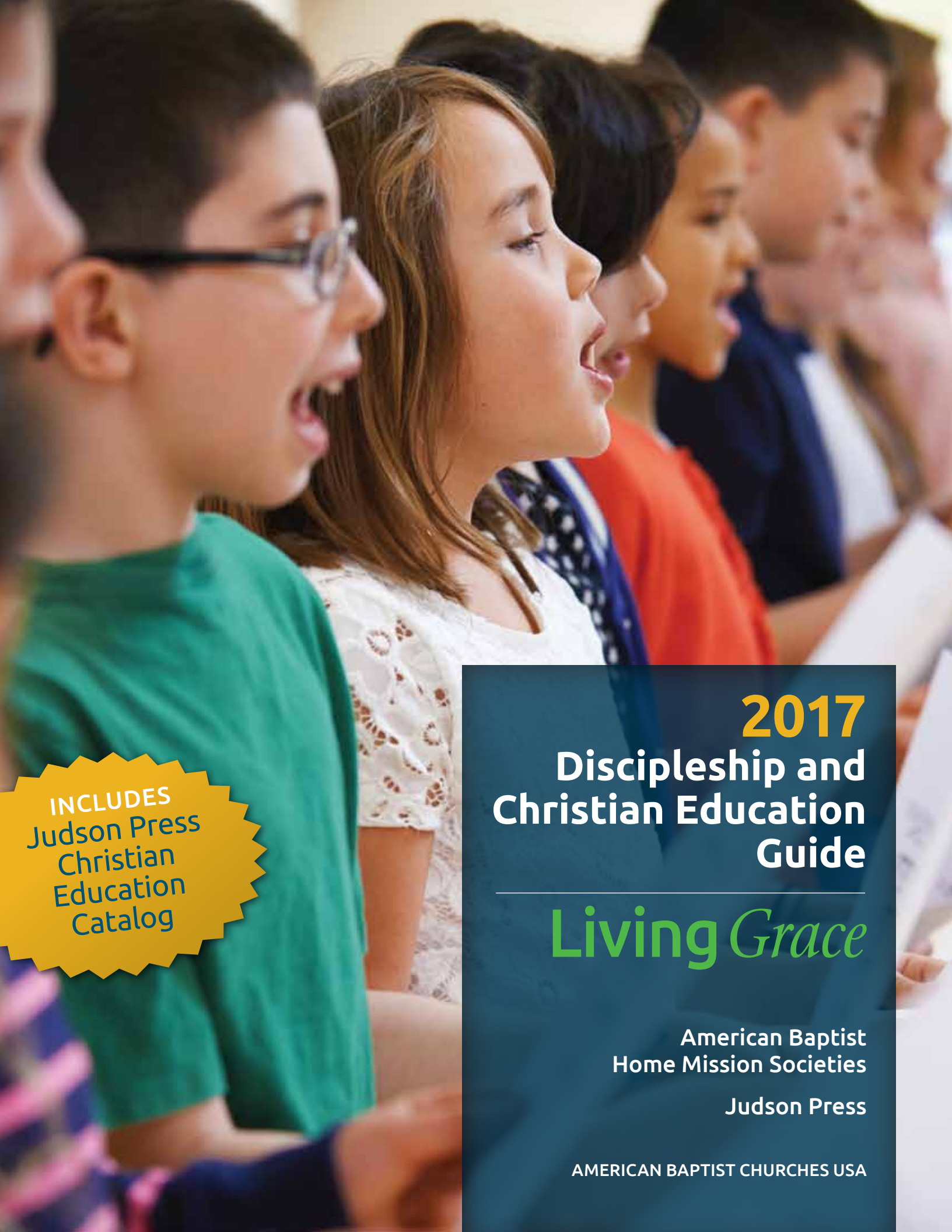

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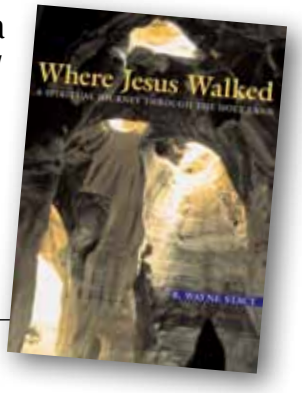

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Executive Director
Dr. Jeffrey Haggray

Publisher—Judson Press
Laura Alden

Managing Editors
Rev. Cassandra D. Williams, EdD
Marcia Jessen

Copy Editor
Nadine Hasenecz

Catalog Editor and Editorial Assistant
Lisa Blair

Designer
Danny Ellison

A publication of:
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Welcome

The Discipleship and Christian Education Guide is published annually by American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS). Print copies are mailed to all American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA) regions and churches, and individuals by request. A PDF may be downloaded at www.abhms.org > Resources. A list of select discipleship resources available from ABHMS appears on page 11. The quick reference "Year-at-a-Glance Calendar" is found on page 14, followed by the Month-by-Month Planning Calendar, which includes resource suggestions.* The *Revised Common Lectionary* can be found on pages 12–13.

A litany for Christian Education Sunday (September 24) is provided in English, Traditional Chinese, French, and Spanish on pages 5–6. The litany with 2 per page for easier copying is also downloadable from www.abhms.org > Resources > Discipleship and Christian Education Guide. This year's theme, "Living Grace," reflects the dual reality that the grace we receive from God is *living grace* and that Christian discipleship is a matter of living the grace we have experienced. The theme text is Colossians 4:6: *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone*. Our focus is on practicing gracious ways of being together, in particular in having graceful interactions and graceful speech. Throughout this resource, you will find articles and suggested resources to help you walk gracefully on your own journey of discipleship and in your endeavor to nurture others in discipleship.

Reflections on the Theme: Living Grace; Colossians 4:6

The vision of ABHMS is "CONNECTING partners to CULTIVATE leaders and disciples to heal and CHANGE communities." Nurturing Christian discipleship requires leaders and teachers who speak grace. The language of grace is not the *lingua franca* of a fallen world; it is a second language for all of us. The following practices can enlarge our capacity to receive God's grace and help us move toward fluency in speaking the language of grace.

■ **Awareness:** Practicing consciousness of who we are, what we feel, and what's happening around us takes courage. Many of us are so tuned in to what *should* be that we find it difficult to embrace the truth about ourselves, the church, and the world. Practicing awareness provides information we need to be authentic in our efforts to speak the language of grace.

■ **Listening:** When we calm our bodies, quiet our tongues, and settle our minds, we can learn from the Native Speaker of the language of grace. Stillness in nature can also teach us grace as Psalm 19:1 reminds us, "The heavens declare the

glory of God." When we open our hearts to nature's communications, we are reminded of the generosity of the Creator by whose grace we are created, sustained, and redeemed.

■ **Immersion:** Fluency is enhanced when we immerse ourselves where a language is spoken. Grace can be heard among Christians who by the power of the Holy Spirit are intentionally practicing gracious speech. It can also be heard in the church's sacred tradition expressed in Scripture, hymns, artwork, symbols, rituals, and in the glories of creation.

■ **Practice:** Learning a new language requires the courage to experiment and learn what works and what doesn't. It might feel uncomfortable to us to replace inner monologues of self-criticism with gentle words. It might surprise those outside the church who have come to expect the language of judgment from us. As we practice, we can be confident that our efforts are sustained and our blunders redeemed by divine grace.

Rev. Cassandra Carkuff Williams, EdD, ABHMS National Coordinator, Discipleship Resource Development, is author of Learning the Way: Reclaiming Wisdom from the Earliest Christian Communities *(available from Rowman & Littlefield [rowman.com] and Judson Press [judsonpress.com]). As always, we encourage your feedback to help us make the* Discipleship and Christian Education Guide *a resource that meets the diverse needs of our American Baptist family. Email comments to cassandra.williams@abhms.org or call 800-222-3872, x2459.*

* A variety of outside resource information is provided for you to explore; however, this provision does not indicate organizational endorsement of the contents of the resources and/or web pages.

Conversation Covenants

Conversation covenants are commitments about how we choose to be together. Such covenants can promote dialogue that is both productive and graceful.

1. Be fully present, extend welcome, and presume we are welcomed. We work best when we are fully present and welcomed. Setting aside the distractions of things undone from yesterday and those that belong to tomorrow, let us give and receive the gift of hospitality.

2. Acknowledge one another as equals. We are each uniquely gifted, so let us be reminded that no one's person's gifts and graces are more or less important than another's.

3. Stay curious about each other. Curiosity and genuine interest promotes authentic conversation and enables us to share deep longings and real fears. Let us be inquisitive and invested in one another.

4. Listen generously. Let us listen intently to what is shared and to the feelings beneath the words. "To *listen* another's soul into life, into a condition of disclosure and discovery—may be almost the greatest gift we can offer to another" (Douglas Steere).

5. Slow down so we have time to think and reflect. Conversation creates the conditions to rediscover the joy of thinking together. Let us take time to enjoy each other's company, remembering to pause between thoughts to give each other time to reflect and to hear each other into deeper speech.

6. Expect conversations to be messy at times. Life doesn't move in straight lines. Neither does a good conversation. Consider that, even if we can't see how they link logically one to another, our ideas build upon each other; our ideas, observations, and conversations come from a desire to create the future we all long to see.

7. Know that it is possible for us to emerge from our time together refreshed, surprised, and less burdened. Let us believe that this time can provide renewal, refreshment, and possibilities—that seeds planted here will keep growing and flourish in the days ahead in service to God's church and renewing work in the world.

Adapted by the Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE) from the Center for Courage and Renewal's Circles of Trust retreats and Margaret Wheatley's Turning to One Another. *Thanks to Rev. Adam Bond, PhD, Assistant Professor, Historical Studies, and American Baptist Liaison, Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology, Richmond, VA, for introducing us to this resource.*

A Model for Teaching on Potentially Controversial Topics

The goals of this transformational model are: to nurture authenticity and integrity in beliefs; to cultivate the capacity to gracefully navigate differences; to foster respectful interaction; and to explore together our shared journey of faith, building up the body of Christ "until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12-13). A foundational premise is that beliefs often reflect preconceptions and assumptions that were formed early on through key relationships and experiences. These beliefs are then held in place by emotions connected to those formative relationships and experiences. By raising to consciousness and opening such beliefs to reflection, we can move toward greater authenticity and integrity, even when those beliefs remain unchanged. Any teaching around potentially controversial topics must take seriously these four principles:

1. Opportunities for transformation must include time for exploring experiences and the emotional impact of those experiences.
2. Opportunities for transformation must include encouragement to critically reflect on unconsciously held beliefs and unexamined assumptions.
3. People's emotions and experiences—and assessments of those emotions and experiences—are valid for them and must be treated with respect.
4. Those who presume to teach must learn to listen beneath words and commit to not judging either perspectives or the way perspectives are expressed.

This model of education was developed by Rev. Cassandra Williams, ABHMS National Coordinator, Discipleship Resource Development, as part of her doctoral dissertation, Andrew Linzey's Animal Theology and the Educational Ministry of the Christian Church: Guidelines for Educating toward Transformation of the Human/Animal Relationship *(Presbyterian School of Christian Education, 1998).*

Pactos de conversación

Los pactos de conversación son compromisos sobre cómo elegimos estar juntos. Tales pactos pueden promover un diálogo que sea productivo así como cubierto con gracia.

1. Esté completamente presente, extienda la bienvenida y asuma que todos somos bienvenidos y bienvenidas. Trabajamos mejor cuando estamos totalmente presentes y somos bienvenidos. Dejar de lado las distracciones de cosas que no hicimos ayer y las que pertenecen a mañana, nos permite dar y recibir el regalo de la hospitalidad.

2. Reconozca a cada persona como igual. Cada uno de nosotros y nosotras es dotado de manera única, así que es necesario recordar que los dones y talentos de ninguna persona son más o menos importantes que los de otra.

3. Mantenga la curiosidad de unos por otros. La curiosidad y el interés genuino promueven la conversación auténtica y nos permiten compartir anhelos profundos y temores reales. Seamos curiosos e interesémonos unos en otros y otras.

4. Escuche generosamente. Escuchemos con atención a lo que se comparte y los sentimientos detrás de las palabras. "Escuchar que el alma de otro cobre vida, llegue a una condición de la apertura y descubrimiento puede ser casi el mayor regalo que podemos ofrecer a otra". (Douglas Steere)

5. Disminuya la velocidad, de tal manera que haya tiempo para pensar y reflexionar. La conversación crea condiciones para redescubrir la alegría de pensar juntos. Tomemos tiempo para disfrutar de la mutua compañía, sin olvidarse de hacer una pausa entre las ideas para darse uno al otro momentos para reflexionar y escuchar la voz más profunda de la otra persona.

6. Espere que las conversaciones sean un poco incómodas a veces. La vida no se mueve en línea recta. Tampoco lo hace una buena conversación. Tengamos en cuenta que, incluso si no podemos ver cómo se vinculan lógicamente unas a otras, nuestras ideas se construyen unas sobre otras, y nuestras ideas, observaciones y conversaciones vienen de un deseo de crear el futuro que todos deseamos ver.

7. Sepa que es posible para nosotros salir reanimados, sorprendidos y menos cargados de nuestro tiempo juntos. Creamos que este tiempo puede proporcionar renovación, ánimo y posibilidades; que las semillas plantadas aquí seguirán creciendo y floreciendo en los próximos días en el servicio a la iglesia de Dios y la renovación del trabajo en el mundo.

Adaptado por el Foro para la Exploración Teológica (FTE), de los retiros del Círculo de Confianza del Centro para el Valor y Renovación, así como de "Volviéndonos unos a otros", de Margaret Wheatley. Gracias a Adam Bond, Ph, D., Profesor Adjunto de estudios históricos y enlace Bautista Americano de la Escuela de Teología Samuel DeWitt Proctor, Richmond, VA por presentarnos este recurso.

