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American Baptist Churches USA Young Adult Caucus

2018 Informational Update:

In November 2018, four young adult members of the Board of General Ministries met with Don Ng who was brought in by BGM Executive Committee to provide mentorship in assisting with the further development of the Caucus. Out of this meeting and Don's discussion with Rev. Sarah Strosahl-Kagi, American Baptist Home Mission Society employee, a decision was made to have Ashley Whitaker, Andy Arndt and Tasha Wilson to proceed as the temporary leadership team through Biennial Mission Summit 2019. The goal would be to establish a new Leadership Team to take the Caucus forward.

The Leadership Team had a few conference calls in the last several months and multitude of emails working on planning for Biennial Mission Summit and the future.

The 2018 Financial Report is still pending receipts. Co-Chair Ashley Whitaker is working to submit them in a timely fashion.

Future Leadership:

The Leadership Team reviewed a compiled file of all folks that fill out a form at the 2017 Young Adult Caucus event at the BMS that expressed interest in participating in Leadership role. We took into account the desire to focus on a variety of regions, backgrounds, and work experiences in creating new leadership team. We have spoken with Rev. Dr. Dan Brockway (pastor of First Baptist Church of Brockport, NY - ABCRGR) and Rev. Kathryn Ray (pastor at North Shore Baptist Church, Chicago – Metro Chicago & BGM Director). Both have agreed to serve in a leadership position within the Leadership Team. We are continuing to discuss other potential candidates to round out this group and have spoken with other Leaders in the denomination for their feedback.

2019 Biennial Mission Summit:

The Young Adult Caucus added a Friday evening Ice Cream Social after evening worship to assist in the networking of Young Adults early in BMS. We are charging a discounted rate and offsetting with funds as necessary. We will be utilizing this meeting time to present the new leadership team and work on recruitment for the other 2 individuals we hope to identify to round out our leadership team.

We will continue our Sunday evening dinner opportunity and participate in the Puerto Rico dinner event. We work with Travel & Conference Planning to sell tickets to young adults at a discounted rate and offsetting with funds as necessary. We will have reserved tables set aside for young adults that come to sit together.

It has been very important as a Caucus over the last several Biennial Mission Summits to not have events that occur during the ethnic caucuses events. We would like the Young Adult Caucus to be open to everyone of all ethnicities that are either a Young Adult or interested in Young Adults in this denomination.

We have reached out to Kevin Walden to incorporate us into the kickoff event of the Orientation to AB Life to assist in meeting and networking w/ young adults that are present for Orientation to AB Life. Kevin expressed interest in also finding ways in which any young adults that are in OTABL can be active in caucus events at BMS.

For the 2019 BMS, the Leadership team will be providing a stipend to the three interim Leadership team members (Ashley, Andy and Tasha) to assist with supporting their ability to be present at the Biennial Mission Summit.

The Young Adult Caucus decided that for the 2019 event that we would not purchase table space in the Exhibit hall as other Caucuses do. We instead worked with Ken Marsenburg to identify a donor to offset the cost of a half page Ad in the program book highlighting the caucus.

Future 2019-2020 Planning:

As mentioned above, we (Ashley, Andy, and Tasha) are working on identifying a leadership team to carry the group forward for longer term planning with the mentorship of Don Ng. We are preserving funds for what we anticipate to be in the Fall 2019 planning meeting of a new leadership team, potentially in Valley Forge. This could be linked with the November 2019 Board Meeting when Tasha will be retiring from BGM and able to assist with a handoff of Leadership.

It will be important for the next Leadership group to explore the relationship further with Sarah Strosahl-Kagi and American Baptist Home Mission Society. Sarah's portfolio is in Emerging Leaders which is in alignment with Young Adult Caucus vision. Efforts such as the Intercultural Institute for Emerging Leaders coming up in September 2019 and the Connect 2018 event from last year in Chicago would be appealing to Caucus individuals.

The new Leadership Team will also need to make decisions about the basics, including PO Box rentals, website hosting, a Zoom account and bank account as a part of the transition.

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