



## **BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES**

June 23-24, 2015

### **MINUTES**

**Meeting Site:** Sheraton Overland Park Hotel  
6100 College Blvd.  
Overland Park, KS 66211  
913-234-2100

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

**Parliamentarian:** Dennis Johnson

**Tuesday, June 23, 2:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.; Cottonwood 1**

#### **BGM 212 WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

ABC president Don Ng welcomed BGM directors and ABCUSA staff, and called the meeting to order. He expressed appreciation to Kelly Legg and Wesley Sun who agreed to serve as tellers and to Nancy O'Neill for her gift of providing music during the meetings.

President Ng recognized new directors attending their first meeting: Stephanie Commandest, Evergreen Association of ABC; Marijane Kiley, West Virginia Baptist Convention (noting that BGM will take action at this meeting to elect Marijane as an At-Large Director and that she previously served on the General Board); Cecilia Dachtler, ABC of the Dakotas and Thomas Roberts, ABC of Michigan (Cecilia and Thomas were new to the Board in November, but neither was able to attend the November meeting.)

President Ng also announced that resignations were received from Nancy Adkins, West Virginia Baptist Convention (resigned in January) and Richard Hansen, ABC of Maine (resigned in May). The following

directors were not able to attend this meeting: Manuel Magana, ABC of the Central Pacific Coast; Dianne Steelman, ABC of Ohio; Elmore Warren, Jr., ABC of the South.

## **BGM 213      OPENING WORSHIP/LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE**

BGM Chaplain Judy Fackenthal lit the Christ Candle in recognition of Christ's presence and BGM's commitment to "Worshipful Work."

She announced that during the plenary sessions three directors will be sharing an account of someone who helped them spiritually in their Christian journey. Kenneth Kho shared during this time, relaying his experience of growing up in the Philippines and the friendships he encountered with ABC missionary families who made a profound impression upon his life.

## **BGM 214      CONSENT AGENDA**

The consent agenda allows the Board of General Ministries to take action on several agenda items with one vote. These are items that can usually be handled without questions, although directors are invited to ask questions prior to a vote being taken. A motion was made, seconded and it was

**VOTED: To approve the Consent Agenda: The June 23-24, 2015 Proposed Agenda and the minutes of BGM's November 13-15, 2014 meeting (held in King of Prussia, PA).**

## **BGM 215      REPORT OF ACTIONS OF THE MARCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Minutes of the March 10-13, 2015 Executive Committee were posted on the BGM document page for review prior to the meeting. President Ng stated that there are also two actions from the Executive Committee meeting held earlier this morning that will be reported later in this meeting.

## **BGM 216      REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Vice President Fackenthal shared a report of the Nominating Committee, which met on Monday, June 22, 2015 and presented the following actions for vote:

### Election of At-Large Director of the Board of General Ministries

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

Upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee, it was

**VOTED: To elect Marijane Kiley, West Virginia Baptist Convention, as an At-Large Director (class of 2018) as nominated to the Board of General Ministries.**

### Election of General Director of the Board of General Ministries

*Up to five (5) General Directors are elected, by the Members giving due regard to geographical, racial, ethnic and gender diversity on the Board of General Ministries, the National Boards and within the Constituencies of ABCUSA.*

**VOTED: To elect June Totten as a General Director (class of 2019) to the Board of General Ministries.**

Richard Hansen's resignation as an At-Large Director from ABC of Maine, created a vacancy. The Nominating Committee voted to recommend Bonnie Higgins for election to fill the remainder of Richard's term. Bonnie's name will also be presented to the Biennial Mission Summit delegates at the Sunday morning, June 28, business session for election as the At-Large Director from ABC of Maine (2017-2020).

Upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee, it was

**VOTED: To elect Bonnie Higgins, ABC of Maine, as an At-Large Director, (Class of 2016) to the Board of General Ministries.**

Alan Rudnick, current At-Large Director from ABC of New York State, will be resigning at the end of June. The ABC Nominating Committee voted to recommend Janice Bell for election to fill the remainder of Alan's term (Class of 2017). However, during this meeting, this vote was tabled until later in the meeting to permit additional discussion with the Nominating Committee.

The ABC Nominating Committee also voted to recommend Annie Svitavsky as At-Large Director from ABC of Vermont/New Hampshire (Class of 2020). Annie's name will be added verbally to the election slate when it is presented for election at the Biennial business session on Sunday morning, June 28.

**BGM 217 REVIEW OF BIG ISSUES OF THE DAY AND PARKING LOT ISSUES**

The Board considered Big Issues and Parking Lot Issues. President Ng announced that the agenda item "General Secretary Search" will be discussed following the BGM dinner this evening.

**BGM 218 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE ABCUSA BYLAWS & STANDING RULES**

Proposed amendments to the ABCUSA Standing Rules and ABCUSA Bylaws were posted on the BGM document page for review prior to this meeting. Time was provided for questions, after which Alan Rudnick, chair of the Standing Rules Committee, presented the proposed actions.

