

Important information you need for ministries with women and girls.

Winter 2023

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with women and girls!

Helpful Links

[2021-2023 Ministry Focus: Let the Walls Fall Down](#)

[2023 Mission Focus: Racial Justice](#)

[Webinar Recordings](#)

[Shine the Light Award](#)

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New Programming

By [Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain](#), executive director

Dear Friends:

I am grateful for each of you. God has kept us and brought us into another year! The executive committee and staff started 2023 with 60 days of prayer and fasting. It has been great to see so

many of you attending the [Winter Webinar series](#), *Let the Walls Fall Down*.

We are blessed to start the year with a One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) Development Grant from American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) to develop leadership opportunities for women and girls. The grant will support a new ministry project called "Be Strong, Be Courageous: Leadership Training for Women and Girls," which will provide opportunities to study God's word and develop leadership acumen. You may have seen the [recent press release](#) about it. The grant enhances and supports ABWM's [mission, vision, and core values](#). This grant will support webinars as well as workshops presented by leadership development experts at the [2024 National Women and Girls Conference](#). The event will be held at Roanoke College, in Roanoke, VA, on July 18-21, 2024. Participants will build confidence and curiosity as they expand biblical knowledge, delve into equity concepts, advocacy, self-esteem, team building, mentor/mentee relationships, and leadership opportunities at all levels.

The rationale for the [2023 Mission Theme Racial Justice](#), is on the website. Thanks to all that contributed to the research and resources provided.

Let us lean into our ministries with deep gratitude and intentional actions that make space for all women. God is moving amongst us and blessing us!



Alumnae Updates

The alumnae of American Baptist Women's Ministries made up of former elected and appointed officers, region/state presidents, staff, consultants, advisors, National Leadership Team of AB GIRLS, and program board representatives, have been connecting through Zoom. At their January meeting, they voted to support through gifts and donations. Their goal for 2023 is to raise \$10,000 to fund the next series of webinars (Fall 2023 and Winter 2024) and additional funds to be used for scholarships for events, programs, resources, and leadership training for women and girls across the US, including Puerto Rico.

Young Adult Women: Ready to Serve?

American Baptist Women's Ministries is looking for applications from young adult women who are

interested in serving American Baptist Women's Ministries as a [national officer](#) and/or the [Young Adult Women's Ministries Advisory Team](#).

Visit www.abwomensministries.org or call (610) 768-2288 to learn more!



Articles from Officers



Unity in Sisterhood

By [Rev. Dr. Christine Smith](#),
national president

Happy New Year, ABWM! WOW – it is 2023!!! The year 2022 was challenging for people on so many levels. Continuing struggles with COVID,

readjusting to "in person" gatherings while still navigating Zoom, and questions about the best paths forward. Yet, through it all, God remains FAITHFUL. I watched as many stepped up to serve, give, encourage, lift, and bless women and girls across the U.S., including Puerto Rico. Together we shared in ABWM national, regional, and local gatherings, developed and executed projects to meet needs and empower people, and became the hands and feet of Jesus in various ways – To God be the glory!!!

Challenges remain as we step into 2023, but through faith, *we remain* undaunted. Embracing our 2023 Mission Focus, *Racial Justice*, many amazing events will unfold. Below are just a few...

[Women's History Month Gatherings](#): Join us on Mondays in March 2023 via Zoom 12:00-12:30 PM, EST

[Women and Girls' Day](#): Join us on **Friday, June 23, 2023, for ABWM's Be Strong, Be Courageous** biennial Women and Girls' Day program. The event will be held at First Baptist

Church of Caguas, Puerto Rico! Women and girls from across the country and Puerto Rico will gather for worship, fellowship, Bible study, and community service projects. Rev. Dr. Yamina Apolaris will be the Bible study leader for women, and Rev. Dr. Jessica Lugo-Meléndez will be the AB GIRLS Bible study leader. You won't want to miss this!

[ABWM Shalom Retreat](#): October 6-8th, 2023, Euclid, Ohio (stay tuned for more details soon!)

Visit our "[Dates at a Glance](#)" page to see the dates and times of our upcoming racial justice webinar series.

To learn more about ALL of our uplifting, Holy Spirit-filled, educational, love-inspired endeavors led by American Baptist Women's Ministries, visit our website, www.abwomensministries.org.

