

OTABL WEBINAR 1 Q&A

Answers added or edited after the webinar by Dr. Walden are in red.

OTABL COHORT QUESTIONS

How many people are participating in OTABL? Is there any way we can learn a little about one another before arriving in Virginia (Names, Regions served, current or previous seminary)?

That is a great idea. Can you email me on that Jennifer? Let's work on doing that. I'd be open to some ideas.

Registration as of the March webinar was 81

Jennifer and the Office of the General Secretary staff and working on this.

Is there any type of mentor program, or intentional introductory cohort for newer (younger) pastors? A 2-3 year cohort for denominational orientation, relational support, best practices, etc.? I see this happening in the CBF, RCA, etc., but I haven't seen anything like this in ABC. Perhaps this happens at the Region level in some Regions?

There is a young clergy caucus. This would be a great thing to continue to work on.

American Baptist Youth Adult Caucus has co-presidents:

Rev. Ashley Whitaker and Tasha Wilson.

Email for contact is: abcyacaucus@gmail.com

There will be regional staff at the Biennial Mission Summit who will coordinate mentor groups at the gathering.

Each regional office should be asked about their mentoring of new clergy. This is typically one of the things the region staff loves to do.

Young Adult Ice Cream Social was accidentally left off our OTABL registration. That has been corrected.

A key contact at ABHMS is Rev. Sarah Strosahl-Kagi who is the National Coordinator, Emerging Leaders and Scholarships. Sarah will be invited to our events and I hope you will get to have interactions with Rev. Sarah.

Sarah's email is: Sarah.Strosahl-Kagi@abhms.org

Sarah's phone: 610.768.2462

WEBINAR 1 QUESTIONS

If we miss one of the three webinars, will we be able to watch them as a recording?

Yes, if you miss we will know it and will send you a link to register to listen to it later

Will we be able to have access to the handout? And where?

The handouts are found on the sidebar. There are three handouts for tonight.

Handouts will be posted to our webpage: www.abc-usa.org/OTABL

I cannot find the handouts. Is there any other way for me to get the handouts from you? Please....

Yes - they will be available later. We will provide those

Handouts will be posted to our webpage: www.abc-usa.org/OTABL

BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT QUESTIONS

TRAVEL QUESTIONS

Are we responsible for getting to the hotel from the airport and vice versa, or will the travel agency help plan that? And do we cover those costs or will those be covered as well?

There will be a shuttle. The office of travel and conference planning will arrange that with you.

An announcement will be made closer to the event about the logistics of the shuttle arrangements.

What about if you are renting a car to come to Virginia?

That's okay. The reimbursement cannot exceed the amount it would take to fly.

Guidelines for reimbursement will use directions and an expense form from ABCUSA's accounting office. This will be provided at a later date.

I haven't received any information in regards to the hotel arrangements. Will this be something sent out later?

The **OTABL Hotel** is the **Wyndham on the beach**. You need to go back into your registration and pick your hotel, your academy choices and Baptist Talk choice. **We have a special rate with this hotel.**

You can adjust your registration by logging back into your account using your email and confirmation number.

My flight is into Norfolk. What is the best means to travel from there to Virginia Beach? Would it be a car rental. BTW-My wife is attending as a guest.

Contact our Office of Travel and Conference Planning. That's what they can help with.

Norfolk is the closest airport. There will be shuttles from the airport.

An announcement will be made closer to the event about the logistics of the shuttle arrangements.

I was booked on a Boeing 737-900 flight to the event. And I heard that the Boeing 737 flights have been grounded in the US for safety purposes. How safe is it for me to fly Boeing 737 to the event?

There are a lot of different 737's - it is the 737 800 max that has been grounded. The government is working hard to make flying safe.

My church registered me after I told them what courses I wanted. How do I travel via car?

You can drive. We will reimburse you like normal accountable expenses for clergy. You submit receipts. The cost for driving cannot exceed what it would cost to fly. On average the cost is \$400 for a round trip ticket.

Guidelines for reimbursement will use directions and an expense form from ABCUSA's accounting office. This will be provided at a later date.

Will we be reimbursed?

yes - see previous answers. Up to the amount of flying. Typically \$400 for a round trip ticket.

Guidelines for reimbursement will use directions and an expense form from ABCUSA's accounting office. This will be provided at a later date.

How do we submit receipts for driving? Are you referring to receipts for gas? And when will we do this? Once we're back home?

The IRS has some regulations on this. Technically, you should always note starting mileage and ending mileage on a mileage reimbursement form. (Forms will be posted later) The current IRS rate is .58 cents / mile.

Guidelines for reimbursement will use directions and an expense form from ABCUSA's accounting office. This will be provided at a later date.

Does reimbursement include tolls?

Yes, that would be normal.

SCHEDULING QUESTIONS

Is there a chance to do some of the young ministers group meetings on Monday or will we be flying back? Have not set up with travel agents yet, so this might be a silly question

There is a possibility. There is a group that is organized for young ministers. They are invited to our BBQ on Sunday night.

Yes – see notes above.

Can we register for any programs other than the OTABL ones and how do we do that?

What other programs are you wondering about Anita?

There may be some free events that are not mentioned in our program registration pathway. We will let you know about that when you arrive.

