

**Report to BGM from Representative to BIM**  
**Rev Vivan H Martindale**  
**November 2016**

It has been a privilege to serve on the BGM for these last several years and most recently to be representative to the Board of International Ministries. We have transitioned from the old organizational structure (corporate?) to the new structural expression (associational?). My hope is that the various representatives from BGM to other boards will only be the 'minimal' effort at discerning the new relationships between these expressions of American Baptist mission. Our new structure is not the "be all / end all" but our best judgment at the time. We should expect to continually assess our relationships and ministries; making our means of ministry and mission flexible, adaptable and focused. In order to accomplish this we must make time for each other.

Since BGM is the only board fully representative of all the regions, auxiliary organizations and churches then we (BGM) carry a unique privilege and responsibility to always be calling each other to the table to learn from each other and discern how we can best serve Jesus Christ. BIM is cognizant of the need for membership broadly representative of our ABC family. But the board is more intentionally focused currently on recruitment of members who represent a range of talents, various areas of expertise as well as a passion and demonstrated commitment to the new strategic vision for mission, ***Responding to the Call***.

The calling of Rev. Sharon Koh as Executive Director of the Board of International Ministries was a prayerful, thoughtful and unanimous decision. She is a devoted disciple of Jesus Christ, birthed into and passionate for the mission of Jesus Christ at every level. She is intelligent, articulate and humorous and expected to effectively grow into the leadership of our large multi-dimensional mission organization. Sharon has also expressed a desire for growing the conversations across our new structure.

A new strategic plan has been adopted, a new Executive Director hired and new board members inducted. I believe the board will turn toward implementing the new strategic plan and continuing to educate the board on its own fiduciary, legal and policy responsibilities. Assessment of staffing patterns and bringing the communications, media and electronic footprint up to date with current technology are already in process. I believe the next two years will be critical for the future and will see innovations in delivery of mission and the invitation to the ABC family as well as the "nones" to participate in making a difference in mission through participation personally and financially.

The essential identity of BIM as 'independent' will continue to be clarified and internalized as the new strategic plan is implemented. As each of the primary boards clarify its own ministry identity we will have the freedom to come together and be able to articulate what each brings to the table. There is much work to do in the future from each perspective. Yet there will be much work that can better be done when we work together.

It has been an honor to serve on the BGM and I am grateful to have served with so many esteemed board members and officers. While this will be my final meeting as a board member I stand ready to work in any way feasible to build new and healthy relationships between our boards. My prayers will especially continue to go ahead of and behind the work of the Board of General Ministries

With deepest gratitude,  
Rev. Vivan Martindale