Let us continue to pray with and for one another. **"Faith is the KEY in 2023!!!"**

We look forward to seeing you soon!



Celebrating Our Stories!

By [LaRose Karr](#), coordinator of
mission with women and girls

Women's History Month begins March 1st and ends March 31st

– *this month is dedicated to commemorating and encouraging the study, observance, and celebration of the vital role of women in American history.*

The National Women's History Alliance announced the 2023 Women's History Theme, **"Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories."** American Baptist Women's Ministries has a long, vivid, and rich history with stories of women making a difference!

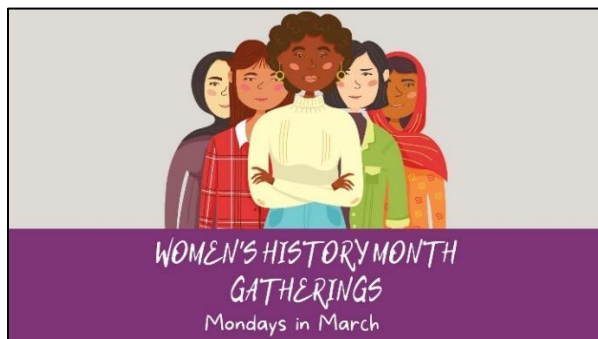
Does your church celebrate Women's History Month? Women's events can be held throughout the entire month. Some churches select a Sunday to highlight the ministry and mission of women. It is so important to tell our stories.

However, we don't need just to choose one day; we can choose a local mission opportunity and get the church involved. Host a tea honoring the senior women in your church. They have stories to share of living their lives for Christ and the work that has gone on before. There may even be an opportunity for multi-generations to share among your ladies.

Don't forget the women in your area who are gifted speakers. Invite them to share Bible studies, health topics, meal planning, or even home and hospital visitation. With an entire month dedicated to honoring women, our brainstorming and dreams will become a reality.

Perhaps a special offering can be taken for the national office? Giving can be done online at www.abwomensministries.org/give. Glorify the Lord as you seek to do his will!

Celebrate Women's History Month with ABWM every Monday in March 2023 at 12:00 PM (noon) EST and by following our social media sites ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#)).



Young Adult Women's Ministries Events

By [Olivia Banks](#), coordinator of young adult women's ministries

The Young Adult Women's Ministry is starting 2023 with a winter webinar series, [Seasons of Transition](#). We were inspired to explore this theme

because, as young adult women, we encounter many unique transition experiences throughout life.

The first webinar, **Faith and Wellbeing**, will take place on Thursday, February 23, 2023, at 8:00 PM (EST). We are excited to feature Rachel Legg, a mental health therapist who has been providing counseling in the community mental health setting for three years.

The second webinar, Faith and Yoga, will take place on Thursday, April 20, 2023, at 8:00 PM (EST). We will be blessed by Jasmine Turner, an Emmy-award-winning anchor, and reporter for NBC 12 News in Richmond, Virginia, who is a certified yoga and meditation teacher.

Continue to look for the presence of the Young Adult Women's Ministry throughout this year. From helping with the AB GIRLS Hangout to Women's History Month Gatherings and the October Shalom Retreat, we are active across all facets of ABWM.

Mission Projects for Young Adult Women

A mission project, no matter how small, should be carefully coordinated. As we embark into a new year, this could be a wonderful opportunity to coordinate a mission project with the young adult women in your church or group. It is okay to start small and within everyone's capacity to be involved. Take an inventory of the talents and gifts of your group of young adult women participants. Work on aligning your group's strengths to a need in your church or community. It might even be appropriate to team up with an organization that already has roots in your chosen mission project. Building and sustaining relationships is a hugely important part of any mission project. These relationships include your group members, community members, mission project partners, etc.

Some examples of mission projects include:

- Exercise/Healthcare - developing a space for community members to exercise, hold workout classes, or start a youth sports program
- Career Readiness/Resume Writing - hold seminars and career fairs, coordinate with a college in town
- Clothing Closets - collect donations and have a location for people to shop or teach sewing classes
- Cooking/M meal Preparation - teach smart shopping, tips for finding the best deals and eliminating waste
- Community Garden - engage other churches, neighborhoods, and city officials to save green spaces



Planning Events that Align with the ABWM Mission

By [Dawn Doerr-Johnson](#), coordinator of events

Happy New Year! Cue party horns and streamers. One of the ways that you can celebrate the new year is to plan an event for your women that aligns with ABWM's *mission*, *vision*, and *purpose*. To do that, you must, of course, know what those are!

