

Congregations and Regions Celebrate Special Occasions

Every year numerous congregations celebrate significant anniversaries. Although many of them request anniversary certificates from the Historical Society, it is rare that we have the privilege of presenting a certificate in person or attending the anniversary celebration.



Priscilla Eppinger preaches at the annual meeting of the Evergreen Association

In recent months, however, ABHS has been represented at several occasions around the country. Executive Director Priscilla Eppinger was the keynote speaker at the annual meeting of the Evergreen Association of ABC Churches, which met at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Seattle. (Video recordings of the worship services where Dr. Eppinger preached are available on

the [Evergreen Association Facebook page](#).) While in Seattle she presented a certificate to Seattle First Baptist Church, commemorating their 150th anniversary.

In October, the American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin celebrated 175 years as an association of American Baptist Churches, and Rev. Dr. Kevin A. Walden, Associate General Secretary for Congregational and Pastoral Effectiveness, was



Priscilla Eppinger presents an anniversary certificate to Rev. Dr. Tim Phillips of Seattle FBC

there, representing the American Baptist Office of the General Secretary. He presented an anniversary certificate to Rev. Dr. Marie Onwubuariri, Executive Minister of ABC of Wisconsin.



Kevin Walden presents an anniversary certificate to Rev. Dr. Marie Onwubuariri



A costumed Kevin Walden presents an anniversary certificate to Rev. Luke Oskin

Walden also presented an anniversary certificate to First Baptist Church of Hubbard, Ohio, when they celebrated 200 years of ministry.

Eppinger took advantage of a visit to Topeka, Kansas, and

spoke at First Baptist Church. As this is the congregation she grew up in and that commissioned her to missionary service in 1983, it was a homecoming of sorts.

What a joy it is for ABHS to celebrate ministry across the country!



Priscilla Eppinger speaks at FBC, Topeka

Church Anniversaries

September – December

We celebrate the faithful ministry of American Baptist Congregations and their pastors! The following churches mark anniversaries this quarter:

225 Years

Clifton Park Center Baptist Church, Clifton Park, NY; Rev. Gregory R. Staples and Rev. Damaris Cami-Staples, pastors

200 Years

First Baptist Church, Trumansburg, NY;
Rev. Dennis Christiansen, pastor
Tabernacle Baptist Church, Utica, NY;
Rev. Debbie Kelsey & Rev. Daniel San, pastors
First Baptist Church, Hubbard, OH; Rev. Luke Oskin, pastor

175 Years

First Baptist Church, Janesville, WI; Tom DeWitt, pastor
First Baptist Church, Pella, IA; Rev. Jason Thorton, pastor
First Baptist Church, Burnesttsville, IN; Paul Scott, pastor

170 Years

Shiloh Baptist Church, Cleveland, OH;
Rev. Dr. Thomas W. Gilmore, interim pastor

150 Years

First Baptist Church, Seattle, WA; Rev. Dr. Tim Phillips, pastor
First Baptist Church, Murphysboro, IL;
Rev. Shaker Samuel, pastor
Charleston Baptist Temple, Charleston, WV;
Rev. Dr. Jim T. Hewitt, pastor
Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Indianapolis, IN;
Rev. Dr. Philip K. James, pastor
First Baptist Church, Bloomfield, IN; Rev. Nathan R. Brooks, pastor

125 Years

Little Capon Baptist Church, Romney, WV; Paul Anthony Baker, pastor
Summitville First Baptist Church, Summitville, IN; Paul Albrecht, interim pastor.

100 Years

Immanuel Baptist Church, Erie, PA; Christian Eriksson, interim pastor
Goodyear Heights Baptist Church, Akron, OH;
Rev. D. Edward Witchey, pastor
Cardville United Baptist Church, Greenbush ME;
John Cheney, pastor

75 Years

Lee Road Baptist Church, Cleveland, OH;
Rev. Dr. James P. Quincy, pastor

25 Years

Fellowship Baptist Church, Washington, DC;
Rev. Patricia Hailes Fears, pastor

If your church is celebrating a significant anniversary, request a certificate from ABHS.

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Priscilla E. Eppinger, Executive Director
Jill Sweetapple, Head of Archives & Special Collections
Jenny L. Manasco, Digital Collections Specialist
Jan Winfield, Office Manager
Kay Eland, Financial and Subscription Secretary
April Williams, Student Worker
Brice Bongiovanni, Intern

Website: www.ABHSarchives.org

For Research appointments, donations to collections, reference desk, general questions: (678) 547-6680 or ABHSoffice@ABHSarchives.org

For ABHS memberships, *American Baptist Quarterly* subscriptions: (610) 768-2269 or Kay.Eland@abc-usa.org

Postal Address: ABHS, Mercer University, 3001 Mercer University Drive, Atlanta, GA 30341

Location: 2930 Flowers Road South, Suite 150, Atlanta, GA 30341

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Do you make your philanthropic gifts via a donor-advised fund? Please add the American Baptist Historical Society to the organizations designated to receive a gift from your DAF. For more information or if you have questions, contact Priscilla Eppinger, Executive Director.