Un modelo para la enseñanza de temas potencialmente polémicos

Una conjetura fundamental de este modelo educativo de transformación es que las creencias se basan a menudo en ideas preconcebidas y en hipótesis que se formaron a una temprana edad a través de las relaciones y experiencias clave. Estas creencias son mantenidas en su lugar por emociones conectadas con esas relaciones y experiencias formativas. Al ser más conscientes y abrir tales creencias a la reflexión, podemos avanzar hacia una mayor autenticidad e integridad, incluso cuando esas creencias sigan siendo las mismas.

Los objetivos de este modelo son: Nutrir la autenticidad y la integridad en las creencias; cultivar la capacidad de manejar las diferencias con gracia; fomentar la interacción respetuosa; y explorar juntos nuestra jornada de fe compartida, edificando el cuerpo de Cristo, "a fin de capacitar al pueblo de Dios para la obra de servicio, para edificar el cuerpo de Cristo. De este modo, todos llegaremos a la unidad de la fe y del conocimiento del Hijo de Dios, a una humanidad perfecta que se conforme a la plena estatura de Cristo" (Ef. 4:12-13). Por lo tanto, cualquier enseñanza en torno a temas potencialmente controversiales debe tomar en serio cuatro principios:

1. Para dar a los estudiantes oportunidades para la transformación, hay que incluir el tiempo para explorar las experiencias y el impacto emocional de esas experiencias.
2. Para dar a los estudiantes oportunidades para la transformación, debemos fomentar la reflexión crítica sobre las creencias mantenidas inconscientemente y conjeturas no examinadas.
3. Las emociones y experiencias, así como las evaluaciones de esas emociones y experiencias de las personas son válidas para ellas y deben ser tratadas con respeto.
4. Aquellos que se atreven a enseñar deben aprender a leer entre líneas y comprometerse a no juzgar ni las perspectivas de las personas ni la forma en que se expresan puntos de vista.

Este modelo de educación fue desarrollado por Cassandra Williams como parte de su tesis doctoral, Teología Animal de Andrew Linzey y el ministerio de educación de la iglesia cristiana: Directrices para la educación hacia la transformación de la relación humano/animal *(Escuela Presbiteriana de Educación Cristiana, 1998).*

恩典常存

你們的言語要常常帶著和氣，好像用鹽調和，就可知道該怎樣回答各人。(歌羅西書四章六節)

領：賜恩的神，不可預知的生命會奪去我們的平安。

眾：我們發現自己經常會感到精疲力竭和恐懼。

領：提醒我們，我們是藉著祢的恩典而活

眾：我們天天生活在永生的盼望中。

領：打開我們的心扉接受那恩典的話語

眾：因為那帶給我們的是透過創造之美

領：並通過聖經中的話

眾：以及每當我們在祢面前等候，祢心傳到我們的。

領：教給我們滿有恩典的言語

眾：這樣我們也可以說出那平靜紛爭的話，

領：癒合而非傷害的話

眾：轉化而非挑釁的話

領：以致我們可以在這個焦慮的世界上成為恩典的代言人。

全體：願恩典通過我們的生命，並在我們的生命中得勝，奉那道成肉身滿有恩典的耶穌，我們救主的名。

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Living *Grace*

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone (Colossians 4:6).

Leader: God of Grace, the unpredictability of life can rob us of our peace.

People: We often find ourselves feeling drained and fearful.

Leader: Remind us that it is by your grace

People: that day by day we live in the promise of life eternal.

Leader: Open us to the language of grace

People: As it comes to us through the beauty of creation

Leader: and through the words of Scripture

People: and from your heart to ours whenever we pause in your presence.

Leader: Teach us the language of grace

People: so that we might speak words that calm division,

Leader: words that heal rather than injure

People: words that transform rather than provoke

Leader: so that we might be agents of grace in this anxious world.

All: May grace prevail in our lives and through our lives, in the name of Grace Incarnate, Jesus our Savior.

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Gracia viva

Que su conversación sea siempre amena y de buen gusto. Así sabrán cómo responder a cada uno. (Colosenses 4:6)

Líder: Dios de Gracia, lo impredecible de la vida nos puede robar nuestra paz.
Cong: A menudo nos encontramos agotados y atemorizados.
Líder: Recuérdanos que es por tu gracia
Cong: que día a día vivimos en la promesa de la vida eterna.
Líder: Ábrenos al lenguaje de la gracia
Cong: conforme viene a nosotros a través de la belleza de la creación
Líder: y a través de las palabras de la Escritura
Cong: y de tu corazón al nuestro cada vez que hacemos una pausa en tu presencia.
Líder: Enséñanos el lenguaje de la gracia
Cong: para que podamos hablar palabras que mitiguen la división,
Líder: palabras que sanen y no que hieran,
Cong: palabras que transformen y no que provoquen
Líder: para que podamos ser agentes de gracia en este mundo de ansiedad.
Todos y todas: Que la gracia prevalezca en nuestras vidas y a través de nuestras vidas, en el nombre de la gracias encarnada, Jesucristo, nuestro Salvador.

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Grâce vivante

Que votre parole soit toujours pleine de grâce et du bon goût, afin que vous puissiez répondre à tout le monde. (Colossiens 4:6)

Leader: Dieu de grâce, l'imprévisibilité de la vie peut nous priver de notre paix.
L'assemblée: Nous avons souvent le sentiment d'être épuisés et effrayés
Leader: Rappelez-nous qui est par ta grâce
L'assemblée: Que à chaque jour nous vivons dans la promesse de la vie éternelle.
Leader: ouvré nous au langage de la grâce
L'assemblée: Comme il vient à nous par la beauté de la création
Leader: et à travers les paroles de l'Écriture
L'assemblée: et de votre cœur au notre chaque fois que nous sommes en votre présence.
Leader: Apprends nous le langage de la grâce
L'assemblée: afin que nous puissions parler des mots qui atténuent la division,
Leader: mots qui guérissent plutôt que des mots qui blessent
L'assemblée: mots qui transforment plutôt que des mots qui provoquent
Leader: afin que nous puissions être des agents de la grâce dans ce monde d'anxiété.
Tous: Que la grâce prévalent dans nos vies et à travers nos vies, au nom de la Grace incarnée, Jésus notre Sauveur.

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Learning Mission from Matthew's Gospel

Let's investigate a Matthew 25 assignment:

A. Invite someone to read Matthew 25:31-46. Briefly share your reaction to this passage of Scripture. Does it: Upset you? Comfort you? Challenge you to live your life in a certain way? Raise any questions about how people are living out their lives today?

B. After you have shared your reaction to the passage, take a look at the list below. You will find listed there the many mission opportunities that were spoken of in Matthew 25. Look over the list and think of your community; then answer the questions below with your community in mind.

1. I was hungry and you gave me food.
2. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.
3. I was a stranger and you welcomed me.
4. I was naked and you gave me clothing.
5. I was sick and you took care of me.
6. I was in prison and you visited me.

Discussion questions:

1. Identify the Matthew 25-type issues you have observed in your community.
2. Discuss with each other how you think your faith community is addressing the issues you have identified in question number one.
3. Of the issues identified in your community, which one issue speaks most to your heart? Explain why.
4. As a group, which issue speaks most to your group's hearts? Did you have a common interest from the list?
5. Described below is a missional activity called "The Found Money Exercise." Invite someone to read to the group the description below and then pick one of the heart-felt issues you have talked about and create a "Found Money" experience.

The Found Money Exercise

One day my family and I came out of a local restaurant and, as we walked toward home, my oldest daughter saw a twenty dollar bill laying on the ground at the bus stop. We looked around, but no one was to be found. We all assumed that someone waiting for the bus reached into their pocket, pulled out their bus pass or whatever, and the twenty dollar bill fell out onto the ground and they did not know it. Our problem was we had no idea who it belonged to or how to let someone know that we found it. So we played a game and this is the experiment that I want to challenge you to do—"The Found Money Exercise." The question we asked each other was, "How can we best use this 20 dollars for the kingdom of God?" We created and carried out a 20 dollar mission outreach!

Here is the challenge to your class: First, find some money! (It's simple to do; just check what is in your billfold/purse/pockets.) Then, as a group, pull together your "found money" and determine how to use it for the kingdom of God. (You may find only 10 dollars, 20 dollars, or even more.) But here's the catch! Whatever money you find, you cannot put into some form of mission offering. It is to be used in a "hands-on" mission outreach. Remember, whatever money you find is the amount you have to carry out a mission project around the need your class identified in the Matthew 25 assignment.

This sample exercise is from Mission from the Gospels: Unit Two Learning Mission from Matthew Week One. Mission from the Gospels *is a joint project of American Baptist Home Mission Societies and American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin (ABC of WI, developed by Rev. Dr. Ron Carlson, Missional Church Strategist, ABHMS, and Rev. Sam Brink, Minister of Church Resources and Mission Support, ABC of WI. Visit www.missionfromthegospels.org for more information or email Rev. Dr. Ronald Carlson (ronald.carlson@abhms.org).*

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American Baptist Entities and ABC-related Seminaries: Partnership for Renewal

American Baptist theological schools are a deep well of biblical, theological, and applied learning. Below are three contributions that ABC-related seminaries can make to the larger denominational family.

1. Being a source of renewal.

Theological schools have both a conservancy and constructive role for churches and denominations. They are stewards of the intellectual heritage of Christianity, and pay attention to the historical shifts that have shaped our contemporary identity. Those who teach and research at theological institutions observe the outcomes of congregational formation as they receive students and engage varied forms of "theological listing" (to the right or left) among our diverse churches. While American Baptists are far from creedal, a renewed attentiveness to who we are theologically in the Free Church tradition could enhance our common life. Seminaries can offer resources of continuing education, workshops, and collegial support to leaders through American Baptist regions and serve as representatives at national gatherings such as Ministers Council events and Mission Table.

2. Offering creative efficiencies that have the potential to build thicker connections.

Offering online a shared course that is part of each seminary's basic curriculum could have a wonderful outcome: rising ABC scholars could get to know one another beyond their own institutions! If such a course were attached to a national meeting, such as Mission Summit, seminaries could share teaching and capitalize on the learning opportunities of the broader denominational context. Similarly, we could work together, along with national organizations, to expand and widen participation in global immersion experiences.

3. Fostering constructive theological insights for the emerging horizons we face.

Events such as the pre-Mission Summit theological conference could provide an opportunity to showcase younger scholars and address theological concerns. American Baptist seminaries could identify and sponsor students to attend and perhaps even volunteer a couple of presenters to lead Mission Table Conversations on their topics. If younger, progressive thinkers are welcomed and respected in these circles, there is great promise for the future leadership of the ABCUSA. Millennial thinkers might serve to push some thought and dialogue forward, while supplying some much-needed fresh fire and vision.

As seminaries, national and regional denominational organizations, and local congregations walk through this era of perpetual change, we face many challenging questions, such as:

- What does church membership mean in a time of shifting understandings of "belonging?"
- How can local congregations better nurture vocational discernment among adolescents and young adults?
- How do we maintain theological integrity, while at the same time embracing and experimenting with different ways of being the church in worship, structure, and mission?
- With the economic challenges facing both churches and those who feel called to pastoral ministry, are there ways we can enhance the spiritual dimensions of fundraising and stewardship? Are there ways we can better provide preparation, theological foundation, and practical support for the ever-increasing role of bivocational ministers?
- How do we strengthen and reclaim the traditional prophetic stance of American Baptists on issues of religious liberty?

If we face these questions *together*, recognizing that our mission is a shared mandate from the God we all serve for the kingdom we all seek, the integrity and power of our ministry will be greatly enhanced.

Adapted from "Synergy for ABC Seminaries," presented by Molly T. Marshall, PhD, President and Professor of Theology and Spiritual Formation at Central Seminary (Shawnee, KS, [www.cbts.edu]) at the annual meeting of the American Baptist Association of Seminary Administrators (ABASA), which was sponsored by American Baptist Home Mission Societies and hosted by Palmer Theological Seminary April 14-15, 2016, at ABCUSA's Mission Center in Valley Forge, PA.

March 8 is American Baptist Seminary Sunday. For a list of the 10 ABC-related seminaries across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, visit www.abhms.org > Education & Scholarships > Seminaries.

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Tragedy shook NYC on 9/11
Tornadoes hit the Midwest
Sandy struck the East Coast
When Nicaragua needed medicine and clean water
When the redemption of a Savior is needed

FAITHFULLY SERVING GOD AND MEN
SINCE 1922
ABMen
MATTHEW25:21

www. ABMen.org

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Ministerial Effectiveness
MEMBERSHIP
Ministering among the leaders who minister to us
Centeredness
Spirituality
Fellowship
Together in Ministry
Education
Equipping Leaders

Who are we? The Ministers Council is an independent, non-profit organization of ordained, commissioned and lay Christian leaders who are serving American Baptist Churches.

What do we do? We nurture, encourage and strengthen more than 2000 clergy, counselors, seminarians and lay leaders. We provide fellowshipping opportunities; spiritual enrichment; and educational programming to fuel the effectiveness of the men and women called of God to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

What do we provide?

- Support for regionally based Ministers Council chapters;
- Annual gatherings, workshops, retreats for respite, and spiritual and professional development;
- Models and best practice guidelines for creating clergy peer groups;
- Informative articles and writings for ministers;
- Access to value-added services through partnerships;
- A sense of community for clergy.

Want to learn more? Go to **www.ministerscouncil.com** to learn more or join.

Rev. Dr. Debora Jackson
Executive Director
P.O. Box 851
Valley Forge
PA 19482-0851
(800) 322-3872
x2334

The Ministers Council
Collegiality/Centeredness/Competence
AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES USA

Select Resources Available from ABHMS

Advent Readings: two sets of reading with an introduction for dedication of the Advent wreath can be downloaded at www.abhms.org > Resources > Discipleship and Christian Education Guide.

Age-appropriate Discipleship Formation outlines developmental characteristics, (including understandings of God and corresponding Baptist emphases), while offering suggestions for nurturing discipleship for ages birth through adolescence along with guidelines for special-needs children. Download at www.abhms.org > Resources.

