



**BOARD OF GENERAL MINISTRIES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 5-7, 2024
MINUTES**

FINAL

Meeting Location: Omaha Hilton
1001 Cass St.
Omaha, NE 68102

Officers: Nikita McCalister, President
William Poland, Vice President
Paul Higgins, Budget Review Officer
Gina Jacobs-Strain, General Secretary

Committee: Cedric Jones, PBA
Tamara Scott, MI
Joy Martinez-Marshall, NE
Jim Wolfe, Past- President

Parliamentarian: Bill Fredrickson, NJ

Chaplain: Doug Scalise, MA

Staff: Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary for Finance/CFO/Treasurer
Vicella Gramling, Administrative Manager

Thursday, September 5, 2024, 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. – Rome Meeting Room

Breakfast 7:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

BGM EC 889 WELCOME AND CATCH UP WITH ONE ANOTHER

ABCUSA President Nikita McCalister welcomed everyone and asked the committee to give a brief check in update since the last meeting.

BGM EC 890 CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND DEVOTIONS

*Chaplain Doug Scalise opened with the Lighting of the Christ Candle and led with Devotions:
Placing Your Life in the Hand of God – Psalm 31*

BGM EC 891 ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Proposed Action: To approve the minutes of the June 2024 BGM Executive Committee Meeting in Green Lake, WI, and approve the agenda for the BGM Executive Committee meeting.

By voice vote, the BGM Executive Committee approved by general consent the Minutes of the Board of General Ministries Executive Committee June 11-12, 2024, in Green Lake, WI, and the designated reports on the agenda.

Proposed Action: The motion to have permission to record the BGM Executive Committee Meeting.

Motion: A motion was made by Cedric Jones and Paul Higgins seconded to approve permission to record the BGM Executive Committee meeting.

By voice vote, the BGM Executive Committee approved the motion.

BGM EC 892 REPORT FROM THE ABCUSA PRESIDENT

ABCUSA President Nikita McCalister referenced her "President's Report September 2024" report and shared additional highlights. President McCalister attended the Mission Symposium in Puerto Rico, where she heard from the Puerto Rico Delegation. She also met with regional staff and the Rev. Edgardo Caraballo Marin, Regional Executive Minister (REM), whose 8-year term will conclude in 2025. Rev. Caraballo Marin expressed gratitude and excitement for having the President and General Secretary visit the region outside of a biennial year. He emphasized that while the region requires financial support due to disasters, it is not solely an aid recipient. He also highlighted the importance and value of the Spanish-speaking ABCUSA constituents. Additionally, President McCalister spoke about attending the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) Symposium in Lagos, Nigeria.

BGM EC 893 REPORT FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

General Secretary Gina C. Jacobs-Strain referenced her report, which can be found in the "Report of the General Secretary – BGM Executive Committee September 2024." She shared details about attending the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) Gathering with President McCalister in Lagos, Nigeria, where she preached at a preaching symposium. Additionally, she attended three MMBB colloquiums and participated in meetings, small groups, and one-on-one conversations with clergy. She also noted that the Office of the General Secretary (OGS) is continuing to build relationships both internally with staff and externally through visits and meetings with regional leaders, regional meetings, local churches, and local pastors. She noted upcoming Everyday Conversations and Webinars.

The General Secretary shared that ABCUSA is working with IM to improve OGHS website, collections of funds, and donor information. Currently IM does not share donor information for OGHS funds they collect on behalf of the denomination. ABCUSA and IM have agreed that ABCUSA will have input into the WRC operation budget as ABCUSA covers 80% of operation costs and IM covers 20%. This collaboration will impact the 2025 budget.

BGM EC 894 2025, 2027, and 2029 BIENNIAL MISSION SUMMIT

The 2025 Biennial Mission Summit is moving along nicely. We have confirmed plenary and workshop speakers. Registration will open on November 1, 2024. The theme is "Come Seek Living Water" and with an emphasis on being a Family Reunion. As the Biennial is on a holiday weekend and as we are encouraging families to attend, we will have a picnic-style early dinner on Friday to allow attendees to take advantage of the July 4th evening celebrations in Omaha.

2027 Biennial Mission Summit: Several regions agreed to consider hosting 2027 and possibly 2029 Biennials. Office of Travel and Conference planning is reviewing sites and locations.

BGM EC 895 ENGAGE 2025

Engage is being shaped well. The ABCUSA co-chairs are aiming to connect with participants prior to the Biennial. National partners have agreed to support Engage (formerly known as Orientation to Baptist Life).

