

October 31, 2023

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

I attended one day of the American Baptist Home Mission Societies meeting in June, as the dates were concurrent with the dates of the BGM meeting. During my report, I received questions regarding the timeline for the General Secretary search committee process. Dr. Haggray expressed concern that the continued period of interim was having a stagnating effect on the movement and fundraising of the denomination.

At this meeting, it was reported that ABHMS is beginning a process of investigation into its role in the establishment and maintenance of boarding schools for Native American children over the past 200 years. It was also reported that ABHMS received a clean audit.

I also attended the ABHMS Banquet at the biennial. At this event, Judson Press celebrated its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The program for the annual banquet was planned by the Rev. Lauren Lisa Ng, with the theme of "Dear Disruption." They invited several speakers to offer letters written to disruption. A pastor from Puerto Rico spoke of March 15, 2020, when the pandemic began. Painful conflict emerged in his church around how they should gather, when they should return in person and how. These conflicts led him into a deep depression, a struggle he named openly for the first time at this event. A woman from Burma spoke of February 2021. Her city of Yangon had just come into a time when life was stabilizing after the pandemic when disruption hit again, as the armed military coup brought violence to the streets and protests that were put down by force. An Apache educator spoke of the late 1800s, when Apache children were forcibly taken from their homes to boarding schools in an attempt to erase their language and culture. The event "intended to convey the power of testifying as a means of achieving spiritual and emotional uplift through daunting periods of societal turbulence."

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

Warmly,

Rev. Kathryn Ray  
Chicago, IL