Mission: American Baptist Women's Ministries is a Christ-centered ministry with a commitment to encourage and empower women and girls to serve God.

Vision: Every American Baptist church shall have a vital women's ministry program that empowers women and girls to become and develop as God's person, build God's faith community, and serve God's world.

Purpose: As servant leaders, we serve American Baptist churches by encouraging existing vital ministries with women and girls and empowering churches to build such ministries.

Did you know that to be a fully recognized American Baptist Women's group, you must align with the national mission, vision, and purpose? There are legal and tax implications to using the name for purposes (including fundraising) that are not in alignment.

Let's briefly look at our Purpose. An event that raises funds for another ministry, no matter how important, that does not serve women and girls is not aligned. Two examples of this: serving women who are overseas or serving the developmentally disabled. This is Godly work. It is important. But it is not the work to which this ministry is called. Should you raise funds for this? Yes, just not under the name of American Baptist Women's Ministries.

Consider having a speaker that focuses on American Baptist Women's Ministries' mission. Did you know that ABWM's national officers and staff can speak at your ABWM event?

As you review your documents and plan your program this year, please also review our *Mission*, *Vision*, and *Purpose*, and take steps to ensure your local alignment.

Request a national officer or staff to be the speaker at our event! To learn more and to request a speaker, email info@abwomensministries.org or (610) 768-2288.



Racial Justice Devotional

By [Carol Wright](#), coordinator of the western section

It's a blessing to be created in the image of God! To presuppose that one's own ethnicity is superior is wrong. Oppressing or mocking others with belittling or

racial jokes insults God. Favoritism based on prejudicial judgment is sinful.

As one in Christ, what happens to one affects us all, so mourn with those who are hurt, meet their needs, and advocate for their rights. Seek to understand and listen before forming an opinion and avoid jumping to conclusions based on information from just one source. Discuss our biases with other trusted believers.

God gave us the ministry of reconciliation, so we are responsible for justice. Vote for candidates who enforce laws fairly and want to right wrongs. Racism will not be fully eliminated until Jesus returns, but we must actively work to eradicate it and oppose oppression. Combat racism, America's original sin, with prayer regularly. Ask God to heal these wounds in our country.

Pray: God, aid us in overcoming this blight from our hearts, communities, our social and civil institutions so that we may work with you in healing the USA. Wake us up, Lord, so that racism finds no home here. Remove any barriers to your grace that may oppress and offend my sisters. Empower us to love our neighbors who may not know you so that it serves as a sign and symbol of the goodness of the gospel. Finally, remind us, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." Amen.

We have prayed, and now, with changed hearts, let us move our feet to action. For ideas about opportunities to work for racial justice, visit usccb.org/racism.

Visit the ABWM website to learn more about racial justice, our 2023 Mission Focus.
www.abwomensministries.org

What's Happening in your ABWM Region?

WESTERN SECTION

By [Carol Wright](#)

- **Anacortes, WA**, are thrilled that their choir is together again after years of occasional singing!

- **Region of the West** in CA is excited to announce that their first in-person meeting post-Zoom will be on March 18, 2023, at Beth Eden Baptist Church in Oakland, CA. The theme is *Building Lasting Bridges: An Updated Handbook For Intercultural Ministries*, and the guest speaker is Rev. Katie Choy-Wong.
- **Idaho** reports that their focus will be racial justice as they support their Idaho Indian tribes knowing hospitality and translators are important.
- **Pacific Northwest's** 2nd annual quilters/crafters event was near the ocean in November.
- **Olympia's** ABWM Christmas brunch brought women together after Zooming.

ABWM Executive Committee's book study includes challenges from *Building Lasting Bridges*: build longer breaks for translation time, be cautious of eye contact, gestures, humor, visuals, graphics, icons, and individual and group participation to avoid disrespect and respect established cultural relationships.

