



# ANNUAL REPORT

# 22

*Weaving God's Love Across Cultures*

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Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries exists on two fronts. We work with ethnic pastors and churches on a faith-based level to assist pastors in fruitfully living out their call while exercising faithful stewardship of every gift and potential God has provided. We also work with the refugee and immigrant community through the ACE Center for New Americans on a non-sectarian level, serving to support and meet the multifaceted needs of ethnic and immigrant individuals and communities. Our mission is to Advocate, Empower, and Celebrate New Americans to become active participants in shaping American society and the church.

The ACE Center for New Americans, established as a “doing business as” through MBMM — we support, assist, and walk with the refugees and immigrants in their journey of starting their lives, families, educations, careers, and citizenships in the United States of America.

# 13<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

Moderator: Ms. Barbara Drauschke, MBMM President

Receiving of the Annual Reports:

*Executive Director*

*Program Manager*

*Officers*

— *President*

— *Secretary*

— *Treasurer*

*Other Reports*

— *Financial Review: Brooks and Associates, CPA's*

— *Cultural Advocates*

— *Refugee Advocates*

— *ACE Center Report*

— *English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Tutors*

Voting on the Slate of the Board of Directors

Report from the Executive Director

Installation of the Board of Directors

Motion to End the Business Meeting

# MESSAGE from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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*“We care about life only when we realize its value”* Jean Jacque Rousseau

**Human life is sacred, created by God. I believe that every human being is a child of God, created in the image of God.**

Every human life is valuable. However, when a person kills another human being, he or she believes that that person has no value and is unimportant and the world can live better without that person. The most recent Israeli and Arab conflict has drawn the attention of everyone, where many people have been killed, including children and elderly.

The humanitarian crisis of refugees and migrants fleeing from their country is escalating at an alarming rate in the world today. Imagine: 1.1 million people from Gaza were ordered to evacuate. Jesus said, “Love your neighbors as yourself,” however, there is a very similar instruction in the Torah: Do not oppress a foreigner; you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners, because you were foreigners in Egypt. (Exodus 23:9). Human rights violations, forcible displacement, and occupation are always caused by high handedness by the powerful over the powerless. There always has been a power relation from historically privileged people to the less privileged people. It is also true that violence and conflicts are caused by the powerless as a way of resistance and the vicious circle of violence and atrocities continues.

## **The United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees**

(UNHCR) estimates that as of 2022 statistics a staggering 101 million people are forcibly displaced from their country. Throughout the world, refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and



**Rev. Dr. Mar Imsong**  
Executive Director

internally displaced persons are the victims of racial discrimination, racist attacks, xenophobia and ethnic intolerance. Racism is both a cause and a product of forced displacement, occupation and an obstacle to its solution.

## **MBMM is committed to being on the forefront of the conversations**

about race, diversity, and power relations. Our work is to defend the marginalized, live as peacemakers and lead their communities in reconciliation and transformative change. MBMM believes that as citizens, we have rights, but as Christians, we have responsibilities here to advocate, celebrate and empower migrants and refugees who are victims of racial discrimination, racist attacks, xenophobia and ethnic intolerance. Our voices, action are the ministry of radical hospitality and expression of solidarity with the poor and marginalized.

I am so grateful to be leading this amazing organization with a host of people who believe in MBMM's mission to Advocate, Celebrate, and Empower (ACE) ethnic churches, pastors, and new Americans from different parts of the world. We promote and speak the language of LOVE. Our work is weaving God's love across cultures. Yes, it is an uphill task, and we sometimes or can feel overwhelmed, discouraged and disappointed. The end has not been reached by us, but we are on the way. We serve; we give; we pray; we fall and get up. I find comfort and encouragement from a passage from Martin Luther's sermon where he reflects on this idea, almost in a poetic way. Here are his words:

*This life is not a being holy but a becoming holy; it is not a being well but a getting well; it is not a being but a becoming; it is not inactivity but practice.*

*As yet we are not what we ought to be, but we are getting there; the task is not as yet accomplished and completed, but it is in progress and pursuit.*

*The end has not been reached, but we are on the way that leads to it; as yet everything does not glow and sparkle, but everything is purifying itself.*

*(Martin Luther, What Luther Says, p. 235)\**

Thank you to all our fello sojourners, MBMM supporters, donors, churches, and organizations like the Boston Baptist Social Union, American Baptist Home Mission Society, Office of the Refugees and Immigrants of Massachusetts, Lilly Foundation, and several corporations for your generosity and in believing in our mission. Your partnership is greatly valued and because of your support we are inching towards our goal of creating a beloved community.

I also feel so privileged to be working for a very dedicated Board of Directors. Their wisdom, knowledge, skillsets, and generosity always inspire me and motivate me to lead the organization. I am indebted to the MBMM staff for their dedicated service. It has been made very clear to me that what motivates our staff to do a great job at work is not necessarily for the pay but because of their belief in MBMM's mission of "weaving God's love across cultures." I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the extraordinary work by our community leaders and volunteers. Their devoted work proves that MBMM is not an institution but rather a movement welcoming and creating an inclusive community. I invite all of you to continue your support of MBMM in our common journey of creating a beloved community.

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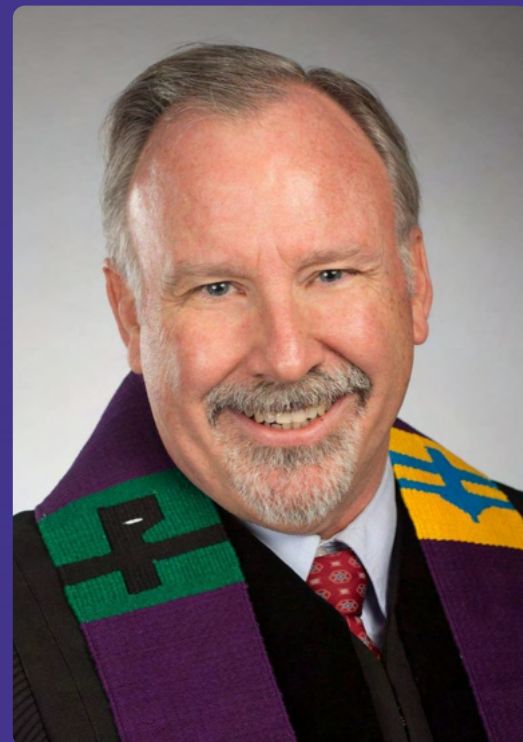
**Mar Imsong**  
Executive Director

\*(Ewald M Plas, What Luther Says, Concordia Publishing House, 2006, p. 235)

# MESSAGE from the TPMP Project Director

## **THRIVING PASTORAL** *Ministry Program*

The last year of the Thriving Pastoral Ministry Program (TPMP) has been robust yet has also included some challenges. We now have a total of nine Ethnic Clergy Groups (ECGs), comprised of 90 members representing 79 congregations. After losing the Latinx ECG group last year, we have successfully started a new Latinx Clergy Group after recruiting a new Cultural Advocate for that community. We held our second annual TPMP event, Gathering for Pastors and their Spouses: Rest and Rejuvenation, a two-day conference with a refreshingly different makeup. This was held September 22-23 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Westborough, MA. Our breakout sessions on Saturday focused on conversations on ways that pastors can find rest and rejuvenation even when dealing with difficult or stressful times. We had a total of 91 people attend the gathering, 51 of whom were participants in the program and 28 were spouses. After reviewing the expenditures for 2022, we determined that we were able to increase the number of times ECGs could meet and receive stipends from 6 times per year to 9. We also added a line item where participants could take a personal spiritual retreat during the year, in addition to each ECG being able to hold a retreat.



**Rev. James Leavitt**  
Project Director,  
Thriving Pastoral Ministry  
Program

## **Ninety pastors from churches in Massachusetts**

and surrounding states are currently participating in our TPMP program. They represent various ethnic constituencies. We have 9 Ethnic Clergy Groups (ECGs): African (11 members), Asian (14 members), African American (9 members), two—one all-male and one mixed gender—Haitian (20 members), LatinX (8 members), two Portuguese-Speaking—Brazilian— (20 members), and White (8 members). Each of these groups has unique strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that they explore in their meetings and events. There are two Ethnic clergy groups of Haitian one led by Rev. Lucien Myrthil and another one led by Rev. Veronique Lapaix.

There are also two Brazilian Ethnic Clergy group because for the Brazilians their spouses are co-pastors, and we have 8 pastors with their spouses with the total of 16 members. One of the Brazilian ECG is led by Rev. Miguel Da-Silva, and the other one is led by Pastor Maria Efigenia Paiva. Our new Latinx Cultural Advocate is Rev. Rubenia Bomatay-Palacios. The ECGs have each been establishing common ground and coming to a better understanding of their group's needs and opportunities. We also have one Intercultural Clergy Group (ICG) made up of nine Cultural Advocates (CAs), many of whom serve as facilitators for the ECGs.

The goal is to continue to grow our ECGs and add an ICG over the course of the next year so that this project will grow slowly over time. This has proved challenging, but we have seen growth during the past year. It has been difficult recruiting new members for a second ICG.

### **Lessons Learned/Best Practices**

Ministers love and appreciate meeting together, and the stipend does make a difference, we have found. We knew clergy would love meeting and becoming a small culturally-affirming ministry support group, but it is still gratifying to know how nourishing TPMP members report the collegial act of meeting together, whether in person or via web conferencing.

As we learned last year, it is far more common in ethnic churches for the pastor's spouse to be a co-pastor of the church, whether they wear that official title or not. Therefore, we made revisions to the program and budget that allow spouses in those roles to take advantage of programs such as a personal spiritual retreat with their spouse. In addition, this was further reinforced as the wives of the African ECG pastors to gather as a group by themselves periodically, outside of the program.

One of the stated goals of the program is to provide opportunities for professional development. This is an area that we need to continue to improve in. This year we have made it possible for participants in the program to receive a grant toward some type of continuing education, such as attending a seminar or online class, and includes work toward a theological degree.

