



**American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.**

**BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

June 12-13, 2014  
Green Lake, WI

- Meeting Site:** Green Lake Conference Center  
W2511 Wisconsin 23  
Green Lake, WI 54941  
920-294-3323
- 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, West Virginia
- Staff:** Alan Musoke, Treasurer and CFO  
Cathy Brubaker, Recorder
- Guests:** David Knipel, Esq., ABCUSA House Counsel  
Annie Marcucci, OTCP, ABCUSA (present for part of the meeting)

**Thursday, June 12, 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.; Brown, Kern Lodge**

**BGM EC 190                      WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER**

ABC President Don Ng provided a warm welcome and led in prayer before calling the meeting to order. He asked each to share “things we let go” to come to this meeting as an exercise in really letting go and becoming fully involved in our time together.

**BGM EC 191                      DEVOTIONS**

Judy Fackenthal, ABC Vice President and BGM Chaplain, lit the Christ Candle as sign and symbol of Christ, the light of the world, the one who brings renewal. She led in devotions based on Proverbs 8 and also read from J. Philip Newell's writings. The Executive Committee shared prayer requests and Judy led in a time of prayer as each was brought before the Lord.

**BGM EC 192                      UPDATES/REVIEW OF BGM AGENDA**

President Ng reported the resignation of two BGM directors, the names of two new directors and shared regrets from those not able to attend the BGM meeting. (See the BGM minutes for a list of names.) He also reported that the ABC Nominating Committee will be meeting by conference call prior to the November BGM meeting.

The Executive Committee reviewed the BGM agenda, discussing together parking lot issues (routine business needing to be addressed) and big issue items (major issues needing focus) and determining together the flow of the agenda. President Ng noted that 60-90 minutes has been allotted on the BGM agenda this afternoon to address the work of the Adaptive Challenge Team on United Mission (ACT on UM).

**BGM EC193                      GENERAL SECRETARY SEARCH**

A revised job description for the position of General Secretary will come from the General Secretary Search Committee to the BGM for action at its meeting this afternoon. If approved, the job description will be posted with an October 31 deadline for receipt of applications. The Search Committee will meet in January 2015 to begin the process of screening applicants.

**BGM EC 194                      ASSOCIATE MINISTRY ORGANIZATION (AMO) STATUS**

**CBCUSA & KBCUSA**

General Secretary Roy Medley shared a brief review of the September 25-26, 2013 meeting of leaders of the Chin Baptist Convention USA, the Karen Baptist Convention USA and ABC officers to discuss the possibility of CBCUSA and KBCUSA establishing, as independent organizations, a special relationship with ABC. Options considered at this meeting included Associated Ministry Organization (AMO) status and Region status, as well as the possibility of a "Special Relationship" category. The resulting conversations from this meeting were taken back to the boards of the Chin and Karen Baptist conventions for further discussion. Each in turn has requested AMO status. Should the BGM take action to approve this relationship with CBCUSA and KBCUSA, the covenant will be signed at the meeting this afternoon by both the Karen Baptist Churches USA and the Chin Baptist Churches USA to acknowledge each as Associated Ministry Organizations. The Executive Committee reviewed the covenant which designates AMO & ABCUSA responsibilities. General Secretary Medley noted that this relationship will provide support (other than financial) to each organization in ways that keep them integrated into ABC life and yet with autonomy.

Following this discussion, a motion was made by Paul Higgins, seconded and it was

**VOTED:** To recommend that the Board of General Ministries extend an invitation to the Chin Baptist Convention USA and to the Karen Baptist Convention USA to become an Associated Ministry Organization (AMO) with ABCUSA.

