



**BGM Executive Committee**  
**March 9-12, 2016**

**MINUTES**

<b>Meeting Site:</b>	Rainbow Acres 2120 W. Reservation Loop Rd. Camp Verde, AZ 86322 928-567-5231
<b>Housing:</b>	Days Inn 1640 W. State Route 260 Camp Verde, AZ 86322 928-567-3700
<b>Officers:</b>	Judy Fackenthal, President Josue Gómez-Menendez, Vice President Paul Higgins, Budget Review Officer Don Ng, Past President Susan Gillies, Interim General Secretary
<b>Committee:</b>	Felipe Candelaria, Puerto Rico Tasha Wilson, Rochester/Genesee
<b>Chaplain:</b>	Kay Farley, Rocky Mountains
<b>Parliamentarian:</b>	Dennis Johnson, West Virginia
<b>Staff:</b>	Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary/Treasurer/CFO Cathy Brubaker, Administrator

*Members of the Executive Committee who arrived at Camp Verde on Monday, March 7, were hosted by Paul Higgins, ABC Budget Review Officer and CFO of Rainbow Acres, on a trip to the Grand Canyon on March 8.*

**BGM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RETREAT**

**Wednesday, March 9, 2016; 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.; The Board Rm., Rainbow Acres**

At the June 2015 meeting of the Board of General Ministries, the Becoming a Beloved Community Action Group proposed that BGM schedule a retreat to engage in dialogue related to the beloved

community, offering their services in the planning and facilitation of that retreat. The call for this retreat came out of the cessation of the last General Secretary's search process and was requested for the purpose of forming a deeper sense of appreciation and awareness of one another as the search process continues.

The Executive Committee and four members of the Becoming a Beloved Community Action Group (Camille Brown, Shirley Fair, Wesley Sun, and Dean Parker) met at Rainbow Acres on March 9, 2016 to plan a retreat to be held June 16-17, 2016 with the full Board of General Ministries. Erin Hawkins, General Secretary of the General Commission on Race & Religion (GCORR), The United Methodist Church, facilitated this time together. Notes from the retreat are included with the Executive Committee minutes filed in the General Secretary's office.

## **BGM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday March 10, 2016; 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m., The Board Rm., Rainbow Acres**

### **BGM EC 353                      CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS & GETTING ACQUAINTED**

ABC president Judy Fackenthal called the meeting of the BGM Executive Committee to order and welcomed Interim General Secretary Susan Gillies and other new members of the Executive Committee: Josue Gómez-Menendez, Felipe Candelaria and Kay Farley. Judy also shared regrets from Dennis Johnson.

Judy asked that each share, as an "ice-breaker/get to know you better" responses to the question: What is by my bedside table or on my coffee table?

### **BGM EC 354                      DEVOTIONS**

BGM chaplain Kay Farley lit the Christ Candle and led in a time of devotions from Matthew 5:13-16, "We are the salt of the earth." She closed with prayer.

### **BGM EC 355                      CONSENT AGENDA/APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Tasha Wilson noted that a correction needs to be made to the Executive Committee agenda for this meeting (p. 2) and to the minutes of the Executive Committee's November 2015 meeting (p. 4), changing "United Mission Adaptive Challenge Team" to "United Mission Advertising Team."

President Fackenthal presented the consent agenda. A motion was made, seconded and it was

**VOTED:** To approve the Consent Agenda: The proposed agenda dated March 9-12, 2016 (with correction) and the November 12, 2015 minutes of the BGM Executive Committee (with correction).

### **BGM EC 356                      PRESIDENT'S NOMINATIONS**

Upon nomination of President-elect Judy Fackenthal, a motion was made by Tasha Wilson, seconded by Felipe Candelaria, it was:

**VOTED:** To recommend to the Board of General Ministries the President's nomination of Rev. Dr. Zina Jacque, ABC of Metro Chicago, as General Director and member of the BGM Executive Committee (class of 2019).

Judy reported her nomination of Mr. Tom Ross to serve on the ABC Nominating Committee, noting that in that role he would, as determined by the ABCUSA bylaws, also serve on the General Secretary's search committee. A motion was made by Tasha Wilson, seconded by Felipe Candelaria and it was

**VOTED:** To recommend to the Board of General Ministries the President's nomination of Mr. Tom Ross, ABC of Metro New York, as a General Director (class of 2019).

