

**2003 BIENNIAL MEETING OF THE  
AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE U.S.A.  
June 27-30, 2003  
Richmond, Virginia**

FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2003: EVENING GATHERING

***"Centered in Christ: An Inviting People"***

1. As people entered the hall, a fanfare was played by **David Wells**.
2. Following the prelude, **Sandra Collins** and **Brad Berglund** led the congregation in singing "Jesus, Be My Center" as Gathering Music.
3. ABC President **David Hunt thanked** David Wells, James Abbington, Brad Berglund, and Sandra Collins for sharing their gifts of music leadership, and **welcomed** the delegates and visitors, the youth representatives and representatives from AB GIRLS and AB Boys and Young Men. Hunt noted that this was the first national denominational meeting held in the ABC of the South, and thanked Walter Parrish II, Jim Foster and the ABC of the South for their hospitality.
4. President **Hunt** next **called to order** the 2003 Biennial Meeting of American Baptist Churches (ABCUSA). President Hunt announced that as of 6:30 p.m., June 27, 2003, 1299 Delegates had registered. Therefore, for this Biennial Meeting, in accordance with the ABC Bylaws (Article IV, Section 3-b) 433 delegates (one-third of the registered delegates) would be the quorum.
5. President Hunt referred the delegates to the "Materials for Business Sessions" brochure included in delegates' packets which included "Rules of Procedure for the Conduct of the 2003 Biennial Meeting of Delegates." The Rules note that *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* would govern the conduct of any business which came before the meeting, except where inconsistent with the ABC Bylaws and the Standing Rules, or the Rules of Procedure voted by the delegates to this 2003 Biennial meeting.  
President Hunt also called attention to the "Rules of Procedure" document for the Statements of Concern, also in the packet. He noted that speaker registration for the Statements of Concern to be presented on Saturday and Monday would be held from 8:15 am to 8:45 am, and pointed out the registration location.
6. **Adoption of the Rules of Procedure was moved** (Jim Foster) and seconded (Yosh Nakagawa). The **motion passed** with the required two-thirds majority.
7. President **Hunt introduced** Jim Foster, chair of the 2003 Biennial Program Committee.
8. Chairperson **Foster welcomed** delegates and visitors to the Biennial meeting and thanked members of the Local Arrangements Committee, the Biennial Program Committee and the Staff Advisory Group for their work in planning the Biennial.
9. Since the 2003 Biennial Program Committee had completed its work, its members became the Order of Business Committee and Jim Foster the Chair of the Order of Business Committee. **Foster** (on behalf of the Biennial Program Committee) **moved the adoption of the provisional program**, subject to any changes the Committee on the Order of Business might recommend. The **motion passed**.
10. President **Hunt introduced** Yosh Nakagawa, ABC Vice-President.
11. Vice-President **Nakagawa introduced** the Biennial Meeting Parliamentarians, Loyd Starrett, Esquire and Mr. Frank Christine. He then noted that the information shared during Saturday and Monday morning Gatherings would constitute the information sharing relating to the work of the General Board as called for in the ABCUSA Bylaws.

12. Vice-President **Nakagawa called attention to the report of the ABC Nominating Committee**, mailed to each cooperating ABC congregation and region in February 2003 and also included in the 2003 Biennial Meeting packet. He then read Standing Rule 4.3.5 which deals with procedures for receiving nominations from the floor and announced that the deadline for submitting nominations from the floor had been extended until 10:00 pm that evening. He also announced that Intent to Move to Amend Notices regarding the Number of Representatives would be received until 10:00 pm that evening in the ABCUSA office at the Convention Center.
13. **Foster** called attention to the Report of the ABC Nominating Committee and announced the committee's slate of nominees for the 2004-2005 biennium, including the denominational officers (President: Peggy Johnson; Vice President: Arlee Griffin; Budget Review Officer: Melva Gray). Foster also announced that nominations from the floor would be received and elections held for ABCUSA President, Vice President, and Budget Review Officer during the Saturday morning business session, and that seven members would be nominated to serve on the Statements of Concern Committee, class of 2007.
14. President **Hunt introduced** the evening's preacher, the Rev. Dr. Joan Parrott, vice-president for the Children's Defense Fund, and invited the congregation to a reception following the evening Gathering to celebrate the installation of Roy Medley. Wells played "Amazing Grace."
15. After a congregational hymn, a prayer, and special music by the Shokei choir from Japan, **Aidsand Wright-Riggins III presented** the Edwin T. Dahlberg Peace Award to Congressman **John Lewis**. **Lewis responded** with remarks on peace and unity.
16. Local Arrangements Committee Co-Chairs, **Barry Young** and **Delores Pretlow**, invited the congregation to donate to the evening offering, which would underwrite the expenses of the local arrangements committee. (Total received: \$6,555.03)
17. The Richmond Biennial Mass Choir under the direction of Mrs. **Brenda Nichols** and accompanied by Weldon Hill sang "Holy, Holy, Holy" and "He Never Failed Me Yet" as the offering was given.
18. **Parrott** read Isaiah 40: 28-31, and **preached** the evening message.
19. As the congregation sang "O Christ, the Great Foundation," participants in the installation service for General Secretary Roy Medley processed.
20. The congregation joined in a **litany of installation**. The platform party, including Sumner Grant, Melva Gray, Denton Lotz, Arthur Munson, Walter L. Parrish II, John A. Sundquist, Elisa Vazquez, Cheryl H. Wade, James Willis, and Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III, representing the ABCUSA membership, and three former General Secretaries - Robert C. Campbell, Edwin Tuller and Daniel E. Weiss - laid hands on Medley in an act of commission, blessing and installation.
21. Rev. **A. Roy Medley**, newly installed General Secretary, **gave a response** and offered a benediction.
22. The congregation sang "We are Marching in the Light of God" as the recessional hymn.
23. James Abbington played the postlude.

