

ABHS Report to BGM sitting as ABHS May, 2022

The past year has been one of transition and adaptation. Our two new staff, Caroline Crowell as Archivist and Jean McDaniel as Administrative Assistant, have worked hard to learn their new jobs. Unfortunately, Caroline has given her notice due to her spouse accepting a job in Alaska and we have begun a search for a new archivist. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has required flexibility, as we work to serve the needs of researchers while remaining observant of public health precautions. One ramification has been fewer on-site researchers and an increase in Research-by-Mail requests.

Archival Projects

In May 2021 we received a \$48,000 grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) for a project to digitize audio tapes of American Baptist Conventions from 1958-1973. Those tapes have been digitized and we are in the middle of the process of quality control and ingestion into the digital preservation platform.

We await word on a grant proposal to the National Park Service, "Sharing the Story: Increasing Access to Records Documenting Northern Baptists' work with Japanese American Internees." ABHS proposed to digitize materials that relate to work of Northern Baptists with Japanese Americans who were interned during World War II.

Most of these ABHS-held documents belong to the archives of the American Baptist Home Mission Society and the Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society; a smaller number are in personal papers collections and the archives of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (International Ministries).

Outreach

We continue outreach to congregations and regions by means of church anniversary certificates.

ABHS participated in the Prairie Pastors Conference and ABWM's Women's History Month programs.

Executive Director Priscilla Eppinger has been named Conference Historian for the "Celebrating Ministering Women: Radical. Redeemed. Ready." conference, and will lead two workshops during that Green Lake conference in June 2022.

Strategic Planning

Updating the Society's strategic plan was a top priority in 2021. The Strategic Planning Task Force identified continuing and expanding our digital archives project and increasing access to paper-based collections as crucial to the Society's mission, and increased funding as the top need in the next five years in order to carry out that mission.

The Task Force and ABHS Board of Managers have identified additional fee-based services that ABHS will offer to increase revenue streams. We are excited about services we can offer to congregations and regions.

Priscilla Eppinger
Executive Director