## **BGM EC 357**

## **REFLECTIONS FROM DR. SUSAN GILLIES**

Interim General Secretary Susan Gillies shared reflections from her work, which began officially on December 1, 2015. Susan expressed her joy in working with President Fackenthal, noting that she has drawn strength through their many conversations as they together seek new direction. She emphasized that although the former General Secretary search was disbanded, leaving many with the feeling that ABC was failing the system or failing God, it is time to look forward. We cannot change the past but we can learn from it. Susan is convinced that the Holy Spirit has been with us throughout in ways we may not have comprehended. The Spirit continues to move. Our opportunity is to be faithful.

In preparation for this role, Susan shared that she began to question why the Northern Baptist Convention (NBC) came into existence. In consultation with ABHS director Deborah Van Broekhoven, and in reading "A Manual of the Northern Baptist Convention" which was prepared to commemorate the completion of ten years of service (1908-1918), it became clear that the forming of NBC came from the pews (from the roots up) with the goal of having a center for this denominational family. Commenting on how similar to present circumstances the situation was even back then, she read a quote from a well-respected man from New York State, Rev. George E. Horr, whose remarks were given great prominence at a meeting of the Baptist Congress in 1898 when he stated: "There is a great opportunity for the denomination to harmonize its missionary work... There is just as much necessity that the work of the Missionary Union, the Home Mission Society, and the Publication Society should be harmonized—note that I do not use the work unified..."

Susan reported that her initial efforts have been to prioritize work with regions and to work with the National Executive Council (NEC). The REMC and the NEC are both in a state of transition due to several recent retirements, but with those transitions has come a fresh new spirit and fresh work. She described this interim period as a time of reestablishing who one is, where one comes from and identifying priorities for the interim.

Susan also reported that former executive minister of ABC of Ohio, Rev. Larry Swain, will be functioning as a volunteer training coordinator with Transition Ministries. She also commended the work of Rev. Dr. Pat Hernandez, director of ABWIM and Transition Ministries, for her excellent work with churches inquiring about interim services.

She also shared information regarding staff transitions, speaking of ramifications and possible approaches to handling workloads in the interim. There was also discussion related to best practices for the General Secretary search.

Following her report, the Executive Committee paused for a time of quiet reflection.

## **10:30 a.m. -- RAINBOW ACRES TOUR**

*The Executive Committee took a break to enjoy a tour of Rainbow Acres.*

## **12:00 p.m. -- LUNCH/BREAK – Palmer Community Center**

*The Executive Committee joined Ranchers for lunch in the Palmer Community Center.*

## **BGM EC 358            RECONVENE**

President Fackenthal reconvened the meeting of the Executive Committee. She shared copies of Rhythms of the Spirit and World Mission Conference “Save the Date” cards, emphasizing the value of both events and praising the cooperative efforts used to promote these upcoming events to the American Baptist family.

## **BGM EC 359            CONTINUED DISCUSSION**

The Executive Committee continued to focus on Susan’s report, allowing time for questions and further discussion.

## **BGM EC 360            UNITED MISSION ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN (UM AD)**

Tasha Wilson, chair of the Communicating ABC Identity Action Group, reported that the United Mission pilot project with three regions (ABC of the Central Pacific Coast, ABC of Rhode Island and ABC of Wisconsin) concluded at the end of December 2015. Evaluations were held in January to review feedback and to identify learnings in anticipation of the process beginning to engage other regions. Positive feedback was received from pastors who were involved in the pilot projects. Collaboration between the working group and the contracted marketing company, Technology Therapy, resulted in the creation of a website which includes helpful resources. The main focus of the UM AD report shared at the REMC and NLC meetings in April will be testimonies from the three region executives of the pilot groups (Steve Bills, Marie Onwubuariri and Tom Wiles).

At the UM AD meeting in Orlando in January it was determined that Bridget Lipin would serve in the role of project manager. The team met by conference call in February to discuss how to move forward. An April 18 face-to-face meeting is scheduled in Indianapolis. A major mailing to region executive ministers will be released by April 8, following the REMC and NLC meetings, in hopes that they will share the information with region pastors. Display boards/banners will be mailed to the NLC meeting, will be available for the next Pastors Conference, and sent to ABC of the South for its April annual meeting and Dr. James Harrison’s installation. Other region ministers can request that the display boards and banner be sent to their annual meetings as well.

UM AD will be submitting to the ABCUSA Finance Committee a program evaluation report and a request for release of contingency funds from the Mission Initiative Fund for 2017.

President Fackenthal encouraged the Executive Committee to focus on the work by the Adaptive Challenge Team which noted in its November 2014 report to BGM: While ABCUSA is engaged in numerous valuable projects and ministries, leadership is urgently needed to bring laser like focus on cultivating a reimagined, unified sense of identity and energy at the region and congregational level. She posed the question for thought, as leadership transition continues to be on the forefront: What are the creative skill sets needed?

