

**American Baptist Churches, USA  
Valley Forge, PA**



**Position Profile for:**

**General Secretary  
For American Baptist Churches USA**

**American Baptist Churches USA  
Serving as the hands and feet of Christ**

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## **American Baptist Churches USA**

### **Position Specifications**

#### **General Secretary**

**Reports To:** American Baptist Churches USA  
Board of General Ministries

**Reporting To the General Secretary:**

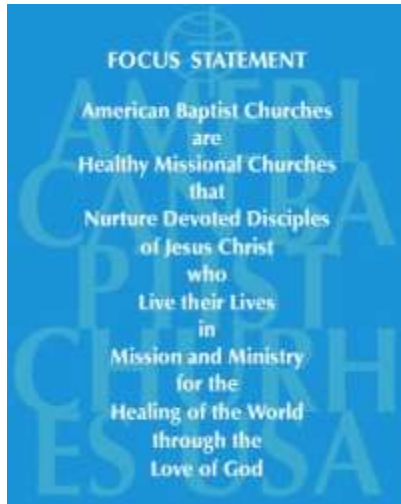
- Associate General Secretary for Finance and CFO
- Associate General Secretary for Mission Resource Development
- Associate General Secretary for Regional Ministries and Congregational Development
- Chief Human Resource Officer for ABC
- National Director, ABWIM/Transition Ministries
- Director of Development
- Director of Travel and Conference Planning
- Executive Assistant

**Compensation:** Competitive with other nonprofit ministries and organizations

**Benefits:** Medical/dental insurance for employee with availability for spouse and family with employee contribution; disability insurance; participation in employer paid 403(b) plan; four weeks annual vacation.

**Location:** Valley Forge, Pennsylvania

*American Baptist Churches USA is one of the most diverse Christian denominations today, with over 5,200 local congregations comprised of 1.3 million members, across the United States and Puerto Rico, all engaged in God's mission around the world*



**ABCUSA Focus Statement**

American Baptist Churches are healthy missional churches that nurture devoted disciples of Jesus Christ who live their lives in mission and ministry for the healing of the world through the love of God.

**ABCUSA Mission Statement**

American Baptists are a Christ-centered, biblical grounded, ethnically diverse people called to radical personal discipleship in Christ Jesus. Our commitment to Jesus propels us to nurture authentic relationships with one another; build healthy churches; transform our communities, our nations and our world; engage every member in hands-on ministry; and speak

the prophetic word in love.

As a people of prayer, purpose, and passion, we are in the forefront of creating a community of faith where people of every race, nationality and culture gather as one in worship, service and work.

The heart of the gospel is God's redemptive love. In our life together, the world will see the power of forgiveness to overcome alienation, the strength of love to transform hate, the power of grace to break the bonds of guilt, the triumph of hope over despair, and the victory of faith over doubt.

Through the cross of Christ we embrace the world as neighbor. Our vision for mission energizes a multitude of servant ministries of evangelism, discipleship, leadership, new church development, social justice, healing, peacemaking, economic development and education. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we work together in mutual submission, humility, love, and giving that the gospel might be preached and lived in all the world.

**"Write the vision, make it plain..." Habakkuk 2:2**

## **The General Secretary and the American Baptist family**

American Baptists are active through local churches, regions, mission organizations and other cooperating organizations and groups. The General Secretary brings the family together for the betterment of all.

To do this, the General Secretary:

- is responsible for the Biennial Mission Summit
- chairs the National Executive Council (the Executive Directors of MMBB, International Ministries, American Baptist Home Mission Societies, American Baptist Women's Ministries).
- chairs the National Leadership Council (ABC President; the General Secretary and up to three other staff members of the Office of the General Secretary; the Executive Directors and three other staff members of MMBB, International Ministries and American Baptist Home Mission Societies; and Executive Directors of American Baptist Women's Ministries, REMC (Regional Executive Ministers Council), the Ministers Council of ABC-USA, American Baptist Assembly, American Baptist Extension Corporation, Transition Ministries-ABC, American Baptist Historical Society and American Baptist Foundation).
- encourages and promotes all the ministries of the family.
- serves as the Head of Communion for American Baptists, representing the family both within the ABC and in the wider ecumenical community.

