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November 2024

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ABWM Presidents Report



Greetings Ladies of American Baptist Women's Ministries of Michigan. Do you feel that nip in the air and see the gray clouds? Fall is here and winter is knocking on the door. Did we have a summer? It went by too fast for me. I hope all of you are doing well and looking forward to the holiday season.

Our 2024 annual conference/retreat was a success. Planning is already underway for the 2025 conference/retreat. The conference will be held at the St. Francis Retreat Center in DeWitt from Friday – Sunday, June 13-15. I look forward to seeing and interacting with you at our 2025 retreat.

Our ABWM officers are:

President – Brenda Threatt
Secretary/Treasurer - Lori Zupan
Coordinator of Missions with Women & Girls – Lynne Punnett
Coordinator of Scholarship – Kim Michowski
Coordinator of Conference & Events – Rev. D. Irene Key
Coordinator of Publicity – Anne Daws-Lazar
Coordinator of Youn Adult Women – Open
Coordinator of AB Girls – Open

Area Presidents

MDA – Rev. Dr. Denise Henderson
Mid Michigan – Open
Central – Open
West – Open
Great North – Open

Please let me know if you are interested or know someone who would be a good fit for the open positions.

At our 2024 conference we celebrated our Woman of the Year. I am not revealing the name at this time because our recipient was unable to attend the conference, and we plan to deliver the plaque to her at a future time. Applications for 2025 Woman of the Year are due May 16, 2025.

I have been involved with American Baptist Women's Ministries on the national level. National ABWM is in the process of revising its board structure and bylaws. As I receive information regarding these changes, I will pass them on. I ask you to consider becoming a Vital Partner or Violet Circle member by giving regularly to National Support of ABWM. For more information, please visit the ABWM webpage at abwomensministries.org. I will also continue to notify you of national activities. Look for that information on the ABWM-MI Facebook page and in News & Views.

My time as President is coming to a close. At the June 2025 annual meeting we will be electing a new President. I am open to suggestions as to who you think this person should be. Please feel free to invite me to ABWM activities in your area and at your churches. Please call or text me at 248.808.4133. You may also email me at blgct2008@gmail.com. I want to hear what you think the future holds for ABWM-MI. I know my remaining year as President will be filled with expectations and joy. I also know that with God all things are possible. We are in this journey together.

I wish you a blessed Thanksgiving, a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

May God richly bless all of you.

Brenda Threatt
ABWM President, Michigan Region

Missions



By Lynne Punnett
ABW Coordinator of Missions for Woman and Girls
Region Mission Consultant, ABC Michigan

Isaiah 6:8 “Here am I, Lord. Send me.” is the perfect theme for any mission team preparing to serve and there is no shortage of opportunities to serve. Here are just a few:

ABC Michigan Mission Support Continues in 2025

The *Michigan Servants for Christ* Region team has received funding in the 2025 Region budget once again and for that, we are extremely grateful. No destination or dates have been determined yet, but there will be a short-term mission trip in 2025 where a few people from any of our Michigan churches can come together to serve.

I am asked often, “When can we go back to Haiti?” and the truth is that it is unlikely we will return there anytime soon. The civil unrest caused by gang control of much of the country and related violence; the lack of government structure, no military, and ineffective law enforcement make it far too dangerous for missionaries to be there.

We have had a strong ministry in Puerto Rico since 2019 where damage has occurred and support is needed following numerous hurricanes and earthquakes so it is entirely possible we will go back there. The trip will not be before summer and will likely cost less than \$1,000 per person thanks to the Region financial support.

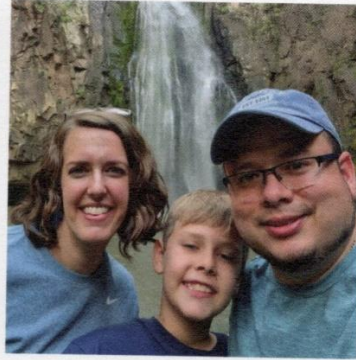
2026 S. Africa Trip Being Planned

A short-term mission team of up to 12 people is being planned in the summer of 2026 to S. Africa to work with Drs. Rick and Anita Gutierrez. The trip will likely be 12 days in total including travel and cost \$3,500-\$4,000 per person including airfare. Exact dates have not been set but I share this now so that you can begin to pray and plan.