## **BGM EC 361            ABCUSA -OFFICE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY**

Discussion continued related to the value other organizations receive from ABCUSA- Office of the General Secretary and the importance of clarity in regard to that value.

Susan also reported that MMBB recently requested to have the interest rate on their share of the 588 Associates LP mortgage reduced and she noted the impact that would in turn place upon the operating budget. It was also noted that if ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary agrees to lower MMBB's interest rate, it would need to offer ABHMS the same rate as well. Deliberation to determine the appropriate response to this request continues.

## **BGM EC 362      MEETING OF ABC OFFICERS**

Past president Don Ng reported on the gathering of presidents and vice presidents of the national organizations at the Mission Center on December 11, 2015. The meeting focused on such issues as: the building of relationship between the various organizations, creating a healthy dynamic between board and staff, fiduciary responsibility as it relates to board accountability, updates on urgent issues (including suspension of the General Secretary search), updates on IM's search for an executive director, and discussion related to the work of one organization which may infringe upon other organizations (i.e., appeals outside windows of promotion, challenges of ABHMS to carry out work of the former Board of Educational Ministries). It was noted that ABC president Judy Fackenthal and ABC vice president Josue Gómez-Menendez will continue to facilitate meetings during the new biennium.

## **BGM EC 363      FORMATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAGALAND**

Don reported on his February visit (his second) to Northeast India and continued conversations related to the proposed establishment of a Christian university in Nagaland, Northeast Christian University (NECU), which would offer studies in liberal arts and sciences. ABC missionaries initiated the formation of many Bible colleges and seminaries almost 200 years ago. Currently however, the Indian government is engaging in a national program which equates nationality with Hinduism in state-run universities, creating an unsafe environment for young Christians. Plans for the university include the formation of a U.S. board of directors also. The initial goal is to raise \$25 million to establish the university, with the government providing the land. The immediate plan is to raise \$1 million to renovate a temporary building where classes might be offered, allowing the university to establish alumni. (In November 2015 the World Relief Committee approved a \$40,000 grant as seed money for NECU to begin networking to seek funding.)

Don met with University Chancellor Dr. Anjo Kiekund and three NECU volunteer staff persons, and heard updates on developments. Dr. Anjo and others have met with leaders of the 9 Baptist conventions in Northeast India for possible support and although there is interest, they were met with some concern as to prioritization of this project over other specific needs of the convention.

At the conclusion of his report, Don presented two proposals which he asked the Executive Committee to support:

1. To help more American Baptists capture the NECU vision, it is proposed that the regional executives of the Dakotas, WV, and TABCOM (and perhaps others) visit Nagaland and Northeast India in 2017. This visit would be scheduled to coincide with the CBC-NEI annual convention in Assam or one of the many other gatherings that they have.
2. To continue to share the NECU vision and to solicit financial support. NECU leaders would like to sponsor a choir from Northeast India which would sing at the 2017 BMS in Portland. The choir hopes to also schedule singing engagements in as many churches as possible while they are in the US. This will be shared with the BMS Planning Committee in the end of March. This idea would need the collaboration of Ben Chan in IM.

## **BGM EC 364      COALITION TO TRANSFORM ADVANCED CARE**

At its September 2015 meeting, the Executive Committee voted to ask American Baptist Homes and Caring Ministries (ABHCM) to serve as ABC's representative to the Coalition to Transform Advanced Care (C-TAC) if ABC can find sufficient funding (approximately \$1500) to assist a delegate of ABHCM with the expense of attending an annual meeting. Budget Review Officer Paul Higgins reported that there are unspent funds in the "Task Force Contingency" line that could be used for this funding.

A motion was made by Paul Higgins, seconded by Tasha Wilson, and it was

**VOTED:** To name American Baptist Homes and Caring Ministries (ABHCM), because of its expertise, as the official ABC representative to the Coalition to Transform Advanced Care (C-TAC), with funding to cover the cost of the annual meeting being provided by ABCUSA- Office of the General Secretary.

Cathy Brubaker, recorder for this meeting, was asked to contact Rev. Garth Brokaw, Interim Executive Director of ABHCM, to inform him of this action.

