

American Baptist Women's Ministries of Rhode Island 2018 Annual Report from the President

Having been a Registered Nurse for forty-five years, I am very used to change. So when I started the year as ABWMRI secretary and got promoted to president mid-year, I just took it in stride. Today, I get to take credit for other people's accomplishments, and there have been many. Here is a summary of what we have been doing:

- Mission and Service Day, March 10, 2018, held at Lakewood Baptist. These events have a particular focus. Here, Rev. Kathryn Palen described the reality that our congregations are increasingly made up of seniors. In discussion groups, various examples were shared regarding elder service opportunities.
- Tristate Spring Conference/Annual Meeting, June 1 - 2, 2018 at Canonicus Conference Center. This is the second year, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island American Baptist Women have gathered together. Our National ABWM Executive Director Rev. Gina Jacobs-Strain was our Bible study leader. Rev. Sandra Dorsainvil, our International Ministries Short-term Mission Director share her thoughts and experiences. Barbara Anderson, a sister from Massachusetts, and past National President of ABWM shared the story of her organization founded in 2010 called All Hands In. This agency provides education, services and advocacy in the local area for those being exploited.
- National ABWM Harvesting Shalom: A Retreat about Wellness, Sept 28-30, 2018 at Canonicus Conference Center. This event was filled with worship, Bible study and conversation with Christian sisters. The experiences equipped us with tools for regenerating our prayer lives, for attending to our physical health and for discerning God's direction for each of us. Too many wonderful speakers to mention.
- Spiritual Retreat, Nov. 10, 2018 at Phillips Memorial. This was a truly full and diverse day. We learned about the language of love, listened to a Biblical story teller, participated in liturgical dance, and studied the power of a woman's faith in Matthew 9, and the power of a woman's prayer in 1 Samuel 2.
- Bandages and Babies Breakfast Buffet, Jan. 26, 2019, hosted at First Baptist of Wakefield. This was Nancy Bancroft's brain child. The goal was to raise money to contribute toward shipping costs for White Cross supplies to IM Global Servant, Kathryn Niles in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In the end, this event raised over \$2,000.
- Coming up March 23, 2019 at Phenix Baptist – Mission and Service Day Celebrating the Wonderful World of White Cross which is 100 years old this year! Dr. Laura Parajón, IM Global Servant in Nicaragua, will be our keynote speaker.
- Annual Mission Project. ABWMRI will raise \$2,000 to be divided between the Drs. Parajón in Nicaragua and the Women and Girls Mission Fund.

I have been active in ABWM for only five or six years. How sorry I am that it took me so long to get connected. How grateful I am that God has brought me here, now. This organization is exceptional! Over these years, I have visited so many of our ABCORI churches and met so many wonderful, Godly women. I am incredibly blessed. I can't wait to see where God leads us this year! So excited!

God Bless!

Meredith Eckel