

Mission in America

MISSION SPOTLIGHT

ABHMS stands with Burma Diaspora population in U.S.

American Baptist Home Mission Societies stands in solidarity with those who are protesting the military coup in Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) and those who are leaders and members of Burma Diaspora churches in the United States.

On April 10, ABHMS' the Rev. Florence Li, national coordinator, ABHMS Asian Ministries, and the Rev. Rothangliani Chhangte, senior associate, ABHMS Grants, Partnerships and Strategy Alignment, joined thousands of people of Arakan, Bamar, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Lisu, Mon and Shan ethnicities in the "Multi-Ethnic Protest in D.C." against the military coup in Myanmar.

The protesters began the rally in front of the Embassy of the Republic of China, where Chhangte offered an opening prayer and a greeting on behalf of ABHMS, and Li spoke on behalf of the Burma Refugee Commission. Protesters then marched peacefully to the Myanmar Embassy and the Military Attache's Office, before making a brief stop near the White House and ending at the Washington Monument. The rally closed with a prayer by Li.

On April 16, leaders of Burma Diaspora churches in the United States met virtually with ABHMS Executive Director Dr. Jeffrey Haggray and other members of the ABHMS

staff. The Diaspora leaders expressed concern for the people of Burma, while admitting that they, themselves, are experiencing trauma from the brutal acts that are taking place there.

Tansy Kadoe, a licensed associate marriage and family therapist and member of Arizona Karen Baptist Church, Phoenix, said that



everyone in attendance at the meeting was likely suffering complex, collective trauma.

"When ABHMS says, 'We stand by you,' that means a lot to us," said the Rev. Dr. Stephen Hre Kio of Indiana Chin Baptist Church, Indianapolis. "What you say and what you do may sound simple, but it's quite impressive to us."

Haggray stressed to those assembled that he and other ABHMS personnel understand suffering and share the burden of the Burma Diaspora people.

"I'm sitting here," said Haggray, "as a brother in Christ who is grieving with you."

ABHMS presents 'Orientation to American Baptist Life'

ABHMS recently offered its part in the annual denomination-wide Orientation to American Baptist Life, a series of presentations meant to introduce the denomination to seminarians and pastors serving American Baptist Churches for the first time. This year's presentations were held virtually.

ABHMS Executive Director Dr. Jeffrey Haggray began the event by mentioning ABHMS' April 27 birthday, noting that the organization has been on the mission field since 1832, or 189 years.

"We have a vision of American Baptists empowered," he said. "We seek to not just be a society with slogans but a society that practices as the hands-and-feet ministry" of Jesus Christ.

A lively part of the event was "ABHMS and Judson Press Jeopardy," hosted by Dr. Laura Miraz, director, Human Resources and ABHMS board of directors liaison.

Representatives from each of ABHMS' five units—Leadership Empowerment, Discipleship Ministries, Intercultural Ministries, Healing & Transforming Communities and Public Witness & Advocacy—named the members of their unit and shared their unit's ministry goals.

Said the Rev. Lisa Harris Lee, director of ABHMS Healing & Transforming Communities: "There is plenty of room at the American Baptist table for you, those who you lead now and those you will lead in the future."



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Dr. Jeffrey Haggray EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Susan Gottshall EDITOR
Nadine Hasenecz WRITER
Danny Ellison ART DIRECTOR

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MISSION BRIEF

The important and provocative book “With Liberty and Justice for Some: The Bible, the Constitution, and Racism in America” has received a silver award in the Political/Current Events category of the 33rd Annual Independent Book Publishing Association Benjamin Franklin Awards as well as a 2021 Independent Press Award in the Culture and Social Issues category.

Says Judson Press Publisher Laura Alden: “We are heartened by the judges’ recognition not only of this book’s quality but also as a need for our nation to take a critical look at the intersection of race, politics and religion.”

NEWS BYTES

ABHMS’ spring development campaign focuses on Operation Planting Hope, which continues the tradition of White Cross. Read more about it at abhms.org.



Visit abhms.org to find out about an ABHMS staff member who supported one pastor on her ministerial journey.

American Baptist Home Mission Societies presented the “Living the Gospel in the United States and Puerto Rico” workshop during “Imagine,” American Baptist Churches USA’s 2021 Biennial Mission Summit: An Online Experience. In addition, a variety of one-hour presentations featuring small group breakout sessions were held. Learn more at abhms.org.



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

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CCL ON THE CUTTING EDGE

Center for Continuous Learning launches website

American Baptist Home Mission Societies launched the website for its Center for Continuous Learning (CCL) during the virtual Biennial Mission Summit in June. The center’s physical space—to be dedicated as the Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III Learning Center—will formally launch in September with a ribbon cutting and full lineup of educational offerings. Watch for details to follow. While the Learning Center was to have been launched before the website, ABHMS pivoted in its plans because of the Coronavirus pandemic.

“The Center for Continuous Learning offers exciting opportunities to deliver quality ABHMS training and education in new and dynamic ways,” says the Rev. Rebecca Irwin-Diehl, CCL director. “The website is a powerful learning platform that can host live events, on-demand webinars and cohort-based trainings.”

A constantly evolving educational community, CCL offers new live and on-demand learning experiences monthly, in preparation for the launch of a full catalog of course offerings in academic year 2021-22.

JUDSON PRESS PICK

Judson Press books win Independent Press Awards

American Baptist Home Mission Societies and Judson Press are proud to announce that five books published by Judson Press have received Independent Press Awards.

The Independent Press Awards recognized “#InThisTogether: Ministry in Times of Crisis” edited by Curtis Ramsey-Lucas, as a winner in the Current Events category; “A History of the Black Baptist Church: I Don’t Feel No Ways Tired” by Wayne E. Croft Sr., winner, African American Nonfiction category; “Black Millennials and the Church: Meet Me Where I Am” by Joshua Mitchell, Distinguished Favorite, African American Nonfiction category; “Still A Mother: Journeys through Perinatal Bereavement” edited by Joy M. Freeman and Tabatha D. Johnson, Distinguished Favorite, Grief category; “With Liberty and Justice for Some: The Bible, the Constitution, and Racism in America” by Susan K. Williams Smith, winner, Cultural and Social Issues category.

“We celebrate this recognition—both for the authors and for Judson Press,” says Judson Press publisher Laura Alden. “The IPPY awards help to promote these titles to a worldwide audience, which also extends our witness for Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God!”