On recommendation of the BGM Executive Committee, it was

**VOTED: To approve the proposed amendments to the ABCUSA Standing Rules.  
(Counted vote: 34 yea; 0 nay)**

And, it was

**VOTED: To approve the proposed amendments to the ABCUSA Bylaws for recommendation to the ABC delegates at the 2017 Biennial Mission Summit.  
(Counted vote: 34 yea; 0 nay)**

**BGM 219 TRANSFORMED BY THE SPIRIT**

Jeff Woods, Associate General Secretary for Regional Ministries (soon to be Associate General Secretary for Congregations & Regions), led the Board in singing "Deep and Wide" as an illustration of, and a celebration for, how the depth and the width of the process of Adaptive Challenge is guiding congregations. He spoke of three piloted resources of *Transformed by the Spirit* (TbyS) that assist congregations in discerning how God is working in their midst at a deeper and wider level. For the first time, resources of

*Transformed by the Spirit* will be available online through the new ABC Forum following the Biennial Mission Summit. “Journey Guides,” is also available as an online tool to teach more about facilitating the leadership teams that are formed to engage these resources. Rosie Oaks Lee, the facilitator, has established an online classroom experience to permit others to become involved and to share feedback.

Also new this summer are newly launched Executive Minister Conversation groups, with Dr. Sumner Grant providing leadership for senior executives and Dr. Jeff Woods working with newer executive ministers in the same capacity.

Dr. Dwight Stinnett (executive minister of ABC/Great Rivers Region), who has served as chair of the Journey Team, will be retiring at the end of this month and Rev. Nikita McCallister (senior pastor, Bethany Baptist Church, Pawtucket, RI) will step into that role. Dr. Jeff Savage (pastor, First Baptist Church, Springfield, OR) is working to connect pastors with pastors. Dr. Judy Allbee is serving as Executive Minister Liaison. Other members of the Journey Team include: Dr. Scott Arnold, Rev. Betty Wright-Riggins, Rev. Karen Yee and Dr. Jeff Woods.

General Secretary Roy Medley provided a brief update on Rhythms of the Spirit, an initiative designed as a way to “deepen our love to one another to do justice and walk humbly with our God.” There are two additional conferences planned, one on August 3-7, 2015 in Exeter, Rhode Island and another on October 26-30, 2015 in Green Lake, WI. The General Secretary extended an invitation to board directors to attend a Rhythms of the Spirit conference, noting that the experience provides a time of rest for one’s spirit, but also an enriching opportunity to grow.

## **BGM 220      588 ASSOCIATES/BUILDING ISSUES**

### Building Update

Alan Musoke, ABCUSA Treasurer/CFO, presented a report on building issues which included information related to: 1) a survey of ABC Mission Center staff which will be used to inform the location and design of the new ABC office space; 2) the Real Estate Council’s first quarter conference call on April 14; 3) results of a property tax appeal meeting with 588 Associates L.P. attorneys held on April 29; 4) a May meeting of 588 Associates officers with the ABC Communications Council to solicit their expertise in drafting a series of internal and external communications regarding the disposition of the building process, as well as a long-term communication strategy related to the disposition of the building; 5) the June 2 release by CSG Consulting LTD (588 Associates’ real estate consultants) of the Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI), the first of a two-step process of choosing a developer for the Mission Center property; and 6) a June 12 staff celebration and information session to review survey results and provide an update on the disposition strategy.

Alan also reported that ABHMS plans, by the end of March 2016, to outsource its Judson Press disbursement function and since 40% of the work of ABCUSA’s Traffic department is related to Judson Press, it will affect our staffing pattern.

His full written report is attached to the minutes filed in the General Secretary’s office.

### Transfer of Mission Center/Graphic Arts Property

ABCUSA Legal Counsel David Knipel, Esq. reviewed the background of the proposed transfer of the Mission Center/Graphic Arts property now owned by 588 Associates, L.P. to its current limited partners (ABCUSA, the Home Mission Societies, MMBB and International Ministries), to be held by them after the transfer as tenants in common. He explained that the transfer was being proposed in connection with property tax exemption settlement negotiations currently underway between the partnership and local taxing authorities to clarify that the property was both legally and equitably owned by 501(c)(3) organizations who

were public charities under Pennsylvania law. He noted that the BGM had previously approved resolutions authorizing appropriate ABCUSA officers to sign a Unanimous Consent of Members of 588 Associates, G.P., LLC (as the General Partner of the partnership) to authorize the partnership to undertake the transfer and related restructuring.

It was reported that the BGM Executive Committee voted at its meeting this morning to recommend to the BGM that it authorize ABCUSA to acquire a 35% share of the property as a tenant in common, and to execute and deliver related documents previously posted on the ABCUSA website for the BGM's review. It was also noted that the Executive Committee requested that when the draft forms of documents to be approved were in final form, they be brought back to the Executive Committee for final approval.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Robin Crouch, seconded by Dean Parker and it was

**VOTED: To adopt the following resolutions with the final documents coming back to the BGM Executive Committee for final approval:**

**WHEREAS, the Corporation is a limited partner in the Pennsylvania limited partnership known as 588 Associates, L.P. (the "Partnership"), and a Member of 588 Associates, G.P., LLC, the general partner of the Partnership; and**

**WHEREAS, through its general partner, the Partnership has determined to dissolve and to transfer the real estate and other assets described in the Special Warranty Deed and Assignment and Assumption of Leases to its limited partners (including the Corporation) as tenants in common pursuant to a Tenants in Common Agreement, all as presented to this Board;**

**NOW THEREFORE, it is hereby:**

**RESOLVED, that the forms of Special Warranty Deed, Assignment and Assumption of Leases and Tenants in Common Agreement submitted to this Board are approved, and with any changes the Executive Committee of this Board, any officer of the Corporation and counsel for the Corporation may approve; and it is further**

