Senior Pastor  
Concord Baptist Church of Boston  
in Milton

I have always loved a good story. In Matthew 13:34-35, we read, “Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet: ‘I will open my mouth to speak in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden since the foundation.’” Jesus was a gifted storyteller. Through Jesus’ parables, what was once hidden is now revealed and accessible for each generation.

When I talk to young people about faith, I often describe Scripture as the great love story between God and God’s people. I remind them that this story did not end with what we read in the sacred text, but it is still being written. Each of us is part of this ongoing holy story and is called to share our own faith journey with others.

Matthew 13 is story rich. Jesus told parables drawing upon agrarian and homesteading touch points to describe the Kingdom of Heaven to the crowds, so he did not need endless descriptions nor was he explicit about the key concepts or lessons he was trying to convey.

In cultures where indirectness is a default way of communicating, stories are common as they invite listeners into a momentary imagined space where environment, living beings, activity, and purpose all come together. The act of listening is itself a process of meaning-making. Stories do more than expand knowledge or give instruction; they invite the listener’s ownership of the value in the story details and story takeaways alike, instigating the desire to tell the story again and again, now through a voice that is their own.

As I reflect on my journey of faith, I am reminded of all the faithful people who came before me and shared their own faith stories. Through their witness, I began to discover how God’s story included me.

May we, as people of faith, never stop telling stories of God’s goodness. Let us continue to share how God is at work in our lives so that others may know of God’s grace, mercy, and love. These are good stories to tell, and they are worth telling again and again.



**Rev. Jennifer Schneider**  
Associate Executive Minister  
American Baptist Churches of the  
Central Region

And when storytelling and story-listening are done in community, meaning-making and passing on becomes a shared endeavor.

In this chapter, the importance of hearing, perceiving, and understanding is emphasized. Before considering passing on stories of faith to oncoming generations, here are questions to ponder:

- What have we truly heard, perceived, and understood of Jesus’ parables and our ancestors’ stories of faith?
- How are we continuing to pursue God’s Kingdom versus the “kingdoms” of this world?
- What do I know of my listeners’ context, and how can I foster full opportunity for them to hear, perceive, understand, own, and tell in their own voices?



**Rev. Dr. Marie Onwubuariri**  
Director of Intercultural Ministries  
ABHMS

# Sample congregational letter

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

As we begin the campaign for the 2026 America for Christ Offering (AFC), we are called to reflect on this powerful theme: “The Wisdom and Power of Storytelling.” Scripture reveals how God’s truth and love are passed down through generations, often through the simple yet profound and powerful gift of storytelling. Stories have always been God’s way of shaping faith, identity, and vision.

Jesus chose stories—parables—to reach people’s hearts. Matthew 13:34–35 reminds us that His words were not just lessons but living testimonies that have connected listeners across time, culture, and experience. Similarly, we are called to share our faith, our history, and our vision for the future with those who come after us.

This year’s campaign encourages us to celebrate storytelling as a form of ministry. Sharing the stories of our churches, families, and faith communities helps strengthen the present and sow seeds of hope for the future.

Together, we can make AFC 2026 a season of storytelling that bridges generations, deepens faith, and advances God’s mission of love and justice.

Thank you for your faithful partnership in this vital ministry.

In Christ’s service,  
[Your Name]  
[Title / Organization]

## How Congregations Can Promote AFC 2026:

- **Share Your Stories:** Dedicate time during worship or fellowship gatherings for members of different generations to share testimonies of faith and service.
- **Highlight AFC in Worship:** Use bulletin inserts, prayers, and sermon illustrations to remind the congregation of the importance of this offering.
- **Engage All Ages:** Invite youth and children to interview older members about their faith journeys and then share these stories with the congregation.
- **Use visual and media:** Share AFC promotional materials through newsletters, websites, and social media. Personalize them with your church's own stories.
- **Encourage Generosity:** Remind members that their donations to AFC enable the ongoing work of Christ's healing, unity, and transformation in communities nationwide.

# AMERICA FOR CHRIST OFFERING 2026

## Please give today! | [www.abhms.org/afc](http://www.abhms.org/afc)

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## ABOUT AFC 2026

### What is the America for Christ Offering?

The America for Christ (AFC) Offering is an annual mission offering that supports the ministries of American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS). It funds programs that share Christ's love through discipleship, leadership development, community transformation, and justice advocacy across the United States and Puerto Rico.