Last year we mentioned the need to make the forms and paperwork that is necessary easier to approach. This past year we have made these forms easier to complete online without having to download, complete, and then scan to send back. We have also made them available in French, Portuguese, and Spanish for individuals that are more comfortable reading and signing documents that are in their primary language.

### **Looking Forward**

We look forward to growing our TPMP ranks, both with more members (up to ten) in our ECGs and with more ECGs, and look to expand our reach to western Massachusetts. We anticipate being able to continue offering sufficient meeting time for groups, along with another fan favorite—spiritual retreats, to all TPMP participants. We expect to continue learning from TPMP members how best to support them in thriving in ministry. This is also the time in our grant cycle where we need to review all aspects of the program and the sustainability of TPMP beyond March of 2025.

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**Rev. James Leavitt**  
TPMP Program Director





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022-2023

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## OFFICERS

**Rev. Dr. Mar Imsong**

Executive Director

**Ms. Barbara Drauschke**

President

**Rev. Robert Paiva**

Vice President

**Rev. Dr. Richard Haley**

Treasurer

**Prof. Brita Gill-Austern**

Secretary

## DIRECTORS

**Rev. Ruth Harvey**

**Rev. Dr. Mary Day Miller**

**Rev. Dr. Dalton Said**

**Prof. Ardeth Thawnghmung**

**Rev. Veronique LaPaix**

**Mr. Ifeanyi Okeke, Esq.**

**Dr. Claudia Kessen-Banks**

**Rev. Sheila Sholes-Ross**

**Ms. Jenny Bonham-Carter**

**Ms. Marilyn Glover**

**Rev. Becke Drake**

## DIRECTORS EMERITUS

**Rev. Michael Harvey**

**Mr. Edwin Hobart**

# BOARD of DIRECTOR REPORTS

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Ms. **Barbara Drauschke**  
President



Ms. **Marilyn Glover**  
Secretary



Rev. Dr. **Richard Haley**  
Treasurer

# President's Report

*Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries*



## **Our Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries (MBMM)**

year begins on April 1 and ends the following March 31. This report covers those dates in the second year of my fourth two-year term as President.

One of my primary responsibilities is to chair the Board of Directors meetings, as well as the meetings of the Executive Committee (the four officers and the Executive Director). The Board met four times, in April, June, September and February. Two were virtual only, and two were hybrid, that is, with some people meeting in person, and some joining via Zoom. The Executive Committee met twice: in April and August 2022. It has been a pleasure to work with the Board, and the MBMM staff.

## **I express my sincere appreciation for the work of our former Secretary, Marilyn Glover, whose term ended**

with our Annual Meeting last year. She agreed to continue as a member of the Board, and helped by taking minutes of meetings until our new Secretary, Dr. Brita Gill-Austern, took on that role in March 2023. The officers agreed at that time to start meeting monthly to keep better informed about the work of MBMM, and to offer more consistent support and encouragement to our leader, Rev. Dr. Mar Imsong.

I will highlight a few the MBMM events of the year. World Refugee Day, June 20, 2022 which included a celebration of Juneteenth, was held by the river at the Sampas Pavillion at Lowell Heritage State Park. Several board members attended, as well as the MBMM Staff, and members of the Lowell community. A cultural dance was offered by some Burmese children. Tom Rush, a nationally known folk singer performed. MBMM co-sponsored a conference with TABCOM on September 30 to October 1 at Rivers of Living Water International Ministry in Marlborough, our Vice President, Robert Paiva's church. This combined TABCOM's MissionWork annual event with an MBMM conference "Re-Membering" for pastors and their families and church members involved with the

Thriving in Pastoral Ministry program. More than 100 persons attended this event, and learned more about missions and ethnic and small church pastoral ministry. Our Annual Meeting and Gala were held at the Hellenic Cultural Center in Watertown in early November. Special thanks to our MBMM friend, Weimin Feng, who prepared and catered the event for us. We also hosted an in person New American Christmas celebration in December 2022 at Calvary Baptist Church in Lowell. We had packed individualized gift bags for our guests, based on the information about needs of families we got from the Refugee Advocates and MBMM Staff who work with them. Some gift bags were delivered to families who could not attend the event.

The mission of MBMM is to Advocate, Celebrate and Empower (ACE) ethnic churches, pastors, and New Americans. We have two main foci of this work: The Thriving in Pastoral Ministry Program (TPMP) and the ACE Center. The TPMP program, funded by a grant from the Lilly Foundation, works on developing small groups of ethnic and small church pastors to increase communication, support and shared experiences among each group's members. Our ACE Center in Lowell, offers after-school programs for high school students, and story hours and special workshops for younger children, ESOL classes, and help with immigration issues. We have an ACE Shoppe there where newly arrived residents can choose clothing and household goods that have been donated.

Thanks to all who volunteer their time and talents to MBMM. Thanks to the Lilly Foundation and to the Boston Baptist Social for their financial support. We appreciate donations from individuals, churches and community groups. The work of MBMM continues to stretch and challenge us all. It is my hope and prayer that this good work will continue to grow and thrive under the excellent leadership of our Executive Director. Please consider ways that you can support this very important work.

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**Barbara Drauschke**  
President

# Secretary's Report

Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries



The organization's year begins April 1st 2022 and ends March 31st, 2023. It is a 501 (c)(3), Non Profit Organization.



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST YEAR:

### December 11, 2022

The New American Christmas party, where over 110 gift bags for New American families were given. Over 90 toys, board games, etc. were given out to children.

### June 20, 2023

World Refugee Day celebration, Backpack Stories and entertainment, Sampas Pavilion, Lowell, MA

### August 5, 2023

Volleyball Tournament, Roberto Clemente Park (Pailin Park), Lowell, MA

### September 22 & 24, 2023

Back pack and School Supply distribution to New American students

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### November 4, 2023

MBMM GALA /Fundraiser at the Riverview Restaurant & Function Hall

### December 2023

12/8 - Packing event for New American Christmas  
12/9 - Annual New American Christmas Party, Lowell, MA

### December 16, 2023

Board of Directors and Staff Christmas Party, December 3, 2022, location TBD

### June 20, 2024

"World Refugee Day, Lowell, MA

# Secretary's Report, cont.

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## MASSACHUSETTS BAPTIST MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES (MBMM) BOARD OF DIRECTORS' 12th ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING At the GALA AND SILENT AUCTION, November 5, 2022 Hellenic Cultural Center, 25 Bigelow Avenue, Watertown, MA

**OPENING:** At 5:30 p.m., registration for the Silent Auction and Appetizer service began.

**CALL TO ORDER:** At 6:10 p.m., President Barbara Drauschke called the Business Meeting to order, supported by prayer and a blessing. President Drauschke then noted the printed report for 2021-22, containing the Annual Reports of the officers and Director Mar Imsong, the Financial Review by Brooks and Associates, information on the Clergy Groups, as well as the ESOL programs in Boston and Lowell, and the ACE Center in Lowell.

### OFFICERS:

Ms. Barbara Drauschke (President)  
Rev. Dr. Robert Paiva (Vice President)  
(Secretary)\*  
Rev. Dr. Richard Haley (Treasurer)  
\* Indicates nomination for a two-year term

### DIRECTORS:

Ms. Jenny Bonham-Carter\*  
Dr. Claudia Kessen-Banks  
Rev. Becke Drake\*  
Rev. Veronique Lapaix\*  
Prof. Brita Gill-Austern  
Rev. Dr. Mary Day Miller (TABCOM Rep.)  
Ms. Marilyn Glover\*  
Mr. Ifeany Okeke, Esq.  
Rev. Michael Harvey, Emeritus  
Rev. Dr. Dalton Said  
Rev. Ruth Harvey  
Rev. Sheila Sholes-Ross (CBMM Rep.)  
Mr. Edwin Hobart, Emeritus  
Prof. Ardeth Thawngmung

### INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS:

Rev. Mark Jackson installed the slate, giving words of encouragement

### ADJOURNMENT:

The Business Portion of the MBMM Board of Directors' Annual Meeting came to a close.

# Secretary's Report , cont.

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The **GALA** began officially with remarks of welcome by Executive Director, Rev. Dr. Mar Imsong, offering gratitude for the support of those present, and for corporate and individual sponsors, for donating to the cause of welcoming New Americans. More opportunities to give were presented, with a reminder by Jim Leavitt of the silent auction items. Chef Weimin Feng was recognized for his skill in the preparation of the buffet. Entertaining periodically during the evening were Zoe Rose de Paz and her band. The MBMM ANNUAL AWARD was presented to Rev. David Lee, Pastor of Community Baptist Church of Somerville, for exemplifying the MBMM multicultural slogan of “Weaving God’s Love across Cultures”.

The **MBMM VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD** was presented by Prof. Ardeth Thawngmung to Jerry Loew, for his selfless contribution of time and talent in tutoring third graders through high-school age students in homework and SAT preparation, as well as advocating for these young people, and/or providing musical lessons, and score-keeping for the soccer games.

**LIVE AND SILENT AUCTIONS:** After a Live Auction of 3 photos (36” by 18”) on canvas, announcement of the winners of the Silent Auction items was made.

**DEPARTURE:** Following a “Thank You” to attendees, Board of Director members, Staff, and his wife Bendangla, Mar explained the New Americans’ Friendship Circle concept and then bid “Godspeed” and “Happy Holidays” to all.

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**Marilyn E. Glover**  
Secretary



# Treasurer's Report

*Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries Inc.*



## **The balance sheet, income/expense**

report and comparison between this year and last year are relatively self-explanatory. There were no unusual or troublesome things to report. One big expense this year was the purchase of a van for MBMM to aid in transportation primarily for ACE center clientele. We also have begun switching our bank accounts to Enterprise Bank - Mar and I feel they offer better customer service and are more flexible. They also are very community minded and have indicated they will make some donations to us.

As with last year, the volatility of the market continues to affect our investments, but we remain confident that the low risk Vanguard funds we use will continue to serve us well. I am also on the MABIT board and have confidence in their investment portfolio and strategies - we may once again want to consider working with MABIT in terms of our investments.

