

ABHMS' Home Mission NOW! Newsletter, Issue 9, September 2025

From: American Baptist Home Mission Societies (communications@abhms.org)

To: fbc.hingham@verizon.net

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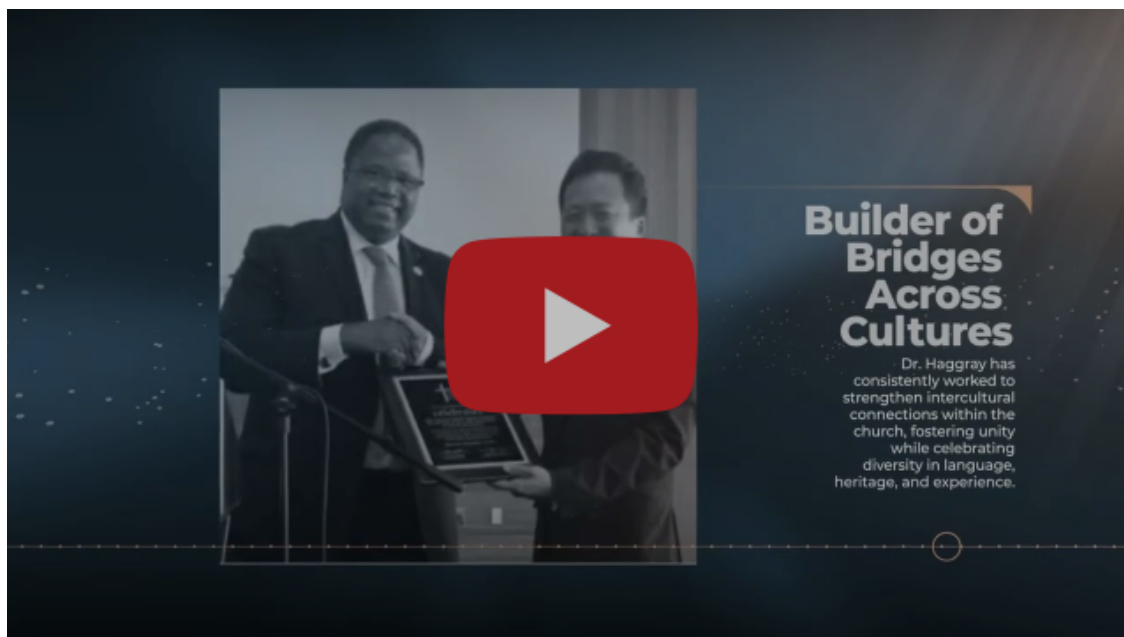


An ABHMS digital newsletter | Issue 9, September 2025

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the September issue of Home Mission NOW!

This month, we marked a significant 2025 milestone in the life of American Baptist Home Mission Societies: the 10th anniversary of Dr. Jeffrey Haggray's leadership as our executive director. We invite you to take a moment to watch a short video celebrating his decade of vision, service, and commitment to mission. It reminds us of how much can be accomplished when bold ideas are matched with faithful action.



Two initiatives in particular—**Space for Grace & Spiritual Caregivers Conference** and **ministrElife**—stand as remarkable expressions of that vision. Space for Grace began as an open invitation to gather around shared challenges and hopes; it has since grown into a signature national event that brings together faith leaders from across the United States and Puerto Rico for learning, connection, and renewal. Our [April 2026 conference](#) continues this legacy with a focus on storytelling and its power to liberate, connect, and transform.



MinistrElife, our digital platform for ministry professionals, is another product of forward-thinking leadership. With its newly launched mobile app, ministrElife is more accessible than ever, offering opportunities to build community, share resources, and support one another in the work of ministry no matter where that work takes you.

Thanks for staying connected through **Home Mission NOW!** and for all you do to support Christ-centered leadership, discipleship, and community transformation. We are grateful, as always, to be on this journey together.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Cura'.

