



## MINISTERS COUNCIL NEWS YOU CAN USE – PLEASE SHARE WITH YOUR NETWORKS

Joe Kutter, Acting Executive Director

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Click here to view this message as a webpage: <http://www.ministerscouncil.com/Periodicals/Publications.aspx>

### ~AN OBSERVATION

The first Sunday of Advent, a traditionally “poor attendance Sunday” is squeezed between “Black Friday” and “Cyber Monday”. That’s almost symbolic of the way that the Christmas brand has been hijacked by our American culture. Even more, the spiritual and emotional complexities of this season are presented in the whip-lash between commercial pressures and the promises of the Gospel. Every emotion, joyful and painful, is intensified during the month of December. Good relationships get better and bad ones get worse. Paradoxically, those who ignore him during most of the year will both seek Jesus and push him away this month. I suspect that more people attend worship on Christmas Eve than any other day of the year. It’s a strange spiritual season!

And in the midst of the confusion, our colleagues in ministry will speak the Gospel of Christ with a clear voice and conduct ministry with solid integrity. It is what God has called us to do and we will be faithful.

Thank you for your ministry and may God bless you during this Advent Season. *Joe Kutter*

### ~REGISTER NOW FOR “TOGETHER IN THE LORD” – DEADLINE DECEMBER 16

Have you registered for the “Together in the Lord” Conference January 4-7, 2009? Click on the link and register TODAY! You won’t want to miss it!

<https://www.bimwebport.org/etrakwebapp/meetings.aspx?DirectLink=2010TITLP>

Scholarship money will be available. For more information click on the link and follow instructions listed below - <http://www.nationalministries.org/>

On left side bar point to Education - Click on Scholarship and Grants - Scroll down to bottom of page and click on "Tell me more about aid for Ministerial Leaders" and click on "Cultivating New Life Grant Application" then follow instructions given there.

### ~A MINISTERS COUNCIL TASK FORCE FOR WOMEN IN MINISTRY – *Holly Bean*

At its meeting in August, the Ministers Council Senate voted to establish a task force to focus on issues American Baptist women in ministry face. Earlier in the year, the Executive Director of Women in Ministry position in the Office of the General Secretary (OGS) had been defunded because of a serious decline in resources. Leaders of the Ministers Council Senate received that news with great concern. The Ministers Council has historically committed itself to support and advocacy for women in ministry. The time had come to reactivate that commitment.

At the same time the Ministers Council was setting up its task force, OGS was taking action. The Reverend Mary A. Hulst accepted General Secretary Roy Medley’s invitation to lead an exploration of

how ABCUSA can support women in ministry in the future. The result of her work will be a proposed new pattern of staffing support for ABC professional women in ministry. The Ministers Council's task force will work in partnership with her efforts.

In addition, the Ministers Council's Women in Ministry Task Force will explore and develop new ways to support and advocate for women in ministry, especially through Ministers Council channels. We plan to keep women in ministry information circulating with regular submissions to this newsletter.

In the spirit of "News You Can Use" we would like to highlight this month the Priscilla Institute, an interesting educational center located at Palmer Theological Seminary. Here is more information about it.

In 2004 Eastern University, and its seminary, Palmer Theological Seminary collaborated to launch a new program for women who are leading in various ministry capacities in organizations and churches. The Priscilla Institute (PI) at the Hestenes Center for Christian Women in Leadership is a program designed especially for women. PI makes it possible for women to achieve a Bachelor of Arts degree in Organizational Management from Eastern University.

The Priscilla Institute is an illustration of koinonia in practice. It combines courses from various schools within Eastern University resulting in a comprehensive outcomes based, learner-centered education. Located on the campus of the Palmer Theological Seminary, the Priscilla Institute was designed to provide a well-rounded education for those who are on the front lines of ministry. It affords women the chance to develop their ministry, management, and leadership skills, offering those with little or no college education the opportunity to earn a degree and enhance their skills as a pastor, a minister, or a leader.

To learn more, log on to <http://www.palmerseminary.edu/priscilla/index.html> or email Gail Randolph-Williams, the Director, at [prisca@eastern.edu](mailto:prisca@eastern.edu).