American Baptist Personnel Services (ABPS) is a computer based data-storage-and-retrieval system that produces personal profiles of men and women professionally trained who seek to serve local congregations and denominational entities, and provides resources to help congregations discover their mission and leadership needs. For information, go to www.abhms.org > ABPS.

Children, Poverty and the Bible is a five-part Bible study that explores the call of Scripture to uplift and care for children and the poor. Includes recommended discussion points and a complete leader's guide. Download at www.abhms.org > Resources > Bible Studies or call 800-458-3766 for print copies.

The Christian Citizen focuses on discipleship and justice issues, offering suggestions and opportunities for personal witness and action. Go to www.abmhs.org > Resources > Publications for a free subscription, or check out sample issues, including:

- "Childhood Matters," vol. 2, 2013
- "Eco-justice: American Baptists' Heritage and Hope for Creation," vol. 1, 2009
- "From Generation to Generation," vol. 1, 2014
- "Deep Roots and Flexible Branches: Christian Discipleship in the 21st Century," vol. 2, 2011

The Christian Liturgical Calendar: A Guide to Seasons of the Church Year can be downloaded at www.judsonpress.com/judson_journeys_downloads.cfm > Charts > Seasons of the Church Year.

Judson Bible Journeys for Adults is a Bible-based quarterly curriculum series based on the Universal Lesson Series and written by American Baptists for American Baptists. See page 27 for pricing and ordering details.

Teaching Does Not Equal Talking: Learning Styles and Christian Education can be downloaded at www.abhms.org > Resources.

Marks of the Transformational Leader in a Disciple-making Church can be downloaded at www.abhms.org > Resources.

A Matter of Stewardship: Eco-justice in Biblical Perspective with accompanying PowerPoint presentation can be downloaded at www.abhms.org > Resources > Workshops for Church Life and Leadership or call 800-458-3766 for print copies.

Mission in America is ABHMS' bimonthly publication with news stories about American Baptist mission in the United States and Puerto Rico. Visit www.abmhs.org > Resources > Publications for a free subscription.

The Secret Place, a daily devotional guide written by the readers, will enhance your faith journey. See inside front cover for pricing and ordering details.

Financial aid information can be found at www.abhms.org > Education & Scholarships.

Passionaries are ordinary people doing extraordinary things for Christ. Join ABHMS on the journey by making the Passionary Promise at www.abhms.org > Ministries > Cultivating Leaders > Passionary Movement. You will receive the daily email "Word and Witness" along with access to the weekly blog "Everyday Mission."

Race and Poverty: A Five-Session Study Guide was developed and published jointly by American Baptist Home Mission Societies and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in response to Hurricanes Rita and Katrina. Download at www.abhms.org > Resources > Bible Studies.

Selecting Curriculum Materials provides a process for selecting curriculum materials that meet the unique needs of your church. Download at www.abhms.org > Resources.

Workshops for Church Life and Leadership cover a variety of issues related to church leadership and Christian education with 28 English, 7 Spanish, 3 French, and 6 Karen workshops. Download at www.abhms.org > Resources > Workshops for Church Life and Leadership. Request hard copies from Sue Peterman (800-222-3872, x 2394).

2017 Revised Common Lectionary

January 1: First Sunday after Christmas Day
Isaiah 63:7-9
Psalm 148
Hebrews 2:10-18
Matthew 2:13-23

January 1: New Year's Day
Ecclesiastes 3:1-13
Psalm 8
Revelation 21:1-6a
Matthew 25:31-46

January 6: Epiphany
Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

January 8: Baptism of the Lord
Isaiah 42:1-9
Psalm 29
Acts 10:34-43
Matthew 3:13-17

January 15: Christian Unity Sunday
Isaiah 49:1-7
Psalm 40:1-11
1 Corinthians 1:1-9
John 1:29-42

January 22
Isaiah 9:1-4
Psalm 27:1, 4-9
1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Matthew 4:12-23

January 29
Micah 6:1-8
Psalm 15
1 Corinthians 1:18-31
Matthew 5:1-12

February 2
Malachi 3:1-4
Psalm 84 or Psalm 24:7-10
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

February 5
Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12)
Psalm 112:1-9 (10)
1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)
Matthew 5:13-20

February 12
Deuteronomy 30:15-20 or Sirach 15:15-20
Psalm 119:1-8
1 Corinthians 3:1-9
Matthew 5:21-37

February 19
Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18
Psalm 119:33-40
1 Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23
Matthew 5:38-48

February 26: Transfiguration Sunday
Exodus 24:12-18
Psalm 2 or Psalm 99
2 Peter 1:16-21
Matthew 17:1-9

March 1: Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm 51:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b–6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

March 5: First Sunday in Lent
Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
Psalm 32
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11

March 12: Second Sunday in Lent
Genesis 12:1-4a
Psalm 121
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
John 3:1-17 or Matthew 17:1-9

March 19: Third Sunday in Lent
Exodus 17:1-7
Psalm 95
Romans 5:1-11
John 4:5-42

March 25: Annunciation of the Lord
Isaiah 7:10-14
Psalm 45 or Psalm 40:5-10
Hebrews 10:4-10
Luke 1:26-38

March 26: Fourth Sunday in Lent
1 Samuel 16:1-13
Psalm 23
Ephesians 5:8-14
John 9:1-41

April 2: Fifth Sunday in Lent
Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 130
Romans 8:6-11
John 11:1-45

April 9: Palm or Passion Sunday
Liturgy of the Palms: Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29, Matthew 21:1-11
Liturgy of the Passion: Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 31:9-16, Philippians 2:5-11, Matthew 26:14–27:66, or Matthew 27:11-54

Holy Week: April 10-April 15
Monday: Isaiah 42:1-9, Psalm 36:5-11, Hebrews 9:11-15, John 12:1-11
Tuesday: Isaiah 49:1-7, Psalm 71:1-14, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, John 12:20-36
Wednesday: Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 70, Hebrews 12:1-3, John 13:21-32
Maundy Thursday: Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14, Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Good Friday: Isaiah 52:13–53:12, Psalm 22, Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9, John 18:1–19:42
Holy Saturday: Job 14:1-14 or Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24, Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16, 1 Peter 4:1-8, Matthew 27:57-66, or John 19:38-42

April 16: Easter Sunday
Acts 10:34-43 or Jeremiah 31:1-6
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
Colossians 3:1-4 or Acts 10:34-43
John 20:1-18 or Matthew 28:1-10

April 23: Second Sunday of Easter
Acts 2:14a, 22-32
Psalm 16
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

April 30: Third Sunday of Easter
Acts 2:14a, 36-41
Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19
1 Peter 1:17-23
Luke 24:13-35

May 7: Fourth Sunday of Easter
Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 23
1 Peter 2:19-25
John 10:1-10

May 14: Fifth Sunday of Easter
Acts 7:55-60
Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
1 Peter 2:2-10
John 14:1-14

May 21: Sixth Sunday of Easter
Acts 17:22-31
Psalm 66:8-20
1 Peter 3:13-22
John 14:15-21

May 25: Ascension Day
Acts 1:1-11
Psalm 47 or Psalm 93
Ephesians 1:15-23
Luke 24:44-53

May 28: Seventh Sunday of Easter
Acts 1:6-14
Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35
1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11
John 17:1-11

June 4: Pentecost
Acts 2:1-21 or Numbers 11:24-30
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 or Acts 2:1-21
John 20:19-23 or John 7:37-39

June 11: Trinity Sunday
Genesis 1:1-2:4a and Psalm 8
2 Corinthians 13:11-13
Matthew 28:16-20

June 18
Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7) and Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
Exodus 19:2-8a and Psalm 100
Romans 5:1-8
Matthew 9:35-10:8, (9-23)

June 25
Genesis 21:8-21 and Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17
Jeremiah 20:7-13 and Psalm 69:7-10, (11-15), 16-18
Romans 6:1b-11
Matthew 10:24-39

July 2
Genesis 22:1-14 and Psalm 13
Jeremiah 28:5-9 and Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18
Romans 6:12-23
Matthew 10:40-42

July 9
Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67 and Psalm 45:10-17 or Song of Solomon 2:8-13
Zechariah 9:9-12 and Psalm 145:8-14
Romans 7:15-25a
Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

July 16
Genesis 25:19-34 and Psalm 119:105-112
Isaiah 55:10-13 and Psalm 65:(1-8), 9-13
Romans 8:1-11
Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

July 23
Genesis 28:10-19a and Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24
Wisdom of Solomon 12:13, 16-19 or Isaiah 44:6-8 and Psalm 86:11-17
Romans 8:12-25
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

July 30
Genesis 29:15-28 and Psalm 105:1-11, 45b or Psalm 128
1 Kings 3:5-12 and Psalm 119:129-136
Romans 8:26-39
Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

August 6
Genesis 32:22-31 and Psalm 17:1-7, 15
Isaiah 55:1-5 and Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21
Romans 9:1-5
Matthew 14:13-21

August 13
Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 and Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b
1 Kings 19:9-18 and Psalm 85:8-13
Romans 10:5-15
Matthew 14:22-33

August 20
Genesis 45:1-15 and Psalm 133
Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 and Psalm 67
Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32
Matthew 15:(10-20), 21-28

August 27
Exodus 1:8-2:10 and Psalm 124
Isaiah 51:1-6 and Psalm 138
Romans 12:1-8
Matthew 16:13-20

September 3
Exodus 3:1-15 and Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b
Jeremiah 15:15-21 and Psalm 26:1-8
Romans 12:9-21
Matthew 16:21-28

September 10
Exodus 12:1-14 and Psalm 149
Ezekiel 33:7-11 and Psalm 119:33-40
Romans 13:8-14
Matthew 18:15-20

September 14
Numbers 21:4b-9 and Psalm 98:1-5 or Psalm 78:1-2, 34-38
1 Corinthians 1:18-24
John 3:13-17

September 17
Exodus 14:19-31 and Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21
Genesis 50:15-21 and Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13
Romans 14:1-12
Matthew 18:21-35

September 24
Exodus 16:2-15 and Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45
Jonah 3:10–4:11 and Psalm 145:1-8
Philippians 1:21-30
Matthew 20:1-16

October 1
Exodus 17:1-7 and Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 and Psalm 25:1-9
Philippians 2:1-13
Matthew 21:23-32

October 8
Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20 and Psalm 19
Isaiah 5:1-7 and Psalm 80:7-15
Philippians 3:4b-14
Matthew 21:33-46

October 9
Deuteronomy 8:7-18
Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21
2 Corinthians 9:6-15
Luke 17:11-19

October 15
Exodus 32:1-14 and Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23
Isaiah 25:1-9 and Psalm 23
Philippians 4:1-9
Matthew 22:1-14

October 22
Exodus 33:12-23 and Psalm 99
Isaiah 45:1-7 and Psalm 96:1-9, (10-13)
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10
Matthew 22:15-22

October 29
Deuteronomy 34:1-12 and Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17
Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18 and Psalm 1
1 Thessalonians 2:1-8
Matthew 22:34-46

November 1: All Saints Day
Revelation 7:9-17 and Psalm 34:1-10, 22
1 John 3:1-3
Matthew 5:1-12

November 5
Joshua 3:7-17 and Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37
Micah 3:5-12 and Psalm 43
1 Thessalonians 2:9-13
Matthew 23:1-12

November 12
Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25 and Psalm 78:1-7
Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-16 or Amos 5:18-24
Wisdom of Solomon 6:17-20 or Psalm 70
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Matthew 25:1-13

November 19
Judges 4:1-7 and Psalm 123
Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18 and Psalm 90:1-8, (9-11), 12
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
Matthew 25:14-30

November 23: Thanksgiving Day
Deuteronomy 8:7-18 and Psalm 65
2 Corinthians 9:6-15
Luke 17:11-19

November 26: Christ the King (End of Church Year)
Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 and Psalm 100
Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 and Psalm 95:1-7a
Ephesians 1:15-23
Matthew 25:31-46

December 3: First Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

December 10: Second Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

December 17: Third Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126 or Luke 1:46b-55
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 24: Fourth Sunday of Advent
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Luke 1:46b-55 or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

December 24: Christmas Eve & Day
Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)
Or
Isaiah 62:6-12
Psalm 97
Titus 3:4-7
Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20
Or
Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98
Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12)
John 1:1-14

December 31: First Sunday after Christmas Day
Isaiah 61:10–62:3
Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:22-40

The Christian Liturgical Calendar: A Guide to Seasons of the Church Year can be downloaded at www.judsonpress.com/judson_journeys_downloads.cfm > Charts > Seasons of the Church Year.

The 2017 Year-at-a-Glance Calendar

January 2017

America for Christ promotional window begins.

1 New Year's Day
6 Epiphany
8 Baptism of the Lord
15 Christian Unity Sunday
16 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
18-25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
22 Green Lake Sunday
27 Holocaust Remembrance Day (International)

February 2017

Black History Month

1 Anniversary of the founding of the Women's Baptist Home Mission Society (1877)
5 Baptist World Alliance Sunday
Boy Scout Sunday
12 Church Vocations Sunday
25 Anniversary of the founding of the Baptist General Tract Society (1824)
26 Transfiguration Sunday

March 2017

America for Christ Offering Month and Women's History Month

1 Ash Wednesday/Lent Begins
3 World Day of Prayer
5 1st Sunday in Lent
America for Christ Sunday
8 International Women's Day
12 2nd Sunday in Lent
Daylight Savings Time Begins
Girl Scout Sunday
American Baptist Seminary Sunday
19 3rd Sunday in Lent
19 Women in Ministry Sunday
19-25 Central America Week
25 Annunciation of the Lord
26 4th Sunday in Lent

April 2017

Prevention of Child Abuse Month and Autism Awareness Month
One Great Hour of Sharing promotional window begins.

