**American Baptist Anti-Racism Work Continues through Anti-Racism Convening Table**

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (4/1/22)**—American Baptist Churches USA has called together an American Baptist Anti-Racism Convening Table. This is the next step following the Board of General Ministries decision at its November 2021 meeting to approve the proposal to form an Anti-Racism Commission, initiated by the 2020-2021 Anti-Racism Task Force. The Anti-Racism Convening Table will meet regularly to discern faithful ways to move forward with an ongoing denomination-wide commitment to anti-racism work.

Prior to forming a commission, the Board of General Ministries now requires an establishment phase, which can last up to 12 months. During this time, a select group of individuals would further assess and develop the commission proposal and lay a strong foundation for ongoing work. Considerations of short-term and long-term goals, human and financial resources, expected outcomes and impact, and approaches and implementation of the commission work are all part of the discernment during an establishment phase.

Karen Podsiadly, ABCUSA President for the 2020-2021 biennium, said about the Convening Table, “Informed by the framing and resources offered by the Anti-Racism Task Force, we are entering into the commission establishment phase paying attention to and probing the models and practices we have institutionalized over time, while also discerning how God is calling us to work toward transformation we have not yet seen as a result of previous efforts. Anti-racism work requires us to be intentional, alert, and open to different approaches.”

The Anti-Racism Convening Table began meeting in February this year and thus far includes staff and board representatives from the members of the National Executive Council (comprised of ABCUSA Office of the General Secretary, American Baptist Home Mission Societies, American Baptist International Ministries, American Baptist Women’s Ministries, MMBB Financial Services), and the Regional Executive Ministers Council (comprised of 33 ABC regions).

Podsiadly continued, “To engage in work that we hope will have denomination-wide input and impact, partnership from the ground up is essential. We anticipate that the Convening Table will consider ways to broaden the conversation and efforts. I am grateful to the National Executive Council and Regional Executive Ministers Council partners in coming together at this stage to discern next steps together.”

*[Potential additions to be determined at Convening Table Meeting 2]*

American Baptist Churches USA is one of the most diverse Christian denominations today, with approximately 5,000 congregations comprised of 1.3 million members, across the United States and Puerto Rico, all engaged in God’s mission around the world.

Additional reads:

2020-2021 ABCUSA Anti-Racism Task Force

[Include hyperlink: <https://www.abc-usa.org/2021/06/abcusa-anti-racism-task-force/>]