

July | Aug 2020

QuickLinks

A memorial page on ABHMS' website commemorates American Baptists who have died from the Coronavirus. Find it at abhms.org/american-baptist-covid-19-memorial-wall/. Add a name with permission of the deceased's family.



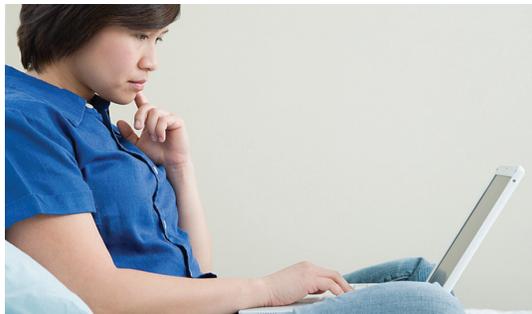
"Engage"—part of ministrElife, the ABHMS-created online networking platform—features discussion forums, chat, video chat and global search. In addition, it offers live, online communities that are organically created by like-minded users based on their needs. The communities can be public, private or anonymous. Visit ministrElife.org.



ABHMS offers plethora of pandemic-related resources

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, ABHMS has provided a plethora of resources appropriate for both American Baptist individuals and organizations. In fact, ABHMS convened a National Emergency Roundtable in April with American Baptist partners as a first step in responding to the Coronavirus pandemic by sharing information about needs of American Baptists—members, pastors and churches—and available resources to meet those needs.

On June 16, 23 and 30, God's people experienced fellowship without leaving their homes by participating in ABHMS' online "You Are Not Alone: A Space for Grace Retreat."



Subjects included the stages of grief and loss: denial, anger, bargaining and depression; God's intervention in the process of the stages of grief and loss; and acceptance.

The Christian Citizen has published close to 40 COVID-19-related articles at <https://christiancitizen.us/category/series/>

covid-19/. The three most widely read articles are "As Churches Consider Reopening Buildings and Resuming In-Person Worship, What Can Pastors Expect?" (Editor's note: Please see excerpt on back page), "A Prayer During the Coronavirus Pandemic" and "Ministry in the Midst of a COVID-19 Outbreak."

Also, Episode 24 of The Christian Citizen's Justice. Mercy. Faith. podcast features interviews on faith and mental health with Jessica Young Brown, author of "Making SPACE at the Well: Mental Health and the Church," published by Judson Press, and Jermaine Alberty, executive director of ABHMS' Community Outreach Ministries' partner Pathways to Promise. Find it at ChristianCitizen.us/podcast or wherever you get your podcasts.

ministrElife is helping American Baptists stay connected and share best practices with its "Coronavirus: Ministry in the Midst of the Novel Coronavirus Outbreak" community at ministrElife.org. The digital platform also seeks to bring people together through its "Extend-a-Hand" campaign, which offers a ministrElife Zoom video room for gifting when one purchases a video room for one's own use.

Judson Press and author the Rev. Dr. Naomi Kohatsu Paget offer the free, downloadable resource "Ministry during Pandemic: From Awareness to Implementation" at judsonpress.com.

Emergency OGHS appeals support relief efforts in U.S., Puerto Rico, globally

Anita is pastor of a church and chaplain at a local hospital. Married for 57 years, she and her husband contracted COVID-19, and he tragically died alone with no family by his side. Still, she works a 24-hour shift at the local hospital; she provides counseling and prayer for people suffering from the virus, while her church remains shuttered and financially shattered. Through it all, she has remained faithful, while bringing comfort to the families for whom she prays and supports. But who will care for Anita in her time of devastating loss and financial strain?

The record of need collected by the roundtable mentioned in the "ABHMS Offers Plethora of Pandemic-related Resources" story above informed planning for the June launch of the emergency One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) appeal—"COVID-19 Recovery: Renewing Hope and Service."



For information about OGHS' global COVID response efforts and how to contribute, visit <https://www.internationalministries.org/covid19/>.