Respectfully submitted,

**Rev. Dr. Richard Haley**

Treasurer



# Budget vs Actuals

## MBMM BUDGET 2022-2023 - FY 24 P&L

April 2022 - March 2023



### Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries Budget vs. Actuals: MBMM - FY24 P&L April 2023 - March 2024

	Total	
	Actual	Budget
<b>Revenue</b>		
<b>41000 Grants</b>		
40004 BBSU	250,000.00	250,000.00
4008 Financial Literacy	24,549.94	23,000.00
41001 ABHMS		20,000.00
41014 Other Grants	30,125.96	100,000.00
Lilly Thriving in Ministry Grant	259,000.00	252,000.00
<b>Total 41000 Grants</b>	<b>\$ 563,675.90</b>	<b>\$ 645,000.00</b>
<b>42000 Contributions</b>		
41003 Individual Donation	1,081.00	10,000.00
<b>Total 42000 Contributions</b>	<b>\$ 1,081.00</b>	
<b>43000 Congregation</b>		
43001 Partner Congregations / Local C	2,225.00	10,000.00
<b>Total 43000 Congregation</b>	<b>\$ 2,225.00</b>	<b>\$ 10,000.00</b>
<b>44000 Programs</b>		
44001 Friends of MBMM Banquet	1,703.00	25,000.00
44002 World Refugee Day Sponsorship	3,000.00	3,000.00
44003 Conference Registrations	440.00	8,500.00
<b>Total 44000 Programs</b>	<b>\$ 5,143.00</b>	<b>\$ 36,800.00</b>
<b>44004 Other Income</b>		
44007 MBMM Product Sales	36.46	50.00
44009 Refunds and Cost Sharing	248.78	5,000.00
44010 Balance from Previous Fiscal year		89,342.00
<b>Total 44004 Other Income</b>	<b>\$ 285.24</b>	<b>\$ 94,392.00</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 572,410.14</b>	<b>\$ 786,192.00</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$ 572,410.14</b>	<b>\$ 786,192.00</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
51000 ACE Operating & Admin Expense	46,766.55	50,100.00
52000 MBMM Operating & Admin Expenses	18,905.00	47,570.00
52100 Staff Expenses	387.68	9,500.00
52200 Consulting Expenses	6,117.75	21,500.00
52300 Board Expenses	430.20	3,800.00
52400 ADVOCACY	15,130.00	47,880.00
52500 CELEBRATION	13,224.47	69,900.00
52600 EMPOWERMENT	39,993.99	160,925.00
55100 Staff Salaries	146,278.41	387,310.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 287,234.05</b>	
<b>Net Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 285,176.09</b>	<b>\$ 786,192.00</b>
<b>Other Revenue</b>		
Interest Earned	39.56	
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 39.56</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>
<b>Other Expenditures</b>		
Miscellaneous	0.00	
Reconciliation Discrepancies	10.00	
<b>Total Other Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 10.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>
<b>Net Other Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 29.56</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 285,205.65</b>	<b>\$ 786,192.00</b>





# Balance Sheet

As of October 19, 2023

## Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries Statement of Financial Position As of October 19, 2023

	<u>Total</u>
	<u>As of Oct 19, 2023</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Bank Accounts</b>	
ACE Center Checking (2290)	2,069.00
Enterprise Bank 6245	7,361.05
In-Kind Clearing	1,328.96
Investments/Vanguard	749,212.96
MBMM Checking (6809)	166,214.27
MBMM SAVINGS (0451)	80,493.48
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$ 1,006,679.72</b>
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	
Accounts Receivable (A/R)	0.00
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>
<b>Other Current Assets</b>	
Undeposited Funds	0.00
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,006,679.72</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	
Accumulated Depreciation	-10,604.00
Computer Equipment	13,135.00
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>\$ 2,531.00</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 1,009,210.72</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
<b>Accounts Payable</b>	
Accounts Payable (A/P)	-5,007.16
<b>Total Accounts Payable</b>	<b>-\$ 5,007.16</b>
<b>Credit Cards</b>	
MBMM Credit Card (5163)	1,859.50
<b>Total Credit Cards</b>	<b>\$ 1,859.50</b>
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>	
Deferred revenue	0.00
Direct Deposit Payable	0.00
<b>Payroll Liabilities</b>	
Federal Taxes (941/943/944)	917.73
MA Income Tax	284.38
MA Paid Family and Medical Leave	19.41
<b>Total Payroll Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 1,221.52</b>
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 1,221.52</b>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>-\$ 1,926.14</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>-\$ 1,926.14</b>
<b>Equity</b>	
Opening Balance Equity	8,833.01
Opening Balance Equity (5)	0.00
Retained Earnings	747,047.55
Net Revenue	285,205.48
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$ 1,041,086.04</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$ 1,039,159.90</b>

# Communication Report

*Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries, Inc.*

This year was focused on expanding the reach of MBMM and the ACE Center for New Americans. Working on the back end of the website and Google Business Profiles to enhance the visibility of both the MBMM and ACE Center websites during search. Promoting all events online and through social media allows New Americans beyond our current clients to see the programs we offer to help Advocate, Celebrate, and Empower them in the United States.

The websites were seen by visitors in these countries:

1. Typing our website in directly
2. Google search
3. Bing Search
4. DuckDuckGo Search
5. Facebook

We started promoting all of our events before and after to the local print media - and churches that were open to promoting them for us. This has opened up a relationship with the Lowell Sun that has featured us in the Five Minute Read and on the front page. This brought in new volunteers and is allowing the greater Lowell community the opportunity to see what MBMM and ACE offer for immigrants and refugees.

Introductions were made with Merrimack College, Tufts University, and LatinX Community Resources and other community leaders in order to increase potential volunteers and exposure of our programs.

As seen here this evening, an online auction system was for the Annual Gala to increase of those who may want to bid and increase the offerings of items auctioned. This allows for the greatest potential reach for people to get involved and help raise money to continue the work of MBMM and ACE Center.

We created flyers in 6 languages to help distribute to the communities about the programs that ACE Center has to offer. The goal is to make as many New Americans feel comfortable and involved in all of the events and programs we run.

In April, we facilitated the creation of a monthly newsletter to help inform our donors and potential donors what we do each month - and hopefully encourage them to donate in the future

## **MBMM Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn page**

42% increase over last year

## **ACE Center Instagram page**

203% increase over last year

## **Raeann Pellerin**

Digital Designer and Communications Specialist



# A Gathering for Pastors & their Spouses: Rest & Rejuvenation

One of the greatest challenges that we face in designing and implementing TPMP was that pastors are already very busy people. Pastors are not only ministers of a congregation but also leaders of a community. We were very careful not to add any more to do list to our busy pastors. Our goal was to find a place for our pastor to rest, to hang out with another pastor, develop collegial relationships and develop spiritual sojourner for pastors.

Life can become busier than we can handle. It can sometime become dangerous for our ministry and even lead us away from God's presence. Many of our pastors are chronically tired, stressed, and overwhelmed with many responsibilities.

Pastors can end up in the endless pit of fatigue, and hopelessness. Therefore, MBMM designed a gathering for pastors to collectively reflect on what is depleting the pastors. Perhaps it is time for a Sabbath Rest and experience God's unconditional love. It is time for pastor to surrender the misconception that every blessing and success in ministry will come by own blood, sweat and tears. It is time to view rest as a gift, it is time to view that rest is something precious, rest is holy and sacred. We invite pastors to exchange their to do list with God's love and mercy. We are not wasting our time when we take that long walk with the Lord, when we listen to the children's laughter and play. When we just stay still waiting on the Lord.

On September 22nd and 23rd, the TPMP Annual Gathering was held at the DoubleTree Hotel in Westborough, MA. The theme for this year's gathering was Rest and Rejuvenation. Our theme verse for the event was Matthew 11:28; "Come to me, all of you



that are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” With pastors and their families being asked to do so much, particularly since the pandemic, and with the rate of burnout that has been taking place in pastors, we wanted to provide opportunities for pastors and their spouses to rest and share with one another ways that can help address those needs.

The gathering started with an opportunity for the Ethnic Clergy Groups (ECGs) to meet, followed by a time to meet the leaders of our “conversation cafes” that would be held the next morning, and to hear a bit about what would be taking place in each of these sessions. This was followed by dinner and worship, where our preacher was the Rev. Dr. Conley Hughes, Senior Pastor of Concord Baptist Church in Milton. Rev. Hughes reminded us that even God rested and how much more do we need to take time to rest in order to be fully present for others.

Saturday morning started with breakfast followed by a time of devotion, led by ECG Group facilitator, Rev. Veronique Lapaix, that again focused us on the need for rest and renewal. We then had people move to the Conversation Cafes.

The various topics were; Intercultural Collegiality, led by Rev. Dr. Marie Onwubuariri, Director of Intercultural Ministries with American Baptist Home Mission Societies; Clergy and Spouse as Co-Pastors, led by Rev. Dr. Conley Hughes and his spouse, Rev. Dr. Moreen Hughes, of Concord Baptist Church in Milton; Mindfulness, led by Rev. Kent Harrop, retired pastor, he also serves as a Spiritual Director; Stress Management, led by Rev. Dr. Meg Hess, a certified coach and Licensed Pastoral Psychotherapist; Bold Conversations and Soul Care, led by Rev. Margaret Lewis, the Executive Director of the Center for Career Development and Ministry and also serves as pastor of First Baptist Church in Nashua, NH.; and Music, Art, and Soul Care led by Rev. Kimberly Salico-Diehl, a pastor, pianist, composer, and chaplain in northern Colorado. All sessions were appreciated by those that were in them, with the conversation on Stress Management the most popular choice.



