



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

Joe Kutter, Acting Executive Director

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~RETREAT OR CONFERENCE? *By Joe Kutter*

In planning an event with the Ministers Council of the ABCCR, the regional Executive Committee made a decision to focus on having a “Retreat” rather than a “Conference.” What is the difference? I don’t know of a formal definitional difference but this is where we focused our attention.

The event focused on relationships and encounters. First, we developed processes to give serious time and attention to our relationship with God. I’ve given up on engineering or planning an encounter with God (i.e. You will meet God at 3:15 p.m. as we reflect on Acts 2. It doesn’t work!) but we can carve out time and space within which our relationship with God may be refreshed. We tried to attend to both the extroverts in conversational groups and to the introverts in times of solitude.

Second, we gave serious attention to our relationships with colleagues in ministry. In settings both formal and informal, meals and breaks are as important as the planned sessions, we made the space that allowed friendships to be made and nurtured. I can only guess at the hundreds of conversations that happened in which life, both personal and professional, were shared. New friendships were made and existing friendships were deepened.

Thirdly, many of us had fresh encounters with the center of our own being. In a variety of informal settings, memories were shared that revealed a fresh encounter with the soul shaping events and memories that helped to form the person’s life and attitude towards life. We did not program for these personal moments but they happened as colleagues spent time together.

Was there a dimension of “cognitive learning” present? Absolutely! But this may be the difference between a “Retreat” and a “Conference.” The “Conference” seems to focus on the “Cognitive” and may or may not expect relationships to happen in an accidental way. Conferences are a good thing and we need to continue to have them.

In the “Retreat,” the cognitive dimension becomes a partner with the relational. Why is this important for ministerial leaders? We know that ministerial identity and ministerial skills are best honed within the context of relationships. More often than not, it’s a significant relationship or a significant cluster of relationships that brings us to Christ, nurtures us in Christ, and shapes our skills as ministerial leaders.

In my experience, conferences that impart information separated from a relational context are generally ineffective as agents for improvement or change. When the question is asked, was the information applied, the answer is usually “No.”

So my observation, subject to your scrutiny, is this: There are times when we need to focus on the information. There are times to focus on the relationships. But most of the time, we need to focus on both.

~FANNING THE FLAME CONFERENCE – MAY 24-27, 2010

For information on the Fanning the Flame Conference please click on the link below.

<http://www.ministerscouncil.com/OnLineManual/documents/2010FanningtheFlameInvitationBrochure.pdf>

~WOMEN TOGETHER: LIFTING AND ENCOURAGING ONE ANOTHER; A CONFERENCE FOR FEMALE CLERGY

Women Together: Lifting and Encouraging One Another; a Conference for Female Clergy will be held August 19-20, 2010 at Prospect Missionary Baptist Church in Detroit, MI. Please consider attending. This is a great opportunity for fellowship and learning with other women in ministry! For more information click on the link below.

<http://www.ministerscouncil.com/WIM%20Resources/documents/WIMpostcard.pdf>

~GROWING AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES

Have you been praying about the kind of growth God wants for your church? The American Baptist Extension Fund (ABEC) can assist in making ministry dreams come true through building planning and lending services.

Are you looking for a place to invest and save while helping American Baptist churches grow? Let us help.

Visit us at www.myabec.org for information on building planning, investing and lending services, to check rates or to contact us. ***Building the Church, Investing in the Kingdom***

~JUDSON PRESS NAMES NEW ABC READS SELECTION AND LAUNCHES BOOKS LIKE NEW

The 2010-2011 ABC Reads selection is [*nuChristian: Finding Faith in a New Generation*](#) by pastor Russell Rathbun. Recognized as an *Outreach* magazine Resource of the Year, *nuChristian* offers practical ideas for reaching today's young adults with an authentic, transparent, and holistic Christlike community.

Discounts are available for bulk purchases for your church-wide or small group use. Visit <http://www.judsonpress.com/abcreads.cfm> for more information and to place your order. Books can also be ordered by calling 800-458-3766.

Judson Press is also pleased to introduce its Books Like New program. Books Like New include recently released titles, classic favorites, and out-of-print gems whose covers or spines may show some wear, but whose pages are unaffected for your reading pleasure. Books Like New are 60% off their original retail price! Check out the selection of hundreds of titles at www.judsonpress.com/bookslikeneu.

~CONFERENCE FOR CHURCH MUSICIANS

The Fellowship of American Baptist Musicians Conference for Church Musicians will be held at the Green Lake Conference Center, Green Lake, WI, July 17-24, 2010. Conferees of all ages are able to work with nationally and internationally acclaimed clinicians in ensemble and workshop settings. Choral, handbell, instrumental, and worship workshops are designed to further educate and train those involved in church music leadership as well as congregation members who just love to make music! In addition to daytime activities, the conference features six evening concerts.

Go to www.fabm.com for more information and to register online or my mail.

~MONEY AT CHURCH: CAN YOU SEE THE TRIANGLES?

Triangles are everywhere in church life. A triangle occurs when the relationship between two people becomes troubled, and a third person (or group) is pulled in to manage the anxiety between the two. Given the high-anxiety nature of money in church life, we can expect triangles to show up frequently. To read more click on the link.....

<http://margaretmarcuson.com/blog/?m=201004>

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Company Website: <http://www.margaretmarcuson.com/>

~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 AND 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. 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 under the WHO WE ARE link.