Feel free to e-mail me at lynnepunnett@yahoo.com or call 734-834-3886.

Thank you notes from Missionaries!

From the Garache-Lafferty family



THANK YOU for your very generous support this year of my ministry in Nicaragua with AMOS and International Ministries. We are truly grateful for your encouragement, prayers, and partnership!

With immensely grateful hearts,
Christy, Abel, and AJ

P.S. If you are able, I would be so grateful if you would prayerfully consider your support for my ministry for the coming year. God bless you!



Thank you!

For walking this path with me...

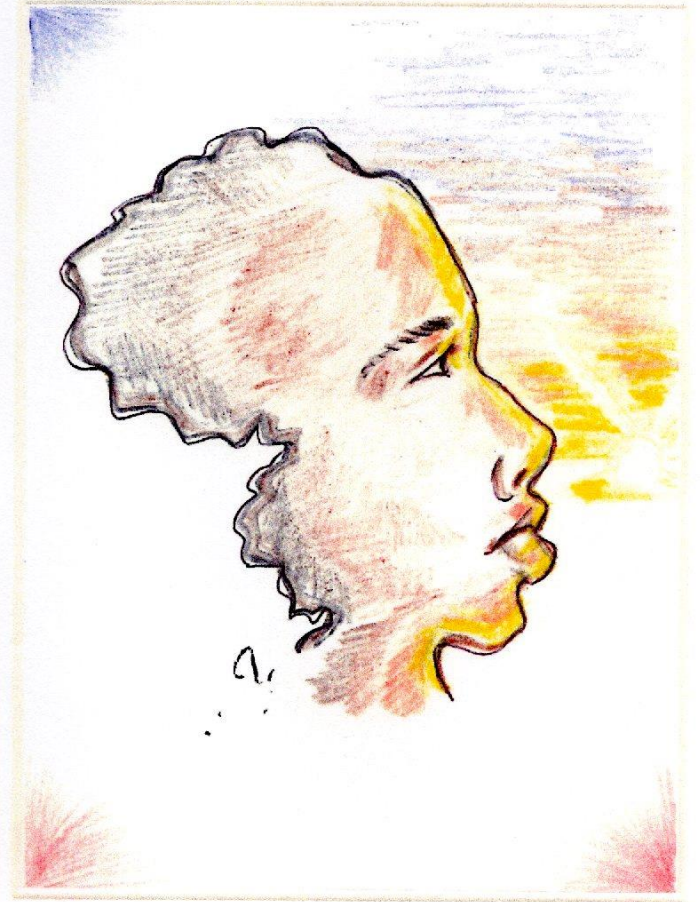
For believing in the value of missions...

AMOS
Health & Hope

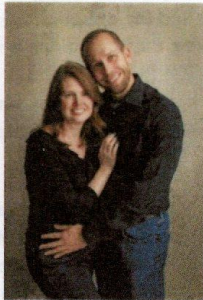
international ministries

From the Clemmer family

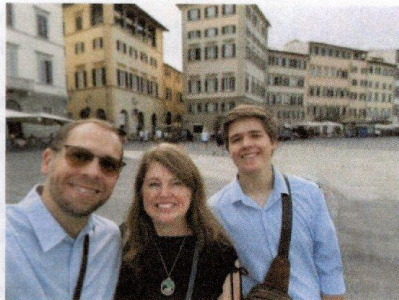
Dear ladies of MI
Just a note of
Appreciation
for your partner-
ship with us in
the work in Iowa!
With joy,
Crew + Zoo



From the Good Family



Amanda and Jon Good
Global Servants
International Ministries



Jon, Amanda, and their son, Andrew

Dear Friends,

I am so excited that you have decided to partner with Jon and Amanda Good in ministry. All Global Servants form a Missionary Partnership Team (MPT). Team members provide support in many different methods. Some help with the promotion of Amanda and Jon while attending regional meetings. Some organize the MPT and provide us with leadership by scheduling video calls so we can meet with Amanda and Jon and pray for specific prayer requests, and there are many other responsibilities. I have been asked to assist with the newsletters, so this is why you are hearing from me.

