

American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.

**BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES
MINUTES: November 14-16, 2013**



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**Ruth Clark, President
Donald Ng, Vice President
James R. Ratliff, Budget Review Officer
Frank Christine, Jr., Past President**

“American Baptists Serving as the Hands and Feet of Christ”

Scripture Focus: *“As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.”*
Colossians 3:12-16

Thursday, November 14, 2013: 2:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.; Independence North

BGM 111 WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

ABC President Ruth Clark welcomed directors of the Board of General Ministries and called the meeting to order. She thanked Nancy O’Neill (ABC of Wisconsin) for ministering through her gift of music during the BGM plenary sessions and Tasha Wilson (ABC of the Rochester/Genesee Region) and Felipe Candelaria (Iglesias Bautistas de Puerto Rico) for serving as Tellers. She also conveyed regrets from BGM directors: Danny Jack, Mo Khan and Dianne Steelman.

BGM 112 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONS

President Clark recognized new BGM directors attending their first meeting: Richard Hanson, ABC of Maine (elected in June 2013), and Kelly Legg, ABC of Pennsylvania and Delaware, who is being nominated as a new BGM At-Large Director.

She also welcomed ABC vice-president elect Judy Fackenthal, who brought greetings.

BGM 113 BGM WORSHIP

Jeff Savage, BGM Chaplain, lit the Christ Candle as a symbol of Christ's presence and BGM's commitment to Worshipful Work. Focusing on the theme of "community", he led in worship through oral reading of the New Testament passage Colossians 2:12-16, and with silent meditation on the verses to address the questions: Who comes to mind as you focus on this scripture? Who makes this hard for you?

Nancy O'Neill shared in worship by playing from Ken Medema's songbook, "The Gathering." Throughout this BGM meeting, during times of worship/devotion, directors and staff also worshipped by singing together John Bell's song, "Take, O Take Me As I Am", from the Iona Community in Scotland.

*Take O take me as I am
Summon out what I shall be; set your seal upon my heart; and live in me.*

BGM 114 CONSENT AGENDA

It was by consensus

AGREED: To approve the Consent Agenda: November 14-16, 2013 Proposed Agenda; June 18-20, 2013 Minutes of the Board of General Ministries (meeting held in Overland Park, KS).

BGM 115 REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Report of the Nominating Committee/Election of New Member

Election of At-Large Directors of the Board of General Ministries

The Board of General Ministries is composed of At-Large Directors, Special Directors and Ex Officio Directors. There are 33 At-large Directors, one from each ABCUSA Region, elected by the Biennial Delegates. Any vacancy for an At-large Director "may be filled by a majority vote of the Board of General Ministries on nomination of the ABCUSA Nominating Committee."

Upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee, it was

VOTED: To elect Kelly Legg, ABC of Pennsylvania and Delaware, as an At-Large Director (class of 2016) as nominated to the Board of General Ministries.

VOTED: To elect Manuel Magana, (ABC of the Central Pacific Coast), as an At-Large Director (class of 2016) as nominated to the Board of General Ministries.

BGM 116 REPORTS OF THE PRESIDENT & GENERAL SECRETARY

Ruth Clark presented her final report as president of the ABC to the Board of General Ministries. General Secretary Roy Medley also provided a report of his work and travel since the June BGM meeting. Both written reports are attached to the official set of minutes filed in the General Secretary's office.

Jointly, the president and general secretary reported on the following events where they and other Baptist leaders were present:

Chin-Karen Consultation, Sept. 25-26, 2013 in Chicago

Leaders of the Chin Baptist Convention, the Karen Baptist Convention and American Baptist Churches USA met in Chicago in September for focused discussion related to the interest expressed by CBC and KBC in establishing, as independent organizations, a special relationship with ABC. Members of BGM who participated were: Roy Medley, Ruth Clark, Don Ng and Duh Kam. Options considered at this meeting included Associated Ministry Organization (AMO) status and Region status, as well as the possibility of relating in a "Special Relationship" category. The resulting conversations from this meeting will be taken back of the boards of the Chin and Karen Baptist conventions for further discussion.

