



BGM Executive Committee September 8-10, 2016

MINUTES

Meeting Site:	First Baptist Church 175 Allens Creek Rd. Rochester, NY 14618	Housing:	DoubleTree by Hilton Rochester 1111 Jefferson Rd. Rochester, NY 14623
Officers:	Judy Fackenthal, President Josue Gómez-Menendez, Vice President Paul Higgins, Budget Review Officer Don Ng, Past President Susan Gillies, Interim General Secretary		
Committee:	Felipe Candelaria, Puerto Rico Zina Jacque, Metro Chicago Tasha Wilson, Rochester/Genesee		
Chaplain:	Kay Farley, Rocky Mountains		
Parliamentarian:	Dennis Johnson, West Virginia		
Staff:	Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary/Treasurer/CFO Cathy Brubaker, Administrator (Recorder)		
Guest:	Rev. Dr. Al Fletcher, Acting Associate General Secretary for MRD Executive Minister, ABC of Maine		

Thursday, September 8, 2016

The Executive Committee enjoyed breakfast together at First Baptist Church of Rochester prior to the meeting. Tasha Wilson, a member of the Executive Committee and a member of the First Baptist Church, served as a host for this meeting, along with other members of her family and the congregation. Rev. Brent Bowden, pastor of First Baptist Church, warmly welcomed the Executive Committee.

BEM EC 397 CALL TO ORDER

ABC president Judy Fackenthal called the meeting of the BGM Executive Committee to order at 9:00 a.m. Judy invited members to share brief personal updates since the June meeting and/or thoughts related to this day ("International Literacy Day"). She welcomed Rev. Dr. Al Fletcher, Acting Executive

Director of MRD and Executive Minister of ABC of Maine, who participated in the meeting as the Executive Committee's guest.

BGM EC 398 WORSHIP

Chaplain Kay Farley lit the Christ Candle as a reminder of Christ's presence. She reflected on the phrase, often mistaken for a biblical quote, "You always see what you are prepared to see." Reading from Scripture and reflecting on the words of Solomon, she encouraged the Executive Committee to work in such a way as to discern what can and what cannot be changed, and to thank God for a renewed move of the Spirit in the conducting of a second search for a new General Secretary. Worship concluded with prayer. President Fackenthal called on Kay, in her role as Chaplain, to continue to call the Executive Committee to prayer throughout this meeting, to ensure that the work accomplished is indeed Holy Work, led by God's Spirit.

BGM EC 399 REVIEW OF PROPOSED AGENDA/CONSENT AGENDA

President Fackenthal reviewed the agenda, emphasizing the main areas of work to be focused on. She presented the consent agenda. A motion was made by Don Ng, seconded by Tasha Wilson and it was

VOTED: To approve the Consent Agenda: The proposed agenda dated September 8-10, 2016 and the June 15, 2016 minutes of the BGM Executive Committee (meeting held in Green Lake, WI).

BGM EC 400 FINANCIALS

Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary/Treasurer/CFO, presented the Financial Statements for the year ended July 31, 2016. Overall the YTD financials show a net loss of \$81,000. Net revenue compared to this time last year is down by \$14,000. Total YTD UM is at \$4, 430,922, a decrease of \$371,658 from the prior year. This represents a reduction of 7.74%.

The Executive Committee spent time in discussion related to:

ABCUSA's permanently restricted assets: These assets include building proceeds as well as cash endowment gifts and are invested in the Common Investment Fund of ABHMS and with the AB Foundation.

Transition Ministries: It was noted that the margin of revenue with Transition Ministries, which has always been a revenue builder, can fluctuate as a result of entering into contract with smaller-sized churches that are not able to contribute in the same way as larger churches. Transition Ministries is currently receiving less from churches using its service, but going forward, by the end of the 4th quarter, it is anticipated that the margin of revenue will improve.

Development office: Susan reported that a Development Advisory Team (DAT) will be meeting on Monday, September 24. At that meeting the team will be considering important questions, including clarity of priorities and time allocation as well as the relationship between the Development office and the Mission Resource Development office.

Institutional Support: Institutional Support has been down. Unlike today, churches used to contribute to the support of individual institutions. Even the Love Gift is showing a 23% decline. 15% of Love Gift is

allocated to ABWM, with 85% allocated to UM. Al Fletcher noted that, with the coming of IM's Missionary Partnership Team (MPT) program, some regions have voted to allocate all of their Love Gift to ABW.