God is working through you to share the hope of Jesus in Europe. It is through your prayers and financial support that has enabled Amanda and Jon to be in Italy today. We do not want you to miss any of their updates! Do you receive the Goods' email journals? If you are receiving updates, great! If not, and you would like to receive them, to get on the list email good@internationalministries.org

Enclosed are some printed copies of previously emailed journals. Amanda and Jon plan on sending printed copies two times a year. *If you don't need printed copies and would like to help us save on postage and printing costs, please email good@internationalministries.org*

Thank you for supporting Amanda and Jon.

Yours in Christ,

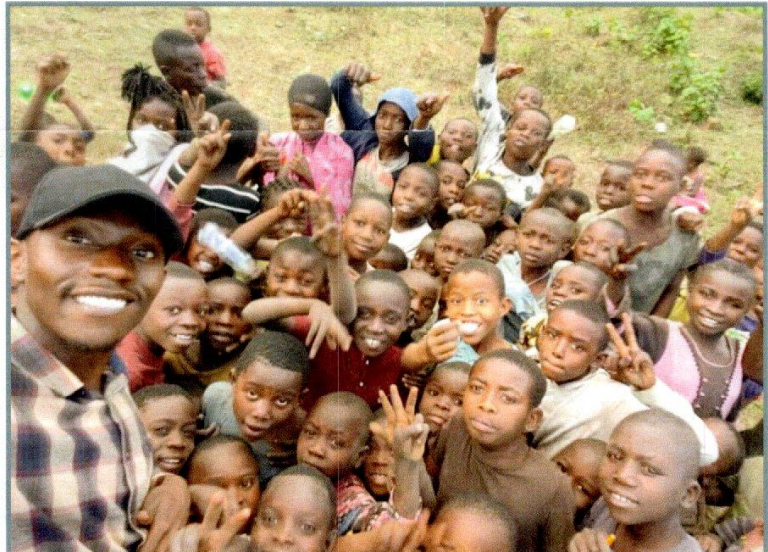
Susan Rhodes
MPT Member

I Am Surrounded!

The writer of Hebrews talks about “a great cloud of witnesses,” that surrounds us...all those who lived and died in their faith. In Goma I am not only surrounded by the saints who have gone before me...but truly live among faithful servants who continue to humble and inspire me.

Salomon is a young man, a senior in high school, with whom I work at HEAL Africa, appropriately named because he demonstrates great wisdom. Salomon was abandoned as a child, first by his father, then by his mother and was subsequently passed from one distant family member to another... whoever could afford to feed another mouth. He remembers as a child being told that his mother ‘threw him away in the forest when he was 8 months old because he reminded her of his father’, an uncle who grudgingly took him in for a few years nicknamed him ‘worthless’. In many of the families he was passed to, he was fed only once a day. He remembers as a child always being hungry. He told me “the only one who ever loved me was God”, whom he came to know as a boy. Even now, he has no permanent home, he recently found shelter at night in a kitchen somewhere (I can tell by the charcoal smell of his clothes). He smiles however, and tells me that he has never been abandoned by God who “keeps him in the palm of His hand”, providing for all his needs as He has done throughout his life.

Salomon has grown into a faithful and well-spoken young man with a passion for telling others, especially children, about Jesus. He dreams of the opportunity one day to write books on Christian leadership, go into youth ministry or become an evangelist. He senses the call that God has placed on his life.



Salomon at a refugee camp in eastern Congo

Many of you know of the current crisis in eastern Congo (DRC) with renewed fighting between government and militia (M23) forces. Over a million people have fled their villages, farms and homes, and have settled in refugee camps around the city of Goma.

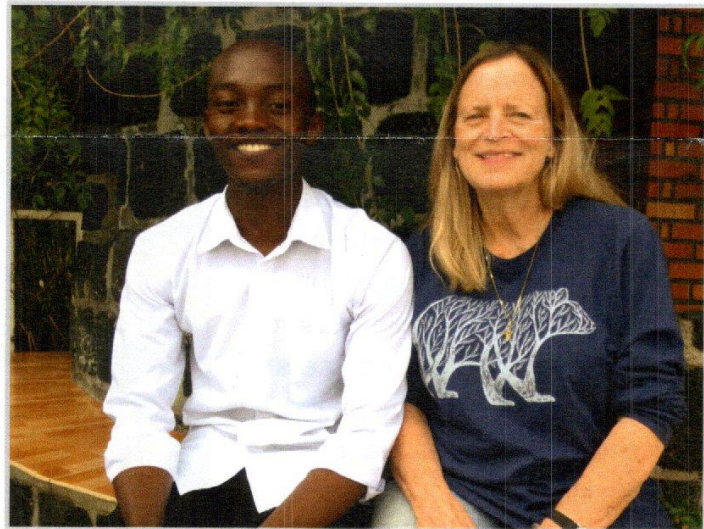
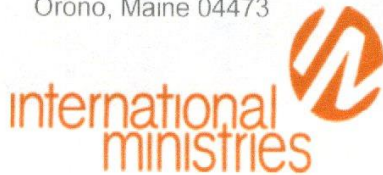


