

## **2018 — ABWM Announces 2018 Shine the Light Award Recipient**

***May 10, 2018***

This year, the Shine the Light Award recognizes a Wisconsin resident who helped resettle Chin refugees from Myanmar. American Baptist Women's Ministries has announced Nancy Byleen, a member of First Baptist Church in West Allis, Wisconsin, will receive this year's Shine the Light Award. Byleen was nominated by Rev. Kim Drost, who is also a member of First Baptist Church in West Allis and witnessed Byleen's dedication to serving Chin refugees who arrived in the area in the late 2000's. Rev. Drost says, "Her self-deprecating 'Aw, shucks, I didn't do much' belies her true worth and value to AB Women's Ministries and the church. I appreciate how she has exemplified being the hands and feet of Christ's work in the...community around her."

When Chin refugees were first relocated to the Milwaukee area from the dangerous war in Myanmar, Byleen and her husband led the efforts of their church congregation to assist with the resettlement. She not only set up a Sunday School for the families' children, but also accompanied individuals to their doctors' appointments and interviews, helped them complete government paperwork, and taught them how to use Milwaukee's metropolitan transportation system. Byleen also led the church in a collection of donated household and food items and taught volunteers to help the refugees find housing, learn to drive, and meet other needs.

"Nancy certainly exemplifies passion and commitment to serving as she uses her gifts to lift others. She is living I Thessalonians 5:11 and inspires each of us to do the gospel," says Rev. Gina Jacobs-Strain, executive director of American Baptist Women's Ministries.

Each year, AB Women's Ministries presents the Shine the Light Award to a woman who has served as an outstanding light-bearer for Christ. The award highlights creative ministry projects which best demonstrate how the honored individual or group has spread the light of Christ in their congregation, community, or the world.

Byleen will be presented with her award at the [FEEL Conference](#), taking place July 19-22 at Judson University in Illinois.

Nominations for the 2019 award will be open in the fall. Information about the nomination process can be found at [abwomensministries.org/shinethelight](http://abwomensministries.org/shinethelight).

*American Baptist Women's Ministries is a Christ-centered ministry with a commitment to encourage and empower women and girls to serve God. For more information about American Baptist Women's Ministries, visit [www.abwomensministries.org](http://www.abwomensministries.org).*