

Women Alive

Winter
2020/2021

President

While plans change, God does not change! We can reschedule and change the way we do things, knowing that God will never forsake us. We are in His hands! Please join me as we keep each other in our prayers and lift each other up! Take comfort from God's word.

"The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you, nor forsake you. ...do not be discouraged." -Deuteronomy 31:8 (NIV)

As I begin this new journey, serving as your president, I am mindful that we are facing a new normal. This past year has been fraught with challenges and changes. We attended church (remotely), weddings (smaller) still took place, birthdays still happened, and staycations became the new reality. My husband, John, and I went on Sunday afternoon rides, supported our local farms, and found we enjoyed taking simple hikes in the state parks. The summertime was easy to have outside socially distanced visits with both our children, Joseph and Stephen and their wives Sarah and Anna. I miss seeing family, friends and attending AB Women's Ministries state events! And I MISS ALL OF YOU!



PENNY WITH HUSBAND, JOHN

A plan is in place to have a spiritual retreat via Zoom and in your own home on Saturday, February 27, 2021. More information to follow.

If you have not been checking the website, www.abwomensministriesma.org, you have missed some exciting new features: Our Women - Our Stories, Christmas message, MBMM giving news, monthly Bible verse, and events. We also have a new Facebook page. Type "American Baptist Women's Ministries of Massachusetts," like, and share!

Make sure we have your email address, tell a friend about us, share us in your church newsletter!



Penny Mulloy
27 Ox Rd.
Billerica, MA 01821
508-847-3327
pennymulloy@gmail.com

Secretary

“And now go, write it before them on a tablet and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever. -Isaiah 30:8 (ESV)

While my passion is mission oriented, the need was for a secretary. I am honored to fill this position for you. I hope I can exceed your expectations.

I am a mom of two beautiful grown adults, a son and a daughter, and Gram to beautiful 14-year-old Hannah, and 3-year-old Ellie, and soon to be Gram to a grandson in late February or March.

I am about to become the 2nd person of 11 people in my family to celebrate turning 70 years old. This has been quite the accomplishment given that 7 have already passed on before the age of 70.

I am in a growing church (First Baptist Church of Medfield) where our new pastor has had the challenge of growing our church during this pandemic. I am proud to say that he is accomplishing growth and bringing many to Jesus through today's modern technology. I am so grateful for Pastor Hunter Guthrie and his family.

While we will have lots of challenges in the next few years together, may we remember that our great Lord will never give us more than we can handle.

Terry Miller
16 Old Populatic Rd.
Norfolk, MA 02056
twisted.10@juno.com

Treasurer

As I assume the new position of Treasurer on the Executive Committee, I first want to acknowledge the hard work of my predecessors, Frances Glenn-Chalmers, and Joanne Brown before her. I am grateful for the carefully organized records.

At our Fall 2020 meeting, which included our Annual Meeting for 2020, we recognized several groups and individuals who participated in the Eight Steps of Giving. Since it is by this means that our American Baptist Women's Ministries of Massachusetts receives its major support, I want to emphasize its importance. Although certificates are earned for completion of all 8 steps, partial participation is possible and recognized for the effort. Those groups and individuals recognized for completion of the 8 Steps are as follows:

- AB Women's Ministries of the First Baptist Church of Abington (for 2019)
- Women's Federation of the First Baptist Church of Gardner
- AB Women's Ministries of the First Baptist Church of Malden
- Women's Society of the First Baptist Church of Waltham
- WABC Women of the West Acton Baptist Church of Acton
- Wanda MacCurtain of the First Baptist Church of Hanson
- Bonnie Sestito

Recognized and Appreciated for participation:

- MBC Missionary Society of Messiah Baptist Church of Brockton (completed for 2019)
- First Baptist Church of Lynn

- Women's Society of the First Baptist Church of Medfield, sent in by Lucy Mbugua
- Barbara Anderson of Trinity Baptist in Arlington

The information for the current Eight Steps for Giving, due in whole or in part on April 30, 2021, may be found at the ABWM of MA website (www.abwomensministriesma.org) under "Resources."

2020 has been a tough year for everyone. We are hopeful that 2021 will bring a return to normalcy. Something unique is being developed for our Spiritual Retreat in February 2021, as you will be made aware of soon.

I hope to be able to see you in person when it becomes safe to do so. Make it our fervent prayer that it will be possible to hold our Annual Spring Conference at the Salvation Army Wonderland Conference Center in Sharon, MA, on June 4-5, 2021.



Marilyn Glover
40 East Border Rd.
Malden, MA 02148-1104
781-322-5631
fbc.mglover@verizon.net or glovermarilyn46@gmail.com

AB GIRLS

It has been a rough season filled with isolation, masks, cancellations, and sadly, death. We could all use a break in the midst of this social and emotional desert.

So, it is good that it is time for the annual spiritual retreat. This year it will be virtual.