Curtis Ramsey-Lucas

Director, Marketing and Communications

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Mission Stories

Multicultural ministry—listening to one another

At Allelon 2025, a conference hosted by Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries, ABHMS leaders joined with immigrants, refugees, and pastors to practice deep listening as a sacred act. Together, they discovered how hearing one another's stories becomes a path to bridge divides, nurture belonging, and embody God's reconciling love.

[Read the full story >](#)



ABHMS attendees at the Allelon gathering include (left to right) Rev. Abigail Medina Betancourt, Rev. Daryn Stylianopoulos, Rev. Dr. Marie Onwubuariri, Rev. Dr. Anna Piela, and Rev. Mario Joseph.

Healing amid God's love at 'Tu Refugio Seguro'



At "Tu Refugio Seguro" (Your Safe Refuge), Latino survivors of abuse, violence, and trafficking find healing through faith. With ABHMS' support, the Indiana-based ministry trains survivors as community advocates, raises awareness

Survivors of domestic violence comfort one another. Photo courtesy of Israel Torres of Pexels.

of abuse, and offers God's love as a path to restoration and hope.

[Read the full story >](#)

Sanación en medio del amor de Dios en Tu Refugio Seguro

Tu Refugio Seguro en Indiana acompaña a mujeres latinas sobrevivientes de violencia doméstica, sexual y de trata humana, ofreciendo sanación arraigada en la fe. Con el apoyo de ABHMS, el ministerio cultiva defensores comunitarios, brinda apoyo directo y promueve restauración espiritual de las personas, mostrando el amor transformador de Dios en medio del dolor.

[Leer la historia completa >](#)

Hurricane Katrina fomenta an enduring ministry of rebuilding and renewal

Born from Katrina's devastation and the inequities it exposed, American Baptists established a lasting ministry of rebuilding and renewal. From the Lower Ninth Ward to Puerto Rico, ABHMS' Disaster Response Ministries mobilizes volunteers for justice-driven action—staying with communities until the work of restoration is complete.

[Read the full story >](#)



The aftermath of Hurricane Katrina: A destroyed residence in New Orleans' devastated Lower Ninth Ward. Library of Congress photo courtesy of Unsplash.

News

Nomination window is open for five ABHMS national ministry awards

ABHMS seeks nominations for five esteemed national awards honoring American Baptist chaplains, pastoral

counselors, spiritual directors, and other specialized ministers for stellar performance. These awards, including a new tribute to the late Rev. Dr. John “Jack” Gleason, will be presented at the 2026 Space for Grace & Spiritual Caregivers Conference, April 21–23, in Cleveland, Ohio.

[Read the full story >](#)

[Download awards criteria >](#)

[Access the nomination form >](#)



The four recipients of ABHMS’ national awards for excellence in spiritual caregiving in 2024 are flanked by Dr. Jeffrey Haggray, ABHMS executive director, and Rev. Dr. Patricia Murphy, BCC, ecclesiastical endorser and director of Spiritual Caregivers at ABHMS, at left and right, respectively.

Hope for Tomorrow recognizes ABHMS’ commitment to education and community renewal



Rev. Michele Turek, ABHMS national coordinator for Asian Ministries, joins Dr. Jeffrey Haggray, executive director of ABHMS, as he hoists a recently bestowed Hope Partner Award.

ABHMS has received the Hope Partner Award from Hope for Tomorrow, an Indianapolis nonprofit serving Burmese and Chin refugee families. The honor recognizes ABHMS’ faithful partnership and support that have empowered after-school programs for youth and citizenship classes for adults, helping families build new beginnings in the United States..

[Read the full story >](#)

ABHMS invites submissions for poster presentations

ABHMS encourages chaplains, spiritual caregivers, pastoral counselors, and specialized ministers to share their scholarship and stories at ABHMS’ 2026 Space for Grace & Spiritual Caregivers

Conference, April 21–23 in Cleveland, Ohio. Poster proposals—especially those engaging the theme, “Storytelling: Discovering Its Power for Faith Leaders Today,”—are due November 21.

