

## Join us at the very first ABC Mission Summit!



The first ABC Mission Summit will be held in Kansas City/Overland Park, Kansas, as part of our 2013 Biennial on June 21-23. The purpose of a Mission Summit is to create the space for creative and meaningful conversation among the Mission Summit participants in order to advance the mission and ministry of ABC among the various American Baptist constituents. At the Mission Summit, we will ask, “What can we create together to respond to the call of Christ today?”

Mission Summit participants will have the opportunity to self-select a topic around which to engage with others. Depending on the topic chosen, some conversations will benefit from previous learnings as multiple streams of information will flow into the Mission Summit in order to address the available topics.

One of these streams is an initiative called “**Transformed by the Spirit**” (TbyS). Groups have been created and are in the process of exploring topics related to mission and ministry. In the spring of 2013, these groups will be invited to share summary learnings of work that they have been focusing upon. Although it is not necessary to have participated so far in this current



MISSION  
SUMMIT  
2013

The logo features a stylized blue wave graphic above a white cross. The text 'MISSION SUMMIT' is in large, bold, yellow letters, and '2013' is in smaller yellow letters below it.

An American Baptist Biennial Gathering  
Overland Park/Kansas City, June 21–23

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ABC initiative to be fully part of the Mission Summit, the Mission Summit will build upon the work that is taking place in this initiative as well as ministries taking place in all of our regions, seminaries, national boards and other ABC entities. Some of the topics that are currently actively being engaged include discipleship, bridging generational gaps, training and mobilizing lay leadership, ministering in our neighborhoods, and nurturing the next generation of leaders.



Rather than gathering in a workshop format to listen to experts address these topics, Mission Summit participants will be invited to engage in conversations among themselves around one of these topics. The "TbyS conversations" at the Mission Summit will begin afresh with new participants engaging in a discussion regarding how previous learnings intersect with their own lives and situations. There will be three rounds of TbyS conversations at the Mission Summit open to all persons, with increased opportunities for interaction among the groups as the Mission Summit progresses.

The Mission Summit/Biennial Planning Team is working hard to design a Mission Summit that will leave people with impressions such as, "It is nice to know that I am not alone on this topic," "I can't wait to talk to my small group back home about what I learned," and "These certainly were not workshops, but I did learn something and even made some new friends." It is hoped that Mission Summit participants will take away personal insights as well as identify other persons with whom they wish to dialogue further about a particular topic. Yes, we are hoping that our Mission Summit goes viral!

Additionally, learnings from the Mission Summit will continue to be advanced at the next round of ABC conversations that will take place in Fall 2013 at "Mission Table" gatherings as regional, national, educational, and other entities wrestle with what they can add to the learnings and transformation that is taking place within ABC and among our neighbors



All are welcome to come and engage in these conversations, so please join us at the very first ABC Mission Summit in 2013!



## New 2013 Mission Summit/Biennial Registration Changes

In addition to the new Mission Summit element, the Board of General Ministries has approved a new registration policy to make it easier for individuals to attend the Mission Summit/Biennial.

This year, churches are invited to register. Once a church has registered, an unlimited number of members from that church may register to attend the Mission Summit/Biennial at a reduced rate of \$35 per person. This new funding structure will not affect the number of delegates each church is eligible to send.

Individuals from non-registering churches are still eligible to register for the full registration fee of \$150 for the entire event or \$50 for a single day.

The following registration options are available for churches, based on average worship attendance.

1 Churches of less than 100	\$200
2 Churches of 101-200	\$350
3 Churches of 201-500	\$500
4 Churches of more than 500	\$650

Go to [www.americanbaptists2013.com](http://www.americanbaptists2013.com) to register your church today. Individuals will need to wait until AFTER their church has registered to be able to register for the \$35 fee.

This is going to be a historic Mission Summit/Biennial, with celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, the 200th anniversary of the Judsons' arrival in Burma, and the 375th anniversary of the founding of the First Baptist Church in America. In addition to inspirational times of worship, we will have the Mission Summit experience, providing networking and discussion opportunities about the future of your church. Finally, this new registration policy will allow unlimited members of your church to attend at a nominal fee. Don't miss this historic event!

# ABCUSA Structure UPDATE

In June 2011, American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA) passed the new ABCUSA bylaws in San Juan, Puerto Rico, at the 2011 Biennial meeting. These bylaws went into effect on January 1, 2012. The Board of General Ministries of ABCUSA (BGM), the denominational representative board, met for the first time in January 2012 in Orlando, Florida. It met for the second time under the new bylaws at Green Lake Conference Center (GLCC) in Green Lake, WI, a historically American Baptist conference center with deep connections to ABCUSA. While in Green Lake, board members had the opportunity to attend the installation service for Benjamin C.K. Mott, who was installed as president/CEO of GLCC. A third meeting was held in Valley Forge, PA, in November 2012.

The boards of the American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) and International Ministries (IM) will now meet separately from the Board of General Ministries. The board of ABHMS met in June and again in October of 2012 following the bylaws changes. The board of International Ministries met in March and again in September 2012.

Ruth Clark is serving as ABCUSA president for the current biennium, January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2013. Along with Clark, Rev. Don Ng is serving as vice president and James R. Ratliff continues to serve as budget review officer.

“To gather with the Board of General Ministries, leaders from across our denomination, is both the end of a process of transition and the beginning of a new structure. We are launching a new way of doing business, trusting God to provide wisdom, insight and discernment as we undertake this role,” said Clark as she opened the first Board of General Ministries meeting under the new structure.



Ruth Clark  
ABCUSA President



Rev. Don Ng  
ABCUSA Vice President



James R. Ratliff  
Budget Review Officer

## Get to know ABCUSA President Ruth Clark!

Ruth Clark is currently serving as president of American Baptist Churches USA for the biennium running from January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2013. Nominated by the American Baptist Churches of the Central Region, she served two terms on the General Board (now the Board of General Ministries), including four years as part of its Executive Committee. Ruth served as vice president of International Ministries, chaired the Bylaws Committee for IM in preparation for the new structure, and just completed her term as president of that board.

The daughter, daughter-in-law, wife, and mother of American Baptist pastors, she is a member of the Judson Baptist Church in Kansas City, Kansas, where her husband John is pastor. She is actively involved in the educational, musical, and women's ministries of the church, teaching Sunday school and serving as church pianist for the worship team.

Ruth is a graduate of William Jewell College (music education) and Central Baptist Theological Seminary, with a degree in religious education.



Communion service at the November 2012 BGM meeting



**ABCUSA CONNECTIONS** is made possible by your gifts to United Mission. UM is essential to many of our ministries. Together your gifts can make a big difference for the denomination. Be sure that United Mission, the ABCUSA family offering, is included in your church budget. For details about how funds are used or information about how to contribute, please check out the website at [www.abc-usa.org](http://www.abc-usa.org) or contact [beth.fogg@abc-usa.org](mailto:beth.fogg@abc-usa.org).

# Upcoming Events



American Baptist Churches USA  
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Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851

Sunday, December 9	2nd Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 16	3rd Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 23	4th Sunday of Advent
Tuesday, December 25	Christmas
Sunday, December 30	Student Recognition Sunday
Tuesday, January 1	New Year's Day Week of Prayer, Renewal & Invitation begins
Sunday, January 6	Epiphany
Friday, January 11	Human Trafficking Awareness Day
Sunday, January 13	Christian Unity Sunday Christian Unity Week of Prayer begins
Monday, January 21	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



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