ABWM Western Region reports the following service through projects/visits to promote ABWM.

Objectives for 2023: Increase ABWM communication/information dissemination, increase church visits, include Zooms with all states, fundraising, vital partner and Violet Circle efforts, and establish weekly/consistent email distribution.

News and Information for AB GIRLS



National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month

By [Debra Curry](#), coordinator of AB GIRLS

"Abuse is not just about broken bones, bruises or black eyes but includes telling someone what to do, what to wear, who to see, constantly putting them down, making them do sexual acts they don't want to do." -- Anonymous

As we know, teen dating can be very complicated and confusing. Understanding relationships requires more maturity than most teens have developed. A lack of communication, jealousy, and selfishness are likely to consume these relationships. Adverse childhood experiences can also be a trigger for teen dating violence, such as:

- experiencing violence, abuse, or neglect
- witnessing violence in the home
- having a family member attempt or die by suicide.

There is also the child's/teen's environment to take into consideration:

- substance use
- mental health
- instability due to parental separation or household members being in prison.

These are just a few examples showing how challenging teen dating can be. Therefore, it is very

important to understand the behaviors that may point to an unhealthy and/or abusive relationship which takes on many different forms.

- Invasion of privacy
- Unexpected bouts of anger
- Unusual moodiness
- Pressuring a partner into unwanted sexual activity
- Blaming problems in the relationship and not taking any responsibility for the same
- Constantly monitoring whereabouts and checking in to see what you are doing and with whom.

The examples listed above that are visibly noticeable in teen dating violence. It has been found that negative or abusive behavior in unhealthy relationships is more likely to increase over time if not dealt with early in the relationship. For more information on teen dating violence month, visit <https://www.loveisrespect.org/get-involved/tdvam/>

The National Leadership Team of AB GIRLS is Seeking Applications!

The National Leadership Team of AB GIRLS (NLT) comprises four high school-age girls and one adult from across the country. The NLT works together to plan events, programs, and resources for ministry with girls. The NLT is seeking applications for youth members to serve a two-year term. For more information and to apply, visit www.abwomensministries.org/NLT.



Events for Women and Girls

National ABWM 2023 Events

Feb 23 — Faith and Wellbeing Webinar
Mar. 2 — Building Lasting Bridges Webinar
Mar. 6 — Women's History Month Gathering
Mar. 13 — Women's History Month Gathering
Mar. 13 — Midwestern Section: What's Up ABWM?
Mar. 16 — Sisters in Prayer
Mar. 20 — Women's History Month Gathering
Mar. 27 — Women's History Month Gathering
Apr. 20 — Faith and Yoga Webinar
Apr. 29 — Domestic Violence Workshop and Certification
June 2 — Western Section: What's Up ABWM?
June 23 — Annual Meeting
June 23 — Women and Girls' Day
Oct 3 — Eastern Section: What's Up ABWM
Oct 6-8 — Shalom Retreat

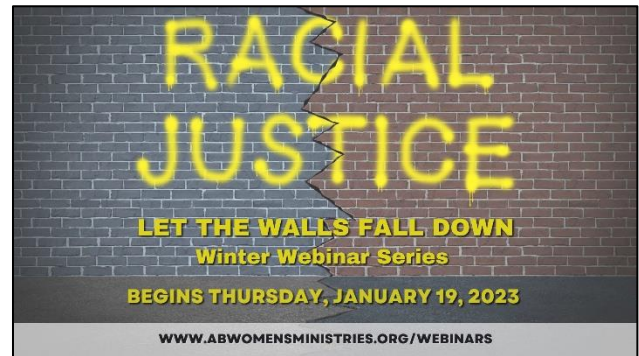
2024

July 18-21 — Women and Girls' Conference at Roanoke College in Roanoke, Virginia

For more event information, visit www.abwomensministries.org/events.



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Let the Walls Fall Down Winter Webinar Series

This Let the Walls Fall Down webinar series will focus on racial justice (racial justice is ABWM's mission focus for 2023). Learn more at www.abwomensministries.org/webinars.



