

Becoming a Beloved Community Action Group
May 6, 2021

Becoming a Beloved Community: Purpose

“ABC life has welcomed and celebrated the great diversity and gifts that its members bring in the making of the whole. Statistically, ABC is more multi-ethnic than any other Protestant group in the US. While we have affirmed such God-given richness, we still have not attained the spirit of a “beloved community.” **What does it mean to be the Body of Christ that values all of its members?** How is power shared among its members? The composition of BGM is designed to reflect a “beloved community” in its members but how may we truly function in spirit? This Action Group will continue the ACT on this topic with the hope of identifying findings that would influence the work that BGM does such as the Biennial Mission Summit.”

Prayer: We opened in Prayer led by Marijane Kiley.

Welcome: Marijane Kiley

Introductions: Marijane Kiley, Patricia Hernandez, Judith Christiansen, Bill Poland, Nancy Lewis, Stephanie Commandest

Update on Anti-Racism Taskforce: Stephanie Commandest has resigned from the Anti-Racism Taskforce. Because the purpose and vision of the Beloved Community Action Team fits well with the Anti-Racism Taskforce’s hopes and expectations, we would like for someone from the Beloved Community Action Team to participate on the Anti-Racism Taskforce. Because the Taskforce is transitioning its structure and organization, we will wait to hear from them in terms of possibly suggesting a Beloved Community Action Team member to participate on the Taskforce. The Executive Committee talked about inviting representatives from each Action Team onto the Anti-Racism Taskforce so that the Board is fully represented.

Gifts conversation: Patricia Hernandez

We have different gifts (charisma), according to the grace (charis) given to each of us.
Romans 12:6

But each of us was given grace (charis) according to the measure of Christ’s gift.
Ephesians 4:7

Because part of the purpose of the Becoming a Beloved Action Group is to “**celebrate the great diversity and gifts that its members bring,**” conversation ensued about how to become more aware of the gifted community we are as the Board of General Ministries and how we can appreciate the diversity and array of gifts we each bring to our work together.

Suggested questions were posed and processes explored as a way of becoming aware of the ways in which people serve and the gifts they use in their local congregation as well. It is hoped that these questions could serve as an opening conversation that would lead to a deeper understanding of how we connect with our local churches and regions and of the gifts we bring to BGM.

The questions settled on were:

1. What is your passion for life and ministry?
2. How have you helped to strengthen your local ABC congregation?
3. How might you help to strengthen the work of BGM and the ministry of OGS?

The process settled on was proposed by Judith Christiansen and is described in the letter below that is being sent to the Executive Committee of BGM in order to plan for the November meeting.

Letter to Executive Committee of BGM: Judith Christiansen

From: The Beloved Community Action Group

TO: The Executive Board of the BGM

RE: Time at our November, 2021 BGM meeting

DATE: May 19, 2021

Dear Friends:

On May 6, 2021, the Beloved Community Action Group met via Zoom. As part of our meeting, we discussed ways that the BGM might become re-acquainted as we gather in person in November of 2021. Our goal was to do something that would personally re-introduce us and would highlight the many gifts that each Board member has.

To that end, we propose the following exercise during the November BGM meeting:

Step 1: Each person present (BGM members and staff) will partner up with someone that they do not know well. Taking 3 minutes per person (for a total of 6 minutes for this step), each will introduce themselves to their partner by answering the following questions:

4. What is your passion for life and ministry?
5. How have you helped to strengthen your local ABC congregation?
6. How might you help to strengthen the work of BGM and the ministry of OGS?

Step 2: Partners will join 3 other partners at tables (for a total of 8 people at each table). At the tables, one partner will introduce their other partner and all will go around the table until all are introduced. Each introduction will take 90 seconds. Step 2 will take approximately 12-15 minutes)

Step 3: One person from each table will introduce everyone at his/her table to the entire group, highlighting one thing about each person. Each of these introductions will take approximately 15 seconds per person, or about 2 minutes total. If there are 7 tables, this step will take about 15 minutes.

The total exercise will take roughly 45 minutes (including instructions and "move time")

We think that the exercise will provide a great way for BGM members to reconnect and learn more about each other. We think it will also be a fun way to get to know something about all members of the Board.

Thank you for your consideration.

Becoming the Beloved Community Action Group

We plan to meet briefly via zoom before the November meeting to orchestrate this. Staff should be included as well. Perhaps sometime in October.

Reminder to register for the Biennial and save dates!

Closing Prayer: Nancy Lewis

Minutes submitted by Stephanie Commandest and Judith Christiansen