



**BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES
GREEN LAKE, WI
JUNE 13-15, 2022
MINUTES**

Meeting Location: Green Lake Conference Center
W2511 State Rd. 23
Green Lake, WI 54941
Ph: 920-294-3323

Officers: Jim Wolfe, President
Michelle Nickens, Vice President
Paul Higgins, Budget Review Officer
Jeff Woods, General Secretary

Parliamentarian: Bill Frederickson **BGM Chaplain:** Cedric Jones

Monday, June 13, 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.; BGM Plenary; Brayton Case (Kern Lodge)

BGM 558 CALL TO ORDER

American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA) President Jim Wolfe welcomed all of the Board of General Ministries (BGM) directors and staff, calling the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Jim gave a special welcome to those attending their first in-person meeting: Daryl Ward, Brandon Bouldin, Orin Clinger, Chakravarthy Zadda, and Abner Cotto-Bonilla. Jim shared regrets from directors unable to attend: Patrick Embley, Christopher Hamilton, Noemi Nunez-Sanchez, Bill Poland, and Lillian Ramos. He expressed appreciation to Marilyn Malone and Thomas Gilmore for agreeing to serve as tellers and to Marijane Kiley for sharing her gift of music during the meetings. Jim continued with announcements.

BGM 559 WORSHIP

Cedric Jones lit the Christ Candle in recognition of Christ's presence and led a devotion based on Joshua 4:20-24.

BGM 560 ABCUSA FOCUS STATEMENT

The ABCUSA Focus Statement was shared in unison.

American Baptist Churches are missional congregations that nurture devoted disciples of Jesus Christ who live their lives in mission and ministry for the healing of the world through the love of God.

BGM 561 CONSENT AGENDA

By Voice vote, the BGM approved by general consent the Minutes of the Board of General Ministries November 5-7, 2021 and to receive the designated written reports on the agenda.

BGM 562 REPORT OF THE ABCUSA GENERAL SECRETARY

ABCUSA General Secretary Jeff Woods gave a report highlighting the focus of the American Baptist Churches USA Office of the General Secretary on gathering the denomination; supporting congregations, regions and national organizations; and creating space for local and global issues. Jeff expressed his gratefulness for the tremendous work of board directors and staff to continue to advance these mission priorities. ABCUSA engages in this work with persons from the entire American Baptist family for all American Baptists.

Jeff highlighted gathering the denomination through the “Radical. Redeemed. Ready.” Conference hosted by American Baptist Women in Ministry, a ministry of the Office of the General Secretary.

Jeff introduced newest staff member Rev. Soozie Whitten Ford, interim associate general secretary for Regional Ministries, who has begun serving regions as a part of our emphasis of supporting churches, regional and national entities.

He also shared about recent efforts around creating space for local and global issues, including the formation of a Task Force on Interpreting the Impact of COVID-19 on Congregations, recent Everyday ABC Conversations held around the topics of “Homelessness and the Housing Crisis” and “Creation Justice and International Women’s Day,” and continued work around the establishment of an Anti-Racism Convening Table, which includes representative members from American Baptist partners.

More details from Jeff’s report are in the “Report of the General Secretary.”

BGM 563 REPORT OF THE ABCUSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Kathryn Ray made a motion and seconded by Bonnie Higgins to elect the President’s nominee Shawna Simmons as a member of the BGM Executive Committee. So moved.

By voice vote the following were approved to serve as BGM Directors for the terms noted:

At-Large Director for Growing Healthy Churches - Valui Wung completing Ralph Marks’ two terms (2022) and 2nd term (2023-2026).

At-Large Director for Central Pacific Coast Matt Toupin completing John Nichols’ term (2022-2024).

At-Large Director for Nebraska Orin Clinger completing Mark Harvey’s term (2022-2024).

General Director Chakravarthy Zadda (Chaks) – completing Zina Jacque’s term (2022-2023).

At-Large Directors completing a filled vacancy term end December 31, 2022:

Damaris Santiago Lebron for Puerto Rico - 1st term (2023 – 2026)

By voice vote, the BGM voted in favor of Chakravarthy Zadda serving as a member of the Committee on Christian Unity and Interfaith Relations.

