

**Communicating American Baptist Churches Identity  
Meeting Notes: November 14, 2014 (2:00-5:00pm)**



**Meeting opened in Prayer**

**Old Business**

Prayer List for Connections and monthly e-newsletter

Team looked at most recent version with inclusion of this.

- Regions, AMOs, Caucuses, special partnerships, special programs, etc.
- Pictures, stories, and prayer requests
- 100 words maximum
- Due to Bridget by the middle of the month prior or end of month prior at latest
- Schedule:
  - January, February, March: Nancy Adkins (WV)
  - April, May, June: Felipe
  - July, August, September: Bill
  - October, November, December: TBD in June

**Best Practice/ABC Identity Resources**

- Webpage of resources: material for churches to download, books for library, etc.
- Especially looking for multilingual resources
- Still an important question:
  - How do we proactively define ourselves?
  - Can we use the 2015 Mission Summit to survey everyone about ABC identity?
  - How do we communicate ABCUSA identity as an action team of BGM?
  - What steps do we, as this Action Team, need to take to communicate and define this identity?
  - Two identities to communicate: ABCUSA (the denomination) and Office of ABCUSA (formerly known as OGS)

**3 things to keep in mind, given the ACT report:**

**1. Identity**

- We need to promote ABCUSA (the OGS) and its ministries to the world. It's not just an administrative arm.
- We as ABCUSA (OGS) will also promote IM/ABHMS/MMBB/rest of denomination. "As you support the ministries of OGS/BGM, you also support the ministries of IM/ABHMS/etc."
- Identity: look at confusing nomenclature?

**2. BGM + Regions = Adaptive Change for UM**

- Having BGM directors go back to regions and talk about UM, the future
- BGM directors will be educated and equipped for these conversations.

**3. Lots of changes happening in denomination: new national leaders, new regional leaders**

- NEC/board presidents and VPs/REMC to meet early next year = potential diplomatic arenas to convince and convey re:ACT recommendations

**Marketing Campaign for OGS/BGM needs to be:**

- Make a “Rainbow Acres” video: who they are, how they change lives
- Video(s), newsletters, social media, website, links
  - Fresh Expressions ([www.freshexpressions.org.uk](http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk)) style short videos on YouTube?
- Multilingual
- Unifying, defining theme needed!
- What does ABCUSA (the OGS) do now (see website) and what is the original purpose of the OGS as per the bylaws?

**ABCUSA Ministries (OGS)**

- ABCUSA/General Secretary
- American Baptist Caucuses
- Board of General Ministries
- Ecumenical and Interfaith Ministries
- Regional Ministries
- Transformed by the Spirit
- Transition Ministries (formerly Interim Ministries-ABC)
- United Mission
- Women in Ministry

These responsibilities include: implementing policy decisions of the Board of General Ministries; relating to and coordinating the work of the national and regional boards; fostering ecumenical relations; helping raise the mission budget through the office of Mission Resource Development, and supervising the receipt and disbursement of contributions to American Baptist Mission Support through the Office of the Treasurer; working with Regional Ministries and the Regional Executive Ministers Council; operating the American Baptist Churches Information Systems; overseeing the Mission Resource Development’s communication duties and such denomination-wide media as the American Baptist News Service and the American Baptist homepage on the World Wide Web; overseeing Women in Ministry and Transition Ministries which are housed under the offices of ABCUSA; providing travel and conference planning and scheduling services through the Office of Travel and Conference Planning; providing staff services for the Board of General Ministries; arranging for the Biennial Meetings of the denomination; operating a human resource development program; and maintaining denominational records.

**What does it mean for me as an American Baptist and a member of the BGM?**

Ashley Whitaker:

- Leading edge of denominational life
- Service and leadership opportunity
- Forming connections across country

- Advising the GS

Others:

- Diversity, representative
- 1 Peter 2:10 – now you are a people – moving progressively closer to beloved community
- Prophetic
- Face of the denomination
- Relational – between each other on the BGM and between the BGM and our regions through directors
- Change history, make history
- Dialectical relationships