## **SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 2003**

### **MORNING GATHERING**

*"Centered in Christ: A Witnessing People"*

24. **David Wells** played gathering music.
25. **Barry Young** (co-chair of the Local Arrangements Committee) **introduced Rudolph C. McCollum**, Mayor of the City of Richmond.

26. **Mayor McCollum offered greetings** to the convention.
27. President **Hunt called the business session to order**. After indicating where people could register to speak on issues brought before the session, he reminded the delegates that the minutes of the 2001 Biennial Meeting, held in Providence, Rhode Island, were recorded on pages 18 through 26 of the Summer 2001 issue of American Baptists IN MISSION magazine. The minutes were reviewed by members of the 2001 Biennial Program Committee.
28. Hunt announced that there were no nominations from the floor, and noted the names of nominees on the ballots.
29. Jim **Foster**, Chairperson of the ABC Nominating Committee, **called for delegates to vote on the slate of officers** and members of the Statements of Concern Committee, using ballots distributed when they had entered the convention hall. Ushers collected the ballots for counting, the results of which were announced at the evening session.
30. Vice-President **Nakagawa moved the Resolution from the General Board concerning the number of Representatives to be elected for the 2004-2005 biennium**. **Rev. Susan Maybeck**, president of the Board of National Ministries, **seconded** the motion. The text of the resolution is as follows :

**RESOLUTION OF GENERAL BOARD RECOMMENDING NUMBERS OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR NEXT BIENNIUM 2004-2005**

WHEREAS, as amended at the 1991 Biennial in Charleston, West Virginia, Article III, Section 2(I) of the ABCUSA Bylaws states that “there shall be sufficient numbers of Representatives, as determined by the Biennial Meeting upon recommendation of the General Board, to perform the functions of the General Board”;

WHEREAS, as research by numerous scholars has demonstrated conclusively, a smaller board functions much more effectively and also produces much greater satisfaction and sense of accomplishment; and Representatives have confirmed that research by reporting that their work in smaller bodies is more satisfying, more productive in setting policy, and more effective in holding staff accountable;

WHEREAS, each Representative can participate more fully in work of smaller boards, and smaller plenaries will make debate more manageable, enabling a larger proportion of the membership to speak and facilitate shorter meeting times;

WHEREAS, smaller boards are more cost efficient in that travel, food and lodging expenses are reduced both directly because fewer people travel and indirectly because smaller, less expensive meeting sites become feasible and because shorter meetings reduce the demand for food and lodging;

WHEREAS, the Representative Process Review Commission (RPRC) concluded, after extensive investigation and study, that a smaller General Board and therefore smaller national program boards (because the membership of each national program board is approximately one-third of the General Board) would be more effective and efficient, would constitute better stewardship of the Denomination’s resources and would not impair representation or communication; and the General Board, after thorough consideration, approved the RPRC Report;

WHEREAS, as costs continue to increase and revenues continue to decrease, better stewardship of the Representative Process Budget becomes more and more imperative;

WHEREAS, the RPRC recommended that the General Board be reduced by attrition from approximately 210 to 160, comprised of 111 Election District or Regionally Nominated Representatives, 37 at Large or Nationally Nominated Representatives and 12 ex officio or designated Representatives, and the General Board approved that recommendation;

WHEREAS, the 1995 Biennial in Syracuse voted to begin the process of reducing the size of the General Board as recommended by the RPRC and therefore to fix the number of Regionally Nominated Representatives at 143 for 1996 and 130 for 1997 and the number of Nationally Nominated Representatives at 46 for both 1996 and 1997, producing a total General Board of 201 in 1996 and 188 in 1997;

WHEREAS, the 1997 Biennial in Indianapolis voted to continue the process of reducing the size of the General Board by attrition and therefore to fix the numbers of Regionally Nominated Representatives at 126 for 1998 and 123 for 1999 and the number of Nationally Nominated Representatives at 42 for both 1998 and 1999, producing a total General Board of 180 in 1998 and 177 in 1999;

WHEREAS, the 1999 Biennial in Des Moines voted to continue the process of reducing the size of the General Board by attrition and therefore to fix the numbers of Regionally Nominated Representatives at 114 for 2000 and 111 for 2001 and the number of Nationally Nominated Representatives at 38 for both 2000 and 2001, producing a total General Board of 164 in 2000 and 161 in 2001.

WHEREAS, to complete the process of reducing the size of the General Board by attrition, there should not be replaced 1 Nationally Nominated Representative in 2002 and thereafter, producing a total General Board of 160 in 2002 and beyond.

NOW THEREFORE, the General Board recommends to the 2003 Biennial Meeting that the numbers of Regionally Nominated Representatives be fixed at 111 for 2004 and 2005 and that the number of Nationally Nominated Representatives be fixed at 37 for both 2004 and 2005, producing a total General Board of 160 in both years. (These totals include the standard 12 ex officio or designated Representatives.)

31. **Nakagawa moved and David Blythe seconded an amendment** to the resolution.

**Trinette McCray spoke in favor of the amendment.** The text of the amendment is as follows:

"NOW THEREFORE the General Board recommends to the 2003 Biennial Meeting that the number of Regionally Nominated Representatives is fixed at a number no greater than 111 and no less than 90 in 2004 and no greater than 111 and no less than 86 in 2005; and, that the number of nationally Nominated Representatives be fixed at no greater than 37 and no less than 31 for both 2004 and 2005, producing a total General Board of no more than 160 and no less than 133 in 2004 and no greater than 160 and no less than 129 in 2005. (These totals include the standard 12 ex officio or designated Representatives.)"

The **amendment was passed** by a rising vote.

32. The **amended resolution was passed** by a voice vote.

33. Collins and Abbington led the congregation in singing "Jesus, stand among us."

34. The **Program Boards reported** on their activities.

35. **Members of the Statements of Concern Committee presented the first Statement of Concern:** "How Shall American Baptists Respond To Terrorism?" There was one respondent to the statement.