### When is the AFC Offering collected?

The official collection period is from January through March each year, but churches can give at any time throughout the calendar year that is convenient for their congregations. Every contribution, regardless of when it is made, directly supports vital ministries across the United States and Puerto Rico.

### How are AFC funds used?

Gifts to AFC Offering help fund:

- **Leadership Empowerment** - providing pastors, lay leaders, and chaplains with the resources they need.
- **Healing & Transforming Communities** - providing grants, training, and resources for community ministries.
- **Justice Ministries** - supporting programs that address poverty, immigration, anti-racism, and other Biblical justice issues.
- **Discipleship and Faith Formation** - nurturing spiritual growth for all generations, and more.

### How much of my donation goes directly to ministry?

Most AFC funds go directly to ministry efforts and mission partners through ABHMS. Administrative expenses are kept to a minimum, ensuring that your gift has the maximum impact.

### Can my church set its own goal for the offering?

Yes. Many churches set an annual AFC goal to encourage their congregations to participate.

### Are promotional materials available for my church?

Yes. ABHMS provides free digital and print materials—including bulletin inserts, posters, stories, videos, and worship resources—to help congregations plan and promote the AFC Offering. Most of these materials can be downloaded from the ABHMS website.

### How can individuals give to the AFC Offering?

There are several ways to give:

- Through their local American Baptist church during the campaign period.
- Electronically through ABHMS' website.
- By mailing a check designated for "America for Christ Offering" to ABHMS.

### Why is my participation important?

Your gift makes a real difference. It helps churches thrive, supports struggling communities, and empowers leaders to share Christ's love in tangible ways. When we unite as American Baptists, we amplify our impact and strengthen our collective witness for Christ.

### Is my donation tax deductible?

Yes. All gifts to the America for Christ Offering are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

### Who should I contact with more questions?

For more information, resources, or support in planning your church's AFC campaign, please contact the ABHMS Development Office by email ([donate@abhms.org](mailto:donate@abhms.org) or [vincent.dent@abhms.org](mailto:vincent.dent@abhms.org)) or phone (1-800-222-3872).

# CONVERSATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH: THE FAITHFULNESS OF WONDERING

**For now we see only a reflection, as in a mirror, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. 1 Corinthians 13:12**

How many stars fill the sky? How many grains of sand cover the earth? Most of the universe remains undiscovered and unnamed. Billions of galaxies exist beyond our view. On Earth, ocean creatures still await discovery, as do insect species on land. The apostle Paul reminds us that for now, we see only in part. We do not know everything! Questions and curiosity help us grow in our understanding of the world and our faith. It is good to ask, to wonder, and to make space for mystery. Through wonder, we hold big questions, welcome new learning, and deepen our connection with the God we have not yet seen and with one another.

## **Wondering is praise.**

Wondering opens our hearts to God's power, far greater than we can comprehend. It proclaims, God is great, God is good.

## **Wondering is reverence.**

To wonder is to stand in awe before the beauty, mystery, and complexity God's creation, and honor it with our attention.

## **Wondering grows empathy.**

By asking, "What is it like to be in another's place?", wondering turns our hearts toward others. It nurtures compassion for people, creatures, and the earth.

## **Wondering is an act of humility.**

When we wonder, we admit to not having all the answers. We remain teachable—open to discovery about ourselves, our neighbors, and God.

## **Wondering keeps us connected.**

Across time and cultures, people of faith have asked big questions. When we wonder, we remember we are part of a larger story, and never alone.



# Wondering is an act of great FAITHFULNESS!

I **WONDER** what it's like to be a tree ...  
Can you move or dance like a tree?

I wonder what **GOD** looks like ...  
Draw a picture of what you think **GOD** looks like!

What are you **WONDERING** about today? If you would like, share your **WONDERINGS** with a friend.

