

Rev. Elizabeth Caudill

James Wolfe, ABHS Board of Managers

I have a business-size card that I carry from time-to-time which is a record of the ordination of my home pastor. Although yellowed with age and hard to read, the words are vitally important to my life. It declares that on the 21st day of October 1941, Elizabeth Caudill was ordained to the Gospel Ministry. As well as being a story of a remarkable ministry, it is also a very personal story. Miss Caudill never married and she shared a home with my widowed paternal grandmother. This meant that she was part of every holiday, birthday, and countless Sunday lunches. She was family in every meaningful sense of the word. This was a unique experience which shaped my early life and is a lasting influence on my ministry. In fact, I was in seminary before I had the experience of being nurtured by a male pastor.

The Bethel Baptist Church of South Charleston, West Virginia was organized April 17, 1946, with 33 members. Soon after that first meeting the decision was made to call the Rev. Elizabeth Caudill to be the first pastor of the fledgling church. To the best of my knowledge there were no other female pastors in West Virginia at that time. Ill health forced Rev. Caudill to retire in 1985, after nearly 40 years of pastoral ministry.

Many of the records I have come from my grandmother's handwritten notes of Bethel Baptist Church's history. Miss Caudill's ministry was significant, not only for Bethel, but for the community at large and for American Baptist women. By May of 1950, only four years after its birth, the church boasted 249 members and had received 101 of those members by baptism. Ten years later, on the fourteenth anniversary of the church, church records indicate 666 members and 383 baptisms during that time.

In 1960 Rev. Caudill was the driving force in establishing a volunteer chaplaincy program at a local hospital. In 1974 Miss Caudill was honored by Alderson-Broaddus College as a distinguished American Baptist woman and in 1981 was the first recipient of the prestigious "President's Award" at the Biennial Meeting of the American Baptist Churches USA in San Juan, Puerto Rico. During her career she received many civic and humanitarian honors, including recognition by Governor John D. Rockefeller IV, as an Outstanding West Virginian.



Perhaps the greatest measure of her ministry was the number of individuals who experienced the call to ministry under her leadership. Personal and church records indicate that during the years she pastored Bethel Baptist Church, at least twenty-two persons accepted the call to pastoral ministry, and I am one of them. Others, who did not feel called to pastoral ministry, were licensed by Bethel to preach and ministered as vital lay leaders. Many of those pastors and lay

(Continued on page 6)

Church Anniversaries

October – December

We celebrate the faithful ministry of American Baptist congregations and their pastors! The following churches notified ABHS that they are celebrating anniversaries this quarter:

250 Years

Union Baptist Church, East Killingly, CT
Antonio Manalus, pastor

225 Years

First Baptist Church, Burlington, NJ
Rev. Kevin M. Lowe, pastor
First Baptist Church of Mount Holly, Eastampton, NJ
Rev. Dr. George Hancock-Stefan, pastor

200 Years

ABC of Ohio, Granville, OH
Rev. Mark Click, Executive Minister

185 Years

First Baptist Church, Beloit, WI
Rev. Walt Hoshaw, pastor

155 Years

Genesee Baptist Church, Rochester, NY
Rev. Steven Wilson Sr., pastor

150 Years

First Baptist/Red Oak Church, Springfield, MA
Rev. Peter Yoon, pastor

125 Years

Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Overland Park, KS
Rev. Dr. Pamela R. Durso, President
Primera Iglesia Bautista de Carolina, Carolina, PR
Rev. Carmen C. Adames Vazquez, pastor

100 Years

Matewan Missionary Baptist Church, Matewan, WV
Carl Butler, pastor

80 Years

Emmanuel Baptist Church of Malden, Malden, MA
Rev. Wayne A. Gadie, pastor

If your church is celebrating a significant anniversary, notify ABHS and request a certificate. We want to celebrate with you!

Opportunities to see the JACS Exhibit in 2026:

October	Denison University, Granville, OH
Oct 9-10	ABC NY State Biennial Meeting, Kenmore, NY
Oct 25 – Nov 25	Canisius University, Buffalo, NY

We are scheduling host sites for 2027. Contact Jenny Manasco (J.Manasco@ABHSarchives.org) for more information.

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MaShani Allen, Administrative Assistant
Gusmar Chavarria, Financial Clerk
Priscilla E. Eppinger, Executive Director
Mariah Hamby, Head of Archives and Special Collections
Jenny L. Manasco, Digital Archivist

Website: www.ABHSarchives.org

Contact us at : (678) 547-6680 or
ABHSoffice@ABHSarchives.org

Postal Address: 3001 Mercer University Drive
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A RESILIENT FAITH

Japanese American Baptists during World War II

During World War II, over 42,000 Japanese migrants and 70,000 U.S. citizens of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast of the United States were sent to incarceration camps. Among them were ordained Baptist pastors and their congregations, numbering about 2000, who would hold on to their faith as they struggled to understand and find hope in their experience.