## **The General Secretary and the Board of General Ministries – ABCUSA, Office of the General Secretary**

As the chief executive officer of American Baptist Churches Office of the General Secretary, the General Secretary exercises executive and prophetic initiative required to achieve an effective Mission. The General Secretary and the ABCUSA Office of the General Secretary staff are charged with a number of specific responsibilities which articulate the vision of the denomination as it seeks to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

These responsibilities include:

- implementing policy decisions of the Board of General Ministries;

- relating to and helping interpret the work of the national and regional boards;
- helping raise the mission budget through the office of Mission Resource Development
- connecting to and assisting the ministry of regions and local churches through the office of Regional Ministries and Congregational Development;
- fostering ecumenical relations;
- supervising the receipt and disbursement of contributions to American Baptist Mission Support through the Office of the Treasurer;
- operating the American Baptist Churches Information Systems;
- overseeing Mission Resource Development's communication duties and such denomination-wide media as the American Baptist News Service and the American Baptist homepage on the World Wide Web;
- providing travel and conference planning and scheduling services through the Office of Travel and Conference Planning;
- providing staff services for the Board of General Ministries;
- arranging for the Biennial Meetings of the denomination;
- operating a human resource development program;
- maintaining denominational records.

## **Position Specifications**

### **Major Responsibilities:**

Subject to the general direction and supervision of the Board of General Ministries, the General Secretary shall fulfill pastoral, ecclesiastical, and prophetic roles, serve as head of communion, and to those ends shall:

- be the chief executive officer of ABCUSA Office of the General Secretary responsible for the day-to-day administration of its affairs;
- be responsible for implementing all Board of General Ministries policy decisions and for articulating American Baptist Policy Statements, Resolutions and Public Witness Statements;
- provide staff services for Biennial Mission Summit Meetings (including the envisioning process), the Mission Table (including coordination of research); meetings of the Board of General Ministries, and for all committees, commissions, and councils of ABCUSA and of the Board of General Ministries, except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws or the Standing Rules;
- convene and chair meetings of the National Leadership Council and the

Covenanting Partners under the Covenant of Relationships;

- perform the usual duties of a corporate secretary, including the keeping of minutes of meetings of Directors, Delegates, the Board of General Ministries, and the Executive Committee; and
- have such other duties as may be assigned by the Board of General Ministries.

In addition to the above roles, the General Secretary fulfills these roles:

- I. **Pastoral Leadership**: The General Secretary must be willing to network, collaborate and inspire new pastoral leadership within the denomination. The General Secretary will be responsible for convening and connecting the community of stakeholders to address current and future pastoral leadership such as women in ministry, seminarians, and ministry to attract younger generations.  
**Competencies**: *Has the capacity and presence to influence the entire ABC family. Communicates well multi-culturally. Has proficiency with social media. Is a collaborator. Communicates with people of varying theological perspectives with integrity. Uses conflict creatively.*
- II. **Diversity**: The General Secretary is responsible for building meaningful connections in a culturally diverse denomination and for building accountability and participation in a common mission. The General Secretary celebrates the breadth of the Kingdom by valuing the strength of diversity and by demonstrating a commitment to staff diversity. The General Secretary helps ABCUSA discover how to build community. The General Secretary develops connections with the next generation of leaders, seeks others' wisdom and insight and has the capacity to engage in non-linear thinking.  
**Competencies**: *Demonstrates skill in community building. Communicates effectively with a broad range of groups. Has a willingness to learn and experiment. Helps empower all through cultural competency. Has skills in organizational analysis and development. Seeks and discovers emerging leaders.*