2 5th Sunday in Lent
7 World Health Day
9 Palm or Passion Sunday
13 Maundy Thursday
14 Good Friday
15 Holy Saturday
16 Easter
22 Earth Day
23 American Baptist Camps and Conferences Sunday
23 American Baptist Volunteer Sunday

April *(continued)*

23-29 National Volunteer Appreciation Week
27 Anniversary of establishment of American Baptist Home Mission Society (1832)

May 2017

Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month and Older U.S. Americans Month

4 National Day of Prayer
5 May Fellowship Day
7 Peace Sunday
7-14 Family Week
14 Mother's Day
Rural Life Sunday
20 Armed Forces Day
21 Baptist Heritage Day
24 Holocaust Remembrance Day (U.S.)
25 Ascension Day
29 Memorial Day

June 2017

4 Pentecost
Church Planting Sunday
Religious Liberty Sunday
International Environmental Sabbath
One Great Hour of Sharing Sunday
11 Trinity Sunday
Children's Day
Baptist Youth Day of Prayer
14 Flag Day
18 Father's Day
20 World Refugee Day
25 American Baptist Homes and Caring Ministries Sunday

July 2017

4 Independence Day
13 204th Anniversary of the arrival of Adoniram and Ann Hasseltine Judson in Burma
23 Parent's Day

August 2017

World Mission Offering promotion begins.

6 Transfiguration
Friendship Day

September 2017

Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15–Oct. 15)

4 Labor Day
17 American Baptist Women's Sunday
National Back to Church Sunday
18 Native American/First Nations Day
21 International Day of Prayer for Peace
24 Christian Education Sunday

October 2017

Pastor Appreciation Month, World Mission Offering Month, National Disability Employment, and Domestic Violence Awareness Month

1 World Communion Sunday
World Mission Offering Sunday
8 American Baptist Laity Sunday
9 Columbus Day
14-16 National Observance of Children's Sabbath
16 World Food Day
22 Campus Ministry Sunday
22-28 National Pastoral Care Week
24 United Nations Day
29 Reformation Sunday
31 Reformation Day

November 2017

1 All Saints' Day
3 World Community Day
5 Daylight Savings Time Ends
American Baptist College Sunday
6 Baptist Women's Day of Prayer
7 Election Day
11 Veterans Day
12 Stewardship Sunday
14 Anniversary of the founding of the Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society (1877)
19 Bible Sunday
Asian American Baptist Sunday
23 Thanksgiving
26 Christ the King Sunday—The Church Year Ends

December 2017

Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering Month

3 1st Sunday in Advent—The Church Year Begins
Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering Sunday
10 2nd Sunday in Advent
Human Rights Day
17 3rd Sunday in Advent
24 4th Sunday in Advent
Christmas Eve
25 Christmas
24 (sundown)–Jan. 6 Christmastide
26-1 Kwanzaa *(Dec. 26–Jan. 1)*
31 New Year's Eve (Watch Night)
Student Recognition Sunday

January 2017

America for Christ promotional window begins.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6 Epiphany	7
8 Baptism of the Lord	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 Christian Unity Sunday	16 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day	17	18 18-25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	19	20	21
22 Green Lake Sunday	23	24	25	26	27 Holocaust Remembrance Day (International)	28
29	30	31				February is Black History Month ▶

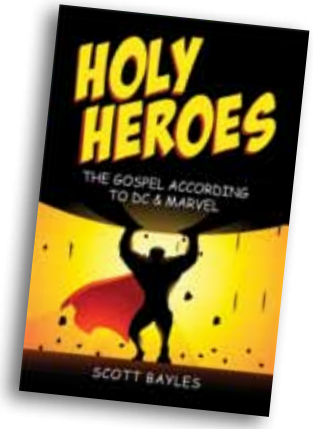
Resources

- America for Christ offering information is found at www.abhms.org or by calling 800-222-3872, x2028.
- Justice for Children grants from American Baptist Home Mission Societies provide an opportunity for American Baptist-related organizations to receive support for their outreach to children in underserved communities. For more information, visit www.abhms.org > Ministries > Healing Communities > Justice for Children or contact Rev. Lisa Harris-Lee, ABHMS National Coordinator, Justice for Children Initiative/Christian Center Relations (lisa.harris-lee@abhms.org or 800-222-3872, x2158).
- The National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces will be held January 9–11, 2017, in Arlington, VA. For more information, visit www.ncmaf.net.
- *Race and Poverty: A Five-Session Study Guide* was developed jointly by American Baptist Home Mission Societies and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in response to Hurricanes Rita and Katrina. Download at www.abhms.org > Resources > Bible Studies.
- For details on The Religious Liberty Essay Scholarship Contest sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, visit www.bjconline.org.
- For information on The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, visit www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/week-of-prayer.
- Workshops for Church Life and Leadership (www.abhms.org > Resources) include:

903C Becoming a Disciple-forming Community

811 Dealing with Conflict in Group Meetings

- From Judson Press (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766):
  - *Beyond Stewardship: A Church Guide to Generous Giving Campaigns*, John Zehring and Kate Jagger
  - *Holy Heroes: The Gospel According to DC & Marvel*, Scott Bayles



- Orders for *Judson Bible Journeys* curriculum for adults spring quarter, "God Loves Us" are due January 30. Student book (regular size): $5.50; student book (large print): $6.99; Leader's Guide (print): $7.99; Leader's Guide (PDF): $6.00

Notes

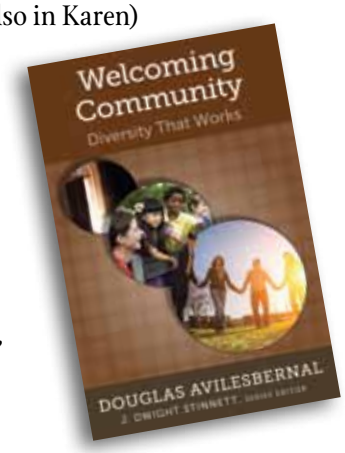
February 2017

Black History Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Anniversary of the founding of the Women's Baptist Home Mission Society (1877)	2	3	4
5 Baptist World Alliance Sunday	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Church Vocations Sunday	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 Anniversary of the founding of the Baptist General Tract Society (1824)
26 Transfiguration Sunday	27	28				**March is America for Christ Offering Month** ▶

Resources

- America for Christ offering information is found at www.abhms.org or by calling 800-222-3872, x2028.
- American Baptist Personnel Services (ABPS) is a computer based data-storage-and-retrieval system that produces personal profiles of men and women professionally trained who seek to serve local congregations and denominational entities, and provides resources to help congregations discover their mission and leadership needs. For information, go to www.abhms.org > ABPS.
- Baptist World Alliance Sunday information is found at www.bwanet.org.
- There are more than 1,200 ABC-related black churches (including African, African American, Haitian and Caribbean). For information, contact Rev. Dr. Brenda Halliburton-Williams, ABHMS National Coordinator, Intercultural Ministries, Black Church Strategist, at Brenda.halliburton@abhms.org or 610-768-2443 or visit www.abhms.org > Ministries > Intercultural Ministries > Black Church Ministries.
- "Marks of the Transformational Leader in a Disciple-making Church" can be downloaded at www.abhms.org > Resources.
- For information on ABHMS partner Neighborhood Action Program (NAP) Christian centers, visit www.abhms.org > Ministries > Healing Communities or contact Rev. Lisa Harris-Lee, ABHMS National Coordinator, Justice for Children Initiative/Christian Center Relations (lisa.harris-lee@abhms.org or 800-222-3872, x2158).
- Workshops for Church Life and Leadership (www.abhms.org > Resources) include:
  101 The Identification and Use of Spiritual Gifts in the Disciple-making Church
  101E Identificacion y uso de los dones espirituales en una iglesia discipuladora
  101F L'Identification et L'Emploi des dons Spirituels dans L'Eglise Orientee à Faire des Disciples
  501 The Journey toward Wisdom
  808 Strategies to Move the Small Church Forward
  808F Stratégies pour favoriser le développement de la petite congrégation
  812 Leadership as Enabling (also in Karen)
- From Judson Press (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766):
  - *Welcoming Community: Diversity That Works*, Douglas Avilesbernal
  - *My Beloved, My Friend: The Song of Songs for Couples*, Brent D. Christianson



Notes

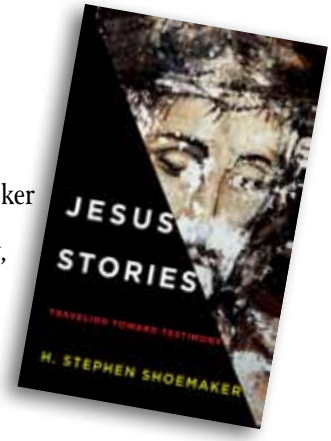
March 2017

America for Christ Offering Month and Women's History Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Ash Wednesday/ Lent Begins	2	3 World Day of Prayer	4
5 1st Sunday in Lent America for Christ Sunday	6	7	8 International Women's Day	9	10	11
12 2nd Sun. in Lent Daylight Savings Time Begins American Baptist Seminary Sunday	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 3rd Sun. in Lent Women in Ministry Sunday 19-25 Central America Week	20	21	22	23	24	25 Annunciation of the Lord
26 4th Sunday in Lent	27	28	29	30	31	April is Prevention of Child Abuse Month and Autism Awareness Month. ▶

Resources

- America for Christ offering information is found at www.abhms.org or by calling 800-222-3872, x2028.
- "American Baptist Entities and ABC-related Seminaries: Partnership for Renewal" appears on page 9 of this guide. For a list of American Baptist-related seminaries, visit www.abhms.org > Education & Scholarships > Seminaries.
- *Mission from the Gospels: A Bible Study with a Missional Twist* was developed in partnership between American Baptist Home Mission Societies and ABC of Wisconsin. This peer-to-peer small group learning experience draws on the four Gospels and the Book of Acts and asks "What if the Gospels were intended to be read as four different handbooks on mission?" See page 7 of this guide for a sample and visit www.missionfromthegospels.com for more information.
- *Nonviolent Christian Parenting: Raising Children with Love, Limits, and Wisdom* is found at http://nospank.net/ncp.pdf.
- For information on International Women's day, visit www.internationalwomensday.com.
- For Women in Ministry information, visit www.abc-usa.org > Ministries > All Ministries > Women in Ministry.
- Workshops for Church Life and Leadership (www.abhms.org > Resources) include:
  201 Planning Discipleship Formation/Christian Education (also in Karen)
  301 Child abuse Prevention in Churches (also in Karen)
  301E Prevención del Abuso de Niños y Niñas en las Iglesias
  807 The Spiritual Life of Boards and Committees
  808 Strategies to Move the Small Church Forward
  808F Stratégies pour favoriser le développement de la petite congrégation
- From Judson Press (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766):
  - *Jesus Stories: Traveling Toward Testimony,* H. Stephen Shoemaker
  - *Journey with Jesus through Lent,* Glenn E. Porter Sr.



Notes

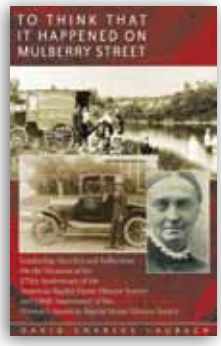
April 2017

Prevention of Child Abuse Month and Autism Awareness Month
One Great Hour of Sharing promotional window begins.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 5th Sunday in Lent	3	4	5	6	7 World Health Day	8
9 Palm or Passion Sunday	10	11	12	13 Maundy Thursday	14 Good Friday	15 Holy Saturday
16 Easter	17	18	19	20	21	22 Earth Day
23 American Baptist Volunteer Sunday American Baptist Camps and Conferences Sunday 30	24 23-29 National Volunteer Appreciation Week	25	26	27 Anniversary of establishment of American Baptist Home Mission Society	28	29

Resources

- The American Baptist Home Mission Society was established in New York City in 1832, sending 150 home missionaries by 1836, while refusing to appoint single women. The Women's Baptist Home Mission Society, based in Chicago, and the Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society, based in Boston, were founded in 1877 "to extend the kingdom of God among the women and children of America." The two women's societies consolidated their work in 1909 under the name Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society (WABHMS). In 1955, The American Baptist Home Mission Society and WABHMS merged their work and were renamed National Ministries in 1972. In 2003, National Ministries added the denomination's ministries of discipleship, education, and publishing to its work when it absorbed Educational Ministries. On April 27, 2010, National Ministries reclaimed the organization's historic names and began carrying out its ministries as American Baptist Home Mission Societies. For more history or to download publications, *American Baptist Home Mission ROOTS 1824-2010* and *To Think That it Happened on Mulberry Street*, visit www.abhms.org > About Us > Where We Come From.