The gathering concluded with lunch followed by worship with Rev. Donald Ng as the preacher. Rev. Ng shared from his own story and the children's book, Jesus' Day Off, by Nicholas Allan, reminding us that even when we are resting or enjoying a day off, we can still be having an impact on others. Music for both the Friday evening and Saturday devotion and worship times was provided by the Praise Team from River of Living Waters International Church – MIRAV in Marlborough, MA. A special thanks to that church for also providing the sound system for the event.



# FINANCIAL REVIEW

## Examining Our Financial Health

Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries utilizes Brooks & Associates, CPAs each year to compile the financial reports of our organization. We are thankful for their partnership with us in this endeavor. Just as it is important for every organization to provide public disclosure of all operating funds and financial data, we take pride in producing credible and transparent data for our stakeholders, partners, donors, and future sponsors.

The following financial reports provide insight into the many ways we have allocated, dispersed, and maintained responsible stewardship of the funds within our organization. Most funding of our programs and events for those that we serve are fueled through donors, sponsors, and other in-kind supporters of Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries.





Karen Brooks, CPA, MST  
Cheryl M. LaVigne  
Susan E. Silvia  
Eileen Dunning, E.A.  
Barry Gorevitz, E.A.

## **INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REVIEW REPORT**

To the Board of Directors  
Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries  
Lowell, Massachusetts

We have reviewed the accompanying financial statements of Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the financial position as of March 31, 2023 and 2022 and the related statements of activities and changes in net assets and cash flows for the fiscal years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements. A review includes primarily applying analytical procedures to management's financial data and making inquiries of Organization's management. A review is substantially less in scope than an audit, the objective of which is the expression of an opinion regarding the financial statements as a whole. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.

### **Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements**

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement whether due to fraud or error.

### **Accountant's Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to conduct the review engagement in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services promulgated by the Accounting and Review Services Committee of the AICPA. Those standards require us to perform procedures to obtain limited assurance as a basis for reporting whether we are aware of any material modifications that should be made to the financial statements for them to be in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. We believe that the results of our procedures provide a reasonable basis for our conclusion.

### **Accountant's Conclusion**

Based on our review, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

BROOKS & ASSOCIATES, INC., CPA'S

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brooks &amp; Associates". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

175 Middlesex Turnpike, Suite 3A, Bedford, MA 01730  
Tel: 781-275-4199 Fax: 781-275-0871 [www.brookscpa.com](http://www.brookscpa.com)

# Statements of Financial Position

March 31, 2023 and 2022

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 106,024	\$ 257,852
Investments	867,678	867,678
Office equipment — Less accumulated depreciation of \$14,027 and 12,074 respectively	4,920	6,710
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 978,622</b>	<b>\$ 1,205,344</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Unrestricted net assets	\$ 978,622	\$ 1,205,344
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 978,622</b>	<b>\$ 1,205,344</b>

See accountants' review report and accompanying notes.



# Notes to Financial Statements

*The Fiscal Years Ended March 31, 2023*

**MASSACHUSETTS BAPTIST MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEARS ENDED MARCH 31, 2023 AND 2022**

**NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Nature of Operations**

Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries (the "Organization") strives to bridge the different ethnic churches to the American Baptist Churches in the USA, and to foster greater ties within the denomination. Based on the former president Jimmy Carter's phrase, "we become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic, consisting of different people, beliefs, yearnings, hopes and dreams". Therefore, the Organization's objective is to recognize this diversity and to celebrate its great offerings within the whole mission of the church.

**Basis of Accounting**

The financial statements are presented on an accrual basis, which recognizes income when earned and expenses when incurred.

**Financial Statement Presentation**

The Organization has presented its financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for not-for-profit organizations in the United States of America. Under this guidance, the Organization is required to report information regarding its financial position and activities according to three classes of net assets: unrestricted net assets, temporarily restricted net assets, and permanently restricted assets.

The Organization reports gifts of cash and other assets as an increase in temporarily or permanently restricted net assets if they are received with donor stipulations that limit the use of the donated assets. When a donor restriction expires, this is, when a purpose restriction is accomplished or a time restriction expires, temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

**Use of Estimates**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets, revenues and expenses, and disclosures during the reporting period. Accordingly, actual results could differ from those estimates.

**Cash and Cash Equivalents**

For purposes of the statements of cash flows, the Organization considers all money market mutual funds and highly liquid investments available for current use with an initial maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents.

# Notes to Financial Statements

*The Fiscal Years Ended March 31, 2023 and 2022*

**MASSACHUSETTS BAPTIST MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEARS ENDED MARCH 31, 2022 AND 2021 (Re-Stated)**

**NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)**

**Office Equipment**

Purchased equipment are stated at cost. All assets are depreciated over estimated useful lives on a straight-line basis. Repairs and maintenance and small equipment purchases are expenses as incurred. Expenditures that significantly increase asset values or extend useful lives are capitalized. Acquisition of property and equipment in excess of \$500 that meet the capitalization requirements are capitalized.

Estimated useful lives are as follows:

Furniture, fixtures and equipment	5 - 7 years
-----------------------------------	-------------

**Donated Assets**

Donated materials and other noncash donations are recorded as contributions at their fair values at the date of the donation.

**Contributions**

All contributions are available for unrestricted use unless specifically restricted by the donor. All pledges receivable and amounts received that are donor restricted for future periods or donor restricted for specific purposes are reported as temporarily or permanently restricted, depending upon the nature of the restriction. Temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and are reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restriction when the donor stipulated time restriction ends or the purpose restriction is accomplished by the Organization. All gifts granted to the Organization are recorded at fair value at the time of receipt.

**Forgivable Loans - Paycheck Protection Program PPP**

The organization's policy is to account for forgivable loans received through the Small Business Administration (SBA) under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), as a debt in accordance with Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) 470, Debt and other related pronouncements. The forgiveness of the debt is recognized once the debt is extinguished.

**MASSACHUSETTS BAPTIST MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEARS ENDED MARCH 31, 2022 AND 2021 (Re-Stated)**

**NOTE 1 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)**

**Investment Valuation and Income Recognition**

Investments are stated at the fair value in the statement of financial position, with all gains and losses included in the statement of activities. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. Investments are made according to the investment policies adopted by the Board of Directors. Outside parties are contracted by the Organization for the purpose of providing investment management.

Purchases and sales of securities are recorded on a trade-date basis. Interest income is recorded on the accrual basis. Dividends are recorded on the dividend date. Realized gains or losses on the sale of marketable securities are calculated using the specific-identification method. Unrealized gains and losses represent the change in fair value of the individual investments for the year, or since acquisition date, if acquired during the fiscal year.

**Concentration of Risk**

Financial instruments that potentially subject the Organization to off-balance-sheet credit risk include cash on deposit with financial institutions which were insured up to \$250,000 by the U.S. Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. The Organization maintains its cash in bank deposit accounts that at times may exceed federally insured limits. The Organization has not experienced any losses in such accounts. Management believes the Organization is not exposed to any significant credit risk related to cash and cash equivalents.

**Reclassification**

Certain prior year amounts may have been reclassified to conform to the current year presentation.

**NOTE 2 - OFFICE EQUIPMENT**

Office equipment and accumulated depreciation are as follows at March 31, 2023 and 2022:

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Office Equipment	\$ 20,737	\$ 20,737
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(15,817)	(14,027)
	<u>\$ 4,920</u>	<u>\$ 6,710</u>

**NOTE 3 - OFFICE RENT**

The Organization maintained an operating lease, which can be terminated with a 30 day notice.

**MASSACHUSETTS BAPTIST MULTICULTURAL MINISTRIES  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE FISCAL YEARS ENDED MARCH 31, 2023 AND 2022**

**NOTE 4 - INVESTMENTS**

Investments consist of mutual funds and were initially recorded at cost as of the purchase date, then subsequently adjusted to fair value as of the reporting date. The following shows the fair value evaluation as of March 31, 2023:

Initial Investment - 6/16/21	\$ 700,000
Additional Investment 1/18/22	<u>200,000</u>
	900,000
Add:	
Dividends & Capital Gain Distribution - 12/31/21	18,682
Dividends & Capital Gain Distribution - 3/31/22	3,076
Unrealized Gains - 3/31/22	19,024
Dividends & Capital Gain Distribution - 3/31/23	13,746
Unrealized Losses - 3/31/23	<u>(86,850)</u>
	<u>\$ 867,678</u>

**NOTE 5 - SUBSEQUENT EVENTS**

Management has evaluated subsequent events through October 19, 2023 the date of which the financial statements were available to be issued.

# DONOR APPRECIATION



## Thank you to all who donated

We know firsthand how valuable and impactful the work of MBMM is to Advocate, Celebrate and Empower. As a nonprofit organization we also understand that charitable donations are essential for our work and sustainability. However, the constituents that we serve are already on a tight budget either because of the cost-of-living crisis or just because their money doesn't stretch beyond their own needs. Many must think about food, shelter, clothing, emergency money, and retirement savings. However, it must be noted that MBMM constituents may not donate money, but many give their time and volunteer for our events, programs, clothes, or in-kind donation to ACE Shoppe. Most of the MBMM works are done in the community by our committed volunteers and make a great impact in transforming lives of the New Americans. Thank you to all those donors!!!

Giving money to MBMM is arguably more of a sacrifice. After all, it's not just about having a clear-out of stuff you may no longer need but money always comes handy for MBMM. Being rich isn't what makes people give money, that is why MBMM works hard to tell the right stories and communicate to anyone who gives even 5 dollars a month. According to our observation most of the MBMM donors have been through a similar experience of living through refugees

and immigrants' experiences and navigating complex institutional systems in the U.S. We are so thankful for all those sacrificial givers.

There may be some people who think that organizations like MBMM have an uphill task. It's a pretty common belief that donations people make simply won't make any impact because the problem is too big, particularly when thinking about global issues like immigrants and refugee crisis. Of course, we know that many hands make light work, and the truth is that even small donations can make a big difference. For instance, your \$10 a month donation can provide healthy snacks to 30 after school children for a week. Or your \$40 a month donation will help support a stipend to a Refugee Advocate which in turn provides direct services to at least 40 New Americans a month. The direct services are assisting in transitional assistance such as food stamps, making doctor's appointments, meeting with the school counselor, helping open a bank account etc.

