

To Rev Dr. Woods and the Executive Committee of the Board of General Ministries,

Since my previous report, I attended the virtual meeting of the American Baptist Home Mission Societies Board on November 16-17, 2021.

The ABHMS entered its final quarter with a net income of \$58,000. Total expenses were \$9.7 million, and income was \$9.33 million. The AFC offering contributed \$508,800 of this, (11.4% higher than the previous year), United Mission provided \$8,400 (92.7% lower than previous year), Passionary Fund income was \$999,000, and One Great Hour of Sharing was \$28,6000. Other sources of income include endowment & reserve income, lease income, and publishing income, among others.

2021 was the inaugural year of the ABHMS Center for Continuous Learning. Having built infrastructure and platforms over the past year with multiple webinars and in-person learning experiences, they are committing in 2022 to develop content aimed at two significant trends: the rise of people who claim no religious affiliation and are leaving the institutional church, even as “most people across generations and cultures are still spiritual formation and communities of practice.” The second trend is the significant number of clergy leaving the pastorate, but not ministry. Within these two focus trends, the CCL will offer courses on creative models for faith formation, Baptist identity, and cultural competency. The Co-Creators Incubator was one 2021 initiative aimed at nurturing the growth of innovative ministry ideas.

Financial health and competency also remains a key focus of ABHMS continuing education programs. The In Support of Excellence program, which provides spiritually-rooted financial education, remains a critical component of this work. Previously funded by the Lily Endowment, this program will continue with committed funds from ABHMS.

It continues to be a privilege to serve as liaison between these two Boards.

Warmly,

Rev. Kathryn Ray
Chicago, IL