588 Associates, LLP Real Estate Council Meeting, Oct. 16-17, 2013

The newly formed 588 Associates Real Estate Council met in October to launch a 2-3 year study that will culminate with a recommendation regarding the future location of the AB Mission Center and disposition of the current King of Prussia property. The Council, scheduled to meet quarterly, is made up of representatives of 588 Associates LLP (ABCUSA/BGM, ABHMS, MMBB & IM) and representatives from the AB Extension Corporation, AB Computer Center, AB Women's Ministries, AB Ministers Council and AB Foundation. Ruth Clark, Roy Medley, Alan Musoke and Jim Ratliff are members of the Council. CSG Urban Partners of Washington, DC (real estate development and consulting firm) is providing consulting services.

World Council of Churches Assembly, Oct. 30-Nov. 8, 2013 in Busan, Korea

BGM director Dr. June Totten, newly elected to the WCC Central Committee (which serves as the main decision-making body of the Council between assemblies), reported on her experiences at the WCC Assembly, held in Busan, Korea. The Assembly was planned with the theme "God of Life, Lead us to Justice and Peace." She noted that it was the Bible study sessions, the times of ecumenical conversations (engaging participants in sustained and in-depth conversations on critical issues that affect life and witness of the church today), and the diversity of cultures that made this time together so very rich. She expressed delight at the level of Baptist involvement in this event, including the role of our own General Secretary Roy Medley, who was elected as the first Baptist member of the WCC Nominating Committee. Roy also expressed what a great honor it was to have participated in this assembly with the world church. He noted that it was a privilege and yet somewhat humbling to study scripture with such a diversified group of people, many who have suffered greatly for the Gospel; that experience causes one to read the Scriptures and to pray for our world in a much different way.

Mission Table, Nov. 11-13, 2013 in Green Lake, WI

The first ever Mission Table was held at the Green Lake Conference Center just prior to this meeting. It brought American Baptist regions, affiliated ministry organizations, national staff, and officers to the table in focused conversation around 32 topics which originally surfaced through a national survey and the *Transformed by the Spirit* initiative. Conversations that resulted from the Mission Summit informed the work of the Mission Table. The ultimate goal of the Mission Table was that each participant would leave these conversations enthused about, and advocating for, a course of action relevant to their own organization's respective situation/needs. A webpage (www.missionsummitconversations.com) was established in June 2013 to sharing learnings from the Biennial Mission Summit. Mission Table learnings will also be posted on this site, as well as on the ABCUSA website (www.abc-usa.org).

Upon motion by Bill Frederickson, seconded by Camille Brown, it was

VOTED: To elect Jim Wolfe as BGM Director to the Board of ABHMS

Upon motion by Robin Crouch, seconded by June Totten, it was

VOTED: To elect Vivan Martindale as BGM Director to the Board of IM

Upon motion by Dean Parker, seconded by Earnest Jones, it was

VOTED: To re-elect Bill Frederickson as BGM Director to the Board of MMBB

BGM 118 ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE BGM FINANCE COMMITTEE

By recommendation of the Executive Committee, it was

VOTED: To approve the following as members of the BGM Finance Committee:
Robin Crouch, Beryl Hornberger, Charity Matic, Wesley Roberts and James Thomason

BGM 119 PRESIDENT'S NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS FOR 2014-2015

President's Nominations

Upon nomination of President-elect Don Ng, in consultation with General Secretary Roy Medley, it was

VOTED: To elect Camille Brown, Wesley Roberts, and Tasha Wilson as members of the BGM Executive Committee for 2014-2015

Upon nomination of President-elect Don Ng, it was

VOTED: To elect Dennis Johnson as BGM Parliamentarian for the 2014-2015 biennium

Upon nomination of President-elect Don Ng, in consultation with General Secretary Roy Medley, it was

VOTED: To elect Shirley Fair and Danny Jack as members of the World Relief Committee

Upon nomination of President-elect Don Ng, it was

VOTED: To elect Ruth Clark, Ernest Jones, Mo Khan, Jonathan Malone, Hopeton Scott, and June Totten, as members of the Committee on Christian Unity and Interfaith Relations

Upon nomination of President-elect Don Ng, in consultation with General Secretary Roy Medley, it was

VOTED: To elect Julia Bebeau, Kay Farley, and Alan Rudnick to the Standing Rules Committee

President's Appointments

The following votes were taken by the Board of General Ministries in regard to President-elect Don Ng's appointments for the 2014-2015 biennium:

VOTED: To recognize the appointment of the following six directors of the BGM to the Nominating Committee: Andy Arndt (Laity); Camille Brown (Clergy); Elisai Echevarria (Laity); Bill Frederickson (Clergy); Dianne Steelman (Clergy); Koreen Villers (Laity)