We will be doing a mix of online and independent activities with opportunities to interact. There will be prayer, meditation, music, reflection, and more. Hands-on activities will be included. You will receive your retreat kit by mail.

Join us at the  for some respite from the desert wilderness that is this pandemic season.



For girls in grades 3-12

February 27, beginning at 10AM



Melinda Parry
5 Swain Place
Wakefield, MA 01880
781-245-9984
zupatree@hotmail.com

Missions

2020/2021 State Mission Project: Christian Women of Angola

At the Annual Meeting held September 26, 2020 the women voted to extend the Christian Women of Angola for another year because women's groups were not able to meet due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Women in Angola make clothing for women and men using a specially made fabric which helps them to evangelize.

Funds raised will be used by the women to have more fabric made so that they may continue witnessing to those with whom they come in contact. Rev. Ruth Harvey, International Ministries Special Assistant to Angola, is available to speak via Zoom in local churches, women's gatherings, mission events, etc. Contact Rev. Harvey via email at ruthlh@comcast.net.

\$2,409 has been raised. Our goal is \$3,500 with a challenge goal of \$5,000. Donations may be made through the Eight Steps of Giving. Eight Steps of Giving Remittance Forms are available to download from our website, www.ABWomensMinistriesMA.org under "Resources" and "Missions".

Human Trafficking Awareness

While most of us were profoundly experiencing the restrictions of 2020, an industry was thriving—the dark and destructive commercialized sex market. Human trafficking involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act. Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked worldwide – including right here in the United States. It can happen in any community and victims can be any age, race, gender, or nationality. Traffickers might use violence, manipulation, or false promises of well-paying jobs or romantic relationships to lure victims into trafficking situations. Language barriers, fear of their traffickers, and/or law enforcement frequently keep victims from seeking help, making human trafficking a hidden crime. *(Information obtained from <https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/what-human-trafficking>)*

National Human Trafficking Awareness Day is recognized each year on January 11th. To raise awareness of human trafficking, you are invited to take a picture of yourself and/or your women's group wearing purple clothing and share it on the AB Women's Ministries of Massachusetts Facebook page.



Partnering Ministry



Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries' (MBMM) imperative is to weave God's love across cultures. Their mission is simple, "ACE", to Advocate for, Celebrate, and Empower new Americans. MBMM is uniquely focused on two objectives: assisting immigrants and refugees, and edifying immigrant pastors. MBMM opens opportunities to create contexts for celebrating diversity and inclusion by sharing of respective cultures and traditions. This sharing assists in easing racial, cultural, linguistic, practical, and socio-economic challenges.

The Partnering Ministry request was included with in the Summer/Fall *Women Alive* newsletter, but because of the pandemic the MBMM board later voted not to have the new Americans Christmas Party. Instead MBMM requested that gift cards to Costco, BJ's, Target, Walmart, and Staples in the amount of \$25 be sent to them so that they may distribute the cards to the new American families and let them purchase what they need. For more information about MBMM visit www.mbmm.org.

News



Patricia (Patt) J. Downe

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our dear sister and friend, Patt, who served as the AB Women's Ministries of Coordinator of AB GIRLS, Coordinator of Mission and Service, and Coordinator of White Cross. She also served as president of Central Association's AB Women's Ministries for 20 years. Patt will be missed.

Patricia J. (Neville) Downe, 79, died on Sunday, Nov. 1 at U-Mass Memorial Lake Ave. Born in Detroit, Michigan, she was the daughter of Albert H. and Mary Jane (Bragg) Neville Jr. She worked for many years as a customer service representative for Macy's Dept. store. Patricia was a long-time member of First Baptist Church in Worcester and was a member of the American Baptist Women of Central MA and the Mass. She was a Girl Scout leader for close to 30 years. Patt felt that it was important to teach girls to be strong and independent. Her love of nature led her to be involved with the Mass. Environmental Education Society and New England Environmental Educators. She was a member of the D.A.R. and spent countless hours doing research on her family genealogy. She also enjoyed doing crafts and movies.

She leaves 2 daughters, Kathi Downe of Worcester, Lynne Turer and her husband Spencer of Burlington, Vt., and 5 grandchildren, Zachary, Nicole and Marissa Gallant and Sydney and Sophia Turer. Cards may be sent to Patt's daughter, Kathi Gallant, 28 Hartford Rd., Worcester, MA 01606.

"Well done, good and faithful servant!"
Matthew 25:23

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Judson Association



Many Judson Association churches participated in the group's annual Toy Harvest on November 7th. This year, because of the COVID-19 restrictions, the meeting was held virtually. Everyone participating in the Zoom meeting enjoyed catching up and "seeing" each other again. Funds for toys were raised for several weeks before the Toy Harvest and several churches donated bags of toys for all ages. There were several shoppers who enjoyed collecting toys and gifts that will be distributed to children of inmates at the Middlesex House of Correction in Billerica. One of the chaplains at the prison, Pierce VanDunk visited the group during the meeting via video and explained how the gifts were distributed to children when they visited the inmates. He was grateful for the donations that will be welcomed by many children and families. He said the inmates were very thankful for these gifts for their loved ones.