(614 Affirm; 90 Not Affirm)

## **STATEMENT OF CONCERN: HOW SHALL AMERICAN BAPTISTS RESPOND TO TERRORISM?**

The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, and the Pentagon and the failed attempt on other Washington, DC targets-reminds us of things we have taken for granted. It reminds us

that religious faith can inspire the best and can be distorted to justify the worst in human action.

Since September 11, 2001 our lives as Americans have changed in both large and small ways. We grieve for the lives lost. We celebrate those who sacrificed to save others. We wait longer at airports and we examine our mail more closely. We focus on protecting ourselves while giving up some of our liberties. We see the world differently, and our freedoms seem more dear. Our understanding of our nation's role in the world remains unclear. As American Baptists, how do we make sense of this changed world?

First, we must not give in to hopelessness. Ephesians 3:20 reminds us that God is able to accomplish, through us, abundantly more than we could ask or think. In spite of new anxieties and new threats, we are called to live courageously and generously. As Christians, we cannot allow the gift of God's love on the cross for all peoples to cease to be acted out. As Jesus said, "What good is it to love only those who love you? ... Be therefore perfect as your father in heaven is perfect" (Matt 5:46-48). We must continue to love and pray for those who hate us and want to do violence to us. We must not withdraw into isolation. And since terrorism is engendered and nurtured in part by poverty and economic injustice, the work of God's kingdom continues: feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, bringing justice to the oppressed, and proclaiming the Good News of Christ's redemption.

Second, we must look clearly at our own history and society. Matthew 5:38 calls us to examine the plank in our own eye before we look at the eye of our adversary. Many reviews of American foreign policy show both achievements and shortcomings, laudable efforts towards encouraging democracy and a history of interfering in the rights of other countries to self-determination. We must understand that some nations despise us because of our decisions.

As Christians we must acknowledge that hatred often uses religion as justification for violence; for example, the Crusades of a thousand years ago, the Hindu-Muslim conflict in Kashmir, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the Protestant-Catholic fighting in Ireland. Within our own nation, crimes of hatred have been committed against those some have perceived as "outside the fold". We as Christians are called to be a people of reconciliation instead of divisions (II Cor 5:19b).

Finally, our American Baptist racial, ethnic, and theological diversity calls us to be a model for a peaceful pluralistic society. Our Baptist principle of soul liberty supports ecumenical and interfaith dialogue. Our understanding of the role of government gives us perspective on the importance of civil liberties. American Baptists can be a light to the world in showing how different faiths can live together in peace even while acknowledging our differences. Our faith in the saving and energizing power of God in Jesus Christ enables us to reach out to others without fear, for perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18).

Therefore, we call on American Baptists to:

- Pray constantly for justice and peace; pray for world leaders that they will be guided by wisdom and peace.
- Commit ourselves to be witnesses to the personal and social transformation that comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

- Develop avenues for interfaith dialogue and fellowship, particularly with Muslim communities, in order to bring about mutual respect and understanding.
- Recognize values of diverse faiths that call for peace and justice.
- Denounce bigotry and discrimination, and examine ourselves for cultural and religious sensitivity.
- Be vigilant about the mixing of religion and politics in order to guard against engendering hate.
- Support governmental security while advocating for civil liberties.
- Call upon our government and other leaders to seek a more secure world through actions, procedures, and organizations of mutual security that bring terrorists to justice.
- Encourage all American Baptist to offer themselves as ambassadors of peace whenever and wherever possible.

36. Angela Farrar (Seattle First Baptist Church, Seattle, WA), Gordon Braun, and youth representatives used skits to introduce the second Statement of Concern: “Relationships with Youth.” There was one respondent to the statement. (638 Affirm; 4 Not Affirm)

The text of the Statement of Concern on relationships with youth follows:

**STATEMENT OF CONCERN: RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUTH**

Now, more than ever, young people have numerous outside influences impacting their lives. Long past are the days when the greatest concern for parents was the influence of Elvis Presley and the Beatles on their children. Now, media influence encompasses music and music videos with explicit lyrics, movies, television, video games with excessive violence, and the Internet, which can expose youth to images and people that can be to the detriment of young people’s physical and emotional well being. We live in a society in which the desire to hold on to youthful innocence is not only lost, but often discouraged in the mainstream media, and in society as a whole.

As times have changed, so has the make-up of the family. It is increasingly difficult for a family to afford the luxury of one parent remaining at home with the children while the other provides the family’s income. Most two-parent families require both parents to work outside the home. Furthermore, the church, along with the rest of the country, is seeing a rapid decline in the traditional two-parent family. This often leaves the single parent with the responsibility of having to work many hours away from the home, often leaving children with less than adequate supervision. This opens the door even wider to the unhealthy influences of the media, peers, and adults who may not have the best interests of youth in mind.

However, parents and other invested and caring adults still have great influence on young people. The words and admonitions of parents continue to have significant impact on today’s youth, even in the face of media and peer pressure. Young people desire to be engaged in meaningful relationships with their parents and other influential adults. With this in mind, parents should make every effort to provide positive, godly counsel and to spend quality time with their children. Likewise, the church has a responsibility to provide an atmosphere for healthy, redemptive relationships to develop between young people and parents and other adults. Furthermore our churches should be intentional about integrating youth into the total life of the congregation.

American Baptists have a great obligation to help parents rear their children with biblical principles. Many teenagers attend a weekly church-related event. This affords the church a great opportunity to provide relationships to help young people grow in Christ. Unfortunately, many of our churches do not devote the resources necessary to provide healthy, redemptive relationships between adults and youth. Whether those resources include time, funding for youth programming, or personnel/volunteers, generous, persistent efforts need to be made by the church to create meaningful, Christ-like relationships between our adults and our youth.