VOTED: To confirm the following appointments by the President-elect to the Biennial Program Committee: Susan Gillies (2017), Chair; Reg Mills (2015) – Past Chair; Steve Bils (2019) – Vice Chair; Aye Aye Thaw (2017); Leslie Braxton (2015); Felipe Candelaria (2017); Audrey Davidson (2015)

VOTED: To recognize the appointment of Wesley Roberts as Chair of the Credentials and Caucus Committee

VOTED: To recognize the appointment of Alan Rudnick as Chair of the Standing Rules Committee

VOTED: To recognize the appointment of Shirley Fair as Chair of the World Relief Committee

BGM 120 RESPONSE GROUP BREAK-OUT SESSIONS

At 4:00 p.m. President Clark adjourned the full meeting of the Board of General Ministries for directors to meet in Response Groups to focus its work in various areas. (The list of members of Response Groups below specify full membership; not all were able to be present for this break-out session.)

- **Christian Unity & Interfaith Relations—Mifflin 106**
June Totten, Ruth Clark, Ernest Jones, Mo Khan, Jonathan Malone, (Hopeton Scott)
- **Congregational Renewal—Independence North**
- *Don Ng, Jeff Woods, John Duckworth, Elisai Echevarria, Kay Farley, Bill Frederickson, Richard Hansen, Nancy O'Neill, Dean Parker, Koreen Villers, James Wolfe*
- **Finance—Radnor**
Jim Ratliff, Alan Musoke, Paul Higgins, Beryl Hornberger, Charity Matic, Wesley Roberts
- **Mission Resource Development—DeKalb 206**
Frank Christine Jr., Leo Thorne, Robin Crouch, Dennis Johnson, Vivan Martindale, Alan Rudnick, Elmore Warren
- **Missional Response—Devon**

Duh Kam, Roy Medley, Perla Belo, Shirley Fair, Danny Jack, Ray Jepson, Jim Thomason, Tasha Wilson

- **Professional Church Leadership—Independence North**
Jeff Savage, Pat Hernandez, Andy Arndt, Julia Bebeau, Camille Brown, Felipe Candelaria, Mercy Johnson, Kelly Legg, Dianne Steelman, Wesley Sun, Amaury Tañón-Santos

Following Response Group work, the Board shared dinner together.

BGM 121 CORPORATE MEETING OF ABHS

Rev. Dr. Trinette McCray, president of the American Baptist Historical Society, called the corporate meeting of ABHS to order at 7:30 p.m. Minutes of this meeting, which include an oral report from the President, a written report by ABHS Executive Director Deborah Van Broekhoven, and the election of ABHS officers and members of the board, are attached to the official BGM minutes filed in the General Secretary's office.

President Clark reconvened the meeting of the Board of General Ministries.

BGM 122 REPORT OF THE BGM FINANCE COMMITTEE

Jim R. Ratliff, Budget Review Officer, reviewed the YTD Financials through September 2013. He also shared an update on the work of 588 Associates, LP.

A one-hour session was allotted to the Budget Review Officer at this meeting to provide sufficient time to thoroughly review the 2014 ABCUSA Budget. It was further decided that action on the budget be taken on Friday or Saturday to facilitate additional time for discussion/questions prior to the vote.

All documents used for this session were transmitted prior to the meeting for review and are attached to the official copy of the minutes filed in the General Secretary's office.

BGM 123 OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Ken Marsenburg, Director of Development, shared an overview of the strategy for ABCUSA's development program. It is ABCUSA's hope to work directly and strategically with churches and individuals, with emphasis on proportionate giving, to employ pledge gifts and to encourage individuals who have a commitment towards the work found in Matthew 25 ("you did this for me") with personal, prayerful, pledge-like giving over a period of time. ABCUSA strives to work hard at recognizing individuals for their generosity and to concentrate in partnering with grantors who provide matching challenge gifts.

Ken noted that he works from the biblical principle, "To whom much is given, much is required" and he recognizes that true sacrificial givers come from experiencing hardship. He reported that out of its membership, ABC has received through *Transformed by the Spirit* an opportunity to transform lives. Well over \$770,000 has been received thus far, over 97% of the goal. *Transformed by the Spirit* is a movement, not a campaign. It is an opportunity to move forward the body of Christ.

President Clark recessed the meeting of BGM until Friday morning, November 15.