## **BGM EC 365      FOLLOW UP - JUNE BGM RETREAT LOGISTICS**

The Executive Committee discussed the June BGM Retreat, setting the following guidelines/concerns:

- Desire to move around, not stay in one space
- Be mindful of various physical abilities of participants
- Be sure "ethics" is a stronger part of the retreat
- Consider having a staff group with its own stations
- Contemplate how to focus/ challenge deep enough that we address issues
- Admit/acknowledge that we need to release the past, not focus on past errors
- Necessity to state problem clearly, to help one another see ourselves as broken people
- Provide suggested vocabulary for groups to use (i.e., "White" or "Anglo"?)
- Have Design Team spell out what "Beloved Community" looks like so we are aware of moving forward to become a model for Beloved Community"
- Important to be proactive, not just reactive

## **BGM EC 366      MISSION TABLE 7 PRIORITIES**

The Executive Committee reviewed the seven priorities resulting from the November 9-10, 2015 Mission Table (Next Generation of Leaders, Violence, Discipleship, Poverty, Gospel in a Rapidly Changing Society, Women in Ministry and Innovative Models for Pastoral Ministry) with a view toward how BGM Action Groups might focus on the one or more of the identified priorities. For the benefit of new members, the history of the formation of Action Groups was shared. Also there was discussion related to the distinction between staff roles and board roles as applying to Action Group work.

During this discussion it was noted that:

-Since BGM focuses its work related to macro issues, it may be best for it to focus on the macro priority, "Gospel in a Rapidly Changing Society," leaving other organizations to focus on remaining priorities, which are more program oriented.

-BGM might function well by incorporating more small group discussion times during plenaries, eliminating the need for small working groups (like the Action Groups). BGM might consider forming a taskforce, with clearly defined roles and expectations, when an issue becomes specific and a conflict of interest is recognized.

-The BGM Finance Committee and the Committee on Christian Unity & Interfaith Relations serve as standing committees of the ABCUSA Bylaws and Standing Rules and would need to continue.

-Focusing on the priority “Gospel in a Rapidly Changing Society” might include personal one-on-one conversations with people who have left the denomination. A set of questions might be designed, including: “Why did you leave the ABC?” An instrument might be designed by Jeff Woods to collect data and share such feedback with the ABC family.

- It would be good for current Action Groups to meet in June to wrap up their work. At that time, a new model with BGM focusing mainly on the Mission Table priority, “Gospel in a Rapidly Changing Society,” could be introduced and then implemented at BGM’s November 2016 meeting. This would include the elimination of one Action Group, with the others continuing in some form. It will be important to clearly define each of the 4 working groups. Susan will confer with Bridget Lipin on the description for the Communicating ABC Identity Action Group.

-In November BGM could participate in a discussion defining gospel and the changing society, with the inclusion of a macro speaker. The focus might be on keeping congregations vital and alive and, in light of that goal, considering what innovative ideas local congregations are currently implementing in our changing society.

- “Board Development” will be a good topic for BGM to focus upon at its November 2016 meeting.

## **BGM EC 367                      TIME OF REFLECTION**

As a closing blessing, Chaplain Kay Farley asked that each person reflect on the day’s work and share one descriptive word with the group that speaks of the day.

### **6:00 p.m. -- DINNER & FELLOWSHIP**

*The Executive Committee enjoyed dinner and fellowship together on the veranda of Paul and Jeri Higgins’ newly built home in Camp Verde.*

## **Friday, March 11, 2016; 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.; Board Room**

## **BGM EC 368                      CALL TO ORDER**

President Fackenthal called the meeting to order and offered time for each to share further thoughts regarding the work that was accomplished yesterday. There were expressions of appreciation for the level of willingness to share around the table, and for the collaborative spirit and willingness to explore new models of ministry. President Fackenthal expressed personal appreciation to Paul, as did all of the Executive Committee, for his attention to the details of hosting of this meeting and for the delightful evening meal shared at his and Jeri’s home the previous evening.

**BGM EC 369****WORSHIP**

BGM Chaplain Kay Farley lit the Christ Candle and led in morning devotions, focusing on Matthew 5:13-16, God as the light of the world. She shared a personal story of Faith Community Church, a congregation that she and her husband co-pastor, as an example of how that church became the light of Christ in the midst of darkness, spreading the love of Christ and the resulting blessings that came from their willingness to be that light.

**BGM EC 370****EXECUTIVE SESSION/GENERAL SECRETARY SEARCH**

The Executive Committee met in Executive Session, without staff present, to discuss the position description for the new General Secretary and the upcoming search, as well as other items. No actions were taken during this time. It was noted later that a few minor changes were made in the current General Secretary's position description, and that after those changes are made it will be ready for posting.