**RESOLVED, subject to approval by the Executive Committee, any officer of the Corporation is authorized to do and perform all such further acts and things, to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of the Corporation, and where necessary or appropriate, to execute and file with the appropriate governmental authorities, all such other agreements, certificates, consents, corporate papers and other documents (including without limitation warranty deeds, bills of sale, other instruments of transfer and conveyance, powers of attorney, assumption agreements, option agreements, and lease agreements), and to make all such payments and take all other action that such officer and counsel for the Corporation deem necessary or desirable to carry out the intent and purposes of the foregoing resolution; and any or all of the transactions contemplated thereby; and any actions of such officers taken consistent with the intent and purposes of the foregoing resolutions are approved, ratified and confirmed.**

## **BGM 221      GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT**

General Secretary Medley, who traveled to San Francisco prior to this meeting, to participate in President Don Ng's retirement as senior pastor of the historic First Chinese Baptist Church (FCBC) in San Francisco, recognized and commended President Ng for his years of service with the American Baptist Churches. Don served in the mid-1970s as youth minister at FCBC and from 1978-1998 as national staff of the American Baptist Board of Educational Ministries where he was director of Education for Discipleship and Youth Ministry. In 1998 he returned to FCBC to serve an additional 17 years as senior pastor. Board directors enjoyed viewing a video of Don's grandchildren's reflections on his retirement, prepared by his wife Joy for the retirement festivities held this last weekend.

While acknowledging that these past 14 years as General Secretary have included times of upheaval and changing expectations, Roy also spoke of the amazing things that American Baptists have experienced and the ways in which God has led. He challenged BGM to “dream big”, to never cease believing who American Baptists are and what God can do through this denominational family.

Roy also shared personal accounts of the April 2015 ABC/COB/PNBC visit to the Middle East. ABCUSA co-sponsored a peace conference in Nazareth with the Baptist Churches of Israel and the European Baptist Federation, a first ever conference of this nature. It is hoped that this will become a biennial event. Roy and Dr. David Coffey, past president of BWA, were invited as speakers.

Concluding his report, the General Secretary also challenged American Baptists to continue to work intentionally on issues of racial reconciliation in this country. He called for the formation of a new commission to study race relations, posing these questions: How can American Baptists be more active? How do we live as American Baptists, fighting against things that are so corrosive in our society?” Recounting the recent racially-motivated tragedies in Ferguson, in Baltimore, in Staten Island and in Charleston, SC, he called on American Baptists to recapture their passion for social justice so that all might live lives of quality, emphasizing that “we need to live as people who are transformed in the journey, by the journey, and for the journey. We need to dream big, because we serve a big God!”

## **BGM 222 RECESS/ACTION GROUP MEETINGS**

President Ng recessed the meeting of the full Board of General Ministries. From 4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m., BGM convened in the following Action Groups to focus its work in various areas: (The list of names of members of Action Groups below specify full membership; not all were able to be present.)

***Finance Committee** (Led by Paul Higgins; Alan Musoke, staff)*

*Robin Crouch, Beryl Hornberger, Danny Jack, Charity Matic, James Wolfe*

***Christian Unity & Interfaith Relations** (Led by June Totten; Roy Medley, staff)*

*Andy Arndt, Ruth Clark, Dennis Johnson, Ernest Jones, Duh Kam, Marijane Kiley, Alan Rudnick*

***Becoming a Beloved Community** (Led by Camille Brown; Pat Hernandez, staff)*

*Julia Bebeau, Stephanie Commandest, Shirley Fair, Kenneth Kho, Kelly Legg,*

*Vivan Martindale, Dean Parker, Dianne Steelman, Wesley Sun*

***Communicating ABC Identity** (Led by Tasha Wilson; Leo Thorne, staff)*

*Felipe Candelaria, Bill Frederickson, Jonathan Malone, Elmore Warren, Ashley Whitaker*

***Renewing Congregations** (Led by Wesley Roberts; Jeff Woods, staff)*

*Joyce Blandon, Cecilia Dachtler, Judy Fackenthal, Kay Farley, Manuel Luquin,*

*Manuel Magana, Nancy O'Neill, Tom Roberts*

## **BGM DINNER: 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.**

The Board of General Ministries, their spouses and staff enjoyed dinner together at 6:00 p.m. in the Maple Room of the Sheraton. Following dinner, Brad Berglund, Mission Summit Manager/Consultant, provided a preview of the Biennial Mission Summit, the upcoming ABC Family Celebration.

## **Tuesday, June 23, 8:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.; BGM 2<sup>nd</sup> Plenary; Cottonwood 1**

## **BGM 223 EXECUTIVE SESSION-GENERAL SECRETARY SEARCH**

The Board of General Ministries met in Executive Session to hear a report from the General Secretary Search Committee. Minutes from this meeting have been sealed in a confidential envelope and attached to the official copy of the minutes filed in the General Secretary's office.

**Wednesday, June 24, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; BGM 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenary; Cottonwood 1**

**BGM 224 RECONVENING/WORSHIP**

Vice President Fackenthal reconvened the meeting of the Board of General Ministries. She lit the Christ Candle, inviting God's presence and guidance for the day's work, and opened with prayer. She also led in an oral reading and meditation of Acts 11:22-26, the sending of Barnabas to the church in Antioch.

