

Procedures for Discussion, Dialogue, and Adoption of Policies

The Biennial Mission Summit is a time for American Baptists to gather to worship, to learn, and to share. How can you make sure your voice is heard and your learnings shared? How can the rest of us hear what God is stirring in you?

The primary venue is the Mission Summit Conversations. Around the table, we engage in conversation around specific topics of interest to our American Baptist family. Bring your concerns, your successes, your failures, or just a listening ear and engage in dialogue that can be rewarding, touching, fulfilling and even fun! Since they were initiated in 2013, Mission Summit Conversations have been one of the most appreciated parts of our Biennial Mission Summits.

New to this Biennial Mission Summit, “Baptist Talk” expands on the Mission Summit Conversations to allow more free-flowing conversation. Healthy, even contentious dialogue is allowed here as long as we remember that we’re all family and follow principles designed for respectful dialogue.

American Baptists no longer adopt Policy Statements and Resolutions. We now have Public Witness Statements, which start at the “grassroots” level. For more information about initiating a Public Witness Statement, see Article XII in the ABCUSA Bylaws.

If you wish to discuss or propose initiatives related to mission and ministry, please contact someone from the appropriate national board or associated ministry organization. Board members and staff have ribbons on their name tags to help you identify them. If you need help, approach any board member or visit the Biennial Office.

At the business meeting, Delegates will be considering changes to our ABCUSA Bylaws. If you are a Delegate and would like to speak to these proposed changes, either for or against, please refer to the Rules of Procedure [or visit the Biennial Office]. You’ll need to sign up in advance by 11:30 am on July 1 if you intend to speak to these proposed changes.

If you are a Delegate and are interested in proposing a change to our ABCUSA Bylaws, please refer to the Rules of Procedure and article XIX of the Bylaws. You must sign up in advance at the Biennial Office. [You may present your proposed change at the business meeting and then you and others, who have also signed up in advance, can speak for or against your proposal. If your proposal is approved by the delegates, it will be referred to the Board of General Ministries. The Board of General Ministries may then vote to bring it to the 2019 Biennial delegates for their vote.]

[To be clear, the only opportunities to address the delegates at the business meeting will be for a Delegate to address the proposed bylaws changes or to propose additional bylaws changes. A Delegate must sign up in advance if they wish to address the delegates at the business meeting.]