Several months ago, Salomon felt an urging to visit one of these camps where he came across hundreds of desperate families in make-shift huts with children everywhere. He sat down, listened to their plight, and revisited them every week. The children often spoke of the unimaginable trauma they had experienced... one girl couldn't stop crying as she talked of watching her mother set on fire and killed by rebel soldiers. His heart was broken by their stories. He started a weekly group that now has over 300 children who come together every Saturday morning to sing songs and receive words of encouragement. He requested permission from camp leaders to use the tarp covered school on Saturdays and then recruited colleagues who have been trained in trauma counseling to return with him to minister to these children. They sit huddled on cardboard mats wearing the only clothes they have, listening to Salomon as he tells them stories of a God who loves them dearly and, as God did for him, will surely stay by their side through the challenges they face in life.

The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.

1 Samuel 16:7

Bill and Ann Clemmer
41 Forest Ave
Orono, Maine 04473



Salomon and Ann in Goma, DRC (September 2024)

<https://www.internationalministries.org/author/ab-clemmer/>

Praying – ‘Help’



Rev Sheree Gidcomb Clark, Co-Pastor of Northside Community Church

“God speaks to us in three places: in scripture, in our deepest selves, and in the voice of a stranger.”

– Thomas Merton

I’ve begun to re-read Max Lucado’s book *A Gentle Thunder; Hearing God Through the Storm*. It seems right since my life has been going through some stormy weather.

I flew to my brother and sister-in-law’s not long ago in Arkansas and the flight there and then back home was very bumpy at times – very stormy. Our visit was glorious – and exhausting! I got to see my brother’s kids, grand kids, greats & great greats. Now that is the glorious and exhausting that I’m talking about. That bumpy, stormy weather we had flying had me praying – let me tell you. All those extra prayers I find myself lifting up to my loving Parent when I’m afraid and not sure what else to do or even say.

How’s your prayer life? Yep – I went there, just like that. Prayer. The thing we call talking to God. For many (most?) of us, something we do the moment we get bad news. Or it’s a special meal like Christmas and you’re called upon to give thanks. Or you’re on the worship team at Northside Community Church and it’s your turn to lead the Lord’s Prayer and halfway through all can remember are the words to the song “Stairway to Heaven” from Led Zeppelin. (Yes, this really happened. They let me stay on...)

Prayer is talking to God. Anytime, anywhere about anything. Relationships are made by getting to know each other. God desires to know us. Really. Prayer will change us as well. My brother asked me once, “What’s the point of praying to God if he already knows the number of hairs on our heads – you know, everything about us!”

I told him that prayer changes us. It does. I promise you it will. Some people pray out loud to God. Some write their prayers in a journal. Some just have a conversation in their head. I know musicians that do their best prayers with their music. Some of my best prayers have been in my car, driving with the windows down, with my favorite Cyndi Lauper song on in the background. Prayer – always. Especially in the storm.

Back to Thomas Merton. God speaks to us in scripture. In our deepest selves. In the voice of a stranger. Where are we going to find these? Where do we go when we are looking for God?

Now more than ever we need to be the church. Churches are meant to be places of prayer, places for praising God, places for coming together to do that. We Are the Church. Don’t let the building define your faith. We are all lights on the hill, still the way to show people what God’s love looks like. We are called to be the heart, hands, and feet of Christ. The world needs us, and we need each other. There is a gentle thunder rolling through all our Churches.

“The word *prayer* has often been trivialized by making it into a way of getting what we want. But I use *prayer* as the umbrella word for any *interior journeys or practices that allow us to experience faith, hope, and love within ourselves*. It is not a technique for getting things, a pious exercise that somehow makes God happy, or a requirement for entry into heaven. It is much more like practicing heaven now.