BGM EC 896 REPORT OF THE BUDGET REVIEW OFFICER

Budget Review Officer Paul Higgins reviewed the Financial Report prepared by Alan Musoke. Paul highlighted the Year-To-Date Financial Report as of June 30, 2024, which showed a minor loss of \$10,960. United Mission saw a decline of just 2.82% through June 2024 compared to June 2023, marking a smaller decrease than historically experienced.

Board Meeting Rescheduling for Legal Purposes – End of June and Early July 2025

Paul Higgins informed the BGM Executive Committee that ABCUSA is incorporated in New York State, so we are subject to the New York State Non-Profit Law. Under this law, the financial report must be presented to board members at the BGM annual meeting before the end of June. He stated that this will not impact the Biennial, but it will affect the scheduling of the BGM meeting.

President McCalister will follow up with the attorney for legal advice, ensuring ABCUSA is within the New York Non-Profit Law guidelines and report back to the board.

BGM EC 897 HR/COMPENSATION (EXECUTIVE SESSION)

All staff stepped out of the room during the executive session.

BGM EC 898 STANDING RULES COMMITTEE REPORT

The Standing Rules Committee Report submitted clarification to the BGM EC on the possible Bylaw changes that would need to be made to Article XIII – National Boards. The Standing Rules change if the Bylaw change is accepted. This must be posted 90 days before the Biennial Mission Summit so the BGM can vote on the change.

Proposed Action: The motion to remove the words “National Program Boards” in the Bylaw so it reads “National Boards.”

Motion: To adopt the report of the Standing Rules Committee. Jim Wolfe, Past President, made the motion, and Tamara Scott seconded the motion.

By voice vote, the BGM EC approved the motion with necessary changes to Article XIII- “National Program Boards” to “National Boards.”

Motion: To remove dates (August/September 2024) from the top of the page.

By voice vote, the BGM EC approved the motion and ratified the necessary changes to Article XIII— National Board line to remove the months from the date.

2:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Tour of Convention Center (CHI Health Center)

Kendra Moyars, the Convention Center (CHI Health Center) Manager, gave the BGM Executive Committee a facility tour.

BGM EC 899 AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN’S MINISTRIES

President McCalister discussed the financial independence of ABWM. She had conversations with ABWM Leadership and the long-standing treasurer. Both leaders spoke highly of General Secretary Jacobs-Strain’s leadership during her tenure overseeing ABWM including establishing an endowment fund. The ABWM Board had been using reserve funds for operations over the past 20 years without replenishing them.

DINNER – 6:00 p.m. The committee had dinner together in the Mercer Room.

Friday, September 6, 2024, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. - Rome Meeting Room

BGM EC 900 CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND DEVOTIONS

*Chaplain Doug Scalise opened with the Lighting of the Christ Candle and led with Devotions:
It’s a Blessing to Have Our Sins Forgiven – Psalm 32:1-5*

BGM EC 901 BOARD CONFIDENTIALITY

General Secretary Jacobs-Strain shared the importance of confidentiality and suggested the need for

guidelines highlighting its significance and impact on board relationships, effectiveness, and reputation internally and externally. Past President Jim Wolfe noted that all members of the GS Search Committee signed a respectful communication guidelines form, which includes confidentiality. He will provide this information to the EC.

The BGM Executive Committee noted that Budget Review Officer Paul Higgins addresses confidentiality during the New Board Member Orientation. It has been suggested that a confidentiality section should be on the agenda as part of the next BGM meeting, along with sourcing relevant materials and sharing critical points on confidentiality with the board.

The board requested Parliamentarian Bill Fredrickson to provide information on the costs and consequences of confidentiality breaches for ABCUSA. They asked him to offer a brief reminder and, if possible, share a personal experience where confidentiality was compromised, detailing how it affected him and the time it took away from his other responsibilities.

Paul Higgins and Bill Fredrickson will share a presentation on Board Confidentiality at the November meeting.

BGM EC 902 Credentials and Caucus Committee

The BGM Executive Committee discussed concerns regarding the use of Caucus Grant Funding. Alan Musoke, Associate General Secretary for Finance/CFO/Treasurer, noted that each of the eight Caucuses received \$8,000 in grant funding for 2024. The Credentials and Caucus Committee had requested that the Caucuses submit a summary report detailing their activities after receiving the funds, but only a few responded. The Credentials and Caucus Committee followed up with Caucus leaders, requesting detailed information on their activities, how the funds were spent, and the remaining balance of unallocated funds. However, only four out of the eight Caucus leaders replied.

These are the guidelines established in 2022.