Building sale: In 2009, when 588 partners entered into mortgage agreement, ABCUSA issued mortgage loans to MMBB and ABHMS at a 7% interest rate. ABCUSA received a request from MMBB to restructure its loan to lower the interest to 4%. At the June 2016 meeting of the Executive Committee it was discussed that an alternative counter proposal would be to offer resources to refinance through a third party. This proposal would provide prepayment of everything. This would provide money to invest (which was the intended purpose of the sale). Alan reported that MMBB has a lack of interest in going to the marketplace and has expressed a desire to continue discussion. Alan and Susan will be in contact with MMBB. If ABCUSA lowers the interest rate for MMBB, ABHMS will also desire/"be owed" a lower interest rate. ABCUSA would be giving up over 1 million dollars over the next 5 years due to lowering interest. Susan will bring this to the NEC table for discussion.

BGM EC 401 TRANSFORMED BY THE SPIRIT

The Journey Team (*Transformed by the Spirit* steering team) will meet on Oct. 4-5 in Denver, CO; this will be Susan Gillies' first meeting with the group. The Journey Team is excited about the launching of the "Joining God in the Neighborhood" resource for community and congregational transformation, under the auspices of Rev. Greg Mamula, assistant executive minister of ABC of Nebraska, who serves as resource person.

Susan reported that Jeff Woods wrote a very helpful document, "Timeline History of the Mission Summit Conversations," that includes background on the forming of the *Transformed by the Spirit* (TbyS) initiative that she will forward to the Executive Committee for review. She will also take a copy of this document with her to the Journey Team meeting as a beginning conversation for reviewing TbyS goals, objectives and timelines in order to consider what the lifespan of this initiative might be going forward. This conversation will then be brought to the NEC to consider the question: What is our denominational energy for this? With the recent, and continuing, transition of leadership, Susan noted the importance of new leadership buying into *Transformed by the Spirit*.

BGM EC 402 RECOGNITION OF PASSING OF FORMER ABC PRESIDENT CHARLES Z. SMITH

President Fackenthal reported the passing of Charles Z. Smith, former ABC president (1976-1977) and American Baptist leader who also served as the first, and only, African American Supreme Court Justice for the state of Washington. In September 2014, when the Executive Committee met at First Chinese Baptist Church in Seattle, the Executive Committee hosted a dinner meal with Charles and his wife Elie and with Yosh and Sue Nakagawa. Members of the Executive Committee signed a card to be sent to Elie.

BGM EC 403 TOUR OF FIRST BAPTIST

Charles (Chuck) Sparrnrendt, Vice moderator of First Baptist Church of Rochester, led a tour of the facility, highlighting the church's history and ministry over the past almost 200 years. First Baptist was organized in 1818 and incorporated in 1827 when Dr. O.C. Comstock, a member of the US Congress, served as minister. The present facility was built and dedicated in 1953. First Baptist is a founding church

of the University of Rochester and Rochester Theological Seminary (currently named Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School).

BGM EC 404 REPORT OF THE INTERIM GENERAL SECRETARY

Interim General Secretary Susan Gillies shared a report of her work since the June 2016 meeting. Susan continues to focus on the important issue of harmony, the American Baptist family working together. She spoke of the continuing transitions in NEC membership, about her monthly written updates to the Regional Executive Ministers Council, and continuing communication with the Associated Ministry Organizations (AMOs).

Transitions continue with ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary staff as well. New employees include Al Fletcher, serving as Acting Associate General Secretary of Mission Resource Development and Laura Miraz, serving as Director of Human Resource Management. Annie Marcucci returned this week from sabbatical, and Jeff Woods returns from sabbatical the first of October, although Jeff has continued to maintain some connections during his sabbatical related to job responsibilities (i.e., executive minister search committees). Bridget Lipin returns in September from maternity leave.

Susan reported that amendments to the Bylaws and Standing Rules may need to be considered so that the Biennial Mission Summit business meeting is handled in a more efficient and effective way. Jeff Woods and Al Fletcher will be working in coordination with ABCUSA legal counsel David Knipel toward that end.

Susan provided a detailed update to the Executive Committee related to the work of the 588 Partnership, 588 Associates, LP (ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary, ABHMS, IM and MMBB) to consider the Best and Final Offers of three companies who are potential joint venture partners in the development of the Mission Center property. During discussion, it was agreed that with ABC's commitment to the work of the Creation Justice Network, it is especially important that ABC model stewardship for others in how it becomes a sustainable organization. We cannot move forward with a process which only focuses on saving money up front. Also noted was the importance of the flexibility of space. In the course of this conversation and continued discussion, Susan asked for the Executive Committee's input into several real estate issues related to completing a 16-question matrix ("588 Associates Developer Selection Real Estate Questions") designed by Louis Barbarin, Chief Executive Officer for MMBB Financial Services and a member of the NEC, for collating partner needs.