Friday, November 15, 2013: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.; Independence North

BGM 124 RECONVENING AND DEVOTIONAL

Vice President Don Ng reconvened the Board of General Ministries.

Chaplain Jeff Savage led the Executive Committee in a time of meditation on Acts 15:1-6 and in worship through John Bell's song, "Take O Take Me as I Am."

BGM 125 CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS

BGM directors shared together reports of many wonderful celebrations since the last meeting in June. They also shared concerns for prayer and heard updates from Charity Matic and Perla Belo related to family/loved ones in the Philippines, living in the aftermath of typhoon Haiyan.

Following a time of prayer, an offering was collected for victims of Philippine typhoon Haiyan, which struck on November 8, 2013. The offering totaled \$716.00 and will be given through One Great Hour of Sharing.

BGM 126 BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT

The Board celebrated the June 21-23 Biennial Mission Summit held in Overland Park, KS. Information related to the Mission Summit conversations can be accessed through www.missionsummitconversations.com. Phase II of the *Transformed by the Spirit* initiative will be focusing on how American Baptists can become involved in what transpired from the Mission Summit conversations and how to best feed this information into the life of ABC churches to get local congregations involved.

Vice President Ng reported that the 2015 Biennial Mission Summit Planning Team had its first face-to-face meeting in Overland Park, KS on October 29-November 1, 2013. Chair Susan Gillies brings superb skills to ensure full participation by all. The planning team earnestly reviewed feedback and suggestions from the 2013 event. The Mission Table conversations will also feed into the planning. ABC of the Central Region will again host the event, but with the co-sponsorship of three adjoining regions (ABC of the Great Rivers Region, Mid-American Baptist Churches and ABC of Nebraska). The planning team decided that the new process of church registration will take place again for this biennial, but will work out a few kinks from the previous experience, and will initiate the registration process earlier. General Secretary Medley will be asked to bring the message at one of the evening gatherings as we honor him for his leadership. An all-Biennial barbeque is being planned, as well as youth events, numerous Sunday afternoon opportunities (jazz museum, Negro League Museum, etc.) and pre- and post- Summit attractions.

Felipe Candelaria, a member of the planning team, shared his excitement for the planning process.

BGM 127 JOINT BOARD MEETING

The Board reviewed feedback from the June 19, 2013 Joint Board meeting of BGM, ABHMS, IM and MMBB in an attempt to improve future meeting times together. It was agreed that coming together as an ABC family is the most important value taken from these joint gatherings. Feedback from the June 2013 meeting will be reviewed and considered as officers of all organizations plan for the June 2015 joint meeting.

BGM 128 BREAK-OUT SESSIONS: RESPONSE GROUPS

Vice President Ng recessed the Board of General Ministries. From 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., the BGM convened in Response Groups to continue focused work which was begun on Thursday, November 14.

Following these sessions, The Board of General Ministries enjoyed a buffet lunch together in Stirling's Restaurant.

BGM 129 TRANSITION MINISTRIES

President Clark reconvened the meeting of the full Board of General Ministries at 1:30 p.m.

The first item of business included a report by President Clark on an action taken by the BGM Executive Committee on behalf of the BGM. The Executive Committee met by teleconference on October 9 to discuss benefits and best practices for employing American Baptist clergy through ABCUSA's Transition Ministries program. It was resolved that ABCUSA is authorized to employ ordained ABCUSA clergy as interim ministers to be assigned to local churches that have agreements with ABCUSA to participate in the Transition Ministries program and that ABCUSA can provide these clergy persons with a limited set of benefits (workers compensation and travel/accident insurance).

During discussion concern was raised regarding clergy abuse and the need for ABC to have rigorous insurance coverage related to that issue. The question was also raised as to whether ABCUSA might add a requirement that the local church insurance policy carry additional insurance coverage as well. This will be considered.

BGM 130 THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

Rev. Katie Choy-Wong, senior pastor of New Life Christian Fellowship (Castro Valley, CA), was invited to lead BGM in a 2 ½ hour session regarding living into our diversity, into the Beloved Community. Katie has been involved in ministry for the past 30 years; besides pastoring, she has served on national, regional and seminary staff and has been highly involved in multi-cultural work over the past years.