Therefore, we call American Baptist Churches to:

- Make youth ministry a priority in our churches and denominations. Just as Jesus encouraged young people to be in his presence, so must the church encourage the presence, gifts, and participation of young people in the life of the Body of Christ at all levels (Mark 10:13-16).
- Support parents by providing opportunities for training, fellowship, and nurture. The Body of Christ is called to equip the parent to parent the youth (Proverbs 22:6 NRSV).
- Provide mentoring for our young people. All mature adult members of the Body of Christ are obligated to share their wisdom, values, and life experiences with a young person, whether that person is a family member, neighbor, or fellow congregant. Current ministries such as AB Girls and AB Boys and Young Men are a few of the many resources available to the local church (I Timothy 5:1-2).
- Model healthy adult relationships. The Church must put into action the word of God by living it out before our young people. Youth watch what adults do more than they listen to what adults say (II Timothy 1:5-6).
- Create a climate of meaningful relationships between adults and young people within the community of our churches. The Body of Christ must intentionally create fellowship opportunities for and with young people, and must allow young people the freedom to worship and fellowship in their own, unique way. Regularly scheduled gatherings, multi-generational fellowship events, worship services organized by the youth, and youth-oriented Bible studies, regional and national events, and new models of churches working together are some of the ways in which churches can develop community for young people.

The ushers collected the ballots on both statements from delegates and the totals were announced at the evening session.

37. David Hunt offered a benediction to recess the morning session.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 2003**

**EVENING GATHERING**

*"Centered in Christ: A Witnessing People"*

38. The **University Baptist Praise Team** (University of Illinois, Champaign, IL) **led gathering music.**

39. **Walter L. Parrish II** welcomed the congregation and **announced the results of the election of officers.** ABC officers for the 2004-2005 biennium are: [# of votes of confirmation]

PRESIDENT: Peggy Johnson, First Baptist Church, North Kingstown, RI [757]

VICE PRESIDENT: Arlee Griffin, Berean Missionary Baptist Church, Brooklyn, NY [757]

BUDGET REVIEW OFFICER: Melva Gray, First Baptist Church, Indianapolis, IN [757]

#### STATEMENTS OF CONCERN COMMITTEE

Term Ending June 2007:

Janet DeWitt, First Baptist Church, Sioux Falls, SD [738]

M. Ingrid Dvirnak, First Baptist Church, Pueblo, CO [730]

Michael-Ray Mathews, Grace Baptist Church, San José, CA [734]

Edna Pincham, Third Baptist Church, Youngstown, OH [734]

Bruce Reed Pullen, Central Baptist Church, Westfield, MA [739]

Russell Steiner, Melba Community Baptist Church, Melba, ID [728]

Harry J. Williamson, First Baptist Church, East Rochester, NY [730]

Term Ending June 2005:

Gordon Braun, Demarest Baptist Church, Demarest, NJ [725]

40. **Parrish** then **introduced** the evening's speaker, **Steve Fitzhugh**, founder and president of PowerMoves, and the musical groups "**One Way**" and the "**West Virginians.**"
41. Following the procession of Regional Executive Ministers, youth representatives, and representatives from ABBoys and Young Men and AB GIRLS, **Louise Barger**, Executive Minister from the ABC of the Rocky Mountains, and youth representatives **offered an invitation to the 2005 Biennial Meeting in Denver.**
42. **Linda Spoolstra**, Executive Minister from the ABC of Massachusetts, **offered a prayer.**
43. Regional Youth Representatives **Danica Hernandez** and **Peter Oldham** offered testimony about the significance of being part of the Regional Youth Representative program, and **invited** the congregation **to give to the offering** in support of the Regional Youth Representative program. The offering was received while the congregation sang "The Servant Song," led by Sandra Collins. (Total received: \$3,543.26)
44. **Yosh Nakagawa presented** the Cora and John **Sparrowk President's Award to Dr. Loris Coletta.**
45. **Dr. Coletta responded.**
46. "One Way" provided **special music.**
47. Steve Fitzhugh provided the **address.**
48. The "West Virginians" provided **special music.**
49. One of the Regional Youth Representatives offered a benediction.

#### **SUNDAY, JUNE 29, 2003**

##### **MORNING WORSHIP**

*"Centered in Christ to Serve"*

50. As people entered the hall **David Wells played gathering music** including "This Is My Father's World" and "Wind Beneath My Wings."
51. Roy Medley welcomed the congregation and gave instructions regarding the logistics of the communion service.
52. **Sandra Collins and Brad Berglund led** the congregation in **singing** "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms."



53. **Kate Harvey offered a prayer** of confession.
54. Following an introduction and explanation by Collins, the congregation sang “Bless the Lord,” and “O Lord, Hear Our Prayer,” music from the Taizé community in France.
55. **Harvey gave the invitation to Communion** which was repeated in Spanish, French, Portuguese, Japanese, Tagalog, and Chinese. The congregation sang “Come and Fill.” Harvey then **offered the Great Thanksgiving prayer**. **A. Roy Medley and Walter L. Parrish II officiated communion**.
56. Following the singing of “Blest Be The Tie That Binds,” **Parrish read Col 1: 15-20**.
57. **Medley preached** the sermon.
58. **Collins, Berglund, and Abbington led** the congregation in singing “Jesus, Be My Center.”
59. **Sandra Simms discussed CARITAS** (Congregations Around Richmond Involved To Assure Shelter), a community-based organization which enables member congregations to provide shelter and hospitality to persons who are homeless in the Richmond Metropolitan Area, and **invited** the congregation to contribute to **an offering** to benefit CARITAS. (Total received: \$5,081.05)
60. The **Haitian Alliance Mass Choir** under the direction of Rev. **Duval Denis sang anthems**.
61. **Medley offered the benediction**.
62. **James Abbington played the postlude**.