- Disaster Response information and Volunteer Mobilization Ministries information are found at www.abhms.org > Ministries > Healing Communities > Disaster Response, or contact Victoria Goff at victoria.goff@abhms.org or 800-222-3872, x2449.
- Download "Eco-justice: American Baptists' Heritage and Hope for Creation," *The Christian Citizen*, vol. 1, 2009, or Workshop for Church Life and Leadership 920C, "A Matter of Stewardship: Eco-justice in Biblical Perspective" at www.abhms.org > Resources.
- From Judson Press (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766):
  - *Through Her Eyes: Bible Studies on Women in Scripture*, Deborah Spink Winters, ed.
  - *8 Questions Jesus Asked: Discipleship for Leaders*, Daniel M. Cash & William H. Griffith

- Orders for *Judson Bible Journeys* curriculum for adults summer quarter—"God's Urgent Call" —are due April 30 (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766). Student book (regular size): $5.50; student book (large print): $6.99; Leader's Guide (print): $7.99; Leader's Guide (PDF): $6.00

Notes

May 2017

Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month and Older U.S. Americans Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 National Day of Prayer	5 May Fellowship Day	6
7 Peace Sunday 7-14 Family Week	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Mother's Day Rural Life Sunday	15	16	17	18	19	20 Armed Forces Day
21 Baptist Heritage Day	22	23	24 Holocaust Remembrance Day (U.S.)	25 Ascension Day	26	27
28	29 Memorial Day	30	31		June is One Great Hour of Sharing, Torture Awareness, and Immigration Heritage Month ▶	

Resources

- ABHMS endorses American Baptist-ordained clergy as chaplains and pastoral counselors. For additional information for endorsement for pastoral counseling and chaplaincy in corporations, hospitals, prisons, or the military, please visit www.abhms.org > Ministries > Cultivating Leaders > Chaplaincy and Pastoral Counseling Ministries or send an e-mail to endorsement@abhms.org.
- *Children, Poverty and the Bible* can be downloaded at www.abhms.org > Resources > Bible Studies or call 800-458-3766 for print copies.
- Intercultural Ministries provides resources for congregations and individuals seeking to develop cultural awareness and sensitivity for building a culturally and racially just and inclusive church. The goal is to provide church leaders with the communication bridges and skills that further the cause of Christ. For more information, visit www.abhms.org > Ministries > Cultivating Leaders > Intercultural Ministries or contact Rev. Dr. Brenda Halliburton-Williams (Brenda.Halliburton@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x 2443); Rev. Florence Li (Florence.Li@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x 2468); Rev. Salvador Orellana (Salvador.Orellana@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x 2421); or Curtis Ramsey-Lucas (Curtis.Ramsey-Lucas@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x 2394).
- Peace Sunday information and materials can be found at www.bpfna.org/peace-sunday.
- *Personality-based Evangelism*, a webinar by Dr. Jeffrey Johnson, ABHMS National Coordinator of Evangelism and New Church Planting, is found under "Free Downloads" at www.judsonpress.com.
- Workshops for Church Life and Leadership (www.abhms.org > Resources) include:
  107 American Baptist Heritage
  107E La Herencia de los Bautistas Americanas at www.abhms.org
  601E Cultivando la Fe en las Familias
  809 Hospitality and the Church
  C904 Naturally Creating Community (workshop based on *Got Style? Personality-Based Evangelism* by Jeffrey Johnson, ABHMS National Coordinator of Evangelism and New Church Planting)
- From Judson Press (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766):
  - *Here I Am: Faith Stories of Korean American Clergywomen*, Grace Ji-Sun Kim, editor
  - *Sisters of Scripture: Mentors in Womanhood*, Billie Montgomery/Cook

Notes

June 2017

One Great Hour of Sharing Month, Torture Awareness Month, and Immigration Heritage Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 Pentecost Church Planting Sun. Religious Liberty Sunday Int'l. Environ. Sabbath One Great Hour of Sharing Sunday	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Trinity Sunday Children's Day Baptist Youth Day of Prayer	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 Father's Day	19	20 World Refugee Day	21	22	23	24
25 American Baptist Homes and Caring Ministries Sunday	26	27	28	29	30	

Resources

- For information on American Baptist Homes and Caring Ministries, visit abhms.org > Ministries > Healing Communities (left menu) > American Baptist Homes and Caring Ministries (left menu).
- Baptist Youth World Day of Prayer resources can be found at www.bwanet.org.
- Download "Childhood Matters," *The Christian Citizen*, vol. 2, 2013, at www.abhms.org > Resources > Publications.
- For information on church planting, visit http://churchplantingsunday.com.
- For information and resources on resettlement assistance or immigration awareness and reform, contact Rev. Dr. Brenda Halliburton-Williams, Acting National Coordinator, Immigration and Refugee Services (Brenda.halliburton@abhms.org or 800-222-3872, x 2443) or visit www.abhms.org > Ministries > Immigration and Refugee Resettlement.
- For Burma refugee information, contact Rev. Florence Li, National Coordinator, Asian Ministries (florence.li@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x2468); Rev. Saw Ler Htoo, National Coordinator, Burma Diaspora Ministries (sawler.htoo@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x2007); or Rev. Ronald C. Nunuk, National Coordinator, Burma Diaspora Ministries (ronaldcharles.nunuk@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x2426).
- Religious Liberty Sunday information can be found at www.bjconline.org.
- Torture Awareness information from the National Religious Campaign against Torture is found at www.nrcat.org.
- Peace Village is an international nonprofit that teaches the power of peace to children, families, and communities. Learn more at www.peacevillageinc.org.
- From Judson Press (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766):
  - *Managing Projects in Ministry*, Vincent Wyatt Howell
  - *As the Ink Flows: Devotions to Inspire Christian Writers & Speakers*, Glenda Dekkema, Melony Teague, Carol Ford, Claudia Loopstra & Marguerite Cummings

- Workshops for Church Life and Leadership (www.abhms.org > Resources) include:
  301 Preventing Child Abuse in Churches (also in Karen)
  301E Prevención del Abuso de Niños y Niñas
  302 Basics of Teaching and Relating to Children (also in Karen)
  303 Teaching the Bible to Children (also in Karen)
  602 Ministries with Families of Children with Disabilities

Notes

July 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
World Mission Offering promotion begins in August. ▶						1
2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13 204th Anniv. of the arrival of Adoniram and Ann Hasseltine Judson in Burma	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 Parent's Day	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

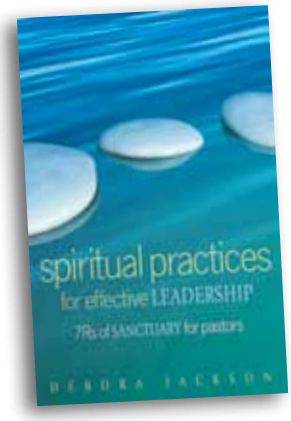
Resources

- As a founding member of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), American Baptist Home Mission Societies is part of a coalition of active shareholders who view the management of investments as a catalyst for change. The Common Investment Fund (CIF)—where ABHMS assets are held—is an actively managed fund that engages in a full range of Socially Responsible Investing activities. Established in 1962, ABHMS' CIF was expanded in 1975 to allow participation of American Baptist churches and related institutions. For more information or to download resources, visit www.abhms.org > Ministries > Healing Communities > Socially Responsible Investing.

COMMON INVESTMENT FUND

- "Studying How Poverty Keeps Hurting Young Minds, and What to Do About It," (Jim Dwyer, *New York Times*, May 3, 2016) is found at www.nytimes.com.
- Workshops for Church Life and Leadership (www.abhms.org > Resources) include:
  C404 Encounter: Come as You Are (for youth and young adults—also in Karen)
  C405 MtW: Equipped for Life (for youth and young adults)
  C901 Reading the Bible with Integrity (also in Karen)
  C903 Becoming a Disciple-forming Community

- From Judson Press (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766):
  - *What's Your Function? Working It Out with God*, Aaron Basko
  - *Spiritual Practices for Effective Leadership: 7Rs of Sanctuary for Pastors*, Debora Jackson
  - *Bless God and Take Courage: The Judson History and Legacy*, Rosalie Hall Hunt
  - *To the Golden Shore: The Life of Adoniram Judson*, Courtney Anderson



- Orders for *Judson Bible Journeys* curriculum for adults fall quarter, "Covenants with God," are due July 30 (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766). Student book (regular size): $5.50; student book (large print): $6.99; Leader's Guide (print): $7.99; Leader's Guide (PDF): $6.00

Notes

August 2017

World Mission Offering promotion begins.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Transfiguration Friendship Day	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	National Back to Church Sunday is September 17. Christian Education Sunday is September 24. ▶	

Resources

- *Age Appropriate Discipleship Formation* can be downloaded at www.abhms.org > Resources.
  Additional discipleship-formation resources are available at
  - www.abhms.org > Ministries > Equipping Disciples; and
  - www.judson press.com > Free Downloads
- Missional church is a growing movement in response to the current era of dramatic change, in which local congregations seek to become authentic faith communities that primarily direct their ministries outward toward the context in which they are located. A Missional Church Learning Experience (MCLE) is a cluster of churches in an American Baptist region that forms a learning community exploring how they can best fit with God's mission in our rapidly changing culture. For information on Missional Church and MCLE, visit www.abhms.org > Ministries > Equipping Disciples (in left-hand menu) > Missional Church Transformation or contact Rev. Dr. Ron Carlson, Missional Church Strategist (ronald.carlson@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x2416), or Rev. Glynis LaBarre, Transformation Strategist (glynis.labarre@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x2412).
- For information on Friend Sunday/National Back to Church Sunday, visit http://friendsunday.com/ or http://backtochurch.com/.
- Workshops for Church Life and Leadership (www.abhms.org > Resources) include:
  107 American Baptist Heritage
  107E La Herencia de los Bautistas Americanas
  201 Planning Your Discipleship/Christian Education Program (also in Karen)
  (Workshops continued)
  601E Cultivando la Fe en las Familias
  808 Strategies for Moving the Small Church Forward
  808F Stratégies pour favoriser le développement de la petite congrégation
  C910 Introduction to Missional Church (also in Karen)
- From Judson Press (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766):
  - *Still a Mother: Journeys through Perinatal Bereavement*, Joy Freeman & Tabatha D. Johnson, eds.
  - *Faith in the Fast Lane: How NASCAR Found Jesus*, Chad Bonham

Notes

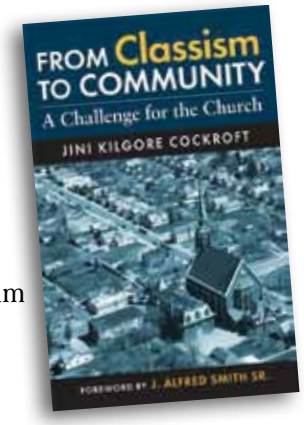
September 2017

Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15–October 15)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
October is Pastor Appreciation Month. ▶					1	2
3	4 Labor Day	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 American Baptist Women's Sunday	18 Native American/ First Nations Day	19	20	21 International Day of Prayer for Peace	22	23
24 Christian Education Sunday	25	26	27	28	29	30

Resources

- CECALI XXI, an ABHMS training program founded in collaboration with Spanish and Portuguese speaking pastors and leaders, provides practical tools for effective and transformative ministry in churches and communities. For more information, visit www.abhms.org > Ministries > Cultivating Leaders > Intercultural Ministries > Latino Ministries or contact the Rev. F. Salvador Orellana, National Coordinator, Latino Ministries Strategist (salvador.orellana@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x2470).
- International Day of Prayer for Peace information is found at www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/events/international-day-of-prayer-for-peace.
- A litany for Christian Education Sunday in English, French, Spanish, and Traditional Chinese is found on pages 5–6. Versions of the litany with 2 to a page for easier copying are available at www.abhms.org > Resources > Discipleship and Christian Education Guide.
- Download "Deep Roots and Flexible Branches: Christian Discipleship in the 21st Century," *The Christian Citizen*, vol. 2, 2011, at www.abmhs.org > Resources > Publications.
- Information on ABHMS' Native American Ministries can be found at www.abhms.org > Ministries > Cultivating Leaders > Intercultural Ministries > Native American Ministries or contact Curtis Ramsey-Lucas (curtis.ramsey-lucas@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x2408).
- *Teaching Tolerance*, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, offers resources for a variety of classroom settings (K-12 and higher education) focused on diversity, equity, and justice (www.tolerance.org).
- Women's Ministry Sunday information is found at www.abwministries.org.
- Workshops for Church Life and Leadership (www.abhms.org > Resources) include:
  104 Growing Persons
  104E Personas en Crecimiento en las Iglesias
  501 The Journey toward Wisdom
  503 Maximizing Discussion in Adult Classes
  702 Teaching with Respect for Diverse Learning Styles
  702E Enseñando con Respeto para Diversos Estilos de Aprendizaje
  703 Teaching Approaches for Discipleship Formation
- From Judson Press (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766):
  - *From Classism to Community: A Challenge for the Church*, Jini Kilgore Cockroft
  - *Intercultural Ministry: Hope for a Changing World*, Grace Ji-Sun Kim & Jann Aldredge-Clanton, eds.



Notes

October 2017

Pastor Appreciation Month, World Mission Offering Month, National Disability Employment, and Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 World Communion Sunday World Mission Offering Sunday	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 American Baptist Laity Sunday	9	10	11	12	13	14 14-16 National Observance of Children's Sabbath
15	16 World Food Day	17	18	19	20	21
22 Campus Ministry Sunday 22-28 National Pastoral Care Week	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 Reformation Sunday	30	31 Reformation Day				**November 12 is Stewardship Sunday.** ▶

Resources

- ABHMS endorses American Baptist-ordained clergy as chaplains and pastoral counselors. For additional information for endorsement for pastoral counseling and chaplaincy in corporations, hospitals, prisons, or the military, please visit www.abhms.org > Ministries > Cultivating Leaders > Chaplaincy and Pastoral Counseling Ministries or send an e-mail to endorsement@abhms.org.
- Information on American Baptist-related colleges and universities and scholarships for members of ABC-related churches is found at www.abhms.org > Education & Scholarships.
- The bulletin insert "Expanding Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities" and articles related to Disability Ministries are found at www.abhms.org > Ministries > Healing Communities > Disability Ministries or contact Curtis Ramsey-Lucas (curtis.ramsey-lucas@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x2408).
- National Observance of Children's Sabbath information is found at www.childrensdefense.org.
- World Food Day information is found at www.bread.org.
- Women's Ministry Sunday information is found at www.abwministries.org.
- Workshops for Church Life and Leadership (www.abhms.org > Resources) include:
  101 Identifying and Using Spiritual Gifts in the Church's Mission
  101E Identificando y Usando los Dones en la Iglesia y en su Misión
  101F L'Identification et L'Emploi des dons Spirituels dans L'Eglise Orientee à Faire des Disciples

  (Workshops continued)
  602 Ministries with Families of Children with Disabilities
  813 Church Leader Development
- From Judson Press (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766):
  - *Vital Spirit, Vital Service: Spirituality that Works,* Trinette V. McCray
  - *Pastoral Caregiver's Casebook Series: Volumes 1–4,* John J. Gleason, ed.

