

Board of General Ministries Report
Regional Ministries Activity (June thru August of 2019)

After twenty years of service as executive minister of the **ABC of Michigan**, Rev. Dr. Michael Williams has announced his retirement. I have been working with the sixteen member search committee to extend a call to their next executive minister by the end of the year. Robert Cochran has also announced his retirement from the **DC Baptist Convention** effective March of 2020. I am also providing facilitation services for this seven person committee.

In addition, I regularly provide facilitation for a number of small groups and task forces related to our executive ministers. Most recently, I have been asked to facilitate a change process for a program called **"Face to Face"** that seeks to bring together potential candidates and local church search committees in the same setting so that they can get acquainted with one another and explore the possibilities of a future call. This happens to be a program that I helped to launch with now deceased Rev. Sandra Heizer over twenty years ago. Over time, this event has been effected by trends and technology and is need of a new vision. So far, we have identified the criteria for success, assessed their willingness to change, and will soon evaluate potential format changes that could lead to a new way of conducting this program.

The **Regional Executive Ministers Council** held an impactful continuing education event in conjunction with the Biennial Mission Summit. Rachel Meyer presented highlights from ten years of working with pastors on clergy health. During my monthly column to the REMC, I am continuing to supplement information from this presentation as well as the MMBB complementary presentation from Matt Bloom. Our executive ministers are being encouraged to provide a model of self-care for our ABC pastors.

In addition to work directly related to regional ministry, I have staffed several ABC committees and groups during the past few months. Regarding the **Mission Summit Conversations**, I designed, distributed, and analyzed an online survey that presented options for drilling down on the seven Mission Table priorities for more in-depth discussion at the Biennial Mission Summit. Over 200 people participated in these conversations that dealt with racism, poverty, faith and politics, etc.

I helped to secure a speaker for the **CCUIR** banquet and select the nominee for the Mowbray Award, as well as provided staffing for the committee. Award recipient Stephen Butler Murray was a worthy honoree and has expressed interest in continuing to engage the work of the CCUIR.

I also have been working with **Women in Ministry Intern** Rebecca Driscoll in conducting telephone interviews with several bivocational ministers who indicated that they have a "success story" to share during a recent survey. The write-ups of these stories are appearing on the ABCUSA website.

The next round of the national survey called **"Faith Communities Today"** will be distributed in 2020 and will include American Baptists in their distribution. The planning team met in August to review the final version of the survey. I have helped to formulate this survey since the year 2000 and it remains the largest and most complete survey of congregations in the United States.