# DONOR APPRECIATION, cont.



MBMM is also very thankful to churches and organizations who continue to support. We intend to create and expand an overall plan for the development of partnership with churches and organizations. Perhaps your church or organization may have similar missions and passions yet do not have skill sets or dedicated staff and volunteers to do the work. MBMM would be happy to partner or collaborate with your organization or church. Please reach out to us, we will be happy to talk with you. With the collaboration and networking let us make a much greater impact in the coming year in “Weaving God’s Love Across Cultures.”



## Your kindness provided the following:

- Gift bags to over 110 families for New American Christmas.
- Monthly stipends to Refugee Advocates.
- Stipends to ESOL Tutors.
- ACE Center program supplies.
- Healthy snacks for after school students.
- Backpacks filled with school supplies to over 100 students.
- Chromebooks for ESOL students.
- Cricket supplies to the Afghan community.
- Assistance to the Bhutanese Community of Lowell's soccer tournament and cultural events.
- Partnership with ICNA Relief to provide a monthly Halal food pantry.
- Household items and clothing through ACE Shoppe to over 40 families.
- Field trips to Canobie Lake Park for ACE Center students.
- Stipends to participants who complete workshops such as Financial Literacy.



# DONOR LIST

Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries, Inc.



## INDIVIDUALS

Accime Heureuse	Michael Guarino	Kathy Maddocks	Douglas Rogers
Etta Anderson	Richard Haley	Pranim Magar	Jephtet Roseme
Apollos Ba	Michael Harvey	Mather Melanie Mather	Dalton Said
Steve Banks	Ruth Harvey	Eleanor Metcalf	Herta Said
Irerri Bernal	Leah Hoover	Keene Metzger	Isaac Seelam
Adrienne Berry-Burton	Moreen Hughes	John Minott	Bonnie Sestito
Emily Brown	Mar Imsong	Jean Moise	Sheila Sholes-Ross
Pauline Chase	Bendangla Imsong	John Mulloy	Christine Shrade-Keddy
David Choi	Gigi Issa	Penny Mulloy	Pfosiia Singh
T.J. Conklin	Mark Jackson	Lucien Myrthil	Betsy Sowers
Susan Daneau	Tali Jamir	Donald Ng	Robert Stetson
Judith Dean	Delinse Jean	Joy Ng	Mark Townsend
Becke Drake	Emma Jones	Robert Paiva	Naing Tun
Barbara Drauschke	George Joseph	Melinda Parry	Robert Vergile
Elaine Fadden	Claudia Kessen-Banks	Rajendrakumar Patel	Paula Vergile
Cynthia Maybeck	Miranda Kwon	Hester E. Pender	Denise Vielehr
Anita Farber Robertson	Veronique Lapaix	Lorraine Pigott	Patricia Voner
Amy Clark Feldman	Anne Leary	Stephen Powell	William Ware
John Fisk	James Leavitt	Nancy Powell	Sharon Ware
Kristen Gake	Emily Leavitt	Lorianne Praznovsky	Bob Williams
Gregory Gake	Jerry Loew	Caroline Ridlon	Zelda Williams
Sharon Gallo-Dunn	Janice Lotz	Garvin Robertson	James Wong
Brita Gill-Austern	Wanda MacCurtain	Ngozi Robinson	Mary Lee Wong
Marilyn Glover		Rich Robison	David Wright





## ORGANIZATION

American Baptist Home Mission Society  
Bob's Discount Furniture  
Eastern Bank  
Church Mutual  
Craic Sauce  
Fellowship of Haitian Pastors NE, Inc.  
Fred C Church Insurance  
Lowell Community Health Center (LCHC Metta)  
Lowell International Church  
Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants  
National Grid  
TABCOM  
Wegmans



## CHURCHES

A.B.W.M. United Baptist Church of Saco, ME  
American Baptist Women of Medway  
A.B.W.M. of Rhode Island  
Brewster Baptist Church  
First Baptist Church of Fitchburg  
Somerville Community Baptist Church  
First Baptist Church of Medford  
Eglise Baptiste Eben Ezer  
Evangelical First Haitian Baptist Church  
First Baptist Church of Arlington  
First Baptist Church of Bedford  
First Baptist Church Communion Fund  
(Medford)  
First Baptist Church of Malden  
First Baptist Church of Mount Vernon, ME

First Baptist Church of Waltham  
First Baptist Church of Worcester  
First Baptist Church of Woburn  
First Baptist Church of Chelmsford  
First Baptist Church of Lynn  
First Baptist Church of Lexington  
Avon Baptist Church  
New Creation Baptist Church  
Putnam Baptist Church  
Green Street Baptist Church  
Rivers of Living Waters International  
Second Baptist Church  
Tabitha International Ministries, Inc.  
West Acton Baptist Church  
West Bowdoin Baptist Church





**Rev. John Bio Asante**  
Cultural Advocate

*It is evident that the Thriving in Pastoral Ministry Program has had a great impact on the group. Most members constantly report growth and improvement in ministry.*

## AFRICAN ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP

In retrospect, this year has been so wonderful and inspiring for the African Clergy Group. Attendance at our monthly zoom meetings has been very very fulfilling. We meet every last Tuesday of the month to pray and to discuss matters of mutual concern in ministry and in our families. We are lucky to have amongst us seasoned ministers who are ever ready to share, mentor and coach. Individual concerns are shared freely amongst ourselves, knowing very well that friendship and love will permeate every conversation.

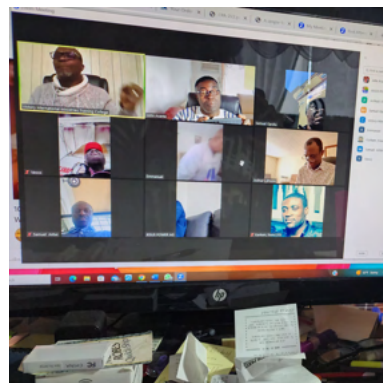
It is evident that the Thriving in Pastoral Ministry Program has had a great impact on the group. Most members constantly report growth and improvement in ministry. The principal objective of this project which is to facilitate more depth and breadth in collegial relationships, and to support professional and personal/spiritual growth is gradually being achieved.

Our group is gradually building the capacity to strengthen and expand opportunities for collegial and intercultural relationships. Even though our Ethnic Clergy Group is made up of pastors with similar ethnic and cultural identities, there is an evident diversity in our denominational ethos.

I can boldly say that there exists now amongst us a very strong bond of friendship and trust. This friendship has created opportunities to learn from each other while addressing issues critical to our contexts and ministries.

On August 4, 2023, we gathered at the Marriott Downtown hotel, Springfield for an overnight retreat. The activities were designed to deepen collegial relationships, to do peer coaching and networking, and also to rest - in a very serene environment.

For the first time we invited our spouses to participate, and we were glad we did. With the exception of those whose spouses were



## AFRICAN ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP, cont.

outside the country, every member came with the wife. The Spiritual impact of the retreat is evident and collegiality amongst our spouses is very commendable. Our wives have also formed a group on Whatsapp and have since been holding regular meetings. They are hoping to expand their group to include other women. The inclusion of our wives has actually put the icing on the cake.

Our vision is to develop critical professional skills, and to work on personal/spiritual care as well as prevent burnout. We hope to flourish in ministry by promoting and embracing hospitality, mutual accountability and personal responsibility. We hope to establish trust and build bridges across the theological and denominational divide.

The prospects of our group giving birth to another ECG is very bright. One of our members has started a parallel group running on the model of our TPMP in the Lowell area. Thriving in ministry now makes sense

to our group. It has been quite rewarding and impactful talking about collegiality, mentorship, coaching, burnout and of course rest. I will take this opportunity to thank members of my group for their love for ministry, and also thank the leadership of MBMM for their dedication and goodwill towards these men and women in ministry. May the Lord show mercy and favor unto us all.

I will conclude by quoting Christopher L. Coble, Lilly Endowment's vice president for religion who said:

“Leading a congregation today is multi-faceted and exceptionally demanding. When pastors have opportunities to build meaningful relationships with experienced colleagues, they are able to negotiate the challenges of ministry and their leadership thrives.”

Blessings!

---

**Rev. John Bio Asante**  
Cultural Advocate  
African Clergy Group





**Rev. Dr. Moreen Hughes**  
Cultural Advocate

*“A new command I  
give you: Love one  
another. As I have  
loved you, so you  
must love one  
another.” John  
13:34 (NIV)*

## AFRICAN AMERICAN ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP

It has been a pleasure working with and being in partnership with MBMM and those with whom I serve as a part of this group in kingdom building. We have journeyed together for another year even though the year was not without its challenges in regards to the entire group coming together for in-person meetings. However, we have been blessed by the availability of technology that made it possible for us to meet despite the distance of two of our members.

Besides continuing to engage with this group of my clergy sisters, I was privileged to mentor one male minister seeking ordination with ABC/USA. Most of our meeting time centered around the construction and discussion of his ordination paper and topics surrounding what makes a healthy pastor and church leader. It is amazing to see how God continues to grow the group as together we see his amazing handiwork.

Throughout the year we met via Zoom with one meeting being in person. Our meetings were the third Monday of the month from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Looking back upon the year in review, activities included:

- Devotions – each person having an opportunity to do so monthly.
- Graceful conversations – centered around compensation, part-time ministry, and call
- Articles Reviewed – The Resilient Pastor Initiative by the Barna Series
- Navigating through the ordination process.
- Reviewing the goals that were set last year to see what has been accomplished.
- Self-care – the importance of finding time to rest.



## AFRICAN AMERICAN ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP

We were blessed to have two persons in our group to be ordained and one to take on the responsibilities of interim pastor. God continues to show his faithfulness through significant growth.

This specific group of clergy women exists out of need, the need for support. I have been led to bring them together for clergy formation, so they can be free to share in a safe space, learn best practices in ministry, while moving forward to becoming effective pastors and committed leaders for the kingdom of God.