### **SUNDAY, JUNE 29, 2003**

#### **EVENING GATHERING**

*“Centered in Christ: A Growing People”*

63. The worship service began with the congregation singing “O, How I love Jesus,” “I Thank You, Jesus,” and the NEW LIFE 2010 Hymn.
64. **Carol Sutton**, director of NEW LIFE 2010, welcomed the congregation and **discussed NEW LIFE 2010**, the decade-long American Baptist emphasis. Sutton called attention to those churches designated “NEW LIFE 2010 churches.” She then **introduced Rev. Susan Maybeck**, president of the Board of National Ministries.
65. **Maybeck led a litany** focusing on NEW LIFE 2010, and **offered a prayer**. Maybeck **explained the NEW LIFE 2010 Award**, established to recognize excellence in ministry that has led to congregational transformation through church planting, evangelism or caring ministries, and **introduced Aidsand Wright-Riggins**, Executive Director of National Ministries, to present the award.
66. **Wright-Riggins introduced Rev. Gracie M. Jackson** Senior Associate Minister at the Eagle River Baptist Church in Eagle River, Alaska, and **presented** her with the NEW LIFE 2010 award.
67. **Jackson responded**.
68. The Rev. **Valentine Royal**, Executive Director, American Baptist Women in Ministry **presented ABCUSA President-elect Peggy Johnson, Vice-President-elect Arlee Griffin, and Budget Review Officer-Re-Elect Melva Gray**, and **introduced Rev. Héctor Cortez as the new Executive Director of International Ministries and Rev. Dr. C. Jeff Woods as the new associate general secretary for Regional Ministries**.
69. After the congregation sang “Here I am, Lord,” **Carole Dieciedue**, director of American Baptist Volunteer Services, along with **Nancy Tracy and Hector Ramirez** discussed the mission and service of American Baptist Volunteer Services, and **invited** the congregation to contribute to the **offering** to fund grants to people who are unable to raise sufficient money to

cover travel costs to the place where they would like to serve as a volunteer missionary. (Total received: \$2,973.53) The **Exaltation Ringers** (First Baptist Church, Topeka, KS) played the **offertory**.

70. **Randy Palada introduced Rev. Dr. James D. Carrington**, pastor of Friendship Baptist Church (Yorba Linda, CA) as the preacher for the evening.
71. After the **Friendship Baptist Church Choir**, under the direction of **Brent Jones**, led **worship** by singing, **Carrington read Col 1.15-20 and preached**.
72. Friendship Baptist Church choir led the congregation in song and continued singing while people exited.

## **MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2003**

### **MORNING GATHERING**

73. As people entered the hall **David Wells** played gathering music.
74. Co-Chairperson of the local arrangements committee, **Barry Young**, introduced **Dr. Bernard W. Franklin**, president of Virginia Union University.
75. **Franklin brought greetings**.
76. President **Hunt** began by sharing some thoughts on differing while remaining unified, a scripture (Phil. 1:6), and a prayer. He then **called the business session to order**. He called attention to the First and Second Resolutions to amend the ABCUSA Bylaws, as found in the Business Booklet of delegates' packets.
77. **Hunt presented the first proposed Resolution, to amend Article XV - Officers, Section 1, Paragraph 2 of the ABCUSA Bylaws** (text below), which defines the way in which the President and Vice President of ABC/USA are nominated.

Article XV, Section 1, Paragraph 2: "Upon nomination by the ABCUSA Nominating Committee, or from the floor at Biennial Meeting, the President and the Vice President shall be elected by the Delegates in Biennial Meeting for a single two-year term only, commencing on January 1 next following the dates of their election, and until their successors are elected. In proposing nominees for the office of President, the ABC/USA Nominating Committee shall give consideration to rotating such nominees among the following three (3) categories: (i) clergy; (ii) laymen; and (iii) laywomen, with equal and fair consideration given to all persons regardless of ethnic and language group."

Hunt explained that the ABC Nominating Committee requested that the category of clergy be divided into "clergymen" and "clergywomen". The **proposed changes** would alter the last sentence of Article XV - Officers, Section 1, Paragraph 2 to read:

"In proposing nominees for the office of President, the ABC/USA Nominating Committee shall give consideration to **rotating such nominees among the following four (4) categories: (i) clergymen; (ii) laymen; (iii) clergywomen; and (iv) laywomen**, with equal and fair consideration given to all persons regardless of ethnic and language group.

"The new rotation will begin with the 2006-2007 biennium."

78. Nominating committee chairperson **Jim Foster moved** the proposed amendment; Vice-President **Nakagawa seconded** the amendment. A total of three people spoke during the time allotted for discussion, two in favor and one opposed to the proposed amendment.
79. **Delegates voted** by ballot as called for in the "Rules of Procedure for the Conduct of Business at the 2003 Biennial Meeting of Delegates." A 2/3rds majority was required for passage of the By-law amendment. **The motion passed** by a vote of 469 For, 169 Against, 5 Abstaining.

80. Vice-President **Nakagawa presented the second proposed Resolution to amend** the ABCUSA Bylaws. Nakagawa explained that the question of whether or not a national or regional staff member who is duly elected by an organization cited under Article II, Membership of the ABCUSA By-laws can serve as a General Board Representative. Clearly Article III states that a Representative shall not serve as a staff member of ABCUSA, or of a National or Regional administrative unit.

Nakagawa explained that the By-laws do not address whether or not an organization cited under Article II can name an alternate to represent the organization on the General Board in the event that the President of this organization is also a staff member.

He explained that the Standing Rules Committee proposed the following addition to Article II - Membership, of ABC/USA By-laws. This addition (text below) would become the second paragraph of Article II.

**Proposed** Article II Paragraph 2: “In the event that the elected President of The Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board of American Baptist Churches, The American Baptist Historical Society, American Baptist Men, American Baptist Women’s Ministries or The Ministers Council of ABC/USA is or becomes during his/her term a staff member of ABC/USA or of a National or Regional administrative unit, the President will not be permitted to serve as a Representative. The organization that has elected the President will immediately need to select an alternate to represent the organization on the General Board and related assignments (such as observer to the General Board Executive Committee).”