## **~JUDSON PRESS RELEASES 15TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION OF COMING TOGETHER**

Judson's latest release is *Coming Together in the 21st Century: The Bible's Message in an Age of Diversity* [http://www.judsonpress.com/product.cfm?product\\_id=13902](http://www.judsonpress.com/product.cfm?product_id=13902) by Curtiss Paul DeYoung. This updated and revised edition features nearly 50 percent new material, including contributions from ethnically and culturally diverse contributors like Brenda Salter-McNeil, Richard Twiss, Jean Zaru, Mimi Haddad, and Allan Boesak, and expanded the definition of diversity adding gender and class to race, culture, and ethnicity. A group reflection and action guide make this an ideal resource for small group or classroom discussion. To order, call 800-458-3766 or visit [www.judsonpress.com](http://www.judsonpress.com).

## **~THESE HANDS...THESE FEET - ABC PEOPLE TAKE A LOOK BACK AT THE BIENNIAL**

To read more from MMBB click on the link below.  
[http://www.mmbb.org/index\\_whats\\_new.cfm?whats\\_new\\_id=129](http://www.mmbb.org/index_whats_new.cfm?whats_new_id=129)

## **~SABBATICAL RESEARCH FINDINGS – Jeff Woods**

The program evaluation study included 225 congregations where the pastor of the congregation had received a sabbatical grant in the last five years. The following are some findings from both the pastoral and congregational perspectives of those congregations. To read more click on the link below.

<http://www.ministerscouncil.com/Sabbaticals/SabbaticalResearchFindings09.aspx>

## **THE PRACTICES OF PILGRIMAGE DEEPEN OUR EXPERIENCE OF WORSHIP**

American Baptist minister and worship designer Rev. Brad Berglund has been leading people in the spiritual practice of pilgrimage for over ten years. To read a brief article about how the practices of pilgrimage can deepen the experience of worship. Click here  
<http://www.ministerscouncil.com/OnLineManual/documents/BradBerglandPilgrimages09.pdf>

Brad's ministry called "Illuminated Journeys" will celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010. His journeys to Ireland, The Republic of Georgia, France, Spain, Sweden and New Mexico are ecumenical by design and regularly include clergy. To learn more about pilgrimage and how it can enhance your ministry, visit Brad at [www.illuminatedjourneys.com](http://www.illuminatedjourneys.com)

### **~CALL FORWARD – SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS FOR THE CHURCH**

To read more about this newsletter click on the link below.

<http://www.thefund.org/callforward/>

### **~REMEMBER US!**

When planning your estate, please remember The Ministers Council.

### **~HELP US KEEP YOU INFORMED**

The hard reality about this newsletter is this: Our email mailing list is not as complete as we would wish. But you can help and your help we ask. Please forward this to your constituencies and friends. Most months, there is something helpful and when there is not, the delete button is only about an inch away and there will be little imposition impressed upon your friends. We appreciate your help. *Joe Kutter*

**THE MINISTERS COUNCIL OWNS THE DOMAINS [www.ministerscouncil.org](http://www.ministerscouncil.org) AND [www.ministerscouncil.com](http://www.ministerscouncil.com). IF YOUR BROWSER ENCOUNTERS DIFFICULTY IN OPENING ANY OF THE LINKS IN THIS NEWSLETTER, GO DIRECTLY TO THE WEBSITE AND/OR FEEL FREE TO CALL THE OFFICE FOR SPECIFIC NAVIGATION DIRECTIONS TO LOCATE THAT LANDING PAGE ON THE SITE.**

### **~SIGN UP FOR FUTURE ISSUES OF NEWS YOU CAN USE FROM THE MINISTERS COUNCIL**

Sign up for future issues of the monthly Ministers Council newsletter by replying to this message from the email address to which you wish issues to be sent. Add the newsletter email address to your address book so that future newsletters will not go into your spam filter.

If you have news, ideas, events or websites from your Ministers Council to share with colleagues, please email to [joe.kutter@abc-usa.org](mailto:joe.kutter@abc-usa.org). The more we share with one another what works, the stronger we will all be.

### **~MINISTERS COUNCIL CONTACT INFORMATION**

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**Join the Ministers Council through your local constituent council. Contact information is posted on [www.ministerscouncil.org](http://www.ministerscouncil.org) under the WHO WE ARE link.**