BGM EC 405 MRD ADAPTIVE CHALLENGE

The Rev. Dr. Alfred J. Fletcher, executive minister of ABC of Maine, began a 13-month term on July 25, 2016 as acting associate general secretary for Mission Resource Development (MRD) of the American Baptist Churches USA. Susan Gilles expressed appreciation for Al's willingness to serve and noted the value ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary gains from his credibility and giftedness, as well from the rich perspective he will contribute as an executive minister.

Al shared some background about the financial difficulties faced by ABC of Maine in recent years as decisions needed to be made to cut staff (leaving him as the only full-time staff person) and, at one point, to possibly sell the China Lake Conference Center. Through it all, he recounted the region's commitment to United Mission. Discussion commenced related to UM and the changing dynamics that are at play affecting its decline. A large part of Al's role will be to move the Adaptive Change process forward. Al noted that there is a need to engage in United Mission work in a new way—to help churches understand

what it means to be an American Baptist family, to have a commitment to the whole family. We partner together by telling our own stories and also by forming the larger story, asking the questions: What are you learning? What are you discovering? What are you sharing? There is an “organic” way of doing ministry. Adaptive work can be a messy process and normally must include a healing process. Al asked for prayer as he balances his dual role of executive minister and associate general secretary for MRD.

BGM EC 406 ANNOUNCEMENT OF RETIREMENT

Interim General Secretary Susan Gillies announced the retirement of her administrative assistant, Cathy Brubaker. Cathy will complete her full-time work with ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary as of the end of December 2016. However, she will continue some contracted work through June 2017, if needed, to assist through the transition to a new General Secretary and the filling of her position.

BGM EC 407 NEW BAPTIST COVENANT – COVENANT COMMUNITY

Judy Fackenthal by virtue of her service as ABC President, serves on the New Baptist Covenant (NBC) board. She will be attending the board’s September meeting as well as the September 14-16, 2016 NBC Summit (“Journeying to Covenant Community”), both to be held in Atlanta. Five members of the Taskforce on Race and Race based Violence will also attend the Summit, due to the generous gift of donors (husband and wife) who attended the last NBC event and weren’t able to attend this year, but desired to share in sponsoring other participants.

Judy also reported, in the spirit of “Journeying to Covenant Community,” that the Taize Community (attended by Rhythms of the Spirit last June in France’s Burgundy Province) is planning a reconciliation event in Ferguson, MO and will be in St. Louis in October to do preparation for that event. Judy will host Brother Emile of the Taize Community and a few ministers and continues to look forward to spreading the work of reconciliation and peace.

BGM EC 408 IMMIGRATION TASKFORCE

Susan reported that the Immigration Taskforce is currently producing a cooperative webinar. Susan plans to convene a conference call of its members to assess whether anything is currently being worked on or whether there is energy to move forward in specific ways. ABC Vice President Josue Gómez-Menendez highlighted the work that Ray Schellinger, IM missionary, is doing to engage a group from ABWomen’s Ministries in an immersion experience in Mexico and to facilitate a trip for members of the Hispanic Caucus to Tijuana. Josue expressed interest in giving exposure to Ray’s work. Susan noted that his work, as well as stories from Syrian, African and other refugees, will be included in the webinar being produced.

BGM EC 409 BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT PHASE IV

Biennial Mission Summit

The Biennial Mission Summit Phase IV group met on July 28 in Valley Forge. Sharon Koh, executive director of IM, will be invited to preach on Friday evening; Dr. Jeff Haggray, executive director of ABHMS, will be invited to preach on Saturday evening and the new General Secretary will, hopefully, be speaking on Sunday morning. Dr. Ango Keikung, chancellor of North East Christian University, will be bringing a choir from Nagaland to sing.

There is a desire to remove from all plenary sessions things that are precursory and to have a wonderful celebration of who we are as American Baptists, interspersed with uplifting music. Al Fletcher, Acting Associate General Secretary of MRD, is conducting research related to the Saturday afternoon business session, hoping to provide a process which promotes an aura of freedom and yet also functions in a well-ordered manner. Many capable individuals have been contracted to conduct Bible study. There will also be a labyrinth and several workshops.

Susan noted the need to encourage Biennial participants to talk, to listen and to pray as a means of ensuring the Spirit's presence and the fostering of gracious behavior at this family gathering. It was suggested that as part of President Fackenthal's opening remarks on Friday, she may want to share a statement that will encourage open hearts, open minds, and a willingness to stay in the room when views are expressed that are contrary to one's personal beliefs. The goal might be to cause participants to ask the question, "What can I learn about myself and other American Baptists at this moment?" Zina Jacque suggested that such a statement might be placed on the Biennial website prior to the gathering and emphasized again on site. The desire is to create an environment which fosters listening to the various voices present and inviting God to inhabit that space.