**BGM 225 TIME OF REMEMBRANCE: THE REV. DR. G. DANIEL JONES**

BGM Director Dean Parker, recently elected moderator of PBA, paid tribute to former ABC friend and colleague, Rev. Dr. G. Daniel Jones, who served for 31 years as pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Germantown, PA and as interim pastor at Zion Baptist Church, Philadelphia for the past several months, just prior to his passing on May 27, 2015. The Board observed a moment of silence in honor of this beloved American Baptist leader. Dean shared personal reflections on how Dr. Jones influenced his own Christian journey and he also invited BGM directors and staff to share 1-2 sentence memories of having worked with Dr. Jones.

General Secretary Roy Medley, who participated in Dr. Jones' home-going service, reminisced about Dr. Jones' "deep pockets" and his "deepness of heart," a man who called us to hear the voice of our whole community and who was an advocate of justice and loving mercy and compassion.

BGM chaplain Judy Fackenthal led in a closing hymn.

Following this time of remembrance, a motion was made by Ruth Clark, seconded by Danny Jack and it was

**VOTED: To adopt the following resolution in honor of ABC's beloved American Baptist Friend and colleague, The Rev. Dr. G. Daniel Jones:**

**To the beloved Members of the Family  
Of the Rev. Dr. G. Daniel Jones  
And Members of  
Grace Baptist Church, Germantown, Pennsylvania**

The Board of General Ministries (formerly the General Board) of the American Baptist Churches in session on June 24, 2015 does hereby adopt the following resolution of appreciation for the life and ministry of the Rev. Dr. G. Daniel Jones:

**Whereas**, the Rev. G. Daniel Jones who entered his heavenly reward on May 27, 2015 faithfully served his Lord Jesus Christ and the American Baptist Churches in a manner worthy of highest honor and praise, and

**Whereas**, G. Daniel Jones was beloved as pastor and

**Whereas**, G. Daniel Jones was exemplary in service as a national denominational leader serving in many capacities including:

Member of the General Board for 18 years  
Served on the Board of Educational Ministries  
Chaplain to the General Board (2006-2007)  
President of the Black Caucus  
President of the Ministers Council (1998-2001; April 2002-August 2002)  
Advisor to General Secretaries

We, hereby, extend our Christian sympathies to his beloved family and church members, affirm our deep affection and respect for this exemplary Christian leader, and memorialize his name as a beloved leader in American Baptist life.

*And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!" (Rev 14:13 RSV)*

## **BGM 226**

## **REPORT OF THE BUDGET REVIEW OFFICER**

### Audit

Budget Review Officer Paul Higgins reported that all notes from the 2012 and 2013 audits have been addressed. He presented the 2014 ABCUSA Audit: Financial Statements and Report of Independent Certified Public Accountants, December 31, 2014 and 2013. On June 8, 2015, the audit firm of Tait, Weller & Baker LLP (with whom ABCUSA has contracted for 3 years) provided a clean report, with no difficulties or discrepancies, stating "In our opinion, the financial statements referred to present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of ABC-USA as of December 31, 2014 and 2013, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."

Following Paul's report, and a time for questions, it was

**VOTED: To accept, as recommended by the BGM Finance Committee, the Auditor's Report on the 2014 ABCUSA Audited Financial Statements for the years ended December 31, 2014 and 2013.**

### YTD Financial Report

Overall the year-to-date financials show a net loss of \$41,000. Revenue has increased by \$189,000 from the previous year although Expenses have increased by \$220,000. Not all revenue and expenses are reflected in the April financials since final financial results for the Biennial Mission Summit will not be available until the July financials are processed.

Total United Mission receipts are down 3.51% from the previous year. The World Mission Offering is down 30.9%; the Retired Ministers and Missionaries is up 2.1% and the Region Offering is up 16.3% from the previous year.

## **BGM 227**

## **RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION- ROXBURGH & VAN GELDER**

The *Transformed by the Spirit* initiative was first introduced during the Board and Biennial meetings in Puerto Rico in 2011. General Secretary Medley commended The Mission Network consultants Alan Roxburgh and Craig Van Gelder, describing them as instruments of change as American Baptists began to feel God's Spirit moving amongst this denominational family. He noted that the four years since have been life-changing for ABC.

With grateful appreciation for the invaluable and Spirit-led role of these consultants, a motion was made by Kay Farley, seconded by Alan Rudnick and it was by consensus

**AGREED: To approve the following resolution in appreciation of Alan Roxburgh and Craig Van Gelder, The Mission Network consultants:**



**The Board of General Ministries, American Baptist Churches USA in session June 23-24 , 2015, wishes to acknowledge its great gratitude to the Rev. Drs. Alan Roxburgh and Craig Van Gelder, for the creative leadership they have given to the American Baptist Churches in *Transformed by the Spirit*. We recognize that each is a thought leader in the church's effort to face the adaptive challenges presented by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with an engagement of neighbor and world in the love of Christ, the power of the Spirit and the redemptive purposes of God.**

**Having walked with them for several years in the formation of the *Transformed by the Spirit* initiative, and having benefited from their wisdom and their insights into God at work in the world in this time as they have counseled and guided us,**

**We wish to honor their contribution to American Baptist life and express our profound gratitude for their immeasurable assistance to us and our deep affection for each as beloved brothers in Christ by adoption of this resolution of appreciation.**

#### **BGM 228      ADJOURN/RECONVENE: CREDENTIALS & CAUCUS REPORT**

Wesley Roberts, chair of the Credentials and Caucus Committee, presented the Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches. Following a time for questions,

A motion was made by Robin Crouch, seconded by Manuel Luquin and it was

**VOTED: To recognize the Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches (document 1205.1:6/15) dated November 5, 2014 through June 8, 2015.**

#### **BGM 229      JOINT REVIEW COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS**

Article XIV, Section 5 of the ABCUSA Bylaws states: "There shall be a Joint Review Committee on Nominations consisting of the Vice President of ABCUSA (who shall chair the Committee), the Presidents of each of the National Boards, the President of the REMC, the Inter-Caucus President, the President of the Ministers Council of American Baptist Churches in the USA, the President of American Baptist Men and the President of American Baptist Women's Ministries. This Committee shall review the composition of the Board of General Ministries and the National Boards and note any concerns regarding diversity and reflective representation. The Committee shall report any such concerns to the ABCUSA Nominating Committee, to the respective nominating committees of the National Boards, and to the National Leadership Council."