**12:00 p.m. --LUNCH**

*The Executive Committee enjoyed lunch at the Palmer Community Center with American Baptist leaders, Dr. Warren Stewart (pastor of First Institutional Baptist Church in Phoenix, AZ and member of the ABC Immigration Taskforce) and Rev. Larry Jackson (pastor of Bethany Baptist Church in Clarkdale, AZ) as guests. Following lunch, Dr. Stewart shared information related to the work of ABC's Immigration Taskforce and also provided information about the National Immigration Forum, one of the nation's premier immigration policy organizations based in Washington DC. Rev. Larry Jackson shared about the ministry of Bethany Baptist Church as well as some updates about ministry in the region.*

**BGM EC 371****GENERAL SECRETARY SEARCH - TIMELINE**

ABC Vice-President Josue Gómez-Menendez presided over the afternoon session of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee projected the following timeline in regard to the General Secretary's Search:

**March 2016 - June 2016**

- Executive Session/ Review of Search Firms
- President Fackenthal will contact the NEC and Presidents and Vice Presidents of ABHMS, ABWMinistries, IM and MMBB regarding language from ABCUSA Standing Rule 14.2 related to membership of the ABCUSA Nominating Committee (which also serves as the General Secretary's Search Committee) and ask for the organizations to cooperatively select a person to serve on this committee. She will:
  - Include the current demographics of the Nominating Committee
  - Stress that the person selected doesn't need to be affiliated with any of the boards, but could be a distinguished person who has wide knowledge of the ABC
  - Request that the proposed name be submitted prior to the end of May
- Letter to BGM be sent prior to the BGM Retreat, sharing information about what to anticipate
- Share proposed GS Job Description
- Write proposed charge to Search Committee for BGM to adopt; Include that Search Committee creates Covenant of Accountability; responsibility back to BGM



### June 2016

- Vote- Job Description
- Charge- Activate Search Committee
- Contact Form a covenant of accountability
- Response brought back to BGM
- Contact Search Committee –Dates, President identifies 2-3 search firms, timeline

### July-August 2016 - Meeting of Search Committee

### Early March 2017 - Interviews

The Executive Committee paused in their work for a time of prayer, for this process as well as for other requests.

## **BGM EC 372            RECESS/CREDENTIALS & CAUCUS/RECONVENE**

President Judy Fackenthal recessed the meeting of the BGM Executive Committee. Josue Gómez-Menendez, Chair, convened the meeting of the Credentials & Caucus Committee.

Prior to this meeting 2015 annual financial reports and requests for funding for 2016 received from the American Baptist Caucuses were posted on the ABCUSA website for review.

Budget Review Officer Paul Higgins reviewed the Guidelines for Caucus Funding, especially as it relates to the reporting timeline set forth and to the appropriate use of funding (i.e., for administrative purposes, not for programming). Noting that this discussion would normally take place in June, following the May 15 deadline for caucuses to submit annual reports/requests for funding, Paul explained that we are in a process of catching up. Therefore the Executive Committee will be receiving 2016 financial reports and funding requests for 2017 to approve at its June 2016 meeting.

The Executive Committee engaged in conversation related to the history of caucuses and funding needs.

It was decided that Josue Gómez-Menendez, as chair of the Credentials & Caucus Committee (CCC), in collaboration with Intercaucus president Kenneth Kho, will reiterate to the caucuses the need for meeting the May 15, 2016 deadline for submitting detailed annual financial reports to the CCC and to the Finance Committee denoting its use of 2015 funding and any remaining balance, as well as requests for 2017 funding.

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

**VOTED:** To continue 2015 funding levels (with a budget of \$52,000) for American Baptist Caucuses in 2016 as follows:

- AB African American Caucus - \$8,000
- AB Asian Caucus - \$8,000
- AB Haitian Caucus - \$8,000
- AB Hispanic Caucus - \$8,000
- AB Native American Caucus - \$8,000
- AB National Portuguese Speaking Caucus - \$6,100
- AB Women's Caucus - \$4,950

Josue recessed the meeting of the Credentials & Caucus Committee; Judy reconvened the BGM Executive Committee.

### **BGM EC 373                      YOUNG ADULT CAUCUS**

The Young Adult Caucus is a caucus of the Board of General Ministries (having come as a caucus of the General Board at the time of the 2011 bylaw changes) and as such is not required to submit an annual report as part of the Credentials and Caucus Committee process as do other caucuses. The Young Adult Caucus is also not part of the Intercaucus. It was agreed that it would be helpful to clarify BGM expectations of the caucus (privileges/responsibilities) since the current ABCUSA Bylaws carry no provision for such. It was also agreed that if BGM prioritizes the need to keep young adult issues up front with the board, young adult gatherings and/or other means of focusing on such issues, need to occur.

It was decided that this issue be forwarded to the Young Adult Caucus for further discussion, empowering them to present a proposal to the Executive Committee at its September 2016 meeting.