Katie referenced author Bell Hook's quote: "Beloved community is formed not by the eradication of difference but by its affirmation, by each of us claiming the identities and cultural legacies that shape who we are and how we live in the world." She also spoke of the "Aloha Spirit", explaining the meaning of the Hawaiian words "Aloha" and "Mahalo" as words of blessings and prayers as an example of how the beloved community might look. She noted that the Beloved Community really began with the arrival of the Holy Spirit in Acts chapter 2 and that to build community is to be intentionally aware of building listening skills.

Through a series of guided group exercises and small group work, and with the aid of several handouts, the Board engaged in discussion related to such topics as: cultural differences/clashes and what shapes our understanding of covenant, cross-cultural ways of thinking, how the sense of identity defines a person, development models of Intercultural sensitivity, skills for creating the Beloved Community, and tools needed for cross-cultural/cross racial competency.

At the conclusion of this session there was time for each person to share one thing they learned and one thing they will intentionally do upon returning home to build a beloved community.

BGM 131 REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President Ruth Clark and Vice President Don Ng reported on the September 12-14, 2013 Executive Committee meeting held in San Francisco, which included a time to meet with ABC leaders in the Bay Area.

During this time it was also

AGREED: To recommend that the Board of General Ministries send a memorandum of appreciation to the families of Rev. Dr. George H. Tooze and Rev. Hugh D. Pickett to acknowledge their work on behalf of the American Baptist family.

President Clark and members of the Executive Committee also shared their deep appreciation for the work of colleagues Jonathan Malone and Beryl Hornberger. Both will be going off the Executive Committee at the conclusion of the year.

Just prior to 5:00 p.m., President Clark recessed the meeting of the BGM for dinner in Independence South.

BGM 132 PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

At 6:30 p.m., President Clark reconvened the meeting of the BGM.

Affirmative Action Policy/Sick Leave and Family Medical Leave Act Policies

Johnson Eapen, Director of Human Resources, presented proposed changes to ABCUSA's Affirmative Action Plan. The proposed revisions were reviewed by legal counsel who were complimentary of ABC's diversity policy in that such a policy is not usually carried by non-profits.

Johnson also presented proposed revisions to ABCUSA's policies on Sick Leave and on Family Medical Leave. The proposed inclusions will more clearly stipulate guidelines related to pay received during sick time and will clarify that it is the responsibility of staff on FMLA leave, within a prescribed period of time, to initiate contact with MMBB to explore disability options. These policies are being proposed to protect ABCUSA from a legal standpoint but also for staff protection/clarification as well.

It was by consensus, at the recommendation of the BGM Executive Committee

VOTED: To adopt the amended documents, Affirmative Action Policy and Sick Leave and Family Medical Leave Act Policies, as proposed. (These documents, as adopted, are attached to the official set of minutes filed in the General Secretary's office.)

BGM 133 REPORT OF THE INTERCAUCUS

Amaury Tañón-Santos, Intercaucus President, shared a report with the Executive Committee. A written report was also provided and is filed with the official minutes in the General Secretary's office.

BGM 134 FUTURE MEETING DATES

President elect Don Ng reported that he has been looking at future meeting sites which will provide for BGM and the BGM Executive Committee a strategic opportunity to interact with pastoral leaders and lay leadership in various areas of the country. He also reported that ABCUSA has received invitations from The Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches and from ABC of the Central Pacific Coast to become the Biennial Mission Summit site for 2017.

BGM 135 PRAYER

President Clark shared a report posted by Kit Ripley (IM-ABC missionary serving in Thailand) of the horrifying account of North Korea's public executions of approximately 80 persons, which took place in 7 cities on November 3. The victims were accused of possession of a Bible and/or of watching South Korean movies/TV.

Duh Kam led the Executive Committee in a time of prayer for our North Korean brothers and sisters.

President Clark recessed the meeting of the Board of General Ministries. The Board enjoyed dinner together.

BGM 136 REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS AND CAUCUS COMMITTEE REPORT OF CHANGED RELATIONSHIPS

Report of the Credentials and Caucus Committee: Women's Caucus

Wesley Roberts, chair of the Credentials and Caucus Committee recounted the request received from the Women's Caucus Steering Committee for the Women's Caucus to become a national caucus (instead of a caucus of the board).

The Executive Committee, in past meetings, met with representatives of the Steering Committee and spent significant time in discussion related to this request and how the Women's Caucus would fit the criteria as stipulated in the Standing Rules as well as naming ways in which efforts have been made, or efforts might intentionally be made, to move forward in advocating for the placement of women in national leadership positions.

