

**Report of the American Baptist Home Mission Societies Meeting
November 18-21, 2014**

Highlights of the November meeting:

An opening luncheon featured speaker Joy Anderson, founder of the Criterion Institute, a think tank related to shaping markets to create social and environmental good.

The Rev. Eddie Cruz, ABHMS associate executive director for Mission Advancement, introduced the America for Christ Offering 2015 theme—“Discipleship: A Journey of Grace”—and recognized board members whose churches shared significant gifts during the 2014 offering.

The board unanimously elected The Rev. Dr. Amy Butler to a 2015-2017 term, and the following members to the 2015-2017 director class: Chiles, Thurman, Antonio Lombardi, the Rev. David Gregg, the Rev. Miriam Mendez and the Rev. Lauren Ng.

In consideration of Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III’s plan to retire in October 2015, board members invested a significant portion of time discussing and analyzing the present and future vision of the American Baptist Home Mission Societies; examining the strengths, opportunities and future ministries of ABHMS.

A professional consulting firm has been engaged to begin searching for a new executive director and a search committee was elected. The committee is presently engaged in the search process.

The American Baptist Home Mission Societies’ board of directors held a retreat in Charlotte, N.C., Feb. 10-12. The Rev. Dr. Debora Jackson, executive director of The Ministers Council of American Baptist Churches USA led members in examining the relationship between spiritual practice and effective leadership.

The meeting’s theme, “Breathe,” was based on John 20:22: “He breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

The meeting also included a visit to Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, an ABCUSA congregation in Charlotte. Board members toured the 100-plus-acre church campus and heard from the Rev. Dr. Clifford Jones Sr., pastor, about the congregation’s wide-ranging ministries that include a 26-bed transitional housing for single, homeless women; a catering division that provides culinary skills job training and nutrition education; and a resale boutique.

**Respectfully,
Jim Wolfe**