To support OGHS relief initiatives across the United States and Puerto Rico, donations can be made online at abhms.org/give now, via your church or check payable to American Baptist Home Mission Societies and mailed to the attention of Leda Carter at American Baptist Home Mission Societies, 1075 First Ave., King of Prussia, PA 19406. Write "OGHS-COVID Recovery: US & PR" on the memo line.



American Baptist
Home Mission
Societies
Connect. Cultivate. Change.

Mission in America

Copyright © 2020
American Baptist Home Mission Societies
1075 First Avenue
King of Prussia, PA 19406

Unless otherwise noted, information in Mission in America may be copied without permission. Printed on recycled paper.

Executive Director
Dr. Jeffrey Haggray

Editor
Susan Gottshall

Writer
Nadine Hasenecz

Art Director
Danny Ellison

Podcasts about American Baptist churches, communities and ministries affected by the COVID-19 pandemic are featured weekly at abhms.org on the COVID-19 Recovery page. These one-on-one interviews bring to life the challenges people face as well as the help they're receiving from dedicated American Baptist clergy and laity. Come face-to-face with hardship and hope in this poignant series.



AMERICAN BAPTIST HOME MISSION SOCIETIES
Mission **in** America

As churches consider reopening buildings and resuming in-person worship, what can pastors expect?

Churches are looking toward re-opening buildings and resuming in-person worship. What can pastors expect to encounter as they lead their churches in the weeks and months to come?

Everyone is traumatized. The people that come back to your church will not be the same as when they left. We are all dealing with a range of emotions and experiences during this time. For virtually everyone, this includes grief. Grief can be for the loss of loved ones, the loss of a job, the loss of experiences, and more. Some of these traumas you will be aware of; some you may not.

People are unpredictable. This is the challenging thing: Knowing these realities does not make the time to come any more predictable. After a trauma, we often experience that persons we are expecting to be crushed do better than we expect. Conversely, people we experience as strong and resilient may seem overwhelmed. Other people will lurch back and forth from days of able coping to days of total meltdown.

Expect resistance. As a pastoral leader, you are already dealing with “decision fatigue” from all the considerations that



are going into the re-opening process. But no matter what you decide, or how you involve your leadership in those decisions, someone is going to disagree with them. This is unavoidable. You will experience

people minimizing the impact of this crisis; others will embrace a worst-case scenario at every turn. Try not to let any of this surprise or overwhelm you. Stand firm on the decisions that are important for the health and safety of your people.

Mary Day Miller is executive minister of The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts. Excerpted with permission from The Christian Citizen magazine.

Photo: Debby Hudson on Unsplash

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

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Southeastern, PA
Permit No. 362

Book discusses ‘Health, Holiness, Wholeness’ for ordained clergy, laity

Based on a popular series of “Health and Excellence in Ministry”-themed workshops from the highly regarded Midwest Ministry Development Service, “Health, Holiness & Wholeness for Ministry Leaders” is intended for both ordained clergy and laity in church and community.

This invaluable new resource offers practical wisdom for developing healthy patterns of behavior in all areas of personal and vocational life. The volume includes real-life applications from actual ministry settings of the three principles of excellence:

- separation of self and role,
- always choose strength and
- straight from Jesus.

Accessible and user-friendly, this book provides researched-based observations and insights regarding the behaviors, disciplines and attitudes present in pastors who lead well. It offers practical strategies to develop leadership capacity and improve pastoral impact and personal health. In addition, it illustrates empowering and hope-filled ideas to move beyond the tug-of-war between self-care and pastoral ministry. Reflective exercises call forth latent leadership capacities present in clergy.

Hailing from various settings, authors John R. Matthews, Kristina R. Gutierrez and Ross D. Peterson have direct access to clergy and denominational leaders through their affiliation with Midwest Ministry Development Service.

Order at JudsonPress.com.

JUDSON PRESS
PUBLISHERS SINCE 1824