Singing the Song of the Exile: A Womanist Exploration of Psalm 137 on **Thu., January 19, 2023** (*Recording available*)
Speaker: **Rev. Dr. Leslie Callahan**, Pastor, St. Paul's Baptist Church in Philadelphia, PA



Gathering Our Tools for Building Trustworthy Community on **Thu., February 2, 2023** (*Recording available*)
Speaker: **Rev. Dr. Shannon Daley-Harris**, author, retreat leader, and child advocate



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Lessons from the Story of Ruth on **Thu., February 16, 2023** (*Recording available*)
Speaker: **Rev. Dr. Christine Smith**, ABWM National President and Senior Pastor, Restoration Ministries of Greater Cleveland, Inc. in Euclid, OH



Building Lasting Bridges on **Thu., March 2, 2023, at 8:30 PM EST**
Speaker: **Rev. Kathryn Choy-Wong**, consultant, trainer, and writer in intercultural ministries



Sisters in Prayer on **Thu., March 16, 2023, at 8:30 PM EDT**



Seasons of Transitions Webinars

The Young Adult Women's Ministry of ABWM is excited to host a two-part webinar series entitled *Seasons of Transition*. Join us as we gather to hear two wonderful young adult women speak on how they have dealt with transition in their lives. They will share personal stories and open our hearts and minds to incorporating our faith during times of transition. [Click here to learn more and to register.](https://www.abwomensministries.org/events)



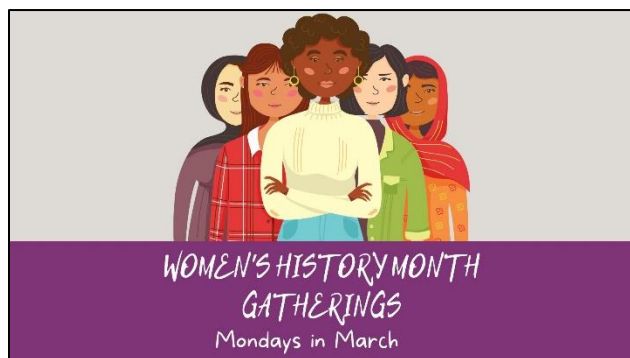
Faith and Wellbeing

Thu., Feb. 23, 2023, at 8:00 PM ET
Presenter: **Rachel Legg**, Mental Health Therapist



Faith and Yoga

Thu., April 20, 2023, at 8:00 PM ET
Presenter: **Jasmine Turner**, Yoga Instructor



Women's History Month Gatherings

Mondays in March, 12:00–12:30 PM EST

During Women's History month, ABWM curates a gathering every Monday during March. We hope

you'll join us in celebrating Women's History Month! [Click here](https://www.abwomensministries.org/events) to learn more and to register for each gathering!



Monday, March 6, 2023, at 12:00 PM EST

Speaker: **Minister Sadiqa Delaney**, member of ABWM's Young Adult Women's Ministries Advisory Team (YAWMAT) and Associate Minister, Berean Baptist Church



Monday, March 13, 2023, at 12:00 PM EDT

Speaker: **Dr. Laura Miraz**, Associate Executive Director of Human Resources Management Services, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS)



Monday, March 20, 2023, at 12:00 PM EDT

Speaker: **Rev. Dr. Patricia Hernandez**, Associate General Secretary, American Baptist Women in Ministry and Transition Ministries at ABC-USA, USA



Monday, March 27, 2023, at 12:00 PM EDT

Speaker: **Rev. Yvette Vanterpool**, Chief Communications Officer, Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board (MMBB)



Domestic Violence Workshop & Certification

Saturday, April 29, 2023, 9:00 AM-5:30 PM EDT

Held virtually and at the First Baptist Church of Detroit (21200 Southfield Rd, Southfield, MI 48075)

American Baptist Women's Ministries is partnering with Safe Haven Ministries for Bible study and a Domestic Violence certification. This workshop will enable clergy, church leaders, community groups,

and domestic violence educators to come together in a safe and intentional manner to learn ways to support and aid those in their communities suffering from Domestic Violence.