Humbly submitted,

**Rev. Dr. Moreen P. Hughes**

Cultural Advocate  
African American Clergy Group





**Rev. Lucien Mythil**  
Cultural Advocate

*“Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries nous a aidé grandement par de différentes trainings afin que cela soit réalisé pleinement du point de vue spirituel, économique, mental et social pour atteindre le but de notre existence”*

## HAITIAN ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP

Nous avons le privilège de vous adresser aujourd’hui juste pour vous mettre au courant des activités que les pasteurs haitiens avons réalisées au sein du programme (TPMP.) Thriving Pastoral Ministry Program.

En somme, notre groupe a dix pasteurs engagés dans le ministère de la prédication et l’oeuvre missionnaire à la recherche des âmes pour Christ. En dépit de tout, nous avons mis à part un temps pour nous réunir et réfléchir sur le programme cité antérieurement.

Au cours de l’année 2023 nous avons rencontré plus de sept fois pour discuter et critiquer sur certains points tel que: L’immigration, l’asile politique, déportation et le traitement infligé aux haitiens à la frontière du Mexique et des Etats-Unis d’Amérique du Nord. Nous avons souligné également aux pasteurs le rôle de l’église locale dans la société. Elle doit être un élément moteur au développement de la communauté en s’intégrant entièrement au service de tous au niveau de l’esprit, de l’âme, et du corps.

Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries nous a aidé grandement par de différentes trainings afin que cela soit réalisé pleinement du point de vue spirituel, économique, mental et social pour atteindre le but de notre existence.

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**Rev. Lucien Myrthil**  
Cultural Advocate  
Haitian Ethnic Clergy Group



## HAITIAN ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP



*“Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries had greatly assisted us in providing various trainings so that our work can be fully achieved from the spiritual, economic, intellectual and social points of view in order for us to accomplish the purpose of our existence.”*

It is our privilege to address you today to bring you up to date on the activities that the Haitian pastors have accomplished within the Thriving Pastoral Ministry Program.

In summary, our group of ten pastors are engaged in both preaching and missionary work seeking to recruit souls for Christ. Despite our schedules, we have set aside time to meet and reflect on the TPMP.

During the 2023 year, we have met more than seven times to discuss and reflect on certain points, such as: immigration, political asylum, deportation, and the treatment inflicted on Haitians at the Mexican border with the USA. We have equally stressed to our pastors the role of the local church in society. The church should be a motivating leader in the development of the community and integrate itself fully to serve everyone in the capacity of the spirit, the soul, and the body.

Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries had greatly assisted us in providing various trainings so that our work can be fully achieved from the spiritual, economic, intellectual and social points of view in order for us to accomplish the purpose of our existence.

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**Rev. Lucien Myrthil**  
Cultural Advocate  
Haitian Ethnic Clergy Group



**Veronique Lapaix**  
Cultural Advocate

*“Nous planifions de continuer à grandir dans l’amour fraternel, le partage, le respect et dans l’édification spirituelle des uns des autres.”*

## HAITIAN ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP

Durant cette année nous nous sommes déjà rencontrés cinq fois et il y a possibilité de nous rencontrer encore deux fois.

Nous avons eu des moments de partage très fructueux et intéressants. Chacun des pasteurs participants a parlé avec confiance et avec respect mutuel. Dans l’une de nos dernières réunions nous avons eu l’opportunité de recevoir des informations sur MMBB et comment préparer notre futur financier pour la retraite par la Rev. Miriam Chacón-Peralta, Consultante de MMBB Retirement Benefits. L’information a été bien reçue par tous les participants.

Bien que nos réunions furent effectuées sur Zoom, nous avons eu l’occasion de nous rencontrer face à face lors de l’assemblée annuelle de TABCOM (TAG) et lors de la retraite TPMP pour les pasteurs et épouses/ époux qui a eu lieu en septembre.

Nous planifions de continuer à grandir dans l’amour fraternel, le partage, le respect et dans l’édification spirituelle des uns des autres. Nous aimerions aussi avoir un week-end de retraite réunissant les deux groupes de pasteurs haïtiens.

C’est un honneur de servir dans cette fonction.

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**Veronique Lapaix**  
Cultural Advocate  
Haitian Ethnic Clergy Group



## HAITIAN ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP

During this year we have already met five times and there is the possibility of meeting twice more.

We had very fruitful and interesting moments of sharing. Each of the pastor participants spoke with confidence and with mutual respect. In one of our latest meetings we had the opportunity to receive information about MMBB and how to prepare our financial future for retirement by Rev. Miriam Chacón-Peralta, a Consultant from MMBB Retirement Benefits. The information was well received by all participants.

Although our meetings were held on Zoom, we had the opportunity to meet face to face at the TABCOM Annual Meeting (TAG) and at the TPMP Retreat for pastors and spouses which took place in September.

We plan to continue to grow in brotherly love, sharing, respect and in the spiritual edification of one another. We would also like to have a weekend retreat bringing together the two groups of Haitian pastors.

It is an honor to serve in this capacity.

**Veronique Lapaix**  
Cultural Advocate  
Haitian Ethnic Clergy Group



*“We plan to continue to grow in brotherly love, sharing, respect and in the spiritual edification of one another.”*





**Rev. Daryn Stylianopoulous**  
Cultural Advocate

*"Members of our group have intentionally sought out and engaged in interracial conversation and dialogue..."*

## WHITE ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP

Our clergy group had the opportunity to take time at Rolling Ridge for a brief retreat of challenging and practically rooted anti-racism conversation, introspection, reflection, and a deeper dive into anti-racism work in our contexts. The retreat



was facilitated by American Baptist clergy, Larry Jay, and brought us into conversation with authors as well as our own experiences with and noticings of racism in our lives and ministerial contexts. We explored the importance of having a trusted collegial group to support us in our own anti-racist efforts, knowing that we will not always get things perfectly, but that we can be better with the advice, feedback, and perspectives of those around us who are with us for the journey and hard work required toward transforming the racism within ourselves and our contexts of ministry.



We read, and reflected, and spent time in devotionals, as well as creating spaces for worship, song, artistic expression, and prayer with one another – all dedicated to the work of anti-racism.

Alongside this work, we allowed time for labyrinth walking and hiking along the Rolling Ridge grounds, and moments for quiet reflection and self-care, as well as time for fellowship. We were able to connect with one another in person for an extended stay of time, and that felt so important and good – to be with one another – a key reminder of the solidarity we share.

From the retreat we crafted some new goals and guidelines for our group, including conversation prompts for our meetings going forward. And so each month we have gathered holding the following:

Aside from continuing as an affinity group and source of encouragement and accountability, we concluded that some next steps for our





## WHITE ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP, cont.

group would be to bring the following to future meetings:

- 1) moments when we have encountered racism in our world or within ourselves - simply for noticing, and if desired for reflection and compassionate response.
- 2) case studies - moments when we have struggled to know what to do, or when we have questioned whether our responses or actions have been appropriately anti-racist, or when we are seeking feedback on an encounter or situation along our journey.



We are committed to continuing in the internal and contextual work of anti-racism alongside one another.

One goal we have for the coming year is to gather with other Ethnic Clergy Groups for collegiality and fun. We are hopeful we can collaborate toward that end.



It is also a joy for me to add that Rev. Nancy Willbanks has agreed to come alongside me as a co-facilitator of our Ethnic Clergy Group. This has been an immense help, particularly in terms of logistics and planning, and capacity for organization. I am grateful for this assistance. Thank you, Nancy!

**Respectfully submitted,**  
**Rev. Daryn B. Stylianopoulos,**  
**Rev. Nancy Willbanks**

Cultural Advocate  
White Ethnic Clergy Group





**Rev. Rubenia  
Bomatay-Palacion**  
Cultural Advocate

Being open to be  
a good listener  
creating a servant  
leadership team  
to handle  
disagreements  
and conflicts  
within the church  
with prayer.

## LATINX ETHNIC CULTURAL GROUP

This is our report for the year so far, meetings, peoples and the topics we covered during the year 2023

Our first meeting was on June 3rd, 2023, with eight people altogether led by Rev. Rubenia Bomatay-Palacios. These eight people are pastors and church ministers who labor in the ministry.

Rev. Rubenia Bomatay-Palacion and Pastor Gerardo Palacios  
Pastor Jose Salinas and spouse Rina Salinas  
Marina Salinas  
Gadiel Ramos and Isis Michel Ramos  
Carlos Mingeli

Rev. Rubenia spoke about the importance of accountability and connection. She emphasized the importance of collegial relationships and creating a safe place for pastors to gather to share and pray for one another. We all agreed to keep on coming together to help each other and have a space in which we can talk freely about some of our issues when it comes to the ministry.

Our second meeting was on July 1st 2023 - the topic was an open conversation about how to accept people that think different than us, especially on the gender issue and how to preach a message that is more inclusive and still guide them to Christ and let the Holy Spirit work in their lives. Our job is not to divide but unite in Christ.

Our next meeting was September 2nd, 2023 - the topic was preparing for the upcoming MBMM conference and how excited we were about that opportunity. We also had an open conversation about how to manage church gossip and the stress it brings to us as ministers. Being open to be a good listener creating a servant leadership team to handle disagreements and conflicts within the church with prayer.



## LATINX ETHNIC CULTURAL GROUP, CONT.

Our meeting on October 7th, 2023 - the topic was an open conversation about our experience at the conference in September of Rest and Rejuvenation. We had a great time and one of the topics we all agreed upon was finding the time to rest and having time for our families. Ways in which we can dedicate time for our family apart from the ministry. Work life balance is something that we all decided to work.

Our group has enjoyed time together so far and these meetings have helped to understand that we are all working in the ministry and are going through the same struggles together. We will keep having these meetings as we go and report on it.

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Submitted by Carlos Mingeli on behalf of  
**Rev. Rubenia Bomatay-Palacios**  
Cultural Advocate  
Latin-x Clergy Group





**Miranda Kwon**  
Cultural Advocate

One of the major achievements of the Asian Clergy Cohort is creating a safe place for everyone ability to be honest and vulnerable, to share and pray for one another.