Around \$1,000 was raised for this cause this year. The Judson Women are hoping to be able to have their annual meeting as a group in the spring or summer.

Merrimack Valley



Carolyn (Furbish) Webster
September 25, 1929 – December 1, 2020

Carolyn went to her eternal home, after gracefully waging an epic battle against multiple cancers. Served on the Planning Committee of AB Women's Ministries of Merrimack Valley for many years. Carolyn was the longest-tenured member of Littleton First Baptist Church, having independently decided to make it her church home when she was just ten years old. She served as Administrative Coordinator, Church Moderator, Lifetime Deacon, and with her husband, Bert, headed the Sunday School class for Grotonwood's New Day residents for many years. She also served on the regional and national American Baptist associations.

NATIONAL NEWS

Sisters in Prayer



Join us in prayer for our future leaders. Our time together will be focused on AB GIRLS (American Baptist Girls in Relationship, Leadership, and Service). We must provide prayer support for ministry as it allows for a firm foundation and resources for girls.

Tuesday, January 12, 2021
8:00 PM (EST)

Hi-eS.T.E.A.M. Events for girls



Join American Baptist Women's Ministries and AB GIRLS in this upcoming Christian education and STEAM programs.

Saturday, January 15, 2021
1:00 PM-4:00 PM (EST)

Soothe Your Soul Events



Cook and Soothe Your Soul

Friday, February 12, 2021, 8:00 PM EST

Move and Soothe Your Soul

Friday, March 12, 2021, 8:00 PM EST

For more details and to register visit <https://abwomensministries.org/events.aspx>

Reset and Reimagine Initiative

From our AB Women's Ministries Executive Director, Rev. Gina Jacobs-Strain

"...Reset and Reimagine (R&R) is another example of our sisterhood in action! We recognize the need to respond to bare food pantries, closed daycare centers, and other missing essential services for women and children diminished due to COVID-19. Reset and Reimagine seeks to raise money to support women and children that have lost essential services and churches that provide essential services to disadvantaged women. As women look to reset and reimagine their future and dream new dreams, your support will empower and inspire them to move forward. Reset and Reimagine offers tangible support through grants..."

For more information and to apply for a grant, visit www.abwomensministries.org/ResetandReimagine

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2021 AB Women's Ministries Calendar of Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Place</u>
Jan. 11	Mon.	Human Trafficking Awareness Day	Local Church
<i>Jan. 12</i>	<i>Tues.</i>	<i>Sisters in Prayer: Focus AB GIRLS</i>	<i>Zoom (8:00 PM EST)</i>
<i>Jan. 16</i>	<i>Sat.</i>	<i>AB GIRLS STEAM Event</i>	<i>Zoom (1:00 PM EST)</i>
<i>Feb. 12</i>	<i>Fri.</i>	<i>Cook and Soothe Your Soul</i>	<i>Zoom (8:00 PM EST)</i>
Feb. 27	Sat.	Spiritual Retreat	Your Own Space
Mar. 5	Fri.	World Day of Prayer	Local Church
Mar. 8	Mon.	International Women's Day	Local Church
<i>Mar. 12</i>	<i>Fri.</i>	<i>Move and Soothe Your Soul</i>	<i>Zoom (8:00 PM EST)</i>
<i>Apr. 8</i>	<i>Thurs.</i>	<i>Sisters in Prayer</i>	<i>Zoom (8:00 PM EST)</i>
<i>Apr. 23-24</i>	<i>Fri. – Sat.</i>	<i>Domestic Violence Training Conference</i>	<i>Zoom</i>
May 1	Sat.	Women's Buffet Breakfast at TABCOM's Annual Gathering	TBD
Jun. 3	Thurs.	Sisters in Prayer	Zoom (8:00 PM EST)
Jun. 4-5	Fri. – Sat.	Spring Conference	Wonderland Camp & Conference Center, Sharon, MA
Jun. 12	Sat.	Women's Day	Local Church
<i>Jul. 17</i>	<i>Sat.</i>	<i>AB Women's Ministries Annual Meeting</i>	
Sept. 18	Sun.	AB Women's Ministries Sunday <i>AB Women's Ministries 70th Birthday Celebration</i>	Local Church <i>Zoom (6:00 PM EDT)</i>
Sept. 25	Sat.	Fall Women's and Girls' Day	TBD
Nov. 1		Baptist Women's Day of Prayer (BWA)	Local Church
Nov. 5		World Community Day (CWU)	Local Church
Dec. 10		Human Rights Celebration	Local Church

Bold: AB Women's Ministries of MA
Italics: AB Women's Ministries (National)