

**Board of General Ministries
Representative to the Board of International Ministries
Report – June 2016**

Serving as the BGM representative to the Board of International Ministries continues to be a privilege. Involvement in the identity transformation of both boards has been both enlightening and challenging. BIM has faced many complex issues under the new denominational structure. While International Ministries has carried on mission work for over two centuries, the board was not technically structured as a 21st century non-profit corporation on its own. Consequently many members did not fully understand all the added roles and responsibilities of board membership.

BIM has gone through an extensive process of educating the board, crafting the new legal documents necessary and discerning the Lord's direction for our very important worldwide ministries as we begin to move through the next century. A beautiful and effective process gathered information, dreams and visions from across the entire ABC-USA family, our missionaries, international partners, other mission agencies, regional staff and officers, and local congregations. More than 1400 conversations with groups and individuals were completed with a high degree of interest and input.

I am pleased to report that the Board of International Ministries, at our March 2016 board meeting adopted a forward thinking strategic plan, "Responding to the Call" as the articulation of our future work. This plan has a vision to do God's work "on earth as in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). I believe, as all of our denominational ministry boards ("program" boards), craft and sharpen their own identities we will discover where our ministries overlap or are complimentary which could lead to a renewed and powerful sense of ministry cooperation in the future. It is significantly that this vision and strategic plan was crafted from the insights and burdens of all those mentioned above rather than being a "top down program."

Another important decision made this year was to develop and implement a much needed and too long delayed salary level increase process for our missionary staff. We continue work to stabilize the financial equilibrium of IM through development work, budget management and early expansion of E-marketing and use of social media which have been very positive thus far. Several individuals and families are moving through the process of becoming missionaries, developing personal support and continuing preparation for their work.

Most of you are aware that our current BIM Executive Secretary, the Rev. Dr. Reid Trulson will retire this summer. At our March board meeting we hired a new Executive Secretary for International Ministries. A very extensive and carefully crafted search

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process ended with a unanimous decision by the board to call the Rev. Sharon T. Koh. Most recently she has served as Senior Associate Pastor of Mission and Community Life at Evergreen Baptist Church in Los Angeles CA. *More detailed information can be seen in the AB News Service and at the IM web site.*

Board President the Rev. Dr. Reginald Mills, who chaired the search committee, has said, *“Sharon has a passionate heart for God’s mission and is an effective team builder, who understands how to mobilize people for God’s work. God has used the Responding to the Call discernment process to give IM a clear vision. Through her work on the Discernment Team that received and articulated this vision, Sharon is uniquely poised and gifted to provide collaborative and executive leadership for this new century of mission. The Board is delighted, staff is enthusiastic and Sharon is passionately committed. Together, we are responding to the call embedded in the prayer Jesus taught us, to see God’s will done ‘on earth, as in heaven.’”*

Please watch for updates at the BIM web site internationalministries.org
A new, comprehensive and easy to use web site will be rolled out in fall of 2016.

Respectfully submitted with hope for the future,

Rev. Vivan H Martindale
BGM Director