

Communicating American Baptist Churches Identity Notes
Meeting Notes: November 12 and 13, 2015



Thursday, November 12, 2015

Present: Jonathan Malone, Don Ng, Felipe Candelaria, Bonnie Higgins, Bill Fredrickson, Ashley Whitaker, Bridget Lipin

Historic Logo and “Hands and Feet” Logo Discussion

- Two logos in contention:
 - American Baptist Churches “Serving as the hands and feet of Christ”
 - Notes in agenda about formation and distribution of this logo in 2007, 2009
 - Verbal, action-oriented logo
 - Promoting raising money for the work of the ABC
 - Connected with the Office of the General Secretary since it came from that office, especially since denominational bylaw changes that separated the program boards
 - Has been used intentionally by the Office of the General Secretary as its logo since June, in order to promote the Office of the General Secretary
 - American Baptist Churches USA “historic logo – cross and orb”
 - Notes in handout
 - Logo established in 1970
 - Theological, “noun” logo
 - God’s grace in Christ for all the world
 - Synonymous with the denomination as a whole (rather than with one program board)
 - Unifying power of this logo across the denomination
- What is American Baptist Churches USA? Let identity and mission drive logo choices
 - Reshaping the definition/understanding of “mission” as not just international ministry but also what OGS does
- Remembering that the BGM speaks on behalf of the denomination as representative body

ABCUSA Terminology and Organization Name

- Suggestion: Unified Ministries (this is what we are)
 - Is this too close to United Mission, abbreviation “UM”?
- Suggestion: General Ministries (helps Board of General Ministries make sense)

Friday, November 13, 2015

Present: Judy Fackenthal, Josue Menendez Gomez, Felipe Candelaria, Bonnie Higgins, Jonathan Malone, Bill Frederickson, Ashley Whitaker, Bridget Lipin

ABCUSA Terminology and Organization Name

- “Ministries of the General Secretary”

FYI: Action Group Nov. 2015 Notes
Communicating American Baptist Churches Identity

- Broadening the ministries of the General Secretary, including the ministries of the staff of the OGS and the leadership of the BGM

Recommendations to BGM/Executive Committee:

- Logo:
 - We should use the 1970 historic logo more often as the dominant, primary logo of the denomination as a whole.
 - Bridget will connect with Communications Council members (representing IM/ABHMS/MMBB) in using the historic logo more often/as often as possible.
 - The “Hands & Feet” logo will be used when talking about specific ministries of the Office of the General Secretary (e.g. Baptist Muslim Dialogue, Commission on Racism, etc.).
- Organization Name:
 - The legal name should remain the Office of the General Secretary.
 - The Office of the General Secretary should refer to itself and its work as the Ministries of the General Secretary as often as possible.

ABCUSA Identity Flash Drive

- How was it used by Action Group Members?
 - Jonathan was able to use in a Baptist History and Polity Class to present an overview of the denomination
 - Bonnie was able to use at ABCOM Board Meeting, ABW function, and two different churches
 - Some feedback as to resistance to increasing UM offering due to need to keep funds in local church due to decreased funds
 - However, the connections and understanding were there and easily understood
 - Jonathan talked about regional offering in New York State, challenges around regional offerings vs. United Mission giving
 - Bonnie talked about a monthly special mission offering taken at her church for United Mission (other months include WMO, Deacons’ Fund, etc.)
 - However, the BGM/OGS cannot advocate for this
 - Challenges of many people not understanding how regional offerings may decrease the overall United Mission giving and become counterproductive
 - Judy used with her church board – people who are heavily involved in church but without much broader denominational understanding had expressed in the past what Bonnie had said about many wanting to keep funds in the local church as opposed to giving to UM – these same people had a greater understanding due to Connecting promotional materials
 - **Discussion: Let the UM AD team know:** discussion asked if maybe we could use Connecting and UM Is the Vehicle together. Finding a way to bridge them/connect them may increase its potency rather than having too many materials together
 - Merge Connecting content and format with UM Is the Vehicle branding?

FYI: Action Group Nov. 2015 Notes
Communicating American Baptist Churches Identity

- **Recommend:** Action Group survey of BGM members asking how many used the Connecting materials and how they used it?
 - **In Jonathan's report out to BGM, use 3 minutes at each table to talk about if/how BGM members used Connecting.**
 - Jonathan plans to present to Rhode Island board – hasn't been able to yet due to scheduling conflicts
 - Ashley plans to present to Mid-America board – hasn't been able to yet due to scheduling conflicts
- The Spanish version of Connecting has been completed by a member of Felipe's church who does design, and this will be sent to Bridget to distribute to the team, and then to all Spanish-speaking churches.

E-Newsletter Monthly Prayer Focus

- This has not proceeded as originally introduced – originally, we had hoped that team members would write these promotional/prayer focus columns
- Tasha has helped Bridget think of things to include in E-Newsletter
- Not much contribution from team members in last year and a half
- This idea came from Perla Belo, former Action Group/BGM member.
- Going forward, Tasha and Bridget will move this forward on our behalf.