

MINISTERS AND MISSIONARIES BENEFIT BOARD (MMBB)

Report of the Special Director – Matt Toupin

Greetings to the members of the Board of General Ministries,

From May 6th to 8th, 2024, the Board of Directors of the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board (MMBB) held its Spring meeting, in the Washington, D.C. area. As the newly-appointed Special Director to MMBB serving on behalf of the Board of General Ministries, this was my very first time participating in an MMBB meeting.

As it turns out, this meeting was also a special gathering of Board of Directors of MMBB as it was considered their “retreat,” an event they hold only every several years. As a new member of the Board of Directors, I was appointed to serve on the Benefits Committee, which was the very first meeting of the gathering.

After the various Committees met, the full Board of Directors met for its regular meeting, taking care of routine business. This time was abridged much shorter than normal, as I understand, due to the fact that the focus of the gathering was to be the Board of Directors’ Retreat, which took up the rest of the meeting time that week. Committee reports were approved, including the selection of BDO USA, P.C. for auditing services, brought by the Auditing Committee, and the actuary report of Mercer, MMBB’s actuary, brought by the Benefits Committee.

The retreat began with a presentation by experts in “changing church landscape,” Austin and Thumma. They presented very helpful information regarding the patterns of church decline and growth that are affecting our denomination in general and MMBB specifically. It became clear to me that a great deal of what was presented would prove very useful also to the Board of General Ministries as we face the same societal challenges that MMBB does. With smaller and midsize churches in decline across the board, and with larger, non-denominational churches on the rise, the data presented strongly suggested the need for MMBB to continue marketing its services beyond the denominational family, including to larger, non-denominational client congregations.

The remaining gathering time during the retreat involved excellent and very professional presentations from each member of MMBB Executive Staff in what was a “deep dive” strategic planning session. This was a particularly fruitful discussion, because it was based on the foundational understanding of the changing church landscape that serves as the backdrop for anything MMBB will be able to do in the near- and long-term, from a strategic perspective.

The focus was on “Enterprise Risk Management,” and each of the main departments within the organization led a discussion on types of risk that impacted the organization from the perspective of their department, including: Marketing, Human Resources, Information Technology, and the core business itself—Retirement Plan Stewardship. A comprehensive

list of risks were considered, including those that are legal, political, competitive, strategic, technological, and of course, economic. Managing risk carefully within each department should help MMBB to position itself best for the future, continuing to provide excellent service to existing clients, while also growing by necessity in the new markets suggested by the changing church landscape that we all face.

After this, the following proposals were made to the Board of Directors, for their consideration, based on material presented during the retreat:

- *Consider expanding strategic investments to programmatic endeavors that will positively impact MMBB's service delivery to members and employers.*
- *Cultivating a culture of excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement through targeted investments*
- *Adopt a Balanced Scorecard approach for programmatic and nonprogrammatic measure for performance.*

I am very greatly honored by the Board of General Ministries for the opportunity to serve as your Special Director for MMBB. I was also grateful to our ABC President, Rev. Nikita McCalister, and to our BGM colleague, Noemí Núñez-Sánchez, my predecessor in this role, for providing me with helpful information as to what service on the Board of Directors of MMBB entails. Having experienced this meeting, I am highly confident in our excellent and very professional MMBB staff, led by Chief Executive Officer, Louis Barbarin. As a long-time American Baptist and participant in the MMBB retirement system, I deeply value the importance and success of this organization in (and beyond) our denominational family and look forward to serving as a liaison between the BGM and MMBB during my term of service.

Warm regards,

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Matt Alan Toupin

BGM Rep. from ABC Central Pacific Coast