



**BGM Executive Committee**  
November 12, 2015

**MINUTES**

**Meeting Site:** Doubletree by Hilton  
301 West DeKalb Pike  
King of Prussia, PA 19406  
Ph: 610-337-1200

**Officers:** Don Ng, President  
Judy Fackenthal, Vice President/BGM Chaplain  
Paul Higgins, Budget Review Officer  
Ruth Clark, Past President  
A Roy Medley, General Secretary

**Committee:** Camille Brown, Cleveland  
Wesley Roberts, Massachusetts  
Tasha Wilson, Rochester/Genesee

**Parliamentarian:** Dennis Johnson

**Staff:** Alan Musoke, Treasurer and CFO  
Cathy Brubaker, Recorder  
Ken Marsenburg, Guest

**Thursday, November 12, 2015, 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

**BGM EC 334            WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER**  
**WORSHIP**

President Don Ng warmly welcomed members of the Executive Committee. He called the meeting to order and reviewed the schedule for the day.

Chaplain Judy Fackenthal lit the Christ Candle and led in worship using Lectio Divina from Rhythms of the Spirit with focus upon the Old Testament passage of Ezra 3:10-13. As Scripture was read and re-read,

the Executive Committee meditated on the passage and contemplated the questions: How is my life touched? Is there an invitation here for me? What am I being invited to do?

**BGM EC 335            CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS**

The Executive Committee shared concerns and celebrations together. Among items shared was a concern for the family of the Rev. Steven Case, retired ABC pastor and former member of the Board of General Ministries and the General Board who passed away as the result of complications from a fall suffered as he left his hotel for a Baptist Joint Committee meeting in October. Camille Brown led in prayer.

**BGM EC 336            ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by Judy Fackenthal, seconded by Camille Brown, and it was

**VOTED:**            To adopt the agenda dated November 12, 2015.

**BGM EC 337            SEARCH: INTERIM GENERAL SECRETARY**

President Ng brought to the Executive Committee the name of Susan E. Gillies as the nominee for the position of Interim General Secretary, ABCUSA. He reported that the agreement with Susan was that she would serve on a 75% time basis and that she would keep her current residence in Omaha. Susan Gillies' bio was shared and time provided for questions.

A motion was made, seconded and it was by consensus

**AGREED:** To recommend to the Board of General Ministries Susan E. Gillies to serve as Interim General Secretary, beginning on December 1, 2015 and extending until the naming of a new General Secretary.

**BGM EC 338            2015 MISSION TABLE**

President Ng reported on the convening of the second American Baptist Churches Mission Table, which took place on November 9-11, 2015 at the Doubletree by Hilton just prior to this meeting. He reviewed the goals of the Mission Summit, to discern and articulate broad priorities for American Baptists for the upcoming biennium and beyond, and the process by which reports and recommendations of the Mission Summit come to the Mission Table for further focus and discernment. From the 2015 Biennial Mission Summit (held June 26-28, 2015 in Overland Park, KS), 21 Mission Summit Conversation topics were narrowed down, resulting in the following 7 priorities: 1) Next Generation of Leaders, 2) Violence, 3) Discipleship, 4) Poverty, 5) Gospel in a Rapidly Changing Society, 6) Women in Ministry, and 7) Alternative Models for Pastoral Ministry. Case statements were written for each, with the goal of encouraging ABC entities to engage these priorities over the next two years and Mission Table

participants (representatives from American Baptist regions, affiliated ministry partners, national staff, and officers) to work on ministries associated with these 7 priorities.

It was noted that ABC already has work progressing in some of the 21 topics resulting from the Mission Summit, and Mission Table participants kept that in mind in the process of prioritizing. The challenge remains as to how to follow up with local congregations, regions and national boards.

The Executive Committee discussed what might be the “teeth” to accountability and in what ways moving forward with these priorities might be encouraged. It is clear that the National Executive Council (NEC) and the REMC need to have these priorities on their agendas. Discussion continued as to ways these priorities might be focused on at BGM Executive Committee meetings and if the Executive Committee might task itself with the process of monitoring and requesting reports on progress by inviting key leaders to its meeting to report. Also, how might the Ministers Council become involved? It was also noted that part of the *Transformed by the Spirit*/Rhythms of the Spirit process involves following up on these 7 priorities; this is how the Spirit works among us.

The Executive Committee also discussed the possibility of realigning the current BGM Action Groups with the intention of focusing on these priorities.