Digital Archives Update

We are currently scanning microfilm reels from American Baptist Home Mission Societies' archives (ABHMS) that contain correspondence related to church edifice fund loans from the early 20th century. Dry sounding stuff for sure! These funds were loaned to churches to build or improve their church buildings. But even these seemingly mundane business files hold gems of insight into communities of the past. For example, the Calumet Baptist Church in Douglas, Arizona, was the second Baptist church founded within 10 years of the town's establishment. Founded as a copper mining town in 1901, by 1910 Douglas was home to two smelters as well as two Baptist churches.



Digital Archivist Jenny Manasco uses the FlexView microfilm conversion scanner to convert microfilm to digital format for output as PDFs. The Flex View was purchased using funds donated through the *At Your Fingertips* campaign.

We know from the church edifice fund files that Calumet Baptist Church was established about 1910, "quite a distance out of the city near the Calumet smelter" where a new subdivision had been built. The members were hopeful the church would thrive due to the "street car company making a change to its system so it will run closer to the church." By 1916, however, the church reported that they had been largely inactive for two or more years because "smoke from the smelter has bothered so that many moved away." By 1919, there were only 3 or 4 members and the deed to the church was given over to the Home Mission Society. Though we have no membership or other records of this short-lived church, thanks to the correspondence in these financial records of the Home Mission Societies, we know a little about the motivations and challenges of its founders and members.

Thanks to the generous supporters of the *At Your Fingertips* campaign, the story of Calumet Baptist Church in Douglas, Arizona, can be remembered and retold! Browse through our online catalog, ArchivesSpace, and imagine what other stories are waiting to be told.



Research Snapshot – Wallace Best

Dr. Wallace Best came to ABHS from Princeton University, where he is a member of the Core Faculty as Professor of Religion and African-American Studies and is also affiliated with the Department of History. Prof. Best was researching the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy of the 1920s as played out between the great preachers John Roach Stratton and Henry Emerson Fosdick in order to write an article about these New York City pastors. [Click here for a video of Wallace Best.](#)

From the Archives

Chaplains' Military Service Documented

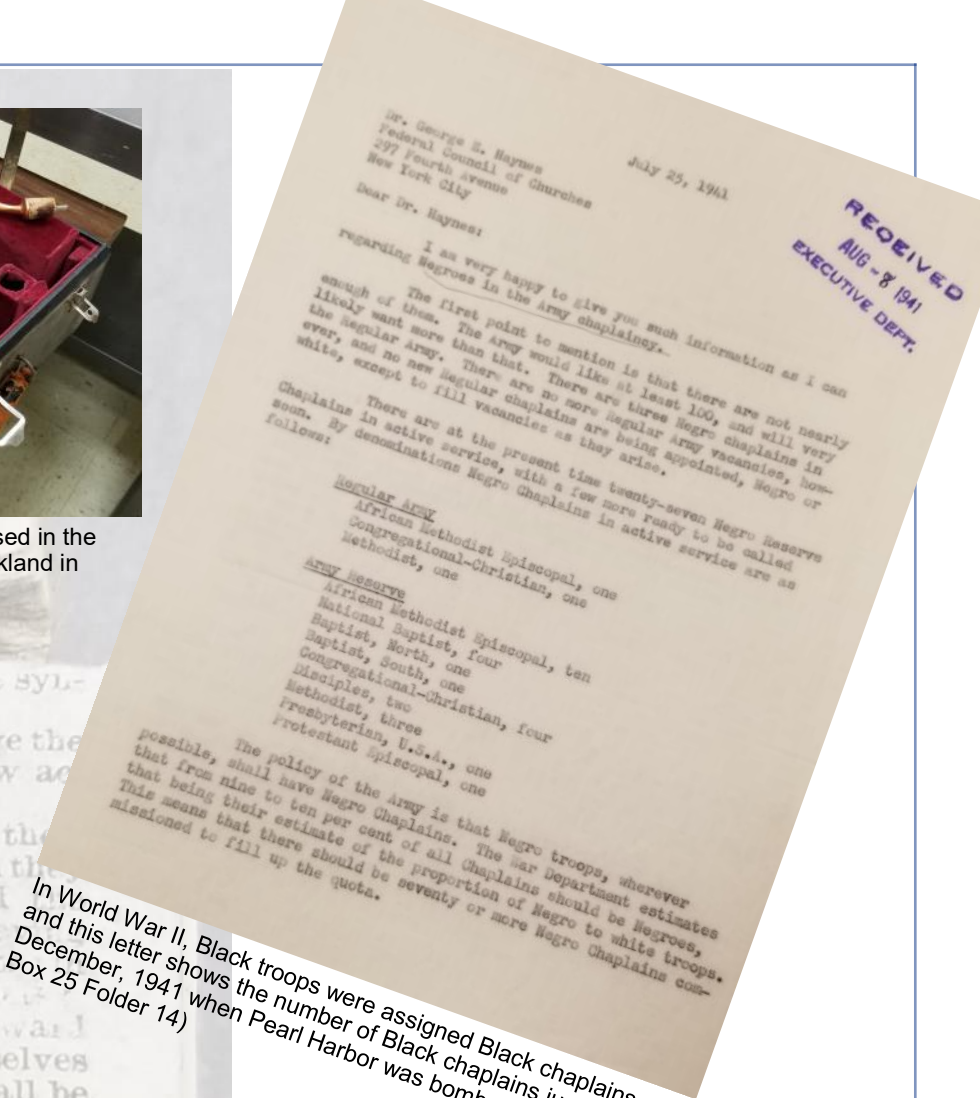
Baptist chaplains have been ministering to soldiers since the Revolutionary War, and ABHS has photos, documents, and artifacts that document that long history. Currently, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) endorses American Baptist-ordained clergy for service as military chaplains, as well as endorsing chaplains to serve in specialized settings such as hospitals, institutions, and correctional facilities.



