



News & Views

February 2024

Highlights

Letter from the President of ABWM Michigan

Missions

American Baptist Churches welcomes new General Secretary
Rev. Gina Jacobs-Strain

American Baptist Women's Ministries Calls Interim Executive Director

Upcoming American Baptist Women (MDA) Event

Save the Date for June 2024 DeWitt Conference!
Registration attached

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Scholarship Report

Scholarship Application (due by March 15!)

Woman of the Year Nomination Form

Local Church News* **New!**

ABWM-MI Region President



Happy New Year. Greetings Ladies of ABWM Michigan. I hope all of you are doing well and enjoying this supposedly winter season. The weather changes so often we have spring every other week.

I hope you're looking forward to another great annual conference/retreat. Dee De La Fuente-Durham and her committee have been busy planning the activities and the schedule. Our guest speaker will be Rev. Sheree Gidcomb Clark. The conference will be June 7-9 at St. Francis Retreat Center in DeWitt. Please invite someone to attend the conference with you. You know we will have a wonderful time.

Please do not forget about our offerings – Scholarship, Special Interest Missionaries, ABWM National Support and Friendship House and our special mission project Single MOMMs camp at Higher Ground at Lake Louise.

We still have an opening on the Region Executive Committee for Coordinator of AB Girls. We also have openings for Area Presidents for Great North, MidMichigan, West and Central Areas. Please let me know if you are interested or know someone whom you think would be excellent for these positions.

I have been involved with the National American Baptist Women Ministries via zoom calls for board meetings. I ask that you consider becoming a Vital Partner by giving regularly to National Support of American Baptist Women's Ministries. For more information visit the American Baptist Women's Ministries webpage at abwomensministries.org. I will also notify you of national activities. Look for that information on the ABW-MI Facebook page and in News & Views.

Dates to Remember

May 25 – Nominations for 2024 Woman of the Year Award due to Brenda

June 7, 8 & 9 – ABWM-MI Annual Conference & Retreat, DeWitt, MI

I would like to continue to spend time getting to know you so please feel free to call or text me at 248.808.4133. You may also email me at blgct2008@gmail.com. I want to hear what you think the future holds for ABWM-MI. I know whatever lies ahead for us will be filled with excitement, expectations, and joy. I also know that with God all things are possible. We are in this journey together.

I wish you a blessed Easter and a wonderful Mother's Day.

May God richly bless all of you.

Brenda Threatt
ABWM-MI Region President

Save the Date!

June 7 - 9, 2024
ABWM Michigan Annual Conference
Saint Francis Retreat Center
DeWitt, MI



Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous.

Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged.

For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

American Baptist

Women's
MINISTRIES
OF MICHIGAN

Registration form attached! Register by mail or online!

2024 MISSION TRIP TO PUERTO RICO SCHEDULED



Ladies - Is God calling you or someone from your church? Please share the news that the 2024 short-term mission trip to Puerto Rico is scheduled for August 10-17. Adults and youth 14 and up are welcomed to join this team. Contact Lynne Punnett to sign up or answer any questions.




2024 PUERTO RICO MISSION TRIP

 *August 10-17, 2024*

Do you have a servants heart...? This trip could be for you! General construction, clean up, and rebuild from the hurricanes and flooding that occurred the last few years. Community Outreach. Do you have a servants heart and want to spread the love of Christ to those around the world? This could be the trip for you!

**Everyone is welcome no matter your experience.*

 *Cost- \$950 per person*

Cost includes airfare, lodging, meals and transportation in Puerto Rico.

\$100 non-refundable deposit due by MAY 1, 2024.
Balance due by July 1, 2024.

 *Host Church-
FBC of Rio Piedras*

How do you see yourself serving? Through music? Children and/or elderly ministry? What about building things or teaching others? Bring your skills and passions to help those in Puerto Rico. The team's projects and activities will depend on the experience and talents of those who sign up for the mission trip.