Visit our online exhibit to learn more about this project and the history of Japanese American Baptists.



Digital Update

Jenny Manasco, Digital Collections Specialist



From Microfilm to Internet

One of the benefits of being an archivist is getting to work with really interesting materials and collections. Our collection is so rich and diverse it is almost impossible to answer when someone asks, "What is the most interesting/unique/coolest thing in the collection?" We often joke about trips to the vaults (the climate-controlled rooms where we store collections) being "treasure hunts." Even after eight years here, it still often feels that way when I run across something new. But there is also a lot of rather mundane and repetitive work when it comes to arranging, describing, and digitizing those same collections.

The largest single hardware purchase from the "At Your Fingertips" campaign several years ago was a FlexView microfilm scanner. One of the most requested parts of our collection is the missionary correspondence from overseas missionaries. Although we have the original letters, we have long used microfilm copies to provide access to researchers, thus preserving the fragile originals. The scanner allows us to provide copies of this correspondence in a .pdf format instead of having to send out the microfilm to be duplicated. So, what does it take to scan one of these reels and prepare the files?



Scanning the microfilm is the easy part. We load the film on the scanner and fast-forward it to end then rewind it to take up any slack that has developed. While doing that, we watch for frames that are especially light or especially dark. We use those frames to dial in the exposure settings on the scanner to maximize the number of frames that are legible in the scans. Scans of hand-written letters that are 150-200 years old can sometimes be very faint. It is sometimes difficult to find a setting that will render those pages without making other pages so dark they become unreadable. Once the settings are chosen the microfilm runs through the scanner unattended, taking about 45 minutes to scan a reel. Then the "fun" begins.

Missionary correspondence often has 2000-3000 pages on a reel. The first step of processing it is going through the reel and making sure the software has detected all the pages correctly (hint: it didn't) and drawing boxes around the pages it missed. In a second pass we scroll through and look for where two pages are defined as one and separate them. Then we page through it to adjust the balance and contrast, making those light and dark pages more readable, straighten pages, and fine tune margins. On a fourth pass, we identify the beginning of each folder (typically 1-2 years of a particular missionary's correspondence), and lastly, we name those folders with what will become the filename of the pdf. This process can take anywhere from one to five hours. When done, the software generates .jp2 files of each page and the .pdf files. We further process the .pdf files by compressing and optimizing them for the internet then prepare both the .jp2 and .pdf files to upload to our digital preservation system and sync with our catalog (yet another spreadsheet!).

You can see how this could become a tedious process. Yet when we are done, we will have 50-70 folders of missionary correspondence that you can read simply by clicking a link in our catalog. The hardest part is often not getting derailed by reading them as we go!