They might be wondering about something today **TOO!**

## WORD PUZZLE

			F	N	I							
			S	R	O	B	G					
			D	T	Z	J	G					
	F	A	V	F	A	I	D	N	Y			
J	A	X	M	T	G	R	L	W	V	Y		
D	P	U	Y	N	Z	W	H	S	F	Z	L	B
Y	P	U	W	Q	U	L	F	J	E	S	U	S
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	N	H	E	E	A	I	U	J	J	Z	F	
	U	P	A	F	C	N	A	S	R	J	Y	
	P	A	U	L	E	Y	D	X	G	O	D	
	M	T	C	U	R	I	O	S	I	T	Y	
		I	N	P	A	R	T	V	Z	B		
		G	Z	J	W	M	C	F	R	H		

## WORD BANK

AWE  
CONNECTION  
CURIOSITY  
FAITH  
GOD  
IN PART

JESUS  
PAUL  
QUESTIONS  
SAND  
STARS  
WONDER



# The Wisdom and Power of Storytelling

**Bringing Living Water to Eloheh**  
*ABHMS partners with an Indigenous ministry in Oregon to sustain earth, community, and spirit.*

In Yamhill, Oregon, the Eloheh Indigenous Center for Earth Justice and Eloheh Farm & Seeds stand as living proof of God's design for harmony between people and the land. Founded by Randy and Edith Woodley, the ministry teaches Indigenous and faith communities to care for creation through earth-honoring regenerative practices that nurture both soil and soul.

For years, Eloheh struggled with a dwindling water supply, its well producing only two gallons per minute. Without a dependable source, the ministry had to buy water at high cost, threatening its efforts to welcome people for teaching and hospitality. In response, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) provided a grant to drill a new well, manifesting God's promise in Isaiah 58:11: 'You shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.'

Today, Eloheh's new well produces 7.5 gallons per minute, supporting crops, animals, and the hundreds of visitors who come each year to learn about creation care and community justice. A second ABHMS grant funded two large storage tanks, ensuring that Eloheh's mission stays strong—even during summer droughts.



# The Wisdom and Power of Storytelling

**Bridging the Digital Divide: Technology Brings Native Churches Closer Together**  
*ABHMS helps rural Native American congregations stay connected through faith and innovation.*

When the COVID-19 pandemic closed church doors, many Native American congregations already limited by scarce resources and poor internet access found themselves more isolated. In response, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) took action to help bridge the digital divide.

Through its Native American Ministries, ABHMS has equipped churches across Oklahoma with essential tools such as monitors, laptops, cameras, and sound systems. These upgrades are transforming how pastors and congregations gather, worship, and serve. "Each church had different needs," explains Rev. Saeed Richardson, ABHMS' chief technology officer, "but all wanted one thing—to connect meaningfully with their communities."

The initiative, led by Rev. Ben Sullivan, ABHMS' national coordinator for Native American Ministries, ensures that rural congregations can now stream services, conduct virtual Bible studies, and host online gatherings. For churches once facing access issues, the technology has created new opportunities for fellowship and learning. "This equipment will help churches provide community access to the internet and host training sessions," says Sullivan. "One of the big hopes and outcomes is showing our communities what is possible."



**Your generosity helps living water flow.**  
Please give today at [www.abhms.org/afc](http://www.abhms.org/afc).

**Help bridge the gap. Please give today at**  
[www.abhms.org/afc](http://www.abhms.org/afc).

# The Wisdom and Power of Storytelling

## Feeding the Body, Nourishing the Spirit

*In Lincoln, Nebraska, a warm meal becomes a living story of compassion and community.*

Every Saturday on K Street in Lincoln, Nebraska, the doors of First Baptist Church open wide for a sacred purpose. Volunteers from First Baptist and other congregations sharing the facility gather to prepare meals, offer kindness, and build relationships with neighbors experiencing homelessness or food insecurity. This ministry, called the K Street Lunch Project, is about far more than food; it is about healing hearts and restoring dignity.

With support from an American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) grant, First Baptist has served over 5,000 meals each year since 2023. “The food is just the beginning,” says Rev. Joy Martinez-Marshall, the former pastor of First Baptist. “The deeper work is building relationships.” Though Martinez-Marshall is now pastoring elsewhere, the K Street Project continues with strength. Through shared



tables and open hearts, volunteers and guests alike experience the nourishment of faith made tangible.

The ministry has expanded to include local businesses, retirement communities, and volunteers from various faith backgrounds, showing how

compassion bridges differences. In a city where many face poverty and displacement, the K Street Lunch Project has become a place of belonging, where everyone is known by name and welcomed as part of God’s family.