Anyone interested in joining the 2024 Puerto Rico Mission Team should contact ABC-MI Region Mission Consultant Lynne Punnett.

CONTACT :
LYNNEPUNNETT@YAHOO.COM 734-834-3886



Welcoming our New General Secretary Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain

Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain was called as General Secretary of American Baptist Churches USA by the Board of General Ministries on November 4, 2023, and her service as General Secretary began on February 1, 2024.

The American Baptist Churches USA Office of the General Secretary and Board of General Ministries look forward to many years of faithful service with Dr. Jacobs-Strain, working in partnership with all of American Baptist Churches USA.

[Learn more about Dr. Jacobs-Strain:](#)

[Read an interview from The Christian Citizen first published on Feb. 1, "'When all of God's gifts are being celebrated and used, there is a joy that is abundant': an interview with Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain, new ABCUSA general secretary"](#)

[Read Dr. Jacobs-Strain's bio here.](#)



Upcoming Event by ABW (MDA)

A purple event poster for "AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN (MDA) CELEBRATES... Impactful Women Of The Bible". The poster features five circular portraits of speakers: Rev. Cheryl Swabak, Rev. Dr. Denise Henderson, Rev. Nikita McCallister, Rev. D. Irene Koy, and Rev. Delores Greer Stevens. Below the portraits, it says "\$15 REGISTER ON EVENTBRITE" and "CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST, SERMONETTES, TEA TALK, & MORE". At the bottom, it lists the host as "HOST PASTOR REV. DR. MICAH R. GAINES, GREATER CHRIST BAPTIST" and the location as "Greater Christ Church Activity Center, 8521 Mack Avenue, Detroit, MI 48214". The date and time are "March 23, 2024, 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM".

American Baptist Women's Ministries Calls Interim Executive Director



The search committee unanimously recommended, and the executive committee of American Baptist Women's Ministries (ABWM) shared on Friday, January 12, 2024, their unanimous decision to call Rev. LaThelma Yenn-Batah to the position of Interim Executive Director, beginning March 1, 2024.

Board President ProTem Lovena Van Haaften, search committee chair, said, "Rev. LaThelma Yenn-Batah served on the ABWM staff and brings a strong administration, communication, and program coordination skill set. She has experience in relationship-building and will be an asset in strengthening relationships with women's ministries and partners."

An ordained American Baptist minister, Rev. Yenn-Batah made history as the first African American pastor of Flemington Baptist Church in Flemington, NJ. Prior to this groundbreaking role, she served as the Associate Executive Director of American Baptist Women's Ministries, where she was instrumental in sourcing the STEAM program for AB GIRLS, organizing events for young adult women, and preached and led Bible studies at regional ABWM and ABC events.

Rev. Yenn-Batah is a graduate cum laude from Scripps College. She holds a Master of Divinity and Master of Christian Education from Princeton Theological Seminary, where she earned accolades in Urban Ministry and Sacred Music. She co-founded The SoulJourn Collective, a diverse group of creatives with a mission to harness the remarkable power of love, faith, and creative restoration for positive change in our world. She is also a founding pastor of The Unfiltered Church NJ.

Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain, who [ends her tenure as ABWM's Executive Director](#) on January 31, 2024, says, "We are excited that ABWM's executive committee invited Rev. LaThelma Yenn-Batah to serve as the Interim Executive Director, and she said yes! We are confident that her gifts, generous spirit, and innovative thinking will guide ABWM in this season of transition. She is keenly attuned to relevant matters for women and girls and stayed connected to ABWM while serving as a local pastor in New Jersey. Her experience during her tenure as Associate Executive Director at ABWM positions her to readily engage women and girls in our 32 regions while sustaining relationships with our denomination, national, regional, and ecumenical partners. We believe she has a heart for our ministries, will listen for God's direction, and cultivate new spaces for spiritual growth, advocacy, and leadership development."