Wesley Roberts read the following vote taken by the Executive Committee at its September 2013 meeting. It was voted: "On recommendation of the Credentials and Caucus Committee to present the request of the Women's Steering Committee to become a caucus of the Board of General Ministries to the BGM at its November 2013 meeting."

Following a time for questions and discussion, it was by consensus

AGREED: To approve the Women's Caucus as a national caucus

Report of Changed Relationships

The Board of General Ministries received a report (oral and written) of changed relationships of local churches from the BGM Executive Committee, which convened as the Credentials and Caucus Committee at its meeting on November 14, 2013. Wesley Roberts, Chair of the Credentials and Caucus Committee, presented the report and entertained questions.

Following discussion, upon recommendation of the Credentials and Caucus Committee, it was

VOTED: To recognize the changed relationships of local churches as recorded in the Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches dated June 8, 2013 to November 6, 2013.

Saturday, November 16, 2013: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

BGM 137 TRANSFORMED BY THE SPIRIT

General Secretary Roy Medley reported on *Transformed by the Spirit* and its impact in the denomination. In the two years since this initiative's inception, it has been bearing fruit and gifting ABC with an emerging sense of hope and energy. The 32 adaptive challenges, which came forth from the Mission Summit and were further filtered by the Mission Table to identify 10, have engaged hopeful conversations, along with a calling to live afresh within associational relationships, coming together around common passion and mission. There is a renewed sense of belonging together.

Roy noted that as ABC enters Phase II, there is a deepening of the experience. The Journey Team has been working hard with consultant Alan Roxburgh to fashion a seamless transition. Eight ABC regions will be invited to enter into a more intentional role of gathering congregations in their regions to continue work together on adaptive challenges. *Transformed by the Spirit* is not a solo journey, but a common journey to be experienced together. Congregations with common concerns learn from and strengthen one another. The ABC has spent 2 years creating the initial experience and infrastructure to begin this deeper journey.

Roy thanked BGM for its courage in taking the financial steps that allowed this initiative to progress. He also expressed his hope that the ABC family will continue, as it faces challenges, to engage in learning processes that strengthen the family as it moves forward together.

BGM 138 EMERGE: BAPTIST WITNESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Every two (non-Biennial) years, ABC and partners sponsor the Orientation to American Baptist Life and the national Ministers Conference. These combined events include approximately 300 participants and have been, in the last several years, held in Orlando. The 2014 event, EMERGE, will be held January 6-9, 2014 at the Doubletree Seaworld in Orlando. Don shared his own experience of attending OTABL in Green Lake as a young seminarian, as well as plans for this January's event.

BGM 139 GENERAL SECRETARY: REFLECTIONS/FORECAST AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Roy Medley reflected on ABC life during his last four years as General Secretary and also shared a forecast for the next two years as he looks ahead to the completion of his term.

General Secretary Medley will be installed as Chair of the newly-organized NCC Governing Board this coming Monday, November 18, in Chicago. He asked the board to be in prayer, both for him in this new role, but also for the NCC as a whole. A significant decision will be made at this gathering to vote on the nominee for the position of General Secretary/President (James E. Winkler). Mr. Winkler has been serving as the head of the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society.

Knowing that the NCC was scheduled to meet in Chicago, and noting that Chicago has become a "poster child" for violence in our country, Roy recently wrote to Larry Greenfield, executive minister of ABC/Metro Chicago, to inquire as to what the region is doing to counter this violence. Larry wrote a very moving report and he was invited to share this report with the NCC. Interfaith dialogue for peacemaking will also be a theme for the next few years.

Roy noted that this is a new day for the NCC and this is a group of leaders in sober and sustained hope.

The fact that over the last 12 years, the ABC family has strengthened its desire to be a fellowship that values diversity, that it came through crisis and through divisive issues, speaks to the courage of the family. One

thing that marks the body of Christ is that we love one another. When love is expressed in those hard and messy places where we are at odds with one another, our unity is not our choice. We've been baptized in the one body. To be severed from each other counters the last prayer of our Lord. We are filled with exemplary courage and enriched and deepened by those examples. We have come through this and now have focused on our call for us to be a blessing to this nation and to our communities. We look at our life through some different lenses, through what are the promises and hopes the gospel brings to us. We believe in the right of conscience against any authority that can coerce. We have sought to protect the right of each believer to pursue their faith and their understanding of their faith in concert with one another, without coercion of outside people, with the freedom that leads at its very best to new understanding and the work of the Spirit in our lives. The work of the renewal of our church is the work of the Spirit. Our prosperity in life does not rely on our financial resources, the latest business techniques, and not in our power, but of the life of the Spirit.