## **BGM EC 339            PRESIDENT’S NOMINATIONS & APPOINTMENTS FOR 2016-2017**

President-elect Judy Fackenthal noted that the process for making presidential nominations and appointments is a humbling one which requires much discernment and she expressed gratitude for the Spirit’s presence and for the gift of being able to consult with many wise voices.

A report of the President’s Nominations and Appointments (document 1201.1:11/15) was posted electronically for review prior to this meeting and during this time, the following corrections noted: Ernest Jones will not be able to serve on the BGM Executive Committee or on the ABCUSA Nominating Committee due to his role as the new executive minister of ABC of Ohio. Wesley Roberts is being presented to serve on the Nominating Committee and Judy reported that she is awaiting a response from a person who was asked to serve on the Executive Committee. A vacancy also remains on the Nominating Committee. There is a need to balance ethnicity and gender on the Nominating Committee and to have a nominee who understands what it means to be an American Baptist, to have spiritual depth, voice and presence due to sitting on the General Secretary Search Committee, one role of the Nominating Committee.

Judy also shared background information on Rev. Philip James, her appointment for Vice Chair of the Biennial Program Committee.

Upon nomination of President-elect Judy Fackenthal, seconded by Ruth Clark, it was:

**VOTED:** To approve President-elect Judy Fackenthal's Nominations for the 2016-2017 biennium, as revised; To recognize the President-elect's Appointments for the 2016-2017 biennium, as revised (document 1201.1:11/15 attached).

#### **BGM EC 340            ASSOCIATED MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS (AMOs)**

General Secretary Roy Medley reported that he and Rev. Saw Ler Htoo, General Secretary of the Karen Baptist Churches USA, met with the Kachin American Baptist Association and the Kachin Baptist Churches USA on October 31 in Washington DC. Following that meeting, and in spite of the fact that both Kachin organizations voted a year ago to become Associated Ministry Organizations to ABCUSA, each will be going back to their respective board to review the AMO covenant to assure full understanding before proceeding further. We anticipate that requests from both organizations for AMO status will be coming to BGM for action in the near future, with the possibility of receiving interest from other organizations of Burma as well. No action was required at this time.

#### **BGM EC 341            REPORT OF THE BUDGET REVIEW OFFICER**

Budget Review Officer Paul Higgins shared a report on:

##### ABCUSA Financials through September 2015

Paul reported that revenue is up \$819,000 from one year ago. Revenue is \$275,000 more than budget, due to the Biennial Mission Summit. Excluding the effect of the Biennial, revenue is up by \$130,000. Expenses are \$834,000 more than one year ago and \$469,000 over budget, although Biennial Mission Summit had \$739,000 in expenses. Excluding BMS, expenses are up \$95,000 from last year.

##### ABCUSA Finance Committee Notice related to the Mission Initiative Fund

On August 4, the ABCUSA Finance Committee approved a Mission Initiative Fund (MIF) grant request from the United Mission Adaptive Challenge Team, noting two items of interest: The project had already begun and the request was considered outside the normal review schedule. Although these were exceptions to the MIF grant guidelines adopted in June 2013, it is permitted in "unusual situations" if reported to the Board of General Ministries.

##### 2016 ABCUSA Budget and Proposed Distribution of UM for 2016

Paul explained that the proposed 2016 ABCUSA Budget was posted on the ABCUSA website with the notation "Budget Pending Recommendation of the BGM Finance Committee" due to not meeting a quorum at its recent conference call. Action, however, was taken at the BGM Finance Committee breakfast meeting this morning to recommend approval.

Paul reported that the ABCUSA Finance Committee met earlier this month by conference call related to the continuing discussion of allocating the national portion of United Mission, a task assigned to the ABCUSA Finance Committee on behalf of BGM. After struggling with this issue, the ABCUSA Finance Committee asked Paul to approach the Executive Committee at its September 2015 meeting to receive

feedback about a possible process. After much discussion, the Executive Committee requested that Paul ask the ABCUSA Finance Committee to continue along, giving the Executive Committee more time to process this through discussion with presidents and vice presidents of the American Baptist organizations and the NEC in order to determine what might be best for the ABC family. Paul noted that the ABCUSA Finance Committee reluctantly accepted that guidance and approved distribution but is now urging the conversations about process to continue.

It was noted that until the Adaptive Challenge Team on United Mission (ACT on UM) work is completed, these questions may not be able to be addressed. When United Mission began there were no other streams of income as there now are. A review of streams of income available to other boards needs to be undertaken as part of this process in order to achieve clarity.