81. **Jean Cunningham moved** the proposed amendment; President **Hunt seconded** the amendment. There was no discussion.

82. **Delegates voted** by ballot as called for in the “Rules of Procedure for the Conduct of Business at the 2003 Biennial Meeting of Delegates.” A 2/3rds majority was required for passage of the By-law amendment. **The motion passed** by a vote of 640 For, 15 Against, 18 Abstaining. The ushers collected the ballots on both amendments and the totals were announced at the evening session.

83. The congregation sang a hymn. **Hunt thanked Collins and Abbington** for their music leadership during the convention.

84. A second presentation of program board reports was given by staff and board members of International Ministries, National Ministries, and Educational Ministries.

85. **John Jacobs reported on the work of the American Baptist Foundation** while photo of Foundation field staff were projected onto the screen.

86. Members of the **Statements of Concern Committee introduced the third Statement of Concern: “Celebrating the Clergy/Congregational Relationship”** through the use of a skit and projected photographs, and **Jeanette Holt** (University Baptist Church, College Park, MD) **gave a testimony** regarding her church’s relationship with their former pastor. (513 Affirm; 5 Not Affirm)

#### STATEMENT OF CONCERN CELEBRATING THE CLERGY/CONGREGATIONAL RELATIONSHIP

The relationship that God intends to exist between clergy and congregation is to be celebrated. Paul, in his letter to Timothy, called the work of the clergy within the congregation a noble task (I Timothy 3:1). In his letter to the church at Philippi, Paul told the congregation that he thanked God every time he thought of them (Philippians 1:3). In the book of Acts, we are told that the elders of the church at Ephesus loved Paul so deeply that when he left, the elders prayed with him, embraced him, kissed him, and wept because they would not see him again (Acts 20:36-38).

Clergy and congregation share life in a dimension matched by few human relationships. They support, encourage, challenge, and inspire one another. They minister with and to one another, accompanying one another through both the most jubilant and the most sorrowful experiences of life. The opportunity to pastor a church and the privilege of a church to receive pastoral care are profound reciprocal blessings. Biblical instruction for clergy/congregational relationships can be found in 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14.

As in all meaningful relationships, there are ways in which the clergy/congregation relationship can be damaged. Sometimes clergy commit transgressions against the congregations they serve. Tragically, clergy sometimes abuse the sacred relationships they have with individuals in a congregation or with a congregation as a whole. In other situations, the congregation or individuals within it exploit their role in the church to the severe detriment of the pastor. Many times the relationship between congregation and clergy is damaged simply because the expectations of one were not met by the other. In such instances, no grievous sin or lapse in ethics has been committed. Still, disappointment can lead to estrangement and sometimes to the severing of the relationship. Both clergy and laity need to learn to say "I apologize" and to seek forgiveness and restoration with the spirit of Christ as instructed in Ephesians 4:25-32.

In most cases, when the relationship between clergy and congregation is damaged, both parties bear some of the blame. With Paul we need to acknowledge we are not yet perfect (Philippians 3:12). Regardless of who is at fault, when the relationship between clergy and congregation is significantly harmed, great pain is inflicted upon all involved, especially, the witness of the body of Christ to the world. This pain can express itself through severe division within the congregation, loss of membership, systemic pain, or involuntary termination of the pastor. In some cases the anguish becomes so great that members turn away from participation in any church and pastors pursue a change in career.

The Ministers Council of American Baptist Churches U.S.A. and other clergy groups have found that clergy/congregation relationships can be greatly enhanced by the formation of a stated covenant between the clergy and the congregation, examples of which can be obtained from the Ministers Council. This written covenant is to be developed and agreed on by both the clergy and the congregation. The covenant is more than a job description. It outlines the congregation's expectations of and commitment to the clergy as well as the clergy's expectations of and commitment to the congregation.

The congregation should include in the covenant a clear explanation of compensation and benefits, expectations of work hours and time off for family and self, a commitment to provide continuing education opportunities for the clergy, and a description of the responsibilities the clergy is expected to fulfill. In addition, the covenant should describe how the clergy is to be evaluated and what process shall be followed if the clergy is to be commended or if disappointment or grievances arise with the clergy's fulfillment of responsibilities. A clear statement of the help and resources that would be employed in the event of conflict is essential. Furthermore, the covenant should commit the congregation to a stated code of ethics in dealing with the pastor. The ethical code should include a commitment to honesty, compassion, clarity, open dialogue, gender sensitivity, confidentiality, forgiveness, support, affirmation, spiritual growth, justice, sexual morality, and civility.

The clergy should include in the covenant an acceptance of the compensation, benefits, work expectations, time off, continuing education provisions, and responsibilities as agreed upon. In addition, the clergy should state a commitment to follow the process established for addressing disappointments and grievances with the congregation, including the willingness to work with the help and resources requested by the congregation. Lastly, the clergy should commit to follow a stated code of ethics in ministering to the congregation. The ethical code should include a commitment to honesty, compassion, clarity, open dialogue, gender sensitivity, confidentiality, forgiveness, support, affirmation, spiritual growth, justice, sexual morality, and civility.

Because of both the wondrous potential for blessing and the tragic potential for pain that exists in clergy/congregation relationships, it is of utmost importance for all involved to dedicate themselves to building healthy relationships.

We therefore call upon:

- American Baptist congregations and clergy to find ways of celebrating and nurturing their ministry together.
- American Baptist congregations and clergy to seek the help of the Ministers Council of the ABCUSA and other resources in developing a covenant of their commitments to one another.
- American Baptist congregations to provide clergy with compensation, benefits, continuing education, and other kinds of support in keeping with their ministry assignments and with the standards recommended by their Region.
- American Baptist clergy to follow the highest ethical codes of their calling and profession.
- American Baptist congregations and clergy to make use of the resources of their Region in responding to disappointments and grievances within their relationship.
- American Baptist congregations to seek every avenue of conflict resolution before involuntary termination of clergy occurs. And if it occurs, to administer termination with grace and compassionate compensation.
- American Baptist congregations and clergy throughout their mutual ministry to relate to each other with the full character of Christian love as set forth by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ballots were collected at the exit, and the totals announced at the evening session.