1. What is the purpose of the Caucus?
2. What is the proposed plan for operations?
3. Officers: How was the money spent? (Action proposed)
4. Amending the 2022 Guidelines in Section 14.4.3 language (Action proposed)

The BGM Executive Committee has recommended that Vice President William (Bill) Poland reach out to the remaining Caucus leaders who have not yet responded to the Credentials and Caucus Committee's letter.

The BGM Executive Committee also wants to emphasize that the Caucus leaders' work is appreciated, and they are interested in hearing their plans for 2025.

Motion: President McCalister moved to appoint Vice President William (Bill) Poland as chairperson of the Credentials and Caucus Committee, and Past President Jim Wolfe seconded the motion.

By voice vote, the BGM Executive Committee approved the motion to election of Bill Poland.

Proposed Action: The BGM Executive Committee recommended amending the 2022 Guidelines in Section 14.4.3 to change the language. Confirm that the Caucus leaders submit a phone number, email, list of officers, including the president and treasurer, and an annual report of how funds were spent. Send this information by email to the Office of the Treasurer.

Motion: Budget Review Officer Paul Higgins motioned that we defer revisions to the guidelines until we hear from the Inter Caucus President, Katharine Hsiao, and invite her to the Credentials and Caucus Committee meeting in November. Cedric Jones seconded the motion.

By a show of hands, the motion was approved unanimously.

Recess for Dinner

BGM EC 903 ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Regarding the collection of One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) funds, the General Secretary stated that, for the past 20 years, it had been agreed that ABHMS and IM would receive OGHS donations on behalf of ABCUSA. IM has not shared donor information with OGS, and any information obtained was marked as anonymous. When ABCUSA requested access to donor information, IM leadership and staff noted donor information is noted as anonymous.

BGM EC 904 ABCUSA LOGO USE

General Secretary Jacobs-Strain and President McCalister sought input from the Executive Committee due to recent articles shared by AWAB and Baptist Global News. The committee affirmed the response from the General Secretary and the President.

BGM EC 905 POLICY STATEMENTS AND RESOLUTIONS

We discussed the significant efforts to amend, affirm, or rescind any existing policy, statements, or resolutions. According to our By-laws, a 75% threshold is needed to amend, affirm or rescind a resolution. It was suggested that we focus our attention on advancing our denomination, clearly defining who we are, shaping the American Baptist identity, and equipping people with the necessary tools. The Biennial is an opportunity to share our core values and share our American Baptist identity.

BGM EC 906 LITIGATION UPDATES

ABCUSA signed a nondisclosure confidential settlement agreement in the California case. The insurance company issued all settlement costs at an amount below our \$50,000 threshold.

The committee recessed for dinner at 6:00 PM at Jams Old Market, 1101 Harney Street, Omaha, NE.

Saturday, September 7, 2024, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. - Rome Meeting Room

Breakfast 7:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

BGM EC 907 CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND DEVOTIONS

*Chaplain Doug Scalise opened with the Lighting of the Christ Candle and led with Devotions:
The Earth is Full of God's Steadfast Love – Psalm 33:4-9*

The BGM Executive Committee shared their thoughts on the devotion on Steadfast Love. They also spoke about how productive this meeting was and how great it was to see the group.

BGM EC 908 PRAYER AND ADJOURNMENT

President McCalister ended the BGM Executive meeting with prayer and wished the group safe travels home. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by,

Rev. Dr. Gina C. Jacobs-Strain

Rev. Dr. Gina C. Jacobs-Strain, General Secretary
GCJS/vg

Documents attached:

CICR About the Report and Regional Data for Board Meeting ABCIS 5460
BGM EC Agenda September 5-7, 2024
Integrated Schedule- BGM Exec Comm Meeting September 2024
President's Report September 2024
BGM EC Minutes – June 2024
Final Rewrite of Bylaw Article XIII (906-924)
September 2024 BGM Executive Committee Roster
Report of the General Secretary – BGM EC September 2024
ABCUSA Financial Report as of June 30, 2024
Changes to Standing Rules and Corrections
Final – Possible Bylaw Changes
Article 15.1.1.3 Redo
Added 9/12/24 Standing Rules Article 15.1.1.3 Current Version

Board of General Ministries Meetings:

November 15-17, 2024, Alloy Hotel, King of Prussia, PA
July 1-3, 2025, Omaha Hilton, Omaha, NE

BGM Executive Committee Meetings:

November 14-15, 2024, Alloy Hotel, King of Prussia, PA
March 13-15, 2025, Los Angeles, CA
June 30-July 1, 2025, Omaha Hilton, Omaha, NE
September 11-13, 2025 (Location TBD)