– Richard Rohr

We know how to pray. And when you think you have no words to say to God, that the world is just too big, and you are out of time, and you're just too tired anyway – remember – “help”. Not a bad word to say to God when that is the only one you have. Believe me, I know.

God's never failed me yet. Even on “Stairway to Heaven”.

Be Well,

Sheree

Rev. Sheree Gidcomb Clark
Co-Pastor
Northside Community Church
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Conference 2025!

In an effort to encourage all our Christian friends to enjoy all that our annual conference has to offer, we are re-imagining the conference as a Christian Women's Conference, sponsored by American Baptist Women's Ministries. Invite all your Christian friends to join you! Register and pay by February 1 for \$25 off this year. As always, while the conference runs from Friday afternoon through Sunday morning, attendees can come for as long as they are available -- whether it's just one day or the entire weekend with pricing reflecting that.

We look forward to seeing you in June!

A Weekend to Cultivate Joy!
Stronger Together
Encourage and Build One Another Up 1 Thess. 5:12



KEYNOTE SPEAKER (FRI)
Hon. Rev. Dr. Shannon Holmes
Renaissance Baptist Church

KEYNOTE SPEAKER (SAT)
Rev. Dr. Laura J. Hunt, Assoc.
Pastor New Beg. Comm. Church

Workshops
Candlelight Communion
Small Groups, Spiritual Gift
Reassessments, Prayer,
Meditation, and Fellowship

DeWitt, Michigan | June 13-15, 2025

Christian Women's Conference @ St. Francis Retreat Ctr.
Sponsored By American Baptist Women's Ministries
Contact: Abwmsec@gmail.com / Register: <https://bit.ly/25conference>



First Baptist Church of Ypsilanti has Choir Robes to Offer

FBCY is offering choir robes to any church that might want them. Available are 37 light blue, 19 gold, 26 dark blue, and 11 green (smaller size). If you're interested in any of them, please contact Lori Zupan at loriz@tsshhome.com or 734-904-1874. You will need to arrange a time to come pick them up.

Lori Zupan



Donations

If you'd like to make a donation to one of the missions supported by ABWM or the scholarship fund, please use the Donation form included here. Instructions and addresses to send donations are at the end of the form. Thank you!

American Baptist
Women's
MINISTRIES
OF MICHIGAN

Donation Form

Date: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Area (if known) _____

Church contact (if appl.) _____

Address: _____

City/Zip: _____

	Amount Encl.
- ABWM MI Region support (for day-to-day support of our organization)	_____
- Scholarship Fund (college scholarships)	_____
- Special Mission Project (this year: Single MOMM camp at Higher Ground)	_____
- Special Interest Missionaries (through International Ministries)*	_____
- ABWM National, which will be apportioned when being sent as 25% to Women & Girls Fund and 75% to general support	_____
Total:	_____

* The missionaries we will support for 2024-25 are Bill & Ann Clemmer • Jon & Amanda Good • Rick & Anita Gutierrez • Carmella Jones • Wayne & Katherine Niles

If you personally or your church are able to offer any support, please send your check** made out to AB Women's Ministries, c/o Lori Zupan, 581 Canterbury Dr, Saline, MI 48176. Or you can make a payment through Venmo -- @lori4abw -- or Zelle pay -- abwmsec@gmail.com. If you choose to do either of those, please email Lori with the information about how much you are allocating to the various offerings. You can email her at the email listed above or her personal email: loriz@tsshome.com.

** If you are a member of the Central Area, please make check payable to Central Area ABW Ministries and mail to CA Treasurer Carolyn Grapentine, 3998 Beech Dr, Ypsilanti, 48197. Central Area dues of \$15 are appreciated in addition to any of the above offerings.

Note: If you wish to support any other organizations or missionaries, please send your donation directly to them. We appreciate all your support.

Scholarship



Hello Everyone, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Kim Michowski. I am the new Scholarship Coordinator. I am a member of First Baptist Church of Ypsilanti. If you have any questions, I can be reached at ms_kimm@live.com.

We had three young ladies receive scholarships for 2024-25.



Elizabeth Andersen is attending Grand Valley State University as a sophomore, and she is majoring in photography. She is a member of Crosspoint Meadows Church in Novi. Elizabeth was excited to be attending the conference this year with her mother.