Orientation to American Baptist Life (OTABL)

Rev. Holly Bean, coordinator for OTABL, is working to secure cohort leadership from region executive ministers and is currently creating a workbook for the event. This will be a different event than it has been in the past, since this is the first year it will run in tandem with a Biennial Mission Summit, although it was recognized that those in attendance will have no expectations from past events.

Request from First Baptist Church of Rochester

First Baptist Church of Rochester, NY sent a letter to the Executive Committee urging the Biennial Mission Summit planning team to consider acknowledging the growing number of Welcoming and Affirming churches that are part of the diversity of American Baptist life by permitting space in the exhibit hall for the 2017 Biennial Mission Summit. President Fackenthal noted that such a request for consideration needs to appropriately come from the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists (AWAB). Should this request come from AWAB, the Executive Committee would be the group to make a decision. The Executive Committee spent time in discussion regarding the criteria used to approve exhibit space.

BGM EC 410 2016 MINISTERS CONFERENCE

The 2016 Ministers Conference was held August 22-25, 2016 at the National 4H Center in Chevy Chase, MD. President Fackenthal reported that the conference—sponsored by ABCUSA Office of the General Secretary, the American Baptist Foundation, American Baptist Home Mission Societies, MMBB and the Ministers Council—was a wonderful cooperative effort and served as one aspect of Rhythms of the Spirit this year. Next year there will be one major Rhythms of the Spirit event, with an additional event planned in conjunction with the 2017 Biennial Mission Summit. Judy expressed disappointment that there were not more in attendance and, in fact, she reported that there was a loss financially with the conference center with the block of space held not being filled. However, in spite of that, she also noted that there was exceptional preaching and worship, wonderful insights shared and good diversity.

Don Ng, who also attended the conference, expressed appreciation for the presentation by Rev. Dr. Jennifer Davidson, associate professor of Worship & Theology and Director of Chapel at ABSW (who completed a sabbatical just prior to the conference). Dr. Davidson shared her sabbatical work on discipline: "What is your Rule of Life?" Focusing on the work of Debra K. Farrington (popular author

and retreat leader), she led the group through 8 elements of a personal rule of life that are living and giving and provided space for personal evaluation in these areas. Don noted that it is especially appropriate for religious leaders to take a temperature reading of their lives and to ask such questions as: What drives me to continue in ministry? Where have I not done enough? Where do I lack balance in my life/ministry?

Judy Fackenthal will email Rev. Dr. Debora Jackson, Executive Director of the Ministers Council, about the possibility of dispersing an evaluative piece related to this event.

BGM EC 411 RECESS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Executive Committee met in Executive Session, without staff present, to discuss the search process for the new General Secretary. Any actions taken during this time will be sealed in an envelope and attached to the minutes filed in the General Secretary's office.

5:30 P.M. DINNER & FELLOWSHIP

The Executive Committee enjoyed dinner together at Monroe's Restaurant (3001 Monroe Ave., Rochester, NY). Dr. James Kelsey, executive minister of ABC of New York State, and his wife Debbie, and Rev. Alan Newton, executive director of ABC of the Rochester/Genesee Region, and his wife Gail, were invited as guests of the Executive Committee. Following dinner, Dr. Kelsey and Rev. Newton shared brief updates regarding ministry in their regions.

Friday, September 9, 2016

The Executive Committee enjoyed breakfast together at First Baptist Church. During this time the Executive Committee shared in the singing of a birthday song to Al Fletcher, who was celebrating his birthday.

Susan Gillies announced that she had just received a message from Rev. Steve Bills, executive minister of ABC of the Central Pacific Coast, about the unexpected passing of ABC/CPC's office manager, Judy Flora. The Executive Committee prayed for Judy's family and for Steve & his wife, who were traveling when they received the news. The Bills will be returning home to be with the region family.

BGM EC 412 CALL TO ORDER/WORSHIP

ABC Vice President Josue Gómez-Menendez reconvened the meeting of the Executive Committee.

Chaplain Kay Farley led in a time of worship. She noted that to honor individuals, we often clap our hands. Reading from Psalm 47:1 ("Oh clap your hands all you people...") and from Psalm 98:8 ("Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills be joyful together"), she encouraged the Executive Committee to consider the following questions as we do the holy work of the day: What would make God clap His hands for us? What holy work might we do?