- III. **Reaching Out To The Next Generation:** The General Secretary will connect to the deep spirituality of American Baptist young adults. The General Secretary will value and honor differences of worship styles, thinking and understandings; raise awareness of a culture of young adults; engage in theological reflections; preserve a place to belong and inspire ownership. **Competencies:** *Has the ability to discover emerging leaders and connect across theological spectrum. Has technical expertise. Is an analytical thinker. Explores the next generation's needs; has a willingness to experiment; holds an optimistic view of the unknown; envisions new forms of spiritual, religious and ecclesial life; and has a strategic perspective.*
- IV. **Stewardship/Fund Development:** The General Secretary must convene and connect stakeholders to create new models of stewardship to effectively fund the whole family. The General Secretary will help lead conversations to develop fair apportionment, dealing creatively with declining UM realities as well as identifying new ways of generating funds to underwrite ABCUSA. The General Secretary develops and monitors strategies for ensuring the long-term financial viability of the organization. **Competencies:-** *Understands the financial support of ABC mission. Demonstrates financial acumen. Encourages a culture of philanthropy.*
- V. **Trust and Collaboration:** The General Secretary must be able to develop and sustain a culture of trust. The General Secretary must be willing to create safe space and help American Baptists to understand that we are in this ministry together. **Competencies:** *Fosters teamwork. Cultivates strong interpersonal relationships. Is respected and respects others. Demonstrates exemplary personal integrity. Makes creative use of conflict. Is willing to be vulnerable. Is politically astute without being overly political.*
- VI. **ABC Identity:** The General Secretary is the head of communion, the face of ABCUSA and as such, must be willing to articulate and stand for ABC's unique polity. The General Secretary is expected to tell the ABC story effectively and assure ABC's mission, programs, and services are consistently presented in a strong, positive image to relevant stakeholders **Competencies:** *Highly values soul freedom, church freedom, biblical freedom, and religious freedom. Leads in the midst of tensions. Understands and communicates Baptist distinctives.*

- VII. Fiduciary and Administrative:** The General Secretary must fulfill the duties specified by the ABC bylaws and Covenant of Relationships, prudently managing the organization's resources within guidelines set by the board. The General Secretary leads, coaches, and develops ABCUSA Office of the General Secretary Leadership Team and develops future leadership within the organization. The General Secretary conducts annual performance evaluation of direct reports.

**Competencies:** *Demonstrates leadership. Has financial expertise. Has knowledge of organizational structures. Is a strategic decision maker. Can communicate effectively with board and staff.*

## **Candidate Profile:**

### **Education, Experience and Competencies:**

It is preferred that a candidate have a Masters of Divinity (M.Div.) or equivalent. Must be a member of an ABC congregation. Must hold recognized ABC ordination. A minimum of 15 years of executive level experience and significant denominational experience required.

Must have extensive knowledge of and commitment to the mission of ABC. Evidence of global or cross-cultural experience. Proven understanding of local congregational realities/perspectives. Must have excellent communication and organizational skills. Act as a change agent and be able to work in a collaborative setting. Proven administrative skills. Excellent communication skills. Ability as a facilitator who works well in a collaborative setting. Persuasion and diplomacy, capability to function within political realities. Capability and willingness to work cooperatively within the denominational and ecumenical structure. A sense of humor. A balance of enthusiasm, maturity and energy for the work of ABC. Ability to participate in the change process. Ability and willingness to travel.



