

REPORT OF BGM DIRECTOR TO ABHMS

The Board of Directors of the American Baptist Home Mission Societies met in June 2019 concurrently with meetings of the Board of General Ministries.

The Board of Directors of American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) unanimously elected the Rev. Jamie Washam and Dr. Lacey S. Alford as incoming president and vice president, respectively. Both were elected to two-year terms, effective Jan. 1, 2020, filling vacancies left when the terms of President Dr. Clifford I. Johnson and Vice President Wendy J. Hagn expire at the end of 2019.

In his report to the board, Johnson shared his gratitude for the opportunity to lead the board, especially during the last year in which ABHMS made great strides in mission and ministry. “It was a blessing,” he said, “to work with the staff and executive director in developing a Space for Grace conference in 2018 that proved to be such a marvelous occasion.”

Executive Director Dr. Jeffrey Haggray, in his report, remembered Virginia Beach residents still reeling from the trauma of the mass shooting in a city municipal building, just a few weeks ago, that left a dozen people dead.

Haggray announced that the 2020 Space for Grace conference will be held Sept. 21-25 in Kansas City, Mo., and will include the launch of a Chaplaincy and Specialized Ministries Network. Expanded to three days, the conference will be held in the years between ABCUSA Mission Summit celebrations.

Jill Duroseau, ABHMS team lead for the American Baptist Personnel Services/ministrElife platform, informed the board that ABHMS is ready for and looking forward to the hard launch of the newly designed digital platform for ministry professionals during Mission Summit.

The Rev. Salvador Orellana, director of ABHMS’ Rebuilding, Restoring, Renewing Puerto Rico initiative, said that at least 30,000 homes in Puerto Rico still have only blue tarps as roofs—21 months after Hurricane Maria’s destruction. As ABHMS’ initiative moves into Phase 3, he outlined 2019 goals: “We want to help 50 families, which will impact a total of 200 people. This will require raising \$300,000.” The long-range goal (2020-2022) is helping 450 families, which will make a difference in the lives of 1,800 individuals—and require raising \$2.7 million.

Ken Adams, outgoing chair of the Bacone College Board of Trustees, shared his gratitude for ABHMS’ support of Bacone throughout the last few years.

The oldest continuing institution of higher education in the state of Oklahoma, the college will celebrate 140 years in February 2020 and enroll its 140th class soon. Bacone is the only college in the country that offers a four-year degree in American Indian ministry, a program that’s been built over the last four years.

Brenda Sullivan, president of the American Baptist Indian Caucus, shared with the board that the caucus has a “Memorandum of Understanding with ABHMS to work together to benefit our people.”

Submitted by Jim Wolfe