BGM EC 413 CREATION JUSTICE NETWORK

Don Ng, a member of the Creation Justice Network Steering Committee, submitted a written, as well as an oral, update. The first meeting of the committee is scheduled for September 22-23, 2016 in Natick, MA. Rev. Ian Mevorah and Rev. Tom Carr, leaders of the Creation Justice Network, have been given liberty to select members to serve on the Steering Committee. Through connections with those who attended the 2015 Biennial workshop on creation/justice in Overland Park, as well connecting with others who carry expertise/experience in issues of creation justice and those involved with ecologic work, the following members were selected: Ashley Anderson, Boston, MA; Karyn Bigelow, Washington, D.C.; Dwight P. Davidson, Granville, OH, Stacey Simpson Duke, Ann Arbor, MI; Kathleen Moore, Albany, NY; Jamie Washam, Providence, RI, David Wheeler, Portland, OR; and Don Ng, Sausalito, CA. Each person will be writing a personal autobiography, including why they are excited and committed to serving on the committee.

Each member of the Steering Committee received a copy of the book “Spiritual Help in Hard Times: The Bible’s Hope for Life on Earth” by Dr. Owen D. Owens. This book was printed as a resource for facilitating a church Bible study. Don presented a proposal that the Executive Committee invite Rev. Mevorah and Rev. Carr to facilitate a creation justice Bible study for the November meeting of BGM. Susan reported that Dr. Owens was invited by the planning team for the Ministers Council luncheons, held at the Mission Center, to facilitate a “Brown Bag Luncheon.” He was well received.

Josue Gómez-Menendez asked the question of whether there is a plan to connect the work of Creation Justice Network with the work of the Taskforce on Race & Race-based Violence to determine any such common threads between the two working groups. It was decided that the Executive Committee routinely request a leader from the various taskforces to connect to a BGM meeting through Skype and that it also considering reserving a spot on the website to share the focus of what each of these taskforces are accomplishing. It was further decided that it would be good to communicate with other national boards related to their work with taskforces to keep conversations open in these areas, asking such questions as: What taskforces exist in each organization? How do we see common threads or possibilities for cooperative work? It was also suggested that this discussion, through Interim General Secretary Susan Gillies, be added to the NEC agenda.

**BGM EC 414 ROLE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY
FOCUS ON “WHO WE ARE/WHAT WE’RE ABOUT”**

The Executive Committee paused for a time of self-reflection, focusing attention on important key issues pertaining to “who we are, what we’re about and what will serve God, serve ABCUSA and make coming to board meetings and sacrificing time meaningful and purposeful for the board.”

President Fackenthal invited the Executive Committee to participate in a three-layered conversation, addressing the following specific foundational questions:

- 1) Why have a General Secretary? Do we need a General Secretary?
- 2) If so, what should ABC-Office of the General Secretary look like and what is the role of BGM?
- 3) How does the Board of General Ministries function in a meaningful way while paying attention to the fact that it is the only representative board and ABCUSA’s leadership (ABC officers) terms of office are shorter than other board officer terms?

Judy explained that the goal for this process is to dream, to envision, and to express with all honesty questions that have been contemplated and yet not answered and to consider how we invite God into the center of our thoughts as we dream and open ourselves up to new ideas.

President Fackenthal called on Chaplain Kay Farley to lead the Executive Committee in a time of prayer as a means of discerning whether the committee felt the Spirit working in this process and whether there was agreement to enter into the conversation.

Following prayer, the Executive Committee divided into three small groups to address the questions: Why have a General Secretary? Do we need a General Secretary? President Fackenthal invited staff to fully participate. Following small group work, each of the three groups reported back to the whole. Through continued discussion it became apparent that there was a strong sense among members of the Executive Committee and staff for the validation of the role of General Secretary. Some of the descriptors used to validate this role included: unifier, harmonizer, overseer of the whole, ambassador, corporate secretary, convener, connector, pastoral presence, chief encourager, prophetic voice, etc. The Executive Committee ended this session with a time of prayer. The meeting was recessed for lunch.

12:00 Noon LUNCHEON WITH 9 PASTORS FROM THE ROCHESTER AREA:

The Executive Committee hosted a catered luncheon at First Baptist Church with the following local pastors from the Rochester area invited as guests:

Rev. Deborah Bennett-Reynolds, Lake Avenue Church
Rev. Brent Bowden, Rochester First Baptist Church
Rev. Ronald Duttweiler, Trinity Church of Nunda
Rev. Steven C. Gretz, Greece Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. George Huffsmith, Federated Church of Sennett
Rev. Dr. Vera Miller, Genesee Baptist Church
Pastor Peter Naing, Rochester Chin Baptist Church, Clifton, NY
Rev. Dr. Jimmy L. Reader, Pittsford United Church
Rev. Sean Tucker, Mumford Second Baptist Church
Rev. Michael Ware, Webster Baptist Church

Following lunch, each pastor shared about their ministries and their hopes and dreams for those ministries.

BGM EC 415 BGM/BGM EC SCHEDULED MEETINGS

President Fackenthal reconvened the meeting of the Executive Committee.