Discussion continued related to the work of World Relief and to where the position of World Relief Officer sits within the denomination. Roy reviewed the history of the position and stressed the importance of BGM directors who sit on the committee understanding the history and structure of World Relief.

Following discussion and upon recommendation of the ABCUSA Finance Committee, it was

**VOTED:** To forward to the Board of General Ministries for approval the proposed UM distribution for 2016 and to recommend that discussions continue among leaders (both professional and volunteer) of the national boards to reimagine UM and the funding of necessary common services.

Further, upon recommendation of the BGM Finance Committee, it was

**VOTED:** To forward to the Board of General Ministries for adoption the proposed 2016 ABCUSA Budget as presented.

## **BGM EC 342            588 ASSOCIATES/REAL ESTATE ISSUES**

### **Building Issues**

Alan Musoke, ABCUSA Treasurer/CFO, presented a report on building issues. The 588 Real Estate Council met on October 21-22, 2015. During that meeting Charles King and Simone Goring Devaney, CSG Consultants, presented an update of the results of the Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) process and Jeff Haggray, executive director of ABHMS and former pastor of First Baptist Church, Washington DC shared his experience and insights related to a Joint Venture process he was involved with in DC.

It was determined at the meeting, that no RFEI offers met the goals of 588 Associates, and therefore the following next steps were taken: 1) CSG has been asked to contact the most viable developers to schedule meetings and begin conversations regarding a possible Joint Venture. Patti Glasser, IM treasurer, and Alan Musoke will represent 588 at these meetings, and these will occur on an expedited timeline with the goal of having a recommendation in early 2016. 2) A press release for communicating

with internal staff and external constituents updating them of the status of the building disposition went out on Monday, November 9.

### Tax Issues

Alan reported that ABCUSA's legal counsel has heard from counsel for the Upper Merion School District regarding the potential settlement of 588's tax appeal.

The School District's position is that the tax-exempt percentage of the Mission Center is based upon the square footage actually used by the exempt party(ies) compared with the total square footage (not compared with the occupied space only) and that the 41.26% tax-exempt percentage is likely to be the percentage that will be agreed upon for any settlement.

Alan presented a proposal that 588 Associates would be willing to accept a 58.74% obligation for the 2015 (yet unpaid) tax bill (the amount due if the property is 41.26% tax-exempt) as the mechanism to recover a portion of the 2013 and 2014 overpayments that have been protested if all other conditions proposed by 588 are accepted. (A detailed explanation of the full proposal was distributed to the Executive Committee and is attached to the minutes filed in the General Secretary's office.)

By consenting to a lesser part of the building being tax exempt, 588 understands that it would be able going forward to pay the taxes without reassessment of space for non-exempt status year after year. And agreeing to this proposal would prevent further legal fees for both sides.

Although authority to make these decisions has been delegated to staff of the respective 588 members and partners subject to the oversight of the BGM Executive Committee, the respective boards are being asked to affirm this proposal.

Following a time for questions and discussion, a motion was made by Wesley Roberts, seconded by Paul Higgins and it was

**VOTED:** To recommend that the Board of General Ministries affirm the current direction of the proposed action by empowering Alan Musoke to act on behalf of ABCUSA as a member of 588 Associates G.P., LLC.

## **BGM EC 343            MARCH 2016 MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Judy Fackenthal reported that Erin Hawkins, General Secretary of the General Commission on Religion and Race of The United Methodist Church, who was recommended by Jim Winkler, has agreed to serve as consultant for the Executive Committee's March 9-12, 2016 meeting at Rainbow Acres in Camp Verde, AZ. Four members of the Beloved Community Action Group will be invited to attend the retreat; Camille Brown, chair of the Action Group, will be one of the four.

It was also decided that in June the Executive Committee meeting will begin on Wednesday, June 15 at 5:00 p.m., meeting also on Thursday, June 16 from 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

#### **BGM EC 344            CREDENTIALS & CAUCUS COMMITTEE**

President Ng recessed the meeting of the Executive Committee. Wesley Roberts, chair, convened the meeting of the Credentials and Caucus Committee.

The Executive Committee reviewed the Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches. Concern was again expressed regarding the increasing number of withdrawing churches and the lack of information received from regions. It was recommended that a joint committee between ABCUSA and ABHMS be formed to address the issue of decreasing congregations.

It was also suggested that this report be taken to executive ministers, asking them to sit down and collegially work together toward a goal of accuracy of reporting and sustainability of church relations. It was decided that President Ng would address this issue through a memo, acknowledging the work of *Transformed by the Spirit* within the memo. It was also decided that the ABCUSA website should reflect a membership of 5,000 ABC congregations, a decrease from 5,200 formerly reported.