**Be part of a story where love is served one lunch at a time. Please give today at [www.abhms.org/afc](http://www.abhms.org/afc).**

# The Wisdom and Power of Storytelling

## Let the Little Children Come

*ABHMS helps a refugee ministry give children hope and belonging.*

For refugee children, summer can feel lonely. Many families cannot afford traditional camps or enrichment programs, which disconnects these children from friends and increases their risk of falling behind in school. That is why American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) helps support a ministry’s special summer program that transforms months of uncertainty into a time of growth, friendship, and joy.

Founded in 2017 by a Chin-American former refugee, the ministry connects local Burmese, Chin, and American communities through education and service, offering English, math, and Bible study for students in grades one through eight, along with practical learning through a partnership with a leading national university’s 4-H youth development program. Together, they nurture faith, knowledge, and leadership among children who are learning to thrive.

One seven-year-old student, a newly arrived refugee welcomed into the program, began her summer shy and withdrawn. By the third week, she was reading aloud with confidence, and on the final day, she stood before her classmates and recited a psalm she had memorized. Her courage reflects the heart of this ministry, where faith and education meet to form new beginnings.



**Help make every child’s story one of hope. Please give today at [www.abhms.org/afc](http://www.abhms.org/afc).**

## The Wisdom and Power of Storytelling

**With Help from ABHMS, a Mustard Seed Grows**  
*In Chicago, community investment redefines ownership and hope.*

On Chicago's South Side at the corner of 79th and Cottage Grove, a once-abandoned strip mall with boarded-up windows and cracked pavement, previously symbolized decades of economic neglect in a neighborhood lacking basic services. But today, that same property is being transformed into a story of renewal, thanks to a collaborative effort between American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) and The Chicago TREND Corporation, a social enterprise focused on revitalizing urban commercial corridors.

Through catalytic funding from ABHMS, TREND empowers community members, many from historically marginalized backgrounds, to become co-owners of neighborhood shopping centers. For as little as \$1,000, investors gain both financial literacy and a tangible stake in their community's future. "Now people have a real connection," says TREND co-founder Lyneir Richardson. "You can say, 'Let's grab coffee at the shopping center my family owns.' It makes a difference."

Since 2016, TREND has acquired six shopping centers with 384 investors—67 percent of them Black and nearly half women.

Each project transforms neglected spaces into thriving centers for local businesses that become economic anchors and shining sources of community pride.



## The Wisdom and Power of Storytelling

**A Second Family for Myanmar's Young Refugees**  
*ABHMS partners with a church offering safety, faith, and community for youth in South Asia.*

In the wake of escalating violence and political turmoil in Southeast Asia, thousands of young people have fled their homes seeking safety. Many have made their way to the United States, some arriving with little more than faith to guide them. On the West Coast, a church-partner of American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) has become a sanctuary for these newcomers.

With support from ABHMS, the church provides the youth with essentials such as care packages, transportation, and scholarships. Beyond fulfilling physical needs, the ministry offers spiritual and emotional support, including Bible study, counseling, and community meals where young people find strength in faith and a sense of belonging. "Sometimes, the youth gather at my home," says the church's associate pastor. "We cook together, eat together, and talk about whatever they're carrying on their hearts."

For one student who arrived alone to study in the U.S., that compassion was life changing. "I almost cried that God gave me this miracle," she said, recalling how a church member drove two hours to pick her up from the airport and provide a place to stay.



*(Names have been omitted to protect vulnerable communities and those serving them.)*

**Be part of the story of refuge and renewal.**  
**Please give today at [www.abhms.org/afc](http://www.abhms.org/afc).**

**Help more mustard seeds grow. Please give today at [www.abhms.org/afc](http://www.abhms.org/afc).**

# The Wisdom and Power of Storytelling

**Amid Horses, Prayer, and Community, Ranchers Learn to Thrive**  
*At Rainbow Acres, lives are transformed through compassion, confidence, and connection.*

In Camp Verde, Arizona, a special community named Rainbow Acres has been helping adults with developmental disabilities discover independence, purpose, and a sense of belonging for over 50 years. Affectionately called “ranchers,” residents there experience joy through meaningful work, friendship, and faith.