Vice President Judy Fackenthal, chair, reported that there was a first meeting of this committee since the passing of the ABCUSA Bylaws in 2011. Out of this meeting came the following concerns: 1) Currently there is no one of Haitian or Portuguese descent and only one of the boards has a representative of Native American descent; 2) BGM and ABHMS have a higher percentage of clergy. IM has a higher percentage of laity; 3) There seems to be a lack of clarity regarding clear and concise goals related to diversity and representation. The Committee has asked for diversity goals from the national boards to share with the Nominating Committee.

#### **BGM 230      MATTHEW 25 GRANT REPORT**

BGM directors Robin Crouch and Alan Rudnick and ABCUSA staff Leo Thorne and Tina Turner monitor the Matthew 25 Grant funding.

Robin reported that some years ago ABCUSA received monetary gifts from a generous donor who wishes to remain anonymous but asks that the funds be used to address “housing, feeding, education and health with regard to the less fortunate.” The recipient must be an American Baptist church or affiliate. Awards from the funds will be disbursed twice a year, in April and in October, and the maximum given to any ministry will be \$5,000 per disbursement. \$78,315 has been distributed thus far in 2015.

A written report of distribution of the fund since 2013 and a description of the projects funded were shared with members of the board.

## **BGM 231**

## **IMMIGRATION- MISSION TRIPS**

### Mexico

In March 2014, the BGM Executive Committee was hosted by ABC missionaries Ray and Adalia Schellinger, missionaries to Tijuana, Mexico. The Executive Committee spent the day learning about immigration issues as experienced on the Mexican side of the border. The day consisted of educational experiences and a time of prayer at Friendship Park, the border fence in Playas, Mexico and a visit to Deborah’s House, a ministry to women and children affected by domestic violence, as well as a visit to Casa de Migrante in Tijuana, a faith-based non-profit Catholic mission which shelters migrants on their way to the U.S. or those who have been deported. Judy Fackenthal and Wesley Roberts shared personal accounts of their experiences during this mission trip.

Prior to this trip, in January 2015, an Immigration Taskforce was convened by General Secretary Roy Medley, consisting of representation from ABCUSA, IM, ABHMS and ABW Ministries with the goal of seeking to determine how we as American Baptists will address the justice issue of immigration. This Taskforce (Rev. Sandra Hasenauer, ABW Ministries; Dr. Jose Norat -Rodriguez, IM (now retired); Rev. Salvador Orellana, ABHMS; Rev. Ray Schellinger, IM; Rev. Dr. Warren Stewart, Sr., First Institutional Baptist Church, Phoenix, AZ and General Secretary Roy Medley, with the help of Rev. Ruth Mooney, IM-ABC missionary; Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, Esperanza College, Philadelphia; and Adalia Gutierrez Lee, IM-ABC missionary/staff) designed an immigration resource which was launched in April 2015. This resource, which may be used for Christian education study, focuses on personal stories of humanity and provides more than just statistics—an opportunity for reflection, application and commitment. The resource can be downloaded from the ABCUSA website at: [www.abc-usa.org](http://www.abc-usa.org)

Roy stated that to be truly in mission, we must not divide domestic and international situations, but realize that there is an interpenetration, that national and international issues encumber us all.

### Burma

Roy shared highlights of his January/February 2015 trip to Malaysia, Thailand and Burma. Although the delegation was not able to visit the Thai refugee camps due to restrictions, they invited leaders from these five camps (in which 120,000 Burmese are living) to meet with them. He reported that it was good to hear that some issues regarding land confiscated from refugees are being addressed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The U.S. government is accepting refugees for resettlement based upon family reunification or on individual proof that a life is threatened. Those who responded will be filtering through the process for the next two to three years. The UNHCR is no longer considering Chins who fled to Malaysia as refugees for resettlement; but considers them as fleeing solely for economic reasons.

While in Burma the delegation met with many government officials, including leaders such as Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (Nobel Laureate), Minister U Aung Min (chairperson of Myanmar Peace Centre), US government and UN officials, and the Chief Minister of the Kachin State. One of the rising epidemics in the Kachin State is drug addiction. Although the Kachin Baptist Convention supports some work in this area, the ongoing surge of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) prevents them from being able to concentrate their efforts. Roy raised the issue with the Chief Minister as to whether he might welcome ABC missionaries to assess the situation and to be involved in combatting the drug trade as they have in Thailand through the

introduction of replacement crops. Florence Li also spoke with him about the drug rehabilitation programs created in Hong Kong by Harold Schoch, where she worked for a time, and she offered to make a connection with those programs if desired. Roy mentioned his hope that some OGHS funding might be used.

Roy emphasized that there are currently three issues of extreme importance in Burma: The Cease Fire talks, long-term political dialogue around the constitution, and the forthcoming elections. The Carter Center has been named as one group who will oversee the elections. Roy wrote to President Jimmy Carter offering American Baptist assistance, and President Carter responded to let him know that he is happy to partner in this endeavor.

