

## **American Baptist Women's Ministries Calls Interim Executive Director**

The search committee unanimously recommended, and the executive committee of American Baptist Women's Ministries (ABWM) shared on Friday, January 12, 2024, their unanimous decision to call Rev. LaThelma Yenn-Batah to the position of Interim Executive Director, beginning March 1, 2024.

Board President ProTem Lovenia Van Haaften, search committee chair, said, "Rev. LaThelma Yenn-Batah served on the ABWM staff and brings a strong administration, communication, and program coordination skill set. She has experience in relationship-building and will be an asset in strengthening relationships with women's ministries and partners."

An ordained American Baptist minister, Rev. Yenn-Batah made history as the first African American pastor of Flemington Baptist Church in Flemington, NJ. Prior to this groundbreaking role, she served as the Associate Executive Director of American Baptist Women's Ministries, where she was instrumental in sourcing the STEAM program for AB GIRLS, organizing events for young adult women, and preached and led Bible studies at regional ABWM and ABC events.

Rev. Yenn-Batah is a graduate cum laude from Scripps College. She holds a Master of Divinity and Master of Christian Education from Princeton Theological Seminary, where she earned accolades in Urban Ministry and Sacred Music. She co-founded The SoulJourn Collective, a diverse group of creatives with a mission to harness the remarkable power of love, faith, and creative restoration for positive change in our world. She is also a founding pastor of The Unfiltered Church NJ.

Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain, who [ends her tenure as ABWM's Executive Director](#) on January 31, 2024, says, "We are excited that ABWM's executive committee invited Rev. LaThelma Yenn-Batah to serve as the Interim Executive Director, and she said yes! We are confident that her gifts, generous spirit, and innovative thinking will guide ABWM in this season of transition. She is keenly attuned to

relevant matters for women and girls and stayed connected to ABWM while serving as a local pastor in New Jersey. Her experience during her tenure as Associate Executive Director at ABWM positions her to readily engage women and girls in our 32 regions while sustaining relationships with our denomination, national, regional, and ecumenical partners. We believe she has a heart for our ministries, will listen for God's direction, and cultivate new spaces for spiritual growth, advocacy, and leadership development."

*American Baptist Women's Ministries (ABWM) is a diverse community of American Baptist women and girls serving in ministry in Christ's name in the US, including Puerto Rico. With local, area, region/state, and national levels of ministry, American Baptist Women's Ministries creates and sustains communities of passionately faithful, mission-minded women and girls engaged in worship, leadership, service, and friendship. Our ministries include domestic violence and sex trafficking prevention and education, building beloved community, advocacy, and developing leaders. To learn more about American Baptist Women's Ministries, visit [www.abwomensministries.org](http://www.abwomensministries.org).*

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