

**Ministry Report of the General Secretary
June 2017**

Dear Members of the Board of General Ministries,

*"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through him." (Colossians 3:17)*

Thank you, my friends, for the privilege of serving as ABCUSA's General Secretary! My ministry began on June 1, 2017 and it has been a busy three weeks, to be sure! My days have been filled with conversations of all kinds – building relationships with all of the staff members of OGS, preparing for the Mission Summit in Portland, and meeting for the first time with the ABCUSA Officers, OGS leadership Team and the NEC. I also have meet with Sharon Koh (IM), Virginia Holmstrom (ABWM) and Perkin Simpson (ABF) individually. There are many issues that have demanded immediate attention, including the upcoming move to the new Mission Center, the operations of the Computer Center, United Mission, and staffing for the future ministry of OGS.

Ethicsdaily.com taped a video interview with me, and my first pastoral letter, on racism and violence, has received widespread distribution and garnered a good deal of positive feedback from all parts of our ABCUSA family. I also filmed a video presentation for the Christian Community Credit Union, in celebration of the retirement of its President, John Walling, after 45 years of distinguished service.

At our meeting on May 8, I outlined my key ministry priorities. They are to:

- **Unify** our Family based on Core Convictions and Joyful Mission
- **Strengthen** our Regions as they serve our churches and clergy
- **Promote** the mission of our national agencies and mission partners
- **Lead** our family into new church growth, evangelism and creative service
- **Encourage** creative partnerships

I have been working on all five priorities from day one. For example, I have already accepted invitations to speak or participate in seven regional events: New Jersey, Northwest, Great Rivers (September), Central, West Virginia (October), ABCOFLASH (November), and Vermont/New Hampshire (March 2018). I have asked for and received a standing invitation to attend REMC events and meetings, and will be similarly asking for invitations to attend, as possible, cluster REMC groups and retreats. Before year's end, I anticipate face to face conversations with at least one half of the Executive Ministers. I will share about the other priorities in my oral presentation to the Board.

In August, I plan to participate in the Rhythms of the Spirit Retreat for two days, and during that time have conversation concerning *Transformed by the Spirit* with two of its team leaders. In November, I will speak at the national Haitian Alliance annual meeting and attend the National Council of Churches Board Meeting.

In Christ's name,



Rev. Dr. Lee B. Spitzer
General Secretary
American Baptist Churches USA