Elizabeth can be reached at 1861 Decker, Walled Lake, MI 48390. Her birthdate is April 7.



Morgan Scott is entering her junior year at Western Michigan University majoring in pre-physician assistance studies. She is a member of the Galilee Baptist Church in Kalamazoo. We met Morgan at last year's conference.

Morgan can be reached at PO Box 20044, Kalamazoo, MI 49019. Her birthdate is April 14.



Elizabeth Good is our newest recipient. She is a sophomore at Judson University studying Christian studies. She graduated from high school in Hungary. She is a member of the Covenant Baptist Church in West Bloomfield. She spent the summer at Green Lake Conference Center working on the Salt Program.

Elizabeth can be reached at 888 1750th St., Lincoln, IL 62656. Her birthdate is June 2

We also offer congratulations to our recent graduates Sarah Kocsis and Luisa Tittle.

American Baptist Women's Ministries of Michigan - Scholarship Information

Who is eligible? Any woman who is a member of an American Baptist Church in Michigan, enrolled in a college or seminary, and gives evidence of a call to follow the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ.

What must she do? By March 15th, submit an application with a letter of recommendation from her pastor, a Statement of Christian experience/call to ministry, and a brief statement of vocational expectations/goals.

What can we do? Take applications to your home church! • Encourage your young women to apply!

- Write to and Pray for these women! • Donate as a church or an individual to the scholarship fund!



ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS: Any woman who is a member of an American Baptist Church in Michigan, who gives evidence of a call to follow the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, whether in a secular position or in ministry, shall be eligible. We are all called to be ministers for Jesus wherever we are.

Applicants must complete and sign this application and also provide the following additional data:

- 1. Letter of recommendation from your pastor.
2. Statement of Christian experience/call to ministry.
3. Brief statement of your vocational expectations and goals.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM

NAME _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

(PLEASE PRINT FULL NAME - NO NICKNAMES)

HOME ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____ CELL PHONE _____

PARENT'S NAMES _____ HOME PHONE _____

NAME OF HOME CHURCH _____

CHURCH ADDRESS _____ PASTOR _____

HIGH SCHOOL _____ YEAR GRADUATED _____

COLLEGE YOU ARE ENROLLED AT _____

MAJOR _____ YEAR _____

IS YOUR FAMILY ABLE TO HELP YOU FINANCIALLY? _____

IF SO, WHAT PERCENT CAN THEY PROVIDE? _____

DO YOU EXPECT TO WORK WHILE IN SCHOOL? _____

CAN AND WILL YOUR CHURCH PROVIDE FINANCIAL HELP? _____

STATE SPECIFICALLY ANY OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME AVAILABLE, SUCH AS YOUR OWN SAVINGS, OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS, ETC. _____

GIVE NAMES OF TWO (2) PEOPLE OTHER THAN FAMILY AS REFERENCES:

NAME: _____ NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____ EMAIL: _____

Please check: ABWM ___ may ___ may not publish my birthday and address to our organization's members.

I recognize that this scholarship is a gift from the American Baptist Women's Ministries of Michigan for the purpose of helping me prepare myself for whatever God would have me do with my life. I pledge myself to sincere preparation and eagerly seeking to know and to follow His will. I understand that should God call me to serve in a Christian vocation, I will plan to serve in the American Baptist Churches, USA.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT _____ DATE _____

*Please send a photo to ms_kimm@live.com.

This application and attachments are to be returned to the Scholarship Coordinator before the deadline, March 15. Kim Michowski, ms_kimm@live.com, 1251 Shirley Dr., Ypsilanti, MI 48197

**American Baptist Women of Michigan
2025 Woman of the Year Award**

Tell us about the woman you are nominating. You may include your response in the spaces below or write your response in a narrative which includes this information. Use as much space as you need to introduce us to your nominee. Please feel free to use the back of the form if you need more room.

Name of Nominee: _____

Church/Area: _____

How does she contribute to God's kingdom?

What has she done to further God's kingdom?

Why are you nominating this person?

Why is she worthy of this award?

Nominator Information:

Name: _____

Church/Area: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Return to the region president by May 25, 2025:

Brenda Threatt
22715 Kenwyck Dr
Southfield, MI 48034-4765

email: blgct2008@gmail.com

Local Church News

We like to highlight individual churches here. If you'd like to let us know what your church is doing, contact Anne at annedawslazar@gmail.com