A motion was made by Judy Fackenthal, seconded by Paul Higgins and it was:

**VOTED:** To receive the Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches (document 1205.1:11/15) dated June 8, 2014 to Nov. 4, 2015 and to forward it to the Board of General Ministries.

Wesley Roberts adjourned the Credentials and Caucus Committee and President Ng reconvened the meeting of the BGM Executive Committee.

#### **BGM EC 345            REPORT OF THE WORLD RELIEF OFFICER**

World Relief Officer Lisa Rothenberger and Shirley Fair, chair of the World Relief Committee, joined the Executive Committee for a working lunch.

Lisa, who has served as World Relief Officer since January 2004, provided an oral report of the work of the World Relief Committee. The committee includes 7 voting members, 2 from ABCUSA, IM and ABHMS, and one from ABWM. Since members serve according to their terms on their own boards, and since those terms of office vary from organization to organization now that the new bylaws are in effect, Lisa noted that it is somewhat of a challenge to staff meetings. Summer meetings are held in conjunction with one of the national organizational meetings as much as possible.

World Relief provides support for 3 areas of ministry: Relief, Development and Refugee ministries. The promotional window for One Great Hour of Sharing offerings begins in April and ends in June, with June, July and August being the primary times of collection. The committee works hard to perfect the

process of how grants are disbursed and to perfect the application and reporting forms. The committee does site visits periodically.

During a time for questions, Lisa shared her concern that the network of ecumenical partnerships is breaking down at a time when it needs to be stronger, affecting the OGHS development of materials. She also reported that the World Relief Manual, which is being revised, is not yet at a point where Executive Committee action is being sought. She noted that ABCUSA can submit proposals for World Relief funding opportunities, complying with criteria put forth by World Relief. Discussion also centered on accountability for retained funds by receiving entities.

The Executive Committee is interested in having further conversation related to the work of World Relief. There is a need to look at possible realignment with the forming of a staff group, which would then come back to WRC and BGM to move the matter forward. There is concern for better education related to the work of World Relief and for consistency with the new bylaws.

President Ng closed with prayer.

#### **BGM EC 346            BGM OFFERING**

By consensus, it was

**AGREED:** That the November BGM offering be designated for Mrs. Hat Kho Neng, the wife of Dr. Yam Kho Pau, General Secretary of the Myanmar Baptist Convention, who has been suffering from cancer since July 2015 and needing to travel to Bangkok for treatments. (\$5,000 was contributed on behalf of BGM and sent to the Pau's through the Calvary Burmese Baptist Church, Washington, DC.)

#### **BGM EC 347            HOUSING ALLOWANCES – EXEMPT STAFF/TRANSITION MINISTERS**

The Executive Committee received the Housing Allowance Requests for Interim Ministers for 2016.

##### Transition Ministries

A motion was made by Judy Fackenthal, seconded by Wesley Roberts and it was

**VOTED:** To approve the 2016 salary compensation, including the housing allowance portion of that compensation, for interim ministers as set forth in Exhibit A (filed with the official Executive Committee minutes for this meeting in the General Secretary's office).

##### ABCUSA Staff

A motion by Wesley Roberts, seconded by Judy Fackenthal, and it was



**VOTED:** To approve the 2016 salary compensation, including the housing allowance portion of that compensation, for the following ordained staff as set forth in Exhibit B (filed with the official Executive Committee minutes for this meeting in the General Secretary's office):

Patricia Hernandez  
Leo Thorne  
Jeff Woods

**BGM EC 348            GENERAL SECRETATRY EMERITUS: REV. DR. A. ROY MEDLEY**

President Don Ng and Wesley Roberts presented a proposed resolution to the Executive Committee for its consideration in honoring General Secretary Roy Medley for his outstanding work and ministry as General Secretary from 2002-2015.