## **ASIAN ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP**

After the first two bi-monthly meetings of the year 2023, one in January and the other in March, the Asian Cultural Advocate (Rev. Isaac Seelam) who had been organizing and facilitating meetings and communications of the Asian Cohort for several years in the past stepped down. The new Asian Cultural Advocate (Rev. Miranda Kwon) assumed the responsibilities from May.

The Asian Cohort continued to meet via zoom bi-monthly. More emphasis was put on supporting members of the Asian Clergy Group tangibly. For example, substantial scholarship was offered to each Asian Cohort member for continuing education and professional development such attending ABCUSA Biennial Missions Conference in June in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Scholarship was also given to those who attended Asian Colloquium hosted by Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board (MMBB) in August in Orlando, FL. Without such substantial financial help, it would have not been easy for the members of the Asian Cohort to attend such conferences in other parts of the US. These conferences/colloquia offered tremendous opportunities to learn and grow as ministers.

Another way to support Asian Clergy Group members tangibly was done through buying each participant a copy of the book *They Called Us Enemy* by George Takei for a book discussion held via zoom in July. As most Asian Clergy Group members collectively and individually experienced racism and anti-Asian hate and discrimination especially in the wake of Covid pandemic, the book and the book discussion offered valuable opportunity to openly express and process such experiences and, while grieving collectively, had opportunity to offer emotional and spiritual support and prayer for one another.

Besides these, other resources for financial help, including various scholarships available through other organizations were shared as they become available. Sharing of such helpful information and sources of aid are very important to Asian Clergy Group members as individual members often do not find time to search for such information on their own as most Asian ministers already wear multiple hats in their ministerial and personal lives. One of the major achievements of the Asian Clergy Cohort is creating a safe place for everyone ability to be honest and vulnerable, to share and pray for one another.

## ASIAN ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP, cont.

### Special Events

The Asian Cohort had an annual cookout in August. Spouses and other friends of the Asian ministers were also invited and enjoyed great food and games, such as cornhole and volley ball. It was a time of fellowship and fun.

In September, Asian Clergy members and their spouses were invited to an overnight retreat for Pastors and their Spouses for renewal. Participating members were given a scholarship to attend the event.

An in-person Christmas gathering/lunch is being planned in Dec. It will be the last meeting of this year for the Asian Cohort. The last bi-monthly meeting of this year is scheduled in November.

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### Miranda Kwon

Cultural Advocate  
Asian Clergy Group





**Pr. Efigenia Paiva**  
Cultural Advocate

*“Our hearts are very grateful for all the good MBMM had done for us, only God can reward all of you involved in this beautiful work. Honor and glory be given to our God, for all of his goodness to us.”*

## PORTUGUESE ETHNIC CLERGY GROUP

We are a group of nine Brazilian pastors, and although we have known each other for a good few years since we started the group, which was at the end of June, it has been very uplifting. Since we started the group, we have felt the freedom to open our hearts and receive help from one another.

We always start the meeting with a prayer and receive a word of encouragement and wisdom from the Bible. During the time together we talked about situations that we have to face, like families, health problems, members and disciples that leave the Church discipleship, immigration issues and racism.

As a pastor it's not easy to have someone we can talk to openly. But in our group, we feel very comfortable, and we know that everyone involved is trustworthy. They don't judge or criticize. Based on everyone's actions and the joy on their faces, we can see that these meetings have done us a lot of good.

We didn't have much time for planning events and retreats this year, but on August 3 we had a special dinner celebration for communion, it was very fun and made us feel special. We cannot forget the special event promoted by MBMM, a gathering for Pastors and their spouses. It was a wonderful time. We learned a lot from all the speakers, and it really was a relaxing time with good food and communion with other leaders.

On December 9 we are going to have an end of year celebration with our spouses, and everyone is very excited to spend that time together.

Our hearts are very grateful for all the good MBMM had done for us, only God can reward all of you involved in this beautiful work. Honor and glory be given to our God, for all of his goodness to us.

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**Pr. Efigenia Paiva**  
Cultural Advocate  
Portuguese Clergy Group



# English for Speaker of Other Languages (ESOL) Report

MBMM & ACE Center for New American



## 1 ESOL Instructor Lowell



**Hester Pender**

This year, because of some health issues, I was only able to have one student. We have our beginner class on Zoom weekly, and she studies vocabulary and pattern sentences in the book during the week. Because she is willing to

study all week, she has made good progress in her language learning. She likes to use flashcards to learn vocabulary and writes a dictionary of words and phrases with meaning in her language to study at home. I take a photo on my phone of all the cards on a table, save it in my computer and sent it to her email. She can make a copy to study.

After we know the flashcard vocabulary, we do a “language experience,” using a picture of a scene containing some of the vocabulary and answering questions or commenting on the scene. I write it down and send a copy to her, so she can practice reading it. She enjoys learning this way.

This year we have a new book series from National Geographic called “Stand Out.” Along with good photos and a variety of ways of presenting the vocabulary and grammar forms, the lessons emphasize everyday conversations and situations. Online audio and video are free on the “Stand Out” website and there is a continuing story video in each unit that uses the language learned in an everyday way. “Basic” is the first level for beginners. Each lesson has some fundamental vocabulary and grammar that we can pull out.

Because these lessons emphasize daily language use, my student had been enthusiastic in learning from them. Going to the grocery store, shopping for clothes, the weather, places in the city, etc., are all relevant topics.

When students are eager to learn and study at home, our sessions are relaxed and fun. We will soon start Level One of “Stand Out.”

## 2 ESOL Instructor Boston



**Etta Anderson**

Beam program had a year of ups and downs. The ups were the joy of receiving new students and interacting with them. The downs were the disappointment of seeing them leave prematurely to seize job opportunities, whose hours conflicted with their class time.

We continued the program with two remote classes two evenings per week. As the fears and horrors of COVID began to recede, the Center opened slowly and cautiously. Early summer we started a daytime in-person class in a small but comfortable room equipped with a TV monitor which we used. The room soon became capacity full with nine students, most of whom were new arrivals from Venezuela. They were excited and eager to learn, and were a joy to teach, but they too left prematurely for job opportunities. The class still meets with other students.

We continue our evening classes via Zoom – an intermediate level, an advanced-beginner, and a low beginner. One of the advantages of our arrangement is that we accept students as they come. We do not have a waiting list.

We are thankful for our volunteer teachers – one of whom has been with the program for about a decade. They are committed and are happy to be playing an important role in the lives of the students who come to us.





# ACE Center For New Americans

ACE Center Annual Report 2022 - 2023



**Pranim Magar**  
ACE Center Program Manager



**Bendangla Imsong**  
ACE Shoppe Coordinator



**Madhava Narasimhadevara**  
ACE Center Volunteer Coordinator

In the remarkable year of 2022, we witnessed the unwavering resilience of our organization as we navigated the complex landscape of the post-COVID world. This was a year marked by significant milestones – the removal of nearly all COVID-19 restrictions, the reopening of international borders, and the global rollout of COVID-19 vaccines. With these obstacles conquered, we witnessed a surge in community participation and engagement.

## After School Drop-In Program:

Our After School Drop-In Program thrived, attracting the participation of more than 30 eager students. A highlight of the year was our unforgettable field trip to Canobie Lake Park on June 28th, where 25 students and 15 dedicated chaperones were rewarded for their commitment

to our educational programs. This outing not only celebrated their dedication but also fostered a profound sense of unity within our ACE family, despite the occasional raindrops. We are excited to build on this success by offering more enriching field trips to inspire and celebrate our students' hard work and engagement.

## Mentorship Programs:

Two exceptional students are diligently progressing through our Post High School Preparation Program, actively engaging in our workshops and resolutely pursuing their goals. We take immense pride in Ayoub, one of our Afghan students, who successfully completed our Work Force Readiness for New Americans (WFRNA) program. Ayoub's dedication to improving his English, excelling in his studies, and supporting his family exemplifies the spirit of our organization.



## Mental Health with Children, Youth, and Young Adults:

We are making effort to partner with Center for Hope and Healing (CHH) on our New Americans Youth Mental Health Initiative. CHH would be responsible for providing number of trainings to staff, volunteers, and youth in order to equip them to address mental health issues and healthy identity formation for refugee and immigrant children, youth, and young adults.

We have also worked on Mental Health Well Being Mentorship, through this program, a mentor would work with their mentee on setting goals using the SMART system, creating a strategic plan to achieve those goals, tracking progress, and then evaluating the progress. Mentor and mentee are offered free gym membership at Choice Fitness. We currently have six paid gym membership at Choice Fitness.SOL Program.

While our Lowell-based English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program faced initial challenges in recruiting adults in person program, our online ESOL classes remained robust and successful.

### **ACE Shoppe:**

Through the ACE Shoppe, we provided essential items such as blankets, clothes, and kitchenware to over 20 families in need. Our commitment to serving the community drives us to expand the offerings at the ACE Shoppe, including new clothes, shoes, and kitchenware.

### **New American Christmas Party:**

After several years of COVID-19-related challenges, we successfully hosted an in-person New American Christmas Party. This event not only celebrated Christmas but also reflected on our remarkable resilience



throughout the year. We distributed over 110 Christmas gift bags to new American families, along with more than 90 toys and board games for children. The festivities included a free raffle with prizes such as a Samsung TV, Aroma Rice & Grain Cooker, Keurig Coffee Maker, and bed sheets, among others.

### **Volunteer Appreciation Day:**

2022 also marked the inaugural ACE Volunteer Appreciation Day, a heartfelt occasion where we expressed gratitude to all volunteers from 2021-2022 for their hard work, dedication, and, most importantly their invaluable time. Our ACE Center team presented them with certificates, volunteer pins, pens, ethnic food, and beverages. We engaged in social conversations, played board games, and cherished each other's company. In the days ahead, we eagerly anticipate recognizing and thanking more volunteers.