[Read the full story >](#)

[Access the application form >](#)



Happenings



Learn More!



The NEW ministrElife app is here!

Designed specifically for ministry professionals, the **MinistrElife app** is now available in the [Apple App Store](#) and [Google Play Store](#). With this **FREE** download, you can:

- Connect with peers nationwide and grow your network
- Engage in private, trusted conversations with unparalleled security
- Access training, events, and resources



[Click image to download installation instructions >](#)

THE JUSTICE DIALOGUES

October 8

Beyond partisan lines: Leading with values in a partisan world

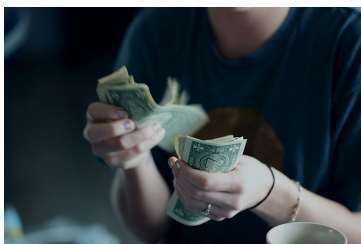
In an increasingly polarized world, where even empathy is now being politicized, many folks have to wonder—is it possible to be political without being partisan? On **Wednesday, October 8, at 12 p.m. EDT**, **Lauren Reliford, MSW**, director of public policy at the **Children's Defense Fund**, joins The Justice Dialogues to address this topic. Drawing upon nearly two decades in advocacy and government relations, she will lead a conversation that reflects on faithful engagement in today's shifting policy landscape.



Lauren Reliford, MSW

[Register here >](#)

ABHMS CENTER FOR CONTINUOUS LEARNING



Faithful Finance for Fraught Times

In a time of financial uncertainty, find steady guidance from faithful advisors. Gain practical skills and spiritual insight to manage your money wisely, stay grounded, and engage today's reality with confidence. **Online in real time. Starts October 2.**

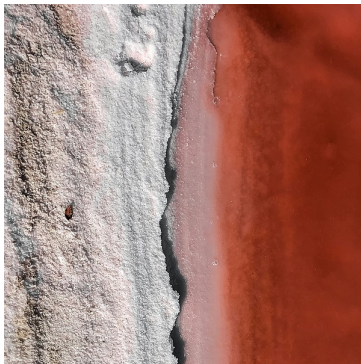
[Learn more and register >](#)

Discipleship Summit 2025: Mental Well-being Across Generations



Join us in-person or online for the 2025 Discipleship Summit, exploring faithful ways to address mental well-being across the lifespan. Featuring licensed therapist and woman of God, Dr. Jessica Young Brown. **Hybrid. October 13.**

[Learn more and register >](#)



Ministry Ethics and Healthy Boundaries

This nine-hour certificate training educates and reminds ministry professionals about the privilege and responsibility we hold. **Cohort starts October 17.**

[Learn more and register >](#)



More Skills for Community Chaplaincy

This new four-week certificate course expands on the foundations of Chaplaincy Skills for Community Ministry. Taught by board-certified chaplains, the course is perfect for active chaplains seeking CEUs. **Cohort starts October 20.**

[Learn more and register >](#)

2025 Conferencia de Liderazgo Intergeneracional

Presentadores/as:

Rvdo. Abner Cotto-Bonilla
Coordinador Nacional de Ministerios Latinos en American Baptist Home Mission Societies

Dr. Eric Sias
Director de Programas Latino/as en Berkeley School of Theology

Pastora Yamilis Hidalgo Placeres
Presidenta del Caucus Nacional Hispano de ABCUSA

Lugar:
Berkeley School of Theology
2606 Dwight Way
Berkeley, CA 94704

Horario:
4 de octubre de 2025
9:00 am – 2:00 pm PT
Costo de registro: **\$25**

BERKELEY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

ABHMS CENTER FOR CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Para obtener más información, visite ccl.abhms.org

Un programa educativo que forma y prepara a líderes laicos y a la pastoral Latina para servir en entornos intergeneracionales. En persona.