Following discussion, it was by consensus

**VOTED:** To approve funding for 2016 for the American Baptist Young Adult Caucus in the amount of \$950.00

### **BGM EC 374                      BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT**

2017:

President Fackenthal reported that a meeting of the Biennial Mission Summit Planning Team will be held in Portland, OR on March 29-31, 2016. The agenda will focus on a myriad of logistics and will include an on-site inspection of the convention center. The placement of the business meeting on the agenda will be one topic of conversation. Checking with legal counsel David Knipel, President Fackenthal noted that there is a time frame that has to lapse between the official opening of the biennial and the business meeting, Saturday afternoon after 2:00 p.m. being the earliest possible time to convene business. The Executive Committee recounted the 2015 business session and discussed the need for a process which would allow people to more openly express concerns but at the same time also allow officers to anticipate what will be brought to the floor. It was acknowledged that there are some who come to biennials with the desire to make a change and some who just want to vent, and that it is important to strategize a process where internal issues might be best addressed. It was decided that a format for process be initiated.

Conversations at the BMS on the 7 Mission Table priorities (one or two sessions) will bring each into deeper perspective and will include sharing about what is already bringing some focus related to these priorities. The planning team is working to be intentional about balancing a schedule which offers many rich opportunities and yet does not schedule too heavily. Portland is a travel-friendly city and that provides other opportunities for people as well.

The Orientation to American Baptist Life (OTABL) will be held in conjunction with the 2017 BMS. Rev. Holly Vincent Bean has been appointed as Orientation Logistics Coordinator. Two sessions will be held prior to the Biennial. Thursday evening will provide an overview, connecting with mentors and mentor groups and worship; Friday morning will include a time of orientation to the experience. The remaining time will include full participation in the Mission Summit offerings, with mentor groups checking in from time to time.

2019:

In September 2015, the Executive Committee authorized Annie Marcucci, director of the Office of Travel and Conference Planning, to begin considering cities in the Midwest and Northeast as venues for the June 28-30, 2019 Biennial Mission Summit, in the following order of priority: 1) Cleveland, 2) Providence 3) Detroit.

Executive ministers Yvonne Carter (Cleveland Baptist Association) and Tom Wiles (ABC of Rhode Island) have both confirmed that their regions are willing to host. Susan reported that Annie is also looking into the possibility of moving, within the next few years, from a convention center setting to a double hotel setting as a venue for reducing the cost.

It was clarified that although the Mission Table will not meet in 2017, it will meet in 2019.

## **BGM EC 375                      SUGGESTED BYLAW/STANDING RULE AMENDMENTS STATEMENTS OF CONCERN**

The Executive Committee agreed that the following issues need to be flagged for possible future Bylaw/Standing Rules amendments and that current documents referencing these issues need to be thoroughly reviewed:

- General Secretary Search Process
- BGM Young Adult Caucus (might this be made a commission?)
- Intercaucus
- Budget Review Officer (title; there is no longer a Budget Review Committee)
- Action Groups
- Confidentiality expectations for BGM directors

Discussion continued related to both positive and negative aspects of the World Relief Committee (WRC) being lodged in International Ministries, ABC. It was noted that former General Secretary Medley once made a proposal to the World Relief Committee, which was declined due to ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary not being termed a “National Program Board.” [S.R. 14.7.2 under functions of the WRC reads: “granting to National Program Boards and to Region Boards the administration of funds within the policies adopted by the Committee and approved by the Board of General Ministries.] It was recognized that the term National Program Board is not clearly defined in the Standing Rules. Susan Gillies noted that this issue lies under relationships and committed to doing some research on that matter.

The meeting was recessed for dinner.

### **6:00 p.m. -- DINNER & FELLOWSHIP**

*The Executive Committee enjoyed a Brazilian meal, hosted by Rev. Gary Wagner, President & CEO of Rainbow Acres, and his wife Jussara and their children, Isaac and Abigail, at their home.*

## **Saturday, March 12, 2016; 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.; The Board Rm., Rainbow Acres**

## **BGM EC 376                      RECOVERING/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

President Fackenthal called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda for the day. Chaplain Kay Farley lit the Christ Candle. She asked each one to share once again their words describing the day’s work yesterday and she led in prayer.

2015 Full-Year Financials

Budget Review Officer Paul Higgins reviewed the 2015 full-year financials.

The year-to-date financials show a net loss of \$164,000, primarily due to the Development office loss of \$231,000. Paul explained that revenues realized by this department flow through other departments and that they had unrestricted revenue of \$227,000 credited to the 2015 operating budget. They also had temporarily restricted revenue of \$150,000 designated for 2016 through 2018.