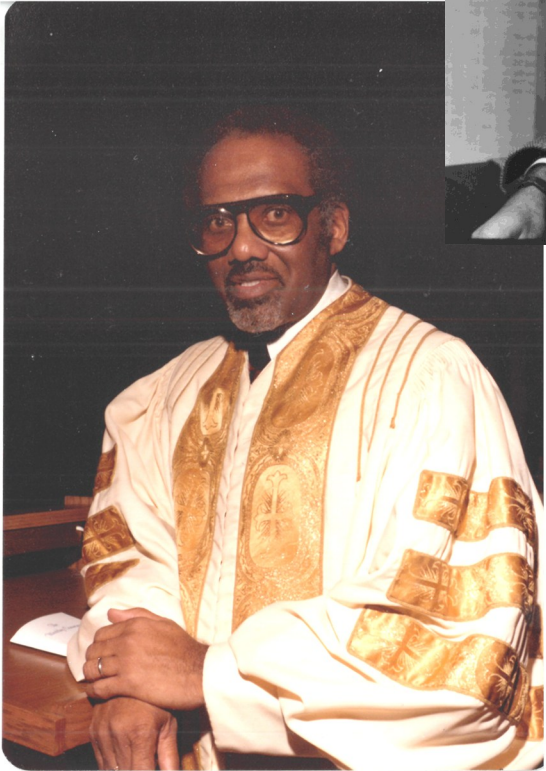
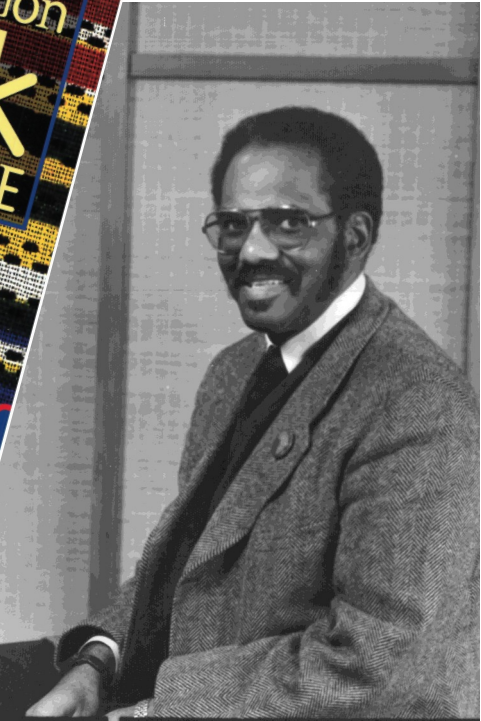
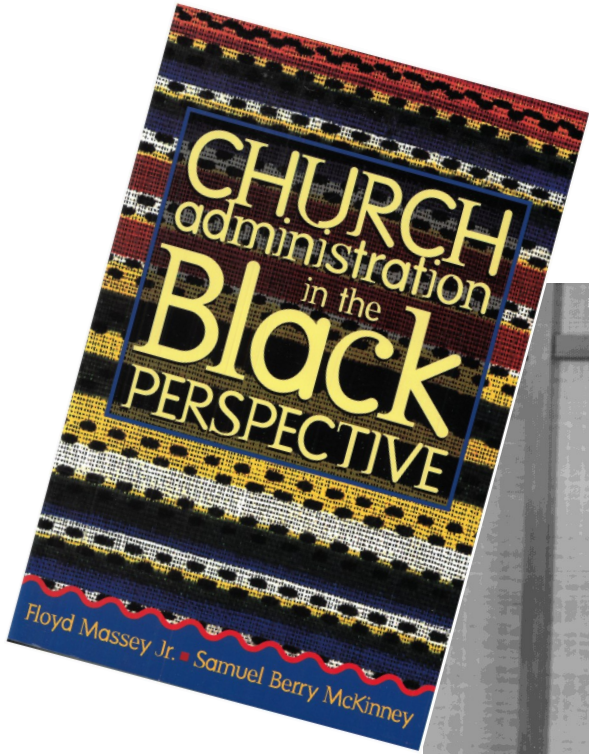
From the Archives: McKinney Family Collection

Mariah Hamby, Head of Archives and Special Collections

Rev. Dr. Samuel Berry McKinney (December 28, 1926 – April 7, 2018) left a renowned legacy of a justice-oriented faith, remembered for his ministry in American Baptist churches and in the Civil Rights movement, especially in Seattle, Washington. In 1976, McKinney co-authored *Church Administration in the Black Perspective* (Judson Press) with Floyd Massey, Jr.

A graduate of Morehouse College (1949) and Colgate Rochester Divinity School (1952, 1975), McKinney served pastorates at Olney Street Baptist Church (Providence, RI; 1955-1958) and Mt. Zion Baptist Church (Seattle, WA; 1958-1998 and 2005-2008). His pastoral responsibilities included advocacy for Black ministers on a national level through his integral role in establishing the Black American Baptist Churchmen, forerunner of the American Baptist Black Caucus.

McKinney did not limit his insights and leadership to Baptist environments, but regularly engaged with other Christian groups, such as the Church Council of Greater Seattle and the World Council of Churches. Concurrent with his congregational ministry McKinney pursued economic development opportunities for the African-American community in Seattle, notably founding the Northwest Baptist Federal Credit Union (1958) and Liberty Bank (1966).



Above and right: Group 29 Office of the General Secretary, Box 1465 Folder: Black American Baptist Churches Newsletters, Vol. 1, Issue 1.

RG 1588 McKinney Family Papers, Box 10, Folder 3; Samuel McKinney at Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Seattle, WA (Undated)

RG 1588 McKinney Family Papers spans nearly 10 linear feet. In addition to the sermons, correspondence, photographs, and recordings of Dr. Samuel McKinney’s ministry, the collection holds documents from other McKinney family members, including Louise Jones McKinney, Ruth Berry McKinney and Rev. Dr. Wade Hampton McKinney, Jr., and Dr. Lora-Ellen McKinney, an author and psychologist. The collection continues to grow through donations by Lora-Ellen.

(Continued from page 1)

leaders still serve in active ministry.

Today there are voices who declare that women do not belong in pastoral ministry and behind a pulpit. Rev. Caudill never pushed a feminist agenda, nor defended her call to ministry. If she experienced resistance to her ministry, she did not make an issue of it. She was secure in her call and with grace, humor, and humility lived into that commitment.