American Baptist Women's Ministries (ABWM) is a diverse community of American Baptist women and girls serving in ministry in Christ's name in the US, including Puerto Rico. With local, area, region/state, and national levels of ministry, American Baptist Women's Ministries creates and sustains communities of passionately faithful, mission-minded women and girls engaged in worship, leadership, service, and friendship. Our ministries include domestic violence and sex trafficking prevention and education, building beloved community, advocacy, and developing leaders. To learn more about American Baptist Women's Ministries, visit www.abwomensministries.org.

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For more information, contact Wendy Clemmer, info@abwomensministries.org or call 610-768-2288.

Treasurer's Report



We have opened an additional CD at Lake Trust Credit Union, so that we now have nearly \$27,000 in CDs and approximately \$17,000 in our checking account. This year we have passed along \$1169.75 in donations and 25% of our Calvary Baptist earnings to our special interest missionaries; we sent \$977 for our special mission project (Single MOMMS camp at Higher Ground at Lake Louise); we passed along \$551 to Rick & Anita Gutierrez for their dome cover project; and we paid out \$3900 in college scholarships (while receiving \$1339). We thank you for your donations. If you or your church is able to make any donations, please use the form included in the News & Views.

Lori Zupan
Secretary/Treasurer

American Baptist
Women's
 MINISTRIES
 OF MICHIGAN

Donation Form

Date: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Area (if known) _____

Church contact (if appl.) _____

Address: _____

City/Zip: _____

	Amount Encl.
- ABWM MI Region support (for day-to-day support of our organization)	_____
- Scholarship Fund (college scholarships)	_____
- Special Mission Project (this year: Single MOMM camp at Higher Ground)	_____
- Special Interest Missionaries (through International Ministries)*	_____
- ABWM National, which will be apportioned when being sent as 25% to Women & Girls Fund and 75% to general support	_____
- Camp Lael	_____
- Higher Ground at Lake Louise (general support)	_____
Total:	_____

* The missionaries we will support for 2023-24 are Bill & Ann Clemmer • Jon & Amanda Good • Rick & Anita Gutierrez • Carmella Jones • Wayne & Katherine Niles

If you personally or your church are able to offer any support, please send your check** made out to AB Women's Ministries, c/o Lori Zupan, 581 Canterbury Dr, Saline, MI 48176. Or you can make a payment through Venmo -- @lori4abw -- or Zelle pay -- abwmsec@gmail.com. If you choose to do either of those, please email Lori with the information about how much you are allocating to the various offerings. You can email her at the email listed above or her personal email: loriz@tsshome.com.

** If you are a member of the Central Area, please make check payable to Central Area ABW Ministries and mail to CA Treasurer Carolyn Grapentine, 3998 Beech Dr, Ypsilanti, 48197. Central Area dues of \$15 are appreciated in addition to any of the above offerings.

Note: If you wish to support any other organizations or missionaries, please send your donation directly to them. We appreciate all your support.

Scholarship

This year we have had five young women receiving scholarships from our Region. Luisa Tittle will graduate with her bachelor's degree from U-M Flint this year and Sarah Kocsis will graduate with her master's degree from Grand Rapids Theological Seminary with a focus in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Congratulations to both!

Continuing on will be Elizabeth Anderson, Rachel (Good) Schinzler, and Morgan Scott. Rachel got married last summer – congratulations on the marriage, Rachel!

We welcome new applicants! Please note that the application deadline is March 15, although it is possible to submit your pastoral recommendation by the end of the month if the deadline is too tight.

In addition, we are always looking for donations from our women and our churches to help fund the scholarships. If you are able to give a donation, please use the donation form included in the News & Views.

Thank you.

Lori Zupan
Scholarship Coordinator



ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS: Any woman who is a member of an American Baptist Church in Michigan, who gives evidence of a call to follow the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, whether in a secular position or in ministry, shall be eligible. We are all called to be ministers for Jesus wherever we are.