Rainbow Acres

General Secretary Roy Medley received from Gary Wagner, President & CEO of Rainbow Acres, a letter in March 2014 stating that Rainbow Acres would like to come into covenant relationship with ABCUSA by becoming an AMO. Paul Higgins, ABC Budget Review Officer, who also serves as Vice President of Finance for Rainbow Acres, shared a brief history of this organization which has provided for 40 years a ranch-style Christian residential community for adults with disabilities. Located in Camp Verde, AZ, the organization began through the efforts of an ABC pastor, Dr. Ralph Showers. Although Rainbow Acres is accredited through the United Methodists, it has stronger ties to ABC; it currently has no formal connection with other organizations. The past chair and the current chair of its board, and its secretary, are all American Baptists. There is strong support for the work/ministry of Rainbow Acres in the west but residents and board members come from across the U.S. Some of its strongest supporters are located in Iowa, Arizona and Nebraska. Paul noted that ABCUSA's Standing Rules state the need to file application for AMO status with BGM, and Mr. Wagner's letter serves as that application. He also said that Rainbow Acres' desire is to eventually be able to assist ABC regions to do work in the area of disabilities, as well as continuing its current work.

Following discussion a motion was made by Tasha Wilson, seconded by Wesley Roberts, and it was

**VOTED:** To recommend that the Board of General Ministries invite Rainbow Acres to become an Associated Ministry Organization of ABCUSA.  
(Paul Higgins recused himself from the vote.)

**BGM EC 195                      ABCUSA 501(c)(3) GROUP EXEMPTION**

At its March 2014 meeting the Executive Committee met with legal counsel David Knipel by conference call related to ABCUSA's 501(c)(3) group exemption. The Executive Committee was advised by legal counsel to take action to clarify continued sponsorship of certain organizations and to determine what limits, if any, it might want to set. Action was taken by the Executive Committee during that conference call to approve the following three resolutions:

*Resolved that ABCUSA agrees to continue to include on its group exemption churches, regions, and associations of churches and their integrated auxiliaries, but ABCUSA will no longer accept applications for inclusion in its group exemption from other types of organizations.*

*Resolved that organizations currently on ABCUSA's exemption that do not come within the foregoing parameters will be offered the opportunity to be included as Type 1 supporting organizations and...*

*Further resolved that organizations currently on ABCUSA's group exemption unable to qualify under either of these options will be offered the opportunity to be fiscally sponsored by ABCUSA while they apply for their own 501(c)(3) status.*

At this meeting David Knipel provided an update regarding concentrated effort to identify the status of all organizations currently on ABCUSA's group exemption list. A former staff member of the Office of the General Secretary, Rev. Beverlee Everett, was retained to provide research. Out of 60 organizations, she determined that 14 are no longer in existence; all remaining organizations are being surveyed to determine whether these organizations qualify as integrated auxiliaries or will need to be offered alternative ways to continue to be included on the group exemption. The final report is anticipated to be ready by the end of June.

David explained that the tax status of 588 Associates, L.P. as an organization is a little different. 588 Associates recently received notification from the township of a change in the exempt status of its property. It has appealed the ruling, provided a briefing and continues to wait for the township's response.

## **BGM EC 196                      2017 & 2019 BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMITS**

Annie Marcucci, Director of the Office of Travel and Conference Planning, joined the Executive Committee for discussion related to venues for the 2017 and 2019 Biennial Mission Summits.

### 2017 Biennial Mission Summit:

ABCUSA received invitations to host the 2017 Biennial from two regions: Evergreen Baptist Association and ABC of the Central Pacific Coast. (It was noted that ABCCPC's invitation was extended specifically for a one-time Biennial venue.) Annie submitted RFP's (Requests for Proposal) to both Seattle and Portland and shared a detailed comparison report with the Executive Committee related to transportation, hotel rates, accessibility to restaurants at each site, as well as city incentives and the willingness to negotiate. It was noted that hotels are priced lower in Portland (and with no sales tax); a comprehensive transportation system is available with a good variety of restaurants accessed off the light rail, there is a fee of \$2.50 to get into town, but the city provides a free pass for transport while in Portland, and the city offers a grant program.

Following a time for questions, a motion was made by Ruth Clark, seconded by Tasha Wilson and it was

**VOTED:** To recommend that the Board of General Ministries accept the invitation from ABCCPC to host the 2017 Biennial Mission Summit in Portland, OR.