Net revenue (compared to last year) increased by \$75,000, primarily due to increased revenue of \$61,000 in Transition Ministries and the Denominational Emphasis. Total UM has decreased by \$414,936, 4.53% from the previous year.

The Executive Committee engaged in discussion related to details of the budget. Part of this discussion also dealt with areas where ABCUSA-Office of the General Secretary might be more conservative with its expenses, considering such questions as: How might the Executive Committee continue to meet in different locations across the country in order to connect with various ABC constituencies and yet keep the expenses in check? Realizing that ABC is a small denomination in comparison to larger-sized denominations we partner with ecumenically, how might ABC devote only funds which are financially feasible and yet maintain involvement in strategic areas?

Discussion also focused on the continuing decline of United Mission (UM) and the number of declining ABC churches. Susan noted that we need to “get off the band wagon of looking at finances for our measurement of success.” Besides recognizing the churches giving the largest percentage to UM, we need to also recognize congregations that give all they can. It would be good to reframe our reporting perspective, have a report not just on the rise or fall of UM but on the state/health of churches, the changing paradigm. This would be a way to celebrate all that churches give, not only what comes to ABC life. An accompanying report of good news telling these stories would be a healthy perspective.

It might be possible to receive responses from more churches by asking for the statistics at the same time as asking for their “good news” stories, which might be compiled and shared on the website.

At its November 2015 meeting the Executive Committee requested that the ABCUSA website more accurately reflect the membership of 5,000 ABC congregations, a decrease from 5,200 formerly reported. Susan will talk with Bridget Lipin, ABCUSA webmaster, about this requested change.

Building Issues

Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary for Finance/CFO, reported that two tenants will be leaving the Mission Center--Palmer Seminary at the end of June, which represents a \$320,000 loss of revenues and Judson Press, outsourcing its inventory by the end of September, which represents a \$70,000 loss of revenues. He expressed the difficulty in securing leasing entities due to the future sale of the building.

Update on Tax Exemption

Alan Musoke reported that as of March 11, 2016 the Upper Merion School District Board of Education and the Upper Merion Township agreed to the settlement of 588's tax appeal. They accepted a 58.7% obligation for the 2015 tax bill, which represents a 41.26% tax-exempt status. This tax exemption rate, retroactive to 2013 (adjustment for overpayments made by ABC in 2013 and 2014), will continue moving forward without reassessment of space for non-exempt status year after year.

#### Update on Progress of 588 Associates, LLC with Developers

The responses from the RFEI did not generate viable plans and offers to support continuing the process. The real estate council instead requested the search for potential joint venture partners. 15 of the 40 developers that were contacted in the RFEI process were invited to submit proposals as potential joint partners for the Mission Center property based on specific requirements. 588 is currently in a second round of meetings with the potential joint venture developer partners. 8 of the developers have submitted redevelopment plans for the property. It is hoped by April 4th, the group will be narrowed down to 3 with a selected partner by July 25th.

Susan noted that the NEC is supportive and desires to give energy to finishing the process.

#### **BGM EC 378**

#### **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

The Executive Committee considered dates/venues for upcoming BGM Executive Committee meetings as well as meetings of the full Board. The following dates/venues were confirmed, reflecting in particular a change in the March 2017 and September 2017 meeting venues. The Office of Travel and Conference Planning will be consulted to be sure the contract for the September 2016 meeting has not yet been signed.

#### **June 15-18, 2016 – Green Lake**

The Executive Committee will need to arrive the afternoon of Wed., June 15, for a 5:00 p.m. dinner and meeting following.

BGM Retreat with Erin Hawkins: Thurs., June 16 (9:00am-5:30pm) – Fri., June 17 (9:00am-12:00Noon)

BGM Business Sessions: Fri., June 17 (1:00pm-dinner) – Sat., June 18 (9:00am-12:00Noon)

*Note: On Friday, the hour before dinner will be held for Action Group meetings.*

#### **September 8-10, 2016 -- Rochester**

*(The venue for this meeting was originally scheduled for Atlanta; we will check with Annie Marcucci, Office of Travel & Conference Planning, related to the signed contract and how that affects our desire to change venues.)*

Tasha Wilson has been in touch with Rochester/Genesee executive minister Alan Newton, ABC/New York State executive minister Jim Kelsey and the president of Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Marvin McMickle, to let them know that the Executive Committee desires to change its meeting in Rochester from its originally-scheduled date of Sept. 2017 to Sept. 2016. Tasha will continue to review possible venues for meals and other ministries to visit while in Rochester.