- Orders for *Judson Bible Journeys* curriculum for adults winter 2016-2017 quarter "Faith in Action" are due October 30 (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766). Student book (regular size): $5.50; student book (large print): $6.99; Leader's Guide (print): $7.99; Leader's Guide (PDF): $6.00

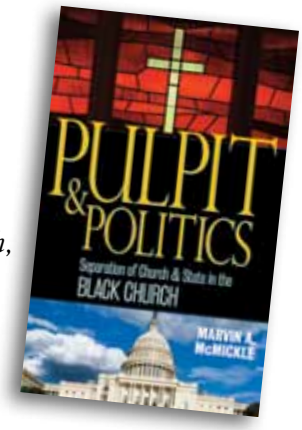
Notes

November 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 World Community Day	4
5 Daylight Savings Time Ends American Baptist College Sunday	6 Baptist Women's Day of Prayer	7 Election Day	8	9	10	11 Veterans Day
12 Stewardship Sunday	13	14 Anniv. of the founding of the Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society (1877)	15	16	17	18
19 Bible Sunday Asian American Baptist Sunday	20	21	22	23 Thanksgiving	24	25
26 Christ the King Sunday—The Church Year Ends	27	28	29	30	**December is Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering Month. Advent begins December 3.** ▶	

Resources

- An Advent wreath dedication and two sets of Advent readings can be downloaded at www.abhms.org > Resources > Discipleship and Christian Education Guide.
- Information on ABC-related Asian-American communities is found at www.abhms.org > Ministries > Cultivating Leaders > Intercultural Ministries > Asian Ministries or contact Rev. Florence Li, ABHMS National Coordinator, Asian Ministries (florence.li@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x2468). For Burma refugee information, contact Rev. Saw Ler Htoo, ABHMS National Coordinator, Burma Diaspora Ministries (sawler.htoo@abhms.org; 800-222-3872 x2007); or Rev. Ronald C. Nunuk, ABHMS National Coordinator, Burma Diaspora Ministries (ronaldcharles.nunuk@abhms.org; 800-222-3872, x2426).
- Information on American Baptist-related colleges and universities and scholarships for members of ABC-related churches is found at www.abhms.org > Education & Scholarships.
- Information and resources for Baptist Women's Day of Prayer is found at www abwministries.org.
- From Judson Press (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766):
  - *Pulpit & Politics: Separation of Church & State in the Black Church*, Marvin A. McMickle
  - *The Star Book for Stewardship*, Clifford A. Jones Sr.



- Workshops for Church Life and Leadership (www.abhms.org > Resources) include:
  303 Teaching the Bible to Children (also in Karen)
  502 Methods for Bible Study with Adults (also in Karen)
  802 The Work of the Nominating Committee
  804 The Deacon as Servant-Leader (also in Karen)
  812 Leadership as Enabling (also in Karen)
  C901 Reading the Bible with Integrity (also in Karen)
  C910 Introduction to Missional Church (also in Karen)

Notes

December 2017

Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 1st Sunday in Advent—The Church Year Begins Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering Sun.	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 2nd Sunday in Advent Human Rights Day	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 3rd Sunday in Advent	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 4th Sun. in Advent Christmas Eve 31 New Year's Eve (Watch Night) Student Recognition Sun.	25 Christmas	26	27	28	29	30

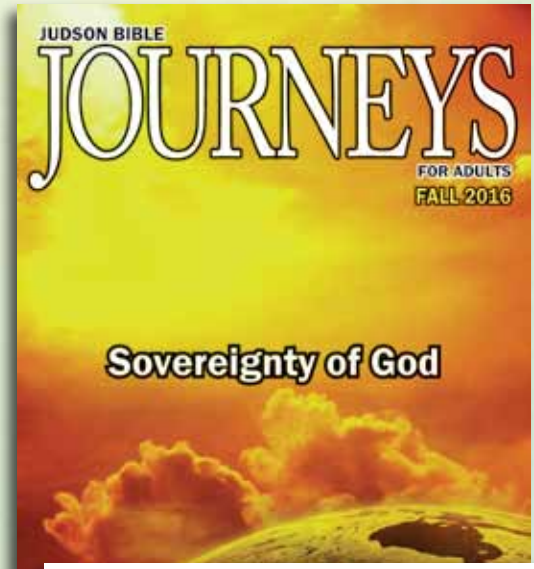
Resources

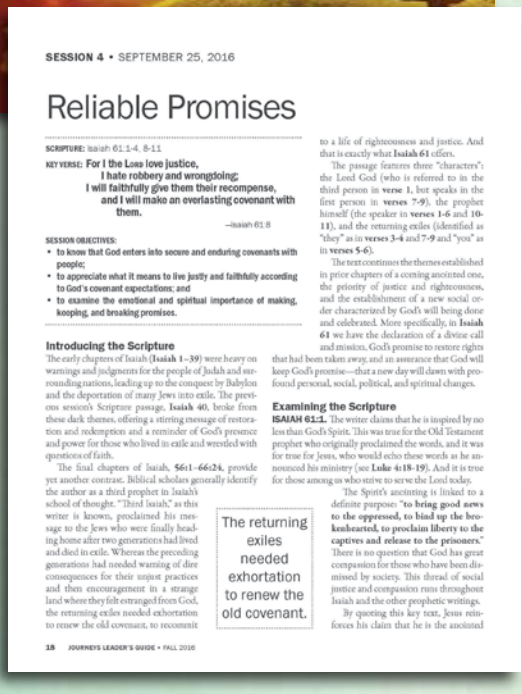
- America for Christ promotion begins in January. Watch for your offering packet or visit www.abhms.org for more information.
- Download "From Generation to Generation," *The Christian Citizen*, vol. 1, 2014, at www.abhms.org > Resources > Publications.
- The Common Investment Fund (CIF) is an actively managed fund that engages in a full range of Socially Responsible Investing activities, which allows participation of American Baptist churches and related institutions. For more information, visit www.abhms.org > Ministries > Healing Communities > Socially Responsible Investing.
- *Personality-based Evangelism*, a webinar by Dr. Jeffrey Johnson, ABHMS National Coordinator of Evangelism and New Church Planting, is found under "Free Downloads" at www.judsonpress.com.
- Prisoner Re-entry and Aftercare ministry information, *Family Freedom Kit, and Prisoner Re-entry and Aftercare Ministry Toolkit* are available at www.abhms.org > Ministries > Healing Communities > Ex-offender Re-entry or contact Rev. Fela Barrueto at fela.barrueto@abhms.org or 800-222-3972, x2493.
- *Selecting Curriculum Materials* provides a process for selecting curriculum materials that meet the needs of your church. Download at www.abhms.org > Resources.
- White Cross information is found at www.abhms.org > Ministries > Healing Communities > Disaster Response or contact Victoria Goff at victoria.goff@abhms.org or 800-222-3872, x2449.
- Workshops for Church Life and Leadership (www.abhms.org > Resources) include:
  401 Evangelism and Discipleship in Youth Ministry (also in Karen)
  401E Evangelismo y Discipulado en el Ministerio de Jóvenes
  401F Evangélisation et Formation de Disciples dans le Ministère des Jeunes
  403 Basics for Teaching Youth (also in Karen)
  C404 Encounter: Come as You Are (also in Karen)
  C405 MtW: Equipped for Life
- From Judson Press (www.judsonpress.com or 800-458-3766):
  - *'Tis the Season: Church Celebrations for Advent & Christmas*, Rachel Gilmore
  - *The Twelve Plays of Christmas: Original Christian Dramas*, Sheryl J. Anderson

Notes

Judson Bible Journeys for Adults

The adult curriculum for American Baptists





SESSION 4 • SEPTEMBER 25, 2016

Reliable Promises

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

KEY VERSE: For I the Lord love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
—Isaiah 61:8

SESSION OBJECTIVES:
- to know that God enters into secure and enduring covenants with people;
- to appreciate what it means to live justly and faithfully according to God's covenant expectations; and
- to examine the emotional and spiritual importance of making, keeping, and breaking promises.

Introducing the Scripture

The early chapters of Isaiah (**Isaiah 1–39**) were heavy on warnings and judgments for the people of Judah and surrounding nations, leading up to the conquest by Babylon and the deportation of many Jews into exile. The previous session's Scripture passage, **Isaiah 40**, broke from these dark themes, offering a stirring message of restoration and redemption and a reminder of God's presence and power for those who lived in exile and wrestled with questions of faith.

The final chapters of Isaiah, **56:1–66:24**, provide yet another contrast. Biblical scholars generally identify the author as a third prophet in Isaiah's school of thought. "Third Isaiah," as this writer is known, proclaimed his message to the Jews who were finally heading home after two generations had lived and died in exile. Whereas the preceding generations had needed warning of dire consequences for their unjust practices and then encouragement in a strange land where they felt estranged from God, the returning exiles needed exhortation to renew the old covenant, to recommit to a life of righteousness and justice. And that is exactly what **Isaiah 61** offers.

The returning exiles needed exhortation to renew the old covenant.

The passage features three "characters": the Lord God (who is referred to in the third person in **verse 1**, but speaks in the first person in **verses 7-9**), the prophet himself (the speaker in **verses 1-6** and **10-11**), and the returning exiles (identified as "they" as in **verses 3-4** and **7-9** and "you" as in **verses 5-6**).

The text continues the themes established in prior chapters of a coming anointed one, the priority of justice and righteousness, and the establishment of a new social order characterized by God's will being done and celebrated. More specifically, in **Isaiah 61** we have the declaration of a divine call and mission, God's promise to restore rights that had been taken away, and an assurance that God will keep God's promise—that a new day will dawn with profound personal, social, political, and spiritual changes.

Examining the Scripture

ISAIAH 61:1. The writer claims that he is inspired by no less than God's Spirit. This was true for the Old Testament prophet who originally proclaimed the words, and it was for true for Jesus, who would echo these words as he announced his ministry (see **Luke 4:18-19**). And it is true for those among us who strive to serve the Lord today.

The Spirit's anointing is linked to a definite purpose: "**to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners.**" There is no question that God has great compassion for those who have been dismissed by society. This thread of social justice and compassion runs throughout Isaiah and the other prophetic writings.

By quoting this key text, Jesus reinforces his claim that he is the anointed

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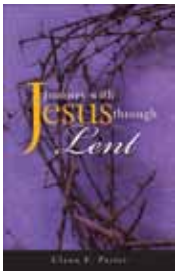

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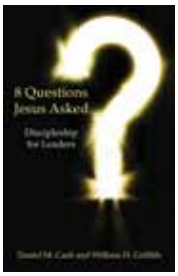

8 Questions Jesus Asked: Discipleship for Leaders

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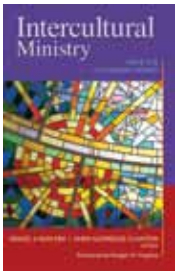

privilege to each culture? How do they avoid assimilating minority cultures into dominant cultures? *Intercultural Ministry* explores these questions and more with chapters from a racially and denominationally diverse group of pastors, theologians, and teachers who reflect on their experiences and experiments in intercultural ministry. Contributors include Peter Ahn, Amy Butler, Brad Braxton, Brandon Green, Daniel Hill, Angie Hong, Karen Oliveto, Carlos Ruiz, Sheila Sholes-Ross, Christine Smith, and more!

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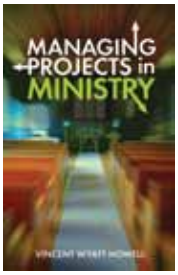

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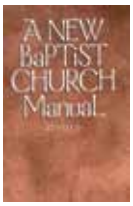

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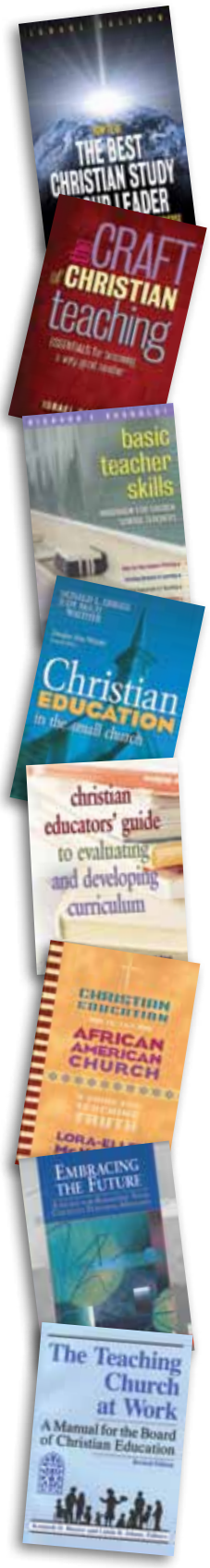

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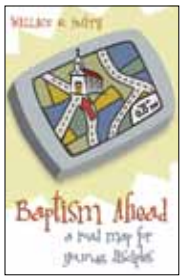

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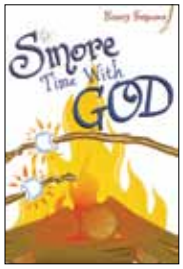

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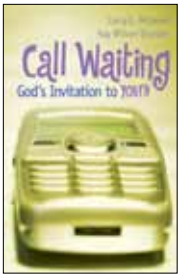

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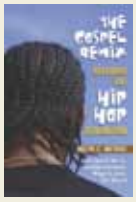

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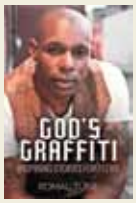

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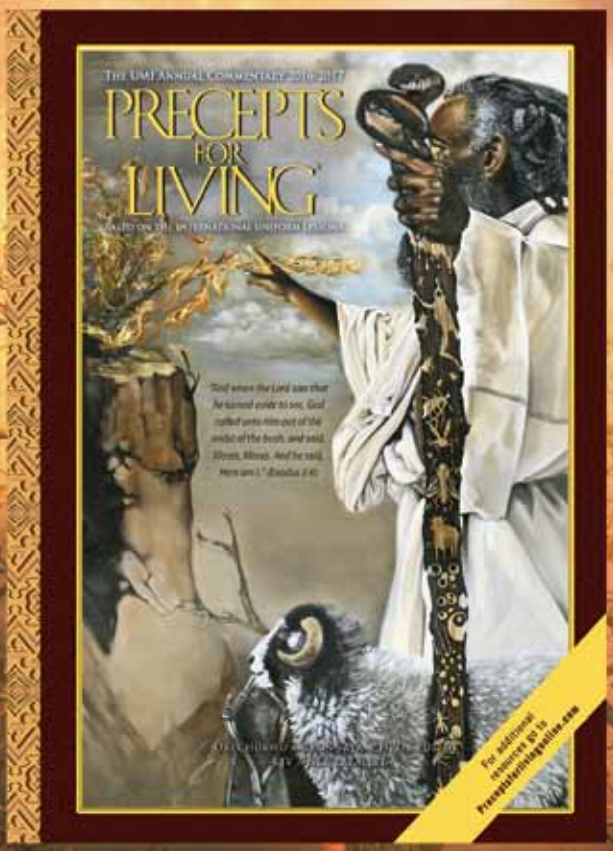

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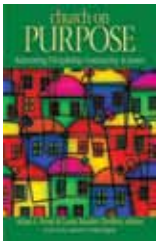

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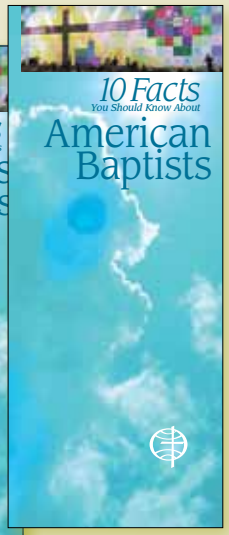

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with local churches
Connecting is a ministry of ABCUSA's Board of General Ministries

ABCUSA is renewing its covenant with more than 5,200 American Baptist local churches across the United States and Puerto Rico. With the support of the ABCUSA Office of the General Secretary, Board of General Ministries, and the wider American Baptist family, we are committed to walking hand in hand with our local churches — serving together as the hands and feet of Christ in spreading the gospel around the world.