Paul Higgins initiated a discussion related to determining future BGM meeting dates. Generally meetings are scheduled to begin on Thursday and to end by noon at Saturday, with the exception of when BGM meets prior to the Biennial Mission Summit. Considering the mix of lay and clergy persons serving on the board, the question arose: Might we consider striking a balance to hold the June meetings on week days (beginning on Wednesday and ending on Friday at noon) and to hold the November meetings into the weekend (beginning on Friday and ending on Sunday at noon). It was stipulated, however, that pastors cannot miss the first Sunday in Advent. It was decided that Cathy Brubaker ask Annie Marcucci to research the possibility of this suggested rotation as it relates to venues/cost and that a report be brought back to the Executive Committee at its November meeting. It was also decided that the determination of meeting dates for 2018 will be added to the March 2017 agenda.

**BGM EC 416 ROLE AND WORK OF THE BGM
FOCUS ON “WHO WE ARE/WHAT WE’RE ABOUT”**

Having lived into ABCUSA’s new structure for five years, the Executive Committee realizes the need to work through an evaluative process to review the pros and cons of the new structure as it relates to BGM’s role, purpose and function.

The Executive Committee divided into two groups for further discussion related to the remaining two questions: What is the purpose/role of BGM? How does BGM function in a meaningful way while paying attention to the fact that it is a representative board and to the fact that BGM’s leadership serves for only 2 years in contrast to the new bylaws provision of other national organizations? The focus for this session was to discern what is working well, what needs to be tweaked and to identify possible new growing areas for the work of BGM. And, in light of this conversation, the Executive Committee’s goal was to then determine how this discussion might inform the work of the full board in November.

Following small group discussions, members of the Executive Committee again met together to share responses and to engage in further conversation. There was agreement that the discussion related to the role and function of BGM needs to come to the full board at its November meeting. It was determined that President Fackenthal will ask Jeff Woods to create a BGM survey to be sent to board directors prior to the meeting. This (anonymous) survey should be brief, taking only 15-20 minutes to complete, and designed to assist in providing evaluation and prioritizing of BGM’s work by identifying strengths and weaknesses. Jeff will then be asked to use the resulting data to guide discussion related to the role and function of the board during BGM’s first plenary session on November 17.

BGM EC 417 MISSION CENTER PROPERTY

At its August 2016 meeting, members of the NEC agreed to have Louis Barbarin create a matrix (“CSG & NEC Joint Venture Developer Selection Process Real Estate Questions”) for each 588 partner to complete, with input from its respective board, as a way to respond to CSG and NEC questions critical to the final selection of a joint venture developer. Earlier in the meeting, at Susan’s request, the Executive Committee provided input into ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary’s response, which was then submitted electronically. Susan reported on responses received from the other national organizations.

The Executive Committee reviewed in detail the various offers for the development of the Mission Center property that are on the table, comparing various issues and responses received from potential developers, both pros and cons. During this conversation it was agreed that it will be extremely important to conduct an event of recognition and celebration of the Mission Center space, not so much the building but recognition of the covenants, the celebrations and the tough decisions that have made at the Mission Center over the many years.

The Executive Committee recessed for dinner and the evening.

6:00 p.m. DINNER – AT TASHA AND KYLE WILSON’S HOME IN HONEOYE FALLS.

The Executive Committee enjoyed fellowship and a wonderful meal together, hosted by Tasha and Kyle Wilson at their home in Honeoye Falls.

Saturday, September 10, 2016

BGM EC 418 COFFEE CONNECTION

The Executive Committee enjoyed breakfast together at First Baptist Church of Rochester, catered by Coffee Connection (a ministry begun by 2 American Baptist pastors), which provides employment training and job creation for women in recovery from addiction and functions as a not-for-profit business selling fair trade, organic coffee to retail and wholesale customers. Joy Bergfalk, one its founders, and Katie, a young woman working for Coffee Connection and herself in recovery, were present to share information and testimonies about Coffee Connection and its ministry.

**BGM EC 419 RECONVENE/ANNOUNCEMENTS
LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE**

Judy Fackenthal reconvened the meeting of the Executive Committee. Tasha Wilson shared information related to transport to the airport and to the hotel.

Chaplain Kay Farley lit the Christ Candle as sign and symbol of Christ's presence in the day's work.

BGM EC 420 CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

President Fackenthal reported that, due to recent alterations in NY Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, she has been advised by ABCUSA legal counsel David Knipel that ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary will need to revise its Conflict of Interest policy to reflect new provisions and terminology to conform to the most recent changes. This item will be placed on the November 2016 BGM Executive Committee and BGM meeting agendas.

