

Chaplains and Pastoral Counselors: Ministering at Life's Crossroads

They brought onsite ministries of help and healing to the victims of the September 11, 2001 carnage, and to those devastated by the destruction of Hurricane Katrina. They've accompanied our troops in times of tumult and engagement in the Middle East. Every day, they offer compassionate fellowship and hope, fed by a Christ-centered faith, to countless persons seeking wholeness, guidance and encouragement.



They are the more than 600 American Baptist chaplains and pastoral counselors—ambassadors for Christ and for a caring denomination—who minister in hospitals, hospice centers, educational institutions, battlefields, prisons and even race tracks.

“Chaplains and pastoral counselors often meet with people who are at challenging crossroads in life and relationships,” says the Rev. Dr. George A. Langhorne, endorsing executive of Chaplaincy Services, a part of National Ministries, American Baptist Churches USA. Such situations “bring opportunities for ministry.”



The myriad challenges of chaplaincy ministry and pastoral counseling in specialized settings are formidable. “There are incredible needs here...isolation, loneliness, depression, boredom and addictions, along with lack of transportation and health care,” says the Rev. Jack Cordell, race track chaplain at Philadelphia Park Race Track. Such challenges, however, open doors. “We have many opportunities to share God’s love with folks who have a need for grace and love in their lives,” Cordell says, “and people respond when they see that someone cares.”

Providing ongoing support, training, career guidance, Web-based communication and encouragement to American Baptist chaplains and pastoral counselors is part of National Ministries’ commitment to this caring outreach. “It’s rewarding to be a pastor to men and women who are serving as ministers in specialized settings,” Langhorne says. “This work offers wonderful opportunities to walk with people through difficult times.”

For more information about Chaplaincy and Pastoral Counseling Services contact: george.langhorne@abc-usa.org or call 800-ABC-3USA, ext. 2428.

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