87. Hunt announced that the fourth Statement of Concern would be taken up during the afternoon session. He prayed and recessed the meeting.

### **MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2003 AFTERNOON GATHERING**

88. The business session reconvened with President **Hunt and regional youth delegates leading praise songs.**

89. After a video introduction to the issues, Charles Jones presented the fourth Statement of Concern: "American Baptists and the Global Impact of HIV/AIDS."

(289 Affirm;106 Not Affirm)

## STATEMENT OF CONCERN: THE GLOBAL IMPACT OF AIDS

About every 15 seconds, someone in the world is infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. An estimated 2.7 million children under 15 years of age are living with HIV disease worldwide; 88 percent of these children live in sub-Saharan Africa. The virus is spreading quickly: In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, an estimated one million people are living with HIV. That is more than the estimated number of HIV-positive individuals in North America, though cases of HIV were found in North America ten years earlier.<sup>1</sup>

The economic and social impact of HIV/AIDS in the developing world is profound. In the Worldwide pandemic, HIV/AIDS is spread in a complex web of behaviors and social conditions: lack of personal responsibility, poverty, rape, gender inequality, and failing to hold the body sacred as a temple of God. When a working family member becomes seriously ill from AIDS, immediately household income drops; children, especially teenagers, leave school to support the family. Community support for the family drops because of the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS, either because the family is shunned or because the family rejects available support in order to maintain secrecy. Family property is sold, and borrowing increases in an attempt to meet the sick individual's medical needs. Women are particularly hard hit by HIV/AIDS; they carry the majority of the caregiving responsibilities, while also being the most stigmatized if they become HIV-positive. As parents and children die of AIDS, family networks are shrinking and generations are lost. The costs in terms of human creativity, economic productivity, love, and caring are tremendous. Around the world HIV/AIDS has exacerbated poverty and made basic health care and clean, safe living conditions even more important. As the number of available workers decreases and the number of orphans increases, community-level and national-level organizations are heavily burdened trying to meet human needs and maintain a viable economy.<sup>2</sup>

The lifesaving drugs that have decreased the death rate in the West have been too expensive for the developing world to use until recently, when, under pressure, pharmaceutical companies made agreements with several countries to provide these medications at a much lower cost. We commend their philanthropy. We rejoice in this movement toward justice, and we encourage more such advances. Furthermore, we thank God that Botswana is the first African nation to offer free, life-long HIV treatment to anyone who needs it. We encourage other nations ravaged by the epidemic to follow suit. We rejoice that in Uganda the World vision model that includes prevention education and care has dramatically decreased the transmission of HIV/AIDS.

American Baptists uphold the value of all people, created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) and intended to live together in harmony (Acts 17: 26). God cares about and protects the weak sheep in the flock (Ezekiel 34:16, 31.) We are responsible to care for the vulnerable among us because Jesus said, "Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it unto me" (see Matthew 25:31-46). Jesus was concerned with healing the sick in body and soul (Mark 1:32-34, 5:21-42, 6:53-56; Matt 8:16-17, 9:18-26, 14:34-36; Luke 5:12-26, 13:10-17), and as a people of God, and with Christ as our model, we too are charged with comforting the sick and ministering to their families' physical and spiritual needs. HIV/AIDS is a disease that stigmatizes its victims, and efforts to help are hampered by

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<sup>1</sup> All prevalence statistics from UNAIDS December 1, 2001 prevalence report.

<sup>2</sup> UNAIDS Report from a Consultation on the Socio-Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS on Households, Chiangmai, Thailand, 22-24 September 1995.

prejudice and fear. We as Christians know that God is love, and perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18). Because God loved us, we must love and serve one another (John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:7).

Therefore, American Baptists are called to:

- Pray to God for help, wisdom, mercy, and power as we respond to the crisis.
- Support mission outreach that provides accurate preventative education as well as comfort and assistance to families affected by HIV/AIDS, including nutritional needs, emotional support, economic structures, community support structures, and hope that comes from knowing God's love in Jesus Christ.
- Sponsor a family or a village in the developing world, that they might have health care and safe living conditions.
- Advocate to our congressional representatives and to multinational companies in support of legislation and practices that help people living with HIV/AIDS both here and abroad.
- Fight the misconception that HIV/AIDS affects only certain segments of the population.

Regional Youth Representatives serving as ushers collected the ballots on both statements from delegates and the totals were announced at the evening session.

90. **Loris Coletta presented the Adopted Statement of Concern "Compassionate Care Giving."** (365 Affirm; 9 Not Affirm)

ADOPTED STATEMENT OF CONCERN: *COMPASSIONATE CARE GIVING*

We are increasingly facing the dilemma of an aging population and those who have become victims of debilitating illnesses such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, cancer, strokes, and paralyzing injuries. Middle-aged families have become known as the "Sandwich Family" as they care for their loved ones and still have children at home. Twenty-five percent of American households are caregivers to some 39,000,000 people. <sup>3</sup> A typical caregiver is 46 years old, married, working and spends 18 hours a week caring for a loved one. <sup>4</sup> Less than 5% of those needing care are in institutions, and the cost of unpaid care is estimated to be \$196,000,000 more than the cost of health care and nursing care combined. This does not include lost wages or lost pension benefits of these caregivers. <sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Kiecolt-Glasser J.K. Glasser, R. Chronic stress and mortality among older adults. Journal Of The American Medical Association, 1999, p. 282.

