**ABHMS Applauds New Resources on Mental Health for Faith Leaders**

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 7/16/15)—**American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) applauds two new resources to help faith leaders better understand mental illness and treatment as well as to better help individuals and families in their congregations who face mental health challenges.

Resulting from last summer’s Mental Health and Faith Community Partnership meeting sponsored by American Psychiatric Association (APA) and American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), American Psychiatric Foundation has produced a 20-page booklet “Mental Health: a Guide for Faith Leaders” and companion two-page “Quick Reference on Mental Health for Faith Leaders.”

The resources were introduced at the APA annual meeting earlier this summer by Curtis Ramsey-Lucas, who serves as managing director of Resource Development for ABHMS, director of Interfaith Engagement for AAPD’s Interfaith Disability Advocacy Coalition and as a member of the steering committee for the Mental Health and Faith Community Partnership. Ramsey-Lucas participated in the materials’ writing and development.

“Individuals and families facing a mental health concern often turn first to a faith leader,” says Ramsey-Lucas. “These resources are designed to help pastors and other faith leaders dispel misunderstandings, reduce stigma associated with mental illness and treatment, and facilitate access to treatment for those in need. They are clear, concise and much needed.”

The Mental Health and Faith Community Partnership is comprised of psychiatrists and faith leaders who represent diverse faith traditions.

The resources are available for free download at APA’s website at [www.psychiatry.org/faith](http://www.psychiatry.org/faith).

*ABHMS—the domestic mission arm of American Baptist Churches USA—ministers as the caring heart and serving hands of Jesus Christ across the United States and Puerto Rico through a multitude of initiatives that focus on discipleship, community and justice.*

*American Baptist Churches USA is one of the most diverse Christian denominations today, with over 5,200 local congregations comprised of 1.3 million members, across the United States and Puerto Rico, all engaged in God’s mission around the world.*