### 2019 Biennial Mission Summit:

President Ng reported that Susan Gillies (chair of the BMSPT) and the Biennial Mission Summit Planning Team provided a list of possible 2019 Biennial sites which included such cities as Cleveland, Columbus, and Pittsburgh, as well as several eastern cities. The Executive Committee agreed that it is interested in securing a site in the Northeast/Midwest for the 2019 Biennial. President Ng requested that members of the Executive Committee from these areas of the country begin to speak with their region executive ministers related to possible interest in hosting this family event.

During this discussion, Annie noted that the top three things she considers in choosing a venue include: 1) response from the city (does the city want us?) 2) transportation and 3) space & meal prices.

It was by consensus:

**AGREED:** To authorize Annie Marcucci, Director of the Office of Travel and Conference Planning, to begin considering cities in the Midwest and Northeast as venues for the 2019 Biennial Mission Summit.

**BGM EC 197                      BURMA**

The Executive Committee discussed at length two issues pertaining to Burma (Myanmar), one in regard to U.S. financial support for the Burmese military and the other in regard to a proposed law on religious conversion. Each of these issues has the potential for great harm to Baptist Christians and others in Burma.

Financial support for the Burmese military: When in Burma in December 2013 for the Judson celebration the ABC delegation heard first-hand testimony from the Kachin about the ongoing atrocities against them by the military. Current legislation in the form of Senate Bill 1885 and House of Representative Bill 4377 has been written to prevent aid from going to the Burma military until they have shown progress in areas of human rights.

Proposed law on religious conversion: A religious conversion law is currently being introduced into the legislative process in Burma, which would severely restrict the rights of Christians and other minority religions to share their faith with Buddhists. The bill carries jail terms and other punitive measures for those who do so and clearly contravenes the guarantee of religious liberty in their own constitution.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Tasha Wilson, seconded by Paul Higgins and it was

**VOTED:** To recommend that the Board of General Ministries endorse the intent of Senate Bill 1885 and House of Representative Bill 4377 to require advances in human rights and religious liberty by the government of Myanmar as a condition of security assistance and we urge our congregations to support such legislation.

A motion was made by Tasha Wilson, seconded by Camille Brown and it was

**VOTED:** To recommend that the Board of General Ministries expresses to both the government of Myanmar and the US government our strongest concerns over the restrictions of religious liberty contained in the proposed religious conversion law. Its restrictions against the right to freely choose a religion violates internationally recognized fundamental human rights.

**BGM EC 198                      LEGAL MATTER: BACONE COLLEGE**

David Knipel advised the Executive Committee that ABCUSA has been named as defendant (along with Bacone College) in a lawsuit filed in Oklahoma by the mother of a former 19 year old student at Bacone College. There are, however, no allegations against ABCUSA in the body of the Petition and it is unclear what the plaintiff is alleging against ABCUSA. ABCUSA is represented in that litigation by the Tulsa based firm of Conner & Winters. All defendants have filed Motions to Dismiss the Petition and the parties are awaiting the ruling of the Court.

**BGM EC 199                      STANDING RULES COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee discussed its desire to reconvene the Standing Rules Committee under the new ABCUSA bylaws.

Standing Rule 11.7.1 reads: Membership. Three or four members of the Standing Rules Committee shall be elected by the Board of General Ministries from among its membership.

Julia Bebeau, Kay Farley and Alan Rudnick were elected to the Standing Rules Committee in November 2013 (BGM 119). David Knipel will serve on this committee as staff. The Executive Committee would like to recommend that the BGM elect Bill Frederickson to the Standing Rules Committee. President Ng will contact Bill to ask if he is willing to serve in this capacity.

## **BGM EC 200                    CAUCUS FUNDING**

The Credentials and Caucus Committee (CCC) is tasked with the determination of and distribution of caucus funding and with caucus funding guidelines. At the request of the CCC, the Finance Committee is currently working to draft new caucus funding guidelines, including developing a financial reporting form and a procedure to monitor the reporting process and finding a way to make this reporting flow within the new system. (The Finance Committee has no authority regarding caucuses other than developing the budget. The CCC determines the level of funding.)