Rev. Evan J. Shearman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Garden City, Long Island, extends the right hand of fellowship to Airmen Westland J. Taylor and Cody Moore of Mitchell Air Force Base. Chaplain Eugene R. Alt (right) baptized the airmen. (ABHMS Box 241 Folder 6)



World War II-era portable communion set, used in the European theatre, donated by Paul. W. Strickland in 1979.



In World War II, Black troops were assigned Black chaplains, and this letter shows the number of Black chaplains just prior to December, 1941 when Pearl Harbor was bombed. (ABHMS Box 25 Folder 14)



David Jones served as a Chaplain in the Revolutionary War, and at the mature age of 76 years, also served as Chaplain in the War of 1812. (ABHS Record Group 1046)



Maj. Gen. Lorraine K. Potter (ret.), photo courtesy of the U.S. National Archives

The story of American Baptist military chaplaincy continues into the present.

Major General Lorraine K. Potter (ret.) was the first female chief of the Air Force Chaplain Service, and the first woman in any of the military services to be promoted to the rank of major general. In addition, she was the first woman ordained by the ABC-USA in Rhode Island (1971) and the first female chaplain in the Air Force. The endorsement of Rev. Potter by ABHMS allowed her to join the Air Force as a chaplain in 1973.



L to R – Johnny F. Tharpe (AR), Jimmy L. Shouse (IN), Donald E. Deskin (CA), Richard T. Shouse (KY), and Arthur H. Smith (FL), members of the crew of USS Los Angeles, are baptized at the Christian Servicemen's Center, Yokosuka, Japan, in July 1955. The Chaplain is Henry E. Austin of the U.S. Navy. (ABHMS Box 241 Folder 8)

Background photo: The proverbial Bible that stopped a bullet: A World War I soldier was carrying this New Testament in his breast pocket when a piece of shrapnel was diverted by the volume, saving his life.

The Intersection of Sacred and Secular History

In the late 19th century the American Baptist Home Mission Society and the American Baptist Publication Society took advantage of a new means of transportation, conveying missionaries in mobile chapels to communities without churches.

The [Northwest Railway Museum](#) in Snoqualmie, WA, has restored Chapel Car 5, "[Messenger of Peace](#)." ABHS collaborated on this project.



ABHS collections include a copy of the song book used in the chapel car.



Interior of "Messenger of Peace" showing worship space, pump organ at the front.



Living quarters for the missionary couple were "cozy"; ABHS Board member Mitch Homma, a museum docent and the museum's director, Rich Anderson, and ABHS volunteer Stephanie Stone filled the small space.



Exterior of "Messenger of Peace"



Left: Japanese Baptist Church, Seattle
Right & below: NVC Foundation Japanese American Memorial Wall; Mitch Homma contemplates names of family members.



When, in 1942, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 authorizing the removal of all people of Japanese descent from the west coast of the U.S., the entire congregation of Japanese Baptist Church in Seattle was removed to Idaho. Their pastor, Rev. Emery Andrews, relocated with his family in order to continue to minister with the JBC congregation.



The Nisei Veterans Committee Foundation erected a [memorial wall honoring Japanese Americans](#) who were interned during World War II, as well as those who have served in the military. The only names of non-Japanese people on the wall are those of Rev. Emery Andrews and his son, Rev. Brooks Andrews, both of whom dedicated themselves to ministry and to the rectification of the injustice done to Japanese Americans.

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the Revolution to the
present day*

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American Baptist Quarterly Call for Papers

ABQ is the scholarly journal of the American Baptist Historical Society. Both established and emerging scholars are invited to submit papers written from original research. Articles and essays should be between 6,000 and 10,000 words.

If you are interested in submitting a paper for one of the upcoming issues, please contact editor Curtis Freeman (CFreeman@div.duke.edu) as soon as possible.

Upcoming Themes	Submit by:
The Fundamentalist Fight in the Northern Baptist Convention	March 1, 2020
Christian Responses to Global Warming	March 1, 2020
The Vocation of Christian Laypeople	May 1, 2020
Seeing the Sacred in a Secular Society	June 1, 2020

Our Mission

The American Baptist Historical Society, as a premier religious historical society, advances Baptist identity, promotes historical literacy, and thereby inspires spiritual and social transformation.