By voice vote, the BGM voted in favor of Orin Clinger to serve on the BGM Finance Committee.

BGM 564 REPORT OF THE ABCUSA PRESIDENT

ABCUSA President, Jim Wolfe shared that he has been working with the Biennial Mission Summit Planning Team on arrangements for the 2023 Biennial Mission Summit in San Juan, PR; as well as, continuing working with the General Secretary Search Committee. Jim Wolfe attended the National Leadership Council (NLC) May 17-20 and shared that the NLC prayed for the members of the search committee that were present at the NLC gathering. The board will meet in executive session for 90 minutes to discuss the General Secretary Search progress and the future plans. For more details on Jim Wolfe's Report, please reference the Report of the ABCUSA President.

BGM 565 ABCUSA INTERPRETING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CONGREGATIONS TASK FORCE

In response to the interest of ABC congregations to continue to explore the impact of the global pandemic on congregational life, the ABCUSA Office of the General Secretary and Board of General Ministries is establishing a new task force entitled, "Interpreting the Impact of COVID-19 on Congregations." Former Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware, Rev. Dr. Frank Frischkorn, has agreed to serve as chair of this task force. The purpose of the task force is to gather and share information regarding ways that ABC congregations can adjust to new realities created by the global pandemic so that they can become all that God intends them to be.

BGM 566 BYLAW CHANGE AFFILIATED VS. COOPERATING CHURCHES

The current wording of the ABCUSA Bylaws, Article V, Section 1. Qualifications, states:

Section 1. Qualifications. Every Baptist church in the United States (as defined in Article XVIII, Section 7) which cooperates in the work of the Denomination in accordance with the Criteria for Cooperating Churches, as defined in the Standing Rules, may become a Cooperating Church of ABCUSA ("Cooperating Church") for the purposes of these Bylaws. Upon their determination by the Board of General Ministries and the Regional Boards acting jointly, the Criteria for Cooperating Churches shall be incorporated into the Standing Rules by the Board of General Ministries.

The following wording is proposed as an addition to this section...

"Cooperating Churches are not 'affiliated' with ABCUSA in the legal sense because being affiliated implies an entity that controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with another entity."

The revised wording of the ABCUSA Bylaws, Article V, Section 1. Qualifications would read,

Section 1. Qualifications. Every Baptist church in the United States (as defined in Article XVIII, Section 7) which cooperates in the work of the Denomination in accordance with the Criteria for Cooperating Churches, as defined in the Standing Rules, may become a Cooperating Church of ABCUSA ("Cooperating Church") for the purposes of these Bylaws. Upon their determination by the Board of General Ministries and the Regional Boards acting jointly, the Criteria for Cooperating Churches shall be incorporated into the Standing Rules by the Board of General Ministries. Cooperating Churches are not 'affiliated' with ABCUSA in the legal sense because being affiliated implies an entity that controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with another entity.

The BGM Executive Committee recommended to the Board of General Ministries that the following sentence be added to the paragraph in Article V, Section 1 of the ABCUSA Bylaws "Cooperating

Churches are not ‘affiliated’ with ABCUSA in the legal sense because being affiliated implies an entity that controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with another entity.”

Motion passed by a counted vote of 27 yes and 1 no.

BGM 567 BGM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE UPDATE

ABC Vice President Michelle Nickens reported that the BGM Executive Committee met in Phoenix, AZ March 10-12. More information about actions from that meeting can be found in the Minutes of the March BGM Executive Committee.

BGM 568 RECESS OF MEETING FOR BGM ACTION GROUPS

From 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., the BGM convened in the following Action Groups to focus its work in various areas.

BGM Finance Committee – Brown Room

Christian Unity & Interfaith Relations – Hanson Room

Becoming a Beloved Community – Stansbury Room

Communicating ABC Identity – Johnson Room

DINNER

At 5:00 p.m., BGM directors, spouses/families and staff gathered in Bauer Dining Room for dinner and fellowship. New Board Orientation followed dinner in the Brayton Case Room.