President Ng requested that Tasha Wilson gather members of the Young Adult Caucus at some convenient time during the BGM meetings in order to discuss funding needs.

## **BGM EC 201                    APPROVAL OF MARCH BGM EC MINUTES**

A motion was made by Tasha Wilson, seconded by Wesley Roberts and it was

**VOTED:** To approve the March 14-16, 2014 BGM Executive Committee minutes (meeting held in San Francisco, CA).

## **BGM EC 202                    SEPTEMBER BGM EC MEETING**

It was by consensus

**AGREED:** That the Executive Committee accept the invitation of the Washington Baptist Convention (invitation extended by Evergreen Baptist Association executive minister Marcia Patton and WBC president Dave Roberts) to join them for a luncheon on September 13, 2014 during their biennial meeting in Renton, WA.

## **BGM EC 203                    REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY**

General Secretary Roy Medley reported that ABC's leadership in Baptist-Muslim dialogue has opened critical doors for ABC to extend its efforts for peace. At the invitation of Dr. Ahmad Iravani, an Iranian who teaches at Catholic University in Washington DC, Roy became part of an interfaith group of 8 religious leaders who traveled to Iran (May 24-June 1) at the invitation of clerics there that seek to build relationship with the Christian community and to end violence and war in the name of religion. While there, they met with religious and political leaders. That trip in turn led to an invitation as part of a delegation to meet with the Sudanese ambassador to the U.S. to advocate for the release of Meriam Ibrahim, a young wife and mother sentenced to hang for changing her faith and becoming a Christian. A strong presentation was made by the delegation as to how this sentencing is contrary to the UN Declaration of Human Rights, for which Iran is a signatory, as well as how it is contrary to their own constitution. This meeting then led to an

invitation for a future meeting with religious leaders in Khartoum, as well as a return trip to DC to meet with the Foreign Minister of Sudan. Roy asked for prayers for future meetings and opportunities.

Roy also reported on his heavy travel schedule to accommodate many preaching and speaking engagements on behalf of ABC. He shared an update on *Transformed by the Spirit*, on ABC's continued advocacy efforts for Burma, his continued responsibilities as chair of the board of NCC, and on the continued planning for a third national Baptist-Muslim gathering. The General Secretary's full written report was distributed at the meeting and is filed with the official minutes in the General Secretary's office.

#### **BGM EC 204                      ADOPTION OF COMMON BUDGET COVENANT AMENDMENT**

At a meeting of the Covenanting Partners of the Common Budget Covenant held on April 9, 2014, a decision was reached by consensus to eliminate the category of 'Designated Giving' from the Covenant. Alan Musoke, ABCUSA Treasurer & CFO, explained the rationale for this change:

In 2013 less than 1% (.09%) of total AMBS giving was in the United Mission Designated category. Many churches which give United Mission Designated funds have a number of other options for designating their gifts and are unaware that the UM Designated category does not usually result in the designee receiving funds in addition to their traditional share of United Mission funds. When a designee receives more than their determined percentage of United Mission a dilemma results in honoring donor intent.

This change will not become effective until all Covenanting Partners have had the opportunity to ratify this decision and a new mission giving form has been created that clearly outlines how monies given can be directed for their intended use. Congregations will have multiple ways to designate giving which will fulfill their intent of providing additional support to their designee.

Following this discussion and a time for questions, a motion was made by Judy Fackenthal, seconded by Tasha Wilson and it was

**VOTED:** To recommend that the Board of General Ministries approve the adoption of the Common Budget Amendment, eliminating Designated Giving as a UM category.

#### **BGM EC 205                      ABC PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

ABC president Don Ng presented a written report which was posted on the BGM document page prior to the meeting. President Ng highlighted several parts of his report, including a May 7, 2014 meeting he, General Secretary Roy Medley and Vice President Judy Fackenthal had with Robin Lunn, president of Affirming & Welcoming American Baptists (AWAB) and an AWAB colleague in Portland, ME. The invitation to gather in conversation was extended by Robin, who was in Portland as part of AWAB's board meeting. President Ng emphasized his intention, in his role as ABC president, to represent the full American Baptist family, and in that role to not avoid addressing controversial issues. He also noted that this is what it means to be ABC, to dialogue in a mature and respectful way, recognizing one another as God's children.