A motion was made by Wesley Roberts, seconded by Judy Fackenthal and it was

**VOTED:** To recommend to the Board of General Ministries the following resolution conferring upon the Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley the title of General Secretary Emeritus:

***Resolution to Confer the Recognition  
of  
General Secretary Emeritus  
to the  
Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley on November 13, 2015***

**Conferring the Recognition:**

*Recognizing your denominational leadership of the American Baptist Churches USA for the past 14 years since January 2002, we bestow upon you the honor of being known to the American Baptist family and to all others in Christian and interfaith communities as General Secretary Emeritus of the American Baptist Churches USA.*

*We remember with deep regard your faithful commitment to bring people with different faith convictions to the table for reconciliation, evident in the Baptist/Muslim dialogues; your prophetic courage to represent the oppressed people, particularly in Burma, in the halls of national governments; your loving compassion to travel and meet people around the world to embody being the hands and feet of Christ; your lifelong commitment to the National Council of Churches of Christ and to the Baptist World Alliance that such world-wide Baptist communion has appointed you as their representative at the 14<sup>th</sup> Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in Rome in October 2015.*

*In conferring this honor, the Board of General Ministries of ABCUSA joins with you in continued appreciation for the Office of the General Secretary. And though you will no longer actively serve as General Secretary, your commitment to peace and justice around the world helps us to regard you and the Office of the General Secretary you held in our midst with great respect and honor.*

*In conferring this honor, we pledge ourselves to continued concern for your health and well-being. We hold you in our prayers and cherish the contributions you have made and will continue to make as our first “General Secretary Emeritus!”*

For reference:

*BGM Understanding on Granting General Secretary Emeritus/a Status*

*The word, “Emeritus/a” has to do with being retired from active service while retaining one’s title as an honor. The retaining of the title is offered because of merit earned during the time of active service. The honor is never an automatic one but rather recognition of exceptional service over a long period of time, usually a minimum of 10 years.*

*The title of General Secretary Emeritus/a is an honorary one rather than a functional one and therefore there are no specific roles and responsibilities unless determined by the presiding General Secretary and/or the Board of General Ministries, ABCUSA. The website and printed communication pieces will include the name of the General Secretary Emeritus/a and stationery and business cards will be provided. The BGM may allocate travel funds for the General Secretary Emeritus/a to represent the denomination for specific purposes.*

*The presiding General Secretary may initiate active participation of the General Secretary Emeritus/a at special celebrations in the life of the denomination. The General Secretary Emeritus/a will firmly refer well-intended invitations for denominational work to the presiding General Secretary. The General Secretary Emeritus/a and BGM are to hold in regard the health and vitality of the General Secretary’s office by treating the presiding General Secretary as the head of the denomination.*

## **BGM EC 349            REVIEW OF BGM AGENDA**

During a review of the BGM agenda, President Ng reported that: 1) Vice President Elect Josue Gómez-Menendez and Rev. Joan Friesen, executive minister of ABC of Greater Indianapolis, will be at the BGM meetings and will be formally introduced; 2) The following correction to the June 2015 BGM minutes will need to be announced: Page 16 under BGM 245, correct “David Gregg, MMBB” to “David Gregg, ABHMS; and 3) The Action Group reports will be moved from Friday to Saturday on the agenda to allow more time for a break prior to Friday night’s dinner celebration in honor of General Secretary Medley.

## **BGM EC 350            2019 BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT SITE**

At the Executive Committee’s September meeting, a recommendation was made to explore sites for the 2019 Biennial Mission Summit. President Ng reported that executive ministers Yvonne Carter (Cleveland Baptist Association) and Tom Wiles (ABC of Rhode Island) have both confirmed that their regions are willing to host.

## **BGM EC 351            WORDS OF APPRECIATION – RETIRING MEMBERS**

President Ng spoke personal words of appreciation to those completing terms of service on the Executive Committee--Camille Brown, Wesley Roberts and Ruth Clark. He also recognized General Secretary Roy

Medley, sharing personal words of gratitude for him and his ministry. Dr. Medley responded, thanking the Executive Committee for its dedication and support over the years.

**BGM EC 352          ADJOURNMENT**

President Ng adjourned the meeting of the Executive Committee.

*Next Meeting: March 9-12, 2016; Camp Verde, AZ*

Submitted by,



Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley  
General Secretary

ARM/cb

Documents attached:

*Agenda (1102: 11/15)*

*BGM EC Roster*

*Worship Programs*

*BGM EC Minutes, September 10-12, 2015, Charleston, WV (1002:9/15)*

*Susan Gillies Bio*

*President's Nominations and Appointments (1201.1:11/15)*

*Report of the Budget Review Officer (1524:11/15)*

*ABCUSA Financial Report as of September 30, 2015*

*588 Building Update*

*Report of Changed Relationships (1205.1:11/15)*

*Proposed Changes to World Relief Committee Policy*

*President's Report (1201:11/15)*

*Report of the General Secretary (1202:11/15)*

*Housing Allowances- Exempt Staff; Transition Ministry*