BGM EC 421 CREDENTIALS & CAUCUS

Caucus Funding

Josue Gómez-Menendez, chair of the Credentials and Caucus Committee, reported that ABCUSA is in receipt of documents from the Portuguese-speaking Caucus, the Indian Caucus and the American Baptist Women's Caucus. The original deadline for receipt of documents was May 15. The deadline was then extended to an August date, with the maximum of 75% level of funding from the previous year.

The Executive Committee reviewed each submission. A recommendation was made by Josue that a letter of confirmation be sent to the caucuses to clarify the receipt of 75% funding and with encouragement for caucuses to meet the May deadline in the future year. Budget Review Officer Paul Higgins will send the letters under both his and Josue's signatures.

Don Ng noted the importance of the Credentials and Caucus meeting agendas to clarify the issue so all are aware that the process has been done in decency and in order. Paul Higgins noted that the next issue to address might be the issue of separating program expenses, which these grants do not fund. There is a need for improving the reporting process. The value of this new process is that it empowers the caucuses and causes them to be responsible and efficient, holding all accountable.

Don suggested that it might be good to create a form, which includes a history of caucus funding, explaining why we do not fund the program work of the caucuses. Don will write this history, which will be included with the letter. Staff will be asked to review files from 1970-1971, to determine whether written documentation can be found.

There is a need to also review the role of caucuses in the denomination. The Asian Caucus' name was changed to the Asian Alliance with the desire to come closer to being a mission partner. Former General Secretary Roy Medley seriously cautioned the caucus about use of the name "Alliance" in regard to the ability to retain caucus funding. Discussion continued related to IM mission funding and the racial/ethnic cultural specific dichotomy unintentionally created. Discussion was also had related to the possible future formation of a White Caucus and the pros and cons. The assumption is often that "we've arrived," however, there continues to be a need for a better platform for discussion.

Susan will to take this discussion to the NEC to make them aware of the issues related to caucuses.

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

VOTED: To allocate \$4,475 to the Portuguese-speaking Caucus; \$6,000 to the American Baptist Indian Caucus; and \$3,713 to the American Baptists Women's Caucus.

BGM EC 422 YOUNG ADULT CAUCUS

Tasha Wilson, a member of the Executive Committee and the Young Adult Caucus shared a letter written to the Credentials and Caucus Committee by Rev. Ashley Whitaker on behalf of young adults who are currently serving on Board of General Ministries. This letter was written to be submitted as an application from the Young Adult Caucus of the Board of General Ministries of the American Baptist Churches USA, subject to the guidelines of Standing Rule 14.4, and it also included a request for a budget of \$3,000 for the 2017 calendar year to formally organize the caucus and its leadership during a gathering at the 2017 Biennial Mission Summit. Tasha also read a section of Amaury Tanon-Santos' presentation to the General Board in 2015 which expressed the desire that the Young Adult Caucus might emerge in the future as a freestanding caucus. There was agreement among the members of the Executive Committee that the Young Adult Caucus shares a great passion and zeal for the denomination, which needs to be honored and encouraged. Discussion occurred about all the ways in which Young Adults formally and informally have connected over the years at Biennials. Some include, coming early for Theologians Conference, pre-planned gatherings hosted by Young Adult Caucus, and Young Adult Clergy groups.

During this discussion, it was noted that there is a process in place and 7 criteria that need to be met to qualify as a board caucus (Standing Rule 14.3.2 & Standing Rule 14.2.3). President Fackenthal mentioned her desire to advocate for a balance of leadership within the caucus, including both clergy & laity. In light of this, the Executive Committee requested that the letter of proposal be rewritten to advocate for a leadership balance between laity & clergy membership and to clarify interim leadership. This can then come back to the Executive Committee for recommendation to BGM at its November meeting.

BGM EC 423 BWA REPORT FROM GS EMERITUS ROY MEDLEY

General Secretary Emeritus Roy Medley submitted to the Executive Committee a written report of the 2016 BWA General Council held in Vancouver, British Columbia. Included in his report was an accounting of the challenges within BWA related to issues of power and dominance in the life of the global church and in particular, the issue of the future of BWAid and the organizing of a network of mission agencies from the global north (EAD Network) parallel to BWAid; some see EAD as competing with BWAid. In a recent Baptist News Global report written in July, IM is mentioned as one of the several participants. Although it appears as though both organizations are contributing money to where it is to go, there is much tension over which holds more control over purse strings and there is a marked difference on governance between both groups.

Offerings (approximately \$203,000 annually) that flow from American Baptist churches through the World Relief Committee are allocated to ABCUSA–Office of the General Secretary to distribute. A portion of this money goes to BWAid. World Relief funds (approximately \$10,000) are also contributed annually to Bread for the World, which has not been involved in the EAD Network. It is important that the Executive Committee analyze how it wants to review funding in supporting organizations that tend to perpetuate these traditional relationships.