The Bible study will take familiar scripture text and look at it through the lens of domestic violence. Together we will reflect and see how our actions and inactions may impact a survivor in our families, churches, and communities. [Click here to register!](#)



Bible Study Leader: **Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain**, Executive Director, American Baptist Women's Ministries



Certification Trainer: **Tara Aday**, Director of Prevention and Education, Safe Haven Ministries



Certification Trainer: **Mykal Ward**, Training and Education Manager, Safe Haven Ministries

Women and Girls' Day
 Friday, June 23, 2023
 9:00am-3:30pm ADT
 Bible Study Leader: Rev. Dr. Yamina Apolinaris
 AB GIRLS Bible Study Leader: Rev. Dr. Jessica Lugo-Meléndez
 Primera Iglesia Bautista de Caguas
 Caguas, Puerto Rico
www.abwomensministries.org/events

Women and Girls' Day

Friday, June 23, 2023, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM EDT

Held virtually and at Primera Iglesia Bautista de Caguas, Calle Gautier Benítez y Baldorioty, Esq. Forastieri, Caguas, PR 00725, Puerto Rico

Join women and girls from across the country and Puerto Rico for worship, fellowship, Bible study, and community service project. Our theme is "Be Strong, Be Courageous."

There is **programming available for middle and high school girls!** Girls will engage in activities with peers, worship, and participate in a community service project! Scholarships are available for girls to attend!

The afternoon programming will include **community service projects** for our brothers and

sisters in Puerto Rico. Participants will create hurricane emergency kits or visit a local school.

Register now at

www.abwomensministries.org/womensday.



Bible Study leader is **Rev. Yamina Apolinaris-Concepcion**, a preacher, professor, and workshop leader.



AB GIRLS Bible Study Leader: **Rev. Dr. Jessica Lugo-Meléndez**, a teacher, pastor, and innovation strategist

Shalom Retreat
 October 6-8, 2023
 Euclid, Ohio
 Join us for fellowship, faith and well-being.
 Register at www.abwomensministries.org/events
 or call 610-768-2288 for more information

Shalom Retreat

Friday, October 6-8, 2023, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM EDT

Held at Restoration Ministries of Greater Cleveland, Inc (140 Richmond Road; Euclid, Ohio 44143), where our National President, Rev. Dr. Christine Smith, is the senior pastor at Restoration Ministries of Greater Cleveland, Inc.

Enacting God's calling on our lives involves attending to our wellness: spiritually, physically, emotionally, and mentally. This weekend spent in the company of your American Baptist sisters will help you find refreshment and renewal, as well as learning new techniques for attending to your health. Learn more at www.abwomensministries.org/events.



Bible Study Leader on Friday and Evening Plenary Preacher on Saturday: **Rev. Dr. Martina S. Moore**, President and CEO of Moore Counseling & Mediation Services, Inc.



Workshop Leader and Sunday Morning Preacher: **Rev. Dr. Gina Jacobs-Strain**, Executive Director of American Baptist Women's Ministries

Support ABWM

Make a gift to American Baptist Women's Ministries today! Gifts allow ABWM to continue providing free webinars, scholarships for events, programs, resources, and leadership training for ministries with women and girls in your church, area, and region.

- Give by Venmo: @abwomensministries
- Give by text: Text ABWM to 44321
- Give online by credit card: Give online at <http://www.abwomensministries.org/give>
- Give by check: Mail a check payable to "ABWM" to American Baptist Women's, 1075 First Ave STE C-210, King of Prussia, PA 19406



Become a Vital Partner to support the vision for the future of American Baptist Women's Ministries. Vital Partners regularly give \$228 or more a year to support our work with women, young adult women, and girls. Vital Partners give monthly, quarterly, or annually, and they may also set up automated giving by direct withdrawal from their bank account or credit card. Become a Vital Partner today at www.abwomensministries.org/VitalPartners.

Find Us On Social Media

Do you ever feel like you find out about American Baptist Women's Ministries (ABWM) events after they've taken place? Do you need more info about ABWM? Do you want to feel part of a community of like-minded women who enjoy helping others and rejoicing in God's Word? Then, follow American Baptist Women's Ministries on social media: Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter. Be a part of this dynamic Christ-centered organization and stay informed.

- www.facebook.com/abwomensministries
- www.instagram.com/abwomen/
- www.twitter.com/abwomen



Be Part of the Leader's Reader Conversation!

Send us "ideas that worked for me" in women's and girls' ministries, women or girls you'd like to thank or honor, theme-related devotionals, or other materials you think would be helpful to women and girls in our congregations! Please send contributions to info@abwomensministries.org.

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