<sup>4</sup> Flori, D.E. The prevalence of later life family concerns in the marriage and family therapy journal literature. A Content Analysis, Journal Of Marital And Family Therapy, 1989, p. 289-297; Van Amberg, S.M. Barber C.E. and Zimmerman T.S. Aging and Family Therapy: Prevalence of aging issues and later family life concerns in marital and family therapy literature. Journal Of Marital And Family Therapy 22, 1999, p.95-203.

<sup>5</sup> Flori, D. E. Clinical Update: Care Giving For The Elderly. Family Therapy Magazine, July August 2002, p. 36-42.

Statistics show that those over 65 now comprise 13% of the population and will reach 70,000,000 people in the near future. Many will live into their 80s and beyond. <sup>6</sup> On average, those with Alzheimer's will live 8-12 years beyond the time they show signs of the illness; those with heart disease will live 3 to 4 years beyond diagnosis; those with cancer 5 to 6 years beyond the initial onset. <sup>7</sup> This means a higher cost for medical, emotional, and social needs.

The rate of suicide attempts by those over 65 years of age is 6 times higher than that of the average population. Some begin to abuse alcohol and drugs. Deep depression occurs with about 22% of this population at risk with only 3% ever experiencing help. <sup>8</sup>

Many people of all ages require constant care such as being fed, dressed, bathed and helped with other basic necessities. We have watched the empty stares on the faces of those with Alzheimer's, the terrible physical contortions of those with Parkinson's, the lifting and preparation of those needing to be in wheel chairs, and the deterioration of the physical bodies of cancer victims.

Caregivers ride a roller coaster of emotions: sadness, guilt, exhaustion, and desperation, in the midst of feeling the satisfaction of caring for a loved one. The scriptures speak of God's compassion both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the book of Jeremiah we read that in the midst of the worst crisis in exile Jeremiah gave advice that they were to contribute to the well being of that city. "Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you shall find your welfare" (Jeremiah 29:7). In the book of James we read that we are to "care for orphans and widows in their suffering" (James1:27b). Caregivers fulfill this call but need the support of the church. Even though the needs of care giving appear greater than our resources, our churches must commit to caring for those in need.

Therefore, we call on American Baptists to:

- Recruit and train teams of people in our churches and communities that can provide respite and encouragement for caregivers, those receiving care, and their families.
- Identify and make use of existing resources available for care giving.
- Address the grief issues of caregivers such as loss of vocation and freedom.
- Urge our government representatives to pass legislation that will bring better services to those requiring chronic care and to their caregivers, including medical benefits and insurance coverage.
- Be an advocate for new areas of research to find cures for these diseases.
- Follow the example of Jesus as a compassionate caregiver.

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<sup>6</sup> Flori, D.E. The prevalence of later life family concerns in the marriage and family therapy journal literature. A Content Analysis, Journal Of Marital And Family Therapy, 1989, p. 289-297.

<sup>7</sup> Kiecolt-Glasser J.K. Glasser, R. Chronic stress and mortality among older adults. Journal Of The American Medical Association, 1999, p. 282.

<sup>8</sup> Zarit S.H. And Zarit, J.M. Mental Disorders In Older Adults: Fundamentals of assessment and treatment, New York: Guilford, 1998; Blazer, D.G. Epidemiology Of Later Life Depression. In L.S. Schneider; C.E. Reynolds, B.D. Lebowitz And A. J. Friedhoff (Eds.) Diagnosis and treatment of depression in later life. Results Of The NIH Consensus Development Conf. Pp 9-18 Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1999; Bartels, S. L. Mental Health: Assisted living's next challenge. Assisted Living Today, vol. 8, 2001, p. 25-27.



91. **Two Signature Statements** were presented, one entitled “War is No Solution” and one on “Baptist Principles”. Hunt reminded those present that discussion on the Signature Statements would be forwarded to the General Board and Statement of Concern Committee for discussion and action, but would not be voted on by delegates.
92. **Hunt recognized and thanked Statements of Concern Committee** members for their hard work, and invited regional youth delegates to lead a closing song.
93. President Hunt recessed the meeting until evening.

## EVENING GATHERING : MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2003

*“Centered in Christ: A Worshipping People”*

94. The evening session began with a video presentation about the American Baptist Historical Society, followed by a **concert by Ken Medema**.
95. General Secretary **Medley** thanked Medema, and **introduced Daniel Vestal** of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. **Vestal brought greetings** and words of appreciation from the CBF to the ABCUSA.
96. Medley offered a prayer of confession and intercession for members ABCUSA.
97. Vice-President **Nakagawa introduced the Rev. Yamina Apolaris** as the evening’s preacher, and **thanked** retiring International Ministries Executive Director **John Sundquist** (absent because of a death in the family) **and** outgoing President **David Hunt** for their leadership and service.
98. **Hunt offered remarks** concerning the current and future state of the denomination.
99. The congregation viewed “Celebrating A Great Cloud Of Witnesses, ” a multi-media collage honoring ABCUSA award winners, ABCUSA leaders who have died, those who have left staff/retired, anniversaries of the AB Historical Society and Interim Ministries, the Women’s American Baptist Home Mission Society, and concluding with photos of current officers and elected officers.
100. President **Hunt introduced President-elect Peggy Johnson**.
101. President-elect **Johnson made a short address** naming unity as the goal of her presidency.
102. A **prayer for Johnson was offered** by former ABC Presidents Davidson, González, McCray, and President Hunt.
103. **Karen Shipp**, music coordinator for the Biennial, **led the congregation** in singing “Alleluia.”
104. **Apolaris read Luke 7: 36 – 50, and preached.**
105. **Medema** presented a short concert in response to the sermon.
106. The scripture from John 3.16 was read in a variety of languages.
107. The congregation sang the hymn “How Firm a Foundation.”
108. **Medley gave a commissioning blessing**, followed by more songs played by Medema.

## REGISTRATION REPORT FOR THE 2003 BIENNIAL

Registered Delegates:	1,567
Registered Visitors:	678
Musicians and Richmond Volunteers:	532
Staff:	236

<b>Total</b>	<b>3,013</b>
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