From February 13-21, Rev. Dr. C. Duh Kam (Executive Minister for the Chin Baptist Churches USA), Rev. Dr. Paul and Gail Aita (Special Assistants to Stan Murray for Burma) and Rev. Yan Naung (Chin Baptist Convention), traveled with Roy to the Southern Chin State, where it had been 60 years since an American Baptist visit. In 2013 when Roy visited the northern Chin state, he and that delegation represented the first American Baptists to be present in the Chin Hills since ABC missionaries were forced out. Roy described the receptions for both trips to be incredible. During this trip to the Southern Chin State, more than 10,000 people gathered for this conference. People lined the streets from the airport to the conference center.

Roy described the Chin Hills as the Appalachia of Burma, the poorest region with a lack of an infrastructure in most of the region where medical and educational help is lacking due to the remoteness and isolation of the villages and hamlets. He noted that the Chin State is the only state in Burma with no government sponsored college or university.

Duh Kam, a BGM director and president of the Chin Baptist Churches USA, also addressed the board, explaining how evangelism is organized in the Chin Hills.

## **BGM 232 EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board of General Ministries met in Executive Session. Minutes from this meeting have been sealed in a confidential envelope and are attached to the official copy of the minutes filed in the General Secretary's office.

## **BGM 233 RECESS/ACTION GROUPS**

Vice President Fackenthal recessed the meeting of the full Board of General Ministries. From 10:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m., BGM convened in the following Action Groups: Finance Committee, Christian Unity & Interfaith Relations, Becoming a Beloved Community, Communicating ABC Identity and Renewing Congregations.

### **LUNCH: 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

A Buffet Lunch was served in the Hawthorne Room of the Sheraton.

## **Wednesday, June 24, 2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.; BGM 4<sup>th</sup> Plenary; Cottonwood 1**

## **BGM 234 REPORT OF THE ABC PRESIDENT**

President Don Ng reconvened the meeting of BGM.

He shared a written report of his work and travels as ABC president since the November BGM meeting prior to the meeting, but highlighted some of that report during this time.

On June 6 he delivered the message at the historic First Baptist Church of Boston (his home church) as the church celebrated its 350th Anniversary. And, on Oct. 24-25, he will bring the message (as recently retired pastor) at First Chinese Baptist Church as FCBC celebrates its 135<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Don noted that like Simon & Garfunkel's song, *Old Friends* ("Old friends, sitting on the park bench like bookends"), First Baptist Church of Boston and First Chinese Baptist Church, San Francisco have now become his bookends.

He also reported on the wonderful opportunity he had to visit NE India in May. As a result of the work of ABC missionaries 180 years ago, Baptist churches are thriving with over 7200 churches in 6 conventions and 3 associations, and more than 1.2 million members. While there, he was able to visit three of the seven Baptist colleges and three of the six Baptist hospitals. Don has also been invited to speak at the Nagaland Baptist Church Council's convention on February 5-7, 2016.

Dr. Anjo Keikung, who was a guest at this meeting and will be attending the Biennial Mission Summit, brought greetings to BGM from the Council of Churches of NE India. He presented gifts to General Secretary Roy Medley and to ABC President Don Ng.

### **BGM 235**

### **BGM OFFERING**

An offering (\$500) to assist the ministry of Deborah's House (Tijuana, Mexico) in honor of ABC missionaries Ray and Adalia Schellinger was collected at this meeting as part of BGM Worship.

### **BGM 236**

### **UNITED MISSION ADAPTIVE TEAM**

At the March 2015 meeting of the Executive Committee, discussion relative to the Adaptive Challenge Team on United Mission (ACT on UM) ended with the identification of and agreement about several next steps. One step was the formation of a small work group (comprised of members of BGM, ACT on UM, 3 or 4 region executives who are committed to UM, and staff members of ABCUSA) which would be tasked with bringing focus to a clear approach to UM using a marketing firm and developing a campaign to increase giving to UM, with an eye toward the other 4 offerings, and with regard to the current and changing giving realities.

Tasha Wilson and Leo Thorne provided a report on the meeting of the small work group, which met in Chicago on May 19, 2015. Participants of the group included: Don Ng, ABC President; Steve Bils Executive Minister of ABC/Central Pacific Coast; Marie Onwubuariri, Executive Minister of ABC/Wisconsin; Tom Wiles, Executive Minister of ABC/Rhode Island; Ashley Whitaker, member of ACT on UM, BGM director, and pastor; Nancy Adkins, lay person and marketing professional; and Leo Thorne and Bridget Lipin, ABCUSA Mission Resource Development staff.

The working group prepared a proposal and interviewed three firms, hiring Jennifer Shaheen from Technology Therapy, Smithfield, RI. The firm has been asked to take what is pertinent about the history of United Mission and to assist in designing a campaign to begin in early September 2015 and continue through December 2016. Jennifer will be on site in Overland Park during the Biennial Mission Summit as a way of providing exposure; she will be roaming around with a camera, asking the question, "What does it mean to be American Baptist?"

Three regions (ABC/WI, CPC, and RI) have been chosen as Beta groups for a UM pilot project in the fall of 2015 which will involve a handful of churches. It is hoped that results by the spring of 2016 will provide learnings to assist in engaging the denomination as a whole with a powerful campaign.