American Baptist Churches is one of the most diverse Christian denominations today. We are excited to embrace the future by serving in mission and ministry with our local churches and to continue to celebrate our rich heritage.

In *Connecting*, you will be amazed to learn more about the breadth of all those who make up our American Baptist DNA. Thousands of partners, associates and local churches are interconnected and woven into one another, creating our American Baptist tapestry. This edition of *Connecting* is just a glimpse of all that defines who we are as the American Baptist denomination.

Join us today in an exciting journey as we run towards the mark together in mission and ministry of proclaiming the 'good news' of Christ in our own communities and throughout the world. You, the local church, friends and family of ABCUSA, can connect into the work of God's Ministry through ABCUSA. Visit our website at **www.abc-usa.org** and strengthen your connection with us today!

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES
Focus Statement:
American Baptist Churches are missional congregations that nurture devoted disciples of Jesus Christ who live their lives in mission and ministry for the healing of the world through the love of God.

ABCUSA MISSION STATEMENT
Covenant

American Baptists are a Christ-centered, biblically grounded, ethnically diverse people called to radical personal discipleship in Christ Jesus. Our commitment to Jesus propels us to nurture authentic relationships with one another; build healthy churches; transform our communities, our nations and our world; engage every member in hands-on ministry; and speak the prophetic word in love.

As a people of prayer, purpose, and passion, we are in the forefront of creating a community of faith where people of every race, nationality and culture gather as one in worship, service and work.

Write the vision, make it plain...
Habakkuk 2:2

The heart of the gospel is God's redemptive love. In our life together, the world will see the power of forgiveness to overcome alienation, the strength of love to transform hate, the power of grace to break the bonds of guilt, the triumph of hope over despair, and the victory of faith over doubt.

Through the cross of Christ we embrace the world as neighbor. Our vision for mission energizes a multitude of servant ministries of evangelism, discipleship, leadership, new church development, social justice, healing, peacemaking, economic development and education. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we work together in mutual submission, humility, love, and giving that the gospel might be preached and lived in all the world. ■

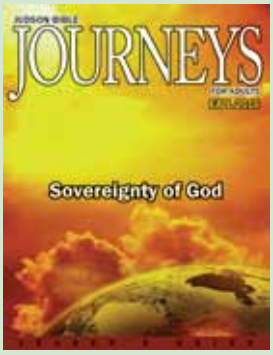
www.abc-usa.org 1

Connecting with Local Churches
United Mission Digest #8996

Love Gift
Envelopes #7109
Coin Box #9143

Visit the ABCUSA website for a complete list of resources and items available for purchase: **www.abc-usa.org** and click on **Resources** for more information.

Adult Ministry



Judson Bible Journeys for Adults

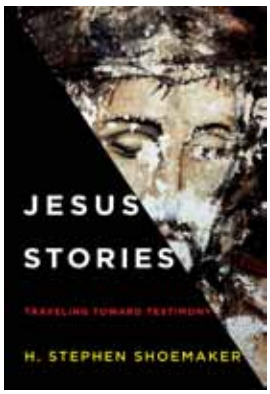
Draws adults into an enriching, challenging, and enlightening learning experience that is sure to enrich their relationship with Jesus Christ. A curriculum designed for Baptist churches, it features the NRSV translation with a six-year cycle based on the International Uniform Lesson.

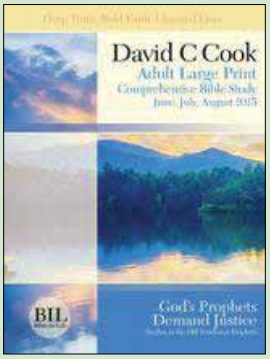
Quarterly Leader's Guide $7.99
Quarterly Leader's Guide (downloadable PDF) $6.00
Student Class Book.....$5.50
Student Class Book (Lg Print) $6.99
Leader's Monthly Units (downloadable PDF).....$4.50
Leader's Weekly Sessions (downloadable PDF) $2.00

Jesus Stories: Traveling toward Testimony

H. Stephen Shoemaker

Join pastor, scholar, and author Steve Shoemaker on a quest—searching for the Jesus who is searching for us. You may have heard of the "historical Jesus," the figure who lived in first-century CE Galilee as best as we can reconstruct. And you undoubtedly know the more-than-historical Jesus who is in search of us, alive to us in the Spirit of God. This vital volume ushers today's disciples on a journey that moves from history into testimony—seeking the man Jesus in order to embrace the savior we call the Risen Christ. There is history here. There is the author's personal testimony as well, a story of faith and experience. And there is an invitation to piece out of that history and story your own testimony, your own story of how you have come to recognize the historic Jesus at work in your life and faith. $17.99





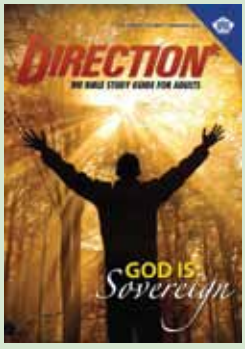
David C. Cook Bible-in-Life & Echoes
Comprehensive Bible Study

This Sunday school curriculum follows the International Sunday School Lectionary (ISSL). Each lesson inspires adults, promotes community among others, and challenges them to grow spiritually.

Comprehensive Bible Study Book (Lg Print) $5.89
Comprehensive Bible Study Book.....$5.59
Lesson Leaflets for Visitors.....$5.19
Power for Living Take-Home Paper $4.59
Adult Teacher's Guide $8.49
Creative Teaching Aids.....$19.99
Quiet Hour $4.59
Teacher's Guide & Creative Teaching Aids Packet $22.99

Urban Ministries, Inc.
Direction

(Age 35+) Features 13 weekly lessons with Scripture passages, memory verses, and thought-provoking questions for class discussions, and suggestions to incorporate Bible truth into the lives of African Americans.



Teaching Success Kit $18.99
Teacher Manual.....$6.19
Student Magazine $4.50
Student Book (Lg Print) $5.00

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD
ENERGIZE YOUR CONGREGATION

2016–17 Global Mission Projects For Church Events, Youth Programs and Vacation Bible School

This year, your congregation can make an eternal difference around the globe through American Baptist International Ministries (IM) by supporting any one of these important projects … or more than 100 others.

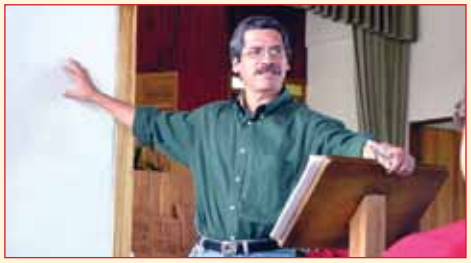
You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. *Galatians 5:13*

Gifts of <u>any</u> size will make a difference!

Start New Baptist Churches in the Middle East and Asia

An urgent need exists to encourage the Baptist faith and witness in the former Soviet communist states. The purpose of this project, managed in cooperation with European Baptist Federation Mission Partnership, is to provide salaries and support for church planters and to help make new congregations financially viable.
Learn more:
www.internationalministries.org/projects/216

Seven-year Goal: $314,575



Fund Scholarships for Christian Leaders in Latin America

Christianity is growing in Latin America. There is critical need for trained leaders in pastoral and church ministries, yet no programs currently exist for Latin American students to receive advanced training in their own countries. IM has partnered with Palmer Seminary and the American Baptist Home Mission Societies to allow seminary students in Mexico to receive a U.S.-accredited Master of Theological Studies. Taught in Spanish, classes will be available online.
Learn more:
www.internationalministries.org/projects/229

Annual Goal: $1,890 per student; $113,400 total

Help Children Have A Brighter Future (Student Tuition Expense Program, STEP)

Help fund education programs that reduce child labor, improve health, strengthen local economies and enable people to read, make informed spiritual commitments and exercise leadership in their churches and communities. Your donation will help give children all around the world the gift of an education.
Learn more:
www.internationalministries.org/projects/232

Annual Goal: $80,000

100+ More Projects in Need of Funding

See more online: **www.internationalministries.org/projects**

For more information, contact Chris at ***chris.marziale@internationalministries.org*** and mention the Discipleship & Christian Education Guide.

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PO Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482
800-222-3872
www.internationalministries.org

Spanish Ministry Resources *Recursos de Ministerios Hispanos*

Lecciones Cristianas

Lecciones Cristianas tiene como propósito ayudar a las personas adultas hispanas a crecer en su comprensión de la Biblia y relación de ésta con la vida. Lecciones Cristianas sigue la serie de las Lecciones Bíblicas Internacionales. Está escrito especialmente para las iglesias de habla hispana. También hay un Libro del Maestro que provee sugerencias importantes para la enseñanza de cada lección, preguntas para discutir y actividades para la clase.

Nueva cada trimestre.
Libro del alumno, $5.99
Libro del maestro, $6.99

El Discípulo

Editado por el Rvdo. Eliezer Alvarez Díaz

Producido por la Iglesia Cristiana (Discípulos de Cristo) en Puerto Rico, El Discípulo es un recurso de educación Cristiana que considera al estudiante un participante activo en el proceso de transformación. Los escritores son de Puerto Rico, los Estados Unidos y Latinoamérica y representan contextos urbanos, rurales y metropolitanos.

Todos los recursos incluyen una lección para adultos y jóvenes en el mismo libro.

Guía para el Líder marzo–agosto, $7.99
septiembre–febrero, $7.99

Guía para el Estudiante
marzo–agosto, $6.99
septiembre–febrero, $6.99

Escuchemos a los niños: Conversaciones con familias inmigrantes / Listen to the Children: Conversations with Immigrant Families

Elizabeth Conde-Frazier,
Prefacio por Luis Cortes

Padres, pastores/as,educadores/ as y líderes en la comunidad son invitados a escuchar a escondidas estas conversaciones entre padres, hijos y guardians. Este recurso práctico y sensible a las necesidades emocionales y cultura de las familias ofrece una perspeicacia a las emociones y percepciones de las familias inmigrantes. Bilingüe (Inglés/Español). $13.99
Guia de studio gratis está disponible para su descarga en línea (solomente en inglés).

Para ser bautistas: Lecciones para nuevos miembros / Being Baptist: Lessons for New Members

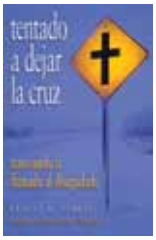
J. Manny Santiago

Diseñado para usar con adultos y jovenes.
Bilingüe. $15.00
¡Ahorre al comprar en cantidad!
Paquete de 5-$60.00; Paquete de 10-$100.00

Herencia e identidad bautistas: Historia, principios y practicas

Ángel Luis Gutíerrez; Prefacio por José Norat-Rodríguez, Miriam Z. Rodríguez Gutíerrez y, Juan A. Gutíerrez, editores

Una investigacíon histórica detallada, incluyendo textos bíblicos, para explorer la herencia e identidad bautistas. De muchísimo valor para estudiosos, ministros, ministras, y personas laicas en Estados Unidos, Puerto Rico y más allá. $18.00



Tentado a dejar la cruz: Renovando el llamado al discipualdo

Ernest R. Flores

También disponible en Inglés: *Tempted to Leave the Cross: Renewing the Call to Discipleship* $14.00

El Arte de la Enseñanza Cristiana

Israel Galindo
$16.00

Estudios Biblicos Buena Tierra Sus lamentos llegaron al cielo: Estudio de Exodo

$2.99

CULTIVATING LEADERS

EQUIPPING DISCIPLES

HEALING COMMUNITIES

Luke 4:18-19

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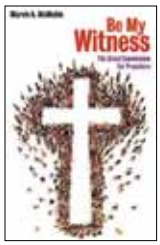
Your America for Christ offering is making life-changing impact through ministries and resources that vitalize our congregations and communities across the United States and Puerto Rico with the hope of Jesus Christ.

www.abhms.org

American Baptist Home Mission Societies
SINCE 1824

Leadership Growth & Development



Be My Witness: The Great Commission for Preachers

Marvin A. McMickle

Be My Witness explores the Great Commission as recorded in Acts 1:6-8, "Be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" and offers a unique approach to the preaching task. You'll learn ways to declare the gospel with relevance to the many issues and challenges society faces and explore the implications of what it means to be a witness for Jesus. Author Marvin McMickle examines a three-fold understanding of the word witness:

- Seeing something
- Saying something
- Suffering something

And he develops a twenty-first century theology of preaching that encompasses both content and context for delivering the gospel message. $17.99

From Classism to Community: A Challenge for the Church

Jini Kilgore Cockroft; Foreword by J. Alfred Smith, Sr.