Michelle, one of the ranchers, spends her days caring for horses, donkeys, goats, and bunnies. She also works in the campus kitchen and at a nearby hotel while preparing for her upcoming move to independent housing. “Working is my favorite activity,” she says with a smile. Her friend Kelly, a kennel technician and artist, weaves colorful poncho-style fashions in her spare time. “I don’t have to feel pressure from the outside world,” she says. “Here, I can just be me.”

Through prayer circles, shared meals, and caring staff, Rainbow Acres creates a nurturing home where residents set personal goals, learn new skills, and grow in faith. With support from American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS), including gifts from the America for Christ Offering, the ranch provides scholarships, safe housing, and life-enriching programs to those who might otherwise face isolation or uncertainty.



# The Wisdom and Power of Storytelling

**Healing Amid God’s Love at Tu Refugio Seguro**  
*Faith, compassion, and advocacy bring healing to Latino survivors of abuse and trafficking.*

A ministry in the Midwestern United States is offering hope and healing to Latino survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and trafficking, helping those who have endured unimaginable harm rediscover safety, dignity, and faith. “You can go to a psychologist or a social worker,” says the ministry’s founder, herself a survivor, “but to really heal completely, the Holy Spirit needs to be involved. God needs to be involved.”

With support from American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS), the ministry offers crisis intervention, counseling, and education on abuse prevention, focusing on both trauma and the cultural barriers that stop many Latino survivors from seeking help. Through its training program for community advocates, the ministry prepares survivors to become sources of strength for others. “As soon as people know you are preparing to be an advocate, they start coming forward with their stories,” says the founder.

Each testimony shared and every survivor supported becomes part of a larger story of transformation.

*(Names have been omitted to protect vulnerable communities and those serving them.)*



**Your gift helps stories like Michelle’s and Kelly’s continue to unfold. Please give today at [www.abhms.org/afc](http://www.abhms.org/afc).**

**Help sustain this refuge of healing and hope. Please give today at [www.abhms.org/afc](http://www.abhms.org/afc).**

## Litany

# The Wisdom and Power of Storytelling



Based on Matthew 13:34–35

**Leader:** Jesus spoke all these things to the crowds in parables; He did not say anything to them without using a story.

**People:** For through stories, God’s truth is revealed, and His promises are remembered.

**Leader:** The prophet declared, “I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world.”

**People:** Through sacred stories, the mysteries of God shine into our lives.

**Leader:** From the stories of Abraham and Sarah to the songs of the psalmists, to the parables of Jesus—God has always spoken to us in word and witness.

**People:** We receive these stories as gifts, shaping our faith and guiding our walk with Christ.

**Leader:** In telling, we remember. In listening, we believe. In sharing, we are transformed.

**People:** Let us tell our stories, for they are testimonies of God’s grace and power.

**Leader:** Children, youth, and elders alike bear witness to God’s love through stories.

**People:** Our voices join in the great story of redemption, which continues in us today.

**Leader:** As Baptists, we affirm the priesthood of all believers, and every believer carries a story worth telling.

**People:** We will speak of God’s mercy in our lives and listen for His truth in the stories of others.

**All:** Lord of parables and promise, sanctify our stories that they may point to You. May our lives become living testimonies, telling the story of Jesus and His love.  
*Amen.*



# SPACE FOR GRACE & SPIRITUAL CAREGIVERS CONFERENCE

Join faith leaders and spiritual caregivers for a transformative gathering exploring the art of storytelling in ministry. Through worship, learning, and shared experience, we'll discover how stories can liberate, connect, and transform—renewing hearts, voices, and communities.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:



Rev. Dr. James Sommerville



Rev. Dr. Tisha Dixon-Williams



Harold Recinos Ph.D.



Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III



Rev. Dr. Lauren Ng

### April 21-23, 2026

Cleveland, OH



**STORYTELLING:**  
*Discovering Its Power  
for Faith Leaders Today*



**REGISTER NOW**



# AMERICA FOR CHRIST OFFERING 2026

American Baptist Home Mission Societies  
1075 First Avenue  
King of Prussia, PA 19406



## Promotional Materials Enclosed

To obtain additional printed copies of promotional materials, contact Kim Wilkins in ABHMS' Office of Development at [kim.wilkins@abhms.org](mailto:kim.wilkins@abhms.org) or 610.768.2413. For digital copies that can be downloaded and printed, visit [abhms.org/afc](http://abhms.org/afc).



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