Tuesday, June 14, 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.; BGM Plenary; Brayton Case (Kern Lodge)

At 7:00 a.m., the BGM directors and staff enjoyed breakfast in the Bauer Dining Room. At 7:00 a.m. the BGM Finance Committee met for a breakfast meeting in the Tower Dining Room.

BGM 569 RECONVENING/WORSHIP

Cedric Jones lit the Christ Candle in recognition of Christ’s presence and led a devotion.

BGM 570 BGM OFFERING

Jim Wolfe announced that the BGM offering being collected during the Vespers service in the evening would be designated to assist with the travel expenses for international speakers at the International Religious Freedom Summit.

BGM 571 REPORT OF THE BUDGET REVIEW OFFICER

The report of the independent certified public accountants, Tait, Weller & Baker LLP was presented by Paul Higgins, Budget Review Officer. (see attached document).

Paul Higgins referred to the financial report prepared by Alan Musoke, highlighted in the year-to-date financial report for the year ending April 30, 2022 and were included in the written report prepared by Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary for Finance/CFO/Treasurer. The year-to-date financials show a surplus of \$780,000. The following activity is based on the financials excluding the Biennial. There was a Biennial in 2021. Net revenue compared to last year is up \$801,000. Revenue is up primarily due to the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) Loan and Transition Ministries increased by three ministers in 2022. Expenses as compared to last year are

higher by \$223,000. This is primarily due to NetSuite fees and implementation costs, increase in Transition Ministries costs, and increase in travel.

ABCUSA received an additional PPP Loan in 2021 in the amount of \$744,802. The PPP Loan was forgiven in 2022 and was moved from a liability to income.

Total UM is \$1,942,736. This is a decrease of \$201,361 from the prior year. This represents a decrease of 9.39%.

BGM 572 MISSION RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (MRD) UPDATE

Marie Onwubuariri, Associate General Secretary for MRD, shared with the BGM that the annual summary will be sent in the mail and posted on the ABCUSA Website in July. The annual summary can be used as a tool for board directors to communicate with congregations what the Office of the General Secretary does as an organization. Marie handed out copies of the communication standards and the envelope for donations.

BGM 573 WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE

Janice Fletcher, Chair, shared updates from the World Relief Committee that met Nov. 11, 2021 and December 14, 2021. The committee reviewed eleven grant requests. The committee also reviewed the results submitted by a World Relief sub-committee concerning the use of the \$500,000 estate gift from FBC, Palo Alto, CA. It was agreed that this was a legacy gift and should be treated differently than the standard distribution of undesignated funds. The committee decided to make \$375,000 available to our ABC partners. The remaining \$125,000 will be used to establish an endowment for One Great Hour of Sharing.

BGM 574 ORIENTATION TO AMERICAN BAPTIST LIFE (OTABL)

Jeff Woods noted that MMBB and United Mission are the major funders for the OTABL program. OTABL is once again being co-led by Judy Fackenthal and Zina Jacque. The planning team includes Doug Avilesbernal, Mark Click, Lisa Harris-Lee, Sandra Hausenhauer, and Marc Kirchoff. The planning team is looking at options for re-branding OTABL with a focus on equipping, inspiring, and connecting.

BGM 575 EXECUTIVE SESSION

After lunch, the Board of General Ministries met in Executive Session. Minutes, including actions during this session, are sealed in a confidential envelope and attached to the official copy of the minutes filed in the General Secretary's office.

BGM 576 RECESS OF MEETING FOR BGM ACTION GROUPS

From 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., the BGM convened in the following Action Groups to focus its work in various areas.

Christian Unity & Interfaith Relations – Hanson Room

Becoming a Beloved Community – Stansbury Room

Communicating ABC Identity – Johnson Room

DINNER

At 5:00 p.m., BGM directors, spouses/families and staff gathered in Bauer Dining Room for dinner and fellowship. Evening Vespers, led by Cedric Jones, followed dinner in the Brayton Case Room.

Wednesday, June 15, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.; BGM Plenary; Brayton Case (Kern Lodge)

At 7:00 a.m., the BGM directors and staff enjoyed breakfast in the Bauer Dining Room.

