

AMERICA FOR CHRIST 2025 GRACE UPON *Grace*

First Baptist Comunidad Cristiana housing project

Yakima, Washington, known for its apple orchards and wineries, is also a community in need. Many youths here face poverty, limited opportunities, and the threat of gang involvement. But thanks to your past support, ABHMS has already made a difference through initiatives like the new housing project led by the Rev. Andy Ferguson of First Baptist Comunidad Cristiana (FBCC), a multicultural English/Spanish language church located in the poorest neighborhood of Yakima.

FBCC is creating safe housing for at-risk high school graduates, providing a sanctuary where they can gain new skills, mentorship, and a pathway to success. For young people emerging from trauma and neglect, this support offers a bridge from survival to thriving. Ferguson's plan includes not only safe housing, but also life-changing internships and trade training, giving hope and purpose to those who might otherwise face a bleak future.

When you give generously to the 2025 America for Christ Offering, you enable ABHMS to continue investing in the FBCC housing project, helping at-risk youth find stability and direction. Together, let us bring further hope to Yakima's youth, building brighter futures for those in desperate need of safety, support, and opportunity.



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Community garden sows seeds of hope

The America for Christ Offering empowers transformative initiatives that uplift and nourish communities across the nation. For example, a partnership between Phillips Memorial Baptist Church in Cranston, Rhode Island, and the Comprehensive Community Action Program (CCAP), a regional nonprofit serving low-income individuals, has cultivated a church-based community garden engendered by the isolation of the pandemic.



Under the guidance of Rev. Alan Newton, a master gardener, a team of 35 dedicated volunteers harvests over a ton of fresh vegetables annually, providing essential produce to those experiencing food insecurity in Cranston and neighboring areas. The need is great: in 2023 alone, 3,714 individuals, including 1,000 children, relied on the Cranston Food Pantry as their primary source of fresh food. This garden project supplies CCAP's clients with nutritious, homegrown produce, creating a lifeline for many who cannot afford these items. Beyond nourishing bodies, this garden nourishes the community itself. Volunteers come together to plant, harvest, and grow friendships, and some are encouraged to start their own micro-gardens. It also protects pollinators and biodiversity, fostering a healthy environment. Through a recent \$3,000 grant from ABHMS, the garden continues to thrive, with funds supporting supplies essential to its growth, while your continued giving to the America for Christ Offering helps to sustain this and other life-changing ministries, where churches bring hope and healing in Christ's name to communities nationwide.

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Building Bridges for a new generation

Your gift to America for Christ Offering empowers young leaders and bridges generations across Puerto Rico, ensuring the future of Baptist ministry on the island, where local churches face a severe clergy shortage due to burnout and increasing retirement rates.

In response to this crisis, ABHMS has launched Building Bridges with partners Iglesias Bautistas de Puerto Rico (IBPR) and Unión de Jóvenes Bautistas de Puerto Rico (UJBPR). With a curriculum rich in intercultural training, leadership development, and faith-based immersion experiences, this program equips Puerto Rican youth to become community leaders and potential clergy.



Participants like Coralys Santos and Alondra Liz Perez Menendez have found renewed purpose through the program. For Santos, Building Bridges offers a foundation for her pastoral calling, while Perez Menendez aims to inspire future generations to embrace the mission of Jesus, even amid differences.

Your support of the 2025 America for Christ Offering helps sustain initiatives like Building Bridges that foster a future where young leaders guide the churches and communities with faith and resilience.

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Wilderness Journeys

The Rev. Dr. Jonathan Malone, a former parish pastor, steadfastly believes that God's love and guidance can be found beyond church walls in unexpected places—like the rugged trails and serene forests of the wilderness—which prompted him to establish Wilderness Journeys, a ministry that emerged from his participation in ABHMS' groundbreaking Co-Creators Incubator program.



With support and guidance from ABHMS, Malone's Wilderness Journeys now leads groups and individuals on hiking trips that provide a unique spiritual experience. Away from the distractions of technology and the comforts of daily life, participants encounter God in profound ways. In nature, they are free to reflect, pray, and listen to what God is saying, facing their struggles with honesty and openness.