Applicants must complete and sign this application and also provide the following additional data:

- 1. Letter of recommendation from your pastor.
- 2. Statement of Christian experience/call to ministry.
- 3. Brief statement of your vocational expectations and goals.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM

NAME _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

(PLEASE PRINT FULL NAME - NO NICKNAMES)

HOME ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____ CELL PHONE _____

PARENT'S NAMES _____ HOME PHONE _____

NAME OF HOME CHURCH _____

CHURCH ADDRESS _____ PASTOR _____

HIGH SCHOOL _____ YEAR GRADUATED _____

COLLEGE YOU ARE ENROLLED AT _____

MAJOR _____ YEAR _____

IS YOUR FAMILY ABLE TO HELP YOU FINANCIALLY? _____

IF SO, WHAT PERCENT CAN THEY PROVIDE? _____

DO YOU EXPECT TO WORK WHILE IN SCHOOL? _____

CAN AND WILL YOUR CHURCH PROVIDE FINANCIAL HELP? _____

STATE SPECIFICALLY ANY OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME AVAILABLE, SUCH AS YOUR OWN SAVINGS, OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS, ETC. _____

GIVE NAMES OF TWO (2) PEOPLE OTHER THAN FAMILY AS REFERENCES:

NAME: _____ NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ ADDRESS: _____

Please check: ABWM ___ may ___ may not publish my birthday and address to our organization's members.

I recognize that this scholarship is a gift from the American Baptist Women's Ministries of Michigan for the purpose of helping me prepare myself for whatever God would have me do with my life. I pledge myself to sincere preparation and eagerly seeking to know and to follow His will. I understand that should God call me to serve in a Christian vocation, I will plan to serve in the American Baptist Churches, USA.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT _____ DATE _____

*Please send a photo to loriz@tsshome.com.

This application and the additional data sheets are to **be returned to the Scholarship Coordinator before the deadline, March 15. Lori Zupan, loriz@tsshome.com, 581 Canterbury Dr., Saline, MI 48176.**

American Baptist Women of Michigan 2024 Woman of the Year Award

Tell us about the woman you are nominating. You may include your response in the spaces below or write your response in a narrative which includes this information. Use as much space as you need to introduce us to your nominee. Please feel free to use the back of the form if you need more room.

Name of Nominee: _____

Church/Area: _____

How does she contribute to God's kingdom?

What has she done to further God's kingdom?

Why are you nominating this person?

Why is she worthy of this award?

Nominator Information:

Name: _____

Church/Area: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Return to the region president by May 25, 2024:

Brenda Threatt
22715 Kenwyck Dr
Southfield, MI 48034-4765

email: blqct2008@gmail.com

Local Church News

We'd like to know what's going on in area ABWM churches. Have you had an event that you'd like to highlight? Or an upcoming event you'd like to invite others to attend?

We invite area American Baptist Women to submit news about your churches! Just send an article (even a few lines) to Anne at annedawslazar@gmail.com for inclusion in the next N&V in May. I'll start out with a few words about my church.

Northside Community Church 929 Barton Dr. Ann Arbor, MI 48105

We have 2 co-pastors: Rev Dr Terence McGinn and Rev Sheree Gidcomb Clark. There's a lot going on at Northside right now. We just had an Ash Wednesday service and the rest of the Easter season is being planned as I type. Music is a large part of our ministry. Every year we have 1-4 music interns from the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance. This year we have 4 wonderful young voices and 2 of them also play in our bell choir. We have a number of book clubs/Bible studies lead by Rev Sheree and missions that include providing 'blessing bags' for those who are unhoused, adopting a family or 2 from the school across the street at Christmas for 'Secret Santa' and this last year we also provided for turkey dinners at Thanksgiving along with a local middle school. Our space is available for the public to rent out mostly for recitals, etc. That means there is a 'joyful noise' in our space many times outside of worship- most of which is open to the public. We also host music events that aren't specifically part of our church.