Jesus said, "You will know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). The fruits of Rev. Caudill's ministry prove that ministry is not about gender, ethnicity, or any other external factor. She had only one agenda and that was to do the work of a pastor. The fruits of her ministry confirm and affirm God's call on her life.

Rev. Dr. James O. Wolfe serves on the ABHS Board of Managers. He is a past president of American Baptist Churches, USA and serves as pastor of Minonk Baptist Church in Minonk, IL.

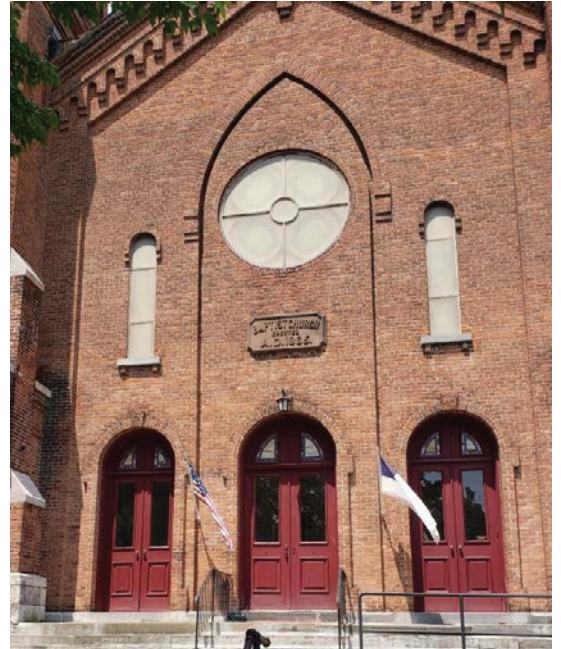
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Legacy giving is one way to support ABHS into the future. Your bequest will help ensure professional preservation and increased accessibility of historical materials for generations to come.

Please let us know if you plan for your estate to include a gift to ABHS.

Research Snapshot— Darrell Jackson

Darrell Jackson is Principal of Whitley Theological College in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, and also serves as chair of the Baptist World Alliance Commission for Baptist Doctrine and Christian Unity. He came to ABHS to research the historical and theological development of the ministry of the diaconate. Dr. Jackson is also working on an article comparing the missionary spirituality of William Carey and Adoniram Judson, so also looked at materials related to Judson's early missionary career, including the sermon preached at Judson's commissioning service in 1812 Massachusetts. For yet a third project Dr. Jackson examined late-18th-century and early-19th-century hymnals from ABHS's extensive collection of hymnals.



Greenwich, NY Church Receives Grant to Save 120-Year-Old Rose Window

Bottskill Baptist Church was recently awarded \$12,000 from the New York Landmarks Conservancy Sacred Sites Program to repair its 120-year-old stained glass rose window. The funding marks a major milestone in the church's "Preserving Our Light" campaign to raise \$50,000 for the restoration. "This window is more than just glass, lead and stone; it is a piece of our history," says church trustee Roger DeKorp. Kudos to Bottskill Baptist Church for this historical preservation work!



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INSIDE: Honoring Rev. Dr.
Samuel Berry McKinney at
the centenary of his birth

Torbet Prize Expands to Fund Research

The ABHS Board of Managers has approved expanding the annual Torbet Prize competition to include Research Proposals as well as Essays.

This annual prize was established in honor of esteemed American Baptist historian Robert G. Torbet to encourage development of scholars in the field of Baptist history studies. Submissions from emerging and early-career scholars will be prioritized.

Essays should make a unique contribution to the field of Baptist history or theology; the winning essay is eligible for publication in the journal *Foundations*, and its author awarded \$1000. Research proposals should delineate the scholarly significance of the research topic as related to Baptist history in contemporary scholarship and how the researcher will utilize resources within the ABHS archival collections. Award monies are to be used to fund a research visit to ABHS.

No more than one Torbet Prize (Essay or Research) will be awarded in a single year. The annual deadline for submissions is September 1. For more information, please see the ABHS website.

Robert George Torbet (1912-1995) was an American Baptist historian and educator, born in Spokane, WA and a graduate of Wheaton College, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and the University of Pennsylvania. He taught church history at Eastern Seminary (1944-1952), served as director of educational services for the American Baptist Board of Education and Publication (1952-1958), as dean and professor of church history at Central Baptist Theological Seminary (1958-1967), and as Associate General Secretary for Ecumenical Relations of the American Baptist Churches, USA (1967-1977). His significant contributions to Baptist research and publication led the American Baptist Historical Society to establish a prize in his honor.