Susan Gillies emphasized the need to have discussions with a number of people, including World Relief Officer Lisa Rothenberger, in order to gather more facts to feed into the decisions the Executive Committee makes related to future funding. The goal is to be sure that the funding gets to persons in a compassionate way, in a way that fits American Baptist priorities.

The Executive Committee directed Interim General Secretary Susan Gillies to handle investigating this situation and to bring back a report to the Executive Committee.

BGM EC 424 WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE

At former General Secretary Roy Medley's request, Judy Fackenthal and Don Ng began to attend World Relief Committee meetings. Don reported on the last meeting of the World Relief Committee, held June 24, 2016 in Philadelphia. Shirley Fair, BGM director (who also once serves as an IM director), chairs the committee.

The World Relief Committee manual helps guide committee work, regulates how funds are allocated and specifies who qualifies for funding. There are 3 issues of concern:

- 1) There needs to be clarity on connections and accountability. The WRC is housed under BGM, not IM. Lisa Rothenberger, staff of IM, is considered ABCUSA's employee when she serves in the capacity of World Relief Officer.
- 2) Roy once applied for a project he hoped WRC might fund, but was turned down due to ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary not being categorized as a "program board."
- 3) The World Relief Committee has normally allocated funds for disaster relief mainly in the US, under the auspices of region executive ministers. Guidelines note that unused funds for disaster relief should be returned; however, historically that guideline has not been followed, leading to an issue of accountability. (Susan Gillies noted that there are some complications as it pertains to distributing disaster relief monies, making it harder than one would think to make distributions.)

Following discussion, it was agreed that there is a need for routine evaluation of the World Relief Policy. Susan will name a person to investigate where we are with the World Relief Policy and how we might move forward to determine needed changes. Susan will have a conversation with Sharon Koh, Executive Minister of IM, about World Relief prior to any action being taken to investigate the issues. It was also agreed that the Executive Committee will continue to ask Lisa Rothenberger to report on a regular basis.

BGM EC 425 COMMISSION ON BAPTIST TALK

BGM voted at its June meeting to form a Commission on Baptist Talk. Past President Don Ng reported that following the June 2016 BGM meeting, President Judy Fackenthal, in consultation with Susan Gillies, appointed the following persons to serve: Don Ng, chair; Jeff Woods, staff; Raimundo Barreto, Cecelia Dachtler and Wesley Sun (BGM directors). Two additional members are pending. The commission will meet in tandem with BGM meetings in June and November, with the initial meeting being held in November 2016. Work will be accomplished by electronic means. It was recommended that clear guidelines be written.

BGM EC 426 CLOSE OF BUSINESS AGENDA

As the business meeting concluded, Interim General Secretary Susan Gillies voiced a reminder to all of the Executive Committee of their commitment in terms of confidentiality of its work.

The Executive Committee expressed appreciation to Tasha Wilson and to her family for hosting this meeting.

BGM EC 427 CLOSING WORSHIP/ADJOURNMENT

Kay Farley led in closing worship, focusing on the biblical story of God's speaking to Samuel, especially noting Samuel's fear and Eli's request. Kay encouraged members to think about the leadership role of the Executive Committee and its responsibility for the ABC family. In light of that, she requested that each person contemplate one thing resulting from this meeting that caused each to say, "I'll have to pray on this." ("Speak Lord, I am listening.")

Next meeting of the BGM Executive Committee:
November 16-17, 2016 —King of Prussia, PA

Submitted by

Dr. Susan E. Gillies
Interim General Secretary

SEG/cb

Documents attached
BGM Proposed Agenda: September 8-10, 2016
BGM EC Roster
BGM Minutes: June 16-18, 2016 (1001:6/16)

BGM EC Minutes: June 15, 2016 (1002:6/16)
YTD Financials Through July 31, 2016
Timeline History of the Mission Summit Conversations, by Jeff Woods
ABC President's Report
Report of the Interim General Secretary
GS Search: Research Piece
UM Adaptive Challenge- Segment from "Leadership on the Line," by Ronald A. Heifetz & Marty Linsky
Reports from AB Caucuses: Women's Caucus; AB Indian Caucus; Portuguese-Speaking Caucus
Young Adult Caucus Letter of Request
Friends of Northeast Christian University (FNECU) – Update from Past President Don Ng
ABC Creation Justice Task Force, 9/8/16 Report
Young Adult Caucus: Draft of letter to become a Board-Related Caucus
BWA General Council 2016: Report from GS Emeritus Roy Medley
Baptist Talk Task Force