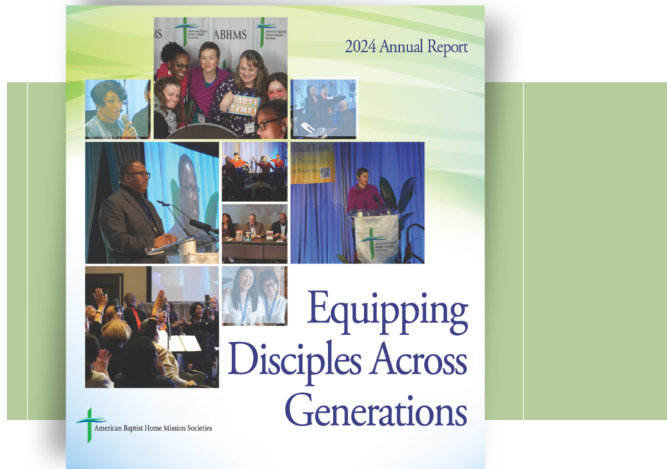
¡No pierdas esta oportunidad! ¡Regístrate ahora! >

Publishing

The ABHMS 2024 Annual Report

Now available in as a convenient digital publication. Get your copy today!

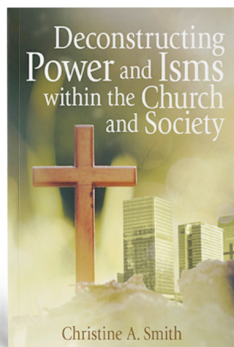
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Featured Book



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Monday, October 27th 12:30PM ET on Zoom

Join Dr. Cheryl Price for an insightful conversation with Dr. Christine Smith, author of *Deconstructing Power and Isms within the Church and Society*.



Dr. Cheryl Price
Judson Press Publisher



Dr. Christine Smith
Author



Register and join our
bookclub:
bit.ly/judsonpressbookclub

[Click image to download a printable postcard about the October meeting >](#)

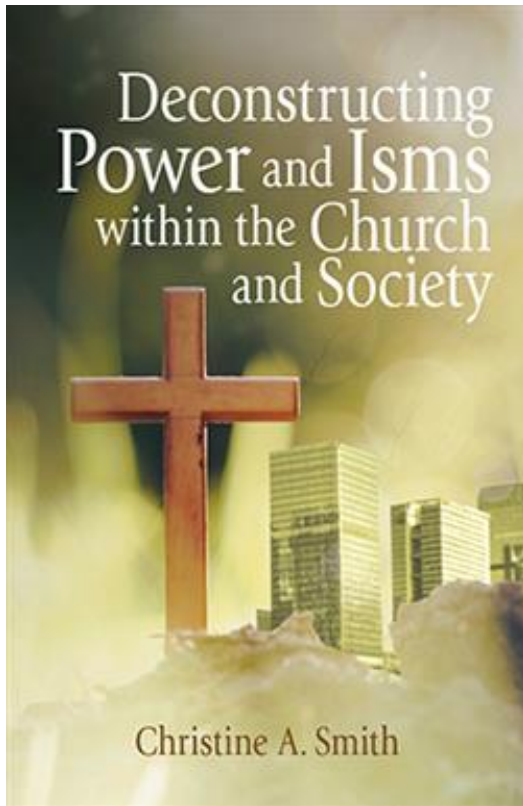
Join Dr. Cheryl Price, Judson Press publisher, as she welcomes Dr. Christine Smith on Monday, July 28, at 12:30 p.m. EDT on Zoom. Become a Book Club member and receive a personal invitation to attend.

October Featured Title

‘Deconstructing Power and Isms Within the Church and Society’

Christina A. Smith

In her pending release, Rev. Dr. Christine Smith delivers an unflinching examination of the systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice. Drawing from scripture, personal experiences, and historical insights, she reveals how the intersections of racism, sexism, and



classism persist in sacred and secular spaces alike. **In paperback.**

[Order your copy >](#)

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