ABC has not given up on the future of the church. The church of Jesus Christ is not at risk. Over 150 churches are now related to us in the US due to the refugee influx from Burma. We must stay the course on refugee work, on Baptist Muslim dialogue, in working ecumenically, on the side of peace and justice and reconciliation, transformed by the Spirit in our world. Jesus calls us to seek to find a way to work with one another to build the common good. *Transformed by the Spirit* brings together those are entering into new vocational expressions of ministry to begin to network them in through Rhythms of the Spirit, and hold spiritual life conferences inviting youth to spiritual pilgrimages. ABC needs to stay the course with these emphases, continually being challenged to become the beloved community. It is what the world needs. People of various cultures and languages, not feeling threatened, but enriched, journeying with one another as one journey in Christ to bring a witness as we have through these 12 years, a witness that we are committed to life together, that we are committed to step outside our own to experience to welcome others.

The 50th anniversary of the March on Washington reminded us of the sacrifices made that we might find a better life. It took courage for a group to form in koinonia in DC. This was a group that wanted to live into a new form of community, who had a commitment to offering a different face of what it means to be humanity. That is what we need to represent to the world.

The General Secretary stated that he feels more hopeful now than he has been for many years. We are in a good place where God can do great things for us. "I still believe like Adoniram Judson that the future is as bright as the promises of God!"

Directors of the BGM and staff gathered around Roy for prayer, dedicating and blessing him for the journey ahead with ABC and with the NCC.

BGM 140 CLOSING COMMUNION/RECESS

Chaplain Jeffery L. Savage led the Executive Committee in worship through song, through the reading of Acts 27:33-36, and through communion.

Saturday, November 16, 2013: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.; Independence North

BGM 141 RECONVENING/LIGHTING OF CHRIST CANDLE

President Clark reconvened the meeting of the Board of General Ministries at 9:00 a.m.

BGM 142 2014 ABCUSA BUDGET

The ABCUSA Budget was presented to the Board of General Ministries for vote.

Upon motion by Jim Ratliff, on behalf of the Board of General Ministries Executive Committee, it was

VOTED: To approve the ABCUSA Budget for 2014

Upon motion by Jim Ratliff, on behalf of the Board of General Ministries Executive Committee, it was

VOTED: To approve the ABCUSA Representative Process Budget for 2014

Upon motion by Jim Ratliff, on behalf of the Board of General Ministries Executive Committee, it was

VOTED: To approve the ABCUSA Mission Resource Development Budget for 2014

BGM 143 RECOGNITION OF RETIRING BOARD DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

BGM Directors

The following BGM directors were recognized for their generous gifts of time, talents and Christian love in service over the years to the board and to the American Baptist family:

Frank Christine, Jr. – 12 years
John Duckworth – 10 years
Ray Jepson – 7 years
Mercy Johnson – 6 years
Jim Ratliff – 13 years
Jeff Savage – 11 years
Amaury Tanon-Santos – 2 years

Each was presented with a certificate of appreciation and the book, “Bless God and Take Courage.”

ABC Officers

The following Officers were honored for their many years of faithful and committed leadership:

Frank Christine, Jr., Past President
12 years: 6 years as GB Representative (2002-2007)
2 years as GB Vice President (2008-2009)
2 years as GB President (2010-2011)
2 years as BGM Past President (2012-2013)

Jim Ratliff, Budget Review Officer
13 years: 6 years as GB Rep (2001-2006)
7 years as Budget Review Officer (2007-2013)

Jeff Savage, Chaplain
4 years: 2 on GB as Ministers Council President (2010-2011)
2 years as BGM Chaplain (2012-2013)
Biennial/Mission Summit chair (2011 and 2013)

ABC President

The Board of General Ministries also recognized retiring ABC president Ruth Clark. General Secretary Medley stated: “In her role as ABC President for the 2012-2013 biennium, Ruth Clark

has served the denomination with great distinction. Her love for the American Baptist family and her dependence on God has inspired those who have had the privilege to work with her. We honor Ruth at this time for her faithful leadership and dedication to the mission and ministry of ABC and celebrate the fact that she will remain engaged in the work of BGM as past president.”

Ruth was presented with a plaque of appreciation, designed to hold her presidential gavel, and the Board shared its appreciation with a standing ovation.

