

BGMEC Report June-September 2020

The two primary foci for OGS during the months of June, July, and August of 2020 have been the continuing impact of COVID-19 and our ABC response to racial justice. Some of the highlights of these activities are shown below in this three-month report.

COVID-19 Activities

- Online contacts and conference calls
 - I have continued to hold weekly calls with the Executive Ministers and the group continues to engage as a learning community during these calls.
 - I have led several conference calls with pastors including pastors from IN-KY, ABCOPAD, Maine, ABC of the South, and the Ministers Council.
- Resources
 - We continue to post reflections, insights, resources, and newsletters on the section of the website dedicated to COVID-19.
 - The discussion guide for reopening church buildings and the learnings document of Discoveries and Opportunities from COVID-19 have been utilized and appreciated.

Anti-Racism Emphasis

- I worked with president Karen Podsiadly to design a “Call to Prayer” that included over 145 online participants. The commitment of the panelists was evident as one panelist led in prayer from a hospital bed and another prayed from a workroom, the only place that could be found with power following a tornado in the area the day prior. We have received over twenty applications from persons desiring to help with the work of the task force.
- Several of the Executive Minister calls have addressed racism and have included personal sharing, the identification of regional activity, and presentations from Baptist historians and leaders.
- The NEC also discussed our coordinated efforts on this issue.
- Several individual conversations were also held with members of the REMC and pastoral cluster groups on this issue.

Staff

- Office Staff
 - We have continued the monthly check-ins with staff as well as other departmental staff meetings.

- The staff have returned to the building on a limited basis, working a couple of days a week with temperature checks prior to entering, social distancing in place, and scheduling that limits that the number of staff in the office at one time.
- Several staff have been taking online training, including CVent training.
- Kathy Jachowski assembled a perpetual calendar for the current and future ABCUSA presidents.
- Development
 - We received \$3280 in gifts by including a letter and envelope with our recent ABCUSA newsletter. Thank you letters were sent to top UM giving congregations as well as new congregational participants in UM.
- Creation Justice
 - Rebecca Driscoll worked with the Creation Justice Network to produce a four-session webinar series entitled, “Praying with Creation: Sabbath, Lament, Restoration/Resiliency, and Resurrection.”
- ABCIS update
 - The consultants from Weidenhammer conducted several focus group online meetings with regional and national groups. As a result of the input from customers and potential providers, they have develop requirements for a new system and we have narrowed the list of potential providers two. Donna Molinaro, Alan Musoke, Geri Blier, and I have had regular conversations with the consultants and stakeholders.
- Associate General Secretary for Mission Resource Development
 - A hiring team has been put together for this position that is named in our ABCUSA Standing Rules, and is funded through United Mission.
 - The primary responsibilities of this position are to promote giving to United Mission on behalf of the denomination and to oversee resource development for the Office of the General Secretary.
 - The position announcement was open from July 15 through August 31.
 - The goal is to have someone in the position by January 1, 2021.

Regional Ministry

- Regions:
 - DCBC has called the Rev. Trisha Manarin to serve as their next executive minister. She began on August 17, 2020.
 - Rev. Doug Harris has begun service as the interim executive minister for ABC of Rhode Island.

- **Resourcing**
 - Two retired executive ministers have been recruited to assist with resourcing the regions. Tony Pappas is assisting regions with reopening conversations and Marcia Patton is assisting regions with training persons in racial justice issues through the Kaleidoscope Institute.
- A survey regarding the impact of COVID-19 on regional activity was distributed and discussed among the REMC. A copy of the results of this survey as well as an ABC congregational survey have been posted for review by the BGMEC.

Events

- **Biennial Mission Summit**
 - I continue to serve as chair of the Biennial Program Committee. The theme for the 2021 Biennial Mission Summit is, “Imagine.” The confirmed speakers are:
 - Rev. Dr. Winterbourne LaPucelle Harrison Jones
 - Rev. Susan Sparks
 - Rev. Yamina Apolinaris
 - Rev. Dr. Corey Fields
 - Rev. Briana Parker
 - Rev. Dr. Marie Onwubuariri
- We have sought input regarding the Biennial Mission Summit from a number of sources including the REMC, NEC, SAG, ABC constituents, etc. A decision document was prepared for the BGMEC regarding this event and distributed prior to this meeting. BGMEC members are encouraged to rate the items in the decision document prior to the BGMEC meeting.
- **Mission Table**
 - This event is currently scheduled to take place two days following the Biennial Mission Summit 2021.

Attachments:

- Factors Influencing the Biennial Mission Summit
- COVID-19 Regional Survey Results
- COVID-19 Congregational Survey Results