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**Executive Session: General Secretary Job Description**

Material removed from the 2015 version

The Board of General Ministries conducts its business as “Worshipful Work,” which is a style of operating as church bodies doing business which places Jesus Christ as the Head of the Body at the center of its work. In “Worshipful Work,” scriptural themes underlie the work, and are often cited. The agenda is arranged in ways to highlight the Worshipful nature of our work. Worship services are frequent, and scripture and prayer are offered repeatedly throughout the meeting. **Directors Members** are invited to share in reminding the Board of General Ministries of a scripture that certain business may bring to mind, or a prayer that is needed. Whenever possible, consensus is used as a means of conducting business. The Board of General Ministries has a Chaplain who not only provides personal support to **the** Board of General Ministries and **to staff members** who may come to meetings with a particular need, but takes the “temperature” of the meetings and interjects scriptural and spiritual reminders when s(he) detects that this intervention may be needed. In these and other ways, we seek to honor Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior throughout the work of the Board of General Ministries. The goal is for both our process and our decisions to honor Jesus Christ and build up the Body. In “Worshipful Work,” we seek to discern God’s yearning in a particular situation or for a particular issue.

As the major policy-making body of the denomination, the Board of General Ministries is highly representative of American Baptist diversity in gender, ethnicity, geography, age, as well as in a balance of ordained and lay leaders. It addresses business and polity. Through **Public Witness Statements (and existing policy statements, and resolutions)** and other declarations, it offers its best wisdom to autonomous churches and individuals on issues of faith and practice as it discerns the mind of Christ. While Board of General Ministries decisions give direction to national staff, they in no way obligate American Baptist congregations or regions to any position or course of action.

The Board of General Ministries also plays an important role in mission planning and coordination. The Board of General Ministries hears reports from Program Boards to coordinate planning and **to** carry out denominational envisioning. It also plans the **Biennial** Mission Summit/**Biennial** through its **Biennial** Mission Summit **Planning Team** **Biennial Program Committee**.

### **Mission**

ABCUSA **Office of the General Secretary** provides servant leadership through vision, resources, training, administration and counsel for the whole denomination, so that American Baptists can effectively “carry out the common task of mission and ministry in our time” in fulfillment of the Great Commission.

### **Vision**

- A thriving center of vital vision for American Baptists which unites, encourages, resources and empowers the people of God

- A user-friendly organization, which is the first point of contact for innovative, clear, accessible, and responsive information, counsel and services
- Encourager of diversity, reflecting our multi-faceted denominational membership

### **Core Values**

- God has given American Baptists a mission that is needed and necessary in today's world.
- Christ and Christ's church deserve our commitment to excellence.
- Integrity matters.
- People and relationships matter.
- We exist to serve.
- We must be effective listeners.
- We must be willing and able to learn from others.
- We celebrate our denomination's diversity.
- **Location**
  - Located in Montgomery County in suburban Philadelphia, Valley Forge is best known as the site of the military camp of the American Continental Army over the winter of 1777-1778 during the American Revolutionary War.
  - Montgomery County (Montco) is a suburb of Philadelphia, and consequently, many of its residents work in the city. However, Montco is also a major employment center with large business parks in Blue Bell, Lansdale, Fort Washington, Horsham and King of Prussia, which attract thousands of workers from all over the region. The strong job base and taxes generated by those jobs have resulted in Montgomery County receiving the highest credit rating of 'AAA' from Standard & Poor's, one of fewer than 30 counties in the United States with such a rating. It has been recognized by Forbes as the 9<sup>th</sup> Best Place to Raise a Family.
  - A short distance to the east, Center City Philadelphia offers attractions as varied as regional and national theater, the Pennsylvania Ballet, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, competitive teams in every major league sport, numerous colleges and universities, and a host of local, ethnic, and nationally ranked restaurants.
  - Philadelphia also features the Philadelphia Art Museum, the recently relocated Barnes Foundation, and the Franklin Institute, among 26 museums within the city alone; the 8,700 acre Fairmount Park; the Morris Arboretum; and historic sites, including Independence Hall, the new National Constitution Center, the Liberty Bell, and the Philadelphia Zoo—the nation's first. New York City and Baltimore are easy day trips; the

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Pocono Mountains and New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland beaches offer weekend alternatives. Nearby historical sites include Valley Forge National Park, the battleground at Gettysburg, and other reminders of the area's long history.