BGM Action Groups were invited to report as needed, recognizing that action of the full board might at times be required in order for the Action Group to move forward with its work. Full written reports will be posted on the BGM document page for review following this meeting.

Renewing Congregations: Wesley Roberts reported

At the November 2014 meeting of the Action Group, it was decided that each member would come to the June 2015 meeting prepared to share learnings about transformation which resulted from regional and congregational interviews. A summary of these learnings was shared with the Executive Committee, noting that these will also be posted on the ABCUSA website.

Beloved Community: Wesley Sun reported

The results of a data collection exercise about what it would take to become a Beloved Community was shared with BGM. The survey included two questions: What would beloved community look like to you? How would you participate in this community between November and the June meeting? The Action Group requested that BGM schedule a retreat for persons to engage in dialogue related to the beloved community, offering their services in the planning and facilitation.

Finance Committee, Paul Higgins reported

The BGM Finance Committee continues to work on a revised investment policy. At its meeting the committee also considered draw rates from the Roblee and Roberts endowment funds, reviewed regional audits and caucus reports and funding requests. They heard a teleconference presentation regarding multi-life benefit plans related to future benefits/potential donations. The ABCUSA Finance Committee reviewed Mission Initiative Fund grants and allocation of United Mission.

Committee on Christian Unity and Interfaith Relations: June Totten and Ernest Jones reported

The CCUIR reviewed ecumenical work and American Baptist representation from 2010-2015. Much of this group's work centered on issues of Baptist-Muslim dialogue and peace and justice, including work for peace building in the Middle East. A brief report was also shared about the ABC/COB/PNCB peace delegation trip to the Middle East in April.

Communicating ABC Identity: Tasha Wilson and Bridget Lipin reported

BGM directors received a hard copy of the new identity piece, "Connecting." This publication will also be made available to those attending the Biennial, mailed to ABC churches and made available online and at various ABC events. BGM Directors will also receive a flash drive with tools to promote ABC identity and United Mission. The flash drive will include instructions on how to use the information included: a PDF version of "Connecting"; Talking Points; a PowerPoint presentation, with accompanying script and corresponding bulletin inserts. A Spanish translation of the bulletin inserts will soon be ready as well. BGM directors are tasked with spreading the word about this new identity piece in their respective regions to increase awareness.

BGM director Alan Rudnick will be moving to a new place of ministry, from First Baptist Church of Ballston Spa, NY to a Community Church. Because of this move, he is not able to continue as a BGM director. The Board expressed appreciation to Rev. Rudnick for his service on the Board of General Ministries and wished him continued blessing on his ministry. General Secretary Roy Medley expressed added appreciation for Alan's role in identifying and cultivating donor relationships and presented to him, on behalf of BGM, the gift of a Bible as an expression of appreciation.

In light of this move, and upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee, it was

**VOTED:** To elect Janice Bell, ABC of New York State, as an At-Large Director (class of 2017) as nominated to the Board of General Ministries.

## **BGM 239**

### **REPORT ON WOMEN'S CAUCUS**

Julia Bebeau, BGM Director and president of the AB Women's Caucus, shared an update on the caucus. She stated that the initiative in forming the caucus rested with a need for connectivity between women in the various boards/organizations due to adoption of the new bylaws and changes that would result. The Women's Caucus will have a booth in the Hall of Ministries at the Biennial, and Julia welcomed willing hands to set up the exhibit, encouraging all to stop by and contribute to the quilt that will be at the exhibit by adding your name to the network of women caucus friends.

## **BGM 240**

### **REPORTS FROM BGM DIRECTORS**

BGM directors heard reports from those serving as representatives to the following boards:

#### MMBB- Bill Frederickson

The MMBB Board of Directors met in May and in Oct. at 475 Riverside Drive. Bill served on both the Governance Committee and the Benefits Committee. He reported that legal fees have been high due to recent IRS clergy issues, which have since been resolved. At its meeting on May 5, the MMBB Board of Directors honored General Secretary Roy Medley for his years of ministry. A framed resolution in his honor was gifted to him.

#### ABHMS- Jim Wolfe

The ABHMS Board met on November 14-21, 2014. At that meeting, Joy Anderson, founder of the Criterion Institute, a think tank related to shaping markets to create social and environmental good, shared with the board. Eddie Cruz, associate executive director for Mission Advancement, introduced the America for Christ Offering theme for 2015 ("Discipleship: A Journey of Grace"). The board elected the Rev. Dr. Amy Butler for a two year term (2015-2017) and re-elected several current directors to the class as well. A professional consulting firm has been engaged and a search committee elected to begin the process of searching for a new executive director. The ABHMS board of directors held a retreat in Charlotte, NC on Feb. 10-12 where Rev. Dr. Debora Jackson, executive director of The Ministers Council led members in examining the relationship between spiritual practice and effective leadership. The board, in anticipation of ABHMS Executive Director Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins' retirement in October 2015, spent a significant portion of time in discussion focusing on the strengths, opportunities and future ministries of ABHMS. Jim's full written report was transmitted to BGM directors prior to the meeting.

#### IM-Vivan Martindale

Vivan has been serving on the Personnel Committee. IM is currently working on bylaw revisions and on board development issues and organizational responsibilities. The board is in the process of developing a long-term strategy using the Appreciative Inquiry initiative.

## **BGM 241**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Board directors were requested to wear their name badges and BGM t-shirts for the evening Gathering of National Boards. President Ng noted that the evening event is resulting from a January planning session of the presidents & vice presidents of the various organizations that met initially in January in Valley Forge. The evening will include a sharing of "swap gifts" which represent the ministries of the organizations and 5 minute "TED talks" (Technology, Education and Discipleship) on what it means to be an American Baptist.

