



## American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania & Delaware

### Rev. Mark Mahserjian-Smith

Acting Regional Executive Pastor

Regional Pastor for Mission & Communication

1523 Smokey Corners Rd  
Williamsport, PA 17701

Phone: 570-435-2001

[msmsmail@abcopad.com](mailto:msmsmail@abcopad.com)

[www.abcopad.org](http://www.abcopad.org)



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Philippians 1:3-6 I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

One of my favorite books in the Bible is Paul's letter to the Philippians. Paul writes this great letter of encouragement and thanksgiving to a congregation he deeply loves. In the opening verses of chapter 1, Paul expresses his gratitude and joy for the partnership he shares with this church family.

Philippians 1:3-6 is the scripture passage that ABCOPAD uses to form the bedrock of our vision, "To Build Healthy Partnerships with Churches, Pastoral Leaders, and our Wider AB Family, to Fulfill Christ's Mission in our World." For our Region, ministry is all about partnership and like the Apostle Paul, ABCOPAD is forever grateful and joyful for the many partnerships we share.

Throughout the course of a year, our churches come up with new and brilliant ideas for ministry. God grants these churches a glimpse of what could be, but the question of how to make vision a reality is hard. ABCOPAD becomes a faithful partner providing coaching through its Regional Staff, seed money through its grants and wisdom and insight by connecting leaders with experience with congregations ready to try something new.

For other churches in our Region, ministry in this post-pandemic era is challenging. For some congregations, their aging buildings that can seat a hundred or more people, now have a fraction of that number using the space once or maybe twice a week. Gifted pastoral leaders who served the church for years have retired or will retire soon but finding the next pastor is difficult and overwhelming. Our polarized culture spills over into the church making conflicts in our congregations nearly insurmountable.

Every day, our pastors and churches pick up the phone, or write an email at their computer or compose a text message reaching out for guidance, support and encouragement. And every day, ABCOPAD staff are the people at the other end of the phone, email or text, standing ready to help.

When you support Partners in Ministry, you make it possible for ABCOPAD to have a ministry of presence. You make it possible for us to be partners in ministry. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." Thank you for your partnership in ministry and thank you for your generosity, donating to our Regional Offering. Through your gifts, ministry happens.

*Mark*

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