There may be some events that are scheduled when we have other programming. Let me know if you have questions and I will see if I can assist you. If you ask about something that has a cost to it, you may be required to pay for any additional costs. We will work that out together. Email me at: Kevin.Walden@abc-usa.org

ATTENDANCE QUESTIONS

Will ABHMS be at the Biennial Conference as well?

Yes - absolutely. They will be presenting in April and be at the Biennial Mission Summit

Will LGBTQ+ individuals (and potentially their partners) be welcome at the conference (and all ABC-USA gatherings), be given an equal seat at the table, and be treated with dignity and respect

We do not ask this question, and I imagine there will be some who identify this way.

Hi, I just asked a question a few minutes ago, and I'm not clear on the response. I asked: "Will LGBTQ+ individuals (and potentially their partners) be welcome at the conference (and all ABC-USA gatherings), be given an equal seat at the table, and be treated with dignity and respect?" I understand you do not ask people to specify their status, but I imagine that some folks, especially those involved in AWAB, are concerned as to how they will be received at this conference. Will they be treated equally and be fully included in the discussion and decision-making process, even if they are openly identifying as LGBTQ? I ask this because ABC-USA as a denomination decided in 1992, through a denominational vote, that "the practice of homosexuality" to be "incompatible with Christian teaching." Can you please tell me, are openly LGBTQ individuals WELCOME at national gatherings? Will their God-given talents be recognized in full? Thank you.

Nicole - I apologize, but I don't know how to answer your question. As a denomination we ask all people to follow Jesus faithfully and treat each other respectfully. This might be a question better asked personally to Dr. Spitzer.

I can certainly understand why this question would be asked. This is not a question for the OTABL program.

Generally speaking: The Biennial Mission Summit is a gathering of the American Baptist family.

The fee for a guest is \$460. Will I be billed for that, or will I pay that fee upon arriving at the conference?

You need to log back into your registration and update the information. You can add a guest and pay for them. You need your email and confirmation number to do that.

If you have questions about this, you can contact Sharese.Shedrick@abc-usa.org

If my spouse is registered, does she have to attend sessions as well?

If you've paid the \$460 that covers sharing the room and meals. It is up to them how they spend their time.

ABCUSA RESOURCES AND SUPPORT QUESTIONS

Where can we go to seek support for local church ministries from ABCUSA? As far as getting a grant/financial help or partnership in getting a ministry going in our specific local church?

That's a great question. It sounds like a good question for our mission partner, the American Baptist Home Mission Societies

There are many places that occasionally offer grant opportunities. All of the mission partners have, at times, announced opportunities for grant submissions. You can always ask if you are unsure and each group can answer.

ABCUSA
International Ministries
American Baptist Home Mission Societies
MMBB Financial Services
(occasionally others as well)

I've been a Lead Pastor in an ABC church for five years, but I'm new to ABCUSA. I'm VERY confused about how the entire organization works. There are so many acronyms, so many moving parts. It seems like nothing is streamlined, and nearly everyone is a denominational leadership role is an "insider", and therefore can't see the water they are swimming in, at least to the extent that they are able to do the translating work for someone like me. As a 37-year old, denominational outsider, who is committed to ABC, the entire organization is simply confusing. I'm hoping OTABL will help. But, in every interaction I have w/ ABC, I'm OVERWHEMINGLY aware that to people like me - to millennials, outsiders, etc. - this

denominational family is confusing. It makes me really concerned for the future of ABC in general. How are the Regional and Denominational leaders working to take our organizational life together, and make it accessible to younger clergy, and denominational outsiders? Are there places where this is happening that perhaps I'm unaware of?

It's perfectly okay to help us with this. Keep asking these questions. I'm working on some ideas to address it.

We'll provide an acronym key in the OTABL Program Booklet

Is ABCUSA working closely with other denominations as well? If so, in what way?

We asked Dr. Lee this live. He said yes and gave the examples of the National Council of Churches and the National Association of Evangelicals.

ABCUSA partners with many ecumenical and interfaith ministries and organizations. A list and links to these organizations can be found on the Ecumenical and Interfaith Ministries page on our website: <http://www.abc-usa.org/ecumenical-ministries/>.

ABCUSA REGIONS QUESTIONS

Can you share how regional and international leaders are chosen for their positions and how long the tenure is?

Joel - often there is a limit on service, but not always. I know in some regions the Executive must retire at 70. Others do not have an age of retirement

Regional leaders are chosen by a search committee as directed by their bylaws, very similar to how local church pastors are chosen in the ABC family.

Is there a limit in the local ABC church to ordained clergy?

I do not believe so. It would depend upon the local church.

Being military, do I need to contact each region once I move?

It would be the polite thing to do.

If you are a military chaplain, you need to keep your endorsement current with the Office of Chaplaincy and Specialized Ministries.

A Key Contact at ABHMS for Chaplains is:

Rev. Dr. Patricia Murphy

Ecclesiastical Endorser, National Coordinator for Chaplaincy and Specialized Ministries.

Email: Patricia.Murphy@abhms.org

Phone: 610.768.2050

Being military and ordained, do I need to contact each region when I move?

If you are a part of the recognized clergy through ABHMS office of the chaplaincy, they should help you with this.

See contact information above.

MINISTERS COUNCIL QUESTIONS

How much are the annual dues for the Ministers Council?

I'll ask that. It's a good question

Website: www.ministerscouncil.com