BGM will be providing a chocolate chip cookie & a magnetic bookmark with the ABCUSA logo.

It was also announced that Biennial registration will begin at 4:00 p.m. this evening and again tomorrow (June 25) at 8:00 a.m.

**BGM 242                      RECOGNITION OF NOMINEES FOR ABC OFFICERS,  
2016-2017 BIENNIUM**

BGM recognized and celebrated the following nominees for ABC Officers for the 2016-2017 Biennium. Once elected, their service will begin as of January 1, 2016.

Rev. Judy Fackenthal – ABC President  
Dr. Josue Gómez Menendez – ABC Vice President  
Mr. Paul Higgins – ABC Budget Review Officer

**BGM 243                      COST OF LIVING**

President Ng reported that HR Compensation Committee met early this afternoon and approved Cost of Living salary increases.

**BGM 244                      CLOSING WORSHIP WITH COMMUNION**

BGM chaplain Judy Fackenthal led in prayer and read the Scripture passage from Luke 24: 13-33, one of the early appearances of Jesus, on the road to Emmaus, after his resurrection.

Kay Farley, BGM director and pastor of First Baptist Church, Denver, CO, shared an inspirational story focusing on many who have helped her along her Christian journey, including what she learned from God's directing her to a man who was homeless.

The board shared communion together ending by holding hands and singing, "Blest Be the Tie That Binds."

**BGM 245                      ADJOURNMENT**

President Ng adjourned the meeting of the Board of General Ministries until November 2015.

**November 2015 Meeting of the Board of General Ministries (Doubletree by Hilton, Valley Forge, PA)**

*The November 2015 meeting begins on Thursday, Nov. 12 at 2:00 p.m. and ends on Saturday, Nov. 14 at 12:30 p.m. (The Mission Table meets prior to that, beginning on Monday, Nov. 9 at 1:00 p.m. and ending on Wednesday, Nov. 11 at 12:00 p.m.)*

**AMERICAN BAPTIST GATHERING OF MEMBERS OF NATIONAL BOARDS  
(ABCUSA/ABHMS/ABWM/IM/MMBB)  
Courtyard Ballrooms, Overland Park Convention Center**

Members of the National Boards (ABCUSA, ABHMS, IM, MMBB) and the board of ABWomen's Ministries enjoyed dinner together at 5:00 p.m. Prior to dinner each board exchanged "swap gifts", providing

an opportunity to meet other board directors and a time to share the meaning of the gift provided related to their respective board work.

Following dinner, at 7:00 p.m., there was a combined plenary session, the second “family meeting” since the new ABC Bylaws were passed in June 2011. ABC President Don Ng chaired the meeting. During this time, the following representatives from each board shared 5 minute “TED talks” (Technology, Education, Discipleship) on “Why I am an American Baptist”: Don Ng, ABCUSA/BGM; Patti Stratton, ABW Ministries; Mercy Johnson, IM; Gwen Perlich, MMBB; and David Gregg, MMBB. The plenary closed by singing together the hymn (“Renew Your Church”, written by American Baptist Kenneth Cober) and with a benediction.

Submitted by

Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley  
General Secretary

ARM/cb

Documents attached

*Integrated Schedule (1008:6/15)*

*BGM Proposed Agenda: June 23-24, 2015*

*BGM Directory*

*BGM Action Group Notes from the Nov. 2014 BGM Meeting*

*BGM Minutes: November 13-14, 2014(1101:11/14)*

*BGM Executive Committee Minutes: March 10-13, 2015 (1002:3/15)*

*BGM Executive Committee Minutes: June 23, 2015(1002:6/15)*

*Transformed by the Spirit Updates, June 2015 (1223:6/15)*

*588 Associates L.P. Documents*

*- Proposed Resolutions of ABCUSA BGM*

*- Special Warranty Deed*

*- Assignment and Assumption*

*- Tenants in Common Agreement)*

*General Secretary Roy Medley's Report (1202:6/15)*

*- Report of Endorsements and Statements (2014) by the General Secretary Based on Policy Statements & Resolutions*

*- BGM Reports of ABCUSA and Associated Ministry Organizations*

*- Report to ABCUSA BGM, IM, and ABHMS*

*- ABC/NCC Living Letters Visit to Malaysia/Thailand/Burma*

*Medley Report to the World Relief Committee (1511:6/15)*

*ABCUSA Financial Statements & Report of Independent Certified Public Accountants, Dec. 31, 2014 and 2013*

*ABCUSA Financial Report as of April 30, 2015*

*Joint Review on Nominations*

*Pastoral, Practical, Prophetic, and Personal: A Resource on Immigration*

*ABCUSA Matthew 25 Grant Fund Update*

*Report of ABC President Don Ng (1201:6/15)*

*Connecting with Local Churches*

*Brochure: North East Christian University*

*Rhythms of the Spirit: Report on Taize, Brad Berglund*

*Report of the ABHMS Meeting, Nov. 2014, James Wolfe*

*Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches & New Church Plants, Nov. 5, 2014 to June 8, 2015*

*Report of the World Relief Committee/Report of 2014 Disbursements (1511:6/15)*

*Confidential- 2016 Salary Grid Adjustment & COLA*

*Confidential- Minutes from the Executive Sessions of the BGM (sealed envelope)*