The Co-Creators Incubator gave Malone the mentorship and support he needed to transform his vision into reality. With seed funding from ABHMS, he transitioned from a parish-based role to a full-time wilderness ministry, showing how faith can flourish outside traditional settings.

Your precious gift to the 2025 America for Christ Offering helps fuel these innovative ministries, unique expressions of faith, and community-building, which bring God's grace to those seeking healing and connection. Together, we can continue to expand the reach of Christ's love into every corner of life.

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Friendship House

Friendship House in Billings, Montana, is a beacon of hope for underserved families. Founded in 1957 by members of the First Baptist Church, Friendship House arose from a simple, compassionate gesture—feeding local children in need. Today, with support from ABHMS, it has grown into a lifeline for over 40 churches and community groups serving Billings’ South Side neighborhood.



Today, this ministry provides a comprehensive range of programs, all shaped to the unique needs of a diverse community with large Native American and Hispanic populations. Its preschool and after-school programs attract over 200 children annually,

while teens receive job-skills training through an innovative student-run restaurant. Classes for adults cover vital areas like parenting. Further, all ages have access to mental health support, a critical community need.

This essential ministry receives little to no public funding and relies on donations and grants to continue its work. Consequently, its ongoing partnership with ABHMS, which is fueled by your precious gifts to AFC Offering, remains crucial.

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The Native American Leadership Training Series

Indigenous communities in America face unique challenges in fostering strong, faith-centered communities. ABHMS is responding with a revitalized Native American Leadership Training Series (NALTS) to equip Indigenous ministry leaders with the tools they need to serve their communities effectively.

NALTS is designed to address a critical need: retaining young people in Native American churches. The program provides Indigenous leaders with culturally resonant strategies that integrate latest best practices to create an engaging and supportive faith environment for youth. Leaders like Monique Prigmore, who ministers to young people on the Yavapai Apache reservation in Arizona, are already using this training to foster a sense of belonging and faith-based identity among teens in her congregation.



NALTS participants are also building crucial mentorship programs to address a shortage of Native pastors. By empowering local leaders to shape ministry from within their communities, NALTS honors Native culture while nurturing Christian faith to create a pathway for Indigenous youth to find hope and purpose through Christ. Your support of the 2025 America for Christ Offering can ensure that innovative programs like NALTS continue to help Native American ministry leaders build a future of faith, hope, and opportunity for their communities.

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Bringing Hope and Healing to Our Communities

Your donation to the America for Christ Offering fuels essential ministries that uplift and serve vulnerable communities across the nation. With your support, ABHMS partners with churches like Church of the City in New London, Connecticut, which is transforming lives every Saturday by serving free meals to more than 250 people in need.



ABHMS grants to Church of the City, New London, Connecticut, have funded upgrades to its kitchen to industrial standards to keep pace with demand and helped stock a vital food pantry. However, as New London continues to grapple with high unemployment and other economic challenges, the needs of area residents extend beyond food. Consequently, Church of the City also provides access to clothing, health checkups, and a compassionate community.

Church of the City fully embraces its mission to “be in the city for the city,” which echoes ABHMS’s commitment to empowering local ministries in transforming lives. And as an ABHMS partner, Church of the City has become a beacon of hope and resilience.

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Empowering Innovative Ministries

Donations to the American for Christ Offering facilitate groundbreaking projects that connect faith with contemporary issues to reach communities in fresh, impactful ways. One such initiative is the short film “Are We There Yet,” backed in part by an ABHMS grant. A creation of Standing in the Gap Inc., a nonprofit that aims to foster unity and justice across faith communities through media production, the film confronts the wretched Doctrine of Discovery and its implications for Christian nationalism.

The filmmakers tackled these complex themes to inspire the vision of a church that reflects equity, compassion, and unity through a medium capable of reaching a broad audience via screenings at film festivals, theological institutions, and on YouTube.



ABHMS’s commitment to projects like “Are We There Yet” helps creative leaders inspire faith communities to engage with social issues and promote unity. By helping to support innovative ministries that address critical issues, your

gift to AFC makes you part of the journey to foster lasting change and shape a better future.

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