BGM 577 RECONVENING/WORSHIP

Cedric Jones lit the Christ Candle in recognition of Christ's presence and led a devotion.

BGM 578 CREDENTIALS & CAUCUS COMMITTEE

Judith Christiansen, Chair of the Credentials and Caucus Committee, shared figures from the *Report of Changed Relationships*.

By voice vote, the BGM voted in favor of accepting the Report of Changed Relationships of Local Churches (1205.1:06/22) dated November 8, 2021 to June 9, 2022.

BGM 579 RECESS BGM/CONVENE AMERICAN BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

By voice vote, the BGM voted in favor of the American Baptist Historical Society (ABHS) Board of Managers and President Malone's recommendation given on behalf of Executive Director Priscilla Eppinger that Garth Brokaw be named Honorary Life Member of ABHS.

Priscilla continued by giving an update on the Historical Society. Priscilla ended noting that she was named Conference Historian for the "Celebrating Ministering Women: Radical. Redeemed. Ready." conference, and invited everyone that was attending the conference to come to the two workshops she was leading during the conference.

BGM 580 RECONVENE BGM/2023 BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT, SAN JUAN, PR

Biennial Mission Summit Program Coordinator Tina Kiernan shared that planning has begun for the event which will be held June 23-25, 2023 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The theme will be "For Such a Time as This."

The following persons have agreed to be the Worship Speakers:

Rev. Dr. Frederick Haynes III, Senior Pastor of Friendship West Baptist Church, Dallas, TX

Rev. Miriam Mendez, Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey

Rev. Joy Martinez-Marshall, Pastor of First Baptist Church, Lincoln, NE

The service on Sunday morning will be a Puerto Rican Worship Experience.

More information on the planning for 2023 Biennial Mission Summit is available in the report.

BGM 581 ASSESSING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The board took time reflecting on personal spiritual gifts that may be used to benefit the work of the BGM and ABCUSA.

BGM 582 ACTION GROUP REPORTS

Beloved Community Action Group:

Marijane Kiley shared that the Beloved Community Action Group discussed ways to make the BGM more inclusive; as well as, understand the work of the board and the role of the directors. At the November board meeting the action group would like to share as a group, thoughts, desires, and feelings to get to know one another as board directors on a deeper level and build trust.

Communicating ABC Identity:

Bonnie Higgins shared an update from the action group who discussed the title “General Secretary,” and that the group thought that rebranding the title would help to clarify the position.

BGM Finance Committee Action Group:

Paul Higgins gave updates from the BGM Finance Committee included in the attached “Report of the BGM Finance Committee to the Board of General Ministries June 2022.”

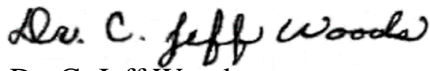
Committee on Christian Unity and Interfaith Relations (CCUIR):

Annie Field gave updates from the CCUIR included in the attached CCUIR report, on behalf of Raimundo Barreto, Chair.

BGM 583 CLOSING WORSHIP

Cedric Jones led a closing worship with communion.

Submitted by,



Dr. C. Jeff Woods
General Secretary

CJW/kj

Documents attached

BGM Proposed Agenda (1102:06/22)

Integrated Schedule- June 2022

BGM Minutes – November 2021 (1001:11/21)

BGM Executive Committee Minutes: March 2022 (1002:03/21)

BGM Executive Committee Minutes: November 2021 (1002:11/21)

ABCUSA and Associated Ministry Organizations Reports

PMT Report to BGM June 2022

Burma Refugee Commission Report June 2022

Creation Justice Network

ABCUSA General Secretary's Report

ABCUSA President's Report

Report from Special Director to IM

Report from Special Director to ABHMS

The Task Force on Interpreting the Impact of COVID

Suggested Bylaw Change affiliated vs cooperating congregations

Financial Statements and Report of the Independent CPAs Dec. 31, 2021 and 2020

YTD Financials Through April 2022

World Relief Committee

American Baptist Historical Society Update

Biennial Mission Summit Update, San Juan, PR.2023

Orientation to American Baptist Life

Report of Changed Relationship

BGM Orientation Agenda – June 13, 2022

BGM Action Groups April 2022

CCUIR Update