### **Financial Literacy Workshops:**

Financial Literacy training allows New Americans to overcome barriers by providing them with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed financial decisions and by empowering them to improve their chances of achieving economic success in America. With the Financial Literacy Training for New Americans sponsored by the Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants (MA ORI), we were able to host total of three workshops, one workshop each in the month of April, May, and June. Total of sixty-four participants attended the workshops and received certificate of completion from the State as well as \$75.00 stipend each.

## Financial Literacy Workshops:

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## Summer School Drop-In Help Session:

Fifteen students participated in our Summer School Drop-In Help Session. They received help on their summer packets as well as learned about different countries around the world. Not only did they learned many wonderful facts about countries around the world, but they also did face painting, played board games, card games, baseball, and American football outside the ACE Center.

## World Refugee Day 2023:

World Refugee Day 2023 was an unqualified success. Even passersby engaged with our volunteers and staff to learn about our organization. We were deeply honored to have Massachusetts State Representative Rodney Elliot as a guest speaker, a testament to his humility and commitment to our cause as he stayed with us for the entire event. We had Sarah Htwe from the Burmese community, who shared her backpack story, detailing their journey to the United States. We had Lugiyo, an international student whose story was read by Taw Taw Lay which detailed Lugiyo's experience with the military coup in Myanmar (Burma). We also heard another powerful backpack story from one of our Afghan community members, whose name will not be mentioned upon their request, which detailed their journey from Afghanistan to the United States. They also shared their experiences regarding the collapse of Afghanistan. Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to our dedicated volunteers. Their unwavering commitment, enthusiasm, and selflessness have profoundly impacted countless lives. Our volunteers are the driving force behind our mission to create a more inclusive and compassionate society.



## Volleyball Tournament:

In August 2023, the ACE for New Americans hosted an exciting friendly volleyball tournament that brought together participants from diverse backgrounds for a day of friendly competition and camaraderie. With five teams vying for the championship trophy, the event showcased the spirit of unity, sportsmanship, and cultural exchange. Set against the backdrop of Roberto Clemente Park in Lowell, the tournament was a celebration of community, teamwork, and the love of the game.



## Ping-Pong Tournament:

The ACE Center for New Americans hosted exciting friendly ping-pong tournament in the month of July. This event brought together ten enthusiastic players from various backgrounds. The event was a celebration of friendly competition, cultural exchange, and the spirit of community. Against the backdrop of the UMASS Lowell Recreation Center in Lowell, participants showcased their skills, fostered camaraderie, and left with unforgettable memories. The winner and runner-up were presented with trophy as well as gift card.

## Back-To-School Giveaway:

As the summer of 2023 ended, the ACE Center for New Americans continued its unwavering commitment to empowering students and fostering education within the community. An event that stood out among their efforts was the backpack distribution for the upcoming 2023-2024 school year. With backpacks filled with essential school supplies, this initiative aimed to equip students with the tools they need to succeed. Held at the ACE Center's headquarters at 99 Church Street, Lowell, MA, during the Summer School Drop-In Program, this event embodied the organization's dedication to nurturing learning and supporting the academic journey of students from diverse backgrounds.

In closing, 2023 was indeed a year of growth, resilience, and profound community engagement for our organization. Amidst the challenges we faced, our unwavering dedication to serving and supporting our community remained resolute. We extend our deep appreciation to all who contributed to our mission and look forward to an even brighter future.





**Hamid Dabeer**

Afgahani  
Advocate



**Abdul Jalil Kamawi**

Afgahani Advocate



**Pranim Magar**

ACE Center Program  
Manager

**AFGHAN COMMUNITY**

Due to the political situation in Afghanistan, the last year (2022-2023) has been filled with both challenges and excitement for the Afghan community.

Thousands of Afghans have immigrated to the United States, with more than 50 families and 100 individuals choosing to settle in Lowell, MA, in pursuit of their dream life in the United States. However, they are facing a range of difficulties, including strict COVID-19 restrictions, language barriers, transportation issues, lack of access to computers, and the need to adapt to American culture.

We are grateful to MBMM and the ACE Center for their support during these challenging times, especially in providing our community's young generation (students) with backpacks, school supplies, educational programs, and even taking them on a field trip to Canobie Lake Park to assist them in adjusting to the community and much more.

Furthermore, they have established English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes for community members who need to improve or start learning English. With the support of MBMM and the ACE Center, we were able to establish a large cricket team. They provided us with the necessary sporting equipment, including bats, wickets, gloves, balls, and the crucial pitch turf. Cricket is a favorite pastime in Afghanistan, and sports serve as a great way to build a community and promote healthy activity.

**Hamid Dabeer**

Refugee Advocate  
Afghan Community of Lowell

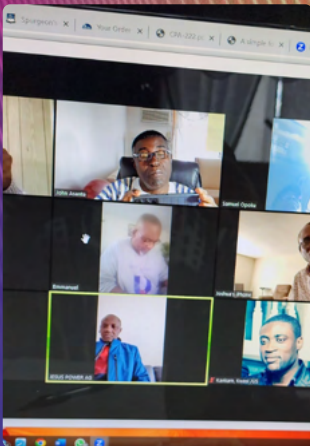
Due to the critical and political situation in Afghanistan, more than 100 new Afghan families arrived in Lowell, Massachusetts, seeking refuge and settling here with the assistance of various resettlement agencies. They are looking forward to their anticipated life in the United States, filled with thousands of expectations and hopes. However, arriving as immigrants or refugees in a new country, whether by choice or necessity, poses various challenges, including cultural, transportation, language barriers, practical issues, environmental adjustments, and socio-economic challenges.



## AFGHAN COMMUNITY, cont.

The Afghan community extends its heartfelt thanks to MBMM and the ACE center for providing unwavering support to those in need. They speak out for those who cannot advocate for themselves, defending the rights of the poor and needy people. Additionally, the Afghan community expresses gratitude to MBMM for:

1. ACE Center's support in helping needy students with their academic weaknesses and homework.
2. Providing school supplies and backpacks to all grade levels.
3. Offering ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) services to new English learners, both virtually and in-person.
4. Organizing volleyball and table tennis tournaments.
5. Supporting the Afghan cricket team by providing necessary supplies.
6. Offering transportation services to ACE students for pick-up and drop-off.
7. Arranging various field trips for ACE center students, such as visits to the Boston Aquarium and Canobie Lake Park.
8. Conducting financial literacy training, teaching practical skills, and providing training on violence prevention, cultural adjustment, and other capacity-building initiatives.
9. Facilitating housing and services provided by resettlement agencies.
10. Assisting with road tests and obtaining driving licenses.
11. Providing basic living supplies, including household goods, clothing, and kitchen appliances.
12. Celebrating Refugee Day with fun and entertainment for participants.
13. Sharing the concerns of the Afghan community with the Lowell Community Health Center (LCHC Metta).



In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation to the entire MBMM and ACE Center team for their hard work and steadfast support for the Afghan community. I hope they continue with the same spirit and enthusiasm in their future endeavors.

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### Abdul Jalil Kamawi

Refugee Advocate  
Afghan Community of Lowell



## BHUTANESE COMMUNITY

The Bhutanese Community of Lowell deeply values the contributions of the MBMM and the ACE Center for New Americans. This year, we witnessed increased engagement from our community in ACE Center's events, friendly sports tournaments, and the Financial Literacy Workshop, among others. Several members of our community dedicated their time to volunteering during various events and programs this year. Additionally, our youth actively participated in our Summer School Drop-In Help Session, where they received assistance in their summer packets as well as had fun. They had a wonderful time learning about various countries; they enjoyed face painting, playing board games, card games, baseball, and American football outside the ACE Center.



My involvement with this organization has enabled me to offer more substantial support to my community. I have assisted my fellow community members with various processes, including job applications, state ID renewals, learner's permit applications, USCIS-related procedures, opening savings and checking accounts, registering for the Selective Service, providing interpretation during healthcare assessments, guiding them through homebuying processes, helping with vehicle title registrations, and notarizing important documents.

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### Pranim Magar

ACE Center Program Manager



## BURMESE REFUGEE COMMUNITY

Due to the ongoing political conflicts in Myanmar, the Burmese community has faced numerous challenges and difficulties. The military coup in Myanmar, which began in 2021, has led to riots and the loss of countless innocent lives. Many families have been forced to flee their homes and homeland due to the military violence. In response to this crisis, the Lowell International Church (L.I.C.) has been actively sending financial assistance to Myanmar on a regular basis to support those in need.



**Sarah Htwe**  
Burmese Advocate



**Vaal Thawngmung**  
Burmese Advocate



**Tawtaw Lay**  
Burmese Advocate

Today, some members of our community have found refuge in the United States, where they enjoy the freedom and opportunities that were denied to them in Myanmar. We are immensely grateful for the support and assistance provided by organizations like Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries (MBMM) and the ACE Center for New Americans. These organizations have become a lifeline for many New American families who can rely on them for support without worrying about language barriers or their voices going unheard.

One of the most significant benefits our community members have received is the provision of educational support for their children. The ACE Center offers tutoring services, ensuring that parents do not have to worry about their children falling behind in their education. Additionally, essential resources such as school supplies, clothing, and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes are made available to us every year. We are profoundly thankful for these resources, as they go a long way in meeting the needs of our Burmese community.

The collective efforts of organizations like MBMM and the ACE Center for New Americans, as well as the support from the Lowell International Church, are instrumental in assisting the Burmese community during this challenging time. Their dedication and generosity are making a positive impact on the lives of those who have been affected by the political turmoil in Myanmar. We hope for a brighter future for the Burmese community, both in the United States and in their homeland.

**Sarah Htwe**  
**Vaal Thawngmung**  
**Tawtaw Lay**

Refugee Advocates  
Burmese Community of Lowell





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*\*Denotes that this person is nominated for a two-year term, which will be voted on at the meeting*

*\*\*This position needs confirmation, the term started in March 2023, and will be voted on at the meeting*



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