#### **November 15-19, 2016 – Crowne Plaza, King of Prussia**

The Executive Committee would like to meet one afternoon in the Mission Center, from approximately 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., concluding with an evening meal (which would include Philly cheesesteaks). The afternoon meeting would include a “588 walking tour of the building,” with a staff person from each organization facilitating a tour of their respective area, along with an exhibit of ministries.

#### **March 9-11, 2017-- Atlanta**

The Executive Committee would like to contact Al Brinson, Shelby Haggray (wife of Jeffrey Haggray and director of Baptist School of Theology at Chandler) and new region executive minister Dr. James Harrison, inviting each to participate in a part of the meeting and/or to be guests for a meal. Interest was also expressed in meeting with Chin Baptists in the area. Paul Higgins will contact the Oakhurst Baptist Church (his former home church when he was at Chandler) to see if a van might be available to make travel easier. Other possible visits discussed include: ABHS, the Carter Center, the King Center, and Ebenezer Baptist Church.

**June 26-July 2, 2017 – Portland**

The Executive Committee will begin meeting the morning of June 27, with the Board of General Ministries meeting June 27-28, ending with the American Baptist Gathering of Members of National Boards dinner and plenary in the evening.

Pre-biennial events will be scheduled on June 29 (including the Theologians Conference). The Biennial Mission Summit will be held June 30-July 2.

**September 14-16, 2017 – Puerto Rico**

The Executive Committee will begin meeting the morning of September 14 (travel on September 13) and end on September 16 at 12 Noon.

**November 15-18, 2017 – Crowne Plaza, King of Prussia, PA**

The Executive Committee will begin with dinner on November 15 and through lunch on November 16. BGM will begin at 2:00 p.m. on November 16, ending at noon on November 18.

**BGM 379                      WRITTEN REPORTS/UPDATES**

Judy Fackenthal noted that the following written reports were transmitted prior to the meeting as a means of sharing information and updates and she provided time for questions:

Taskforce on Race and Race-based Violence, submitted by Jackie Thompson, Taskforce Co-chair  
Baptist Muslim Dialogue – Report on the Marrekesh Conference, submitted by Roy Medley, General Secretary Emeritus

Rhythms of the Spirit Report, submitted by Brad Berglund, Director of Spiritual Formation,  
Transformed by the Spirit Progress Report, submitted by Judy Fackenthal  
Report of ABC President Judy Fackenthal

ABCUSA –Office of the General Secretary Communication Standards – 2016, submitted by the  
Communicating ABC Identity Action Group

It was decided that the Communication Standards document will be sent electronically to BGM following this meeting.

Susan Gillies and Judy Fackenthal shared appreciation to all for the good work that was processed during this meeting and for the spirit of openness in doing so.

**BGM EC 380                      CLOSING DEVOTIONS**

Susan Gillies read Matthew 5:13-16. Chaplain Farley, through story illustration, reminded us that ABCUSA serves as the hands and feet of Christ, that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

Through a responsive reading, the Executive Committee reflected on these truths: Jesus expects each of us to made a difference in ABCUSA; as followers of Christ, if we are going to impact ABCUSA and the world we must not lose our flavor and we must let our light shine; God calls us to be transformed by the Spirit and to not be conformed to the world, but to let the mind of Christ be in us; God's Word is a lamp to the feet of others and a light to their path; We put our heart in the hand of the Lord.  
Chaplain Kay Farley led in a closing prayer.

At 12:00 p.m. President Fackenthal adjourned the meeting of the Executive Committee.

Those with late flights stayed to attend the Arizona Aloha Festival in Tempe, AZ, to experience some great Pacific Island food, shopping, music and entertainment, hosted by Paul Higgins and his wife Jeri (whose Hula Dance Troupe performed at the festival).

Submitted by,

Dr. Susan E. Gillies  
Interim General Secretary

SEG/cb

*Documents attached*

*BGM EC Proposed Agenda: March 9-12, 2016*

*Worship Programs*

*BGM EC Roster: March 2016*

*BGM EC Minutes: November 12, 2015 (1002:11/15)*

*BGM Minutes: November 12-15, 2015 (1001:11/15)*

*Annual Reports & Funding Proposals from American Baptist Caucuses*

*Caucus Guidelines*

*General Secretary Position Description*

*Transformed by the Spirit Progress Report*

*Ng Report on Northeast Christian University*

*Medley Report of the Marrakesh Declaration: 2/22/16 Memo*

*AB News Service Release regarding Marrakesh Declaration*

*ABCUSA Financial Report as of December 31, 2015*

*ABC President's Report*

*Report of the Interim General Secretary*

*ABCUSA Office of the General Secretary Communication Standards*