BGM 144 REPORTS FROM RESPONSE GROUPS/PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

The full Board of General Ministries received oral reports of Response Group work. Presenters of each report are noted below. Brief written summaries will be received from each Response Group and transmitted to BGM directors following the meeting.

Committee on Christian Unity and Interfaith Relations – June Totten

Following this report it was

VOTED: At the recommendation of the Committee on Christian Unity and Interfaith Relations to approve the following persons as “conveners of the NCC Tables”:

Intergenerational Think Tank:

Rev. Dr. June Totten

Theological Study and Dialogue and Matters of Faith and Order:

Dr. Loida Martell-Otero

Dr. Christian Collins Winn

Christian Education, Formation and Leadership Development:

Ms. Laura Alden

Rev. Dr. Paul Martin

Joint Action for Justice and Peace:

Rev. Fela Barrueto

Rev. Dr. Christopher Bullock

Rev. Pat Hernandez

Inter-religious Relations and Dialogue:

Rev. Dr. Ernest Jones

Rev. Dr. Dan Buttry

Rev. Dr. Cheryl Wade

Congregational Renewal - Don Ng

Finance Committee – Jim Ratliff

Mission Resource Development—Vivan Martindale, Robin Crouch and Alan Rudnick

Missional Response Group-- Jim Thomason

Professional Church Leadership—Wesley Sun

BGM 145 BOARD OF EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES REUNION

Vice President Don Ng shared with the board a brief history of the difficult decisions faced 10 years ago by the former Board of Educational Ministries, due to financial concerns, and the subsequent dissolution in 2004 of BEM along with the merging of several of its ministries into the Board of National Ministries. He noted that there has never been a formal celebration of the work and ministry of former EM staff. However, with the support of the General Secretary, ABCUSA and the American Baptist Home Mission Society, there will be a reunion of former EM staff on November 16, directly following the conclusion of BGM's meeting this afternoon, in celebration of the work and ministry of former EM staff on behalf of the ABC family. He thanked BGM for providing the resources and time for this occasion. BGM shared together in prayer for this gathering.

BGM 146 COMMISSIONING OF MYANMAR TRAVELERS

Ruth Clark, Roy Medley, Don Ng and Jim Ratliff, along with other American Baptist leaders, will represent the American Baptist Churches USA family at the 200th year celebration of Myanmar Baptist Mission, begun in 1813 by Ann and Adoniram Judson. The celebration will be held in Yangon, Myanmar in December 2013. Following the celebration, Roy has been invited to extend his stay to make a second visit to the Chin Hills.

Using the biblical example of the early church in Antioch, the Board of General Ministries, led by Dennis Johnson, commissioned these leaders for a God-directed journey. Each traveler was surrounded by board directors as Dennis led in prayer.

Vivan Martindale ministered by singing the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, "Lord, Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace."

BGM 147 PRAYER AND ADJOURNMENT

President Clark led in a closing prayer and adjourned the meeting of the Board of General Ministries.

The next meetings of the BGM and BGM Executive Committee will be held on June 11-14, 2014 in Green Lake, WI.

Submitted by



Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley
General Secretary

ARM/cb

Documents attached

Integrated Schedule (1008:11/13)

BGM Proposed Agenda: November 14-16, 2013

Board of General Ministries: List of At-Large and General Directors

BGM Minutes: June 18-20, 2013(1001:6/13)

BGM EC Minutes: September 12-14, 2013 (1002:9/13) & October 9, 2013 (1002:10/13)

Report of the ABC President

Report of the General Secretary

Staff Reports to BGM from ABCUSA and AMOs (1202:11/13)

Call for the Annual Meeting of The ABHS (9200.1:11/13)

ABHS Minutes

Report from Executive Director Deborah Van Broekhoven

ABHS Nominations

2014 ABCUSA Budget

YTD Financials Through September 30, 2013

Transformed by the Spirit Financial Report

588 Real Estate Advisory Council: Roles & Process Overview

BGM Joint Board Reflections

The Beloved Community Presentation Handouts: Rev. Katie Choy Wong, presenter

Report of the Intercaucus: Rev. Amaury Tanon-Santos

2014-2015 Meeting Dates

Affirmative Action Policy/Sick Leave and Family Medical Leave Act Policies

Report of Changed Relationships (June 8, 2013 to Nov. 6, 2013)

Response Group Notes: June 2013 & November 2013