Author Jini Kilgore Cockroft examines the biblical truths that all persons are made in the image of God, and persons who are transformed through faith in Jesus Christ become members of equal standing in the Christian church. With these two truths as a foundation, she proclaims that Christians should accept one another as equal inheritors of God's grace, and should relate to one another as peers regardless of any differences in socioeconomic backgrounds. Cockroft offers a historical analysis of the origin of "classism" in the church and its influence in the development of denominations, specifically in the African American church. She urges the church to include the poor and forgotten and shares ways to de-emphasize social class distinctions in order to affirm and embrace the concept of the *imago dei.* $16.99

Beyond Stewardship: A Church Guide to Generous Giving Campaigns

John Zehring and Kate Jagger

A detailed handbook that applies the best fundraising principles to the church's annual giving campaign to offer a comprehensive and practical guide for ministry leaders. Zehring and Jagger highlight "generous giving," emphasizing connections with individual givers and encouraging a lens of abundance to propel the church beyond typical stewardship. Discover four interlocking strategies for a successful annual giving campaign:

- Concentric circles
- Personal visits
- Direct mail
- Public witness

Includes appendices with additional tools and handouts to facilitate the process. $15.99

Welcoming Community: Diversity That Works

Douglas Avilesbernal; J. Dwight Stinnett, Series Editor

New in the "Living Church" series, this volume acknowledges the dramatic changes in culture and congregational life in the twenty-first century, particularly as it relates to church growth in an increasingly multicultural world where communities are often in transition. Using the biblical story of Jesus' journey through Samaria, which led to a transformational encounter between a Jewish rabbi and a Samaritan woman, the author offers a model for learning to welcome the community in which a congregation finds itself by becoming a welcoming community of faith in itself.

Learn to lead and manage the changes congregations face in building stronger ties with the community and to ultimately thrive together as one. See related "Living Church" titles below. $16.99

The Living Church Series

Caring Pastors, Caring People
Marvin A. McMickle $15.99

Empowering Laity, Engaging Leaders
Susan E. Gillies and M. Ingrid Dvirnak $15.99

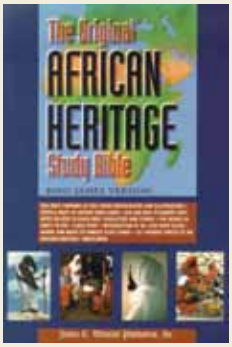
Learning Mission, Living Mission
Glynis LaBarre $15.99

Making Friends, Making Disciples
Lee B. Spitzer $16.00

Vital Spirit, Vital Service
Trinette V. McCray $16.99

Welcoming Community
Douglas Avilesbernal $16.99

Bibles & Bible Study



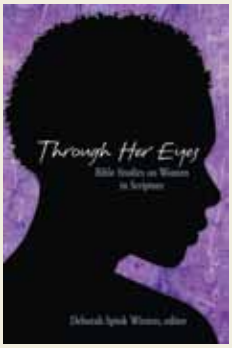
The Original African Heritage Study Bible KJV

Cain Hope Felder, general editor

"...Interprets the Bible as it relates specifically to persons of African-descent and thereby fosters an appreciation of the multiculturalism inherent in the Bible."—from the Introduction
Paperback, $36.99;
Boxed Leatherette, $55.00

NIV Gift & Award Bible

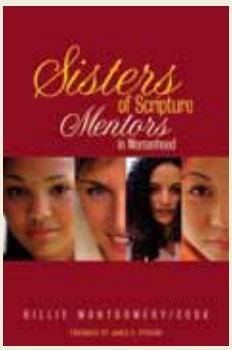
For personal use, presentations, confirmation, and awards, this unique Bible offers the highest quality, greatest readability, and most affordable pricing. Featuring the complete text of the New International Version (NIV) with helpful study tools like maps and a Bible dictionary, the *NIV Gift & Award Bible* is an exceptional value and an unforgettable keepsake. $8.00



Through Her Eyes: Bible Studies on Women in Scripture

Deborah Spink Winters, editor

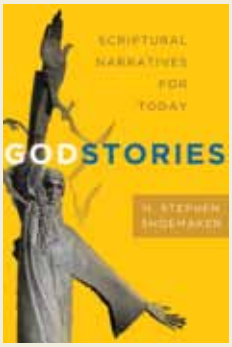
Discover faith anew through the perspectives of 20 biblical women, from Rahab to Ruth, from Hannah to Huldah, as well as unnamed women encountered in Jesus' ministry. This collection of Bible studies features a diverse array of contributor voices, male and female, across generations. Great for small-group use or personal study, every session includes a "hook question" to begin and several reflection questions to conclude. $13.99 **Download the Free Leaders Guide at www.judsonpress.com.*



Sisters of Scripture: Mentors in Womanhood

Billie Montgomery/Cook

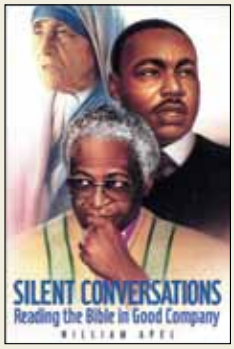
Young women are ushered into a warm and welcoming relationship with the women of the Bible through the stories of Eve, Sarah, and Vashti, encountering relationship, trust, and self-respect issues that many young women of today face. Inspiring, enlightening, and empowering, young women will see themselves in these stories and find hope, love, and faith. $14.99



GodStories: Scriptural Narratives for Today

H. Stephen Shoemaker

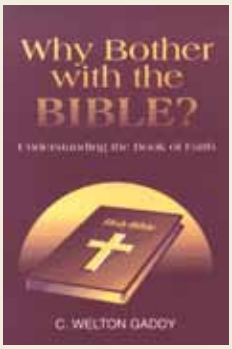
Retells 33 stories of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, in a way that both brings students into the world of the sacred text and brings the text into the heart of contemporary life. $17.00



Silent Conversations: Reading the Bible in Good Company

William Apel

Arranged according to the thematic sections of faith, hope, and love, each chapter begins with a Bible passage highly significant in the life of a sage or saint, a quote from the writings of that sage, and an examination of that person's connection to a particular Scripture before embarking on a probing journey of the biblical text itself. The author brings to life the insights of his "faithful cloud of witnesses" in ways that supply contemporary Christians with wisdom and inspiration. $16.00



Why Bother With the Bible? Understanding the Book of Faith

C. Welton Gaddy

A solid foundation for serious Bible study among laypersons. $12.00

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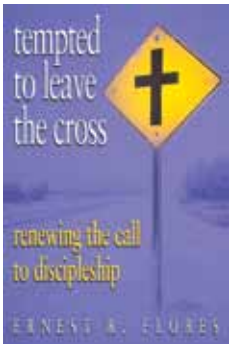
Peggy Kendall

"Most people's lives are touched by communication and information technologies, so examining how these modern conveniences affect our relationships and commitments is of utmost importance to all who care about their spiritual life." —*Publishers Weekly* $14.00

Free 4-week study resource available online.



Tempted to Leave the Cross: Renewing the Call to Discipleship

Ernest R. Flores

Offering solid biblical study in a conversational style, this resource embraces the cross as not only a symbol of personal salvation but also a call to kingdom service. $14.00

Lenten Study Facilitator's Guide available online at www.judsonpress.com $4.00

Modeling Mary in Christian Discipleship

John Burns

Biblical references to Mary, the mother of Jesus, are profoundly reflective of the stages of discipleship that each of us must pass through on our way to spiritual maturity. Includes questions for personal and small group reflection. $11.00

Leader's Guides for both Lent and Advent are available at www.judsonpress.com $4.00 each

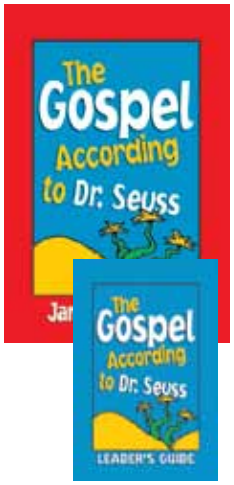
Coming Together in the 21st Century: The Bible's Message in an Age of Diversity

Curtiss Paul DeYoung

"The strength of DeYoung's book lies in his reliance on examples from Scripture...a place to begin for church groups and students of religion."

—*Library Journal*

Includes a nine-session group reflection and action guide. $19.00



The Gospel According to Dr. Seuss: Snitches, Sneetches, and Other Creachas

James W. Kemp

"...offers wonderful inspiration for readers that points out parallels between biblical lessons and the unique stories by Dr. Seuss."

—*Children's Ministry Magazine* $11.00

Leader's Guide *by Chet Williams, Kate Ballard, Mark Ballard*

Offers specific lessons for children, youth, and adults. $8.00

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Judson Press has a number of Download-It-Yourself (DIY) books in PDF format that can be purchased, downloaded, and printed out either in their entirety or in segments appropriate for study. See the e-Books section on www.judsonpress.com for details.

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William L. Turner, $7.00

Taking Discipleship Seriously
Tom Sine, $9.99

Urban Disciples
Jenell Williams Paris and Margot Owen Eyring, $9.99

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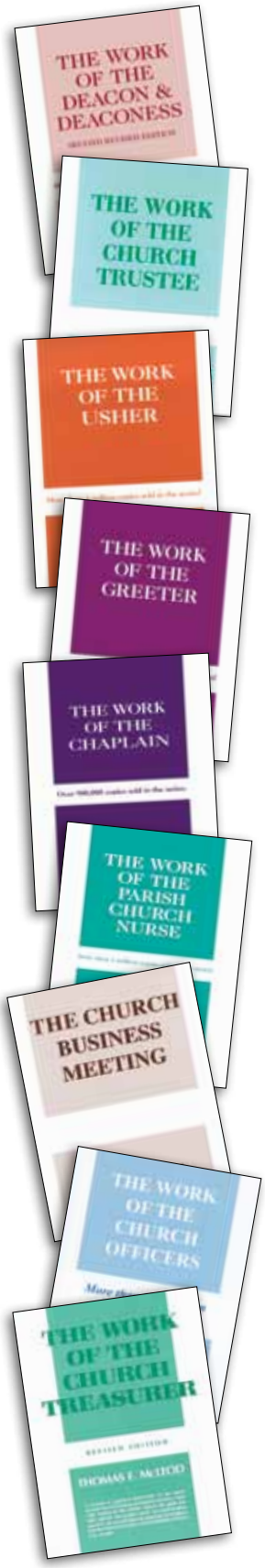

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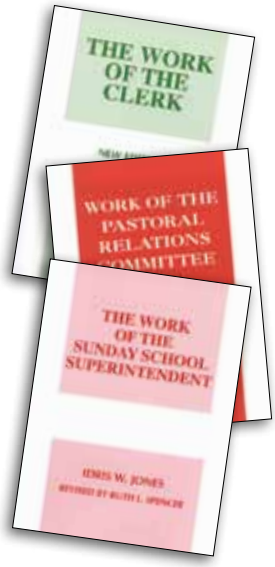

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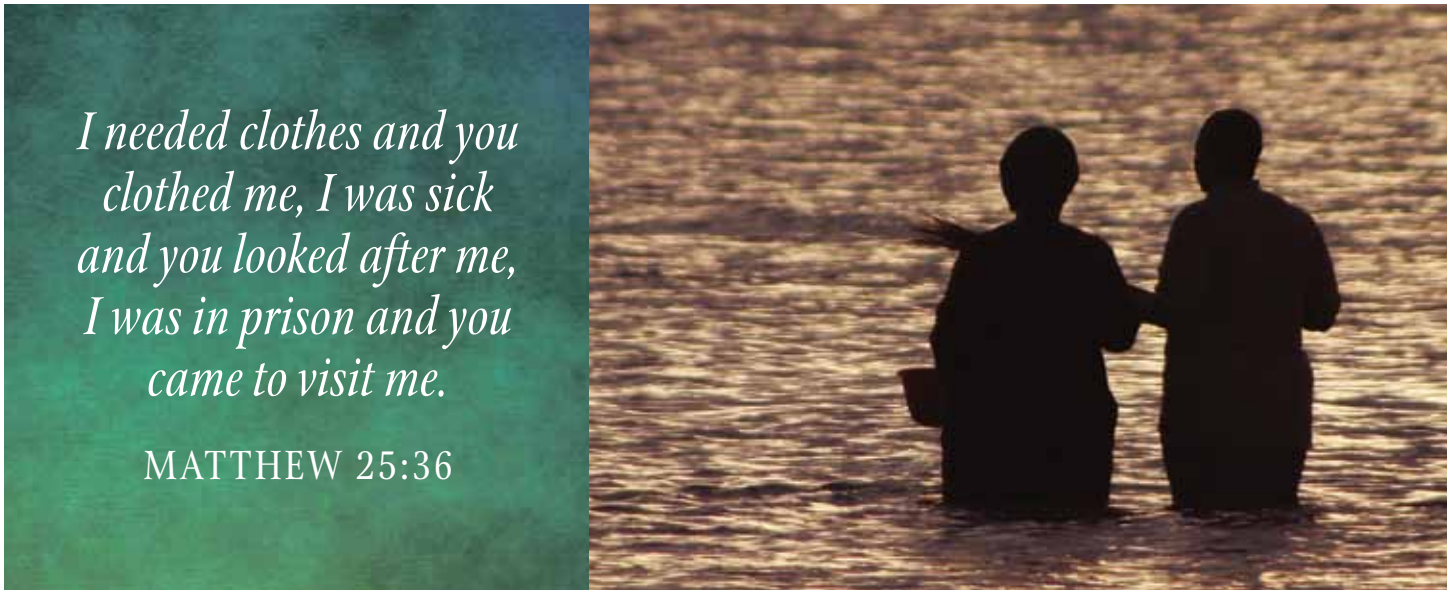

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