President Ng also reported on his co-facilitating with Florence Li, ABHMS, an April 30-May 2, 2014 Burmese Diaspora Consultation at Valley Forge where 7 Burmese groups gathered for the purpose of building a coalition for ministry in the U.S. He provided an update on the work of the General Secretary Search Committee, which anticipates having a candidate by the end of 2015. He reported on some new emerging initiatives related to "living in harmony with God's creation", and he provided an update on the various meetings, speaking engagements and celebrations he attended/will be attending on behalf of ABC,

including the memorial service on Sunday, June 15, for American Baptist friend and colleague and one of his mentors, Rev. Dr. Veronica Lanier.

**BGM EC 206                      RECESS/CONVENE: CREDENTIALS AND CAUCUS COMMITTEE**

President Ng recessed the meeting of the BGM Executive Committee, and Wesley Roberts (CCC chair) called the Credentials and Caucus Committee to order.

The CCC reviewed the Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches. During this review it was requested that the Common Criteria for a Cooperating Church be clearly spelled out on future reports. Also, concern was expressed related to how ABCUSA might work with the regions to acquire better statistics and improved communication related to churches disbanding. A point of concern was also addressed relating to why an international church was included on this report as a cooperating church. It was decided that communication regarding Article V of the ABCUSA Bylaws, which defines cooperating churches, should be sent to regions, explaining that although the region's bylaws may define an international church as cooperating, it would not be able to be categorized in the same way by ABCUSA.

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

**VOTED:** To receive the Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches (1205.1:6/43) dated November 5, 2013 to June 3, 2014 and to forward it to the Board of General Ministries.

Wesley Roberts adjourned the meeting of the Credentials and Caucus Committee.

**BGM EC 207                      RECONVENE/RECESS OF MEETING**

The Executive Committee was reconvened and then recessed until Friday, June 13, 2014.

**Friday, June 13, 2014; 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.; Tower Dining Room**

**BGM EC 208                      FURTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT**

The Executive Committee met in the Tower Dining Room to enjoy lunch together and to conclude any further business prior to the full BGM meeting at 2:00 p.m.

President Ng adjourned the meeting of the BGM Executive Committee.

***The BGM Executive Committee will meet next on September 11-13, 2014 in Seattle, WA.***

Submitted by





Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley  
General Secretary

ARM/cb

Documents attached

*BGM Proposed Agenda: June 12-13, 2014*

*BGM EC Roster*

*BGM EC Minutes: March 13-15, 2014*

*Report of the General Secretary*

*Report of the ABC President*

*ABC President's Report*

*Report of the General Secretary*

*Reports from ABCUSA/OGS and Associated Ministry Organizations*

*Act on United Mission*

*Common Budget Covenant and Common Budget Covenant Guidelines*

*Covenant Between ABCUSA and ABC Associated Ministry Organizations*

*Burma Refugee Task Force*

*Burma: Joint Letter from Ethnic Nationalities Civil Society Organizations Regarding Foreign Military Engagement with the Burmese Military*

*Burma Military Bills: S Bill 1886; HR Bill 1443*

*Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches Nov. 5, 2013-June 3, 2014*

*International Ministries UM Distribution – 2013 & Effect of Eliminating Um Designations*

*ABCUSA Audit December 31, 2013 and 2012*

*Financial Notes YTD April 30, 2014*

*ABCUSA Resolutions of the Board of General Ministries*

*Unanimous Written Consent of the Members of 588 Associates, G.P., LLC*

*588 Associations, LP Process for Evaluation of Unsolicited Proposals to Purchase the Mission Center*

*Rainbow Acres- Letter from Gary W. Wagner, President & CEO*

*Report on Transformed by the Spirit*